



COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION

Central Highfields Masterplan Update – Wednesday 7 May 2025



WELCOME AND FORMAT

- Mayor McDonald
- Welcome to all and welcome to country

7 May 2025 discussion

- QFD – the need for a 24/7 station
- Council
 - We have heard you
 - Community's questions
 - Answers on main themes
 - Changes made following feedback
 - What next?





Queensland Fire Department

THE NEED FOR AN EXPANDED FIRE STATION

- Highfields is growing rapidly, increasing demand for emergency services.
- Highfields crews respond to a wide range of emergencies including:
 - Structure fires and bushfires
 - Road traffic accidents
 - Hazardous materials incidents
- The station operates as an auxiliary station at night - firefighters must travel from home before responding.
- Coverage is supported by 24/7 Toowoomba stations, but distance and availability can affect timeliness.
- Upgrading to a 24/7 permanent facility in Highfields would:
 - Reduce response delays
 - Enhance local safety and resilience
 - Align service levels with community growth and expectations

COUNCIL & PLANNING MATTERS

KARI MUSGROVE - Acting General Manager Planning and Development

- Consultation undertaken 28 Jan to 3 March 2025 (228 submissions received)
- 228 contributions (including 21 paper forms)
- Support (top responses):
 - General support for the plan – 79 positive / 29 negative comments
 - Environmental/green park area – 70 positive / 21 negative comments
 - QFD Fire station location – 28 positive / 18 negative comments
- Concerns (top responses):
 - Allocation of residential zoning – 53 negative comments
 - Need for more commercial/retail space – 47 negative comments
 - Traffic impacts and congestion – 31 negative comments
- We have listened

FORMAT ON 7 MAY 2025

- We received 70+ questions for tonight (sorted into themes)
- We wanted to be respectful of your time, so asked for questions in advance so we could prepare responses.
- Questions were submitted via Slido
- Questions were moderated to ensure they align with Council's values

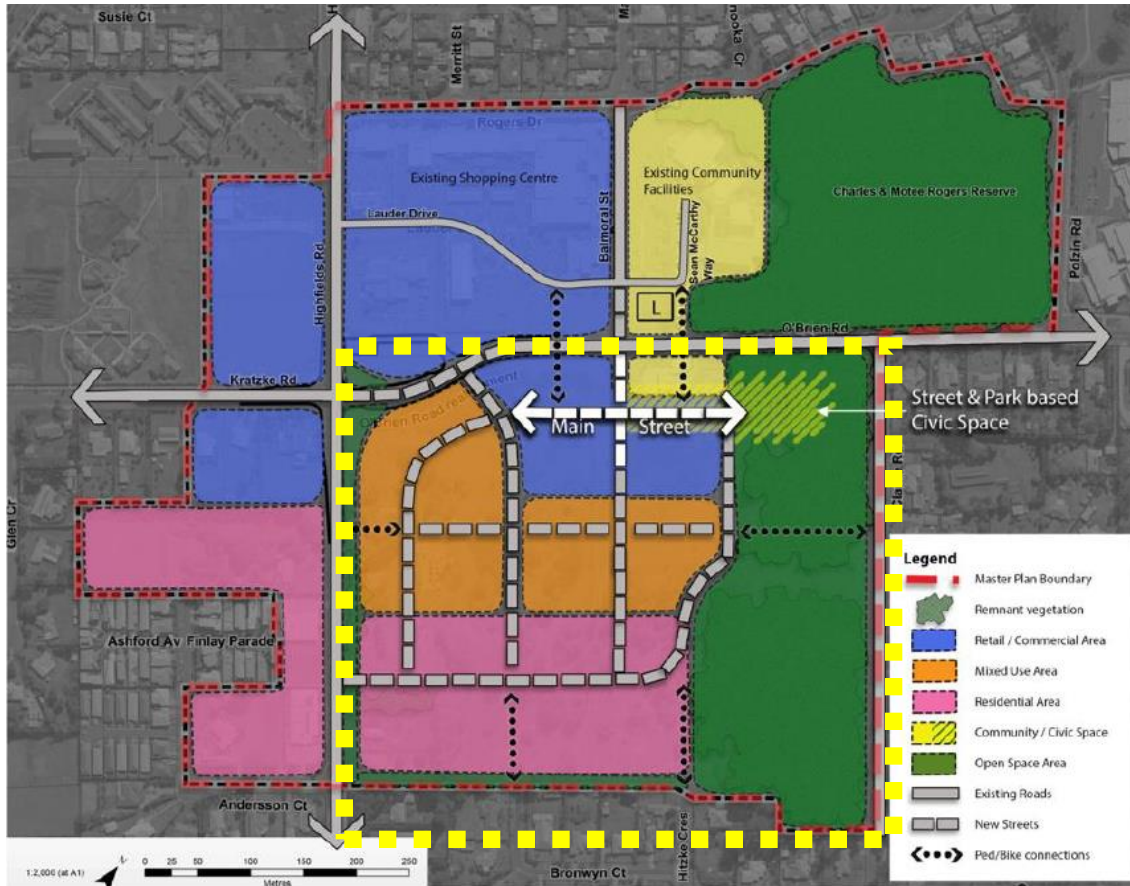
COMMUNITY QUESTIONS - THEMES

List of all the questions, sorted into themes (distributed)

