

Sisters Beach is a unique coastal settlement that is surrounded on three sides by Rocky Cape National Park and bound by the waters of Bass Strait to the north. This Open Space Plan identifies elements of Sisters Beach which are seen as special or significant and makes recommendations for the future use of Council owned public land so as to enhance the settlement’s character and “sense of place” for the local community and visitors alike.

Sisters Beach

Open Space Plan 2015

Date revised	Version (number)
April 2014	Draft to Council and Public Review
April 2015	Draft to Council and Public Review
July 2015	Draft to Council for endorsement
July 2015	Plan endorsed by Council

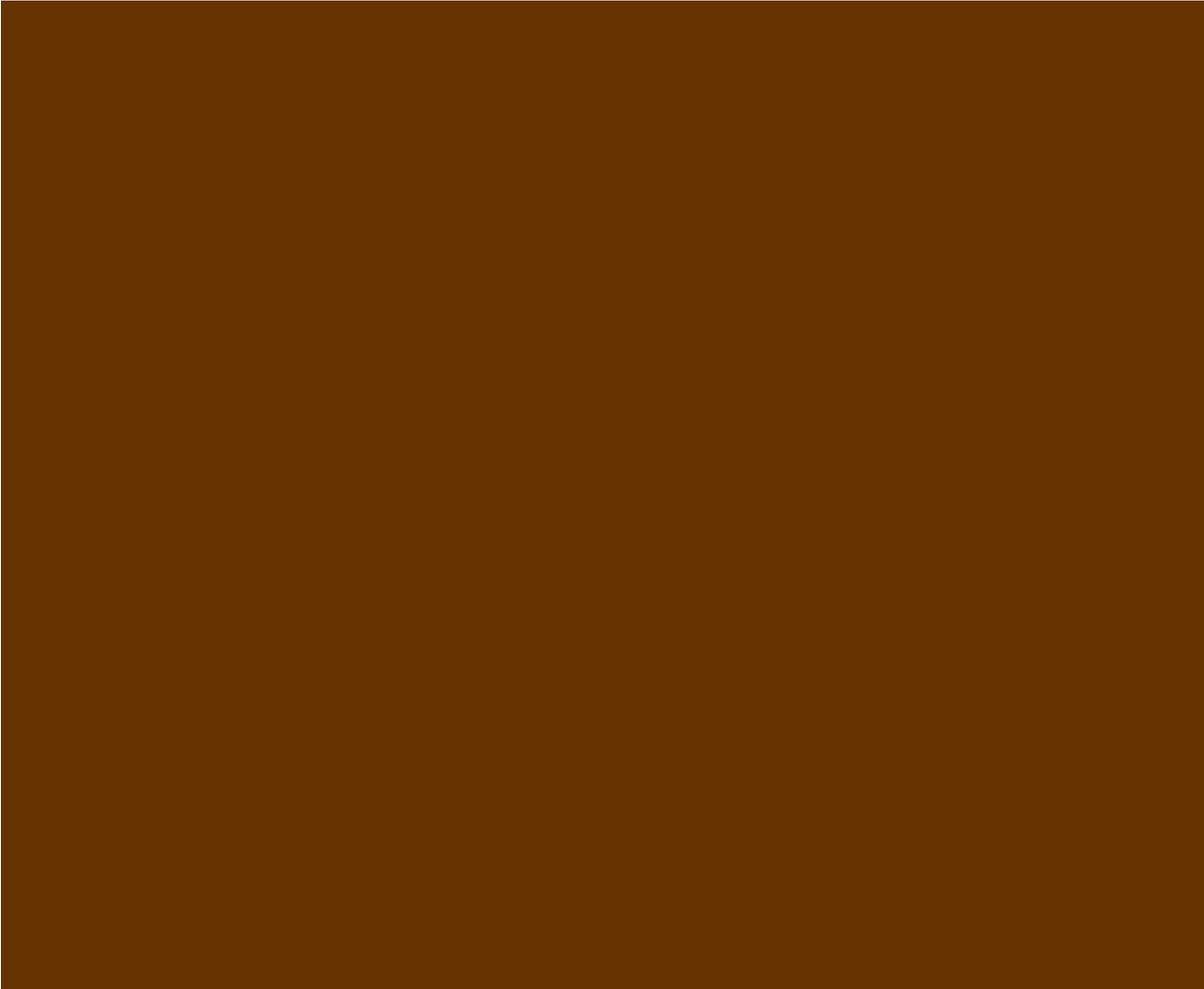
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1/ Introduction



1.1.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The seaside village of Sisters Beach is uniquely located, surrounded on three sides by Rocky Cape National Park and bound by the waters of Bass Strait to the north.

