

Honeysuckle Foreshore

Public Domain Plan
January 2019



Artist Impression only - subject to change, subject to approval



Hunter & Central Coast
Development
Corporation

Honeysuckle west offers the last remaining waterfront sites in Newcastle's city centre

Linking the emerging commercial centre of the West End with Civic and beyond, Honeysuckle will be the city's waterfront arrival experience.

This Foreshore Public Domain Plan (Plan) integrates three important areas of Tree of Knowledge Park, Cottage Creek, and Worth Place Park West. And, for the first time these areas will be connected by the Waterfront Promenade – Newcastle's missing foreshore link.

This Plan has been prepared by Urbis on behalf of the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (HCCDC) and is informed by engagement with members of the community and key stakeholders, including City of Newcastle.

This Plan provides a framework for the delivery of high quality public domain in the Honeysuckle Precinct and supports the broader renewal of Newcastle city centre.



Honeysuckle: linking past, present and future

“ The fact that this area is a contributing part of what makes us who we are and where we come from cannot be defined just at something tangible. The feeling of the area and the extensive connection we have with it, the awareness of knowing this is a connection that is confined to just a handful of people living today because it was our ancestors that walked upon it...”¹

[1] Quoted in Cultural Heritage Assessment, Streat Archaeological Services, April 2011

A place of arrival and departure, Honeysuckle has many layers of history.

The precinct gained its current name from the Honeysuckle plant, *Banksia integrifolia*, and is part of the original home of the Awabakal and Worimi people, who knew of the area as “sweet”.

The precinct was an important place for the Awabakal and Worimi people, the traditional owners of the land. It was a place for meeting and for sustenance, with people fishing and gathering oysters and mud crabs along the low tidal flats. Corroborees were held nearby, where people gathered and ate feasts of seafood.

Industry arrived in the 1870s and for more than 125 years, the precinct housed successive waves of production, including timber yards, the Lee Wharf, the Wickham Oil Berth, Wickham Railway Station, and cordial and soda manufacturing.

The creation of a welcoming public domain at Honeysuckle is an opportunity to recognise the indigenous connection to country as well as the many waves of history that created this place.

HCCDC will continue to work with the Awabakal and Worimi people to ensure their connection to land is appropriately acknowledged in the creation of the Honeysuckle public domain.



City Arcade and Western Markets.
Source: Newcastle Cultural Collections



Lee Wharf 1907-1965.
Source: Newcastle Cultural Collections



Honeysuckle:

what this place
could be

The city's setting between harbour and ocean is much-loved by Novocastrians and the broader Hunter community.

HCCDC has listened to the community's feedback and, working within the constraints of the site, sought to retain what is unique about the Honeysuckle Precinct. The result is a plan that provides amenity and enjoyment for current and future generations.

The public domain is flexible and inclusive, providing spaces for the community to rest and relax by the water, exercise, gather with friends and family, or participate in pop-up community events.

The place will be one characterised by excellence in public domain design.

Each of the areas has its own character:

Tree of Knowledge Park **The arrival experience**

A welcoming place for the community to gather, adjoining residential areas in the north and west (Wickham).

Cottage Creek **An urban waterway**

Located at the centre of the precinct, this important waterway is also a key linkage point allowing for pedestrian and cycle connections.

Worth Place Park West **Breathing space in the city**

A hub for active uses and relaxation in the city, close to the University, TAFE, cafes and restaurants and an emerging residential area.

The Waterfront Promenade **Completing the foreshore link**

The generous promenade will connect the foreshore and provide a safe and active space for walking, cycling, rest and reflection.



HCCDC has listened carefully to the community’s preferences for the public domain at Honeysuckle. This Plan sets out a framework that responds to this feedback.

