

VICTORIA PARK TOWN CENTRE

STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 30 APRIL 2008

OUTCOMES SUMMARY (V1)

OPEN SPACE

General Comments:

- John MacMillan Reserve oversized and underutilised may be activated through sporting and recreational uses;
- Some respondents preferred existing parkland to be left untouched;
- John MacMillan Reserve needs to be more family friendly;
- Water features would improve the quality of open space;
- Active edges to Public Open Space, where parents can watch over kids from a café, was desirable;
- It was perceived by some participants that homeless people tend to gather and sleep in John MacMillan Reserve;
- Existing car parking takes precedence over the quality and presence of open space;
- Morton Bay figs are significant and highly valued;
- Participants believed it is important for public open space to remain publicly owned;
- Wide open space is considered valuable;
- Usability of open space is considered valuable;
- Bowling club provides formal activity and community identity;
- Concerts in the park are favourable;
- A place for markets;
- Park needs to be bigger;
- Tomato Lake is provided with a good example of a children's playground; and
- John MacMillan Reserve is a good place for walking the dog.

Safety:

- One participant (female) indicated that she walks regularly for recreation and generally feels safe walking around at night;
- Locating a playground close to Kent Street would be safer;
- Lighting of POS is insufficient at night; and
- Toilet block is unsafe and attracts vandalism.

Disadvantages of current POS as a destination:

- Lack of children's play facilities;
- John MacMillan Reserve is underutilised for sporting activities;
- John MacMillan Reserve is the only facility of its nature within the vicinity;
- Lacks vibrancy as a destination;
- No café or active interface with the existing reserve;
- Car parking is more dominant than existing open space;
- John MacMillan Park lacks presence; and
- Good Sammy bins are visually unattractive due to misuse.

RETAIL

Qualities enjoyed about existing retail:

- Shopping centre caters for essentials;
- Coles provides good amenity;
- Location of shopping centre and access
- Small and intimate (not oversized like Galleria); and
- Walking dog to café/ ice cream shop.

Potential improvements to existing retail environment:

- Existing shopping centre lacks specialty uses;
- More vibrant and active exterior for the shopping centre;
- Additional entrance to the centre, existing entrances insufficient;
- Improve interface on NE side of Albany Highway;
- More boutiques and specialty shops;
- More competition with supermarkets;
- Reduce dominance of car yards;
- Boutique pub or bars; and
- Car parking on roof, or reduce the impact of existing car parking provisions.

Potential additional uses to retail environment:

- Art house cinema;
- Speciality shops/ boutiques;
- Commercial office space;
- Markets (Paddington Markets - Sydney/ Fremantle/ Subiaco);
- Growers' market (like Midland), but not flea market;
- Cafes;
- Civic uses;
- Open Space in front of development;
- Boutiques;
- Independent shops; and
- Night time supermarkets.

General comments:

- Belmont forum is not favoured as a retail or town centre model.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Appropriate Height at the street edge:

- Albany Highway could accommodate up to 12 storeys (single opinion);
- Three to four storeys (table consensus);
- Kent Street – 2 storey residential;
- Mixed use development on Council land;
- Moorgate/ Basinghall: terrace style residences and mixed use commercial;
- Up to 2 storeys on Gloucester Street;
- Utilise topography to the north of Gloucester to achieve 2 storeys at street edge but increase height towards Jon McMillan Reserve; and
- 3-5 storeys is generally acceptable height should be set back on recession plane (i.e. wedding cake construction).

Maximum height that could successfully be integrated within the Town Centre:

- 3-5 storeys;
- The height that can be accommodated is influenced by the quality of design;
- Height should be confined between Albany Highway and the existing park centre above the existing car park;
- Height should be above the centre existing shopping facilities;
- 12 storeys not acceptable to some but acceptable to others as an overall height limit; and
- Distribute density to reduce need for overly tall buildings.

Examples where height contributes to the creation of a quality urban place:

- Northbank along river's edge in Fremantle, participants indicated that they liked the styling, articulation and detail of the facades;
- Effective design with respect to detail reduces the impact of height;
- Buildings should age well and not be merely fashionable to date quickly; and
- Balance fashion with quality for timeless architectural style.