The area is home to the distinctive Swamp Banksia (*Banksia serrata*) that is endemic to this area of Tasmania. Sisters Creek, coloured by strong tannins leached from surrounding Swamp Paperbark trees (*Melaleuca ericifolia*), flows through the established residential area of Sisters Beach and adjoins the local children’s playground before emptying into Bass Strait.

Apart from land managed by other Agencies, such as Rocky Cape National Park and the Bass Strait coastal dune system, areas of public open space that are managed by Waratah-Wynyard Council are somewhat constrained. Refer to the maps on page 7 identifying areas of municipal public open space.

In 2011 the population of Sisters Beach was 439. Refer to a summary of Australian Bureau of Statistics data for Sisters Beach – Appendix A – page 26



1.1.2 EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND AREAS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

SEWER

Sisters Beach is connected to a TasWater reticulated wastewater treatment facility.

WATER

Sisters Beach is not connected to a TasWater reticulated system. All properties are required to collect water for domestic purposes.

STORMWATER

Sisters Beach residential area has a network of open stormwater surface runoff drains.

ELECTRICITY

Sisters Beach is connected to an electrical network.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Sisters Beach is serviced with telecommunication services. Mobile phone coverage is weak and the community continues to lobby government for upgrades to the existing service.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Sisters Beach is surrounded by the Rocky Cape National Park, owned and managed by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment – Parks and Wildlife Division.

Other areas of open space, such as the road reserve along Honeysuckle Avenue, beach front open space areas and riparian creek land is owned by the Crown and managed under Licence or Lease arrangements by Waratah-Wynyard Council.

Some open space areas are owned by Waratah-Wynyard Council; including two titles adjoining the TasWater wastewater treatment facility. Such open space areas and the current use over each site, including the remaining vacant Serrate Crescent residential lots, are identified on page 7.

