6.2.4 Centre zone code

6.2.4.1 Application

This code applies to assessing development in the Centre zone.

When using this code, reference should be made to Section 5.3.2, and where applicable, Section 5.3.3, in Part 5.

Where development is identified in a nominated centre, additional outcomes will apply to development.

Note: To the extent there is any inconsistency with the outcomes applying to the whole of the zone, nominated centre outcomes will prevail.

6.2.4.2 Purpose

(1) The purpose of the Centre zone code is to provide for: a mix of uses and activities.

These uses include, but are not limited to, business, retail, professional, administrative, community, entertainment, cultural and residential activities.

Centres are found at a variety of scales based on their location and surrounding activities.

(a) a dense mix of land uses that create vibrant economic centres with differing intensities of day and night time activity, including but not limited to, business, retail, professional, administrative, community, entertainment, cultural and residential activities;

(b) centres at a variety of scales based on their location and surrounding activities;

(c) well-designed, safe and accessible environments that contribute to a bustling street life and provide opportunities for cultural and artistic expression to enhance the public realm; and

(d) a network of urban parks, plazas and open spaces that allow for social interaction and relaxation.
The purpose statement for the zone has been changed in accordance with Section 6(3) of the Planning Regulation 2017. The changed purpose statement took effect on INSERT DATE.

(2) The purpose of the code will be achieved through the following overall outcomes:

(a) Land uses –

(i) facilitate concentrations of business, employment, community, cultural, retail and residential uses, including major international events to create vibrant and liveable mixed use environments. Centres remain prosperous and effective and a viable network of centres services the needs of the community and provision of employment opportunities;

(ii) within the network of centres are not unnecessarily duplicated to allow for efficiency. Development intensity and type within each mixed use centre is consistent with its role and function within the centres hierarchy;

(iii) ensure centres are lively and convenient places to live and uses that reduce amenity or are incompatible with intended uses will not be supported;

(iv) make efficient use of available infrastructure and provide access to services and employment for the centre’s intended catchment;

(v) include higher intensity housing usually in a mixed use building format. Residential amenity may reduce as a result of the intended intensity and mix of day and night time activity in these areas;

(vi) that are casinos only occur in the city’s central business district, Broadbeach principal centre and Surfers Paradise specialist centre;

(vii) include licensed premises at a form, scale and intensity that complements the role of the centre in the hierarchy, including hours of operation. An appropriate balance of these uses enables people to enjoy night-time entertainment without experiencing negative social impacts; and

(viii) include nightclub entertainment uses only occur in the Surfers Paradise specialist centre, Broadbeach principal centre or Coolangatta major centre.

(IX) Development includes opportunities for a flexible range of commercial opportunities and flexible re-use of non-residential space.

(b) Hierarchy of mixed use centres –

(i) The hierarchy of mixed use centres is:

(A) Key regional centres
(B) Principal centres
(C) Major centres
(D) District centres

The hierarchy is shown on Figure 6.2.4-4.

(ii) The viability of the centres network is maximised by ensuring the scale and function of each centre is consistent with its level in the hierarchy, preventing out-of-centre development and avoiding incompatible uses within centres.

**Key regional centres**

(iii) The city’s Key regional centres achieve the highest concentration of business, employment, residential, community and cultural uses.

**Note:** Key regional centres are regulated by other legislation, refer to Part 10 Other plans.

**Principal centres**

(iv) Principal centres provide high order services, employment, retail, civic and community facilities for catchments of 200,000+ people and provide for over 15,000 jobs. They provide a practical distribution of higher order centre facilities throughout the city and support regional activities and services as well as some city-wide services as required. Services include:

(A) civic, entertainment, cultural and recreational facilities;

(B) the full range of education facilities including major tertiary education services;
(C) Commonwealth, State or City of Gold Coast services and facilities (such as courts, district offices, service centres);

(D) major health services including hospitals;

(E) private and public sector offices (including administration, finance and professional services);

(F) district community facilities;

(G) regional shopping and retail facilities; and

(H) business and visitor accommodation.

