

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS  
COUNCIL

# SMALL TOWNS STRATEGY



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Southern Grampians  
SHIRE COUNCIL

*Southern Grampians Shire Council acknowledges that our Shire is on the traditional lands of the Guditjmara, Djab Wurrung, Jardwadjali and Buandig people.*

*We recognise the important ongoing role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have in our community and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.*

Job Name	VR_STS SouthernGrampians	
Address	Various	
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Southern Grampians Shire is experiencing change in population structure, resulting from net overall changes to migration, generating new imperatives to critically reflect on how to best ensure the resilience and liveability of our regional communities.

Settlements surrounding an urban centre fulfil differing support roles in meeting the needs of the population of the centre and the greater regional hinterland. These roles can include residential, agricultural, specialist services (e.g. educational or medical), tourism, and so on. With significant changes to population and challenges due to climate change and post Covid-19 recovery, Southern Grampians Shire aims to ensure the ongoing sustainability and resilience of the hinterland of nine towns surrounding the regional centre of Hamilton.

Drawing on established and conducted research in the key areas of:

- Planning Policy
  - Policy context
- Economics
  - Housing supply and demand
  - Rural living analysis
  - Tourism opportunities
  - Population growth
- Environment and Landscapes
  - Considerations and constraints to growth
- Community Consultation
  - Desires
  - Issues
  - Current status of community assets

A hierarchy, classifying each of the nine study towns according to role, has been created to ensure the best use of resources by Southern Grampians Shire.

The report has been prepared to outline key drivers around a regional town hierarchy as well as stipulating specific growth opportunities and challenges faced by each of the nine towns. Specifically:

- Coleraine and Dunkeld fill the role of a ‘District Town’, defined as moderate to large towns with commercial centres. These settlements provide a variety of housing and a moderate employment base, with access to reticulated services.
- Cavendish, Penshurst and Tarrington all fill the role of “Lifestyle Rural Settlements”. These are defined as moderately sized towns with a commercial hub. These settlements provide some housing diversity, and often support specialist medical, retail or tourism services, but lack reticulated sewerage provision.
- Balmoral, Branxholme, Byaduk, and Glenthompson are all “Rural Settlements”, which comprise the smaller towns within the network of regional towns. They provide some housing, and limited commercial and community infrastructure and facilities. Residents are often dependent on nearby centres to meet needs. There is no reticulated sewer provided in these towns.

Future growth and development of all nine towns should consider environmental constraints but should also have due regard for economic and social climate of the individual towns, as well as the broader context of the Southern Grampians Shire. These constraints and opportunities for the broader region as well as for each town are spelt out in further detail in the body of the report.

From these, and building on consultation with both the broader community and specific focus groups, as well as the Southern Grampians Shire audit of community facilities, specific recommendations to facilitate the ongoing sustainability and resilience of each study town have been made. These recommendations cover planning policy and strategy, economic drivers and community service provision, together with open space and recreation suggestions, and directly mirror values and expectations residents have for the development of their communities.

This Small Towns Strategy is the first of its kind for Southern Grampians. The strategy outlines a comprehensive vision for guiding the Shire in managing its small towns’ future until 2041, stemming from the Southern Grampians 2041 initiative (SG2041). Focused on fulfilling a fundamental community aspiration, the strategy aims to sustain and enhance the Shire’s smaller settlements.

The role and function of a town, as outlined in the Strategy, may undergo changes in the future due to various factors such as the condition of physical infrastructure, serviceability, and development constraints like floods and bushfires etc. reflecting appropriate changes to planning policy and regulation. It is advisable to periodically conduct a thorough review of the Small Towns Strategy every 5-7 years to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in light of evolving circumstances.

## INTRODUCTION – SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

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The Southern Grampians Shire, located approximately 300km west of Melbourne, is experiencing significant changes with population and the challenges brought on by both climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. These forces are generating new imperatives to critically reflect on how to best ensure the resilience and liveability of our regional communities.

Hamilton is the largest settlement situated central to the municipality and surrounded by a network of nine key towns which radiate outward. It is the strategic direction and function of these nine towns that the Shire seeks to better understand to inform where allocated funding and infrastructure is needed most.

While it is the localised scale of these towns that is attractive to their residents, this brings challenges for service and infrastructure provision that must be addressed through strategic and creative thinking.

In addition, the Shire's population is ageing, thus, the Shire's future service and infrastructure planning must take into account the unique needs of its population, while also balancing the need to retain families and younger demographics.

Southern Grampians Shire needs a clear strategy that takes into account various external pressures to ensure long term liveable development.



Figure 1: Southern Grampians Shire

## WHY DO WE NEED A TOWNS STRATEGY?

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Over the last two decades, Council has conducted extensive strategic planning work to guide the future growth and character of the region responding to the variety in size, infrastructure provision, history and community needs of each of the local towns surrounding Hamilton, namely:

- Balmoral
- Byaduk
- Branxholme
- Cavendish
- Coleraine
- Dunkeld
- Glenthompson
- Peshurst
- Tarrington

Accordingly, the specific strategic direction for each town, outlining a vision, existing assets, challenges, and a future plan for service and infrastructure delivery needs to be reviewed and updated.

The Shire's towns have much to offer in Aboriginal and post-contact built heritage, local business, environmental values and small-town charm. However, in the fifteen years to 2016, many rural towns experienced slow population decline and aging populations, with net overall migration to larger regional centres. The five years between 2016 and 2021, according to Census data, reversed that trend for seven of the nine study towns, with the strongest population growth experienced in Dunkeld (+1.1% per annum), Peshurst (+0.5% per annum), Byaduk (+0.5% per annum) and Tarrington (+0.3% per annum).

The limitations in funding and resources available to Council means that creative approaches to service and infrastructure delivery are required. Strategic thinking is necessary to determine how to best balance investment across those towns with projected growth and those experiencing population decline, while ensuring communities have fair access to the facilities and services necessary for liveability.

To do this, it is important to understand how each community uses the facilities in their town, what they need and value, and how/where they access services not available locally.

This approach will ensure the individual towns are as self-contained as possible while also supporting the towns to function as a constellation—the vision for each town outlined in this strategy will enable the towns to complement and support one another to provide the services, infrastructure and opportunities necessary to ensure the wellbeing of the Shire's residents for years to come.



