
CENTRAL MAITLAND STRUCTURE PLAN



- November 2009 -

Central Maitland Structure Plan, November 2009

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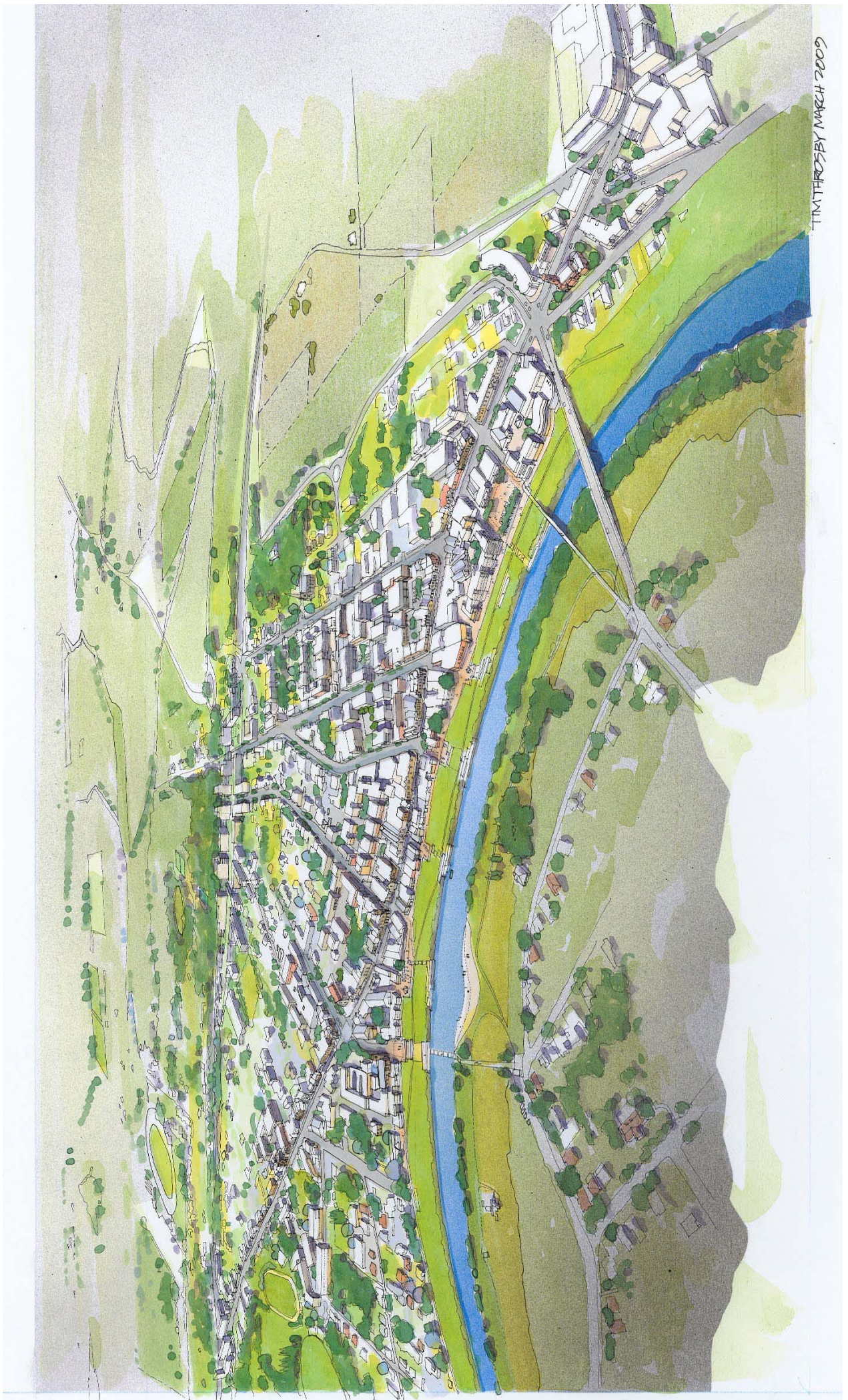
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Maitland Structure Plan sets out an ambitious vision, supported by key strategies to guide growth and development over the next 20 years. The vision for Central Maitland builds on the City's existing strengths and aims to create a vibrant place and reinforce its role as the Major Regional Centre, second only to Newcastle.

This plan recognises that Maitland lies at the centre of the major growth corridor of the Hunter Valley. The city is sited at a junction in the rail network, close to the motorway and close to Newcastle Airport. Maitland stands in a similar relationship to Newcastle as Parramatta does to Sydney. However Maitland and the Hunter have the opportunity to improve on the patterns of Australia's other metropolitan areas to become more sustainable and a more desirable place to live and to do business.

Residential growth

The Structure Plan sets a target of a return to the 1954 population by 2030. The population has declined by two thirds since 1954 (Figure 3.3). The arrest and reversal of the population decline in the city centre is crucial. Growing the residential community will bring day-long activation; expand the walking-community; support local businesses and vitally strengthen stewardship of the neighbourhoods. Key strategies in the plan to support this target relate to solving the problems that have made the flood liable area unbuildable and encouraging denser mixed use development in The City.

Employment growth

This plan identifies a set of key redevelopment sites that represent definite steps toward reactivating and renewing the city. Chief among these is the area around Maitland Train Station and along the rail corridor. This area presents the opportunity for significant transit-oriented development with significant growth in employment and residency at a major public transport node. Other important redevelopment sites have been identified along Ken Tubman Drive in the sites that offer valuable large-plate retail in a form that turns these buildings to re-address the street with active frontages.

Car parking strategy

The plan proposes a strategic change in the placement and operation of car parking in Central Maitland. This will see longer term public car parking located at the entry points to the city, providing the dual benefit of reducing the instances of cars travelling into the centre in search of parking spaces and freeing up the limited developable floor space in the city core for high-value uses. This 'gateways parking strategy' will be combined with the wider circulation strategy of improvements that will ensure that the only cars in Central Maitland are those that have a destination in Central Maitland. This environment of reduced traffic volume and congestion will allow the raft of other initiatives set out in the Structure Plan Framework (Section 4).

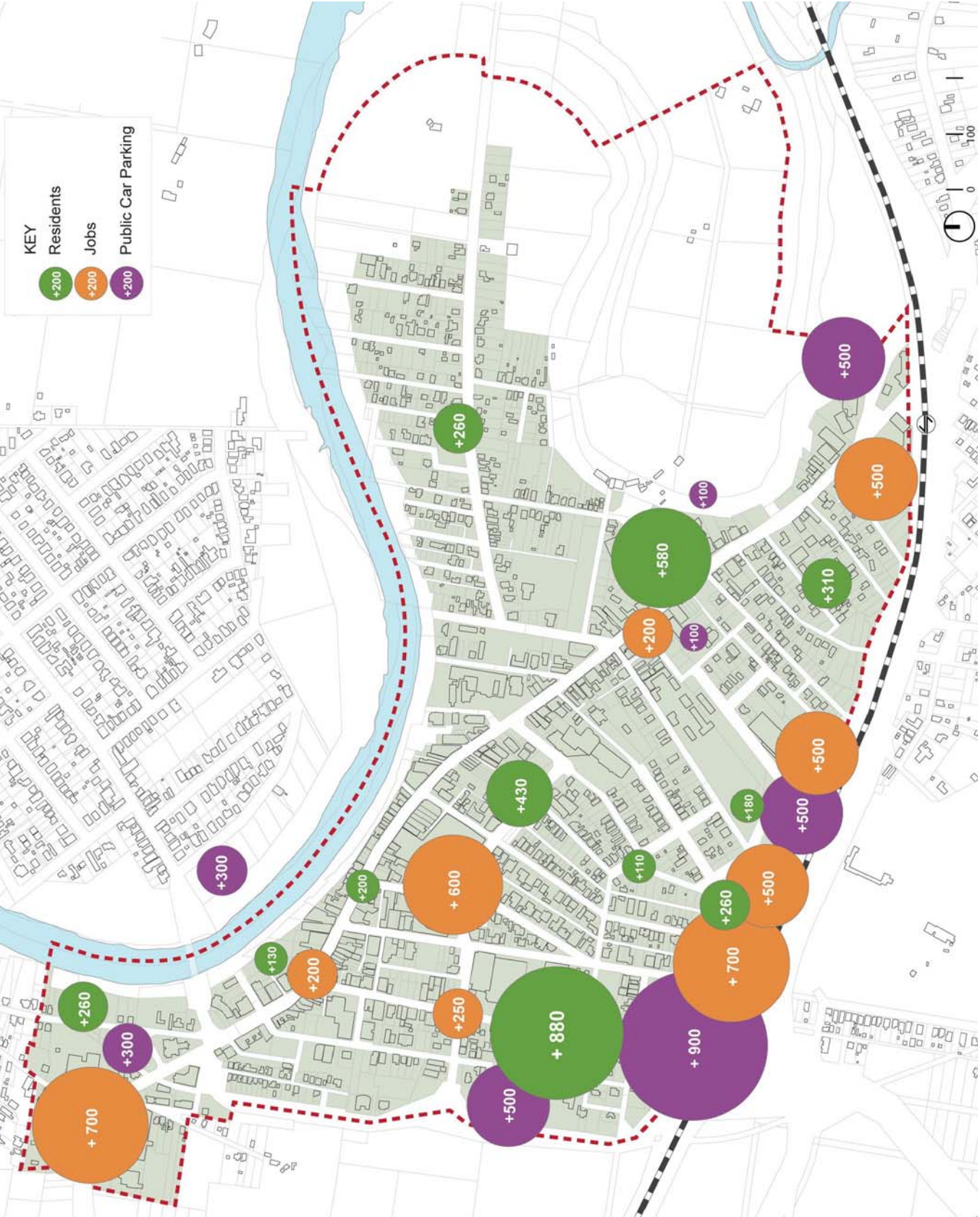
Public domain upgrade

The plan proposes to continue the program of public domain upgrades in the city, giving priority to commercial areas and focusing on improving 'walkability' through the improvement of pedestrian connections and crossings, including a consistent public domain treatment along High Street. This aims to improve way-finding in the town centre by establishing a clearly legible street hierarchy, improving connection to a network of public open space and providing links to effective public transport.

Improve connection to the Hunter River

The plan also suggests a number of concepts for the city that are intended to reconnect and engage the City with the Hunter River. Two potential redevelopment sites have been identified at the River front; these could become landmarks that bring an exciting new dimensions to the City. Projects include:

- A new town and market square facing the River (see Section 6.4.1);
- Pedestrian bridges over the river to create a continuous recreation and walking circuit (see Section 4.5);
- Activity nodes along the River Walk (see Section 4.7); and
- The regeneration of the banks with 'floodable' landscape design to promote the amenity and use of the banks (see Section 4.7).



Retail competitiveness

Central Maitland faces serious increasing competition from stand-alone retail facilities at East Maitland and Rutherford. The retail vacancy in High Street properties and closure of many long-standing retailers in the city centre bears witness to this. There is also a scarcity of new office space in the city centre while there has been significant growth of car-based business parks and industrial and office complexes outside of the centre, further detracting from Maitland City's traditional profile, economic health and vitality as a shopping and service centre. While the focus of this plan is the city centre, it is noted that it is normal in developed countries to actively limit retail and commercial floor space of certain types outside of the historic town centre in order to protect the viability and vitality of the centre. With this protection of its core services the old city centre can remain competitive despite the constraints of small lots, heritage buildings and limited car access. Equally Maitland will build upon its competition advantages and redress the balance in favour of its city centre.

Character

This plan seeks to capitalize on Central Maitland's competitive advantages: its rich and varied urban fabric; its historic buildings and institutions; its transport infrastructure (rail and road); its natural and rural setting; the Hunter River and crucially the people and businesses that make up the local community. These factors combine to give Central Maitland qualities that cannot be reproduced in a new centre.

When these advantages are understood for how they can help the city can assume its central role in the social, commercial and cultural life of the wider city. A picture emerges of a centre with strong entertainment and hospitality businesses, strong specialty and lifestyle retail together with fresh food growers markets and specialty groceries, active tourism attractions and accommodation, strong cultural and creative identity, specialty medical and government services, and a growing residential population that consciously chooses an urban lifestyle because of the qualities of Central Maitland.

The investigation that commenced this project has identified a set of very clear issues that must be understood to fulfil the vision for a renewed and active city centre of the 21st century. They are:

- The effect of flooding in 'sterilizing' the city;
- Decline in competitiveness of commercial and retail properties;
- Decay of historic fabric and context;
- Declining population;
- Declining prosperity and;
- Increasing car dominance.

Recent initiatives by the City Council represent early steps toward addressing some of these issues. Through this Structure Plan, an integrated approach to tackle the issues has been developed, providing a clear path to fulfil the exciting vision for Central Maitland to grow and prosper.



Fig 1.1 Aerial photograph of the study area



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Area

The Central Maitland study area covers 187 hectares. As a regional centre, Central Maitland accommodates a variety of retail, commercial, residential, civic functions, education, entertainment, recreation, open space and transport uses. It is one of the oldest regional centres in Australia.

The study area is defined by the Hunter River to the north, the former course of the river to the east where it curved around Horseshoe Bend, the New England Highway and railway line to the south and Ken Tubman Drive to the west.



1.2 Role of the Structure Plan

The Structure Plan:

- Provides a coherent framework for integrated development;
- It sets the direction for detailed planning instruments, including LEP, DCPs, Master Plans, Public Domain Plans and Transport Strategies.
- Guides the major changes to land use, access and movement, public space and built form;
- Outlines the scale and directions of development that will meet the future needs of the community and the region;
- Gives clear directions to investors about preferred locations for development and character of the precincts;
- Promotes development forms which are sustainable and which respond to the unique character and heritage of Maitland.

The diagram below illustrates the strategic role the Structure Plan plays in the spatial policy framework for the city. The Central Maitland Structure Plan was developed through consultation with community and stakeholders, a comprehensive review of the existing urban environment and the policy setting.

Through this consultation and review, a vision for Central Maitland has been defined. The Structure Plan defines a set of strategies articulated on a city-wide basis (section 4) and a precinct basis (section 5). The strategies are geared for the policies they will direct, including the Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plans together with Sustainable Transport and Public Domain strategies.

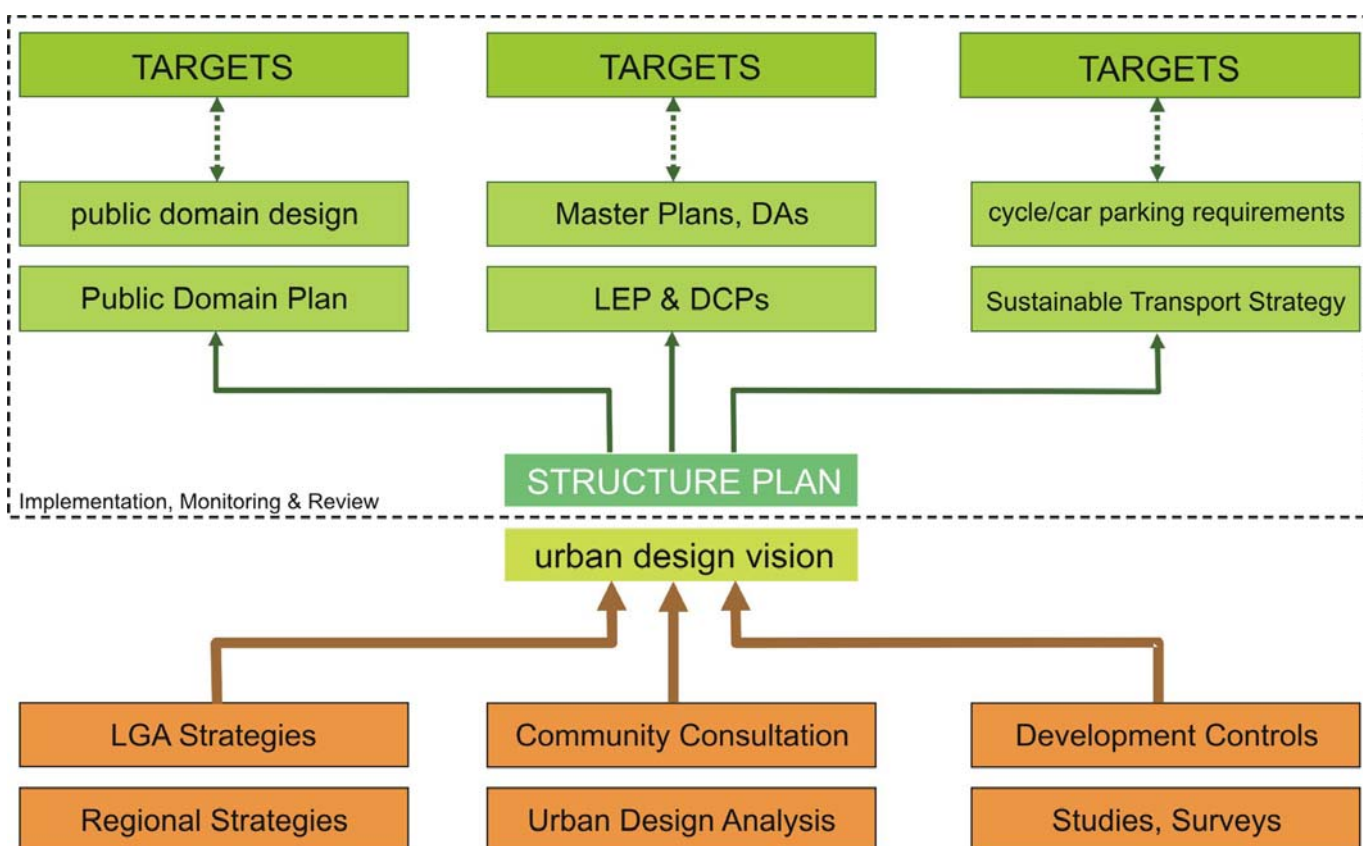


Fig 1.3. Role of the Structure Plan

2 BACKGROUND

2.1. Policy Context and Background Documents

This Structure Plan has reviewed and taken into account all past work undertaken on the study area and builds upon their strengths in developing a new Structure Plan for Central Maitland.

The table below outlines the names and status of all plans, strategies, studies and policy that have been prepared to date in relation to Central Maitland.

Title	Author	Date	Status
STRATEGIES			
Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-2031	NSW Department of Planning	2006	to be reviewed in 2011
Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy	Maitland City Council	2000	amended 2009
Maitland Centres Strategy	Hill PDA	2009	draft
Recreation and Open Space Strategy	Maitland City Council	2004	
Greening Plan	Maitland City Council	2002	
Central Maitland Area Improvement Program, LEP Review	Keys Young	1998	draft
Central Maitland Area Improvements Plan, Landscape Concept Plan	Kiah Environmental Designers	1998	
Central Maitland Area Improvement Program, Planning Strategy and Implementation Plan	Scott Carver Pty Ltd	1995	adopted 1996
POLICIES			
Maitland S94 Plan (Citywide)	Maitland City Council	2007	
Commercial and Retail Policy	Maitland City Council	2001	amended 2006
Conservation and Design Guidelines	Maitland City Council	1999	
LEP	Maitland City Council	1993	amended 2007 new MLEP 2011
Hunter REP	NSW Department of Planning	1989	
City Wide DCP: Central Maitland (DCP no.8)	Maitland City Council	1986	amended 2006
PRECINCT MASTER PLANS			
Maitland Heritage Mall Strategic Analysis, Draft Master Plan Report	Environmental Partnership	2001	draft
Maitland Civic Centre Master Plan	Suters Architects	2001	



Title	Author	Date	Status
FLOODING			
NSW Floodplain Development Manual	NSW Dep. of Infrastructure	2005	gazetted
DCP29 - Hunter Valley Floodplain Management	Maitland City Council	2000	amended 2006
Lower Hunter Valley, Floodplain Management Study	Webb, McKeown & Associates	1998	
Lower Hunter Valley, Supplementary Flood Study	Webb, McKeown & Associates	1998	
Determination of the Flood Standard	Webb, McKeown & Associates	1994	
Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation. Central Maitland Land Use Study	Public Works Department NSW	1982	
HERITAGE			
Maitland Town Hall Conservation Management Plan, Stage 2	Jyoti Somerville Pty Ltd	2003	
Central Maitland Riverside Precinct, Hunter River, Historical Study	Cynthia Hunter	2002	
Horseshoe Bend Maitland, Historical Study	Cynthia Hunter	2000	
Maitland Town Hall: Historical Study	Ian Jack and Jyoti Somerville Pty Ltd	1999	
High Street Study Maitland NSW	Tim Shellshear	1987	
TRANSPORT			
Integrated Land Use & Transport Study	URAP / TTW	2009	draft
Section 94 Contributions Plan - City Wide	MCC	2006	amended 2007
Bike Plan	MCC	2005	
Sustainable Transport in the Lower Hunter	Transit Planners Pty	2003	Issues Paper
Car Parking Requirements		2001	amended 2006
MARKETING / MANAGEMENT			
Maitland City Center Management Plan 2008	Maitland City Council	2007	
Maitland City Centre, Brand & Marketing Strategy	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	
Maitland City Centre, Product Analysis	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	
Maitland City Centre, Marketing Review Background Report	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	
Maitland City Centre, Targeted Tenanting Strategy	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	
Maitland City Centre, Future Marketing Governance	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	
Maitland CBD Marketing Review Update Feb 2005, Research Project	City Marketing Pty Ltd	2005	

2. BACKGROUND

Following is a short summary of the key planning instruments and reports relating to Central Maitland.

2.1.1 Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-2031 (Department of Planning, October 2006)

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy aims to set out the framework for the sustainable growth of the region in the next 25 years. The Strategy is monitored annually and will be reviewed every five years by the NSW Department of Planning.

Central Maitland is listed as one of four 'Major Regional Centres' in the region, second in importance only to Newcastle Regional City. Other centres in the LGA are identified as Town Centres (East Maitland, Rutherford, Thornton and Lochinvar) while Green Hills is identified as a 'Stand Alone Shopping Centre'. The key functions of a Major Regional Centre are described as: "A concentration of business, higher order retailing, employment, professional services and generally including civic functions and facilities. A focal point for subregional road and transport networks and may service a number of districts".

The Regional Strategy seeks to strengthen established and emerging centres by locating 60% of new jobs and 40% of new dwellings to these areas.

The proposed targets for Maitland's LGA consists of 26,500 dwellings and 4,700 jobs by 2031 of which 1,300 dwellings and 3,200 jobs would be located in Central Maitland.

The DoP job projection for the LGA is assuming a strong deterioration of the balance between workforce and available jobs in the LGA, by projecting a deficit of 31,106 jobs by 2031; (56% of workers cannot find a job in the LGA) from the current deficit of 7,806 jobs (29% of workers cannot find a job in the LGA). A substantially higher job creation of up to 12,000 new jobs would maintain the existing jobs-workforce ratio.

2.1.2 Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2001 - 2020 (Maitland City Council, 2009)

The Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy (MUSS) was first published in 2001 by Maitland City Council and is reviewed every two years. The Strategy has been developed to provide an overarching framework for urban growth in the City during this period. MUSS developed a number of key policies for urban and employment land growth and development. This is used to guide the identification of investigation areas.

The Urban Settlement Strategy reinforces the importance of Central Maitland as the highest order centre in the Local Government Area.

2.1.3 Maitland Centres Strategy (in preparation, November 2009)

The purpose of the Maitland Centres Strategy is to strengthen and enhance Maitland's activity centres and employment clusters. This is critical in achieving the vision to create a more vibrant, sustainable community for the visitors, residents and workers of Maitland.

A logical hierarchy and network of activity centres and employment land clusters is outlined in the Centres Strategy, with Central Maitland nominated as the only major regional centre. Major Regional Centres are the highest order in the Maitland LGA, and are hubs for community, cultural, civic and commercial activity. A diverse mix of uses can be found in Major Regional Centres, which cater to the needs of the local and regional population in a location serviced by high levels of accessibility and interconnecting transport modes.





Fig.2.1 Lower Hunter Regional Strategy - Structure Plan

The vision for Central Maitland in the Centres Strategy is one of future development that will enhance the exceptional characteristics and contribute to strengthening its role as a long standing regional civic and retail/ commercial centre, a place of historical importance on the doorstep of the Hunter River, and a focal point for learning, artistic, cultural and democratic expression. Provision of significant employment generating activities to accommodate at least an additional 3,200 jobs over the next 20 years is one of the key policy objectives for Central Maitland.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1.4 Maitland Recreation and Open Space Strategy (Maitland City Council, 2004)

The survey of residents conducted in 2003 revealed that the three most frequented open recreation spaces in the LGA are Maitland Park (84% of residents visited it in the last year), Maitland Showground (76%) and Maitland Pool (49%) all located in the immediate vicinity of the Central Maitland Study Area. Visitation frequency was fairly uniform for the three sectors (West, East & Central) of the LGA. Maitland Park and Maitland Pool were also the two main favourite open spaces, while Maitland Showground ranked fourth in the LGA behind Walka Water Works located 1.5 km north of the study area.

Among the priority actions proposed by the strategy were:

- Investigate the feasibility of an indoor leisure centre, preferably as a complementary facility to a year-round swimming venue;
- Develop off-road multi-use trails for cycling and walking across the LGA;
- Prepare a plan of management to upgrade No.1 Sportsground.

The existing Maitland Park swimming pool to the south of the study area was identified as a potential site for the year round swimming facility and a feasibility study is currently underway. Implications for the Structure Plan are that connections between Maitland Park and the City Centre (across the railway line and the Highway) require upgrade.

2.1.5 Central Maitland Area Improvement Plans (CMAIP): Landscape Concept Plan (Maitland City Council 1998)

This plan prepared in 1998 provided strategic directions for public domain improvements to the pedestrian environment, entry points, visual quality and streetscapes of Maitland City. However most of the recommendations were not implemented.

The main proposals of the Plan were:

- Improve access to the riverbank
- Enhance Hunter Riverbank (*partially implemented*)
- Create a "Central Park" on Council's St Andrews Street car park site.
- Create a "Heritage Walk" to include Church Street, High St, Bourke St, Charles St, Cathedral St and the Riverbank.
- Introduce a "non-pollutive Transport Link" along High Street such as a tram or bullock dray.
- Planting to not obscure heritage facades.
- Introduce "al fresco" dining on High St Mall and Riverbank.

The failings of the plan were that it was not accompanied by any graphic representation of strategies, it did not integrate well with existing policy nor did it outline changes required to existing policy in order to achieve improvements.

Most of the recommendations of the plan are consistent with this Structure Plan, and should be considered by the preparation of a detailed Central Maitland Public Domain Plan.

2.1.6 CMAIP: LEP Review (Maitland City Council, 1998)

This report sought to improve the viability of existing businesses in the CBD as well as to revitalise the CBD with new businesses, tourist and residents. The report stated that increasing the residential population in the CBD was a means of achieving this, on the provision that:

- All new development was flood proof, and
- A well defined conservation policy was adopted by Council.



In relation to the question of an increased number of dwellings in the CBD, the following strategy options were presented, consistent with the Structure Plan:

- Shop-top and shop-back housing has the potential to contribute some dwellings stock to City centre;
- Redevelopment of Council owned land to accommodate medium density housing as well as public car parking;
- Increasing opportunities for infill dwelling development and new dwellings and development in the City Centre with a revision of the existing residential and business land use zones, particularly 2(a) Residential, 2(b) Flood Liable Residential and 3(b) Support Business;
- Increase tourist accommodation and services in the City;
- Improved car parking;
- Utilise Council acquired land on Athel D'Ombra Drive and intensify activity here, and
- Upgrade gateways into Maitland to promote the City's status and profile.

Some of the overarching strategies proposed in the study have been instigated since 1999 (marketing and promotion, shop-top housing) but most recommendations are yet to be undertaken. As most of the strategies in this document are in line with the Structure Plan we recommend the report should be consulted when preparing the SLEP.

2.1.7 Central Maitland Integrated Land Use and Transport Study (in preparation, November 2009)

A coordinated approach to movement and activity in Central Maitland is to be outlined in the Integrated Land Use and Transport Study (ILUTS) which is current in preparation. The key outcomes of the study will be a traffic and transport management plan that caters for current and estimated future traffic growth, access and mobility recommendations, a bicycle plan that encourages walking and cycling as attractive alternative modes of travel, and a land use and parking strategy that accommodates the future growth and needs of the study area. Opportunities to encourage an increased modal share to public transport (including rail and buses) will also be outlined in the study.

2.1.8 Maitland Citywide Development Control Plan, Chapter 8 - Central Maitland (Maitland City Council, 2006)

The DCP adopted in 2006 provides specific planning controls for development in land affected by flooding. It attempts to reverse the fortunes of previous planning policies which deactivated areas subject to flooding and subsequently sterilised the growth and vitality of Maitland town centre.

The DCP is commendable as it:

- Promotes shop-top housing in 3(a) General business zone and 3(b) Support business zone;
- Requires compliance with flood proofing guidelines to minimise flood losses;
- Proposes a merit based approach to assess shop top housing proposals where compliance with DCP No 22 is not achievable;
- Incentivises shop-top housing by removing S94 contributions where shop-top housing conversions do not increase the number of dwellings historically located on the site, and
- Removes Council rates for the residential component of shop top housing.

However the DCP contains controls which do not support growth and development, such as:

- Does not promote a mixture of land uses which is essential for vitality in the CBD;
- Promotes non residential development of land zoned 2(b) Flood Liable Residential further 'sterilising' the zone,
- Does not permit residential uses of land zoned 3(a).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1.9 Maitland Civic Centre Masterplan (Maitland City Council, 2001)

The Civic Centre masterplan prepared in 2001, focused on the block containing the existing Town Hall, identified as a civic precinct.

The intention of the masterplan was to establish the block as a focus for government, community, cultural and professional services in the CBD. The masterplan concept plan for the redevelopment of the site also incorporated a public square, central library, performance hall, exhibition space, senior citizens centre, café, rationalised car park and improvements to the existing buildings.

None of the suggestions made in the masterplan have been realised. A concept for an enlarged Civic precinct has been prepared as part of this Structure Plan and is contained in the Strategies section of the Report. The preparation of a new masterplan for the wider precinct is recommended, with a view to integrate residential uses and provide a more coherent framework for public domain improvements.

2.1.10 Maitland Heritage Mall Masterplan (Maitland City Council, 2001)

In 2001 a masterplan and report was prepared for Maitland's Heritage Mall in High Street. The plan was commissioned in a bid to upgrade the Mall and to promote and revitalise the city centre. It deals primarily in cosmetic solutions for the town centre.

The masterplan recommendations that have bearing on this Structure Plan include:

- Retain the mall as a pedestrian only area and suggest that this recommendation be reviewed in 5-10 years time (i.e. 2011);
- Detailed public domain upgrades;
- Introduce a consistent streetscape treatment through the mall and CBD streets;
- Acquisition of key properties on the north of High St mall with a view to demolition and provision of direct connections between the Hunter River and High Street.
- Develop community spaces and public open spaces along the River Walk.

2.1.11 Central Maitland Land Use Strategy (Department of Public Works, 1982)

Prepared by The Public Works Department of NSW in 1982, this Study has relevance to the Structure Plan as it explored a range of potential policy options for Maitland. It included the option of relaxing controls in flood liable residential areas to permit increased residential use of those areas.

For land subject to the 1 in 100 year floods, the Strategy recommended:

- Allowing infill development of cottages, subject to flood proofing;
- Allowing new medium density development, subject to flood proofing.

It should be noted that this report was prepared in 1982 and the option of "maintaining existing planning controls" was even at that time considered to be a "withering" policy. This worst case scenario has in fact come to be the reality today due to the lack of change to those restrictive planning controls.

For land above the 1 in 100 year flood line, the Strategy recommended:

- Permitting medium density flat buildings and town house developments, subject to building controls;
- Renovation and intensification of existing cottages and dwellings subject to appropriate building controls, and
- Preservation of heritage buildings.

This Structure Plan builds upon these more 'liberal' approaches to flood mitigation and land use.



2.1.12 Sustainable Transport in the Lower Hunter Region (Transit Planners Pty Ltd, 2003)

The Lower Hunter Region is presently car dominated: 93% of trips to work are made by car. The multiple benefits of alternative transport modes are largely discussed in state and regional planning policies, including the Sustainable Transport in the Lower Hunter Region (STLHR) Issues Paper 2003.

The most important of these benefits are:

- reduced road costs;
- lower congestion;
- reduced greenhouse gas emissions;
- reduced use of nonrenewable energy;
- lower air pollution;
- lower noise pollution;
- fewer accidents;
- health benefits from more physical activity;
- increased opportunities for social interaction;

The STLHR discusses in detail the importance of sustainable transport, and outlines general policies and actions to achieve this. It also sets an indicative target to reduce the share of trips made by car by 20%. This would be achievable if the share of sustainable transport modes in Maitland LGA would be increased from presently only 6% (ABS Census 2001 - trips to work) to 25%. A similar Policy in the ACT (Sustainable Transport Plan for the ACT 2004) sets a target of 30%.

2.1.13 Maitland Section 94 Contributions Plan - City Wide (Maitland City Council, 2006)

Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 enables Council to levy contributions from development for the provision of public services and amenities, required as a consequence of that development. This mechanism provides Council an important funding resource for new public facilities and services or upgrade of existing ones, such as parks, roads and community facilities.

According to the 2007 revision of the S94 plan, any new residential development in Central Maitland is required to pay levy contributions of around AUD 11,000 for: recreation and open space (39%), road and traffic facilities (36%), community and cultural services (23%) and cycleways (2%).

An important aspect of the S94 plan is the nexus between the proposed development and the need for the public service or amenity for which the levy is being required. While currently there is no differentiation in this regard between Central Maitland and LGA wide contributions, the plan has the potential to effectively stimulate development in Central Maitland by reducing, for instance, contributions for road and traffic improvements. Instead, increase contributions for developments which are located near railway stations and rely less on private motor vehicles, in accordance with the aims of achieving a more sustainable transport system.

2. BACKGROUND

2.2. Demographic context

Understanding the social dynamics and patterns of a place is essential to finding the starting point for the design of a distinctive and responsive place.

The following demographic analysis is based upon data from the 2006 census. Central Maitland is covered by the following census collection district (CCD): 1110602, 1110608, 1110708 and 1110709.

Maitland LGA is a rapidly growing region (Fig.3.2.). In contrast, data for Central Maitland reflects a picture of urban decline. The population has steadily fallen since 1955 from 5,500 people to less than 2,000 residents (Fig.3.3.).

Those who currently live in Central Maitland are significantly older than the wider area and the average household income is well below the average.

The trend of abandoning the Centre, which has not been a common trend in many Australian towns in recent decades, has been exacerbated in Maitland by development constraints of flood liable residential land.

2.2.1 Household size and type

Less than 30% of households in Central Maitland are couples with dependant children, this is a low percentage in relation to the national average which is 45%.

One parent families in Central Maitland accounted for 26% of the families in the area. This rate is significantly higher than the national average which is 16%.

The average household size in Central Maitland is smaller than LGA and State averages with an average of 2.35 people per household, compared to 2.7 and 2.6 people in the LGA and NSW respectively. This is a common pattern in all urban centres in NSW.

