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# Design Statement

## Vincentia District Centre

### Modification 5 Submission

SC Ref 20110128

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## **Vincentia Town Centre** **Moona Creek Road, Vincentia NSW**

### **Architectural Design Statement for Modification 5** **January 2013**

The following is a statement is to describe the design concept for Modifications made to Vincentia Town Centre, and how these modifications are consistent with the intent of the competition design and its core design principles.

The sections below divide the design response into matters of relevance to the application and it assessment against principles established in previous applications.

- 1. Staging**
- 2. Public Domain Strategy**
- 3. Built Form Strategy**
- 4. Sustainability Strategy**
- 5. WSUD Strategy**
- 6. Materials Strategy.**
- 7. Coastal Design Guidelines for NSW.**

The design modifications are described below with the specific modifications being made to the design benchmarked against the original design intent.

## Staging

The Staging of the development has been reconsidered in light of the ability to design the development around utilising existing and new sections of roadway in a more sustainable pattern over time. The Modification 3 and 4 scheme was premised on a broad spread of development across the Town Centre site, requiring extensive infrastructure works site wide in early stages of the development. In order that this investment is more feasibly enacted over the life of the development, the North Western Corner of the site is now constructed as part of a proposed first stage of the development.

This new first stage consolidates the development, whilst still setting in place the primary access spines of Arbour Walk and the Boardwalk.

The proposed design amendment primarily readjusts the format of the staging, which then drives the built form over time, without impacting negatively on the overarching design principles.

During stage 1 of the development, the remnant parcels of land for future stages will be revegetated to stabilise the ground conditions, and provide a measure of outlook from the residential precinct.



**Above:** Overall and Stage 1 plans of the development. Note that the key design criteria of the early stages is to operate at the Northern end of the site, and not result in impact to the configuration of the Wool Road until the later stages of the precincts growth. Traffic engineering reports and studies support this proposition.

## **Public Domain Strategy**

The public Domain strategy for Vincentia Town Centre as defined in the design principles for Public domain set by Rice Daubney were:

1. *A Discovery – an experience through the compression and de-compression of space – a very simple rule – err on the side of tight and intimate rather than large and impersonal*
2. *A variety of places and spaces rather than a variety of materials and elevation*
3. *Its all public domain – from the car park, as a pedestrian, shopping, going to the library – there is no distinction between inside and outside and the quality of the space*
4. *The town 'mediates' between the resident function and the commercial functions*
5. *Activity is created at points*
6. *The site and its attributes, the bush and water are continuously viewed and referenced*
7. *The form of the buildings responds to a pedestrian point of view, lowering to create more intimacy and uplifting where more volume is desired. The buildings form a 'container' for the activity or life of the town.*

The key elements of the public domain in the amended design proposal are analysed against these principles overleaf:

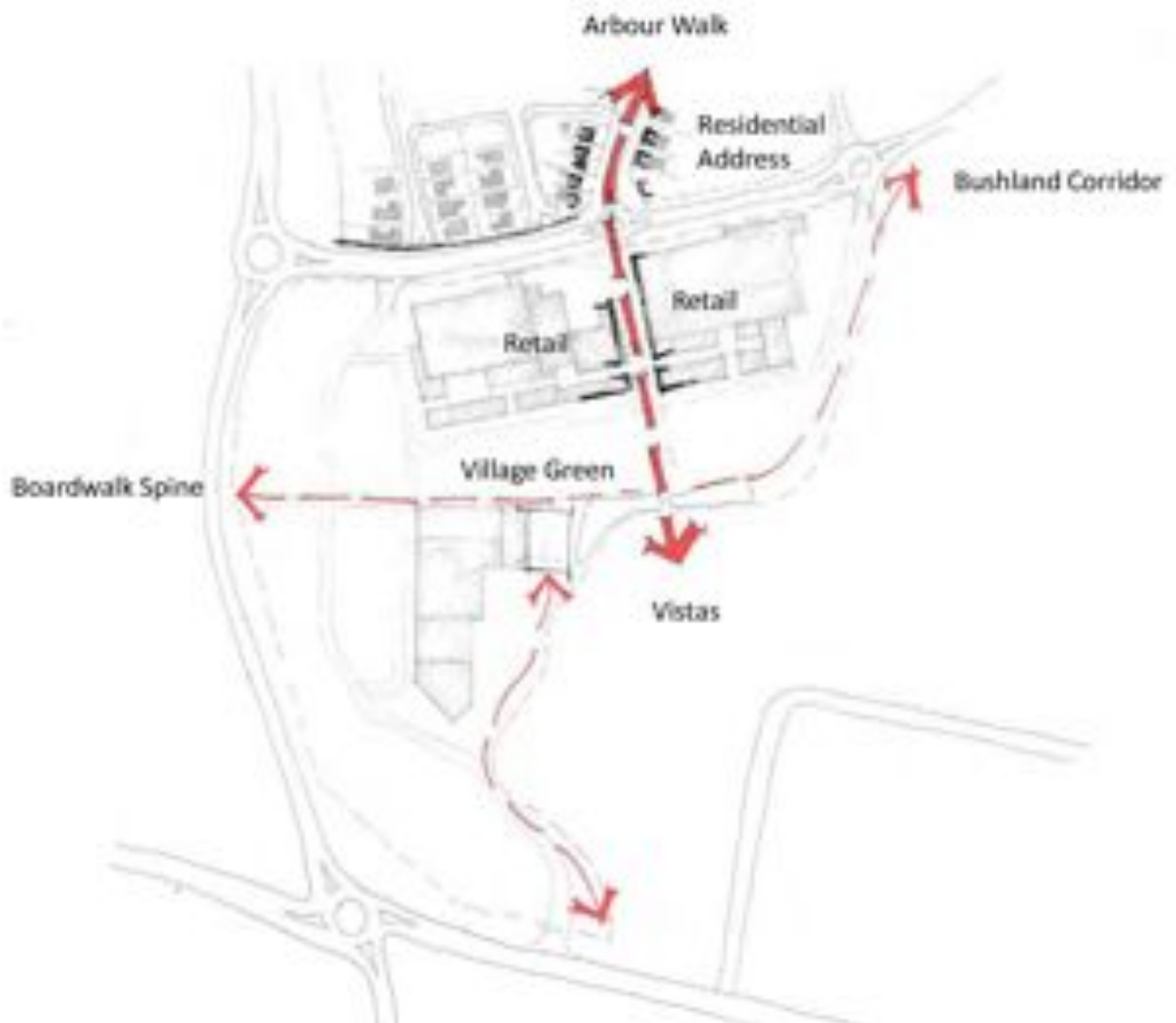
## a) Connectivity

The primary pedestrian connections and pathways established in the design competition are maintained and strengthened in the detail building design

The desire line stretching along the Arbour Walk alignment acts as a primary connector between the town centre and the residential precinct. This alignment carries throughout the centre, intersecting with secondary pedestrian pathways, both internal and external.

The Boardwalk spine is maintained and enhanced as it moves through the site. Its role as marking the creek alignment and acting as a mediating device between the natural and man made elements of the site is retained.

Finally the bushland corridor link continues unchanged creating a continuous link around the periphery of the site, to allow connection to the East and Beach track linkages, and to the South.



**Above:** Connectivity diagram demonstrating the consistency of the links established in previous consents. The active edging to the residential precinct is now concentrated along the Arbour Walk alignment, with Moona Creek road now presenting as a blind boundary fence line.

## b) Place Making Strategy

The design concept principle of generating activity at the nodes of connection is followed through in this detail design. The intersection of these connectors are concentrated where they can best foster the activity and movement through and around the centre

At each of these nodes of connection, the opportunity for a vibrant and dynamic place is created. This is the kernel of the place making strategy for the development. At each place, the identity and differences are borne out by unique naming that sets them apart from each other, and from an early stage of design, forms a reference point for that zone as it evolves and subtly changes over the life of a project.

Each of the key places is described in further detail overleaf.



**Above:** Place-making Map showing primary places within the Town Centre site.



## c) Moona Creek Road Frontage – The Green Boulevard

The Moona Creek Road frontage is modified from its original design concept due to the evolution that has taken place in the development of the residential subdivision plan.

