VIRTUSHERITAGE

Bass Point Reserve

Shellharbour, NSW

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Volume 1 of 2

May 2024

Prepared for Shellharbour City Council

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We wish to acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples who are the custodians of the lands within which Bass Point Reserve is located and pay respects to Elders, past, present and future.

This Conservation Management Plan is compiled with respect for Aboriginal cultural heritage and connection to country and the importance of caring for country.

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All queries related to the content, or to any use of this report must be addressed to Dr Mary-Jean Sutton,Director, Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Virtus Heritage have been engaged by Shellharbour City Council (SCC) to prepare this Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Bass Point Reserve in Shellharbour. Bass Point Reserve is a natural promontory of rocky shorelines and sandy embayments located just south of Shellharbour, NSW. The reserve is an area of c. 72 hectares, and remains crown land, appointed to Shellharbour City Council for management under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*. Shellharbour City Council commissioned this conservation management plan (CMP) for the Bass Point Reserve in 2020. This project was co-funded by a grant from the Heritage Council of NSW.

This CMP is a two-volume report. This Volume One presents the background information and significance and Volume Two presents the management and recommendations for Shellharbour City Council.

In 2013 Bass Point Reserve was listed as a State heritage item, Listing No. 10896, for its importance to the people of NSW. Bass Point Reserve and its surrounding marine habitat contain a large collection of areas with cultural, historical and maritime significance with the Aboriginal and European heritage sites being of State significance. The Reserve is also a highly valuable natural and recreational asset for the local area where a range of activities such as diving, snorkelling, fishing, whale watching, bushwalking and picnicking are very popular.

1.1 Background

A Draft Plan of Management was prepared for Council in 2000 and that two-volume report has been most useful in guiding SCC's management of the area (Manidis Roberts Consultants, 2000). The most significant change since that time is the State heritage significance identified and endorsed in 2013 for Bass Point Reserve (Heritage NSW, Search for Heritage, State Heritage Register, Bass Point Reserve). It is a place of significance for the people of NSW due to its Aboriginal and European heritage values; its pre- and post-contact history; and its natural and maritime heritage.

Now that Bass Point Reserve is a State heritage item there is a need to identify management responsibilities and clarify statutory legislation affecting any proposed works. In 2016, SCC began a draft CMP due to this listing, and the information for that largely incomplete document has been made available for this 2020-2021 project.

In 2020, changes affecting standard exemptions for any works proposed for State heritage items came into force. Another impetus in 2020 was that Shellharbour City Council were increasingly concerned about the pressure that increasing numbers of visitors are creating for the natural environment which also increases the demand for Council services (maintenance, facilities, compliance etc.) within the Reserve.

This CMP draws together environmental and cultural heritage, including maritime, information including for Bass Point. Finally, while the importance of the Aboriginal cultural heritage at Bass Point has been recognised, it has not been investigated and assessed in relation to SCC's management for the Reserve and the intricacies of statutory legislation need to be reviewed and included for SCC to comply. The protection of Bass Point Reserve in relation to its Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values has and continues to be a long-term aspiration of the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council (ILALC) and Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Shellharbour City Council.

1.2 Aims of the Conservation Management Plan

The CMP addresses all aspects of the significance of Bass Point, including environmental and historical, however a strong focus in this CMP has been on the Aboriginal cultural heritage. There is now a responsibility for Aboriginal cultural heritage to be managed by recognised Aboriginal groups. We consider one of the purposes of this project is to recommend specific management measures for the identified Aboriginal cultural heritage values for the Bass Point Reserve project area. The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage section (Section Five) of the CMP considers the management of tangible and intangible cultural heritage values and other cultural sites related to the Bass Point headland. The primary aims include:

- Identifying cultural values of Bass Point Reserve;
- Identifying the management goals of stakeholders and management bodies;
- Identifying hazards and developing management strategies to mitigate risks to the cultural values of Bass Point Reserve;
- Setting out management roles/responsibilities and allocation of resources;
- Developing conservation principles and strategies for the future protection and management of cultural heritage values; and
- Identifying funding opportunities for management activities from government and/or private sources.

The project brief for the CMP for Bass Point Reserve follows the NSW Heritage guidelines which require significance to be investigated, assessed and managed. The guidelines state that a conservation management plan details why an item is considered to be of heritage significance and outlines policies to retain this significance. The policies guide management and allow for economic re-use, possible future development and ongoing management and maintenance (The Conservation Plan guidelines, https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/hmconservationman2002.pdf).

1.3 Heritage Grant Information

In 2019 Shellharbour City Council were successful in receiving a grant from NSW Heritage with funds to go to the provision of a CMP for Bass Point Reserve. This project was co-funded by a grant under the Caring for State Heritage category of the NSW Heritage Grants Program from the Heritage Council of NSW.

1.4 Site Location

Bass Point Reserve is an east-west oriented headland located approximately 2 km south of the small coastal town of Shellharbour and north of the coastal town of Kiama, NSW (**Figure 1**). Bass Point Reserve property information is identified as Lot 3, DP 248002. The Reserve and the area of study for this CMP encompasses Bushrangers Bay, Maloneys Bay and The Middy (Red Sands beach).

The SHR curtilage area includes a buffer of approximately 1 km around the headland to include sensitive marine environments and the maritime heritage associated with Bass Point. A map of the Reserve including identified heritage sites is included herein (refer to **Figure 2**). Bass Point Reserve is located within the lands of the ILALC boundary and is located on land managed by Shellharbour City Council.

Figure 1: Aerial photograph of Bass Point showing the various bays. Note the one access road and the adjacent quarry.

Figure 2
Bass Point State Heritage Register Listed Area and Known Heritage Sites

Legend

- Bass Point SHR Curtilage
- Bass Point Boundary
- AHD Bass Point Area
- AHD Bass Point Marine Area
- Bass Point AHIMS Sites
- Observed AHIMS Field Locations
- Additional Survey Sites
- Additional Survey Site Boundaries

Bass Point Shipwrecks

- Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976
- NSW Heritage Act 1977

Source: NSWSpatial Services; Environmental Planning Instrument - Heritage (HER) spatial data package provided 17/01/2020; OEH State Heritage Register - Curtilages spatial data 21/08/2019; AHIMS Search results 10/01/2020
Projection: GDA94 MGA zone 56

Maps and figures contained within this document may be based on third party data, may not be to scale and are intended for use as a guide only. Virtus Heritage does not warrant the accuracy of such maps or figures.

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Midden and artefact scatter 2
Artefact Scatter and Midden with PAD and Cultural Site
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Kiltobranks
52-5-0138
Cities Service Boston
52-5-0078
52-5-0145
BS4
52-5-0139
Aboriginal Midden
52-5-0077
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Aboriginal Midden
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1.5 Methodology and Objectives

This CMP has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 1999*; the *NSW Heritage Manual* 'Conservation Management Documents', *The Conservation Plan* (5th edition, 2000) by James Semple Kerr and published by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and NSW Heritage Conservation Management Plan Assessment Checklist (2003).

It has also considered requirements to satisfy the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (the Department) who administer the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, which is the protective legislation for Aboriginal cultural heritage.

A main objective of a CMP, as outlined in *The Conservation Plan* (2000), is to set out the significance of the item and develop appropriate policies to enable the significance of the item to be retained in its future use and development. The *NSW Heritage Manual* indicates that a CMP should be a concise document that makes reference to other documentation where necessary, rather than repeating the information included in previous reports unless of particular relevance.

The Project Brief requires this CMP to clarify the heritage significance, noted as being of importance to the people of NSW as follows:

Understand Bass Point Reserve through investigation of its historical and geographical context, its history, fabric, research potential, andimportance to the community.	▪ This CMP focusses on the Aboriginal, historical and maritime cultural significance. The State Heritage Register (SHR) entry is attached in **Appendix A**. ▪ Volume 1 addresses the objective of further identifying and understanding this significance. ▪ Volume 1 includes updates to be added to the SHR listing and to the Historical Themes.
Investigate and assess thedocumentation and physical evidence of Bass Point Reserve to determine the nature, extent and degree of significance.	▪ While some documentation has been forthcoming the physical evidence, inspected on two separate occasions in 2020 has been improved by a geomorphological study of the Bass Point landform which was undertaken for the first time. ▪ Volume 1 includes this information
Consult with relevant community and interest groups during the investigative process.	▪ Consultation has taken place for the duration of the project, from late February to late September 2020. ▪ A concerted effort has been made to contact community and interest groups by both Virtus Heritage, through a series of consultations, a workshop and phone calls and by SCC through their inhouse meetings, website information and invitations. ▪ A consultation log is attached with this report in **Appendix A.**

What are the current obligationsarising from statutory and non- statutory requirements? What are the current obligations arising from heritage significance?	▪ A full explanation of the SHR system and the Aboriginal cultural heritage system, which work independently, is included in Volume 2 of this CMP
Prepare a succinct statement of significance and provide a basis onwhich future policies and management processes can be built.	▪ An update for the existing Statement of Significance is included in Volume 1. ▪ Policies, based on the significance, are included in Volume 2 for SCC to manage the Bass Point Reserve.
What current short- and long-term opportunities are there for development of the Reserve?	▪ This objective is discussed in the section titled Opportunities and Constraints in relation to the significance, contained in Volume 2.
Given the rise in recent tourism, what are the expected levels of visitationand what facilities would be required to accommodate this while ensuring that the heritage and ecological value is preserved?	▪ Management of the Reserve, given the current increase in visitor numbers, has been addressedin Volume 2.
Guided by the assessment of theheritage significance, whatrecommendations can be made onthe policies SCC should adopt in order to maximise the recreational potential and capacity of the reserve while ensuring that all identified considerations are maintained and preserved?	▪ See above. ▪ Policies to manage the Reserve based on its heritage significance are included in Volume 2
Make recommendations on the framework that should be installed for the review and maintenance of the resulting Conservation Management Plan.	▪ This objective is addressed in the policies section in Volume 2.

1.6 Authorship

The CMP was prepared by Gina Scheer (Principal Archaeologist, Virtus Heritage: B. Arts Hons Archaeology, M. Heritage Conservation University of Sydney), Project Manager, and Elaine Lin (Senior Archaeologist, Virtus Heritage: M. Arch.Sci (Adv.) Hons. Australian National University; B. Arts Hons., Archaeology, University of Sydney).

Dr. Mary-Jean Sutton (Principal Archaeologist, Virtus Heritage: PhD Archaeology, University of Queensland; B. Arts Hons. Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology, University of Sydney) has directed the Aboriginal cultural heritage aspects of the project.

Dr Emma St Pierre (Senior Archaeologist, Virtus Heritage: B.A. Hons Archaeology and Anthropology University of Queensland, PhD Archaeological Science, University of Queensland) has contributed and conducted peer review.

1.7 Limitations

Virtus Heritage acknowledge that despite our best efforts in the consultation phase from end of February 2020 to May 2020 and the many months of advertising this project and seeking comments via the SCC website, https://letschatshellharbour.com/planning-bass-point-conservation- management not all informants have been forthcoming with information or recommendations for Bass Point Reserve.

In addition, there are environmental documents from the 1990s prepared for SCC in hard copy format that have not been located for this CMP, but which were located for the Draft Plan of Management completed in 2000. This relates particularly to the maritime natural environment 1999 report by Professor Kirsten Benkendorff, titled The Shellharbour and Bass Point Marine Environment.

The fieldwork for Aboriginal cultural heritage values was limited to areas of visibility, known AHIMS sites and also areas identified by Illawarra LALC as key areas for revisiting to discuss cultural values. No systematic field survey was undertaken, as the purpose of the site inspection was to understand how to manage cultural values as Bass Point Reserve is a known area of significance. Further detailed survey would be required for any areas where impacts are proposed in the future, ensuring engagement in line with SCC Aboriginal cultural Heritage toolkit and OEH due diligence processes. As visibility in the project area is generally low due to vegetation, sites can remain undetected in areas where the ground surface visibility is poor.

The information presented in this CMP is limited to the knowledge and information reviewed, expressed and discussed as part of the preparation of the document. We note where possible the inaccuracies of the Department of Premier and Cabinet's (DPC) AHIMS site data and mapping as discussed and mapped in this plan but cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of the DPC's AHIMS site mapping and records.

2 DESCRIPTION OF BASS POINT RESERVE

Bass Point Reserve covers a land area of 72 hectares and is visible from the coast of Shellharbour village as the peninsula located immediately south of the township. The Reserve appears as a low, wooded and long headland comprising native bush and rock platform edges to the water. There are no visible developments apart from the narrow jetty and quarrying infrastructure located to its west.

2.1 Site Context and Views to and from Bass Point

Bass Point Reserve is considered a coastal tourism jewel. The reserve is known for supporting one of the few littoral rainforest areas in the Illawarra region; as a heritage-listed former cedar timber industry locale, important Aboriginal camping and meeting place, pastoral property, basalt mine and now nature conservation and recreation area.

The natural environment of Bass Point Reserve is clearly appreciated from the north and on the approach through the new residential developments and marina, Shellcove, which is located immediately south of Shellharbour village. Parts of Shellcove are still under construction, including, as of February 2020, the new access road. A range of views to and from Bass Point are shown below and overleaf and illustrate its natural appeal (**refer to Figure 3 up to Figure 5**).

Figure 3: View south to Bass Point Reserve from the Shellharbour boat ramp / Cowrie Island

Figure 4: The view north and up the coast from west of 'The Gutter' in Bass Point Reserve.

Figure 5: The view to southeast, from Maloneys Bay does not stretch as far as Minnamurra.

From the south, Bass Point Reserve appears as the more prominent headland, although Killalea Reserve and Minnamurra also evident as natural coastal environments combining grassy and low bush headlands with small stretches of sandy beaches.

The views and vistas from Bass Point Reserve are significant for their aesthetic, natural and culturalvalues. Views which link nearby Aboriginal cultural sites are historically and culturally significant withadditional spiritual value. The sensory and aesthetic values of these views and vistas have been appreciated by Aboriginal people just as they have been by non-Aboriginal people since European occupation.

Views at Bass Point help to provide information on the migrations of whales. They also provide outlooks for other important changes in marine fauna and changes in currents and tides. The outlookfrom the headland has been essential for Aboriginal people to track coastal changes, which would have been critical for resource use, hunting and gathering. Other important resource rich areas andcampsites visible from Bass Point include the Minnamurra River, Minnamurra Lagoon, ShellharbourBeach and Lake Illawarra (Bursill *et al*. 2015: 3) (refer to **Figure 6**).

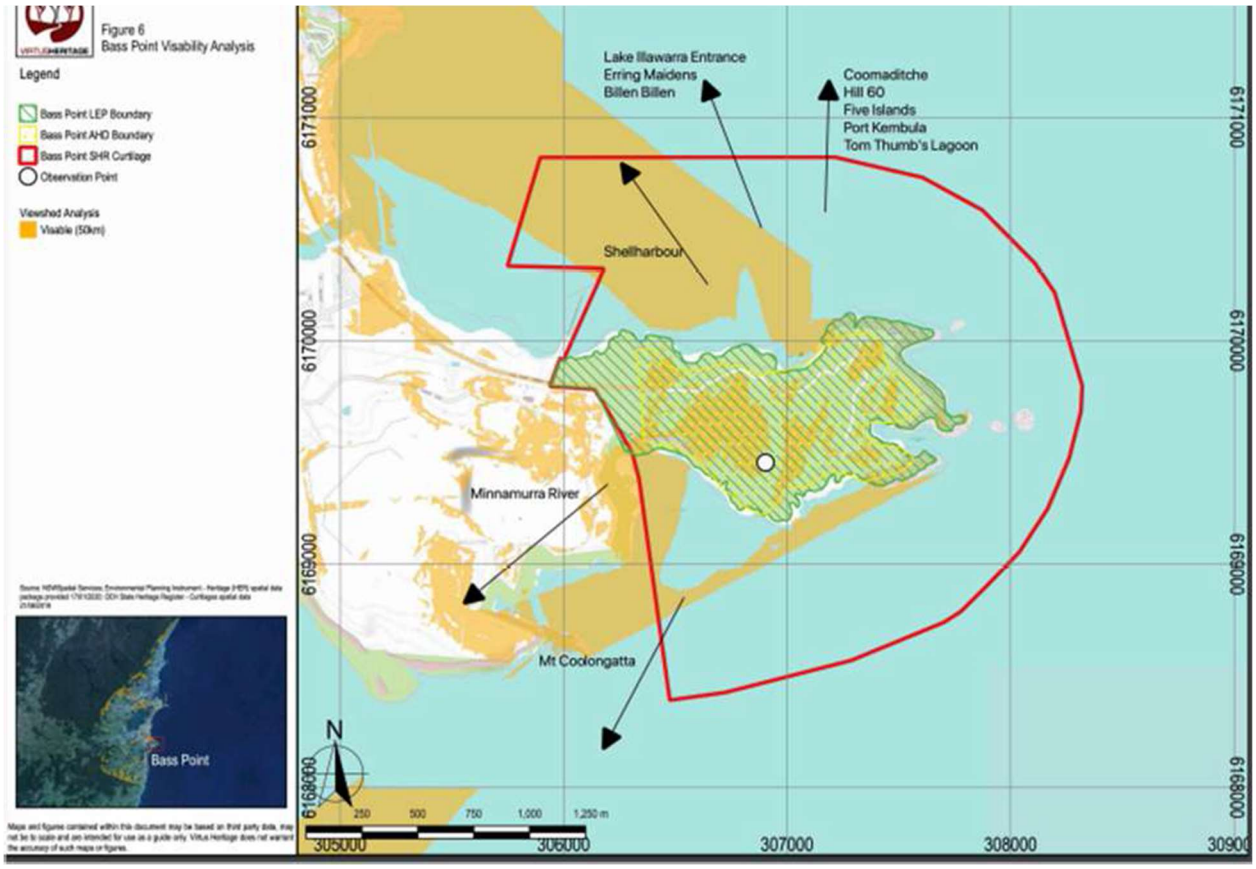


Figure 6: Locality Plan for Bass Point Reserve, with arrows showing views to significant cultural areas.

2.2 Bass Point Reserve Site Inspection

Two site inspections took place at Bass Point Reserve for this project. The first was undertaken in February 2020 with Matthew Harvey and Cheryl Lappin (SCC), Dr Mary-Jean Sutton and Gina Scheer (Virtus Heritage), and Debbie Brown, Sites Officer ILALC. Photographs from that site inspection areincluded within this report.

The second inspection took place in September 2020 with Dr Peter Mitchell (Geomorphologist), Elaine Lin (Virtus Heritage), Kayla Williamson and Paul Cummins (Woronora Plateau Gundungara Elders Council).

2.3 Environmental Context

Bass Point Reserve is recognised for its high environmental, Aboriginal cultural, historical and maritime values including scientific and recreational significance and aesthetic appeal. It was placedon the State Heritage Register in 2013 and is recognised and identified as a State significant area due to its highly significant environmental values including intact remnant vegetation communities, threatened flora and fauna and rich biodiversity. Bushrangers Bay, a protected marine reserve ecosystem with high biodiversity, forms a part of the waters around Bass Point, which is also the site of many historical shipwreck sites. The reserve was officially declared in 1968 and Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve was declared in 1982 (NSW SHR 2013: 8). This section presents a summary of the physical landscape and environment of Bass Point which provides the context for its ecological andcultural richness.

2.3.1 Landforms, Geology and Soils

The Bass Point headland is an unusual feature on the east coast of NSW, being the largest headland distinctively oriented east west. It is composed of hard rock which does not generate quartz sand onweathering. The sand beaches are largely composed of shell fragments, but the extensive dune coverappears to consist mainly of quartz (see Appendix C, Mitchell, 2020).

Bass Point is highly exposed and lies at an altitude ranging between 10 – 50 metres above sea level (Australian Height Datum), comprising low rolling quaternary sand dune hills and sea cliffs with extensive rock platforms (Hazelton 1992). This is characterised at Boston Point (refer to **Figure 7 up to Figure 11**).

Figure 7: Volcanic bedrock pillow lava formation (Geomorphological site investigations, 18 September 2020)

Figure 8: Views to south-east at Boston Point across the flat rock platforms.

Figure 9: View to south, note the high visibility of shell in all exposed ground area

Figure 10: Views to south and east at Boston Point across the flat rock platforms.

Figure 11: Similar views, note the high visibility of shell in all exposed ground area.

The south side of the headland has a much higher relief than the north, and is characterised by rock pools, small amphitheatres, boulder beaches and low cliffs formed by erosional processes related tothe plucking of joint blocks and water layer weathering. In contrast, the north side appears to be an abrasion ramp, with fewer rock pools, boulder beaches and cliffs (Mitchell, 2020).

Geologically, Bass Point comprises part of the northern extremities of the Permian period GerringongVolcanics formation originating from the Kiama region. This volcanic activity formed basaltic depositswith circular pockets of explosive cavities on the rock shelves around Bass Point, as boiling sea watermixed with hot lava (Carter *et al*. c.1977-1980). The porphyritic basalt in the region is a form of Latite,also known as a trachydesite. This Bombo Latite from the Shoalhaven Group has large phenocrystsof labradorite and augite in a near-horizontal sheet of submarine lava. While the Permian period basaltic bedrock on either side of the headland is identical, the geomorphology of the coastline isnot (Mitchell 2020).

Bass Point Reserve is situated within the Bombo soil landscape of the Kiama Soil Landscapes (1:100,000 map sheet, Hazelton 1992). It is largely composed of unconsolidated Quaternary sediments overlying Bombo Latite geology (Bowman 1974). The majority of the soils on the headland are fine grey Quaternary sands, with patches of brownish black sandy clay loams on the slopes above the rock platforms at the edges of the Reserve (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 9).

The geomorphology of the coast and the depositional phases of the Quaternary sands have not fully been investigated. Peter Mitchell (2020) suggests that early descriptions of the Bass Point Quaternary sands and their inclusion in the Bombo soil landscape may not be reliable. The most recent mapping identifies Bass Point as having potential Holocene bedrock-mantling dune sands overPermian sedimentary and volcanic rocks (Troedson and Hashimoto 2013). The range of recorded basic soil types in the study area include shallow structured loams on crests, moderately deep krasnozems on upper slopes and benches, and brown to red podzolic soils on mid to lower slopes (Bombo Soil Landscape Report 1992: 44 – 5).

The variety of landforms and complex geology and soil landscapes of the Bass Point Reserve supportsa high biodiversity of floral and faunal habitats, communities and species. The relative geographic prominence of Bass Point headland influenced its importance as a landmark visible from sea, andadditionally made it favourable to Aboriginal people as a ceremonial site and gathering place withviews to important cultural landmarks and Dreaming locations. These cultural heritage values willbe discussed further in **Section3**.

2.3.2 Hydrology

While there are no obvious sources of freshwater and no clear drainage lines on the reserve, the entire Bass Point Reserve is well-serviced by an abundance of freshwater springs and seepages acrossthe shore platform stemming from the base of the cliffs along the southern shore. No part of the headland is more than approximately 400 metres from a good fresh water supply, rendering Bass Point Reserve a resource-rich and desirable environment for living, camping, and the gathering of resources (Mitchell, in press). Although it is possible that shallow wells in the sand may have also been used in the past by Aboriginal people on the headland, archaeological evidence of this would not be expected to survive.

2.3.3 Palaeoenvironment and Implications for Site Preservation

In the past sea levels varied largely between the Pleistocene and Holocene which has influenced theshoreline over time. Radiocarbon dating of samples from campsites at Bass Point, places Aboriginalpeople in the region from at least c.20,000 years ago. At that point in time sea levels were lower andthe coastline may have been approximately 15 – 20km further east (Bursill *et al*. 2015: 1).

Lake Illawarra formed around six to seven thousand years ago, at which point the coastline reached a level similar to today. During interglacial periods (when sea levels were higher) the coastal valleys of the region were drowned, however during glacial periods of low sea level the coastline and estuaries would have been located on the presently submerged continental shelf. Lake Illawarra nearby has been subjected to three such

inundation and drying cycles since its formation (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000:11).

When interpreting Aboriginal settlement patterns and land use of Bass Point headland over time, it is important to take into consideration these variations in sea level and the changes in the coastlineand available water supply. While radiocarbon dating of a campsite at Bass Point has provided evidence of some of the earliest human occupation in NSW, a much earlier date is probable but likelylocated at now submerged sites (Bursill *et al*. 2015:1).

Furthermore, the crest of the headland at an elevation of approximately 30 metres asl is covered by sand dune deposit of unknown depth. While these dunes have been described in a few archaeological test excavations (e.g., Bowdler 1970; 1976), interpretations of dune and shell middenformation have been contradictory to date. The age and composition of the sand as well as the degree of soil development remains unknown (Mitchell, in press).

The undisturbed parts of the headland and its soils support many significant native floral and faunal communities. These intact terrestrial and marine ecosystems range from common to rare, contributing to the high significance and biodiversity of the reserve. Bass Point is home to a numberof Endangered Ecological Communities (ECC) and is a key coastal site due to its natural and cultural richness.

2.3.4 Terrestrial Ecology

Bass Point Reserve is situated within the Illawarra subregion of the Sydney Basin Bioregion. It has a warm, temperate climate characterised by warm summers with no dry season (DPIE website, accessed 7th May 2020). Several key documents exist for the conservation of different terrestrial aspects of the headland, including: vegetation studies (Mills 2018; Carter *et al*. c.1977-1980), faunal studies (Smith and Chafer 1987), Council Plans of Management (Manidis Roberts Consultants 2000a and 2000b; Shellharbour Municipal Council 1993), and a comprehensive terrestrial Ecological Assessment and Plan of Management (Eco Logical Australia 2012). These reports have been reviewed for this document, in order to help develop the most up to date CMP for the holistic management of the reserve's highly significant natural and cultural assets.

The current council Plan of Management document (Manidis Roberts Consultants 2000a; 2000b) for the headland has deemed the reserve a place of great significance and diversity. Bass Point Reserve contains some of the best remaining coastal vegetation between Sydney's Royal National Park and Gerroa's Seven Mile Beach National Park including a protected littoral rainforest stand, a large number of protected native species of state conservation significance and significant marine habitats. The largely intact and comparatively undisturbed nature of the ecological communities on the headland has added to its importance as a protected nature reserve (Manidis Roberts Consultants 2000a; 2000b).

The listing of Bass Point Reserve on the NSW SHR demonstrated that apart from its known importance as an Aboriginal and European place of significance, it also met the criteria on several fronts due to its high environmental significance. The headland was deemed to have visual value, with a spectacular interplay of bush, beaches, headlands, cliffs, rocks, sea and sky; giving it significant scenic views. It is a valued recreation and nature tourism area with high potential for further scientific and ecological research and education. One of the most important aspects of Bass Point Reserve is its diversity of plant and animal communities, including some highly protected ECC's and rare threatened species (SHR 2013).

2.3.4.1 Vegetation Communities and Species

Bass Point is a regionally and state significant reserve of native vegetation containing several Endangered Ecological Communities and habitats for many threatened species of flora and fauna (Council Summary, 2020). The current Ecological Assessment and Plan of Management for the environmental protection of Bass Point Reserve (Eco Logical Australia 2012) highlighted three significant communities:

- The Complex Littoral Rainforest has been assessed as a critically endangered EEC,
- The Bangalay Sand Forest as a partial EEC, and

- The Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest as a community that is floristically similar to the coastal floodplain EEC.

A more recent Illawarra Vegetation Study (Mills 2018) highlighted an additional two EEC's which have since been added to the list of threatened communities, (refer to **Figure 12**):

- The Saltmarsh critically endangered EEC, and
- The Themeda Headland Grassland EEC.

Figure 12: Bushrangers Bay headland with Themeda Headland Grassland and some saltmarsh.

2.3.4.2 Complex Littoral Rainforest

Complex Littoral Rainforest occurs in the central part of the Reserve on both sides of the main road. It is characterised by a dense canopy dominated by Native Celtis (*Celtis paniculate)*, Plum Pine (*Podocarpus elatus)*, Ribbonwood (*Euroshinus falcata)* and Guioa (*Guoia semiglauca)* to a height of approximately 15 metres. A sub-canopy at 5 – 12 metres height is dominated by Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum)*, Muttonwood (*Rapanea variabilis)*, Red-fruited Olive Plum (*Cassine australis)*, Black Plum (*Diosporos australis)*, Red Ash (*Alphitonia excelsa)* and Lilly Pilly (*Acmenasmithii).* A few large specimens of Port Jackson Fig (*Ficus rubiginosa)*, Small-leaved Fig (*Ficus obliqua),*and Deciduous Fig (*Ficus superba* var. *henneana)* reside within and emerge above the closed sub- canopy (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 11).

The stand of littoral rainforest contains other sub-canopy species, as well as a patchy understorey to a height of approximately 2 metres. This includes juveniles of sub-canopy species, as well as shrubs such as Coffee Bush (*Breynia oblongifolia*), Wilkiea (*Wilkiea huegeliana*), Hairy Clerodendrum (*Clerodendrum tomentosum*), Brittlewood (*Claoxylon australe*), and Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*). Weeds such as Lantana are conspicuous within the understorey particularly along the edges of the road (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 11).

The Complex Littoral Rainforest within Bass Point Reserve is a component of the endangered ecological community *Littoral Rainforest in the Southeast Corner, Sydney Basin and NSW North Coast Bioregions*. It is listed on the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act 2016)* and is deemed a critically endangered *Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia*, which islisted on the Federal *EPBC Act 1999*. The community is mapped as Littoral Rainforest on the *SEPP (Coastal Management*) 2018 and on the NSW Biodiversity Values Map, as set out in the NSW *BC Regulation 2017*.

The littoral rainforest at Bass Point Reserve is the only patch of such a community in the Local Government Area (Council Summary 2020). It is protected under the State Environmental PlanningPolicy Number 26 – Littoral Rainforests (stand # 173A). Due to its designation as an EEC the current Ecological Plan of Management (Eco

Logical Australia 2012) recommends that the area within the reserve is kept protected. This can be achieved by ensuring that only qualified bush regenerators undertake and/or supervise weed control activities within the Complex Littoral Rainforest (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 42).

2.3.4.3 Bangalay-Banksia Sand Forest

This endangered ecological community occurs in the central and eastern areas of Bass Point Reserve,immediately south of the Complex Littoral Rainforest EEC. The main characteristic of this communityis its canopy co-dominated by regrowth *Eucalyptus botryoides* and Coast Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*). This occurs to a height of approximately 8 – 14 metres. The canopy also contains occasional Cabbage Gum (*Eucalyptus amplifolia*) and Bracelet Honey Myrtle (*Melaleuca armillaris*)individuals (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 13), (refer **Figure 13** and **Figure 14**).

Figure 13: Coast Banksias stand out in this forest area at Bushrangers Bay and Maloneys Bay below

Figure 14: Maloneys Bay sub-canopy with Coast Banksias.

The community also contains a patchy sub-canopy to a height of approximately 7 – 12 metres, and an understorey dominated by mesic species such as Coffee Bush, Rough Fruit Pittosporum (*Pittosporum revolutum*), Muttonwood, Mock Olive, Cheese Tree and Scentless Rosewood to a height of approximately 1.5 metres. The diverse groundcover is a mix of native and exotic grasses, sedges and forbs such as Spiny-headed Mat-rush, Scurvy Weed, Common Bracken Fern (*Pteridiumesculentum*), Kidney Weed, Basket Grass, Sea Berry Saltbush (*Rhagodia candolleana*), Bare Twig-rushand the weed Sand Couch (*Sporobolus virginicus*). Climbers such as Common Silkpod, Scrambling Lily and Common Milk-vine are another prominent part of the groundcover, occasionally climbing uptrees and shrubs in the community (Eco Logical Australia 2012:13).

Parts of the Bangalay-Banksia Forest occurring within the study area comprises the *Bangalay Forestof the Sydney Basin and Southeast Corner Bioregions* (BSF) EEC listed on the *BC Act 2016*. This is one of only two patches of this type of EEC in the Shellharbour LGA. It is estimated that there is approximately 11,200 hectares of the equivalent Coastal Sand Forest extant, or between 50 – 70% of the pre-European extent of southeast NSW (Tozer *et al*. 2010: 382). The type of community withinthe reserve correlates with the Hind-dune Littoral Rainforest described in the report for National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW) on the Native Vegetation of the Illawarra Escarpment and Coastal Plain (2002: 77 – 79).

More than half of the community (including the one in this study) is in conservation reserves. According to a report by Kevin Mills and Associates (KMA 2000), however, there is only 36.5 hectaresin three patches remaining in the Shellharbour LGA. Other examples are near the Minnamurra River estuary and in Killalea State Park.

The approximately 13.5 hectares of Bangalay Sand Forest within the Reserve is thus small but a highlysignificant component of the extant distribution of this endangered community. It must be protectedas an EEC as per the NSW *BC Act 2016*. The current recommendation in the Plan of Managementis to ensure that only qualified bush regenerators undertake and/or supervise weed control activitieswithin this community (Eco Logical Australia 2012:42).

2.3.4.4 Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest

Two patches of this community occur in the study area in the low-lying central-eastern parts of theBass Point Reserve. The community is characterised by a semi-closed canopy of Swamp Oak (*Casuarina glauca*) to a height of approximately 16 metres. The community contains a patchier sub- canopy to a height of approximately 6 metres, including occasional individuals or a fringing scrub of rainforest species such as Guoia, Lilly Pilly and Common Acronychia.

The patchy understory grows to a height of approximately 2 metres and is a mix of native species such as Star Nightshade (*Solanum stelligerum*), Coffee Bush (*Breynia oblongifolia*), Celerywood and Muttonwood. This understorey is admixed with exotic Lantana. The groundcover is very patchy, comprising dense and sparse cover in places with species such as Native Violet, Basket Grass, Pastel Flower, Spiny-head Mat-rush, Blue Flax-lily (*Dianella caerulea*), Bare Twigrush (*Baumea juncea*) and Scurvy Weed. Climbers such as Milk Vine, Scrambling Lily, Snake Vine (*Stephania japonica*) and CapeIvy cover portions of the canopy (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 13).

While the Swamp Oak Forest in Bass Point Reserve is not considered to comprise the *Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest of the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions* (SOFF) endangered ecological community, it is however floristically similar to the EEC, of which KMA (2000) estimates there to be a total of 23.34 hectares in the entirety of Shellharbour LGA (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 30). More recent vegetation studies in the region have yielded similar results and recommendations (Mills 2018), deeming the community similar to the Swamp Oak Forest EEC, though not meeting the full criteria for a Swamp Oak Forest as per the NSW *BC Act 2016.* Nevertheless, the recommendation for this community and other threatened species at Bass Pointis to monitor the recovery of native vegetation and the response of weeds and native vegetation to proposed treatments (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 58).

2.3.4.5 Saltmarsh

The Coastal Saltmarsh was added to the Bass Point Reserve list of Endangered Ecological Communities by Mills (2018) in his Illawarra Vegetation Study. This community has been greatly depleted along the NSW coast and occurs in small patches around the foreshore. Saltmarshes are found where saline soils have accumulated amongst rocks (Mills 2018: 15). Conservation requirements for this community are like those recommended by Eco Logical Australia (2012) for the other EECs at Bass Point in their existing ecological management plan for the Reserve.

2.3.4.6 Themeda Headland Grassland

Small remnant communities of 'Themeda Grassland on Seacliffs and Coastal Headlands' occur frequently along the Permian volcanic coast of the Illawarra. These are listed in NSW as endangered as per the *BC Act 2016*. At Bass Point, there is a patch of this type of grassland above the foreshore southwest of Maloneys Bay. While the extent is small, the value of this type of community is heightened by the complex of coastal communities in their entirety, forming important areas for botanical conservation in the region (Mills 2018: 15).

2.3.4.7 Threatened Species

Bass Point Reserve contains two species of plants listed as Endangered in the *BC Act 2016*. These are *Cynanchum elegans* (White-flowered Wax Plant) and *Zieria granulata* (Illawarra Zieria). A third potential species *Pimelea spicata* (Spiked rice-flower) is known nearby, and may potentially be foundwithin the Reserve, though none have been recorded recently. The current Plan of Management recommends that threatened species and EECs are assessed annually using photographic and surveymethods. The recommended monitoring program should assess the recovery of native vegetationin communities and areas with known threatened species, including the monitoring of the responseof weeds and native vegetation to proposed treatments (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 58).

2.3.4.8 Cynanchum elegans

The Endangered White-flowered wax plant was recorded in the Reserve during flora surveys in the study area undertaken for the most recent ecological management plan by Eco Logical Australia (2012). This threatened species, now protected by the NSW *BC Act 2016*, was most recently seen near the entry road to the Reserve (Mills 2018: 15). It is also listed as a regionally significant species.

It has been recommended that herbicide spraying is not to be undertaken along the main road within10 metres of known occurrences of this species. Fires should be excluded from known sites with *Cynanchum elegans*, and all bush regeneration activities should be conducted or supervised by qualified bush regenerators. Annual monitoring to assess species health should be undertaken; thisshould check for pathogens, evidence of stress, or any new threats to thespecies.

2.3.4.9 Zieria granulata

This Illawarra Zieria shrub is endemic to the region, growing on the Permian volcanic landscape between Lake Illawarra and Berry (Mills 2018: 16). It was identified at two sites at Bass Point in 2010 (Shellharbour City Council). Later targeted surveys for Endangered species were conducted as partof the development of the ecological management plan for Bass Point Reserve (Eco Logical Australia2012), for which the Illawarra Zieria species was again identified at multiple locations, necessitatingits protection under the NSW *BC Act 2016*. It has most recently been searched for as part of an Illawarra Vegetation Study though had not been recorded in that survey (Mills 2018: 16).

Due to the high significance of the species and the possibility of its re-occurrence at Bass Point Reserve, recommendations in the Eco Logical Australia (2012) management plan should be considered. These state that existing bush regeneration activities should be followed up on withinand immediately surrounding the population. Fires should also be excluded from the locations where *Zieria granulata* populations have been known to be located. Weed control actions around the population will be limited to cut and paint and similar

labour-intensive methods, with herbicide spraying prohibited given the potential for off-target damage to individuals. All bush regeneration activities are to be carried out or supervised by qualified bush regenerators.

2.3.4.10 Pimelea spicata

Targeted surveys for threatened species were conducted in the development of an ecological management plan for Bass Point Reserve. During these surveys, while the Spiked Rice-flower was not found within the study area, it was recorded nearby in the disturbed grassland south-west of theReserve (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 25). More recent surveys in 2018 as part of an Illawarra Vegetation Study did not successfully locate any individuals in areas where they were previously recorded (Mills 2018: 15). Nevertheless, *Pimelea spicata* may potentially be found on the Reserve,and should be included on the agenda for annual monitoring of threatened species.

2.3.4.11 Regionally Significant Species

Two plant species which meet regional significance criteria were recorded at Bass Point Reserve as part of the 2012 development of an ecological management plan for the study area (Eco Logical Australia 2012). One species was the aforementioned *Cynanchum elegans*, while the second specieswas *Celtis paniculata*, or the Native Celtis. The Coastal Jack Bean (*Canavalia rosea*) and Small Bleeding Heart (*Homalanthus stillingifolius*) were noted to have potential to occur within the Reservedue to occurrences in the past (Council Summary 2020. Six additional regionally rare species were recorded in a more recent Illawarra Vegetation Study by Mills in 2018.

A few individuals of Native Celtis (*Celtis paniculata*), a small to medium deciduous tree, were recorded in 2012 (Eco Logical Australia) along the main road in association with the Complex Littoral Rainforest at Bass Point Reserve. The species is rare in the Shellharbour region, which is its southernmost extent, spanning from northern Queensland to the Minnamurra River. Its only other known location in the region is on the Minnamurra Sand Spit (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 24). More recent vegetation surveys of the Reserve confirm that the species is only common to Bass Point Reserve (Mills 2018: 16). The species should be monitored as part of the Reserve's yearly ecologicalassessment, which should include factors affecting the Native Celtis and other regionally rare plants such as weed invasion, physical damage, inappropriate fire regimes and weed management practices.

The Coastal Jack Bean (*Canavalia rosea*) and Small Bleeding Heart (*Homalanthus stillingifolius*) species were noted in the Eco Logical Australia (2012) management plan as having been recorded in the area, though surveys in 2012 did not locate any specimens. The former, a small trailing or climbing herb, grows mainly on sand dunes north of Sydney. The species is very rare in southern NSW and is thus considered a significant species in the Illawarra Region. It had previously been recorded on the rocky shoreline, though was not seen on the Eco Logical Australia survey (2012: 24). More recent studies of Bass Point Reserve have located this rare species of coastal vine, which has only been seen at seven sites between Big Island and Jervis Bay (Mills 2018: 16).

The Small Bleeding Heart (*Homalanthus stillingifolius*) was similarly recorded on the Reserve prior totargeted surveys by Eco Logical (2012) where it was not detected again. Nevertheless, the species has been included in the ecological management plan for the study area due to its regional significance, and its potential occurrence at Bass Point. It was last recorded on the edges of the Complex Littoral Rainforest and is known at a small number of sites locally (Eco Logical Australia 2012:25, and refer to **Figure 15**).

Additional species occurring at Bass Point Reserve have, since the development of the original ecological management plan (Eco Logical Australia 2012), been recorded at the site or deemed regionally rare. A targeted Illawarra Vegetation Study (Mills 2018: 16 – 7) has recorded an additional six species on the regionally rare list. These are:

- *Nicotiana debneyi*, an uncommon herb which occurs sporadically across the region, which can grow on disturbed sites, and has been found along the foreshores of Bass Point on clayey soils close to the rocks;
- *Wollastonia uniflora*, a creeping coastal herb which is rare on the coast, is known at only a few locations, and which occurs commonly at Bass Point above foreshore rocks on the northern side of the point;

- *Cyclophyllum longipetalum*, a rainforest tree species common at Bass Point, but is otherwise uncommon in the region;
- *Euroschinus falcatus*, a rainforest tree species moderately common to Bass Point, with occasional large trees, but is otherwise rare to uncommon in the region;
- *Podocarpus elatus*, a rainforest tree species with a large population at Bass Point, which is otherwise uncommon and scattered across the region south towards Jervis Bay; and
- *Polyscias elegans*, a rainforest tree species with a large population at Bass Point, which is uncommon in the region.

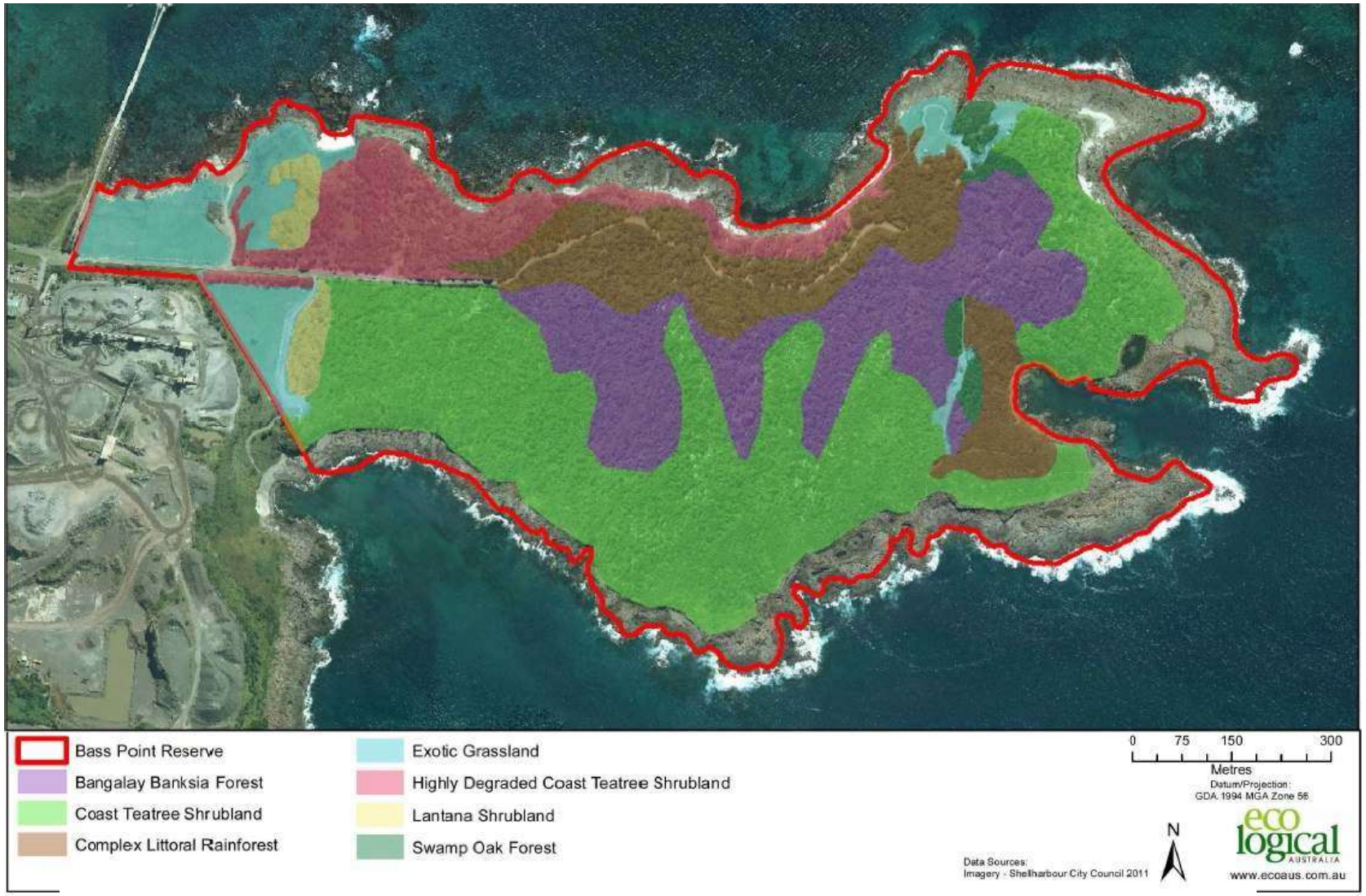


Figure 15:: Vegetation map from 2012 study. (Ecological, 2012)

2.3.5 Faunal Species

Bass Point is a regionally and state significant reserve with high biodiversity values. The headland contains multiple Endangered Ecological Communities which provide habitats for a large variety offaunal species. The most recent faunal inspection was undertaken by survey of Bass Point by Eco Logical Australia (2012) for the Ecological Assessment and Plan of Management for the reserve. Inthis comprehensive study, a total of 52 species were found inhabiting the headland. This included ten native mammals, 30 native birds, two amphibians, five reptiles, three exotic mammals and two exotic birds (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 20). The information from that study has been used in this CMP.

Two threatened faunal species, both bats, were found during this survey. They were the Eastern Bentwing-bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*) and the Southern Myotis (*Myotis macropus*), detected using Anabat recording devices. No endangered populations or migratory species listed on the *EPBC Act 1999* were detected within the reserve at the time. Nevertheless, several species such as the Black-faced Monarch (*Monarcha melanopsis*), Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) and Satin Flycatcher (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*) have been deemed likely to occur there from time to time (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 29).

2.3.5.1 Threatened or Regionally Significant Species

Two threatened species of bats have been recorded in the Reserve: the Eastern Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*) and the Southern Myotis (*Myotis macropus*). Both reside and roost in a variety of habitats in the reserve. The former was detected using echolocation call analysisfor the Ecological Plan of Management, as well as in a previous study (Lesryk 2000). This species of bat is known to use caves as roosting sites and forests as foraging grounds. Suitable sea caves may be present in the reserve.

The Southern Myotis (*Myotis Macropus*) roosts and forages in similar environments. It additionally can occupy other habitat types such as mangroves, paperbark swamps, riverine monsoon forests, wet and dry sclerophyll forests, open woodlands and River Red Gum woodlands. The species requires nearness to water and was tentatively recorded foraging within Bass Point Reserve. From previous studies, it was concluded that this species may be roosting on the headland in tree hollows and other substitutes for caves (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 27).

Though no other regionally significant or threatened species were found during the 2012 survey for the Plan of Management, several additional species were deemed to have potential to occur withinthe reserve. This was based on historic recordings in the area and on habitat types present on the headland. These additional species include other threatened micro chiropteran bats, as well as theendangered Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*). A threatened species of flying fox, the Grey-headed FlyingFox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) has been observed flying overhead, possibly to their nearest permanent camp at Whispering Gallery in Shellharbour. This species likely uses the Reserve from time to time to forage when canopy vegetation species are in flower, or when there are fleshyfruits available.

Other potential species include regionally significant frugivorous rainforest doves. These include the Rose-crowned Fruit-dove (*Pteilinopus regina*), the Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*), the Topknot Pigeon (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*), and the White-headed Pigeon (*Columba leucomela*). Potentialthreatened shorebirds which may occur at Bass Point include the Sooty Oystercatcher (*Haematopusfuliginosus*), the Pied Oystercatcher (*Haematopus longirostris*), and the White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*). An additional ground-dwelling bird, the Bassian Thrush (*Zoothera lunulata*) may occur, though is considered uncommon in the Illawarra region due to its vulnerability to predation by cats from nearby urban areas (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 27 – 9).

Aside from the main faunal study by Eco Logical (2012) that forms the basis of the current EcologicalAssessment and Plan of Management for Bass Point Reserve, few systematic faunal surveys have been conducted compared to floral studies. Of the faunal surveys, the largest focus has been on the avifauna of Bass Point (e.g., Smith and Chafer 1987). Endangered or vulnerable bird species recordedhere include the little tern (*Sterna Albifrons*), which was listed as endangered in the CommonwealthEndangered Species Protection Act; sanderling (*Calidris Alba*);

large sand plover (*Charadrius Leschenaultii*); and pied oystercatcher (*Haematopus Ostralagus*). There were seven bird species recorded which were listed as vulnerable in the New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, including the sooty oystercatcher (*Haematopus Fuliginosus*), which was commonly seen inthe area. The place provides habitat for fourteen species of non-breeding migratory birds listed inthe Japan Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) and twelve species listed in the China Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) (Register of the National Estate, Place ID 19909).

Activity associated with the Illawarra Bird Observers Club has in recent years provided more information about birds than other types of fauna in the region (Wollongong City Council 2011: 24).Due to the scarcity of information about the faunal species and populations of Bass Point Reserve, it is further recommended that a comprehensive faunal survey of the reserve be conducted. It wouldbe of great merit to systematically determine the threatened and migratory species present on the headland, including of their habitats. The long-term conservation and management of the naturalheritage of Bass Point relies on the development of appropriate and up-to-date management strategies which can aid in the protection and enhancement of this locally fragmented and highly significant nature reserve.

2.3.6 Marine Ecology

The waters around Bass Point contain multiple important marine ecosystems which warrant protection. Several habitats include deep reefs, sponge gardens, intertidal boulder fields, wave exposed rock platforms and urchin-grazed Barrens.

The marine ecology of Bass Point Reserve, including Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve is very important for the conservation of biodiversity. The area is known to support an unusual mix of southern water and tropical species, endemic and genetically isolated organisms, protected, rare andendangered species, commercially and recreationally important species, a comparatively high overallbiodiversity, and species of medicinal value (Manidis Roberts Consultants 2000a: 29).

The most comprehensive assessment of the marine ecology of Bass Point was provided to Shellharbour City Council by Kirsten Benkendorff (1999) and forms the basis of marine conservation in the current Plan of Management (Manidis Roberts Consultants 2000: Vol. 1 and Vol. 2). The 1999 report by Kirsten Benkendorff could not be located at SCC. The information in this CMP has relied on the 2000 Plan of Management, the information from the Register of the National Estate listing Place Id. 19909 from 1998 and the Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries..

2.3.6.1 Bushrangers Bay

The Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries manages fisheries, marine biodiversity including marine habitats, and manages Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve in partnership with Shellharbour City Council. (refer to **Figure 16** to **Figure 18**). DPI District Fisheries Officer noted Bushrangers Bay aquatic reserve is one of the oldest in the state. (Pers. Comm. D. Minter, 24.09.2020) Partnership between DPI Fisheries and Shellharbour City Council is required for managementof this place.

Figure 16: Left, This signage is on the rocky headland and at the stair approach, above to Bushrangers Bay. Note the Grey Nurse Shark protection poster above is at the stair approach, shown below.

Figure 17: Timber staircase down to the rocky foreshore.

Figure 18: View from the foreshore of the water of Bushrangers Bay.

Bushrangers Bay is a small rocky marine embayment, with mid-south coast shallow water subtidal habitats. The bay has a unique habitat and nursery area between temperate and tropical regions and is the home of several rare and protected species. The shallows contain cuttlefish, sea dragons, nudibranchs, leather jackets, bream, yellowtail and bullseyes.

Bushrangers Bay Reserve was declared for its representation of rock platforms, crevices and rock pools that are typical of the NSW mid-south coast, but also in recognition of the Reserve's unique habitat and role as a nursery area located between temperate and tropical regions.

Bushrangers Bay contains the only meadow of marine strapgrass, *Posidonia Australis*, between Port Hacking and Jervis Bay. It is especially important because of its location at the end of the Bass Point peninsular which juts several kilometres out to sea into the seasonally south flowing East Australia Current, which transports tropical marine life and restocks fisheries down the entire New South Wales coastline.

Toward the deeper parts of the bay there are boulders littering the bottom, creating a habitat for stingrays, squids, octopus, morwongs, blue gropers, starfish, featherstars, hawkfish, catfish, moray eels, nudibranchs and the occasional turtle.

The bay is relatively safe most of the time, with only occasional surges, and easy entries and exits from the pebbly beach or rocky shoreline. The water has average depths of 15m and visibility about 10m. In the outer bay the depth drops from 15 m to 20 m, and out beyond the entrance the seafloor drops to about 28m where deeper water sponge gardens and soft corals begin to dominate. These conditions make it an ideal scuba diving destination.