People told us that they wanted Honeysuckle to be a place that attracts people of all ages and takes advantage of its harbourfront setting, with an attractive promenade, seats overlooking the water and the potential for art and sculpture on the water or water’s edge. Picnic areas and children’s playgrounds to attract families during the day. Cafes, restaurants, spaces for pop-up food trucks, evening markets and music operating in to the evening.

Some of people’s big ideas included:

- “A Coney Island kind of setup [with] coin operated binoculars, roller skate hire, water bubblers, pop up drink and food, seating, big shaded kids play area and an outdoor cinema under the stars with free popcorn.”
- “A dining strip with cosmopolitan hours.”
- “Small live music area and family beer garden.”
- “Afternoon into evening activation with live music will bring life to the space.”

The final public domain will be subject to site constraints and funding. Due to the nature of the harbourfront location, significant funding is required for public infrastructure works including seawalls and the realignment of Honeysuckle Drive.

HCCDC engaged with City of Newcastle, government stakeholders, the University of Newcastle, the Awabakal and Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Councils, business and community representatives in the production of this Plan.

Stakeholder workshop outcomes

Their feedback has informed the plan and included:

Capture what is unique about the precinct

- Celebrate the indigenous and European heritage of the site
- Make this a place of excellence in design of the public domain
- Respond to the industrial heritage and current working harbour.

Make it active and engaging

- Provide a variety of destinations with a range of activities
- Make it authentic: tourists will want to come to the place if locals love it
- The spaces should work during the day and into the night.

Make it safe and attractive

- Create a safe promenade for both fast and slow movement (pedestrians and cyclists)
- Provide clear sightlines along all north south connections to the water and CBD
- Allow people to touch the water safely.

Create urban greenery

- Provide shaded spaces
- Interpret the natural form of Cottage Creek, whilst maintaining its important role in flood mitigation for the city.

Plan for the future

- Cater for the future population (university students, CBD workers and residents)
- Balance the existing “organic” use of spaces by the community with planned future uses (e.g. Tree of Knowledge Park is already an important gathering point for celebrations)
- Consider future uses of surrounding precincts, including across the harbour.

Big Ideas

Celebrate the past



Look to the future



Diversity of place



Vision



Place

- Celebrate our indigenous and working harbour heritage
- Acknowledge Honeysuckle as the future CBD waterfront
- Ensure public parks and urban spaces contribute to the value and understanding of the place



Activation

- A vibrant and safe public domain
- Easy to navigate
- Places for pop-up and special events



Connectivity

- Provide green space networks across the precinct
- Include a range of destinations along the water's edge
- Enhance streets by planting alongside footpath locations



Sustainability

- A mix of green, urban and waterfront spaces
- An urban ecology
- Green spaces that provide ecological and community benefits



Diversity

- A variety of experiences
- Enabling passive and active recreation
- Spaces that attract people from a range of backgrounds

