



UNANDERRA TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN

Master Plan Report

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UNANDERRA TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN
MASTER PLAN REPORT

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with sub-consultant services provided by Hill PDA

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Terminology

Abbreviation	Name
LEP	Local Environment Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design

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Executive Summary

Unanderra Town Centre like so many town centres both globally and nationally is facing increased challenges through the growth of the shopping mall, greater demand for convenience shopping and the deterioration of the traditional high street. It is through the phenomenal growth of online retailing, the rise of mobile retailing, the speed and sophistication of the major national and international retailers, the modern and immersive experiences offered by today's new breed of shopping mall, combined with the economic downturn that have all conspired to change today's town centre.

Essential to acknowledging the challenges facing town centre's today is understanding what principles make a 'vital town centre'. To do this, eight principles were identified assisting the master planning process and ultimately establishing a socially, economically and environmentally resilient town centre master plan. These key principles are;

- Principle 1: A Unique Identity
- Principle 2: Street Vibrancy;
- Principle 3: Urban Composition;
- Principle 4: A Community Heart
- Principle 5: Accessible and Well Connected
- Principle 6: A Balanced Environment;
- Principle 7: Policy and Governance;
- Principle 8: Community Ownership;

These principles underpin the master plan process and form a key step in understanding Unanderra Town Centre today and the initiatives required to regenerate one of the Illawarra Regional Strategy's designated 'Major Towns'. With a car dominant landscape and a disparate collection of buildings the master plan looks to build on the town centre's distinctive characteristics including the Country Grocer, a small collection of heritage items and Unanderra Railway Station. By unlocking these unique characteristics, a longer term vision can be established that catalyses the future development of the Unanderra Town Centre.

Crucial to the success of the master plan is ensuring the first key moves of this transformation offer community benefits rather than commercial benefits. As its by empowering the community and offering a sense of ownership within the town centre, incentives for development can follow, catalysing the 30 year vision for Unanderra Town Centre.

Through introducing temporary interventions at key locations, the communities perception of space can be changed, re-prioritising the emphasis on public space rather than vehicular car parking. Initiatives such as pop-up cafes, play areas and outdoor seating can contribute to this change and spark the revitalisation of Unanderra Town Centre.

Essential to Unanderra Town Centre's success will be improved links to Unanderra Railway Station. By refurbishing the existing pedestrian footbridge and activating adjacent buildings, the local community can re-connect to its most valuable asset, promoting a sustainable future for Unanderra Town Centre and its surrounding neighbourhoods.

By proposing more temporary solutions, the qualities of Unanderra Town Centre can be unlocked, ensuring a more immediate transformation to the key spaces. In the face of economic uncertainty and rapidly changing possibilities, these temporary activities offer a re-imagination of space whilst retaining a flexibility that can accommodate the changes in the economy and the communities perception of space.

These early initiatives in key spaces can incentivise development within the town centre and allow the emergence of a longer term vision for Unanderra. This longer term vision, based on the eight key principles that make a 'vital town centre', is focussed on a new 'Central Spine'. The spine reconnects previously isolated spaces and community facilities, through an eclectic mix of uses and a pedestrian prioritised heart, which is intersected by a well composed network of streets and laneways. This move changes the spatial qualities of Unanderra Town Centre, placing the community at the front and centre, creating an experience that is uniquely Unanderra.

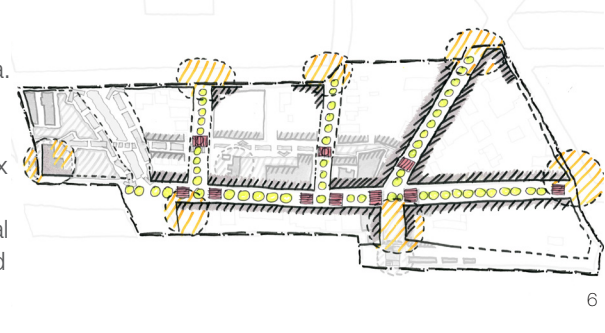
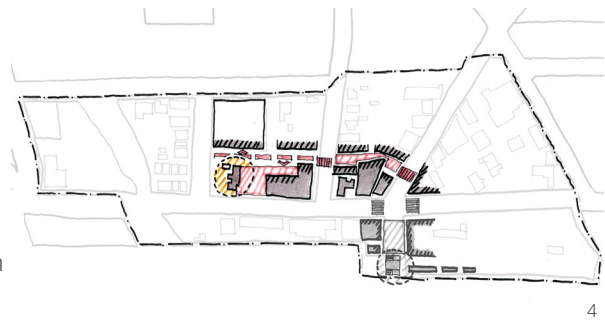
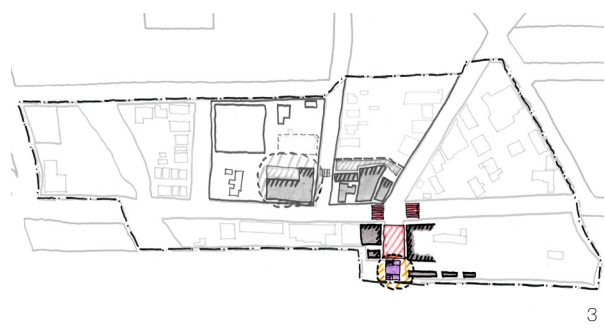
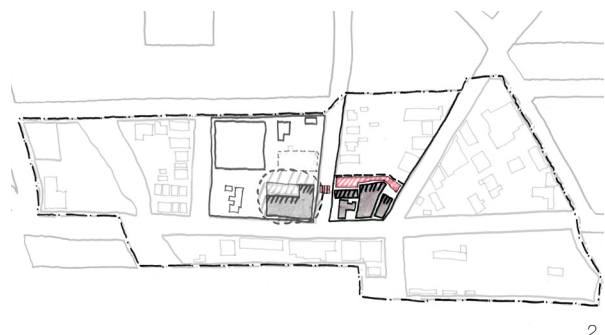
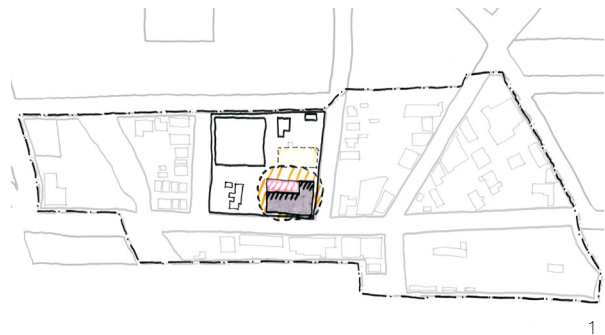
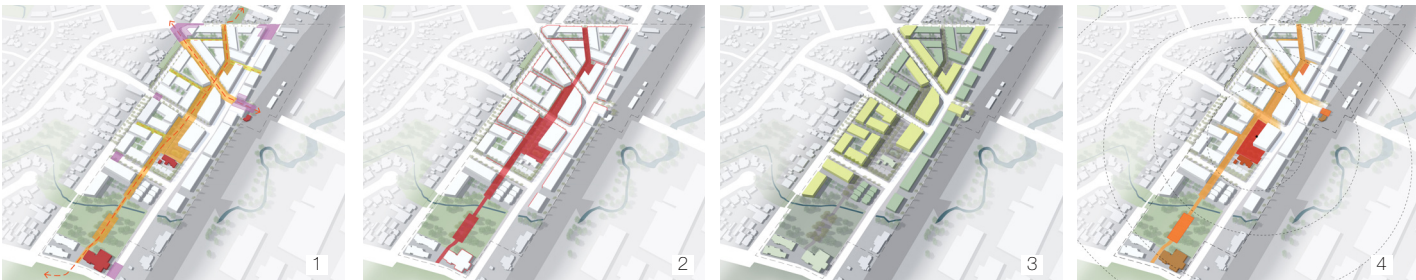


IMAGE 1. Key Move: Strengthen the community
IMAGE 2. Key Move: Establish a Central Spine
IMAGE 3. Key Move: Connect the Town centre
IMAGE 4. Key Move: Reinforce the Spine
IMAGE 5. Key Move: Connect to the Environment
IMAGE 6. Key Move: Define the Town Centre



TOP: The 30 Year Vision
IMAGE 1. Principle 1: Reinforce Unanderra's Identity
IMAGE 2. Principle 2: Making Unanderra Vibrant
IMAGE 3. Principle 3: Composing Unanderra
IMAGE 4. Principle 4: Strengthening the Community Heart
IMAGE 5. Principle 5: Connecting Unanderra
IMAGE 6. Principle 6: Balancing Unanderra's Environment
IMAGE 7. Principle 7: Policy and Governance



1.0 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

Wollongong City Council has been reviewing the planning controls for commercial centres and other precincts (as part of a periodic review) with the aim of informing a master planning process to guide future development, infrastructure investment and community development programs.

The Unanderra Town Centre Study is nominated as a priority for 2012-13 financial year, and Council is committed to delivering this study in accordance with Wollongong 2022 Annual Plan [2012-13].

In response to this prioritisation, McGregor Coxall has been commissioned by Wollongong City Council to prepare a Master Plan and Implementation Strategy for Unanderra Town Centre. The key aim of the Study is to assist in defining the role and identity of Unanderra Town Centre; guide built form over the next 30 years; and address public domain and open space requirements.

1.2 UNANDERRA TOWN CENTRE

Unanderra, a designated ‘Major Town’ in the Illawarra Regional Strategy is located approximately 5km southwest of the Wollongong City Centre. The suburb is defined to the west by the South Coast Railway Line, the Princes Highway and M1 Princes Motorway, which provide excellent connections to the wider region of Wollongong and NSW. Figtree a major town centre sits to the north, with Dapto and Warrawong Regional Centres being located to the South West and East respectively [Figure 1.1].

1.3 STUDY BOUNDARY

Figure 1.2 illustrates the existing Unanderra Town Centre study boundary designated for this master plan project. To ensure a comprehensive town centre master plan the study boundary was extended to incorporate key town centre features including Unanderra Railway Station, Unanderra Library and Community Centre and Charcoal Creek [Figure 1.3].



FIGURE 1.1 - LOCATION PLAN
TOP. Unanderra Town Centre's location
FIGURE 1.2 - TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY
LEFT. Existing Town Centre Boundary
FIGURE 1.3 - PROPOSED TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY
RIGHT. Proposed Town Centre Boundary

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

The master plan report structure reflects the design process undertaken in preparing this Master Plan and Implementation Strategy for Unanderra Town Centre. The following sections form the structure of this document;

- Section 2 looks to understand the complexities comprising a 21st Century town centre and the key principles that make a vital town centre;
- Section 3 applies the key principles that comprise a vital town centre against Unanderra Town Centre;
- Section 4 identifies a series of key strategic moves to revitalise Unanderra Town Centre;
- Section 5 documents the vision for Unanderra Town Centre, proposing a 30 year framework for future development;
- Section 6 summarises the key conclusions and recommendations for Unanderra Town Centre;

1.5 THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The Town and Village Planning Process Flowchart below has been developed by Wollongong City Council to broadly define the process for delivering Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan and Implementation Strategy. This particular project covers Stage 1 of the Town and Village Planning Process, with its intention to inform Stage 2- Implementation.

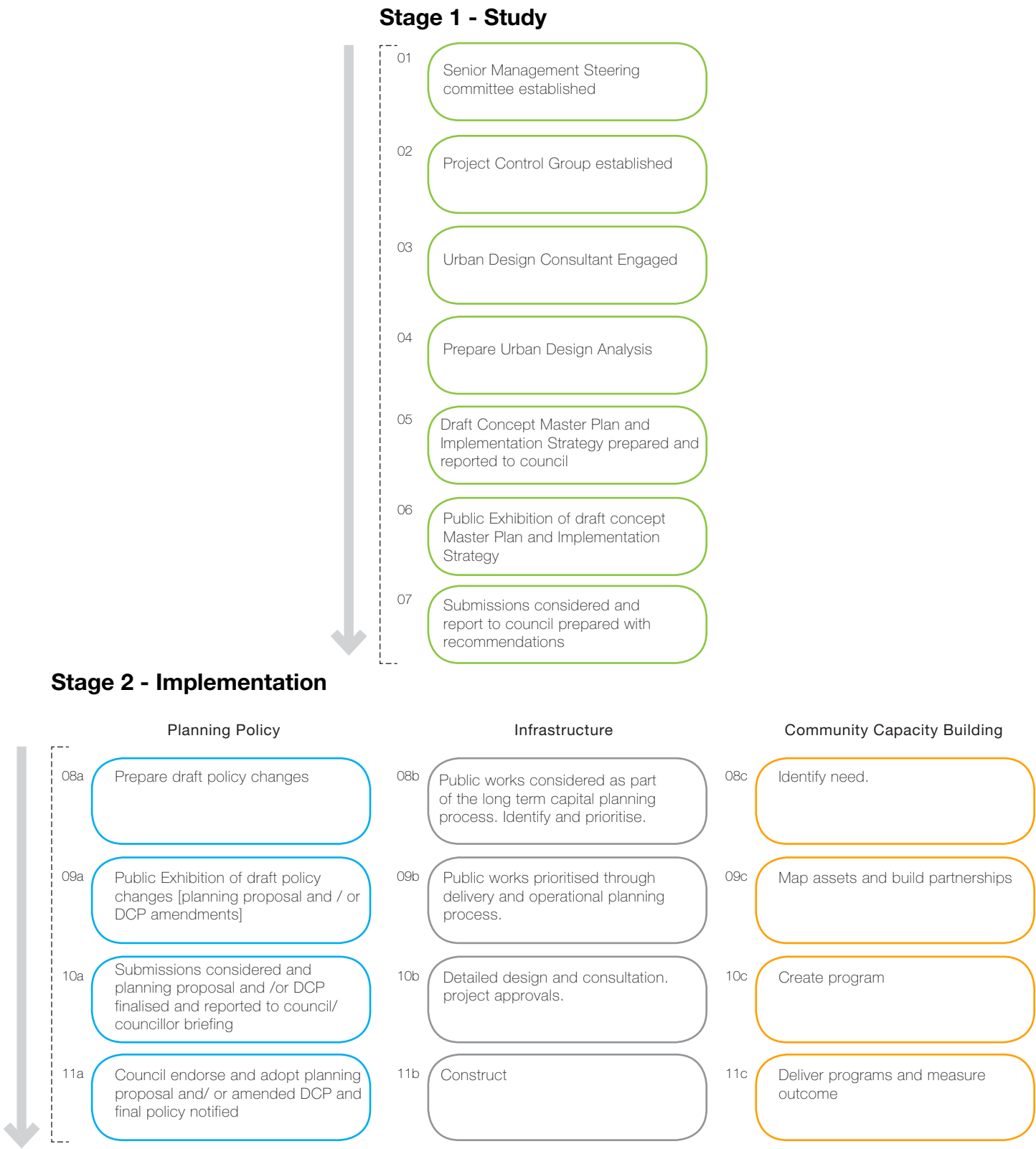


FIGURE 1.2 - TOWN AND VILLAGE PLANNING PROCESS
DIAGRAM
TOP: Flow Chart Diagram



2.0 Understanding the 21st Century Town Centre

2.0 Understanding the 21st Century Town Centre

2.1 THE CHALLENGES FACING TOWN CENTRES TODAY

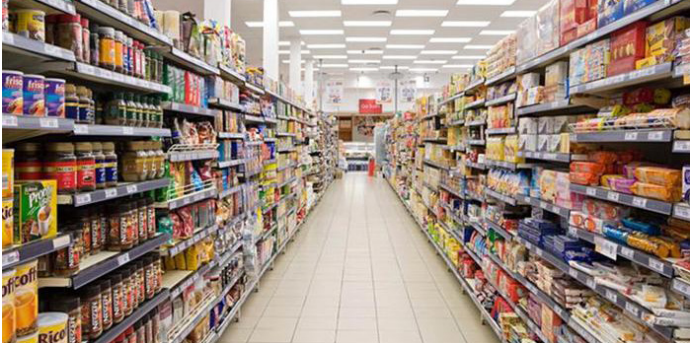
In order for any town centre to thrive in the future it is important to understand and identify the challenges facing town centres today. With the increased growth of the shopping mall and the deterioration of the traditional high street, town centres are now catering for a different shopper mind-set.

The phenomenal growth of online retailing, the rise of mobile retailing, the speed and sophistication of the major national and international retailers, the modern and immersive experiences offered by today's new breed of shopping mall, combined with the economic downturn have all conspired to change today's town centre. Key factors that have impacted on the traditional town centre high street are as follows;

- Boom to Bust - Over the past few decades we have enjoyed a boom in retail and property values, fuelled by easy credit and rising standards of living. The Global Financial Crisis [GFC] has exposed the underlying weaknesses in the economy, resulting in a number of declining town centre high streets. Shops are falling by the wayside as they fail to meet the expectations of today's consumer.
- The Shopping Mall - The lack of economic resilience within the traditional high street has been exposed by the modernised shopping mall which has changed beyond recognition over the past 10 years. With convenience being the new 'buzz' word for the consumer, the shopping mall has catered for this through a compact internalised shopping arrangement that is managed like a business rather than a collection of independent retailers.
- The Rise of the Supermarkets - The traditional supermarket which sold groceries and food has modernised its offering to cater for the convenience of each consumer. Supermarkets have expanded their reach into homewares, stationary, books, flowers etc. All of these retail items, once the preserve of specialists on our high streets are now being sold in volume, and with real sophistication, by the generalists.
- Technological Advances - New technological developments now mean that the internet is one of the key threats to retail on our high streets. Fewer shops are required in our town centres as the typical consumer can now shop online without leaving the comfort of their own home.
- Vehicular Dominance - Town centres, shopping malls and retail outlets have all been designed around the vehicle, catering for mass car parking, wide road carriageways and high volumes of traffic. The vehicle has fuelled the convenience culture creating a car dependent society that associates easy car access, ample car parking and convenient shopping as the norm.

Although the current consumer has new expectations that have been created in terms of value, service, entertainment and experience, town centres and high streets have the physical characteristics to offer something different. As Gordon Cullen states in a Concise Townscape, "Take all the elements that go to create the environment: buildings, trees, nature, water, traffic, advertisements and so on, and to weave them all together in such a way that drama is released." A town centre's distinctly unique characteristics can if appropriately designed separate it from the replicated experiences of the shopping mall, bringing together architecture, the public domain and a variety of uses.

Essential to this high street renaissance is establishing a greater flexibility in planning policy and fostering a community ownership of the town centre. Council can engender this through encouraging the temporary use of town centre spaces, transforming the communities perception of a space, whilst incentivising the revitalisation and redevelopment of a town centre from a more permanent perspective.



