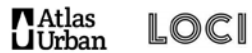




OURIMBAH COMMON MASTERPLAN

November 2025





<http://www.atlasurban.com/>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Citrus Orchards in Ourimbah C1910 (Credit: Courtesy of Central Coast Council)

Ourimbah underwent a significant transition, evolving into a prominent center for citrus fruit production. This circa 1910 photograph captures the early citrus orchards with Glen Road discernible in the background on the right-hand side.

The master plan responds to the design brief and was developed through a process of analysis, careful listening, and inspiration. Alternative options were developed and discussed to reveal preferences. Community and council feedback has confirmed a set of practical considerations including the need for robust materials, convenience, visibility, shelter, and flexibility of use.

At every point of the master planning process there has been keen engagement from the village community. This is not surprising as, for generations, the site has been a special place serving as the community's common ground. The master plan recognises this special status and carries it forward with the concept of Ourimbah Common.

What kind of place is Ourimbah Common?

- A place for the community to come together for play and celebration.
- A place of collective effort in service of life in common.
- A place that offers relief 'when nature calls'.
- A place to sit that is sheltered from the sun and rain.
- A place where stories are told and new stories are made.
- A place where locals belong and visitors are welcome.

The design creates a layered and flexible place to function as a pocket park, informal children's play, community gatherings and other occasions. The master plan includes areas of open turf and a variety of trees and shrubs. Two wheelchair-accessible public toilets, a covered seating area with interpretive heritage elements and a water drinking fountain.

The strategic positioning of the building in the Southeast of the site frames the park and allows for good visibility from Glen Road and the shops. The design of the curved structures enables a visual connection to the east while screening the homes to the south.

The use of curved structural elements also acts as an interpretive reference to the former Nissen Hut that once occupied the site. A circular space serves as a small forum, edged with steps for informal seating and gathering.

The park area includes a garden. Planted mounds frame the open spaces and provide privacy to the southern neighbours. An open grassed area forms the main part of the park, serving **smaller-scale recreational and communal activities**. A planted drainage swale will add privacy and aesthetic appeal with small shrubs to avoid conflict with services.

The public domain area of Glen Road includes a **new footpath and an extended kerb to shorten the street crossing of Glen Road**. The parallel parking on the south side of Glen Road is to be replaced with right-angle parking to increase the number of spaces from 5 to 12 including one disabled car parking space and a Council vehicle. Provision for maintenance vehicle parking has also been provided on Jaques Street.



1A Jaques Street, Ourimbah Master Plan

1 INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the masterplan and public domain plan are to:

- Produce a masterplan for the proposed development of 1A Jaques Street in close consultation with internal stakeholders and the community that is attractive, accessible, and active with a focus on community, social enterprise, and/or open space and recreation uses.
- Identify uses that complement current zoning, encourage activity and connectivity, and improve the viability of the Ourimbah centre.
- Identify potential linkages within the Ourimbah centre.
- Enhance the character and urban form of the Ourimbah centre.



1A Jaques Street, Ourimbah Site context

1.3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- The Ourimbah Area Strategy and Centre Masterplan, adopted by Council in March 2022, identified opportunities for the town centre and Jaques Street site to be improved.
- 1A Jaques Street comprises of a rectangular plot measuring approximately 1050 square meters. Prior to the council's acquisition, the land was owned by The University of Newcastle since 1994.
- Council acquired the site from the University of Newcastle in July 2023 for the nominal fee of \$1, with the understanding that the site would be used for a community purpose.

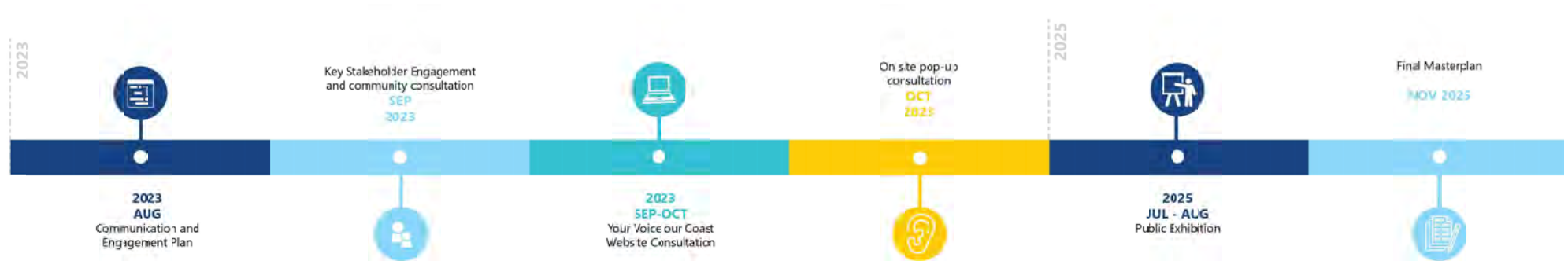
- Council resolved that Council work with the community to determine future uses for the site and to inform amendments to the adopted Ourimbah Land Use Strategy and Masterplan 2022