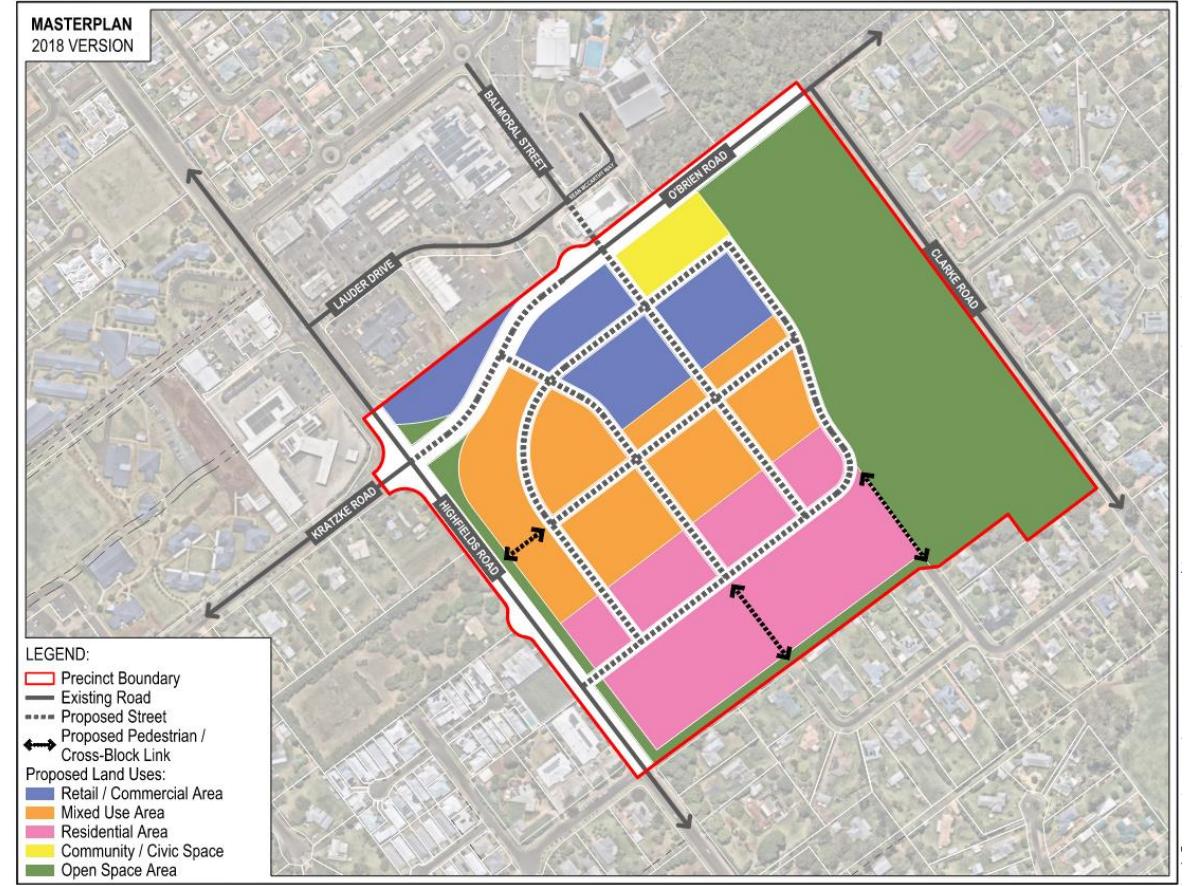
1. **Planning horizon** - calls for a longer-term vision (20–30 years), not just short-term
2. **Land use balance** - concerns that increased housing is replacing commercial and mixed-use zones, limiting local jobs and services.
3. **Commercial and Community Facilities** - desire for a vibrant centre with retail, medical, entertainment, youth and civic services, including cinemas, cafes, and major retailers.
4. **Staging and Delivery** - support for a staged rollout, rather than one large sale.
5. **Governance and Transparency** - concerns about developer influence and transparent decision-making that reflects local voices.
6. **Infrastructure, Traffic and Transport** - road safety, congestion, and car parking.
7. **Fire Station** - expansion of the local fire station to 24/7.
8. **Open Space & Public Realm** - protection of existing trees, and providing green corridors, parks, walkways, and shaded civic spaces.

