



Central Highfields Master Plan

OCTOBER 2025



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Background and Strategic Content

Highfields is located approximately 12km north of Toowoomba and forms a growing major centre to the Toowoomba CBD. The Highfields population is projected to grow significantly over the next 10 years, by around 7,000 people to approximately 16,000 people in 2031.

Central Highfields is the focal point of retail, office, mixed use and centre-based development and community facilities in the area and is positioned to accommodate most of this non-residential floorspace growth. Low to medium density residential development around the retail core will be important to provide a diversity of housing options for population growth and to ensure the ongoing activation of the centre.

Council has undertaken significant planning in the Highfields area in order to prepare and accommodate for this growth. This planning includes:

- July 2013 – Preparation of the Highfields, Meringandan, and Meringandan West Local Plan.
- July 2019 – Preparation of the Central Highfields Master Plan.
- November 2019 – Preparation of the Central Highfields Structure Plan¹
- September 2025 – Updated version of the Central Highfields Master Plan (this document).

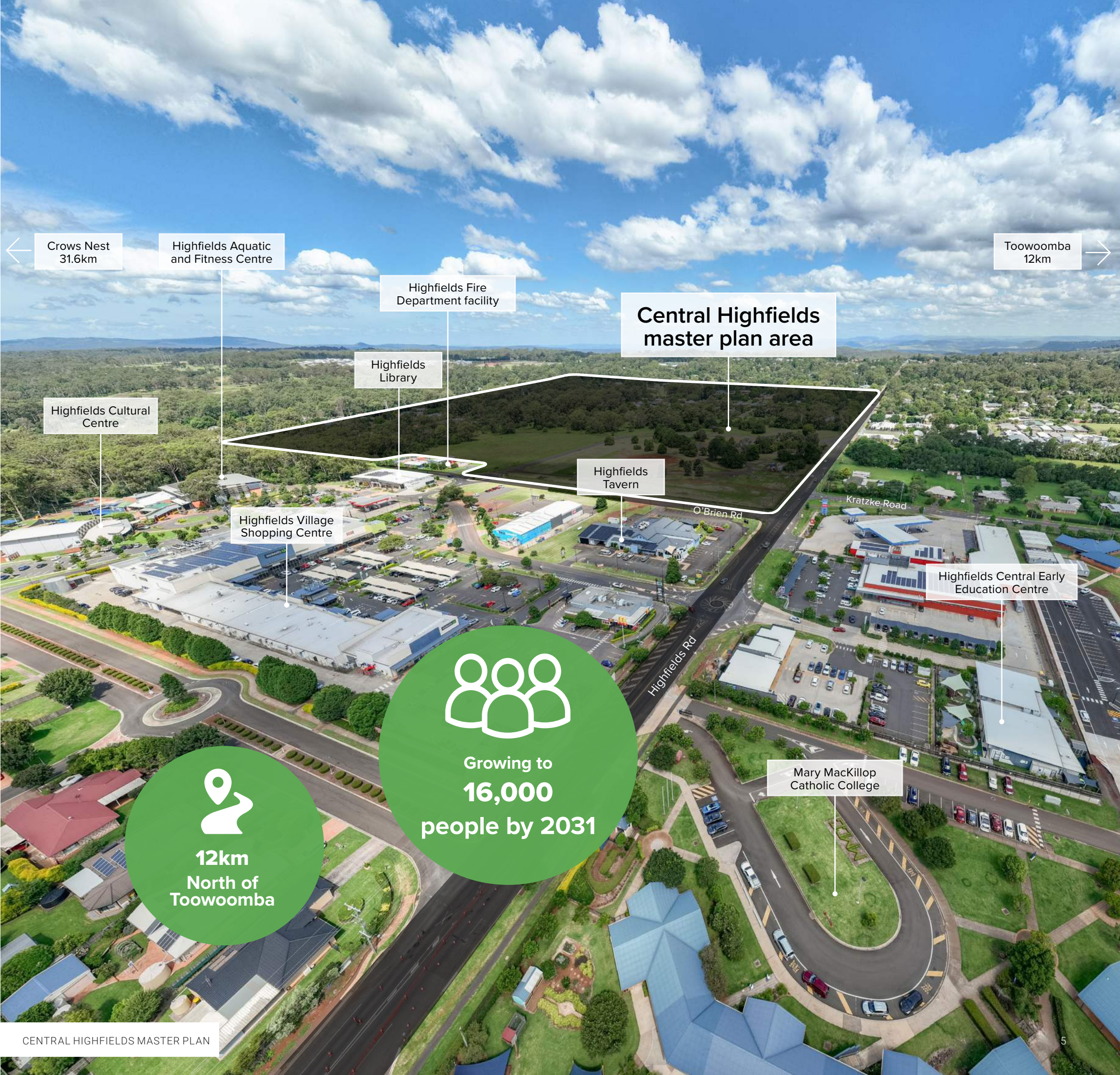
The 2025 master plan revision was in response to the sale of land to the Queensland Fire Department (QFD) to facilitate an expansion of the existing facility to provide 24/7 emergency servicing to the area.

