

# Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore State Assessed Planning Proposal

Statement of Heritage Impact

**Applicant:** Property and  
Development NSW

February 2025



Artefact Heritage and Environment

ABN 73 144 973 526

Suite 56, Jones Bay Wharf

26-32 Pirrama Road

Pymont NSW 2009

Australia

+61 2 9518 8411

[office@artefact.net.au](mailto:office@artefact.net.au)

## Document history and status

Version	Date issued	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Revision type
1	09/2024	Jenny Winnett	Jenny Winnett	09/2024	Draft V1
2	20/09/2024	Scott MacArthur	Scott MacArthur	20/09/2024	Final
3	28/02/2025	Scott MacArthur	Scott MacArthur	28/02/2025	Final Revised

<b>Project name:</b>	Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore State Assessed Planning Proposal - Statement of Heritage Impact
<b>Authors:</b>	Jordan Wilson-Aarsen, Kristen Tola, Bronwyn Hanna, Stephanie Moore, Monika Sakal, Daniel Dompierre-Outridge
<b>Project manager:</b>	Scott MacArthur
<b>Project number:</b>	220536
<b>Name of organisation:</b>	Artefact Heritage and Environment
<b>Document version:</b>	Draft V1 (new SoHI)

© Artefact Heritage and Environment

This document is and shall remain the property of Artefact Heritage and Environment. This document may only be used for the purposes for which it was commissioned and in accordance with the Terms of the Engagement for the commission. Unauthorised use of this document in any form whatsoever is prohibited.

Disclaimer: Artefact Heritage and Environment has completed this document in accordance with the relevant federal, state and local legislation and current industry best practice. The company accepts no liability for any damages or loss incurred as a result of reliance placed upon the document content or for any purpose other than that for which it was intended.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Property and Development NSW is continuing to lead the revitalization of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct on behalf of the NSW Government. Artefact Heritage and Environment have been engaged by Property and Development NSW to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact that assesses the heritage constraints of the State Assessed Planning Proposal (Planning Proposal) in relation to the NSW heritage legislative context.

This Statement of Heritage Impact supports a Planning Justification Report that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure as part of a Planning Proposal.

Although the Planning Proposal indicates that future development may take place adjacent to areas of heritage significance and curtilages there is no direct impact on any listed heritage items. The Planning Proposal would therefore not result in physical or visual impacts to significant heritage. This Statement of Heritage Impact includes recommended next steps for the project, should physical works be required at development stage.

### Overview of built heritage findings

There are **three** heritage items located within the Precinct:

- Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology) and Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)—Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I8.
- Ferguson's Cottage—State Heritage Register #1802, Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I9.
- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty—State Heritage Register #2040, Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I20, Regional Environmental Plan 1988, Register of National Estates #18999, National Trust of Australia.

There is **one** heritage item located immediately adjacent to the Precinct:

- Solitary Islands Marine Area—Royal National Estate #18848; Solitary Islands Marine Park—NSW *Marine Parks Act 1997*.

There are **three** heritage items located within a 200 metre vicinity of the Precinct:

- House - Interwar—Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I14.
- School - Coffs Harbour State High (Building B00A)—Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I17 and S170 (Education).
- Post Office—Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan #I19.

The proposed rezoning application has no impact on any of the above heritage items.

## Overview of historical archaeological findings

Portions of the Precinct have been assessed as having moderate potential to contain archaeological remains that may be associated with the State Heritage-listed Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (historical phase 3). Dependant on the extent of survival, these remains may reach the local and/or state significance thresholds.

No excavation works are required as part of the Planning Proposal. Should future excavation works be required within areas identified as having moderate potential to contain significant archaeological resources, the Historical Archaeological Assessment has recommended that a Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment be prepared. This document should be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Council and delegates.

The Historical Archaeological Assessment is included in Appendix 1, and a summary of result is below.

Phase of development	Feature or activity	Description of potential remains	Degree of survival
1: European land use (1830-1880)	Land clearing	Evidence tree stumps and roots, fence posts	Low
2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)	Low intensity land use, early road construction	Road infrastructure, kerbing	Low
3: Commercial port development (1900-1950)	Commercial and residential buildings, railways or roads.	Crane bases, cargo shed foundations, jetty railway track alignment, jetty buildings or fence post holes, telegraph poles, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, fill material (300mm deep)	Moderate
4: Post-war occupation (1950-Present)	Commercial and public use of the area	Crane bases, cargo sheds, jetty railway track alignments, jetty buildings or fences, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, early carparks, walking pathways, roads	Extant/not archaeological

## Approval pathway

This Statement of Heritage Impact is intended to accompany the State Assessed Planning Proposal application being submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure, to be assessed under the *Environmental and Planning Assessment Act 1979*.

Any future development works proposed within the curtilage, or visual buffer, of a State Heritage Register listed item require approval by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*. This will occur as part of the development phase.

Similarly, any ground-disturbing activities may require approvals either under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* for potential harm to significant archaeological relics or under the NSW *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* for projects at the development application stage with the potential to impact significant archaeological remains.



## Recommendations and mitigation measures

The following recommendations and mitigation measures should be considered in future development application stages to protect and enhance the significance of the identified State Heritage Register (SHR) and Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan (CHLEP) heritage items located within the study area:

- The Planning Proposal is assessed as having '**neutral (nil)**' visual impacts to the place' for all listed heritage items in the Precinct (refer to Table 9 in Section X).
- Potential visual impacts have also been assessed in the *Visual Impact Assessment* by Ethos Urban, which is also appended to this Planning Proposal. The Visual Impact Assessment determined that 'the proposal has acceptable visual and view loss impact'.
- If future development stages involve works where potential adverse visual impacts are identified to heritage items, a SoHI will be required and the following would need to be undertaken:
  - If the SHR heritage items (jetty and Fergusons Cottage), the preparation of a SoHI would be required to be approved by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* as part of a Development Application (DA) process; this process would include a Section 60 application.
  - If the CHLEP heritage items, the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) would be required, and the appropriate approval pathway would be determined by the SoHI.
- While this Planning Proposal does not result in direct impacts to heritage items or their curtilages, it is noted that the delivery of the intent under the broader Illustrative Masterplan (specifically infrastructure and public domain elements) may potentially have physical impacts on heritage items. Any such physical impacts to heritage items at the future development stages should be evaluated by a Statement of Heritage Impact and where potential adverse physical impacts are identified, the following would need to be undertaken:
  - If the future development requires work or changes to the State Heritage Register-listed heritage items (jetty and Fergusons Cottage), then the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact would be required for the works to be approved by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* at the Development Application stage.
  - If the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan heritage items would suffer adverse visual impact at the future development stage, then the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact would be required and the appropriate approval pathway would be determined by the Statement of Heritage Impact at the Development Application stage

- Future development stage works must remain consistent with the Coffs harbour Jetty Conservation Management Plan and Ferguson's Cottage Conservation Strategy, these have been detailed in Section 7.0 of this assessment and recommendations for these have been summarised in Section 8.0 of this assessment Future development must be undertaken in accordance with the supporting Design Guidelines, which include matters relating to heritage protection to ensure potential impacts to heritage are to be considered and assessed as part of future development applications.

## CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Project background.....	1
1.1.1	The Precinct.....	2
1.1.2	The Illustrative Masterplan .....	4
1.1.3	The planning proposal .....	7
1.2	Authors .....	7
1.3	Limitations.....	8
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Legislative Context.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	NSW <i>Heritage Act</i> 1977 .....	9
2.1.1	State Heritage Register .....	9
2.1.2	Section 170 registers .....	9
2.1.3	Conservation Management Plans .....	9
2.2	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW).....	10
2.2.1	Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 .....	10
2.2.2	Coffs Harbour Development Control Plan 2015 .....	11
2.3	NSW <i>Marine Parks Act</i> 1997.....	11
2.4	Non-Statutory Considerations .....	13
2.4.1	North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (REP) (repealed) .....	13
2.4.2	Register of the National Estate.....	13
2.4.3	National Trust of Australia (NSW) .....	13
2.5	Summary of heritage listings .....	13
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Historical background.....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1	Aboriginal history .....	16
3.2	Early European settlement .....	16
3.2.1	Colonial history .....	16
3.2.2	Development of Coffs Harbour .....	16
3.2.3	Late 20 <sup>th</sup> century and early 21 <sup>st</sup> century developments.....	17
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Physical Context.....</b>	<b>26</b>
4.1	Site Inspection .....	26
4.1.1	Context .....	26
4.1.2	The Precinct Context .....	26
4.1.3	Existing Character Areas .....	27
4.1.4	Physical description of heritage items within the Precinct.....	38
4.1.5	Physical description of heritage items within the vicinity of the Precinct.....	39
4.1.6	Other Heritage related items .....	41
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Significance Assessment.....</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1	Methodology .....	42

5.2	Statements of Significance for heritage items .....	42
5.2.1	Coffs Harbour Jetty (Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty) (within the Precinct) .....	42
5.2.2	Ferguson's Cottage (within the Precinct) .....	43
5.2.3	Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (Archaeology) & Buried Timber Trestle Rail Bridge (Archaeology) (within the Precinct) .....	44
5.2.4	Solitary Island Marine Park (within the vicinity of the Precinct) .....	44
5.2.5	House – Interwar CHLEP #I14 (within the vicinity of the Precinct) .....	44
5.2.6	School - Coffs Harbour High CHLEP #I17 and S170 (within the vicinity of the Precinct) .....	45
5.2.7	Post Office CHLEP #I19 (within the vicinity of the Precinct) .....	45
<b>6.0</b>	<b>The Application.....</b>	<b>46</b>
6.1	Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore State Assessed Planning Proposal.....	46
6.1.1	Changes to land use zoning .....	47
6.1.2	Changes to height of buildings .....	49
6.1.3	Design Guidelines.....	50
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Heritage Impact Assessment .....</b>	<b>52</b>
7.1	Overview and methodology .....	52
7.2	Assessing the Planning Proposal against CMP policies .....	53
7.3	Heritage Impact Assessment.....	55
7.3.1	Physical heritage impacts .....	56
7.3.2	Visual and other heritage impacts .....	56
7.3.3	Cumulative heritage impacts .....	56
7.3.4	Heritage impacts analysis summary table .....	56
7.4	Potential archaeological impacts .....	58
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>59</b>
8.1	Overview of built heritage findings .....	59
8.2	Overview of historical archaeological findings.....	59
8.3	Approval pathway .....	60
8.4	Recommendations and mitigation measures .....	60
<b>9.0</b>	<b>References .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>appendix 1 .....</b>	<b>65</b>
10.1	Historical Archaeology report .....	65

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation.	Term
Artefact	Artefact Heritage and Environment
CHCC	Coffs Harbour City Council
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan (a Council guideline for development which accompanies and elaborates on the Council's Local Environmental Plan)
DP	Deposited Plan
DPE	NSW Department of Planning & Environment
Heritage NSW	Heritage New South Wales (Office of the Heritage Council of New South Wales), also recently known as the NSW Heritage office, the Heritage Branch and the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)
km	kilometre
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
CHLEP	Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013
NSW	New South Wales
PDNSW	Property & Development New South Wales (part of NSW Department of Planning, House and Industry)
The Precinct, the Precinct	Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct
RNE	Register of the National Estate (an Australian Government heritage list, now defunct)
S170	Section 170 of the NSW <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> which requires government agencies to keep a Heritage & Conservation Register of places they own and manage
SHR	State Heritage Register
SoHI	Statement of Heritage Impact

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Vision for the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore.....	2
Figure 2: Location of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct (Source: SJB Architects, 2025). ....	3
Figure 3. Existing state of the Precinct rail lands and gravelled areas (Source: PDNSW). ....	4
Figure 4. Illustrative Masterplan (Source: SJB 2025).....	5
Figure 5. Community-led place principles (Source: PDNSW).....	6
Figure 6. Proposed sub-precinct map (Source: SJB 2025).....	7
Figure 7: Excerpt of Solitary Islands Marine Park Zoning Map (Source: NSW Department of Primary Industries & Australian Marine Parks 2018) .....	12
Figure 8: Map showing Solitary Islands Marine Park adjacent to the Rezoning application the Precinct / six precincts (Source: Artefact) .....	12
Figure 9: SHR and CHLEP heritage item curtilages at Coffs Harbour Foreshore .....	15
Figure 10. Photograph of S.S. Orara docked at Coffs Harbour Jetty, showing the railway line on the jetty and a steam powered crane, 1910 (Source: Coffs Library Collection) .....	22
Figure 11: Photograph of Jetty Beach taken in 1912 by P. Crook, with Muttonbird Island seen to the right and Coffs Jetty seen on the left (Source: State Library of NSW 2021) .....	23
Figure 12: Photograph of Jetty Beach taken in 1927 by P. Crook, with Coffs Jetty seen in the background (Source: State Library of NSW 2021).....	23
Figure 13. Photograph of Coffs Harbour Jetty and Railway Station dated 1930 (Source: Coffs Library Collection).....	24
Figure 14: Photograph the view of Jetty Beach and Coffs Harbour Jetty from Muttonbird Island, taken by H.H. Fishwick in 1934 (Source: National Library of Australia 2021) .....	24
Figure 15: 1906 (24 July) Map – Town of Coff’s Harbour and Suburban lands, Parish of Coff, County of Fitzroy, Land District of Bellingen, the Precinct outlined in red (Source: NSW Land Registry Services).....	25
Figure 16: 1953 (25 August) Map of Coffs Harbour, the Precinct outlined in red (Source: NSW Land Registry Services) .....	25
Figure 17. Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Existing Character Areas (Source: SJB). ....	28
Figure 18: View of the southern breakwater (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	31
Figure 19: View of Coffs Harbour taken from Corambirra Point with Jetty Beach House at the left (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023).....	31
Figure 20: View of WWII gun embankment (circled in red) and The Jetty Beach House (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	31
Figure 21: View of Jetty Beach House / Old Deep Sea Fishing site (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023)....	31
Figure 22: View of eastern side of Foreshore Parklands with view of Jetty Beach and Coffs Harbour Jetty (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023).....	32
Figure 23: Panorama view of Coffs Harbour beachfront (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023) .....	32
Figure 24: View of heritage Coffs Harbour Jetty from Jetty Beachfront (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023).....	32
Figure 25: View of down Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	32

Figure 26: View of Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	33
Figure 27: View of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	33
Figure 28: View of middle of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	33
Figure 29: View of middle of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	34
Figure 30: View along one of the pathways to the beach in Foreshore Parklands across a pedestrian bridge (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	34
Figure 31: View of creek running through the Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	34
Figure 32: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	35
Figure 33: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	35
Figure 34: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	35
Figure 35: View of path from Foreshore Parklands to the beachfront (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	36
Figure 36: View of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	36
Figure 37: View of the newly constructed Community Building located near the Coffs Harbour Jetty within Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	36
Figure 38: View of southern end of railway and open land in front of rail corridor (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	37
Figure 39: View of southern end of land in front of rail corridor (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	37
Figure 40: View of northern lot, corner of Marina Drive and Jordan Esplanade (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	37
Figure 41: View of northern lot, junction at Harbour Drive and Marina Drive (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	37
Figure 42: View of the marina buildings taken from beachfront (Source: Artefact 2023) .....	37
Figure 43: View of Foreshore, marina and Coffs Harbour Jetty from Muttonbird Island (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	38
Figure 44: Eastern view of Coffs Harbour Jetty from the Jetty Walkway (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	38
Figure 45: Western view along the Jetty Walkway (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023) .....	38
Figure 46: The total area of proposed LEP changes within the study area (Source: SJB 2025) .....	47
Figure 47: Existing zoning .....	48
Figure 48: Proposed zoning .....	48
Figure 49: Existing permitted uses .....	49
Figure 50: Proposed permitted uses .....	49
Figure 51: Existing height of buildings .....	50
Figure 52: Proposed height of buildings .....	50



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

NOTE: The planning pathway being pursued for the Jetty Foreshore has changed from a State-led Rezoning to a State Assessed Planning Proposal assessed by the Department of Housing, Planning and Infrastructure (DPHI). Accordingly, the pathway should be referred to as a 'planning proposal'. Please ensure this terminology is consistent and distinction is made as Property and Development NSW is an agency within DPHI.

### 1.1 Project background

Property and Development NSW (PDNSW) is continuing to lead the revitalization of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct (the Precinct) on behalf of the NSW Government. Artefact Heritage and Environment have been engaged by PDNSW to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) that assesses the heritage constraints of the State Assessed Planning Proposal in relation to the NSW heritage legislative context.

This SoHI supports a Planning Justification Report that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan (CHLEP) 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) as part of a State Assessed Planning Proposal (rezoning application).

As Coffs Harbour continues to grow as a Regional City, the NSW Government and Coffs Harbour City Council have, through various strategic planning exercises, identified four key strategic priorities to reimagine its direction and respond to current and future challenges and opportunities:

- Deliver a regional economy (CHCC LSPS, 2020; CH Economic Development Strategy, 2017) that is diverse, sophisticated and able to retain businesses and skills
- Evolve the tourism offering (CHCC LSPS, 2020) with improved attractions, activities and accommodation
- Provide more housing (CHCC LSPS, 2020) in accessible locations, including affordable housing
- Provide better connections between places with more sustainable movement choices (CHRCAP, 2021; CHCC, 2020)

As a large, strategically located and wholly government owned site, the Precinct represents a significant opportunity to deliver on each of these key regional priorities. In this rezoning application, PDNSW seeks to celebrate the unique location, history and culture of the Jetty Foreshore to deliver outcomes for the benefit of the Coffs Harbour community. The revitalisation will be staged and funded, over time, to deliver the shared community vision.

Coffs' family playground, a precinct of parks and places, that connects community with Country. The community is and always has been at the heart of creating a thriving regional economy and destination for Coffs Harbour. Shaped with the community, our vision is to ensure The Jetty Foreshore will become a world-class oceanfront precinct through the principles shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Vision for the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore.**

#### 1.1.1 The Precinct

The Precinct (Figure 2), wholly owned by the NSW Government, is strategically significant to the State and to the Coffs Harbour region. The Precinct is located on the traditional lands of the Gumbaynggirr people, in saltwater freshwater Country. It encompasses approximately 62 hectares of foreshore land, 5km east of the Coffs Harbour CBD, located on the Coffs Harbour coast with direct access to the Pacific Ocean. Access is provided on Marina Drive in the north, and Camperdown Street in the south, with Jordan Esplanade bisecting the site north to south.

The west boundary is generally defined by the railway line and Coffs Harbour Railway Station. To the north the Precinct borders a culturally significant site known as “Happy Valley”, which has been returned as freehold land to the Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council. Gallows and Boambee Beaches are located to the south of the Precinct, where Littoral Rainforest occurs. Coffs Harbour itself, the Pacific Ocean, Muttonbird Island and South Coffs Island (Corambirra Point) form the eastern boundary.

The Precinct is a popular destination for both locals and tourists offering a variety of attractions and amenities. These include Jetty Beach and extensive parklands with biodiversity value, as well as items of heritage significance such as the Coffs Harbour Jetty and Ferguson’s Cottage, owned by the Coffs Harbour District Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). Further, the Coffs Harbour Fisherman’s Co-op, the Coffs Harbour Yacht Club, weekly Sunday markets, and community hub building (recently delivered by PDNSW) are located within the Precinct. Various public works including breakwater and boat ramp upgrades have been undertaken over recent years to support the marina function.

There are redeveloped and well-maintained parts in the area however, much can be done to enhance the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct. A large portion of the Precinct is currently gravelled, and a large area of residual railway land is fenced off and inaccessible to the public, as shown in Figure 3. While gravelled areas provide informal overflow parking, they do not reflect the potential of this foreshore.



**Figure 2: Location of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct (Source: SJB Architects, 2025).**

An illustration of the precinct's existing character areas is provided below in Figure 17. Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Existing Character Areas (Source: SJB).





**Figure 3. Existing state of the Precinct rail lands and gravelled areas (Source: PDNSW).**

### 1.1.2 The Illustrative Masterplan

The planning proposal is supported by an Illustrative Masterplan (Figure 4) that presents a potential development outcome that could be realised at the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct – it is not prescriptive nor is it determined. The Illustrative Masterplan builds on the shared vision created via extensive community and stakeholder consultation and provides further detail in relation to land use and development outcomes sought for the Precinct.

The Place Principles shown in Figure 5, agreed with the community, guided the formation of the Illustrative Masterplan.




The Illustrative Masterplan is broadly organised across six sub-precincts that will each have a distinct character and function. These are identified as:

1. Foreshore Parklands – with improved amenities, proposed new board walk and nature-based playground.
2. The Marina – An active marina revitalised to accommodate local marine based businesses that reflect their regional importance.
3. North Park – Functional open space with recreational courts and formalised parking.
4. Jetty Hub – A hub of residential and tourist accommodation supporting activation, tourism and regional attraction located adjacent to the current Jetty Walkway, with massing capped at 6 storeys stepping down in scale when closer to public areas.
5. Activity Hub and Village Green – An active village green that delivers increased public open space connected to the existing foreshore parklands and may include family-friendly food and beverage, community uses and club houses or facilities to support events. A local business activity zone connected to the rail station.
6. Corambirra Point – A new regional tourist destination on the site of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site including publicly accessible cafes and restaurants, a function space, activity centre and tourist accommodation.

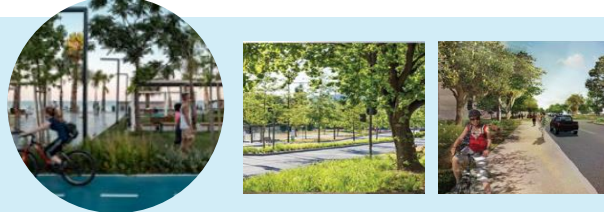
A precinct map showing the Illustrative Masterplan and the six distinct zones is provided below in Figure 6.



**Figure 4. Illustrative Masterplan (Source: SJB 2025).**



**Gathering place**  
Become the premier place on the North Coast where all are welcome and feel at home, now and in the future



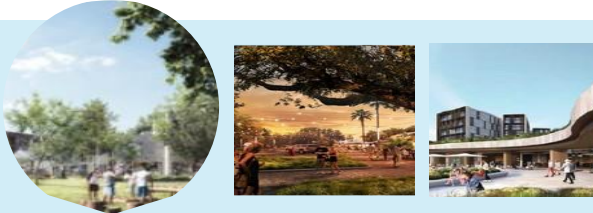
**Seamlessly connected**  
Tie the city structure and regional networks into the precinct and provide accessibility for all abilities throughout



**Sustainable economy**  
Foster a wider mix of uses that leverage existing industry to create a balance of local employment opportunities and waterfront activation



**Resilient environment**  
Be the exemplar for the North Coast on adapting to climate change by safeguarding existing assets and mitigating future risk

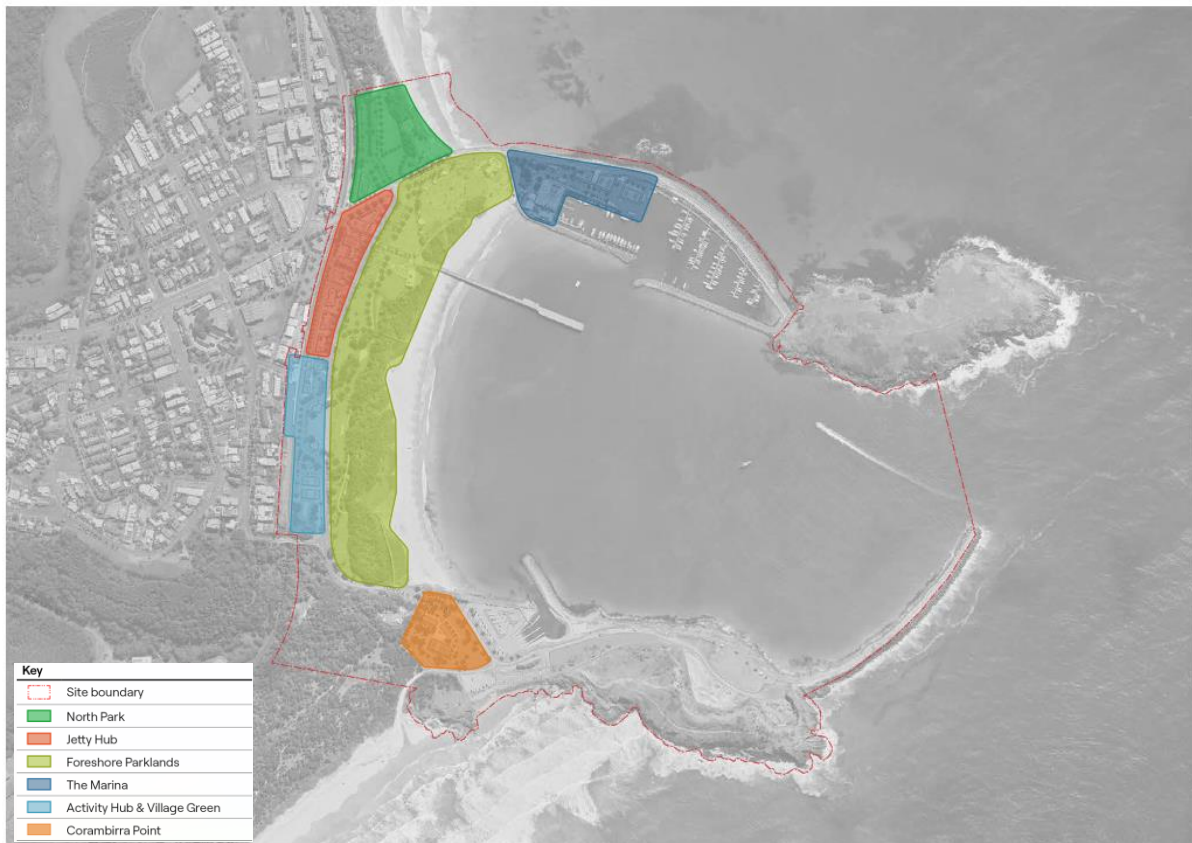


**Choice destination**  
Enhance the precinct as a family friendly collection of local and regional destinations offering an accessible, engaging, safe, comfortable and inclusive environment day and night



**Celebrate Country**  
Ensure opportunities for Gumbaynggirr people to Care for Country and heal Country, with long-term community involvement, cultural activation and education, and protection of significant heritage sites

Figure 5. Community-led place principles (Source: PDNSW).



**Figure 6. Proposed sub-precinct map (Source: SJB 2025).**

### 1.1.3 The planning proposal

The master planning of large-scale precincts follows a highly consultative and stepped approach. The current step, which paves the way for the revitalisation of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct, is the application for a State Assessed Planning Proposal, which is a legislated process.

PDNSW is lodging a planning proposal with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure that seeks approval for:

- Changes to permissible land uses.
- Changes to permissible maximum building heights.
- Planning controls for future State Significant Development Applications including design guidelines and design excellence processes.

This SoHI supports this planning proposal.

## 1.2 Authors

The Built Heritage component of this report has been prepared by Jordan Wilson-Aarsen (Heritage Consultant), Bronwyn Hanna (Senior Associate), Monika Sakal (Heritage Consultant), Daniel Dompierre-Outridge (Heritage Consultant) and reviewed by Sarah-Jane Zammit (Senior Associate). The Historical Archaeology component of the report and the Appendix report has been prepared by



Kirsten Tola (Heritage Consultant) and Stephanie Moore. Quality Assurance and Technical Review undertaken by Jenny Winnett (Technical Director).

### 1.3 Limitations

This report focuses on historical built heritage items, and provides a summary of the archaeological findings within the report, expanded in Appendix 1 (with stated limitations). Maritime archaeology is outside of the scope of this SoHI. Refer to the Maritime Heritage Archaeology, prepared by Cosmos, 2024.

Aboriginal Heritage assessment is not included in the scope of this SoHI. Refer to the Coffs Harbour Precinct Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) prepared by Artefact, which is part of the suite of documentation supporting the re-zoning application.

## 2.0 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

### 2.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977

#### 2.1.1 State Heritage Register

The State Heritage Register (SHR) was established under Section 22 of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* and is a list of places and objects of particular importance to the people of NSW, including archaeological sites. The SHR is administered by Heritage NSW, and includes a diverse range of over 1,600 places and items, in both private and public ownership. To be listed, a place must be deemed by the Heritage Council of NSW to be of 'state' heritage significance for the people of NSW. If works to an SHR item are required, a Section 60 application must be prepared for submission to Heritage NSW, unless the works can be assessed as 'exempt' under Section 57(2) of the Act.

There are **two items** listed on the State Heritage Register *within* the Precinct:

- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (SHR #2040).
- Ferguson's Cottage (SHR #1802).

#### 2.1.2 Section 170 registers

Under the Heritage Act all government agencies are required to identify, conserve and manage heritage items in their ownership or control. Section 170 (s170) requires all government agencies to maintain a Heritage and Conservation Register that lists all heritage assets and an assessment of the significance of each asset. They must also ensure that all items inscribed on its list are maintained with due diligence in accordance with State Owned Heritage Management Principles approved by the Government on advice of the NSW Heritage Council. These principles serve to protect and conserve the heritage significance of items and are based on NSW heritage legislation and guidelines.

There is **one** heritage item within a 200-metre *vicinity* of the Precinct, which is listed on the Department of Education s170 register:

- Coffs Harbour State High School – Building B00A

#### 2.1.3 Conservation Management Plans

Under Section 38A of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be prepared for items listed on the State Heritage Register. The CMP should identify the state heritage significance of the item, set out policies and strategies for the retention of its significance and be prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Heritage Council. Works proposed in the vicinity of these places should address the policies.

Both of the SHR-listed items within the Precinct have a Conservation Management Plan or Strategy which may be consulted for its policies designed to conserve the significance of each place. Although each CMP is now out of date, being more than five years since it was endorsed or adopted, they both provide useful issues for consideration. The two CMPs are listed below:

- NSW Public Works Heritage Group State Projects, 1994. *Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan*, commissioned by NSW Public Works, made available online by Heritage NSW Library.

- Trevor Jamison, 2009, *Ferguson's Cottage – Conservation Management Strategy*, made available online by Heritage NSW Library.

