

Wollongong Harbour Redevelopment

Wollongong Harbour Consultative Committee Report to Minister Kelly



Version FINAL
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Executive Summary

Wollongong Harbour Consultative Committee was formed to provide guidance to the Minister for Lands, the Hon Tony Kelly, on the built form and land use parameters that may be acceptable for the redevelopment of Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore.

The Committee met on seven occasions and agreed the following objectives for the Harbour and Foreshore area:

- Provide a social and civic hub for the city.
- Encourage more people to visit the harbour.
- Refocus the Wollongong Heritage Port area as a major tourist and recreation area.
- Provide an economic basis for the harbour's restoration and ongoing function.
- Restore and enhance heritage value.
- Provide for marine/harbour activities while opening up a wider range of uses.

Committee members appreciate the fact that there have been calls within the Illawarra community for leaving the harbour area in its current state. The Committee believes that this is not realistic or desirable noting that:

- Unless there is active intervention, the heritage assets and other infrastructure will continue to deteriorate and value of the harbour to the community will be lost.
- The public domain does not meet expected standards for current or future needs, including with regard to public safety.
- There is a need to recognise that the use of the harbour is changing.
- Equitable access to the harbour should be provided for a wider range of users.
- Revitalising the harbour will provide positive outcomes to the community and the opportunity to manage the area in a sustainable way.



Key recommendations for the harbour and foreshore included:

- Limited development of the Wollongong Harbour area is supported to ensure that it meets the ongoing needs of the Illawarra community.
- Development should generally be geared towards recreation and tourism uses, especially those with a maritime theme, together with appropriate elements of a “working port”.
- The southern side of Belmore Basin should be re-focussed as a pedestrian friendly environment, with vehicles excluded. Low scale development (up to 2 storeys) can be permitted in a way that does not adversely impact on heritage features or views of or from Flagstaff Hill. Key locations for new development should be to the south west of the existing Co-Op Building, as well as the ‘triangle’ footprint at the seaward end of the heritage wall with provision for smaller activity nodes in between. At the earliest opportunity or when tenure arrangements permit, the Co-Op building should be removed and replaced with a public plaza.
- While it is desirable to maintain a fishing fleet in Wollongong harbour, the Committee has been advised that this is not essential provided a suitable location elsewhere is provided. Similarly, the slipway and workshops, which are more akin to an industrial activity, could be relocated away from its present position if a suitable location within the Illawarra could be found.



- Buildings on the Central pier could be up to 2 storeys. The area on the southern side should be focussed on maritime related activities (such as boat servicing, refuelling and maritime related retail), whilst the northern side should be more focussed on recreation and tourism, including enhanced public access and recreational space (possibly by way of reclamation and/or board walk).
- Flagstaff Hill should remain as open space, but would benefit from improved landscaping. Some minor “kiosk” style development and public amenities could be appropriate, probably in association with the heritage fort area.
- The Continental Baths building is not used to its capacity. Alternative uses should be explored (including club house, kiosk, offices) and some expansion of the existing building could be considered. Access to the building and potential conflicts with other users would need to be resolved.

The Committee believes that the recent landscape development of the Brighton Beach area as part of Wollongong City Council's “Blue Mile” initiative is illustrative of the potential of the harbour. The Committee noted that whilst the Blue Mile initiatives appeared to be perceived negatively by the public prior to construction the response since implementation has been overwhelmingly positive.

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide the deliberations of the Wollongong Harbour Consultative Committee to the Minister for Lands, the Hon Tony Kelly.

The Consultative Committee was formed to provide guidance to the Minister on the built form and land use parameters that may be included in a Request for Detailed Proposals for the redevelopment of Wollongong Harbour. The Committee was asked to consider issues such as building heights, development footprints, tenures and land uses. The representation on the Committee covered a broad cross section of the local community including those from environmental, business, heritage, social, research and education, user and tourism backgrounds.

1.2 The Project History

The Department of Lands (Lands) called for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the redevelopment of Wollongong Harbour & Foreshore on 19 November 2007. EOIs closed on 22 February 2008 and six proposals were received.

The requirements set out in the EOI were based on the planning framework adopted for the Harbour and Foreshore area in the Revitalising Wollongong City Centre Vision, Civic Improvement Plan and Local Environment Plan and Council's Blue Mile Masterplan.

The Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) was the first stage in a process to select preferred Proponent(s) for the development of the area. EOIs were reviewed with a view to establishing a short list of proponents who would be requested to submit detailed proposals which would be assessed against defined criteria. These criteria are yet to be developed for the next phase of the Wollongong Harbour project.

In response to calls for further community input to the project, Minister Kelly announced on 18 August 2008 that a Consultative Committee would be formed to facilitate effective local stakeholder input and guidance to the development of built form design parameters for inclusion in a request for detailed proposals for the redevelopment of Wollongong Harbour.

1.3 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Committee were:

- TOR 1: Become familiar with the project history and existing planning framework governing the redevelopment of the Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore environs;
- TOR 2: Make recommendations to the Minister for Lands on built form and land use parameters that it considers should be used to guide any future redevelopment of Crown Land within the Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore environs taking into account the values of the area, its links with the Wollongong CBD and the existing planning framework. Considerations are to include:
 - Building footprints
 - Building heights;
 - Treatment of heritage features;
 - Land uses and commercial opportunities;
 - Public domain design parameters, including access and safety;
 - Views;
 - Final built character;
 - Environmental and financial sustainability;
 - Other urban design issues.

It should be noted that any advice or recommendations from the Committee does not preclude the need for independent formal development assessment (including public consultation) of any proposal as required under the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

1.4 Consultative Committee Process & Membership

A total of 7 meetings were held. These were generally themed around activities of the Committee as follows:

Meeting 1: Introductions, Committee Operation and Overview of Project Background, Issues and Opportunities (held 22 October 2008).

Meeting 2: Presentations from Council and Preliminary Opportunities & Constraints Workshop (held 13 November 2008)

Meeting 3: Presentation from Stakeholders in Belmore Basin (held 27 November 2009).

Meeting 4: Site Inspection and Detailed Built Form & Land Use Workshop (held 14 January 2009).

Meeting 5: Discussion of Preliminary Recommendations & Consideration of Conceptual Drawings (held 4 February 2009).

Meeting 6: Further Discussion of Conceptual Drawings & Final Report (held 4 March 2009).

Meeting 7: Endorsement of Final Report (held 17 March 2009)

Members of the Committee were as follows: David Fuller (Chair), Geoff McQueen, Les Dion, Ian Mackreth, Greg Binskin, Peter Costigan, Carol Herben, Reg Jago, Janine Cullen, Richard Olsen, Judith Matic, Wayne Morris, Eddy de Gabriel.