The original intent of the Masterplan otherwise largely remains the same, and this updated document serves to review the potential zoning patterns to inform the new Toowoomba Regional Council Planning Scheme. Over time it is anticipated that the design of the centre will continue to evolve in response to broader market and economic changes and the master plan will be reviewed on an as needed basis.

Community and industry engagement was incorporated into the review of the master plan,

- February and May 2025 community information sessions
- Market sounding and feedback (coordinated by JLL on behalf of TRC)

¹: A copy of the November 2019 structure plan is available on Council's website:
<https://www.tr.qld.gov.au/our-region/major-projects/planning-development/14281-central-highfields-structure-plan>



Vision

The vision for the Central Highfields site remains similar to the 2019 structure plan, which is to create a vibrant and exciting centre which will service the Highfields community and the greater region.

This centre will add to the existing Highfields Village Shopping Centre by providing additional retail and commercial opportunities, medium and low-medium density housing, further recreation and civic spaces.

With this in mind, the previous vision statement created in 2019 for the centre remains the same:

“To create a distinct, vibrant centre which provides local and regional residents with a convenient alternative to the Toowoomba CBD to access day to day commercial, leisure and retail facilities. Central Highfields will be a mixed-use location characterised by open-air and bushland surrounds. It will be an exciting place for residents to work, live, shop and interact with local businesses.



Site Considerations

Physical Considerations

The Site

The site exists in a vacant and natural state. The site’s high point is on the north-western corner with a gradient of approximately 2% fall across the site to the south-east corner. There are a number of large stands of mature trees on site however, none are identified as state significant bushland or habitat.

The Surrounds

The site is central to the Highfields locality which can be characterised by large lot residential living and open space. The community enjoys ample access to a number of community facilities and parks.

In September 2025, the Highfields, Kratzke, O’Brien Roads intersections upgrade (HKO project) received funding from the Queensland State Government under the Residential Activation Fund (RAF). The HKO project is situated at the heart of the Highfields central business area and the funding will contribute to unlocking housing and development of the site, in addition to supporting increasing transport demands for the growing Highfields area.

The immediate surrounding land uses comprise:

To the North

Residential uses:

- Large lot residential (>1,000m²)
- Centre uses:
- Highfields Village Shopping Centre
- Mary MacKillop Catholic College

Community uses:

- Highfields cultural centre
- Highfields library
- Highfields aquatic and fitness centre

Recreation / open space:

- Highfields skate park
- Charles and Motee Rodges bushland reserve

To the East

Residential uses:

- Large lot residential (>1,000m²)

Recreation / open space:

- Williams park

To the South

Residential uses:

- Large lot residential (>1,000m²)

Recreation / open space:

- Kuhls Road recreation reserve

To the West

Residential uses:

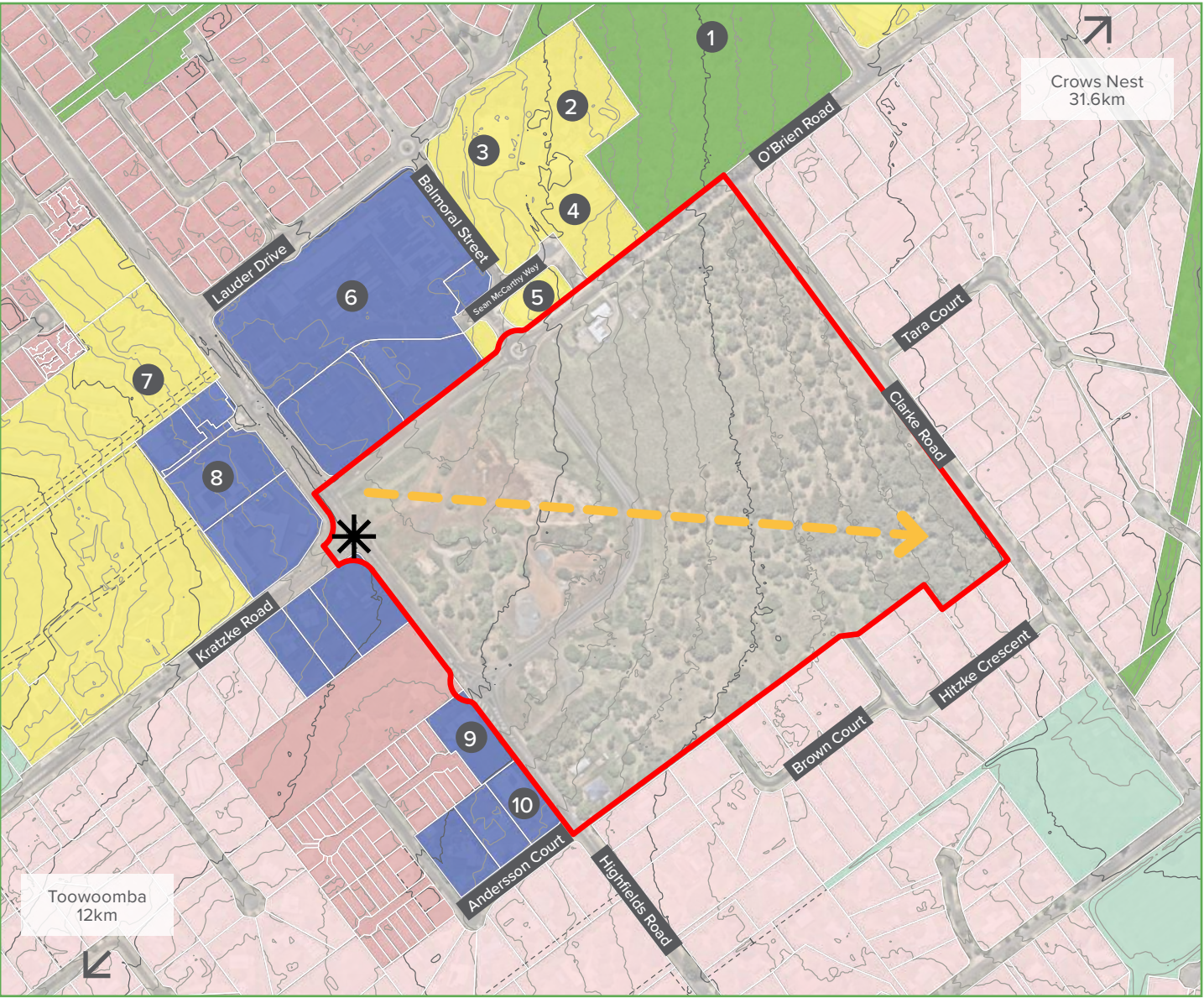
- Large lot residential (>1,000m²)
- Smaller lot residential (<500m²)

