

## Planning Scheme Policy – Centres and centre activities

### 1. Purpose of the planning scheme policy

- (1) The purpose of this planning scheme policy is to provide guidance and identify information Council may request for development associated with centres and centre activities.

### 2. Interpretation

- (1) Terms used within this planning scheme policy are defined within Schedule 1 of the CairnsPlan 2016 planning scheme. Where a term is not defined in Schedule 1, section 1.3 Interpretation of the CairnsPlan 2016 planning scheme applies.

### 3. Guidance on meeting planning scheme outcomes – need and impact of centres and centre activities

- (1) Development involving the establishment of a new centre, or significant centre activity within or outside of a centre, is only established where the following is demonstrated:
- There is a need for the proposed development;
  - The proposed development does not compromise the role and successful function of the hierarchy of centres within the Region;
  - The proposed development is highly accessible within the community it serves, not on the periphery; and
  - The proposed development does not compromise the character and integrity of surrounding areas.
- (2) Council intends to support the role and function of the Region's hierarchy of centres. An impact and need assessment report may be requested to demonstrate that the proposed development will meet the relevant performance outcomes in the planning scheme codes and the intentions expressed in the strategic framework. For code assessable development, the role and function of centres within the hierarchy of centres is outlined in Schedule 6 of the CairnsPlan 2016 planning scheme. For Impact assessable development, the role and function of the hierarchy of centres is described 3.3.2 Element – Centres and centre activities within Part 3 Strategic framework in addition to Schedule 6 of the CairnsPlan 2016 planning scheme. Where the development is inconsistent with the planning scheme the assessment may form part of the basis for determining whether sufficient grounds exist to approve such a development.

### 4. Information Council may request

#### 4.1. Centre need and impact assessment reports

- (1) In particular, a centre need and impact assessment report should include the following:
- A background / Context including:
    - An outline of the purpose of the assessment;
    - A description of the methodology used;
    - A description of the size, function and tenancy mix of the proposed development (including details of any staging of the development);
    - If a new centre is proposed, the intended role and function of the centre and its relationship to the existing centres within the hierarchy of centres;
    - The identification of the proposed development's service catchment including the methodology used to identify the catchment (refer to section 4.2 for guidance);
  - A demand assessment including:
    - A calculation of the demand, or likely future demand, for retail, business, commercial or other centre floor space in the service catchment;
    - Commentary on changes to the supply / demand balance upon approval of the proposed development, including whether the proposal represents an excess of supply for the service catchment;

- (c) An assessment of the potential / actual impacts on the hierarchy of centres and surrounding community including:
    - (i) A description of the location, size, nature, function and tenancy of other centres likely to be affected by the proposed development;
    - (ii) An assessment of the extent of inadequacy, if any, within the hierarchy of centres;
    - (iii) An assessment of the quantitative economic impact upon the centres likely to be affected by the proposed development describing the consequent effects upon those centres;
    - (iv) The identification of the impacts of the proposed development would have on the successful trading of other centres (including the period of time); or the changes, if any, to the range of services that existing centres will continue to provide;
    - (v) An assessment of the effect of the proposed development upon the hierarchy of centres, including demonstration that the proposed development will not result in the centre assume the role and function of another centre within the Region hierarchy of centres;
    - (vi) An assessment of the impacts of the development on adjoining premises and the surrounding community (including any changes to amenity such as changed traffic conditions);
  - (d) An assessment of alternative sites including:
    - (i) Evidence that any feasible alternative and appropriately zoned location/s have been investigated and discussed so that reasoning behind the selection of the preferred site is clear;
  - (e) A summary of the overall need for the proposed development including a description of the community benefits.
- (2) The centre need and impact report will need to demonstrate that on balance the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the hierarchy of centres within the Cairns Region in terms of their ongoing viability, form and role and function.
  - (3) The centre need and impact assessment report must be prepared by a suitably qualified economist and may be subject to a peer review.

