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## G. Draft Local Character Statements

STRATEGIC PLANNING

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# Northern Coast Draft Local Character Statement

May 2021

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# 1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statement

Randwick City Council acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Australians of this land, and the Bidjigal and Gadigal people who traditionally occupied the land we now call Randwick City.

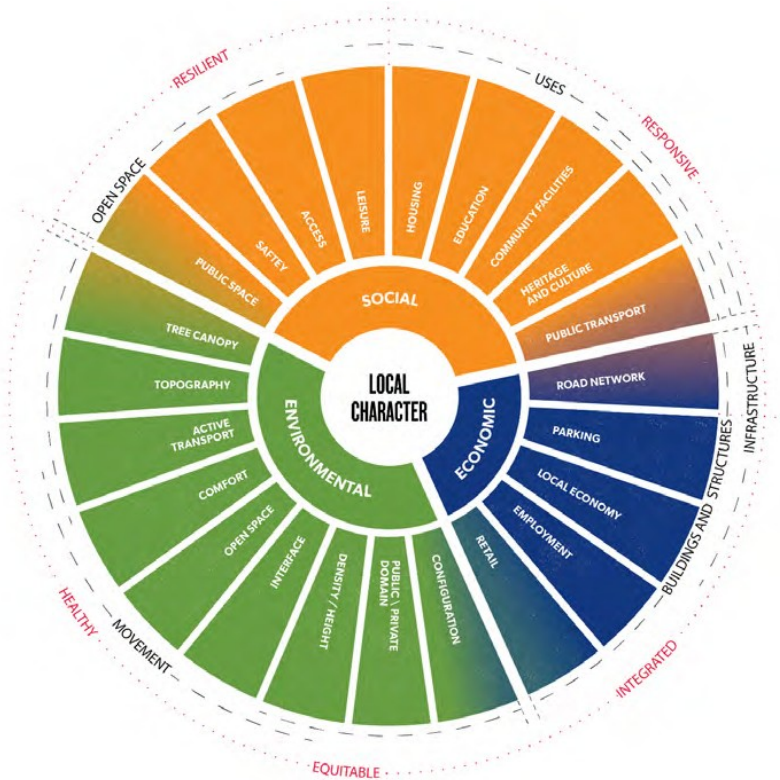
Randwick City has a rich and unique Aboriginal cultural history, with La Perouse being the only area in Sydney where the local Aboriginal community have had an unbroken connection to the land.

We recognise and celebrate the spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land which long pre-dates European settlement and continues today.

Building on our Statement of Recognition and commitment to Reconciliation, Council wishes to support the vision and plans of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait community in order to close the gap on disadvantage, build stronger local and regional economies and support culturally rich and healthy communities.

## 2. Our approach

Local character is the identity of place and what makes a neighbourhood distinctive. It is a combination of land, people, the built environment, history and culture and looks at how these factors interact to make the character of an area.



Council’s methodology for identifying local character has involved two main streams of research – expert and local knowledge. Our expert knowledge is drawn from Council’s databases and is based on the three indicators of local character – environmental, social and economic. Local knowledge is drawn from extensive community consultation conducted in 2019 and social media analytics. By mapping and overlaying all of this data, we have generated spatial representations of local character and have identified draft Local Character Areas (LCAs) and draft Special Character Areas across the LGA.

Eleven draft Local Character Statements have been prepared that will outline the key features and desired future character of each LCA. In addition, Council has identified draft Special Character Areas where local character indicators and community engagement outcomes emerge as a dense layer based on the methodology. Each LCA has one Special Character Area, while the Maroubra Central and Bunnerong Creek LCAs each have two.

The Special Character Areas identified in Northern Coast, Southern Coast and The Bays have been incorporated into Local Character Areas for inclusion within the Randwick LEP.





For more information on local character, please refer to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment’s *Local Character and Place Guideline*.

### 3. The Northern Coast Local Character Area



The Northern Coast Local Character Area is situated on the northern coastal side of the Randwick LGA and incorporates the ocean bays of Clovelly, Gordons, Coogee and Lurline. It includes many significant and iconic open spaces and coastal vistas, the vibrant Coogee town centre and the urbanised coastal areas of Clovelly, Coogee, the east side of South Coogee and a northern section of Maroubra situated around Lurline Bay. It also includes Wedding Cake Island, a focal viewpoint offshore.

