

Item No.	<b>03</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Central Highfields Master Plan</b>
AUTHOR	Principal Land Use and Community (Heath Martin)

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report considers the final *Central Highfields Master Plan* and recommends that it be adopted by Council.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council on 18 July 2017 (Item 9.1) considered submissions to the draft *Highfields Cultural Precinct Master Plan* and resolved, in part:

- “9. That Council defer consideration of the design of the Highfields town centre.
10. That any future consideration of the design of the Highfields town centre involve early engagement of the Highfields community.”

A process for the establishment of a master plan for the Highfields town centre (Central Highfields) was subsequently put in place. The process was based on three (3) stages:

- Stage 1. Identification of community values and a vision for the Central Highfields area;
- Stage 2. The preparation of three (3) master plan options based on the vision and values identified in Stage 1; and
- Stage 3. The preparation of a final draft master plan based on community feedback received during Stage 2.

Each stage has involved extensive consultation with the Highfields community.

A final master plan (Refer **Attachment 1**) has now been prepared and is recommended for adoption by Council.

Following adoption of the master plan by Council work will commence on the next level of planning, which will involve the development of a structure plan and urban design framework. Further details are provided on page 27 of the master plan. This work is included within the Strategic Planning and Economic Development Branch’s operational plan and budget allocation for 2018/19.

## RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the *Central Highfields Master Plan* in the form identified in Attachment 1 to this report.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Development of the master plan has been undertaken in close consultation with the community. Adoption of the master plan will finalise the process and enable commencement of the next phase of planning for the development of Central Highfields.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopt the *Central Highfields Master Plan* in the form identified in Attachment 1 to this report.

**COUNCIL DECISION - 17 JULY 2018  
(Planning and Development Committee - 10 July 2018 - Item No. 03)**

Committee Recommendation adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 17 July 2018.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Action Officer</b>	<b>Action</b>
03	Heath Martin	Please instigate all follow up action from Council's decision.

**CORPORATE PLAN REFERENCE**

- 3.1.3 - Plan and manage open space, parkland and natural areas to eradicate pests and noxious weeds and promote biodiversity, water quality and community use.
- 4.1.1 - Undertake strategic integrated land use and infrastructure planning that responds to climate, is resource-wise, reinforces local character and achieves innovation and design excellence.
- 4.1.3 - Plan centres and townships to provide a strong sense of identity, local employment opportunities, community participation and access to housing choices.
- 6.1.4 - Ensure planning and infrastructure supports future economic growth.
- 7.1.2 - Implement effective community consultation processes that enable participation, engagement and collaboration.

**BACKGROUND**

Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council on 18 July 2017 (Item 9.1) considered submissions to the draft *Highfields Cultural Precinct Master Plan*. Strong community opposition had been raised against some parts of the draft master plan, which also contributed to a lack of community confidence in the master planning process. Council resolved to endorse some elements of the draft master plan and to abandon others. The resolution included, in part:

- “9. That Council defer consideration of the design of the Highfields town centre.
- 10. That any future consideration of the design of the Highfields town centre involve early engagement of the Highfields community.”

A process for the establishment of a master plan for the Highfields town centre (Central Highfields) was subsequently put in place. The process was based on the following three (3) stages, with each stage involving extensive community consultation:

- Stage 1 Identification of community values and a vision for the Central Highfields area;
- Stage 2 The preparation of three (3) master plan options based on the vision and values identified in Stage 1; and
- Stage 3 The preparation of a final draft master plan based on community feedback received during Stage 2.

**CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

Each stage in the development of the *Central Highfields Master Plan* has involved extensive community consultation that has seen over 250 people participate in at least one (1) stage of consultation and over 100 people participate in all three (3) stages.

Community engagement reports were prepared and made publicly available following the conclusion of each stage of consultation. The reports document the process and feedback received. Copies have been included as **Attachments 2, 3 and 4** to this report.

## ISSUES, RISKS AND RESPONSES

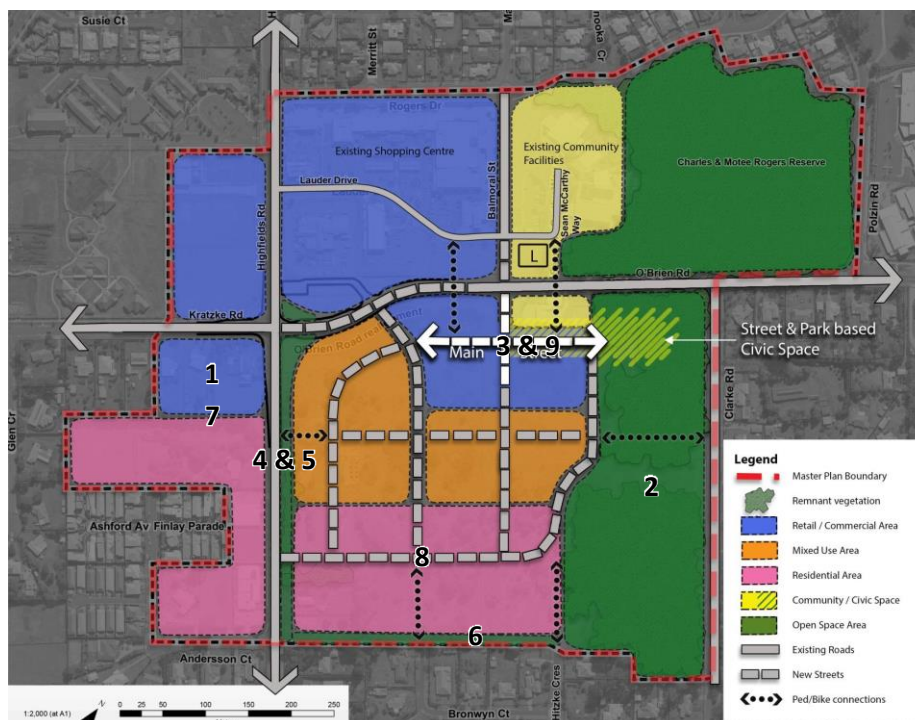
During the first stage of consultation members of the community identified their vision for Central Highfields and the values that should be used in preparing the master plan. The following seven (7) values were formed from that feedback:

1. Belonging, Family, Community , Neighbours
2. Distinct Identity
3. Space
4. Trees and Nature
5. Accessibility and Connectivity
6. Safety and Security
7. Economy and Growth

These values were used to prepare 20 development principles and three (3) master plan options, demonstrating how the elements of the master plan (land use areas and movement network) could be arranged in different ways based on the community values.

The community were asked to provide feedback on the three (3) options, identifying what they would like to see retained, removed and modified. That feedback demonstrated a preference for one (1) of the three (3) options over the other two (2) (Option 1), with suggestions for how that option could be improved.

A final draft master plan was prepared based on the Stage 2 feedback, with the community asked to identify any further refinements that were needed in finalising the master plan. There was a high degree of support for the final draft, with very few refinements being identified. The following are the refinements identified by stakeholders with corresponding officer comments (numbers on the figure below correspond with the number of each refinement):



1. *Land on the corner of Highfields and Kratzke Roads should be designated as Mixed Use rather than Retail / Commercial (mixed views were expressed on this matter across all stakeholder groups);*

*Comment:* This refinement has been suggested by stakeholders as it was seen as a land use that is more compatible with the adjoining residential area.

As a high exposure site on a significant intersection this location is considered to be best suited to 'fringe' retail activities that may require a large site and therefore not suitable to the central Retail/Commercial area. Such uses may include appropriately designed showrooms.

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

2. *Include a pedestrian / cyclist path running 'north/south' through the park;*

*Comment:* The master plan does not show all pedestrian / cyclist paths that might be constructed within Central Highfields however the suggested path is considered to be of sufficient significance to be included within the plan. It is also suggested that a pedestrian / cyclist path be shown running 'east/west' along the 'southern' boundary of the master plan area.

It is recommended that this refinement be included in the master plan.

3. *Make the 'Main Street' pedestrian only (were expressed on this matter across all stakeholder groups);*

*Comment:* This refinement has been suggested by stakeholders to eliminate any potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians within the main street. The master plan envisages the main street being designed as a low speed environment and in a way that would allow the street to be closed to traffic during community events. This would enable cars to access the main street outside of events, maximising vehicle circulation around the Central Highfields area while maintaining a high quality pedestrian friendly environment and avoiding vehicle/pedestrian conflict at times of greatest risk (during events).

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

4. *Make sure the green buffer along Highfields Road is protected should the road be widened in the future;*

*Comment:* This is not something the master plan is able to achieve.

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

5. *Widen the Highfields Road buffer so that it continues to be effective as the road gets busier;*

*Comment:* The designations in the master plan are indicative only with distances and areas not intended to be accurately measured. This level of detail will be developed in the next stage of planning (structure planning).

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

6. *Widen green buffer between existing and new residential areas;*

*Comment:* The designations in the master plan are indicative only with distances and areas not intended to be accurately measured. This level of detail will be developed in the next stage of planning (structure planning).

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

7. *Include a buffer between the retail/commercial area and residential area on the 'west' side of Highfields Road;*

*Comment:* It is agreed that the interface between all Retail/Commercial and Residential areas be appropriately treated so as to address conflicts that may arise from noise, vehicle movements, odours, etc, from the Retail/Commercial area. This interface is most appropriately addressed through the development assessment process using mechanisms such as setbacks, fencing and landscaping.

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

8. *Reduce the size or eliminate the Residential area to ensure that demand for non-residential development can be met in the long term;*

*Comment:* It has been forecast that 11.1 hectares of land is required to support demand for retail, office and bulky goods within Central Highfields to 3031. The draft master plan identifies approximately 14.6 hectares of land for these uses, providing 40% more land than required to 2031 and therefore making provision for demand for the longer term.

It should be noted that as Highfields grows not all of the demand for retail, office and bulky goods will be met within the Central Highfields area. Some of that demand will be met in other locations including on the highway and in local centres.

It is recommended that this refinement not be included in the final master plan.

9. *Move the 'Main St' further away from O'Brien Road so the fire station isn't backing onto the 'Main St'.*

*Comment:* This change is supported. It will result in a more consistent form of development for the full length of the 'Main St'.

It is recommended that this refinement be included in the final master plan.

The modifications recommended above have been incorporated into the final master plan, which is included as **Attachment 1** to this report.

## FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The financial and resource implications for Council in implementing the master plan have not been evaluated as part of this process. These implications will be heavily dependent on the approach Council takes to implementing the plan, e.g. Council could fund and build all infrastructure required to support the initial stages of the master plan upfront or require that this be done by developers.

The various implementation options will be documented and evaluated during the next phase of planning.

**CONCLUSION**

The *Central Highfields Master Plan* has been developed by Council over the last 12 months in close partnership with the Highfields community. The level of community involvement has resulted in a final plan that has a high level of support and provides a sound basis on which more detailed planning can be undertaken.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 of 4 [Central Highfields Master Plan](#)

Attachment 2 of 4 [Stage 1 Community Engagement Report](#)

Attachment 3 of 4 [Stage 2 Community Engagement Report](#)

Attachment 4 of 4 [Stage 3 Community Engagement Report](#)