

Interpretation Plan



Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse Myall Lakes National Park

produced for the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change
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Originally sugar was kept in solid 'loaves'.

When some sugar was needed it was scraped off the loaf.

Currently 270 places in New South Wales have the term 'Sugarloaf' in their name.

This widespread use of the term perhaps reflects the enormous variety of shapes the sugarloaf would acquire throughout the course of its natural life.

Sugar loaf

[sug'r loafe; sugger loafe; sugger loaves; suger lofe; sugar love; sugar loave; sugar loaves; sugar loafe; sugar in the loaf; shuger loves; loves of sugar; louef of sugger; lofe of sugar; loaves sugar; loafes of sugar]

A moulded conical mass of hard SUGAR made by passing SYRUP through already REFINED SUGAR in a SUGAR POT. Loaves varied in size; one, for example, weighed only 4 LB [Diaries (Moore)], while the '9 sugar loaves' recorded elsewhere weighed over 12 LB [Inventories (1634)]. If bought in this form the sugar would have been broken up using SUGAR NIPPERS.

OED earliest date of use: 1422

Found described as HARD, REFINED Found in units of C, LB, POUND Found exported by C Found rated by the CWT

See also LOAF SUGAR, REFINED SUGAR.

Sources: Diaries, Houghton, Inventories (early), Inventories (mid-period), Inventories (late).

Ref: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=58889>



Lighthouse

Perhaps the most famous lighthouse in history is the Lighthouse of Alexandria, built on the island of Pharos in Hellenistic Egypt.

The name of the island of Pharos is still used as the noun for "lighthouse" in some languages, for example: Albanian and Catalan and Romanian (far), French (phare), Italian and Spanish (faro), Portuguese (farol), Swedish (fyr), Bulgarian (фар), and Greek (φάρος). The word "pharology" (study of the lighthouses) is also derived from the island's name.

The Lighthouse of Alexandria was originally built in 280 BC to serve as that port's landmark. With a height variously estimated at between 115 and 135 metres (383 - 440 ft) it was among the tallest man-made structures on Earth for many centuries, and was identified as one of the Seven Wonders of the World by classical writers.

Ref: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lighthouses>



Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse

The construction of Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse was completed in 1875, ten years after it was recommended a light be placed to highlight the treacherous Seal Rocks. It was originally intended to place the light on Seal Rocks but landing was difficult and the proposition was abandoned.

The tower is constructed of brick, rendered and painted white. Also constructed were three adjoining cottages, various outbuildings, the construction of the road from Bungwahl, and a 460 metre (1500 foot) long jetty which was used to land some 1800 tons of building supplies and materials.

The light was upgraded in 1923 and was converted from kerosene to acetylene gas. Electricity was introduced in 1966 and the light was kept manned for many years despite automation in 1987.