## 2.2 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes the framework for cultural heritage values to be formally assessed in the land use planning and development consent process. The EP&A Act requires that environmental impacts are considered prior to land development; this includes impacts on cultural heritage items and places as well as archaeological sites and deposits.

The EP&A Act also requires that local governments prepare planning instruments (such as Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans [DCPs]) in accordance with the EP&A Act to provide guidance on the level of environmental assessment required. The Precinct falls within the boundaries of the Liverpool local government areas. Schedule 5 of each of the *Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013* includes a list of items/sites of heritage significance within this LGA.

### 2.2.1 Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013

Heritage items listed on the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 (CHLEP) are managed in accordance with its provisions in Section 5.10 (Heritage Conservation). Clause 5 of Section 5.10 states:

---

*The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:*

*(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or*

*(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or*

*(c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),*

*require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.*

---

Schedule 5 of the CHLEP 2013 includes a list of items of heritage significance within the LGA.

There are **three items** listed on the CHLEP within the study area:

- Ferguson Cottage (CHLEP #I9)
- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (CHLEP #I20)
- Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)/ Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology) (CHLEP #I8)

There are **three items** listed on the CHLEP located outside of the Precinct but within 200 metres of the Precinct although (not adjacent):

- House – interwar, 151 Edinburgh Street Coffs Harbour (CHLEP #I14)
- School - Coffs Harbour State High (CHLEP # I17)
- Jetty Post Office, 350 Harbour Drive Coffs Harbour (CHLEP # I19)

## 2.2.2 Coffs Harbour Development Control Plan 2015

The Coffs Harbour DCP 2015 is a supporting document that compliments the provisions contained within the Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 and provides specific design detail regarding sympathetic development on, or in the vicinity of, items listed on Schedule 5 of the Coffs Harbour LEP 2013.

Parts C and D of the Coffs Harbour DCP 2015 provides sympathetic considerations for development in the vicinity of a heritage listed item. These considerations include ensuring that the character, bulk, scale and height of new development does not unreasonably overshadow a nearby heritage item, that colouring and texture of new materials of a new development is sympathetic to a heritage item, and that views of a heritage item should not be obscured from the point of view of areas of public domain.

Given the location of the development areas, potential future developments pose no overshadowing risk and the proposed Design Guidelines (Ethos Urban) support sympathetic materials, colours and textures.

This SoHI supports a State-Assessed Planning Proposal that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. The proposed amendments to the LEP are also supported by Design Guidelines, prepared to guide future development within the Precinct. The Design Guidelines will be a matter for consideration in future development application stages, and include detailed provisions relating to matters such as built form, heritage and views. The existing matters of consideration for heritage from the Coffs Harbour DCP 2015 will also continue to apply as relevant.

## 2.3 NSW Marine Parks Act 1997

The NSW *Marine Parks Act 1977* provides the following objectives:

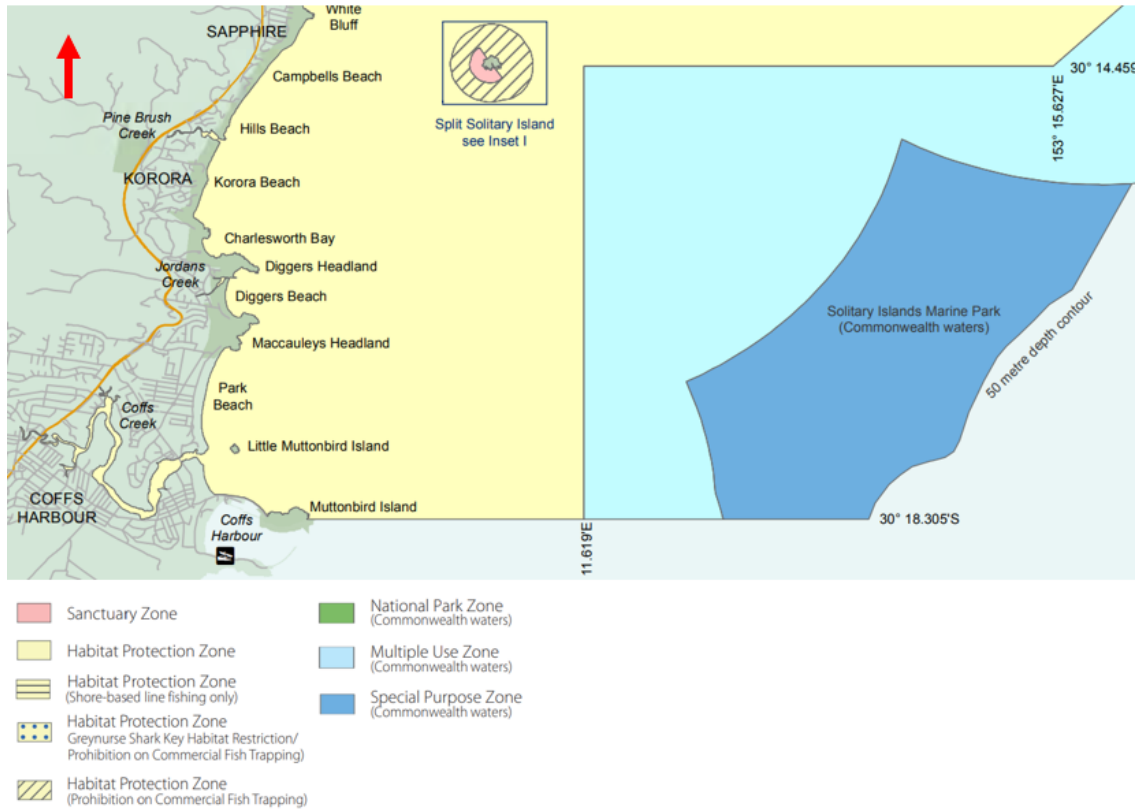
---

*The objects of this Act are as follows: (a) to conserve marine biological diversity and marine habitats by declaring and providing for the management of a comprehensive system of marine parks, (b) to maintain ecological processes in marine parks, (c) where consistent with the preceding objects: (i) to provide for ecologically sustainable use of fish (including commercial and recreational fishing) and marine vegetation in marine parks, and (ii) to provide opportunities for public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of marine parks.*

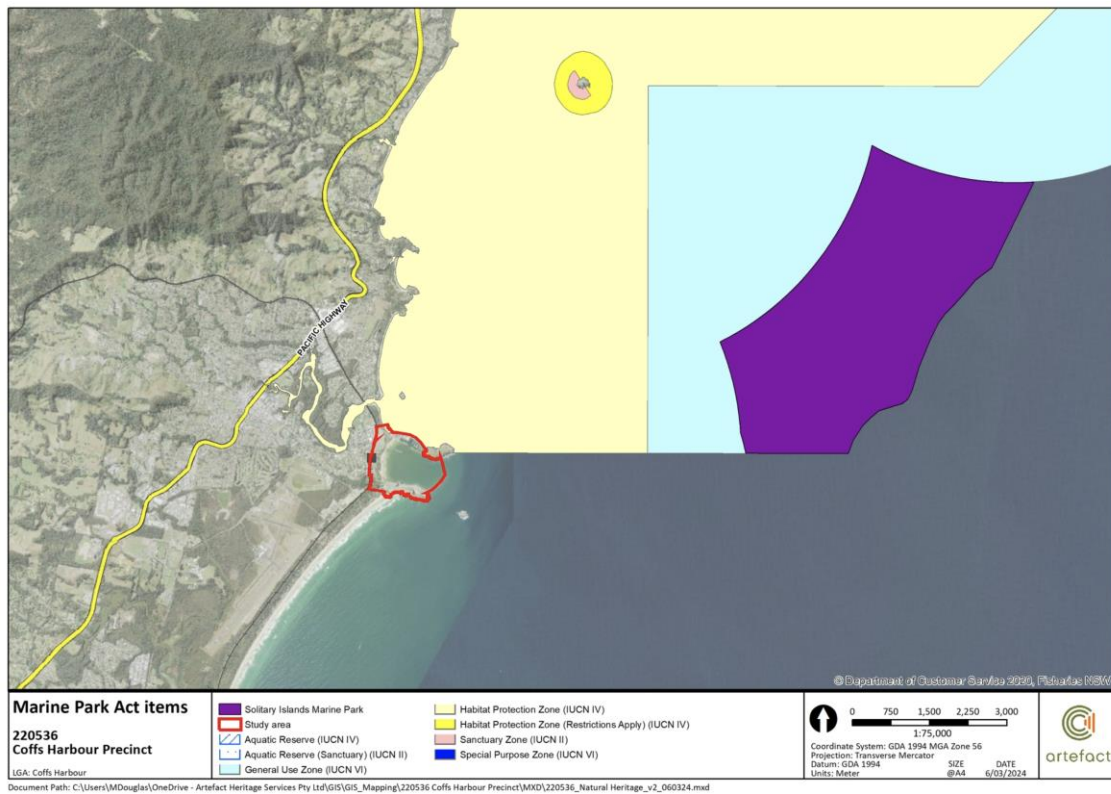
---

There is **one item** listed on the Marine Parks Act located adjacent to the Precinct:

- Solitary Islands Marine Park



**Figure 7: Excerpt of Solitary Islands Marine Park Zoning Map (Source: NSW Department of Primary Industries & Australian Marine Parks 2018)**



**Figure 8: Map showing Solitary Islands Marine Park adjacent to the Rezoning application the Precinct / six precincts (Source: Artefact)**

## 2.4 Non-Statutory Considerations

### 2.4.1 North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (REP) (repealed)

The Coffs Harbour Jetty was listed on the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (REP) 1988, but this planning instrument has been repealed. The listing has no statutory force but serves as an indication of community esteem.

There is **one item** located within the Precinct which was listed on the REP:

- Coffs Harbour Jetty

### 2.4.2 Register of the National Estate

The Register of the National Estate (RNE) is no longer a statutory list; however, it remains valuable as an archive and indication of community esteem.

There are **two items** located within the Precinct which are listed on the Register of the National Estate:

- Coffs Harbour Jetty (as an 'indicative place')
- Solitary Islands Marine Area (RNE #18848)

### 2.4.3 National Trust of Australia (NSW)

Listing on the National Trust Heritage Register does not impose statutory obligations but is valuable as an archive and an indication of community esteem.

There is **one item** listed on the register of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) within the Precinct:

- Coffs Harbour Jetty

## 2.5 Summary of heritage listings

The Precinct is located within the Jetty Foreshore locality of Coffs Harbour and is composed of six precincts designated in the Planning Proposal as referenced in Figure 2. The relevant heritage listings have been outlined in the tables below.

**Table 1: Results of register searches showing within the Precinct**

Item	Address	Significance	Listing	Place ID	Item type
Coffs Harbour Jetty (Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty)	Jetty Foreshore/ High Street, Coffs Harbour	State	SHR	#02040	Built
		Local	CHLEP 2013	#I20	
			REP 1988 (repealed)		
			Register of The National Estate (repealed)	#18999	

Item	Address	Significance	Listing	Place ID	Item type
National Trust of Australia					
Ferguson's Cottage	1 Breakwater Road, Coffs Harbour	State	SHR	#1802	Built
		Local	CHLEP 2013	#19	
Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)/ Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)	Jordan Esplanade, Coffs Harbour	Local	CHLEP 2013	#18	Archaeology

**Table 2: Results of register searches showing items adjacent to the Precinct**

Item	Address	Significance	Listing	Place ID	Item type
Marine Parks Act 1997					
Solitary Islands Marine Park / Solitary Islands Marine Area	Stretching north 75 km & east for 3 nautical miles from the northern breakwater and Muttonbird Island at Coffs Harbour				Natural
			Register of The National Estate (repealed) #18848		

**Table 3: Results of register searches showing three heritage items within 200m of the Precinct**

Item	Address	Significance	Listing	Place ID	Item type
House – Interwar	151 Edinburgh Street, Coffs Harbour	Local	CHLEP 2013	#114	Built
School – Coffs Harbour State High Building B00A	336 Harbour Drive or 336 Edinburgh Street, Coffs Harbour	Local	CHLEP 2013	#117	Built
			Dept Education S170		Built
Post Office – Coffs Jetty	350 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour	Local	CHLEP 2013	#119	Built



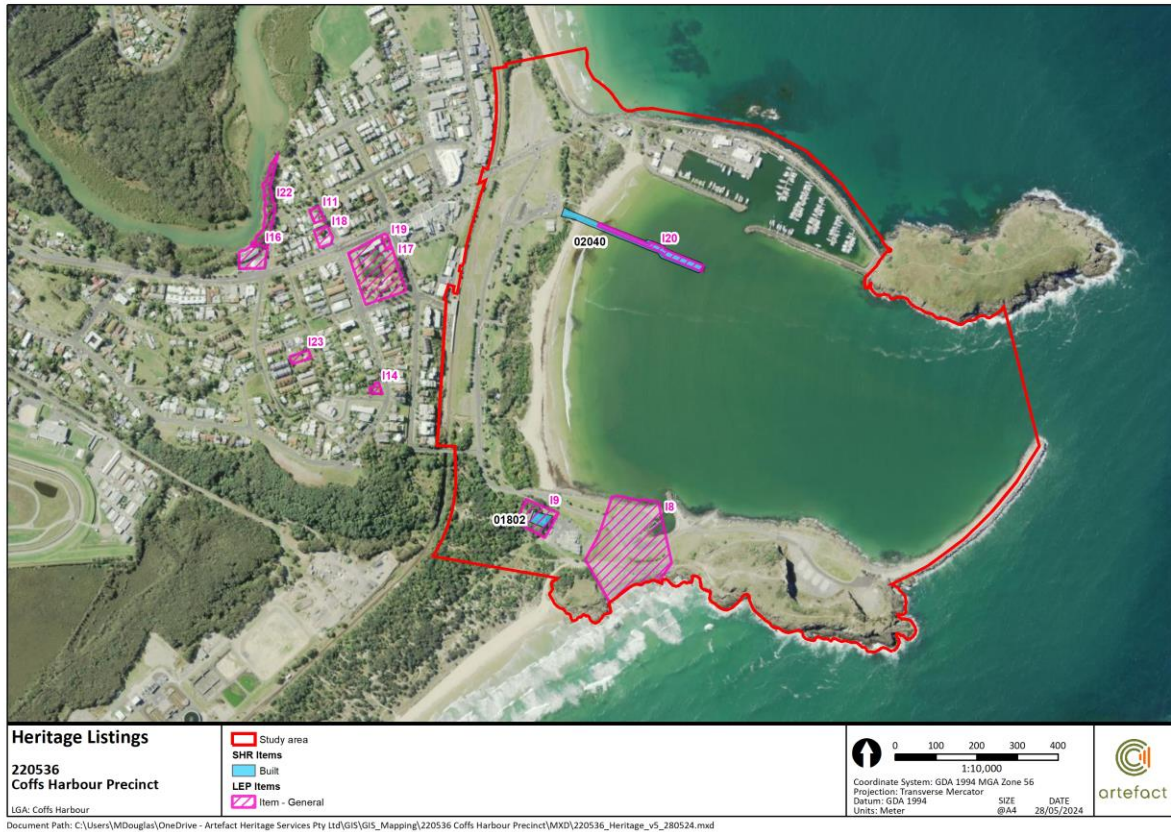


Figure 9: SHR and CHLEP heritage item curtilages at Coffs Harbour Foreshore

## 3.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Aboriginal history

Gumbaynggirr people have lived on the northern coast of NSW for many thousands of years. With this resource-rich area of rainforests, rivers, waterways, inlets, headlands and beaches, they are historically one of the largest groups of coastal NSW Aboriginal people. Gumbaynggirr Country is diverse, extending from around the Nambucca River in the south to around the Clarence River in the north, from the Pacific coast and into the mountains of the Great Dividing Range to the west. This Country has been estimated to cover about 6,000 square kilometres.

Many people from Grafton (Jadalmany), Coffs Harbour (Garlambirla), Nambucca (Nyambaga) and inland of these places identify as Gumbaynggirr. Some say they are 'saltwater/ freshwater' people, moving to the coast during winter and back into the valleys when the hot summers arrive.<sup>1</sup> There are a number of recognised clan groups within the Gumbaynggirr Nation, including the Garby Elders, Garlambirla Guyuu Girrwa (Coffs Elders group), Gumbular Julipi Elders and Bagawa. The Precinct is located within the Coffs Harbour Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).

For a more detailed Aboriginal history refer to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report that accompanies the Rezoning Application, prepared by Artefact Heritage in 2024.

### 3.2 Early European settlement

#### 3.2.1 Colonial history

The British penal colony occupied Sydney Harbour, about 525 km south of Coffs Harbour, from 1788. By the 1820s some colonists and squatters were driving flocks of sheep or herds of cattle deep into Aboriginal land from the NSW Central West and from the Hunter Valley through the New England tablelands. Major rivers such as the Clarence and Macleay became the focus of shipping and timber getting from the 1830s. European cedar getters relied heavily on Aboriginal guides to locate timber stands and often called upon Aboriginal labour to extract the timber. Walter Harvie is thought to be the first cedar getter in the Coffs Harbour area. With his bullock team he set up camp on the north side of Coffs Creek, near the present-day Showground.<sup>2</sup>

In 1847, the first European land grant was given to the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, Clement Hodgkinson, who named the area after John Korff, the captain of a trading vessel that ran aground there that year<sup>3</sup>. More permanent British settlement occurred relatively late, from the 1880s, perhaps because of the lack of an obvious navigable river.<sup>4</sup> The Coffs Harbour region remained relatively unoccupied by Europeans until the 1880s when the first road access to the region was made. The predominant 19<sup>th</sup> century industry here remained the timber trade.

#### 3.2.2 Development of Coffs Harbour

Population growth led to calls for government infrastructure to support the community. In September of 1880 and April of 1881 petitions were made to the Postmaster General for the establishment of a regular postal service to the Coffs Harbour region. In 1882 a Receiving Office was built in Coffs Harbour and in 1890 was upgraded to a functioning Post Office. Another small community developed

<sup>1</sup> Murawin (2022). 'Community Consultation and Outcomes Report, Coffs Harbour Jetty', p. 1; English, A (2006). *The Sea and the Rock give us a feed*, La Perouse Museum, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Waters, K (2020). 'Coffs Harbour Bypass Project, Cultural Values Assessment Report', p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> SJB, 2025, Urban Design Report, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Mackey, N (2001). *European Settlement in the Clarence River District before 1850*, Mackey, p. 103-107.

closer to the harbour, known as 'Jetty Town': 'A small resident population developed in the streets behind the jetty distinct to the other Coffs Harbour community that was becoming established around Grafton, Moonee and Coramba Streets. In 1906 the small community was granted its own post office'.<sup>5</sup>

By the late 19th century, the Coffs Harbour region lacked suitable harbour facilities to support the growing industry and population of the area. Lumber and other commodities were ferried by surf boats to and from larger shipping vessels anchored in deeper waters outside of the harbour. By 1885, as the volume of production increased, there were many appeals and petitions for a government-funded jetty to be constructed. The Coffs Harbour Jetty was built in 1892 by the NSW Public Works Department, measuring approximately 500 metres in length and 6.5 metres in width.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the new jetty, a small five-ton crane was installed at the shore end in 1898 to help with movement of shipments. The crane facility at the jetty was repeatedly upgraded throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Coffs Harbour railway line began construction in 1911 following extensive petitions by the inhabitants of Coffs Harbour who were seeking better avenues for production and consumption.<sup>7</sup> The early 20th century also saw the development of the Coffs Harbour breakwater which linked Muttonbird Island and South Coff Islands (Corambirra Point) with the mainland, as well as the construction of an additional breakwater stretching north-east from South Coff Island, all beginning construction in 1912. In 1913 a timber trestle bridge was built, connecting South Coff Island to the mainland to assist in the transport of rock from a quarry at South Coff Island for use in construction of the breakwaters. The breakwaters were completed with concrete capping which took place between 1939 and 1941. They provided the harbour with extensive protection from unpredictable weather and tidal movements of the previously open ocean waters, which facilitated safer shipping and marine activity between Coffs Harbour and the eastern coast of Australia.<sup>8</sup>

The expansion of the banana industry in the early 20th century also played a significant role in Coffs Harbour's economy. Banana plantations became a prominent feature of the landscape, leading to the town being known as the 'Banana Coast'.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.2.3 Late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century developments

In the second half of the 20th century sand mining became the primary industry of the Coffs Harbour region. From the 1950s to the 1980s the outer sand barriers of Coffs Harbour were targeted with dredging and extraction at such sites as North Corindi Beach, Arrawarra/ South Corindi Beach and Moonee Beach.<sup>10</sup> The population of the area also grew within this time, with a growing population of Sikh and Dutch migrants moving to the area for the available work associated with the growing industry.<sup>11</sup>

During this time, tourism steadily increased alongside the residential population of the area. A census taken in the early 1990s identified a population of approximately 35,000 residents in the Coffs Harbour region. As of 2022, the region is now populated by an approximate 80,000 residents with

<sup>5</sup> "Post Office – Coffs Harbour" CHLEP 2013 heritage listing entry, Heritage NSW SHI, online.

<sup>6</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald (August 6, 1892). *Opening of the Coffs Harbour Jetty*, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Carley et al. (2006). Coastal Processes in the Coffs Harbour Region, *Proceedings of the 15th NSW Coastal Conference*.

<sup>8</sup> Carley et al. (2006). Coastal Processes in the Coffs Harbour Region, *Proceedings of the 15th NSW Coastal Conference*.

<sup>9</sup> SJB, 2025, Urban Design Report, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> BMT WBM Pty Ltd (2009). Coffs Harbour Coastal Processes Progress Report. Report for the Coffs Harbour City Council, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> Hedditch, R (2013). *Coffs Harbour 2013 Heritage Study*. Unpublished heritage study prepared for Coffs Harbour Council and held by Heritage NSW Library.

annual tourist numbers estimated to be an additional 50,000 people, demonstrating a two-fold increase in population over the course of a 30-year period.<sup>12</sup>

In the 21st century, the region is now driven predominantly by the tourist industry with the town noted for its banana plantations, resorts, beachfront activities and fishing. The transition from industrial work to tourism has seen the Coffs Harbour infrastructure transform in order to facilitate the annually increasing tourist population. Hotel services and accommodation and local restaurant and food industry business have been developed across the 30 kilometres of local coastline. The tourist fishing and whale watching industry is also a focal attraction in the area with the marina and other sites along the coastline facilitating harbour deep sea fishing and whale watching expeditions.<sup>13</sup>

### 3.2.3.1 History of Coffs Harbour Jetty

The following historical background is quoted from the SHR SHI listing for 'Coffs Harbour Jetty' (SHR #2040):

*European expansion into the north coast region began with the arrival of timber getters in the 1840s. The north coast of NSW attracted European settlement with its amenable climate and good soils which produced timbers of great quality and quantity. The new settlers also established sugar and banana plantations, dairy farms, orchards and agriculture to support the establishing settlement and the population increased with the discovery of gold in the region in the 1880s. Although an accessible road providing land transport was not established until 1875, the early settlement used its sea access for passenger transportation, exportation of goods and importation of supplies. Land was soon reserved by the government for the development of a harbour to service the developing settlement. Early exportation of timbers (including tallowwood, blackbutt, turpentine and blue gum) had to be floated over the surf and out on the tide to waiting vessels before being winched onboard. Imported supplies were transferred from anchored ships to smaller boats and rowed ashore. These processes proved to be slow, weather reliant and hazardous and, with shipping considered vital to the survival of the Coffs Harbour township, calls were soon made for the construction of a wharf or jetty to enable ships to dock and load goods directly.*

*Tenders were called for in 1889 and local builder Thomas L. Lawson was appointed to undertake the construction of the jetty for the Harbours and Rivers Section of the NSW Public Works department. With timber being a readily accessible material in the region, it was economical and efficient to build the jetty entirely of timber with metal fixings. With capwales, girders, braces and headstocks of ironbark, grey gum, white mahogany, tallowwood and grey box; piles of turpentine; and decking of brushbox, the Coffs Harbour Jetty was completed in 1892 for a cost of 12,596 pounds. At 1640 feet long and 21 feet, six inches wide, the Coffs Harbour Jetty was the longest timber jetty built by NSW Public Works in the 19th century. With the opening of the jetty and the establishment of the North Coast Steam Navigation Company in 1891 to service the shipping needs of the north coast, Coffs Harbour was opened to national and international markets and the shipping trade was instrumental in the economic development and growth of the north coast region. Sawmill businesses and operations also developed as a direct result of the jetty opening as timber no longer had to be conveyed in logs but could be cut and milled before transportation.*

*The jetty was extended, widened and strengthened on a number of occasions, cranes installed, and a railway track laid to assist in the loading and unloading activities and to connect the operations of the jetty to the Coffs Harbour township and greater region. By 1916, the timber industry of the north coast was booming and the Sydney to Coffs Harbour sea passage was well established, averaging 400 ships each year, and the population of Coffs Harbour had increased ten-fold. Although the construction of the jetty had improved the speed and safety of the transportation of goods via the shipping network, use of the jetty was subject to weather conditions and work could not be*

<sup>12</sup> City of Coffs Harbour Community Profile (2022).

<sup>13</sup> Aussie Towns (2023). Coffs Harbour, NSW.



undertaken when the conditions were poor. As such, in 1913, work commenced to build a breakwater connecting Muttonbird Island and South Coff Island to the mainland, which would provide a sheltered port which ships could navigate and be provided safe anchorage. Although the breakwater had reached Muttonbird Island by 1924, the breakwater was not completed until 1942. Although World War I did impact the timber industry and subsequently the operations of the jetty, the use of the Coffs Harbour Jetty increased steadily with exportation activity having its busiest years in the 1930s. By the end of the decade, the port of Coffs Harbour was the most heavily utilised port on the north coast. However, the development of the rail network was to surpass sea transport as a faster, more comfortable and more reliable form of transporting goods, livestock, produce and passengers and the use of the Coffs Harbour Jetty soon felt the impact of this shift in preferences. The outbreak of World War II also saw Coffs Harbour and the use of the jetty change. Identified as a suitable military defence post, the Coffs Harbour Jetty was used to berth small US and Australian naval ships and cargo convoys. Following the end of the war, the Coffs Harbour shipping trade experienced a short-lived revival, particularly in 1952/53 when it had its busiest commercial year since the 1930s.

However, with the liquidation of the North Coast Steam Navigation Company in 1954 and the growth of rail, road and airfreight, shipping operations from the Coffs Harbour Jetty declined steadily. Commercial shipping from the Coffs Harbour Jetty ceased in 1973 and the structure became increasingly dilapidated until the late 1970s when it was deemed unsafe for shipping use entirely. Much of the infrastructure (cranes, railway line) and associated structures (buildings) of the jetty were removed over the following years due to safety concerns and the jetty was closed from public use in 1991. As the value of the jetty slowly shifted away from an economic purpose, its social significance to the Coffs Harbour community grew in momentum. With foreshore improvements and installation of historical interpretation, today the Coffs Harbour Jetty is a popular tourism and recreational place for fishing, boating and passive recreation and has become a vibrant element of the port landscape.

