



Central Highfields Master Plan

Stage 3 Community Engagement Report

June 2018

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Executive summary

Between October 2017 and June 2018, Toowoomba Regional Council has been working in close partnership with the Highfields community to develop a Master Plan for Central Highfields which will ultimately inform an amendment to the Planning Scheme.

(An Overview of the engagement process is presented on the following page.)

Stage 3 Community Engagement, conducted in the week of 28 May 2018, sought to gather feedback on the draft final master plan that had been prepared utilising best practice town planning and urban design principles and feedback from the Highfields community.

During Stage 3 Community Engagement, the Project Team engaged with 112 people at six public workshops where participants identified refinements they considered should be made in finalising the master plan and issues that should be addressed in the next phase of planning.

This report presents the consolidated feedback from this third and final stage of community engagement. This feedback will be considered in finalising the draft master plan.

Engagement overview



Stage 1 of this process was successfully completed during October-November 2017. During this stage, Council engaged with more than 200 people to elicit their views on two key considerations:

- Values, and
- Vision for the future of Central Highfields.

The first stage concluded with the Stage 1 Community Engagement Report, which was presented to Council and made available to the public via Council's website. That report included details about the project team, and the intent of the engagement process.

During December 2017 and January 2018, the TRC Project Team worked to translate the data collected in Stage 1 into three different master plan options for Central Highfields.

The Stage 2 community engagement process was held during February-March 2018. The intent of the Stage 2 process was to:

1. present and foster understanding about the three Master Plan options;
2. gather feedback about how well (or otherwise) the options reflect the values identified during Stage 1; and
3. begin to understand what the final and preferred option might look like.

The second stage concluded with the Stage 2 Community Engagement Report, which was presented to Council and made available to the public via Council's website. That report included details about the engagement process and the feedback received.

This report presents the findings of Stage 3 engagement. The information in this report will now be used by Council to finalise the draft master plan before it is considered for adoption by Council.

Engagement approach

The Stage 3 engagement process sought to engage with members of the Highfields community who had participated during Stages 1 and/or 2, and also provided the opportunity for additional members of the community to join in.

Council sent individualised correspondence (via letter/email) to all people on the Stage 1 and 2 engagement database inviting them to participate in the Stage 3 process.

Stage 3 Engagement occurred during the week commencing 28 May 2018 with feedback from the Highfields Community being obtained via workshops or as a written submission.

Community Workshops

Workshop	Registered	Attended
Workshop 1 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 28 May 2018, 3.30 – 5pm</i>	23	21
Workshop 2 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 28 May 2018, 6 – 7.30pm</i>	25	26
Workshop 3 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 31 May 2018, 10 – 11.30am</i>	22	20
Workshop 4 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 31 May 2018, 3.30 – 5pm</i>	12	12
Workshop 5 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 31 May 2018, 6 – 7.30pm</i>	17	18
Workshop 6 <i>Highfields Cultural Centre 2 June 2018, 9.30 – 11.30am</i>	8	15
Total	107	112

Note: Numbers at all workshops was capped at 25 to enable all members to participate in the discussion.

Other Feedback

Stakeholders who were unable to attend the community workshops were encouraged to provide their feedback as a written submission. One community member provided a written submission.

Workshop Process

Each of the six workshops was co-facilitated by Carey Crimmins (Primus Pty Ltd) and Heath Martin (Principal Land Use and Community – TRC) over a 90 minute period, with participants sitting in a 'U' configuration, all in one group. The workshop began with a review of the Stage 1 and 2 processes, including identification of the master plan option preferred by the community in stage 2 (which was option 1), the modifications community members identified as being needed to the preferred option and how these had been used to prepare the draft final master plan (see figure 1 below).