#### 4.2. Determining the service catchment for development

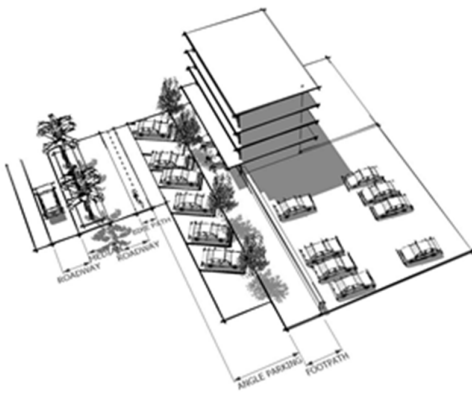
- (1) The determination of the service catchment for a proposed development should have due consideration to the following:
  - (a) the existing centres hierarchy and other relevant competition;
  - (b) the nature, scale and functionality of the proposed development;
  - (c) the nature of the potential users of the development (e.g. residents, workers, students, other businesses);
  - (d) typical travel routes of potential users of the development; and
  - (e) the attracting capacity of any neighbouring uses.
- (2) A map(s) of the service catchment should be included in the impact and need assessment report, which clearly defines the service catchment boundary, identifies relevant existing centres, identifies the site of the proposed development and includes key transport corridors. The impact and need assessment report should include a justification of the proposed trade area boundary.

### 5. Guidance on meeting planning scheme outcomes

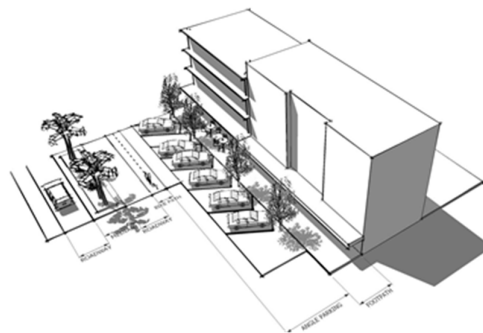
#### 5.1. Adaptable centre design – Development within structure plan areas, Major centres and District centres

- (1) The planning scheme requires that centres within structure plan areas, and Major and District centres are designed with layouts that are adaptive to the needs of the community over time by:
  - (a) Planning for active streets through a range of retail, commercial and community activities and spaces, particularly at ground level, which can change with minimal intervention;

- (b) Sleeving larger format retail and commercial activities behind smaller activities that activate the street front;
  - (c) Allowing for interim uses that can be changed over time and be added to with minimal intervention.
- (2) Fundamental to planning new communities is the need to create mixed use precincts that cater for diversity and vibrancy of urban living. The centres within the Cairns Region will be based on best practice planning of developing mixed uses horizontally and vertically. Mixed use development is encouraged through a level of activity provided at the street level that encourages community life with higher density residential activities above or around the activity.
- (3) Adaptable design for centres considers the potential phasing of development to ensure that ultimate targets are achieved. The diagrams below illustrates an example of how lower parking rates can be achieved early in the development process, with the adjacent development site being used for at grade car parking. As the centre matures and demand for land increases, the vacant site would be developed, achieving the lower car parking standards, in line with the maturing market.

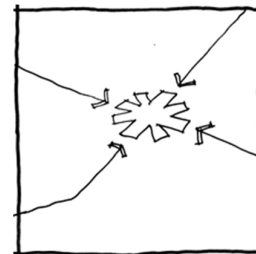


Vacant land as part of the overall development of the site can provide for short-medium term at grade parking.

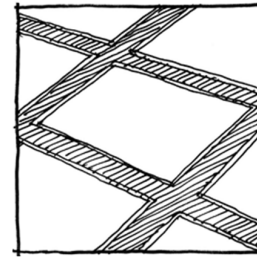


Phasing of development sees the outcome outlined in the Master Plan achieved with the second phase of development.

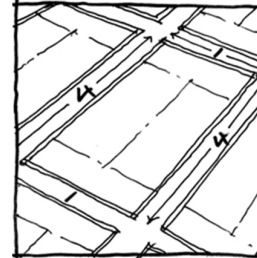
- (4) Centres are adaptable to the community's changing needs over time where they meet the following principles:
- (a) The centre provides high levels of access to public space or central activity areas that serve as a community focal point and gathering place.



