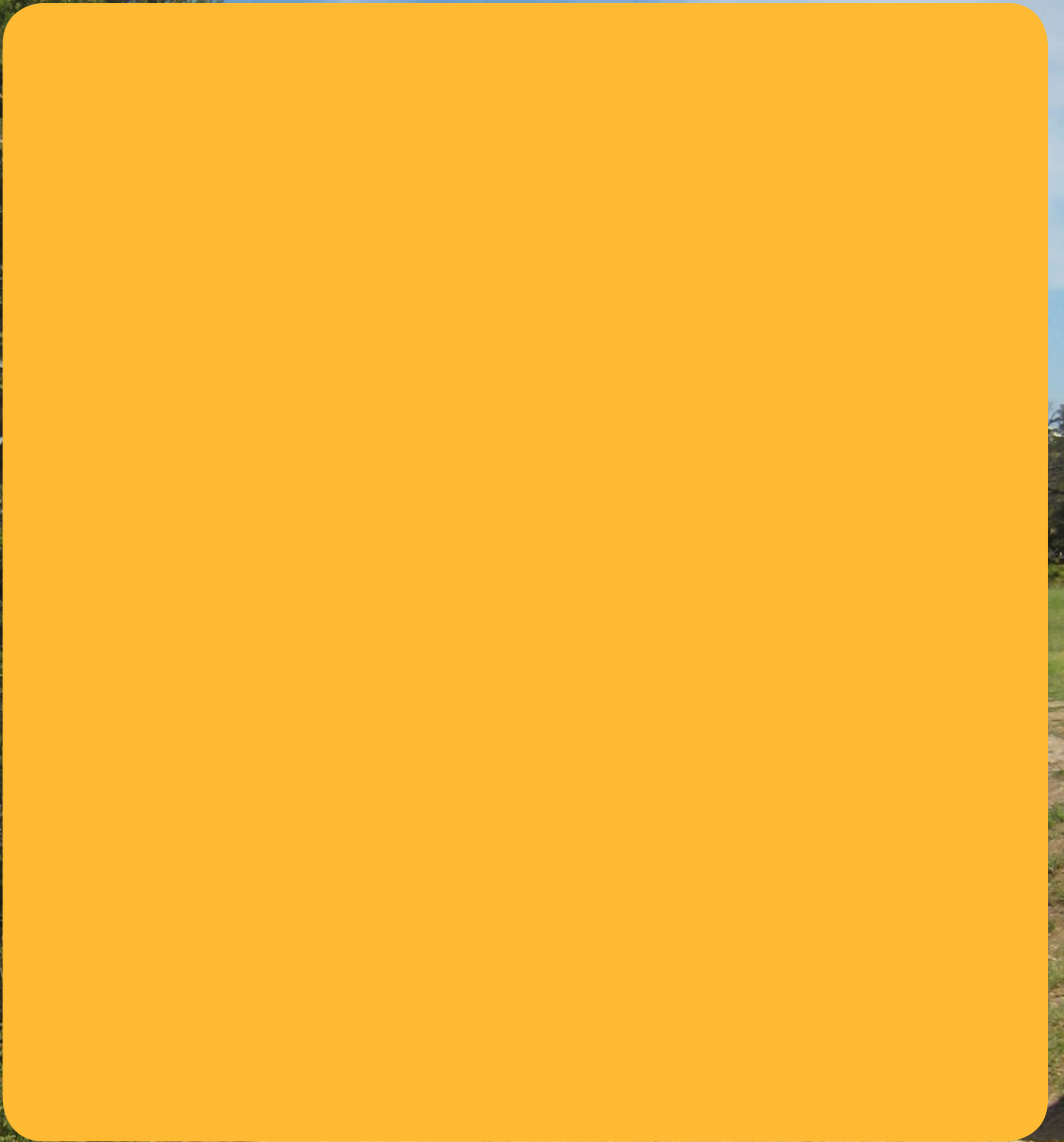




TORQUAY TOWN CENTRE PROJECT

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK **DRAFT**





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Date	Version	Issue	For
15.06.2017	A	Working draft	Internal project team review
28.06.2017	B	First Draft	Council review
05.07.2017	C	Second Draft	Project Control Group review
08.08.2017	D	Exhibition Draft	Public exhibition



INTRODUCTION

01



INTRODUCTION

The Torquay Town Centre urban design framework is guiding document designed to shape the future development of the commercial core of Torquay. The framework, and an associated *Strategic Investment Facilitation Plan*, were commissioned by Surf Coast Shire Council in 2016 and undertaken by hansen partnership Pty Ltd (urban planning, urban design and landscape architecture), in association with Essential Economics (economics) and Martyn Group (transport).

This document seeks to establish an agreed vision for Torquay's main Activity Centre (the Town Centre) to be realised over a period of up to 20 years and a number of key projects and priority actions as an impetus for change within the area. This document also seeks to provide more explicit guidance for some of the key public and private spaces within the Town Centre which are key to the town's successful evolution. Once adopted, this document should inform the Surf Coast Planning Scheme and be the basis for future decision making as relates to planning and design matters within the Torquay Town Centre.

Torquay, located only 1.5 hours west of Melbourne, is identified in the *G21 Geelong Region Plan* as a sub-regional employment centre and a regional population centre. As such, it plays an important role in the economic and population growth of the region. As outlined in the Project Brief, over the past 5 years, Torquay's population has increased by an average of 5.3% each year, making it one of the State's fastest growing areas. In order to keep pace with this population growth it is estimated approximately 2,200 additional jobs need to be created in Surf Coast Shire by 2036 (SCS 2015). It is envisaged that the Torquay Town Centre will play a significant role in the provision of this job stock. It also plays a strong tourism role as the designated eastern Start of the Great Ocean Road.

This rapid growth and need for additional jobs creates potential conflict with the valued character of Torquay and a pro-active approach to managing this is needed to appropriately balance the growth requirements and an emerging character which nonetheless is strongly reflective of the community's values. Strengthening the 'sense of place' through investment in the public realm and management of private development is critical not only from a social perspective but also economically, in order to not undermine the very assets that make Torquay attractive.

Alterations to the urban structure of a place envisaged by this Framework usually occur over a number of generations, even where the surrounding population undergoes change of the scale seen in this region. This often results in a town centre which fails to deliver what the community needs to ensure they can (and would prefer to) live, work and socialise locally. The Torquay Town Centre is unusual in the actions by two or three landowners has the potential to significantly transform the Centre in the shorter term. This presents a very exciting prospect of allowing the Town Centre to evolve in tandem with broader residential growth but also makes it critical that the right controls are in place to ensure that this is a positive change.

The opportunities to grow employment within Torquay through the continued development of the Town Centre depends heavily on actions that can be undertaken by the Surf Coast Shire Council. Firstly, in undertaking meaningful investment in the delivery of a public realm and pedestrian network within the Centre that will create the foundation for private investment, and secondly, by ensuring that planning controls reflect an appropriate balance between protecting or rather, enhancing, the valued 'coastal' or 'surf' character.

It is also important to acknowledge that, despite this, the Framework is a long term ambition. The overarching scale of change identified will not occur over the next 5 years, but over the next 20 years. The Framework is designed to be flexible and should be reviewed within the next decade to ensure it remains relevant.





GEELONG

ARMSTRONG CREEK
URBAN GROWTH AREA

SURFCOAST SHIRE BOUNDARY

TORQUAY

GREAT OCEAN ROAD

ANGLESEA

Figure 1: Regional context

what is an urban design framework **how will the urban design framework be used?**

An Urban Design Framework is a strategic planning document which provides the framework for the long term development of a place by defining the preferred nature of future growth and articulating how this change will be managed. Urban Design Frameworks have a particular focus on building form and the 'public realm' (which includes streets, parks and other public spaces) as well as the interfaces between private land and these public spaces.

A coordinated plan allows a wide range of stakeholders, service authorities, State Government departments and internal Surf Coast Shire Council departments to all 'read from the same page' to produce a coherent outcome and certainty for both residents and the Council, as the Responsible Authority.

An Urban Design Framework also provides the framework for statutory planning controls which will be implemented through the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. Plans such as this are informed by extensive public consultation and discussion, as well as the overarching requirements under State Planning Policy. While everyone may not agree on every aspect of the plan, it should reflect broad community consensus.

The aim of the Urban Design Framework for Torquay Town Centre is to guide future land use and development in a coordinated manner and provide greater certainty for all stakeholders in terms of delivering a preferred future. In establishing an agreed vision for the Centre for a period of 15 - 20 years, the Urban Design Framework seeks to outline key policy directions, and important physical outcomes as related to Torquay Town Centre's land use, built form & activity, landscape & public realm and access & movement. The Urban Design Framework will be used by:

Surf Coast Shire Council:

- As a basis for introducing new planning policies, zones and overlay controls into its planning scheme (as appropriate);
- In assessing planning permit applications;
- In assessing requests to rezone land;
- In guiding non-statutory initiatives, arrangements or partnerships to assist in realising potential future opportunities within the centre;
- In preparing capital works budgets to implement public works;
- In seeking funding from external sources for public works; and
- In delivering community services.

The Community:

- To understand how the area, and specific precincts within the activity centre, are likely to change in the future;
- To assist community groups in prioritising future work and in seeking funding for projects; and
- To provide a framework for community groups to assist in making long term plans.

Existing Business Owners:

- To create greater certainty and appreciation regarding the future direction of the centre.

Developers:

- To understand the development opportunities that exist and the matters that will be taken into account in assessing development proposals.

Other government agencies:

- In coordinating infrastructure improvements with work undertaken by Surf Coast Shire Council and other agencies including public transport, roads and water.



components of the project

As outlined previously, there are two major components of this project:

- Strategic Investment Facilitation Plan (SIFP)
- Torquay Town Centre Urban Design Framework (UDF)

The Strategic Investment Facilitation Plan seeks to firstly develop an understanding of the opportunities which exist to stimulate investment and revitalisation of the Town Centre and to enhance the opportunities for greater local job provision. The second component, the Urban Design Framework, seeks to respond to both the matters raised in the SIFP and to consider the appropriate built outcomes for Torquay into the future.

These two documents are further supported by a series of additional reports which have also informed the preparation of this UDF and which provide some of the strategic justification particularly in relation to access and movement:

- Issues and Opportunities Paper 2017
- Parking and Access Strategy 2016-2021
- The Esplanade and Bell Street Traffic and Pedestrian Strategy 2017

land affected by the project

The study area for the Town Centre Urban Design Framework (UDF), shown in Figure 2 includes the traditional Town Centre (the Gilbert Street area) and other commercial and special use zoned land surrounding that area in a broadly rectangular shape. It extends to Zeally Bay Road in the north and encompasses the adjoining Taylor Park interface and residential hinterland. To the south, the nominated study area extends to the alignment of Boston Road. However, it is noted that the UDF addresses land south to Anderson Street. The eastern boundary is defined by the foreshore reserve, with directions provided around relevant matters within that land where relevant. The study area includes land between Boston Road and Zeally Bay Road as far as the Torquay Village site, although much of that land remains in residential use.

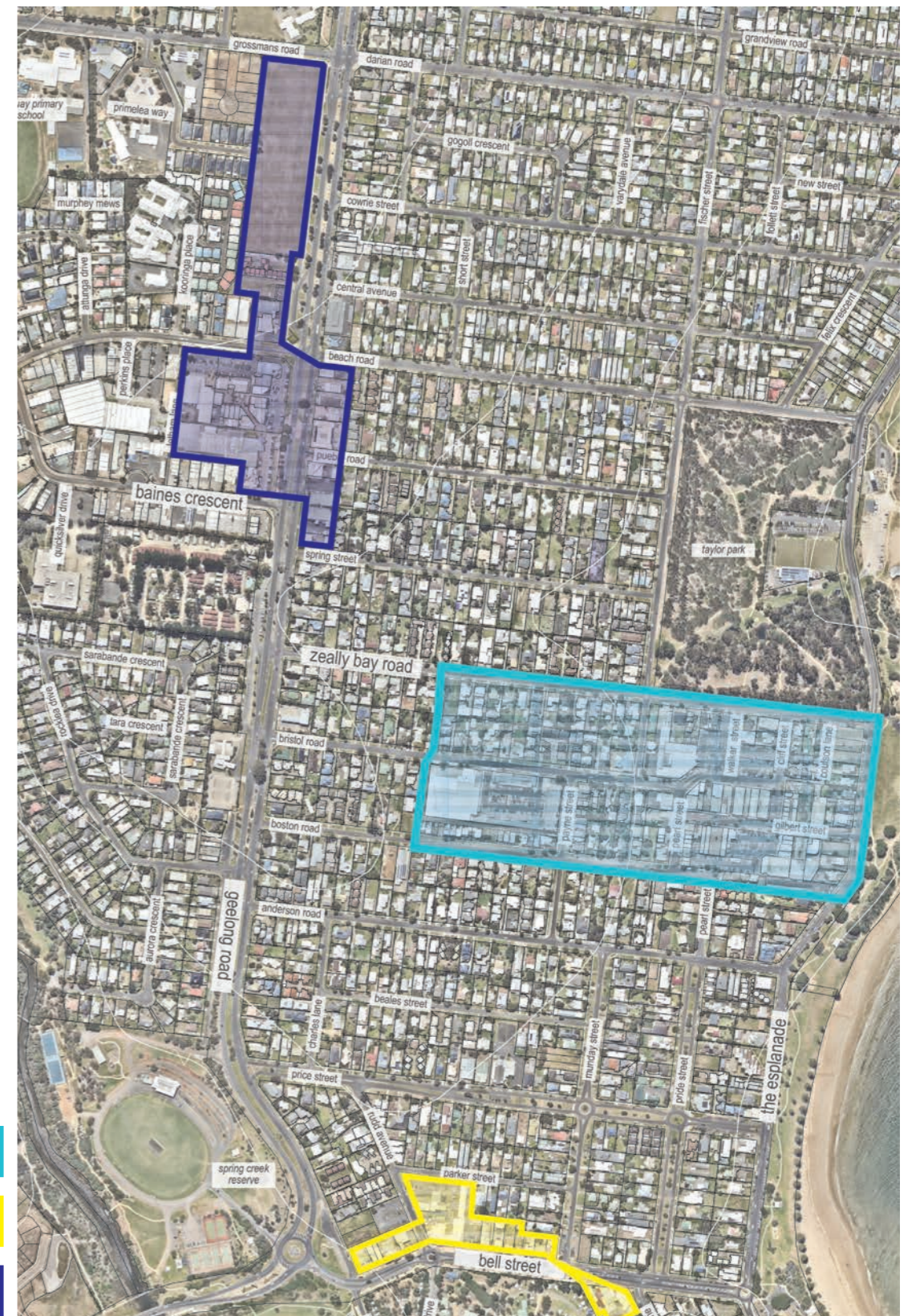
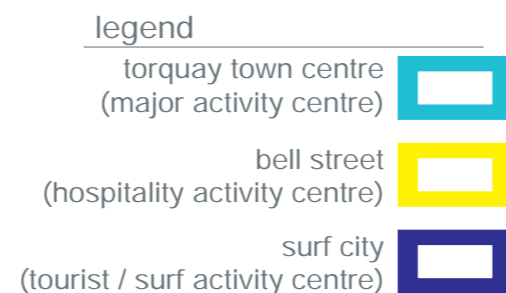


Figure 2: Torquay context



Figure 3: Study area

preparing the framework

A number of studies have been undertaken to guide the development of the Torquay Town Centre over the last two decades. Some of these documents have shaped the growth and development of the town as they form part of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme. This study builds upon the base established by earlier documents, in particular the 2001 Torquay Town Centre Revitalisation Project. Notably, the current study encompasses a much broader area and further considers the feasibility of the build form outcomes envisaged.

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) was prepared through a collaborative working process which included extensive consultation with Council officers, external stakeholders (including government departments) and the wider Torquay community. The Town Centre UDF and the SIFP were undertaken in a concurrent manner as each exerts a strong influence on the outcomes of the other. The project was completed in a number of stages:

Phase 1: 'Information gathering', including desktop analysis, fieldwork and consultation which informed an Issues & Opportunities Paper;

Phase 2: 'Visioning', in which a draft framework for future development was established and tested with stakeholders;

Phase 3: 'Drafting' the Urban Design Framework; and

Phase 4: 'Testing' the Urban Design Framework (upcoming)

A range of consultation exercises were undertaken with key feedback that has informed the preparation of the UDF outlined later in this section. Full details of community feedback and priorities are included in the Issues and Opportunities Paper and have been available via Councils website.

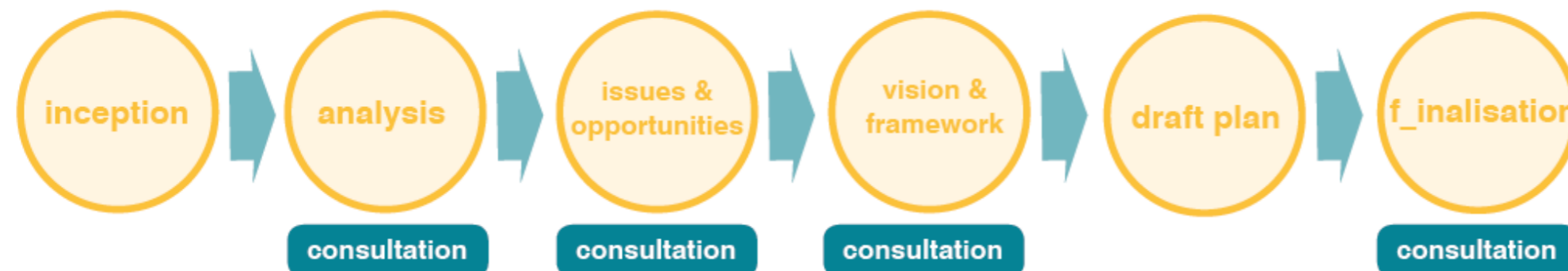


Figure 4: Project process



CONTEXT

02



the place

Torquay Town Centre is a designated Activity Centre (AC) within the Surf Coast Shire, playing a high level local service role, characterised by a dominance of small businesses and shops, with three supermarkets providing for local convenience shopping needs. It also plays a wider regional role in relation to tourism. The Town Centre is one of a number of existing and proposed centres within the municipality but has been repeatedly confirmed as the highest order Activity Centre within Torquay. Smaller centres on Bell Street, the Surf City area, West Coast Business Park and local Centres within new growth areas in Torquay North and Spring Creek will remain subservient economically to this Centre.

It is located approximately 1.5hrs from Melbourne to the south-west, but importantly, the rapidly expanding 'second city of Victoria', Geelong, is only half an hours drive away, and its associated growth area of Armstrong Creek is closer still. Torquay's designated growth areas of Spring Creek and Torquay North are located to the north and west of the study area,

The study area is located between the Surf Coast Highway and Zeally Bay. It is characterised by an important north-south road, The Esplanade, which forms the eastern edge of the Town Centre and provides the interface with the foreshore reserve, a large grassed area managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee, The foreshore reserve then drops relatively steeply down to the beach. Access between the beach and the Town Centre is currently relatively convoluted. The regional Surf Coast Walk, which extends from Point Impossible to Fairhaven, runs past the Town Centre within this reserve.

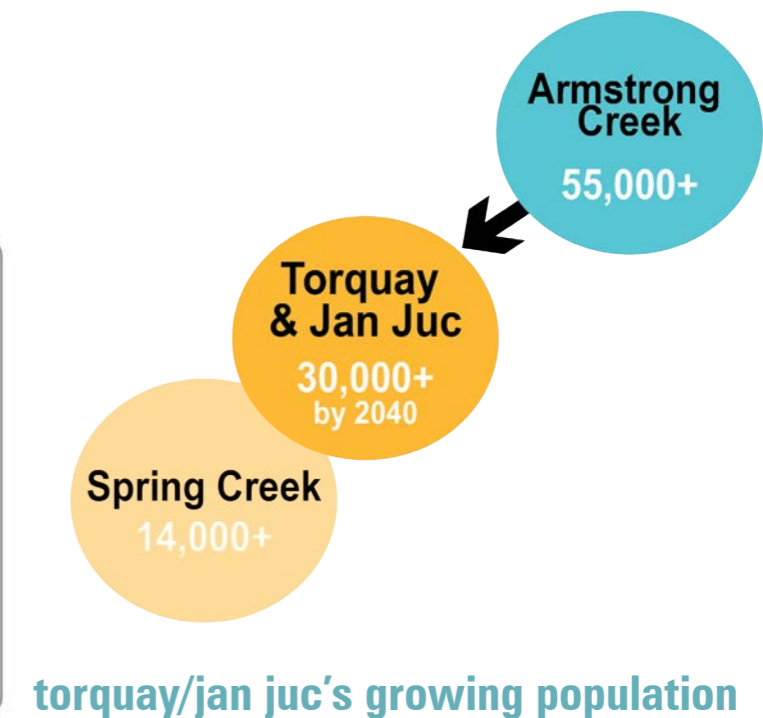
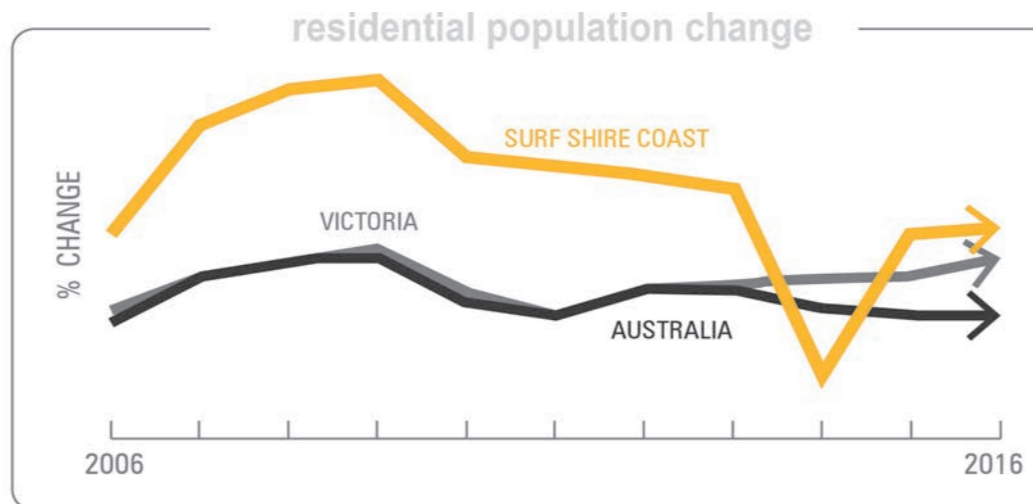
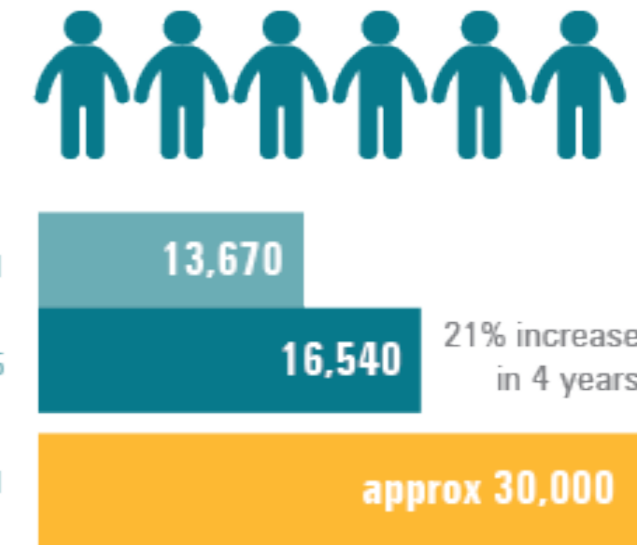
The east / west aligned Gilbert Street has long been considered the 'heart' of Torquay but has seen only modest recent investment in both the public and private realms. Though nominally a 'pedestrian friendly space' it is nonetheless dominated by vehicle movements in and out of adjoining at-grade car parking spaces, which also disrupt the rhythm of built form along this important corridor. Pedestrian crossings are lacking along the length of the street and its connection to the foreshore, particularly on the southern side where the corner site remains vacant is not strong.

The redevelopment of the old Primary School site on Bristol Road and the establishment of a full line Coles supermarket create a secondary 'hub' within the town centre. Recognition of the disconnection between this area and Gilbert Street has driven the rezoning of intervening land for commercial purposes. Despite this, the land remains almost exclusively residential, with current planning controls requiring the preparation of a development plan for all lots. As a result of the presence of Torquay Village, Bristol Road carries much of the vehicular traffic into the Town Centre, despite a problematic intersection with the Surf Coast Highway.

The northern part of the Town Centre comprises primarily a full line Woolworths supermarket and large areas of at-grade car parking dominating the experience of this area. Coulson Lane and a narrow path offer the potential for connection to the foreshore along the alignment of Bristol Road. There has been limited development of sites along Zeally Bay Road, with a mix of commercial forms and older residential dwellings still present at this interface. A row of informal car parking creates a visual and physical barrier to Taylor Park. The line of canopy vegetation at this edge however, makes a significant contribution to the experience of the Town Centre.

As it stands, the study area contains a mix of land uses and types of services and facilities encouraged in Activity Centres but perhaps not at the scale envisaged by policy. Ground level residential uses remain in commercially zoned land and there are very limited community or other, permanent non-privatised social or cultural uses occurring.

While the Torquay Town Centre has a generally pleasant feel, this is largely derived from the coastal setting and the associated on-street activity. Built form within the Centre is relatively tired and displays little that refers to or enhances the coastal setting through either form or materiality.



the people

Surf Coast Shire, has experienced rapid population growth over the past 20 years with a current population of 28,941 (ABS ERP 2015). Torquay-Jan Juc is estimated to have a population of 16,543 (ABS ERP 2015). The State Government’s population expectations for Torquay-Jan Juc are for the population to grow to around 30,000 people by 2040.

Forecasts also identify a growing proportion of the population aged under 15 and over 65, who are less likely to drive or have access to a private motor vehicle. This means consideration must be given to alternatives to private vehicle travel, such as strong pedestrian networks and public transport services. As Torquay continues to evolve from a seasonal destination into a larger permanent residential centre, the subsequent investment needed to improve transport and access networks will be carried largely by the existing population for the benefit of visitors and future residents.

Notable job trends among Torquay’s population include an increase in professional jobs, at levels above those being added in other sectors. Other growing employment sectors included personal service workers and clerical and administrative worker.

The population of Torquay is relatively young and has a relatively high income, and the expectations of this demographic in relation to what their Town Centre can provide is not yet being met, with many recent developments associated with the demographic occurring in the Baines Court area.

Torquay has a very strong sense of local community and one which is strongly protective of the character of the township. The rapid pace at which growth has occurred within the township is contrary to the expectations and aspirations of many longer standing residents. As well as these longer term residents, Torquay is also attracting more and more new residents who also value the lifestyle, and associated ‘character’ of the township as a result of its location. It is important that this Framework gets the balance right between the broader ‘strategic’ aims of providing the services, facilities and job potential required to support its overall population, while protecting the overarching ‘coastal’ or ‘surf’ character which is of such value to its community. Finding that balance has been a core consideration of this Framework.

There are two local groups with an identified interest in the Study Area. These are the residents group (3228) who have a particular interest in the protection of the existing character of the township and the Torquay Commerce and Tourism group who are the key advocacy body for the Town Centre. The latter group has been heavily involved in advocating for sustainable outcomes within the Town Centre and have produced their own ‘Vision’ document for the Centre, ‘Torquay: a town for tomorrow’.