### 3.2.3.2 History of Ferguson Cottage

The following historical background is quoted from the SHR SHI listing for 'Fergusons Cottage' (SHR #1802):

*The building was originally associated with the construction or maintenance of the South Coffs breakwater by the Public Works Department - probably as a temporary construction office . . . As construction buildings including offices were generally built by carpenters often without plans and demolished on completion of the work, or moved to another site if transportable, the building is likely to be a rare surviving example of such a structure. The fact that the cottage is sitting on the original sleeper substructure suggests it was probably not intended to serve for a long term . . .*

*Association of the building with the Ferguson Family started with Mr Andrew Ferguson who was a ganger and works supervisor for the Department of Public works on the breakwater construction in the late '40s, '50s and '60s . . . The Public Works' Coffs Harbour District Engineer at the time, Mr Hugh Bailey, entered into an arrangement with Mr Ferguson to allow his family to occupy the 'office' as a family home during the early 1950s. Prior to this arrangement the family lived on the nearby block of Dung Hill . . . Allowing the family to occupy the 'office' as a cottage was an exceptional step for a Government official at the time. In the 1950s, the status of Aboriginal people was quite different from the present day. The decision was based on two reasons, one explicit and the other implicit. The explicit reason was in exchange for Andrew Ferguson providing oversight of the harbour's southern headland and construction areas in the periods when no construction work was taking place . . . In the succeeding years the arrangement with the Ferguson family was endorsed by successive district Engineers of the Department, including Len Harper in the '60s and Ron Colley in the '70s . . . The implicit reason that the Fergusons were allowed to make their home in the cottage was the high regard that the Public Work's District Engineer held for the good works and social contribution made by Andrew Ferguson's wife, Evelyn Ferguson, or "old Mrs Ferguson" as she was known in the Public Works Office at Coffs Harbour . . .*

*Mrs Evelyn Ferguson, also known as Nanny Ferguson, was an exceptional lady. Her life had lasting significance to both the Aboriginal and white communities of Coffs Harbour, the north coast region and beyond. During the 1950s and 1960s, the status of Aboriginal people was low and relationships with the broader community were strained. Housing was poor, education was minimal and health conditions were unacceptable. Evelyn Ferguson was a strong Aboriginal woman who confronted all of these issues head-on over her life, and in doing so provided a bridge between the Aboriginal and white communities and was a pioneer in many aspects of Aboriginal life that are now accepted as conventional. Evelyn Ferguson had the ability to function equally in both Aboriginal and white communities because of her wisdom, her communication skills and the respect in which she was held. She was an active member of the Seven Day Adventist Church and encouraged her family to attend services, facilitating cross-cultural mixing and friendships at a time when it was rare. She was held in high regard by the police, who knew her as "Granny Ferg". On many occasions during the 1950s and 1960s they brought the communities' and individual's problems to her for mediation and resolution because of her wisdom, respect and authority. She was also a well-regarded and integral contact point between "the Welfare" and the local and regional Aboriginal communities . . . She stood up for the kids, saw that their rights were observed, gave assurances on their behalf and then ensured that the assurances were honoured. In the role of an Elder, she took it upon herself to protect the communities' children and defend their rights . . . She was also respected by the business community of Coffs Harbour. She was a personal friend of the Symmonds family who operated a large department store, and went fishing with them on many occasions. She was known and respected by Hugh Bailey, the Public Works District Engineer- the person responsible for allocating the dwelling to her family. Such relationships during that time were extraordinary and provided an exemplary model of cross-cultural acceptance for both the Aboriginal European people in the Coffs Harbour and wider community.*

*The "bridge" that Nanny Ferguson forged between the Aboriginal community and local and wider community and services was vital to the lives and history of inter community relations for the local Aboriginal people, those in the coastal region and beyond . . . Nanny Ferguson is remembered by the local and wider European and Aboriginal community as a lady brimming with love and care. As well as her own children, she took in nephews and nieces, grandchildren, members of the extended family and anyone who needed help from the local and wider Aboriginal community. No-one was ever denied a bed or a meal. Sometimes the little cottage accommodated up to 15 children and half a dozen adults who were in need of shelter and assistance. It was for this reason that the extension to the family home was made in the early 1970s. Later a number of small sheds or 'bunkers' were built for more room. If there was not enough food, she would simply go fishing herself and catch a meal. The cottage was a "home", a safe place, in its truest sense to several generations of the family, the extended family and anyone in need.*

*The cottage is the symbol of Nanny Ferguson and her legacy which continues to be held in high esteem within the community of Coffs Harbour and Aboriginal people from wider afield who were embraced by Nanny Ferguson's generosity. Today, the good relations and respect nurtured by Nanny Ferguson continues within the community of Coffs Harbour. Her legacy remains in the values that Nanny Ferguson instilled in her family and extended family and demonstrated to the community at large. It remains in the cohesiveness of the Aboriginal community in Coffs Harbour. The building also has an important association with the maintenance of a significant public work, the Coffs Harbour, which was initiated under the eminent Public Works engineer E.M. de Burgh who as Chief Engineer for Harbours and Water Supply (1909 - 1927), was in charge of the Coffs Harbour Improvement Works.*

### **3.2.3.3 History of the Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)/ Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)**

The following historical background has been extracted from the CHLEP SHI listing for 'Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore' ( CHLEP #18):

*Following the completion of the government jetty in August 1892 and the rapid growth of the timber, sugar cane, and dairy industries around Coffs Harbour, it was decided to improve the town's harbour facilities. The large-scale engineering scheme to create a safe and tranquil shipping harbour was designed by government engineers de Burgh and Keele in 1910-1911. The scheme involved building two breakwaters to link North Coff (Muttonbird) and South Coff Islands to the mainland and enclosing some 200 acres of water (at low tide). A timber trestle bridge or viaduct was part of the first stage of works that began in 1913 and involved building a timber trestle bridge that linked South Coff Island to the mainland. This was done so that the base of South Coff Island could be used as a quarry to source rocks for the breakwaters. By 1915 a standard-gauge rail line had been built to transport the rocks from the quarry to where the northern breakwater was to start. As work progressed, fill from the quarry was used to build a reclamation wall along the southern side of the harbour . . . The rail line used to transport rocks and later concrete blocks was extended as work on the two breakwaters progressed. PWD plans show that the rail line in and around the quarry at South Coff Headland were moved and extended as the quarry was progressively worked . . . visiting British engineer, Sir George Buchanan . . . recommended the use of heavy concrete blocks in conjunction with the quarried stone as the quarried stones were not large or heavy enough on their own. This advice was heeded and the quarry at South Coff Island was also used to manufacture and store 40-ton concrete blocks. A combination of stone boulders and concrete blocks were used for both breakwaters.*

*Following the completion of the jetty and the harbour breakwaters, Coffs Harbour became a major NSW coastal shipping port exporting large amounts of hardwood timber, fruit and vegetables, and dairy products. It was also the major point of arrival for visitors and settlers to the Coffs Harbour area until the Coffs-Glenreagh section of the North Coast Railway was completed in 1922 and the later completion of the Pacific Highway. The years after the Second World War saw a gradual decline in coastal shipping. Shipping activity at Coffs Harbour gradually wound down until 22 July 1979 when the last commercial ship was loaded. Following that, various sections of the government rail lines that serviced the jetty, the breakwaters and the private timber tramlines no longer in use were taken up at different times . . . [around 1974] the eastern breakwater rail line was used to transport blocks for repairs and maintenance for the last time. A stationary crane and, according to John Kramer, Landrovers were used to haul the tipping trolleys carrying blocks . . . Until 2012 the exposed rail lines along the length of the eastern breakwater were the only rail and tram lines still visible in and around the jetty at Coffs Harbour and it is uncertain if any section of either the earlier narrow-gauge timber tramlines or standard gauge PWD rail lines survive under later road works . . .*

#### **3.2.3.4 History of House – Interwar**

The following historical background has been extracted from the CHLEP SHI listing for 'House – Interwar' (#114):

*The inter-war period in the history of Coffs Harbour was marked by steady urbanisation and consolidation, helped by the completion of several major infrastructure projects: the North Coast Railway, the Glenreagh-Dorrigo branch line, the two harbour breakwalls, the building of the Pacific Highway and the introduction of electricity. This period (1919-1945) was the second major building phase in the growth and development of Coffs Harbour. Development remained generally small-scale: individual private homes, small community facilities and modest government buildings... The surviving buildings from this inter-war period are potentially of high local heritage significance as the population, while it was growing, was still relatively small so there were correspondingly few buildings and many have not survived... After WWI, Coffs Harbour followed the changed fashions in domestic architecture and embraced new building materials. Houses of the 1920s and 1930s became asymmetrical, acquired more complex roof forms with gables and dormers, windows changed from sashes to casements, verandahs were often enclosed to create sleepouts and there was an overall increase in the decorative detail and design sophistication...*



### 3.2.3.5 History of School - Coffs Harbour State High / Coffs High Building B00A

The following historical background has been extracted from the CHLEP SHI listing for the 'School – Coffs Harbour State High' (CHLEP #I17):

*The Primary School's status was raised to District status from the start of the 1928 school year. From the start of 1930, the school became an intermediate High and a year later it was further advanced to the status of 'first class'. Ministerial approval for the establishment of a High School was granted in 1934 and, after visits by Government architects, the Edinburgh Street block occupied by the Jetty Infant's building was deemed to be an appropriate site, building started in the first half of 1937. The huge new edifice, costing £30,000 was officially opened at 1 pm on Saturday 23 July 1938. By November 1941, the High School building was already showing signs of over-crowding. Temporary (portable) classrooms were in use at the school by 1945 and continued to meet the extra accommodation needs until 1949, when the first of many future additions to the original building was constructed. Even today, the site, grounds and school buildings remain a large institutional complex at the Jetty and are a local landmark.*

### 3.2.3.6 Post Office - Coffs Jetty

The following historical background has been extracted from the CHLEP SHI listing for the 'Post Office – Coffs Jetty' (CHLEP #I19):

*Coffs Harbour's early history is intimately linked to the development of coastal shipping. The jetty at Coffs Harbour was completed in 1892. A small resident population developed in the streets behind the jetty distinct to the other Coffs Harbour community that was becoming established around Grafton, Moonee and Coramba Streets. In 1906 the small community was granted its own post office and in 1908 this was upgraded to a telegraph office. The first post office building was destroyed in the fire of 1914 that also destroyed the Pier Hotel. The current post office site was acquired in December 1923. The successful builder for the works was accepted in December 1925 and the new post office building was completed on 18 May 1926. The land cost 1640 pounds and the building cost 2297 pounds. The bricks came from Sydney by boat.*



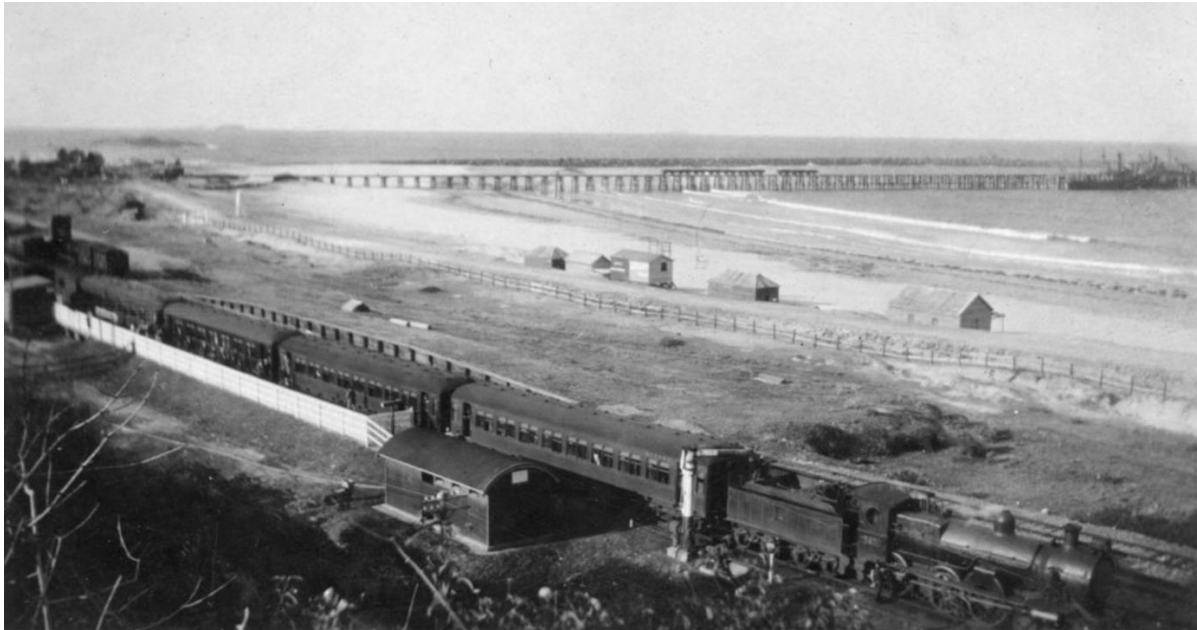
Figure 10. Photograph of S.S. Orara docked at Coffs Harbour Jetty, showing the railway line on the jetty and a steam powered crane, 1910 (Source: Coffs Library Collection)



Figure 11: Photograph of Jetty Beach taken in 1912 by P. Crook, with Muttonbird Island seen to the right and Coffs Jetty seen on the left (Source: State Library of NSW 2021)



Figure 12: Photograph of Jetty Beach taken in 1927 by P. Crook, with Coffs Jetty seen in the background (Source: State Library of NSW 2021)



**Figure 13. Photograph of Coffs Harbour Jetty and Railway Station dated 1930 (Source: Coffs Library Collection)**

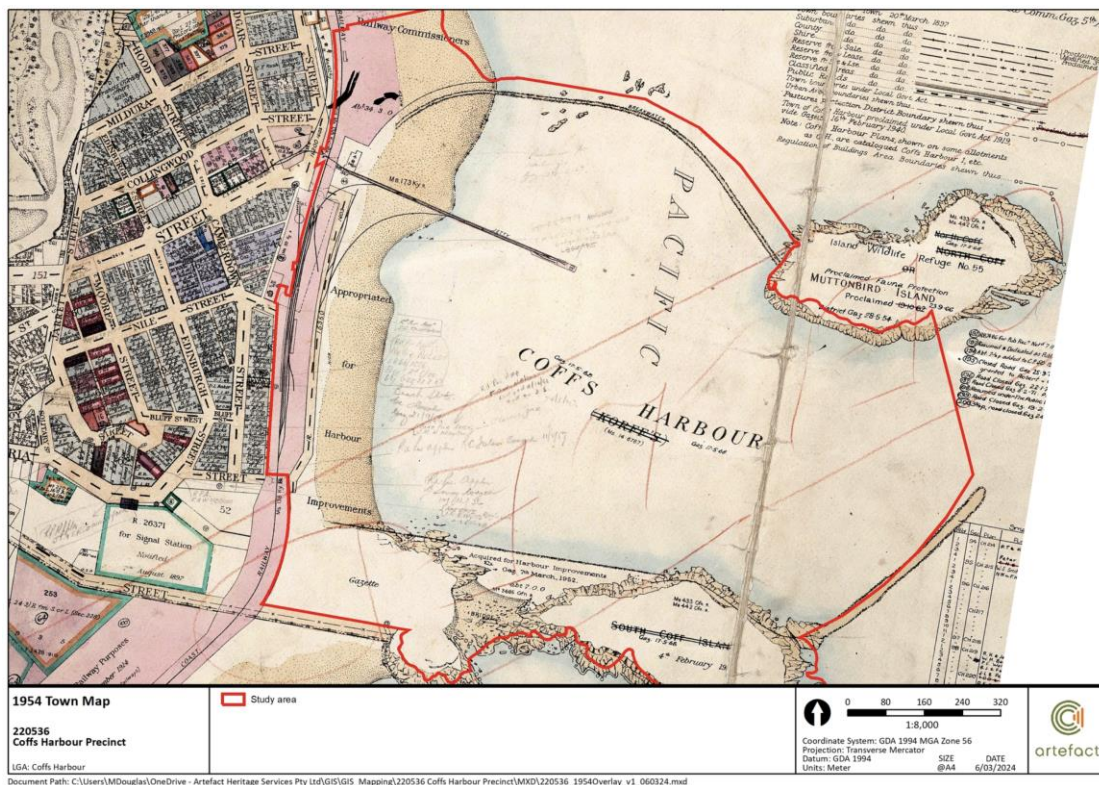


**Figure 14: Photograph the view of Jetty Beach and Coffs Harbour Jetty from Muttonbird Island, taken by H.H. Fishwick in 1934 (Source: National Library of Australia 2021)**





**Figure 15: 1906 (24 July) Map – Town of Coff’s Harbour and Suburban lands, Parish of Coff, County of Fitzroy, Land District of Bellingen, the Precinct outlined in red (Source: NSW Land Registry Services)**



**Figure 16: 1953 (25 August) Map of Coffs Harbour, the Precinct outlined in red (Source: NSW Land Registry Services)**

## 4.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 4.1 Site Inspection

A site inspection was conducted on 17 and 18 July 2023 by Jordan Wilson-Aarsen (Heritage Consultant) and Bronwyn Hanna (Senior Associate) of Artefact Heritage and Environment, accompanied by a local PDNSW representative. The aim of the site inspection was to review the area undergoing rezoning and to identify heritage items and heritage significant fabric in the vicinity that may be affected by the project. Discussions were also had regarding the potential future development which could take place along the railway corridor and the old deep sea fishing site. The inspection was undertaken on foot and a photographic record was made of the different sub-precincts making up the Precinct of the Coffs Harbour Foreshore Rezoning application.

#### 4.1.1 Context

Coffs Harbour is a vibrant regional city in NSW with a resident population of around 80,000 people, which expands considerably over holiday seasons. It is picturesquely situated on the Mid North Coast nearly midway between Sydney (which is approximately 540 km to the south) and Brisbane (which is approximately 390 km to the north), with the escarpments of the Great Dividing Range to its west. It is an economic hub for the broader region and a major service centre offering tourism, healthcare, education, retail and recreation services catering to a multicultural resident population. Aboriginal people comprise nearly 6 per cent of the local population.<sup>14</sup> The Princes Highway currently runs through the centre of the town, a bypass is currently under construction 14 km to the west of the town centre and will be completed in 2027.

#### 4.1.2 The Precinct Context

The natural form of Coffs Harbour has been drastically altered through modifications in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Prior to these modifications Coffs Harbour comprised a small beach with two offshore islands, one to the south (Corambirra Point) and one to the north (Muttonbird Island). The harbour now consists of a highly sheltered environ, shielded to the north by a rock breakwater connecting the mainland to Muttonbird Island, to the east by a rock breakwater extending 500m seaward of Corambirra Point, and by reclaimed land connecting Corambirra Point to the mainland.

The Precinct is characterised by rocky outcrop islands in the east, beach sands and low foreshore dunes in the west, and an extent of low lying level land to the north west. A local significant highpoint, Beacon Hill, rises to 50m in height immediately to the south west of the Precinct and a smaller highpoint, Dung Hill, is located in the south west corner of the Precinct.

Refer to Section 1.1.1 for the detailed description of the overall Precinct. Refer to Figure 47 and Figure 48 for the rezoning boundaries.

---

<sup>14</sup> SJB, 2025. Urban Design Report, pp12 & 14.

#### 4.1.3 Existing Character Areas

Whilst the Precinct is mainly recognised for its open green spaces and beach fronts, it also offers a broad variety of character areas that divide the foreshore into distinct sub-precincts.



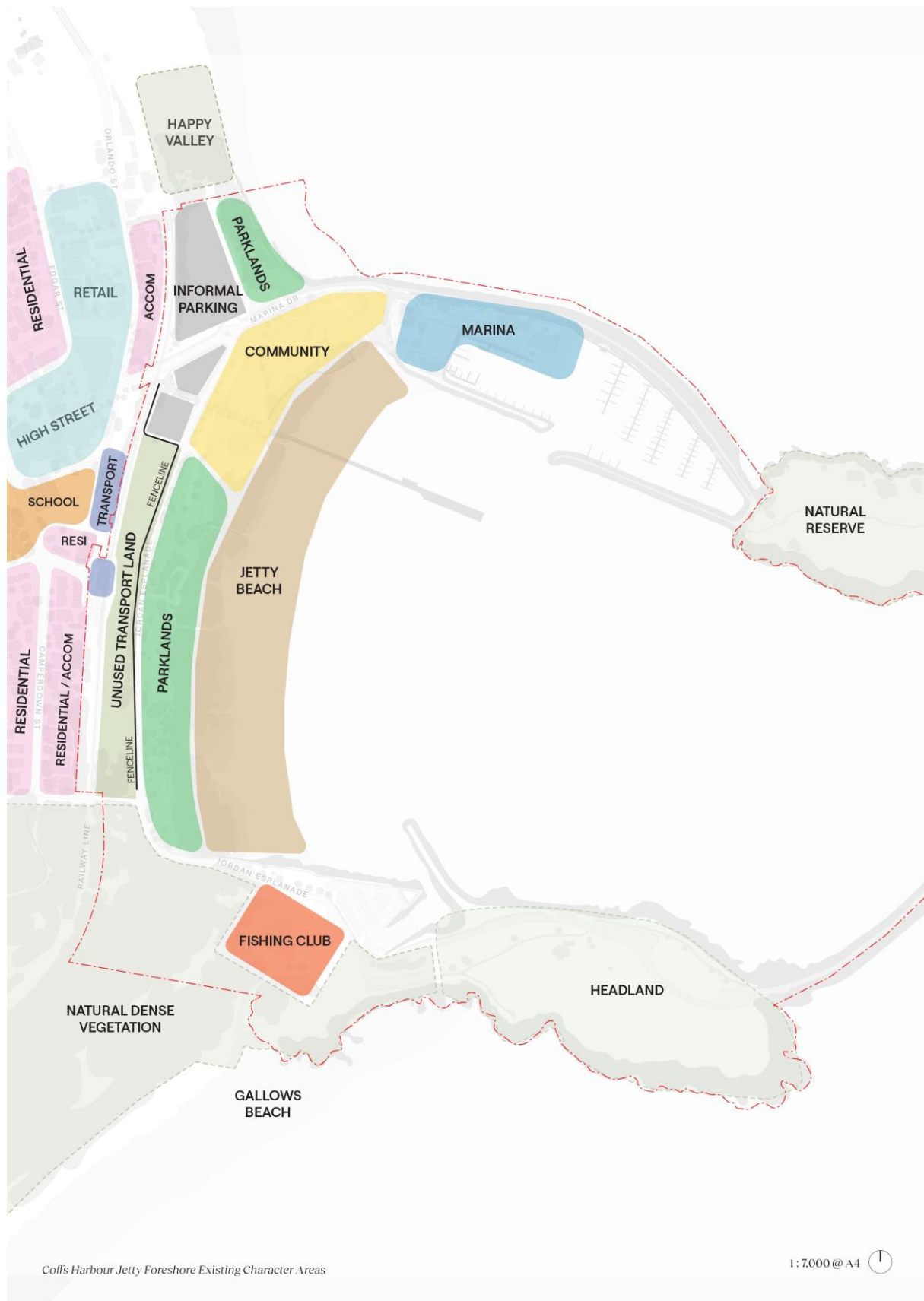


Figure 17. Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Existing Character Areas (Source: SJB).





The following Character Areas are outlined in Chapter 3.1 of the *Urban Design Report* by SJB:

1. Jetty Beach Precinct: a long stretch of sandy beach that is used predominantly for swimming, surfing and fishing.
2. Parklands Precinct: comprised of heavily vegetated areas, picnic areas and playgrounds.
3. Community Precinct: includes the market lawns, new community centre and the access point to the Jetty. This area is highly landscaped and offers numerous parking areas and picnic amenities including toilets, cafes, pavilions and picnic seating, beach volleyball courts, children's play areas, sculptures, interpretive signage and pathways leading into the bushy eastern side of the precinct where there are a number of bridges crossing the creek to the beachfront. The carefully landscaped and interpreted Jetty Walkway pathway also intersects this precinct, connecting the Coffs Harbour Jetty on the east with the railway line on the west. The recently constructed Vendetta 'Community Building' is also located within this precinct, immediately adjacent to the Jetty Walkway and overlooking Jetty Beach and the Coffs Harbour Jetty itself. The jetty is located within the Precinct (Figure 5).
4. Marina Precinct: is on the north-eastern end of the Precinct, north of Jetty Beach, it consists mainly of reclaimed land on the breakwater including a small complex of four marine and commercial buildings plus public toilets. On its northern side is a stone retaining wall bordering the ocean with a public pathway on the breakwater leading through to Muttonbird Island in the east (not included in the precinct, adjacent to the northeast). The Marina buildings include the community-run Fisherman's Co-op, fish restaurants and tourist facilities, the government offices for the Coffs Harbour Fisheries Office and Solitary Island Marine Park and GC Boatyards marine services as well as connecting roadways and parking zones, allowing public access to the buildings and boat dock situated adjacent.
5. Informal parking: an under-utilised part of the site that is predominantly used for informal parking. The land immediately to the north of this precinct is known as 'Happy Valley' and was returned to the Coffs Harbour Local Aboriginal Land Council in 2022 following successful Aboriginal land claims.<sup>15</sup>
6. Fishing Club: the site is home to the Deep Sea Fishing Club and contains facilities for fish cleaning and parking as well as a restaurant/bar with open lawn overlooking the harbour. The precinct is on a hill-top surrounded by open grassland to the north and east bordered by Jordan Esplanade.
7. Unused Transport Land: an un-utilised blank space that is separated via Jordan Esplanade and not accessible due to a fence around it's periphery.
8. Endemic Vegetation Areas: located within the Littoral Rainforest and sits as part of an endangered ecological community. This area includes the heritage listed Ferguson's Cottage<sup>16</sup> and just to the south the WWII Coastal Observation Bunker (outside of the Precinct and beyond the 200m vicinity area studied here).

<sup>15</sup> NSW Department of Industry media release "Happy Valley" land for Aboriginal community', 5 August 2022.

<sup>16</sup> 'Ferguson Cottage', CHLEP listing entry.



Figure 18: View of the southern breakwater (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 19: View of Coffs Harbour taken from Corambirra Point with Jetty Beach House at the left (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 20: View of WWII gun embankment (circled in red) and The Jetty Beach House (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 21: View of Jetty Beach House / Old Deep Sea Fishing site (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023)





Figure 22: View of eastern side of Foreshore Parklands with view of Jetty Beach and Coffs Harbour Jetty (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023)



Figure 23: Panorama view of Coffs Harbour beachfront (Source: Coffs Harbour 2023)



Figure 24: View of heritage Coffs Harbour Jetty from Jetty Beachfront (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 25: View of down Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)





**Figure 26: View of Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 27: View of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 28: View of middle of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**





Figure 29: View of middle of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 30: View along one of the pathways to the beach in Foreshore Parklands across a pedestrian bridge (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 31: View of creek running through the Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)





Figure 32: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 33: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)



Figure 34: View of northern end of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)





**Figure 35: View of path from Foreshore Parklands to the beachfront (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 36: View of Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 37: View of the newly constructed Community Building located near the Coffs Harbour Jetty within Foreshore Parklands (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**





**Figure 38: View of southern end of railway and open land in front of rail corridor ( (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 39: View of southern end of land in front of rail corridor (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 40: View of northern lot, corner of Marina Drive and Jordan Esplanade (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 41: View of northern lot, junction at Harbour Drive and Marina Drive (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**

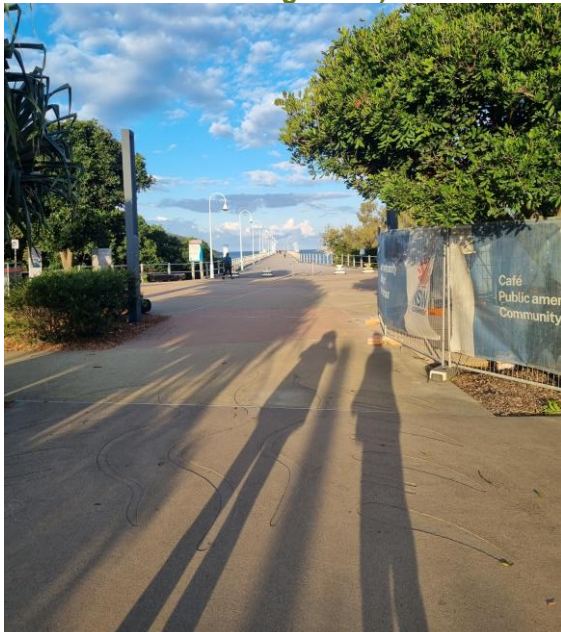


**Figure 42: View of the marina buildings taken from beachfront (Source: Artefact 2023)**

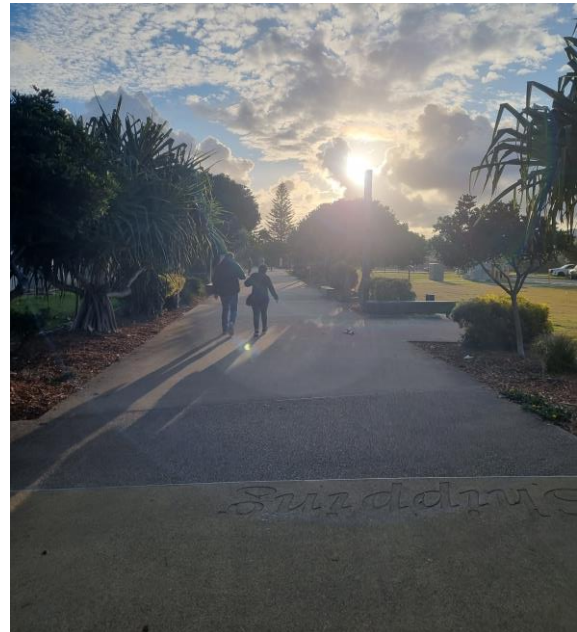




**Figure 43: View of Foreshore, marina and Coffs Harbour Jetty from Muttonbird Island (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 44: Eastern view of Coffs Harbour Jetty from the Jetty Walkway (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**



**Figure 45: Western view along the Jetty Walkway (Source: Artefact Heritage 2023)**

#### 4.1.4 Physical description of heritage items within the Precinct

##### 4.1.4.1 Coffs Harbour Jetty

The jetty is supported by approximately 750 piles and is 450m long. It varies from 6.5m in width at the shoreward end to 15.24m at the seaward end. The deck level is 6.55m above Low Water Ordinary Spring Tide (LWOST). The spacing of pile bents out to bent 83 is 6.1m. In this section of the jetty the girder cross-sectional dimensions are 300 x 300mm. The spacing of pile bents between bents 83 and 103 is 4.57m and the girder cross sectional dimensions in this area are 300 x 350mm meaning that the larger girders span shorter distances. The jetty is constructed entirely from timber. The NSW Public Works document 'Schedules to Specification for Supply and Delivery of Timber for Harbours and River Work' specifies that the timber used for capwales, girders, braces and headstocks is either Ironbark, Grey Gum, White Mahogany, Tallowwood or Grey Box. Turpentine is specified for timber

piles. Because of structural modifications that have been carried out in the past, cross sections through the jetty vary along its length. A railway has been removed from the deck.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4.1.4.2 *Ferguson's Cottage*

'The cottage is a small weatherboard building, with additions to the rear and an iron roof with a front veranda approximately 5m by 2m. The house structure sits on the original sleepers while the back section has some areas of added concrete flooring approximately 50 metre areas timber on ground (sand). The front section of the house consists of the original 2 rooms, the original kitchen. The lining of the walls are made of old horsehair. There have been some modifications to the kitchen area for safety reasons including new electrical wiring. The back section has been modified slightly with an additional room added, where the toilet and wash area is located. Further modifications to the back section include the connection of cold water to the back laundry area via the old copper piping that existed. The original roofing has been replaced with the same fabric of corrugated iron. The area where the cottage is located has potential for further archaeological research due to its significant location on the headland which was a ceremonial site. Previous archaeological studies have identified many sites within close vicinity of the cottage.'<sup>18</sup>

#### 4.1.4.3 *Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters Foreshore (Archaeology)*

'There are currently no remaining visible sections of the rail line. The last remaining section that extended along the eastern breakwater was covered over in the major repair works undertaken by PWD in 2012. This listing sheet is for the known "line" of the railway. Some remnants of the rail line may survive under current road works.'<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.1.4.4 *Buried Timber Trestle Rail Bridge (Archaeology)*

'The bridge has been completely buried since 1928. Nothing of the bridge is visible. Photographs of the trestle bridge before it was enclosed by infill reveal it was built in the standard manner of PWD timber trestle rail underbridges. It consisted of a series of tall cross-braced timber trestles supporting timber beams over which were laid the rail deck and tracks.'<sup>20</sup>

### 4.1.5 Physical description of heritage items within the vicinity of the Precinct

#### 4.1.5.1 *Solitary Islands Marine Park*

The NSW Solitary Islands Marine Park was the first marine park declared in NSW. Located on the Coffs Coast, the park covers more than 70,000 hectares and 100 kilometres of coastline from the northern side of Muttonbird Island at Coffs Harbour north to Plover Island at the entrance to the Sandon River. It extends from the mean high water mark and upper tidal limits of coastal estuaries and lakes, seaward to the three nautical mile limit of NSW waters and includes the entire seabed.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4.1.5.2 *House – Interwar*

'House – Interwar' is a single storey house at 151 Edinburgh Street, Coffs Harbour, built between the 1920s and 1940s. The house is constructed in timber with corrugated iron roofing, currently painted in a neutral grey/green with red/orange roofing.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.1.5.3 *Post Office – Coffs Harbour*

Combination of dark face and rendered brickwork, designed to take advantage of its corner position with the front entrance facing the corner. It is designed to be viewed from two sides with both the

<sup>17</sup> Kramer, J (1984). *Ships and Timber - A short history of Coffs Harbour port and associated railways*. The Light Railway Research Society of Australia. p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> SHR listing entry for Ferguson's Cottage #1802, 'Description'.

