Maritime Safety Queensland

Bowen State Boat Harbour
Draft Master Plan



Draft for public consultation

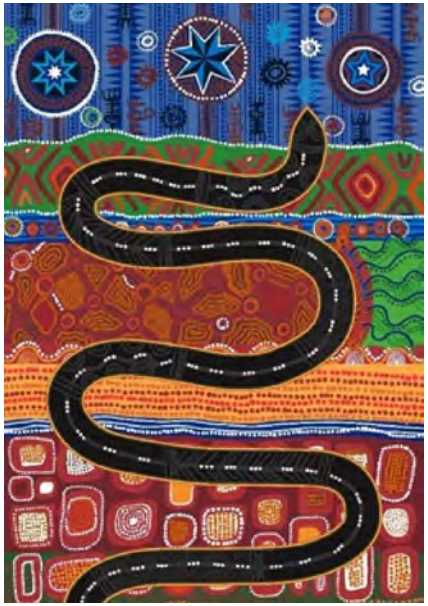
DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND

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Acknowledgement of Country

Maritime Safety Queensland respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waterways.

We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Maritime Safety Queensland recognises those whose ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures will leave a lasting legacy for future First Nations people.



Travelling by Gilimbaa

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This information can also be found on our website:
www.tmr.qld.gov.au/projects/bowen-state-boat-harbour-master-plan

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1 Introduction

Bowen State Boat Harbour

The Bowen State Boat Harbour (Harbour) is located south-east of the town centre, on the eastern part of Bowen's foreshore between Doughty Creek and Magazine Creek.

The 55-hectare study area contains a mix of public and private marine infrastructure providing access to Port Denison and the Coral Sea, and offers a sheltered harbour environment for recreational vessels, yachts, maritime businesses and public park.

The Harbour Master Plan (Master Plan) will guide long-term evolution of the Harbour as a working maritime asset, recreational boating destination, and important part of Bowen's foreshore. It responds to changing economic conditions, growing tourism and recreation demand, ageing infrastructure, coastal hazards, and need for improved land use efficiency.

Key outcomes

- Strengthen the working Harbour
- Enable economic growth
- Improve waterfront access
- Renew ageing infrastructure
- Protect the coastal environment



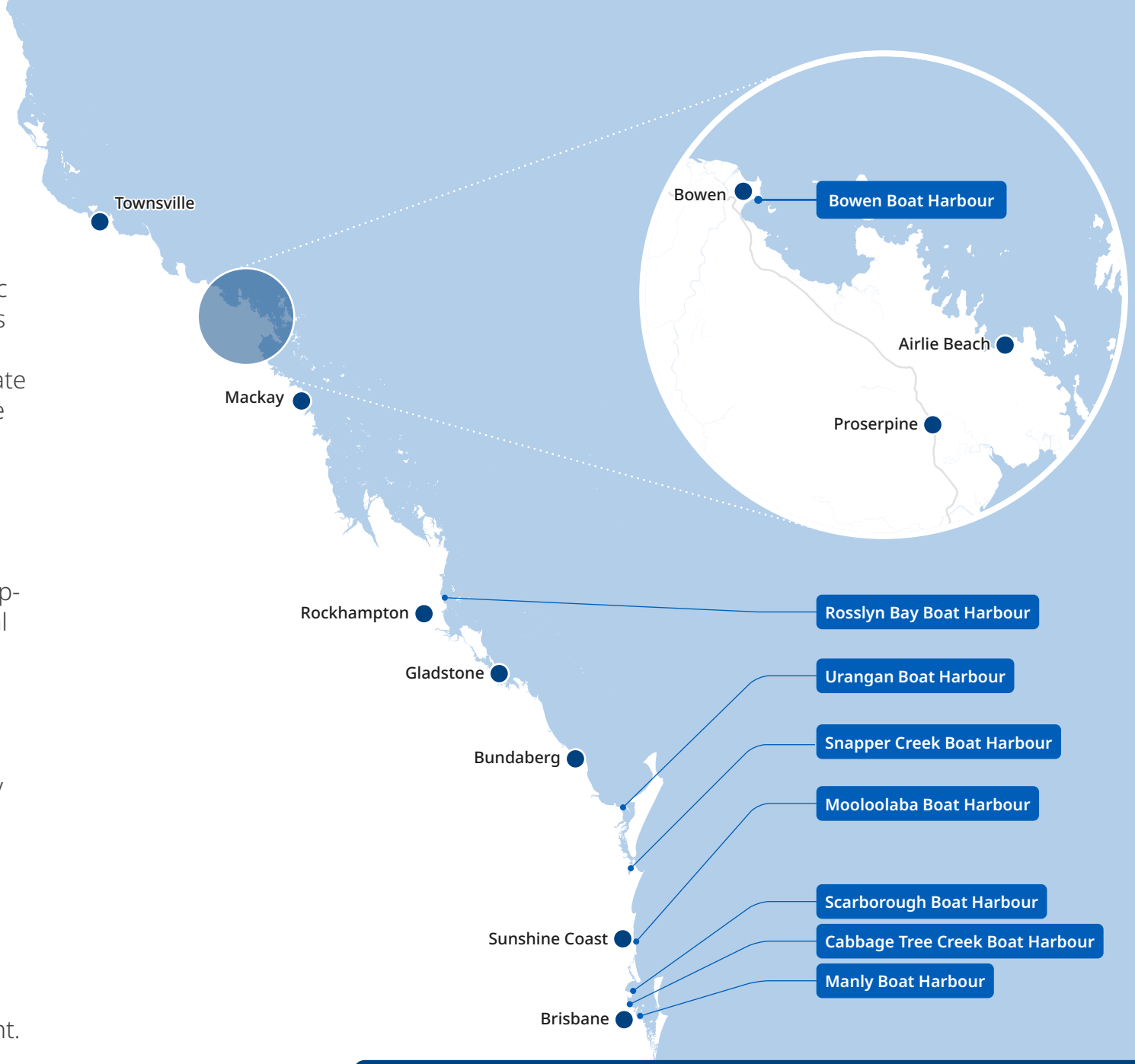
Bowen State Boat Harbour study area

State-managed boat harbour network

Bowen's Harbour forms part of a strategic maritime network spanning Queensland's coastline. Maritime Safety Queensland owns and manages eight Queensland State Boat Harbours located at Manly, Cabbage Tree Creek (Shorncliffe), Scarborough, Mooloolaba, Snapper Creek (Tin Can Bay), Urangan (Hervey Bay), Rosslyn Bay (Yeppoon), and Bowen. This network:

- Provides safe and efficient all-tide deep-water sheltered access for recreational and commercial vessels.
- Supports sustainable recreational and commercial boating and the broader maritime and tourism sectors.
- Supports maritime-related community functions, state agency marine operations, and public recreation.

Each harbour has a local and regional role. The goal is to protect core maritime function while enabling public access, community use, environmental management, and appropriate investment.



Bowen State Boat Harbour in relation to other Queensland State Boat Harbours

Drivers of change

The Harbour, as a working destination and component of the Bowen Foreshore, is facing a set of connected pressures and opportunities that are driving change across the site. Challenges regarding infrastructure and operations demand a responsive Harbour that will enable efficient and safe day-to-day use. Likewise, the interdependence of environmental amenity with regional marine tourism will drive how the Harbour grows and adapts.



Working harbour continuity

As the Harbour grows and demands evolve, safe vessel access, marine servicing, seafood industry operations, and essential harbour functions are becoming increasingly constrained.



Tourism and local economic growth

Growing tourism within the Whitsunday Region creates opportunities for complementary harbour-based tourism, local business growth, and visitor experiences in Bowen.



Infrastructure renewal and capacity

Ageing and obstructing assets are limiting the Harbour, constraining vessel sizes, creating ongoing dredging considerations, preventing growth, and restricting boat ramp capacity.



Access, safety and amenity

Movement within the Harbour unclear, at times unsafe and largely fragmented, creating conflicts between users. Likewise, amenity provisions are lacking in several locations around the Harbour.



Environmental resilience

As sea levels rise, severe weather frequency increases, and the Harbour footprint grows, Bowen's wetlands, waterways, and adjacent Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area are increasingly at risk of degradation and biodiversity loss.

Master Plan objectives

To respond to the drivers of change, this Master Plan has been prepared to provide a practical, non-statutory guide for future decision-making and design to enable growth, safeguard operations, and improve adaptability.

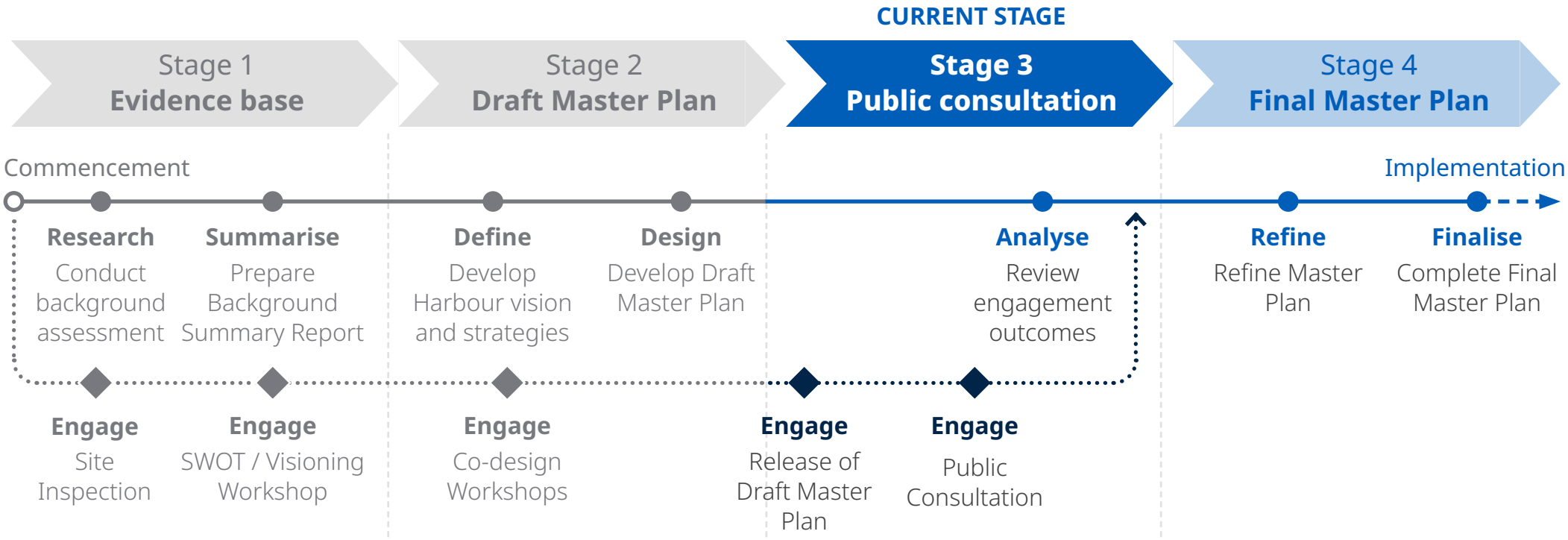


- Establish a clear long-term vision to support safe and sustainable Harbour operations
- Align future planning with government strategy, policy, and portfolio objectives
- Provide a collaborative process informed by technical evidence and stakeholder input
- Give Harbour users, tenants, and the community greater clarity about future direction
- Identify opportunities, constraints, and further investigations required to support delivery
- Strengthen public access, amenity, and place outcomes compatible with harbour function
- Inform future leasing, investment, and infrastructure decisions
- Enable staged implementation through clear project and planning actions

The process

The Master Plan has been developed through an evidence-led and collaborative process, bringing stakeholder insights with technical assessments. The process has moved from understanding the Harbour today, to shaping the vision and strategies, and translating these into a concept master plan and implementation pathway.

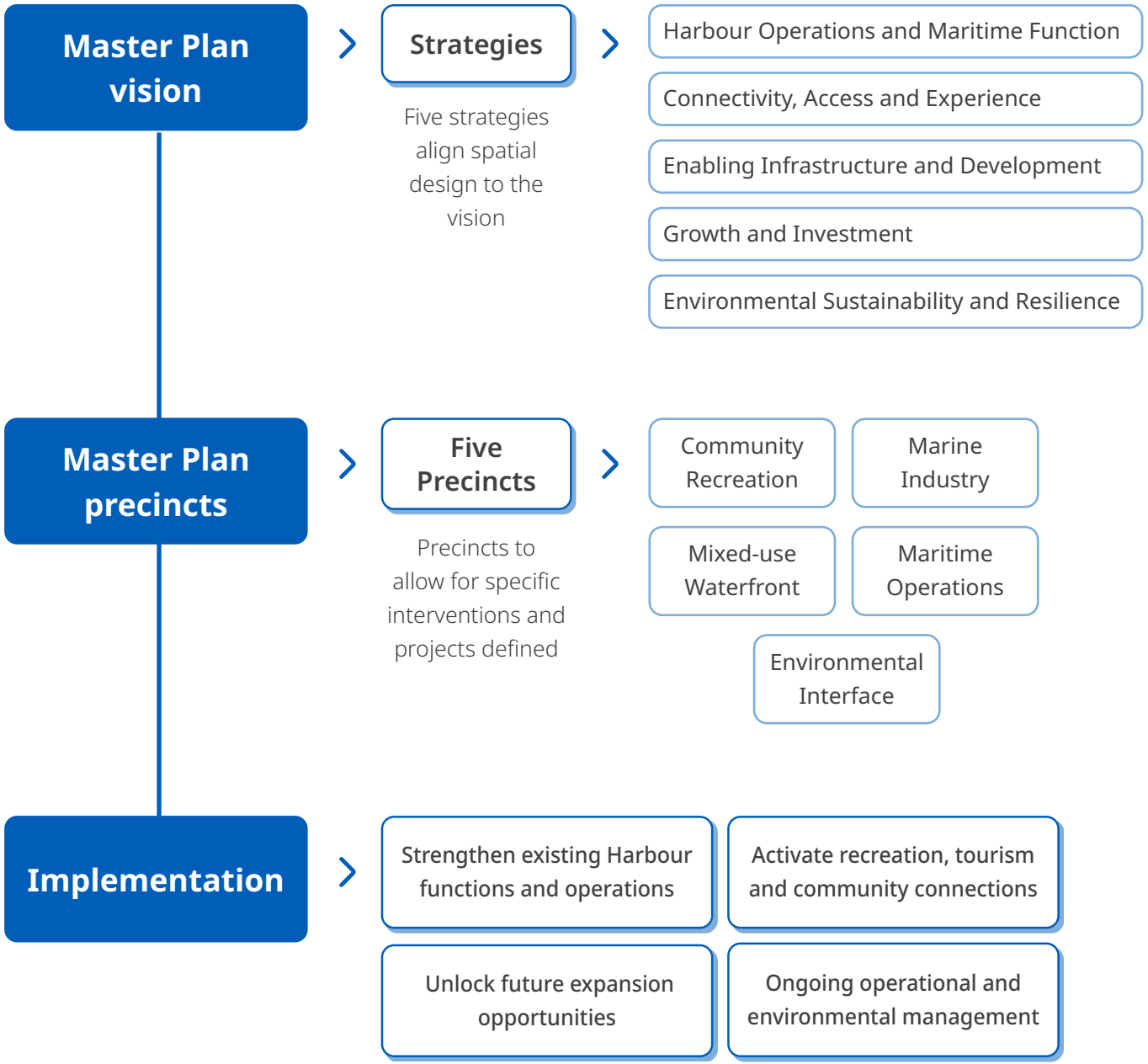




Master Plan structure

The Master Plan translates the vision and design principles into a spatial framework that guides the future growth, operation and resilience of the Harbour. It brings together land use, access, public realm, landside and maritime infrastructure, and environmental considerations into a coordinated long-term plan.

