

# *A community vision for Toondah Harbour*



*Bird's Eye  
Artists Impression*

# Making a working harbour

## Harbour improvements include:

- A** Integrated harbour terminal, bus interchange and expanded Water Taxi Area.
- B** Limited ongoing dredging and maintenance.
- C** Provision for up to four vehicular ferry berths and improved waiting area.
- D** Improved harbour edge works with minimal reclamation.
- E** Multi-storey public carpark which could have subsidies for local residents.
- F** Create a scenic harbour park and reduce hardstand areas.
- G** Community facilities.
- H** Create a slow speed shared zone on 'Toondah Avenue' and provide improved shaded walkways and pedestrian crossings.



## Why does Toondah Harbour need a new Concept Plan?

Over the last thirty years, Toondah Harbour and its surrounding neighbourhood have inadequately catered for the popularity of travel to North Stradbroke Island. The area presents as a congested and sprawling car park bounded by uninspiring open spaces which are unconnected to the Harbour, to the historic Cleveland Point precinct, or to adjacent residential areas.

## A context for the Concept Plan

The Federal Government has rejected Toondah Harbour development plans because of the unacceptable environmental impacts. 'The Toondah Alliance' now proposes a long term community vision for the Toondah Harbour precinct which is both practical and environmentally sustainable.

This Community Concept Plan focuses on:

- Not impacting adversely on environmentally protected areas and community open space; and
- Ensuring that needs of the ferry operators, ferry customers and the community are addressed.

The Concept Plan aligns with the local Council approved Development Plan of 1993. The Concept Plan focuses on improving the harbour and its parking operations, revitalising the heritage area and its parklands, and protecting the internationally recognised wetlands.

Next steps should include support from three levels of government, consultation with Traditional Owners and detailed input from ferry operators.

## Beautifying Toondah Harbour

Toondah Harbour will be transformed into a friendly and green Gateway to Stradbroke Island, celebrating its rich flora, birdlife and cultural heritage.

G.J. Walter Park will be upgraded to provide residents and visitors with picnic shelters, barbecues, shaded walkways, and an improved off leash dog park. Koalas and endangered wading birds will be better protected.

A working harbour needs to be made. Currently a chaotic spread of car parks and infrastructure, the harbour is not fit for purpose, providing a poor visitor experience and impacting local residents with overflow car parking.

Two sites can provide multi-storey car parks to provide for the more than 1500 car parks that will be required in the future. Parking could be subsidised for local residents, in either the SeaLink site, or in the adjacent publicly owned site. The passenger and ferry terminals and facilities will provide excellent amenities, and visitors will be able to visit a new interpretive centre and its walkways, decks and nature trails.

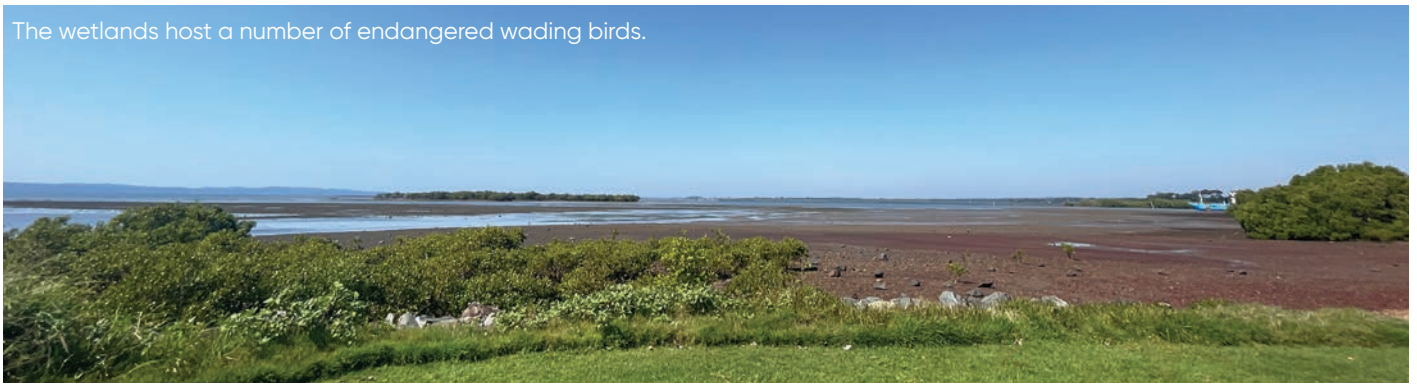
Residential zoned areas to the North-West of the precinct can provide for more housing, with a mix of residential housing types, to be flood resilient and Green Star accredited.

