

MOUNT BARKER TOWN SQUARE CONCEPT PROPOSAL



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Acknowledgement of Country

Mount Barker District Council acknowledges that this work is situated on the traditional lands of the First Nations people and recognise the First Nations people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We respect the spiritual relationship with Country that has developed over thousands of years, and the cultural heritage and beliefs that remain important to the First Nations people today.

Issue	Description	Date	Client
1	Concept Proposal	24/09/2021	Mount Barker District Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Mount Barker District Council** has embarked on the next significant step in developing a comprehensive vision to transform a key landholding in the Mount Barker centre.

Beginning with the Town Square, the City Catalyst Project will, in time, be home to an exciting range of uses, including the relocated Council offices, a new Library, Market Sheds, Hotel, and residential properties.

TOWN SQUARE CONCEPT DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The concept design has been developed through a process of visioning, exploring, testing and refining options.

This Concept Design Report captures the investigations carried out, meetings and consultation undertaken by the Design Team to inform the preferred option.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

With the completion of the Concept Design Phase, this concept design for the Town Square will be presented to the wider community.

Mount Barker District Council, Burke Urban Investments, and the design team look forward to the opportunity to seek feedback from the community and to continue to refine and develop the Town Square project through the next stage of implementation.



SECTION 01:

THE CASE FOR A TOWN SQUARE

IDENTIFYING CIVIC OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COUNCIL AREA

Mount Barker District Council's 2012 Town Centre Strategy identified the opportunity to inject greater activity and create significant civic presence in the centre of Mount Barker.

A GROWING TOWN

With substantial population growth and private investments occurring in Mount Barker and its Districts, Council have placed a new importance on the primacy of the Mount Barker Town Centre. As the fastest growing regional township in South Australia, there is now a need to create a place which meets the needs and demands of the local community and its visitors.

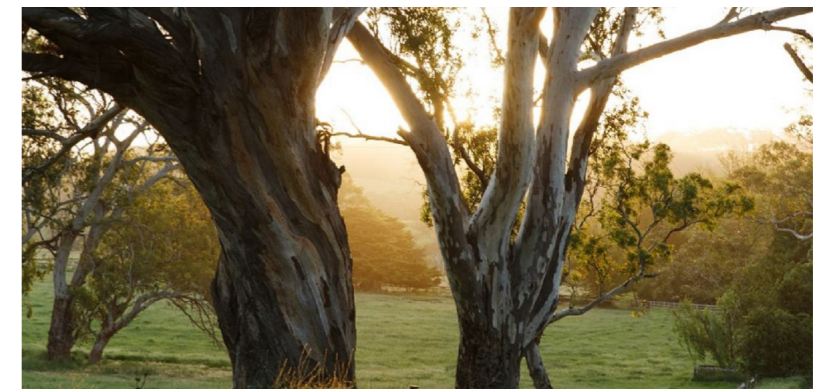
The public space of a new Town Square will act as a linchpin in which retail, commercial, civic, and accommodation uses will benefit from.

The Mount Barker Town Square will be a place for public events, activation, and for day-to-day use to sit and relax for Mount Barker's diverse community.

A NEW SPACE FOR EVENTS

Mount Barker has a significant network of parklands that successfully host a number of large events, however it has been identified that there is a gap in the parkland network for a dedicated civic space within the township. The opportunity this project presents is to fill that gap and create a dedicated town square that can host smaller events, ceremonies, music, film and gatherings.

The Town Square will be set amongst high quality, medium-rise buildings that will provide a sense of enclosure with lively, active edges which include hospitality and retail offerings to complement the public open space.



BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE ABUNDANT OPEN SPACE NETWORK

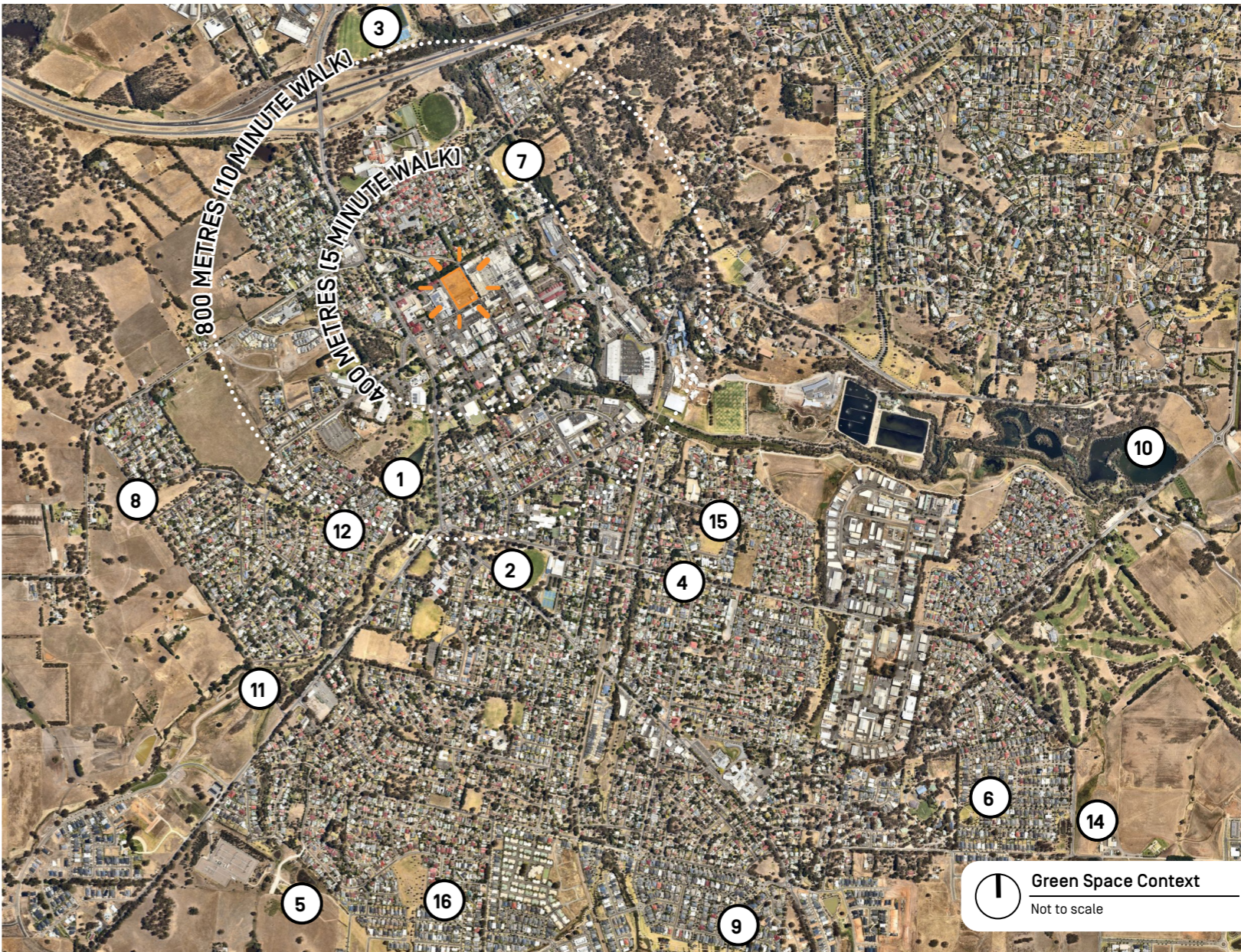
The Mount Barker township is supported by many green spaces, including parks, reserves, and ovals. These hold large events, and are used for passive and active sporting uses. From walking the dog, riding along a bicycle trail, kicking a ball with friends, or playing weekend sport - there are significant opportunities for these types of activities to occur in the Mount Barker area; all set amongst well-maintained green spaces with lawns and trees.