2.2 PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE A ‘VITAL TOWN CENTRE’

By acknowledging what challenges are facing today’s town centres it is equally important to understand ‘What principles make up a vital and vibrant town centre’. To do this we have identified eight principles which co-exist to make a vital town centre. The principles of a vital town centre that we describe and illustrate in the following pages are the essential components to a successful town centre environment, founded on new urbanist thinking and accepted principles of good urban and town centre design.

By understanding the urban design principles that make up a vital town centre, we can analyse and identify any particular areas where it is lacking, thus informing the town centre master planning process. Although the key principles proposed will guide the master planning process, it must be noted that in reality these boundaries inter-relate with each other, reinforcing the complex relationships that interplay in creating a vital town centre.

Principle 1: Unique Identity

The identity of a town centre comes from its individuality or distinction from other places, which form the basis of it being recognised as a separable entity. This uniqueness or individuality can come from a town centre’s physical setting, activities and meaning for the local community. Thus the urban character and sense of arriving into a town centre are key elements that form a unique identity.

Character

The character and identity of a town centre is rooted in its urban structure, quality of urban spaces and the patterns of movement and activity that exist. A town centre’s character can be expressed through the form of urban blocks, the scale and size of the buildings and the spaces they create.

Sense of Arrival

Equally as important to a town centre’s character is the sense of entering into a particular area. Successful town centres ensure that key access routes into a district offer individuals a sense of arriving to a collective entity or place, which may be achieved by physical separation or distinctiveness within the built form and spatial environment.

Principle 2: Street Vibrancy

Successful town centres typically have animation, vitality, and an urban ‘buzz’. By promoting people to the street, animation and vitality is created. To create this vitality and vibrancy a close grain of vibrant uses should be accommodated which respond to the surrounding public domain.

Close Urban Grain and Diversity

Town centres that offer a close grain mix of uses, benefit the economy by encouraging a well connected catchment of customers to local businesses. A finer grain mix of uses within a town centre offers a viable alternative to large single use blocks, as its diversity ensures town centre streets are more resilient to economic uncertainty.

Flexibility and Adaptability

The built form and public domain needs to be flexible and adaptable to cater for a variety of functions. The adaptability of individual buildings and public spaces is important not only to allow for physical change but also cultural and social change. The most successful places are products of growth over time, shaped by and able to accommodate changing economic conditions, development aspirations and cultural differences.



Principle 3: Urban Composition

“Bring half a dozen buildings together and an art other than architecture is made possible. Several buildings begin to happen in the group, which would be impossible for the isolated building. We may walk through and past the buildings and as a corner is turned an unsuspected building is suddenly revealed” (Cullen 2002). Essential to a well composed town centre is its street definition, sense of enclosure and legibility, ensuring a user is guided through a town’s key focus areas.

Definition and Enclosure

Streets and public domain have a symbiotic relation with the built form and its density. If appropriately designed the urban environment can take a positive form and possess a sense of enclosure to the public domain.

Legibility

The articulation of the built form and it’s relationship with the spaces that bound it are crucial to ensuring a legible network of town centre streets. By manipulating the nuances of scale and style, of texture and colour, as well as character, a route can have a strong and memorable identity that reflects its importance within a hierarchy, encouraging legibility.

Principle 4: A Community Heart

A community heart forms an essential component to a vital town. Typically a community heart consists of an eclectic mix of uses and activities that is supported by a quality public domain. The concentration of uses and appropriate public domain can establish a gathering point for social interaction that can be deemed as the community heart due to its affiliation with the town centre population.

Focal Point for Social Interaction

The community heart acts as a focal point for social interaction, offering a variety of potential different uses and activities during the day and night. Essentially this focal point evokes a sense of place and ownership for the town centre community.

Community Use

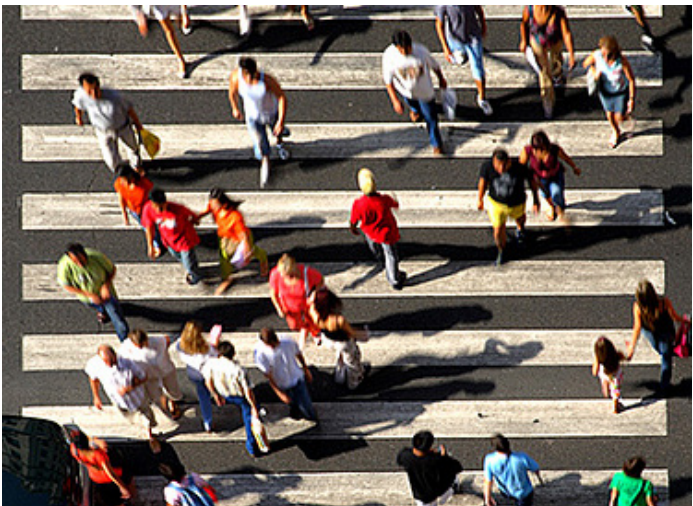
Successful community hearts tend to be civic spaces, squares or a high street, where a variety of functions can be catered for, such as markets, festivals, theatre and relaxation for meeting others. It is imperative that a large proportion of the community heart is public and freely accessible at all times, to all users.

Principle 5: Accessible and Well Connected

Cars form a dominant characteristic in many town centre’s today, however the most vital town centres reconcile the importance of the pedestrian and cyclist, reducing the dominance of the vehicle and prioritising pedestrians, cyclists and modes of public transport.

A Network of Pedestrian Accessible Routes

“Emphasising walking as a viable mode of transportation with a strong impact on health is leading towards a more sustainable city and town centre, where energy consumption and a focus on a lively city during the day and night are part of the new city strategies” (Gehl 2009). The way a town centre is designed can contribute to an individual propensity to be physically active - to walk instead of drive. This can have a direct influence on improved health outcomes.



Good Public Transport Links

Good public transport can reduce vehicular use within a town centre, supporting the retention of open space, encourage traffic calming, promote walking and cycling, enhance social sustainability and encourage a more compact town centre that is easily accessed and used.

Principle 6: A Balanced Environment

Essential to any vital town centre is the balance between hard and soft landscape, ensuring a symbiotic relationship between the urban and natural environment. As town centres expand, natural habitats are enveloped by the urban environment, altering the natural ecosystems and bringing the urban environment into direct contact with the natural environment.

Public Domain

A quality public domain beyond providing an aesthetic component for town centres, can create an ongoing series of systems, patterns and interactions between living things. Thus a vital town centre offers a public domain that responds to the user requirements and local ecosystems, creating a more balanced environment.

Environmental Sustainability

A vital town centre must be sustainable by responding to its environment and ecosystems within it, ensuring a resilience to extreme weather conditions. Additionally, through the appropriate planting of trees and vegetation, carbon dioxide can be sequestered, winds speeds can be reduced, shelter belts are established and dust pollution can be filtered. These considerations are essential for any vital town centre.

Principle 7: Policy and Governance

“Sustainable communities and town centres are characterised by leadership, and strong governance frameworks that are transparent, accountable and adaptable. They enable active partnerships to build capacity and achieve a shared vision, and deliver a variety of stakeholder benefits”. [Green Star - Communities, 2012]

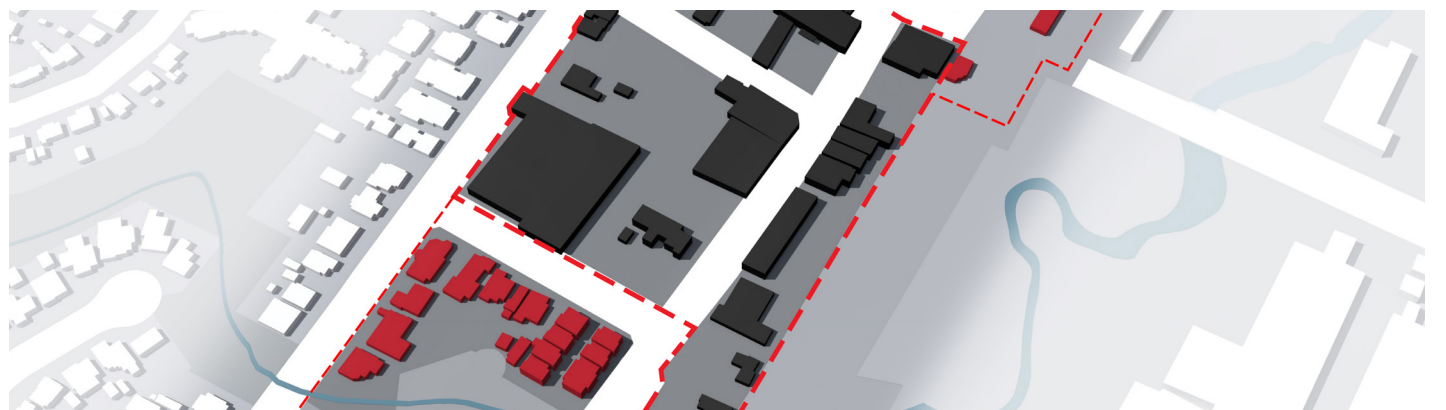
The correct governance and policy for a town centre is essential to ensuring its vitality and viability. For this to happen, local, state and federal government require a clear and inclusive governance model, incentivising the successful implementation of development within a town centre.

Principle 8: Community Ownership

“Sustainable communities are liveable. They are diverse, affordable, inclusive and healthy. They enhance social interaction and ownership, are safe and caring and improve people’s wellbeing” [Green Star - Communities, 2012]. In creating a vital town centre, the master planning process must incorporate the community and establish an understanding of their current and anticipated demands of the town centre.

A vital town centre requires a community that is actively involved in ensuring their town centre is vital and vibrant. A vital town centre encourages community cohesion through engagement processes that allow stakeholders and the community to have a say in the evolution of their communities, from policy development, to ongoing revitalisation, evaluation and adaptive management.





3.0 Understanding Unanderra Town Centre

3.0 Understanding Unanderra Town Centre

3.1 CONTEXTUAL POSITIONING

This section establishes an understanding of Unanderra Town Centre both physically, economically and environmentally by assessing it against the key principles that make a ‘Vital Town Centre’. The analysis work produced in this study is supported by the Unanderra Town Centre - Desktop Analysis [2013] produced by Wollongong City Council.

Unanderra Town Centre is located approximately 5km southwest of Wollongong City Centre and 2.5km southwest of Figtree Town Centre. Unanderra Town Centre is bordered by Cordeaux Heights and Farmborough Heights to the west and south west with Figtree to the north and Kembla Grange to the south. To the east, Unanderra is bounded by light and heavy industrial lands. The Town Centre is comprised of a mix of Retail, Commercial and Light Industrial uses primarily along Central Road, Tannery Street and the Princes Highway.

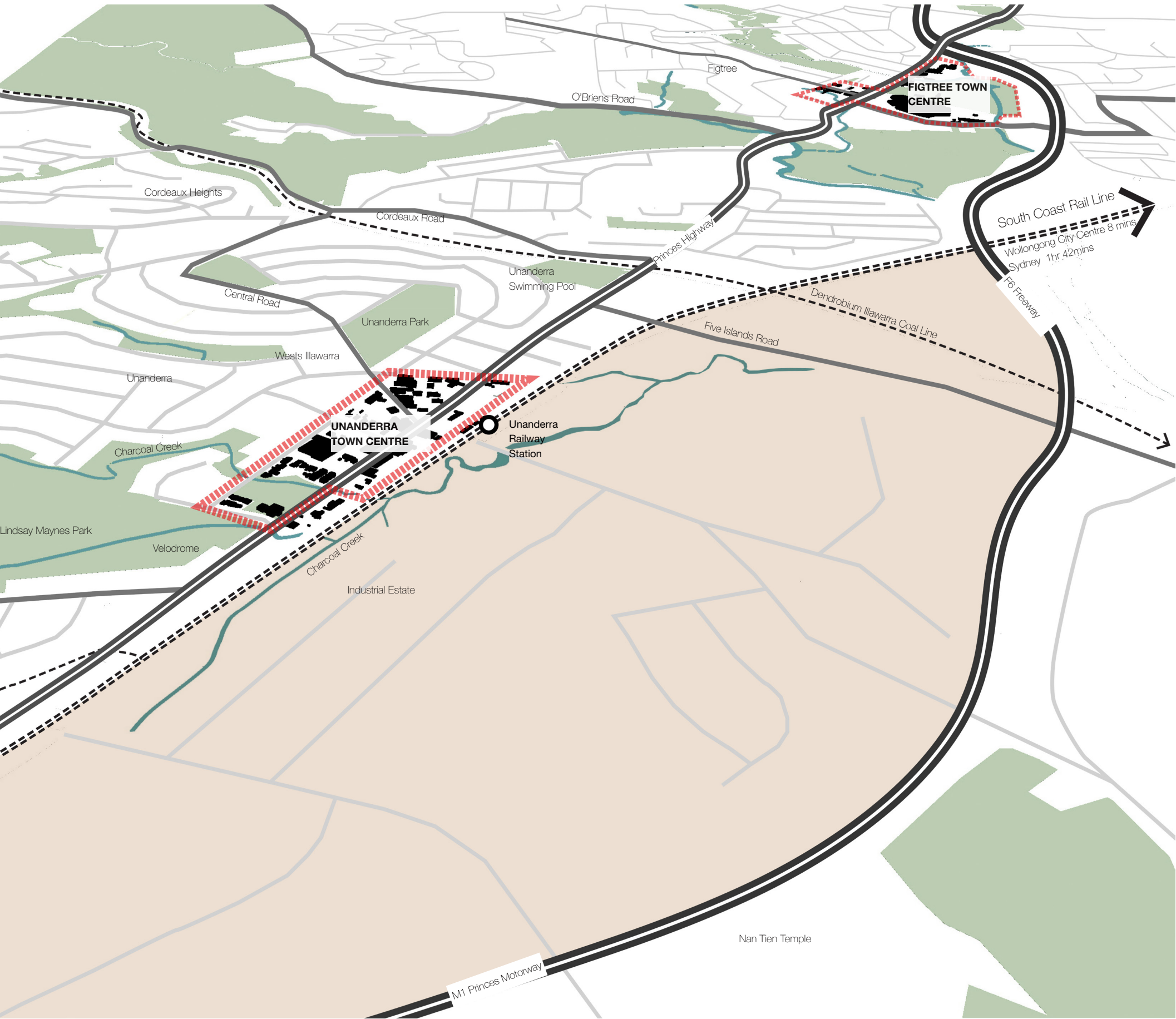
Regional Connections

Unanderra Town Centre is located on the main South Coast Rail line which provides a direct connection to Wollongong City Centre in the north. To the south, connections are provided to Dapto, Albion Park, Kiama and Bomaderry/Nowra. The South Coast Rail line also provides a direct connection to the Sydney CBD. Unanderra Town Centre is dissected by the Princes Highway which provides road connections to the north and south of the Illawarra Region.

Open Space Connections

A network of Open Spaces exist on the periphery of Unanderra Town Centre. Charcoal Creek flows from the west through a substantial open space network before flowing through the Berkeley Industrial Estate. Lindsay Maynes Park sporting complex offers a wide variety of active recreational uses including the local velodrome, hockey stadium and play equipment. To the north Unanderra Park and Unanderra Swimming Pool and surrounding lands provide large open spaces for the community of Unanderra.





3.2 IDENTITY

A key priority for the master plan is to achieve a clear identity and character that reflects Unanderra town centre's community and history. The below headings offer an understanding to what is identifiable in Unanderra Town Centre.

Character

Unanderra Town Centre is characterised by large areas of parking combined with a disparate collection of buildings offering limited architectural quality. The key characteristics of Unanderra Town Centre are as follows;

- Image 1 - A defining element located within the town centre is a cluster of small shops containing the Country Grocer and the big bulk retailer, Woolworths [Image 1]. This space is defined on only one side by the single storey shopping complex with car parking abutting the building frontages;
- Image 2 - The Princes Highway forms a key axial route through the town centre. The highway is characterised by a vehicular dominated environment with limited crossing points for pedestrians. Its vehicular prioritised character has driven many local retailers to face inwards and effectively turn their back on the highway;
- Image 3 - Unanderra Town Centre contains a local heritage item, which was previously Unanderra Public School. The building is now occupied by Woolworths Liquor which is located between Woolworths, Country Grocer and the Princes Highway;

- Image 4 - Central Road is the historical high street of Unanderra Town Centre. The road is characterised by single storey buildings with staggered frontages, narrow footpaths, little vegetation and kerbside parking;
- Image 5 - Unanderra Railway Station forms a key public transport connector for the Unanderra community. At present this key asset provides no disabled access limiting its usability.
- Image 6 - The Station Masters Residence located adjacent to the raised platform is a local heritage item that is at present disused, contributing to the poor character experienced within the town centre;
- Image 7 - Unanderra Public Library is located to the southern edge of the town centre and forms a key local facility for the Unanderra community. Classified as a heritage item, its southerly location results in it being separated from the key uses within Unanderra including the Country Grocer and Woolworths.
- Image 8 - Charcoal Creek and a local open space sit adjacent to the Unanderra Public Library. At present both natural features form little relationship with the town centre, offer no recreational facilities and are poorly used;

