Lord Howe Island Lagoon Foreshore Management Plan

Lord Howe Island Board November 2015

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1. Introduction

The Lord Howe Island Lagoon Foreshore (referred to as 'the foreshore' in this plan) is a special and unique part of Lord Howe Island (LHI). The foreshore is located on the western side of LHI from the northern end of Old Settlement Beach to the southern end of Kings Beach generally between Lagoon Rd and the mean high water mark.

The foreshore is Crown Land held under various forms of tenure including government reserves, special leases, permissive occupancies and commercial leases pursuant to the Lord Howe Island Act, 1953 (LHI Act).

The foreshore has important scenic, conservation, tourism and recreation values. The foreshore provides opportunities for limited commercial use, and contains a number of privately held assets and essential public utilities.

This plan provides the framework within which the LHIB will manage the foreshore for the next ten years. It outlines the main values, issues, management directions and priorities of the LHIB for managing the foreshore consistent with the values of the area and the resources available for management.

Location

Description

The foreshore is located on the western side of LHI from the northern end of Old Settlement Beach to the southern end of Kings Beach generally between Lagoon Rd and the mean high water mark. (Map 1).

Management Context

Legislative & Planning Context

This plan is consistent with the following legislation, policies and procedures:

- Lord Howe Island Act, 1953 (LHI Act);
- Lord Howe Island Regulation, 2014 (LHI Reg);
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act);
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999 (EPBC Act);
- Threatened Species and Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act);
- Heritage Act, 1977;
- Lord Howe Island Local Environment Plan, 2010 (LEP);
- Lord Howe Island Development Control Plan, 2005 (DCP);
- Marine Estate Management Act, 2014 (MEM Act);
- Fisheries Management Act, 1994 (FM Act);

This plan replaces the former *LHIB Lagoon Foreshore Activities and Management Policy* adopted by the Board in December 2009.

The foreshore area corresponds to the Foreshore Building Line as shown on Sheet 2 of LHI Local Environmental Plan, 2010 (LEP).

Tenure and Land Use

All land on LHI is Crown land and may only be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the *LHI Act*.

The foreshore is held under various forms of tenure including government reserves, special leases, permissive occupancies and commercial leases pursuant to the *LHI Act*.

The majority of the foreshore is zoned 7 Environmental Protection under the LEP The objectives of this zone are to protect areas that may be vulnerable to erosion, habitat, or corridors, for native animals or plants and to protect the scenic amenity of land. This zone also aims to restore lost or disturbed natural resources, and to provide utility services that are essential to the community's needs in a manner that is in sympathy with the World Heritage values of the Island.

The foreshore includes areas held under special lease which are zoned environmental protection and continue to be used for grazing. The foreshore also includes sections of the golf course and areas of open space which are zoned environmental protection, and are used largely for recreation.

The foreshore includes the Waste Management Facility which is zoned 5 Special Uses and sections of Lagoon Rd which is unzoned land.

The plan includes permissive occupancies and commercial leases, which are held by perpetual leaseholders or incorporated bodies providing essential community services and are used for either private or commercial use. These generally comprise of boatsheds, slipways and public utility undertakings.

The plan includes those areas reserved for Public Recreation, Access, Shelter and Foreshore Improvements, notified in the NSW Government Gazette (No. 25) on 11 March 1955.

The plan does not cover any areas of perpetual lease, the LHI Aerodrome or land within the LHI Permanent Park Preserve.

Adjacent Land Use

LHI Marine Park (LHIMP) extending from the Mean High Tide Water Mark to 12 nautical miles seaward. The LHIMP is managed in accordance with the MEM Act, FM Act and EPBC Act

Values

Description

The following values have been identified for the foreshore:

- safe public access;
- recreation, including BBQs, picnic areas, walking tracks, children's playground, dog exercise area, private boat sheds, boat maintenance and storage, and community use;
- important tourism resource with limited opportunities in certain areas for community based and marine based businesses (such as the commercial boatsheds);
- environmental including landscape/scenic values, areas protecting habitat for native plants and animals, dune stabilisation and erosion protection, etc;
- public assets such as the boat ramp allowing access to the Lagoon, and the proposed new slipway, load lines and the jetty;
- cultural heritage including the long association of residents to the foreshore, boatsheds and slipways, and Norfolk Island Pines at Lovers Bay being listed as heritage items under the LEP; and
- amenity including shade and shelter.