Key priorities and aspirations for the Torquay community identified through earlier stages of this project include:

- A much stronger future for the centre in supporting social activity, alongside small businesses and providing for everyday shopping needs.
- Responses to questions around future priorities for the Centre were fairly consistent, with improvements to Gilbert Street a clear priority for Torquay’s community. The most common responses were:
 - Changes to Gilbert Street access, either through pedestrianisation or the introduction of a one way system.
 - Improvements to the overall appearance of the Town Centre to make it more cohesive and modern.
 - A much stronger focus on pedestrian and cycle access, and smarter management of car parking.
 - Better public / private interfaces, managing overshadowing and scale, and the creation of more dining and small business spaces.
- Design which reflects the local context and environment.
- A desire for further opportunities to use the centre in the evening through:
 - A greater variety of dining opportunities;
 - Longer opening hours for existing businesses;
 - More events and pop-ups;
 - More entertainment options; particularly live music, cinema and theatre spaces; and
 - Improved streetscapes, particularly lighting and a more active street life.



the policy

An Urban Design Framework is guided by a State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) and a Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF). The LPPF must support the State framework and cannot contradict it. The most important piece of policy for the Torquay Town Centre is 'Activity Centre' policy. Activity Centres are defined within State Planning Policy as being areas which provide a variety of land uses and are highly accessible to the community, supporting a concentration of retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments (see page 14).

State Policy also seeks to encourage development which meet the communities' needs for retail, entertainment, office and other commercial services and provides net community benefit in relation to accessibility, efficient infrastructure use and the aggregation and sustainability of commercial facilities. To achieve this, the Council should:

- Locate commercial facilities in existing or planned activity centres.
- Provide new convenience shopping facilities to provide for the needs of the local population within, or immediately adjacent to, existing commercial centres.
- Locate cinema based entertainment facilities within or on the periphery of existing or planned activity centres.

The *Torquay / Jan Jac Retail Strategy* 2011 outlines how Council will implement this policy at a local level.

At a regional level, as outlined in the *G21 Geelong Region Plan* included at Clause 11.09 of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme, Torquay is one of only five identified employment areas (including Geelong) which are to be strengthened and protected.

Other relevant policy includes a recognition of the importance of distinct local identities through acknowledgement of different neighbourhood characters in both State and Local policy. The creation of high quality public spaces, cycle and pedestrian linkages and more intensive residential development where high quality public transport exists are other common themes between State and Local policy affecting the Torquay Town Centre.

At a local level, development in Torquay is informed firstly by the five key values developed by the Surf Coast Shire for the township as part of the *Sustainable Futures Plan Torquay – Jan Juc 2040*, which are:

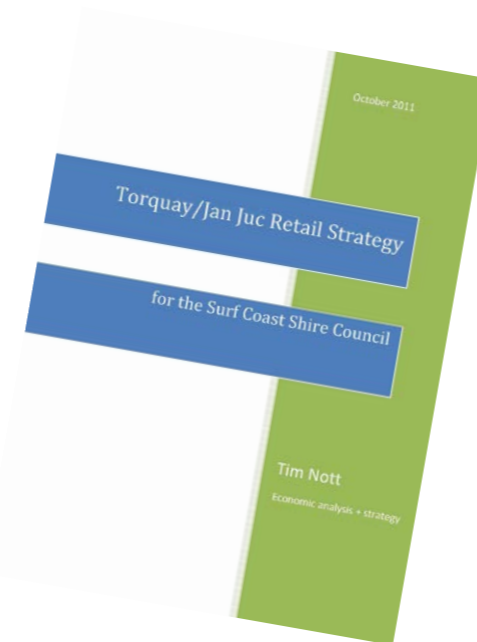
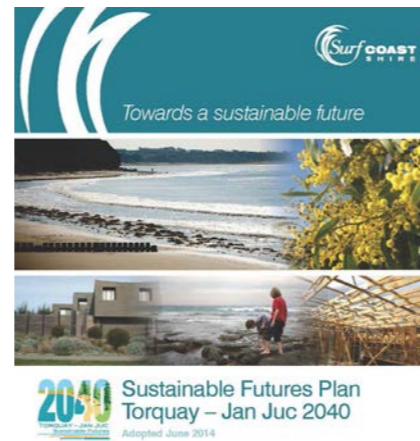
Value 1: Places for People – The importance of a close knit community

Value 2: The Natural Environment – Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

Value 3: The Built Environment – Fostering the unique coastal look and feel

Value 4: Services and Infrastructure – Planning for services and infrastructure with development

Value 5: A Local Economy – Providing employment opportunities locally.



Local policy, informed by the Retail Strategy and other strategic work also supports a retail hierarchy with 'Gilbert Street' (the Torquay Town Centre) as the major Centre for the township. This means that the Centre must be able to accommodate most of the commercial activity within Torquay, with other areas providing a 'supporting' role. For example, manufacturing or bulky goods retailing would be accommodated elsewhere. Two new retail areas in Torquay North and South Spring Creek are intended to provide more localised services to their surrounding neighbourhoods, primarily by providing supermarkets and other shops that allow residents to access local services.

Bell Street plays a supporting role to the Town Centre, in accommodating further hospitality and entertainment uses, while Surf City plays a critical role in the local economy through supporting jobs associated with the 'surf' industry and associated tourism uses.

Local policy also identifies a number of other relevant matters including:

- Identifying land along the north side of Bristol Road for future rezoning to facilitate commercial land uses.
- Controls to require the development of a Discount Department Store on land between Pearl and Payne Streets.
- A Neighbourhood Character Study and associated controls that identifies building heights across varying residential areas and site coverage minimums.
- Detailed design controls affecting the previously identified Town Centre area.
- Limited heritage controls within the Centre, compromising two individual sites.

other key influences

activity centre planning

Key objectives for planning within Activity Centres are included in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme at Clause 11.03. Relevant key objectives are:

- Encourage a diversity of housing types at higher densities in and around activity centres.
- Reduce the number of private motorised trips by concentrating activities that generate high numbers of (non-freight) trips in highly accessible activity centres.
- Improve access by walking, cycling and public transport to services and facilities for local and regional populations.
- Broaden the mix of uses in activity centres to include a range of services over longer hours appropriate to the type of centre and needs of the population served.
- Provide a focus for business, shopping, working, leisure and community facilities.
- Encourage economic activity and business synergies.

The State Planning Policy also references Design Guidelines for Activity Centres which includes the following aims. These have underpinned the preparation of this UDF:

- **Develop a good-quality public environment:** Ensure public spaces within individual developments and throughout activity centres are comfortable, engaging environments.
- **Promote street-based patterns of connection:** Directly link developments within activity centres and with their surrounding neighbourhoods using a fine-grained street system that accommodates diverse modes of travel.
- **Improve community safety:** Promote the natural surveillance of public space and street edge activity. This can be achieved by ensuring buildings address the street and contain active uses on the ground floor. Clearly define public and private space.
- **Encourage a mix of uses:** Optimise the diversity of uses in activity centres where the mix promotes vitality, extends the hours of activity and intensifies the use of existing infrastructure.

- **Improve pedestrian and cycling amenity:** Encourage an increase in pedestrian and cycling traffic by maximising the convenience, safety and appeal of these modes of travel.
- **Promote a public transport focus:** Better integrate public transport with activity centres by increasing community comfort, safety and accessibility.
- **Increase accessibility and integration:** Ensure activity centres are a focus for the entire community, are accessible to all, and are physically integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Encourage environmental sustainability:** Promote the efficient reuse of existing assets, prolong the life cycle of structures, ensure energy efficiency, and water and resource conservation and encourage appropriate orientation and use of materials.

urban design imperatives

One of the critical approaches to urban design that has informed this Urban Design Framework (UDF) is the concept of 'human' design, or design which considers how spaces are experienced rather than just how they look on a plan. In an age of increased connectivity, higher levels of education and upward socio-economic trends, the growth of the 'knowledge' economy and increasing urban growth means urban designers and planners are placing an ever-increasing importance of the experience of a place.

The human experience of a place is predominantly experienced through the public realm. This occurs at the ground plane, and does not just mean publicly owned spaces, but also the parts of buildings that inform that experience, particularly ground level frontages. In reality (in most cases) while the upper levels of a building may be bland or unengaging, if the ground level is engaging and active, then the building makes a positive contribution to the public realm. It's the experience that counts. However, where the upper levels are particularly poorly designed they are likely to exert a negative impact on surrounding spaces.

Importantly, the ground level experience is a mix of the public and private. It does not just include elements of built form which can be controlled through guidelines (such as design detailing, setbacks etc) but also that within the streetscape; the amount of vegetation, the ease of movement and the choice of paving. It also includes more intangible contributions such as emotional connections, understanding of history or environmental context and social aspects. All these elements work together to comprise the experience of a place. While long range views of poorly designed buildings must be acknowledged as detrimental to the public experience, these exert a lesser influence if offset by vibrancy and interest at the ground plane. This is because, despite often being only one level of a building which may be many storeys high, the ground level exerts a disproportionate influence on any experience of the environment. Areas above the ground plane are generally experienced at a greater distance and therefore have a correspondingly lower intensity. As such, the design of the ground floor of buildings is the most critical component of a building's contribution to the Town Centre.

Associated with planning around how pedestrians experience, perceive and process sensory impressions is an acknowledgment of walking pace (around 5km/h). Key urban design outcomes now seek to embed an understanding that ground levels of buildings in areas which are intended to facilitate high levels of pedestrian movement should be designed to be viewed at this speed, rather than a scale more suited to vehicular speeds. Essentially, if the ground floors of buildings are interesting and varied, the urban environment is inviting and enriching. This concept underpins the design thinking within this document.

So if we acknowledge the importance of the ground level then how can we make this work for Torquay to improve the design, and more fundamentally, the triple bottom line outcomes. Attracting people to the Town Centre and then encouraging them to stay and to undertake multiple activities within the one space is a core planning principle. But what is it that actually makes a place somewhere people want to linger, to exchange the ideas and thoughts, to cross pollinate in ways that are critical to economic and social success in the twenty-first century?

The presence of spaces which facilitate these social interactions, both formal and informal is obviously crucial, and an associated emphasis on the delivery of public spaces such as parks or squares supports this. A diversity of uses, in particular, a strong retail and cultural offer associated with longer visitation is also noted. But it is really the *mix* of activities and the presence of a *diversity* of high quality public spaces which underpins great places.

The concept of placemaking which has gained prominence in design thinking also reflects this truth. It is important to acknowledge however, the limitation of a Framework such as this in delivering these outcomes – placemaking is not just the creation of appropriate spaces, although these are very important and are addressed through this document, but the ongoing use and activation of those spaces. This ‘soft’ part of the placemaking discourse will be an on-going collaboration between Council and the community in the design and activation of spaces within the Centre.

What a framework such as this should aim to achieve is to facilitate the transition of this Centre from one which has been designed around facilitating vehicular movement to a place which turns the ‘streets’ back into public places. There are four key elements to this:

- What is happening along the street; what activities are going on within the streetscape and in the adjoining buildings, how are these activities and the buildings housing them interacting with the street?
- How easy is it to get to key places within the Town Centre and to access it from surrounding areas?
- The scale of the street, how does the measurement of the street profile and the street wall (the part of the building which abuts the public realm) relate to people in terms of human scale?
- What is within the public space, what kind of vegetation, street furniture, public art etc is present?

Drawing from numerous sources, a summary of generally accepted parameters of ‘great places’ could be expressed as follows:

- Mostly active uses at ground floor such as retail uses, hospitality etc;
- Diversity at ground level - an average of a change of use, a doorway or a change of form every 10 meters. A minimum of a new ‘active’ use in every 15 meters;
- The presence of pedestrian movement;
- Socio-economic capital in the surrounding neighbourhoods;
- The presence of land uses or activity with a regional role;
- A location within the urban fabric of the broader settlement, connected to walking and cycling routes;
- A fine grain street pattern allows pedestrians to make choices;
- Connections to parks and open spaces;
- Coherent and yet varied urban design;
- A density of built form and resident population ; and
- Clear and intuitive wayfinding.

Torquay already possesses many of the key components to become a great space. This Framework aims to build on these existing strengths to ensure that development controls do three things; they enhance the existing strengths, fill the ‘gaps’ in terms of what the Centre currently provides through its built environment and provide practical, implementable outcomes.

The concept identified above of smaller tenancies with a relationship to the street is critical in achieving a level of permeability between the public and private realms which is associated with the interaction which drives the success of a place.

Key urban design drivers for great human orientated places which are integrated into this Framework are that Torquay Town Centre should:

- Be pleasant to walk and cycle to and around.
- Be physically comfortable (wind, sound, sun, shadow, maintenance).
- Have definition (building heights should at least be half the street width).
- Have variation in building form.
- Have quality design that engages visually.
- Have clear definition of gateways and streets.
- Have a good tree canopy.
- Have a range of opportunities to sit, not just on formal seating.
- Not be dominated by cars and associated noise.
- Include parking facilities but balanced with pedestrian space.
- Include small shops and allow for innovation / entrepreneurialism.

investment imperatives

The *Strategic Investment Facilitation Plan* prepared by Essential Economics investigated the retail investment, consumer spending and opportunities for future commercial development. These were assessed to determine how, from an economic perspective, the Torquay Town Centre can deliver the identified policy objectives.

The following key issues were identified as part of the report:

- High Land Prices
- Disconnect Between Policy Support for Development and a Constrained Urban Form
- Unremarkable Urban Amenity
- Need for Site Consolidation
- Low Vacancy Rate
- Customer Amenity
- Lack of Activity Outside Normal Business Hours
- No Clear Definition of the Town Centre Role

The following key opportunities were identified as part of the report:

- Rezone Land for Commercial Use as Already Supported by Policy
- Unlocking Development Sites
- Strong Underlying Demand Fundamentals
- Better Balance between Vehicles and People
- Utilising Space Above and Below Ground
- Providing Housing and Accommodation Choice
- Generating Space for New Anchor Tenants
- Entertainment and Leisure

Further details around these matters can be found in the *Strategic Investment Facilitation Plan (2017)*.



comparable existing and proposed floorspace

In Torquay 2017, there were only 2% of total shopfronts vacant. The typical range of vacancies for well performing activity centres in Australia is 4-6%.



current floorspace breakdown & jobs

In 2015/6,
there were
**16,444 international
visitors,**
spending
\$3.18 million

In 2015/6,
there were
**551,000 domestic
day visitors,**
spending
\$52.35 million

In 2015/6,
there were
**475,000 domestic
o/night visitors,**
spending
\$112.7 million

torquay tourism contribution

On that basis the following recommendations were included in the SIFP were structured around the following directions which have been considered in the formulation of this UDF:

The Essence of Torquay

Torquay Town Centre must begin to reflect the attributes representative of the town, including the outdoor lifestyle and coastal outlook. Development should be a positive reflection of the Torquay character, and contribute to creating an enhanced point-of-difference with other centres.

A People Friendly Place

Torquay Town Centre will be a people-friendly space which encourages residents and visitors to spend both time and money. In aspirational terms, the Torquay Town Centre will be identified as a benchmark for coastal town centres around Australia and will be a notable attraction in the Surf Coast region.

Expand the Footprint

In view of the relatively constrained urban environment in which the centre is located, it is appropriate to identify sensible options for the centre’s expansion. These ‘logical inclusions’ to the town centre will provide additional scope to provide the range and scale of facilities required of the Major activity centre serving Torquay and the Surf Coast region.

Productive Use of Space

It is vital that land in the Torquay Town Centre is used in an efficient and productive manner so that the ability of the centre to meet expanding community and business requirements is maximised. This will include more intensive use of space, including below and above-ground development options.

The 18 Hour Centre

From 6am to midnight, Torquay Town Centre will provide arrange of facilities, attractions and activities which are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Collaborative Development

To facilitate development of key sites and achieve a range of community benefits including jobs and investment, Council and landowners will work together to unlock the potential within the Torquay Town Centre.



access imperatives

The Access & Movement Report (included at Appendix 1) prepared by the Martyn Group investigated the vehicular and pedestrian movements, car parking, cycling and public transport provision within the Town Centre. It identified the following key objectives for access and movement within the Town Centre:

- Provide a safe, high amenity public realm that encourages walking, cycling and street activity.
- Support high pedestrian and streetscape amenity in areas which are predominantly residential.
- Increase the attractiveness of walking, through implementing Pedestrian Oriented Design (POD).
- Eliminate 'missing links' and 'missing connections' in the on-street cycle network, creating a cohesive integrated active transport network.
- Encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes within the road infrastructure and decrease reliance on private vehicles.
- Increase public transport mode share by making it a more attractive and reliable option for all residents.
- Address social and economic barriers to transport choice, such as travel cost, time and availability of fully accessible services.
- Achieve higher density mixed development around public transport corridors and hubs.
- Recognise and provide for the high level of demand for private car access to the Town Centre.
- Support activity centre development and operations, by providing for freight and servicing requirements.
- Minimise the impact of vehicle congestion and conflict between transport modes.
- Create a balance between the provision of sufficient parking capacity at activity centres and transport hubs, and providing a safe and accessible street environment for all.
- Ensure that parking solutions accommodate people with disabilities so that they can participate in day-to-day activities across the Town Centre
- Consider alternative future uses for road space currently occupied by car parking.

- Encourage equity of access for all town centre users and a parking system that supports a balance between short and long stay requirements.

These key objectives and the associated recommendations have informed the content of this UDF.

It is also acknowledged that two concurrent traffic engineering studies have been undertaken in relation to The Esplanade, and also the Town Centre more broadly. These documents both placed a greater emphasis on the priority of vehicular movement than this document but have been reviewed and integrated where they were broadly consistent with aspirations of this framework. Comments on those document have been included in the UDF where relevant.



identified opportunities & challenges

The Background and Issues Paper prepared in Phase 1 of this Project identified a series of opportunities and challenges based on background analysis. These were by no means a comprehensive list but provided a basis for the development of initial framework plans which were the starting point for this Urban Design Framework.

opportunities

- **A growing population that is able to support additional retail and other commercial development and a regional role that can support jobs** – quality development outcomes are more viable and likely with a population to support them, and as the Town Centre of one of the fastest growing towns on the coast, more jobs are possible in the right conditions. This means people will have the potential to live, work and socialise in one place.
- **Clear potential to shift the overarching focus of the Town Centre to people not cars** – this can be done by improving how easy it is to move around the centre on foot, by focussing all new development on the pedestrian experience and reclaiming streets as ‘public’ spaces rather than ‘car’ spaces.
- **Opportunities to ‘complement’ other growth area centres rather than ‘compete’** – Torquay’s locational attributes, established nature and established business mean that the Centre is able to provide a level of ‘lifestyle’ and amenity that other, newer centres may not. Torquay’s tourism role can both support and benefit from any ‘lifestyle’ focus.
- **Significant areas are available within the Town Centre for infill development or for the redevelopment of large sites** – vacant land and at-grade car parks offer clear opportunities to improve the urban structure and improve the pedestrian environment as well as large sites which offer potential for innovation.
- **Opportunities to build on existing connections to nature** unique to the Torquay Town Centre such as views to the foreshore or canopy vegetation within the skyline – to bring the natural environment into the Town Centre and identify key areas for protection.

- **Three existing supermarkets** which draw people into the Town Centre – retail uses like supermarkets often act as ‘anchors’ in town centres allowing people to combine shopping with a visit to a café or accountant.
- **Potential to open up the urban blocks and create new connections** – to look at where people want to go and assess ways of using public works or private development to connect the disparate parts of the Centre.
- **A potential focal point for the local community** – the centre of Torquay lacks a clear gathering space for the community, a space for low-key events, activities, or just a public space for informal socialising which can be explored through this process. It is important that the Centre contains places for locals, not just tourists.
- **Improved integration of sustainable design features and vegetation could be prioritised** – making sure that climate and water sensitive design features are considered in any new development and the design of public spaces, highlighting the special connection to the environment inherent in the Centres coastal location.
- **Capacity to strengthen and clarify Town Centre approaches** – better management of vehicular traffic into the centre can improve legibility and help avoid conflicts between pedestrians and cars. There will need to be continued vehicular access, but how this occurs can be managed through this process.

challenges

- **Uses which might be suitable for the town centre might establish elsewhere** – not only are there many other ‘shopping’ centres establishing in the region but hospitality uses may establish along The Esplanade to Bell Street which could affect the Town Centre.
- **Constrained land parcels and fragmented ownership within parts of the Town Centre** – this makes development in some areas less viable and discourages reinvestment.
- **Torquay’s ‘character’ is not currently explicit in the ‘look’ and ‘feel’ of the Town Centre** - A lack of clear identity or character within the Centre can lead to unwelcome or unintended development outcomes and reduce the opportunities to build on the Centre’s strengths. There is also a potential opportunity to define this character through this process.

- **Current low vacancy rates could stifle the ability of new businesses to establish in the Town Centre** – while low vacancy rates are great, unless new floorspace is provided it can make it difficult for new or local business to establish in the Centre.
- While a lot of great policy aspirations have been endorsed for the Centre, **the ‘on-the-ground’ situation may make the implementation of these difficult** – it is important that policy can be implemented to ensure clarity and to ‘get things moving’.
- **Problematic legibility and wayfinding within the Centre** contribute to a relatively poor pedestrian environment – studies have shown that pedestrian focussed spaces are the most successful, economically, socially and sustainably, but Torquay Town Centre remains focussed on vehicular movement.
- **Potential for new development to impact on the public realm** through overshadowing, loss of key views or inappropriate sense of enclosure if not carefully planned – this could reduce the attractiveness of the centre for both locals and tourists.
- A ‘fine grain’ character (consisting of lots of smaller tenancies at a street frontage) offers associated opportunities for diverse uses and activation of the streets – without careful planning and the right controls **‘big box’ retail uses could compromise this.**
- **A ‘weak’ presence on key access roads** and vacant land or poorly presented buildings at gateways to the Town Centre – the lack of defined connections to other areas, presence along key transport corridors and sense of arrival affects how people access and perceive the Centre.
- **Diversifying uses within the centre may cause conflicts** – the potential for commercial imperatives, such as deliveries or waste collection to conflict with residential uses will need to be managed, and the introduction of more ‘entertainment’, along with more dwellings and accommodation in the centre will also need to be carefully planned.



THE FUTURE

03



the vision for torquay

The following vision statement summarises the ambitions of the Urban Design Framework. It offers a dynamic vision of how Torquay can develop and respond to the competing needs of an important regional centre. This vision seeks to provide a long term view of a sustainable and exciting future for Torquay. It reflects the overarching policy directions, feedback from the community and the aspirations of traders within the Town Centre

vision statement

The Torquay Town Centre is the 'heart' of a town which not only fostered global Australian surf culture but also forms the start of the Great Ocean Road - this makes it a truly special place. It is also the focus of a rapidly growing population and will evolve to provide the services, facilities and jobs current and future residents deserve. This local access will support a focus on sustainable development in keeping with the values of the local community. The Town Centre will inevitably change but it will do so in a positive way, which allows it to truly become a 'people' place.

New development and upgrades to the public spaces within the centre will provide a higher level of amenity for people and a greater connection to the coastal environment. It will provide an increasing diversity of uses, and will be the focal point for entertainment and social activity, not just for local residents but also the broader region. New initiatives will see the Town Centre increasingly reflect the historic association the town has with creative entrepreneurs who will add vibrancy to the area.

A series of high quality public spaces throughout the Centre will allow people to gather and will reflect both the strength of local community connections and the informal, and slightly irreverent, 'surf' character. While its tourism role will continue to be important in delivering local jobs, its role as the 'heart' of the Torquay community will be of the utmost importance.

principles ('the givens')

A series of key 'principles' have been developed to inform the preparation of the Urban Design Framework. These are considered to be the 'givens' or non-negotiable starting points upon which the Framework was built. It is important to acknowledge these upfront to ensure community members and other stakeholders reading this document understand the underlying drivers of the content.

- Recognise that the Town Centre, as the primary Activity Centre for the Shire and its growing population must provide a range and scale of activity commensurate with that role.
- Recognise that the location on the beach and the 'lifestyle' of Torquay are critical assets both economically and socially that must be protected and maximised.
- Recognise that while tourism is a valuable contributor to the local economy, the Town Centre is firstly about local needs.
- Recognise that the pedestrian experience and public realm will be key drivers to the success of the Town Centre.
- Recognise that the importance of the Centre deserves appropriate funding and planning controls to ensure its continued success.

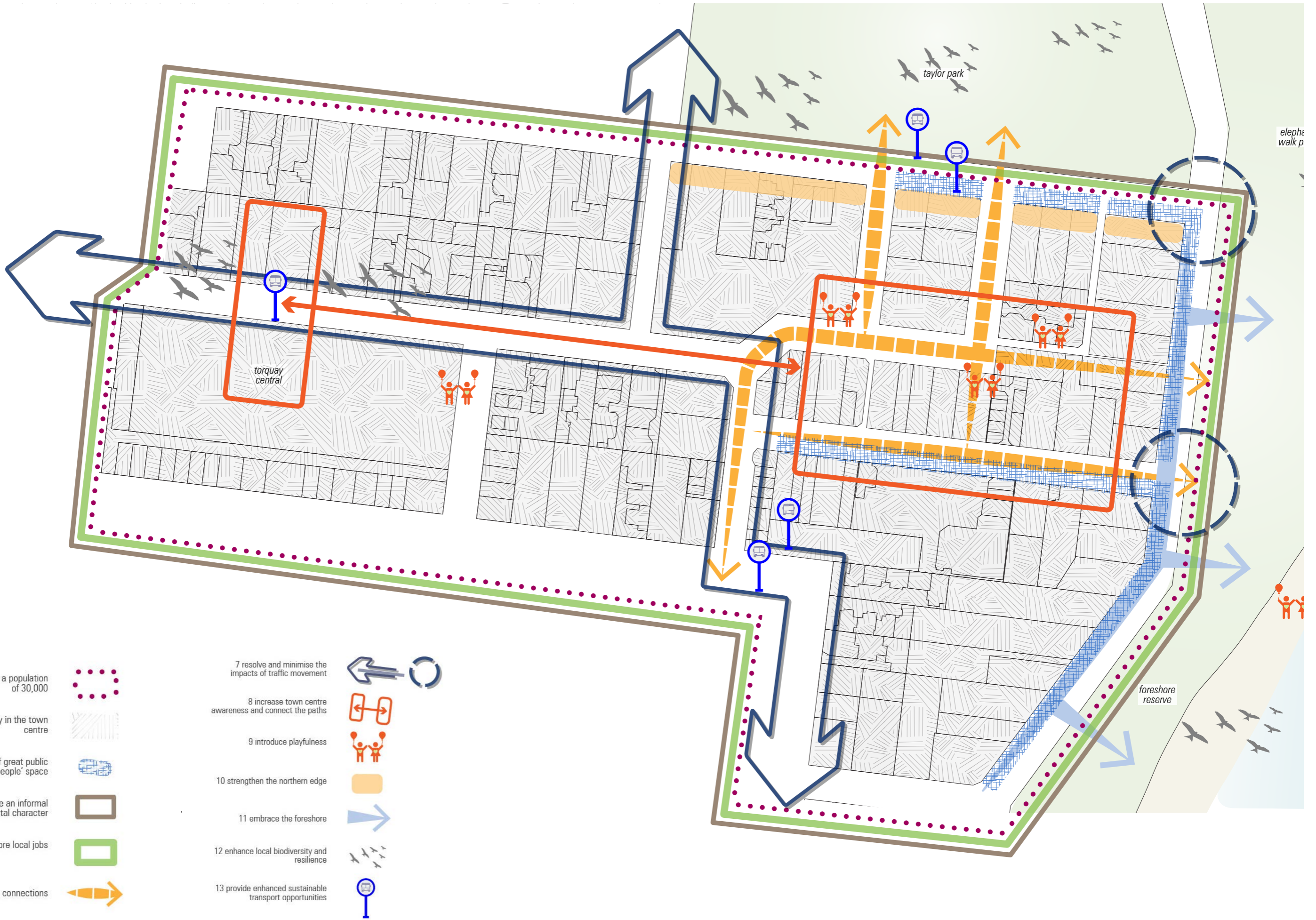
key directions

Based on the information gathered within the first phase of the project and the 'givens' identified, a series of Key Directions for the future development of the Town Centre were developed. These key directions are as follows:

- Key Direction 1: A Town Centre for a population of 30,000.
- Key Direction 2: Diversify activity in the Town Centre.
- Key Direction 3: Create a network of great public 'people' spaces.
- Key Direction 4: Retain and enhance an informal coastal character.
- Key Direction 5: Support more local jobs.
- Key Direction 6: Improve pedestrian connections.
- Key Direction 7: Resolve and minimise the impacts of traffic movement.
- Key Direction 8: Increase Town Centre awareness and connect the parts.
- Key Direction 9: Introduce playfulness.
- Key Direction 10: Strengthen the northern edge.
- Key Direction 11: Embrace the foreshore.
- Key Direction 12: Enhance local biodiversity and resilience.
- Key Direction 13: Provide enhanced sustainable transport opportunities.