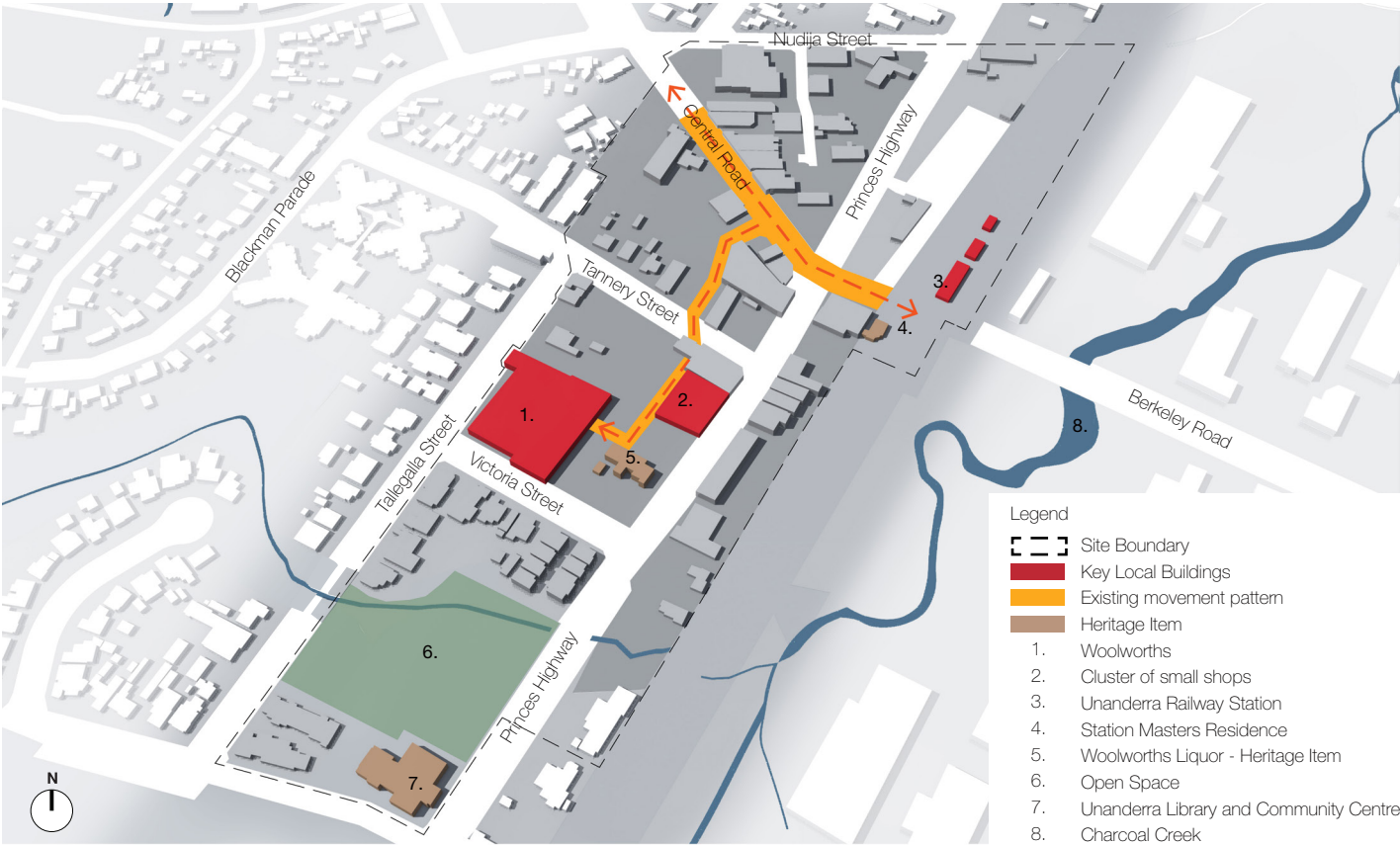


LEFT IMAGE 1. Cluster of small shops [Grocers]
LEFT IMAGE 2. Princes Highway
LEFT IMAGE 3. Woolworths Liquor [Heritage Item]
LEFT IMAGE 4. Central Road
RIGHT IMAGE 5. Unanderra Railway Station
RIGHT IMAGE 6. Station Masters Residence
RIGHT IMAGE 7. Unanderra Library and Community Centre
RIGHT IMAGE 8. Open Space and Charcoal Creek

Limited Individuality and Distinctiveness

Unanderra Town centre is characterised by large areas of parking and little building definition, resulting in little local distinctiveness. The key aspects of the town centre that offer some individuality are as follows;

- The cluster of small shops and the informal lane way that connects to Central Road;
- The key heritage building including Woolworths Liquor, the Station Masters residence and the Public Library;
- Unanderra Railway Station and its close connections to neighbouring centres including Wollongong city centre;



No Sense of Arrival

The primary entry points into Unanderra Town Centre are characterised by large empty spaces with little activation. In particular, the northern and southern entry points on the

Princes Highway lack a sense of arrival in the town centre. Similarly, the entry points on Tannery Street and Central Road lack spatial definition due to existing built form and land uses.



FIGURE 3.2 - LOCAL FEATURES
TOP. Key character features existing in Unanderra Town Centre today
FIGURE 3.3 - ARRIVAL POINTS
BOTTOM. Entry points into Unanderra Town Centre

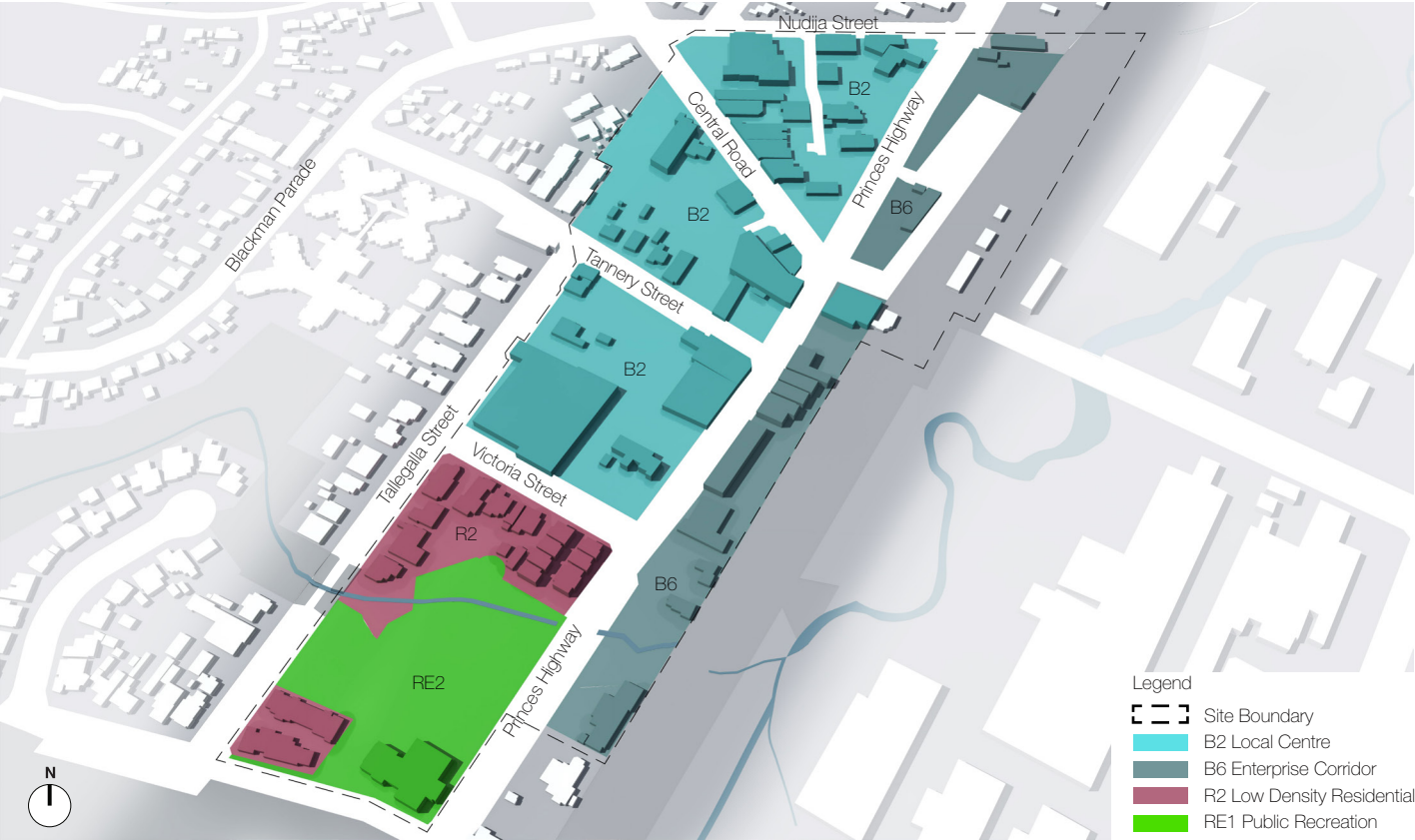
3.3 STREET VIBRANCY

A key priority for the master plan is to guide built form, which promotes street vibrancy and activates the pedestrian environment. The below headings offer an understanding to what street vibrancy exists in Unanderra Town Centre today.

Land Use Zoning [LEP 2009]

To understand Unanderra Town Centre’s street vibrancy it is important to understand the planning policy that guides development and the distribution of uses. At present Unanderra Town Centre offers little street vibrancy with the majority of uses being internalised and not addressing the street frontage. This is not consistent with the town centre’s

current zoning as it is primarily designated as B2 Local Centre, which allows for a wider variety of uses. Other zones within the study area are B6 Enterprise Corridor and R2 Low Density Residential which contribute to the lack of street activity along the south and western edges of the town centre.



Existing Land Uses

The majority of Land Uses within the town centre align with the LEP Land Use zones. The north of the town centre accommodates the majority of commercial uses, whilst the central area contains the majority of retail in the town centre.

Two anomalies appear however, with the residential land uses along Tannery Street and the single residential dwelling fronting Tallegalla Street.

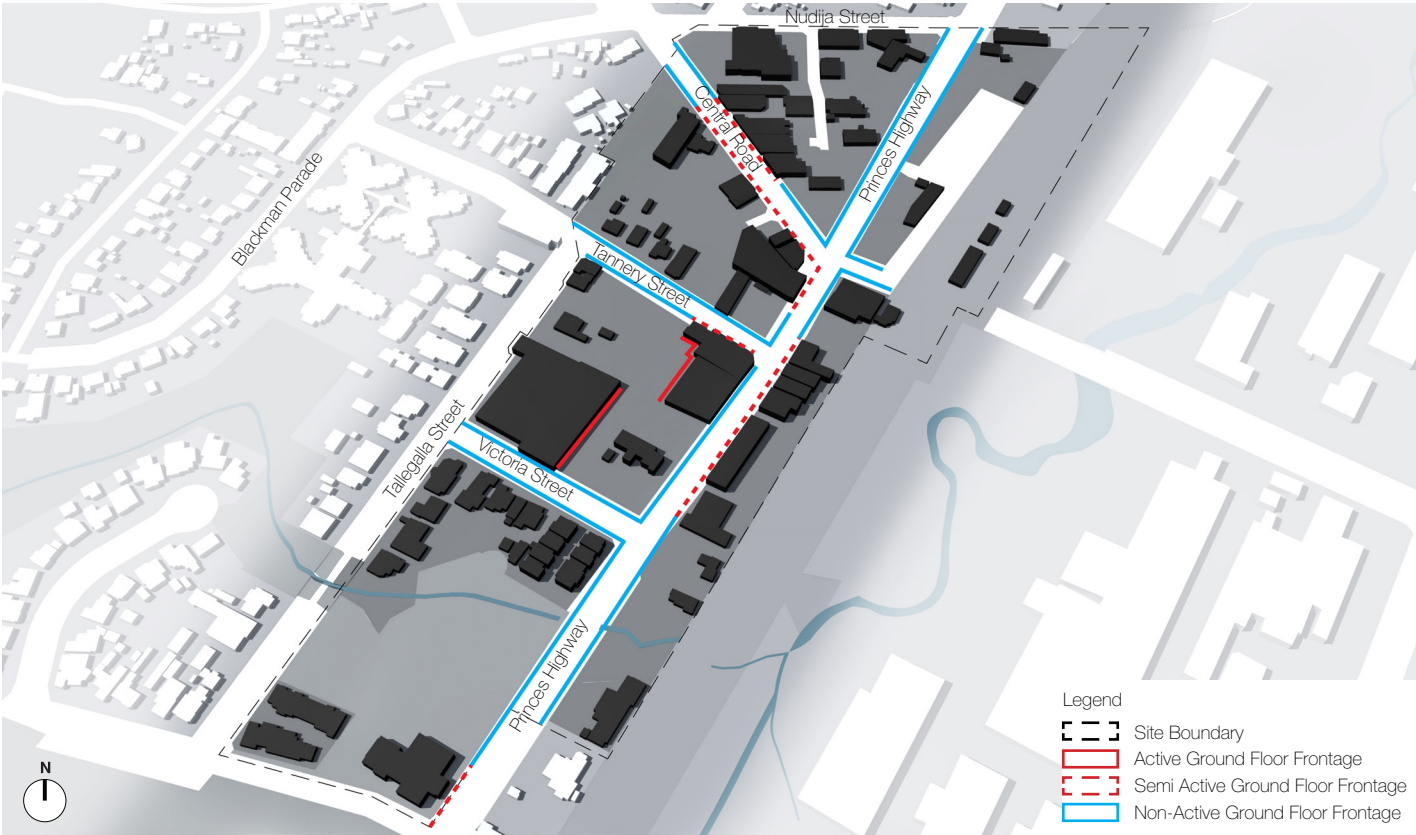


FIGURE 3.4 - LEP 2009 LAND USE ZONES
TOP. Land Use Zones in LEP 2009
FIGURE 3.5 - EXISTING LAND USES
BOTTOM. Existing Land Uses

Edges

Unanderra Town Centre is dominated by non-active edges, with semi active frontages being located along small portions of Central Road and the Princes Highway. The Princes Highway creates a hostile environment for pedestrian activity and has

led to businesses within the cluster of shops between Victoria Street and Tannery Street to turn their backs on the highway. This combined with the location of Woolworths has led to an inward looking built environment within the town centre;



Excessive Space

The town centre is dominated by a disparate collection of buildings that are surrounded by vast swathes of space which tend to be used for car parking. These conditions lead to a

poor critical mass of uses and a low density built form which are characteristics that don't align with a vibrant town centre environment.



FIGURE 3.6 - BUILDING FRONTAGES
TOP. Existing frontages within Unanderra Town Centre
FIGURE 3.7 - FIGURE GROUND
BOTTOM. Building to space comparison

3.4 URBAN COMPOSITION

A key priority for the master plan is to create high quality streets through appropriate scale and massing. The below headings offer an understanding to what the urban composition of Unanderra Town Centre is today.

Existing Building Heights

The existing building heights within the town centre predominantly fall between 3 - 9 metres [1-2 storey]. This low scale collection of buildings within Unanderra Town Centre,

reinforces a lack of street definition and enclosure, contributing to the town centre’s poor legibility and identity.



Permissible LEP 2009 Building Heights

The LEP designates the maximum building height within the town centre as 15 metres, significantly higher than any existing development. This designation highlights that the town centre

at present fails to meet the allowable height of buildings proposed in the LEP 2009, presenting opportunities for future development to increase building heights within the centre.



FIGURE 3.8 - EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS
TOP. Existing building heights within Unanderra Town Centre
FIGURE 3.9 - LEP 2009 HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS
BOTTOM. Existing building heights contained within LEP 2009

Floor Space Ratio [FSR]

At present, built form in Unanderra Town Centre is well below permissible FSR ratios. For example the Woolworths block currently has an FSR of 0.5:1 where an FSR of 1.5:1 is allowed

under the LEP 2009. Similarly the FSR's of other blocks throughout the town centre are between 0.37-0.67:1, well below the allowable FSR.



Street Form

Unanderra Town Centre is dominated by single storey built form and wide streets.

- Image 1 - Tannery Street is a key town centre street that at present lacks street definition and enclosure due to a wide road carriageway, low scale buildings and no tree planting. These physical characteristics combine to create a poorly composed streetscape that fails to reflect its role as one of Unanderra Town Centre's most important streets.
- Image 2 - Central Road is Unanderra Town Centre's most notable streetscape. With Central Road being the historical high street of Unanderra Town Centre, the scale of the road and built form offer a more appropriate street composition within the town centre. However, with low scale buildings, no street trees and poorly defined street parking, the road offers little to reinforce its hierarchal relevance within Unanderra Town Centre;
- Image 3 - Princes Highway being the major arterial road that connects the key centres within the Illawarra Region, is composed with a wider road carriageway, low grade uses and low scale built form. A lack of street trees and poorly defined spaces results in a street composition that is not fitting of 'Major Town Centre'.



FIGURE 3.10 - LEP 2009 FSR
TOP. Existing FSR contained within LEP 2009
IMAGE 1. Tannery Street: Low quality street form
IMAGE 2. Central Road: Medium quality street form
IMAGE 3. Princes Highway: Low quality street form

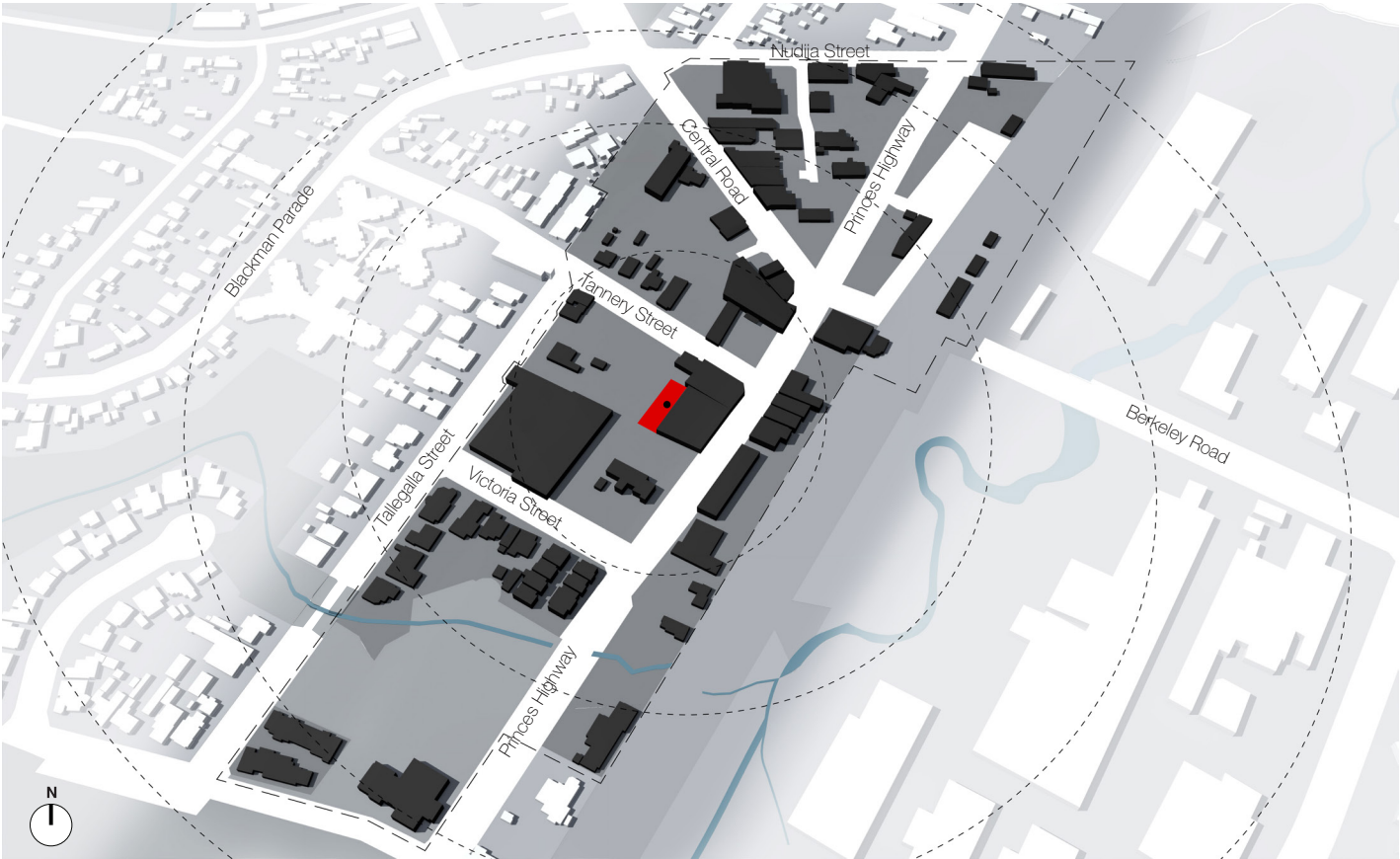
3.5 COMMUNITY HEART

A key priority for the master plan is to identify opportunities to define a community heart and build on the focal points that exist. The below headings offer an understanding to what focal points for social interaction exist within Unanderra Town Centre today.

