



## 4.1 Design statement

This chapter describes the ultimate form of Varsity Station Village, responding to the vision and development brief.

The challenge for the consultant team, led by Deicke Richards and EDAW, was to prepare a Master Plan that responded to the development brief whilst applying sustainable urban practices. As such, the goal of achieving sustainable urbanism underpins the consultant team's urban design work.

Varsity Station Village will be a sustainable neighbourhood with a small town centre. Uses and activities are grouped to create a vibrant mixed-use community with a distinct sense of place.

A variety of residential types and densities are concentrated around the rail station to provide vibrancy. Appropriate workplaces are both vertically or horizontally mixed and integrated with residential areas. The urban environment is legible, accessible and encourages walking.

Varsity Station Village will benefit the existing community and future residents, workers and visitors through its focus on integrating an efficient public transport network within a new urban centre, containing a range of new facilities, services and public spaces. The character of the station and Village will be strongly urban, reinforced by the scale and nature of development. High Street will form the heart of the Village and will be reinforced by taller buildings with active pedestrian focused frontages.

Varsity Station Village will be distinctively subtropical through the design of buildings and public realm – featuring local planting with water sensitive urban design incorporated into streets and public spaces.

Varsity Station Village will meet a diverse range of user needs, capitalising on the unique location and reflecting the nature and form of development appropriate to a benchmark transit oriented community.

### 4.1.1 Local outcomes

The Varsity Station Village Master Plan has been prepared to respect the surrounding community and encourage the establishment of important linkages, both locally and regionally.

Locally, the Village will provide a variety of safe and attractive connections to the new rail station and transport interchange. It will also improve the amenity of the connection between Varsity Lakes and Reedy Creek. Varsity Station Village will provide new facilities, jobs, services and public places for use by all. Integration could be enhanced by upgrading the two existing pocket parks on Palma Crescent, linking them with the entries into the Village off Scottsdale Drive. This would be subject to community feedback and negotiations between the future developer and Gold Coast City Council.

Regionally, Varsity Station Village will contribute to the Pacific Innovation Corridor, one of the Gold Coast's long term signature economic development projects. While providing a support role to the principal activity centre of Robina, the Village will differentiate itself by transport connectivity, urban outcomes, compactness and quality of place. It will also complement the vibrant and growing Varsity Central, which is within easy reach.

The Village will improve the amenity and safety of the connection across the Pacific Motorway from Reedy Creek. It will transform the existing bridge into a pedestrian and cyclist-friendly street.

The Master Plan proposes a preliminary strategy for the management of parking and traffic movement. This aims to encourage public and active transport. However, it also acknowledges that members of the community will require access by car and therefore car parking. Whilst the Village will include kerbside parking, park 'n' ride and kiss 'n' ride facilities, plus parking within new developments, a regulated parking strategy may be required for the site. This strategy and intended outcomes will be detailed during the development approval stage.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads will sell the site for development by either one or a number of private sector developers. The developer/s will actively generate opportunities for the existing and future community to lease or purchase homes, offices and shops within the Village.

Varsity Station Village's strategic location, adjacent to the Pacific Motorway and Varsity Lakes station, will provide benefits to residents, workers and visitors.



Figure 4.1 Indicative built form of Varsity Station Village

## 4.1.2 Key elements

### Varsity Lakes station

The architecturally designed station, currently under construction, will be the 'anchor' for the Village. Like rail stations of old, it has been designed to be a landmark – an icon for public transport, part of a busy transport interchange with a public plaza. It will be an important point of reference in the Village, connecting with existing and future activity centres along this corridor and providing the Village with a direct connection to other parts of the Gold Coast and to Brisbane.



Aerial View of railway station

### High Street

Designed with a traditional High Street in mind, High Street will become the place to meet, shop, eat and have fun. As the heart of the Village it will be compact, defined by wide protected footpaths, subtropical landscaping, street furniture, public art and kerbside parking. Terminated by the rail station, High Street will be filled with pedestrians day and night, yet designed to keep traffic speeds low. Consequently, it will become a popular address for shops, café's and restaurants, which will line the street, and benefit from nearby commercial and residential buildings.