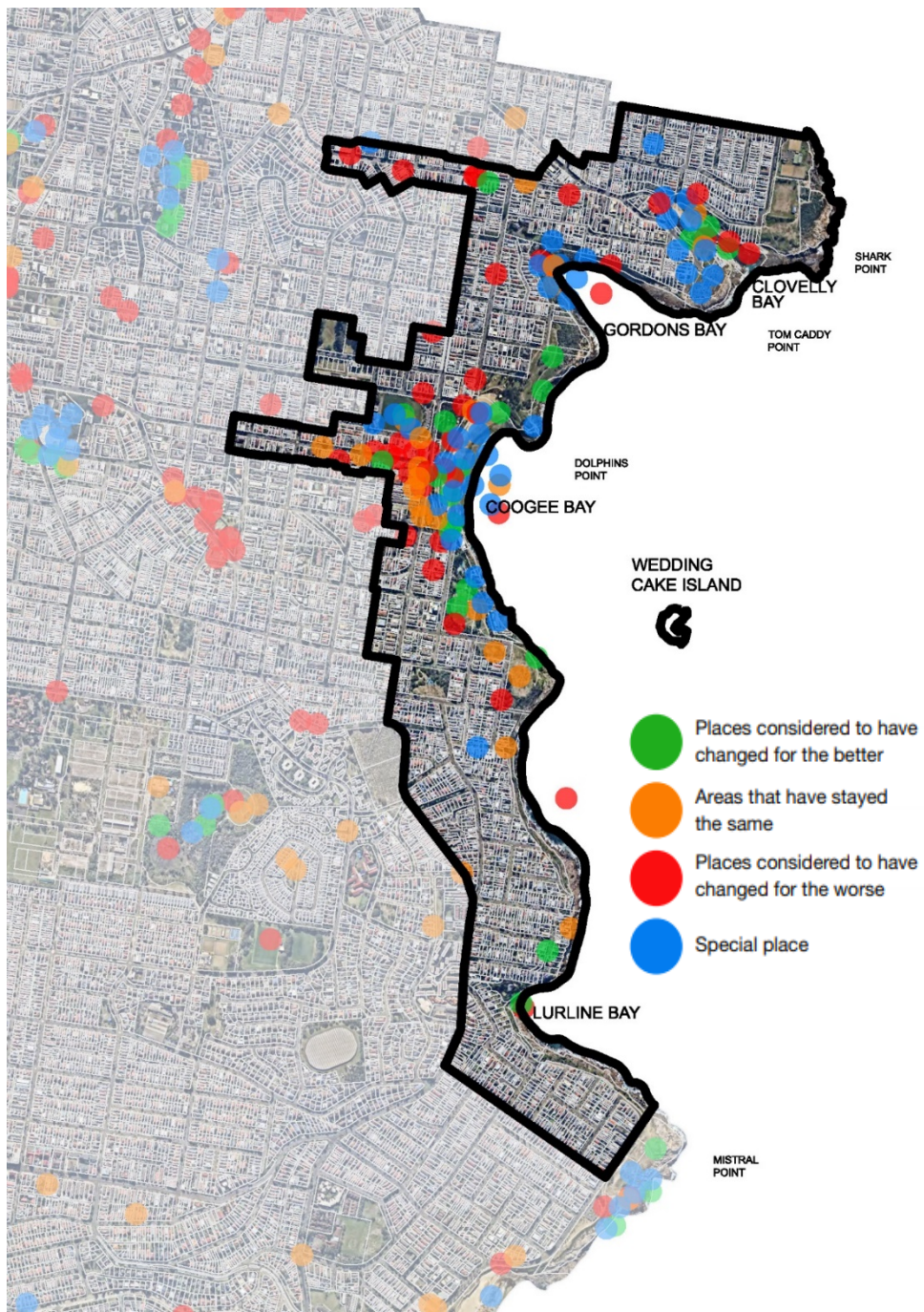
## 4. Northern Coast LCA Key Features

	<p>Large number of public parks and open space along the rocky headlands of this section of Sydney's Great Coastal Walk</p>
	<p>One of Sydney's iconic tourist hotspots, with high pedestrian activity and street activation</p>
	<p>Suburbs with a balanced mix of heritage and contemporary built forms</p>
	<p>A rolling terrain generating extraordinary vistas to the ocean</p>

## 5. Community feedback

To inform our local character analysis, Council undertook comprehensive community engagement in 2019 through online surveys, interactive mapping, interviews, community workshops and pop up stalls. In workshops and online, participants were asked to put points on the map for places they consider have changed for the better, stayed the same and changed for the worse. They were also asked to map their special place.

Council exhibited the 11 draft local character statements between 13 May and 10 June 2020. Council encouraged the community to read the statements and provide a written submission or comment on the interactive map. The exhibition asked the community to consider the current and desired future character of the LCAs, and their draft boundaries and names.





## 5.1. Clovelly

Participants of the community workshops were asked to consider their suburb both now and into the future.

Clovelly suburb area character: now



Clovelly suburb area character: future



## 5.2. Coogee and South Coogee

Participants of the community workshops were asked to consider their suburb both now and into the future.

Coogee and South Coogee area character: now



Coogee and South Coogee area character: future



### 5.3. Key findings from our community engagement on Northern Coast LCA include:

- Emphasis on the beaches and open space along the coastline as special places the community feels connected to
- Beaches are clean and have new facilities
- Differing views on contemporary development, with some wishing to see more and others feeling that new housing is out of character with the streetscape
- Lots of older Pre-War, Inter-War and Art Deco dwellings in the area that contribute to the local character of the area
- Would like some more bars and restaurants that are open late
- Trennery Reserve is a beautiful place with great access
- Would like to see more native vegetation Insert additional feedback from

During the exhibition of the 11 draft Local Character Areas, Council received approximately 15 written submissions in regard to the Northern Coast LCA. Key findings included:

- Concern regarding heritage,
- Increase tree canopy and protect existing bushland and open space,
- Retain village feel at Coogee Beach,
- Increased vegetation in the private domain,
- Maintaining and enhancing the natural landscape,
- Minimising development along the foreshore and cliff front,
- More art and cultural facilities,
- Protect view corridors.

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## 6. Environmental characteristics

**Northern Coast LCA comprises the coastal areas located east of the high plateau along Carrington and Malabar Roads from the north-eastern corner of the LGA to Mistral Point and the northern side of Maroubra Beach.**

The LCA is mostly characterised by the series of ridgelines inland from the coast which broaden out to form an elevated plateau. The rugged coastline is typical of the Hawkesbury sandstone areas around Sydney.

The coastline is punctuated by a succession of rocky headlands, high sandstone cliffs, long rocky inlets with tidal rock platforms, and concave sandy beaches. Broad basins enclosing Coogee and Maroubra beaches interrupt the continuity of the plateau. Within this LCA there is a significant relationship between the urban and natural characteristics of the coast and its shoreline. The urban form is characterised by a regular grid and a rectilinear street layout over the steep terrain providing considerable vistas to the ocean from most streets, even at a distance from the coast.

Large parks temper the rocky headlands, combined with a backdrop of large houses in a variety of styles. The predominant residential building typology characterising the coastline is medium-density development. As found in many of the coastal suburbs of Randwick, the LCA is characterised by split-level streets to reconcile the steep topography with the disciplined grid pattern street layout. Streets may end in a cliff and small reserve, have a high side and low side or a street may be split.

In such places, sandstone retaining walls, footpath steps and timber post and rail fences are integral parts of the area's local identity. The relatively small allotments and high site coverage,

together with the sandy soil and the harsh microclimate, has meant that the gardens are generally low in scale. Some streets, particularly those further from the coastal edge, contain notable street plantings that contribute positively to the local streetscape character of the LCA.

In the south of the LCA, east of Malabar Road, the rectilinear street layout reflects the original subdivision of the area and provides considerable vistas to the ocean from most streets. In this area, houses are larger and diverse in style and, like much of South Coogee, lack significant planting. A consistent characteristic of the area is the imposition of the formal street layout on the topography.

Many of the streets east of Denning Street terminate abruptly in cliffs mid-street, to be continued several metres below and connected only by a staircase. The houses on these streets take maximum advantage of the views, with terraces and balconies facing both the street and the ocean from most properties. The landscape significance is strongly associated with the steep hills leading to the cliff edge, a good example of which is Cairo Street.