The following sections set out the vision, strategies, precinct directions, and implementation priorities that will support the Harbour's renewal over the next 15-20 years.



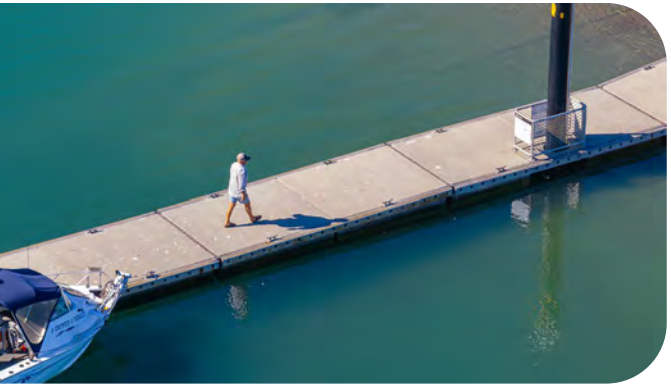


2 Background investigations

Engagement insights

A series of targeted engagement activities have been undertaken by Maritime Safety Queensland with government representatives, Harbour tenants and community representatives to better understand operational requirements, current challenges, future aspirations and opportunities for the Harbour. This engagement has helped ensure the Master Plan is grounded in local knowledge, operational realities and stakeholder perspectives, both now and into the future.

Community and stakeholder engagement will continue to inform the Master Plan as it progresses through public consultation and finalisation.



Support and strengthen the working harbour

- Safeguard safe harbour access and essential maritime functions.
- Better organise maritime, recreational and public-facing uses to reduce conflicts and support efficient operations.

Support a diverse maritime economy and complementary tourism opportunities

- Build on Bowen's existing marine, fishing and seafood industries.
- Support marine servicing, storage and haul-out as core economic opportunities.
- Support complementary marine trades, visitor services and hospitality.
- Expand and diversify berthing and mooring.

Improve access, connectivity and amenity

- Provide safer and more legible roads and movement.
- Improve walking and cycling routes with connection to foreshore and town centre.
- Strengthen public waterfront access whilst respecting harbour operations.
- Improve public facilities and amenities.
- Activate harbour with compatible recreation and events.

Invest in enabling infrastructure

- Consider ongoing dredging requirements.
- Expand public boat ramp capacity.
- Stage fit-for-purpose investment to unlock future opportunities.
- Improve service reliability and resilience.

Provide tenure and investment clarity

- Provide greater clarity around land use, leasing and tenure.
- Support continuity and expansion of existing businesses.

Protect environmental values and build resilience

- Protect and enhance wetlands, waterways and the coastal environment.
- Balance environmental protection with the harbour's ongoing operational function.
- Respond to coastal hazards, extreme weather and changing environmental conditions.
- Support habitat restoration and ecological connectivity.

Technical findings

A series of technical investigations have been undertaken to understand the complexities of the Harbour through the lenses of policy and planning, economy and tourism, access and infrastructure, environment and urban character.

Further details on technical findings are in a separate supporting document, the **Background Summary Report**, which can be found online at our website.

These findings, together with the engagement insights, have played a key role in shaping the vision, strategies and precinct directions of the Master Plan.



Policy and planning

- Bowen Master Plan (2021) and Bowen Foreshore Master Plan (2025) highlight importance of a marine-focused precinct.
- Provide clear land use plan to support leasing and investment certainty.
- Reinforce the marine-focused working-harbour role and support complementary tourism.
- Focus broader mixed-use and residential opportunities in surrounding areas, helping retain the Harbour's working-waterfront character.

Economy and tourism

- Existing marine industry including seafood processing, berthing and boating is key to local economy.
- Strong demand for increased and diversified berthing, vessel storage and marine services.
- The Harbour provides a distinctive regional offer; an affordable, functional alternative.
- Complementary hospitality, tourism, and recreation encourage longer stays and promote more spending.

Access and infrastructure

- Water, sewer, electrical, stormwater and telecommunications networks are ageing.
- A high voltage electrical line limits vessel access into the inner harbour area.
- Vessel access, boat ramp capacity and marine servicing require coordinated upgrades.
- Roads require upgrades to support movement, operations, and public amenities.

Environment

- Sensitive marine setting adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.
- Exposed to flooding, storm tide, wave run-up and future sea level rise.
- Embed resilience in land use and create coastal-responsive infrastructure.

Urban character

- Identity shaped by maritime operations, seafood, boating and coastal setting.
- Fragmented land uses with limited connectivity and amenities result in a disconnected public realm.
- Define a cohesive working waterfront through improved access, landscape and built form.

Bowen State Boat Harbour will remain a **resilient working harbour** that supports commercial and recreational boating as core functions, alongside maritime business and industry, local jobs and public access to the coast while protecting the environmental values that define its setting.

Over the next 15– 20 years, the Harbour will support ongoing **maritime function**, well-located **investment**, adaptable **infrastructure**, and stronger **waterfront connections**. Marine industry, seafood activity, and recreational boating will be supported to grow in the right places, without compromising Harbour **operations and efficiency**.



Master Plan Strategies

The Harbour will remain unmistakably Bowen: a working Harbour where vessels move, marine businesses operate, seafood activity remains visible, and people can gather by the water. Efficient infrastructure and a clear spatial structure will support confident harbour operations while creating space for new businesses, skills and opportunities to grow. Wetlands, waterways and coastal landscapes will shape a distinctive harbour experience and guide practical decisions on resilience, stewardship and long-term adaptation.

The Master Plan gives effect to this vision through **five connected strategies** that guide the Harbour's spatial, operational and environmental direction.



Harbour Operations and Maritime Function

Safeguard Bowen Harbour's role as a safe and productive working harbour, where current and future maritime uses operate with confidence, and infrastructure planning adapts to changing demand.



Connectivity, Access and Experience

Provide safe and legible access to harbour facilities and waterfront areas while respecting harbour operations. Create an authentic coastal precinct that reinforces Bowen's maritime identity and connects to nearby destinations.



Enabling Infrastructure and Development

Coordinate infrastructure renewal and investment to support reliable harbour operations, unlock development opportunities and provide sufficient capacity for long-term growth.



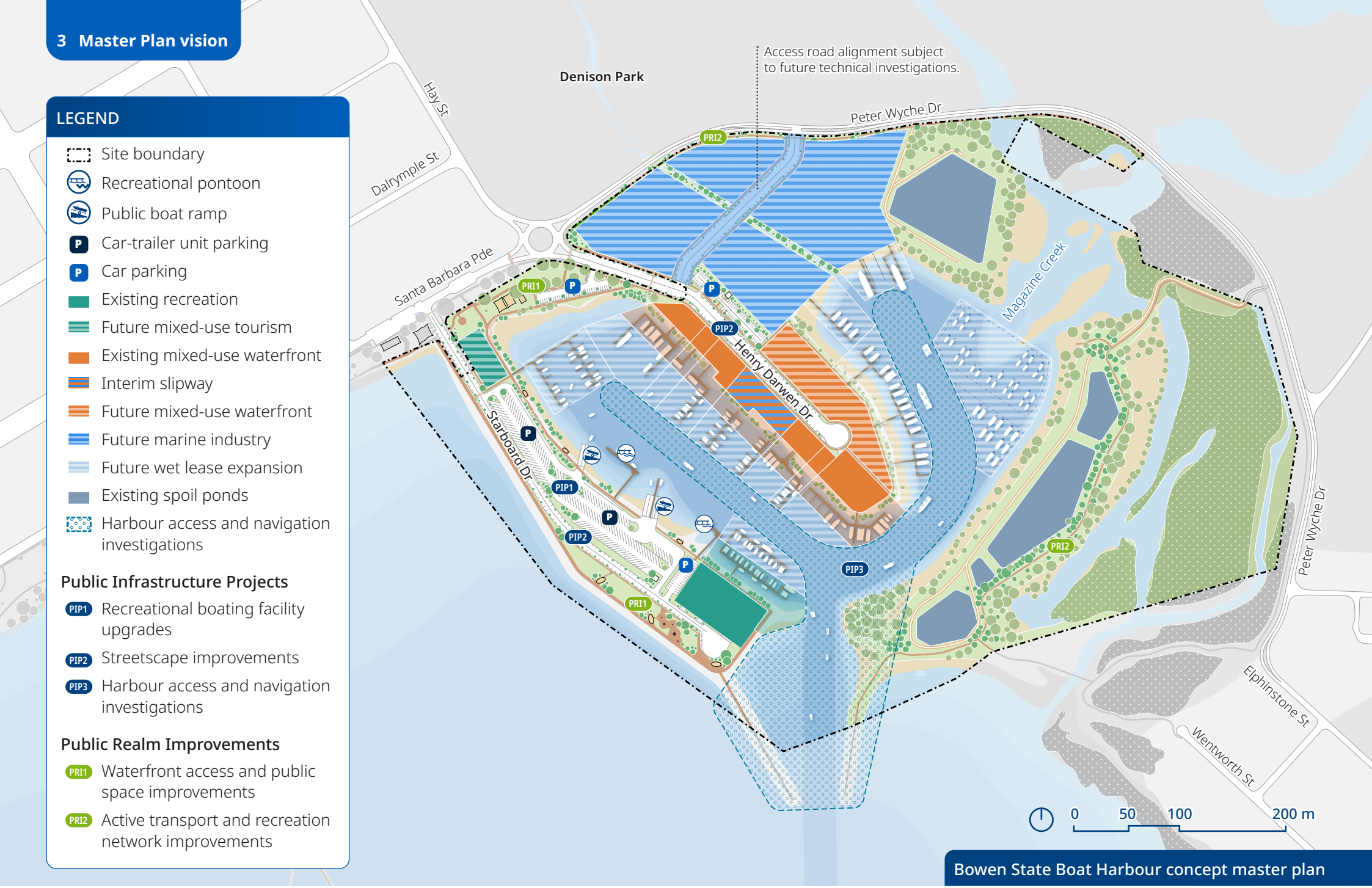
Growth and Investment

Create the conditions for sustainable investment and business growth by making efficient use of harbour land and water and providing greater certainty about future land use and development.



Environmental Sustainability and Resilience

Protect and enhance the Harbour's ecological, coastal and cultural values through environmental stewardship and resilience, while supporting the health of the wider marine environment.



Bowen State Boat Harbour concept master plan

Harbour Operations and Maritime Function

Safeguard Bowen Harbour's role as a safe and productive working harbour, where current and future maritime uses operate with confidence, and infrastructure planning adapts to changing demand.