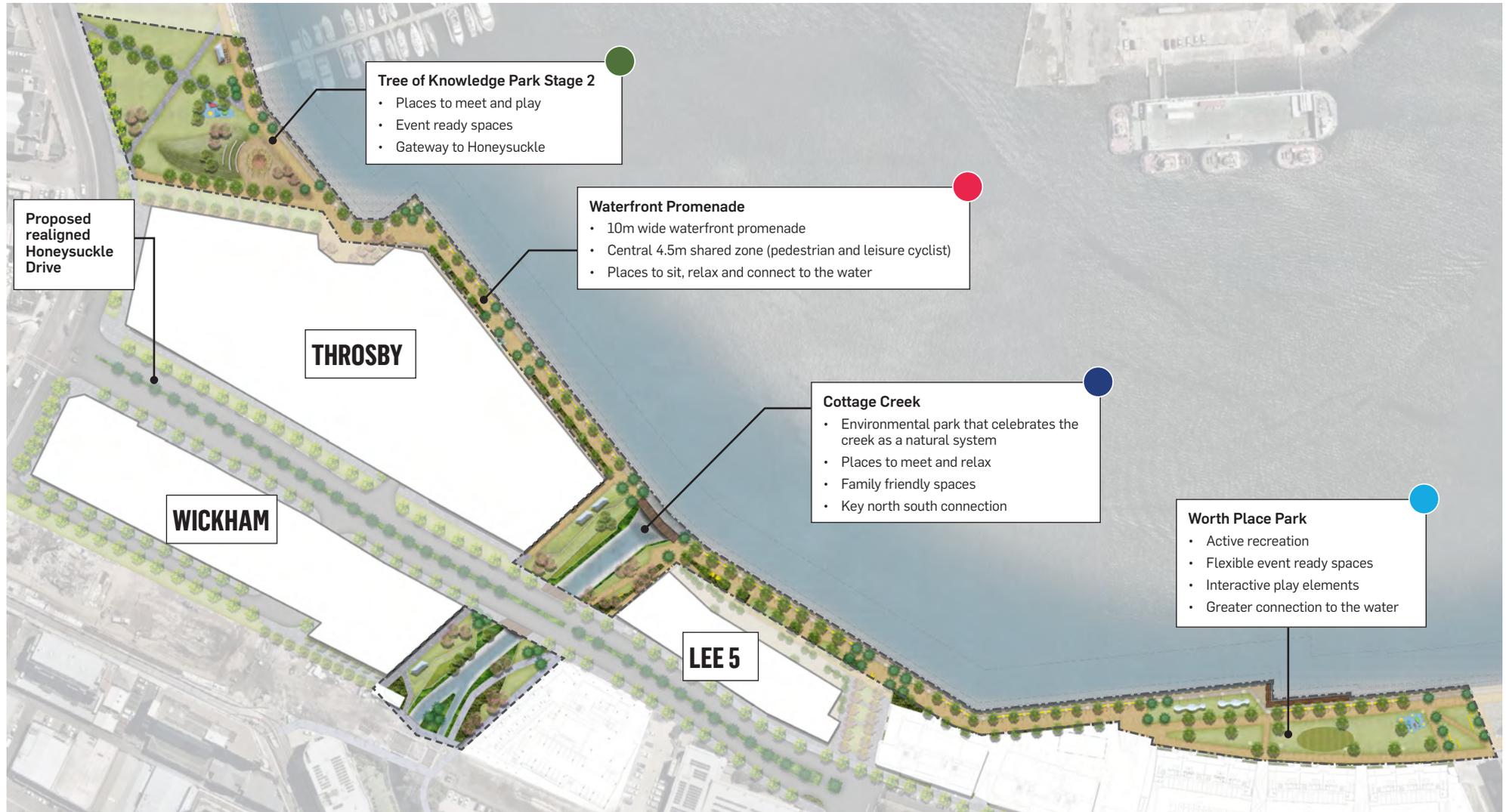


Participation

- Informed by community feedback
- Accessible and engaging spaces for all ages and abilities
- Places for informal gatherings and formal community events

Foreshore public domain plan

“ The Foreshore Public Domain Plan has been prepared following the assessment of site constraints and opportunities, consideration of stakeholder feedback and community consultation, application of key design strategies and consideration of available funding.”





Community and stakeholder insights

People were excited by a promenade completing the harbourfront link at Honeysuckle.

Their vision for the promenade is:

- A place that celebrates the indigenous, non-indigenous and industrial heritage of the precinct
- A place for locals and tourists will be attracted to this authentic local experience
- Opportunities for sitting and relaxing at the waterfront
- Accommodate both fast and slow movement along the waterfront, including pedestrians, cyclists, prams and wheelchairs
- Design that enables the promenade to meet the water
- The incorporation of interactive public art and water or kinetic sculptures.

