

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Korumburra Community Hub Discussion Paper ~ Location Options

October, 2017



Introduction

The Council Plan 2017 - 2021 identifies the need to develop a Community Hub in Korumburra (the Hub). The Hub will improve existing services and cater for increased demand as the township's population grows to an estimated 6,000 residents in 2030. The purpose of this Discussion Paper is to discuss where the Korumburra Community Hub should be located and the range of uses proposed to be included in the Hub.

The Hub is a significant capital investment for Korumburra and its location and service provision will have long term effects on the operation of the Town Centre. For this reason it is important that key stakeholders and the community be involved in this discussion.

Council is aware from previous community engagement that a range of views exist regarding the Hub's location and what uses it should contain. Council is also aware that any location that involves acquiring private land brings with it additional sensitivities that must be accounted for in the process.

Each Hub location option has a range of advantages and disadvantages that will require careful balancing before a preferred site is selected. Council commences this community engagement process without a preferred site and is looking to work with key stakeholders and the community to identify the best site and to clarify what uses will occur in the Hub.

This Discussion Paper does not discuss the temporary relocation of existing uses at the former Shire Office building required to facilitate the development of the new supermarket. This is occurring as part of a separate process.

What is a Community Hub?

A Community hub is a multi-use facility that combines a range of community services and functions in the one building. Hubs are being used by councils across Australia as an alternative to the traditional model of housing each service in its own building. Significant cost savings can be gained by constructing hubs as flexible spaces that can be reconfigured as uses change over the lifetime of the building. Examples of successful new Community Hubs in the Gippsland region can be found at Rosedale and Churchill. When developed, the Korumburra Hub will be the first hub in the Shire following this model of service delivery.

What will be in the Korumburra Community Hub?

The uses currently planned to be included in the Korumburra Community Hub are:

- The Library services currently provided at the existing King Street site
- Milpara Community House services, currently provided at their Shellcot Road facility
- Senior Citizens uses currently provided at the Radovick Street Senior Citizens building
- Multi-purpose meeting spaces / rooms
- Kitchenette facility for catering purposes
- Accessible for all toilet / 'Changing Place' facility
- Wall display space for Rotary Club art exhibitions and other exhibitions / displays as required.

Council administrative / customer service functions are not intended to be included in the Hub, however the flexibility offered by the hub model will not preclude this from occurring in the future.

How big will the Korumburra Community Hub be?

Council has undertaken a detailed assessment of the floorspace needs of the uses proposed to be included in the Hub and benchmarked these against community hubs in similar sized townships.

It is estimated that an internal floorspace of 1,500m² is required. To put this in perspective, the current Library Service has a total internal floor area of 300m². The Library Service and Milpara Community House will be the main occupants of the Hub and occupy approximately 500m² each.

Additional space will be required around the Hub building for access provision, landscaping, vehicle delivery and disabled car parking. How much land will be required for these features can only be accurately determined at the design stage.

While the Hub site may contain some small amounts of additional car parking, it is currently expected that most car parking will be provided in the immediate surrounding areas.

What will the Korumburra Community Hub cost and how will it be funded?

Council's 2017/18 Budget allocates \$5.4 Million dollars for Hub construction in financial year 2024/25. This funding will be comprised of Council money and any additional State / Federal grant funding available at the time. This funding model was successfully used to develop Korumburra's Karmai Community Children's Centre.

It is understood that if the new supermarket is developed at the current Library site, Hub construction will be brought forward to minimise the time the Library will be housed in temporary accommodation. Subject to identifying a Hub site, next year's budget is likely to bring forward Hub construction to 2019/20.

Where the Hub is located will affect its cost in terms of both land purchase and building construction costs. If Council has to secure private land for site assembly or vehicle access, this will add to the upfront costs. If land slope requires two storey construction, this is likely to increase costs by approximately 20% and increase the ongoing operation and maintenance costs to Council over the life of the building.

The Hub is estimated to cost \$2,200per m². A single storey Hub of 1,500m² will cost approximately \$3.5 Million. Two storey construction will cost approximately \$4.4 Million. These figures exclude land purchasing costs.



What does the Planning Scheme say about the Korumburra Community Hub?

The South Gippsland Planning Scheme and other Council documents discuss the need for a Hub and where it should be located.

The Korumburra Town Centre Framework Plan (KTCFP) was developed by Council from 2012 to 2013 and involved extensive community consultation. Regarding the Community Hub, the key recommendations of the KTCFP are:

- “Support the proposal to develop a community hub in a central location in the Town Centre to house (potentially) the library and other community services, with the opportunity to provide a development that integrates with proposed public realm improvements
- Continue to engage with the West Gippsland Library Corporation to determine the advantages and disadvantages of establishing the library off the ‘main street’ and come to an agreed preferred location
- Continue to actively engage with the community and key stakeholders regarding the design, siting and layout of the new community hub”

While the KTCFP identified the need for further investigation, the Plan identified the former Kindergarten site at 4 Victoria Street (Crown Land) as the candidate site for the Hub (see Option 1). The adjoining dwelling and shed to the south (up hill) were excluded from the proposed Hub site.