The Committee agrees that a quorum of members attended all meetings and that the recommendations of the Committee reflect the opinions of the group as a whole.

2 TOR 1 – COMMITTEE TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH PROJECT

2.1 Information Gathered & Assessed

Term of Reference 1 stated that:

“The Committee is required to become familiar with the project history and existing planning framework governing the redevelopment of the Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore environs.”

The Committee achieved this through the course of the meetings through the review of information provided and presentations from agencies and stakeholders.

Information provided to the Committee included:

- The Expression of Interest documentation as published by Lands.
- The Blue Mile Masterplan and Vision as published by Council.
- A summary of studies of the non-indigenous history of Wollongong Harbour & Foreshore. This was prepared by Lands and independently verified as a correct summary of previous work completed. This work also included a summary of previous work on the indigenous history of the area.
- Committee members were directed to the Cities Taskforce work, Revitalising Wollongong City Centre Vision, Masterplan, LEP and DCP on the Department of planning's website.

Committee members requested (and were provided with) additional Information as follows:

- The current state of play in the fishing industry. This information was requested to help understand if expansion of the fishing fleet in Belmore basin was a possibility. It was confirmed that, based on the current industry directions, this is unlikely.
- The status and findings of investigations into the integrity of the stone walls surrounding Belmore Basin and the Central Pier area. This was requested to help understand what redevelopment may be physically possible in these areas and what protection of historical features may be required.

Additional information on the history and historical features of the precinct was provided to the Committee by Carol Herben.

2.2 Presentations to the Committee

The Committee requested presentations to be provided by agencies and stakeholders as follows:

The Department of Lands: Lands provided a presentation on the history of the redevelopment initiative to date, the current status of the EOI process and Lands desired directions for the project. Lands also provided an overview of the existing planning framework and the consultations undertaken to date.

Wollongong City Council: Council staff provided a presentation on recent city planning initiatives, the Blue Mile project and the Wollongong Harbour position paper recently prepared by Council. Relevant public documents were circulated to Committee members.

Belmore Basin Stakeholders: The Committee invited a number of key stakeholders from the harbour area to make presentations. These stakeholders included:

- Mr Tony Musumeci, Wollongong Fishermen's Cooperative;
- Mr Carl Loves, Illawarra Charter Boats;
- Mr Lindsay Smith & Ms Janice Jenkin-Smith, Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association Inc;
- Mrs Helen Harle, Wollongong Slipway Services;
- Mr Richard Ward, Seawind Catamarans;
- Mr Larry Jennet, Wollongong City Surf Life Saving Club;
- Mr Stephen Phillips & Mr Rod Harper, Wollongong Yacht Club;
- Mr Jim Eddy, Bombora Seafood Restaurant; and
- Ms Meredith Hutton, National Trust.

Comments from these stakeholders were varied and often conflicting, reflecting the contrasting nature of the uses of the harbour area. Many stakeholder comments were made in confidence and are as such not recorded herein. They were, however, taken into consideration in the decision making process.

The Committee considers that it is very well informed regarding the project history and existing planning framework governing the redevelopment of the Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore environs. It also considers that it is very well informed regarding the current uses and stakeholder interests in the project area.

All of this information was taken into careful consideration in making recommendation on the built form and land uses for the Harbour and Foreshore area.

3 TOR 2 – COMMITTEE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATION ON BUILT FORM AND LAND USES

3.1 Scope of Committee Recommendations

Term of Reference 2 stated that:

“The Committee is required to make recommendations to the Minister for Lands on built form and land use parameters that it considers should be used to guide any future redevelopment of Crown Land within the Wollongong Harbour and Foreshore environs taking into account the values of the area, its links with the Wollongong CBD and the existing planning framework. Considerations are to include:

- *Building footprints*
- *Building heights;*
- *Treatment of heritage features;*
- *Land uses and commercial opportunities;*
- *Public domain design parameters, including access and safety;*
- *Views;*
- *Final built character;*
- *Environmental and financial sustainability;*
- *Other urban design issues.”*

The Committee considered that the information required to perform its obligations under TOR 2 was gathered as described in Section 2 herein.

The Committee undertook two workshops to identify appropriate built form and land use parameters for the Harbour and Foreshore as follows:

Workshop 1: Preliminary Opportunities & Constraints Analysis; and

Workshop 2: Detailed Built Form & Land Use Recommendations.

The Assistant Government Architect, Helen Lochhead, was engaged to facilitate these workshops and provide urban design advice to the Committee.

3.2 Initial Consideration of Opportunities & Constraints

Key Opportunities and Constraints identified by Committee members at its initial meeting included:

Opportunities:

- Make links to other tourist areas, complement Gateway project, be the “face” of Tourism Wollongong.
- The redevelopment would be good for jobs and create jobs / tourism benefits.
- Increase commercial activity, food outlets, possible café on Flagstaff Hill.
- Improve disabled access.
- Improvement to public domain including better lighting, seats, cycling, security and amenity.
- Relocate slipway and work sheds. Consider removal of most of fishing fleet to commercial port.
- Include a Transport and/or Maritime Museum.
- Develop key hubs in harbour area. Set back the Co-Op building (also known as the Musumeci building). Consider developing the airspace above heritage walls with walkway below. Corner triangle area near Endeavour Drive could be developed as could the Central Pier (alfresco dining, high turnover, heritage style building). Address current poor utilisation/amenity at Flagstaff Hill.
- Bring life back to the heritage of the area with commercial opportunities. Ensure respect for heritage and appropriate heritage preservation. Interpretation of harbour heritage highlighted as feature.
- Make harbour place for employment and enjoyment.

Constraints:

- Balance improvement with modern / complementary services.

- Keep Osborne Park to Courthouse views.
- Do not demolish heritage walls, keep and preserve heritage.
- Must be done well, public acceptance, sympathetic. Make it an icon.
- Ensure commercial return / financial viability, infrastructure sustainability, must be maintained.
- Address impact on residents.
- Vehicle access to marina an issue. Access to Brighton Beach difficult.
- Access conflicts between the Blue Mile in the area of the Continental Pool.
- Sea level change and sustainability of the redevelopment would need to be taken into consideration
- Need to provide for increased recreational use, walking, cycling. Existing pathways too narrow for bikes creating conflicts with pedestrians. Provide pathway around foreshore.
- Keep the open space. Preserve Flagstaff Hill as a remote headland.
- Increase access parking, public transport, bus shuttle. Close some roads and improve traffic management. Exclude cars from harbour area and make it a pedestrian precinct / delivery vehicles only. Explore underground parking options (Lang Park). Additional tourists will have an impact on parking and access.