Project scope:

1. Identify the suitable utilisation of the site, encompassing its potential for community activities, social enterprise, open spaces, and recreational purposes and;
2. Explore the possibility of leasing the site to a community organisation.



PROJECT TIMELINE



- A range of community consultations involving key stakeholders and the broader public were conducted to gather feedback on the proposed uses for the site in the future.



Oct 23 on site pop-up session

1.4 DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

Engagement with the stories of Country and of the place will be fundamental to the Master Plan.

We understand that, in order to be effective, this may need to be flexible, informal and ongoing beyond the period of the consultancy; it is a conversation and process that does not and should not stop. This process is guided by the Connecting with Country and Designing With Country policies drafted by the NSW Government Architect.

The concept diagram on the right reflects the three essential elements that are interrelated when designing with Country.

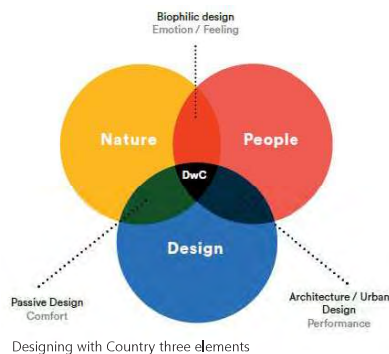
The Connecting with Country Framework is a framework for developing connections with Country to inform the planning, design, and delivery of the built environment.

Through a Designing with Country approach, we can help to ensure that First Nation insights form part of the design and development process well before the first sod is turned. Together the approach of the Master Plan would be aiming to reset the balance between Indigenous, colonial and migrant histories, and bring a First Nations' perspective to sustainable design.

The framework also reveals the importance of country-centred design compared to human-centred design.

The project team with Council has discussed the proposals and included feedback from cultural representatives from both Darkinjung and Guringai traditional owners. This valuable and privileges sharing of knowledge has been included in the park story.

Prioritising people and their needs when designing is widely regarded as fundamental in contemporary design and planning. However, appreciating an Indigenous or Aboriginal world-view suggests that there are limitations imposed by an entirely human-centred approach to design. If people and their needs are at the "centre" of design considerations, then the landscape and nature are reduced to second order priorities. If design and planning processes considered natural systems that include people, animals, resources and plants equally "similar to an Aboriginal world view" this could make a significant contribution to a more sustainable future world.



Designing with Country three elements



Human-centred vs country-centred

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Community Collaboration

Seek to include local Indigenous communities in each stage of the planning and design process to seek their voices and perspectives as members of the community.

Cultural Consultation:

Engage with local communities in each stage of the design process to ensure that the building reflects the cultural practices, values, and aspirations of the local community.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PLACE

Creating Healthy Environments

Promote physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, with access to natural light, fresh air, and green space that is safe for all users.

CELEBRATE STORYLINES OF COUNTRY AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

Cultural Spaces

Spaces within the proposal that can be used for cultural life, language revitalisation programs, and community gatherings, thereby strengthening the community's connection to their heritage and language.

Storytelling Through Design

Using the architecture to tell the stories of the land, its history, and its people.

MATERIALS AND LANDSCAPING TO CARE FOR AND HEAL COUNTRY

Use of Local Materials

Incorporate local materials that are respectful to the land and contribute to the healing of the environment. This includes using sustainable and renewable materials that are locally sourced, where possible, to minimise the environmental footprint.

Landscaping with Native Plants

Landscaped areas will include native vegetation to support local ecosystems, promote biodiversity, and maintain the ecological balance in the area. These plants will require less water and less maintenance.