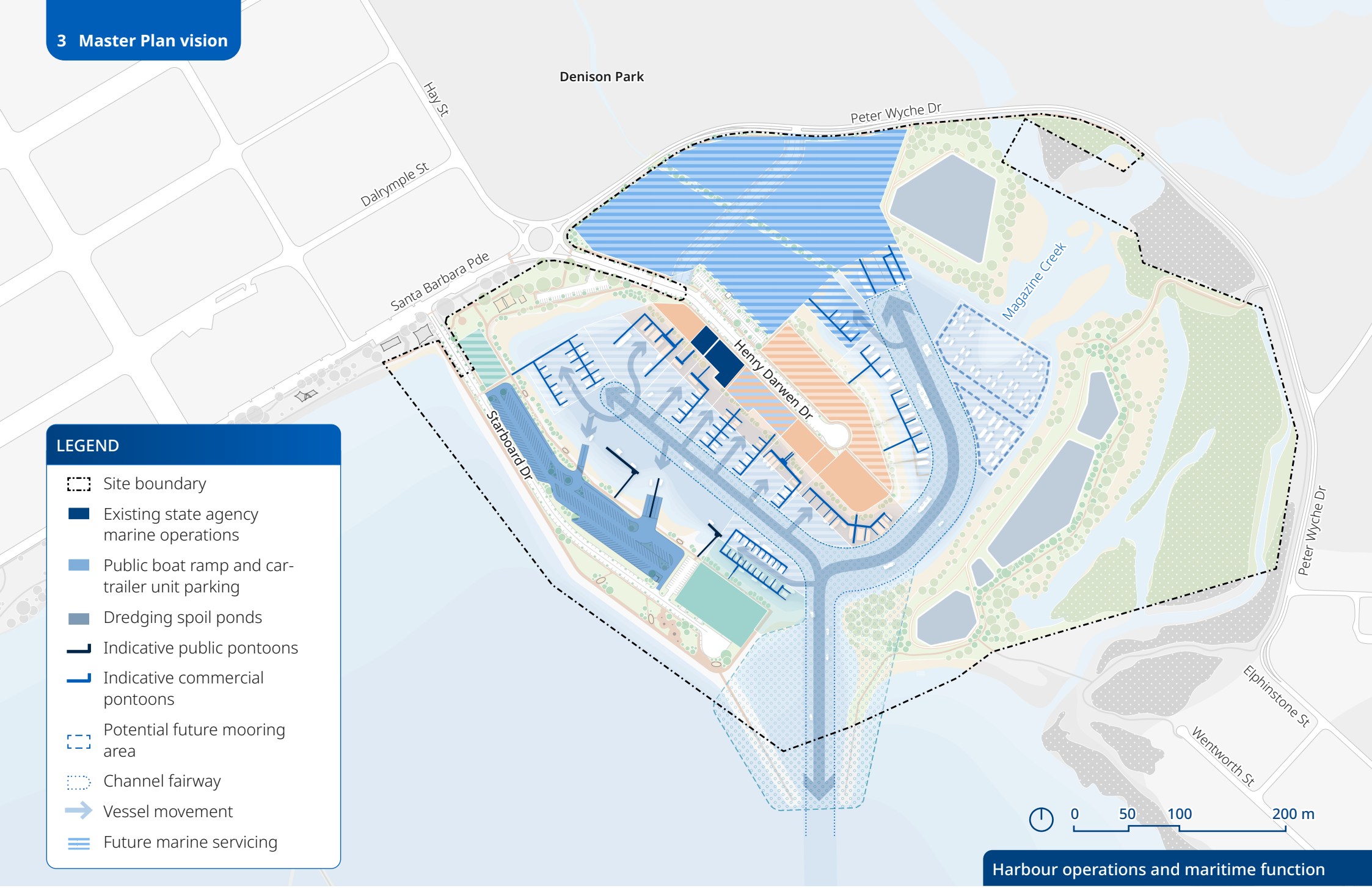
Dry boat storage, Manly Harbour
© d'Albora Marina

Master Plan Sub-Strategies

- Protect the Harbour's core maritime function by prioritising harbour-dependent and harbour-supporting uses within operational land and water areas.
- Enhance recreational boating access, launching, berthing, parking and on-water facilities as essential Harbour infrastructure.
- Maintain safe, reliable and efficient marine access for commercial, recreational, operational and service vessels.
- Plan harbour capacity and infrastructure to respond progressively to changing vessel, berthing, launching and marine servicing demand.
- Manage interfaces between maritime operations, recreational boating and public activity to minimise operational and safety conflicts.
- Retain flexibility within operational areas to accommodate future maritime requirements and changing industry needs.

Master Plan Responses

1. Safeguard identified operational harbour land and waters for maritime and harbour-supporting activities.
2. Upgrade boat ramp infrastructure and associated car-trailer-unit parking in response to demand.
3. Improve berthing, pontoon and marine infrastructure to improve safety, accommodate a broader range of vessels and meet future demand.
4. Maintain navigational access through coordinated dredging, navigation management and asset maintenance.
5. Investigate improvements to harbour entrance, navigational access and internal vessel circulation.
6. Use the precinct structure and movement network to separate incompatible operational, recreational and public movements where practicable.



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Existing state agency marine operations
- Public boat ramp and car-trailer unit parking
- Dredging spoil ponds
- Indicative public pontoons
- Indicative commercial pontoons
- Potential future mooring area
- Channel fairway
- Vessel movement
- Future marine servicing

Harbour operations and maritime function

Connectivity, Access and Experience

Provide safe and legible access to harbour facilities and waterfront areas while respecting harbour operations. Create an authentic coastal precinct that reinforces Bowen's maritime identity and connects to nearby destinations.



Glebe Foreshore Park, NSW
© City of Sydney

Master Plan Sub-Strategies

- Prioritise safe and efficient access for harbour operations while providing clearly defined routes for public movement.
- Connect the Harbour more effectively with Bowen's foreshore, town centre and surrounding destinations through an integrated walking and cycling network.
- Provide a safe and legible access to harbour facilities and waterfront areas while respecting harbour operations.
- Strengthen the Harbour's distinctive working-waterfront identity through public realm, landscape and built-form outcomes.
- Provide comfortable and welcoming spaces where people can pause, gather and spend time throughout the year.
- Support inclusive recreation and community activity in designated public-facing areas without compromising harbour operations.

Master Plan Responses

1. Establish a clear movement hierarchy separating operational, general vehicle and pedestrian movements where practicable.
2. Deliver **Public Realm Improvements (PRIs)** to enhance the amenity, accessibility, and identity of the Harbour through coordinated upgrades to landscaping, pedestrian connections and place-making infrastructure.

   Within leased areas, delivery may be the responsibility of the relevant lessee as part of broader precinct activation and visitor experience outcomes.
3. Create appropriately located spaces for community recreation and small-scale events.
4. Retain views and opportunities to experience the activity of the working waterfront as part of the Harbour's public experience.



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Key open spaces
- Key road
- Future access road (indicative)
- Other vehicle route
- Indicative driveway crossover
- Key pedestrian route
- Future boardwalk opportunity
- Other pedestrian route
- Key views

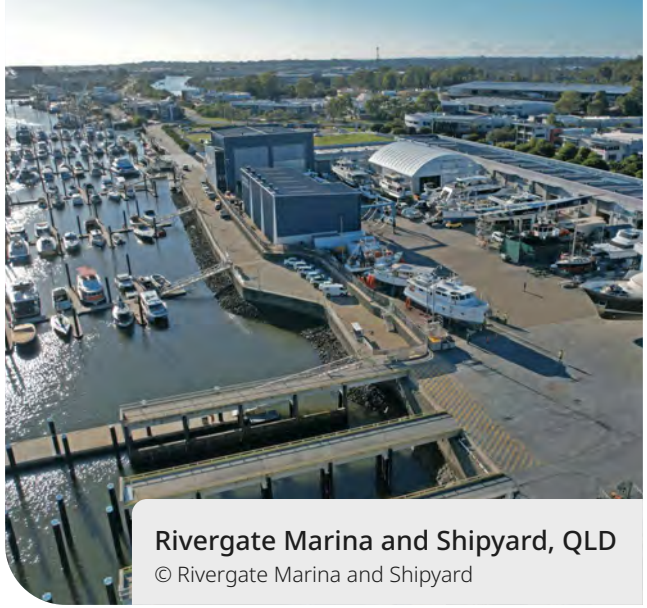
Public Realm Improvements

- PRI1 Waterfront access and public space improvements
- PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements

Connectivity, access and experience

Enabling Infrastructure and Development

Coordinate infrastructure renewal and investment to support reliable harbour operations, unlock development opportunities and provide sufficient capacity for long-term growth.



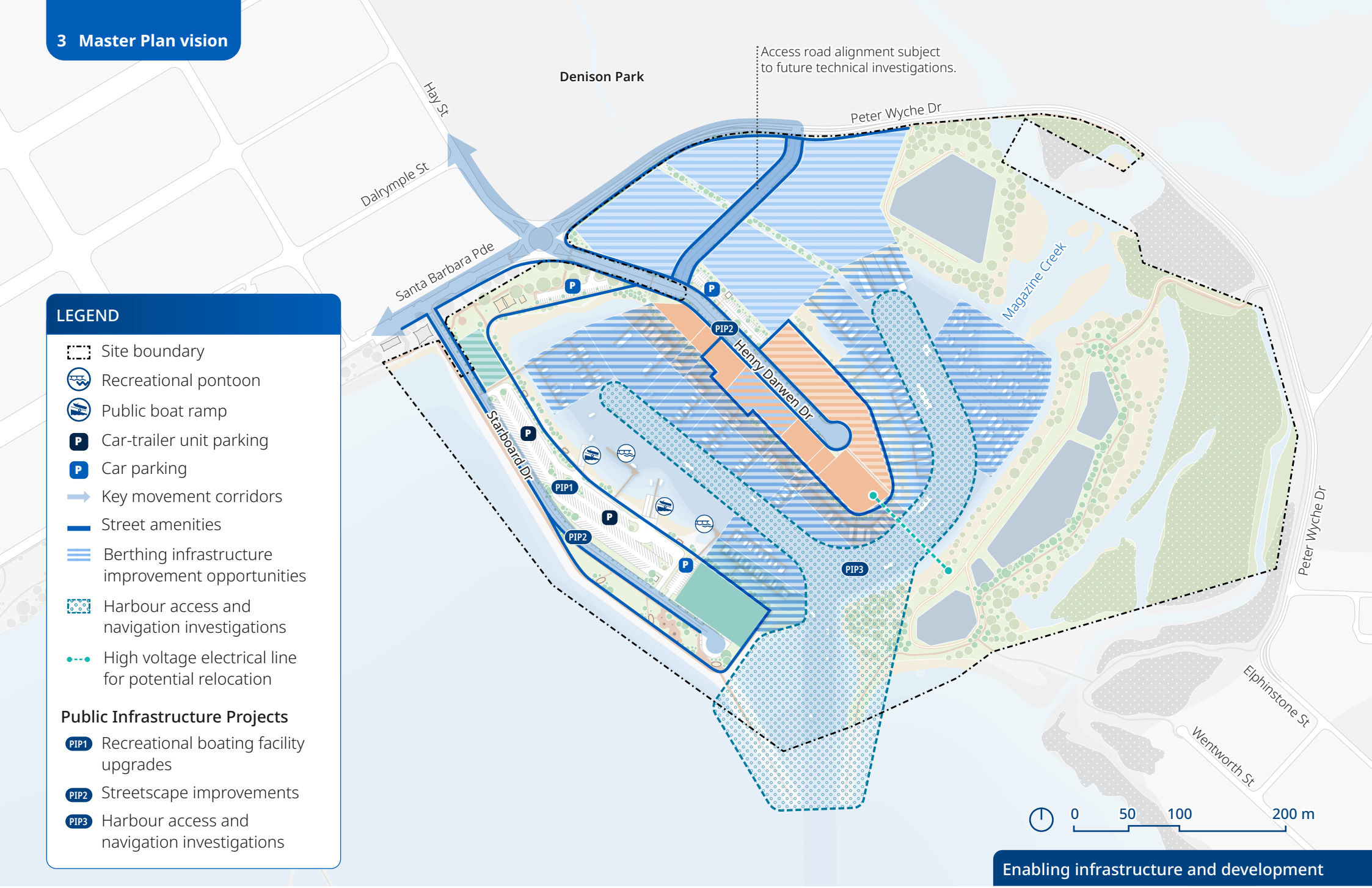
Rivergate Marina and Shipyard, QLD
© Rivergate Marina and Shipyard

Master Plan Sub-Strategies

- Prioritise infrastructure that is essential to safe and reliable harbour operation.
- Upgrade ageing infrastructure and address key infrastructure constraints to support safe, dependable day-to-day harbour operations, and enable future harbour development.
- Coordinate marine, transport and utility infrastructure planning with the sequencing of future land use and development.
- Plan infrastructure capacity to respond to changing operational requirements and demonstrated demand.
- Improve the resilience, serviceability and adaptability of harbour infrastructure over its life cycle.
- Stage major investment so that infrastructure expenditure supports clearly identified operational, economic or development outcomes.

Master Plan Responses

1. Investigate harbour entrance, wave conditions and navigation requirements to determine future marine infrastructure needs.
2. Plan for staged renewal of ageing marine assets and supporting operational infrastructure.
3. Coordinate car parking, car-trailer unit parking, servicing and access improvements with future harbour growth.
4. Investigate utility capacity and infrastructure upgrade requirement.
5. Investigate options to address infrastructure constraints affecting vessel access and future harbour development.
6. Deliver **Public Infrastructure Projects (PIPs)** that provide essential infrastructure and enabling works to support staged Master Plan implementation and future public and private investment.



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Recreational pontoon
- Public boat ramp
- Car-trailer unit parking
- Car parking
- Key movement corridors
- Street amenities
- Berthing infrastructure improvement opportunities
- Harbour access and navigation investigations
- High voltage electrical line for potential relocation

Public Infrastructure Projects

- PIP1 Recreational boating facility upgrades
- PIP2 Streetscape improvements
- PIP3 Harbour access and navigation investigations

Enabling infrastructure and development

Growth and Investment

Create the conditions for sustainable investment and business growth by making efficient use of harbour land and water and providing greater certainty about future land use and development.



Shellharbour Marina, NSW
© Shellharbour Marina

Master Plan Sub-Strategies

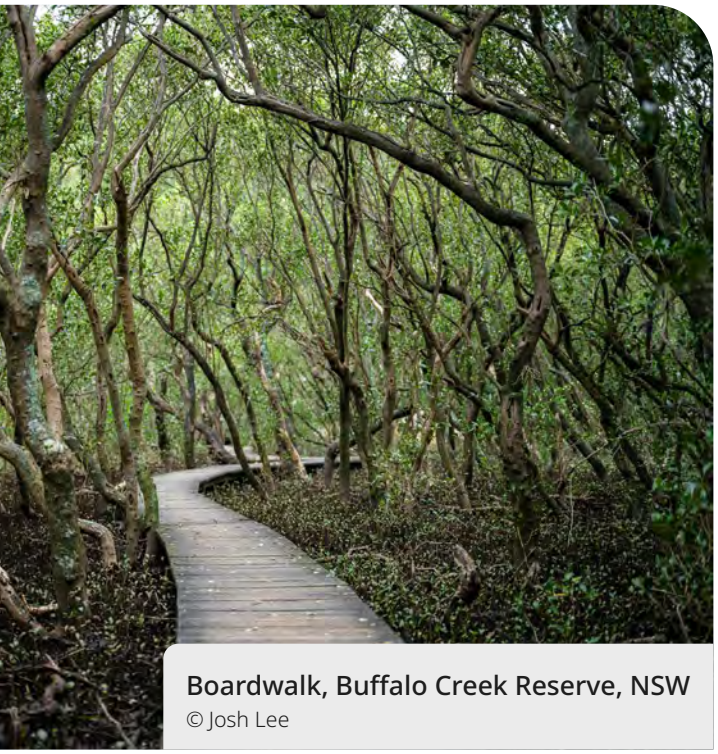
- Prioritise marine industry, seafood, recreational boating and complementary harbour-related activities that strengthen Bowen's maritime economy.
- Provide a clear land-use structure that gives existing and prospective operators greater certainty about where investment and growth can occur.
- Support tenure and leasing arrangements that enable appropriate long-term investment and business continuity.
- Make more productive use of underutilised land and water while retaining sufficient flexibility for future harbour needs.
- Enable complementary visitor, commercial and recreational activities where they support harbour activation without displacing or constraining core maritime functions.