These 13 Key Directions are illustrated in Figure 5.


















- 1 a town centre for a population of 30,000 
- 2 diversify activity in the town centre 
- 3 create a network of great public 'people' space 
- 4 retain and enhance an informal coastal character 
- 5 support more local jobs 
- 6 improve pedestrian connections 
- 7 resolve and minimise the impacts of traffic movement 
- 8 increase town centre awareness and connect the paths 
- 9 introduce playfulness 
- 10 strengthen the northern edge 
- 11 embrace the foreshore 
- 12 enhance local biodiversity and resilience 
- 13 provide enhanced sustainable transport opportunities 

Figure 5: Key Directions



URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

03



URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The urban design framework outlines a series of key directions and actions that will improve the function, image and capacity for growth within the Torquay Town Centre. Prior to a description of these key directions, it is necessary to outline the key 'framework' elements that underpin the plan. These are illustrated in Figures 6-10. They are:

land use and activity

This plan identifies matters relating to land use and activity. Given the commercial zoning of land and the inherent flexibility of the zoning, the majority of the Town Centre will remain unchanged. Notable, however, is the proposed expansion of the footprint of the centre to the south. A focus on tourism uses to the foreshore continues. To the west of the Town Centre, the allowance for a more robust built form outcome is intended to see a transition from predominantly residential uses to commercial uses between Pearl and Payne Streets, which has long been supported by the zoning of the land. Areas along the north of Bristol Road are also identified for change, albeit of a more modest nature, given the renewed focus towards the foreshore through the proposed expansion of the commercial footprint. Also identified on this plan are three Strategic Development Sites which are considered integral to the achievement of the vision for the Town Centre.

access and movement

This relates to the functional aspect of pedestrian movement and transport in the Town Centre. One of the key elements highlighted on the 'Access & Movement' plan is a reordering of the road hierarchy. The primary traffic flows are diverted from the town core, which now has a greater emphasis on pedestrian movement, through the recognition of the Fischer / Pearl Street corridor. Also of note are the establishment of the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid which, through the strengthening of existing pedestrian connections and the establishment of new linkages through the redevelopment of key sites, aims to increase the legibility and ease of movement for pedestrians. The identification of numerous pedestrian priority crossings through the town centre, aligned with this grid is important. Equally so is the greater integration of sustainable transport options through the establishment of a new Town Centre bus stop, improved facilities and connections to existing bus stops and the provision of new cycle paths and infrastructure. Integral to the creation of a more pedestrian friendly town centre is the management of car parking. While the future of the Town Centre is closely aligned with a greater emphasis on foot traffic, nonetheless, car parking will continue to be demanded within the Town Centre. A supporting diagram (Figure 10) identifies the range of strategies proposed to manage these issues, including consolidated cells of underground car parking, new shared laneways and additional areas of on-street car parking.

landscape and environment

This Plan relates to key capital works and the integration of landscape features in the Town Centre. The immediately notable element within the Landscape & Environment framework is the strengthening of the presence of vegetation within the public realm, both as canopy vegetation and associated low level planting. The plan also highlights the key component of the 'green link' which runs north-south along Cliff Street connecting the Gilbert Street spine, through a new Town Centre Plaza and up to a Park Edge Plaza, connecting the Town Centre to the adjoining landscape of Taylor Park. Further Park Edge Plazas at Walker Street and the intersection of The Esplanade and Gilbert Street are also identified. As well as more traditional plantings, a number of other landscape features are also identified on this plan, including a continuation of the Torquay Village harbour feature, to provide a visual connection between this area and the core of the commercial area. Framing elements are also proposed at upper levels along key frontages, intended to forge connections between private open spaces and the adjoining public realm. The Town Centre Pedestrian Grid is also shown in this plan, highlighting the area for which a consistent treatment of the public realm is advocated. Approaches to the Town Centre where the landscape character of front setbacks is important are also shown.

built form and character

This relates to key development activities within the Town Centre. The Built Form Plan shows the designation of Gilbert Street as the primary retail spine, but with the emergence not only of Bristol Road within the town core as a supporting street, but also a supporting network of streets that can deliver a retail experience. The Esplanade maintains a focus on an enhanced public realm aligned to a two storey form, with third level framing elements encouraged along it to create the perception of a more robust form and encourage the integration of additional vegetation at upper level street frontages. The significant change that will occur as at-grade car parks are developed for higher order uses will change perception of space within the Town Centre contributing to an increased vibrancy. Diversification of built form opportunities through the establishment of additional laneway frontages as a result of the development of the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid will also emerge. Built form outcomes along areas identified as Priority Pedestrian Routes have their emphasis on maintaining the sense of openness and human scale through the retention of a two storey streetwall, as well as through clear guidelines for how the interaction between the public and private realms are managed at the ground plane. Built form outcomes at this level have a strong focus on diversifying the actual or perceived level of activity.

Building heights within the Town Centre are generally limited to four storeys. Limiting height above four storeys to carefully identified 'pods' within the Town Centre avoids abrupt transitions where taller forms may jar visually. Three larger spaces within the Town Centre can comfortably accommodate forms of up to five storeys as appropriate transitions to street edges can be established and long range views are mitigated. The quality of the built form and its response to the 'coastal character' is a critical, non-spatial element that will be managed through new assessment protocols, including the referral of key sites to the Office of the Victorian Government Architect.





legend

- ground floor active uses with upper level commercial / residential / tourism
- expand commercial area through rezoning
- potential longer term commercial expansion—do not support further subdivision
- transition residential uses to more intensive mixed use
- strategic development site
- facilitate small business opportunities & medium density residential
- proposed town plaza
- encourage transition from ground floor residential use
- encourage medium density housing & home offices
- retain emphasis on tourism focused uses
- discourage 'entertainment' uses with potential amenity impacts
- require new pedestrian linkages as part of development
- focal areas for on-street activity
- consider cultural / community focus
- proposed park edge plaza
- existing plaza
- event spaces
- strongly support further medium density housing

Project Ref: 16.690
 Dwg No.: UDD-005
 Scale: 1:2000@A3
 Date: 26.05.2017
 Revision: A

Figure 6: Land Use & Activity



SETBACK ABOVE 2 STOREYS

ROAD	3rd	4th	5th
The Esplanade	8m	3m	-
Gilbert Street	5m	15m	15m
Bristol Road	3m	3m	5m
Walker Street	8m	3m	8m
Cliff Street	8m	3m	-
Pearl Street	3m	15m	-
Zealy Bay Road	3m	3m	5m

legend

2 storey (7.5m)	retain existing residential built form controls	visual break in building form above 2 storeys	integrated car parking entrance
3 storey (9m)	2 storey maximum street wall with 0m front setback	transitional secondary setback to residential interface	canopy interface
3 storey (10.5m)	2 storey streetwall with robust framing element at third level	primary active frontage	significant built form Key site: design review
4 storey (13.5m)	minimum ground floor setback of 6m with landscaping	active frontage	retain and protect heritage form
5 storeys	retain splay for ocean view	laneway interface	

Project Ref: 16.690
 Dwg No.: UDD-012
 Scale: 1:2000@A3
 Date: 13.06.2017
 Revision: A

Figure 7: Built form & character



legend

- proposed town plaza
- gateway canopy treatment
- event spaces
- park edge plaza
- existing plaza

- planting and understorey
- new median tree plantings
- protect canopy interface
- iconic streetscape
- ground floor landscaping

- existing arbour
- extended arbour
- infill street edges to activate public spaces
- gilbert street streetscape improvements
- require new pedestrian linkage as part of development

- improve laneway interface
- shared path
- existing shared path
- consider water based play elements

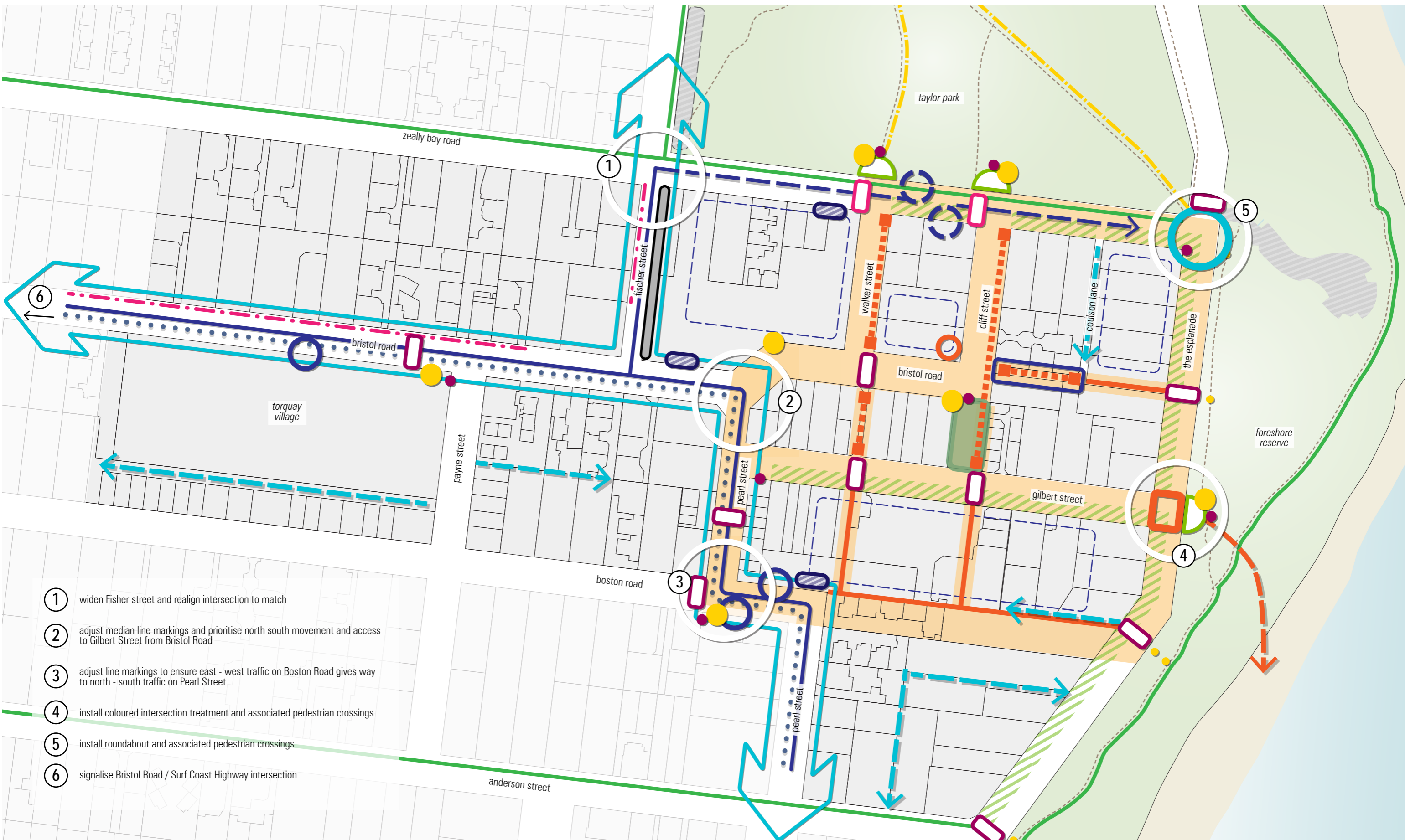
- improve picnic area
- enhance visual openness
- existing lookout
- beach access points
- all purpose toilets

- public transport node with improved facilities

Project Ref: 16.690
 Dwg No.: UDD-014
 Scale: 1:2000@A3
 Date: 13.06.2017
 Revision: A

Figure 8: Landscape & Environment

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- ① widen Fisher street and realign intersection to match
- ② adjust median line markings and prioritise north south movement and access to Gilbert Street from Bristol Road
- ③ adjust line markings to ensure east - west traffic on Boston Road gives way to north - south traffic on Pearl Street
- ④ install coloured intersection treatment and associated pedestrian crossings
- ⑤ install roundabout and associated pedestrian crossings
- ⑥ signalise Bristol Road / Surf Coast Highway intersection

hansen
TORQUAY TOWN CENTRE PLAN

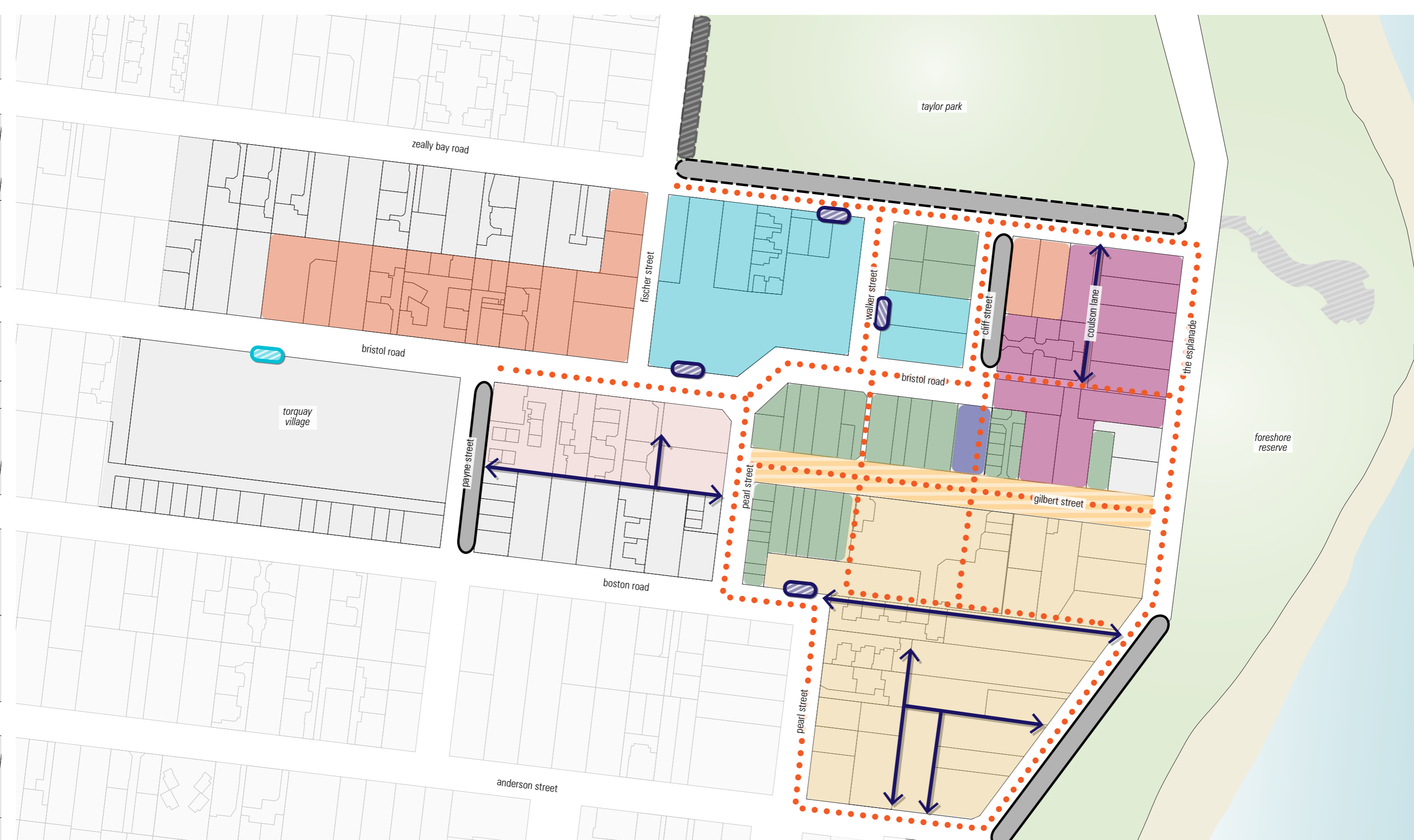
ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

<p>intersection upgrade </p> <p>proposed town plaza </p> <p>park edge plaza </p> <p>new 'iconic' streetscape pedestrian priority area </p> <p>wombat crossing </p>	<p>zebra crossing with kerb outstands </p> <p>coloured intersection treatment with zebra crossings </p> <p>town centre pedestrian grid </p> <p>increase amenity and presentation of existing linkage </p> <p>require new pedestrian linkage as part of development </p>	<p>new footpath </p> <p>upgraded shared path </p> <p>existing shared path </p> <p>facilitate direct beach access </p> <p>proposed path extension </p>	<p>existing regional / local bicycle route </p> <p>bicycle parking facilities </p> <p>consider integration of public "end of trip" facilities </p> <p>existing bus route </p> <p>proposed bus route extension </p>	<p>advocate for v/line bus access </p> <p>existing bus stop to be upgraded </p> <p>proposed bus stop </p> <p>proposed roundabout with zebra crossing </p> <p>primary road network </p>	<p>facilitate rear car parking access </p> <p>discourage vehicular access </p> <p>underground car park entrance </p> <p>potential long bay parking area </p> <p>expand fischer street </p>	<p>priority locations for wayfinding signage </p>
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Project Ref: 16.690
 Dwg No.: UDD-013
 Scale: 1:2000@A3
 Date: 13.06.2017
 Revision: A




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Figure 9: Access & Movement









legend

- pedestrian priority route: do not support at grade car parking at street level and reduce vehicular crossover 
- facilitate new laneway connections 
- shared basement car parking 

- remove car parking from south side of Gilbert Street and integrate angled car parking on north side 
- remove car parking from council parcel and offset through additional on-street car parking on Gilbert and Cliff Streets and The Esplanade 
- discourage presence of on-site car parking 

- encourage car parking to the rear of built form and encourage and retain the potential for a shared rear access lane 
- car parking access from Coulson Lane (basement preferred) 
- encourage car parking located to the rear of built form 

- consolidated basement car parking or rear car parking accessed by new laneway connection 
- preferred basement car-parking entries 
- replace existing car spaces with loading zone 

- consider additional long bay parking areas 
- formalise existing car parking 
- new car parking areas (90 degree / angled) 

Project Ref: 16.690
 Dwg No.: UDD-015
 Scale: 1:2000@A3
 Date: 13.06.2017
 Revision: A

Figure 10: Car parking

key direction 1: a town centre for a population of 30,000.

This Key Direction seeks to recognise the fundamental nature of the change that will need to occur within the Torquay Town Centre over the next 20 years. The original Gilbert Street precinct was developed when Torquay was a small coastal settlement. That role has evolved significantly over the intervening years, and a consequential shift in the intensity of activity and the density of built form is to be expected. Policy is clear in the protection and enhancement of the Torquay Town Centre as the central focal point for commercial development within the region. Development to date has not reflected this policy, partly due to the restrictive controls which apply to building heights within the Centre.

A one to three storey Centre does not align with the requirements for additional floorspace, and nor does it provide sufficient drivers for redevelopment of older building stock and at-grade car parks to the quality that should be expected in such an important Town Centre. While some of the residential areas surrounding the Centre contemplate three storeys forms under current policy (Boston Road), most preferred heights are below this and the commercial areas are similarly restricted in their form, where there may be an expectation to the primary activity centre (where Council wishes to stimulate investment) would provide greater flexibility. The Centre is missing exciting opportunities to pursue higher quality built form outcomes by these restrictions on building height, which will often impact on the amount of capital investors are prepared to dedicate to building design and finishes. Built form should reference models which recognise the importance of density and activity in successful places but include higher built form only where this aligns with broader objectives relating to the amenity of public spaces.

Consideration must be given to the fundamental planning principles which outline what an 'activity centre' is expected to deliver, including opportunities for development, the facilitation of local jobs, sustainable transport and enhanced pedestrian movement as well as the enhancement of a 'sense of place'.

strategies and associated actions

- Continue to support the Torquay Town Centre as the commercial focal point (the 'central business district' CBD) for both Torquay and the wider Surf Coast community.
- Discourage the establishment of major office uses in other centres within Surf Coast unless a nexus between existing uses and proposed uses can be demonstrated.
- Do not support the development of a Discount Department Store or Cinema in any location outside of the Town Centre.

- Use examples of successful public/ private partnerships to implement a demonstration project using Council owned land (Strategic Development Site 2).
- Review the potential for community uses to be established within the Town Centre. Strategic Development Site 2 offers the potential for the integration of community uses such as meeting rooms or a Council outpost at the ground or first floors.
- Actively encourage the redevelopment of at-grade car parks within the Town Centre to increase available floorspace.
- Encourage the development of robust built form throughout the Centre (two to four storeys) in recognition of the important CBD function the Torquay Town Centre plays.
- Encourage the redevelopment of the two major retail developments within the Town Centre (Strategic Development Sites 1 and 3).
- Discourage underdevelopment within Town Centre and require buildings proposed for one or two storeys to be designed to facilitate additional floors in the future.
- Allow taller building heights (to five storeys) in select areas where they won't adversely affect the public realm in order to encourage redevelopment and increase available floorspace for a mix of uses.
- Support the development of small scale office based uses along the northern edge of Bristol Road and discourage retail uses in this area.
- Encourage shop-top housing, particularly above the first floor, and review the Parking Overlay to ensure the levels of parking provision and/or financial contributions for waiving of car parking are consistent with the outcomes identified by this UDF.
- Facilitate the provision of additional tourism focused floorspace through the rezoning of contiguous land to Anderson Street. This could provide a greater range of development opportunities and is preferred to extending higher order retail based uses to the Surf Coast Highway. Land in this pocket is also significantly less fragmented than other parts of the Town Centre.
- Do not support any further subdivision of this land or land identified as potential future commercial land to the west of Pearl Street to avoid compromising future meaningful commercial development opportunities.



key direction 2: diversify activity within the town centre

While previous plans included very detailed identification of specific land uses within different parts of the Centre, this Framework seeks to support the Town Centre as a genuine mixed use environment consistent with State planning policy. Direction around land uses is only provided in limited circumstances where there are site specific outcomes or potential amenity impacts which may need to be managed through the planning scheme.

Current policy identifies a series of roles for the other centres within the old area of Torquay. While these uses are recognised, and supported, they should not lead to any restriction of the uses which establish within the Town Centre area. For example, Bell Street is the designated 'Entertainment' Precinct. This designation recognises the location of the pub and brewery within this area. However, the scale of growth in Torquay and the social and entertainment needs of such a rapidly growing population, particularly considering demographics, mean there will clearly also be a role for the Town Centre in providing entertainment and other opportunities for social activity to complement Bell Street's role. This is consistent with the principles of a mixed use activity centre, and also supports the significant economic opportunities available through increased activation into the evening hours within the Town Centre. Surf City provides a range of manufacturing, retail and office uses nominally associated with the 'surfing' industry. However, without careful management and the provision of additional floorspace within the Town Centre, this area has the potential to draw activity that would be more appropriately located in the Town Centre.

There has been very limited commercial development within the Town Centre in recent years and this needs to change if the Centre is to support growth projects appropriately. This Key Direction therefore outlines how a number of different land uses and functions could emerge within the Town Centre.

strategies and associated actions

- Support mixed use development throughout the Town Centre.
- Prioritise the development of retail, hospitality and other 'active' uses at ground floor along key pedestrian routes.
- Identify a series of new pedestrian linkages and laneways to provide additional frontage, as well as diversify the available frontage (i.e. not just main street frontage).
- Discourage uses which will not contribute to an activated street frontage along identified Priority Pedestrian Routes.
- Actively encourage hospitality uses with on-street dining and other activities which encourage interaction between the public and private realms along Iconic Streetscapes.

- Encourage the development of commercial uses at upper levels. Require all first floors to be capable of accommodating commercial uses, even if residential uses are proposed in the shorter term.
- Leverage Council land assets to deliver greater diversity of land uses through pro-active development.
- Retain both Walker and Cliff Streets as roadways to maintain permeability and increase available retail frontage.
- Support more people living in the Town Centre, through the development of upper level residential uses but manage potential conflicts as follows:
 - Support first floor commercial uses to increase separation between residential and hospitality uses which may have amenity impacts.
 - Do not support ground level residential development in the Town Centre except in areas specified as accommodating residential uses in Figure 6.
 - Where first floor residential uses are accommodated, use built form responses such as the incorporation of winter gardens to manage amenity impacts or integrate appropriate acoustic measures.
- Support the development of built form which supports entertainment opportunities within the Town Centre.
- Establish a core 'entertainment area' within the Town Centre to avoid off-site amenity impact on adjoining residentially zoned land.
- Discourage entertainment uses which are of a scale or type which are not compatible with the vision for the Town Centre (i.e. nightclubs).
- Encourage the development of an independent cinema within the Town Centre. Do not support the development of a cinema in any location within Torquay other than the Town Centre.
- Investigate opportunities for the development of Council owned land north of Bristol Road to integrate diverse land uses which may not be delivered by the private sector. These may include cultural uses such as a cinema, social uses such as not-for-profit training, or small commercial spaces for start-ups.
- Consider the integration of community uses such as meeting spaces or a Council outpost within the Town Centre to reinforce the role of the Town Centre as the focal point for activity.
- Retain existing restrictions discouraging convenience shops or local services along The Esplanade to avoid the spread of offices etc within this core tourism area.

- Encourage lower order mixed use activity focused around small offices and other commercial spaces at the periphery of the Town Centre.
- Ensure that an appropriate mix of uses is delivered through the redevelopment of Strategic Development Sites within the Town Centre (see highlight box below).

Strategic Development Site 1

- *Ground level retail and office uses, with active retail frontages or hospitality uses focused towards Bristol Road and Walker Street frontages*
- *Retention of a full line supermarket on this site*
- *Predominantly commercial uses at first floor level*
- *Accommodation or residential uses on upper levels*

Strategic Development Site 2

- *Start-up spaces, co-working area, community uses / meeting rooms or hospitality training at ground and first levels*
- *Public toilets and end-of-trip facilities*
- *Potential integration of uses such as a Boutique Cinema if feasible or Council outpost*
- *Residential or accommodation above the first floor*

Strategic Development Site 3

- *Ground level retail and office uses, with hospitality uses focused towards The Esplanade and Gilbert Street frontages*
- *Smaller retail and hospitality tenancies to proposed north / south laneways*
- *Predominantly commercial uses at first floor level*
- *Accommodation or residential uses on upper levels*

key direction 3: create great people spaces

Great town centres are often defined by their public spaces. It has been convincingly demonstrated that the creation of great ‘people’ spaces has a positive impact not only on social, but also economic, outcomes. It is generally acknowledged that the Torquay Town Centre does not live up to its potential and feedback from both key stakeholders and community members has consistently highlighted investment and revitalisation for the Town Centre’s streetscapes as a number one priority. Council has been prudent in trying to make small and incremental changes where these can be facilitated through private development but the outcomes have been, by necessity, relatively piecemeal. The SIFP which underpins this UDF highlights repeatedly the need for Torquay’s Town Centre to improve the amenity and functionality of its public spaces in order to facilitate private investment. This Key Direction addresses this need for public realm improvements in two ways.