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT DISTINCT CONCEPTS RELATING TO COUNTRY

Reflecting Cultural Significance

Reflect the cultural significance of the site, incorporating elements that tell the story of the land and its people. This includes the incorporation of artwork, symbols and design motifs that are meaningful to the local Indigenous community.

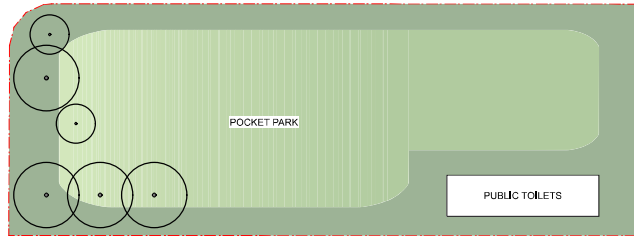
Sensitivity to the Land

Design with a sensitivity to the natural landscape, considering aspects such as the orientation to the sun, wind patterns, and topography, to ensure the delivery has minimal impact, and works harmoniously with the surrounding environment.

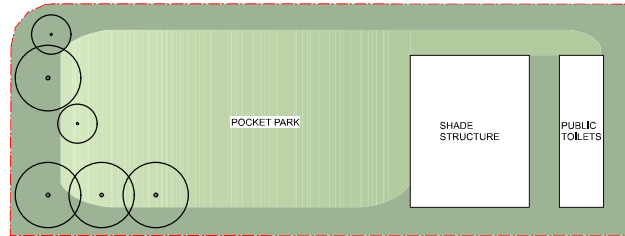
1.5 PROJECT DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- The subject site presented a spectrum of possibilities, contingent on the development preferences of the local community.
- As illustrated in these basic massing diagrams, the master plan evolved through a number of design iterations.

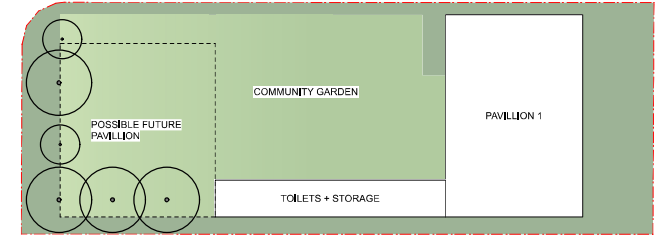
Preliminary design option development



3 Option 1
Scale: 1:300

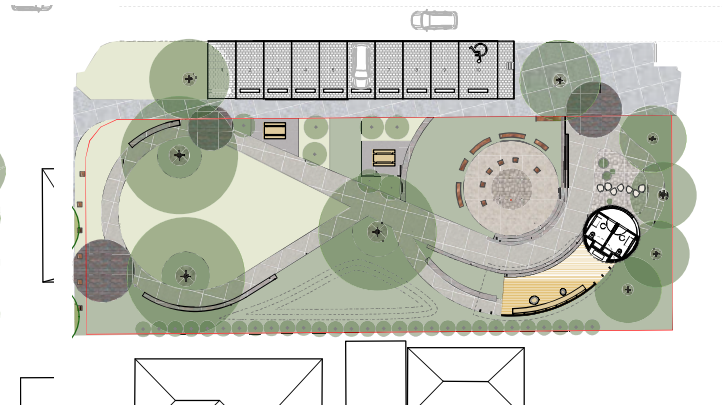
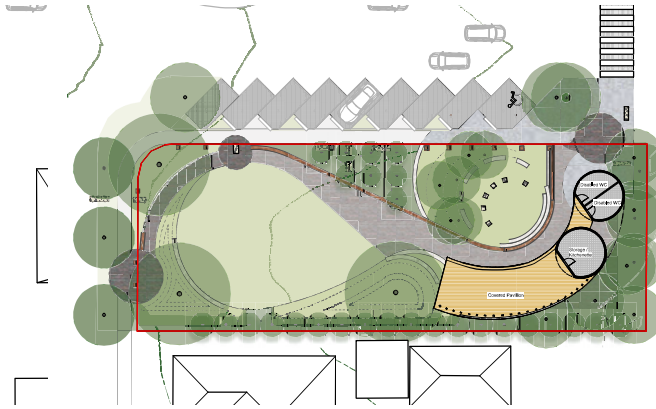
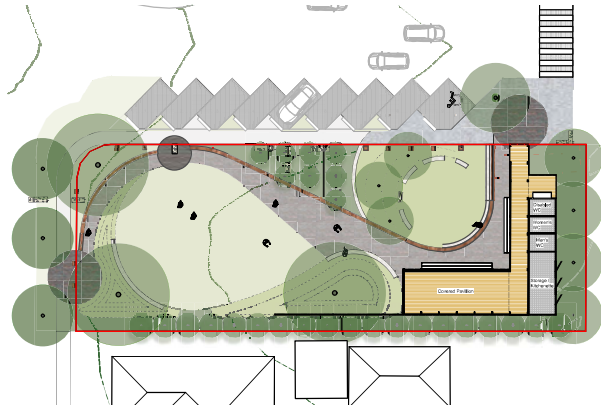


