Disclaimer: While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this data, the City of Gold Coast (City) makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness, suitability for any particular purpose. City disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incur as a result of the data being inaccurate or incomplete in any way for any reason. Photographic images and illustrations indicated as being for information only and are intended to represent general urban design principles and design.
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The City of Gold Coast is focused on protecting areas on the Gold Coast with a particular local identity, natural resource base or development character. The primary intent of this place analysis is to provide a resource to ensure character elements are appropriately considered in future development decisions at Palm Beach which forms part of the southern Gold Coast strip.

The Palm Beach neighbourhood centre, located along the ocean front is the central focus of a small residential suburb, which has an intimate character and is characterised by large expanses of parkland along the oceanfront with distinctive mature vegetation.
KEY URBAN CHARACTER ELEMENTS

The key character elements and special qualities identified for Palm Beach are summarised below.

- Activated frontages along both sides of the Gold Coast Highway and Palm Beach Avenue which bisect the centre and on avenues connecting the centre to the beach.
- The strong street grid with varied road widths informs the proportion of development height.
- Retain and enhance mid-block connections as a legible break in the urban structure.
- Consolidated corner developments bookend the village ‘block’ at high profile intersections, at edges to the village centre and on avenues which connect the centre to the beach.

- The street grid reinforces the visual and physical connection between the village centre and the ocean.
- Framed views assist in orientation along the street grid link to surrounding landscape features: Tree lined streets with good path network, street furniture and shaded sitting nodes throughout the village centre.

- Safe Gold Coast Highway crossing points on east west roads with access to the beach: Palm Beach Avenue; 4th Avenue; and 7th Avenue.
- Mid-block links via private carparks and laneways throughout village centre.

- Diversity of commercial, office, community infrastructure, retail, service and dining promote high levels of street activity and engagement.
- The active street life supported by the local community promotes a new destination for visiting trade rather than a thoroughfare for passing traffic.

- Consolidated retail and commercial uses in the village centre.
- Narrow lot frontages create a diversity and fine grain of shopfronts.
- Zero setback frontage and covered awnings create shade and enclosure to street.
- Proximity of the centre to the beach reflected in upper decks with views of the water.
- Adaptive re-use of older building stock to promote dining and entertainment venues and office spaces.
- Development frames views to landscape features that assist with orientation.
Palm Beach is a beachside suburb located between the scenic headlands of Burleigh Heads and Currumbin Ridge and the natural waterways Tallebudgera Creek and Currumbin Creek on the Southern Gold Coast.

While currently combining a mix of residential densities, Palm Beach is predominantly low density land-use and a traditional suburban area. The population growth anticipated in the city over the next 20 years will result in changes to places along the southern corridor.

The key to respecting the character of the Palm Beach area is to identify and understand the special aspects which the community relate to, and ensure new development understands, respects and responds to this character to enhance unique place qualities.
METHODOLOGY

This study follows a three step process of mapping the spatial, physical and cultural qualities that define the character of Palm Beach.

STAGE ONE
City and suburban context

This step reviews background information and undertakes a comprehensive place analysis including written, graphic and photographic representations and descriptions of the findings.

The process includes site visits, desktop analysis, and research:

• Desktop review of desired character statements in established “building block documents” including but not limited to Gold Coast Landscape Character Study 2014, Gold Coast Urban Heritage & Character Study 1997, Gold Coast Planning Scheme 2003, planning scheme policy 12 Image of a City, Palm Beach Masterplan and existing heritage studies.

• Undertake field survey to record character assessment at a village scale and analyse: What is ‘special’ and distinctive about this place, plus elements amenable to urban design responses.

• Undertake a comprehensive mapping exercise from a whole of city scale to a suburb scale to a local ‘village’ centre scale to define the broad range of physical and cultural elements that influence the shape and character of Palm Beach including spatial definition of the village centre in Palm Beach.

Three Scales of Mapping

STAGE TWO
Village Elements

An assessment of character elements identifying how they collectively contribute to the function, urban form and character.
REGIONAL CONTEXT

Palm Beach is a beachside suburb located between the scenic headlands of Burleigh Heads and Currumbin Ridge and the natural waterways Tallebudgera Creek and Currumbin Creek on the Southern Gold Coast. The southern Gold Coast curves in an arc to the most easterly point of the Gold Coast at Point Danger. These southern points and headlands, including Burleigh and Currumbin that flank Palm Beach are formed from the eruption of Wollumbin (Mount Warning) shield volcano 23 million years ago. The headlands create protection and a slightly north east orientation for the sandy beach that runs between the headlands and creeks which provides desirable aspect and protection from the prevailing south easterly winds, and an attractive and liveable sub-tropical climate with hot summers and mild winters, as illustrated adjacent.

What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

- Located approximately mid-way between Coolangatta and Surfers Paradise with good access from major roads
- Attractive location with a north-eastern orientation with headlands creasing protection from prevailing south-easterly winds
“Palm Beach epitomises the statement ‘the story of the Gold Coast has therefore been one in which change has been intrinsic to continuity, where sudden bouts of development have become so familiar that they are essential to the city’s culture and image’.”

- Gold Coast Urban Heritage & Character Study 1997.
CITY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Gold Coast Landscape Character Study 2014 maps 10 Landscape Character Types for the city, of which six apply over Palm Beach. The six city-wide landscape character types which are found in Palm Beach are illustrated on the overlays adjacent and a summary of the landscape character elements specific to the Palm Beach centre that are recognised at a whole of city scale are referenced in Table 1.

A full detailed description of signature elements and focal points, elements of importance, elements that reinforce character and anomalies for each landscape character type are tabulated in the appendices or can be found in the Gold Coast Landscape Character Study 2014.