The Aquatic Reserve's diverse marine life includes common temperate and seasonal tropical fish, many of which are quite abundant in the Reserve. This is due to the seagrass beds providing habitat for a variety of fish, including half-banded seaperch (*Hypoplectrodes Maccullochi*), southern maoriwrasse (*Ophthalmolepis Lineolatus*) and senator wrasse (*Pictilabrus Laticlavius*).

These fish, together with a suite of other species, such as the red morwong (*Cheilodactylus Fuscus*), striped trumpeter (*Latris Lineata*), blue groper (*Achoerodus Viridis*), horseshoe and pygmy leatherjackets (*Meuschenia Hippocrepis* and *Brachaluteres Jacksonianus*) and herring cale (*OdaxCyanomelas*), forage between the seagrass and the other habitats found within the Reserve. The Reserve is also the southernmost distribution for several species of tropical fish.

Consultation regarding the area of Bushrangers Bay with Shellharbour Scuba who regularly visitand dive there noted that a marine biologist from Australian Museum (Mandy Reid, a cuttlefish andoctopus expert) was very excited about the 6 or 7 types of cuttlefish she saw at Bass Point on her dive with them between 2018-2020. Claudia Orana, an international marine biologist and world expert on sea spiders found new species at Bass Point and was similarly excited within the same timeframe. These comments support a recommendation to prepare a new study to update our information regarding marine heritage and ecology.

DPI Fisheries has the following information regarding Bushrangers Bay for the public, at their website, https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/marine-protected-areas/aquatic-reserves/bushrangers-bay- aquatic-reserve:

Bushranger's Bay Aquatic Reserve is a small rocky embayment at the eastern end of Bass Point, approximately 4 km south of Shellharbour on the NSW south coast. The Reserve covers the entirety of Bushrangers Bay, an area of approximately 4 hectares;

Objectives for the Reserve

- *conserve the biodiversity of fish and marine vegetation*
- *protect fish habitat*

- *facilitate educational activities*
- *facilitate scientific research.*

DPI Fisheries goes on to note that:

> *The Reserve is an excellent sheltered dive site, you can scuba dive and observe the variety of marine animals and plants within the Reserve.*
>
> *This is a 'no take' Aquatic Reserve, which means you are not permitted to fish by any method, harm marine animals or plants, or collect marine organisms whether dead or alive (including empty shells as they provide homes for living organisms).*

DPI Fisheries has the following information (dating to 2003) in relation to Grey Nurse Sharks in the area:

> *Grey Nurse Sharks have been observed at two sites at Shellharbour. Both sites: "The Gutter" and "The Arch/Cave" are located at Bass Point. The Gutter is a reef system extending off the northern most tip of Bass Point near Lou's Reef with a deep sand-filled gutter that reaches a depth of 38 metres. The Arch/Cave is located on the southern side of Bass Point and is a reef system that reaches a depth of 30 metres. Grey Nurse Sharks are observed swimming or hovering inside or near the Cave or Arch. The sharks have been observed at these sites from December to June. In December 2002, NSW Fisheries declared Critical Habitats at …Bass Point (Shellharbour), … under Section 220Q of the Fisheries Management Act 1994 (and Amendments). (N.M. Otway, et al, June 2003, 41)*

Grey Nurse Sharks use different areas in the reserve throughout most of the year. They can be seen at various sites around Bass Point, including The Gutter and Coal Loader, and within Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve. Bushrangers Bay is a popular scuba diving location, as is The Gutter, The Arch, The Holes, The Gravel Loader and Beaky Bay as well as the remains of the ships SS *Cities Service Boston*, *Alexander Berry* and *Our Own*. These dive sites are mapped in **Section 4.1,** Maritime Heritage. The following images of sea life are from the scuba diving website (refer to **Figure 19** *and* **Figure 20**).

Figure 19: Diving at The Gutter, sponge gardens in foreground. Copyright © Michael McFadyen 1990 to 2020

Figure 20: Grey nurse shark at the Gravel Loader, Bass Point. Copyright © Michael McFadyen 1990 to 2020

3 EUROPEAN HISTORY FOR BASS POINT RESERVE

In the 2000 Management Plan Volume One, a comprehensive history of the European associations with the area was provided. This 2020 CMP has drawn on the information gathered there and on the large amount of material retained at Shellharbour City Council library and museum relating to BassPoint Reserve which has been collected from various local histories and newspaper articles.

The name 'Bass Point' commemorates the 1796-1797 boating exploration of the area by George Bass and Matthew Flinders, although they did not specifically explore or record the promontory which was formerly known to Europeans as Long Point.

The first recorded European sighting of the area was recorded by Captain James Cook, in April1770 and crew on board the Endeavour, who noted in their journals their observations - "Sunday, 22nd April:....and were so near the shore as to distinguish several people upon the Sea Beach. They appeared to be of a very dark colour....Thursday, 26th April: Saw several smokes along shore after dark, and 2 or 3 times a fire" (Organ, MK, Doyle, AP (eds), 1994, 2). The journals from the Endeavour also make note of the "numerous campfires, and of a luxuriant vegetation and varied landscape" (Organ, MK, Doyle, AP (eds), 1994, 8).

3.1 Land Grants and Settlement

A historical parish map from 1821 shows the land incorporating Bass Point Reserve as part of the very large land grant to D'Arcy Wentworth, (refer to **Figure 21**). It was a land grant forfarming purposes.

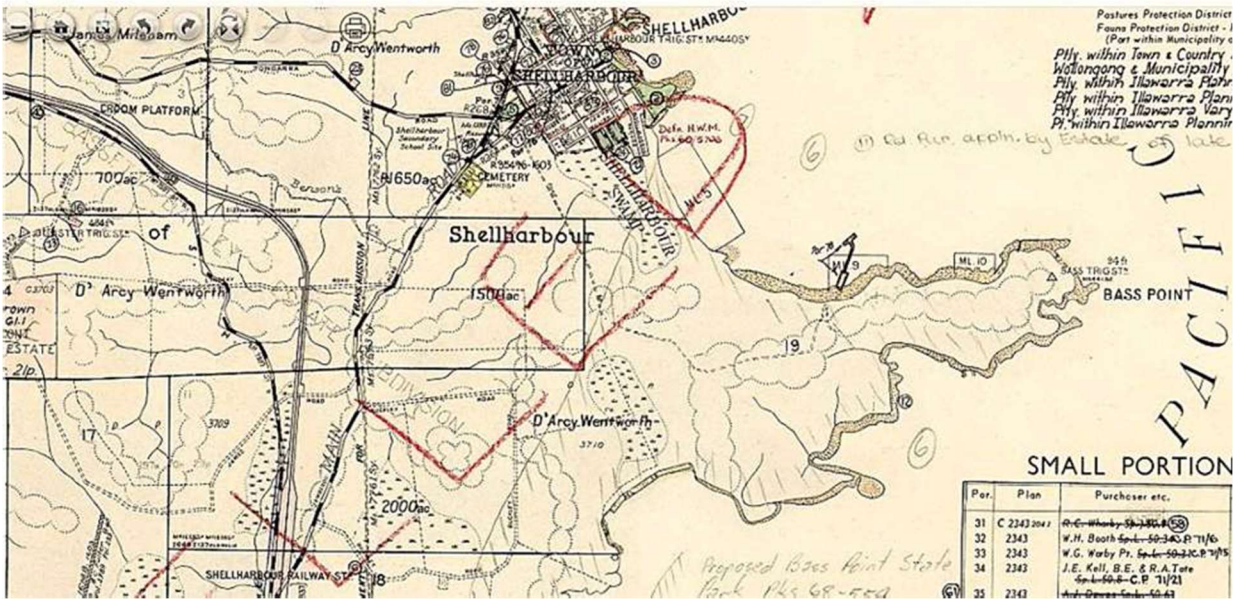


Figure 21: The whole area seen here was land granted to or purchased by D'Arcy Wentworth c.1821.

European settlement in the wider Shellharbour area related to the search for red cedar and of suitable land to graze cattle. For many years prior to the start of the shell-lime industry at Shellharbour, the small beach at the boat harbour was one of the locations where cedar planks werecarried by bullock teams. The cedar planks were built into rafts at the beach and floated out to small sailing vessels waiting to take them to Sydney (Organ & Doyle, (eds), 1994, 8).

In 1803 the first lot of cattle arrived in Illawarra. They were recorded as being Major Johnston's cattle(from his Liverpool Estate), sent to Illawarra during the drought in 1803-4 while Governor King wasin charge of the colony. The cattle were conveyed by boat under the charge of David Nicholls, an employee of Major Johnston, and were landed at Five Islands (Port Kembla region). The pasture landsin the district were used under free occupation permits by the cattlemen of the older districts closerto Sydney. Actual settlement was sporadic, in 1815 reports of fine grazing ground were made although also recorded was the difficulty of transporting cattle by road

(Organ & Doyle eds 1994, Chapter 3). People who grazed cattle there included Major Johnston, Captain Brooks, Charles Throsby, D'Arcy Wentworth, Robert Jenkins, William Browne and Samuel Terry.

The land of Bass Point was grazed by cattle owned by James Badgery and managed by Bob Higgins, until about 1817 when land grants were made. Prior to that time, occupiers under grazing permits and other influential persons had obtained promises of grants from Governor Macquarie who followed through on these promises in 1821. D'Arcy Wentworth had originally been granted two portions in the area by Governor Macquarie in January 1821. They were 1,650 acres, 668 hectares, situated at Shellharbour, and including the site of the private town and 1,500 acres, situated at Shellharbour, including Dunster Hill and Mount Wentworth. Another land grant made to Thomas Davey, for 2,000 acres, 809 hectares, was situated at the entrance to Lake Illawarra and included Native Dog Hill and Barrack Point. This was transferred to D'Arcy Wentworth by the grantee. As in the case of Davey's grant, land granted to James Mileham, John Horsley and William Wentworth in the area were later transferred to D'Arcy Wentworth (Organ & Doyle eds 1994, Chapter 4).

In September 1821, a further area of 2,000 acres, 809 hectares, was granted to D'Arcy Wentworth, lying to the southward of his previous grants and including Point Bass. Another area of 1,000 acres, south and fronting the ocean and Minnamurra River was granted to William Ralph on 1 May 1833. This grantee was one of the early surveyors. As in the case of the grants to James Mileham, Thomas Davey, John Horsley and William Wentworth, this grant was later transferred to D'Arcy Wentworth((Organ & Doyle 1994, Chapter 7). On his death in 1827 Wentworth was one of the richest men on the Colony. He left his Peterborough Estate, which by then totaled a massive 13,060 acres – 5285 hectares - in trust to five of his children, Martha (Reddall), Sophia (Towns), Mary Ann (Addison/Hollings), Catherine (Bassett/Darley) and his son Robert. The main streets in Shellharbourvillage are named for Wentworth and his children. The name "Peterborough", given by Mr Wentworth to his Estate, pre-dated the name "Shellharbour", and continued for the southern part of the Estate, near the Shellharbour railway station.

The name Shellharbour was derived from the large deposits of shell on the seashore in this locality, and the conversion of these into shell-lime, which was shipped from the little boat harbour to Sydney.This industry was carried on by Messrs Towns and Addison, the latter being a son-in-law of D'Arcy Wentworth. A portion of the grant of 1,650 acres (668 ha) to Wentworth was laid out as a private township and surveyed into allotments. The first allotments in the village were purchased by Mr Addison.

The shell-lime industry petered out, but Shellharbour later became the business centre for a community of tenant farmers on the Wentworth Estate, with the boat harbour providing a port oftrade to Sydney.

An 1828 census noted that Wentworth was grazing 1600 head of cattle on his Estate, and that no land was being cultivated (Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 45).

During the 1840s the use of the land changed. An influx of poor immigrant families was settled on 4000 acres (1618.7ha) of the huge estate, through the goodwill and efforts of philanthropist CarolineChisholm and Captain Robert Towns and his wife Sophia Wentworth. The system of clearing leases allowed immigrant families to occupy parcels of land farms rent free for a period of six years and clear the land and establish farms. Caroline Chisholm escorted twenty-three families from Sydneyand the land was cleared for wheat, potatoes and other vegetables. These clearing leases eventually expired in 1857 and the land was then sub-divided into 80 farms. A plan from that period held in the local Tongara Museum shows Bass Point Reserve as Lot 37 and 38, (refer to **Figure 22**).

In 1865 a portion of the large Wentworth Estate, 2560 acres, 1036 ha, was sold to George Fuller and this included Bass Point. He retained ownership until 1917. Fuller called his estate 'Dunmore' and continued to lease it to farmers, who by this time, were using the land to graze cattle and growing crops such as barley, oats and rye that could beused as fodder replaced wheat. His two sons continued the farming and quarrying after his death however in 1923 they sold the land (Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 51).

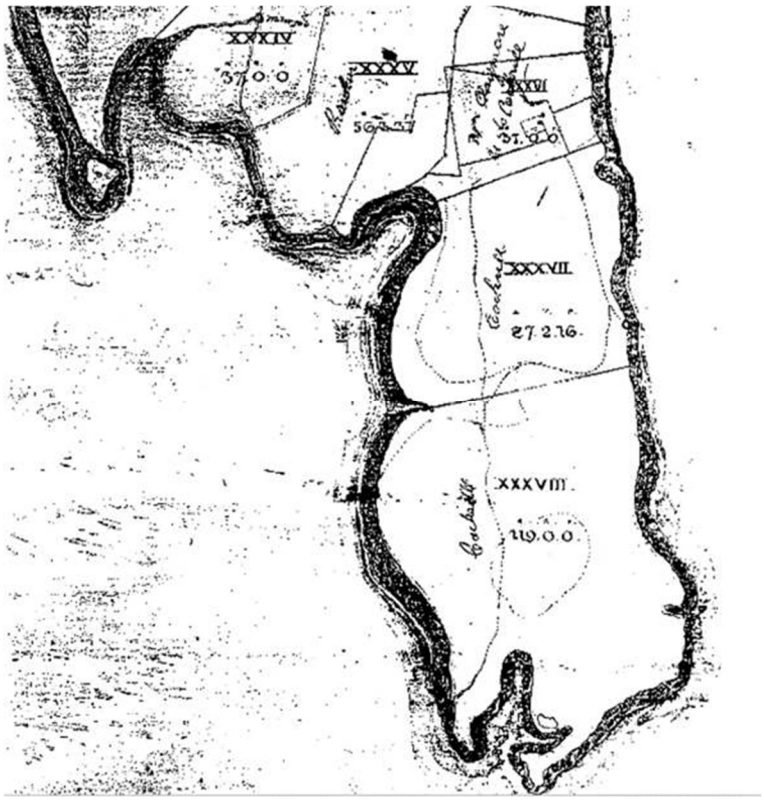


Figure 22: c.1860s plan of Bass Point showing the allocated farming portions (Organ & Doyle eds 1994, 46)

3.2 Mining, industry and WW2 Event

Alluvial gold was mined at Bass Point for a short period between 1868 to 1872. This period of time aligns with the gold rush in other parts of NSW and Victoria. Local Benjamin Lindsay noted in his 1934 history:

> *During my youth gold was being won from the sand on one of the small beaches lying between the Minnamurra Entrance and Point Bass. The gold was in minutes particles and was supposed to have been brought down to the sea from the upper reaches of the Shoalhaven River, carried northward by the prevailing ocean currents, and washed up on the beaches by the action of the waves. This entrance evidently did not pay, as it was soon abandoned* (Organ & Doyle eds 1994, 59).

Fuller, a businessman originally from Ireland also began quarrying basalt on the land of Bass Point. Basalt was used in building drystone walls for fencing and piggeries and in the construction of homesand public buildings (Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 53). From 1880 basalt, in large quantities, was quarried here and shipped at first to Melbourne. A long jetty was constructed of Turpentine timber, 484 feet extended to 500 feet, 152 metres, at Fuller Bay, with large loading bins at the end of the jetty. The *S.S. Dunmore* was purpose built, in 1898, to carry 'blue metal' to Sydney (refer to **Section 4**). Fuller sold the business in 1914, however it continued to operate until the 1930s Depression. The jetty was eventually dismantled onsite in 1958 with parts of it remaining on the seafloor to the west(Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 53).

Between 1923 and WW2 documented uses for Bass Point relate to shell grit mining. Bass Point was known in the 1920s as one of the best shell grit mining spots in the State (Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 54). Particularly on the northern shorelines, many leases remained active for decades and reportedly (from Council Rangers in 1999) little huts were set up in the area. The activity involved much manual labour and loading of large sacks of shell grit onto lorries.

The 2000 Plan of Management notes: *It is interesting to note that Bowdler commented in 1981 that the site she recorded as Midden site BP6 (AHIMS Site No. 52-5-79) showed evidence of extensive damage*

*due to shell grit extraction. This site is situated in what was Mining Lease 2 (*Manidis Roberts,August 2000, 55).

Bass Point was used by the Australian Defence Forces during and after WW2. The Shellharbour Thematic History notes: The vast area still available in the Shellharbour region during WWII allowed the construction of defence installations in the locality, including an airstrip, training camp and observatory post (Humphries & London, November 2005, Vol 2, 58). The Voluntary Defence Corps personal were stationed at various places around Shellharbour including Bass Point and Dapto, and this became public in reference to the 1943 wrecking of the *Cities Service Boston*.

The photograph overleaf was taken just after the wrecking, on 6 December 1943, (refer to **Figure 23**). The typed description on the reverse of this historical photograph states

> *"Block lines for censor. This photo was taken a few minutes after Australian and American rescuers had been swept to sea. Four Australian soldiers were drowned. With tragedy stalking intheir midst, seamen and Australian soldiers grab blankets and food in a howling gale after an American steamer had been driven ashore on the Australian coast*." (John Campbell, Reverse of photograph # SMH 2-000000396)

Figure 23: Hut at Bass Point – immediately after the wrecking of Cities Service Boston, 1943, see caption above.

This hut may well have been one of the shell-grit huts referred to earlier as scattered across the northern shores of Bass Point from c.1920s. Comments were received regarding the site of a WW2 base on Bass Point, with advice that a whole area was cleared its centre and relics found there many years later, and photos seen of the camp (P. Woodcock, pers comm 06.05.2020). However, there is also the information that the only 'Army camp' on the peninsula was a hut manned by the Volunteer Defence Corps who first sent news of the shipwreck to Shell Harbour. The hut is said to have been located just east of The Gutter dive site and just east of the present memorial to the lost soldiers of the 6th Machine Gun Battalion who came to the rescue from their camp in Dapto. (Michael McFayden's Scuba Diving website, SS Cities Service Boston) It is possible that some archaeological traces of the hut remain (refer to **Figure 23**). This reference puts it in the present picnic ground possibly even under one of the present buildings.

The *Cities Service Boston* was salvaged over the next ten years, with works noted in the following, section on maritime history (**Section 4**). Additional archaeological remains relate to the rail track, which was constructed by Australian Iron and across the rock platform to about the location of the present toilet block to haul out salvaged steel plate to be melted down at Port Kembla. The route of the rail track is evident in part.

In July 1945 the immediate site of the wreck was declared a RAAF bombing range for a radius of 1250 yards (1143m). This radius would cover virtually the entire peninsula. This use was discontinued in March 1950. There does not seem to be a record of this, however potentially a UXO clearance report was completed before its handover as a Nature Reserve/State Park in the early 1960s. An aerial photograph from 1948 showing the whole peninsula reveals possibly some clearance in the area above Maloney's Bay, (refer to **Figure 24**).

Figure 24: 1948 aerial of Bass Point including Bushrangers Bay. (Shellharbour City Council, Photo No. 171-52 View north)

3.3 From 1960s - Reserves and Crown Land

In the 1960s, the land of Bass Point Reserve was proposed for a State Park. Conservation groups suchas the Illawarra Natural History Society, were becoming more concerned about the adjacent quarryand the potential for it to expand further into Bass Point. Shellharbour Council decided to establish the area as a State Park in 1968, and a smaller area for the quarry was also approved at that time.

The 1960s conservation group recommendations included protection of the 'heavily wooded extremity of the peninsula', this is indicated as Area A1 on the map, (refer to **Figure 25***)*, and provision of a car park for walkers to set off from two well defined and restricted roads, one to the *Cities Service Boston* wreck site and the other to the south side of Bushrangers Bay (Council State Park document, c.1969).

Area A2 was defined as '15 acres of climax vegetation very little affected by man, which could be isolated and preserved for scientific study' (Council State Park document, c.1969). Area A3 is the lovely Bushrangers Bay which was considered of great value for the study of marine life (Council State Park document, c.1969). Further recommendations were made by the group for the areas relating to Killalea Lagoon.

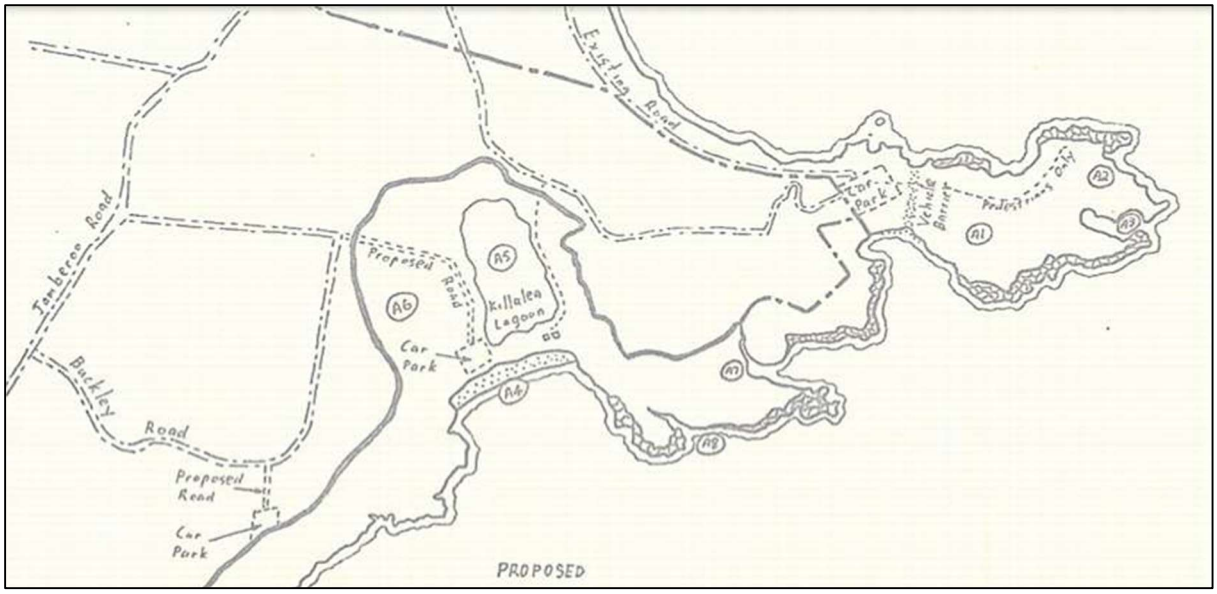


Figure 25: Map from the c.1969 State Park Discussion with Illawarra Natural History Society.

In 1969, (Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) purchased the land of the former Dunmore Estate. They leased it to South Coast Basalt, a subsidiary of Pioneer Concrete, who resumed quarrying for basalt, **(**refer to ***Figure 26***). A new jetty was constructed, immediately east of the earlier one at Bass Point, and this jetty, or its similar configuration, is present and in use today.

Currently in 2020, basalt quarrying continues under the ownership or management of Hanson Construction Materials Pty Ltd. In January 2014, Hansen Construction Materials Pty Ltd obtained a Project Approval for the proposed extension of the quarry.

Figure 26: 1970 aerial photograph of Bass Point with quarry in the foreground just re-established under ICI ownership (NSW Government, Bass Point Shellharbour, 1970 aerial photograph)

The quarry now covers 157 hectares including the existing quarry and the extension areas. The northern boundary of the quarry now runs roughly parallel to the Bass Point Reserve Road while thesouthern boundary is bordered by a cliff face and the Pacific Ocean. The eastern quarry boundary isbordered by Bass Point Reserve and to the west are undeveloped lands and the Killalea Lagoon (RPS, May 2014, 1).

In 1980 Bass Point Reserve was entered onto the Australian Register of the National Estate, primarily because of the Aboriginal cultural heritage associated with the shell middens. It became a registered site in 1998.

Bushrangers Bay was designated an aquatic reserve in 1982, one of the earliest if not the earliest in the State. It remains under the management of the DPI Fisheries. It was also separately listed on the Register of the National Estate in 1998.

The land of Bass Point is identified as Lot 3 DP 248002 (refer to **Figure 27**) and was entered on to the Crown Estate on 28 June 2002, under Section 138 of the Crown Lands Act 1989. On the same day, a reservation number 1003048 for Public Recreation and Coastal Environmental Protection was declared for the place and Shellharbour Council appointed as Reserve Trust Manager. Council is now the Crown Land Manager under the current Crown Land Management Act 2016. Advice was received that prior to that, the land was owned by the Minister administering the EP&A Act (Regional Services, Crown Lands, March 2021).

Figure 27: Bass Point Reserve identified here as Lot 3 DP 248002 (NSW Land and Property Management)

4 MARITIME CULTURAL HERITAGE

The European maritime history of the area begins in 1796. This is when exploration of the Illawarra region was undertaken by George Bass and Matthew Flinders. They named the region the Five Islands District. During 1797, Bass and six other seamen travelled south in a whaleboat, anchoring nearby to Bass Point in Shellharbour. Bass apparently did not notice or comment on the point, however, the current nomenclature of Bass Point commemorates George Bass's initial explorationsand encounters within the Illawarra area.

Maps that include Bass Point, referred to as Pt Bass, are available in from 1849, (refer to **Figure 28**). Throughoutthe 19th century Bass Point was more commonly referred to as Long Point.

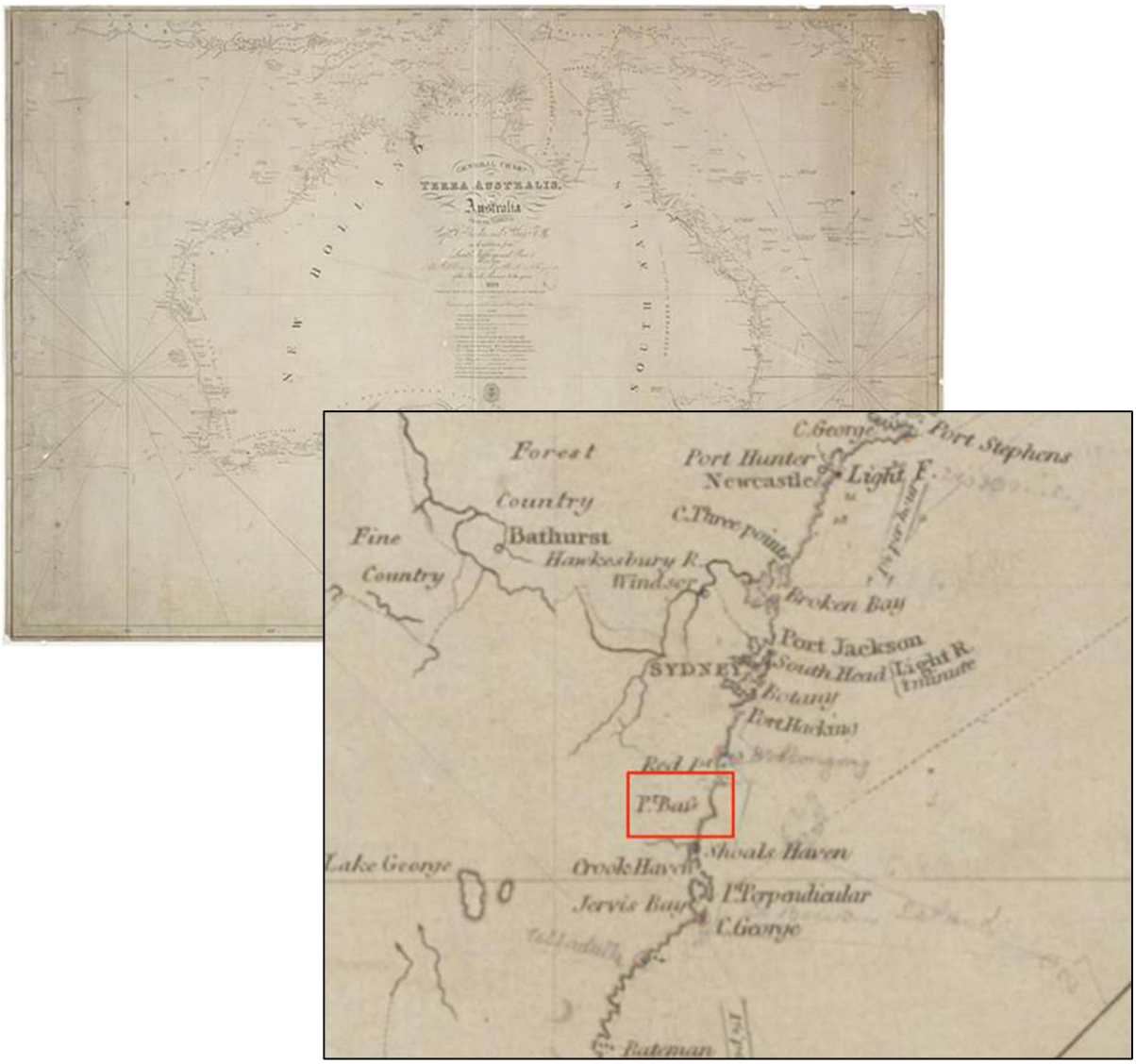


Figure 28: General chart of Terra Australis, Australia 1849. Extract from Map showing Bass Point (red outline) (Flinders & Hurd, 1849)

Shipping in the South Coast region was first established in the early 19th century with sailing vesselsloaded with potatoes, maize and butter. Cedar was also obtained on the South Coast and frequentcargos were brought to Sydney, to compete with the northern variety (Bach 1982,72).

Steamship trade from Sydney to Wollongong opened in 1839, and this saw the establishment ofthe Illawarra steam packet company (ISPC). Services were intermittent and irregular to the region,as there was no harbour and vessels had to lay off the beach and passengers and cargo wereferried to and from shore (Illawarra Historical Society 1973, Extract from an address by Mr G.AHarwick, 1972 R.A.H.A Conference).

From 1841 to 1852 various steamships frequented the area. The Kiama Steam Navigation Company (KSSC) was established by residents in 1852 and in 1858, the Illawarra Steamship Company (formerSteam Packet Company) and the Kiama Steamship Company amalgamated to become the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company (ISNC). The Shoalhaven district formed their own steam company, the Shellharbour S.N. Company (SSNC) in 1857. In 1904, the ISNC company became the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company (ISCSNC) which itself lasted until 1952 (Illawarra HistoricalSociety 1973). During 1905, the SSNC was absorbed by the ISCSNC.

From the second half of the nineteenth century, the South Coast experienced an increase in industry.Coal and blue metal (derived from basalt) provided further impetus to coastal shipping and loadingfacilities were provided at Coal Cliff, Bulli and Bellambi, while facilities for loading blue metal wereprovided at Bass Point, Shellharbour and Kiama (Illawarra Mercury 4 December 1883). The vesselsengaged in this trade haves been referred to as the 'Stone Fleet' with actual trade being referred to as the 'Stone' or 'Blue Diamond' Trade (Jack Clark, no date no page).

From the 1850's, deposits of basalt in the Shellharbour area had only been quarried on a small scale. The most substantial deposits of basalt were located on Bass Point. From 1865 to 1880, George Laurence Fuller slowly purchased the land on Bass Point, accumulating approximately 9,000 acres ofit. The property estate was called 'Dunmore' and he divided the estate into numerous small farmswhich he leased out to dairy farmers and established a basalt quarry (Manidis Roberts, 2000, 53). In 1880, Fuller reached a business arrangement with Chamber and Co, a Melbourne based investor company. Operations commenced in 1880 and the first 480-foot jetty, out of turpentine wood, wasbuilt at Bass Point. The jetty was situated on the northern side, west of Bass Point in Fullers Bay. An engine and crusher were installed at the quarry as well as loading bins at the end of the jetty. The first shipment of blue metal was sent by steamer to Melbourne. By the end of 1882, the company was insolvent.

In 1885, Fuller had resumed operations as the proprietor and manager. By 1890, business was booming and Fuller carried out improvements, adding more equipment and extending the jetty to 500 feet. Even though the arrival of railway in 1887 allowed the transport of basalt by rail however, shipping was the favoured mode of transport due to its cost effectiveness and despite the number of shipwrecks that occurred around Bass Point that were linked to this trade (see below for discussionon shipwrecks) (Manidis Roberts, 2000, 54). This is demonstrated by the purchase of a steamer, *Platypus.* Fuller then commissioned a new steamer, the SS *Dunmore*, for the stone trade (Illawarra Mercury, 13.08.1891). The steamer loaded its first cargo on the 16th of December 1891 to transport thecrushed basalt from Bass Point to the markets of Sydney, (refer to **Figure 29**).

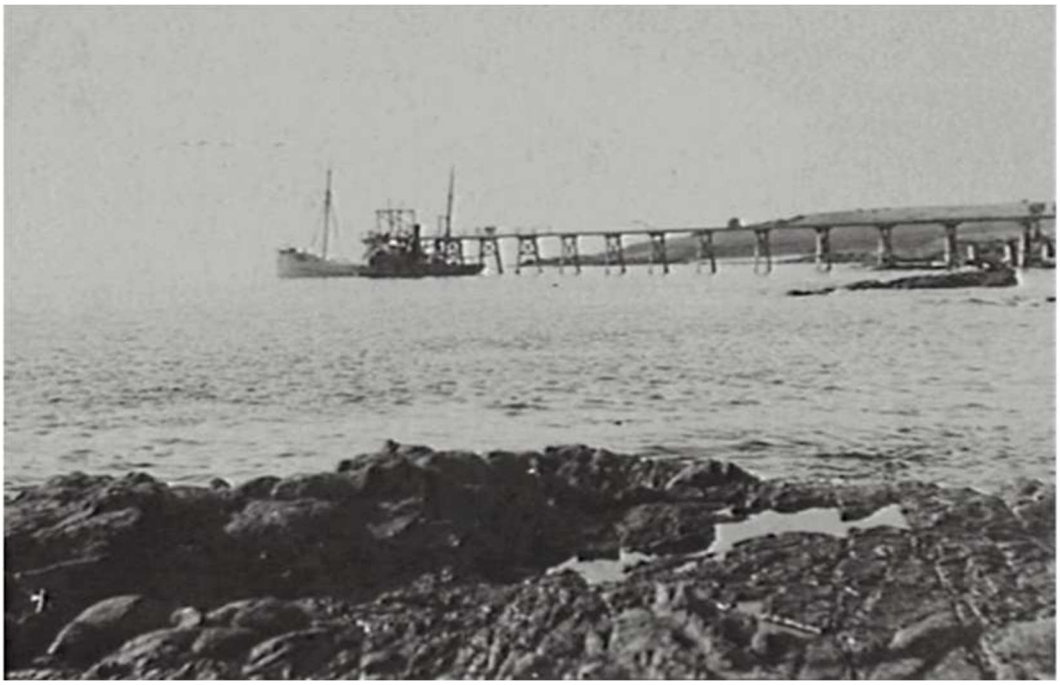


Figure 29: The 'Dunmore' steamer ship loading basalt from the Bass Point Quarries. (Unknown 1920, Dunmore (Ship), Trove National Library of Australia).

Fuller sold the business in 1914 and it continued to operate profitably until the Great Depression of the 1930's. Work at the quarry was abandoned in 1939 and the jetty fell into disrepair. It was destroyed by heavy seas in 1957 and the last standing section was demolished in 1958. Remains of this structure are scattered westward along the sea floor form its original position.

From 1939 – 1953, Bass Point was used by the Australian Military Forces for various defensive, training and surveillance functions. After the Second World War ICI purchased the former Dunmore property, planning to use it as a munitions store. Between 1968 and 1969 the areas to the west at Bass Point containing basaltquarries were leased to a contractor. South Coast Basalt reopened the quarry in 1973 and rebuilt thejetty and basalt gravel loader, which remain today.

A reserve was officially declared for the eastern part of Bass Point in 1968 (SHR Item No.01896, History). In 1982, Bushrangers Bay became an aquatic reserve. It has become a popular scuba diving location. Scuba diving is also undertaken on the wrecks of the Cities Service Boston, Alexander Berry and Our Own, (refer to **Figure 30**). The shipwrecks located in the area are discussed in detail in the following **Section 4.1**.

Figure 30: Google earth satellite image of Bass Point Reserve. These shipwreck locations within the SHR curtilage have been mapped accurately (Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd May 2020)

4.1 Shipwrecks

The maritime landscape around Bass Point Reserve contains 14 shipwrecks according to the Maritime Heritage Database of NSW, administered by NSW Heritage at the Department of Planning,Industry and Environment. (DPIE website, Search maritime heritage sites). Of those shipwrecks 8 arelocated in the waters surrounding Bass Point. The *Alexander Berry, Cities Service Boston, Our Own* and *Kiltobranks* have been located and inspected. The *Bertha, Echo and Amphitrite* and *Comboyne* have not been located. The *Comboyne* is the subject of a current search effort by local scuba diving enthusiasts (NSW Wrecks 2020 website, *Search for the Comboyne*). Of the 14 shipwrecks in the area,a number have been refloated, *Joseph banks, Blackwall* and *Franz* and one was salvaged, *Hexham Banks*. The *Unidentified Launch* and *No Name* have not been located and are believed to be the same shipwreck. They are noted as being wrecked off Shellharbour, near Bass Point. As such these shipwrecks have not been included in this review.

The ocean surrounding Bass Point is now a regular scuba diving area and a popular location. From the North to South the following dive spots are frequented by local diving companies, (refer to **Figure 31**).

- Bass Point Bommie
- Bass Point Gravel Loader
- Bass Point Island – North
- Bass Point Island – South
- Hump One
- Hump Wall
- The Arch
- The Gutter
- The Gutter Sponge Gardens
- The Cave
- The Grotto

Figure 31: Google Earth aerial with dive sites marked in addition to the shipwrecks (Cosmos Archaeology 2020)

4.1.1 Sources Consulted

Online sources include databases and websites. Further searches were conducted in Trove for potential shipwrecks not listed in the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database (AUCHD), and historic periodicals, historic journals and histories were also accessed where available. These sources are presented below.

Table 1: List of online database sources used

Source	Online Location
Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy – Australian National Shipwrecks Database (ANSDB)*	http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/historic-shipwrecks/australian-national-shipwreck-database
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Office of Environment and Heritage – Maritime Heritage Sites	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/WebsiteSearch.aspx
Australian Government Department of Defence and Australia Hydrographic Service – Sea Dumping in Australia	http://www.hydro.gov.au/n2m/dumping/dumping.htm
NSW Wrecks Info (2010) - Shipwreck Position Database	http://www.*nswwrecks*.info/

Australian National Shipwrecks Database (ANSDB)

The Australian National Shipwreck Database is managed by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy. The current database was launched in December 2009 and includes all known shipwrecks, aircraft and other maritime cultural heritage in Australian waters. At the timeof the production of this report, the database contained information on:

- 10,457 shipwrecks, of which 6,970 have reasonably accurate locations.
- 215 aircraft, of which 103 have reasonably accurate locations, and.
- 250 items of other maritime cultural heritage, of which 157 items have either been found, or have near exact locations.

The search of the ANSDB found 12 shipwreck sites listed within Shellharbour and 6 listed within the study area of Bass Point, they are:

- ID61 Alexander Berry
- ID213 Bertha
- ID368 Cities Service Boston
- ID406 Comboyne
- ID368 Echo
- ID1391 Our Own

The Shellharbour shipwreck sites are:

- ID95 Amphitrite
- ID717 Franz
- ID1018 Kiltobranks
- ID1341 No Name
- ID1867 Unidentified

The search of the ANSDB found no listed sites for aircraft and/or other maritime cultural heritage.

NSW Government Department of Environment and Heritage – Maritime Heritage Sites (MHS)

The Maritime Heritage Sites database is managed by the Heritage Division (HD) of the Department of Environment and Heritage. The database contains information and details on maritime heritage sites in NSW recorded by HD. At the time of the production of this report, the database contains information of 2,796 maritime heritage sites.

The search of the National Heritage List found seven sites listed within the study area and four without locations but wrecked within Shellharbour:

- ID84 Alexander Berry
- ID1825 Bertha
- ID1966 Cities Service Boston
- ID1636 Comboyne
- ID2798 Hexham Bank
- ID787 Our Own
- ID26 Unidentified Launch Bass Point

There were four Wrecks with an unknown location in Shellharbour:

- ID1720 Amphitrite
- ID 93 Unidentified Shellharbour
- ID1093 Kiltobranks
- ID1598 Echo

Department of Defence and Australian Hydrographic Service – Sea Dumping in Australia (AHS SD)

This database of sea dumping sites is managed by the Australian Government Department of Defence with information supplied by the Australian Hydrographic Service. It contains information on sea dumping in Australia, including links to electronic spread sheets for information on specificsites.

The search of the AHS SD found no sites listed within the study area.

NSW Wrecks – Shipwreck Position Database (nswwrecks)

The NSW Wrecks Info website contains publicly available information on the positions of shipwreckscompiled from a number of sources. The managers of the website are avocational shipwreck searchers and divers with a Side Scan Sonar. Decommissioned in 2019, a Shipwreck Position Databasewas available as a number of Google Earth files under different categories including checked waypoints (shipwrecks found and dived on), unchecked waypoints (possible shipwrecks that have not been inspected) and SSS hits, as well as compiled targets from reported sinking positions, WorldWar Two (WWII) non-sub echoes, trawler snags and others. At the time of the researching for this CMP report, the database was not accessible online, however, the website stated that they were actively searching for shipwrecks.

The search of the NSW Wrecks Info found 1 site listed near the study area.

- Comboyne.

Amphitrite Shipwreck, (1851)

Amphitrite was a 17-ton wooden ketch. The vessel measured 11.8 m in length, 3.7 beam and had a draft of 1.5 m. *Amphitrite* was built at Brisbane Water, NSW, in 1847 and registered at Sydney as 29 of 1850. The vessel was under the command of owner William Baxter. The vessel went ashore at Shellharbour, reported as becoming a total wreck.

The remains of the *Amphitrite* have not been found.

Echo, (1863)

Echo was a 21-ton wooden schooner. The vessel measured 11.3m in length, 3.444 m beam and had a draft of 1.828 m. *Echo* was built in Sydney in 1843. Registered at Sydney as 76 of 1848, Official No. 32472. The vessel was engaged to transport a cargo of wheat, maize and potatoes to Sydney from Shoalhaven. The vessel was under the command of owner Captain W. Ringland. The vessel struck a rock near Long Point, Shellharbour.

The remains of the *Echo* have not been found.

Bertha (1879)

Bertha was a 64-ton wooden top sail schooner. The vessel measured 22.1 m in length, 5.7 m beam and had a draft of 2.3 m. *Bertha* was built by Edward Davis at Davistown, Brisbane Waters, NSW in 1864 and was registered in Sydney as 64 of 1864, official No.49269. The vessel was engaged in transport of road metal from Kiama to Sydney and was under the command of Frederick Mahler and owned by F.W Cook. The *Bertha* was a vessel in the 'Stone Fleet' and was in a convoy with the *Franz.*

Contemporary accounts of the wrecking event can be found in newspapers, with one account originally published in the *Kiama Independent* giving accounts of the wrecking event and the rescueof all on board. The

accounts are summarised below (Kiama Independent, 12 September 1979, *Wrecks,* 2).

- *Bertha* was in ballast, travelling from Sydney to Kiama, on 9th September 1879,*experienced a storm about four o'clock on Tuesday morning, and the Captain was unable to make Kiama, put about, and tried to make Wollongong. The wind and sea rose suddenly, and the sails wereconsiderably torn.* The Captain, *seeing a light on the northern side of Point Bass or Long Point* ran her ashore, ran ashore on the north side of Bass Point and broke apart on the rocks.
- There were 3 crew and 2 passengers on board.
- On 9 September the Bertha 'went on shore at 5:30am, driven by a terrific gale veering from the east and north-east to the south-east. The sails of the vessel were ripped.
- Local Aboriginals witnessed to the shipwreck and saved the lives of the Captain, two crewmen and two passengers on board by conveying a line from the stricken vessel to the shore.

The remains of the *Bertha* have not been found.

Our Own (1880)

Our Own was a 73-ton wooden paddle steamer. The vessel measured 26.94 m in length, 4.876 m beam and had a draft of 1.767 m. *Our Own* was built by Reuben Greentree in Nowra in 1878 and was registered by the owners, John McArthur & Co, in Sydney as 45 of 1878, Official No. 74982. *Our Own* was engaged in transport of general cargo.

Contemporary accounts of the wrecking event can be found in newspapers, with one account originally published in the *Telegraph and Shoalhaven Advertiser* newspaper including an account given by the Captain (The Telegraph and Shoalhaven Advertiser, Wreck of the steamer *'Our own',* 26.08.1880, 2). The accounts are summarised below (Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, *The Steamer Our Own*, 2):

- Our Own was transporting general cargo and a steam engine when the vessel suffered machinery failure.
- The captain reported that damage to the boiler caused her to lose steam and she drifted for some time before a change of wind sent her ashore.
- The vessel was wrecked on the 21st August 1880, described as wrecking on rocks on the southern side of Bass Point. It was reported as lying in three fathoms of water.
- Two lives were lost in the wrecking event.

The shipwreck has been located. The site in 2000 consisted of scattered artefacts, including a small admiralty anchor (Manidis Roberts, 2000, 54). The site has not been inspected at the time of writing this report.

Alexander Berry (1901)

Alexander Berry was a 62-ton wooden screw steamer. The vessel measured 24.6 m in length, 4.7 beam and had a draft of 1.6 m. *Alexander Berry* was built by James Bower & Co at Pyrmont, NSW in 1873 and registered in Sydney as 6 of 1874, official No 69740. The vessel was engaged in transport and was owned by the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company.

Contemporary accounts of the wrecking event can be found in newspapers, with one account originally published in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper *(Wreck at Shellharbour*, 02.07.1901, 5). The accounts are summarised below (Sydney Morning Herald, *A disastrous Cyclone. Gales off theCoast* 2.07.1901, 5):

- On 1st July 1901, the vessel met with 'severe weather' outside of the Shoalhaven River Heads and took refuge in Abrahams Bosom, a small, sheltered nook at the southern end of seven- mile beach, between Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay. Reported by Mr Walter Pierce *'our position became a very critical one, for we were between two reefs, and as the night was pitch dark and foggy, we could not lay a course to get out. There was nothing to direct us'*
- The vessels' cable parted, and it drifted out to sea for more than 12 hours before the rudder *'broke right off, and we were left entirely at the mercy of the waves and drifted about in the trough of the*

sea'.

- At 7 am a worker from the quarry, My John Maloney, noticed the vessel drifting towards the 'Bombora Rocks at the extreme end of Point Bass'
- The crew '*noticed that there was no chance of our getting in shore, and that the vessel was making rapidly for the rocks. We got all the blankets on board and tried to make a sail. If we could have succeeded in that we might have weathered it; but it was no go. We thought that it we could have made some sort of sail we might have headed her off the rocks'*
- The vessel was carried over the rock and settled down in the surf on the opposite end, before sinking. Accounts report, *'She was lifted over one set of jagged points, but bumped on another set and went to pieces in view of onlookers'*
- Four of the five crew aboard lost their lives in the wrecking event, one survived. The shipwreck has been located but not inspected at the time of writing this report.

Comboyne (1920)

Comboyne was a 281-ton wooden screw steamer. The vessel measured 42.42 m in length, 9.052 m beam and had a draft of 2.286 m. *Comboyne* was built by Earnest Wright at Tuncurry, NSW in 1911 and was registered in Sydney as 25 of 1911, official No. 131486. The vessel was engaged in timber transport under the command of Captain Woods and owned by Allen Taylor & Co.

The wrecking event was recorded in contemporary newspapers as occurring on 27th November 1920, after striking a rock about 1 mile off Bass Point (Daily Commercial News and Shipping List, *Struck a rock*, 29.11.1920, 4). The account of the event is summarised below.

- At 3.30 am on Saturday morning the *Comboyne* struck something submerged more than a mile offshore and in an instant water rapidly worked its way up through the cargo. Within 8 minutes of the accident the *Comboyne floundered* (Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, *Steamer, Comboyne Founders*, 29.11.1920, 4).
- The vessel being constructed of wood, the bump caused the timbers to open all round the vessel, and not withstanding that the whole of the crew was mustered, and the pumps fully manned the attempt to cope with the in rush of water proved futile.
- The pumps could not be worked any longer, and under instructions from the captain the crew took to the boats.
- Just as the last men left the ship the *Comboyne* heeled right over on her side and went down in deep water (Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, *Steamer, Comboyne Founders*, 29.11.1920, 4).

The shipwreck has not been located.

Kiltobranks (1924)

Kiltobranks was a 272-ton wooden screw steamer. The vessel measured 40.75 m in length, 8.53 beam and had a draft of 2.682 m. *Kiltobranks* was built by Rock Davis at Blackwall, NSW in 1908 and register in Sydney as 36 of 1908, official No.125170. The vessel was as member of the Stone fleet and engaged in the transport of blue metal. It was under the command of Caption Gardiner and owned by G.T Bell.

The wrecking event was recorded in contemporary newspapers as occurring on the 21st of February, 1924, (refer to **Figure 32**). The accounts are summarised below from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Daily Commercial News and Shipping Lists (*Daily Commercial News and Shipping List 1924, *Marine Court;The loss of the Kiltobranks* and The Sydney Morning Herald, *Wrecked,* 22.2.1924, 9).

- The vessel '*loaded a full cargo of blue metal'* was attempting to reach *'the swinging buoy used for birthing during a strong north- easterly wind'* used for berthing and went aground on the rocky seabed on the northern side of Bass Point.
- The grounded vessel appeared to be in no immediate danger and *'owing to the ebb tide, it was soon impossible to refloat her'.*

- A strong north easterly wind prevailed and the Kiltobranks had become a total wreck.

The shipwreck location has been found. The site was reported by local divers as consisting of a scattered area stretching from just west of the existing gravel loading jetty to a position about 300 metres east of the caravan park on the point at Basset Park.

The wreckage consists of the ships anchor, chain, propeller and other not so readily identifiable itemsincluding 'fly wheels' that could be from the *Kiltobranks* adjacent to the existing jetty (Manidis Roberts, 2000, Vol A, 57).

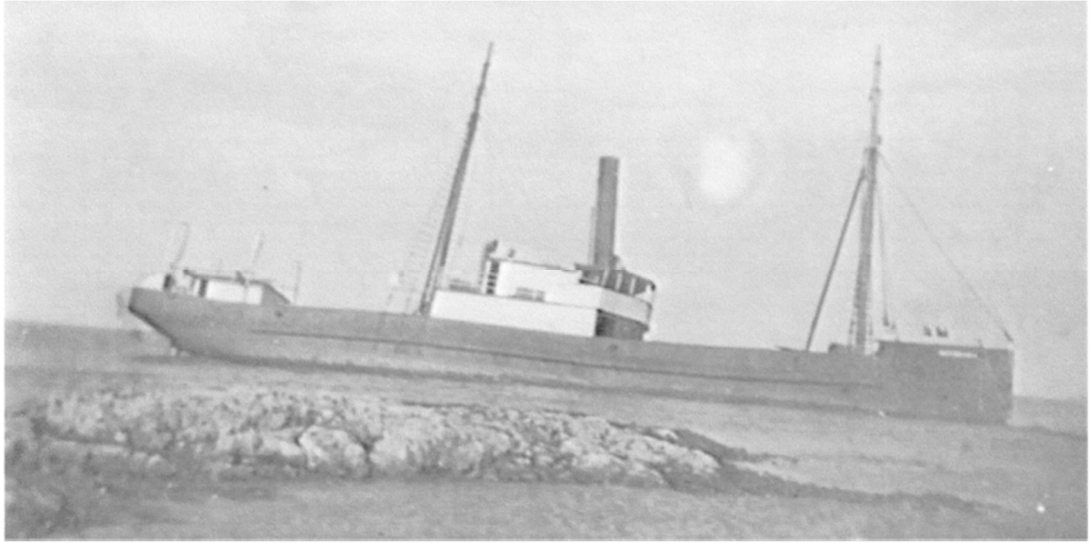


Figure 32: The wooden steamer, Kiltobranks, wrecked at Shellharbour in 1924 (Shellharbour City Library, Photograph, Bob Phelan, 21/2/1924)

Cities Service Boston (1943)

The most well-known shipwreck of Bass Point is the *Cities Service Boston* (refer to **Figure 33**). The vessel wasa large, 9348-ton, steel screw steamer. The vessel measured 153.5 m in length, 20.6 beam and had a draft of 10.5 m. *Cities Services Boston* was built in New York, United States in 1921. The vessel was engaged as an oil tanker being used during World War 2 to supply the Australian and Allied forces with fuel.

Figure 33: The Cities Service Boston wrecked on the rocky shelf at Bass Point (Unknown 1938, Cities Service Boston, Bass

Point. Trove National Library of Australia)

Contemporary accounts of the wrecking event can be found in newspapers, with one account originally published three days after the event in 1943 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and another six months later in *The Advertiser* and *Kiama Reporter and Illawara Journal.* Due to censorship during the war, it is noted that the primary descriptions of the event are limited. Local accounts have been used, as well as oral accounts from survivors and rescuers taken during the 50th Anniversary of the wrecking in 1993 (McFayden oral accounts, 1993). The accounts are summarised below as follows:

- The *Cities Service Boston* left Sydney in a convoy of 18 ships plus 4 warships. During nightfall and leaving the protection of Sydney Harbour, the convoy encountered a heavy sea and heavy rain. The vessels were travelling as close to shore as possible due to reports of Japanese midget submarines who were active in the area. The vessel was the lead ship on the starboard side of the convoy.

