

Howard Springs Community Consultation Community Workshop Saturday, 3 December 2016

Introduction

The Planning Commission held a community workshop on Saturday, 3 December 2016 to consider the future Howard Springs Rural Activity Centre (RAC). The Chairman, Gary Nairn, opened the workshop with a brief background of the project. Participants considered several scenarios as outlined below, with representatives from each table presenting a summary of their discussion.

The following information is provided to participants as a summary of the proceedings, and feedback received on the day.

Facilitators:

RED	Chris Humphries
YELLOW	Stephanie Breuer
GREEN	Allison Hooper
BLUE	Michael Holmes

Participants:

RED	Letchimi Wright (Litchfield Council), Mark Lowe (CAG), Gerry Wood MLA, Kylie Davis, Tony Thiel Jnr, Michelle Elliott, Lesley Piper, Maree Bredhauer (Litchfield Council, Session 2)
YELLOW	Edward Li (Litchfield Council, Session 1), Nina Kurucz (DoH, Session 1), Rikki Saltmarsh (CAG), Abhishek Jain, Helen Bond-Sharp (Session 1), Anita Walker, Geoff Cole
GREEN	David Kingston (Litchfield Council, Stephen Ashford, Judy Beck, Roger Farrow, John Daw, Samantha Sowing, Graeme Finch (DIPL, Session 1)
BLUE	Wendy Smith (Litchfield Council), Christine Osborne (Litchfield Council), Bob Shewring (CAG), Joy Beck, Mark Davis, Brian Radunz, Allan Warchot (DoH, Session 1), Graeme Finch (DIPL, Session 2)


Scenarios explored:

	Session 1	Session 2
RED	Housing Choice / Aging in Place Traffic Management	Vision for the Rural Activity Centre
YELLOW	Mosquito Management Traffic Management	Extent of the Rural Activity Centre
GREEN	Traffic Management Housing Choice / Aging in Place	Vision for the Rural Activity Centre
BLUE	Housing Choice / Aging in Place Mosquito Management	Extent of the Rural Activity Centre

Scenario 1: Housing Choice / Aging in Place

Table	Matters Raised	Presenter
RED	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> canvassed preference to not have units (meaning multiple dwellings). preference for lots no less than one acre (4000m²), but... if smaller lots, they must have a big transition as a buffer to rural living lots. one hectare lots against Wadham lagoon as buffer to mosquitoes. preference to have only 100 additional dwellings. <p>Discussion on eastern transition area. Proposed local road (Macleod to Whitewood) should be a cul-de-sac with pedestrian / cycleway continuing through.</p>	Gerry Wood
YELLOW	<p>While this was not a scheduled topic for the yellow group, all participants had a particular interest in housing choice and options for accommodating older residents. Preferred lot sizes were discussed in relation to the 'extent of the rural activity centre' scenario. In addition, matters raised at the table were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural character should be preserved. Support for more housing options for older residents in Howard Springs, close to amenities. Some residents emphasised that retirement homes do not have to be <i>immediately</i> next to shops, etc and that a retirement village should retain a 'bush' feel. Developments in Coolalinga and Zuccoli were both given as examples of development that should <i>not</i> be considered. 	N/A
GREEN	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General consensus that dwelling height be limited to 2 storeys Opportunity for a gated retirement village with different levels of care, particularly given presence of doctor's surgery and pharmacy in shopping centre Shopping centre / commercial centre needs to 'future-proof', build on existing good facilities to create an alternative to Coolalinga and Palmerston Minimum urban lot size of 1000m² for affordability, considering proximity of rural properties and value for money 	Samantha Sowry
BLUE	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 750m² lots not affordable, and not attractive in rural area when you can purchase a large rural lot just 10 minutes away. One hectare blocks seem good match in the middle?? – concern about less than 1 ha; although a mix of 4000m², 1 ha and 2 ha is also considered acceptable. Older people can't look after 2 ha lots, but longer you can stay in own dwelling = better quality of retirement What about people who want to stay outside the activity centre boundary? Put activity centre boundaries on roads – use roads as buffer. Some not worried about townhouses (multiple dwellings) as long as they're within the urban boundary, but note that two storey homes not suitable for retirement. Keep trees, rural feel, serenity – don't want to create another Coolalinga. People want to age on their own block, not have to move to urban areas therefore... Consider social infrastructure (and economic viability of improving infrastructure). Transition area could be extended along Whitewood or Madsen, if this would help the sewerage network. Need upgraded / revitalised commercial services to provide for new residents. Concern about noise from pub or more residents at urban densities. Concern about two dwellings on 1000m² lots. <p>Ideas presented to workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The activity centre could accommodate a degree of housing choice... Rural amenity is a priority – measures to manage urban noise may be needed. 	Wendy Smith