Table 1: Regional Landscape Character Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature elements focal points</th>
<th>Elements that reinforce character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The ocean as seen from elevated viewpoints.</td>
<td>• Low-rise retail strips (e.g. Surfers Paradise and Burleigh) which promote high levels of street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The beaches which as a landscape element</td>
<td>activity and engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide a major point of difference between the</td>
<td>• Street trees of appropriate form and scale to provide amenity, shade and microclimate benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Coast and other cities.</td>
<td>for pedestrians/cyclists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Views of forested hills, with distant higher</td>
<td>• View corridors from and between buildings to the ocean, river and beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mountains behind.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Undulating topography.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of importance</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Views and glimpses of the ocean, rivers,</td>
<td>• Low-rise retail strips (e.g. Surfers Paradise and Burleigh) which promote high levels of street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creeks, estuaries, canals, lakes and waterbodies from public areas.</td>
<td>activity and engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Views to and from beaches, plus glimpses from</td>
<td>• Street trees of appropriate form and scale to provide amenity, shade and microclimate benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surrounding streets and public open spaces as seen between buildings and vegetation.</td>
<td>for pedestrians/cyclists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Views from roads, public open spaces and</td>
<td>• View corridors from and between buildings to the ocean, river and beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recreational water bodies to other landscape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>character types such as mountains.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Distinct boundaries between developed areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and undeveloped open space.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Landscape Character Types - City Scale

- Water/watercourses and estuary
- High rise development
- Coastal headlands and beaches
- Bay islands and Spit
- Lowlands
- Coastal plains and low hills
- Foothills
- Distinct valleys
- Mountains

Regional Context Map
HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Geographic Heritage Frameworks (GHF's) established in the 2014 Gold Coast Landscape Character Study capture the patterns of development of the Gold Coast and the tangible evidence of heritage landscapes that exist in the suburb.

Of the nine Heritage Frameworks identified in the study, five are applicable to Palm Beach. Table 2 explains the Heritage framework that has been identified in Palm Beach.

---

Landscape Heritage Overlay

- **Heritage hub/ village**
- **A** Movement routes and hubs
- **B** Beaches foreshores
- **C** Canal areas
- **D** Coastal development
- **E** Broadwater and Lower Coomera River
- **F** Northern rural plain
- **G** Hinterland foothills and valleys
- **H** Western Ranges, tablelands and valleys
- **Gold Coast regional boundary**
Table 2: Heritage Significance of Palm Beach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Heritage Framework Landscapes</th>
<th>Statements of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Movement Routes &amp; Hubs</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Pattern of the Gold Coasts’ Linkages and Community Nodes</td>
<td>The cultural significance lies in the heritage evidence, the intangible heritage and its settings.&lt;br&gt;It includes historical movement routes, tracks, roads, railways, bridges, the airport, boating ways, ferries, the villages, community hubs and gathering places through the Gold Coast’s history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B The Beaches &amp; Foreshores</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Recreation Landscape</td>
<td>The cultural significance lies in the high aesthetic and social appreciation of the beaches and their associated foreshores and open space, the headlands and coastal waterways and the streetscape plantings and urban views from the beaches and esplanades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C The Coastal Wetlands &amp; Canals Spine</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Leisured Residential Landscape</td>
<td>The cultural significance lies in the waterways and the associated open space corridors and vegetation there, the historical residential canal estates, and the pattern of roads and bridges formed in the historical developments of this coastal plain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D South Coast Development Strip</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Linear Beachside City&lt;br&gt;The lands of the foreshore and formerly wooded dunes over which the coastal development began and grew in intensity through the 20th century.</td>
<td>The cultural significance lies in the strip pattern of development formed between the beaches and the wetlands of the coastal plain, the differences and social values of each locality along its length and the aesthetic values of the streetscapes and beach and esplanade views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G Hinterland Foothills &amp; Valleys</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Residential &amp; Recreational Spine</td>
<td>The cultural significance lies in the historical pattern of movement routes, rural and residential developments over these landscapes, the aesthetic appreciation of both the historical landscape form and vegetation cover wherever it can be appreciated, and the distant viewscapes of the ranges and tablelands to the west.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UBERN STRUCTURE

The urban structure of Palm Beach is largely informed by the natural landscape features that surround the suburb. The development that has occurred over time, including the road and street pattern and the historic settlement, development and land-use pattern of the suburb follows the movement north south and east west through Palm Beach along major roads, as illustrated adjacent.

Palm Beach is framed between natural open space on three sides which gives Palm Beach a unique setting experienced by residents each time they enter and leave the suburb. The ocean to the east, and the Tallebudgera and Currumbin Creek systems form natural edges to the built form of the suburb. The M1 (Pacific Highway) with its associated acoustic barriers forms a hard edge to the suburb and separates Palm Beach from the more elevated suburb of Elanora.

As illustrated in the plan adjacent, the ridges of Burleigh, Currumbin and Elanora form a defining frame for the predominantly flat suburb’s edges and terminate the view lines from the north-south and east-west grid of streets creating recurring landmarks in the landscape including the McPherson Range and other geographic features such as The Cougals.

These ridges also offer unique gateway experiences and sense of arrival to the area:

- Iconic views from the Currumbin Creek bridge of the Gold Coast sky line, the Currumbin Rock, surf break and beach from the old Gold Coast Highway vantage point as emerges from the Currumbin Hill Conservation Park. This view is appreciated by vehicles, pedestrians and aeroplanes.
- Iconic views from the Tallebudgera Creek Bridge of the Burleigh Head National Park headland, with distant views to Mount Warning and the hinterland. These views are appreciated by vehicles, bridge fishermen and pedestrians.