- Due to the storm the vessel was unable to confirm its positions, as the compass heading varied widely. Various reports of the weather consisted of *'very heavy seas all night, driving rain, high wind, no visibility.*

- The vessel was seen by Corporal Fred Tieck as a light tossing about in the huge seas.

- The vessel then hit the Bombora rock and ran aground. The waves were reported as *'so big they* were going over the funnel and most lifeboats and rafts were washed away'.

- The other vessels in the convoy offered assistance but due to the conditions were advise not to respond. The Captain gave the order to abandon ship, however due to the seas and rocks this was not possible. An SOS was sent by the ships radio operator, Jay Epstein.

- Australian soldiers from the 6th Australian Machine Gun Battalion were camped nearby at Dapto and were sent to assist in the rescue. Some 40 men under the command of Major Babilinski and Lieut. Sam Matchett were dispatched reaching the site some four and a half hours after the initial alarm. In the meantime, local men from Shellharbour mainly fishermen led by Jack Burke, who drove the bus, pushed through to the site of the present park gates then approached the wreck site on foot. With the VDC they secured a line to shore. State police, Red Cross, Ambulance men and local farmers also came to help.

- The Ship's Captain with his crews' safety at heart requested that his 62 crew and marine guard be brought ashore. Lieut. Matchett took over the rescue. With help from the Naval Auxiliary Patrol in the form of Capt. Nicholson and Senior Mate Askew a breeches buoy had been secured to the line. The largest American was sent across first to test the line, but it sagged under water, and he was engulfed by a wave. As there was nothing to tie the line off to the men on shore were ordered to grip the rope and pull it like a huge tug-o-war with the raging sea. The waves hitting the rock platform exploded 30 feet in the air. The rescued were being nearly drowned as waves engulfed them - a party of Machine Gunners was sent to the edge of the rock platform to pull down on the line whilst the buoy was over the water thus raising the sailors out of the sea. As the sailors were rescued some helped to man the ropes.

- All the 62 crew on board were rescued.

- Four Australian soldiers drowned in the rescue. Only two bodies were found.
    - Sergeant William F. Allen NX133805
    - Private Geoffrey, M. Pitt NX127791

- Private Raymond J. Snell NX118174
- Private Bruce M. Symons NX111705

The *Cities Service Boston* underwent salvage operations for the next decade as the vessel was too damaged to be re-floated. The vessel was stripped of the engines, machinery and fittings. The hull was sold to Australian Iron and Steel Ltd (AIS), part of the Broken Hill Propriety Ltd (BHP) conglomerate. A railway was built by contractors for the salvage of the masks, funnel and gun mounts, (refer to **Figure 34**).

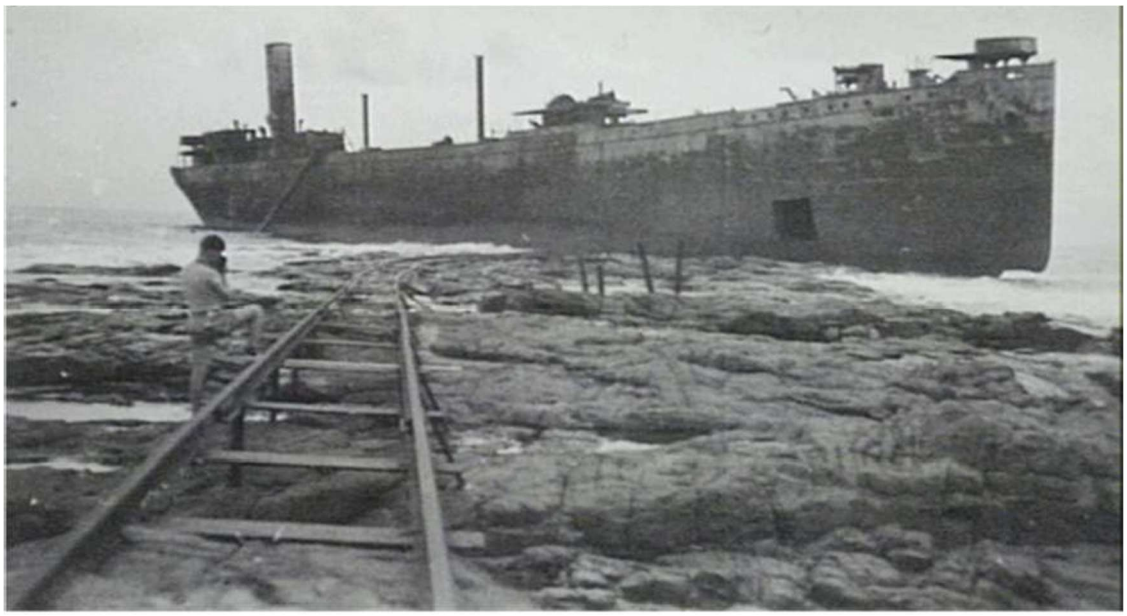


Figure 34: The Cities Service Boston salvage operations in 1950. Railway visible in foreground (Unknown 1950, Cities Service Boston (Ship), Trove, National Library of Australia)

Two weeks after the salvage operations began, heavy seas broke the vessel into two pieces and the stern section was relocated to the ocean floor on the northeastern side of Bass Point (this is referredto as the Bommie). What remains of the shipwreck were reported in 1993 as 'twisted bits of metal and some bits of the engine and boilers. Part of a boiler can be seen in the surf line from the north shore of Bass Point' (Michael McFadyen 1993).

To commemorate the loss, plaques were unveiled at Bass Point in 1968 and a remembrance serviceis held at the site each year, (refer to **Figure 35** to **Figure 38**). The last service was held in May 2019. There are still pieces of the wreck located underwater. This part of Bass Point has become known as Boston Point, and is a popular dive site, with Shellharbour Scuba putting up a buoy over it in 2019, for the most recent memorial service.

Figure 35: Entrance to the shipwreck area in Bass Point Reserve.

Figure 36: The commemorative plaque, interpretation sign and part of the wreck on 20 February 2020.

Figure 37: The cairn with shipwreck plaque and information in Boston Point amenities area.

Figure 38: At Boston Point itself, ship and railway iron remains, not protected.

5 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

This section of the CMP provides a summary of consultation undertaken and summaries of previous archaeological and ethnohistoric research about the Bass Point Reserve. Later in this Volume we identify known and predicted Aboriginal cultural heritage values. The final section of the report, Volume 2, will include discussion of the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage values within the Reserve. The consultation undertaken for Aboriginal cultural heritage values is summarised inthis report at **Table A1** in **AppendixA**.

5.1 History

Coastal resources played an important role in the lives of Aboriginal people living in the Illawarra region (OEH 2012:6-8). The boulder beaches and sand beaches in enclosed bays around Bass Point would have been favourable for the launching of canoes, while the headland itself would have actedas a prominent land marker while out at sea. Aboriginal groups from the region were known to have both men and women commanding canoes for fishing expeditions; most clans owning between six to ten canoes (Bursill *et al*. 2015:24).

The importance of seafaring for local Aboriginal people did not completely diminish even after the colonisation of the Illawarra region by European settlers. Until the early- to mid-twentieth century, a few Aboriginal reserves that were independent of government and church allowed Aboriginal people to live traditionally and sustain commercial fishing industries which provided for Aboriginaland non-Aboriginal communities. Some of these campsites were situated near Bass Point and were visible from the headland. Such communities included: Minnamurra, Hill 60, Coomaditchie, Tom Thumb's Lagoon, and a camp at the base of Mount Coolangatta (DEC 2004; Donaldson *et al*. 2017).

These unique and resistant Aboriginal communities maintained some independence and traditionalcoastal ways of life while many communities and regions around Australia could not. Hill 60 near PortKembla, now a State Heritage Listed site, maintained its independence until its residents were dispossessed by the government for a defensive lookout during World War II. The site was traditionally an important sacred place (Donaldson *et al*. 2017: 45 – 8). The Aboriginal reserve at Hill60 later became a community which resisted closure from pressure by non-Aboriginal groups and government authorities such as the Aboriginal Protection Board. The site had strong ties to those from Bass Point and the greater South Coast region, with strong oral history and knowledge sharing traditions to this day.

Hill 60 is well within living memory, with residents who still share their stories about the settlement where many still spoke Wodi Wodi and hunted and gathered off the coast (DEC 2004:41-2). The site is visible from and significant to those from Bass Point (see **Section 2.1**, refer to **Figure 6**). It continues to play an important role in forming the cultural landscape and in building knowledge and resilience in Aboriginal communities along the South Coast.

5.1.1 Ethno-Historical Context

Many Aboriginal sites have been recorded on Bass Point Reserve over the years, from shell middens to campsites. The Reserve has tangible and intangible values associated with it; the sensitive landforms and biological richness would have provided places for ceremony, hunting, resource gathering, seafaring, and living in the past.

This section aims to provide an ethno-historical background for Bass Point Reserve and will outlinethe previous archaeological studies which have contributed to our understanding of the cultural values of the site. Identified cultural heritage values including tangible and intangible heritage valuesare identified in this section.

The Illawarra Region, which encompasses Wollongong, Kiama and Shellharbour Council areas was named by Europeans based on its similar pronunciation to 'Eloura' or 'Elouera', meaning a "pleasantplace" (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000:18). Prior to European settlement, two major groups occupied the territory: the Dharawal and the Dhurga (Bursill *et al*. 2015:2). The land south of Lake Illawarra including Bass Point Reserve

belonged to the Dhawaral people, who shared a commonlanguage and country (Bursill *et al*. 2015:2). The Wodi Wodi subgroup of the Dharawal people occupied the area around Bass Point Reserve (Tindale 1974). The name Wodi Wodi was first recorded in 1875 based on the testimony of Lizzy Malone, who was a daughter of a woman from the Shoalhaven tribe. Malone remembers Wodi Wodi as the language spoken in the region (Ridley 1875; Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000:18).

The ethno-historical reconstructions of precontact and post contact records have a European andnineteenth century bias and we recognise that although this section summarises known records, it is not a detailed anthropological or genealogical history. These records and reconstructions are oftencontested by Aboriginal people and boundaries between language groups were often in flux, conflicted and fought over and can never be fully understood or definitive in present times.

Prior to 10,000 years ago, settlement in the region may have been sporadic. This is because the shoreline was 15 – 20 km further to the east measured from Stanwell Park (Bursill *et al*. 2015: 1). Following the stabilisation of sea levels, however, rich terrestrial and marine environments may haveemerged to support growing occupation of the headland by Aboriginal people. Ecological systems such as coastal estuaries, mangrove flats and sand barriers may have increased diversity and predictability of resources, making Bass Point headland a highly favourable coastal campsite fromaround 6000 BP (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000: 34).

The headland was a seasonal campsite that was heavily traversed, likely by well-maintained walkingpaths. These were usually one metre wide, and were created by the burning of forests, scrub, mangroves and weeds.

Many of these may have connected Bass Point to other extensive networks in the region; most were considered songlines connecting important campsites or gathering places. These were pathwaysjourneyed by a creative spirit which brought that part of the country into existence and were frequently travelled (Bursill *et al*. 2015: 3 – 4).

The Wodi Wodi clan was the largest Dharawal subgroup in the Illawarra and were known to camp at Bass Point during the season of January and February. During the cold and stormy seasons, people would move from the headlands and the coast to the many rock shelters in the deep valleys of the escarpment. Resources that were depended upon in this period would have included small fish, eelsand yabbies, and terrestrial resources that were available further inland (Bursill *et al*. 2015:3).

Bass Point Reserve played an important role in supporting the occupation of the Northern Illawarra landscape as part of its coastal zone. This comprised the coastline, offshore islands, Lake Illawarra and the Minnamurra River as well, while the inland zone included the headwaters of the Kangaroo River and the tableland.

These inland areas would have been easily reached via well-maintained songlines, and include regions such as Wilton, Picton and Mittagong (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000:36). Not onlydid clans move seasonally for terrestrial resources; coastal and marine resources were acquired seasonally also. The men and women of the Illawarra region were known as accomplished seafarers,with each clan having between six to ten canoes for fishing (Bursill *et al*. 2015:23 – 4).

The arrival of European settlers greatly changed the course of Aboriginal culture in the Illawarra, asit did in the rest of Australia. The first mention of Bass Point was likely from James Cook's voyage on the Endeavour, which sailed past the Illawarra region. He described seeing smoke at multiple locations (Organ 1993:46).

The headland and region were favourable to European settlers, who subsequently settled and beganto use the land in the early nineteenth century. Forests were exploited for timber, land was exploited for agriculture post-clearance, the local bedrock was quarried, and Aboriginal shell middens alongthe coast (including Bass Point) were mined for "shell grit" to make shell lime (Navin Officer HeritageConsultants 2000:13 – 4).

Land grants and conflict in the 19th century resulted in the loss of traditional homelands and the displacement of Aboriginal communities. With the cedar-getters in the region and later white settlers and agriculturalists, the rich forested environment was permanently changed. Aboriginal families lost their independence, their communities, and often their lives. The very trails and songlines that Aboriginal people maintained to traverse the Illawarra and South Coast were the ones used by foresters, settlers and surveyors to colonise the area (Kiama Library Website, accessed 27/05/2020).

In 1816, the Surveyor General granted 2,100 hectares of Dharawal land to five non-resident gentlemen. These lands were practically free, and convicts were given to each landholder to do whatever work was required. In 1818, landowners of allotments in Dapto who were also managing land in Yallah sent labourers and convicts to the region around Bass Point to supposedly fetch two muskets for securing their land. The posse went to the Aboriginal camp at Minnamurra River near what is now Swamp Road and massacred every person at this camp. No action was taken against the killers despite an official investigation (Donaldson *et al*. 2017:12 – 3).

The violent acquisition of Wodi Wodi land in the 1800's continued, with murders common and "landclearance" recorded around places such as Shellharbour and Five Islands. Aboriginal groups weredriven off country and died by murder, starvation, or from conflict as they entered other countriesand breached their Law. While the Minnamurra River massacre has now received recognition and has been commemorated (Kiama Library Website, accessed 28/05/2020) as an official massacre site(Colonial Frontier Massacres Australia 1788 – 1930 Website, accessed 28/05/2020), smaller scale murders and other colonial processes leading to death and dispossession of Dharawal peoples havenot fully been recognised or documented (Donaldson *et al*.2017:13).

Within a short period of the first land grants in the South Coast region, only remnants of the original population were to be found. As tensions were high between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inhabitants of the area in the nineteenth century, dispossessed Aboriginal people began to camp inreduced groups scattered around the South Coast area (NSW NPWS 1998:19).

Coastal and rich terrestrial resources and spaces were hugely diminished due to the substantial andoften violent expansion of white settlement in the Illawarra. By the early 1900s, however, there continued to be areas where Aboriginal people camped seasonally to obtain seafood and to live traditional coastal lifestyles (OEH 2012: 3).

One such camp, Hill 60, was independent of the government and the church. It resisted closure until World War II, when the government claimed the land for military defence purposes (Donaldson *et al*. 2017:45 – 6). Inhabitants at Hill 60 were traditional seafarers who shared knowledge with their younger generations of fishing, diving and shellfish gathering (OEH 2012:9 – 10). The independent camp was a successful commercial operation which sustained those living there, and which broughtseafood to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in the area (DEC 2004). Hill 60 is now listed on the State Heritage Register (2013b) and continues to be a highly significant Aboriginal cultural site.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, pressure from the government forced many Aboriginalcommunities to settle into more official government reserves. This resettlement moved local Aboriginal people away from freehold and crown lands, forcing people from different countries andaffiliations into close living quarters. One of these short-lived camps may have been at Bass Point, which was a pre-existing meeting place, campsite and resource gathering site for Wodi Wodi peoples at the time (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000: 19). Outbreaks of cholera, typhoid and otherintroduced diseases in the 1900's further justified the forced resettlement of Aboriginal groups fromindependent camps into official reserves sanctioned by the Aboriginal Protection Board (NSW NPWS1998: 19).

Despite these colonial processes that resulted in depopulation and dispossession, many of the Aboriginal groups from the south coast resisted pressures to leave, and instead became seasonal workers as industrial pursuits increased on Dharawal lands. Many families joined industries in thelllawarra, and many continued to pass on traditional knowledge to younger generations who could later help to form unions for Aboriginal workers' rights such as the South Coast Aboriginal Advancement League, which was established in 1961 (Donaldson *et al*.

2017:54 – 63). Today, south coast Dharawal and Dhurga Elders continue to maintain the Illawarra region, while Aboriginal culturein the area continues to grow and gather strength (Bursill *et al*. 2015:27).

5.1.2 Previous Archaeological Studies

Archaeological studies in the region have made a significant contribution to the understanding of theearliest occupation of Bass Point Reserve, which is a State Heritage Register (2013a). The site was listed due to its cultural, ecological, scientific and aesthetic values. The south coast region has been the subject of extensive archaeological research in the last five decades.

Common site types for the region including those at Bass Point Reserve are shell middens, open artefact scatters and camp sites. Other types of sites along the coast and estuaries surrounding the study area include rock shelters with art and/or cultural deposits, grinding grooves, scarred trees,coastal and estuarine midden sites, and burials (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants 2000:34).

Bass Point Reserve has, since the 1970's, been considered one of the three NSW coastal sites of potential Pleistocene age, along with Burrill Lake and Wallen Wallen Creek. It is the only open site on the eastern Australian seaboard of that antiquity (Eco Logical Australia 2012:34). Through survey and excavation, including of the Pleistocene age shell midden excavated by Bowdler (1970; 1976; 1981; 2010), thirteen sites in total have been recorded previously in the study area. Twelve sites weremidden deposits, with a single site identified and recorded from oral tradition.

The site has been of great interest to the scientific community, and has been investigated thoroughly by geoarchaeologists, geomorphologists and geologists. Part of the site was re-excavated by Hughesand Djohadze (1980). The later excavations acquired additional dates that neither refuted nor confirmed Bowdler's date of approximately 17,010 years BP for the oldest artefact.

It has been heavily debated over the last few decades whether the site has been subjected to 'storm wave' reworking of the shell midden deposits, which could potentially affect the reliability of the dates and interpretation of the site. Hughes and Sullivan (1974) posited that the shell middens there represented a typical south coast 'storm wave' reworked shell midden deposit, citing other examples along the south coast. Other researchers have suggested more destructive events which could haveseverely altered the landforms of the coast such as a series of mega-tsunami events during the Holocene (Bryant *et al.* 1992, 1996; Bryant and Nott 2001; Bryant 2008). Tsunami data from the major destructive events in 2004 in the Indian Ocean have been compared to events in NSW to assessand refute the mega-tsunami hypothesis (Dominey-Howes *et al*. 2006; Switzer and Jones 2008).

A comprehensive combined archaeological and geomorphological assessment of Bass Point Reserveis currently being finalised by Mitchell (2020). In this study, a review of past environmental and geological hypotheses has aided in addressing past interpretations of the site. While it has been suggested by Mitchell that the remains of a probable Pleistocene sand are situated on the crest of the headland, it is also possible that numerous shell middens which may be much younger have beenexcavated and reported on.

The site is particularly interesting geomorphologically due to its unusual shore platform features. Asit is in the midst of many debates regarding the reworking processes of shell midden materials andpotential Holocene mini tsunamis (as above), the dates for the earliest occupation must be reconsidered. It is currently considered by Mitchell to potentially fall between the mid- to late- Holocene. In order to understand the processes of dune formation and shell midden formation, a research programme with further excavations and geomorphological investigations has been suggested (Mitchell 2020).

Despite uncertainties in dating and site formation, the headland is highly culturally significant toAboriginal communities on the south coast today. It is of exceedingly high value to the scientific community. Further investigations will contribute to a better understanding the nature of early Aboriginal occupation of the headland and formation of the shell middens, which in the future will require continued protection and management.

Table 2 provides a summary of recent additional cultural studies for Bass Point.

Table 2 Summary of recent Aboriginal cultural heritage studies for Bass Point Reserve and its surrounds.

Author	Year	Study Type	Description
RPS	2019	Final Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP)	Review of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) values of Bass Point Quarry immediately to the west of Bass Point Reserve. No survey was undertaken, and no new sites recorded. Area was largely disturbed by post-colonial industrial mining activities.
RPS	2014	Draft Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP)	As above.
Navin Officer Heritage Consultants	2000	Aboriginal Heritage Study	Review of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) sites and values within Shellharbour City Council area, including at Bass Point Reserve. Predictive modelling for potential archaeological sites was provided to aid in future conservation and management plans.

5.1.3 Aboriginal Resources

Bass Point Reserve is a protected State significant headland with high environmental significance anda diverse range of protected, threatened and regionally significant terrestrial and marine ecologies.Natural values included sensitive landforms which would have been attractive to Aboriginal communities for occupation and for gathering resources prior to as well as after the arrival of Europeans. These values continue to be renewed by Aboriginal people who regularly come to the Bass Point Reserve for camping, fishing, gathering and visiting.

The headland currently continues to support many extant native Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's), as well as provide habitats for regionally significant and threatened communities and species. It currently supports five critically endangered EEC's: Complex Littoral Rainforest, Bangalay Sand Forest, Swamp Oak Floodplain, Saltmarsh and Themeda Headland Grassland environments. These provide habitats for the many threatened and regionally significantspecies of native fauna. While the terrestrial ecology of Bass Point Reserve may not necessarily mirror the Pleistocene or early Holocene environments on the headland, the ecological richness and access to diverse landform types indicate that natural resources may have been abundant for Aboriginal people in the past.

5.2 Historical Timeline

A chronological timeline for identified developments for the area of Bass Point Reserve is as follows:

Pre-European contact	- archaeological evidence indicates sustained occupation of Bass Point by Aboriginal people for some 20,000 years
1803	– cattle grazing and clearing rights secured by European free settler, James Badgery, for land (including Bass Point).
1820	– D'Arcy Wentworth receives large land grants and purchased more resulting in 13,060 acres, 5285 hectares of grazing area including Bass Point.
1880	- George Laurence Fuller (proprietor and business manager) purchases part of Wentworth's property and after some small-scale dairy farming commences basalt mining on Bass Point in area around the later quarry.
1885	- Fuller builds 480 ft jetty for shipping of blue metal from Bass Point quarry to Melbourne then Sydney.
c1890	- Fuller improves and extends jetty to 500ft.
1920s-30s	– Bass Point a major collection site for shell-grit with huts established along its northernshore.
1939-53	– Bass Point used by Australian Military Forces for various defensive, training and surveillance functions.
c.1961	– demolition of the long jetty and construction of modern replacement (sited directly to the east) with at least some remains submerged on location.
1968	– Bass Point given to Shellharbour Council for use as a nature reserve / State Park.
	– construction and unveiling of memorial to *Cities Service Boston* shipwreck and the four lives lost during the rescue operation at Boston Point.
1969	– quarrying resumes for basalt under ICI.
Post-1968	- minor development (building and maintaining roads; parking sites; amenities; and publicfacilities) by Shellharbour Council.
1998	– listing of Bass Point Reserve and Bushrangers Aquatic Reserve on the Register of the National Estate due to significance.
2013	– listing of Bass Point Reserve on the NSW Heritage Register.
2014	- extension to the Quarry area.
c.2018	– establishment of the Aboriginal cultural walk and picnic area.
2020	– replacement of the hand-made and hand-painted signage with SCC signage throughout.

6 SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS

6.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

6.1.1 Intangible and Tangible Values

The key Aboriginal cultural heritage values associated with the Bass Point Reserve include intangible and tangible heritage values.

Intangible heritage values relate to the stories, knowledge, cultural practices and attachments evoked from this cultural place. These values include the views and vistas to connected culturalfeatures and aesthetics, and sensory aspects of this place (refer to **Section 2.3**, **Figure 5**). The key intangible heritage values of Bass Point Reserve include:

- Cultural stories and knowledge associated with the Bass Point Headland. The Reserve contained gathering sites which were used by generations of Aboriginal families as their home, fishing and important resource gathering areas, and ceremonial places. A burial sitebetween the present caravan park and the reserve boundary to the north has been linked to songlines and cultural stories. A known massacre site at Minnamurra River nearby is also visible from the Reserve.
- Views and vistas from the Reserve to places such as Bushrangers Cove, Red Sands Beach, theopen ocean and Mount Keira contribute to its aesthetic beauty. The Reserve has views to several important natural features that are part of the cultural landscape, and which are associated with Dreaming stories. These stories speak of the arrival of the first Aboriginal people and the creation of the natural features of the area. Important places include Billen Billen (Windang Island, also known as Gangmangang), the entrance to Lake Illawarra, Five Islands and Mount Keira.
- Aesthetic and sensory features of the Bass Point Headland include access to water, sea breezes, views to the mountains, and views to Lake Illawarra. The natural beauty of the location as well as its biological richness makes Bass Point culturally significant and favourablefor Aboriginal occupation.

Tangible heritage values relate to the places, objects, sites and material culture that can be touched,quantified and physically recorded. Tangible heritage includes middens, artefact scatters, camp sites, rock shelters, stone arrangements and burial sites associated with middens, (refer to **Figure 38**).

- Shell middens are places where the debris from eating shellfish and other food has accumulated over time. They can contain shellfish remains, bones of fish, birds, and land andsea mammals used for food, charcoal from campfires, tools made from stone, shell, and bone. Shell middens tell us a lot about Aboriginal activities in the past. The types of shells in a midden can show the type of marine environment that was used, and the time of year when Aboriginal people used it (DPIE website, Shell midden webpage). Shell middens are sometimes associated with human cremations during Aboriginal occupation and were sometimes used for interment of humanremains.
- Artefact scatters or occupation sites are the locations of where stone tools were discardedduring previous Aboriginal occupation and often are the locations of where stone tools were made/manufactured and may indicate repeated visits or long term/more focal occupation. Workshop sites are areas where more intensive stone tool manufacture is undertaken, usually near a locally occurring stone resource.

A summary of known tangible heritage values which have been documented on theNSW Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) as well as additionally identifiedAboriginal cultural heritage sites within the Bass Point Reserve are displayed on the figure overleaf (refer to **Figure 39**). Included herein are the sites recorded during thesite inspection which was undertaken on 21 February 2020.
Table 4 on the following pages provides a summary of the key intangible heritage values within the Bass Point Reserve for Aboriginal cultural heritage.

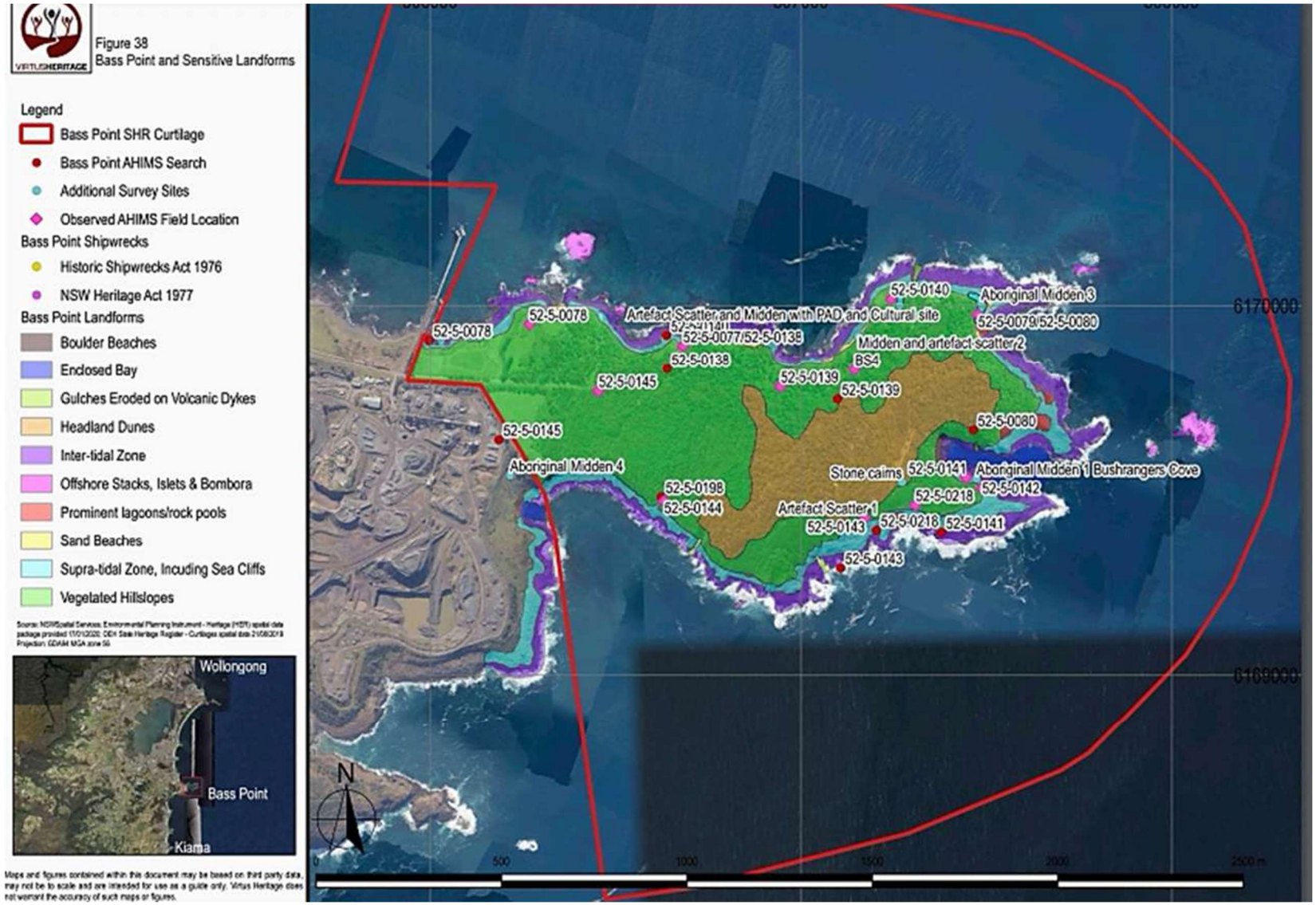


Figure 39: Sensitive Landforms identified and known heritage sites, Bass Point Reserve

Table 3 Tangible cultural heritage values within the Bass Point Reserve and Documented Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sites within the Bass Point

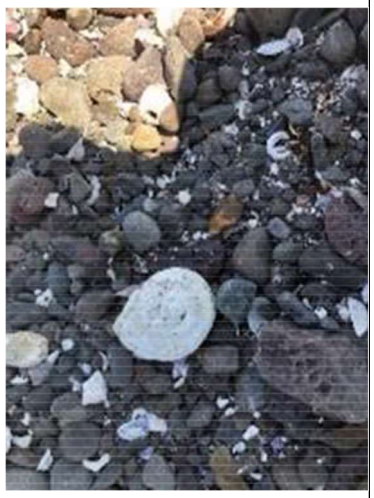
Tangible Cultural Heritage Values	*Place name/AHIMS site ID*	*Scale/Grid ref*	*Description*	*Recorded By*	*Date Recorded*
	Bushrangers Cove Aboriginal Midden 1 *(Located within AHIMS 52-5-0989 - Bass Point Landform – Supra-Tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs)*	*MGA 307474, 6169531*	*Aboriginal midden deposit was identified eroding out of the hill crest and downslope into the rocky outcrops and down into the bay. The original location of the cultural midden deposit is located on the crest and includes oyster, mud whelk, cockle, pippi, conks, periwinkles and mussel shells. The crest is heavily vegetated as seen in the far right of the photograph and it is likely this entire crest contains evidence of Aboriginal shell middens and occupation deposit that is intact and may have stratigraphic integrity. ILALC identified the site and the crest and surrounding area as having cultural values.*	*M.Sutton*	*21/2/2020*
	Possible stone cairn/arrangement *(Located within AHIMS 52-5-0978 - Bass Point Landform - Headland Dunes)*	*MGA 307273, 6169522*	*Five basalt and igneous stones which are out of place in a circular arrangement no more than 3m in diameter and some are stacked on a heavily vegetated crest overlooking Bushrangers Bay. The area is vegetated and off the track and there is no evidence of modern camping use or disturbance from visitation. The location of the stones was identified byILALC who have known them to be on site for some time. Thesestones may have cultural value and be some kind of Aboriginalstone cairn or stone arrangement.*	*M.Sutton*	*21/2/2020*

	Aboriginal midden 3 (Located within all of the following: AHIMS 52-5-0975 - Bass Point Landform – Boulder Beaches; AHIMS 52-5-0977 - Bass Point Landform - Gulches Eroded from Volcanic Dykes; AHIMS 52-5-0987 - Bass Point Landform – Sand Beaches; and AHIMS 52-5-0988 -Bass Point Landform – Vegetated Hillsides	MGA 307473 6170012	Aboriginal midden deposit eroding out of the boundary between vegetated slopes and sand beaches landform boundaries. Midden deposit is characterised by dark ashy deposit, pippis, calcined oyster, cockles, conks, mussel and mud whelk shells. Deposit is actively eroding and being affected by natural wind, water and coastal erosion. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	G. Scheer	21/2/20
	Aboriginal midden 4 (Located within AHIMS 52-5-0988 -Bass Point Landform – Vegetated Hillsides)	MGA 306216, 6169540	Aboriginal midden in dark ashy deposit in sand eroding out of the track on a crest landform was identified. Shells visible included oyster, conk, mussel, cockle and pippi shells and intact below the surface introduced fill on the track. The midden deposit did not contain any Aboriginal stone tools but may contain greater evidence of occupation underneath the fill as this is a small exposure from erosion. The site is being impacted by track use and wind, water and coastal erosion. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	M. Sutton	21/2/20

	52-5-0077 (not relocated in 2020 and is the registered AHIMS location) and 52-5-0138 (Observed AHIMS Field Location)	(refer to Figure 39)	The AHIMS site card records this site (52-5-0077) as reworked midden deposit located in backshore, sheltered situation. One layer of deposit, containing shell species which were not eaten, shell grit, water-worn shell, rounded gravel, pumice, charcoal and stone artefacts. This site is also known as Bowdler's (1978) originally recorded site Bass Point 2 and also Hughes and Sullivan's (1974) Bass Point 2. Site 52-5-0077 is believed to be a duplicate recording of 52-5-0138. The AHIMS site record for 52-5-00138 is described as "badly disturbed shell midden in clearing in banksia/lantana scrub. Original extent hard to determine, at least 100 x 100m. Some bits still *in situ*. Shell: turban, triton. Stone: silcrete, chert flakes, implements seen". AHIMS site was relocated on 21 February 2020 and is nearby AHIMS 52-5-140 and is midden with lots of eroded shells including conk, mussel and oyster which is eroding into the basalt outcropping and foreshore from the track. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	Bowdler Hughes and Sullivan M.Sutton	1978 1974 21 February 2020

	52-5-0078	MGA 306263E 6269947S	Important open stabilised shell midden sites recorded by numerous archaeologists and rerecorded and a recognised rare site of Pleistocene age with high archaeological research potential and scientific significance. Undisturbed midden deposit on high headland, exposed to storm waves. Two layers discovered, contents including charcoal and stone artefacts. Evidence of midden is most likely still within the site and obscured under existing ground cover. Bowdler recorded this site as "a large concentration of pebbles at Bass Point. Shell remains of Aboriginal camp sites. Stratified open midden 20' above high-water mark. Very minor open site. Shell species present all of rock platform types, none predominant". The extent of these sites and their condition would be partially impacted by coastal erosion but require further sub-surface testing and geomorphological assessment for an accurate condition inspection and recording. These sites have cultural value to ILALC. This site is also scientifically the largest and most important with archaeological research potential (Peter Mitchell, pers. comm. September 2020). Originally estimated to be about 3,000 $m^{2\ but}$ is revised to approximately 20,000 m^2, and Bowdler's (1981) map extends outside dense lantana and may also be a continuation of site 55-5-77 or join up to this site.	S. Bowdler Unknown O.B Pryor S. Bowdler Ronald Lampert Philip Hughes	14/8/81 Unknown Aug 66 Jan 70 1967 1977

	52-5-79	307270 E 6169989S	AHIMS site records by Bowdler record (Bowdler's Bass Point 6) this has a "very large open midden disturbed through shell-grit mining; also re-deposited by wave and storm action. The *locus classicus* of the south coast reworked midden (Hughes and Sullivan 1974, *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW* – combines sites 3 and 4)". The same location as Sullivan and Hughes Midden 3. This site was not relocated during the site inspection. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S Bowdler	15/8/81
	52-5-80	1: 250,000 3899.7274 1: 63,360 900.277	AHIMS site records record this site as "reworked midden deposit in exposed, backshore deposit. Deposit has one layer, containing shell species not eaten, shell grit, water-worn shell, rounded gravel, pumice, charcoal and no stone artefacts". This site was not relocated during the site inspection. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	Unknown	Unknown
	52-5-0138	1: 250,000 3890.7276 1: 63,360 890.276	Badly disturbed shell midden in clearing in banksia/lantana scrub. Original extent hard to determine, at least 100 x 100m. Some bits still *in situ.* Shell: turban, triton. Stone: silcrete, chert flakes, implements seen. A high visitation site recorded as part of a survey for NPWS. It was in banksia/lantana coastal scrub (maybe the bangalay banksia forest) on a hill above the foreshore on the north side of Bass Point. 300m east of Rotary entrance to Bass Point Recreation Reserve; track to north of main vehicle road, blocked off by a log to vehicle access. After log, opens out to a clearing. This site has cultural value to ILALC. This site is likely an exposure of the same midden as AHIMS 52-5-140 and AHIMS 52-5-0077 is likely a duplicate recording of this 52-5-0138.	S. Bowdler M. Sutton	14/8/81 21/2/20

	52-5-139	1: 250,000 3895.7275 1: 63,360 895.275	Open midden site cut through by road as originally recorded on AHIMS site. Some suggestion it is not *in situ*, S. Bowdler did not agree (see Bowdler 1981). AHIMS record includes descriptions of "shells: turban, triton. Continues on under lantana on north side of the road for at least2m". This site was not relocated during the site inspection. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler	14/8/81
	52-5-140	1: 250,000 3898 7277 1: 63,360 898.277	The AHIMS site card describes "open shell midden, badly disturbed but still intact in some places. On small north-west facing headland, mostly on edge of rise before land drops down to rocky foreshore, 8 – 10 metres above sea level. Depth uncertain, extent uncertain – at least 100m along cliff edge. Shells: usual turban, etc. Stone flakes noted". This site was recorded as Site 5 by Bowdler (1981). Site 52-5-140 was relocated on 21 February 2020 and is is likely an exposure of the same midden recorded as AHIMS site 52-5-0138. The 52-5-140 midden includes evidence of also abalone, mutton fish and sea urchin. A close up of a conk shell fragment is shown in the photograph. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler M.Sutton	15/8/81 2/2/20

	52-5-141	1: 250,000 3898 7271 1: 63,360 900.272	The AHIMS site record describes a "Small rock shelter, facing NE. Ashy shell midden deposit, a little disturbed. Unknown depth and no art seen. Dimension of shelter: entrance 3m across, 1.5m deep, 1.25m high, c. 4m from and 1 – 2m above high water mark. Shells: mussel, turban, limpet, Melanerita". This site was recorded as Site 7 by Bowdler (1981). This site was notrelocated and appears currently inaccessible but the generallocation of the site which is believed to nearby be photographed on 2 February 2020. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler	19/8/81
	52-5-142	1: 250,000 38987271 1: 63,360 900.272	The AHIMS site record describes "Small open midden, somewhat eroded but largely intact. About 5m across of unknown depth, about 20cm? 3.4m directly above rock platform. Shells: turban, triton, limpets, chiton. One silcrete flake noted". This site was recorded as Site 8 by Bowdler (1981). This site was relocated during the site inspection and is heavily eroded with little remaining midden deposit at the recorded location. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler M. Sutton	15/8/81 2/2/20

	52-5-143	1: 250,000 3895.7270 1: 63,360 898.271	The AHIMS site record describes "Scattered midden in small discrete patches. No more than 3 square metres in total. Not much apparent depth. Shells: turban, triton, limpet, some mussels. Seems a high proportion of triton". This site was recorded as Site 9 by Bowdler (1981). The site was relocated with similar shells eroding out in very isolated locations with much less shells than eroded by Bowdler on 21 February 2020. This site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler M. Sutton	15/8/81 2/2/20
	Artefact Scatter 1 (Located within AHIMS 52-5-0988 -Bass Point Landform – Vegetated Hillsides)	MGA 307174, 6169426	Two artefacts were identified within the rock outcrops and boundary of the vegetated hillslopes including a basalt flakewith bulb, point of force application and dorsal scars intact andone broken flake of silcrete mixed in with shell in a heavily disturbed context from natural coastal erosion. This site hascultural value to ILALC.	M.Sutton	2/2/20

	52-5-144	1: 250,000 3885.7274 1: 63,360 892.271	AHIMS site recording describes "Scattered, eroded open shell midden in blowout. Some shell *in situ*, apparently stabilised under banksia scrub: sandy matrix, no great apparent depth. About 12m above sea level. Shells: turban, triton. Silcrete flakes noted". This site was recorded as Site 10 by Bowdler (1981). These middens are most likely destroyed as mapping in the mining area curtilage which in the photograph is shown in the distance. If still extant, this site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler	14/8/81
	52-5-145	1: 250,000 3885.7274 1: 63,360 888.275	AHIMS site recording notes "Open shell midden of unknown extent, very badly disturbed. May continue less disturbed under bush to the east. Shell: turban, triton. Flakes noted by Bowlder in her original 1981 recording". These middens are most likely destroyed as mapping in the mining area curtilage. If still extant, this site has cultural value to ILALC.	S. Bowdler	14/8/81
	52-5-0198	1: 250,000 3889.7273 1: 25,000 3/0652 61/6929	AHIMS site record describes "Midden and campsites on hill slope. Shell: pippi, oysters, mussels, abalone recorded by NSW NPWS in 1985". This site was not relocated during the site inspection. If still extant, this site has cultural value to ILALC.	NPWS	10/8/85

	52-5-0218	1: 25,000 30/715 61/692 1: 250,000 388/726	AHIMS site record describes "Small midden directly on bedrock above cliff line. The midden comprises highly fragmented shell of triton, centruts, limpets and other rocky shore platform molluscan species. No artefacts or charcoal were visible. There is no apparent depth to the midden". This midden was relocated during the site inspection of 2020 and visibility is verypoor but from the slope leading up to the cliff line, middendeposit including triton, pippis, cockles and oyster shell are seeneroding out downslope. Erosion from wind, tidal movementsand other forms of coastal erosion are impacting this site. This site is approximately 100 metres from Site 9 by Bowdler (1981).This site has cultural values to the ILALC.	NPWS	30/6/87

Table 4 Key Intangible Heritage Values for Bass Point Reserve for Aboriginal cultural heritage

	Stories – i.e., Massacre	Nearby massacre to the north of Bass Point at Minnamurra River and to the west near the existing caravan park which is a place of traumatic history for generations of Aboriginal people in the region.
	Songlines	Songlines are common across the Illawarra region and would have existed leading into Bass Point and across the headland. The site is known to have been heavily traversed as a seasonal site for resource gathering, as well as a corroboree site, a meeting place and a seasonal camping site.
	Views and Vistas	▪ Views from Bass Point Reserve to several important Dreaming story sites of great importance to the Dharawal and Wodi Wodi peoples of the area. These sites associated with creation stories include: Five Islands, Billen Billen (Windang Island also known as Gangmangang), Mount Keira and the entrance to Lake Illawarra. ▪ Views from Bass Point Reserve to resource rich areas such as the Minnamurra River, Lake Illawarra, and Shellharbour Beach. ▪ Views to Bass Point headland as an important landscape navigation marker for Aboriginal seafarers in the past. ▪ Views from Bass Point Reserve to potential burial sites at the entrance to Lake Illawarra, Port Kembla and Hill 60. ▪ Views from Bass Point Reserve to massacre sites and places of frontier conflict such as the Minnamurra River Massacre site, and murder sites at Shellharbour and Five Islands. ▪ Views to Bass Point Reserve from Aboriginal campsites and reserves, including those at: Hill 60, Minnamurra, Coomaditchie, Mount Coolangatta and Tom Thumb's Lagoon.

6.2 Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes and Landforms

Landforms are the basis for revised Aboriginal site boundaries within Bass Point Reserve. As alreadynoted, the AHIMS and other identified sites shown in **Table 3** are identified as they are small windowsof erosion where sites are visible. The 'dots on maps' provided on **Figure 39** for AHIMS and identifiedsites should be considered loci (discrete locations of evidence of Aboriginal occupation) eroding out ofbroader landforms. The landforms are the true 'site' boundaries describing Aboriginal cultural use ofthe landscape. This is how Bass Point Reserve needs to be recognised from a management perspective. Not just limiting Aboriginal occupation at Bass Point Reserve to the small windows of erosions recordedand visible in site surveys.

6.2.1 Cultural Landscape

While **Table** 3 provides a summary of known Aboriginal sites and additional sites identified within theBass Point Reserve, the cultural and scientific values for Aboriginal occupation is much more complex. Bass Point Reserve is a sensitive Aboriginal place within a broader culturally significant landscape. It isinterconnected to known story places, massacre sites and other forms of cultural places with tangibleand intangible cultural heritage values. The Aboriginal sites identified in **Table 3** are small lenses ofvisibility in a heavily vegetated landscape within the Reserve which has a high potential for Aboriginalcultural heritage and occupation deposits. To understand Aboriginal occupation at Bass Point Reserve, we have devised landforms that can be considered the basis for Aboriginal site boundaries.

6.2.1.1 Landforms – redefining sites and understanding the Bass Point Reserve cultural landscape

Geologically Bass Point is underlain by strongly jointed Bombo latite, a Permian age volcanic. In placesthis is visible via prominent columnar jointing patterns, these are intersected by volcanic dykes. Thecrest of the headland to an elevation of about 30 – 35m is covered by dune sand of unknown depth.This sand must have been emplaced from the south at a time of lower sea level (late-Pleistocene tomid-Holocene) when coastal sands were available nearby. The age and composition of the sand, andthe degree of soil development in it has not been assessed (Mitchell 2020).

There is a marked difference in micro-landforms on the shore platforms between the north and southsides of the headland, yet both sides are formed in the same rock type with similar jointing patterns.On the north side the shore platforms appear to be an abrasion ram. It contains few rock pools, fewboulder beaches, and few cliffs.

In contrast the south side has a much higher relief. Rock pools, small amphitheatres, boulder beaches,and low cliffs are much more in evidence. The principal erosion process on this side appears to relateto joint blocks and water layer weathering.

The two different aspects (north and south facing) of the shore platforms may be sufficient to explainthese differences. Others have suggested Bass Point was subject to several tsunamis during theHolocene (10,000 years ago). This has particularly important implications for the age and condition ofAboriginal midden sites around the headland.

The following landforms are identified on the map shown on **Figure 39**. It is important to notethat the map has been drawn from Google Earth satellite imagery, and none of the landforms orboundaries have been checked or refined in the field by a geomorphologist.

Table 5 provides a summary of these revised landform boundaries and a description of their sensitivity for Aboriginal occupation:

Table 5: Landforms of Bass Point Reserve with Known Heritage Site Loci

Landform	Description of landform and potential use in Aboriginal occupation	Site Locations identified within this landform-based boundary
Offshore Stacks, Islets and Bomboras	Usually subject to breaking waves and on rare occasions these isolated and partly submerged rocks can be accessible and may provide food resources	None identified by survey to date.
Enclosed Bays	Quiet shallow water surrounded by shore platforms where fishing and collecting can be conducted frequently	None identified by survey to date.
Gulches Eroded on Volcanic Dykes	Deep water with strong wave surge and steep sides makes access difficult but may be a favoured line fishing location that is occasionally accessible by diving	Aboriginal Midden 3
Inter-tidal Zone	Shore platform that is readily accessible at low tide on most days of the year and can be a highly productive zone for food collection	52-5-0077 (missing AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0078 (AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0141 (AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0142 (missing AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0143 (AHIMS registered location)
Supra-tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs	Shore platform including sea cliffs located just above the level of most high tides and is generally accessible but does not produce a great amount of collectible food species	52-5-0140 (registered AHIMS location) 52-5-0141 (observed AHIMS field location) 52-5-0142 (observed AHIMS field location) 52-5-0218 (AHIMS registered location) near the boundary of the Intertidal Zone Aboriginal Midden 1 Bushrangers Cove Aboriginal midden, cultural site, artefact scatter and camping ground, gathering site and near contemporary cultural walk with Potential Archaeological Deposit (boundary and extends in from Vegetated Hillslopes)
Prominent Lagoons and Rock Pools	Pools dominated by saltwater which is frequently refreshed, and which can provide collectible food species, though a few pools at higher elevation may provide freshwater resources as well; water quality and frequency of water exchange varies with elevation above high tide	None identified by survey to date.
Boulder Beaches	Convenient access points for launching canoes, but not productive of food themselves; may contain rock types suitable for flaked tool manufacture	None identified by survey to date. Aboriginal Midden 3 extends into this landform also.
Sand Beaches	Composed mainly of fragmented shell, derived from the shore platforms; may be backed by vegetated sand sheets or low dunes above storm wave run up and can provide campsites; the proportion of quartz sand is unknown but will be higher on beaches closer to the headland dunes	Aboriginal Midden and Artefact Scatter 2 extends into this landform also. Aboriginal Midden 3 extends into this landform also.

Landform	Description of landform and potential use in Aboriginal occupation	Site Locations identified within this landform-based boundary
Vegetated Hillslopes	Gently vegetated on unknown substrates; likely mostly shallow clay loam soils derived from underlying latite geology, but may have a significant component of quartz and/or shell sand	52-5-0077 / 52-5-0138 merged (observed AHIMS field location): original AHIMS registered sites in inter-tidal zone and vegetated hillslope 52-5-0078 (observed AHIMS field location) 52-5-0079/52-5-0080: (AHIMS registered locations and single observed AHIMS field location; duplicates merged) 52-5-0139 (observed AHIMS field location and AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0140 (observed AHIMS field location) 52-5-0143 (observed AHIMS field location) 52-5-0144 (observed AHIMS field location; near boundary of Supra-tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs) 52-5-0145 (observed AHIMS field location and AHIMS registered location) 52-5-0198 (AHIMS registered location) near boundary of Supra-tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs 52-5-0218 (observed AHIMS field location) Artefact Scatter 1 (near boundary of Supra-tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs) Aboriginal Midden 4 Aboriginal midden, cultural site, artefact scatter and camping ground, gathering site and near contemporary cultural walk with Potential Archaeological Deposit
Headland Dunes	Boundaries, composition and age uncertain	Stone cairns

7 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Introduction

In 2013 Bass Point Reserve was listed on the State Heritage Register as a place of great significance and importance to the people of NSW. There was a great deal of information gathered by SCC for the State Heritage Register entry and the listing, Item No. 01896, has full details (see SHR listing at **Appendix B).**

In 2020, the work for this project has clarified some of the information and a small number of updatesare recommended for addition to the full listing for both the State Heritage Register (Section 3 of theState Heritage Inventory) and for the heritage listing under Section 3 Local Government.

Bass Point Reserve was also previously listed on the Register of the National Estate as both a naturalplace, Bass Point Recreation Reserve, and a maritime reserve, Bass Point Marine Area. Please note thatthe Register of the National Estate was closed in 2007 and it is no longer a statutory listing.

This section of the CMP includes the existing statutory significance information and provides updated information where it has been identified, particularly in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage and tomaritime cultural heritage.

The statutory requirements, management, policies and recommendations based on this significance are addressed in Volume 2 of the CMP.

7.2 Assessing Significance

Accurate assessment of the cultural significance of sites, places and items is an essential componentfor NSW heritage planning and management. A clear determination of a site's significance allowsinformed planning decisions to be made for a place, in addition to ensuring that heritage values aremaintained, enhanced, or at least minimally affected by changes or development.

Assessments of significance are made by applying standard evaluation criteria. In New South Wales,two levels of significance exist in the heritage management system; Local and State. State heritagesignificance applies in relation to a place, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct. It meanssignificance to the State in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological,architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item. Local heritage significance applies in relation to aplace, building, work, relic, moveable object or precinct. It means significance to a local area in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value ofthe item.

The NSW Heritage Act notes that if an item is primarily of State heritage significance it can also be oflocal heritage significance; an item that is primarily of local heritage significance, however, may notnecessarily be of State heritage significance (NSW Heritage Branch, 2009, 7).

The *Burra Charter: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Place of Cultural Significance* is the widely acceptedreference document for heritage conservation standards in Australia. The Charter sets a standard ofpractice for those who provide advice, make decisions about or undertake works to places of culturalsignificance, including owners, managers and custodians. It contains a set of thirty-four principles,defined as Articles, which can be directly applied for management of heritage items, or places. The definition of 'place' used throughout the *Burra Charter* means *site, area, land, landscape, building orother work, group of buildings or other works,*

and may include components, contents, spaces andviews (Australia ICOMOS, 1999, Article 1).

The Burra Charter notes that cultural significance of a place is embodied in its physical fabric, settings,contents, use, associated documents and its meaning to people through their use and associationswith the place (Australia ICOMOS, 1999, Article 1). Its cultural significance and issues affecting futureuse are best understood by a methodical process of collecting and analysing information prior tomaking decisions.

