

STRATEGIC PLANNING

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# The Bays Draft Local Character Statement

May 2020

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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.

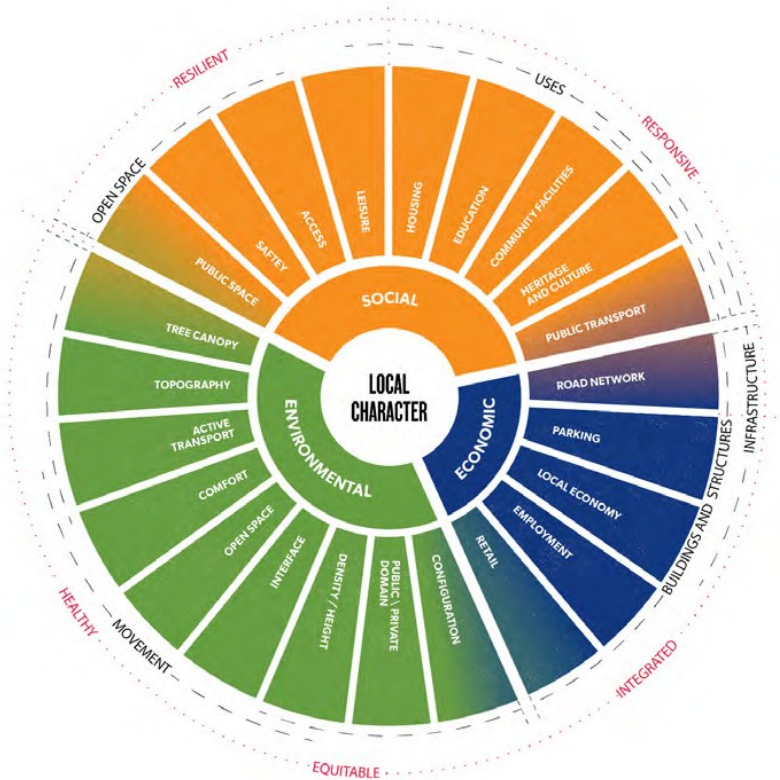
Randwick City has a rich and unique Aboriginal cultural history, with La Perouse being the only area in Sydney where the local Aboriginal community have had an unbroken connection to the land.

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.



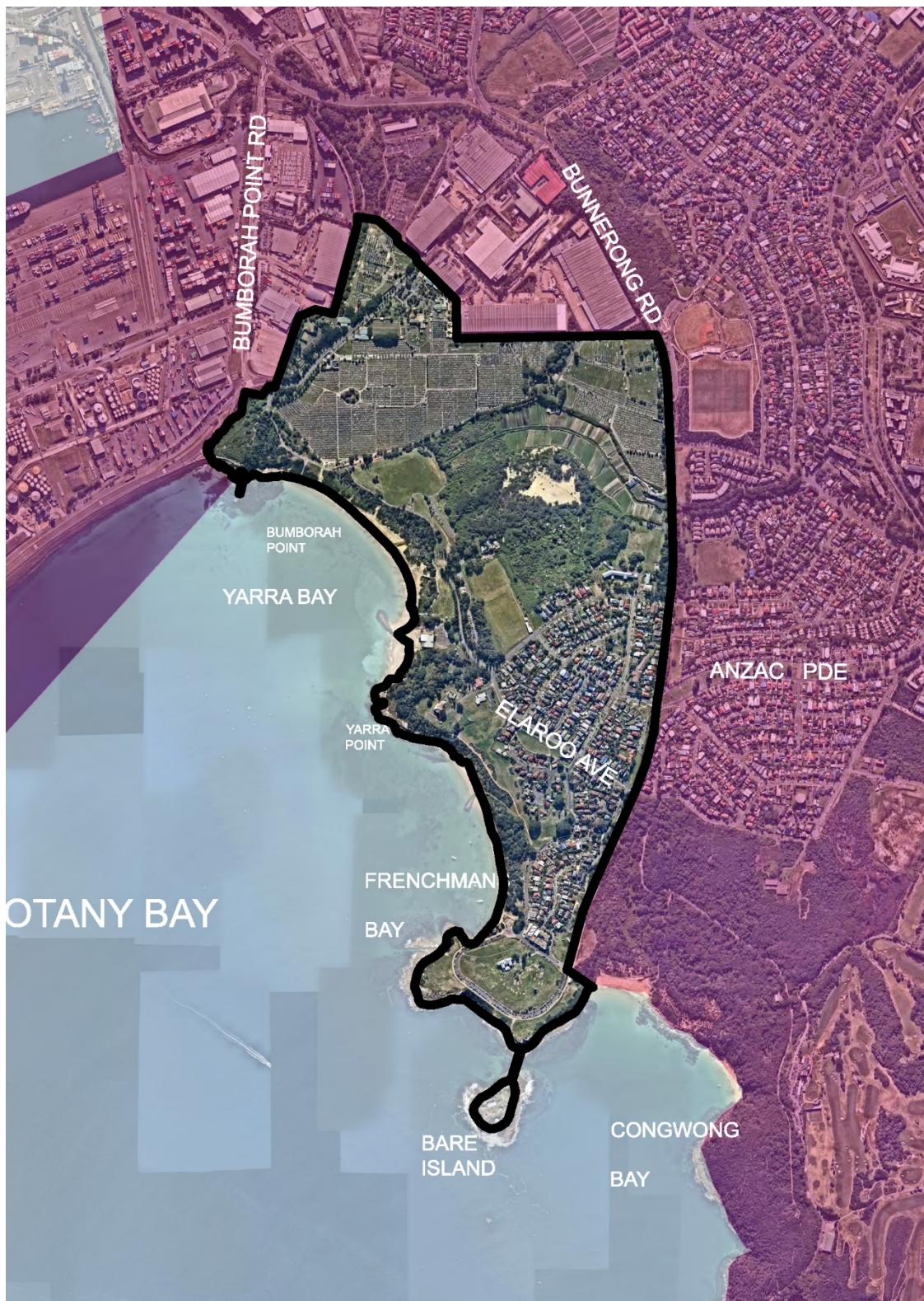
Council's methodology for identifying local character has involved two main streams of research – expert and local knowledge. Our expert knowledge is drawn from Council's databases and is based on the three indicators of local character – environmental, social, and economic. Local knowledge is drawn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