Scenario 2: Traffic Management, Pedestrian Safety and Access

Table	Matters Raised	Presenter
<p>RED</p>	<p>Matters raised at table: Culvert open drain in Whitewood Road to create nature strip space Kids bike paths wherever possible for safety No crossroad at Whitewood and link to Madsen. Design a staggered 'T' instead. This needs to be investigated further.</p> <p>Ideas presented to workshop: The activity centre is working OK the way it is. Why the need to change? Some growth within the commercial area of the activity centre could be accommodated, but outside this, the minimum lot size should be 1 acre. Opportunities could be found for retirement accommodation somewhere in the rural area. Safety along Whitewood Road should be a priority.</p> 	<p>Gerry Wood</p>
<p>YELLOW</p>	<p>Matters raised at the table: Strong concerns about the safety of Whitewood Road, particularly around Good Shepherd College and Howard Springs Primary School at peak school times, and at the intersections of Whitewood Road with Stow Road and Smyth Road. Residents felt that further work was needed on the Whitewood/Stow intersection to ensure the safety of drivers and pedestrians. In particular, residents contested the findings of a traffic impact assessment near Good Shepherd College. Strong support for an improved and more extensive cycling network. This need not be in the order of works along the 'old railway corridor', but a simple means of separating cyclists and pedestrians from the road would suffice. Participants were supportive of an extension of the cycle network along Madsen Road if/when Madsen is brought into the Activity Centre; however, it was emphasised that any new path must connect to the Howard Springs Primary School – along Whitewood Road or through a safer (but still direct) option if possible.</p>	<p>Stephanie Breuer</p>

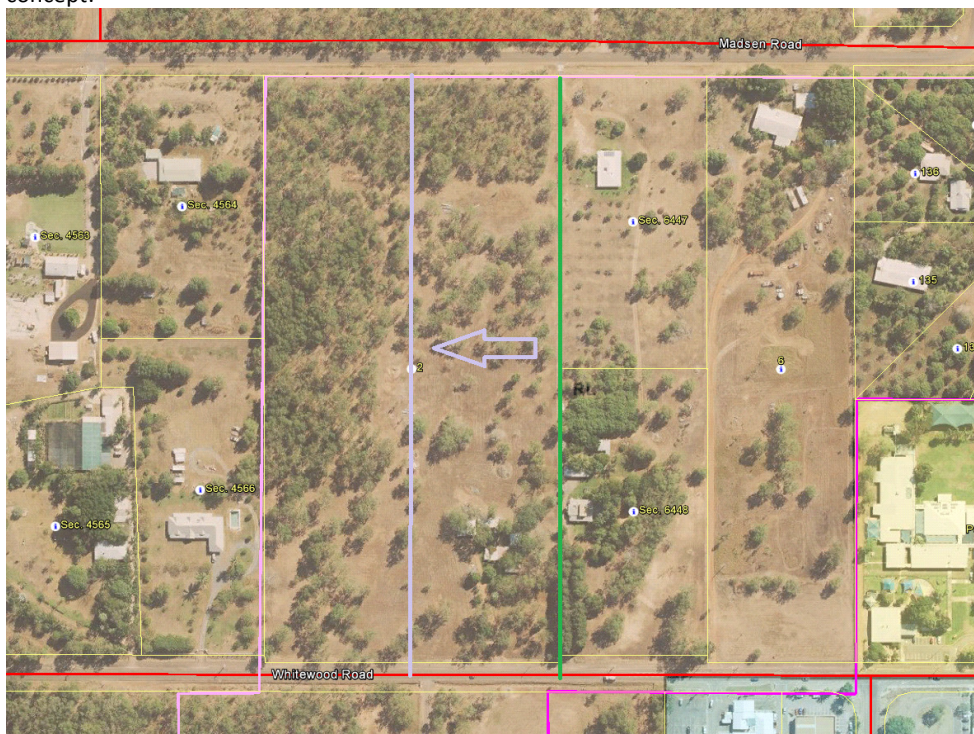
It was thought that the Whitewood Road reserve would need to be widened to allow a better quality cycle/pedestrian path with sufficient separation from the road.
 Shade and safety were the key considerations in encouraging pedestrian/cyclist activity.
 Generally, the extension of Madsen Road through to Smyth Road and the associated regional connections were considered positively; however, there was concern about the level of traffic that this could introduce and how safe and compatible such a road would be through a higher density residential area with parklands.
 One participant suggested that Hicks Road could be pushed through to Sittella Road to allow residents of the broader area (eg Girraween) to avoid Whitewood Road if so desired.
 One participant suggested that Whitewood Road could be extended through to the highway via what is currently a dirt road.
 One participant recommended a ring-road around the activity centre.
 One participant suggested that some sort of underpass could support the movement of turtles across Whitewood Road.

