

Hornsby Town Centre Review

Stage 2 Stakeholder Engagement Outcomes Report
DRAFT

COX



URBAN APOSTLES
NEXT GENERATION CITY MAKERS

BRICKFIELDS
CONSULTING



YOUR VISION.
YOUR FUTURE.

Hornsby Town Centre



Tract

HECTOR ABRAHAM
ARCHITECTS

JLL

wsp



Executive Summary

Introduction

Following a period of research and information gathering by the design team, a one-day intensive co-design workshop, was held at the Hornsby Shire Council Chambers on Friday the 30th of August 2019.

In the team’s experience on other projects of this scale and nature, the greatest vehicle for stakeholder buy in, design process participation and delivering certainty at the conclusion, is the informed and open workshop format of the co-design workshop.

The co-design formed part of the engagement process based on not just consultation but genuine collaboration with over 45 stakeholder representatives coming together to test the vision and aspirations for the Town Centre and identify a framework for its establishment and delivery.

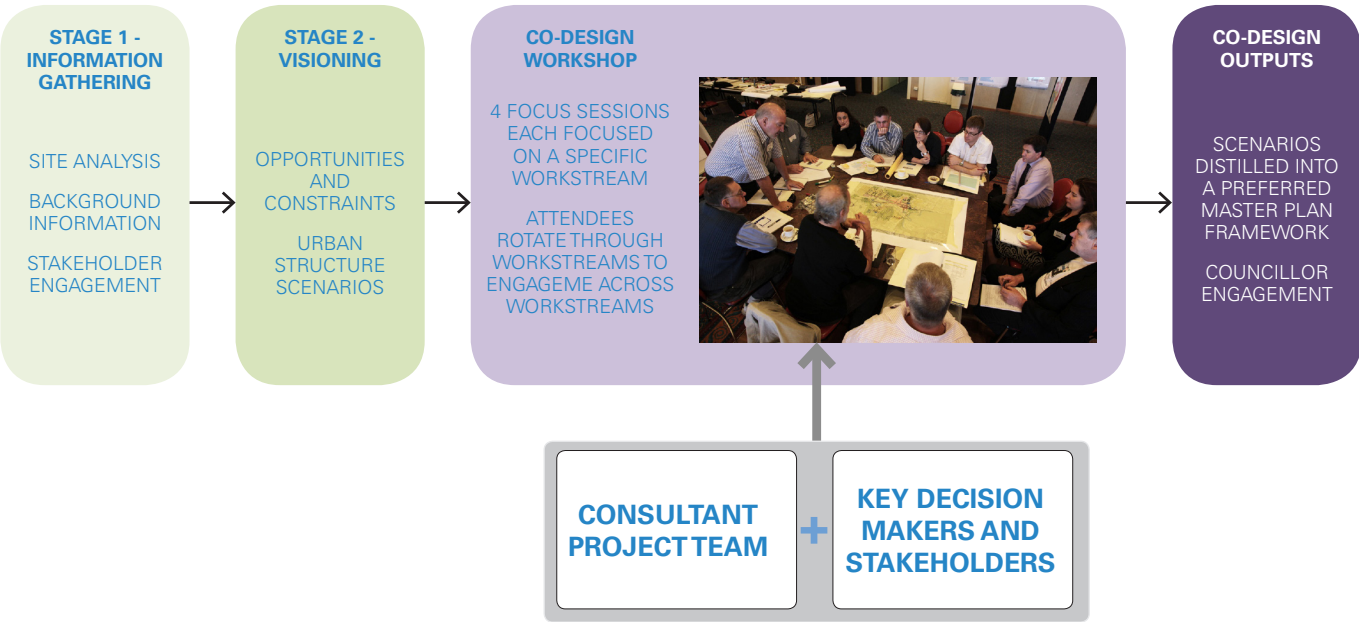
The co-design focused on three urban structure options for the Town Centre Plan, each including subsequent options for the Interchange.

Participants collaborated with Council and the Consultant team to test the aspirations and scenarios for the future of the Town Centre, building a layered set of strategies that will underpin the development of the preferred urban design framework plan in subsequent stages.

This Outcomes Report consolidates the holistic principles that emerged out of the overall design co-design workshop process, backed by separate workstream chapters, authored by the individual teams.

The chapters for each focus area are designed to operate as standalone documents, and comprehensively distill findings from the co-design workshop into issues, inputs, outcomes and design input.

Co-Design Process



Workstreams

Shaped by Council's Draft Vision, stakeholder interviews, document reviews, and specific research, the consultant team have developed master planning scenarios for the Town Centre study area, guided by four key themes:

1. Community and Experience
2. Public Domain and Landscape
3. Urban Design and Built Form
4. Movement and Place

Focus sessions allowed 'deep dive' discussions on outlined framework scenarios, opportunities and key considerations specific to each workstream, with the goal of identifying preferred scenarios.

Each workstream was led by an expert in the respective field and teams were equipped with plans, maps and a briefing document with information that could be deliberated within discussions and designs.

Over the course of the day, each group held four sessions together to discuss issues, considerations, principles and objectives, outcomes and design options.

Key Messages

Overarching key messages from these four workstream are summarised here:

- Recognise the role of the centre as Hornsby's Town Centre and reinforce the intergration of the town centre with Hornsby Shire and greater Sydney.
- Facilitate a poly-centric network of public spaces activated by community uses through the Town Centre.
- Provide a connected multi-modal network of active, green spaces to reinforce the bushland shire identity and make the Town Centre comfortable, active, liveable and sustainable.
- Reinforce strong local character and unique retail and authentic public space experience in a way that reinforces the makes the Town Centre 'sticky' for commuters, residents, workers, tourists and visitors.
- Additional east-west connections across the station at Burdett St. and Bridge Rd. are crucial to realising and coherent, connected and functional Town Centre.
- Sustainability and sustainable urbanism is at the core of Hornsby Town Centre.
- Staging of the Town Centre regeneration is important to ensure a critical and complete mass of retail, community use and commercial facilities at each stage.
- Location of the new generation library/community heart is important to anchor and shape the new community heart and ensure visitors, residents and workers have free activities available to them, and act as a catalyst for subsequent development.
- Housing diversity and mixed affordability will serve as crucial economic infrastructure for Hornsby Shire keeping the town centre active morning, noon and night.
- Integrate Peats Ferry Rd. and Hunter Ln. in a connected multi-modal network of active, green spaces to make the Town Centre comfortable, active, liveable and sustainable.
- Consider George St. and Peats Ferry Rd. movements to prioritise Hornsby as a destination in its own right.
- Consider relocating commuter parking out of Town Centre area to free up key opportunity sites for transit oriented development.
- Split transport interchange with north buses on Peats Ferry Rd. and south buses on George St. and relocate waiting bays from the centre to maximise connectivity and public realm amenity.

The Co-design Workshop



Overview

A one day co-design workshop was held on Friday August 30 at Hornsby Council Offices.

The objective of the co-design was to inform the development of the Hornsby Town Centre master plan review.

The co-design workshop allowed a thorough testing of the vision and aspirations for the Town Centre and identify a preferred framework for its establishment and delivery.

Shaped by Council's Draft Vision, stakeholder interviews, document reviews, and specific research, the consultant team have developed master planning scenarios for the Town Centre study area, guided by four key themes:

1. Community and Experience
2. Urban Design and Built Form
3. Public Realm and Landscape
4. Movement

The primary objectives of the co-design workshop were to ensure the Hornsby Town Centre:

- Achieves design diversity and world-class concepts
- Challenges preconceived ideas
- Delivers distinct, diverse outcomes in parallel, increasing efficiencies in the development of the master plan
- Engages experts and key stakeholders in the design process and affords buy-in and ownership of the concepts for the Town Centre

Venue

Held in Council Chambers in the western area of the Town Centre Study Area, this location gave participants exposure to the site's existing conditions, while travel to the venue allowed first-hand experience of the current permeability, wayfinding, street network, road and public transport linkages.

The Hornsby Council Chambers embody a unique character flanked by civic, education and community uses. The venue offered a variety of light and comfortable gathering, conference and presentation spaces, and was of adequate size to enable four separate workstreams to work independently from each other.

The chambers were also well positioned in consideration of the framework opportunities for the integration of Council in planning strategies, as well as the opportunities for connections to the Hornsby Quarry Park, Peats Ferry Rd. and adjoining community uses.



Attendees

The co-design workshop was attended by over 45 representatives including Hornsby Councillors, Hornsby Shire Council, stakeholders, and the consultant team, each with great variety in expertise, experience and priorities for the Hornsby Town Centre.

Collaboration and participation took place between representatives from health, education, research, urban design, industry, community, environmental, transport and government sectors.

Connecting these stakeholders enabled the advising of competing and complementary aspirations and plans for the Town Centre.