4 Option 2
Scale: 1:300



5 Option 3
Scale: 1:300

Further design option development



2 SITE HISTORY

2.1 OURIMBAH NEIGHBOURHOOD HISTORY

1863

- Blue Gum Flat Public School (now Ourimbah Public School), was built on the site of the current Railway Station. At the time of the school's opening in 1863, schools were controlled by the Board of National Education. During this period in country districts, children were only required to attend school for two to three years before being considered properly educated. (Ourimbah Recollections, p26).

1870

- In 1870 the community felt that the district warranted a Post Office. Edward Walmsley was building a shop across the road from the Blue Gum Flat Public School and offered it as a place from which the school teacher could operate a post office. In 1871 William Walmsley became Ourimbah's first Post Master (Ourimbah: History of a New South Wales Timber Town to 1930, p33).



The Tall Timbers Hotel, circa 1890s. Formerly the Royal Exchange Hotel, the property was owned by John Beattie in the 1880s to early 1900s. (Source: Central Coast Library Services")



Ourimbah subdivision plan - 1896 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- This early subdivision plan, dating back to late 1896, delineates the initial planning efforts in proximity to the recently inaugurated railway line.
- The highlighted area in red corresponds to the subject site along what was then Government Road, subsequently renamed Glen Road.
- Notably, Jaques Road had not yet been developed at the time of this plan.



Series of advertisement from the Central Coast Phone Books (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- A Bakery Factory was located on Jacques Street Ourimbah
 - 1972-1976 Cobbitty Farm Bakeries Jacques Street Ourimbah
 - Circa 1977-1982 Pro-Rol Bakeries main office Belmont with Jacques Street Ourimbah referred to as a Depot
 - 1983-1994 and possibly beyond Tip Top Bakeries (Pro-Rol)
 - 1986 Branded in phone Book advertisement "Tip Top makers of Tip Top & Pro-Rol bread"



Ourimbah School Of Arts, Photo Taken Circa 1907 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- The original Ourimbah School of Arts, dating back to approximately 1904, was situated on the opposite side of the highway, adjacent to the railway tracks and across from the Tall Timbers Hotel.
- Acting as the town's first community hub, the building unfortunately burned down in 1922.



The relocated Ourimbah Public School, formerly Blue Gum Flat PS 1886, circa 1910 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")



Ourimbah Station C1908, (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- Strategically situated, the establishment of Ourimbah Station in 1886 marked a significant milestone in the history of Ourimbah, transforming it into a pivotal center for the timber industry that catered to the construction surges in Sydney and Newcastle.
- The above Charles Kerry postcard shows timber products from the local sawmills being readied for loading in 1908.



- Positioned as a pivotal intermediary between Newcastle and Sydney, Ourimbah fulfills a crucial role in connecting and servicing a broader population beyond its immediate local residents.



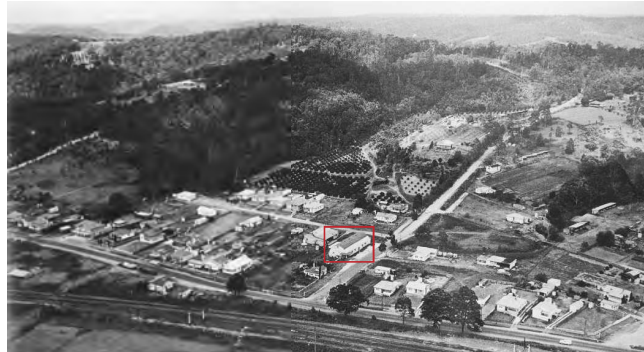
Saturday night dance crowd, Community Hall, Ourimbah, 1938 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- The community hall was the core of the social life of the district



Third School of Arts Building, Ourimbah - 1978, (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- The original School of Arts provided technical education to unskilled workers who lacked formal educational.



