

3.1 Historical Development

The town of Gerringong was laid out in the 1850's.

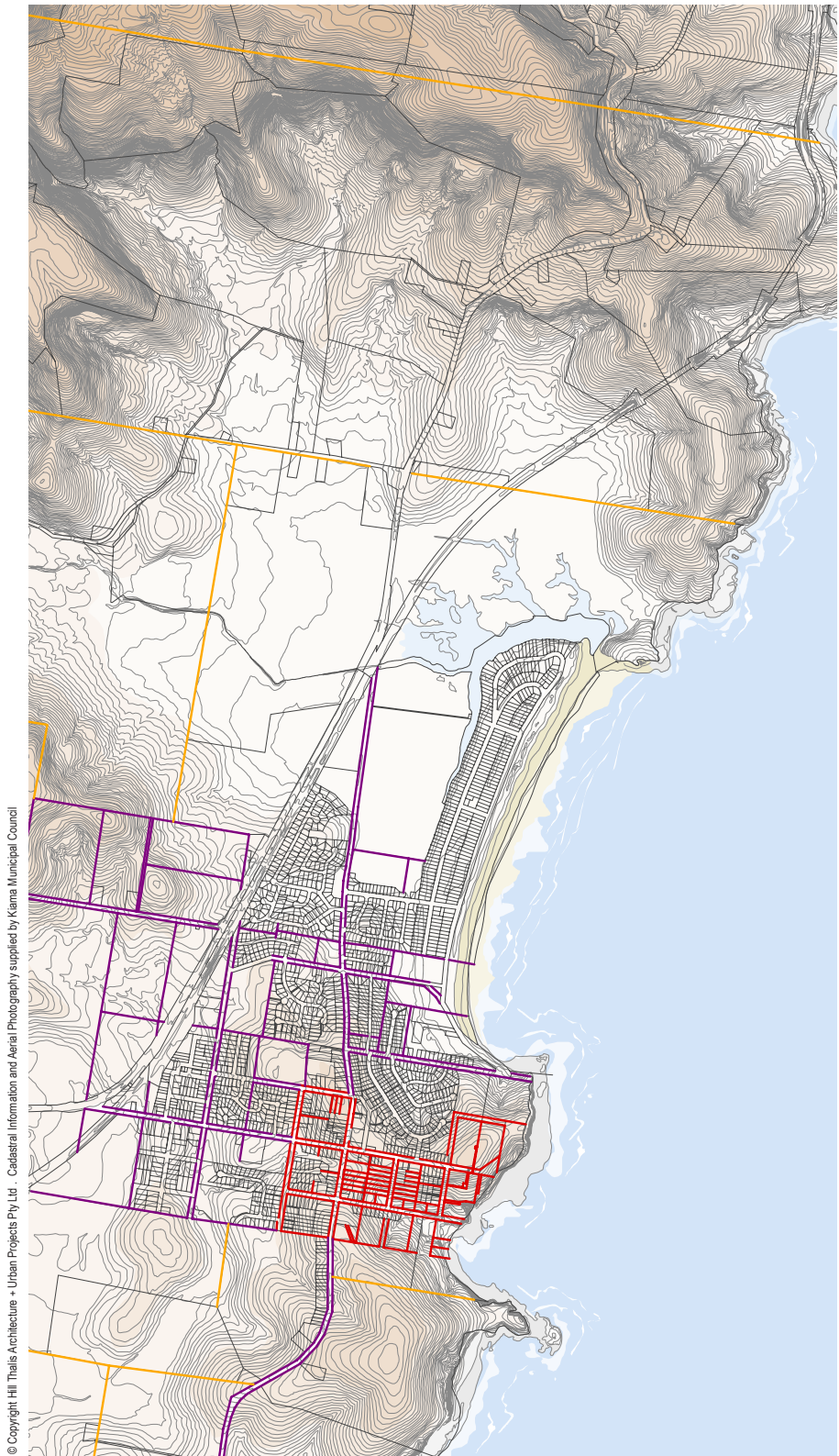
The original plan displays characteristics of many of the Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell's town plans and subdivisions, particularly -

- its square grid aligned to north;
- its structure of square urban blocks 10 chains wide x 10 chains deep;
- the presence of town blocks surrounded by larger rural blocks, and
- waterfront reserves.