A site massing and indicative design exercise was conducted and it was realised that the 10 metre slope cross-fall would necessitate two storey construction, external ramps and a lift as the sole means of internal movement between the floors. Combined with the slope of the surrounding car parking, it was evident that this site has challenges in terms of disability access, internal functionality and high construction and ongoing maintenance costs.

The recommendations of the KTCFP are reflected in the current Korumburra Town Centre planning scheme provisions (Clause 21.15-2) where the recommendations of the KTCFP are repeated, however with the adjoining two privately owned lots (dwelling and commercial shed) included in the area identified as the ‘Preferred Community Hub’ site.



Korumburra Community Infrastructure Assessment July 2013

The Korumburra Community Infrastructure Assessment (KCIA) is a detailed investigation of the future community infrastructure needs for the township and provides extensive commentary on the benefits of developing a Hub, the uses that may be suitable for the Hub and discussion around where it should be located.

The KCIA supports the location of the Hub in a prominent location in the Town Centre and discusses the Hub potentially including the Library Service, Milpara Community House services, Senior Citizens, Rotary Club Art display and public / council meeting spaces. The KCIA also comments on the need for the Hub to sit within a landscaped space where it can become a town focal point and meeting place, making it more than just the uses occurring within the building itself.

Korumburra Community Hub Location Options

Three locations have been identified as the potential site of the Korumburra Community Hub. The following pages provide an overview of the key features of each site and a list of advantages and disadvantages identified by Council officers. The list is not exhaustive and Council is keen to gain your views on these and other issues that should be considering before a Hub site is chosen.

To assist in visualising development of the Hub, Council has prepared artistic impressions of how development at each site might appear. These images have been prepared to assist visualisation of the project and to encourage debate and engagement.

Sites not being considered for Hub location

The planning and community infrastructure investigations undertaken by Council to date have reaffirmed that the Korumburra Community Hub should be located in the town centre area. Accordingly Council is not considering locating the Hub at either Coal Creek Heritage Park and Museum or the former sale yard site. These locations are considered too far from the town centre and too isolated from other uses that could benefit from their proximity to the Hub.

Should the existing supermarket (South Railway Crescent) relocate to the proposed new supermarket site (King Street) the current supermarket site is not supported because it is isolated from the main functions of the town centre and difficult for pedestrians to access.

The Senior Citizens site at Radovick Street is Council owned however with a land size of 1,600m², boundary to boundary construction would be required leaving insufficient space for landscaping, disability parking and the creation of a public realm / meeting area. The proposed Hub is too large for this location.

The State Government owned and heritage listed Railway Station building is too small to contain the Hub and is the proposed location for other community uses.



Option 1

Victoria Street - Former Kinder site & surrounds

Option 1 is comprised of 2 Victoria Street (private dwelling), 4 Victoria Street (former kindergarten) and 11 Little Commercial Street (commercial shed). These lots are currently identified in the Planning Scheme as the potential site for the Korumburra Community Hub. The former kindergarten site is Crown Land (reserved for 'education') and zoned General Residential. The dwelling and shed lots are privately owned and zoned Commercial 1.

Council investigated the development of the Hub on 4 Victoria Street in 2013 and found that the slope of the land (10 metre cross fall) necessitated two storey building construction and that the slope and development pattern of the surrounding area presented challenges in terms of vehicle and pedestrian access to the building. If the adjoining dwelling and shed are included in the Hub site, access to the Hub can be improved by providing a direct connection to the existing



park at the rear of the Masonic Lodge, which is comparatively flat and at a level approximate to the proposed upper storey of the Hub building. Including these additional lots in the Hub site does not avoid the need for two story construction but it will greatly improve access to the building and its appearance. Preliminary advice to Council is that the Crown Land reserve status can be changed from 'education' to 'community' to facilitate the development and ongoing use of the Hub by Council with minimal or no cost.

Advantages

- Former kinder lot is Crown Land - no purchase required
- Town Centre location close to centre of activity
- Ample surrounding car parking
- Good vehicle access to the site - widening of entry to Bridge Street might be beneficial?
- Excellent views from two storey hub building
- Low land contamination risk level
- Fewer lots to consolidate for site assembly than Option 2
- If developed on the former kinder land only, construction can commence sooner

Disadvantages

- Steep slope (11.3%) requiring two storey construction
- Higher construction costs and ongoing maintenance costs associated with two storey construction - e.g. a lift
- Two levels requires ongoing additional staffing for safety and service provision
- Very poor disability and low mobility access to the site due to slope of paths and car parking spaces
- Compromised disability access within the building due to split level construction
- Site is visually isolated from Commercial Street and addressed the 'back of house' functions of surrounding land uses.
- If the supermarket is constructed at King Street, the Hub would be further isolated from the centre of township activity

Option 1 Artist impression - View from Little Commercial Street looking up hill.



Option 2

22 to 28 Victoria Street

Option 2 comprises four separately owned lots between and including 22 and 28 Victoria Street, creating a site area of approximately 4,250m². Three of the lots contain privately owned dwellings zoned Commercial 1, while 28 Victoria Street is Council owned and contains the former Council childcare centre. The former childcare lot might soon be sold by Council to improve vehicle access to the currently proposed supermarket development. All of the lots are affected by an existing Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) which extends 6 metres inside their front boundaries. The PAO was applied in the 1980's for the purpose of securing more on road car parking spaces.