Limited Focal Point for Social Interaction

The primary space identified as the community heart within the town centre is the small area outside the Country Grocer shopping complex. Aside from the alfresco dining area

accommodated by the Country Grocer, there is no designated public space, establishing a more car dominant space rather than a social gathering point for the community.



Poor Frontage to the Community Focal Point

The space identified as the primary community heart in Unanderra Town Centre is dominated by car parking and offers no relationship with the adjoining building uses. Other community assets that have been identified but are currently

disconnected or under-utilised include the former school building used as a liquor shop, the Community Centre on the southern edge of the town centre and the train station which is not universally accessible.

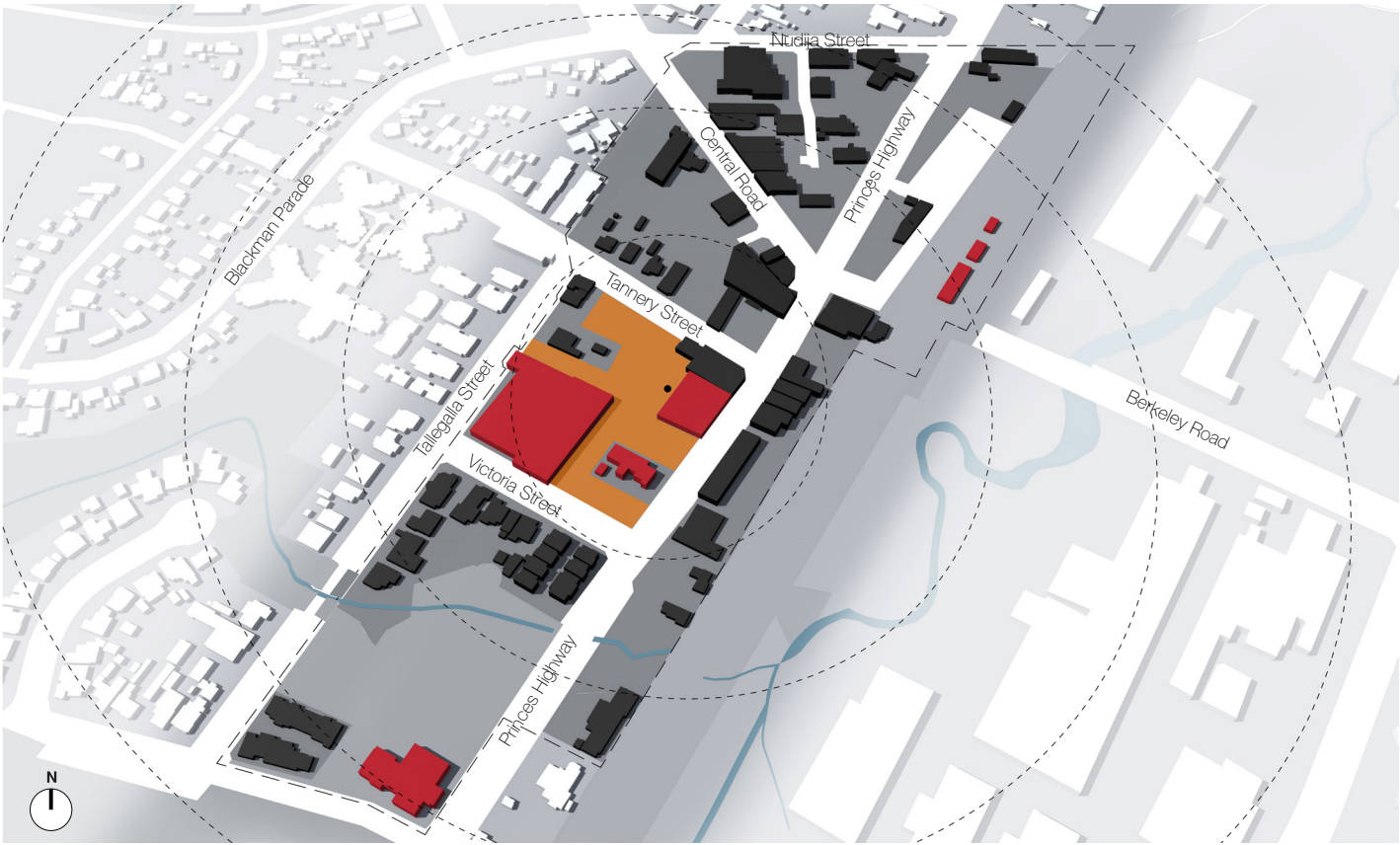


FIGURE 3.11 - EXISTING COMMUNITY HEART
TOP. Westfield acts as Unanderra Town Centre's community heart
FIGURE 3.12 - COMMUNITY HEART SURROUNDINGS
BOTTOM. Space and frontage surrounding the community heart

3.6 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

A key priority for the master plan is to promote pedestrian links, cycling and greater use of the local public transport system. The below headings offer an understanding to what access and movement patterns exist in Unanderra Town Centre today.

Poor Pedestrian Connectivity

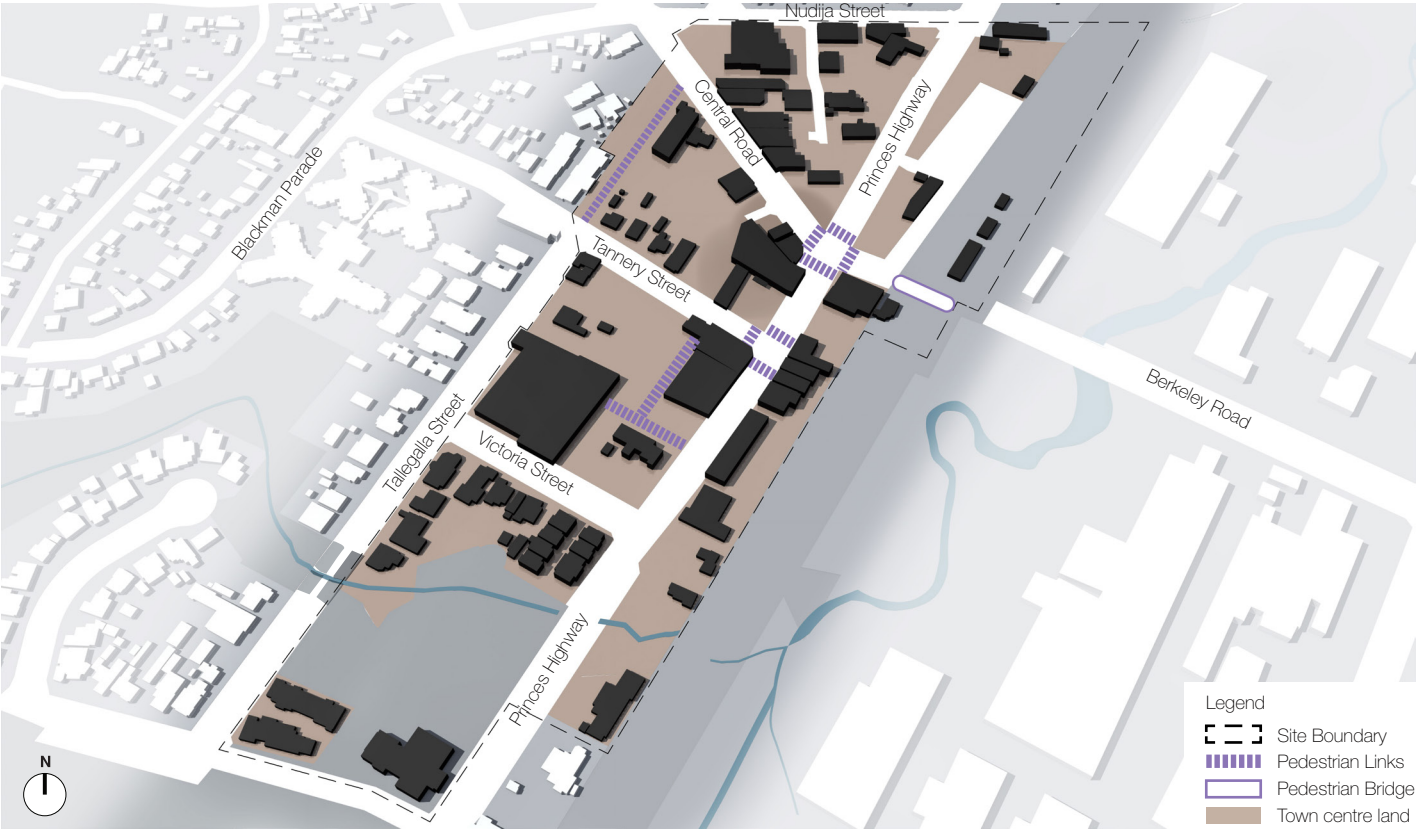
Unanderra Town Centre currently offers limited pedestrian connectivity for the town centre users, reinforcing a vehicle prioritised environment. Key points to note are;

- Both Tannery Street and Central Road offer designated crossing

points at their intersection with the Princes Highway;

– A low quality walkway connection allows pedestrians to navigate the car parking between the Country Grocer and Woolworths ;

– Unanderra Railway Station’s pedestrian footbridge offers no disabled access, restricting its usability to the able bodied.



Vehicular Prioritisation

Unanderra Town Centre, due to its close connection with the Princes Highway, offers good vehicular accessibility to the surrounding context with Central Road, Tannery Street, Victoria Street and Nudija Street all intersecting with the key arterial

road. However, due to the dominating and divisive nature of the Princes Highway and the excessive car parking zones located within the town centre, the reliance on the vehicle characterises Unanderra Town Centre’s environment.



FIGURE 3.13 - PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT
TOP. Pedestrian links and crossings within Unanderra Town Centre
FIGURE 3.14 - VEHICULAR MOVEMENT
BOTTOM. Road and vehicular hierarchy within Unanderra Town Centre

Limited Public Transport Links

Unanderra Town Centre is well accessed by a variety of public transport links. Key points to note are as follows;

- Unanderra Railway Station provides excellent transport links to Wollongong, Sydney and local centres including Dapto Town
- Centre. A key constraint is the railway station offers no disabled access due to low quality pedestrian footbridge and no lift.
 - Bus access is facilitated from a number of nearby centres including Figtree, Dapto and Wollongong city centre.
 - A lack of bicycle facilities and a limited offering of cycle access currently exist within Unanderra Town Centre;



FIGURE 3.15 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT
TOP. Local bus routes within Unanderra Town Centre
IMAGE 1. Princes Highway south end
IMAGE 2. Woolworths car park
IMAGE 3. Princes Highway north end
IMAGE 4. Central Road and Princes Highway intersection

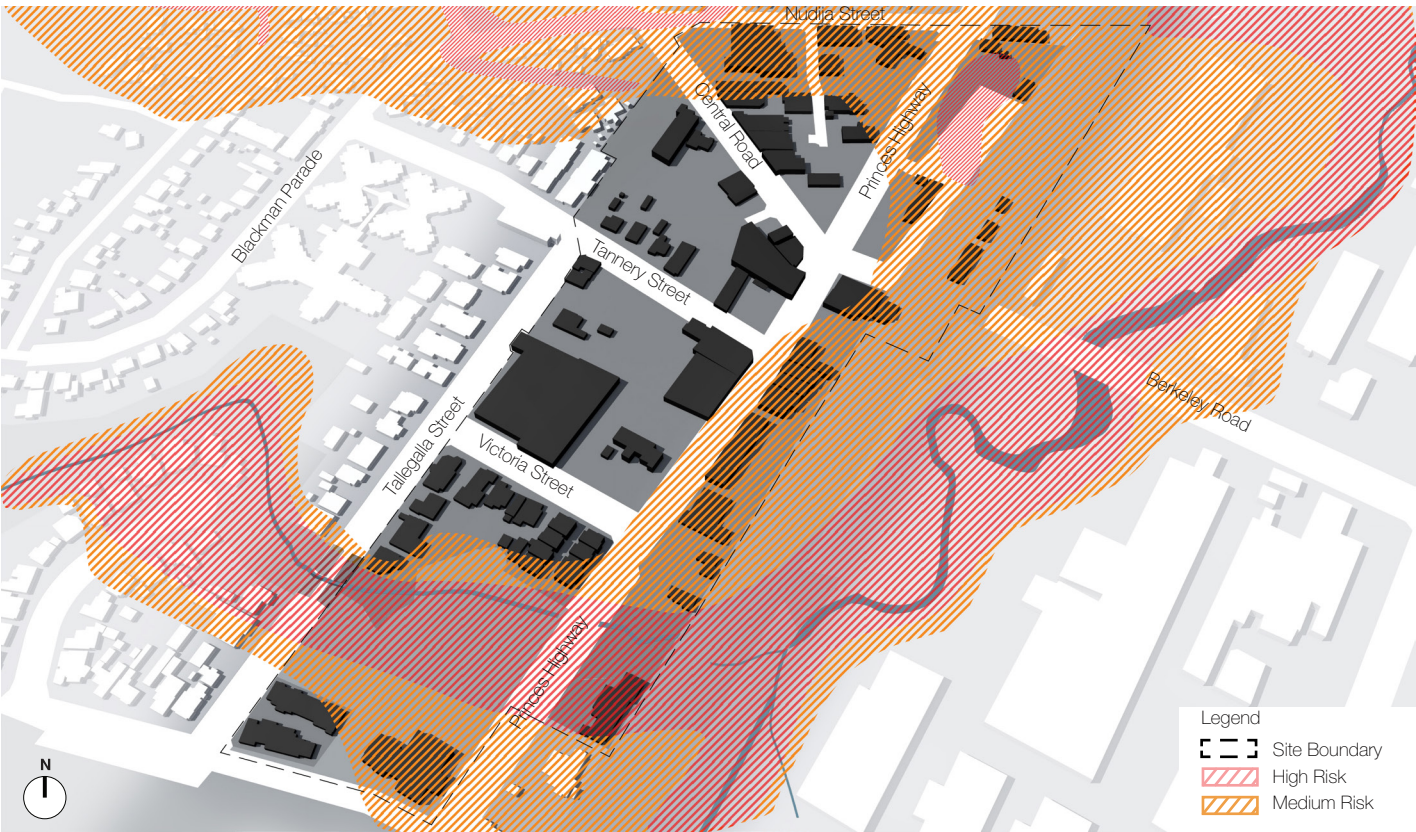
3.7 ENVIRONMENT

A key priority for the master plan is to ensure the vision for the town centre responds to the existing environmental conditions, offering a balanced environmental experience for the local community. The below headings offer an understanding to the environmental characteristics existing within Unanderra Town Centre today.

Flooding

Flooding is a key consideration in Unanderra Town Centre. High velocity flows occur along the course of Charcoal Creek, particularly through the open space at the southern end of the town centre. Low velocity flows affect all properties on the southern side of the Princes Highway and the northern part

of the block bounded by Central Road and Nudjia Street. For Unanderra Town Centre to become a vital town centre, future development must be resilient to flooding and accommodate the natural ecosystems that characterise Charcoal Creek.



Open Space and Public Realm

The town centre is dominated by impermeable hardscape surfaces, primarily used for vehicular parking. A limited area of permeable soft landscape surfaces exist within both public

and private land. The town centre also suffers from a lack of established vegetation, in particular street trees.

