



# 2

## Development of Samford Valley and Village identity

*“Samford is a jewel in the region ... to keep it we need to support the current Town Plan.”*

*“The Village should be a quality destination ... compact ... memorable...”*

## 2.1 Development of the Valley

### 2.1.1 History and background

#### *Samford Valley – from rural to residential*

The transition from rural activities to ‘rural residential’ was a gradual process that reflected the decline of the dairy industry and its need to be located close to markets. The expansion of Brisbane transformed Samford into a dormitory suburb offering an alternative lifestyle to that available on the quarter acre blocks of the adjacent suburbs.

The geographical protection of our own ‘scenic rim’ enabled the low density to be protected from urban sprawl of Brisbane suburbs. The lack of sewerage and, in half of the Valley, lack of town water supply placed further constraints on redevelopment.

The semi-rural development pattern is protected by the current Town Plan (Pine Rivers Plan 2006), which identifies a compact village footprint set against low-density residential areas.

There is an authentic history to the Village and its role as a centre in the Valley. This should be the basis for the future vision of the Village and its maintenance as a discrete small centre with clear boundaries.



*The 1947 train crash and plaque*

#### *The Railway*

Samford Valley used to be serviced by a rail link that extended from Ferny Grove to Dayboro. It opened in 1918 and reached Dayboro in 1920. Evidence of Samford Station is still apparent in the embankment at John Scott Park, Station Street. This rail yard functioned as railhead for the surrounding district produce. Bananas, dairy and timber were shipped on the line.

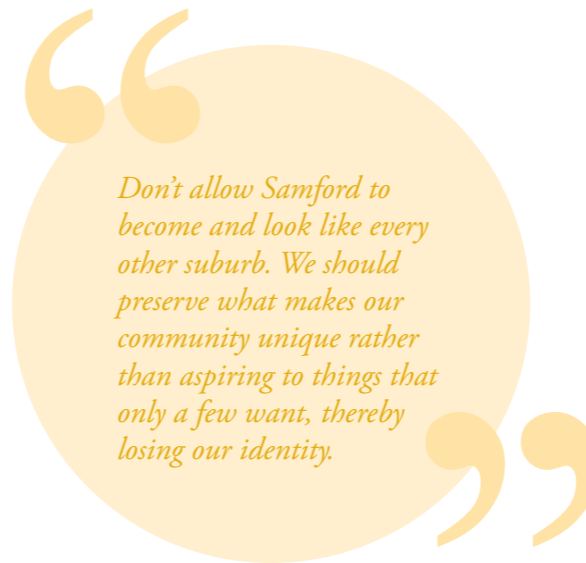
After the Second World War, road transport and a declining rural sector diminished the need for a rail link.

The derailment of a crowded picnic train at Camp Mountain in 1947 was a significant event that foreshadowed the closure of the line. It was Queensland’s worst rail disaster, with 16 people killed and 38 injured. With the increasing ownership of motor cars, the use of the line declined and it was closed in 1955.

The old rail alignment has been earmarked as a bike link to connect Samford Valley to Ferny Grove. This will upgrade the current bridle track. This has the potential to make Samford an activity-based destination and increase the recreation potential of the Valley.



**Samford Valley is a place for people to live in a rural atmosphere as well as a visitor destination for those in Brisbane and the south-east corner of Queensland.**



*Don't allow Samford to become and look like every other suburb. We should preserve what makes our community unique rather than aspiring to things that only a few want, thereby losing our identity.*

### 2.1.2 Existing framework

Samford Valley is identified within the South East Queensland Regional Plan as a location to be relatively lightly populated. This plan underpins Samford’s image as a ‘green lung’ of South East Queensland – a place for people to live in a rural atmosphere at the same time as it is a visitor destination for those within reasonable driving distance in the south-east corner, and particularly Brisbane City.

Within local governance frameworks, the Moreton Bay Regional Council’s town plan further enhances Samford’s image as a ‘green lung’, with a lower limit on acreage property subdivisions and a Village Plan that acknowledges to some extent the Village’s unique identity. Locally, the Samford and District Progress and Protection Association, property owners and developers are the main players regarding the planning and development of the Samford Valley.

