

STRATEGIC PLANNING

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# Southern 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.

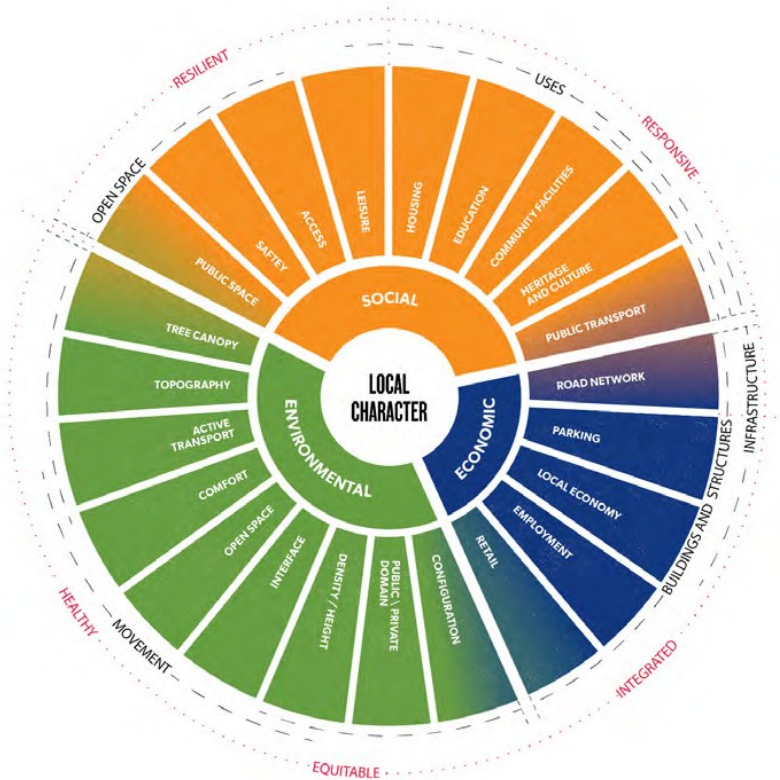
Randwick City has a rich and unique Aboriginal cultural history, with La Perouse being the only area in Sydney where the local Aboriginal community have had an unbroken connection to the land.

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.



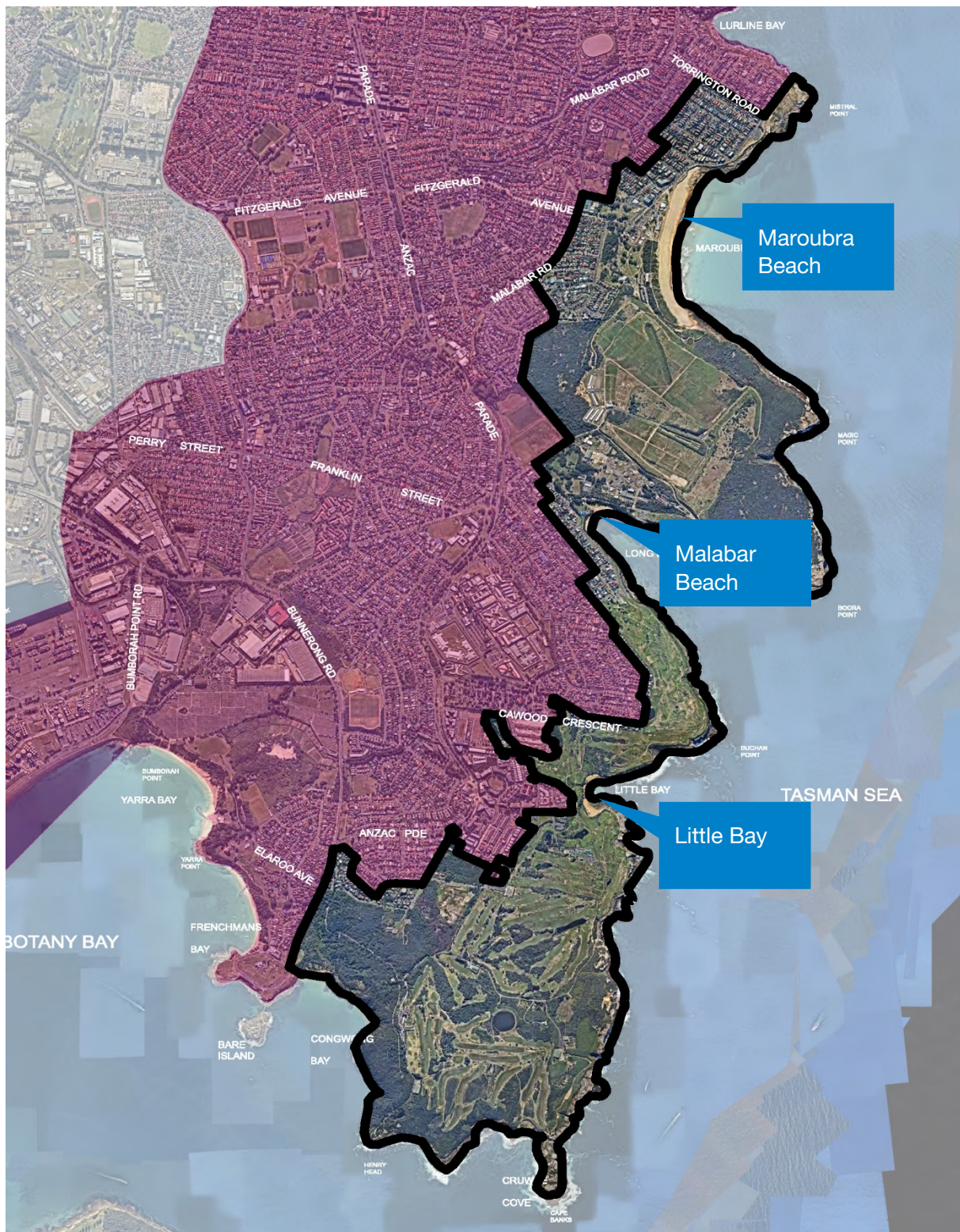
Council's methodology for identifying local character has involved two main streams of research – expert and local knowledge. Our expert knowledge is drawn from Council's databases and is based on the three indicators of local character – environmental, social and economic. Local knowledge is drawn from 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 Southern Coast Local Character Area



Southern Coast Local Character Area (LCA #10) spans from Mistral Point at the northern point Maroubra Bay to Congwong Bay in the south. It includes much of the significant natural and environmental open spaces of Randwick City, such as the Malabar Headland and Botany Bay National Parks which include a number of culturally sensitive Aboriginal areas.