Master Plan Responses

1. Establish defined precincts for mixed-use waterfront, marine industry, maritime operations, community recreation and environmental interface.
2. Safeguard areas for growth of marine industry and consolidate the activities in locations suited to their operational, access and amenity requirements.
3. Enable appropriately located complementary commercial, tourism and recreational uses that contribute to harbour activity and support the working waterfront.
4. Enable staged expansion of marina and berthing capacity in response to demonstrated demand.
5. Improve separation between operational areas and public-facing activities to reduce land-use conflict.
6. Support flexible tenancy and development opportunities within designated growth areas.

Environmental Sustainability and Resilience

Protect and enhance the Harbour's ecological, coastal and cultural values through environmental stewardship and resilience, while supporting the health of the wider marine environment.



Boardwalk, Buffalo Creek Reserve, NSW
© Josh Lee

Master Plan Sub-Strategies

- Recognise the Harbour's connection to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and protect existing wetlands, waterways, coastline and cultural values to support ongoing maritime function.
- Integrate coastal hazard and climate resilience into land-use, infrastructure and asset-planning decisions.
- Improve the environmental performance of development, infrastructure and the public realm over time.
- Strengthen the resilience and adaptability of harbour infrastructure and access networks to coastal hazards, extreme weather and changing environmental conditions.
- Support restoration and stewardship of degraded or underutilised landscapes where this can strengthen ecological value and harbour resilience.
- Recognise the Juru People as Traditional Custodians of the land and Sea Country of Bowen and recognise their enduring cultural connection to this place.

Master Plan Responses

1. Direct development and higher-intensity activities away from areas of significant environmental constraint, where practical.
2. Use coastal planting and other appropriate nature-based measures to complement engineered resilience interventions.
3. Support sustainable dredging and sediment management, integrated into wider coastal reconstruction and maintenance practices.
4. Incorporate adaptive and resilient design into new and renewed infrastructure.
5. Provide controlled access to ecological and wetland areas to encourage public understanding and stewardship.
6. Explore opportunities to integrate cultural narratives and Designing with Country into wayfinding, public art and amenity.

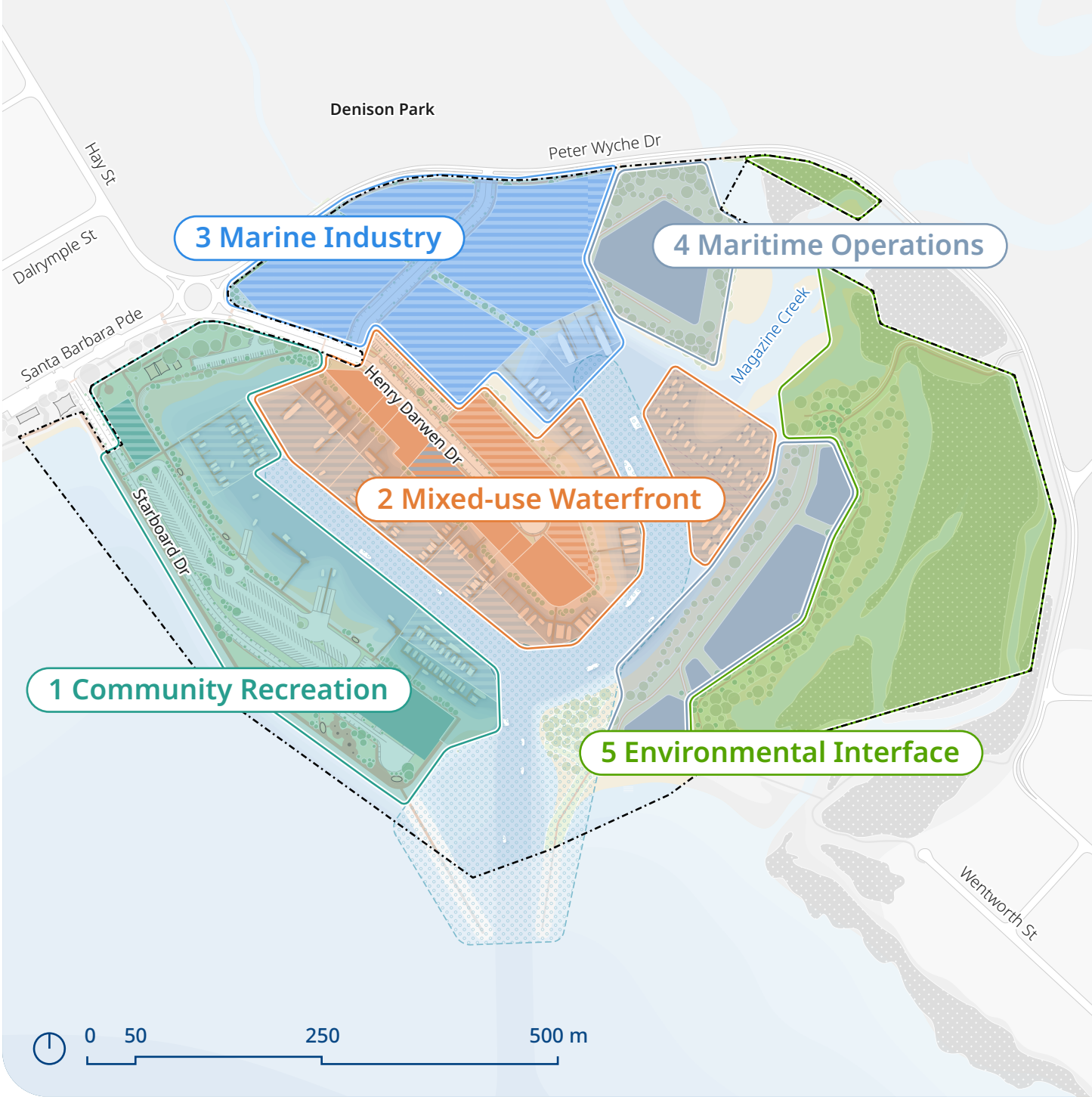


4 Master Plan precincts

Precincts

Bowen State Boat Harbour has been divided into precincts to establish a clear framework for land use, development opportunities, public infrastructure projects and public realm projects. This framework protects the core maritime function of the Harbour whilst enhancing recreational character, strengthening operational requirements and conserving sensitive wetland areas.

Each precinct has a defined role, with the Master Plan comprising five precincts. Precincts 1 through 3 respond to increasing boating and industrial demand, with provisions for future expanded dry and wet operational lease areas. Precincts 4 and 5 focus on specific Harbour needs, with the former linked to dredging capabilities and the latter with environmental interfaces. Unlocking and realising the potential of the Harbour requires long-term strategic urban planning that strives for appropriate balance of use and economic feasibility. This Master Plan will ensure the Harbour grows sustainably in response to current and emerging demand to become a core gateway to the Whitsunday region and broader Queensland coast.



Precinct 1
Community Recreation

A community destination that serves as an extension of the Bowen Foreshore, supporting current and future boating demand alongside additional recreational opportunities. This section of waterfront will be designed as an active amenity, linking public spaces along the shoreline and anchoring each end with mixed-use development opportunities. Greener, protected spaces throughout promote outdoor lifestyles, boosting year-round comfort and attracting visitors to nearby Harbour maritime businesses.

Indicative land use activities

- Vessel launching and retrieving
- Car-trailer unit parking
- Boat hire facilities
- Short-term vessel berthing
- Outdoor recreation and leisure
- Tourism-related operators and services
- Hospitality (restaurants and cafés)
- Vessel refuelling services
- Office and administration
- Public amenities

Development opportunities

(A) Mixed-use tourism

(B) Recreational facility upgrade

Public Infrastructure Projects

PIP1 Recreational boating facility upgrades

PIP2 Streetscape improvements

Public Realm Improvements

PRI1 Waterfront access and public realm improvements



Precinct 1 overview

Precinct 1
Community Recreation

Ⓐ Mixed-use tourism

To diversify recreational activity in the Harbour and improve the overall experience of visitors and users, this site is earmarked as an opportunity for a mixed-use tourism hub. The hub will integrate hospitality offerings such as restaurants, cafés, and specialty shops with marine-based recreation operators including charter, ferries, boat hire and other tour experiences. Shared marine infrastructure will aid in coordinating tourism operations such as berthing and fuelling, improving overall functionality and accessibility.

By tying landside development into maritime activities, this opportunity can establish a vibrant arrival destination that strengthens the connection between Harbour and foreshore, attracts year-round visitation and supports local economic activity.



Shellharbour Marina, Wollongong, NSW
© Waterfront Tavern

Ⓑ Recreational facility upgrade

As an established cruising and community destination within the Harbour, the cruising yacht club provides the foundation for a more active waterfront precinct that combines marine recreational activity and hospitality. Targeted upgrades to the existing facilities, amenities, surrounding public realm and pontoon berthing will improve safety and functionality, while strengthening connections between cruising activities and broader waterfront experience.

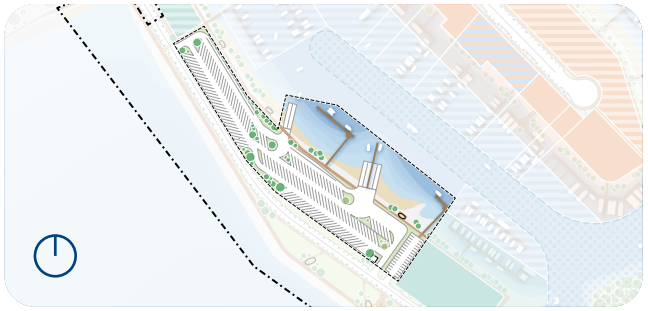


Keppel Bay Sailing Club, Yeppoon
© KBSC

Precinct 1
Community Recreation

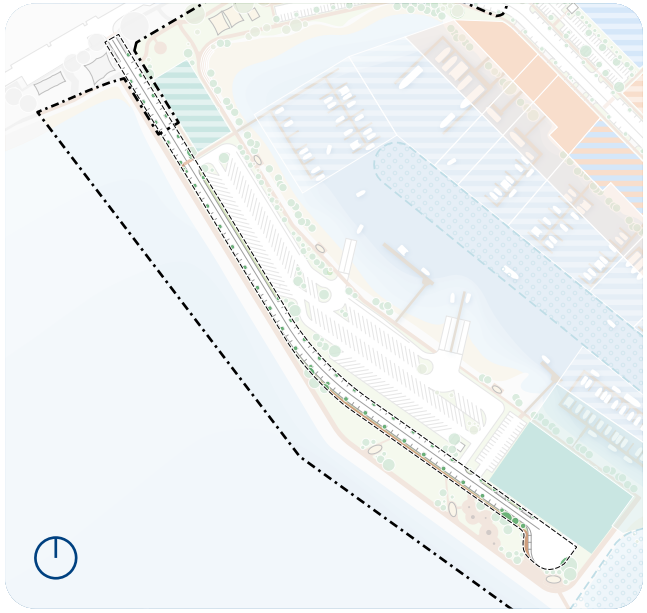
PIP1 Recreational boating facility upgrades

Upgrades to the existing boat ramp will address existing peak-period congestion and future growth in user demand. An additional two-lane boat ramp will increase functional capacity, with the current spillover parking area formalised into additional car-trailer unit parking. A second pontoon for temporary mooring adjacent to the boat ramps will allow for safer movement of vessels during peak periods. Improving the public toilet block, establishing a fish cleaning station and enhancing landscaping will support boat ramp function.



PIP2 Streetscape improvements

Starboard Drive will be enhanced to improve safety, legibility and resilience to extreme weather and coastal conditions, while supporting Harbour operations and improving the visitor arrival experience. This will include parallel parking, pedestrian pathways and street trees that provide shade and enhance comfort. Potential future upgrades include the relocation of overhead utility lines underground to improve service reliability and future-proof essential infrastructure.





Burrum Heads Boat Ramp and Car-trailer Park, Burrum Heads
© Hall Contracting



Spoilbank Marina, Port Headland, WA
© Town of Port Headland

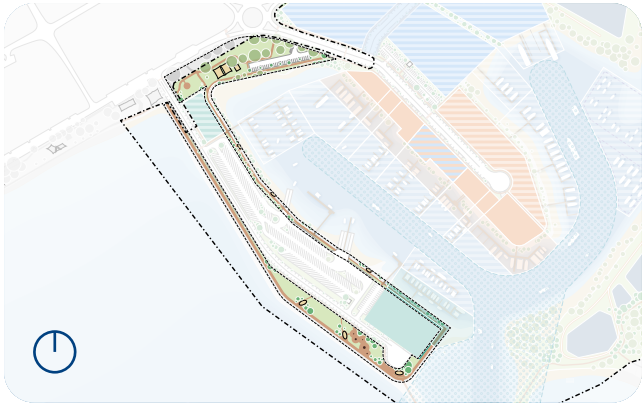
Precinct 1
Community Recreation

PRI1 Waterfront access and public realm improvements

Henry Darwen Park revitalisation
The park will be revitalised through landscaping and amenities to improve functionality, visual amenity and safety. Interventions include seating, pathways, lighting, drinking fountains, a toilet block and a formalised car park. The revitalised park will create a more inclusive and accessible public space that supports everyday recreation and social interaction in addition to supporting foreshore access and increased parking capacity.