A number of landscape features within the area are identified as further contributing to local character, including:

The mature brush box avenue along Dolphin, Bream, Melody and Abbott streets

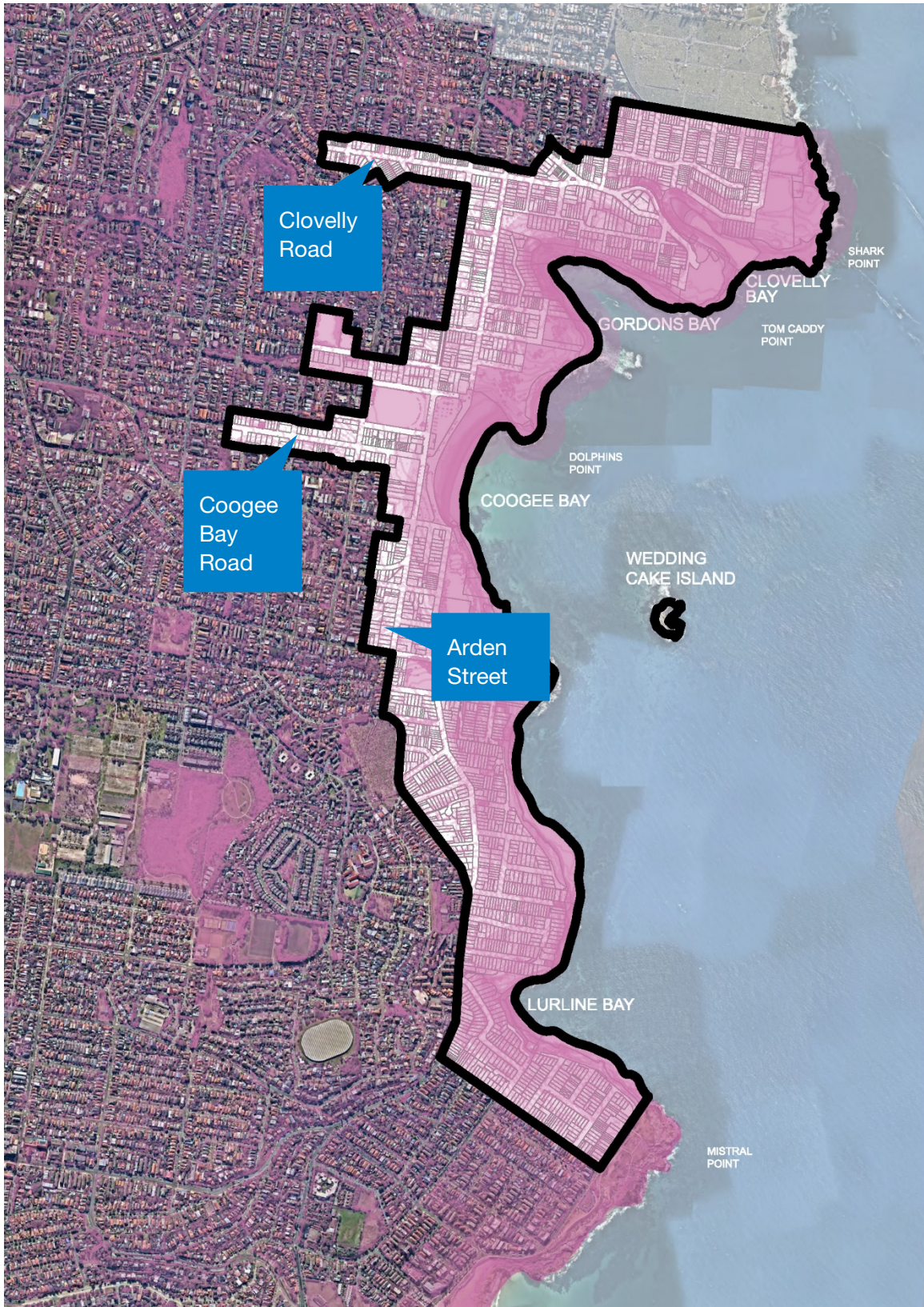
- The extensive pedestrian stairway and associated sandstone walls and Phoenix Canariensis trees in Cairo and Garnet streets
- The coastal public parks of Grant Reserve and Trenerry Reserve
- The expansive view over the cemetery and coastline along Boundary Street
- The mature hills fig avenues on Barry and Athol streets
- The retaining walls on Victory Street (sandstone) and Surfside Street (concrete)
- The mature hills figs and sandstone retaining walls to footpaths on Abbott Street
- The mature Ficus and Norfolk Island pine plantings on Clovelly Road
- The sandstone retaining wall and several flights of sandstone stairs on Dolphin Street
- The residential sandstone retaining wall of Ritchard Avenue
- The 'Coogee Stairs' at Denning and Alexandria streets, South Coogee

The LCA is rich in remnant bushland, which refers to the original native vegetation which has survived since before 1788. Remnant bushland is important to the biodiversity of the LCA. Local indigenous communities once inhabited the undulating dune fields, beaches and bays of the eastern suburbs, having a spiritual connection and harmonious relationship with the land. The coastal heath and scrub gives this LCA and the wider Randwick City area its character, and provides a natural historical record of environments which occurred before 1788. Some of our bushland reserves contain species of national and state significance and it is Council's commitment to improve the health of these species for their guaranteed survival for generations to come.

REMNANT BUSHLAND SITE	ITEMS
Burrows Park, Clovelly	Threatened species, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, headland with high sandstone cliffs, freshwater pond, coastal heath and sedgeland, native revegetation.
Bundock Park, Clovelly	Sedgeland on low sandstone cliff, native revegetation.
Gordons Bay	Freshwater swamp and natural spring, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, sheer and low sandstone cliffs, gully forest species located on foreshore, coastal heath and scrub, native revegetation.
Dunningham Reserve, Coogee	Rare or Threatened Australian Plants (ROTAP) species, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, headland with high sandstone cliffs, coastal heath and scrub on both deep and skeletal sands, native revegetation.
Grant Reserve, Coogee	Indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, scattered sedgeland in supratidal zone, native revegetation.
Trenerry Reserve, South Coogee	Freshwater peat swamp, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, low sandstone cliffs, native revegetation.
Blenheim Reserve, South Coogee	Remnant heath species on deep aeolian sand deposit, native revegetation.
Coastal Walk South Coogee	Indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, sheer sandstone cliffs, low coastal heath and sedgeland, native revegetation.
Lurline Bay	Indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, sandstone cliffs, natural watercourse, coastal heath, herb and sedgeland, native revegetation.

## 6.1. Environmental indicators density map

The following map is the spatial representation of the environmental indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as topography and tree canopy, hydrography, open space and protection areas. It provides evidence of nodes where environmental indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark pink) over the whole coastal fringe and the Coogee basin.



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## 7. Social characteristics

**The LCA contains many parks and open spaces which are well-utilised for a variety of recreational and leisure activities by residents and visitors.**

Along the coast, one of Randwick City's most popular and attractive assets is the Eastern Beaches Coastal Walkway which crosses from north to south through the LCA. The 4.5km Clovelly to South Coogee section runs along the coast through Clovelly, Gordons Bay, Coogee and South Coogee. It connects to the Bondi to Waverley Cemetery section of the walk to the north, and onto the Maroubra to Malabar section to the south. There is a small portion of the walk in-between the Clovelly to South Coogee and Maroubra to Malabar sections that is accessible via footpaths on suburban streets.