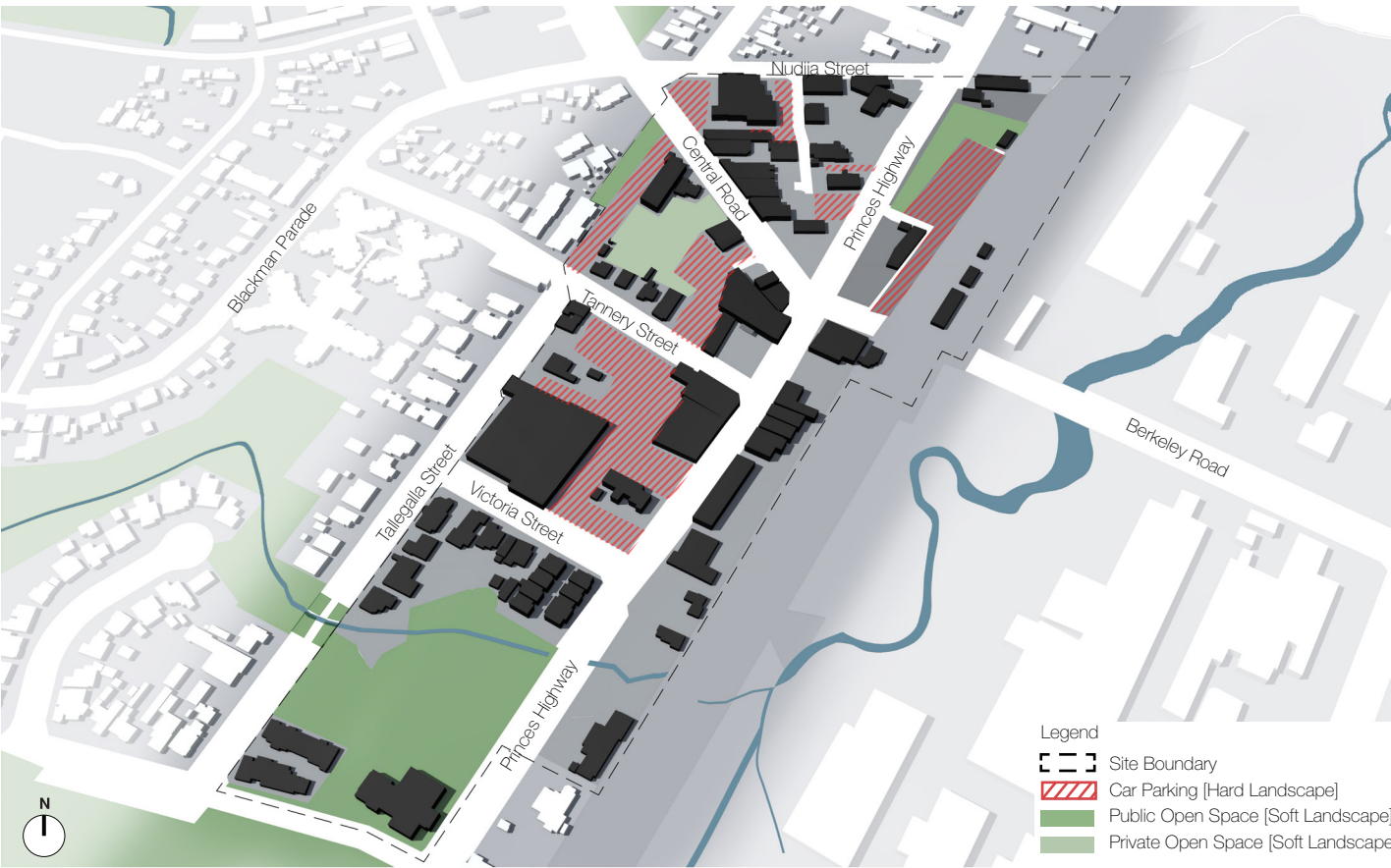


FIGURE 3.16 - FLOODING
TOP. Flood conditions within Unanderra Town Centre
FIGURE 3.17 - LOCAL ENVIRONMENT
BOTTOM. Soft and hard space within Unanderra Town Centre

3.8 COUNCIL CONSULTATION

A key priority for the master plan is to ensure the vision for the town centre responds to the council's aspirations, ensuring the master plan process considers relevant policies and governance. Essential to understanding the council's aspirations is undergoing a council workshop process.

Council and Councillor Workshops

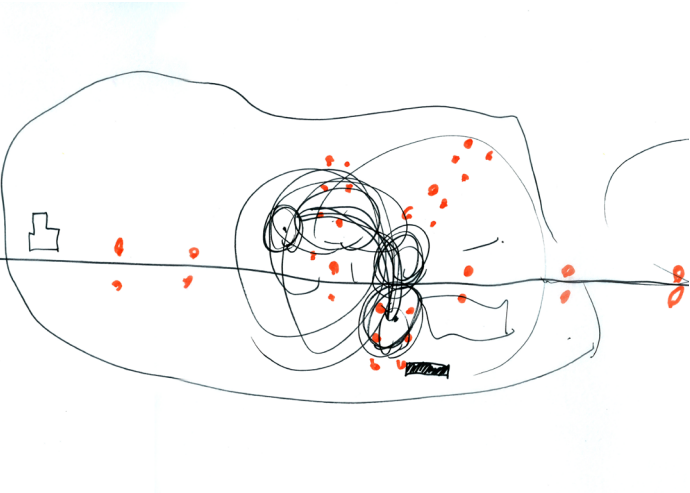
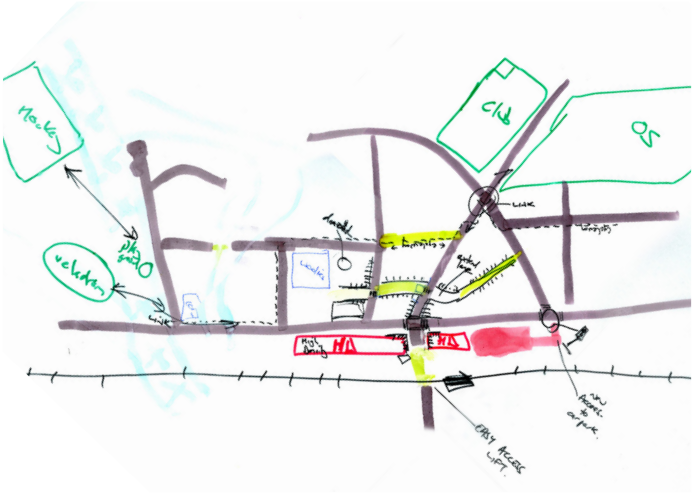
Workshops were held with councillors and council staff at Wollongong City Council on 18th January, 4th February, 18th February and 26th February 2013. The workshops were facilitated by Michael Cowdy and Matthew Ritson from McGregor Coxall.

The aim of the council workshops was to present the project teams analytical understanding and initial strategies for Unanderra Town Centre. This was followed by a forum of discussion, where ideas and feedback were received. All points raised were noted and applied to the development of the master plan strategies. Key points discussed at the workshops were as follows;

- The ownership of the parking bays adjacent to the Country Grocer are important in understanding what future opportunities are possible;
- The reorganisation of the car parking spaces between the Country Grocer and Woolworths have the potential to increase the capacity of public space. Traffic analysis would be required to test the feasibility of achieving this outcome;
- FSR's along the southern edge of the Princes Highway should be tested to understand if current planning controls are applicable;
- A continuation of the central spine towards Unanderra Park is

crucial to integrating the surrounding open spaces into the town centre;

- Any proposed changes to the Princes Highway would require negotiations with the Road and Maritime Services [RMS];
- In the long term, it would be great to accommodate more community based uses in the heritage building currently occupied by Woolworths Liquor;
- Temporary interventions within the existing parking spaces should be encouraged - this can be tested when the spaces are not needed;
- Pedestrian prioritisation within the town centre is encouraged;
- The existing heritage items including Unanderra Library and Community Centre, Woolworths Liquor and the Station Masters residence should be incorporated into the town centre and used by the community;
- Community ownership of town centre spaces should be encouraged;
- Pedestrian crossing within the town centre should be increased allowing greater access in and around Unanderra;
- The existing pedestrian footbridge located at Unanderra Railway Station should be improved and made accessible for all users;
- Access to open spaces and Charcoal Creek should be improved for recreational uses;
- Street trees should form an essential component to the key roads within Unanderra Town Centre;



3.9 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A key priority for the master plan is to ensure the vision for the town centre responds to the communities aspirations, ensuring a level of community ownership in the master plan process. Essential to understanding the communities aspirations is undergoing a community workshop process. For a more detailed understanding of the community consultation feedback please refer to the Unanderra Town Centre study Community Engagement Summary Report.

Community Workshops

During November and December 2012, Wollongong City Council engaged with the community to ask about their 'vision' for the future of these town centres, and to better understand how the town centres function. A range of ideas and concepts for both town centres were discovered through conversations with the community, and the feedback gathered will inform the preparation of Town Centre Master Plans.

Council staff conducted conversations with local schools and businesses, residents, local social and community groups and local service providers.

- A total of 25 surveys were completed with 92% of respondents living in Unanderra or one of 10 surrounding suburbs targeted during the consultation.
- 5 submissions were received.
- Hundreds of ideas were shared.

What we asked the community

- Three consultation exercises were used at face to face forums including 'Where do you visit?', 'Where do you feel safe/ unsafe?' and based on the 6 goals of Wollongong 2022: 'What is

your key priority for the future of Unanderra town centre?'

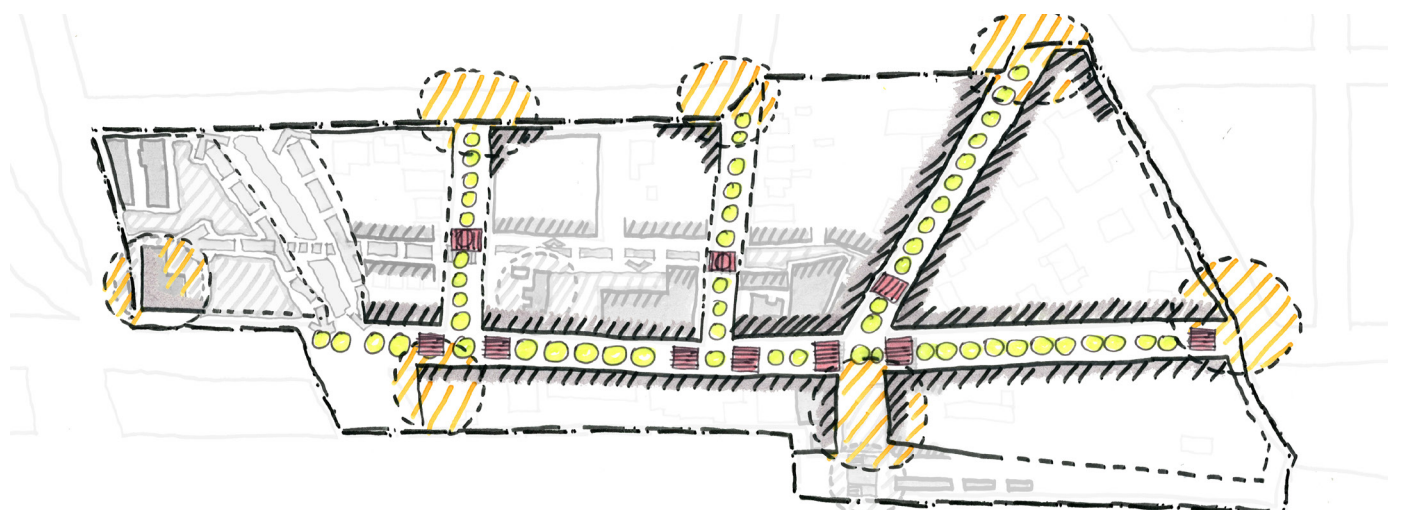
- Survey questions asked what they valued most about the town centre, what needs to be retained or protected, what things they would like to see improved and what is something new or different they would like included in the town centre in the future.

What the community told us

- The community most valued the size of the town centre and convenience which was associated with the size of the town.
- Overwhelmingly, the community wished to retain and enhance small retail facilities and the village atmosphere.
- The community told us they wanted to see traffic and parking improved in the future, as well as upgrading the railway station to improve access for all patrons.
- The most common top priority for a new element in Unanderra Town Centre was the creation of a public amenities and access to achieve 'walkability' to and within the town centre.
- It was recognised that all Wollongong 2022 goals were important and interconnected.
- More than 82% of visits to Unanderra Town Centre occur during the day.
- The top place to visit with the Town Centre was Precinct 1 – Woolworths block (47% of responses). This block formed a hub of activity around Country Grocer café.
- The number of youth that indicated that they felt safe and unsafe were equal. 72% of responses felt safe in Central Road and over 61% said they felt safe in Precinct 1.
- The community voiced that they would like to see the Community Centre and Library included in the town centre.
- The majority of people who visited Unanderra Town Centre last, come by car (68%)



TOP LEFT IMAGE 1. Community Goal 1 - We value and protect our environment
TOP MIDDLE IMAGE 2. Community Goal 2 - We have an innovative and sustainable economy
TOP RIGHT IMAGE 3. Community Goal 3 - Wollongong is a creative, vibrant City
BOTTOM LEFT IMAGE 4. Community Goal 4 - We have a healthy community in a liveable City
BOTTOM MIDDLE IMAGE 5. Community Goal 5 - We are a connected and engaged community
BOTTOM RIGHT IMAGE 6. Community Goal 6 - We have sustainable, affordable and accessible transport



4.0 Strategising Unanderra Town Centre

4.0 Strategising Unanderra Town Centre

4.1 THE KEY STRATEGIC MOVES

Building off the analysis produced for Unanderra Town Centre a series of key strategic moves have been established that look to incrementally phase the transformation of Unanderra Town Centre into a vibrant and vital town centre. The strategic moves have been broken down into two key phases;

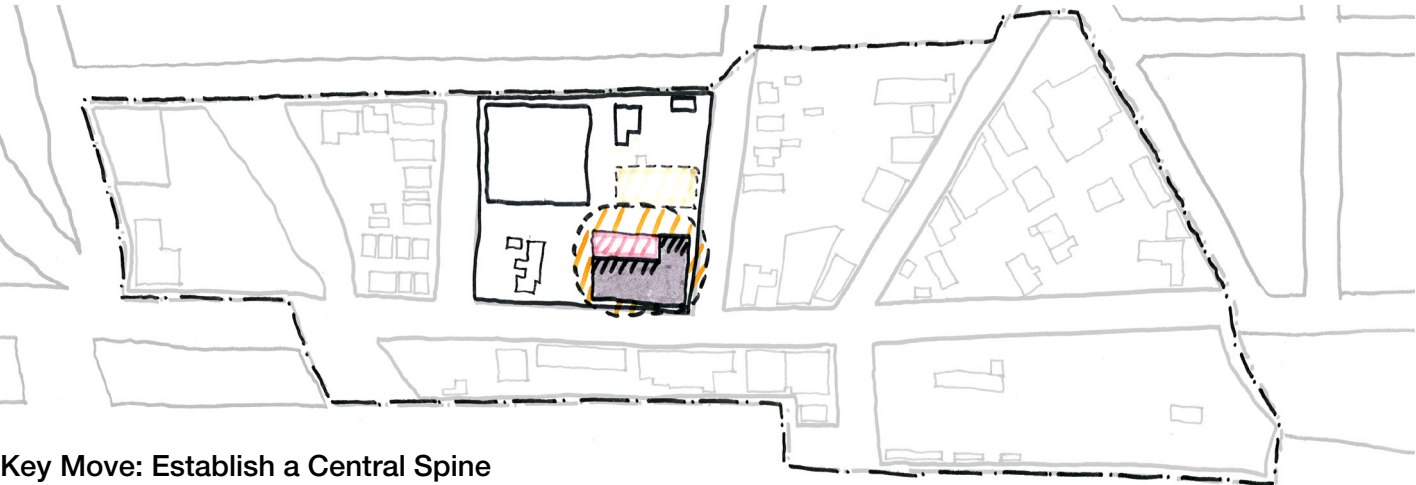
- Short Term Transitional Interventions
- Long Term Major Changes to the centre

Short Term Transitional Interventions

Key Move: Strengthen the Community Heart

Drawing on the existing qualities of the Country Grocer and the adjacent retail premises, a temporary community space is proposed along the northern edges of these retail premises. Active interventions such as Pop-up cafes, bars or stalls are

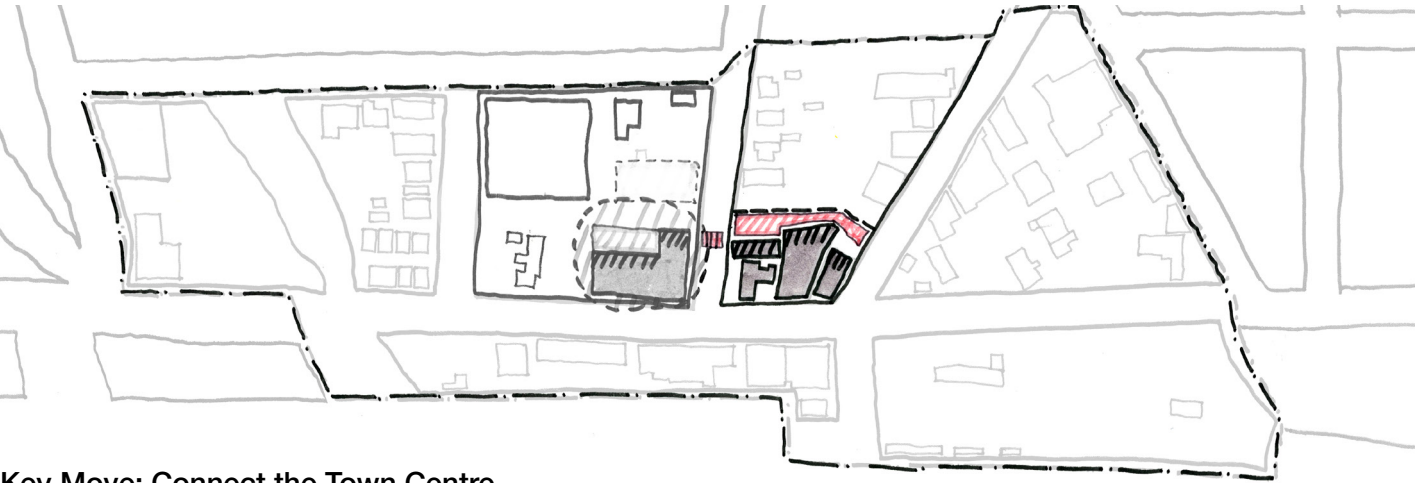
proposed within the space through temporarily closing off the parking bays, allowing a flexible use of space and the opportunity to initiate a social point for community interaction. Initial works can commence on refurbishing Unanderra Railway Station's pedestrian footbridge into a disability compliant structure ensuring universal access to the transport node.



Key Move: Establish a Central Spine

The existing car parking zone located to the rear of the adjacent properties will be enlivened through the implementation of temporary interventions. A lightweight structure could be inserted to define the edge of the space,

formalising the connection and establishing the beginnings of a 'Central Spine'. Proposed temporary interventions can actively encourage the adjacent uses to re-address their frontage, reinforcing a new activated 'Central Spine'.



Key Move: Connect the Town Centre

Unanderra Railway Station should be transformed into an accessible active arrival hub for the community, through improved crossing points and a variety of active uses. The Station Masters House has the potential to be adaptively re-used into a cafe for public use, establishing a community

use that is distinctly Unanderra. These two interventions can catalyse the location and initiate active uses along the existing Telstra Exchange, creating a new destination for the Unanderra community to use, relax and enjoy.



