Appendix SEVEN
ACECS 2010 Extracts

Activity Centre and Employment Cluster Typology

Defining a typology of centres and clusters is critical to understanding its function, role and place within the established network and hierarchy of activity centres and employment clusters in Maitland. This section provides an explanation of the types of activity centres, range employment clusters and specific types of retailing which exist in the Maitland LGA.

ACTIVITY CENTRES

Activity centres are the local and regional hub for community activity. They are places providing a diverse mix of activities where people can socialise, shop, work, meet, relax and often live. Activity centres range in size, scale and development intensity from a neighbourhood centre, like Largs or Tenambit through to a major regional centre, like Central Maitland. Activity centres are usually well-served by public transport, offering a highly accessible location for commercial, personal and retail services, community, entertainment and recreational facilities as well as a mix of housing options to attract for a diverse population.

Major Regional Centre:

This activity centre is the community, cultural, civic and commercial heart of a sub-region and is the highest order activity centre for the LGA. It provides a diverse mix of uses which cater to the needs of the local and regional population in a location serviced by high levels of accessibility and where different modes of public transport interconnect.

A significant concentration of commercial offices, higher order comparison retailing and convenience shopping, employment, health and professional services are located within the Major Regional Centre. A range of entertainment, community, leisure and recreational services, along with local and regional educational, arts and cultural facilities are also offered in this activity centre. The Major Regional Centre is also the preferred location for civic functions, facilities and other government departments.

The inclusion of higher density residential development adds to the social diversity and mix of uses. It's inclusion creates a lively neighbourhood with high accessibility to public transport, facilities and services, supports activity outside 'business hours' and supports a thriving evening economy and vibrant activity centre.

Town Centre:

This activity centre is the community and commercial heart of a specific area within the LGA. Town centres provide a mix of uses in a highly accessible location which accommodates the needs of the local population within a specific segment. An indicative scale of this centre typology can range from between 80 and 150 establishments.

A Town Centre offers a range of convenience shopping and comparison retailing, health and professional services and commercial offices. It may also contain community and recreational facilities along with local educational institution. The location of restaurants and cafés, mixed with higher density residential development, provides a diverse range of activities, a strong local economy and supports activity outside 'business hours', which create a lively place to meet, socialise and live.

Local Centre:

This activity centre is the heart of a specific location. The function of a local centre is primarily to provide for the daily needs of the local residential population within a specific catchment located in close proximity. Residential development through shop top housing provides an alternative housing option in a accessible location and adds to the diversity of uses in this activity centre.

A Local Centre offers a range of convenience shopping with limited comparison retailing, local health and professional services along with a café, restaurant and/or takeaway establishment. A Local Centre may also contain local community facilities and can be characterised by a scale of between 4 and 12 establishments.

Neighbourhood Centres:

This activity centre is integrated within a residential neighbourhood to improve the walkability, provide for the convenience needs and create a place with a strong identity for the surrounding community. The scale of this activity centre is characterised by a small cluster of shops with the primary aim of providing convenience services and encourages a reduction in car use for short trips.

EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS

Employment clusters provide an accessible location to accommodate a range of industries, bulky goods retailing and business activities. Employment clusters are usually located outside of activity centres however, due to the size, activity or

potential impact of the activity, it may be inappropriate for the particular industry or business use to be located within an activity centre. They range in size and intensity but all have a common aim to provide employment generating activities to encourage growth in the local economy and provide job opportunities to cater for a range of skills and qualifications.

Bulky Goods Retailing:

A large, stand alone store or a cluster of similar sized stores which are typically refered to as a 'homemaker's centre' and are usually located at the edge of or outside of existing activity centres. The types of goods sold within these stores varies widely from furniture, white goods and electronics to automotive parts and building supplies, however the defining feature is that the goods are 'bulky' in nature and can not generally be carried away without the use of a vehicle

Industrial Activities:

A range of business types including manufacturing, storage, warehousing, transport, engineering and general trades such as mechanics usually removed from activity centres and other locations where a sensitive interface is required.

