



# Mackay

city centre local area plan

Background & Enquiry by Design Outcomes Report

June 2011

## Client

### Mackay Regional Council

The Background & Enquiry by Design Outcomes Report for Mackay City Centre Local Area Plan has been prepared on behalf of Mackay Regional Council.

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The Background & Enquiry by Design Outcomes Report for Mackay City Centre Local Area Plan was written and desktop published by Deicke Richards in conjunction with our project partners Lat 27, Buckley Vann Town Planning, AEC Group, Cardno and Elton Consulting.

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This Background & Enquiry by Design Outcomes Report is intended to provide a resource to the Mackay City Centre Local Area Plan (LAP) project providing a sense of history and flavour of the city and provide a summary of the outcomes of the Enquiry by Design process. The document represents a collection of past ideas. It is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of background information but rather a selective summary of important themes, analysis, ideas and issues that have and will impact upon the future direction of the City Centre.



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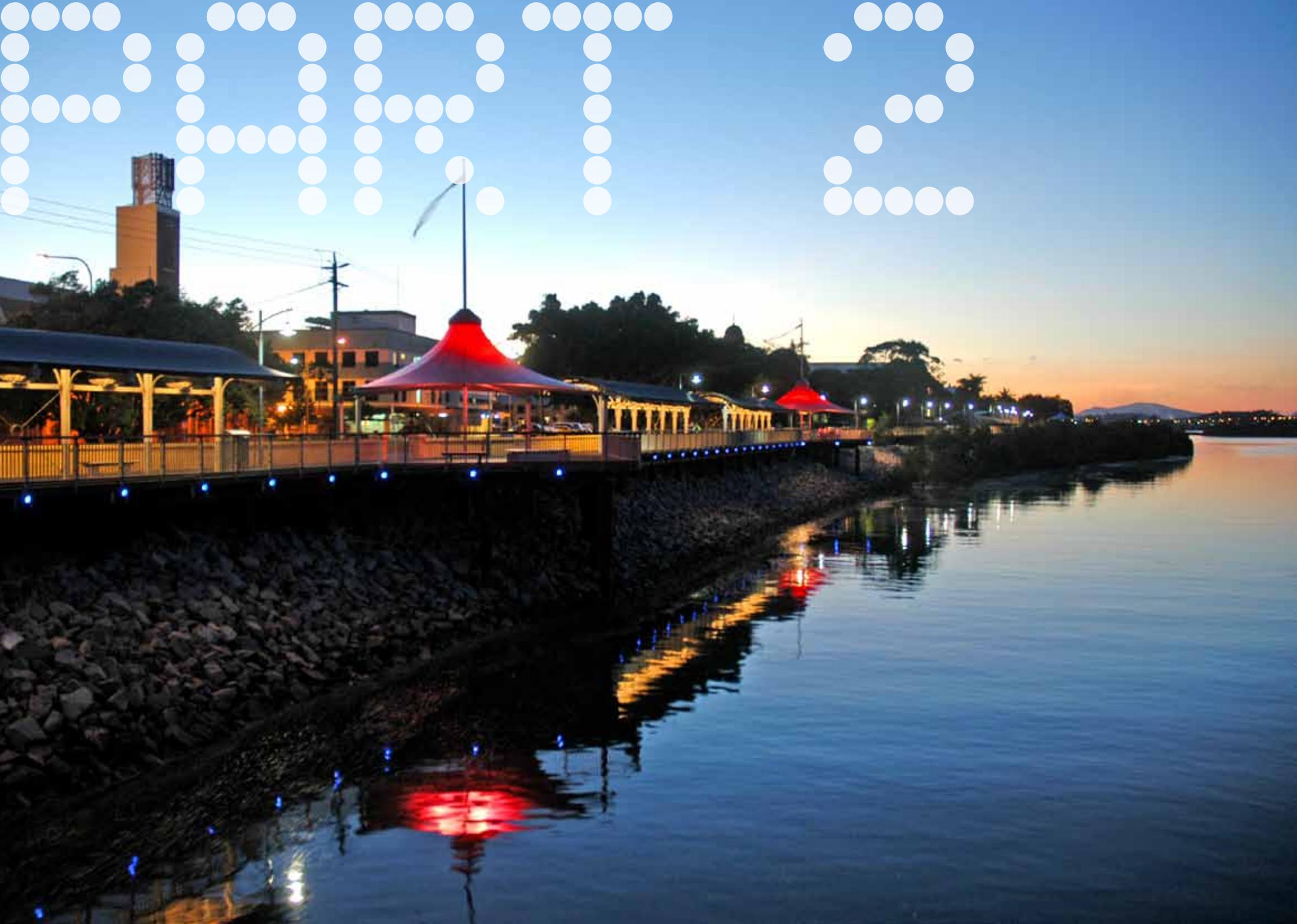
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## Part 2: Enquiry by Design outcomes

### Introduction

**The following section provides a summary of the Enquiry by Design (EbD) workshop that was held at the Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre 23 - 25 March 2011.**

### What is an EbD?

Enquiry by Design workshops are an important part of the Local Area Plan (LAP) preparation process.

EbD Workshops are multi-day planning and urban design forums that explore and test design and development ideas and options based on a comprehensive understanding of local issues, opportunities and constraints. The fundamental purpose of this EbD Workshop is to inform the preparation of a Concept Plan over the local area.

Each EbD Workshop is unique as it is tailored to local characteristics and issues as well as the knowledge and skills of workshop participants. All EbD Workshops, however, generally involve the following:

- presentation of Context and Appraisal Report and Preliminary Vision to 'frame' the workshop
- appreciation of the role and character of the local area and its place in the regional context
- formulation of neighbourhood scale structure plans;
- formulation of potential precinct/site plans for key locations.

### Aims of the EbD

The aims of the EbD were to:

- Establish a vision for the next 20+ years – What does the future Mackay City Centre look like? (Opportunities, changes, challenges)
- Explore and test initial responses to opportunities, constraints and key issues
- Explore and test key themes such as access and connection, centres and activity nodes, neighbourhoods, recreational/open space, built form, land use and precincts, and streetscapes
- Explore and test urban enhancement opportunities
- Consider the sustainable provision of trunk infrastructure to facilitate future urban growth (water, sewerage, storm water)
- Consider how future development should be sequenced

The EbD Workshop brought together key stakeholders from government (local and state) and community representatives (landowners and business owners) in a collaborative environment to exchange ideas and to establish principles and guidelines for development.

The workshop produced numerous plans, concepts and supporting material which recorded and illustrated the findings of the workshop.

The EbD was an investigative rather than a decision making process. Not all of the findings may be pursued, but instead used as input to guide further discussion and investigation through the LAP process.

The workshop led participants through a structured design process that began with looking at the strategic issues of how activity nodes in the City Centre interact and connect. Participants then looked at the areas and precincts, and finally drilled down to investigate key interventions and development opportunities.

These outcomes documented in the following pages will be used as a basis to define a new City Centre Strategy.

# What the community said

## Vision

A vision workshop was held prior to the EbD workshop. The following responses were given by participants of the visioning workshop:

".... should be pedestrian priority over cars."

".... car parking."

".... loop bus for the city."

".... interaction of the city with environmental areas adjoining Sandfly Creek – not just another piece of open space."

".... traffic circulation and access."

".... open up the river frontage."

".... event management in the city."

".... signage and wayfinding."

".... River Street is a barrier to pedestrian movement."

".... Improve tired streetscapes and buildings."

".... landscape needs to be looked after."

".... link to caneland needs to be pedestrian friendly."

".... gateways at Sydney and Gordon Streets"

".... CPTED/safety/lighting – safety related to time of day/night."



".... rooftop recreation space on taller buildings."

".... sub tropical design for buildings."

".... more residential development in the city."

".... places to rest."

".... residential development for middle income earner not just top end."

".... not a concrete jungle."

".... light and airy."

".... Heritage protection."

".... costs who will pay for services and facilities."

"....public transport improvement."

".... economic future of the city – 'Beyond Mining'."

".... the bulk of the buildings is the issue not the height."

".... why would I want to live in the city."

".... shade and comfort/lawnings on buildings."



## Structure & form

Workshop Leaders led participants on an exploration of the structure and make up of the city. Given the relative size of the city it contains a number of places or neighbourhoods based on their locational differences such as proximity to the river, age and nature of existing buildings, predominant land use and road network.

The groups were free to explore how the city is structured both now and into the future. The options considered are set out below.

### Option 1

This option (Figure 12) highlights the role the City Core plays as an activity centre and the major neighborhood in the city. This option shows retail and commercial activities extending down Sydney and Wood Streets to the TAFE area between Alfred and Shakespeare Street. This area anchors the southern entry of the city.

Shakespeare Street contains a number of local shops and an assortment of commercial activities along its length. These shops form the basis for two other residential neighbourhoods which support residential uses in this locality.

Higher density residential uses dominate the waterfront area. This plan recognises that development activity is seeking to capitalise on this high amenity location and reinforces this notion.

The service and commercial area to the east of the City Core is retained and expanded as part an employment precinct containing showroom, services, arts, industry and technology. All essential uses for a growing City Centre.

To the west of the town centre a commercial precinct capitalises on its proximity and exposure to Gordon Street.

A number of linkages are emphasised in this plan including River and Victoria Streets providing stronger pedestrian connections between Caneland Central Shopping Centre and City Core.

