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17 February 2012

Shire of Jerramungup
Attention – Craig Pursey
PO Box 92
Jerramungup WA 6337

Dear Mr Pursey

DRAFT BREMER BAY TOWN CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN

As a property owner at Short Beach, Bremer Bay, I am responding to the invitation from the Shire of Jerramungup to comment on the Draft Bremer Bay Town Centre Structure Plan. I write as a devotee of Bremer Bay and from a position of professional experience, as the WA Government Architect for 5 years and, currently, the Victorian Government Architect.

This plan is an improvement on the earlier proposal and has many positive aspects. There are, however, numerous changes that can be made in order to strengthen the plan and assist it in meeting the laudable objectives that have been set out in the draft document.

Comments (inset) are recorded in response to how the objectives (in bold) are being met or able to be met in the plan.

The main objectives of the Structure Plan include:

- **Ensuring the Town Centre is the focus for future retail, commercial, community, civic and cultural uses;**

COMMENT:

This makes sense for a number of reasons, but the objective would be strengthened by developing a strategy to bring the existing general store/service station on John Street into the new Town Centre.

- **Improve the legibility of the road network and ensure the heart of the town is easily accessed.**

COMMENT:

Again, this is a sensible and supportable aim – but legibility would be improved by having a single clear entry as strongly signaled by the introduction of a roundabout. In its current location, the Visitors' Centre will also read as an entry. The Visitor's Centre would be better located within the town centre and at a point from which visitors may enjoy views of the surrounding countryside and gain a better appreciation of the place. One-way streets do not aid road legibility and it is not clear why the western end of Gnombup Terrace has been made one-way. This will result in confusion in practice and is difficult to justify in a small town with wide roads. The two crossovers into the new car park off the Borden-Bremer Bay Road could be reduced to one, aiding legibility.

- **Ensuring the scale and activities within the Town Centre are commensurate with the intended population for Bremer Bay, commercial viability and the town's coastal and rural setting;**

COMMENT:

A sound objective – but projected populations should allow for a degree of uncertainty. This is met by enabling, on the one hand, flexibility in the plan for expansion and, on the other hand, ensuring the plan can work if the town development is not fully completed as proposed.

- **Providing for a range of services and amenities that will attract people to the area and sustain a constant level of community activity, inclusive of active after hours use, spaces for weekend markets and special events;**

COMMENT:

Fully agree with the objective – to 'sustain a constant level of community activity' will require a careful mix of uses. This may necessitate the use of incentives of some form (eg. rate holidays).

- **Enhancing and develop a distinct Town Centre "main street" character and identity that complements the coastal and natural resources of Bremer Bay;**

COMMENT:

Agree – and this is an important objective – but it is very difficult to see how a 'main street character' may be generated from the one-sided main street plan as proposed. See comment below regarding the 'main street'.

- **Preserving significant areas of natural vegetation whilst balancing the practical requirements to clear land for safety, access and for future built form;**

COMMENT:

Agree – but see comment below regarding the 'main street'.

- **Providing for greater housing choice through medium density residential development to maximise the number of people living within walking distance of the Town Centre or also provide suitable accommodation for residents to 'age in place';**

COMMENT:

Agree – the provision and location of the medium density housing is strongly supported as is the ‘age in place’ ambition. It would be useful to require a range of unit types and sizes within the medium density residential development to enable a real mix of household types, including singles.

- **Maximising the range and mix of employment opportunities that can be provided within the Town Centre; and**

COMMENT:

Agree, and while difficult to achieve in a small town like Bremer Bay, the plan does suggest a good range of uses in the Town Centre.

- **Creating a safe, convenient, prosperous Town Centre that services the existing and future needs of residents, visitors and tourists.**

COMMENT:

Agree – but care will be needed to ensure that tenancies are managed in such a way as to prevent empty untenanted shops – signals of failure. It may be that, to attract certain desired tenants, rental subsidies or similar incentives will have to be offered.

Basically, the town centre structure plan is intended to:

- **Create a ‘main street’ for Bremer Bay and tie the town together around a focal point for locals residents and visitors.**

COMMENT:

This is an important and commendable aim, the achievement of which would contribute to a real sense of place and identity.

The plan, however, is compromised in achieving this outcome because of the proposed one-sided ‘main street’.

