3.4 City-wide structure plan of public spaces

The key places of Gosford Leagues Club Field in the South, Kibble Park in the centre and a potential new public open space in the north combine to create a stepping stone of interesting and diverse places across the city.

The improved public domain and new places will attract locals, visitors and workers to enjoy high quality places in the regional capital. The mixture and unique character of all three areas combine to offer something unique for everyone, and create a unique identity for Gosford.
Purpose of the place-based studies

These place-based recommendations provide guidance to help shape and inform the development of the next stages of planning and investment decisions in Gosford.

These studies will inform:
- early urban design advice to assist with shaping and the assessment of time sensitive projects ensuring that they contribute positively to the vision for Gosford e.g. Regional Library and RPAC
- development of new and emerging planning controls for the city centre and the three places – Civic Heart, City North and City South
- contribute to the schedule of projects to be included in the preparation of state and local infrastructure contribution plans
- public and private sector investment decisions in the three key places
- pre-application advice to developers
- consideration of planning proposals and applications including proposed design review processes
- negotiation of voluntary planning agreements (VPA) and the potential inclusion of regional and community facilities in proposals
- potential partnerships opportunities for mixed use projects
- inform and support bids for funding e.g. upgrades in public realm, active transport, etc.
3.5 City-wide implementation strategies

1. Place management, landowners and stakeholders

Collaboration and leadership can help drive change for the city.

A place manager could be a role required in this city to bring together various government departments and private stakeholders. A place manager helps to facilitate coordination and collaboration, finding synergies and opportunities in each place across multiple stakeholders including the CCC. They offer continuity of leadership and can be seen as an impartial expert, helping to mediate between public and private interests. A place manager can help lead the detailed design process needed to create each key public place in the city.

Successful place outcomes should consider consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders including:
- Imperial Centre Management
- ATO and state government service leaders
- Health NSW
- School leaders
- TAFE
- Arts NSW
- Youth services
- Social Service providers
- Key developers
- University of Newcastle
- NSW Trains/Gosford Station Manager
- Local police services
- Clubs and pubs in Gosford
- Local producers
- Local business leaders
- GBID
- Aboriginal community representatives

2. Further inputs and city-wide analysis

Gosford will require further city wide studies to support the next steps after the UDF.

Key studies that will be required include:

An integrated access and movement strategy including parking study.

In the short term, while improved public transport options improve, parking locations should increase footfall in the city, encourage short term parking that allows people to access services in the city core.

In the medium to long term, public transport, cycling and walking can help to reduce the reliance on private vehicles and lead to a reduction in the number of cars needing to access the city centre.

Detailed urban design master plans and infrastructure audit

Detailed master plans for key places and strategic sites across the centre could take the aspirations and ideas from the UDF and develop these concepts with detailed design testing. Design development would be supported with detailed studies on the infrastructure and service requirements across the city.

Detailed design and master planning could help test design options in collaboration with key stakeholders. It would provide the detailed design work needed to ensure new development supports the principles of the UDF and subsequent planning controls including the updated DCP. It will also identify further opportunities and detail and public domain upgrades.
3.6 Design considerations for any public open space

1. Safety
Safety and the perception of safety is important for all users but in particular children and women.

A good sense of safety is a function of:
— good visibility
— clear orientation and pathways
— lighting
— well maintained public toilets
— frequent use and activation in the space and overlooking the space.

Safe travel routes include sufficient separated footpaths and dedicated cycle lanes (preferably off road).

Gosford local businesses, government, council and police should work together to identify areas that do not feel safe and consider initiatives to improve the public domain, or failing that option, increase police presence or anti social deterrents like cameras and good lighting.

Consider the relocation of the police station to a more central and visible location, ideally near the courts due to their close relationship.

2. Infrastructure
Consider power supply that is reliable, suitable for events such as markets or concerts, flexible and cost effective. Without this supply, open spaces can fail to be activated or flexible for different community uses.

Ensure water and sewerage connections are sufficient, with consideration for open space irrigation, water retention, flooding concerns and water reuse.

Water is a good opportunity to express the history of the landscape, engage in play, and provide cooling in the summer.

Access to clean water for drinking should be provided as well as bathroom facilities.

3. Quality and maintenance
A space can often feel unsafe or poor due to insufficient maintenance.

Public open spaces should be well maintained and funded. For example the broken fountain in Kibble Park is often commented on by the community as an example of a failed public place.