IDENTIFYING THE CURRENT OPEN SPACES IN THE MOUNT BARKER AREA

The map at right shows existing parks and reserves in Mount Barker. Highlighted in orange is the City Catalyst Project site - which shows the opportunity to create a central town square that is complementary to the existing network of parklands.

This space will fill a need for a space to relax and recreate within the town centre, which will also allow for year-round use as an event and ceremonial space.

- 1. Keith Stephenson Park
- 2. Mount Barker Recreation Ground
- 3. Anembo Park
- 4. Ascent Estate
- 5. Barka Park (Dog Park)
- 6. Barzona Street Reserve
- 7. Dunn Park
- 8. Fry Street Reserve
- 9. Hilltop Linear Park
- 10. Laratinga Wetlands
- 11. Linear Trail
- 12. Memorial Drive Walkway
- 13. Mount Barker Summit
- 14. The Summit Reserve
- 15. Weld Park
- 16. Zanker Drive Reserve



OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

KEY

1. Keith Stephenson Park
2. Mount Barker Recreation Ground
3. Anembo Park
4. Ascent Estate
5. Barka Park (Dog Park)
6. Barzona Street Reserve
7. Dunn Park
8. Fry Street Reserve
9. Hilltop Linear Park
10. Laratinga Wetlands
11. Linear Trail
12. Memorial Drive Walkway
13. Mount Barker Summit
14. The Summit Reserve
15. Weld Park
16. Zanker Drive Reserve
17. Linear Trail



SECTION 02:

THE SITE & CONCEPT BRIEF

THE SITE TODAY

Bound by supermarket, retail, restaurants, and residential properties, the City Catalyst Project site is a unique landholding - one that has not seen any significant development in a number of decades.

Currently standing mostly vacant, the 1.17 hectare site sits surrounded by the leafy Druids Street to the north, Stephen Street to the west, Hutchinson Street to the east, and Morphett Street to the south.

A WAY TO LEVERAGE OFF THE SUCCESS OF NEARBY ACTIVITY NODES

With the Gawler Street precinct located less than 170 metres from the site, the City Catalyst Project site will act to connect the two nodes, particularly with the upgrade of Stephen Street which will support the direct connection between Gawler Street and the Town Square.

With new and exciting uses and businesses on the City Catalyst Project site and the well-established businesses and uses in Gawler Street, the two activity nodes will complement each other.

The additional opportunity to encourage walkability in the Mount Barker centre, and in turn reducing a reliance on motor vehicles, is possible through the quality upgrade of Stephen Street.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO SIT COMFORTABLY WITHIN THE SURROUNDS

Surrounded by an already active town, the site will take advantage of being located conveniently within the centre of Mount Barker. The Town Square will be complemented by the existing businesses surrounding the site, and any new businesses will be compatible with these established businesses.

Carefully positioned land uses, with residential and lower-intensity uses to the north and more commercial and civic uses to the south, the Town Square is ideally located to fit neatly within the established land uses.



SUMMARY OF PROJECT SCOPE

Mount Barker District Council is working alongside Burke Urban Investments through a co-design model to develop the Town Square design. As part of this process, there is consideration of how the design of the Stephen Street upgrade can strengthen the key linkage between the Gawler Street Precinct to connect the new Town Square.

SCOPE

The Town Square is defined as a 1,500 square metre site. The site has an edge to Morphett Street, and will be bound by built form generally to its other two sides; a Library and Council Civic Building to the west, and the historic cottage and new Market Shed buildings to the east.

The Town Square will be connected north through to Druids Avenue by a pedestrian connection, which will take the user through the length of the City Catalyst Project site.

A connection to the upgraded Stephen Street will be possible by a short walk along Morphett Street, which then intersects with Stephen Street to link to Gawler Street.