Hornsby Shire Councillors

- The Honourable Philip Ruddock
- Emma Heyde
- Janelle McIntosh
- Joe Nicita
- Robert Browne
- Vince del Gallego

Hornsby Shire Council

- Ashesh Chand
- David Defina
- David Johnston
- Glen Magus
- James Farrington
- Julie Ryland
- Katherine Vickery
- Kurt Henkel
- Radek Zarzycki
- Steve Fedorow

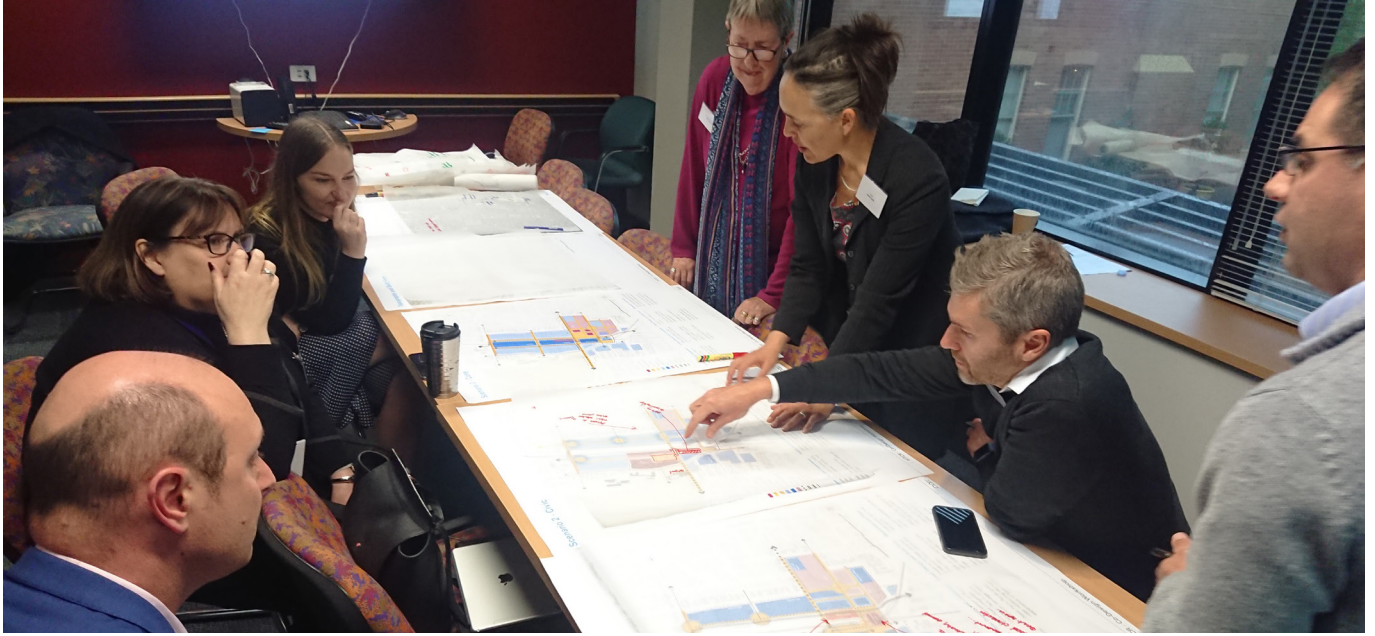
Stakeholders

- Bike North
- Cities Leadership Institute
- Conservation
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment
- Greater Sydney Commission
- NSW Health
- Transport for NSW
- Sydney Trains

Consultant Project Team

- COX
- WSP
- JLL
- Tract Landscape
- Urban Apostles
- Hector Abrams Architects

The Co-design Workshop



Supporting Information

Workstreams were equipped with the necessary information to understand the site conditions and requirements, and the necessary materials to enable experimentation and creativity in the co-design process.

Groups were provided large plans and aerials of the study area, as well as drawing materials of trace paper, pens and pencils.

Site context and analysis diagrams were also displayed on walls and distributed to all workstreams.

These plans contained critical information on:

- Council Vision and Principles
- Existing uses and facilities
- Primary attractors
- Existing and recent development
- Heritage
- Land zoning
- Strata
- Local and regional context
- Topography and views
- Transport and road hierarchy
- Vegetation and green spaces
- Current demographics and forecast growth

Process and Participation

The one-day co-design workshop was scheduled in a programme arranged by workstream, facilitators and locations.

The co-design workshop began with welcomes followed by presentations by leaders from the consultant project team and workstream facilitators to outline the project process and opportunities for each workstream, further to framework scenarios with the goal of inspiring creative thinking and promote the Town Centre vision and potential.

These presentations were focused on Hornsby's existing physical and cultural landscape, existing and potential activity nodes, placemaking and urban design. This morning presentation was accompanied by an explanation of the Hornsby Town Centre project and an outline of the co-design process and key objectives.

Subsequently, four one-hour smaller group sessions allowed participants to engage in 'deep dive' discussions on the outlined framework scenarios from the taking into account key considerations of each workstream.



Participants moved between workstreams over the co-design workshop, allowing each to engage in discussions and provide expertise to each focus area. The group engagement process incorporated ideas, visions, actions and plans in a mix of spatial, drawn, numeric and written forms.

At the completion of the workshop, workstream leaders presented key messages and preferred master plan concepts to the broader group.

It was largely the responsibility of workstream leads to facilitate equal levels of participation from group members. Workstream discussions were generally balanced and conversational, with inputs welcomed and no question off limits. Leaders successfully captured the views of both dominant and reserved attendees, and spoke up regularly to reaffirm, summarise and clarify points made by participants.

| Time | Activity |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:30am | Arrival and Registration |
| 9:00am | Introductory Presentation of Process to Date Engagement summary, outline vision and town centre scenarios |
| 10:00am | Workstream Session 1 Participants break into four workstreams |
| 11:00am | Morning Tea |
| 11:15pm | Workstream Session 2 Relocation of participants into different work streams |
| 12:15pm | Lunch and Break |
| 12:45pm | Workstream Session 3 Relocation of participants into different work streams |
| 1:45pm | Workstream Session 4 Relocation of participants into different work streams |
| 2:45pm | Afternoon Tea |
| 3:00pm | Closing Presentation of Key Outcomes Each work stream presents their findings and ideas |

Framework Scenarios

A Flexible Kit of Parts

The co-design focused on three urban structure options for the Town Centre Plan, each including subsequent options for the Interchange.

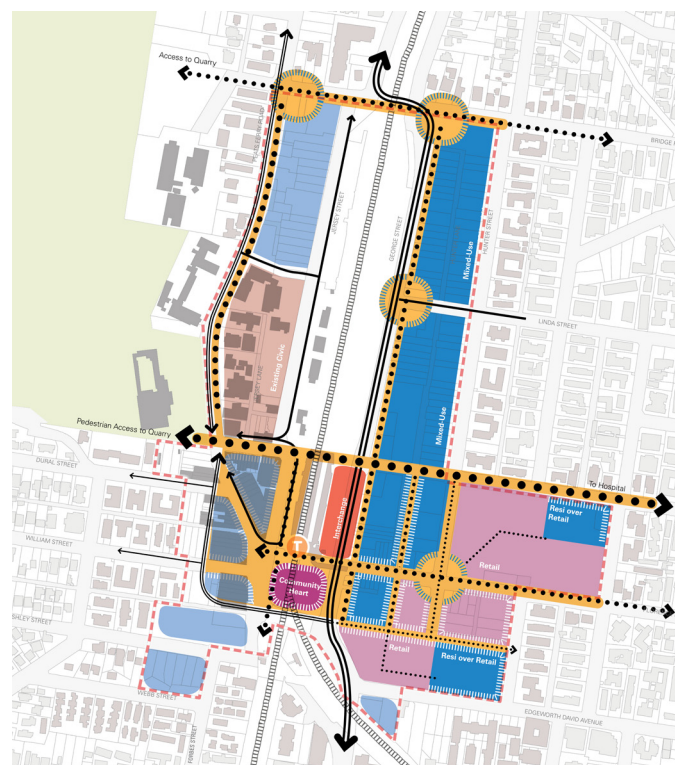
Each scenario was developed to consciously different to each other, exploring opportunities across each of the workstreams, including potential locations of the proposed 'community heart' and public spaces and activity nodes, opportunities for creation of new and enhancement of existing connections, land uses and opportunity sites for development and densities.

Components of each scenario were envisaged and presented as a flexible 'kit of parts' that could be mixed and matched across multiple workstreams and scenarios.

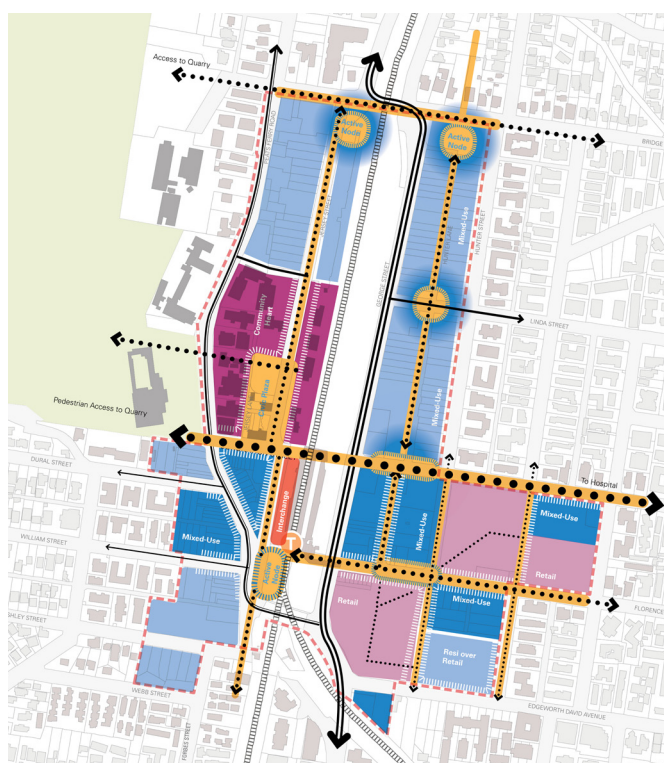
Participants collaborated with Council and the Consultant team to test the aspirations and scenarios for the future of the Town Centre, building a layered set of strategies that will underpin the development of the preferred urban design framework plan in subsequent stages.

Emerging from the co-design workshop, the preferred elements span multiple scenarios, including new ideas not yet considered prior to the co-design workshop.

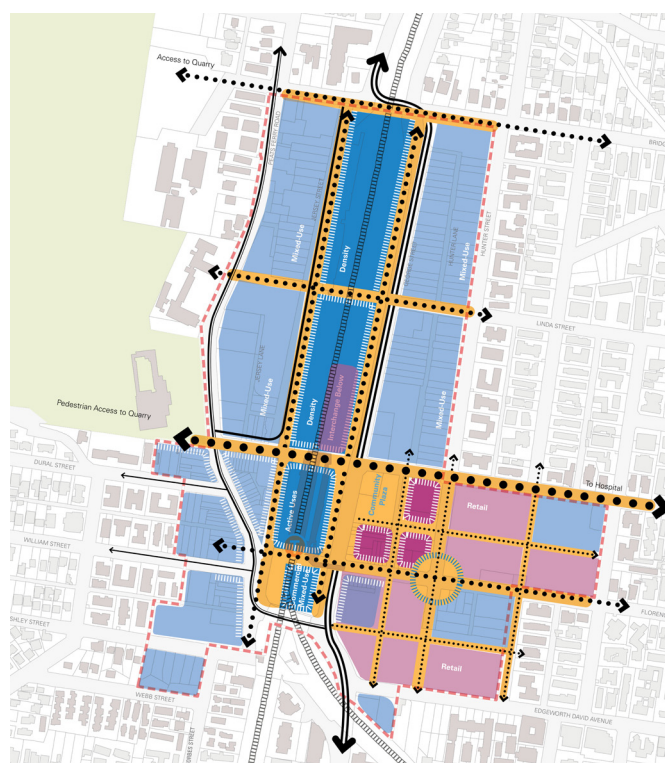
1 Cenotaph



2 Civic



3 Core



- Community Node
- Pedestrianised Zone
- Active Node
- Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Density
- Retail
- Public Link
- George St
- Peats Ferry Rd.
- Local Street



Co-Design Workstreams

Key Opportunities and Considerations

Shaped by Council's Draft Vision, stakeholder interviews, document reviews, and specific research, the consultant team identified master planning opportunities and key considerations for the Town Centre study area grouped by four key workstreams.