Alfred Street is highlighted as another key east/west link between the showgrounds and Queens Park which are two key open space areas in the city. This street has a more mixed use residential focus with a reduced scale and intensity of development.



Figure 12: Land Use and Urban Structure Option 1



Figure 13: Land Use and Interventions for north-west sector of the city

## Option 2

This second option (Figure 14) explores a multi centre city providing each centre with a particular bias. Identifiable urban precincts that respond to the overall scale and character of the city were identified. A key feature of this option was the elevation of mid-block links/ lanes running east-west across the entire city to improve urban connectivity.

Five centres were proposed based upon existing functional and aspirational qualities:

A 6-block 'Core' was defined around Sydney and Victoria Streets to capture and accentuate Mackay's most significant architectural fabric. This zone was to be retained as the City's entertainment precinct but with a more diverse range of offerings. Accentuating the existing, unique streetscape and exploring ways to sensitively increase building density were also proposed. Four other centres orbit this hub.

River Street West/Caneland Central Shopping Centre was highlighted as the focus for a river-edge village capitalising on the nexus between an established commercial centre and the desire for residential and recreational opportunities adjoining the Pioneer River. Strategic open space links would be augmented by improved north-south, street-based links.

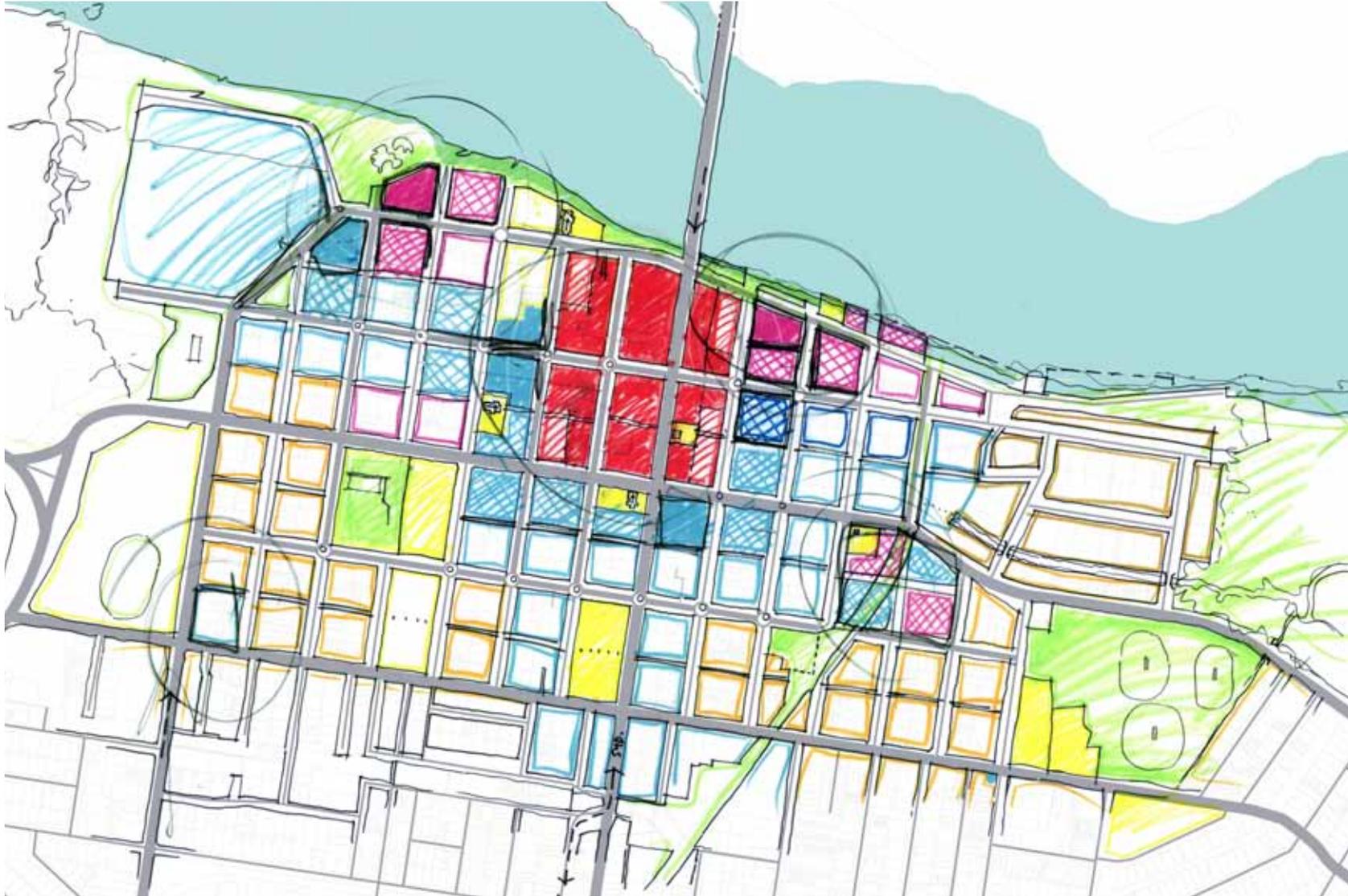
East of Sydney Street is the opportunity for another waterside centre that could energise the recently completed Bluewater Quay precinct and reinforce the eastern edge of the City Core as a transition to the waterfront and further east along the Bluewater Trail. A bias towards commercial activities south of this zone would complement existing land use patterns as a concentric frame to the City Core.

The fourth centre is located east of Tennyson Street, south of Gordon Street on the former railway yard. A large, catalyst site here has the

potential to significantly change the dynamics of this part of town.

Positive impacts include population growth in close proximity to Queens Park, local schools and a direct link into the open space link running north-south along the former railway corridor.

South-west of the core, the fifth centre sits between the key activity nodes of the Council Buildings/ MECC/ Art Space facilities and the showgrounds. Additional roles for this centre include clarifying the arrival experience into the city across Shakespeare Street and the location for more affordable housing options for Mackay. Improved use of existing open space adjoining Council buildings was also seen as important to the success of the City Centre.



Now	Later	
		Mixed-use/ residential - high
		Residential - medium
		Commercial - high
		Commercial - medium
		Open space
		Civic + heritage
		Support industry

Figure 14: Land Use and Urban Structure Option 2

## Preferred Structure

The preferred structure recognises the City Core as the heart of a large mixed use neighbourhood that is the City Centre as shown in Figure 15. The City Centre is supported by a number of smaller neighbourhoods which have their focus on Shakespeare Street. These are predominantly residential and support the City Centre with higher density residential development. The highest density of residential development is most likely to occur in the City Centre neighbourhood where taller buildings capitalise on the amenity of the Pioneer River.

From a structural point of view, the City Core is and always has been the focus socially and functionally, and should continue to be into the future. Other activity nodes will support the dominant centre allowing an interchange of movement which activates paths between these nodes. This is important in bringing life to streets.

The Langer Plan recognised a number of neighbourhoods in the city however these neighbourhoods were all of the same size and focused around specific nodes of activity such as the City Centre. The Langer Plan encouraged movement between nodes but did not give weight to a larger neighbourhood or centre as a focus for the City. The preferred structure sets the City Core at the centre of a neighbourhood which is effectively the City Centre. This is consistent with the City Centre being a principal activity centre and a major focus for the region.

## Planning for Mixed Use

It was evident from the approaches taken in the workshop that there were consistent themes emerging in the structuring of the City Centre. The following is a Precinct by Precinct description of the city as a method for organising and ascribing tables of assessment to the structure plan. It includes the various roles of the precincts.

### City core

The Core is a central component of the city. Given its heritage buildings and streetscapes it makes an enormous contribution to the sense of place. It is a very memorable place with a wealth of street based uses - retail, entertainment, café's, etc - activating streets. This function of the Core will be retained and enhanced. Heritage and character buildings are retained with incentives to redevelop premises considered as part of a broader policy approach to development within the Core.

### Mixed use residential (north)

The northern edges of the city are dominated by more intense residential uses that capitalise on the considerable amenity the Pioneer River delivers. This Mixed Use Residential Precinct is currently where development pressure is and will most likely continue as more development is attracted to the city. This waterfront activity, both east and west of the Core and indeed in the Core, will help drive linkages across the waterfront from east to west linking the Core via River Street to Caneland Central Shopping Centre.

### Caneland Central Shopping Centre

Caneland Central is obviously a very important part of the city. It generates considerable vehicle movements within the region but is currently poorly connected functionally and physically to the rest of the city.

It is physically disconnected because of the level of traffic which severs the shopping centre from the city making pedestrian movement to and from the Centre difficult. Functionally, the Shopping Centre is an internal mall which makes little contribution to the street life and presence in the locality. Essentially Caneland Central is focused internally as most 'big box' shopping centres are, making its integration to the adjoining city fabric difficult and creating poor amenity along Mangrove Road and River Street.

Options for 'stitching' the city and Caneland Central Shopping Centre together are explored in later sections and they include considering alternative points of access to the centre allowing better physical integration between the two. This allows for a residential use to occur east of the shopping centre to fully capitalise on opportunities presented by the riverfront and by Caneland Central Shopping Centre as part of a walkable neighbourhood which includes River and Victoria Streets, connecting back to the City Core.