At the second meeting of the Committee, the Assistant Government Architect facilitated a workshop (Workshop 1) to look at a preliminary site analysis. Matters considered included:

- Assessment of development of water, open space and basin areas to optimise use.
- Informal patterns of movement.
- Conflict areas, barriers.
- Resolution of access issues including the conflict between parking and continuous access.
- Development of more people-focused activity in basin.
- Potential development of 2 storey height will still allow views.
- Continuous foreshore access needed.
- Appropriate scale of development in basin.

This preliminary site analysis formed the basis of the more detailed workshop on built form and land use.

3.3 Existing Condition

During the course of its deliberations the Committee members noted that the existing condition of the harbour and surrounding area was generally poor and aesthetically unpleasing. The Committee resolved that the final report to the Minister should incorporate photos of the existing condition to illustrate the need for action to resolve the current appearance of the harbour and foreshore. Some photos of the existing condition of the harbour are described included here to illustrate the issue.



Poor condition of the existing work shed on the Central Pier.



Deterioration of harbour assets.



Poorly managed boat storage.



Unsympathetic style and poor quality of coastal patrol building.



Poor public domain and access ways with pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.



Need for maintenance of heritage features.

3.4 Detailed Built Form & Land Use Recommendations

The Committee agreed the following objectives for the Harbour and Foreshore area:

- Provide a social and civic hub for the city centre.
- Encourage more people to visit the harbour.
- Refocus the Wollongong Heritage Port area as a major tourist and recreation area.
- Provide an economic basis for the harbour's ongoing function – explore commercial uses.
- Retain and reinforce heritage value.
- Provide for marine/harbour activities while opening up a wider range of uses.

For the purpose of making recommendation on built form and land use parameters the Committee divided the harbour and foreshore area into seven precincts. These precincts are illustrated in **Appendix A**. It was noted that the division was somewhat arbitrary and recommendations for some areas could be combined.

The Committee agreed the following built form and land use parameters for precincts as listed in the table below.

Possible concept sketches of sections of the harbour area are included in **Appendix C**. It is stressed that these sketches are purely indicative and are not intended to imply the Committee recommends a particular design solution.

Precinct	Issues	Opportunities	Recommendations				
			Access	Built Form	Activities & Uses	Views	Other
<u>Precinct 1:</u> <u>Endeavour Drive</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Car parking, vehicle and pedestrian conflicts. o Poorly sited Co-op building. o Maintenance of heritage sandstone walls. o Maintain views from Flagstaff Hill. o Conflicts between commercial fishing fleet, tourist and locals using the harbour for recreation. o Disjointed pedestrian connections. o Poor management of area; o Stormwater issues. o Parking. o Under-utilised grassed area in SW corner adjacent Endeavour Drive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide continuous pedestrian connection and upgrade footpaths. o Urban plaza on the waterfront – create a fully pedestrianised space along the water (service and loading at both ends). o Introduce new appropriate commercial development; o Low scale development. o Remove existing Co-Op building when practicable – relocate uses in more appropriate development. o Possible use of under-utilised grassed SW corner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Rationalise parking - need to tie in with Council Parking Strategy and provide access to shuttle bus/bus transport/coach parking – see also Precinct 4 comments. o Eliminate vehicular traffic along waterfront. o Enhance public domain for pedestrian access (including connections to outside the harbour area). o Review vehicular access – including potential for one way on Endeavour Drive – see also Precinct 4 comments. o Potential boardwalk in the south-west corner of Belmore Basin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Potential for up to 2 storeys on lower level at ends of precinct subject to views from Flagstaff Hill being maintained. o Potential to expand upper level at SW of precinct into under-utilised grassed area (subject to reduction in footprint at lower level). o Appropriately stage development prior to removal of Co-Op Building (ie, only more westerly buildings around public plaza not whole footprint). o Small activity nodes along heritage retaining wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Tourist Information, charter boats shore base, restaurants, cafés, food vendors, tourism-related retail, weekend markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maintain views from Osborne Park near shared way. o Maintain views to and from upper parts of Flagstaff Hill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maintain significant views of wall. o Maintain those sections of the wall with documented heritage value. o Ensure any discovered archaeology is respected. o Pursue removal of Co-Op Building and relocation of functions. o No requirement to retain trees along retaining wall. o Improve stormwater. o Resolve management issues.

Precinct	Issues	Opportunities	Recommendations				
			Access	Built Form	Activities & Uses	Views	Other
<u>Precinct 2: The Central Pier</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Slipway boat maintenance – potential conflicts with other uses. o Significant OHS/health issues including asbestos, lead paint, use of paints/solvents, spills etc with significant cost to upgrade. o Visual impact of boat maintenance facilities. o Heritage constraints. o Vehicle and pedestrian conflicts. o Wave, wind and swell action. o Pier and seawall maintenance. o Trailer parking for boat ramp. o Lack of sewer services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improve pedestrian access. o Expand marine based commercial opportunities. o Continue to cater for fishing industry. o Potential for land reclamation/boardwalk or pontoons for another destination/people place on central pier. o Potential to relocate slipway to Port Kembla (to be investigated). o Investigate relocation of boat ramp and rationalise boat trailer parking. o Remove volunteer coast guard building and relocate essential services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improve pedestrian access along north side. o Provide for shared service vehicle/ pedestrian usage on south side of pier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Up to 2 storeys. o Reclamation or boardwalk along north side. o New development footprint to cover area similar to existing facilities. o Remove Volunteer Coast Guard building (and relocate essential services) . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o “Working Port” uses. o Maritime and tourism related commercial uses. o Servicing for vessels, loading & unloading. o Potential for a more people-based place along north side. o Water access for low impact users (surf skis, surf boats) – at eastern end. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maintain breakwater and lighthouse as is – no development in this vicinity. o Sewerage infrastructure to be provided to central pier as part of any new development. o Address management issues. o Remove usage conflicts. o Pursue alternative location for slipway.
<u>Precinct 3: Belmore Basin</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Mix of commercial and recreational vessels. o Facilities not suitable for quality tourism ventures. o Timber jetty may not be suitable for use by commercial vessels, such as charter boats. o Historic sandstone walls and fixtures. o Restricted vessel manoeuvring; o Management issues. o Stormwater issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maintain working harbour. o Rationalise moorings to enhance opportunities for charter boats, commercial fishing, working harbour, recreational uses such as tourism moorings. o Short term boat mooring (2 hours - to several days) for visiting yachts/cruisers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Focus vehicular drop off and pick up for tourists/boat users at both ends of Belmore Basin to keep waterfront as pedestrian only along southern edge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Access pontoons at extremities of basin. Structures to have no impact on Basin walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Focus servicing for commercial vessels on central pier. o Locate visiting and recreational moorings along southern edge. 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Options to be investigated: configuration of boats, boat pick up/drop off. o Any re-arrangement of moorings should not impede vessel manoeuvring in tight Basin area. o Management issues to be addressed. o Address stormwater issues.