As such, this strategy will outline a definitive hierarchy of towns for which the Shire can direct their focus for funding, community infrastructure, tourism and housing investment.

## THE WORK WE ARE BUILDING ON

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Council has undertaken extensive community engagement and strategic planning work in previous years, including their Health and Wellbeing, Recreation and Leisure strategic work.. The sheer number of existing Strategic Plans and Urban Design Frameworks, that guide the desired built form, identity and economic role of the towns, are now in need of review to provide a concise strategy that accounts for this previous work and responds to new and developing needs, opportunities, and challenges.

A literature review was conducted (see Appendix 1), and some of the key themes understood from these plans include:

1. Supporting the growth of the individual townships and communities
2. Grow the regional economy.
3. Maintain, renew and support the growth of new infrastructure where needed.
4. Protect the natural environment.
5. Provide strong governance and leadership.

Specific recommendations relating to each town have also been re-tested with the community to understand their current relevance, with summaries included in the following town-specific chapters.

Key documents include:

**GENERAL**

- Regional Growth Plan
- Municipal Planning Strategy
- Planning Scheme Review Report 2018
- Grampians Tourism 2016-20 Strategic Plan
- Southern Grampians Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan
- Development Plan Overlay & Development Plans Audit Report
- Southern Grampians Council Plan 2021-2025
- Southern Grampians Health and Wellbeing Plans 2017-2021
- Southern Grampians Economic Development Strategy (2011-2021)
- Southern Grampians Retail Development Strategy (2011-2021)
- Southern Grampians Sustainability Strategy (2010-2020)
- Southern Grampians Open Space, Recreation and Leisure Strategic Plan (2019-2029)
- Small Towns Urban Design framework
- Community Vision Framework SG 2041
- Community Investment Plan 2022

- Strategic Planning Work Programme 2021
- Southern Grampians Shire Natural Assets Strategy
- Southern Grampians Shire Natural Assets Strategy

**BALMORAL**

- Balmoral Community Plan 2014-2020

**BRANXHOLME**

- Branxholme Community Plan 2014-2020

**CAVENDISH**

- Cavendish Community Plan 2014-2020
- Cavendish Structure Plan 2019 (not adopted)
- Cavendish Urban Design Framework

**COLERAINE**

- Coleraine Community Action Plan 2014-2020
- Coleraine Urban Design Framework 2003

**GLENTHOMPSON**

- Glenthompson Onsite Wastewater Inspection Program
- Glenthompson Community Plan

**PENSHURST**

- Penshurst Community Plan 2017-2020

**TARRINGTON**

- Tarrington Community Plan 2015-2021
- Tarrington Structure Plan 2014

**DUNKELD**

- Development Plan Recreation Road Dunkeld
- Dunkeld UDF 2002
- Dunkeld Concept Plan
- Dunkeld Community Plan 2019-2021
- Dunkeld Structure Plan - land supply and demand assessment 2011
- Dunkeld Structure plan 2014
- Dunkeld Structure Plan Urban Design Guidelines - Creekside
- Dunkeld Structure Plan Urban Design Guidelines - Town residential
- Dunkeld SP UDG Main Street
- Dunkeld SP UDG - Low density residential

## A SNAPSHOT TODAY

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- The population of Southern Grampians Shire experienced a period of decline from 2006 to 2016, mostly due to a reduction in population in the rural areas and small towns. The **municipal population increased** between 2017 and 2021, including growth in the rural areas for the first time in the past 20 years.
- Net overseas migration has made up the greatest share of positive population change in recent years. Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, Victoria's regional areas have experienced a period of **strong net internal migration**, driven primarily by formerly metropolitan residents.
- Residents of the rural areas of Southern Grampians are older on average than residents of Hamilton. The population of **older age cohorts (60-75) increased while children and younger adults decreased** between 2011 and 2021.
- Of the approximately 8,000 dwellings in the Shire in 2021, **39% of dwellings within the municipality were located outside Hamilton**, with the majority were located within 30 minutes drive.
- Approximately **three-quarters of dwellings in the Shire in 2021 were owner/occupied**, with rental properties accounting for 20% of the overall dwelling stock. Dunkeld is the only town where rentals comprised more than 20% of the dwelling stock in 2021.
- Recent research into housing for key workers found that **there is a significant shortage of housing available for key workers**, especially rental properties. Locations most acutely impacted are Hamilton and Dunkeld.
- The Southern Grampians **economy relies on the strength of the local agricultural sector**, along with a substantial population services role in Hamilton (health, education and retail) and Coleraine (health).
- **Unemployment in Southern Grampians has been very low** since mid-2015 and had consistently been at or below the regional Victorian average over the past 5 years.
- **Proximity to the Grampians National Park is a major driver of visitation and economic opportunity.** An evolving tourism location in Southern Grampians is the town of Dunkeld which is located less than 5km from the Grampians and hosts the nationally reputed Royal Mail Hotel.
- Between 2016 and 2021, local employment decreased in the mining, manufacturing, and retail sectors, however **agriculture, health care and construction employment increased**. Federal government employment projections for the broader South West Victoria Region are for the greatest employment growth to occur in the industries of education and training, health care, construction and retail.
- **The relationship between business, employment and housing is paramount in Southern Grampians** – businesses generally rely on attracting a substantial proportion of their staff from outside the region. Housing is critical to supporting business activity across the region.

# HIERARCHY



## HIERARCHICAL DEVELOPMENT

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Setting an agreed hierarchy of towns within the Southern Grampians is an important consideration in the ongoing planning of housing supply, key employment areas, regional community facilities and tourism support.

The hierarchy can evolve and change over time and for this reason a regular review of town priorities should be undertaken. This is one of the key considerations and outputs of the Small Town Strategy.

A settlement hierarchy has been prepared, tested, and developed in the context of identifying the existing and future role of towns and settlements to support preferred patterns of growth across Southern Grampians. The settlement hierarchy groups and categorises the towns according to size, regional and local policy context, economic drivers, zoning, and consultation response, as well as services and facilities available in each settlement. Refer to Figure 3 for a graphical representation of the factors comprising a hierarchical analysis. These are further outlined on the following pages.