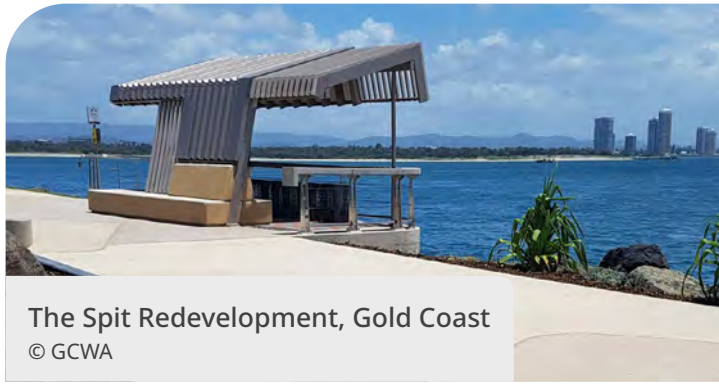
New Harbour promenade
Creating a continuous waterfront promenade will transform the Harbour edge into accessible and engaging public destination, connecting key Harbour locations, amenities and experiences. Combining a shared pedestrian and cycle path with harbour-edge boardwalk, the promenade will provide opportunities to experience the waterfront and coastal landscape up close. Improved wayfinding, lighting, seating and landscaping will encourage walking, cycling and recreation, enhancing the overall Harbour experiences and supporting greater use of the Harbour throughout the year.

New parkland
Additional open space will be formalised into a waterfront recreation destination with opportunities for social interaction and environmental resilience. Landscaping, shade trees, public shelters, lookouts, interpretive signage and public art will strengthen the space. Together, these amenities will promote outdoor lifestyles, mitigate wind and heat gain, establish new habitat and improve visual amenity.





Seaforth Esplanade Redevelopment, Mackay
© Mackay Regional Council



The Spit Redevelopment, Gold Coast
© GCWA



Coral Sea Marina, Airlie Beach
© Queensland.com

Precinct 2
Mixed-use Waterfront

This precinct is a key component of Bowen's working harbour. It accommodates established fisheries, marina operations, marine businesses, and state agency marine operations that contribute to the harbour's day-to-day function and economic performance. Reactivation of the existing slipway provides interim marine servicing function, helping retain vessel maintenance activities and building the momentum for stronger local marine service economy.

In the longer term, expansion of marine servicing functions within the future marine industry precinct may enable relocation of the existing slipway. This would release the strategically located waterfront land for additional marina infrastructure, commercial opportunities, seafood industry expansion, and harbour activation while preserving the precinct's core maritime function.

Indicative land use activities

- State agency marine operations
- Marine rescue services
- Associated office / administration
- Low-impact marine uses
- Commercial fishing and seafood industry
- Seafood processing, storage and wholesale/retail sales
- Hospitality and food & beverage
- Marina berthing and mooring
- Vessel refuelling services
- Car parking
- Marine trade and support services
- Harbour operation offices
- Interim (existing) haul-out facility, vessel maintenance, chandlery and retail
- Dry storage (subject to future demand)

Development opportunities

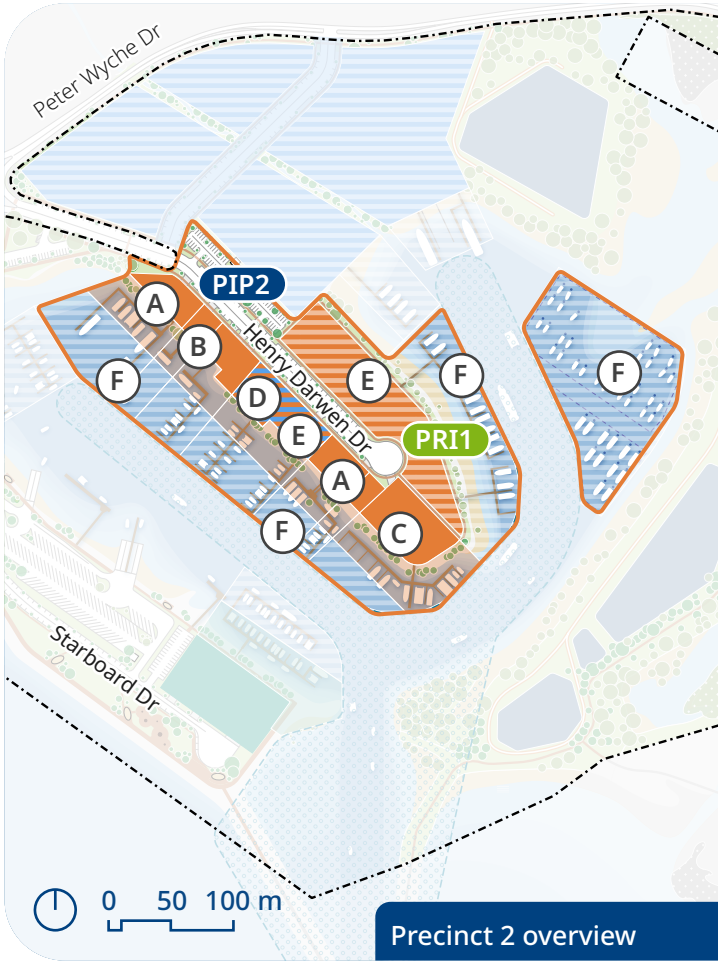
- (A) Fisheries
- (B) State agency marine operations
- (C) Commercial marina
- (D) Reactivated slipway
- (E) Landside commercial opportunities
- (F) Expanded wet lease and berthing

Public Infrastructure Projects

PIP2 Streetscape improvements

Public Realm Improvements

PRI1 Waterfront access and public realm improvements



Precinct 2 overview

Precinct 2
Mixed-use Waterfront

(A) Fisheries

Support existing fishery businesses, with opportunities to expand the processing, storage and wholesale capacity. These potential upgrades will be supported by expanded berthing and operational infrastructure including a realigned channel to enable improved trawler off-loading, vessel manoeuvrability and overall productivity. The fishery sector is key to the Harbour's success and future development, with retail, seafood markets and dining experiences crucial in showcasing Bowen's seafood identity.

(B) State agency marine operations

Strengthen and retain state agency and safety operations already occurring within the Harbour. Upgrades and expansions to each facility, including additional secure berthing, equipment storage, training spaces, direct and uninhibited water access, and dedicated parking for staff and operational vehicles enables these areas to function effectively into the future.

There is potential to consolidate operational uses into a singular smaller footprint within the precinct, increasing space efficiency. As a single or collocated public interface, this frees land for marine industry use, public realm improvement or other complementary Harbour activities.

(B) Commercial marina

The marina will be revitalised into a vibrant waterfront destination that integrates marine and commercial activities on an active Harbour front, celebrating Bowen's maritime lifestyles. Upgrades span additional wet lease berthing, provision of vessel refuelling facilities and strengthened supporting services. Complementary uses may include a yacht or boat club, waterfront restaurants, cafés, marine retail, office space and harbour-related businesses integrated into the active public waterfront. Future opportunities to improve access to the waterfront through a designed boardwalk will further strengthen the success of the commercial marina as a core destination in Bowen.



Prawn Star Cairns, QLD
© Prawn Star



Coral Sea Marina, Airlie Beach
© Coral Sea Marina

Precinct 2
Mixed-use Waterfront

(D) Reactivated slipway

Reactivation of the existing slipway presents a significant opportunity to re-establish marine servicing capability within Bowen and create the foundation for a broader marine services cluster. Anchored by haul-out and vessel maintenance functions, the precinct supports maintenance, repair and refit, as well as marine trade activities that are currently being lost to other regional centres. This can be supported by complementary marine trades services and the introduction of chandlery, marine retail and vessel support services to provide a more complete marine offer for commercial, recreational and visiting vessels.

As marine servicing demand grows, the slipway may be relocated to the future Marine Industry Precinct, where larger-scale haul-out, maintenance and marine trade activities can operate more efficiently and accommodate growth in vessel sizes.

(E) Landside commercial opportunities

New lease areas and underutilised land present opportunities for commercial development that complements existing harbour activities and supports long-term activation. Potential uses may include marine-related businesses, seafood industry expansion, tourism operators, visitor services, hospitality and supporting commercial activities that contribute to a more active and economically productive harbour environment. Future development will be encouraged where it reinforces marina character and supports the harbour's primary maritime function. Relocation of slipway to the Marine Industry Precinct and consolidation of state agency marine operations may open more land for new or expanded commercial opportunities.

(F) Expanded wet lease and berthing

Subject to market demand and investment, the progressive removal of end-of-life pile moorings and realignment of the outer harbour fairway will rationalise berthing, improve navigability, and unlock opportunities for expanded wet lease areas.

This will enable existing operators to grow waterside operations and increase berthing capacity. New mooring areas within the inner harbour may also be explored to diversify vessel accommodation.

Collectively, these will support greater utilisation of harbour waters, improve operational flexibility, and help capture growing demand for berthing of small- to medium-sized vessels currently constrained elsewhere in the region.



Shellharbour Marina, Wollongong, NSW
© Shellharbour Marina

Precinct 2
Mixed-use Waterfront

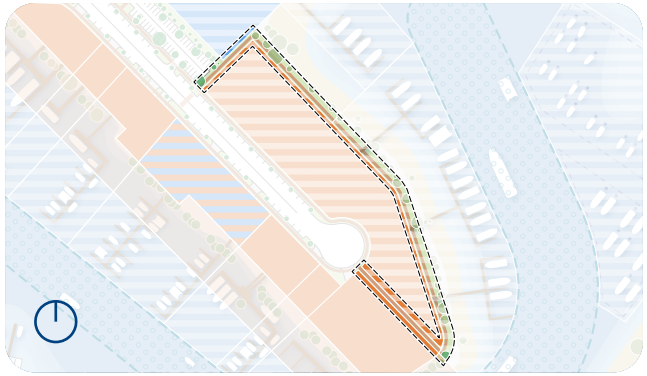
PIP2 Streetscape improvements

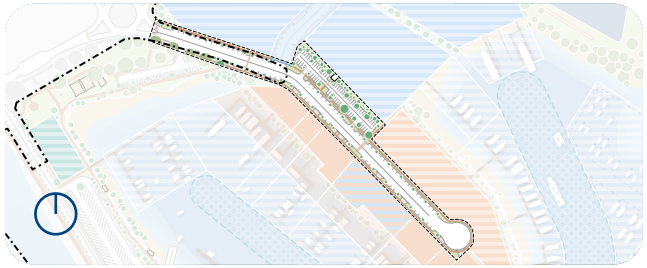
Transforming Henry Darwen Drive into a functional and attractive waterfront main street will support established marine industries, marina businesses, and harbour operations whilst improving safety, connectivity, and visitor experience. Enhancing the road with parallel on-street parking, dedicated pedestrian connections, shade tree planting and streetscape improvements will improve its function. There will be sufficient lane width for commercial servicing, freight access, and day-to-day harbour operations.

New off-street parking will support ongoing and emerging marina activities, events and peak visitation periods, with landscaping and streetscape upgrades improving visual amenity and providing a buffer between public realm and marine industry activities. Future utility considerations include the relocation of overhead lines underground to improve service reliability and future-proof essential infrastructure.

PRI1 Waterfront access and public realm improvements

A new promenade provides opportunities to experience marine industries and marina activity up close, creating a stronger connection between people and the working waterfront. It can be achieved by delivering a continuous harbour-edge boardwalk and shared pathway along the marina frontage, incorporating viewing areas, seating, shade, lighting and wayfinding.







Gold Coast City Marina and Shipyard, QLD
© InDaily



Mackay Marina, QLD
© Queensland.com

Precinct 3
Marine Industry

The Marine Industry Precinct secures the long-term future of Bowen's working harbour by providing a dedicated location for marine servicing, haul-out, vessel maintenance, repair, storage and marine trade activities. Purpose-built marine infrastructure, direct water access and room for future landside expansion will enable the precinct to evolve into a major marine services hub supporting larger scale marine operations and industry growth across the northern Whitsunday region.

Over time, the precinct may also accommodate the relocation and expansion of marine servicing functions from elsewhere within the harbour. It will create a dedicated marine industry hub capable of supporting larger vessels as well as expanding servicing capability and future maritime growth. Technical investigations and enabling infrastructure will be required to support long-term growth.

Indicative land use activities

- Haul-out facilities
- Vessel maintenance and repair
- Mechanical, electrical and marine engineering services
- Fabrication and marine trades
- Chandlery and marine retail
- Marine contractor services
- Commercial vessel berthing
- Dry boat storage
- Marine industry offices and administration
- Training and workforce development facilities
- Industry support services
- Equipment storage and warehousing
- Operational parking and servicing areas