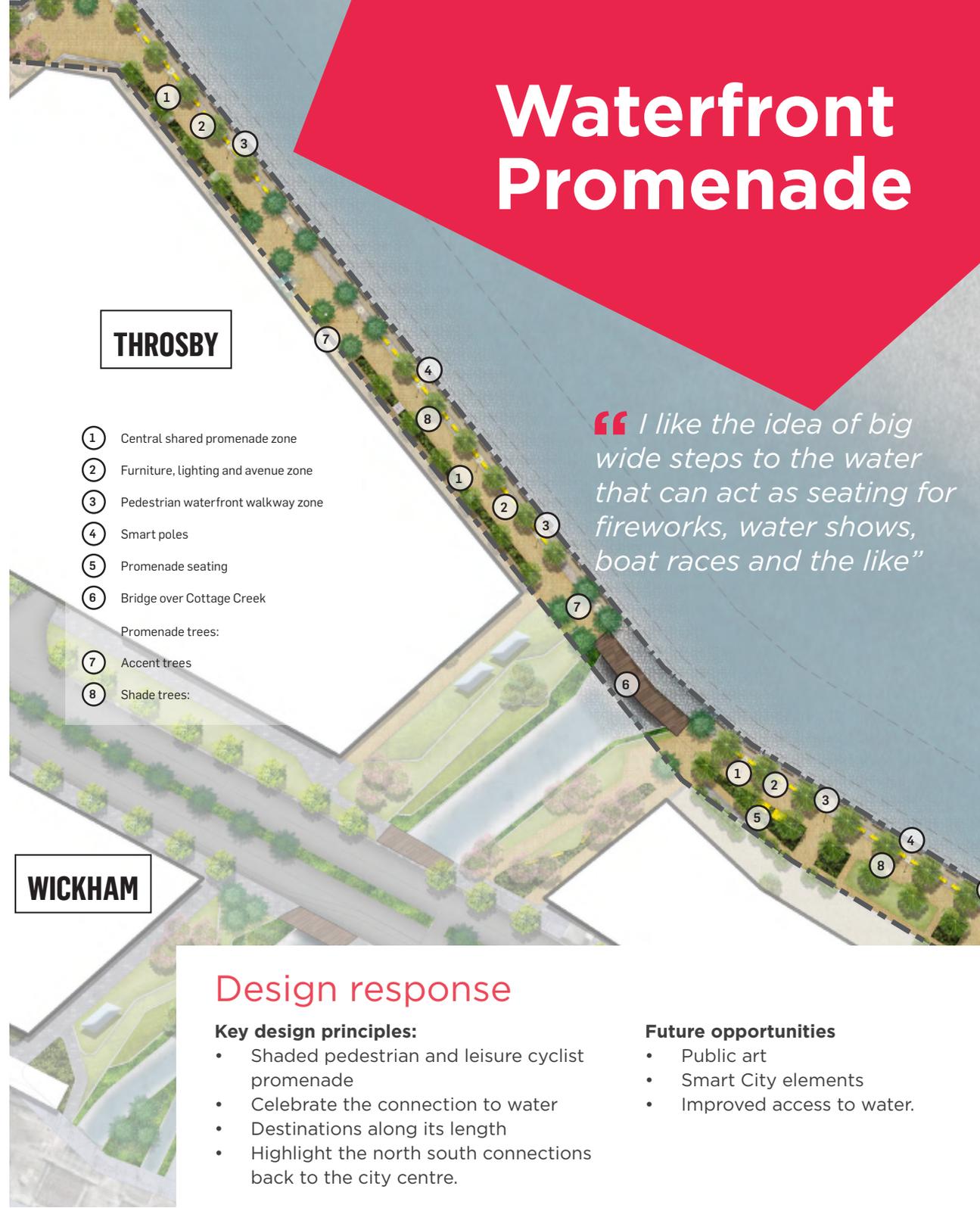
In their words:

"I like the idea of big wide steps to the water that can act as seating for fireworks, water shows, boat races and the like"

"Include water or kinetic sculpture."

"Integrate the landscape, design and architecture."

"Consider collaboration with Indigenous artists."