As the residential subdivision has developed, the two streets: Skiff St and the current unnamed street, have been terminated before they junction with the future Moona Creek Road.

Critically, rather than have property alignments that address Moona Creek Road, these properties address the residential side streets and now present only a blank boundary fence to the future town centre site.



**Above:** Recent Aerial photo of site showing extent and shape of residential development.

Halloran Street now forms the primary address and gateway to the new town centre. The challenge for the town centre is to create an atmosphere of 'town' utilising the Moona Creek road frontage, which has now been constructed partially with the rear fences of facing low scale residential development.



**Above:** Recent photo of site showing side boundary fences addressing the future Moona Creek Road.

Given the reduction in active interface on the opposing side of Moona Creek road, the active edges of the retail development have been adjusted to draw these edges deeper along the Arbour Walk Alignment.

This has now meant that the primary retail frontages have been drawn to provide a more contained experience along the pedestrians Arbour Walk alignment, and the pedestrian connectors of the Bushland Corridor and Boardwalk.

The edges of the retail building then provide low scale edges to the structure in accordance with the massing strategy set out in the design principles.



**Above:** Diagrammatic Comparison of extent of edge activation in Mod 4 and Mod 5 schemes showing the comparative increase in edge activation in Mod 5, and redistribution of edge activation across and through the site.

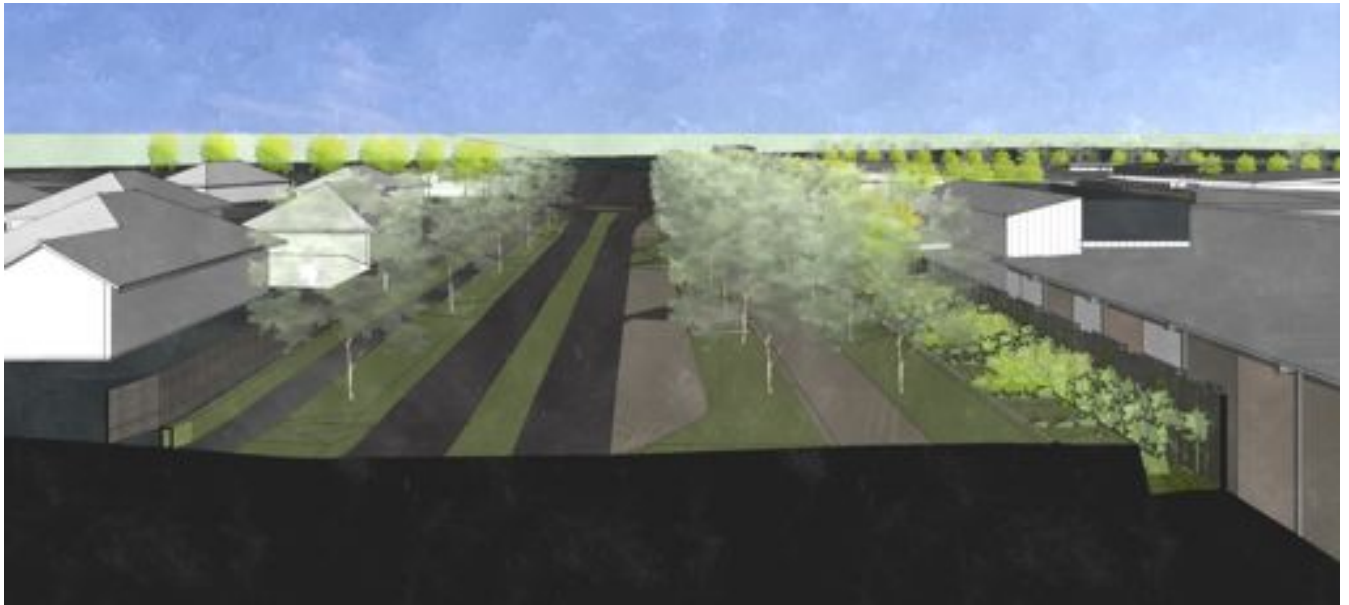
Moona Creek road itself is now conceived of as a 'Green Boulevard' that acts as the gateway to the Town Centre. Deep soil landscape planting, and structure planting and arbours create a lush landscape edge to the town centre. More formalised planting at Arbour walk signifies this point as the primary address to the Town.