The Town Square will be a place to satisfy the needs of multiple users which could include: teenagers to hang out, a place for office workers to have lunch, friends to grab a drink, teachers with student groups, and families to relax on the lawn and take advantage of the water feature on a summer afternoon.

BUDGET

An indicative budget of \$2 million has been determined for the Town Square part of the greater City Catalyst Project. The budget for the Town Square will be supported by grant funding from Federal and State opportunities, as well as a contribution from Council budget funding.

The final funding model will be subject to the outcome of grant applications.



SECTION 03:

BENCHMARKING & ENGAGEMENT

BENCHMARKING: COMPARABLE TOWN SQUARES

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to investigate comparable town squares and parks with a defined (and scalable) area, that had comparable surrounding uses, and was complementary to other spaces within their council area.

With the new Mount Barker Town Square to occupy approximately 1,500m², the benchmarking exercise further explored the common elements found at each of these squares or parks.

COMMON THEMES

Across the identified town squares and parks assigned for benchmarking, we identified a number of common themes.

These themes had a strong relevance to the way in which design for the Mount Barker Town Square would be influenced.

These include:

- Activated edges, including shopping and food & beverage opportunities
- Passive surveillance from adjacent built form which look onto the square or park
- Lighting for night use, including catenary lighting, path lighting, and coloured illumination for event modes
- Shading for summer, both in the form of trees, vines, and architectural structures
- Flexibility of space for varying modes
- Areas for performance, with lighting and power available.
- A mix of hard and soft ground surfaces to allow for places to sit, and places to play
- A variety of landscaping types and sizes (including trees and shrubs), providing amenity to screen, to provide shade, and for aesthetic purpose
- Rich materials and textures which are reflective of their location



BOWDEN MAIN PARK
BOWDEN, SA
4,500 m²



KAPUNDA TOWN SQUARE
KAPUNDA, SA
1,500 m²



PIAZZA DELLA VALLE
MCLAREN VALE, SA
1,400 m²



DESIGN WORKSHOP ENGAGEMENT

‘BUILD A TOWN SQUARE’ DESIGN CHALLENGE

An interactive design workshop was held with Elected Members which introduced the design brief, split Members up into four groups, be assigned personas to ‘get into the shoes’ of a particular Town Square user, and be provided with a ‘kit of parts’ to begin to design a new Town Square for each group.

AIMS OF THE DESIGN CHALLENGE

The design challenge exercise set out to develop aspirational thinking once having a firm understanding of the scale of the Town Square, help stakeholders articulate the types of functions and uses that are important to the community, inform the design team of the key elements and experiences that they believe should be included in the Town Square, and start to prioritise these uses, functions, and particular experiences.

KIT OF PARTS

The three groups were equipped with a ‘kit of parts’, which were to be placed on a scaled plan which would be built up to form a concept design. These included lawn, trees, shrubs, fire pits, shade structures, street furniture, feature lighting, a performance stage, market stalls, food trucks, and path materials.

UNDERSTANDING WHO WILL BE USING THE TOWN SQUARE

To envisage the needs and desires of multiple users, Elected Members were required to approach their design thinking through the lens of differing persona. These were established by the design team, and they included:

- A teenager at a local high school
- Professional couple meeting up for lunch
- Single parent with a toddler in a pram
- Person taking an elderly parent to an appointment
- Office worker meeting friends after work
- Teacher with a small group of primary school students
- Group of retirees meeting after an event
- Family who has ridden their bicycles along the linear trail to the Town Square.

AN EMERGING PATTERN

At the conclusion of the design challenge, one team member from each of the three groups was tasked with presenting their concept design, and the reasons they included the elements they did.

Although the kit of parts allowed for a great degree of flexibility, particularly with a blank canvas being the Town Square outline only, the design team were encouraged to see a pattern of similarities in the placement of their items, even before these were presented.

The general themes that were consistent across each of the groups include:

- The inclusion of fire pits within each design
- The desire to incorporate a stage space, with this located adjacent the Library building which would mean the audience were protected from looking into the sun
- A careful balance of hard surfaces and soft surfaces, to give the user the option depending on weather or ability
- A pathway which encapsulated a grassed area; some with a central path which dissected the lawn area
- Trees to provide shade
- Shrubs to define additional edges to spaces
- Moveable furniture for event modes



Design Concept by Group 3



Group 2 members



Group 3 members

SECTION 04:

THE VISION

THE VISION FOR A NEW TOWN SQUARE



THE VISION FOR THE MOUNT BARKER TOWN SQUARE

Invite your family, your friends, and your community. **This is a place for you.** The new Mount Barker Town Square is **your place to connect** – to your community, to cultures, to learning, and to the environment. The Town Square is an **evolving** place which will **change with the seasons and grow with the community.** Its character will be driven by the people that use it, with the events that take place here, and with the memories that are created here. Our aim is to create a space that is a **backdrop to connection**, which enables ownership and activation by the community.



- We use water in the town square to reflect the universal and cross cultural traditions of settlement and gathering around water. It is an acknowledgment of common ground between Peramangk and European cultures and tells of the abundance of the region and its natural landscapes.
- Water is woven through the site as a playful wayfinding mechanism, it guides you along the public realm to the many destinations within the site. These streams converge in a central location and are expressed in a series of flush mounted water jets that invite gathering, interaction and observation. These streams will vary in intensity and expression as they weave through the site as both a physical and interpretive expression.



- Nature connection was identified as one of six top priorities in the Community Plan, and it is important that we consider our role as steward of the natural environment by minimising the impacts of the development of the surrounding natural systems.
- We will showcase, educate and set a high standard through the responsible use of locally sourced, renewable resources, minimising resource consumption and ensuring an enduring and long lived design outcome.