## 4. Southern Coast LCA Key Features

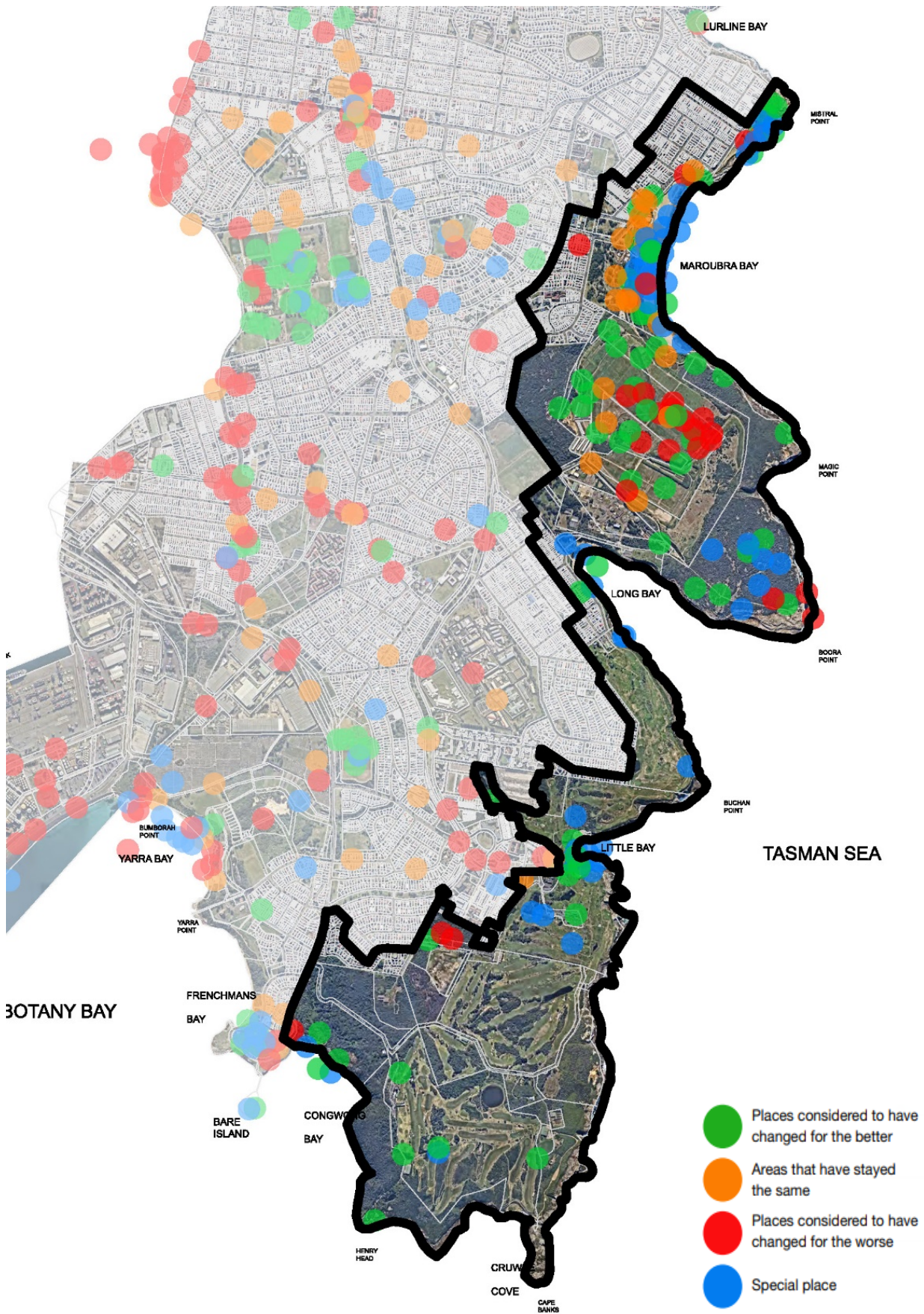
	<p>Significant Aboriginal cultural places and landscape heritage</p>
	<p>Large swathes of significant open space and national parklands</p>
	<p>Dramatic rocky coastline and beaches encircling the southern bays</p>

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## 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.





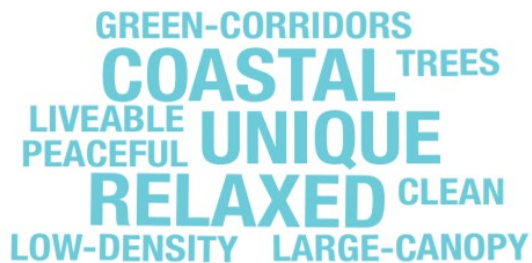
## 5.1. Malabar

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

Malabar area character: now



Malabar area character: future



## 5.2. Little Bay

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

Little Bay area character: now



Little Bay area character: future



### 5.3. La Perouse

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

La Perouse area character: now



La Perouse area character: future



### 5.4. Key findings from our community engagement on Southern Coast LCA include:

Community concern about loss of natural/ open space as a result of development

- Many people in the community enjoy the new Malabar Headland coastal walkway
- Mixed responses in regard to the rifle range at Malabar Headland
- Issues in regards to parking at Malabar and Little Bay beaches
- Many people value the village feel at Maroubra Beach town centre, while some believe that it has potential for redevelopment
- Many people wish to maintain the low density residential character in the area
- Many people want greater active transport connections, including the completion of the coastal walk and more cycle paths

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

- Retain village feel at Maroubra Beach,
- Maintaining and enhancing the natural landscape,
- Concern about Meriton development at Little Bay Cove,
- Maintain coastal character of Malabar and Little Bay beaches.

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## 6. Environmental characteristics

**The Southern Coast LCA is distinctive for its dramatic rocky coastline and beaches encircling the southern bays and large expanses of open space along the coast.**

Areas of environmental significance in the LCA include Jack Vanny Reserve, Malabar Headland National Park and Kamay Botany Bay National Park, as well as the many beaches and bays located along the coastline.