Previously, the various roles of settlements across the municipality have been defined through:

- Regional Policy Context
- Local Policy Context

To bolster the existing policy setting, a detailed housing and economic analysis of Southern Grampians Shire was undertaken to provide much needed information on the economic roles of the towns within the regional context, and what their housing, employment, and by extension, community infrastructure needs are.

A detailed Rural Living Analysis together with an understanding of any environmental constraints has assisted in understanding the growth potential of each town.

Each of these elements now serve as an important indicator of a potential networked hierarchy of Southern Grampians Towns.

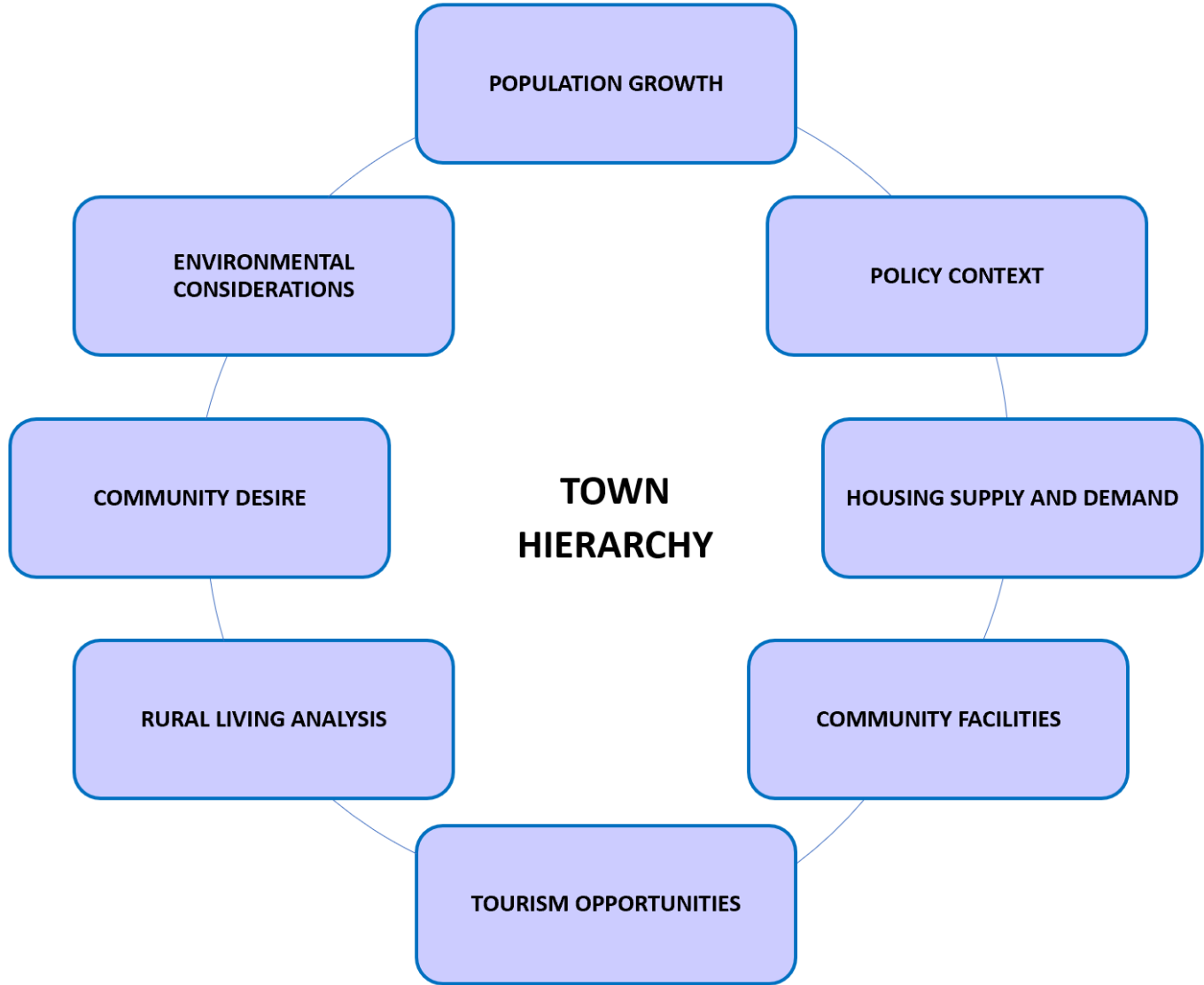


Figure 2: Hierarchy considerations

## REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

One of the key strategic documents that alludes to a town hierarchy is The Regional Growth Plan 2014 (RGP), which provides direction for the next 30 years for future strategic planning across the region. It notes the importance of developing a network approach to planning, development, infrastructure, transport and service provision. The plan also underscored the need to enhance liveability through improving health, education and standards of living. Although touted as a regional level strategic plan, only two of the nine key towns, Coleraine and Dunkeld, were addressed.

Both Coleraine and Dunkeld were identified as 'District Towns', performing important roles in the region. In 2014, Coleraine consisted of medical facilities that serviced many of the smaller towns, whilst Dunkeld predominantly functioned as a hub for tourism related activities.

Coleraine was identified as being able to accommodate 'sustainable change' due to its provision of medical facilities that would provide health services to surrounding small towns.

Dunkeld was identified as capable of supporting 'medium growth', playing a role as a niche tourism provider due to its established food and wine culture and proximity to the Grampians.

Dunkeld was also identified within a nominated 'Primary Growth Corridor' where high economic and population growth was supported through the diversification of the economy and investigating opportunities in industry sectors such as food and fibre, tourism, education, health and retail sectors.

The other key towns were not identified for growth in the RGP and specific reference to their relevance within a broader town network or hierarchy was limited. Such an approach reduces the ability to plan for broad municipal wide access to employment opportunities, facilities, housing and community services.