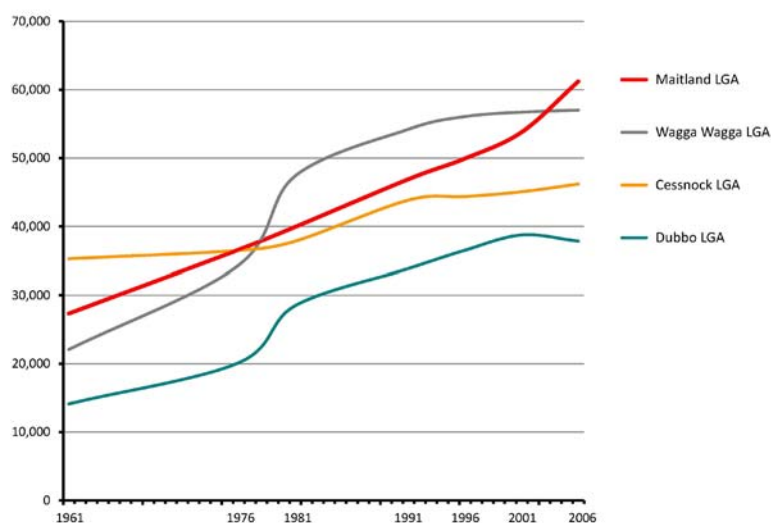


Fig.2.2. LGA growth trends 1961 - 2006

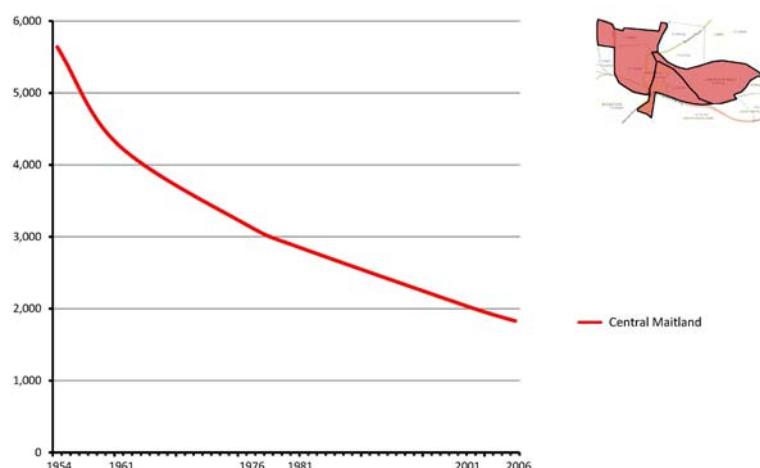


Fig.2.3 Population decline in Central Maitland 1954 - 2006

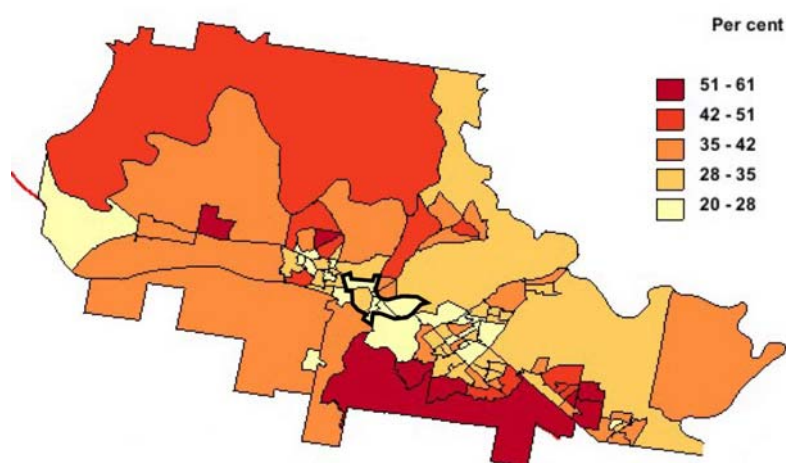


Fig.2.4 Couples with dependant children (Census 2006)



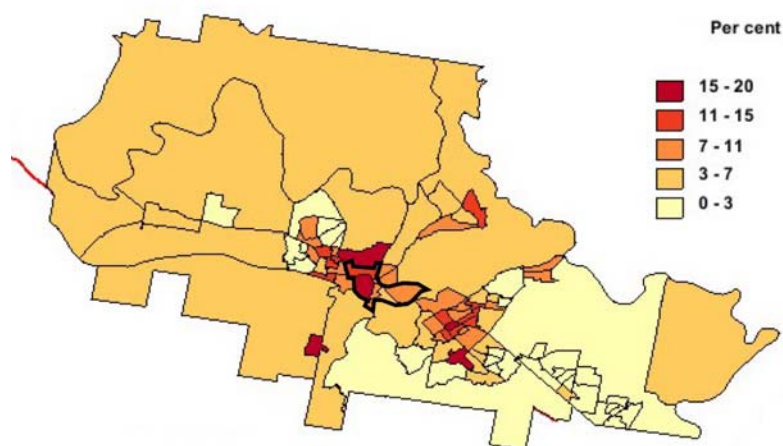


Fig.2.5 People aged 65 years and over (Census 2006)

2.2.2 Population age and size

In Central Maitland, more than 20% of residents are aged 65 or over and less than 6% are aged under 4.

In comparison to NSW, Central Maitland has a higher percentage of older people, in NSW the percentage of over 65 year olds (as a percent of total population) is 13%.

The average age of Central Maitland residents is 41 years, much above the LGA average of 35 years as well as NSW average of 37 years.

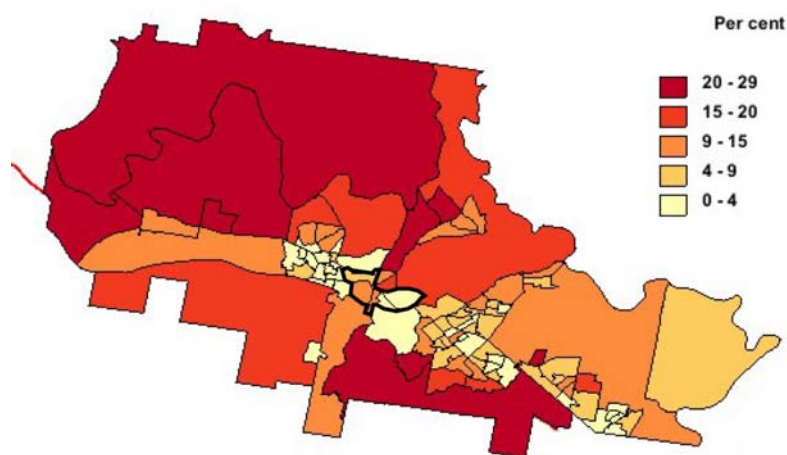


Fig.2.6 High income households (Census 2006)

2.2.3 Household income

A high proportion of households in Central Maitland are low income households (20-40%). A low proportion of households here have a high income (between 4-9%).

Household income in Central Maitland are lower than both the LGA and State averages. The average Central Maitland household income is \$700 per week, compared to average incomes of \$1,025 and \$1,037 per week for LGA and State households respectively.

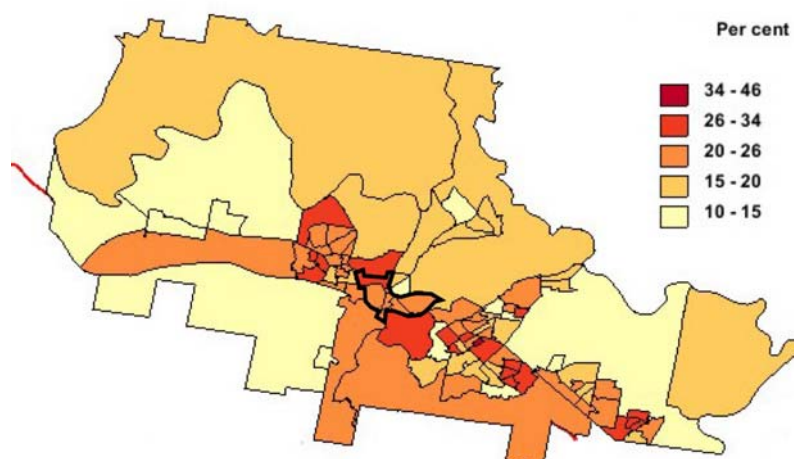


Fig.2.7 Households with rent/mortgage stress over 30% of gross income (Census 2006)

2.2.4 Mortgage stress

A high level of mortgage stress (30%) exists in Central Maitland compared to the LGA average (25%).

2. BACKGROUND

2.2.5 Housing cost and rental levels

35% of the population of Central Maitland lives in rented residential property.

House prices in Maitland have consistently been below the average LGA house price over the past ten years; in 2007 house prices fell by as much as \$100,000.

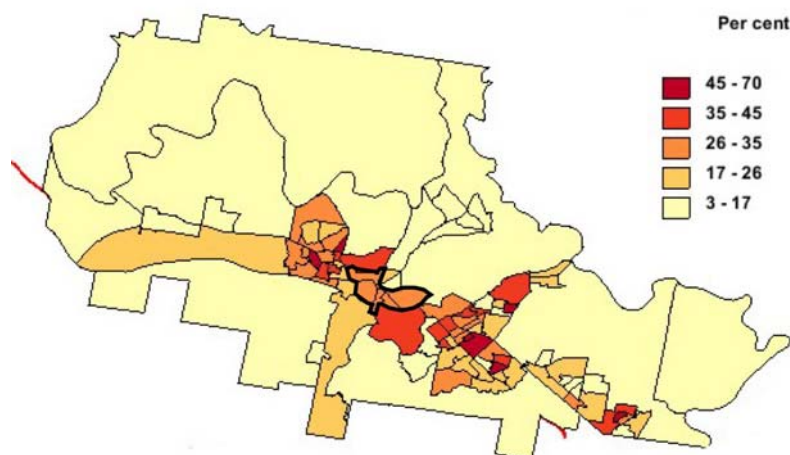


Fig.2.8 Rented dwellings (Census 2006)

2.2.6 Crime rates

Crime rates in Maitland LGA are at levels similar to other regional towns (i.e. Coffs Harbour and Port Stephens) and below NSW average. A relatively high concentration of breaking and entering into commercial properties and car theft occur in Central Maitland. This pattern is similar to other business only areas, like Greenhills shopping-centre or the northern section of the Sydney CBD.

Despite the average crime rates, anecdotal evidence from community consultation indicates a relatively high perception of crime for Central Maitland. However, as numerous studies indicate, perception of crime is often more closely linked to the frequency of reporting of crime in the media than actual crime rates.

Another typical difference between perception of crime and actual crime rates is that risk of crime is more often attributed to the public domain. However, of the crimes that occurred in the Maitland LGA in 2007, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics data shows that public space was not the location where most crimes occurred:

- Only 29% of assaults (non-domestic violence related) occurred in public space/outdoors (including car parks);
- 40% of robberies occurred in public space (including car parks);
- 50% of motor vehicle thefts and 52% of theft from motor vehicles occurred in public space (including car parks);
- Residential dwellings and the areas outside of residential dwellings were the locations where the highest levels of crime consistently occurred.

Good urban design and strategic planning which activates the City will assist in improving public perception and enlivening Central Maitland.



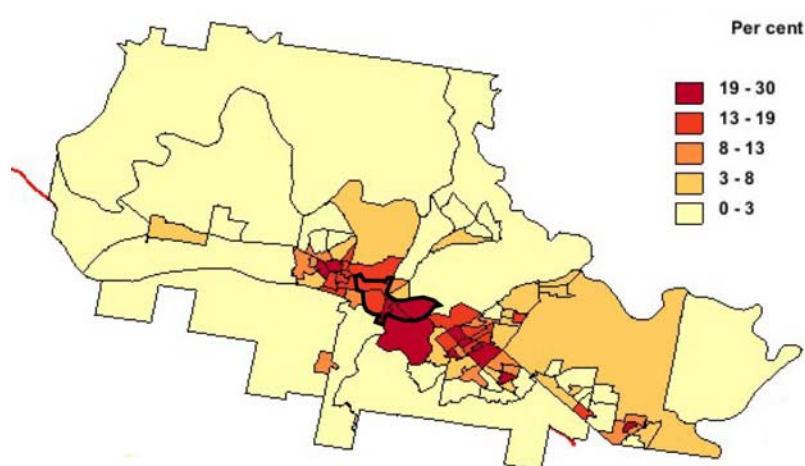


Fig.2.9 Households without motor vehicles (Census 2006)

2.2.7 Car ownership and trips to work

Levels of car ownership for Central Maitland dwellings are lower than levels across the LGA which may be a result of close proximity to rail and bus services.

A relatively high percentage (20%) of households have no vehicle while compared to the LGA average of 9% and NSW average of 12%.

Analysing modal split of trips to work illustrates a very high car dependency of 79%, even if somewhat lower than the LGA average of 94%. The difference of 15% is result of higher walking and train use rates.

The majority of the residents of Maitland the local government area (LGA) work outside the LGA, in part as a consequence of a net deficit of 29% of available jobs against existing workforce. Net outbound travel for work occurs towards Newcastle (-4,250 jobs) and Singleton (-1,100 jobs). The trend is towards an increase of this deficit, with projections by the Department of Planning indicating a net deficit of -56%.

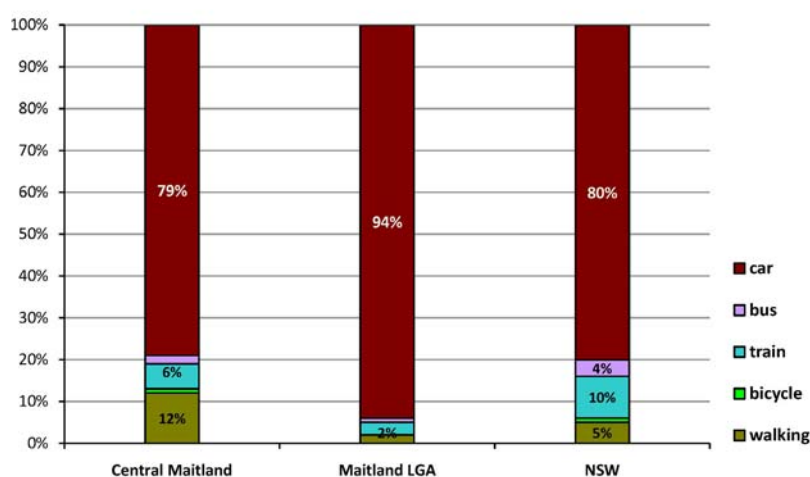


Fig.2.10 Modal split - trips to work (Census 2006)

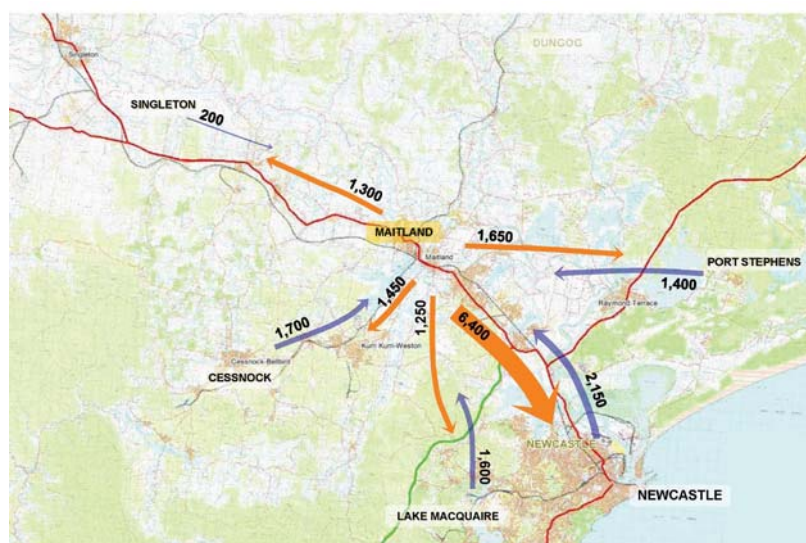


Fig.2.11 Travel to work (Census 2006)

2. BACKGROUND

2.3 Urban context, structure and form

2.3.1 Town structure and morphology

The comparison of Central Maitland's street structure with other regional cities in NSW reveal the City's distinct 'organic' morphology. Whereas the other cities were planned by the colonial surveyor general, Central Maitland was shaped by laissez-fair private development.

Compared to other large regional City Centres of Dubbo, Wagga Wagga and Bathurst which all share formal large grided City structures, Maitland is fine-grained and informal. This is a characteristic it shares with only the very oldest urban areas in Australia including the northern area of Sydney's CBD, East Balmain and Battery Point in Hobart.

The advantages of Central Maitland's distinctive street pattern are:

- Human scaled streets;
- Complex visual experience at walking speed;
- Rich diversity of lot sizes, shapes and orientation;
- Efficient land use (82% of land is private);
- A sensible relationship with the natural environment, and
- Through its uniqueness it represents a strong source for local identity.

The main challenge posed by this historic street structure is the constraints imposed to motor vehicle accessibility.

The town was not built for car usage and its streets cannot comfortably accommodate high-speed traffic. The Ken Tubman Drive intervention from the early 1980s aimed to improve vehicle accessibility, however it also created a distortion in the centre of the town, generating developments which are not pedestrian oriented and are intrusive in the heritage context.

Strategies to improve accessibility without compromising the values of similar historic towns have been implemented successfully in numerous European cities.

These include:

- Provision of consolidated public car parking structures located at the gateways of the town core;
- Provision of good public transport access (train and tram), and
- Provision of comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle only street networks.



Central Maitland



Dubbo



Wagga Wagga



Bathurst

Fig. 2.12 Comparative street networks, NSW regional cities.



Fig.2.13 Maitland 1830s map (Source: NSW State library)



Fig.2.14 Maitland 1846 map (Source: NSW State library)



Fig.2.15 Maitland 1912 map (Source: the NSW State library)

The primary street pattern of Central Maitland has been shaped along early tracks and responds to the natural features. High Street follows a course between two bends in the Hunter River, generally along higher ground. The river has been subsequently diverted to bypass Horseshoe Bend. The eastern point where the river and street once came together is the location of the civic precinct.

The western point of proximity, where the Heritage Mall is located today, formed a commercial centre. It was populated with warehouses and wharves to serve the river punts and barges. This period of river trade in the mid-late 1800's saw Maitland grow to become the second largest town in New South Wales.

Elgin Street connects this commercial centre toward the south along the boundary of the original subdivision visible in the 1830's map. The pattern of subdivision in the 1830s has left a clear imprint in the existing street network. At this time Horseshoe Bend was subdivided into large regular sized allotments and the boundaries of these lots have become the present day streets.

By 1846 the urban structure of Maitland had evolved in an organic manner, stemming from the original location and profile of High St. The subdivision pattern of High Street was much finer in the section between the two river bends, indicating that a higher urban density was developing along High Street. This concentration of separate land owners did not extend beyond High Street however. Land to the rear of these properties remained in consolidated ownership and appears to have been farm land or rural in nature.

By 1912 the extent of subdivision in Central Maitland reflected the industrialised nature of the town, its healthy economy and large resident population. A system of perpendicular streets to the south of High Street has emerged within the irregular, organic street network providing good connections and circulation around and through Central Maitland, particularly for pedestrians.

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.2 Heritage

Central Maitland is very well endowed with buildings and urban structures that represent eras across the past 180 years. The City has substantial and confident buildings from the Georgian, Victorian and Federation periods through to the 20th Century, including excellent examples of commercial, residential and civic buildings. Together they form one of the richest and most complete pictures of Australian architecture.

A reconciliation of the important urban fabric with the current LEP Heritage Schedule reveals that despite a blanket conservation zone applying across the study area, surprisingly few individual elements are actually listed. As part of the project a review of the whole of the central area was undertaken by the project team. It indicated that there are many more individual structures deserving further investigation and potential listing. The other structures and neighbourhoods identified provide an important contributory role in establishing a coherent urban character. These features merit appropriate planning control.

Structures that were assessed as having negative or intrusive effect within the urban landscape represent sites that could have been handled in a much more considered way and made a positive contribution to the built environment of Central Maitland. It is considered that a more detailed and thorough assessment of heritage values in Central Maitland is overdue, as the previous one was carried out in 1987.

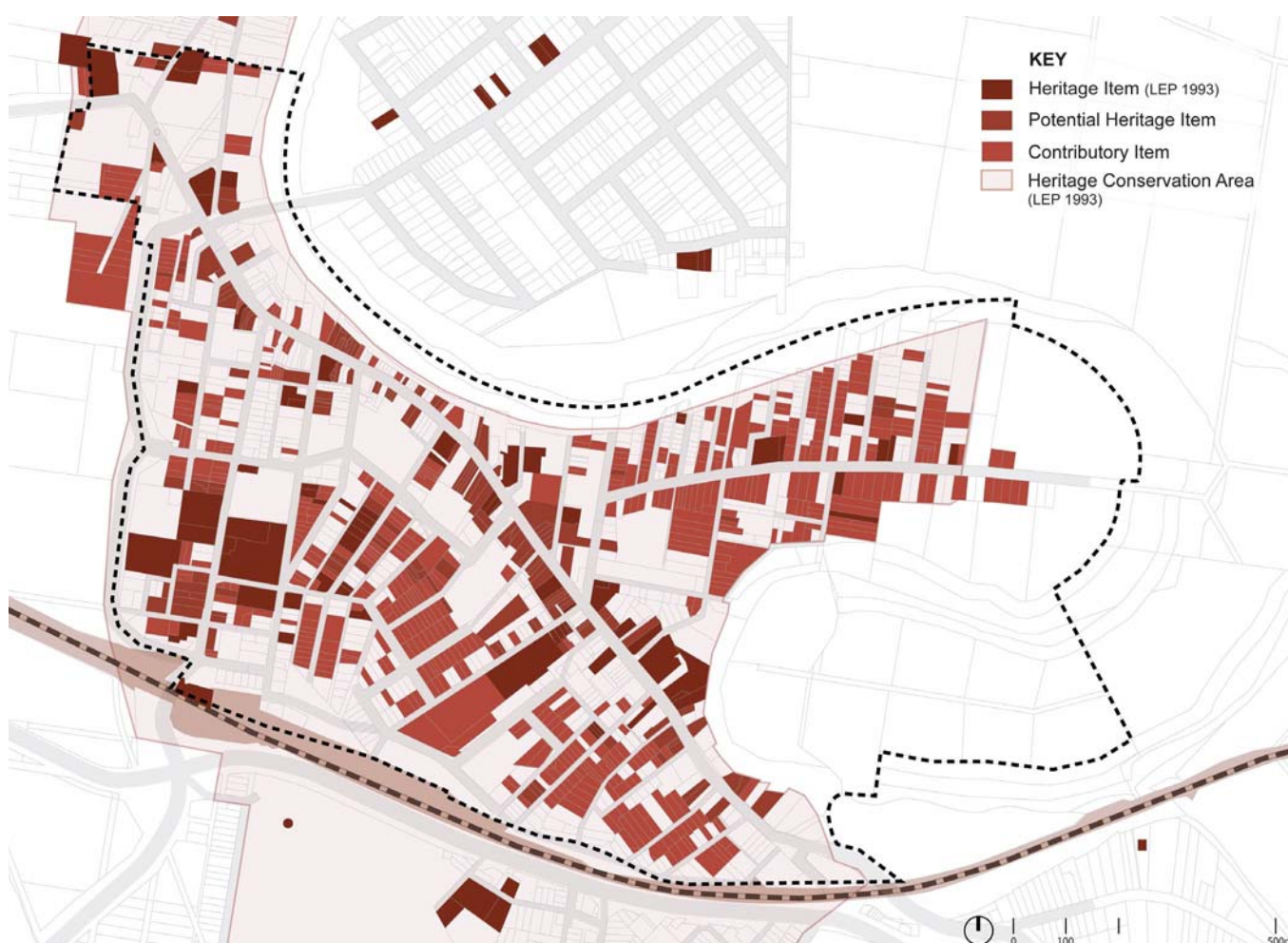


Figure 2.16 Assessment of heritage value



The following brief descriptions relate to significant buildings in Maitland that have long been acknowledged as underpinning the city's considerable historic, aesthetic and associative significance. Most of these examples are located along, or in close proximity to, two of Maitland's earliest streets (High and Church Streets). Of course the few buildings represented here are only a small sample of the considerable number of outstanding examples of the built environment in the Central Maitland area worthy of detailed descriptions. As well as other fine public buildings there are many important 19th and early 20th century commercial and domestic buildings.

Beyond the merit of individual buildings are important streetscape groups and whole blocks of harmonious built elements. Further items of cultural significance include the early street network throughout the city, early residential areas such as Horseshoe Bend, the 1850s railway corridor, the existing and earlier courses of the Hunter River and the adjoining agricultural lands that provide part of the traditional rural setting for the city. Collectively these places substantially contribute to Maitland's unique townscape character and its justified position as one of Australia's notable historic urban areas.



- *Maitland Post Office (1881, 1900 addition)*

The current Post Office building was designed by the Colonial Architect's Office under James Barnet and completed in 1881. The arcaded two-storey post office of rendered brick is typical of Barnet's Italianate style for important public buildings and features apertures with heavily moulded arched lintels and quoins expressed by grooved mock ashlar jointing. The facade is bisected horizontally by a deeply moulded string course. Its corner clock tower forms a vital part of the composition and remains one of the city's important urban reference points.

With its visually prominent position the Post Office fulfils a civic role, reinforcing the importance of High Street. Unfortunately this model has not been emulated by the design of the commercial building adjacent.



- *Maitland Town Hall 1888-90*

Another major public building on High Street is the Town Hall. Its important civic function is reinforced by its strong and imposing symmetrical composition featuring another of Maitland's landmark towers. The hall is regarded as one of the best examples of 1880s 'boom period' of civic architecture within the region and is notable for its continuing use as a council chamber and community meeting place maintaining its original functions for over 120 years.

The building provides an important townscape element within Central Maitland. The steps of Maitland Town Hall are noted as the place where Edmund Barton, Australia's first Prime Minister, opened his campaign in January 1901.

2. BACKGROUND

- *Maitland Regional Art Gallery (former Hunter Institute of Technology, opened 1910)*

Further to the southeast, and on the opposite side of High Street, is the magnificent Maitland Regional Art Gallery. This is another impressive public building currently with major additions under construction to augment gallery space and facilities. The original building served as the Maitland Technical College and was designed by Government Architect WL Vernon in 1908. The scope of the original design was reduced due to budgetary constraints. Despite this, the building was still described as one of the Department's most ornate. It featured a fine façade to High Street and a cantilevered marble staircase.



- *ANZ Bank (former Bank of Australasia, 1869)*

A fine representative of Maitland's various commercial buildings is the substantial ANZ Bank at the corner of High Street and Elgin Streets. It has been described as a rare colonial example of a Byzantine design featuring round-headed windows and a two-storey arcaded verandah that follows the curve of the corner into Elgin Street. This element provides another excellent example of a building that beautifully addresses its prominent corner location and makes a distinguished contribution to the cityscape context.



- *Maitland Courthouse (1893-95)*

This landmark complex represents an outstanding and elegant example of first NSW Government Architect Walter Liberty Vernon's work and an early departure from the typical Italianate stucco style of James Barnet, his Colonial Architect predecessor. Positioned at an important and prominent townscape location (at the junction of High Street and Sempill Street), it is now being obscured by maturing trees planted more recently around its forecourt.

High quality materials and detailing are features of the complex and include fine brickwork, sandstone coursework, wrought ironwork, slate roof cladding and a central clock tower to its principal elevation. The courtroom interior features the heavily moulded dark timber bench, canopy, jury box and fittings typical of the late Victorian period.





- *St John's (1844-46)*

Located off High Street, but maintaining a locally prominent profile within Central Maitland is the Catholic cathedral of St John's and its associated buildings. Together with the adjacent St Peter's school campus the ecclesiastical buildings form part of a large institutional/educational enclave from High Street to the Hunter river levee bank. The complex is one of the most important built groups in the region, it includes the 1840s cathedral building associated with Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis, the former 1855 Presbyterian manse designed by JW and WJ Pender and the Pender-designed Bishop's residence of 1883.

St John's Church, Maitland opened in 1846 and was taken by Bishop James Murray as his cathedral in 1866 and so became the Cathedral of the Diocese of Maitland. By 1933 the Catholic Hall was opened as the Pro-Cathedral and St John's officially closed. However the Pro-Cathedral suffered serious damage from the 1989 earthquake and was closed. Discussions were then held and it was decided to convert the Pro-Cathedral to its former use as a hall and to re-open St John's as a Chapel for the Central Maitland area.



- *Former Methodist church 1858*

Opposite the Catholic school site, and also occupying a very prominent streetscape location, is the current Uniting Church. Built to architect John Wright's design, it survives where its associated corner buildings – including the manse – were removed with the widening of the former Charles Street to become Ken Tubman Drive. The large Sunday School Hall building also remains behind the church.



- *Repertory Playhouse (1850s)*

A Congregational Church was established in Maitland in the 1850s at the corner of High and James Streets. After the severe flooding of the 1950s the church was relocated to Rutherford in 1963.

With the vacancy of the church building the Maitland Repertory Society began occupation using it as its headquarters.

2. BACKGROUND

- Maitland Railway Station (mainly 1880s)*

Maitland Railway Station is located at the southern most end of Church Street. The line arrived at East Maitland in 1857 and reached West Maitland the following year.

The original station – a simple, symmetrical brick building with rendered gables – was further east. The current Italianate-style building dates from about 1880. It features fine brickwork, rendered quoins and parapet and round headed windows.



- Brough House and Grossmann House (Early 1870s)*

These two fine Victorian Regency townhouses were built at the same time by Samuel Owens and Isaac Beckett. Owens and Beckett grew up together in Sheffield, England and established a large general business in Maitland's High St in 1838. Both homes were designed by architect William White who also supervised their construction. They feature cedar joinery, sandstone quoins, two-storey verandahs with Doric columns below and, above, intricate cast-iron lacework, shuttered windows and French doors.

In 1892, the former Department of Public Instruction resumed Grossmann House (formerly known as Entcliffe) to serve as Maitland Girls' High School, one of the first four State-sponsored high schools in NSW. In 1918, the Department of Education purchased Brough House to serve as a boarding home for the students.

By 1963, the school era had ended at both house and, by the mid-1960s, the NSW Education Department had given permissive occupancy of both residences to the National Trust of Australia (NSW). While Grossmann House became a Museum, Brough House became the home of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery for over 20 years. When the gallery moved in 2003, Brough House was used to display National Trust travelling exhibitions and as a venue for the charity's many events.

Grossmann House was opened to the public in 1966, after extensive restoration work, as a house museum. This was the second house museum established by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and now reflects Beckett's period of occupancy and is furnished as a mid-Victorian gentleman's townhouse.





- *St Mary The Virgin (Opened 1867)*

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin and its associated St Mary's Rectory (1880-81) dominates the western side of Church Street.

The sandstone church is regarded as an excellent example of Edmund Thomas Blacket's mastery of Decorative Gothic style and took seven years to build being overseen by J. Horbury Hunt.

While the plan of this building is typical of an 1850s NSW church, Blacket gave it a dramatic composition by positioning the tower at a corner rather than a central location. The building's other notable quality is its careful attention to detail – particularly evident in the window tracery for which Blacket worked out numerous head variations.

Blacket also designed the furnishings such as the complementary tracery panels of the pulpit and reading desk. The bell is from Sydney's St Andrew's Cathedral.

The upper tower and precipitous spire were added in 1885-86 (to an 1883 design by Blacket Brothers) by the local monumental mason Thomas Browne.

- *Former Synagogue (1879)*

The former synagogue was one of only three to be found outside the Sydney area in nineteenth century New South Wales - the others were at Broken Hill and Newcastle. Maitland's small Jewish community, which had existed from the 1830s, built the synagogue on the corner of Church Street and Banfield Street (now part of Ken Tubman Drive) where a foundation stone was laid on 24 February 1879.

The building's architect was John Wiltshire Pender, who designed many other Maitland buildings including 'Cintra', built for BW Levy in 1878.

By the 1950s it is thought that the building was used as a repair shop. After the Maitland Credit Union purchased and restored the building for use as offices, a commemorative plaque was dedicated by Rabbi Raymond Apple, President of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, in 1987.



2. BACKGROUND

2.3.3 Flooding

Almost the entire study area of Central Maitland is flood liable and has a long history of destructive flood events.

During 1 in 50 year flood events the core of the City is above the flood level with the floodplain to the west inundating and some properties on the far west of the study area at risk of flooding. During 1 in 100 year event however, almost the entire urban area of Central Maitland and Horseshoe Bend is likely to be inundated. Only a small area of approximately 5 blocks on High Street, Church and Elgin Streets located on land 14m above water level are likely to escape the impact of flood waters. Land to the north of the Hunter River is not considered at risk of flooding.

Flood mitigation measures, flood warning systems, building design and construction technology and evacuation processes are all much improved since the devastating flood of 1955. As such it is considered that it is time to reverse the trend of abandoning the historic and attractive Centre of Maitland in favour of renewal and activation.

The essential characteristics that make this change in direction possible are that in the event of the waters flood waters in the city centre tend not to be fast moving rather they are generally slow moving although deep in some places. Furthermore the large size of the river catchment means there tends to be long warning period of impending flood events (*Ref. section 4.1*).

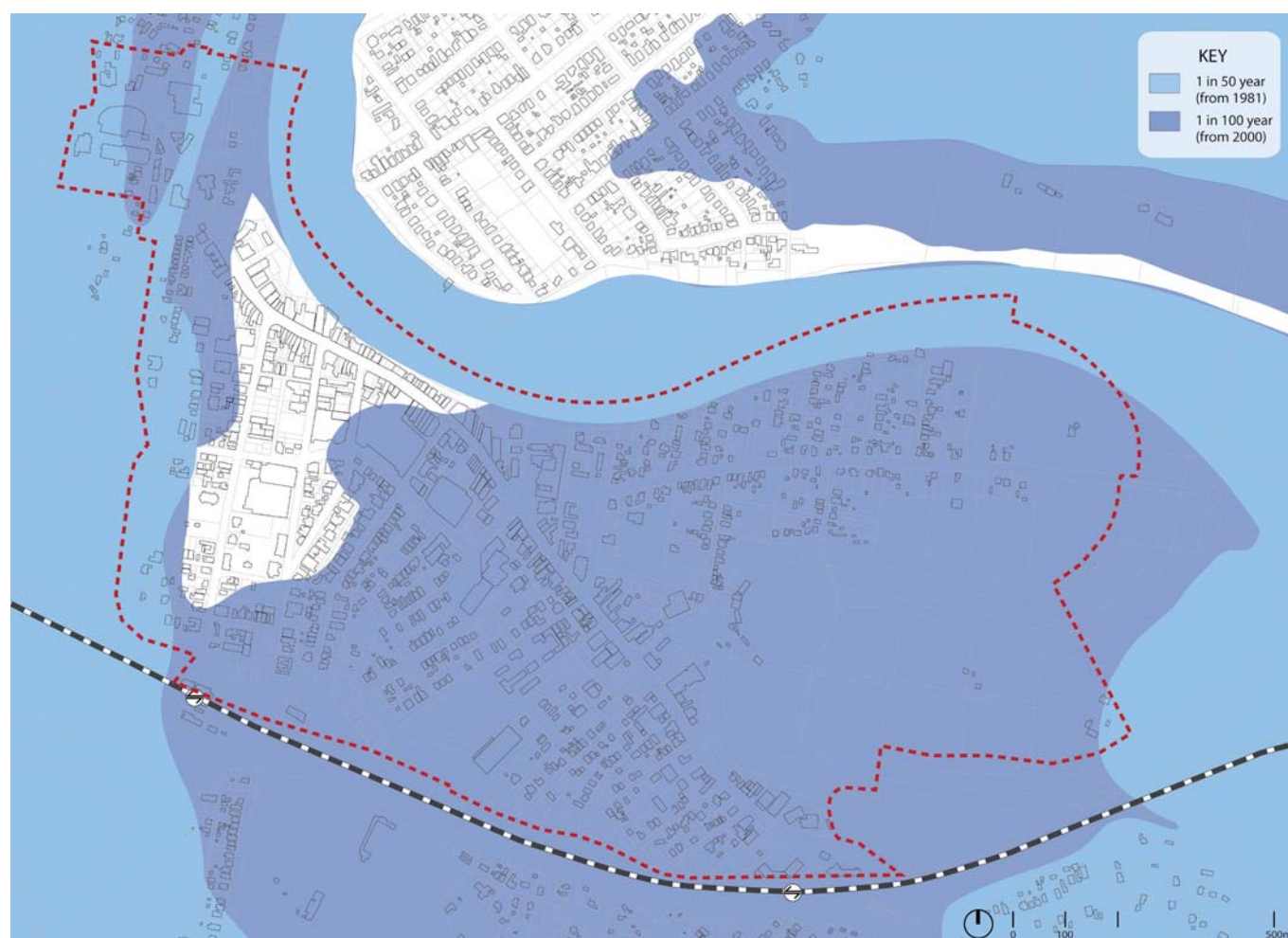


Figure 2.17 Flood liable land



2.3.4 Topography



Figure 2.18 Aerial photograph of the 1955 flood looking south from above the River. (Source: 'The Herald'.)

