

FACT SHEET

DRAFT CUMMINS TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



Background

The Cummins Township Master Plan is being developed by the Lower Eyre Council. The Master Plan will provide a 20-year strategic framework and vision to guide the proactive and planned population and business growth and supporting investment required. Stage 1 of consultation was conducted in October 2022 and informed the actions and recommendations set out in the Master Plan and Implementation Strategy.

This Fact Sheet is best read in conjunction with the Implementation Strategy, which can be found on Council's webpage about the draft Cummins Township Master Plan.

Stage 1 Consultation Summary

Feedback received during Stage 1 identified a number of common, reoccurring themes that have been translated into key priorities in the Cummins Township Master Plan.

The top five priorities were:

1. Delivery of a variety of new housing opportunities within Cummins. This housing should suit a range of different community demographic groups including families and downsizers and include key worker accommodation to reinforce Cummins as a major service centre of the Eyre Peninsula.
2. Resolve the future of the Cummins Rail Corridor. If the corridor is no longer required for freight transport, explore options within the current land ownership configuration to utilise this area for a range of community activation and beautification opportunities to connect the two sides of the Cummins Township, improve the appearance and provide a tourism attractor.
3. Resolve traffic safety, parking, and management. This needs to be a balance between safety and opportunities for business activation and identify suitable solutions to manage everyday operations and peak harvest challenges.
4. Improved health and aged care services, to support an aging population.
5. Increased childcare centre places. With the current services at capacity, additional services are required to support Cummins and surrounding areas, which in turn will increase employment opportunities.

Key Investigations from the draft Cummins Township Master Plan

Open Space

The Master Plan undertakes a comparison of existing open space supply and distribution against the future growth prediction for Cummins. This includes the identification of any surplus open space and instances where land could be re-purposed for a higher and better use, e.g., to promote the broader objectives of the Master Plan by providing additional accommodation (tourism and housing) or tourism and community infrastructure.

Housing

It is critical for Cummins' economic future that the quantity and quality of housing is suitable to meet the demographic characteristics, housing aspirations and support the attraction and retention of employees. Housing challenges are not new to Cummins; and Lower Eyre Council has undertaken a range of initiatives over the last 15 years to attract more residential housing to Cummins, with varying success.

Both the market analysis considered in balance with the feedback provided through both the community and stakeholder consultation, reinforces that Lower Eyre Council's objectives to initiate additional serviced residential allotments and bring new housing to market is critical to support the future growth of Cummins. As a result, this goal remains a critical priority focus for the Cummins Township Master Plan.

Cummins Institute

In the short term, the continuation of community activities under the control of the CDEC (Cummins & District Enterprise Committee) is appropriate at the Cummins Institute. However, it is essential that there are reliable costings prepared for the securing of the long-term structural integrity of the building. Additional costings should be prepared for a range of alternative construction / demolition proposals and robust income streams projected for the various scenarios. Only then will Council be in a position to determine the future direction of the Institute.

Childcare

There is a shortage of childcare spaces within Cummins township. Existing places are provided through the Department for Education Rural Care and Preschool service. Opportunities to address this shortfall include the following:

- Attraction of a private sector operator;
- Provision of subsidised accommodation by Council to attract an operator;
- Council operation of its own childcare centre;
- Preparation of proposals to attract additional subsidised places through the Department of Education Rural Care Preschool service.

Tourism

The Caravan Park site is relatively small (c.1 hectare in area) and therefore limited in its ability to accommodate short stay tourists and longer stay seasonal workers. Expansion of the facility could assist in Council's broader objectives of providing additional accommodation (albeit of a specific quality and market appeal) to support employment needs in the town, and to provide a more attractive short stay option for tourists. Improved amenities and a more attractive irrigated setting would be a desirable outcome for the existing site. The options available to grow the Caravan Park include the area immediately south of the current caravan park location on Tod Highway, south of Mortlock Street, or utilising part of the Showgrounds site off Mortlock / Ford Street or off Ponton Grove.

Main Street & Rail Corridor Enhancement

The rail corridor is a major dilemma for the township. On the one hand, its existence provides a visually interesting, heavily vegetated linear strip through the centre of town, which has great potential to be developed as a strong positive feature of the town. However, its control by One Rail and the uncertainty surrounding its possible re-establishment as a freight route limit the opportunity to invest in the alignment and creates considerable risk to the long-term holding of that investment. As of early 2023, One Rail and Viterra have made a request to the State Government for consideration to reopening the rail line, but no further action has occurred.

Accordingly, rather than progressing a comprehensive plan over the whole of the railway reserve, it is our view that a more responsible approach is to seek the rail operator's agreement to permit Council to landscape and invest in only selected portions of the rail reserve that are most critical to the beautification and functioning of the town centre.

Road Rail & Infrastructure Upgrades

The least intrusive option for the upgrade of Bruce and Railway Terrace in terms of avoiding tree removal and the need for acquisition of railway land is to create a slow speed environment along Bruce Terrace through signage, protuberances, landscaping, and threshold paving, which provides for maximum on street parking and nominated truck parking areas. The provision of parking at the rear of the retail premises and an additional link across the railway reserve to Railway Terrace then become non-essential optional additions that could be pursued by Council but are not fundamental to the success of the concept. Other features could include upgraded pedestrian paving to highlight the centre of township activities on both Bruce Terrace and Railway Terrace, selection of distinctive tree species to create a recognisable town centre precinct and the creation of picnic and play areas adjacent to the main retail shopping point for passing traffic.

Need further information

Holmes Dyer have been engaged to work with Council on this important project. Should you wish to ask questions or require further information on the Cummins Township Master Plan please contact Holmes Dyer on:

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Email: engagement@holmesdyer.com.au

HOLMES DYER