Centre uses:

- Aldi

Community uses:

- Highfields community church
- Highfield Gardens childcare centre



Legend

Low Density Residential

Low-Medium Density Residential

Major Centre

Sport and Recreation

Open Space

Community Facilities

The Site

Intersection Upgrade

Gradient on site

1 Charlotte and Motee Bushland Reserve

2 Highfields Skate Park

3 Highfields Cultural Centre

4 Highfields Aquatic and Fitness Centre

5 Highfields Library

6 Highfields Village Shopping Centre

7 Mary MacKillop Catholic College

8 Aldi

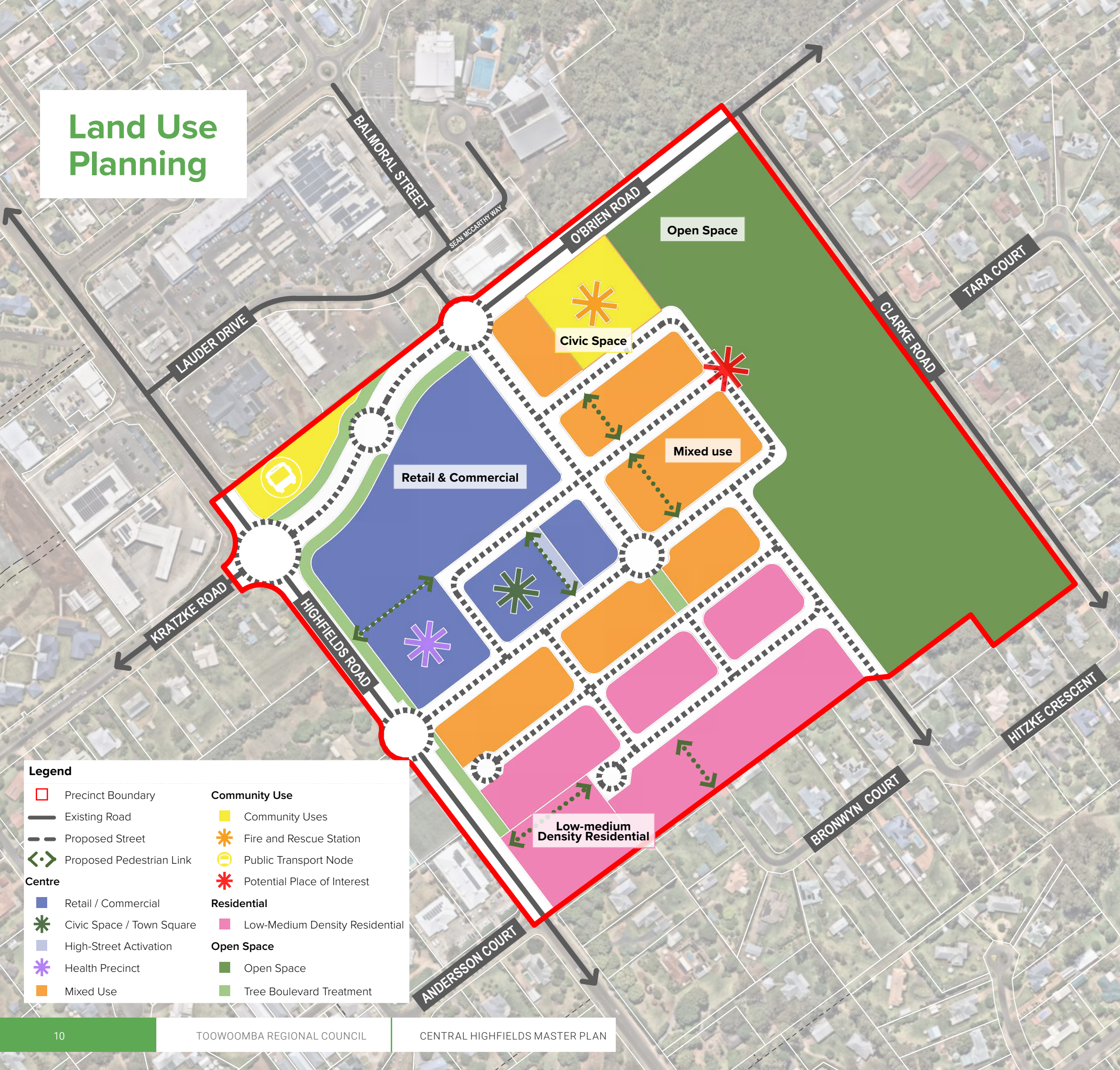
9 Highfields Community Church

10 Highfields Garden Childcare Centre

Planning Considerations

The Highfields centre is intended to act as a major centre within the Toowoomba region and is the focal point for the Highfields area and community. Intensification of residential development around the centre is encouraged. Finer-grained planning outcomes for the site are expressed in the Highfields, Meringandan and Meringandan West Local Plan (the local plan), which will be updated in the new Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme (currently being drafted) as informed by this document.

Land Use Planning



Legend

- Precinct Boundary
- Existing Road
- Proposed Street