The concept design set in place principles of the gateway buildings either side of the arbour walk. The mass and scape of these buildings being formed through double height main roof and facades to the street, and overhanging street awnings along the active shopfronts.

As part of the overall site earthworks strategy, the cut required for the centre has been reduced through elevating the redesigned centre in relation to Moona Creek Road. Previously the length of the centre ran against the contours of the land, relying upon extensive excavation at the Moona Creek Road end of the site. This has now been limited through a more considered overall site construction strategy.

Moona Creek Road to provide a green edge to the site, more in keeping with the surrounding natural context. A new change is considered to have no impact on achieving the 'gateway buildings' concept as both structures will be retained with their originally proposed bulk, scale and façade treatments.





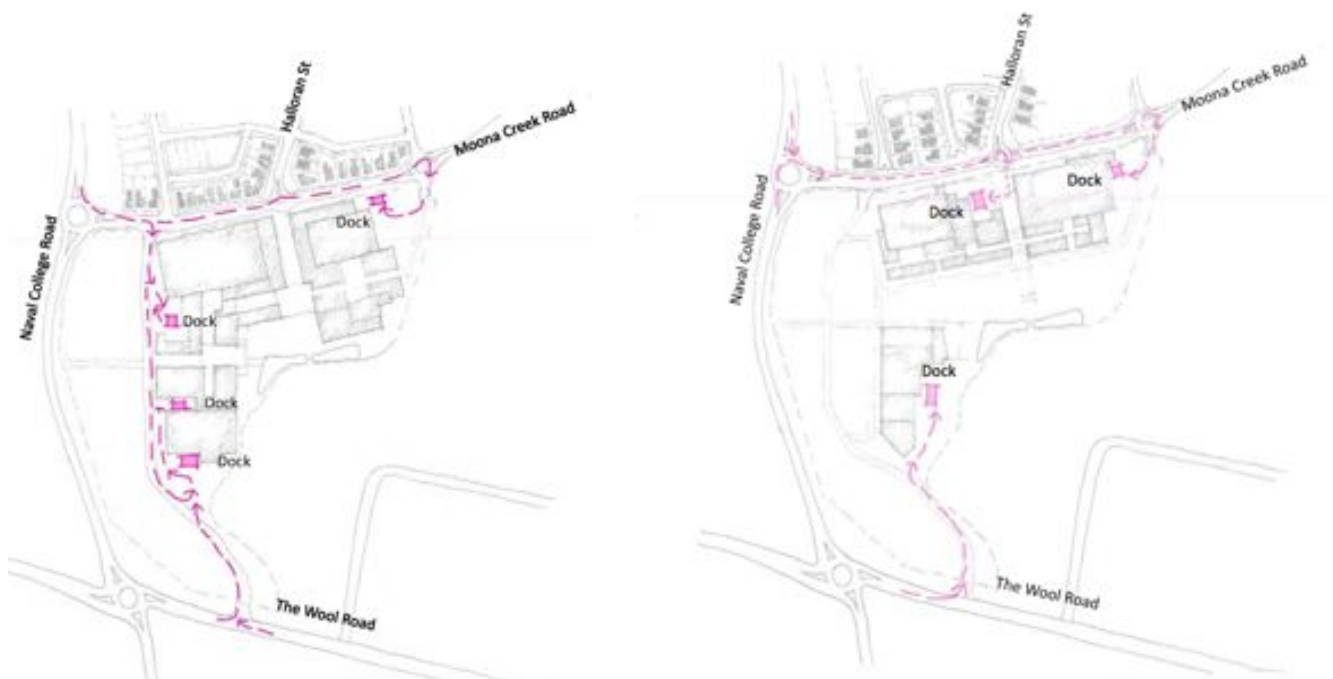
**Above:** Moona Creek rd. The new landscaped edge treatments along the road now screen both developments on either side, instead presenting a verdant landscape gateway along the roads length.