2018 MASTERPLAN

2018 Masterplan + surrounding context



2018 Masterplan (orientated to north)



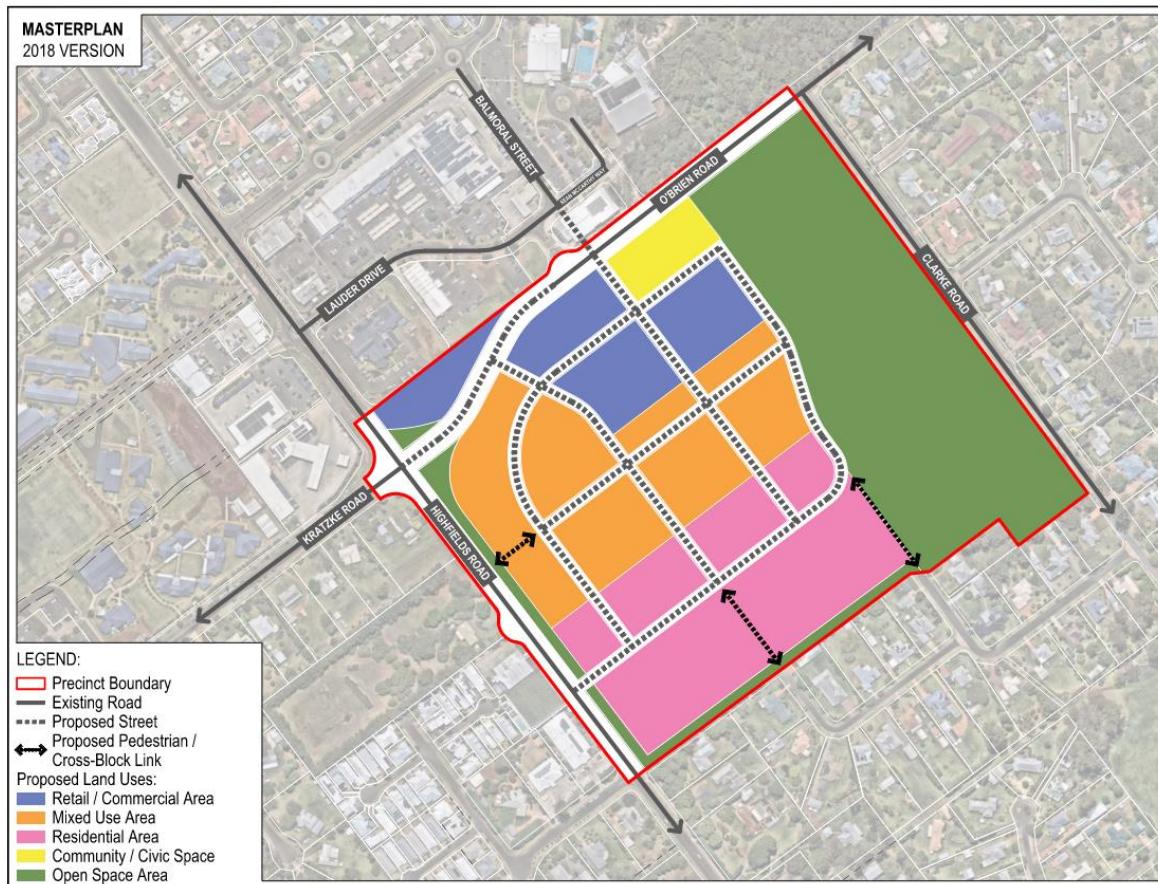
MIXED USE VS TOWN CENTRE

- **Orange** (Mixed Use)
- **Blue** (Commercial / Town Centre)
- Both allocations achieve the same land use outcomes
- Duplication
- Remove confusion
- New Planning Scheme
- What is town centre and what is not