When a need arises to take action on a particular development application or proposal, the Progress Association usually establishes specific community advocacy sub-committees. In the past 5 years the ViVa Samford sub-committee of the Association has played both a strategic and operational role in managing the advocacy process.

A community consultation process facilitated by ViVa Samford enabled the establishment of enhanced Planning Principles for Samford Village, as shown below.

### 2.1.3 Community aspirations for the Valley

During the Samford Futures consultation process, the community said, quite simply, ‘don’t change the development guidelines.’ This widely held view is evidenced by the strong fights to retain acreage allotments and to resist overtures to construct large retail establishments or franchised businesses in the Village. This view has been demonstrated by cases won against a Woolworths Shopping Centre in the Village and the defeat of a proposal to subdivide large blocks into very small blocks in the Village.

#### *Development guidelines for the Valley*

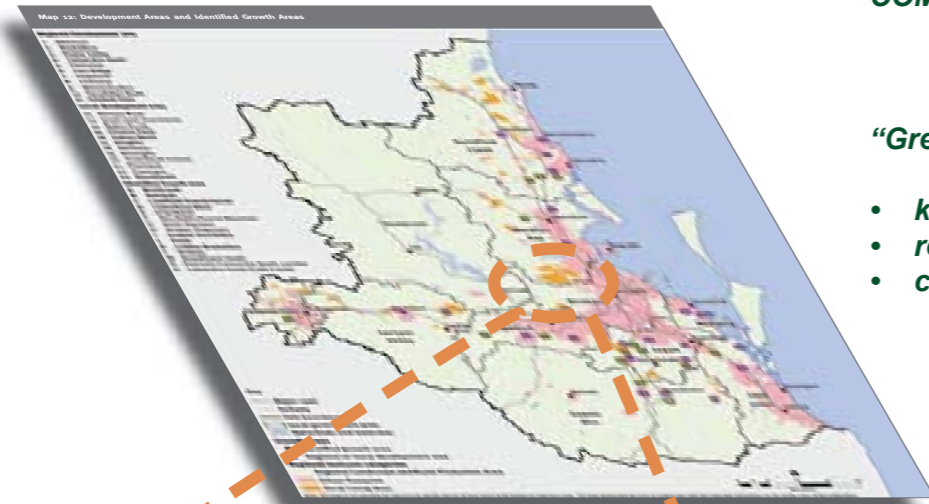
Samford Valley development guidelines would best be built on principles relating to:

- Samford’s uniqueness
- village sustainability
- town planning and land use
- economic need
- local business support
- traffic
- parking
- residential amenity
- urban design
- scale and size
- active edges and ambience
- connectivity and permeability.

**During the Samford Futures consultation process, the community said, quite simply, “don’t change the development guidelines”.**

### S.E.Q. REGIONAL PLAN 2009

Defines broad areas on land use at a regional level



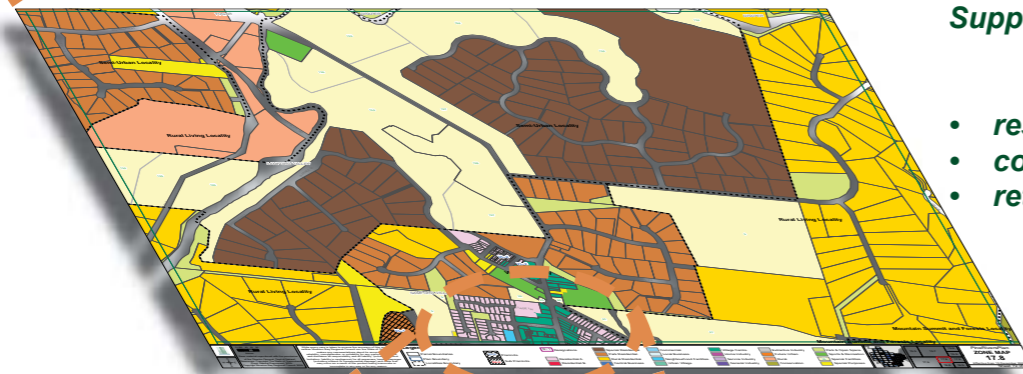
#### COMMUNITY INTENT.....

