

Woollooware Bay Town Centre

Development Application



Landscape report for retail component

Overall Site Background

The Cronulla Sharks Leagues and Football Clubs are important establishments of the Sutherland Shire. The existing site and facilities are the venue for significant sporting events, albeit on infrequent occasions. The site is generally under used, specifically out of the rugby league season and throughout the week. The approved concept master plan proposes to develop these under used portions of the site including both sides of Toyota Stadium. The creation of a new town centre will include a new residential community, new publicly accessible open space and parks with improved pedestrian (including cycle way) access, and a new retail town centre. These will combine with an upgraded club premises to create both a relevant and popular community facility.

This application and report is for the retail component only. The concept master plan has been mentioned and referred to as it remains the binding plan that provides key pedestrian links across the whole site. Furthermore, the master plan contains overall design principles, materiality and a holistic approach for the public domain which will bring together the separate applications into one seamless, connected development.

For more information regarding the retail centre please refer to report by *Scott Carver*.

Retail Site Context

The retail site is located in the suburb of Woollooware, part of the Sutherland Shire, 30km south of the Sydney CBD. The site consists of the Cronulla Sharks Club premises (and adjacent bitumen car park) and the Captain Cook Drive streetscape (refer Figure 2 for the retail site extent).

The site is bound by Captain Cook Drive on the south and the Towra Point Aquatic Reserve to the north (Woollooware Bay), which contains a significant mangrove population. Adjacent to the site on the east is a low rise commercial building housing a Fitness First gym and a petrol station. To the west of the site is Toyota Stadium and to the south of Captain Cook Drive is Woollooware Golf Course and Woollooware High School (refer Figure 1).