Gerringong's structuring grid is set parallel to the predominant ridgeline. Belinda Street, which runs atop the ridge, is lined with towering rows of Norfolk Island Pines visible throughout the district.

The planned extensions of Percy and Coal Streets to the north, and Blackwood Street to the east, were not carried out. Subsequently the original town plan has been eroded along its northern edge by more recent subdivision projects.

The original town plan is clearly visible within the existing cadastral layout. The Noble lands are sited within the north eastern corner of the original town plan to the west of the Foreshore Reserve.



Plan of the Village of Gerringong dated 1933.
Source: Lands Department of New South Wales

Legend

- Original Gerringong Town Grid Remnants
- Surrounding Rural Subdivision Remnants
- Gerringong Rural Block Remnants

Figure - 3.1.(i) - Historical Development

3.2 Town Edges

The dramatic siting of Gerrington on a hilltop spur to the south of the Omega Flat results in the marked visual prominence of the town edges.

An analysis of these edges reveals that most comprise of the side and rear fences of private properties. This situation creates poor address and definition to the town boundary.

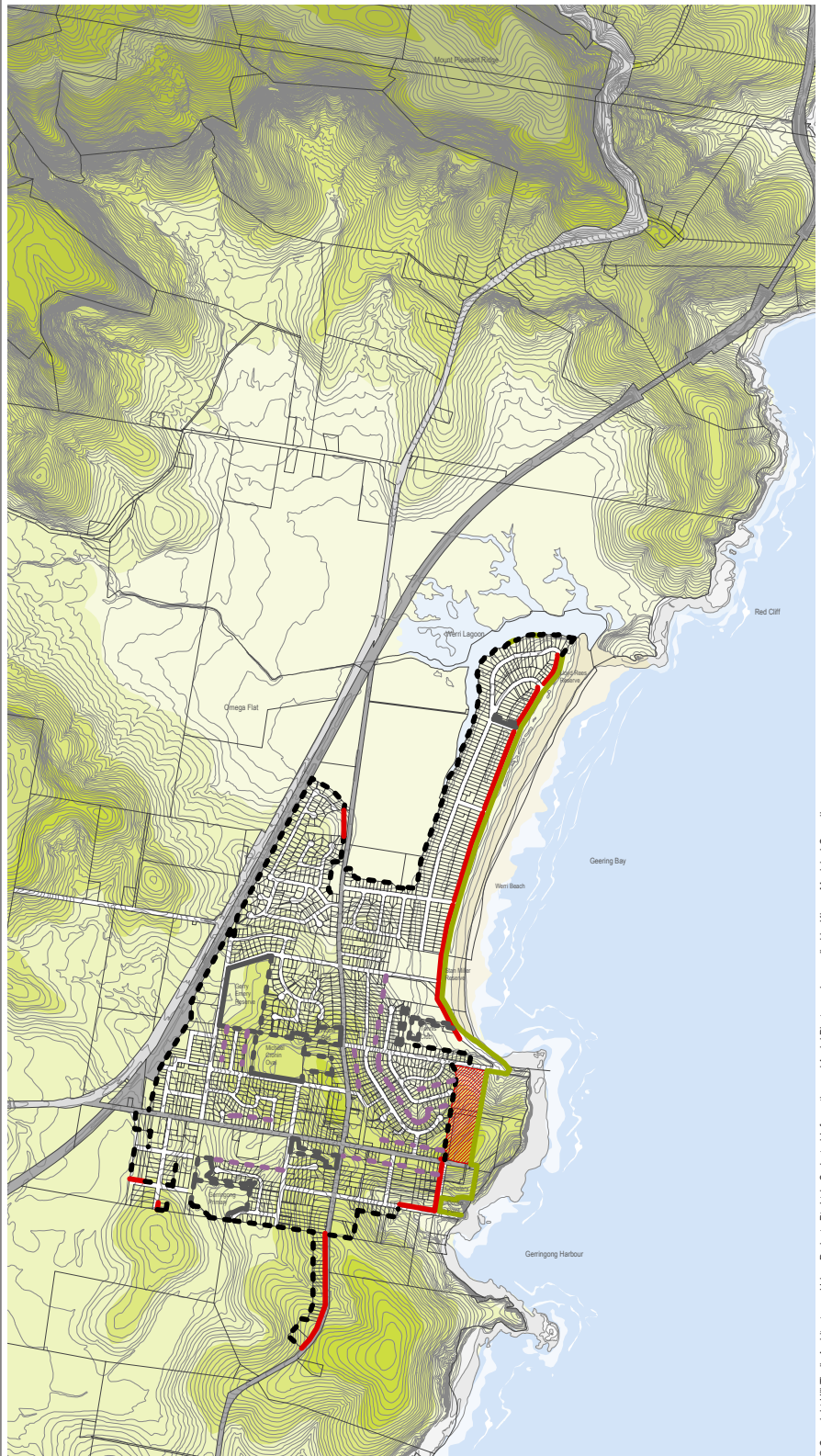
Pacific Avenue however, along the Werri Beach frontage, is an excellent example of a defined edge. This boundary is distinguished by the provision of a public street with supporting built frontage and continuous public access to Werri Beach.