Moona Creek Road possesses a large existing width of street cross section, and the additional landscaping seeks to both screen the proposed development – to and from the residential houses, and to provide a natural tree lined gateway to the precinct. Screen fences are to be incorporated along the boundary edge with architectural mesh and provision for climbing planting also proposed.

#### d) Loading Facilities

The reconfiguration of the development staging allowed for a commensurate reinvestigation of the loading facilities. Previous consents relied upon a broad spread of loading docks around all corners of the site. This then relied upon multiple points of access for the loading vehicles, and conflict zones between customer vehicles and loading vehicles within the car park zones.

The consolidation of these loading facilities reduces the amount of truck movements in areas shared with customer vehicles, and instead quarantines them to zones where low speed manoeuvring is away from public areas, and only shared vehicular driveway areas are required to access the site.



**Above:** Previous and current docking access showing the consolidation of dock facilities, and the reduction in truck circulation within shared customer driveways and areas is reduced.

The design of docking facilities for the Northern end of the subject site along Moona Creek road is heavily driven by Moona Creek Road itself. The road falls over several metres from its intersection with Naval College road, down to the Eastern corner of the site.



**Above:** Aerial view of the Moona Creek road edge. At bottom right is the substantial beaming and earthworks required to mediate between the much higher Moona Creek road, and the retail centre floor level. At centre are the landscape screens functioning as a protective barrier to the retail building. As Moona Creek Road follows off to the left of this view it lowers by several metres, thereby affording the opportunity to more effectively propose a loading dock areas.

This cross fall leads to a dramatic difference between an appropriately massed and levelled retail development where cut and fill are appropriately balanced, and the level of Moona Creek road.

At the docking area, a new shared zone is created (described further in section Arbour Walk). From the new shared zone, heavy vehicles drop further such that from the public domain, an 1800mm high screen fence, sized to be similar to those on the residential development, fully screens the trucks and their manoeuvring from public view.



**Above:** aerial overview of loading dock screening.



**Above:** Person height view of 1800mm high natural timber screen. This screen design is then complemented through the use of natural concrete textured block work, Steel arbour structures, and low scale planting to provide a set of quality material finishes for this area



## e) Arbour Walk

The Arbour Walk pathway into the site is retained, and enhanced as the as a key pedestrian connection to the residential precinct in the first and second stages of the project development.

The key changes from previous scheme are a new scenic line of trees will be incorporated as an avenue leading into the site from this direction. This element enhances the primacy of the Arbour walk desire line, carrying the eye and linking the residential part of the township through the centre, to the distant water views.



**Left:** aerial overview showing the formal planting alignment that stitches the town centre into the Bayswood Village.

At stage 1 a temporary roadway will follow the alignment of the Arbour Walk into the site providing for additional connection into the site. At the completion of the development, the roadway will be closed, and the full width of Arbour Walk will be paved and landscaped as the primary civic entrance precinct.

As Arbour walk continues to the site, the pavement treatment changes to reinforce the primacy of the pedestrian access, to that the heavy vehicles. A speed restriction when entering the roundabout, and high visible permeability of the area enhances safety aspects.

At this point on the site, the zone referred to as 'The meeting place' occurs at the connection between the internal retail environment and Arbour Walk.

This area is then broken into separate places from the external North Facing courtyards that act as the formal pedestrian entry to the town centre, then transitioning through the high and permeable interconnecting canopy and food area, through to the Village green landscape spine that carries the tree canopy to the Bio filtration ponds.





**Above:** Northern Courtyard space along Arbour Walk at the pedestrian entry to the site. Note the natural finishes to the masonry walls, and extensive use of weathering steel pergolas that are used to demarcate pedestrian connection pathways. This north facing space is then formally broken down into distinct and semi-private pods for use by the internal food tenants as external seating zones.



**Above:** Village Green edge interface with the centre, showing the continuation of the architectural style, with low-slung awning structures and large deep soil planted zones for trees.

## f) Canopy Walk

The primary configuration of the centre has seen the alignment of the Canopy walk relocated as part of the overall centre layout. The massing and architectural treatments for the main arcades will follow the design principles of the centre being:

- Day lit internal spaces
- Large overhanging roof forms and Verandahs
- Raking ceilings and soffits.