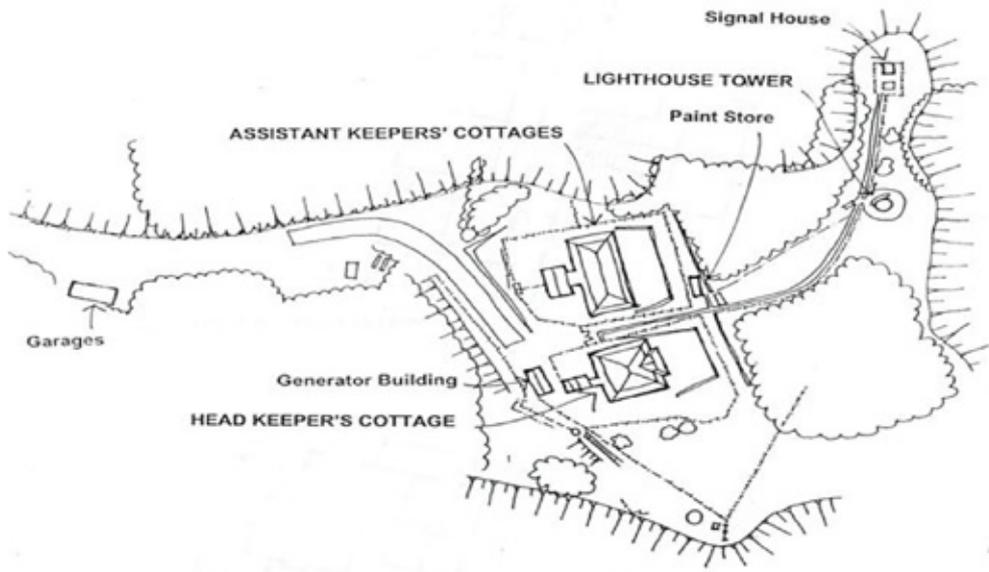
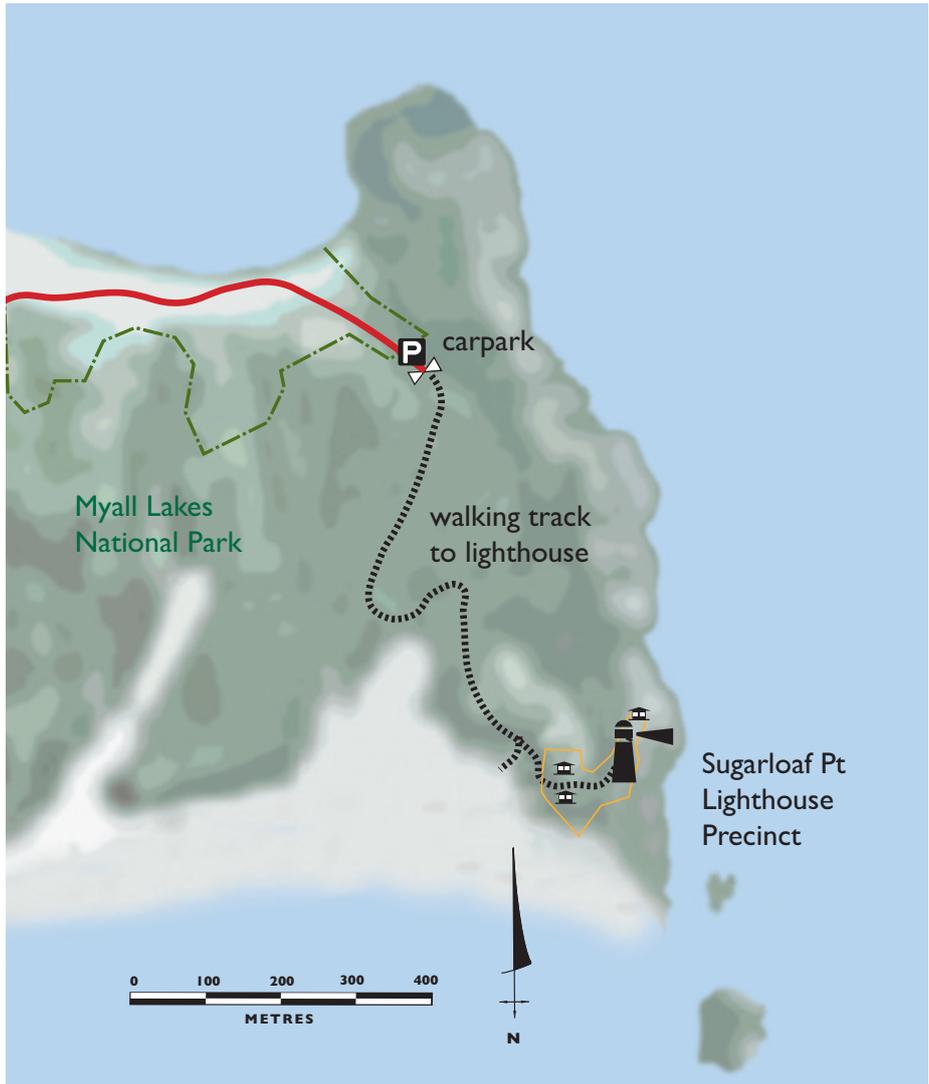
One of Australia's biggest shipping disasters occurred off Sugarloaf Point;- the wreck of the Catterthun in 1895 when bound from Sydney to China with the loss of fifty five lives.¹

The lighthouse precinct came under the management of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in March 2003. It comprises part of Myall Lakes National Park.²

1. Ref: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seal_Rocks%2C_New_South_Wales

2. Conservation management and Cultural Tourism Plan: Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse 2003





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1. Planning context

1.1 Overview and interpretive goal

This interpretation plan for the Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse is one of a series of planning documents relating to this historic lighthouse precinct within Myall Lakes National Park.

These reports comprise:

- *NPWS Lighthouses Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan 2001:*
 - *Part G: Collective resource Interpretation Plan*
 - *Supplementary Information: Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse 2003*
- *Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse Precinct - Myall Lakes NP: Archaeological Landscape Management Plan 2006*
- *Fences at Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse Cottages 2007.*

This interpretation plan is designed to be read and used in conjunction with these existing planning documents. Hence it is not proposed to reproduce background material relating to the resource or general interpretive planning statements already contained and fully presented in these existing documents. Extracts from these reports may however be included here as appropriate to inform the interpretive planning material being presented.

The first instance of this comes in the case of the statement of cultural significance contained in the Conservation Management Plan.

It is axiomatic that the goal of interpreting a historic precinct is that visitors are able to gain an awareness of and appreciation for its cultural significance.

Accordingly this statement provides the essential point of reference underpinning this interpretation plan and is reproduced here in its entirety. Within this overall interpretive

planning context, it is also vital to recognise the key role that interpretation must play in the overall visitor flow and management of the site.

Interpretation is a major management tool in terms of influencing both on site behaviour and overall values and impressions people place upon the resource and its conservation. In particular it must address the issues of visitor flow in and around the site and the integrity of the overall historic ambience of the precinct. Accordingly also, these issues receive a prominent focus in this plan.

1.2 Current developments

This interpretation plan for the site is being produced at a pivotal transition stage for the lighthouse precinct at a time when major restoration works on there are in their final stages of completion and a new lessee is about to commence operation of the lightkeepers quarters to provide overnight accommodation.

This overall context has immediate implications for the development of this plan. The first is the pressing need to provide an interpreted visitor experience to all visitors to the site in keeping with its newly restored status and community resource focus.