Figure 1. Aerial image (existing site conditions). Source: Nearmaps

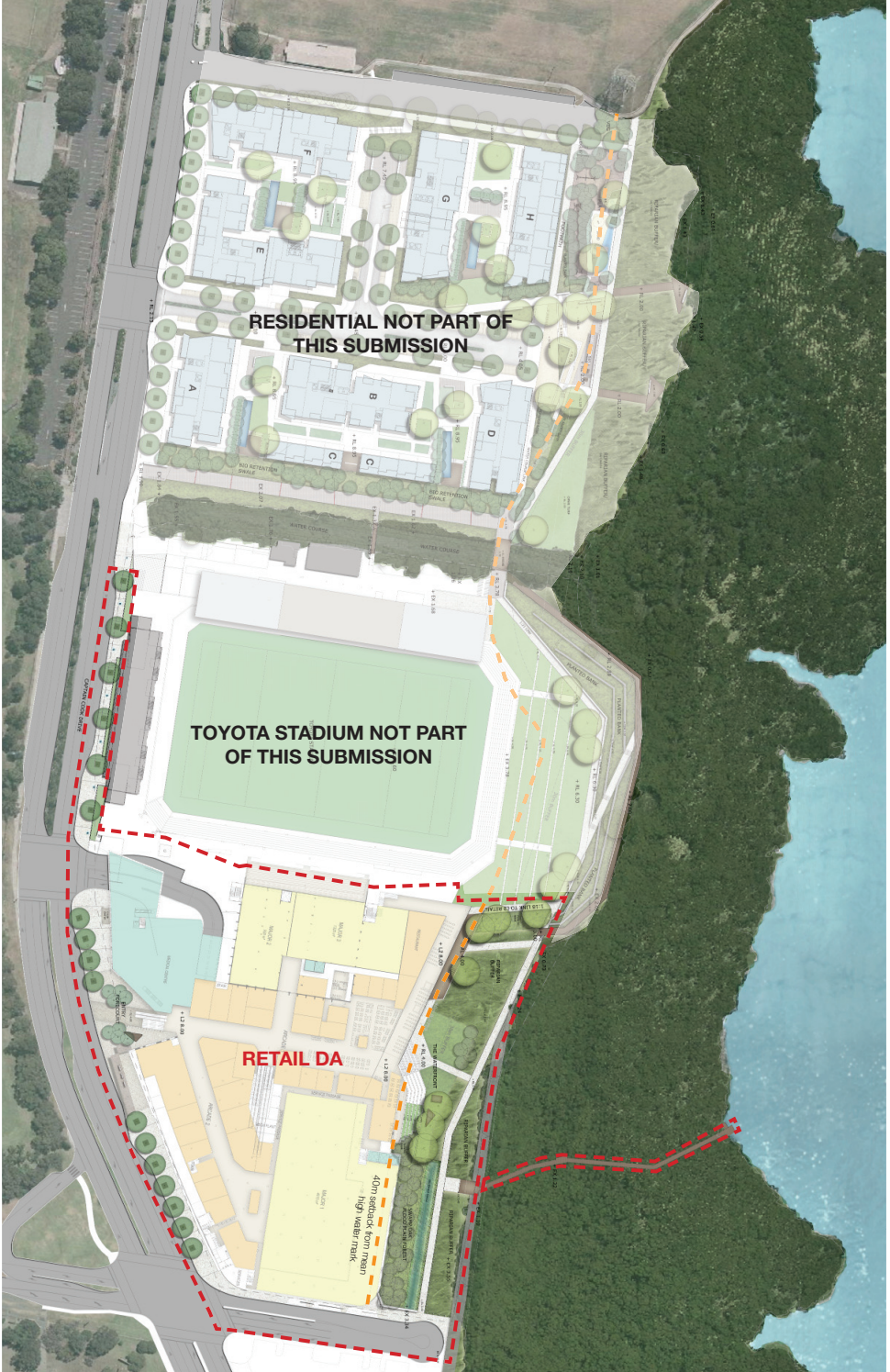


Figure 2. Approved site master plan showing Retail DA site extent

Design Principles

The proposed public domain areas within the Retail site have been designed with regard to the general design principles listed below (as per the concept master plan):

- The provision of high quality landscape spaces that allow for a variety of uses and user groups
- Provision of a minimum 40m wide vegetated riparian buffer (where possible) where active use will be limited to a shared foreshore path, raised timber deck, seating steps and native turf area
- Enhance the quality, accessibility, quantity and usability of public space
- Integration of a shared cycle/ pedestrian network throughout the site with strong links into existing neighbourhood path & cycle networks maximising connectivity within and into the site
- The implementation of environmentally sustainable design principles
- Consideration of storm water management including water sensitive urban design initiatives (WSUD) such as bio swales and water capture/ storage for re use (landscape irrigation)
- The protection and vegetated buffering of significant mangroves adjacent to the northern boundary of the site
- Increase biodiversity and environmental protection through plant species and hard materials choice
- New tree planting to offset existing tree removal on the site
- Where appropriate plant species be selected using providence stock which are indigenous to the local area and genetically compatible with local remnant species (as part of the proposed Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest and riparian buffer planting - refer Vegetation Management Plan by *Ecological* consultants for further information). Proposed planting to be at a density that would occur naturally
- Low water consumption planting
- High quality, low maintenance, robust streetscape materials
- Ensure that the retail public domain has been designed with regard to crime prevention through its design (consideration of CPTED principles)

Landscape Areas

The proposed landscape scheme can be broken down into the following components described in detail below (refer Figure 3 for landscape areas key plan):

- Streetscape upgrades and Retail/ Club entries
- The Waterfront
- Shared foreshore pathway
- Vegetated riparian buffer planting and existing mangroves

Refer retail landscape plan on RDA-03 for further reference.

This report and accompanying landscape plans (11017 RDA 01-08) address the Planning Assessment Commission's schedules 1-5 (Concept approval for Application MP 10_0229, dated 27.08.2012).