- Proposed Pedestrian Link

Centre

- Retail / Commercial
- Civic Space / Town Square
- High-Street Activation
- Health Precinct
- Mixed Use

Community Use

- Community Uses
- Fire and Rescue Station
- Public Transport Node
- Potential Place of Interest

Residential

- Low-Medium Density Residential

Open Space

- Open Space
- Tree Boulevard Treatment

Civic and Open Space

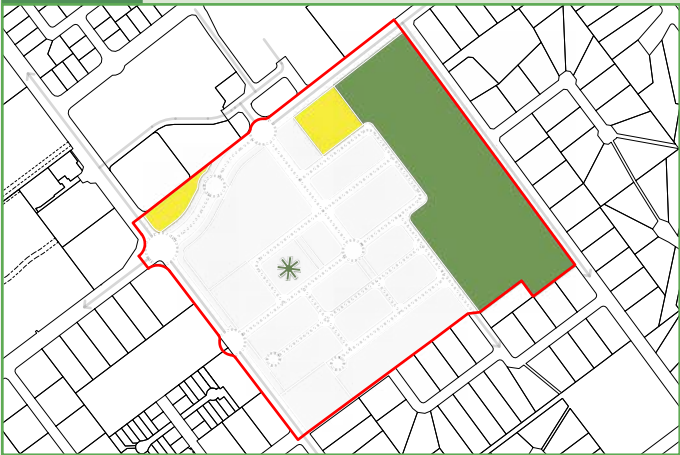
The master plan makes provision for community uses, and civic and open spaces.

Approximately 6 hectares of open space is allocated to preserve established vegetation and provide spaces for recreation and events. Further investigation will be undertaken for the suitability of the open space area to hold memorial type events.

Land allocated for community uses includes the existing and proposed expansion to the Queensland Fire Department facility.

A civic space / town square is envisaged within the retail / commercial core area to activate the space and provide a central and recognisable meeting point for local residents and visitors alike.

Height	Not applicable
Density	Not applicable
Likely uses	Business activities: Market Recreation activities: Outdoor sport and recreation, park Other: Emergency services, telecommunications facility, utility installation