- The Town Square will have many personalities, with the character of the space driven by how the community are using it. A flexible and robust square will support layered and allow the space to be adopted, imagined, and reimaged by users over generations.
- Infrastructure to host events of varying scales will be considered, with the aim to make activation of the space affordable, convenient, and easy.
- Providing technology to live stream events, connect with other communities and activate the space will provide a backdrop to creative pursuits and further support activation. Outside of event mode this technology will be able to light and delight the users of the space and be a destination.

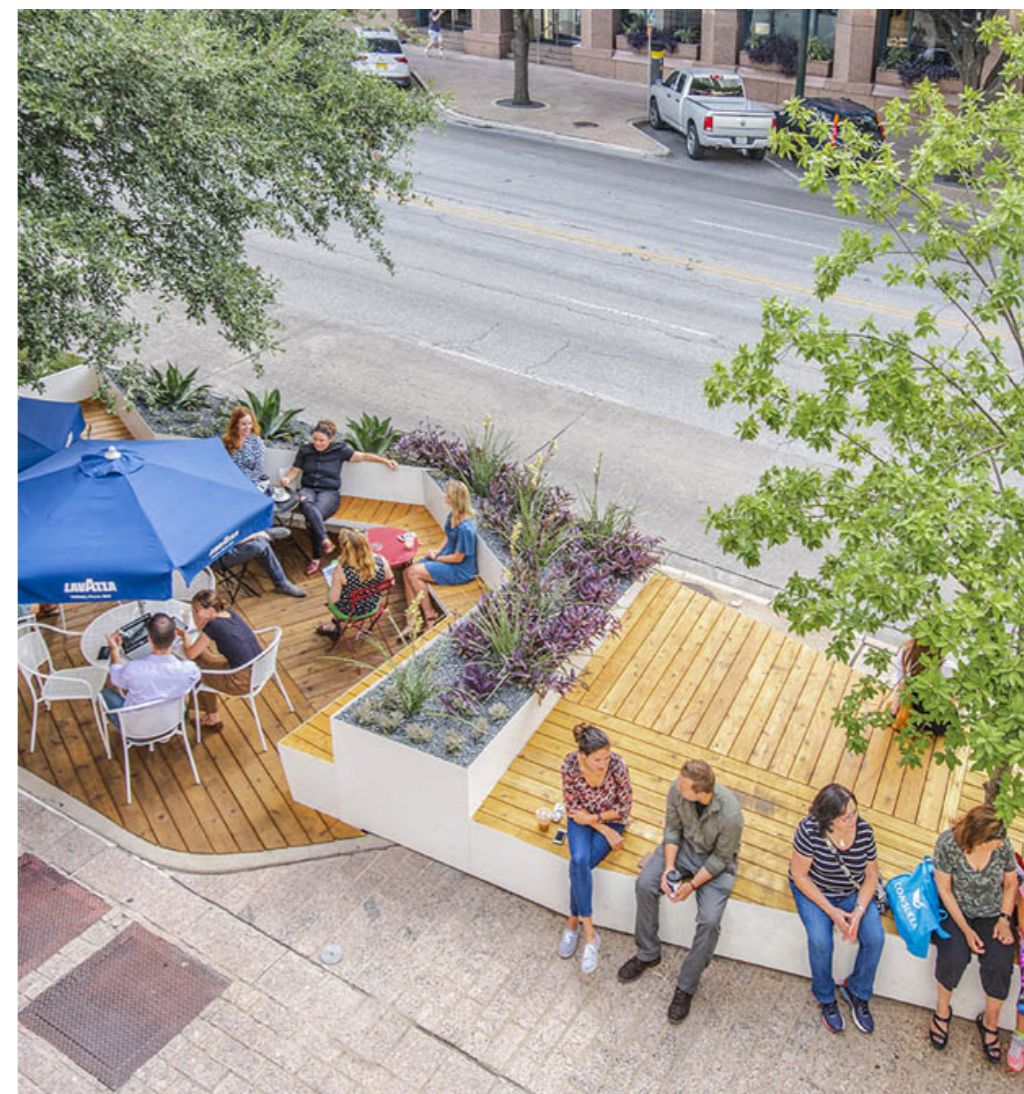
DESIGN FRAMEWORK #1: OF PLACE

1. REFERENCE THE CONVERGENCE OF THREE RIVERS:
MOUNT BARKER RIVER, BREMER RIVER, AND WESTERN CREEK
2. SYMBOLIC WARMTH OF SOLAR ORIENTATION AND FIRE
3. REFLECTION OF PERAMANGK AND EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT OF THE
REGION BY USE OF WATER AND FIRE
4. INTEGRATED PUBLIC ARTWORK OF 'ON PERAMANGK LAND'