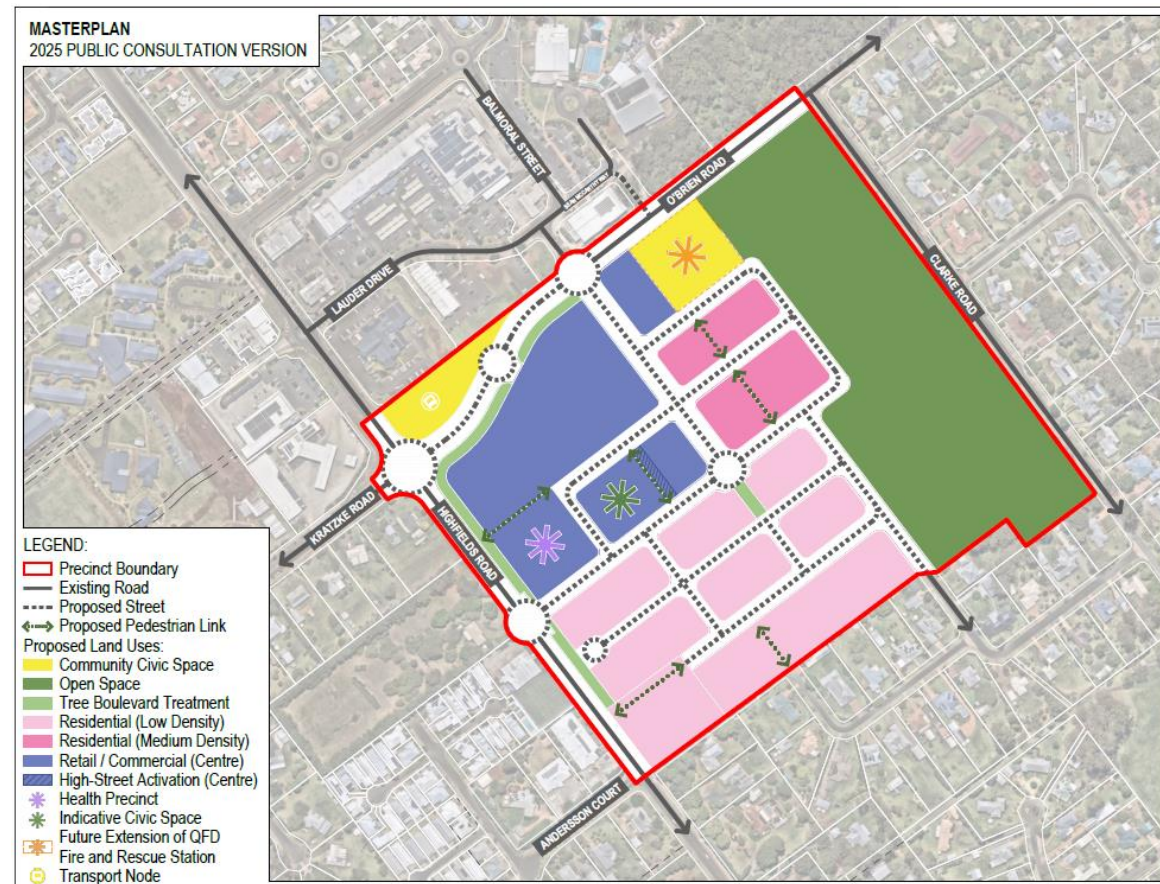


2018 VS 2025 (CONSULTATION) MASTERPLAN

2018 Masterplan (orientated to north)



2025 Masterplan (consultation version)



PLANNING HORIZONS

- 2024 - Highfields population 11,645 (up from 9,500 in 2016)
- By 2051, the Toowoomba Growth Model projections are:
 - Population: to reach 33,439 (+21,794 additional people)
 - New dwellings: to reach 14,338 (+8,768 additional dwellings)
- Household sizes are getting smaller. In the 2021 Census:
 - 27.4% of households were single-person households
 - 36.2% were two-person households
 - Combined, these smaller households make up 63+% of all households.
- Growing need for diverse housing options that suit smaller households and changing lifestyles.
- Why doesn't the 2025 Masterplan adopt a 20–30-year horizon?

WHY HAVE HOUSING IN THE TOWN CENTRE?

- Some submitters have criticised the quantum, type and location of residential in the town centre.
- Why residential uses are important in town / commercial centres? A town planners' perspective
 1. Creates a vibrant, active place
 2. Supports local businesses
 3. Improves walkability and reduces car dependency
 4. Enhances housing diversity
 5. Promotes safety through passive surveillance
 6. Makes better use of infrastructure
 7. Encourages inclusive and accessible communities
- Does the TC have the right kind of housing (do we need more medium density residential?)

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL – POSSIBLE OUTCOMES



IS THERE ENOUGH COMMERCIAL?

- How much commercial is there?
- In the Town Centre = 32,500m² (3.25ha)
- a **general rule of thumb** for retail in regional Australia is 1.0m² to 1.5m² of retail per person (supermarkets, specialty retail, medical and services)
- Using 2051 population of 33,439 AND the higher rate of 1.5m²/person = 50,158m² GFA
- The town centre alone (at 3 storeys and 70% site cover) will produce 68,000m²

TOWN CENTRE – POSSIBLE OUTCOMES



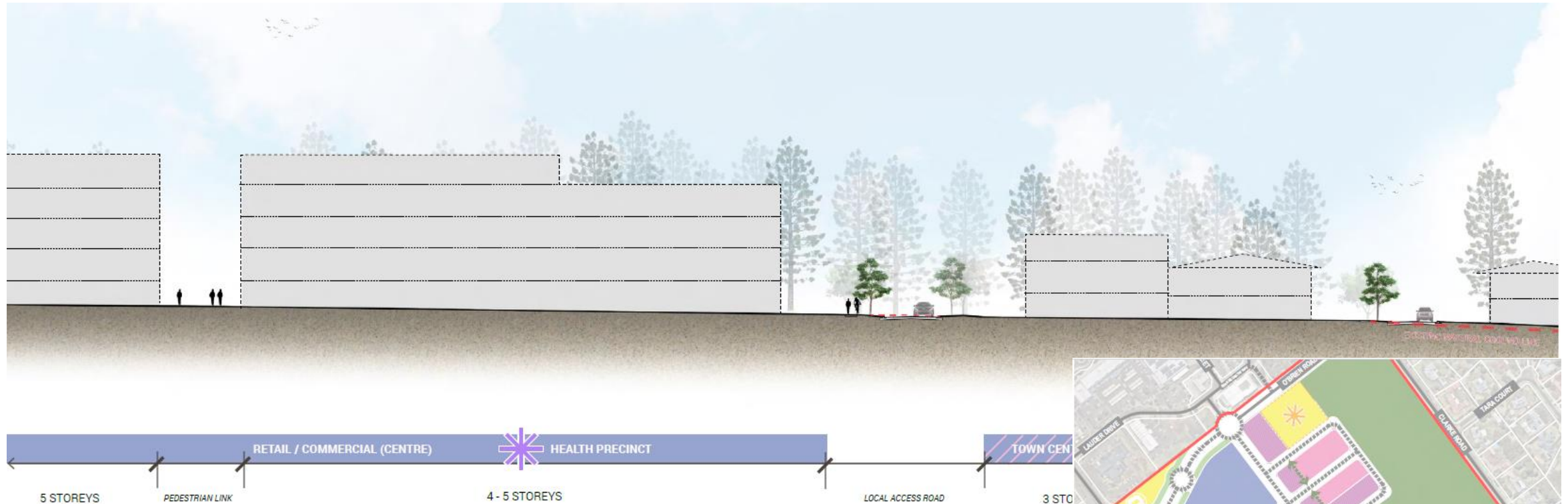
A (NEW) TOWN CENTRE FRAME

- A new allocation called “Town Centre Frame”
- A transition between town centre ‘proper’ and the residential areas
 - In land use and
 - In height
- Ground floor retail and uses that activate the street
- Upper-level offices, or residential
- 14,500m² (1.45ha)