Palm Beach narrows in at the middle at Palm Beach Avenue to become 1 kilometre from the M1 to the beach which forms a major publically accessible asset, focal point and edge to the east.
Broad Structure of Palm Beach and the Study Area

- Strong vistas on main roads
- Gateways
- Regional ridgelines
- Village centres
- Currumbin Estuary Landscape Character Area
- Indicative Palm Beach Extent
- The Study Area
The study area: Palm Beach District Centre zone and surrounds

Gateway to Palm Beach over Currumbin Creek

Gateway to Palm Beach over Tallebudgera Creek with Burleigh ridgeline

Southern Frame: Currumbin ridgeline and Reserve

Broad Structure of Palm Beach and the study area - aerial view
How do you know you are in Palm Beach?
What is it about this place that makes it unique and liveable?
How is it different to other Gold Coast places?
Flat coastal lowland behind the remnant coastal dune system leading to coastal plains and foothills to the west
Strong relationship with the beach and waterways
Flanked north and south by Tallebudgera and Currumbin Creeks
Enclosed by coastal headlands and to the west by mountain ranges
Strong sense of entry and arrival through gateways
Large amount of regional passing traffic on Gold Coast Highway and M1
TOPOGRAPHY, LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE

TOPOGRAPHY

Palm Beach is sited on the flat coastal lowlands. However the suburb does feature an undulating landscape with some coastal low hills in its north-western edge and remnants of the original frontal and hind dunes and back dunes running parallel to the beach. The suburb gently slopes from the beachside dunes to the west where coastal wetlands and melaleuca swamps originally formed. These low-lying sites were subsequently drained to form the Palm Beach canals which penetrate from the north-west to Tallebudgera Creek and Laguna Lake, which drains to the south to Currumbin Creek.

In the village centre the highway runs along the hind dune and falls gently to the west and moderately to the east where Jefferson Lane lies in the sag of the fore-dune before rising again to the beach. This topographic remnant of the dunes is characteristic of Palm Beach and evident in the vertical geometry of the streets which are draped over the existing dunal landscape. Fresh spear water is available in the suburb and Laceys Lane was the site of a freshwater spring prior to development of the high-rise at Royal and Pacific Palms.
LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE

A number of forms of open space are evident in the suburb:

- **Natural open space**: predominantly passive open space the creeks and waterways and adjoining vegetated estuaries and ridges, the beach and the ocean.
- **Physical open space**: the active open space areas including areas listed above for active pursuits, formalised sporting events and the connections between.
- **Other open space**: the use of State land and schools including Palm Beach State school and Palm Beach Currumbin State High School grounds, fitness camps, camping and caravan parks, community halls and facilities and dog off lead areas and skate-parks which explore non-standard open space provisions bolstering traditional open space needs.
- The green headlands merge into the adjacent estuarine landscapes which connect to the continuous sandy beach which creates a string of continuous open space assets. These large open space assets are dispersed throughout the suburb including the Mallawa Drive sporting precinct.
- The Mallawa Drive sporting precinct (Duncan McKenna Field for soccer, hockey and netball).
- Tallebudgera Estuary open spaces including Murlong Park, Tallebudgera Creek Environmental Park, Quicks Island, Tallebudgera Creek Tourist Park ground, Tallebudgera Leisure Centre grounds.
- Ronnie Long Park connecting back to the beach and dog off lead area.
- Laguna Lake Parkland.
- Rockview Public Park.
- Laceys Lane Dog off lead area.
- Pirate Parkland.
- Beree-Badalla Reserve.

Other public open space is dispersed through the suburb:

- Elizabeth Sloper Gardens.
- Laguna Lake Park.
- Salk Oval.
- Palm Beach Olympic Pool.
- Beach access ways including public facilities at Seventh Avenue and the SLSC.
- Bromley Park opposite Palm Beach Library and Community Centre grounds.

Most open space features mature vegetation, public access to the creek, beach, playgrounds, boardwalks/walkways and facilities. Even the fingers of canal systems have open space access points and promote long views across water to ridges beyond such as Rio Dolphin Park, Rio Barramundi Park and Melaleuca Drive Canal reserves.
Section A: Palm Beach between the hills

Topography and Natural Open Space
- Creeks and waterways
- Canals and lakes
- Public open space
- Topography low - high
- 10m contours
- Indicative Palm Beach Extent
- Study Area
Section B: Ranges to Coastline

Physical Open Space, Trails and Key Routes

- Community facilities
- Creeks
- Public open space
- Walking trails and key routes
- Public connection to waterfront
- Indicative Palm Beach Extent
- Study area

1. Tarrabura Reserve walk & Pirate Park
2. Beree Badalla Reserve walk
3. Salk Oval walk
4. Laguna Lake walk
5. Palm Beach Centre
6. Jefferson Lane walk
7. Sporting Precinct
8. Tallebudgera Drive
9. Tallebudgera Leisure Centre
10. The Avenues: East/West North/South
What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s special</th>
<th>Local &amp; Council Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The beach and open space frame are of critical importance to both residents and visitors to Palm Beach:</td>
<td>A range of active and passive recreational experiences in large interconnected open spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- as a continuous form of publically accessible open space from Creek to Creek</td>
<td>Organised community recreation and sporting groups that activate the facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- as an area with multiple passive and active recreational opportunities</td>
<td>Flat terrain allowing good pedestrian walkability and cycling opportunities and access to views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- as a site of high scenic amenity and natural beauty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- as an access to the Pacific Ocean for recreation.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Palm Beach Surf Club with Lifeguard service and adjacent public open space

Mallawa Drive Sports Complex - Palm Beach Sharks Soccer
HISTORY AND HERITAGE

It is likely the Palm Beach area and the associated waterways and ocean provided a rich coastal marine environment that supported food and freshwater requirements for the indigenous inhabitants. Anecdotally, the name Tallebudgera is derived from ‘talle’ meaning ‘fish’ and ‘budgerie’ meaning ‘good’ (Place Names Cutting Book, John Oxley Library). However, this report does not explore the pre-European habitation and relationship to place that would have been held by the original peoples.