OPEN SPACE

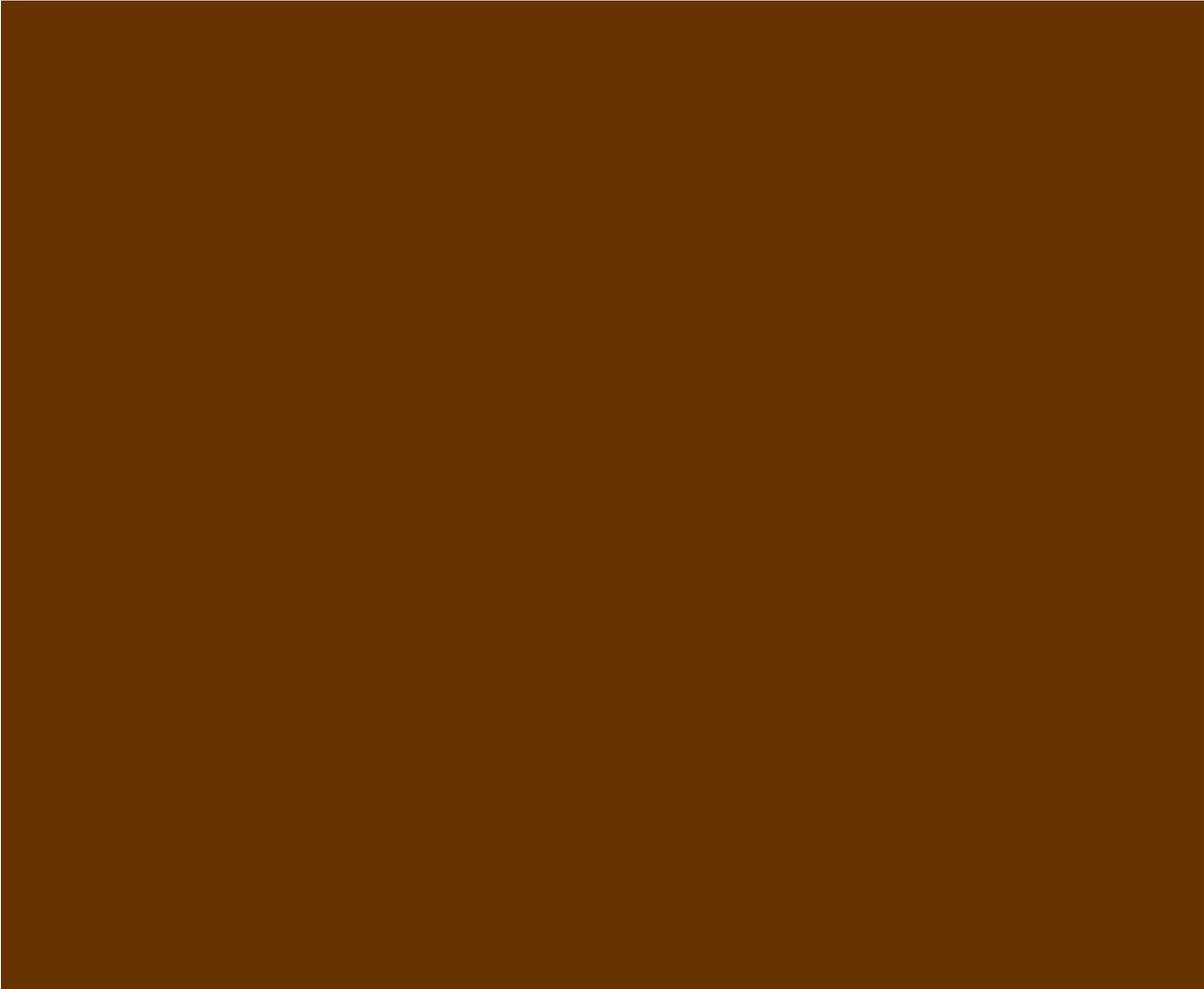


LEGEND

	Drain	(1)
	Hall	(1)
	Park, Recreation Area	(1)
	Park, Recreation Area Authority	(7)
	Vacant-Residential	(11)



2/ Plan Development



2.1 PROJECT OUTLINE

Development of this Plan has included:

- site visits and consultation workshops with the Sisters Beach community
- site visits with other key stakeholders, including TasWater, the Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and the Environment, Parks and Wildlife Division, TasFire and Crown Land Services
- development of a Draft Open Space Plan
- public exhibition of the Draft Open Space Plan, seeking community comment and feedback on proposals
- finalisation of the Open Space Plan for consideration by Council, incorporating amendments that may arise from the public exhibition period

2.2 OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOMES

Objectives

The objective of the *Sisters Beach Open Space Plan* is to provide a framework for public infrastructure improvements at Sisters Beach, to identify actions that will enhance the unique landscape and to improve amenity provision for locals and visitors.

Additionally to reflect the values and strategic direction of the proposed Waratah-Wynyard Recreation and Open Space Plan and long term Financial and Asset Management Plans.

Outcomes

The *Sisters Beach Open Space Plan* will:

- provide a development framework that takes into account the needs of the Sisters Beach community, and the broader recreation and open space requirements for the municipal area
- Identify options for enhancement of open space areas within Sisters Beach
- Identify cost effective measures for improvements that build on existing community assets;
- ensure proposals acknowledge and enhance the significant and unique natural values of the area and result in open space improvements that enhance the local 'identity' and 'sense of place'
- result in an area of public open space that can be enjoyed by the residents of Sisters Beach and the wider community; and
- inform Council's forward plan budget allocations for upgrades and improvements to Sisters Beach public places.

2.3 PRE PRODUCTION CONSULTATION IDEAS AND COMMENTS

Community consultation undertaken in preparation of the *Draft Sisters Beach Open Space Plan* included:

- a 'mail out' to all owners and occupiers of property at Sisters Beach, with an invitation to the community to place ideas and comments onto Council's website;
- two onsite workshops with the Sisters Beach community;
- on site discussions with key stakeholders and land managers, including TasWater, Tas Fire, the Department Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment - Parks and Wildlife Division and Crown Land Services.
- Placement of a survey questionnaire on Council's Website; and
- Preparation of a Draft Open Spaces Plan for Council and the community to review.

Council placed the proposal for a Sisters Beach Open Space Plan onto Council's "Facebook" site, seeking public views and perceptions on how the public open space in Sisters Beach could best be improved for locals and visitors.

The Primary questions asked during online consultation were:

1. *list up to three elements or features that you think define Sisters Beach and set it apart from other coastal settlements.*

- a).....
- b).....
- c).....

- 2 *What improvements would you like to see over the public open space areas of Sisters Beach?*

- 3 *It has been suggested that the Sisters Beach community would benefit from provision of an improved community meeting place (currently at the Fire Station). If such an opportunity did arise, where would you like to see it located?*

During the community workshop, similar questions were asked, seeking to identify key elements that make up the community's 'sense of place' and preferred sites for the future development of local community infrastructure.

The following table provides a summary of the community's responses to four (4) key questions asked at the first public workshop. Questions address Sisters Beach 'sense of place', improvements to open space and facilities therein, overnight location options for fully self-contained recreational vehicles and location options for a multi-purpose community hall. Community preferences, to issues and options raised, were rated (red dot with a value of 6, yellow dot a value of 4 and green dot a value of 2). The total of each 'dot' rating represents the strength of support around each of the matters raised.