#### “Green Lung”

- **keep low density**
- **retain scenic rim free from development**
- **compact Village footprint**

### M.B.R.C. -PINE RIVERS TOWN PLAN 2006

Zoning plans for control of land use  
Detailed regulations for the development of Local Areas



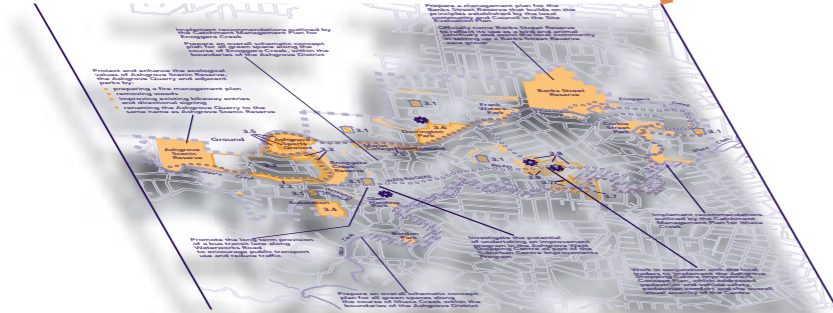
#### “....Keep Samford as it is.....

#### Support the current Town Plan .....

- **residential areas to be low density /semi-rural**
- **compact Village footprint**
- **retail / commercial uses are small in scale**

### M.B.R.C. -SAMFORD LOCAL AREA PLAN 20??

Defines principles of local detail planning  
Aims for quality outcomes to urban design



#### “Make the Village compact....memorable..”

- **have continuous activities lining the streets**
- **priority to small scale human spaces**
- **strong landscaping unity**
- **promote high quality of urban design**

### Our vision for action: Valley development

- Retain the development guidelines for the Samford Valley in their current form for the present.
- Engage the community (via the Progress Association) with the Council during its upcoming (2014–2015) town planning process to ensure community needs are further explored and represented.
- Work with Council in a highly inclusive way to develop a Local Area Plan for Samford, as an outcome of the Council’s town planning process.
- Consult with the community in 2013–2015 about the principles underpinning Sustainable Urbanism, with a view to adding value to the current development guidelines and providing the foundation for community input into Council’s development guidelines for the Valley.



Relationship of planning instruments

## 2.2 Village identity

### 2.2.1 History and background – competing centres

The original core of retail shops was located in the Station Street/ Creek Street (north) end of the Village. The garage was an outpost on the southern end of Main Street, being located on the intersection with Mount Glorious Road. A ‘leapfrog’ pattern of development saw new ‘neighbourhood’ retail centres competing to be the centre of activity.

After the establishment of the IGA precinct, the northern sub-precinct near Station Street suffered a relative decline in activity. In recent years, there has been a renewal of this area and an injection of new businesses opening in older refurbished premises.

There has also been some intriguing new businesses open ‘off Broadway’, notably the Flying Nun and its associated activities. These are fine exemplars of reinventing business models with imaginative combinations of urban/ landscape design, reinvigorated interpretation of standard offers and breaking the mould.

Reinventing our existing Village fabric is the best way forward for a viable, vibrant and sustainable Village.

### 2.2.2 Contemporary directions: ‘Only a stone’s throw away’

There is a strong potential for ‘branding’ Samford Village as a quality destination for local tourism. Samford Village currently stands at a new threshold of offering retail services that appeal to visitors as well as local residents. Being ‘only a stone’s throw away from the rapidly intensifying metropolitan Brisbane, Samford has the potential to become a destination for weekend tourism. This would enrich the offering provided by the Village and can add impetus for the development of an urban design giving a unique character to the Village.