Urban development at Palm Beach occurred firstly along the beachfront and either side of the South Coast Road (now Gold Coast Highway) in the 1920s, followed by waves of development in the 1950s, 60s and 70s gradually moving north and west.

The primary spine of Palm Beach Avenue and Gold Coast Highway resulted in the establishment of a business heart taking advantage of passing traffic particularly the north-south pilgrimage between Surfers Paradise and Coolangatta, with minor local shops in other high profile locations.

During the 1950s and 1960s Palm Beach was overlooked by the glitter strip development of Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach, and subsequently was not subject to the denser high-rise development. It became a haven for residents establishing new homes and holiday accommodation from Brisbane and Ipswich with the first Palm Beach canal estate developed in 1958.

High sea and erosion events in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s made beachside properties less appealing to buyers with no beach being present at Palm Beach. Additionally, the development of the Pacific Motorway and the adjoining suburb of Elanora in the 1980s and its associated Pines and 19th Avenue shopping centres drew some of the focus away from the Palm Beach village centre. During the 1990s the village centre was one of the first centre improvement projects by City.

During the 1980s and 1990s a series of high-rise developments occurred at Palm Beach and remain anomalies other than clusters of seven-storey developments along the beachfront between original fibro shacks.

Palm Beach remains well serviced in terms of community facilities and infrastructure including schools, public open spaces and public transport.

The centre of Palm Beach has had some urban improvements undertaken and still maintains smaller private industries, professional offices and services with some 1990s redevelopment of the original housing stock particularly on key corner sites. There has for many years been a tenancy mix with a relatively recent restaurant and café revival over the past five to 10 years recreating a vibrant Palm Beach core. A number of centre improvement projects have been undertaken in Palm Beach including more recently the 2015 Place Based Masterplan for Palm Beach Central.

The area has some medium high-rises along the Gold Coast Highway and beach front, some 1970s two and three-storey walk-ups and some bulky 1990s and 2000s three-storey developments and has seen an increase in urban infill of townhouses and duplexes on larger lots, wider frontages and corner lots, of varying quality from poor to good.
Kombumerri People

Anada flats on corner of 7th Avenue, 1936

Palm Beach Avenue from Elanora rail siding, 1924

Wenzel’s Newsagent, 1945

Lucinda Guest House, 1950

Original Palm Beach Hotel, circa 1940

Ocean boulevard towards Palm Beach Avenue, 1936

Tallebudgera Creek Railway Bridge

Wenzel’s Newsagent, 1945

Anada flats on corner of 7th Avenue, 1936

Lucinda Guest House, 1950
Gold Coast Highway, circa 1977

Remanining fibro beach shack character

19th Avenue 1999

Cheshire Cat Motel

Palm Beach from Currumbin Hill, circa 1983
What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

- The Gold Coast Highway as a traditional thoroughfare north south for vehicular traffic
- The opportunistic location of service industries and holiday accommodation, flats, motels and caravan parks for passing traffic
- Palm Beach Avenue as an original east west link between Gold Coast Highway and Elanora Siding on the original South Coast Rail route
- The original South Coast rail route along the current M1 including the only original bridge structure now a pedestrian bridge over Currumbin creek
- The traditional suburban form established in 1910 and expanded in the 1950s and 1970s including a local shopping centre (Palm Beach Ave/Gold Coast Highway) which serviced a local community who enjoy the lifestyle benefits of a beachside location
- The street names in southern Palm Beach that take their names from the war in the Pacific and references to Pacific place names when this section of Palm beach was subdivided
- The canals and lakes which are a reminder of the previously poorly drained wetlands and swamps in Palm Beach pre-settlement which were drained as part of sub-division
- Multiple (4) surf clubs as a legacy of community activity associated with a beachside suburb
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

Social and cultural elements of Palm Beach include:

- **Tourism and hospitality:** Tourist accommodation, Caravan Park and Tallebudgera Leisure Centre, restaurants, cafes, retail and commercial outlets and Palm Beach Hotel. The Playroom as an iconic live music venue on the Gold Coast.

- **Education:** Palm Beach State school (public), Palm Beach Currumbin State High School (public).

- **Community:** Palm Beach Library and Community Centre, Centrelink, health services, banks, churches, post office.

- **Recreation and Sporting Clubs:** Recreation is a fundamental part of life in Palm Beach and some key sporting clubs include: Palm Beach Soccer Club, Palm Beach Netball Club, Palm Beach Surf Lifesaving Club, Pacific Surf Life Saving Club, Tallebudgera Surf Life Saving Club, Neptune Royal Life Saving Club.

- **Indigenous:** Jellurgal Cultural Centre is located just north of Palm Beach across Tallebudgera Creek and educates about links to first Australians (a rich coastal marine environment that supported food and freshwater requirements). The name Tallebudgera is derived from ‘talle’ meaning ‘fish’ and ‘budgerie’ meaning ‘good’. This abundance of clean water, the ocean and the creeks is still an appealing recreational resource for the current community.

- Residential detached dwellings to high-rise resort style accommodation.
Surf Life saving

Tallebudgera Creek recreation

Soccer at Mailawa Drive Sports Complex

Palm Beach Parklands and Currimbin Creek use
What’s special about Palms Beach’s place character?

An active local community organised through community groups, schools, sporting clubs, surf clubs and community services that reflect an established catchment of residents who share a passionate interest and sense of ownership of the amenity of open spaces, creeks and estuaries, and sandy beaches.