Examples for development where height has been poorly integrated with the urban environment:

- King George Street apartments;
- Burswood;
- Toaster (Sydney);
- Great Eastern Highway in Rivervale, where the apartments back onto highway. It was acknowledged that the style and presence of the buildings was acceptable from the perspective of the river. Respondents also understood that the aspect onto the highway would be undesirable;
- 1960's and 70's apartment blocks are unacceptable;
- Raffles Hotel;
- King George and McMaster Street (10 storey); and
- Brownlea towers.

CULTURE/ COMMUNITY/ RECREATION

Culture: Preferred informal or formal activities to be included or accommodated within the town centre:

- Social Activities;
- Communal space;
- Amphitheatre;
- Art Precinct;
- Public Art;
- Theatre/ performance space;
- Cultural influence; and
- Free entertainment (formal and informal);
- Art Centre;
- Cinema/ Art House Cinema/ Outdoor cinema in town square;
- Galleries and art spaces;
- Gloucester Street community space including Bowls Club;
- Library;
- Create a place for buskers; and
- Outdoor concerts.

Preferred community/ recreational activities or facilities to be included, retained or accommodated within the town centre:

- Bowls to be integrated with other uses;
- Existing Arts Centre on Kent Street to be reintegrated with new development;
- Multi use facility;
- Town arts events;
- Senior centres close to shopping centre;
- Recreational facility with a strong relationship to the street and public realm;
- Outdoor concerts;
- Yoga in the park;
- Gymnasium;
- Squash;
- Cycling facilities around Town Centre for safe storage of bicycles;
- Enclosed community facilities may be moved but not lost;
- Cycle ways; and
- Children's Playground.

Accommodating multicultural diversity and indigenous heritage:

- Art;
- Performances in amphitheatre;
- Restaurants are reflective of diversity;
- Trees, plaza, community meeting place;
- Elements of nature;
- Create a place that brings people together in the public realm;
- Community cinema/ presentations and performance to showcase local culture; and
- Multiculturalism 'is of the place' already and is reflected by the community, a community gathering place would celebrate this diversity.

Other

- Must be reflective of Victoria Park, not a generic style based on Subiaco. (It was also acknowledged that people contribute to place making).

MOVEMENT/ CONNECTIVITY

Areas where reinstatement of strip shopping would be suitable:

- Albany Highway;
- Basinghall Street;
- Sussex Street;
- Livening up dead areas;
- New internal linkages;
- Provide a combination of at grade and below ground car parking; and
- Where good public transport accessibility exists.

Desired pedestrian linkages:

- Between Kent Street and Sussex Street across John MacMillan Reserve;
- Laneways between Basinghall Street and Sussex Street through existing residential environment;
- More defined access to parks and across parks
- More linkages across parks to disperse rather than focus traffic;
- More pedestrian friendly and interesting streets to encourage people into public realm for surveillance; and
- Across existing surrounding roads (Albany Highway, Kent Street and Mint Street).

Desired Vehicle Linkages:

- Ease of vehicle access to the existing facilities;
- Good public transport;
- Mint street lights need improving;
- Remove commercial traffic from Moorgate Street;
- Heavy commercial vehicles conflict with residential environment, particularly along Gloucester Street and Moorgate Street;
- Laneways between Basinghall and Sussex through existing residential environment;
- Internalise commercial traffic to reduce impact on periphery;
- Internalise car parking;
- Heavy vehicle access should be from major roads such as Albany highway, Kent street or internalised;
- Residential interface should be respected;
- Service traffic should access from Albany Highway;
- Changing the name of Albany Highway to Old Albany Road or Albany Road would change the perceptions of the nature of the Road;
- Access in front of bowling club between Kent Street and Sussex Street
- Pedestrian/ vehicle conflict to and from centre should be addressed to improve movement networks; and
- Reduce Kent Street to 40km/h and provide pedestrian refuges/ landscaping to reduce pedestrian and vehicle conflict.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Underground car parks can be unsafe at night;
- Café strip contributes to a high level of amenity in Victoria Park; and
- East Victoria Park and Victoria Park should be merged to create a more unified community.