The LCA has an extremely rich selection of leisure and recreation facilities. The areas of more intense activity and visitation are predominantly on the Coogee foreshore, the commercial town centres along Coogee Bay Road and Clovelly Road containing retail shops, cafes, restaurants and outdoor dining spaces.

Several active recreation facilities are present along the coast, including the coastal walkway connecting a large number of coastal open spaces, 8 ocean pools with facilities and outdoor showers and also fitness and training facilities. On the headlands the LCA hosts 4 dog parks, 3 sport fields and multiple playgrounds.

The local beaches attract many locals and tourists alike and on any given day there are many people walking and jogging along the coastline. While people are observed cycling around the area, generally the steep and undulating terrain of the area makes cycling and walking access challenging for many. There are opportunities for improved cycling connections throughout the LCA and to other areas such as the Randwick Health and Education Precinct.

Providing high quality walking and cycling environments in and around Clovelly and Coogee will further enhance public amenity.

In contrast to the grid pattern which is predominant throughout the LCA, the curvilinear subdivisions of Moira Crescent and Gordon Avenue in Gordons Bay respond to the steep topography of the area, creating two unique neighbourhoods. As well as these, the Dudley Street subdivision is an earlier response to the terrain that has created a neighbourhood of note with substantial houses in brick and stone overlooking Baker Park. Burnie Street also is an exception to the regular grid and follows the floor of the valley to its ending at Clovelly Bay.

The proximity to the coastal views has meant that part of the original fabric of the area has been often lost under layers of alterations and rebuilding. Alterations and additions to houses in this LCA are common, as they are across Randwick City. Many have been extended either to the rear or by the addition of a second storey, details have been changed and facades altered. Two types of changes that are particularly intrusive in the local streetscape are the rendering and/or painting of original face brickwork in light colours and the building of carports and garages between the building alignment and the street. New infill development is also common in the area which may be of a scale and form that is insensitive to the surviving original buildings.

The built heritage of the LCA is varied in character. It includes individual houses, groups of houses and blocks of flats that together demonstrate the development of the coastal area. Two Heritage Conservation Areas (HCA) are identified within the LCA - the Moira Crescent HCA and the Dudley Street HCA.

The Moira Crescent HCA is located within the Coogee and Clovelly suburbs. The conservation area has aesthetic significance because of the high integrity of its Inter-War streetscapes. The area includes the best preserved and most consistent grouping of Inter-War flat buildings in the

Randwick City, which were a main characteristic of its development during that period. The most common building types are detached single storey Inter-War Bungalows and two or three storey flat buildings in Functionalist, Spanish Mission, Art Deco, Stripped Classical or California Bungalow inspired styles. Many of the properties also have low brick boundary fences which allow the front gardens to become part of the streetscape.

The Dudley Street HCA is located in the southern part of Coogee and includes fine quality groupings and individual examples of large Federation and Inter-War period detached houses. Several styles are represented, including Federation Bungalow and Queen Anne and Inter-War Mediterranean and Functionalist. The houses are situated on elevated sites, with views of the Pacific Ocean to the east and north over the adjacent Baker and Leete parks. The front gardens, fence designs, sandstone kerbing, steep and undulating topography, and the palm, pine and fig tree plantings in the parks, all contribute to the aesthetic quality of the setting.

The LCA also features items of archaeological significance, such as the roadway of Moira Crescent being the original entrance driveway and turning circle to Bishops Court (21-29 Moira Crescent), as well as a number of additional heritage items located along the coast including local heritage listed landscape elements as well as Giles Baths, Ross Jones Memorial Pool, and State heritage listed McIver Women's Baths and Wylie's Baths.

A number of sub-precincts within the LCA are identified as further contributing to local character:

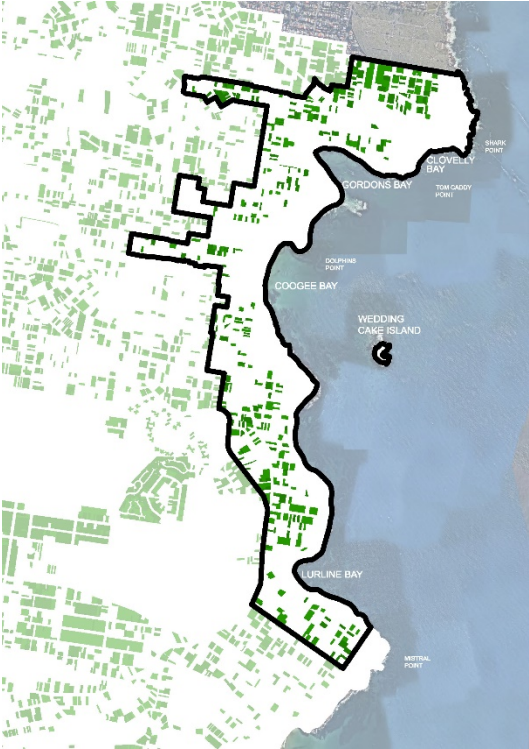
- The group of shops in Clovelly Road (from Fern to Beach streets), which are a cluster of predominantly early twentieth century buildings comprising original leadlight highlights shopfronts.
- The cohesive row of early twentieth century shop top housing at the south eastern end of Burnie Street with its distinctive architectural form, colour schemes and largely intact details.
- The properties further to the east and south of the existing Moira Crescent HCA which were part of the original subdivision of the Bishops Court Estate are notable examples of California Bungalow, Inter-War and Post-War architecture, and form a highly cohesive group due to their consistent scale and the use of the landscape for garden terraces with mature plantings.
- The distinctive and rare small subdivision pattern within Ormond Gardens, a central cul-de-sac closely surrounded by austere Post-War era flat buildings.
- The unusual subdivision and the unique development pattern of the area in between Malabar Road and Broome Street in Maroubra, giving strong original rhythm to the streetscape.