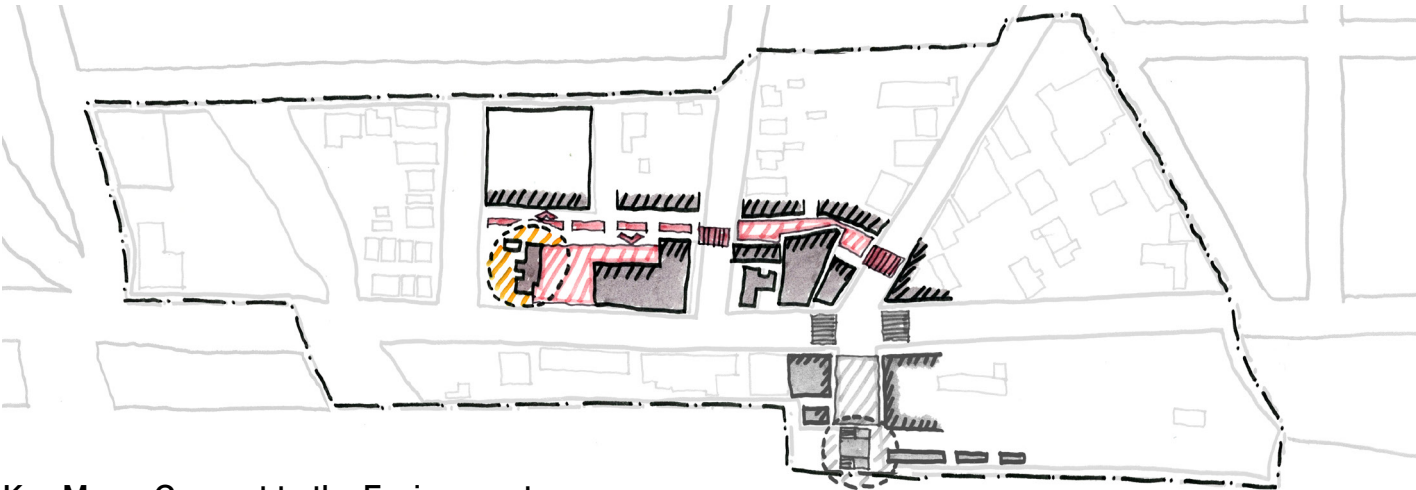
FIGURE 4.01 - KEY MOVE: STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY HEART
TOP. Sketch Plan
FIGURE 4.02 - KEY MOVE: ESTABLISH A CENTRAL SPINE
MIDDLE. Sketch Plan
FIGURE 4.03 - KEY MOVE: CONNECT THE TOWN CENTRE
BOTTOM. SKETCH PLAN

Long Term Major Changes to the Centre

Key Move: Reinforce the Spine

As the temporary interventions become critical elements in the Unanderra Town Centre the opportunity to build on the ‘Central Spine’ will be presented. The increased activity focussed within the town centre can lead to the consolidation of the existing

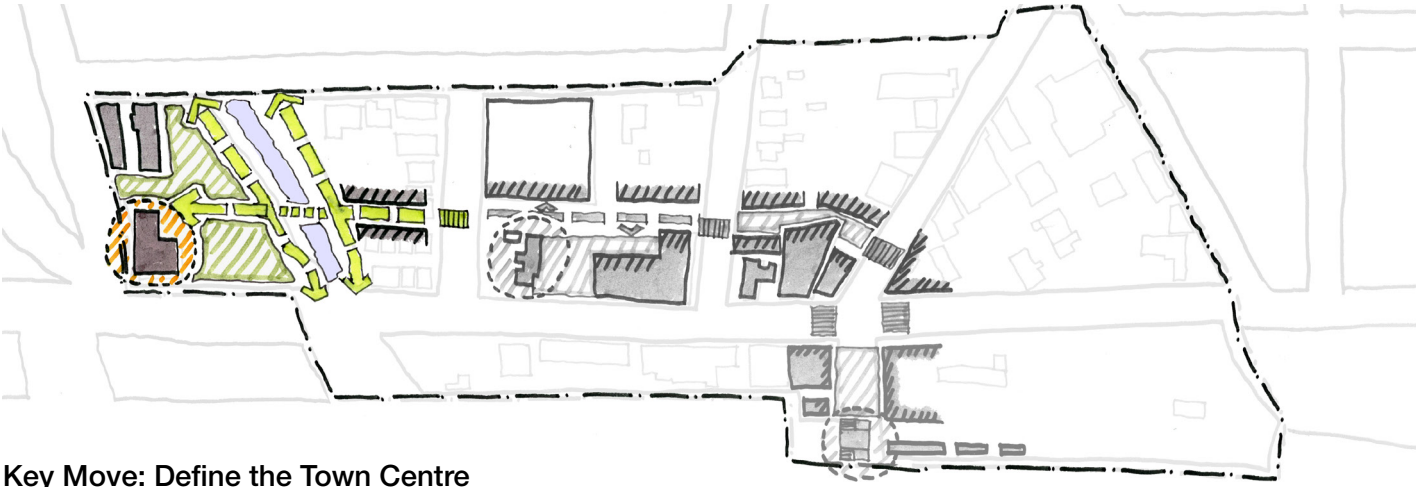
built form, allowing new buildings to be reorganised along the edges of the new central spine. Additionally, the community heart established outside the Country Grocer has the potential to expand towards the historic public school, encouraging a more community focussed use within the heritage item.



Key Move: Connect to the Environment

Charcoal Creek and the open space to the south of the town centre have the potential to become important assets in connecting Unanderra Town Centre to the surrounding community and open spaces. An extension of the ‘Central Spine’ can establish a direct connection across the creek

to the existing Public Library and Community Centre. The existing park can be upgraded to provide essential community facilities and a cycle-way along the creek-line, ensuring seamless access to the neighbouring parks and community spaces.



Key Move: Define the Town Centre

By initiating the previous key strategic moves, development can be incentivised towards the edges of the town centre improving the sense of arriving into Unanderra. Appropriate uses and built form can be introduced to define the town centre, complementing a legible network of tree lined streets.

These interventions can re-establish Unanderra as a ‘Major Centre’ allowing it to become an attractive destination for regional community to live, visit and use.

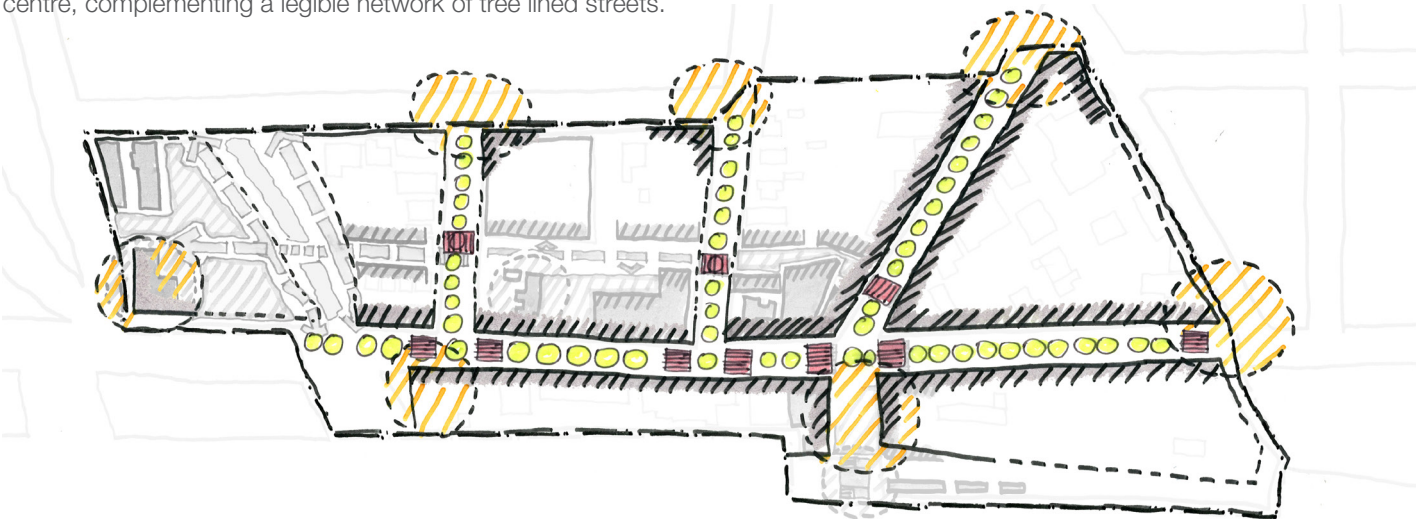


FIGURE 4.04 - KEY MOVE: REINFORCE THE SPINE
TOP. Sketch Plan
FIGURE 4.05 - KEY MOVE: CONNECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT
MIDDLE. Sketch Plan
FIGURE 4.06 - KEY MOVE: DEFINE THE TOWN CENTRE
BOTTOM. Sketch Plan

4.2 DEVELOPING THE KEY MOVES

Each of the key strategic moves proposed on the previous page have been further developed to ensure a greater understanding of what appropriate initiatives can revitalise Unanderra Town Centre.

Strengthen the Community Heart

The existing community heart comprising the Country Grocer and adjoining uses can be strengthened through using the adjacent 12 car parking spaces and access lane, transforming it into a flexible public space. The public space’s success will be in its temporary nature and the active interventions that have the flexibility to be introduced on an ‘as needs basis’.

1. Temporary Public Space

The new public space can act as the gathering point for social interaction, introducing a spatial relationship with the active strip of uses that are already associated as the community heart. The public space’s temporary nature allows the community the ability to utilise the spaces for a variety of community uses, reinforcing a sense of community ownership.

Key interventions that could be used within the space are as follows;

- Minimal interventions, such as having the local children repaint the parking bay lines with vibrant colours will indicate to the community that change is underway.
- Pop-up cafes, bars or stalls can inject vibrancy to the space
- Community art can be introduced within the space, signifying a change in public perception of the space.
- A temporary play area can be designed and painted by the community allowing families to utilise the space;
- Hold music events or markets on quiet days;

2. Access to Unanderra Station

Running parallel to the implementation of a strengthened community heart will be the refurbishment of Unanderra Railway Station’s existing pedestrian footbridge. A new lift providing universal access for all users can be proposed, improving pedestrian access to Unanderra Railway Station [to ensure this key outcome, requires a continuation to lobby State Government in prioritising lift access at Unanderra Station.



FIGURE 4.07 - STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY HEART
TOP, Phase 1 Master Plan



Establish a Central Spine

The success of the community heart can initiate a change in the community’s perception of how car parking spaces can be re-imagined as community spaces. The space between Tannery Street and Central Road can continue this change in perception through extending the temporary uses from the community heart into the space, providing a more active area for the community to enjoy. Key features of this period of development are as follows;

3. Central Spine

The beginnings of a new ‘central spine’ can be established in the space between Tannery Street and Central Road, seamlessly connecting to Unanderra Town Centre’s new community heart. The ‘Central Spine’ can be defined by a temporary structure along its northern edge, ensuring a greater sense of enclosure along the ‘central spine’. The temporary structure could be a community mural or wall of disused books that formalise the space reinforcing a sense of community ownership within the ‘central spine’.

A variety of temporary uses can be dispersed throughout the ‘central spine’ reinvigorating the existing space and transforming the existing pedestrian link into a destination for the Unanderra community. This has the potential to encourage a great number of people to the town centre, revitalising the local businesses and perhaps providing opportunities for new ones. Important to the success of this link is the introduction of priority pedestrian crossings at Tannery Street.

Key interventions that could be used within the space are as follows;

- Pop up book stores and cafes to inject vibrancy into the space with minimal cost to the owner.
- Markets can be encouraged to use the space, potential establishing a weekly market for the surrounding community to use;
- Temporary planters with small trees can be introduced to improve the quality of the immediate environment through the provision of shade and protection.
- Temporary seating can be provided, turning a car dominated space into an active social space;



FIGURE 4.08 - ESTABLISH A CENTRAL SPINE
TOP, Phase 2 Master Plan



Connect the Town Centre

Through the improved connection between the re-imagined 'central spine' and the existing signalised pedestrian crossing across the Princes Highway, pedestrian accessibility to the disabled compliant pedestrian footbridge and Unanderra Railway Station can be realised. Active uses can be implemented within and around Unanderra Railway Station, encouraging the local and surrounding communities to use Unanderra as a direct access point to Wollongong City Centre and other neighbouring local centres. [Note: the timeframes and implementation of the life is a high priority and critical to ensuring this key move can be realised.]

4. Unanderra Railway Station Hub

Through improved access to the railway station an active collection of uses can be implemented within and around the pedestrian footbridge, enhancing the arrival experience of Unanderra Town Centre. Key interventions and development initiatives that establish Unanderra Railway Station as a new focal point for the community to use, are as follows;

- Adaptive reuse of the Station Masters Residence into a cafe and restaurant;
- Pop-up cafes, bars or stalls can inject vibrancy to the space
- Introduce temporary interventions along the streetscape, re-appropriating some of the adjacent road carriageway;
- Facade improvements and a range of active uses along the Telstra Exchange can transform its blank frontage into a new active frontage for the community to use;
- Public realm improvements including high quality lighting, street tree planting and paving;



FIGURE 4.09 - CONNECT THE TOWN CENTRE
TOP, Phase 3 Master Plan



Reinforce the Central Spine

The ‘Central Spine’ overtime can incrementally develop from a series of temporary interventions into a permanent active movement corridor. The ‘Central Spine’ forms the backbone to the Town Centre and its development is crucial to the success of Unanderra Town Centre. [Note It is at this point that more long term strategies requiring investment can be established.] Key initiatives during this period of development are as follows;

1. Tannery Street Square

The community space fronting the Country Grocer has the potential to expand towards the heritage listed school building, offering a flexible and active space for the community to use;

2. New Pedestrian Footbridge

A new access compliant bridge can ensure universal access for all users, improving connections to Unanderra Railway Station;

3. Central Spine

As the ‘Central Spine’ evolves, consolidation of its edges which front the community space can begin to occur and a range of permanent active uses can be re-introduced.

4. Unanderra Railway Station Hub

Through improved access to the station, an active collection of uses can be implemented around the station, enhancing the arrival experience of Unanderra Town Centre;

5. Historic Unanderra Public School

The heritage listed school building has the potential to be re-appropriated with a range of community uses, adaptively re-using one of Unanderra’s key heritage items as a community facility;

6. Woolworths

The existing Woolworths can be re-developed into a modern mixed use building that incorporates Woolworths on the ground floor with residential above. This integration of uses can ensure a greater critical mass within the town centre and a high quality frontage to Tannery Street Square.

7. Parking area converted into a street

To ensure an efficient plot and accessible town centre, the existing parking area and cycle route should be transformed into a tree-lined street that encourages good access to the adjacent plot and Central Road;

8. Streetscape

On-street parking and trees should be introduced to Unanderra’s streets, establishing a traffic calmed environment and a more defined streetscape;

Both 7 and 8 are subject to a traffic study/ analysis of the movement network.



FIGURE 4.10 - REINFORCE THE SPINE
TOP, Phase 4 Master Plan



Extend the Spine and Connect the Environment

As the town centre continues to develop, the ‘Central Spine’ has the potential to organise the built form as well as drive connections to the surrounding environment. Key initiatives during this period of development are as follows;

9. Central Spine

Extending the ‘Spine’ south through to the existing Community Centre and Library and north through to Nudjia Street can establish a north/south pedestrian connection through the town centre;

10. Community Park

The existing open space can be transformed into a key recreational space for the community to utilise. Through the continuation of the Central Spine the new open space can form an integral element within Unanderra Town Centre’s environment and allow seamless access to the sporting facilities of Lindsay Maynes Park;

11. Unanderra Park

To the north, the extended ‘Central Spine’ has the potential to drive the development of the northern block of the town centre creating a pedestrian connection across Nudjia Street to neighbouring open spaces including Unanderra Park;

12. Charcoal Creek

Charcoal Creek on the southern edge of the town centre presents a significant opportunity to become a riparian greenway, offering a seamless connection to the surrounding open spaces through a network of cycle and walking trails;

13. Unanderra Library and Community Centre

Unanderra Library and Community Centre can be re-integrated into the fabric of the town centre, forming the town centre’s southern most entry point;



FIGURE 4.11 - CONNECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT
TOP, Phase 5 Master Plan



Define the Town Centre

Developing the eastern side of the Princes Highway presents the final phase of the Master Plan and allows the opportunity to define the entry points into Unanderra Town Centre. Key initiatives during this period of development are as follows;

14. The Princes Highway

Discussions between Wollongong City Council and Road and Martine Services [RMS] on the Princes Highway can aim to reduce the vehicular prioritisation of this large arterial road. By re-prioritising the significance of the Princes Highway, improved street environment can be introduced along the road corridor, encouraging a more pedestrian friendly environment;

15. Eastern Buildings

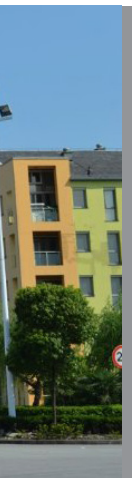
The built form along the eastern edge of the Princes Highway provides key opportunities to define the entrance into Unanderra Town Centre and strengthen Unanderra Town Centre’s identity. Consisting of ground floor active uses with offices above, these buildings can establish street definition along the southern edge of the Princes Highway.

16. Future Transport Interchange

The area of land north of Unanderra Railway Station presents the opportunity to develop a future transport interchange. Further investigation would be required to explore the viability of this future opportunity.



FIGURE 4.12 - DEFINE THE TOWN CENTRE
TOP, Phase 6 Master Plan





5.0 The 30 Year Vision

5.0 The 30 Year Vision

5.1 THE VISION

This section presents the 30 year vision for Unanderra Town Centre. A vision that looks to transform a declining town centre into a vibrant and vital place for the local community to use, enjoy and relax in.