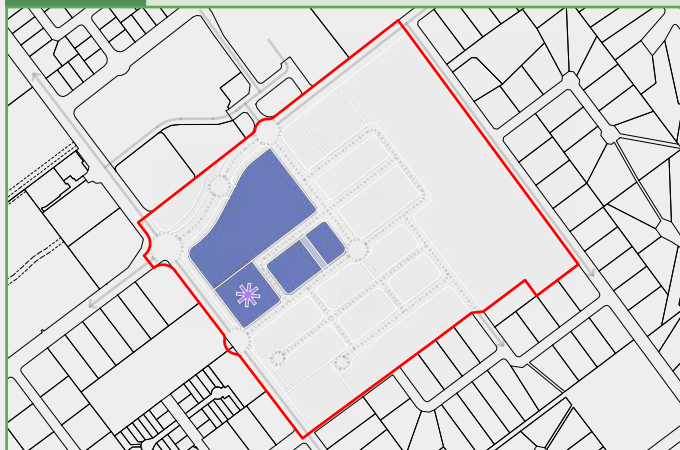


Health Precinct Retail & Commercial



The Health Precinct within the retail / commercial area will provide opportunities for much needed health services in Highfields. The precinct is to be provided along the Highfields Road frontage with access proposed from within the Central Highfields site. A large day hospital or medical centre is anticipated within the precinct and is encouraged up to 4 storeys in height.

Height	Up to 4 storeys
Density	25-40 dwellings per hectare
Likely uses	Accommodation activities: Retirement facility (where vertical and ancillary to a hospital / health care service) Business activities: Food and drink outlet, office, parking station, shop Community activities: Health care services, hospital

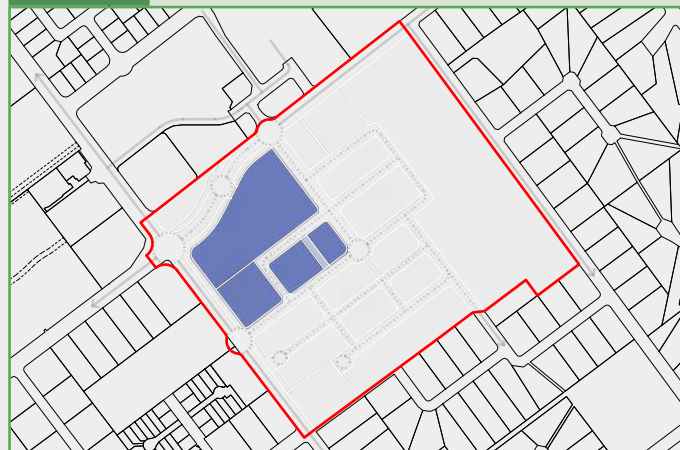


Retail & Commercial

The retail / commercial area been created to protect the major function of Central Highfields site and is to form the retail 'heart' of Highfields. It will accommodate large scale anchor retail development which requires convenient vehicle and service access, ample car parking and larger floor plates.

A review and update to the below table has been undertaken to remove land uses which are inconsistent with the vision for the precinct, such as service station, outdoor sales, and low to medium density residential uses. It is anticipated that large scale shopping centre and medical centre development will incorporate a mixture of standalone and ancillary land use types.

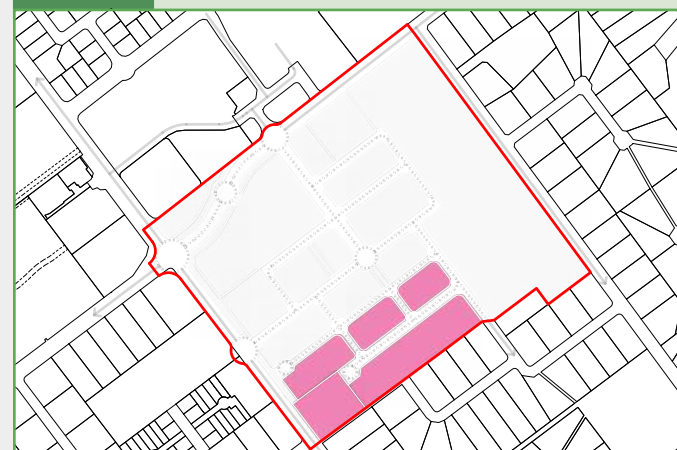
Height	Up to 4 storeys
Density	Not applicable
Likely uses	Accommodation activities: Short term accommodation Business activities: Food and drink outlet, market office, parking station, sales office, shop, shopping centre, showroom, veterinary services Community activities: Childcare centre, club, community care centre, community residence, community use, educational establishment, healthcare services Entertainment activities: Bar, function facility, hotel, theatre, tourist attraction Other: Car wash, substation



Low-Medium Density Residential

The Low-Medium density area will provide a transitioning function of bulk and form from the Mixed use area into the surrounding lower density areas. It will incorporate town houses, attached and some detached houses, small lot housing and multiple dwellings (where transition of bulk and form can be managed), to achieve a dwelling density of between 15 dwellings per hectare and 25 dwelling per hectare. Development in this area should be up to 2 storeys high.