Business Areas:

A concentrated cluster of similar business enterprises usually located outside of existing activity centres. These concentrations offer a range of business types including research and development, education campuses, storage, warehousing and logistics, office-based businesses and high tech industries. In some cases, businesses choose to co-located with others due to the similar type of industry or activity they are engaged in.

RETAIL TYPOLOGIES

Convenience Shopping:

The provision of everyday, essential items and services including food, drinks, newspapers and magazines as well as postal services and banking services.

Comparison Retailing:

The provision of items not obtained on a daily or frequent basis. These include items such as clothing, footwear, health and beauty, household and recreational goods.

Neighbourhood Shop:

A single shop located within a residential area or in other areas outside of activity centres and employment clusters, providing a convenience shopping function to the immediate residents. Areas for neighbourhood shops are not defined in this strategy as they are a single shop located within residential areas or as a result of an existing use.

Stand Alone Shopping Centre:

In line with the LHRS, a Stand Alone Shopping Centre is defined as being a privately owned freestanding format located away from other activity centres. Stand Alone Shopping Centres provide a focused retailing function in an enclosed format with associated car parking on a single site.

Planning Policy Context

The planning for future growth of activity centres and employment clusters is guided by a variety of state and local government's strategies and policies. The strategies and policies, as outlined below, provide the policy context for the preparation of this strategy to accommodate future growth of Maitland's activity centres and employment clusters.

DRAFT CENTRES POLICY
(NSW Department of Planning: April 2009)

The NSW Government's *'Draft Centres Policy – Planning for Retail and commercial Development'* sets out the Department's (DoP) desired approach to the development of centres with a particular focus on retail and commercial activities. The aim of this policy is to *"create a network of vital and vibrant centres that cater for the needs of business, and are places where individuals and families want to live work and shop"* (DoP 2009: ii).

The principles of the Department's draft Centres Policy include:

- Retail and commercial activity should be located in centres to ensure the most efficient use of transport and other infrastructure, proximity to labour markets and to improve the amenity and liveability of those centres;
- The growth of centres and the creation of new centres are to be supported by

a flexible planning system, which should regulate the location and scale of development. While the market is best place to determine the need for retail and commercial development;

- Planning should support a wide range of retail and commercial activities, ensuring a competitive retail and commercial market and that there is available floorspace to accommodate market demand, help facilitate new entrants into the market and promote competition; and
- Retail and commercial development should be well designed and contribute to the amenity, accessibility and sustainability of centres.

LOWER HUNTER REGIONAL STRATEGY

(NSW Department of Planning: October 2006)

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS) sets a collective future direction for the local authorities in the Lower Hunter (Newcastle, Maitland, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens and Cessnock) to 2031. The vision for the Lower Hunter is articulated through a number of strategies, which includes growth of residential development, employment and the regional economy. Along with a range of infrastructure investment priorities, to accommodate the region's projected housing and employment needs for the next 25 years.

Within its framework of centres and corridors, the LHRS identifies Central Maitland as a 'Major Regional Centre' along with Thornton, East Maitland, Rutherford and Lochinvar as 'Town Centres'. Greenhills, is identified as 'Stand Alone Shopping Centres' in the LHRS, recognising the significant retail offer concentrated in this location.

Of particular relevance to the Maitland LGA and for this strategy, the LHRS seeks to achieve:

- Strong and vibrant centres through a local hierarchy of centres framework which supports the order established within the LHRS;
- An additional 3,200 new jobs and 1,300 new dwellings within Centre Maitland, a Major Regional Centre by 2031;
- An additional 1,500 new jobs created at Greenhills by 2031; and
- 26,500 additional new dwellings within the Maitland LGA equating to an additional 55,650 new residents by 2031.

MAITLAND URBAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY 2001-2021

(Maitland City Council: reviewed 2008)

The Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy (MUSS) 2001-2021 provides a framework for the long term urban growth in the Maitland LGA. The primary focus of the MUSS is investigation, sequencing and management of land release for residential and to a lesser extent commercial and industrial land uses.