Unanderra Town Centre has the physical attributes to become one of Wollongong’s Major Centre’s, offering excellent transport connections through Unanderra Railway Station and the Princes Highway; an existing community heart due to the Country Grocer and a compact town centre structure. It is through these existing characteristics that Unanderra Town Centre can be re-imagined into a series of flexible community spaces and a well connected network of activated streets that encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

Essential to creating a vision is establishing a robust master planning framework that forms a guidance for future development within the town centre. This master planning framework has been developed through our understanding of the key principles that define a ‘vital town centre’. A reminder of these key principles are as follows;

- Principle 1: A Unique Identity
- Principle 2: Street Vibrancy;
- Principle 3: Urban Composition;
- Principle 4: A Community Heart
- Principle 5: Accessible and Well Connected
- Principle 6: A Balanced Environment;
- Principle 7: Policy and Governance;
- Principle 8: Community Ownership;

5.2 UNANDERRA, ‘A VITAL CENTRE’

The proposed master plan framework has been built on these principles and identified future opportunities that ultimately aspire to establish Unanderra as a ‘Vital Town Centre’. To assist in understanding the 30 year vision, the master plan framework, has been broken down into the eight key principles that have driven the master planning process. These original principles when applied to Unanderra Town Centre are as follows;

- Principle 1: Reinforce Unanderra's Identity through improving the sense of arrival into the town centre and establishing a defined ‘Central Spine’;
- Principle 2: Making Unanderra vibrant through the interaction of uses and activities that are concentrated along the ‘Central Spine’, whilst offering seamless connections to a network of streets and lane-ways;
- Principle 3: Composing Unanderra through the appropriate scale and massing of the built form and articulation of key community spaces and streets;
- Principle 4: Strengthening the Community Heart through encouraging a focal point for social gathering and interaction;
- Principle 5: Reconnecting Unanderra Town Centre through a network of pedestrian prioritised routes and a seamless connection to Unanderra Railway Station;
- Principle 6: Balance Unanderra’s Environment through establishing a high quality public domain and strong links to local open spaces;
- Principle 7: Implement appropriate planning controls that incentivise future development within Unanderra Town Centre
- Principle 8: Provide opportunities for the community to have a sense of ownership in deciding the future for Unanderra Town Centre;



FIGURE 5.01 - THE VISION
TOP, 3D Master Plan



5.3 REINFORCING UNANDERRA'S IDENTITY

The long term vision establishes a well defined series of internal routes that enhance the town centre's permeability, whilst also reinforcing the existing identity of Unanderra. The following components of the master plan reinforce Unanderra's Identity;

- A 'Central Spine' can provide seamless connectivity between the town centre and its immediate surroundings', establishing legible access to Unanderra's new community spaces and existing heritage items.
- Well articulated buildings can be located at important strategic locations within Unanderra Town Centre, reinforcing a sense of arrival when entering Unanderra.
- Central Road's historic significance within Unanderra Town Centre can be strengthened through a fine grain of uses and a well defined streetscape, re-establishing its relationship with Unanderra Town Centre and Unanderra Railway Station.



FIGURE 5.02 - REINFORCE UNANDERRA'S IDENTITY
TOP. Creating a unique character and sense of arrival.

5.4 MAKING UNANDERRA VIBRANT

The distribution of land uses within the town centre are rationalised through a ‘central spine’ that offers a diverse mix of uses, building economic resilience into the town centre economy as well as activating the streets during the day and night. The following components of the master plan have the potential to establish vibrancy within Unanderra Town Centre;

- A series of public spaces should be located along the ‘Central Spine’ characterised by a diverse offering of retail, commercial and community uses;
- Commercial and office uses with a limited number of driveway entrances should be concentrated along the Princes Highway;
- Active ground floor frontages with residential above should be located away from the Princes Highway providing a transition between the residential context and the transport dominated environment of the Princes Highway;
- An opportunity to provide live-work units could be accommodated along the laneways that intersect with the ‘Central Spine’;



FIGURE 5.03 - MAKING UNANDERRA VIBRANT
TOP. An activated network of streets and lanes.

5.5 COMPOSING UNANDERRA

The design approach to composing Unanderra has been to respond to the significance of Unanderra’s key streets and provide a sense of enclosure within the public domain. It must be noted that the proposed building heights are a reflection on current policy and so are constrained to the existing planning controls provided in the LEP 2009. This master plan process has identified an opportunity to amend current planning controls to incentivise development within Unanderra Town Centre. The following proposed scale and massing ensures a well composed streetscape within the current LEP planning controls;

- Tannery Street Square should be defined by a greater height of buildings, establishing a sense of enclosure within the community space;
- Greater building heights along the Princes Highway and Central Road can define the road carriageway creating a sense of entering into Unanderra Town Centre;
- Lower building heights along the northern edges of the town centre can ensure a smoother transition in scale between the town centre buildings and its surrounding residential context;
- Building setbacks should align with SEPP 65 and Wollongong DCP 2009;

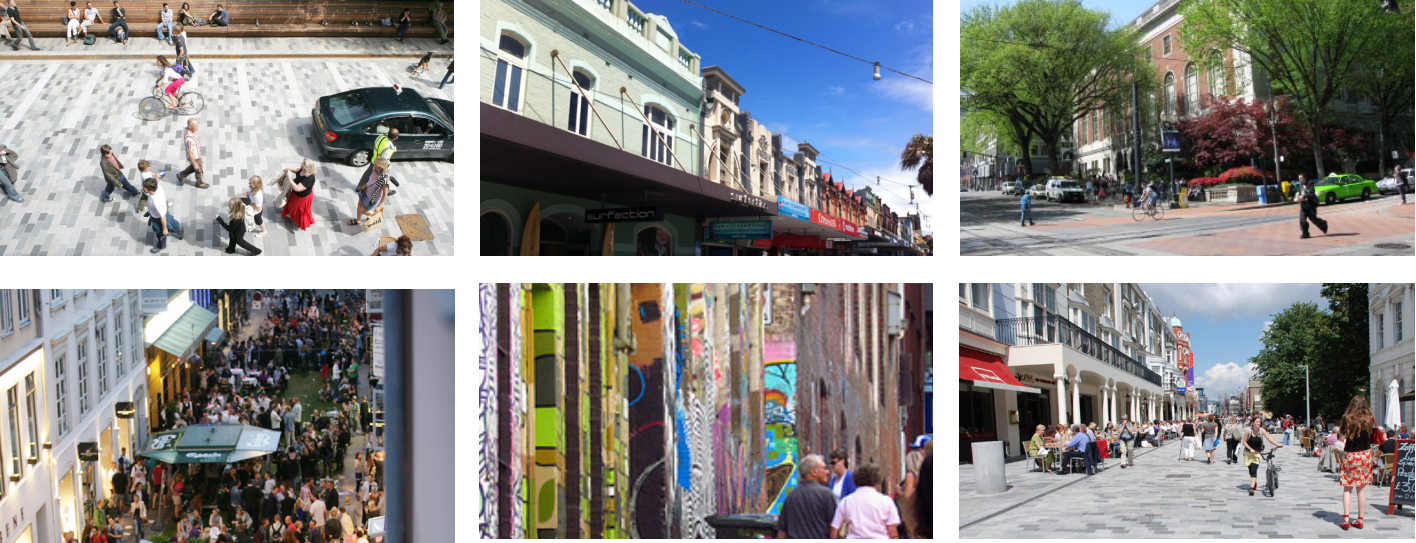
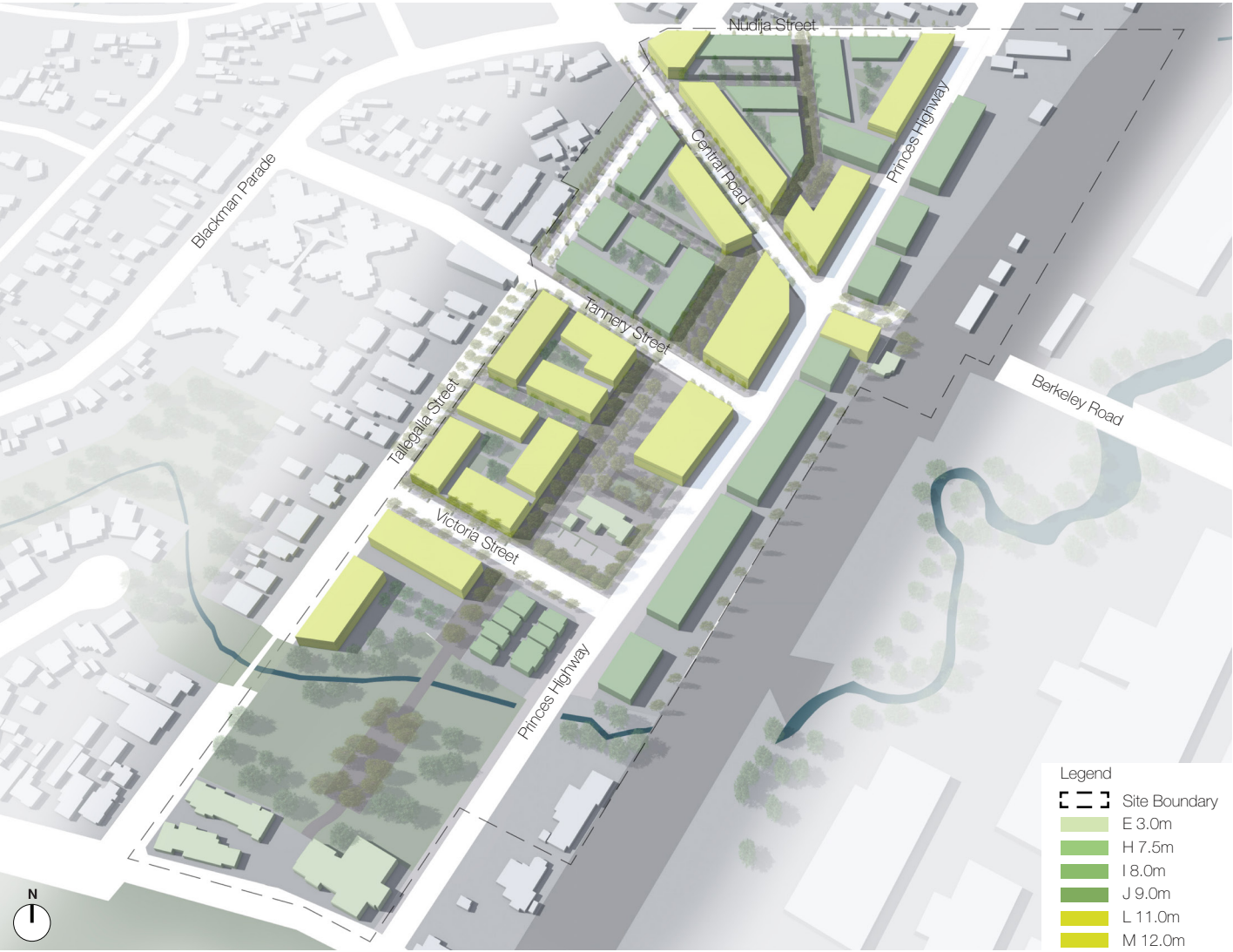


FIGURE 5.04 - COMPOSING UNANDERRA
TOP. Bringing definition to the streetscape.

5.6 STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY HEART

The space fronting onto the heritage listed public school buildings and the existing Country Grocer can form the community heart for Unanderra Town Centre. This public space can act as the focal point for social interaction within the town centre and for the wider Unanderra community. The following key uses and initiatives can strengthen the community heart within Unanderra Town Centre;

- A range of community uses such as cafe's, child-care, super-

market and other retail/ commercial uses can be introduced to the community heart improving passive surveillance within the core of the town centre;

- The community space should be flexible in design, attracting markets, temporary interventions and a range of night time uses.



FIGURE 5.05 - STRENGTHENING UNANDERRA'S HEART
TOP. Establishing focal points for social interaction..

5.7 RECONNECTING UNANDERRA

Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Unanderra Town Centre should be serviced by a well connected network of streets with a clear hierarchy enhancing legibility through the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists. The following key pedestrian and cycle opportunities can enhance connectivity within Unanderra Town Centre;

- A new pedestrian spine forms the key access point within the town centre, re-prioritising the town centre for the pedestrian.
- Pedestrian crossing points are located at key intersections, allowing improved pedestrian access across Unanderra Town Centre's key streets.
- The existing cycle network can be enhanced and extended along Central Road, the Princes Highway and Tannery Street;
- Charcoal Creek can be transformed into a green riparian cycle way allowing easy access to the surrounding open spaces and neighbourhoods;

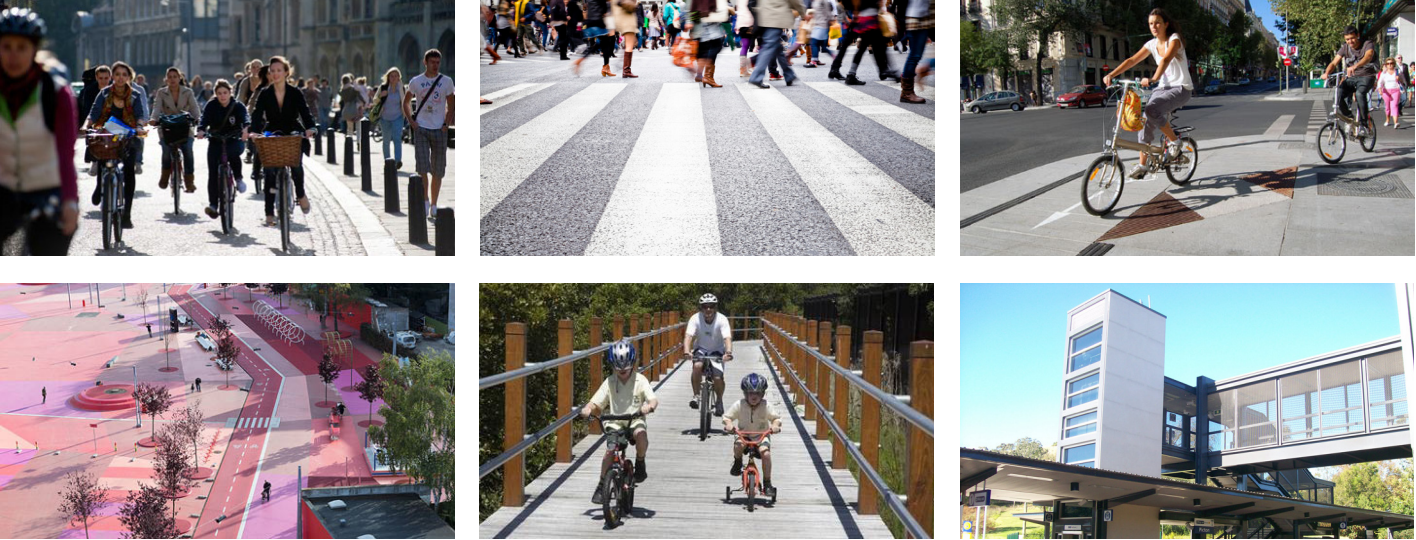


FIGURE 5.06 - CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT
TOP. Pedestrian and Cycle prioritisation

Public Transport

The master plan looks to further develop Unanderra Town Centre's public transport offering and encourage greater community use of the local bus and rail network, with less of a reliance on the vehicle. The following initiatives can enhance the public transport offering within Unanderra Town Centre, creating a more sustainable town centre.

- Improved access to Unanderra Railway Station through a new disability compliant pedestrian footbridge;

– Improve the existing bus network through an increase in bus frequency and bus stops encouraging greater community use of the bus system;

– The building plots adjacent to Unanderra Railway Station has the potential to offer a new transport interchange, catering for 'park and ride' and a greater concentration of local buses;

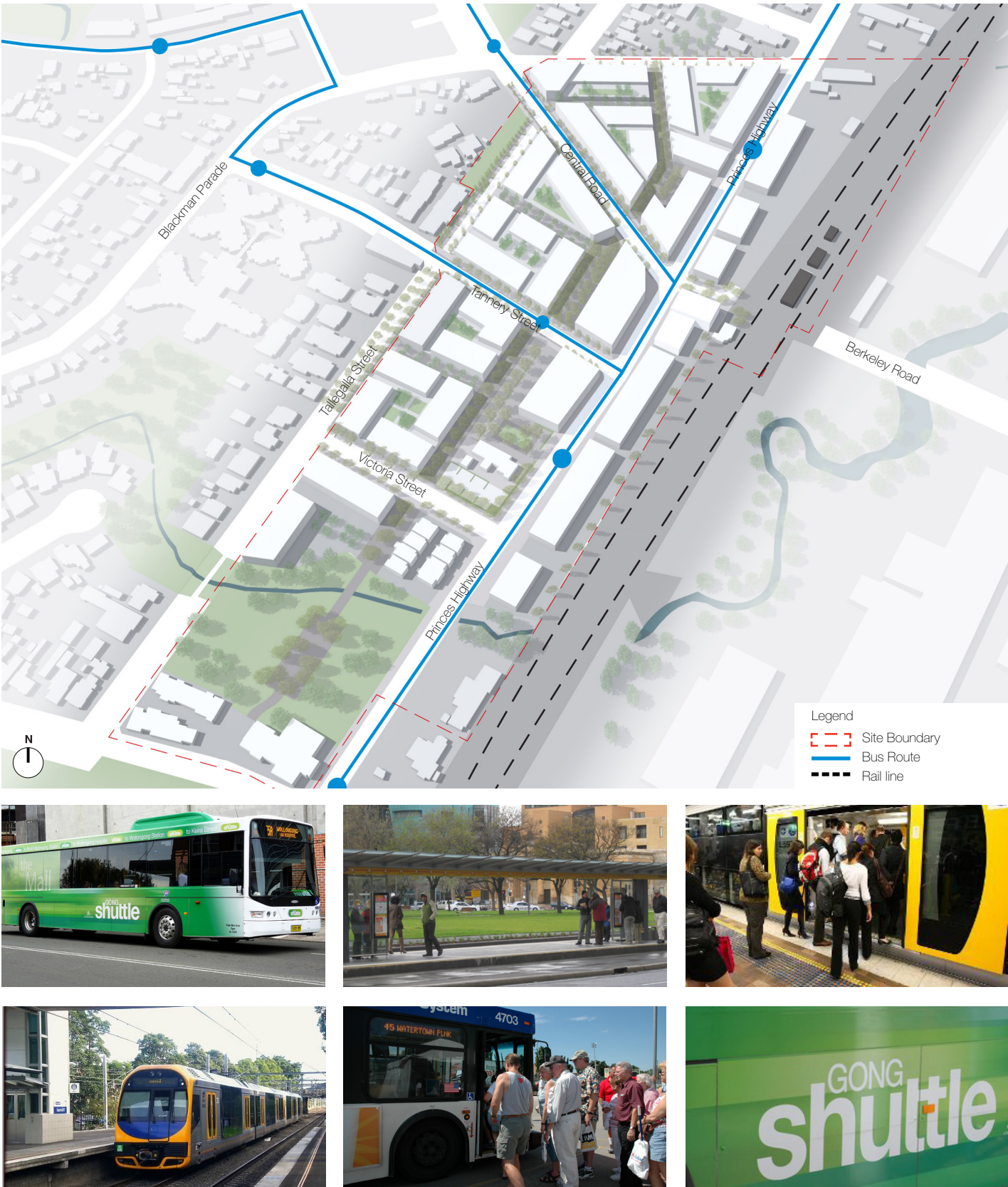


FIGURE 5.07 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT
TOP .A Sustainable network of accessible transport routes

MCGREGOR
COXALL

Vehicular Access and Parking

Unanderra Town Centre's existing road network should be retained ensuring easy access to the surrounding context. The Princes Highway can be re-prioritised within the town centre boundary encouraging greater pedestrian connectivity across the road corridor. The town centre should offer a range of parking options, with the majority of the site being serviced by rear deck car parking. This will establish a strong built frontage and a sense of pedestrian priority throughout the town centre.