Aerial PHOTO AFTER 1951 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

- This aerial photograph, dating back to approximately 1951, provides an initial glimpse of the newly constructed Nissen Hut. Additionally, by this time, Jaques Street had been established, with residential properties emerging along the street. Notably, citrus orchards still covered the landscape behind the site and extended up Glen Road.



School of Arts Ourimbah - circa 1985 (Source: Central Coast Library Services")

The origin of the Nissen Hut:
Nissen huts were developed during the First World War by Major Peter Norman Nissen of the 29th Company, Royal Engineers. The design was formalised after three prototypes were constructed in April 1916. At least 100,000 were produced in World War I. Nissen patented his design in 1916.

2.2 1A JAKES STREET SITE HISTORY

Ourimbah Station, situated on the Main Northern railway line, was constructed in 1886 and officially opened on 15 August 1887. Today, more than 1,000 passengers use the station per week.

The School of Arts burned down in 1922, prompting relocation to what is now known as 1A Jakes Street.

The School of Arts Hall was destroyed in a second fire on 3 February. As the social hub of the district, its loss was deeply felt. Residents of Ourimbah decided in a public meeting to construct a brick-and-tile School of Arts Hall on the site to replace the previous weatherboard structure.

The University of Newcastle commenced teaching at the hall, with the property officially transferred to the university on 10 December 1993.

By the end 2023, the Nissen Hut was removed from the site and the University of Newcastle - Ourimbah Campus transferred the site back to council.

1886

1922

1949

1951

1989

2023

NEXT

1904

Ourimbah's first School of Arts was erected in 1904, serving multi functional roles including as a cinema, auditorium, theatre, and a venue for various special community events.

1923

By 1923, the building had been rebuilt and continued its use as the School of Arts.

2005

The building was rendered vacant by the university.



The Nissen Hut, imported as war surplus from Manus Island, arrived at the site following the end of WWII. This site was under the ownership of the Ourimbah School of Arts.

1954

By 1954, Ourimbah Hall was quickly becoming a popular destination for dancing, featuring what was regarded as one of the best dance floors in the district. Its spacious layout made it suitable for hosting large-scale cabaret-style balls.

Ourimbah is derived from the Aboriginal word meaning "bora" or ceremonial ground, or, it refers to "the sacred circle at the initiation site for investing the Oorin, or belt of manhood," traditionally made from possum pelts.

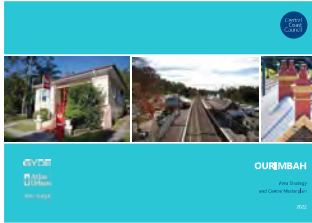


*Refer to Heritage Report for details

3 ANALYSIS

3.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

Ourimbah Area Strategy and Centre Masterplan was adopted in March 2022. The Strategy and Masterplan provided directions to guide long-term planning for Ourimbah.



1A Jaques Street is located within the Centre Masterplan, which also outlines a series of strategies pertaining to car parking, enhancements in public spaces, footpath development, and street tree planting.

Please note that the Nissen Hut remained intact at the time the Masterplan was prepared. The Masterplan proposed the future landuse as follows: *'re-use building if suitable or redevelop site for a community use such as occasional market, community hall or other.'*