Precinct	Issues	Opportunities	Recommendations				
			Access	Built Form	Activities & Uses	Views	Other
<u>Precinct 4: Flagstaff Hill</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views to and from Flagstaff Hill. Dominated by roads, lacking facilities. Poor pedestrian and cycle access. Windy. Minimal landscaping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landmark site. Picturesque focal point. Enhance heritage elements and interpretation of heritage. Potential heritage walk. More shade trees and landscaping – sheltered picnic terraces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider one way traffic flow with associated enhancement of on-road parking capacity. Continuous pedestrian access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only small structures. Possible use of the old fort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public toilets, information/ kiosk, heritage interpretation as part of old fort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key views to and from Flagstaff Hill to be protected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There may be potential to provide some facilities such as amenities and the use of the old fort.
<u>Precinct 5: The Moorings</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure of harbour to sea surge. Limited moorings. Bedrock in the outer harbour. Protect middens. Structured pontoons versus increased moorings. High level of recreational use of sheltered beach. Unsafe access to boats from northern breakwater. Management issues. Commercial fees not charged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to rationalise moorings. Opportunity for better management of moorings a priority. Landscape treatment as continuation of works being undertaken by Council at southern end of Brighton Beach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle/ pedestrian access widened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boardwalk above dinghies. Structures to enhance safe access to vessels along sea wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picnicking, passive recreation, swimming. 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No opportunity for a structured marina in short to medium term (poor land base, access conflicts with pedestrians/cyclists, impacts on use of sheltered beach). Better management of moorings.
<u>Precinct 6: The Continental Baths</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited car parking space. Pedestrian conflicts along the vehicle access road/cycleway. Under-utilised building that needs a “facelift”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link North Beach and Belmore Basin. Upgrade baths with potential commercial element. Improve cycle route along Cliff Rd. Improve access to baths. Create a point of interest for pedestrians and cyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue improvement to cycle / pedestrian access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated as part of existing building development (possible extension to building). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cafe, restaurant (as part of Baths). Clubhouse. Support for boats. Public toilets. 	NA	
<u>Precinct 7: Brighton Beach</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicle and pedestrian conflicts. Historic planting. Boat / kayak ramp access. Lack of public transport drop-offs. Midden site. Water quality/stormwater management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promenade. Shade and seating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Mile cycle/ pedestrian improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional built form proposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passive recreation. Planting, shade. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to stormwater should be pursued.

3.5 Overall Recommendations:

Committee members appreciate the fact that there have been calls within the Illawarra community for leaving the harbour area in its current state. The Committee believes that this is not realistic or desirable for reasons including the following:

- Unless there is active intervention, the heritage assets and other infrastructure will continue to deteriorate and value of the harbour to the Wollongong community will be lost.
- The public domain does not meet expected standards for current or future needs, including with regard to public safety.
- There is a need to recognise that the use of the harbour is changing.
- A revitalisation process will provide positive outcomes for the community.

The Committee acknowledges the desire by some community members to retain the harbour as a “working port” (based around the fishing industry) but also recognises the role of the harbour as a fishing port has significantly diminished over a number of years owing to restructuring in the fishing industry with only a few active fishing vessels remaining. The future of the harbour will have a stronger emphasis on tourism and recreational boating.

The overall findings of the Committee with respect to TOR 2 are summarised as follows:

- Limited development of the Wollongong Harbour area is supported to ensure that it meets the ongoing needs of the Illawarra community and to assist with maintenance of public infrastructure, including important heritage features and values.
- Development should be considered within the areas shown in the Zoning Plan as included in **Appendix B**. The Indicative Plan in **Appendix B** illustrates the bulk of development that would typically be acceptable within the development areas but should not be taken to indicate a definitive or recommended design solution.
- Development should generally be geared to enhancement of opportunities in the area of recreation and tourism, whilst retaining a strong emphasis on maritime-related activities as well as appropriate elements of a “working port”.
- The primary areas where new built form could be introduced are the Central Pier and the Endeavour Drive Precinct.
- **In the Endeavour Drive Precinct:**
 - The southern side of Belmore Basin should be re-focussed as a pedestrian friendly environment, with vehicles excluded.
 - Low scale development (up to 2 storeys) can be permitted in a way that does not adversely impact on heritage features (including historic stone walls) or views of or from Flagstaff Hill.
 - Key locations for new development should be to the south west of the existing Co-Op Building, as well as the south eastern ‘triangle’ footprint at the seaward end of the heritage wall (shown on the attached plans) with provision for smaller activity nodes in between.
 - At the seaward end of the heritage wall it may be possible to excavate the hillside (beyond the existing stone steps) to accommodate a building footprint. Appropriate care will need to be taken to properly handle any heritage features uncovered.



- A minimum setback of 6 metres to the water's edge should be generally maintained in all areas to facilitate safe pedestrian access around the area (noting that isolated exceptions are possible, particularly at activity nodes suggested along the wall).



- The area of the existing Co-Op building should ultimately be developed as a public plaza. The development footprint to the south west of this building should be developed in a staged way until this building is removed, to prevent 'overcrowding' of the area in the interim.
- The Committee considered at some length the elevated grassed area at the south west of the precinct. The area was identified as under-utilised at present. Development of this area could be considered if the overall design solution is balanced with the adjacent area to the north west such that the built form does not 'overcrowd' the waterfront urban plaza. A two level solution could be considered with the upper level built "into" the grassed area.

○ **For the Central Pier Precinct:**

- Buildings on the Central pier could be up to 2 storeys, with strong emphasis on maritime uses and associated services, together with broader tourism and recreational activities.
- Usage of the area on the southern side should be focussed on maritime related activities. Activities could include vessel servicing, fuel, vessel fitout and mooring of commercial vessels.
- The southern side should include a shared pedestrian and vehicle area, with vehicle access restricted to short term service vehicles.
- The northern side of the Central Pier could be more focussed on public access (pedestrian and cyclists), with the potential for additional reclamation and/or a boardwalk to create enhanced recreational space.
- Setbacks from the water on the southern side should be technically designed to facilitate access and manoeuvring by service vehicles (with a minimum setback of 10m to be maintained).
- Important heritage elements should be respected or enhanced (such as the pilot's slipway, crane pedestal and basin walls).
- "Passive" water craft users (such as surf skis, surf boats) should ultimately be catered for at the seaward end of the precinct to minimise potential conflicts.