Maitland city is sited on predominantly flat, low lying land (6 to 8m above water level), as such it is prone to flooding in extreme events.

A slight ridge 12m above water level runs in a north-south direction meeting the Hunter River to the east of the Belmore Bridge, and running along Elgin St.

An area of land surrounding this ridge (bound by St Andrews Street to the west, Bourke Street to the east, Steam Street to the south and the River to the north) is located 10m above water level offering some relief from flooding risk. The low lying floodway can be clearly seen to the west of the study area.

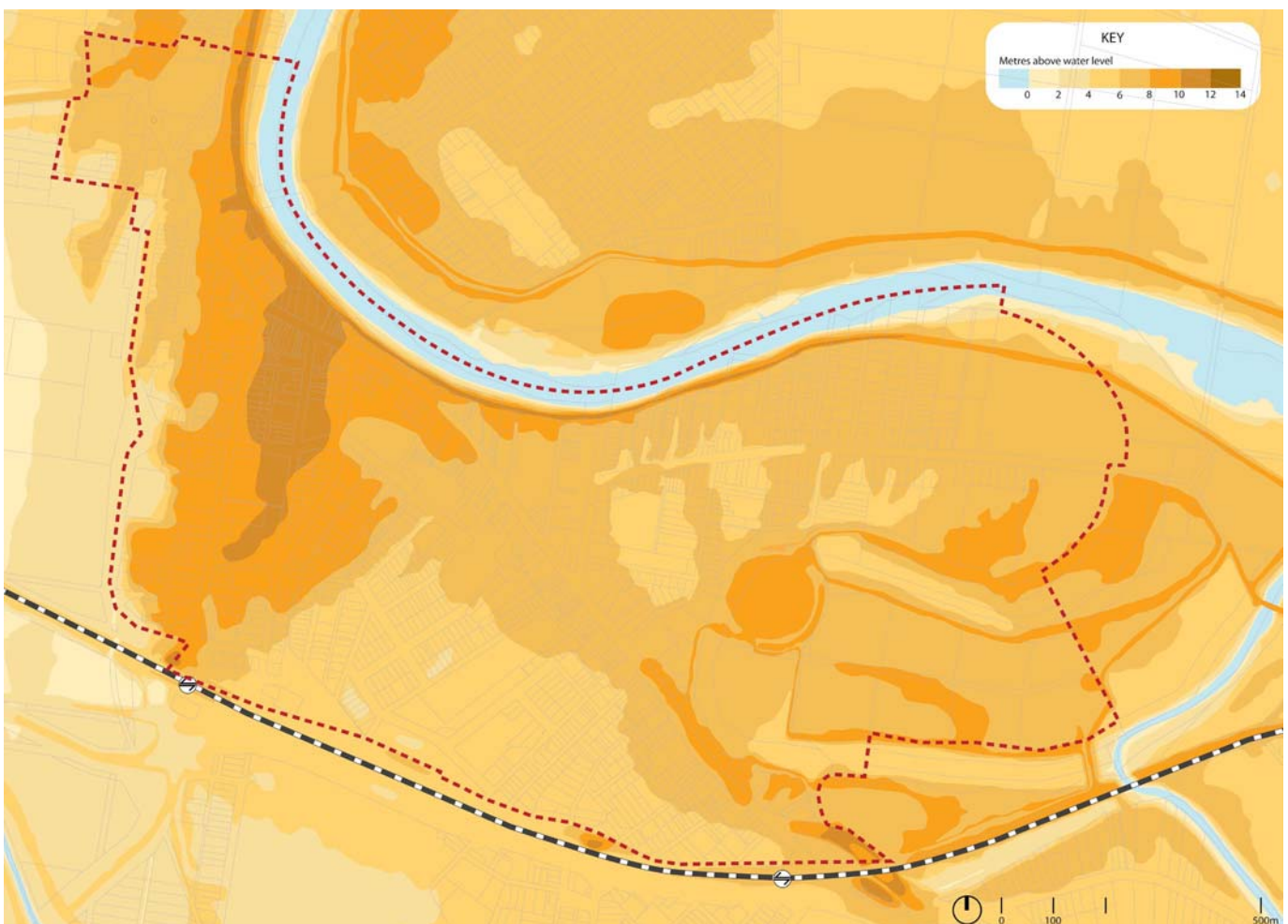


Figure 2.19 Topographic map of Maitland

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.5 Figure-ground relationship

The contrast of building footprints against the ground plain of the study area demonstrates the primacy of High Street with its consistent frontage with a fine grained development pattern.

There is a high proportion of undeveloped land and vacant lots in the study area, particularly to the west of Elgin Street, south of High Street and in Horseshoe Bend. Amalgamated sites with large floor plate buildings occur near Ken Tubman Drive and at the connection of High Street with the Long Bridge. These building footprints are a dramatic departure from traditional forms and scale of the subdivision pattern of Maitland.



Figure 2.20 Existing figure ground relationship



2.3.6 Building heights

Building heights in Central Maitland are very homogenous and could be described as low - medium. This is the legacy of the intact heritage building fabric which are between one and three storeys tall, and due to the relatively low level of development that has occurred in the 20th century, preserving the original skyline and main street profile of High Street.

It should be noted that although buildings in Figure 2.21 have been identified as between one and three storeys tall, the ceiling to floor height of Victorian buildings were much greater than contemporary ceiling to floor heights. In addition to this many of the commercial and civic buildings in the City have decorative parapets which give an extra sense of height. As such it will be useful to provide a height limit in meters as well as an indication of the number of storeys when Council prepares new planning instrument controls addressing this issue.

A number of spires and towers appear on the Maitland City profile, these are dotted along High Street and Church Street. They are associated with churches, civic buildings and have heritage significance; they often act as markers on the landscape, assisting orientation within the City.



Figure 2.21 Existing building heights

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.7 Land Uses

The core of the City Centre is devoted to 'private commercial' land uses (shown in blue), this includes shops, offices and businesses. These land uses are focused along the entire length of High Street where they are typically one block deep, and along Church Street which runs perpendicular to High Street.

The pattern of land use also reveals concentrations of land that is used for 'public uses' (shown in red), such as schools, government offices and agencies, cultural and civic uses. Three main areas of concentration are evident: at the intersection of High and Hunter Streets; at the southern end of Church Street; and where the street meets the Belmore Bridge and the Long Bridge.

Residential land uses make up the fringe areas of the City (shown in beige), Horseshoe Bend and the area south east of Ken Tubman Drive and south east of Rose Street are almost exclusively residential. These single use zones do not require small village shops (as seen at Lorn) as they are all within a short walk of services and facilities.

The west of Church Street is a diverse area that contains residential land interspersed with retail, business and public land uses.



Figure 2.22 Existing land uses



2.3.8 Land Use Zones

The land use zones defined by the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 1993 reflect to some extent the pattern of land use seen in Figure 2.23. However, some dysfunctions can be observed: many 'vacant lots' occur in areas that are zoned as 2(b) Flood Liabile Residential and there are few examples of shop-top housing in 3(a) and 3(b) zones. The existing land uses represent a relatively old doctrine of land use planning (1930-70s) seen today as particularly dysfunctional for a town centre. The preparation of the Maitland LEP 2011 provides a great opportunity to correct these issues with the implementation of more permissive land use definitions and which recognises the value of complexity in an urban environment.

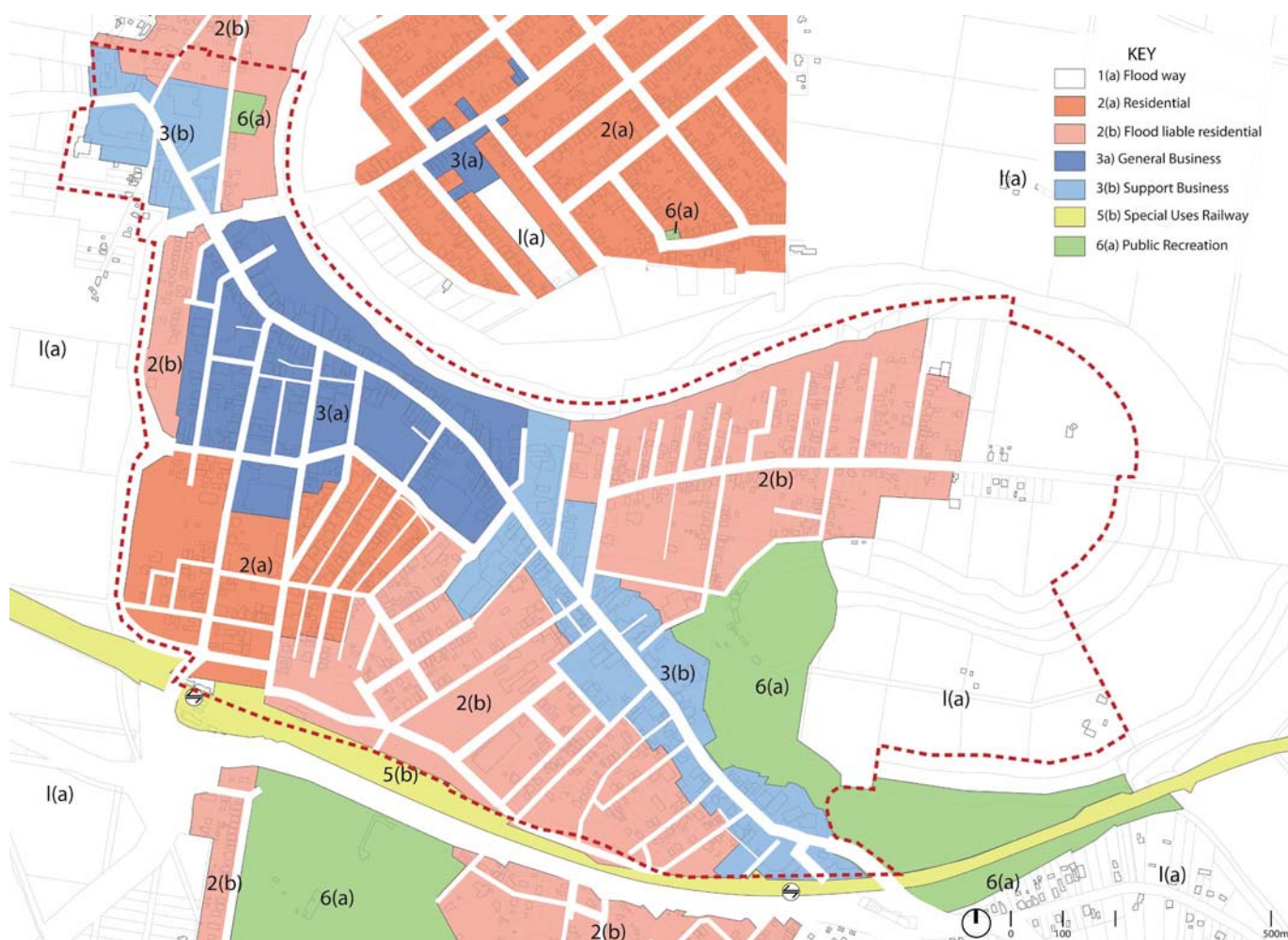


Figure 2.23 Existing land use zoning

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.9 Open space

Large areas of public open space for recreation are located on the fringes of the town centre. There is no established network of green open space in or through the centre of Maitland.

A linear network of open space runs along the northern edge of the railway line and Ken Tubman Drive to the west of the study area, adjacent to the floodway.

Along the Southern edge lies a series of accessible spaces, but do not visually or formally connect together as a whole.

The analysis also shows large areas of open space fronting the Hunter River but these offer limited recreation opportunities due to the steep slope. This land, being outside the levee is flood liable.

The presence of open farmland in the floodway around the city centre give the distinct impression of a compact town in a rural setting. This pattern was common in historic times and still exist in many European towns. It distinguishes Maitland from other Australian towns and cities.



Figure 2.24 Existing open space typologies



2.3.10 Pedestrian permeability

Pedestrian permeability in Central Maitland is assisted by the fine grained street network that travels north-south connecting High Street and residential areas.

There are large areas of the public domain within the study area. Places that are particularly pedestrian oriented (with paved footpaths) are not as extensive however and are restricted to the Heritage Mall, the River Walk, Church Street, High Street and to sections of Elgin and Bulwer Streets.

Many missing links have been identified (shown in orange), which are necessary to improve and promote access and movement through the study area. Increased pedestrian permeability will achieve better connections between residential areas and retail/office areas of the City, improve links to public transport and enliven the public domain.

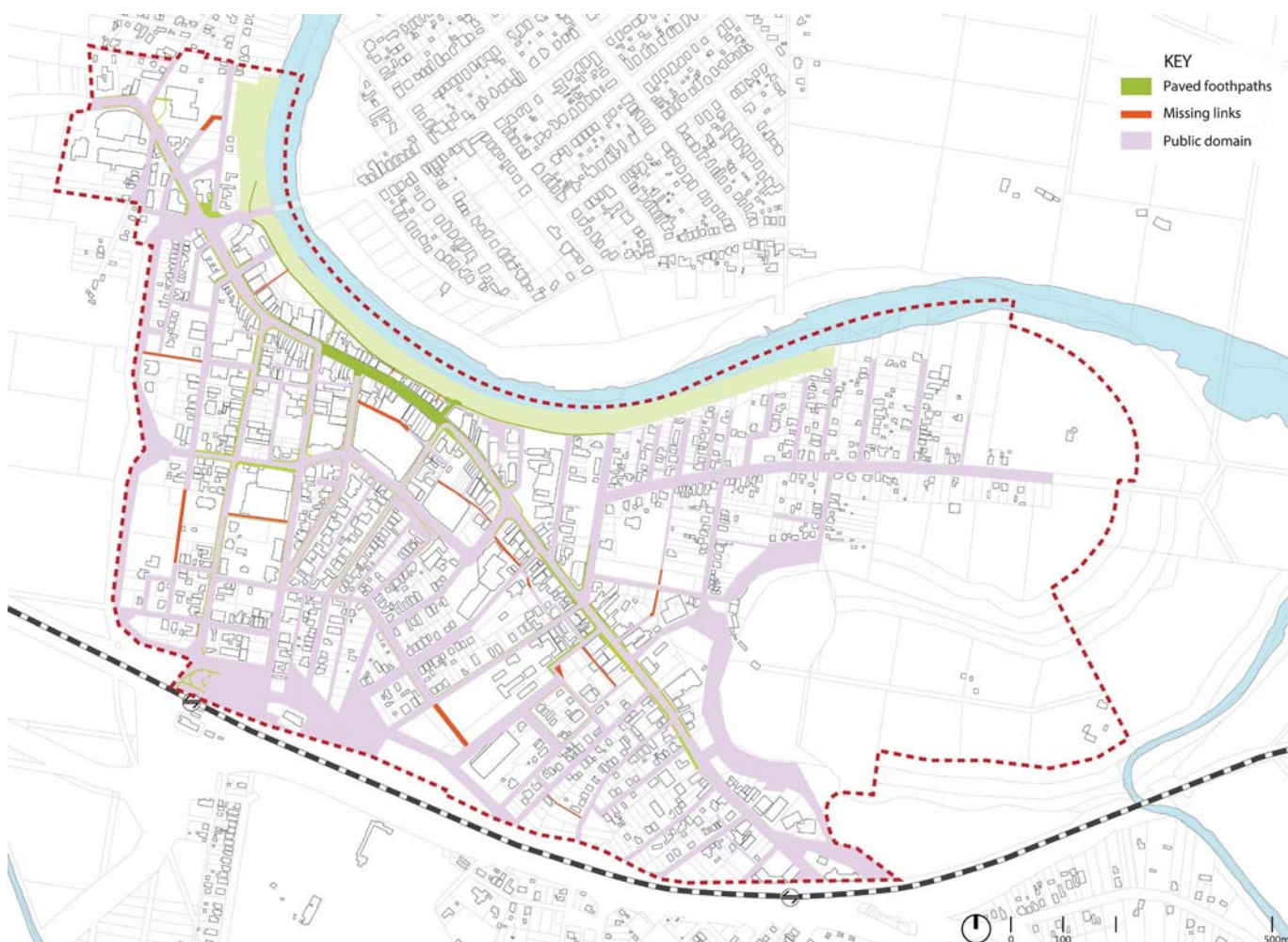


Figure 2.25 Existing pedestrian permeability

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.11 Access and circulation

The Integrated Land Use and Transport Study (ILUTS) Report prepared by URaP TTW considers that Ken Tubman Drive and Allan Walsh Drive on the west of the study area are sub arterial roads; High Street (to the beginning of the pedestrian mall) and Ken Tubman Drive (to the south of High Street) are collector roads; and Church Street and Elgin Street are major local roads.

The ILUTS report states that Central Maitland is subject to a high level of traffic in both east-west and north-south directions. The creation of the Heritage Mall in the centre of High Street and the organic street network of central Maitland have required changes to vehicular access and circulation such as 'no through roads' and 'one way streets'.

There are also limited connections between the CBD and the residential areas south of Ken Tubman Drive. This has major impact on way-finding and orientation in the City with traffic directed away from High Street through low quality public domain and built environment, detracting from the City's arrival, character and experience.



Figure 2.26 Access and circulation



2.3.12 Car parking

At present large areas of Central Maitland are used for surface car-parking, representing an under use of land, detracting from the character and vitality of the town and the public domain. 136 sites in the study area are vacant or accommodate surface car parks. They present inactive and alienating spaces to the street and do not contribute active frontages to the town centre.

At present, a total of 3,902 car parking spaces are provided in Central Maitland town centre. The utility rate for on-street car parking is 79% and off-street car parking has a utility rate of 60 - 94%. A number of large privately operated car parks experience a low utility rate: the cinema complex has a utility rate of 40% on average; Pender Place operates at 33% capacity and K-Mart at approximately 45% (Source: *Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy, URaP/TTW, 2008*).

The following general observations can be made about parking activity in Central Maitland:

- There is high demand for car parking (both on and off street).
- Demand for car parking is higher in the north of the Church Street precinct and the west of the Ken Tubman Drive precinct.
- Currently the area operates at near capacity in terms of parking requirements.
- Demand for parking is higher in close proximity to destinations such as High Street shops and offices.



Figure 2.27 Existing car parks

2. BACKGROUND

2.3.13 Vacant lots and infill potential

Over 34% of the land in central Maitland has infill potential. The diagram below illustrates that vacant lots account for 14% of land in Central Maitland. Most vacant lots occur in the 2(b) – Flood liable residential land use zone. Title searches on RP Data show that many of these vacant lots are under private ownership and that they are usually attached to an existing residential dwelling. This analysis brings into clear focus the impact that 50 years of conservative flooding and planning controls have had on the density and vitality of residential areas in the City.

Other areas of potential infill are surface car parks which make up 6% of the land in Central Maitland. The analysis diagram reveals that there are 70 surface car parks in total. These are focused around Church and High Streets in the City where retail and commercial land uses require visitor and customer parking.

Sites deemed to have ‘intrusive character’ account for 14% of the land in central Maitland. These sites are either large footprint buildings (developed on consolidated lots) or areas of land that accommodate no buildings. Sites with ‘intrusive character’ detract from the public domain and the character of Maitland.



Figure 2.28 Vacant lots and infill potential



2.3.14 Land ownership

Maitland Council is the major landowner of a large number of sites in the Railway Precinct, High Street Precinct and East Central Precinct. Most of these lots are either unutilised or used at low intensity (i.e. surface car park), Churches (Anglican, Catholic) represent the second major landowner in Central Maitland. Significant areas of land owned by churches are vacant or used as surface car parking. The third major group of landowners are state departments (Education, Police, etc.).

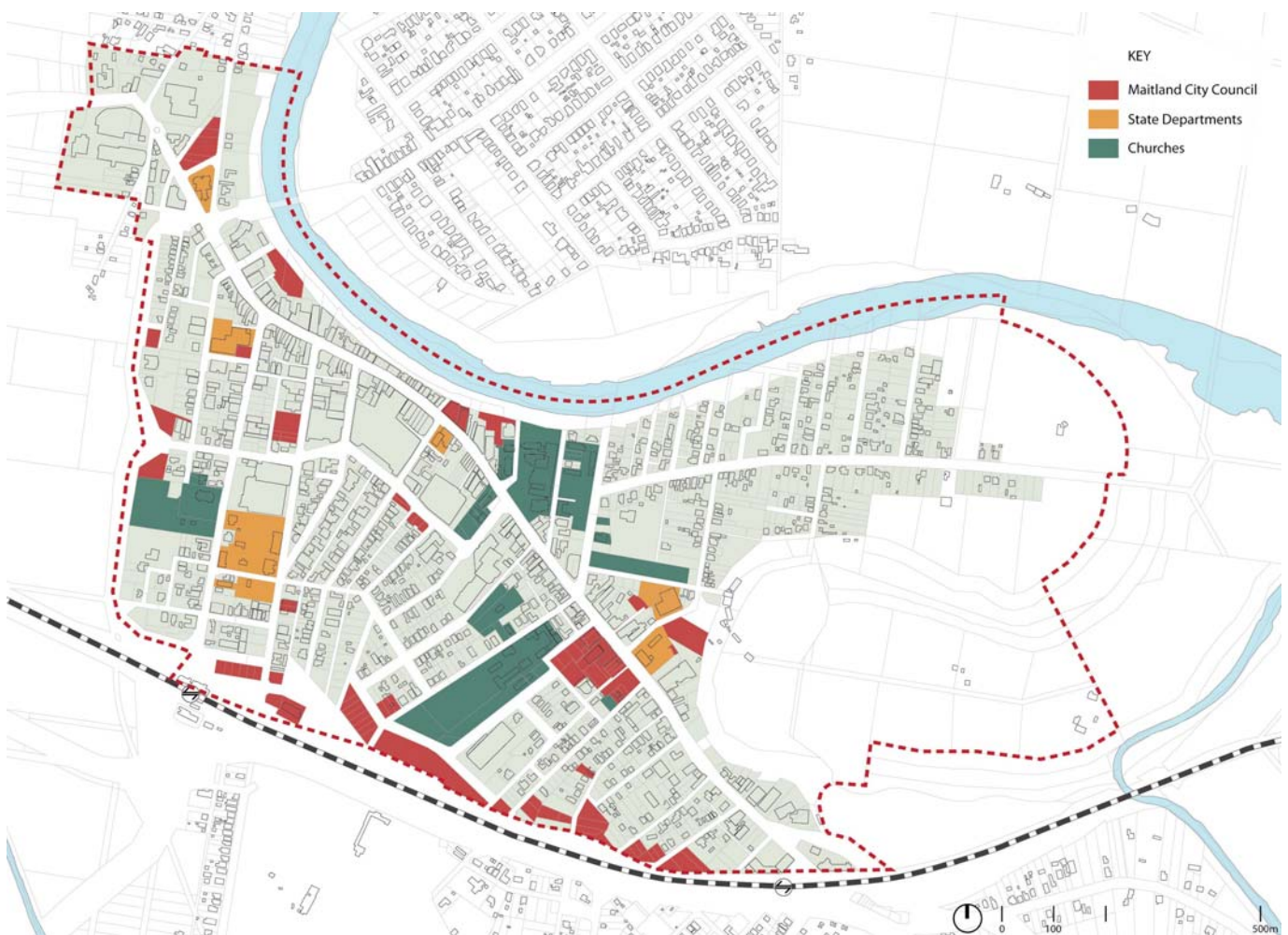


Figure 2.29 Land ownership

2. BACKGROUND



3 A VISION FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

The vision for Central Maitland builds on the City's strength as a long standing regional civic and commercial centre, a place of historical importance on the shore of the Hunter River, a focal point for learning, artistic and cultural expression. All of these attributes create a foundation to create a diverse, vibrant community life in Central Maitland and reinforce its role as the Major Regional Centre, second only to Newcastle.

A place for a Vibrant Community and Public Life

Central Maitland will be an attractive and lively place, valued and enjoyed by residents, workers and visitors. Central Maitland will be a beacon in the wider region as to how the design of high quality public spaces and innovative architectural outcomes can create an interesting mix of heritage character and City living.

Streets should be attractive and lively places that prioritise pedestrians, providing places for conversation, impromptu meetings and seating to quietly watch the world go by. The improved public domain will be supported by a variety of adaptable outdoor spaces for community gathering, events and festivities that encourage people to participate in community life. The development of a thriving entertainment and café/restaurant precinct within Central Maitland will create opportunities for people to come together and contribute to a flourishing nighttime economy, contributing to the feeling of safety for people in the City centre.

A place that Celebrates Its Significant Historic Value

The strong heritage character of Central Maitland will be protected, reused and adapted to contribute to a vibrant 21st century City. The existing concentration of significant heritage buildings, heritage building fabric and City structure will contribute to and reinforce the unique character of Central Maitland. The historical value of Maitland and the stories expressed through the built environment will be enhanced and protected with adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for residential, cultural, educational, commercial and tourism uses. Valuing the historical character of Maitland aims to create pathways to the community's past, preserving local knowledge and embracing what will be the heritage of the future.

The indigenous history of Maitland should be tangible to visitors and locals of Maitland. The original inhabitants of the Maitland area residing in the Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council boundaries are the people of the Wonnarua Nation "*People of the mountains and the plains*". Early European observations of the region detail how the indigenous communities lived along the Hunter River. The river was the focus for Aboriginal life with canoes being the common means of transport and the fish a staple food source'.

A place that is a Liveable Neighbourhood

A residential led regeneration will increase the housing stock within Central Maitland with a particular focus on the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and infill of the many vacant lots in the City centre. New residents will enjoy access to a diverse range of shops, services and community lifestyle. They will critically provide increased passive surveillance and custodianship of public spaces, streets and recreation facilities.

Renewal of the resident population in Maitland will assist in reducing the need to develop new housing and servicing to other more isolated greenfield areas. This sustainable approach to population growth will more efficiently utilise existing infrastructure and resources. Bringing residents back into Central Maitland will increase the customer and employment base to improve the vitality of the commercial and service environment.

A place for Learning and Artistic Expression

An arts and cultural renaissance in Maitland has already begun and will continue to be strengthened, contributing to the vibrant community life, a diverse local economy and the sustainable growth of Maitland. The Maitland Regional Art Gallery is a leader for artistic expression within the Lower Hunter Region and is a catalyst for a burgeoning arts and cultural environment in Central Maitland. Affordable rents, reuse of existing heritage buildings and the infill of vacant sites can accommodate artist studios, galleries, artist run spaces and workshops helping to regenerate and support the local economy, cultural landscape and the Maitland identity by embracing the possibilities, the creative and the vernacular.

Strengthening the role of Central Maitland as a learning city creates an atmosphere for lifelong learning and encouraging interaction of ideas and experiences. The concentration of schools, the library, recreational facilities, the art gallery and civic functions all in Central Maitland provide an important bond between learning and participation for all students, whether they are young or old. It encourages the creation of new opportunities for learning, inspiring ideas through discussion, creative expression and cultural appreciation. In particular, trade and artisan apprenticeships will prosper with the encouragement of a creative industry environment and contribute to growing cultural tourism for Maitland.

A place with a Thriving and Diverse Economy

Central Maitland will reaffirm its position in the Lower Hunter Region by strengthening the existing range of living, commercial, cultural and entertainment choices for residents, workers and visitors. Creating opportunities for a diverse local economy will ensure that Maitland continues to prosper and grow, reinforcing its role as a 'Regional Centre' in the Lower Hunter, second only to Newcastle in terms of size and profile.

Central Maitland will accommodate 'anchor' retail functions and support smaller secondary retail such as boutique stores, lifestyle stores, businesses and professional services. The City will offer an exciting range of dining choices as well as convenient retail options catering to the needs of the residential community. Civic and service functions of Central Maitland will remain and grow, reinforcing the established administration, health care, business profile and functions of the City.

Maitland will become a 'must-see' for tourists and day trippers visiting the Hunter Valley region, providing a choice of quality accommodation and dining options, an active nightlife, a contemporary art and cultural scene and a unique heritage landscape and country charm.

An arts and cultural renaissance in Maitland will contribute to the vibrant community life and the diverse economy. Affordable rents, reuse of existing heritage buildings and infill of vacant sites will accommodate artisan studios, galleries and workshops that regenerate the local economy and culture by embracing the unique, the creative and the vernacular.

Strengthening the enduring legacy of Central Maitland as an educational precinct is important with the creation of new colleges and training facilities connecting to existing resources and infrastructure. Trade and artisan apprenticeships will prosper within a creative and cottage industry environment.

A place that is Accessible and Legible

Central Maitland will continue to be well serviced by a connected bus network and a direct train link to Newcastle and the upper Hunter Region.



The compact nature of Central Maitland provides a convenient walking and cycling environment for residents, workers and visitors. Providing a connected network of pleasant pedestrian and cycle links through Central Maitland will assist in decreasing reliance on private vehicle use and ultimately improve the environmental qualities of the area. Legibility and way-finding will be significantly improved with simple changes to the road network.

Living with the risk of flood is a challenge that will be met to achieve the vision of a sustainable, mixed community in Central Maitland. Accepting the likelihood of flood events and planning for them through flood proof design; effective flood risk management techniques and evacuation processes will ensure that the risk and effects are adequately managed.

A place that values and enhances its connection to the Hunter River

The creation of quality open spaces along the Hunter River will provide opportunities for passive recreation and reconnect the river to the advantage of residents, visitors and workers in Central Maitland. By better engaging the banks of the Hunter River, connections between the City and this impressive natural asset will be revealed and a unique and active space for community life and recreation on the river bank will be created.

The redevelopment of riverside properties with dual frontages to address both the river and High Street will improve passive surveillance and create a well integrated pedestrian network. The River Walk will be extended to link between Central Maitland with residential areas at Lorn and Horseshoe Bend and eventually to provide a quality regional recreation trail to Morpeth.



3. A VISION FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

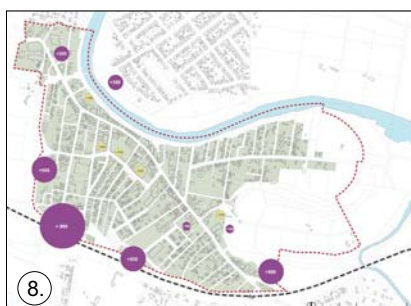
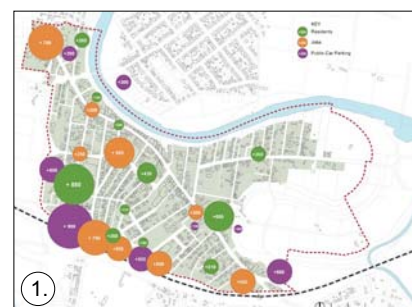


4 STRUCTURE PLAN STRATEGIES

This section presents 10 key strategies to support the vision for Central Maitland. These strategies apply to the whole of the Central Maitland area.

Strategies:

1. Increase the Diversity of Activities in Central Maitland
2. Residential Led Recovery
3. Protect and Promote the Heritage Character in Central Maitland
4. Strengthen Three Distinct Nodes
5. Consolidate Arts, Cultural and Educational Opportunities
6. Consolidate Government Function and Civic Identity
7. Improve Access, Circulation and Way Finding
8. Organise Car Parking
9. Enhance the Connection with the Hunter River
10. Create a Safe and High Quality Public Realm



4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.1 Diversity of Activities

This strategy aims to enhance and strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of Central Maitland through the provision of a variety of activities, including residential, community, commercial and cultural uses. With the increase in diversity and the range of activities, a greater level of social interaction can occur in Central Maitland which offers residents, workers and visitors opportunities to participate in community life.

This represents a new approach towards the creation of a Central Activities District (CAD) rather than a one-dimensional commercial centre which is usually referred to as a Central Business District (CBD). This diversity of uses and the creation of places for interaction and participation of the community is the backbone to achieving a more sustainable and exciting future for Central Maitland.

This strategy is critical to achieving the vision for Central Maitland, particularly to create a place that has a vibrant community life, a liveable neighbourhood, a thriving and diverse economy and a place for learning and artistic expression.

To increase the diversity of activities in Central Maitland to create a more vibrant place, the following actions need to be considered and implemented:

- a.) Consolidation of land use activities which are currently in decline or performing below their potential:
 - Increase the numbers of residents in Central Maitland with the aim to achieving a similar number of residents as there was prior to 1955 through well-designed infill development;
 - Strengthen and consolidate the commercial and business activities in Central Maitland;
 - Strengthen the retail activities in Central Maitland and encourage the development of high order and boutique retail as a point of difference to other centres in Maitland;
 - Improve the streetscape and public domain, particularly along the primary shopping frontage of High Street to provide a pleasant environment for pedestrians.
- b.) Encourage and seek opportunities for a wide range of activities in the public domain:
 - Provision of outdoor dining;
 - Community Festivals and Events (e.g. Aroma Festival, Steamfest etc);
 - Farmers Markets;
 - Art Events and the provision of public arts (both permanent and temporary installations);
 - Provision of child-friendly spaces (e.g. areas for playing, theatre and art spaces); and
 - Public spaces for both active and passive recreation.
- c.) Aim to attract a diverse range of employment generating activities in Central Maitland:
 - Consolidating the existing concentration of activities such as education;
 - Boost the activities associated with tourism;
 - Strengthen the existing links to the Maitland Hospital Health Precinct; and
 - Strengthen the cultural and artistic employment opportunities within Central Maitland.
- d.) Increase the social diversity of people in Central Maitland:
 - Providing a mix of housing types and sizes to cater for a range of people including opportunities for well located affordable housing and accommodation for students and the elderly;
 - Support the existing and new residents with easy access to a range of activities, services and facilities including the provision of convenience shopping options;
 - Develop guidelines to encourage shop-top housing; and
 - Integrate a variety of uses to encourage mixed use development for residential, commercial and retail activities to development.



Key Issues for Consideration

A key issue to be addressed to allow for greater diversity of activities in the city centre is flooding. Strategies for addressing this issue relate to: learning from precedents in other places; planning for and responding to flood events and; design strategies that allow for safe evacuation and mitigating damage in the event of a flood.

Grafton NSW presents an important precedent for developing a planning response for dealing with flood (see appendix B for case study). Many other examples exist around the world including coastal Japanese cities that have developed detailed tsunami and earth quake plans to allow towns and cities to grow in an environment of managed risk of natural disaster.

There are many ways to respond to the risk of flood. It is anticipated that the city will develop an integrated plan for ways to respond to flooding. The plan may include such elements as: an early warning system; households and businesses prepare a 'flood ready plan'; an evacuation plan and a recovery plan. Public education and a special attitude to be taken by all households and businesses within the flood zone will be important elements. Design strategies for flooding relate to infrastructure design & escape routes. Other design elements include building design that incorporates upper level storage; elevated homes 'Queenslander' style; 'Floodable finishes' in lower levels and; buildings to have appropriate structural integrity. Many of these strategies have a long history in Maitland, the structure plan requires they are renewed and integrated to allow the centre to grow.

