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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

The suburb of Toronto developed as a result of early pastoral activities and then, more significantly, as a holiday and recreation resort. The area subsequently developed as a residential area as improved infrastructure and services were provided.

Areas of Toronto have been identified as requiring specific development solutions to suit the existing character and address local issues.

**Note:** This Area Plan should be read in conjunction with [Lake Macquarie City Council Heritage Guidelines](#), which provide additional development guidelines for Heritage Precincts.

### 1.2 LAND TO WHICH THIS PLAN APPLIES

This Area Plan applies to all the land outlined in heavy green edging, as shown within Figure 1 –Toronto Heritage Precinct.

**Note:** For heritage items or potential heritage sites located within the Heritage Precinct, refer to *Lake Macquarie Local Environmental Plan (LM LEP 2014)* and [Lake Macquarie City Council Heritage Guidelines](#) respectively.



Figure 1 - Toronto Heritage Precinct

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### 1.3 HISTORY AND EXISTING CHARACTER

The identified Heritage Precinct of Toronto has social and historical significance for its association with the earliest settlement of the area on the shores of Lake Macquarie. The heritage areas includes the foreshore and commercial area along Victory Parade, the foreshore residential strip east of Brighton Avenue, and the residential peninsula to the north. Each area has its own notable elements. The unifying theme in all cases is the proximity to the foreshore that has aesthetic and historical significance in these locations.

The Victory Parade foreshore area was the location of the original European settlement, which centred on the hill overlooking the lake. The historic hotel retains its position on the hilltop, providing a continuing reminder of the settlement's origins as a unique Nineteenth Century recreational resort. Below the hill is the former railway station, which provided access to the area and contributed to its development as a holiday destination. Several vernacular lakeside cottages survive on Victory Row, adjacent to the former railway station.

The southern foreshore residential area from Brighton Avenue southwards is no longer recognisable as an historic precinct. However, views from the lake reveal numerous older boatsheds, jetties, fishermen's cottages and several grand period homes. This area is very closely built.

The northern residential part of the precinct features a collection of houses from the late Nineteenth to the late Twentieth Century, indicating gradual development over a long period. Despite variations in style, period and type, the area is unified by its street planting and generously planted private gardens. There is also reasonable consistency in the use of timber and iron for construction. The presence of several good period homes dating from the 1890s to the 1950s provide a significant historical emphasis.

The foreshore of the northern area is generally more open than the southern residential precinct, with fewer structures. Generous private gardens extend down to the lake edge with houses located further up the slope.

Despite the predominance of post-war buildings, the identified heritage precinct features one of the better surviving collections of period buildings in the City of Lake Macquarie. There are many individual buildings of importance within the precinct, several of which are listed as Identified Heritage Items.

Although the settlement has taken on a suburban role, it retains its own distinct physical character and cultural identity. The relationship between the lake and settlement remains a strong theme.

### 1.4 SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATING TO THIS LOCALITY

Future development in Toronto will need to consider:

- Good urban design of public and private developments to sustain growth.
- The physical boundaries of the locality including bushland, lake and surviving heritage fabric.
- Increased development needing additional infrastructure and services, for example roads and public transport.
- Development that is in scale with surroundings.
- Business growth that is based on local character and an increasing population. This needs to stimulate competition between other district and regional centres.
- Opportunities for medium density residential development that is sensitive to the heritage characteristics of the locality.
- The potential for mixed-use tourism for Lake Macquarie.
- Sensitive elements of the local topography, foreshore and existing streetscapes.

## 1.5 CONTEXT AND SETTINGS

### **Objectives**

- a. To safeguard the heritage and cultural values of the Toronto Heritage Precinct.
- b. To ensure that development complements the existing streetscape, local architectural style, decoration and adornments.
- c. To ensure that development does not detract from the significance of the dominant cultural and natural elements of the area.

### **Controls**

1. A detailed analysis of the streetscape and surrounding environment must accompany development proposals.
2. Development proposals must incorporate bulk, form, scale and landscaping that is consistent with, and complements the historic development of the Toronto Heritage Precinct.

## 1.6 SITE COVERAGE

### **Objectives**

- a. To ensure the bulk and form of future development reflects the historic development of the Toronto Heritage Precinct.
- b. To provide opportunities for the provision of landscaping and/or the enhancement of existing native vegetation.
- c. To promote on-site stormwater infiltration by encouraging pervious surfaces and landscaped areas.

### **Controls**

1. The maximum site coverage, including ancillary development must not exceed 40%, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the heritage values within the precinct.