



Irwin Districts Historical Society Inc
Maintaining the identity of the Irwin District

Comments on Port Denison Foreshore Masterplan Concept Design Report,
Revision E, Final Report, dated 22 November 2021

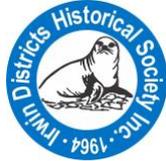
Section	Comment
1.2 Exec Summ.	We note that the precinct boundaries remain the same as in the draft. The significant William Street and George Street alignments remain intact. We support the inclusion of foreshore vegetation in the Obelisk and Boat Ramp precincts. However, the continued obscuring of the Herbert Street alignment in the Obelisk precinct remains a concern (see comment on s 4.6).
1.3 Public engmnt	We note and concur with many of the public comments, and emphasise our support for a natural or terraced shoreline, and wheelchair access, to Grannies Beach precinct; the Foreshore Park precinct design responding to the fishing museum; interpreting and remembering Denison Hall, and locating the proposed pavilion further southwards in the Foreshore Core precinct; and recognition of the Herbert Street landing place, and placing the shipwrecks plaques on the shoreline promenade, in the Obelisk precinct; but we retain concerns over the playground location, 'floating restaurant', visitor centre, private development, road, levels and car parking around the obelisk.
2.0 Analysis	We note and support the recognition in the analysis of the sensitivity of the obelisk as a historical monument, and the links to the Sandhills Obelisk.
2.2 Charactr & herit	We note and support the identification of heritage places in a diagram, although this could have been more focused by distinguishing between State (No 8) and local (Nos 4, 5) heritage listings (the similar plan in the River Trails masterplan is a better approach), and making it clear that the character places (1, 2, 3, 6 and 7) are not identified heritage places. We note that local heritage place 087 is not marked on the plan, and should be.
3.3 Design Principles	We support the inclusion of the 6 th point in 'A Distinct Place', all points in 'An Accessible Place', and the 5 th point in 'A Place to Visit'. We note the irony of the 3 rd point, 'create a civic heart', in 'A Place to Visit', when the Shire went out of its way to demolish the existing civic heart in 2019.
3.4 Design strategies	We support all points in 'Culture and Heritage', and generally the points in the 'Landscape Qualities' and 'Environment' design strategies, notably managing weeds such as sea lavender and lawn grasses, and the points in the 'Infrastructure' design strategy, especially impacts of light pollution and reducing lawn areas in favour of drought-tolerant and coastal species.
4.0 Concept overview	We do not support the 3 rd point in Foreshore Core, to extend foreshore reclamation, we support the 5 th point on historical and cultural interpretation of the Old Jetty and Denison Hall, we support improving access, interpretation and the setting for the obelisk and opportunities for the shipwreck walk and landing place in the Obelisk precinct.
4.2 Grannies Bch	We support including design elements that reflect Wattandee cultural history linked to the foreshore. We note that the illustrations on page 13 still indicate vertical sea walls rather than stepped or diagonal walls, and argue that this will not achieve the 3 rd key aim for the precinct, protecting the beach against erosion caused by natural