There is an increasing diversity of retail and business offerings in the Village. This could be complemented and supported by the Samford Commons project (see Section 1.5), which seeks to establish a precinct for the arts, sustainability and urban agriculture. Pedestrian links to the Village would make an extended destination for visitors and locals alike.

**Reinventing our existing Village fabric is the best way forward for a viable, vibrant and sustainable Village.**

These new retail offerings would sit alongside an increasingly rich and diverse set of local businesses providing goods and services to the local and district community. Samford Valley is home to the greatest number home businesses per capita in Queensland. There are, however, limited opportunities to rent small-scale commercial space in the Village, so there is an unmet latent demand.

Future development may well be of mixed use, which combines living, office and retail activities within the same complex. This approach adds richness and resilience to projects.

### 2.2.3 Existing patterns and issues in the village

*Where is the ‘heart’ of the Village?*

The legacy of competing centres of gravity has left Main Street with an incoherent and somewhat disconnected development pattern. It has no central ‘heart’ and a poorly developed sense of character. There are no strong urban spaces. Main Street has disjointed active edges, especially in the central zone, which has been left behind by the two competing ends, which vied for a dominant role.

*Restrict the break up of large building blocks. Be mindful of Samford’s ‘charm’ when considering new development.*

#### Types of development

There are four main types of retail /office development in Samford Village:

- **Traditional street shops** – Shops that operate with no set back to the street and form a continuous active edge. These occur in the central section of Main Street.
  - **Retail strip shopping** – Shops that are set back from the street and have convenience parking in front. There are examples at each end of Main Street.
  - **Shopping centre model** – A larger self-contained version of the retail strip model (the IGA precinct).
  - **Individual ‘cottages’** – Free standing residential houses converted to retail and commercial uses.
- Each of these offers different experiences for patrons and different opportunities for retailers.

**Pavilion cluster**

- small buildings with included courtyards

**Retail strip shopping**

- set back from the street
- convenience parking in front

**Shopping centre model**

- larger self-contained version of the retail strip model

**Traditional street shops**

- no set back to the street
- continuous active edge

**Individual cottages**

- set back to the street
- landscaped garden space

Main Street has a disjointed pattern of different types of development. The lack of continuity of the active edges makes it difficult to achieve a high quality urban design. Where the street is edged with buildings, activity flourishes.

The difficulty in developing continuous active edges that characterise traditional main streets is evident in the disjointed pattern in Samford. Currently there are discrete clusters of activity, with significant dead spots in-between. This lack of coherence means Samford Village lacks a positive identity and falls short of its potential as a place to visit and remember.

#### Comparisons

It is instructive to compare Samford with other Villages in our local region.

Dayboro has more consistency in its street edges, with parking placed to the rear and side of buildings. The main street has continuous edges, many of which are actively engaged with the street. Buildings are small and have human-scale veranda edges to the street.

Montville has consciously defined itself as a centre for art and craft. Although the buildings are often set back from the street, they have many landscaped courtyards that blend the private realm with the public footpath. Parking is predominantly to the rear and access by small laneways and spaces between buildings.

Both of these centres have significant trees that impart a distinctive character and ambience to the street.

These places have a more distinctive character than Samford Village. They have also more successfully and self consciously branded themselves as unique destinations.

#### Traffic in Main Street

Main Street is under the control of the Department of Main Roads (DMR) as a regional connecting road. There is a conflict of agenda between the needs of a regional road and that of a Village community that needs safety and amenity. The DMR has identified the Samford by-pass as a long-term proposal with a 25-year time frame.

In the immediate future, the community should act with the Council to press DMR for further traffic calming measures in Main Street. The DMR should be encouraged to develop these strategies in recognition of the Village status. The DMR should recognise that traffic zones within villages should reflect safety and amenity requirements of the local community, and consequently should apply different criteria to the management of traffic flow.

**The Village should be more connected from end to end**

#### Landscape character

The existing landscape character lacks coherence and does not impart any definitive identity to the Village.