Management principles

Objectives

The primary objectives for management of the foreshore are to:

- a) To provide safe public access to the foreshore;
- b) To provide opportunities for public use and enjoyment of the foreshore;
- c) To allow sustainable use that is compatible with the conservation of natural and cultural values;
- d) To allow limited community based and marine based business opportunities whilst recognising the importance of tourism to the local economy;
- e) To ensure public utilities are designed, constructed and operated in line with legislation and best practice guidelines;
- f) To maintain and enhance the significant scenic values;
- g) To protect the habitat of native plants and animals and where possible maintain and restore identified areas;
- h) To conserve items, relics and landscapes of heritage value.

The LHIB acknowledges that there may be conflicting views from stakeholders and community members in regards to the ongoing use and management of the foreshore and a balance is needed to achieve all of the listed objectives.

Management Issues and Response

Recreation Activities

Shore-based Fishing

Within the foreshore, the beaches, rock platforms and the jetty are popular for recreational fishing.

Shore-based fishing is permitted along the entire length of the lagoon foreshore, extending from Old Settlement Beach to Kings Beach in accordance with the MEM Act, MEM Regulation and the NSW Fisheries Management Regulations. The shore line boundary of the LHI Lagoon Sanctuary Zone is offset from the Mean High Water (MHW) mark by 50m to allow for shore-based fishing from the beach.

Management Response:

 Support NSW Marine Parks and Fisheries in the enforcement of fishing restrictions and bag and size limits.

Beachcombing / Removal of Coral & Shells

Persons may collect coral (dead only) and shells (not containing living organisms) and similar material for non-commercial purposes only. Recreational collecting of dead coral and shells cannot exceed 1kg per person per day. Any commercial collecting will require the written permission of the LHIB Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Any commercial collecting below MHW mark may require a permit from the Manager LHIMP.

Some live shells (turban shells, nerites) can be collected in the LHIMP Habitat Protection Zone.

Management Response:

 Support the NSW Marine Parks in the enforcement of restrictions relating to collection of corals and shells.

Dog Activities

The LHIB Dog Importation and Management Policy sets out specific policies and procedures for the importation and management of dogs on LHI. The foreshore includes a number of designated zones with various levels of dog activity permitted.

Management response:

 Management of dogs in the foreshore will be in accordance with the LHIB Dog Importation and Management Policy.

Social Functions (non-commercial):

The LHIB acknowledges that many areas within the foreshore zone are very popular for low-key social functions.

Management response:

 Organisers of social functions must ensure that the comfort of other persons within the vicinity of the function is not compromised, that the vegetation in the area is not disturbed and that all rubbish is removed after the function.

Golf Course

The section of the LHI Golf Course to the west of Lagoon Rd lies within the foreshore. This area is not covered by a formal agreement under the *LHI Act*.

Management Response:

- Ensure a Permissive Occupancy Agreement and associated management plan is developed with the LHI Golf Club;
- Ensure that maintenance and use of the foreshore meets best practice guidelines for golf courses in environmentally sensitive areas.

Open space activities

These activities may include ball sports (golf practice to be limited to 50 metre shots, no closer than 30 metres from Lagoon Rd.), kite flying, model aircraft flying, etc. The majority of these types of activities are considered appropriate within the beached areas of the foreshore zone and also the open grassed area directly opposite the LHI Bowling Club.

Management response:

 Recreational activities will be permitted in modified areas to ensure natural areas or identified revegetation sites are not affected.

Small Watercraft storage (private)

The need to store small watercraft within some areas of the foreshore is acknowledged. It is however undesirable that derelict or unused items remain in situ on the foreshore.

Management response:

- The LHIB will conduct regular surveys of small watercraft and physically remove any items not accounted for;
- The storage of small private boats and/or trailers will not be permitted adjacent to the boat ramp area for any longer than 48 hours.