Jack Vanny Reserve is situated on the northern headland of Maroubra Beach and forms a part of the Eastern Beaches Coastal Walk. From this open, grassed and rocky reserve, there are spectacular views of Maroubra Beach to the south and Lurline Bay to the north. Steps lead from the middle of the reserve to Mahon Pool which is a popular swimming location and generally a safer and calmer option for children than Maroubra Beach.

Malabar Headland National Park (also a Heritage Conservation Area) offers dramatic coastal views and walks between Maroubra and Malabar beaches. The park covers two separate sections of the headland. The western section lies between the Anzac Rifle Range and an area of medium density housing in South Maroubra. Open year-round, it contains an area of remnant native vegetation. The eastern section is at the end of the headland.

It includes sandstone cliffs, remnant native vegetation and Boora Point Battery, a WWII coastal defence site. The eastern section is closed when the ANZAC Rifle Range is in use.

The Malabar Headland National Park has considerable scenic value, and landscape and aesthetic significance. The bushland and ocean cliffs can be appreciated as part of a largely unaltered natural landscape. There are excellent views of the coastline north and south from the headland and it also provides an attractive natural backdrop for many views in the local area. Dramatic cliff top views and rugged bushland make Malabar Headland National Park a popular spot for coastal walks. It is also a great spot for whale watching, with humpbacks cruising the Pacific Ocean during season.

Both the eastern and western sections contain bushland remnants which are some of the largest areas of essentially unmodified bushland in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

The bushland is a significant part of one of the two semi-natural corridors between Botany Bay and Port Jackson. Together the sections support one of the two most species rich areas of indigenous flora in the eastern suburbs, and at least seven distinct plant communities. They support three rare or threatened Australian plant species.

The western section contains four areas of critically endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS). Both sections of the national park contain geomorphological features of scientific value, including Pleistocene dune remnants.

The Botany Bay National Park Heritage Conservation Area covers the entire coastal strip facing Botany Bay and the Pacific Ocean, from Yarra Bay to the old Prince Henry Hospital site. Refer to the Social Characteristics section for more details on the Botany Bay National Park Heritage Conservation Area's social significance.

The Kamay Botany Bay National Park has a strong environmental focus. The wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas together with the Aboriginal place of heritage significance are its main features.

The remnant bushland, biodiversity and natural values of Southern Coast LCA include:

- Randwick City's largest and most intact sections of remnant bushland at Malabar Headland and Kamay Botany Bay National Park, La Perouse,, which offer bushwalking opportunities

- A geological and Aboriginal ochre site
- The best representations of what the original vegetation would have looked like pre-1788
- The largest proportion of land containing threatened species
- The most 'natural' water features including creeks and coastal swamps

**Southern Coast LCA bushland sites and items of natural value:**

REMNANT BUSHLAND SITE	ITEMS
Jack Vanny Reserve, Maroubra	Indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, herb and sedgeland, saltmarsh species, native revegetation.
Arthur Byrne Reserve, Maroubra	Threatened species, heath and scrub on deep sand.
Anzac Pde Median, Malabar	Threatened species, heath on deep sand.
Malabar Wetland	Threatened species, freshwater swamp, native revegetation.
Pioneers Park	Threatened species, heath and scrub on sand, native revegetation.
Cromwell Park South (including Malabar Beach and foreshore)	Low sandstone cliffs, rock platforms, beach dune, spinifex grassland, coastal sedgeland, native revegetation.
Randwick Golf Course	Ranging sandstone cliffs, rock platforms, coastal sedgeland.
Maroubra Beach	Beach dunes, spinifex grassland, dune shrub-forest, native revegetation.
Prince Henry, Little Bay	Threatened species, heath and scrub on sand, moist heath, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick.
Malabar Headland National Park	Threatened species, indigenous plants species considered regionally rare and rare in Randwick, variety of habitats and plant communities, excellent native plant diversity, freshwater swamps, large headland with ranging sandstone cliffs, rock platforms.
Former University of NSW land (Little Bay Cove)	Threatened species, heath and scrub, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, geological site, wetland and reconstructed creek, native revegetation.
Telstra land, La Perouse	Threatened species, scrub on deep sand, moist heath.
Coast Golf Course, Little Bay	Wet and dry heath on sandstone, sedgeland, native revegetation, beach dune, low sandstone cliffs, rock platforms, watercourses.
Spinal Cord Injuries Australia, Little Bay	Threatened species, heath on sandstone.
Cullens Driving Range, Little Bay	Heath and scrub on sandstone.
St Michaels Golf Course, Little Bay	Threatened species, scrub on deep sand, heath on sandstone, native revegetation, dry sclerophyll forest, creek/watercourse, dam.
NSW Golf Course, La Perouse	Threatened species, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, scrub on deep sand, heath on sandstone, swamps, sedgeland, native revegetation, creek/watercourse, dam.
Kamay Botany Bay National Park, La Perouse (including Jennifer St)	Threatened species, excellent example of Themeda Grasslands, indigenous plant species considered rare in Randwick, variety of habitats and plant communities, good native plant diversity, swamps, creek/watercourses, sheer sandstone cliffs, beach dunes.