Firstly, a series of key spaces, which can be implemented over time, together form a cohesive network of spaces to support commercial, residential, cultural and social activity within the Town Centre. The key spaces, which comprise three ‘Iconic Streetscapes’, a new Town Plaza and three smaller Park Edge Plazas, are supported by larger event spaces and strategies which seek to increase the level of pedestrianisation and associated activity and vibrancy within the Centre as a whole. The introduction of additional appropriate vegetation to the Town Centre is also critical to the creation of great spaces, allowing for the natural management of climatic conditions, as well as filtering views of built form and supporting the ‘coastal’ character through careful species selection

Secondly, it supports an implementation approach which advocates for the recognition of the broader economic benefits that upgrades to the streetscapes and public spaces within the Town Centre will bring. This means more upfront funding of works within the Centre to ensure that these are implemented in the shorter term, and in a consistent manner. While an approach which prioritises upfront spending on significant public realm upgrades by Council may not be suitable in many centres, the importance of the public realm in supporting the vision for the Centre, and given the potential loss of tourism visitation, it is considered justified in this case. Further to this, the Town Centre is a critical focal point for the identity and character of the township more broadly, providing additional imperatives for prioritising public works. The State Government too, in its support for the levels of growth proposed for Torquay, has a role to play in ensuring a Town Centre which is reflective of this status.

strategies and associated actions

- Establish a diverse network of spaces for events and activities within the Town Centre.
- Require built form responses to support and enhance public spaces which adjoin the Town Centre.
- Improve the appearance, character and maintenance of public spaces within the Town Centre.
- Use existing publicly owned space to facilitate pedestrian activity and movement.
- Consider the overshadowing impacts on key public spaces when establishing appropriate building heights. Built form above two storeys should not cause any additional overshadowing of public spaces at the Spring Equinox between 11am and 2pm.
- Consolidate car parking underground to provide sufficient spaces while leaving the streets to people.
- Reconfigure the existing Council owned parcel of land between Bristol Road and Gilbert Street (currently used as a car park) as a Town Plaza. See highlight box on Page 36 for more details.
- Do not support development above two storeys adjacent to the proposed Town Plaza.

- Transition three key streets within the Town Centre to Iconic Streetscapes, whose quality helps define the Town Centre. This includes:
 - Reconfigure Gilbert Street to comprise a wide pedestrian promenade and on-street dining hub along the southern side of the street. Quality paving should be provided for the full width of the 7m wide public space, with regular canopy tree planting and associated understorey planting, as well as designated areas for on-street dining. The northern side of the street should retain its local shopping focus (see Figure 11).
 - Establish a wide pedestrian promenade along The Esplanade. New development fronting The Esplanade should be setback to ensure the creation of a 5m wide public space. On-street parking should be encouraged where appropriate providing a minimum 2m wide zone for pedestrian movement is retained adjoining building frontages. Regular canopy tree planting and associated understorey planting should also not be compromised by on-street dining.
 - Implement a 4m wide promenade on Zeally Bay Road to Walker Street.
- Identify new development opportunities to support the infilling of street frontages, particularly along Iconic Streetscapes.
- Support some variation in ground floor setbacks along The Esplanade beyond the identified 5m promenade only where larger areas of outdoor dining or other ‘active’ uses are proposed.





Figure 12: Potential Gilbert Street configuration



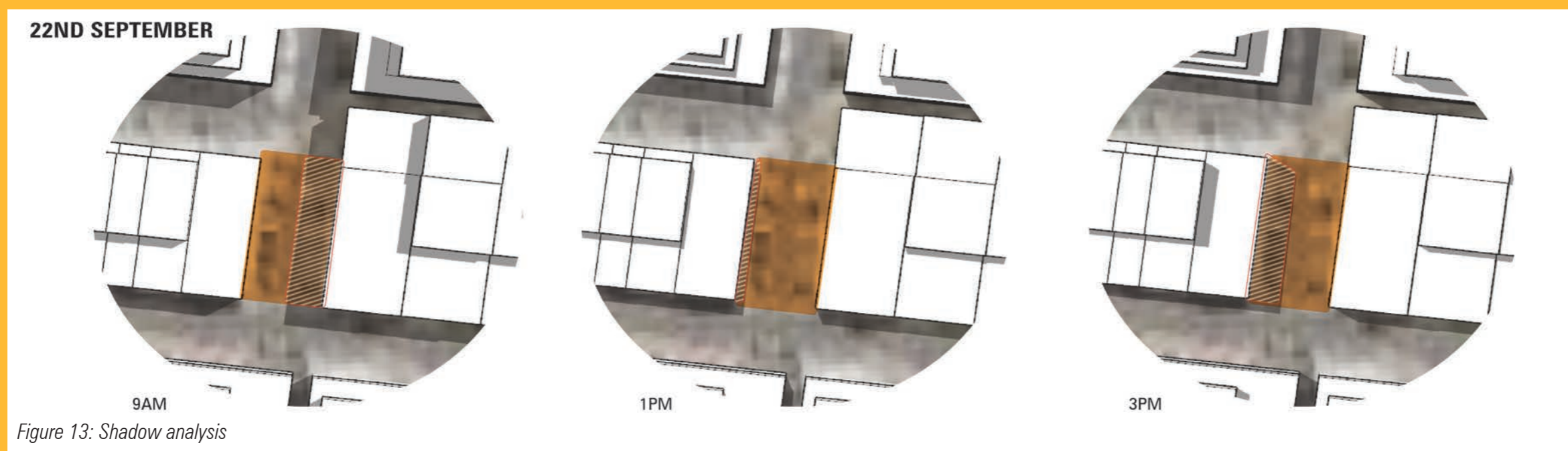
- Work with the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee to deliver three Park Edge Plazas. These are intended to be small paved areas with seating, bicycle racks, way finding and feature planting. They are intended to provide a transition between the open spaces and the more urban town centre; a place to 'pause' on the threshold.
- Encourage the use of bi-fold windows or similar treatments at the street frontage which break down barriers between the public and private realms, particularly along The Esplanade and the south side of Gilbert Street.
- Require buildings in key locations to be set back at upper levels to protect sunlight to the public realm. This includes:
 - Along The Esplanade: Require a 7m setback above the first floor for development fronting The Esplanade.
 - Along the northern side of Gilbert Street: Require a 15m setback above the first floor on the north side of Gilbert Street.
- Require any new large format stores within the Town Centre to be sleeved with smaller tenancies.
- Design of the ground floor of the private realm should provide:
 - Enough differentiation between uses (change of use every 10m or so) and a variety of functions.
 - The provision of awnings or other 'protective' elements along key pedestrian routes.
 - A special character to the architecture, in response to the coastal setting.
 - Richness in materiality that responds to the concept of 5km/h details (eg. textural contrasts and fine detailing).
 - Careful transition between private and public spaces.
 - Integration of appropriate, non-dominant signage.
 - Generous ground floor heights (around 4m).
- Minimise the impact of bulk above two storeys through appropriate setbacks, (see cross sections on following pages, Figures 14 -17).
- Require significant breaks in building form above two storeys along key north south viewlines as shown in Figure 7.
- Implement a process of Design Review to ensure new built form in the Town Centre makes a positive contribution to the public realm by reinforcing the 'coastal' character of Torquay.

- Ensure an appropriate transition in building heights to adjoining residentially zoned land to reduce amenity impacts (see Figure 7).
- Ensure modest built form along the north side of Bristol Road so as to reduce visual bulk impacts on residences fronting Zeally Bay Road.
- Retain and enhance the fine grained rhythm of buildings through the Town Centre.
- Enhance the presentation of built form at the Pearl Street / Boston Road intersection in recognition of its prominence.
- Encourage and support the use of public land adjoining the Town Centre for larger scale events. While the foreshore should continue to be used for markets, Taylor Park could accommodate small scale concerts, or open air cinema events in a secluded natural setting.
- Use the Town Plaza and Iconic Streetscapes as locations for smaller scale events and activities within the Town Centre.
- Investigate mechanisms to encourage a greater provision of music within the Town Centre, including small scale concerts and identification of busking sites and any streetscape or Plaza design processes.
- Actively pursue a 'playful' design imperative within the Town Centre (see Key Direction 9).
- Continue to develop a program of year round events focused on the Town Centre and adjoining public spaces, and encourage community programming of spaces where possible.
- Increase vegetation throughout the Town Centre, with a particular focus on connections from Taylor Park and the foreshore reserve.
- Ensure that appropriate lighting is provided along all key pedestrian routes, where possible integrate lighting with public art features.
- Install catenary lighting within the Town Plaza and fairy lights within trees along Gilbert Street (or similar) to reflect their special roles.
- Review alternate locations for the integration of public toilets and showers within the Town Centre. Potential locations could include Strategic Development Site 2 (see highlight box on page 33).
- Investigate funding mechanisms to establish a program of street cleaning / vandalism management within the Town Centre. This could comprise the allocation of a dedicated Council staff member to the Town Centre with responsibilities including monitoring car parking, ensuring appropriate cleanliness and identifying maintenance works and vandalism requiring action.



The creation of a new Town Plaza is a key component of the UDF. Existing areas of public space (such as Talyor Park and the foreshore) will continue to provide highly amenable spaces to gather informally and will accommodate larger scale events. Streets within the Town Centre, principally the Iconic Streetscapes, will provide on-street activity focused on outdoor dining and pedestrian movement. Despite these important spaces, there remains a missing 'middle' in public space provision which a dedicated plaza can provide. This will be a space to sit down and have a chat, or to eat lunch, listen to some music or for Torquay's younger residents to just hang out and use free wi-fi. The Town Plaza is intended to provide a more formal 'urban' space, which nonetheless reflects the 'coastal' or 'surf' character of the Town Centre. To this end it will be a defining feature of the town. While a location to the south side of Gilbert Street has previously been advocated for the location of town centre plaza and has some benefits (most notably, it can be delivered by the private sector and has marginally better solar access), the preferred location of the new Town Plaza is the existing parcel of Council land between Gilbert Street and Bristol Road currently used for car parking. Three sites were assessed during the development of this framework. The primary rationale for identification of the preferred site relates to the contribution this space can play in linking the disparate parts of the Town Centre and the scope for activating the Town Centre that the dimensions and location of this space provide. Other considerations included:

- The potentially strong synergies that can be built between this space and the redevelopment of the Council car park site, as well as the strengthening of Coulson Lane as a pedestrian thoroughfare would be lost should an alternate site be chosen
- By removing car parking and vehicular access to Gilbert Street from this area, a reduction in pedestrian vehicular conflict is achieved
- This area will generally be free from shadow throughout the day, and free from shadow over the important lunch period (see Figure 12 below)
- Any current impacts from wind are likely to be significantly mitigated as infill activity occurs along the southern side of Gilbert Street
- While the delivery of a Town Plaza by the private sector offers significant cost savings to Council there are also potential issues which arise from that approach in terms of delivering the right outcomes, maintaining the public profile of the space (as opposed to it becoming a semi-privatised space associated with adjoining land uses) as well as issues such as longer term maintenance or the management of street performers within the space



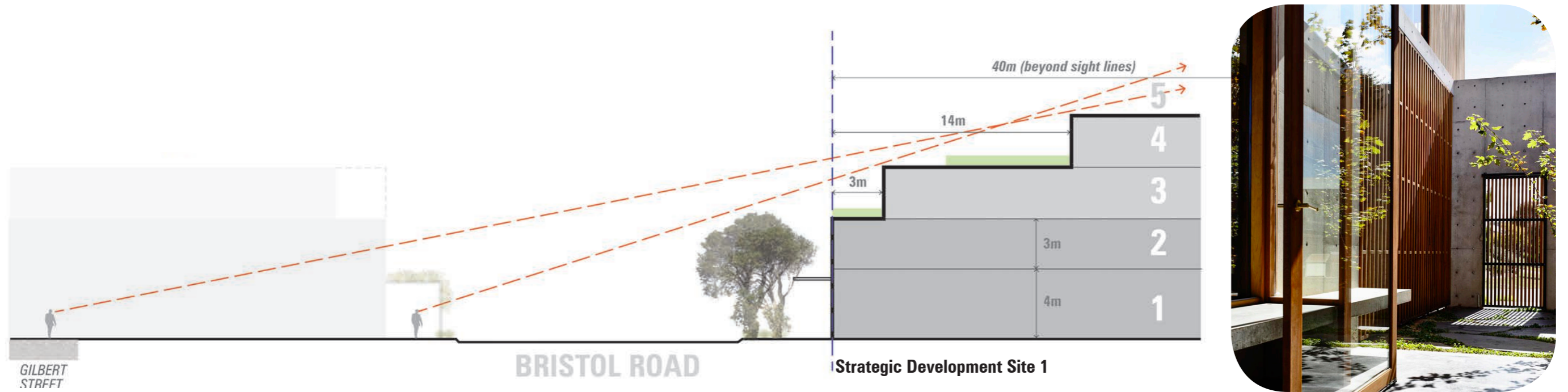
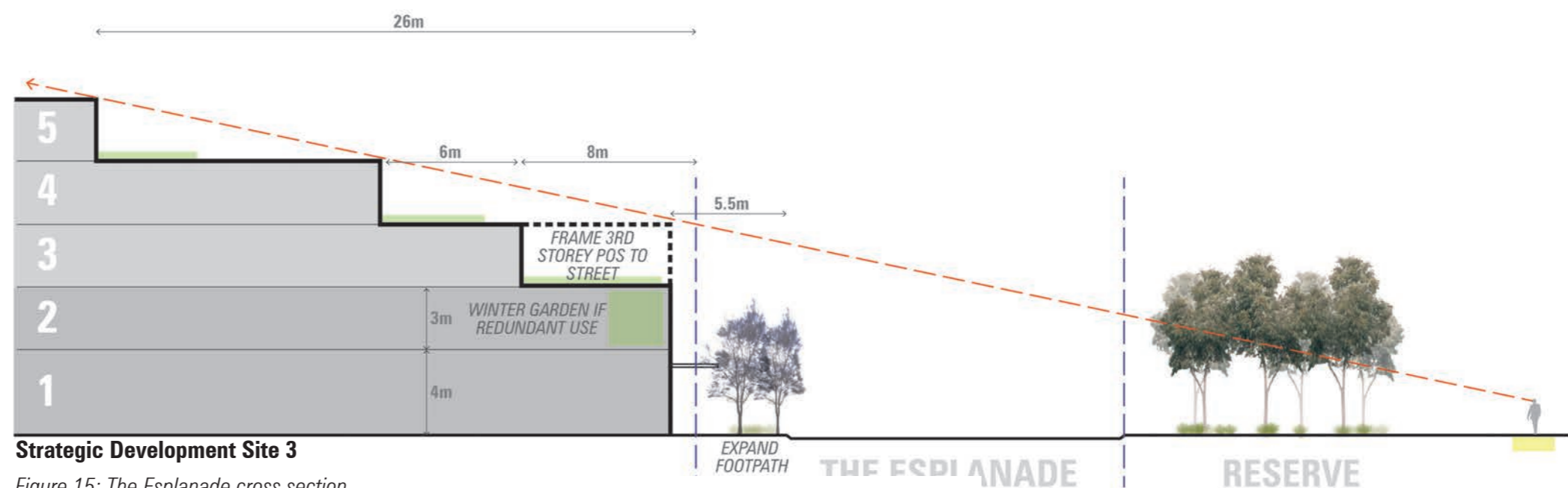


Figure 14: Bristol Road cross-section



Existing building



Strategic Development Site 3

Figure 15: The Esplanade cross section

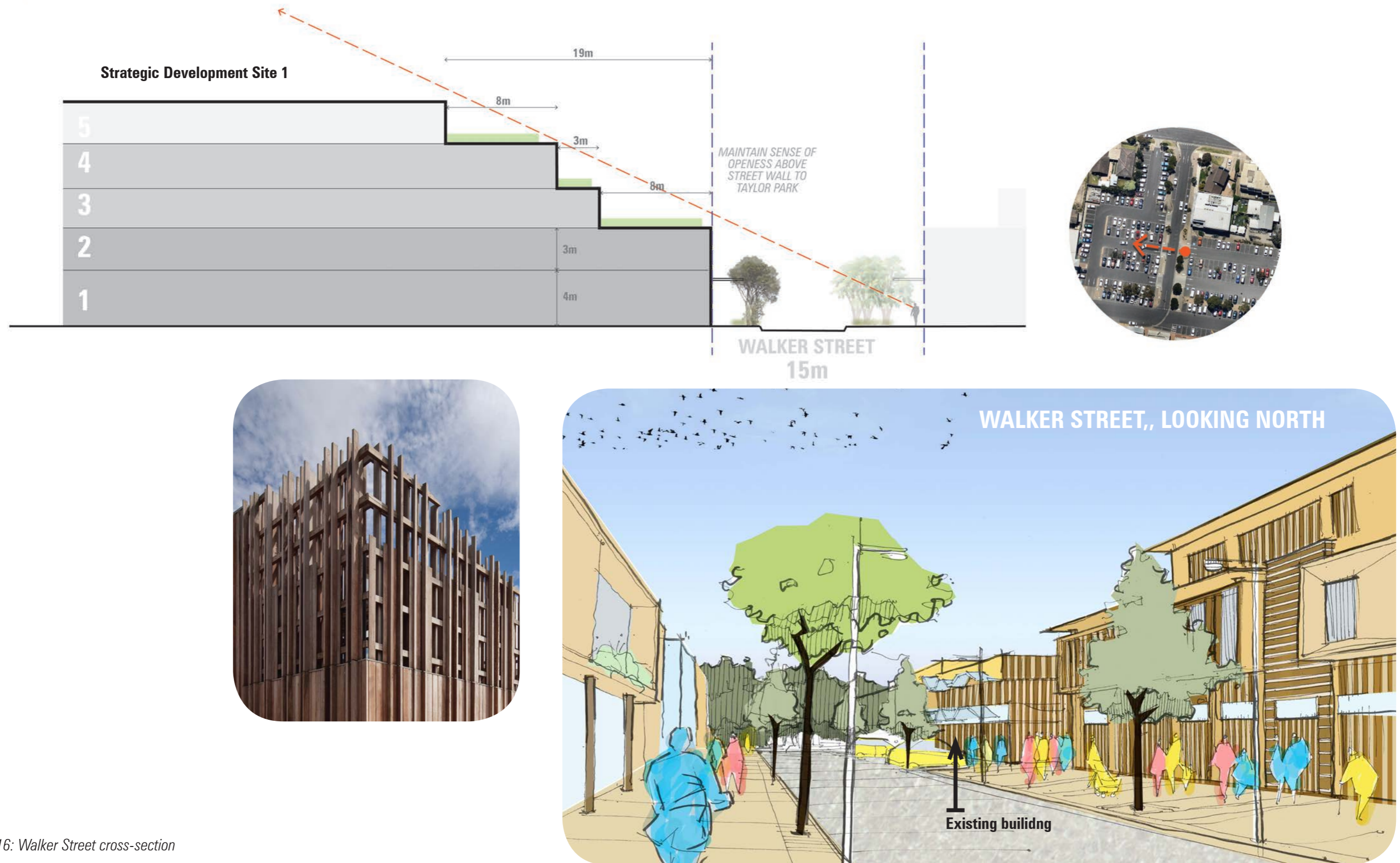


Figure 16: Walker Street cross-section

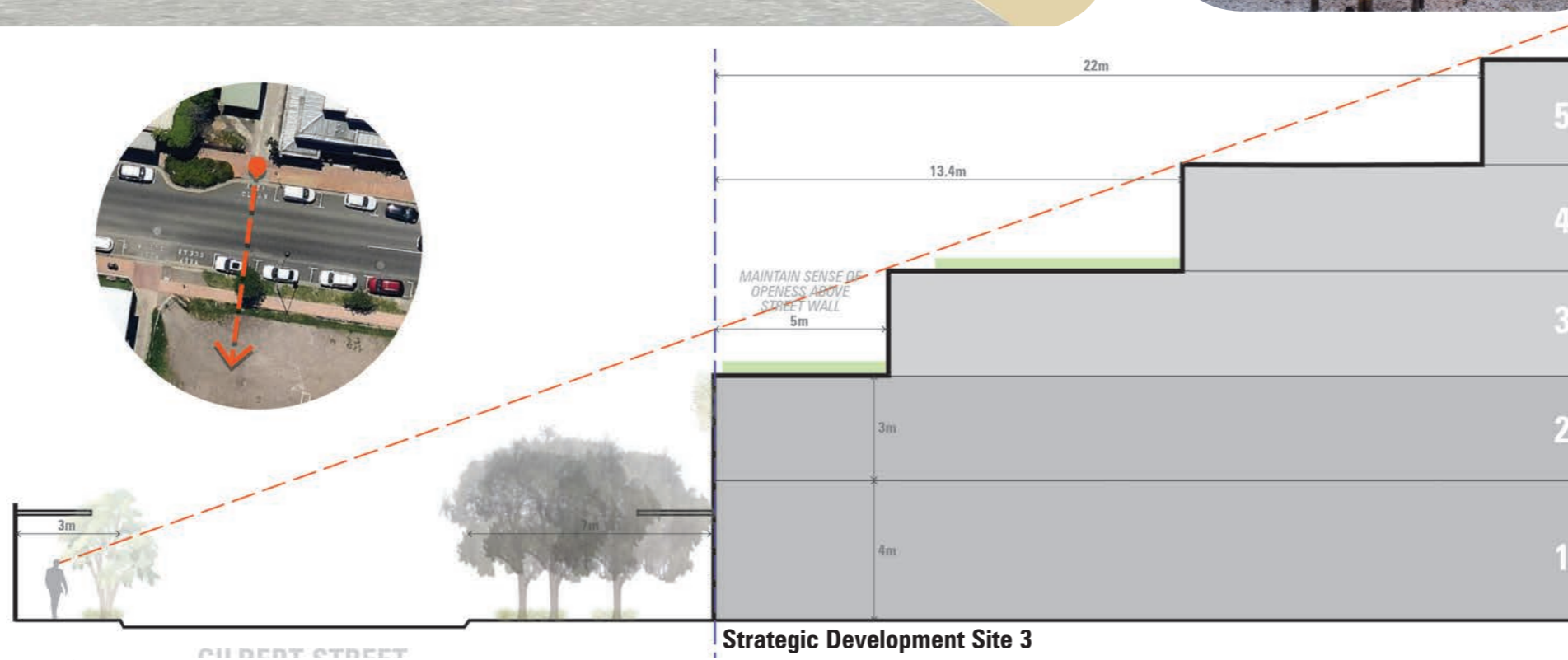


Figure 17: Gilbert Street cross-section

key direction 4: retain and enhance a coastal character

The protection of Torquay's special character is highlighted within existing policy and was of key interest to community stakeholders who attended consultation events. However, as identified within the Issues and Opportunities Paper, this 'coastal' or 'surf' character is not currently reflected in the look and feel of the Town Centre. Apart from the occasional glimpses of the foreshore available, the built form of the Town Centre is similar to many other regional centre (albeit one without the strong heritage character of many of Victoria's regional towns). Responses to surveys highlighted that the character of the Torquay is primarily derived from its 'relaxed', friendly' and 'informal' feel, and in opposition to 'suburban' built form outcomes. This Key Direction seeks therefore to not only retain elements which contribute to this valued character, such as a sense of openness along important view corridors, but to *enhance* the 'informal' and 'coastal' character.

There are two key factors which inform the character of a place; the public realm (streets, open spaces, landscaping, street furniture etc) and the private realm (buildings and other development on private land). The 'feel' of spaces is largely influenced by the landscaping and pavement treatments, as well as the activity that occurs on them. It is the streets that matter most. As a result, the role of Council in providing for quality public spaces in the Town Centre is critical. In the context of Torquay, how the public realm relates to the coastal character through material choices, as well as the generosity of vegetation provided are particularly highlighted. While previous strategies suggested clear distinction in treatments between different areas of the Town Centre, this UDF seeks a consistent treatment across all parts of the Centre, with the Iconic Streetscapes being distinguished by the generosity of their width and the activity which occurs along them rather than the individual elements of street furnishings. Differentiation on street tree plantings are however identified, and the Framework has avoided the more common 'coastal' planting of Norfolk Pines or palm trees in favour of indigenous species which further link the Centre to its environmental context.

Private buildings contribute negatively to a place's character where their impact on the public realm is notably detrimental, for example if they overshadow or dominate spaces, but mostly it is the materiality of buildings that people notice - is it a lovely timber building, or does it look cheap and suburban? Defining and controlling those matters through a discretionary planning scheme is a challenge. The low rise built form of Torquay has been highlighted as an important element of the 'coastal village' character of the town. However, the character of the Town Centre is not defined by a specific building height, but by the human scale of buildings, solar access and views of the sky. This Framework seeks to recognise this 'modest' scale, identifying increases in building heights of only one or two storeys across most of the Centre. The proposition of a modest building height of 3-4 storeys, with significant setbacks and breaks in building form is intended to respond to the need to retain a human scale, solar access and a sense of openness. Heights

above this scale are only contemplated in instances where larger land parcels offer opportunities for a fifth floor to have limited impact. Proposed building heights have been tested through 3D modelling to assess impacts.

The other critical element aside from the height and massing of buildings is, of course, the more detailed design of buildings – most people can instantly identify a 'suburban' building rather than a 'coastal' one. It is this distinction that must be preserved, even for low scale buildings. Avoiding boxy, flat roofed forms and pursuing a lightweight feel and materials with a significant focus on the use of timber will assist with this. Considering ways of integrating ancillary structures such as timber decks or pergolas also provides an opportunity to enhance a coastal character.

While a more robust built form is contemplated within the Town Centre, which will provide a sense of differentiation between the Town Centre and its residential surrounds, the approaches to the Town Centre should be carefully managed to ensure that new development retains a sense of the 'coast'. A key aspect of this is the retention of front setbacks for landscaping consistent with the coastal character.

strategies and associated actions

- Establish clear parameters for building forms within the Town Centre and implement these robustly and consistently. This should include a clear focus on building design elements which have the most influence on perceptions of a 'coastal' character, such as lightweight forms, the use of timber and roof configurations. A set of key principles is identified in the highlight box (Page 41). These should be the starting point for any building design within the Town Centre.
- Require development in the Town Centre to utilise a more 'natural' palette reflective of the treed and coastal surrounds in preference to a 'bright' or 'pastel' palette.
- Establish a Design Review process (see Implementation section) to ensure meaningful consideration of a 'coastal' design response and avoid 'suburban' outcomes. Require referral to the Office of the Victorian Government Architect for strategic design sites (see Figure 7).
- Protect, through built form guidelines, the important corridor views:
 - Along Gilbert Street to the foreshore, by requiring setbacks above two storeys of 15m to the north and 5m to the south;
 - Along Cliff and Walker Streets to Talyor Park, by requiring setbacks above two storeys of 8m to each side; and

- Retaining the existing 7m slay established in policy at the intersection of The Esplanade and Gilbert Street.
- Strategic Development Sites 1 and 3 require breaks in built form above two storeys commensurate with the street widths where north / south view corridors are available along Walker, Cliff and Pearl Streets. This is not intended to render these upper levels invisible but to reduce the visual impact.
- Establish a two storey street wall and use more lightweight framing elements at upper levels to create perception of a robust streetwall at key frontages.
- Avoid the provision of standalone 'wedding cake' style development, particularly along The Esplanade and Taylors Park interfaces. Instead seek a built form which includes zero lot setbacks to side boundaries, and a discernible street-wall to Iconic Streetscape edges.
- Support simplified building forms which use meaningful articulation, materiality, design detailing and textural changes to add visual interest.
- Flat roof forms should be discouraged in favour of skillion, wave or other forms which are more responsive to the coastal context.
- Discourage the use of materials such as alucobond or similar which provide non-textual cladding, including at upper levels.
- Encourage the integration of landscape elements on upper levels of development, particularly those which 'spillover' or soften built form or framing elements, or contribute to an informal landscape character.
- Encourage the provision of upper level balconies to maximise solar access and views as well as increase activation at street edges. Consider the integration of winter-garden style balconies where residential development is provided at the first floor to minimise conflict with ground floor commercial uses and support the perception of a consistent two storey street wall.
- Minimise advertising signage to complement the coastal character.
- Require visible roof spaces to provide either an architectural response or, preferably, to integrate low level grasses or succulents consistent with principles of green roof development.
- All plant, equipment, and plumbing must be located within the setbacks identified and should not be visible from the street. Where services or solar panels are visible, they must be screened in a manner consistent with the preferred coastal character.