Horse Riding:

- Horse riding is permitted along the grassed area and Lagoon Beach in the following locations:
 - Between the Aquatic Club and opposite the Bowling Club;
 - Between the airstrip rocks and the creek mouth on Cobby's Beach.
- All horse manure must be removed from the foreshore area.

Public Utilities / Facilities

BBQ / Picnic areas

BBQs and picnic areas are important facilities for residents and visitors

Management response:

- The LHIB will maintain existing BBQ and picnic facilities at Old Settlement Beach, the Boat Ramp area, under the Pines, the Playground area, the Aquatic Club and at Cobby's Corner. In addition, BBQ and picnic facilities will be provided and serviced at Lover's Bay;
- An unserviced BBQ will continue to be made available at the northern end of Cobby's Beach;
- BBQ and Picnic facilities cannot be reserved for exclusive use;
- Where wood fired BBQs are provided, the LHIB will provide firewood to eliminate the need to use foreshore vegetation as fuel;
- Electric BBQs will be provided in selected areas where electrical supply is easily obtained to supplement existing wood BBQs and reduce the cost of providing firewood.

Wastewater Management

- The LHIB, within available resources will provide reasonable access to public toilet facilities. These facilities will be maintained to a high standard and be of a suitable design to minimise any environmental impact;
- The LHIB will replace any existing wastewater management systems at LHIB owned buildings within the foreshore area in accordance with the LHI Wastewater Management Strategy;
- Development for the purpose of wastewater management systems within the foreshore may be carried out on land within Zone 7 Environment Protection with the consent of the LHIB.

Moorings / Load Management response: lines Moorings and load lines must be located in accordance with permission obtained under the MEM Act and LHI Act; Moorings and load lines will be managed in accordance with the LHIB Mooring Management Policy; Commercial operations will be restricted to the extent required as determined by the LHIB to prevent operational conflict and crowding and to improve safety and visitor experience in accordance with the LHIB Mooring Management Policy. Playground Management response: The LHIB will, provide a well maintained, safe playground facility which is compliant with relevant Australian Standards; Motor vehicle access (other than for maintenance requirements) will be excluded from this area; No other playground facilities will be permitted within the foreshore. Sporting facility Management response: The LHIB will consider the installation of a sporting type facility such as a skate ramp or exercise area, subject to funding and the provisions of the LEP.

Slipway Facility

Management response:

- Any proposed new facility must be designed in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and best practice guidelines;
- Development consent is required in accordance with the provisions of the LEP, the EP&A Act, POEO Act, MEM Act and FM Act:
- Slipway facilities will be permitted only under an appropriate Permissive Occupancy Agreement;
- The existing commercial slipway facility in the Boatshed precinct will be discontinued, the Permissive Occupancy Agreement terminated and the site returned to a natural dune profile and condition and all above-ground infrastructure removed;
- Any actions likely to cause pollution or contamination to the environment including the painting or removal of anti-foul and bio-foul from vessels and some forms of vessel maintenance will not be permitted on the foreshore except at an approved facility.

Boat Ramp

- The LHIB will maintain a safe and effective boatlaunching ramp at Hunter Bay;
- The LHIB will improve the existing facility to include a floating pontoon with wave protection, acknowledging that it will be difficult to meet relevant Australian Standards;
- Trailer boat launching, and retrieval will not be permitted at any other site (with the exception of the slipway facility) without the prior approval of the LHIB CEO. Approvals may be given under certain circumstances for this to occur.

Waste	
Management	
Facility	

The operation of the Waste Management Facility (WMF) is subject to a licence from the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) as a scheduled activity.

Management response:

- Develop a management plan which clearly defines the boundary of use of the WMF;
- Maintain compliance with EPA licence and Pollution Incident Response Plan;
- Maintain and upgrade the WMF using grants and other funding allocations to improve wastewater management, composting and waste diversion.

Groundwater monitoring

Groundwater monitoring bores, fitted with data loggers measuring water level and electrical conductivity have been installed on the foreshore. The bores will be monitored to guide the sustainable use of groundwater resources on LHI.

Management response:

 data from groundwater monitoring will be utilised to guide decisions on groundwater on LHI."