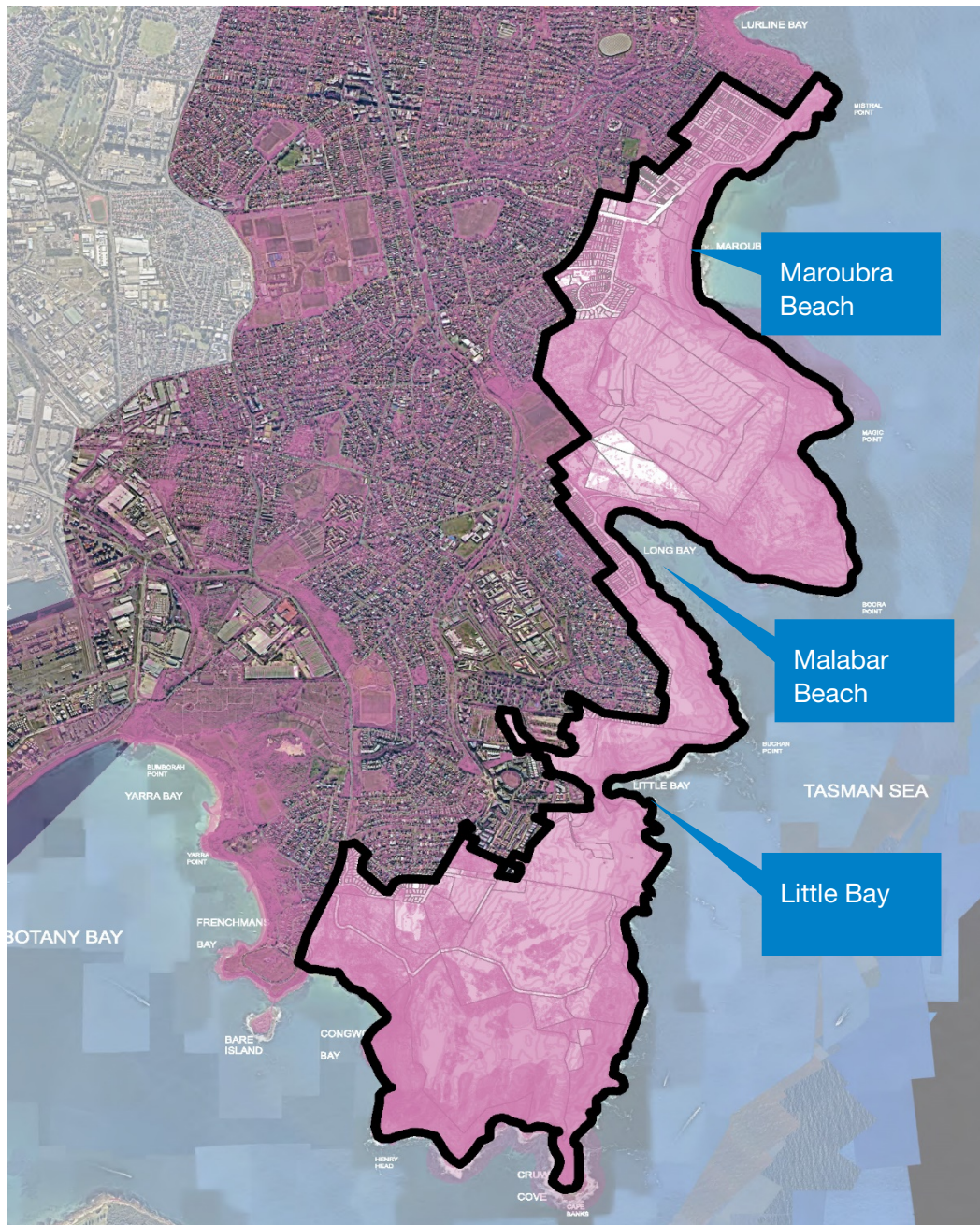
Opportunities for bushland and biodiversity in Southern Coast LCA:

- Continue to resource ecological restoration efforts at Council managed sites
- Continue to mitigate threats acting upon remnant bushland and prioritise work around areas of high biodiversity value
- Continue to increase buffer plantings to protect remnant bushland in the Anzac Parade median, Arthur Byrne Reserve, Pioneers Park, Cromwell Park and the Little Bay fauna corridor.
- Continue to link patches of remnant bushland through appropriate indigenous plantings and create effective fauna corridors along Anzac Parade road easement

### **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 with few inland areas like the Maroubra basin, Malabar Headland National Park, Kamay Botany Bay National Park and golf courses.



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## 7. Social characteristics

**Southern Coast LCA is characterised by its variety of open spaces. Its social characteristics are inextricably linked to the natural environment. Within the LCA, there are three heritage conservation areas (HCAs).**

The Malabar Headland HCA has a strong historical and social significance, as well as a strong environmental significance as outlined in the previous section. The eastern section of the HCA includes a WWII coastal defence site of historic significance, the Boora Point Battery. This is an imposing, purpose-built coastal landmark which is important for providing tangible evidence of Australia's coastal defence efforts in the area during WWII.

The Boora Point Battery features a number of particularly unusual attributes, including gun mountings, an underground counter bombardment facility, ammunition supply and engine room, and a sunken tramway associated with an observation post.

The Botany Bay National Park HCA covers the entire coastal strip facing Botany Bay and the Pacific Ocean, from Yarra Bay to the old Prince Henry Hospital Site. It comprises of an extensive stretch of dramatic coastline including areas of remnant bushland and sites of early Aboriginal and European contact. The existing landscape and man-made features provide evidence of numerous historical events and processes over a period of more than two centuries. The HCA includes areas of native bushland, most notably in the area adjacent to Jennifer Street and in pockets between the fairways of the many golf courses within the HCA. Also located within the HCA is the Little Bay Miocene Geological Heritage Site and Aboriginal Ochre Site. The Geological Heritage site is the only known site containing peat of Miocene age (22 million years before present) on the NSW coast and one of only two in the country. The Little Bay Ochre Aboriginal site is of high significance to the local Aboriginal community. It is a source of ochre or pipe clay used in body decoration for various cultural practices, including dances and ceremonies.

Within the LCA there is also the Prince Henry Hospital HCA and the Aboriginal Place of Heritage Significance. The HCA consists of a diverse complex of buildings in the coastal landscape, focused on the hospital which played an important role in the treatment of infectious diseases from the 1880s until 1986. The site is historically important to the local Aboriginal community for its historic associations prior to European occupation.

In terms of passive and active recreational items, Southern Coast LCA consists of many reserves, playgrounds, golf courses, walkways and beaches that support a wide range of activities.

Maroubra Beach is popular with visitors given its easy access and large kilometre-long expanse of sand, and with surfers given the regular good swell and wave conditions. The word 'Maroubra' comes from an Aboriginal word meaning 'like thunder', describing the sound of waves pounding the shoreline.

These waves have made Maroubra one of the most popular surfing locations in Sydney and Australia's second National Surfing Reserve. The beach is serviced by two surf lifesaving clubs, and is patrolled all year by Randwick City lifeguards.

Arthur Byrne Reserve is a large grassed beachside park located directly adjacent to Maroubra Beach. It has many grassed areas screened by native trees and shrubs, making it an ideal location for picnics. Park facilities include picnic shelters, BBQs, bubblers, beach access, and toilets and change rooms in the nearby pavilion. The popular Maroubra Skate Park is located within the reserve.