Principal centres are:

(A) **Broadbeach** principal centre maximises its proximity to high frequency public transport services and a unique cluster of major tourism and leisure infrastructure. It is a major employment area with diverse employment opportunities anchored by Pacific Fair, the Oasis Centre, the Gold Coast Convention Centre and Jupiters Casino. It accommodates a range of tourist, retail, residential and business activities and day and night time leisure and entertainment facilities.

Broadbeach's status as a principal centre recognises its unique infrastructure accessibility. Over the next 10 to 20 years it is expected that Broadbeach will diversify its business and employment mix and double the number of in-centre jobs, building upon its iconic beachfront location and infrastructure.

Additional community services, health facilities and cultural events support the increased residential and tourist population. To protect the increasing permanent residential population and improved amenity, specific night-time uses are either controlled or have their operations restricted.

(B) **Coomera** principal centre is a new driver of the city's economy and the principal centre for the northern Gold Coast. It is supported by integrated bus and rail services and good access to the Pacific Motorway for freight.

Coomera will transform to an employment-based and highly accessible transit orientated centre. The centre will develop in an orderly sequence, with high intensity uses such as large format retail and commercial development initially occurring west of the railway line, north of Foxwell Road, and close to the Coomera Railway Station and transport hub to provide the framework for a highly accessible transit orientated centre.

Complementary uses include high intensity residential, commercial, community, civic, entertainment, education, health, industry, leisure and tourist-related activities.

Major centres

(vi) Major centres provide high order services, employment, retail, civic and community facilities for catchments of around 80,000 to 100,000 people and are intended to provide around 8,000 jobs. These centres have a more defined catchment than the central business district and principal centres and do not have the intended scale of uses of those centres. Services include:

(A) entertainment and recreational facilities (including cinemas);

(B) education facilities;

(C) State or City of Gold Coast services and facilities;

(D) health services including hospitals (up to 300 beds);

(E) community facilities;

(F) professional services;

(G) regional shopping and retail facilities potentially accommodating a department store and specialist retail facilities; and

(H) visitor accommodation.

(vii) Major centres are:
(A) Nerang major centre strengthens its position as the gateway to the Gold Coast Hinterland and as a significant western high frequency public transport hub. The centre functions as a significant service centre.

Commercial and retail development is consolidated into a more clearly defined hub, strengthening the original town centre west of the river to support medium to high intensity, mixed use development, including a significant residential component that promotes diversity in housing choice and strengthens demand for retail, commercial and community services.

(B) Coolangatta is Gold Coast’s pre-eminent southern beachside destination. Significant tourism, sport, cultural, employment, retailing and residential uses diversify with rail and air transport improvements, and cross-border planning activities with Tweed Shire.

Coolangatta (together with adjoining Kirra and Rainbow Bay) is recognised as the heart of international surfing with world-renowned surf breaks and international surfing events.

To protect an increasing permanent residential population and improved amenity, specific night-time uses are either controlled or have their operations restricted.

(C) Helensvale provides a mix of services and facilities including retail, office, community, entertainment, educational and residential development, integrated with the heavy rail line. Helensvale accommodates medium and high intensity residential and commercial office space growth (including freight and logistics businesses) due to its accessibility to the Pacific Motorway.

(D) Biggera Waters is dominated by Harbour Town, a factory outlet shopping centre. The centre supports visitor and tourist shopping.

Biggera Waters includes an improved mix of uses, including higher intensity residential, commercial and community uses. A broader range of shops appeal to the local catchment and improve the local community focus.

Note: To maintain the role and function of the city’s centres hierarchy, single shops within Major centres generally do not exceed 7,000m$^2$ GFA.