### Mixed use commercial

Gordon Street is a highly visible road corridor attractive to commercial uses which benefit from high visibility and the movement economy. The preferred structure plan opts for Mixed Use Commercial uses along this frontage recognising its value as a business address rather than a residential address.

This Mixed Use Commercial Precinct extends along Gordon Street from east to west through the Core, and recognises the current commercial nature of areas adjoining this path.



Figure 15: Land Use and Urban Preferred Structure

### City services

On the eastern fringe of the city is the existing Services/Industry area. This area plays an important function providing for a range of service and light industry uses that are required in the day to day life of a city. This area is to be retained, however areas close to the river may be redeveloped over time for residential uses.

Other uses that require larger showroom/warehouse style spaces are encouraged in this precinct.

### Mixed use residential (south)

A Mixed Use Residential Precinct is created along parts of Alfred Street. These residential areas provide an alternative residential setting from the waterfront area, and will be of a significantly different scale and intensity. This mixed use area supports a range of residential uses

that contribute to both the city and to the local neighbourhoods which they are a part of.

### Mixed use education

This precinct recognises the future role the TAFE can offer the city as an educational asset, as an activity generator and as a potential gateway to the southern edge of the city. This precinct will facilitate the growth and expansion of the education facility encouraging similar uses within the precinct.



## Built form

Built form was seen as critical to the future development of the city of Mackay in creating appropriate character responses to existing built forms. It is also important in responding to streets and public spaces with building forms that both overlook and activate these spaces.

The following principles were developed to guide built form development:

- **provide simplicity and flexibility** – simplicity in building form and flexible with respect to accommodating a range of uses over its life time
- **reinforce streets** – creating tight streetscapes and reinforcing the public realm. Buildings define the public realm delineating public from private
- **respect heritage** – heritage and character buildings are retained as integral elements of the streetscape and as the essential character of the city. Redevelopment of these areas respect the character and rhythm of the streetscape
- **preserve views** – strong views out of the city are generated by the topography of the locality and the orientation of the grid. Views out of the city are respected by individual developments
- **incentivise development** – development needs to be encouraged to develop in certain areas in preference to others in order to maximise public expenditure on infrastructure and public realm. Incentives also need to be developed for the retention and redevelopment of heritage and character buildings
- **design thinner buildings** – as a response to Mackay's climate, thinner buildings which encourage cross ventilation and access to breezes should be encouraged.

## Thinner buildings

Given the hot humid nature of the climate, a thinner building typology was explored that allowed for greater cross ventilation. Figure 16 provides an illustration of the principle of thinner buildings and how they respond to streets and adjoining development.

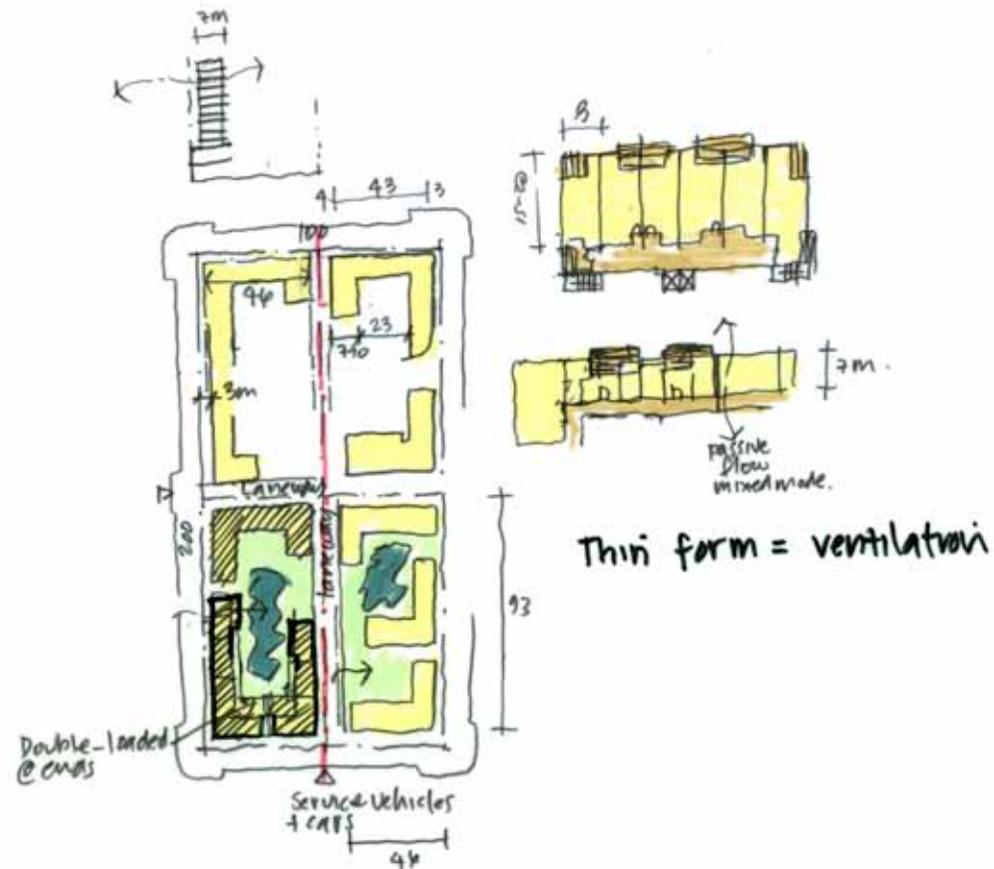


Figure 16: Climatically responsive building from

### Building frontages

The following building cross-sections represent a number of built form approaches to key streets in the city.

**Cross Section 1** - represents a possible outcome for both River and Victoria Streets and shows mixed use buildings with active frontages built to the alignment providing a strong edge to the public realm. Residential towers grow out of 2 level podiums which provide opportunities for a range of commercial activities including retail, cafes and offices. Basement parking is provided over 2 levels.

Street cross sectional details have been altered to make more generous provision for outdoor dining and additional public realm.

Buildings are slightly raised from street level to mitigate against potential flooding hazard.

**Cross Section 2** - shows a possible treatment for buildings fronting onto Gordon Street. This cross-section shows mixed use commercial buildings lining Gordon Street with single or two level podiums and commercial office or residential above.

This is an important commercial address and buildings need to reflect this street's status as a strong gateway and path to the city. Buildings are set to the street alignment for the full height, reinforcing this as a key path. Generous floor-to-ceiling heights at ground floor allow for a range of uses from showrooms to retail and commercial.

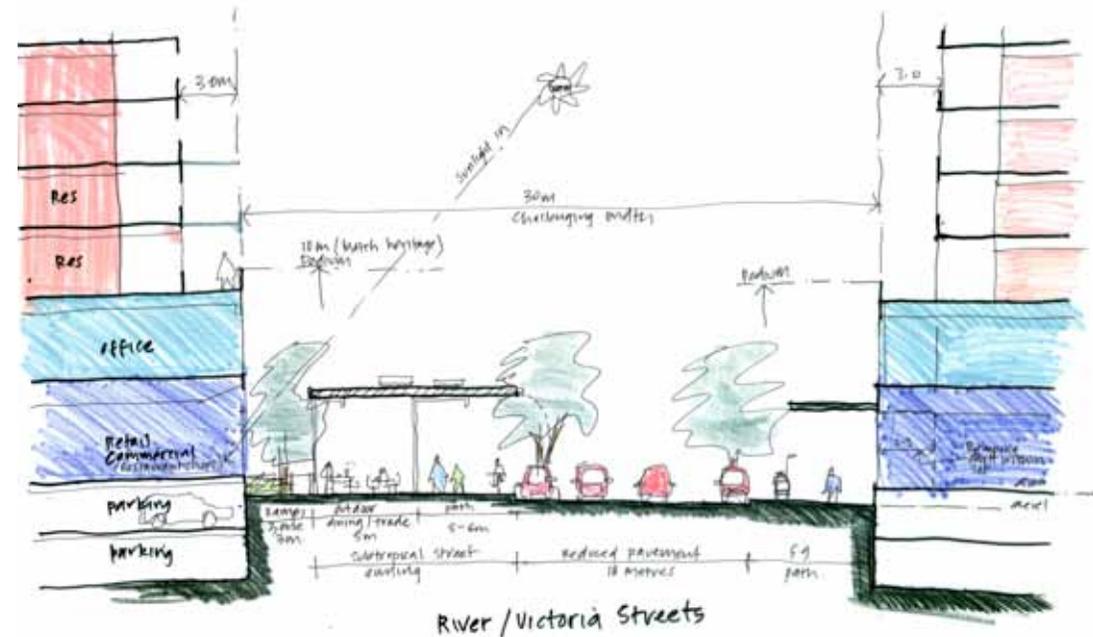


Figure 17: Cross Section 1 - River Street & Victoria Street



Figure 18: Cross Section 2 - Gordon Street

Cross Section 3 - shows two variations of potential treatments of Alfred Street. This street moves from a more residential function to a more mixed use role around Sydney Street, as such the nature of the building relationship changes.

The residential cross-section provides for a small setback with an elevated first floor which allows for small balconies or courtyards to overlook the street. This ensures surveillance of the public realm whilst maintaining some sense of privacy and refuge from the street for the occupant.