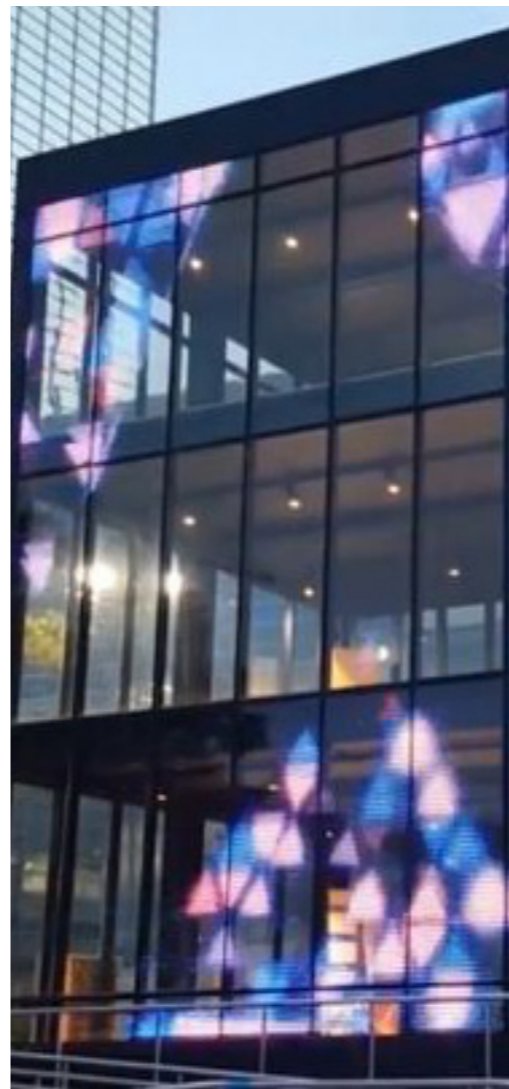
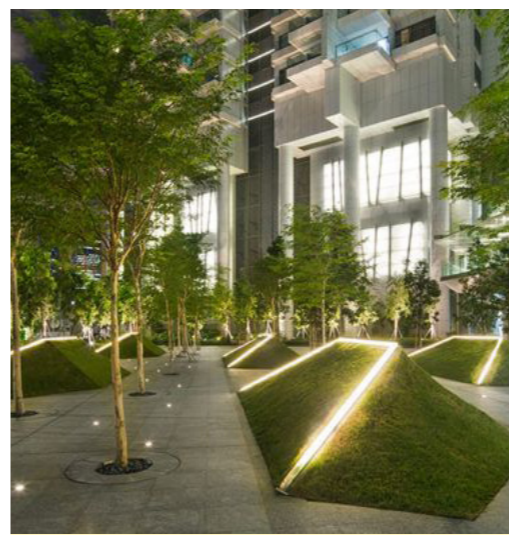
DESIGN FRAMEWORK #2: SUSTAINABLE

1. THE USE OF LOCAL RESOURCES WITH LOW EMBODIED ENERGY AND LONG LIFECYCLES
2. WATER CAPTURE THROUGH WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN
3. THE USE OF TREES TO REDUCE HEAT ISLAND EFFECT
4. THE USE OF LOW MAINTENANCE PLANTS WHICH ARE TOLERANT OF THE MOUNT BARKER CLIMATE



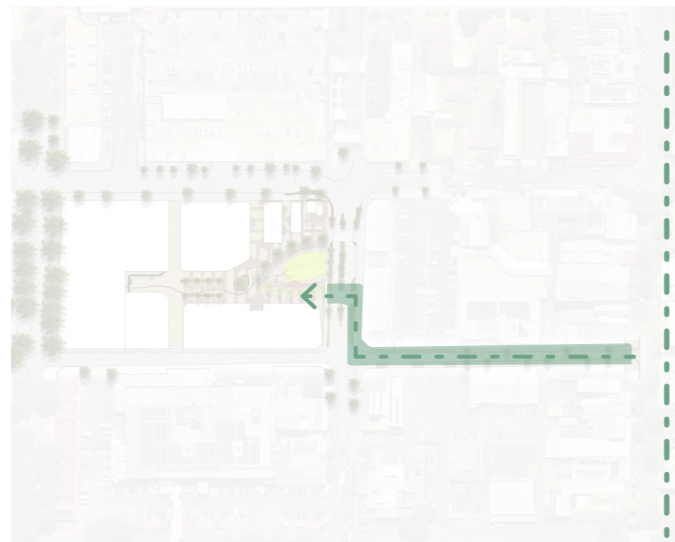
DESIGN FRAMEWORK #3: FOR COMMUNITY

1. ABILITY TO HOST A RANGE OF COMMUNITY EVENTS, WITH YEAR-ROUND AND ALL-SEASON ACTIVATION
2. SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT FOOD TRUCKS, MUSIC AND PERFORMANCES
3. INTERACTIVE AND DYNAMIC LIGHTING INSTALLATIONS AND SIGNAGE
4. COMFORT AND RESPIRE FOR DAY-TO-DAY USE

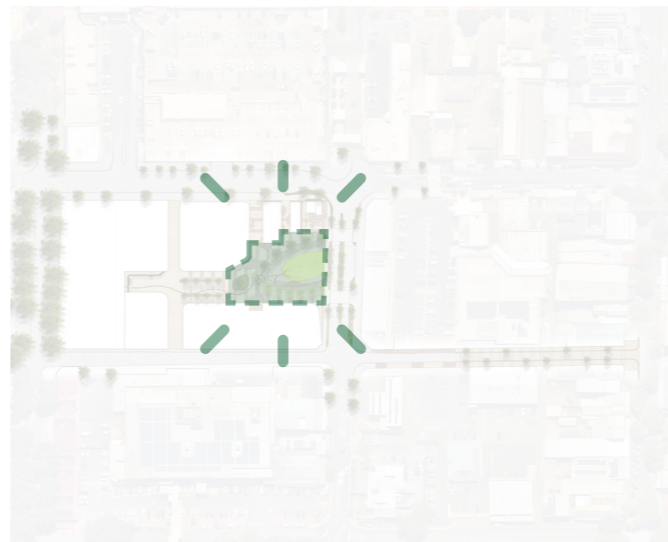


THREE CITY-WIDE KEY DESIGN STRATEGIES

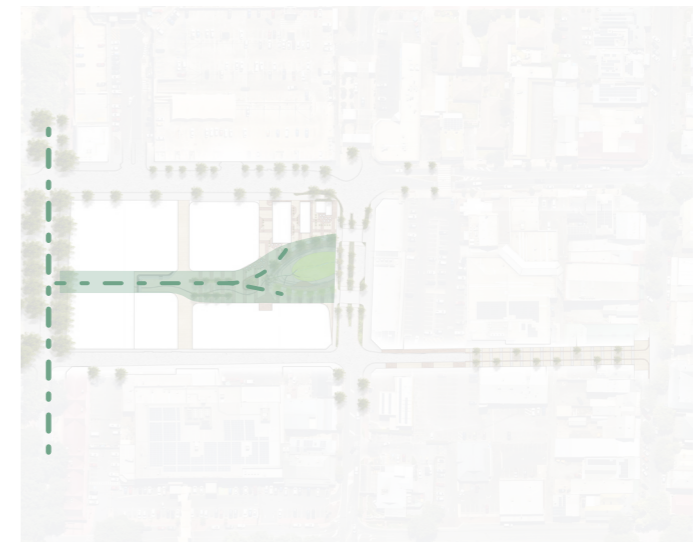
Three design strategies have been formulated to begin the **connection of the new Town Square to the Gawler Street precinct**; utilising the upgrade of Stephen Street as the vessel to achieve this.