The Bays Local Character Area (LCA #11) consists of the coastal zone from Bare Island to Bumborah Point. Its eastern boundary follows Anzac Parade and Bunnerong Road and it is bordered by the industrial area of Port Botany to the north and west.

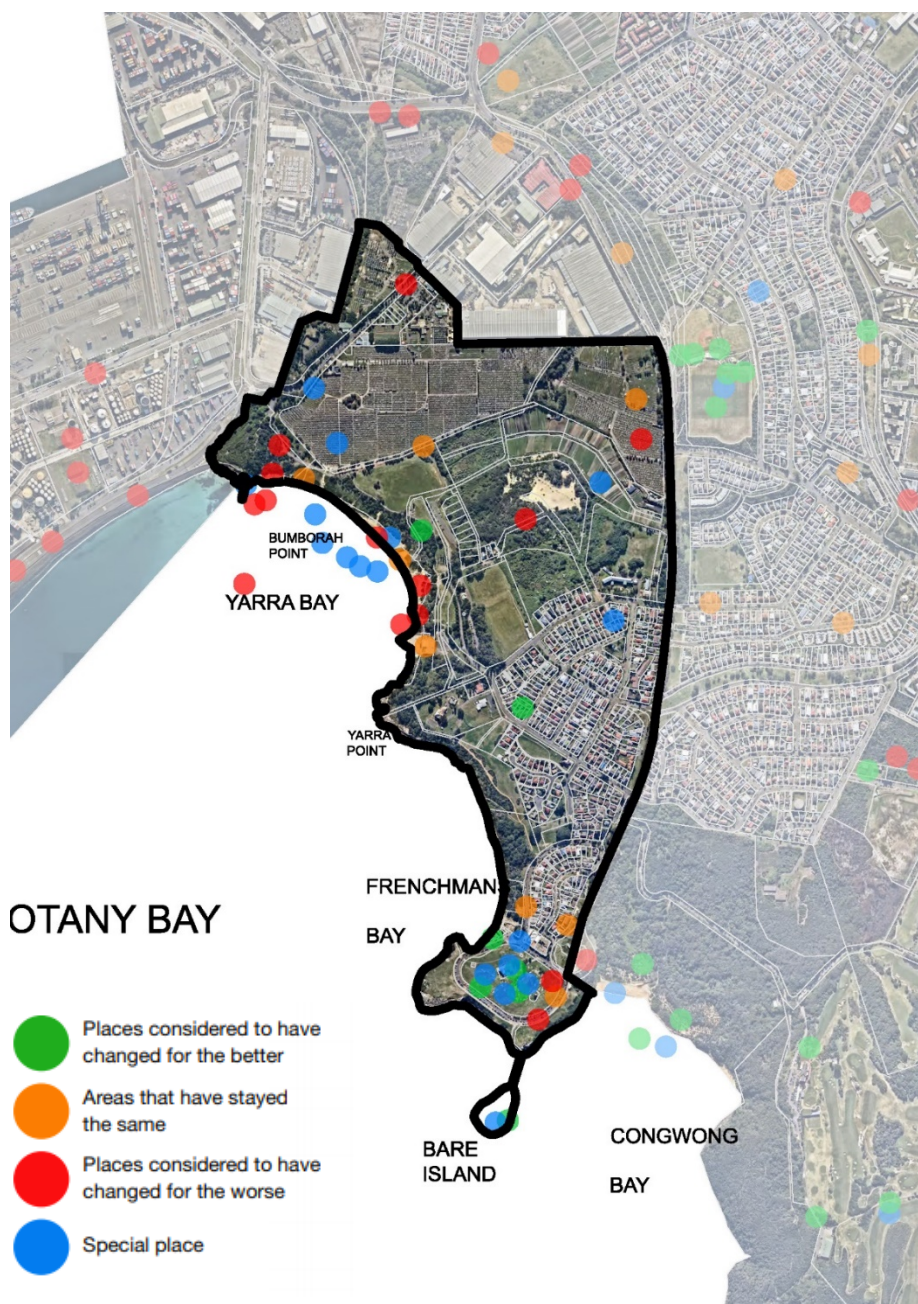
## 4. The Bays LCA Key Features

	<p>Aboriginal Community's links to the land remains strong</p>
	<p>Rich variety and diversity of marine and estuarine habitats</p>
	<p>Heritage significance as a first contact site</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. Phillip Bay