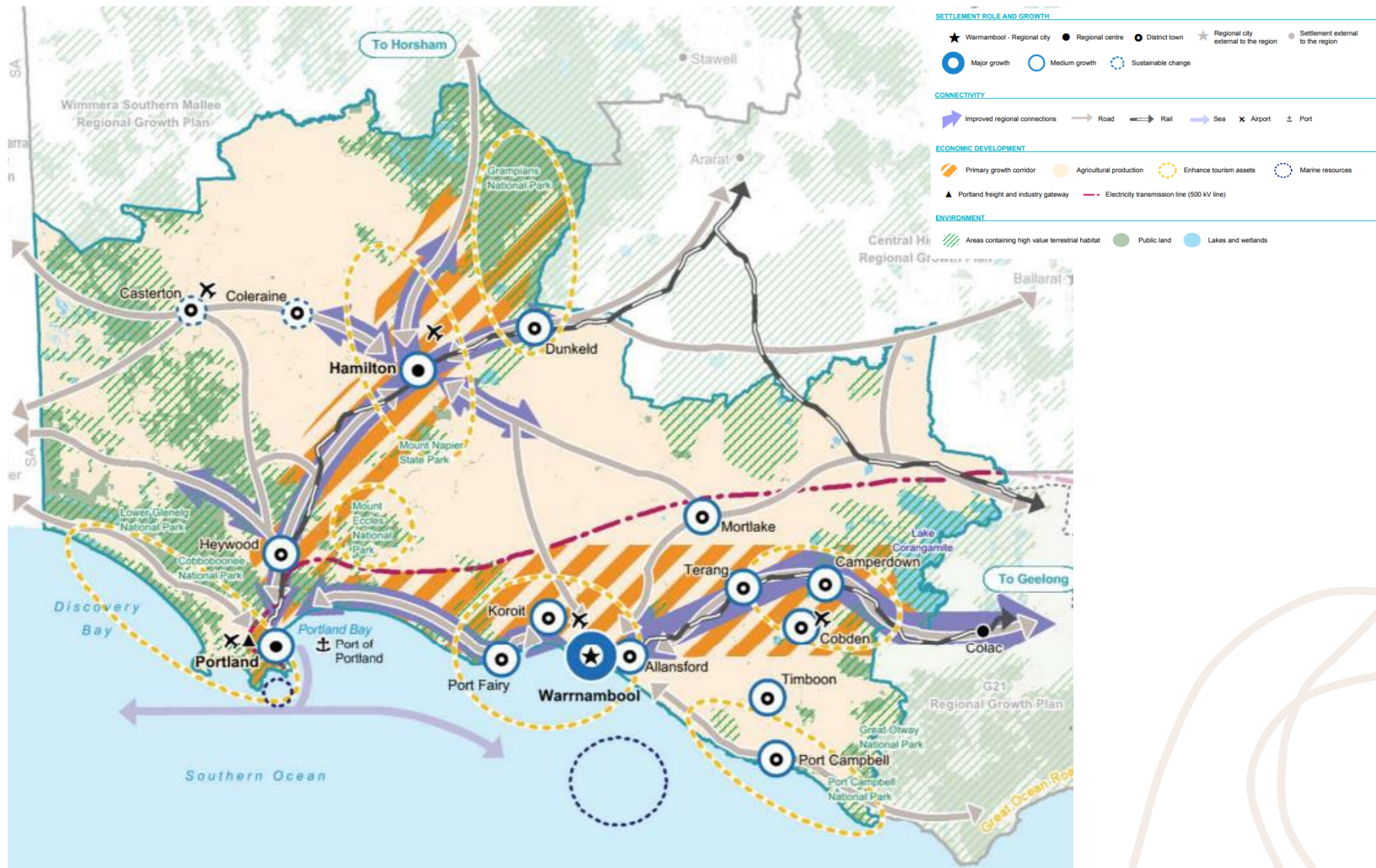


Figure 3: Regional Growth Plan (Source: DELWP)



## LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT ROLE

In regard to planning hierarchy, Clause 2.03 Strategic Directions of the Scheme also provides direction for managing growth within the municipality's towns.

Settlement	Role
Hamilton	Major Urban Centre
Coleraine	Rural service centre
Dunkeld	Rural service and tourism centre
Penshurst	Rural service centre
Branxholme	Small rural service settlement
Cavendish	Rural service centre
Tarrington	Rural service centre
Balmoral	Small rural service centre
Glenthompson	Small rural service settlement
Byaduk	Small service centre
Wannon	Small settlement

Source: Southern Grampians Planning Scheme.

To manage future growth, the clause identifies that across all towns Council will:

- Provide and enforce clear settlement boundaries.
- Plan for and support development that readily accommodates the future extension of sewerage services.
- Plan for and improve services and facilities to meet the needs of local communities.
- Ensure development does not negatively affect environmental values.
- Retain the non-urban break between Hamilton and Tarrington for agricultural uses.
- Support development that contributes to the economic viability and liveability of the Shire's smaller towns, including small-scale light and service industries.
- Facilitate a range of housing types in serviced residential locations, particularly infill development.
- Plan for an ageing population by supporting aged care facilities.
- Attract new residents by encouraging a broad range of housing and lifestyle options.