The entry signature to the Village is the cluster of pine trees on the roundabout. This is a quality element and its intent should be supplemented with an avenue of trees along Main Street. The Village Identity would be greatly enhanced by the establishment of larger shady street trees (in areas not under powerlines)

A long term civic vision is needed – the 100 year view – let's plant for future generations.

### 2.2.4 Community aspirations for the Village – the ideas and vision

'What is sadly missing in Samford Village is a vision for the design of Main Street'.

Elements that would enhance the amenity and economic prosperity of the Village are as follows:

- Samford should be established as a quality destination.
- Samford Village should identify itself as a gateway to the Valley and a weekend destination of choice for visitors from the Moreton Bay region and Brisbane City.
- The Village should be more connected from end to end – extending through to the bridge at the bowling club.
- The Village should have improved pedestrian connections to Samford State School, Samford Parklands and the new Commons proposal.
- Main Street should be revitalised with new retail that has active edges connected to each other.
- Retail spaces should be varied, stimulating and inviting.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be promoted, retail active edges should be made accessible to the street and small human-scale spaces to meet and sit should be created.
- The public realm should have significant public art, street furniture and landscape improvements.
- An artisans/providers market may operate in the Village.

### 2.2.5 Opportunities and enhancements to the Village

#### The sub-precincts

It is helpful to identify five sub-precincts to the Village. These have naturally different starting points and offer a variety of opportunities for improvement. Over time, this will impart a different urban design character to each zone. However, there should be a strong common landscape theme binding the Village from end to end and continuity of public art, signage and seating elements.



- STATION STREET
- MAIN STREET NORTH
- MAIN STREET CENTRAL
- MAIN STREET SOUTH
- IGA PRECINCT

Village sub-precincts

The five identifiable precincts are:

- Station Street (Edged by John Scott Park, Samford Museum, Flying Nun)
- Main Street North (Samford Valley Hotel, Chemart Pharmacy, Buzz Stop, Samford Homestead Restaurant, Village Place)
- Main Street Central (Farmers Hall, CWA Hall, John Scott Park, Pizza Capers building, Samford Fitness Centre, Samford Hire)
- Main Street South (Samford Valley Veterinary Hospital, Happy Berry, Black Sheep, Samford Garage)
- Kath Fitzgerald Precinct (IGA precinct, Samford Country Centre)

It is in the interests of clusters of businesses to group together in local sub-precincts to develop a shared vision of improvements to the look and feel of the urban design elements. Small 'seed' projects can have a remarkable effect as catalysts for larger scale improvements.

*What is sadly missing in Samford Village is a vision for the design of Main Street.*



Key sites for urban design and possible redevelopment



Kath Fitzgerald Precinct – proposed Master Plan

The inclusion of green landscape elements such as small courtyards and shady trees would enhance the appeal of the Village.

*Key sites*

There are several key sites in the Village that have the potential to enhance the future quality of urban design in the Village.

- These occur along the length of Main Street and Station Street. Several of these sites have development proposals under way; others are potential redevelopment sites that currently have uses that may change as the Village evolves over time.