- 01 Create a comfortable pedestrian link between the Gawler Street precinct and the new Town Square



- 02 Connect the new Town Square to surrounding amenity on Morphett Street, Hutchinson Street and Stephens Street



- 03 Create a laneway experience through the site, connecting the Town Square to Druids Avenue, and the greater northern area beyond

CONTEXT PLAN

REINFORCE CONNECTION TO GAWLER STREET



Context Plan
Scale: Not to scale

FOUR TOWN SQUARE KEY DESIGN STRATEGIES

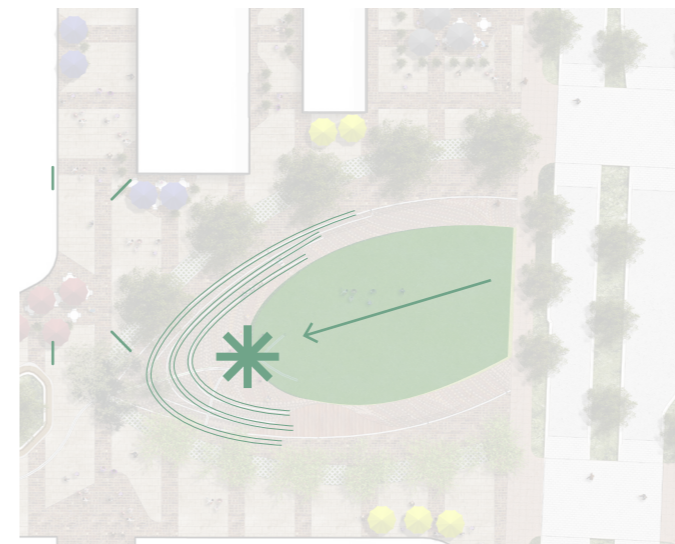
Four key design strategies begin to explore the relationship and inclusion of the **Peramangk people**, the metaphoric connection of **natural elements** to the site, and the **prioritisation of people** in a new urban area.



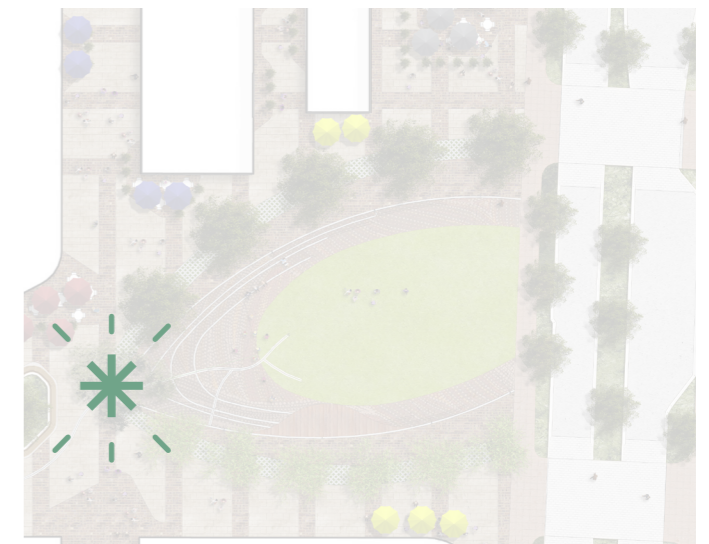
01 Incorporation of the Peramangk shield shape to drive layering of urban elements



