

**6.2 Setting the Scene:  
A Snapshot of Sandon Point November 2001**

<b>Zone 1 – <u>North facing slope surrounding the 1867 tramway line &amp; original cokeworks site</u></b>		
<b>Soil</b>	Combination of islands of original soil profile combined with areas of fill.	
<b>Vegetation Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal native grassland community (dominant native plant community within this zone)</li> <li>• Native obligate soak species (sedges and rushes)</li> <li>• Woody and herbaceous weeds</li> </ul>	
<b>Weed Density</b>	<b>Medium<sup>13</sup></b>	Predominantly herbaceous annual weeds and grasses with some woody weeds.
<b>Habitat Value</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	This grassland and soak offers habitat potential for a variety of small birds, potential food for birds of prey and habitat for reptiles including snakes and lizards, small native mammals and frogs.
<b>Major Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weed invasion (Blackberry is contributing some habitat value);</li> <li>• Terracing remaining from the construction of the tramway line and later cokeworks site have evolved into soaks that now offer habitat ;</li> <li>• Potential impact on this zone by development proposals will be devastating.</li> </ul>	
<b>Contribution to Conservation Value of Sandon Point</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This Zone has the potential to link the dune Coastcare site to the east with the Sydney Coastal Estuarine Swamp Forest Complex (SCESFC)<sup>14</sup> along Tramway Creek immediately to the west;</li> <li>• If the size of this zone is reduced the only natural physical feature linking SCEFSC and the Bushcare site will be the restricted water coarse line of Tramway Creek flowing under the culvert at the bicycle path;</li> <li>• <i>Isachne globosa</i> occurs in this Zone. The population of <i>Isachne globosa</i> at Sandon Point is the largest recorded in the district. This species is cited as regionally rare and a characteristic species for the SCESFC [see Appendix E];</li> <li>▪ The zone is affected by a significant number of Aboriginal archaeological sites and relics.<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>

An ecological community is an assemblage of native species inhabiting a particular place. An endangered ecological community therefore refers to an assemblage of native species that are likely to become extinct in NSW if threats to that community continue.  
NSW State of Environment Report 2000: Biodiversity

<sup>13</sup> Low Density Weed Invasion: weeds present although indigenous vegetation dominant in all vegetation levels  
Medium Density Weed Invasion: 50:50 ratio of weeds to indigenous vegetation in at least one vegetation level  
High Density Weed Invasion: at least one indigenous vegetation level absent as a result of weed domination

<sup>14</sup> NSW Scientific Committee's Final Determination (December 2000) of the "Sydney Coastal Estuarine Swamp Forest Complex" as an Endangered Ecological Community under the Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995)

<sup>15</sup> Navin Officer Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd for Rose Consulting/Stockland Pty Ltd, *Aboriginal Sub-surface Testing Program and Aboriginal Consultation*, October 2001



**Plate 6:** Looking west across Zone 1 and Zone 2 to the Illawarra Escarpment



**Plate 7:** Looking north from Zone 1. Archaeological excavations in foreground.