‘Life between the bridges’
VISUAL SETTING AND VIEWS

KEY VIEWS

Key views and vistas within Palm Beach have determined to inform the visual sensitivities of Palm Beach in its landscape context. These have been identified based on a combination of site visit and desktop review.

1. Panoramic Gateway - Tallebudgera Creek
   - Views to McPherson Range
   - Views over estuary
   - Views over Burleigh Hill and Creek mouth

2. Panoramic Gateway - Currumbin Creek
   - Views over estuary to ocean
   - Views over suburb to Burleigh Ridge
   - Views over Elanora ridge to McPherson Range

3. Highway Gateway over Tallebudgera Creek
   - Views over Tallebudgera Creek with Burleigh Ridge behind
   - Views along Tallebudgera Creek to Valley

4. Ocean Views

5. Burleigh ridge frame

6. Currumbin Hill frame

7. Elanora ridge frame

8. East west views (oceans and mountains) on avenues

9. North south views (Burleigh to Currumbin) on avenues
What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinctive setting with strong arrival Gateways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street grid frames local view lines to key landscape elements and assists in orientation, wayfinding and sense of place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long views over coastal lowlands and waterways to mountain backdrop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space has high scenic amenity values</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Highway gateway over Tallebudgera Creek framed by Burleigh ridge and Burleigh Hill

Panoramic gateway from Gold Coast Highway looking west over Currumbin Creek to Beree-Badalla Reserve and Palm Beach with Elanora and the McPherson Range beyond

View east to ocean from Palm Beach Avenue

View south along Jefferson Lane with Currumbin ridge behind high-rises
URBAN FORM

The main urban centre of Palm Beach has historically taken advantage of the Gold Coast Highway through traffic, establishing retail and service business on each flank, with a focus on the Palm Beach Avenue spine. This Centre generally stretches from 4th Avenue to 8th Avenue and between The Gold Coast Highway and Cypress Terrace. Some smaller clusters of local shops have also established in several other locations to service the local community and take advantage of passing traffic on local collector streets:

- Gold Coast Highway north between 24th Avenue and 23rd Avenue (restaurants, bottleshops and hairdressers)
- Townson Avenue and 23rd Avenue (restaurants, coffee shops, bottleshops, convenience store)
- Laguna Lake Shops on Philippine Parade (butcher, Baker, Convenience, medical centre, chemist, coffee shops, bottleshops, hairdressers, jewelers, pool shop and professional offices).

A number of individual businesses such as medical centres professional offices and retail outlets are also sporadically located along major roads and key intersections to take advantage of passing traffic:

- Gold Coast Highway and 19th Avenue Service station and McDonalds, and restaurants
- Gold Coast Highway and 15th Avenue, Medical Centre, retail outlet
- Palm Beach Avenue home businesses and professional offices
- Palm Beach Avenue and Townsend Avenue Vet, Mechanic, auto electrician and smash repair and additional services further west on Palm Beach Avenue
- Community services also exist in Palm Beach including the Centrelink on the Gold Coast Highway, Community Health Building on 5th Avenue, Community Pantry at 8th Avenue and The Palm Beach Library and Share and Care on 11th Avenue. The Post office was removed circa 2010.

SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The original settlement occurred on the north south alignment of the Gold Coast Highway approximately 50 metres west and parallel to the beach. This linear form was dictated by crossing points over the creeks and the previous use of the beach for transport between Surfers Paradise and Coolangatta. It resulted in beachfront land with private lot frontage, serviced via Jefferson lane and limited laneway connections to the beach at Laceys Lane; 3rd; 4th; Palm Beach Avenues, then every second Avenue; 7th to 21st; with an esplanade/open space between 23rd; 25th; and 27th.

The Avenues formed east west connections with Palm Beach Avenue providing the primary link to the South Coast Rail resulting in a cross roads creating a services hub for passing motorists, gradually expanding post war into the linear village centre between Gold Coast Highway and Cypress Terrace. The main commercial centre with its tourist, retail and commercial facilities stretches along both sides of the Gold Coast Highway spine and west to Cypress Terrace, providing a pedestrian retail frontage 500 metres in length (between 4th Avenue to 8th Avenue). Smaller neighbourhood centres are located at Mawarra Street and Philippine Parade.

These subsequently developed at key intersections to service the growing population with approximate 400 metres walk-up catchments. As the suburb was expanded in the 1920s, through to the 1950s to service a new residential community, additional east west connections were made. The flat coastal lowland was cleared and subdivided, with the only barrier to development being the low lying areas that were later drained to form canal estates in the northern areas in the 1970s. In these more recent areas the subdivision pattern breaks away from its strict urban grid and follows the contour with cul-de-sacs street layout.

The beachside proximity ultimately surpassed the Gold Coast Highway for development and the highest intensity of development occurs along this spine to take advantage of views and aspect.

The outer urban footprint of Palm Beach has extended to the natural open space edges of the Tallebudgera Creek and Currumbin Estuaries, and west defined by the Pacific Motorway, which was the original South Coast Rail route.
The road network consists of a tiered hierarchy of north south and east west carriageways ranging from motorways and highways to collector streets to avenues and laneways. This network facilitates legible and efficient access in the suburb through an efficient grid structure.

The Gold Coast Highway is elevated along the line of the secondary dune system and runs parallel to the beach line, affording ocean vistas from the urban development to the north east down street lines and between existing buildings, and to the green hinterland distant backdrop to the south west.

The street network runs off this spine in a north-east/south-west direction setting up a rectangular grid pattern, running parallel to the beach, influenced by the canal and lake systems of the newer canal estates with streets that terminate with cul-de-sacs.