Table 1: Community Responses – Ideas and Comments

SISTERS BEACH OPEN SPACE PLAN IDEAS AND DISCUSSION WORKSHOP				
Question 1. Sense of Place				
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	TOTAL
Safe/laidback/lifestyle/family friendly	17	8	3	140
Beachside Village ‘destination’	9	11	7	112
Surrounded by Rocky Cape National Park Endemic Banksia species	2	6	7	50
Secluded yet accessible to major centres	2	6	12	50

NB: Red has value of 6, Yellow has value of 4, Green has value of 2.

SISTERS BEACH OPEN SPACE PLAN IDEAS AND DISCUSSION WORKSHOP				
Question 2. Improvements to Open Space Areas				
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	TOTAL
Healthy Activities & Recreation provision for all ages	14	8	1	118
Community Gathering Centre	9	9	4	98
Allocated Camping space for RV’s	6	3	11	88
Walking Access and Safety – Overall Review – especially Bridge Street	1	5	4	34
Public Toilet at Boat Ramp	0	5	6	32
Interpretive Signage and Features (e.g. Art)	2	0	4	20
Sisters Beach Entry Feature	0	2	2	12
Underground Power	0	1	0	4

NB: Red has value of 6, Yellow has value of 4, Green has value of 2

SISTERS BEACH OPEN SPACE PLAN IDEAS AND DISCUSSION WORKSHOP				
Question 3. Location of a Community Centre				
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	TOTAL
Adjacent the Fire Station	11	6	6	102
Near the Beach Creek	12	4	7	102
Old Log Cabin Site – Elfrida Avenue	3	8	9	68
South of the Fire Station – on Crown Land	2	6	3	48
*Waterfront site	3	6	6	44
<i>Matter for investigation: - Slide park underutilised</i>				

NB: Red has value of 6, Yellow has value of 4, Green has value of 2

*"Waterfront site" relates to a parcel of land fronting Bass Strait, adjacent to the public car park.

SISTERS BEACH OPEN SPACE PLAN IDEAS AND DISCUSSION WORKSHOP				
Question 4. Location of a camp site for fully self-contained RV's and caravans				
	1st	2nd	3rd	TOTAL
Behind Fire Station – Camp Charisma	16	6	5	130
Old tip site – Crown Land	9	13	4	114
East Esplanade – Towards the National Park	3	4	4	42
Near Boat Ramp	0	0	7	14
<i>Matters for investigation: - Interim use of Boat Ramp Site.</i>				

NB: Red has value of 6, Yellow has value of 4, Green has value of 2

The Draft Sisters Beach Open Space Plan was placed on public display at the Council Offices in Saunders Street, Wynyard, and at the Sisters Beach General Store and on Council's website, for community feedback and comment. Responses to the Draft Open Space Plan have been taken into consideration in the review and development of the second draft for further community comment and Council consideration.

2.4 SPECIAL AND SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

The primary features are identified as special or significant in the Sisters Beach area:

BANKSIA SERRATA

The prolific and endemic growth of the *Banksia serrata* species at Sisters Beach gives the settlement a unique character. The *Banksia serrata* only grow in this area in Tasmania and their form is very distinctive; with twisted, wrinkled trunks, serrated gray/silver saw tooth leaves and large flower cones. The species were the inspiration for the 'big bad banksia men' in the famous series of books '*Snuggopot and Cuddlepie*' by May Gibbs (1949).