- As a priority, seek public funding for upgrades to streetscape in order to avoid incremental upgrades as private development occurs.
- Mandate use of high quality materials which reflect a 'coastal' character, particularly along key interfaces such as The Esplanade and Zeally Bay Road. Buildings should avoid extensive use of materials such as alucobond and render, as well as highly reflective materials and bright colours. Significant use of timber should be incorporated.
- Create a 'Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide' to identify a palette of preferred material and finishes, and to document preferred vegetation species, street furniture etc. This should be referenced not only by the Council but used by developers within the Town Centre to establish a consistent coastal 'feel', particularly where there is crossover between 'public' and 'private' spaces.
- Ensure that new planting within the Town Centre is in keeping with an identified preferred species list (see Page 56).
- Utilise a sand toned paving treatment throughout the centre to reinforce the coastal location. The preferred material palette for the Town Centre is as follows:
 - Sand toned paving treatments. In pedestrian priority areas this should be a suitable stone or composite, in other areas a coloured aggregate may be considered suitable.
 - A feature paving treatment, suitable with integration with the broader 'sandy' treatment could be considered along Iconic Streetscapes.
 - In the longer term, implement a consistent pavement treatment and landscape improvements including new canopy vegetation, along The Esplanade, linking the existing Bell Street area (which currently extends to Munday Street) with proposed treatment of The Esplanade within the Town Centre (proposed to extend to Anderson Street).
- Maintain and enhance a coastal landscape character in front setbacks of the surrounding residential areas.
- Establish an avenue of new indigenous canopy trees along Bristol Road within the verge and in kerb out-stands to enhance this key approach.

Planning in Victoria is based around a discretionary planning scheme which emphasises site responsive design, making it difficult to mandate detailed design. However, it is critically important that the design of buildings in the Town Centre is not only of high quality but also strongly reflective of the place. As such, a set of design parameters which should be used to assess the appearance of any new buildings in the Town Centre are identified below:

- *Architecture that has a 'coastal' character complementing local culture or natural features, rather than buildings with a typical 'suburban' appearance or period style replicas.*
- *Buildings that have a lightweight and relaxed image rather than an appearance of mass and weight.*
- *Disaggregated structures with interesting spaces and projections rather than solid bulky structures with blank walls.*
- *Architectural forms which convey a combination of simplicity and distinction without fussy detail and decoration.*
- *Rooflines which reflect a 'non-traditional' suburban context, but retain a simplicity. Skillion or undulating forms which reflect the local environmental context and built form heritage are preferred. Flat roof forms are discouraged unless they incorporate landscape elements.*
- *Facades that utilise light, shade and texture rather than smooth, uninterrupted, single coloured surfaces.*
- *The use of timber, natural materials and other innovative types of cladding in preference to the traditional suburban use of brickwork, blockwork or cladding.*
- *The use of colours which reflect the environmental context and the more 'informal' nature of the Centre. This includes subdued colours reminiscent of the Talyor Park bush, sandy tones or whites and blues reflective of the ocean.*
- *The inclusion of feature timber elements such as decks, frames or shade structures.*

key direction 5: support more local jobs

The majority of growth within the Surf Coast Shire is occurring within Torquay, and with population growth should come employment growth. At the moment, the Council has a modest growth target of 2200 jobs by 2036. But even this number, which acknowledges a significant amount of jobs will be provided by Geelong and Melbourne, there will still need to be meaningful action to fulfil this target. If a greater proportion of jobs are preferred locally, this is even more the case. However, Torquay's population is not only growing but it is diversifying and the types of jobs which will be needed in the future will be equally diverse. While there are other areas within Torquay which provide jobs, for instance, Surf City and the West Coast Business Park, the Town Centre represents the best location to support many of these future jobs. At the moment, the contribution that the Town Centre makes to local job opportunities is below what would be expected.

This Key Direction recognises the important role that the Town Centre plays in the provision of local jobs and seeks to significantly increase the number of jobs provided. There are a number of ways it can and should do this. Firstly, by providing opportunities for additional retail and hospitality through increased ground level floorspace, a greater number of jobs within those industries, traditionally providing for jobs for a younger demographic, will be present. Secondly, recognising the increasing trend towards more professional or office based employment trends within Surf Coast Shire and providing increased upper level floorspace for office and other commercial development to allow for a greater density of jobs within the limited footprint.

Thirdly, this Framework seeks to recognise the important role small and local businesses play in creating new and diverse job opportunities. It is often difficult for small 'start-up' businesses to establish within areas like the Town Centre due to the lack of appropriately sized and costed spaces. Torquay has a long and continuing association with entrepreneurial small business. At the moment, the high costs and limited floorspace available in the Town Centre mean that this activity is not occurring within the Town Centre. Wh

ile it is not expected that most of this activity will locate in the Town Centre - much will develop in home offices or areas such as Baines Court where more 'industrial' activity will occur, there is a significant benefit in drawing more of these creative and experimental small businesses into the Town Centre. The mix of businesses define the 'character' of a town centre as much as the built form. There is an opportunity to assist in the provision of smaller spaces within the Town Centre to provide these spaces, which can conversely provide a spin off benefit for the Town Centre in increasing diversity and activity through the introduction of smaller or more innovative businesses. Encouraging other elements which also support local jobs such as a second, appropriately costed co-working space and free wi-fi within the Centre are also proposed.

Torquay, as the Start of The Great Ocean Road and home of Australian surfing also has an opportunity to create a unique sense of place for local residents and visitors that extends well beyond the identified Town Centre of this project. Elements of way finding, and broader support infrastructure opportunities will connect with additional strategies identified in the Great Ocean Road Gateway project.

strategies and associated actions

- Recognise the importance of a combination of expansion of the Town Centre both vertically and along the ground plane to provide job opportunities, in addition to redevelopment of sites within the Town Centre.
- Support the provision of additional ground floor retail and hospitality space by infilling existing vacant land and at-grade car parks within the Town Centre.
- Support the appropriate redevelopment of existing major retail anchors to retain their relevance to consumers.
- Recognise and protect the current distribution of key retail anchors within the Town Centre to encourage pedestrian movement between them and increase exposure for a greater range of businesses.
- Support the development of increased office floorspace to encourage rents low enough to allow for small local businesses to locate within the Town Centre.
- Support the development of commercial floorspace on upper levels and ensure an appropriate balance between residential and commercial floorspace is retained at upper levels.
- Do not support any additional ground floor residential uses other than within designated mixed use or residential areas.
- Ensure built form supports entertainment opportunities which contribute to opportunities for cultural or hospitality jobs and which allow for an increase in the vibrancy of the Town Centre.
- Consider increasing access to information, through the creation of a 'Surf Coast Start-ups' referral service which allows new small business owners to access an information pack relevant to their sector outlining the various permits, requirements referral etc and which provides a streamlined service for facilitating the establishment of new small businesses within the Town Centre.
- Provide free Wi-Fi within the core of the Town Centre.
- Support the transition of land between Fischer Street and Torquay Village to a 'mixed use' area supporting small office type businesses interspersed with residential and accommodation uses through rezoning of the land.

- Discourage 'industrial' uses within this mixed use area by directing such uses to other centres within Torquay to ensure that potential amenity impact are managed and office based opportunities are prioritised.
- Support appropriate home offices in residential areas surrounding the Town Centre.
- In considering the development of Strategic Development Site 2, explore opportunities to integrate the following at ground or first floor levels:
 - A range of 'small' or 'micro spaces which have minimal fits outs but access to central bathroom facilities and are available on flexible contracts with low rental for a fixed period to support start-ups within the Town Centre.
 - A cost effective co-working space to support the growth in resident professionals who may work part time in metropolitan Melbourne or Geelong.
 - On-site hospitality training and / or youth support services such as STREAT which contribute positively to the Town Centre while addressing employment challenges for disadvantaged residents,



key direction 6: Improve pedestrian connections

Strong and well-functioning pedestrian links are predominantly related to the measure of how pedestrian friendly and accessible an area is. The level of walkability depends on both the physical quality of the walking paths and the availability of pedestrian oriented destinations alongside the paths and determines the level of accessibility. Pedestrian Oriented Design (POD) relates to the design and presentation of development, public spaces and associated facilities to encourage walking and create compact, walkable, mixed use communities. Improved pedestrian infrastructure and public realm experience makes it possible to reduce trips made by private vehicles.

To provide strong pedestrian accessibility in the Torquay Town Centre, there is a need to focus on improving pedestrian network facilities and infrastructure. Pedestrian priority routes should be provided along desire lines based on key attractors within the Town Centre such as supermarkets and retail areas, car parking, local and regional bus stops, The Esplanade and foreshore. There are immediate improvements that can be made to improve the pedestrian network, such as in areas where footpaths are lacking on both sides of the street or potential exists for conflict between walkers and traffic which raises safety concerns.

There has been some attempt to provide for pedestrians within the Town Centre, through the construction of centre median refuges to assist pedestrians along desire lines at key intersections. However, this type of provision does not constitute a safe or formal pedestrian crossing, and in many cases only serves to confuse both car drivers and pedestrians as to who has the right of way and, in the worst case scenario, create a more dangerous situation where the most disadvantaged users of the pedestrian network such as the elderly or mobility impaired are then stranded between two lanes of moving traffic. Many of these existing mid-street refuges are located in the right location for pedestrians, but should be replaced with formal zebra crossing facilities.

To facilitate improved pedestrian connections and to guide decision making, a new network of high quality pedestrian links throughout the centre will be established. These Pedestrian Priority routes, forming a grid throughout the Town Centre have been classified as Primary and Secondary Priority Routes to support a consistent streetscape and built form response.

strategies and associated actions

Recognise a Town Centre pedestrian network comprising areas identified as the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid.

Recognise a supporting hierarchy of streets within and around the Town Centre to guide works in the public realm:

- Iconic Streetscapes;
- Pedestrian Priority Streets; and
- Pedestrian Connector Streets.

Recognise four levels of response required from adjoining built form in response to this grid

- Iconic Streetscape interfaces;
- Pedestrian Priority Route primary active frontage;
- Pedestrian Priority Route secondary active frontage; and
- Pedestrian Priority Route laneway interface.

Undertake a program of streetscape upgrades to ensure a cohesive, attractive and functional network of pedestrian streets within the Town Centre.



Figure 18: pedestrian framework

- On Pedestrian Priority Streets:
 - Remove grass verges and extend paving to the kerb;
 - A minimum 2m wide trafficable movement zone should be provided with this area clear of signage seating etc;
 - Install street tree planting and associated low level planting within garden beds at regular intervals within the paved extent, as well as between car parking spaces and /or in pedestrian outstands where possible;
 - Introduce pedestrian priority crossings at regular intervals (see Figure 9); and
 - Ensure sufficient lighting is provided to enhance perceptions of safety.
- On Pedestrian connector routes:
 - Ensure a consistent footpath with a minimum dimension of 1.8m is provided; and
 - Introduce additional street tree plantings as appropriate to increase pedestrian shelter and amenity.
- Incorporate a series of new laneways as part of any redevelopment of Key Development Site 3 to increase pedestrian permeability.
- Require building setbacks as part of any redevelopment of land adjoining Coulson Lane and associated connection to The Esplanade to ensure a minimum 2m wide pedestrian connection.
- Consider integration of artwork, hanging vegetation or artistic lighting effects along the existing lane between Gilbert Street and Bristol Road.
- Require buildings on northern street sides and along identified Pedestrian Priority Routes to be set back at upper levels to retain a sense of openness
- Require development adjoining the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid to improve the pedestrian experience by:
 - Preventing new, and removing existing, vehicular crossovers where possible.
 - Requiring built form responses at the ground floor level to enhance the pedestrian experience.
 - Providing weather protection in the form of simple, cantilevered awnings on all frontages abutting Iconic Streetscapes, Primary and Secondary active interfaces.
- Recognise and require appropriate responses for new built form adjoining identified primary active frontages. This includes:
 - Discouraging uses which will not contribute to an activated street frontage and contribute to a relationship between the public and private realms;
 - Use of glazing and other façade treatments to stimulate interaction. A minimum of 80% of the street frontage must be activated. The use of a combination of solid and glass is preferred to fully glazed shopfronts;
 - No more than 50% of any glazing to be covered by advertising or other signage;
 - High quality design detailing to provide visual interest; and
 - Fine grain or strong vertical articulation at ground level. No more than 10m of any ground floor street frontage to be associated with a single tenancy.
- Recognise and require appropriate responses for new built form adjoining Secondary active frontages. This includes:
 - Use of glazing and other façade treatments to stimulate interaction. A minimum of 50% of the street frontage must be activated;
 - High quality design detailing to provide visual interest; and
 - Fine grain or strong vertical articulation at ground level. No more than 10m of any ground floor street frontage to be associated with a single tenancy.
- Recognise and require appropriate response in areas identified as Iconic Streetscapes. This includes:
 - Encourage on-street and outdoor dining by designing shopfronts with fully or partially opening windows and doors, and supporting use of the public realm for on-street dining;
 - Discouraging uses which will not contribute to an activated street frontage and contribute to a relationship between the public and private realms;
 - Use of glazing and other façade treatments to stimulate interaction. A minimum of 80% of the street frontage must be activated. The use of a combination of solid and glass is preferred to fully glazed shopfronts;
 - No more than 20% of any glazing to be covered by advertising or other signage;
- High quality design detailing to provide visual interest; and
- Fine grain or strong vertical articulation at ground level. No more than 10m of any ground floor street frontage to be associated with a single tenancy.
- Establish a set of guiding principles to ensure appropriate development along laneways which form part of the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid outlining preferred responses to pedestrian only laneways and shared zones which may also provide access to rear car parking cells or loading areas.
- Where larger buildings are proposed, façade detail, materials and colour should be designed to provide interest and articulation. The traditional 'strip shopping centre' image of multiple shopfronts should be maintained.
- Require the addition of a 'skin' of active uses where larger format or in-active uses are proposed adjoining identified pedestrian routes.
- Increase pedestrian safety throughout the centre, as follows:
 - Install Wombat Crossings (raised zebra crossings) at the intersections of Zeally Bay Road and Walker and Cliff Streets
 - Install kerb outstands and zebra crossings at the intersection of the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid and The Esplanade to facilitate safe crossing to the Foreshore. Investigate the most appropriate form of kerb outstands and raised crossings along The Esplanade to ensure that the Cadel Evans bike race is not compromised.
 - Implement a wombat crossing at the eastern end of Gilbert Street and zebra crossings from both the northern and southern sides of Gilbert Street across The Esplanade. Demarcate this important intersection through extending a coloured treatments which encompass the road surface of The Esplanade to each side of the zebra crossings, the pedestrian pavements and the proposed wombat crossing.
 - Provide zebra crossings on the southern and western legs of the proposed Zeally Bay Road roundabout to improve the level of service and safety for pedestrians at this location. It is recommended the existing median island crossing facility approximately 15m north of this intersection is also converted into a zebra crossing. Monitor the safety and efficiency of zebra crossings associated with the proposed Zeally Bay Road / The Esplanade roundabout
 - Install a pedestrian crossing from the bus stop on the south side of Boston Road to the east side of Pearl Street

- Install two pedestrian crossings on Bristol Road, one near the existing Torquay Village plaza, and the other aligned with Walker Street.
- Install kerb outstands and a zebra crossing on Pearl Street south of Gilbert Street
- Install kerb outstands and a zebra crossing on Boston Street west of Pearl Street
- Install zebra crossings at the western end of Gilbert Street and at the two crossing points which form part of the Town Centre Pedestrian Grid.
- Seek a reduction of vehicular speeds along The Esplanade between Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street to 40km/h to reflect the focus on pedestrians within the Town Centre area.
- Ensure that appropriate lighting is provided along all key pedestrian routes, where possible integrate lighting with public art features
- Provide access to major underground car parks from peripherals streets such as Pearl Street and Zeally Bay Road to reduce vehicle numbers within the town core



key direction 7: resolve and minimise impacts of traffic movement

There have been numerous studies undertaken to resolve perceived traffic and car parking access issues within the Town Centre. A variety of road hierarchies have been identified and a variety of treatments to Gilbert Street proposed. All previous strategies, including recent recommendations of the 2016 *Parking & Access Strategy* and the 2017 *The Esplanade and Bell Street Traffic and Pedestrian Strategy* have been reviewed as part of the development of this Urban Design Framework. While many of the recommendations in those documents have been adopted to resolve identified issues, the alternate starting point of this Framework must be acknowledged. While these strategies have focussed on resolving issues associated with current patterns of vehicular movement, this document seeks to reposition the Town Centre as a place where pedestrian movement is prioritised. As a result of this, there will inevitably be some changes to the existing positions regarding vehicular access.

Central to the resolution sought through this Key Direction is an acknowledgement of current key access routes; rather than seeking to change existing movement patterns, these are being modified or controlled. The location of car parking within the Town Centre is a key driver of vehicular movement. Significant proportions of vehicular movements within activity centres are vehicles circulating looking for car spaces. The development of underground car parking cells accessed primarily from peripheral locations is therefore pursued, as supply of parking accessed from a clearly identified peripheral locations is critical to ensuring that vehicular movement within the pedestrian focused core is minimised. The location of car parking has significant implications for the amenity and safety of pedestrian routes - minimising potential conflicts (or the perception of conflicts) between pedestrians and vehicles within the Town Centre is also important.

Previous strategies (including Clause 21.08 in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme) have suggested closure of Gilbert Street to vehicular traffic, or making it one-way. As identified in the *Parking & Access Strategy 2016 (PAS)*, the success of malls is generally very poor, with several in regional areas having been re-opened to vehicular traffic in an attempt to generate more activity. Discouraging traffic from Bristol Road and Gilbert Street will not contribute to commercial success of the Town Centre. Further, it is considered that the intention behind any street closure can be achieved without such as dramatic intervention. One way vehicular movement is therefore supported along Gilbert Street) (with the introduction of angled car parking along the northern side of the street_ The movement is west to east (from Pearl Street) in line with the recommendations of the PAS which found that only supporting movement from east to west (from The Esplanade) would impact on the viability of businesses. This arrangement further supports an increased focus on pedestrian movement from the foreshore area, rather than vehicular movement. As part of the UDF, access to at-grade car parking areas from Gilbert Street will also be removed, supporting the movement of vehicles along peripheral street to access car parking, with the focus with the Town Centre core remaining on pedestrian movement and an associated reduction in the design speed limit.

The recent PAS identified a shift from the previously established position of identifying Zeally Bay Road as the key entry road into the Town Centre, in favour of Bristol Road. This designation is associated with a recommendation to signalise the currently dangerous intersection. This is considered a logical position given the number of vehicles using this street (which is roughly triple the amount using Zeally Bay Road). As such, this Key Direction recognises Bristol Road as the key vehicular entry to the Town Centre from the Surf Cast Highway. Both Zeally Bay Road and Bristol Road have a 20m wide road reserve. However, the presence of a wider carriageway incorporating a marked parallel parking zone on both sides of Zeally Bay Road and a narrower nature strip than Bristol Road currently gives the impression of a higher order, higher capacity access street. Both streets have the same capacity to carry local traffic, and visitors to the Town Centre from the local area are likely to continue to utilise both. Over time, as the Centre develops, Anderson Street may evolve to provide a second signalised intersection on the Surf Coast Highway. In addition, signal are currently proposed at Beach Road which will facilitate access to the Centre via Fischer Street and The Esplanade.

Fischer Street has long been identified as a key access road into the Town Centre and has consistently provided the third most used vehicular access into the Town Centre - this hasn't changed over the last 20 years according to data collection. In seeking to establish a clear network of vehicular routes the role of Fischer Street, in association with Pearl Street in providing an alternate north south route to The Esplanade is supported by this UDF. Associated with this recognition are a number of proposed changes to these streets. Some of these changes also support the designation of Bristol Road as a key entry road, and the establishment of a west – east one way system along Gilbert Street, as well as access to peripheral basement car parking entrances and bus movement within the Town Centre.

The Esplanade will continue to function as a major north south route through Torquay / Jan Juc. However, within the Town Centre vehicular movement will be slowed to prioritise pedestrian movement and reduce conflicts. Traffic modelling undertaken indicates that the introduction of lowered speed limits and pedestrian crossing within the stretch of road adjacent to the Town Centre will have minimal impacts on broader movement functionality or travel times (The Esplanade traffic study 2017). A roundabout has been proposed for The Esplanade / Zeally Bay Road intersection to physically slow vehicles on The Esplanade and provide a visual cue to the changed environment. The roundabout will also incorporate the entrance to the Torquay Play Park car park and be designed to accommodate potential bus movements to support the re-routing of the 51 bus service. Potential conflicts between the Cadel Evens bicycle race should be considered in decision on the form and permanency of this proposed treatment.

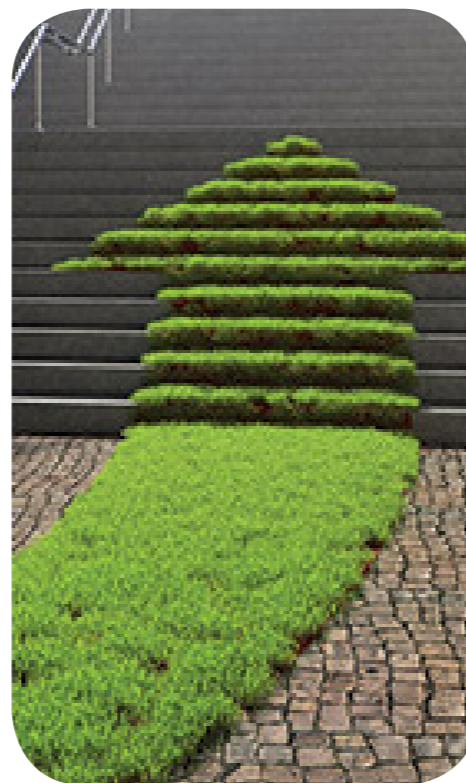


Figure 19: access framework

strategies and associated actions

- Recognise and prioritise Fischer and Pearl Streets as a key north south corridor for vehicular movement;
 - Widen Fischer Street between Bristol and Zeally Bay Roads using existing parallel on-street parking and footpath to match the carriageway north of Zeally Bay Road (from approx. 6.5m to 8m);
 - Require a minimum 2.2m setback from the western lot boundary to allow for pedestrian movement along the eastern side of Fischer Street as development occurs;
 - Establish landscape treatments including canopy trees at each corner of this intersection to mark the Town Centre 'gateway';
 - Provide a footpath on the western side of Fischer Street between Bristol and Zeally Bay Roads adjacent to the property boundaries in response to the existing desire line and proposed street widening;
 - Establish a landscape planting bed along the western edge adjoining 20 Bristol Street (PetBarn); and
 - Investigate the potential to prioritise Pearl Street vehicular movement over Boston Road traffic at that intersection.
- Recognise Bristol Road as the key local access road from the Surf Coast Highway:
 - Signalise the intersection of Bristol Road and Surf Coast Highway;
 - Introduce a 40km/h speed limit within the Town Centre;
 - Support the continued role of Zeally Bay Road as providing an alternate route to Bristol Road;
 - Use public realm treatments to clearly signal the location of the Town Centre along the Surf Coast Highway (see Key Direction 8); and
 - Alter intersection priority at the intersection of Bristol Road and Pearl Street to promote vehicle movement into Gilbert Street.
- Rebalance the movement priority of The Esplanade increase pedestrian movement priority across the Esplanade through facilitating both north / south vehicular movement and east / west pedestrian movement.
- Recognise the current role of The Esplanade as a key north south corridor for vehicular movement but reduce vehicular speeds adjacent to the Town Centre through the introduction of a 40km/h speed limit, a narrowing of the roadway and associated introduction of zebra crossings at key points.

- Support the integration of a roundabout at the intersection with Zeally Bay Road, provided this can be designed to support safe pedestrian movement and does not compromise the Cadel Evens Bike Race.
- Install a coloured pavement treatment across the intersection and zebra crossings at Gilbert Street to signal this important intersection.
- Support Gilbert Street as a pedestrian priority street but recognise the important of continued vehicular access;
 - Support a reconfiguration of the streetscape to prioritise pedestrian movement and create an Iconic Streetscape on the south side of the street;
 - Implement a system of one way west – east vehicular movement, with the roadway constructed to a 30km/h design speed; and
 - Restrict access to car parking areas from Gilbert Street to reduce vehicular circulation.



Early consultation sessions identified the issue of Zeally Bay Road vs Bristol Road as the key entry road as a contentious issue. Previous work had identified Zeally Bay Road as the key entry road to the Town Centre. Based on the recent Torquay Town Centre Parking and Access Strategy (2016-2021), and a consistency with other preferred outcomes, the UDF proposed Bristol Road as the key entry road. Much of the concern expressed related to safety of the Surf Coast Highway / Bristol Road intersection and the perceived narrowness of the Bristol Road carriageway. The proposed signalisation of the Bristol Road intersection will address the first issue and some analysis was undertaken to assess the difference in existing road widths for Zeally Bay Road and Bristol Road. As can be seen from the existing conditions, the road profile for the two streets is identical. The third cross section outlines the proposed integration of landscape treatments along Bristol Road