The mixed use condition sees the building set forward to the street alignment with a single level podium. Greater floor-to-ceiling height at ground level of up to 4.5m allows for a range of uses to activate the street from commercial offices and shops to live work units. The residential component above is shown setback, however given the residential nature of the street and the scale of the building (4-6 storeys) it is not essential.



Figure 19: Cross Section 3 - Possible frontage treatment for Alfred Street

### Building heights

The workshop explored the issue of buildings heights. Currently the maximum height in some locations is set at 30m. There is a possibility of the height going to 49m which is the current Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) height for the Mackay Airport.

Map 6 shows the proposed buildings heights across the city as discussed in the workshop. The Building Heights Plan demonstrates a transition of building heights from taller buildings in precincts adjoining the Pioneer River to lower buildings along the southern (residential) fringes along Shakespeare Street.

This reflects the general building pressure along the riverfront and encourages this to continue. The pressure along this edge is discussed below in staging as the issue of staging and building heights are linked. Generally lower building heights reflect a desire to restrict development in some locations.

Building heights within the City Core are related to heritage and character issues. It was felt that by allowing taller buildings within the core that they would:

- encourage the removal of heritage and character buildings within the core rather than their retention and reuse
- encourage development that is out of scale and out of character with surrounding development.

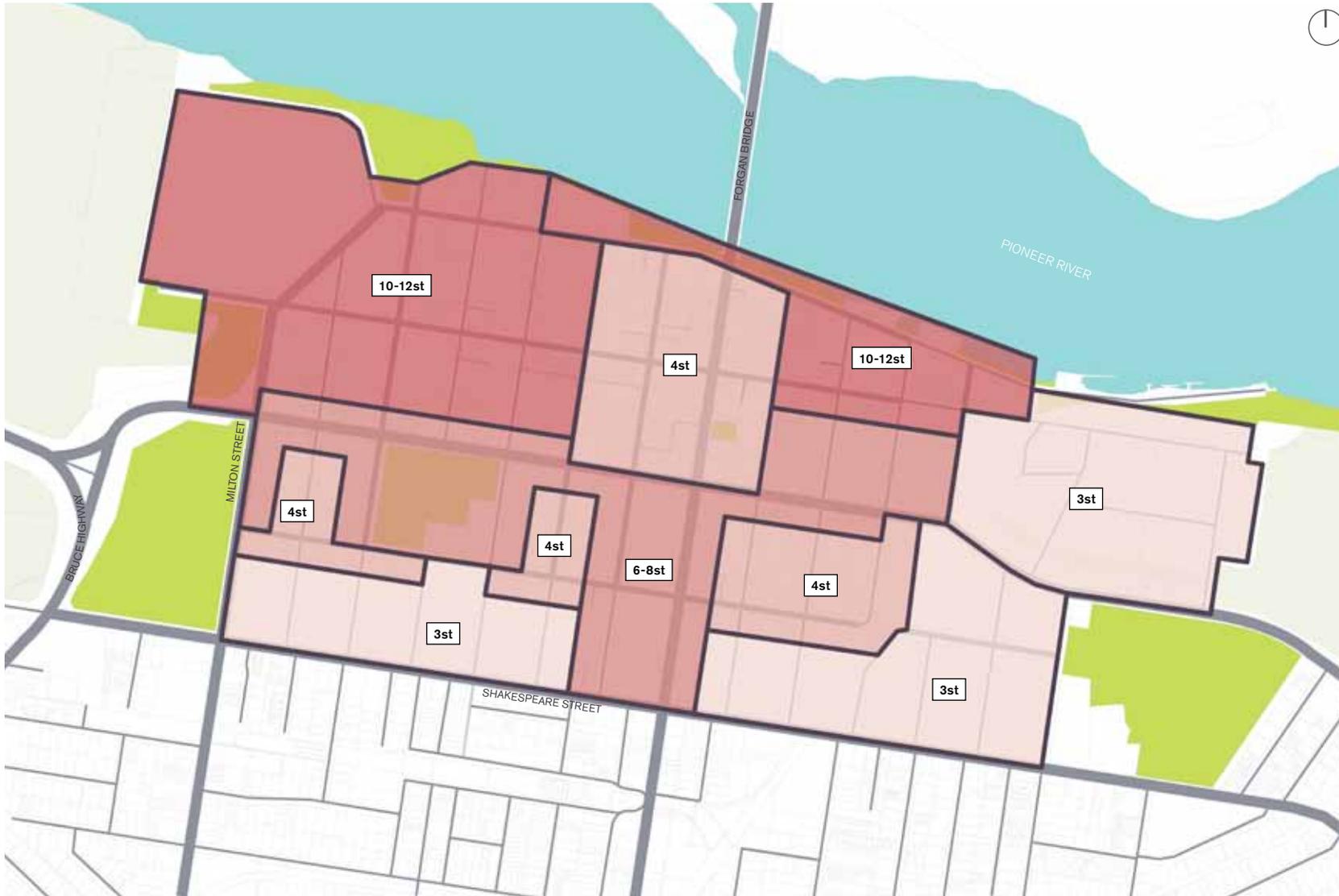
The workshop generally agreed on a height limit of around four storeys, but this needs further consideration.

### Staging

Council has already made considerable investment in the upgrade of the riverfront and is embarking on upgrading River Street. This investment needs to be reflected in the staging of development in the city. As discussed there is already pressure for development along River Street which capitalises on the amenity offered by proximity to the Pioneer River. This therefore is the logical development front and should be the place where any further capital investment by Council should be considered. Upgrades to both streetscapes and infrastructure (roads, sewer and water) will be complimented by development activity and ensure there is a match between public and private expenditure.



Map 6: Building Heights



## Movement

The city contains a number of activity points which have their own gravity as places of interest to residents and visitors. The City Core is, of course the most important and has a strong identity generated by the interplay of heritage buildings, intense streetscape planting, and the range of fine grain land uses including shops, cafes and restaurants which occupy the buildings.

Caneland Central Shopping Centre has less of a physical presence in the city as it is an internalised shopping mall. It does however play a large role in the economic life of the city and attracts a great deal of motor vehicle traffic which impacts upon the shopping centres ability to interact with the city that surrounds it. Traffic movements around the shopping centre act as a barrier to pedestrian movement and interaction with the rest of the city.

The Council Administrative Building shares space with a number of other cultural and community assets namely the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre and library. These elements form a strong civic precinct.

TAFE occupies a large site on the southern fringe of the City Centre and has the potential to expand through joint initiatives with the Central Queensland University. This would become a strong activity node in itself as it develops into the future. The TAFE has the potential to contribute significant amounts of activity and movement between the TAFE site and the City Core.

### Pedestrian movement

Connections between key activity nodes is important to create life and movement through the city. The quality of these connections is equally as important.

The humid subtropical climate of Mackay can make walking uncomfortable and undesirable particular during periods of wet weather where storms can bring intense periods of rain. It was seen as important by many participants that streets should contain shade and shelter to assist in making the city walkable.

These issues were addressed partly through the built form responses generated in the workshop and in the public realm discussions. These are detailed below.

### Cycle movement

The approach to cycle movement in the city will see the creation of dedicated cycle lanes on arterial and sub-arterial roads being Gordon, Shakespeare and Sydney Streets. The rest of the streets should be marked as Cycle Aware Zones which allow cycle and vehicle movement to mix on these lower speed and lower volume roads.

### Vehicle movement network

The city is laid out on a grided network of streets with creating a regular pattern of blocks being generally 100m x 200m in dimension with the long axis of the blocks orientating north-south. Streets have a very generous reserve width of 30m.

Generally east-west streets perform different roles and functions from the north-south streets. East- west streets such as Gordon, Shakespeare and Victoria Streets distribute traffic through the city from the major gateways and entry points to the city.

The overall vehicle movement plan for the Mackay City Centre has the following key elements as shown in Figure 20:

- 1 A clearly defined hierarchy of arterial roads (red lines) for major through traffic (Sydney Street, Gordon Street west of Sydney Street) – traffic movement efficiency will be one key objective of these roads, the other being pedestrian linkages.
- 2 A clearly defined hierarchy of sub arterial roads (blue lines) for through traffic (Milton Street south of Gordon Street, Shakespeare Street) – traffic movement efficiency will be an important objective on these roads.
- 3 A clearly defined hierarchy of collector streets (green lines) for local traffic distribution and circulation (River Street, Mangrove Road, Victoria Street, Gordon Street east of Sydney Street, Alfred Street, Gregory Street, Tennyson Street, Peel Street) – a slower speed, pedestrian friendly and human scale environment will be the key objective on these streets. Note that Peel Street is suggested to be replaced by Wellington Street in this concept.
- 4 An important aspect is that River Street is to be reduced in it hierarchical role to a Collector Street. This is an important outcome to discourage through traffic along this route to the Forgan Bridge and through the City Centre, in order to encourage greater local interaction (local traffic, pedestrians) in this area.
- 5 A local City Centre bus service (dashed black line) for high frequency local distribution of public transport within the City Centre between key destinations such as Caneland Central Shopping Centre, City Core, Eastern Commercial Precinct, Civic Precinct. The majority of the City Centre is within a 400m (5 minute) walk of this bus route.