What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

- Legibility of grid structure for circulation and for context, views, vistas, orientation and amenity
- The east west grid of streets provide access to the major asset the beach
- The urban setting in a natural open space frame
- A diversity of ownership and eclectic mix of businesses

Key Road Hierarchy and Grid Structure

- Village centres
- Laneway
- Road grid
- Walking radius
- Dimension
- Indicative Palm Beach Extent
- Study Area
VILLAGE CONTEXT

LAND USE, LOT SIZE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The following section describes and maps the existing land-use in the core village centre of Palm Beach and the immediate surrounding streets. Key observations include:

• The village centre is characterised by low density long narrow lots generally reflecting the original subdivision pattern.
• Some lots have been amalgamated to enable redevelopment for commercial and other medium density residential properties close to the beach.

LAND USE

• More focus on the north-bound (western) side of the Highway possibly due to the barrier effect of the busy road and fencing.
• Residential focus east of the highway.
• Some mixed use generally associated with new developments like Pavilions on 5th.
• Large vacant sites are allocated public and private car parking to service developments from the rear that have no setback to the street.
• Considerable gaps in the pattern of land-use including vacant lots and interspersed residential in the village centre and interspersed community and service buildings in the core.
• Limited public open space on the beach frontage is provided adjacent to the SLSC in 7th Avenue otherwise only provided by road reserves.
• Surrounding suburban area is predominantly residential with some light industrial trades and service business along Palm Beach Avenue.
• Mixed-use neighbourhood centre on Philippine Parade.

LOT SIZE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

• Dominance of commercial/retail on the Gold Coast Highway frontage (see adjacent diagram) and Palm Beach Avenue as the two priority routes through the centre, taking advantage of passing traffic.
• No high street definition but dominance of retail and commercial frontage being Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach Avenue, 5th Avenue and 8th Avenue in that order.
• Particular focus on corner site consolidation and establishing bookends on key avenues (see photo 1 and adjacent diagram).
• Mix of commercial and residential east of Gold Coast Highway.
• Fine-grain commercial strip along Philippine Parade with laneway access behind.
• Existing permitability and community access to connect streets within the centre.
What's special about Palm Beach's place character?

- A community who support local business and local village and neighbourhood centres
- Proximity to the beach, creeks and open space which creates a diversity of old and new making for an interesting and eclectic suburb
- High intensity of small local business with village scale shop fronts
- Highway commercial/retail strip and consolidated corner commercial blocks (see diagram)
- Land use transitions between centre and residential neighbourhoods, for example mixed use on 8th Avenue

Consolidated corners and Gold Coast Highway commercial strip frontage development pattern
Palm Beach Avenue / Gold Coast Highway intersection

Original commercial corner building retained adjoining amalgamated development on 5th Avenue / Cypress Terrace

Gold Coast Highway commercial strip with consolidated corner development to 7th Avenue

Informal parking on vacant land on 7th Avenue

Original commercial corner building retained adjoining amalgamated development on 5th Avenue / Cypress Terrace

Palm Beach Avenue / Gold Coast Highway intersection
BUILT FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

Built form of Palm Beach are extremely varied, with waves of development from holiday to permanent accommodation, from high-rise and multi dwelling to single detached dwellings. This is held together by the landscape and coastal setting of ocean, creeks, canals, mature trees in the streetscapes, headlands and a ridgeline backdrop.

Variations include (historically and currently):

- tents, caravans, fibro beach houses, apartments, flats - brick and fibro walk-ups
- detached dwellings/dual occupancy dwellings
- motels, taking advantage of the Gold Coast Highway passing traffic (e.g. Cheshire Cat Motel)
- current development progression of mid-high rise contemporary architecture and resort style developments of seven storeys or more (e.g. Pavilions on 5th)
- high-rises over 20 storeys (e.g. Royal Palm Resort) anomaly from the 1980’s and 1990’s
- school buildings, other public facilities and service buildings, shops, cafes and restaurants
- varied architectural style and materials.

Jefferson Lane contains some of the Gold Coasts earliest beach ‘shacks’, that in fact predate the later subdivision of the area (Gold Coast Urban Heritage & Character Study 1997).

The eclectic nature of the built form gives Palm Beach its’ character. There is no single structure that epitomises the architectural character of this area, rather it is the architecture reflected in a cross section of the entire streetscape and neighbourhood. The challenge is refurbishing and redeveloping without “blandifying” the neighbourhood centre and beach side suburb.

It is desirable for new development and refurbishments to encourage a coastal sub-tropical style to maximise liveability at this coastal suburb with sea breezes and a casual outdoor lifestyle. It needs to provide connection to the public realm allowing visual and physical access to the beach and public open spaces. This in turn leads to a safer and more engaged and dynamic community.
One and two-storey single detached residential dwellings (varied materials)

One-storey retail and commercial buildings (varied materials)

One and two-storey public buildings (varied materials)

One-storey retail and commercial buildings (varied materials)
Two-storey attached residential dwellings (varied materials)

Two-storey mixed use buildings (varied materials)

Two-storey mixed use buildings (varied materials)

Three-storey walk-up multi residential apartments (varied materials)
Seven to 15-storey multi residential apartments, with multi-lift access e.g. 19th Avenue; Royal Palms and Princess Palms

Four to six-storey residential apartments, with lift access (varied materials)

Seven to 15-storey multi residential apartments, with multi-lift access e.g. 19th Avenue; Royal Palms and Princess Palms
BUILDING FOOTPRINTS

In the commercial centre, there are generally zero setbacks to the street including awning coverage and signage. Larger building footprints occur on corner sites and along Gold Coast Highway where lots have been amalgamated. Largest building footprint occurs on Pavilions on 5th.

