

Extract of Part 5.3 of the Local Commercial Planning Strategy – Urban Design Assessment for the Dunsborough Town Centre:

5.3 Dunsborough

5.3.1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis

Strengths

- Significant investment interest in the town
- Dunn Bay Rd – potential link to the coast
- Tourism influence provides vitality
- Potential expansion areas – down Dunn Bay Rd and into Clarke Street
- Dunsborough foreshore enhancement – a well supported community initiative

Weaknesses

- Traffic circulation is poor, as is the legibility for traffic movement
- Much of the built form is ad hoc
- No cohesive architectural theme
- Congested at certain times
- Pedestrian movement is fragmented
- Some of the new development – Coles – is internalised and poorly designed
- Directional signage is poor
- No obvious entry statement or sense of arrival
- Limited linkage to the ocean

Opportunities

- Possibility for bay views if building height limits are raised
- Adjoining industrial area – Clarke Street – provides opportunity to expand
- Creek system provides potential for open space spine
- The proposed development of the hotel could provide a landmark
- Use of the laneways could create interest.

Threats

- Poor traffic circulation and amenity will discourage people from visitation
- Poorly located parking areas exacerbate congestion problems

5.3.2 The Dunsborough Vision

Key words:

- District centre/village atmosphere
- Coastal, seaside location
- Tourist location
- Vibrant
- Informal, “laid back”
- Seaside design theme
- Improving aesthetics
- A place to shop where diverse and quality products are available
- A green, landscaped streetscape

5.3.3 Urban Design Principles

Land use

- Key Principle: Encourage mixed uses - residential, offices, hospitality, retail and community – in the town, to increase vitality.

The Dunsborough Town Centre displays a reasonable level of mixed use ambience with tourist accommodation, retail, office, commercial and other types of uses all present in the town. The town also shows high levels of vitality at certain times because of the large number of tourists who visit.

However, there are a number of land use changes that could intensify the mixed use nature of the area, as follows:

- A clarification of the term subsidiary in reference to residential uses in the policies for the Business zone (as per the suggested amendment for Busselton).
- The rezoning of the land along Dunn Bay Road (excluding the parkland) to allow higher intensity, mixed use development

A different zoning should not be applied to the rest of the Dunsborough town centre for the land identified on Figure 27 as being within the 'office, administrative and consultative precinct'. The land in this precinct should be retained within the Business zone.

Recommendation

28) Council should consider the preparation of an amendment to the TPS to facilitate the following land use changes in the Dunsborough town centre:

- a. A clarification of the term subsidiary in reference to residential uses in the policies for the Business zone (as per the suggested amendment for Busselton).
- b. The rezoning of the land along Dunn Bay Road (excluding the parkland) to allow higher intensity, mixed use development.
- c. The office, administrative and consulting precinct shown on Figure 28 should not have a different zoning to the rest of the Dunsborough town centre.

Built Form

- Key Principles: Develop a more cohesive, "seaside" based architectural style and control the intrusion of poorer quality and ad hoc building styles.

The built form in Dunsborough is ad hoc with no cohesion or design theme evident. This should be addressed as a priority. There are opportunities to develop a "seaside" theme which would further link the development of the town to its coastal location.

Recommendation

29) Council should commission a study of urban design improvements in the Dunsborough town centre, with particular reference to the development of a design theme for inclusion into the TPS as a policy.

Density and Height

- Key Principles - Consider increasing building height limits to encourage bay views and medium to high density residential uses in and around the town.

Despite its proximity to the coast Dunsborough has little relationship with the foreshore. The increasing of height limits of development in the town centre could result in Bay views and provide further mixed use development.

The residential development on a number of selected sites on the boundary of the town centre is low density R15. Given their location in proximity to the town centre a higher density could be considered.

Recommendation

30) Council consider amending the TPS to lift height limits in the town centre and to rezone the selected sites to an R40-R80 designation.

31) The development of buildings higher than three storeys in Dunsborough town centre should require a careful consideration of design issues and the development of more detailed planning guidelines relating to taller buildings.

Pedestrian Links

- Key Principle: Increase safe and efficient pedestrian movement in the town

A number of actions have been suggested for this key principle:

- Encourage pedestrian movement from the town to the foreshore as a focal point
- Improve the legibility of pedestrian links between sites within the town
- Review the large roundabout at the intersection of Dunn Bay Road and Naturaliste Terrace to prioritise for pedestrian movement or potential removal.
- Undertake a traffic study to resolve pedestrian vehicular conflict in the town centre.

Recommendation

32) In conjunction with the parking study currently being conducted) to incorporate the above suggestions.

Car Parking

- Key Principle: Provide well located car parks to encourage pedestrian movement in the centre of town

Key elements to consider are:

- The potential consolidation of parking facilities in peripheral locations to discourage fragmented and small parking locations.
- Provision of dedicated staff parking facilities to avoid the overlap with users of the town centre
- The delineation of bays at the rear of future development to allow for the provision of a zero setback streetscape.