Macartney Reserve, also known locally as Macartney Oval, is a large park ideal for sport and recreation, and also has seating and a playground for toddlers.

Malabar Beach is one of Randwick City's lesser-known beaches. It features a rock pool located on the southern foreshore below Randwick Golf Club. The beach is popular with families due to its generally calm conditions.

On the northern side of the bay is a boat ramp and the home base for the Randwick District Offshore Rescue Boat. Cromwell Park is located directly behind the beach where there is a children's playground and public toilets, showers and change rooms.

Little Bay Beach, a 'secret' beach popular with locals, is well protected from large coastal swells making it perfect for swimming and snorkelling. It too is popular with families while the rock ledges to the north and south are popular with fisherman, albeit can be dangerous at times. The

Little Bay Rock Pool is a ring-of-rocks pool constructed with beach rocks on the southern tip of Little Bay.

Congwong Beach is located within the Kamay Botany Bay National Park and is in the care and control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is a beautiful, calm bay facing Botany Bay. Close by, Little Congwong Beach provides a more secluded beach used occasionally as a non-official nudist beach.

Cruwee Cove Beach is a quiet, windblown cove also located within the Kamay Botany Bay National Park.

Cape Banks walking track is a beautiful coastal walk in La Perouse with views across Sydney's Botany Bay. Cape Banks is a fantastic spot for whale watching.

The Coast Hospital Cemetery Walk is an easy walk, near a beautiful coastline, visiting an early Australian cemetery. The cemetery is located on raised ground, with views out to the coast and sea. Used primarily as a cemetery for The Coast Hospital from the 1880's, it is home to over 2000 graves (most not visible). The visible grave sites are interesting and provide a fascinating glimpse into life and death over 100 years ago.

There are also the four major golf courses situated along the coast:

- The Randwick Golf Club at Malabar with stunning views overlooking Long Bay and the Pacific Ocean
- The Coast Golf Club surrounding Little Bay
- St. Michael's Golf Club located within Kamay Botany Bay National Park area
- The New South Wales Golf Club which is situated on the northern headland of Botany Bay, flanked by the rugged cliffs of Henry Head and the prominent headland of Cape Banks.

The built environment included in Southern Coast LCA is located east of Malabar Rd and Anzac Parade and overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The northern section of the LCA is a broad open valley stretching between the rocky headlands framing Maroubra Beach on the eastern edge. East of Malabar Road, a rectilinear street layout provides dramatic vistas to the ocean from most streets. In this area, houses are larger and in a variety of styles. Closer to the beach, three-storey walkupflats have a greater consistency in form and scale. The Maroubra Beach commercial precinct on McKeon Street and Marine Parade is undistinguished and, like much of the area, lacks significant planting.

Between the Coral Sea Estate and the Malabar Headland National Park, the area displays a unique medium-density subdivision and development pattern. The street layout is not notable, but all allotments, and consequently the buildings, are offset to the alignment of the street, giving a strong and unusual rhythm to the streetscape. This is accentuated by the very narrow separation between the detached houses, giving the streetscape a very dense quality. The area within Malabar Road and Broome Street in particular contributes to the built form character.

To the south is the small suburb of Malabar, which is distinctive for its irregular rocky coastline and the small sandy beach terminating in Long Bay. The Malabar Wastewater Treatment Plant sits within this landscape. A slither of open space wraps around the bay and culminates at the Randwick Golf Course on the southern headland.

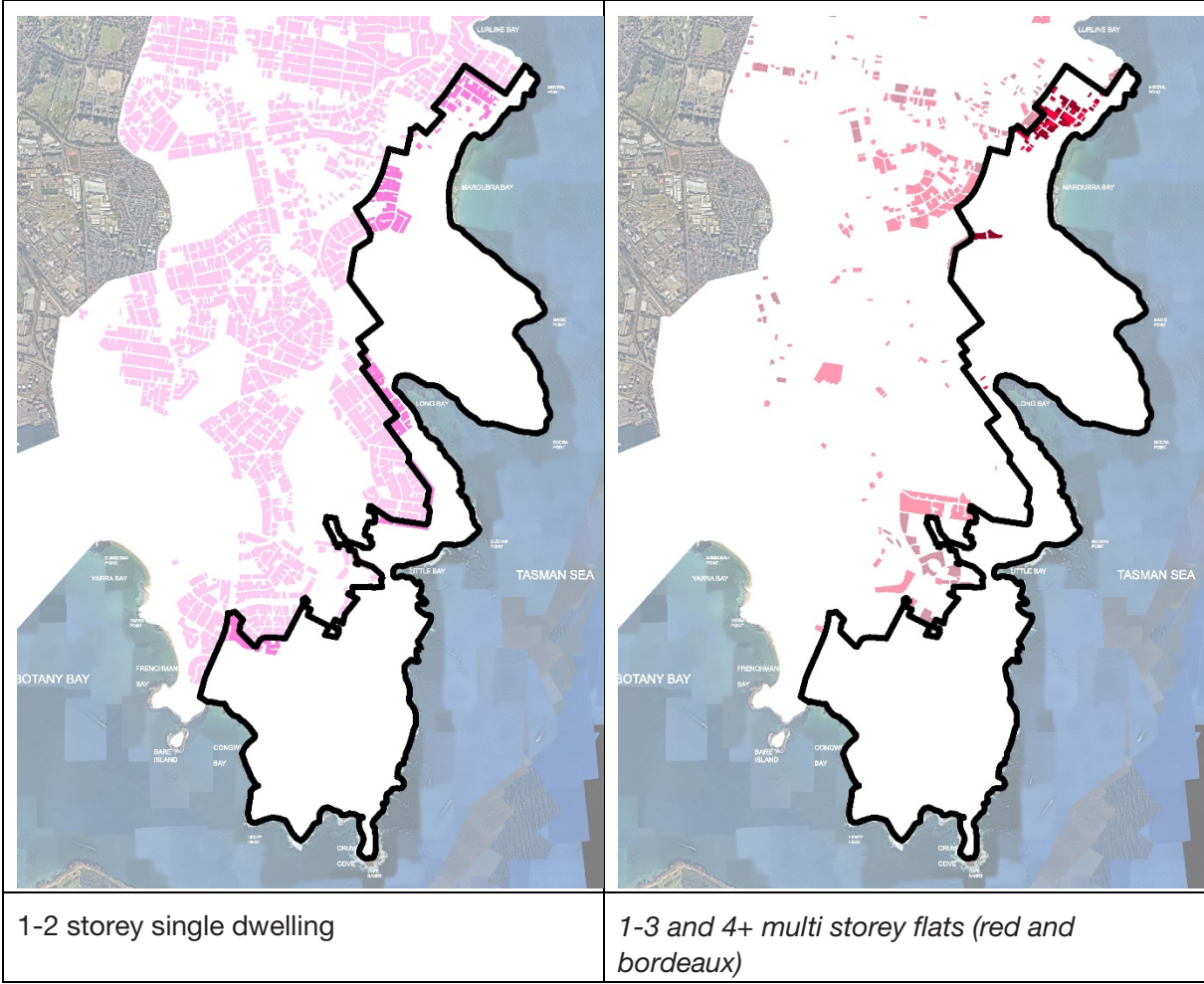
The residential neighbourhood in Malabar is located on the southern side of Long Bay.

