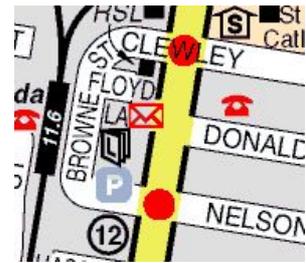


The area I have chosen for my observation exercise is the “Corinda Civic Centre”, located along Oxley road, bound by Nelson and Clewley Streets. The first time I visited it, I was surprised by the number of services’ available, such as the post office, hardware, bank, butchers, library, RSL club, phone shop, bakery, take-away, surgeries, chemists and a pet shop. I felt that this site appeared to have little or no need to redesign, or improve.



Location of “Corinda Civic Centre”



The East West Crossing

However, as Oxley Rd is the main thought fare that leads to the city, it is very hazardous to cross, and only truly safe way to cross is at the lights. Traffic moving along the site had been curbed in speed due to the distance between traffic lights and width of road. The crossing pictured left, is opposite the news agency; this felt unsafe to cross. The site is level, with no obstacle to the elderly nor disabled. Further

Parking at Browne St aided in access to shops. It’s proximity to the rail and bus makes this centre a handy place to stop, but not to stay. Toowong Station, on the other hand is similar in respect to this, but has been designed to cater for transport users and visitors alike. The only reason to be at the site is to utilise the services, therefore it is a commercial zone, not a social zone.



The community notice board



View of area looking South

Things like a community notice board and sculptures attempt to create a sense of community, but feel out of place. The reason they felt out of place was mainly they were newish, and haven’t had time to wear themselves into the community, like older parts such as the West End, Valley Mall and Park Road, which over time acquire worn paths, worn seats and steps.

This worn look of character is not manufactured, and is embedded from the users of the site. A similar style of community packaging has also been used in the West End, and is equally unsuccessful in its approach. The attempt to

standardise does not meet the needs of various communities. I can understand the Council wishing to “improve” on the existing community spirit, but in the case of Corinda, it appears not to be working as well as it should. To visualise the users of this space, I felt that they where middle to upper class, white, possibly retired or working in the city. I some how felt that if I saw a vagrant they would definitely stand out. So, with the concept of this group, I walked around to Park Road, and the West End, and to the Valley mall to compare services. The thing that was lacking in Corinda was a coffee district, and a area of social interaction. The closest thing to this was the Hotel, which extended it self onto the roadside. Even though there are park styled seating situated by the roadside, you do not feel relaxed when siting in them. This is due to the proximity of Oxley Road. The sand finished walkways try to distinct it self from the road; unfortunately the road still dominates. It feels like you cannot escape the traffic flow, and you are very conscious of this. Further negative factors are things like it’s proximity to Indooroopilly Shopping Centre (5 to 10 min’s away), the City it self (10 to 15min’s), Rocklea Markets (5 to 10min’s). These detract from having any reason to stop, for there are very few attractors there. The few young trees on site, give a immature feel to the area. This design meets with little or no



Seating and sculptures dot the site



“This is Corinda Civil Centre”

regard for local socialising, and appears to be only a area for commercial benefit. This design tries to be community minded, and fails to create a sense of place. It feels like there is pretence within the area. The reason why I say this is because of the clues to a small village are there; a town notice board, a post office, library, roadside seating and signs that let you know you have arrived. Within a small village, there is a sense of community, a sense of belonging. Within this small village, however, the seats are empty, the notice board is full of advertising, the signage stating that you have arrived to Corinda is obscure; only the post office and library are it’s saving grace. It gives me an impression that the local residents cannot really utilise this centre for any other function than a place to shop and to drive through. Further, the cost of upgrading facilities, the lack of real community aim such as a square or piazza and café make this just another row of shops and do not attract visitors or entertain residents.