Recommendation

33) A parking study of Dunsborough is presently being undertaken. This should be urgently completed and its results considered carefully by Council.

Open Space and Parkland

- Key Principle – Improve links between the town centre and nearby parkland

A number of specific actions have been proposed to achieve this key principle, as follows:

- The creek that moves east west from between the Clarke Street Industrial area and the commercial area provides an opportunity to create a natural corridor from the commercial area to the foreshore.
- The Lions Park in the centre of town provides a useful green space – further landscaping of this facility is a possible improvement to townscape amenity.
- The Dunn Bay foreshore is a strategic open space facility that is currently underutilised – implementation of the foreshore and Seymour Park concept plan would improve this situation
- The planting of additional street trees in a landscape theme would soften the ad hoc nature of built form in Dunsborough

Recommendation

34) Council should review the suggestions above and consider funding the development of these open space linkages

A summary of key suggestions for Dunsborough is shown in Figure 27.

Lot 106, Cyrilleean Way, which is privately owned, is currently identified as ‘Recreation’ reserve in the TPS. It is adjacent to Dugalup Brook, and has previously been subject of a development approval for an art gallery and restaurant. The current identification of the site as ‘Recreation’ reserve is not necessary or appropriate, and a zoning that would allow development of a similar character to that previously approved for the site would be appropriate. That would be best be achieved by an appropriate ‘Special Purpose’ zoning.

Recommendation

35) Lot 106 Cyrilleean Way to be included in a Special Purpose zone to allow for development of a similar character to that previously approved for the site (i.e. art gallery, cafe/restaurant uses), with the details to be determined in consultation with the landowners either as part of the preparation of a new town planning scheme, or as part of a future town planning scheme amendment initiated at the request of the landowners.

Planning

While Dunsborough provides the services of a district level centre, it will not reach the intensity of commercial activity of Busselton. However, as has been demonstrated continued growth is forecast for the town which needs to be accommodated. Ultimately though, a high intensity mixed use town centre for Dunsborough which competes with the Busselton CBD, would not be appropriate.

As has been noted in various studies, Dunsborough ought to consolidate its commercial floor space in a “Main Street” format as it will not have the scale to facilitate both a DDS and an effective town centre with retail component. Despite significant changes, the current form of the town centre does not yet wholly reflect a “Main Street” approach to urban design or land use planning.

The particular road network and connectivity issues of central Dunsborough are well documented.

However, many of the solutions have been focussed on attempting to solve perceived and actual transport and access related problems rather than approach the matter from a townscape and land use perspective.

The 1994 Town Centre report prepared by BSD on behalf of the Shire was of the view that there would be insufficient demand to connect the business district with the foreshore. Dunsborough is a growing seaside town yet fails to take any real commercial advantage of that fact. It’s commercial

district is focussed ineffectively around transport imperatives rather than maximising its locational advantages.

Transport issues of access, parking and circulation *et al* should not form the basis of land use allocation for the town centre (as has traditionally been the case). "Main Street" development works best where there is a through movement of traffic. That is, Dunsborough should not shy away from permitting controlled through traffic as this will ultimately support the creation of an identifiable centre with a logical transport network.

To this end Figure 27 depicts a strategy aimed at:

- Concentrating future small scale retail, tourism and hospitality uses along Dunn Bay Road east of Naturaliste Terrace toward the foreshore, subject to rezoning of land to facilitate such changes in use;
- Larger format retail and office/consulting uses focussed toward the western end of Dunn Bay Road so as not to dilute the concentration of "Main Street" retail activity to the east;
- Clark Street Industrial area to be retained as a low intensity Industrial precinct with incidental retail permitted to the predominant use. Clarke Street operates as a successful light industrial precinct supporting incidental retail uses and this should be maintained to prevent infiltration by inappropriate pure retail and showroom uses more appropriately located in Busselton or in the main retail part of Dunsborough itself.
- Put in place long term objectives to eliminate onsite parking between buildings and the road reserves along Dunn Bay and Naturalise Terrace (ie require commercial buildings to have a 0m setback to the road reserve);
- Allow residential densities of up to R100 in the Business zone with residential uses permitted only above the ground level in the town centre. A substantial commercial floor space component to be required at the ground level to ensure commercial character is retained (eg vertical zoning concept).
- Building heights to be lifted to 3-4 stories to enable mixed use development potential to be realised and generate a town centre residential community to support business activities.

A recommended non-commercial strategy is to implement medium to high density zoning (R40-R80) within 800m of the boundary of the town centre to provide improved housing choice, decrease car dependency and increase the immediate population supporting the commercial centre of the town.

The above strategies will over time, focus commercial activity toward Dunsborough's key locational asset which is the foreshore reserve and beach. Currently this area is monopolised by a few low density residential dwellings and some tourism related development. A longer term view is recommended by this above strategy with the aim of extending the town centre in that direction.