The building footprint and narrow frontage of remnant shops reflects the historic pattern of the streetscape, providing a rhythm, character and accessibility to street fronts via projected awnings. The awnings connect the shops, retail and commercial uses, creating a public way for businesses to open into and spill out onto, creating an active centre, in contrast with internalised pedestrian malls of big box shopping centre models.
Existing Building Heights and Footprints

- 5 storeys +
- 4 storeys
- 3 storeys
- 2 storeys
- 1 storey
Royal Palm Resort and Pavilions on 5th visible over low rise residential

Two-storey commercial building with seven-storey residential behind

What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

- The variety of built form, materials and styles
- The historic pattern of streetscape, narrow shop frontage and covered awning creating a village shopping experience with parking
ACTIVATION, STREET LIFE AND SIGNAGE

ACTIVATION AND STREET LIFE

A number of daytime activators occur in the village centre which see active outlets, newsagent, coffee shops and cafes from 5am, catering for early morning street life throughout the village centre.

In contrast the majority of night time activation occurs in restaurants bars and hotels and the SLSC which are primarily associated with the Gold Coast Highway, but some new bars are opening on adjoining avenues. There is also night shopping at the Coles supermarket and there are numerous bottleshops within the centre.

The scale of the original shop frontage that occurs in 5th Ave and 8th Ave with covered awnings and a diversity of outlets assists in activating the frontage and providing a diverse and eclectic retail mix.

The beach and the Avenues that lead to the beach are also activators from the very early morning, with many people taking advantage of the beach for recreation including walk, ride and drive up for surfing, fishing, exercise and dog walking, leading to further activation in the village centre.
Day Time Activators

- Retail
- Commercial services
- Supermarket
- Takeaway food
- Restaurant / bar
- Cafe

- Community
- Building footprint
- The beach
- Avenues connecting to the beach

Map showing Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach Ave., Cypress Tce., Philippine Pde., Sixth Ave., Eighth Ave., Fourth Ave., and Jefferson Ln. with various Activators marked.
SIGNAGE

A range of signage types exist that contribute both positively and negatively to the character of Palm Beach. Much of the signage is placed to take advantage of the visual exposure of the main roads including the Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach Avenue and key corner streets. Note also that the scenic preference (what people prefer to look at) is low in the urban core and high along the beachfront.

Billboard signs are generally large ephemeral advertising on key corners and blank walls mainly facing north. This may be to take advantage of oncoming (predominantly south bound traffic) and solar access to the sign face. Some of these signs at times promote local business but not the desirable characteristics of Palm Beach.

Other signs cover entire buildings or walls and reflect the business within like the Palm Beach Motors (mechanics) sign. It may also reflect a desire for landlords to maximise a return on their land holdings. The billboard signs sometimes promote “where you would rather be” as opposed to the qualities of “where you are”.

Combined pylon signs are used in only several locations to promote whole buildings and precincts and have integrated signage palettes for the collective of shops included.

Under awning suspended signs and awning face signs promote business within and are generally low scale and reflect diverse business names, character, lettering and materials. Generally the scale of these signs promotes a village character and the concept of village consisting of a multiple of small businesses. At times clear line of sight to signage conflicts with shade tree planting and foliage resulting in aggressive street tree pruning regimes.

Other signage includes advertising smaller billboards located in rented public space and rooftops, some of which like bus stops attracts oncoming traffic, but is not reflecting unique qualities of Palm Beach. Some signs form barriers to pedestrian movement across the footpaths.
Local business signs that don’t contribute to sense of place and add volume

Awnings, signage and streetscape character along Gold Coast Highway

Advertising message ‘from where you’d rather be.’

Businesses utilising awning and facade signage

What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

The historic pattern of streetscape, shop frontage and covered awning and signage creating a village shopping experience and eclectic mix of businesses and tenancies

Businesses utilising awning and facade signage

Palm Beach Motors using entire building frontage for signage

Local business signs that don’t contribute to sense of place and add volume

Suburb entry signage

Character signage and business owner
ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Access and movement is defined by the road network and the development pattern which has established the urban grid pattern.

Vehicle access is well catered for with a range of options for north-south and east-west movement.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Pedestrian access is limited with the historic location of the Gold Coast Highway which creates a physical east-west barrier between the majority of the residential area, the village centre and the beach, and effectively bisects the village centre into an eastern and western side. This barrier is exacerbated by the highway median fence, put in place by the Department of Transport and Main Roads to restrict mid-block jaywalking. Sets of traffic lights provide controlled crossings of the highways at the avenues accessing the beach.

The flat terrain allows good pedestrian walkability and bikeway opportunities. With limited public open space in the village centre, the street verges provide a legible accessible network for pedestrians and cyclists as a spatial component that works in conjunction with other private spaces, carparks and parks to provide a network of connections to main features, primarily public open space and the beach. Pedestrian ‘ant trails’ occur within the district centre connecting through private car parks and lanes, as well as occurring along the beach front public open space.

STREETS AND PARKING

Most streets have on street parking with some 90 degree parking provided in the median on Palm Beach Avenue and neighbourhood centre in Philippine Parade.

The public and private carparks servicing the village centre business provide an informal mid-block pedestrian and cycle connection within the shopping centre. In addition there are public parking areas in proximity to the parklands and SLSC, although these are overflowing in peak times.
Primary Pedestrian Routes
Bikeway
Key Pedestrian Connections
Major Pedestrian Barriers

Pedestrian Crossings
Signalised Pedestrian Crossings
Roundabout
Public / Private Land and Laneway Access

- Private Property (Built Form)
- Road Reserve
- Public Carpark
- Private Carpark
- Public Open Space
- Beach Connection
- Public Laneway
- Private Laneway With 24hr Public Access
- Private Laneway
STREETS

STREET TYPOLOGIES

Street typologies play a key role in the urban structure and amenity of the suburb with a range of road hierarchies, widths and characteristics. The streets cater for significant through traffic north-south and east-w est as well as distributing local traffic via the avenues to the Palm Beach and accordingly they represent the windows in which users experience the suburb.