The large proportion of underutilised land in Central Maitland provides a very significant potential for increasing activity in the town centre, by increasing the number of residents, jobs and attracting more tourists. The diagram below sets out development potential and targeted mix for the city centre. This is expanded in Section 6.1

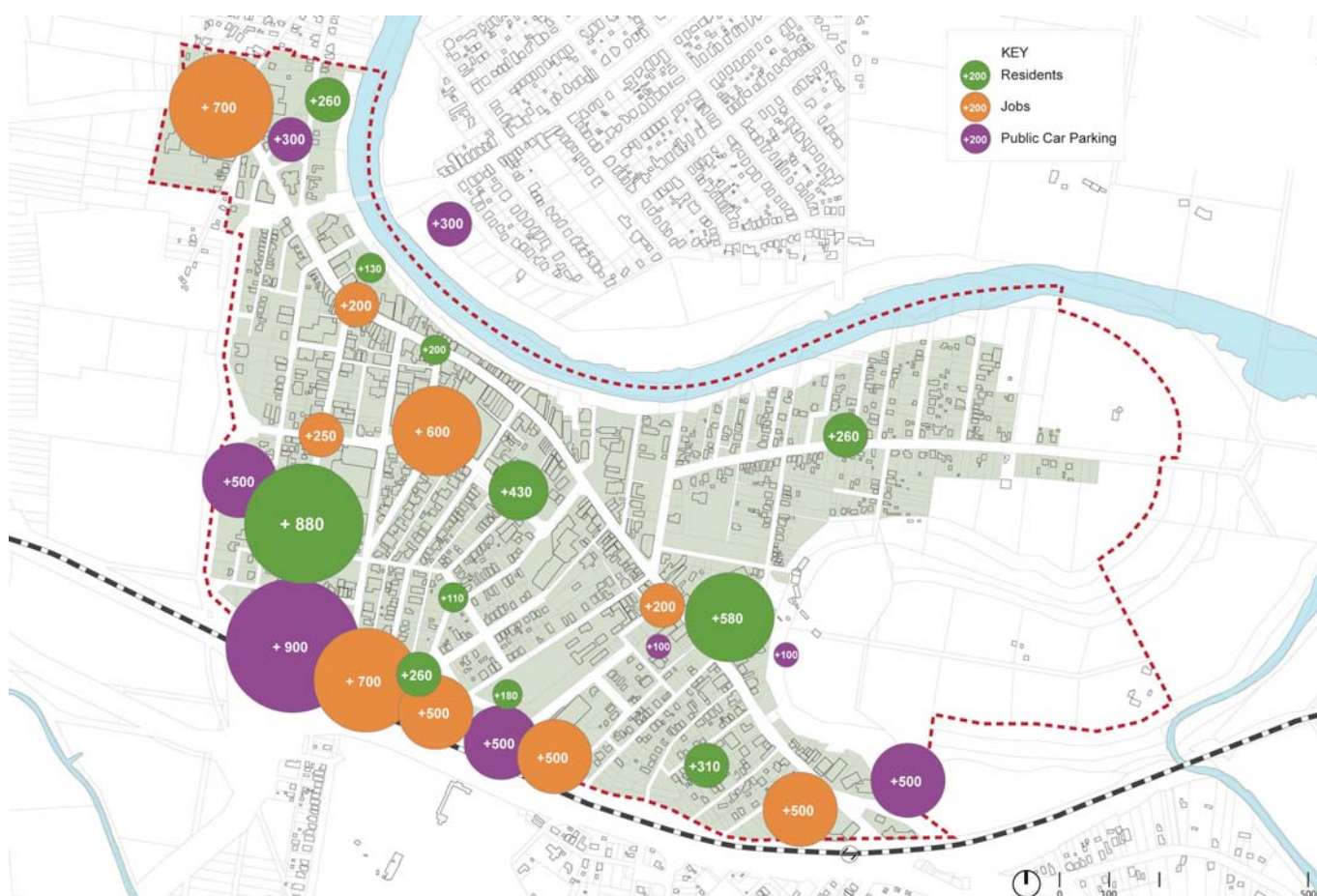


Fig.4.1. Diversity of activity

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.2 Residential Led Recovery

A primary strategy proposed by this Structure Plan is to reverse the loss of residential population and transform Central Maitland into a “living community”. Growing the residential community will bring day-long activation; expand the walking community; support local businesses and vitally strengthen stewardship of the neighbourhoods, leading to better utilisation of the already existing infrastructure (i.e. public space, railway) (*Ref. section 6.2*).

The primary reason for the loss of residents has been the severe limitation imposed on residential development through planning regulations, with the intention to reduce risk of damage to property caused by flooding. However, as already identified by the *Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation - Central Maitland Land Use Study 1982*, the effect of this regulation can be, and arguably has been, more damaging than the risk it was intended to avoid. Subsequent studies (Central Maitland Improvements Plan 1995-98) and examples of other regional cities affected by flooding risk (Grafton) indicate that retaining a significant number of residents in the town is possible and desirable.

The desktop analysis of development potential (*Section 2.3.13*) identified that there is sufficient available land to accommodate at least 1,700 new dwellings to return the total population to its 1954 level of 5,500 residents. This residential growth is possible even in the condition of increased per capita space demand, and without putting pressure on sites containing heritage or contributory items, while also allowing a significant employment growth.

Therefore the Structure Plan proposes a target of minimum 3,700 additional residents (1,700 dwellings) by 2030 to be adopted. This target is to carry into all other relevant policies (Maitland Settlement Strategy, Maitland Centres Strategy, Lower Hunter Regional Strategy). The proposed target is the result of a more detailed analysis than the one which was possible within the scope of the Regional Strategy prepared by the Department of Planning (i.e. 1,300 dwellings, equivalent of ca. 2,700 residents).

Key actions proposed by the Structure Plan to support this residential target are:

- Appropriately address flood risk and amend land use zoning to allow residential development wherever this does not pose unreasonable risk to human life and residential property;
- Increase the amount of residential-used land in the areas not affected by flood risk (some of this unconstrained land is currently used for surface car parking);
- Promote shop-top housing;
- Promote urban infill for residential and mixed uses.
- Identify opportunities for adaptive reuse and redevelopment in existing building stock and sites.



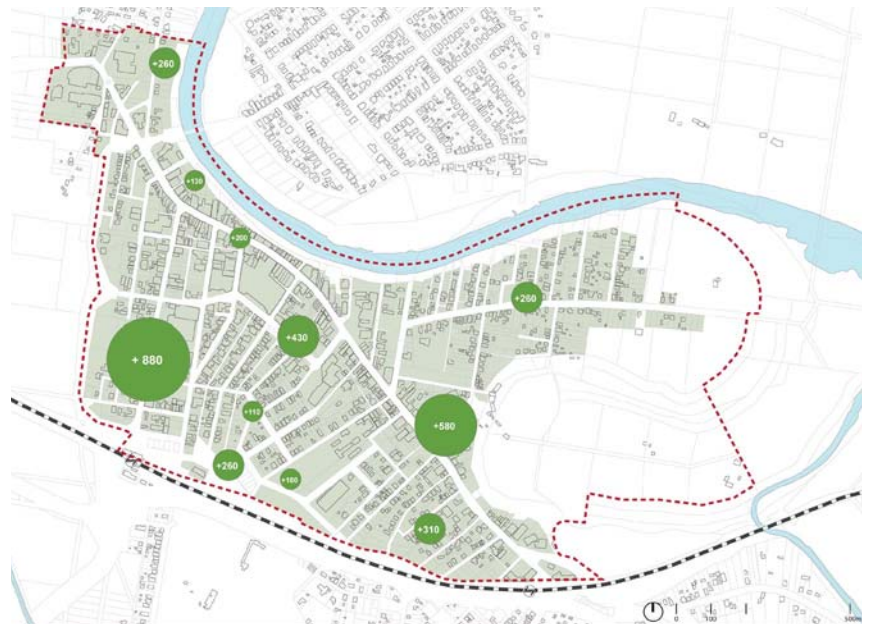


Fig.4.2. Areas of residential growth.



Fig.4.3. Potential infill development

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.3 Protect and Promote Heritage and Character

This strategy seeks to capitalize on Central Maitland's competitive advantages: its rich and varied urban fabric, its historic buildings and institutions, its transport infrastructure (road and rail), its natural and rural setting, the Hunter River and, crucially, the people and businesses that make up its community. These factors combine to give Central Maitland qualities that cannot be reproduced in a new centre.

One of the most crucial steps to follow the Structure Plan is the establishment of a process that will allow Maitland to develop new spaces and activities 'hand in glove' with its superb and unique heritage.

Maitland has seen some poor urban design outcomes; it has lost buildings and has pseudo heritage architecture. However, the town also has some exemplary projects: the new art gallery extension and the adaptive reuse development at 333 High Street are examples. Maitland has a long history of confident contemporary architecture in each epoch.

This plan anticipates a significant renewal of the centre over the next 20 years. It also anticipates Maitland becoming a leader in heritage-context urban renewal, exceeding the outcomes achieved by the present leaders in the area including the Perimeter or City of Sydney.

The tools that will be employed for this outcome will include a new integrated Development Control Plan and a design review panel that includes skills for the heritage context.

Strategies to promote the heritage and character of Maitland include:

- Raising awareness of the Heritage value of important buildings including consistent signage;
- Maintaining appropriate building form and scale relationships to the existing built and natural environment;
- Protecting the historic skyline of Central Maitland, in particular seen from the north bank;
- Reusing currently vacant buildings;
- Identifying heritage and contributory items for protection;
- Identifying opportunities for appropriate interpretation and symbolic references to the town's past.

Importantly, the heritage development controls will be devised with a view to the realistic adaptation and re-use of heritage items and will follow the principles set out in the Burra Charter and follow the recommendations and guidelines of the "New Uses for Heritage Places" publication by the NSW Heritage Council.





Fig.4.4. Heritage, potential heritage and contributory item

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.4 Strengthen Three Distinct Nodes

The aim of this strategy is to strengthen three activity nodes as a priority. The development within the three main activity nodes will act as a catalyst for development adjacent and between these nodes. These nodes are (1) the intersection of High Street and Church Street; (2) the civic precinct on High Street near James Street and (3) the Maitland train station precinct. Each has existed and functioned in a similar way for more than a century. In recent decades however each of these nodes have failed to thrive or have declined. The Structure Plan recognises these important nodes and establishes strategies to foster their sustenance and growth.

Intersection of High Street and Church Street

The area around the intersection of High Street and Church Street forms an elongated node that extends to the Heritage Mall. This is the part of High Street that functions as Maitland's 'Main Street'. Key strategies for strengthening this node are:

- Create a town square on the western side of the St Andrews car park;
- Redevelop St Andrew's car park to include a large residential component and ground level retail;
- Upgrade public domain with modern design, wide footpaths, shade trees, ample seating;
- Ensure the streetscape is free of clutter including fences or bulky planters;
- Capitalise on the strong historic character of the street;
- Promote shop-top housing within the existing buildings;
- Improve connections to the Hunter River;
- Extend the laneway system along the south of High Street;

Town Hall node

The part of High Street incorporating Cathedral Street, Victoria Street, Bent Street and James Street has a distinctly civic character. Key civic and cultural institutions including the Town Hall, Art Gallery and the Maitland Mercury are housed in substantial and proud 19th century buildings. These, together with the large school campuses, have made this area a focus of public life in Maitland for more than a century.

Its position corresponds with a point on High Street where the Hunter River once came very close to the street. The precinct maintains a 'centre of gravity' that balances the "South Bank" (Heritage Mall) precinct. Council is playing a key role in this growth, demonstrating confidence through new building and public domain works.

The Structure Plan identifies this area as a crucial anchor within the town and proposes the following strategies to consolidate this character:

- Cultivate the predominant function of the precinct as the centre of art, culture and public life;
- Expand employment and activity in the area through redevelopment of council lands to expand council offices, include additional residential, commercial office space and retail;
- Increase residential population of the area by promoting infill residential development north of High Street and on both sides of James Street.
- Upgrade the public domain including creating a new public square adjacent to High Street.



Train station node

Maitland Train Station is both a major transport node and the southern gateway to the town. The precinct is shaped by a concentration of business attracted to an area with excellent access and the difficult space requirements of circulation, roadways, car parks, ramps and concourses. This Structure Plan includes strategies aimed at improving the transport and access function for all transport modes while supporting the intensification of land use at this important node (*Ref. section 6.4.3*).

Key strategies for nurturing this node are:

- Facilitating the development of higher intensity land uses around the station including employment generating land uses.
- Improve efficiency of car access and parking at the station.
- Establish traffic lights at the intersection of Church Street and Athel D'Ombra to bring the pedestrian and cycle crossings back onto the alignment of the street.



Fig.4.5. Three main nodes

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.5. Consolidate Arts, Culture and Education Opportunities

This strategy aims to retain Maitland as a competitive city in the 21st century, by attracting the “creative class”, those creative people who help the city’s economy to be innovative and adaptive to changing global conditions. Cities also ought to create those conditions which encourage its residents to become creative.

Central Maitland has a great potential to build upon its important civic functions and inherited built form of unique cultural significance as a basis for becoming a leading creative city.

Four precincts have a potential lead role in transforming Central Maitland into a centre of creativity:

- The South-East Precinct provides a great opportunity for arts led gentrification, given the relatively low cost of living, mixed-use character in an inherently noisy environment (proximity to railway, highway and established light industry), and a multitude of vacant or undefined spaces which invite creative activation. This precinct could accommodate artist workshops, home-offices and small galleries, which could extend into the public domain. Affordable living conditions could attract artists and creative professionals, which would actively contribute to a strengthened local community, intensified civic life, improved image and ultimately renewed identity.
- The East-Central Precinct contains the administrative core (town hall), regional exhibition centre (Art Gallery) and centre of education (schools and high-schools). All these functions can be further strengthened, expanded and further opened up to the public.
- The High Street Precinct is the core precinct of social interaction and exchange. Through its multiple forms of public space it facilitates the exchange of ideas as well as that of goods. In this regard the Structure Plan proposes to further diversify the available public space which encourages social interaction by the creation of a town square at the northern end of St Andrews Street, and of creatively re-landscaping the floodable Hunter riverbanks.
- The Church Street Precinct has, at its core, one of the most significant historic ensembles of buildings in Central Maitland: St Mary’s Church and Rectory, and Brough and Grossmann Houses, which can become a highlight of any heritage tour of Central Maitland. Nurturing the connection with the past is not only educational but mostly inspirational for new generations.

These precincts hold particular potential for creative and civic functions. Nevertheless, policies aiming to transform Central Maitland into a centre of creativity apply to the whole plan area, as potential for creativity exists across the city centre.





Fig.4.6. Precincts dominated by Art, Culture and Civic Functions;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.6. Reinforce the Government Function and Civic Identity of Central Maitland

This strategy aims to strengthen Central Maitland as the focal point of governing and civic leadership. Participation in local governing is a fundamental privilege of all citizens, offering each willing person a stake in the future of Maitland, how it grows and how we evolve as a community. With the continued increase of residents moving into Maitland and the continued diversification of the population, it is critical that Central Maitland continue to be a civic icon and the place for effective governing of our City and local community.

A strong civic identity and governing function has long been associated with Central Maitland. Its historical development as a merchant city made it the ideal place to locate a concentration of churches, educational institutions, banking institutions, functions of law such as the Court House (1893) and the symbol of local democracy, civic leadership and governing functions, such as the Town Hall (1888). Functionally, physically and socially the character and location of the Town Hall within Central Maitland tells a story about Maitland's civic past and is a representation for the equitable and democratic development of our future.

Local governing and public administration functions continue to play an important role in defining Central Maitland's function and identity. The location of Maitland City Council, along with various local and state government offices and community facilities consolidate and strengthen the governing and civic function of Central Maitland. As a Major Regional Centre, second only to Newcastle within the Lower Hunter, Central Maitland remains the best location to continue it as the civic and governing centre of the LGA.

This strategy is critical to achieving the vision for Central Maitland, in particular to create a place that has a vibrant community life, values the heritage character, is a thriving and diverse economy and a place for learning and artistic expression.

To reinforce Central Maitland as the focal point for governing and civic leadership, the following points should be considered and investigated with the implementation of the structure plan:

- Retain the presence of local and regional governance functions and increase the number of public services in Central Maitland;
- Making provision for public spaces that support the democratic process;
- Promote the identity of Central Maitland by using the Town Hall as an icon of civic identity;
- Engage with the community and support the role of governance and leadership through effective decision-making;
- Enhance the civic core of Central Maitland with interpretive representation of local leaders and formation of the City.





Fig.4.7. Consolidate Civic Identity and Governing Function;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.7 Improve Access, Circulation and Way-Finding

Major strategic measures are required to improve the experience and movement through the town centre.

- Improve way-finding in the city centre by establishing a clearly legible street hierarchy; promoting views and vistas; providing consistent signage and slow vehicular speed in the city centre;
- Promote sustainable transport modes through the improvement of the pedestrian and cycle environment in the town centre and links to public transport;
- Improve quality and frequency of train and bus services;
- Investigate potential upgrade or reconfiguration of Heritage Mall.
- Connect the system of laneways south of High Street.
- Establish a well connected public open space network through and around Central Maitland;
- Improve access for tourists and reduce car traffic in the centre through the provision of long-term car parking at gateway locations;
- Improve access from Lorn by the provision of an additional pedestrian crossing between Cathedral Street and The Avenue in Lorn;
- Improve physical and visual connections between the River and the town: Levee Walk to Morpeth;

Presently a partial lane system extends across the blocks to the south of High Street. The lanes function both to service the buildings fronting High Street and as an address for small businesses and shops. This type of fine grain in the City centre creates varied urban environments where a great diversity of businesses may flourish. This diversity and intensity is precisely the character which gives the town its competitive advantage.

The Structure Plan seeks to connect these lanes to provide a continuous walking link along lanes and arcades running the length of High Street. The missing links may be connected gradually over time, as each new connection is made, the function and activity of the adjacent links will improve.

Concepts for bridging the Hunter River

Establishing pedestrian and cycle links across the Hunter River (between the River Walk and Lorn) would dramatically improve activity on the River Walk and the amenity of the public domain in the Central Maitland.

As an infrastructure project it need not be major and phased implementation could have the following advantages:

- Pontoon bridges as cost effective alternative to a suspension bridge.
- Retractable pontoon bridges for spring and summer seasons only when usage would be highest.
- Pontoon bridges that can be retracted in the event of flooding.
- Development of light weight suspension cycle/pedestrian bridge could proceed once the merits of the pontoon bridge crossing are determined and funding is sourced.



Examples of pontoon bridges, from top-left: a barrell pontoon bridge in Japan; The Queen Emma Bridge in Curacao, Antilles; The Eastbank Esplanade pontoon system in Portland, Oregon USA.





Examples of suspension bridges, from left: The Baranja Bridge in Croatia; The Kanes Bridge in the Yarra Valley, Australia.



Fig.4.8. Proposed access and circulation improvements;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.8 Organise Car Parking

The aim of this strategy is to reduce car dependency and dominance of vehicles in Maitland without adversely impacting the vitality and vibrancy of the area. The Structure Plan proposes a strategic change in the placement and operation of car parking in Central Maitland. This will see public car parking located at the entry points to the city. This will provide the dual benefit of reducing the distance that cars are drawn into the centre in search of parking spaces, while freeing up the limited developable floor space in the city core for high-value uses. This 'gateways parking strategy' will be combined with the wider circulation strategy that sees: the only cars in Central Maitland should be those that have a destination in Central Maitland. This environment of reduced traffic congestion will allow the raft of other initiatives set out in the Structure Plan Framework to be implemented. Car parking location plays an important role in integrated transport and land use planning and place making in the Maitland centre.

This Structure Plan supports and incorporates the following two key strategies from the Integrated Landuse & Transport Plan in relation to car parking.

Review of the car parking DCP and address provisions and requirements

URAP/TTW Parking Review (See Appendix) recommends a review of parking requirements within the Development Control Plans. The recommendations include demarcation of parking zones within the town Centre into eastern and western parking sections (Victoria Street would form the boundary) and include:

- Provision of 1 space per 35m² for retail uses within the eastern parking section;
- Provision of 1 space per 50m² of retail/commercial uses within the western parking section;
- Maintaining current parking rate for medium density housing within both eastern and western parking sections (1 space for each 1 or 2 bedroom dwelling; or 2 spaces for each dwelling with more than 2 bedrooms. Also, 1 visitor space for the first 3 dwellings; 1 space for every 5 thereafter);
- Any deficiencies on parking requirements (excepting residential development) as part of a Development Application should be compensated for by way of a contribution for provision of a common parking area.

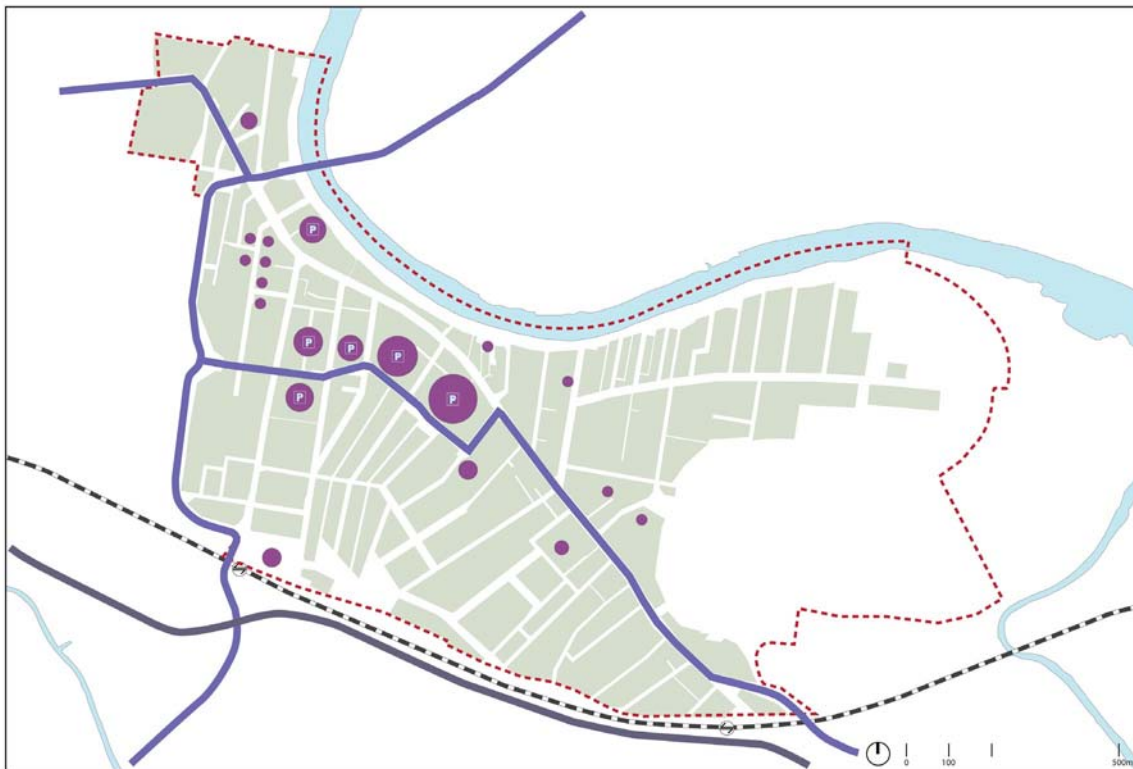
Parking management measures

The Parking Review provides both specific and general recommendations for the parking management within the study area that will complement and reinforce the DCP review. These include:

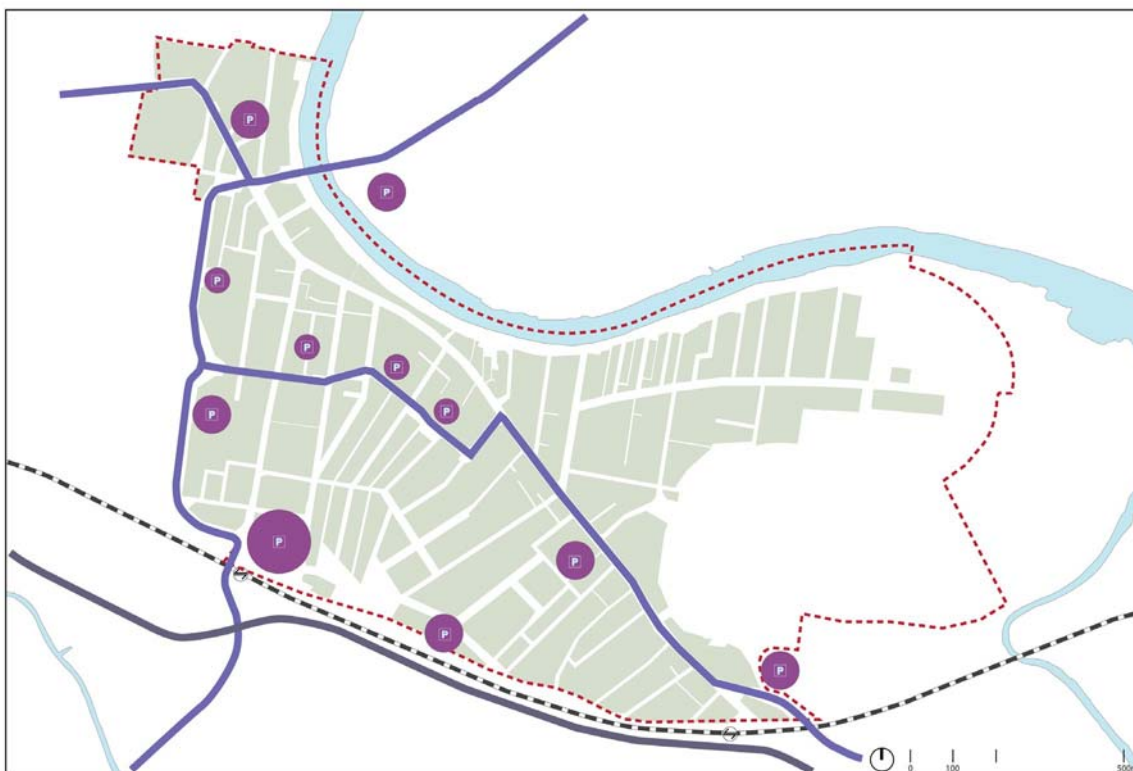
- Installing directional signage to indicate parking areas;
- Provision of parking facilities for short stay parking close to destination, managed through time restrictions;
- Encourage long term parking away from attraction areas;
- Encourage the consolidation of surface car parks and redevelopment of those sites providing car parking behind and above active ground floor frontages;
- Consider alternative car park solutions including commuter car parks;
- Provide guidelines on interface and design of car parking areas.

Further to the above recommendations, the requirement for car parking space should be reviewed for the railway precinct, in the light of the proposal within the Structure Plan of major employment generating development in this location. Given the close proximity to the railway station and the availability of alternative options for car parking (south of the railway line) a lower car parking requirement of 1 space per 60-75 m² of retail/commercial uses should be considered;





Present distribution of major car parking



Desired future distribution of major car parking

Fig.4.9. Present and proposed car parking structure;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.9 Enhance the connection to the Hunter River

The creation of quality open spaces along the Hunter River will provide opportunities for passive recreation and reconnect the river to the advantage of residents, visitors and workers in Central Maitland.

By better engaging the banks of the Hunter River, connections between the City and this impressive natural asset will be revealed and a unique and active space for community life and recreation on the south bank will be created.

The redevelopment of Riverside properties with dual frontages to address both the river and High Street will improve passive surveillance and create a well integrated pedestrian network.

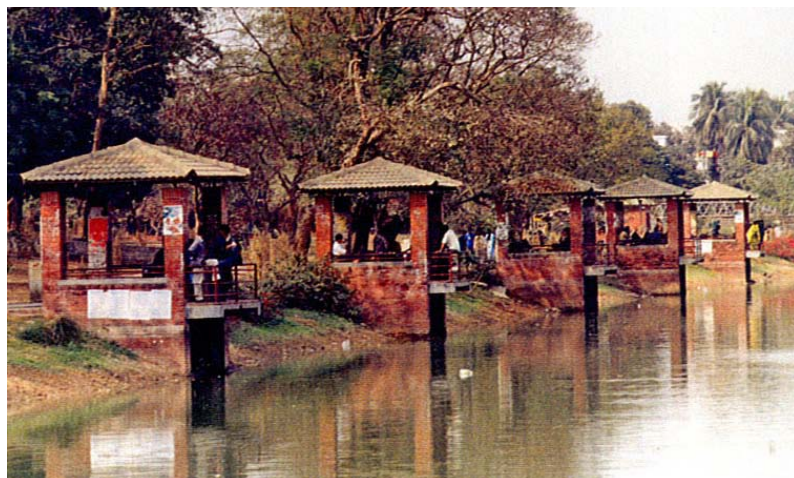
The River Walk will be extended to link Central Maitland with residential areas at Lorn and Horseshoe Bend and eventually to provide a quality regional recreation trail to Morpeth.

Activity nodes along the River Walk

Locating small activity nodes along the River Walk that contain shelters and follies will create another level of engagement between users and the River.

There are a range of possibilities and activities that the nodes could include:

- Provision of shelter and seating for users;
- Accommodate refreshment stalls or small retail opportunities;
- Incorporate interpretation of the River and the regional views;
- Provision of identifiable meeting and gathering places, and
- Contribute to the activity levels on the River Walk, day and night.



Examples of light buildings that engage both the public walkway and the landscape creating activity nodes. (from top); Lake front kiosks, India; Esplanade pavilion, UK; Timber kiosk in Kyoto, Japan.



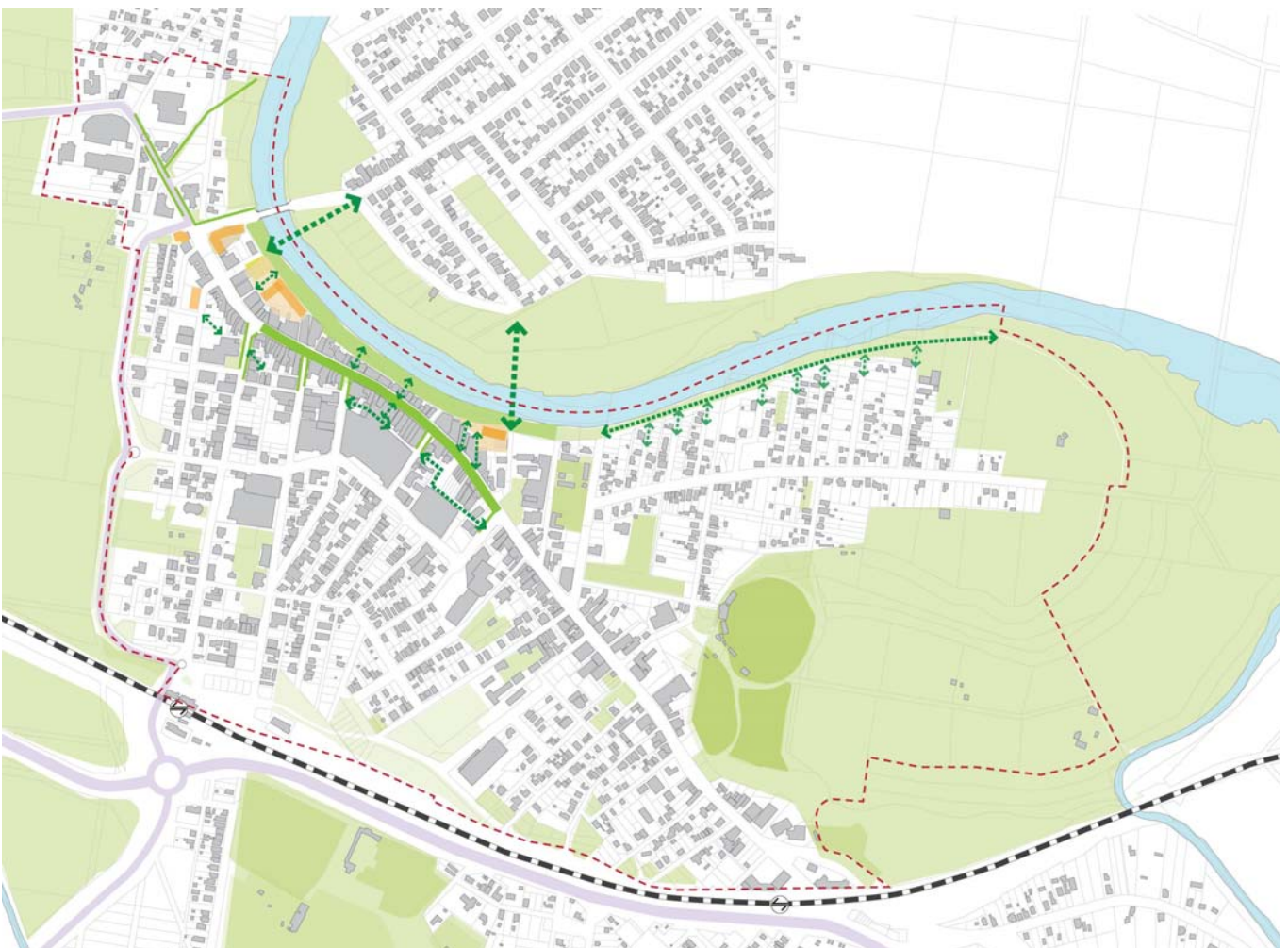


Fig.4.10. Improvements to the connection with the Hunter River;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

Floodable landscape

The banks of the Hunter River represent a substantial proportion of the total open space easily accessible from the City.

The linear character of the River banks makes them accessible along the whole northern edge of Central Maitland. However the River bank is constrained by steep slopes and tendency to inundate due to periodic flooding. These are characteristics Maitland shares with many urban river fronts around the world.

The images presented here illustrate a range of strategies for dealing with steep slopes and periodic flooding, where thoughtful design permits active use of the River bank and enable access and engagement with the water's edge.



Follies that engage the foreshore from a garden in Dumfries, Scotland.



Examples of accessible but flood liable landscapes (from top): Obere Limmat canal, Zurich Switzerland; Ganges River, India; Stepping stones in Kyoto River Park, Japan.





River beach concept

The existing River beach on the northern bank of the Hunter River has the potential to be capitalised upon and recognised as a recreation resource and attraction in the City.

Many European River cities install temporary 'beaches' along their banks over the summer season, providing special spaces for swimming, leisure, gathering and events.

The River beach concept could be easily realised at Maitland and could be implemented in the following ways:

- Extend the natural river beach with additional sand.
- Provision of temporary shade structures (umbrellas, awnings, trees).
- Provision of a supervised swimming area.
- Accommodate a 'stage' for events over summer (carols, beach volleyball, etc).



Examples of temporary River beaches and man-made beaches, from top: Seasonal riverside searing along a canal in Berlin; man-made beach at Southbank in Brisbane; Cairns man-made beach and Esplanade.



Seasonal man-made beach in Bristol, UK.

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND

4.10. Create a Safe and High Quality Public Realm

This strategy aims to strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of Central Maitland with spaces and places that offer visitors an exciting, memorable experience. With an increased diversity of people, participating in a range of activities, the provision of a high quality, interesting and safe public realm in Central Maitland aids greater social interaction offering residents, workers and visitors opportunities to participate in community life and build a strong identity and relationship with Central Maitland.

The public realm is a shared resource and the provision of an interesting, high quality public realm enhances the 'everyday experience' for visitors. It also contributes to further developing the distinct character of Central Maitland, creating a strong identity and a place that is memorable. The creation of an interesting and safe public realm is achieved when a combination of factors come together. This includes landscaping and natural elements, a well maintained and clean public domain, lighting, public art, places to sit and spaces to mingle and animate the public realm.

This strategy is critical to achieving the vision for Central Maitland. It is relevant across all the vision objectives of this structure plan to create a place that has a vibrant community life, values the heritage character, a liveable neighbourhood, a place that is legible, a thriving and diverse economy, a place for learning and artistic expression and which reconnects with the Hunter River.

To create an interesting, high quality and safe public realm in Central Maitland, the following points should be considered and investigated with the implementation of the structure plan:

- a.) Continue to build a distinct identity for Central Maitland through:
 - Create a thriving evening economy and build Central Maitland as a renowned 'eat-street';
 - Consistent treatment of the public domain with landscaping, street furniture designed from a specifically designed palette;
 - Streetscape improvements and the creation of new public spaces;
 - Enhance the heritage character of Central Maitland, through sensitive reuse of buildings, protection of significant historic buildings and their surrounds, and the integration of thought-provoking architecturally designed buildings; and
 - The use of lighting to improve safety and provide an interesting feature within the public realm.
- b.) Encourage opportunities for a wide range of activities to take place in Central Maitland with:
 - The provision of outdoor dining;
 - Creation of flexible spaces for community festivals and events (e.g. Aroma Festival, Steamfest, Farmers Markets, community gardens);
 - Art events and the provision of public art (both permanent and temporary installations);
 - Busking and street performance;
 - Provision of child-friendly spaces (e.g. areas for playing, theatre and art spaces); and
 - Public spaces for both active and passive recreation.
- c.) Create a safe public realm in Central Maitland with:
 - The public domain being well maintained and clean;
 - Appropriate lighting to support evening activity and contributed to increased feeling of safety;
 - Active ground floors to provide passive surveillance throughout the day and evening;
 - Public spaces which are overlooked;
 - Creation of spaces which are accessible, particularly for visitors who have limited mobility, persons with a disability, children, parents with children and the elderly;
 - Design considers the 'in-between' spaces to minimise opportunities for people to hide and the creation of 'dead spaces' in the public realm;
 - Encourage the innovative use and design of 'in-between' spaces to improve safety and encourage creativity, particularly those that would ordinarily be seen as excess space or present difficulties. The laneways in Melbourne are an example of how this can be achieved and positively contribute to the function and vibrancy of the city; and
 - Encourage investment to reduce vacancies, which contributes to a feeling of neglect and decline.