There are three distinct neighbourhoods in Malabar. The original rectilinear grid on the steeper north-eastern slopes overlooking Long Bay, the more recent curvilinear subdivision on the plateau adjacent to the golf course and the Department of Housing development south of the



Long Bay Correctional Complex. The medium-density of the Bilga Crescent social housing estate along the southern edge of the Long Bay Correctional Complex is somewhat disconnected from the remainder of the area. Within this area is the Kooloora Community Centre on Bilga Crescent.

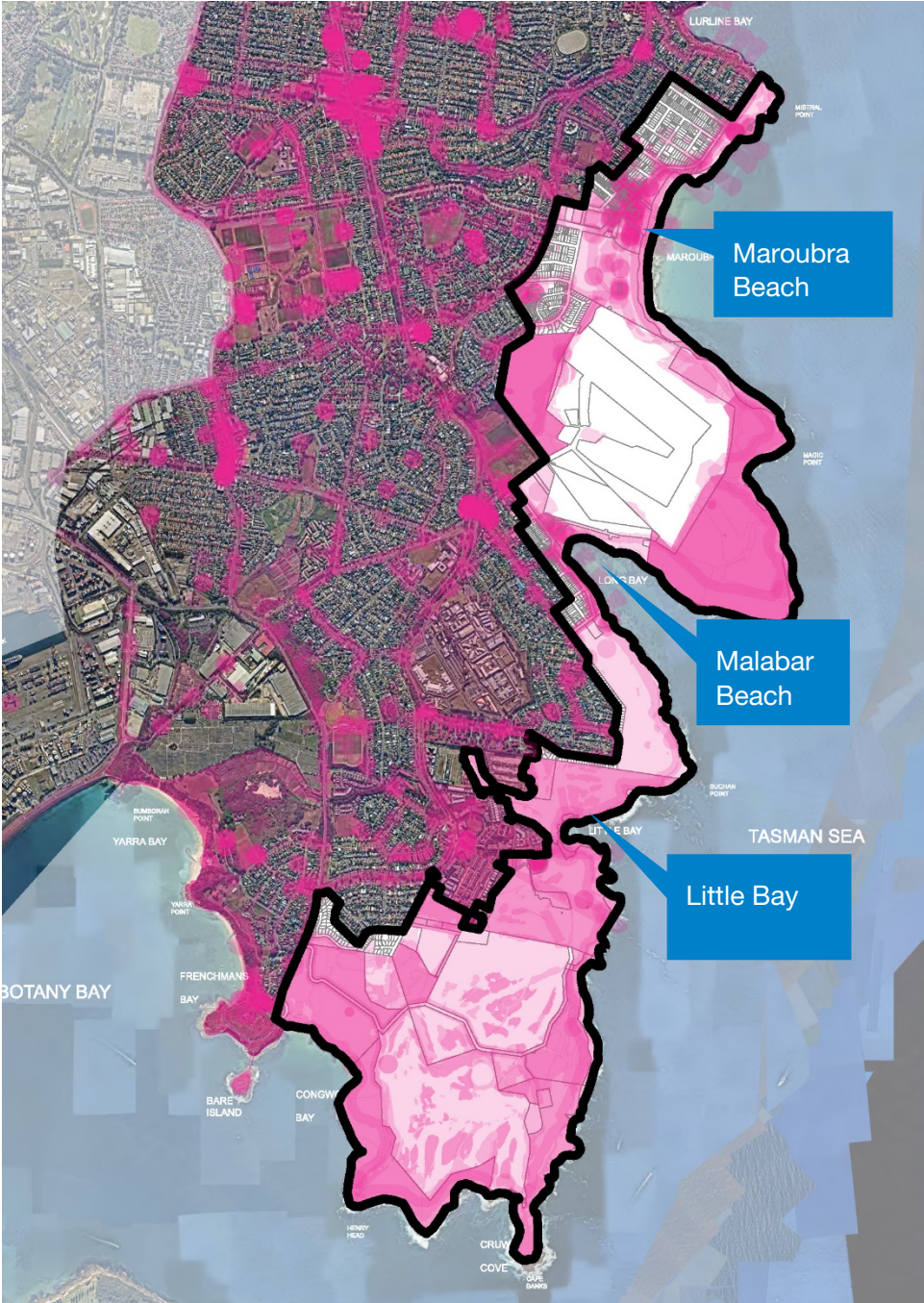
Within the LCA the residential built character consists predominantly of single dwellings with 1 or 2 storeys. These dwellings account for 69.4% of all housing stock. Flat buildings consist of 14.5% of all housing stock and are focused on the Maroubra Beach town centre and along Anzac Parade at Little Bay.



### 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) over the whole coastal fringe and on Maroubra Beach, Malabar Beach and Kamay Botany Bay National Park.



## 8. Economic characteristics

**Southern Coast LCA is fundamentally based on natural open space and environmentally and culturally sensitive areas. Cultural items and green infrastructure contributes to the local economy (e.g. beaches and walkways).**

Each year many people experience the spectacular views and special experiences that the LCA offers. The few small business activity areas in Southern Coast LCA are located in Maroubra, Malabar and Little Bay.

