



Master Plan

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In association with:



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Glossary





1.1 Introduction

The Varsity Station Village project is transforming vacant land previously earmarked for industry into a modern, vibrant and attractive place for people to live and work, all within easy walking distance of the new Varsity Lakes station.

The primary objective of the Varsity Station Village project is to promote 'transit oriented development' as advocated in the *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026*. This form of integrated development encourages future residents and visitors to travel to and from the site by more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling, trains and buses.

The Queensland Government's aspiration for Varsity Station Village is to facilitate a successful contemporary urban place on the Gold Coast, anchored by the new transport and bus interchange. This is being achieved through the creation of an endorsed vision and a comprehensive Master Plan with implementation strategies and actions.

The Varsity Station Village Master Plan assists in the achievement of transit oriented development objectives by outlining the building form and mix of activities around the future Varsity Lakes station to make it successful and attractive, whilst ensuring access to sustainable transport options.

Ultimately, the Department of Transport and Main Roads will sell the Varsity Station Village site to private industry to develop.

Community consultation on the Draft Master Plan in November 2008 provided the department with feedback from the community and stakeholders, which was considered prior to finalising the Master Plan and resulted in changes to this document.

This final Master Plan has been condensed to reflect the detailed information of most relevance to the private sector developers and council officers who will be implementing the department's vision.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to:

- assist the drafting of a statutory Local Area Plan for inclusion in the Gold Coast City Council Planning Scheme
- guide the future development of the site and assist in the assessment of future development proposals
- inform the community and developers of the intent for Varsity Station Village.

The scope of the Varsity Station Village project includes:

- promotion of transit oriented development principles
- working with the community and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive planning framework
- preparation of a site Master Plan
- preparation and delivery of implementation strategies and actions that assist in the achievement of the Master Plan outcomes
- sale of land to property developers to construct buildings, roads and landscaping in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Varsity Station Village project will:

- contribute to Gold Coast City's economic, transport and social goals
- create a vibrant and active urban environment that will be an asset to the wider Gold Coast community, and in particular, the communities of Varsity Lakes and Reedy Creek.

1.2 The site

The 14 hectare Varsity Station Village site is owned by the Queensland Government and will be the home of the new Varsity Lakes station. The site is located within the suburb of Varsity Lakes on Queensland's Gold Coast as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

The Pacific Motorway, Scottsdale Drive and Coromandel Lane all border the site as illustrated in Figure 1.2.

The site consists of two land parcels, namely:

- Lot 200 on SP186774, Parish of Gilston, County of Ward
- Part of Lot 1 RP 222906 Parish of Gilston, County of Ward.

The site is strategically located to service the surrounding communities of Varsity Lakes and Reedy Creek and has excellent access to local employment centres such as the Robina Town Centre, Varsity Central and the West Burleigh industrial area by either rail or bus services.

The wedge shaped property at the southern end of the site is not owned or controlled by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It has been included within 'The Site' for master planning purposes only, to ensure that the land parcel:

- will not be isolated as a result of adjacent development
- can integrate with the proposed development
- can help improve the efficient use of land at this location and
- can assist in delivering effective 'edge of development' outcomes for Varsity Station Village.



Figure 1.1 Site location plan extracted from Gold Coast City Council Planning Scheme