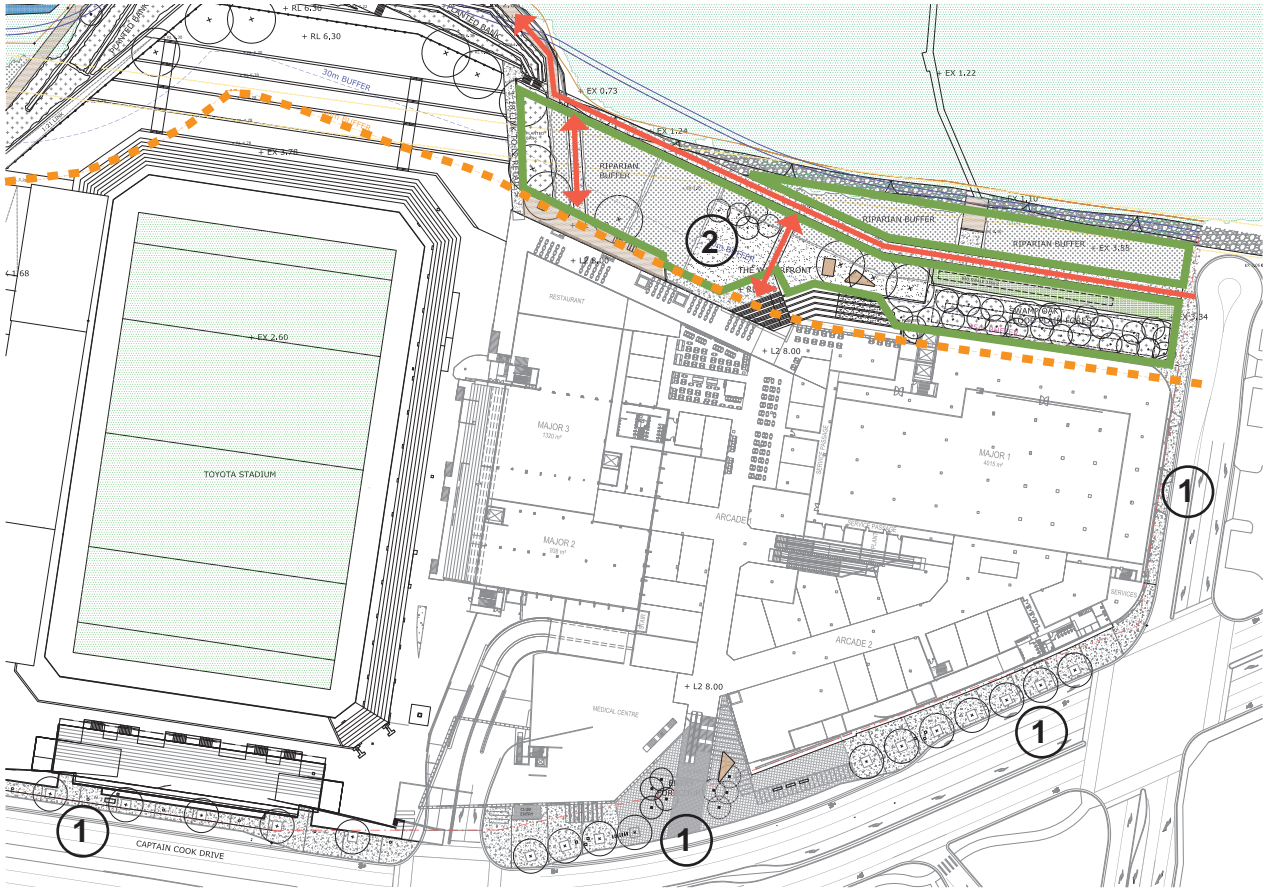


Figure 3. Landscape areas key plan

- ① Streetscape upgrades & Retail/ Club entries
- ② The Waterfront
- Shared foreshore path network
- ▭ Vegetated riparian buffer planting
- 40m setback from mean high water mark

Streetscape upgrades and Retail/ Club entries

Upgrades along Captain Cook Drive will include both street tree planting and under storey planting (within tree pits). Tree species (refer plant schedule for species selections) will form part of a wider street tree master plan for the entire site, and it is proposed that street trees feature in a continuous line (at approximately 10m centres) along the entire development. The street tree species will reflect the surrounding character of the area, reinforcing the development's connection to its surrounds. Mature trees are proposed to be carefully planted in order to minimise footpath conflict and create a strong day one character for the development. Species vary along Captain Cook Drive (refer RDA-08), with more columnar form native pines planted against the stadium frontage (as a strong recognisable feature) and larger rainforest species proposed in front of the retail, where more space is available.

Street trees along the stadium frontage will alternate with 'landscape markers' which could be flag poles, signage or similar. These upright elements will help delineate the stadium curtilage and could possibly be place holders for game day information and such.

It is proposed that the pedestrian footpaths along Captain Cook Drive (and the extension of Woollooware Rd to the retail loading dock) be a robust and low maintenance in situ concrete with an exposed aggregate finish and saw cut joints. Porous paving will also feature, setout logically around all tree pits. This improves the growing conditions and ensures the necessary vigour and health is achieved. Footpaths are designed with minimum 3m width, creating a safe and generous corridor for pedestrians traveling along the vehicle dominated Captain Cook Drive. Cyclists are encouraged to use the bike lane provided in the road carriageway.