The second is to recognise that many of the key elements needed to develop a comprehensive interpretation plan covering all aspects of the site interpretation are not currently available to the planning process. Most importantly this includes the possible role that the site lessee can play in providing an interpretive resource in terms of gathering additional site material and information, presenting this within the context of the overnight accommodation and additionally providing guided tours on site.

This situation hence requires this plan to come up with a strong platform upon which initial core interpretive product can be developed, while also establishing a

clear process by which future interpretive initiatives can be both planned for and delivered.

1.3 Visitor contact with the site

There are two main modes of visitor contact with the site.

The first is by **casual visitation** on the part of people undertaking the short 500 metre walk from the carpark at the end of the road through Seal Rocks. This visitation pattern is marked by the fact that people can do this without having planned ahead or contacted the NPWS prior to their arrival on site.

Such encounters are typically relatively brief 'out and back' strolls to the lighthouse precinct in keeping with Sugarloaf Points long standing renown as a major landscape feature / icon destination that people wish to visit.

Casual visitors cannot access any of the lightstation buildings or the areas enclosed by fences in association with the lightkeepers quarters. They cannot rely on any contact with staff on site to receive information. Significantly they can visit the light tower, walk around its base and climb up the external stairwell to its 1st floor landing. They cannot however enter the tower.

The absence of other facilities such as picnic areas or toilets means that casual visitors time in the lightstation precinct is typically short and of less than an hour's duration.

The second type of visitation is **planned visitation** by people who will spend longer on site either by way of staying overnight in the lighthouse keepers residences or by participating in a guided tour activity or group educational activity focussed on the lighthouse precinct.

These encounters are marked by the fact that people will have needed to contact either the NPWS or the site leasees, prior to their arrival on site. This in turn opens an array of issues

/ opportunities in terms of both pre visit orientation and also for detailed break downs of the user groups accessing the site in this manner to be compiled.

The different interpretive responses required to meet the needs of these two fundamentally different user groups will form a major basis of this interpretive plan's proposals.

1.4 The collective resource interpretation plan

As one of ten lighthouses managed by the NPWS it is essential that the interpretation of the site have regard to the overall ensemble of interpretive themes and approaches already laid out in the NPWS Lighthouses Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan. These were addressed in detail in Appendix G – The Collective Resource Interpretation Plan.

As this interpretation plan is being produced so as to be read in conjunction with existing planning documents, it is not proposed to reproduce the entirety of this material here.

There are however two sections of particular importance in terms of functioning as an interpretive checklist and accordingly these are included here in Section 3: Storylines and outcomes.

2. Interpretive themes and messages

The themes and messages for the site interpretation are defined by the site's statement of cultural significance which is reproduced here

2.1 Overview

Sugarloaf Point Lightstation is an outstanding and relatively intact example of a late Victorian Lighthouse complex located in an unspoilt and spectacular setting. It is unusual in NSW for its external stair.

Sugarloaf Point Lightstation is part of a cohesive group of late 19th and early 20th century lighthouse in NSW each of which demonstrates the incremental changes in the design and construction of the various complexes.

It is an important and representative example of the so-called "coastal highway lighthouses" that were erected along the NSW coastline between 1862 and 1903.

2.2 Historic Significance

Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse is an important component of the system of great 19th century lighthouses designed to light the NSW coastline, the so called "highway lights" in contrast to the harbour lights.

It is James Barnet's first major lighthouse design and a forerunner to his other major designs.

The decision to construct the lighthouse at Seal Rocks was taken as an integral part of plan to fill the more dangerous gaps in the Australian coastline, a decision that has its origins in a resolution of the Inter-Colonial Conference of 1873.

The 1873 Conference is significant as the principle marine officers provided the first Australia wide evaluation of navigational needs. The development of the lighthouse sparked the formation of the telegraph services to and road from Bungwahl.

It aided in the increased development of the area generally and the formation of the Seal Rocks village specifically.

2.3 Aesthetic Significance

Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse is significant for its relationship to its position on a prominent headland; contrasting against its natural surroundings it has important landmark qualities.

It is unusual for its external geometric stair, being only one of a few and the only remaining NSW lighthouse with this feature.

The tower features are well proportioned even though it is of a small size. It can be well appreciated in the round from a human scale.

The structure and detailing including the outward curving upper platform and curved balustrade display very fine elements of design and craftsmanship.

Likewise the tower is significant as one of the most notable designs of James Barnet, for the heavily bracketed upper balcony, domed oil store and distinctive balcony railing, all of which are characteristic of Barnet's design.

Similar design features, although in a variety of final compositions were used at Smoky Cape, Green Cape, Point Perpendicular and Barrenjoey.

The Sugarloaf Point Keepers' Cottages display the typical robustness of the Victorian Georgian style used extensively by the NSW Colonial Architect's office throughout the late 19th century.

The white painted buildings with their collection of chimneys, pitched roofs, verandahs and enclosed courtyards stepped snugly into the slope of the headland, present a visual unity in form style and materials.

The residences are a strong reminder of the era of staffed lighthouses on the coast of Australia.