	<p>processes. The graduated walls in the illustrations on page 14 may be better able to achieve this aim and the other two aims for the precinct.</p>
4.3 F'shore Park	<p>We support the aims generally, and the 2nd aim in particular to reduce irrigation of the lawns.</p> <p>We support the provision of future connections to the MOFAS through the precinct.</p>
4.4 F'shore Core	<p>We do not support the omission of interpreting and conserving the historic significance of the Denison Hall/Old Jetty/William Street axis as a key aim of the precinct – this should be included as a key aim.</p> <p>We do not support the infilling or reclaiming of the bay – in our submission on the draft plan we suggested this needed further and explicit public discussion. This has not occurred in any organised way. Our rationale was outlined in the original submission, including incremental loss of the defining crescent-shape of Arurine Bay, but none of the points have been addressed either by local leadership or in the final plan. No measurement of the infilled area is given in the plan, but we calculate it to be about 1.4 ha or 14,400 m². In the absence of any informed discussion, we cannot support the infill/reclamation.</p> <p>We note the relocation of the pavilion southwards to a more suitable location – a location that we note does not, according to the illustrations on page 16, require any infill/reclamation of the bay.</p> <p>We support the 12th and 14th points concerning interpreting Denison Hall and the Old Jetty, and archaeological investigation and interpretation of tramway relics.</p> <p>We remain perplexed about the location of the playground, which seems contrary to any dignified achievement of the 12th point, especially as the proposed infilling of the harbour will provide a similar extent of land for the playground just north of the precinct's southern boundary. What other point is there to the infill if it has no purpose such as playground location?</p>
4.4 P/grnd and Pavilion	<p>We do not support the location of the playground as shown in the plan, especially the 6th point to insert a large basket swing within the Denison Hall footprint. As noted above, this is contrary to any dignified achievement of the 12th point of the Notes on page 16. While this may be resolvable through more detailed design work, the plan as shown on page 17 seems deliberately provocative for no clear purpose.</p> <p>No mention is made of the demolition of the 1969 Pavilion that will be required for this scheme to proceed – we noted in our submission on the original plan that the 1969 serpentine seawall could be retained to interpret this older scheme, but the plan is silent on this. The plan is also silent on investigating and interpreting the archaeological evidence of the several layers of earlier 20th century development on this site, which are identified in the Local Heritage Survey (place 087), as noted in our original submission. On that basis, we cannot support the amphitheatre which, if the drawing on page 18 is accurate, will involve some excavation of these archaeological zones without any prior investigation. On the other hand, if the amphitheatre 'swale' is to be a raised embankment, it will (especially in combination with</p>



	<p>the new pavilion) obscure views between the harbour and the historic CBD of Port Denison, views that are partly the rationale for the CBD location. See also comment on s7.3, item 4.04.</p> <p>As noted earlier, the insistence of locating the playground on this site is perplexing when a similar area of land is proposed to be made available by the proposed reclamation/infilling at the southern end of the precinct without the same issues. This is the location we suggested in our comments on the draft plan as suitable, even without infilling the harbour, and it is disappointing that no response has been made.</p>
<p>4.5 Boat ramp</p>	<p>The plan on page 19 indicates pathways cut through the regenerating foreshore vegetation. We indicated our opposition to these paths in our submission on the draft plan, and we do not support cutting paths through the foreshore vegetation (see 4.6 Obelisk precinct for more).</p> <p>We note the key aims for the precinct fail to include ‘conservation of natural and regenerating foreshore vegetation’ – this should be included as a key aim. We do not support the continued obscuring of the west end of George Street within a car park. We noted in our original submission that the street is a significant historical axis that could be reinforced through appropriate car park design. It is disappointing that this opportunity has been ignored.</p>
<p>4.6 Obelisk precinct</p>	<p>We support the key aim of enhancing interpretation of the cultural and historical heritage of Port Denison, and argue this should also include natural heritage.</p> <p>We support recreating the shipwreck walk as part of the proposed promenade.</p> <p>We do not support cutting paths through the foreshore vegetation. This is the last area of natural foreshore vegetation within the harbour, although marred by weed invasion and feral animals, notably rabbits. The area is noted in figure 2.2 as a ‘character’ area - that must mean something? Section 3.3 ‘A Place To Visit’ includes the principle ‘highlight the natural environment and biodiversity of the foreshore’; and 3.4 ‘Design Strategies’ include ‘retain and restore remnant dune vegetation and control weed infestation’, ‘native revegetation planting and habitat establishment’ and ‘weed management’. These strategies cannot be attained by fragmenting the foreshore vegetation with more paths. In addition, since making our original submission, we have been made aware of the existence of Aboriginal middens (possibly disturbed) within the area of regenerating foreshore bushland (and hence the name Midden Beach). Regenerating this area of foreshore vegetation will need to engage with the potential for Aboriginal archaeological sites. This must be taken into account in any further design work for this area, including before cutting any paths through the area.</p> <p>Similarly, the natural values of the gulls fishing for sea urchins and dropping the catch on Leander Point for feeding has not received any recognition. This needs to be considered further given the proposals for road works and car parking in the vicinity of the Obelisk.</p>