Serious consideration should be given to relocating the civic facilities to form a new eastern edge to the main street, from the corner of the roundabout so that a civic presence is signaled to people entering the town.

The incursion into the nature reserve could be minimized by running the length of the building along the main street and the experience of the bushland could be enhanced by providing outlook into it from the civic building.

As a result of the relocation of the civic facility, another solution would be to shift the main street westwards, the width of the civic building, so that none of the nature reserve is lost.

A preferable location for the Visitors Centre (together with a possible café) would be at the northern edge of the civic building, forming a focal point for a small park/playground and the ‘civic square’ that could be relocated from its planned position on the other side of the road. This new setting would offer views, a useful functional adjacency to the civic facilities, and the opportunity to consolidate facilities to ensure a constant level of activity.

If the main street is not developed as two-sided in this way, there is the danger that the default main street will become the parking area to the western rear of

the shops, bringing people into the shops past rubbish collection and delivery/storage areas. Also, it is difficult to maintain a well-functioning two-sided dual access retail outlet as it compromises surveillance and security, thereby threatening the workability of the single-sided main street.

The shifting of the medical centre location from Garnett Road onto the new main street would be a serious addition to the objective of creating a focal point and tying the town together.

The alternative to the creation of a two-sided and intensively occupied main street is a series of independent buildings set in a landscaped car park, defeating this critical structure plan objective and losing the potential of creating a real sense of place and identity.

- **Provide a retail, office, entertainment and civic focal point for the Bremer Bay community.**

COMMENT:

The plan does do this but could do it better if a real two-sided main street is developed.

As stated above, the relocation of the medical centre to the main street would be a very positive contribution to this objective.

- **Create a sense of arrival in Bremer Bay and serve to orientate visitors to sites and activities of the region.**

COMMENT:

As noted above, legibility would be improved by having a single clear entry as will be strongly signaled by the roundabout. In its current location, the Visitors' Centre will also read as an entry point. The Visitor's Centre would be better positioned at a readily visible location within the town centre, at a point from which visitors may enjoy views of the surrounding countryside and gain a better orientation than possible from its current location.

I have attached sketches that attempt to clarify the modifications recommended above. Option A shows the suggested relocation of several buildings while retaining the basic plan. Option B also shows the relocation of several buildings but shifts the main street westwards, resulting in an expansion of the nature reserve.

Please contact me if any clarification is required.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment – I look forward to seeing the plan as it develops further.

Yours sincerely



Geoffrey London

OPTION A:
RETAINING PLAN,
RELOCATING SOME
FACILITIES

LEGEND

- 1 REMNANT VEGETATION
- 2 CIVIC
- 3 MEDICAL CENTRE
- 4 POLICE STATION
- 5 PARKS AND NATURE RESERVE
- 6 OFF-STREET PARKING
- 7 STREET PARKING
- 7B DOUBLE LENGTH STREET BAYS
- 8 RETAIL
- 9 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITE
- 9B FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITE OR COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE
- 10 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY (POSSIBLE RESIDENTIAL)
- 11 FUTURE VISITOR CENTRE
- 12 EXISTING PRIMARY SCHOOL

- STREET PAVING
- LANE PAVING

PARKING

ON-STREET

- 14 SINGLE LENGTH BAYS
- 18 DOUBLE LENGTH BAYS
- 32 TOTAL

OFF-STREET

- 108 OFF STREET PARKING

(EXCLUDING PARKING FOR VISITOR CENTRE, POLICE STATION AND CIVIC)

RETAIL

TOTAL AREA : 2919 SQM

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Land Swap required with school to facilitate new North-South main street. Alternate connection to north via a diagonal road through parks and nature reserve subject to DEC endorsement.
2. Future development opportunity sites allow for expansion should population growth support. Opportunity for 9B to be a community plaza/park space. Opportunity for activities such as weekend markets.
3. Portion of Gnomnubup Terrace to become one-way to improve traffic circulation.
4. Retail Floor plates to be adaptable to allow flexibility, design should facilitate activation of both frontages and address each corner. Opportunity for shop-top housing.
5. New entrance roundabout - possibility of entrance statement feature.
6. Retention of vegetation along eastern boundary of new town centre is an integral component of the masterplan. Creates ecological corridor/green link through Bremer Bay. Opportunity for passive recreation.

TWO-WAY

CONSOLIDATED CROSS-OVER

EXTENDED CORNER BLUES.