- "Working Port" - Whilst it is desirable to maintain the fishing fleet in Wollongong, the Committee has been advised by stakeholders that this is not essential provided a suitable location elsewhere is provided (say at Port Kembla). In particular, fish handling and processing no longer needs to be undertaken adjacent to the harbour.
- Similarly, the slipway and workshops, which are more akin to an industrial activity, could be relocated away from its present position if a suitable location could be found. These current activities create significant use conflicts with recreation users and the desirability of achieving increased public access around the Wollongong Harbour area. Furthermore the current slipway and workshop areas need to be significantly upgraded to meet modern operating standards and to ensure compatibility with the developing recreation focus of the harbour area. It is important

that the slipway facility be retained in the Illawarra region and alternative locations should be explored.

- The Committee notes that with better management some rationalization and improvement of moorings in the outer harbour would greatly improve the visual appearance and assist in meeting demand for moorings. However, the Committee believes that the development of a structured marina is not appropriate in the short to medium term, because of difficulties in gaining land access for servicing and potential conflicts with use of the sheltered recreational beach.
- Flagstaff Hill should remain as open space, but would benefit from improved landscaping. Some minor “kiosk” style development and public amenities could be appropriate, possibly in association with the heritage fort area.
- Moorings in Belmore Basin may be able to be more efficiently arranged, although the area of the Basin is very “tight” and it is essential that adequate vessel manoeuvring space is retained. The Committee believes that 1 or 2 “pontoon style pick up and drop off” points should be provided at the eastern and western ends of the Basin for charter and tourist vessels.
- The Continental Baths building is not used to its capacity. Alternative uses should be explored (including club house, kiosk, offices) and some expansion of the existing building could be considered. Access to the building and potential conflicts with other users would need to be resolved.
- There should be provision made in any Expression of Interest process for an ‘iconic’ structure or building to be included in the development. Whilst development should broadly comply with the recommendations of this report the opportunity to construct something unique for the Wollongong region should be positively encouraged.
- Parking and transport are issues that require an integrated approach with Wollongong City Council (and its plans for the entire area between the Wollongong Entertainment Centre, Stuart Park and the Wollongong CBD) to ensure that outcomes are consistent with wider community requirements and viability of commercial spaces.
- To meet parking requirements, a mixture of on-site and offsite arrangements will be needed. Council should consider the use of a one way traffic system around Flagstaff Hill, which would be expected to enable enhanced parking along Endeavour Drive, particularly through the use of angle parking.



The Committee is also aware of other options that have been considered by Council and that could be pursued, including structured, low visual impact car parks in Lang Park or the Entertainment Precinct.

- Enhanced public transport links to the area are needed and it is important that appropriate bus pick up / drop off and disabled access be incorporated at the Harbour.
- The Committee noted the heavy pedestrian use of the area, particularly during events. This will increase in the future. While there are reasonable “north/south” pedestrian links, improvements in links across to the west are required.

It should be noted that the Committee did not undertake any formal feasibility analysis of development options as documented herein. The Committee was mindful that any development of the area would require a critical mass to be financially viable and attractive to private sector proponents. Similarly detailed constraints on building form may impact on the overall financial feasibility. Whilst concerns were expressed that some of the development options identified may not provide the required critical mass it was considered outside the scope of the Committee to undertake further financial analysis of development scenarios.

4 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee makes the following comments and/or recommendations on several pertinent issues that may not directly relate to the Terms of Reference, but which should be considered by the Minister.

One of the key findings of the Committee was that the harbour area has been subject to a lack of attention over a considerable period of time. This has resulted in much of the harbour and foreshore becoming dilapidated and poorly maintained and has ultimately resulted in lost opportunities for the immediate area and the Illawarra region. With better management the area should be able to generate a commercial income. The Committee believes that current and future revenue streams should be used towards restoration and maintenance of the harbour area in a more sustainable way.



More specifically the Committee noted the following:

- The use of the harbour is not currently on a 'user pays' basis for all users. Current tenures should be in place for persons or organizations that occupy areas or moorings in the harbour. Appropriate commercial rents and fees should be collected from all tenure holders on a consistent basis. This income should be used to help address the lack of funding for maintenance activities, and may result in the removal from the area of unsightly, unused or unusable vessels that detract from the image of the harbour.
- Any new tenures should have review and performance measures built into them such that they are assessed throughout the life of the lease. Leases and licences should be commercially based to ensure that investment is continually made in the area throughout the life of the tenure.
- The level of maintenance of infrastructure and day-to-day management of the public domain in the harbour area was criticised by a number of stakeholders. A more coordinated and accountable management approach to the management responsibilities across the harbour area is required.
- The Wollongong Fishermen's Co-Operative building (Musumeci Building) occupies a very prominent place in the harbour and is seen as a significant impediment to the optimal redevelopment of the precinct. The Committee appreciates that commercial tenure arrangements are in place, but believes that, at an appropriate time, relocation of the functions of this building should be pursued, together with removal of the building to enable enhanced public open space and amenity around the harbour.
- Further dialogue should be undertaken with Port Kembla Port Corporation to determine the feasibility of relocating appropriate maritime facilities. It is considered essential that boat repair facilities be retained in the Illawarra region.
- The recent landscape enhancements of the Brighton Beach area as part of the WCC Blue Mile initiative are illustrative of the potential of the harbour and the broader community are strong supporters of these enhancements. The Committee noted that whilst the Blue Mile initiatives appeared to be perceived negatively by the public prior to construction the response since implementation has been overwhelmingly positive.



- Water quality and stormwater management were highlighted by a number of stakeholders as issues of concern. Good water quality and stormwater management is paramount if the area is to become a regional showpiece. NSW Department of Lands should work with WCC to implement appropriate best practice.



- With reference to the 2009 Wollongong LEP currently on exhibition the Committee considers that the proposed zoning of Wollongong Harbour and its surrounds as appropriate and consistent with both the current use and the recommendations of the Committee as documented in this report. This includes the zoning of the waterway as W3 Working Waterways, the immediate area surrounding Belmore Basin as IN4 Working Waterfront and the remainder as RE1 Public Recreation.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Harbour & Foreshore Precincts