Focus sessions allowed 'deep dive' discussions on outlined framework scenarios, opportunities and key considerations specific to each workstream, with the goal of identifying preferred scenarios.

Each workstream was led by an expert in the respective field and teams were equipped with plans, maps and a briefing document with information that could be deliberated within discussions and designs. Additional members of the consultant team acted as universal resources across each workstream.

Over the course of the day, each group held four sessions together to discuss issues, considerations, principles and objectives, outcomes and design options.

1 Community & Experience

Facilitators

- Jason Twill, Urban Apostles
- Justin Ray, Tract
- David Johnston, Hornsby Council

Key Workstream Opportunities

- Create a 'heart' for the Town Centre and the greater Hornsby Shire
- Deliver an anchor for year-round public activity of many scales and types
- Serve shifting demographic in new population of +7,000 new, younger, disposable income residents
- Facilitate diversity of land uses to strengthen collaborative partnerships and talent attraction
- Foster an 18-hour economy and destination activities
- Ensure housing diversity and innovation

Key Workstream Considerations

- Open Space and Land Uses
- Community Facilities and Events
- Intergenerational Space Planning and Activity Nodes
- Arts & Cultural Planning and Programming
- Retail Strategy and Active Frontages
- Private and Public Partnerships
- Integration of Existing and Future Employment
- Accessibility and Affordability
- Governance

2 Public Domain and Landscape

Facilitators

- Anne Lucas, Tract
- David De-Fina, Hornsby Council
- Kurt Henkel, Hornsby Council

Key Workstream Opportunities

- Reinforce the 'Bushland Shire' experience
- Enhance legibility and connectivity to promote active movement
- Provide green streets and places to offer meaningful and functional landscape amenity for all ages and abilities
- Reinvigorate existing laneways as attractive spaces
- Shape day and night attraction, identity, and safety
- Weave regional green networks into local connections, including Hornsby Quarry Park

Key Workstream Considerations

- Open Space Hierarchy and Programme
- Open Space Principles and Requirements
- Thresholds and Gateways
- Active and Passive Open Space
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Flood and Hydrology
- Water Sensitive Urban Design
- Topography, Geology and Soils
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
- Universal Design
- Rail Interface and Access
- Bus Interface and Access

3 Urban Design and Built Form

Facilitators

- Lachlan Hicks, Cox
- Daniel Turini, JLL
- Ash Chand, Hornsby Council

Key Workstream Opportunities

- Balance preservation of distinct charm and character with projected growth
- Increase north-south and east-west permeability
- Breakup big box retail with busy public pedestrian laneways and spaces
- Enhance active street frontages
- Shape design excellence in built form
- Establish a consistent character
- Consider new development above the railway corridor

Key Workstream Considerations

- Built Form Design Principles
- Building Typology Opportunities
- Land Uses and Character Areas
- Centres
- Street and Block Pattern
- Active Edges
- Street Edge Definition
- Height Strategy
- Interface and Transition Guidelines
- Massing, Scale and Articulation
- Setbacks
- Street Wall Heights
- Solar Access and Overshadowing
- Yields and Capacities
- Heritage

4 Movement and Place

Facilitators

- Camden Fitzgerald, WSP
- Ian Connolly, Cox
- Bernard Choongo, Hornsby Council
- Radek Zarzycki, Hornsby Council

Key Workstream Opportunities

- Balance vehicular and transit needs with pedestrian and non-vehicular movement
- Shape interchange as Town Centre activator and unifier
- Explore relocation of transit hub
- Encourage out of centre commuter parking to alleviate pressure on parking in centres.
- Improve non-vehicular connectivity, including to and from the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, Hornsby Quarry Park, and beyond
- Ensure efficient service and waste access
- Increase north-south and east-west permeability

Key Workstream Considerations

- Movement and Place
- Walkability and Permeability
- Active Transport Network
- Network Capacity and Hierarchy
- Catchments and Desire Lines
- Dedicated, Shared, On-Road and Mixed Modes
- Future Mobilities
- Car-share Targets and Strategies
- Mode Share Strategies
- Vehicular Access within Precinct
- Parking and Decoupled Parking Strategies
- Pick up and Drop-offs and Kiss and Ride
- Street Sections
- Bus Network Stops, Operations and Capacity
- Interchange Location and Operation
- Concourse and Station Access
- Precinct Waste Management
- Servicing

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Community and Experience

Facilitators

- Jason Twill, Urban Apostles
- Justin Ray, Tract
- David Johnston, Hornsby Council

Overview

Facilitation methodology for the community and experience work stream centred around the concept of the 'community heart' of Hornsby Town Centre.

Participants were debriefed on the three concept option and asked to consider the future experience of the Town Centre with an additional 6,500 residents and approximately 3,100 new dwellings.

However, in lieu of interrogating the three concept options systematically, participants who live and work within and around the Town Centre were asked to share their personal reflections of the current Town Centre, how they feel emotionally connected to it and what they valued most about their community.

Group members were asked to pinpoint specific areas and experiences that provided them delight and identify why. This exercise drew out some considered discussions about where each group 'felt' the location of the future community heart should be and how their idea of the heart could be tested and aligned with the current masterplan concepts.

For each subsequent session, participants were debriefed on the findings and discussions of previous session so as to evolve and build upon ideas and concepts throughout the day.

Key Outcomes

While each session yielded distinctive and unique outcomes, throughout the day the following constants were identified:

- Hornsby Town Centre should evolve a strong local character and unique retail and authentic public space experience.
- Priority should be given to local businesses and retailers, Westfield already caters to the super markets and franchise amenity offering.
- Majority of participants felt that the new community hub belonged on the West side of the station.
- The Station needs to be revitalised to become a place in and of itself.
- East-west connection across the station is crucial to realising and coherent, connected and functional Town Centre.
- Don't design around cars, design around people.
- Find value in old buildings for new uses, particularly around Hunter Lane which could support night time economy businesses.
- Housing diversity and mixed affordability will serve as crucial economic infrastructure for Hornsby Shire keeping the town centre active morning, noon and night.
- Housing for current key workers and service workers within Westfield were considered critical to ensure housing options close to jobs.
- Sustainability and sustainable urbanism is at the core and any concept option for Hornsby Town Centre with an aspiration for the centre to be net zero energy.
- Intergenerational and accessible public space and community services were considered critical.
- Connection and seamless access to the Quarry and recreational bushland is key to driving more tourism and enhanced user experience.
- More green spaces will be required to make the Town Centre conformable, attractive, liveable and sustainable.



Session 1

Session 1's group started in a very micro context quickly honing in on Coronation Street as a likely current 'community heart' as it is a favourite street to get coffee, shop and enjoy north facing sunlight throughout the day.

As the session went on, however, and more participants shared their experiences, the community heart gradually started to extend north toward Jersey street and east toward Florence Street and Westfield Shopping Centre so as to create an almost crescent shaped pedestrian zone moving from Westfield to Jersey Street with the epicentre focused on the south end of the station and the bus interchange where participants agreed the community hub.

Session 1 Key Considerations:

- Schools were noted as being important both from a service perspective to meet the needs to the future population but also as community anchors with strong public activation. The letter from the NSW government was shared supporting the idea of expanded primary and secondary school within and around the Town Centre.
- The idea of a '8 to 80 pedestrian loop' where people of all ages and abilities can experience good urban life and public space in Hornsby.
- Strong emphasis on not designing around car parking.
- Ensure the master plan considered a governance model that will prevent the displacement of small and local sole traders.
- Ensure new and unique destinations are created.
- Urban forest strategy and shady streets are a must have.
- 'Third places' should be considered for morning, afternoon and evening economies.
- Need to strike a good balance between commercial office and residential development as new and expanded employment opportunities will be important to the activation of the new Town Centre. Ideas were raised about co-working or office hot desking for state government or back-of-house corporate employees living in or around Hornsby Shire to relieve the burden of daily commuting to Sydney.
- 35% of residents are foreign born with a growing population of Indian, Iranian and Nepalese citizens which offers opportunity for more culturally driven experiences and housing choices.

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Community and Experience

Session 2

Building on Session 1, Session 2 started out with a completely different perspective focused on user experience for persons with disabilities.

A Council staff member shared the experience of her husband who is visually impaired arriving in the station by train and then having to take a taxi to Westfield. This in turn fuelled a discussion around accessibility issues, grade changes and the need for better pedestrian connections east west and north south.

Session 2's group also drew out more association and experience around the Hunter Lane area which start to expand the pedestrian experience zone toward the northeast area of the Town Centre.

Participants in this group highlighted some of the charm and hidden value in this area with its eclectic mix of buildings and clustering of art spaces.

But they also expressed value in the future potential of Jersey Street which also a mix of uses and art spaces.