Key Issues for Consideration

Consideration should be given to how the public realm can accommodate the diversity of activities, functions and people that utilise it. Understanding how people use the public realm and the recognition that the use is more informal than deliberate is critical. In many cases, the best public spaces are used in a way that it was not originally intended for but which has evolved.

The issues include:

- Potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, particularly in areas that facilitate heavy foot and vehicle traffic;
- Design which improves safety is critical to the success and longevity of the public realm;
- The integration of landscaping and other natural features to improve the amenity of Central Maitland and in consideration of the climate, to provide shading for people to rest;
- Street furniture must be functional, but should also enhance the attractiveness and response to how people use the public realm. Seating for example should be designed to allow people to meet and gather as well as provide opportunities for people to sit quietly. Straight lines allow for quiet reflection; however they do not encourage use by a group of people who will usually form circles to interact.
- Along with street furniture, recognition that the built environment offers informal opportunities and landmarks for people to meet, sit and interact. These include things such as steps, garden edges and public art installations



Fig.4.11 Creating a safe and high quality public domain;

4. STRATEGIES FOR CENTRAL MAITLAND



5 CENTRAL MAITLAND PRECINCTS

The Central Maitland Structure Plan area has been divided into nine (9) precincts. This holistic approach recognises the various functions; characteristics and challenges that each specific area presents and provides a logical plan for the future growth and development of Central Maitland.

For each precinct, a detailed understanding of the existing character, strengths and challenges is provided. Guidance as to how the precinct will develop in the future, a future character statement, supported by a set of policy objectives is detailed for each of the nine precincts. This aims to provide landowners and the community with a clear understanding about the future direction of each specific precinct and how they collectively will reinforce the vision for Central Maitland as a whole.

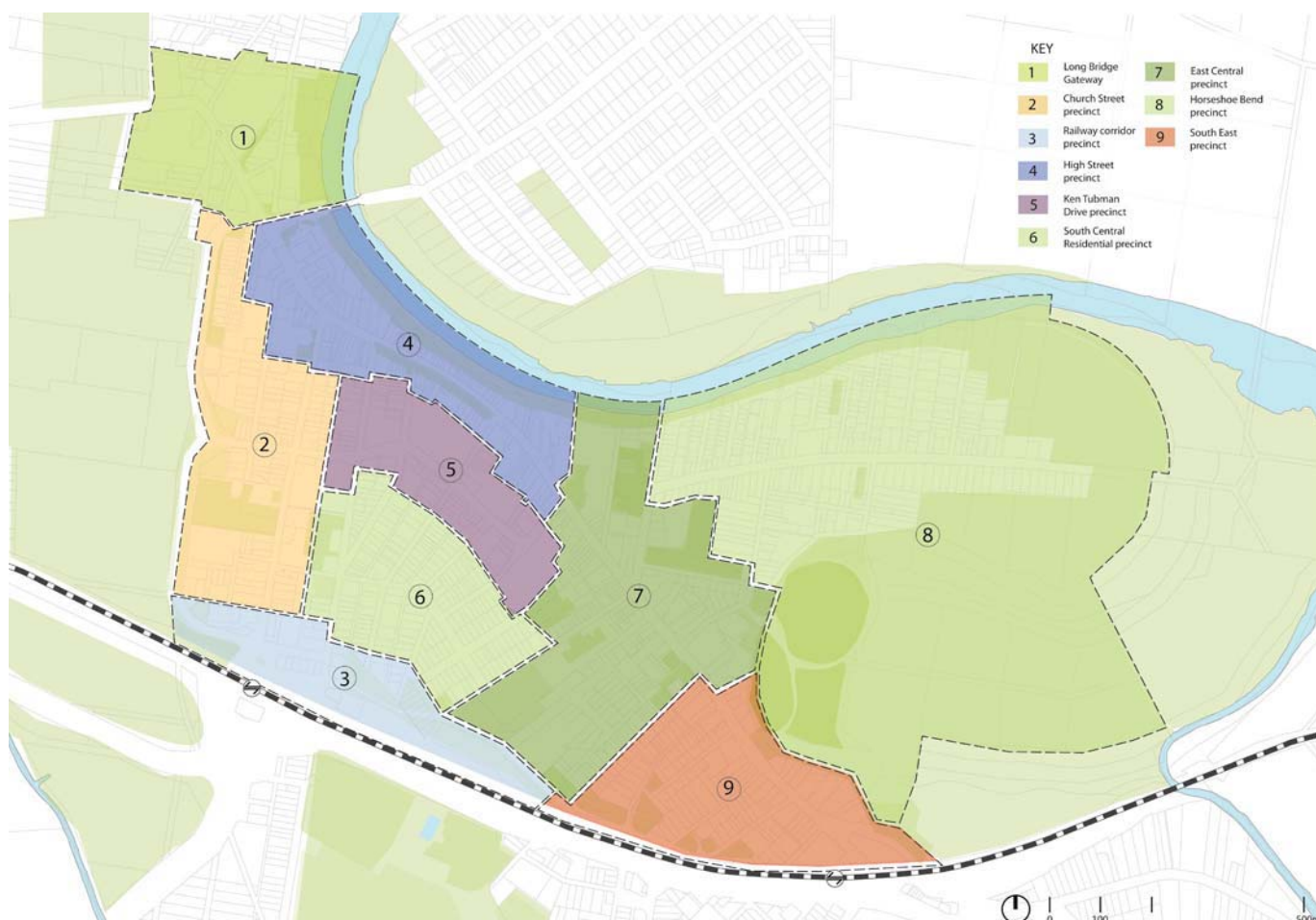


Fig.5.0 Precincts

Precincts (1) Long Bridge Gateway, (2) Church Street, (3) Railway corridor, (5) Ken Tubman Drive and (9) South Eastern gateway have less clearly defined character and significant potential for infill, redevelopment and improvement.

Precincts (4) High Street, (6) South Central Residential, (7) East Central and (8) Horseshoe Bend have a well defined character which will be retained and reinforced.

The precinct based analysis of the study area allows a more detailed understanding of the local character of Maitland and explains the objectives and actions recommended in the Structure Plan in a detailed manner.

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.1 Long Bridge Gateway Precinct

5.1.1 Precinct character

The Long Bridge precinct is an arrival point into Maitland from Rutherford and other suburbs in the west. The intersection of High Street and the Belmore Bridge is marked by the courthouse, one of the significant landmarks of Central Maitland and is an important entrance point from Lorn and other suburbs in the north of LGA.

The area is predominantly flat and the levee bank on the east of the precinct is the highest topographical feature. Pastoral land to the north and west defines the surrounding landscape.

Development in this precinct currently is car oriented with large areas of land used for surface car parking, and lacks the profile of a “gateway”. As an overall effect High Street does not provide a pleasant walking environment in this precinct.



Fig.5.1.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.1.2 Precinct plan



5.1.2 Strengths

Strengths which future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Good linear access along the Hunter River;
- An informal recreation link to the south is already provided;
- The Maitland Court House and surrounding group of buildings provides an attractive focal point for the precinct;
- Mix of uses of civic, commercial and residential buildings.



Fig. 5.1.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.1.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- The precinct does not reflect its profile as a gateway into Central Maitland;
- Existing development in the precinct is car oriented and as a result the highest order street in the precinct does not provide a pleasant walking environment;
- Large surface car parks, driveways which traverse the pavement and poor built form on large sites detract from the walking environment;
- The intersection of Belmore Bridge and High Street is a busy intersection which is alienating for pedestrians;
- The fine grained pattern of development seen elsewhere in the study area is lacking in this precinct;
- The car park between Sempill Street and foreshore of the River is a barrier to pedestrian access and amenity; and
- The recent redevelopment of large sites with High Street frontages does not establish a clear street address.



Fig. 5.1.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.1.4 Desired future character

From the north and west of the LGA, the Long Bridge Precinct will be the arrival and 'gateway' point into Central Maitland and future redevelopment of the precinct must reinforce this sense of arrival. The location of Maitland Courthouse, a significant historical landmark will provide a focal point for the precinct and contribute to a more attractive and interesting streetscape.

The close proximity of this precinct to the retail and community facilities of the High Street Precinct and the river makes it ideal for mixed use and commercial land uses, which will provide active frontages, and well-design buildings to reflect the 'gateway' profile. An improved public domain with pedestrian-friendly streets and future links to reconnect to the river bank and to High Street will offer a more pleasing environment for workers and visitors.

5.1.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the Long Bridge Gateway Precinct:

- Strengthen mixed use character along High Street and adjacent streets. At key sites and corner sites, the built form profile should reflect the 'gateway' status and reinforce a sense of arrival;
- Reconnect the precinct to the Hunter River by improving links to the river frontage from High Street and Sempill Street;
- Provide a consistent landscaping and public domain treatment to reinforce the gateway profile of the precinct and to establish a sense of arrival to Central Maitland from beyond the area;
- Establish street frontages which have active ground floors, particularly on High Street and reduce the visual dominance of car parking by locating them away from the public domain;
- Reinforce the heritage character of the Maitland Courthouse and adjacent contributory items in the south of the precinct with sympathetic infill development and improvements to the surrounding public domain to utilise this significant landmark as an arrival marker into Central Maitland from the north.

5.1.6 Opportunities.

The following are some opportunities for the Long Bridge Gateway Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- Improve the built form of key sites so as to engage better with the public domain and create active and identifiable corners consistent with a gateway;
- At key sites and corner sites, investigate possible development incentives, such as variations to maximum height limits to establish a built form profile which reflects the vision of this precinct as a gateway into Central Maitland;
- Increase the number of active frontages to buildings;
- Nurture and protect the Courthouse group of buildings near Belmore Bridge to promote the historic character of Maitland;
- Improve the public domain surrounding the Maitland Court house;
- Provide physical and visual connections to the Hunter River and the precinct;
- Improve the public domain to achieve a more pleasant, pedestrian friendly environment within the precinct.



Corner building with active ground floors and good street address (by Eeles Trelease Architects), Double Bay, Sydney. Source Flickr.com



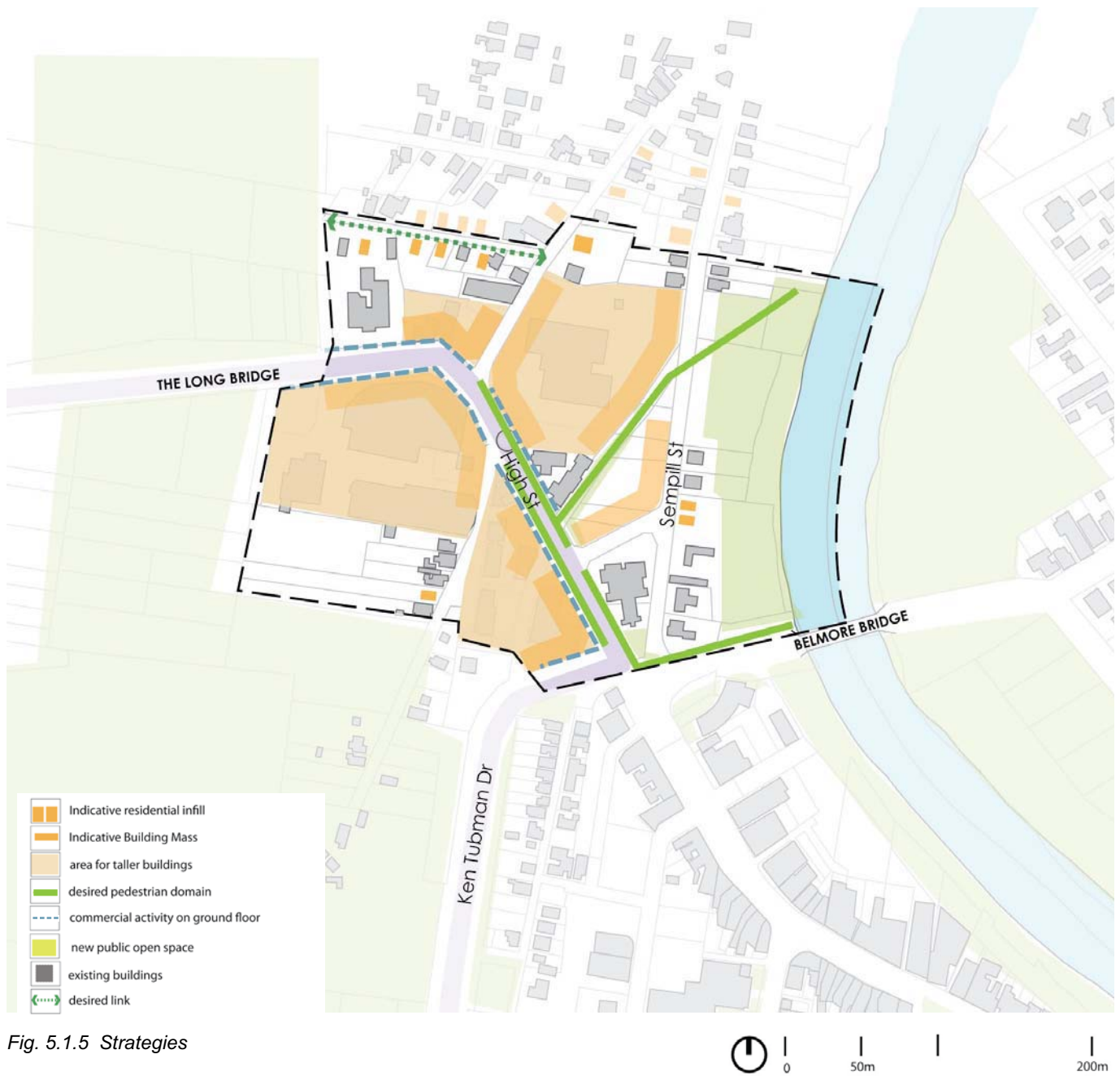


Fig. 5.1.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.2 Church Street Precinct

5.2.1 Precinct character

The Church Street precinct runs north-south between High Street and Maitland train station (a distance of approximately 700m). It contains two high order streets: Church Street and Ken Tubman Drive. The precincts character is defined by a mix of land uses including commercial, residential, educational and religious uses.

There is a steep drop in the topography to the west of the precinct (to 2m) where the floodplain meets Ken Tubman Drive, however this also provides good views and vistas of pastoral land.

The precinct has a consistent building height and development grain as well as palette of building materials that reinforces the strong heritage character and has a distinctly 'country town' ambience. An important focal point is the historic ensemble of St Mary's and Brough and Grossmann Houses.

The southern section of Church Street between the Maitland Train Station and Ken Tubman Drive provides a pleasant walking street for pedestrians. However, the northern section of Church Street presents a poor pedestrian environment as result of surface car parks fronting the street, driveways and inconsistent awnings.



Fig. 5.2.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.2.2 Precinct plan



5.2.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- The strong heritage character of Church Street and the education and community uses reinforce this character and regional centre profile of Maitland along a high order street (Church Street).
- Two large campus sites and their buildings (Maitland Public School and St Mary's Church) at the south of Church Street are listed as heritage items and also contribute to the strong heritage character of the precinct;
- The spire of St Mary's is an important marker on the skyline of Central Maitland; and
- The precinct offers attractive views across the flood plain to the west.



Fig. 5.2.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.2.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Large blocks and few formal linkages connect and integrate Church Street with residential land to the west preventing good access and circulation;
- Loss of the original scale and grain of Church Street has occurred due to the 1980s Pender Place development;
- Many buildings north of Ken Tubman Drive present poor interface with the street;
- Surface car parks dominate the public domain to the north of the precinct detracting from the street;
- The 600m distance between High Street and the train station is not perceived a 'short walk' as such the precinct's link to High Street is weak; and
- Large intersections and traffic calming measures on Church Street (Ken Tubman Drive and High Street) present barriers to smooth pedestrian access.



Fig. 5.2.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.2.4 Desired future character

The heart of the Church Street Precinct is dominated by the impressive historic ensemble of St Mary the Virgin Church and Rectory, the Brough and Grossman House. The heritage value of this ensemble will continue to enhance the attractiveness of the precinct and will also add economic value as a key tourism attraction to Maitland.

With its close proximity to Maitland Railway Station, the southern area of the precinct will provide future opportunities for higher density residential development and transit oriented development. The northern area of the precinct will provide future opportunities to consolidate and redevelop existing commercial and retail uses which link into the High Street Precinct.

The Church Street Precinct will be an important pedestrian and cycle way axis connecting Maitland Railway Station with the retail and commercial core of High Street. A more pedestrian friendly environment, with improved connections will encourage greater public transport use for the residents, workers and visitors of Central Maitland.

5.2.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the Church Street Precinct

- To enhance the character of the precinct by encouraging infill development which is of an appropriate scale, land use and activity on sites which are currently under-utilised;
- Provide pleasant, safe pedestrian and cycle routes along Church Street, which is a critical route connecting Maitland Railway Station and the commercial/retail core of Central Maitland and linkages to surrounding land to the east and west of the precinct;
- Mixed use redevelopment to provide retail and commercial activities in the north of the precinct, close to High Street and for residential and transit oriented development in the south of the precinct close to Maitland Railway Station.

5.2.6 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the Church Street Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- New buildings must address and engage the street with active ground floors or where appropriate, garden frontages;
- The introduction of a consistent public domain treatment along Church Street to reinforce the profile of the street. This can be achieved through landscape guidelines, materials, plantings, street furniture, lighting and building setbacks;
- Where possible, provide through-site links to improve access and circulation, particularly on large blocks and investigate the widening of Scotia Street;
- Extend and continue the 'dead-ends' and laneways to reconnect the road network along St Andrews Street;
- Retain views to the floodplain along the east-west oriented streets of the precinct; and
- The site on the corner of Ken Tubman Drive and Church Street provides redevelopment opportunities for a new built form that reflects the importance of this corner location.



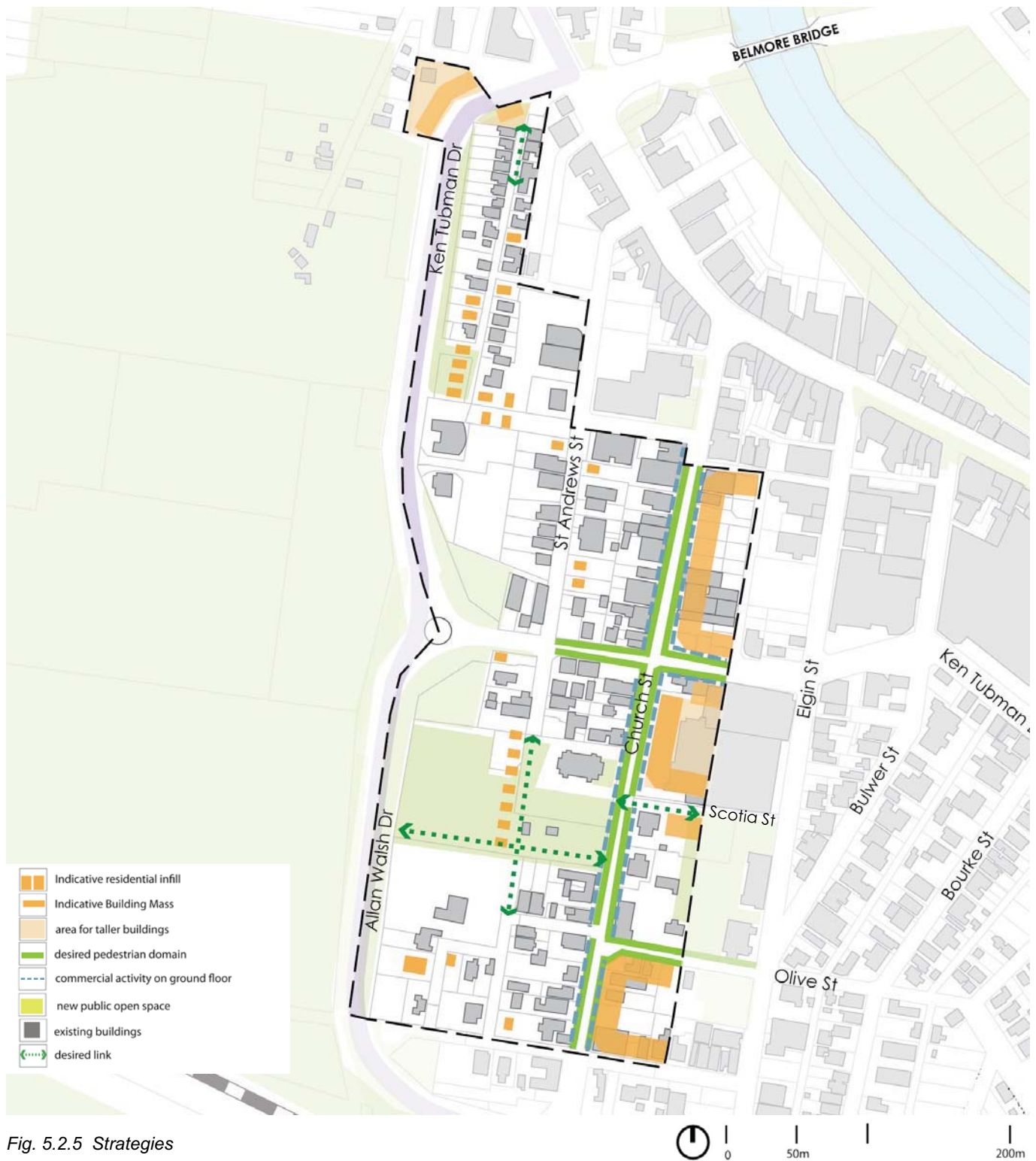


Fig. 5.2.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.3 Railway Corridor

5.3.1 Precinct Character

The Railway corridor precinct is a linear east-west running area of land in the southern side of Central Maitland. It is an important gateway into Maitland from the New England Highway and Cessnock Road. The precinct is bounded by Devonshire Street to the west and the floodplain to the east and it buffers residential land to the north from the railway and the Highway.

The precinct focuses on Athel D'Ombra Drive connecting the two railway stations (Maitland Station and High Street Station). The pedestrian link between the Railway Station and Church Street is highly dysfunctional as result of a turning loop, a large roundabout, absence of pedestrian crossings and absence of footpaths.

Large areas of land in the precinct are undeveloped which may be the legacy of land acquisition for roads or flooding.



Fig. 5.3.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.3.2 Precinct plan



5.3.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Very good accessibility, as result of being located within a short walk of Maitland and High Street Railway Stations;
- The high proportion of vacant land provides the capacity for infill and regeneration;
- The railway line is listed as a heritage item, as is the Grand Junction Hotel at the southern end of Church Street, proving an attractive entrance to the precinct;.

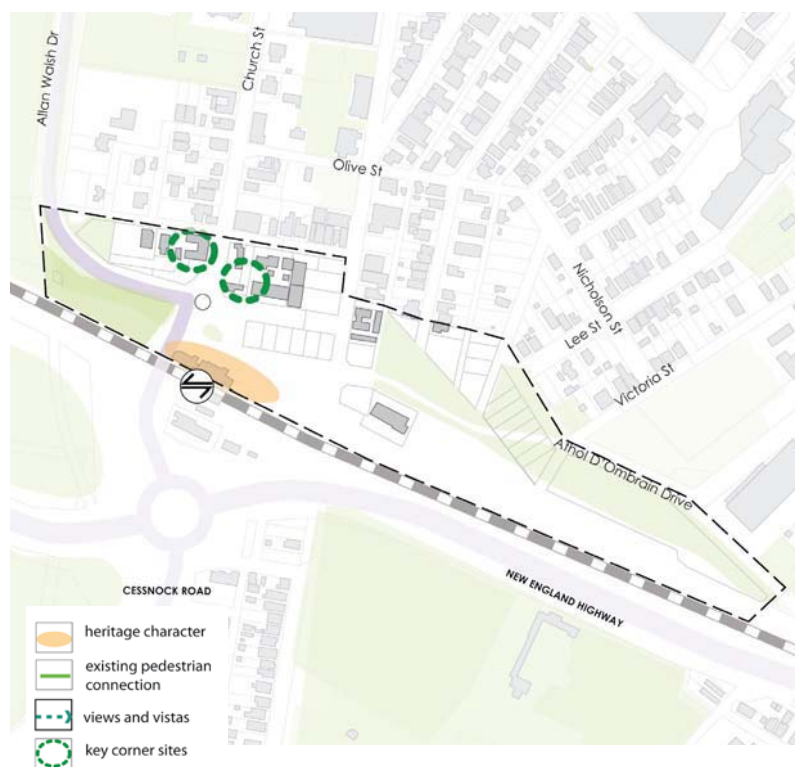


Fig. 5.3.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.3.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Athel D'Ombra Drive is a car dominated road providing little activity or pedestrian amenity and poor passive surveillance, resulting in a pedestrian environment that is very limited;
- High exposure to noise from railway and Highway;
- Separated and cut off from residential and recreational land (Maitland Park) to the south by the railway and the Highway;
- Major roundabout at the gateway to Church Street in close proximity to the train station creates an unfriendly environment for pedestrians;
- North - south residential streets do not connect to Athel D'Ombra Drive providing poor circulation and integration with surrounding areas; and
- This precinct is one area of Central Maitland that has few intact heritage buildings or character which is a stark contrast to the neighbouring South-Central Residential Precinct.

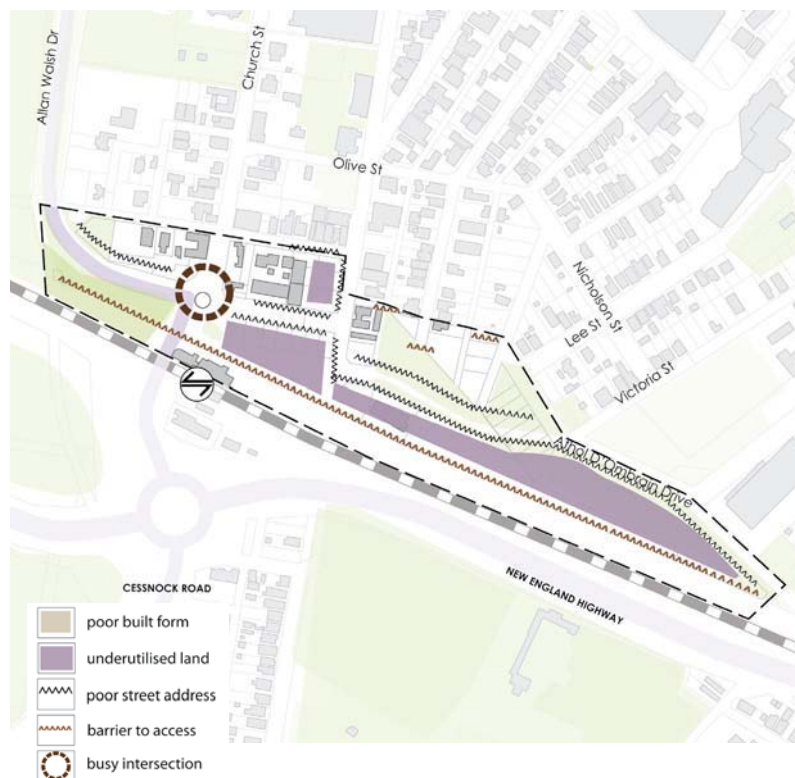


Fig. 5.3.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.3.4 Desired future character

The Railway Corridor Precinct will be an important gateway into Central Maitland. The location of this precinct to the Maitland Railway Station will offer a highly accessible location for significant commercial and employment activities. The area around the Maitland Railway Station will provide a much improved entrance for public transport users into Central Maitland. A well designed transport interchange will cater for commuters with a mix of transit oriented services and destination spaces.

Vertical architecture providing active ground floors will be a positive way to animate the street edge, while public domain improvements will provide a pleasant pedestrian environment along Athel D'Ombra Drive.

5.3.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the Railway Corridor Precinct.

- Introduce a greater variety of land uses, including retail, commercial, community and some residential to increase activity and vibrancy of the area;
- Improve pedestrian and cycle links along Athel D'Ombra Drive between the train stations, residential areas and commercial activities within the precinct and to connect with the community and government activities in Central Maitland;
- Encourage the development of location of transit oriented development around the Maitland Railway Station and new employment generating development (i.e. offices, retail) on vacant land between Athel D'Ombra and the railway line taking advantage of this highly accessible location; and
- Ensure that any new development successfully interfaces with residential properties to the north of the precinct and those areas within the South-Central Residential Precinct.

5.3.6 Opportunities:

The following are some opportunities for the Railway Corridor Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- Development incentives such as a reduction in car parking requirements and increased building heights for new employment generating development along the railway corridor given the close proximity of the railway stations;
- Improve the public domain area surrounding the Maitland Railway Station to provide a welcoming introduction to Central Maitland and to improve pedestrian safety. This could be achieved with the creation of a plaza in front of train station which provides meeting spaces, transit-oriented development, such as a convenient store, cafes or a newsagent and the improvement of the area as a transport interchange to support public transport users;
- Provision of greater levels of car parking at the railway station, which is consistent with the 'gateway' parking strategy underpinning this structure plan;
- Creation of new, useable public open spaces to support residents, workers and visitors;
- Permit taller buildings in the precinct of a consistent height so as to establish a regular and unobtrusive backdrop to the heritage skyline when viewed from the north. Also to act as a buffer between the railway and highway to the south and residential land to the north; and
- Improve pedestrian access to South Maitland and Maitland Park by provision of more pedestrian links to the south.





5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.4 High Street Precinct

5.4.1 Precinct character

The High Street precinct is centred on the retail heart of Maitland. It extends from the River frontage to the north (characterised by the back of High Street properties and the River Walk) to a series of informal lanes behind High Street shops on the south. It is bound by the Belmore Bridge in the west to Cathedral Street in the east. The precinct contains the pedestrian Heritage Mall and can be described as a traditional shopping street, featuring predominantly high Victorian architecture with a largely intact building fabric. The Library, Police Station and Post Office are the main public buildings within the precinct.

The Heritage Mall is a pedestrian only zone that provides a large urban open space in the centre of Maitland. The Mall is used for special functions, special markets and outdoor trading. It suffers from lack of passive surveillance after business hours and has required significant changes to access and circulation throughout the study area. The River Walk at the rear of High Street properties provides a pleasant pedestrian walkway set in open space with attractive panoramas of the Hunter River and Lorn.



Fig. 5.4.1 Aerial photograph

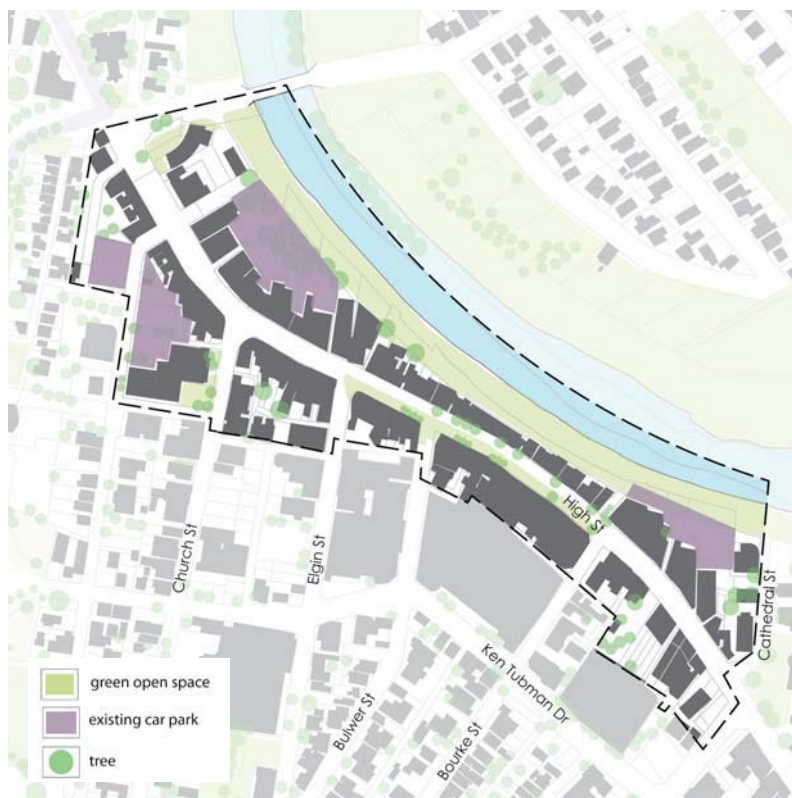


Fig. 5.4.2 Precinct plan



5.4.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Intact heritage building fabric and grouping of heritage buildings creates a unique streetscape;
- The precinct has many distinguished buildings intact that date from the mid 19th century through to the early 20th century.
- Heritage skyline is uninterrupted with views of the spires, significant vegetation and decorative parapets;
- Key corners require emphasis through built form High Street - Church Street and Elgin Street;
- Capitalise on sweeping views and vistas along the River front;
- High Street beyond the Mall provides a good pedestrian environment with consistent awnings, lighting and clear sight lines;

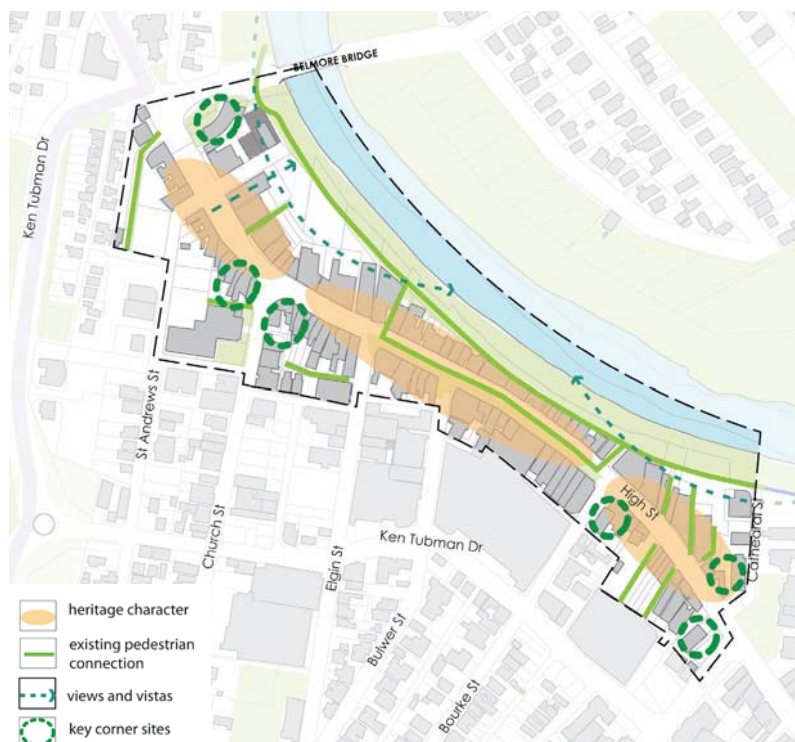


Fig. 5.4.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.4.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Inconsistent built form at River frontage with few buildings engaged with the River Walk;
- Few visual or physical links exist between the River and High Street;
- An inconsistent and discontinuous network of lanes exists to the rear of High Street properties;
- Two surface car parks are located at the extreme east and west of the precinct on prime River front land;
- Maitland Library site (at the Belmore Bridge) does not address the corner well or establish gateway profile;
- Anti-social behaviour due to lack of passive surveillance and low levels of activity outside of business hours;
- Large, busy intersections on High St create unfriendly pedestrian environment; and
- Confusing car access and circulation system which affects surrounding streets due to traffic diverted by the Mall.