- ⑥ A potential Public Transport Interchange (big red asterisk) could include local bus stops, interstate coach stops and taxi bays. This is located strategically close to the existing stops (at Caneland Central Shopping Centre), on the periphery of the City Core and on the high activity corridor (Victoria Street) between the City Core and Caneland Central Shopping Centre.
- ⑦ Key pedestrian corridors (dotted green lines) providing connections between the key destinations such as the Blue Water Trail, Queens Park, Civic Precinct, City Core, Caneland Central Shopping Centre, schools.
- ⑧ A new road access to Caneland Central Shopping Centre located to the west of Milton Street in an effort to reduce traffic demands on Milton Street and enhance the ability to integrate the Caneland Central Shopping Centre with the City Core.
- ⑨ A potential new road access to Caneland Central Shopping Centre located on the western side of Caneland Central Shopping Centre, to possibly link to Ron Camm Bridge. This may be a long term proposal due to a number of potential constraints.
- ⑩ A number of strategically located off street car parking sites for Short Stay (SP) parking (say less than 2 or 4 hrs) and Long Stay (LP) parking (greater than 4 hrs). The Short Stay parking is located on the immediate outer boundaries of the City Core, within a 200m distance (5 minute walk) of the Core. The Long Stay parking is located outside the City Core but within the City Centre and is typically 800m (approximately 10 minute walk) from the core.



Figure 20: Movement network for Mackay

### Street character & function

The streets of the city were examined during the workshop not just from a functional hierarchy perspective but also from place function and the role they play in the character of the city and what role they should play in the growth and revitalisation of the centre.

North-south streets tend to provide more local access and carry less traffic except for Sydney Street which provides access to the city from the north and the south. They provide internal connection from activity node to activity node.

The role of these streets is important to imaging the type of place the city will be in the future and so streets need to be considered in a joint context of 'place' and 'movement'.

**Gordon Street** – has a high movement and high place function. It is a major gateway and path through the city and has the potential to create an important commercial address for those businesses and activities that rely on exposure and the movement economy.

**River Street** – currently provides alternative connection to the Forgan Bridge. This street will be an important residential address as development pressure builds along the riverfront. Whilst some through traffic is expected into the future, considerable upgrades of the street in terms of planting and other streetscape works is required to ensure this street has a high place function inviting pedestrian movement along its length to and from the City Core.

**Victoria Street** – is a mixed use street both east and west of the City Core and carries reasonable volumes of traffic. Again with development pressure on the northern edge of the city, this street has the potential to create a strong path linking the City Core and the Caneland Central shopping centre, creating a mixed use street that has a high place function encouraging pedestrian movement and activity.

**Alfred Street** – is an important residential link between the showgrounds and Queens Park. Under the Karl Langer plan of the 50's this was a strong link between areas of open space east and west of the city and the civic precinct in the middle. This idea can be realised and in doing so create a boulevard that has high place value with only a moderate movement function creating a quality residential address.

**Shakespeare Street** – is an important east-west connection south of the city and contains a mix of uses including convenience retail. These facilities form the basis for a series of neighbourhoods strung out along this street's length. Much less intensity of land use and built form than Gordon Street, this street also has a high place and high movement function.

### Transit interchange

Figure 21 and Figure 22 present two alternative options for laying out a Public Transport Interchange located adjacent to Caneland Central shopping centre. The location has been chosen to be adjacent to the existing shopping centre, in a more prominent location (for visibility) and on the key pedestrian spine between the City Core and Caneland. The latter aspect is aimed to encourage greater use of buses to serve the City Centre (existing and expanded). The potential new PT Interchange could incorporate bus bays for local services, bus bays for interstate coach services and taxi bays. It is expected that tour outlets/services will collocate with the PT interchange.

**Pedestrian Crossing - Gordon Street** Figure 23 shows a concept for providing a better crossing of Gordon Street between the Civic Precinct and Nelson Street. The concept shows a staggered, uncontrolled crossing (no traffic signals, no zebra crossing) meaning that pedestrians will not have priority and will need to select a safe gap in traffic. The concept proposes a covered structure in the wide central median to

provide cover for pedestrians sheltering in the median. Whilst the current concept shows the crossing starting from the eastern side of Nelson Street and aligning with the pathway in the centre of the Civic Precinct car park, the crossing could also (or alternatively) start from the western side of Nelson Street.

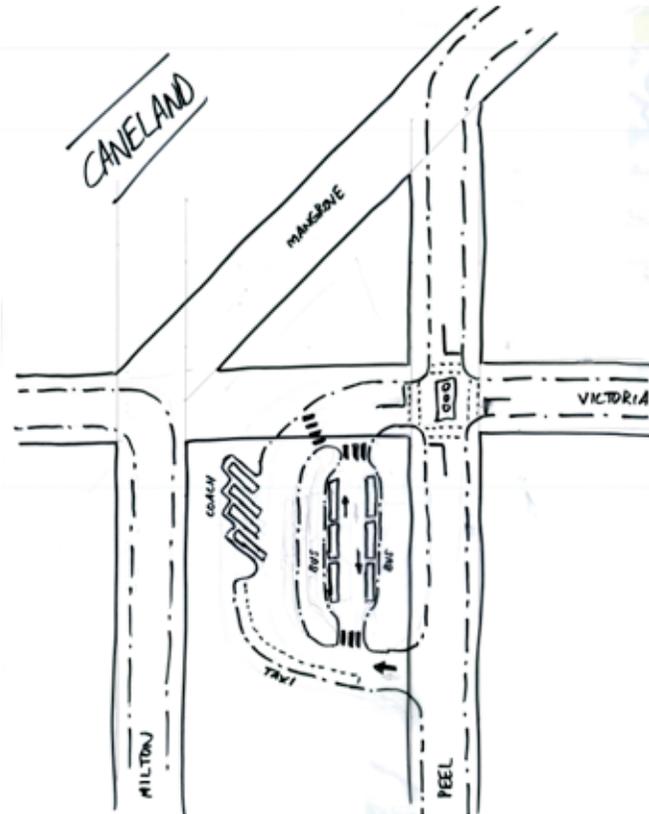


Figure 21: Option 1- Transit Interchange

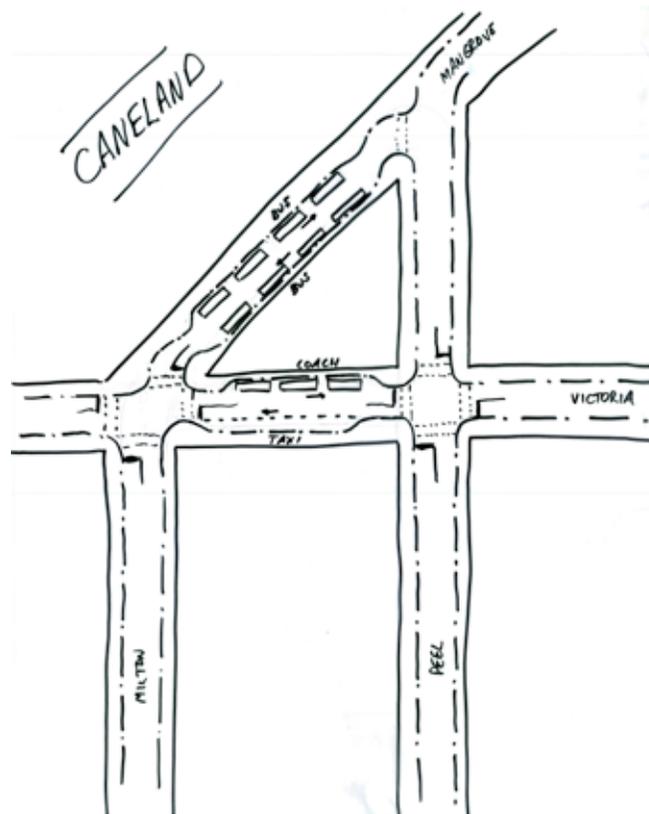


Figure 22: Option 2 - Transit Interchange

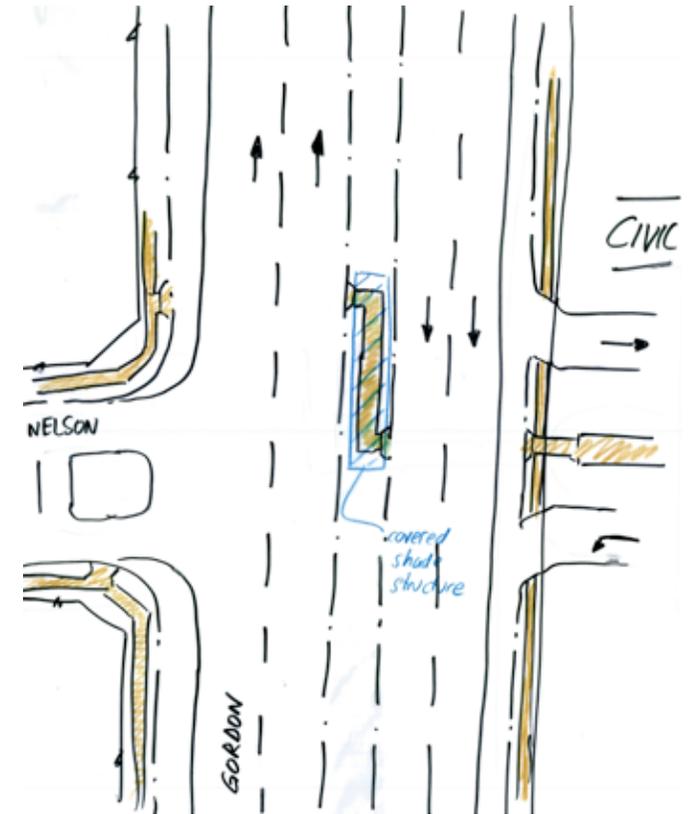


Figure 23: Pedestrian crossing for Gordon Street

## Gateways

With the Pioneer River forming a strong edge on the northern side of the city a strong gateway is created by the Forgan Bridge where it extends over the Pioneer River to meet Sydney Street. This is underpinned by heritage buildings and significant Council investment in public realm projects such as Bluewater Quay.