The overarching principle outlined in the MUSS for employment land is to *"provide suitable commercial sites and employment land in strategic areas".* The adopted key policy directions to achieve this include:

- Concentrate retail activities in centres and identify and strengthen industry clusters;
- A range of employment opportunities are to be provided in Maitland, considering emerging trends in job growth and economic change and to facilitate the renewal of employment areas through incentives for redevelopment in appropriate and identified locations;
- Centres are to be protected and strengthened with the use of development guidelines and incentives. The hierarchy of centres is to be maintained, but will be subject to review and analysis;
- Encourage employment growth in Central Maitland, whilst maintaining and facilitating specialized civic, educational, medical and entertainment functions. Also limit retail and commercial development outside Central Maitland and Greenhills; and
- Maintain a 10 to 15 year supply of zoned employment land and ensure sufficient zoned land and infrastructure provision for employment land, by concentrating activities near areas with existing services that are underutilized or easily expanded.

PART C: MAITLAND'S NETWORK of ACTIVITY CENTRES and EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS

Set within the local and regional context, this strategy presents a proactive approach to the planning and development of activity centres and employment clusters to manage growth over the next 20 years.

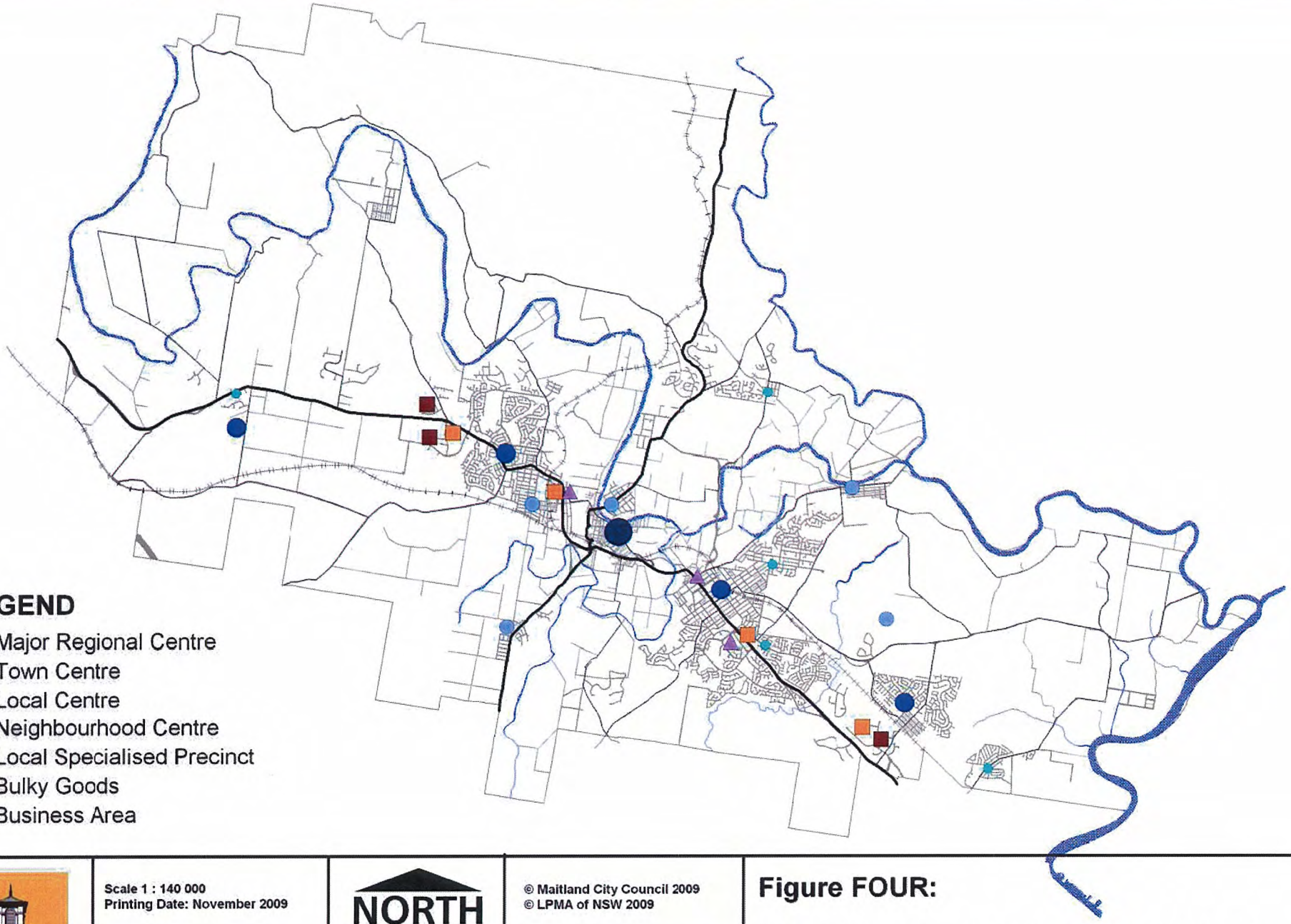
The definition of a network *(the pattern of provision)* and hierarchy *(the role and relationship)* ensures that growth in centres and clusters consider the overall network and how they interrelate. Figure 4 illustrates the network of activity centres and employment clusters in the Maitland LGA. This approach will positively contribute to the prosperity of the local economy and support the residential and working communities, helping to create a more sustainable future for Maitland.