GREEN

Safety concerns of existing local road network:
 Whitewood Road – too narrow, turning lanes and slip lanes too short or non-existent, situation will become worse as traffic levels increase, road reserve too narrow for infrastructure (inc. existing open drains), school pedestrian crossing (traffic speed)
 Howard Springs caravan park – no turning lane for long vehicles poses a risk to continuing traffic

Future of local road network:
 Howard Springs receives a lot of through traffic, especially from Herbert
 Smyth Road would be a good connection through to Coolalinga
 Road reserves will need to be wide enough to accommodate proposed underground services
 Should Madsen Road be upgraded, local area traffic management will need to be implemented within Howard Springs village to force through traffic to use Madsen Road
 The intersection of Whitewood Road and Howard Springs Road should be retained
 Connection between Whitewood Road and Madsen Road should be moved further west of existing concept:

Samantha
 Sowry



Scenario 3: Mosquito Management

Table	Matters Raised	Presenter
YELLOW	<p>Matters raised at the table:</p> <p>Generally, participants were less concerned about mitigating mosquito impacts compared to protecting the lagoons and the wildlife that these sustain.</p> <p>All participants were supportive of a pond to be constructed at Wadham Lagoon that would retain water year-round to support fish to control mosquito larvae levels.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance of drains by the appropriate body to reduce pollution and weeds entering the lagoons was considered essential to mosquito mitigation and the health of the environment.</p> <p>Other ideas that were considered satisfactory were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor engineering works to 'even the land' to prevent mosquito breeding in shallow pools around the lagoon Use of pellets to inhibit larvae growth where required Ongoing monitoring of mosquito numbers – perhaps by Council? <p>The issue of quad-bike riders using areas around lagoons was also considered as an impediment to ongoing maintenance as riders stir up the mud and create pools in which mosquitos could breed.</p> <p>One participant was worried that mosquito mitigation would involve draining the lagoons</p> <p>One participant suggested that improved access to the lagoons could allow use by the schools (eg for science).</p>	Stephanie Breuer
BLUE	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Man-made fish reservoir needed but would require works on private land. Group wanted more information on disease risk and success of management strategies. Group also expressed a concern with any environmental impacts of mosquito mitigation. If there is a management plan between Government and private owners of the lagoons, who would be the responsible agency? Who would pay for the mitigation costs? If mosquito breeding can be reduced then some increase of core area into transition could be supported. 	Wendy Smith