Jetty / Wharf facility

- The LHIB will provide a well maintained, safe jetty facility for public and commercial use;
- The LHIB will liaise with the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) regarding the ongoing management of the jetty facility and associated lighting;
- Generally, public access is available onto the jetty facility. This access may however be suspended during periods of commercial stevedoring operations;
- Goods transported to LHI by ship must be removed within 48 hours of unloading. Similarly, all goods to be transported from LHI must only be delivered to the jetty area a maximum of 48 hours before the scheduled arrival of the ship;
- Site works and operations adjacent to this area must be consistent with the LHI Biosecurity Strategy.

Desalination Equipment	The impacts of desalination and the disposal of highly concentrated brine back into the ocean have not been studied on LHI.
	Management response:
	 Development consent is required for the installation of desalination equipment on the foreshore including intake and discharge pipes;
	 Approvals may be required from other government authorities including the NSW Environmental Protection Authority and Marine Parks.
Vegetation Management	
Removal or destruction of vegetation	 Damage to or removal of native vegetation (including mowing) is not permitted except in accordance with an approval from the LHIB;
Revegetation	The LHIB has adopted a Revegetation Plan which provides a coordinated and strategic approach to revegetation and the identification of high priority areas on Crown land under the care, control and management of the LHIB.
	Management response:
	 Undertake revegetation/rehabilitation works in high priority areas on the foreshore in accordance with the LHIB Vegetation Rehabilitation Plan.
	 Close the foreshore to the removal of kentia palm seeding to encourage natural revegetation.

Norfolk Pines:

Island

Araucaria heterophylla (Norfolk Island Pine) a species endemic to Norfolk Island, was introduced to LHI in the late 1870s or early 1880s and has become a prominent element in the landscape of parts of the settled areas of the island. Norfolk Island Pines (NIP) exhibit weed characteristics and need to be managed to reduce their impact on the islands natural values.

Retention of NIPs for cultural heritage conservation and/or provision of amenity must be balanced against the conservation of the natural World Heritage values of the Island.

- The LHIB will develop a Vegetation Management Plan specifically for NIP, which will include details regarding areas and individual NIPs to be retained, removed or managed. The plan will also ensure that any trees that are removed are appropriately revegetated;
- The plan will give priority to the removal of all regrowth pines, pine seedlings and juvenile pines from the foreshore.
 Juvenile pines are considered to be less than 10m in height and 1m Diameter at Breast Height (DBH);
- Norfolk Island Pines which infringe on the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) for the aerodrome, particularly those at northern end of the airstrip will be managed or removed
- For mature trees greater than 10m in height and 1m DBH, an objective assessment should be carried out based on criteria such as age, condition, vigour, crown form, DBH, safe and useful life expectancy (SULE rating), public risk, value (cultural heritage significance, amenity, wind protection, shade, erosion control), habitat, and invasion potential. The plan should recommend whether a tree is to be retained or removed. A schedule should be included, showing priority works including removal, remedial tree surgery and other maintenance requirements;
- The LHIB will investigate the option have an area of the foreshore entirely free from NIP.
- The LHIB will notify the community of scheduled works by way of the local newspaper or householder through post boxes. Emergency works involving removal of trees based on public risk will not be notified.

Weed Management

The LHIB has developed a Weed Management Strategy which covers the entire Island.

Management response:

 Weed management on the foreshore is to be carried out in accordance with the LHI Weed Management Strategy;

Notifications for the use of herbicide will be in accordance with the LHIB Pesticide Notification Plan.

Heritage

The LHI Group is listed on the State Heritage Register. In addition, the foreshore area contains five heritage items listed under Schedule 2 of the LEP as being of heritage significance to the island. These are:

- a) Boatsheds, Lagoon Road, Government Reserve;
- b) Cargo shed related to the wharf, Lagoon Rd, Government Reserve;
- c) Pair of mature NIP's, Lover's Bay, Government Reserve, Lagoon Road;
- d) Old Settlement Beach area, beyond northern end of Lagoon Road, including portions 74, 75, 275 and 276;
- e) Soldiers Creek area, being the site of Johnson's farm and 1882 Commissioner's Camp, Lagoon Rd, Portions 126 and 123.

Management response:

Ensure the conservation of relics, specified heritage items and the heritage significance of those relics and heritage items (including the settings of those heritage items) in accordance with the Heritage Act, LEP and relevant Conservation Management Plans.