- (b) The centre is designed to ensure a high level of permeability and incorporates a grid street network that is interconnected and highly legible.

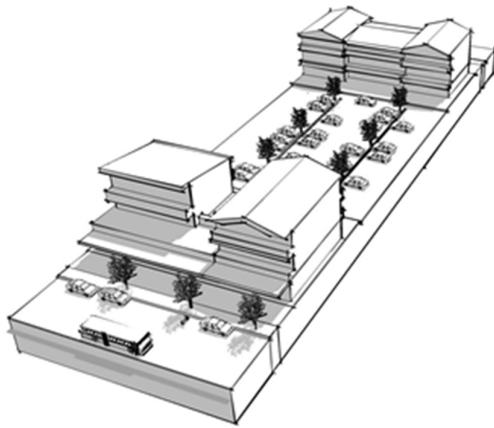


- (c) Within core and frame areas, street blocks are based on a grid pattern with a block dimension of not more than 240m and a length to width ratio of not more than 1:4.

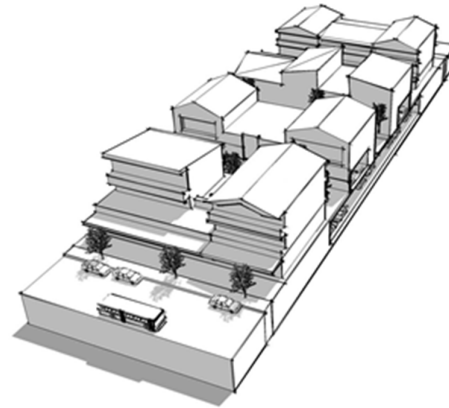


- (d) Development provides for streets that are responsive to the urban context and which provide opportunities for a range of local street profiles including laneways, rear lanes and main streets to be provided.
  - (e) Public open space including parks, squares, plazas and environmental open space is provided as a key physical element in the pattern of urban settlement and a prominent feature of centres and employment areas.
  - (f) The development of centres is phased so that they are established as important elements within the structure of the community in the short to medium term whilst retaining opportunities to evolve and adapt to meet their full potential and ultimate planned capacity in the long term.
  - (g) Site design may allow for later infill sites that can accommodate higher development intensity.
- (5) In considering adaptability, whilst designing for the ultimate development outcomes, consideration of the potential to phase development within the project will be required. Planning and design will need to identify the potential for interim uses that will not have a significant detrimental impact on the overall intent for the development.

Additionally the intensity of development may be phased as part of a higher order planning process (e.g. structure planning). Development sites require staging to achieving the desired outcomes are a scenario that will need to be considered in achieving residential densities and public transport delivery along with development of the centre. An example of this outcome is shown below:



Phasing of development may see parts of the development used for low intensity uses.



Low intensity uses that have minimal investment in the initial stages of development provide an excellent opportunity for future development.

## 5.2. External dining and structures above roads

- (1) External dining on footpaths is encouraged in centres where the internal and external street network provides required space for its efficient and safe use as a thoroughfare and entertainment space.
- (2) External dining is designed in accordance with the following principles:
  - (a) To promote a vibrant street life which balances the interests and needs of residents, ratepayers and visitors to the city
  - (b) To be located to achieve fairness and consistency between traders in the use of footpaths
  - (c) To ensure:
    - (i) safe and unobstructed passage for pedestrians, in particular those who may be physically or vision impaired;
    - (ii) safe and unobstructed vision for motorists and cyclists;
    - (iii) limited impact on amenity and the streetscape that characterises the area.
- (3) Consideration for the following is required to cater for potential external dining:
  - (a) A continuous accessible path of travel must be provided along the building line;
  - (b) Pedestrian access should have a minimum width of 2.0m wherever possible and not less than 1.5m;
  - (c) Footpaths 3.0m or less in width are not suitable for on-street activities;
  - (d) Footpath activities located in close proximity to intersections should not obscure drivers' line of vision or traffic signs and will be subject to assessment by Council's Transport Engineer;
  - (e) Required clearances and setbacks from kerbs, public assets and other street infrastructure must be maintained;
  - (f) Compliance with the Disability Services Act 2006 (DSA);
  - (g) Structures should comply with Council's existing streetscape master plans and designs. Any proposed structures will be assessed as to whether they are appropriate to the streetscape;
  - (h) Structures associated with the footpath should not privatise, fully enclose public spaces or adversely affect the openness of public footpaths.
  - (i) The only types of permanent structures that may be considered are retractable awnings, approved planter boxes and decks. Any other items located on the footpath are considered temporary items and need to be designed for removal daily.