Scenario 4: Vision for the Rural Activity Centre

Table	Matters Raised	Presenter
RED	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of the activity centre's streetscapes. Could there be a streetscaping guidelines for Howard Springs, eg. pavement 3 cars wide, interconnected roads with footpaths and bike paths, common themes and consistent planning standards. The activity centre needs green open spaces. Could there be a partnership between Government and the owners of Wadham Lagoon to manage mosquito breeding and retain for wildlife. Activity centre should have a space / area for arts / community activities. Activity centre should have a rural market space. A commercial land owners group could be established to develop a common development vision for the future of the land in Zone C. This vision could work towards creating community spaces and also provide areas of shared car parking. The commercial centre is a 'book-ended' by very short transitions. This will call for relatively sudden change in built form, unless more generous transition areas are provided. A good commercial area will encourage more to call in and use the activity centre. <p>Position presented to workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Howard Springs activity centre should have a unique rural style and the commercial area should feature more options (cafes, restaurants) for meeting and dining other than the pub. With a coordinated vision for the commercial centre, future development could resolve problems such as limited parking, and create space for a rural market and community uses. 	Lesley Piper

YELLOW	<p>While this was not a scheduled topic for the yellow group, participants were generally positive about 'vision' ideas presented by other groups. In particular, ideas about creating a unique centre and introducing meeting/dining options in addition to the pub were supported. Comments made throughout the group's discussion included:</p> <p>a generally strong preference for more parks/greenspace to be introduced</p> <p>two residents particularly emphasised their interest in preserving the natural environment</p>	N/A
GREEN	<p>The group spent some time identifying existing positive attributes and weaknesses of the RAC, before moving on to opportunities, which included:</p> <p>Supportive of the extension of the NAR cycle path through to Coolalinga – Howard Springs should be further connected through local road network</p> <p>Howard Springs should not be seeking to replicate Coolalinga or Palmerston, but instead be aiming to create its own identity, with a purpose and point of difference</p> <p>A commercial centre vibe the same as Parap would be acceptable, including a walkable centre</p> <p>Commercial centre should focus on attracting more restaurants / cafes to cater for a more family friendly atmosphere</p> <p>A central playground to provide some focus</p> <p>Commercial centre should upgrade first as a pull factor for new residents</p> <p>Additional facilities – assisted living/hospice, hydro pool for aqua aerobics etc, better parking and access to shops</p> <p>Wadhams Lagoon – opportunity for a community asset for 'bush' recreation, ie walking trails, enjoying the wildlife</p> <p>Provision for public transport – integrated network including consideration of bus stop locations and routes</p> <p>Questions that arose:</p> <p>Who pays for future roads, such as connection between Whitewood Rd and Madsen Rd when it has a broader benefit than to just the developer?</p> <p>Future of the INPEX village and the existing social infrastructure will impact on the future of Howard Springs</p>	Samantha Sowry

Scenario 5: Extent of the Rural Activity Centre

Table	Matters Raised	Presenter
YELLOW	<p>There was no consensus within the group about what the extent of the rural activity centre should be.</p> <p>Generally, residents of the area were in favour of making all boundaries as compact as possible, with a buffer to the existing 20 lot subdivision on Smyth Road.</p> <p>One participant was in favour of expanding the core boundary to include his lot.</p> <p>One resident on Madsen Road (outside of concept boundaries) was interested in subdividing his 5 acre lot in half to have a more manageable lot size in retirement.</p> <p>All participants agreed that 1 acre (4000m²) lots would be appropriate in the transition area.</p> <p>Residents were generally supportive of 1000m² lot sizes with single storey buildings in the core area.</p> <p>Residents were generally not supportive of greater densities and building heights even within immediate proximity of the commercial area.</p> <p>One participant was in favour of a higher level of development. In particular he expressed the need to for infrastructure coordination between landowners/developers.</p>	Stephanie Breuer
BLUE	<p>Matters raised at table:</p> <p>Support for connection from Madsen Road and alternate access around commercial centre.</p> <p>Construct Madsen Road along to Hamilton now to improve access to Whitewood Road.</p> <p>When Smyth Road opens to Coolalinga, traffic management will be an issue.</p> <p>Contingent on whether or not reticulated sewerage is required to address existing public</p>	Wendy Smith

health concerns...

If YES then group would consider townhouse type development (multiple dwellings) around the commercial centre – refer to sketch below by group; OR

If NOT then then 1 acre lots generally preferred with a minimum transition of suburban lots around commercial centre

Position presented to workshop:

The group considered extending the activity centre to the west to support reticulated sewerage.

The table would like to hear from Power and Water on the sewer options.