<sup>19</sup> LEP listing entry for 'Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwater Foreshore (Archaeology)' #18 "Description".

<sup>20</sup> LEP listing entry for 'Buried Timber Trestle Rail Bridge (Archaeology)' #18 "Description".

<sup>21</sup> NSW Department of Primary Industries, no date. 'Introduction', *Solitary Islands Marine Park Guide*.

<sup>22</sup> Artefact Heritage's description.

Harbour Drive and Camperdown street facades equally well detailed. Impressive corner entrance portico with columns, pediment and facade. Decorative concrete block all vents. Brick quoining. Lined eaves. Original raised lettering on Harbour Drive facade and corner pediment. Corrugated roof. Six multi-pane timber double-hung sash windows. Rear weatherboard skillion storage building, which if not part of the original works, was built shortly after and shares the same importance as the main building.<sup>23</sup>

#### **4.1.5.4 School – Coffs Harbour State High**

Inter-War Georgian Revival. Load-bearing brick. Tile roofing. Greek Revival entrance portico. Timber-framed double-hung windows. The corner entrance block faces Edinburgh St/Nile St corner and is flanked by two matching side blocks arranged in a semi-circle, forming a very strong, two-storey institutional street presence. The regular placement of the timber windows reinforces the severe symmetry. The terracotta red bricks are matched by the red Marseilles roof tiles. The eaves are narrow and lined with timber slats. Simple gable roof form. Simple brick detailing and string courses. The whole school occupies the block bounded by Edinburgh, Nile, Camperdown streets and Harbour Drive. There are 7 or more large Port Jackson fig trees in the central playground. Nile Street is lined with an avenue of Norfolk pines. A cluster of large gumtrees line the footpath along Camperdown Street.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Coffs Harbour LEP listing entry for Post Office, #119, 2013, 'Description'.

<sup>24</sup> Coffs Harbour LEP listing entry for School – Coffs Harbour State High, #117, 2013, 'Description'.



#### 4.1.6 Other Heritage related items

##### *South Solitary Island Lighthouse Optic (SSILO)*

Precinct Development NSW agreed in 2020 to play a pivotal role in the relocation of the South Solitary Island Lighthouse Optic (SSILO). State government not only funded the new building that houses the SSILO today, but also coordinated the engineering, architectural design and onsite project management for its relocation.

A dramatic landmark off the Coffs Coast, the South Solitary Island Lighthouse is located approximately 18 kilometres north-east of Coffs Harbour. It is the most isolated light stations in New South Wales. The lighthouse optic, which comprises a lens and pedestal, was installed in 1879 and became operational on 15 March 1880, a catalyst for safe coastal shipping and the economic development of Coffs Harbour.

The optic was replaced in 1975 with a fully automated electric light, bringing an end to lightkeeping on the island. Removed from the island in 1976, the optic was installed in the then Museum at 189 Harbour Drive. The most valuable object in the Yarrila Arts and Museum (YAM) collection, it was carefully relocated in 2023 to its current position on the Jetty Foreshore, once again in sight of the ocean where it belongs.

PDNSW involvement in relocating this irreplaceable maritime artefact is a further celebration of the State Government's commitment to celebrating unique local heritage linked to the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore.



## 5.0 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Methodology

Determining the significance of heritage places makes use of the *Burra Charter* approach (Australia ICOMOS 2013), which is supported by legislation in the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* and implemented through Heritage NSW's *NSW Heritage Manual*. If an item meets any of the seven heritage criteria, it can be considered to have heritage significance (see Table 4). The significance of the item can then be assessed as being of 'local' or 'state' significance.

**Table 4. Heritage NSW assessment criteria & explanation (Heritage NSW, 2023A, pp23-48)**

Criteria	Description
<b>A – Historical Significance</b>	An item is important in the course or pattern of the local area's cultural or natural history.
<b>B – Associative Significance</b>	An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the local area's cultural or natural history.
<b>C – Aesthetic or Technical Significance</b>	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area.
<b>D – Social Significance</b>	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
<b>E – Research Potential</b>	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the local area's cultural or natural history.
<b>F – Rarity</b>	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the local area's cultural or natural history.
<b>G - Representativeness</b>	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places of cultural or natural environments (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

### 5.2 Statements of Significance for heritage items

There are three heritage items listed within the Precinct and four outside the Precinct but within the vicinity of the Precinct (vicinity meaning within 200m).

#### 5.2.1 Coffs Harbour Jetty (Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty) (within the Precinct)

##### **SHR #2040 Statement of Significance:**

*The Coffs Harbour Jetty is of state heritage significance as the longest coastal timber jetty built by the Harbours and Rivers Section of the NSW Public Works department in the 19th century during a key period of shipping transportation in NSW. A rare and representative example of a surviving timber ocean jetty which once formed part of the extensive coastal network, the Coffs Harbour Jetty is of state heritage significance for the technical significance of its timber construction and maintenance over its 80 year operational life (1892- 1973). The ongoing maintenance of the Coffs Harbour Jetty, particularly during its operational life, and the retention of its entirely timber materiality also demonstrates changes and growth in the engineering industry and the evolution of timber repair methods in NSW.<sup>25</sup>*

<sup>25</sup> 'Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty', SHR Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI online



**CHLEP #120 Statement of Significance:**

*Coffs Harbour Jetty is the largest coastal timber jetty in New South Wales and is the only remaining large ocean jetty in New South Wales which dates from the nineteenth century. It was the largest timber jetty constructed by the Harbours and Rivers Section of the NSW Department of Public works between 1880 and 1895 and is the only surviving example of the three ocean jetties constructed on the North Coast. Less than a dozen examples of deep water ocean jetties remain in Australia, the main concentration being in South Australia. The construction of the Coffs Harbour jetty is associated with the development of timber getting in, and exportation from, New South Wales and the economic development of the Coffs Harbour region. The facilities constructed at Coffs Harbour indicate the importance of coastal shipping for both passengers and cargo in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. An extensive network once existed throughout NSW, of which little physical evidence remains. The jetty is the most prominent landmark in Coffs Harbour. It is the focal point of Jetty town, not only visually but, prior to restricted public access, socially. The design of the Coffs Harbour jetty indicates the level of knowledge regarding the timber beam spans and marine pest resistant timber in the late 1880s (Heritage Group 1994).<sup>26</sup>*

**5.2.2 Ferguson's Cottage (within the Precinct)**

**SHR #1802 & CHLEP #19 Statement of Significance (the same text in both):**

*Ferguson's Cottage, as the home of Nanny Ferguson and the heart of her community work, is of historic, social and cultural significance for the local Coffs Harbour Aboriginal community and also for many Aboriginal people in the North coast region and beyond as it symbolises a legacy of reconciliation and the deepening of Aboriginal European understanding that was brought about by the tireless efforts of Evelyn 'Nanny' and Andrew Ferguson during the 1950s and the 1960s. The Fergusons' work in dealing with the social pressures and racism impacting on the Aboriginal community of Coffs Harbour and the north coast; their position as role models for employment within the Aboriginal community and their work mediating with local and state government authorities, was integral to the acceptance of cultural relationships between Aboriginal and white people during a time when Aboriginal people were not widely accepted within the European community. The Fergusons' achievements in cross cultural relations, was acknowledged and accepted throughout the region and is one 'symbolic' example of similar improvements (albeit small and slow) in community relations in NSW. Ferguson's Cottage was seen as a safe haven for many Aboriginal people either from the community or on those passing through Coffs Harbour while travelling up and down the coast. Nanny Ferguson was a fighter for law and order among her own people and insisted that the Welfare protect the Aboriginal children and defend their rights. Today Ferguson's Cottage is held in high regard by the Aboriginal and white community as it represents the 'place' where reconciliation began for Coffs Harbour. Generations of the Ferguson's continue to reside in the cottage, and today the legacy is still carried on by members of the Ferguson family. The building was originally constructed as a site office for the staged construction and maintenance of a major piece of Public Works Department (PWD) infrastructure, the south Coffs Harbour breakwater initiated by prominent Public Works Engineer, EM de Burgh. As PWD construction buildings such as Ferguson's Cottage were usually demolished or relocated at completion of works it is notable that the cottage, due to its use by the Ferguson family, still sits on its original sleeper sub-structure and is thus significant as a rare surviving example of a temporary site office constructed by the Department of Public Works.<sup>27</sup>*

<sup>26</sup> 'Coffs Harbour Jetty', CHLEP 2013 Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI online.

<sup>27</sup> 'Ferguson's Cottage', CHLEP and SHR Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI online.

### 5.2.3 Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (Archaeology) & Buried Timber Trestle Rail Bridge (Archaeology) (within the Precinct)

#### **CHLEP #8 Statement of Significance (former rail tracks):**

*The line of the former rail tracks along the Coffs Harbour breakwaters and foreshore are of local significance in being part of the large-scale public works undertaken by the NSW Government between 1890 and 1939. These works drastically re-shaped the physical form of Coffs Harbour's coastline and created the man-made harbour we see today. These works, and the North Coast Railway, were largely responsible for the growth and development of Coffs Harbour itself. The line of the former railway helps to capture the distinctive features of that critical phase of Coffs Harbour's past history as a busy, shipping port. The layout of the former tram and rail lines make sense of the current landforms around the harbour and are essential to understanding how Coffs Harbour was created. Even though they are now largely absent, the breakwater rail lines continue to exert a powerful sentimental/romantic appeal over Coffs Harbour residents and form part of the identity of Coffs Harbour.<sup>28</sup>*

#### **CHLEP #8 Statement of Significance (buried timber trestle bridge):**

*The buried timber trestle rail bridge at South Coff Headland is of high local significance as a surviving and integral part of the original infrastructure of the large-scale harbour reclamation works that were undertaken in Coffs Harbour between 1913 and 1939. The trestle rail bridge was built between 1913-1915 and progressively filled in as part of the works until completely buried by 1928 and today forms part of the land bridge between the former South Coff Island and the mainland. The buried timber trestle rail bridge is also significant as an example of a standard timber rail underbridge built by PWD until 1935, of which few remain in NSW. All surviving buildings and remnants of the PWD harbour construction works are important in demonstrating this critical phase of Coffs Harbour's past history as a busy, shipping port and are essential to understanding how Coffs Harbour was created. The buried timber trestle bridge is of high social significance as a well-known and highly esteemed part of those early capital works.<sup>29</sup>*

### 5.2.4 Solitary Island Marine Park (within the vicinity of the Precinct)

*The meeting at the Solitary Islands of the southward-flowing East Australian Current with the colder northward-flowing inshore current results in a complex mixture of communities, in which marine species normally associated with the Great Barrier Reef can be found along with species which occur as far south as Tasmania . . . The Solitary Islands and surrounding waters have been the site of numerous research projects over the past 30 years and the area is used extensively by scuba divers and underwater photographers because of the diversity and beauty of the coral and other marine life.<sup>29</sup>*

### 5.2.5 House – Interwar CHLEP #14 (within the vicinity of the Precinct)

*Of high local significance as an early surviving, substantially intact domestic residence from the interwar period and displaying typical design features. This house demonstrates the history and development of Coffs Harbour during the second major phase of permanent settlement (1920s –*

<sup>28</sup> 'Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (Archaeology)' & 'Buried Timber Trestle Rail Bridge (Archaeology)', CHLEP 2013 Statements of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI, online.

<sup>29</sup> 'Solitary Island Marine Area' RNE heritage listing entry excerpt of statement of significance, online at the Australian Heritage Database.

1940s) and belongs to an important group of early buildings that continue the local tradition of hardwood construction and display the building skills and craftsmanship of the time.<sup>30</sup>

#### 5.2.6 School - Coffs Harbour High CHLEP #I17 and S170 (within the vicinity of the Precinct)

*Historically, the Coffs Jetty High School site and buildings have regional significance as the location of the region's first fully fledged high school. The site and buildings exhibit the continuity of secondary education in the Coffs Harbour area over a 60-year period. Aesthetically the main building has local rarity and thus high local significance. Socially the site and group are held in high esteem by generations of the Coffs Harbour community and have special social and cultural associations for the wider regional community. They are crucial to Coffs Harbour's sense of place. For all these reasons, the site and group has regional significance. They have a unique potential to reveal information which could contribute to a better understanding of the form and scale of secondary education in the Coffs Harbour area from the early middle of the 20th century onwards and of the scale of Education Department commitment to regional secondary school building at the time. For these reasons the site and building have regional technical significance.<sup>31</sup>*

#### 5.2.7 Post Office CHLEP #I19 (within the vicinity of the Precinct)

*The Jetty Post Office is inextricably linked to the history of the Coffs Harbour Jetty community and the economic development of Coffs Harbour. It is an important public building on a prominent corner site on one of the busiest thoroughfares in Coffs Harbour. It is built in a style rare for Coffs Harbour in being brick and detailed to take advantage of its corner position. It has been in continuous use as a post office since 1926 and is a local landmark and of high social importance to the Coffs Harbour community.<sup>32</sup>*

---

<sup>30</sup> 'House – Interwar', CHLEP 2013 Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI, online.

<sup>31</sup> 'School – Coffs Harbour High & Building B00A', CHLEP 2013 Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI, online.

<sup>32</sup> 'Post Office', CHLEP 2013 Statement of Significance, Heritage NSW SHI, online.

## 6.0 THE APPLICATION

### 6.1 Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore State Assessed Planning Proposal

This SOHI supports a Planning Justification Report that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan (CHLEP) 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) as part of a State Assessed Planning Proposal (planning proposal).

As documented in the Planning Justification Report, PDNSW is lodging a Planning Proposal with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure that seeks approval for:

- Changes to permissible land uses
- Changes to permissible maximum building heights
- Planning controls for future State Significant Development Applications including design guidelines and design excellence processes

The Planning Proposal is supported by an Illustrative Masterplan, refer Figure 4) that presents a potential development outcome that could be realised at the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct – it is not prescriptive nor is it determined. The Illustrative Masterplan builds on the shared vision created via extensive community and stakeholder consultation and provides further detail in relation to land use and development outcomes sought for the Precinct.

The Planning Proposal is also supported by Design Guidelines which include detailed provisions to Guide future development within the Precinct. The Design Guidelines include matters relating to built form, public domain, heritage, and views. See Section 6.1.3 for further discussion on the Design Guidelines.

A precinct map showing the total area subject to proposed LEP changes is provided in Figure 46 below.





**Figure 46. The total area of proposed LEP changes within the study area (Source: SJB 2025)**

#### 6.1.1 Changes to land use zoning

It is envisaged a range of land uses will be supported within the Jetty Foreshore Precinct to support a vibrant precinct with a mix of commercial, retail, tourism, residential and tourist accommodation, recreation and community / cultural uses. The proposed land uses are also intended to allow and facilitate the continued operation of the working harbour.

For the southern headland former quarry site, a deliberate approach to zoning has been adopted in response to the unique characteristics of the site – both a significant Aboriginal place and a highly exposed coastal location. The SP1 Special Activities zone should be applied to special land uses or sites with special characteristics. Accordingly, the intention of this zoning would be to recognise the special and sensitive cultural and coastal status of the site, whilst providing for a narrow range of potential future cultural, community and recreation uses. The zone objectives for the SP1 zone within the Coffs Harbour LEP are as follows (emphasis added):

- To provide for special land uses that are not provided for in other zones.
- To provide for sites with special natural characteristics that are not provided for in other zones.
- To facilitate development that is in keeping with the special characteristics of the site or its existing or intended special use, and that minimises any adverse impacts on surrounding land.
- To encourage active living through the provision of healthy, walkable, green and safe built environments and streets, greener connections and walking and cycling infrastructure.
- To ensure that development reflects design excellence and is of a high visual quality in its presentation to the public realm.

Noting the above, the following amendments to the CHLEP 2013 'Land Zoning Map' are proposed:



- Exclude land in part of the North Park sub-precinct from the RE1 Public Recreation zone and include it in the MU1 Mixed Use zone.
- Exclude land in the Jetty Hub sub-precinct from the SP2 Infrastructure (Railway) and RE1 Public Recreation zones and include it in the MU1 Mixed Use zone.
- Exclude land in the Foreshore Parklands sub-precinct abutting the Jetty from the SP2 Infrastructure (Tourism, Marine, Wharf and Boating Facilities) zone and include it in the RE1 Public Recreation zone.
- Exclude land in the Activity Hub and Village Green sub-precinct from the SP2 Infrastructure (Railway) and RE1 Public Recreation zones and include it in the RE1 Public Recreation and MU1 Mixed Use zone.
- Exclude land in part of the Corambirra Point sub-precinct from the RE2 Private Recreation and RE1 Public Recreation zone and include it in the MU1 Mixed Use zone.
- Exclude the southern headland area outside of the Corambirra Point sub-precinct from the SP2 Infrastructure (Tourism, Marine, Wharf and Boating Facilities) zone and include it in the SP1 Special Uses (Culture, Community and Recreation) zone.

All other land use zones are proposed to be retained, including:

- The existing W4 Working Waterfront zone for the Marina sub-precinct.
- The existing RE1 zoning for the existing foreshore parkland.
- The existing SP2 Infrastructure (Railways) for the North Coast Rail Line and Coffs Harbour Train Station.
- The existing R2 Low Density Residential zone applying to the Coffs Harbour and Region Local Aboriginal Land Council lot.

For the avoidance of doubt, no change is proposed to the existing C1 National Parks and Nature Reserve zoning for land on Muttonbird Island adjacent to the Precinct boundary. .

A thumbnail comparison of existing and proposed zoning is shown below in Figure 47 and Figure 48.



Figure 47. Existing zoning

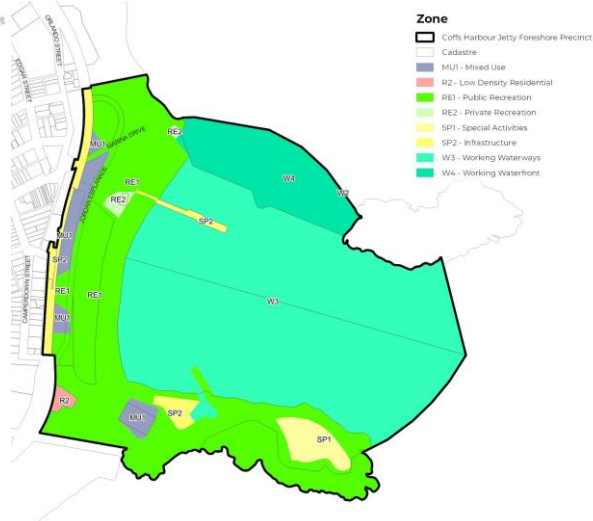


Figure 48. Proposed zoning

#### 6.1.1.1 Additional permitted uses

In addition to the land use zoning described above, an additional permitted use is proposed to be introduced to Schedule 1 of the CHLEP and apply to the Marina (zoned W4 Working Waterfront) to provide additional flexibility for the operators working within the Marina and assist in facilitating future

renewal. This additional permitted use '24' specifically enables office premises to be permitted with consent.

Separately, amendments are proposed to the additional permitted use that currently applies to the majority of Corambirra Point and the southern headland. Presently, the following is permitted in additional permitted use '4':

*Development for the purposes of hotel or motel accommodation, serviced apartments, shops and wharf or boating facilities that support tourism, marine and wharf or boating activities is permitted with development consent.*

This is proposed to be reduced to marine and wharf or boating activities only. To achieve the above, the following amendments to the CHLEP 2013 'Additional Permitted Uses Map' are proposed:

- Minor amendments to the boundary of the existing additional permitted use '4' along the inner western boundary to capture the entire headland area.
- Remove the permissibility of hotel or motel accommodation, serviced apartments and shops from the existing additional permitted use '4'.
- Inclusion of office premises as an additional permitted use for part of the Marina sub-precinct (within a new additional permitted use reference number, '24').

Additionally, amendments to Schedule 1 of the CHLEP 2013 are proposed to correspond with the proposed changes described above. A thumbnail comparison of existing and proposed zoning is shown below in Figure 49 and Figure 50.

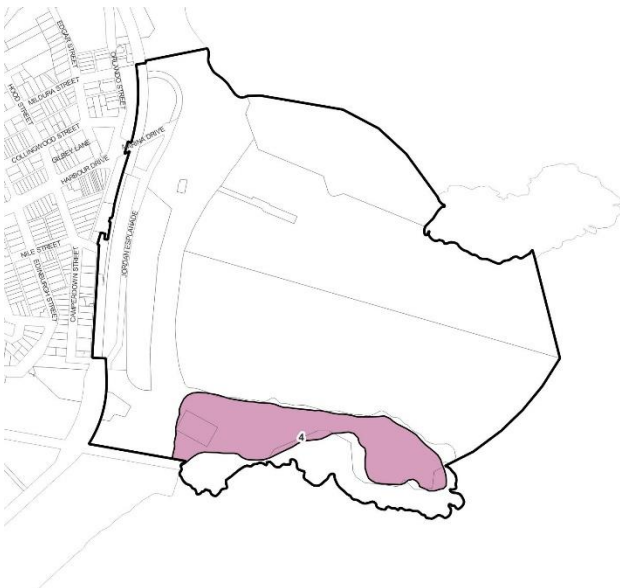


Figure 49. Existing permitted uses

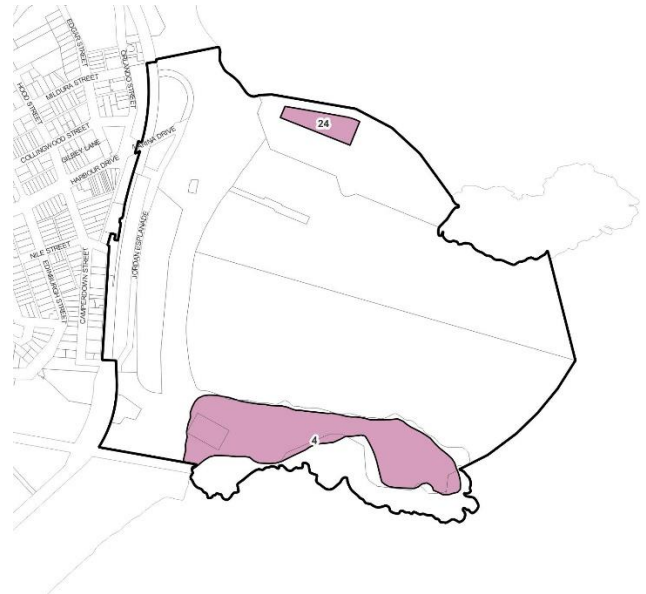


Figure 50. Proposed permitted uses

### 6.1.2 Changes to height of buildings

The maximum height limit for blocks intended for development within the Precinct range from 9m to 25m. The southern headland is currently subject to generous height limits that reflect past intention for redevelopment of the former quarry site. These are proposed to be removed, allowing a sensitive merit assessment for any potential future structures. The following amendments to the CHLEP 2013 'Height of Buildings Map' are proposed:

- Increase maximum building height in part of the North Park sub-precinct from 5.4m to 21.5m.
- Increase maximum building height in the Jetty Hub sub-precinct from 5.4m to part 25m, part 21.5m and part 18.5m.
- Increase maximum building height in part of the Activity Hub and Village Green sub-precinct from 5.4m to part 11m and part 8.5m.
- Increase maximum building height in part of the Marina sub-precinct from 11m to 15.5m.
- Increase maximum building height in the Corambirra Point sub-precinct from 8.5m to 15.5m.
- Remove permissive maximum building heights between 8.5m and 22m in the southern headland area outside of the Corambirra Point sub-precinct. In areas zoned RE1 Public Recreation, apply a maximum height of 5.4m consistent with the rest of the parkland.

All other height limits are proposed to be retained, including:

- The existing maximum building height of 5.4m applying to RE1 zoned land foreshore parklands).
- The existing maximum building height of 8.5m applying to the to the community building and the Coffs Harbour and Region Local Aboriginal Land Council lots.

A thumbnail comparison of existing and proposed maximum heights is shown below in Figure 51 and Figure 52.

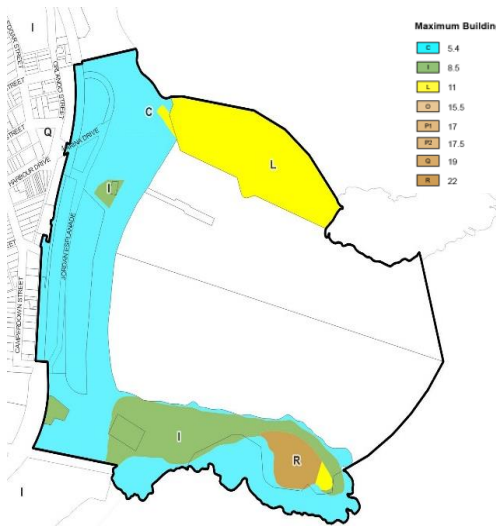


Figure 51. Existing height of buildings

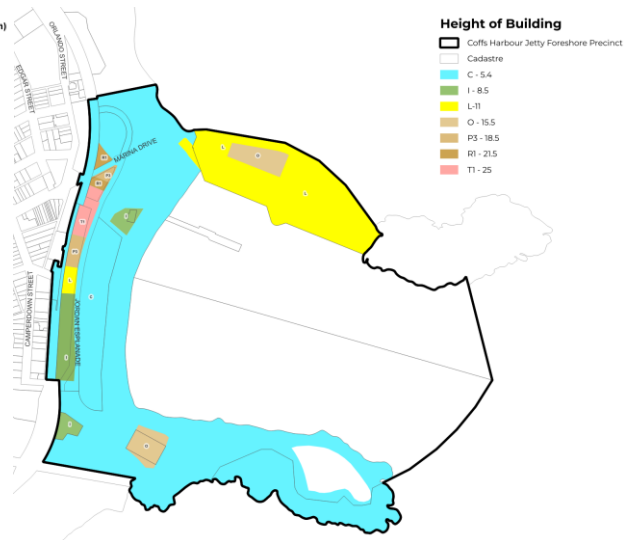


Figure 52. Proposed height of buildings

### 6.1.3 Design Guidelines

The Planning Proposal is supported by Design Guidelines which provide more detailed design guidance. The Design Guidelines include detailed provisions to be considered in future development application stages.

The Design Guidelines will be a matter for consideration in any future development applications and include provisions that will ensure continued consideration, assessment, and management of heritage as the Precinct develops over time.

Of note, the Design Guidelines include provisions relating to heritage which aim to:

- Ensure Corambirra Point development does not impact views to Ferguson's Cottage. This can be achieved by building along existing contour lines
- To ensure new development has regard to the views and vistas relating to the location, siting and design of heritage buildings and cultural landscapes.

- Ensure development retains, conserves and enhances significant historical relationships, cultural landscapes, building curtilages and settings, views and vistas.
- Require a Heritage Impact Statement should be prepared for all development in close proximity to heritage items in the precinct.
- Ensure development in the Corambirra Point precinct respects Ferguson's Cottage with minimal disruption to accessibility and views and provides a minimum 15m landscape setback from Ferguson's Cottage.



## 7.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Overview and methodology

This section assesses impact of the Planning Proposal and the proposed LEP Changes on heritage places within and nearby the study area, following the Burra Charter approach to heritage conservation and Heritage NSW guidelines for heritage impact assessment.

This heritage impact assessment aims to evaluate and explain how the proposed works may affect the heritage significance of the place and offers suggestions for how heritage significance can be conserved and possibly enhanced by the proposed works.

For consistency, the terminology in the following tables are used throughout this report. The definitions are based on guidelines produced by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)<sup>35</sup> and the Heritage Council of NSW<sup>36</sup>.

**Table 5: Terminology for heritage impact types**

Impact	Definition
<b>Physical</b>	Impacts resulting from works located within or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item, caused by removing or altering the item or fabric of heritage significance, or excavating in areas of the project site where potential for significant archaeology is anticipated
<b>Visual</b>	Impact to views, vistas, setting and curtilage of the heritage item resulting from proposed works inside or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item.
<b>Potential</b>	Impacts resulting from increased noise, vibrations and construction works located within or outside the curtilage boundaries of the heritage item.

**Table 6: Terminology for assessing the magnitude of heritage impact**

Grading	Definition
<b>Major adverse</b>	Actions that would have a severe, long-term and possibly irreversible impact on a heritage item. Actions in this category would include partial or complete demolition of a heritage item or addition of new structures in its vicinity that destroy the visual setting of the item. These actions cannot be fully mitigated.
<b>Moderate adverse</b>	Actions that would have an adverse impact on a heritage item. Actions in this category would include removal of an important part of a heritage item's setting or temporary removal of significant elements or fabric. The impact of these actions could be reduced through appropriate mitigation measures.
<b>Minor adverse</b>	Actions that would have a minor adverse impact on a heritage item. This may be the result of the action affecting only a small part of the place or a distant/small part of the setting of a heritage place. The action may also be temporary and/or reversible.
<b>Negligible</b>	Actions that are so minor that the heritage impact is considered negligible.

<sup>35</sup> ICOMOS, 2011. Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties.

<sup>36</sup> Heritage NSW, 2020. Material Threshold Policy, online.

Grading	Definition
<b>Neutral</b>	Actions that would have no heritage impact.
<b>Minor positive</b>	Actions that would bring a minor benefit to a heritage item, such as an improvement in the item's visual setting.
<b>Moderate positive</b>	Actions that would bring a moderate benefit to a heritage item, such as removal of intrusive elements or fabric or a substantial improvement to the item's visual setting.
<b>Major positive</b>	Actions that would bring a major benefit to a heritage item, such as reconstruction of significant fabric, removal of substantial intrusive elements/fabric or reinstatement of an item's visual setting or curtilage.