Due to the particular combination of topography and street layout, the LCA includes a number of areas with distinctive views/vistas on the ocean that should be maintained for future generations:

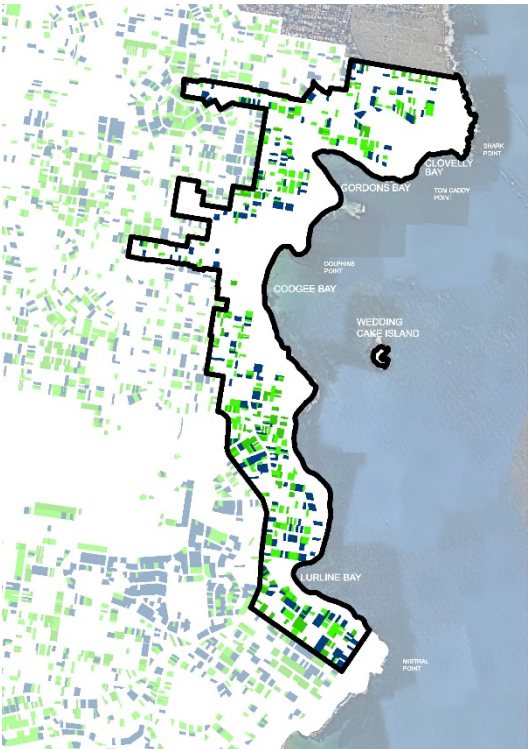
- The inland grid to the west of Arden Street, the northern slopes overlooking Clovelly Bay and the southern slopes overlooking Gordons Bay
- The Gordon Avenue subdivision overlooking Gordons Bay, the Coogee basin rectilinear grid and the Coogee Beach town centre
- The predominantly rectangular subdivision close to rugged coastline and the South Coogee Cemetery, an identifiable local landmark on the saddle between two hilltops
- The predominantly rectilinear subdivision overlooking Lurline and Maroubra bays

The LCA's development throughout the twentieth century has resulted in a varied pattern of development that is relatively consistent across the LCA. The lot sizes and frontages in the LCA are generally smaller and narrower in comparison to other areas in Randwick City. The most common lot sizes are 225-325sqm (19.1%) and 325-400sqm (18.7%).

There are also a large number of lot areas from 400-500sqm and 500-600sqm as shown below. The two most common frontage widths are 6-8m (15.8%) and 12-15m (26.3%) however frontage widths are generally well spread across the area.



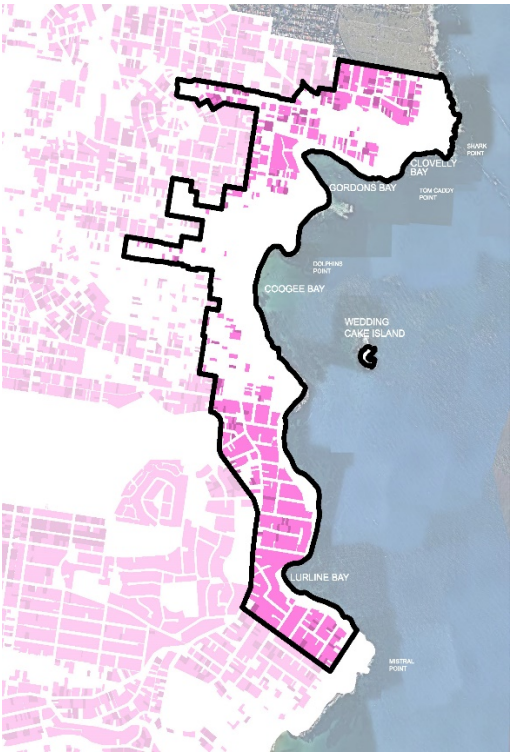
*Lot areas from 225-325sqm and 325-400sqm (dark and light green)*



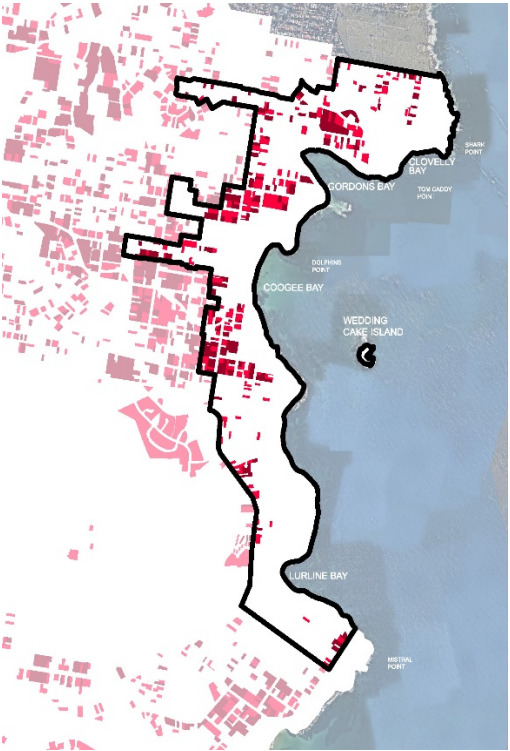
*Lot areas from 400-500sqm and 500-600sqm (green and blue)*



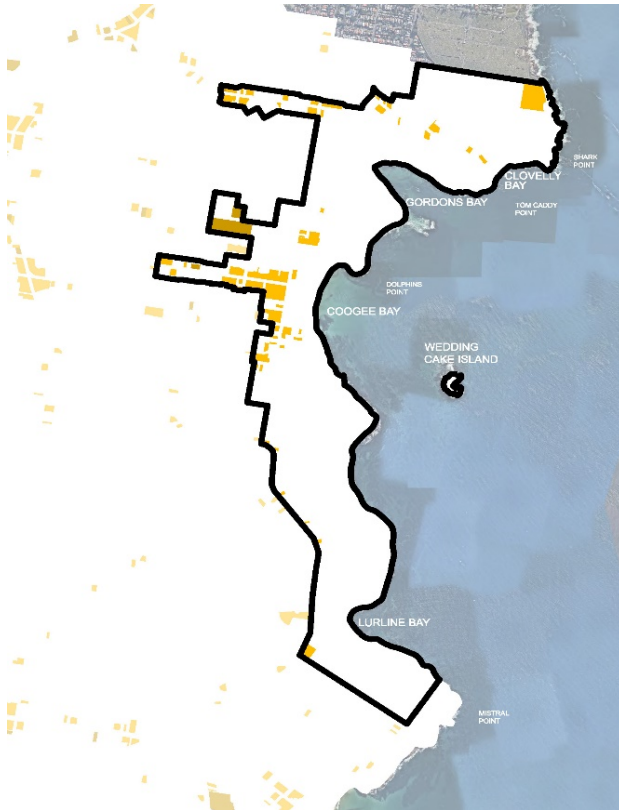
Most of the LCAs built form and coastal streetscape is characterised by 1-2 storey buildings (66.9%). Compared to the whole LGA, the LCA has a higher proportion of residential flat buildings ranging from 1930s three-storey walk-ups to more recent residential development and some mixed use development.