Banksia serrata

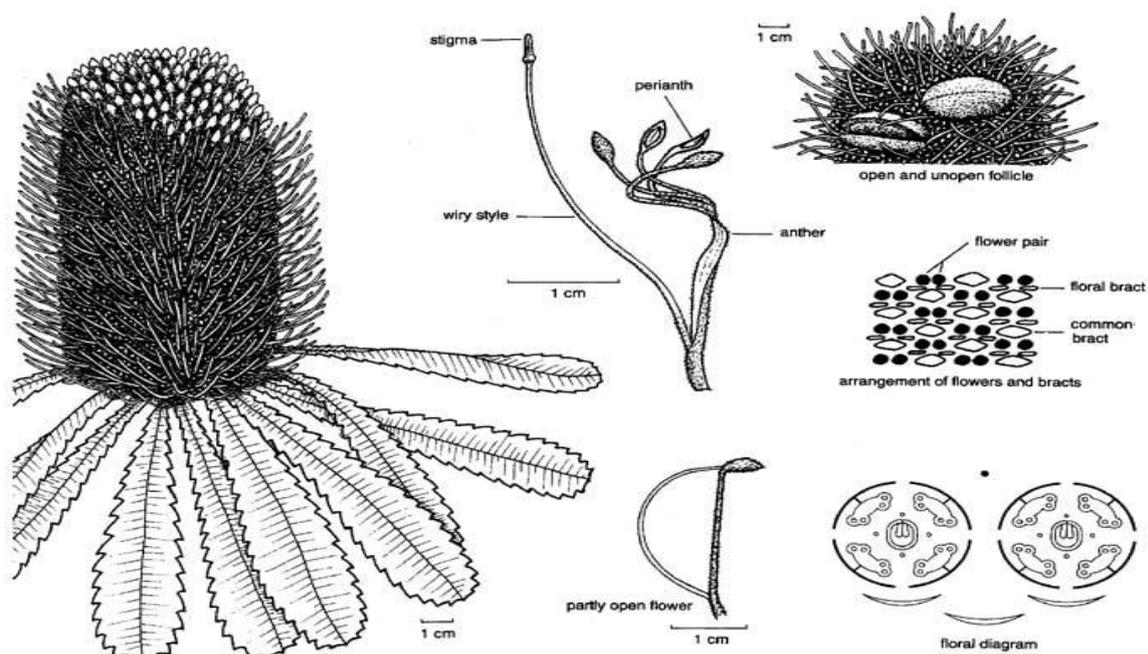


Illustration is from the website of the Australian National Botanical Gardens.

WALKWAYS LINKS TO THE BEACH

There are several narrow, public open space walkways that link residential development to the Sisters Beach beachfront and the waters of Bass Strait. The walkways are important community infrastructure as they provide equal opportunity for all residents of Sisters Beach to readily access the beachfront.

SEASIDE SETTLEMENT SURROUNDED BY ROCKY CAPE NATIONAL PARK

The coastal settlement is surrounded by Rocky Cape National Park and Sisters Beach is an access point for those wanting to experience Rocky Cape National Park walking trails. This makes the Sisters Beach approach road and living environment somewhat unique. There is opportunity for Council, the community and the Parks and Wildlife Division of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment to liaise and determine a long term strategy for Rocky Cape National Park and surrounding land that includes identifying development opportunities and constraints and land management requirements.

For the residents of Sisters Beach, living in such close proximity to an expanse of forested natural landscape comes with a high level of bushfire risk. This risk is compounded because the settlement is accessed and egressed via a single road.

Sisters Beach has a very active and dedicated Fire Brigade that is made up of local volunteers. The office and training room of the fire station currently doubles as a community meeting room.

SAFE AND FAMILY FRIENDLY COASTAL SETTLEMENT

Sisters Beach is regarded as a secluded, safe, family friendly environment. Traffic speed within the settlement is 40km per hour. This allows for shared access by pedestrians and vehicles over all roads.

The low key, relaxed character of the settlement is seen as an important element to preserve as the number of residents at Sisters Beach increases.

LIMITED AREAS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Whilst Sisters Beach is surrounded by a National Park, expanses of public open space managed by Waratah-Wynyard Council are somewhat constrained. The public open space that adjoins the beachfront and Sisters Creek, accessed via East Esplanade, currently supports public car parking, public toilets, public barbeque facilities (2) and playground equipment. This area is Crown Land, managed under a lease agreement with Council. The area has been developed in an ad hoc manner, with areas of open space dotted with infrastructure. This area is seen as the 'public' area of Sisters Beach, accessed on a daily basis by residents and visitors.