## 7.2 Assessing the Planning Proposal against CMP policies

Each of the SHR-listed places adjacent to the study area has a Conservation Management Plan or Strategy which may be consulted for its policies designed to conserve the significance of each place. Although each CMP is now out of date, being more than five years since it was endorsed or adopted, they both provide useful issues for consideration.

- Heritage Group State Projects NSW Public Works, 1994. *Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan*, commissioned by NSW Public Works, copy made available online by Heritage NSW Library.
- Trevor Jamison, 2009. *Ferguson's Cottage – Conservation Management Strategy*, copy made available online by Heritage NSW Library.

The following two tables offer assessments of the proposed Planning Proposal against relevant policies contained in these two documents.

**Table 7: Assessment of proposal against relevant policies from Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan**

Policy	Policy detail	Overarching policy	Are works consistent with CMP policy? (Yes/No?)	Comments
1	A development application should be submitted to Coffs Harbour City Council for all works which may alter the Jetty.	General Principles	<b>Yes</b>	This Planning Proposal does not alter the Jetty.
4	Any proposals for the redevelopment of Coffs Harbour which will have a major impact on the character and significance of the Jetty should be exhibited for public comment.	General Principles	<b>Yes</b>	Public engagement is already a critical part of the Planning Proposal.
14	The future uses of the Jetty should not exclude public access.	On-Going Public Participation	<b>Yes</b>	The Planning Proposal assumes ongoing public accessibility.

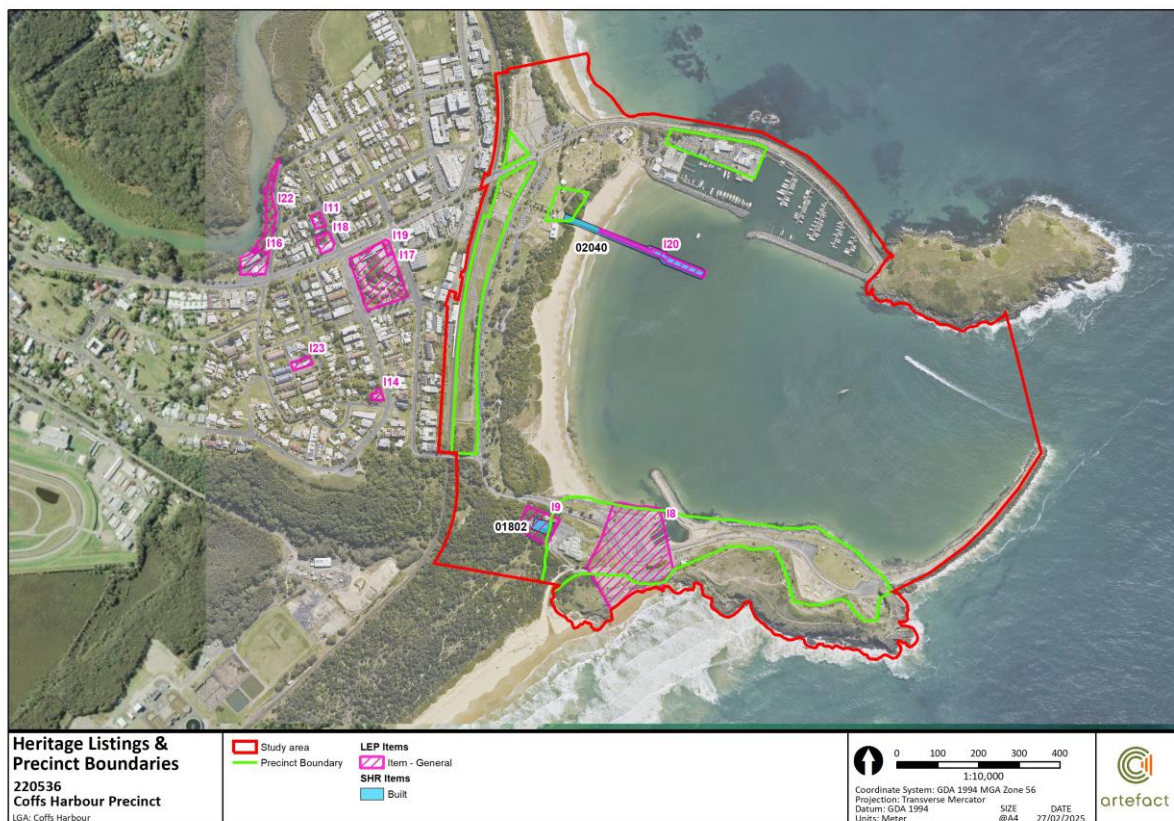
Policy	Policy detail	Overarching policy	Are works consistent with CMP policy? (Yes/No?)	Comments
16	An integrated care and maintenance strategy should be established for the Jetty and Foreshore areas.	On-Going Public Participation	<b>Yes</b>	Ongoing maintenance of the Jetty is the responsibility of Coff Harbour Council as the appointed Crown Land Manager. A Plan of Management already exists for the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore. This will need to be revisited as works related with the Planning Proposal progress.
18	All future uses should ensure the retention and the enhancement of the character and cultural significance of the Coffs Harbour Jetty.	Compatible Uses	<b>Yes</b>	The Planning Proposal ensures that main view lines and key pedestrian links associated with the Jetty are maintained and enhanced.
25	Any associated development, either including or adjacent to the Jetty should have a theme that relates to the maritime character of the area.	Compatible Uses	<b>Yes</b>	As a flagship project for this Precinct, the NSW Government funded and delivered a new purpose-built enclosure housing the iconic South Solitary Island Lighthouse Optic (SSILO) adjacent to the Jetty and New Community Hub, celebrating the region's rich maritime heritage and history. This was in partnership with local community group Friend Of South Solitary Island Lighthouse (FOSSIL) – a coordinated achievement between PDNSW, Council and the community.
26	Any commercial development of the foreshore in the immediate vicinity of the Jetty, such as restaurants, tourist and cultural facilities or educational facilities should relate to public usage of the Jetty.	Compatible Uses	<b>Yes</b>	The Planning Proposal is intended to boost community and tourist presence in the Jetty area.
54	New structures should not detract from the Jetty acting as the focal point of the harbour.	New Structures	<b>Yes</b>	The Planning Proposal positions new structures against the railway line and adjoining existing built form, allowing the jetty to remain the focal point of the harbour.
67	No new construction, demolition or modification which would adversely affect the setting should be permitted.	Setting	<b>Maybe</b>	The Planning Proposal is assessed as having no impacts on the setting of the Jetty so long as new building envelopes do not interfere with views of the escarpment from the Jetty.
76	In any future works, adequate time, financial and staff resources shall be set aside for Archaeological Monitoring, for the purpose of recording and retrieving any archaeological relics.	Archaeology	<b>Maybe</b>	Artefact recommends that further historical archaeological work be done as Development Applications are prepared.

**Table 8: Assessment of proposal against relevant policies from Ferguson's Cottage – Conservation Management Strategy**

Policy	Policy detail	Overarching policy	Are works consistent with CMP policy? (Yes/No?)	Comments
5.1	Public car parking be located off the site. Pedestrian access including for the disabled to be provided from car parking in Breakwater Road to Ferguson's Cottage via the existing path.	Public Access to Ferguson's Cottage	<b>Yes</b>	Public Parking is located adjacent to the site.
10.2	The landscaping to reflect the natural coastal vegetation and ambience of Evelyn Ferguson's occupation of the cottage. Preferably existing large Banksia trees to be maintained and new vegetation to be native and natural looking.	Works	<b>Yes</b>	The Planning Proposal specifies the use of endemic species in future landscaping.

### 7.3 Heritage Impact Assessment

A plan that overlays the SHR and CHLEP heritage items and the area subject to proposed LEP changes is shown below in figure 53.



**Figure 53: SHR and CHLEP heritage items curtilages area subject to proposed LEP changes**



### 7.3.1 Physical heritage impacts

The changes to land uses and height of buildings outlined in the Planning Justification Report will not have a physical impact on heritage items in the study area or its vicinity. While there are areas illustrated in Figure 52 above that do overlap with heritage curtilages (Corambirra Point Sub precinct), these LEP changes relate to the removal of Additional Permitted uses only and are not deemed to have material impact on the heritage items.

### 7.3.2 Visual and other heritage impacts

The Planning Proposal is assessed as having '**neutral (nil)** visual impacts to the place' for all listed heritage items in the Precinct (refer to Table 9).

Potential visual impacts have also been assessed in the *Visual Impact Assessment*<sup>37</sup> which is also appended to this Planning Proposal. The Visual Impact Assessment determined that 'the proposal has acceptable visual and view loss impact'.

However it should be noted that upon enacting the broader works related to the delivery of the masterplan vision (particularly infrastructure and public domain elements) there is potential for visual impacts to occur that will be assessed in further detail as part of future development applications. Supporting provisions are included in the Design Guidelines which further consideration and assessment of potential visual impacts on heritage items as part of future development.

### 7.3.3 Cumulative heritage impacts

While the LEP changes outlined in the Planning Proposal do not cause heritage impacts in and of themselves, it should be noted that under the Illustrative Masterplan, there is scope for works that can cause impacts to the heritage significance of places, items, and views. It is important to note that such works that would be liable to produce impacts which would require further detailed assessment if, or when, they are finalised and enacted.

### 7.3.4 Heritage impacts analysis summary table

A summary of the assessed heritage impacts of the proposed works on the six heritage places in the vicinity of the study area is given in Table 9.

---

<sup>37</sup> Ethos Urban, *Draft Visual Impact Assessment: Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct Revitalisation*, 13 May 2024

**Table 9: Assessment of heritage impact to nearby heritage places (within 200m of the study area)**

Item Name	Item/Listing Number	Potential physical impacts	Potential visual impacts
Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty	State Heritage Register – #20040 Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #120 Register of The National Estate - #18999 National Trust of Australia State Environmental Planning Policy – NA, REP 1988	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Ferguson's Cottage	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #19, SHR – #01802	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #18	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)			
Solitary Island Marine Area/ Park	RNE #18848	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
House – Interwar	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #114	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Coffs Harbour State High School	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #117	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Coffs Harbour State High School – Building B00A	S170 Register – NA	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.
Post Office – Coffs Jetty	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013 – #119	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> physical impacts to the place.	The proposed rezoning is assessed as having <b>neutral (nil)</b> visual impacts to the place.

## 7.4 Potential archaeological impacts

Portions of the Precinct have been assessed as having moderate potential to contain archaeological remains that may be associated with the State Heritage-listed Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (historical phase 3). Dependant on the extent of survival, these remains may reach the local and/or state significance thresholds.

No excavation works are required as part of the planning proposal. Should future excavation works be required within areas identified as having moderate potential to contain significant archaeological resources, the Historical Archaeological Assessment has recommended that a Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment be prepared. This document should be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Council and delegates.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

This SoHI has made the following conclusions:

### 8.1 Overview of built heritage findings

There are **three** heritage items located within the Precinct:

- Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology) and Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)—Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan (CHLEP) #18.
- Ferguson's Cottage—State Heritage Register (SHR) #1802, CHLEP #19.
- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty—SHR #2040, CHLEP #120, Regional Environmental Plan (REP) 1988, Register of National Estates (RNE) #18999, National Trust of Australia.

There is **one** heritage item located immediately adjacent to the Precinct:

- Solitary Islands Marine Area—RNE #18848; Solitary Islands Marine Park—NSW *Marine Parks Act 1997*.

There are **three** heritage items located within a 200 metre vicinity of the Precinct:

- House - Interwar—CHLEP #114.
- School - Coffs Harbour State High (Building B00A)—CHLEP #117 and S170 (Education).
- Post Office—CHLEP #119.

The proposed rezoning application has no impact on any of the above heritage items.

### 8.2 Overview of historical archaeological findings

Portions of the Precinct have been assessed as having moderate potential to contain archaeological remains that may be associated with the SHR listed Coffs Harbour Jetty. Dependant on the extent of survival, these remains may reach the local and/or state significance thresholds. Other phases of development within the Precinct have been assessed as having low archaeological potential with the unlikely ability to reach the threshold of local significance.

No excavation works are required as part of the rezoning proposal. Should future excavation works be required within areas identified as having moderate potential to contain significant archaeological resources, the Historical Archaeological Assessment has recommended that a Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) be prepared. This document should be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Council and delegates.

The Historical Archaeological Assessment is included in Appendix 1, and a summary of result is below.

The Historical Archaeological Assessment has identified that the Precinct has been subject to relatively little development during historical phases 1 and 2. There is greater potential for an archaeological resource associated with phase 3 to be present due to the extensive development and modifications of the jetty and accompanying structures from the late 1880s onwards.



Phase of development	Feature or activity	Description of potential remains	Degree of survival
1: European land use (1830-1880)	Land clearing	Evidence tree stumps and roots, fence posts	Low
2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)	Low intensity land use, early road construction	Road infrastructure, kerbing	Low
3: Commercial port development (1900-1950)	Commercial and residential buildings, railways or roads.	Crane bases, cargo shed foundations, jetty railway track alignment, jetty buildings or fence post holes, telegraph poles, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, fill material (300mm deep)	Moderate
4: Post-war occupation (1950-Present)	Commercial and public use of the area	Crane bases, cargo sheds, jetty railway track alignments, jetty buildings or fences, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, early carparks, walking pathways, roads	Extant/not archaeological, Low/associated artefacts bearing deposits

### 8.3 Approval pathway

This Statement of Heritage Impact is intended to accompany the State Assessed Planning Proposal being submitted to DPHI to be assessed under the *Environmental and Planning Assessment Act 1979*.

Any future development works proposed within the curtilage, or visual buffer, of a State Heritage Register listed item require approval by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*. This will occur as part of the development phase.

Similarly, any ground-disturbing activities may require approvals either under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* for potential harm to significant archaeological relics or under the NSW *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* for projects at the development application stage with the potential to impact significant archaeological remains.

### 8.4 Recommendations and mitigation measures

The following recommendations and mitigation measures should be considered in the future development application stage that would be enabled by the approval of the Rezoning Proposal to protect and enhance the significance of the identified SHR and CHLEP heritage items located within the study area:

- The Planning Proposal is assessed as having '**neutral (nil)** visual impacts to the place' for all listed heritage items in the Precinct (refer to Table 9 in Section 7.3.4).
- Potential visual impacts have also been assessed in the *Visual Impact Assessment* which is also appended to this Planning Proposal. The Visual Impact Assessment determined that 'the proposal has acceptable visual and view loss impact'<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Ethos Urban, *Draft Visual Impact Assessment: Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct Revitalisation*, 13 May 2024

- If future development stages involve works where potential adverse visual impacts are identified to heritage items, a SoHI will be required, and the following would need to be undertaken:
  - If the SHR heritage items (jetty and Fergusons Cottage) the preparation of a SoHI would be required to be approved by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* as part of a Development Application (DA) process; this process would include a Section 60 application.
  - If the CHLEP heritage items the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) would be required and the appropriate approval pathway would be determined by the SoHI.
- Potential physical impacts to heritage items at the future development stage should be evaluated by a SoHI and where potential adverse physical impacts are identified, the following would need to be undertaken:
  - If the SHR heritage items (jetty and Fergusons Cottage) would suffer adverse physical impacts at the future development stage, then the preparation of a SoHI would be required to be approved by Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* at the development stage
  - If the CHLEP heritage items would suffer adverse visual impact at the future development stage, then the preparation of a SoHI would be required and the appropriate approval pathway would be determined by the SoHI at the development stage
- Future development stage works must remain consistent with the Coffs harbour Jetty CMP and Ferguson's Cottage Conservation Strategy, and these have been detailed in Section 7.0 of this assessment and recommendations for these have been summarised in Section 8.4 of this assessment
- Future development must be undertaken in accordance with the supporting Design Guidelines, which include matters relating to heritage protection to ensure potential impacts to heritage are to be considered and assessed as part of future development applications.

## 9.0 REFERENCES

Anonymous (1892). 'Opening of the Coff's Harbour Jetty', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (August 6, 1892, p10). Available at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13874247> (Accessed 10/07/2023).

Arrawarra Sharing Culture, (2013). Sharing Culture 'Gumbaynggirr Nation', *Environmental Trust*. p. 1. Available at: <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/8421334/project-fact-sheets-the-arrawarra-sharing-culture-project> (Accessed 09/07/2023).

Aussie Towns (2023). Coffs Harbour, NSW. Available at: <https://www.aussietowns.com.au/town/coffs-harbour-nsw> (Accessed 14/07/2023).

Australia ICOMOS, 2013. *Burra Charter: The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (2013), Australia ICOMOS.

BMT WBM (2009), 'Coffs Harbour Coastal Processes Progress Report', Unpublished report prepared for CHCC and held by the Heritage NSW Library.

Carley, J.T., Wyllie, S.J., Lord, D.B. & R.J. Cox, (2006). *Coastal Processes in the Coffs Harbour Region*, Proceedings of the 15th NSW Coastal Conference.

'City of Coffs Harbour Community Profile', 2020. Available at: <https://profile.id.com.au/coffs-harbour#:~:text=The%20City%20of%20Coffs%20Harbour,440%20kilometres%20south%20of%20Brisbane>. (Accessed 14/07/2023).

Coffs Harbour Library (Coffs Collection)(2023). Available at: <https://libraries.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/Collections/Local-history/Coffs-Collections>

Department of Planning & Environment, 2022. 'Coffs Jetty Revitalisation Refined Rezoning application , shaped by community feedback, December 2022', brochure summary of revised Rezoning application available online at: [https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/548731/Coffs-Jetty-Revitalisation-Refined-Rezoning-application-2022.pdf](https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/548731/Coffs-Jetty-Revitalisation-Refined-Rezoning-application-2022.pdf) (Accessed 2/08/2023).

English, A (2006). *The sea and the rock give us a feed*, La Perouse Museum.

Enright, W (1940). 'Notes on the Aborigines of the North Coast of New South Wales', *Mankind*. Available at: <https://mnclibrary.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Notes-on-the-Aborigines-of-the-North-Coast-of-NSW.pdf> (Accessed 14/07/2023).

Gumbaynggirr Language and Cultural Group (1992). 'Gumbaynggirr Yuludarra (Gumbaynggirr Dreaming) Vol 1: The stories of Uncle Harry Buchanan', Gumbaynggirr Language and Cultural Group, Coffs Harbour.

Hedditch, R (2013). *Coffs Harbour 2013 Heritage Study*. Unpublished heritage study prepared for Coffs Harbour Council and held by the Heritage NSW Library.

Heritage NSW, 2020. 'Material Threshold Policy', guideline available at: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/material-threshold-policy.pdf> (Accessed 20/08/2023).

Heritage NSW, 2023A. *Assessing Heritage Significance, Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria*, Heritage NSW.

Heritage NSW, 2023B. *Guidelines for preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact*, Heritage NSW.

ICOMOS, 2011. 'Guidance on heritage impact assessments for cultural World Heritage properties', online at: [https://www.icrom.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/icomos\\_guidance\\_on\\_heritage\\_impact\\_assessments\\_for\\_cultural\\_world\\_heritage\\_properties.pdf](https://www.icrom.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/icomos_guidance_on_heritage_impact_assessments_for_cultural_world_heritage_properties.pdf) (Accessed 14/07/2023).

Kramer, J (1984). *Ships and Timber - A short history of Coffs Harbour port and associated railways*. The Light Railway Research Society of Australia.

Mackey, N (2001). *European Settlement in the Clarence River District before 1850*, Mackey: Grafton.

Murawin, (2022) 'Community Consultation and Outcomes Report, Coffs Harbour Jetty', Unpublished report for CHCC held by PDNSW.

Statutory heritage-listed item entries (Australian, state and local) online:

- 'Coffs Harbour Jetty', SHR listing entry #2040, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Coffs Harbour Jetty', CHCC LEP 2013 #120, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- Coffs Harbour State High School – Building B00A, S170 listing Department of Education, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Ferguson's Cottage', SHR listing entry #1802, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Ferguson's Cottage', CHCC LEP 2013 #19, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Line of Former Rail Tracks, Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)' and 'Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology)', CHCC LEP 2013 #18, SHR listing entry, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'House – Interwar', CHCC LEP 2013 #114, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Post Office – Coffs Jetty', CHCC LEP 2013, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'School – Coffs Harbour State High', CHCC LEP 2013, State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW website.
- 'Solitary Island Marine Area', Register of the National Estate heritage listing entry, Australian Heritage Database, online at: [http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place\\_detail;search=place\\_name%3Dsolitary%3Blist\\_code%3DRNE%3Bkeyword\\_PD%3Don%3Bkeyword\\_SS%3Don%3Bkeyword\\_PH%3Don%3Blatitude\\_1dir%3DS%3Blongitude\\_1dir%3DE%3Blongitude\\_2dir%3DE%3Blatitude\\_2dir%3DS%3Bin\\_region%3Dpart;place\\_id=18848](http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl?mode=place_detail;search=place_name%3Dsolitary%3Blist_code%3DRNE%3Bkeyword_PD%3Don%3Bkeyword_SS%3Don%3Bkeyword_PH%3Don%3Blatitude_1dir%3DS%3Blongitude_1dir%3DE%3Blongitude_2dir%3DE%3Blatitude_2dir%3DS%3Bin_region%3Dpart;place_id=18848) (Accessed 23/08/2023).

NSW Department of Industry media release "Happy Valley" land for Aboriginal community', 5 August 2022, accessed 18 August 2023 at: <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/media/releases/2022-media-releases/happy-valley-land-for-aboriginal-community> (Accessed 23/08/2023).

NSW Department of Primary Industries & Australian Government Parks Australia & Australian Marine Parks, no date. *Solitary Islands Marine Park Guide*. Online at: [https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/656304/simp-user-guide.pdf](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/656304/simp-user-guide.pdf) (Accessed 23/08/2023).

SJB Architects, 2025. 'Coffs Harbour Foreshore Urban Design Report', report commissioned by Property & Development NSW.



Waters, K (2020), 'Coffs Harbour Bypass Project, Cultural Values Assessment Report'. Unpublished report for Transport for NSW held by NSW Property & Development.

## 10.0 APPENDIX 1

### 10.1 Historical Archaeology report

# Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore State Assessed Planning Proposal

Historical Archaeological Assessment

Report to Property & Development NSW

March 2024



Artefact Heritage

ABN 73 144 973 526

Suite 56, Jones Bay Wharf

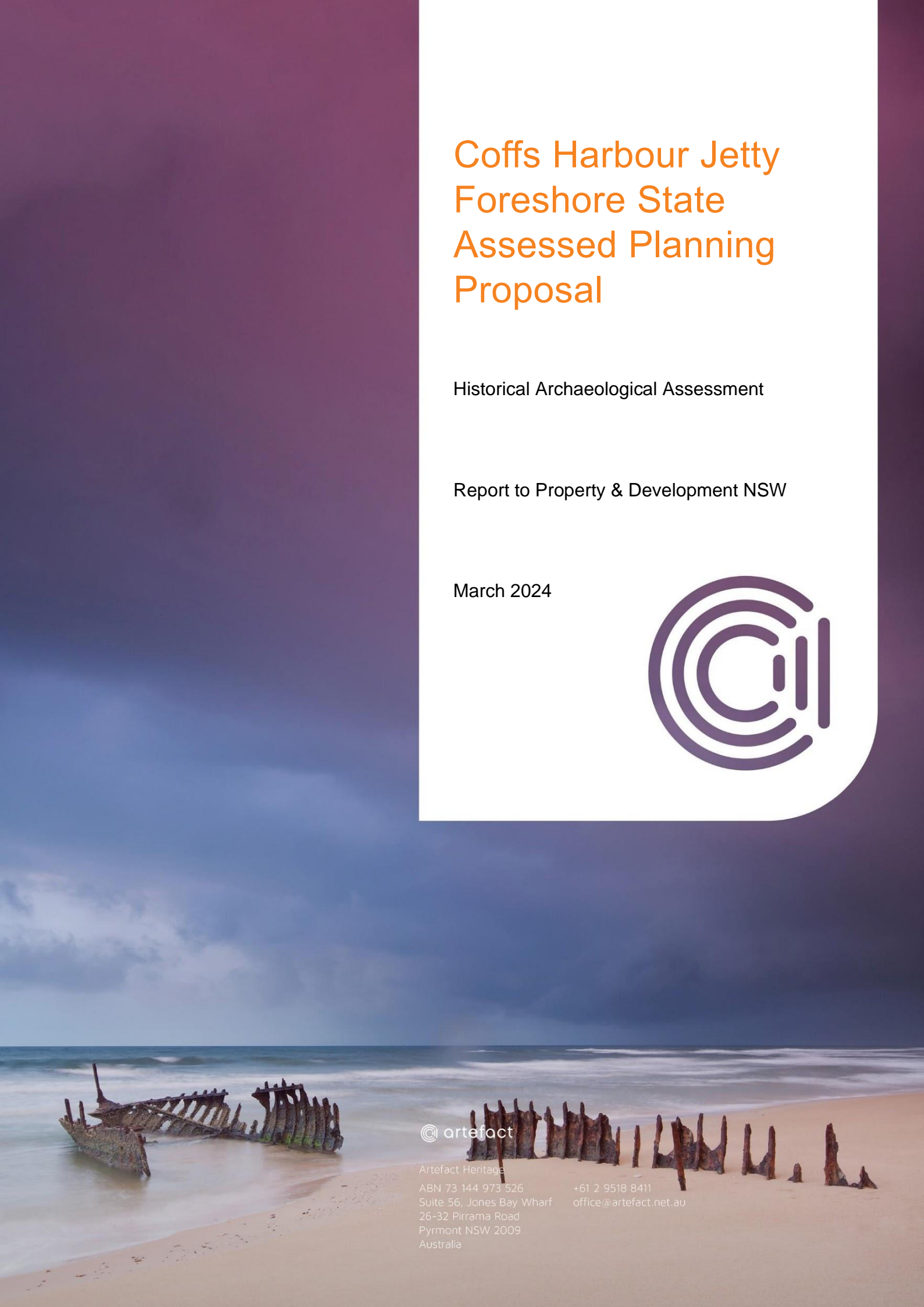
26-32 Pirrama Road

Pymont NSW 2009

Australia

+61 2 9518 8411

[office@artefact.net.au](mailto:office@artefact.net.au)



## Document history and status

Revision	Revision type	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Date issued
1	First draft	J. Sokalik	J. Winnett	22.08.2023	
2	Final	J. Sokalik	J. Winnett	11.03.2024	11.03.2024
3					

<b>Last saved:</b>	24 August 2023
<b>File name:</b>	220536 Coffs Harbour Foreshore HAA DRAFT
<b>Project name:</b>	Coffs Harbour Foreshore Masterplan
<b>Author:</b>	Kristen Tola
<b>Project manager:</b>	Bronwyn Hanna
<b>Project number:</b>	220536
<b>Name of organisation:</b>	Artefact Heritage
<b>Document version:</b>	Final

© Artefact Heritage Services

This document is and shall remain the property of Artefact Heritage Services. This document may only be used for the purposes for which it was commissioned and in accordance with the Terms of the Engagement for the commission. Unauthorised use of this document in any form whatsoever is prohibited.

Disclaimer: Artefact Heritage Services has completed this document in accordance with the relevant federal, state and local legislation and current industry best practice. The company accepts no liability for any damages or loss incurred as a result of reliance placed upon the document content or for any purpose other than that for which it was intended.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Project overview

Property and Development NSW is leading the revitalisation of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct on behalf of the NSW Government. Artefact Heritage and Environment has been engaged by Property and Development NSW to prepare a Heritage Constraints Assessment that assesses the heritage constraints of the State-led rezoning application proposal in relation to the NSW heritage legislative context.

This Historical Archaeological Assessment supports a draft State Environmental Planning Policy Report that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure as part of a State-led rezoning application.

### Overview of findings

Portions of the Precinct has been assessed as having moderate potential to contain archaeological remains that may be associated with the SHR listed Coffs Harbour Jetty. Dependant on the extent of survival, these remains may reach the local and/or state significance thresholds. Other phases of development within the Precinct have been assessed as having low archaeological potential with the unlikely ability to reach the threshold of local significance. The archaeological potential for the study area is summarised in the table below.

Phase of development	Feature or activity	Description of potential remains	Degree of survival
1: European land use (1830-1880)	Land clearing	Evidence tree stumps and roots, fence posts	Low
2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)	Low intensity land use, early road construction	Road infrastructure, kerbing	Low
3: Commercial port development (1900-1950)	Commercial and residential buildings, railways or roads.	Crane bases, cargo shed foundations, jetty railway track alignment, jetty buildings or fence post holes, telegraph poles, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, fill material (300mm deep)	Moderate
4: Post-war occupation (1950-Present)	Commercial and public use of the area	Crane bases, cargo sheds, jetty railway track alignments, jetty buildings or fences, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, early carparks, walking pathways, roads	Extant/not archaeological, Low/associated artefacts bearing deposits

Although the Indicative Masterplan indicates that ground disturbing works may take place in areas with archaeological potential, the current proposal is for **rezoning only** and no excavation works would occur.

The proposal would therefore not result in impact to significant archaeological resources.