The high degree of integrity of the elements of the lighthouse complex add to its significance.

The tower and the residences form a cohesive group and are aesthetically pleasing in their design and layout.

2.3 Social Significance

The Lighthouse has always been a place for visitors in the area, as well as tourists, as indicated by the Visitors Book and is still a popular place today with hundreds of visitors at peak seasons.

It is an identifier with the village life and holiday life of Seal Rocks. Many locals have shown interest in putting their names on the waiting books to be volunteer relief keepers.

The Lighthouse complex operated for over 100 years and is associated with the various Light Keeper's and their families.

It has special meaning to the groups particularly evidenced by the memorials.

Also there are stories of how each Keeper painted and decorated the interior of the residences to suit their own tastes and are identified with their periods at the lighthouse.

2.4 Scientific Significance

The lighthouse retains the original Chance Bros. lantern house.

The lantern is a beautiful example of the 19th century industrial technology and is intact apart from some modernisation.

The tower is of industrial archaeological significance in its ability to demonstrate the evolution of lighthouse technology.

There are a number of archaeological sites throughout the precinct and wider location that have the potential to yield additional information.

2.5 Significance To Aboriginal People

The significance of this site for the local Aboriginal community relates to the known sites in the area.

The vegetation associations of the headlands and rainforest areas provide a valuable source of food and medicinal resources.

The availability of fresh seafoods from the ocean included shellfish, crustaceans, seals and fish.

Together with the important mythological places associated with area these connections demonstrates the strong associations and significance of the area to local aboriginal community.

Historic associations relate to use of a local spring and fresh waterhole at south end of Lighthouse Beach, as well as camping and fishing.

3. Interpretive storylines and outcomes

3.1 Storylines

The NPWS Lighthouses Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan: Collective Resource Interpretation Plan sets out a storyline for the presentation of messages relating to a particular lighthouse precinct.

This storyline can be used as an overall context within which to present material relating to the specific cultural significance of the Sugarloaf precinct.

This Collective Resource Interpretation Plan specifies the following priorities for the storyline.

ENDS OF THE EARTH

Remoteness and isolation of lighthouse locations and the common biophysical characteristics of the coastal zone land / sea interface have made them places of adventure, contemplation, intimacy and revelation for people of all cultures.

THE PEOPLE

Significance of many lighthouse locations in Aboriginal tradition, accommodation and lifestyle of lighthouse keepers – pecking order, duties. Challenges of isolation: role of keeper's wives and families, supplies, communication, a different kind of childhood, education and medical care

THE NEED FOR COASTAL LIGHTS

Battling the elements of a fatal shore

THE FIRST LIGHT

South Head tripod beacon, 1790

19TH CENTURY SHIPPING

economic and political imperatives

THE DESIGN

Greenway sets architectural style for future lighthouse towers with Macquarie Tower, South Head (1816).

THE VISION

Francis Hixson, "to illuminate the coast like a street with lamps".

THE ARCHITECTS

Dawson, James Barnett and the Colonial Architect's "New South Wales style".

THE MEANS

19th century colonial prosperity reflected in materials and finishes

THE TECHNOLOGY

Evolution of nav aids, light sources and lens arrays

THE POLITICS

Rationalisation of coastal lighting as an impetus to Federation

A NEW CENTURY

Brewis and the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service. Later Government architects. Importance of shipping levy revenues.

A VANISHING BREED

Technological changes and the automation of lighthouses. Recent lighthouses. Recollections of retired lighthouse keepers.

THE COLLECTION

NPWS as a manager of a significant collection of lighthouses, their locations and range of visitor uses and related recreational opportunities.

AN INVITATION

to explore other lighthouses in the collection.

3.2 Outcomes

The NPWS Lighthouses Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan: Collective Resource Interpretation Plan also articulates interpretive outcomes sought in relation to the lighthouse experience.

KNOW

- that it is one of 10 historic lighthouse sites presented by the NPWS in NSW
- why and how the NSW system of coastal lights came to be built (who initiated, built, ran and staffed it)
- how the lighting arrays evolved and the appearance and characteristics of the principal types
- that the collection as a whole and each of its lighthouses are important in the historic, aesthetic, social and scientific development of the country, the region and the community
- that many lighthouses are located in places whose significance extends back in time from the historic period to prehistoric times and that their traditional significance to Aboriginal people continues today
- that lighthouses are located in places of ecological as well as cultural significance
- what the duties of the head and assistant lightkeepers were and the lifestyles of their families
- that there is more to find out in other locations in the precinct

THINK

- that this and other heritage precincts are special places that are worth preserving
- that throughout their evolution, lighthouses have played significant and varied roles in the economic, cultural and recreational life of the community

- that the collection and its significance have been appropriately conserved and presented

FEEL

- that this place has touched people's lives in significant ways
- motivated and empowered to explore public areas of the lighthouse precinct with comfort and confidence
- empathy with the people who lived and worked in the Lighthouse Service
- a sense of the continuing evolution of the place and its functions in the life of the community
- that their personal growth has been enriched and their personal horizons expanded through a sense of place and an awareness of its significance

UNDERSTAND

- how the system of coastal lights functioned, and its significance in local, regional and national politics, trade and development
- how distinctive light characteristics identified each lighthouse
- how the collection is managed today and that it offers a varied range of interesting and pleasurable visitor experiences at different locations

ACT

- in ways that respect the fabric and spirit of the place
- in ways that acknowledge and support the ongoing responsibility of the NPWS to conserve and present this and other historic environments to a standard commensurate with their significance.