The aim is to deliver a public environment that is practical in its level of parking provision but not visually dominated by the car. The range of parking solutions across the master plan include;

- Surface/kerb side parking provided for the town centre community as well as acting as a traffic calming measure;
- Deck car parking for all the buildings, supporting the commercial, office and residential users

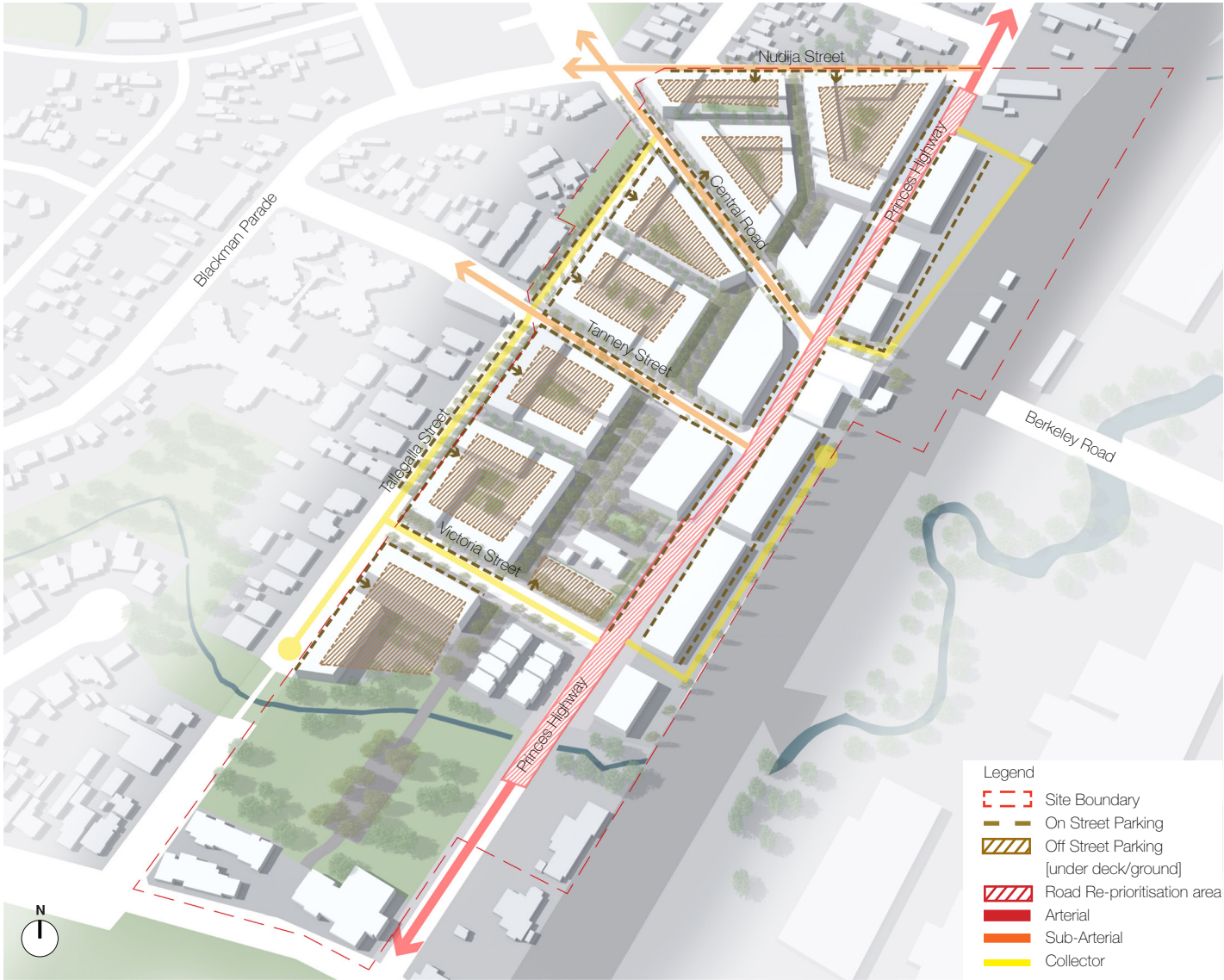


FIGURE 5.08 - VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING
TOP. Removing the dominance of outdoor carparking and
defining parallel car parking.

5.8 BALANCING UNANDERRA'S ENVIRONMENT

The town centre master plan is structured around a variety of open spaces that deliver a diverse and interesting public realm with the scale of open spaces responding to their intended functions and land uses that border them. Key environmental features of the master plan are as follows;

- The introduction of ESD and WSUD initiatives can ensure a balance is achieved between hard and soft landscapes in Unanderra Town Centre.
- The 'Central Spine' should be defined by trees and planting, creating a green canopy through the town centre linking the open spaces of the north with the open spaces of the south;
- Charcoal Creek can be transformed into a riparian greenway that allows the local community to interact with the natural ecosystems;
- The introduction of street trees and planting across the town centre can connect the surrounding ecologies while WSUD interventions can ensure the town centre has a positive impact on local flooding issues in Unanderra Town Centre;.

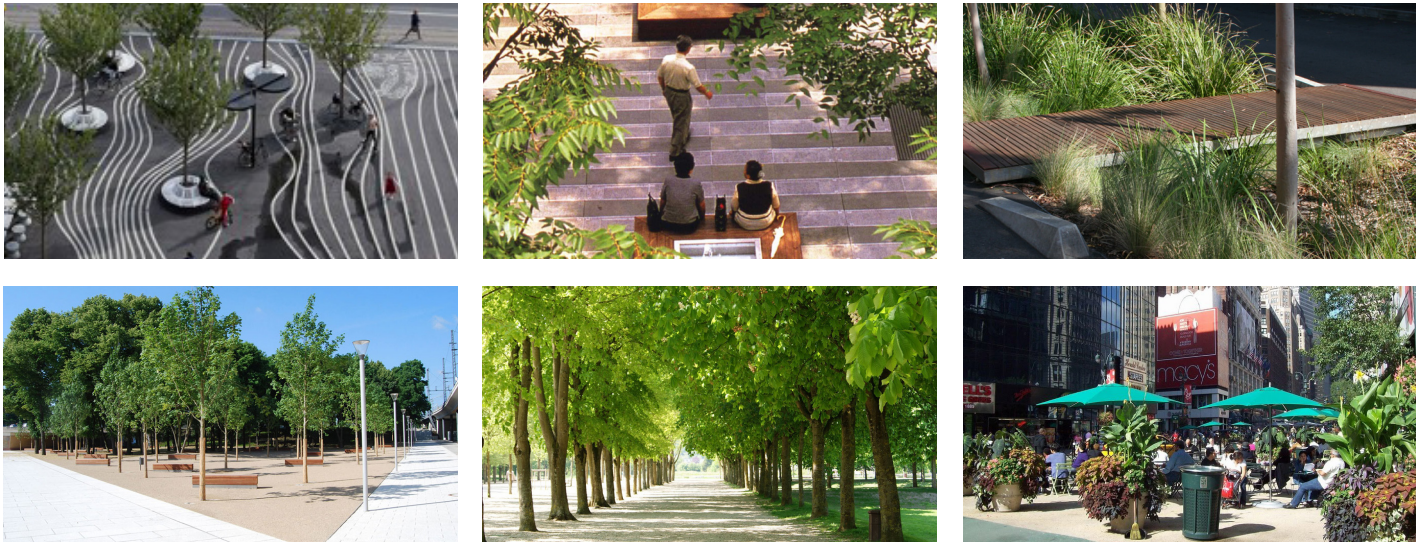


FIGURE 5.09 - BALANCING UNANDERRA'S ENVIRONMENT
TOP. Environmental sustainability embedded in Unanderra

5.9 POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

A workshop was held with councillors and council staff at Wollongong City Council on 23rd January and 18th February 2013. The workshop was facilitated by Michael Cowdy from McGregor Coxall.

The aim of the workshop was to present the teams future vision for Unanderra Town Centre and council priorities required to assist in implementing the master plan. The key policy and governance priorities proposed at the workshop for council to consider were as follows;

Planning

- The master plan process highlighted that the current planning controls [Height of building and Floor Space Ratio] may not be appropriate to incentivise development and encourage a quality scale and massing. An urban design study would assist in understanding the appropriate scale and massing;
- Area 1 - The current enterprise zone located to the south of the Princes Highway could be rezoned as local centre, encouraging a more appropriate mix of town centre uses;
- Area 2 - The DCP 2009 should be amended to illustrate the active 'central spine';

Infrastructure

- A traffic and analysis study should be undertaken to test the future traffic movement within Unanderra Town Centre;

- Area 3 - Negotiations between Wollongong City Council and Road and Maritime Services about the re-prioritisation of the Princes Highway should commence. This should ultimately look to reduce the traffic speeds and road carriageway width of the Princes Highway within Unanderra Town Centre;
- Further work on the appropriate locations of pedestrian crossings should be investigated, with the emphasis on improving pedestrian connectivity within the town centre;
- Area 4 - The existing pedestrian footbridge next to Unanderra Railway Station should be refurbished to accommodate for disable access through a new lift;

Community

- Area 5 - Further design work should investigate the opportunities of creating temporary community spaces within existing car parking areas. This work should look at testing the appropriate temporary interventions to activate the key spaces;
- Area 6 - A recreation master plan should look at investigating the design opportunities within the open space that sits adjacent to Unanderra Library and Community Centre;
- Area 7 - Mitigation options along Charcoal Creek should be investigated to test the opportunity to revitalise the natural waterway into a riparian greenway with cycle and pedestrian access;
- Area 8 - Parking area should be transformed into a street allowing greater access between Tannery Street and Central Road.



FIGURE 5.10 - POLICY AND GOVERNANCE
TOP. Key priorities for Wollongong City Council to investigate and proceed

5.10 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

To inform the refinement of the draft Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan, a second stage of consultation was undertaken to discuss the range of ideas and concepts presented by the Unanderra Town Centre draft Master Plan: Stage 2 – Refining the Master Plan.

The draft Master Plan was exhibited from 25 March to 3 May 2013. The community were asked to provide feedback on the Strategies, key moves and recommendations put forward by the draft Master Plan.

Council carried out a range of conversations with the community through kiosks near Country Grocer and adjoining speciality retailers, face to face discussions with business owners, targeted workshops with land owners, schools and government agencies.

12 written submissions (including 1 completed survey) and hundreds of conversations have shaped the refinement of the Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan and Implementation Strategy. For a more detailed understanding of the community consultation feedback please refer to the Unanderra Town Centre Study Community Engagement Summary Report: Stage 2 – Refining the Master Plan.

The key message from consultation was an overarching support for the key strategies and projects identified in the draft Master Plan. Overall, the response provided by the community was positive, with general support given to strategies and key moves put forward by the draft Master Plan.

Feedback from Youth

Council staff visited Unanderra Public School to seek the ideas and thoughts of children on the draft Master Plan, in particular, possible temporary uses for a community space.

Children were asked to draw what their community space may look like. The most popular theme was ‘Play/exercise’, followed by ‘Entertainment’ and the third most noted theme of ideas was ‘Landscaping’

The top overall 10 ideas included: jumping castle (14 responses), plants/trees in pot plants (13), temporary seating (10), a mini library/books (9), play equipment (9), a stage for performers and music (8), grass (7), drawing/painting on the ground (7), hop scotch (6) and tables (6).

Feedback from Community Conversations

The community were invited to share their thoughts on the draft Master Plan for Unanderra Town Centre. Council

conducted a number of activities in order to engage with the community including holding a community kiosk in the town centre on Saturday 6 April, meeting with Neighbourhood Forum 6, meeting land owners and retailers.

Conversations identified a range of ideas, themes and commentary on the draft Master Plan. Overall, the feedback has been divided into five most popular themes:

i. Town Centre Amenity

The community conversations demonstrated that the community wanted to see an improvement in the general amenity, safety and ‘feel’ of the town centre.

ii. A Temporary Community Space

In conversations, the community identified that parking was important in this location

however, if the space was activated when parking demand in this area was low, they were supportive.

iii. Traffic and Parking

A significant number of comments related to parking congestion at the Woolworths car park. The community identified a need to ‘fix’ the car parking in Unanderra.

iv. Community Centre/ Library

A range of comments were raised about the Community Centre and Library, identifying their importance in the community. Linking the community centre to the town centre was supported noting that the library would be better utilised if it was integrated and accessible from the town centre.

v. Access to the train station

Train station lift – a number of comments reinforced the need for a lift at the station to provide access for all of the community.

Conclusion

The consultation process identified a range of ideas, actions and aspirations of the Unanderra community to inform the development of a Master Plan for Unanderra Town Centre.

This feedback informed the strategies, key moves and recommendations put forward by the draft Master Plan and have assisted staff to refine the Plan and create an implementation strategy which will guide delivery of the Master Plan.



FIGURE 5.11 - COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP
TOP. Community Workshop photographs



6.0 Conclusion and Key Recommendations

6.0 Conclusion and Key Recommendations

6.1 CONCLUSION

Unanderra Town Centre like so many town centres both globally and nationally is facing increased challenges through the growth of the shopping mall, greater demand for convenience shopping and the deterioration of the traditional high street. This master plan process aims to set in motion a series of principles that respond to these challenges and incrementally transform Unanderra Town Centre into a vibrant and vital town centre for the community to enjoy and use.

Crucial to the success of the master plan is ensuring the first key moves of this transformation offer **community benefits** rather than commercial benefits. As it's by empowering the community and offering a sense of ownership within the town centre, that incentives for development can follow, catalysing the 30 year vision for Unanderra Town Centre.

Through introducing **temporary interventions** at key locations, the communities perception of space can be changed, re-prioritising the emphasis on public space rather than vehicular car parking. Initiatives such as pop-up cafes, play areas and outdoor seating can contribute to this change and spark the revitalisation of Unanderra Town Centre.

Essential to Unanderra Town Centre's success will be **improved links to Unanderra Railway Station**. By refurbishing the existing pedestrian footbridge and activating adjacent buildings, the local community can re-connect to its most valuable asset, promoting a sustainable future for Unanderra Town Centre and its surrounding neighbourhoods.

By proposing more temporary solutions, the qualities of Unanderra Town Centre can be unlocked, ensuring a more **immediate transformation to the key spaces**. In the face of economic uncertainty and rapidly changing possibilities, these temporary activities offer a re-imagination of space whilst retaining a flexibility that can accommodate the changes in the economy and the communities perception of space.

These early initiatives in key spaces can incentivise development within the town centre and allow the **emergence of a longer term vision** for Unanderra. This longer term vision, based on the eight key principles that make a 'vital town centre', is focussed on a new 'Central Spine'. The spine reconnects previously isolated spaces and community facilities, through an eclectic mix of uses and a pedestrian prioritised heart, which is intersected by a well composed network of streets and laneways.

The Unanderra Town Centre master plan offers a framework for change and ultimately should guide future development within Unanderra Town Centre. The success of the master plan relies on establishing a **transparent governance structure** and planning controls that can assist in incentivising development and allow the community ownership of its town centre. This approach has the potential to change Unanderra Town Centre, placing the community at the front and centre, creating an experience that is uniquely Unanderra.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations stated below are based on the outcomes of the master planning process and look to assist Wollongong City Council in prioritising the future interventions that can lead to the transformation of Unanderra Town Centre. The proposed recommendations have informed the Implementation Strategy which ultimately aims to fulfil the vision set out in this master planning document.

Implementation

The Unanderra Town Centre Implementation Strategy has been developed in parallel with the Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan 2013. The purpose of the Implementation Strategy is to guide the delivery of key projects and actions in a collaborative and coherent way. The Implementation Strategy is fundamentally linked to the Master Plan to ensure:

- **Actions** are identified and prioritised to facilitate the timely allocation of budget and delivery of the Master Plan.
- **Responsibility** is defined – with tasks and projects broken down into achievable actions, aligned with the Annual Plan with clear lines of responsibility.
- **Expectations** are managed – clarifying which projects are Council led, which projects have secured funding and time-frames for delivery, and clearly reporting unfunded projects.
- **Governance** is tested – with a requirement for Council to review the processes and framework needed to give weight to the intent of the Master Plan document in business planning and resourcing.
- **Priority** projects are defined in sufficient detail enabling the implementation process to commence.



FIGURE 6.01 - UNANDERRA TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN IMAGES. The Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan has informed the delivery of key projects identified in the implementation strategy

Planning

- Develop an urban form study based on the proposed master plan framework to test the existing planning controls [Height of Building and Floor Space Ratio], encouraging developer incentives and an appropriate scale and massing within the town centre;
- Review the land use zone of the parcel of land along the northern edge of the current Council car park at Tallegalla Street to R3 medium density, integrating it within its existing parcel.
- Review the Enterprise land use zone along the southern edge of the town centre to B2 local centre, encouraging a more appropriate mix of town centre uses;
- Update Wollongong DCP 2009 to illustrate the active 'central spine' and relevant outcomes to reflect the endorsed Unanderra Town Centre Master Plan.
- Expand the town centre area in the DCP to include the Library and Community Centre;
- Investigate opportunities to undertake a heritage review project that explores the heritage qualities of the Unanderra Town Centre, considers adaptive reuses and develops an Interpretive Plan.

- A access and movement study should be undertaken to test the future traffic movement within Unanderra Town Centre and the potential location of a transport interchange close to Unanderra Railway Station;

- Negotiations between Wollongong City Council and Road and Maritime Services about the re-prioritisation of the Princes Highway should commence. This should ultimately look to reduce the traffic speeds and road carriageway width of the Princes Highway within Unanderra Town Centre;
- Further work on the appropriate locations of pedestrian crossings should be investigated, with the emphasis on improving pedestrian connectivity within the town centre;
- Council continue to lobby State Government for lift access to Unanderra Railway Station;
- Investigate options to re-categorise the parking zone [area 8 on page 54] into a street;

- Council to work with community to investigate the opportunities of creating temporary community spaces within existing car parking areas. This work should look at testing the appropriate temporary interventions to activate the key spaces;
- Council to work with local landowners and business owners to support and promote the activation of both public and private spaces;
- A master plan along Charcoal Creek should look at investigating the design opportunities to increase connectivity and activation through a green riparian corridor. The master plan should propose a wider offering of cycle paths and walkways that seamlessly integrate with Unanderra Library and Community Centre;
- Mitigation options along Charcoal Creek should be investigated to test the opportunity to revitalise the natural waterway into a riparian greenway with cycle and pedestrian access;
- Investigate funding opportunities to deliver a range of public art projects in the Town Centre.