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

Phillip Bay area character: now



Phillip Bay area character: future



## 5.2. 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





### 5.3. Key findings from our community engagement on The Bays LCA include:

- The local Aboriginal community have a strong connection to this LCA
- The area has a sensitive cultural and environmental heritage that must be preserved for future generations
- The area is a great place to view sunsets
- Would like an increase in cultural facilities and active transport connections
- Improvements to parking, access and future ferry accessibility is desirable
- Preservation of the market gardens
- Community desire to protect the natural values of the local area
- Yarra Bay and Frenchmans Bay are special places that are inexplicitly connected to the local character of the area

Council received 4 written submissions on The Bays LCA during the public exhibition of the draft statements in 2020. Key points included:

- Retain village feel at La Perouse,
- Opposition to the proposed cruise terminal and La Perouse to Kurnell Ferry,
- More emphasis needed on the historical significance of The Bays,
- Emphasis on the social significance of the Yarra Bay Sailing Club and Fishing Club.

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## 6. Environmental characteristics

**The Bays LCA is characterised by a gently undulating terrain with expansive views to Frenchmans Bay, Yarra Bay and Port Botany across Yarra Bay Bicentennial Park.**

Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park defines the northern boundary of the LCA and is a significant local feature.

The LCA hosts part of the Botany Bay National Park Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) that comprises an extensive stretch of dramatic coastline including several areas of remnant bushland and a number of sites of early Aboriginal and European contact.

The Kamay 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.

Yarra and Frenchmans Bays still retain their natural vital elements including dune systems and terrestrial and marine plant communities.

The quaint Frenchmans Bay in the south has a mixture of dune scrub and forest with a thin band of spinifex, ground covers and herbs growing at the strandline as a first line of defence against storm surge and infrequent swell activity. Yarra Bay has a more dynamic dune system due to its south-easterly aspect and the beach profile can change remarkably after intense and prolonged weather events.

A dune swale has formed and a mixture of typical dune plant species has either colonised or has been installed as parts of ongoing ecological restoration efforts.

A small woodland of Sydney Red Gums adjacent to the Yarra Bay Sailing Club typifies what the original vegetation would have looked like pre 1788.

The natural values of The Bays LCA include:

- Intrinsic

A place where you can be completely surrounded by ocean at Bare Island. A place where one can gain a sense of solitude

- Aesthetic

Bays which can boast south-westerly aspects over greater Botany Bay and the significant Towra Point wetlands

- Scientific

The ecologically sensitive sea grass meadows in Yarra and Frenchmans Bays

- Ecosystem services

Native vegetation which supports a diversity of wildlife. Market Gardens that provide an important green belt for the flow of genetic diversity between local natural areas

- Educational

The Bush Tucker Trail where members of the Guriwal Aboriginal Corporation provide tours on bush foods and medicines

Opportunities for bushland and biodiversity in The Bays LCA include:

- Possibility for further extension of native vegetation throughout the Yarra Bay Bicentennial Park
- Connect dune vegetation between Bumborah Point and western edge of Yarra Beach
- Continue to resource ecological restoration efforts at Council managed sites
- Continue to mitigate threats affecting remnant bushland looked like pre 1788.

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**REMNANT BUSHLAND SITE ITEMS**