- (4) Road closures in strata to provide for verandas or balconies are supported where the structures are:
  - (a) Two storey (i.e. 2 level above footpath level only) and may have a roof over. Where the structure is roofed, the roofed area is not to be utilised by the storey above (i.e. this area is not lettable area and cannot be used as a veranda or for landscaping;
  - (b) Open on at least 3 sides (i.e. street and on the sides and not include windows or walls or louvers), clear structures may be erected for weather protection;
  - (c) Used for balcony dining or recreational purposes, not for retail, office or commercial purposes;
  - (d) One continuous structure for the length of the building – e.g. not divided into separate areas to suit internal leases;
  - (e) Incorporate the design features in (5) below and designed to integrate with the street canopy required by the Cairns city centre local plan.
  
- (5) Proposed awnings, shade structures or strata should be designed to contribute to the vibrancy, vitality and interest of the City’s streetscapes and maintain and enhance the traditional façade details of the area’s character. Buildings and structures should be designed to create visual integration with the street, contribute to the vibrancy, interest, activity and streetscape within the City.

The design should not dominate the streetscape and be of a tropical character and design, which may include:

- (a) Architecture that reflects the character of the streetscape and that is proportional to the building;
  - (b) Deep shading;
  - (c) Decorative features e.g. ‘Queenslander’ style balustrading and corner brackets at post and beam junctions;
  - (d) Steep roof pitch or interesting roof design;
  - (e) The structure should be designed to appear to be part of the building rather than appear to be retro-fitted.
- 
- (6) Awnings should be designed and assessed with reference to the relevant codes within the planning scheme, which lists acceptable measures for the location, height and setback of awnings.

**6. Related materials**

- (1) Other documents which provide guidance on meeting the purpose of the planning scheme outcomes include:
  - (a) Cairns City Centre Master Plan;
  - (b) Mount Peter Master Plan Part 5 Technical report – Placemaking.

**7. Schedule of amendments**

**Table 7.a – Schedule of amendments**

| Amendment title   | Version number | Description  | Dates   |
|---|----------------|--|---|
| CairnsPlan 2016 Amendment 1 of 2017 - Administrative  | 1.1            | The amendment integrates the Cairns Local Government Infrastructure Plan and corrects formatting, numbering, outdated terms and factual matters incorrectly stated in the planning scheme. | Adopted 28 June 2017<br><br>Commenced 1 July 2017         |
| Planning Scheme Policy – Centres and centre activities Amendment 1 of 2017 - Administrative | 1.2            | The amendment corrects formatting and numbering to remove the Planning Scheme Policy from Schedule 6 of the CairnsPlan 2016 and includes a schedule of amendments.                         | Adopted 6 December 2017<br><br>Commenced 11 December 2017 |

|   |            |   |   |
|---|------------|---|---|
| <p>Planning Scheme Policy – Centres and centre activities – Amendment 1 of 2021 – Minor</p> | <p>1.3</p> | <p>The amendment corrects and updates references in the planning scheme policy.</p> <p>This amendment introduces a cross-reference to the planning scheme definitions in Schedule 1 of CairnsPlan 2016.</p> | <p>Adopted 13 October 2021</p> <p>Commenced 26 October 2021</p> |
|---|------------|---|---|