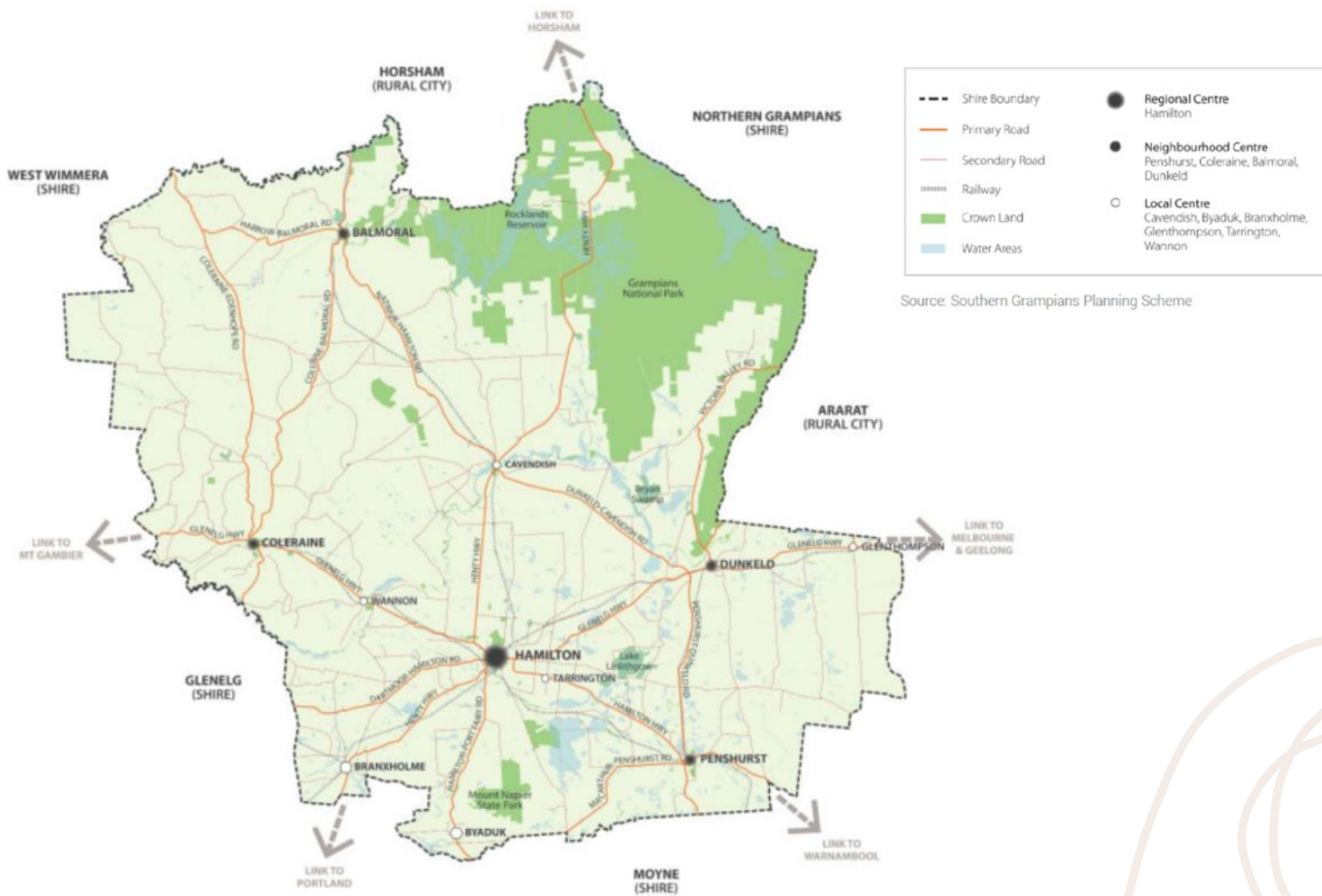


Figure 4: Clause 2.03 Strategic Directions (Source: Planning Scheme)

## LOCAL ECONOMIC DRIVERS AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

The Southern Grampians economy relies on the strength of the local agricultural sector, along with a substantial population services role in Hamilton (health, education and retail) and Coleraine (health). In rural areas and small towns, economic drivers primarily relate to agribusiness, health, tourism and wind farms as outlined within the latest Economic Development Strategy (2011-2021).

The Great South Coast Regional Growth Plan further identified economic directions for the region as:

- Livestock and cropping production, research and development.
- Grampians tourism.
- Health and education.
- Mineral sands processing.
- Manufacturing and logistics.
- Hamilton as a gateway for exports from the north.