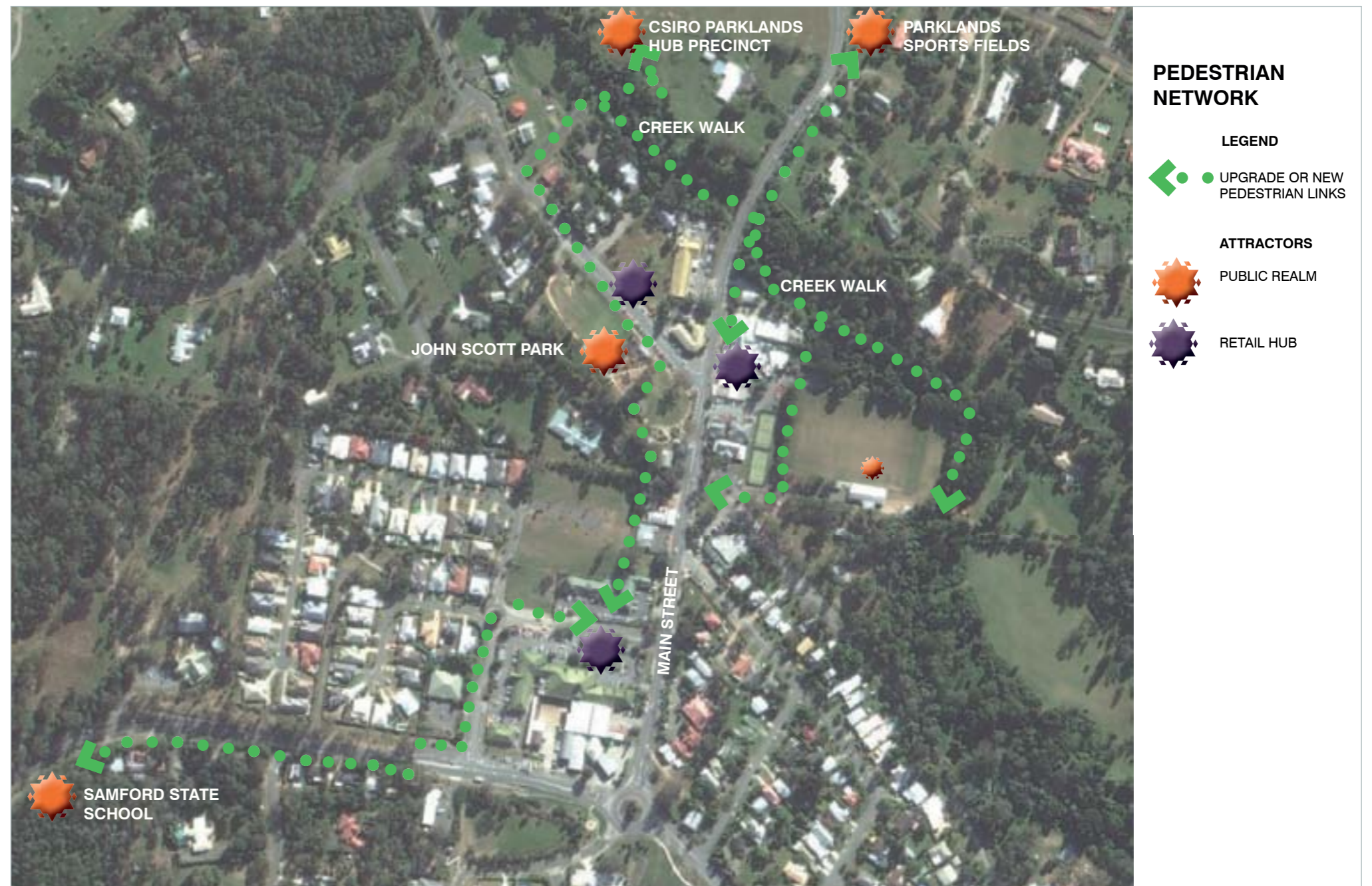
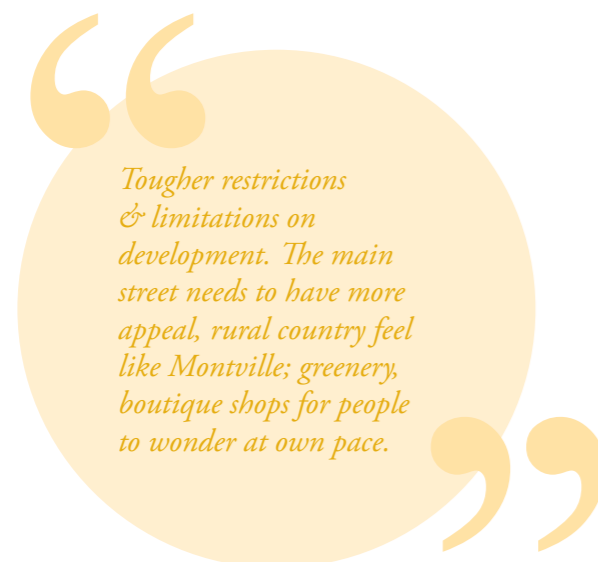
- Importantly, these sites could develop pedestrian through-connections, define corners and reinvent the street edge with lively activity.
- The inclusion of green landscape elements in the urban fabric – such as small courtyards with green walls, green facade elements and trees that can mature to create shady retreat areas – would enhance its appeal.