Access

Walking tracks:

- Extend the foreshore walking track north to 'The Pines' picnic area between the boatsheds and the beach, where practicable. This track is specifically for pedestrian access, not bicycles;
- Include directional signage to encourage residents and visitors to use the foreshore walking track;
- Upgrade the walking track down to the beach at Lovers Bay;
- Close and rationalise some of the informal tracks between sheds to reduce confusion for the public;
- Access to the foreshore via existing informal tracks from leasehold land to the foreshore will continue to be permitted.
 Existing tracks must not be greater than 900mm in width, and must not have any permanent markers or structures;
- No new informal tracks will be permitted.

Beach access (vehicles):

Management response:

- LHIB vehicles and plant, and those of authorised contactors, are permitted to access the beach without specific approval from the LHIB CEO.
- Vehicles and plant are not permitted on beach areas within the foreshore, except in accordance with an approval from the LHIB CEO for access for management or emergency purposes, or other purposes to be considered on their merit.

Vehicle parking

Management response:

- The LHIB will, where practicable, separate vehicle access and parking from primarily pedestrian areas.
 These areas include all Picnic and BBQ areas;
- The LHIB will designate parking areas within open areas of the foreshore zone and in doing so will clearly delineate these areas. These areas are currently; opposite Pinetrees, opposite the LHIB depot, opposite the Museum, near the playground and adjacent to the jetty;
- The LHIB will continue to allow temporary parking of vehicles for business operations;
- Consideration is to be given to a dedicated parking area on the northern side of Lagoon Road, near the Boatshed precinct for parking of vehicles for business operations.

Boat Parking

Trailer

Management response:

 The storage or parking of trailers will not be permitted adjacent to the boat ramp area for any longer than 48 hours.

Bicycle Parking

- The LHIB will monitor the need for additional bicycle parking along the foreshore;
- The LHIB will install additional bicycle racks near Boatshed 1 and Boatshed 3.

Signage

Management response:

- A person must not display any advertisement or a sign except with the consent of the LHIB under the Advertising and Signage Policy;
- The LHIB will undertake regular audits of advertising and directional signage to ensure compliance against the Advertising and Signage Policy.

Erosion / Recession Risk

The key coastline management issues on LHI are located in the receding area north of Windy Point seawall.

Management response:

- Management actions identified in the LHI Coastal Hazard Definition and Coastal Management Study 2014 to reduce the risk of undermining of Lagoon Road have commenced and will be ongoing, with appropriate approvals. These include discontinuing beach scraping, developing an emergency action plan, alongshore sand relocation, sand nourishment, beach profile surveys and sand tracing study;
- The LHIB construct a seawall/revetment extending north of the existing concrete Seabee revetment and bag wall;
- The LHIB liaise with the permissive occupancy holders regarding possible impacts and protection measures to the Pinetrees Boatshed.
- The LHIB will monitor erosion at the section of road near Cobby's Corner

Creek Opening procedures

Management response:

 Entrance management of Old Settlement Creek, Cobbys Creek and Soldiers Creek is to be carried out in accordance with the LHI Coastal Hazard Definition and Coastal Management Study 2014 and in consultation with Marine Parks.

Cliff Stability

Management response:

 That community education and warning signs be installed to manage the risk of rock fall at Signal Point in accordance with the recommendations of the LHI Coastal Hazard Definition and Coastal Management Study 2014.

Public Safety

Management response:

 The LHIB will undertake a full safety audit of the foreshore to identify actual and potential risks. This audit should consider the feasibility of more clearly defining areas for public access, parking areas, equipment storage and working areas.

Commercial Activities

Events

Management response:

- Commercial activities or events within the LHIMP, below the MHW mark will be permitted, subject to the proponent holding a Business License from the LHIB and all other licences or permits, as required for that particular business activity by Marine Parks or other government organisation;
- The staging of events (e.g. swimming and beach carnivals) is acceptable within existing open public use areas;
- Organisers of events must ensure that they have appropriate insurance coverage prior to staging the event.