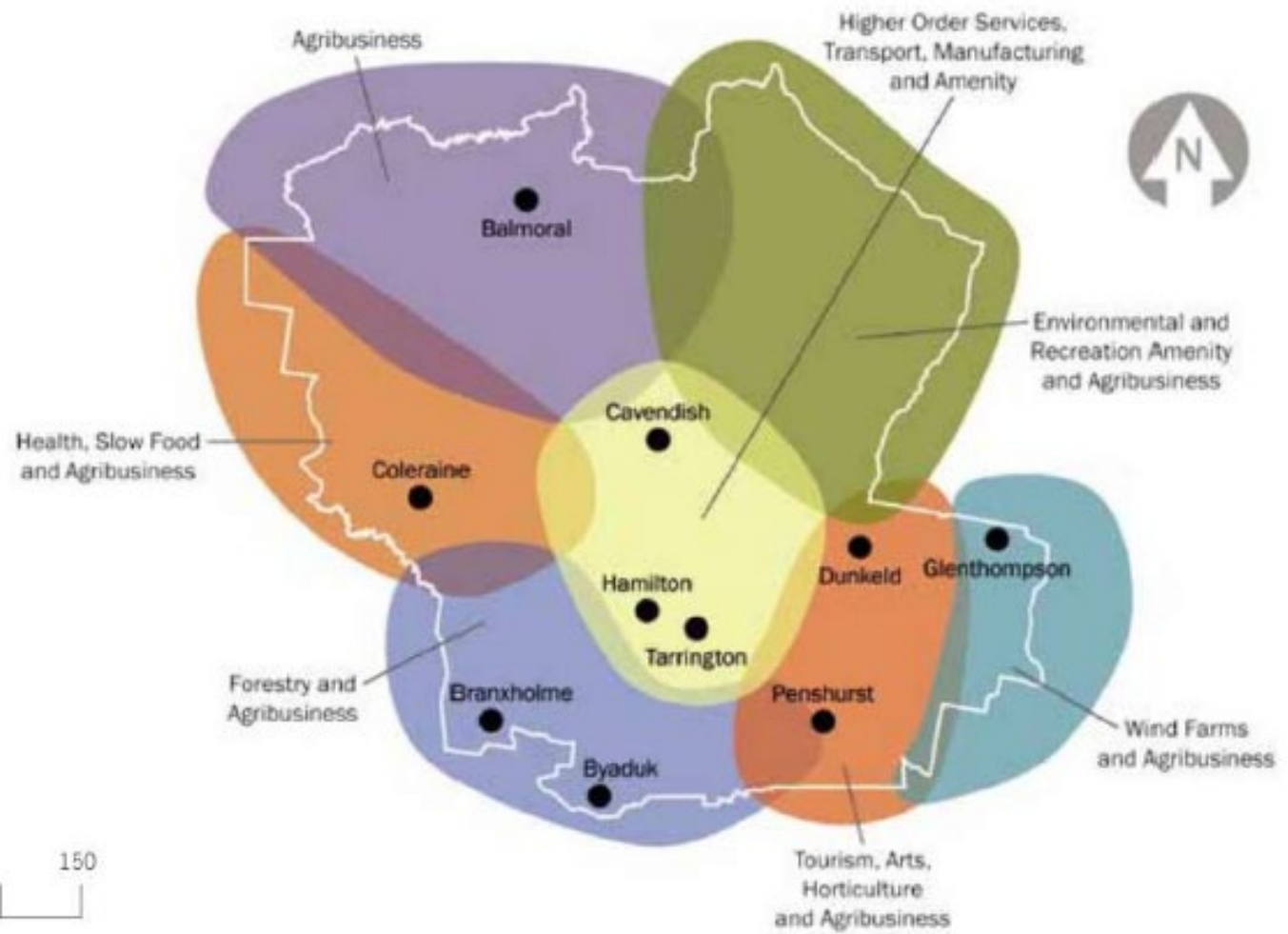


Figure 5: Southern Grampians Shire Economic Development Strategy

## POPULATION, HOUSING AND TOWN GROWTH

Historical development activity indicates that approximately 30% of all new dwelling activity occurs outside Hamilton. Using this as a guide, the Strategy should plan for at least 12 - 15 new dwellings per annum, or 240 - 300 dwellings over the next 20 years in study towns. It is likely that there is a level of unmet demand in certain towns, warranting consideration of a contingency. Adopting a contingency of 20%, the dwelling requirement would increase to up to 360 dwellings across the towns.

The analysis also indicates that not all towns are experiencing housing demand. The strategy therefore seeks to prioritise locations and housing types with demonstrable demand in District Towns and Lifestyle Rural Settlements as per the following list:

### Dunkeld

- Existing housing supports tourism workers and visitor demand.
- Strong price growth indicates unmet demand for lifestyle properties.
- Demand for township housing could be accommodated through intensification within the existing township zone however further work is needed to ensure infrastructure has the capacity to support such development.
- An ongoing supply of lifestyle lot opportunities (LDRZ) should be planned, including additional land supply if needed based on current land supply levels.

### Coleraine

- Health services provided which are important for ageing population.
- Relatively affordable housing
- Existing infrastructure and other services.
- Opportunity to encourage the intensification of existing GRZ land however further work is required to determine the capacity of infrastructure within the town. Smaller lots / dwellings could be encouraged to support the aging population.

### Tarrington/ Peshurst/Cavendish

- Depending on the availability of infrastructure and the relative suitability of the towns to accommodate growth, these towns could accommodate demand for housing proximate to Hamilton, primarily those seeking lifestyle lots within reasonable commuting distance to employment and services in Hamilton.
- It is recommended that these towns are further investigated as potential lifestyle locations (LDRZ).
- It is also noted that an Adaptive Wastewater Project is currently being trialled by Council, Wannon Water and DTP in Peshurst which could ultimately increase the development potential of existing land in the TZ if fully implemented.

## RURAL LIVING ANALYSIS

There are a number of planning zones applied to residential areas within the study towns of the municipality which assist in determining the extent of growth.

The most common planning zone which applies to the study towns is the Township Zone (TZ), while some towns located along the Glenelg Highway corridor have land zoned as Low Density Residential (LDRZ) and/or Rural Living (RLZ). Coleraine is the only town in the nine studied that has land zoned as General Residential (GRZ).

Consultation with the community indicated that due to a lack of suitable housing available in urban areas, some new housing development is transferring to rural residential areas, in addition to the small proportion of the market already seeking rural lifestyle properties.

Together with the significant shortage of housing available for key workers, including a lack of rental properties (as of 2022), this movement is placing further demand on an already stretched housing market. This limits employment attraction and retention, and subsequently economic output across all sectors of the economy.

In terms of housing supply, real estate agents surveyed noted that there is a lack of the following housing types relative to demand:

- Residential property of all types in the nine study towns.
- Larger lifestyle lots.
- Vacant lots within towns.

Historical development activity indicated that approximately 30% of all new dwelling activity occurs outside Hamilton.

Using this figure as a guide, at least 12-15 new dwellings per year should be planned for across the nine towns.

Land in the LDRZ and RLZ at the fringes of Hamilton has accommodated 25% of municipal dwelling growth in recent years. Forecasting based on 20% of housing growth occurring in this region, Southern Grampians Shire should be prepared to support on average 8-10 additional dwellings in this area per year, a total of 160 – 200 additional dwellings over a 20 year period.

## ECONOMIC DRIVERS SUMMARY

The following key implications for the Small Towns Strategy regarding housing provision and township growth are noted below.

### 1. Focusing areas of demand and growth:

Low overall population growth warrants a strategic approach to accommodating housing demand in selected locations that are well serviced by infrastructure and where stable medium-term demand is evident. Not all towns should be planned to perform a growth role, especially given the effects of the COVID pandemic are not certain to endure in the medium-long term.

**Locations best suited to accommodate township demand are Dunkeld, Peshurst and Coleraine.**

### 2. Facilitating a breadth of housing products:

The demand analysis indicates that lifestyle properties are an important component of the housing stock in Hamilton and surrounds. An adequate supply of new opportunities for this housing type should be provided, alongside other housing types required to respond to demand and demographic changes, such as rental properties for key workers and suitable housing for an ageing population.

**Locations that are likely best suited to accommodate lifestyle demand include Tarrington, Dunkeld and Cavendish.**

### 3. Ensuring residential land supply and housing availability is not a barrier to economic development and population attraction and retention:

Maintaining and growing the local economy relies on labour availability and attraction, which in turn relies on suitable housing being available near employment. The strategy should ensure that urban areas such as Hamilton (especially health, education and industrial sectors) and Dunkeld (tourism, hospitality) and nearby towns have suitable housing available to accommodate existing worker demand as well as capacity to accommodate growth expected as part of recent and expected investment in the Shire. in the Shire.