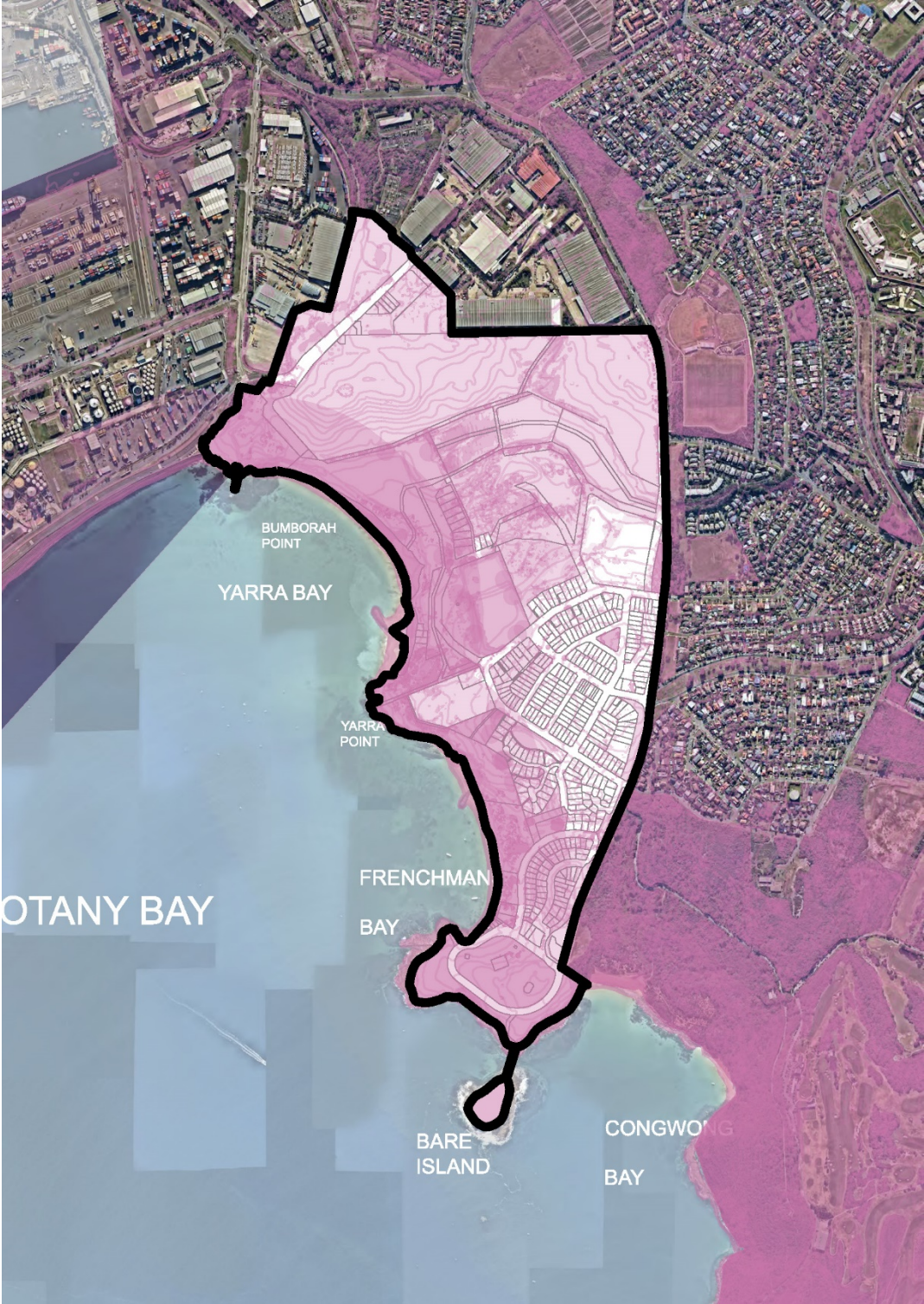
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Bare Island	Remnant coastal heath and sedge species, small to medium sandstone cliffs with overhangs, intertidal zone including rock shelf
La Perouse Loop	Isolated patch of remnant heath over a sandstone outcrop
Frenchmans Beach Dunes	Beach dunes, dune scrub-forest, and native revegetation
Yarra Point, Yarra Beach Dunes and Bumborah Point	Beach dunes, spinifex grassland, dune scrub-forest, remnant heath on low sandstone cliff, casuarina thickets on rocky points, small pond, and native revegetation

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**6.1. Environmental indicators density map**

The following map is the spatial representation of the environmental indicators mapping overlay. It provides evidence of nodes where environmental indicators emerge as a dense layer (i.e., dark pink) along the shore from Bare Island to Bumborah Point and at the natural areas inland from the coast.



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## 7. Social characteristics

**The Bays Local Character Area is located to the northern headland of Kamay, also referred to as Botany Bay.**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a long history of occupation in Randwick City that goes beyond LCA boundaries. La Perouse, in particular, is an area that has a rich cultural and heritage significance for Aboriginal people as the only area in Sydney in which Aboriginal people have had an unbroken connection to the land.

La Perouse headland provided access to plentiful food sources in the sea and on the land. The rich Aboriginal cultural heritage within La Perouse contributes greatly to the local character of the area. The La Perouse area has special significance to the Aboriginal community because of its history of use before and after European contact. Today, the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council is located in Yarra Bay, with their headquarters situated in the heritage listed Yarra Bay House on Elaroo Avenue. There are number of significant Indigenous sites in the LCA that include ceremonial or meeting places as well as fishing areas. There is also the Guriwal Bush Tucker Track which provides opportunities to showcase Aboriginal knowledge and information about local plants used for bush tucker, medicines and crafts, and to present local artwork and the history of the local Aboriginal community.

The Bays LCA hosts part of the Kamay Botany Bay National Park that comprises an extensive stretch of dramatic coastline including several areas of remnant bushland and a number of sites of early Aboriginal and European contact. The aesthetic significance of the area as a whole arises from the scenic value of the natural landscape, and a number of man-made features within it. The area was the location of some of the earliest contacts between Aboriginal people and Europeans on the east coast of Australia.

There are also a number of European heritage items and other significant sites that contribute to the social character of the LCA. Bare Island is an important element of The Bays LCA with its historic, social and environmental significance. Captain Cook first spotted the area now known as Bare Island in 1770, and referred to it in his journal as 'a small bare island'. The fort was built in the early 1880s and was in operation until 1908, after which time it became Australia's first war veterans' home. The water surrounding Bare Island is a very popular snorkelling and scuba diving location within the Kamay Botany Bay National Park.

Housed in the former cable station heritage building, the La Perouse Museum is a multidisciplinary museum that has a focus on local stories, ongoing Indigenous histories and the story of the French explorer Lapérouse. It offers visitors and the local community temporary and permanent exhibitions, public programs, events, lectures, and performances. East of the museum is the Macquarie Watchtower which was built around 1821. It is Randwick City's oldest building and an important heritage site. The octagonal tower was altered over many decades and in 2010 a major restoration project commissioned by the National Parks and Wildlife Service was undertaken.

