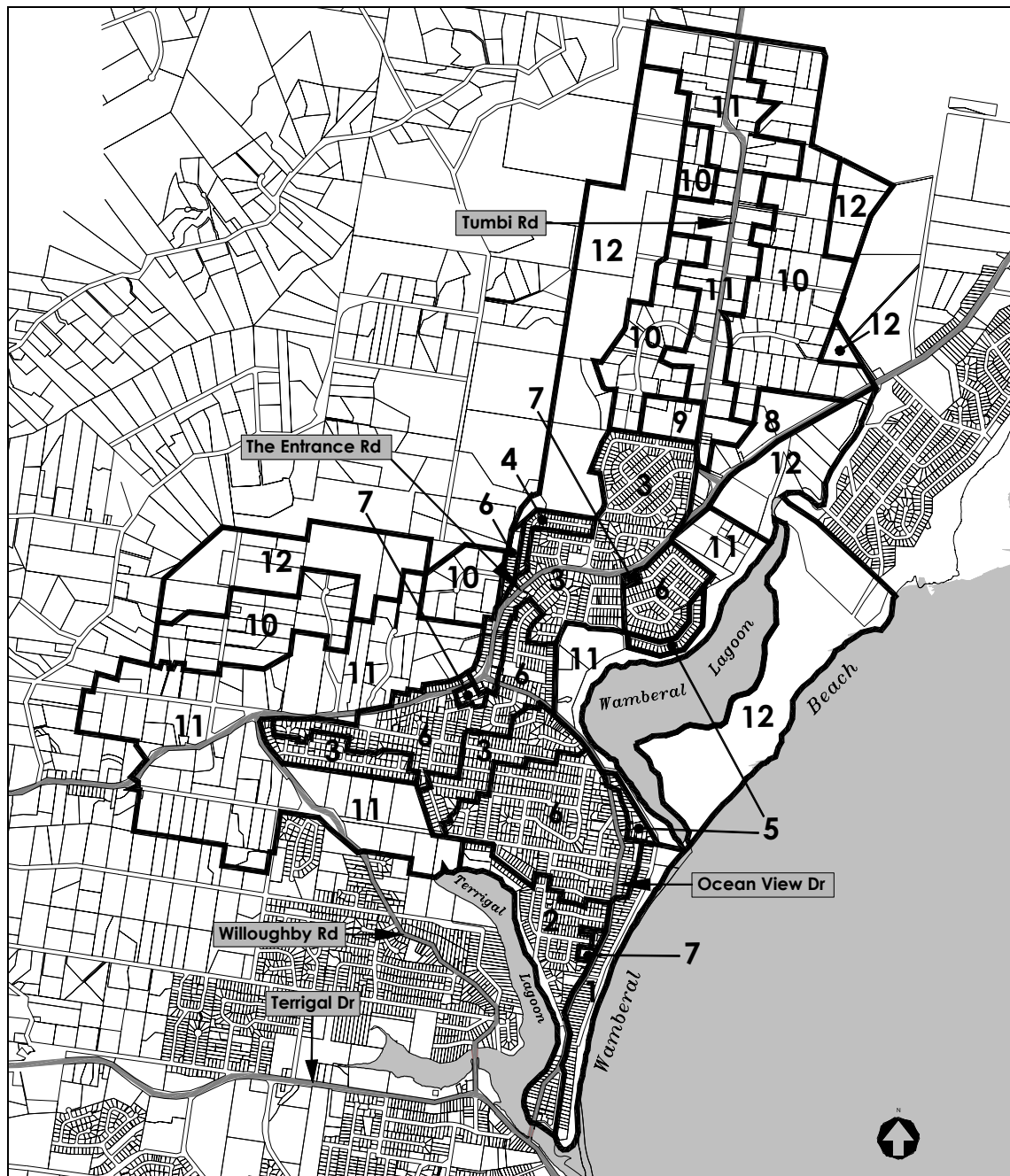


"Places" in Wamberal



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Wamberal 1: Ocean Beachfront

Existing Character

A foreshore residential subdivision perched upon an exposed frontal dune, forming a prominent backdrop to the open ocean beach.