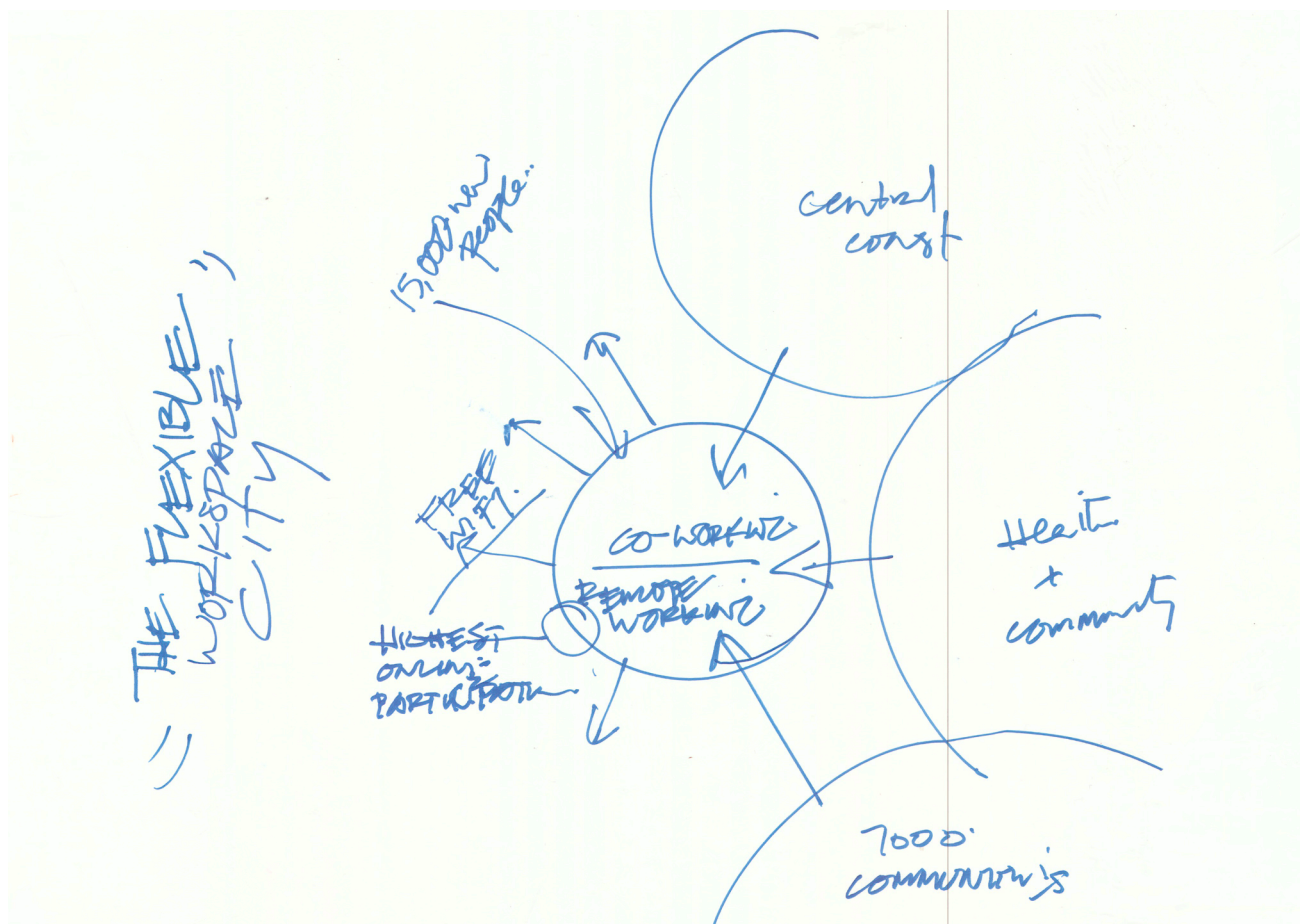
Discussions boiled down to changing the crescent shaped pedestrian experience zone to a "U" shape one that extended north up to Hunter Lane from Westfield. The group tended to agree with the decision of session 1 participants with locating the community hub around the south end of the station and the Interchange as a anchoring element that could support greater connectivity east to west.

This group also saw greater potential for night time economy activities in the Hunter Lane area and even consideration for a brewery to go into one of the older buildings.



Session 2 Key Considerations:

- Hornsby station needs to become its own functional place.
- Participants asked themselves "what missing in Hornsby" and how can we fill in the gaps and attract more people to visit and stay within the Centre. Retail and food experiences were highlighted as opportunities.
- This group agreed that the Library is already a strong anchor, but a new expanded community hub situated between the east and west could support better transition and connection.
- Desire to leverage bushland experience and entice visitors (mountain bikers, hikers etc..) to arrive earlier and leave later to eat or experience the culture of the Town Centre.
- Art Studios on Jersey Street should be leveraged to improve the cultural infrastructure of the Town Centre.
- Accessibility Issues exist between station and mall, with many not safe or accessible.
- Currently a challenge having no pedestrian access accessibility ramp on to station from George Street.
- Thursday markets at the mall are a big drawcard that should be considered in the new master plan drawing visitors from as far away as Wollongong.
- Master plan should explore how best to capture/integrate population from east of study area across bridge road. This area has roughly 7,000 people and is currently the only agglomeration of low-cost housing in the shire.
- Fountain should be retained and better utilised to activate space around it.
- Loading dock deliveries in west side precinct for business conflicting with pedestrian pathways and experiences.



Session 3

Expanding on the first two sessions, session three really started to hone in on the rail station and opportunities for over rail development including expansion of the current platform to the north to really allow for greater east west connection.

This session also drew out more identity and development potential at the north ends of the town centre on both sides of the tracks and the importance of not eroding the value of a community heart in the south end of the Centre with great residential and commercial development potential likely toward the north.

This discussion then led the group to consider expanding the "U" shaped pedestrian experience zone and community heart anchored around the south end of the station to the idea of a polycentric urban centre.

The polycentric urban centre concept explores idea of four 'sub-precincts' or 'micro-neighbourhoods' within the Town Centre each with their own anchors, local character, identity and diverse offering of experiences.

High level discussion around sub-precinct concepts as follows:

- The 'Civic Precinct' in the northwest anchored by the Council offices and cultural uses along Jersey Street.
- The 'Heritage Precinct' in the southwest anchored by the new RSL development and heritage retail area including Coronation Street, Cenotaph Parl and possible inclusion of the new Community Hub.
- The 'Shopping Precinct' in the southeast anchored by a reconceived and urbanised Westfield Shopping Centre.
- The 'Lifestyle Precinct' in the northeast anchored by new residential development and Hunter Lane cultural and night time amenity.

Session 3 Key Considerations:

- Expand Station platform north and south, deck over and create the station as its own place.
- Sub precincts each with their with anchors (Westfield, RSL, Council, Transport and Private sector).
- Location of Library is critical to anchor community hub and support greater east west connections.
- Hornsby mall can be upgraded to include green space.
- More evening amenity and eclectic retail will be required to attract and retain young professionals looking for good urban experiences.
- New ideas need old buildings so consider protection of older buildings and warehouses to support incubation hubs and start up local businesses/retailers.

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Community and Experience

Session 4

While session 1 delved into the micro planning and design ideas, session 4 evolved into the 'big picture' macro concepts and ideas that will galvanise and provide economic strength the master plan concepts.

Session 4's group included Councillors that were really interested in the economic development and employment/business growth opportunities that a new Town Centre could foster.

Discussions started to centre around the existing health-related infrastructure within the Shire and how these could be better leveraged and influence the redevelopment of the Town Centre with a core theme of health and wellbeing.

Discussion then shifted to explore how food and sustainability could be central to the branding and economic development strategy for Hornsby Shire. Urban agriculture and community gardens were raised as important to integrate into the town centre public space plan.

Points were also raised on how we could better integrate Waitara and the Health Precincts into the Town Centre plan and use them as a draw card for health related employment growth and health-tech start-ups. It was proposed to consider Biophilic Urbanism as a central theme to influence every aspect of the master plan. Biophilic design is a concept used within the design and building industries to "increase occupant connectivity to the natural environment through the use of direct nature, indirect nature, and space and place conditions."

Used at both the building and city-scale, it is argued that this idea has health, environmental, and economic benefits for building occupants and urban environments.

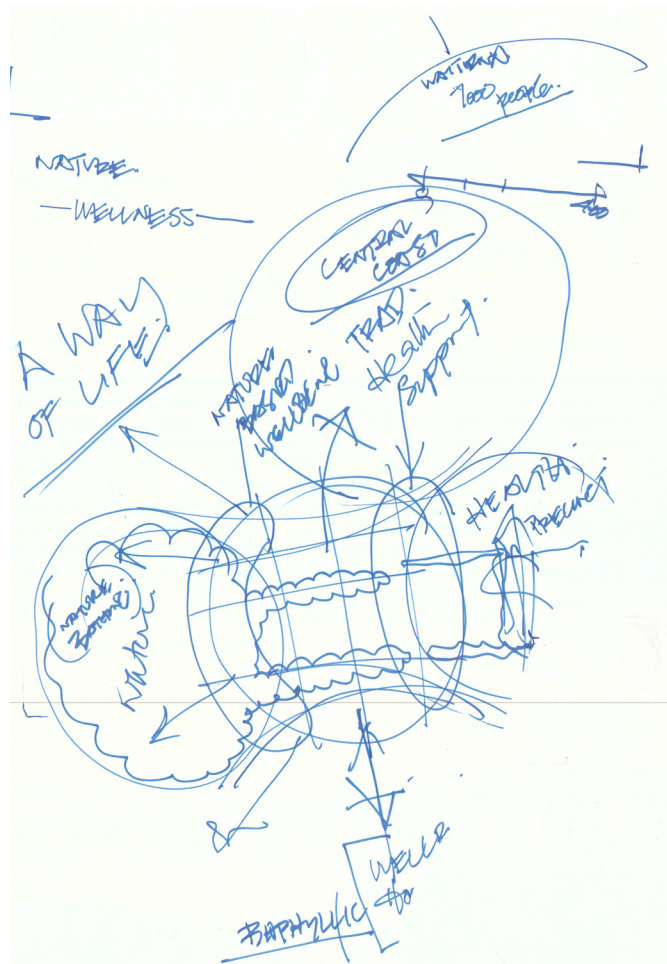
Defined by Harvard Evolutionary Biologist Edward O. Wilson in 1984, Biophilia is the idea that "humans have an inherited need to connect to nature and other biotic forms due to our evolutionary dependence on it for survival and personal fulfillment."