Local council and local businesses should focus on a high quality public domain including well maintained buildings. Initiatives such as the following could be considered:
— consider low cost building improvements like painting, or improved awnings
— work with local businesses to reduce blank facades and excessive advertising which reducing transparency and the engagement of the ground floor in buildings
— consider incentives to reduce graffiti or quickly address graffiti when it arises
— improved lighting and planting
— incentives building owners to activate empty tenancies, including providing these spaces for arts, community or students. Provide the necessary connections to link building owners with these communities.

4. Identity, branding and events
Consider a clear overarching identity for Gosford, and each individual public open space, as well as how they contribute to the overall vision including:
— consider the permanent and temporary uses
— events coordinated with businesses to draw people into the city on weekends and holidays.
— holiday programmes for families
— arts and culture opportunities that activate the city — consider unique opportunities for branding events or new ideas based on successful local businesses such as the West Gosford Vintage Car Museum or Botanica Distillery.

5. Pop-ups and temporary activation
In the short term and during construction consider temporary activation options. These are usually low cost, low infrastructure place making concepts that provides places for people to sit, enjoy and engage with the open space and consider what might become more permanent. For example the introduction of moveable furniture to an open space can allow people to take over the urban environment and adapt it for their use.
3.7 What can public open spaces offer Gosford?

**1. Environmental benefits**
- micro climates
- clean air
- wind protection
- water collection, treatment and reuse
- solar access for people
- reduce impacts of an urban heat island

**2. Leisure and play**
- leisure and recreation for all citizens
- exercise
- play
- sports
- bringing together different age groups and social groups to help foster a stronger community
- cycle and pedestrian activities
- dog walking and play spaces

**3. Educational opportunities**
- opportunities to engage school and TAFE students in learning about the environment
- indigenous plant species
- urban gardening for food production
- outdoor spaces for classes

**4. Community engagement**
- gathering spaces for small groups
- families enjoying the same space
- larger community gatherings
- involvement in the process of design
- good sense of public ownership
- sense of shared responsibility and use of a public space
- interpreting and acknowledging stories and history of a place
- spaces for social inclusion for the whole community

**5. Health benefits**
- room for exercise, both individually and in groups
- good amenity with clean air, low dust, solar access and shade to encourage active play
- emotional well being from being outside and connected to the environment

More detail on the value and design of public open spaces can be found in the following Government Architect documents:

— Greener Places: An urban green infrastructure policy for NSW (GANSW 2018)
— Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW (GANSW 2017)
3.8 Aspirations for public spaces and their users

The following users and their interests should be considered for any public space. It is the combination of all these users that makes a successful public space.

1. Families
- safety
- weekend activities
- events
- community engagement
- food and beverage options
- services and shopping
- close parking

2. Children
- playground
- open space
- things to learn
- classes and events
- safety
- spaces for all ages

3. Retiree or empty nester
- good accessibility
- transport options
- seating, amenities, shade
- access to cafes, shopping and services
- social connection and community engagement
- urban gardening

4. Workers
- access to open space and sun at lunch
- team sports and personal training
- drinks and dinner after hours
- access to services and shopping

5. Tourists
- visiting something unique
- clear identity and function
- overnight accommodation
- food and beverage a different landscape unique to Gosford

6. Mobility limited
- clear and legible wayfinding
- footpaths wide and accessible
- drop off zones to key services
- close parking options
- clear signage

7. Cyclists and pedestrians
- off road safe paths for cycling and pedestrians
- a connected network
- end of cycle facilities like bathrooms, changerooms and bike storage
- bike lockable areas
- safe travel and good lighting

Activated and safe places in the day, night and weekend
Inclusive for all parts of the community including: families, elderly, youth, people with limited mobility, students, workers, tourists and different socio-economic groups.
Good public spaces provide reasons to visit, for different people, at different times of the day and night.
They attract people in a day to day use, and in event mode.
These spaces should be accessible with strong public transport, pedestrian and cycle connections.
SECTION TWO

PLACE-BASED FRAMEWORK AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Kibble Park is a unique place in Gosford, consistently identified by the community as the heart of the city. Geographically it is in the centre of Gosford located adjacent to Mann Street connected through William Street Plaza. It is close to the station and connected in the east to the loop road of Henry Parry Drive.

As the only significant open space in the centre, the area has the potential to operate at a scale that can make it a regional destination. It is a central meeting place that brings the character of the bushland reserves into the heart of the city.

The park has a significant amount of public and private development commencing around it bringing, residents and new commercial space. Many important regional functions are focusing on this civic heart, including the new regional library, local courts and government services.