1-2 storey buildings: single dwelling and semi-detached dwelling (pink and purple)



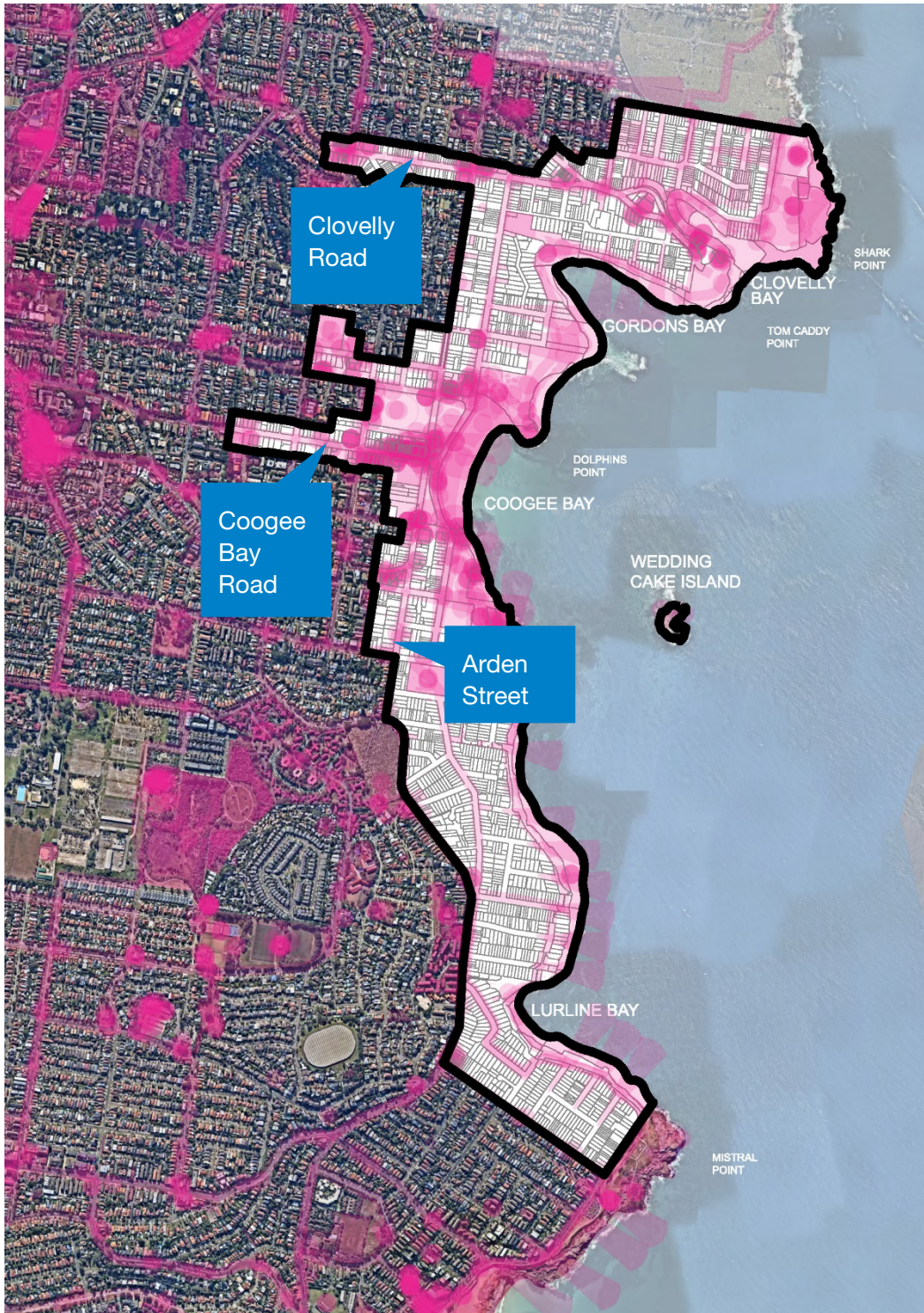
1-3 and 4+ multi storey flats (red and bordeaux).



*Mixed use and commercial (yellow and beige)*

### **7.1. Social indicators density map**

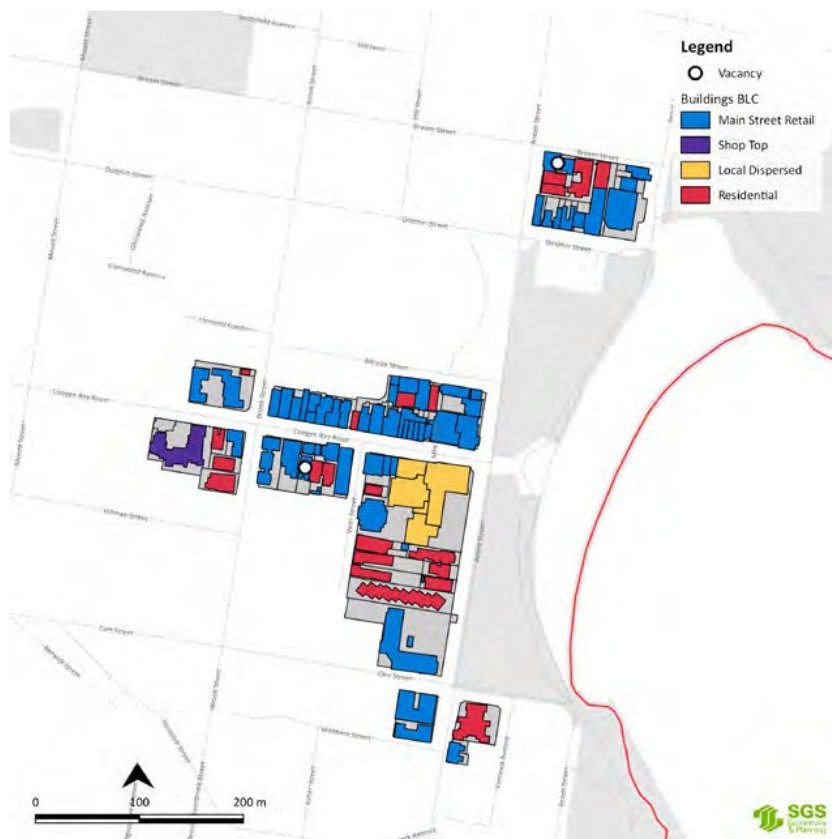
The following map is the spatial representation of the social indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as community facilities, heritage and culture, leisure and recreation, public transport and social housing. It provides evidence of nodes where social indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark pink) around the Coogee basin, Coogee Bay Road, Clovelly Road and along the coastal fringe.