District centres

(viii) District centres provide a range of retail, office and employment land uses and some community and civic services for a catchment of between 20,000 and 40,000 people and are intended to provide around 3,000 jobs. They are limited in size and intensity to serve the ‘employment precinct’ role provided by the higher order mixed use centres – central business district, principal centres and major centres. More intensive development activity is focused in these higher order mixed use centres. Services include:

(A) entertainment and recreational facilities (including cinemas);
(B) primary, secondary and limited tertiary education facilities;
(C) State or City of Gold Coast services and facilities;
(D) health services;
(E) community facilities;
(F) professional services;
(G) subregional retail facilities including a discount department store (in some district centres where there is an economic need), full-line supermarkets and specialty support retailing;
(H) secondary retailing, including bulk retailing, automotive retailing and service stations; and
(I) visitor accommodation.

(ix) District centres include:

Editor’s note: Not all of the city’s district centres are mentioned below
(A) **Burleigh Heads** supports development that will increase the range and number of jobs and services. Development includes residential uses above ground-level commercial premises.

The village centre has a vibrant day and night time economy and temporary road and laneway closures support markets and festivals. Uses that activate its traditional main street and key laneway/arcades are encouraged.

(B) **West Burleigh shopping centre** supports development that will increase the range and number of jobs and services. Development includes residential uses above ground-level commercial premises.

(C) **Varsity Station Village** is a transit oriented centre with a strong focus on commercial office employment and residential uses, integrated with convenience retailing and associated services. Development maximises integration with the Varsity Railway Station and provide a level of pedestrian accessibility to serve as a high quality transit oriented community. Retail gross floor area is limited to service the local population and protect the viability and orderly development of nearby, established centres.

(D) **Oxenford** provides a gateway to the northern hinterland. Development supports the clustering of business and industry activity. Retail gross floor area is limited to protect the viability and orderly development of the Coomera principal centre.

(E) **Upper Coomera** services a planned population of up to 40,000 people on the western side of the Pacific Highway, as well as visitors and workers of the nearby industrial and education facilities. Retail gross floor area is limited to protect the viability and orderly development of the Coomera principal centre.

Progressive development improves internal pedestrian connections and better integrates the growing mix of residential, entertainment and recreational facilities, local medical and community facilities and convenience shopping.

(F) **Pimpama** services a planned population of up to 35,000 people living in growing residential communities to the east and west of the Pacific Motorway. Development provides a range of retail, commercial and medium density residential uses that support employment, an integrated community and transit orientated development principles given the possibility of a future railway station.

The retail function of the centre is defined by up to two supermarkets. As the catchment matures, the centre has potential to support a small discount department store.

New development forms an integrated ‘main street’ based centre with a mix of uses which are easily accessible by all forms of transport. The orientation of buildings and access routes create new physical connections to the proposed train station and existing Pimpama village, ensuring that the centre is perceived and functions as a single centre.

(G) **Mudgeeraba Village** accommodates tourist and service activities to broaden and enhance its tourism role as a gateway to the southern hinterland.

(H) **Palm Beach** is an integrated, mixed use centre comprising shopping, residential accommodation, eating, entertainment, community and ancillary services for residents and tourists.

(I) **Ashmore City** supports consolidated redevelopment and centre expansion to deliver an enhanced scale and mix of centre, including employment activities on-site. Progressive development improves internal pedestrian connections and better integrates the growing mix of centre uses.

(J) **Ashmore Plaza** supports consolidated redevelopment and centre expansion to deliver an enhanced scale and mix of centre, including employment activities on-site. Progressive development improves internal pedestrian connections and better integrates the growing mix of centre uses.

(K) **Ormeau** services a planned population of up to 30,000 people living throughout the surrounding catchment. Development provides a range of retail, commercial and
medium density residential uses that support employment, an integrated community and transit orientated development principles given the possibility of a future railway station.

Note: To maintain the role and function of the city’s centres hierarchy, single shops within District centres generally do not exceed 4,500m² GFA.

(x) Commercial operating hours in district centres generally cease by midnight to limit potential social and amenity impacts arising from these uses to nearby residents.