Significant private developments are also underway in this place, including Bonython Tower under construction and other investments along Mann Street. It is also adjacent to the main regional shopping facility of the Imperial Centre.
1.1 Why Kibble Park?

Kibble Park is a unique place in Gosford, identified by the community as the heart of the city. Geographically it is in the centre of Gosford located adjacent to Mann Street connected through William Street Plaza. It is close to the station and connected in the east to the loop road of Henry Parry Drive.

By concentrating investment in this place, there is the possibility to create both quality open space and a place of civic and commercial intensity in the heart of the city.

Starting with Kibble Park creates a great place in the heart of the community, rather than at its edges. The park, under local government ownership, is a logical and realistic place to start. It doesn’t have the complex challenges of the waterfront, and is ready to start while the hospital is under construction.

Changes in the heart of the community have the potential to ‘ripple’ in all directions. A central civic space working to its full potential can draw on and support the people, businesses, jobs and services that surround it.

1.2 Kibble Park – strategic position in the city network

Kibble Park draws the sense of the wider bushland landscapes into the heart of the city.

It is the key moment where the north-south urbanity of Mann Street meets the bushland character of the east west connections.

Kibble Park becomes the centre of a wider green circulation network linking the northern city centre, station and waterfront.
1.3 Kibble Park – strategic position in relation to regional attractions

Kibble Park and the surrounding area is in a great location to build on existing and future regional attractions with additional commercial, tourist, cultural and educational facilities.

These include:
— Regional Library
— TAFE
— Large Shopping Centre
— Mann Street Retail
— Railway Station
— Bonnython Tower
— Kibbleplex
1. Create a ‘green room’ – respite for the growing city.

2. Relocate activity to the edge and activate where people move.

3. Re-purpose library as a public building – possible Town Hall, meeting place, flexible exhibition space. Investigate upgrade or new cafe integrated with park. Create a civic plaza and connect to Mann Street with active edges.

4. Increase visual connection between Mann Street and the park. Streetscape upgrade to Mann Street.

5. Establish through connection to Watt Street.


7. Investigate opportunity to retain public parking in part of future development behind an active edge to Henry Parry Drive.

8. Connect park to reserves with tree planting along Donnison Street.

9. Locate development height to minimise overshadowing of Kibble Park.

Indicative process and development envelopes only. All development subject to planning approval.
View 1: City Centre Overview

Indicative process and development envelopes only. All development subject to planning approval.
## 1.5 Detailed urban design principles

### 1. Activity to the edges

The park is cluttered. Scattered park activities, vehicle access and car parking take up much of the space.

Move the park uses to the edges to create active streets and diverse edges for people to gather. The open space can breathe.

### 2. An iconic green room

Planting a frame of Eucalyptus trees creates an alternative green room with shaded edges. The park becomes iconic, grounded by a beautiful borrowed view to President’s Hill.

### 3. Great Civic Spaces

Mann Street Plaza and the re-purposed library become flexible event spaces for day and night activation.
4. Ensure sunlight access to the park

Locate height in surrounding developments to minimise overshadowing of park and public domain.
Ensure solar access for 4 hours to 50% of the park between 9am and 3pm at the winter solstice. Refer to built form principles.

5. Active street frontages

Protect and promote the fine grain retail of Mann Street.
Ensure active and defined street frontages to all park edges.
Re-purpose library as a public building. Investigate upgrade or new cafe integrated with park.
Curate diverse offerings for different demographic segments and for activation during day and night, weekday and weekends.

6. Reduce dominance of cars

Vehicle access is retained around the park in the short and medium term, but with reduced road widths and shared surfaces with clear pedestrian priority.
Future servicing or parking entries not to be located on Mortimer Lane or William Street adjacent to the park, or where active street frontages are proposed.

7. Connect with nature

Protect view corridors to President’s Hill and Rumbalara Ridgeline. Refer to built form principles.
1.6 Built form principles

1. Two to three storey podium height with a fine grain and active frontages to key places and streets.

2. Ensure ground floor facade of the plaza buildings achieves sun throughout the day.

3. Provide setback to upper levels above podium.

4. Slender East/West tower forms, aligned to protect view corridors to Rumbalara ridgeline.

5. Setback slender north/south orientated tower forms to allow shadows to move quickly across Kibble Park.

6. Protect view corridors to Presidents Hill from Kibble Park.

7. Ensure solar access for four (4) hours to 50% of the park between 9am and 3pm at the winter solstice.
View 2: Mann Street – A new Civic Square to Kibble Park