Waterfront Promenade

THROSBY

- ① Central shared promenade zone
- ② Furniture, lighting and avenue zone
- ③ Pedestrian waterfront walkway zone
- ④ Smart poles
- ⑤ Promenade seating
- ⑥ Bridge over Cottage Creek

Promenade trees:

- ⑦ Accent trees
- ⑧ Shade trees:

WICKHAM

"I like the idea of big wide steps to the water that can act as seating for fireworks, water shows, boat races and the like"

Design response

Key design principles:

- Shaded pedestrian and leisure cyclist promenade
- Celebrate the connection to water
- Destinations along its length
- Highlight the north south connections back to the city centre.

Future opportunities

- Public art
- Smart City elements
- Improved access to water.



A family friendly boardwalk that has a mix of cafés, retail, picnic area, children's playground and theatre."

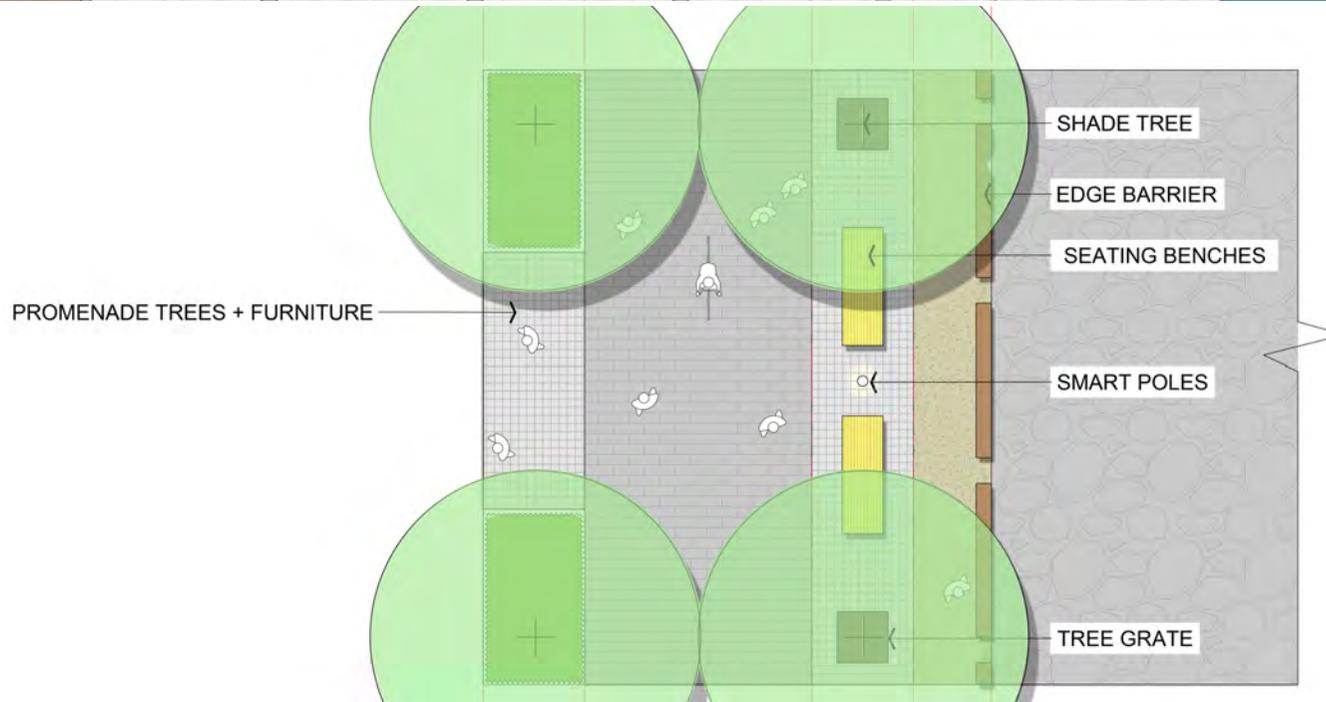
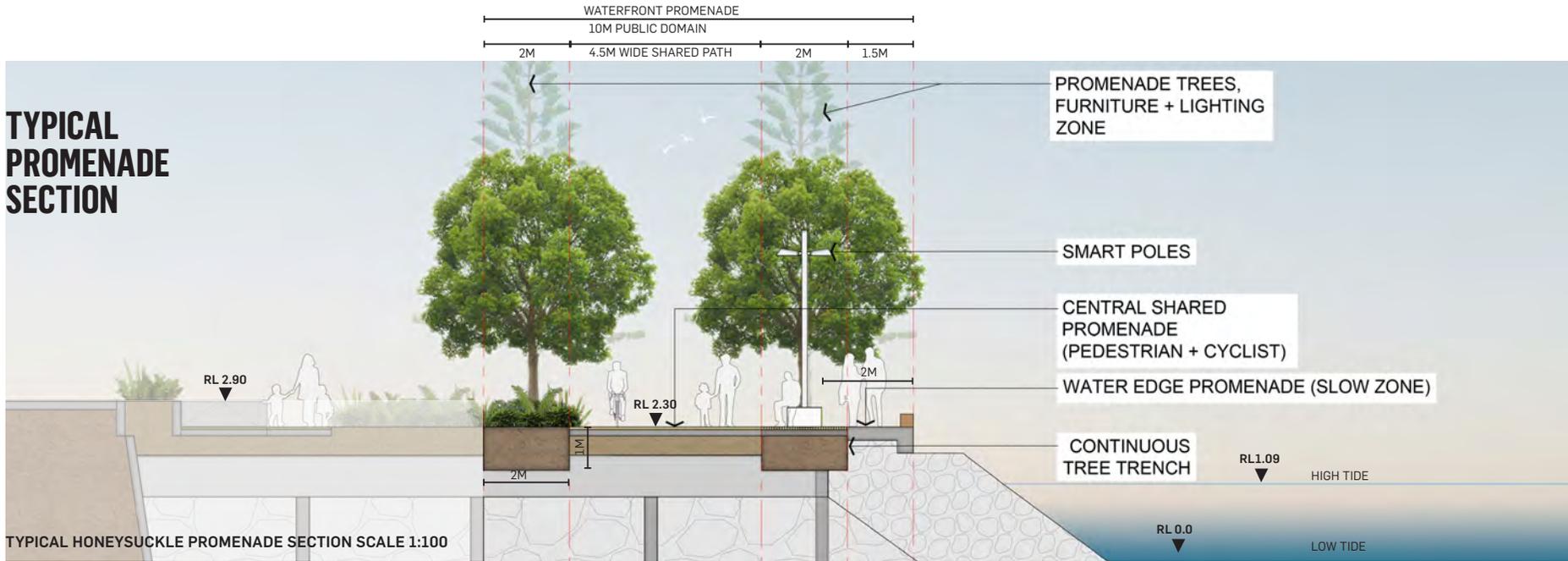


Current Site



View location

TYPICAL PROMENADE SECTION





Community and stakeholder insights

People supported Worth Place Park West being a place for active recreation, with connections to the water.

Their vision for Worth Place Park West is:

- Green space connecting park facilities, new residences and the water
- A place for active play opportunities, such as playgrounds and water play
- Pop-up spaces.

In their words:

“Interesting paths with public art, access to water for all abilities, night lighting, sensory gardens for the visually impaired, edible landscaping.”

“Greenery, trees, a community garden and sustainability centre.”

- 1 Bespoke shade structures
- 2 Seating steps
- 3 Seating benches
- 4 Sculptural play space
- 5 Passive lawn
- 6 Event ready flexible park
- 7 Waterfront promenade 10m wide
- 8 Worth place park
- 9 Accent trees
- 10 Shade trees
- 11 Viewing terrace/promenade
- 12 Light poles



Worth Place Park West

Design response

Key design principles:

- Connection to the water
- Active recreation park
- Interactive play and exercise features
- Flexible event and open spaces.