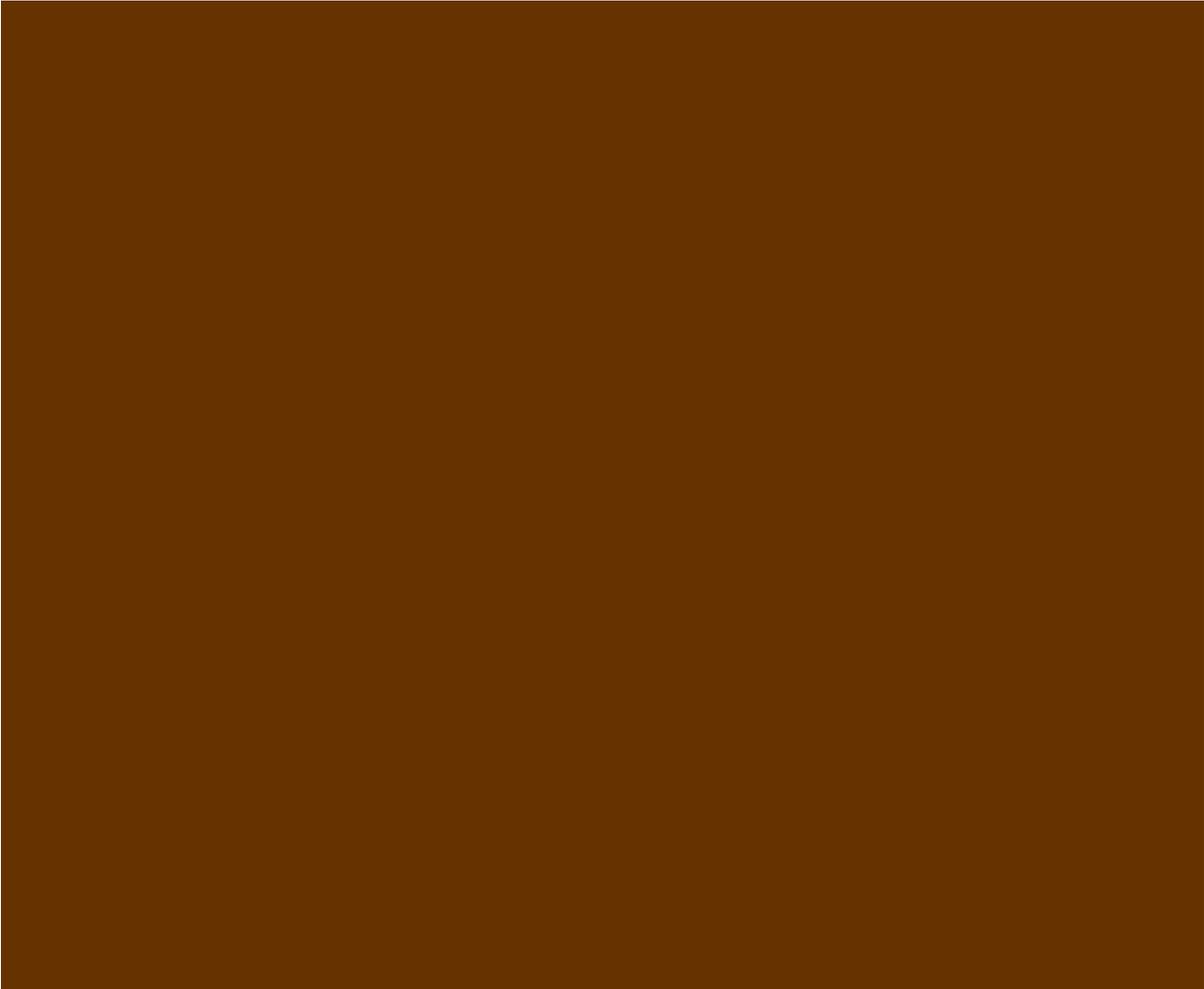
In determining the future use of this open space area, two critical fire fighting water tanks, accessed via Elfrida Avenue, need to remain unimpeded by further development.

PUBLIC BOAT RAMP

A relatively new public boat ramp services the residents of Sisters Beach, Boat Harbour, surrounding rural properties and recreational boating visitors from the North West of Tasmania.



3/ Recommendations



3.1 COMMUNITY PRECINCT

Establish a 'Community Precinct' that supports infrastructure that is primarily used and managed by the Sisters Beach community

The development of a dedicated community precinct in the established reserve area on the eastern side of Sisters Creek which extends up onto the ridge to the intersection of Elfrida Avenue and Cumming Street overlooking the reserve. This area would be recognized as the primary public open space area for use by locals and visitors to Sisters Beach.

The proposed Community Precinct area already has on site infrastructure that can be built upon and enhanced. This area includes public toilets, playgrounds and walkways, which are well used. The area has hosted community events and is a recognized meeting place for local community members and visitors to Sisters Beach.

The establishment of this as a dedicated community precinct would build on the acceptance of this site as a focal point for the Sisters Beach community and visitors to the area.

Detailed design, including land survey, site design and detailed facility and site design, would occur as the Plan is implemented and as funding and opportunity were identified.



Public Park with barbeques, toilet and playground

3.1.1 MULTI PURPOSE RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

- Develop an all-weather multi-purpose court with line markings for tennis and basketball, a basketball hoop and backboard facility within the Community Precinct. With provision to develop & enhance this infrastructure for other recreation activities.

3.1.2 COMMUNITY MULTI PURPOSE BUILDING

- Develop a feasibility study, business case and design brief for the development of a flexible multi-use community centre within the Community Precinct. As part of the process explore options for partnerships with other organisations.

3.1.3 FIRE BRIGADE ACTIVITIES

- Re-establish the Fire Station as a “stand alone” emergency response building. *Once alternate, appropriate community facility is established.*
- Investigate potential uses for the existing building located on Council owned land off Honeysuckle Avenue (PID: 2917760) as part of Councils Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Decommission this building if it is identified as surplus to the requirement of the area.

3.1.4 PUBLIC AMENITY

- Identify appropriate public infrastructure such as family friendly barbeque facilities as part of development of the area.
- Further investigate impact of future sea level rises and erosion on the embankment near the creek and carpark area. Implement immediate solutions to stabilize this area including plantings. Seek funding to undertake appropriate studies into sea level rises and erosion impacts and long term solutions to address these.