The retail and club entries will be defined with high quality and robust stone or concrete unit paving which creates a clear address for the retail centre, and purposeful difference to the in situ concrete. The Retail Forecourt will receive marker trees (*Livistona australis*) that will punch toward the sky and create a signature and identity to the space. Informal bench seating, bike racks and lighting will also feature, which will help in creating a comfortable and people focused address to the centre. Access through the retail (via escalators/ lift) allows pedestrian movement from Captain Cook Drive to the waterfront. This journey will be partly made within the retail centre, and continue right to the point where the food court/ balcony seating terraces on level two step down to the waterfront below.

The new development will be well connected to the surrounding suburbs via well-considered intersections that service both the residential/ retail components and pedestrian amenity. Increased crossing points have been provided along with a bus drop off point (and shade canopy - by others) adjacent to the retail and club entry. New signalised entries, the removal of the existing roundabout and works to Woollooware Road mark improvements as detailed in a report by *McLaren Traffic Engineering*. The existing *Ficus rubiginosa* (T1 - refer arborist report by *Earthscape*) located at the centre of the roundabout (being removed) along Captain Cook Drive will be relocated to The Waterfront (refer RDA-03 for location).

The Waterfront

The design of The Retail Waterfront allows for mainly passive recreation (whilst respecting the 40m wide vegetated riparian buffer) in a planted and natural coastal setting.

A direct connection has been made between the level 2 (RL 8.0) dining terrace and waterfront at RL 4.0. A series of seating terraces provides a north facing space for casual eating, drinking and people watching. Pre cast concrete will form the main structure and offer angled risers which form comfortable back rests for lounging. Turf on the eastern most treads softens the concrete and meets a planted embankment adjacent (which also negates the need for a balustrade). A direct and grand access stair is provided at the western side, aligned with the path connecting the waterfront with the shared foreshore path.

A breakout space is proposed to the level 1 tenancy to the north (RL 4.0). This will be a raised outdoor space (timber or composite material decking above the existing ground line) with picnic seating, which serves as a gathering space and facilitates entry into the retail centre from the shared foreshore path.

Beyond the retail curtilage and at the heart of the waterfront space are two large, native turf areas. These areas provide a usable space within the 40m vegetated riparian buffer. A series of small, raised decks provide for casual seating opportunities under the shade of native trees (tree species part of the riparian buffer - refer plant schedule on RDA-08). The native turf areas are flanked by more densely planted buffer zones with access to the sea wall and estuarine zone/ mangroves to the north restricted by the inclusion of a simple wire and timber post fence structure.

Shared foreshore path network

Beyond the native turf areas and along the northern edge of the waterfront is the shared foreshore pathway/ cycle link. This 3m wide path forms part of the wider network as shown in the concept master plan for the entire site. It is envisaged that it will link in with the existing shared path network linking the site with Taren Point to the west and Kurnell/ Green Hills to the east (refer RDA-01 for site linkages).

Materials along the path (at the retail centre) will be robust, majority in situ concrete with an exposed aggregate finish with saw cut joints. This is the case where the existing levels allow for the path to be in ground. A raised section is required where the existing levels drop away. The path here will be either pre cast concrete or timber/ composite material (refer section B), detailed so as to allow for vehicular access to the electrical wire columns at the west of the site.

The foreshore path (including the raised sections) has been located so as not to remove any mangroves and furthermore the mangroves will be protected during construction. If inaccuracies are found with the current site survey/s, the foreshore path will be re-located (further south) so as to avoid the need to remove any mangroves.

The new shared way will link in with the existing 'Woollooware Bay Mangrove Boardwalk' which will be upgraded in this proposal (materials will be in keeping with the existing, ie timber or a composite material)

An upper level shared path (also in situ concrete and 3m width) will link the Toyota Stadium Family Hill with the level 2 retail dining terrace. A feature gabion wall sub structure will support the path and form a barrier between the retail waterfront space and ticketed stadium areas to the west.