## Management and mitigation measures

It is recommended that the following measures be implemented to reduce and avoid potential archaeological remains:

**Table 1: Mitigation measures**

Mitigation measure	Description
<b>Impact reduction through design</b>	<p>Prior to development in the study area, it is recommended that a suitably qualified archaeologist is consulted during the design process in order to limit impact to the archaeological resource and to mitigate the removal of archaeological remains if necessary.</p> <p>Excavation impacts within those areas with the potential to contain state significant archaeological remains associated with the SHR listed jetty should be reduced.</p>
<b>Archaeological Impact Assessment, Archaeological Research Design and Methodology and approvals</b>	<p>The current proposal is for rezoning only.</p> <p><b>No historical archaeological relics, or significant archaeological remains, would be impacted by the current proposal.</b></p> <p>Should the masterplan progress to the next stage, the following is recommended to manage potential impacts historical archaeological remains:</p> <p>If excavation impacts are required in area identified as having the potential to impact on areas of moderate archaeological potential, an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) must be prepared to outline appropriate strategies to minimise and manage any potential impacts to archaeological remains, and outline the statutory obligations of the project.</p> <p>Should project excavation works be unavoidable and required in areas identified as having archaeological potential, archaeological testing may be required prior to project works to determine the extent of preservation and refine construction methodologies. Should state significant relics be identified, avoidance of remains is recommended.</p> <p>Archaeological approvals under Section 140 and/or Section 60 of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> may be required prior to any excavation works within areas assessed as having potential to contain significant archaeological remains (including archaeological testing and/or project excavation works).</p> <p>Any archaeological permit/exception permit would need to be accompanied by an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) and an Archaeological Methodology and Research Design (AMRD).</p>

## CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Project background.....	1
1.2	Study area .....	1
1.3	Statutory context.....	2
1.3.1	NSW Heritage Act 1977 .....	2
1.4	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW).....	4
1.4.1	Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 .....	4
1.5	Summary of heritage listings .....	5
1.6	Approach and methodology.....	5
1.7	Limitations.....	6
1.8	Authorship.....	6
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Historical context.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	2
2.2	Phases of development .....	2
2.2.1	Phase 1: European Land Use (1820 - 1880).....	2
2.2.2	Phase 2: Permanent Settlement (1880 - 1900).....	2
2.2.3	Phase 3: Commercial Port Development (1900 - 1950) .....	6
2.2.4	Phase 4: Post-war occupation (1950 - Present).....	8
2.3	Summary of land-use development.....	8
2.4	Summary of historical development .....	9
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Assessment of archaeological potential .....</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	24
3.2	Previous relevant investigations .....	24
3.2.1	Jetty4Shores Project Stage 1, Historical Archaeological Assessment (Umwelt 2014) ....	24
3.2.2	Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct Stimulus Enabling Infrastructure & Coffs Harbour Jetty Community Building, Historical Archaeological Assessment (Niche 2021). ....	24
3.2.3	Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan, Heritage Group State Projects (NSW Public Works 1994). ....	25
3.3	Archaeological assessment.....	25
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Assessment of archaeological significance .....</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1	Basis for assessment .....	28
4.2	Existing statement of significance .....	29
4.3	NSW Heritage criteria for assessing significance related to archaeological sites and relics	30
4.4	Bickford and Sullivan's questions .....	31
4.5	Summary statement of significance .....	32
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Assessment of development impact .....</b>	<b>34</b>
5.1	Proposed development.....	34

5.2	Potential impacts .....	34
5.3	Response to relevant policy .....	35
5.4	Recommended mitigation .....	35
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Conclusions and recommendations .....</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1	Conclusions .....	37
6.2	Heritage approvals processes .....	37
6.3	Recommended next steps for the design stage .....	38
6.4	Management and mitigation measures .....	39
<b>7.0</b>	<b>References .....</b>	<b>40</b>
7.1	Secondary Sources .....	40
7.2	Legislation and Guidelines .....	40



## FIGURES

Figure 1: Location of the Precinct for Coffs Harbour Foreshore Indicative Masterplan (Source: SJB Architects, 2024).....	0
Figure 2: SHR and CHLEP 2013 heritage item curtilages at Coffs Harbour Foreshore (Source: Artefact) .....	1
Figure 3: Study area with 1885 historical overlay (Source: HLRV) .....	4
Figure 4: 1890 historical overlay showing the jetty (Source: HLRV) .....	5
Figure 5: 1946 map showing Coffs Harbour railways, with study area overlayed in red (Source: Coffs Collection)Is the southern study area outline in the rifght place? And why does the study area now go over the jetty? .....	7
Figure 6: Summary of archaeological potential for the study area.....	27

## TERMINOLOGY & ABBREVIATIONS

The following table provides a list of terms and abbreviations that have been used throughout this report.

Abbreviation	Term
Artefact	Artefact Heritage and Environment
CHCC	Coffs Harbour City Council
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan (a Council guideline for development which accompanies and elaborates on the Council's Local Environmental Plan)
DP	Deposited Plan
DPE	NSW Department of Planning & Environment
Heritage Constraints Assessment	Constraints Assessment
Heritage NSW	Heritage New South Wales (Office of the Heritage Council of New South Wales), also recently known as the NSW Heritage office, the Heritage Branch and the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)
km	kilometre
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
NSW	New South Wales
PDNSW	Property & Development New South Wales (part of NSW Department of Planning & Environment)
The Precinct, The Study Area	Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct
Relic (archaeological)	The Heritage Act defines a relic as any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and</li> <li>is of local or State significance.</li> </ol>

Abbreviation	Term
RNE	Register of the National Estate (an Australian Government heritage list, now defunct)
S170	Section 170 of the NSW <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> which requires government agencies to keep a Heritage & Conservation Register of places they own and manage
SHR	State Heritage Register
Study area	See blue dashed outline on Figure 1.
Work (archaeological)	Archaeological 'works' are not defined by the Heritage Act, but are typically considered to be the in-ground physical remains of infrastructure, building, or other activities. Exposure of a 'work' does not necessarily trigger a requirement to obtain an excavation permit under the Heritage Act.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project background

Property and Development NSW (PDNSW) is leading the revitalisation of the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct (the Precinct) on behalf of the NSW Government. Artefact Heritage and Environment has been engaged by Property and Development NSW to prepare a Heritage Constraints Assessment that assesses the heritage constraints of the State-led rezoning application proposal in relation to the NSW heritage legislative context.

This Heritage Constraints Assessment supports a draft State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Report that outlines proposed amendments to the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan (CHLEP) 2013 and will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) as part of a State-led rezoning application (re-zoning application).

The proposal seeks to respond to current and future challenges and opportunities. As Coffs Harbour transitions into a regional city, the NSW Government and Coffs Harbour City Council have, through various strategic planning exercises, identified four key strategic drivers to see through this transition:

- Delivering a regional economy that is diverse, sophisticated and able to retain businesses and skills
- Evolving the tourism offering with improved attractions, activities and accommodation
- Providing more housing in accessible locations, including affordable housing
- Providing better connections between places with more sustainable movement choices

This Precinct represents a significant opportunity to deliver on these strategic priorities, being a large, strategically located and wholly government owned site. It has the capacity to deliver on these important planning policy aspirations while delivering meaningful community benefit.

This report has been prepared to provide an assessment of the potential for the study area to contain historical archaeological remains.

Define what archaeological impacts are? Human remains, remains of buildings, earthenware, vehicles, tools, animals??....

### 1.2 Study area

The study area encompasses approximately 24ha (hectares) of Coffs Harbour Foreshore in the eastern coastal region of Coffs Harbour Local Government Area (LGA).

The location of the study area is shown in Figure 2.



## 1.3 Statutory context

### 1.3.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977

The NSW Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act) is the primary item of State Legislation affording protection to items of environmental heritage in NSW. The Heritage Act is designed to protect both listed heritage items, such as standing structures, and potential archaeological remains or relics.

#### 1.3.1.1 State Heritage Register

The State Heritage Register (SHR) was established under Section 22 of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* and is a list of places and objects of particular importance to the people of NSW, including archaeological sites. The SHR is administered by Heritage NSW, and includes a diverse range of over 1,600 places and items, in both private and public ownership. To be listed, a place must be deemed by the Heritage Council of NSW to be of 'state' heritage significance for the people of NSW. If works to an SHR item are required, a Section 60 application must be prepared for submission to Heritage NSW, unless the works can be assessed as 'exempt' under Section 57(2) of the Act.

There are **two items** listed on the State Heritage Register within the Precinct:

- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (SHR #2040)
- Ferguson's Cottage (SHR #1802)

#### 1.3.1.2 Section 170 registers

Under the Heritage Act all government agencies are required to identify, conserve and manage heritage items in their ownership or control. Section 170 (s170) requires all government agencies to maintain a Heritage and Conservation Register that lists all heritage assets and an assessment of the significance of each asset. They must also ensure that all items inscribed on its list are maintained with due diligence in accordance with State Owned Heritage Management Principles approved by the Government on advice of the NSW Heritage Council. These principles serve to protect and conserve the heritage significance of items and are based on NSW heritage legislation and guidelines.

There is **one** heritage item within a 200-metre vicinity of the Precinct, which is listed on the Department of Education s170 register:

- Coffs Harbour State High School – Building B00A

#### 1.3.1.3 'Relics' provision

The Heritage Act provides additional protection for archaeological remains through the operation of the 'relics' provisions. The primary aim of an archaeological significance assessment is to identify whether an archaeological resource, deposit, site or feature is of cultural value and therefore, considered to be a 'relic'.<sup>1</sup>

The Heritage Act defines a relic as any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

- a. relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and
- b. is of local or State significance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (former), Heritage Division, 2009. *Assessing Significance for Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*, 4.

In accordance with Section 139, it is an offence to disturb or excavate land, where this may affect a relic, without an excavation permit under section 140 of the Heritage Act, unless an excavation permit exception is issued for works that are minor in nature, require monitoring or test excavation.<sup>2</sup>

The discovery of unexpected relics, must be reported to Heritage Council under Section 146 of the Act:

- 
- (a) *within a reasonable time after he or she first becomes aware or believes that he or she has discovered or located that relic, notify the Heritage Council of the location of the relic, unless he or she believes on reasonable grounds that the Heritage Council is aware of the location of the relic, and*
- (b) *within the period required by the Heritage Council, furnish the Heritage Council with such information concerning the relic as the Heritage Council may reasonably require.*
- 

In addition to relics, remnants of historical structures which are typically not associated with artefactual material that may possess research value are considered to be ‘works’.

‘Works’ may be buried, and therefore archaeological in nature, however, exposure of a ‘work’ does not necessarily trigger a requirement to obtain an excavation permit under the Heritage Act.

Examples of ‘works’ include:

- Former road surfaces or pavement and kerbing
- Evidence of former drainage infrastructure
- Building footings associated with former infrastructure facilities
- Evidence of former rail track, sleepers or ballast.
- Evidence of former rail platforms and former platform copings.

‘Works’ should be managed according to their significance.

Sites listed on the SHR and subject to Section 60 (s60) approvals, the ‘works’ and ‘relics’ definitions do not apply. In this context, all archaeology is managed by its potential significance in a holistic manner.

#### **1.3.1.4 Conservation Management Plans**

Under Section 38A of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be prepared for items listed on the State Heritage Register. The CMP should identify the state heritage significance of the item, set out policies and strategies for the retention of its significance and be prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Heritage Council. Works proposed in the vicinity of these places should address the policies.

Both of the SHR-listed items within the Precinct have a Conservation Management Plan or Strategy which may be consulted for its policies designed to conserve the significance of each place. Although each CMP is now out of date, being more than five years since it was endorsed or adopted, they both provide useful issues for consideration. The two CMPs are listed below:

---

<sup>2</sup> Refer to order published in the NSW Government Gazette  
[https://gazette.legislation.nsw.gov.au/so/download.w3p?id=Gazette\\_2022\\_2022-59.pdf](https://gazette.legislation.nsw.gov.au/so/download.w3p?id=Gazette_2022_2022-59.pdf)

- a) NSW Public Works Heritage Group State Projects, 1994. *Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan*, commissioned by NSW Public Works, made available online by Heritage NSW Library.
- Trevor Jamison, 2009, *Ferguson's Cottage – Conservation Management Strategy*, made available online by Heritage NSW Library.

## 1.4 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes the framework for cultural heritage values to be formally assessed in the land use planning and development consent process. The EP&A Act requires that environmental impacts are considered prior to land development; this includes impacts on cultural heritage items and places as well as archaeological sites and deposits.

The EP&A Act also requires that local governments prepare planning instruments (such as Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans [DCPs]) in accordance with the EP&A Act to provide guidance on the level of environmental assessment required. The Precinct falls within the boundaries of the Liverpool local government areas. Schedule 5 of each of the *Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008* (Liverpool LEP) includes a list of items/sites of heritage significance within this LGA.

### 1.4.1 Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013

Heritage items listed on the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013 (CHLEP) are managed in accordance with its provisions in Section 5.10 (Heritage Conservation). Clause 5 of Section 5.10 states:

---

*The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:*

*(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or*

*(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or*

*(c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),*

*require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.*

---

Schedule 5 of the CHLEP 2013 includes a list of items of heritage significance within the LGA.

There are **three items** listed on the CHLEP within the Precinct:

- Ferguson Cottage (LEP #I9)
- Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty (LEP #I20)
- Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)/ Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology) (LEP #I8)

There are **three items** listed on the CHLEP located within 200 metres of the Precinct although not adjacent:

- House – interwar, 151 Edinburgh Street Coffs Harbour (#I14)

- School - Coffs Harbour State High (# I17)
- Jetty Post Office, 350 Harbour Drive Coffs Harbour (# I19)

## 1.5 Summary of heritage listings

Heritage items within the study area are summarised in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 3.

**Table 2: Register search results for heritage items within and in proximity to the study area**

Item	Address	Significance	Listing	Place ID	Item type
		State	SHR	#02040	
Coffs Harbour Jetty (Coffs Harbour Timber Jetty)	Jetty Foreshore/ High Street, Coffs Harbour	Local	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013	#I20	Built
Ferguson's Cottage	1 Breakwater Road, Coffs Harbour	State	SHR	#1802	Built
		Local	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013	#I9	
Line of Former Rail Tracks, Coffs Harbour Breakwaters and Foreshore (archaeology)/ Buried timber trestle rail bridge (archaeology) (#I8)	Jordan Esplanade, Coffs Harbour	Local	Coffs Harbour LEP 2013	#I8	Archaeology

## 1.6 Approach and methodology

This report was prepared in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the following documents:

- *Archaeological Assessments*<sup>3</sup>
- *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*<sup>4</sup>
- *Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and Relics*<sup>5</sup>
- *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice*<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> NSW Heritage Office, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 1996. *Archaeological Assessments*

<sup>4</sup> Australia ICOMOS 2013 *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*

<sup>5</sup> Heritage Branch (former) 2009. *Assessing Significance of Archaeological Sites and Relics*

<sup>6</sup> Heritage Office (former) 2006. *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice*



## 1.7 Limitations

This report provides an assessment of historical (non-Aboriginal) archaeological remains and their values only and does not assess Aboriginal cultural heritage or built heritage elements. As the project stage is for a concept masterplan for rezoning, no physical impacts are assessed in the scope of this report.

This assessment is limited to terrestrial space and an assessment of submerged land or maritime structures (jetties, etc) is not included. This assessment has also not assessed any portion of the study area that is within the intertidal zone or permanently submerged.

## 1.8 Authorship

This report was prepared by Kristen Tola (Heritage Consultant, Artefact) with input by Johnny Sokalik (Senior Heritage Consultant, Artefact) and Bronwyn Hanna (Senior Associated). Technical input and review by Stephanie Moore (Historical Archaeology Team Leader, Artefact), and Quality Assurance review was undertaken by Scott MacArthur (Principal), Jenny Winnett (Principal, Artefact) and Josh Symons (Technical Director, Artefact).



Figure 1: Location of the Precinct for Coffs Harbour Foreshore Indicative Masterplan (Source: SJB Architects, 2024)

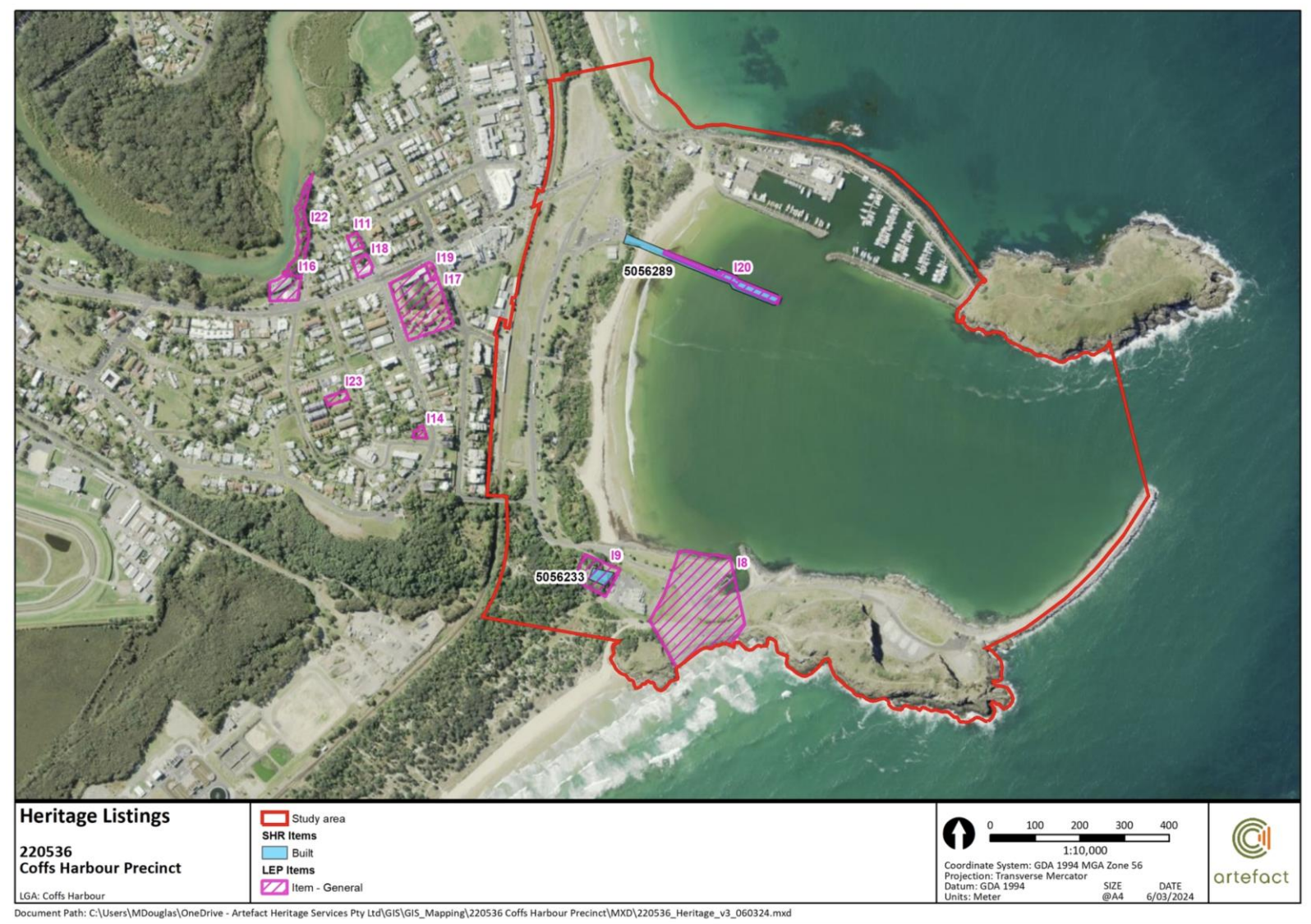


Figure 2: SHR and CHLEP 2013 heritage item curtilages at Coffs Harbour Foreshore (Source: Artefact)



## 2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### 2.1 Introduction

The following background provides an overview of land use within and surrounding the study area, predominantly following European occupation from 1820.

A visual analysis has been prepared using photographs and cartographic material to supplement this historical context, to inform the assessment of archaeological potential and significance provided in Section 4.0 of this report.

### 2.2 Phases of development

The following timeline of site development has been prepared from the historical background and visual analysis.

#### 2.2.1 Phase 1: European Land Use (1820 - 1880)

From the 1830s, major rivers such as the Clarence and Macleay became the focus of shipping and timber getting. Since as early as the 1820s, some colonists and squatters had been driving flocks of sheep or herds of cattle deep into Aboriginal land from the NSW Central West and from the Hunter Valley through the New England tablelands. More permanent British colonies in such places as present day Coffs Harbour occurred relatively late, perhaps because of the lack of an obvious navigable river.<sup>7</sup>

In 1847, Captain John Korff identified the Coffs Harbour coastal area as a safe shipping location and it was soon reserved for government purposes, then officially named Korffs Harbour in 1861. European cedar getters relied heavily on Aboriginal guides to locate timber stands and often called upon Aboriginal labour to extract the timber. Walter Harvie, thought to be the first cedar getter in the Coffs Harbour area, was led to the watershed of Coffs Creek by Gumbaynggirr people who told him there was 'plenty of cedar near the sea' there. Harvie took a bullock team and set up a camp on the north bank of Coffs Creek, near the present day Showground.<sup>8</sup>

#### 2.2.2 Phase 2: Permanent Settlement (1880 - 1900)

In the late 19th century, timber-getting became the first industry established in Coffs Harbour which resulted in permanent settlements, and the Jetty Township was established. Population growth led to calls for government infrastructure to support the community. In September of 1880 and April of 1881 petitions were made to the Postmaster General for the establishment of a regular postal service to the Coffs Harbour region. In 1882 a Receiving Office was built in Coffs Harbour and in 1890 it was upgraded to a functioning Post Office. In 1885, there was no building development in the study area (Figure 4). In 1886, new settlers arrived in Coffs Harbour, coinciding with the release of land in the Orara region. Land was used for farming and agricultural purposes, mostly dairy farming and pig raising, and mostly west of Coffs Harbour foreshore area. In 1887 the Coffs Harbour town plan was surveyed, roads allocated, and public recreation areas were increasingly utilised. The 1887 subdivision map of the village of Brelsford shows the residential subdivision that included a portion of the study area east of the railway line.

<sup>7</sup> Mackey, N (2001). *European Settlement in the Clarence River District before 1850*, Mackey, p. 103-107.

<sup>8</sup> Waters, K (2020). 'Coffs Harbour Bypass Project, Cultural Values Assessment Report', p. 21.



The Coffs Harbour region lacked suitable harbour facilities to support the growing timber industry and population of the area. Lumber and other commodities were ferried by surf boats to and from larger shipping vessels anchored in deeper waters outside of the harbour. By 1885, as the volume of production increased, there were many appeals and petitions for a government-funded jetty to be constructed. The Coffs Harbour Jetty was commenced in 1889 and completed in 1892 by the NSW Public Works Department, measuring approximately 500 metres in length and 6.5 metres in width.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the new jetty and a tramway, a small five-ton crane was installed at the shore end in 1898 to help with movement of shipments. Once completed, the crane facility and jetty provided access to the offshore waters (Figure 5).

---

<sup>9</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald (August 6, 1892). *Opening of the Coff's Harbour Jetty*. p. 10.



Figure 3: Study area with 1885 historical overlay (Source: HLRV)



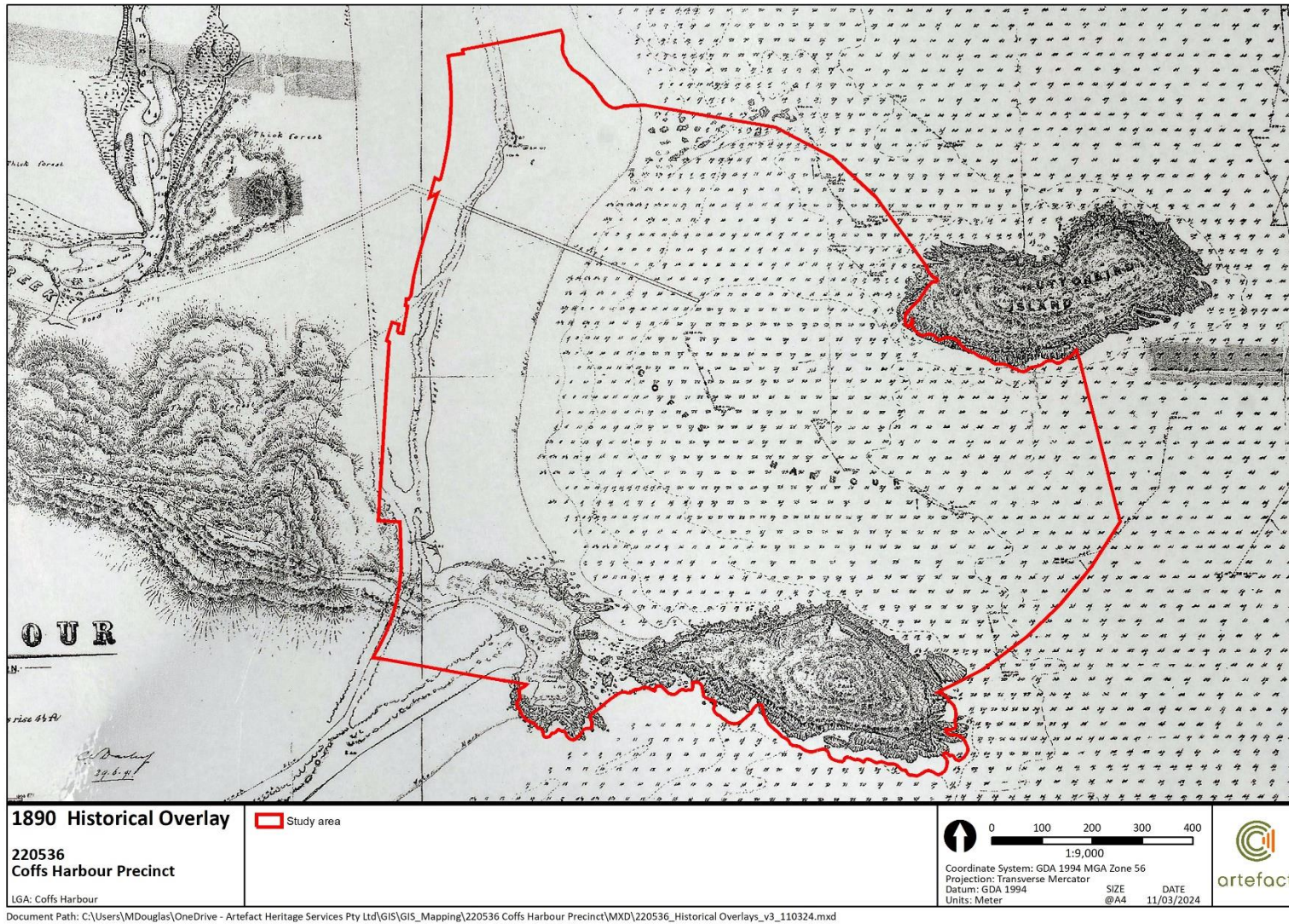


Figure 4: 1890 historical overlay showing the jetty (Source: HLRV)

### 2.2.3 Phase 3: Commercial Port Development (1900 - 1950)

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, development in Coffs Harbour was mostly associated with individual private homes, small community facilities and government buildings. The completion of the Coffs Harbour Jetty resulted in continued economic growth and development in Coffs Harbour. The timber and agricultural industries were now capable of exporting high volumes of produce, and by 1898 with nearly 500,000 feet of timber being exported. Coffs Harbour experienced growth in the number of timber cutting mills in the area.<sup>10</sup> The Jetty was continually improved, to enable the processing and export of timber. In 1909 the outer end of the jetty was widened. The railway network was subsequently developed to service the jetty, with lines connecting to the jetty tramway constructed by the British Australia Timber Company (BAT Coy) in 1904, and the Langley Brothers in 1909, and later operated by the North Coast Railway.<sup>11</sup> More permanent buildings and associated structures had been established west of the jetty, including timber buildings, telegraph lines and roads. With the expansion of the Jetty Township most of the lots within the study area were repossessed and demolished for the railway line development.

In 1911 the jetty railway construction began, and it was strengthened to facilitate steam locomotives. By early 1912, breakwater development became necessary to create a safer port for ships, and linked Muttonbird Island and South Coff Islands (Corambirra Point) with the mainland, as well as the construction of an additional breakwater stretching north-east from South Coff Island. In 1913 a timber trestle bridge was built, connecting South Coff Island to the mainland to assist in the transport of rock from a quarry at South Coff Island for use in construction of the breakwaters. The jetty was lengthened in 1914, and again in the 1940s. The breakwaters were completed with concrete capping between 1939 and 1941. They provided the harbour with extensive protection from unpredictable weather and tidal movements of the previously open ocean waters, which facilitated safer shipping and marine activity between Coffs Harbour and the eastern coast of Australia.<sup>12</sup>

Small scale development ensued during the inter-war period with development of private homes, community facilities and government buildings. In 1914 fire destroyed the first post office and Pier Hotel. In the 1930s the school gained district status. The port of Coffs Harbour was the major transportation hub, until the 1920s when the Coffs-Glenreagh section of the North Coast Railway was built. After World War Two, coastal commercial shipping began to decline in Coffs Harbour, due mostly to the efficiency of the railways for transporting goods and passengers.

---

<sup>10</sup> Coffs Harbour Shire Council 1986. Heritage Study: Coffs Harbour Shire.

<sup>11</sup> Maston, W.A.J. 1984. Ships and Timber: a short history of Coffs Harbour port and associated railways'. Coffs Collections, accessed 19/07/2023, <https://coffs.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/71930>.