**Locations best suited to house workers associated with tourism and health include Cavendish, Coleraine and Dunkeld.**

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Key environmental considerations which provide opportunities and/or constraints to growth of each of the nine towns are listed below:

### Bushfire

A Bushfire Management Overlay applies to land in Victoria that may be at risk from bushfire. The estimated severity of potential bushfires will dictate the use of land, and level of protection required against bushfire attack. This can limit expansion and development of the towns. The priority in the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) is the protection of human life and assets with regards to bushfire risk.

Construction of buildings on land subject to this overlay requires the provision of an amount of defendable space around them through the clearing of vegetation, in order to limit the exposure of the building and potential occupants.

### Floodways and Land Subject to Inundation

Waterways run through many of the nine study towns, and these provide important cultural and open space touchpoints for members of the communities. However, living alongside waterways brings an acceptance of flooding and inundation risk to the community, and these have been mapped out in greater detail in the relevant town summaries. In planning new development and growth strategies for the towns, an acknowledgement of the limitation that flood and inundation mapping brings to the design and construction of new facilities and buildings is another important constraint.

### Significant Landscape

The Significant Landscape Overlay in the VPP seeks to identify significant landscapes, and conserve and enhance their character. Within Southern Grampians Shire, these overlays apply to Coleraine (“Coleraine Landscape Area” and “Koroite Homestead (Original Site), Buvelot Tree and Waterpool”), the “Mount Rouse and Crater Reserve” located south of Penshurst, and “Harmans Valley”, which runs to the north-west of Byaduk.

These landscapes present constraints to growth and development but offer potential for tourism opportunities if managed and conserved appropriately.

### Biodiversity

The expansion of urban areas threatens the biodiversity of local species, including plants, animals, and microbiota, and this effect can be particularly pronounced on already endangered or threatened species. A desktop assessment of rare and threatened flora and fauna was conducted during the initial phases of strategy development, and this information for each of the nine study towns fed into assessment of the environmental constraints and their relation to each town’s role in the network hierarchy of towns surrounding Hamilton.



## COMMUNITY FACILITY IMPLICATIONS

Town hierarchy is also influenced by the location of regional, district and local community facilities.

To date, analysis of current infrastructure provision and gaps in supply of community infrastructure have been completed. The major strategic findings from this report are that utilisation data for community facilities is lacking, as is data around the fitness for purpose of community facilities provided. There will be future need for additional kindergarten facilities in the Shire with the increase in Victorian State Government 4-year-old kindergarten funded hours from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week.

Detailed analysis of each township's community facilities has been included in the relevant town summaries.

## COMMUNITY DESIRE

Through the use of intercept surveys, respondents spoke of the location of towns around a centralised Hamilton hub, reflecting the importance of the inter-relationship of the nine towns. Most towns therefore had a strong relationship with Hamilton, its greater size and offering for many of their weekly service needs. Those residents of towns closer to other larger regional centres such as Warrnambool to the south and Mount Gambier to the west also relied on them for larger regional shopping exercises.

Most travel between the towns occurs as a result of residents needing to meet their needs relating to community and social infrastructure (high interrelationship around sporting codes such as netball and football), and retail activities in particular. This includes, travelling for cafes, restaurants and pubs, retail and commercial activities as well as for medical reasons.

Although this figure suggests that many residents would benefit from an increase in services locally, the interrelationship could also be viewed as a positive synergy between the towns, where their diverse and different offering makes for a dynamic rather than static network of towns.

Noting that towns fulfil varying roles within the regional context of the Southern Grampians Shire, the extent to which the nine towns inter-relate will help Council gain clarity on where to direct funding.