Integrated Strategies Map

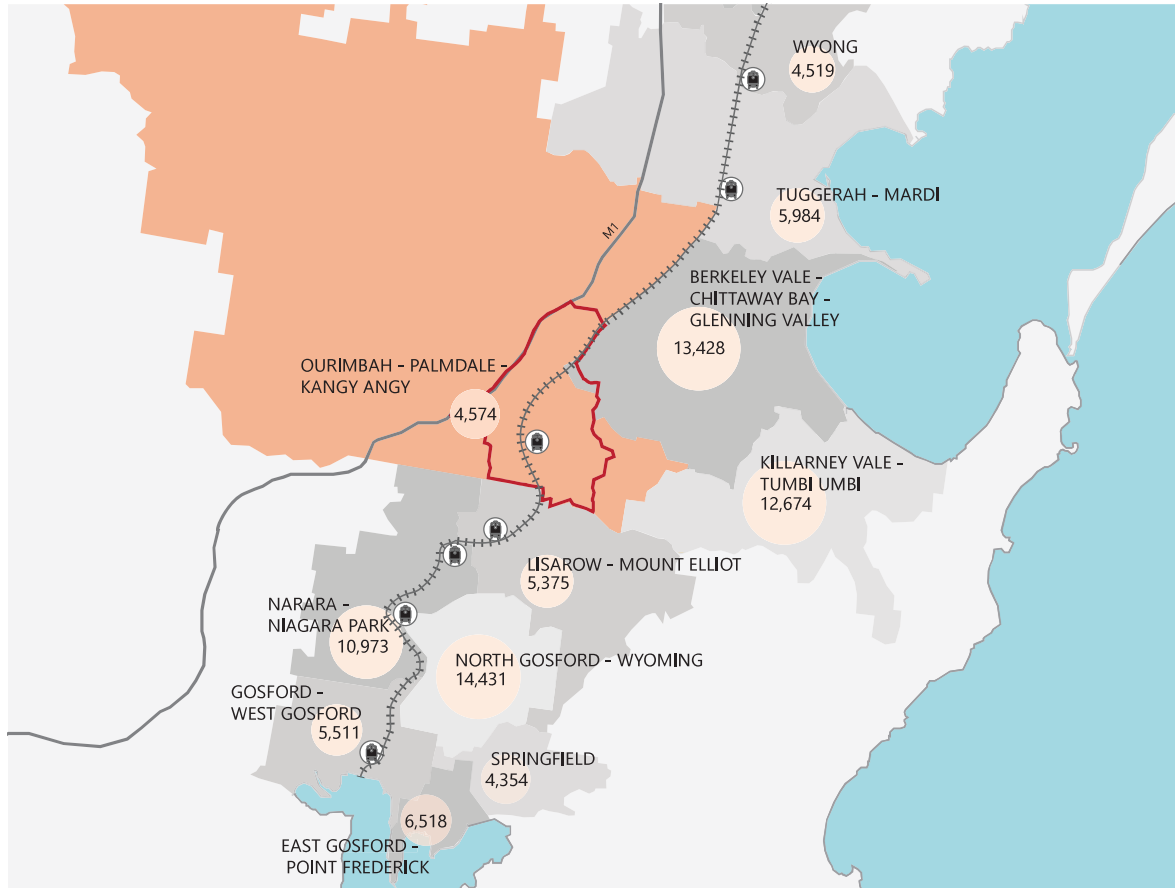
- Precinct boundary
- ↔ Vehicle and pedestrian link - New
- ↔ Vehicle and pedestrian link - Improved
- ⋯ Pedestrian link - New
- ⋯ Pedestrian link - Improved
- Investigation area
- Potential for improved public access
- Maintain scenic qualities/minimise visual impacts
- ↔ Biodiversity corridor investigation
- Prominent site - Natural
- Prominent site - Urban



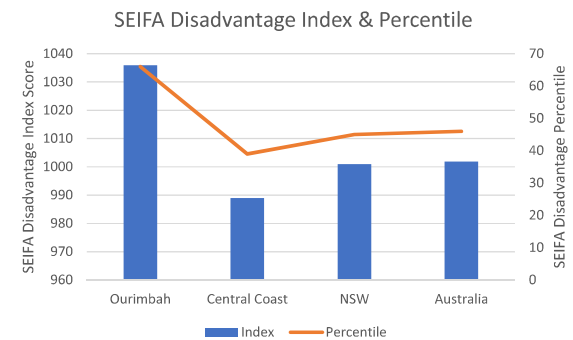
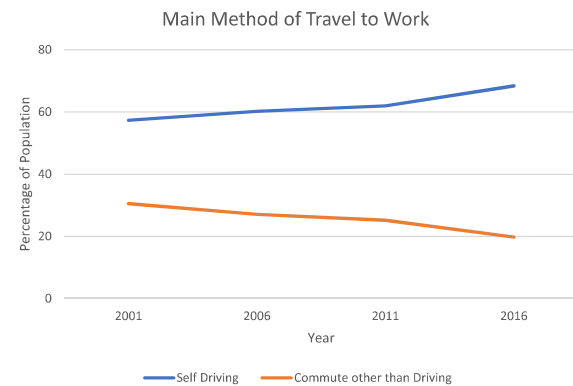
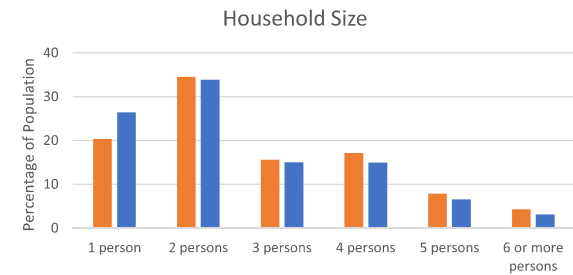
Indicative Masterplan Layout