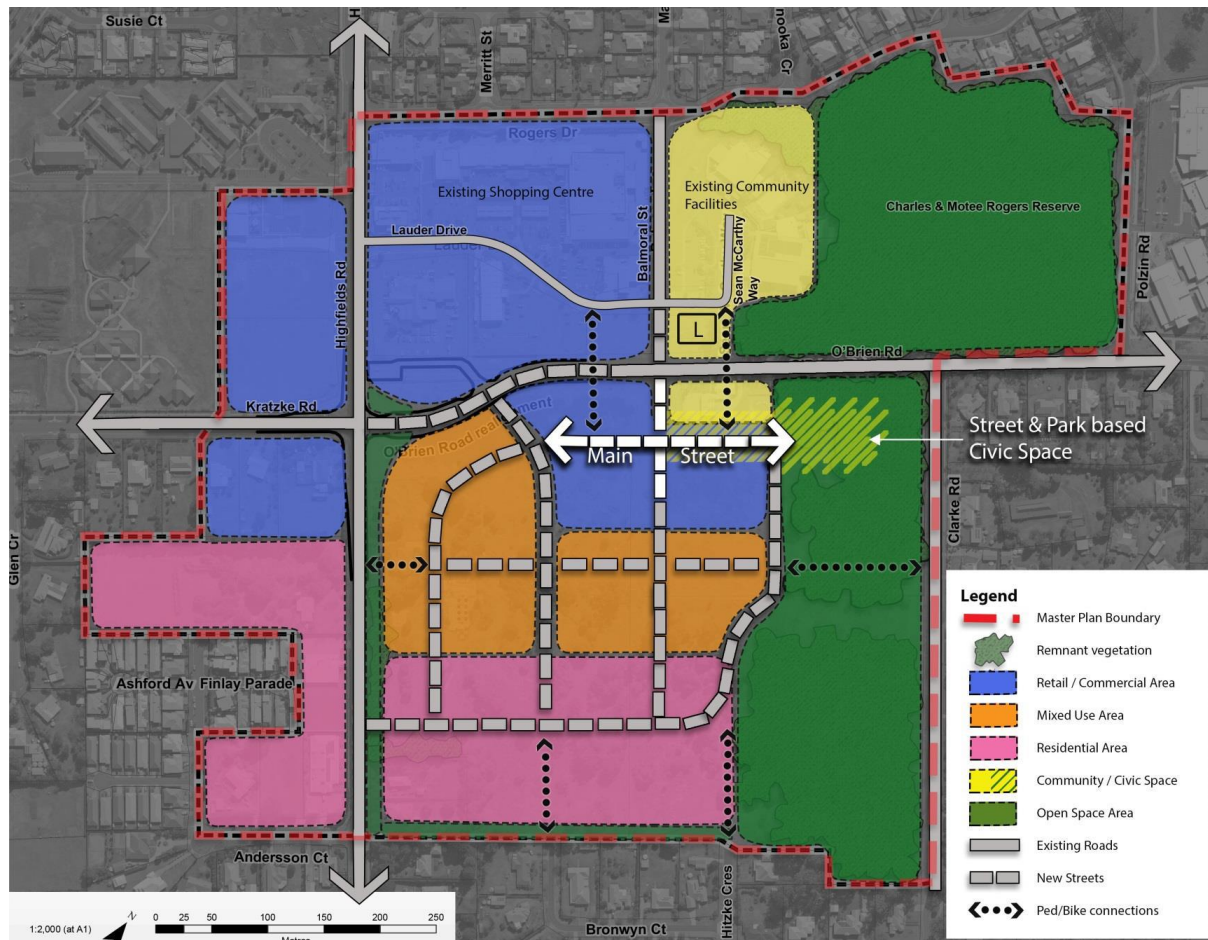


Figure 1 Draft Final Master Plan presented at community workshops for discussion

Participants were also shown two artists impressions to assist them to visualise the type of development being proposed by the draft master plan (see figures 2 and 3 below).

Participants were then asked to briefly discuss the refinements they thought should be made to the draft master plan with one or two people next to them in the group. The ideas raised in those conversations were then brought to the full group where they were discussed further and noted on butcher's paper.

Feedback also identified matters that were considered important to include in the next stage of planning. These were also noted on butcher's paper.

Once all refinements and future planning issues had been captured the facilitators described the next steps, which included development of a:

- structure plan; and
- urban design guidelines.



Figure 2 Artist impression of the Civic Space proposed by the draft Master Plan presented at the community workshops



Figure 3 Artist impression of part of the draft Master Plan area presented at the community workshops

What we heard

The sections below outline what we heard from the Highfields community about refinements to the draft final master plan and issues to be addressed in the next stage of planning.

Refinements (refer to figure 4 below for the location of reach refinement)

1. The land on the corner of Highfields and Kratzke Roads should be designated as Mixed Use rather than Retail/Commercial (there were mixed views within the group on whether this change should be made);
2. Include a pedestrian / cyclist path running 'north/south' through the park;
3. Make the 'Main Street' pedestrian only (there were mixed views within the group on whether this change should be made);
4. Make sure the green buffer along Highfields Road is protected should the road be widened in the future;
5. Widen the Highfields Road buffer so that it continues to be effective as the road gets busier;
6. Widen the green buffer between the existing and new residential areas;
7. Include a buffer between the Retail/Commercial area and Residential area on the 'west' side of Highfields Road;
8. Reduce the size of or eliminate the Residential area to ensure that there is land available to meet demand for non-residential development in the long term; and
9. Move the 'Main St' further away from O'Brien Road so the fire station isn't backing onto the 'Main St'.