Aerial view of High Street

### Transport interchange

An important function of the Village is to provide a transport interchange for the broader community. The interchange will be anchored by the new rail station. Local bus stops adjacent and opposite the rail station will facilitate the transport interchange. Also located in the vicinity of the station are a taxi rank, kiss 'n' ride, park 'n' ride and bicycle parking facilities, creating a true transit focus within a mixed-use centre. In addition, the quality of the streets and footpaths will enable cyclists and pedestrians to access the interchange.



Aerial view of transport interchange

### A vibrant centre

Varsity Station Village will be an active place during the day and night thanks to the mix of residential, commercial and retail activity and as the destination of a wide range of transit options. The building density will generate a critical mass of residents, workers and visitors supporting the range of activities in the area. High quality plazas and squares with an urban scale will prove popular as safe, interesting and vibrant places for the community.



Illustrative concept of Village Square



### Walkable

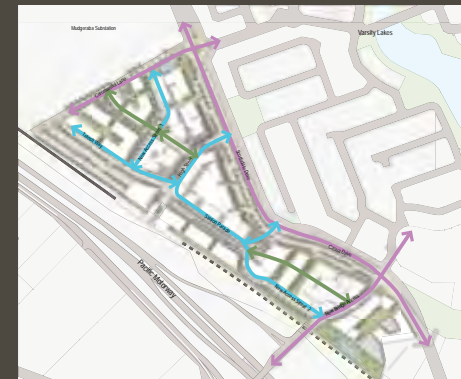
Varsity Station Village is designed to be a compact and walkable centre. This will be facilitated through the use of generous covered footpaths, dedicated cycle lanes and direct, safe and attractive links. Shopping trends are coming full circle and once again relying on streets like Tedder Ave, Main Beach and James Street, Burleigh Heads as the focus rather than enclosed pedestrian only malls. While a portion of the community relies on cars, increasingly successful centres are designed so that cars and car parking no longer dominate the townscape, but still provide a level of activity and accessibility.



Artists impression view along Station Parade towards the station

### Network of urban places

Communities need safe, attractive and comfortable places to meet and play. Varsity Station Village will provide a network of high quality public places, all with a compact urban scale. Station Plaza, at the entry to the new station, will be a popular place to meet and greet. The Village Square, just off High Street, will be a place to meet, play, sit, eat or relax. Smaller formal and informal spaces, which offer joint roles for passive recreation and water sensitive urban design, will be strategically positioned within the Village. They will all provide different but complementary experiences for the community.



Important linkages around the site

### Scottsdale Drive

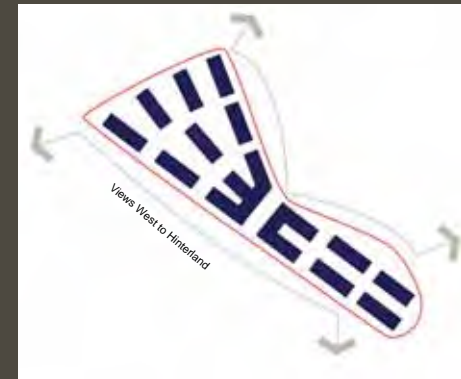
Varsity Station Village will reinforce Scottsdale Drive as an important route within the community. New signalised intersections at landscaped entries into the Village will allow pedestrians to cross safely. Significantly, the Varsity Lakes station project is committed to working with Energex to underground the high voltage powerlines for a safer, more attractive outcome. This also provides an opportunity to use this space to create a service road with parking, resulting in better traffic management and access.



Artists impression along Scottsdale Drive towards the Village

### Orientation and aspect

The streets have been aligned within the Village to enable residential and office buildings to have a south west or north east outlook. This will provide a balance between climatic outcomes, such as solar orientation and the opportunity for hinterland or ocean/lake views from some levels. The exception to this pattern of building orientation are those buildings associated with High Street which are orientated to enclose and overlook this important social and commercial space.



Building orientation diagram