4. The interpretive goal

4.1 Goal

To ensure that all visitors to the lighthouse precinct leave with an awareness of and appreciation for its cultural significance.

4.2 Elements underpinning the goal

A feature of this goal is the fact that it focusses more on a minimum outcome for the site interpretation rather than a maximal one.

In adopting this approach it positions itself as the foundation upon which additional interpretive processes and subsequent product can be built for the site, rather than attempting to define an end point to aspire to.

In essence this is a bottom up approach to the site interpretation rather than a top down model. It recognises that interpretation on site will evolve and adapt over time in relation to a number of factors.

These include the fact that the as the new lessees for the on site accommodation program take up their role in the very near future, they will need to have an active role in the development and delivery of interpretive materials and experiences for their guests. This process should not simply be a one off venture, but rather be an ongoing and creative part of the delivery of interpretive product on site.

Additional to this is the fact that the current interpretive resource that is available now to interpretive programs is very strong at an overview contextual level, yet weak at a detailed social level.

This represents the reality that the broader overview for the site is substantially a matter of public record and is supported by a range of publicly archived documents. The social construct of the site however is largely made up of people's own stories and experiences and this resource is both inherently open ended and often quite difficult to access.

In this regard the lessees may well have a pivotal role to play in terms of them being local members of the community and hence able to communicate and engage with people who may otherwise be reluctant to deal with the bureaucracy that "took over their lighthouse".

Overall this situation strongly suggests a response that focusses on getting a core interpretive product in place that communicates the basic values of the site to all visitors.

This core resource represents a fundamental interpretive PRODUCT that will provide an essential foundation on which the site's overall interpretation can rest.

Allied to this there then arises the opportunity to establish an array of value adding interpretive PROCESSES that will come up with additional product that evolves and adapts over time.

4.3 Staged development of the interpretation program

The above focus on core product allied to ongoing process implies a natural staging approach be applied to the site's interpretation.

Stage 1 involves getting this core interpretive product in place and identifying the likely processes needing to be followed to further develop the site's interpretive potential.

Stage 2 involves implementing these procedural initiatives and coming up with additional interpretive product and programs in association with additional interpretive planning as required.

3.4 Relationship to objectives

The above considerations flow naturally into determining the specific objectives required for the interpretation plan.

5. The interpretive objectives

5.1 To ensure all English speaking, literate visitors to the site have a meaningful and engaging visit that raises their awareness of the site's cultural significance.

5.1.1. Issues relating to this objective

This objective relates specifically to defining the bedrock program content on which the site interpretation program must rest. It fundamentally relates to the on site signage program to be developed on site.

The reasons for signage being the relevant media to carry this core load are as follows.

The first point is that signs communicate equally with both people who may have planned their trip well in advance and those who arrive on site with no prior preparation.

While brochures and other printed material may be effective in terms of communicating with the 'plan ahead' visitors, printed media fails in terms of the 'drop ins'. While brochure dispensers in carparks have a certain historical ambience in some areas, they have long been discredited as a functional approach in most settings.

Reliance on printed material hence immediately creates a distinction between information rich and information poor visitors, so as to render it unable to achieve this objective. Additionally the validity of providing information via paper products falls over when an alternative signage option exists. With signage, message recycling to subsequent visitors comes built in.

An additional feature in favour of using signage to convey the core body of interpretive messaging is the functional role it can play in the overall management and presentation of the area to visitors.

A well considered, effective interpretive signage program (as integrated with other precinct wide orientation signage) can offer the following benefits.

It can create an ambient sense of connection between the visitor and the environment they are entering. An interpretive sign is a passive reassurance that you are in the right spot and that this spot is one with meaning and value that you are being invited to share.

This effect is significantly increased when the signage is used strategically to reinforce key components of the visitor experience. In the case of the lighthouse precinct for example, signage on entry to the main compound area after a 400m walk on the entry track can help create a sense of arrival. It can help reorient people to finish the process of accessing the resource and start to experience it.

The appropriate place to establish this entry portal is in the precinct immediately adjacent to the blowhole. In this regard it is important to note that it is not sufficient to simply install signage at this venue and that minor landscaping works will be required in association with it.

This is because the area as it currently stands is a major access corridor that funnels both people and vehicles past the site. Corridors are places of transit that people move down, not places of repose where you stop mid stride to take in an allied experience.

Accordingly this entry portal should be established as a place of repose – a node where pedestrian priority exists and vehicles are relegated to the status of intruding elements (as they are for example in the case of pedestrian malls where vehicles can still gain access).

Moving away from this precinct, the dominant visitor experience is then focussed on the path leading up past the lightkeepers cottages and onto the lighthouse.

This precinct should be kept substantially free from interpretive signage for several reasons.

The first relates to the corridor effect mentioned above.