Note: It is acknowledged that on an individual basis it may be appropriate to review and adjust these operating hours based on the specific circumstances, role and function of some centres.

Specialist centres

(xi) Specialist centres:

(A) have individual unique qualities and are strong in a particular economic component such as health, education, entertainment, tourism, culture, ICT, knowledge and innovation areas;

(B) gain economic benefit from being near and working together with certain business and industry sectors;

(C) complement mixed use centres through the inclusion of business, employment, community, cultural and residential uses but do not contain the same higher order range of services, employment, functions and retailing (except Surfers Paradise);

(D) Surfers Paradise includes high-order services and retailing support its role as the city’s main domestic and international tourism hub, with a core area that supports a vibrant day and night time entertainment economy. Land uses such as tourist, retail, entertainment and events, short-term accommodation and recreational facilities are envisaged. Surfers Paradise accommodates an increasing permanent residential population and improved amenity. To protect this amenity, specific night-time uses are either controlled or restricted; and

(E) Varsity Central/Bond University provides a cluster of education, research and development activities and supporting ancillary uses, with Bond University being part of the city’s research triangle. Varsity Central’s role is equivalent to a district centre, and servicing Bond University students, visitors and workers as well as the Varsity Central community.

(c) Character consists of

(i) a dense mix of land uses that create vibrant economic centres with differing intensities of day and night time activity;

(ii) urban streets framed by attractive building walls and shaded by awnings and street trees;

(iii) safe and accessible pedestrian and cycle focused environments that contribute to a bustling street life;

(iv) a network of urban parks, plazas and open spaces that allow for social interaction and relaxation;

(v) prosperous and lively localities that provide opportunities for cultural and artistic expression to enhance the public realm;

(vi) in Specialist centres character will vary depending on function and location of the centre; and

(cvii) additional character outcomes for particular centres:

(i) in the Pimpama district centre:

(A) the Old Pacific Highway and Pimpama-Jacobs Well Road is the heart of the Pimpama district centre, future development will retain and enhance this location;

(B) a ‘main street’ extending from the heart of the current village, across the currently vacant land towards the future train station (site to be determined) is the primary organising feature of the layout and development of the centre; and
The built form character of the village is changing. Recent residential development in the area is contemporary in style which contrasts with the existing older buildings. New development can be contemporary in form; however retaining or retrofitting older buildings is encouraged.

(ii) in Coomera:

(A) design achieves a traditional downtown urban centre format that supports a vibrant day and night economy, or demonstrates how the initial stages of the centre can transition to this outcome in the future; and

(B) indicative access and mobility outcomes for the Coomera Town Centre area are guided by Coomera Town Centre Indicative Access and Mobility shown in Figure 9.4.13-2 in section 9.4.13 – Transport code.

(d) Built form –

(i) The built form and scale of development:

(A) does not exceed the building height identified on the Building height overlay map;

(B) is consistent with the planned character of the locality, where the highest order centres generating the greatest activity have the highest intensity built form and scale;

(C) can have considerable bulk to supply the necessary space for large floor plate office and retailing uses;

(D) is responsive to site characteristics and neighbouring buildings (existing and approved), ensuring adequate access to natural light, natural ventilation, amenity and privacy;

(E) has a site cover that maximises the use of the land while reducing building dominance and providing adequate space for facilities and landscaping;

(F) has limited or no setback to road frontages to promote street activation, create a positive and engaging interface with the street, and allow for the integration of landscape and built form; and

(G) is setback from side and rear boundaries to protect the reasonable amenity and privacy of adjoining residences, provide landscape buffers to adjoining dwellings, and allow access around the building.

Note: The designated height on the Building height overlay map may not be achievable when taking into consideration outcomes, such as, but not limited to, aviation restrictions, setbacks and site cover.