02 Convergence of three rivers: the Mount Barker River, Bremer River, and Western Creek

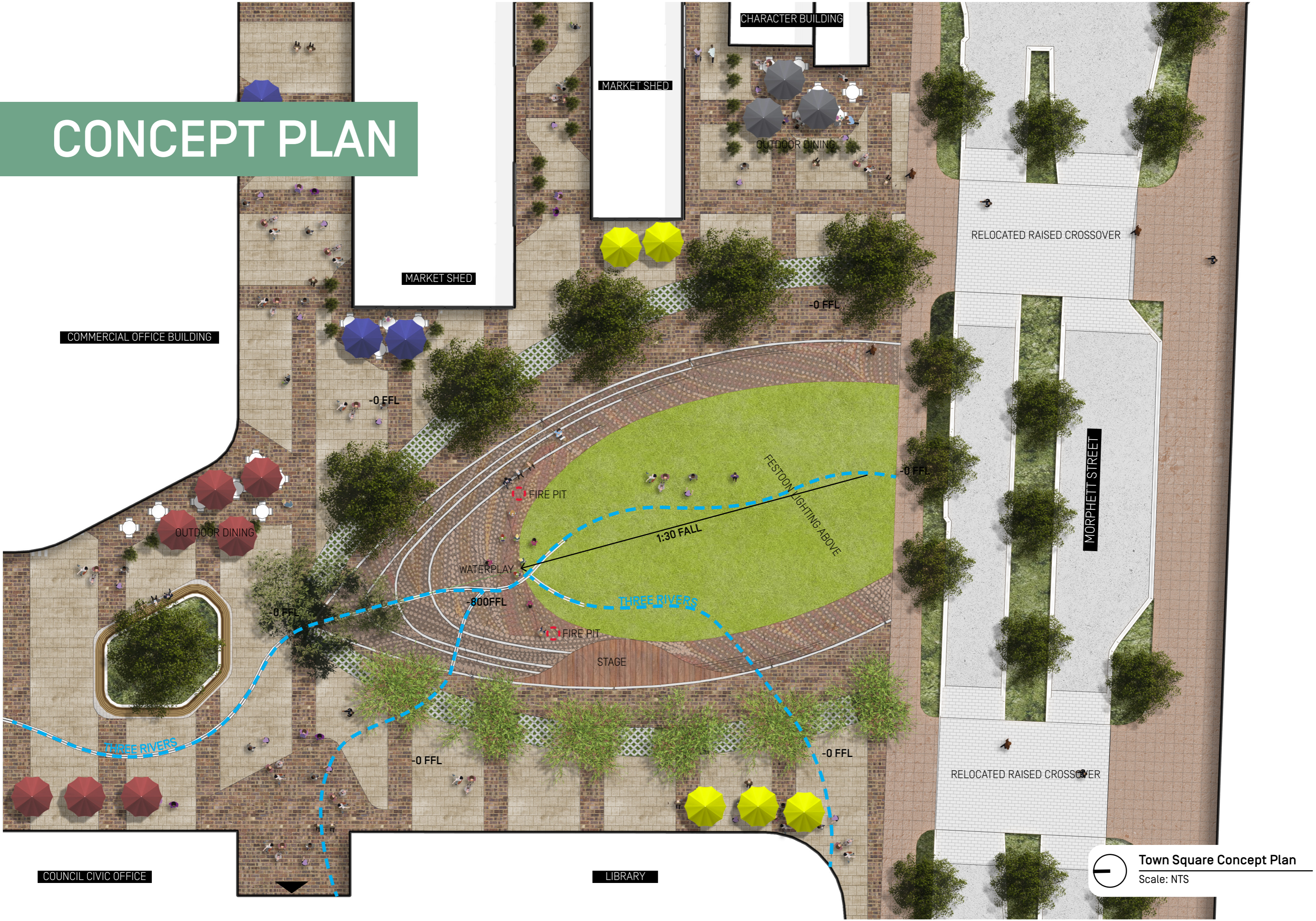


03 Create a casual amphitheatre space centred around the convergence of the 'rivers'

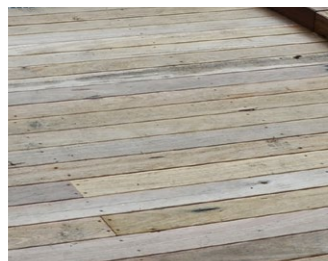


04 Planting of a Mountain Gum at the apex of the shield as an iconic landmark and meeting place

CONCEPT PLAN



TOWN SQUARE: KEY MOMENTS & MATERIALS



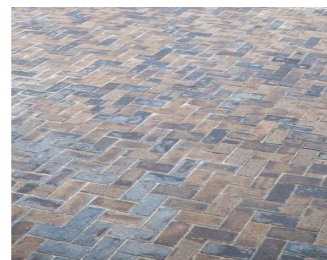
- 01 Timber Decking**
Class 1 durability
hardwood, spotted
gum



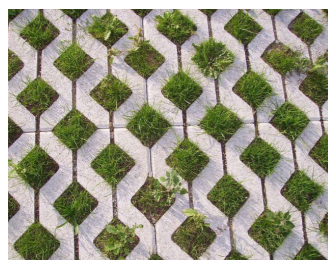
- 02 In-Situ Wall**
Formed in-situ
concrete with skate-
stops where required



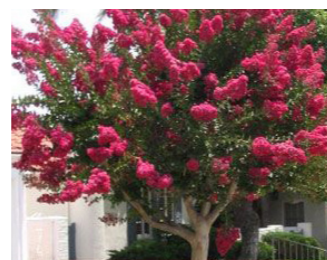
- 03 In-situ concrete**
With opportunity for
branding or First
Nations storytelling



- 04 Concrete Pavers**
Contrasting colours to
delineate spaces



- 05 Permeable Paving**
Permeable pre-cast
concrete heavy duty
interlocking paving



- 06 Crepe Myrtle**
Feature colonnade
trees to western
(Library) side of grass
area



- 07 Tilia Cordata**
Shade tree to
pedestrian walkways
and grassed area



- 08 Mountain Gum**
Feature tree at apex of
shield

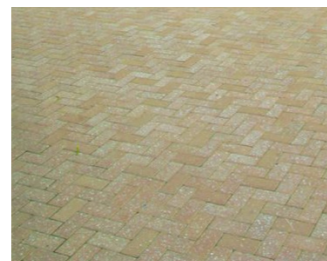


Site Plan - Town Square
Scale: 1:4000 @ A3

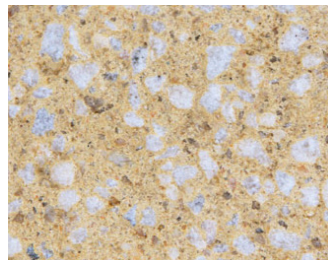
STEPHEN STREET: KEY MOMENTS & MATERIALS



01 Concrete Paver
Adbri Trihex 80
'Charcoal' colour



02 Concrete Paver
Adbri Hollandstone 60
Exposed aggregate
'Oatmeal' colour



03 Concrete Paver
Adbri Trihex 80
Exposed aggregate
'Oatmeal' colour



04 Cobblestone
Kamantoo bluestone
100x100 cobblestone



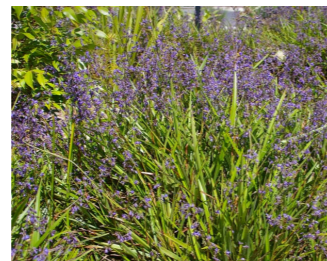
05 Feature lighting
Catenary lighting to
continue Stephen
Street South design