Development opportunities

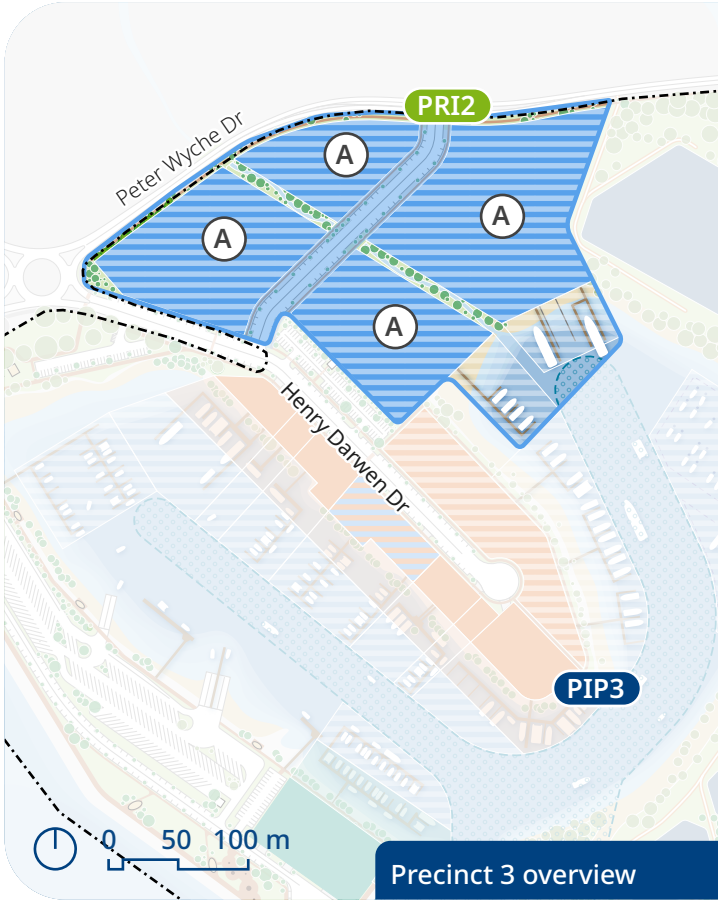
(A) Maritime service development

Public Infrastructure Projects

PIP3 Harbour access and navigation investigations

Public Realm Improvements

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements



Precinct 3 overview

Precinct 3
Marine Industry

Ⓐ Maritime service development

Unlock strategic land

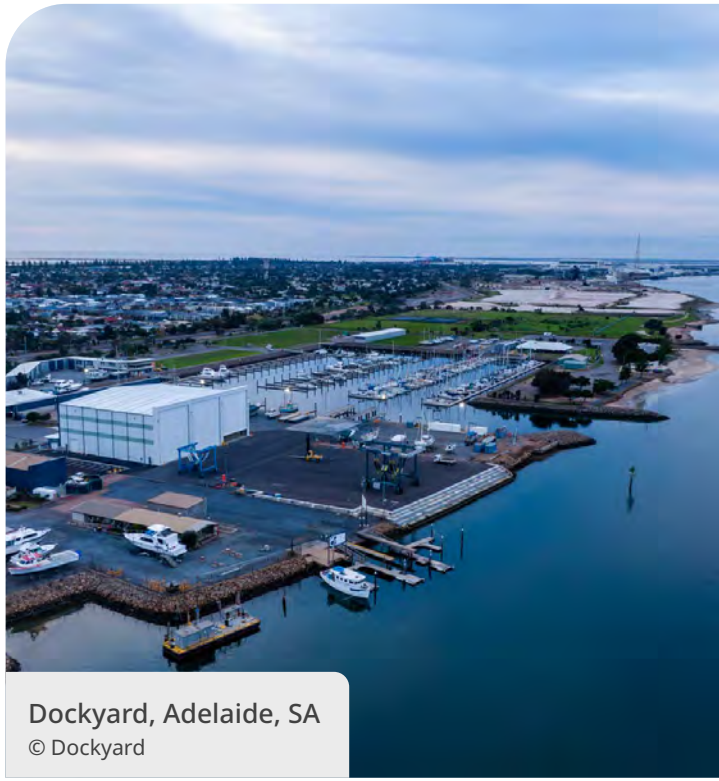
This precinct provides the land, infrastructure, and operational flexibility required to accommodate marine industry growth that cannot be efficiently accommodated within the existing harbour footprint. By creating future lease areas that respond to market demand signals, the Harbour can create capacity for larger-scale marine industrial uses whilst protecting operational harbour land. It will also reduce conflict with recreation, tourism and public-facing activities.

Deep water access

Expanding the marine industry in this area leverages the operational advantages of the inner harbour's deep-water access to accommodate larger vessels and expand servicing capability. With larger vessels than those that can currently access the Harbour, there is opportunity for enhanced wet lease areas that serve trawlers, yachts and other vessels unsuited to the current outer harbour. Along with improved in-harbour navigational access and expanded dry storage capacity, the opportunity creates the conditions for a broader range of maritime industry activities.

Future-ready infrastructure for staged growth

Purpose-built infrastructure will establish the foundations for a long-term marine industry hub that can grow in response to market demand. This will support downstream marine services, attracting investment, supporting skilled employment and strengthening local and regional supply chains.



Dockyard, Adelaide, SA
© Dockyard



Gold Coast Marina and Shipyard
© Iguana Yachts

Precinct 3
Marine Industry

PIP3 Harbour access and navigation investigations

Entrance channel investigations

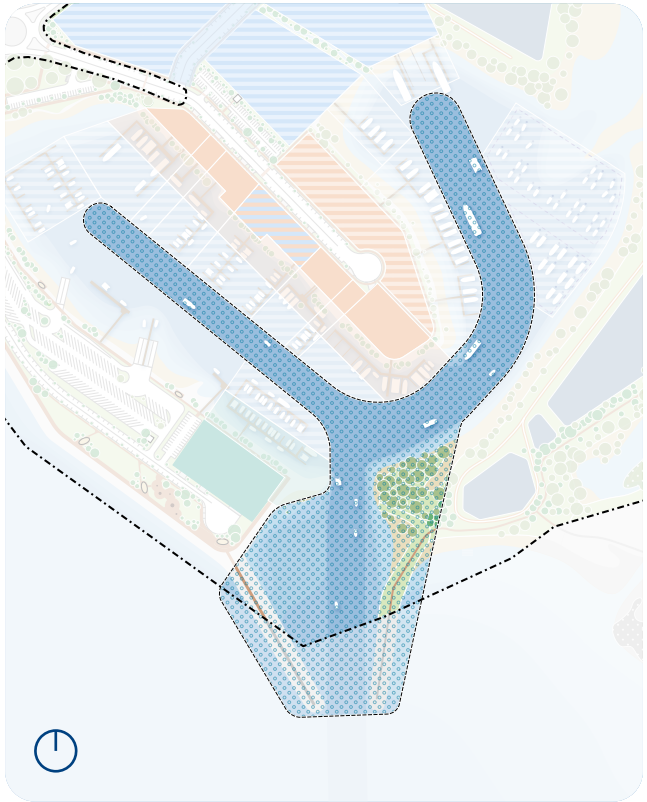
The existing harbour entrance presents navigational and access constraints for larger vessels that may be required to support future marine industry growth in the inner harbour. Future investigations will assess the performance of the entrance channel and breakwaters, including opportunities to improve navigational safety, vessel manoeuvrability and access to the inner harbour. The findings will inform whether upgrades such as channel widening, deepening or realignment are required.

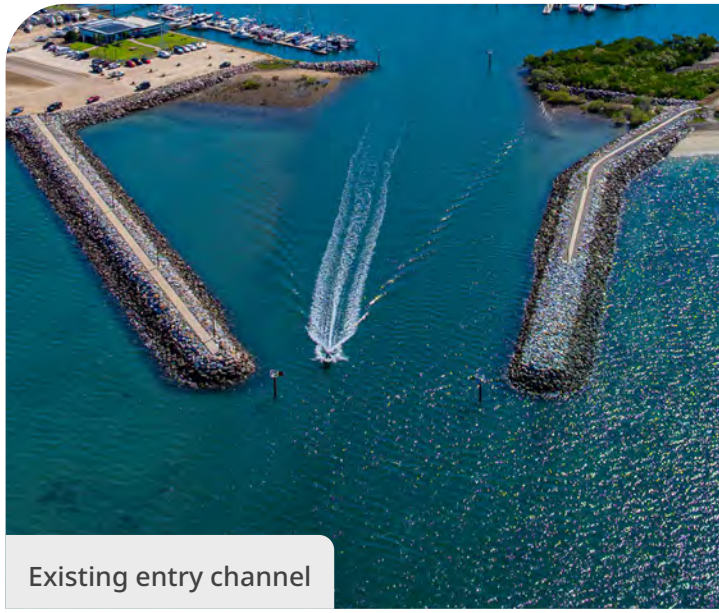
Inner harbour dredging

The inner harbour likely requires dredging to establish an all-tide navigation fairway from the harbour entrance to the haul-out facility, enabling the precinct to accommodate larger vessels. Dredging may be undertaken in a staged sequence in response to market trends and future growth in vessel sizes.

High-voltage electrical line relocation

The alignment of a high voltage electrical line across the Harbour will also require re-evaluation through future technical investigations to allow vessels with a significant mast height to access the inner harbour and potential maritime service offerings.





Existing entry channel

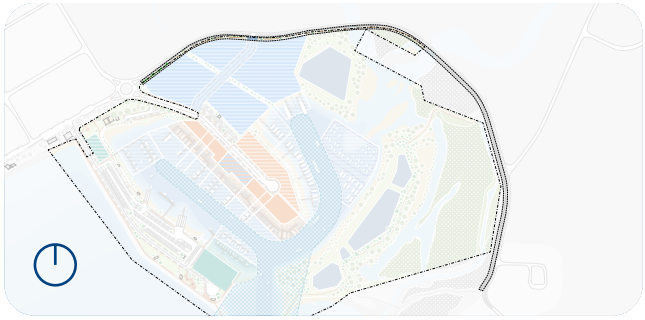


Inner harbour channel and existing electrical line

Precinct 3
Marine Industry

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements

An active transport corridor along Peter Wyche Drive presents an opportunity to connect existing and future active transport network including routes along Hay Street, Queen Street and Santa Barbara Parade. Landscaping, shade trees, seating, wayfinding and shared pathway infrastructure will establish a comfortable and legible route for people of all ages and abilities. There will be setbacks between public realm and future lease areas providing opportunities for screening, landscape treatment and utility infrastructure without compromising industrial functionality or access requirements.





Chapman Road Shared Path, Geraldton, WA
© Geraldton City Council

Precinct 4
Maritime Operations

A functional, minimal intervention precinct focussed solely on accommodating, maintaining and operating the Harbour's dredging spoil ponds. This precinct complements all Harbour functionality, enabling future capacity for channel dredging critical to vessel navigation and safety.

Indicative land use activities

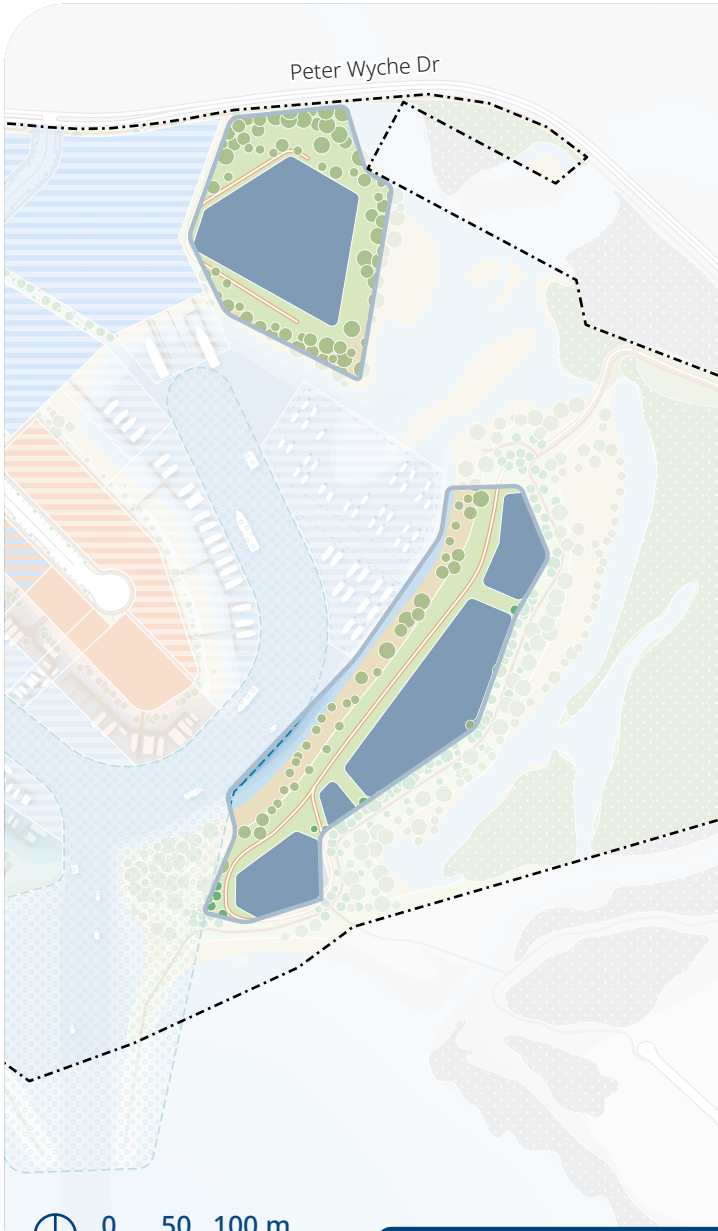
- Dredging spoil ponds
- Environmental buffers

Management and maintenance of dredging spoil ponds

Existing dredging spoil ponds will be maintained to support ongoing harbour operations and the safe, efficient and environmentally responsible management of dredged material. Upgrades to the existing access track will provide reliable access for ongoing maintenance and management.

Future spoil pond investigations will assess capacity and condition as well as long-term suitability and remaining service life. Bund integrity and environmental constraints will be key considerations.

Findings will inform future dredging programs, infrastructure upgrades and the need for expansion or alternative spoil management solutions to support long-term harbour maintenance and navigational access.



Precinct 4 overview

Precinct 5
Environmental Interface

This precinct supports the long-term function and resilience of the Harbour through the protection and enhancement of surrounding wetland and coastal environments. Healthy ecological systems help manage stormwater, improve water quality, support natural drainage processes. They increase resilience to flooding, storm tide and extreme weather events. The precinct balances conservation, restoration and environmental education outcomes while protecting the natural assets that contribute to the harbour's environmental performance and distinct coastal character.