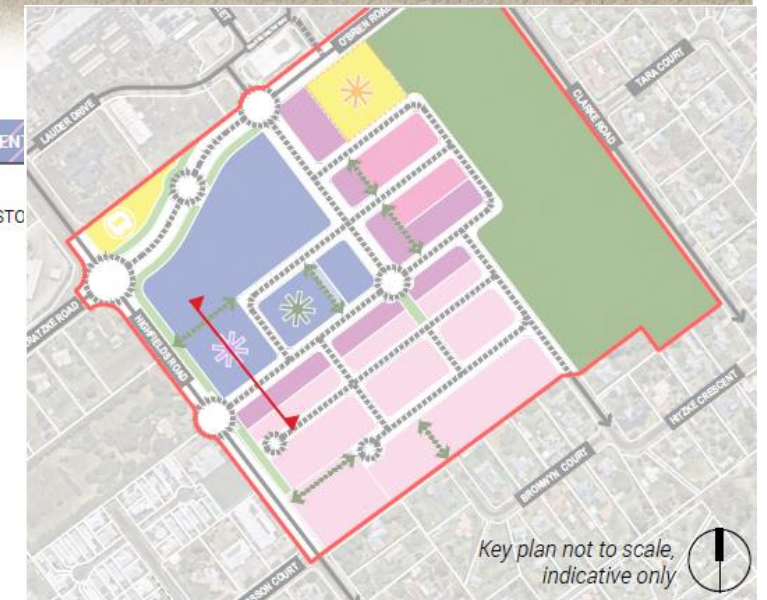
FRAME – POSSIBLE OUTCOMES



POSSIBLE BUILT FORM / HEIGHT SECTION



Heights for buildings in the future Town Centre have not yet been considered or determined. The indicative heights shown are a possible long term vision that could occur in the medium to longer term (say 10 to 15 years). Building heights will be subject to the requirements of the Planning Scheme at the time, and will need to be approved by Council.

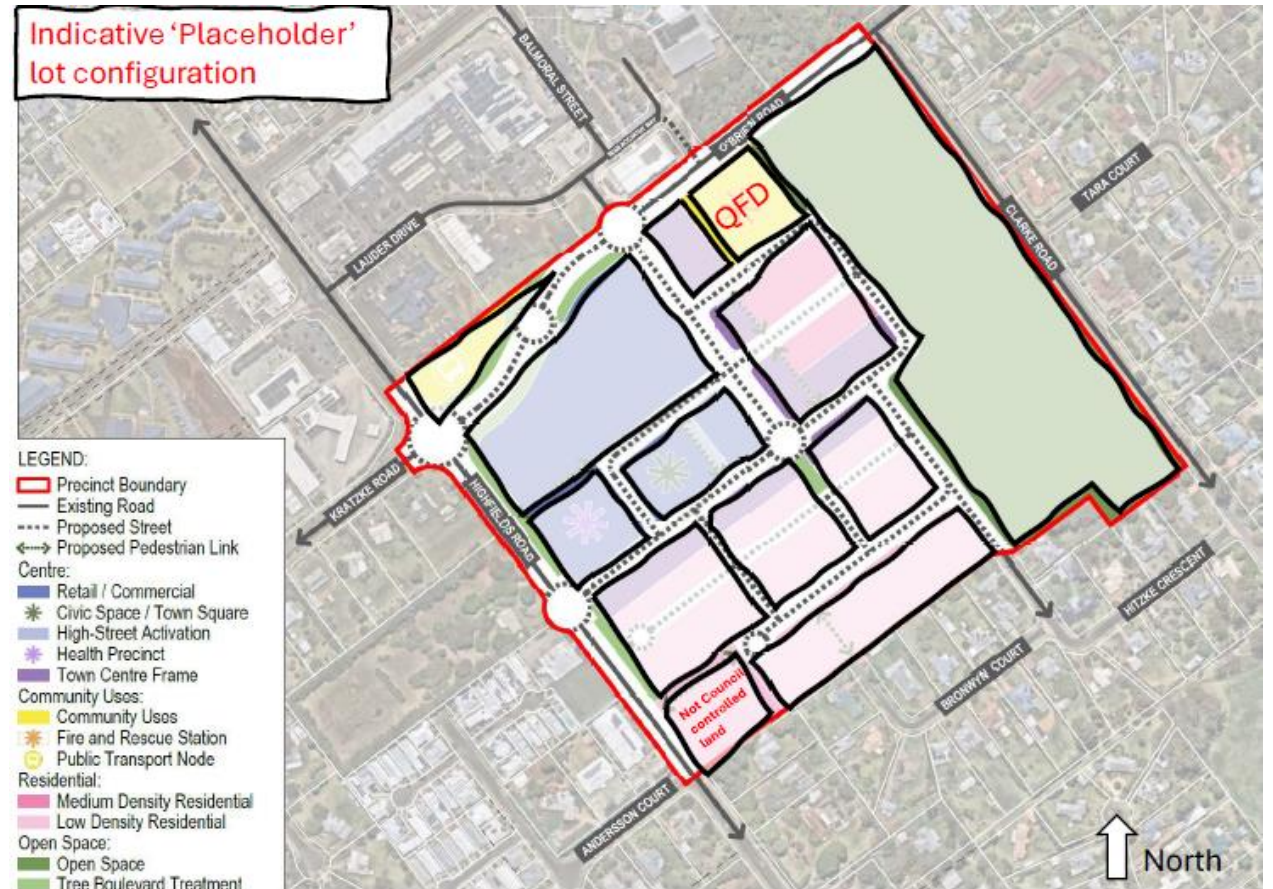


STAGING AND DELIVERY

Support for a staged rollout, rather than one large sale.

Management Lot Subdivision - divide into a smaller “super lots” without undertaking detailed design or full development.