NSW Heritage have issued guidelines for assessing significance which refer to seven assessmentcriteria. In addition, for archaeological significance, the analysis of 'Intactness' is recommended. It is particularly relevant to archaeological sites in the sense of 'undisturbed' sites or areas which may beexpected to yield well-provenanced archaeological deposits. However, the lack of intactness will also affect significance. An archaeological site or other heritage place may need to retain sufficient integrityso that it is able to convey significance to people in the present. This significance could derive fromfactors unrelated to 'research potential' such as location, setting, design, materials, workmanship andassociation, and therefore invaluable in assessing heritage significance for a place / item (NSWHeritage, 2009, 9) The seven heritage assessment criteria are shown below in **Table 6.**

Table 6: NSW Heritage Significance Assessment Criteria

Criteria A; historical	An item is important in the course or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);
Criteria B; associational	An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area);
Criteria C; aesthetic, creative or technical	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area);
Criteria D; social values	An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons
Criteria E; scientific or archaeological value	An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area
Criteria F; rarity value	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area
Criteria G; representative value	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural and natural environments

7.3 Statement of Significance from Listings

The SHR listing for Bass Point Reserve, SHR Item No. 01896, is attached with this Volume, see **Appendix B**. It contains the following comprehensive statement of significance, which was last updated in 2012:

Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for both its Aboriginal and European values; itspre- and post-contact history; and its natural and maritime heritage.

Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people have occupied the Illawarra region andBass Point Reserve for some 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers. The traditionalcustodians of the land, the Elouera people lived in a hunter/gatherer lifestyle, governed by thesustainable use of the environment and the resources available. Bass Point was a place ofestablished occupation for the Aboriginal people and is regarded as a traditionally importantcamping and meeting place.

Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late 1960s as an area thathas potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW. Twelve middensites and one camping/meeting place have been identified and archaeological excavations haverevealed the environmental change and evolution of the area over time and the development oftechniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available resources.

Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be oneof the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW. It is considered tobe a rare example of established occupation and continues to be of exceptionally high significanceto the Aboriginal people of NSW.

Upon the arrival of European settlers to the Illawarra region in 1803, the land of Bass Point wasgranted to D'Arcy Wentworth, a wealthy colonial official and the Principal Surgeon and PrincipalSuperintendent of Police. A significant colonial figure, Wentworth developed a substantial estate(of some 13,050 acres - including Bass Point) from 1821-1865 and was influential in thedevelopment of the Shellharbour area.

Bass Point also had a significant but brief association with Captain James Cook who first made noteof the region and its Aboriginal occupants as the Endeavour sailed by the coastline in April 1770.Bass Point has another brief association with the colonial explorers George Bass and MatthewFlinders who made the first recorded European visit to the region in 1796. The contemporarynaming of Bass Point commemorates these early explorations.

Bass Point Reserve has significant natural features and habitats that contribute to its aestheticvalue. A prominent headland in the region, Bass Point contains elements of bush, beach and oceanthat create a visually spectacular environment of both land and sea.

This key coastal landscape is also regarded as highly significant for its biodiversity and pristine condition. The relatively undisturbed environment supports a variety of common, rare andendangered fauna and flora species - including littoral rainforest and habitats for the endangeredgrey nurse shark and sea grasses.

The maritime landscape around Bass Point Reserve also contains a number of shipwrecks and archaeological evidence, dating from 1879. The most significant and well known, the Cities Service Boston, was wrecked in May 1943 and a memorial was erected at Boston Point to commemorate

the Australian lives lost in the rescue. ***Date significance updated:*** *28 March 2012 (Heritage NSW, Search for Heritage, Bass Point Reserve, Section 2).*

The following Statement of significance is listed for the Shellharbour City Council heritage listing forBass Point, the local government listing on the State Heritage Inventory and includes reference to itsviews and social significance:

Bass Point Reserve is of exceptional significance for a variety of natural, Aboriginal andEuropean cultural reasons. It is a foremost cultural landscape along the NSW coastline andwithin the Illawarra. It has a spectacular visual, aural and sensory interplay of bush, beaches,headlands, cliffs, rocks, sea and sky, which together create very high scenic, natural andcultural importance.

Bass Point Reserve contains remnants of the natural environment which supports headlandvegetation and littoral rainforest (probably the most diverse of the south coast of NSW).

The land is an important repository of Aboriginal occupation over thousands of years, and ofintangible value. Bass Point is important from a technical perspective as it was one of the first Aboriginal archaeological sites excavated on the NSW south coast. Particularly pertinent toAboriginal values is the RNE entry: "Excavations of midden deposits in the Bass Point areahave provided valuable archaeological evidence about coastal occupation in Australia, and inparticular south-eastern NSW.

Bass Point is one of the oldest dated coastal sites in NSW. Excavations at Bass Point providedevidence for technological and economic changes over the last 16,000 years. In particular, thetransition between different types of stone artefacts and fishing tool technologies, and relatedchanges in exploited fish species.

The adjoining marine reserve 'The Bass Point Marine Area' (Bushrangers Bay) provides arelatively undisturbed example of temperate fringing reef community. It contains significantflora and fauna, including an important Grey Nurse Shark Critical Habitat. It continues to be apopular dive site.

Early European settlement historic themes and archaeology, relate to quarrying, shipping andfarming. Bass Point has historic associations with colonial naval explorer George Bass, anddistrict pioneer and landowner, George Laurence Fuller.

Social significance is evident through regional tourism, and as a highly valued and importantrecreational resource.

Aesthetic views and vistas relate to its retained natural coastal setting. The scenic quality anddiversity of natural species found here, have made it one of the most popular sites in NewSouth Wales.

Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for both its Aboriginal and Europeanvalues; its pre- and post-contact history; and its natural and maritime heritage. The Reservewas placed on the State Heritage Register on 18 January 2013. ***Date significance updated:*** *14Jan 2019 (Heritage NSW, Search for Heritage, Bass Point Reserve, Section 3)*

7.4 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Significance

The Burra Charter provides guidance for the conservation and management of places of culturalsignificance (cultural heritage places) and is based on the knowledge and experience of AustraliaICOMOS members. Conservation is an integral part of the management of places of culturalsignificance and is an ongoing responsibility. The Charter sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance, includingowners, managers and custodians.

The Burra Charter provides a definition of cultural significance as "aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations" (ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013:2). Cultural significance isdefined in the Burra Charter as being "embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects" (ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013:2).

- Aboriginal cultural heritage sites are therefore assessed following these categories ofsignificance developed under the Burra Charter:
- Social or cultural value (assessed only by Aboriginal people);
- Spiritual value;
- Historical value;
- Scientific/archaeological value (assessed mostly by archaeologists/heritage consultants);
- Aesthetic value.

Table 7 overleaf describes the values of the key features of the landscape of Bass Point Reserve forAboriginal cultural heritage, based on the significance assessment criteria of the Burra Charter. Wherrelevant, information from this Table has been incorporated into the updated Statement of Significancefor Bass Point Reserve, located at Section 7.3.

The assessment of scientific/archaeological values are undertaken according to six criteria in thisassessment process following DPIE's standards within NSW for archaeological assessments (DECCW2010). They are rarity, representativeness, integrity, connectedness, complexity and potentialarchaeological deposit.

The following significance assessment was based on information provided by representatives of the ILALC and ACLO during field inspections and through written responses by these representatives to drafts of this CMP. During field inspections and throughout the CMP development process it was repeatedly reported by Paul Knight (CEO of ILALC) and other representatives of the Aboriginal community that the entirety of Bass Point is a significant cultural landscape where sites and values are all interconnected.

Table 7 List and Description of Values for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Name of Site/Feature	Description of values
Social or cultural value refers to "the associations that a place has for a particular community or cultural group and the social or cultural meanings that it holds for them" (Australian ICOMOS 2013:4).	
All previously recorded AHIMS sites, new sites and landforms within the Bass Point Reserve and surrounding cultural landscape.	Bass Point Reserve is interconnected to the broader cultural landscape of the Aboriginal people of the region and has social and cultural meaning. The Reserve has significant views to other cultural landmarks related to Dreaming stories and creation stories in the Illawarra region. The Reserve has important camping sites, middens, and is a gathering place and ceremonial place. It has stories passed down generations associated with the Reserve which is evidence of the cultural significance of Bass Point Reserve today and in the ancient past for Aboriginal occupation. The cultural walk within intact midden and occupation deposit is a key example of the continued cultural value and occupation of Bass Point Reserve for generations.
Spiritual value refers to the "the intangible values and meanings embodied in or evoked by a place which give it importance in the spiritual identity, or the traditional knowledge, art and practices of a cultural group. Spiritual value may also be reflected in the intensity of aesthetic and emotional responses or community associations and be expressed through cultural practices and related places" (Australian ICOMOS 2013:4).	
Bass Point Reserve and cultural landscape surrounding Hastings Point Headland	Bass Point Reserve evokes emotional responses and community associations for the local Aboriginal community. The Reserve is connected visually and spiritually to known creation story places and Dreaming sites. These sites associated with creation stories include: Five Islands, Billen Billen (Windang Island), and Mount Keira.
Historic value "refers to the associations of a place with a historically important person, event, phase or activity in an Aboriginal community", for example, post-contact places such as missions or reserves or massacre sites (DPIE, 2011:9)	
Bass Point Reserve and cultural landscape surrounding Hastings Point Headland	Bass Point Reserve is an important cultural place for both pre- and post-contact history of the Illawarra region. Bass Point was likely occupied for approximately 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers and because of this is one of the most important Aboriginal archaeological sites in NSW. It was an important campsite and gathering area and is of similar antiquity to Burrill Lake, 125km to the south. Post-contact, the Bass Point Reserve has been associated with Captain Cook's Endeavour voyage, as well as voyages by explorers George Bass and Matthew Flinders who are important in the national story of Aboriginal people's earlyencounters with Europeans in the region. A known massacre site is visible and within close proximity to the Bass PointReserve and is interconnected to the cultural history of Aboriginal occupation in the locale.

Name of Site/Feature	Description of values
Scientific/archaeological values are assessed according to six criteria in this assessment process, ***rarity, representativeness, integrity, connectedness, complexity and potential archaeological deposit.***	
AHIMS sites, identified additional site lociand landform sites as shown on **Figure 39** and **Table 3.**	Bass Point Reserve's tangible values can be assessed only for scientific/archaeological value for sites identified in **Table 3** and **Figure 39** and their surrounding landforms with potential for Aboriginal occupation evidence (as these are physical evidence of material culture). These sites are evidence of Aboriginal occupation, which is rare in the locality, but not within the region. However, the age of the middens and cultural sites, particularly 52-5-0078 are of high research potential, date back to the Pleistocene. Coastal sites with evidence of stone artefact knapping and midden deposit are common regionally but locally this form of material culture is rare due to the cumulative impact of development and infrastructure. These sites have some remaining integrity and potential for additional archaeological deposits as identified in studies such as Bowdler (1981) with potential for chronology/dating and stratified deposits, particularly in landforms where sites are often not visible within the Bass Point Reserve. These sites are connected as described above to other cultural features, knowledge and stories and a part of a broader regional cultural landscape belonging to the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra. These sites are representative of coastal middens and artefact scatters indicating camp sites and areas of long-term Aboriginal occupation in coastal areas of NSW and have research potential for providing new information on coastal occupation in the Pleistocene. The Reserve has high biodiversity with protected important terrestrial and marine ecosystems and habitats for many threatened and regionally significant species, as well as many endangered ecological communities, which also would have sustained Aboriginal occupation and the different ecotones and environmental diversity is a key factor that often indicates long term and high-density Aboriginal occupation and therefore, larger archaeological sites of high cultural and scientific value. The many middens are a type of site for the NSW South Coast that has high future scientific potential for dating and understanding Aboriginal occupation which can contribute not only to the region but the nation's story of Aboriginal occupation and antiquity. The cultural walk site within intact midden, PAD and artefact scatters is an example of a highly significant archaeological site with continued Aboriginal occupation from antiquity to date with high potential for Aboriginal occupation deposits at depth (as shown by intact deposits of midden and artefacts eroding out underneath fill) and mixed in with introduced fill taken from other parts of Bass Point Reserve overlying the site.
Aesthetic value refers to "the sensory, scenic, architectural and creative aspects of the place" and is often linked with social values (DPIE 2011:9). This value may refer to the visual nature of the landscape and "smells and sounds associated with the place and its use" (DPIE 2011:9).	
Bass Point Reserve and cultural landscape surrounding Bass Point Reserve.	Bass Point Reserve and the surrounding environment (including Bush Rangers Bay as a key example) are visually stunning and aesthetically beautiful. The beauty of the area is well known and attracts large numbers of tourists and recreational use of the Reserve for diving, walking, swimming, picnicking, fishing and surfing. The aesthetic and visual values of the landscape are connected to its social values and cultural significance.

7.5 Maritime Heritage Significance

The State Heritage Register entry for the Bass Point Reserve was updated in 2013 with the boundarycurtilage to extend 1/2 nautical mile (approx. 1km) into the ocean to capture shipwreck sites,associated maritime evidence and significant natural marine habitats. This is an adequate curtilage inrelation to these items.

Additional information for the maritime heritage of Bass Point has been provided here in relation tothe SHR listing description, as follows:

Physical description:

In the waters surrounding Bass Point Reserve, **eight** *shipwrecks have been identified and the associated artefact scatter recorded. These wrecks include* ***Amphitrite (1851), Echo (1863),****Bertha (1879), Our Own (1880), Alexander Berry (1901), Comboyne (1920), Kiltobranks (1924)and the Cities Service Boston (1943).*

Physical condition and/or Archaeological p o t e n t i a l

The locations of the ***Amphitrite, Echo****, Bertha* and *Comboyne remain undiscovered. It is also possible that there are further shipwrecks within the area that have gone unrecorded in ourpresent documentation.*

History

Shipping trade at Bass Point (1851 - 2011)

Shipping was the favoured mode of transport of the product, but the journey was often a hazardous one with a number of ships lost along the coast and in the waters surrounding BassPoint.

The first vessels lost on the rocks of Bass Point, were the wooden ketch the *Amphitrite* (1851)and wooden schooner *Echo* (1863) transporting general cargos of maize, wheat and potatoes.

The Basalt trade, commonly referred to as the Stone trade, lost several of its stone fleetduring coastal shipping between Bass Point and Sydney. *The Bertha, an 87-ton woodenschooner, is thought to be one of the earliest wrecks from the* **Stone Trade***. It was reported thatshe was transporting bluestone from Kiama to Sydney and, on 9th September 1879, ran ashoreon the north side of Bass Point and broke apart. It was reported in the media at the time thatthe local Aboriginal people camped at Bass Point had assisted with the rescue of the threecrewmen and two passengers on board by conveying a line from the stricken vessel to the shore.*

Over the years, other ships experienced a similar fate to that of the Bertha: in 1880, the woodenpaddle steamer Our Own was wrecked off the beach at Bass Point with the loss of two lives; theAlexander Berry, a wooden steamer, went down in 1901 with four of the five crewmen perishingin the accident; the Comboyne wrecked in 1920; and the Kiltobranks, **another vessel of theStone Trade, carrying blue metal,** *in 1924.*

The assessment of the identified significance for Bass Point Reserve, via each criterion, is noted below in**Table 8** in italics and has been reproduced from the State Heritage Register entry, see **Table 7**.

Recommended updates to the listed information are included in this table in bold text and text to be removed is indicated with strikethrough.

Table 8 Assessment of Significance for Bass Point Reserve

SHR Criteria a) [Historical significance]	*Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for both its Aboriginal and European values and its pre- and post-contact history.* *Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people occupied Bass Point Reserve for some 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers. The traditional custodians of the land, these people lived in a hunter/gathererlifestyle, governed by the sustainable use of the environment and the resourcesavailable.* *Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late1960s as an area that has potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW. Twelve midden sites and one camping/meeting placehave been identified and archaeological excavations have revealed theenvironmental change and evolution of the area over time and the developmentof techniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather availableresources.* *Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW.* *Official European settlement in the Illawarra region and on Bass Point Reserve,started from 1817 with the division of land and the establishment of agricultureand industry.* ▪ **The development of basalt mining on the point saw the growth of coastal shipping in the region and the development of the Stone Trade. This was the trade between Bass Point and Sydney of blue diamond, commonly known as quarried and crushed basalt, used as aggregate for concrete, road making and as ballast from railways and tramways in Sydney. Several Vessels were lost due to the hazardous conditions of the new transport route, a numberof ships were wrecked off the Bass Point coastline – the *Amphitrite (1851),Echo (1863), Bertha* (1879); *Our Own* (1880); *Alexander Berry* (1901);*Comboyne* (1920); *Kiltobranks* (1924); and *the Cities Service Boston* (1943).** ▪ **Bass Point Reserve was also associated with a short period of alluvialgold mining and with sand grit mining especially during the 1920s and1930s.**

SHR Criteria b) [Associative significance]	*Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for its association with a number of significant people and groups.* *Traditionally, and for some 20,000 years prior to European settlement, the landhas been occupied by the Elouera people of the Dharawal group. The longevityof the use of Bass Point as a camping and meeting place indicates its significance to the Aboriginal people of this region. Documentary, archaeological and oralevidence indicate that Bass Point was, and is, considered to be an extremelyimportant place by local Aboriginal people and that "the general 'feeling' aboutthe place was that it was a good and happy place" ('Bass Point Reserve: DraftPlan of Management (Volume 1: Reference Document)', 2000, p43). Althoughthe significance of this site to the Elouera people stretches for thousands of yearsinto the past, its importance to the contemporary Aboriginal communitycontinues today.* *Bass Point also had a significant, but brief, association with Captain James Cookand the Endeavour. As the Endeavour sailed by the Illawarra coastline in April1770, journal notes were made about their observations of the landscape and the traditional Aboriginal occupants. There is evidence to suggest that Cook attempted a landing in the region but abandoned the effort due to dangerousconditions. Had this landing attempt succeeded, it would have been the first onAustralian soil - predating that at Botany Bay.* *The first recorded European visit to the region was by colonial explorers andnaval men, George Bass and Matthew Flinders, in 1796. Exploring the unknowncountry to observe and report back to the colony, Bass and Flinders were most-likely the first contact the Elouera people had had with European settlers. The contemporary naming of Bass Point commemorates the initial explorations ofthese significant explorers.* *After the Illawarra region had been officially settled, the land was divided intofree grants, and Bass Point was granted to D'Arcy Wentworth, a wealthy colonialofficial and medical practitioner. Wentworth had arrived in Australia as a free settler and Assistant Surgeon on a convict fleet in 1790. By 1811, GovernorLachlan Macquarie had appointed him Principal Surgeon and PrincipalSuperintendent of Police. Also, a founding member of the Bank of NSW,Wentworth is a significant colonial figure who developed a substantial estate (of some 13,050 acres, including Bass Point) from 1821-1865.* ▪ **Bass Point Reserve and Shellharbour are also historically associated with philanthropist Caroline Chisholm and Captain Robert Towns and his wifeSophia Wentworth, who settled immigrant families on 1618.7hectares of the former Wentworth Estate in the 1840s.**

SHR Criteria c) [Aesthetic significance]	*Bass Point Reserve has significant natural features and habitats that contributeto its aesthetic value. A prominent headland in the region, Bass Point containsimportant elements of bush, beach and ocean that create a visually spectacularenvironment of both land and sea. This key coastal landscape has significantaesthetic value and its general visitation numbers reflects the public's ongoingadmiration for the natural beauty of this site.* ▪ **There are individual areas within the Reserve of great natural beauty, combining intact terrestrial and marine ecosystems ranging from common to rare. This combination contributes to the high significance and biodiversity of the reserve. Bass Point is home to several Endangered EcologicalCommunities (ECC) and is a key coastal site due to its natural and cultural richness. Bushrangers Bay is a key example that is visually stunning andaesthetically beautiful. The beauty of the Reserve is well known and attracts large numbers of tourists and recreational use including for diving, surfing and fishing.**
SHR Criteria d) [Social significance]	*The social significance of Bass Point Reserve remains strong in contemporary Aboriginal culture. There is a wide-spread understanding that the Elouera people(a subdivision of the larger Dharawal group) are the traditional occupants of theland of the Illawarra region. The coastal landscape at Bass Point supported theestablished camp sites of the Aboriginal people and provided a diverse andsustainable natural source of food and fresh water for some 20,000 years priorto European arrival to Australia. Following white settlement, the Aboriginalpeople continued to use the Bass Point area as a camp site and meeting place.* ▪ **The Reserve has significant views to other cultural landmarks related to Dreaming stories and creation stories in the Illawarra region. The Reserve has important camping sites and middens and is a gathering place andceremonial place. Stories passed down generations are associated with the Reserve which is evidence of the cultural significance of Bass Point Reservetoday and in the ancient past for Aboriginal people**. *The designation of Bass Point Reserve has ensured that the natural value of thesite is conserved and is still available for use by the Aboriginal people of theregion today. The site is also widely used by visitors as a tourist and recreationalresource.* ▪ **The Reserve and particularly Boston Point is strongly associated with the local 6th Australian Machine Gun Battalion who valiantly rallied along with other locals to rescue 62 American sailors as the *Cities Service Boston foundered on the rocks at what is now known as Boston Point. Four Australian soldiers lost their lives there on 9 December 1943 and the event is commemorated with memorials at thesite.*** ▪ **The Reserve is also strongly associated with 1960s conservation groups, and through their efforts along with Shellharbour City Council, the area has been protected as a natural reserve.**

SHR Criteria e) [Research potential]	*Bass Point Reserve has state heritage significance for its potential to reveal furtherinformation through archaeological research. Although it has been subject to earlierarchaeological investigations (in 1969/70 by Dr Sandra Bowdler and again in 1974 byHughes & Sullivan), there is great potential for further archaeological discoveries, bothterrestrial and maritime. Through Dr Bowdler's investigation, it was concluded that there is potential that the individual shell midden sites on the northern shoreline could represent one single and continuous midden. It is also highly probable that there may be unrecorded Aboriginalartefact scatters and burial sites on the reserve (either individually or in association withmidden sites).* ▪ **In 2020 the cultural significance and geomorphological investigations confirmed site locations and landforms that have contributed to our understanding of location of sites. There is further research potential relating to this study. The cultural walk site within intact midden, PAD and artefact scatters is an example of a highly significant archaeological site with continued Aboriginal occupation from antiquity to date with high potential for Aboriginal occupation deposits at depth (as shown by intact deposits of midden and artefacts eroding out underneath fill) and mixed in with introduced fill taken from other parts of Bass Point Reserve overlying the site.**
***Continued* - SHR Criteria e)** [Research potential]	▪ **Bass Point is a particularly interesting geomorphic site with unusualshore platform features, the remains of a probable Pleistocene sanddune on its crest, and numerous shell middens which may be muchyounger than have been reported. This chronology needs to be testedby a new excavation and dating program.** ▪ **In regard to shipwrecks, the location of the Amphitrite (1851), Echo (1863), Bertha (1879) and the Comboyne (1920) remain undiscovered.** ▪ **In 2020, this CMP updates include the maritime landscape around Bass Point Reserve contains 14 shipwrecks according to the Maritime HeritageDatabase of NSW, administered by NSW Heritage (Search Maritime Heritage Sites). Of those shipwrecks 8 are located in the waters surrounding BassPoint. The *Alexander Berry, Cities of Boston, Our Own and Kiltobranks* havebeen located and inspected. The *Bertha, Echo, Amphitrite* and *Comboyne* have not been located. The *Comboyne* is the subject of a current search effortby local scuba diving enthusiasts (NSW Wrecks 2020, *Search for theComboyne*). Of the 14 shipwrecks in the area, 2 have been refloated, *Josephbanks, Blackwall and Franz* and one was salvaged, *Hexham Banks*. The*Unidentified Launch and No Name* have not been located and are believedto be the same shipwreck, noted as being wrecked off Shellharbour.**

SHR Criteria f) [Rarity]	*Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late1960s as an area that has potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW.* *Twelve midden sites and one camping/meeting place have been identified atBass Point and archaeological excavations have revealed the environmentalchange and evolution of the area over time and the development of techniquesused by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available r e s o u r c e s .* *Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW.* ▪ **Geographically Bass Point is an unusual feature of the NSW coast as it is a large and relatively undisturbed headland with an east-west orientation. The orientation means that it is exposed to wave action from three directions; north, east and south, and it would be expected that the geomorphology may differ on each aspect. The headland is based on hard rock which doesnot generate quartz sand on weathering. The sand beaches are largelycomposed of shell fragments, but the extensive dune cover appears to consist mainly of quartz.**
SHR Criteria g) [Representativeness]	Bass Point is representative of prominent headlands in the Illawarra region and contains the coastal vegetation found throughout the area. Bass Point is also representative of places that had established occupation by Aboriginal people due to the plentiful and sustained food resources occurring naturally in theenvironment.
Integrity / Intactness	*Bass Point Reserve is an evolving and naturally changing landscape but its designation as a nature reserve has ensured that the site will remain a natural environment into the future while maintaining its use for recreational purposes.*

7.6 Updated Information for the Statement of Significance

The existing statement of significance for both the SHR listing and the local government listing havebeen included in full in this report at **Section 7.3.** Both entries contain much detailed information aboutthis important place.

The processes undertaken for this project have not resulted in altering the information already publicly available, however there has been more detailed information obtained and a better understanding ofwhat is significant for Bass Point Reserve. While this is true for the natural environment and historicalcultural heritage, it is of special importance for both Aboriginal cultural heritage and for maritimecultural heritage.

The suggested updated and additional information for both the SHR listing and local government listings s is brief, see below. The wording in italics is existing information on the SHR listing:

> **Bass Point Reserve is an important cultural place for both pre- and post-contact history of the Illawarra region. Bass Point was likely occupied for approximately 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers and because of this is one of the most important Aboriginal archaeologicalsites in NSW. In**

2020, a study of the geomorphology and site formations of Bass Point Reserveidentified landforms that are significant and contribute to the extent and locations of the shellmiddens across the Reserve.

***The maritime landscape around Bass Point Reserve also contains* 8 shipwrecks and archaeological evidence, dating from 1851. *The most significant and well known, the CitiesService Boston, was wrecked in May 1943 and a memorial was erected at Boston Point tocommemorate the Australian lives lost in the rescue.* Two wrecks, the *Bertha* and *Kiltobanks* were vessels associated with the Stone fleet. The fleet was a part of the 'Stone Trade' between Bass Point and Sydney. Blue diamond, commonly known as quarried and crushed basalt, was used asaggregate for concrete, road making and as ballast for railways and tramways in Sydney.**

Updated information in each of the seven individual assessments of significance are alsorecommended, as per this report, **see Table 7.**

7.7 Historical Themes

The Australian and State themes of environment and local themes relating to culture are important for Bass Point Reserve. The State Register Entry for the Reserve includes historical themes, refer to the SHR listing included at **Appendix B**. These historical themes are from a generic list defined by NSW Heritage which can quickly define important elements for a place or item.

In addition to the themes already listed, this CMP identifies the following themes shown in Table 9 overleaf, which should be added to the SHR listing.

Table 9 Updated Historical Themes for Bass Point

AUSTRALIAN THEME	NSW THEME	LOCAL THEME
Theme 1. Tracing the natural evolution of Australia	Environment; Environment - naturally evolved	There are two aspects to this theme: (1) Bass Point is a geological feature occurring naturally in the physical environment which has significance, independent of human intervention. Bass Point is underlain by strongly jointed Bombo Latite, which in places has prominent columnar jointing patterns, some areas of pillow lava on the shore platforms, and which is intersected by several volcanic dykes with different weathering characteristics. (2) Bass Point as a natural feature in the physical environment has shaped or influenced human life and cultures for the local Aboriginal people. Bass Point is a particularly interesting geomorphic site with unusual shore platform features, the remains of a probable Pleistocene sand dune on its crest, and numerous shell middens which may be much younger than have been reported. This chronology needs to be tested by a new excavation and dating program.
Theme 3. Developing local, regional and national economies	Mining;	Historical shell-grit mining in the late 19th to early 20th centuries along the northern shoreline, in particular. Historical and current mining of basalt in the area of the quarry and for the extant and earlier jetty.
Theme 7. Governing	Defence;	WW2 lookout post on Bass Point; Site of important rescue in 1943 of US soldiers and sailors of the Cities Services Boston, marked by memorials and commemorative events within the Reserve.

This concludes Volume 1 of the 2020 Bass Point Reserve CMP.

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APPENDIX A

CONSULTATION

This plan has been developed in consultation with stakeholders including the following Consultations:

Table *A1* Consultation for Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Bass Point Reserve

Date	Consultation with	Consultation Undertaken
1/2020 to 2/2020	Illawarra LALC and ACLO	Telephone and email consultation with Paul Knight, ILALC onsite inspection and initial project background and discussions with Maiquilla Brown, ACLO, SCC.
20/2/2020	ACLO and SCC	Inception meeting and collection of background information at Council including meeting with ACLO, Maiquilla Brown.
21/2/2020	Illawarra LALC and SCC	Site inspection and meeting of Bass Point Reserve and discussion with ILALC and follow updiscussions with CEO Paul Knight and sites officer.
4/2/2020	Illawarra LALC	Formal project notification letter to discussconsultation approach, CMP background andpoints of contact with follow up discussion withthe CEO, Paul Knight.
March 2020 *March 2021*	Native title claim by South Coast People for land including Bass Point, entered on Register on 31/1/2018	Letter issued on 5 March 2020 to NTS Corp by SCC. No response from South Coast People Native Title Claimants. Emails with Regional Services Crown Lands DPIE, 5 March 2021 resulted in claim advice issued to Virtus Heritage.
9/7/2020 – Aboriginal cultural heritage section only	Illawarra LALC, ACLO and AAC	Draft CMP was sent out with closing date of 5August for review and an invitation for discussionand workshop on 24 July to all parties by Council.
24/7/2020	Illawarra LALC, ACLO and AACinvited and Paul Knight CEO ofILALC attended online withKayla Williamson, Iriaka Rossand Richard Davis, Jodie Edwards with Bonnie Hittman andRyan Stirling	Workshop on draft CMP and developing conservation management strategies and protocols and discussion via Zoom webinar.
29/7/2020	Illawarra LALC, ACLO and AACinvited and Paul Knight CEO ofILALC attended online withKayla Williamson, Iriaka Rossand Richard Davis, Jodie Edwards with Bonnie Hittman and Ryan Stirling	Additional information requested with mappingfor the CMP ACH draft discussed at the workshop.
18/9/2020	Uncle Reuben, Jodie Edwards, ILALC, ACLO and AAC, Kayla Williamson and Paul Cummins, Dr Peter Mitchell and Elaine Lin	Site visit and additional consultation (invitationwas made and only some parties could make it on the day) on the geomorphology of the Bass Point Reserve and discussion of ACH values and management.
To be undertaken	*Illawarra LALC, ACLO and AAC*	*Provision of final CMP*

SHELLHARBOUR CITY COUNCIL - KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Name	Title	Project Role
Matt Harvey	Asset Officer	Project Manager; Asset Management Advisor
Shaun Robinson	Asset Planning Manager	Asset Management Advisor
Andrew Lee	Senior Environmental Officer	Environmental Advisor
Bernadette Sharpe	Recreation Planner	Strategic Planning Advisor
Maiquilla Brown, Bonnie Hittmann and Shane Venables	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer	Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee
Tamara Hynd	Museum Curator	Historical Advisor
Cheryl Lappin	Senior Strategic Planner	Historic Heritage

Table *A2* Virtus consultation with Community Groups, Individual Stakeholders and Industry

Name	Title	Type of contact	Summary of comments
Ailee Caldeback	Landcare Illawarra	Phone call and email	Interested and informative
Wendy, secretary	Tongarra Heritage Society	Phone calls	24.03.20 – Another phone call – the meeting was cancelled but Wendy did put a notice in their newsletter, no response
Glen Staples, Fisheries at Huskisson recommended Ispeak with Daniel Minter, District Fisheries	Marine Estate Management Authority – DPI Fisheries	Phone calls	Information from Daniel Minter re management of Bushrangers Bay Reserve and collaboration with Ben Stuart at SCC.
John Campbell	Machine Gun Battalion re: memorial	Phone call and email	Interested and informative, provided access to his histories and historical photographs
Craig and Mick	Dive Shop Illawarra / Shellharbour Scuba	Phone call	Interested and informative and suggestions received
Chelsea Flood, Compliance Officer	Hanson Australia Pty Ltd	Letter, email and phone call	"As we are a neighbouring state significant development, we are willing to assist Virtus/ Shellharbour City Council where possible"
No contact name	South Coast Board riders	Email	No response
No contact name	Shellharbour Whale and Wildlife Group and Protect Bass Point Group	Email after their comment on SCC 'let's chat' page	No response
Phil Woodcock	former Shellharbour Council Planning Manager	Phone call	Interested and informative re former SCC documents – Benkendorf and Chapman, Eco Tourism resort
Ben Stewart	SCC Director Amenity and Assets	Phone call	Interested in management of the Aboriginal cultural heritage and signage at Bushrangers Bay
Heike Peterlin, Senior Property Management Officer	Regional Services Crown Lands, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Nowra NSW	Email exchange	Provided relevant Crown Land and Native Title information for Bass Point Reserve.

APPENDIX B

STATE HERITAGE REGISTER LISTING, 2020

Bass Point Reserve

Item details

Name of item:
Bass Point Reserve
Other name/s:
Long Point
Type of item:
Landscape
Group/Collection:
Aboriginal
Category:
Place of significance
Location:
Lat: -34.5959090081 Long: 150.8957031630
Primary address:
Boollwarroo Parade, Shell Cove, NSW 2529
Parish:
Terragong
County:
Camden
Local govt. area:
Shellharbour
Local Aboriginal Land Council:
Illawarra
Property description

Lot/Volume Code	Lot/Volume Number	Section Number	Plan/Folio Code	Plan/Folio Number
LOT	3		DP	248002

Boundary:

Curtilage extends 1/2 nautical mile (approx. 1km) into ocean to capture shipwreck sites, associated maritime evidence and significant natural marine habitats.

All addresses

Street Address	Suburb/town	LGA	Parish	County	Type
Boollwarroo Parade	Shell Cove	Shellharbour	Terragong	Camden	Primary Address

Owner/s

Organisation Name	Owner Category	Date Ownership Updated
Deparment of the Environment	Federal Government	
Shellharbour City Council	Local Government	22 Aug 12

Statement of significance:

Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for both its Aboriginal and European values; its pre- and post-contact history; and its natural and maritime heritage.

Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people have occupied the Illawarra region and Bass Point Reserve for some 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers. The traditional custodians of the land, the Elouera people lived in a hunter/gatherer lifestyle, governed by the sustainable use of the environment and the resources available. Bass Point was a place of established occupation for the Aboriginal people and is regarded as a traditionally important camping and meeting place.

Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late 1960s as an area that has potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW. Twelve midden sites and one camping/meeting place have been identified and archaeological excavations have revealed the environmental change and evolution of the area over time and the development of techniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available resources.

Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW. It is considered to be a rare example of established occupation and continues to be of exceptionally high significance to the Aboriginal people of NSW.

Upon the arrival of European settlers to the Illawarra region in 1803, the land of Bass Point was granted to D'Arcy Wentworth, a wealthy colonial official and the Principal Surgeon and Principal Superintendent of Police. A significant colonial figure, Wentworth developed a substantial estate (of some 13,050 acres - including Bass Point) from 1821-1865 and was influential in the development of the Shellharbour area.

Bass Point also had a significant but brief association with Captain James Cook who first made note of the region and its Aboriginal occupants as the Endeavour sailed by the coastline in April 1770.

Bass Point has another brief association with the colonial explorers George Bass and Matthew Flinders who made the first recorded European visit to the region in 1796. The contemporary naming of Bass Point commemorates these early explorations.

Bass Point Reserve has significant natural features and habitats that contribute to its aesthetic value. A prominent headland in the region, Bass Point contains elements of bush, beach and ocean that create a visually spectacular environment of both land and sea.

This key coastal landscape is also regarded as highly significant for its biodiversity and pristine condition. The relatively undisturbed environment supports a variety of common, rare and endangered fauna and flora species - including littoral rainforest and habitats for the endangered grey nurse shark and sea grasses.

The maritime landscape around Bass Point Reserve also contains a number of shipwrecks and archaeological evidence, dating from 1879. The most significant and well known, the Cities Service Boston, was wrecked in May 1943 and a memorial was erected at Boston Point to commemorate the Australian lives lost in the rescue.
Date significance updated: 28 Mar 12

Note: The State Heritage Inventory provides information about heritage items listed by local and State government agencies. The State Heritage Inventory is continually being updated by local and State agencies as new information becomes available. Read the Department of Premier and Cabinet copyright and disclaimer.

Description

Physical description:
Located 25km south of Wollongong, Bass Point Reserve is a 4km-long natural promontory of rocky shorelines and sandy embayments that supports a diverse collection of natural and cultural elements.

As a cultural landscape, Bass Point Reserve includes sites of Aboriginal archaeological significance and others of European historical significance. Fourteen sites associated with the sustained Aboriginal occupation of the land have been identified - 13 of which are coastal shell middens and one meeting and camping place. Sites of European occupation include potential remnants of the original jetty (to the west of the existing jetty) and, on Boston Point, a memorial to the 1943 shipwreck of the Cities Service Boston and the four lives lost during the rescue operation.

In the waters surrounding Bass Point Reserve, six shipwrecks have been identified and the associated artefact scatter recorded. These wrecks include Bertha (1879), Our Own (1880), Alexander Berry (1901), Comboyne (1920), Kiltobranks (1924) and the Cities Service Boston (1943).

The Bass Point Marine Area surrounding the reserve is regarded as highly significant for its biodiversity and pristine condition. This relatively undisturbed environment supports a variety of common, rare and endangered fauna and flora species. The shallow and sheltered waters have seen the development of a significant but fragile Sea Grass Habitat that provides a suitable environment for many aquatic animals to shelter, feed and breed.

To the eastern point of Bass Point Reserve is Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve. Made up of beaches, intertidal rock pools, seagrasses and submarine cliffs the reserve provides important habitats for a variety of animals including fish, anemones, sponges, crabs, molluscs and urchins.

Bass Point Reserve also supports diverse headland vegetation and significant littoral rainforest - making it one of the most important and unique natural landscapes in southern NSW. Littoral rainforest is generally a closed forest with its structure and composition strongly influenced by its close proximity to the marine environment. Positioned on coastal headlands or beach sand dunes, littoral rainforest is considered an Endangered Ecological Community in NSW. The natural vegetation of Bass Point Reserve supports a variety of flora and fauna, both common and rare to the region.

Today, the spectacular visual interplay of the bush vegetation, beaches, headlands, cliffs, ocean and sky makes Bass Point Reserve a scenic location for recreation visitors.
Physical condition and/or
Archaeological potential:

The natural environment of Bass Point Reserve has undergone periods of regeneration by Shellharbour Council's rangers and is in good condition. The on-going maintenance of visitor areas has also ensured the good condition of facilities.

Since the Bass Point Marine Area was identified, and specific areas classified as critical habitats and aquatic reserves, the marine environment surrounding Bass Point Reserve has remained in pristine condition.

Although Bass Point Reserve has been subject to earlier archaeological investigations (in 1969/70 by Dr Sandra Bowdler and again in 1974 by Hughes & Sullivan), there is great potential for further archaeological discoveries - both terrestrial and maritime.

Through Dr Bowdler's investigation, she concluded that there is potential that the individual shell midden sites on the northern shoreline could represent one single continuous midden site. It is also highly probable that there may be unrecorded Aboriginal artefact scatters and burial sites on the reserve (either individually or in association with midden sites).

In regard to shipwrecks, the location of the Bertha remains undiscovered and it is also possible that there are further shipwrecks that have gone unrecorded in present documentation.

Modifications and dates:

Pre-European contact - archaeological evidence indicates sustained occupation of Bass Point by Aboriginal people (some 20,000 years)
1803 - grazing and clearing rights secured by free settler, James Badgery, for land (including Bass Point)
1880 - George Laurence Fuller (proprietor and business manager) commences basalt mining on Bass Point
1885 - Fuller builds 480ft jetty for shipping of blue metal from Bass Point quarry to Sydney
c1890 - Fuller improves and extends jetty to 500ft
1939-53 - Bass Point used by Australian Military Forces for various defensive, training and surveillance functions
c1958 - demolition of jetty and constuction of modern replacement (sited directly to the east)
1968 - construction and unveiling of memorial to Cities Service Boston shipwreck and the four lives lost during the rescue operation
1968 - Bass Point given to Shellharbour Council for future use as natural reserve
Post-1968 - minor development (building and maintaining roads; parking sites; amenities; and public facilities)

Current use:

Nature conservation and passive recreation

Former use:

Aboriginal camping/meeting place, basalt mining, cedar-cutting, pastoral grazing

History

Historical notes:

ABORIGINAL OCCUPATION OF ILLAWARRA REGION BEFORE EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT
Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people occupied the Illawarra region for some 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers. The Elouera people are traditional

custodians of the land extending from Stanwell Park in the north, Shoalhaven River in the south, west to Picton and Moss Vale, and east to the ocean. The Elouera people are a group, subdivided from the larger Dharawal group, that occupies the land from Botany Bay to Jervis Bay.

In the Illawarra region, the Elouera were identified as fresh or salt water people due to their occupation of particular marine or estuarine landscapes and their use of the natural resources found in these environments. Essentially, the Elouera people lived a hunter/gatherer lifestyle, governed by the sustainable use of their surrounding environment and the available resources. Traditionally, the division of labour in such a society was determined by gender and age - men hunted by land and sea while women gathered food and resources. The Aboriginal people had developed their understanding of the region and environmental sustainability over thousands of years and there is archaeological evidence to suggest that the people travelled the land making use of seasonal resources when they were abundantly available and allowing those depleted to regenerate with time.

The diet of the Elouera people was varied and flexible - consisting of (among other things) fish, shellfish and seals from the ocean; and wallabies, possums, birds and plants from the land. Evidence of this changing diet has been found through archaeological investigation of the shell middens at both Bass Point and along the NSW coastline.

These shell middens are found in coastal environments throughout Australia - but particularly on the east coast. Those identified at Bass Point have been dated at 6000 years old, from the period when the sea levels stabilised and the coastal environment developed into what it is today. Analysis of the content of these middens has revealed shell and food remains that indicate the hunter/gatherer lifestyle of the traditional Aboriginal people in the Illawarra region. Excavation of shell middens at Bass Point have also revealed the changing tools and technology used by the Elouera people to exploit the available resources around them - in particular, the development and evolution of hunting practices as species of fish and animals changed with the seasons and over the years.

Middens are usually found in close proximity to both fresh water supplies and have often resulted from an established occupation of a place. Evidence at Bass Point indicates the longevity of its use by the Aboriginal people as an important camping and meeting place - a value supported by the oral tradition of the local people. The coastal plain is known to have been an abundant natural environment of food and fresh water resources and, with their in-depth understanding of the marine environment, Bass Point must have been regarded by the Aboriginal people as a resourceful place that could sustain long-term occupation.

FIRST CONTACT WITH EUROPEAN EXPLORERS (1788)
A harmonious and balanced relationship between the Aboriginal people and the environment existed for thousands of years and it was in this form when the Aboriginal people first had contact with European explorers. Although there may have been earlier contact with Portuguese, Spanish, Polynesian or Asian explorers, the first report of Bass Point and the local Aboriginal people comes from Captain James Cook who sailed by the region on the Endeavour in April 1770. Those on board noted in their journals of their observations - "Sunday, 22nd April:....and were so near the shore as to distinguish several people upon the Sea Beach. They appeared to be of a very dark Colour....Thursday, 26th April: Saw several

smokes along shore after dark, and 2 or 3 times a fire" (Organ, 'A Documentary History of the Illawarra and South Coast Aborigines', p. 2). The journals from the Endeavour also make note of the "numerous campfires, on the blackness of the natives, and of a luxuriant vegetation and varied landscape" (Organ & Speechley, 'Illawarra Aborigines', p.8). There are historical reports that Cook attempted to make a landing along the Illawarra coastline but abandoned these efforts due to uncertain and dangerous conditions. Had this landing been successful, it would have been the first on Australian soil - predating that at Botany Bay. Although the lives of the Aboriginal people continued relatively undisturbed following this visit, stories soon circulated between the groups about sightings of the 'White Swan' (believed to be a reference to the sails of the Endeavour).

The geographic nature of the Illawarra ensured that the region remained isolated from the early colonial settlement following the First Fleet landing in 1788. The surrounding mountains provided a barrier to the north and west and, with the absence of a natural and accessible harbour, official settlement of the region did not occur until early in the nineteenth century. Stories of the arrival of Europeans surely spread to the region through communication between Aboriginal groups quickly and, as in other parts of Australia, it was first thought by the Aboriginal people that the settlers were their re-born ancestors. Their pale skin but similar features ensured inquisitive but mostly civil early interactions between the settlers and the Elouera people.

EARLY COLONIAL EXPLORATION OF ILLAWARRA REGION (1796)
The first official exploration of the Illawarra region (then known as the 'Five Islands District') was recorded by George Bass and Matthew Flinders in 1796. Following a similar exploratory expedition up the Georges River, Bass and Flinders ventured to the Illawarra region to explore and examine the country, take specimens from the environment and to report their findings back to the colony with recommendations for possible future settlements. The local Aboriginal people may have had sporadic interactions with other Europeans after the Bass/Flinders visit (including the shipwreck survivors of the Sydney Cove in 1797 who were making the arduous and largely fatal trek from Cape Howe to Sydney) but little changed as a result of the First Fleet landing until the region was officially settled in 1803 - the effect of this settlement on the local Aboriginal people being felt almost immediately.

The colonial settlement in Sydney experienced a severe drought in 1803 that threatened the agricultural industries (particularly cattle grazing) that supported life in the colony. Finding fresh new pastures was essential to the survival of the industry and reports of the rich untouched land further south at Lake Illawarra soon circulated amongst the colonists. Free grazing rights were issued by the government - and a significant land parcel stretching from Lake Illawarra to the Minnamurra River (and incorporating Bass Point) was granted to free settler, James Badgery, for cattle running.

At this time, Red Cedar-cutting was also an important industry in the colony and there were lucrative supplies discovered in the virgin bush of the Illawarra region.

Both the cattlemen and the cedar-cutters were adventurous and were the first Europeans to traverse the unknown country - successfully doing so by following the traditional trails established by the Aboriginal people. From even this early period of settlement, European exploitation of the land and resources had begun. The easy abuse of land through clearing of

vegetation and wildlife would have been an abhorrent disrespect to the Aboriginal people. The traditional lifestyle of the people had been sustained by this land and its immediate exploitation by the European settlers would no doubt have led to future conflicts.

COLONIAL SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY
In 1816, in an effort to regulate land ownership in an official system, Governor Lachlan Macquarie called for the division of the region (what is now Shellharbour Municipality) into land grants - 22 in total. The free grants were given to prominent colonial citizens and cattlemen - one such grant of 1650 acres, and later an additional 2000 acres (including Bass Point), was granted to D'Arcy Wentworth, a wealthy colonial official and medical practitioner.

Although Wentworth was promised the land grants in 1817, he was not issued with the land until 1821 when he established 'Peterborough Estate'. Following the exit of Badgery, Wentworth was able to run his own cattle while, at the same time, acquiring surrounding grants to expand his land holding. There is a strong presumption that the expansion of Peterborough Estate was organised with the other land-holders from very early on. The land was rich in pasture and possibility but remained largely unsettled and unused by its early owners. By 1827, Wentworth had acquired the largest land holding in the region totalling 13,050 acres - including Bass Point and the private Peterborough township (that is now Shellharbour village).

The repossession and division of the richest lands in the region had a devastating effect on the Elouera people. The prime locations selected for land grants would have been those with easy accessibility to fresh water supplies - the areas most valued by the Aboriginal people for resources and as traditional camping places. Larger numbers of people occupying the land also reduced the capacity for the Aboriginal people to traverse the region as they had traditionally done.

Colonial grazing and farming of the land also had a detrimental and lasting effect on the native food supplies used by the Aboriginal people. Traditional plants had been destroyed by grazing cattle and replaced by introduced plant species.

Additionally, native animal species had been frightened away from their habitats. In no time, the scarcity of traditional resources saw a crisis arise in the lifestyle of the local Aboriginal people - their homeland was being ravaged and their very survival was at risk.

The rapid degradation of the sustainable environment left the traditional Aboriginal people with one option: appropriate the introduced crops and stock to survive. While traditional Aboriginal life had no concept of ownership (but rather a shared use of land and resources), the settlers viewed their actions as theft and crimes punishable by violent retaliation. At this point in relations, the Aboriginal people were struggling to maintain their traditional ways of life while contending with the force of the colonial settlers and it was soon realised that the Elouera people had little to match the sheer number of settlers with their introduced firearms and diseases (smallpox, influenza and tuberculosis).

The colonial government, under Governor Macquarie's direction, had declared unofficial war against the Aboriginal people. A detachment of the 46th Regiment was sent to Red Point (now Hill 60 at Port Kembla) to bring a show of force to the Aboriginal people. "During April of

1816 Macquarie instructed his soldiers to seek out the Aborigines and 'strike them with terror .... drive them to a distance from the settlements of the White Men ... inflict terrible and exemplary punishments' so as the Government would not be seen to show cowardice in the face of perceived Aboriginal aggression" (Organ & Speechley, 'Illawarra Aborigines', p.10). It was the colonial intention that fear be instilled in the local Aboriginal people to reduce retaliation attempts on the settlement.

As a result of this action, the traditional Aboriginal population was quickly decimated. With forced removal to fringe camps, assimilation to European culture and the imposition of strict control measures - coupled with their delegation to the bottom of the social hierarchy - the Aboriginal people had no recourse against the invasion of the settlers throughout the nineteenth century. Governor Macquarie's plans to expand the colonial frontier had been a success and the rich land of the Illawarra region had been cleared of its traditional inhabitants and was free to be exploited by the settlers.

By the 1840s, the colony was experiencing an economic depression and the large landholdings in the region were soon subdivided into smaller tenant farms. Provided rent-free for periods of up to six years, the land was leased to families for the purpose of clearing native vegetation and cultivating crops. Wheat and maize were popular early crops but soon proved to be susceptible to rust and ultimately financially unprofitable for the farmers. By the second half of the nineteenth century however, the dairy industry had been established and was proving to be a successful business for the small landholders in the region.

During this period, 2560 acres of Peterborough Estate (including Bass Point) had been sold by the Wentworth family to George Laurence Fuller who named the property 'Dunmore Estate'. By 1880, Fuller had negotiated a mining venture and established a basalt 'blue gold' quarry to the south of Bass Point including the construction of a new 480-foot jetty to ship the quarried metal. Although the enterprise collapsed within two years, Fuller resumed operations as the proprietor and manager and, by 1890, business was booming. To support the industry, Fuller soon improved and extended the jetty to 500 feet and commissioned the construction of the SS Dunmore to transport the crushed basalt from Bass Point to the markets of Sydney.

SHIPPING TRADE AT BASS POINT (1880 -)
Shipping was the favoured mode of transport of the product but the journey was often a hazardous one with a number of ships lost along the coast and in the waters surrounding Bass Point. The Bertha, an 87-ton wooden schooner, is thought to be one of the earliest wrecks from the basalt trade. It was reported that she was transporting bluestone from Kiama to Sydney and, on 9th September 1879, ran ashore on the north side of Bass Point and broke apart. It was reported in the media at the time that the local Aboriginal people camped at Bass Point had assisted with the rescue of the three crewmen and two passengers on board by conveying a line from the stricken vessel to the shore.

Over the years, other ships experienced a similar fate to that of the Bertha: in 1880, the wooden paddle steamer Our Own was wrecked off the beach at Bass Point with the loss of two lives; the Alexander Berry, a wooden steamer, went down in 1901 with four of the five crewmen perishing in the accident; the Comboyne wrecked in 1920; and the Kiltobranks, another blue metal carrier, in 1924.

One of the more well-known shipwrecks of Bass Point was the loss of the Cities Service Boston on 16th May 1943. The US oil tanker was transporting fuel supplies from the Middle East before running aground during a storm at what is now known as Boston Point. Australian soldiers from the 6th Australian Machine Gun Battalion were camped nearby and assisted in the rescue of the 62 crew on board. All lives from the Boston were saved but four Australian soldiers perished in the rescue. To commemorate the loss, plaques were unveiled at Bass Point in 1968 and a remembrance service is held at the site each year.

Since Dunmore Estate was sold in the 1920s, the land in and around Bass Point was used by the Australian Military Forces for defensive, training and surveillance functions. By c1957, Bass Point was purchased by Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) and mining of its extensive basalt deposits was renewed. The original jetty had deteriorated beyond the needs of the mining leases and was ultimately demolished in 1958 before being replaced by a new jetty directly east of the original.

CONSERVATION AS A NATURE RESERVE (1960s -)
It was as a result of the increased mining of Bass Point in the 1960s, that its future as a natural reserve was first considered. Local conservationists had formed a society to promote the natural value of Bass Point and to balance the interests of both conservation and development. A reserve was officially declared in 1968 and, furthermore, Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve was declared in 1982.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AT BASS POINT (1970s -)
Since the historic value of Bass Point has been recognised, there have been archaeological investigations of the area that have revealed significant information about its pre-contact history. Of the 12 shell midden sites identified on Bass Point, Dr Sandra Bowdler investigated six sites in 1970 as the basis for her thesis. Further analysis of the remaining six sites was undertaken by Dr PJ Hughes in 1974.

Middens of the NSW South Coast, including those at Bass Point, contain indicative remains of the food sources of the Aboriginal people. Upon analysis of the middens at Bass Point, Dr Bowdler and Dr Hughes discovered shells and bones of shellfish, fish, wallabies, bandicoots, possums, birds and seals.

It was also considered that the many middens along the northern shoreline may, in fact, represent a single continuous midden site.

These archaeological excavations revealed the environmental change and evolution of Bass Point over time and, further analysis of the midden sites has shown the development of techniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available resources. As a result of these archaeological assessments, Bass Point is now considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW.