(i) intensity emphasises the amount of activity generated by the centre, with the highest order centres generating the greatest activity, building height and bulk;

(ii) has a building height that does not exceed that indicated on the Building height overlay map;

(iii) can have considerable bulk to supply the necessary space for large floor plate office and retailing uses;

(iv) has varying site cover to reduce building dominance;

(v) reinforces urban legibility and centre identity with deliberate variations in building heights to contrast between different centres;

(vi) strengthens the urban ‘street edge’ with active uses, attractive materials and building variations that have little or no setback to the street;

(vii) frames urban open space areas, public transport nodes and major intersections to create a sense of place and arrival;

(viii) is flexible in the re-use of non-residential spaces at the ground level;

(ix) supports a wide variety of housing choices and affordability, with higher intensity housing usually in a mixed use building format; and
Mixed use centres dominated by internalised shopping centres or isolated from street edges behind car parking transition into more traditional downtown urban centre formats. (Figures 6.2.4-1 to 6.2.4-3 illustrate). Centres which transition in this way include (but are not limited to) Helensvale, Biggera Waters, Elanora, Runaway Bay, Southport Park, West Burleigh, Ashmore City, Ashmore Plaza and Mermaid Waters.

Figure 6.2.4-1
Centre transformation to traditional downtown urban centre format - now

Figure 6.2.4-2
Centre transformation to traditional downtown urban centre format - intermediate
Additional built form outcomes for particular centres:

(A) in the Pimpama district centre:

- new development integrates with the village ensuring that the centre is perceived and functions as a single centre;
- built form is at its highest towards the rail line, and around the proposed future train station, stepping down towards the existing village and surrounding low rise areas;
- the location, orientation, height and density of built form assist to integrate any new development together with the existing village;
- large expanses of car parking are avoided, particularly along the northern edge of the Old Pacific Highway where it would separate new development from the existing village;
- development which occurs prior to the finalised location for the proposed train station provides a layout which allows the establishment of, and access to a future train station;
- centre layout focuses on providing access to the train station, with buildings that focus on creating a 'main street' which links the existing village and the future train station;
- a 'main street' based retail and commercial environment, as opposed to an enclosed 'big box' mall, is the primary organising layout feature of the centre to reflect the character of the existing semi-rural village; and
- new roads and access ways will link with, and improve the existing road and access network.

Pimpama district centre spatial concept diagrams
Note: The diagrams above show graphically the desired design outcomes for the Pimpama district centre. They are conceptual in nature and are not intended to represent a finalised design solution.

(B) in Broadbeach principal centre:

- parts of Broadbeach are free from a building height designation to encourage innovative high rise towers that advance the Gold Coast’s iconic skyline. Appropriate height will be determined by design criteria and site context; and
improvements in connectivity between major entertainment, open space and retailing focal points, create safe, legible access corridors and movement systems with a focus on light rail stations.

(C) in the Burleigh Heads district centre:
- development enhances the human scale and beach village character and reinforces its traditional main street layout and laneway/arcade connections, vibrant and eclectic mix of uses;
- includes building heights up to 20 metres (4 storeys); and
- views to the foreshore area, headland and ridgeline are also maintained.

(D) in Mudgeeraba Village district centre:
- traditional rural village ‘old town’ character and low-rise built form, including heritage buildings is retained.

(E) in Surfers Paradise:
- the centre is free from a building height designation to encourage innovative high rise towers that advance the Gold Coast’s iconic skyline. Appropriate height will be determined by design criteria and site context; and
- improvements in connectivity between the beach and the river linking Chevron Island to the Gold Coast Cultural Precinct will improve access, amenity and lifestyle opportunities.

(e) Infrastructure capacity overall outcomes
   (i) Development demonstrates adequate available infrastructure capacity to support the development density, including water, sewer, stormwater, transport, social and community facilities, electricity and telecommunications.
   (ii) Development density does not adversely impact on the continued operation, viability and maintenance of existing infrastructure or compromise the future provision of planned infrastructure.

(fe) Lot design –
   (i) supports the flexible range of uses envisaged in the zone; and
   (ii) additional lot design outcome for the Pimpama district centre:
- lot design facilitates and enhances links with existing and future movement networks to ensure integration with the surrounding area.