- Centre Masterplan Boundary
- Footpaths
- Heritage
- Street Trees

OURIMBAH DEMOGRAPHIC



- Household sizes in Ourimbah have decreased in recent years but remain above the Central Coast average. Although approximately half of the households in the area include children, there is a growing number of lone person households.
- Recent housing market trends reflect this shift, with more homes now available with either 2 bedrooms or 4 or more bedrooms.
- Source: Ourimbah Area Strategy and Centre Masterplan 2022



COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN 5KM RADIUS



- There are over 50 community facilities located in Ettalong, Gosford, Lake Munmorah, Long Jetty, Terrigal, Toukley and Wyong
- A Youth Entertainment Venue is located at Erina in an approximately 8km from the site.

OURIMBAH OPEN SPACE INVENTORY WITHIN 600M - 10 MINUTES WALK

- While the Master Plan proposes facilities similar to those found in the immediate vicinity, it's important to note that the subject site enjoys certain advantages. For instance, Lions Park, situated close to the highway, doesn't provide the same level of safety for young children as the subject site does.
- Additionally, the larger parks to the north are accessible from the shops only by navigating a series of barriers, including crossing both the highway and the railway tracks. The subject site, with its close proximity to the shops and its segregation from the highway, presents an ideal location for a small pocket park.

On site facilities: OURIMBAH RUGBY PARK AND SOCCER GROUND

- Car parking.
- Club house
- Playing fields

BILL SOHIER PARK FACILITIES

- Carparking.
- Toilets
- Club house
- Playing fields.
- Tennis courts.
- Skate ramp.
- Playground with picnic settings & BBQ

LIONS PARK

- Car parking.
- Picnic settings.
- Playground.



SITE LOCATION

- The subject site area is approximately 1,100 square meters
- It is where the former Nissen Hut was situated, as well as the open space stretching along the highway in front of the local shops.
- While the primary focus is 1A Jaques Street, evaluating its interaction with the Public Domain, particularly the adjacent shops to the North, is a crucial aspect of the Master Plan.

CONTEXT AND PARKING

- This diagram illustrates the number of parking spaces within the vicinity of the site.
- Although there are 25 designated parking spaces in front of the shops, a significant number of patrons also rely on Glen Road and Jaques Street for accessing the shops.
- This situation presents an opportunity to enhance the integration of these presently disconnected elements and incorporate additional parking spaces into the design.



Legend
ⓧ Number of parking space

3.2 ANALYSIS - EXISTING SITE CONTEXT



1. Disengagement between shops and park space.
2. Toilet block is in a key location within the park space however blocks the possibility of a connection. The toilet block is uninviting.
3. Existing trees in the park space are insignificant, mostly privet weed species and a cheese tree in poor condition. There is opportunity for a new tree planting design.

4. The fall of two metres results in a drainage low point that needs to be responded to. The gradient will benefit from subtle terracing to maximise the usability.
5. Parking needs to be formalised in a configuration that best balances number of spaces and the connection between the park and shopping centre.



6. Existing powerlines will limit height of street trees along the street frontage. Larger trees will need to be planted within site.
7. An easement runs along the southern side of the site, requiring appropriate access and planting to be considered in the design.

ANALYSIS - EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

- The current site features restroom facilities and a moderately-sized open field for public use.
- As part of the site's improvement process, new restrooms will replace the existing facilities, providing enhanced amenities and improved functionality.
- This upgrade will also incorporate additional features such as a shade structure, an open pavilion, and a versatile pocket park.
- There are stormwater services on the southern boundary of the park that is informing the design response to avoid conflicts.



View at the corner of Glen Road and Jaques Street



Southern edge of the site



Intersection of Glen Road and Jaques Street



Existing public toilet



Entry to existing public car park



Ramp access to shops



The view of the shops is dominated by parked cars, old and disjointed awnings and irregular signs. This presentation would benefit from a renewal that freshens the appearance and brings coherence.