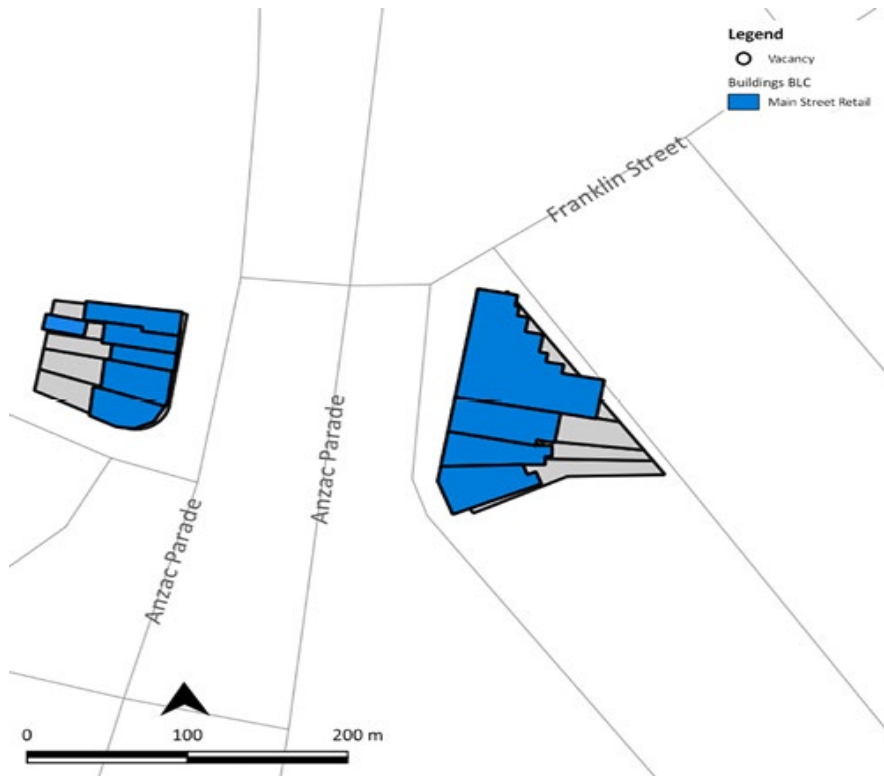
Maroubra Beach town centre is a local precinct that mainly operates during the day and is busiest during the summer months. It is located predominantly on Marine Parade and McKeon Street, adjacent to the Maroubra beachfront.

The centre generally consists of retail, cafes and food takeaways. The Maroubra Seals Sports and Community Club and The Bay Hotel and Diner are the two large, licensed venues within the centre. Nearby is the South Maroubra Shopping Village which consists of a number of food takeaways, a Woolworths supermarket, a large pharmacy and some professional services.

Malabar is another small-scale neighbourhood centre, functioning as a cluster of active retail uses along Anzac Parade intersecting with Lawson Street and Franklin Street. The centre predominantly consists of food takeaway with a number of restaurants and cafes. There is also some retail and services such as a pharmacy and newsagent. The Malabar Library is also part of this centre.



Business activities at Maroubra Beach town centre (Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2019)



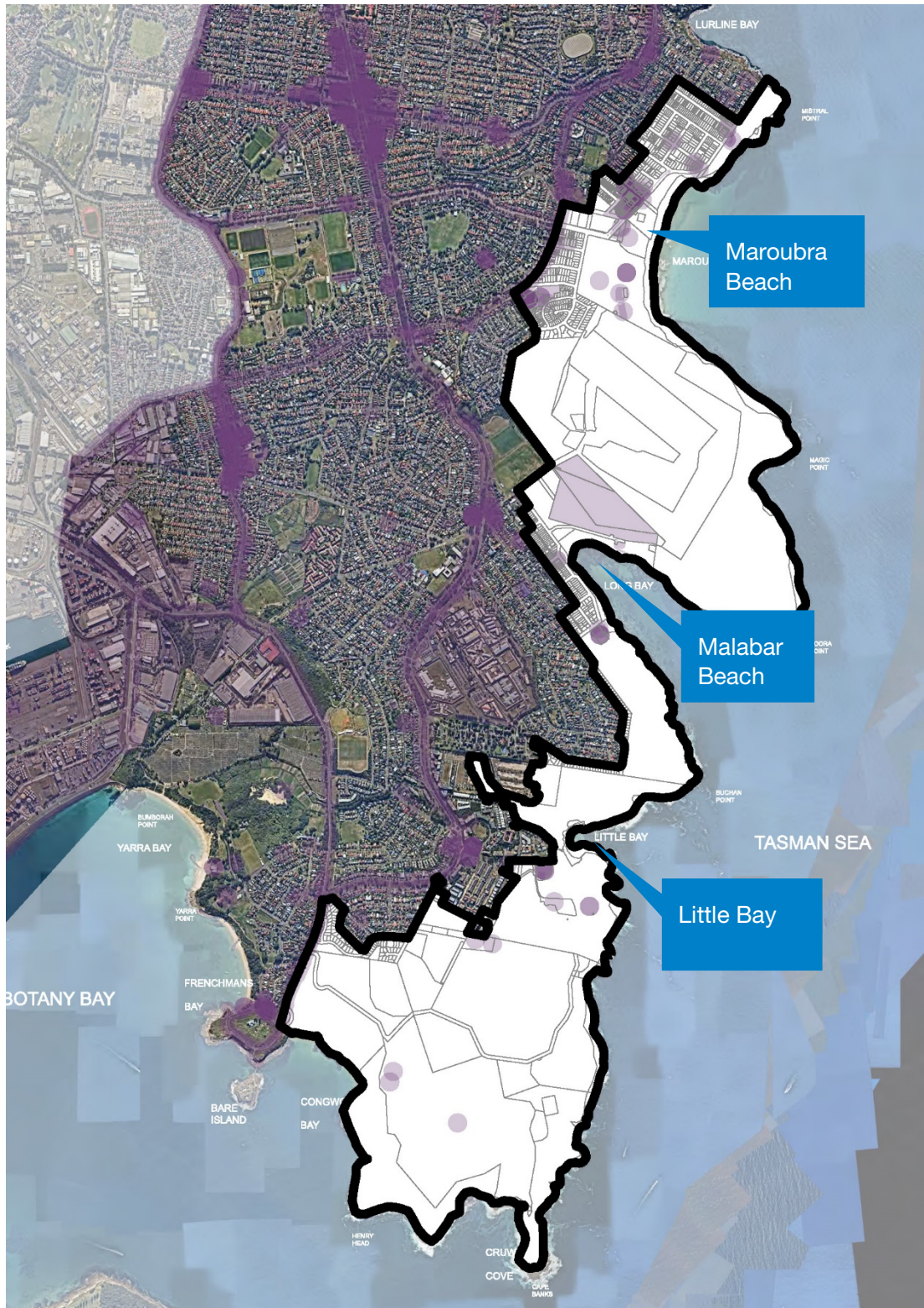
Business activities at Malabar neighbourhood centre (Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2019)

The Little Bay neighbourhood centre is located on the intersection of Anzac Parade and Pine Avenue. This local centre containing a range of retail uses, including some large cafés and a Foodworks supermarket. Much of the centre is part of the mixed use area within Prince Henry, while there is also some older, commercial stock on Anzac Parade.