Indicative land use activities

- Wetlands and coastal habitats restoration
- Water quality and stormwater management functions
- Ecological monitoring and research
- Environmental and cultural interpretation
- Low-impact walking trails
- Lookouts and birdwatching area

Development opportunities

Ⓐ Wetland rehabilitation and conservation

Public Realm Improvements

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements



Precinct 5 overview

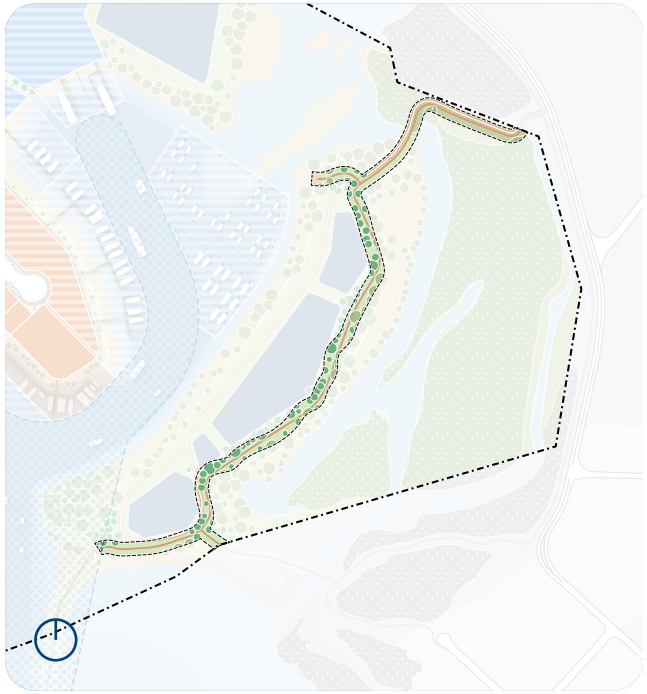
Precinct 5
Environmental Interface

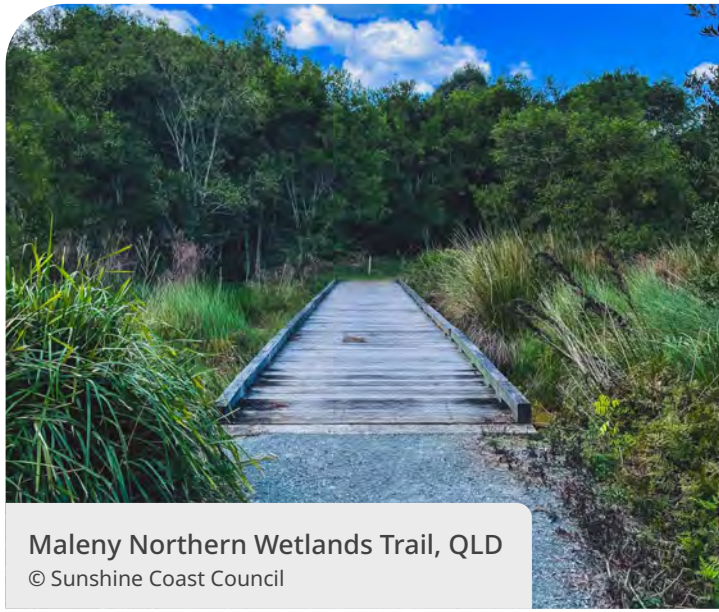
Ⓐ Wetland rehabilitation and conservation

Targeted wetland rehabilitation and conservation works will protect and enhance the Harbour's wetland environments. This will be through revegetation, habitat restoration, erosion management and ecological stewardship. Environmental offsets associated with future harbour development may also contribute to restoration outcomes. Together, these initiatives will improve biodiversity, strengthen ecological connectivity and enhance the long-term resilience of the Harbour and surrounding coastal environments.

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements

A network of low-impact trails, lookouts and interpretive experiences that provide opportunities to experience and learn about Bowen's wetland environments while protecting ecological values. The trails will support recreation, environmental education and community stewardship, while strengthening connections between the Harbour, wetlands and surrounding active transport network.





Maleny Northern Wetlands Trail, QLD
© Sunshine Coast Council



Erskine Nature Trail, Mandurah, WA
© Pupsy



5 Implementation

Overview

The transformation of Bowen State Boat Harbour will occur progressively over the life of the Master Plan through a combination of public infrastructure investment, operational improvements, private sector development and environmental stewardship. The implementation framework is organised around four priority areas that reflect the Harbour's long-term vision as a resilient working harbour supporting maritime industry, recreation, tourism and environmental resilience.

These priorities are intended to guide investment decisions over time. They will allow projects to respond to market demand, funding availability, operational requirements and tenure outcomes. This approach provides flexibility while maintaining a clear implementation pathway aligned with the Harbour's strategic objectives and precinct outcomes.

The implementation priorities are:



Strengthen existing Harbour functions and operations



Activate recreation, tourism and community connections



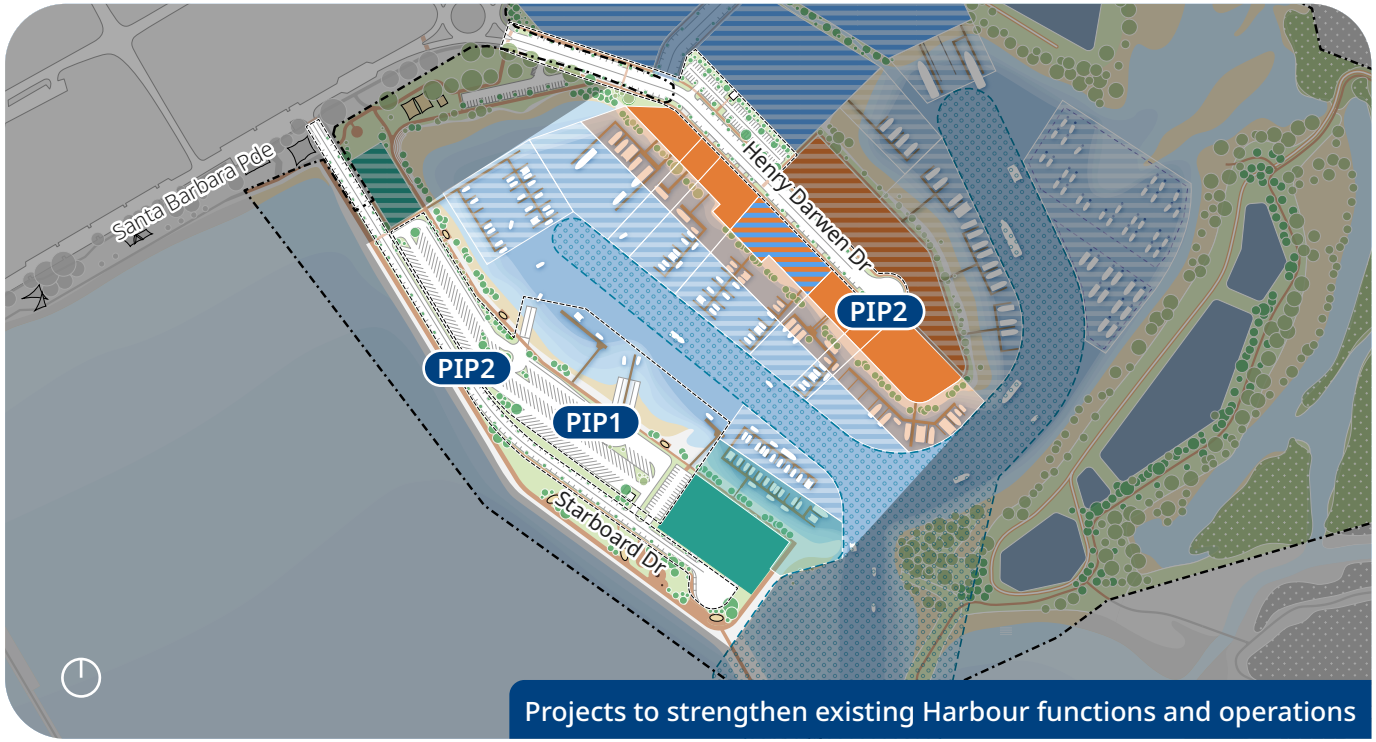
Unlock future expansion opportunities



Ongoing operational and environmental management

Strengthen existing Harbour functions and operations

This priority focuses on strengthening the Harbour's core maritime function by addressing infrastructure constraints, improving safety and operational efficiency, and supporting existing businesses, state agency marine operations, and recreational boating users. Early investment will build confidence in the Harbour's future and provide the foundation for subsequent activation and growth.



Projects to strengthen existing Harbour functions and operations

PIP1 Recreational boating facility upgrades

Expand boat launching capacity through an additional boat ramp, additional public pontoon and increased car-trailer unit parking capacity with supporting amenities. Provide better amenities including upgraded public toilet and fish cleaning station.

PIP2 Streetscape improvements

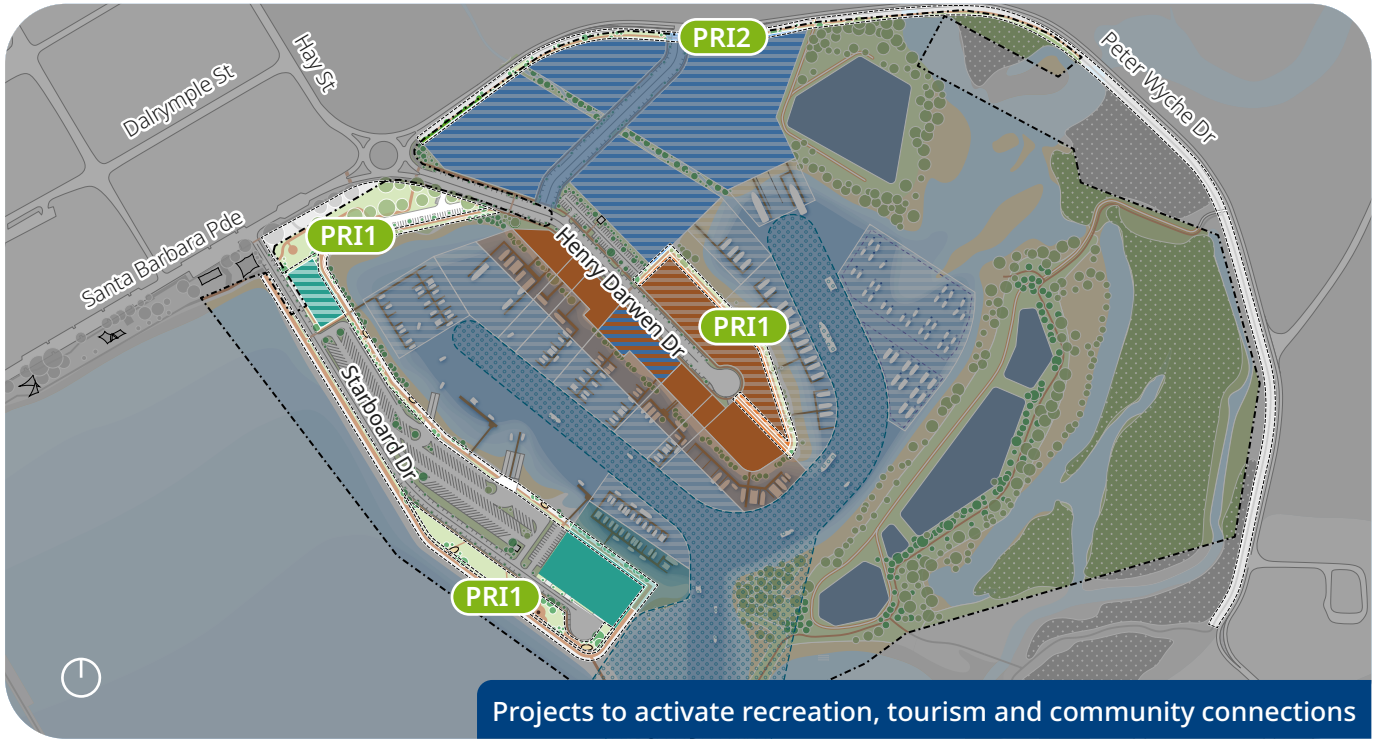
Staged delivery of improvements along Starboard Drive and Henry Darwen Drive to enhance accessibility, safety, and wayfinding through upgraded streetscapes, stronger arrival experiences, additional public parking and more legible movement corridors.

Existing land use activation

Strengthen fisheries, state agency marine operations and marine servicing activities through targeted reinvestment, infrastructure renewal and operational improvements.

Activate recreation, tourism and community connections

Building on improved Harbour operations, this priority enhances its role as a community, recreation and visitor destination. Waterfront experiences, public connections will be strengthened to create a more accessible harbour that complements Bowen foreshore. Activation initiatives support tourism, recreation and hospitality opportunities while celebrating Bowen's working waterfront identity.



Projects to activate recreation, tourism and community connections

PRI1 Waterfront access and public realm improvements

Enhance public amenity, recreation opportunities and community gathering spaces through improved amenities, landscaping and open space.

Delivery should commence in Precinct 1 and extend into Precinct 2 as waterfront activation occurs.

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements

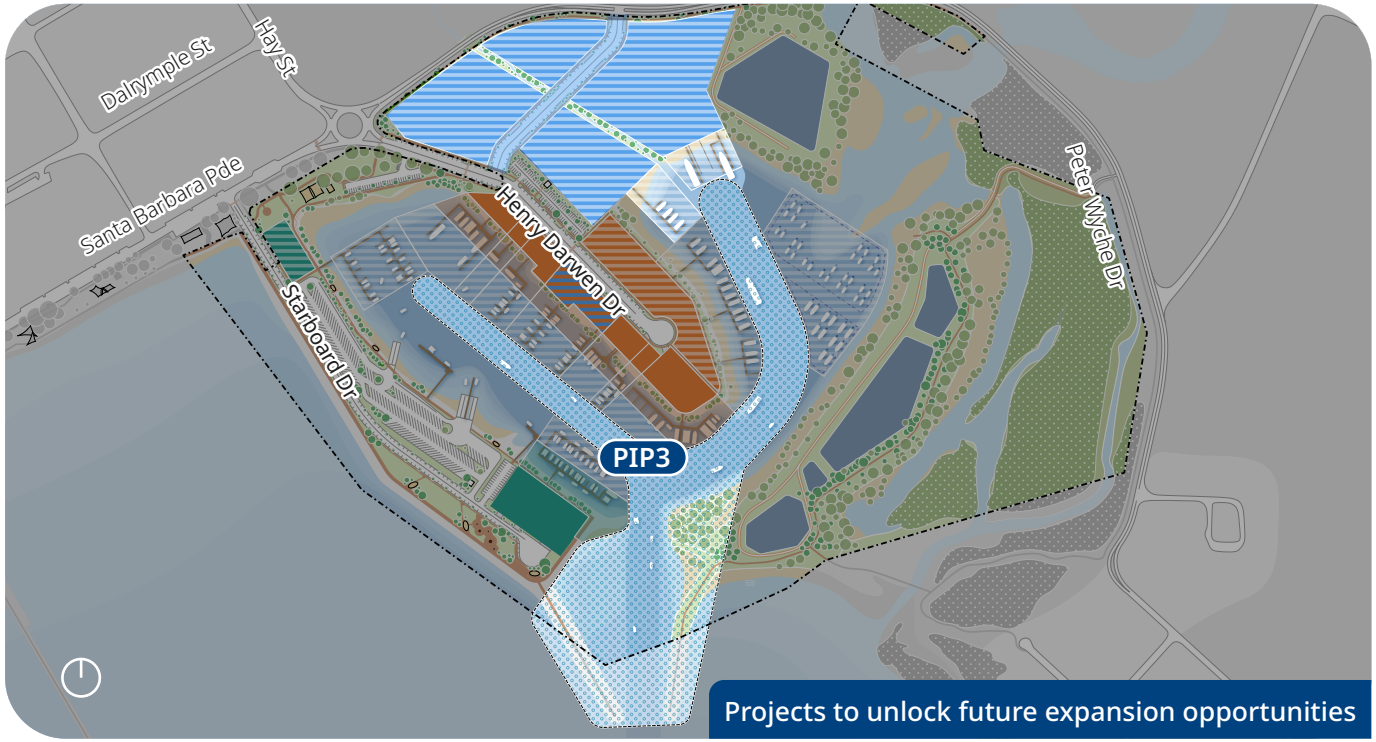
Strengthen walking and cycling links between the Harbour, CBD, Bowen Foreshore and Flagstaff Hill. Delivery is best aligned with future development of Precinct 3 and the broader active transport network.