Height	2 storeys or 8.5m
Density	15-25 dwellings per hectare
Likely uses	Accommodation activities: Dwelling house, dwelling unit, home based business, dual occupancy, multiple dwelling

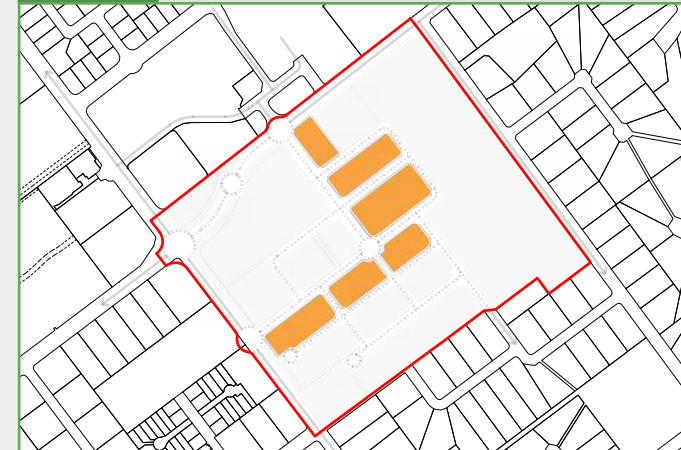


Mixed Use

Land identified for Mixed use will generally comprise of ground floor activated non-residential land uses with residential and commercial offerings being located on the floors/levels above. Mixed use development is anticipated to sleeve the retail/commercial core and along road frontages and civic spaces to activate the streetscape and public realm. Non-residential uses will be required to face and activate the street to support residential development that can be built above up to 4 storeys in height and maintain a pedestrian scale at the street level.

A review and update to the below table has been undertaken to remove land uses which are inconsistent with the vision for the precinct, such as (but not limited to) service stations, service industry and bulk landscaping supplies uses. The land use types that remain are suitable as they offer flexibility for many types of compatible businesses to establish without compromising the mixed use, pedestrian activated vision for the precinct.

Height	Up to 4 storeys
Density	25-40 dwellings per hectare
Likely uses	Accommodation activities: Caretaker's accommodation, community residence, dwelling unit, home based business, multiple dwelling, residential care facility, retirement facility, short term accommodations Business activities: Food and drink outlet, market, office, sales office, shop, showroom, veterinary services Community activities: Club, community care centre, community residence, community use, educational establishment, health care services Entertainment activities: Bar, funtion facility, hotel, theatre, tourist attraction Other: Car wash, substation



Infrastructure and Servicing

The strategic infrastructure planning that was undertaken with the 2019 structure plan was reviewed and incorporated within this updated master plan. It was determined that the infrastructure planning is still relevant for the purposes of the master plan. Notably, future infrastructure works are subject to detailed design as the master plan is implemented and future development of the land occurs. See below a summary of the infrastructure planning outcomes for the site:

Electricity

Central Highfields is serviced by electricity by Ergon. Sustainable development principles will be incorporated as part of the urban design guidelines (next stage) which encourage solar passive design, natural ventilation and other power conserving development techniques.

The guideline will explore how energy efficient design can provide a point of difference for living and working in Central Highfields.

Transport

In September 2025, the Highfields, Kratzke, O'Brien Roads intersections upgrade (HKO project) received funding from the Queensland State Government under the Residential Activation Fund (RAF). When finished, the HKO project will upgrade important road and intersection standards, whilst also creating a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment that will complement the changing Highfields Central business area.