- Staged release strategy
- Supports flexible future use
- Speeds up disposal
- De-risks the site
- Simplifies infrastructure delivery
- Avoids overcapitalisation
- Facilitates market responsiveness



GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

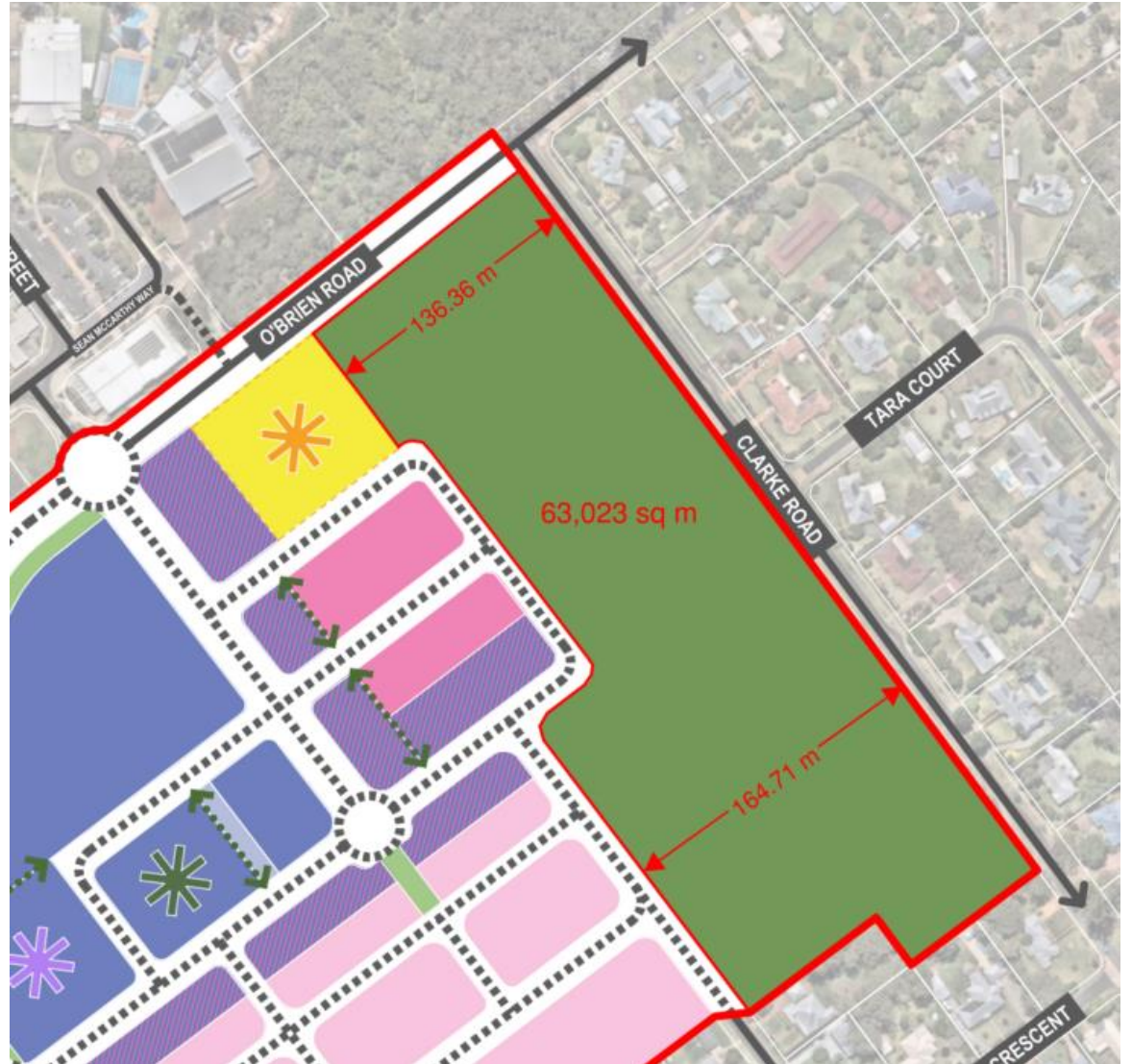
- Submitters want to ensure transparency around decision-making
- If approved, intended to be incorporated into the new planning scheme (statutory status)
- Future development applications will need to comply with planning scheme provisions
- Council will not be the developer of this land.
- 'Management Lots' of land will be sold to the private sector via an open, tender process, likely an Expression of Interest.
- Legal redress?

INFRASTRUCTURE, TRAFFIC & PARKING

- Hitkze Crescent and Bronwyn Court are not cul-de-sacs.
- Both finish hard against the TC boundary, indicative that a future connection was envisaged.
- Hitkze Crescent vehicular link will be a low traffic connection.
 - Improves local access to services, allowing residents to reach shops, schools, and community facilities more easily.
 - Supports economic vitality, by making it easier for people to visit, work, and shop in the town centre.
- Can we plan a no cost parking tower or underground parking that will not be a detractor to the area.
- The Public Transport Hub only has 32 car spaces. How is it going to work without adequate parking?

OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC REALM

- Protection of existing trees, and providing green corridors, parks, walkways, and shaded civic spaces.
 - New park 136-164m wide
 - Protects existing trees
 - Bushland connections to Williams Park – future investigation (crossing Clarke Road)



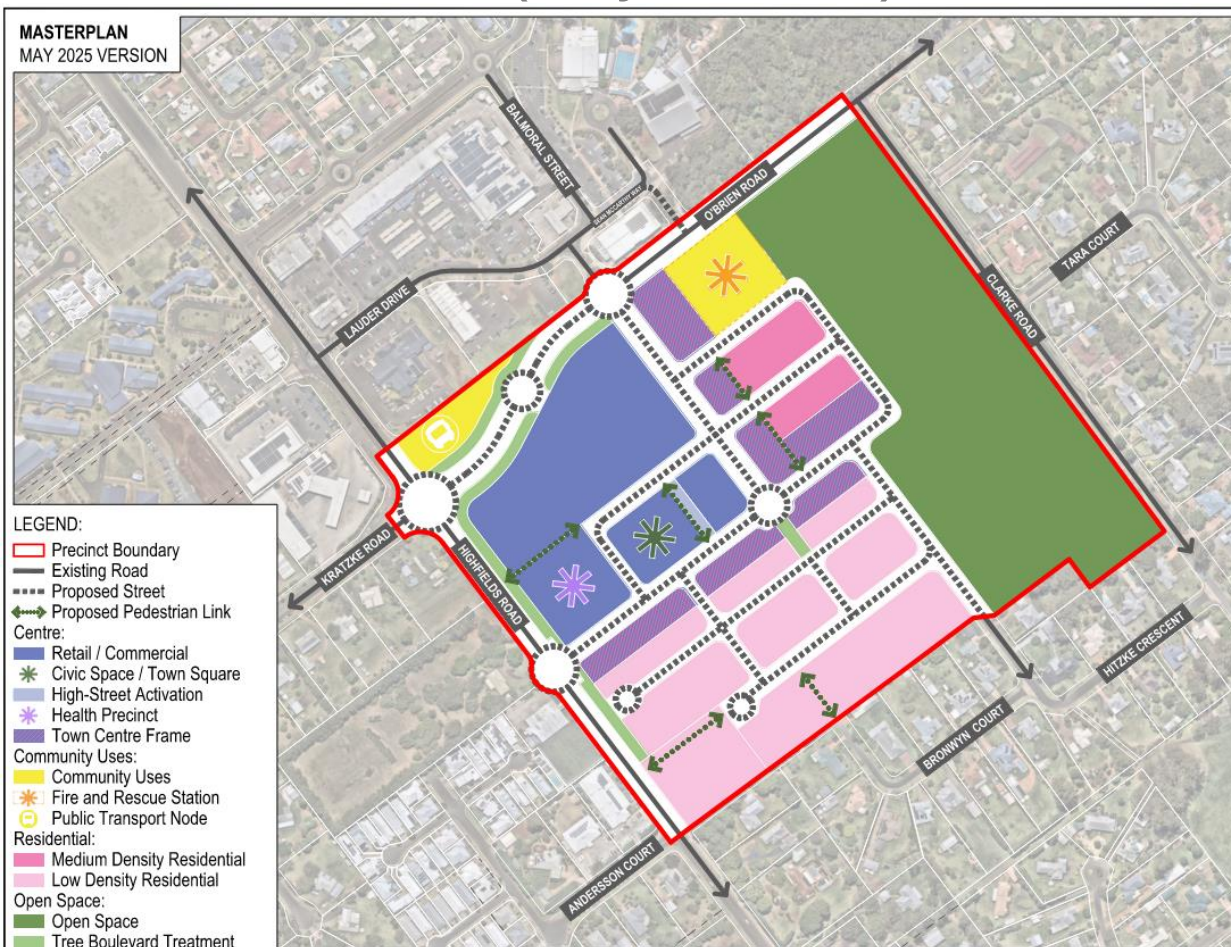
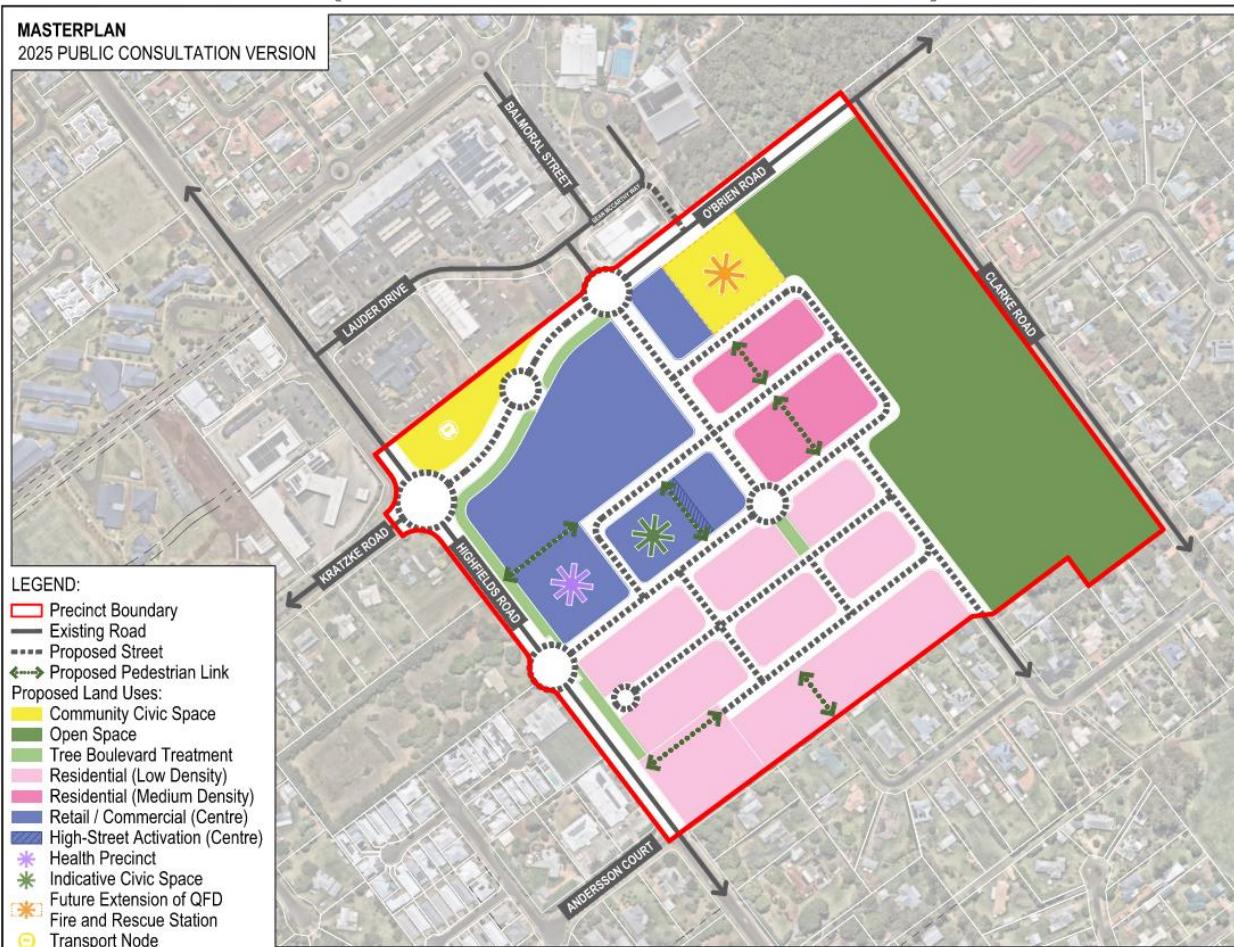
OPEN SPACE – POSSIBLE OUTCOMES