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Vessel Storage

Commercial Operators Long-term Tender Storage

- Commercial operators wishing to leave their tenders at the boat ramp area for long-term storage (> 48 hours) need approval from the LHIB;
- Tenders must not be over 5.0m:
- The tender must be sited and approved by the LHIB;
- Long-term storage of commercial tenders will be in the area immediately to the south-west of the LHI Museum (Map 3);
- The tender stored must be used as part of a commercial operation;
- The tender must be removed during periods of inactivity or if the commercial operation ceases or as directed by the LHIB;
- The designated storage area is to be made safe and clean at all times and tools and materials are to be appropriately stored or removed from the site when not in use;
- Owners must indemnify the LHIB against public risk;
- Applications for storage outside these criteria will be considered by the LHIB CEO on their merits.
- Any actions likely to cause pollution or contamination to the environment including the painting or removal of anti-foul and bio-foul from vessels and some forms of vessel maintenance will not be permitted on the foreshore except at an approved facility.

Vessel Short-term Storage

The storage of large boats and/or trailers must comply with the following conditions:

- Short-term storage will be in the area adjacent to the boat ramp at Hunter Bay (Map 2);
- Vessels must be 6.0m or longer;
- Vessels can be stored for a maximum of 7 days to undertake repairs;
- Owners must lodge the appropriate form at the LHIB administration prior to storing their vessel;
- Owners must indemnify the LHIB against public risk;
- A fee will apply for use of the area;
- A key will be provided for the use of electricity and water upon request;
- The working area is to be made safe and barricaded/signposted to discourage public access. Tools and materials are to be appropriately stored or removed from the site when not in use;
- The area is to be returned to its original condition on completion of the work;
- Applications for storage outside these criteria will be considered by the LHIB CEO on their merits.
- Any actions likely to cause pollution or contamination to the environment including the painting or removal of anti-foul and bio-foul from vessels and some forms of vessel maintenance will not be permitted on the foreshore except at an approved facility.

Vessel Long-term Storage

- Long-term storage will be in the area on the southern side of Ocean View Road known as Lot 152 DP757515 (Map 2).
- Vessels must be 6.0m or longer.
- Vessels can be stored for a maximum of 6 weeks.
- No work will be permitted on vessels in this area.
- Owners must indemnify the Board against public risk.
- Applications for storage outside these criteria will be considered by the CEO on their merits.
- Any actions likely to cause pollution or contamination to the environment including the painting or removal of anti-foul and bio-foul from vessels and some forms of vessel maintenance will not be permitted on the foreshore except at an approved facility.

Storage (materials and equipment)

- The area opposite the oval (Map 4) is to be used for LHIB management purposes and the storage of LHIB materials and equipment;
- No other areas are to be used for storage of materials and equipment except in accordance with development consent.
- The storage and handling of fuel and other dangerous goods will be carried out in accordance with the Board's risk assessment with LHI Sea Freight Pty Ltd and EPA requirements.

Boatshed activities

Concern has been raised regarding the expansion of boatshed activities beyond their approved boundary of use defined in the Permissive Occupancy / Commercial Lease curtilage. Encroachments and improvements include access ways, mown areas, picnic tables, and storage of equipment and watercraft.

Management response:

- No new encroachments or improvements will be permitted without the approval of the LHIB;
- Existing improvements which offer businesses an unfair advantage over other competitors are recommended for removal;
- Existing improvements which are considered to be permissible including the storage of hire equipment and other watercraft in the foreshore area will be formally surveyed and included in the boundary of use of the Permissive Occupancy/Commercial Lease with holders being required to pay rental based on an independent valuation;
- The LHIB will place a moratorium on the construction of any new boatsheds;
- The LHIB will encourage the use of Boatshed No.1 for community or commercial purposes in accordance with the provisions of the LEP and Heritage Act;
- The LHIB will undertake regular audits to ensure compliance with Permissive Occupancy/Commercial Leases conditions.

Plan review

A full review of this plan will commence approximately ten years after adoption of the final plan by the Board members. This plan will remain in force until such time that a new plan is adopted.

Amendments to the Plan may be made as a result of changes in legislation, policies, other circumstances, better information resulting from research and monitoring activities or as determined by the LHIB and the LHI Foreshore Management Plan Sub-committee.