Other gateways to the city include the entry to the city from the showgrounds along Gordon Street. This is an important gateway and entry to the city but is not well defined either by signage, landscape or built form elements.

## Street Cross-sections

The following street cross-sections (Figure 24, 25, 26 and 27) provide a range of options for achieving the desired objectives for these “local collector streets” subject to the differing land use needs adjacent. All cross sections retain two travel lanes (one each way) but vary in terms of:

- parking form (parallel, angled, kerbside, centre) and therefore parking quantum (centre achieves more parking than parallel)
- verge width (wider verge for key pedestrian corridors or where verge use is required – eg. outdoor dining).

These cross-sections also demonstrate how level change (between street level and ground floor level) can be incorporated to overcome issues of flooding where minimum floor levels are required to be achieved.

**Street cross section 1** – provides a level change within a widened footpath creating a continuous surface between footpath and ground floors of adjoining buildings. Ramps for disabled access can be incorporated in the footpath.

As with all solutions of this nature, where the level change occurs in the footpath a rear lane is required for access to individual sites.

Kerb side parallel parking is removed to provide additional footpath width however centre median parking is provided.

**Street cross section 2** – shows the level change incorporated into the building frontage including ramps for disabled access. This is suitable for single use buildings such as commercial offices etc as access to individual ground floor tenancies under this scenario would be problematic and require all tenancies to be further setback from the street.

In this scenario parallel kerb side parking and centre median parking are provided leading to lesser footpath width.

**Street cross section 3** – again shows the height transition incorporated into the building frontage. On street parking is provided as kerb side angled bays. This solution provides no median treatment.

**Street cross section 4** – provides a generous 8.0m footpath allowing transition in height to occur in the public realm. The extra footpath width is generated through kerb side parallel parking only. No median treatment is provided.

This treatment also has the potential to create a series of linear parks within streets creating enhanced realm opportunities especially on the north/south streets. This could include additional landscaped areas with seating, deep planting and outdoor dining etc.

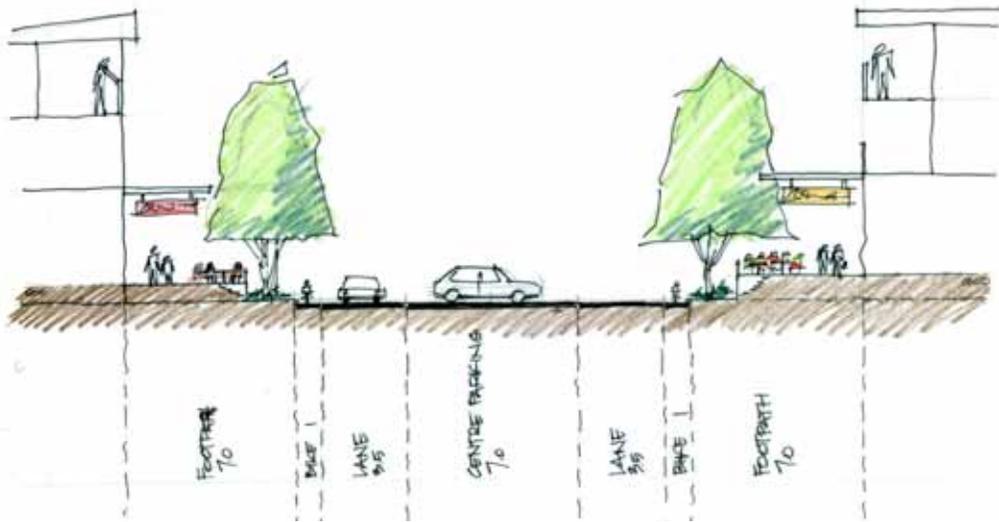


Figure 24: Street cross section 1

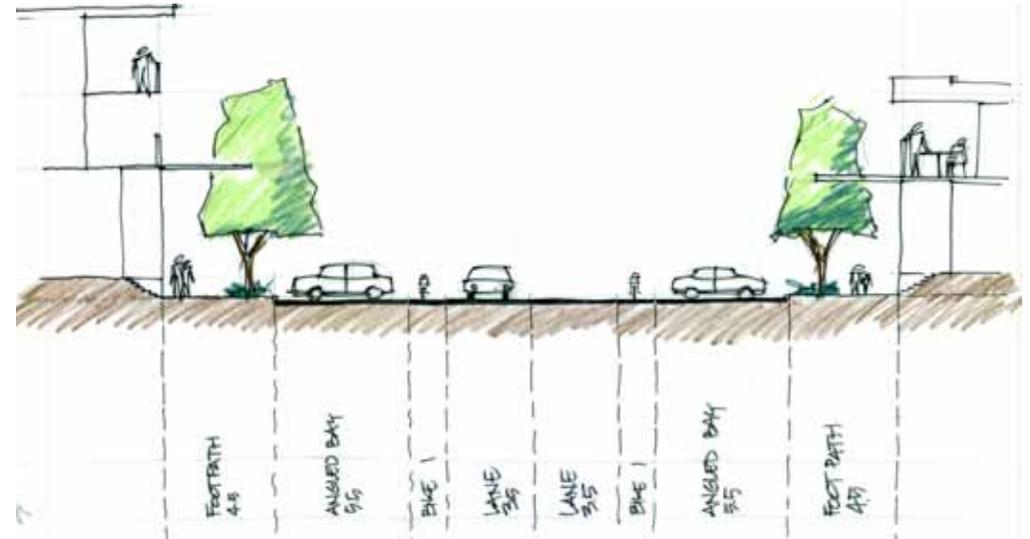


Figure 26: Street cross section 3

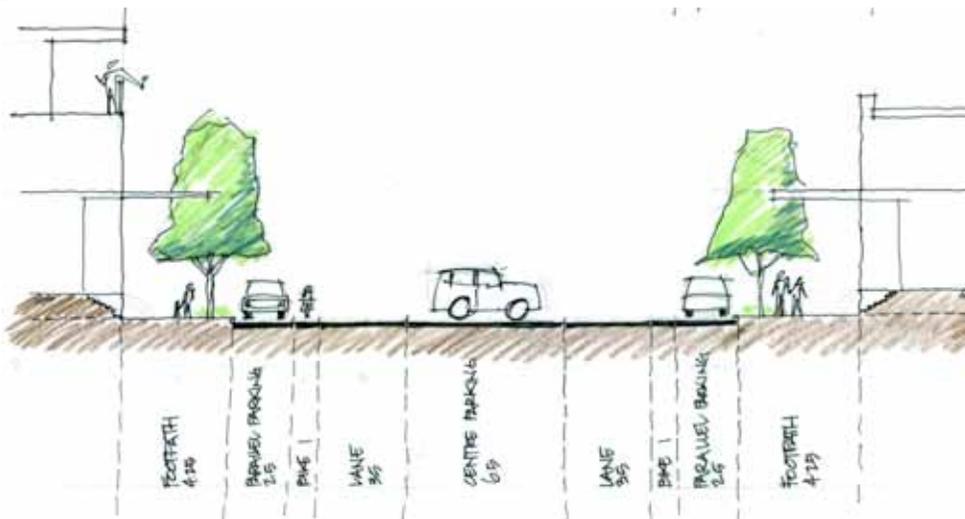


Figure 25: Street cross section 2

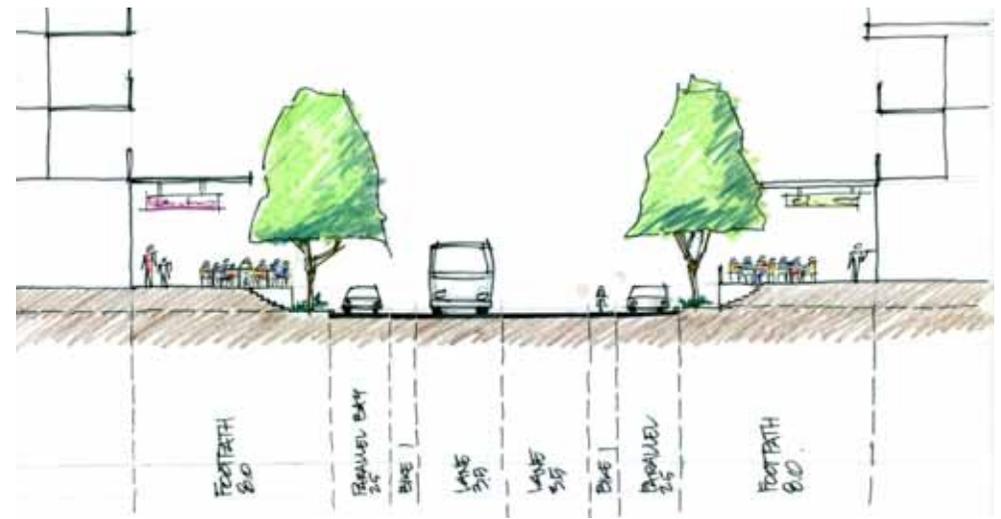


Figure 27: Street cross section 4

## Public realm

Public realm concepts developed during the EbD workshop focused on improving connectivity, maximising the use of existing assets and introducing new elements to improve the character of the City.