<sup>12</sup> Carley et al. (2006). Coastal Processes in the Coffs Harbour Region, *Proceedings of the 15th NSW Coastal Conference*



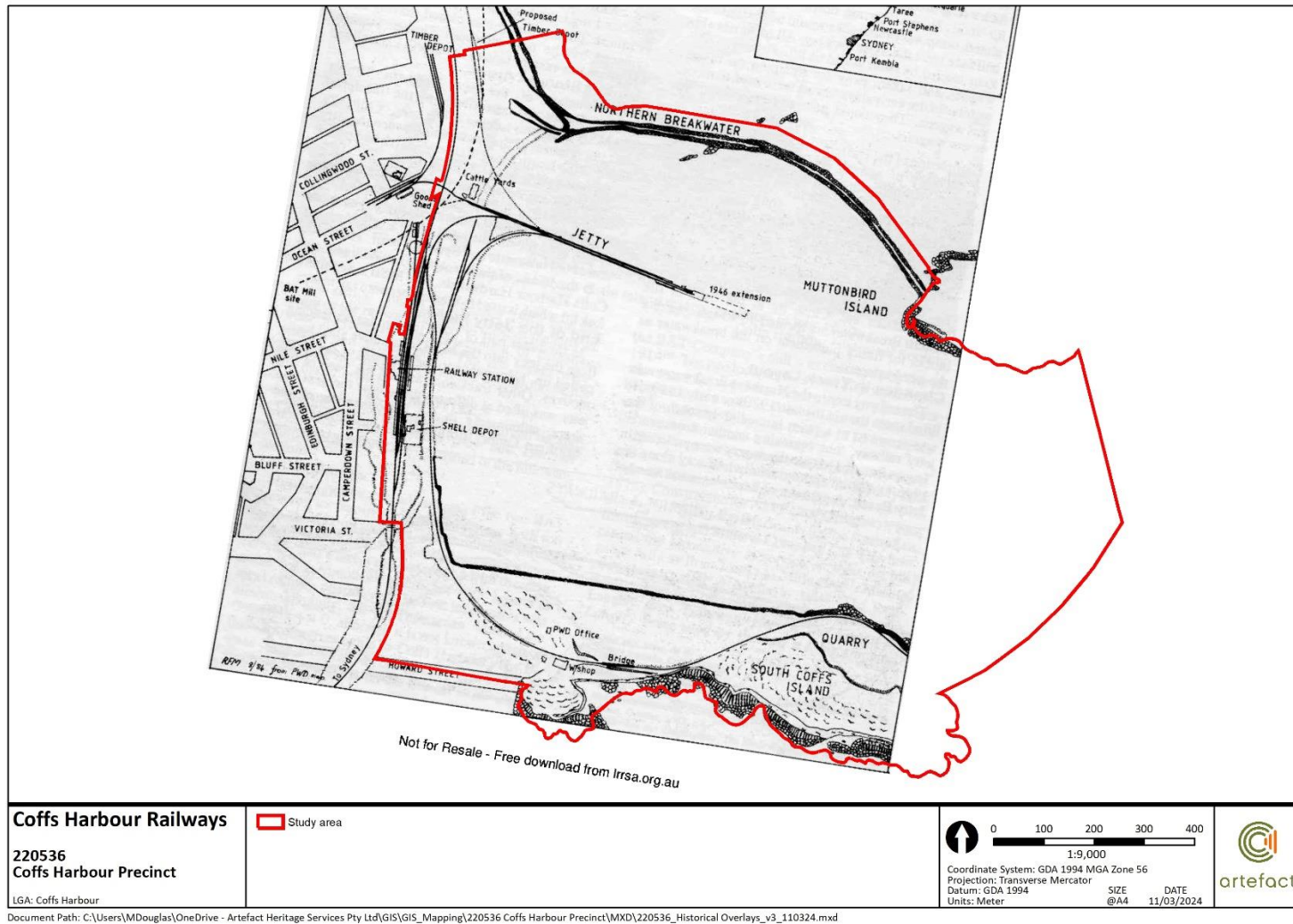


Figure 5: 1946 map showing Coffs Harbour railways, with study area overlayed in red (Source: Coffs Collection) Is the southern study area outline in the right place? And why does the study area now go over the jetty?

#### 2.2.4 Phase 4: Post-war occupation (1950 - Present)

With the post-war decline of the timber industry, sand mining became the primary industry of the Coffs Harbour region. From the 1950s to the 1980s the outer sand barriers of Coffs Harbour were targeted with dredging and extraction at such sites as North Corindi Beach, Arrawarra/South Corindi Beach and Moonee Beach.<sup>13</sup> Steady growth of the population saw the rural settlement give way to urban development, with a growing population of Sikh and Dutch migrants taking advantage of industrial growth.<sup>14</sup> In the 1980s, much of the foreshore infrastructure including the jetty tram/rail lines, cranes, boat ramp and amenity buildings once associated with the jetty were removed.

During this time, tourism steadily increased along with local building developments. In 1958, Park Beach Reserve, which had been a popular tourist location since the 1940s, was cleared of permanent residences so that new tourist facilities could be developed.<sup>15</sup> The residential population also increased, with a census taken in the early 1990s identified a population of approximately 35,000 residents in the Coffs Harbour region. As of 2022, the region is now populated by an approximate 80,000 residents with annual tourist numbers estimated to be an additional 50,000 people, demonstrating a two-fold increase in population over the course of a 30 year period.<sup>16</sup>

In the 21st century, the region is now predominantly driven by the tourist industry with the town noted for its banana plantations, resorts, beachfront activities, and fishing. The tourist fishing and whale watching industry is also a tourism attraction of the area with the Marina and other sites along the coastline facilitating deep sea fishing and whale watching expeditions.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3 Summary of land-use development

**Table 3: Phases of historical development**

Phase	Discussion
Phase 1: European land use (1820-1880)	European land use
Phase 2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)	Permanent settlement of Coffs Harbour
Phase 3: Commercial port development (1900 – 1950)	Development of commercial port
Phase 4: Post-war occupation (1950 – present)	Post War occupation

<sup>13</sup> BMT WBM Pty Ltd (2009). Coffs Harbour Coastal Processes Progress Report. Report for the Coffs Harbour City Council. p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> Hedditch, R (2013). *Coffs Harbour 2013 Heritage Study*. Unpublished heritage study prepared for Coffs Harbour Council and held by Heritage NSW Library.


<sup>15</sup> Kadwell, D. 1998. 'Caught in the Tide: Australian beach culture and Coffs Harbour', in J. Kijas, J. Ledger and A. Beasley (Eds) *Past Lives Fresh Views: histories of the mid-north coast of New South Wales*, p. 204.

<sup>16</sup> City of Coffs Harbour Community Profile (2022).

<sup>17</sup> Aussie Towns (2023). Coffs Harbour, NSW.

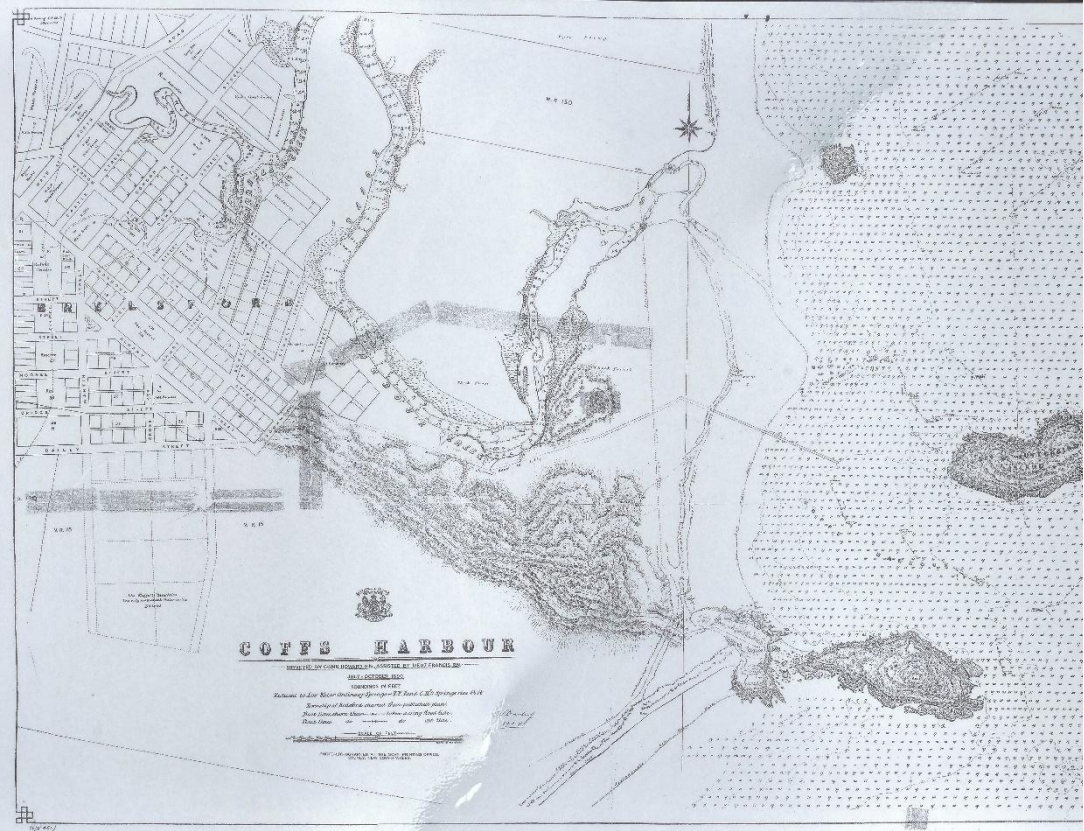
2.4 Summary of historical development

Table 4: Summary of historical development

Date	Image	Summary
1885		<p>Survey plans by George Parsons showing coastal landform and islands to the east of mainland Coffs Harbour. The area is described as “dense honey suckle scrub, poor sandy soil”. Telegraph line is indicated running along the coastline and crossing within the study area.</p> <p>Plan shows limited occupation in the vicinity of the study area.</p>

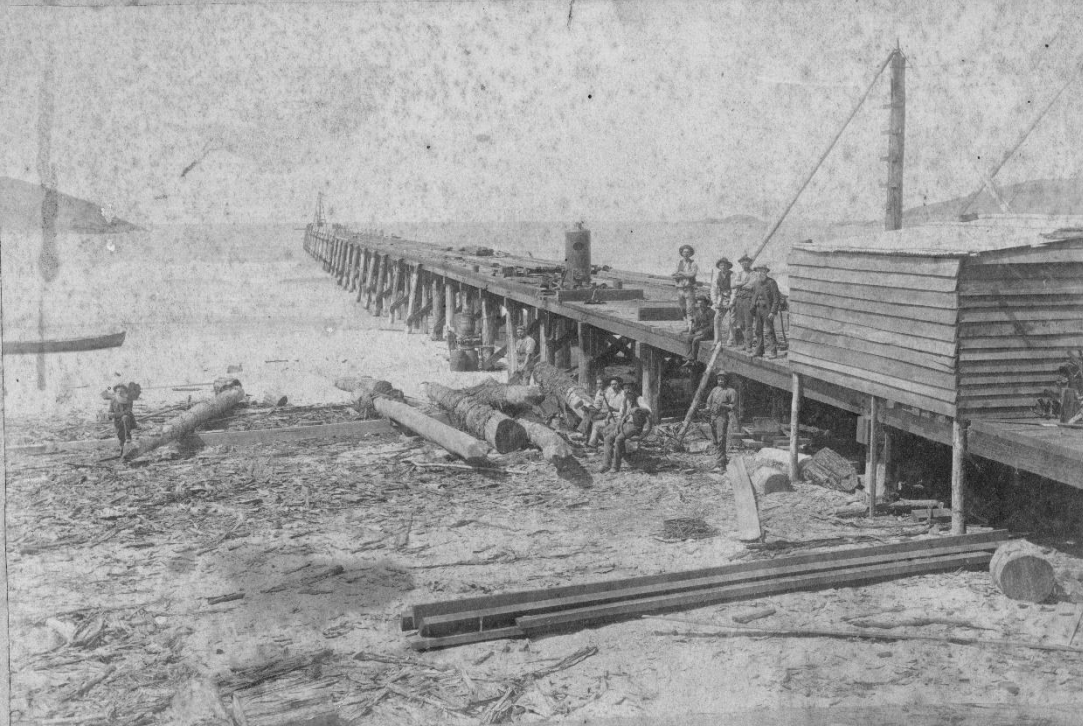
Source: Plan shewing [sic] all features within Reserve 15, Village of Brelsford, April 1885. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum (Coffs Collections, Accession Number 12.1447)



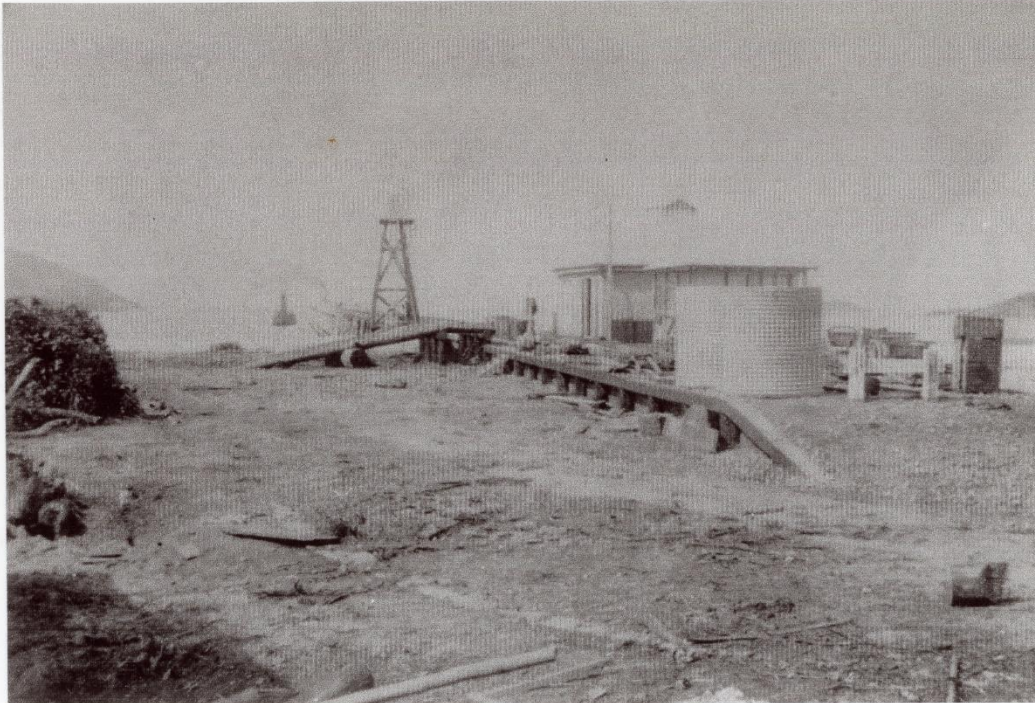
Date	Image	Summary
1890		<p>Survey map of township of Brelford showing the Jetty and access road in the study area.</p> <p>Map shows no building development in the study area.</p>

Source: Coffs Creek and Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum (Coffs Collections, Accession Number 12.346)




Date	Image	Summary
1891		Photograph looking southeast from the shore, showing the Jetty (which is extant) and timber structure at the end of the Jetty.

*Source: Timber workers on the shoreline end of the Jetty, 1891. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collections, Accession Number mus07-2965)*


Date	Image	Summary
1900		Photograph showing Jetty loading ramp and work shed in the study area.

*Source: A loading ramp and work shed at the end of the Jetty, c.1900. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collections, Accession Number mus07-1996)*

Date	Image	Summary
c. 1900s		<p>Photograph showing several structures within the study area, including timber buildings, fences, water tank, windmill, and crane. Telegraph poles are visible on the fence to the east and west of the buildings.</p> <p>The signs read:</p> <p>W. Seccombe for Cheap Farm &amp; Town Lots.</p> <p>Bull &amp; Long Auctioneers Stock &amp; Stat Agents Coffs Harbour (Bull &amp; Long started business in Coffs Harbour in 1907).</p>


*Source: End of the Jetty line. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collections, Accession Number mus07-7937)*



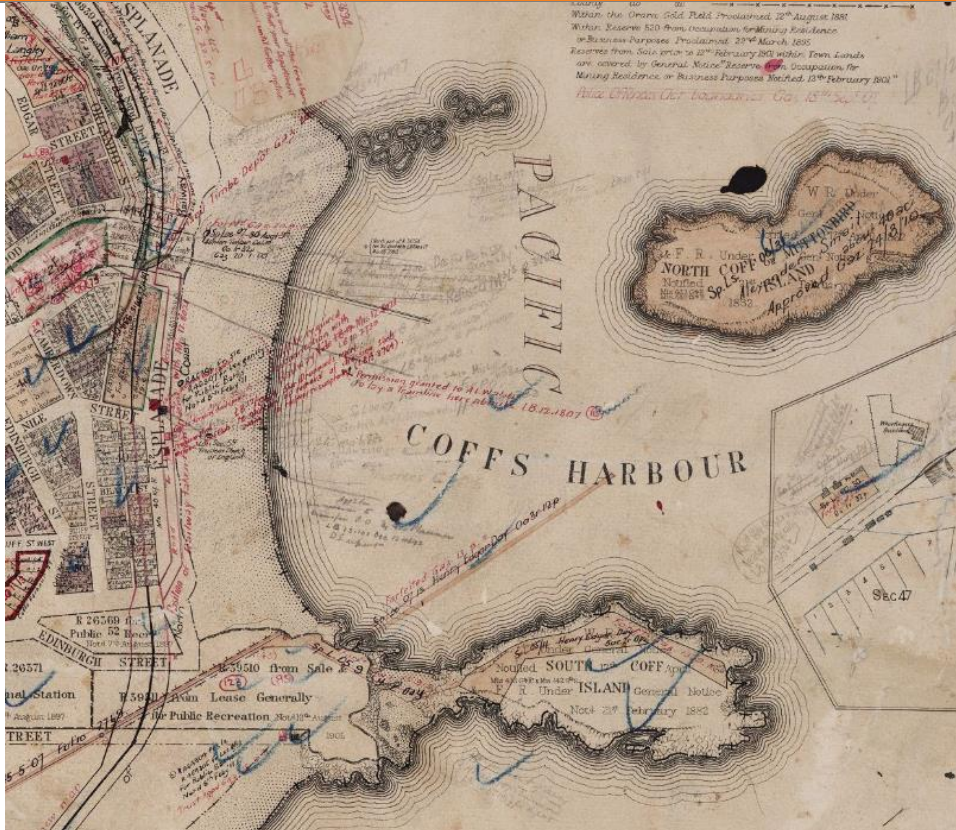
Date	Image	Summary
c. 1900s		Photograph shows township in proximity to the Jetty and structures along foreshore area.

Source: Jetty Township, looking north towards Little Muttonbird Island. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Souvenir Collections, Accession Number mus07-13162)




Date	Image	Summary
c. 1900s		Photograph show Jetty with tramway and timber structures to its south along shoreline. The crane was removed in 1910 to alleviate congestion at the start of the Jetty.

*Source: Stacked timber awaiting loading at the Jetty. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collection, Accession Number mus07-2195)*

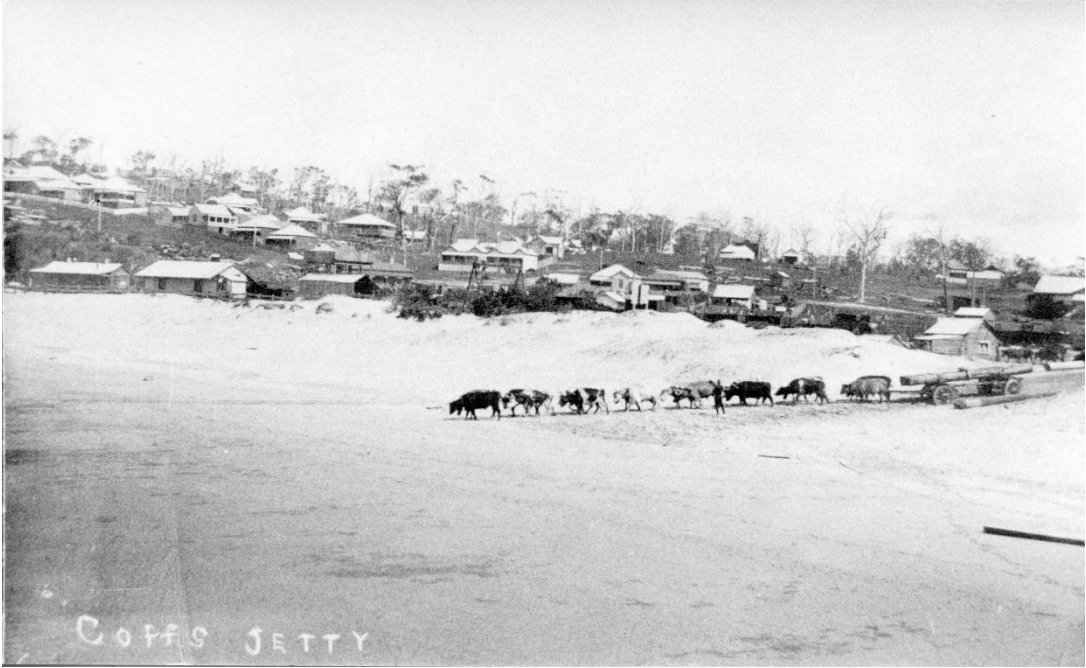
Date	Image	Summary
1906		<p>Parish map shows jetty alignment and building development to the west of the Esplanade. There is no building development in the study area.</p>

Source: (24 July) Map – Town of Coffs Harbour and Suburban lands, Parish of Coff, County of Fitzroy, Land District of Bellingen (NSW Land Registry Services)

Date	Image	Summary
1906		Photograph looking northeast from a nearby hill to the Jetty and the Coffs township. Structures can be seen at the end of the Jetty.


*Source: Home of W. Moore at the Jetty, 1906. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collection, Accession Number mus07-5201)*




Date	Image	Summary
1908		Photo showing study area and structures – Bullock team pulling timber on Jetty Beach, c. 1908

Source: *Bullock team pulling timber on Jetty Beach, c. 1908. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour. Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, (Coffs Collection, Accession Number mus07-2193)*




Date	Image	Summary
1909		<p>Photograph shows several buildings in the study area, including the Pier Hotel and General Store. In the foreground are several tree boles, railway tracks and dirt roads.</p> <p>The Pier Hotel was built in 1906, burnt down in December 1914, and was rebuilt in the same location in 1915.</p> <p>The photograph is described as:</p> <p>“Looking south across the base of the jetty towards Camperdown St. On the right is Ocean St., now High St. The mill was located beyond the two-storey Pier Hotel. The track, with the three wagons loaded with sawn timber, ran from the base of the jetty straight ahead and round to the back of the Jetty Goods shed. The track on the right foreground ran from Coffs Creek out to the forest north of town.” [Source: NSW Government printer, Australian Railway History, June 2006, p.216].</p>

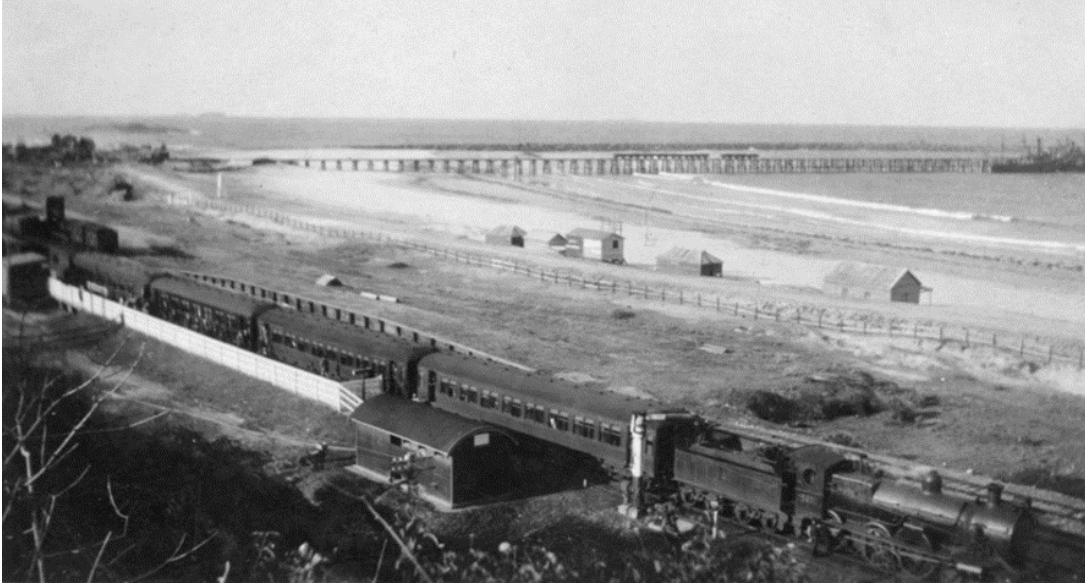
Source: Jetty village, March 1909. Courtesy of the City of Coffs Harbour (Coffs Harbour Regional Museum, Coffs Collection, Accession Number mus07-3634)

Date	Image	Summary
1910		Photograph shows timber jetty with tram tracks and crane at eastern end.

*Source: Photograph of S.S. Orara docked at Coffs Harbour Jetty, featuring steam powered crane, 1910 (Coffs Library Collection)*

Date	Image	Summary
1912		Jetty can be seen with small vessel docked alongside. View looking northeast to shoreline shows no permanent structures.

Photograph of Jetty Beach taken in 1912 by P. Crook, with Muttonbird Island seen to the right and Coffs Jetty seen on the left (Source: State Library of NSW 2021)

Date	Image	Summary
1930		<p>Jetty is visible as a significant timber structure. Several small buildings are shown in the study area and to the west and south of the jetty structure. Fencing has been constructed along the shoreline to the south of the jetty. Railway and associated structures and tracks have been constructed.</p>

**Photograph** of Coffs Harbour Jetty and Railway Station dated 1930 (Source: Coffs Library Collection)





## 3.0 ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

### 3.1 Introduction

The potential for the survival of archaeological remains is significantly affected by development activities that required ground disturbance. This assessment is therefore based on consideration of current ground conditions, and analysis of the historical development of the study area.

‘Archaeological potential’ refers to the likelihood that an area contains physical remains associated with an earlier phase of occupation, activity, or development of that area. This is distinct from ‘archaeological significance’ and ‘archaeological research potential’. These designations refer to the cultural value of potential archaeological remains and are the primary basis of the recommended management actions included in this document.

The archaeological potential of a site is presented in terms of the likelihood of the presence of archaeological remains, considering the land use history and previous impacts at the site. This evaluation is presented using the following grades of archaeological potential:

**Table 5: Grading of archaeological potential**

Grade	Definition
<b>High</b>	Evidence of multiple phases of historical development and structures with minimal or localised twentieth century development impacts, and it is likely the archaeological resource would be largely intact
<b>Moderate</b>	Analysis demonstrates known historical development and some previous impacts, but it is likely that archaeological remains survive with some localised truncation and disturbance
<b>Low</b>	Research indicates little historical development, or where there have been substantial previous disturbance and/or truncation which may not have removed deep subsurface features entirely
<b>Nil</b>	No evidence of historical development or use, or where previous impacts would have removed all archaeological evidence

### 3.2 Previous relevant investigations

#### 3.2.1 Jetty4Shores Project Stage 1, Historical Archaeological Assessment (Umwelt 2014)

Historical archaeological investigations were undertaken in the northern section of Coffs Harbour Foreshore for a new carpark on Jordan Esplanade, located in the study area. There were a number of items of potential heritage excavated, including a large metal cog, railway tracks, railway sleepers, and ballast. It was determined that the finds were out of context, and that the proposed works, which involved excavation to 200mm, would be unlikely to disturb any archaeological remains of significance.

#### 3.2.2 Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshore Precinct Stimulus Enabling Infrastructure & Coffs Harbour Jetty Community Building, Historical Archaeological Assessment (Niche 2021).

A historical heritage assessment was undertaken for the proposed redevelopment of the TS Vendetta Building located just south of Coffs Harbour Jetty within the Coffs Harbour Foreshore area. Most of the study area was identified as being highly disturbed. The assessment determined that it was unlikely that historical archaeological deposits would be present within the study area. However, the survey was limited to only areas with high visibility, excluding any densely vegetated areas. Therefore, Niche concluded that historical archaeological remains were likely in the following areas: South Coff Island, mainly north of the existing listed heritage curtilage; infrastructure associated with the railway station; public baths (dated 1911) on the foreshore; tramline extending to the jetty;

tramline and timber bridge in South Coff Island. The assessment concluded that if archaeological deposits were found, they would have high potential to contribute to the historical archaeological record of the Coffs Harbour Foreshore.

Excavation for the Community Building did not identify archaeological remains.<sup>18</sup>

### 3.2.3 Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan, Heritage Group State Projects (NSW Public Works 1994).

Commissioned by NSW Public Works, the conservation plan was developed to accompany a development application and aimed to be a guiding document for any future works (including maintenance) associated with the Jetty, also considering the structure in context with the Coffs Harbour port area. Approximately 50m of the western end of the Jetty is buried under sand and roads, and the archaeological remains are considered older than the remainder of the structure. The assessment determined that there may be evidence of archaeological remains such as original jetty timbers; embedded piles and discarded cargo on or underneath the seabed; or cargo shed, passenger waiting rooms, livestock pens or tramlines which may remain in the archaeological record.

## 3.3 Archaeological assessment

There are four identifiable phases of development for the study area which may be represented in the archaeological record. These phases have been summarised in Table 1. Additional information regarding these phases has been included in the Constraints Assessment.

**Table 1: Land use summary**

Phase	Historical summary
<b>Phase 1: European land use (1830-1880)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Early ephemeral land use.</li> <li>– Land reserved by the government along the Coffs Harbour coastline. Any archaeological remains would have resulted from the ephemeral use of the area such as land clearance and informal tracks.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– In the west of the study area there is potential for archaeological remains associated with the earliest roads.</li> <li>– Land cleared, early tracks or roads established.</li> <li>– Land modified for construction of commercial harbour infrastructure, jetty and breakwaters.</li> <li>– 1889 construction of Coffs Harbour Jetty.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3: Commercial port development (1900 – 1950)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1911 onwards – port development consisting of construction of two breakwaters, two low-level jetties under the Eastern breakwater, a quarry and reclamation works connecting the mainland and South Coff Island, and a railway.</li> <li>– 1913 timber trestle bridge in south of study area.</li> <li>– 1911 onwards — development and construction of the North Coast Railway, and 1916 conversion of jetty railway to standard gauge.</li> <li>– Land use for commercial and residential building development on foreshore area near jetty.</li> <li>– 1922-24 Coffs-Glenreagh section of railway completed.</li> <li>– 1930 fisherman's co-operative shed located near end of jetty.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 4: Post-war occupation (1950 – Present)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Land modification for demolishing of harbour reserve buildings.</li> <li>– Land use for community building development along foreshore.</li> <li>– Tourism, whale watching, boating, and recreational fishing.</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Pers. Comm. Sophia Lord, 8 September 2023

This assessment of archaeological potential is based on readily available information including photographic evidence, previous archaeological assessments, and the site inspection. The identified historical archaeological resource has low to moderate potential to provide material evidence of the Coffs Harbour Foreshore. It can be concluded that the study area has potential to contain historical archaeological remains including:

- Phase 1: Remnant remains associated with land use such as land clearance and early tracks. It is considered the remains of this archaeology would be ephemeral in nature and of nil potential.
- Phase 2: Remnant archaeological remains relating to early land clearance and roads. It is considered that there is nil to low potential for remains of any early occupation to be present in the study area.
- Phase 3: Remnant archaeological remains associated with jetty railway, breakwater infrastructure, and building structures. It is considered that there is moderate potential for remains of railway tracks or building foundations to be present within the study area. It is considered that there is moderate potential for archaeological remains associated with the former tramway track alignment.
- Phase 4: Archaeological features from this period are largely extant thereby are unlikely to be associated with an archaeological resource.