## 8. Economic characteristics

As illustrated in the previous sections, areas with a concentration of indicators are centred along the coastline of the LCA. The primary economic centre of the LCA is at Coogee Beach.

The Coogee Bay Road and Coogee beachfront commercial precinct has a particular character, with a scale of development that has significantly transformed the face of the beachfront over time to become a tourist and local hot spot. Coogee Bay Road functions as the primary corridor for pedestrian traffic throughout Coogee with its diverse retail offerings, attracting a variety of people and age groups. It acts as a destination for dining and entertainment when visiting Coogee Beach.

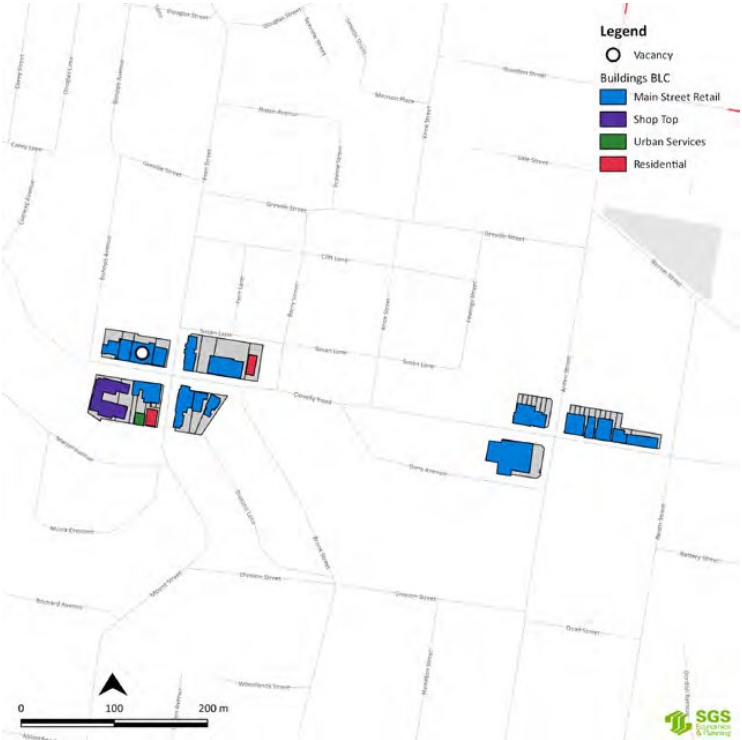


*Business activities at Coogee Beach Precinct (Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2019)*

The area contains a concentration of accommodation, cafes, retail stores and restaurants. There are also two large licensed venues in the form of the Coogee Pavilion and the Coogee Bay Hotel. The shopping strip on Coogee Bay Road is typical of many local centres with consistent two-storey street-edge buildings and continuous awnings along its length. On Arden Street the tourist strip has a larger scale of development at odds with the fine grain pattern of development that still exists around the commercial area.

The other concentration of commercial activity in the LCA is in Clovelly, with its early twentieth century shops dispersed in two smaller centres along Clovelly Road – one centred on the intersection of Clovelly Road and Fern Street, and the other centred on the intersection of Arden Street and Clovelly Road.

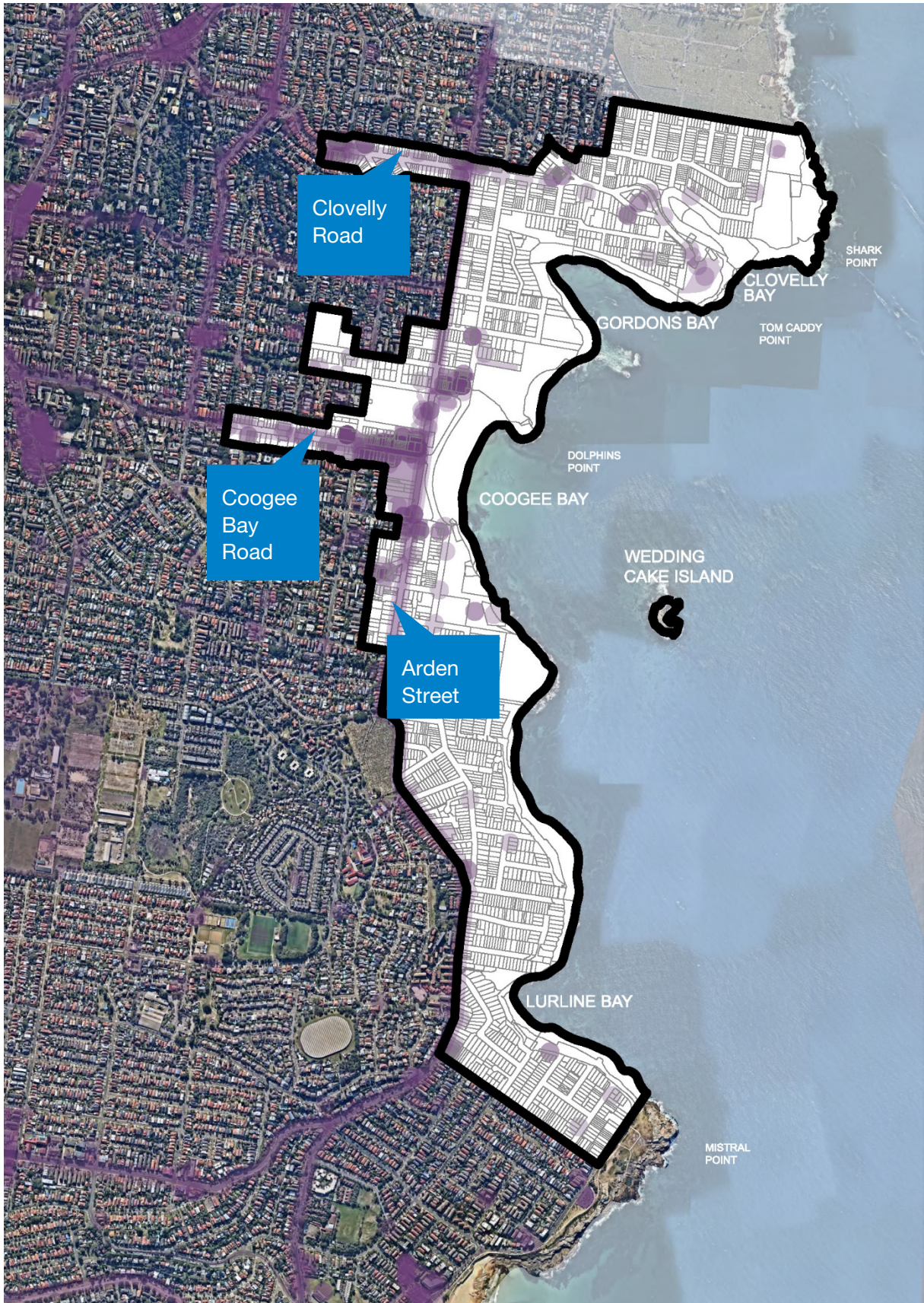
The main street is primarily made up of hospitality offerings and other retail. Its store based retail offerings cater for niche markets particularly in clothing and accessories. There are also a number of services including a medical centre, bank and laundromat. It has a number of specialty cafes open during the day serving breakfast and lunch, frequented by families with toddlers and children which adds to the family-friendly nature of the LCA. It has a role in providing food and other store based retail offerings to a local population of residents.