Vegetated riparian buffer

A continuous vegetated riparian buffer is to be established along the entire mangrove edge adjacent to the retail frontage. It is proposed that the riparian buffer be species from the ecological community Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest, and planted at a density that would occur naturally. Species have been based upon the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) undertaken by *Ecological* consultants - please refer to this document for further information regarding the species specifics, including local stock procurement etc.

The 40m buffer zone (from the mean high water mark) has been used as a guide to where the vegetated buffer occurs. Spaces within this zone remain largely planted except for the retail seating terraces and level 1 spillout space and retail curtilage. The remaining areas have been purposefully left as majority planting, acknowledging the need for a generous buffer to the mangroves. This promotes activities occurring within the 40m buffer zone to remain largely passive, with direct access restricted to the estuarine edge and mangroves through denser planting and a low, simple fence.

On the south eastern side of the shared path/ boardwalk it is proposed that a planted bank be established which will help visual amenity along the retail loading dock. The planting would vary in height and include larger trees (*Casuarina glauca* - amongst other species). A planted stormwater bio swale flanks the planted embankment and shared path (refer section A) with species again selected using the VMP as a guide.

Suitable riparian buffer planting adjacent to the mangroves can be established using minimal excavation. Existing levels shown on sections A-C (refer to RDA-04-06) demonstrates how proposed levels tie in with the existing bank and edge of the mangroves. A new sea wall will need to be constructed in this location. It is proposed that any sea wall works be in accordance with the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change's guide: Environmentally Friendly Seawalls (2009).

Please refer to the planting key and schedule on RDA-08, and the VMP (*Ecological*) for further information regarding the riparian buffer and plant species/ plant communities.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

The public domain areas have been designed with regard to the following principles, which intend to minimise the opportunity for crime:

Surveillance

- All new buildings will overlook the adjacent public domain
- Ground floor retail tenancies allow surveillance and easy connectivity from the retail centre into the public domain. All streets and public domain areas have active frontages and 'eyes on the street'
- Ground floor retail tenancies adjacent to streets and the landscape have been designed to have direct and convenient access to the public domain

Access Control

- The new public domain areas are designed to attract users of all ages.

Territorial reinforcement

- The proposed public open space has been designed to be clearly and openly connected to all surrounding areas with uses designed to attract regional and local users of all ages and backgrounds
- It is envisaged that the waterfront will be used by all residents of the surrounding suburbs, not only the retail users, Shark's members and new residents of the development.

Space management

- The public domain areas have been designed with regard to their ongoing maintenance and will utilise robust materials to enable an ongoing high quality level of presentation.

Interpretation Strategies

The adjacent area and site has a rich natural history that will be recognised through proposed interpretation and public art strategies. The public parklands and mangrove curtilage offer diverse opportunities for ecological interpretation works. For example these could include a rich interpretive overlay which provides insight into the adjacent Towra Point Nature Reserve, local shore/ migratory bird populations, salt marsh habitats, historic local Aboriginal sites (Towra Lagoon) and the mangroves.

It is proposed that the streetscape works included in this retail DA submission do not include interpretation works as we believe that elements of this type are most meaningfully located in the public open space and adjacent to the mangroves (along the shared Foreshore pathway network).

Accessibility in the Public Domain

In establishing the proposed levels for the retail site, equal access has been a key criteria. All new street footways have been designed to be at accessible grades. Both the higher and lower level shared foreshore paths provide equal access from west to east across the development, and in addition the higher path offers equal access up to the top tier of the Sharks 'Family Hill' and into the level 2 retail (RL 8.0). On grade access is provided into the retail centre from both Captain Cook Drive and the waterfront (along the northern foreshore edge). Multiple lift access will be provided from the level 1 retail to all of the upper levels.

Note regarding the overall landscape design (master plan)

It is important to note the essential role the landscape design plays in providing clear connections and links across the site between the residential, stadium and retail centre. This has been a major driving force in the design of the concept master plan - both on the north (mangrove side) and south (Captain Cook Drive), and is key to the success of the project.

The foreshore path network has been designed to knit in with the existing shared path network and provides strong links both at the upper and lower levels of the site, and into key entry points such as the residential streetscape/ Foreshore Park, stadium surrounds and retail entries (both on ground and at level 2).

In addition, it is proposed that the design language and landscape components (for example paving, furniture, lighting, tree planting etc) across the site will read as a suite of elements - further tying the site together and providing continuity throughout.