Located upon a long-established subdivision, large lots of uniform width face a wide district thoroughfare with formed edges flanked by narrow grassed verges and some footpaths, providing a busy yet distinctly coastal setting.

A mix of traditional but large seaside houses, apartments and large contemporary dwellings can be viewed from two frontages and from surrounding hillsides. Over the past three or four decades, many traditional houses have been redeveloped for large apartment buildings and individually designed houses of two and three storeys, accommodating both residents and holidaying visitors. Built to capture lagoon vistas as well as panoramic ocean views, new buildings have wide frontages and are substantially elevated above the dune crest, creating an almost continuous wall of development.

The area also includes a traditional corner shop near a beachfront carpark and surf club. Both the shop and club are older style and modestly-scaled buildings, and they display a variety of corporate advertising signs. Next to the club and carpark, a long park flanked by a dense corridor of shrubs and small trees reinforces this location as a focus for community recreation, and forms a buffer to a neighbouring development of low-rise holiday apartments.

Facing the beach, gardens are small and open, while along the street, traditional houses with deep gardens and dense thickets of shrubs are being replaced by smaller open gardens and parking courts surrounded by tall security walls.

Significant landscape elements include occasional Norfolk Island Pines and scattered examples of established traditional seaside gardens.

Wamberal 1: Ocean Beachfront

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential foreshores where future development does not dominate the informal scenic quality of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's ocean beaches, and new dwellings are surrounded by leafy gardens that provide protection from storm surges and shoreline erosion.

Ensure that new structures do not disrupt development patterns that are evident upon surrounding properties. Avoid disturbing natural slopes plus any existing trees that are visually-prominent foreshore features, and ensure a leafy character for these prominent backdrops to ocean beaches. Plant gardens and street verges with low hedges and salt-tolerant trees that are predominantly indigenous, clustered to maintain existing panoramic views. Facing beachfronts in particular, avoid tall retaining walls or fences, extensive terraces or driveways that would visibly compromise the desired leafy character. Plant low-growing "hedges" of indigenous shrubs and ground covers along boundaries and to stabilise dunes. Also, maintain the informal character of any existing wide street verges that are dotted with shady street trees.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of foreshore development by setting all building works back from exposed fore-dunes, and by surrounding buildings with leafy gardens. Incorporate waterfront and street setbacks that are similar to the surrounding properties, and provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings or additions to existing dwellings. Use irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms, such as linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. All roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, flanked by wide eaves and verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. Facing the beach, disguise the impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies and verandahs.

Reflect elements of traditional coastal architecture and minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and lightly-framed verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views between the dwelling and the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 2: Sandplain Bungalows

Existing Character

An older residential subdivision on a flat sandspit, located between a major district thoroughfare and a coastal lagoon, with a wooded backdrop formed by a minor coastal headland to the north.

Within this established subdivision that has been almost totally cleared of original vegetation, a regular pattern of smaller to medium lots faces a grid of wide streets with formed edges, flanked by narrow grassed verges without street trees. Along the lagoon frontage, road verges include an unmanaged mix of grass and exotics, intermingling with a thin band of natural wetland.

Houses are of varied age and style, generally modest single storey, of timber frame or brick construction, with simple open gardens to the front and rear providing a simple open atmosphere. Close to the thoroughfare and the beach, redevelopment of former cottage blocks has produced some contemporary and well designed dual occupancies.

Wamberal 2: Sandplain Bungalows

Desired Character

These areas should remain low-density residential neighbourhoods where new buildings complement the architectural character of mid-Twentieth Century bungalows that are distinctive streetscape features of Gosford City's older suburbs, and the existing sparse tree cover is enhanced by additional plantings.

Ensure that new structures complement the siting of surviving traditional bungalows nearby. Surround each dwelling with a leafy garden to accommodate shady trees and shrubs that are mostly-indigenous, planted as corridors or clusters along back fences and street verges. Maintain street setbacks that are similar to neighbouring properties. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of buildings along any street or laneway by providing at least one wide side setback or by stepping the shape of front and rear facades.