Figure 28 summarises potential key strategies explored during the workshop. It prioritises strategic urban elements and looks to exploit the existing urban fabric/ key sites to generate some readily achievable concepts for the Mackay City Centre.

### Revamp and Update the Traditional City Core

Located at the centre of the City, it is clear that more can be done to build on the traditional character of this area:

- an initial 'spring clean' and audit of this area is the first logical step. Removing some of the visual clutter could improve legibility.
- a streetscape 'revamp' scoping:
  - pedestrian facilities and permeability
  - shade and shelter structures,
  - street furnishings and finishes,
  - pavement upgrades
  - lighting design and lighting levels,
  - signage/wayfinding – improvements to legibility including through, public art elements,
  - highlight key focal points with permanent and ephemeral markers to enhance aesthetics and attraction within core
  - WIFI and mobile phone application capabilities
- The Concept Plan should review current guidelines on planting, signage, pavements, street furniture, etc with the chance to integrate community input.

- specifically, a unifying planting character should be extended for the full extent of the Core and along Victoria Street to link with Caneland Central to the west. Sight-lines through mid-storey planting – particularly in the area around the Wood Street and Victoria Street intersection – should be addressed to improve safety and visibility.
- existing streets and laneways also offer many opportunities for the City Core, including permanent art installations, self-guided heritage trails with interpretative signage and ephemeral activities such as pop-up retail, markets, busking and temporary art.

### Connecting the activity nodes

Prioritise key linkages to improve public amenity and extend Traditional City Core characteristics. This could be accomplished through the identification of key drivers (including activity nodes, existing character, key linkages/ views, etc) and the subsequent provision of new shade tree planting, signage/wayfinding elements, urban art, unified pedestrian pavements, and improved pedestrian crossings.

Better “knit” and link together key City Centre activity nodes. The City Centre has a number of strong key drivers, most notably the established activity nodes such as the Traditional Core, Pioneer River, Caneland Central and Civic Precinct. Tying key drivers together for a stronger, unified City Centre, involves:

- enhancing pedestrian movement and identified links between Caneland Central, Civic Precinct and Traditional Core areas;
- treatment of Mangrove Road frontages to remove barriers to pedestrian movement,
- enhancing walkability and interest along main spines such as Victoria Street,
- identification of axes to facilitate greater walkability in and around the City Centre; and

- attention to landscape/streetscape character from the Traditional Core along Victoria and River Streets, linking into the Caneland Central.

### The concept of connecting the key activity nodes anticipates:

- Victoria Street being the key link, with new development encouraged to incorporate design at street level to enhance pedestrian comfort, appeal and improve walkability. Activate buildings at ground level with footpath dining/retail opportunities and utilise existing build-outs at street corners.
- potential pedestrian and/or public transport facilities featured midway along Victoria Street to add interest and greater appeal to the link between Caneland Central and the Traditional Core.
- better 'stitch' Caneland Central to the fabric of the City Centre by enhancing permeability along Mangrove Road to facilitate pedestrian movement,
- encourage development to include active facades addressing the street, ie the activation of the Mangrove Road street frontage that sleeves the existing Caneland Central carpark
- promotion of a key link between Civic Centre and Victoria Street, including safe and legible pedestrian access across Gordon Street.
- Macalister Street emerged as a potential strategic, cross-city axis as it links the MECC/Artspace through to Victoria Street and further on to the Pioneer River.
- the continued street level activation of River Street as new residential developments progress. Street tree and ground level planting with the potential for exploring the 'linear park' concept.
- establish a streetscape character, linked to the role of the street, suitable for the local climatic conditions.



- 1** Revamp the Traditional Core including:
  - pedestrian facilities and permeability
  - shade and shelter structures
  - street furnishings and finishes
  - pavement finishes
  - lighting designs and lighting levels
  - signage/wayfinding - improvements to legibility
  - public art elements
  - key focal points are to be highlighted with
  - permanent and ephemeral markers
  - WIFI and mobile phone application capabilities
- 2** Establish a pedestrian friendly spine between the Traditional Core and Caneland Central
- 3** Establish a cross city axis connecting the Civic Precinct with Victoria Street and further on to the Pioneer River
- 4** Activation of Mangrove Road street frontage and enhanced pedestrian permeability
- 5** Heightened sense of arrival through streetscape treatments and enhancements
- 6** Enhancement of Sydney and Gordon Streets in terms of landscape treatments
- 7** Public Domain enhancement further highlight Old Town Hall within the existing streetscape. Review & update facilities on offer visitor amenities, lighting wifi park, signage & interpretation
- 8** Increase activity options along the urban edge of Bluewater Trail
- 9** Old rail corridor link to the Pioneer River (long term)
- 10** Enhancement of Civic Precinct Public Domain, including strengthening linkages to the City Core

Sense of arrival

Figure 28: Public Realm Concepts

### Public Transport facilities

Investigate improvements to existing and future public transport facilities to enhance commuter comfort and to make using public transport more convenient. Potential improvements include:

- improved signage/wayfinding
- shade and shelter
- seating
- lighting
- WIFI and mobile phone application capabilities

### Wayfinding and legibility

Focused landscape and wayfinding elements along key streets entering and throughout the City Centre can potentially assist in the providing a sense of arrival, celebration and increase permeability. Elements can include banners, flags, bollards, featured landscaping, street signage and the like.

Consideration, as a parallel project, need to be given to ensuring directional signs and visual 'cues' are provided as part of regional level signage, particularly along major entry routes including the Bruce Highway.

### Busy roads take on visual character of green boulevards

Whilst acknowledging the important high volume transit roles of Sydney and Gordon Streets, these roads play an important role of establishing the visual character of the City. As such, the EbD proposed changing the visual character of these roads from thoroughfares to green boulevards by introducing more large shade trees and distinctive elements, including city signage along their lengths for further consideration.



### Enhance Civic Precinct public domain

Linking arts, events plus governance, the Civic lawns, gardens and plazas surrounding the main Council Administration Building and MECC were seen to be greatly underutilised as public parkland. A key element of this scheme was the improvement of pedestrian movement and crossing north across Gordon Street.

### Increase activity options along urban edge of Bluewater Trail

The Bluewater Trail is an excellent asset to the City that provides the opportunity for further development and addition of facilities in parallel with the adjoining urban growth. This concept underlines the importance of increasing passive surveillance along this route by locating additional activities along its length.

### Long term old rail corridor link

The potential for a long term link between the showground site and Queens Park is a consideration to assist the long-term appeal of the southern edge of the city.



## Sample enhancement projects

Three projects that explore the range of ideas developed during the EbD workshop have been described as follows:

### Public Domain Enhancements - Old Town Hall

Old Town Hall presents an opportunity for further enhancement to highlight this facility within the streetscape to add to the aesthetic appeal and attraction of the City Core as a destination for visitors and locals alike. This concept is defined further on the following pages.

Located on Sydney Street, close to the Forgan Bridge, the Old Town Hall currently functions as an information centre for the City Centre. The intention with this concept was to increase the range of activities on offer and to improve the building's street presence.

Key aspects of this proposal include:

- threshold pavement treatment across the road surface – extending the building forecourt and linking into an existing laneway across the street ( how does this sit with State controlled road?)
- new shade tree planting framing the building entry
- short term drop-off/ coach parking right outside the front door
- install Wi-Fi to the building to attract new users to the site
- upgrade the gardens surrounding the building to include casual outdoor seating and improved access to the public toilets
- integrated artwork and signage

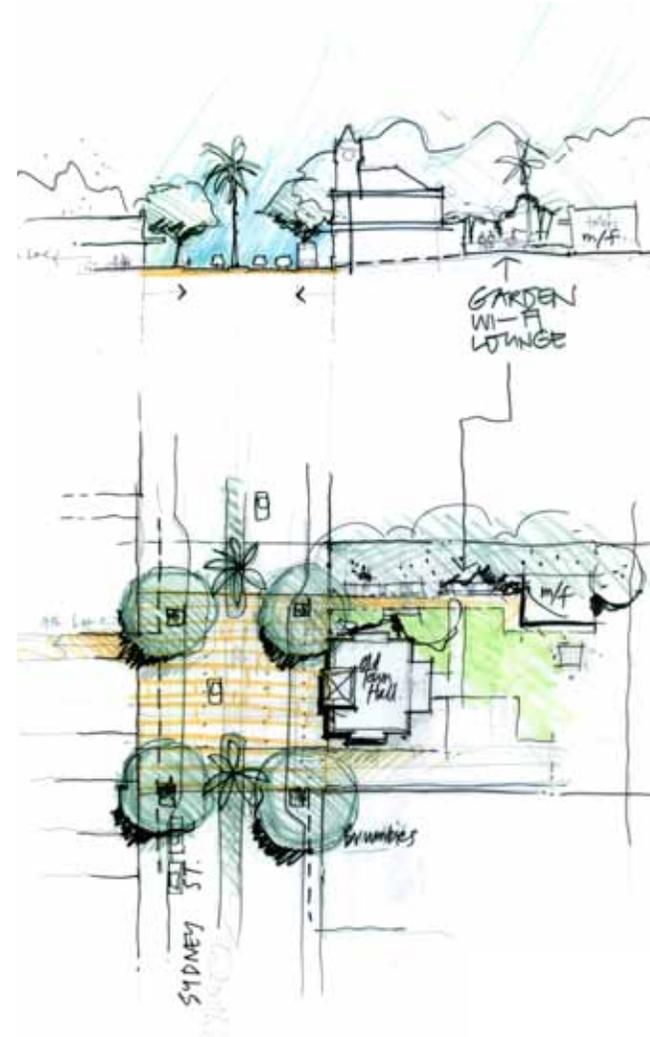


Figure 29: Concept 1 - Public Domain Enhancements

### Pedestrian Enhancements - Victoria Street

An observation common for many of the city's streets is that mid-block pedestrian connections were not always convenient or available. This concept explores ways of 'inserting' a cross-street link into Victoria Street in a way that:

- introduces opportunities for shade tree planting
- works with existing infrastructure such as overhead power lines
- provides footpath build-out zones for outdoor dining, seating, art/ signage and new pavement materials
- improves safety for pedestrians crossing the street by increasing sight lines and slowing vehicular traffic.

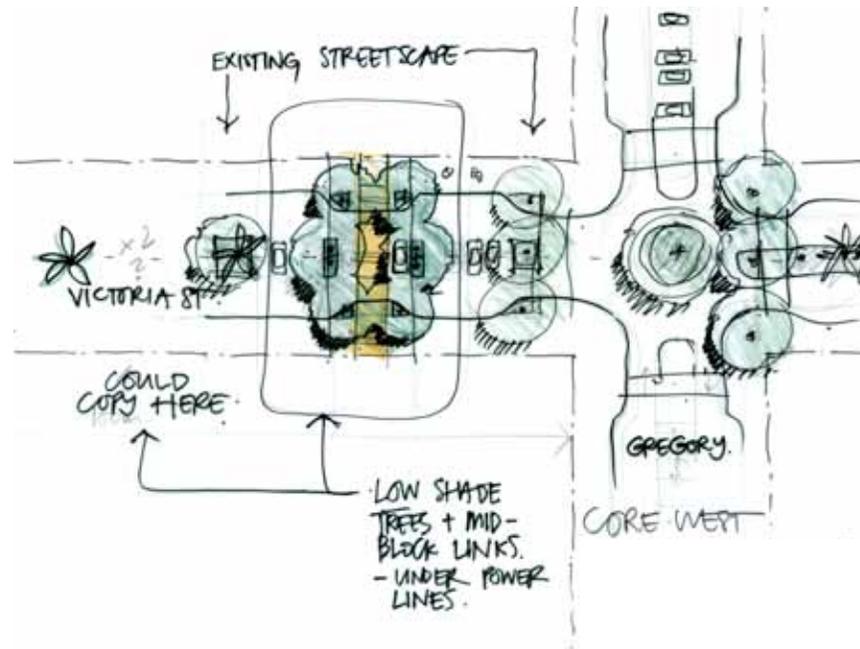
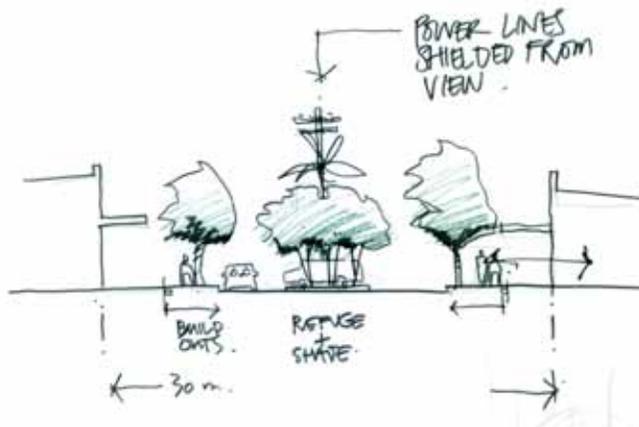


Figure 30: Concept 2 - Pedestrian Enhancements

### Wayfinding Enhancements - Sydney Street

Defining the 'edge' of the City is an important way of helping visitors 'locate' themselves – and can help differentiate Mackay from other coastal centres. This concept explores a simple way of using one of Mackay's existing landscape qualities – large shade trees – in a concentrated way to create a strong arrival experience. The potential exists for the TAFE to consider integrated streetscaping as part of any future site development. This concept is also applicable to a number of arrival points into the City.

Key attributes include:

- large shade trees planted closely together (in kerb build-outs) for maximum impact
- existing driveways/view-lines are coordinated into the layout
- linear gardens flanking the kerb edge provide an opportunity for distinctive groundcover planting displays - including signage
- existing pedestrian desire lines (such as the link between the TAFE dining area and across the street in this case) can be incorporated as controlled pedestrian crossings
- existing street trees, like the round-a-bout fig, can be integrated into the concept.

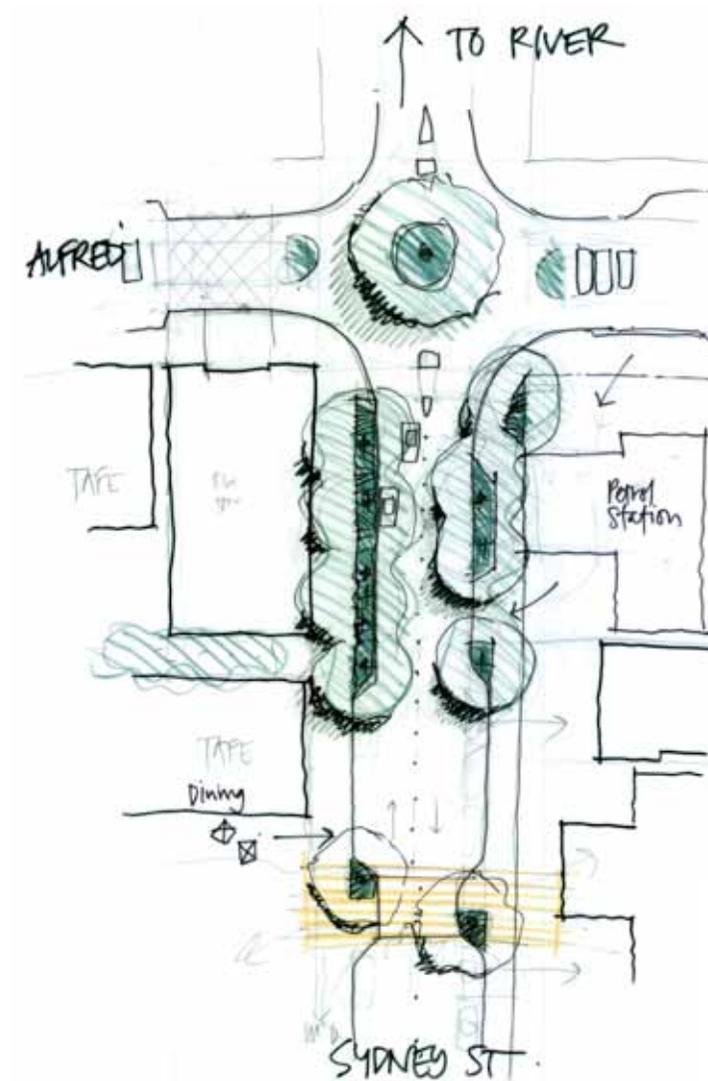


Figure 31: Concept 3 - Wayfinding Enhancements

## Planning & implementation

The following principles and framework for planning for the City Centre were discussed at the workshop. These are by no means the only

### Approach

The key planning principles behind the implementing of the outcomes from the workshop are:

- linking land use, built form, public realm & connectivity outcomes for precincts
- the structure of the Local Plan for the City Centre should be clear, succinct and avoid duplication
- only target regulation where it is likely to make a clear difference and not create another hurdle in the DA process
- link regulation to what parameters are critical in achieving desired outcomes especially with respect to built form outcomes
- avoid unnecessary development applications (eg City Centre activities that are consistent, compatible or complementary)
- use levels of assessment to encourage & discourage certain outcomes (eg Code & Impact assessment)
- flexibility in pursuing innovative outcomes regarding land use, built form & public realm.
- need to update 2007 Traffic Model of the City Centre.

## Planning framework

All Zones	Zones with Precincts	Local Plan
current approach	QPP Principal Centre Zone	recognises the City Centre with the aim of delivering locally focussed outcomes
high level of uncertainty regarding land use but less flexibility	reduce the number of zones & reinforce the primacy of the City Centre locally and regionally	marketing value for attracting investment
not necessarily compatible with precincts	precincts can sit with EbD options	local plan code can deliver the precinct intents and associated provisions (built form)
adds a layer of complexity	precinct provisions can be within one zone code	option for planning scheme policy to support the Local Plan outcomes through detailed provisions
does not support the broader centres hierarchy	principal centre zone allows flexible land use outcomes	
can reduce the number of regulatory layers	adds another layer	

## Contact Us

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