The second relates to the fact that signage here is potentially a major visually intrusive element in a historic landscape. This does not necessarily rule out signage in this area (and indeed some orientation signage will be needed). It would however make its inclusion here problematic.

The third reason to avoid signage in this area relates to the fact that the climb up to the lighthouse is in fact the major focal point and achievement of the visitor experience on site. Accordingly it is a natural point of repose where people will be inclined to spend some time, given they've expended some effort in getting there.

In this context, signage has the added potential to contribute to the overall sense of achievement and balance associated with people's activity. Had they encountered a steady stream of signage en route to the light tower the existence of more signage at this point would be a matter of small regard. Introduced as a substantially new element however it can create an added sense of arrival and reinforce the natural feeling of accomplishment associated with the crest of the hill setting.

Fortunately the light tower precinct is ideally suited to a significant signage ensemble being positioned there owing to the waist high viewing platform environment running around the light tower. It would be an easy matter to install signage in the ground beyond this wall so as to extend across and be easily viewed by visitors at the base of the tower.

Significantly however signage at this venue would not end the overall signage ensemble planned for the site. On their return down the access path, people have an entirely different view and indeed overall outlook to that which accompanied them on their trek up to the light.

Here the view and the focal point is out over the lightkeepers cottages and there is already a natural point of repose in this area associated with a seat. Here signage established so as to look over the cottages would be prominently viewed by people on the downward walk, whereas they would be unlikely to notice it on the ascent (given they would be seeing the back of the signs if they noticed them at all).

This flow pattern by which people would access the signage on site has pleasant synergies in terms of focussing on the key themes to be conveyed as defined by the statement of significance.

ENTRY PRECINCT:

Overall historic significance and Aboriginal significance themes

LIGHTTOWER PRECINCT:

Aesthetic and scientific significance

OVERLOOKING ACCOMMODATION:

Social significance.

Additional points to note in relation to this signage program is that no signage is proposed to be located at the grassed lookout area accessed via a narrow path leading past the storehouse. This precinct should be kept substantially uncluttered as per its present format. Were there a future desire to put signage here, then such signage would focus on matters other than those associated with the lightstation such as offshore wildlife habitats etc.

These extraneous themes do not comprise part of the core lightstation precinct messaging platform and there are in any event many other potential sites where they can be developed in and around the national park.

5.2 To ensure that overnight visitors have an experience that enhances their general awareness of the site’s significance and in particular allows them to empathise with the lightkeeping experience and how this evolved over time.

5.2.1. Issues relating to this objective

The experience of staying overnight in one of the lightkeepers cottages is one with enormous interpretive potential. The cottages as they now sit in their renovated form are a fairly neutral platform in that they don’t focus at any one time at the expense of another.

This is a real issue in the case of historical settings as it is often tempting to focus more on the more evocative contexts associated with the distant past than it is to present a continuum of experience leading up to the present day.

This continuum of layered development of the site is reflected in the way restoration work has been undertaken on site and such an approach needs to be maintained in its interpretation.

While this is an important concept for the signage on site to embrace, it is limited by the fact that much of the historic, aesthetic, and scientific significance of the site is directly grounded on its origins in the 1870s. As such this historical ambience must have a dominant influence in the signage presentation.

It is in the case of the social significance of the site that the need to present an evenly balanced palette of human experience of the lightstation across the past 130 years really comes to the fore. In this context, the opportunity to use the overnight stay experience in the lightkeepers quarters is a remarkably important interpretive asset for the site.

Several immediate ways of responding to this opportunity present themselves. All of these revolve around the concept of turning each of the cottages into an information rich archive that people can explore at their leisure. The quiet space surrounding a bowl of weet bix in the morning is unfortunately an interpretive resource rarely available to a site program, and one that can be fully utilised here.

The first opportunity to note here is that a visitor book for the lightstation relating to the period 1876–1932 exists in the Sydney holdings of the National Archives. This book should be copied and a reproduced version included in each cottage. (N.B. There may be additional logbooks for subsequent years in existence in holdings other than those of the National Archives and this option is one to be explored as part of future development of the site interpretation program).

As many bushwalkers will appreciate, the hut log book is a source of much creative input on the part of contributors and ongoing interest on the part of readers. This process should be continued on site by both including old logbook copies and also having a present day book to which overnight visitors can contribute.

Another essential information resource for the cottages is the inclusion of the book “From Dusk till Dawn – A history of Australian Lighthouses” by G. Reid.

This book, published by Australian Government Printing Services in 1988 is now out of print (a 2nd hand copy can however be bought on the web for US\$190!). The Biblio Quest international book search website describes it as:

The first comprehensive illustrated history of Australian lighthouses from the early days, Very scarce. Highly sought after.. First. Cloth. Mint/Mint. Large 4to.

Given its pivotal value in the presentation of the NSW lighthouse story, the NPWS should actively work to bring about a second edition of this book.

Beyond these core resources, there is actually a major opportunity open to both the NPWS and the site lessees to use the overnight site experience as a major driver to acquire and present additional interpretive material relating to both the Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse and also to other associated lightstations along the NSW coast.