For new dwellings and additions to existing dwellings, reflect the modest scale and simple articulation of traditional mid-Twentieth Century bungalows. Roofs should be simple hips, gables or skillions without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale and bulk of exterior walls. Use stepped floorplans, or divide floorspace into linked pavilion structures that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Any facades that are taller or longer than those of neighbouring dwellings should be screened by an extra setback or by balconies and verandahs. Preferably, provide parking as open carports or in detached garages that are screened by shady trees.

In order to complement the scale and design character of traditional bungalows, a "light-weight appearance" is preferable for facades that are visible from the street. For example, incorporate large windows plus timber-framed balconies or verandahs, plus painted finishes and some sheet or board cladding rather than extensive plain masonry. Also, provide a traditional "street address" with verandahs and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the road and rear laneways. Ensure that wide garages do not visually-dominate any facade or rear-lane frontage.

Facing the street, maintain the informal qualities of existing wide street verges that are dotted with shady street trees. Plant the boundaries facing streets and laneways with hedges or shrubs to allow a filtered view from each dwelling, rather than using fences that are tall and opaque. Screen terraces and balconies to protect the privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 3: Open Parkland Hillsides

Existing Character

In four separate locations, established residential subdivisions on low to moderate slopes, often with scenically-distinctive backdrops of tall forest or foreshore woodland.

Semi-regular subdivisions following hillside contours, with medium lots flanking wide local streets with formed edges and grassed verges, occasionally with street trees and shrubs. Substantially cleared of original woodland, with simple managed front gardens of flowering shrubs and small trees surrounded by turf, and a scattering of remnants through back yards adjoining the forested ridgetops, providing an open parkland atmosphere.

Detached houses vary in age and style, from modest single storey timber and brick to two storey brick buildings elevated above the street level.

Wamberal 3: Open Parkland Hillsides

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential hillsides where existing streetscape quality and amenity are enhanced substantially by further "greening" of gardens and street verges.

Minimise disturbance to natural slopes and any existing trees that are visually-prominent. Retain existing ground levels along all boundaries, and on the steeper slopes, use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside. Locate new buildings behind front setbacks that are similar to their surrounding properties. Provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades, and plant clusters of trees and shrubs throughout each garden to screen buildings and driveways, as well as to provide shady backdrops to the roadway. Facing the street, emphasise a leafy garden character by gardens and street verges planted with taller trees that are indigenous plus hedges of shrubs, and avoid wide driveways, tall fences or multiple retaining walls.

On hillsides that are scenically-prominent, minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by courtyards. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views from a dwelling to the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 4: Prominent Open Hillsides

Existing Character

Elevated residential subdivision between a scenically-distinctive forested ridgetop and older footslope subdivisions along a major regional thoroughfare.

Medium to large lots are located on moderate to steep slopes, flanking a wide cul-de-sac with formed edges and narrow turfed verges without street trees. An elevated location in an open landscape setting, this street of substantial houses forms a prominent backdrop to the regional thoroughfare and a contrast to surrounding residential localities.

Large to very large houses, two to three storeys with wide frontages and predominantly brick construction, are elevated above street level behind terraced front gardens or set above substantial garage podiums to capture panoramic coastal views.

Front gardens of low shrubs contrast with the scenically-distinctive forest backdrop adjoining the back garden areas.

Wamberal 4: Prominent Open Hillsides

Desired Character

These prominent backdrops to Gosford City's town centres, waterways and main roads should become leafy low-density residential hillsides, where new developments do not dominate their landscape setting, and improved standards of scenic-and-urban design quality are achieved by leafy hillside gardens around each dwelling.

Enhance the scenic potential of cleared hillside properties and road verges by retaining existing natural slopes in gardens and along street verges. Plant clusters of trees and shrubs throughout each garden to screen buildings and driveways, as well as to provide shady backdrops to roadways. Facing each street or any vantage points located downhill, emphasise a leafy garden character by planting taller trees that are indigenous plus hedges of shrubs, and avoid tall retaining walls, elevated structures including terraces or pools, and steep driveways that would visibly compromise the desired leafy hillside character. In any garden that is close to a bushland reserve, do not plant identified noxious or environmental weeds.