Fig. 5.4.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.4.4 Desired future character

The High Street Precinct will be the commercial and retail heart of Central Maitland. First floors will provide a mix of commercial and residential uses above active ground floors which will improve the pedestrian amenity. New connections to the Hunter River will offer physical links and alternative spaces to engage the community in interesting and creative ways. The new public spaces will provide opportunities for public gatherings and community events. The location of these public spaces will take advantage of the natural amenity provided by the Hunter River and the historic built environment of Central Maitland. Access and movement through Central Maitland will be improved. Streetscape improvements will provide a consistent design palette that will assist in a City which is legible and that has a distinct identity.

5.4.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the High Street Precinct

- Encourage a diverse range of activities by increasing the levels of residential, accommodation and entertainment floor space in the precinct;
- Reinforce the edges, entry points and identity of the High Street Precinct with a consistent streetscape design, public domain features and redevelopment opportunities of key sites;
- Protect and retain historic built form: notably the heritage, scale and the fine grain of development of High Street and retain the uninterrupted heritage skyline of Central Maitland;
- Improve access and circulation within the heart of Central Maitland as well as improved connections between High Street and the residential neighbourhoods of Central Maitland and Lorn;
- Create direct, safe connections between High Street and the River Walk and encourage active ground floors along laneways and River Walk links with residential, retail and commercial uses; and
- Retain the fine grain shop fronts and encourage active ground floors along High Street retail and commercial uses.

5.4.6 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the High Street Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- Comprehensive streetscape improvements for the High Street Precinct;
- Encouraging the redevelopment of sites along the river to create a dual frontage and reconnect with both the river and High Street;
- Recreational use and engagement with the River front can be improved
- Provide two new public open spaces on the River – St Andrews Square and Cathedral Square; (See section 6.4.1)
- Provide pedestrian/cycle crossings creating a recreation circuit and linking Lorn and the River banks to two new civic open spaces at High Street;
- Redevelop the Library building to provide an exceptional community facility and a design which improves the profile of this site and reflects its strategic gateway location;
- Reconnect the linkages between High Street and the Riverfront;
- Extend the pedestrian priority zone along High Street with consistent public domain treatment.



'Eat Street' precinct, Crows Nest with pedestrians and slow speed traffic using the same space.



Demountable markets held on the pavement at St Kilda, Melbourne.





Fig. 5.4.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.5 Ken Tubman Drive Precinct

5.5.1 Precinct character

The Ken Tubman Drive Precinct is the interface between the residential character to the south and the retail and commercial heart of High Street to the north. It is defined by the back of High Street properties to the north; Church Street properties to the west; and the large Cinema site to east. The urban structure of the precinct is inconsistent with the original grain, scale and built form having been lost to late 20th century development and changes to the road network. The promotion of Ken Tubman Drive as a bypass road around High Street has created a car oriented precinct.

The existing activities and the precinct are predominantly commercial in nature. Entertainment and recreation facilities exist in the form of the cinema, licensed premises and clubs along with tourist accommodation and café.

The pedestrian environment is adversely impacted by large surface car parks, poor built form and few buildings that address the street, all which result in a low quality public domain. The numerous large footprint buildings in the precinct present blank walls to the street and have an imposing scale with little relationship to the context or the pedestrian environment. Despite its close proximity to residential and retail land use it has not evolved as a pleasant pedestrian street.



Fig. 5.5.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.5.2 Precinct plan



5.5.2 Strengths

Strengthens that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Close proximity to the civic function, High Street retail, residential areas and the Hunter River and River Walk;
- Precinct contains a mix of uses, including a number of entertainment and tourism activities;
- Large consolidated sites present opportunities for different uses and integrated development.



Fig. 5.5.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.5.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Under-utilised infrastructure and land resources;
- Poor street address of many buildings in the precinct creates undesirable pedestrian environment, particularly along Ken Tubman Drive, Elgin, Bulwer, and Bourke Streets;
- Confusing car access and circulation system with many one way streets and dead ends;
- Car dominated environment with busy by-pass roads and large areas of surface car parking detracting from the public domain; and
- Many buildings in the precinct can be considered 'intrusive' in terms of heritage value assessment.

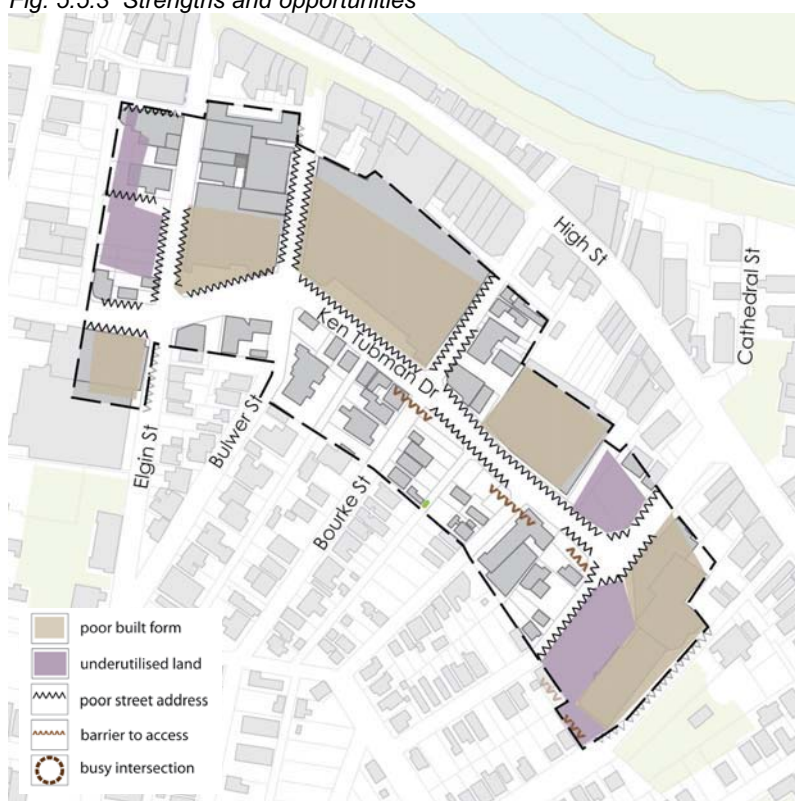


Fig. 5.5.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.5.4 Desired future character

The Ken Tubman Drive Precinct will be the interface between the residential neighbourhood to the south and the commercial and retail activities of High Street. It will continue to build on the existing mix of commercial, retail, entertainment and tourism activities and will strategically utilise land fronting the spine of the Ken Tubman Drive Precinct for more vibrant activities.

The public interface of Ken Tubman Drive will be an engaging space and provide a pleasant pedestrian environment. The redevelopment of key sites along Ken Tubman Drive will reactivate the blank walls which currently dominate the street edge. Streetscape improvements will be designed to differentiate between the residential and commercial uses within this precinct. The height of new buildings along Ken Tubman Drive will ensure adequate space for the diverse range of activities and protect the heritage character of the residential neighbourhood to the south and the historic skyline of High Street.

The importance of Ken Tubman Drive as a movement corridor will be maintained and add to the legible way finding of Central Maitland.

5.5.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the Ken Tubman Drive Precinct

- Improve the pedestrian environment and the public domain to provide a more pleasant environment and reduce the dominance of traffic in the precinct;
- Improve access and circulation through the precinct for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic in recognition of this precinct as the link between four other precincts;
- Sensitively manage the interface between residential land uses, scale and heritage character to the south and heritage skyline of High Street to the north;
- Reintroduce a finer grain street address to the redevelopment of any site in the precinct to reduce the impact of large scale 'blank' walls which have characterised the design of this precinct; and
- Encourage the reactivation of Ken Tubman Drive with the integration of active ground floors with a mixture of residential entrances, offices and retail uses.

5.5.6 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the Ken Tubman Drive Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- Large footprint sites under single ownership present opportunities for redevelopment and improvement of 5 key sites over the next 20 years;
- Encourage the redevelopment of properties to provide an active edge to Ken Tubman Drive and to provide increased through site access of large blocks linking Ken Tubman Drive and High Street.
- Low heritage values in the precinct do not constrain development potential as heavily as they do in other precincts. However design and height considerations of new buildings must protect heritage skyline of High Street, Church Street and detached residential land use pattern to the south;
- Important corners along Ken Tubman Drive provide opportunity for architectural expression; and
- Establish missing links and formalise laneways at the rear of High Street to increase access and circulation within the precinct.



Mixed-use infill development, Danks Street, Sydney.



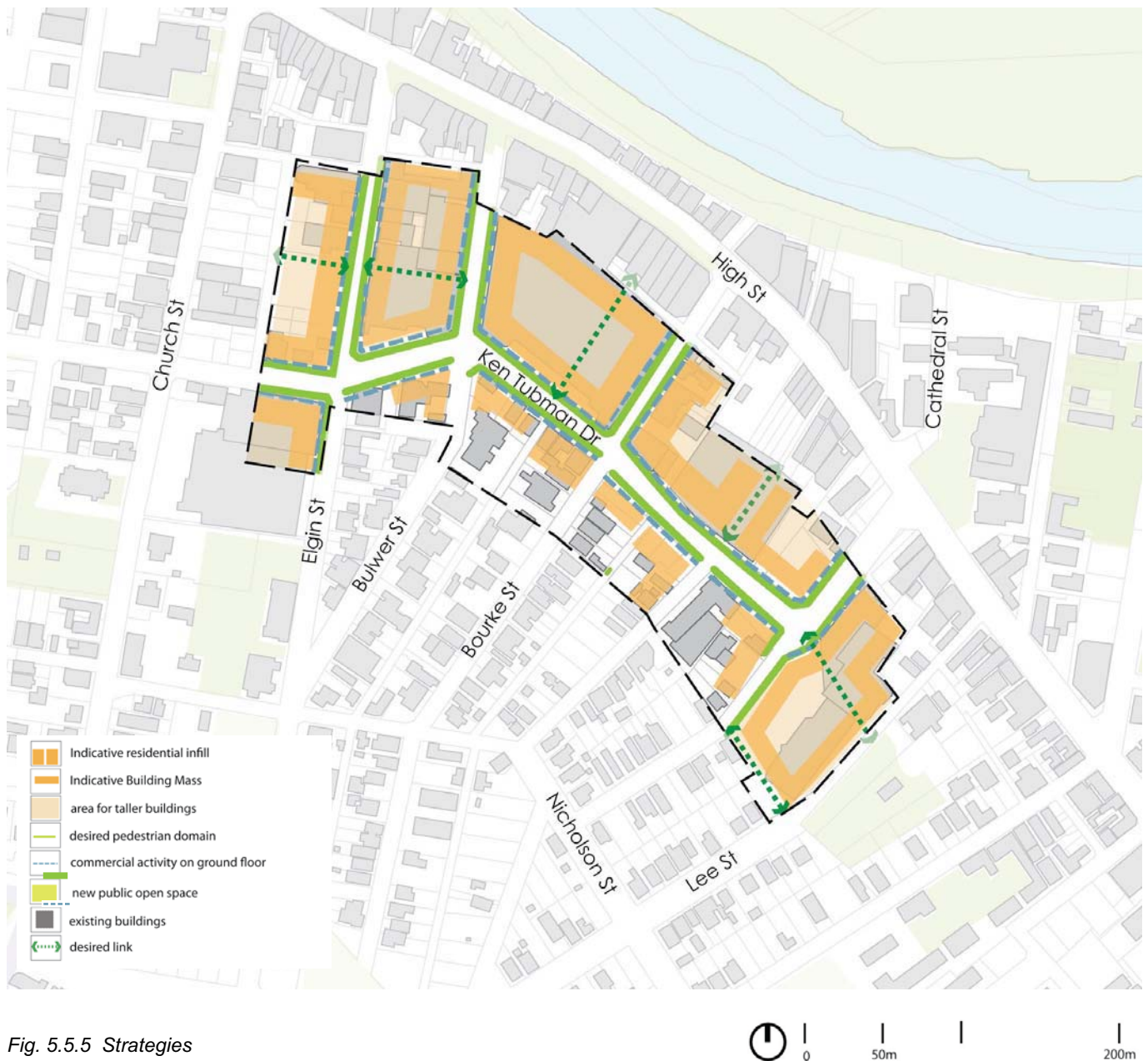


Fig. 5.5.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.6 South-Central Residential Precinct

5.6.1 Precinct character

The South Central Residential Precinct lies to the north of Athel D'Ombra Drive. It is defined by Elgin Street to the west, properties on Ken Tubman Drive at the north and Victoria Street to the east. This precinct offers a low density residential area with a pleasant human scale and quiet streets.

A pleasant pedestrian environment exists on many streets in the precinct with houses presenting traditional garden frontages and 1-2 storeys residential development. The precinct is located within a short walk of both High Street and the Railway station to the south and an established rear laneway system provides good through block links and access.

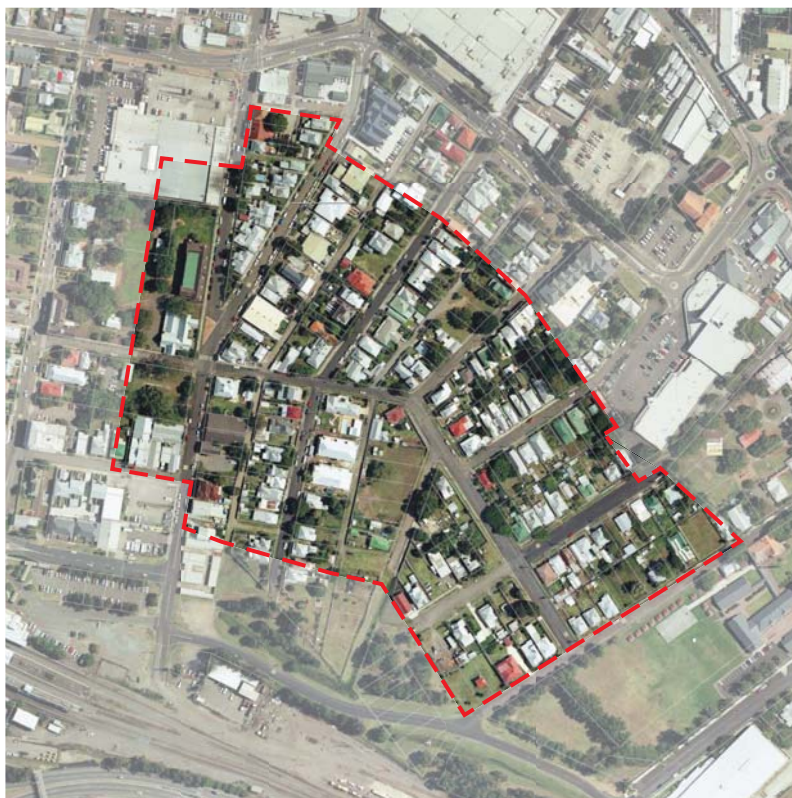


Fig. 5.6.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.6.2 Precinct plan



5.6.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Existing vacant lots provide redevelopment potential and can assist in increasing residential population within Central Maitland;
- Existing rear lanes are positive features in residential areas providing informal access, circulation and increased residential amenity;
- Intact heritage value of local streets is an attractive and pleasant asset and provides a distinct identity for the precinct;
- The Bourke Street contains many properties that are listed as heritage items. Bulwer, Charles and Lee Streets are considered to have consistent contributory heritage value; and
- The precinct's close proximity to both High Street and the Railway Station makes the precinct ideal for continued residential use;



Fig. 5.6.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.6.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Complicated car access and way finding due to restricted vehicular access between Ken Tubman Drive and Bourke Street and Charles Streets to the north, as well as between Athol D'Ombra Drive, Bourke and Catherine Streets to the south;
- Many vacant lots detract from consistent residential streetscapes and reduce the vibrancy of the precinct;
- Many barriers to pedestrian access reduce pedestrian permeability at the edges of the precinct: e.g. school campuses on Elgin Street and Victoria Street and the Cinema Centre;
- Area is prone to flooding in extreme events.



Fig. 5.6.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.6.4 Desired future character

The future consolidation and renewal of the South Central Residential Precinct will reinforce the residential character of this area. Providing a sanctuary from the flurry of the High Street Precinct, growth will be predominantly through sympathetic infill development, which protects the existing heritage character, including individual items as well as the contributory streetscapes that define the area. Being in close proximity to the Maitland Railway Station, the retail and commercial activities in the Ken Tubman Drive and High Street Precincts, the community facilities in the Civic Precinct, and the tranquillity of the Hunter River, the South Central Residential Precinct will be a highly accessible location for existing and future residents to call home.

5.6.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the South Central Residential Precinct

- Encourage increased residential development within the precinct which respond in an innovative way to the heritage and flooding constraints of the area;
- Encourage gradual infill of similar scale, typology and density of residential use on vacant lots;
- Maintain existing residential scale and character of the precinct to protect the contributory heritage qualities of the precinct's residential streetscapes;
- Ensure that adequate green spaces and playgrounds are provided within the precinct, contributing to the identity of the area and providing quality recreational spaces for the enjoyment of residents;
- Improve access and integration with the other precincts, especially to High St to the north and to Maitland Railway Station;
- Maintain slow traffic speed environment in the area to promote pedestrian safety and maintain residential amenity.

5.6.6 Opportunities.

The following are some opportunities for the South Central Residential Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above.

- Improvement to the public domain, particularly along the southern end of Elgin Street;
- Improve the pedestrian links connecting the precinct with the railway station, high street and the community facilities within the Civic Precinct;
- Establish a small park in the precinct for children's play and passive recreation; and
- Investigate the opportunities for streetscape improvements along Nicholson Street, to take advantage of the significant width of this street;



Residential cottage infill, Brisbane (by BASE Architects). Source BASE





Fig. 5.6.5 Strategies



5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.7 East Central Precinct

5.7.1 Precinct Character

The East Central Precinct contains many institutional buildings and land uses associated with education, community uses, artistic and cultural activities as well as open space and recreation facilities. The High Street profile of this precinct continues the retail and commercial activities of the north western section of High Street and presents the same main street character.

Large buildings set in open space include the two school campuses (Victoria Street and Free Church Street), the Maitland Recreation complex, the PCYC, No. 1 Sportsground, Maitland Regional Art Gallery and Council administration buildings on High Street.

The precinct forms a 'green connection' running north-south through the study area, linking the Hunter River to the railway line. Streets running from the north and south toward High Street are attractive and pleasant with tree lined character and a reasonable level of surveillance from adjacent properties.

5.7.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- The precinct presents an identifiable 'node' of public and community uses on High Street, relieving the long retail strip;
- The civic, community and educational role of the precinct is reinforced with the impressive and intact grand institutional buildings (including St Mary's School, Council Chambers and the Technical College);
- The presence of the theatre and art gallery reinforce the artistic and cultural function and the introduction of a new built form, provides a dynamic focal point for the precinct;
- The precinct provides an identifiable north-south link in the centre of the study area providing passive, green open space character and relief from residential and retail land uses;

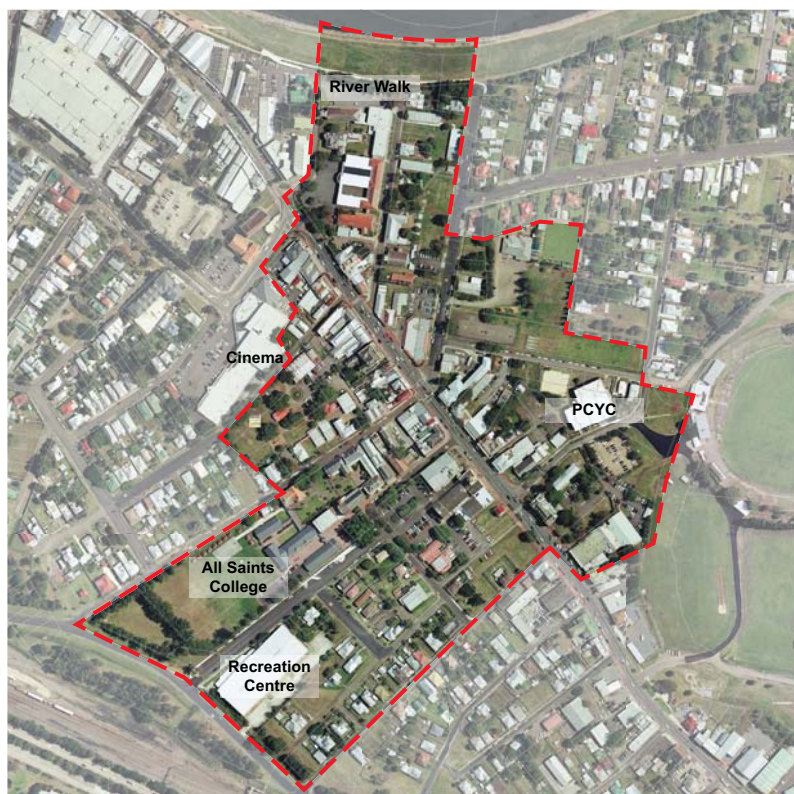


Fig. 5.7.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.7.2 Precinct plan



5.7.2 Strengths (continued)

- Large areas of open space associated with schools and recreation areas provide 'borrowed landscapes' providing attractive views and amenity to surrounding uses;
- Campus grounds and open space around large institutional buildings on Bent Street are considered to be contributory to the heritage values of Maitland;
- High Street presents a consistently strong heritage character while Fry and Devonshire Streets have consistent pattern of contributory heritage items.
- High Street provides a good pedestrian environment with consistent awnings and lighting and clear sight lines afforded along the street. A consistent building edge clearly defines the public domain.

5.7.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Large areas of open space which characterise the precinct are privately owned and managed, and access is restricted;
- The poor street address and built form of the PCYC building on James Street detracts from an important street (link between Sportsground No 1 and High Street) and does not adequately engage surrounding open space resources;
- The Maitland Recreation Centre on Bent Street has a poor street address and the building has low surveillance of the public domain;
- Physical and visual connections between public amenities such as the Sportsground, the Recreation Centre, cultural facilities, educational institutions and the River Walk are weak; and
- The rear of High Street is less consistent with informal and ad-hoc surface car parks dominating the public domain and detracting from the civic and open space character of the area.

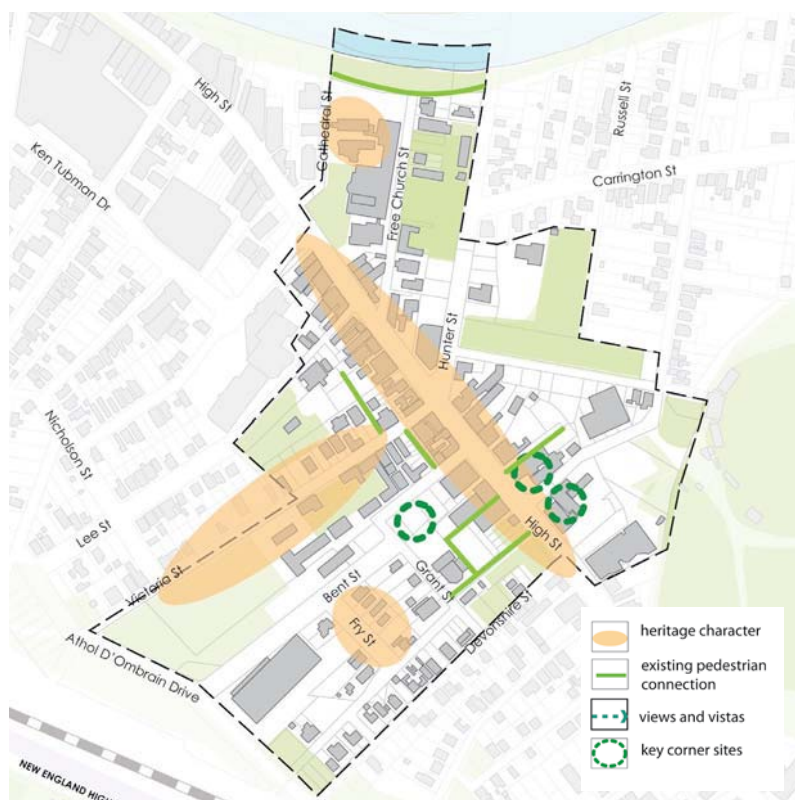


Fig. 5.7.3 Strengths and opportunities



Fig. 5.7.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.7.4 Desired future character

The East Central Precinct will be a focus for the cultural, artistic and democratic expression of the Maitland community. Local governing and public administration functions will continue to play an important role in defining Central Maitland and will add to the diversity of activities. The location of Maitland City Council, along with the concentration of community, cultural, recreational and educational facilities within the precinct will strengthen the civic function. The Precinct will continue to be the ideal location for civic and governing activities of the LGA.

The Maitland Regional Art Gallery will continue to offer an exciting focal point for the precinct, reflecting the creative and artistic expression that will continue to be a defining element of Central Maitland's identity. The architectural excellence of this building sets a benchmark for which all future development in Central Maitland should aspire to achieve.

5.7.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the East Central Precinct

- Focus and cultivate the educational, recreational, artistic, cultural and community role of the precinct to service the Maitland LGA;
- Reinforce Central Maitland's profile as a regional civic, cultural and artistic centre within the Lower Hunter;
- Capitalise on impressive architectural quality of the existing built form and intact heritage fabric of the precinct;
- Provide a network of connected green and public spaces for people to meet and to improve the circulation within the precinct and its interface with surrounding precincts; and
- Create opportunities to focus the community life of the LGA in this precinct, building on the existing facilities such as the art gallery, theatre, council administration, education and recreational facilities.

5.7.6 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the East Central Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above.

- Create areas of public open space fronting Council's administration centre addressing High Street near Hunter Street;
- Create an open space network for pedestrians and cyclists running north-south (a 'green link') between the River and Athel D'Ombra Drive;
- Improve the public domain and link public resources by providing desired links through large lots;
- Extend the River Walk to the east, as a precursor to the future extension to Morpeth;
- Extend high order public domain and street treatment of High Street;
- Encourage a pedestrian environment to protect student and amenity and to provide improved routes through the Maitland and High Street Railway Stations;
- Investigate opportunities to locate a tourist and visitor information point and orientation within the precinct with a High Street presence;
- Allow some infill of vacant lots with appropriate scale residential and community use buildings. Consider the High Street interface of the precinct as a civic and community core in the City and ensure that future development reinforces this; and
- To build the precinct as a focus for community life in Maitland projects such as the creation of a community garden could be achieved with effective partnerships between the Council, students and community organisations and reinforce Central Maitland as a place for learning and community life.



St Kilda community vegetable gardens, Melbourne. Source flickr.com



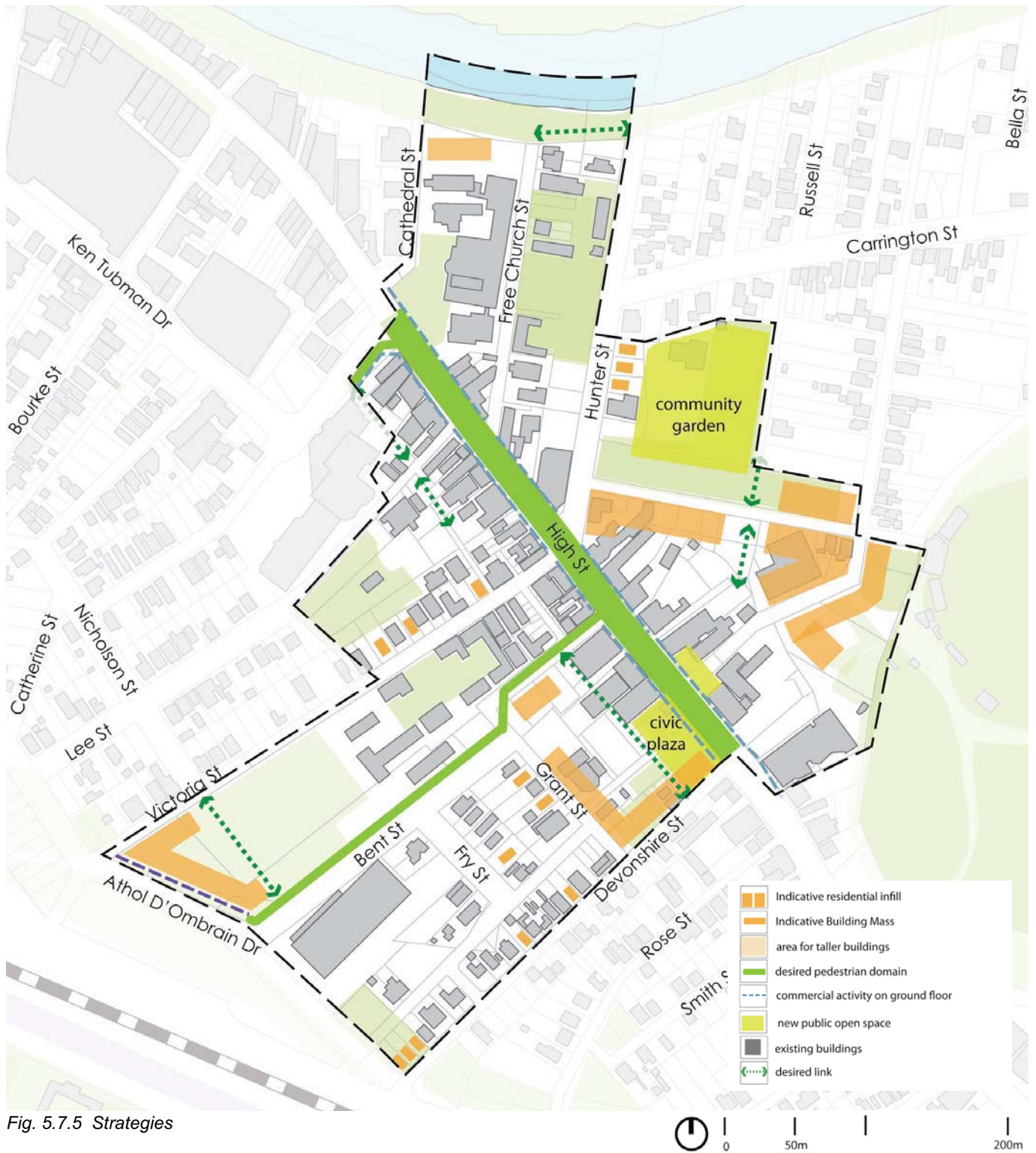


Fig. 5.7.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.8 Horseshoe Bend Precinct

5.8.1 Precinct character

The Horseshoe Bend precinct is characterised by residential land uses bound by rural land. The curve of the Hunter River defines the north of the precinct; the eastern boundary is defined by the former course of the river, now paddocks and pastoral land. The sports ground is located at the south and Hunter Street defines the western most extent of the precinct.

Despite the large expanse of River frontage, the precinct has limited views of river due to the height of the levee bank. Horseshoe Bend is a quiet and attractive residential area. Despite its close proximity to High Street, it retains a rural feel. The streets of Horseshoe Bend are pleasant and pedestrian orientated due to the consistent pattern of garden frontages, houses which address the public domain and quiet low traffic environment.

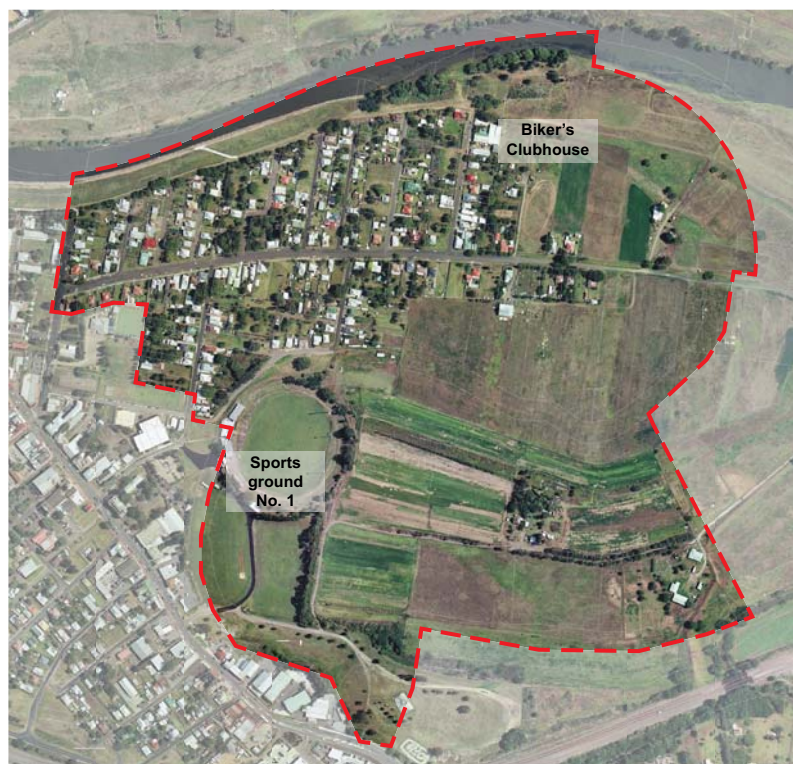


Fig. 5.8.1 Aerial photograph



Fig. 5.8.2 Precinct plan



5.8.2 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- Consistent and pleasant rural and residential character of the precinct;
- The precinct is in very close proximity to sporting facilities and large areas of open space providing active and passive recreation opportunities;
- The residential areas are located within a short walking distance (400m) of High Street;
- Carrington Street is particularly attractive street with mature Jacaranda tree planting and views to pastoral land to the east;
- Clear sight lines and views from residential areas afforded into rural land and open space areas to the east and south;
- An assessment of the heritage values in this precinct reveals a high proportion of contributory items with few isolated examples of listed items.



Fig. 5.8.3 Strengths and opportunities

5.8.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- High proportion of vacant lots due to the legacy of flooding and planning constraints;
- The area is a low lying area of land which is a pooling area for floodwaters in the event of a levee break and is not prone to 'flash flooding';
- Few views to the Hunter River despite close proximity to the precinct;
- Distance between the train stations and the residential areas of the precinct of approximately 1km is not considered to be a short walk; and
- Physical barriers to access exist at the edges of the precinct preventing smooth access and circulation: at the rear of High Street properties, between Carrington Street and Free Church Street.



Fig. 5.8.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.8.4 Desired future character

The future consolidation of the Horseshoe Bend Precinct will be through residential infill development, which is sympathetic to the historic character and scale of the area. Being in close proximity to the recreation and community facilities in the Civic Precinct and the beauty of the Hunter River, the Horseshoe Bend Precinct will offer a quiet location for existing and future residents to live in the City and will continue to retain the benefits of the attractive river and rural vistas.

5.8.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the Horseshoe Bend Precinct

- Allow gradual infill of vacant lots with appropriate and sensitive scale dwellings;
- Maintain and encourage the existing characteristics of contributory heritage streetscapes such as garden frontages, houses which address the street, similar scale and form of housing;
- Retain and protect green open space, views and dominant High Street skyline profile; and
- Provide links between residential streets and the River Walk.

5.8.6 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the Horseshoe Bend Residential Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- Extend the River Walk from Maitland to Morpeth along the top of levee bank, providing an attractive regional recreation trail for pedestrians and cyclists. In the short term the River Walk could be extended along existing streets in Horseshoe Bend;
- Improve public domain between Carrington Street and activities and open space to the south of the residential area;
- Attract regional users to No. 1 Sportsground with an upgrade to facilities and parking;
- Provide clear views and pedestrian connections between the precinct and High Street; and
- Establish a small park in the precinct for children's play.





5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.9 South Eastern Gateway Precinct

5.9.1 Precinct Character

The south eastern gateway precinct is a triangular shaped area that contains a major entry into Central Maitland from the New England Highway. The precinct is defined by the railway line to the south, Victoria Street to the west, and the interface of High Street properties and recreation land on the north east edge.

The High Street profile of the gateway is dominated by private commercial uses. The busy nature of High Street does not continue along streets that run south from it. A range of new development has recently occurred around High Street train station capitalising on high exposure to passing traffic. The remainder of the precinct has a residential and local character.