The potential to enhance the overall experience of being in a lightstation is presumably a key part of the lessee's business plan and one that can help distinguish their product from the increasing number of similar opportunities open to people to stay in historic lightstations across south east Australia.

As groups such as Lighthouses of Australia (LOA) demonstrate, there is a substantial body of people with a primary core interest in lighthouse heritage and appealing to this market in particular would invite the creative attention of the lessees.

In this regard, the potential of the NPWS working in collaborative association with the lessees to establish an expanded interpretive resource base for the site becomes quickly apparent. The potential for example to undertake oral history programs in relation to NSW lighthouse heritage is already recognised as a priority by the NPWS and this focus should be actively pursued at a local level.

5.3 To provide all visitors with opportunities to explore various additional aspects of the lighthouse story subsequent to their site visit by means of both programmed on site activities and off site resources (e.g. web chat rooms, research etc).

5.3.1. Issues relating to this objective

Of all the guided tour activities open to people to experience, those relating to cultural heritage are potentially the ones most appealing to and needed by a broader public. People can enjoy a walk in the bush by themselves without necessarily needing to be told anything about it or feeling the need to question what they are seeing.

Cultural heritage on the other hand tends more to invoke a questioning response. This building is here, why is it here? Why was it built, who lived here, what was its purpose, what was it like to live here?

This palette of opportunity is fertile ground for guided tours to plough. From an overall site interpretive context they also hold out a major opportunity to develop additional layers of meaning and understanding to the site experience.

This is due to many reasons, not the least of which is the way you can structure the flow of information in a tour such that it builds on material already presented. This is not possible via simpler media such as signage where each sign must stand as a self referencing statement not reliant upon a reader having already encountered previous material in order to understand it.

In a guided tour you get to tell a more nuanced, detailed story; a story that can also be customised to the specific needs and interests of the people in the group (especially where group sizes are small).

Accordingly it is essential that a guided tour program be developed for the site. This will inevitably be an organic process that

grows and adapts over time and the possible structures and themes for such programs are more properly the subject of subsequent additional interpretive planning once an appropriate guiding structure / system is in place.

An ideal outcome for the site would be one whereby a regular tours could be held at least once a week. In the case of Glen Davis in the western Blue Mountains for example, the pub owner runs regular tours of the historic oil shale ruins every Saturday at 2pm. This simple initiative is one that can then be readily promoted as part of the area's overall visitor resources, especially if they were open to people on an unplanned basis not requiring pre booking.

The conduct of such program may well be an option for the site lessee to pursue, especially given they will have a caretaker on site who presumably could run this operation.

In addition to a core tour product held on a regular periodic basis, the site should also look to establish an ensemble of 'one off' events that would have the potential to keep the local community connected with the resource.

In support of a program of guided tours on site, the lightstation should also develop a self guided audio tour downloadable via the web and played on site by personal MP3 player. This tour could form part of a larger ensemble of tours produced for each of the NPWS lighthouse precinct.

While such a product would at present appeal only to those who planned ahead in relation to their visit to the lighthouse, the time is fast approaching when most mobile phones will have the capacity to download and play these files. (Currently of course only a few top end models have this capacity). Visitors could hence simply be made aware of the file at the carpark and download their own copy which they then listen to via their mobile phone's MP3 player capacity.

The role of MP3 audio files in interpretation is an exciting new resource whose potential is waiting to be developed. Significantly Mt Tomah Botanic garden have recently produced a major garden tour based around this approach. While audio tours are of course not new, all previous versions have been hardware dependent in that you need to hire or acquire special audio equipment to deliver the tour.

By developing content that is independent of a specific delivery system, (i.e. any personal MP3 will do) it opens a new area that means investment in this area is not likely to be quickly made redundant by technological innovation. On the contrary, such innovation will only increase its broader uptake and relevance.

5.4 To create an organic interpretive program for the site that evolves and adapts over time by drawing upon the creative input of NPWS staff, site lessees, past lightkeepers and members of the public who may have specialised knowledge / experience to share.

5.4.1. Issues relating to this objective

The Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse was created as an integrated part of a broader lighthouse system. It is important that this sense of integration – of the site being one link in a much broader chain – is reinforced through the site interpretation process.

This process is assisted by the fact that the site is one of ten lighthouses managed by the NPWS and as such has an immediate sense of connection with the broader coastal lighthouse network through the NPWS Lighthouse Reference Committee.

The NSW light network is also united by the fact that many have a common appearance and are easily recognisable owing to them being designed by NSW colonial architect James Barnett.

These lights are of course also part of an essential network of coastal lights that remain in operation today under the control of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

These connections have several implications for the interpretation process on site. They mean for a start that experiences recorded in relation to one particular lighthouse setting often have relevance to others, especially in relation to matters such as technology and the routines of work as a lightkeeper and how these evolved over the years.

Another immediate benefit relates to the fact that present day curriculum material produced in either a generic format or for site specific needs can often be easily adapted

to be used on site. A major example in this case occurs in the case of the education kit *Beacons by the Sea: Stories of Australian Lighthouses* produced by the Australian National Archives in 2003 (http://www.naa.gov.au/images/beacons_tcm2-2955.pdf).