Avoid disturbing natural slopes by low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill. On the steeper sites, locate parking next to the street in structures that would blend with the desired leafy setting. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside by locating buildings behind front or rear setbacks that appear similar to their surrounding properties, and providing at least one wide side setback or stepping the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by courtyards. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs, stepped forms or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views from dwellings to the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 5: Open Woodland Foreshore

Existing Character

An established residential subdivision on gentle to moderate slopes along a coastal lagoon foreshore, providing a scenically-distinctive coastal feature.

Woodland remnants, varying from open and scattered to dense copses and corridors of low eucalypts, form a canopy above well maintained gardens of dense shrubs and trees, and provide a scenically-distinctive shady foreshore woodland atmosphere.

A regular subdivision of medium lots facing a winding narrow local street with unformed edges flanked by narrow verges. Elevated lots are partially visible from two frontages, with panoramic coastal views.

Established houses are of a modest scale, a combination of traditional single storey coastal fibro and newer one and two storey brick construction. Recent redevelopment of older cottages has produced large two storey brick houses with wide frontages designed to capture panoramic views.

Along street frontages, gardens support woodland remnants above dense beds of flowering shrubs and ground covers, while foreshore gardens incorporate a mix of shrubs and turf intermingling with a thin band of foreshore casuarinas and indigenous wetland plants.

Wamberal 5: Open Woodland Foreshore

Desired Character

These should remain leafy low-density residential foreshores where the current scenic quality of Gosford City's prominent foreshore backdrops is enhanced substantially by further "greening" of gardens and street verges in order to screen new development and to complement the open bushland canopy that surrounds most existing dwellings.

Avoid disturbing natural slopes and existing trees that provide visually-prominent backdrops to waterways or surrounding suburbs. Complement the established canopy by planting gardens and street verges with trees that are mostly indigenous, enhancing the scenic quality of backdrops to waterways and streets, arranged in clusters to maintain existing water views. Do not plant identified noxious or environmental weeds near bushland reserves. Also, maintain the form of existing wide street verges that are dotted with shady street trees.

Promote a natural character for waterfront backdrops by avoiding structures that would visibly compromise the desired bushy foreshore character. Retain existing ground levels along all boundaries. On the steeper slopes, use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill, and locate parking next to the street in structures that are designed to blend with the natural setting. Avoid retaining walls or fences, extensive terraces or elevated pools, and driveways that are wide or steep. Identify foreshore and street boundaries with hedges or fences that are low or transparent.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any foreshore or street by setting all building works back from exposed shores or ridges, and maintaining front setbacks that are similar to the surrounding properties. Also provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans that create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls. For waterfront facades, disguise the impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies and verandahs.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views between the dwelling and the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 6: Open Woodland Hillsides

Existing Character

In a number of separate locations, established residential subdivisions occur upon gentle to moderate slopes retain an open canopy of tall woodland remnants that provide scenically-distinctive backdrops to a coastal lagoon, major thoroughfares or beachfronts.

Woodland remnants, varying from open and scattered to dense copses and corridors of tall eucalypts, form a canopy above well-maintained gardens of dense shrubs and trees.

Regular subdivisions accommodate small-to-medium sized lots, facing grids of local streets, with filtered coastal views available from elevated lots through the canopy. Some areas include a major district thoroughfare flanked by wide unformed verges studded with tall woodland remnants that provide local landmarks. Local access streets, some with unformed edges, are flanked by very wide sloping grassed verges, often with scattered tall woodland remnants.

Established houses are modestly-scaled, and include traditional single storey timber-framed bungalows and newer one or two storey brick-and-tile buildings. Recent redevelopment upon elevated lots has produced large two storey brick houses with wide frontages that capture panoramic local views.

Surrounding the established houses, substantial gardens provide separation from neighbours and support tall woodland remnants above dense beds of flowering shrubs and ground covers.

Wamberal 6: Open Woodland Hillsides

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential areas where the existing scenic quality and amenity of prominent hillsides are enhanced substantially by further “greening” of gardens and street verges in order to screen new development and to complement the open bushland canopy that surrounds most dwellings.