High Street, near the proposed entrance way to No. 1 Sportsground and from Smith Street northward presents continuous good quality public domain. However, the situation is not so positive at the beginning of High Street (near Sparke Street) where buildings are set back from the street edge and surface car parks and industrial yards are the interface with the main street.



Fig. 5.9.1 Aerial photograph

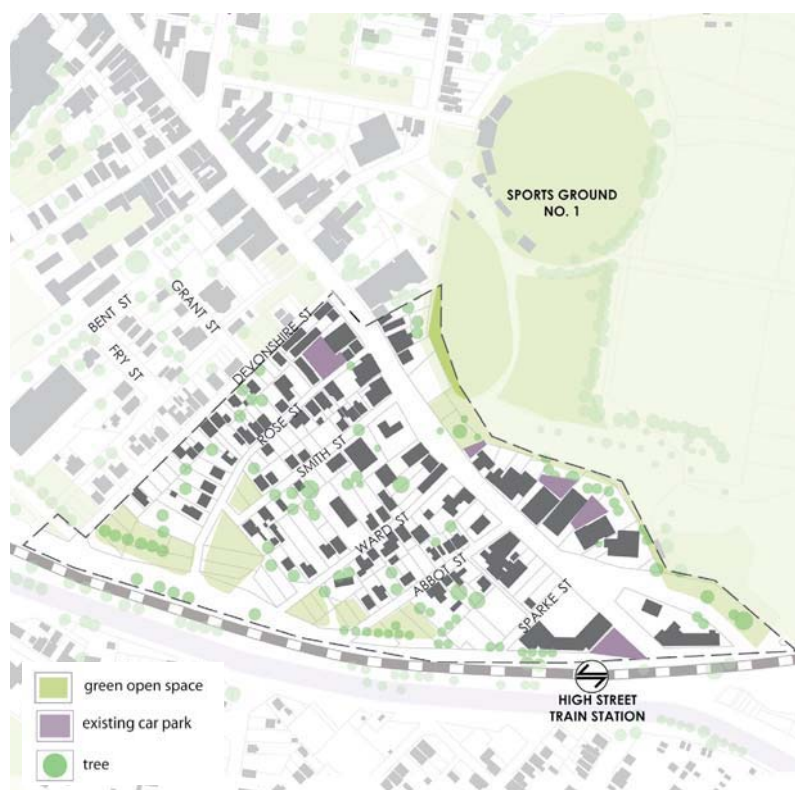


Fig. 5.9.2 Precinct plan



5.9.3 Strengths

Strengths that future development of the precinct should build on include:

- A clear view between High Street and No. 1 Sportsground boosts the profile of the recreation area and improves passive surveillance from the main street;
- Areas of contributory heritage value exist along residential streets on Devonshire, Smith, Ward and Abbot Streets;
- Through block links exist at the north and south of properties fronting High Street and these links assist the ease of access and circulation within the precinct;
- Higher topography of sites on the north of High Street offers good views from those sites across open space and rural land to the north and west;
- High Street Railway Station provides high levels of accessibility for the precinct and is in close proximity to residential land;



Fig. 5.9.3 Opportunities and strengths

5.9.3 Challenges

Challenges that future development of the precinct must respond to include:

- Many vacant lots in the precinct detract from the consistent heritage character of residential streets;
- Many examples of poor street address of buildings and sites occur at the south of High Street. This detracts from the gateway profile of the precinct and creates an alienating environment for pedestrians;
- Key sites addressing High Street are considered to have poor built form which detract from the gateway profile;
- Little signage or orientation is provided for traffic seeking to avoid High Street and bypass the core of Central Maitland along Athol D'Ombra Drive; and
- Few continuous areas of quality pedestrian environment exist in the south eastern gateway precinct.



Fig. 5.9.4 Challenges and weaknesses

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES

5.9.4 Desired future character

From the east, this precinct will be another arrival and 'gateway' point into Central Maitland and future redevelopment must reinforce a sense of arrival. The many small industrial, residential and commercial buildings, along with the close proximity to the East Central Precinct and the Maitland Regional Art Gallery will provide future opportunities to support the arts and cultural renaissance of Central Maitland and the possibility for the growth of creative industries and artist studios within the South-Eastern Gateway.

The location of High Street Railway Station within the precinct will provide opportunities for a higher density mix of uses and taller buildings to develop, which will provide a high level of public transport accessibility and future redevelopment of the land surrounding the railway station for transit oriented uses.

5.9.5 Policy Objectives

In consideration of the key strategies for the revitalisation of Central Maitland, the following provide objectives for the future development of the South-Eastern Gateway Precinct

- Redevelop sites adjacent to the train station as a mixed use area, capitalising on the proximity to public transport and affordable medium density development;
- Ensure that High St buildings address the street with active ground floors featuring retail and commercial uses.
- Encourage gradual residential infill on vacant lots with appropriate scale and form of development and to respect and nurture existing heritage values and significant buildings;
- Continue to build on the arts and culture led renaissance in Central Maitland, by creating a positive synergy with the artistic and cultural functions within the East Central precinct and to increase activity and vitality of the precinct;
- Improve public domain along High Street to improve the amenity, promote pedestrian safety and link to the East Central precinct; and
- Improve access and circulation in the precinct, including orientation and way-finding.

5.9.5 Opportunities

The following are some opportunities for the South-Eastern Gateway Precinct to achieve the vision and key policy objectives as outlined above:

- The vital opportunity for this precinct relate to its identification as an important city gateway. Many of the sites in the east of the precinct have only recently redeveloped, however the plan anticipates the eventual redevelopment of many and sets a framework for this to occur;
- The recognition of the train station as a public transport node;
- The reconfiguration of Sparke Street and the redevelopment of the adjacent site;
- The increased density of mixed use sites and taller buildings in the precinct;
- Sites nearby the High Street Train Station have the potential to be redeveloped, accommodating buildings which denote a gateway and capitalise on close proximity to public transport;
- Reorientation of traffic along an improved road-link in this precinct could alleviate some traffic load on High St;
- The presence of many older small industrial, commercial residential buildings combined with their affordability present the possibility for the growth of creative industries in the precinct. These are to be strongly encouraged and supported;
- Redevelop gateway buildings permitting additional height near the train station to announce the precinct from beyond the study area;
- Permit artist's studios, shop top housing, home offices and consultancies to open in the area promoting a revival;
- Establish a consistent rear lane link at properties fronting High Street; and
- Upgrade Athel D'Ombra Drive to link to Sparke Street offering an alternate car route through Central Maitland.





Fig. 5.9.5 Strategies

5. PRECINCT STRATEGIES



6 FUTURE ACTIONS

A comprehensive Implementation Plan will be prepared as a priority in 2010 to provide detailed direction on required actions, responsibilities and time frames for implementing this plan. The Implementation Plan will integrate further investigations, feasibility studies and community input.

The Implementation Plan will address in detail required amendments or reviews of planning instruments such as the LEP, DCP, Heritage Strategy and Public Domain Plan. It will also provide guidance on other measures to improve design quality, such as Design Review Panels and design competitions.

The following sections provide general recommendations regarding key actions to be addressed in the Implementation Plan.

6.1. Development Strategies and Targets

All three regional strategies relating to Maitland: the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy and Maitland Centres Strategy define Central Maitland as the highest order centre in the LGA. Accordingly these strategies project a higher than average residential growth and employment growth for Central Maitland, increasing its share of residents from ca. 3% to 4% (relative to the population of the LGA) and of jobs from ca. 22% to 29% (estimates based on compiled data from various sources). However this Structure Plan identifies not only the desirability, but also the potential to achieve higher residential and employment growth within Central Maitland. The development potential analysis indicates that more ambitious targets are achievable as follows:

- Increase of the residential population by 3,700 (1,700 new dwellings) bringing back Central Maitland's Population to 5,500 inhabitants, the same as in 1954.
- Increase the number of jobs by 4,200.

The table below provides a comparison between Department of Planning (DoP) projections (Lower Hunter Regional Strategy), Hill PDA draft projections (Maitland Centres Study), and the draft Structure Plan indicative targets.

	2008	Projections 2031		Structure Plan	
	* estimated	Regional Strategy	Centres Strategy	additional	total
Residents (dwellings)	* 1,800 (765)	+2,700 (+1,300)	n/a	+ 3,700 (+1,700)	5,500 (2,465)
Employment retail & comm.	* 3,300	+3,200	+8,400* *aspirational retail: +1,200	+ 4,200	7,500
Employment public sector	* 1,000	n/a	n/a	stable	1,000
Schools	2,063	n/a	n/a	stable	2,100
Car Parking	3,900	n/a	n/a	+ 2,650	6,550

As the proposed figures are based on a more detailed analysis than was possible within the scope of regional strategies, it is recommended that the residential and employment targets of this plan inform the next revision of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy and Maitland Centres Strategy.

6. FUTURE ACTIONS



Fig. 6.1. Residential Growth

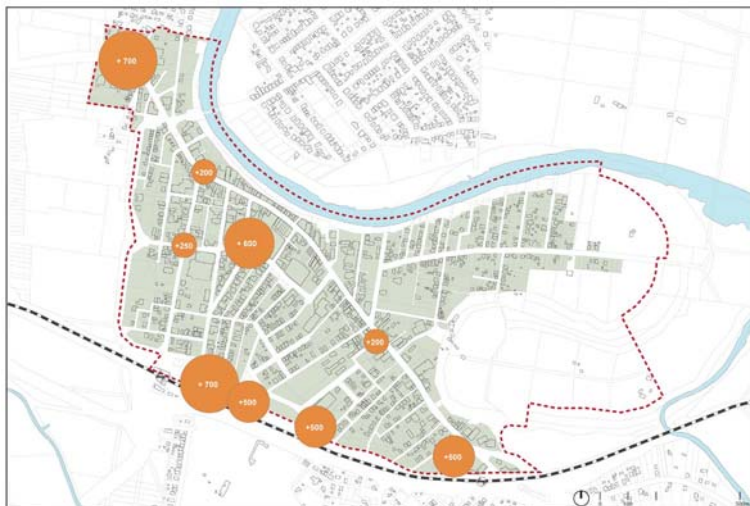


Fig. 6.2. Employment Growth

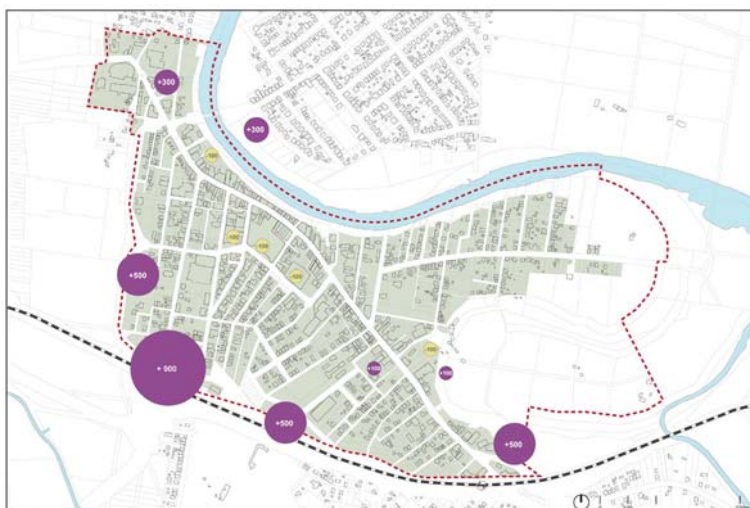


Fig. 6.3. Car Parking Growth

The proposed growth targets can be achieved without compromising the heritage character of the town as it:

- Does NOT require any increase in built density on sites containing buildings with heritage character;
- Does NOT require excessive heights which would compromise the heritage townscape and skyline;
- Does NOT require excessive densities for new developments. The Structure Plan recommends maximum densities in the range of FSR 1.0 - 2.0:1 for residential, 2.0-3.0:1 for mixed-use and 3.5:1 for commercial developments (along the railway line). In Horseshoe Bend and South-Central Precincts the residential FSR will stay in the range of 0.4 - 0.8:1.

*Notes:

The FSRs mentioned above refer to total GFA including above ground car parking, circulation spaces etc. Maximum FSRs in the revised LEP will have to consider the new standard definition of GFA which applies in NSW.

Methodology:

Calculation of potential development

The figures are based on accurate site areas and average FSRs for each building block.

For calculating future development potential we applied rather conservative figures. These numbers were double-checked by testing development potential on selected sample lots.

The total area of all lots in Central Maitland is ca. 1,020,000m², of which 14% are vacant, 6% occupied by large surface car parking, and ca. 14% occupied by buildings with intrusive character.

The resulting potential total GFA achievable on all vacant lots and surface car parking is ca. 300,000 m².

The redevelopment of sites occupied by buildings with intrusive character could provide further 200,000 m² GFA.

Thus only on lots which do not contain any item with heritage significance (1/3 of all lots), Central Maitland's GFA could be increased by ca. 500,000 m².



The distribution of the proposed new development is illustrated in the figure below (Fig.6.4). It is important to note that the figures are indicative only, and may be refined as result of detailed precinct studies and master plans.

Residential growth is expected to occur in all precincts, with the highest growth in the Church St Precinct and East Central Precinct. In contrast employment growth potential is concentrated in the Railway Precinct (ca.40% of total), with the Long Bridge Precinct and Ken Tubman Drive Precinct to follow (ca 15% of total each). No significant growth of employment is projected for predominantly residential precincts (Horseshoe Bend and South Central Precinct).

The provision of public car parking can be substantially increased at gateway sites, while a slight reduction of the number of car parking spaces on central prime land in the Ken Tubman Drive Precinct will allow the much required residential and employment growth in this precinct.

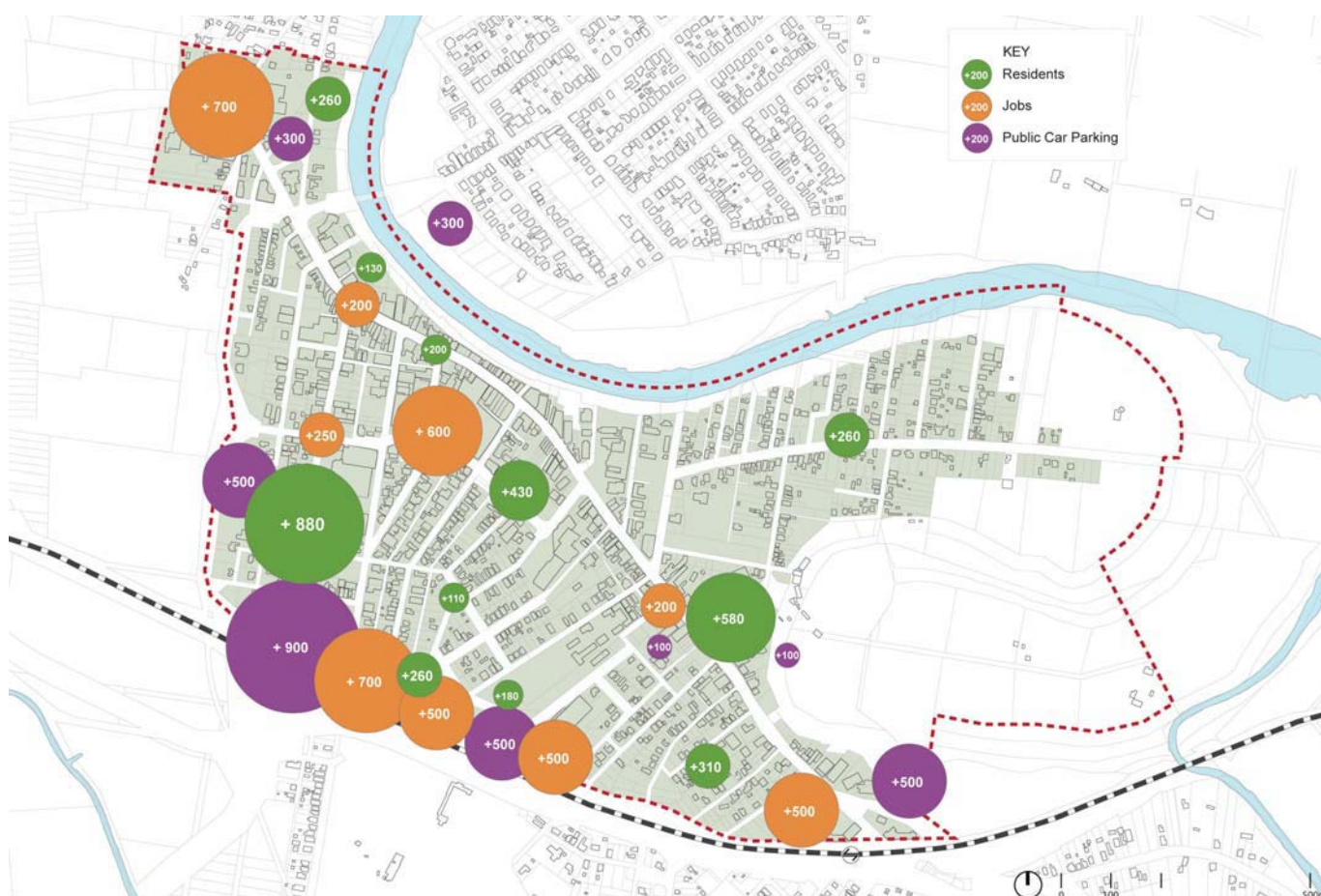


Fig.6.4. Development potential

6. FUTURE ACTIONS

6.2. Sustainable Transport Plan

Maitland's transport system, is heavily car dominated, despite the opportunities offered by the existing train network and bicycle friendly climate and topography. While cars provide great mobility to residents it is important to address the negative impacts of car usage, and to provide better alternatives where possible.

Cars are contributing a significant part of national greenhouse gas emissions. Apart from greenhouse gases, vehicle emissions include air toxins that have detrimental effects on people's health. A number of these contaminants have been linked to causing cancer, birth defects, brain and nerve damage, and long term injury to the lungs and breathing passages.

Another negative effects of a car dominated transport system which is particularly relevant for a town centre, is car parking space demand. A single car parking space occupies between 30-35 m² and costs between 30,000 - 40,000 AUD if built underground. This cost puts great pressure on the above-ground development often resulting in negative outcomes and reduced affordability of residential or commercial space.

The Sustainable Transport Plan will examine the benefit-cost ratio of different transport modes. The ACT Sustainable Transport Plan suggest that the benefit-cost ratio of investment in sustainable transport is between 2:1 and 3:1.

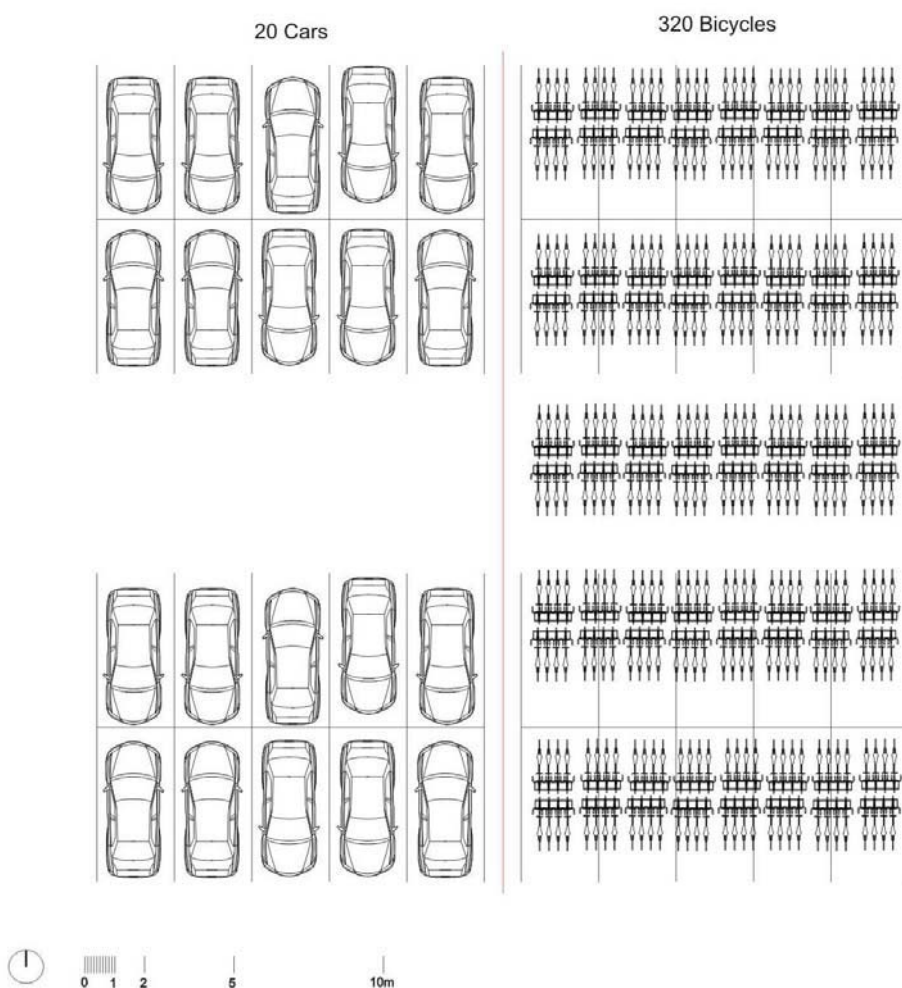


Fig.6.6. Parking Space Demand: cars vs. bicycles.



Therefore it is extremely important that the process initiated by the Sustainable Transport in the Lower Hunter Issues Paper (2006) is swiftly moved forward towards a detailed Sustainable Transport Plan for the whole LGA.

It is recommended that a Sustainable Transport Plan be undertaken by Council to:

- Set a policy direction to achieve a more sustainable transport system;
- Set a framework to achieve a transport system that has lower overall costs, particularly lower greenhouse gas emissions, lower air pollution, reduced accidents and lower health costs,
- Provides more transport options for the community;
- Achieve a shift towards more use of walking, cycling and public transport;
- Establish S94 priorities and equitable contribution framework.

The Sustainable Transport Plan will be consistent with the goals of this Structure Plan and other local and regional strategic documents and will:

- Support the vitality, amenity and attractiveness of the town centre;
- Make Central Maitland an even better place to live, visit and do business;
- Encourage residents to be more active and healthy;
- Decrease air and noise pollution; and
- Decrease the number of accidents.

The Transport Plan will need to address following strategic issues:

- Mobility and access to work, home, shop, business, recreation and services;
- Equity of access to transport;
- Frequent, reliable, comfortable, affordable and 'understandable' public transport services
- Minimised consumption of resources: energy, materials and land;
- Low emissions and low noise impacts;
- Safety and security for users and the community;
- Efficiency: minimised travel times;
- Transport investment that takes into account whole of life cost and benefits and the cost and benefits of externalities;

Modal Share Targets

Numeric targets are commonly used on all government levels as an effective tool which helps monitoring the implementation of goals such as sustainable transport. Modal share targets are in place in many major cities in Australia and overseas. Town Centres have naturally a better share of sustainable transport mode as a result of more mixed and dense land use, which encourage walking. The Structure Plan strongly recommends that a modal share target be set for Central Maitland that aims to establish the percentage of trips made by sustainable transport modes become dominant (more than 50% of all trips) within a short timeframe.

While such a target should be set by the Sustainable Transport Plan the Structure Plan suggests an interim target of 51% by 2020 to be adopted as part of this Plan.

Incentives for Sustainable Transport Modes

Actions by which sustainable transport can be encouraged include:

- Provision of bicycle parking in public space;
- Bicycle storage requirements as part of the DCP (1 bicycle per dwelling);
- Reduce car parking requirements for residents in the town centre.

6. FUTURE ACTIONS

6.3 Land Use Strategy Options

Essential to the implementation of this Structure Plan is a review of land use zoning provisions within the LEP in order to achieve the vision and implement the strategies presented in this plan. The Plan encourages mixed-use development in many areas, including along High St, Church St and Athel D'Ombra Dr to achieve a vibrant street life, strengthen the local community and reduce traffic demand. In consequence it is recommended that land use zoning should permit a broad range of compatible land uses in an area, and avoid restrictions which would lead to unnecessary segregation of activities.

The diagram below illustrates one possible pattern of land uses which is seen as consistent with the aims of this plan. The extensive use of mixed-use zones does not only reflect past and present land use patterns but also the desired future character of Central Maitland. The area designated as "Commercial Core" exemplifies how the restriction of residential uses within a carefully located small precinct, could create an opportunity for the development of a focal point for a more intensive nighttime economy.

While land use zoning is a primary tool of urban planning, it needs to be consistent and fine-tuned with other planning instruments and policies, such as development controls and car parking requirements.

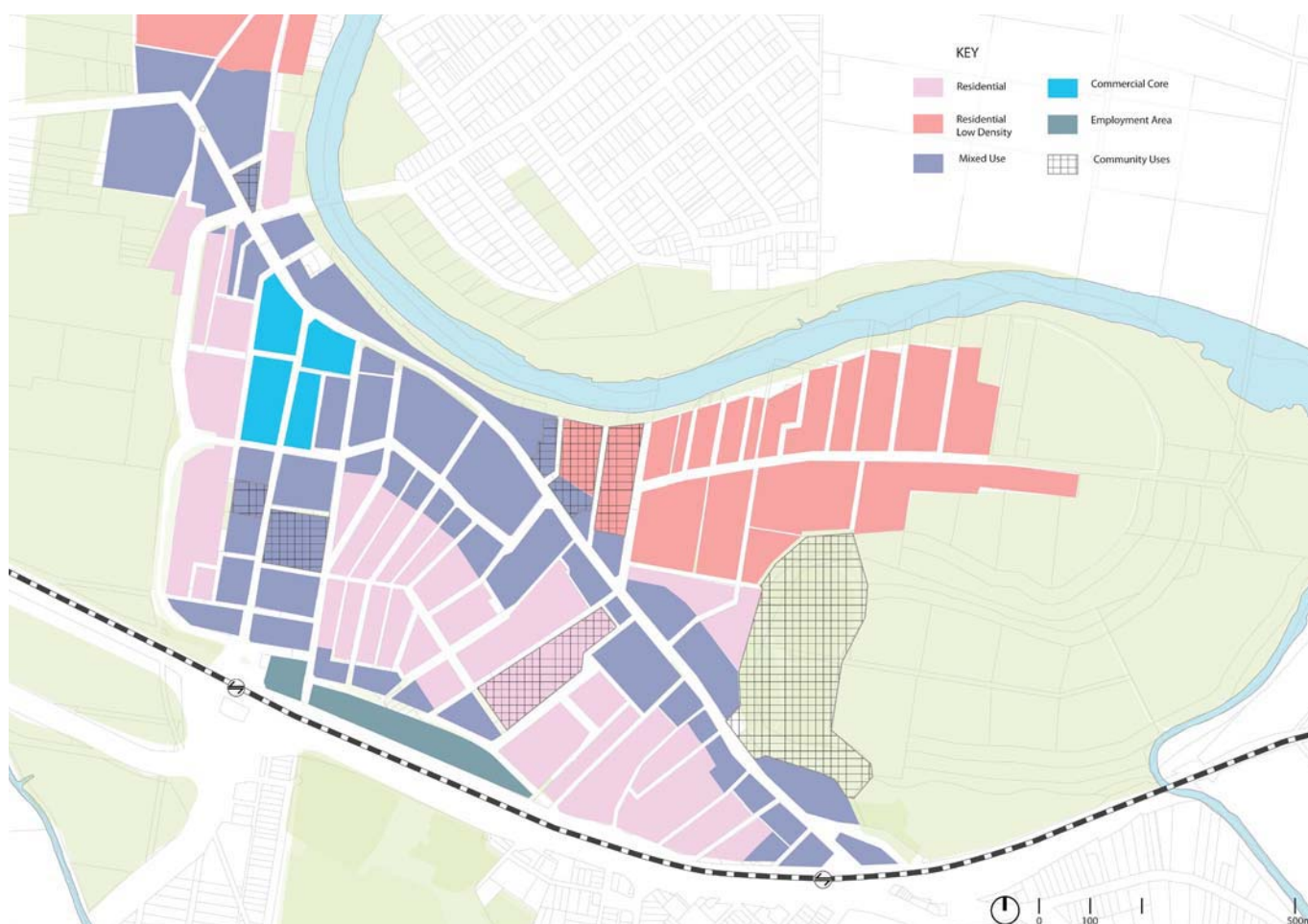


Fig.6.5.Potential future land use strategy



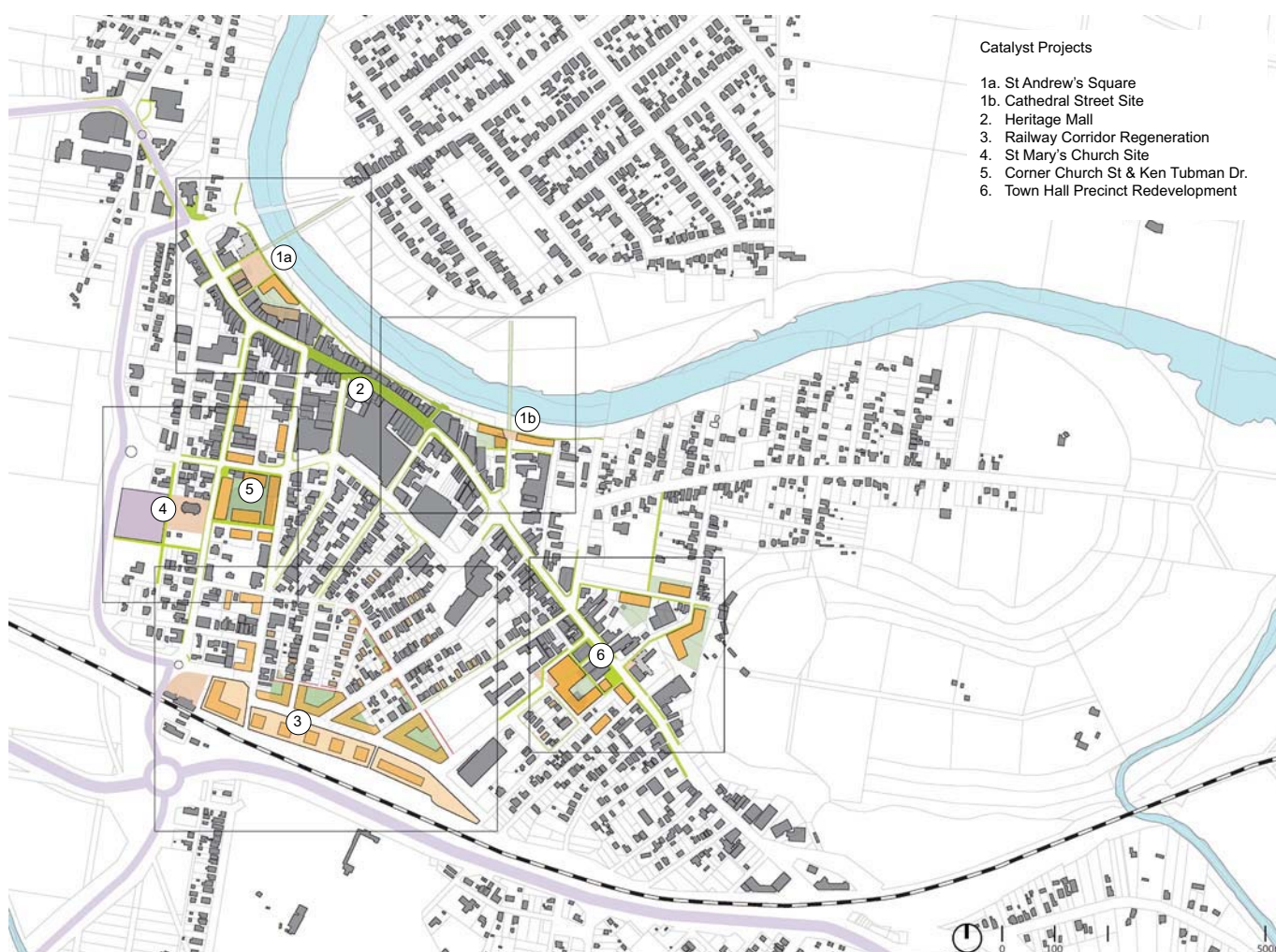
6.4. Key Sites and Catalyst Projects

A number of key sites and projects have been identified as potential catalyst for redevelopment in Central Maitland. Sites have been chosen due to their strategic locations, ownership characteristics and realistic potential for redevelopment to occur within the 20 year time frame of this Structure Plan. The time frame for the development of these sites and projects will vary and requires more detailed planning, design and feasibility investigations to occur.

6.4.1 St Andrews Street and Cathedral Street sites

Two of the catalyst projects to achieve the vision for Central Maitland is the creation of two new public squares on the banks of the Hunter River. In combination with the proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge to Lorn, the formation of these squares encourages circulation to activate both sides of the Hunter River, opening up this under-utilised space and providing quality spaces for a variety of activities to take place in a stunning location. For many years, development in the High Street Precinct has turned their back on the Hunter River, the introduction of these public spaces at the end of St Andrews Street and Cathedral Street starts to redress this and reconnect High Street and Central Maitland to this exceptional natural asset.

It is recommended that Council lead the redevelopment and masterplanning process for both the St Andrews Street and Cathedral Street sites.



6. FUTURE ACTIONS

St Andrews Street River Square concept

As landowner for much of the site, Council has the potential to shape this area. The site currently operates as a car park and is addressed by the back of many High Street buildings. It is proposed the redevelopment of the site provide areas of public open space and improved built form to achieve higher and better use of the land.

Other beneficial outcomes for the redevelopment of a new public square in this location include:

- Re-establish the historic bridge connection at the end of St Andrews Street;
- Create an engaging public square to facilitate a variety of activities to occur;
- Provide active ground floor and street frontages addressing High Street, the square and the River Walk; and
- Future development for a mix of uses, including retail activities, cafes and restaurants and a significant residential component.



St Andrews St development site.



Fig.6.8.St.Andrews car park site Concept

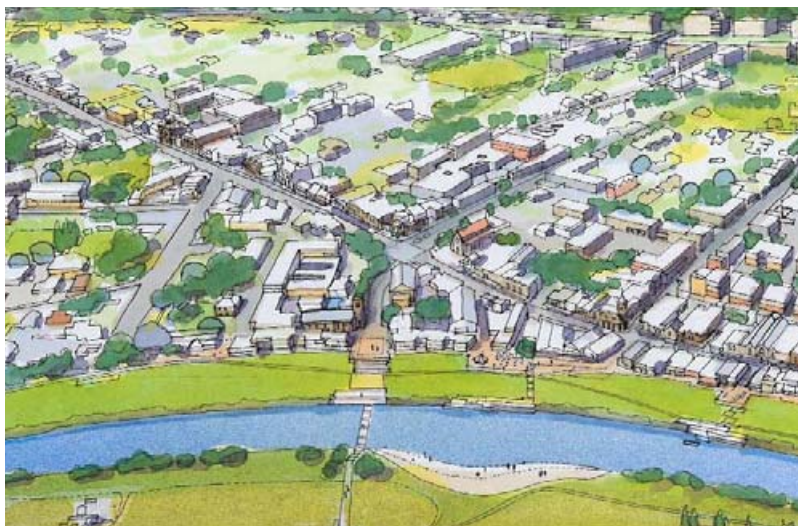


Cathedral Street site

In both public and private ownership, the site currently operates as a car park and is addressed by the back of many High Street buildings including childcare, education and religious buildings. It is proposed that redevelopment of the site to provide areas of public open space and improved development form would achieve higher and better use of the land. Importantly, the Cathedral St site will be a 'landing' point for pedestrian and cyclists using the proposed new bridge connecting the northern banks of the River and Lorn to Central Maitland.

Other beneficial outcomes for the redevelopment of this site include:

- Establish a new bridge connection between Lorn and Central Maitland. The creation of a new bridge will not only be a physical connection but its design will become an architectural attraction and will be a reflection of Central Maitland as a place for artistic expression;
- Create an intimate, welcoming public square to facilitate a variety of activities to occur and as the arrival point for pedestrian and cyclists;
- Provide active ground floor and street frontages addressing High Street, the square and the River Walk; and
- Future development for a mix of uses, including retail activities, cafes and restaurants and a significant residential component.