Historic themes

Australian theme (abbrev)	New South Wales theme	Local theme
1. Environment-Tracing	Environment - naturally evolved-Activities associated with the ph	Cultural: Natural landscapes valu

the evolution of a continent's special environments	ysical surroundings that support human life and influence or shape human cultures.	ed by humans-
1. Environment-Tracing the evolution of a continent's special environments	Environment - naturally evolved-Activities associated with the physical surroundings that support human life and influence or shape human cultures.	Cultural: Conserving and protecting natural features-
1. Environment-Tracing the evolution of a continent's special environments	Environment - naturally evolved-Activities associated with the physical surroundings that support human life and influence or shape human cultures.	Cultural - Coasts and coastal features supporting human activities -
1. Environment-Tracing the evolution of a continent's special environments	Environment - naturally evolved-Activities associated with the physical surroundings that support human life and influence or shape human cultures.	Environments important to Aboriginal traditional and spiritual life-
1. Environment-Tracing the evolution of a continent's special environments	Environment - naturally evolved-Activities associated with the physical surroundings that support human life and influence or shape human cultures.	Natural - site important native fauna habitat or food source-
2. Peopling-Peopling the continent	Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures-Activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practices, past and present.	All nations - places of battle or other early interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples-
2. Peopling-Peopling the continent	Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures-Activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practices, past and present.	All nations - place of first contact between Aboriginal and European peoples-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Agriculture-Activities relating to the cultivation and rearing of plant and animal species, usually for commercial purposes, can include aquaculture	Ancillary structures - wells, cisterns-
3. Economy-Developing local, regional and national economies	Exploration-Activities associated with making places previously unknown to a cultural group known to them.	Routes taken by George Bass-
4. Settlement-Building settlements, towns and cities	Land tenure-Activities and processes for identifying forms of ownership and occupancy of land and water, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal	Early farming (Cattle grazing)-

Assessment of significance

SHR Criteria a)

[Historical significance]

Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for both its Aboriginal and European values and its pre- and post-contact history.

Archaeological evidence indicates that Aboriginal people occupied Bass Point Reserve for some 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers. The traditional custodians of the land, these people lived in a hunter/gatherer lifestyle, governed by the sustainable use of the environment and the resources available.

Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late 1960s as an area that has potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW. Twelve midden sites and one camping/meeting place have been identified and archaeological excavations have revealed the environmental change and evolution of the area over time and the development of techniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available resources.

Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW.

Official European settlement in the Illawarra region and on Bass Point Reserve, started from 1817 with the division of land and the establishment of agriculture and industry. The development of basalt mining on the point saw the growth of shipping in the region but, due to the hazardous conditions of the new transport route, a number of ships were wrecked off the Bass Point coastline - the Bertha (1879); Our Own (1880); Alexander Berry (1901); Comboyne (1920); Kiltobranks (1924); and the Cities Service Boston (1943).

SHR Criteria b)

[Associative significance]

Bass Point Reserve is of state heritage significance for its association with a number of significant people and groups.

Traditionally, and for some 20,000 years prior to European settlement, the land has been occupied by the Elouera people of the Dharawal group. The longevity of the use of Bass Point as a camping and meeting place indicates its significance to the Aboriginal people of this region. Documentary, archaeological and oral evidence indicate that Bass Point was, and is, considered to be an extremely important place by local Aboriginal people and that "the general 'feeling' about the place was that it was a good and happy place" ('Bass Point Reserve: Draft Plan of Management (Volume 1: Reference Document)', 2000, p43). Although the significance of this site to the Elouera people stretches for thousands of years into the past, its importance to the contemporary Aboriginal community continues today.

Bass Point also had a significant, but brief, association with Captain James Cook and the Endeavour. As the Endeavour sailed by the Illawarra coastline in April 1770, journal notes were made about their observations of the landscape and the traditional Aboriginal occupants. There is evidence to suggest that Cook attempted a landing in the region but abandoned the effort due to dangerous conditions. Had this landing attempt succeeded, it would have been the first on Australian soil - predating that at Botany Bay.

The first recorded European visit to the region was by colonial explorers and naval men, George Bass and Matthew Flinders, in 1796. Exploring the unknown country to observe and report back to the colony, Bass and Flinders were most-likely the first contact the Elouera people had had with European settlers. The contemporary naming of Bass Point commemorates the initial explorations of these significant explorers.

After the Illawarra region had been officially settled, the land was divided into free grants, and Bass Point was granted to D'Arcy Wentworth, a wealthy colonial official and medical practitioner. Wentworth had arrived in Australia as a free settler and Assistant Surgeon on a convict fleet in 1790. By 1811, Governor Lachlan Macquarie had appointed him Principal Surgeon and Principal Superintendent of Police. Also a founding member of the Bank of NSW, Wentworth is a significant colonial figure who developed a substantial estate (of some 13,050 acres, including Bass Point) from 1821-1865.

SHR Criteria c)

[Aesthetic significance]

Bass Point Reserve has significant natural features and habitats that contribute to its aesthetic value. A prominent headland in the region, Bass Point contains important elements of bush, beach and ocean that create a visually spectacular environment of both land and

sea. This key coastal landscape has significant aesthetic value and its general visitation numbers reflects the public's ongoing admiration for the natural beauty of this site.

SHR Criteria d)

[Social significance]

The social significance of Bass Point Reserve remains strong in contemporary Aboriginal culture. There is a wide-spread understanding that the Elouera people (a subdivision of the larger Dharawal group) are the traditional occupants of the land of the Illawarra region. The coastal landscape at Bass Point supported the established camp sites of the Aboriginal people and provided a diverse and sustainable natural source of food and fresh water for some 20,000 years prior to European arrival to Australia. Following white settlement, the Aboriginal people continued to use the Bass Point area as a camp site and meeting place.

The designation of Bass Point Reserve has ensured that the natural value of the site is conserved and is still available for use by the Aboriginal people of the region today. The site is also widely used by visitors as a tourist and recreational resource.

SHR Criteria e)

[Research potential]

Bass Point Reserve has state heritage significance for its potential to reveal further information through archaeological research. Although it has been subject to earlier archaeological investigations (in 1969/70 by Dr Sandra Bowdler and again in 1974 by Hughes & Sullivan), there is great potential for further archaeological discoveries, both terrestrial and maritime.

Through Dr Bowdler's investigation, it was concluded that there is potential that the individual shell midden sites on the northern shoreline could represent one single and continuous midden. It is also highly probable that there may be unrecorded Aboriginal artefact scatters and burial sites on the reserve (either individually or in association with midden sites).

In regard to shipwrecks, the location of the Bertha remains undiscovered and it is also possible that there are further shipwrecks that have gone unrecorded in present documentation.

SHR Criteria f)

[Rarity]

Bass Point has been the focus of attention from archaeologists since the late 1960s as an area that has potential to reveal significant information about pre-contact history in NSW.

Twelve midden sites and one camping/meeting place have been identified at Bass Point and archaeological excavations have revealed the environmental change and evolution of the area over time and the development of techniques used by the Aboriginal people to hunt and gather available resources.

Alongside Burrill Lake rock shelter (which is of similar antiquity), Bass Point is considered to be one of the most significant Aboriginal archaeological sites to be excavated in NSW.

SHR Criteria g)

[Representativeness]

Bass Point is representative of prominent headlands in the Illawarra region and contains the coastal vegetation found throughout the area. Bass Point is also representative of places that

had established occupation by Aboriginal people due to the plentiful and sustained food resources occurring naturally in the environment.

Integrity/Intactness:

Bass Point Reserve is an evolving and naturally changing landscape but its designation as a nature reserve has ensured that the site will remain a natural environment into the future while maintaining its use for recreational purposes.

Assessment criteria:

Items are assessed against the State Heritage Register (SHR) Criteria to determine the level of significance. Refer to the Listings below for the level of statutory protection.

Procedures /Exemptions

Section of act	Description	Title	Comments	Action date
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act - Site Specific Exemptions	HERITAGE ACT 1977 ORDER UNDER SECTION 57(2) TO GRANT SITE SPECIFIC EXEMPTIONS FROM APPROVAL Bass Point Reserve SHR No. 1896 I, the Minister for Heritage, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, in pursuance of section 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, do, by this my order, grant an exemption from section 57(1) of that Act in respect of the engaging in or carrying out of any activities described in Schedule “C” by the owner of the land described in Schedule “B” on the item described in Schedule “A”. The Hon Robyn Parker, MP Minister for Heritage Sydney, 24th Day of October 2012 SCHEDULE “A” The item known as Bass Point Reserve, situated on the land described in Schedule “B”. SCHEDULE “B” All those pieces or parcels of land known as Lot 3 DP 248002 in Parish of Terragong, County of Camden and extending ½ nautical mile into the ocean as shown on the plan catalogued HC 2541 in the office of the Heritage Council of New South Wales.	Jan 18 2013

			SCHEDULE "C" Works in accordance with the 'Bass Point Reserve - Plan of Management (draft)' (Shellharbour City Council, August 2000)	
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions	ORDER UNDER SECTION 57(2) OF THE HERITAGE ACT 1977 Standard exemptions for engaging in or carrying out activities / works otherwise prohibited by section 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977. I, Donald Harwin, the Special Minister of State pursuant to subsection 57(2) of the Heritage Act 1977, on the recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales do by this Order, effective 1 December 2020: 1. revoke the order made on 11 July 2008 and published on pages 91177 to 9182 of Government Gazette Number 110 of 5 September 2008 and varied by notice published in the Government Gazette on 5 March 2015; and 2. grant the exemptions from subsection 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977 that are described in the attached Schedule. Donald Harwin Special Minister of State Signed this 9th Day of November 2020. To view the standard exemptions for engaging in or carrying out activities / works otherwise prohibited by section 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977 click on the link below.	Nov 13 2020

Standard exemptions for engaging in or carrying out activities / works otherwise prohibited by section 57(1) of the *Heritage Act 1977*

Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		01896	18 Jan 13	3	120

References, internet links & images

Type	Author	Year	Title	Internet Links
Written	Benjamin Lindsay		A story of early land settlement in Illawarra and other articles on the history of Illawarra from the Illawarra Mercury and the Sydney Morning Herald, 1934-43: Newspaper cuttings	
Written	Caryll Sefton	1983	Prehistory: The Aboriginal Heritage	
Written	CE Sefton	1980	Aboriginal Cultural Resources Study: Illawarra Region	
Written	DEC NPWS NSW	2005	Aboriginal Illawarra (pamphlet)	
Written	DEC NSW	2005	A History of Aboriginal People of the Illawarra: 1770 to 1970	
Written	Dorothy Gillis	2009	150 years of Shellharbour: History notes of Shellharbour City Area	
Written	Dr Sandra Bowdler	1985	Revealing the Past: Archaeology in Australia	
Written	Edgar Beale	1983	Discovery and Settlement	
Written	Jim Derbyshire & Dianne Allen	1984	Land Between Two Rivers: A historic and pictorial survey of Shellharbour Municipality	
Electronic	Keith Macrae Bowden		Bass, George (1771-1803)	

				View detail
Written	Kenneth Charles Wentworth Miles	2008	A Brief History of Shellharbour, New South Sales and D'Arcy Wentworth's 'Illawarra Estate'	
Written	Manidis Roberts Consultants	2000	Bass Point Reserve: Draft Plan of Management (Volume 1: Reference Document)	
Electronic	Michael K. Organ & Carol Speechley	1997	Illawarra Aborigines - An Introductory History	View detail
Written	Michael Organ	1990	A Documentary History of the Illawarra and South Coast Aborigines, 1770-1850: including a Chronological Bibliography, 1770-1900	
Electronic	Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd	2004	Shellharbour Urban Fringe Lands: Cultural Heritage Assessment	View detail
Written	Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd	2000	Shellharbour City Council Area: Aboriginal Heritage Study	
Written	NSW Heritage Office - Maritime Archaeology Unit	2000	Shipwrecks - Shellharbour	View detail
Written	Shellharbour City Council	2011	SHR Heritage Inventory: Bass Point Reserve	
Written	Shellharbour City Council	2010	SHR Nomination Form	
Electronic	SMH Traveller	2009	Shellharbour	View detail
Written	Sue Wesson	2005	Murni Dhungang Jirrar: Living in the Illawarra: 1770 to 1970	

Written	Tamara Hynd	2005	Historic and Archaeological Map, Shellharbour City, 1830-1930	
Electronic	Tongarra Museum		Place Names of Shellharbour City	View detail

Note: internet links may be to web pages, documents or images.

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APPENDIX C

GEOMORPHOLOGICAL REPORT

Revised 19 Sept 2020

Bass Point Geomorphology in relation to the known archaeology.

Dr P.B. Mitchell OAM

This is a revised version of an earlier report written after a field inspection of the Bass Point Reserve with Elaine Lin of Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd., Kayla Williamson and Paul Cummins of Woronora Plateau Gundangara Elders Council conducted on 19 September 2020.

Geographically Bass Point is an unusual feature of the NSW coast as it is a large and little disturbed headland with an east-west orientation. The orientation means that it is exposed to wave attack from three directions; north, east and south, and it would be expected that the geomorphology may differ on each aspect. The headland is based on hard rock which does not generate quartz sand on weathering. The sand beaches are largely composed of shell fragments but the extensive dune cover appears to consist mainly of quartz. The first geological mapping (Pitman *et al.,* 1906) identified the bedrock at Bass Point as part of the Bumbo flow in Permian volcanics and labelled the headland as 'Raised Beach (?)'. No explanation of this point was presented and none of the other headlands on that map were so labelled. It is possible that they observed the relative abundance of coarse shell fragments in the soil and perhaps extensive rounded boulder deposits above high tide level and speculated that these may represent a raised beach.

Latite, also known as trachyandesite, is a porphyritic basalt with large phenocrysts of labradorite and augite. The Bumbo Latite is a near-horizontal sheet of submarine lava (it contains some pillow lava) and tuff with a total thickness of between 90 and 150m. The bedrock geology on either side of the headland is identical, but the geomorphology of the coast is not.

Figure 1. The geology of Bass Point according to Pitman *et al.,* (1906).

The second edition of the Wollongong 1:250,000 Geological Series (Rose 1966) confirmed the bedrock on the point as part of the Bumbo Latite in the Gerringong

Volcanics of Permian age (circa 264 my) within the Shoalhaven Group. The southern half of the headland was mapped as Quaternary alluvium (sand dunes), but no details were given.

In the Soil Landscape mapping Hazelton (1992) did not include any Quaternary sand on the headland and the entire feature was mapped as part of the Bombo Soil Landscape. The description of the soil materials and natural vegetation in that work is incorrect.

The most recent geologic mapping by Troedson and Hashimoto (2013) identifies Bass Point as Holocene bedrock-mantling dune over Permian sedimentary and volcanic rocks. This description is reasonable but provides no specific information about any of the rock or soil materials, and the field visit on 18 Sept 2020 found evidence that the dune is more likely to be of Pleistocene age and did not identify any sedimentary bedrock.

Field inspection confirmed that Bass Point is underlain by strongly jointed Bumbo Latite, which in places has prominent columnar jointing patterns, some areas of pillow lava on the shore platforms, and which is intersected by several volcanic dykes with different weathering characteristics. The crest of the headland at an elevation of about 30m is covered by an unknown thickness of dune sand. The age and composition of the sand, and the degree of soil development in it, has only been described in a few archaeological test pits which are contradictory.

There is a marked difference in micro-landforms on the shore platforms between the north and south sides of the headland, yet both are formed in the same rock type with identical jointing patterns. On the north side the platform appears to be an abrasion ramp. It contains few rock pools, few boulder beaches, and few cliffs.

In contrast the south side has a much higher relief. Rock pools, small ampitheatres, boulder beaches, and low cliffs are all more common. The principal erosion process on this side appears to be plucking of joint blocks, water layer weathering, and small rockfalls from the cliff edge, these difference suggest that over time the southern shore is subject to more energetic storm waves.

The two different aspects (north and south facing) of the shore platforms may be sufficient to explain these differences but others (see below) have suggested that Bass Point has been subject to several tsunami during the Holocene. If this view is valid then it has important implications for the age and condition of Aboriginal midden sites around the headland.

The following landforms are identified on the amended geomorphic map (Figure 1). Not all of the boundaries have been checked in the field but the revised descriptions are appropriate.

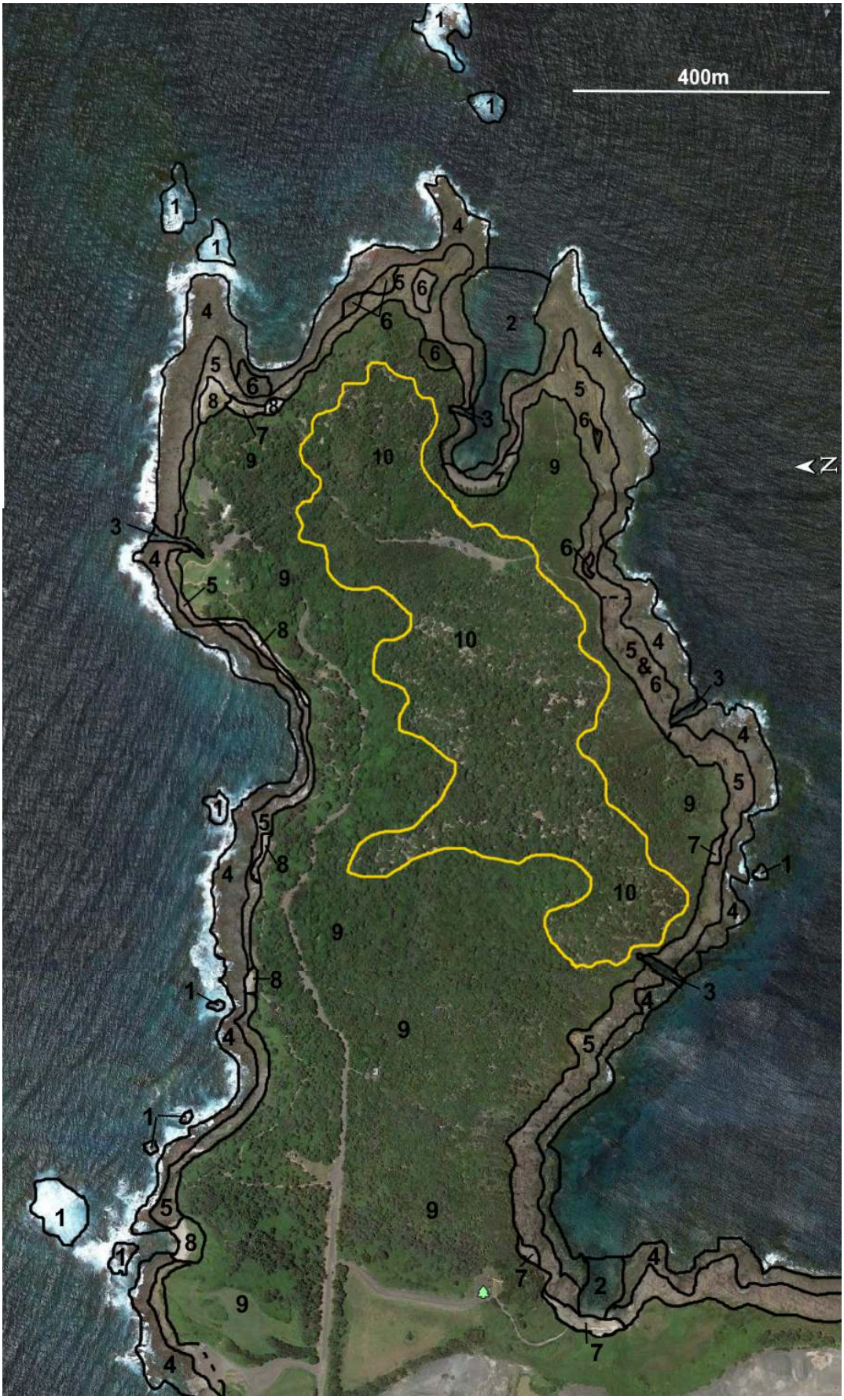

Figure 1. Draft map of the geomorphic features of the Bass Point Headland.

Key to the Bass Point Landforms depicted in Figure 1.

1. Offshore stacks, islets and bombora. Although usually subject to breaking waves, on rare occasions these isolated and partly submerged rocks can be accessible and may have provided marine food resources to Aboriginal people.
2. Enclosed bays of quiet shallow water. Surrounded by shore platforms, fishing and collecting could be conducted on frequent occasions.
3. Gulches eroded on weathered volcanic dykes. Deep water, strong wave surge, and steep sides makes access difficult but these sites may be favoured line fishing locations. Occasionally accessible by swimming and diving.
4. Inter-tidal zone of the shore platform. Readily accessible at low tide to mid-tide on most days of the year and can be a highly productive zone for food collection.
5. Supra-tidal zone of the shore platform including sea cliffs. Located just above the level of most high tides and is generally accessible but does not produce a great deal of collectible food species. A particular feature of this unit on the southern shore is the presence of abundant freshwater supplies from seepages and springs at the base of the cliffs. Water points are less likely along the northern shore.
6. Prominent lagoons/rock pools (smaller examples not mapped). Water quality and frequency of water exchange will vary with elevation above high tide. Most pools are salt or brackish water. A few pools at higher elevation can provide fresh water.
7. Boulder beaches which were convenient access points for launching canoes, but not productive of food in themselves. These may contain rock types suitable for flaked or edge ground tool manufacture.
8. Sand beaches composed mainly of fragmented shell, derived from the shore platforms. May be backed by vegetated sand sheets or low dunes above storm wave run up and can provide convenient camp sites. The proportion of quartz sand appears to be quite low.
9. Gentle vegetated hill slopes on aeolian sands with a high proportion of quartz. The biggest middens occur in this unit on the northern side. The occurrence of weathered latite is unusual and almost all of the soil profiles seen were underlain by iron-cemented sandrock which is as much as 3 to 4m thick in the cliffs at Maloneys Bay.
10. Headland dunes with prominent transgressive ridges. The bulk of this sand appears to have been moved onto the peninsula from the south, but there is also a component of more recent(?) sand drift from the north. The pedology and age of this unit is uncertain. The mapped boundary of this unit has been drawn from interpretation of the Google Earth image and has not been verified in the field.

Fresh water supply

Although the Bass Point Reserve (SHR 1896) covers some 72ha there is no obvious source of freshwater and no clear drainage lines on the reserve. This presents a puzzle with respect to the widespread evidence of Aboriginal occupation and it has been suggested that Aboriginal people must have relied on shallow wells in the sand. This may be true, but archaeological evidence of wells is unlikely to be found. In fact, wells were not essential as there is an abundant fresh water supply occurring as springs and seepages across the shore platform coming from the base of the cliffs (landform unit 9) along the southern shore.

Similar water supplies may be present in places on the northern shore but as the thickness of sand and sandrock is much less in that sector they are expected to be less common. It appears that no part of the peninsula is more than about 400m from a good fresh water supply.

Archaeology

The archaeology of Bass Point was first described by Bowdler (1970, 1976) who reported excavations on a large shell midden on the north-western margin of the headland. The same midden was further examined and sampled by Gillespie and Temple (1977) and Hughes and Djohadze (1980). These reports indicate that eight (8) test pits have been opened in it and at least 26 radiocarbon dates obtained from different materials in the deposit. The site was originally named Bass Point 1 and is registered as AHIMS Site No 52-5-78. Of all the middens on Bass Point this is the most important as it is the source all of the published archaeological history of the peninsula. Bowdler's work has been frequently cited and Bass Point has long been accepted as a coastal site of Pleistocene age. The actual location of 52-5-78 in UTM coordinates derived from Google Earth is; 306263E, 6269947S

A second midden of comparable size occurs at the eastern end of the peninsula beneath the Bealey Cove picnic ground. Originally known as Bass Point 6 and registered as 52-5-79 this is the same location as Hughes and Sullivan's (1974) Midden 3, which is a type location for the storm disturbed middens described by those authors. No serious excavation has been undertaken on this site and it has been disturbed by extraction of shell grit, vehicle tracks, construction of sealed car parks, erection of buildings and signs associated with the picnic facilities and the cultural heritage walk, and construction of a gravelled path. The actual location of 52-5-79 in UTM coordinates derived from Google Earth is; 307270E, 6169989S.

Despite the intensity of archaeological work on 52-5-78 serious questions about the chronology can be raised, and the claimed Pleistocene age for the base of the deposit is even queried by Bowdler (2010). Table 1 compares descriptions and dates derived from the same pits by Bowdler (1976) and Hughes and Djohadze (1980).

Table 1 A summary of the midden sequence according to Bowdler (1976) and as modified by Hughes and Djohadze (1980).

Bowdler (1976) Dates from individual determinations.	**Hughes and Djohadze (1980)** Dates estimated from an age/depth curve.
0-40cm. Dense shell midden. The upper midden was dominated my mussel shell and contained fish hooks and fish hook blanks. The base of this unit was dated at 570+/- 75 years BP. The lower midden contained more gastropods and bone points believed to be used in fish spears.	0-45cm. Upper midden extends to 25 cm and has about 5cm of modern disturbed sand on the surface. Determined age from 100-740 years BP. Lower midden contains shore platform gastropods and terminates at 1,800 years BP
40-55 cm. Grey sand containing deteriorated shell and some bone including two bone points. The base of	45-62.5cm. Grey sand with some poorly preserved shell. Terminates at 3,950 years BP

the grey sand was dated at 2,975 +/-145 years BP.	
55-100cm. White sand containing only pre-Bondian stone flakes. 17,010 +/- 650 years BP for the oldest artefact	62.5-100cm. White sand devoid of organic remains. The upper part extends to 7,700 years BP and the authors accept 17,500 years BP for the oldest artefact.
At 100cm. Sandrock	At 100cm. Eroded surface of Pleistocene sandrock. A date of 9,400 +/-200 years BP on humate in this unit was rejected because of the older date related to the artefact in the overlying white sand.

Neither of these papers presented pedological or sedimentological detail about the sequence except that Hughes and Djohadze (1980) claim that the white sand sits on an eroded surface of Pleistocene sandrock. This point opens the possibility for two different interpretations of the section.

Either the midden lies on a natural podzol soil profile in which the grey sand is an A_1 horizon and the white sand is a bleached A_2 horizon which passes into the B_2 sandrock (podzol pan). Alternatively, all of the grey and white sand and the midden layers have accumulated after stripping of a previously established soil profile and exposure of the B_2 horizon (sandrock). Neither paper discusses the possibility of artefacts and dateable material moving within the sand, nor the dubious reliability of particulate charcoal found in the soil which was used for the dating.

Bowdler (2010) expressed the view that the three generally accepted NSW coastal sites of Pleistocene age; Burrill Lake, Bass Point, and Wallen Wallen Creek, were all problematic with respect to their Pleistocene dates and therefore there was (then) little convincing evidence of Pleistocene human occupation on the NSW coast. This opinion is consistent with what is now known about Pleistocene sea levels and the physical location of the coast.

Resolution of this age question is important as Bass Point has long been held as a 'model site' and if the story of Aboriginal archaeology is to be presented in brochures and information signs etc., then the most reliable data should inform that story.

There are three other reasons why the archaeological chronology of Bass Point should be re-examined.

1. **Storm wave reworking**

Hughes and Sullivan (1974) looked at four middens on the northern edge of Bass Point, including 52-5-79 and claimed that storm wave reworking was possible up to 6 to 7m above mean sea level. In their view, the defining characteristics of this process in a midden were; the presence of; inedible shell species, abundance of shell grit, waterworn shell, inclusion of rounded gravel or pumice, presence of defined sedimentary layering or bedding, and the relative rarity of artefacts and charcoal. There is no doubt that this process occurs with storm wave runup and middens can be significantly modified or even destroyed within this zone, but any remnants are still

Aboriginal sites and need to be treated appropriately. On an extensive midden such as 52-5-78 that extend upslope from 2 to 15m above sea level it should be possible to identify the upper limits of reworked midden above the lowest elevations.

2. Tsunami effects on the NSW coast.

Bass Point was identified by Bryant, Young, and Price (1992) as demonstrating the importance of Holocene tsunami in modifying the coastal geomorphology of NSW. This claim was repeatedly presented over the following decade. It was widely assumed that traces of such events should be evident in the presence/absence, or internal fabric and stratigraphy of middens at the coast.

Prior to the work of Oak (1981) there was little data on the distribution and dynamics of boulder beaches in NSW and only one account (Sussmilch 1912) of the movement of a very large boulder (circa 235 tonnes) by historic storms. There were however many enigmatic descriptions of vegetated boulder beaches that extend several metres about high tide level and did not seem to be explicable by extreme storm events. Researchers, mainly from the University of Wollongong, compiled these observations and presented a hypothesis that the NSW coast had been subject to several tsunami waves including a mega-tsunami event which over-topped headlands during the Holocene (Bryant, *et al*., 1992, 1995, 1996, Bryant and Nott 2001, Bryant and Young 1996, Young and Bryant 1992, Young *et al*., 1995, and Bryant 2008).

Their lines of evidence were:

- Peculiar bedrock erosion features on shore platforms that were believed to be caused by very high flow velocities.
- Boulder beaches at elevated levels above high-water mark,
- Boulders of considerable size apparently dumped on headlands as much as 40m above sea level, or at considerable distances inland.
- Washover deposits of sand sheets above organic sediments in coastal lagoons.

Numerous examples were described on the coast between Myall Lakes and Merimbula, and hypothesised chronology and causes were presented.

Bass Point was presented as an example of a headland affected by such events where mounds of chaotically sorted shell hash with included rounded cobble and boulder sized debris were identified on the north shore in front of the Bowdler midden (52-5-78) and extending for 100m along the shore and up to 4m above the present storm wave limit. Three late-Holocene tsunami waves were postulated and it was argued that the mounds were emplaced by a tsunami wave that must have occurred since 740 BP (citing a date from Hughes and Djohadze 1980).

The major tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004 focussed the attention of researchers and a considerable number of additional papers were produced relating to comparable events in NSW including studies that questioned some of the evidence of the mega-tsunami hypothesis (Saintilan and Rogers 2005, Dominey-Howes *et al.,* 2006, Dominey-Howes 2007, Switzer and Jones 2008). In particular Hutchinson and Attenbrow (2009) argued that the 'well dated' archaeological sequence in Bowdler's midden demonstrated that no tsunami wave could have affected that site in the reported time frame. Note however that even Bowdler has expressed doubt about the reliability of the basal date.

Several studies re-examined important sites where boulders were alleged to have been dumped on headlands at Minnamurra and Beecroft. In each case new evidence was found to show that tsunami waves were not involved (Dominey-Howes *et al.,* 2006, Fink *et al*., 2010, Thomas and Schmidt 2018).

The evidence presented by washover deposits in coastal lagoons such as Killalea Lagoon only 2 km west of Bass Point has fared better (Switzer and Jones 2008) and was endorsed by others to the extent that deposits of this nature attributed to smaller tsunami waves have been retained as confirmed examples in recent issues of the tsunami data base (Goff and Chague-Goff 2014). Dating remained difficult and the best that has been claimed for Killalea Lagoon is that the event occurred sometime within the last 200 to 800 years.

Switzer *et al*, (2011) presented evidence of a new tsunami site in Batemans Bay and in the same paper summarised the state of knowledge and the known dates of alleged tsunami events on the east coast of NSW. These authors listed 60 coastal locations with purported evidence for palaeo-tsunamis of which only 29 had associated dated material. At Bass Point (their site #25) they listed three alleged events at 250, 1,500, and 2,900 years BP but only the youngest of these was supported by any date. Courtney *et al*., (2012) also reviewed the cases for Australian tsunami and concluded that there was little reliable evidence to support the mega-tsunami hypothesis on the east coast but they also admitted that the scenario was not impossible.

Goff and Chague-Goff (2014) revised the Australian tsunami data base and only accepted five palaeo events in a claimed total of 57 for NSW. None of the alleged dates for events at Bass Point were accepted.

In short, the geomorphic impact of tsunami waves on the NSW coast cannot be excluded in the Pleistocene and Holocene but the story is certainly not as dramatic as it was first presented in the context of a mega-tsunami overtopping headlands. New data from the more important headland sites have refuted this model but smaller events such as the breaching of the barrier at Killalea Lagoon appear to be possible.

The difficulties of unequivocal identification of tsunami signatures and the dating of identified events remain and are extremely challenging. However, given the proximity of Bass Point to Killalea Lagoon, and the unusual asymmetry of the shore platform on either side of the headland it must be considered possible that Bass Point has been affected by small tsunami waves during the late Holocene. Further consideration of this point in the field is warranted.

3. Holocene sea levels

It is well known that global sea levels have varied through the Pleistocene with the waxing and waning of ice sheets as the Earth passed through climate changes of the Ice Ages.

For decades, the oft repeated story has been that sea levels were between -120 and -130m below present at the time of the Last Glacial Maximum, 20,000 years ago. Post-glacial warming commenced, and between 18,000 and 12,000 years ago the sea rose steadily at an average rate of about 10mm/year reaching its present level 6,500 to

6,000 years ago (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999, Attenbrow 2002). Some authors presented scattered evidence that the level was actually one or two metres higher around 3,000 years ago but there was no consensus on this because that level of precision was difficult to obtain both with respect to measurements of past levels and accurate dating.

In the past three decades there have been a number of attempts to refine the data and real differences between Holocene sea levels in Northern Australia versus southeastern Australia have been identified (Short and Woodroffe 2009).

Sloss *et al.*, (2007) assembled the most comprehensive data base of dates and levels for the Holocene which, although it has a considerable spread around the best fit envelope, has substantially changed the picture to the extent that all archaeological sites located within 5m of present sea level (assuming 1m of higher sea level plus 4m of storm wave runup) should be reassessed with respect to material reworking and the acceptability of the established dates.

Figure 3 is a simplified version of the revised Holocene sea level curve in which it can be seen that sea level stood at about -18m 10,000 years ago, -2m 8,000 years ago, reached the present level at 7,800 years ago, then rose to between +1 and +1.5m above present until about 2,000 to 1,000 years ago, after which it retreated to the present level.

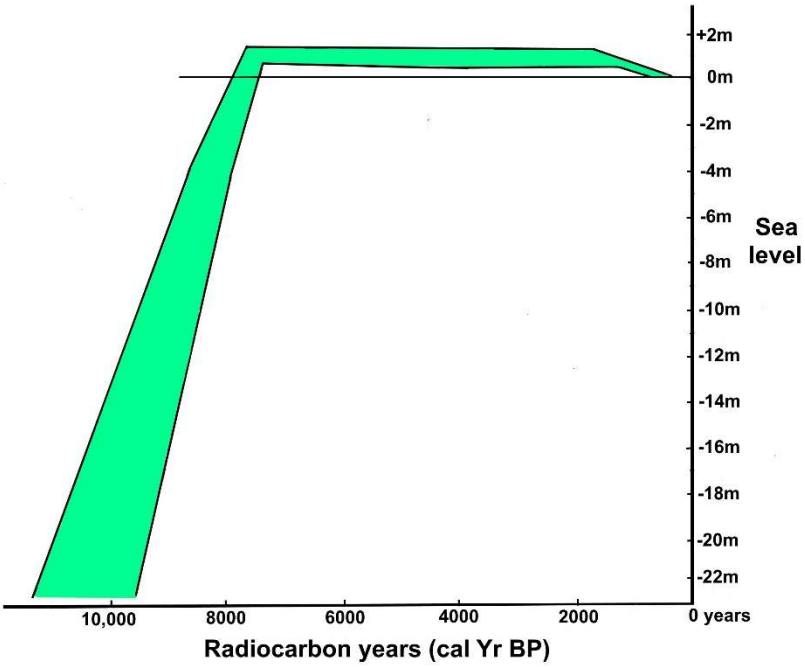

Figure 3. Envelope of the revised Holocene sea level curve for southeastern Australia after Sloss *et a*l., 2007.

This envelope is derived from a very large number of dates based on different materials and techniques from many locations on the southeastern coast. Additional recent support comes from dating at Sandon Point Beach, 16 km north of Bass Point reported by Dougherty *et al*., (2019).

If the revised curve is considered to be applicable to the Bowdler midden at Bass Point (52-5-78) and assuming that the contours depicted on the map by Hughes and Djohadze (1980) are reliable, then it can be predicted that those parts of the midden below an elevation of 5m ASL are likely to be younger and/or reworked by storm waves. Those parts of the midden above 5m elevation and extending to the highest elevation which is reported to be at 15m above sea level may contain materials older than about 8,000 years BP. Marine food resources would not be expected in any midden on this site if it was established when sea level was lower than say -10m below present. This corresponds with a date of about 9,000 years BP.

A model of this nature predicting a lateral shift in midden age and probable content may explain some of the differences between the interpretations of Bowdler and Hughes and Djohadze. It also seriously challenges the reported maximum age of 17,010 years BP (Bowdler 1976) as that part of the deposit contains marine shells which would not be expected for that age.

In addition to these questions the field visit also raised another which concerns the age and nature of the sand dunes and in particular the relationship between the excavated midden and the sandrock found at depth. On the southern edge of the peninsula the sand rock is remarkably thick and it seems likely that the sand rock is a much older deposit than the grey and white sands in which the midden material is described. One approach to testing this hypothesis is to measure the proportions of shell sand versus quartz sand in the different soil and rock materials, particularly in comparison with the present beaches. No local source of quartz sand is present today which implies that it must have been driven into the dune forms at a time of lower sea level. A second approach to this question is a dating program based on multi-grain OSL testing.

Summary conclusions.

Bass Point is a particularly interesting geomorphic site with unusual shore platform features, the remains of a probable Pleistocene sand dune on its crest, and numerous shell middens which may be much younger than have been reported. This chronology needs to be tested by a new excavation and dating program.

Given the revised Holocene sea level curve and uncertainties expressed about the dating of the Aboriginal midden by Hughes and Djohadze (1980) and Bowdler (2010) It appears very likely that the midden is only mid- to late-Holocene in age and that it sits on part of a natural soil formed in older dune sands. There is also a real possibility that the midden is laterally age transgressive with deposits at the higher elevation being older than those near the present shore.

Previous theories about the effects of a Holocene mega-tsunami on Bass Point are no longer tenable but one or more small tsunami waves may have been involved in midden reworking and the establishment of boulder beaches. Further work is needed to evaluate this point.

All of these points deserve more attention if a more reliable archaeological story is to be assembled which can be used to promote Aboriginal cultural heritage values for Bass Point. It would be appropriate for a research program to be developed to address them.

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APPENDIX D

NATIVE TITLE CLAIM INFORMATION

National Native Title Tribunal

Register of Native Title Claims Details

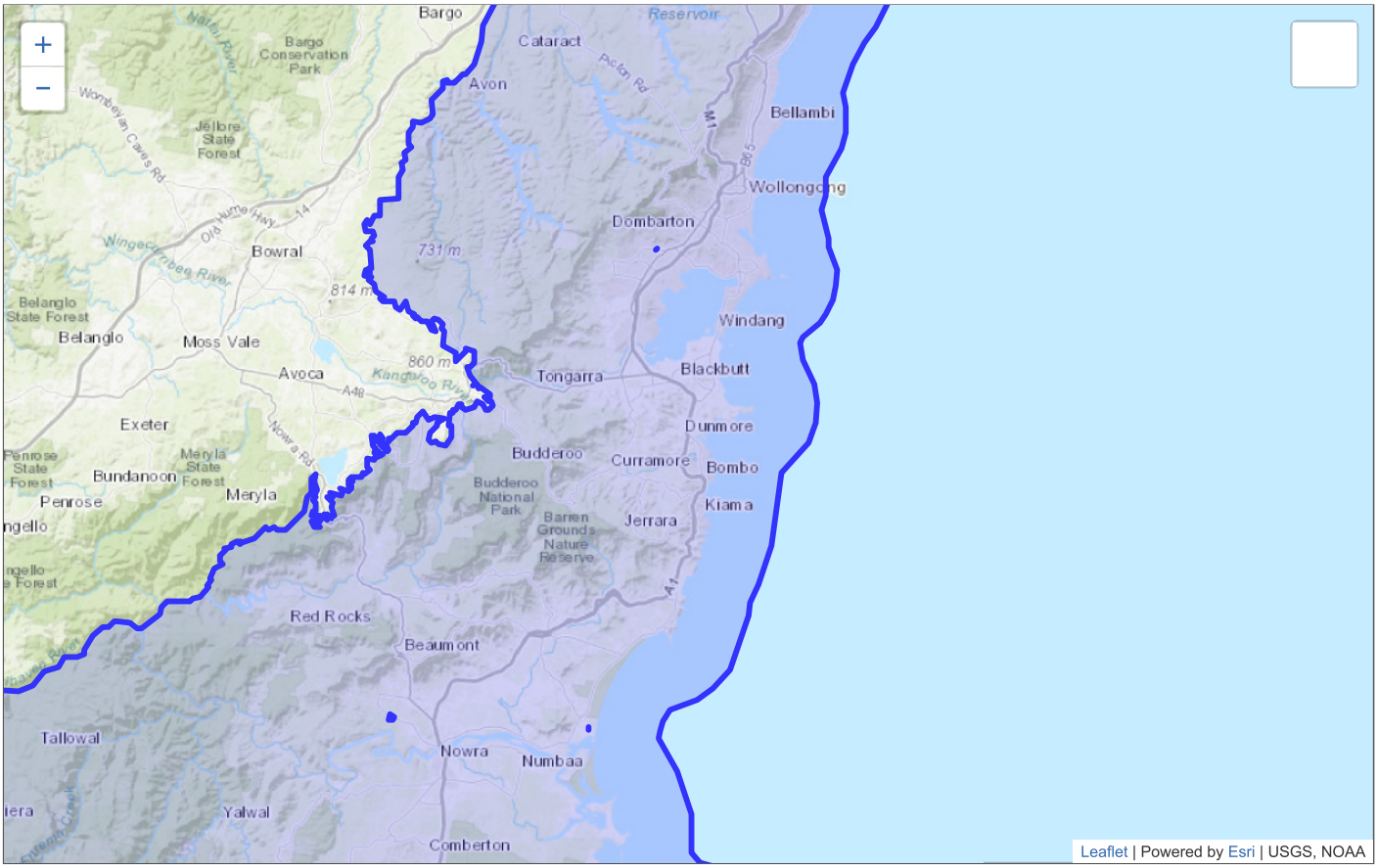
Back to search results

NC2017/003 - South Coast People

Tribunal file no.	NC2017/003
Federal Court file no.	NSD1331/2017
Application name	South Coast People
State or Territory	New South Wales;
Representative A/TSI body area(s)	New South Wales
Local government area(s)	Bega Valley Shire Council,Campbelltown City Council,Canterbury-Bankstown Council,Eurobodalla Shire Council,Georges River Council,Goulburn Mulwaree Council,Liverpool City Council,Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council,Shellharbour City Council,Shoalhaven City Council,Snowy Monaro Regional Council,Sutherland Shire Council,The Council Of The Municipality Of Kiama,Wingecarribee Shire Council,Wollondilly Shire Council,Wollongong City Council
Date filed	03/08/2017
Date claim entered on Register	31/01/2018

Register extract and attachments

Register extract	**RNTCExtract_NC2017_003.pdf**
Register extract attachment/s	**NNTT Map of the application area RNTC.pdf** **Attachment B Description RNTC.pdf** **Attachment C Map RNTC.pdf**



View this map in NTV: **NC2017/003**

VIRTUSHERITAGE

Bass Point Reserve

Shellharbour, NSW

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

VOLUME 2 - MANAGEMENT

May 2024

Prepared for Shellharbour City Council

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VIRTUSHERITAGE

We wish to acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples who are the custodians of the lands within which Bass Point Reserve is located and pay respects to Elders, past, present and future.

This Conservation Management Plan is compiled with respect for Aboriginal cultural heritage and connection to country and the importance of caring for country.

Version	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
1A	27.10.2020 11.11.2020	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	E. St Pierre Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	Clarifications and completions
1B 1C	09.12.2020 10.12.2020	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd K. Kent Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	MJ Sutton Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	Minor edits Format
1D	10.12.2020	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	Shellharbour City Council	Clarify, format and updated with SCC comments
2A - **FINAL**	08.04.2021	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	E. St Pierre Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd and M. Harvey Shellharbour City Council	Finalise and update report
3	27.10.2021	G. Scheer and E. St Pierre Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd		Updated from Heritage NSW and SCC Heritage Advisor review of draft.
3A	17.11.2021	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	M. Harvey Shellharbour City Council	Response to SCC comments
3B	12.01.2022	G. Scheer Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	M. Harvey Shellharbour City Council	Update Executive Summary
4A	07.05.2024	T. Chilcott and S. Sewell Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	M.J. Sutton Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd	Updates from Submissions Process

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CMP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Virtus Heritage was engaged by Shellharbour City Council (SCC) to prepare a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Bass Point Reserve in Shellharbour. Shellharbour City Council have commissioned this CMP in 2020, with funds made available by the NSW government and the Heritage Council's grant.

In 2013 Bass Point Reserve was listed as a State heritage item, Listing No. 10896, for its importance to the people of NSW. Bass Point Reserve and its surrounding marine habitat contain a large collection of areas with cultural, historical and maritime significance with the Aboriginal and European heritage sites being of State significance. The Reserve is also a highly valuable natural and recreational asset for the local area where a range of activities such as diving, snorkelling, fishing, whale watching, bushwalking and picnicking are very popular.

This CMP is a two volume report. Volume One presents the background information and significance. Bass Point Reserve is a natural promontory of rocky shorelines and sandy embayments, located just south of Shellharbour, NSW. The reserve is an area of c. 72 hectares, and remains Crown land, appointed to Shellharbour City Council for management under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*.

This is Volume Two and includes sections discussing legislation and statutory requirements for management of the Reserve. Historic items and cultural heritage places in Australia are protected and managed under a hierarchy of legislation and via a number of heritage guidelines. For Bass Point Reserve and its cultural heritage, the principal legislation which needs to be met in regard to any works within its boundary is the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. This is followed by the *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* – relating to maritime cultural heritage and the NSW Heritage Act 1977 amended 1999 – relating to both historical heritage and archaeology and maritime cultural heritage.

The State significance for Bass Point Reserve is due to the following heritage values:

Aboriginal cultural heritage –

The Reserve has important camping sites and shell middens and is a gathering place and ceremonial place. It has stories passed down through generations and is a place of great antiquity. It was likely occupied for approximately 20,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers and archaeological sites have been identified across the Reserve showing evidence of Aboriginal occupation, which is rare in the locality, but not within the region. Coastal sites with evidence of stone artefact knapping and midden deposit are common regionally but locally this form of material culture is rare due to the cumulative impact of development and infrastructure. These sites have some remaining integrity and potential for additional archaeological deposits as identified in archaeological studies such as Bowdler (1981) with potential for chronology/dating and stratified deposits, particularly in landforms where sites are often not visible within the Bass Point Reserve.

These sites are connected to other cultural features, knowledge and stories and are part of a broader regional cultural landscape belonging to the Aboriginal people of the Illawarra. The sites are representative of coastal middens and artefact scatters indicating camp sites and areas of long term Aboriginal occupation in coastal areas of NSW and have research potential for providing new information on coastal occupation in the Pleistocene (the geological epoch that lasted from about 2,580,000 to 11,700 years ago). The many middens are a type of site for the NSW South Coast that has high future scientific potential for dating and understanding Aboriginal occupation. Bass Point Reserve can contribute not only to the region but the nation's story of Aboriginal occupation and antiquity. SCC manage this cultural heritage by compliance with the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, see **Sections 7 and 8**

Environment and biodiversity –

The Reserve has high biodiversity with protected important terrestrial and marine ecosystems and habitats for many threatened and regionally significant species, as well as many endangered ecological communities. The environmental diversity is a key factor that often indicates long term and high density Aboriginal occupation and therefore, larger archaeological sites of high cultural and scientific value. A specialists

geomorphology report was included in this CMP project and is attached at Volume One.

Within the Reserve, Bushrangers Bay is a small rocky marine embayment, with a unique habitat and nursery area between temperate and tropical regions. It is the home of several rare and protected marine species. The shallows contain cuttlefish, sea dragons, nudibranchs, leather jackets, bream, yellowtail and bullseyes. Bushrangers Bay Reserve was declared an aquatic reserve for its representation of rock platforms, crevices and rock pools typical of the NSW mid-south coast, but also in recognition of the Reserve's unique habitat. The Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries manages fisheries, marine biodiversity including marine habitats, and manages Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve in partnership with Shellharbour City Council. It is one of the oldest aquatic reserves in the state.

The littoral rainforest at Bass Point Reserve is the only patch of such a community in the Local Government Area (Council Summary 2020). It is protected under the State Environmental PlanningPolicy Number 26 – Littoral Rainforests (stand # 173A). The current Ecological Plan of Management (Eco Logical Australia 2012) recommends that the area within the reserve is kept protected, with only qualified bush regenerators undertaking and/or supervising weed control activities. Two plant species which meet regional significance criteria were recorded at Bass Point Reserve as part of the 2012 development of an ecological management plan for the study area (Eco Logical Australia 2012). One was *Cynanchum elegans*, the White Flowered Wax Plant, while the second was *Celtis paniculata*, or the Native Celtis. The headland also contains multiple endangered ecological communities which provide habitat for a large variety offaunal species. The most recent faunal inspection was undertaken by Eco Logical Australia (2012) for the existing Ecological Assessment and Plan of Management for the reserve. A total of 52 species were found inhabiting the headland, including ten native mammals, 30 native birds, two amphibians, five reptiles, three exotic mammals and two exotic birds (Eco Logical Australia 2012: 20)

Historical and maritime heritage –

The land of the reserve was part of the large Wentworth Estate (1803-1827) and used for cattle grazing. During the 1840s an influx of poor immigrant families was settled on 4000 acres (1618.7ha) of the huge estate, through the goodwill and efforts of philanthropist CarolineChisholm and Captain Robert Towns and his wife Sophia Wentworth (descendant of D'Arcy). The land was cleared for wheat, potatoes and other vegetables as well as cattle. In 1865 a portion of 1036 ha, was sold to George Fuller and included Bass Point. Fuller called his estate 'Dunmore' and continued to lease it to farmers. From 1880 basalt, in large quantities, was quarried here and shipped from the jetty Fuller constructed, where the loader is now located. His two sons continued farming and quarrying after his death, and then sold in 1923 (Manidis Roberts, August 2000, 51). Between 1923 and WW2 documented uses for Bass Point relate to shell grit mining, and Bass Point was known as one of the best shell grit mining spots in the State.

During WW2, the Voluntary Defence Corps personnel were stationed at various places around Shellharbour including Bass Point and Dapto and were thought to use the old shell grit huts on the Reserve. The soldiers of the 6th Machine Gun Battalion came to the rescue in 1943 when the American stores ship, *Cities Service Boston* was wrecked at Bass Point. The wreck was salvaged over the next ten years, with a rail track constructed across the rock platform at the Gutter to haul out salvaged steel plate. Bass Point Reserve contains a memorial commemorating the Australian soldiers who lost their lives during the rescue. There are eight historic shipwrecks located in the waters surrounding Bass Point. The *Alexander Berry, Cities Service Boston, Our Own* and *Kiltobranks* have been located and inspected. The *Bertha, Echo and Amphitrite* and *Comboyne* have not been located to date.

Management and Policies:

There are ten Heritage Conservation Policies that will guide management of Bass Point Reserve in relation to its natural, maritime, historical and Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. They are included in the following pages and at Section 10 of this Volume.

Once an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit is obtained under the NSW NPWS Act, works that will affect these

following items can be undertaken, with the advised management actions:

Heritage Ranking	Identified Element	Definition and Management Actions
High	▪ Aboriginal cultural heritage items and places ▪ *Cities Services Boston* memorials ▪ Tramway items associated with *Cities Services Boston* ▪ Identified and unknown shipwrecks and/or submerged sites ▪ Marine life and the marine environment including rock platforms and rockpools ▪ Identified rare flora and the littoral rainforest	– This fabric or element should not be removed from its existing place or demolished. – Should be preserved, restored or reconstructed with advised consultations. – Sympathetic adaptive works can be undertaken with advised consultations.
Moderate	▪ Current signage relating to any aspect of the Reserve ▪ Existing huts, amenities, seating, shelters ▪ Fencing and gates	– Should preferably be retained in situ but there is greater opportunity for adaptation pending advised consultations. – The removal of this fabric or element is allowable only if there is no detrimental impact on the significance of the place or item. – Works should always have regard for the cultural significance of the place and the potential impact upon significant fabric and its setting.
Low	▪ Roads ▪ Gravel paths and access tracks ▪ Timber steps ▪ Car parking areas	– May be retained, adapted or removed, as necessary or desired. – Works to this element must not impact upon elements of fabric graded as High and must not detract from the overall cultural significance of the place.
Intrusive	Landscape items including weeds	– Should be removed or adapted in order to enhance the cultural significance of the place.