Maintain the semi-natural character of hillsides by retaining existing natural slopes throughout gardens and along street verges, and by conserving bushland trees that are visually-prominent features. Complement the established canopy by planting trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous throughout all garden areas and along street verges. Do not plant identified noxious or environmental weeds in any garden that is close to a bushland reserve. Facing all boundaries, emphasise a leafy garden character by avoiding tall retaining walls, elevated structures such as terraces or pools, and steep driveways that would visibly compromise the leafy hillside character.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Screen or shield all verandahs, windows, roofs and suspended floors to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.

Avoid disturbing natural slopes and trees by appropriate siting of structures plus low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks, rather than extensive cut-and-fill. On the steeper sites, locate parking next to the street in structures that are designed to blend with their desired bushy setting. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside by locating buildings behind front and rear setbacks similar to their surrounding properties, and providing at least one wide side setback or stepping the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs, stepped forms or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional “street address” with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views from a dwelling to the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Wamberal 7: Village Centres

Existing Character

A mix of retail, business and residential development in three separate locations, either as ribbon development facing the major coastal highway or as a cluster of buildings in a corner location facing a major local thoroughfare.

The coast highway passes across undulating slopes, meandering between copses of tall forest remnants with overarching canopies that provide scenically-distinctive landmarks. The semi-rural atmosphere of this thoroughfare is changing rapidly as traffic congestion requires road widenings and roundabouts. Unformed verges and narrow pavements are being replaced by kerbing, medians, and dedicated footpaths that are flanked by engineered retaining walls and overhead power lines, resulting in the gradual removal of scenically-prominent trees.

In corner locations facing the highway, two ribbons of shops support a wide range of neighbourhood retailers and services in low scale buildings with continuous awnings above wide footpaths, facing off-street parking.

Close to the beachfront, a cluster of single storey corner shops accommodates modern restaurants with pavement dining, opposite a shop-top apartment development of three storeys that overlooks the lagoon and neighbouring cottages.

Wamberal 7: Village Centres

Desired Character

This should remain a low-intensity centre that services primarily residents from the surrounding suburb but also includes some shop-top accommodation, where the civic-and-urban design quality of a neighbourhood landmark is enhanced by new development that encourages street activity.

Promote on-street activity by maximising the continuity of shop-windows facing all street frontages within the "village", and incorporate awnings, colonnades or balconies in all buildings as shelter for pedestrian frontages.

Ensure that new developments (including alterations to existing buildings) do not dominate their predominantly low-rise residential surroundings, and maximise the amenity of all pedestrian frontages. Facing the street, shop-front facades should have a zero setback and a maximum height of one storey, with any taller storey set back behind terraces or balconies to maintain a modest, pedestrian-friendly scale as well as the current level of midday sunlight that is available along the footpath. Also ensure that the height and siting of new buildings preserve current levels of privacy, sunlight and visual amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings and their private open spaces.

Adapt features of traditional mainstreet shopping villages to reflect the established pattern of low-density suburban dwellings. Buildings should be designed to maximise the number of retail tenants along all street frontages. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development or uniform building heights along any street, and vary both the shape and height of all visible facades, with roofs and parapet heights that step from one building to the next, and any street corners that are emphasised by taller forms. Roofs should be simple hips, gables or skillions without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves that shade upper-storey terraces as well as disguising the scale of exterior walls. In general, the walls of all upper storeys should be screened by an extra setback plus a balcony or a verandah. Adjacent to any detached dwelling, wider allotments also should provide a landscaped setback from the side boundaries.

Disguise the scale and bulk of new buildings. All visible facades should employ extensive windows that are shaded by lightly-framed balconies, verandahs or exterior sunshades, plus painted finishes and some board or sheet cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry. Side and rear facades should match the design quality of the street frontage.

Provide shopper parking at the kerbside, and locate any additional off-street parking behind shops with unobtrusive vehicle entrances that minimise disruption to shopfronts and their associated pedestrian activity. Screen driveways and outdoor parking courtyards by hedges and shady trees. Contribute to co-ordinated street improvements that include dedicated pedestrian crossings, footpaths, landscaping and lighting to provide safe and secure settings for informal social interaction. Building colour schemes and commercial signs should be co-ordinated and limited in size and number to promote the identity of this local centre, rather than emphasising corporate sponsorship.