EXTENDED DEVELOPMENT SITE

MEDICAL CENTRE

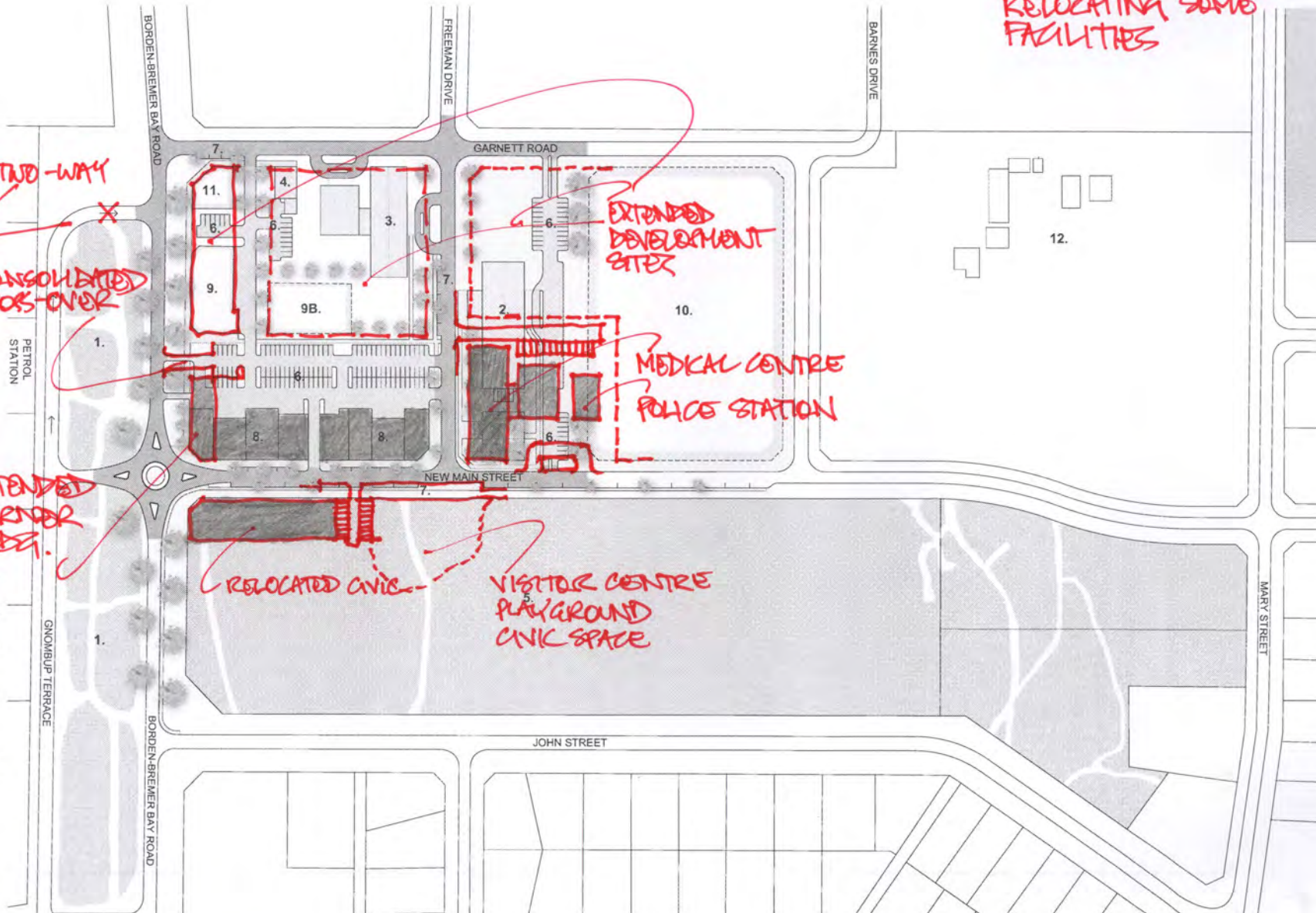
POLICE STATION

RELOCATED CIVIC

VISITOR CENTRE

PLAYGROUND

CIVIC SPACE



Note: Building locations and types of land uses are indicative only. Actual locations may change.