Policy	Description
Policy 1 – Adoption and Review of the Conservation Management Plan	This 2021 Conservation Management Plan is to be submitted to Shellharbour City Council for review and endorsement and will be placed on public exhibition. This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be reviewed within 5 years but not later than 2030, to ensure that it remains a useful guide and accompanies the changing needs and circumstances of SCC. A copy is to be provided to Crown Lands for their review and comment. The contact details are as follows: Senior Property Management Officer Regional Services Crown Lands Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

Policy	Description
	Ground floor, 5 O'Keefe Ave, Nowra NSW 2541 Email: heike.peterlin@crownland.nsw.gov.au An email or letter with information relating to updates to the State Heritage Register listing for Bass Point Reserve and stating that there is (once approved by SCC) a CMP in place is required to be sent to Heritage NSW for their information and for updating on the State Heritage Register listing for Bass Point Reserve. The contact details are: Email: heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au A copy of the CMP is to be provided by SCC to the AAC for their endorsement.
Policy 2 – Accessibility and Distribution of Conservation Management Plan	In order for the CMP to be a useful guide, it needs to be accessible. It is to be made accessible to the stakeholders, contractors and the general public by SCC and a copy provided to the Shellharbour Library and Museum. It is particularly important that a copy of the CMP is kept by SCC for access by their maintenance/works personnel and that it is consulted prior to any works taking place within the Reserve, see *Policy 3*. This will allow for any other communications / permits to be obtained. Copies of the final CMP should also be provided to NSW Heritage, AAC and ILALC (hard copies) and all consulted Aboriginal stakeholders.
Policy 3 – Location and Setting of the Reserve	This CMP references the principles of the Burra Charter and recommends the process of investigation, assessment and management and the legal requirements of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (2010 amendments) and NSW Heritage Act, 1977. Conserving a place requires ongoing maintenance to ensure that it is kept in a good state of repair and that problem areas are identified early before they become major maintenance issues. All future actions or works for Bass Point Reserve, due to its State significance, should be guided by this CMP, including these (maintenance) works – see *Policy 5*: ○ landscaping and weed removal, ○ removal and replacement of roadwork elements, ○ drainage, ○ signage, ○ maintenance of any element including road and path surfaces, ○ repair or any element, and ○ any new works. Specifically, if any works are proposed the scope is to be provided to the key stakeholder group (see Table 4, **Section 7**)/and the CFRMAC, see ***Policy 4.***
Policy 4 – Establish Bass Point	Internal SCC stakeholders have been identified for managing the Reserve. In addition, an SCC Sub-Committee will effectively manage the disparate elements

Policy	Description
Reserve Sub-Committee as part of Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee (CFRMAC)	and coordinate communications, approvals and permits and all work programs and be an intermediary with general public. Bi-monthly (every second month) meetings held at Council or on site at Bass Point Reserve are recommended. This is best achieved, SCC have advised, by integrating Bass Point Reserve matters specifically within the responsibilities of the existing Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee. The CFRMAC will be the conduit for future major maintenance, as well as development of a Master Plan for works at Bass Point Reserve which will form part of the application for a Bass Point Reserve AHIP.
Policy 5 – Site Maintenance and Individual Element Management	a) The maintenance and repair strategy in place by SCC for the care of Bass Point Reserve needs to be coordinated by the CFRMAC. Coordination will ensure that land, marine and maritime heritage are protected and that any required consents / approvals / permits have been obtained. b) As works have the potential to harm or remove Aboriginal objects or Aboriginal cultural values they must first be approved by Heritage NSW via the preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) to legally comply with the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (2010 amendments). A plan of program of works is to be prepared so that an AHIP can be initiated, and it is possible that for some proposed works archaeological test excavations may be required to determine whether the works will harm Aboriginal heritage sites and determine how harm can be limited or avoided. It is likely that activities within the Reserve will require Aboriginal consultation and/or community collection during works. c) In addition, mandatory on site induction is required for all contractors, volunteers and staff. This includes bush-care and weeding. This induction training is to be facilitated by SCC and an Aboriginal registered stakeholder, to present the Aboriginal heritage and cultural induction. d) An induction checklist is to be prepared for SCC, that will include (but is not limited to) an outline of the legislation in relation to archaeological sites, basic archaeological context of the area, including general artefact identification and cultural heritage awareness and an Unexpected Finds Procedure (including photographic examples) to incorporate all possible archaeological relics or objects discoverable at Bass Point and to provide a consistent approach on how to proceed in the event of uncovering an unexpected heritage relic or object.
Policy 6 – Previously Removed Historical Elements	Any historical elements removed from Bass Point Reserve should be recorded and safely stored to conserve them. Advice from a conservation expert is recommended regarding safe storage of the removed hull and keel for Cities Services Boston, which is currently deteriorating at the open-air commemoration location. This policy should be considered in the future development of the Master Plan for Bass Point Reserve.
Policy 7 – Setting, Views and Vistas	The landmark quality of the site should be maintained by retaining the existing view corridors and attractive natural landscape of Bass Point Reserve. Retention of Bass Point Reserve as Crown Land and a public reserve ensures this protection. In general Crown Land is protected by adhering to the Principles of Crown Land

Policy	Description
	Management as required under the CLMA 2016 (relevant legislation at website: https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-058 and the Regulation at https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2018-0088: Under Condition 6 of the Regulation, it is stated that: (1) The responsible manager of dedicated or reserved Crown land may set aside any part of the land (including any building or enclosure in or on the land) for any purpose for which the land may be used. (2) The setting aside is subject to, and must be consistent with, any plan of management for the dedicated or reserved Crown land. This policy states that before making any decisions which may have a material effect on Bass Point Reserve and its heritage significance including setting, views and vistas, is to be considered via referral to the CFRMAC and Heritage NSW. Views and vistas as shown in Volume 1 of this CMP relates to other cultural features. SCC should consider views and vistas and connections to places being included in the SHR listing and a part of future management.
Policy 8 – New services	Services within Bass Point are minor and do not detract from its natural environment. Existing services such as seating, parking signage, two amenities blocks, and a number of small timber shelters have been installed through the years. Future services and other embellishments should be considered as part of an overall Master Plan. Until the Bass Point Master Plan is finalised, there are no plans to update these services. If new services are proposed, for instance, lighting (there is currently no lighting within the Reserve) such services would be subject to an assessment of the impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage. This could be managed under an area wide AHIP for the whole of the Reserve and arranged via a Management Plan and application to Heritage NSW with a clear indication of what the impacts will be.
Policy 9 – Access	Public access is an important issue for the site. Security measures in relation to public access have been developed via the existing gateway that closes across the access road. There is signage at the gateway with closure times, and SCC lock the gate every evening. However, from the water there is no visible protection or indication that a Reserve (the whole of Bass Point) has been entered. Signage regarding the Aquatic Reserve is only erected at Bushrangers Bay and visible from land. SCC will continue to engage with DPI Fisheries on signage requirements and locations to best protect inter-tidal areas.
Policy 10 – Heritage Interpretation	Signage and heritage interpretation, including historical information, is an excellent way of meeting the needs of the wider community and assisting their understanding of the importance of Bass Point Reserve as well as engendering responsible and respectful behaviour within the reserve. An interpretation strategy is required to combine the variety of signage within the Reserve and enable a coordinated approach. This CMP recommends further

Policy	Description
	heritage interpretation signage, (refer to **Sections 9.4** and **9.6**). The impact of signage can be managed as part of an area wide AHIP for Bass Point Reserve. There needs to be inclusion of maritime and Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Reserve: a) For maritime heritage, land-based panels/signs are to be located in the Picnic Bay Area and Bushranger Bay area that include information about the protection of shipwrecks in Australia. There is already infrastructure present in these areas that signage could be incorporated into. b) Signage, including heritage interpretation, should be provided for public appreciation at the entry to the Reserve, and developed in consultation with the AAC and Aboriginal stakeholders to ensure it is culturally appropriate. This CMP recommends the establishment of a small venue outside the gates to Bass Point Reserve, where information is displayed and further relevant information, such as parking and safety are provided. c) The SCC website is to be updated with heritage information relating to the significance of Bass Point Reserve.

1. VOLUME TWO INTRODUCTION

Virtus Heritage have been engaged by Shellharbour City Council (SCC) to prepare this Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Bass Point Reserve in Shellharbour. Bass Point Reserve is a natural promontory of rocky shorelines and sandy embayments located south of Shellharbour in NSW. The reserve is an area of approximately 72 hectares, and it was appointed to Shellharbour City Council under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*. The Reserve and its surrounding marine habitat include many areas with cultural, historical and maritime significance. The Aboriginal and European heritage sites are of State significance and Bass Point Reserve is listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR), Listing No. 10896. The Reserve is also a highly valuable natural and recreational asset for the local area where a range of activities such as diving, snorkelling, fishing, whale watching, bushwalking and picnicking are very popular. The reserve contains one of the few remaining areas of littoral rainforest in the Illawarra, a large number of protected native species of state conservation significance and significant extensive marine habitats.

The SHR listing notes the following boundaries for the Reserve; *All those pieces or parcels of land known as Lot 3 DP 248002 in Parish of Terragong, County of Camden and extending ½ nautical mile into the ocean as shown on the plan catalogued HC 2541 in the office of the Heritage Council of New South Wales*.

There are many management aspects for SCC to consider, such as bushfire management, visitor numbers, leasing, and licensing that have been addressed in the Draft Plan of Management Volume A and B (Manidis Roberts 2000). In addition, SCC have advised they are updating the Bass Point Reserve Plan of Management c.2022. There are other statutory requirements for SCC, as managers of Bass Point Reserve, and this volume of the CMP provides updated information relating to the responsibilities associated with the State listing of Bass Point Reserve. This volume of the 2020 CMP also presents information on how the cultural heritage significance of Bass Point Reserve can be managed and includes, where relevant, management issues such as access, works and visitor numbers.

A main objective of a CMP, as outlined in the Australian guidelines *The Conservation Plan* (2000), is to set out the significance of the item and develop appropriate policies to enable that significance to be retained in future use and development. The *NSW Heritage Manual (2001)* indicates that a CMP should be a concise document that makes reference to other documentation where necessary, rather than repeating the information included in previous reports unless of particular relevance. For Bass Point Reserve there are intertwining areas of cultural heritage to be managed. This report, Volume 2, addresses the management aspects for the heritage significance, which was identified in Volume 1.

The following table outlines the Project Brief for this CMP, which included the requirements to clarify the heritage significance of Bass Point, as it is of importance to the people of NSW:

To understand Bass Point Reserve through investigation of its historical and geographical context, its history, fabric, research potential, and importance to the community.	▪ Volume 1 of the CMP addresses the objective of further identifying and understanding this significance. ▪ **Volume 1 also includes updates to be added to the SHR listing**.
To investigate and assess the documentation and physical evidence of Bass Point Reserve to determine the nature, extent and degree of significance.	▪ Volume 1 includes this information.
To consult with relevant community and interest groups during the investigative process.	▪ A consultation log is attached with Volume 1.
What are the current obligations arising from statutory and non-statutory requirements? What are the current obligations arising from heritage significance?	▪ **A full explanation of the SHR system and the Aboriginal cultural heritage system, which work independently, is included in Volume 2 of this CMP.**
To prepare a succinct statement of significance and provide a basis on which future policies and management processes can be built.	▪ An update for the existing Statement of Significance is included in Volume 1. ▪ **Policies, which are based on the significance, are included in Volume 2.**
What current short and long term opportunities are there for development of the Reserve?	▪ **This objective is discussed in relation to the significance in Opportunities and Constraints, Volume 2.**
Given the rise in recent tourism, what are the expected levels of visitation and what facilities would be required to accommodate this while ensuring that the heritage and ecological value is preserved?	▪ **Management of the Reserve, given the current increase in visitor numbers, is addressed in Volume 2.** ▪ **This objective will be finalised by Council as part of their Master Planning process for Bass Point Reserve.**
Guided by the assessment of the heritage significance, what recommendations can be made on the policies SCC should adopt in order to maximise the recreational potential and capacity of the reserve while ensuring that all identified considerations are maintained and preserved?	▪ **See above.** ▪ **Policies to manage the Reserve based on its heritage significance are included in Volume 2.**
To make recommendations on the framework that should be installed for the review and maintenance of the resulting Conservation Management Plan.	▪ **This objective is addressed in the policies section in Volume 2.**

2. STATUTORY LEGISLATION OVERVIEW

This section addresses statutory requirements for the heritage significance of Bass Point Reserve.

Historic items and cultural heritage places in Australia are protected and managed under a hierarchy of legislation and via a number of heritage guidelines. The following section provides a summary of the relevant statutory regulations for Bass Point Reserve. The relevant guidelines are attached with this report, at **Appendices A to C**. The following are the key legislation relevant to the State heritage status of Bass Point Reserve.

For Bass Point Reserve and its cultural heritage, the principal legislation which needs to be met in regard to any works is the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.*

- **Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018** – relating to maritime cultural heritage.

  The Commonwealth *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* (UCHA) is administered in collaboration between the Commonwealth and the States, Northern Territory and Norfolk Island. Heritage NSW in the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) (hereafter referred to as Heritage NSW) is the State entity responsible for administering the *UCHA 2018*, and the shipwreck and relics provisions of the NSW *Heritage Act* 1977 (within State Waters of NSW).

- ***NSW Heritage Act 1977 amended 1999*** *– relating to historical heritage and archaeology and maritime cultural heritage*

  Owners and managers of State heritage-listed properties with historical heritage need to seek approval from the Heritage Council of NSW if they wish to make changes which may affect the heritage significance of the place. For contact and advice, Heritage NSW are the government body responsible. In 2020, the following site specific standard exemption was established and is noted on the State Heritage Register listing for Bass Point Reserve, accessible at https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5061535

  42217 57(2) Exemption to allow work Standard Exemptions Minister Cowied 11/09/2020

  Standard Exemption 2: Repairs to non-significant fabric

  Specified activities/works:

  a. *Repair (such as refixing and patching) of damaged or deteriorated non-significant fabric.*
  b. *Replacement of missing, damaged or deteriorated non-significant fabric that is beyond further maintenance.*

  Relevant standards:

  c. *Specified activities/works must not involve alteration to, damage to, or the removal of, significant fabric.*
  d. *Only missing, damaged or deteriorated non-significant fabric that is beyond further repair or maintenance may be replaced.*
  e. *Any new materials must not exacerbate the decay of significant fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing significant fabric or limit access to significant fabric for future maintenance.*

- ***National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974*** *– relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage*

  The protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW is the responsibility of Heritage NSW in the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

All Aboriginal places and objects are protected under the NPW Act 1974. Heritage NSW in the DPC also support the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee and the Heritage Council of NSW to carry out their functions under the NPW ACT 1974 and the Heritage Act 1977.

The significance of Bass Point Reserve was studied and described in Volume 1 of this CMP. The 'dots on maps' provided in **Figure 2**, **Volume 1** for recorded Aboriginal sites (AHIMS) should be considered as discrete locations of the evidence of Aboriginal occupation that erodes from the broader landforms.

It is the landforms at Bass Point that are the true 'site' boundaries describing Aboriginal cultural use of the landscape. This is how Bass Point Reserve needs to be recognised from a management perspective, rather than limiting Aboriginal occupation at Bass Point Reserve to the small windows of eroded evidence visible and recorded during site surveys and shown as 'dots on the map'. In this way too, the cultural and scientific values for Aboriginal occupation and cultural heritage are also recognised and managed.

No impacts that may cause harm to Aboriginal objects and places can occur for Bass Point Reserve without SCC making an application to Heritage NSW for an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP). An Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) is the legal instrument Heritage NSW issues under Part 6 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. The application process includes these steps:

a) identification of proposed works

b) preparation of detailed impact assessment on (identified) significance

c) consultation with all relevant Aboriginal parties.

AHIP applications must be prepared in accordance with Heritage NSW guidelines and community consultation as per clause 60 of the NPW Regulation. This process requires the preparation of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment completed as per the *Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW* (OEH 2011), with an appended Archaeological Assessment report prepared in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Archaeological investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales* (DECCW 2010a). This process also requires community consultation to be undertaken, in accordance with *the Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents* (DECCW 2010b).

3. MARITIME CULTURAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION

3.1 Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018

Australia protects its shipwrecks, sunken aircraft and other types of underwater heritage and their associated artefacts through The Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018 (UCHA 2018) which came into effect on 1 July 2019, replacing the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976.

The new Underwater Cultural Heritage Act continues to provide protection for historic shipwrecks in Australian waters and expands protection to historic aircraft wrecks within Commonwealth waters, and establishes a register of underwater cultural heritage, the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database (AUCHD).

Under Part 2, Division 1, Subsection 16, the following articles of underwater cultural heritage are automatically protected:

(a) all remains of vessels that have been in Australian waters for at least 75 years.
(b) every article that is associated with a vessel, or the remains of a vessel, and that has been in Australian waters for at least 75 years.

(Note: Articles c and d pertain to underwater aircraft remains and are not relevant for this CMP).

At the time of writing (2020), vessels and aircraft wrecked before 1945, and their associated articles, are automatically protected under the Act. Under Part 2, Division 1, Subsection 17 of the Act, shipwrecks, aircraft wrecks and their associated articles that do not meet the criteria for automatic protection may be granted protection by the Minister.

Shipwrecks located around Bass Point protected under this Act are:

Amphitrite, Echo, Bertha, Our Own, Alexander Berry, Comboyne, Kiltobranks, City of Boston Services.

There are no aircraft or other maritime infrastructure located in the study protected by this act.

Divers are free to visit shipwreck sites and to learn from them and a permit is not required to enter most shipwreck zones and other underwater sites. (Heritage NSW, Maritime Permits, https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/permits-and-assessments/assessment-and-permit-types/).

Under Subsections 17 and 19 of the Act, the Minister may declare other kinds of 'articles' of underwater cultural heritage protected, if the Minister is satisfied that they may be of heritage significance. Such 'articles' could be interpreted to include submerged terrestrial sites, historic cables and pipelines, archaeological deposits associated with maritime infrastructure or dumped material that may be located in Australian waters.

Under Subsection 30 of the Act, it is an offence to directly or indirectly physically disturb or otherwise damage protected underwater cultural heritage or cause the removal of protected underwater cultural heritage from waters or its archaeological context. Part 3, Division 2, Subsections 29 – 40 outline further offences under the Act.

Under Part 3, Division 1, Subsection 23 of the Act, a person may apply to the Minister for a permit authorising the person or persons specified in the permit to engage in specified conduct relating to the protected underwater cultural heritage. Such activities would include archaeological excavation and could include removal of the underwater cultural heritage with the implementation of acceptable

mitigation.

Under Subsection 20 of the Act, the Minister may, by legislative instrument, declare an area containing protected underwater cultural heritage to be a protected zone. Specific conduct within a protected zone may be prohibited.

Engaging in prohibited conduct within a protected zone without a permit, or adversely affecting protected underwater cultural heritage, is subject to criminal and civil penalties, including imprisonment.

3.2 NSW Heritage Act 1977

The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* is the primary piece of State legislation affording protection to all items of environmental heritage (natural and cultural) in New South Wales. It is important to note that for the purposes of this Act, the State of NSW includes the seabed and the water column up to 3 nautical miles (nm) from the coast.

The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* therefore, within 3 nm of the NSW coast, protects shipwrecks. Shipwrecks currently under the jurisdiction of the *NSW Heritage Act* are identified in the Historic Shipwrecks Register, maintained by the NSW Heritage Council (under the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet).

Under Part 3C, Section 47 of the Act a historic shipwreck means the remains of any ship including any articles associated with the ship: *that have been situated in State waters, or otherwise within the limits of the State, for 75 years or more, or that are the subject of a historic shipwreck's protection order.*

In Part 3C, a reference to an article being associated with a ship includes a reference to:

(a) any article that appears to have formed part of the ship, and
(b) any article that appears to have been installed on, or carried in, the ship, and
(c) any article that appears to have been constructed or used by a person associated with the ship.

A reference to any remains of a ship, or any article (item) associated with a ship, being *situated in State waters* includes a reference to any such remains or an article:

(a) being situated in, or forming part of, the land beneath those waters, or
(b) being situated in, or forming part of, a reef in those waters.

Section 51 of the Act prevents the *movement, damage, or destruction of historic shipwrecks.*

(1) A person must not move, damage, or destroy any historic shipwreck otherwise than in accordance with a historic shipwrecks permit.
(2) This section does not apply to a historic shipwreck that is subject to an interim heritage order made by the Minister or a listing on the State Heritage Register.
(3) This section does not prevent a person from moving, damaging or destroying a historic shipwreck situated in any land in accordance with an excavation permit in force in respect of that land.
(4) It is a defence to proceedings for an offence under this section if the defendant establishes that the act giving rise to the offence was done for the purpose of:
    a. saving human life, or
    b. securing the safety of a ship where the ship was endangered by stress of weather or by navigational hazards, or
    c. dealing with an emergency involving a serious threat to the environment.

Section 51 is included in the Act to provide a link to and consistency with the *Underwater Cultural*

Heritage Act 2018 (UCHA 2018). However, in NSW the 'relics' provision takes precedence over Part 3C when it comes to determining the legal and protected status of a wreck and associated artefacts. There are also provisions within the Act, which allow for the declaration of an emergency Interim Heritage Order.

***There is one site listed on the State Heritage Register located within the study area: Bass Point Reserve, shown with its heritage curtilage below in* Figure 1.**

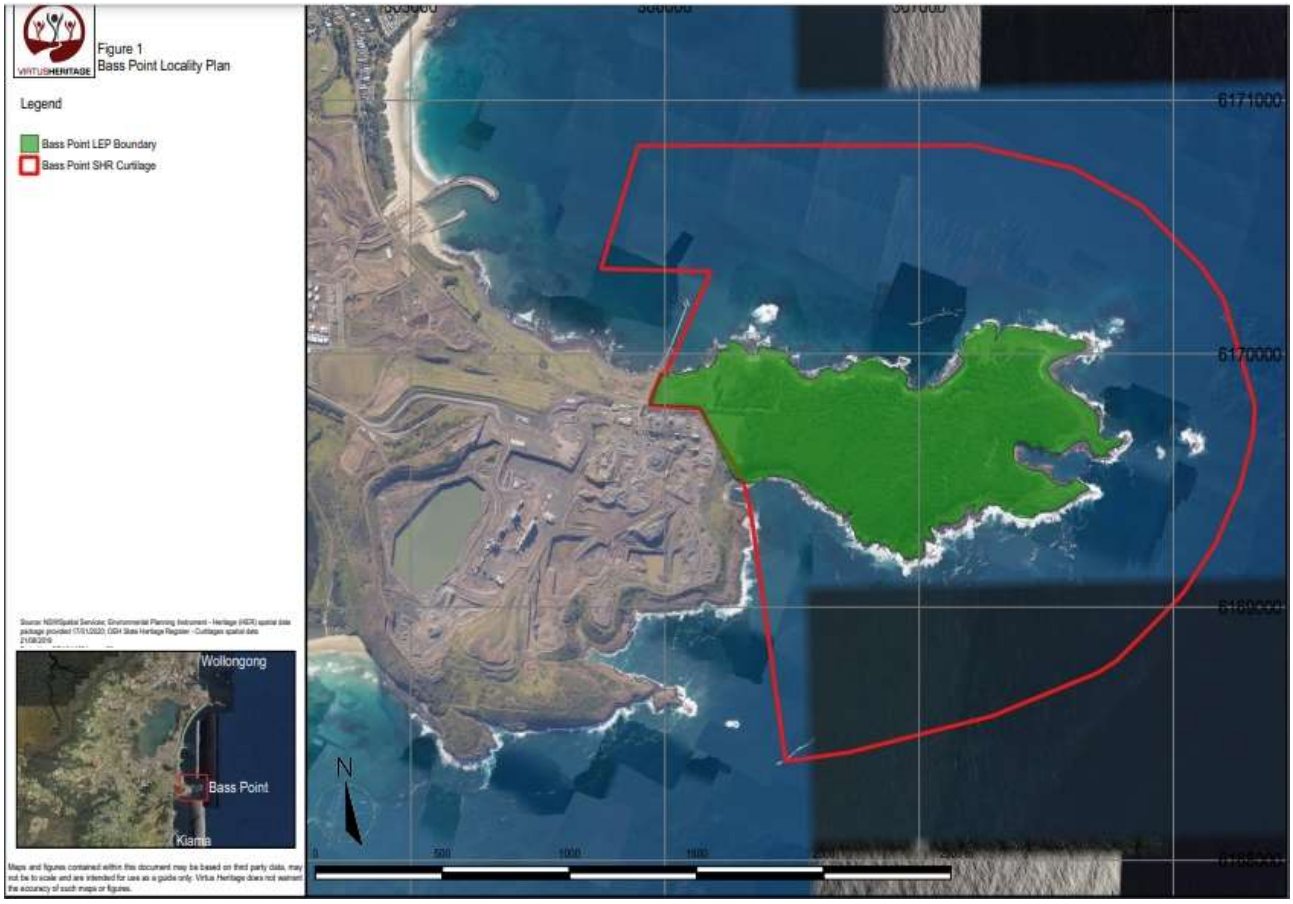


Figure 1: Bass Point Reserve with its State heritage curtilage shown via the red line.

The relics provision applies to archaeology – maritime and land. Sections 139 to 145 of the Act prevent the disturbance or excavation of land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, except by a qualified archaeologist to whom an excavation permit has been issued by the NSW Heritage Council / Heritage NSW\. In cases where relics, or the potential for relics, are identified, there are procedures to be followed in order to comply with the *Heritage Act 1977* and they are:

- The proponent will be required to apply for an archaeological excavation permit (S140) under Section 139 of the *Heritage Act 1977* if the proposed development design cannot be modified to avoid disturbance of relics;
- This application would be submitted to the Heritage NSW accompanied by an archaeological assessment report that describes relics present and the impact of the development on the relics;

- To consider the permit application, the Heritage Council requires the applicant to supply a separate document known as a *Research Design & Excavation Methodology,* which is essentially an archaeological scope of work.

Heritage NSW has issued exceptions to the above permit procedure, which apply for archaeological significance at a local level and relate to maritime archaeological potential. These maritime archaeology exceptions are applicable to this CMP for Bass Point Reserve:

(a) Where an archaeological assessment has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines published by the Heritage Council of NSW which indicates that any relics in the land are unlikely to have State or local heritage significance; or

(b) Where the excavation or disturbance of land will have a minor impact on archaeological relics; or

(c) Where the excavation or disturbance of land involves only the removal of unstratified fill which has been deposited on the land (NSW Heritage Council, April 2004*, Heritage Act 1977* Notice of Order Under Section 139(4).

For the above to apply and if any disturbance is proposed (see the discussion below), Shellharbour City Council must write to the Director of Heritage NSW and describe the proposed excavation or disturbance of land and set out why it satisfies the above criteria. If the Director of Heritage NSW is satisfied that the proposed development meets the criteria, the applicant will be notified.

4. HISTORICAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 NSW Heritage Act 1977

As noted in **Section 3.2** above the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* is the primary piece of State legislation affording protection to all items of environmental heritage (natural and cultural) in New South Wales. However, for Bass Point Reserve and its Aboriginal cultural heritage, the principal legislation which needs to be met in regard to any works proposed is the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974,* which is discussed in **Section 5.**

The State Heritage Register is a statutory list of places and items of State heritage significance endorsed by the Minister of Planning. The Register lists a diverse range of places, including archaeological sites and Aboriginal Places, that are particularly important to the State, and which enrich our understanding of the history of NSW. Bass Point Reserve was listed on the State Heritage Register in 2013.

Places and items listed on the register are legally protected under the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*. Prior to undertaking work that results in their alteration or modification, an approval is required from Heritage NSW. This is described as an application under section 60 of the Heritage Act 1977 for approval to carry out a section 57(1) activity to an item or land listed on the State Heritage Register or to which an interim heritage order applies.

Under section 57 of the *Heritage Act 1977*, when a place or object is listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR), you may not carry out any of the following activities without prior approval from the Heritage Council, under a section 60 approval for works or changes to a State heritage item:

- Demolish the building or work,
- Damage or despoil the place, precinct or land, or any part of the place, precinct or land,
- Move, damage or destroy the relic or moveable object,
- Excavate any land for the purpose of exposing or moving the relic,
- Carry out any development in relation to the land on which the building, work or relic is situated, the land that comprises the place, or land within the precinct,
- Alter the building, work, relic or moveable object,
- Display any notice or advertisement on the place, building, work, * *relic*, moveable object or land, or in the precinct, and
- Damage or destroy any tree or other vegetation on, or remove any tree or other vegetation from, the place, precinct or land.

The Act defines a '*relic'* as:
Any deposit, artefact, object or material evidence that:

a) *Relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales,* ***not being Aboriginal settlement****, and*
b) *Is of State or local heritage significance.*

An archaeological site is an area of land which is the location of one or more archaeological 'relics'. Relics are additionally protected from being moved or excavated through the operation of the 'relics' provisions. The provisions protect unidentified 'relics' which may form part of the State's environmental heritage, but which have not been listed on the State Heritage Register or protected by an Interim Heritage Order.

Division 9 (s139) of the Act specifically deals with the protection of relics. However, this section does not apply to a relic that is subject to an interim heritage order made by the Minister or if it is listed on the State Heritage Register.

As noted in the previous section for Maritime cultural heritage and relics, sections 139 to 145 of the Act prevent the excavation or disturbance of land for the purpose of discovering, exposing or moving a relic, except by a qualified archaeologist to whom an excavation permit has been issued by the NSW Heritage Council / Heritage NSW. The same procedures apply for historical archaeology as for Maritime, however, there are also Standard Exemptions which apply to State heritage items.

Standard Exemptions and Exceptions under the Heritage Act

The NSW Heritage Council has made allowances for a series of standard exemptions from the requirements of the NSW Heritage Act 1977. The purpose of the standard exemptions is to clarify for owners, Heritage NSW and local councils what kind of minor works or maintenance can be undertaken without needing Heritage Council approval. This ensures that owners are not required to make unnecessary applications for minor maintenance and repair.

There were previously two types of exemptions relevant to an item listed on the State Heritage Register:

1. Standard exemptions for all items on the State Heritage Register. Typical activities that are exempted include building maintenance, minor repairs, alterations to certain interiors or areas and change of use.
2. Site specific exemptions for a particular heritage item can be approved by the Minister on the recommendation of the Heritage Council.

Bass Point Reserve, listed on the State Heritage Register as Item No. 01896, has had site specific exemptions which were established for it by the Minister in January 2013. However, as of 1 December 2020, Heritage NSW have changed the previous system of standard exemptions, which included Site specific exemptions for Bass Point Reserve. The updated Exemptions relate to works that can generally be regarded as maintenance, repairs and conservation. The full listing with guidelines and a fact sheet for these Standard Exemptions can be located at their website – accessed at Standard Exemptions | Heritage NSW

The following explanation for the new release of Exemptions for State Heritage Items is relevant for Bass Point Reserve:

- These standard exemptions apply to all items of all values listed on the NSW State Heritage Register or subject to an Interim Heritage Order (termed 'item' or 'items' for the purpose of these standard exemptions), including Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- The standard exemptions do not permit the removal of relics or Aboriginal objects. If relics are discovered, work must cease in the affected area and the Heritage Council must be notified in writing in accordance with section 146 of the Heritage Act 1977. Depending on the nature of the discovery, assessment and an excavation permit may be required prior to the recommencement of work in the affected area. If any Aboriginal objects are discovered, excavation or disturbance is to cease, and Heritage NSW notified in accordance with section 89A of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. Aboriginal object has the same meaning in this Act. More information is available at http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences/ACHregulation.htm
- These standard exemptions are available to the owner of a listed item or item subject to an Interim Heritage Order, or any person with the consent in writing of that owner, or if the item is situated on Crown Land, as defined in the Crown Land Management Act 2016, the lawful occupier.
- Anything done under the standard exemptions must be carried out by people with knowledge, skills and experience appropriate to the work (some exemptions require suitably qualified and

experienced professional advice/ work).

- The standard exemptions do not permit the removal of any significant fabric. Significant fabric means all the physical material of the place/item including elements, fixtures, landscape features, contents, relics and objects which contributes to the item's heritage significance.

As noted previously in this Volume 2, for Bass Point Reserve and its cultural heritage, the principal legislation which needs to be met in regard to any works proposed is the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.* It is for this reason that we recommend an application for an area wide Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIIP) for Bass Point Reserve. Harm to Aboriginal objects and places cannot occur without an AHIP with the proposed works outlined and detailed impact assessment and consultation with all relevant Aboriginal parties. This is further discussed in the following **Section 5** and in **Section 9.**

5. ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION

An Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) is the legal instrument Heritage NSW issues under Part 6 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. An AHIP application is a statutory requirement that needs to be met to undertake all and any future ground disturbing works within the Bass Point Reserve SHR boundary as these works could remove or harm Aboriginal objects.

The AHIP application process requires an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) with Archaeological Assessment (AA). The objectives of the ACHA are to investigate and assess the impact of proposed works on known and potential Aboriginal objects, Aboriginal places and cultural heritage values within a project area as well as to provide appropriate management and mitigation strategies and must be compiled to meet the requirements of the *Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW* (OEH 2011). An Archaeological Assessment is required as an appendix to the ACHA and is to provide archaeological advice on the potential impact of proposed works on Aboriginal archaeological sites. An AA must be drafted to meet the requirements of *the Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW* (NSW DECCW 2010a) for Archaeological Reports – Requirements 1 to 11. Throughout an AHIP application process consultation with all relevant Aboriginal parties must be undertaken in accordance with the *Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010* (NSW DECCW 2010b).

Understanding obligations under the Act is necessary as the Reserve is a known Aboriginal place of high cultural and archaeological significance. Ground disturbing works have already exposed Aboriginal objects, and concerns have been raised by the Illawarra LALC and other Aboriginal parties during consultation stages of this project and during site visits (herein referred to as fieldwork).

We note that since the archaeological study at Bass Point many years ago (Bowdler, 1981, for NSW NPWS), there has been recommendations for further mitigation and management. This applies for access tracks (through monitoring of grading or closing off areas for access), revegetation, and minor works near known middens and occupation sites, for park maintenance. Harm to Aboriginal objects within the Bass Point Reserve puts SCC at risk of a compliance investigation with the State regulatory body, which in 2020-21 is Heritage NSW in the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC). Before any works can take place, an AHIP is required.

In relation to the Aboriginal cultural heritage at Bass Point and its State heritage listing, advice was sought from Heritage NSW, in December 2020. The advice provided by Heritage NSW was that an AHIP, described as an area wide permit (or, a Bass Point Reserve permit) was recommended, as that document could be relevant for a long period of time, c.15-20 years and include more than one task or impact.

There has been a similar AHIP issued for Sandon Point at Bulli for Wollongong Council. However, an AHIP is issued to allow specific works to take place and provide management for such works. Therefore, SCC will need to formalise what works - all works - are planned in the Reserve and prepare a list and timeframe. A Master Plan, addressing Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (at a minimum) and proposed works and their timeframes (all works, including regimes for maintenance) and describing what possible impacts are proposed, would be of benefit. Once the Master Plan is produced, the impacts of these works can be assessed with management and mitigation provided. That assessment, and the Master Plan, could accompany an application for an AHIP.

Protocols for recording previously unrecorded Aboriginal sites – unexpected finds - is attached with this Volume see **Appendix A.**

5.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Listings Potential Benefits and Risks

An AHIP would directly address the concerns of the ILALC and other Aboriginal parties to proactively manage cultural heritage values of Bass Point Reserve with SCC. This will also assist to build relationships between SCC and Aboriginal stakeholders and provide a legal consent for activities that could cause harm to Aboriginal objects and places (including management of these objects and places), whilst allowing necessary and ongoing maintenance activities.

Table 1 overleaf provides a summary of advice for each heritage listing for Bass Point Reserve as well as the range of heritage listings that can be arranged to protect Aboriginal sites and places. Table 1 includes the name of the heritage register, legislation administering the register, the relevant level of significance, potential benefits and risks of the listing, available funding for each type of listed item and provides examples of listed items. The information is based on the NSW Aboriginal Land Council 2011, heritage protection fact sheets as well as the websites of various agencies referred to in text.

Table 1 Forms of Heritage Listing

Heritage List/Database	Level of Listing (State, National Significance)	Legislation	Potential Benefits of listing	Does listing attract or provide opportunities for funding the management of the place?	Potential Risks of listing	Examples of Aboriginal heritage sites on listing
National Heritage List (NHL)	National	*Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (EPBC) and *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act, 1984* (ATSHIP) – The Federal Government suggests that this legislation is "intended to be used only where state or territory laws and processes prove to be ineffective".	▪ Highest form of listing with strongest protection. ▪ Federal Minister has the power to make declarations to protect Aboriginal Places or sites to protect them if they are under threat of harm or desecration. ▪ Federal Minister has powers for emergency declarations to protect places and sites under immediate threat. The declaration is valid for up to 30 days of protection and can be extended another 30 days (maximum of 60 days). ▪ Once listed, a management plan must be produced that sets out how the heritage values of the place will be protected or conserved.	**Yes** Community Heritage and Icons Grants https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/grants-and-funding/community-heritage-icons-grants (Relatively small grants of$2000 to $10,000 only). Indigenous Advancement Strategy/Indigenous Heritage Program Funding (Website link is inactive, funding is difficult if not near impossible to obtain). Not clear how the management plan requirement for a listed site is funded – there appears to be no funding on website.	▪ Few Aboriginal sites are recognised or listed. ▪ Only 7% of applications made to the Federal Government to protect sites have resulted in a declaration being made. ▪ Only 24 declarations in 25 years – less than one on average a year are declared. ▪ General view is the ATSHIP and EPBC Acts have failed to protect Aboriginal sites – no progress has been made since 2011 to consider changes to the Acts for better protection. ▪ Listing process requires clear evidence of national heritage values compared to other places that are similar across Australia – strong case and significance assessment needs to be made to national heritage criteria. ▪ Once a listing nomination is rejected, it cannot be reassessed. ▪ Once listed an Aboriginal Place is then protected under the EPBC Act, 1999 and approval is required from Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet prior to any action taking place that can significantly impact on the national heritage values of the listed place.	*Bass Point is not included.* Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park Western Tasmania Aboriginal Cultural Landscape Willandra Lakes region Wurrwurrwuy stone arrangements
State Heritage Register (SHR) **Bass Point Reserve is listed on the SHR, Item No. 01896.**	State	*NSW Heritage Act 1977* administers the SHR which protects natural, historical and cultural heritage values that are of State significance.	▪ Listed items cannot generally be demolished, redeveloped or altered without the approval of the Heritage Council. ▪ Some information that may need to remain confidential or access to general public limited can be given restricted access. ▪ Listing requires local councils to consider the effects of any proposed development in the area surrounding the item. ▪ Can attract funding for management and protection i.e., funding sought through Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop a Conservation Management Plan that helps to protect the site through its day to day management e.g., site interpretation, schedules of maintenance works and access arrangements for community. ▪ Promote awareness in wider community of Aboriginal culture and heritage. ▪ Encourages landowners and Aboriginal communities to think about long term management of site. ▪ Listing can provide concessions to land tax and local rates.	**Yes** NSW Heritage Grants through Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritage/funding/index.htm Aboriginal Heritage Places program for items listed on SHR ($20,000 to $70,000 ex. GST per project) has annual funding available. Some greater potential through local council funding for protection of SHR items and Commonwealth's Annual Cultural Heritage Grants http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/Heritage/listings/benefitowners.htm	▪ Listing does not affect who owns the land. ▪ Recognition on the SHR does not guarantee access to the site for Aboriginal people even when the site is registered for its Aboriginal heritage values. To guarantee access Aboriginal communities or individuals must negotiate an agreement with the landowner. ▪ Some developments may still be permissible on listed sites with the approval of the Heritage Council and some types of development may be allowed without needing to obtain any approvals. ▪ The Minister, after considering recommendations of the Heritage Council, can also remove a listing from the SHR. ▪ May not be strong enough protection for long term conservation. ▪ Landowners can apply to get 'Exemptions' to carry out activities and maintenance of the site but must still uphold and protect the heritage values for which it is listed. ▪ Major changes which affect the heritage significance of a listed property will require approval from the local council and/or Heritage Council of NSW (through Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet).	**Bass Point Reserve** Bundian Way Brewarrina Fish Traps La Perouse Mission Church Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home Warangesda Aboriginal Mission and Station Colebee and Nurragingy Land Grant Grave of Yuranigh Tranby Aboriginal Cottage
Aboriginal Place	State	*National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974* is the main legislation that protects Aboriginal heritage in NSW. Important Aboriginal sites can be recognised and declared as 'Aboriginal Places'.	▪ The Minister may declare a site an Aboriginal Place if they are satisfied that the place 'is or was of special significance with respect to Aboriginal culture'. ▪ Declaration is free and offers protection for an entire area rather than a specific object. ▪ Harm to Aboriginal 'objects' or 'places' are not permitted without an approval from Heritage NSW DPC via an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP).	**Yes** Funding for Aboriginal Places can be attracted under Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet's Protecting Our Places program. Substantial grants are available for projects aimed at restoring or	▪ Declaration of an Aboriginal Place does not affect who owns the land – the current landowner retains their title. ▪ Does not provide access rights for Aboriginal people – this can only be achieved through an agreement negotiated with the landholder. ▪ While a landholder cannot destroy, damage or deface an Aboriginal Place without a permit, they are not required to conserve the values of the site or prevent natural deterioration.	*Bass Point is not included.* Sandon Point Aboriginal Tent Embassy at McCauley's Beach north of Wollongong (ceremonial site) Bellambi Point at Bellambi

Heritage List/Database	Level of Listing (State, National Significance)	Legislation	Potential Benefits of listing	Does listing attract or provide opportunities for funding the management of the place?	Potential Risks of listing	Examples of Aboriginal heritage sites on listing
			▪ There are high penalties for unlawful damage to Aboriginal objects and places. ▪ From 1 October 2010, a person can be found guilty of an offence if they harm Aboriginal heritage, even if they did not 'know' the site was an Aboriginal object or place. The NPW Act includes some defences that may be used where harm is caused to an Aboriginal object, but these defences are not available where harm is caused to an Aboriginal place. ▪ Protection in this listing considers different types of ways these places are significant including spiritual, historical, social, educational, natural history or other significance. Significance can include the stories connected with a place and the cultural attachment Aboriginal people have with the land. This might not require any physical evidence of Aboriginal occupation or the presence of particular objects. ▪ Secret or sacred places can be protected, and the exact location not made public and local landmarks can be given for reference instead. ▪ Emergency protection for a site under immediate threat is an option, for example for a site threatened by a development.	rehabilitating culturally significant Aboriginal sites or educating Aboriginal and other communities about the natural environment and its significance to Aboriginal people. However, this program is currently under review. www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/pop.htm	▪ SSD and SSI, under Sections 5.23(1)(d) and 4.41(1)(d) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) respectively, do not require an AHIP. However, an application for approval of an SSD/SSI does require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which complies with the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) including an Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment. Additionally, the requirements of s84 of the NPW Act under which APs are declared are not negated for SSD and SSI.	north of Wollongong (spiritual place) Fox Ground at Kiama (ceremonial place)
Aboriginal Areas	State and Local	*National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974* is the main legislation that protects Aboriginal heritage in NSW. Important Aboriginal sites can be recognised and declared as 'Aboriginal Areas'.	▪ Sites can also be declared as 'Aboriginal Areas' to preserve, protect and prevent damage to objects or places on lands which are of special significance to Aboriginal people. ▪ Reservation as an Aboriginal Area requires DPC (formerly Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet) to acquire the land, or that the land is unoccupied Crown Land. ▪ Reservation as an Aboriginal Area may assist where access to the land for cultural purposes would be difficult without a change of ownership or management, or where high levels of maintenance are required. ▪ Emergency protection for a site under immediate threat is an option, for example for a site threatened by a development.	**Yes** Funding for Aboriginal Places can be attracted under Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet's Protecting Our Places program. Substantial grants are available for projects aimed at restoring or rehabilitating culturally significant Aboriginal sites or educating Aboriginal and other communities about the natural environment and its significance to Aboriginal people. However, this program is currently under review. www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/pop.htm	▪ Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet acquire the land or that the land is unoccupied Crown land. ▪ Change of ownership may be required and provided to Heritage NSW, Community Engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet for Aboriginal sites owned by Aboriginal communities/organisations.	*Bass Point is not included.* There are 18 Aboriginal Areas in NSW listed on http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nationalparks/parktypes.aspx?type=aboriginalarea including: Nambucca Aboriginal Area Lennox Head Aboriginal Area Jubullum Flat Camp Aboriginal Area

6. RELEVANT HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The *Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Place of Cultural Significance, 2013* is the widely accepted reference document for heritage conservation standards in Australia. The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013 evolved from the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice 1964), and the Resolutions of the 5th General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) (Moscow 1978) and was adopted by Australia ICOMOS (the Australian National Committee of ICOMOS) in August 1979 at the historic South Australian mining town of Burra.

The Burra Charter provides a best practice standard for managing cultural heritage places in Australia. It was first adopted in 1979 and is periodically updated to reflect developing understanding of the theory and practice of cultural heritage management. The current version was adopted in 2013. The Charter can be applied to all types of places of cultural significance including natural, Aboriginal and historic places with cultural values including maritime.

The Burra Charter advocates a cautious approach to change: do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained. The Charter includes 12 conservation principles which are further developed in the processes and practice sections of the Charter.

6.1 Australia Burra Charter Principles

The Burra Charter provides guidance for the conservation and management of places of cultural significance (cultural heritage places) and is based on the knowledge and experience of Australian ICOMOS members. The Charter sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about or undertake works to places of cultural significance, including owners, managers and custodians. It contains a set of thirty-four principles, defined as Articles, which can be directly applied for management of heritage items.

The cultural significance of a place is embodied in its physical fabric, settings, contents, use, associated documents and its meaning to people through their use and associations with the place. The cultural significance of a place and other issues affecting its future are best understood by a methodical process of collecting and analysing information before making decisions. The definition of 'place' used throughout the *Burra Charter* means *site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views* (Definitions, The Burra Charter: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999, Article 1.)

The *Burra Charter* advocates a cautious approach relating to any changes to a heritage item, which is described within Article 3 and states: *Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible* (Definitions, The Burra Charter: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999, Article 3).

For heritage owners and managers Article 3 has been widely translated as - do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is both visible and retained.

Burra Charter - Relevant Principles [Articles]

There are numbers of key conservation principles from the Charter, specifically the following Articles, which are relevant for Bass Point Reserve, see **Table 2**:

Table 2 Burra Charter Principles / Articles for Bass Point Reserve

Burra Charter Article	Description
Article 3.1	*Conservation* is based on a respect for the existing *fabric, use, associations* and *meanings.* It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.
Article 4.1	*Conservation* should make use of all the knowledge, skills and disciplines which can contribute to the study and care of the *place.*
Article 5.1	*Conservation* of a *place* should identify and take into consideration all aspects of cultural and natural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one value at the expense of others.
Article 8	*Conservation* requires the retention of an appropriate visual *setting* and other relationships that contribute to the *cultural significance* of the *place.* New construction, demolition, intrusions or changes which would adversely affect the setting or relationships are not appropriate.
Article 9	The physical location of a *place* is part of its *cultural significance.* Relocation is generally unacceptable unless this is the sole practical means of ensuring its survival.
Article 11	The contribution which *related places* and *related objects* make to the *cultural significance* of the *place* should be retained.
Article 14	*Conservation* may, according to circumstance, include the processes of; retention or reintroduction of a *use*; retention of *associations* and *meanings; maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation* and *interpretation,* and will commonly include a combination of more than one.
Article 16	*Maintenance* is fundamental to conservation and should be undertaken where fabric is of cultural significance and its maintenance is necessary to retain that cultural significance. It is good practice to schedule maintenance in an ongoing cyclical program.
Article 24	*Retaining associations and meanings* – significant associations between people and a place should be respected, retained and not obscured. Opportunities for the interpretation, commemoration and celebration of these associations should be investigated and implemented. Significant meanings of a place should be respected. Opportunities for the continuation or revival of these meanings should be investigated and implemented.
Article 25	*Interpretation* – the cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and enjoyment and be culturally appropriate.
Article 26.3	Groups and individuals with *associations* with a place as well as those involved in its management should be provided with opportunities to contribute to and participate in understanding the *cultural significance* of the place. Where appropriate they should also have opportunities to participate in its *conservation* and management.
Article 29	Responsibility for decisions – The organisations and individuals responsible for management decisions should be named and specific responsibility taken for each such decision.

6.1 Underwater cultural heritage guidelines

UNESCO Convention on Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, adopted in 2001, sets out the basic principles for the protection of underwater cultural heritage, provides a detailed cooperation system and provides widely recognised practical rules for the treatment and research of underwater cultural heritage.

The main principles are:

- Obligation to preserve underwater cultural heritage;
- *In situ* preservation as first option;
- No commercial exploitation; and
- Training and information sharing.

Article 2 of the Convention details the objectives and general principles, which are as follows:

1) This Convention aims to ensure and strengthen the protection of underwater cultural heritage.
2) State Parties shall cooperate in the protection of underwater cultural heritage.
3) State Parties shall preserve underwater cultural heritage for the benefit of humanity in conformity with the provisions of this Convention.
4) State Parties shall, individually or jointly as appropriate, take all appropriate measures in conformity with this Convention and with international law that are necessary to protect underwater cultural heritage, using for this purpose the best practicable means at their disposal and in accordance with their capabilities.
5) The preservation *in situ* of underwater cultural heritage shall be considered as the first option before allowing or engaging in any activities directed at this heritage.
6) Recovered underwater cultural heritage shall be deposited, conserved and managed in a manner that ensures its long-term preservation.
7) Underwater cultural heritage shall not be commercially exploited.
8) Consistent with State practice and international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, nothing in this Convention shall be interpreted as modifying the rules of international law and State practice pertaining to sovereign immunities, nor any State's rights with respect to its State vessels and aircraft.
9) State Parties shall ensure that proper respect is given to all human remains located in maritime waters.
10) Responsible non-intrusive access to observe or document *in situ* underwater cultural heritage shall be encouraged to create public awareness, appreciation, and protection of the heritage except where such access is incompatible with its protection and management.
11) No act or activity undertaken on the basis of this Convention shall constitute grounds for claiming, contending or disputing any claim to national sovereignty or jurisdiction.

The following relevant rules concerning activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, specifically for the conservation of removed artefacts are listed below:

Rule 1	The protection of underwater cultural heritage through *in situ* preservation shall be considered as the first option. Accordingly, activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be authorized in a manner consistent with the protection of that heritage, and subject to that requirement may be authorized for the purpose of making a significant contribution to protection or knowledge or enhancement of underwater cultural heritage.
Rule 3	Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall not adversely affect the underwater cultural heritage more than is necessary for the objectives of the project.
Rule 4	Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage must use non-destructive techniques and survey methods in preference to recovery of objects. If excavation or recovery is necessary for the purpose of scientific studies or for the ultimate protection of the underwater cultural heritage, the methods and techniques used must be as non-destructive as possible and contribute to the preservation of the remains.
Rule 6	Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall be strictly regulated to ensure proper recording of cultural, historical and archaeological information.
Rule 9	Prior to any activity directed at underwater cultural heritage, a project design for the activity shall be developed and submitted to the competent authorities for authorization and appropriate peer review. A conservation programme for artefacts and the site in close cooperation with the competent authorities. Deposition of archives, including underwater cultural heritage removed
Rule 17	Except in cases of emergency to protect underwater cultural heritage, an adequate funding base shall be assured in advance of any activity, sufficient to complete all stages of the project design, including conservation, documentation and curation of recovered artefacts, and report preparation and dissemination.
Rule 19.	The project design shall include a contingency plan that will ensure conservation of underwater cultural heritage and supporting documentation in the event of any interruption of anticipated funding.
Rule 20.	An adequate timetable shall be developed to assure in advance of any activity directed at underwater cultural heritage the completion of all stages of the project design, including conservation, documentation and curation of recovered underwater cultural heritage, as well as report preparation and dissemination.
Rule 21.	The project design shall include a contingency plan that will ensure conservation of underwater cultural heritage and supporting documentation in the event of any interruption or termination of the project.
Rule 24.	The conservation programme shall provide for the treatment of the archaeological remains during the activities directed at underwater cultural heritage, during transit and in the long term. Conservation shall be carried out in accordance with current professional standards
Rule 25	The site management programme shall provide for the protection and management *in situ* of underwater cultural heritage, in the course of and upon termination of fieldwork. The programme shall include public information, reasonable provision for site stabilization, monitoring, and protection against interference.

The Burra Charter

The Burra Charter 2013 provides a best practice standard for managing cultural heritage places in Australia, as noted here previously in **Section 6.1**. The Burra Charter was first adopted in 1979 and is periodically updated to reflect developing understanding of the theory and practice of cultural heritage management. Although not specifically targeted at maritime heritage, the principles of protection and conservation and minimal intervention apply to all Australian cultural heritage.

Guidelines for the Management of Australia's Shipwrecks

The Guidelines for the Management of Australia's Shipwrecks were produced as a combined publication by the Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology Inc. (now the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology) and the Australian Cultural Development Office (now the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy) in 1994.

The Guidelines for the Management of Australia's Shipwrecks includes a Statement of Principles governing the broad approach to be taken when dealing with historic shipwreck sites and related archaeological collections. They comprise principles and practices that have been adopted by Australia's professional maritime archaeologists and serve as useful modules for other groups. Advice can be obtained from Heritage NSW regarding specific queries and maritime guidelines and information are available at their website, Maritime heritage | Heritage NSW. In addition, the recommended heritage interpretation and shipwreck trail guidelines are appended to this CMP at **Appendix C.**

7. HERITAGE OBLIGATIONS FOR SHELLHARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Shellharbour City Council are the managers of Bass Point Reserve, appointed under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*. In January 2013, the Reserve was gazetted as a State heritage item for its importance to the people of NSW. It is incumbent on the owners or managers of State heritage items to have a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to guide maintenance and management of their heritage asset. As noted in the Burra Charter principles "Responsibility for decisions – The organisations and individuals responsible for management decisions should be named and specific responsibility taken for each such decision." (Article 29).

Tables 3 and 4 in this section recommend SCC departments and department heads who are relevant for management of Bass Point, as well as a framework of management issues. It was noted in **Section 5** that a Master Plan for Bass Point Reserve is proposed to manage the obligations identified in this CMP and nominate works and their timeframes. It is recommended that the Master Plan - with additional impact, works details and management - will form a suitable attachment to an application for a Bass Point Reserve Area AHIP.