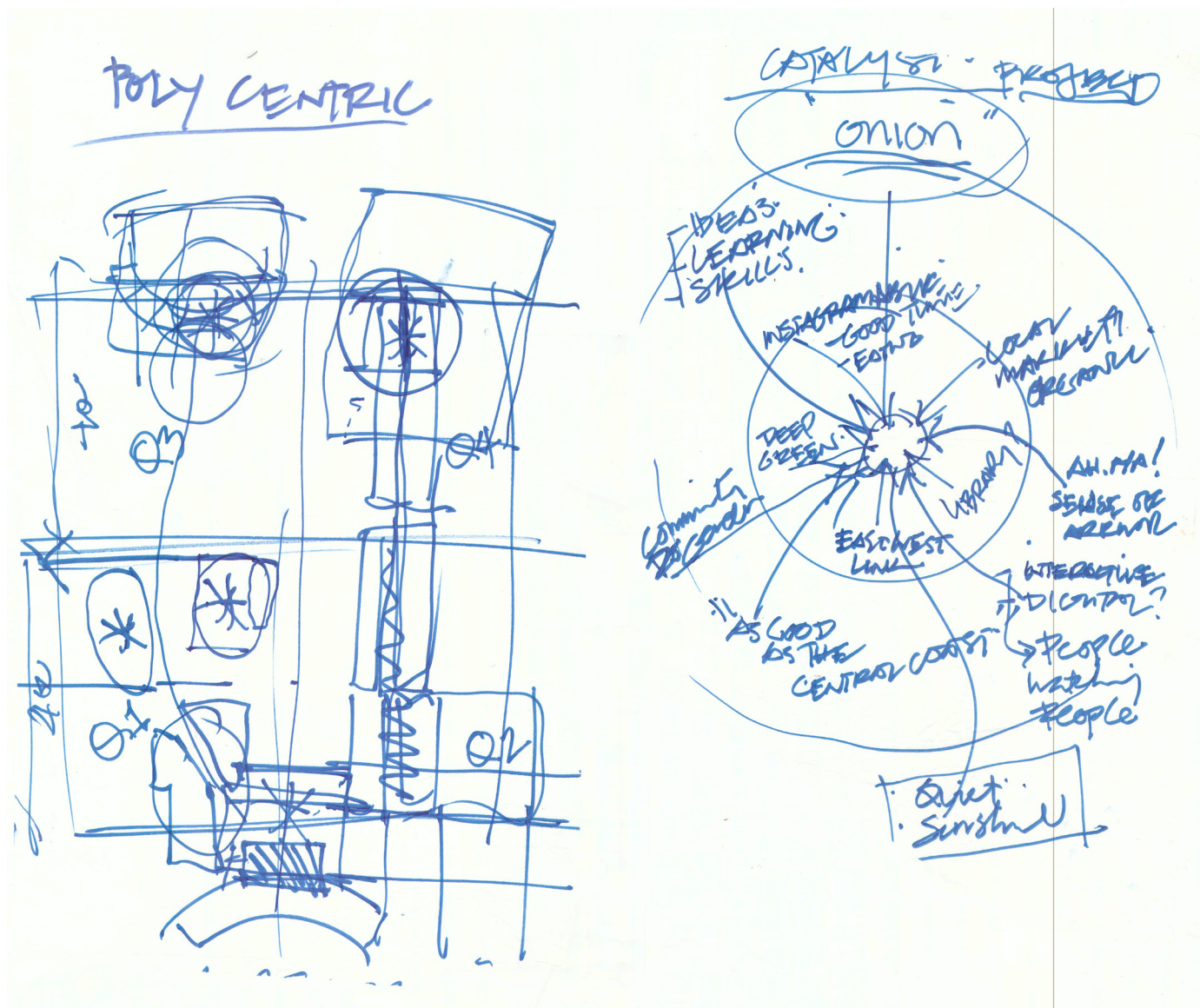
This concept seems to strongly align with the Bushland Shire brand already instilled within the Hornsby but something that could define an entirely new planning concept for the Town Centre.

It was suggested to incorporate the 14 Patterns of Biophilic Design into the urban design framework for HTC. The group ended on the aspiration of the HTC supporting a rebranding of the Hornsby into the 'Biophilic Shire' and how this could be a draw card to attract talent, investment, business and new residents.

Session 4 Key Considerations:

- Food centred aspects to the masterplan, how can community gardens and urban agriculture be included in the options?
- Waitara has over 7,000 people and we need to leverage this population to better activate the Town Centre 18 hours a day.
- Health Anchors have a lot of workers who are predominant home owners
- The Biophilic Shire





A Polycentric town was discussed. There was a feeling that the station precinct & mall are a long way from Bridge Road. To encourage activity to extend north, it was suggested that a northern 'Bridge Rd' precinct (super local, small scale) would draw activity up. Interesting this also links strongly to the idea of connecting to the quarry,

The Onion discussion was a response to the question "So What Happens First" - what do you want to see when the first 'catalyst' project (the centre of the onion) is built.

The group discussed the notion that the experience of an urban place can be like peeled back like an onion in layers.

There was agreement that the southern station precinct should be the catalyst project & should contain library, local green markets, define a sense of arrival be interactive & digitally enabled, be as good as the central coast, should be deep green (Biophillic), have a community garden, a place for people watching but also have quiet times and be calm.

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Public Domain and Landscape

Facilitators

- Anne Lucas, Tract
- David De-Fina, Hornsby Council
- Kurt Henkel, Hornsby Council

Overview

An overview of the analysis and public domain principles was presented to provide each group with an understanding of the analysis to date, and to provide a summary of the main opportunities for public domain in each scenario, further to sketches and benchmarking to convey design concepts.

This presentation outlined

- Local topography
- Local hydrology and water movement
- Local vegetation, conservation and ecological communities
- Existing public domain qualities and character
- Existing public domain open space network
- Proposed public domain hierarchy of 3 scenarios
- Proposed street hierarchy
- Proposed place typology

The public domain opportunities presented by each of the 3 scenarios was reviewed with each group. The following is a summary of comments and discussion points on each scenario as follows:

Key Outcomes

Hornsby town centre has a distinct setting, character and charm which should be reflected and emphasised

The engagement sessions emphasised this aspect as a constant aspect to be appreciated. The existing character of the built form and the bushland setting is distinct and a unique Hornsby attribute which can be utilised to the benefit for the future town centre designs. Every opportunity should be made to maximise the heritage architecture, vantage points which direct views towards bushland and create a bushland presence within the town centre.

Revitalisation of the Cenotaph Park

There is strong support for this space to have a more physical presence in the town centre in all options. The opportunity exists to rearrange the space to allow for a contemporary plaza or park space with an appropriate respectful arrangement that allows formal events around the Cenotaph to continue.

Transport Interchange to be integrated into town centre public domain improvements

Each session supported the benefits of the interchange public domain space being cohesively designed as part of Hornsby town centre sequence of plaza and public domain, rather than as stand-alone and separated waiting space for transport. Allows for Interchange to operate for the benefit of the town centre, rather than restricted to the interface between rail and other forms of transport.

Benefits of having an additional

“urban” plaza space for community use

Support for provision of a new public domain space which has a more contemporary “urban plaza” character and can support the broad range of future community needs from event programming to urban play spaces. This could be a plaza space that is distinct from other passive park spaces in the town.

Provision of a new crossing point between Coronation Street and Burdett Road over the rail and George Street road corridor

Support for this new crossing point appreciating that will be of benefit to movement east-west and that this location has a number of positive aspect:

- Revitalisation of an original crossing point
- Good vantage points to bushland west
- Links to district destination of hospital (east), aquatic centre and future quarry park to the west of the Town Centre

Creation of walkable streets and connected open spaces

There was support and understanding in all sessions regarding the holistic benefits for the town centre by creating more walkable streets and well connected open spaces. This through the provision of a quality public domain which is physically comfortable is inviting to use and is visually appealing.



General Messages

Across the three scenarios, comments included:

- General support for reducing the interchange in size which will have beneficial impact on the historic street frontage here to the benefit of public domain.
- The topography makes for challenges for new crossing across rail in most locations.
- Access to bush/ quarry has a number of issues and opportunities, including challenging levels beyond Aquatic Centre to the west of Coronation Street. Views west are of trees and this could be just an appropriate symbolic connection here rather than physical.
- There are easy pedestrian connection on the north side of the aquatic centre which can be emphasised.
- Support for reducing traffic and making Peats Ferry Road more pedestrian and cycle friendly.

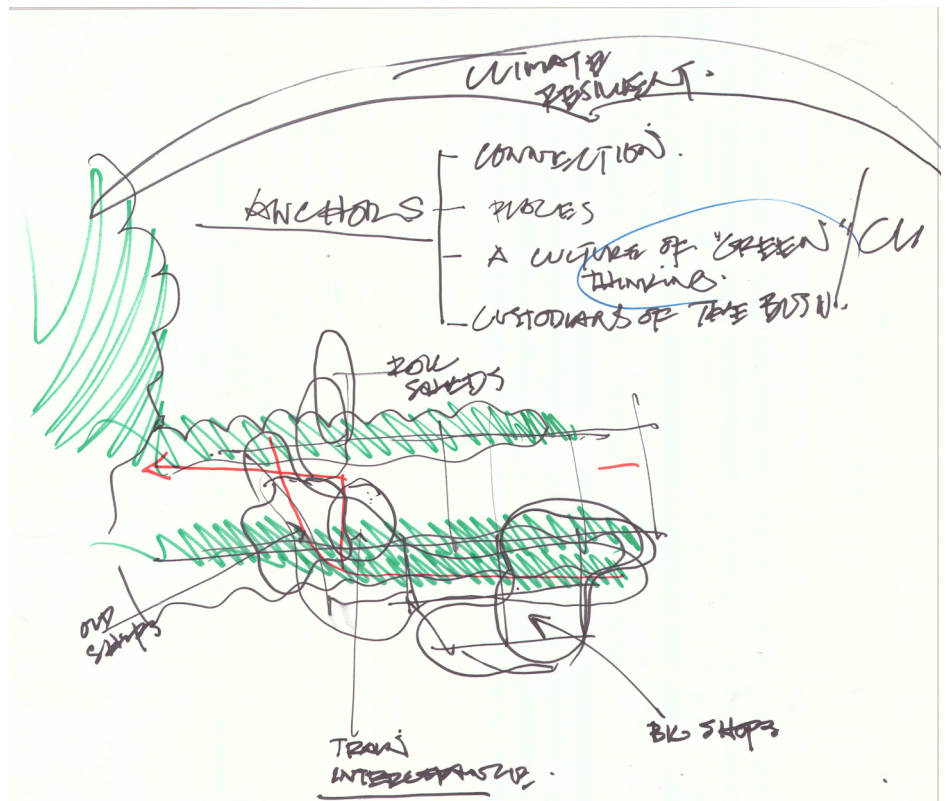
- Support for directing non-local traffic to George Street, support for this street to acknowledge travelling through Hornsby with appropriate boulevard/ design.
- Support for creation of more walkable streets – more shade, more trees, wider footpaths.
- Would be beneficial to encourage access to The Great North Walk. Hornsby has one of the best connections to this regional walking trail using public transport.
- Proposals for a new commuter car park could be a good commercial catalyst for the new crossing at Coronation/ Burdett St.
- Cycle options through the town centre are very limited at the moment. Topography is a challenge for uphill journeys. Jersey Street would make a good cycle route.