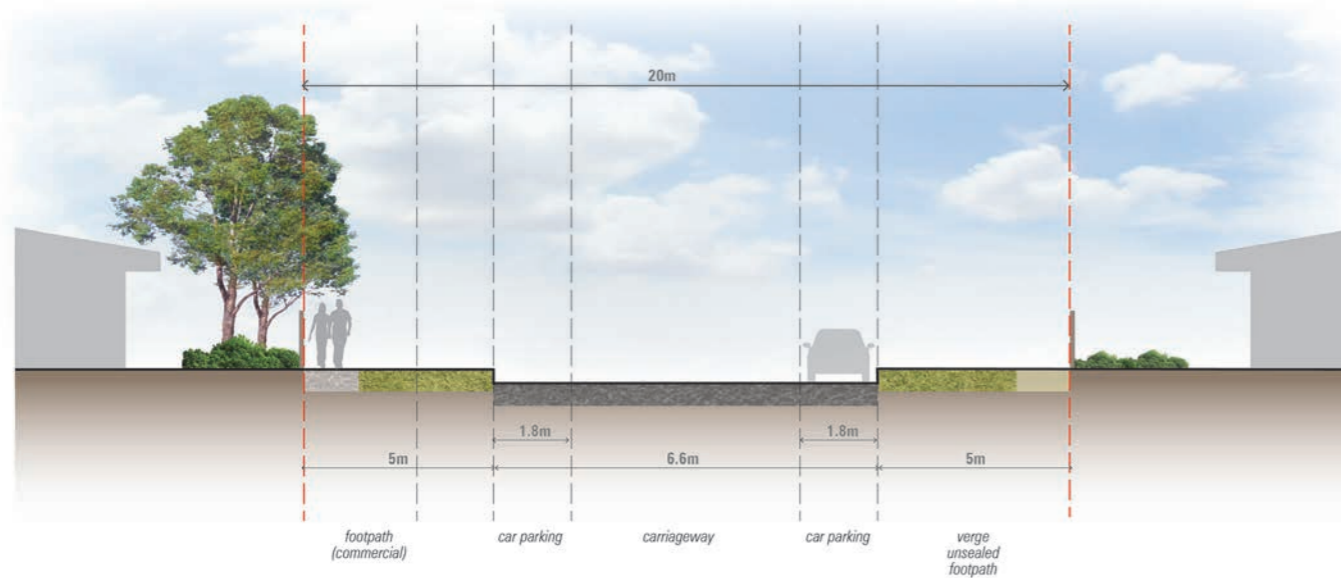


Figure 20: existing Bristol Road cross section

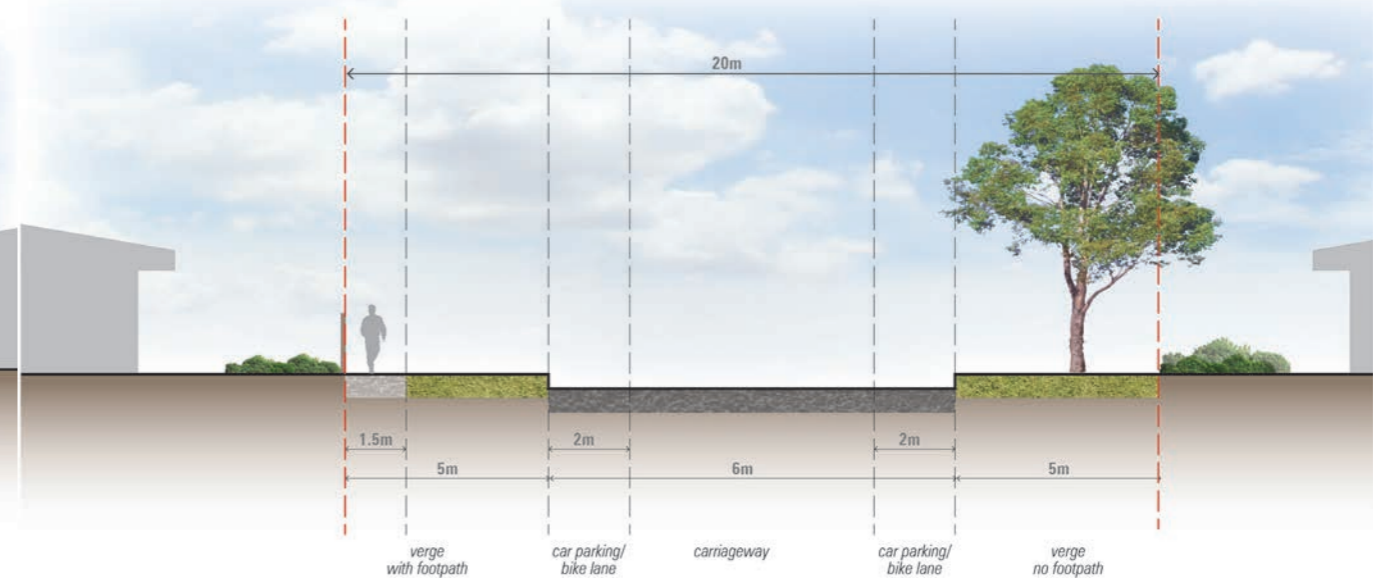


Figure 21: existing Zeally Bay Road cross section

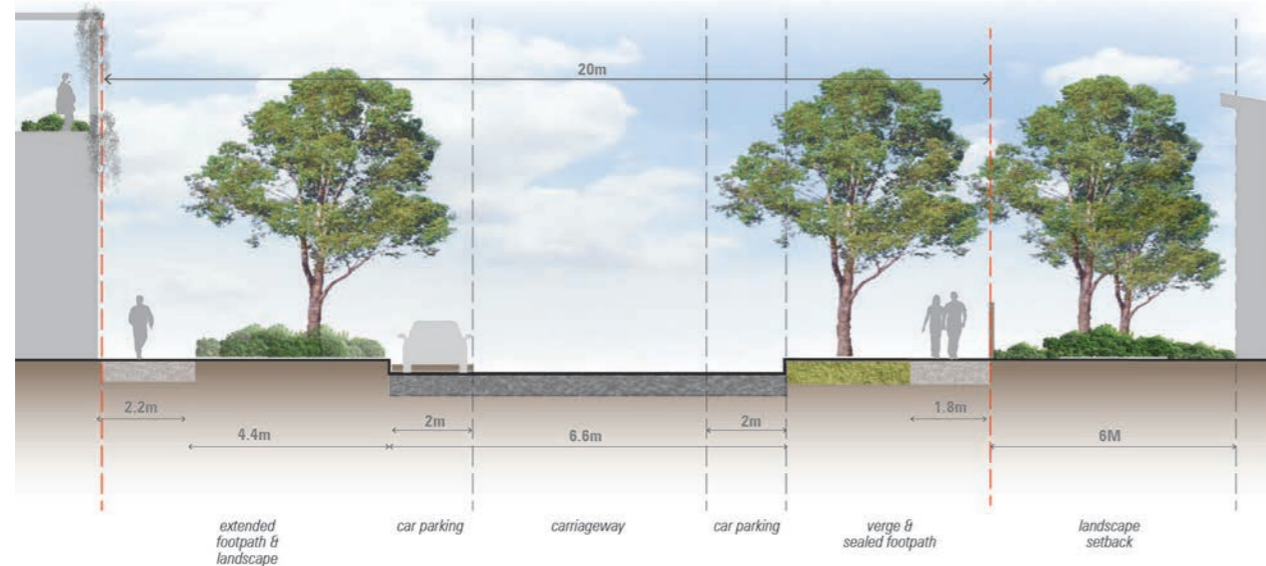


Figure 22: proposed Bristol Road cross section

car parking

The management of parking within the Torquay Town Centre is critical to achieving high levels of amenity, good accessibility and long term sustainability. In town centre environments, it is important to support local business by ensuring convenient access to car parking, sufficient turnover of on-street parking spaces in commercial areas and shopping strips using appropriate parking management tools. Appropriate levels of parking supply can also be an important factor in encouraging sustainable transport behaviour. However, an oversupply of carparking can result in detrimental impacts such as:

- Generate car travel demand causing congestion;
- Compete for valuable space both on and off-road;
- Have a significant impact on the environment and local amenity.

New developments are generally required to be self-sufficient for parking and not add to the demand for on street parking spaces. Whilst this approach may be justifiable for lower density residential areas, the current Planning Scheme parking rates may require downward revision where land is at a premium, and other transport modes are easily accessible, consistent with industry best practice.

It is acknowledged that parking management and access can be a contentious topic, and achieving an appropriate balance between demand and supply is often difficult. However, the successful management of car parking can be one of the greatest influences on the economic, environmental and social success factors of a town centre.

The current provision of at-grade (or ground level) car parking provides some benefits in terms of providing a direct line of sight into the car parking area as well as perceptions of safety for drivers parking and walking to/from vehicles. However, the most appropriate or best use of this valuable Town Centre land may not be for the storage of empty vehicles. These current car parking sites hold potential for development, with car parking still provided but at a basement level (or levels). The car parking supply for Torquay CBD is currently at least adequate in respect of the objective to provide a balance between allowing for 'off-season' demands over most of the year and for 'high season' peaks that will test any reasonable supply of parking on a few days each year.

Replacing at-grade car parking with basement level parking with access points strategically located on Zeally Bay Road, Pearl Street and Bristol Road would have the benefits of removing circulating vehicles from within the Town Centre area, provide protection from the elements and release high value town centre sites for mixed use development or new public town centre space. Incorporating basement car parking pedestrian entry points into the local streetscape, or through enclosed developments would also improve convenience for local users and visitors to the centre.

Strategies and associated actions for managing car parking within the Town Centre are as follows:

- Recognise the impact increased access to the Town Centre by sustainable transport will have on the current demand for car parking.
- Establish a system for managing peak car parking periods, including consideration of park and ride services or the identification of overflow parking areas.
- Discourage the provision of any further at grade car parking spaces. Additional building height contemplated should ensure the feasibility of underground parking options, or the payment of a waiver.
- Where staff car parking is required ensure this is to the rear of any built form, does not front an identified Pedestrian Priority route and is accessed via shared accessways where possible to support preferred zero side setbacks within most of the Town Centre.
- Retain on-street carparking within and around the Town Centre where this does not compromise pedestrian movement.
- Do not locate any at-grade car parking spaces fronting an identified Pedestrian Priority Route.
- Require vehicular access to new development fronting The Esplanade between Gilbert and Zeally Bay Road to utilise Coulson Lane. This will reduce the number of vehicular crossovers and slightly increase the number of parallel car parking spaces available in this area. Ensure that Coulson Lane is widened as part of any redevelopment to ensure the functionality of access.
- South of Gilbert Street, access to car parking or loading areas should be provided via shared accessways wherever possible.
- As part of the reconfiguration of Gilbert Street remove on street parallel parking on the south side of the street and introduce angled car parking along the full length of the northern side, except at identified pedestrian crossing points and in front of the proposed Town Plaza.
- Consider the introduction of paid car parking along Gilbert Street to promote turnover and most efficient use of road space and assist in ensuring parking bays are available for short-term users such as local business customers.
- Reduce the parking requirement for office development in order to facilitate increase office space within the Town Centre.

- A feasibility study / business case should be developed to investigate the potential for the development of a major underground car parking facility between Bristol Road and Zeally Bay Road including the existing Council car park and the Woolworths site.
- Provide additional angled car parking on the east side of The Esplanade, except for identified pedestrian crossing points where kerb outstands are proposed, this could extend down to Anderson Road.
- Formalise car parking along Zeally Bay Road, with the exception of identified pedestrian crossing points and the area between Walker and Cliff Street identified for a future bus stop. The additional 10 or so spaces that will be gained through formalising this car parking will offset the loss of spaces to provide a bus stop in this location.
- Construct angled car parking on the east side of Payne Street.
- Construct 90 degree parking on the east side of Cliff Street.
- Consider the establishment of additional long bay parking areas to the west wide of Taylor Park and south of the Town Centre along The Esplanade.
- Ensure a mix of short term parking is provide on streets within the town core in a mix from 2 hrs to 15min.
- Long term parking should be provided in peripheral streets, and integrated into future basement car parks.
- Consider waivers for visitors parking for mixed use developments given the surveyed peak vacancy rates.

The Esplanade and Bell Street Traffic and Pedestrian Strategy

The following recommendations made within the draft of this document have been adjusted:

- Recommendation for the use of central medians on The Esplanade. Kerb out stands are preferred to central medians as they are both safer for pedestrians and allow greater scope for the introduction of landscaping
- An additional crossing point is recommended in conjunction with a laneways connection form Boston Road
- A crossing is also recommended at the north side of Anderson Street in recognition of the proposed expansion of the commercial footprint.

key direction 8: increase town centre awareness and connect the parts

At the moment, the Town Centre has very little presence on the Surf Coast Highway, and indeed, the Surf City Complex could be considered the 'Town Centre' for those less familiar with Torquay. Current signage and access to the Town Centre is confusing and there is significant scope for improvement. This Key Direction seeks to establish a distinct built form response within the Town Centre, through built form change, and also streetscape improvements.

Allowing residents and visitors to appreciate when they are 'in' the Town Centre also acts to protect the residential surrounds from encroachment. However, while a robust Town Centre form may establish over time, signalling its location on the Surf Coast Highway should be prioritised in the shorter term. It is important again, that this is undertaken in a way which is consistent with the broader message, or 'branding' of the Town Centre – as somewhere distinct from other 'urban' town centres through the extent of vegetation, connections to the coast and sense of 'play'. Along The Esplanade, a consistent Promenade treatment between Anderson and Zeally Bay Roads, along with increased vegetated kerb outstands and a lower speed limit will signal the Town Centre. Lesser gateways should also be acknowledged through additional landscape interventions.

Within the Town Centre itself there are a number of interconnected issues which contribute to the acknowledged disjointed nature of the Town Centre. Due to the current road network, distribution of uses, the extent of car parking areas and lack of signage, the Town Centre currently lacks clarity of form beyond the original Town Centre area of Gilbert Street. Encouraging the development of existing at-grade car parking areas will assist in this.

Key Direction 10 addresses the need to strengthen activity within the northern portion of the Town Centre, through creating stronger built form edges and facilitating increased activity to link disconnected spaces. While a lesser weight is placed within this UDF on linking Torquay Village to Gilbert Street than has been the case previously, nonetheless, there are opportunities for a strengthening of built form, an increase in activity and streetscape works to enhance the sense of connection between these two areas to reduce the sense of a 'fragmented' centre.

There is also a pressing need to improve signage and wayfinding within the Town Centre. Wayfinding is different to 'signage' which is a more explicit direction to specific sites. Wayfinding relates more closely to the ability of pedestrians to negotiate intuitively through a space without signage. The changes to built form and public realm interventions to mark thresholds and gateways within the Centre will assist with this. A clear grid of pedestrian pathways connecting the distinct Iconic Streetscapes will be supported by a consistent paving treatment throughout the remainder of the Centre to further reinforce the definition of the Town Centre.

strategies and associated actions

- Establish a clearer urban structure within the Town Centre by:
 - Requiring any development of Strategic Development Site 3 to infill at-grade car parking areas to provide an active frontage to Gilbert Street;
 - Ensuring car parking for development fronting Gilbert Street is provided to the rear, or in underground car parking areas or is waived;
 - Encouraging sites on the south side of Bristol Road between Payne and Pearl Street to build to the Bristol Road and side boundaries as part of any redevelopment;
 - Discouraging any new vehicular crossovers along identified Pedestrian Priority Routes;
 - Developing the Council owned land identified as Strategic Development Site 2;
 - Encouraging the redevelopment of Strategic Development Site 1 to integrate underground car parking to allow for the development of the existing at-grade car park;
 - Requiring buildings within the Town Centre to have a zero lot line setback from the frontage to ensure a consistent streetscape appearance; and
 - Requiring zero lot line setbacks to be provided along side boundaries unless consolidated or rear car parking is not achievable.
- Enhance linkages to Torquay Village through:
 - Continuing the existing pergola streetscape treatment adjoining Torquay Village along remaining sites on the south side of Bristol Road to the proposed Town Plaza;
 - Requiring a zero lot setback as part of any redevelopment of land on the south side of Bristol Road between Payne and Pearl Streets. Requiring active ground floor uses along these frontages; and
 - Extending the proposed Pedestrian Priority Route (which introduces paving to the kerb line, with garden beds rather than a consistent landscaped verge, see Page 46) to Payne Street on both sides of Bristol Road.
- Improve connections from the Surf Coast Highway through:
 - Supporting the proposed signalisation of Bristol Road in recognition of the amount of traffic using this road;
 - Establishing an 'iconic' public art piece at this intersection to 'mark' the Town Centre location within the existing grassed highway median leading up to the proposed traffic signals; and
 - Establishing a distinctly 'coastal' verge and median treatment for two blocks on the eastern side of the Surf Coast Highway between Zeally Bay and Boston Roads. This should involve replacing the existing grassed verges with garden beds consistent with the treatments proposed within the Town Centre (boulders, grasses etc).
- Upgrade the Bristol Road streetscape in recognition of its role in connecting the Surf Coast Highway and the Town Centre through:
 - Establishing a 2.2m shared path on the south side of the street and a 1.8m wide pedestrian path on the north side of the street;
 - Introducing a landscape verge treatment between the Surf Coast Highway and the bus stop, including canopy trees and understorey planting, as well as outstands including a second row of trees where possible;
 - Discouraging additional on-street car parking between Surf Coast Highway and Payne Street;
 - Monitoring loading and deliveries associated with Torquay Village to ensure they are not occurring informally 'on-street'. Consider use of the two existing on-street car spaces for a designated on-street loading zone;
 - Advocating the undergrounding of powerlines along this street;
 - Requiring building setbacks of 6m for any new development to Payne Street and the integration of 'coastal' vegetation within the front setback.
- Use streetscape treatments to clearly identify a grid of pedestrian connections through the Town Centre.
- Incorporate a series of new pedestrian connections as part of any redevelopment of major landholdings to increase pedestrian permeability.

- Mark Town Centre gateways through:
 - Establishing a 'gateway' treatment at Bristol Road, as above;
 - Recognising the intersections of Zeally Bay Road / Fischer Street and Pearl Street / Anderson Street as secondary gateways and introducing feature canopy trees on the four corners of the intersection;
 - Utilising a consistent paving treatment between Gilbert Street and the associated Park Edge Plaza, and introducing a colour treatment to the proposed crossing points at this intersection which extends into both the pedestrian pavement of Gilbert Street and the Plaza to further define this key gateway to the Town Centre core;
 - Including canopy vegetation and associated sculptural art elements as part of the introduction of any roundabout to the Zeally Bay Road / The Esplanade intersection; and
 - Installing signage or other wayfinding at the intersection of Beach Road and Fischer Street to distribute north / south vehicular movement to the Town Centre from Beach Road between Fischer Street and The Esplanade
- Improve signage and wayfinding throughout the Centre, as follows:
 - Develop a Signage Strategy, to allow for the installation of directional signage through the centre in a consistent format. Priority locations for way finding signage are identified on Access & Movement Plan;
 - Remove any obsolete or damaged signage once consistent signage is established within the Town Centre to reduce visual clutter;
 - Install open space map signage at all Park Edge Plazas to illustrate pedestrian connections to broader attractions as identified on Figure 8);
 - Integrate a Town Centre map illustrating linkages to key activity areas within Torquay into the Town Plaza; and
 - Integrate 'Surf Coast Walk', 'Start of the Great Ocean Road' signage and way finding & plan based signage on the trail indicating the features of the adjoining Town Centre.



key direction 9: introduce playfulness

One of the most important, but intangible, elements of Torquay’s character is the sense of informality, associated with both the surfing culture that underpinned the town’s evolution and helped define its identity, and the influence of beachgoers and holidaymakers within the Centre – by their very nature, relaxed. Torquay is positioned as a lifestyle and holiday destination, and this should be reflected in the public spaces of the Centre. This Key Direction seeks to ensure that as the Centre evolves, this sense of informality is retained and indeed enhanced, through the introduction of playful and informal elements. By consciously encouraging a sense of ‘play’ within the public realm of the Centre, this critical part of the Centre’s identity can be preserved, even as a denser built form emerges in response to strategic imperatives. The ‘surf’ lifestyle is also associated with a slightly ‘irreverent’ approach which challenges the *status quo* which should be recognised

There are a number of ways this can be facilitated within the Town Centre. First and foremost is by acknowledging the importance of playfulness and recognising the value this brings. This can be supported by the design of spaces which encourage a sense of play and other informal social interactions. Allowing for flexible and multi-use spaces within and around the Centre that can be programmed by the community is also important. Often good ideas for use of spaces within Town Centres is stymied by governance structures or bureaucracy but Torquay has a good precedent of successful pop-up spaces which should be encouraged. Council can also be more proactive in encouraging local artists to consider ways of purposefully integrating a range of site responsive street art interventions which make people laugh (band aids over cracks for example) as they move through the Centre. More formal elements of play are also possible within reimagined public spaces, such as climbable sculptures of local species within Park Edge Plazas and the integration of water play elements within the new Town Plaza.

strategies and associated actions

- Ensure that planning is supportive of multi-purpose spaces - a street can be a market, a park can function as an open-air cinema, a lane as a gallery.
- Put in place a policy structure and intra-Council support which streamlines inventive use of space within the Town Centre - a one-stop shop for activation driven by the community.
- Investigate ways of introducing playful, site responsive, street art into the centre, consider commissions or adopt a position of retaining non-commissioned street art where it contributes to the sense of playfulness within the Centre.

- Ensure that playfulness is considered as a design driver in the design of the new Town Plaza, and investigate opportunities for the integration of water based play within the northern portion of this site.
- Integrate public art which encourages interaction within the Town Centre, particularly at key sites such as Park Edge Plazas. This could include pieces which encourage physical interaction or which generate amusement (such as the pigs in Rundle Street Mall in Adelaide).
- Use the integration of new street furniture to consider opportunities to introduce playfulness rather than using ‘standard’ products, for example in the provision of bicycle parking within the Town Centre.
- Preference street tree plantings such as Banksias and Drooping Sheoaks which have tactile seed pods to encourage interactions.
- Support increased use of the Town Centre for buskers and other street performers and ensure that streets are designed to provide appropriate spaces.



key direction 10: strengthen the northern edge

This Key Direction seeks to recognise the clear potential that exists to create additional floorspace to support future growth within the large areas of existing at grade car parking north of Bristol Road. The infilling of these large areas with building forms that create a legible edge to the urban blocks around Walker and Cliff Street will contribute to a more robust Town Centre. There are also exciting opportunities to pursue development of Council owned land with uses which contribute to the strengthening of cultural and community activities within the Town Centre, drawing activity from the core Gilbert Street area through the proposed Town Plaza and up towards Taylor Park. By strengthening the intervening built form in association with a range of social activities, a sense of connection between Taylor Park and the Town Centre will finally be realised. A strong built form edge along Zeally Bay Road and the establishment of a second Iconic Streetscape wrapping around The Esplanade will enhance the attractiveness of this northern edge, building on the amenity offered by the generous canopy line at the southern edge of Taylor Park.

Works within Taylor Park to support the spillover of appropriate activity from the Town Centre should also occur, including the development of Park Edge Plazas at key entry points, designed to draw people into this beautiful but underutilised space. New pedestrian crossing points and shared paths will further facilitate this flow of activity. In addition, opportunities for the further use of the large area of open ground just beyond the canopy line for events, particularly concerts or other events which might benefit from the atmosphere created by a setting within a canopy embrace should be pursued. A third local bus stop at this location will provide direct local access to this increased activity without an overreliance on private vehicle use.

strategies and associated actions

- Infill urban blocks north of Bristol Road between Fischer Street and Coulson Lane, requiring new development to have a zero setback from the frontage at ground floor level.
- Support the establishment of a more robust built form along Zeally Bay Road with a two storey streetwall supporting hospitality, accommodation or residential uses at the first to fourth floors taking advantage of the outlook and contributing to passive surveillance.
- On Strategic Development Site 1, allow for an additional fifth storey in discrete locations which do not have a significant impact on perceived heights and can be successfully integrated.
- Require built form above two storeys on Strategic Development Site 1 to be set back to provide a openness when viewed from Pearl Street and to retain glimpses of canopy vegetation beyond.

- Acknowledge the role that the canopy vegetation along the Talyor Park edge plays in screening longer range views of the Town Centre.
- Do not support any at-grade car parking or loading zones to locate to Zeally Bay Road frontages.
- Do not support any new vehicular crossovers to Zeally Bay Road and encourage the removal of existing crossovers where possible.
- Establish uses which have an on-street presence at the ground level of development between Walker Street and The Esplanade.
- Require ground floor uses associated with 46 The Esplanade to wrap the corner of Zeally Bay Road and The Esplanade to provide a greater sense of connection between these two proposed Iconic Streetscapes.
- Explore options for a public / private development of Strategic Development Site 2 to integrate community, cultural or employment supporting land uses which may otherwise be difficult to establish, with consideration also given to 'small space' rentals to facilitate associated commercial activity.
- Upgrade Cliff Street to provide a more amenable pedestrian environment including a minimum 2m wide footpath consistent with the broader streetscape palette. The remainder of the public realm to the kerbline should be used to establish a series of low level garden beds and strong line of canopy tree planting to create a visual link to the vegetation present in Taylor Park.
- Support the introduction of additional 90 degree car parking on the east side of Cliff Street as recommended in the *Parking and Access Strategy 2016*.
- Strongly encourage the removal of existing vehicular crossovers to Cliff Street to increase the potential for streetscape planting; encourage access to basement car parking either from Walker Street or integrated in a larger basement as part of any development of Strategic Development Site 2, only support one crossover as part of any redevelopment of 5 Zeally Bay Road, only support access to basement car parking accessed from Coulson Lane as part of any redevelopment of 4-6 Cliff Street.
- Within land managed by Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (Taylor Park) advocate for the following outcomes:
 - Protecting and strengthening of the strong canopy planting along the Zeally Bay Road edge;
 - Sealing and line marking of existing informal car parking areas and the establishment of a new local bus stop between Walker and Cliff Streets;

- Establishing a small paved plaza areas to act as Park Edge Plazas from Walker and Cliff Streets, including park map signage and bicycle racks;
- Ensuring park map signage indicates the range of facilities available in Taylor Park (such as the duck pond), as well as broader connections available through the path network;
- Using the large clear area between the Zeally Bay canopy line and the duck pond for events such as small scale music festivals etc that would benefit from a location within a canopy environment. Consider integration of uplighting on carefully selected canopy trees to increase attractiveness during events;
- Upgrading of existing picnic facilities. Consideration should be given to relocating these closer to the Zeally Bay Road frontage and the integration of public toilet facilities to support both events and the establishment of a new bus stop; and
- Upgrading of existing paths through Taylor Park to provide a generous off-road shared path connection to the Town Centre from northern residential areas.
- Establish wombat crossings at the intersections of Zeally Bay Road and Walker and Cliff Streets connecting to the Park Edge Plazas to prioritise pedestrian movement across this interface.



key direction 11: embrace the foreshore

The connection of the Town Centre to the foreshore and surf beach beyond is highlighted throughout this document as a key defining feature of the Town Centre. Enhancing connections to this important space has been a consistent theme in planning for this area over many years but limited concrete actions have been outlined to support this aspiration. The UDF envisages a multipronged approach to embracing the foreshore. This includes a 'reimagining' of the direction for Town Centre growth to increase the amount of activity and activation close to the foreshore (as opposed to along Bristol Road) by including land down to Anderson Street within the commercial area. The UDF also sees the proposed introduction of an Iconic Streetscape which will evolve into a distinctive urban promenade to rival other key coastal interfaces, such as Mountjoy Parade in Lorne.

Supporting these initiatives will be a careful increase in building heights to retain the human scale, setting back proposed higher built form to avoid a dominant interface while encouraging a 'framing' element at the third level to create a robust and consistent frame for the foreshore, rather than staggered separations between building forms along The Esplanade. Activation of usable open spaces at the upper levels along the Esplanade through the integration of winter gardens at first floor levels and generous decks above will support the ongoing tourism focus along this frontage.

A number of other works within the public realm will enhance pedestrian connectivity and visual connections, not only to the foreshore, but to the beach beyond. These include integration and enhancement of pedestrian laneways to increase opportunities for pedestrian connections and associated pedestrian priority crossings. Importantly treatments at the intersection of Gilbert Street and The Esplanade should include the integration of a 'sand' coloured road pavement which extends from within the Gilbert Street curtilage including kerbs to encompass proposed zebra crossings

strategies and associated actions

- Extend the area of the Torquay Town Centre with a connection to the coast by rezoning land to the south of the existing Town Centre bounded by Pearl Street, Anderson Street and The Esplanade to a commercial zone.
- Implement a maximum two storey height limit along the Esplanade at the street frontage, with a third and fourth storeys supported only with generous setbacks.
- Require a minimum 2.5 metre setback from the northern boundary of 38 The Esplanade within 14m of The Esplanade kerb to match the condition on the northern side of Gilbert Street and retain a sense of openness at this important junction.

- Require setbacks at ground floor level of all developments fronting The Esplanade to support a minimum 5m setback from the kerbline.
- Identify key sites in highly exposed locations along The Esplanade as Design Benchmark Sites and require a very high level design response to ensure an appropriate delivery of quality coastal architecture. Require review by the Office of the Victorian Government Architect to support this.
- Support the retention and reuse of old weatherboard housing stock for hospitality uses along The Esplanade.
- Do not support any at-grade car parking or loading zones to locate to The Esplanade frontages.
- Do not support any new vehicular crossovers to The Esplanade and encourage the removal of existing crossovers where feasible.
- Require the establishment of a new pedestrian connection between Boston Road and The Esplanade as part of any development of Strategic Development Site 3. This may be a shared space which also provides access to loading areas if this is managed in a way which protects pedestrian amenity and safety.
- Within land managed by Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (the foreshore area) advocate for the following outcomes:
 - Marking the start of the Surf Coast Walk on the foreshore adjacent to the Town Centre;
 - Removing the existing vegetation at the termination of Gilbert Street and establish a new Park Edge Plaza and associated plantings which reflect the alignment and colour palette of the proposed crossing to enhance the sense of connection between Gilbert Street and the foreshore;
 - Realigning pathways to provide a direct connection from this plaza to beach entry points and the lookout;
 - Providing minor extensions to the existing north / south pedestrian path to connect to other proposed pedestrian crossing points along The Esplanade;
 - Connecting the second beach access stairs to the main shared pathway;
 - Supporting the continued use of the foreshore for events and activities such as markets or outdoor cinemas; and
 - Encouraging the integration of some additional canopy vegetation to provide shade for visitors. Any vegetation would need to be carefully considered to avoid blocking key views or compromising event space.