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy establishes a regional hierarchy of centres. The NSW Government's regional hierarchy lists Central Maitland as a Major Regional Centre within the Lower Hunter. This is supported by the identification of town centres at East Maitland, Rutherford and Thornton and a new town centre at Lochinvar to support the associated residential growth. Greenhills is classified as a Stand Alone Shopping Centre which recognises the significant retail offer and specialised function that Greenhills provides the Maitland LGA and the wider region.

The network and hierarchy framework of this strategy provides a clear definition as to the vision, role and function of activity centres, specialised precincts, employment clusters and corridors. It builds on the regional hierarchy, providing a more local approach to defining activity centres and employment clusters. The hierarchy ensures that residents across the LGA have easy access to the higher order centres, as well as the convenience that local and neighbourhood centres offer and jobs in locations close to home.

The network and hierarchy of activity centres and employment clusters must be resilient to positively respond to the inevitable economic and social changes. Review of the strategy and regular monitoring to identify growth and decline of centres and clusters is critical to enable Council to take action for the benefit of residents, workers, visitors and investors of Maitland.

Figure THREE: Hierarchy of Activity Centres



MAITLAND CITY COUNCIL

Scale 1 : 140 000
Printing Date: November 2009

NORTH

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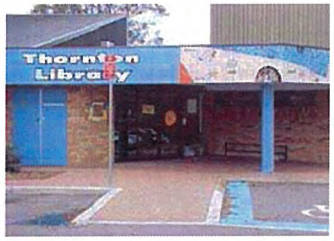
This map has been prepared on the basis of information available to Council at the date of issue. However, that information may be subject to change over a limited time and should therefore be verified with Maitland City Council

Figure FOUR:

NETWORK OF CENTRES and EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS within the MAITLAND LGA