PROPOSED COMMUNITY PRECINCT



East Boulevard Park & Recreation Area

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Children's Playground adjacent to Sisters Creek

3.2 OTHER OPEN SPACE AREAS

Enhance and improve open space that is managed by Waratah-Wynyard Council to include:

3.2.1 PUBLIC TOILET

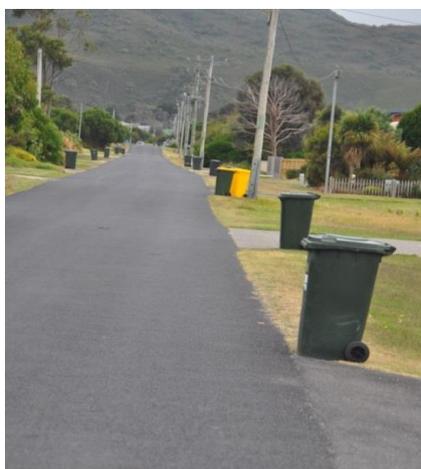
- Build a unisex accessible public toilet adjacent the boat ramp car park, at the western end of Irby Boulevard.



Car park for boat ramp users and visitors to the National Park.

3.2.2 RE-VEGETATION WITH BANKSIA SERRATA SPECIES

- Reinstatement of clumps of *Banksia serrata* in open space areas, most specifically road reserves, where the species has been removed during urban development in consultation with local residents.



Streetscape devoid of Banksia serrata



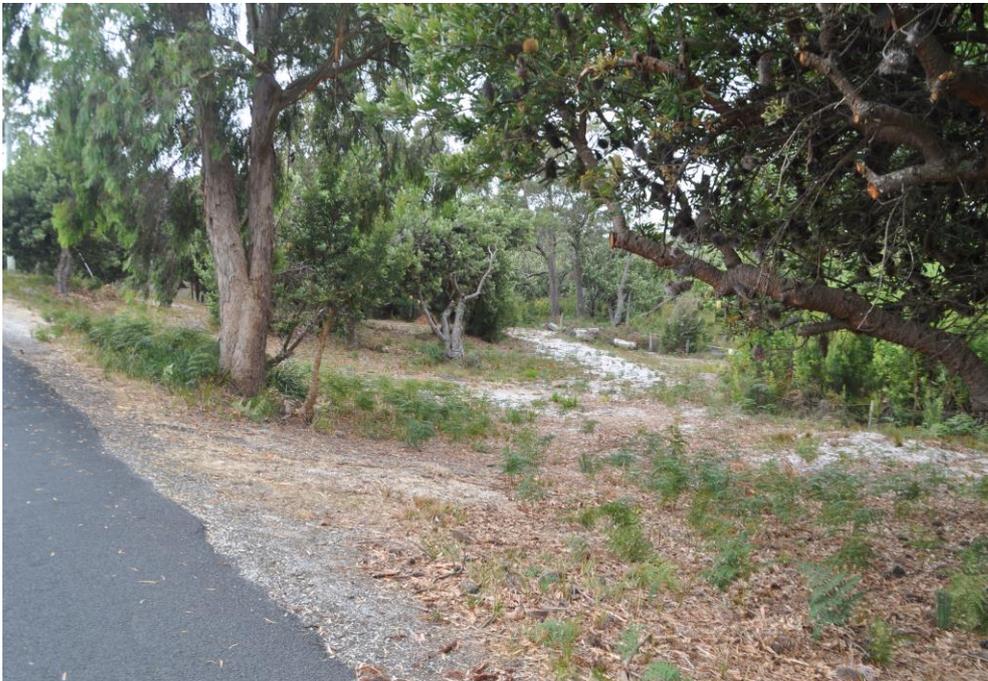
Streetscape displaying remnant Banksia serrata

3.2.3 PEDESTRIAN LINKS TO THE BEACH

- Maintain and signpost established pedestrian links to the beachfront.
- Build dune protection access ramps over vulnerable sections of the link-ways.

3.2.4 COMMUNITY MANAGED SITE FOR FULLY SELF CONTAINED RECREATIONAL VEHICLES AND CARAVANS

- Investigate a potential site for fully self-contained recreational vehicles (RV's) and caravans on Crown or Council land that adjoins Honeysuckle Avenue including cost to redevelop the area for this use.
- The proposed location for overnight stays is a range of where it may be located not the size of the space it would cover; further scoping is required to identify the parameters of the proposal.
- Council to investigate a lease agreement with a community group for management and maintenance of the site.
- Maintain access to existing 'dump station; to service RV's.