Business activities at Clovelly Beach Precinct (Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2019)

**8.1. Economic indicators density map**

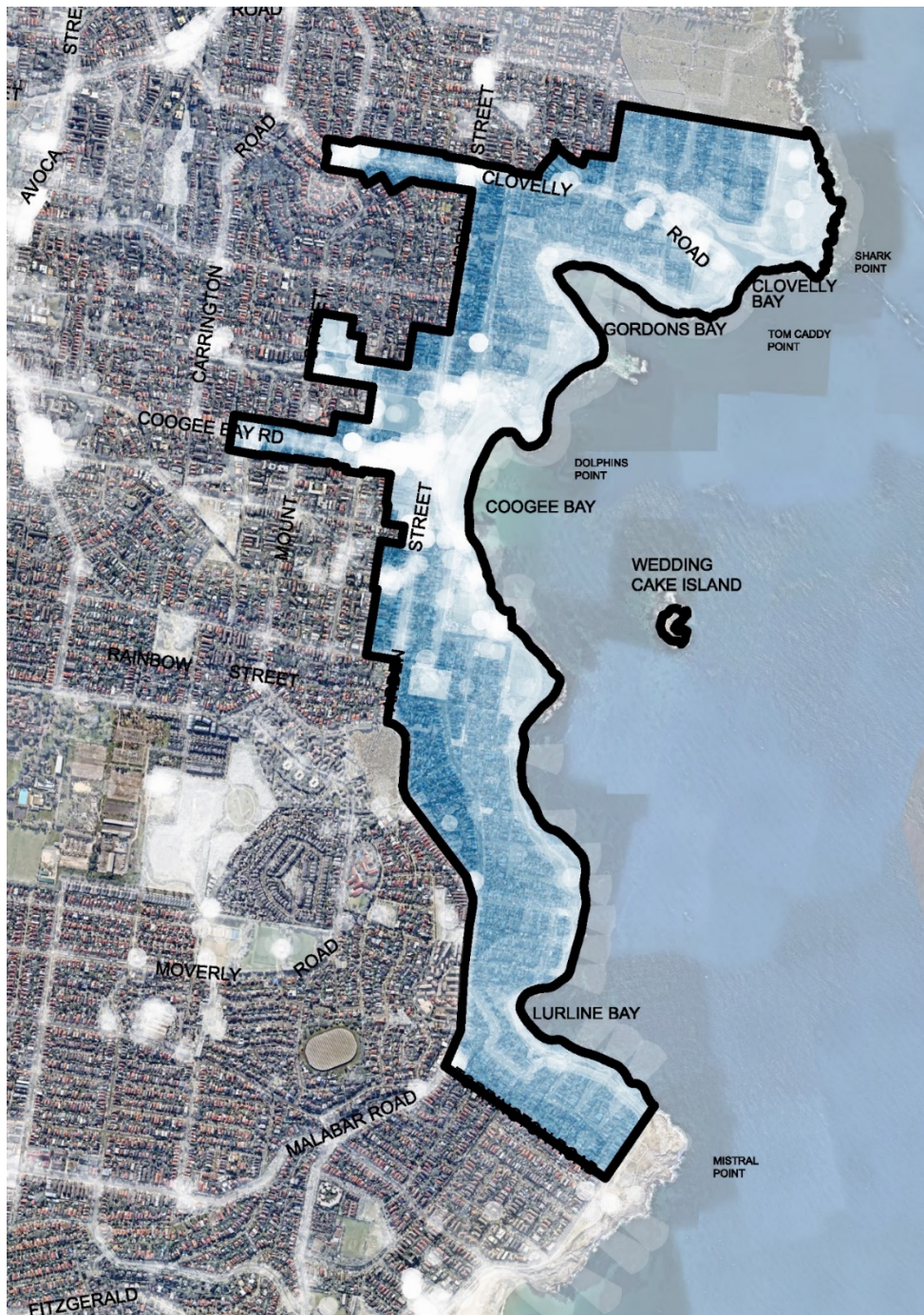
The following map is the spatial representation of the economic indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as local economy, commercial areas, food and health-related activities, road network and parking. It provides evidence of nodes where economic indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark purple) along the spine of Coogee Bay Road, Clovelly Road and Arden Street.



## 9. Local character indicators overlay

The following map incorporates the local character indicators (social, environmental and economic indicators) and community engagement outcomes.

Community engagement found that the community values the natural features of the coastal area, the local heritage buildings, local streetscapes and community vibe. Sustainable and high-quality development that compliments and enhances the foreshore can contribute to the ongoing economic growth in the Coogee Beach town centre. Ensuring views are maintained to the coast and that infill development within the LCA does not detract from the unique coastal character are the key character directions for the Northern Coast LCA.



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## 10. Character principles

Character principles have been prepared to set the desired future character of the Northern Coast LCA. These have been formulated based on the analysis undertaken during the preparation of the draft local character statement. The character principles will be supported by a subsequent DCP chapter to be prepared as part of the upcoming DCP review. The character principles for Northern Coast LCA are as follows:

- Ensure view corridors to the coast are maintained from public spaces
- Improve active transport opportunities, including access to the nearby Randwick Health and Education Precinct
- Ensure the form, scale and density of new infill development is consistent with the local character
- Ensure design excellence through the introduction of detailed controls for the Coogee Beach town centre
- Maintain the area's sensitive scenic and environmental attributes
- Promote native tree planting in public parks and reserves and on local streets
- Continue to ensure that the high value coastal areas of the LCA are safe, clean and accessible to the community
- Build on the strong native flora character of the LCA and protect and enhance native plant communities for future generations
- Maintain the village feel at Coogee and Clovelly beaches

These character principles will inform the comprehensive review of the Randwick Local Environmental Plan 2012 occurring in 2020 and guide future provisions in the Randwick Development Control Plan 2013 which will be reviewed and updated following the adoption of the new LEP.

By elevating local character in the local planning framework, we will deliver better place-based planning outcomes for the community.