Wamberal 8: Mixed-use Corridor (Scenic Buffer)

Existing Character

Mixed development on medium to large allotments flanking a long-established regional thoroughfare.

Across undulating slopes, a wide road with unformed edges and open verges meanders between copses of tall forest remnants with overarching canopies, providing scenically-distinctive landmarks. The semi-rural atmosphere of this thoroughfare is changing rapidly as traffic congestion requires road widenings and roundabouts, with formed edges, medians, and dedicated footpaths flanked by engineered retaining walls and overhead power lines, resulting in gradual removal of trees.

This thoroughfare carries heavy traffic along frontages that support a mixture of traditional coastal fibro houses, new two storey brick dwellings that include dual occupancies, apartments and houses, plus shops, roadside businesses and tourist developments.

At corner locations, two local shopping centres support a wide range of neighbourhood retailers and services in low scale buildings with continuous awnings above wide footpaths.

Outside the local shopping centres, expanding business activities are associated with a proliferation of signage and goods stored for sale, intensifying the commercial atmosphere and also diminishing the semi-rural qualities.

Wamberal 8: Mixed-use Corridor (Scenic Buffer)

Desired Character

This should remain a ribbon of low-impact retail, business and residential activities, where the distinctive semi-rural and natural qualities of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's major tourist routes are preserved by future road works and by developments that maintain leafy settings, as well as by limiting the proliferation of business signs.

Maintain existing informal scenic characters of hillside and roadside properties together with meandering road verges by retaining natural slopes and preventing further fragmentation of the tree canopy, particularly mature bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops to a major tourist route or nearby properties. Limit the intrusion of structures upon their landscape setting by concentrating new development within existing cleared areas. Use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill, particularly on elevated slopes and near bushland. Locate large buildings to preserve existing vistas from the road towards natural scenic backdrops.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones required for dwellings by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of their grounds. The ideal compromise between the desired scenic quality and bushfire protection would limit hazard-reduction clearing to the understorey plus thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees.

Maintain the informal character of existing semi-rural hillsides by avoiding front and side fences that are not see-through, tall retaining walls and extensive terraces or substantial parking courtyards that would be visible from any road frontage or nearby property. For street fences, a see-through post-and-rail style is preferred. Surround all buildings with extensive garden setbacks, planted with trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous to complement the established canopy. Noxious or environmental weeds must not be planted, and existing infestations should be controlled.

In order to minimise their scale and bulk, all new buildings that would be visible from any road or nearby property should reflect the modest character and simple articulation of traditional farm buildings. For example, divide floorspace into separate pavilion structures that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards. Roofs should be simple hips or gables without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges and flanked by wide eaves or verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. (In bushfire prone areas, screen all verandahs and roofs to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.)

To disguise the scale and bulk of new buildings, a light-weight appearance is preferred for all facades that would be visible from the road. For example, incorporate extensive windows and verandahs, paint finishes and some sheet or board cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with the scale and design of the primary building upon each property, particularly by using roofs with eaves and similar pitches.

Complement the desired streetscape quality of road frontages by preventing the proliferation of business signs. Pylons should be limited to one per development and designed to complement landscaping along the road-frontage. Building signs should be attached in consistent locations such as along awnings or fascias, and limited in both size and number.

Wamberal 9: Community Centres + Schools

Existing Character

Facing a major local thoroughfare, a public school surrounded by tall woodland trees is a landmark feature that contributes to scenic quality of the surrounding semi-rural backdrop as well as providing a buffer between neighbouring residential areas.

Located next to a forested ridge, the school site has been partially-cleared but retains scattered copses and corridors of tall woodland remnants that screen this compound of modestly-scaled school buildings.

Wamberal 9: Community Centres + Schools

Desired Character

This property should continue to provide community, educational and recreation services according to needs of the surrounding residential population. The scenic and civic qualities of prominent vegetated backdrops to Gosford City's major roads and residential areas should be protected as well as enhanced by future development, infrastructure or landscape improvements, and by open space management.

Protect the habitat and scenic values of remnant bushland by retaining natural slopes and by avoiding further fragmentation of the tree canopy, particularly mature trees along any slopes or road frontages that provide scenically-prominent backdrops.