LEGEND

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- 2 CIVIC
- 3 MEDICAL CENTRE
- 4 POLICE STATION
- 5 PARKS AND NATURE RESERVE
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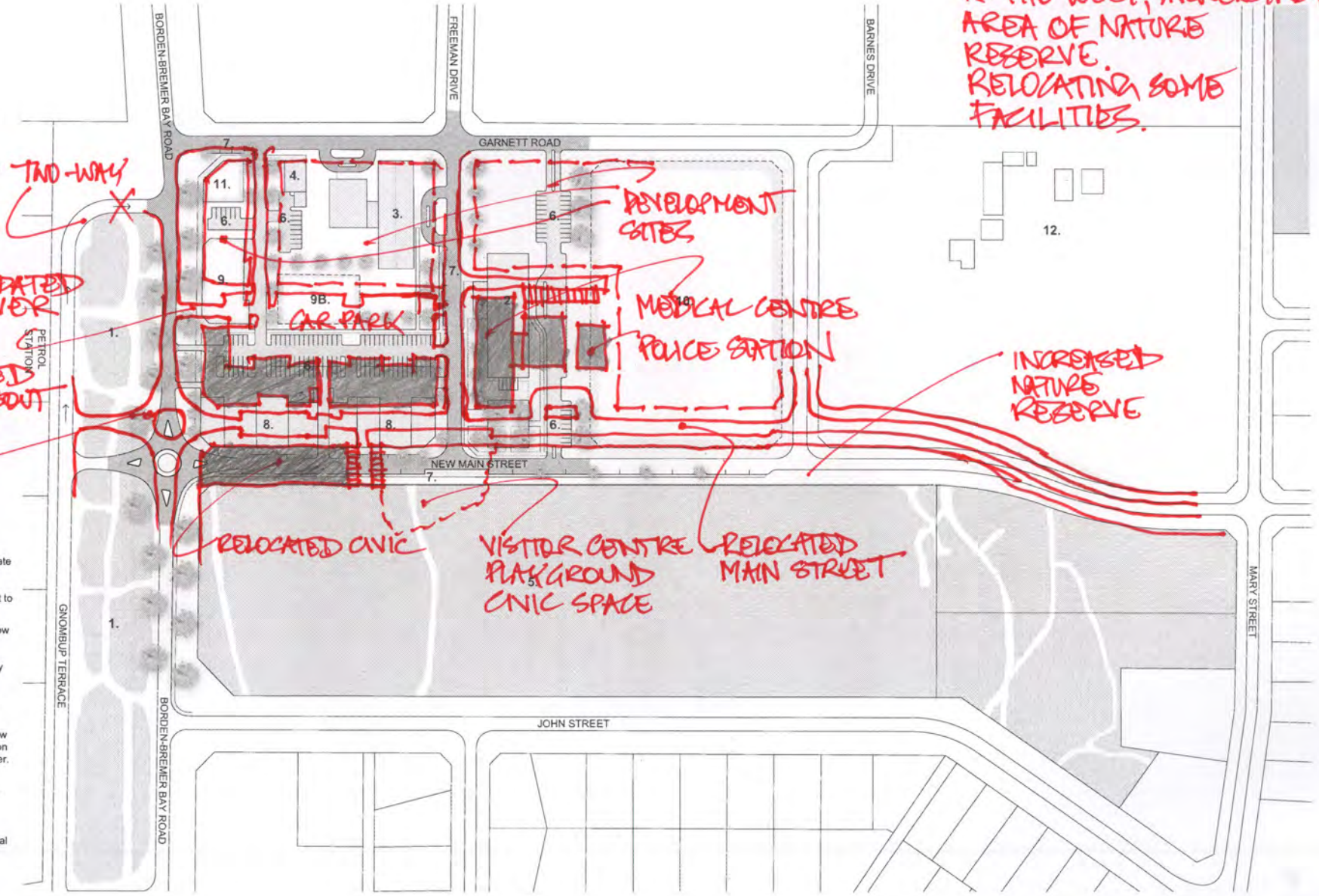
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5. New entrance roundabout - possibility of entrance statement feature.
6. Retention of vegetation along eastern boundary of new town centre is an integral component of the masterplan. Creates ecological corridor/green link through Bremer Bay. Opportunity for passive recreation.

OPTION B:
MOVING MAIN STREET TO THE WEST, INCREASING AREA OF NATURE RESERVE. RELOCATING SOME FACILITIES.



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