## g) Boardwalk

Through the original competition schemes and options, the boardwalk was conceived as a way of celebrating the creek and expressing it within the centre.

The amendments of the scheme reinstate this primacy by reopening the creek to the sky, removing the major concrete abutments and engineering that went with it as well.

The materiality of the proposed boardwalk will remain consistent with the design principles. The Boardwalk will now be an entirely external pedestrian link, carrying the materiality and treatment at the Western end throughout the entire site to the Ponds.

The boardwalk structure now terminates in a large Public Terrace area that addresses the primary community space, the new library structure. The aim of this design item is to make available for the public the overview and outlook to the natural bushland and ponds, and further to the ocean.



Above: Schematic design of boardwalk termination and future community library space. The detail design of the boardwalk, retention ponds and 'The Terraces' remain as per previous submissions.



**Above:** View back towards the development from the bushland verge showing the building masses dropping below the tree canopy line, and extending out to provide shade and shelter.

Principles of the public domain including the blurring of definition between internal and external spaces through the use of extensive glazed elements, and use of lightweight Canopy roof structures, and the maintenance of key sightlines to the sites natural surrounds are all maintained by the proposed modifications.



## **Built Form Strategy**

The principles of the built form are established by the Rice Daubney design strategy:

*"The built for strategy is derived from the built form of Vincentia's existing building vernacular – both past and present. The key initiative centres on the 'building in the bush' typology – not only is this appropriate to the desired 'coastal bush style' but is a typology already established in the public buildings of Vincentia.....*

*The key attributes of this typology are 'building in the round', large overhanging roof forms, a restrained palette of lightweight and largely natural, raw materials. In response the buildings in the Vincentia Town Centre, therefore present themselves as stand alone pavilions with wide overhanging 'brims' flanked by lower verandah forms containing the specialty retail – these lower elements help to deliver a more intimate experience at pedestrian level"*

The Four key Built form strategies defined by Rice Daubney are reviewed against the proposed amendment below:

### **a) Architectural Style and Vernacular**

The Massing of the development follows the concept distinct and separate 'pavilions' containing retail activity within. The Supermarkets and Discount Department store buildings are roofed independently at the ends of the development with a large linking roof volume interconnecting each. This roof is intersected by the Arbour Walk Canopy that scythes through the development creating sight line opportunities and fenestration to building edges.

The overhanging roofs of each pavilion, combined with raw finishes and materials are maintained. Screening devices of timber and steel are integrated into the overall façade concept in line with previous proposals. The detailed selections of façade materials have been developed and an amended materials and external finishes schedule forms part of this application.



**Above:** Detail view of Marketplace Gateway showing arrangement of deep eaves overhangs and where the building is broken into a series of pavilions with low scale awnings and structures to the perimeter.

### **b) Roofscape**

The layout and configuration of the ground floor plan has defined the alignments of the main roof structure. Structural efficiencies and analyses of location and visibility of roof plant condenser decks have led to a concise and refined structural design. Long and low roof lines floating over the external walls are tapered to a human scale at the activated edges of the structure. The key design principles are maintained through use of overhanging roof forms, and tapering lines that reduce the visual bulk of the building. The reconfiguration of the building floor plan does not impact on the previous design principles for the roof scape.





Above: Aerial Overview of the development showing primary roof forms of the major retailers, and the low scale roofs with overhangs to the pedestrian zone.

## c) Verandahs

The verandah projections and attachments moderate scale for pedestrians as they circulate around the perimeter of the building structure. They provide amenity through shade, weather protection and tie the building into the ground plane through running screen walls of similar detail to awnings vertically where they become screening devices. The veranda designs proposed as part of this application are generally consistent with those previously proposed. An additional extent of weather protection to the new Arbour Walk is proposed to allow for further edge activation by retail tenancies, and provide amenity for customers. Further, the integration of a new bus stop shelter further ties in the architectural style and vernacular with that of the town centre.