Figure EIGHT: *Town Centre - Thornton*



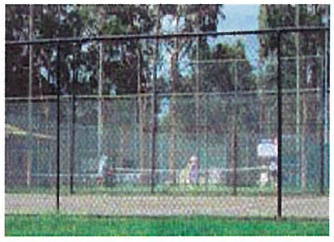
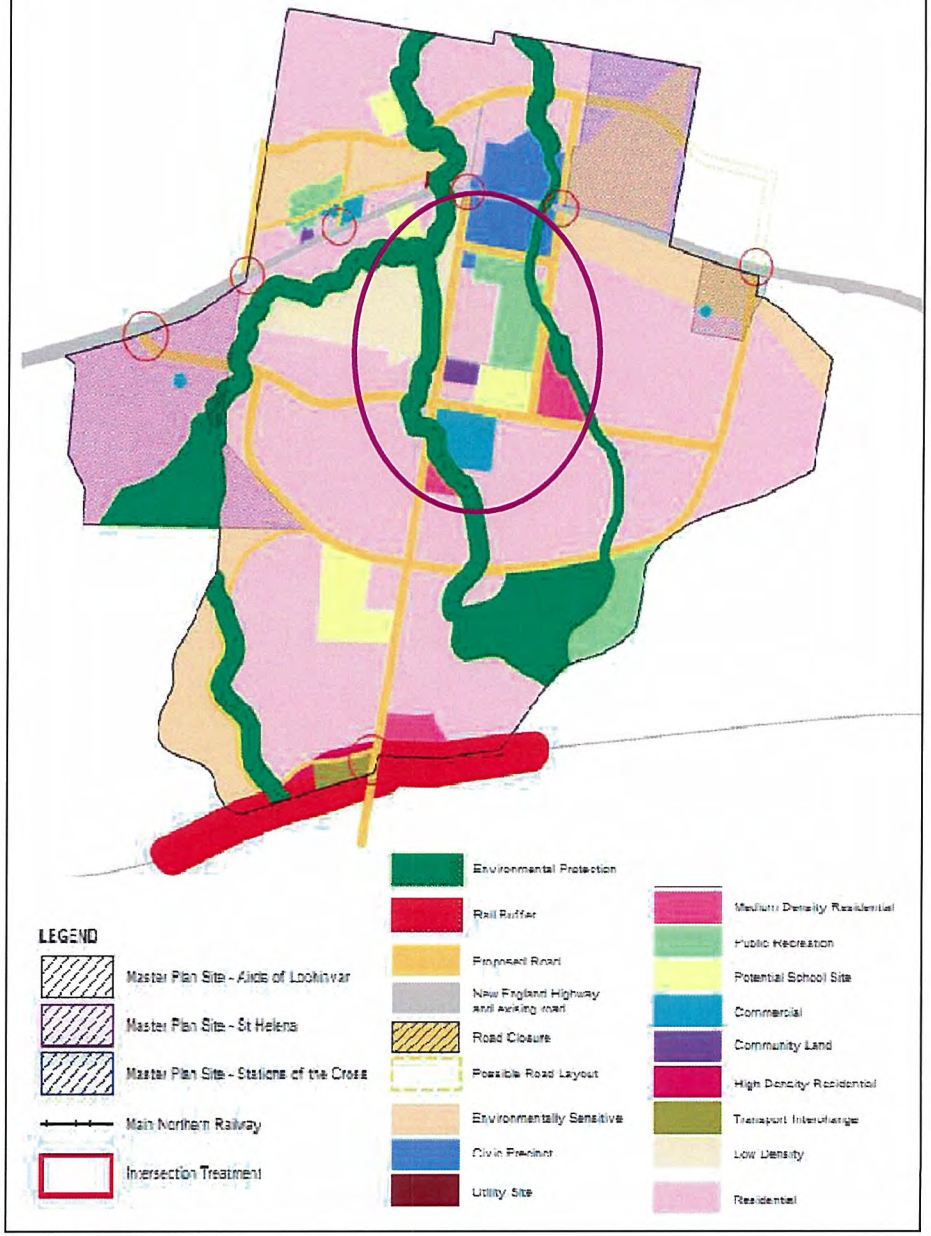


Figure NINE: *Town Centre – Lochinvar*
(Proposed location within the Structure Plan Area)



LOCHINVAR

Lochinvar Town Centre has been identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy as an emerging centre. The creation of this new town centre for the Maitland LGA is in recognition of the significant future growth that is planned for the Lochinvar area. The creation of a new town centre will support the existing centre in Lochinvar which is identified as being a neighbourhood centre.

The location of the town centre is at the heart of the structure plan area, central to Station Lane and within walking distance to the railway station. It is also in close proximity to existing residential areas, recreational, community and educational facilities.

VISION

Located at the heart of a new community, the Lochinvar Town Centre will be an attractive central focus for new and existing residents of Lochinvar and the western sector of the LGA and beyond. A mix of retail, commercial, community, recreational and residential uses will be provided within a safe, inviting public realm. The inclusion of interesting public spaces and, high quality architecture will contribute to the creation of a vibrant activity centre.