## 8.1. Economic indicators density map

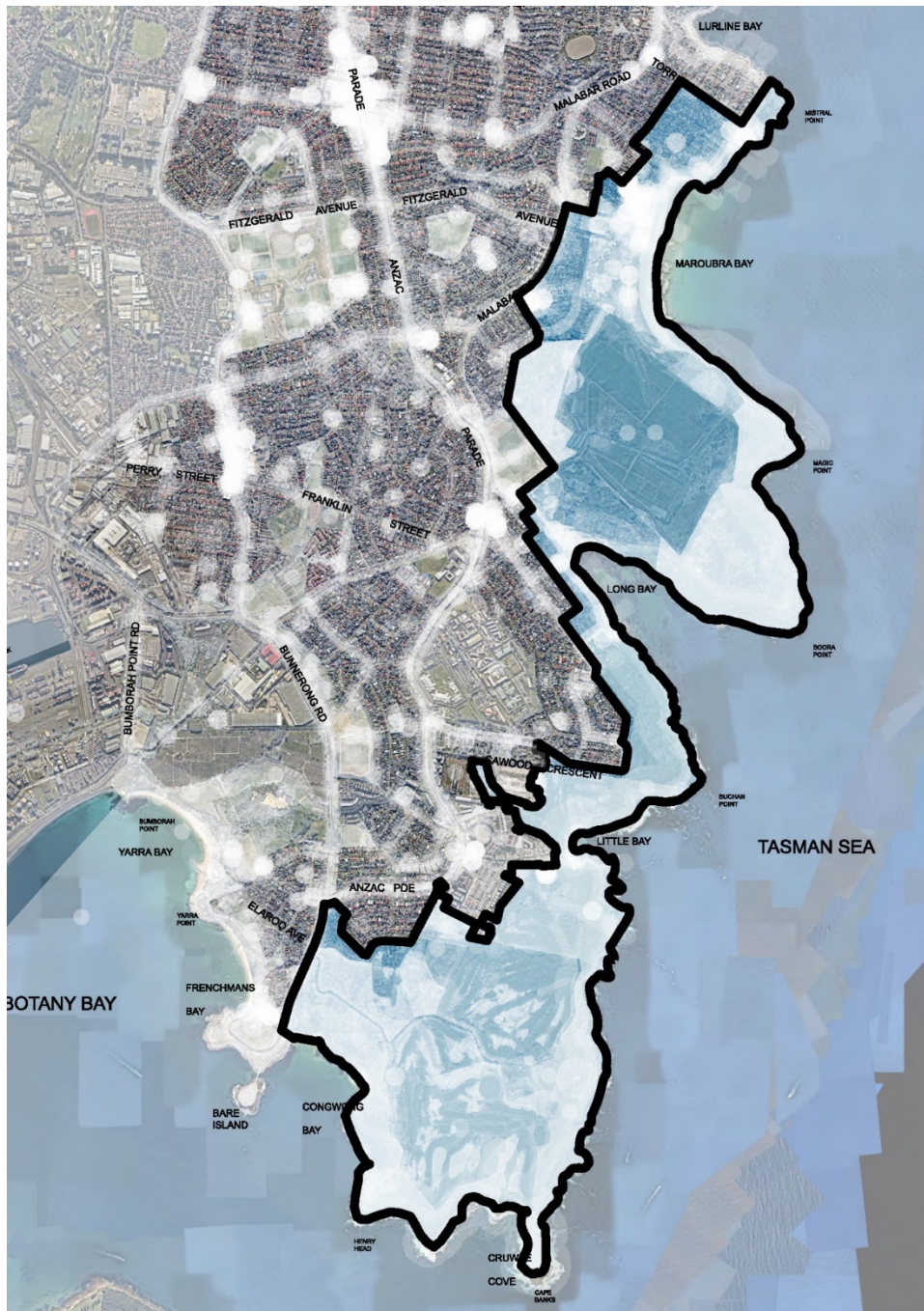
The following map is the spatial representation of the economic indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as local economy, commercial areas, food and health-related activities, road network and parking. It provides evidence of nodes where economic indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e. dark purple) at the Maroubra Beach town centre, South Maroubra Village, Malabar and Little Bay neighbourhood centres.



## 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 is concerned about development resulting in the loss of natural/open space in this LCA. The community values the coastal walkway, village feel of Maroubra Beach and the low density residential character of the area. Suggested improvements include parking supply and greater opportunities for active transport. The high environmental and social significance of this LCA is to be preserved for current and future generations. Ensuring view corridors are maintained to the coast and infill development within the LCA does not detract from its unique coastal character is the key characterization of this LCA.



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## 10. Character principles

These character principles have been prepared to set the desired future character of Southern Coast LCA. The character principles have been formulated based on the analysis documented in this statement.

- Protect large areas of open space and national parklands into the future
- Maintain vistas to the ocean from public areas
- Appropriate development that responds to the coastal landscape
- Increased street planting with a focus on native trees to connect the natural environment of the coastline to the urban areas to the west
- Ensure future development respects the cultural significance of Indigenous landscapes and sites
- Public domain upgrades to existing, smaller centres such as Maroubra Beach and Malabar to make them more inviting
- Ensure that future redevelopment of large sites responds to the coastal character and other key considerations such as public transport access to the LCA
- Maintaining of the ‘village feel’ at Maroubra, Malabar and Little Bay 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.