*Left: example of proposed verandah awning detail over a public external space. Weathering paint finish to fascias and 3-dimensional signage elements are a critical component to delivering a quality built outcome.*

## d) Material transition from outside to inside.

Natural materials are to be utilised in the external façade elements:

- Raw metallic framing. Micaceous Iron Oxide (Sydney Harbour Bridge paint) to steel columns and frames give texture and low sheen texture
- Naturally weathering timber fixed in panelised façade cladding components
- The primary wall systems of Heavy masonry walls contrast from textured block work bases to anchor the building to the site, to natural finish and stained concrete wall panels. Colour and light is provided through panelised cladding panels in rich, earthy tones as shown on the architectural elevations. The natural materials are carried through to the internal mall environment with exposed laminated timber roof structure and dark painted structural steel. Floor colours and treatments will be integrated to create a 'seamless' transition across the threshold to interior spaces.

Enclosed herein is the detailed exterior finishes schedule for the project.

## e) Landscape strategy

The landscaping strategy is to remain consistent in the proposed amended design with detail layout of the landscaping being modified to suit the reduced building footprint.

The primary landscape changes deal with the new Moona Creek Rd 'Green Boulevard'. As previously outlined, structured and non-structure planting. Formal tree alignments and architectural integrated screening elements are all combined to further blend the architectural of the town centre into its natural environment.

The more formal planting of Arbour walk carries the already developed Residential precinct landscape design and carries this through and over the centre.

Finally bio-filtration systems are retained as per previous approvals.



**Right: Principle Landscape interfaces**

## **Sustainability strategy**

The key principles and commitments of the sustainability strategy are followed in the proposed design. The proposed modifications include raising the main building floor level, driven by the goal of creating a balance between the cut and fill, with imported and exported fill from the site having a large environmental impact.

The modification to the proposed development is to the increase in the height of the floor level by a further 300mm to RL.12.8. This change has been driven by on-site soil investigations to balance cut and fill on site. The slight elevation of the floor level also has the added benefits of reducing the effects of mechanical pumping of sewer systems from the site caused by its low level in relation to the Moona Creek level, and thereby reduces energy consumption.

The Water harvesting strategy previously proposed through use of bio-swales in the main car park and detention dam are maintained, with modifications to the design to improve efficiency of the water catchment system. The new stage 2 works design allow for further integration of bio filtration areas into the future stages of the works through the integration of large landscaped areas within the new car park area.

The façade materials are to be a lightweight, panelised system of façade cladding, over the base building structure. This is consistent with the design intent of 're-useable components' as set out in the original sustainability strategy.

The future stages will still incorporate the boardwalk and pathways that activate and enable interpretation of the natural and constructed landscapes.

## **WSUD**

The town centre WSUD approach is pivotal to the definition of Vincentia. The key strategies nominated in the design intent are:

1. *The town centre is a development on the creeks edge – this is the focus of the town centre*
2. *Vistas to the creek are enhanced upon key approaches from car and as a pedestrian*
3. *It is a pivotal part of the public domain and is appreciated at all levels of the public domain from the car park to the enclosed spaces.*
4. *It is the connecting thread of the journey of the town*
5. *The creek does not rely on water – it is as much about the creek bed and lower lying areas.*

The key element of maintaining sight lines from the car and pedestrian point of view to the creek are achieved under the modified design through large glazed end walls and high roof line running through the centre of the site. This alignment follows the main water channel under the development, before it carries into the main lake bed.

For customers approaching and using the centre, the bio-swales and lake elements are highly visible. Through the use of interpretative signage in the final design, identification and education of the way this system will function will be demonstrated and communicated.

The reopening of the creek connection through the site linking to the ponds enables the character of the landscaped creeks and trees will not be adversely impacted if not improved by the proposed modifications.



## Materials Strategy

The Rice Daubney concept of materials set out as follows:

*"The material palette and its use is a response to the built form strategy of 'buildings in the bush'. It is used not only to derive a pleasing aesthetic from honest materials with robust detailing but also delivers a low or no maintenance approach to cladding."*

This strategy is achieved through use of walls and surfaces clad in natural or unfinished materials that are allowed to age in place so as to blend in with the colours and tones of the natural environment. The modifications proposed to the building cladding systems are minor to allow for more conventional and cost effective forms of construction of the base structure.