Further, opportunities exist to consider a district context for the town centre:

- need to consider the new population at Waitara – lots of people accessing town centre.
- new park and open space near Mark Taylor Oval, is local to the town centre.
- Waitara train station is a good link to Hospital – better grades for walking and cycling.

Many comments outlined the appreciation of the character of Hornsby – a unique aspect to be celebrated and enhanced. It was noted that a Westfield retail experience can be experience in many town centres. The setting, heritage and historic aspects here are what make this place different. Any proposals should enhance, reflect, respect and capture the essence of Hornsby charm and human scale.

Co-Design Outcomes



Scenario 1: Cenotaph

Proposal summary Public Domain focus: Location of the main public plaza within the historic area of the site. Traffic removed from Peats Ferry Road to allow space for an extended pedestrian plaza space. Interchange removed to allow for extended public domain space.

Comments to support aspects of this scenario are:

- Support for this area as a notable and exciting urban plaza revitalising the original centre of the town.
- Closing Peats Ferry Road would further support creation of this plaza and achieve a substantial new place and pedestrian area for a wide range of community activity.
- Beneficial to focus on where the energy is already and is a regeneration of an existing well know space.
- Further, it was noted that this area has a good potential relationship with Westfield retail development which supports development along the eastern edge.

- While the Cenotaph function is important in the space it should not restrict the potential of the space.
- The Cenotaph and important functions can be designed around and/ or moved if need be.
- Further support for this option noted the benefits of the transport Interchange facility to be integrated into the public domain sequence of spaces, rather than a waiting area full of bus shelters.

Concerns regarding this option included:

- This proposal is too moderate, “looking backwards” and not a bold enough a change for Hornsby.
- The community use is not a significant enough function for such an involved development over the rail space in this location.

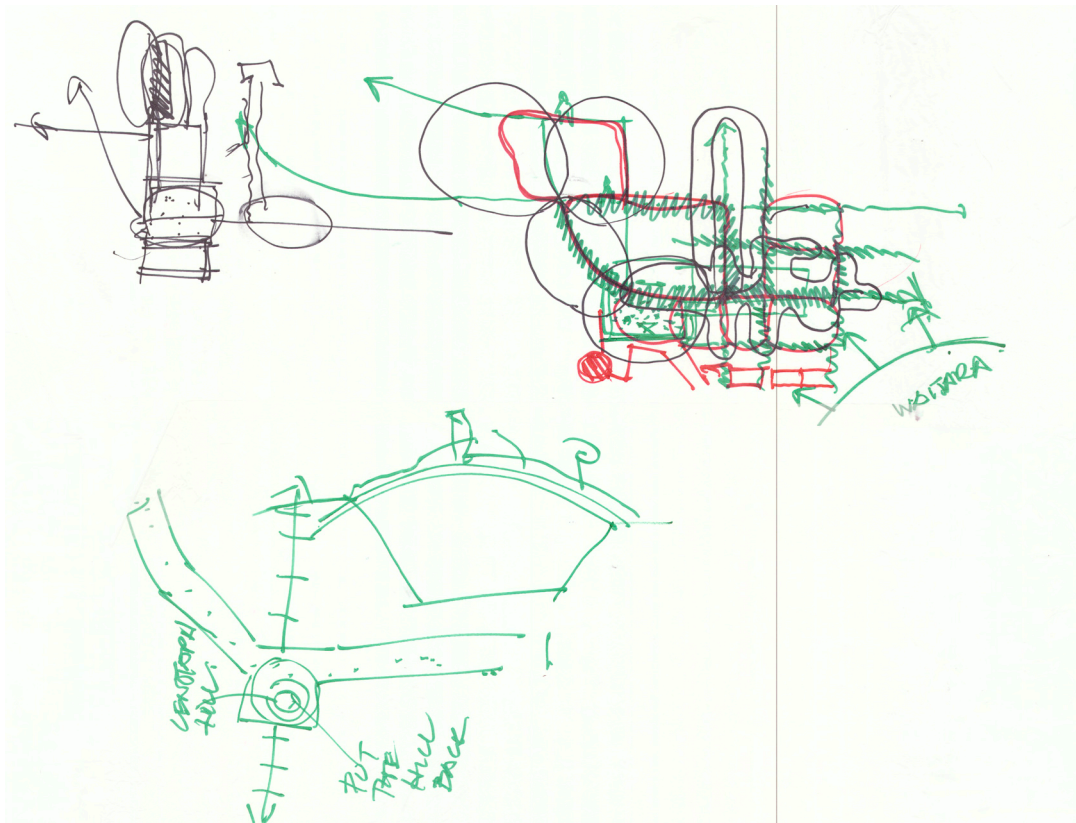
Scenario 2: Civic

The principal public domain space in this option is located with the community functions to the west of the town, integrated within the existing civic area.

This has close connections to the quarry bushland park and proximity to the existing Hornsby Park. The nature of this can be more urban in character.

Comments to support aspects of this scenario are:

- Support the generous spread of different types of spaces which will provide good accessibility for everyone.
- Supportive of a distinct space which has a community focus and use not associated with the existing retail area.
- Supportive of an urban character plaza here which can be purpose designed to be used for community events and could include flexible water play areas/ outdoor recreational activities.
- It was suggested that this area could support a school, library, child care and medical all of which will encourage people to access this area and use the public domain spaces.



Scenario 3: Core

- This option was also beneficial for the plaza space to have proximity to bushland and provided a natural transition between the city and the bush character.
- It was noted that a new east west crossing at Coronation Street/ Burdett Road in this layout provides a natural location to cater for movement between retail to recreational centres.
- Further support for this option also noted the benefits of the transport Interchange facility to be integrated into the public domain sequence of spaces, rather than a waiting area full of bus shelters.

Concerns regarding this option included:

- There were concerns that without the right functions in this part of the town, the area would not be able to attract people to use the public domain spaces.

The focus for public domain in this option is focused on the east, integrated into a new development which decks over rail and George Street and refocuses a public centre in proximity of the east retail area.

Public domain here would have a vibrant and actively layered approach as designs require to accommodate complex topography and multi-story built form with public access around and through.

Comments to support aspects of this scenario are:

- The benefit of new built form removes the presence of the rail and provides a new urban centre.
- Is a positive step to remove the trains and road as a barrier in the town centre, plus good to have whole town centre in the middle of the retail and residential areas.

- There was noted that there is assumption that there will be additional public open spaces to be included as part of housing developments.
- The fact that this is already a successful retail area is seen as a benefit also as will be more attractive as a development opportunity.

Concerns regarding this option included:

- The town centre is already very unbalanced and this will not help that aspect.

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Urban Design and Built Form



Facilitators

- Lachlan Hicks, Cox
- Daniel Turini, JLL
- Ash Chand, Hornsby Council

Overview

The Urban Design and Built Form workstream of the Co-Design Workshop focused around a discussion of the principles and objectives for Hornsby Town Centre and a structure for the master plan.

The workstream worked together to test design principles and what they mean for Hornsby.

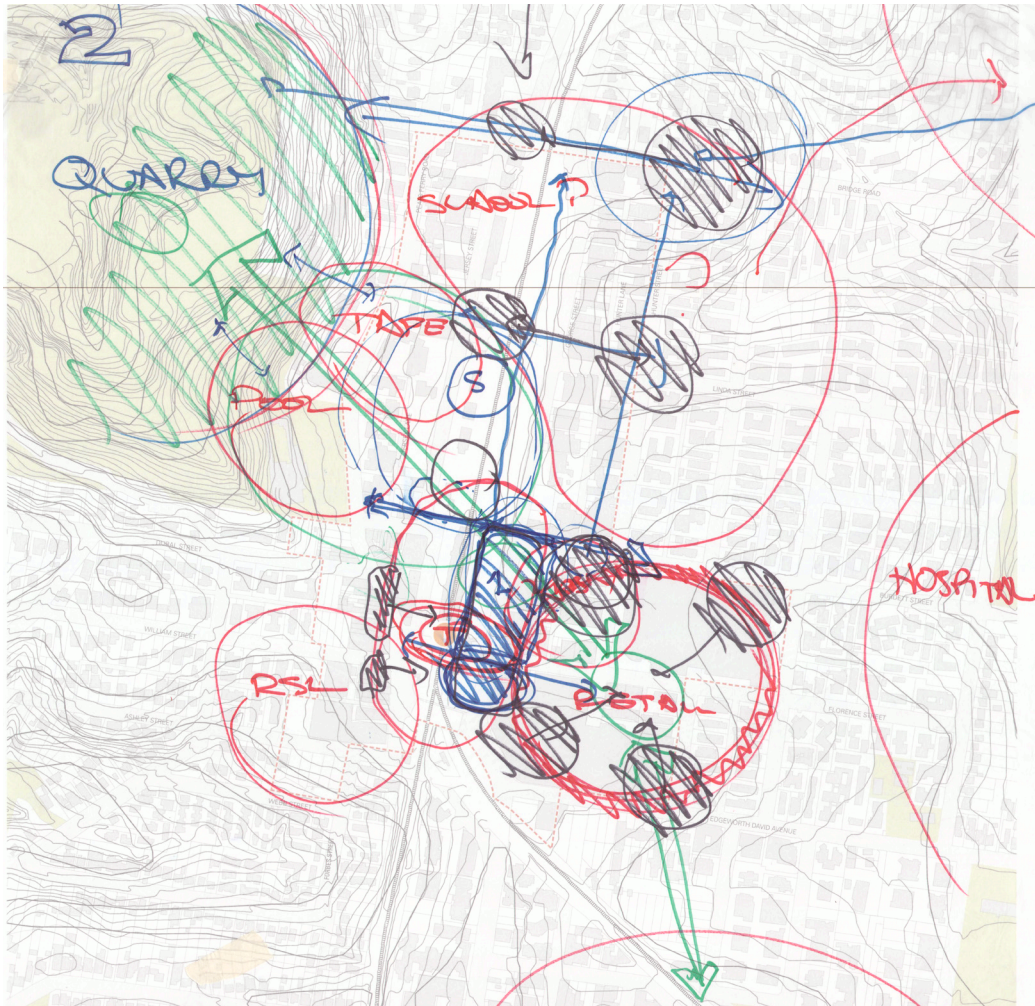
At the conclusion of each session, the principles discussed were collated with those prepared by the other workstreams in preparation for subsequent sessions.