Any new developments should be built to a higher standard and the design of the buildings should be based on the principle of more engagement with the public realm.

*Pedestrian connections*

The disjointed pedestrian connections need to be tackled by the following measures:

- The Village has the potential to connect to activity nodes such as Samford State School and the Samford Parklands precinct. These through connections are currently poorly defined and need some bold moves by MBRC to improve them
- Smaller quality elements might also be included, such as a creek walk, laneways and through connections to promote connectivity
- Future car parking strategies should include rear parking lots and thoughtful landscaping of connecting laneways to enhance the quality of arrival for patrons.
- Revised pavement treatments and street furniture and a series of 'resting points' with seating and shady landscaping elements.



*Pedestrian network*

*Vehicular circulation and parking*

Car parking in the Village is becoming a more difficult issue over time. Council requirements for on-site parking impose difficulties on redevelopment of small sites. Invariably these requirements tend to mean that the parking dominates the interface with the street and the desirable outcome of continuous active edges is compromised.

A lesson that can be drawn from Montville is a consolidated car park to the rear of the main street. The small-scale laneway linkages from parking to street add intricacy and more varied trading opportunities. This approach is a 'whole of Village' idea, where the urban design and quality of street is uppermost as a planning criterion. Groups of smaller traders and landowners should work with Council to achieve a better outcome for the whole village.

**Future car parking strategies should include rear parking lots and thoughtful landscaping of connecting laneways**



*Urban Design and the public realm*

The public realm includes all elements that are accessible to the public. These could all be improved:

- Footpaths – add quality areas to footpath design, with more consistency in materials and including some minor themed elements.
- Parks – add pocket /micro parks with seating /shade elements to allow people to meet and sit.
- Seating, street furniture and signage and way finding – install inventive seating /street furniture elements to tie in with public art and themed signage .
- Lighting – use consistent lighting elements, with lower scale lights in selected areas
- Landscaping – employ a long-term civic vision – the 100-year view (see 2.2.3 above)
- Public art – install art throughout Village to promote Samford as place of the arts, as described below.

*Public art*

A great opportunity exists to brand Samford as a place of the arts. Having a thread for public (and private) artwork throughout the Village would add a sense of quality and real identify. Art ideas can be infused into elements such as seating, signage, interpretive way finding and also landscape elements. The fusion of art + buildings + landscape makes for a memorable and integrated urban design.

As with Montville, the public and private realm should be merged and intertwined with an art/landscape/building interface.

**Our vision for action: Village identity**

- Form a steering committee of local businesses and residents to provide guidance and influence the improvements to the five Village Sub-Precincts.
- Develop pedestrian friendly traffic management strategies for Main Street in conjunction with the Department of Main Roads.
- Connect the Village to activity nodes such as Samford State School and the Samford Parklands /Commons precinct.
- Establish new pedestrian paths for exploring (e.g. a creek walk)
- Establish grouped car parking areas to the rear of Main Street to allow future active edges to be continuous.
- Construct buildings to the street with active edges, with no on-site car parks in front of buildings.
- Open buildings to the public realm and allow them to spill out to the footpath.
- Establish intimate small-scale spaces for people to meet, talk and socialise and use green walls and trellis to add shady relief.
- Improve all elements of the public realm elements: footpaths, new pocket parks, themed seating, lighting signage and way-finding.

**Everyone’s future**

Want to get involved or find out more? Visit the website for further resources, links and updated info.

[www.samfordfutures.org](http://www.samfordfutures.org)