- Undertake a range of actions to slow traffic movement along The Esplanade through the Town Centre to reduce the sense of separation between the foreshore and the Town Centre caused by vehicular movement. These actions include:
 - The provision of new kerb outstands to provide additional safe pedestrian crossing points and narrow the road pavement width;
 - The introduction of a new intersection treatment to The Esplanade and Gilbert Street which continues a consistent colour palette from Gilbert Street across the road pavement and into the proposed Park Edge Plaza; and
 - The reduction of vehicular speeds between Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street to 40km/h.



key direction 12: enhance local biodiversity and resilience

This Key Direction seeks to strengthen the relationship of the Town Centre to the broader environment within which it is situated. Torquay’s coastal location is associated with specific sensitivities and it is important that future development of the Town Centre responds to this. As a regional focal point for a community with a strong interest in sustainability it is considered that the Town Centre should ‘set the bar high’ in ensuring a response to its environment. As a first priority, the integration of Water Sensitive Urban Design features in any public or private development within the Centre should be pursued to ensure that run off is minimised. Further to this, the overarching pursuit of Town Centre ‘greening’ is important on a number of fronts and drives a number of the priority actions outlined within the Implementation section. Increasing both the canopy cover and lower level planting within the Town Centre offers multiple benefits; it provides increased shade and weather protection for pedestrians, it increases the available habitat for local wildlife, it increases the amenity and attractiveness of the Town Centre and it increases the broader resilience of the Town Centre to changes within the climate (for example, the Urban Heat Island Effect). While it is anticipated that the identified ‘iconic streets’ will be more ‘urban’ in nature, they, along with the remainder of the streets within the Town Centre, are identified for increased canopy tree integration and low level planting which should reflect more localised conditions.

strategies and associated actions

- Increase vegetation throughout the Town Centre, with a particular focus on connections from Taylor Park.
- Significantly increase the amount of canopy tree plantings within and around the Town Centre, with a focus on Drooping Sheoak and Silver Banksia and Bellarine Yellow Gum where suitable.
- Use street tree plantings to assist in distinguishing streets for example:
 - Bellarine Yellow Gums along Bristol Road to Payne Street;
 - Drooping She oaks along The Esplanade, Zeally Bay Road and Cliff Street; and
 - Silver Banksias along remaining streets.
- Prioritise new canopy street tree planting along Priority Pedestrian Routes to provide shade and interest.
- Ensure the continued integration of low level planting in association with canopy vegetation to enhance the opportunities for habitat for smaller species (birds, lizards etc).

- Ensure that new planting within the Town Centre is in keeping with an identified preferred species list (see highlight box). Require new private development within the Town Centre to have regard to this preferred species list.
- Encourage the use of integrated landscape or vegetation within private developments where vegetation can be used to soften built form.
- Require visible roof spaces to provide either an architectural response or, preferably, to integrate low level grasses or succulents consistent with principles of green roof development.
- Require the integration of WSUD outcomes as part of any development within the Town Centre. Develop a policy for this which reflect reasonable outcomes for different scales of development.
- Ensure that the development of the Iconic Streetscapes and the Town Plaza both consider opportunities for the integration of water sensitive urban design outcomes. Within the Town Plaza consider how this could be further integrated with a child friendly / playful area of water based play.
- Consider and support the integration of innovative waste disposal options across the Town Centre such as the centralised recycling of food scraps or coffee grounds associated with hospitality uses.
- Ensure the provision of public recycling bins at all Park Edge Plazas and the Town Plaza.
- Investigate opportunities for the use of solar power for lighting and other small usage outlets, for example, a mobile charging station within the Town Plaza.
- Support opportunities for the delivery of appropriate localised energy generation within the Town Centre.

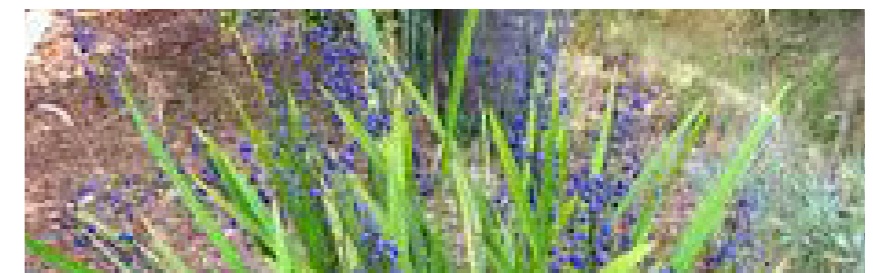
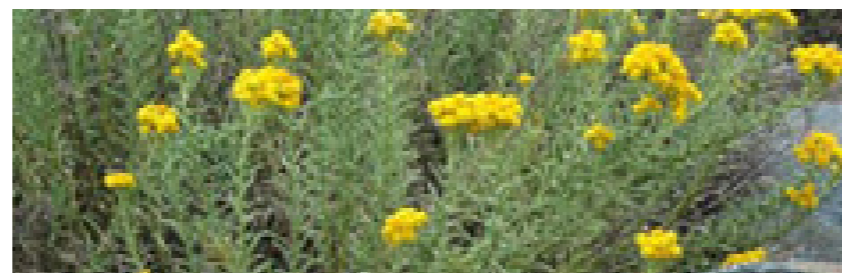
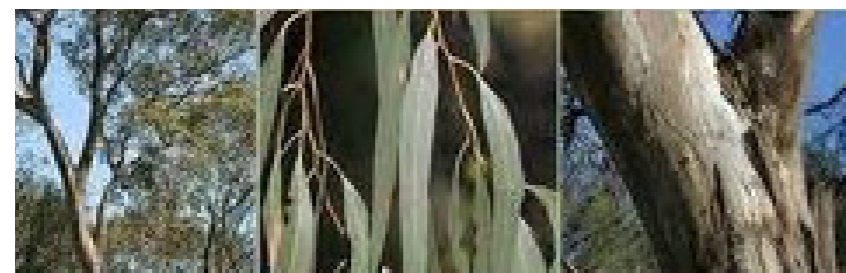


Vegetation within the town centre should reflect the following aspirations, consistent with previous strategies:

“Mounded garden beds add sculptural form and visual interest to streetscape, with the organic forms contrasting with the right angled geometry of the built environment. Local boulders combined with indigenous grasses and shrubs are used to reflect the rugged coastal environment of Torquay. Planting in the town centre, incorporates a variety of native trees, shrubs and grasses to provide thematic links to areas adjoining the Torquay Town Centre and the natural, coastal environment beyond. This is particularly emphasised through the reoccurrence of distinctive vegetation including feathery She-oaks and the robust Banksias. The lower branches of these trees are amenable to regular trimming which will allow vistas to be maintained along key streets.”

Understorey planting of shrubs and grasses in the garden beds introduces a lower level of vegetation focusing on form, colour and texture. The recommended grasses and flowering groundcovers will consolidate planting and strengthen the coastal theme. Species selection for the streetscape and surrounding area are as follows:

trees	shrubs	ground covers
Bellarine Yellow Gum (<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i> ssp <i>bellariensis</i>)	Silver Banksia (<i>Banksia marginata</i>)	Cut Leaf Daisy (<i>Brachyscome multifida</i>)
Spotted Gum (<i>Corymbia maculate</i>)	Common Everlasting (<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>)	Tasman Flax lily (<i>Dianella tasmanica</i>)
Lightwood (<i>Acacia implexa</i>)	Silky Guinea-flower (<i>Hibbertia sericea</i>)	Knobby Club-sedge (<i>Isolepis nodosa</i>)
Drooping Sheoak (<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>)	Silky Teatree (<i>Leptospermum myrsinoides</i>)	Running Postman (<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>)
Silver Banksia (<i>Banksia Marginata</i>)	Dusty Miller (<i>Spyridium parvifolium</i>)	Tussock Grass (<i>Poa labillardieri</i>)
Shining Peppermint (<i>Eucalyptus willisii</i>)		Coast Tussock Grass (<i>Poa poiformis</i>)
Moonah (<i>Melaleuca lanceolata</i>)		Seaberry Saltbush (<i>Rhagodia baccata</i>)



key direction 13: provide enhanced sustainable transport opportunities

A good public transport system provides a viable and attractive alternative to private car travel beyond an immediate walking or cycling range. Public transport also provides a valuable community service through improving access for the elderly and people with limited mobility to travel to destinations, such as community centres or shopping centres, along with proven environmental and road network efficiency benefits. Torquay Town Centre currently contains two local bus stops. The first, near the intersection of Boston and Pearl Streets also acts as the local bus interchange. The second is located adjoining Torquay Village on Bristol Road. In supporting a Town Centre with a lesser emphasis on vehicular movement it is critical that alternate means of accessing the Centre are facilitated. Given the emphasis and scale of change likely within the northern portion of the Town Centre, a third local bus stop is identified on Zeally Bay Road.

In addition, the current regional public transport connections do not reflect the role of the designated main activity area and the 'Start of the Great Ocean Road'. In the longer term, a rerouting of the Regional V/Line bus service to provide direct access to the Torquay Town Centre will offer significant benefits for regional tourism and, importantly, will serve to reinforce Torquay as part of the Great Ocean Road, a distinction which is currently affected by the lack of 'coastal' exposure for regional tourists passing through the township. Initial discussions with V/Line indicate a preference to keep this regional service on the Surf Coast Highway to minimise additional journey time for the largest proportion of passengers with an origin/destination further along the Surf Coast, such as Lorne or Apollo Bay. While these discussions indicate this is likely to be a medium to long term action, exposing regional tourists to the coastal location of the Town Centre and its associated tourism offer should be pursued. In the shorter term, there are clear opportunities to facilitate improved pedestrian movement between the existing Surf Coast Highway bus stops and the Town Centre. The connectivity of the Town Centre to the proposed V/Line rail extension should also be prioritised in forward planning for that important transport initiative.

Providing a safe and efficient cycling network in Torquay is integral to achieving a sustainable transport system that provides transport choice, improves access and enhances quality of life for local residents, in particular the growing younger demographic that may not have access to other reliable forms of transport. While the regional bicycle network is becoming established through the Pathways initiatives, improvements are required to local access through establishing safe and attractive local cycle routes. A significant proportion of the local population is within an easy cycling distance of the Town Centre and the local topography combined with the generally low speed traffic environment within Town Centre are all favourable factors for cyclists. Council has a major

role to play in encouraging the uptake of cycling through the provision of safe and appropriate facilities both on-road and through requiring new developments to provide accessible end-of-trip facilities such as secure bicycle parking, change rooms and showers for staff. Providing for and promoting uptake of cycling for local trips is a relatively low cost means of boosting capacity in the local road network through the more efficient use of existing infrastructure and is one way to address congestion in peak periods, such as summer holidays in Torquay.

strategies and associated actions

- Support direct and convenient access to the Centre for all bus services, local and regional.
- Ensure strong and direct connections between the Town Centre and proposed rail extension are considered in early stages of planning.
- Establish a third Town Centre bus stop on Zeally Bay Road and adjust local bus routes to reflect this new stop.
- The bus interchange should remain in its current location (on Boston Road) but the functionality of this should be monitored as the Town Centre evolves and existing informal layover spaces for school buses relocated in the future if necessary.
- Undertake adjustments as follows to better support bus movements within the Town Centre:
 - Widen Fischer Street between Bristol and Zeally Bay Roads to match width north of Zeally Bay Road.
 - Install a roundabout at the intersection of Zeally Bay Road and The Esplanade.
- Advocate for the longer term re-routing of the regional V/Line bus to access the Town Centre via Bristol Road lights, Pearl Street and Bell Street.
- In the interim, advocate for the bus stop on the Surf Coast Highway to be identified as the 'Town Centre bus stop' and ensure clear signage and consistent footpaths on both sides of Bristol Road to the Town Centre.
- Continue to implement cycle connections to the Town Centre as identified in the *Pathways Strategy*. Implement on-road colour treatments to demarcate Regional / Local Bike Routes.
- Encourage the implementation of new shared path connections on two key north / south routes through Taylor Park to provide direct links into the Town Centre via the proposed Park Edge Plazas.

- Ensure the provision of bicycle parking at key locations within the Town Centre, including;
 - At the three proposed Park Edge Plazas
 - At the two bus stops
 - Within the proposed Town Plaza
 - At the main entry point of any redevelopment of one of the identified Strategic Development Sites.
- Do not support any waiver of bicycle parking or 'end of trip' facilities required though Clause 52.34 of the Planning Scheme.
- Consider the provision of publicly accessible 'end of trip' cycle facilities within the Town Centre, potentially within the development of Council land on Bristol Road.
- Consider the integration of a bicycle maintenance station within the Town Centre or within adjoining public land
- Upgrade bus stops to ensure DDA compliance and passenger amenity.
- Implement pedestrian priority crossings to connect bus stops to key destinations within the Town Centre.





IMPLEMENTATION

04



IMPLEMENTATION

public realm projects

As outlined within the UDF, and strongly supported by the community and stakeholder feedback, works within the Public Realm are a priority outcome for this project. Some works within the private realm will be delivered in conjunction with developers of private land and these are identified separately in the table below. Other works will occur in conjunction with the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee who manage Taylor Park and the foreshore reserve. Those works are identified in a table later in this chapter for further discussion with that land manager. There remains however, a significant body of work which will occur within Council land.

As previously identified, it is critical that this work be undertaken in both a coordinated manner, but also that sufficient budgets are allocated to ensure the works deliver design of a quality which responds to the importance of this Town Centre, not only as the major centre in Torquay but also as a key tourism destination. A co-ordinated program of works should therefore be developed for the Town Centre as a first priority once this UDF is finalised and funding should be sought from external sources wherever possible, including the State Government, to ensure that these actions can be delivered.

The following table lists a grouping of all proposed public works within the Centre and identifies relevant matters in relation to staging and priorities as well as relative costs

Key Direction #	Action Description
Immediate Priorities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with landowners and the community to improve existing laneway between Bristol Road and Gilbert Street. Consider integration of contextual mural, overhead lighting and opportunities for landscape opportunities in wall hung planters.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement measures to restrict vehicular movement between at-grade car parks and Gilbert Street to reduce circulation. Consider installation of bollards at existing entrances to test functionality. One entry to IGA car park may be retained in the shorter term if necessary.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a community placemaking exercise to develop a design agenda for the proposed Town Square. Consider the use of a pop-up in this area to test ideas. Any pop-up should include suitable buffers to the south to mitigate wind effect in advance of development of at-grade car park on the southern side of Gilbert Street.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install zebra crossings to the south, north and west of the Gilbert Street / The Esplanade intersection and surface treatments across the whole intersection in keeping with proposed 'sandy' pavement treatment for the Centre,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake further planning to confirm the required works on Gilbert Street to facilitate streetscape upgrades as identified in this document. Identify opportunities for community input to the process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute the Design Review Panel to ensure in place prior to the approval of any Planning Scheme Amendment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement recommendations of this document within the Surf Coast Planning Scheme.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate potential mechanisms for the delivery of identified outcomes for Council owned land parcels and the feasibility of identified uses.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the <i>Car Parking and Access Strategy 2016</i> and <i>The Esplanade and Bell Street Strategy 2017</i> to ensure consistency. Alignment of car parking objectives and the pedestrian crossing points on The Esplanade is required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm preferred method for installation of kerb outstands. These should be compatible with the Cadel Evens cycle race, and also be able to accommodate low level vegetation and feature boulders.
Short term Priorities (1 -2 years)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install a roundabout, and undertake associated works including kerb outstands and zebra crossings, at the intersection of Zeally Bay Road and The Esplanade. Ensure the integration of generous vegetation and gateway demarcation in planter boxes forms part of the works.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a 40km/h speed limit along The Esplanade within the Town Centre area, Bristol Road and Gilbert Street.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'Town Centre Design Guide' to identify a palette of preferred material and finishes, and to document preferred vegetation species, street furniture etc. This should be referenced not only by the Council but used by developers within the Town Centre to establish a consistent coastal 'feel'. Maintain and strengthen the relationship between the delivery of vegetation and landscape initiatives pursued by the GORCC in adjoining public spaces.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Gilbert Street streetscape upgrades to realign roadway to a one way system, widen pedestrian pavement on the south side, install pedestrian crossings and include additional vegetation (Drooping Sheoaks and associated understorey planting). Retile existing mosaic works during any upgrade and ensure appropriate consideration of proposed future linkages to the south. Adjustments to vehicular priority at the Bristol Road / Pearl Street intersection should be undertaken concurrently.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a signage strategy for the Town Centre to identify a consistent toolkit of signage, confirm signage requirements and locations and identify opportunities for removal or consolidation of existing signage.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a coordinated program of low level planting and canopy vegetation throughout the remainder of the Town Centre.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a set of guiding principles to ensure appropriate development along Pedestrian Priority laneway edges, including developing a 'hard edge' to accommodate some active uses, pedestrian friendly interfaces and design detailing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake streetscape upgrades along The Esplanade, Zeally Bay Road to Walker Street and Bristol Road.

Medium term Actions (2-5 years)

- Develop a policy which pro-actively seeks to support and encourage creative responses, both formal and informal, which contribute to a sense of ‘play’ within the Centre.
- Design and construct the proposed Town Plaza.
- Undertake signalisation of Bristol Road and the Surf Coast Highway.
- Establish a suitable public art contribution which signals the location of the Town Centre on the Surf Coast Highway.
- Undertake landscape works to implement recommendations to convert grassed verges on the Surf Coast Highway between Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street to low level coastal vegetation.
- Develop a WSUD policy for the Town Centre which reflect reasonable outcomes for different scales of development and provide clear guidance for what Council expects.
- Investigate funding mechanisms to establish a program of street cleaning / vandalism management within the Town Centre This could comprise the allocation of a dedicated Council staff member to the Town Centre with responsibilities including monitoring car parking, ensuring appropriate cleanliness and identifying maintenance works and vandalism requiring action.
- Put in place a policy structure and intra-Council support which streamlines inventive use of space within the town centre - a one-stop shop for activation driven by the community.
- Investigate mechanisms to increase presence of music with the Town Centre, given its strong association with the culture of Torquay.
- Undertake streetscape upgrades along Pearl Street, Walker Street and Cliff Street, including the integration of additional 90 degree carparking along Cliff Street.
- Undertake landscape work to mark gateways at Zeally Bay Road / Fischer Street and Pearl / Anderson Streets.
- Install additional pedestrian crossings on Boston Road, Pearl Street and Bristol Road.
- Facilitate the delivery by PTV / Department of Transport of a third Town Centre bus stop on Zeally Bay Road.
- Install wombat crossings on Zeally Bay Road at the intersection of Walker and Cliff Streets.
- Confirm and implement proposed changes to vehicular priority along Pearl Street (Boston Road intersection).
- Review distribution of timed car parking across the Town Centre to ensure strategic alignment.
- Formalise car parking along Zeally Bay Road and install additional angled car parking along The Esplanade.

Long Term Actions (5 plus years)

- Consider increasing access to information, through the creation of a ‘Surf Coast Start-ups’ referral service which allows new small business owners to access an information pack relevant to their sector outlining the various permits, requirements referral etc and which provides a streamlined service for facilitating the establishment of new small businesses within the Town Centre.
- Provide free Wi-Fi within the core of the Town Centre
- Undertake widening of Fischer Street and establishment of new footpath to western edge.
- Undertake construction of the remaining identified on-street car parking spaces.
- Investigate activation opportunities for Coulson Lane, with a particular focus on cultural activities and its relationship to the Town Centre Plaza and Strategic Development Site 2.
- Advocate for regional transport services to provide direct connections to the Town Centre.
- Undertake remaining streetscape upgrades and identified additional footpath delivery.





On-going Actions

- Assess other opportunities to increase coastal vegetation cover within and around the Town Centre. This might include actions such as the distribution of seeds or seedlings to nearby residents where 'verge greening' with coastal grasses rather than traditional lawn is supported to allow for residents to participate in this process as and when they desire.
- Continue to develop a program of year round events focused on the Town Centre and adjoining public spaces, and encourage community programming of spaces where possible.
- As new laneway connections reliant on private land are developed, implement additional pedestrian crossing points.
- Ensure appropriate connections to the Town Centre are considered in early planning for the proposed train station.
- Investigate and support opportunities for innovative waste disposal systems within the Town Centre, with a particular focus on coordination of waste associated with hospitality uses.
- Monitor functionality of the existing bus interchange as Town Centre development evolves.

planning scheme changes

The following changes are recommended to the Surf Coast Planning Scheme to facilitate delivery of this UDF.

- Minor changes to Local Policy at Clause 21.08 to ensure consistent directions are identified.
- Consideration should be given to introducing a local policy to set objectives for the Town Centre and provide assistance in understanding how discretion will be exercised within the Town Centre area.
- Revise existing Design and Development Overlay controls to reflect the content of this document
- Remove the existing Development Plan Overlay from land between Pearl and Payne Streets
- Rezone land between Pearl Street, Anderson Street and The Esplanade to the Commercial 1 Zone.
- Rezone land to on the north side of Bristol Road (numbers 24-38) to an appropriate zone, and introduce a schedule to specify a maximum building height of 9m and include objectives relating to land use and setbacks as outlined within this document.
- Review the Parking Overlay to ensure car parking provision is in line with the aspirations of this document.

other actions

planning processes:

Third Party Appeal Rights: Once this Framework for the Town Centre has been considered by the community, approved by Council and integrated into the Surf Coast Planning Scheme, then decisions about the appropriateness of any individual development application should be made by the Council against the aims of this Framework, without third party involvement. New processes proposed in relation to Design Review will act to protect residential interests in avoiding 'suburban' outcomes within the Town Centre.

Town Centre Planner: In addition, Council should allocate a resource within the planning team to be the focus for the assessment of Town Centre applications. This position should have three key objectives:

- To ensure a cohesive pattern of decision making within the Town Centre, by ensuring a detailed understanding of concurrent or potential future applications at the time an application is assessed.
- To ensure an appropriate weighting is given to the range of issues which need to be considered in assessing a planning application. This is important to ensure that the 'big picture' outcomes for the Town Centre are not compromised or significantly delayed by minor issues.
- To act as an advocate and broker in resolving outstanding issues with referral authorities, both internal and external, for applications which are in keeping with the aims of the UDF.

This position does not need to be dedicated solely to this Town Centre but should have sufficient flexibility within other workloads to respond promptly to town centre applications. It is also critical that the resource 'fits' the role and should have an enabling approach and an appreciation of design matters.

development of council land

Council should review processes available to utilise the development of existing at-grade Council car parks into development parcels where an overall community benefit can be derived.

In the case of the existing Council owned land to Pearl Street, consider using this land to facilitate the redevelopment of Key Development Site 3 with new public pedestrian and laneway linkages and the integration of additional publicly available car parking spaces in an underground formation. Also consider opportunities to leverage contributions to public realm upgrades to Gilbert Street as part of any development of that site.

The centrally owned site to the north of Gilbert Street is also highlighted as a key opportunity. The development of this land for the Town Centre Plaza will offer significant on-going benefits to the Town Centre and such a crucially located parcel should reflect this locational advantage, with car parking provided in more peripheral locations.

The third Council owned parcel within the Town Centre, between Cliff and Walker Streets also offers significant potential to contribute to a positive future. As outlined previously, using this site to facilitate delivery of uses and spaces that may not be delivered by the private sector could exert a strong influence in the Centre and contribute to both the ongoing vibrancy and delivery of jobs.

Many small 'start-up' businesses require a small space with a flexible contract and some basic facilities to move from concept to reality. To rent private space is expensive and contracts are often fixed for several years; a serious financial risk for starters. Investigation of the opportunities for the integration of a mix of small and micro spaces with limited fit-outs within any development of this Council site is recommended, with correspondingly small rents charged for a fixed period (for example 2 years with short termination periods). The simplicity of the spaces should be maintained to ensure maximum flexibility. A mix of small tenancies with street frontage and some without should be explored.

While a co-working space does not fulfil the same function as these 'small spaces', the facilitation of such a space within the Town Centre could also provide benefits. Other opportunities to explore include an independent cinema or the delivery of training spaces to assist with the delivery of tourism and hospitality growth (for example, the STREAT program which focuses on the delivery of training in conjunction with a cafe / bakery / coffee roaster). All these uses have potentially strong synergies, not only with each other, but with surrounding land uses. The delivery of private development on upper levels (for example the third and fourth floors) could assist in the delivery of these outcomes.

In adopting an approach which seeks to maximise the contribution Council land holdings make to the evolution of the Centre it is likely a range of options will need to be explored, including joint ventures, partnerships and other arrangement, A recent successful project of this type which may serve as a benchmark has been delivered in Greensborough, albeit at a larger scale (see 'The Greensborough Project' on the Banyule City Council website).

design review:

Another key change to deliver the UDF is the introduction of a Design Review Process. The first recommendation is to investigate mechanisms to establish a Torquay Town Centre Design Review Panel (including local architects, sustainability experts and other relevant experienced personnel) whose primary role is to assess any proposed design to ensure it is sufficiently responsive to the 'coastal' character. While it is understood 'private' design review panels have been previously established in Torquay, opportunities for a Council led review panel is important to the delivery of the vision identified in this document. Without the review of proposed building forms by a variety of qualified professionals there is a greater likelihood of designs which are 'OK' but which fail to respond to the coastal context being approved. As identified previously, the scale of change possible within the Town Centre as a result of landownership patterns means getting the detailed design of buildings 'right' is fundamental to delivering a 21st century town centre for Torquay's community. Any proposal for a new building or other major development should be referred to this Panel for assessment against the principles outlined earlier in this document (Page 40).

For key sites within the Town Centre identified as Priority Design Sites, referral to the Office of the Victoria Government Architect is recommended to ensure high quality outcomes. This referral is a formal process which invites the proponents to work pro-actively to deliver a design outcome fitting for such an important, but visually sensitive Centre.

By setting the bar high on design and requiring professional assessment of a response to coastal context, concerns around the impact of any additional building heights on the 'coastal character should be mitigated alongside the delivery of buildings which provide a positive contribution to the Centre.

Great Ocean Road Coast Committee

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) manages significant areas of public land adjoining the Town Centre. It is critical that Council work with GORCC to delivery integrated outcomes across these areas. A range of changes which affect GORCC managed land have been identified throughout the UDF. Council will need to ensure that delivery of these projects is facilitated in a way which is consistent with GORCC's obligations as a coastal land manager under the *Crown Lands Act* and which delivers the identified benefits to the Town Centre. Items identified below may be delivered through a masterplanning process for GORCC land, or through one-off projects.

The foreshore reserve

The following recommendations are made in relation to this land:

- Integration of Surf Coast Walk signage and way finding and plan based signage on the trail indicating the features of the adjoining Town Centre.
- Mark the start of the Surf Coast Walk on the foreshore adjacent to the Town Centre.
- Remove the existing vegetation at the termination of Gilbert Street and establish a new Park Edge Plaza and associated plantings which reflect the alignment and colour palette of the proposed crossing to enhance the sense of connection between Gilbert Street and the foreshore.
- Realign pathways to provide a direct connection from this plaza to beach entry points and the lookout.
- Provide minor extensions to the existing north / south pedestrian path to connect to other proposed pedestrian crossing points along The Esplanade.
- Connect the second beach access stairs to the main shared pathway.
- Support the continued use of the foreshore for events and activities such as markets or outdoor cinemas.
- Encourage the integration of some additional canopy vegetation to provide shade for visitors. Any vegetation would need to be carefully considered to avoid blocking key views or compromising event space.
- Integration of additional angled on-street car parking on the eastern side of The Esplanade south of Gilbert Street.

Taylor Park

The following recommendations are made in relation to this land:

- Protection and strengthening of the strong canopy planting along the Zeally Bay Road edge.
- Sealing and line marking of existing informal car parking areas and the establishment of a new local bus stop between Walker and Cliff Streets.
- Establishment of small paved plaza areas to act as Park Edge Plazas from Walker and Cliff Streets, including park map signage and bicycle racks.
- Ensure park map signage indicates the range of facilities available in Taylor Park (such as the duck pond), as well as broader connections available through the path network.
- Use of the large clear area between the Zeally Bay canopy line and the duck pond for events such as small scale music festivals etc that would benefit from a location within a canopy environment. Consider integration of uplighting on carefully selected canopy trees to increase attractiveness during events.
- Upgrades to existing picnic facilities. Consideration should be given to relocating these closer to the Zeally Bay Road frontage and the integration of public toilet facilities to support both events and the establishment of a new bus stop.
- Enhancement of the existing pathways to formal shared paths providing direct access to the Town Centre via Park Edge Plazas.