### Landscape Improvements Include:

- 1 Protect koalas and create habitat gardens.
- 2 Protect wading birds.
- 3 Improve dog park.
- 4 Beautify Parklands.
- 5 Create shady avenue.
- 6 Toondah Harbour Story Trail.
- 7 Integrated walkways and new footpaths.
- 8 Interpretive Centre/Cafe with boardwalks and trails.
- 9 Improve koala tree habitat and create shady avenues.
- 10 New picnic shelters for larger groups, more seating, suitable lighting and BBQ's.



The wetlands host a number of endangered wading birds.



## Protecting the environment

The precinct should be revitalised to become a green, low-scale and informal littoral landscape, and the Toondah Harbour Gateway should blend comfortably into this setting.

The Concept Plan defines all the environmental constraint areas which the plan needs to retain and protect. There are many koalas living and moving within the precinct. Wildlife corridors and signage are proposed which assist their safe and ongoing habitat. A new dog off leash park area will provide a fenced area separate from an improved bushland park corridor and park, to help protect koalas. A purpose-built water and beach edge fence will define the dog off-leash park area, similar to how other beaches are fenced off from sharks and stingers. This fencing will protect the endangered wading birds which use the wetlands in the area.

The presence of dogs and cats is a major risk to local birdlife, and increasing development will bring more residents, and more domestic pets within proximity of environmental areas. Planning controls in the precinct can specify protection measures for existing wildlife from domestic pets.



Bird watching tower

Reserves and open spaces should:

- Locate koala fencing adjacent to active sport; to construction areas; to the foreshore, and to dog off leash areas.
- Provide native tree corridors and streetscape tree plantings to act as safe movement and habitat areas for local wildlife.
- Connect large habitat trees and patches of bushland habitat together with infill trees and plantings.
- Provide koala safe crossings and signpost 'koala crossing' places.
- Create small, grassed areas and parks at the ferry terminal, for dogs and owners waiting to get on the ferry.
- Protect wading birds on the foreshore and coastal birds in the parklands.

## Appreciating the flora and fauna

The open space areas improved to create an informal environmental parkland which seamlessly connect to water-based wetland areas and habitats. Park and environmental areas should:

- Include new environmentally sensitive plantings.
- Protect old and historic heritage trees and provide stories and interpretation.
- Install informal walkways and interpretive trails, featuring Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage and which highlight environmental information.
- Create a landmark tower at the end of Middle Street on the water's edge, to provide visitors with an elevated birdwatching viewpoint.
- Endemic plants and animals to be featured and protected, and their habitats consolidated.
- Interpret the unique and endangered species of Toondah Harbour.
- Create bird hides.
- Install environmental artworks
- Build a continuous path from Oyster Point to Cleveland Point.



Example of a wetland interpretive centre



Sheltered pick up/drop off entries

## An attractive terminal

The Toondah Harbour Terminal is a disappointing gateway facility, with isolated buildings lacking pedestrian amenity, shade, and walkability. The harbour needs destination buildings which create a pleasant waiting experience, and which reduce chaotic movement and congestion. The terminal buildings are low quality buildings reflecting the short-term leases currently given to operators.

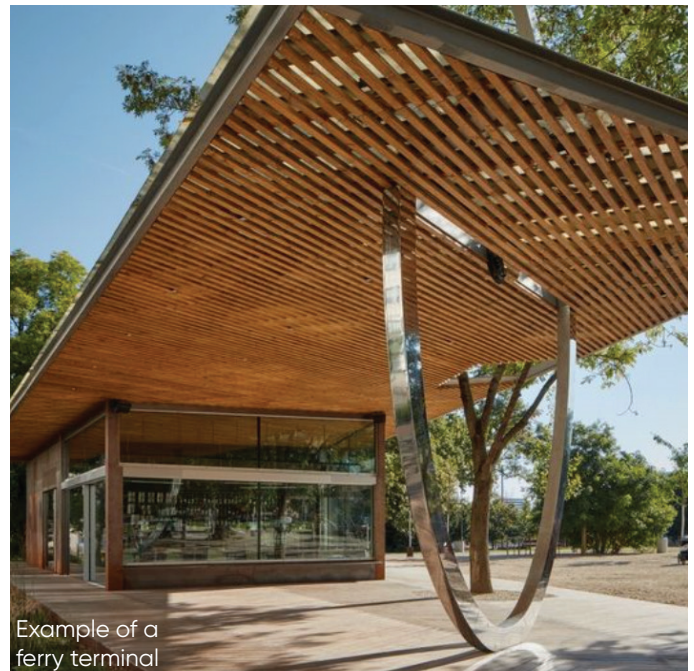
Long term leases are required to enable operators to invest in high quality facilities, and to be able to renovate old harbour infrastructure. The State government should fund the retrofit of the harbour edges and the new terminals, and lease the terminals back to operators, enabling the creation of high quality public buildings, rather than temporary structures. Improved buildings should:

- Create an integrated gateway experience by linking the character and form of all buildings.
- Provide improved public amenities with showers and disability access.
- Provide one bus stop and kiss and ride terminal. Integrate bus parking areas near the terminal.
- Provide high quality terminal buildings for both the water taxi terminal and the vehicular ferry terminal.
- Provide for multiple adjunct operators.
- Provide for café, covered waiting, ticketing, office, storage, and toilet facilities in each terminal.
- Create a continuous and active public boardwalk.
- Create a unique and memorable harbourside character.
- Connect to an interpretive centre with a self-managed visitor signage, integrated with uses such as a café, and watercraft /bike hire.
- Develop a hub for interpreting the wetlands, harbour and local history and culture.

The precinct is subject to significant risks from storm surge inundation and climate induced changes to rainfall. The projected 2100 storm surge area inundates the whole of Toondah Harbour

Climate resilient improvements should include:

- New Ferry terminal buildings , car parks and facilities should be raised and designed for substantial storm impacts.
- Additional car park areas should be raised and protected, to prevent substantial vehicle damages during storm events.
- Ferry terminal areas to provide excellent shaded and illuminated walkways and car parking areas.
- Build within the current land footprint to avoid all impacts on the Ramsar wetlands.
- The harbour edge needs to be retrofitted both for storm surge and for better ferry functions.



Example of a ferry terminal



Multi-storey carpark example

## Multi storey 'green' car parks

The Toondah Harbour precinct urgently requires an integrated transport and car parking study. The last traffic study of 2013 by Cardno identified over 840 car parks in all public and private parking areas. Demand has increased substantially and now cars related to harbour uses impact the whole neighbourhood. All available roads and reserve areas have gradually been converted to expansive unshaded, poorly integrated car park areas. Given that the harbour has run out of space and suffers from vehicular congestion, a sustainable solution would be to create multi-storey car park structures, with a user pays model.

The Concept Plan identifies two sites adjacent to the harbour terminals, one on public land and one on privately leased land. Both multi-storey car parks could accommodate over 1500 estimated car parks. These new car park structures should be designed to:

- Operate commercially, whilst government subsidised parking could provide for Redlands residents, Stradbroke residents and pensioners.
- Provide short term and long term secure, covered car parks for all sorts of vehicle types.
- Create well-scaled buildings with green walls, roofs and perimeter gardens.
- Provide rooftop solar power to allow the precinct to be self-powered.
- Be suitably lit and connected by walkways and paths.
- Incorporate ground floor uses such as: hire of electric vehicles, electric bikes and scooters and hire of watercraft.
- Provide adjunct harbour office and maintenance spaces.
- Be resilient to storm surge, protecting both cars and services.

## Well-scaled buildings

The built form of the emerging residential areas should sit into the landscape, not dominating the streetscape or parklands.

Residential development should:

- Create buildings which step down towards the water (mimicking the natural topography)
- Provide access to ocean breezes and views to the neighbourhood and allow sun access into the G.J Walter parklands.
- Minimise building and development impacts adjacent to koala habitats.
- Be sympathetic in mass and height to the adjacent neighbourhood.
- Be of a height that is scaled to the mature trees and vegetation.
- Be designed to minimise the impacts from storm surge and climate change.
- Protect and enhance wildlife habitats and corridors.
- Create a green buffer between the park and the built form.
- Reinforce the Cleveland Point character.



Terraced residential form

Toondah Harbour edge



## A better harbour edge

Short term leases and a lack of government investment in the harbour have created a range of old and inadequate mooring and berthing infrastructures.

The harbour needs to allow for expansion over time, both with the number of operators, and also with the number of berths, for both the vehicular ferries and the water taxi services.

The concept plan shows a new harbour edge which would provide a saw-tooth shaped harbour edge for four vehicular ferries to more efficiently land and exit. The plan also allows for four water taxi moorings, using new pontoons designed for the additional passenger numbers. A timber boardwalk would create a walkable edge beside the water taxis and connect the three new harbour buildings: the vehicular terminal, the water taxi terminal, and the wetland interpretive centre. A new public amenities building within a small central park provides for universal access to toilets and showers.