7.1 Aboriginal, Historical and Maritime Heritage

Although there are S.60 exemptions that apply for any minor works affecting historical heritage in relation to the State significance listing for Bass Point Reserve, they do not apply for Aboriginal cultural heritage. This is because there are identified objects located across the Reserve. The definition of Aboriginal object from the Standard Exemptions is as per the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 which states:

Aboriginal object means '*any deposit, object or material evidence (not being a handicraft made for sale) relating to the Aboriginal habitation of the area that comprises New South Wales, being habitation before or concurrent with (or both) the occupation of that area by persons of non-Aboriginal extraction and includes Aboriginal remains'.*

As noted in the Standard Exemptions for State Heritage Items (located at Heritage NSW website - Standard Exemptions | Heritage NSW), the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 is the relevant Act for any works affecting Aboriginal cultural heritage. Recent (2020) changes to heritage management and approval at the State level recognise the importance of landscape. Heritage NSW at their website for Aboriginal cultural heritage state that:

Aboriginal site features occur across the entire landscape; however, some parts of the landscape have a greater capacity to contain certain site features or features of different types. The Aboriginal Sites Decision Support Tool (ASDST) was developed to support the assessment of Aboriginal sites issues in NSW at the landscape level and extends the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) by illustrating the potential distribution of site features recorded in the database (Heritage NSW, ASDST).

Volume 1 of this CMP contains a geomorphological report which identifies relevant features within the ancient landscape of Bass Point Reserve. As demonstrated in that report and the identified AHIMS sites, much of the Bass Point Reserve contains subsurface evidence of Aboriginal occupation, mainly shell midden material, which is identified within areas of exposure from erosional processes. The geomorphological report was provided to confirm that Bass Point Reserve likely contains Aboriginal objects across most of its landscape, and the entire Reserve should be considered from a landscape perspective - as an Aboriginal cultural landscape.

One of the issues discussed within this Volume is heritage interpretation for the Reserve and tourism opportunities for the Local Aboriginal Land Council and a recommendation has been made regarding a visitor entry centre which would provide information and guidance for visitors – see **Section 8.4.3**.

The centre would be located outside of the gates to the Reserve, to manage any queries or entry restrictions. SCC need to be aware that as the State Heritage boundary extends up to the loader and the quarry boundary, refer to **Figure 2**. If the centre was to be considered within the State Heritage boundary, such development would require both Heritage Act approval via the works application Section 60 fast track and consultation with Heritage NSW due to required approval under the NSW NPW Act (which could be managed under an area wide AHIP if the works will harm Aboriginal objects).

Figure 2: The state heritage boundary shown in red for Bass Point Reserve (State Heritage Register, accessed at https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5061535)

The Standard Exemptions only apply for historical heritage. For maritime heritage and the identified shipwreck locations around Bass Point Reserve, it is the NSW *Heritage Act 1977* which applies within three nautical miles of the NSW coast, and thus protects the identified shipwrecks. This CMP includes recommendations for updated marine environmental studies and recording in relation to the shipwrecks. Where those actions will include investigation of shipwreck areas, permission must be sought from Heritage NSW. This is outlined in **Section 3.2** of this Volume**.**

To successfully manage the heritage obligations for Bass Point Reserve it is recommended that an advisory committee be formed to manage and report to the SCC internal stakeholders. This recommendation is further discussed in the following section, at **Section 8.1.3**.

For this project to be successfully completed during 2020-2021, the SCC Key Stakeholders were identified as follows, see Table 3:

Table 3 SCC Internal Stakeholders

Name	Title	Project Role
Matthew Harvey / Ryan Stirling (Acting)	Asset Officer	Project Manager; Asset Management Advisor
Shaun Robinson	Asset Planning Manager	Asset Management Advisor
Andrew Lee	Senior Environmental Officer	Environmental Advisor
Bernadette Sharpe	Recreation Planner	Strategic Planning Advisor
Maiquilla Brown/ Bonnie Hittmann and Shane Venables	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer	Aboriginal Community Advisor
Tamara Hynd	Museum Curator	History advisor
Cheryl Lappin	Senior Strategic Planner	Historical heritage
Louise Thom	SCC Heritage Advisor	All heritage

SCC manage all of the Reserve, and what takes place within it. However, it is the Department of Primary Industries Illawarra District Fisheries Office who manage Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve and there are numbers of community groups who maintain areas such as the Sixth Machine Gun Battalion memorials. It is the heritage significance of Bass Point Reserve that should direct all works within the area. There is a need to coordinate maintenance works within the Reserve so that no harm comes to the maritime, environmental, Aboriginal cultural and historical heritage.

This CMP outlines steps to manage and to protect it. The steps need to include an organised system of internal communications between the different departments of SCC and within the State government. The table overleaf, **Table 4** presents the responsibilities for managing and maintaining Bass Point Reserve and which could impact on its heritage significance. SCC will use this table as a template for their framework of responsibilities in their proposed Master Plan for Bass Point Reserve, which will be completed after this CMP has been submitted.

Table 4 Protection of cultural heritage at Bass Point Reserve – SCC Responsibilities in relation to significance and maintenance

This table of tasks and managers will be updated as Shellharbour City Council is developing a Plan of Management for the Reserve

RESPONSIBILITIES	OVERALL MANAGEMENT	MARINE MANAGEMENT	ENVIRO MANAGEMENT	ABORIGINAL CULTURAL MANAGEMENT	HISTORICAL MANAGEMENT
Identified at left within SCC for the various components comprising its State heritage significance:	**The future Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee**	**Shared with DPI District Fisheries Office**	**Environmental manager and team**	**Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer**	**Heritage Advisor**
What level of responsibility for maintenance in relation to marine /environmental /Aboriginal cultural /historical and maritime cultural heritage can SCC share? Stakeholders are: – ILALC – DPC – Sixth Machine Gun Battalion – Tongara Heritage Society – Landcare – Dive companies *N.B. DPI and SCC share communications for Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve which is managed by Dept of Primary Industries District Fisheries Office, Lake Illawarra*					
What is the current maintenance regime that impacts on the cultural heritage in relation to access, roads, parking, vegetation clearance etc?					
Additional issues for the Reserve: - Lighting and access, safety and first aid, traffic management and car parking; boat and jetski access					
- Signage (directional and information) – need to coordinate with DPI District Fisheries Officers….					
- Heritage interpretation – what are the plans to showcase and include all of the heritage, maritime, historical and					

Aboriginal cultural heritage? (Refer to ***Policy 10***)

8. CONSTRAINTS, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MANAGEMENT

This section deals with issues, constraints and opportunities identified in the management of Bass Point Reserve for SCC. These are addressed from the viewpoint of significance for the place, its location and access, ownership and any other issues that have been highlighted during the consultation phase for this project.

8.1 Significance

The significance of Bass Point Reserve has been identified as having historical, rarity, archaeological and community and social values and these values, particularly Aboriginal cultural heritage and maritime values, have been expanded upon in Volume 1. The Reserve is listed as a State Heritage Item for its importance to the people of NSW (SHR Item No. 01896). As noted above, it is the heritage significance of Bass Point Reserve that should direct all works within its curtilage.

Bass Point Reserve is also listed as a local heritage item on the Shellharbour LEP 2013. There are two other heritage items listed as State significant for Shellharbour on the LEP (the Shellharbour Railway Station Group and Toongla at Tullimbar). The local listing for Bass Point Reserve may be an oversight as it should be listed on the LEP as a **State** item. It is recommended that the LEP listing be updated from local to State. The current Shellharbour LEP (2013) heritage listings for Bass Point are as follows:

Bass Point Reserve	Boollwarroo Parade	Bass Point	Lot 3, DP 248002	Local	I056
US Cities Services Boston Shipwreck Rescue Monument	Nature reserve	Bass Point	Lot 3, DP 248002	Local	I020

Issues and Constraints

Social significance is a major cultural heritage factor for Bass Point Reserve. There are many local community groups who appreciate the place, and it is an important feature and landscape, particularly within the Aboriginal community.

There is a lack of information within the Reserve about what makes it a heritage significant place, including environmental and maritime heritage and Aboriginal and historical heritage. This does not allow visitors to appreciate or have a protective approach for their actions within the Reserve.

There are also constraints that exist in relation to heritage significance including understanding the regulation controls and requirements for notification and advice to relevant approval bodies prior about proposed works.

In relation to the historical heritage component of the State heritage listing for the Reserve, the constraint of having to seek approval for works from the NSW Heritage Council has been managed by the initiation of site-specific exemptions to allow maintenance work to take place within Bass Point Reserve (see **Section 4.1.1**). These were updated in 2020 to allow for any relevant exemption to apply (see SHR Listing at **Appendix B** in **Volume 1**).

However, those exemptions relate to historical heritage and archaeology and are not relevant for the Aboriginal cultural heritage of Bass Point Reserve. Separate approvals and permits are legally required for work in areas that will affect Aboriginal cultural heritage (most of the Reserve) and are needed for SCC to

comply with the requirements of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (2010 amendments).

Opportunities

There are opportunities for SCC to provide information and share the importance of Bass Point Reserve for all visitors by signage within the Reserve, signage at its entry and information on the SCC website. Currently there is no information about Bass Point Reserve on the SCC website - https://www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/beaches-and-pools/bass-point-reserve

Preparation of a brochure for visitors and residents to advise them of the rich Aboriginal history and significance of the Bass Point Reserve and surrounds is another method of promotion, and there have been brochures prepared in the past.

Establishment of a sub-committee under the management of the SCC Stakeholder Group advised for this CMP, is recommended as the most efficient form of management of the Reserve given its significance and diversity of its values. A sub-committee is necessary to seek or liaise with relevant bodies including Heritage NSW for advice and timeframes in relation to approvals, to monitor what requires maintenance or work and determine whether a permit has been obtained. During the 1980s a sub-committee was in operation and discussed many of the same issues that are currently being assessed. The minutes from the 1983 Sub-Committee form part of the Bass Point Reserve collection of documents located at SCC.

As SCC are the management body for Bass Point Reserve, discussions during this CMP noted that responsibilities for it are best included within the scope of the (existing) Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee (CFRMAC). That working party was formed to provide feedback and support to SCC on the development, implementation and monitoring of the Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan and Coastal management programs.

The significance of Bass Point Reserve to the Aboriginal community also provides opportunities to strengthen links with and establish a joint management agreement with Aboriginal parties. With the recognised nationally significant cultural heritage at Bass Point Reserve, there is a real opportunity for Aboriginal heritage tourism ventures driven by community and SCC driven education programs, where culturally appropriate. The Reserve also has high potential for tourism for and by seniors and also educational potential for school children, again, where culturally appropriate. To manage these opportunities and provide information and entry restrictions, a visitor entry centre for the Reserve is strongly recommended.

Finally, the participation of community volunteers in relation to the significance of the natural environment, notably flora management and weeding is an opportunity that already exists for SCC with Illawarra Landcare. This relationship can be built by invitation to join the Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee (CFRMAC), discussed above.

8.2 Maritime Cultural Heritage and Natural Heritage

Constraints and Issues

The inter-tidal area of the peninsula is not adequately protected (also recognised in comments by Jodi Edwards during review of the draft ACH for the CMP including the sea floors and potential for buried cultural sites) and appears to fall through legislative requirements. Although Bushrangers Bay is an aquatic reserve (listed as such under section 194 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*), its area does not appear to cover the shoreline of the Reserve. The rest of Bass Point Reserve has a boundary extending seaward, however, there seems to be little management power or regulation of activities in that zone.

There is a serious gap in our knowledge relating to current marine life and conditions for Bass Point Reserve. Information obtained for this project revealed that the 'grey nurse breeding program' signposted at Bushrangers Bay is no longer valid as the sharks have moved closer to the jetty on the northern side of the Reserve. The Australian National Database listed many species – such as underwater grasses, corals, squid and cuttlefish to name a few – that inhabit the waters around Bass Point and contribute to the significance of the place. The 1998 marine environmental study prepared by Professor K Birkendorf cannot be located by SCC. In any case, that study would need to be updated as it is now over twenty years old. The review of existing information available for completion of this CMP stresses the importance of the natural and maritime heritage of Bass Point.

Importantly, consultation with Aboriginal parties also notes the interconnected relationship for biodiversity, flora and fauna and natural values to the cultural and spiritual values of the Aboriginal cultural heritage of Bass Point Reserve.

Opportunities

SCC should consider approaching DPI Fisheries and seek to make the whole Peninsula an Intertidal Protected Area. Note further options which were raised by DPI Fisheries, **Section 8.5.1**.

Council can also support or undertake an underwater survey of the sea life around Bass Point and in particular, Bushrangers Bay. This needs to be undertaken as soon as possible as information relating to this significant natural element contributing to the State significance of Bass Point Reserve is over twenty years old.

There are opportunities for planned cooperation between stakeholders and dive groups to survey and list the marine species within Bushrangers Bay and other marine areas for Bass Point Reserve. This much needed survey can inform SCC and DPI Fisheries on:

a) changes to biodiversity over the past 20 years,

b) impacts to marine ecological communities, and

c) identify at risk species, extinctions etc .

In 2020, it was reported for this CMP that dive teams regularly visit the waters, remove any rubbish they encounter, such as fishing lines and plastic and also record their sea life findings and conditions on the seafloor on personal websites (particularly the informative website of M. McFadyen, https://www.michaelmcfadyenscuba.info/news.php). These are valuable resources that benefit SCC for further collaboration and confirmation relating to species and habitat.

8.3 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Significance

For permits in relation to proposed works within Bass Point Reserve, approval and liaison with Heritage NSW will need to take place, allowing a several months before any works are to commence. Information relating to the permit application process is included within this Volume. The relevant contact details for NSW Heritage, as of December 2020, are as follows:

Telephone: 02 9873 8500; Email: heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au

Issues and Constraints

Shellharbour City Council need to be advised of the following identified key risks to the cultural heritage values within Bass Point Reserve. The identified risks are as follows:

- Uncontrolled regrowth of vegetation and weeds resulting in physical disturbance to known sites and reduction in the aesthetics or amenity of a place.
- Uncontrolled tourism and visitors can result in impacts to midden and artefact scatters sites through use of vehicles, camping, walking and dog-walking. Uncontrolled or unauthorised use of areas can also reduce the aesthetics or amenity of a place.
- Residential/ other development – the coastal areas surrounding Bass Point, but not specifically within the Headland is subject to ongoing residential development and quarry use which impacts on existing vistas to the west and north of the Reserve.
- Coastal erosion and inundation from storms and sea level rise, particularly around the boulder beaches and bays.
- Inappropriate infrastructure or other development (such as services, interpretation for tourists and memorials) can also impact the Reserve and damage and disturb cultural sites, and views and vistas if inappropriately located and installed, and affect the cultural, social and scientific values of these places. It can additionally reduce the aesthetics or amenity of a place.
- Inappropriate management – there are cultural and archaeological sites with potential national values within the Reserve as identified in Bowdler (1981), which require further archaeological testing and salvage and are potentially dateable sites. Inappropriate management without mitigation under an AHIP from Heritage NSW, or without consent process and in consultation with ILALC and other relevant Aboriginal parties, leads to the loss of important cultural information and scientific evidence. Inappropriate management compromises these sites and their values and detracts from potential information of Aboriginal occupation in the region and the State and our understanding of the antiquity of Aboriginal occupation and its continued renewal in Bass Point Reserve.
- Damage by frequent visitation from tourists/visitors unaware of the cultural and archaeological sites within the Bass Point Reserve could lead to inadvertent destruction to and disrespect of these Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
- Neglect of cultural sites due to loss of knowledge over time concerning management plan processes, conflict over land tenure and responsibility for management, and/or lack of funding resulting in indirect (e.g., increased erosion, spread of invasive weeds causing site destruction over time) and potential direct damage (as outlined above inappropriate development) to sites.

8.3.1 Heritage Grant Information

Table A1 (**Appendix B**) provides a list of potential funding programs that may be of assistance to aid future conservation and management for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites and values at Bass Point Reserve. Information presented in this table was accessed from various funding websites (referenced in far left hand column of the table) on 22 May 2020. In addition, in November 2020 a new round of heritage grants from NSW Heritage have been publicised to take effect between 2021 and 2023. Applications close on 8 February 2021 and information is available at the Heritage NSW website - Apply for a grant | Heritage NSW. In this round there are three broad categories of grants relevant for Bass Point Reserve, they are:

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- Caring for State Heritage
- Community Heritage

Other grant information is available at
https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants
https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/home

Opportunities and Management

We note that a formal joint management agreement with SCC is a key priority for Aboriginal stakeholders as articulated in consultation on the draft CMP inputs for ACH, in order for them to continue their cultural responsibility to care for country and also to obtain grant funding to renew and continue their connection to Bass Point Reserve. We recognise that this is an important and urgent priority for management.

We also note that relationships between SCC, Illawarra Aboriginal Land Council and other Aboriginal stakeholders in relation to the Aboriginal cultural heritage of Bass Point Reserve have been strengthened during this CMP process. Consultation for Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been summarised in **Volume 1**, **Appendix A**, **Table A1**.

Table 5 sets out management actions and responsibilities based on the current management framework. It should be revised if any such future agreements or partnerships can be advanced. This plan has been developed in consultation with stakeholders including:

- Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council;
- Kayla Williamson;
- Jodie Edwards;
- Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Shellharbour City Council; and
- Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Shellharbour City Council.

Within **Table 5**, the following abbreviations are used to nominate who is responsible:

AAC	Aboriginal Advisory Committee at Shellharbour City Council
DPC	Heritage NSW at the Department of Premier and Cabinet
ILALC	Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council
SCC	Shellharbour City Council
Virtus	Virtus Heritage Pty Ltd – cultural heritage and archaeology consultants

Table 5 Management Actions and Responsibilities

Site Name	Action Recommended for Management after Adoption of the CMP	Responsibility	Priority Rating	Timeframe: High Priority = 1-2 years Medium = 2-5 years Low = 6-10 years
General				
	Implementation of natural area protection / enhancement actions in accordance with the relevant Shellharbour Development Control Plan.			
	This CMP is not an impact assessment and SCC should avoid impact to the cultural and natural heritage values within Bass Point. If impacts are proposed then an impact assessment is required.			
	Cultural awareness training for SCC staff. Application for a Bass Point Reserve AHIP	ILALC /AAC /SCC	H	1-2 years
	This Bass Point CMP both volumes, particularly this Volume 2, to be provided to all SCC staff, (as relevant) to guide activities.	ILALC /SCC	H	1-2 years
	Development of a protocol for protection and management of Aboriginal objects (including stone artefacts), also known as a care and control agreement. Management of Aboriginal objects will require consultation with the Aboriginal community and an AHIP for any activities that may harm Aboriginal objects. Refer to **Appendix A** to this **Volume 2.**	ILALC /SCC	H	1-2 years
	Copies of Sandra Bowdler's thesis and other research publications such as Hughes and Sullivan (1974) and other related studies are kept within SCC's library as these documents contain important primary information on the Aboriginal cultural heritage sites within Bass Point Reserve.	SCC	M	2-5 years
	Preparation of a brochure for visitors and residents to advise them of the rich Aboriginal history and significance of the Bass Point Reserve and surrounds.	ILALC /AAC /SCC	L	6-10 years
	Consideration by SCC and all Stakeholder parties to establish a joint management	ILALC /AAC	H	1-2 years

Site Name	Action Recommended for Management after Adoption of the CMP	Responsibility	Priority Rating	Timeframe: High Priority = 1-2 years Medium = 2-5 years Low = 6-10 years
	agreement or partnership that will enable Aboriginal parties to secure closer cooperation with SCC, better access to potential grant funding, and present real opportunity for Aboriginal heritage tourism ventures and SCC driven education programs. The Reserve has high potential for tourism by seniors and also educational potential for school children.	/SCC		
Tangible ACH values				
All sites	Clear mapping of AHIMS registered sites to prevent accidental damage.	ILALC /DPC /SCC / Virtus	H	1-2 years
All sites	Weeding of formerly cleared land and increased weed management particularly for sites such as (52-5-78) where coast wattle and lantana are problematic. Weeding could be undertaken by a volunteer 'Friends Group' or by Landcare. Manual weeding can be undertaken without an AHIP as an exempt activity under Part 5, Division 2, Section 58, clause 1(j) of the NPW Regulation (2016).	SCC /ILALC / Landcare	H	1-2 years
All sites	Rectification works to control existing erosion using simple physical controls such as minor reshaping and coconut matting or as stipulated in **Table 6** measures as recommended for protective management from vehicle access or further impacts in consultation with the DPC, ILALC and AAC. The gravel path through 52-5-79 is gullied, exposing intact midden along with hearth stones and this should be repaired as a matter of urgency. Flowing water needs to be diverted from the car park away from the path, and the gully filled with an identifiable material like the crushed granite used as a surface. An AHIP would be required to undertake any of these works to protect the sites and must be discussed in consultation with Heritage NSW and relevant Aboriginal Stakeholders, in order for SCC to comply with the requirements of the NPW Act, 1974 (2010).	SCC	H	1-2 years

Site Name	Action Recommended for Management after Adoption of the CMP	Responsibility	Priority Rating	Timeframe: High Priority = 1-2 years Medium = 2-5 years Low = 6-10 years
All sites	ILALC and SCC Cultural Heritage Officer to carry out regular inspections to monitor for damage.	ILALC /SCC	H	N.B. 6-monthly-annual as stipulated in CMP; No less than 1-2 years.
All sites	Management of residential and commercial/industrial development as per LEP/DCP.	SCC	H	Ongoing, 1-2 years
All sites	Prior to any activities that may cause harm to Aboriginal objects (including track upgrading), an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) and Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit is required prior to the activities being undertaken as well as the completion of any cultural or archaeological salvage (e.g., community collection or if required, archaeological testing or salvage) in consultation with the DPC, ILALC and other relevant Aboriginal parties. These actions are required for SCC to meet their legal obligations to comply with the requirements of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (2010). This process includes an impact assessment.	SCC /AAC	H	1-2 years
Aboriginal midden, cultural site, artefact scatter and camping ground, gathering site and near contemporary cultural walk with Potential Archaeological Deposit located within AHIMS 52-5-0988 52-5-0989	This site as a cultural walk has educational opportunities for school children and as a place for ILALC and other Aboriginal parties to use as a teaching and educational place. Education and promotion of Aboriginal culture and heritage can help minimise accidental or deliberate harm to sites and Aboriginal objects, as well as provide opportunities for engagement and reconciliation with Council and the ILALC and broader Aboriginal community.	ILALC /AAC	M	2-5 years

Site Name	Action Recommended for Management after Adoption of the CMP	Responsibility	Priority Rating	Timeframe: High Priority = 1-2 years Medium = 2-5 years Low = 6-10 years
Aboriginal midden, cultural site, artefact scatter and camping ground, gathering site and near contemporary cultural walk with Potential Archaeological Deposit located within AHIMS 52-5-0988 52-5-0989	This site may have potential for scientific dating and if tested or salvaged in the future a key place for scientific and cultural research. Research of this site by a university or PhD student in consultation with Illawarra LALC may be an opportunity that should be considered in consultation with the DPC and relevant Aboriginal Stakeholders including ILALC. Anthropological research and historical study might also provide some additional information to SCC and ILALC on the contemporary (20th and 21st century) use of this place by the Aboriginal community and renewal of cultural values which is important for future site interpretation and management.	ILALC/ SCC/ AAC/ DPC	L	6-10 years
AHIMS 52-5-0077 and 52-5-0078 and relationships to all cultural sites within Bass Point Reserve	These sites are identified by Bowdler (1981) as having potential for dating/chronology and if tested or salvaged in the future a key place for scientific and cultural research with Pleistocene potential. Research of this site by a university or PhD student in consultation with Illawarra LALC may be an opportunity that should be considered in consultation with the DPC. The research and scientific dating of these sites with the other middens and sites throughout Bass Point Reserve may be an opportunity that should be considered in consultation with the DPC and ILALC.	AAC /ILALC /SCC /DPC	M	2-5 years
Intangible Heritage Values				
Bass Point Reserve	Provision of interpretive signage at strategic locations on Bass Point Reserve to describe the lifestyle and history of Aboriginal people and how the landscape was used and has evolved up to the present and updating signage where required. Review the NSW State Heritage Register (2013) listing for updates (to be provided). Signage will help inform the public of the significance of the site and minimise accidental and deliberate harm to sites.	AAC /ILALC /SCC	L	6-10 years

Site Name	Action Recommended for Management after Adoption of the CMP	Responsibility	Priority Rating	Timeframe: High Priority = 1-2 years Medium = 2-5 years Low = 6-10 years
Cultural landscape surrounding Bass Point Reserve	AAC and ILALC with SCC may consider educational and public awareness campaigns with school children and groups that frequent the reserve including divers, fishing groups and tourists on the history of the Bass Point Reserve and types of cultural sites present to assist with minimising harm that is accidental or deliberate to cultural sites.	AAC /ILALC /SCC	H	1-2 years
Bass Point Reserve and surrounding shoreline and waters	The inter-tidal area of the peninsula is not adequately protected (as recognised in comments by Jodi Edwards during review of the draft ACH for the CMP including the sea floors and potential for buried cultural sites). Bushrangers Bay itself is an aquatic reserve but that does not cover the shoreline. The rest of the Reserve has a boundary extending seaward, but there seems little management power or regulation of activities in that zone. SCC recommended to approach DPIFisheries and make the whole Peninsula an Intertidal Protected Area.	SCC/ ILALC/AAC	H	1-2 years

8.4 Ownership / Management

On 28 June 2002, under Section 138 of the Crown Lands Act 1989, the land of Bass Point Reserve was entered on the Crown Estate. The land had previously been owned by the Minister administering the EP&A Act (Department of Urban Affairs and Planning). Also on 28 June 2002, Reservation 1003048 for Public Recreation and Coastal Environmental Protection was declared, and Shellharbour Council was appointed as Reserve Trust Manager (now council Crown Land Manager under the current Crown Land Management Act 2016).

In general Crown Land is protected by adhering to the Principles of Crown Land Management as required under the CLMA 2016 (relevant legislation at website: https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-058 and the Regulation at https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2018-0088

The Regional Services Department of Crown Lands is located at the Nowra office of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. They have requested an opportunity to review and provide comment on this (and any) new CMP for the Reserve.

Shellharbour City Council are the managers of Bass Point Reserve. Under their management and with some funding historically, various management reports have been prepared. In addition to cultural heritage, both the marine and terrestrial areas of Bass Point are highly valued as they support a diversity of common, rare and endangered fauna and flora species. Bass Point contains diverse headland vegetation and littoral rainforest (protected under SEPP 26), and other Endangered Ecological Communities (ECCs). The Bass Point Marine Area supports a significant but fragile Sea Grass habitat (NSW Environment and Heritage, 2012).

In order to assist SCC to manage Bass Point Reserve, an Ecological Assessment and Plan of Management for the reserve has been compiled for SCC by EcoLogical Australia (2012). In addition, a Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan was prepared for SCC in 2018 and includes the land of Bass Point Reserve (BMT WBM, April 2018).

It is also worth noting that the land is subject to a Native Title claim by the South Coast People, registered in 2018. The claim is for land extending along the south coast from Kirrawee in southern Sydney.

Issues and Constraints

Regional Services Crown Lands at the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment have also advised that the land is also currently subject to undetermined Aboriginal Land Claims under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983. Any dealings that require registration on the title of the land will require written consent from the claimant Aboriginal Land Council and the Minister administering the Crown Land Management Act 2016. Therefore, if the proposed CMP were to include a permanent binding agreement that requires registration on title (this is not the case), then further approval processes apply (Regional Services Crown Lands, DPIE, March 2021).

Bass Point Reserve is listed on the State Heritage Register, and SCC has an obligation to seek permission prior to works taking place there that will affect Aboriginal cultural heritage across the landscape as well as any works affecting the Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve. As a State heritage item with relevance to the people of NSW, there are expectations that SCC will adequately maintain and present the Reserve to its best ability and promote the heritage significance of the place.

As a local council operating under a constrained budget, there are funding issues for SCC in relation to the

maintenance of Bass Point Reserve. SCC owns and maintains a number of places within their boundaries which can create issues in relation to different divisions within SCC prioritising the management of many different places.

The Bass Point Reserve is one of a number within the LGA, with Killalea State Park also located nearby to Bass Point. However, Killalea operates with a State Park Office located on site, at the access to the park. It also contains a kiosk adjacent to a large car parking area and provide unpowered camping sites and a 40-bed dormitory (used by backpackers and school or special interest groups). In 2009 Killalea State Park was named a National Surfing Reserve, to save the surf break for future generations.

Since 2016 Killalea has been managed by NSW Crown Holiday Parks Trust. The NSW Crown Holiday Parks Trust is based in Newcastle and manages nine state parks, and 35 coastal and inland public holiday parks. Their website notes: *Find out the interesting history of Killalea with a virtual tour. Download the "Tread Shellharbour" App and follow the guided tour*.

While the management of Killalea State Park is different to that of Bass Point Reserve, their approach with public access to the historical information and provision of on-site kiosk and office are something that is lacking for Bass Point Reserve. The addition of these services at Bass Point would clearly demonstrate coordinated management and up to date communication relating to visitors and use of the Reserve and acknowledgement of its important heritage significance values. The removal of a dedicated ranger (as part of SCC larger changes) was noted as a problem for management of the Reserve by a few of the stakeholders consulted for this project (see **Section 8.5**).

Opportunities

At various times SCC has appointed a Bass Point Management Advisory Committee or a Bass Point Sub-Committee (as noted previously, reference the 1982-83 annual report). Establishment of a Sub-Committee - under the management of the SCC Stakeholder Group advised for this CMP - is recommended as the most efficient management for the Reserve given its significance and the diversity of values.

We reiterate the opportunity indicated at **Section 8.1.3** for a Bass Point Reserve sub-committee. Discussion with SCC has noted that a relevant existing group is the Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee (CFRMAC). They were formed to provide feedback and support to SCC on the development, implementation and monitoring of the Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan and Coastal management programs.

As it is a heritage asset for SCC, all and any works proposed around or within the identified heritage curtilage for Bass Point Reserve be first notified to the SCC Stakeholder Group, who will coordinate directly with a representative from the CFRMAC. It is the CFRMAC who can arrange for actions with other sections of SCC and liaise with the relevant government officers. Government departments such as DPI Fisheries for Bushrangers Bay and Heritage NSW are two such relevant bodies. They will need to be first contacted for the provision of an area wide Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) for Bass Point Reserve, given that any works are likely to impact an Aboriginal place or object.

The CFRMAC will also liaise with external relevant stakeholders such as Hanson Quarries, who have their own set of management documents for the quarry site adjoining Bass Point Reserve. Sharing information with Hanson Quarries is recommended.

There are funding opportunities for local and State heritage that can be applied for (or organised with) SCC in relation to Bass Point Reserve, as noted in **Section 8.3.2**. Indeed, this CMP was enabled by NSW

Heritage funding in 2019-2020. It is recommended that the CFRMAC and particularly the SCC Stakeholders stay abreast of these opportunities and liaise with community groups relating to support for their grant applications, as well as other related management issues including access and publicity/education.

An opportunity also exists for the CFRMAC to investigate the management model in place for Killalea State Park, and how aspects of its management (not camping or accommodation), can be followed for Bass Point Reserve, see **Section 8.4.2** above. In addition, the establishment of a visitor entry centre located outside of the gates to the Reserve, to provide much needed information and manage entry restrictions is recommended. As noted earlier, SCC need to be aware that as the State Heritage boundary for Bass Point Reserve extends up to the loader and the quarry boundary, any such development would require both Heritage Act approval and also approval under the NSW NPW Act (which could be managed under an area wide AHIP if the works will harm Aboriginal objects).

8.5 Other Issues – Other Stakeholders

There are numerous groups who have been historically involved with Bass Point since at least the 1970s. They include the following who are listed in **Volume 1**, **Appendix A**, **Consultation Table A2:**

- Landcare Illawarra;
- Tongarra Heritage Society;
- Sixth Machine Gun Battalion re: memorial - Contact noted is John Campbell; and
- Dive Shop Illawarra / Shoalhaven Scuba.

Representatives of these organisations will need to be included (or attend or provide comment where necessary) to the Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee for Bass Point Reserve issues. Concerns and suggestions have been raised by some of these groups during the consultation phase of the CMP, in relation to the following management issues for Bass Point Reserve:

Management:

- There is a perception that with no dedicated Bass Point Reserve Ranger, the Reserve is not being looked after.

Historical:

- The Sixth Machine Gun Battalion representative advised that it is also recognised that members of the families involved with the *Cities Services Boston* from the WWII years have an ongoing interest with the location of its wrecking, Boston Point. Maintenance of the memorials and of access to them is required.

Natural Environment – land and marine:

- Threatened ecological communities appear not to be protected, no signage or indication of their value in the Reserve.
- Epiphytes in trees have been stolen.
- There are problems with recreational fishers parking anywhere as there are not enough car parking spaces provided.
- The inter-tidal area of the peninsula is not adequately protected. Bushrangers Bay is an

aquatic reserve but that does not cover the shoreline. The rest of the Reserve has a boundary extending well seaward but there seems to be little management power or regulation of activities in that zone. Request that SCC consider approaching DPI Fisheries and seek to make the whole Peninsula an Intertidal Protected Area.

- Request to increase car parking in the existing car park areas, fines of $220 are issued when cars are parked along the road, but there is simply not enough parking. Bushrangers Bay has an overflow parking area with a gate and this needs to be kept open for use.
- A problem with 4WD access by some visitors who drink and 'hoon' around in their cars after 5pm most days, chewing up the grass. The effects have been photographed at the entry near the coal loader, all along the grass verge.
- The adjacent quarry creates issues including dust coating the rainforest. There is a need to clarify who is responsible for the flora on the rock ledges around the quarry and what management can be undertaken to prevent damage. Hanson Quarry and SCC will need to liaise on this.
- There is an Illawarra Biodiversity Project or Strategy, can SCC advise what is still existing? No updates have been available and rockpool life needs to be included.
- Create access that is suitable for disabled divers– this applies to areas including Bushrangers Bay and the Gutter. Suggestions include a trolley on a track or a raised aluminium boardwalk or concrete path across the rocks to access the water at the Gutter – could even have a little ladder into the water - as this is best diving access and area. The southern side of Bass Point is inaccessible due to the prevailing southerlies, so the northern side, at the boat ramp (near the quarry jetty) and the Gutter is where divers enter the water. The access from Bushrangers Bay is hard to access due to the rocks. The boat ramp near the loader is slippery and a long way from the better dive spots off the Gutter - make this accessible for disabled and elderly.
- The road to the boat ramp and the car parking needs improvement.
- The dive areas are accessed by hundreds of divers each month and they have elderly and disabled who are part of the groups.
- Guided dives are lead every weekend and the divers are transported in one vehicle reducing cars trying to get parking.
- Dive leaders have first aid kits with them and have helped visitors and fishermen who needed first aid – as there is nothing in the park. Divers also remove rubbish from the seafloor.

While it is understood that many of these concerns do not address cultural heritage at Bass Point Reserve, they certainly show the level of thought and care that local community has for the place. In addition, any physical changes that take place within the Reserve, such as parking and access, have the risk of causing harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage. This CMP recommends that all of these issues are finalised as part of the proposed Master Plan for maintenance/works at Bass Point Reserve.

8.5.1 DPI Fisheries communications and advice

It was noted that there are daily patrols of the waterfront areas in Bass Point on behalf of DPI. They (DPI Fisheries) want more "Marine Parks and Aquatic Reserve" signage erected warning against fishing in the reserve. They advise that the site where this is needed is at the fork on the path where one turns right out of Bushrangers Bay and left into it. This is currently where a small green emergency exit sign stands.

At this location, $500 fines apply for fishing in the wrong place. DPI Fisheries find that it is common that visitors cannot see the other signs and are not aware that fishing is not allowed here. Signs within Bass Point need to incorporate images not only wording, as not all visitors understand English. It is noted that more and more visitors from Sydney arrive here who do not know the area, particularly members of the Chinese community fishing for Bonito and Kingfish, which are prevalent at Bass Point Reserve.

8.5.2 Hanson Quarry

Hanson Quarry operate the basalt quarry adjoining Bass Point Reserve. An application for expansion of the quarry was approved in 2014 as a State Significant Development. At the time Hanson commissioned a cultural heritage management plan which was provided for review for this report (RPS 2014).

Advice was received from Hanson's compliance officer, who was contacted for this CMP, that their employee entry is located near the reserve gates. Hanson propose to demolish the old plant closest to the reserve and the old crib room (mess hall) with its functions moved to a different existing building on site. This means that use of the old entry will decrease (no timeframe noted). Hanson will then limit their quarry entry to just one off the Bass Point Tourist Road (C. Flood, pers comm 18.03.2020).

As noted above, the quarry creates dust which is coating the rainforest in Bass Point Reserve. There is a need to clarify who is responsible for the flora on the rock ledges around the quarry between Hanson Quarry and SCC. There is a need for communication systems management to check, identify and prevent any damage.

8.6 Flora Management

Issues and Constraints

The current management plan (EcoLogical Australia 2012) provides recommendations for significant flora and fauna species and communities. There were no specific management recommendations made for regionally rare species in the more recent vegetation study of the Illawarra by Mills (2018). The study noted that:

The Bass Point Reserve and the adjoining public foreshore reserves contain many features of high botanical conservation value. In addition to being the largest area of coastal vegetation between Royal National Park in the north and Seven Mile Beach in the south, the area supports five endangered ecological communities, at least one threatened plant species and eight regionally significant plant species. The importance of the Bass Point area as an Aboriginal archaeological site of national importance has been well documented. The recreational value of the reserve is also high. The area deserves the highest level of protection and management (K. Mills, 2018, 17).

Opportunities

This CMP concurs with the 2012 recommendations which are as follows:

- Restriction of activities within the Reserve to ensure they are consistent with the objective to regenerate and sympathetically manage the high conservation value vegetation and associated habitats.
- Ensuring that activities are consistent with any current or future approved recovery plan for any of the threatened species or EEC's that occur within the Reserve.
- Ensuring that prior to commencement of any works, a suitable level of environmental assessment is to be completed to identify any potential impacts and how these may be mediated through suitable controls and work practices.
- Site inductions are to be carried out regularly by SCC to brief ground staff on sensitive areas where threatened species (or other species vulnerable to works) may be present and how to minimise impacts.

In addition, SCC and Hanson Quarries need to consult and plan management of the flora in relation to dust coating the forest and confirm responsibilities for the flora on rock edges around Bass Point.

In relation to management of Bass Point Reserve flora, the Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan 2019 noted SCC staff time was required for this, or that an external opportunity existed to manage Bass Point Reserve considering its Littoral Rainforest, Bangalay Sand Forest and other high value habitats. Currently these are managed under the Ecological and Bushfire Management Plan, for Bass Point Reserve. That report noted there is a staff time budget allocation, or external consultancy allocation with a budget or value of $25,000 (however, this was proposed along with Windang Island and Elliot Lake catchment).

The Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan also noted funding options and the existence of the South East Local Land Services Grant Programs, and other state grant programs. (Shellharbour Coastal Zone Management Plan, 2019).

Consultation for this project also confirmed the close attention and interest that local community groups such as Landcare Illawarra have for Bass Point Reserve. There are excellent opportunities already existing for regular Landcare Illawarra bushwalks, weeding days and the sharing of communication and resources between SCC and this group. Local community groups can be formed to undertake weed removal work within designated areas of Bass Point Reserve, as has occurred with great success.

Educational opportunities exist for SCC to explain via signage what a 'littoral rainforest' is. Examples of such educational signage from other parkland areas in the State include the Tweed Council Cabarita beach coastal walk with explanation of the small and unique littoral rainforest, and Sydney Harbour Bradley's Head, which has numbers of large and small scale signs along the walkways (Sydney harbour foreshore authority with NSW NPWS), **Figure 3 and Figure 4:**

Figure 3: Cabarita headland littoral rainforest information located next to walkway.

Figure 4: Bradley's Head Walkway sign next to walkway with all points of significance indicated.

8.7 Fauna Management

Constraints and Issues

The conservation management (EcoLogical 2012) recommendations for threatened or significant species at Bass Point Reserve propose that activities should be consistent with the objective to regenerate and sympathetically manage the high conservation values within the Reserve and its associated habitats.

Any activities within the Reserve – by SCC and by visitors - must also be consistent with any current or future approved recovery plans for any of the threatened species or EEC's. There is a requirement to better understand the species that inhabit the Reserve, with no studies having been undertaken or updated for many years.

It is recommended that prior to any works, a suitable level of environmental assessment must be completed to help identify any potential impacts to threatened species, or those vulnerable to works. Pest animal control (particularly fox, feral cat, pig and goat) and annual monitoring of the status of key ecological values has been suggested previously and is recommended.

Opportunities

The affection that the local community hold for Bass Point Reserve provides opportunity for ongoing care, attention, donations and volunteer time. All of these factors will be an important element in implementing the proposed program of maintenance works.

The use of volunteers in relation to checking and maintaining the natural environment, notably flora management and weeding and observation of birds and animals who make the Reserve their home is an opportunity, and this was discussed under **Flora Management**. An environmental survey relating to fauna in the Reserve is a highly recommended action. Such a survey can be undertaken as a joint project between SCC and community groups such as Landcare Illawarra, and/or Wollongong University.

8.8 Location, Access and Visitor Numbers

Constraints and Issues

The location of the Reserve is within an easy drive of Shellharbour village and has a road, the Bass Point Tourist Drive, leading to the gates of the Reserve and continues through it. This road access enables local and out of area visitors to view and appreciate the Bass Point Reserve and links it to Shellharbour and the coastal communities of the South Coast. As there is one road only, there may be constraints with traffic related to the proposed marina and to the new nearby Shell Cove residential development.

Apart from the road, there are site access and safety issues for the general public that need to be addressed. Note the current timber step or cross-country access to Bushrangers Bay Aquatic Reserve, refer to **Figure 5 to Figure 8**. There are no easily accessible areas for divers to access the waters, and this is a very popular dive destination. Additionally, as the Reserve encompasses an Aboriginal shell midden across most of the areas that are not rock platform, there are issues with maintenance of pathways and how to manage Aboriginal cultural heritage and maintenance, discussed in the next section.

Figure 5: Stair access at Bushrangers Bay

Figure 6: Land access via the headland walk to Bushrangers Bay

Figure 7: View NW into Bushrangers Bay from headland, access over this rock platform.

Figure 8: Extra car parking which is gated off at Bushrangers Bay.

As already noted in **Section 8.4,** Shellharbour Scuba advised that their dives are accessed by hundreds of divers each month. These dive groups also include the elderly and disabled. Guided dives are lead in the Reserve almost every weekend. The divers are transported in one vehicle which reduces numbers of cars trying to park where there is very limited parking available.

Dive leaders carry first aid kits with them and have been required to assist visitors and fishermen who needed first aid – as there are no first aid facilities (including the absence of a defibrillator) provided anywhere in the park.

Opportunities

Shellharbour Scuba noted that the waters around Bass Point are easily maintained by their divers. They advised there is no concern about increased numbers accessing the waters as every dive is arranged, organised and monitored and the waters can support large numbers of divers. Due to the safety precautions necessary for every diver, Shellharbour Scuba have noted all divers they have come across are careful and respectful in their approach. They are generally very observant and take any rubbish (fishing lines, plastics) away with them. However, Shellharbour Scuba has questioned whether security cameras are installed anywhere in the Reserve or at its entry to record criminal behaviour or activities that have potential to harm the environment of the Reserve.

The increased access by general public, on land, to fish and to dive are reasons for SCC to provide the following services as a minimum, within Bass Point Reserve:

- First aid location/s (with a defibrillator) – at a new interpretation and visitor information centre to be established at the entry, and/or at the shelter hut and toilets located at Beaky Bay/Boston Point;
- Increased parking in designated areas;
- Signage relating to 4WD control and fines;
- Boardwalk over rocks, location to be discussed with Shellharbour Scuba; and
- Resurfacing the roads, as there is one bitumen road throughout the Reserve, the Bass Point Tourist Road (this was addressed by SCC during 2020).

Aboriginal cultural heritage – Constraints, issues and opportunities in relation to location, access and visitor numbers

Bass Point Reserve and the documented sites are located in areas exposed to natural and human impacts. This is illustrated in the Aboriginal cultural heritage walkway where objects are exposed in the eroding pathway, refer to **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**.

Figure 9: Eroding pathway exposes Aboriginal artefacts and leads to signed Aboriginal cultural heritage walk and seating.

Figure 10: Detail of exposed Aboriginal objects in the eroding path.

These issues are addressed in relation to management, protection, understanding and appreciation of the area and its sites in the following **Table 6**. The Table provides a summary of the site conditions when inspected in 2020, along with the management constraints and opportunities and recommendations.

Table 6 Summary of AHIMS and Other Sites Condition -Use and Management Recommendations

Place name / AHIMS site ID	Management (Constraints and Opportunities)	Actions/ Timeframe
Bushrangers Cove Aboriginal Midden 1 - Coastal erosion, wind and water erosion and natural processes are eroding this midden and washing it downslope from the hill crest. Refer to Site Card:- Supra-Tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs 52-5-0989	▪ Erosion control of the crest and cliffs. Protection of this deposit through erosion control measures is required by planting of native species to assist with stabilising this deposit. ▪ Ensuring signage in bedrock discourages visitation across the crest and confines existing access and signage to rocky areas - not to the crest landform as it will have additional Aboriginal occupation evidence. ▪ As a key vista and focal point for visitors, recommended signage provides an opportunity for discussing Aboriginal cultural values.	▪ Surface collection of any artefacts and cultural objects eroding out of the site and regular monitoring by ILALC – ▪ Every six months. *Note, collection must be undertaken under an AHIP*
Possible stone cairn arrangement - Within a heavily vegetated area and in reasonable condition. Refer to Site Card:- Bass Point Landform - Headland Dunes 52-5-0978	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site.
Artefact scatter 1 – located on heavily eroded rock platform and disturbed by coastal erosion and tidal movements. Refer to Site Card:- Bass Point Landform –Vegetated Hillsides 52-5-0988	▪ This is a conservation activity which will require an AHIP, and further discussions with the Heritage NSW.	▪ Surface collection by community, removal to a safer location and reburied in consultation with ILALC.
Aboriginal midden, cultural site, artefact scatter and camping ground and gathering site near contemporary Cultural Walk with Potential Archaeological Deposit - Disturbed by carpark, with artefacts and midden deposit eroding out of introduced fill. The signage, construction of tracks and eroding grassy area (for camping and picnicking) is impacting the midden and shell deposit. *Refer to AHIMS Site Cards:-* Bass Point Landform – Vegetated Hillsides 52-5-0988 Bass Point Landform – Supra-Tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs 52-5-	▪ AHIP required for any further ground disturbance (including the car park, existing signage, tracks and picnic tables and amenities built on this cultural site). Consideration for further archaeological salvage in consultation with the ILALC and other relevant Aboriginal parties. ▪ Erosion control measures also to be considered where midden is eroding out underneath fill, including diverting drainage and water run off or re-establishing with fill or native plants to stabilise erosion. ▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ It is recommended this site be used as a teaching and educational place as the	▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually. ▪ Existing signage to be maintained for cultural interpretation ▪ New signage should also prohibit areas such as the midden to be walked over or frequented. Immediate action ▪ Research discussions to be held within 1-3 years of this CMP.

Place name / AHIMS site ID	Management (Constraints and Opportunities)	Actions/ Timeframe
0989	cultural walk has educational opportunities for school children and as a place for ILALC and other Aboriginal parties. ▪ This site may have potential for scientific dating and if tested or salvaged in the future is a key place for scientific and cultural research. It is recommended that research of this site by a university or PhD student in consultation with Illawarra LALC may be an opportunity in consultation with the Heritage NSW. Anthropological research and historical study would also provide some additional information to SCC and Illawarra LALC on the contemporary (20th and 21st century) use of this place by the Aboriginal community and renewal of cultural values. This is important for future site interpretation and management.	
Aboriginal midden and artefact scatter 2 - Eroding out of shore deposit and affected by coastal erosion *Refer to AHIMS Site Cards:-* Bass Point Landform – Sand Beaches 52-5-0987 Bass Point Landform – Supra-Tidal Zone including Sea Cliffs 52-5-0989	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition -annually.
Aboriginal midden 3 – Eroding out of location which is frequented by public. *Refer to AHIMS Site Cards:-* Bass Point Landform – Gulches Eroded from Volcanic Dykes 52-5-0977 Bass Point Landform – Boulder Beaches 52-5-0975 Bass Point Landform – Sand Beaches 52-5-0987 Bass Point Landform –Vegetated Hillsides 52-5-0988	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ Erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants or if extending on a track, introduced fill in consultation with the Heritage NSW (as compression by fill could be considered harm to an Aboriginal site and may require an AHIP).	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site and prohibit the use of vehicles. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.

Place name / AHIMS site ID	Management (Constraints and Opportunities)	Actions/ Timeframe
Aboriginal midden 4 – Eroding out of track; mostly intact underneath introduced fill *Refer to AHIMS Site Card:-* Bass Point Landform –Vegetated Hillsides 52-5-0988	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ Erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants and introduced fill in consultation with the Heritage NSW (as compression by fill could be considered harm to an Aboriginal site and may require an AHIP).	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers ▪ Protect the location of this site and prohibit the use of vehicles. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-0077 (not relocated in 2020 and this is the registered AHIMS location) - a reworked open midden and 52-5-00138 (Observed AHIMS Field Location) – a reworked open midden	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants. ▪ It is recommended that this site, identified by Bowdler (1981) as having potential for archaeological scientific dating if tested or salvaged in the future, is a key place for scientific and cultural research. ▪ Research of this site by a university or PhD student in consultation with Illawarra LALC may be an opportunity to be considered in consultation with the Heritage NSW.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-0078 - Undisturbed open stabilised midden site in mostly good condition with some erosion with high archaeological research potential, scientific and cultural significance.	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants. ▪ This site is identified by Bowdler (1981) as having potential for scientific dating and if tested or salvaged in the future a key place for scientific and cultural research. ▪ Research of this site by a university or PhD student in consultation with Illawarra LALC may be an opportunity to be considered in consultation with the Heritage NSW. A research program of this site and its relationship to other middens and cultural features is important and should be prioritised.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition - annually.
52-5-79 - Disturbed by shell-grit mining and redeposited by wave and storm action	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-80 – reworked open midden	No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.

Place name / AHIMS site ID	Management (Constraints and Opportunities)	Actions/ Timeframe
52-5-138 – highly disturbed open midden	No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-139- Cut through by road and possibly reworked open midden with some erosion into road	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants or in this case as on a track, introduced fill in consultation with the Heritage NSW (as compression by fill could be considered harm and may require an AHIP).	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site and prohibit the use of vehicle ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-140 - Highly disturbed open shell midden with small areas of intact midden	No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-141 – slightly disturbed	▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-142 – slightly eroded, small open midden	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-143 - scattered open midden in small discrete patches	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-144 – scattered eroded open shell midden in blowout, moderate condition	▪ Site appears to have been mined and is within the quarry boundary. .	▪ Consultation with quarry company to verify site status is recommended and then update AHIMS site card status if necessary

Place name / AHIMS site ID	Management (Constraints and Opportunities)	Actions/ Timeframe
52-5-145 - Very heavily disturbed open shell midden of unknown extent	▪ Site appears to have been mined and is within the quarry boundary.	▪ Consultation with quarry company to verify site status is recommended and then update AHIMS site card status if necessary.
52-5-0198- Open midden covered by grass	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.
52-5-0218 - Disturbed by wind but otherwise in good condition, though shell is highly fragmented	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site. ▪ No ground disturbing works or activities that may harm this site without an AHIP. Coastal erosion protection should be considered such as stabilising area with native plants. ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.	▪ Provide map of this location to SCC Rangers and protect the location of this site ▪ Regular monitoring of this site and its condition annually.

8.9 Bass Point Reserve Signage

Signage throughout the Reserve is to be replaced in 2020 by SCC. A number of the signs appear to be handmade, and hand painted. As such these signs have some local heritage significance for their social values and their aesthetic values. They have been photographed in situ and were removed for the new SCC signage. A selection of the signs is included here, refer to **Figure 11** to **Figure 14.**

Figure 11: Entry sign in Bass Point Reserve after gate on Bass Point Tourist Road

Figure 12: Rather strange sign near the Gutter and the Bass Point Indigenous Cultural Walk site.

Figure 13: Bushrangers Bay sign

Figure 14: Sign near Bushrangers Bay.

Constraints and Issues

Regular maintenance issues and bushfire risks cause the Reserve to be closed from time to time. When the Reserve is temporarily closed, the gates are closed and signs are posted at the entry and/or information is provided online at the SCC website. What appears to happen is that the gates are closedacross the road preventing access, but Information relating to the closure and alerts for when the closure will occur and also when the Reserve will re-open are not apparent.

The current entry also does not include signage that explains the significance and history of Bass Point Reserve. Signage regarding the significance of the site, including heritage interpretation is scarce. The minimal heritage interpretation within Bass Point Reserve relates to the *Cities Services Boston* Shipwreck and an Aboriginal cultural heritage walk with signage, some of which is overgrown.

Opportunities

The highly visible location for the entry to Bass Point Reserve at the gates is an excellent opportunity for signage and for a cultural heritage centre. Bass Point Reserve is located 5km from Shellharbour village, which is some distance to where any amenities for food and drink and firstaid are currently located.

In November 2015, a feasibility study for an Interpretation Centre at Bass Point (Simon Macarthur & Associates Pty Ltd, 2015) was commissioned by SCC but no works eventuated. The report was prepared as part of a business plan for a tourism operation and was not progressed.