APPENDIX ONE: ACCESS

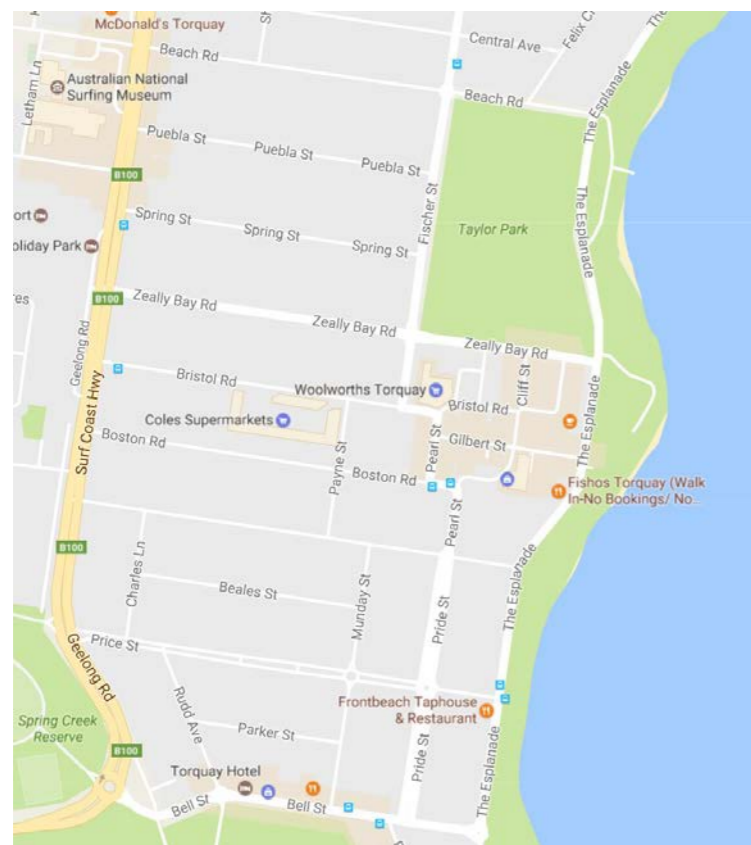


Context

Torquay and the broader Bellarine region are experiencing high levels of growth, providing opportunities for the town centre to evolve and perform a greater regional role, which will require regional connectivity and strong transport linkages. The forecast for a growing proportion of the population aged under 15 and over 65, who are less likely to drive or have access to a private motor vehicle, means consideration must be given to alternatives to private vehicle travel, such as strong pedestrian networks and public transport services.

As Torquay continues to evolve from a seasonal destination into a larger permanent residential centre, the subsequent investment needed to improve transport and access networks will be carried largely by the existing population for the benefit of visitors and future residents. It is therefore prudent to consider how to make the most effective use of existing infrastructure, such as car-parking and the road network. For example, the existing town centre car parking supply is not fully utilised and consideration can be given to alternative land uses that may carry a greater social, economic and environmental benefit.

This chapter identifies the transport context and makes a range of recommendations to guide the Town Centre Urban Design Framework project.



Strategic Policy Context

There are a number of key State Government and Council policy documents providing guidance on appropriate land use and development within Torquay. Those relevant in the context of integrated transport and land use planning are summarised below, with a more comprehensive review included in Appendix B to this document.

Relevant Documents

State Policy

- i. Plan Melbourne
- ii. Transport Integration Act (2010)
- iii. VicRoads SmartRoads
- iv. Victorian Cycle Strategy and Action Plan
- v. Pedestrian Access Strategy (2010)

Local Policy

The *Torquay-Jan Juc Strategy* at Clause 21.08 in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme provides strategic directions and actions in relation to transport and infrastructure. The following are of relevance to the Town Centre :

- Provide a linked network of walking and cycling paths throughout Torquay-Jan Juc, enabling direct access to all activity centres and to and through all areas of public open space.
- Develop The Esplanade in a manner that acknowledges its important role and function of providing access to the foreshore and being the visual link between the town and the coast.

Torquay Town Centre Parking and Access Strategy 2016- 21 FINAL DRAFT

Torquay Town Centre parking and access strategy currently prioritises private vehicle access and parking and it is important to also emphasise future planning for sustainable transport modes. A sustainable transport system is designed to encourage less reliance by individuals on the private car to meet their daily needs. It does this by increasing the attractiveness of other transport options, such as walking, cycling and public transport.

Key Policy Directions

A review of the relevant state, local, and national policy indicates the following key directions in relation to transport and land use in Torquay:

- i. 'Transport choice' is central to providing equitable access to employment and services. Transport choice means that there are a number of viable and attractive options, such as walking, cycling, public transport or private vehicles. Transport choice is also intrinsically linked to urban form. Providing activity centres with a range of employment, retail, educational and community services in close proximity to where people live means that people will have more transport choices.
- ii. Investment decisions in the transport network should be informed by a road user hierarchy.
- iii. Promoting sustainable transport (walking, cycling and public transport) is considered best practice on a state wide basis and can help recognise the following benefits:
 - Healthy, active communities – there is a strong link between active transport and health.
 - Socially connected, liveable communities – places where people walk, cycle and use public transport are likely to perform better on a range of social indicators.
 - Transport efficiency – increased use of sustainable transport has environmental and economic benefits through reduced greenhouse emissions and reduced space required for vehicle movement and storage.
 - Access for all members of the community – a large number of people in the community don't or can't drive, and the provision of attractive and viable alternative means of transport is a key factor in whether a community is affected by transport disadvantage.
 - Safety – Increased sustainable and active transport improves safety and perceptions of safety.
- iv. Planning for new development must consider providing for and promoting sustainable and active transport modes in accordance with the road user hierarchy. This includes a requirement for major developments to integrate with the transport network, including public transport and cycling.

Integrated Transport and Land Use - Guiding Principles

A. A safer network

- Embrace the Vision Zero safety approach in all transport and land use decisions.
- Increase real and perceived safety for all transport users within the Torquay Town Centre.

B. A more accessible Town Centre

- Provide a range of viable transport choices for access to and within the Town Centre
- Promote higher density mixed development around public transport corridors and hubs.

C. Promote sustainable transport

- Apply a Road User Hierarchy principles which prioritises active and public transport modes.
- Encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes within the road infrastructure and decrease reliance on private vehicles
- Make the most efficient use of existing street space
- Achieve strong pedestrian connections and wayfinding through a high-quality pedestrian network within and to the precinct.

D. Support existing and future business

- Support Torquay Town Centre development and access, provide for freight and servicing requirements

E. Manage car parking

- Minimise the impact of vehicle congestion and improve the efficiency of kerbside road space
- Create a balance between provision of sufficient parking capacity and providing a safe and accessible street environment for pedestrians and cyclists
- Consider alternative future uses for road space currently occupied by car parking

Pedestrian Accessibility and Connectivity

Strong and well-functioning pedestrian links are predominantly related to the measure of how pedestrian friendly and accessible an area is. The level of walkability depends on both the physical quality of the walking paths and the availability of pedestrian oriented destinations alongside the paths and determines the level of accessibility.

Pedestrian Oriented Design (POD) relates to the design and presentation of development, public spaces and associated facilities to encourage walking and create compact, walkable, mixed use communities. Improved pedestrian infrastructure and public realm experience makes it possible to reduce trips made by private motorised vehicle.

To provide strong pedestrian accessibility in the Torquay Town Centre, there is a need to focus on improving pedestrian network facilities and infrastructure. The existing parking and access strategy includes some actions and directions for sustainable travel, but specific recommendations on where improvements are needed, what infrastructure should be upgraded and prioritised, some origin destination mapping or observations of likely areas of highest activity is required.

Pedestrian priority routes should be provided along desire lines based on key attractors within the Town Centre such as supermarkets and retail areas, car parking, local and regional bus stops, schools, the Esplanade and foreshore. There are immediate improvements that can be made to improve the pedestrian network, such as in areas where footpaths are lacking on both sides of the street or potential exists for conflict between walkers and traffic which raises safety concerns.

There has been some attempt to provide for pedestrians within the Town Centre, through the construction of centre median refuges to assist pedestrians along desire lines at key intersections. However, this type of provision does not constitute a safe or formal pedestrian crossing, and in many cases only serves to confuse both car drivers and pedestrians as to who has the right of way and, in the worst-case scenario, create a more

dangerous situation where the most disadvantaged users of the pedestrian network such as the elderly or mobility impaired are then stranded between two lanes of moving traffic. Many of these existing mid-street refuges are located in the right location for pedestrians, but should be replaced with formal zebra crossing facilities.

Objectives

- Provide a safe, high amenity public realm that encourages walking, cycling and street activity
- Support high pedestrian and streetscape amenity in areas which are predominantly residential
- Increase the attractiveness of walking, through implementing Pedestrian Oriented Design (POD)

Recommendations

A key transport objective of this study is improving permeability and building strong connections through a high quality and safe pedestrian environment. In order to meet this objective, the following actions are recommended:

- Provision of a high amenity pedestrian environment for all streets within 800m of Town Centre to encourage walking. This should include DDA (1992) compliant footpaths and associated facilities (such as TGS1) on both sides of streets, safe pedestrian crossing points located on pedestrian desire lines, high quality public realm with shade, rest points, seating and lighting.
 - Provide zebra crossing points to accommodate safe pedestrian movements on The Esplanade at the following locations (consistent with the Draft The Esplanade and Bell Street traffic and pedestrian strategy – O'Brien Traffic 2017):
 - north of Gilbert Street intersection. Pedestrian surveys undertaken (O'Brien Traffic 2017) indicate a high proportion of pedestrians currently cross The Esplanade north of Gilbert Street despite the refuge island being located on the south side of the intersection.
 - Where an extended and formalised Coulson Lane link meets The Esplanade
 - Zeally Bay Road roundabout/entry treatment

It is recommended that all new zebra crossings on the Esplanade be implemented with kerb build outs to ensure crossing points are as short as possible, traffic is slowed and clear lines of sight are provided between traffic and pedestrians waiting to cross, who can then do so in one movement without the use of central refuge points and becoming stranded between two lanes of traffic.

Traffic modelling undertaken as part of the O'Brien Traffic study demonstrates that installation of pedestrian crossing points has negligible impact upon road capacity or travel times for motorists.
- Promotion of mid-block pedestrian linkages through new development sites and formalising or improving existing linkages such as from Coulson Lane to The Esplanade to improve pedestrian permeability and access within the Town Centre.
 - Closure of Cliff St between Bristol Road and Gilbert Street to vehicle access to promote a public square/town centre focal point and improved pedestrian space and facilities.
 - Implement an updated cross section on Gilbert Street to incorporate wider footpaths and increase in public space on south side of street to take advantage of solar access, shelter and provide improved public realm. To improve pedestrian access and safety as part of an upgraded Gilbert Street, three new zebra crossing points should be established on pedestrian desire lines in close proximity to:
 - the Pearl Street intersection
 - the new Cliff Street public space
 - The Esplanade intersection.
 - A new zebra crossing on Bristol Road to the east of the intersection with Pearl Street.
 - Provision of zebra crossings at the intersection of Pearl Street and Boston Road to provide safe pedestrian access between the town centre and bus stops located on either side of Boston Road. Given the location of the bus stops, two pedestrian crossings are recommended, one across Pearl Street and one across Boston Road west of the Pearl Street intersection. These crossing points should be complemented by establishment of pedestrian footpaths and associated facilities in the area as per Recommendation (i) above.
 - Provision of a new zebra crossing on Zeally Bay road integrated with the proposed new bus stops for Route 50 and any potential future VLine bus services to provide safe access for public transport users

as well as safe and direct access into Taylor Park from the Town Centre for recreational users and all other pedestrians.

- ix. Implement a clear wayfinding strategy for the Town Centre and surrounding area to better link the Surf Coast Walk with the Town Centre and surrounding street network. It is recommended that as a minimum, information signage is displayed at all new pedestrian crossing points that includes distance/time and directional information to key attractors and destinations. This would also provide an opportunity to incorporate Surf Coast Trail branding, the use of footpath markers or other materials to indicate wayfinding direction.
- x. At such time when car parking provision is relocated into basement facilities under new development sites within the Town Centre, ensure all pedestrian access to these facilities is of a high standard to address any perceived or real safety concerns and incorporated into active land uses wherever possible. These access points should be located close to key pedestrian hubs and local gathering points such as the new Cliff St public space, public transport stops on Zeally Bay Road and Boston Street, the Bristol Road and Gilbert Street shopping zones and internally within any new or existing major supermarket development.

Bicycle Access and Facilities

Cycling is one of the most sustainable and efficient forms of transport. Providing a safe and efficient cycling network in Torquay is integral to achieving a sustainable transport system that provides transport choice, improves access and enhances quality of life for local residents, in particular the growing younger demographic that may not have access to other reliable forms of transport.

While the regional bicycle network is becoming established through the Pathways initiatives, improvements are required to local access through establishing safe and attractive local cycle routes. A significant proportion of the local population is within an easy cycling distance of the town centre and the local topography combined with the generally low speed traffic environment within town centre are all favourable factors for cyclists.

Council has a major role to play in encouraging the uptake of cycling through the provision of safe and appropriate facilities both on-road and through requiring new developments to provide accessible end-of-trip facilities such as secure bicycle parking, change rooms and showers for staff. Providing for and promoting uptake of cycling for local trips is a relatively low cost means of boosting capacity in the local road network through the more efficient use of existing infrastructure and is one way to address congestion in peak periods, such as summer holidays in Torquay.

Objectives

- Eliminate ‘missing links’ and ‘missing connections’ in the on-street cycle network, creating a cohesive integrated active transport network
- Encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes within the road infrastructure and decrease reliance on private vehicles

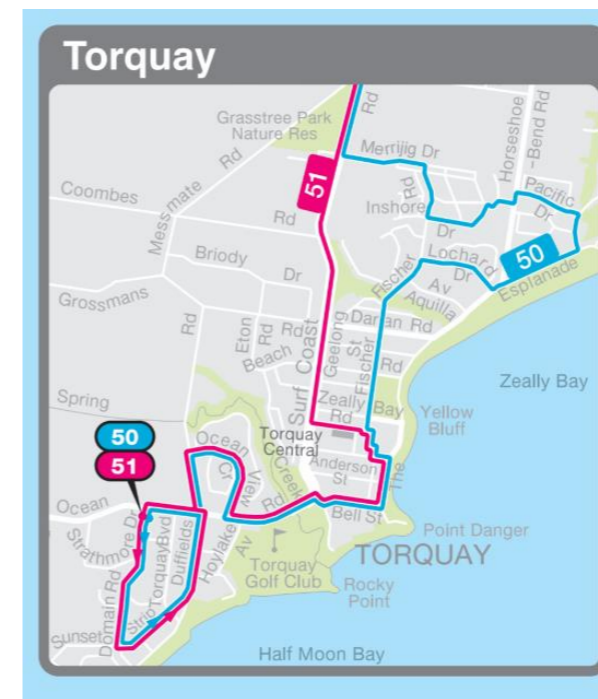
Recommendations

- i. Establish a network of safe on-street bicycle lanes to improve and encourage local access to the town centre by bicycle. The cross section of most local access streets, such as Bristol Road, Zeally Bay Road, Fischer Street (with the exception of the link south of Zeally Bay Rd intersection), The Esplanade, Pearl Street and Pride Street is sufficient to provide an on-road cycle lane facility on both sides of the street. Similar street widths within inner-urban areas regularly accommodate a lane of traffic in both directions and a formalised on-street cycle lane, with on-street parking in most circumstances. It is recommended an audit is undertaken of local access streets from all directions to assess suitability of enhanced on-street cycle infrastructure.
- ii. Identify opportunities to complement the on-street bicycle network above with off-street bicycle paths where possible. For example, a new bicycle path along the edge of Taylor Park to provide a northern off-street alternative to Fischer Street which could continue along the northern side of Zeally Bay Road

and allow cyclists to dismount and cross at a new zebra crossing near Cliff Street to access the town centre.

- iii. Better integrate additional ‘local’ bike lanes with the ‘regional’ route identified through the Trails Strategy along The Esplanade. This can be done through the wayfinding network discussed as Pedestrian Recommendation (viii) above. Implementing new zebra crossing points across The Esplanade would also assist with local bicycle connectivity, not just for commuters to the town centre but for local school children or recreational riders who may not feel comfortable mixing with traffic along the busy road corridors.
- iv. Other improvements to ‘hard’ cycling infrastructure such as end of trip facilities like bicycle parking within public areas in the town centre and on the foreshore, bicycle maintenance stations along the foreshore path can be complemented by ‘soft’ measures to promote cycling, such as partnerships with local bicycle shops to provide cycle maintenance courses and lessons to local schools on safe riding practices, along with general promotion by Council and other partners such as VicHealth to promote not just the transport and travel benefits of cycling, but also health and social benefits.

Public Transport



A good public transport system provides a viable and attractive alternative to private car travel beyond an immediate walking or cycling range. Public transport also provides a valuable community service through improving access for the elderly and people with limited mobility to travel to destinations, such as community centres or shopping centres, along with proven environmental and road network efficiency benefits.

An important consideration in growing centres, such as Torquay, is ongoing commitment to investing in improved service coverage, frequency, travel time and passenger amenity (including safety) to encourage increased public transport use. The regional public transport connection and role this plays in local tourism will form a key component of future transport planning.

Local bus and school bus services currently stop and layover in the Town Centre on Boston Road, between the intersections with Pearl Street. The VLine regional bus stops for Torquay are located on the Surf Coast Highway and do not service the Town Centre area.

The proposed future signalisation of the Bristol Road/Surf Cost Highway intersection offers an opportunity for improved bus access to/from the Town Centre. However, initial discussions with VLine indicate a strong

preference to keep this regional service on the Surf Coast Highway to minimise additional journey time for the largest proportion of passengers with an origin/destination further along the Surf Coast, such as Lorne or Apollo Bay.

It is noted that the Victorian State Government and Infrastructure Victoria have allocated funding into investigations for the extension of VLine rail services from Warun Ponds to Torquay. At the time of writing it is not clear where a potential future Torquay rail station would be located but it is recommended Council advocate for strong links between any significant future transport infrastructure and the Town Centre.

Objectives

- Increase public transport mode share by making it a more attractive and reliable option for all residents
- Address social and economic barriers to transport choice, such as travel cost, time and availability of fully accessible services
- Achieve higher density mixed development around public transport corridors and hubs

Recommendations

- Reconfigure bus route 50 to incorporate Zeally Bay Road and the Esplanade and establish a new bus stop near the intersection of Cliff St or Walker St and Zeally Bay Road to provide a public transport facility to service the northern sector of the Town Centre.
- Retain the current kerbside bus stops and layover facilities on Boston Road which provide public transport services to the southern sector of the Town Centre.
- Ensure all new and existing bus stops meet DDA (1992) requirements to provide accessibility for a range of users including parents with prams, those who are elderly or have lower mobility.
- Advocate to VLine to provide a 'Town Centre' stop at the intersection of Bristol Road and the Surf Coast Highway and provide effective wayfinding signage and appropriate pedestrian facilities to improve integration between regional public transport users and the Town Centre.
- Subject to future patronage and demand, investigate the potential and advocate for the VLine bus route to directly access the Town Centre from the south via the roundabout at Bell Street, Pride Street, Pearl St, Bristol Rd and back onto the Surf Coast Hwy via new signalised intersection. A new VLine bus stop could be incorporated with local bus layover or put on Pearl St south of Gilbert Street.
- Continue to work with State Government and operators to improve VLine links to the Town Centre, either through re-routing of VLine bus services or ensuring any future Torquay Rail Station is as close and well connected to the Town Centre as possible.

Vehicle Access

Given the ongoing emphasis on private vehicle travel to and within the town centre, issues of vehicle access will continue to form a key consideration for the future operation and development of the area.

The Parking and Access Strategy provides detailed issue identification and analysis along with recommendations on provision of higher levels of car parking based on the traditional 'predict and provide' development model. The traffic and parking survey data indicates that the existing traffic network has sufficient capacity to cater for the nature and volume of increased vehicle movements associated with future growth. However, given the increasingly dispersed nature of the town centre retail offering, mix of land uses and ownership and potential future development patterns the future permeability and access routes requires careful consideration and planning.

Access routes to the Town Centre

It is recommended Bristol Road be recognised and promoted as the priority vehicle and service link from the Surf Coast Highway to the Town Centre due to the proposal to establish a signalised intersection of the Surf Coast Highway and Bristol Road, the commercial development on the south side of the street and more direct access to Gilbert St and the commercial area of the town centre. The potential for future development and land use change on Bristol Road further supports this link road function.

Zeally Bay Road will continue to perform an access function, but given the predominantly residential character between the Surf Coast Highway and Fischer Street should be considered secondary in priority to Bristol Rd for car traffic into Town Centre.

Both Zeally Bay Road and Bristol Rd are located in a 20m wide road reserve. However, the presence of a wider carriageway incorporating a marked parallel parking zone on both sides of Zeally Bay Road and a narrower nature strip than Bristol Road currently gives the impression of a higher order, higher capacity access street. Both streets have the same capacity to carry local traffic and visitors to the Town Centre from the local area are likely to continue to utilise both.

Gilbert Street

Gilbert St to be one-way eastbound only and be constructed to a 30kph design speed (but operate with a 40kmh speed limit) allowing for pedestrian safety while providing for traffic and servicing access with a safer and more inviting public realm/pedestrian environment on the south side.

Fischer Street (south of Zeally Bay Road)

Potential exists for Fischer Street to provide an enhanced local access and ring-road role through providing the primary link from the Town Centre to the local area to the north. To ensure Fischer Street continues to operate effectively it is recommended that the carriageway be realigned south of the Zeally Bay Road intersection to be consistent with the kerblines north of this roundabout. This would provide the opportunity for a wider carriageway and improved access in keeping with this enhanced future role.

It is acknowledged that this kerb realignment would impact upon private properties on the west side of Fischer Street, and so should be pursued by Council in conjunction with any future redevelopment of these properties to a higher value land use.

The Esplanade/Zeally Bay Road

A roundabout has been proposed for The Esplanade/Zeally Bay Road intersection to physically slow vehicles on The Esplanade and provide a visual cue to the changed environment.

It is proposed to provide zebra crossings on the southern and western legs of the roundabout to improve the level of service and safety for pedestrians at this location. It is recommended the existing median island crossing facility approximately 15m north of this intersection is also converted into a zebra crossing.

The roundabout should incorporate the entrance to the Torquay Play Park carpark and be designed to accommodate potential bus movements to support the re-routing of the 50 bus service.

While construction of a permanent roundabout would not be supported at this location by Cycling Australia, options for a removable roundabout could be considered. However, a removable roundabout would typically have a lifespan of only 3-5 years, therefore there would be ongoing cost implications. Options for removable roundabouts (and traffic islands) that can be installed/removed without impacting the road surface are available and could be further investigated.

Objectives

- Recognise and provide for the high level of demand for private car access to the Town Centre
- Support activity centre development and operations, by providing for freight and servicing requirements
- Minimise the impact of vehicle congestion and conflict between transport modes

Recommendations

- 40kmh speed limit within Town Centre to promote a safer environment for all road users. It is recommended a design speed of 30kmh is applied to Gilbert Street to recognise the enhanced public realm and higher pedestrian amenity that should be encouraged in the primary retail area.

- ii. Recognise and establish priority vehicle access routes into the town centre to include: Fischer Street from the north, Bristol Rd from the west and Pearl Street/Pride Street to the south to play a higher order role for local and regional traffic.
- iii. When at-grade carparking is incorporated into development sites and moved underground, provide:
 - access points around Town Centre periphery such as on Zeally Bay Rd, at the existing Pearl Street carparking entry and near the intersection of Bristol Road and Pearl Street to discourage vehicles from driving through Town Centre to access carparking.
 - change Bristol Rd/Pearl St intersection priority to traffic continuing along Pearl Street and enabling access to Gilbert Street.
- iv. While Zeally Bay Road and Boston Road will continue to perform an access role for local residents accustomed to travelling these routes into the Town Centre, the residential character and lower level traffic role of these streets should be recognised and promoted. The signalisation of the Bristol Road/Surf Coast Highway intersection provides an opportunity to promote this route as the primary access to the Town Centre from the Surf Coast Highway.

Car Parking

The management of parking within the Torquay Town Centre is critical to achieving high levels of amenity, good accessibility and long term sustainability. In town centre environments, it is important to support local business by ensuring convenient access to car parking, sufficient turnover of on-street parking spaces in commercial areas and shopping strips using appropriate parking management tools. Appropriate levels of parking supply can also be an important factor in encouraging sustainable transport behaviour. However, an oversupply of carparking can result in detrimental impacts such as:

- Generate car travel demand causing congestion;
- Compete for valuable space both on and off-road;
- Have a significant impact on the environment and local amenity.

New developments are generally required to be self-sufficient for parking and not add to the demand for on street parking spaces. Whilst this approach may be justifiable for lower density residential areas, the current Planning Scheme parking rates may require downward revision where land is at a premium, and other transport modes are easily accessible, consistent with industry best practice.

It is acknowledged that parking management and access can be a contentious topic, and achieving an appropriate balance between demand and supply is often difficult. However, the successful management of car parking can be one of the greatest influences on the economic, environmental and social success factors of a town centre.

The current provision of at-grade (or ground level) car parking provides some benefits in terms of providing a direct line of sight into the car parking area as well as perceptions of safety for drivers parking and walking to/from vehicles. However, the most appropriate or best use of this valuable Town Centre land may not be for the storage of empty vehicles. These current car parking sites hold potential for development, with car parking still provided but at a basement level (or levels).

Replacing at-grade car parking with basement level parking with access points strategically located on Zeally Bay Road, Pearl Street and Bristol Road would have the benefits of removing circulating vehicles from within the Town Centre area, provide protection from the elements and release high value town centre sites for mixed use development or new public town centre space. Incorporating basement car parking pedestrian entry points into the local streetscape, or through enclosed developments would also improve convenience for local users and visitors to the centre.

Objectives

- Creating a balance between provision of sufficient parking capacity at activity centres and transport hubs, and providing a safe and accessible street environment for all

- Ensure that parking solutions accommodate people with disabilities so that they can participate in day-to-day activities across the Town Centre
- Consider alternative future uses for road space currently occupied by car parking
- Encourage equity of access for all town centre users and a parking system that supports a balance between short and long stay requirements.

Recommendations

- i. Given there is an oversupply of car parking for a large portion of the year¹, investigate the potential to utilise land allocated to car parking for other uses such as public open space, local markets or food vans when demand low outside the summer holiday peak periods.
- ii. Provide for short term parking supply on-street through implementing a range of time based controls from P15 in high turnover areas to 2P in streets surrounding the Town Centre. Long term parking can be provided for in the existing at-grade off-street facilities and in future in any public off-street parking areas incorporated into future developments.
- iii. Plan for the current supply of off-street at-grade carparking to be incorporated into new development form and be provided underground to promote active and higher value land uses at ground level.
- iv. Consider the potential for new mixed-use developments to be given some level of car parking dispensation for visitor parking in particular - given the supply of free public car parking space and surveyed vacancy levels within the town centre during peak periods (as addressed in the Torquay Town Centre Parking and Access Strategy).
- v. Provide long vehicle parking bays and provision for tour bus parking within a reconfigured Walker Street parking area while this facility remains at-grade. In future when at-grade parking is incorporated into developments and may move underground, consider potential for tour bus parking on Zeally Bay Road and long bay parking on the west side of Taylor Park and / or east side of The Esplanade north of the intersection with Anderson Street, in close proximity to the foreshore and toilet facilities.

¹ Car parking surveys were conducted by Surf Coast Shire on Sunday 24 January 2016 (Australia Day weekend – a typical peak day), Thursday 17 March 2016 and Saturday 19 March 2016. The survey indicates a total peak parking occupancy in January (Sunday Australia Day weekend), March (Thursday) and March (Saturday) respectively of 70%, 69% and 74% within publicly and privately available parking spaces within the overall CBD and a total peak parking occupancy in January, March (Thursday) and March (Saturday) respectively of 73%, 61% and 77% within Torquay Central and on the immediately adjacent streets.



hansen

CAFE
moby

Wood Fired
PIZZA
Fri, Sat, Sun
LIVE MUSIC
5pm - 9pm
OLD BEER & WINES

This way
TO OUR
HUGE REAR
GARDEN &
PLAYGROUND
AREA

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