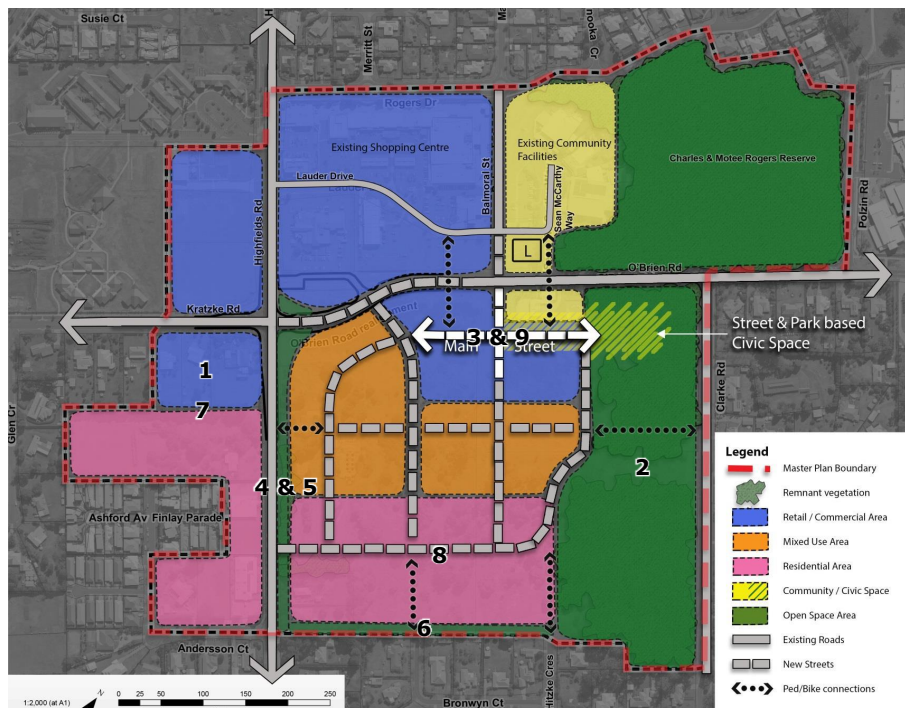


Figure 4 Location of suggested refinements

Issues to be addressed in the next stage of planning

Land Use & Planning

- Maintain integrity of 'balanced' development – refine the mix between residential and non-residential (including commercial & civic);
- Mix residential development – cater for range of users and include single storey accommodation; and
- Ensure planning scheme controls are in place before land is developed and/or sold.

Park

- Power (electricity) to park; and
- Location and design of playground/play area and paths.

Movement and Parking

- Location and design of pedestrian access & crossing points:
 - Highfields /O'Brien Road intersection;
 - Safety of road crossings (over/under pass); and
 - Pedestrian friendly road design.
- Roads:
 - Width and design; and
 - Enough to allow parking and cars to pass.
- Connectivity
 - Integration of bus transport; and
 - Paths that connect beyond the Central Highfields area e.g. creek corridor accessibility without driving; and
- Parking – location and design outcomes.

Built Form

- Building height;
- Guidelines –Urban form and residential, based on sustainability principles; and
- Quality of residential development - clear requirements are needed.

Infrastructure

- Technology capacity (eg. speed); and
- Energy (potential for use of renewable energy) and transport.

Environment

- Retention and planting of native vegetation.

What's next?

Stage 3 community engagement provided further highly valuable input from the Highfields community regarding the Master Plan.

Participants in the final stage of community engagement commented that Council had genuinely sought their input into the master plan, listening and responding to their feedback. This is evidenced by the high degree of support for the final draft master plan and the very short list of potential refinements to be considered.

The illustration below depicts the timeline for the finalisation of the master plan.

Council will formally consider the feedback identified in this report in finalising and adopting the master plan in the coming months. The final Master Plan will be presented back to the community once it has been adopted.

Participants in the three stages of community engagement will be advised when this decision is made and the final master plan will be available for viewing online via Council's 'Your Say' website <http://yoursay.tr.qld.gov.au/HTC>.