Ensure that new developments (including alterations to existing buildings and infrastructure works) do not dominate their natural or landscaped settings, or their predominantly low-rise residential surroundings. Surround buildings with landscaped settings that maintain the scenic quality of prominent bushland backdrops or existing corridors of planted trees. Ensure that the height and siting of new structures also preserve levels of privacy, sunlight and visual amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings and their private open spaces. Complement the bushland canopy by planting all setbacks, courtyards and parking areas with shrubs and trees that are predominantly indigenous. Along front boundaries, provide for surveillance and safety by planting hedges or using fences that are low or see-through.

Promote high levels of visible activity around buildings by adopting elements of traditional "mainstreet" shopping villages, including extensive windows and building entrances that are located to reveal indoor activity. Incorporate footpaths, verandahs or colonnades to concentrate pedestrian access between clearly-identified building entrances and surrounding streets or carpark.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings and avoid the appearance of uniform building heights along any street by well-articulated forms. Divide floorspace into separate pavilion structures that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards, and vary the shape and height of facades, particularly to identify major entrances. For visually-prominent facades, incorporate extensive windows that are shaded by framed verandahs or exterior sunscreens, and display some variety of materials or finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry or metal cladding. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves or verandahs that disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Wamberal 10: Rural Hamlets

Existing Character

Four separate rural residential parcels, with allotments of one to two hectares, on moderate slopes adjoining scenically-prominent forested ridgetops, or flatter lands adjacent to woodland that lines a coastal floodplain.

Substantially cleared for past farming and grazing activities, open paddocks are hemmed by copses, corridors and small blocks of remnant woodland that provide scenically-distinctive backdrops to neighbouring properties, thoroughfares and local roads, and to elevated residential suburbs nearby.

Flanking thoroughfares and access roads with unformed edges, woodland remnants and timber farm fences, plus occasional surviving traditional farm houses and outbuildings, maintain a traditional pastoral parkland atmosphere.

Upon most allotments, individually designed brick houses with a modest style but one to two storey designs of moderate to large scale, are surrounded by open parkland gardens with trees and shrubs, including scattered woodland remnants, surrounded by turf.

Wamberal 10: Rural Hamlets

Desired Character

These should remain rural-residential buffers between surrounding urban areas, where the scenically-distinctive qualities and amenity of existing secluded settings are preserved by very-low density residential development plus low-impact rural activities or businesses that are associated with a dwelling.

Retain natural slopes and prevent further fragmentation of the tree canopy in order to maintain habitat values and informal scenic characters of hillside or valley properties, plus meandering roads with unformed verges. Along creeks, ridges, slopes or road frontages, conserve all mature bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops visible from any road or nearby property. Limit intrusion of structures upon their landscape setting by concentrating new buildings in existing clearings, and using low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill, particularly on elevated slopes or near bushland.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to the understorey plus thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees.

Maintain the informal character of existing semi-rural hillsides by avoiding tall retaining walls, extensive terraces or broad driveways that would be visible from any road or nearby property, and provide boundary fences that are see-through such as traditional post-and-rail designs. Surround all buildings with extensive garden setbacks, planted with new trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous to complement the established canopy. Noxious or environmental weeds must not be planted, and existing infestations should be controlled.

In order to minimise their scale and bulk, all new structures that would be visible from a road or nearby property should reflect the modest character and simple articulation of traditional farm buildings. For example, divide floorspace into a series of linked pavilion structures or wings of rooms that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards, and preferably, provide parking in carports or separate garages. Roofs should be simple hips or gables without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges and flanked by wide eaves or verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. (In bushfire prone areas, all verandahs, roofs and suspended floors must be screened to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.)

Disguise the scale of facades that are visible from the street by incorporating extensive windows and verandahs, some painted finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any frontage. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with the scale and design of their associated dwelling, particularly by using a similar roof pitch and wide eaves.

Wamberal 11: Scenic Buffers

Existing Character

A variety of lands, both private and public reserves, situated on gentle to moderate slopes, providing scenic backdrops to two major thoroughfares as well as buffers between neighbouring residential suburbs.