	<p>We do not support the ‘potential restaurant’ and ‘proposed visitor centre’ on Leander Point shown on page 20 (presumably the ‘future café’ in the 12th point in the Key Notes?). Reasons were set out in our original submission, and it is disappointing to see the proposals remain in the plan. They are unsustainable from a heritage, design or environmental perspective and should be deleted from the plan immediately.</p> <p>We do not support continuing the incremental infilling of the landing place cove and beach, or the continuing addition of built elements to the Leander Point ledge, as stated in our original submission. The plan remains disappointingly silent on these issues.</p> <p>We do not support the loss of the western end of Herbert Street within a proposed new car park. We noted in our original submission that the street is a significant historical axis that could be reinforced through appropriate car park design. It is disappointing that this opportunity has been ignored.</p>
<p>4.6 Obelisk site</p>	<p>We support the key design considerations of improving the obelisk setting, including reference in interpretation to the Sandhills Obelisk, establishing a walking track between the two obelisks, universal access to the obelisk, and minimising the extent of cut and fill around the obelisk.</p> <p>We noted in our original submission that a cross-section drawing of the proposed Obelisk treatment is needed, as it is difficult to comprehend on plan. Unfortunately, this has still not been provided. Design issues may be resolvable through more detailed design work in the future, but we remain concerned about overly-engineered development around the obelisk.</p> <p>We noted in our original submission, at figure 11, the potential cumulative impacts of proposals surrounding the obelisk, impacts apparently also raised in other public submissions (see 1.3, page 6). Unfortunately, this cumulative impact has not been addressed in the plan. We suggest that an additional key aim of ‘keeping the obelisk wholly visible in-the-round from near and far points of view’ needs to be included.</p>
<p>6.0 Plant schedule</p>	<p>The suggested plant schedule will be very useful if it is used to guide future regeneration works.</p>
<p>7.0 Project costs</p>	<p>7.5 ‘Grannies Beach’ repeats 7.1 ‘Grannies Beach’, and presumably should be ‘Obelisk’, which is missing from the costings. The Obelisk precinct costings need to be provided.</p> <p>7.3 Foreshore Core costings</p> <p>Items 1.02 and 3.02 - total cost \$790,800, relating to infilling the harbour – if an estimate of the volume of the infill, and length of new seawall, is available for costing purposes, then the area (m²) must also be available and should be made public, as well as the source of the infill;</p> <p>item 4.04 suggests about 120 large trees will be planted on the amphitheatre swale (the only swale in the precinct) – is this correct?;</p> <p>item 3.19 allows \$200,000 for upgrades to the existing (recreational fishers?) jetty, but there is no mention of this work or the jetty in the plan, is this correct? Ideally the jetty would be in the Boat Ramp precinct as its uses appear unrelated to the core precinct.</p>



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Overall costings

The promenade appears to be 'thick grey concrete' (item 2.01 in each precinct), which seems somewhat different to options suggested in the plan (e.g. images on pages 9 and 21) – [is this correct?](#)

The costings across all precincts (except the missing Obelisk precinct) indicate 278 medium-large trees (100L containers) will be planted and 5,968m² of new turf will be laid – [is this correct](#), and if so, how is the extent of new turf consistent with the design strategies in s3.4?

item 1.01 in each precinct is for 'mobilisation, demolition, earthworks and fine grading' – this item is costed at \$120,000 in the Foreshore Park precinct, the largest for any precinct and 35% of the total across four precincts for item 1.01 – nothing in section 4.3 Foreshore Park Precinct appears to fit this description or include actions that would warrant this expenditure, absolutely or comparatively – [is this correct?](#)