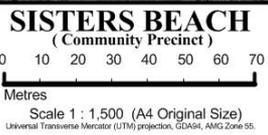


Potential site for fully self-contained recreational vehicles and caravans – Honeysuckle Avenue

PROPOSED POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL VEHICLE LOCATION



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PID: 291 7760, PID 291 7779, TasWater 291 7787

3.2.5 SIGNAGE AND ENTRY STATEMENT

- Review the location and placement of directional and “welcome to” signage.
- Design and install a ‘flexible’ advertising sign that is able to support the combined commercial interests of Sisters Beach.
- Design and install an entry statement into the augmented section of Elfrida Avenue where traffic realignment is proposed.



Directional and identification signage

3.2.6 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- In order to discourage speeding in Elfrida Avenue a realignment of the Elfrida Avenue/Honeysuckle Avenue/Sisters Beach Rd junction such that Honeysuckle Avenue becomes the major road. This change would physically require vehicles to reduce speed when using this junction no matter the direction taken.

3.3 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Sisters Beach Open Space Plan is diagrammatic in detail, and gives a broad overview of development recommendations and overall landscape intent. Each future development or upgrade, for example a hard stand multi-purpose recreational court, will require detail design and documentation at the time of funding such a development.

The Sisters Beach Open Space Plan may be implemented in stages or as a whole development as opportunity and funding arise in accordance with the Waratah-Wynyard Council long term Financial and Asset Management Plans and the Municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan.

3.4 COST ESTIMATES

The Table below shows estimated costs against the various priorities of the Plan. The Cost Estimates include costs for design, professional fees, permit fees and construction.

SISTERS BEACH OPEN SPACE PLAN			
Works	\$ per Unit	Units	Total \$
Revegetation of key streets & walkways with clumps of <i>Banksia serrata</i> .	\$15.00 per plant plus \$5.00 per plant for site preparation	250	\$5,000
Land Survey (to encompass the proposed Community Precinct area).			\$2,500
<u>New multi use recreation hard space</u>			
Site preparation and earthworks Concrete hardstand (tennis court size 12m x 26m) Nets, line marking, basketball hoop & stand with backboard.			\$30,000 - \$35,000 \$2,500 - \$4,000
<u>New Community Building</u>			
Detail Design and Permits. Building to include DDA toilet, kitchen, quality of fitout and size to vary cost (assume size range 200m ² to 350m ² say 12m x 15m to 15m x 14m etc).			\$300,000 - \$450,000
<u>RV camp site Investigations & DA</u>			
1. Fire Management & Evacuation Plan 2. Flora and Fauna Survey 3. Development Application 4. Gravel hardstand to parking sites (stage One) (if required)		Plan Survey Fees Works	\$3,500 \$3,000 \$500 \$20,000 - \$30,000
<u>Advertising Sign at Entry to Settlement</u>			
Design & Installation			\$3,000 - \$5,000
Unisex accessible toilet at boat ramp			\$35,000
Sea Level and Erosion studies			\$50,000 – \$60,000
		Total	\$455,000 - \$633,500

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF 2011 CENSES DATA FOR SISTERS BEACH, TASMANIA.

*“Sisters Beach (7321) is a suburb of North West, Tasmania. It is about 365 kms from Tasmania’s capital of Hobart. Sisters Beach is in the federal electorate of **Braddon**.*

In the 2011 Census the population of Sisters Beach was 439 and comprised 49.9% females and 50.6% males.

The median/average age of the Sisters Beach population is 38 years of age, 1 year above the Australian average.

88.4% of people living in Sisters Beach were born in Australia. The other top responses for country of birth were England 3.2%, Scotland 0.9%, Northern Ireland 0.9%, Germany 0.7%, Indonesia 0.7%.

96.1% of people speak English as their first language 0.7% Dutch, 0.7% Indonesian, 0% Welsh, 0% Irish, 0% Gaelic (Scotland).

The religious make up of Sisters Beach is 34.7% No Religion, 16% Catholic, 15.1% Anglican, 4.8% Uniting Church, 3% Christian.

53.1% of people are married, 27.6% have never married and 12.5% are divorced and 4.2% are separated. There are 9 widowed people living in Sisters Beach (2011).

60.8% of the people living in Sisters Beach are employed full time, 26.1% are working on a part time basis. Sisters Beach has an unemployment rate of 1.5%.

The main occupations of people from Sisters Beach are Technicians and Trades Workers 19.5%, Professionals 19.5%, Managers 15.9%, Community and Personal Service Workers 11.8%, Labourers 10.3%, Clerical and Administrative Workers 10.3%, Machinery Operators and Drivers 7.7%, Sales Workers 5.1%.

The median individual income is \$546.00 per week and the median household income is \$1134.00 per week.

28.9% of homes are fully owned, and 40.9% are in the process of being purchased by home loan mortgage. 27.7% of homes are rented.

The median rent in Sisters Beach is \$195.00 per week and the median mortgage repayment is \$1094.00 per month”.