As part of this project, there will be new intersections, with roundabouts at:

- Highfields Road/ Kratzke Road / O'Brien Road intersection
- Highfields Road/ Lauder Drive intersection
- Highfields Road/ Rogers Drive intersection

The works also include a realignment of O'Brien Road, with an additional roundabout included for access to the proposed Highfields town centre. These roundabouts will have priority crossings for walkers and people using bikes.

Stormwater

The site is generally undeveloped with grass covering. The majority of the site currently drains via surface flow to an open swale drain in Clarke Road and then to a natural drainage system. A secondary drainage point exists to the lower east of Central Highfields near Hitzke Crescent, which consists of a 525mm diameter stormwater pipe.

The development of the site will be required to create no worsening for downstream properties. Accordingly on site treatment of post-development storm water runoff is required.

Stormwater quantity

The pre-development stormwater quantity runoff was established to the nominated points of discharge in Clarke Road and Hitzke Crescent. This runoff was used as the assessment baseline for the post-development assessment against actionable nuisance.

DRAINS stormwater assessment software was used to calculate preliminary detention basin sizing in response to managing runoff to pre-developed conditions up to a 1% AEP storm event. Generally the results were as follows:

Item	Basin 1 (Eastern catchment)	Basin 2 (Southern catchment)
Storage requirement	4,659m ³	603m ³
Land take	3,025m ²	144m ²

Stormwater quality

Post-development run-off will be required to meet water quality treatment requirements in accordance with the State Planning Policy (SPP). It is proposed that water quality treatment will be achieved through at-source devices, swales and other bio-retention devices constructed in and around detention basin.

Water

The site is bounded by water reticulation networks in Highfields, O'Brien and Clarke Roads. A trunk water main is proposed in Clarke Road linking eastern parts of Highfields to the central reservoir located in Highfields west.

It is proposed that further development in Central Highfields will connect to existing reticulation networks in Highfields and O'Brien Road. It is anticipated that an additional higher-order water main will be required through the site to provide for fire services in commercial and residential development.

Preliminary assessment suggests that the existing and planned upgrades to water services will have capacity to service the development.

Sewerage

The majority of the Central Highfields site is not currently serviced by reticulated sewer. Council is progressing the construction of necessary sewer reticulation throughout the site to service proposed development.

The following truck infrastructure works are identified in the current TRC infrastructure Plans:

- Construction of the Kuhl's Road sewer pump station
- Construction of the Kuhl's Road rising main, via Clarke Road, O'Brien Road and connection to gravity mains in Highfields Road
- Construction of trunk gravity sewer mains within the subject site from the existing fire station SPS4 to the proposed Kuhl's Road pump station.
- Decommissioning of the existing SPS4 and 75mm rising main in O'Brien Road.

Preliminary assessment indicates that the planning trunk infrastructure should have capacity for the development as proposed in the structure plan.

Potential Staging Plan

Given the large area of Central Highfields and the significant investment into infrastructure upgrades and community open space, it is important to establish a sequential staging plan for development. Generally development should start close to the existing centre where existing activity and infrastructure exists and move east towards the parkland.

Stage A

-  Open Space and parkland area is created
-  Additional area for Queensland Fire Department facility is purchased and created
-  Public Transport node area is created

Stage B

-  Early identification of a large format retail anchor tenant to construct a shopping centre to provide for retail and commercial needs for Highfields community and providing activity to the precinct
-  A mixture of low-medium density residential and mixed use residential development is unlocked early to create vibrancy within the site interactions with retail / commercial land uses
-  Highfields, Kratze, O'Brien Road (HKO project) roads intersections upgrades project

Stage C

-  Release of low-medium residential and mixed use lots as population and dwelling growth occurs inn the mid-long term

Stage D

-  Release of remaining mixed use area in close proximity to the park / open space area, with an emphasis on creating an active frontage with the park