An interpretive centre is highly recommended. It would provide entry information and identify the historical link between the environment, the local Aboriginal community, the historical references and the environmental value that Bass Point Reserve has for the wider community. This is important due to the state significance for the Reserve.

The centre would need to serve as an entry point and information location, display cultural and historical information, and provide amenities such as drinks, snacks and toilets. It could also control entry and provide entry requirements, restrictions and closing times for maintenance, etc.

The centre would also provide opportunities for Aboriginal cultural tours and employment opportunities. Opportunities to respect and existing cultural values through a centre and for cultural tours and employment developed in consultation with ILALC and other Aboriginal parties, where culturally appropriate, are integral to the conservation of Bass Point's cultural and spiritual values.

The 2015 report also recommended that such an interpretation /information centre (a small building) would operate as the arrival point for Bass Point Reserve. Located outside of the entry gates it would provide much needed information for entry requirements, restrictions and closing times for maintenance, etc. This CMP agrees with the 2015 report recommendations that the building would include the following spaces and necessary services:

- Orientation display;
- Keeping Place;
- Modest sized retail;
- Education room;
- General purpose meeting room;
- Kiosk / basic kitchen and indoor seating area;
- Modest office;
- Storage; and
- Outdoor fire pit and horseshoe seating around it .

8.9.1 Interpretation Opportunities – Maritime Heritage

This section provides a summary of the significant activities of the wrecks described in **Volume 1** of this CMP that can be used for interpretation at Bass Point Reserve. Please note, the *Cities Services Boston* has been extensively summarised and for that reason only brief information has been included herein.

It is recommended that images and/or maps and some of the information noted below be available to all visitors to Bass Point Reserve to help with understanding the significance of this place.

Summary of Shipwrecks at Bass Point

Bass Point was an occupational shipping hazard to the trade industries of the 19th and 20th centuries. The shipwrecks surrounding the point tell a chronological story of wrecking events along its rocky shoreline.

The 19th Century experienced the wrecking of four shipwrecks, the *Amphitrite*, *Echo*, *Bertha* and *Our Own*. All vessels were of wooden construction, carrying general cargo, including potatoes, maize and rock intended for the new settlements along the NSW coastline. Heroic rescue attempts have been made; survivors of the Bertha were rescued by local Aboriginals.

The 20th century experienced disastrous wrecking events of three shipwrecks, *Alexander Berry, Comboyne* and *Kiltobranks*. The larger screw steamers, ranging between 62-272 tonnes were wrecked whilst transporting loads of timber and blue metals between Sydney and Melbourne.

One of the more well-known shipwrecks, *Cities Services Boston* hit the Bombora rocks and ran aground in December 1943. All the 62 American crew on board were rescued by the soldiers of the 6th Australian Machine Gun Battalion. Tragically four Australian soldiers drowned in the rescue.

Summary of Stone Fleet and the Blue Diamond Trade

Bass Point was the last port for the stone fleet in the blue diamond trade. Kiama, Bombo, Shellharbour and Bass Point made up the ports of the shipping route. The blue diamond, commonly known as quarried and crushed basalt was used as aggregate for concrete, road making and as ballast from railways and tramways.

In the earliest years of the coastal trade, the stone fleet was made of sailing vessels but were succeeded by steamers designed to carry bulk cargo. The *SS Dunmore* was built by Fuller, owner of the Bass Point Quarry. The *Bertha* in 1879 and the *Kiltobrank*s in 1924 were both wrecked on the rocky shores of Bass Point.

The blue diamond trade ended in 2011 at Bass Point when the *MV Claudia* vessel was retired. All but one of the stone fleet survives, *the Kiltobranks*. Remnants of the jetty used during the trade is located adjacent to the Bass Point reserve.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN – FLORA AND FAUNA SIGNIFICANCE

The tasks contained in **Table 7** relate to the flora and fauna management of the land areas for Bass Point Reserve. They reflect the Draft Plan of Management (2000), the Environmental report prepared for SCC in 2012 and the more recent SCC summary (2020) provided for this CMP. As noted in the Policies, see **Policy 5** - *mandatory on site induction is required for all contractors, volunteers and staff. This includes bush-care and weeding. This induction training is to be facilitated by SCC and an Aboriginal registered stakeholder, to present the Aboriginal heritage and cultural induction.*

Table 7 Environmental Action Plan

Flora or Fauna / Type	Action	Schedule for SCC / Landcare volunteers
VEGETATION:	– Carefully remove weed species in stages and over a long term, so that areas of vegetation are currently well protected and not suddenly exposed to wind or direct sun. – Protect fine mature specimens, especially of *Ficus* species, *Celtis paniculate* and *Podocarpus elatus* that are growing along the edge of the access track and near existing picnic areas. – Protect existing vines of the endangered species *Cynanchum elegans*, and ensure the existing habitat is retained and ameliorated. – Instruct visitors of the harm they may inadvertently cause by straying from tracks, collecting fruit or removing plants.	As required, check biannually Install signage to advise visitors
Cynanchum elegans	– Locate and identify species. – No Herbicide spraying along main road within 10m of the known occurrence of *Cynanchum elegans.*	As required, check biannually
Zieria granulata	– Existing bush regeneration activities to be followed up within and immediately surrounding the population. – Any fires (control burns etc) to be excluded from the location where the *Zieria granulata* population is located. – Weed control actions around the population to be limited to cut and paint and similar labour intensive methods. – Herbicide spraying will continue to be prohibited given the potential for off-target damage to individuals.	As required, check biannually
SOIL EROSION	– Vegetation removal, including weeds, to continue to be kept to a minimum wherever possible in order to minimise opportunities for soil erosion. – Weeds, wherever possible, should be left *in situ* once treated.	As required, quarterly maintenance regime suggested.
REVEGETATION	– Activities will be limited to plantings in areas where recovery potential is low. – Natural revegetation to be encouraged by using passive bush regeneration methods to capitalise on existing vegetation.	As required, quarterly maintenance regime suggested.
FAUNA	– Mitigate impacts associated with introduced species and increase value of Reserve for native species. – Improve habitat for native species. – Manage human access when planning the location of any boardwalks.	Identify and locate relevant areas within the Reserve. As required, check biannually.

10. CONSERVATION POLICIES

The following presents a series of general and specific policies, all aimed at ensuring the long-term conservation of heritage significance for Bass Point Reserve. These policies should be addressed when preparing any works within the Reserve and its immediate surrounds. The approach to management of the location and setting of Bass Point Reserve should be one of minimal intervention, with the philosophy of 'do as much as necessary, but as little as possible' (Burra Charter 2013) being a primary consideration. This approach would also demonstrate respect to Aboriginal cultural heritage values and follow SCC's internal commitments to respectful community engagement.

Conservation Policies have been designed to incorporate and balance what has been discussed in this report, including the following:

- The identified significance of the various elements comprising Bass Point Reserve;
- Its location, condition and management of the place including issues such as access;
- Promotion of its heritage values and significance for visitors;
- Promotion of its educational and research aspects relating to its significance, notably for Aboriginal cultural heritage and for the maritime environment;
- Specific identified areas for management and maintenance; and
- The relevant cultural heritage legislation, guidelines and policies.

10.1 Statement of Management Policy - Reasons for policy

The statement of management policy recognises the identified heritage significance of Bass Point Reserve and the interaction between its values and its visitors. This CMP seeks to ensure ongoing appreciation and visitation to the Reserve, recognising the importance it has for Shellharbour locals as well as the wider community. It also recognises SCC's long term management of the Reserve, and that Bass Point Reserve already has a role as a 'marketing brand' for Shellharbour and for SCC.

It is important to recognise that the values which make the place significant, particularly its aesthetic and landmark qualities, are the same values which make the site attractive to the local community and to the general public.

10.2 General Policies

There are ten policies in this section, and they aim to:

- Conserve the significant values of Bass Point Reserve. The identified elements relate to land and marine environment, Aboriginal cultural heritage and historical heritage and apply strongly to the Reserve and its setting. Heritage values also relate to social, historical, aesthetic and community importance identified in Volume 1 of this CMP.
- Maintain Bass Point Reserve's heritage listing on the State Heritage Register and ensure compliance with statutory controls.
- Ensure appropriate heritage interpretation and signage consistent with the significant values of Bass Point Reserve.
- Ensure the ongoing maintenance and minimum standards of care continue. Work that is non urgent is addressed in **Section 9.5 Maintenance and Repair**.
- Ensure the Aboriginal cultural heritage management measures outlined in **Table 5** and **Table 6** takes place in consultation with the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) for SCC, ILALC and Aboriginal stakeholders with assistance from qualified archaeologists where required.

- *We reiterate that a formal joint management agreement with SCC is a key priority for Aboriginal stakeholders and recognise that this is an important and urgent priority for management.*
- Establish an appropriate action plan to implement this Conservation Management Plan.

10.3 The Grading of Significance

Within the State heritage significant Bass Point Reserve there are identified elements that have been 'ranked' for their level of cultural heritage importance and the contribution they make to its State significance. Not every item within the Reserve is a highly significant item. Items identified as 'High' significance need to be preserved. Any works proposed for them would require an initial heritage assessment and review of what is proposed. It is understood also, that works to maintain the Reserve will involve replacement and repairs and removal (such as weeds) for some items. Therefore, **Table 8** provides significance rankings and relevant management actions. The ranking and their definitions are based on the standard CMP guidelines and the NSW Heritage Guidelines.

Once an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit is obtained, works that will affect these following items can be undertaken, provided that the management actions are followed.

Table 8 Significance Ranking and Relevant Management Actions after AHIP

Ranking	Definition and Management Actions	Identified Element
High	– This fabric or element should not be removed from its existing place or demolished. – Should be preserved, restored or reconstructed with advised consultations. – Sympathetic adaptive works can be undertaken with advised consultations.	– Aboriginal cultural heritage items and places – *Cities Services Boston* memorials – Tramway items associated with *Cities Services Boston* – Identified and unknown shipwrecks and/or submerged sites – Marine life and the marine environment including rock platforms and rockpools – Identified rare flora and the littoral rainforest
Moderate	– Should preferably be retained in situ but there is greater opportunity for adaptation pending advised consultations. – The removal of this fabric or element is allowable only if there is no detrimental impact on the significance of the place or item. – Works should always have regard for the cultural significance of the place and the potential impact upon significant fabric and its setting.	▪ Current signage relating to any aspect of the Reserve ▪ Existing huts, amenities, seating, shelters ▪ Fencing and gates
Low	– May be retained, adapted or removed, as necessary. – Works to this element must not impact upon elements of fabric graded as High and must not detract from the overall cultural significance of the place.	▪ Roads ▪ Gravel paths and access tracks ▪ Timber steps ▪ Car parking areas
Intrusive	– Should be removed or adapted in order to enhance the cultural significance of the place.	Landscape items including weeds

10.4 CMP Policies 1 to 10

Policy	Description
Policy 1 – Adoption and Review of the Conservation Management Plan	This 2021 Conservation Management Plan is to be submitted to Shellharbour City Council for review and endorsement and will be placed on public exhibition. This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be reviewed within 5 years but not later than 2030, to ensure that it remains a useful guide and accompanies the changing needs and circumstances of SCC. A copy is to be provided to Crown Lands for their review and comment. The contact details are as follows: Senior Property Management Officer Regional Services Crown Lands Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Ground floor, 5 O'Keefe Ave, Nowra NSW 2541 Email: heike.peterlin@crownland.nsw.gov.au An email or letter with information relating to updates to the State Heritage Register listing for Bass Point Reserve and stating that there is (once approved by SCC) a CMP in place is required to be sent to Heritage NSW for their information and for updating on the State Heritage Register listing for Bass Point Reserve. The contact details are: Email: heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au A copy of the CMP is to be provided by SCC to the AAC for their endorsement.
Policy 2 – Accessibility and Distribution of Conservation Management Plan	In order for the CMP to be a useful guide, it needs to be accessible. It is to be made accessible to the stakeholders, contractors and the general public by SCC and a copy provided to the Shellharbour Library and Museum. It is particularly important that a copy of the CMP is kept by SCC for access by their maintenance/works personnel and that it is consulted prior to any works taking place within the Reserve, see *Policy 3*. This will allow for any other communications / permits to be obtained. Copies of the final CMP should also be provided to NSW Heritage, AAC and ILALC (hard copies) and all consulted Aboriginal stakeholders.
Policy 3 – Location and Setting of the Reserve	This CMP references the principles of the Burra Charter and recommends the process of investigation, assessment and management and the legal requirements of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (2010 amendments) and NSW Heritage Act, 1977. Conserving a place requires ongoing maintenance to ensure that it is kept in a good state of repair and that problem areas are identified early before they become major maintenance issues. All future actions or works for Bass Point Reserve, due to its State significance, should be guided by this CMP, including these (maintenance) works – see *Policy 5*:

Policy	Description
	○ landscaping and weed removal, ○ removal and replacement of roadwork elements, ○ drainage, ○ signage, ○ maintenance of any element including road and path surfaces, ○ repair or any element, and ○ any new works. Specifically, if any works are proposed the scope is to be provided to the key stakeholder group (see Table 4, **Section 7**)/and the CFRMAC, see ***Policy 4.***
Policy 4 – Establish Bass Point Reserve Sub-Committee as part of the Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee	Internal SCC stakeholders have been identified for managing the Reserve. In addition, an SCC Sub-Committee will effectively manage the disparate elements and coordinate communications, approvals and permits and all work programs and be an intermediary with general public. Meetings held at Council or on site at Bass Point Reserve are recommended. This is best achieved, SCC have advised, by integrating Bass Point Reserve matters specifically within the responsibilities of the existing Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee. The CFRMAC will be the conduit for future major maintenance, as well as development of a Master Plan for works at Bass Point Reserve which will form part of the application for a Bass Point Reserve AHIP.
Policy 5 – Site Maintenance and Individual Element Management	e) The maintenance and repair strategy in place by SCC for the care of Bass Point Reserve needs to be coordinated by the CFRMAC. Coordination will ensure that land, marine and maritime heritage are protected and that any required consents / approvals / permits have been obtained. f) As works have the potential to harm or remove Aboriginal objects or Aboriginal cultural values they must first be approved by Heritage NSW via the preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) to legally comply with the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 (2010 amendments). A plan of program of works is to be prepared so that an AHIP can be initiated, and it is possible that for some proposed works archaeological test excavations may be required to determine whether the works will harm Aboriginal heritage sites and determine how harm can be limited or avoided. It is likely that activities within the Reserve will require Aboriginal consultation and/or community collection during works. g) In addition, mandatory on site induction is required for all contractors, volunteers and staff. This includes bush-care and weeding. This induction training is to be facilitated by SCC and an Aboriginal registered stakeholder, to present the Aboriginal heritage and cultural induction. h) An induction checklist is to be prepared for SCC, that will include (but is not limited to) an outline of the legislation in relation to archaeological sites, basic archaeological context of the area, including general artefact identification and cultural heritage awareness and an Unexpected Finds Procedure (including photographic examples) to incorporate all possible archaeological relics or objects discoverable at Bass Point and to provide a consistent approach on how to

Policy	Description
	proceed in the event of uncovering an unexpected heritage relic or object.
Policy 6 – Previously Removed Historical Elements	Any historical elements removed from Bass Point Reserve should be recorded and safely stored to conserve them. Advice from a conservation expert is recommended regarding safe storage of the removed hull and keel for Cities Services Boston, which is currently deteriorating at the open-air commemoration location. This policy should be considered in the future development of the Master Plan for Bass Point Reserve.
Policy 7 – Setting, Views and Vistas	The landmark quality of the site should be maintained by retaining the existing view corridors and attractive natural landscape of Bass Point Reserve. Retention of Bass Point Reserve as Crown Land and a public reserve ensures this protection. In general Crown Land is protected by adhering to the Principles of Crown Land Management as required under the CLMA 2016 (relevant legislation at website: https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-058 and the Regulation at https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2018-0088: Under Condition 6 of the Regulation, it is stated that: (3) The responsible manager of dedicated or reserved Crown land may set aside any part of the land (including any building or enclosure in or on the land) for any purpose for which the land may be used. (4) The setting aside is subject to, and must be consistent with, any plan of management for the dedicated or reserved Crown land. This policy states that before making any decisions which may have a material effect on Bass Point Reserve and its heritage significance including setting, views and vistas, is to be considered via referral to the CFRMAC and Heritage NSW. Views and vistas as shown in Volume 1 of this CMP relates to other cultural features. SCC should consider views and vistas and connections to places being included in the SHR listing and a part of future management.
Policy 8 – New services	Services within Bass Point are minor and do not detract from its natural environment. Existing services such as seating, parking signage, two amenities blocks, and a number of small timber shelters have been installed through the years. Future services and other embellishments should be considered as part of an overall Master Plan. Until the Bass Point Master Plan is finalised, there are no plans to update these services. If new services are proposed, for instance, lighting (there is currently no lighting within the Reserve) such services would be subject to an assessment of the impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage. This could be managed under an area wide AHIP for the whole of the Reserve and arranged via a Management Plan and application to Heritage NSW with a clear indication of what the impacts will be.
Policy 9 – ccess	Public access is an important issue for the site. Security measures in relation to public access have been developed via the existing gateway that closes across the access road. There is signage at the gateway with closure times, and SCC lock the

Policy	Description
	gate every evening. However, from the water there is no visible protection or indication that a Reserve (the whole of Bass Point) has been entered. Signage regarding the Aquatic Reserve is only erected at Bushrangers Bay and visible from land. SCC will continue to engage with DPI Fisheries on signage requirements and locations to best protect inter-tidal areas.
Policy 10 – Heritage Interpretation	Signage and heritage interpretation, including historical information, is an excellent way of meeting the needs of the wider community and assisting their understanding of the importance of Bass Point Reserve as well as engendering responsible and respectful behaviour within the reserve. An interpretation strategy is required to combine the variety of signage within the Reserve and enable a coordinated approach. This CMP recommends further heritage interpretation signage, (refer to **Sections 9.4** and **9.6**). The impact of signage can be managed as part of an area wide AHIP for Bass Point Reserve. There needs to be inclusion of maritime and Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Reserve: d) For maritime heritage, land-based panels/signs are to be located in the Picnic Bay Area and Bushranger Bay area that include information about the protection of shipwrecks in Australia. There is already infrastructure present in these areas that signage could be incorporated into. e) Signage, including heritage interpretation, should be provided for public appreciation at the entry to the Reserve, and developed in consultation with the AAC and Aboriginal stakeholders to ensure it is culturally appropriate. This CMP recommends the establishment of a small venue outside the gates to Bass Point Reserve, where information is displayed and further relevant information, such as parking and safety are provided. f) The SCC website is to be updated with heritage information relating to the significance of Bass Point Reserve.

11. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, this CMP supports the State heritage values and significance for Bass Point Reserve. Its heritage listing in both the State Heritage Register and the Shellharbour LEP should be maintained and updated with the information in **Volume 1** of this CMP.

Bass Point Reserve is a special place for local people and visitors and combines a wild and natural environment of water and landscape with cultural heritage associated with land and sea.

11.1 Recommendations

The CMP recommends the following actions be undertaken by SCC regarding Bass Point Reserve, in addition to the Management Actions which were outlined in this Volume at **Tables 6**, **7** and **8**.

These recommendations are for implementation within 1-3 years of the date of this CMP so that the heritage of the Reserve can be managed effectively. They are points 1 to 7, as follows:

1. **LEP Update** – SCC need to change the local status on the LEP 2013 for Bass Point Reserve to State.
2. **Management Agreement for Aboriginal cultural heritage –** a formal joint management agreement with SCC is a key priority for Aboriginal stakeholders as articulated in consultation on the draft CMP. SCC to consider joining into a management partnership with Aboriginal Stakeholders, in order for them to continue their cultural responsibility to care for country and for opportunities to obtain grant funding to renew and continue their connection to Bass Point Reserve.
3. **Sub-Committee for Bass Point** – SCC to re-establish a Bass Point Sub-Committee via the Coastal Flood and Risk Management Advisory Committee, which combines SCC and other stakeholders to coordinate communications and permits, monitor the Reserve, communicate with DPI Fisheries regarding the Aquatic Reserve and with the nominated Aboriginal cultural heritage representatives. This Group will liaise with SCC's key stakeholders, prepare maintenance schedules and inductions for the relevant SCC rangers.
4. **Information and Amenities**:

   4a – Facilities on site and heritage interpretation – A small heritage and entry information centre is recommended to be established to welcome visitors to the site. This facility is lacking at Bass Point Reserve. The venue would be placed outside of the entry gate and therefore provide services relating to entry requirements, including parking information. At a minimum, the centre will also provide historical and environmental information, public safety information, toilets, snacks and cold drinks.

   4b – Heritage Interpretation strategy – the aim of such a strategy is to manage and coordinate the signage and any other elements designed to educate, inform and entertain. It will contain heritage interpretation signage relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage, maritime history and shipwreck information (refer to **Section 11.2**), mining and World War II stories and environmental information. It would also guide the information to be displayed at the heritage and entry information centre. There are further locations for heritage interpretation signage within the Reserve which require management under a strategy.

   Shipwrecks located in the area of Bass Point are to be included in the interpretation strategy – featuring these suggested online and land based options: -

   - Land-based panels/signs located in the Picnic Bay Area and Bushranger Bay area that include information about the protection of shipwrecks in Australia. There is already

infrastructure present in these areas that signage could be incorporated into. All signage will need to be developed in line with Heritage NSW guidelines for shipwrecks trails. **See Appendix C for the shipwreck trails guidelines.** Signage can be included in the recommended heritage and entry centre

- Inclusion of Bass Point reserve, including the maritime heritage, on the **NSW Heritage Online** Webpage: https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/visit/home.aspx
- Information regarding existing maritime heritage interpretation in NSW is available online at the Heritage NSW website https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/about-our-heritage/maritime/maritime-outdoor-signs-and-trails/

5. **Access and car parking –**

   5a - more car parking is needed within the Reserve as well as encouragement for visitors to leave their cars parked outside of the Reserve. There are parking areas available adjacent to the road. Within the Reserve, currently available areas are at Maloney's Bay, and adjacent to the loading jetty and there is an existing overflow area at Bushrangers Bay. Approved car parking areas are to be advised at entry via signage within the heritage and visitor information centre as well as information relating to fines for all other areas. Car parking is to be finalised as part of the Bass Point Master Plan.

   5b - Boardwalks in two places – Create access that is suitable for disabled divers – this applies to areas including Bushrangers Bay and the Gutter. Suggestions include a trolley on a track or a raised aluminium boardwalk or concrete path across the rocks to access the water at the Gutter as this is best diving access area. The southern side of Bass Point is inaccessible due to the prevailing southerlies, so the northern side, at the boat ramp (near the loading jetty) and the Gutter are where divers enter the water.

6. **SHR Update** – The State heritage register entry needs to be updated with the relevant additional and new significance information provided in **Volume 1,**including views, vistas and connections to places.

7. **Maritime Heritage** –

   7a – Conservation advice for *Cities Services Boston* remains

   Advice from a conservation expert is recommended now regarding safe storage of the removed hull and keel for *Cities Services Boston*, which is currently deteriorating at the open-air commemoration location.

   7b – Inspection of Shipwrecks

   Inspect and record the shipwrecks of Our Own, Alexander Berry, Kiltobranks, Cities Services of Boston, to further understand what remains are left on the seabed and as to inform any future interpretation of the sites. The extensive local diving interest could utilise NSW Maritime Heritage Program initiatives, such as wreck spotters. **See Appendix C for the wreck spotters program information** . This action should be implemented with the support of local dive groups.

APPENDIX A

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE: COMPLIANCE UNDER THE NSW NPWS ACT AND PROTOCOLS FOR ARTEFACTS AND CULTURAL OBJECTS IDENTIFIED

Compliance with the NPW Act 1974

Heritage NSW advice provided on their website - Compliance with the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 | Heritage NSW - states:

The NPW Act sets out tiered strict liability offences and penalties for harming or desecrating Aboriginal objects or places (s 86). Harm is defined to include destroy, deface or damage an object or place (s 5). Any offences committed with knowledge in aggravating circumstances attract a higher penalty (s 86(3)).

The Aboriginal cultural heritage offences and the penalty for each offence are summarised below.

Offence	Maximum penalty individual	Maximum penalty corporation
A person must not harm or desecrate an Aboriginal object that the person knows is an Aboriginal object	2,500 penalty units ($275,000) or imprisonment for 1 year 5,000 penalty units ($550,000) or imprisonment for 2 years or both (in circumstances of aggravation)	10,000 penalty units ($1,100,000)
A person must not harm or desecrate an Aboriginal object (strict liability offence)	500 penalty units ($55,000) 1,000 penalty units ($110,000) (in circumstances of aggravation)	2,000 penalty units ($220,000)
A person must not harm or desecrate an Aboriginal place (strict liability offence)	5,000 penalty units ($550,000) or imprisonment for 2 years or both	10,000 penalty units ($1,100,000)
Failure to notify DPC of the location of an Aboriginal object (existing offence and penalty)	100 penalty units ($11,000). For continuing offences, a further maximum penalty of 10 penalty units ($1,100) applies for each day the offence continues.	200 penalty units ($22,000). For continuing offences, a further maximum penalty of 20 penalty units ($2,200) applies for each day the offence continues
Contravention of any condition of an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit	1,000 penalty units ($110,000) or imprisonment for 6 months, or both, and in the case of a continuing offence a further penalty of 100 penalty units ($11,000) for each day the offence continues	2,000 penalty units ($220,000) and in the case of a continuing offence a further penalty of 200 penalty units ($22,000) for each day the offence

Exemptions

There are a number of exemptions to the offences discussed above, including where the harm occurred as a result of:

- Work being carried out for the conservation or protection of an Aboriginal object or place by an officer of Heritage NSW or a person under the direction of such an officer
- Any emergency firefighting act or bush fire hazard reduction work within the meaning of the Rural Fires Act 1997 that is authorised or required to be carried out under that Act
- Anything authorised by or under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 in relation to an emergency and that was reasonably necessary in order to avoid an actual or imminent threat to life or property
- Anything required or permitted under a conservation agreement entered into under the NPW Act

Table A1: Standard Stop Work Procedure for Aboriginal Objects or Places

ACTIONS	Details of Actions
STOP WORK	**Immediately -** All work should cease at the location and if necessary, an appropriately qualified Aboriginal Sites Officer or experienced archaeologist, with expertise in Aboriginal cultural heritage is to be notified, if not already present at the location. The area is to be cordoned off to prevent access and to protect the object. Construction workers and operational personnel will comply with the instructions of the qualified Aboriginal Sites Officer and/or experienced cultural heritage professional (archaeologist). Construction may be able to continue at an agreed distance away from the site.
CONTACT AND NOTIFY	**Contact and notify the DPC's Enviroline on 131 555 and ILALC on phone: (02) 4226 3338.**
ASSESS	**DPC will advise on a course of action based on the significance of the resource, which DPC's officers will follow:** • **Protect and avoid; or** • **Record and protect; or** • **Investigate, excavate, record and preserve** (archaeological excavation may require a permit – i.e., an AHIP and/ or Heritage Act approval). An Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment of the object and surrounding locality is to be undertaken. A written report of the archaeologist's findings and recommendations is to be provided to registered Aboriginal Parties and Heritage NSW for their consideration.
APPLY	**To DPC for an AHIP if necessary**
RECOMMENCE	**When DPC has approved a course of action in writing, works can recommence.** No further works or development may be undertaken at the location until the required investigations have been completed and AHIP permits, or approvals obtained as required by the NPW Act and receipt of written authorisation by Heritage NSW. Upon further advice, construction may be able to continue at an agreed distance away from the site.

Please note in the case of the discovery of human remains or suspected human remains, the following actions must also be undertaken.

Table A2: Standard Stop Work Procedure for Discovery of Human Remains or Suspected Human Remains

ACTIONS	Detail of Actions
STOP WORK	**Immediately –** The Police must be notified, and all personnel and contractors on site should be advised that it is an offence under the Coroners Act to interfere with the material/remains. If necessary, an appropriately qualified Aboriginal Sites Officer or experienced archaeologist, with expertise in Aboriginal cultural heritage is to be notified, if not already present at the location. The area is to be cordoned off to access and to protect the remains. Construction workers and operational personnel will comply with the instructions of the qualified Aboriginal Sites Officer or archaeologist.
CONTACT AND NOTIFY	**Contact and notify the Illawarra Police on (02) 4232 5599; DPC's Enviroline on 131 555; and ILALC on phone: (02) 4226 3338.**
ASSESS	**DPC/Heritage NSW will advise on a course of action based on the significance of the resource, which SCC's officers will follow:** • **Protect and avoid; or** • **Record and protect; or** • **Investigate, excavate, record and preserve**
APPLY	**To Heritage NSW for an AHIP if necessary**
RECOMMENCE	**When Heritage NSW/DPC, NSW Police and Coroner (if required) has approved a course of action in writing, works can recommence.** No further works or development may be undertaken until the required investigations have been completed by NSW Police, Coroner (if required) and DPC and permits or approvals obtained where required in accordance with the NPW Act. Upon further advice, works may be able to continue at an agreed distance away from the site.

Registration of any new Aboriginal objects with DPC's Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) (including human remains if deemed an Aboriginal burial) is required under Section 91 of the NPW Act, 1974. The procedure for artefact recording is described below in **Table A3** below.

Table A3: Recording Procedure for Aboriginal Objects

Procedure for Aboriginal Objects Recording and Site Registration
If any new artefacts/objects (Aboriginal or historical associated with Aboriginal cultural use) are identified within Bass Point, this procedure should be followed to comply with DPC's AHIMS site recording procedures using an AHIMS site card (accessible see link and/or via the recording the digital recording app - https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences/DECCAHIMSSiteRecordingForm.htm): a) A photograph of the overview of the location of the artefacts is provided with a flag or object used as a marker. b) A photograph of a close up of the artefact (if a stone artefact front and back surface (ventral and dorsal) in its location with a scale (IFRAO scale or measured scale - if not on hand, coin, key or pen). c) GPS recording of the artefact and site (Latitude and Longitude or grid system (MGA or AMG) and grid coordinates - easting and northing taken). d) A description made including the following information: • Locational information (closest landmarks, distance from nearby road and how to get to location, where the artefacts are found), • Number of artefacts, • Type of material the artefacts are made of, • Possible age of artefacts, • Any information known by community and Elders about the artefacts, • If found in an eroded area the approximate extent (length/width) of erosion scour or of the possible site. e) **Contact and notify the DPC's Enviroline on 131 555 and ILALC on phone: (02) 4226 3338.** If artefacts/sites are found, undertake the recording for the find (as above). The ILALC should also note if there is any restricted cultural information on the artefacts/site and ensure this information is protected/restricted for access in consultation with stakeholders. f) The recording as outlined above (following steps a) to e) must be sent to the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DCP) Aboriginal Heritage Information Management Systems (AHIMS) database to register on the Sites Database – contact is: Phone: (02) 9585 6470 Email: ahims@environment.nsw.gov.au

APPENDIX B

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Table A4: Types of Potential Funding and Grants

Funding Type	Name of Funding Body/Grant	Description/Amount Accessible	Links and Contacts
Government	Commonwealth - Indigenous Advancement Strategy Including Community Led Grants	The Indigenous Advancement Strategy consolidates the many different Indigenous policies and programs that were delivered by the Commonwealth Government into five overarching programs: Jobs, Land and Economy Children and Schooling Safety and Wellbeing Culture and Capability Remote Australia Strategies The strategy can fund cultural heritage programs/projects including management documents, identification and assessment of cultural places, their maintenance, interpretation and protection and could apply to cemeteries and unmarked graves.	http://www.indigenous.gov.au/indigenous-advancement-strategy Phone: 1800 079 098
Government	Commonwealth – Our Country Our Future – Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) Funding	*Our Country Our Future* is the ILSC's national funding program. It operates across urban, regional and remote areas—it doesn't matter where in Australia you live. Through *Our Country Our Future*, the ILSC can provide a wide range of assistance to those proposing projects: from brokering and developing partnerships, to facilitating and coordinating support, to providing funding assistance.	Free call 1800 818 490 to discuss applications. https://www.ilsc.gov.au/home/partner-with-us/our-country-our-future/

Funding Type	Name of Funding Body/Grant	Description/Amount Accessible	Links and Contacts
Government	Protecting our Places Program	The NSW Environmental Trust offers the Protecting our Places Program. This program supports projects that restore or rehabilitate Aboriginal land and land that is culturally significant to Aboriginal people, as well as educate Aboriginal and other communities about the environment. Available funding up to $60,000.	https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/funding-and-support/nsw-environmental-trust/grants-available/protecting-our-places
Government	NSW Government Heritage Grants	The Department of Planning Industry and Environment and the Heritage Council of NSW work together to connect communities to heritage at a local and state level. One way they do this is through the Heritage Grants Program, providing grants to heritage owners and custodians, local government and the community to deliver a broad range of heritage outcomes. These grants include: Emergency Works Grants Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Grants Community Heritage Grants Caring for State Heritage Grants	https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/heritage/grants-and-funding
Private	ANZ community grants	The Seeds of Renewal program provides grants of up to $15,000 to community organisations for projects focused on creating education and employment opportunities in rural and regional Australia. Grants are independently administered by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) and applications are accepted once a year in July or August - please check FRRR's website for details.	http://www.anz.com/about-us/corporate-sustainability/community/community-grants/

Funding Type	Name of Funding Body/Grant	Description/Amount Accessible	Links and Contacts
Private	Harold Mitchell Foundation Community Grants	The Harold Mitchell Foundation's grant scheme is about helping people to help each other. So many organisations out there are full of great ideas, people and drive. To make a really big difference in our community, they just need a little bit of money, and that's what they're here to provide. Since they started out in 2000, the Foundation has provided up to $7 million in grant funding to over 100 different organisations, in everything from health to the arts. **Community Grants** Invite applications from the community for grants of less than $10,000 to fund projects that reflect a theme.	For more information please visit: haroldmitchellfoundation.com.au
Government	Australian Research Council	The ARC funds research and researchers under the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). As part of its commitment to nurturing the creative abilities and skills of Australia's most promising researchers, the program includes Humanities and Creative Arts. In most cases, researchers prepare an application for funding that is submitted to the ARC through a University Research Office, or equivalent office in other organisations. Discovery Indigenous, Discover and ARC Linkage projects are some of the biggest forms of funding for cultural heritage and archaeological research and need to go through a research institution in partnership with community organisations. These grants are highly competitive.	http://www.arc.gov.au/discovery-projects
Private	Wenner Gren Foundation	Grants for Non-U.S. Scholars All of the Foundation research grants are available to students and scholars regardless of nationality and place of residence. Alongside this, the Foundation has some specific programs to support students and scholars in countries where there are limited institutional and financial resources for anthropology. Conferences and Workshops	http://www.wennergren.org/programs

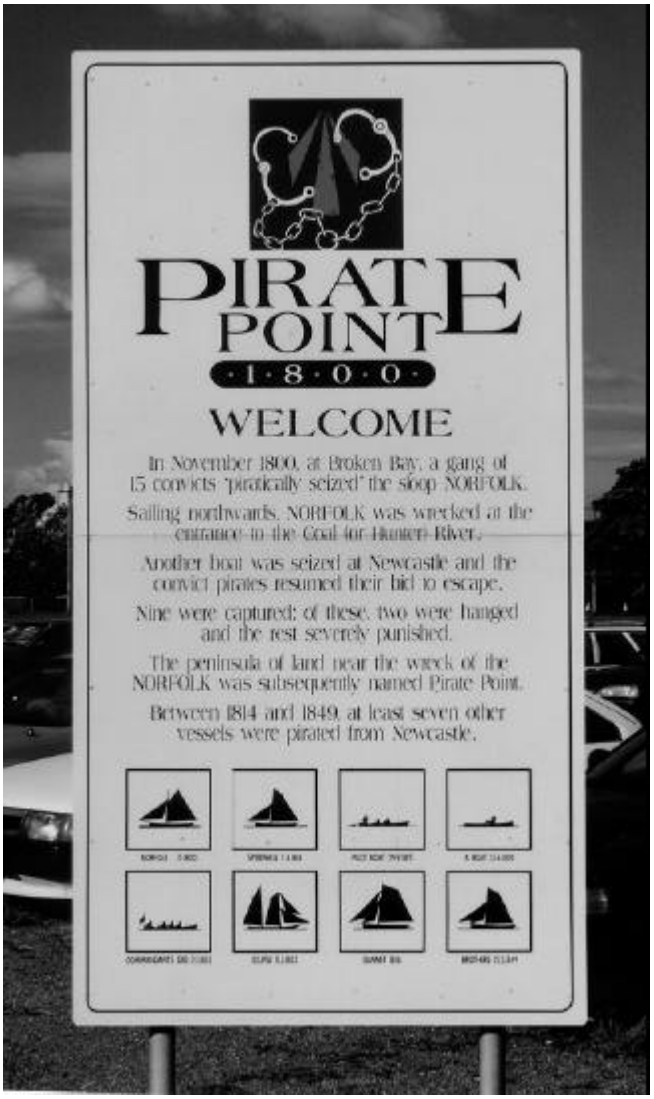
Funding Type	Name of Funding Body/Grant	Description/Amount Accessible	Links and Contacts
		Grants are available to bring international scholars together to develop anthropological knowledge and debate. Grants are made for amounts up to $20,000. These grants are highly competitive.	
Private	Australian Geographic Community Grants	Project Sponsorships (up to $10,000 in four categories, science, environment, adventure, community) and include community heritage funding. Science: Specific research projects, often across a number of years, across all disciplines. - Community: Conservation and cultural initiatives, often at a grassroots level. - Adventure: Undertaking adventures in Australia and abroad. - Environment: Community-based initiatives such as wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, plant and animal education programs or bush conservation.	For more information regarding sponsorship applications please contact the AG Society Administrator society@ausgeo.com.au or (02) 9263 9825
Private	National Geographic	The National Geographic Society awards grants for research, conservation, education, and storytelling through its Committee for Research and Exploration. National Geographic welcomes applications from around the world, and specifically encourages applicants from outside the United States to apply. Applicants planning to work outside of their home country should include at least one local collaborator on their team. The Committee will not usually consider applications that support strictly laboratory or collections work. Grants are awarded on the basis of merit and exist independent of the Society's other divisions.	http://www.nationalgeographic.org/grants/how-to-apply/

APPENDIX C –

MARITIME HERITAGE GUIDELINES

SHIPWRECK TRAILS: GUIDELINES

Shipwreck trails and information plaques have become a very popular way to interpret and promote the maritime heritage of an area. Several significant trails have been established by community groups and Government organisations involved with heritage management Australia wide. These guidelines are intended to provide general information to assist in the development of high quality Shipwreck Trails.



Shipwreck trail at Pirate Point, Newcastle, NSW. Courtesy: Maritime Archaeology Association of NSW - Newcastle Branch.

WHAT ARE SHIPWRECK TRAILS

Shipwreck trails are established self guided routes linking items of an area's maritime heritage. Trails commonly link Historic Shipwreck sites, but can be expanded to include other maritime related heritage such as lighthouses, wharves, gravestones and shipbuilding yards. They are typically interactive - involving the viewer in recreating the scene that lays before them. They often tell a story - perhaps recapturing the moment when a vessel came to grief.

Using new or existing paths, roads or walking areas, Shipwreck Trails can consist of either an individual interpretative plaque, or a series of plaques and signs placed along a pre-determined route. Shipwreck Trails can also be established underwater for the enjoyment of recreational Scuba divers.

Why Trails

Shipwreck Trails and informative plaques invite us to re-live our rich maritime history. As tourist attractions, they can promote local businesses such as the Scuba diving and hospitality industries. Located on land or underwater, Shipwreck Trails and plaques are sought after by divers, non-divers and visitors alike.

WHERE ARE THEY

Shipwreck Trails are located potentially everywhere. NSW has an estimated two thousand shipwrecks, providing scope for many regional signage programs. Shipwrecks are generally located adjacent to bodies of water, such as coastal foreshores or rivers. Examples of existing trails in NSW include the *Newcastle Breakwater* and *Pirate Point Trail* and the *Hastings River Wreck Trail* at Port Macquarie. These trails have utilised existing foreshore public areas to interpret visible and submerged shipwrecks, together with early shipping histories.

Heritage Office

NSW Government

UNDERWATER TRAILS

Underwater Shipwreck trails have been established at Terrigal on the Central Coast and at Gordan's and Long Bay in Sydney. Here, divers can follow a route that links submerged shipwrecks and underwater nature reserves.

Dive groups regularly maintain their own underwater trails ensuring a keen community spirit. Additional shipwreck trails, both underwater and on land, have been established along the coasts of Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria.

These trails have been supplemented with interpretative pamphlets and kits providing additional information on their trails.

WHO MAKES TRAILS

Anybody can begin a shipwreck signage program. One off plaques have been funded and developed by individuals. More substantial trails linking a number of sites and themes generally involve the support of a wider range of people. These might include Government authorities involved with heritage management, local councils, Museums, local business, community groups and the media. Everybody can play a role in establishing shipwreck trails.

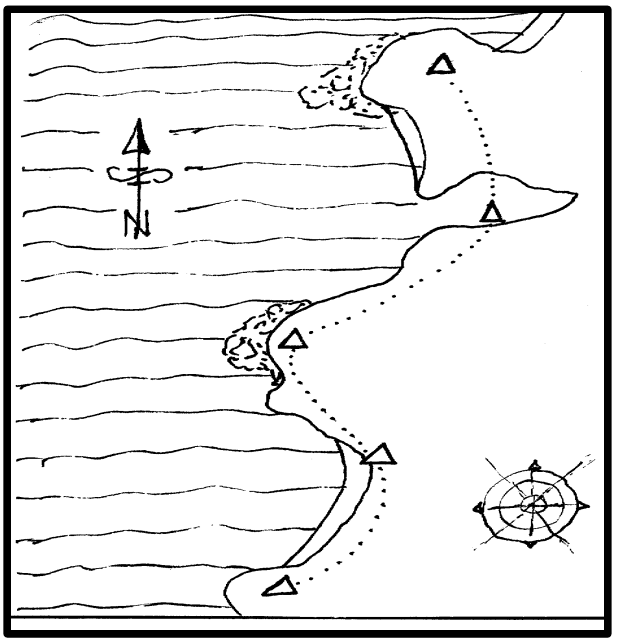
A diver visits the underwater plaque on the HMS Sirius *historic shipwreck site, Norfolk Island. Courtesy: Western Australian Maritime Museum.*

DESIGNING THE TRAIL

Forms Trails Take:

Trails can take many forms, depending on a range of factors including the number of sites to be included, the local land features, access and distance considerations, and importantly - your budget! Interpretation can involve the placement of a simple plaque relating to one site or group of sites, to extensive walking, driving or diving trails linked by highways, access roads and underwater chain cable!

Shipwreck trails are commonly set up in centres with a history of maritime or riverine activity. Other trails have been successfully established along large sections of Australia's rugged coastline, renowned for many shipwreck tragedies.



Trails have incorporated between one and thirty individual sites. Large trails linking widely separated sites require access by road with easily recognised signage and route maps. Appropriate approvals for this signage need to be sought. Close liaison with relevant State Government bodies such as the Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW Tourism Commission and local council is required.

Smaller, more easily defined groupings of shipwreck sites can be effectively linked by walking paths or tracks. These might require an introductory sign at the commencement of the trail together with individual plaques or interpretative signs to mark each individual site. All plaques and information signs should be easily located and comfortably reached on foot or by car.

GETTING ORGANISED

The first step in establishing a Shipwreck Trail is to contact the maritime archaeologists at the Heritage Office.

They can provide advice on the maritime heritage of an area, on funding sources, and on relevant groups who might be contacted. The Heritage Office also maintains up-to-date information on the range of Shipwreck Trails established Australia-wide.

Establish a Working Group

The second step is to establish a *working group* and an overseer responsible for coordinating your project. With independent projects developed outside of Government organisations, the working group should consult a range of interest groups. This will ensure that necessary planning requirement are met and that all possible areas of financial and other support are contacted. Persons to approach include: Sate Government agencies, Heritage Funding Programs, local councils, local business, historical societies, museums and dive shops.

➶ WHERE TO BEGIN

The working group will have to consider a number of important questions. Principle amongst these is "what to interpret". Other important issues are the establishment of appropriate funding sources from the early stages of the project. You will also need to arrange persons to undertake the necessary research, the type of signage or plaques to be used and the preferred method of mounting them.

Where current road and walking tracks do not provide sufficient access, construction of limited access routes and road signage might need to be considered. More on this below.

➶ WHAT TO INTERPRET

Shipwrecks and other maritime heritage items can occur virtually anywhere from deserted expanses of beaches to inland riverways and built up population areas. Most areas have a unique collection of shipwrecks and other sites which can be effectively interpreted by a variety of media.

Firstly, you need to assess the range of shipwreck and maritime sites in the area of interest. From this initial assessment, and depending on the level of funds and help available, you will need to choose the number of sites to be interpreted. This will depend on their relevant significance, the range and distribution of sites and access to them.

➶ WHO HAS THE INFORMATION

Your first stop should be the maritime archaeologists from the Heritage Office who coordinate the State's Maritime Archaeology Program. They can provide general advice on the maritime heritage of your area with specific information on known Historic Shipwrecks upon request.

Several other organisations hold important historical information, including the State-Mitchell Library of NSW, the Archives Office of NSW and the Australian National Maritime Museum's library. Research sources include contemporary newspapers, Marine Board of Inquiry reports, official shipping registers and journals and photographic archives. This work can be arranged professionally through a consultant maritime archaeologist, or members of your working group can be nominated to do the work.

Local historical societies, local history librarians, historians and dive shops can provide important information.

Wrecking of the Walter Hood *near Wreck Bay, NSW in 1870. Courtesy: Mitchell Library State Library of NSW.*

➶ DESIGNING THE SIGN

Editing Text

It is important to bring to life the history of each site. For example, include the day to day life of the ship before its loss and the drama of the wreck event. You might consider using one of the layout formats illustrated in this brochure, or use an alternative approach.
The information displayed on your plaques or signs must be clear and informative. Remember, editing of text and illustrations will be required to fit the type of signage chosen. Once drafted, the edited text will be delivered to the sign manufacturer for lay-up. Some minor alterations

might be required at this stage. Signage companies can assist with editing, however there will be an additional cost involved.

One caution - the information displayed on your plaques must be accurate as it will be readily accepted as the truth. It is therefore very important to get the factual details right before sending text and artwork to the printers. Any mistakes picked up during the final layout and manufacture of the plaques or signs are costly to rectify.

Artwork and Graphics

Some signage systems can accommodate illustrations, photographs and maps. Certain images copy better than others - consult with the sign designers first. Incorporating images and text will add to the overall production costs, so this will need to be taken into consideration in the early planning stages. Remember, use of certain images is often subject to copyright and reproduction fees.

Copyright

This will have to be cleared with the organisation or individual supplying the work, prior to its use. Appropriate acknowledgment of sources may need to be incorporated into the plaques and signs, and into supporting publications and advertising media.

WHICH SIGN TO USE

The range of signage choices continues to grow. Basically however, there are three broad types of materials for above ground signage:

- Wooden signage - involving painted or carved signs. These are cheap but limited in terms of durability and the amount of information that can be carried.

- Metal Castings - involving the casting of either aluminium, bronze or iron at a foundry. This type of signage is commonly used for heritage plaques and can become quite expensive, depending on the complexity of the design and the size of each plaque. The plaques will need to be mounted onto a concrete plinth or other solid support.

- Metal Processing - involving the text and artwork being transferred onto durable sheet metal by several processes - including 'metal photo' and 'screen processing'. Probably the most widely used signage, this process provides scope for the inclusion of text, graphic images and a range of colours. The final sheet will also have to be mounted onto a metal, wooden, concrete or other base or plinth.

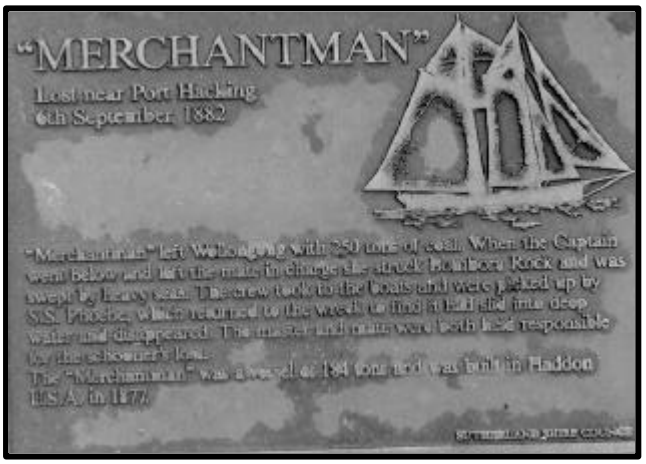
A common form of interpretative signage system, the metal photo sign allows for quite complicated text and graphics. Courtesy: Heritage Victoria, Department of Planning and Development.

SIGN MANUFACTURERS

Many companies specialise in the production of signage and plaques. Look for them in the Yellow Pages phone book. Your choice of signage will depend on cost, durability, mounting options and the number of signs to be produced. Note that one-off designs are usually more costly to produce than larger production runs. It is also more costly if the company undertakes the total design of your signs. You may save time and money by using one of the design options suggested in this brochure.

PLACEMENT AND CONTEXT

Plaques and interpretative signage should be sympathetically placed in relation to historic shipwrecks and other structures. This is to minimise damage to historic shipwrecks and adjacent sites and to limit obstructing views to landscapes. Council By-laws related to the placement of signage must be adhered to and approval sought from Council and property owners where signage will impact on their land or property. Consult with your local council Town Planners in the first instance.



One of a number of bronze plaques manufactured by Sutherland Shire Council for the Cronulla Mall, NSW.

➶ OTHER PARTS OF A SIGNAGE PROGRAM

Brochures and Flyers

Shipwreck Trails can be enhanced with informative flyers and brochures, providing additional information on the maritime or riverine history of your trail. These can be invaluable for promoting the existence of the trail and for attracting sponsorship. A range of colourful pamphlets have been produced to accompany existing Shipwreck Trails around Australia.

Brochures and pamphlets should be carefully researched and written, as with your texts and signs. Consult the Guidelines on heritage Walks and Plaques - available from the Heritage Office.

Should I have a logo

Logo's are an effective way to individualise your particular trail project. They serve two useful functions - to clearly identify the elements of the trail, and to provide a graphic link to the signage. A logo should ideally be stylised and easily 'read'. This will ensure quick recognition at distance and allow reproduction in other advertising media such as brochures, flyers and letterheads.

While a maritime theme generally works, stereotype images such as anchors and cannon should be avoided as they tend to be over used. Several companies specialise in the production of logo's and other graphics. They can be located in the Yellow Pages phone book.

Underwater Signage

Underwater shipwreck trails commonly consist of a series of submerged concrete plinths. These are durable and incorporate a plaque which details the history of the particular wreck. Submerged trails are technically more demanding to develop and the costs of plinth construction, deployment and maintenance are greater.

Impressive trails have been established and attract keen interest amongst the diving population. Underwater trails are best placed adjacent to relatively accessible sites in stable ocean environments. Appropriate organisations need to be contacted before approval for underwater trails can proceed

These might include Local Council, the Heritage Office, the Waterways Authority (ex - MSB), National Parks and Wildlife Service and NSW Fisheries, ensuring that the plinths do not constitute a safety or navigational hazard, will not damage the wreck sites or local underwater habitats, and are liked to a maintenance program. Specific information on the construction and deployment of underwater plinths is available from the Heritage Office upon request.

Trails and the Law

NSW's shipwrecks and submerged cultural heritage are protected by legislation which aims to limit interference, damage or destruction to individual sites, while encouraging responsible public access to maritime heritage sites.

Shipwrecks located inland (within rivers, harbours, lakes and enclosed bays) which are more than 50 years of age from the date of build, are protected as relics under the Relics Provisions of the *Heritage Act*, 1977 (State). Those wrecks situated in open waters, below the low water mark, adjacent to the coast and lost 75 years ago or more, are protected by the *Historic Shipwrecks Act*, 1976 (Commonwealth).

If your working party is considering a signage program, the relevant State and Local Government authorities must be contacted. This is to ensure that the program is approved and supported by the property owners on whose

land the signs are to be mounted (either Government, State or private), and to ensure that the placement of signs does not contravene any local By-laws or regulations.

Acknowledging Sponsors and Supporters

Sponsors and supporters are an essential part of any Shipwreck Trail program. Their support should be acknowledged in the trail signage, in all associated publicity materials and at public events such as media launches.

Maintenance

Once in place, annual maintenance of plaques and access routes will be required. This will include cleaning, repairs, re-painting and clearing away vegetation, etc.

SOME EXAMPLES OF BROCHURES AND FLYERS

Examples of colourful brochures produced to accompany shipwreck trails throughout Australia. Brochures and flyers add another dimension to your trail, providing scope for additional historical information, maps, photographs, credits and publicity.

MORE INFORMATION

The Heritage Office can offer advice on developing your shipwreck signage program. Examples of recently developed signage and accompanying publicity materials are available for inspection. Advice on organisation and funding can also be provided. The Office has produced several publications relevant to its *Maritime Archaeology Program.* These include:

'Underwater Heritage: Local Government Guidelines'
'Underwater Heritage - Principles and Guidelines'
'Underwater Heritage in NSW - Brochure'
'Guidelines on Heritage Walks and Plaques'

For more information on the Office's Maritime Archaeology Program or for Shipwreck Signage advice, contact:

Maritime Archaeology Program
Heritage Office
Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY
NSW 2001

or phone David Nutley on (02) 9391 2034 or Tim Smith on (02) 9391 2037.

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