As such, it provides an appropriate model for treatment of the interface of the Noble Lands with the Headland Foreshore Reserve.

Currently, the Foreshore Reserve is bounded by vacant Foreshore Protection zoned land defined by a post and barbed wire fence. This provides no definition or access (from the west) to the Foreshore Reserve. The side and rear fences of existing residences provides a poor aesthetic edge to the town's eastern fringe land.



The poorly defined edge of the Noble Lands, consisting of side and rear boundaries of private properties contrasts with the Pacific Avenue edge, which provides a public edge street, supporting built frontage and continuous foreshore access.



Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
| — Town Edge comprising public street with supporting built frontage | — Open space with public street address |
| - - - Town Edge comprising private side or rear boundary with poorly defined built frontage | - - - Open space with poor address to private side/rear boundaries |
| — Town Edge comprising public open space | - - - Rear boundaries with visual prominence due to town topography |

Figure - 3.2.(i) - Permeability and Access



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Figure - 3.3.(i) - Street Pattern

3.3 Street Pattern

The clarity of the orthogonal town plan and street pattern has been compromised by the idiosyncratic development of surrounding land parcels.

Most of the later subdivision projects contain curvilinear street patterns that respond tentatively to the topography, clinging to the contours where possible and haphazardly terminating in cul-de-sacs where the terrain rises.

By contrast, the orthogonal street pattern of the original plan boldly establishes the structure of the town and dramatically reveals the changes in topography.

Gerringong's most memorable streets are a legacy of the simplicity and clarity of the original plan.



Belinda Street, a ridgeline street marked by Norfolk Island Pines is one of Gerringong's most impressive streets and is visible throughout the district.

3.4 Permeability and Access

The existing street pattern limits pedestrian permeability through large urban blocks along the beachfront and headland.

Currently, there are only two points of access to the Headland Foreshore Reserve. This contrasts with the excellent access to Werri Beach provided by the Pacific Avenue frontage.

The Noble Lands provide an opportunity to improve connectivity and access to both Werri Beach and the Headland Foreshore Reserve.

New connections will be of particular benefit to those existing residents in the areas to the West of the Noble Lands within Armstrong Avenue and Osborne Street, who currently have to access the reserve from Belinda or Geering Streets.

The Noble Lands also provide an opportunity to link Gerringong's primary water bodies - Werri Beach and Boat Harbour, completing the provision of unimpeded public access to Gerringong's foreshore.