Appendix B: Zoning & Indicative Plans

Appendix C: Concept Sketches

Appendix A
Harbour & Foreshore Precincts



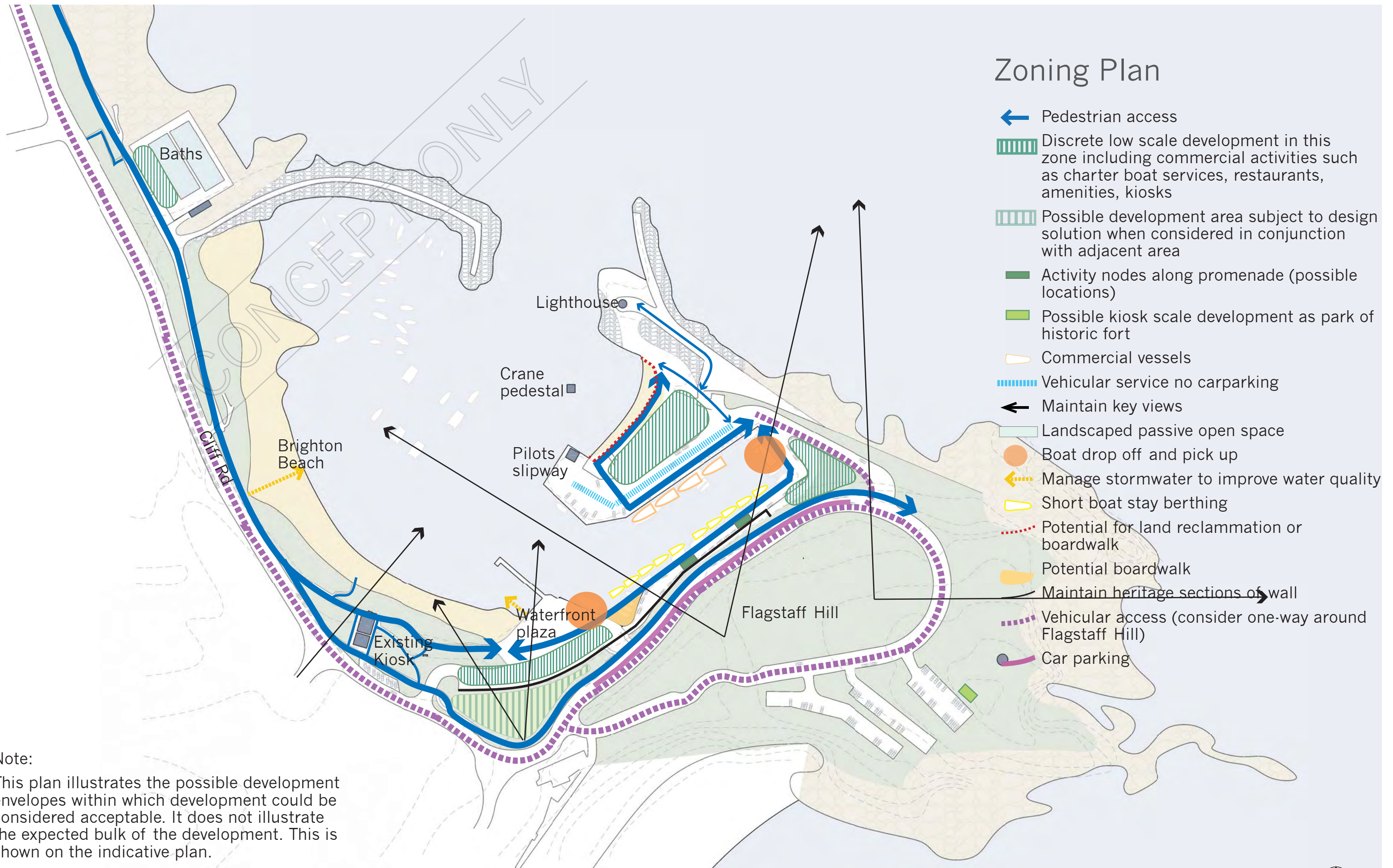
Objectives

- Provide a social and civic hub for the city centre
- Encourage more people to visit the harbour.
- Refocus the Wollongong Heritage Port area as a major tourist and recreation area
- Provide an economic basis for the harbour’s ongoing function – explore commercial uses
- Retain and reinforce heritage value
- Provide for marine / harbour activities while opening up a wider range of uses.