The Frenchmans Bay Reserve is located adjacent to Frenchmans Bay Beach. It is a popular spot in summer for visitors and locals alike and includes a grassed open space, picnic facilities, a playground and barbeques.

Nearby is the Yarra Bay Bicentennial Park, which is a coastal reserve bounded by Yarra Road, Koorngai Avenue and Baragoola Avenue. It is another popular spot with barbeques, picnic facilities and seating.

North is Bumborah Point. Its original topography and promontory form was degraded through the creation of the Port Botany wharves and land reclamation in the 1970s. It now serves as a

physical link between the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park to the north, and the Port Botany wharves to the west and it is a generally undeveloped and vegetated area of the Botany Bay foreshore. Its remnant tunnel opening and associated concrete funnelling arms are the only remaining physical evidence of the Bunnerong Power Station and use of this area for electricity supply to Sydney in the early twentieth century.

The Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park was dedicated as a cemetery site in 1888, with the first interment recorded on 21 August 1893. The crematorium on the site was opened in 1938. It has historical significance to the LCA as a major landholder and contributes to the local character.

The Art Deco style of the crematorium building reflects the mostly rectangular layout and forms of the cemetery. The Chinese Market Gardens are of state heritage significance for their history, associations, research potential, representative value and rarity as a site of continuous food cultivation for the Sydney metropolitan area.

Chinese market gardeners have farmed at the site since at least 1909. The gardens contribute greatly to the local character of the area and are rare to be found in an urbanised environment such as Randwick City. The gardens bestow a rural ambience through the LCA through the pleasing form and strong geometric patterns of their cultivated garden beds, the arrangement of their irrigation channels and creeks, their uncluttered views to adjacent open space and the remnant corrugated iron sheds scattered throughout the site (Heritage NSW). In terms of transport connections, the LCA is serviced by buses that connect to the Sydney CBD via Bunnerong Road and Anzac Parade.

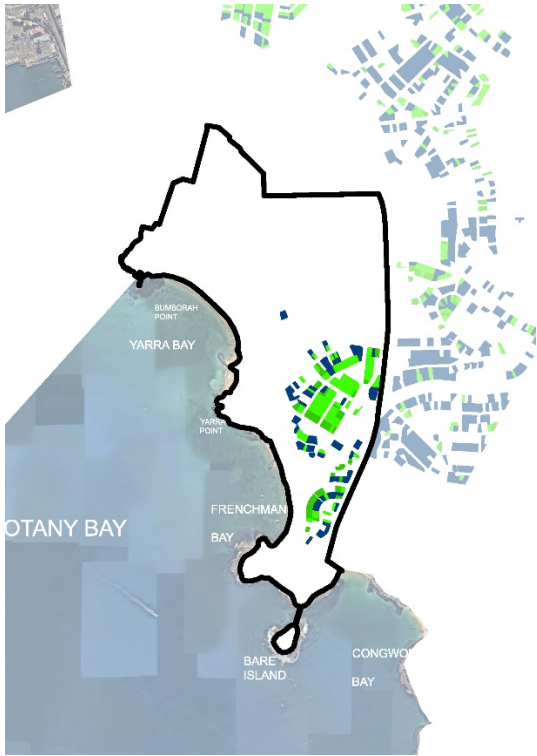
Notwithstanding, many visitors use private vehicles to access the area.

The local area is generally flat, with some undulating roads closer to the coast. The topography and a variety of shared paths and local roads means that the La Perouse is a frequent destination for cyclists who access the area via Anzac Parade and Bunnerong Road. Improvements to the active transport network could make visiting La Perouse by bicycle more appealing to a wider demographic. Improved accessibility around the coastal area with improved signage and wayfinding will also be beneficial to tourists and visitors to the area.

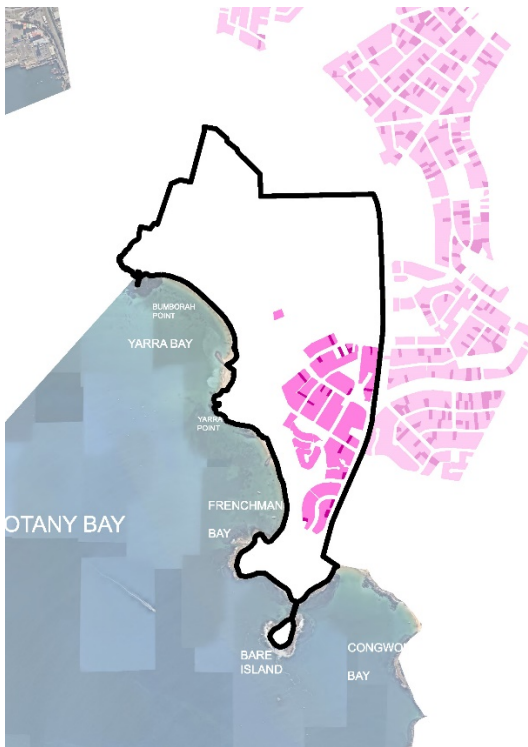
The Bays LCA is a small residential neighbourhood characterised by modest single-storey bungalows. More recent development in the area has been similar to that found throughout the southern suburbs of Randwick, with moderations and additions to existing dwellings and the demolition of older houses for denser infill development such as dual occupancies. The development of this area was typical of that of the Post-War period, with single houses built on separate allotments often made from modest fibro, timber and brick veneer with simple gardens.