The base wall structures are embellished and fenestrated through these screening elements and contrasted with the maintenance of the lightweight pavilion rooves that cantilever and extend on rakish angles towards the building edges.

These cantilevers create shading and definition and lighten the roofs effect in contrast to the walls. Added to the wall system is a series of lightweight screens and cladding panels that provide tonal and visual clues to the surrounding bushland, with ochre, rust and eucalyptus tones. This enables the larger wall planes to blend into the sites natural bushland surroundings where appropriate, and contrast and highlight where needed for visual recognition of the retail activity and entry nodes.

Where timber elements are a simple screening device, the timber will be left to form a weathered, grey appearance over time. Where timber has now been introduced as part of the design modifications as a way of improving the structural expressiveness of the building, this timber is appropriately protected and stained to provide a rich earthy colour and the essential coating system for a required structural member.



**Above:** Screening and awning materiality is predominantly natural finishes or those that patina with age. This conforms to the principles of natural and weathering materials set out in the brief.

Further detail on the external finishes is set-out in the attached detailed external finishes schedule.



## **Coastal Design Guidelines**

The design has been reviewed in relation to the NSW Coastal Design guidelines. From this review, we have audited the schedule of key aims and guidelines that apply to this development.

- *Concentrating the development pattern*
- *Appropriateness of built form to street context.*
- *Protect local views and vistas throughout and surrounding the settlement from public places by relating new buildings to the topography, reducing heights to maintain views of the surrounding landscape and maintaining consistent, height, bulk, scale with the street and local context.*
- *Maintain view corridors to the sea*
- *Building Heights consistent with the rise and fall of the topography*
- *Materials, details and form are distinctly coastal.*
- *Deep soil vegetation zones between buildings.*

### **Concentrating the development pattern**

The built footprint of the site has been reduced through the consolidation of the proposed retail structures to the northern end of the site and the resultant overall reduction in retail development area. This area reduction comes through the current development market and expected growth for the region in the next several years.

### **Appropriateness of built form to street context.**

Description – Moona creek road

### **Protecting local views.**

The design changes proposed retain the low slung form of the main roof forms with the majority of the building now snug against the Moona Creek road hillside. The deep soil landscaping to Moona Creek Road screens the majority of the building bulk from view and allows for the extension of the natural landscape vistas into the town centre site.

### **Maintain View Corridors to Sea.**

The new elevated roof structure to the Arbour Walk alignment further enables through site vistas and connections. After the short linkage through the site, vistas are available uninterrupted to the native bushland beyond. On the Board walk alignment, the relocation of the architectural bulk now allows unimpeded lines of site that terminate in an elevated timber platform that addresses the expansive ocean views.

### **Building heights consistent with Topography**

The heights of the main building forms fall with the topography, as the floor levels in the now two separate components allow for flexible lowering of the future Bulky goods structure unlike in the previous interconnected design. This lower floor level nestles the structure into the hillside which is further enhanced by roof lines that seek to fit within the mature tree canopy line.

### **Distinctly Coastal in design**

The low slung roof forms and overhanging eaves of natural materials reference a natural coastal style. The materialities of the facades are muted to blend into the bushland colour patina.

### **Deep Soil vegetation zones.**

Extensive zones for landscaping are incorporated on site with large tree planting areas to the building edges, and throughout the car park areas. Bio-swale areas incorporate environmental sensitive planting strategies that further enhance the landscape characteristics of the site and its ability to blend with the natural environment.

## **Summary**

The amendments to the application primarily contain detailed development issues that have arisen through the design team's development of the documentation for the project towards construction phase. Aspects of build-ability and ability for the centre to be commercially viable have been overlaid to the site. The core principles set out from the design concept are maintained in this developed design, with those modifications proposed generally consistent with the core principles.

The proposed developments overall gross floor area will not be modified, with the extent of the Stage 1 development, modified to suit current economic demands and forecasts, whilst not 'designing out' any future flexibility for the overall centre.

The attached architectural documentation and design presentation document describes the modifications in further graphic detail.