The key benefit of this site is that it is flatter than Option 1, having a slope gradient of 7.5% compared to Option 1's 11.3%. While not flat, the moderate slope will allow for single storey Hub construction and good vehicle, parking and pedestrian access to the building. The other main benefit is that assuming the supermarket is developed, the Hub will be located adjoining the key retail land use in the town centre.



This provides benefits in terms of creating a precinct of key land uses, reducing the need to travel between uses, improving public spaces (landscaping) and passive surveillance in the surrounding area. However if the supermarket development does not proceed, many of the advantages of this site would not apply. Unlike Option 1, this option cannot proceed without acquiring privately owned land. This adds time and cost to the project before construction of the Hub can begin.

Advantages

- The land is flatter than Option 1 and will allow single storey construction, reducing construction costs and ongoing maintenance costs
- Good pedestrian and vehicle access to the site with no road widening or road improvements necessary for Hub development
- Good disability and low mobility access surrounding the site. Single storey construction assists movement within the building
- Ample existing car parking in the surrounding area however the supermarket may change demand
- Current residential use means the land is likely to be free of soil contamination
- Adjoining the supermarket (when developed) the Hub will be next to the key retail land use in the town centre creating a precinct of activity and good visual surveillance
- The dwelling lots are zoned Commercial 1 in anticipation that this area will transition into town centre uses over time

Disadvantages

- Three of the four lots required for site assembly are privately owned, increasing land acquisition costs in comparison to Options 1 and 3.
- If Council cannot reach an agreement to purchase the dwelling lots, the compulsory acquisition process can be complex and time consuming which would delay the development of the Hub.
- If the supermarket development does not proceed, one of the key siting advantages of this location is no longer applicable.



Option 3

Railway Station Yard

The Railway Station Yards are a key State Government (VicTrack) landholding in the centre of town. The recent closure of the tourist railway allows Council to consider how this land may be re-purposed for the future including the possible development of the Korumburra Community Hub.

The yards are large, flat, adjoin the town centre and offer expansive views of the surrounding rolling hills. However the configuration of the land, its poor vehicle access, existing uses (including the Men's Shed), heritage features and assumed contamination make development of the Hub at this site more challenging than might first be assumed. Furthermore, development on this land must allow for the potential return of rail services. The Hub building would have to be sited to ensure that view lines from the station platform are retained should the existing carriage shed and open sided shed be removed. These considerations greatly reduces the Hub siting options in the yards. Development of the Hub would also require Council to either secure ownership of the land or a very long term lease that would extend over the anticipated lifetime of the building.

Whether the Hub is located in the rail yards or not, the future re purposing of the rail yards will form part of the next stage of the **Korumburra Revitalisation Project** which will commence in early 2018. Similar to the work Council is currently undertaking for the Leongatha rail yards, Council is keen to work with the community to develop a vision for how the Korumburra rail yards can be used in the future. This project will consider such matters as what existing buildings will be retained on the land, what other uses could use the land and how should the space be landscaped and designed so that it can become an iconic feature of South Gippsland.



Council is also currently working with *The Station @ Korumburra* working group to find new uses for the heritage railway station building. Hub uses are not proposed to be included in the station building however the clustering of community uses in this area has the potential to create a precinct of similar uses.



Advantages

- The land is flat, allowing single storey construction
- The identified area is large enough to site the Hub in generous landscaped surrounds
- Single storey construction incorporating a slightly raised floor level can gain views of the rolling hills to the west
- The Hub uses would complement and build on the community uses proposed for the re purposed railway station building
- Sufficient area is available for expansion in the future, or new uses to establish in the area to make the area the focus of community services
- If VicTrack will sell the land to Council, it is likely to cost Council less than the cost to purchase the private lands affected by Options 1 and 2.

Disadvantages

- The land is owned by VicTrack. Council would have to acquire ownership of the land, or a very long term lease
- Poor vehicle access to the site. Existing access would have to be redesigned
- The heritage listed Mens Shed building may have to be relocated to a new position in the yards
- The land is assumed to be contaminated and would require rehabilitation before use
- Although in the town centre, it is visually isolated from the main street



Option 3 Artist impression - View from rear of Post Office looking north west. This option requires location of the Mens shed.



Let us know what you think

Council is keen to gain your views on where the Korumburra Community Hub should be located and what it should contain? Council will be holding a community information drop in session to discuss that Hub - see Council web page for details.

To keep in contact with the project, or to join the email group, visit Council's webpage:

www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/kvitalise

Submissions

For Council to formally consider your views we require a written submission. You can send a written submission to Strategic Planning, South Gippsland Shire Council, Private Bag 4 Leongatha 3953 or email to:

kvitalise@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

See Council's websites for:

- Community Engagement opportunities
- Submission closing date

Enquiries regarding this project should be directed to Council at 5662 9200 or email kvitalise@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