Future opportunities

- Kiosks
- Public art
- Smart City (digital) elements
- Improved access to the water.

“

I think a very green space for a variety of activities needs to be developed here in the heart of our city - linking the centre to the harbour. Not too structured - but facilities for play, riding, children. Maintaining as much open space as possible with natural surroundings - and plenty of mature shade trees.”



View location



Current Site

Cottage Creek



Community and stakeholder insights

People liked the idea of Cottage Creek Park having an environmental focus with design of the public domain celebrating the connection to the waterway. They also saw it as a great daytime space for relaxation and play.

Their vision for Worth Place Park West is:

- A family-friendly open space
- Places to sit and picnic tables
- Incorporation of restaurants, food, bars and cafés.

In their words:

“Evening markets, music and diverse food options and possibly a licensed venue.”

“ Look at waterways in places like Bath and Reading in the United Kingdom and Inverell in NSW for inspiration on [how to interpret] an historic creek.”

THROSBY

- 1 Accent trees
- 2 Shade trees
- 3 Lawn terrace
- 4 Park pathway
- 5 Native planting to edge of creek
- 6 Bridge over creek
- 7 Shade structures with seating
- 8 Substation

WICKHAM

LEE 5



Design response

Key design principles:

- Environmental park
- Enhance the urban ecosystem
- Flexible open space for temporary events
- Passive recreational setting.

Future opportunities

- Water Play
- Public art
- Umbrellas and deck chairs
- Pop up kiosks.

“

Celebrate the mixture of green space and a play area. I love the idea of a small scale water park here, especially with the creek running through this space.”



View location



Current Site

Artist Impression only - subject to change, subject to approval



Community and stakeholder insights

Boasting one of the area's oldest and most historic fig trees, people recognised Tree of Knowledge Park as a much-loved regional park.

They saw it as an important green gateway and civic event space for nearby residents of Wickham and the city as a whole.

Their vision for Tree of Knowledge Park is:

- A peaceful, recreational setting with open and accessible green space
- A family park with event spaces for outdoor movies and other attractions
- Celebrate indigenous heritage and connection to place
- Opportunities for a meeting place
- Inclusion of a play space
- Inclusion of seniors' exercise equipment
- Mixed commentary on opportunities for a skate park
- Consider temporary light installations.

In their words:

"Tree of Knowledge Park could be a highly flexible [and] functional space while still remaining a park."

"Shade trees, continuation of the tropical garden, grassed area, seating and BBQ facilities."

"Water features."



Tree of Knowledge Park

- 1 Open flexible park
- 2 Waterfront promenade
- 3 Shade structure
- 4 Art as play / exercise elements / features
- 5 Lawn mound
- 6 Amphitheatre seating
- 7 Meeting place
- 8 New path connections
- 9 Tuckeroo
- 10 Cook Pine

Design response

Key design principles:

- Green gateway
- Celebrate sites and the indigenous connection to land
- Cultural event plaza
- Flexible open space for temporary events
- Inclusive playspace.

Future opportunities

- Public art
- Feature lighting
- Public toilets.

“

I would like to see a place with large covered area for large family gatherings with rain and sun protection – tables or gazebos under cover – and a small stage.”



Current Site



View location

This Foreshore Public Domain Plan sets the framework for future delivery of a high quality public domain that integrates Honeysuckle's past, present and future.

HCCDC will continue to work collaboratively with the City of Newcastle and partner agencies to:

- Prepare detailed design and documentation
- Place updated design on public exhibition and obtain statutory approval for construction
- Deliver the public domain in stages
- Dedicate the completed public domain to Council, so it remains in public ownership.

www.hccdc.nsw.gov.au

Next Steps