Activate with mixed-use tourism, recreation and hospitality

Support tourism, hospitality and marine recreation opportunities that strengthen visitation, extend dwell time and improve waterfront activation.

Unlock future expansion opportunities

This priority focuses on unlocking the Harbour's long-term growth potential through marine industry expansion, marina growth and enabling infrastructure investment. The Marine Industry Precinct becomes the Harbour's primary growth area. It provides capacity for larger-scale marine servicing, vessel maintenance and maritime industry activities. At the same time, investment in maritime industry opportunities will support increased harbour utilisation, private investment, and long-term economic growth.



Projects to unlock future expansion opportunities

Waterfront access and public realm improvements

Release strategically located waterfront land for marine and harbour-related commercial development.

PIP3 Harbour access and navigation investigations

Investigate and deliver the harbour channel, navigation and infrastructure required to accommodate larger vessels and expanded marine servicing activities.

Expand wet lease and marine infrastructure

Increase vessel accommodation options through additional berthing, mooring and supporting marine infrastructure.

Relocation of marine services to Precinct 3 and staged land release

Transition marine servicing activities into Precinct 3 over time, releasing more land in Precinct 2 for marina expansion and waterfront activation.

Unlock future expansion opportunities

To fully unlock opportunities in the Harbour, further technical, economic and environmental investigations should be undertaken. These include:

Technical

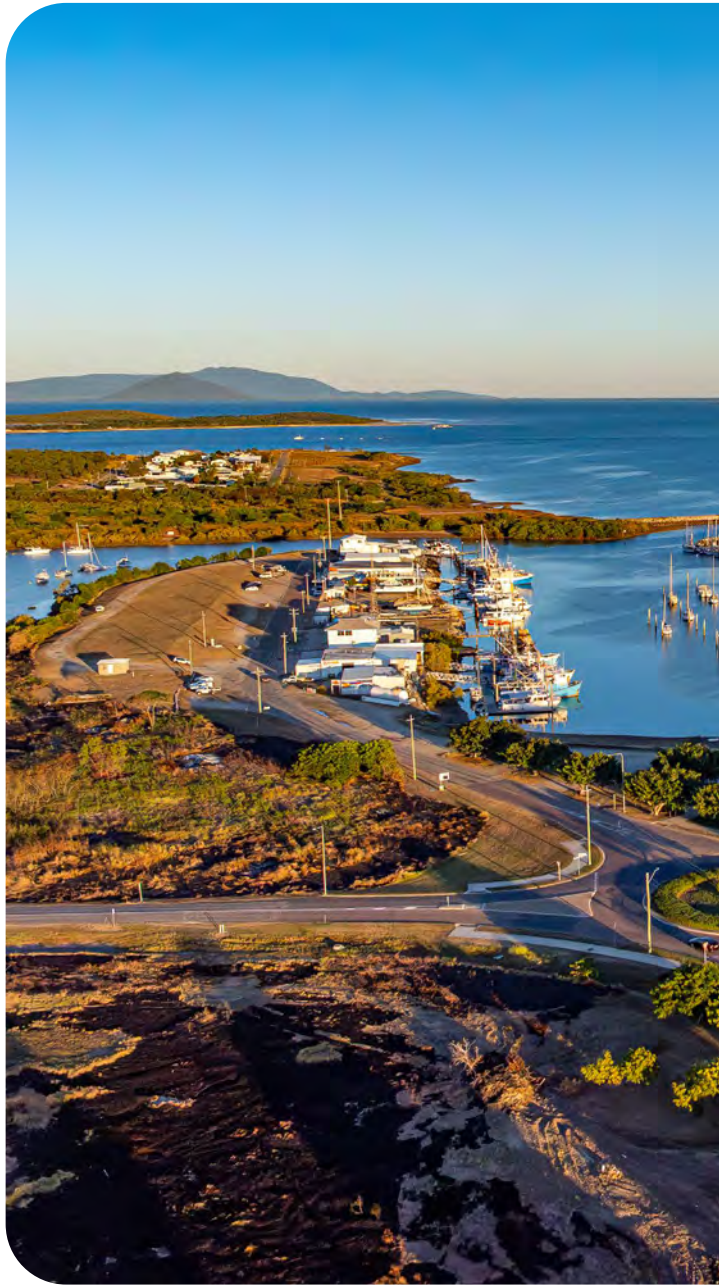
- Coastal process and sediment transport modelling related to potential channel and breakwater realignment.
- Navigation fairway alignment and dimension assessment for larger vessels to safely access the inner harbour under various functional use cases.
- Coastal and fluvial process modelling to inform dredging envelope and methodologies.
- Marine geotechnical investigations to determine geotechnical and geochemical soil characteristics in dredge areas.
- Dredge spoil disposal options and methodologies.
- Powerline relocation assessment.
- Site preparation, access road and utility servicing.

Economic

- Marine servicing demand assessment.
- Marina berth occupancy, demand assessment, delivery and management options.
- Commercial feasibility and funding pathways.
- Lease and land release strategy.
- Industry attraction and workforce analysis.
- Economic impact and cost-benefit analysis of major public infrastructure projects.

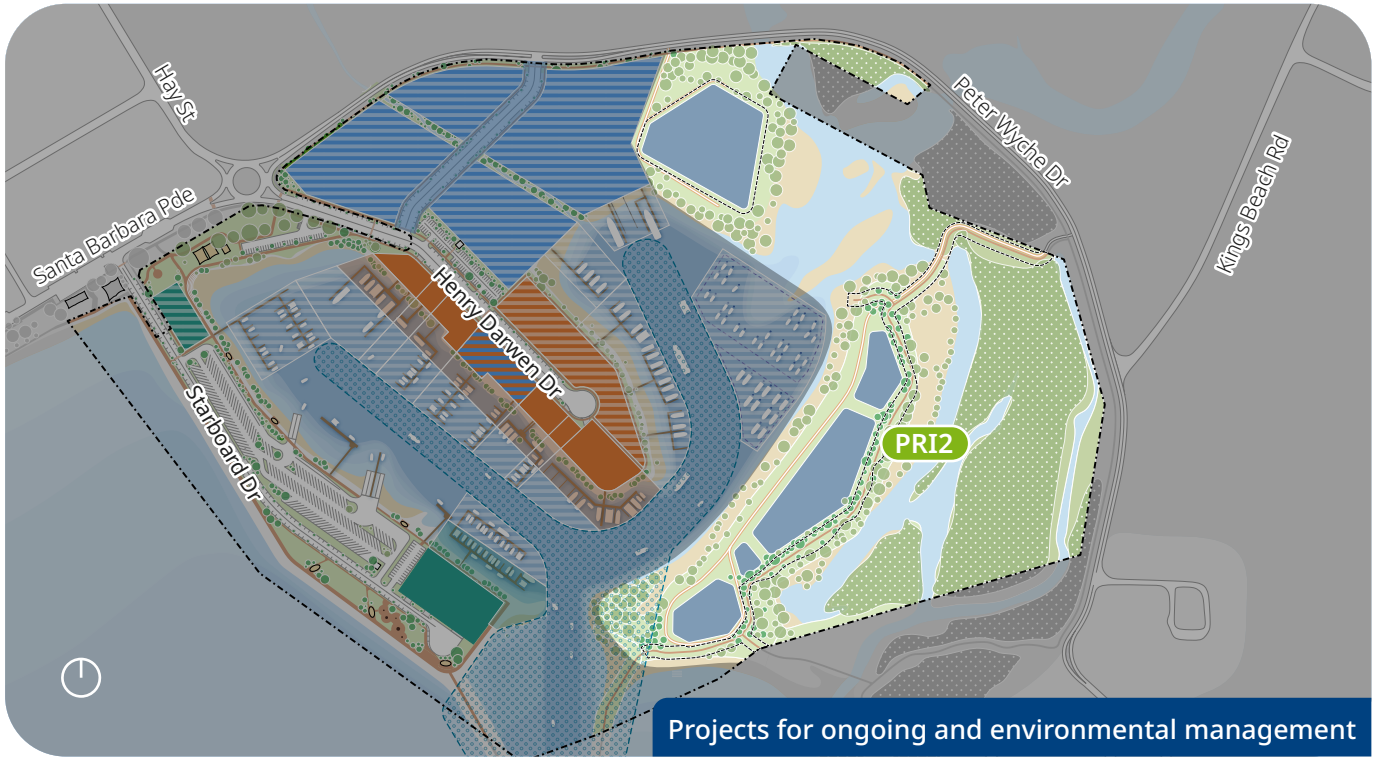
Environmental

- Environmental context, constraints, and impacts of dredging and realignment on Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.
- Ecology and biodiversity assessments.
- Environmental approvals and mitigation requirements.



Ongoing operational and environmental management

Operational management and environmental stewardship underpin the long-term success of Bowen State Boat Harbour and will remain ongoing responsibilities throughout the life of the Master Plan. Maintaining critical harbour infrastructure while protecting and enhancing ecological systems will improve resilience, environmental performance and long-term operational functionality.



Projects for ongoing and environmental management

Management and maintenance of dredging spoil ponds

Maintain operational access to spoil ponds to support future harbour maintenance and navigational safety.

Assess long-term receiving capacity of spoil ponds to support harbour growth and channel maintenance.

Wetland rehabilitation and conservation

Targeted wetland rehabilitation, habitat restoration, revegetation and environmental offsets where appropriate.

Continue ecological monitoring, climate adaptation planning and nature-based resilience.

PRI2 Active transport and recreation network improvements

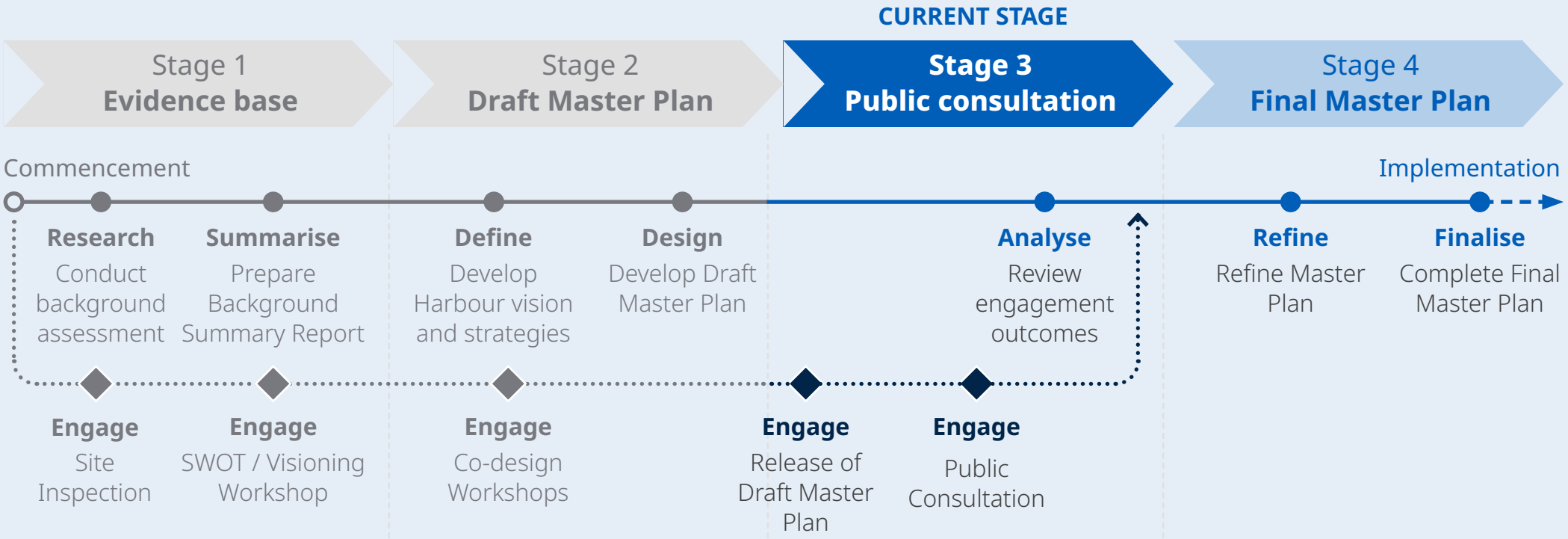
Deliver nature trails, lookouts and interpretation that encourage low-impact recreation, education and community stewardship of the wetland environment.

Next steps

Master Plan finalisation

The Draft Master Plan for Bowen State Boat Harbour has been developed by Maritime Safety Queensland using evidence-based approaches with supporting technical assessments. Collaborative engagement with Harbour tenants, Whitsunday Regional Council, state agencies, key stakeholders, and industry representatives has also informed the process. Feedback and insights from community consultation will be consolidated to refine the Final Master Plan.

The Master Plan is expected to be finalised in mid-2027. Project updates can be found at:
www.tmr.qld.gov.au/projects/Bowen-state-boat-harbour-master-plan



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www.msq.qld.gov.au | www.tmr.qld.gov.au