Appendix B

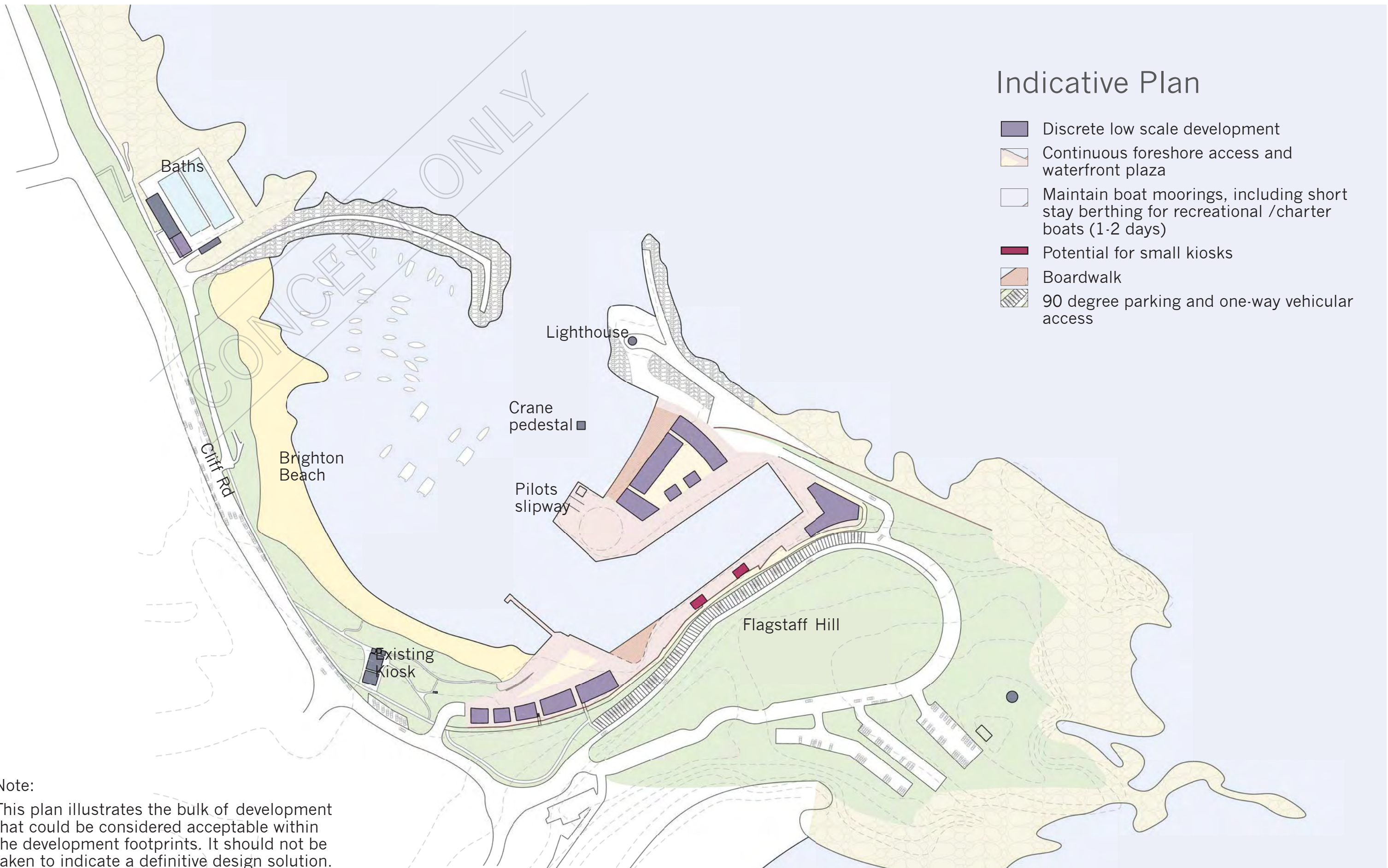
Zoning Plan Indicative Plan

Zoning Plan



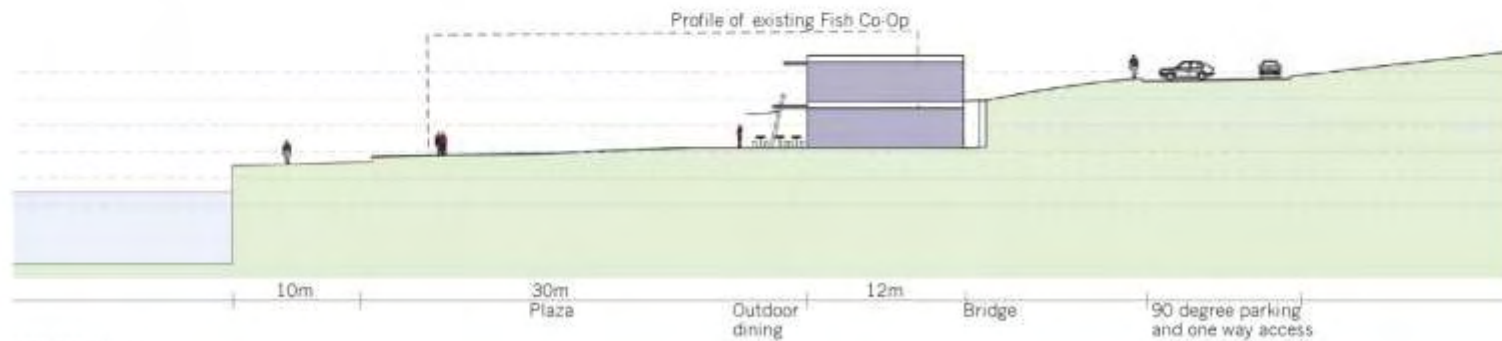
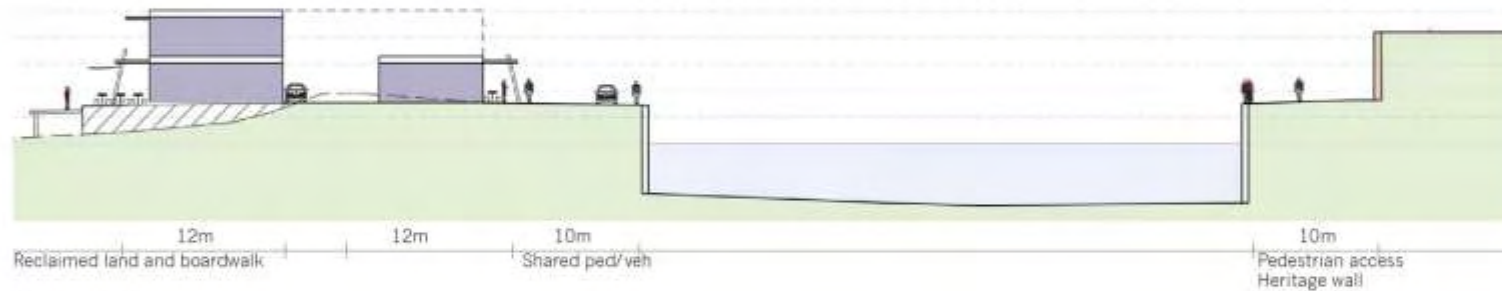
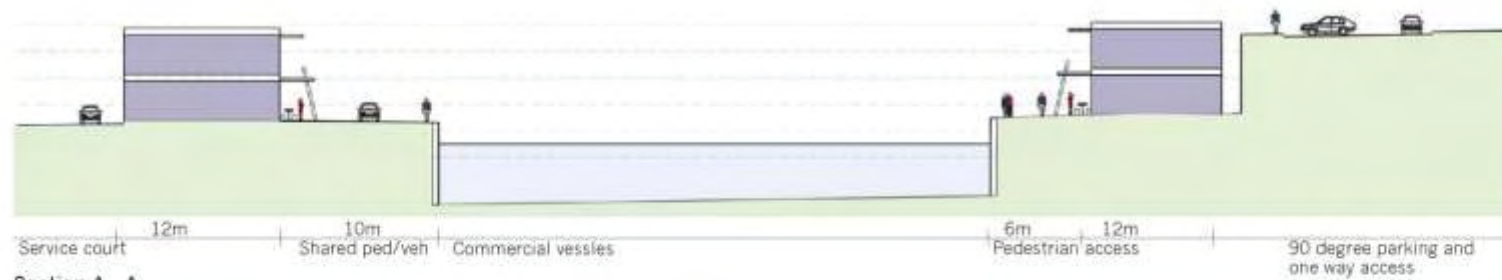
Note:
This plan illustrates the possible development envelopes within which development could be considered acceptable. It does not illustrate the expected bulk of the development. This is shown on the indicative plan.