Dominant north-south Arterial roads include:
- the Gold Coast Highway
- the Pacific Motorway M1.

North south collector roads include:
- Townsend Avenue
- Cypress Terrace
- Tahiti Avenue.

Key east-west connectors with links out of Palm Beach include:
- 19th Avenue
- Palm Beach Avenue
- Thrower Drive.

Key east-west connectors with links out of Palm Beach include:
- characteristic grid of numbered east-west avenues 1st to 27th
- smaller grid of lanes and streets
- some stormwater and services easements that create passive inter-grid connectivity
- some publicly accessible arcades
- canal in northern Palm Beach.

CHARACTER STREETS

Several streets feature wide road reserve widths Palm Beach Avenue, and Philippine Parade and facilitate space for generous landscape with its wide verges, mature street trees and central line of palm trees and landscaped roundabouts is central to the district centre and neighbourhood centre of Philippine Parade. The grid of streets also provides strong view lines to vegetated ridges beyond the suburb.

7th Avenue: east-west connecting street with views to ridgelines

Cypress Terrace: north-south collector road with view to Currumbin ridgeline
Distinctive palm plantings in median on Palm Beach Avenue

Feature Poinciana trees on 5th Avenue

Laneway between 6th Ave. and Palm Beach Avenue

Significant Cottonwood trees at corner of 5th Avenue and Gold Coast Highway

Distinctive palm plantings in median on Palm Beach Avenue
What’s special about Palm Beach’s place character?

- Efficient grid structure of streets and clear road hierarchy provides a range of options for circulation
- Mid-block connections and permeability of shopping precinct.
- ‘Ant trails’ through private car parks and lanes with 24-hour public access (see plan page 33, and laneway image on adjacent page) and beachfront public open space
- Bus stops and shelters (public transport) and public parking areas in proximity to beachfront, SLSC and side and central on street parking.
- Proximity to the M1, Gold Coast Airport, Southern Cross University, Bond University and major shopping centres.
- Feature palm trees on Palm Beach Ave and significant Cottonwood trees to 5th Avenue
The Palm Beach village centre is a traditional retail and commercial cluster with a vibrant and eclectic urban character, located at the junction of the Gold Coast Highway and Palm Beach Avenue. This forms the largest and oldest of the centres in the suburb of Palm Beach. The suburb of Palm Beach is contained between two creeks with traffic bridge crossings, the beachfront to the north east and constrained by the M1 Pacific Motorway to the south west.

The commercial, office and retail presence was initially established in the 1920s. The cluster/centre expanded through the car dominated 1950s to take advantage of the trade opportunities from passing traffic, firstly along the Gold Coast Highway, then the South Coast Railway and subsequently on the grid of avenues into the suburb.

Palm Beach has a strong urban structure with a distinctly defined village centre and a fine urban grain. Built form within the village centre is characterised by a number of elements which contrast with the surrounding residential land uses including narrow lot frontages, zero setback shop frontages, many with covered awnings, rear service access via combined access laneways and car parking areas that create informal mid-block connections. Current built form is one to two storeys which in combination with the narrow mixed-use retail frontages creates a diverse and eclectic village street scale reminiscent of a small country town.

Palm Beach village Centre has a vibrant and active village atmosphere and street life which is supported by the diversity of businesses including traditional shopping uses, commercial and professional offices, restaurants, coffee shops, hotels and bars as well as community services which are oriented to the street.

The grid of streets that typifies the suburb, allows for strong vistas to the surrounding forested hillsides, Gold Coast hinterland, creek lines, beach and ocean. The street grid overlays undulating terrain, evidence of the original dune formation and the adjacent beach 50 metres to the east. The grided street pattern also allows for clear legibility with on and off street car parking providing immediate access to the retail outlets which in turn creates active street life.

The streetscape while aged is well detailed and accommodates shaded seating areas, bins and drink fountains, landscape build outs and shaded verges in the concentrated village centre. The proximity to the beach makes the village centre a popular thoroughfare between the residential area and the beach.

The Palm Beach village centre is distinct to the surrounding residential suburb, which in its own right has a diverse character due to its range of natural assets of creeks, beaches, open space and backdrop of the hinterland.
**KEY URBAN CHARACTER ELEMENTS**

- Activated frontages along both sides of the Gold Coast Highway and Palm Beach Avenue which bisect the centre and on Avenues connecting the centre to the beach.

- The strong street grid with varied road widths informs the proportion of development height.

- Retain and enhance mid-block connections as a legible break in the urban structure.

- Consolidated corner developments bookend the village ‘block’ at high profile intersections, at edges to the village centre and on Avenues which connect the centre to the beach.

- Diversity of commercial, office, community infrastructure, retail, service and dining promote high levels of street activity and engagement.

- The active street life supported by the local community promotes a new destination for visiting trade as a rather than a thoroughfare for passing traffic.

- The street grid reinforces the visual and physical connection between the village centre and the ocean.

- Framed views assist in orientation along the street grid link to surrounding landscape features.

- Tree lined streets with good path network, street furniture and shaded sitting nodes throughout the village centre.

- Consolidated retail and commercial uses in the village centre.

- Narrow lot frontages create a diversity and fine grain of shopfronts.

- Zero setback frontage and covered awnings create shade and enclosure to street.

- Proximity of the centre to the beach reflected in upper decks with views of the water.

- Adaptive re-use of older building stock to promote dining and entertainment venues and office spaces.

- Development frames views to landscape features that assist with orientation.
FOR MORE INFORMATION
P  1300 GOLDCOAST (1300 465 326)
W  cityofgoldcoast.com.au