The LCA's subdivision pattern is more typical of the traditional development process, with blocks set at right angles to the street and corner allotments having a primary and secondary frontage, rather than the spayed rear boundaries found on corner allotments in Chifley and Little Bay. The subtle curvilinear grid pattern of subdivision in this small neighbourhood is responsive to the local topography and gives it a special character. A varied pattern of streets is created with gently curving streets that follow the contours and frame a small triangular hilltop park – Fred Williams Reserve. In contrast, straight cross contour streets frame dramatic views to Botany Bay.

Property data for The Bays LCA demonstrates that lot sizes and frontage widths are generally larger in comparison with the rest of Randwick City. This is reflective of its location to the south of Randwick City, which is generally characterised by freestanding dwellings. The residential character of The Bays LCA is shaped by the prevalent building typology of single dwellings with 1 or 2 storeys, which account for 90.4% of all dwellings. There are a small number of dual occupancy developments (5.2%) and mixed use development (4.1%). Some social housing is present on and around Adina and Goonda avenues.



*Lot areas from 450m-500sqm (light green), 400-450sqm and 500m-600sqm (dark green and blue)*

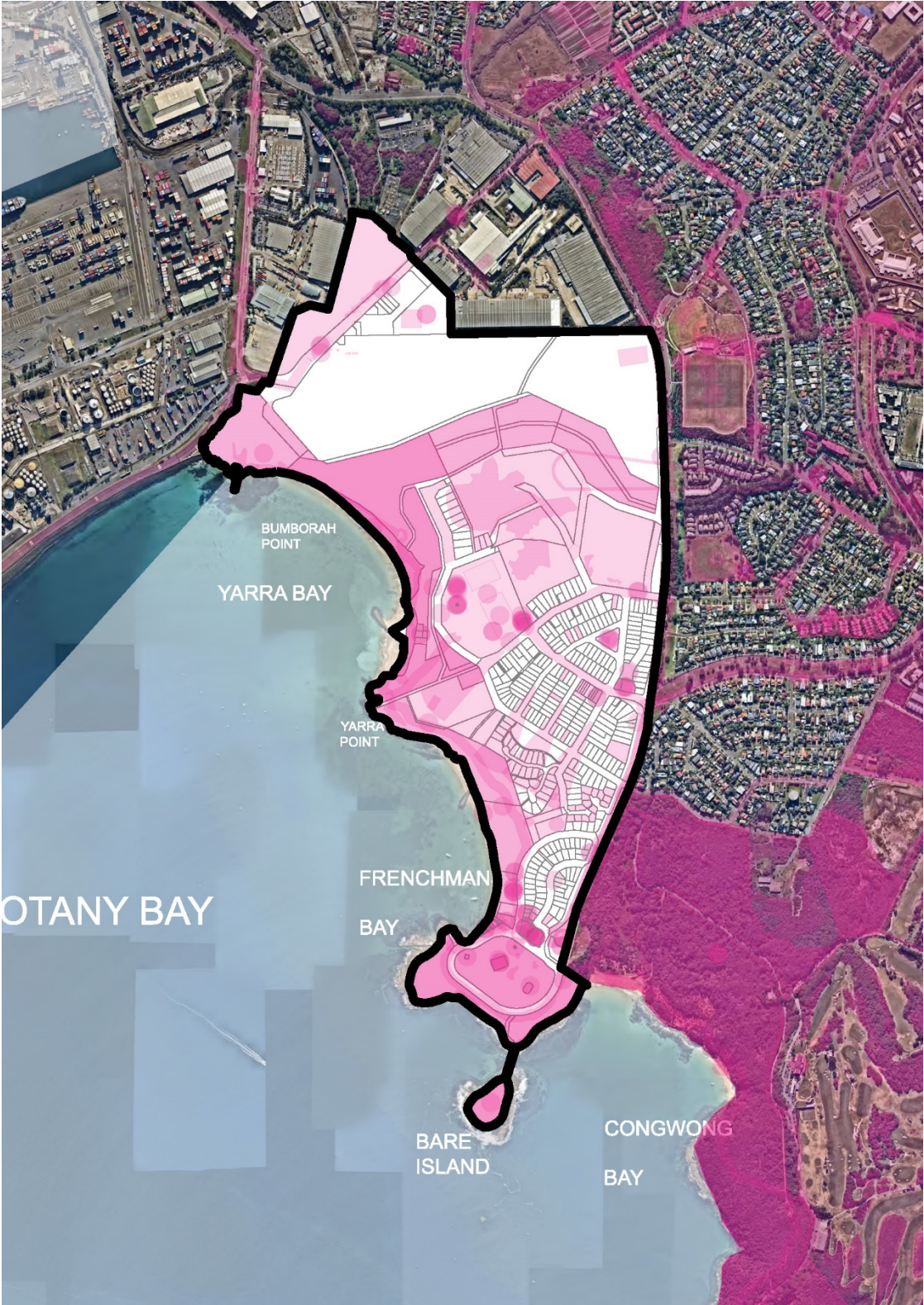


*1-2 storey buildings: single dwelling and dual occupancy (pink and purple)*

**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) along the whole foreshore strip from Bare Island to Bumborah Point and around the Yarra Bay Bicentennial Park area.