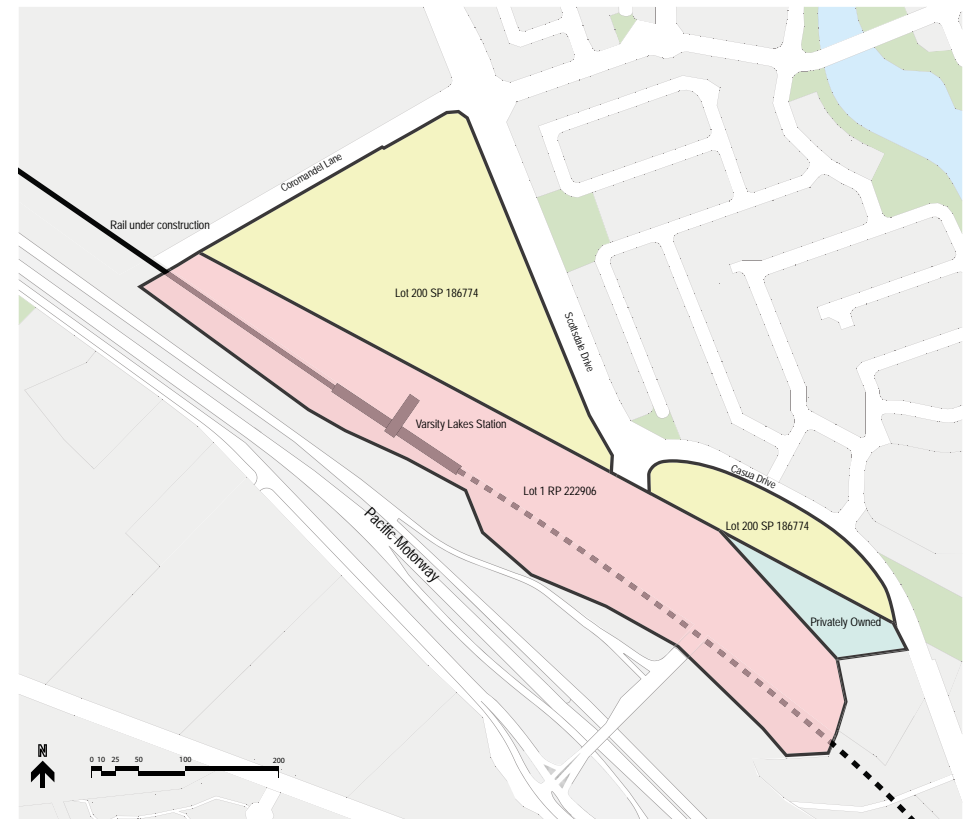


Figure 1.2 Property detail plan

1.3 Project background

In 2003, Department of Transport and Main Roads commenced negotiations to purchase land for both the rail corridor and a future rail station at Varsity Lakes. These negotiations resulted in the purchase of Lot 1 RP 222906 Parish of Gilston, County of Ward, shown in Figure 1.2. Although Lot 1 was sufficient to contain the rail line and station buildings, further land still needed to be acquired to provide for vehicle access and parking. Part of the adjoining site (described as Part of Lot 200 on SP186774, Parish of Gilston, County of Ward) which was owned by property development company Delfin Lend Lease, was identified as being required to provide access to the future station.

The Varsity Station Village concept emerged in 2004. In that year a major review of the South East Queensland Regional Plan (Regional Plan) was undertaken and transit oriented development principles were identified as a way of dealing with the region's population, employment and travel challenges. A draft Regional Plan released in late 2004 identified a future development, designed using transit oriented development principles, could be established on land adjacent to the future station at Varsity Lakes (then referred to as Reedy Creek).

Throughout 2004 and early 2005, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and others explored development opportunities on the site. A number of different delivery models to facilitate the demonstration of transit oriented development principles were explored.

At the same time, a development approval permitting industrial uses on Lot 200 adjacent to the new rail station was granted to the then landowner, Delfin Lend Lease.

Although supportive of the transit oriented development concept, Delfin Lend Lease indicated that it was unable to wait until a new rail station was built and offered to sell the site to the Queensland Government.

This would allow the transit oriented development concept to be pursued in the medium term and that the Government could hold the land in anticipation of both the future station and adjacent land development.

Further analysis of Lot 200 by the Department of Transport and Main Roads concluded that acquisition of the site for the purpose of facilitating development that exhibited transit oriented principles could be supported on both technical and financial grounds. In July 2005, approval was granted to acquire the 8.5 hectare site owned by Delfin Lend Lease with the transaction being finalised in February 2006. The two combined allotments provide a 14 hectare development site.

Concept planning was undertaken between March 2006 and June 2007. The concept planning phase further explored opportunities for facilitating a transit oriented development, finalised the location of the new Varsity Lakes station and confirmed the timing of the station's construction.

In July 2007, the Varsity Station Village and Robina to Varsity Lakes Rail projects were jointly announced as funded capital projects. The Varsity Station Village project was allocated \$23.7 million to provide site works and undertake planning and works to get the site "development ready".

Village Vision

In November 2007, the *Village Vision Draft Master Plan* was officially launched by the then Honorable John Mickel MP, Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations. The *Village Vision* was provided to over 4,000 local households and other stakeholders.

Draft Master Plan

A draft of the Master Plan was released for community consultation in November 2008 to generate discussion and feedback prior to the Master Plan being finalised. Feedback from the community and stakeholders was considered prior to finalising the plan. Individual responses were sent to each submitter and a summary of the issues and the department's responses were collated in the Communication and Consultation Report.