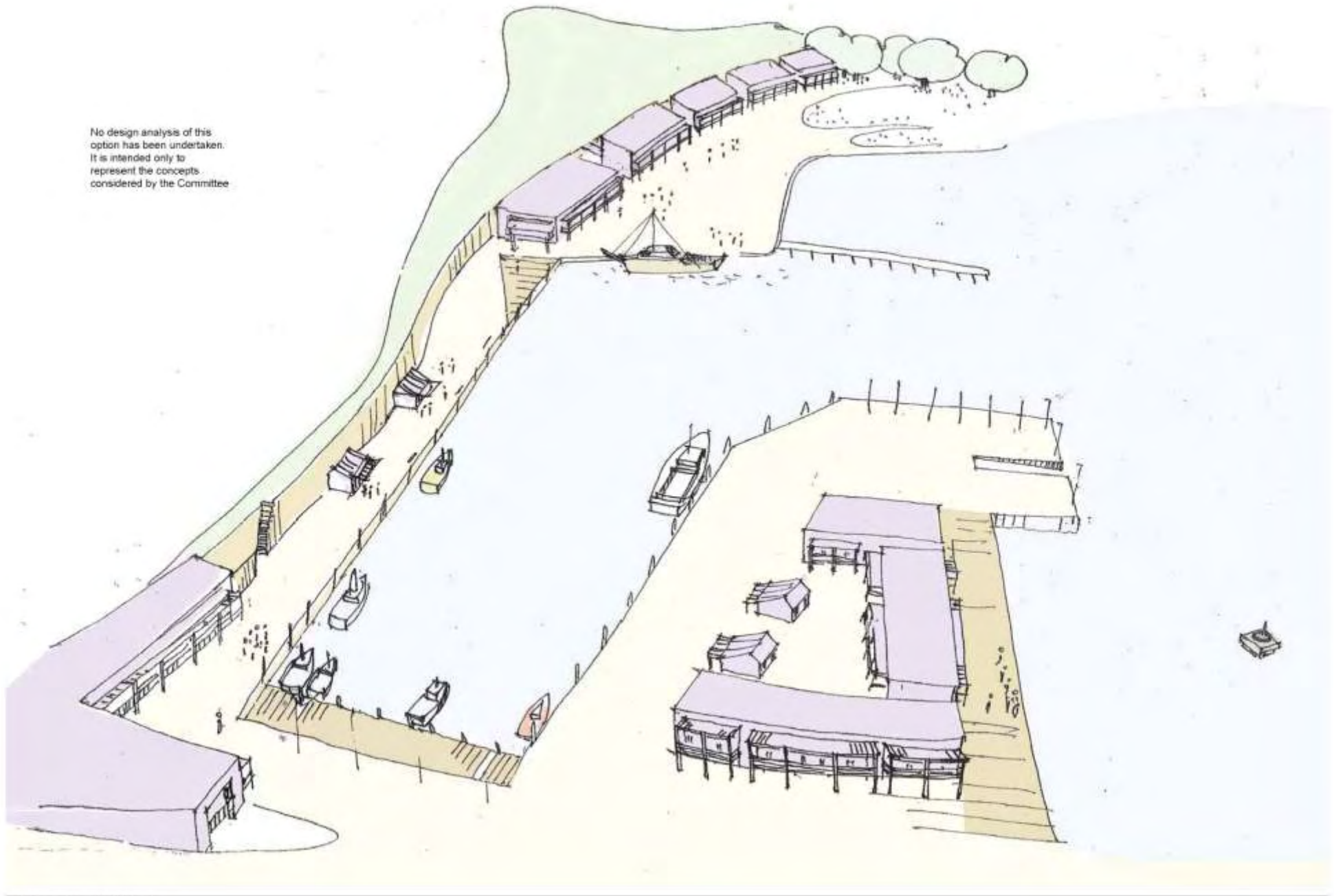
Appendix C
Concept Sketches

Typical sections based on Indicative Plan



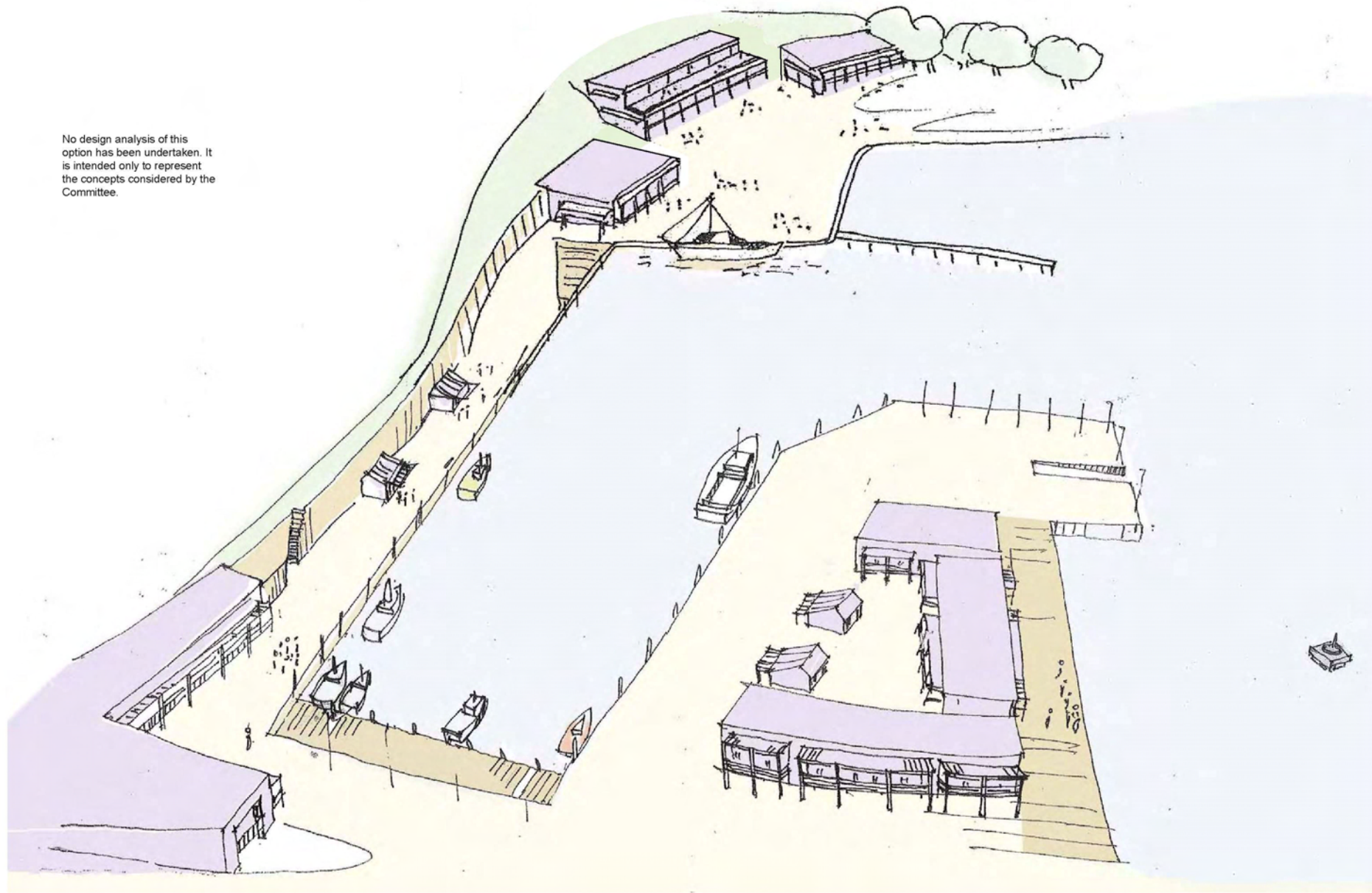
No design analysis of these options has been undertaken. It is intended only to represent the concepts considered by the Committee

No design analysis of this option has been undertaken. It is intended only to represent the concepts considered by the Committee



Wollongong Harbour

No design analysis of this option has been undertaken. It is intended only to represent the concepts considered by the Committee.



Wollongong Harbour