The lightstation of course has a long tradition as a community icon and this connection must be maintained and nourished. This approach underpins the notion of an interpretive PROCESS being a major outcome in itself for the site interpretation.

Interpretive product in terms of this tour or that event may come and go, but a process by which such events are generated on an ongoing organic basis in concert with the overall expansion of the interpretive resource and storylines is at heart a procedural matter that must proceed from a bottom up basis.

This is why it largely lies outside the purview of this interpretation plan. It is something that must proceed in a step by step fashion based on the collective input of those people who will own and implement the process.

In this context the key role of this plan is to recognise its importance and allow a structured role for it in the overall site interpretation.

This notion of nurturing a broader sense of community ownership and connection with the resource is an important one for the site to develop. Clearly lighthouse precincts are still going through a bedding down process allied to their automation and subsequent ‘demanning’ and the transfer of ten NSW lighthouses to the control of the NPWS.

When one looks at some of the web forums and material as presented on the *Lighthouses of Australia (LOA)* website for example it becomes clear that many lighthouse enthusiasts feel less than enamoured of the changes.

Reconnecting the lighthouses with such a fundamental core partner in their conservation is clearly an important challenge that interpretation planning must acknowledge and seek to address.

This again is where the notion of process becomes so important. At this point all that can be done is to recognise the importance of bridging this divide and to ensure that the lighthouses remain a true 'community owned' asset.

One immediate benefit of such an approach in terms of interpretive product is to encourage visitors to the site to connect with the on line forums of groups like the LOA as a means of learning more about lighthouses and sharing their experiences with other interested parties.

A critical feature of this objective is that carriage of it will largely flow from initiatives taken at a broader generic state wide level that are then responded on a site specific basis – i.e. this is primarily a top down approach.

The Lighthouse Steering Committee for example is now focussing on the broader need for oral history projects to record lightkeeper experiences. Ideally this would also link in with the work done both to date and on an ongoing basis by the LOA, given that their website devotes some attention to the issue of collecting and recording such material.

There is clearly a vast resource of lightkeeping resource material compiled to which the NPWS does not have ready access. This certainly exists for example in the case of the Sugarloaf Point site whereby former lightkeeper Mark Sherriff is clearly a major local interpretive resource of both artefacts and knowledge.

Coming up with a process by which to engage with such community assets and generate a broader collective sense of ownership of the lighthouses in their current administrative form is a matter that must needs proceed first at a state wide corporate level in concert with locally applied supporting initiatives.

6. Actions to implement objectives

6.1 Actions to implement objective 5.1

- 6.1.1. Produce site signage plan
(Interpretive consultant Mar 08)
- 6.1.2. Liaise with AMSA re signage installation at lighttower
(Ranger project manager Mar 08)
- 6.1.3. Produce landscape plan for entry precinct adjacent to the blowhole
(Ranger project manager Mar 08)
- 6.1.4. Undertake landscaping works
(Ranger project manager Jul -Sep 08)
- 6.1.5. Produce and instal signage
(Interpretive consultant May 08, Ranger project manager Jul - Sep 08)

6.2 Actions to implement objective 5.2

- 6.2.1. NPWS Lighthouse Steering Committee to undertake negotiations leading to the reprint of the book From Dusk till Dawn.
(Ranger project manager May 08)
- 6.2.2. Obtain scans of original logbook from Australian Archives. Produce 2 duplicates, archive files.
(Regional community relations officer May 08)
- 6.2.3. Determine process by which additional interpretive resource material relating to the site will be obtained and presented within the construct of an information archive in the cottages. Link this work in closely with the broader statewide processes being undertaken by the Lighthouse Steering Committee to access additional lighthouse oral history material. Identify action plan and budget for initial works.
(Site lessee, Ranger project manager, Regional community relations officer, NPWS Lighthouse Steering Committee Jun- Sep 08)

6.3 Actions to implement objective 5.3

- 6.3.1. Determine process by which a guided tour program comprising both regular core tours and special event activities can be established for the site. Process to canvas the potential role both NPWS Discovery and the site lessee could play in delivering the tour product.
(Site lessee, Ranger project manager, Regional community relations officer Jun- Sep 08)
- 6.3.2. Commence process leading to the production of a self guided audio tour for the site downloadable from the NPWS lighthouse website and delivered on site by personal MP3 player. Process to involve initial discussions with NPWS Lighthouse Committee and review of possible role such individual site specific tours could play for all NPWS lighthouses as well as possible corporate funding for such a product.
(Regional community relations officer, NPWS Lighthouse Steering Committee Jun- Sep 08)

6.4 Actions to implement objective 5.4

- 6.4.1. Work with the NPWS Lighthouse Steering Committee to develop and implement a plan not only to acquire oral history material but also to establish formal linkages with key community groups like the LOA (if these do not already exist) and key stakeholders including the site lessees. As part of this community partnership process, determine ways in which the respective resources and strengths of the various parties can be harnessed to the overall presentation and interpretation of the lighthouse resource to the public.
(Ranger Project Manager, Regional community relations officer, NPWS Lighthouse Steering Committee Jun -ongoing)