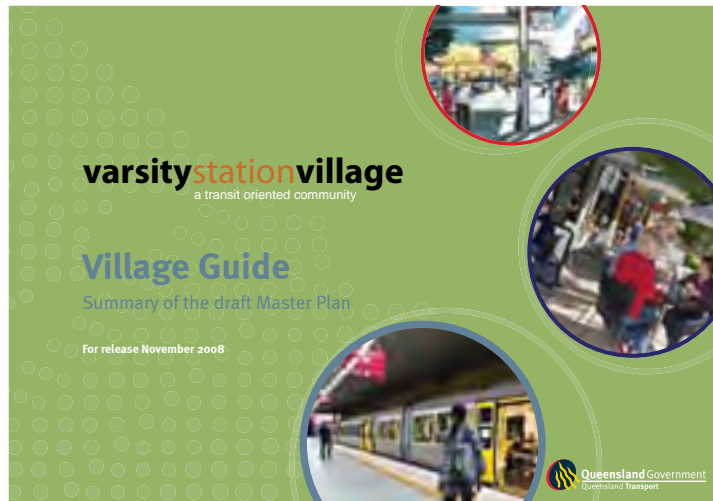
Background information on the site context, opportunities and challenges is contained within the draft Master Plan available from the project website, www.varsitystationvillage.com.au, or from the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Final Master Plan

The final Master Plan has been condensed to reflect the detailed information of most relevance to the private sector developers and council officers who will be implementing the department's vision.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to:

- assist the drafting of a statutory Local Area Plan for inclusion in the Gold Coast City Council Planning Scheme
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- inform the community and developers of the intent for Varsity Station Village.



1.4 Purpose of Varsity Station Village

The purpose of the Varsity Station Village project is to facilitate the development of a contemporary development which embodies the transit oriented development principles identified within the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026.

The project is the first of its kind to be undertaken within Queensland for the following reasons:

- It is the first time the Queensland Government has purchased land adjacent to a future rail station to facilitate development that embodies transit oriented principles.
- The Varsity Lakes Rail Station will be the newest station to be delivered by the Bligh Government.

Varsity Station Village will demonstrate ways of implementing the Regional Plan principles and policies on a local scale with tangible development outcomes.

Knowledge gained from undertaking the Varsity Station Village project will be applied to other future rail and busway stations being planned and delivered across Queensland.

1.5 Project objectives

The objectives of the Varsity Station Village project are:

- to apply transit oriented development principles to plan and develop Varsity Station Village
- to maximise the economic and community benefits of government investment in new public transport infrastructure at Varsity Lakes station
- to promote transit oriented development as a successful form of development
- to work with the development industry to deliver the project
- to demonstrate the benefits of integrating land use and transport planning for smart development
- to promote the lessons learned from the project and highlight how similar development can occur in other locations throughout Queensland
- to encourage stakeholder engagement throughout the plan making process.



1.6 Collaborative planning approach

The Varsity Station Village Master Plan was prepared using a multi-disciplinary and collaborative planning approach.

The project team, led by Department of Transport and Main Roads and supported by a team of specialists including urban designers, engineers, economists, demographers, sustainability strategists and housing specialists, worked with a range of industry and government stakeholders to develop the Master Plan. The project also called upon feedback provided by individual community members and community groups during consultation events and through submissions to the project team.

The Department of Transport and Main Road's award winning 'Enquiry-by-Design' workshop approach was used to work with interest groups to develop integrated planning solutions. These were collaborative design and planning sessions where designers worked with a range of stakeholders to prepare the Master Plan.

The Varsity Station Village project is just one of a range of government projects in the Varsity Lakes area. The Varsity Station Village project team worked with other project teams to achieve a whole-of-government solution.

Some of the other Queensland Government projects in the Varsity Lakes area include:

- Robina to Varsity Lakes rail extension and new Varsity Lakes rail station: led by Queensland Rail (QR) and the TrackStar Alliance
- Varsity Lakes to Tugun section of the Pacific Motorway upgrade planning study: led by Main Roads
- Varsity Lakes to Tugun rail extension planning study: led by Queensland Rail and the TrackStar Alliance
- Mudgeeraba to Tugun power line project: led by ENERGEX.



1.7 Master Plan team



The Varsity Station Village Master Plan has been produced by a multi-disciplinary team led by the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

A core team of contractors assisted in the creation of the Master Plan, including:

- Deicke Richards: lead consultant and urban designers
- EDAW Australia: public realm and landscape
- MacroPlan Australia: development feasibility
- PB (Parsons Brinkerhoff): engineering and site services.

Additional contributions were made by the following contractors:

- Maunsell Australia: urban sustainability
- SGS Economics and Planning Consultants: housing diversity
- Planning Information and Forecasting Unit of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning: demographics
- John Byrne Consulting: project management and urban design
- Andrew Hammonds of AKH Consulting: project management and urban design
- Chris Brincat of The Harrison Group: project management.

In addition, the Master Plan team worked closely with stakeholders from the following organisations:

- Gold Coast City Council
- Queensland Rail (QR)
- TrackStar Alliance
- TransLink Transit Authority
- Main Roads
- ENERGEX
- Department of Infrastructure and Planning
- Housing
- Environmental Protection Agency.