Overall, the study area has been subject to relatively little development during historical phases 1 and 2. There is greater potential for an archaeological resource associated with phase 3 to be present due to the extensive development and modifications of the jetty and accompanying structures from the late 1880s onwards. The significance of potential archaeological remains is assessed in Section 4.0.

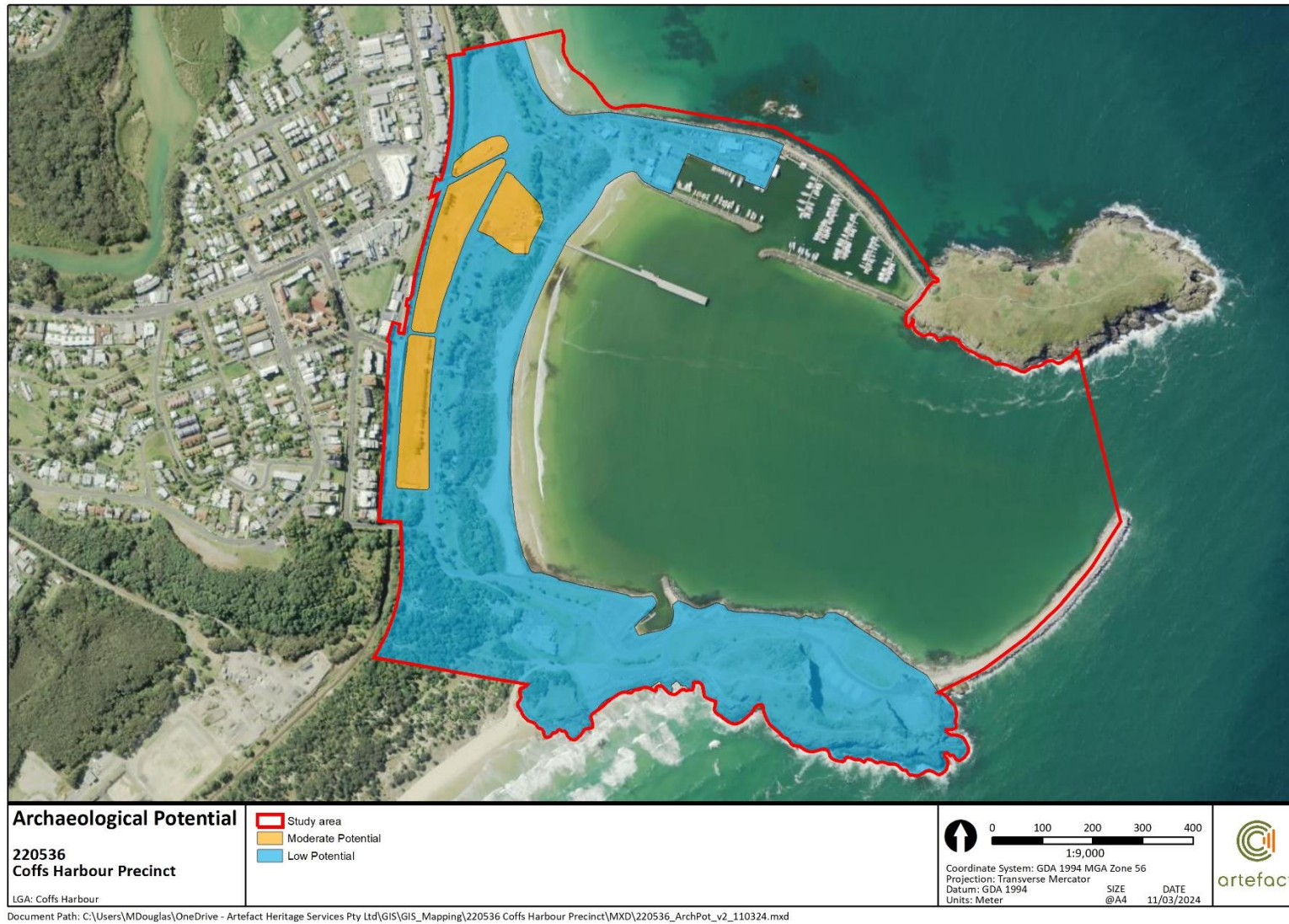
Table 2 below provides a summary of the type of anticipated archaeological remains and their likelihood of survival relative to the phase of historical development they are associated with.

The graphic representation of the site's archaeological potential is presented in Figure 32.

**Table 2: Archaeological potential**

Historical phase	Description of potential remains	Degree of survival
1: European land use (1830-1880)	Evidence tree stumps and roots, fence posts	Nil - low
2: Permanent settlement (1880-1900)	Road infrastructure, kerbing	Low
3: Commercial port development (1900-1950)	Crane bases, cargo shed foundations, jetty railway track alignment, jetty buildings or fence post holes, telegraph poles, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, fill material (300mm deep)	Moderate
4: Post-war occupation (1950-Present)	Crane bases, cargo sheds, jetty railway track alignments, jetty buildings or fences, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons, early carparks, walking pathways, roads	Extant (not archaeological)





**Figure 6: Summary of archaeological potential for the study area**

## 4.0 ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 Basis for assessment

Heritage or ‘cultural’ significance is defined in The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter) as: ‘Aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present and future generations’.

Determining the cultural significance of a place or an item assists in identifying what characteristics of the place contribute to that significance. The assessed significance forms the basis for identification of appropriate management measures associated with any work that may impact heritage and archaeological items of significance.

Assessing heritage significance (NSW Heritage Office, as amended 2001) was developed as part of the NSW Heritage Manual to provide the basis for an assessment of heritage significance of an item or place. The seven heritage criteria are presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Heritage criteria for assessing significance**

Heritage criterion	Description
<b>A – Historical Significance</b>	An item is important in the course or pattern of the local area’s cultural or natural history.
<b>B – Associative Significance</b>	An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the local area’s cultural or natural history.
<b>C – Aesthetic or Technical Significance</b>	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area.
<b>D – Social Significance</b>	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
<b>E – Research potential</b>	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the local area’s cultural or natural history.
<b>F – Rarity</b>	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the local area’s cultural or natural history.
<b>G – Representativeness</b>	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW’s cultural or natural places of cultural or natural environments (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The specific nature of archaeological resource necessitates that they be assessed independently from aboveground and other heritage elements because of the challenges associated with the often-unknown nature and extent of buried archaeological remains and judgment is usually formulated based on anticipated attributes. To facilitate assessment of archaeological significance, the NSW Heritage Branch (now Heritage NSW) arranged the seven heritage criteria into four groups:

- Archaeological research potential (Criterion E)
- Association with individuals, events, or groups of historical importance (Criterion A, B & D)
- Aesthetic or technical significance (Criterion C)
- Ability to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains (Criterion A, C, F & G).

The following significance assessment of the study area’s potential archaeological remains is guided by ‘Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and ‘Relics’.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Heritage Branch, Department of Planning 2009. *Assessing significance for Historical Archaeological sites and ‘Relics’*

## 4.2 Existing statement of significance

Coffs Harbour Jetty is located directly adjacent to the study area. The following two Statements of Significance have been extracted from the LEP and SHR listings for the item.

### SHR Statement of Significance:

---

*The Coffs Harbour Jetty is of state heritage significance as the longest coastal timber jetty built by the Harbours and Rivers Section of the NSW Public Works department in the 19<sup>th</sup> century during a key period of shipping transportation in NSW. A rare and representative example of a surviving timber ocean jetty which once formed part of the extensive coastal network, the Coffs Harbour Jetty is of state heritage significance for the technical significance of its timber construction and maintenance over its 80 year operational life (1892-1973). The ongoing maintenance of the Coffs Harbour Jetty, particularly during its operational life, and the retention of its entirely timber materiality also demonstrates changes and growth in the engineering industry and the evolution of timber repair methods in NSW.<sup>21</sup>*

---

### LEP Statement of Significance:

---

*Coffs Harbour jetty is the largest coastal timber jetty in New South Wales and is the only remaining large ocean jetty in New South Wales which dates from the nineteenth century. It was the largest timber jetty constructed by the Harbours and Rivers Section of the NSW Department of Public works between 1880 and 1895 and is the only surviving example of the three ocean jetties constructed on the North Coast. Less than a dozen examples of deep water ocean jetties remain in Australia, the main concentration being in South Australia. The construction of the Coffs Harbour jetty is associated with the development of timber getting in, and exportation from, New South Wales and the economic development of the Coffs Harbour region. The facilities constructed at Coffs Harbour indicate the importance of coastal shipping for both passengers and cargo in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. An extensive network once existed throughout NSW, of which little physical evidence remains. The jetty is the most prominent landmark in Coffs Harbour. It is the focal point of Jetty town, not only visually but, prior to restricted public access, socially. The design of the Coffs Harbour jetty indicates the level of knowledge regarding the timber beam spans and marine pest resistant timber in the late 1880s (Heritage Group 1994).<sup>22</sup>*

---

It is noted that the proposed rezoning would not include any further development in the immediate vicinity of the jetty.

---

<sup>21</sup> State Heritage Register (2021). *Coffs Harbour Jetty*.

<sup>22</sup> Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013. *Coffs Harbour Jetty*.

### 4.3 NSW Heritage criteria for assessing significance related to archaeological sites and relics

The following (Table 4) presents an assessment of significance for potential archaeological remains within the study area, assessed by historical phase of use.

**Table 4: Assessment of archaeological significance**

Criterion	Assessment of Significance
Archaeological research potential (NSW Criterion E)	The study area has nil to low potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phases 1—2. Archaeological remains associated with these phases would have low research potential and would be unlikely to reach the local significance threshold under this criterion.
	The study area has moderate potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 3 – Commercial port development. Archaeological remains associated with Phase 3 may be associated with the construction of the jetty, , railway and associated building structures has the potential to provide information for the occupation of the timber-getting and agricultural export industry that developed in Coffs Harbour. The physical survival of archaeological remains of undocumented buildings and structures would have the ability to demonstrate the layout of the harbour and foreshore area, and potentially provide some insight into the extent of commercial activities of the port.
	If considerably intact remains, or remains associated with artefact bearing deposits, from Phase 3 are identified, these would reach the threshold for local significance.
Association with individuals, events or groups of historical importance (Criteria A, B & D)	Archaeological remains associated with Phase 4 are extant and present no archaeological research potential.
	<b>Should a considerably intact archaeological resource be identified, it may reach the local significance threshold.</b>
	Potential archaeological remains associated with Phases 1 to 2 have low potential contain an archaeological resource associated with Captain John Korff and other individuals associated with the early occupation of the reserved land of Coffs Harbour.
	The study area has moderate potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 3. The construction of the jetty and associated harbour infrastructure was integral in the development of Coffs Harbour as a major commercial shipping port. Archaeological remains associated with the harbour development may reach the State significance threshold under this criterion. Archaeological remains associated with the timber and agriculture industry which fuelled the construction and modification of the Coffs Harbour Jetty and surrounding infrastructure may have significance at the local level under this criterion.
	Archaeological remains associated with Phase 4 relate to the history of European association, settlement, and landscape modification in Coffs Harbour. The site has the potential to contribute to the local community's sense of place and provide a connection to the history of Coffs Harbour. However, the potential archaeological resource is extant therefore does not meet the local significance threshold under this criterion.
	<b>Should a considerably intact archaeological resource be identified, it may reach the local and/or State significance threshold.</b>



Criterion	Assessment of Significance
<b>Aesthetic or technical significance (Criterion C)</b>	<p>The study area has moderate potential to contain archaeological remains associated with Phase 3, which may reflect the construction and maintenance of the jetty. Such archaeological remains have the potential to provide information on the technical aspects of timber construction and maintenance of the jetty structure. The physical survival of archaeological remains of the jetty would show the application of late 19<sup>th</sup> century engineering knowledge for the use of specific timbers and their fixtures for construction of the jetty in a marine environment, demonstrating the changes and growth in the Australian engineering industry and the evolution of timber repair methods in NSW.</p> <p><b>Should a considerably intact archaeological resource be identified, it may reach the local and/or State significance threshold.</b></p>
<b>Ability to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains (Criteria A, C, F &amp; G)</b>	<p>Potential archaeological remains relating to Phases 1-2 would be unlikely to demonstrate the past through archaeological remains. Ephemeral indicators of European land use can be difficult to interpret and would be unlikely to provide detail otherwise unknown from other sources.</p> <p>Potential archaeological remains for Phase 3 would have moderate potential to provide information about the past occupation of the Coffs Harbour Foreshore. The construction of the jetty and associated harbour infrastructure was integral in the development of Coffs Harbour as a major commercial shipping port. Coffs Harbour jetty is unique for its role in the development of commercial shipping on the north coast of New South Wales from 1889 onwards. Archaeological remains associated with the jetty and harbour foreshore development may reach the State significance threshold under this criterion.</p> <p>Remains from Phase 4 are extant and present no archaeological significance under this criterion.</p> <p><b>Should a considerably intact archaeological resource be identified, it may reach the local significance threshold.</b></p>

#### 4.4 Bickford and Sullivan's questions

Historical archaeological assessment also necessitates a discussion of research potential, as distinct from the potential of remains to be present. The significance of an archaeological site is intrinsically linked to the level of scientific research potential it retains. Bickford and Sullivan state<sup>23</sup>:

*"A site or resource is said to be scientifically significant when its further study may be expected to help answer questions. That is scientific significance is defined as research potential"*

To guide the assessment of research potential for archaeological sites, Bickford and Sullivan posed a series of questions, which now form part of the standard assessment of archaeological significance in NSW. These questions have been addressed below.

##### **Can the site contribute knowledge that no other resource can?**

The site is unlikely to present knowledge that cannot be obtained from other sources. Archaeological remains of Phases 1-2 would be sparse and not easily interpreted. Evidence relating to past land use from these phases can be gained from nearby assessment and archaeological sites with better preservation potential.

<sup>23</sup> Bickford and Sullivan 1984, pp. 22-24.

Archaeological remains from Phase 3 may have potential to provide insights about the commercial and industrial activities associated with the jetty not available from other sources. This may include particular methods for jetty construction using local timber and materials, or tramway and railway alignment and construction.

Phases 4 is well understood from documentary sources and physical examination and would not provide additional contributory information.

**Can the site contribute knowledge that no other site can?**

The site is unlikely to contain archaeological information that is unique. Although the archaeological remains are likely to be significant to the local area for their historical value, the archaeology itself is unlikely to demonstrate technological or architectural value outside of what is typical of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century port town.

**Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive questions relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions?**

The study area has the potential to contain an archaeological resource that may contribute to our historical understanding of the development of Coffs Harbour. The construction of the jetty and associated harbour infrastructure was integral in the development of Coffs Harbour as a major commercial shipping port, and the jetty is unique for its role in the development of commercial shipping on the north coast of New South Wales from 1889 onwards.

## 4.5 Summary statement of significance

Archaeological remains of Phase 3, if considerably intact, have the potential to reach the state significance threshold under criterion A, B, C and D.

There is nil potential for archaeological remains associated with Phase 4. Artefact deposits are not anticipated in association with the harbour foreshore as much of the structures from Phase 3 were demolished to make way for new development in Phase 4, which is represented by extant structures, which do not meet the threshold for local significance.

The study area has been assessed as having low to moderate potential to contain an archaeological resource of local significance.

An archaeological resource within the study area that could meet the local significance threshold would include:

- Archaeological remains associated with the commercial activities which occurred within the Coffs Harbour foreshore area, including any structural remains of former commercial buildings, railway, undocumented buildings and structures.

The study area has been assessed as having moderate potential to contain an archaeological resource of state significance.

An archaeological resource within the study area that could meet the state significance threshold would include:

- Archaeological remains associated with the Coffs Harbour Jetty construction and commercial use, including any buried structural remains of the jetty and its railway, tracks, and

infrastructure such as crane bases, cargo shed foundations, jetty buildings or fence post holes, moveable heritage items such as cranes or railway wagons.

Archaeological ‘relics’ of local significance are protected under the relics provisions of the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*.

Due to the nature of the occupation (industrial) the study area is unlikely to contain archaeological ‘relics.’ The study area has moderate potential to contain significant archaeological ‘works.’

Remains associated with land clearance and post holes of former paddock boundaries or fence lines would have little research potential or archaeological significance. Archaeological remains dating from the mid to late 20th century would also have little research potential or archaeological significance. These archaeological features would not meet the threshold for local significance.

A summary of the archaeological potential and its significance is presented below in Table 5.

**Table 5: Summary of archaeological significance**

Phase of Development	Archaeological Potential	Archaeological Significance
1: Early land use (1830 – 1880)	Nil-Low	Nil
2: Permanent settlement (1880 – 1900)	Low	Nil
3: Commercial port development (1900 – 1950)	Moderate	Local, State
4: Post-war occupation (1950–Present)	Extant (not archaeological)	N/A

## 5.0 ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

### 5.1 Proposed development

The State-led rezoning application is supported by an Indicative Masterplan which presents a potential development outcome that could be realised at the Coffs Harbour Foreshore. The Indicative Masterplan and the resulting rezoning boundaries are shown at Figure 1. The Indicative Masterplan builds on the extensive community and stakeholder consultation carried out to date and provides further detail in relation to land use and development outcomes sought for the Precinct. It sets out a design vision for the Jetty Foreshore will be recognised as creating a new regional identity for Coffs Harbour built from the natural characteristics of its site. The Jetty Foreshore will become a world-class ocean from precinct by:

- Respecting: Gumbaynggirr, environmental and maritime roots now and into the future;
- Promoting: Community character, coastal activity and local economic sustainability;
- Connecting: People to the water, the water to the city, and the city to the highlands.

The Indicative Masterplan is broadly organised across six sub-precincts that will each have a distinct character and function. These are identified as:

1. The Marina – An active marina revitalised to accommodate local marine based businesses that reflect their regional importance.
2. North Park – Functional open space with recreational courts, formalised parking and a public pavilion potentially linked to Aboriginal arts & culture.
3. Jetty Hub – A hub of residential and tourist accommodation supporting activation, tourism and regional attraction located adjacent the current Jetty Walkway, with massing capped at 6 storeys stepping down in scale to public areas.
4. Activity Hub and Village Green – An active village green that delivers increased public open space connected to the existing foreshore parklands and may include family friendly food and beverage, community uses and club houses or facilities to support events. A local business activity zone connected to the rail station.
5. Corambirra Point – A new regional tourist destination on the site of the former Deep Sea Fishing Club site including publicly accessible cafes and restaurants, a function space, activity centre and tourist accommodation.
6. Foreshore Parklands – with improved amenities, new board walk and nature-based playground.

A precinct map showing the Indicative Masterplan is provided at Figure 1.

### 5.2 Potential impacts

Although the Indicative Masterplan indicates that ground disturbing works may take place in areas with archaeological potential, the current proposal is for **rezoning only** and no excavation works would occur.



The proposal would therefore not result in impact to significant archaeological resources.

### 5.3 Response to relevant policy

The *Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan 1998* includes conservation policies to be considered during future management of the Conservation Plan study area. The policies were developed to conserve the significance of elements identified in the plan.

**Table 6: Summary of relevant policy from the Coffs Harbour Jetty Conservation Plan 1998**

Policy no.	Policy	Response
76	In any future works, adequate time, financial and staff resources shall be set aside for Archaeological Monitoring, for the purpose of recording and retrieving any archaeological relics.	On completion of detailed design, the need for archaeological monitoring would be determined by an Archaeological Impact Assessment. The preparation of an Archaeological Impact Assessment is recommended in Section 5.4.
77	The current philosophy regarding the conservation of archaeological remains is that they are best conserved by remaining undisturbed.	This assessment recommended that detailed design considers reducing in-ground impacts on those portions of the study area assessed as having the potential to contain state significant archaeological remains associated with the jetty and former infrastructure see Section 5.4..
78	In the case of the buried section of the jetty exposure of the structural members would speed up the decay process. The best method of conservation of this section of the jetty is for it to remain buried.	This assessment recommended that detailed design considers reducing in-ground impacts on those portions of the study area assessed as having the potential to contain state significant archaeological remains associated with the jetty and former infrastructure see Section 5.4..
79	Archaeological Monitoring should be undertaken if redevelopment proposals will result in the loss of deposits both on the sea bed or under the approaches to the Jetty.	On completion of detailed design, the need for archaeological monitoring would be determined by an Archaeological Impact Assessment. The preparation of an Archaeological Impact Assessment is recommended in Section 5.4..

### 5.4 Recommended mitigation

Portions of the Precinct have been assessed as having moderate potential to contain archaeological remains that may be associated with the SHR listed Coffs Harbour Jetty. Dependant on the extent of survival, these remains may reach the local and/or state significance thresholds.

The current proposal is for rezoning only and no excavation works would occur. The current proposal would **not result in impact to significant archaeological resources**.

#### **Next steps**

Should excavation works be proposed within areas identified as having the potential to contain significant archaeological resources, an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) should be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with relevant guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Council and delegates.

An Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment is to include:

- An overview of the archaeological potential and significance of the area proposed for impact

- An assessment of the probable impact of the proposed excavation on the significance of the archaeological resource, and the impact on any listed heritage items as a result of this archaeological impact
- Recommendations regarding management of potential archaeological resources in order to best conserve their significance whilst balancing the needs of the proposed works. This may include archaeological testing, monitoring and/or salvage excavation dependent on the significance of archaeological resources and the level of proposed impact
- Recommendations regarding approvals and/or exceptions required to undertake proposed works.

If there is any likelihood that the development will have an impact on significant archaeological relics, development is to ensure that the impact is managed according to the assessed level of significance of those remains.

Ground-disturbing activities may require approvals either under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* for potential harm to significant archaeological relics or under the NSW *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* for SSD projects with the potential to impact significant archaeological remains.

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusions

Historical archaeological assessment of the study area has determined:

- The study area has nil-low potential to contain archaeological remains of early European occupation of the site, up to the 1900s (Phases 1-2)
- The study area has moderate potential to contain archaeological remains of the commercial development and occupation of the Coffs Harbour port (Phase 3) – however this impact is only focused on one main area of the rezoning study area
- Post 1950s development remains largely extant within the study area (Phase 4).
- Archaeological remains of Phases 1-2, and 4 have been assessed as having nil archaeological significance
- Archaeological remains of Phase 3 development would reach the threshold for Local and State significance if related to the Coffs Harbour Jetty however little to no major structural development is planned for this area other than hard and soft landscaping improvements.

### 6.2 Heritage approvals processes

This HAA is intended to accompany the State-led rezoning application being submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to be assessed under the *Environmental and Planning Assessment Act 1979*.

Any works proposed within the curtilage, or visual buffer, of a State Heritage Register listed item require approval by the Heritage NSW under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*.

Similarly, any ground-disturbing activities may require approvals either under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* for potential harm to significant archaeological relics or under the NSW *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* for SSD projects with the potential to impact significant archaeological remains.

The following sections outline the necessary approvals processes required for the management of potential archaeological remains, should impact of remains be necessary for the implementation of the masterplan.

#### **Approvals required under the NSW Heritage Act**

To impact archaeological resources within the curtilage of an SHR-listed item, consent must be gained from the Heritage Council through a Section 60 approval. In some circumstances, under Section 57(2) of the Heritage Act, a Section 60 approval may not be required if works are undertaken in accordance with the NSW Heritage branch document *Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval* or in accordance with agency specific exemptions. This includes works that are minor in nature and will have minimal impact on the heritage significance of the SHR-listed item.

Archaeological relics (located outside an SHR curtilage) are protected by the Relics Provisions (Sections 139-146) of the Heritage Act. Excavation approvals are issued by the Heritage Council of

NSW, or its Delegate, under Section 140 of the Heritage Act for relics (not listed on the State Heritage Register).

In some instances, works may be exempt from the requirement to obtain an approval to excavate. Any works exempt would need to be clarified in the HAIA.

- Section 139 Exception – is required for archaeological test excavation and/or minor works to verify the presence of significant relics without removing or impacting them
- Section 140 Excavation Approval – is required for archaeological excavation and activities which disturb and impact archaeological relics.

Any application for approval that would include impact to potential archaeological resources must be accompanied by an Archaeological Methodology and Research Design (AMRD) and Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) prepared in accordance with the relevant NSW Heritage Council guidelines:

### 6.3 Recommended next steps for the design stage

It is noted that the current assessment is for rezoning only. Should the masterplan progress to the next stage, the following is recommended to manage potential impacts to historical archaeological remains.

1. Input into detailed design from a suitably qualified archaeologist.
2. Preparation of an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) on finalisation of the detailed design, when excavation impacts are known, on receipt of Development Application (DA).
3. Preparation of an Archaeological Methodology and Research Design (AMRD) should archaeological management be required.
4. If required, a Section 140 and/or Section 60 approval application for impact to archaeological remains should be submitted to Heritage NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet (HNSW) prior to any in-ground impacts. The application would need to be accompanied by this assessment, the HAIA, AMRD, payment and approved DA.



## 6.4 Management and mitigation measures

It is recommended that the following measures be implemented to reduce and avoid potential archaeological remains:

**Table 7: Mitigation measures**

Mitigation measure	Description
<b>Impact reduction through design</b>	<p>Prior to development in the study area, it is recommended that a suitably qualified archaeologist is consulted during the design process in order to limit impact to the archaeological resource and to mitigate the removal of archaeological remains if necessary.</p> <p>Excavation impacts within those areas with the potential to contain state significant archaeological remains associated with the SHR listed jetty should be reduced.</p>
<b>Archaeological Impact Assessment, Archaeological Research Design and Methodology and approvals</b>	<p>The current proposal is for rezoning only.</p> <p><b>No historical archaeological relics, or significant archaeological remains, would be impacted by the current proposal.</b></p> <p>Should the masterplan progress to the next stage, the following is recommended to manage potential impacts historical archaeological remains:</p> <p>If excavation impacts are required in area identified as having the potential to impact on areas of moderate archaeological potential, an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) must be prepared to outline appropriate strategies to minimise and manage any potential impacts to archaeological remains, and outline the statutory obligations of the project.</p> <p>Should project excavation works be unavoidable and required in areas identified as having archaeological potential, archaeological testing may be required prior to project works to determine the extent of preservation and refine construction methodologies. Should state significant relics be identified, avoidance of remains is recommended.</p> <p>Archaeological approvals under Section 140 and/or Section 60 of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> may be required prior to any excavation works within areas assessed as having potential to contain significant archaeological remains (including archaeological testing and/or project excavation works).</p> <p>Any archaeological permit/exception permit would need to be accompanied by an Historical Archaeological Impact Assessment (HAIA) and an Archaeological Methodology and Research Design (AMRD).</p>

## 7.0 REFERENCES

### 7.1 Secondary Sources

Aussie Towns (2023). Coffs Harbour, NSW. Available at: <https://www.aussietowns.com.au/town/coffs-harbour-nsw> (Accessed 14/07/2023).

Bickford, A and S. Sullivan (1984). 'Assessing the Research Significance of Historic Sites' in Sullivan S and S. Bowdler (eds), *Site Surveys and Significance Assessment in Australian Archaeology (Proceedings of the 1981 Springwood Conference on Australian Prehistory)*, Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra.

BMT WBM Pty Ltd (2009). Coffs Harbour Coastal Processes Progress Report. Report for the Coffs Harbour City Council. Unpublished report prepared for CHCC and held by the Heritage NSW Library.

Hedditch, R. (2013). Coffs Harbour 2013 Heritage Study. Unpublished heritage study prepared for Coffs Harbour Council and held by the Heritage NSW Library. Coffs Harbour Library (Coffs Collection) (2023). Available at: <https://libraries.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/Collections/Local-history/Coffs-Collections>.

Kadwell, D. (1998). 'Caught in the Tide: Australian beach culture and Coffs Harbour', in J. Kijas, J. Ledger and A. Beasley (Eds) *Past Lives Fresh Views: histories of the mid-north coast of New South Wales*.

Mackey, N (2001). *European Settlement in the Clarence River District before 1850*, Mackey: Grafton.

Maston, W.A.J. (1984). *Ships and Timber: a short history of Coffs Harbour port and associated railways*. Coffs Collections, accessed 19/07/2023, <https://coffs.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/71930>.

Sydney Morning Herald (1892). 'Opening of the Coff's Harbour Jetty', August 6, 1892, p10. Available at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13874247> (Accessed 10/07/2023).

Waters, K. (2020). 'Coffs Harbour Bypass Project, Cultural Values Assessment Report'. Unpublished report for Transport for NSW held by NSW Property & Development.

### 7.2 Legislation and Guidelines

Australia ICOMOS 2013 *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*.

Coffs Harbour Shire Council 1986. *Heritage Study: Coffs Harbour Shire*.

Coffs Harbour Development Control Plan 2015. [https://chcc-icon.saas.t1cloud.com/public/pages/plan/book.aspx?exhibit=chcc\\_standard\\_exhibition\\_dcp\\_2015](https://chcc-icon.saas.t1cloud.com/public/pages/plan/book.aspx?exhibit=chcc_standard_exhibition_dcp_2015).

Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2013. <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/epi-2013-0564>.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1979-203>.

Heritage Council of New South Wales, 2021. *Standard Exemptions for Works Requiring Heritage Council Approval*.

Heritage Office (former) 2006. *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice*.

NSW Government Gazette Schedule of exceptions to subsections 139(1) and (2) of the Heritage Act 1977. [https://gazette.legislation.nsw.gov.au/so/download.w3p?id=Gazette\\_2022\\_2022-59.pdf](https://gazette.legislation.nsw.gov.au/so/download.w3p?id=Gazette_2022_2022-59.pdf).

NSW Heritage Act 1977. <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1977-136>.

NSW Heritage Office, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 1996. *Archaeological Assessments*.

Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (former) Heritage Division, 2009. *Assessing Significance for Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'*, 4.



artefact

Artefact Heritage and Environment

ABN 73 144 973 526

Suite 56, Jones Bay Wharf

26-32 Pirrama Road

Pymont NSW 2009 Australia

+61 2 9518 8411

[office@artefact.net.au](mailto:office@artefact.net.au)

[www.artefact.net.au](http://www.artefact.net.au)