## Making it easier to get around

The road system is inadequate for the current and future uses, lacking legibility, amenity and adequate footpaths. A new road system would provide a loop around the harbour, separating parking station users from the kiss and ride/bus drop off users, and also separating the vehicular ferry and boat ramp users.

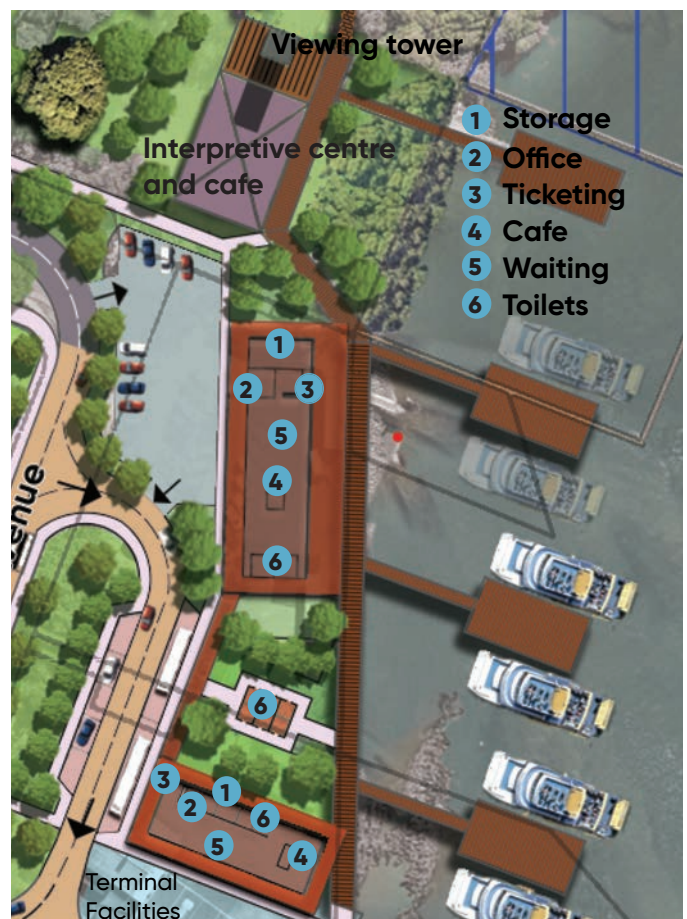
The road system provides space for an integrated bus stop and kiss and ride drop off terminal, proximate to all facilities. Bus parking is separately located nearby, next to the new harbour park, which provides respite and a place for harbour users to go while waiting for ferries and water taxis. Better shaded footpaths connected with pedestrian crossings will make walking around the precinct safer and promote active transport.

New roundabouts will allow smoother movements. Bike paths, both separated paths and on road shared ways should be built into the system.

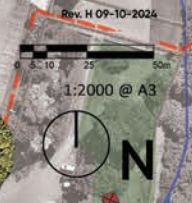
A recreational looping pedestrian system connects from Oyster Point through to the harbour and onto the Grand View Hotel and Cleveland Point. The paths allow residents and visitors to also enjoy new wetland boardwalks near the interpretive centre, with a 5-10 minute loop walk back through the wetlands/mangroves and through the improved G.J. Walter parklands. The paths feature an interpretive trail with signage related to local history, culture, and the environment. Environmental artworks in the parklands would enhance the visitor experience.

## A great gateway

The Community Concept Plan highlights a range of practical and innovative solutions to make Toondah Harbour look and work better. Current leases and lot arrangements have been an impediment to creating an integrated harbour with good buildings, parking and berthing. The three tiers of government should collaborate to jointly fund and plan a better harbour, one which aligns with the needs of local residents, visitors and harbour operators. Toondah Harbour could become a truly great gateway, providing an experience befitting the quality and beauty of this unique coastline and its island environments.



# A community vision for Toondah Harbour



*"a green gateway,  
 a working harbour"*

## Legend

- Canopy tree
- Koala habitat tree
- Moreton Bay fig
- Shade structure
- Koala signage
- Existing Koala tree
- Revegetated bushland
- Ramsar area
- Toondah Harbour PDA boundary
- Interpretive trails and decks
- 20 Km/h Slow zone
- Interpretive trail

## Toondah Harbour Precinct Community Concept Plan