CHANGES (RESULTING FROM FEEDBACK)

2025 (Consultation Version)

2025 (May Version)



COMPARISON OF AREAS (FEB VS MAY 2025)

Central Highfields Masterplan Comparison (Feb 2025 vs May 2025)						
	Feb-25		May-25		Difference (+/-)	
	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
RESIDENTIAL						
Residential	-	-	-	-		
Residential (Low Density)	4.30	18.9%	3.70	16.3%		
Residential (Medium Density)	1.20	5.3%	0.65	2.9%		
Sub-total	5.50	24.2%	4.35	19.2%	-1.15	-5.1%
COMMERCIAL						
Mixed Use	-	-	-	-		
Retail / Commercial (Centre)	3.60	15.9%	3.25	14.3%		
High-Street Activation (Centre)	-	-	0.05	0.2%		
Town Centre Frame	-	-	1.45	6.4%		
Community Civic Space	0.63	2.8%	0.61	2.7%		
Public Transport Hub	0.47	2.1%	0.34	1.5%		
Sub-total	4.70	20.7%	5.70	25.1%	1.00	4.4%
OPEN SPACE						
Open Space	6.35	28.0%	6.35	28.0%		
Tree Boulevard Treatment	0.50	2.2%	0.65	2.9%		
Sub-total	6.85	30.2%	7.00	30.8%	0.15	0.7%
ROAD NETWORK						
Existing Road Network	2.30	10.1%	2.30	10.1%		
Proposed Local Road Network	3.35	14.8%	3.35	14.8%		
Sub-total	5.65	24.9%	5.65	24.9%	0.00	0.0%
TOTAL MASTER PLAN AREA	22.70	100.00%	22.70	100.00%		

COMPARISON OF AREAS (2018 VS MAY 2025)

Central Highfields Masterplan Area Comparison (2018-May 2025)						
	2018 Area		May 2025 Area		Difference (+ / -)	
	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
RESIDENTIAL						
Residential	4.15	18.3%	-	-		
Residential (Low Density)	-	-	3.70	16.3%		
Residential (Medium Density)	-	-	0.65	2.9%		
sub-total	4.15	18.3%	4.35	19.2%	0.20	0.9%
COMMERCIAL						
Mixed Use	3.95	17.4%	-	-		
Retail / Commercial (Centre)	2.25	9.9%	3.25	14.3%		
High-Street Activation (Centre)	-	-	0.05	0.2%		
Town Centre Frame	-	-	1.45	6.4%		
Community Civic Space	0.50	2.2%	0.61	2.7%		
Public Transport Hub	-	-	0.34	1.5%		
sub-total	6.70	29.5%	5.70	25.1%	-1.00	-4.4%
OPEN SPACE						
Open Space	7.45	32.8%	6.35	28.0%		
Tree Boulevard Treatment	-	-	0.65	2.9%		
sub-total	7.45	32.8%	7.00	30.8%	-0.45	-2.0%
ROAD NETWORK						
Existing Road Network	2.20	9.7%	2.30	10.1%		
Proposed Local Road Network	2.20	9.7%	3.35	14.8%		
sub-total	4.40	19.4%	5.65	24.9%	1.25	5.5%
TOTAL MASTER PLAN AREA	22.70	100.00%	22.70	100.00%		

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

CENTRAL HIGHFIELDS MASTERPLAN



Questions and discussion