Accessibility to the Lochinvar Town Centre will be enhanced with the provision of pleasant, safe pedestrian and cycleway links to the railway station, major bus routes along the New England Highway and the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

KEY POLICY OBJECTIVES

Key policy objectives for Lochinvar Town Centre include:

- Reinforce the role and function of Lochinvar as one of the town centres in the Maitland LGA and provide a focal point for community activity enabling a strong identity and sense of community to be built by all residents of Lochinvar and the wider area;
- Provide a range of community, commercial, retail and entertainment activities to create a diverse activity centre which serves the needs of new and existing residents of Lochinvar and further west beyond the Maitland LGA boundary;
- The integration of mixed use development, medium density residential and shop top housing in and around the centre will contribute to a diverse, vibrant town centre and support uses to establish a viable night-time economy;
- The provision of quality public spaces, public art, landscaping and street furniture to create an interesting public realm and present opportunities to meet and mingle and participate in community life;
- Create safe and well connected pedestrian and cycle routes to provide high accessibility between the town centre, residential areas, existing education facilities and public transport.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The planning and development of the Lochinvar Town Centre must be undertaken in the context of the residential development that is being planned for. Analysis suggests that this new activity centre could potentially be similar in size and offer to East Maitland and Thornton.

It is envisaged that the Lochinvar Town Centre will provide a diverse range of convenience and comparison retail, commercial activities, including offices, community and recreational facilities and residential.

To ensure the town centre is highly accessible, it is critical that well designed pedestrian and cycle routes are integrated to link the centre with the Lochinvar Railway Station, bus routes along the New England Highway and the wider Lochinvar area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTIVITY CENTRE

LOCHINVAR

Fronting the New England Highway in Lochinvar, the existing loose cluster of business and activities form the genesis of a neighbourhood centre. This centre has serviced both the existing residential and rural community of Lochinvar, Luskintyre, Oswald and Windella and the travelling public. Community uses such as the public school, School of Arts, pub and tennis courts, with a civic area of schools and churches on its edge, further support and enhance the identity of the Lochinvar district.

VISION

The Lochinvar Neighbourhood Centre enhances the identity of the Lochinvar township and works cooperatively with the Lochinvar Town Centre. Services will provide for the travelling public and add to the amenity of the streetscape. The Lochinvar Neighbourhood Activitry Centre will strengthen the liveable neighbourhood character that exists with highly accessible residential, community and business areas

KEY POLICY OBJECTIVES

Key policy objectives for the Lochinvar Neighbourhood Centre include:

- Reinforce the role and function of Lochinvar as a neighbourhood centre within the network and hierarchy of activity centres which supports the function of the town centre at Lochinvar;
- To provide for the convenience needs of the surrounding residential neighbourhood and due to its location on the New England Highway provide additional services and facilities to support the traveling public ; and
- Provide safe, pleasant pedestrian and cycleway routes connecting the activity centre to the new Lochinvar Town Centre, education and recreational facilities, the surrounding residential neighbourhood and build on its locational advantage.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Analysis suggests that the potential growth of the Lochinvar Neighbourhood Centre should be further explored with the implementation of the structure plan and be of a scale which adequately support the higher order role and function of the new town centre at Lochinvar.

Its location fronting the New England Highway provides opportunities for small scale services which cater for the needs of the travelling public as well as services catering for the convenient needs of surrounding residents.

LARGS

The neighbourhood centre at Largs has grown organically in response to the needs of the local area. The Largs Neighbourhood Centre primarily provides convenience retail activities with additional activities such as the pub and community facilities such as the School of Arts and childcare facilities. This activity centre is heavily reliant on the surrounding residential neighbourhoods supporting the local businesses and the convenience they offer, however currently the activities located within the centre are spread out, thereby reducing the convenience of the activity centre.

VISION

Reflecting the character of Largs and its rural surrounding the neighbourhood centre will build on its identity as the focal point for the hamlet of Largs, Woodville and Phoenix Park. The primary convenience function of this activity centre will continue to be strengthened with the provision of a range of services and facilities to accommodate the day to day needs of the local community. The inclusion of community facilities, quality place spaces and excellent pedestrian, cycle and road connections will enhance the viability of this activity centre.