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## 8. Economic characteristics

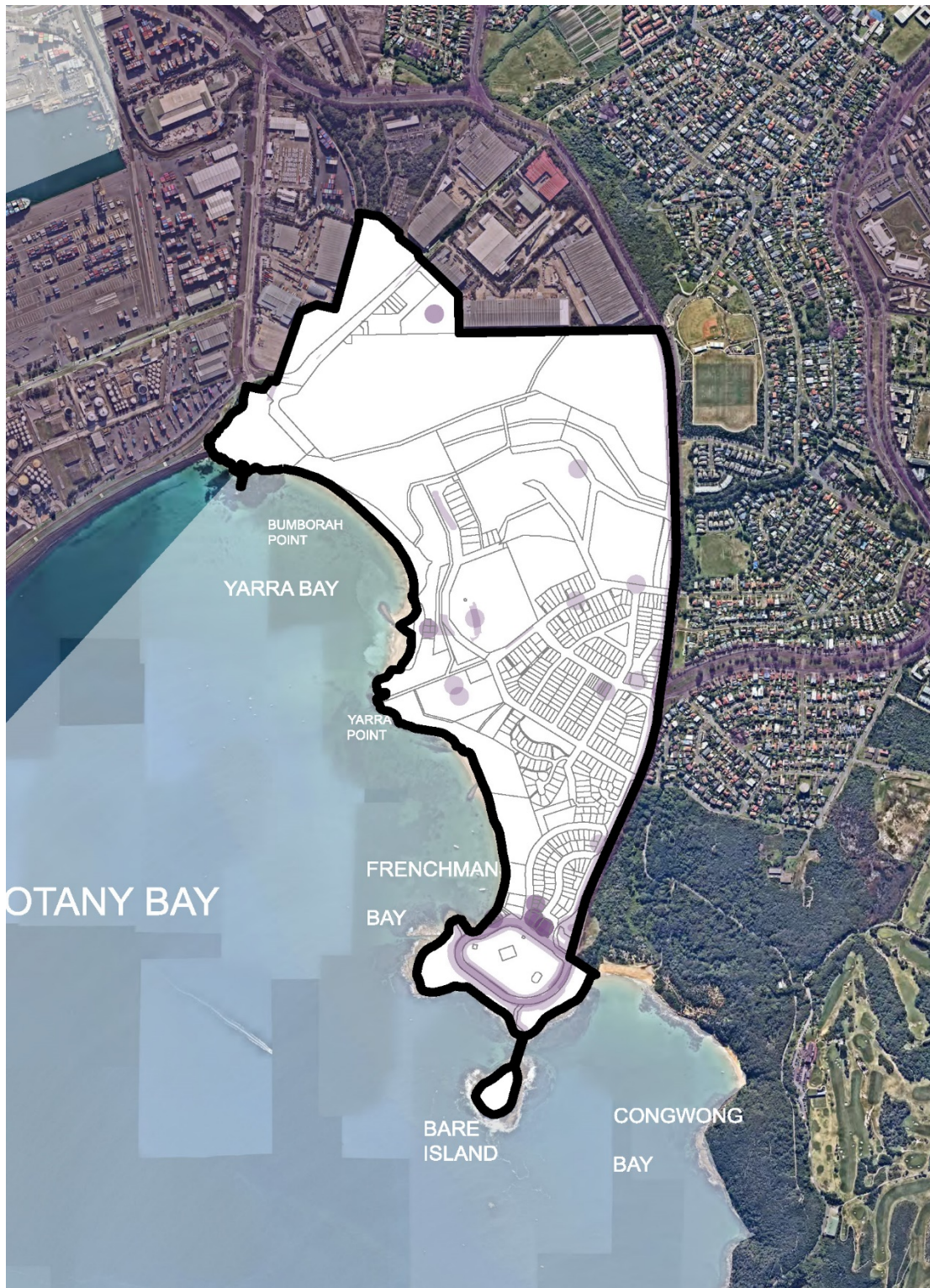
**The La Perouse neighbourhood centre is located on the northern headland of Botany Bay. It comprises a small number of take away food outlets focused on the ‘Lapa Loop’ – the southernmost point of Anzac Parade.**

The surrounding area is characterised by large areas of public open space, a close proximity to the Frenchmans Bay coastline and low density residential areas to the north. La Perouse is a popular summertime destination for visitors taking advantage of the surrounding natural area – you can often see families here eating fish and chips on the weekends. The centre primarily consists of main street retail with some residential also present.

It has been identified that the La Perouse neighbourhood centre has the potential for greater economic vibrancy in the future as a result of increased transport access to the area and tourism opportunities. It is expected that there will be increased visitation to the area as a result of the reintroduction of the Kurnell to La Perouse ferry service.