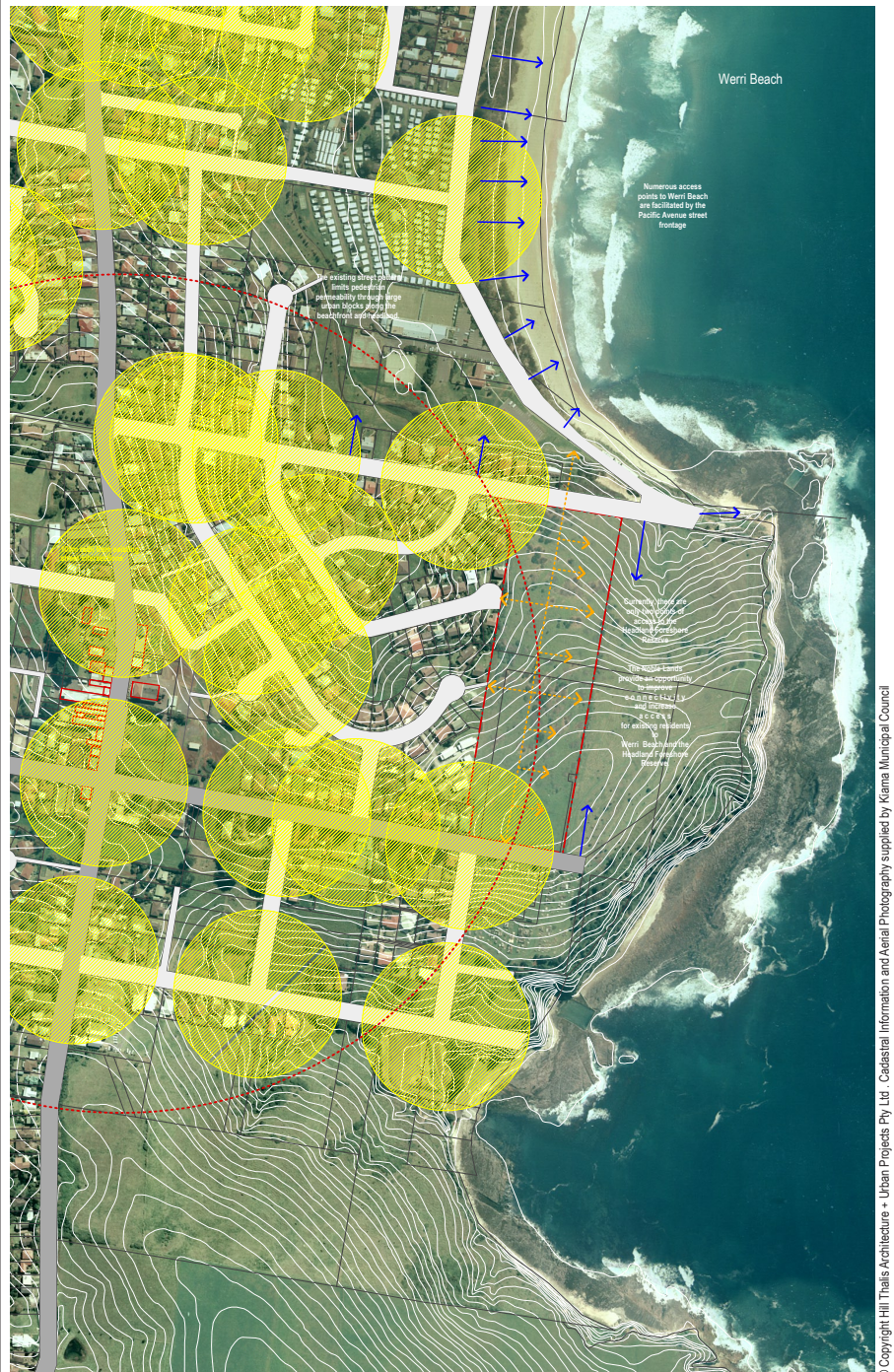


Figure - 3.4.(i) - Permeability and Access



Figure - 3.5.(i) - Site Features and Potential

3.5 Site Features + Potential

The Noble Lands are within a five minute walk of the Town Centre, and lie between Belinda and Geering Streets, two of Gerringong's major streets.