Cathedral St car park site.





Fig.6.9. Cathedral St. car park site Concept

6. FUTURE ACTIONS

6.4.2 Maitland Heritage Mall


Among the strategies for reactivating Central Maitland, the plan has considered options for High Street. The complex nature of the matter means there is not a simple answer on this question. Throughout the Structure Plan, strategies are focussed on improving the walking environment in the city centre, both through increasing the number and variety of attractions and through improving environmental factors such as easy crossings, and creating pleasant and safe walking environment. In this sense a busy traffic-free environment is the ideal. However convenient access is desirable for all transport modes including motor vehicles. The recommendation of this structure plan is to allow for further discussions and ground testing on this question while proceeding with a set of other strategies and actions to increase the activation of the centre and improve access through Central Maitland. The advantages and disadvantages of options for the mall are set out in the table below and form the basis for further discussions with key stakeholders.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	PRECEDENTS
I. The mall is refurbished to remain as pedestrian only zone.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the only public open space of a civic nature (providing ample opportunities for social interaction) in the city; Enables a more profound understanding of the heritage building context, as people can walk along the middle of the street, at slow pace, as at the time the city was built; Enhances retail as it allows pleasant walking environment and easy crossing (same principle as Green Hills); Opportunity for high-quality outdoor dining; Pedestrian safety is ensured, the model is especially good for children, the elderly and shoppers; Capacity for special events; Better for health: encourages walking in a less air polluted environment; Is consistent with sustainable transport strategy and the aim of reducing car dependency; Upgrade can be achieved at lower expense than a structural re-modelling; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constrains vehicular circulation through Central Maitland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Corso, Manly  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dixon Street, Sydney George St, Windsor NSW
II. The mall remains as a pedestrian zone but opens to traffic part time (ie, after business hours)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides public open space in the centre of town at key times (weekends, lunchtimes, late night trading, markets); Peak hour opening could assist in relieving traffic congestion in other areas of Central Maitland; Could provide increased loading and delivery opportunity for businesses and shops located here; lower cost complete than remodelling of street section; Provides late night passive surveillance from vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires clear management and operation criteria; Limitations to refurbishment of the mall i.e. playing areas, location of benches; reduces residential amenity (traffic noise overnight); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitt Street Mall, Sydney 



The City should budget for major public domain upgrade within 5 years. The decision on what format the street should take will be based on an assessment of the success of other strategies implemented for the High Street Precinct and testing of options. It is noted that measures of success will take time to materialise. They will be indicated by such things as new shops and restaurants opening in the area and the number of people visiting during the day and evening.

Redevelopment of the mall will be subject to further detailed planning and design proposals all which must demonstrate consistency with the vision and key policy objectives of the High Street Precinct and contribute to achieving the overall vision for Central Maitland.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	PRECEDENTS
III. The mall opens to traffic moving at slow speeds.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will improve circulation through Central Maitland by relieving traffic pressure on bypass roads and Ken Tubman Drive; Will reinstate the pre-1988 profile-of High Street with the traditional country town arrival experience and vehicular exposure to businesses; Allows for first time visitors to find their way through the centre by car; Slow speed (below 30 km/h) vehicle travel minimises accident risk; Creates opportunity for short-term on street parking; Provides late night passive surveillance from vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased traffic noise, no street music possible; Reduced freedom of movement, particularly affecting children and elderly; Reduces space for dining, busking, playing, sitting, and informal activity on the street; Removes a unique type of open space in the whole Maitland LGA; Reduces competition of High St with River front as place for public open space, dining and leisure area and loses competition with Green Hills Mall as a pedestrian shopping environment; Creates the possibility for pedestrian and cycle/vehicle conflict if detailed design is not carefully considered; Reduced perception of heritage streetscape as walking along the middle of the street would not be possible; Encouragement of car usage instead of walking, with implications to people's health and the environment; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Street Parramatta  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Darling Street, Balmain Darby Street, Newcastle

The raft of strategies aimed at stimulating activities in the centre that could proceed in the interim, with the aim of creating a buzzing activity centre without the introduction of traffic in the high street. Potential strategies include:

- Landuse policy reforms to allow residential growth;
- Redevelopment of key sites and catalyst projects;
- The creation of new Hunter River pedestrian/cycle crossings;
- Improvements to the river front and river bank;
- Acquisition and redevelopment of sites to link the mall with the river front; and
- Strengthening the retail offer combined with the creation of an entertainment/restaurant precinct.

6. FUTURE ACTIONS

6.4.3 Railway Corridor Regeneration

The redevelopment of underutilised land buffering the railway and residential areas of Central Maitland is well suited to commercial and business uses. The redevelopment of this land to provide increased employment generating activities such as offices and business services would be the most effective and valuable use of the site, particularly in regards to the highly accessible location in close proximity to public transport and the residential area of Central Maitland. Redevelopment of this land for employment generating activities would contribute to the 3,200 additional jobs and could act as a catalyst project in the growth and rejuvenation of Central Maitland.



Aerial photograph showing the Railway Corridor and potential future employment (shown in red).



Concept

Fig.6.10.Illustrative new subdivision pattern in the Railway Precinct



The site is a slender area of land that is vacant. It is constrained by its narrow, linear shape and by noise from the railway and the New England Highway immediately to the south. Issues that would need to be investigated and resolved through a detailed planning process include, but are not limited to:

- The type and intensity of activities proposed on the railway corridor land;
- Scale, height and design of new buildings proposed for the railway corridor land;
- The interface of new development with the existing South-Central Residential Precinct and community facilities, such as the school and indoor recreational facility;
- The design response of new buildings on the railway corridor land. It is critical that a variety of design solutions be investigated and that new built forms define and activate street edge. An example of how this could be achieved is with a two storey podium with commercial on ground level street frontage;
- Impact of new development on historic skyline, adjacent heritage items and heritage character of the South-Central Residential Precinct needs careful consideration;
- Traffic generation and the impact on road users and pedestrians related to the increased use of land;
- The coordination of public and private landowners and the classification of the land;
- Impacts of flooding and drainage constraints associated with the land;
- Provision of public open space and in particular, child-friendly spaces; and
- The impacts of noise and vibration from the railway and highway on new commercial development and the greater protection to existing residents from the redevelopment of the railway corridor land.



Fig.6.11. Illustrative building footprints - Railway Precinct

6. FUTURE ACTIONS

6.4.4 St Mary's Anglican Church Site

The possible changes around St Mary's Anglican Church include significant church land. The church may look favourably on these changes because they place the church at the centre of a new movement network. The possible extension of St Andrews Street would directly connect to the proposed town and market square on the Hunter River.

Another option is the provision of a future car park and other developments which would represent an anchor to its west to stimulate greater activity within the precinct. This potential development, together with other changes in the precinct represents a transformation of the site from a town edge setting to a centre of activity.

The redevelopment of the western side of St Mary's Anglican Church site could provide multiple public benefits. These might include:

- Provision of a large consolidated public car parking to provide parking for visitors and workers which is consistent with the 'gateway' parking strategy underpinning this structure plan;
- A convenient entry point for tourists, which would start their visit to Central Maitland from one of the most interesting historical ensembles in the city, formed by St Mary's, its associated Rectory, Brough House and Grossmann House;
- Improved connectivity by linking the northern and southern sections of St Andrew's Street; and
- Potential small scale residential or aged care development.

Future redevelopment of this site will be subject to further detailed planning and design proposals all which must demonstrate consistency with the vision and key policy objectives of the Church Street Precinct and contribute to achieving the overall vision for Central Maitland.



Fig. 6.12. Church St Precinct - illustrative sketch.



6.4.5. Corner of Church St and Ken Tubman Drive (Pender Place Site)

The location of this site on the corner of Church Street and Ken Tubman Drive, within 500m of the Maitland Railway Station offers significant redevelopment opportunities for a mix of uses on site, providing a highly accessible location for residents and businesses. Improving the address to the three frontages will result in more inviting surrounds and provide a transition between the predominant residential character of the southern half of the precinct with the commercial character of the northern half of the precinct.

The redevelopment of Church Street/ Ken Tubman Drive site could provide the following benefits:

- Improved address to the Elgin Street, Church Street and Ken Tubman Drive frontages to create a more pedestrian friendly environment;
- Widening, activation and public domain upgrade of Scotia Street (south);
- Increased land use intensity with a new mixed use development which includes an important residential component;
- Much improved integration with the heritage buildings which occupies the north-western corner of the site and on adjoining properties;

Future redevelopment of this site will be subject to further detailed planning and design proposals all which must demonstrate consistency with the vision and key policy objectives of the Church Street Precinct and contribute to achieving the overall vision for Central Maitland.

6.4.6 Town Hall Area Redevelopment

There are multiple sites within the East Central precinct which provide opportunities for more civic, educational, artistic and cultural developments. Some of these sites are owned by Council while others are owned by private land owners and organisations.

The largest development in the precinct would be the redevelopment of the Town Hall sites, which could accommodate:

- An extension and redesign of council office space and associated parking;
- Creation of a new civic plaza to reinforce the identity of this precinct;
- Integration of more community and recreational facilities in the precinct, such as a community garden;
- In combination with the South-Eastern Gateway Precinct, the location of artist studios and workshops creating a synergy with the Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Redevelopment of sites in this area will be subject to further detailed planning and design proposals all which must demonstrate consistency with the vision and key policy objectives of the East Central Precinct and contribute to achieving the overall vision for Central Maitland.



Fig. 6.13. East Central Precinct - illustrative sketch.

6. FUTURE ACTIONS



APPENDIX A

Parking and Access Management



1. Parking within the CBD

Taking into account that parking strategies play an important role as part of an integrated transport planning approach, recommendations should be based on an awareness of overall and long-term visions for the area. This means supporting strategies that are towards a more sustainable and less car dependent environment while maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the area. Therefore, this study has aimed to develop and propose parking policies that are in line with the characteristics and the need of the area.

The documents Maitland City Centre Marketing Review (2005) and the Maitland CBD Parking Review (2004) provide detailed assessment of the parking supply and demand within the study area. Based on these documents and site analysis of the area, a parking review has been carried out.

Generally, parkers can be divided into the following indicative categories (during a weekday):

- **Resident Parkers:** Those vehicles leaving the study area between 7 AM and 9 AM and returning between 4 PM and 6 PM or those vehicles parked all day without moving or making in/out trips.
- **Short Stay Visitors:** Those vehicles, which park for less than 3 hours.
- **Long Stay Visitors/ Part-Time Workers/Commuters:** Those vehicles, which park for up to 6 hours.
- **Full Time Workers/Commuters:** Those vehicles, which park for over 6 hours (generally an 8 hours stay)

The overall parking supply for the Maitland CBD is shown in Table 1.1. There are a total of some 3,902 parking spaces within the City Centre, of which 597 are on street, 2,428 are public off street and 877 are private unrestricted off street spaces.

The current parking situation within the CBD shows an overall utility rate of about 79% for on-street parking. Similarly the off street parking occupancy rates vary from 60% to 94% with the exception of the Cinema Complex which experiences an average utility rate of only 40%.

An overview of parking survey results and general observations of the parking activity within the CBD area indicates that:

- Generally there is a high demand for both on and off street parking.
- The demand for parking is higher within the north - western sections of the CBD particularly the areas near High, Church, Elgin, St Andrews, Burke and Bulwer Streets.
- While many parking areas experience a full occupancy during peak activity times such as Christmas shopping period, these parking demands reduces to a lower level during normal periods.
- The results from parking study and pilot surveys of various parking sites within the study area indicate that currently the area operates at a near capacity in terms of parking requirements. It appears that there is a high demand for long stay parkers at designated western section.

7. APPENDIX A

- It is evident that parking demand is greatest at the areas close to parkers' destinations. This can be seen by the low usage of parking areas such as Pender Place multi storey area where the top level generally operates at 33% occupancy or top level of Kmart parking facility with about 45% utility rate.

Table 1.1 Parking Supply

Type of Parking	Number of spaces
On Street	
Time restricted	307
Unrestricted	291
Total On Street	598
Off Street	
Time restricted	1,204
Unrestricted – Public	1,224
Unrestricted - Private	876
Total Off Street	3,304
Total Restricted	1,511
Total Unrestricted	2,391
Total Parking Supply	3,902

Parking Strategy

The parking strategy for the CBD comprises of two major elements: **a)** Review of Car Parking Development Control Plan (DCP); and **b)** Parking Management Measures, with consideration to the following points:

- To complement and stimulate the revitalisation of the CBD
- To meet the existing and future environmental and transport initiatives/responsibilities
- To provide a specific response to the need and demand of the area
- To reflect the aim and objectives of the Central Maitland Structure Plan

A review of gross floor area (GFA) for various uses within the CBD area shows a total of 75,408 m² of retail, 79,255 m² of commercial use, 17,191 m² of industrial land and 7,364 m² of medical use .

The parking rates (number of spaces per GFA) based on different land uses are shown in Table 5.2. The overall assessment indicates a total of some 154,663 m² for combined retail and commercial use with some 3500 parking spaces would result in a parking rate of 1 space per 44 m² for the area (considering the remaining some 400 parking spaces are for industrial and other uses). However, applying the Council's rates for commercial and retail uses results in a parking demand of some 3900 spaces. It is clearly evident that parking supply for the area reflects its current demand at near capacity (in consideration with the survey results) particularly at the western section of the CBD.



Table 1.2 Parking Rates for Maitland CBD

Category	Retail	Commercial	Medical	Industry	Medium Density Housing
Council	Shops less than 1000 m ² – 1 space / 25 m ² GFA 1 sp. / 35 m ² GFA for new floor space Shops greater than 1000 m ² – 1 sp. / 16 m ² GFA	Business Premises including medical 1 / 45 m ²	1 / 45 m ²	1 / 75 m ²	1 space for each one or two bedroom dwelling or 2 spaces for each dwelling containing more than two bedrooms plus 1 visitor space for the first three dwellings and 1 space for every five thereafter or par thereof
RTA	1 / 20 – 30 m ² *	1 / 40 m ²	4 / 100 m ²	1 / 77 m ²	1- 1.5 per unit + visitor parking 1 / 5 units
Parking Study	1 / 20 m ²	1 / 37 m ²			

* assuming GLA is about 0.80 of GFA for areas less than 10,000 m² to over 30,000 m²

Accordingly, the following policies are suggested as part of a DCP – Car Parking for the area:

1. The Maitland CBD could be zoned into eastern and western sections with Victoria Street forming the boundary line.
2. The current Council's code would be applicable to the eastern section with adoption of 1 space per 35 m² for all retail uses.
3. The parking rate for retail and commercial uses in the western section could be limited to a maximum of 1 space per 50 m².
4. The current Council's parking rate for medium density housing would be maintained for both eastern and western sections.
5. Any deficiency on parking requirements (with exception of residential developments) as part of a development application could be compensated by way of contribution for provision of a common car parking area.

The above parking policies aim to encourage retail and business developments within the area while encouraging a higher use of active and public transport. These also respond to the context of the area by having a lower impact on sites with specific character as part of a potential redevelopment proposal.

As part of the overall parking management in the study area and improve the parking situation while responding to the area characteristics, the following measures are proposed:

- Installation of directional signs to show parking areas
- Provide parking facilities for short stay parkers closer to their destination – by managing time restrictions
- Encourage long stay parkers to utilise car parks that are within walking distance but away from attraction areas - by managing time restrictions
- Redevelopment of Church and Elgin Streets with multi level car park
- Possible redevelopment of car park at north-west corner of Charles and Ken Tubman Drive (subject to site's acquisition)
- Inclusion of above ground parking level as part of the design schemes for redevelopments sites (as addressed in Structure Plan)
- Removal of the car parking areas at Cathedral and St Andrews Streets along the river side. These sites could be utilised for more appropriate use as part of the urban renewal.
- Investigate the introduction of Resident Parking Scheme for its feasibility and possible implementation
- Provide bicycle storage areas throughout the CBD area to encourage bicycle use.
- Negotiate with the owners of the Cinema Complex (or other possible areas) to use “excess” parking supply within the Complex for use by the public. This could be accommodated by time restriction or lease arrangement.
- Ensure that any car parking facility that would be provided is safe and elements of “crime prevention by design” are employed.
- Introduce incentive measures for employees who use active or public transport such as parking concession to employers who provide such schemes.

2. Access Management Plan

A traffic management plan for the area has been developed in order to:

- Provide a better amenity for pedestrians, cyclists and users of the area.
- Improve vehicular traffic movements within the area.
- Reduce vehicular as well as pedestrian conflicts within the area.
- Provide better accessibility and a safer road system for the community.
- Respond to the needs of the community for the existing issues as well as future requirements of the area.

It should be noted that the proposed plan is based on a holistic approach to study area rather than applying the traditional “local area traffic management”. This method will aim to provide a more integrated solution with consideration to all modes of transport as well as land use activity and character. This results to an integrated movement plan for the area where the issue of accessibility and mobility for all users are considered and addressed.



The main outcomes of the proposed access management plan for the Maitland CBD are summarised below:

1. Upgrade of Athel D'ombrain Drive: the introduction of this alternative route will provide a higher capacity for the road network hence, better mobility, accessibility and choice of routes for users of the area.
2. Access plans for pedestrians and cyclists: the proposed measures while improve or provide facilities for pedestrian and cyclists, they also form part of the access plan for the area. For example, possible replacement of the current roundabout at intersection of High Street and Ken Tubman Drive (east end) - while it would provides better facility for pedestrians, it also integrates as part of the overall vehicular movement throughout the area as well.
3. The proposed road hierarchy plan: its aims to represent a functional utilisation of the streets within the network i.e. appropriate use of the streets and balanced distribution of vehicular traffic. For example, recognition of Victoria Street as a "major local" road.
4. Route Network Options: the tested scenarios aimed to address the issue of vehicular circulation within the Maitland CBD. The assessment of traffic modelling results showed that there would be no adverse impact if the High Street would be reconnected (i.e. opening the Heritage Mall) and in fact marginal improvement of route network operation could also be experienced.
5. Intersection improvements: these measures will contribute to overall operation of the street system while providing facility for the community e.g. proposed traffic signals at intersection of Les Darcy Drive at Louth Park Road. Part 1 of the study has also detailed the assessment of major intersections within the study area. It is recognised that the operation of certain intersections such as Les Darcy Drive with Church Street and Belmore Road with High Street will be improved by introduction of future route proposals (e.g. Third River Crossing) in conjunction with measures outlined in this study.



APPENDIX B

Planning innovation and flooding - Clarence River Case Study

For many years Grafton City in the Clarence Valley Local Government Area was heavily constrained by flooding issues. A decline in the City's vitality, tourism and economic health led to Council starting an economic development planning program that encompassed physical as well as cultural issues. The Clarence Valley Tourism Strategy and associated planning reviews have had a real and tangible impact on the health of the City Centre.

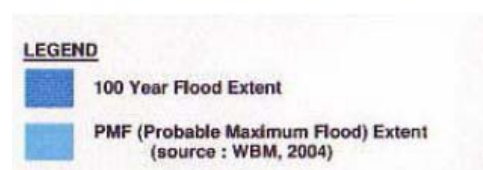
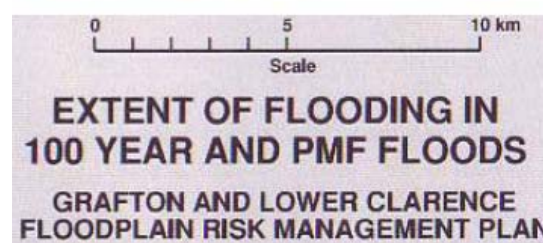
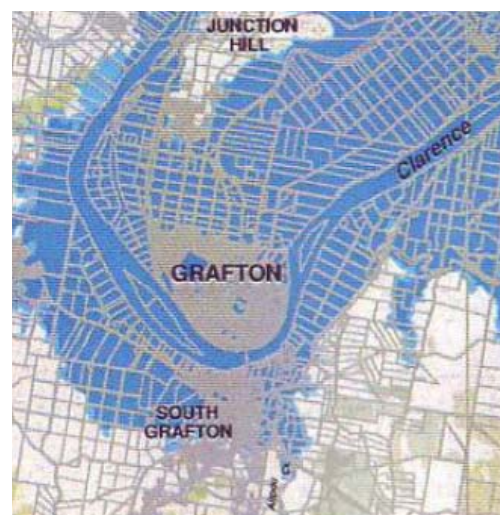
Grafton City Centre shares many similar constraints and challenges as Maitland's City Centre, with a population of 9,800 residents (2006 Census) and profile as a regional Centre. CPUD spoke with David Morrison, the Strategic Planning Manager at Clarence Valley Council and Leonard Lynch from Clouston Associates (the consultants assisting with the Strategy) to learn more about the issues, solutions and outcomes of the Strategy.

The issues and challenges for Grafton Council included:

- The 'tired' profile of the Jacaranda Festival, an arts and crafts focused annual event;
- Decline in traditional industries that supported the City (prawn fishing, sugar industry)
- Competition with Yamba and other coastal areas attracting new development and rivals for tourism;
- The established profile of Grafton as an Administration centre with many intact heritage buildings;
- Flooding risk from the Clarence River that completely inundates the CBD and residential areas in 1 in 100 year events;
- Lack of new development in the City;
- The city has become disengaged from the Clarence River due to levee wall and development that 'turned its back' to the River.

A new DCP was adopted by the Clarence Valley Council, it sought to halt the trend of decline and to reinvigorate Grafton by permitting new residential, commercial and retail development in flood prone areas. The new DCP :

- Promotes Council's philosophy that flood risk is a commercial risk. Commercial buildings must comply with a 5m minimum flood level requirement (n.b. this is problematic for heritage buildings).
- Adopts a practical approach to living in flood prone areas, advocating retreat from floodwaters with provision of upper levels.
- Promotes a technical approach to building compliance. The matrix based approach borrows from the Building Code of Australia in order to satisfy engineering concerns.
- Was accompanied by an Evacuation Capability Assessment and flood mitigation works including a new road raised above flood level that travels out of the City



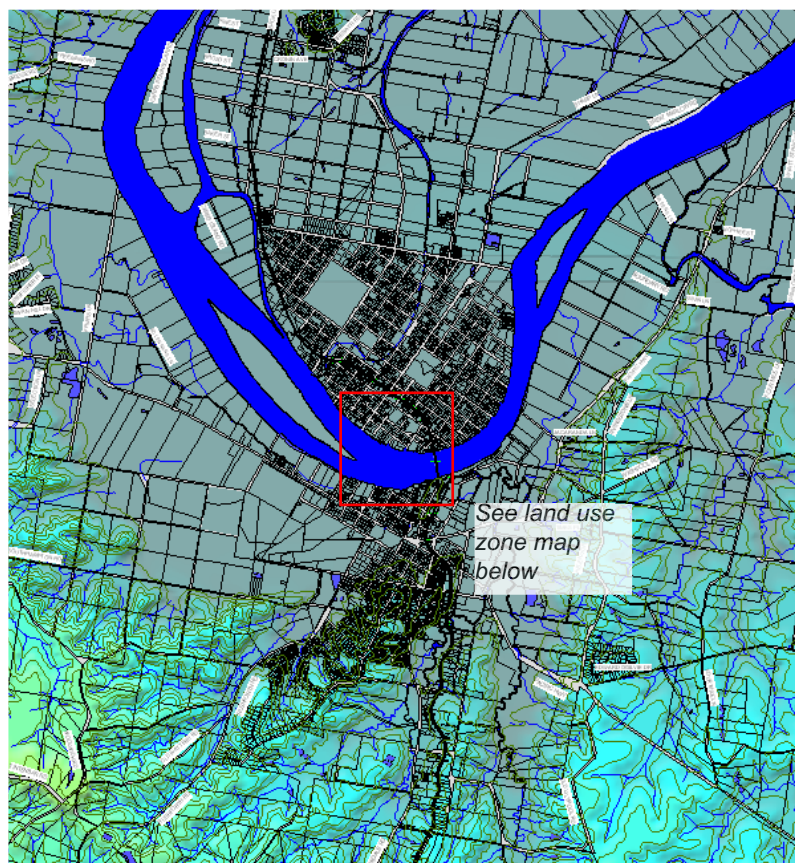
With the adoption of the new DCP and associated planning changes, Grafton has benefited in the following ways:

A large retail and commercial development has started construction in the centre of the CBD;

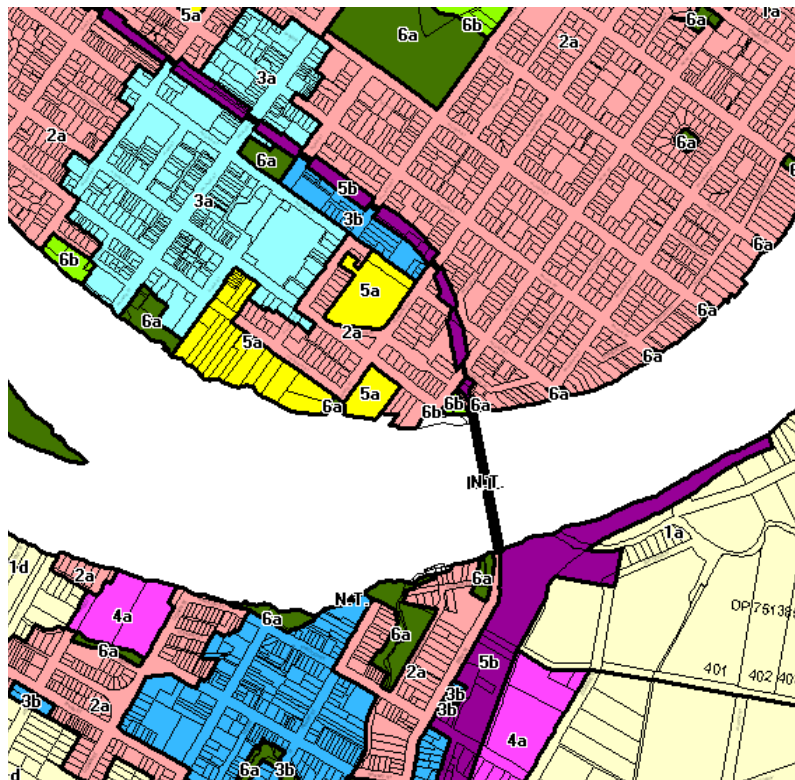
- Council now endorses a far reaching sustainability agenda that underpins the renewal of the CBD. The Sustainability Framework Policy assisted in a change in thinking amongst Councilors and which reversed the fortunes of the City. It was accepted that the economic and social benefits of development and urban renewal in Grafton were more important than the risk to property which could be managed and planned for.
- Development applications for new housing are slowly growing;
- A robust collaborative relationship between Council and the the State Emergency Service has grown out of the changes in planning policy.

Approach to planning

Comparing the land use zones, topography and flood liable land maps of Grafton CBD (located on the northern bank of the Clarence River), illustrates that land zoned for residential uses and core business areas are completely flood liable.



Topographic map of Grafton and surrounds



Land use zoning map of Grafton CBD and South Grafton



Zone 3(a) Business zone

1 Objectives of zone

The objectives of this zone are:

- (a) to allow for retail, commercial, high density residential and restricted service and light industrial uses,
- (b) to control land use location and character within the commercial area by development control plans, and
- (c) to define the main area for business and commercial activity within the City of Grafton.

Zone 2(a) Living area zone

1 Objectives of zone

The objectives of this zone are:

- (a) to designate areas where residential development is the primary land use and where non-residential uses are permitted only when they are compatible and subordinate to the residential character,
- (b) to denote housing densities and types and desired location of allowable land uses whilst maintaining the existing character of those areas by development control plans,
- (c) to allow non-residential uses that can be demonstrated to be compatible with the residential zoning and having regard to public opinion, and
- (d) to provide opportunities for the provision of secure, appropriate and affordable housing in a variety of types and tenures for all income groups within the City of Grafton.





APPENDIX C

Community Consultation (August 2008)

1 SURVEY RESPONSES

City Plan Urban Design (CPUD) surveyed people in the local government area to discover more about local perceptions of the study area, its strengths, weaknesses and aspirations for Maitland town centre.

The survey was conducted during street interviews held on the Heritage Mall in August 2008, as well as a web based survey accessed from Maitland City Council's web page.

- The survey received 56 responses.
- 60% of those were completed during face to face interviews in the mall, 40% were made over the Council's webpage.
- Of the respondents: 50% were male and 50% were female and the majority (66%) of were aged over 40 years of age. 24% were aged between 20 and 39 years of age, and 10% were aged under 20 years of age.

1.1 Discussion

Respondents who live within the study area were asked to give their opinion of living in the area. Responses were varied, a sample of the feedback is provided for your information. Feedback was generally positive, residents cited that they enjoyed the benefits of living close to infrastructure and amenities but were generally critical of issues including the decline in activity levels, poor traffic circulation and the dwindling resident population.

"I like living in Maitland. I find the CBD very difficult to navigate. It can be very frustrating when trying to make a quick trip to pick up the mail or go to the supermarket."

"I don't much like going into the mall as it tends to feel lifeless and seems to lack any real 'heart of the city' feeling."

"It's great to be able to just walk everywhere, I don't need a car living here."

"I love it but I am saddened by the increasing number of empty shop fronts because I believe there is huge potential in central Maitland for it to become a lively cultural centre."

"We dislike what seems to be a reluctance to build any decent sized apartments in town. Maitland needs to have more people to have more activity."

2 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

2.1 Strengths

Respondents were asked to nominate three positive features or aspects of the town centre:

- The pleasant pedestrian experience was considered by most people (21%) to be an asset to Maitland.
- The variety of shops; the rural character and heritage of the centre, and the Hunter River tied as the second most popular assets.
- The convenience of the town centre and ease of access to shops and services was nominated by 10% of people as a positive aspect of the town centre.

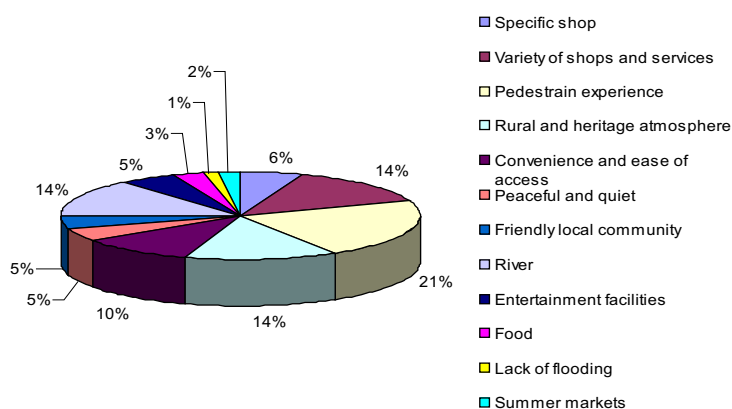


Figure 2.1: Assets and positive attributes of Maitland town centre

2.2 Weaknesses

Alternatively the three things that most detracted from the town centre were considered to be:

- The lifeless and inactive town centre (21%).
- Crime and social problems (16%).
- The confusing traffic and circulation system and also the poor image of the public domain and buildings were the two issues that tied for third place.
- The lack of retail choice in the town centre was also cited as the next biggest issue for the town centre (11%).

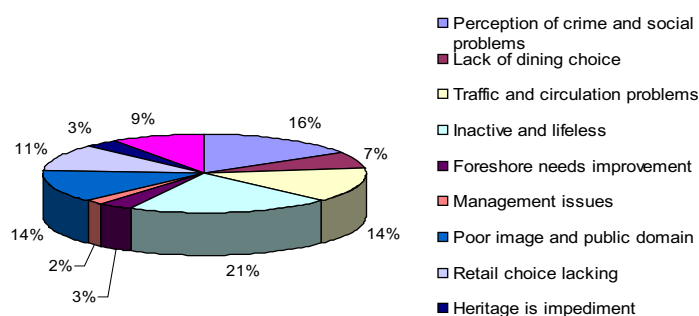


Figure 2.2: Detractions and negative attributes of Maitland town centre



2.3 Discussion

The existing variety of shops in the town centre was considered to be a major asset and the lack of variety was also listed as a major negative issue. This apparent contradiction actually indicates that respondents considered a variety of retailers, shops and services is very important and desirable.

Another anomaly that emerged from the survey results was that the convenience of the town centre and ease of access was considered to be an asset, but the town centre was also considered to have a confusing access and circulation system.

This can be explained in light of retail and shopping choices such as Stockland and Rutherford: both are out of town and effectively isolated from residential and employment areas, as such shopping trips to these malls require designated journeys.

By comparison Maitland town centre is an established and diverse place. It accommodates workers, residents and visitors who come here for a range of reasons and who therefore visit shops, services and other facilities with relative ease while in town. Notwithstanding this, the existing wayfinding and traffic circulation system through and around Maitland is complex and is considered a negative factor.

3 THE NEED FOR CHANGE AT MAITLAND

Survey respondents were asked about the level of change that they thought Maitland town centre required: whether they considered that major change, minor change, no change was needed or whether there was no need for Maitland Town Centre.

The responses indicated:

- Most respondents (46%) considered there was a need for major change.
- Almost as many respondents (45%) considered there was a need for minor change.
- Less than 10% considered 'no change' was needed.

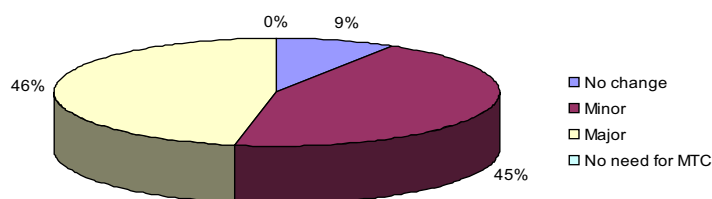


Figure 3.1: Perceived need for change in Maitland town centre

3.1 Discussion

The overwhelming response was that change was required. Opinions on the level of change needed were almost exactly split between major or minor degree of change.

55% of respondents who lived in the study area considered that major change was needed. Of non local residents the split was 50/50 between major and minor change required.

No survey respondents considered that the Maitland town centre was unnecessary.

4.1 Discussion

A range of interesting and creative suggestions were provided by survey respondents when asked to describe their vision for Maitland.

In relation to the development of a dining/cafe culture, many people cited examples of places they considered pleasant and successful restaurant and cafe precincts, these included Beaumont Street in Hamilton and Darby Street in Newcastle.

The pubs, clubs, cinema and existing entertainment features of the town were considered to be positive features but too limited. Many respondents stated that a greater range of attractions were needed to encourage tourists to visit Maitland.

A selection of interesting extracts from the survey responses is provided overleaf for your information.

Provided here are a range of responses from people when asked to describe their vision for Maitland in ten years time. Vision were both aspirational and grand as well as practical and small.

Visions for Maitland generally described a town centre that differentiated itself from other shopping centres in the region and built upon the key features of the place: the River, the existing building stock and the traditional strip shopping typology.

“Cafes and shops need to be open longer and on weekends, especially Sunday afternoons.”

“I would like to see cafes open up in the CBD and the centre of town reopened to traffic, similar to the Tamworth CBD. It doesn't need to be the most exclusive shopping precinct in NSW but an active, friendly place.”

“A cultural centre to escape the mundane giant super centres like Stockland Greenhills and Rutherford. Entertainment - outdoor events, musical, cultural, street art, antique stores, regular events in a purpose built entertainment venue.”

“Allow new residential buildings in Maitland, there are so many empty blocks. ...It has not flooded here in over 50 years. ...People can still enjoy progress near a River, it happens all over the world such as Denmark, Northern Italy etc. There is too much fear around here. What if Newcastle stops building because there can be another earthquake!!! ...Horseshoe (Bend) still looks hopeless, it still looks like the '55 flood happened last year!!!”

“Enlarge and upgrade the library and move it into the centre of town.”

“A large retail store is needed here, like Myer or DJs and more interesting retail shops.”

“From the Mall I think you should be able to see and access the River. ...River activities such as hiring boats and cruises (up to Morpeth and back?). The River path could be extended to maybe as far as Morpeth, so people could walk or cycle along the River.”

“Sell Maitland as a daytime wonderland to be followed with theatre and restaurants once the sun goes down. Let it not be so pub oriented.”