Sessions tested and challenged the structure of the master plan.

Participants identified current issues and opportunities experienced in the Town Centre today, testing against the principles on a plan to explore different ways of looking at the road network and placement of uses.

Key Outcomes

1. Provide a robust and connected multi-modal network of public destinations comprising of community uses and or complementary uses that generate activity such as gathering spaces, ideas markets and food and beverage outlets, centered on public spaces.
2. Link active nodes with legible, connected, and green spaces that reinforce the bushland shire identity and make the Town Centre comfortable, active, liveable and sustainable.
3. Consider staging of the Town Centre to ensure a critical mass of retail, community use and commercial facilities at each stage that contribute to the long-term vision and act as catalysts for subsequent stages.
4. Generate a true community with a mix of feasible uses and densities that foster 18-hour activation.
5. Maximise permeability and view corridors with built form and spaces that have a human scale.
6. Balance density to ensure a respectful consideration of public spaces and transition to adjoining areas.
7. Reinforce clear connections both within the Town Centre and to the wider Hornsby Shire.
8. Establish an authentic Hornsby Town Centre by respecting the topography and landscape, recapturing view corridors and retaining and interpreting the heritage fabric.
9. Integrate employment land uses to ensure continued service amenity and leverage opportunity provide fine-grained destinations.
10. Develop a consistent language and design approach that complements the history, heritage and character of Hornsby.
11. Deliver a multi-purpose, year-round community to attract and cater for the living, working, learning, recreational and cultural desires of the forecast growing population.



Key Discussion Points

A New Community Heart

Beginning with a discussion of where the 'heart' of the Town Centre should be, discussions generally addressed:

1. The opportunity for the heart as shown in scenario 1 placed the focus of activity too far south within the centre, reducing amenity for residents to the north of the Town Centre and beyond.
2. locating the heart in the civic node to the Western Town Centre as shown in scenario 2 may likely need more active uses to be enough of an attraction.
3. Locating the 'heart' in the east as shown in scenario 3, while focusing the location to where there is the most activity, it may reduce attraction and activity in the west.
4. Beyond the three scenarios proposed, participants raised the role of the Hornsby Rail Station as the as active heart and a true hub of the Town Centre.

A Multi-modal Town Centre

Participants agreed that the Town Centre may have not only 'one heart' but rather be comprised of a multi-nodal series of distinct areas, of which the area over rail can be developed as core heart at the centre of several nodes, with it's own function to encourage commuters to 'stay a little longer.'

Furthering the discussion of 'nodes' within the Town Centre, the following primary nodes were raised, further identifying potential focuses:

- Civic node to north-west – civic and education focus, incorporating existing civic uses and TAFE, supporting co-location with potential primary school and active playground and recreation.
- Current library site - active library node connected to retail, rail, and new Burdett St. connection.

- Retail heart in Westfield at fountain – a place to meet.
- Western Town Centre – 18-hour node, activated by cinema, restaurants, and RSL, set within regionally interesting fine-grained and human scaled heritage character.
- Bridge Rd. at George St as amenity for residents and workers to north-east.
- Bridge Rd. at Peats Ferry Rd. as active address to Quarry Park and gateway to Town Centre from the north-west.

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Urban Design and Built Form



Legibility and Connectivity

Unpacking participant impressions of desirable areas of the Town Centre, a number of areas were highlighted, including the fountain adjacent to the Westfield, the Hornsby Park, and the Cenotaph Plaza.

What quickly emerged was the each of these areas have an identity and attraction in their own right, however they are fragmented by a lack of legible connections.

Here it became clear that coupled with the creation of new active nodes, it is critical to 'unlock' the Town Centre and ensure legible and comfortable connections to encourage residents, workers and visitors to move across the Town Centre. Given the overall scale of the centre, the strength of these connections was also seen as a chance to encourage walkability.

This included a recognition that any community node to the Western Town Centre would need to be developed in parallel with enhanced east-west connections over the rail, ideally the proposed Burdett St. and Coronation St. connection, whose enhanced connectivity would ensure a clear and legible connection, minimising any 'split' in activity that may be to the detriment of overall activity in the town centre.

Education

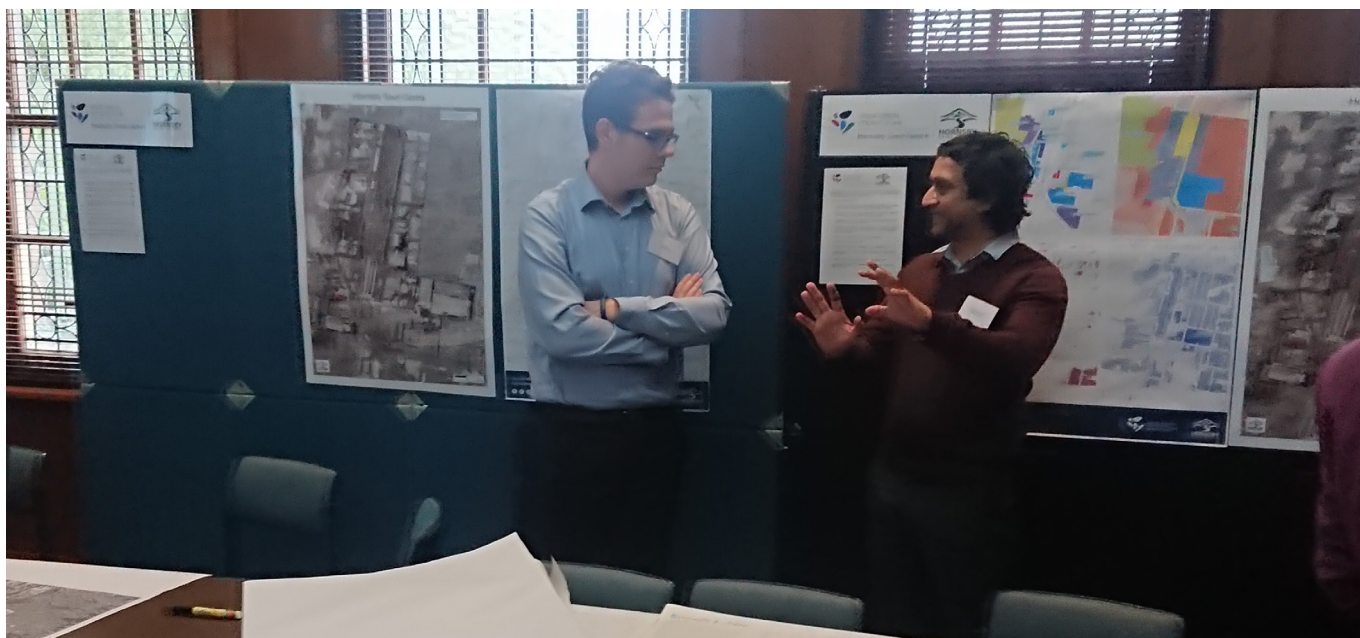
Discussion supported the provision of a primary school in the town centre co-located with TAFE and Hornsby Pool.

This was seen as being capable of contributing to walkability through strengthened pedestrian and public connections along Peats Ferry Road and Jersey St, further to connections across the greater Town Centre.

Employment Lands

It became clear that the south-east and south-west areas of town centre have distinct identities. However the northern areas, primarily employment lands, have little identity or clear vision.

While seen by many in the group as a negative, the employment lands were through discussions agreed to be critical in ensuring the ongoing provision of service-oriented uses in the Town Centre area and further hold great fine-grained opportunity for small-scale interim 'wins' to activate, including food and beverage and cultural uses.



Development and Density

In parallel with the emerging multi-modal strategy, participants supported the focusing of development and density around public nodes. This would maximise activity to each node, enhance feasibility of proposed uses, and in turn ensure amenity and attraction for residents and users of new development parcels.

This was seen as beneficial in ensuring a more balanced and human-scaled density across the Town Centre, transitioning to the lower-rise character of surrounding neighbourhoods.

Development of Council car parks to the rear of existing built form to the Western Town Centre was supported.

Rail Corridor Development

The consideration of development in Government land was supported across each session. Considering access and future rail operation, further to development costs, participants generally agreed that development would be most appropriately focused over the current commuter car park and the Hornsby rail station.

Hornsby Park Quarry

Participants agreed that few, if any, Town Centres has a potential attractor of the scale, character and proximity as Hornsby does such to the proposed Hornsby Quarry Park. With the first phases of the Quarry Part due to open around 2023, integrating the Quarry Park in the identity of the Town Centre was seen as key in realising Council's vision, while maximising regional tourism and local amenity from first stages.

Extending comfortable and green connections to and from the quarry, in particular along Peats Ferry Rd. via Bridge Rd. Bunett St. crossing and an enhanced Florence St. bridge were agreed as instrumental in extending the green network through the Town Centre, ensuring connectivity and exposure to nature for residents, workers and visitors.

The co-location of a community hub to the Western Town Centre with the Hornsby Park, pool, and the quarry beyond was seen as a further opportunity to reinforce the green identity of the Town Centre.