(f) For development where the density exceeds that shown on the Residential density overlay map, housing is provided at a form, scale and intensity that is appropriate for the zone and each particular locality it is in where the following outcomes are satisfied:

Orderly and economically efficient settlement pattern
   (i) degree of public transport service within a 400 metre walking distance, being the most desirable distance for pedestrian access, and the ease and safety of pedestrian access to that service;
   (ii) proximity to major employment concentrations, centres, social and community infrastructure facilities and important amenity features, including the coast, recreational waterways and parkland;
   (iii) capacity of available infrastructure to support the development, including water, sewer, transport and social and community facilities;

Housing needs
   (iv) delivery of a generous mix of housing form, sizes and affordability outcomes that meet housing needs (including housing needs of the future) for the locality;

Design and amenity
(v) whether intended outcomes for building form/city form and desirable building height patterns are negatively impacted, including the likelihood of undesirable local development patterns to arise if the cumulative effects of the development are considered;

(vi) retention of important elements of neighbourhood character and amenity, and cultural heritage;

(vii) whether adjoining residential amenity is unreasonably impacted;

(viii) achievement of a high quality urban design through highly functional, accessible, attractive, memorable and sustainable buildings and public spaces;

**Environment**

(ix) the impacts of any site constraints, including natural hazard and environmental-based constraints; and

**Community Benefit**

(x) where the development:

(A) is appropriate having regard to overall outcome (e)(i) to (ix);

(B) meets all other overall outcomes for the zone; and

(C) incorporates community benefits in addition to those that could be lawfully conditioned to be provided (i.e., that are required to be provided by this City Plan or reasonably required in relation to the development or use of premises as a consequence of the development);

development bonuses are applied in accordance with the SC6.5 City Plan policy – Community benefit bonus elements.

Note: SC6.5 City Plan policy – Community benefit bonus elements provides guidance on what might constitute additional community benefits and the supporting material that may be required to demonstrate the degree of benefit.

Note: Development is not required to incorporate community benefits in order to demonstrate that housing has been provided at a form, scale and intensity that is appropriate having regard to overall outcome (e)(i) to (ix).

6.2.4.3 Specific benchmarks for assessment

**Part A** applies to accepted development subject to requirements.

**Part B** applies to assessable development.
## PART A – ACCEPTED DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS

### Table 6.2.4-1: Centre zone code – for accepted development subject to requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required outcomes</th>
<th>RO1: Building height and structure height does not exceed that shown on the <em>Building height overlay map</em>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>Building height does not exceed that shown on the <em>Building height overlay map</em>. AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structures do not exceed that shown on the <em>Building height overlay map</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>Density does not exceed one dwelling per 400m². OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Density does not exceed that shown on the <em>Residential density overlay map</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity</td>
<td>RO3: Commercial operating hours in district centres cease by midnight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use</td>
<td>RO4: Active uses are located on the ground floor to encourage pedestrian activity and interaction. Note: ‘Active uses’ may include uses such as shops and food and drink outlets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RO5: Residential uses are located above ground floor. Note: This RO does not apply:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Where the residential activity already exists; or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Where the proposed development does not include any residential activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RO6: Development, if involving building work fronting a street, provides awnings which are a minimum width of 1.5m over the pedestrian access/footpath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RO7: The design of the ground floor services and utilities allow for reconfiguration of commercial tenancies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: To facilitate the flexible re-use of the ground floor, Council recommends an internal floor to ceiling height of 4.5m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RO8: Development does not impact on existing waste storage and servicing points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Advisory note

Accepted development identified in the assessment tables as subject to requirements must comply with all the nominated requirements in this and other applicable codes.

## PART B – ASSESSABLE DEVELOPMENT BENCHMARKS

Editor’s note: for assessable development, this zone code consists only of the purpose and overall outcomes.
Figure 6.2.4-4: Hierarchy of mixed use centres