Along broad regional thoroughfares that sometimes meander across undulating hillsides, rural-residential properties of one to two hectares have partially-cleared front paddocks flanking steep roadside embankments and surrounded by rural-style fences, providing a scenically-distinctive semi-rural character.

Surrounding a coastal lagoon, original woodland has been partially cleared for a cemetery, and open foreshores that are managed for active and passive recreation. Set back from the street frontage and neighbouring houses, a substantial two storey club building is surrounded by bowling greens, parking areas, playing fields and a golf course.

Wamberal 11: Scenic Buffers

Desired Character

These should remain buffers where the scenically-distinctive semi-rural and natural qualities of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's major roads and tourist routes are preserved by effective landscape management, by appropriate very-low density residential developments on private lands that are associated with low-impact rural activities, or with small-scale businesses, community or educational facilities that have a modest impact on semi-rural or natural scenic qualities plus the amenity enjoyed by surrounding properties.

Retain natural slopes and prevent further fragmentation of the tree canopy in order to maintain habitat values and informal scenic characters of hillside or valley properties, plus meandering roads with unformed verges. Along creeks, ridges, slopes or road frontages, conserve all mature bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops visible from any road or nearby property. Limit intrusion of structures upon their landscape setting by concentrating new buildings and pavements in existing clearings. Use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill, particularly on elevated slopes or near bushland.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to the understorey plus thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees.

On private properties, maintain the informal character of existing semi-rural hillsides by avoiding tall retaining walls, extensive terraces or broad driveways that would be visible from any road or nearby property, and provide boundary fences that are see-through such as traditional post-and-rail designs. Surround all buildings with extensive garden setbacks, planted with new trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous to complement the established canopy. Noxious or environmental weeds must not be planted, and existing infestations should be controlled.

In order to minimise their scale and bulk, all new structures that would be visible from a road or nearby property should reflect the modest character and simple articulation of traditional farm buildings. For example, divide floorspace into a series of linked pavilion structures or wings of rooms that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards, and preferably, provide parking in carports or separate garages. Roofs should be simple hips or gables without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges and flanked by wide eaves or extensive verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. (In bushfire prone areas, verandahs, roofs and suspended floors must be screened to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.)

Disguise the scale of facades that are visible from the street by incorporating extensive windows and verandahs, some painted finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any frontage. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with the scale and design of their associated dwelling, particularly by using a similar roof pitch and wide eaves. Any commercial signs should be limited in size and number.

Wamberal 12: Scenic Conservation

Existing Character

In four separate locations, either forested hillsides, wooded floodplains and wetlands associated with the Wamberal Lagoon catchment, or a frontal dune carpeted with heath forming an ocean-front barrier to that lagoon.

Locations are scenically-distinctive as well as ecologically-significant, providing flora and fauna reserves plus prominent coastal backdrops to the beachfront and to regional thoroughfares, as well as buffers between neighbouring residential suburbs.

Desired Character

These landmark reserves should remain near-natural buffers between residential areas, where active environmental management conserves the ecological and scenic qualities of Gosford City's unique forested hillsides and ridgetops.

Conserve the natural qualities of hillside and ridgetop reserves by preventing further clearing of bushland, and avoid any land-management activity that would compromise the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of natural plant communities occurring in these reserves. Control any infestations of noxious or environmental weeds, and progressively repair any disturbance to landforms or natural vegetation using bush-regeneration techniques. Employ ecological best-practice for bushfire hazard reduction, for example mosaic burns, in order to strike a balance between conservation, scenic quality and public safety.

Where recreational or infrastructure works are necessary, ensure that natural landscape settings are not dominated by the size, siting, design or construction of new structures. Avoid disturbing natural slopes and bushland by locating works or structures primarily within existing cleared areas. Where there is no reasonable alternative, allow minor clearings in locations that have a lesser ecological value, where effective long-term management of bushland ecology would not be compromised and where the extent of scenic bushland backdrops that are visible from major roads, waterways or surrounding neighbourhoods would not be interrupted. In sloping areas and close to bushland, very-low impact construction such as light-weight framed structures with suspended floors and decks should be used, and cut-and-fill techniques should be avoided.