The land falls to the north and northwest, potentially providing both excellent solar access and views for future residential development.

The topography of the headland ensures that existing dwellings in Osborne Street and Armstrong Avenue look predominantly to the north and northwest, with views along Werri Beach and over Gerringong to Mount Saddleback.

A small number of existing dwellings currently also obtain views across the Noble Lands, and need to be considered in development strategies.

The site topography facilitates the provision of a New Edge Street, linking Belinda and Geering Streets, aligned to the original town plan grid and culminating in a view along Werri Beach to the north eastern edge of the town.

This street has the potential to become a significant and memorable public edge to the Gerringong Town Centre.

Archaeological Testing

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants carried out an Archaeological Site Assessment of the "Noble Lands" in February 2003.

Their report found that the, "character, type and density of Aboriginal cultural material found, and the consequent assessment of the significance of this material as low significance, does not present any long term constraints to the proposed rezoning and future residential development in the East Gerringong Study Area." (Navin Officer Study Report, February 2003)

3.6 Landscape and Climate

Topography

The site is situated on the northern side of Gerringong Headland, which falls towards Geering Street and the southern end of Werri Beach.

Moderate to steep slopes exist on the site ranging from 10% to 16%.

Site relief ranges from 20m at Geering Street and rises approximately 52m at the ridge of the Headland.

(From Storm Consulting Pty Ltd)

Hydrology

The hydrology of catchments near the Illawarra Escarpment are characterised by high rainfall intensities and frequent rainfall. Gerringong has 121 rain days per year and an average monthly rainfall of 111mm/month.

(From Storm Consulting Pty Ltd)

Soils

The "Land Resources Survey Kiama Municipal" study indicates two soil types - Lithosols (Li) and Latit Kraznozems K(lat) - on the Noble Lands. These soil types are similar to those found within the developed residential land to the immediate west of the Noble Land as shown in Figure 3.6(i).

The Land Resources Survey also mapped and assessed urban land capability. In the case of the Noble Land, the urban land capability (measured in terms of soil class and erosion/instability hazard) as shown in Figure 3.6.(ii) indicates urban capabilities as follows -

- Soil Class A (blue) having capabilities for "Extensive building complexes"
- Soil Class C (yellow) having capabilities for "Residential Development"

(From Kiama Municipal Council, Land Resources Survey)



Figure - 3.6.(i) - Soil types - Gerringong Headland
Land Resources Survey, 1983

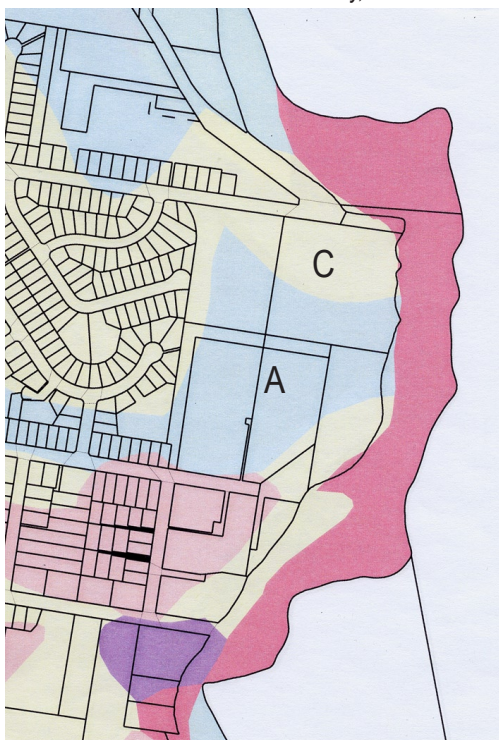


Figure 3.6.(ii) - Urban Capability - Gerringong Headland
Land Resources Survey, 1983