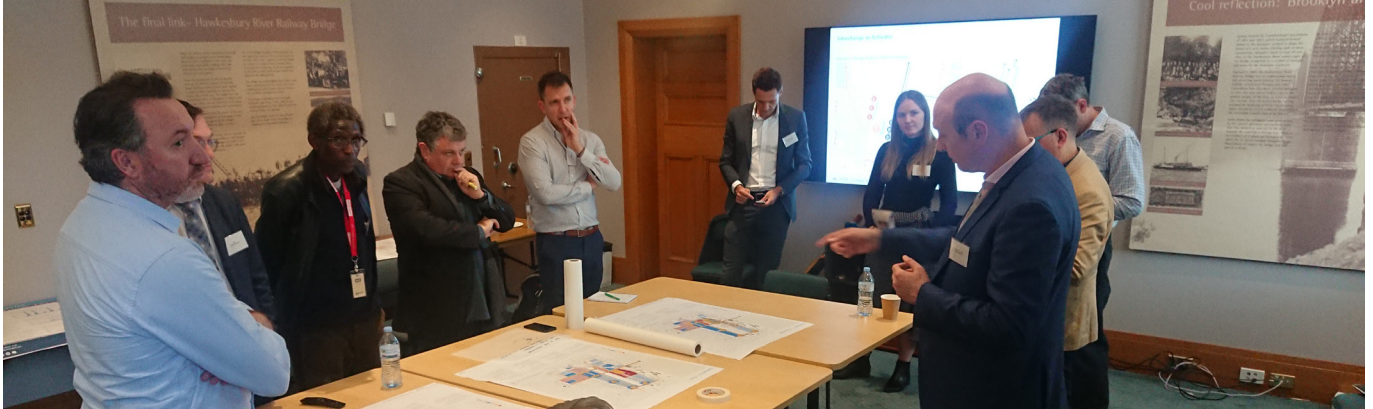
Staging

While the Town Centre master plan considers development through 2036, participants agreed that staging should be considered from day 1, generally:

- Ensure focused development over peace meal
- Consider that amalgamation becomes more difficult with increased land value
- Early phases could focus on north-west aspects, with redevelopment of retail and heritage core coming in later phases
- Developments should build on and enhance existing activities as opposed to splitting activities which may be detrimental
- A distinct and complete place must be created in each phase
- That land value and development opportunities are maximised
- Each phase contributes to the longer-term vision, avoiding short-term wins coming at the cost of long-term gains

Co-Design Workstream Outcomes

Movement and Place



Facilitators

- Camden Fitzgerald, WSP
- Ian Connolly, Cox
- Bernard Choongo, Hornsby Council
- Radek Zarzycki, Hornsby Council

Overview

The Movement and Place workstream was centred on the following primary initiatives and considerations:

- To grow sustainably, Hornsby needs to overcome car dominance by encouraging transit and active modes.
- Movement dominates place, train station needs to be better integrated with the city core, more active links needed through the centre and between east and west sides.
- Bus services and infrastructure need to be improved to be an effective sustainable access mode; and must be designed to provide good access to the centre as well as to the train station. Bus interchange relocation can open up opportunities.
- High demand for commuter parking at Hornsby – reducing importance over time as residential population grows
- we need a better solution for commuter parking more in keeping with place outcomes for Hornsby.

Key Outcomes

Interchange

There was broad consensus that a split interchange was the preferred option.

This would include using the existing interchange in the area of Station Street or Jersey Street for services to/from the north.

Southern, western and eastern services would stay on the eastern side of the railway corridor. This would involve travelling on George Street with the bus stop in the land between the railway lines and George Street.

Most attendees were not in favour of placing a bus stop on George Street itself as it would impede traffic and would impact bus reliability.

Burdett Street is shown as a potential route for outbound services.

An essential element to this plan is a new pedestrian connection at the northern end of the station platforms to allow convenient bus to bus interchange and bus to rail interchange for the relocated services.

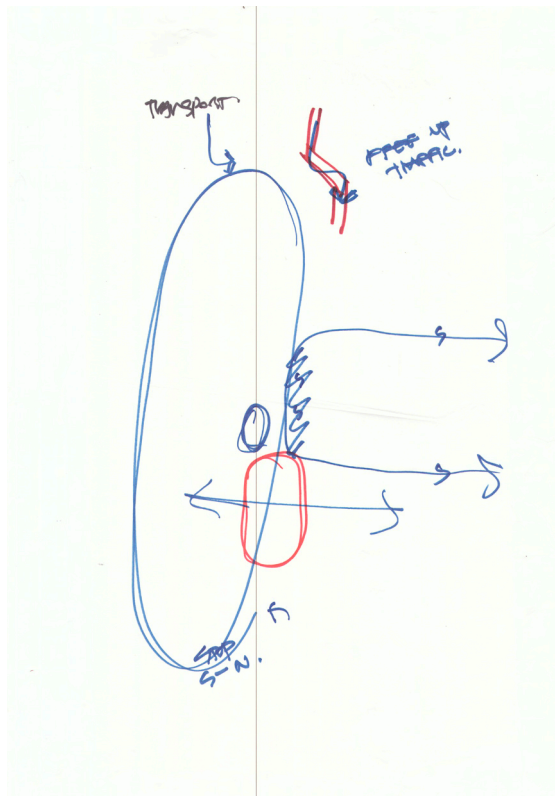
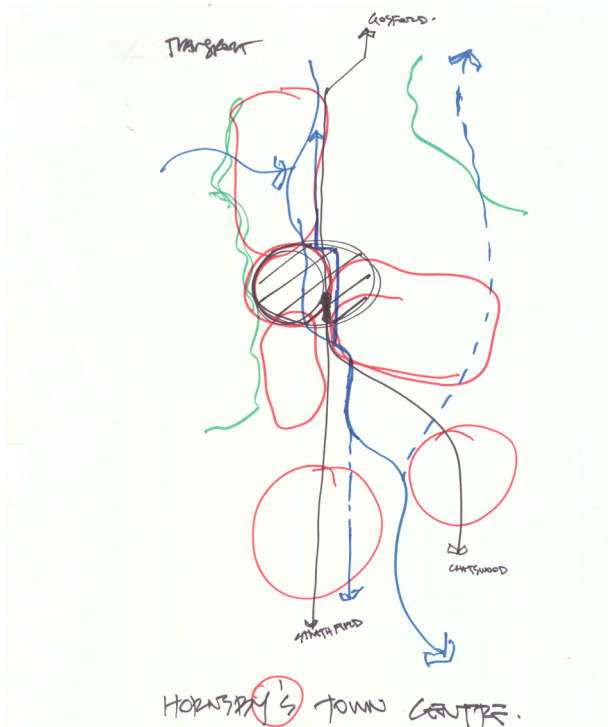
As part of this change, there would be a review of the bus network to assess whether the number of buses terminating at Hornsby could be reduced.

Interchange Advantages:

- Can reduce footprint of interchange as less services terminating here.
- Supported by potential for moving layover out of interchange (true for all options).
- Maintains activity on western side but reduces quantum of buses travelling through civic / heritage precinct.
- Places (half of) the bus interchange in closer proximity to the east side retail core.

Interchange Disadvantages:

- Buses may get caught up in congestion on George Street impacting reliability.
- May impact traffic flows on George Street – the designated through traffic route.
- Some passengers may need to walk further to reach their final destination.



George Street

Consensus that this should be the main movement corridor through the town centre.

George St. Advantages

- Removes confusion regarding which route to take to travel through the town centre
- Reduces traffic on Peats Ferry Road

George St. Disadvantages

- Does not support making George Street a more attractive environment for all users
- Gradients on Hunter Lane between Linda Street and Bridge Street are steep for cycling

Peats ferry Road

Downgrading of Peats Ferry Road for through traffic (at the southern end) was generally supported. This supported the pedestrianisation / traffic calming around the cenotaph area. This should be supported by better sign-posting on the approaches to the town centre.

Re-alignment option around to the west shown in Scenario 1 was supported by some. Others felt it wasn't desirable or absolutely needed if traffic calming could reduce through traffic.

Advantages:

- Reduces through traffic and supports the calming of the west side
- Supports creating a community heart on the west side
- Supports creation of more public domain (an events area) on the west side integrated with the Cenotaph Park / plaza
- If further traffic is pushed to George Street, this may induce drivers to find alternative ways to travel around (rather than through) the town centre

Disadvantages:

- May induce further traffic circulation to from the south and south east for those wanting to access the west side.
- Will move more traffic to Bridge Road and George Street
- May restrict the scale of development possible on the west side.

East-West Connections

Burdett Street to Coronation Street crossing for pedestrians and cyclists was considered essential. This should be integrated with a second entrance to the station

Further, this should link with connection through to Quarry Park

North South Connections

Support for activating these north-south links including bike lanes

Parking

Commuter parking should ideally be moved further north on the eastern side if sites become available. The present site between George Street and the rail corridor is the next-best location (to the north of the proposed bus stop), but may require an additional signalised intersection on George Street.

Cars should not be given more convenient access than buses, walking or cycling.

The proposed northern entrance to the station Burdett St. would keep this within reasonable walking distance.

Sydney Cox Architecture

Level 6, 155 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: +61 2 9267 9599

Adelaide Cox Architecture

Level 2, 80 Pirie Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: +61 8 7122 5050

Brisbane Cox Architecture

Level 2, 2 Edward Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: +61 7 3210 0844

Canberra Cox Architecture

1/19 Eastlake Parade
Kingston ACT 2604
Tel: +61 2 6239 6255

Melbourne Cox Architecture

Leves 2 & 3, 167 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: +61 3 9650 3288

Perth Cox Architecture

360 Murray Street
Perth WA 6000
Tel: +61 8 9322 3644

Dubai Cox Architecture

Office 603, The Maze Tower
Sheikh Zayed Road
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel: +971 4294 9314

Abu Dhabi Cox Architecture

Office 10, 10th Floor
Deluxe Tower, Delma Street
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirate
Tel: +971 2676 0911

Muscat Cox Architecture

1st Floor, Villa 1020
Way 2118
Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos
Muscat, Oman
Tel: +968 9769 5457