### 8.1. Economic indicators density map

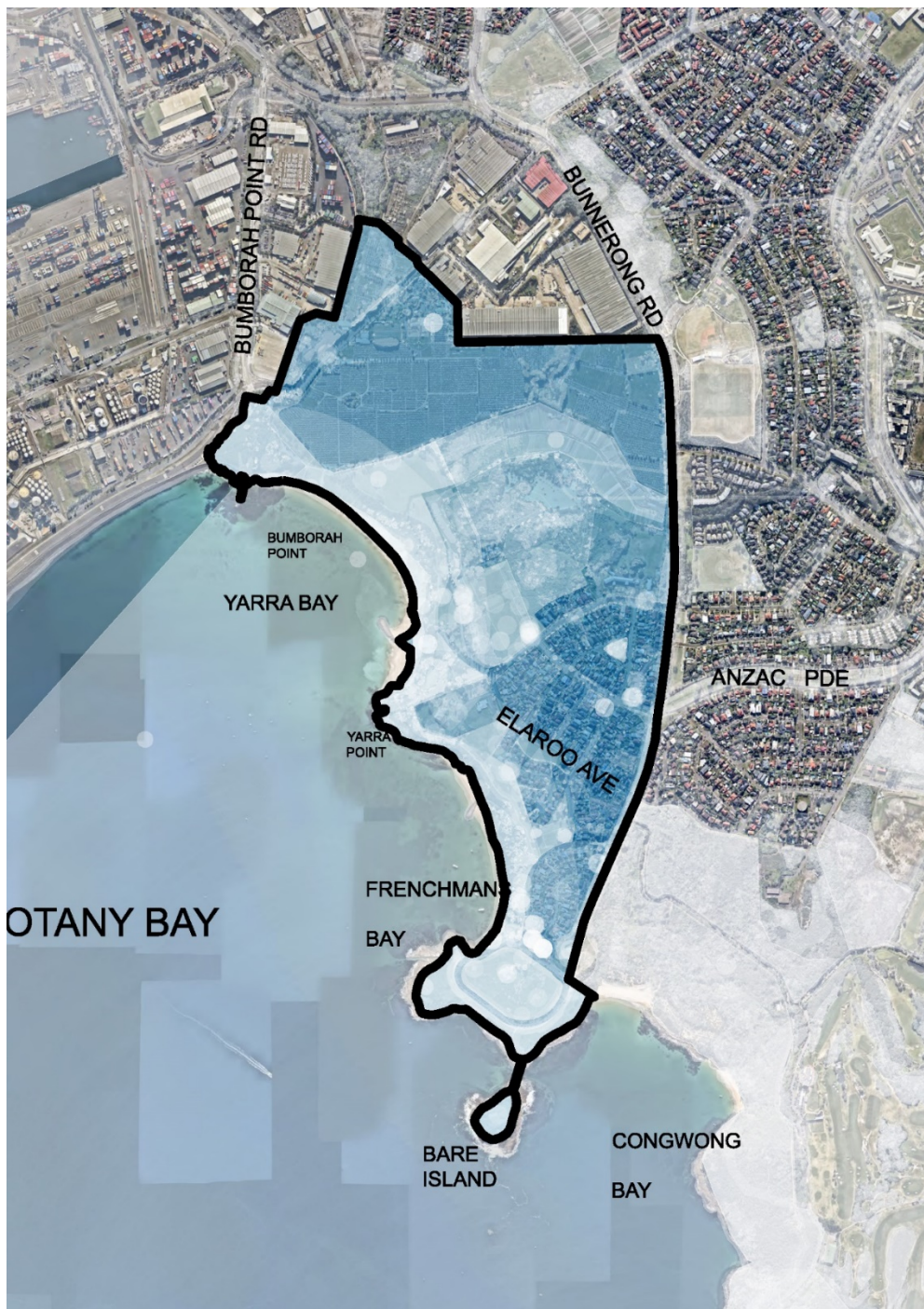
The following map is the spatial representation of the economic indicators mapping overlay. It shows the concentration of indicators such as local economy, commercial areas, food and health-related activities, road network and parking. It provides evidence of nodes where economic indicators emerge as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



## 9. Local character indicators overlay

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

The community values the area's sensitive cultural and environmental heritage, that must be preserved for future generations. The preservation of the market gardens was identified as important, as well as an increase in cultural facilities and active transport connections. Yarra Bay and Frenchman's Bays were identified as special places, with the community highlighting that it is a great place to view sunsets. The area has high natural value of the area was recognised by the community. Protecting and maintaining the unique coastal character of this area for future generations is the key principle for this LCA.



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## 10. Character principles

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

- Built scale that responds to the coastal character of the LCA
- Protect and enhance Aboriginal heritage and significant sites
- Preserve and enhance the village feel in La Perouse
- Improved accessibility around the coastal area with improved signage and wayfinding
- Preserve existing natural environments and local flora and fauna for future generations
- Ensure future development respects the cultural significance of Indigenous landscapes and sites
- Build on existing green grid and biodiversity corridors through the LCA
- Improved economic vibrancy as a result of the reintroduced Kurnell to La Perouse ferry
- Greater visitor facilities and experience, compatible with the unique character of Botany Bay
- Preserve the biodiversity and continue to protect and rehabilitate the landscapes and ecosystems

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.

