

HDBC Response to the TRC Central Highfields Master Plan – Stage 2 Options

16th March 2018

Comments: Relevant to All Options

Emergency Services

The placement of the Emergency Services site is not suitable for emergency response units due to the fact that vehicles would be entering directly onto a main arterial road.

This has the potential to:

- delay vehicles exiting the site and result in consequential worsening of the emergency
- pose a safety hazards to pedestrians in the area

Refer to the current issues with the Herries St Ambulance Station in Toowoomba as an example of what not to do.

Along the similar lines, we would oppose O'Brien Road being designated as the "Main Street" due to the high traffic volume that this road is likely to continue to experience, given that it will always be the fastest connection route between two major areas of Highfields. The placement of a Main Street along this road has the potential to be an issue for pedestrian safety would not result in the relaxed lifestyle amenity that is important to Highfields residents and the business community.

Civic space

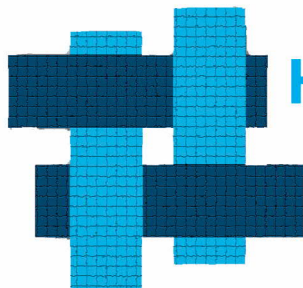
There is a lack of "civic" space for public activities on all three options. This omission fails to reflect the recognised lifestyle values of the Highfields area.

- Sufficient civic space needs to be preserved to cater for public events in the future. For example, even one decade from now public events may cater for greater than 5,000 people. (Based on fact that an estimated 2,500 people turned up at a social function at the Mary McKillop school in September last year.)
- Current plans need to reflect how such civic space and creative community spaces are integrated within the overall site. For example, an amphitheatre for outdoor entertainment cannot be sited within a designated parkland, but with thoughtful planning prior to zoning, such a civic asset could be integrated to maximise the use of civic and parkland spaces.
- In all three options, the Library is still sited in the parking lot across the road from the new precinct. Its placement is beside a service station and surrounded by an area where vehicle access is priority. This site raises safety issues for younger pedestrians and the centre's ability to function as a public asset and resource centre will be severely curtailed.
- All options would benefit by the addition of a community resource/ innovation and digital hub/ Library within the new precinct to cater for adult education, start-up entrepreneurs, small business co-working, community groups, and community activities as well as conventional library services. This was clearly demonstrated during the HCHeart workshops in 2017.

Integration and access between different land use areas

The integration of the civic, mixed use and residential space with the green "park" space is lacking on all options. Civic space is required for public activities and entertainment.

- The edges of zones are bounded with straight lines and /or roads in most examples to form barriers to how areas are used.



- Public access and activities require connecting boulevards or walkways for pedestrian and bicycle use. The South Bank precinct in Brisbane works well because of the boulevards connect a variety of areas from parks and gardens, mixed use and commercial sites and there are multiple entry points. The boulevards are attractive and become part of the design features.
- TRC staff indicated that a detailed vegetation survey may identify smaller patches of trees to be retained and these could be the base for distributing diverse green areas throughout the site.

HBDC's preferred option is Option 1 but this choice is tempered by the above statements.

In summary, HBDC considers that all three options are deficient in that they:

- show a lack of application of creative modern design principles;
- fail to reflect the lifestyle values of Highfields as outlined in the examples above; and
- do not maximise the enormous possibilities available on this greenfield site.

HBDC Recommendations for the Master Plan Design

Moving forward, the HBDC encourages the TRC to give priority to a master plan which reflects the current and future needs of the Highfields community. An attractive well-designed area is central to increasing both business and lifestyle value and to activating commercial areas and tenants.

Key points are:

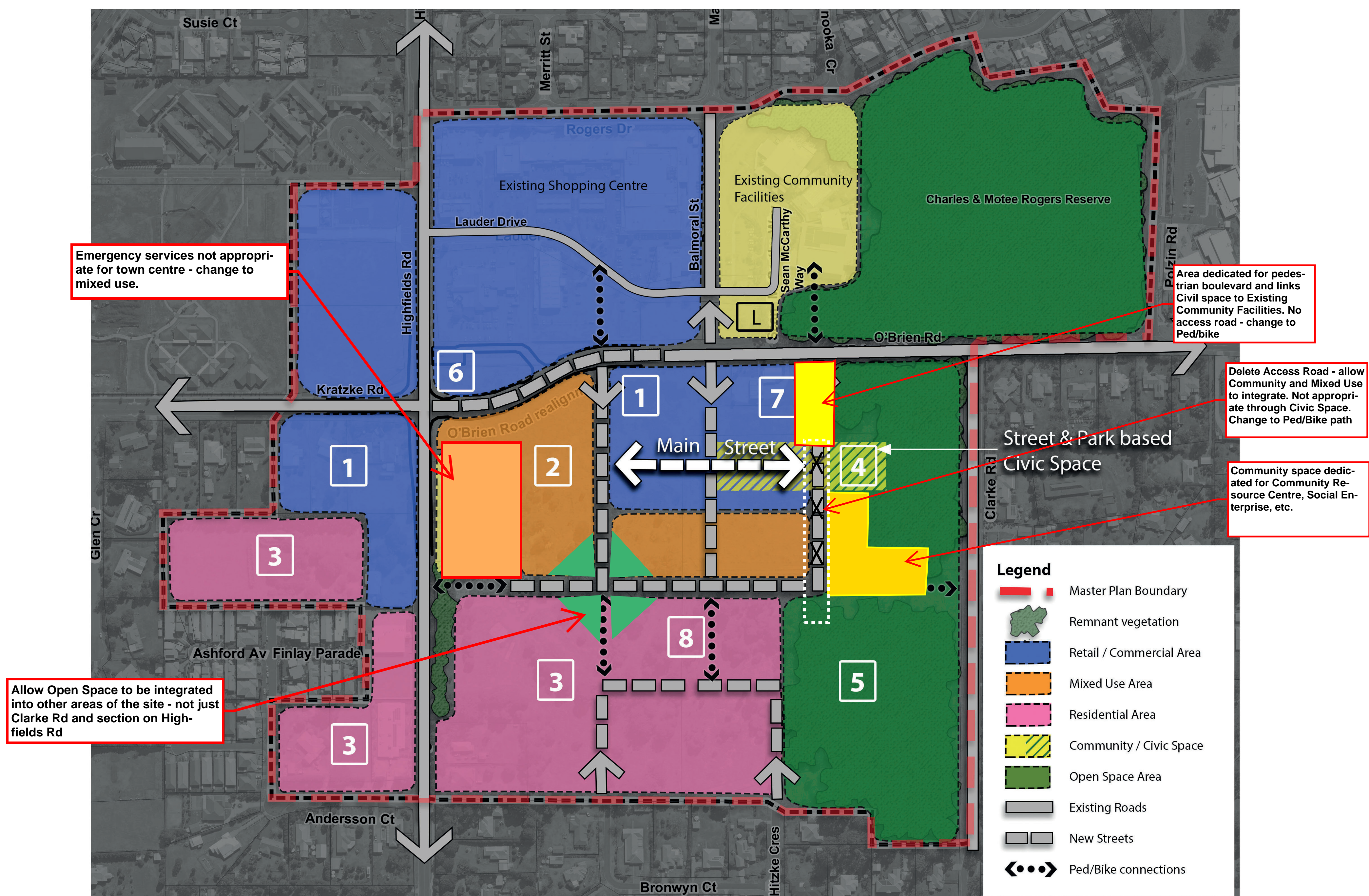
- Design principles should support maximum flexibility and catalyse commercial activity. It is critical for the attraction of a central tenant to support innovation and entrepreneurship and promote 21st Century jobs.
- An expanded civic space and creative community spaces integrated within the overall site. Improved integration of the civic, mixed use and residential space with the green "park" space and the development of well-designed boulevards and pedestrian areas to maximise connectivity. This makes the town centre attractive for residents and supports retail business opportunities.
- The Library /community hub would help frame development IF it were to be placed across O'Brien Rd and within the new space. The placement of the Library can add value to the development of the business case for then new precinct. Library funding would be seen as a public infrastructure contribution and provide leverage for commercial funding, economic development and jobs.

Regards,

The Executive Committee
Highfields and District Business Connections



MASTER PLAN OPTION 1



The Puzzle Pieces Used in Option 1

	Puzzle Pieces	How it's been used
1	Retail/Commercial Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over the existing Highfields Village.Over land south-west of Highfields Road.New area south-east of O'Brien Road.Main Street running parallel with O'Brien Road.
2	Mixed Use Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">South-east corner of Highfields and O'Brien Roads.
3	Residential Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Between the new Retail/Commercial area and existing residential land on Hitzke Crescent and Bronwyn Court.Land south-west of Highfields Road.
4	Community Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over the existing community facilities.Emergency Services area on Highfields Road.New civic/events space utilising part of the main street and open space.
5	Open Space Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over Charles and Motee Rogers Reserve.Over vegetated land along the south-west side of Clarke Road.
6	Existing Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Realignment of O'Brien Road and signalised intersection with Highfields and Kratzke RoadsNo changes to Clarke Road, Kratzke Road, Rogers Drive, Andersson Court and Lauder Drive.Extension of Balmoral Drive to O'Brien Road.Partial closure of Sean McCarthy Way.
7	New Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Grid of streets serving the new Retail/Commercial area.No street access from Highfields and Clarke Roads.New street linking Hitzke Crescent and Bronwyn Court.
8	Pedestrian Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pedestrian paths linking Clarke Road and Highfields Road with the Retail/Commercial area.Pedestrian paths linking existing and proposed residential areas to the new Retail/Commercial area.