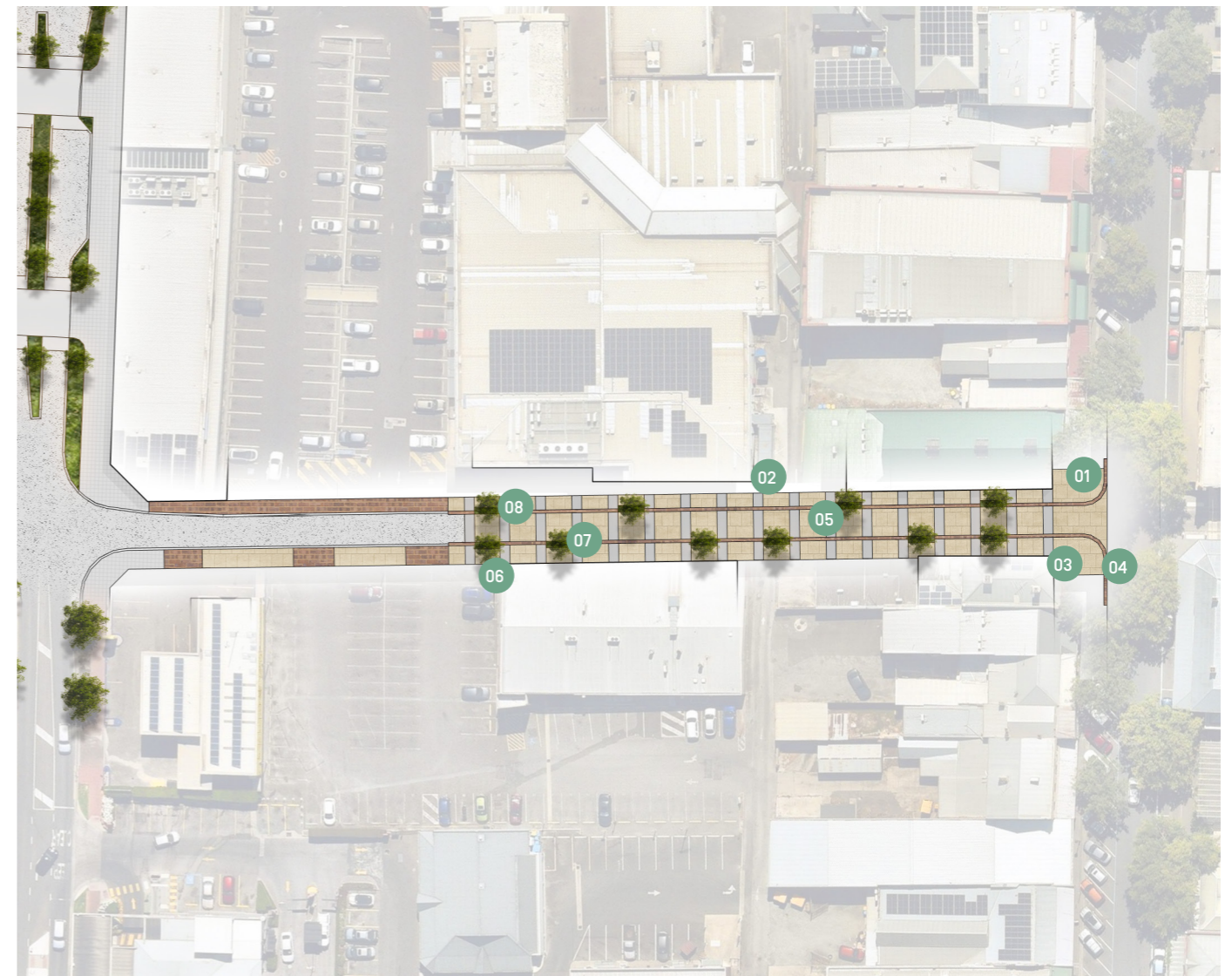
06 Chinese Elm Tree
Shade and amenity
tree to footpaths



07 Understorey planting
Amenity planting under
canopy of street trees



08 Understorey planting
Amenity planting under
canopy of street trees



Site Plan - Stephen Street
Not to scale

TOWN SQUARE: SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO LOCAL MATERIALS

SUPPORTING LOCAL TRADERS

The opportunity to hold pop-up events, with power and water available in the Town Square for a multitude of event types

NATIVE PLANTS

The use of native and endemic plants, responsive to the microclimate and environment

ICONIC MATERIALS

The use of locally sourced materials sourced and found in the Mount Barker area



TOWN SQUARE: A FLEXIBLE & COMFORTABLE EVERYDAY CIVIC SPACE

PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS

Opportunity for protection from the sun, wind, or rain beneath architectural structures and the canopy of trees

A PLACE TO DWELL

A generous lawned area to provide a place to sit, kick a ball, or be host to events

A CLEAR PATH

Navigable and legible pathways for easy access through the Town Square site and across the site



TOWN SQUARE: A NIGHT TIME DESTINATION CIVIC SPACE

A VARIETY OF LIGHTING TYPES
A combination of overhead, up-lighting and catenary lighting to dynamically light the space for night use

NIGHT TIME ACTIVATION
The opportunity for night time activation of the Town Square with retail and food & beverage offerings fronting the square

THE THREE RIVERS
Utilising surface lighting to create a metaphor of the convergence of the three rivers



SECTION 05:

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The Town Square project is expected to be implemented in a multi-step process, which is broadly outlined below.

With the first two steps now complete, we are currently at the stage of Step 3: Endorsement of Community Engagement Strategy. This is a vital step, as it will allow the community engagement process to be undertaken as outlined in the engagement plan, and will begin to seek the ideas and feedback from the community during this engagement period.