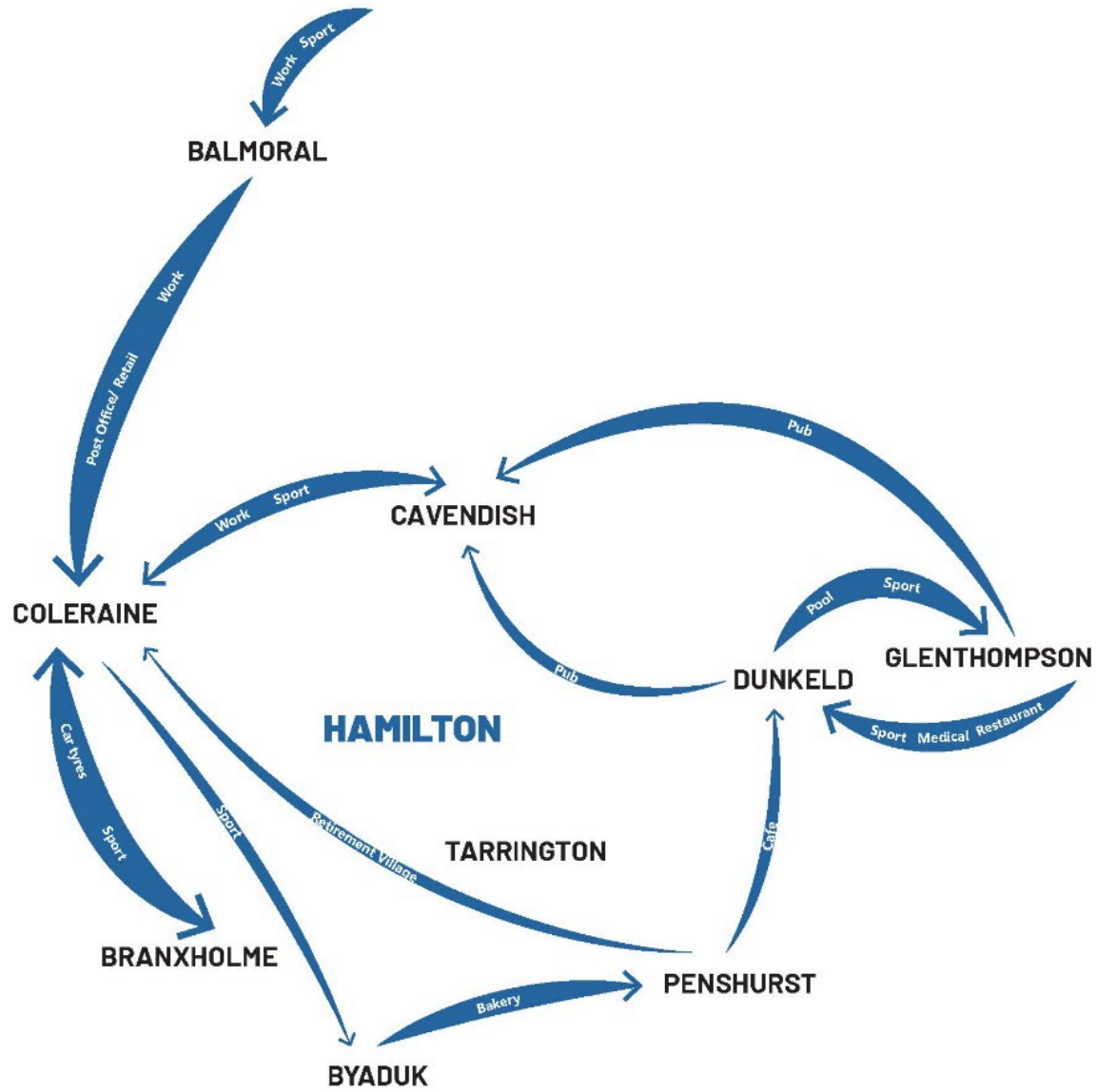


Figure 6: Inter-relationship between towns in Southern Grampians Shire, as drawn from community consultation.

## SUMMARY

The township hierarchy defines towns as one of the following:

- District Town
- Lifestyle Rural Settlement
- Rural Settlement

An analysis of the current role each town plays within the hierarchy is also presented in the table, together with a discussion of future constraints and opportunities for further development of each tier of settlement.

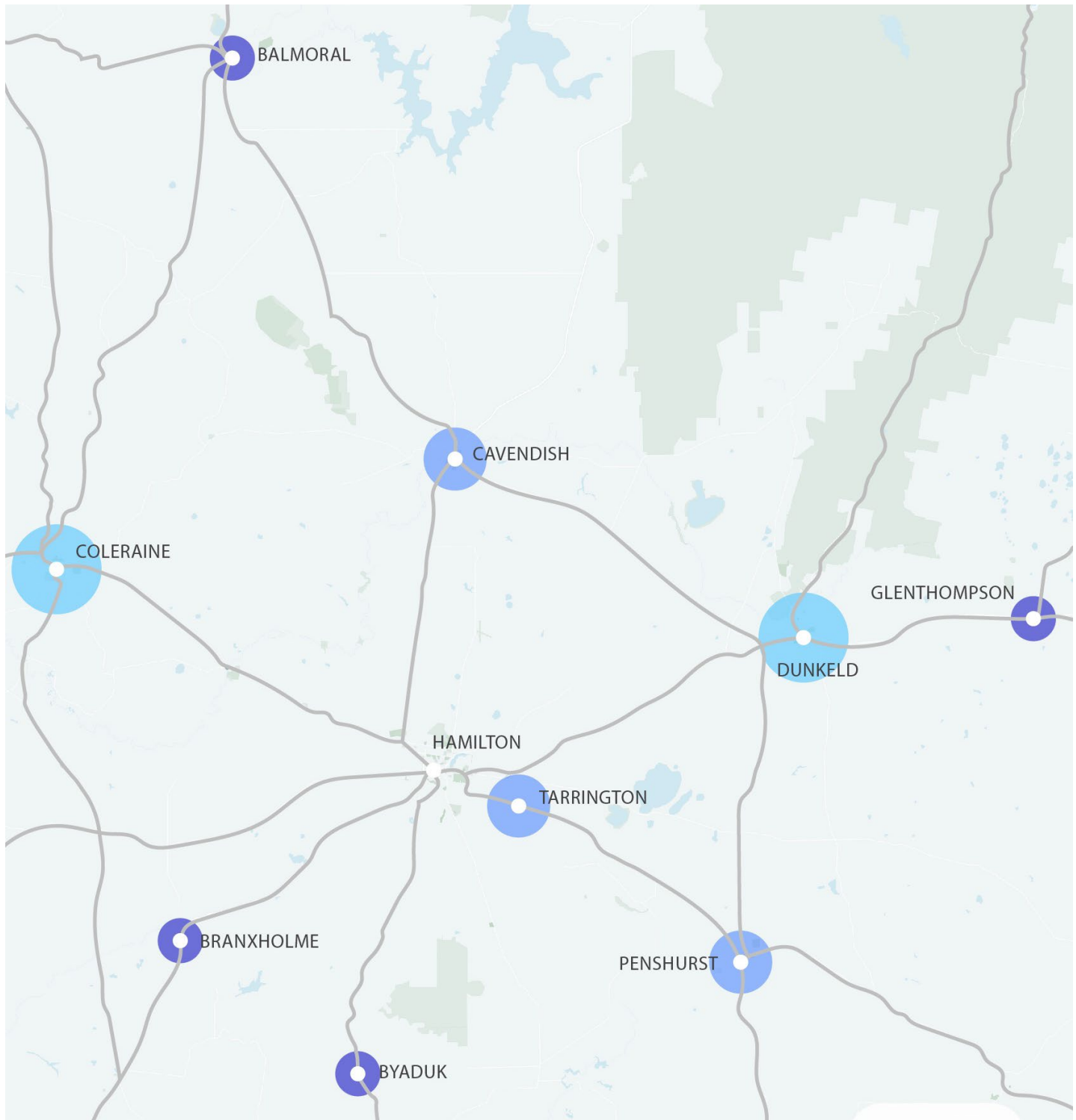
Moreover, the hierarchy also emphasises each town's role in the hierarchy based on the following key considerations, as detailed previously:

- Existing population size and recent growth.
- Economic roles(s) in the local economy.
- Capacity to accommodate demonstrable demand for both housing and economic growth.
- The shared town vision for the growth and evolution of the town over the next 5-10 years
- Existing physical attributes of the town and its role within the broader hierarchy within the municipality
- The existence of retail services and community infrastructure as an indicator of the relative attractiveness to new residents;
- The availability of reticulated sewer as an indicator of the capacity to accommodate additional urban growth;
- The level of recent development activity and property price movements as an indicator of local level housing demand; and
- The scale, type and capacity of residential land supply in the town.

**Table 1: Township hierarchy for Southern Grampians rural townships.**

CATEGORY	CURRENT ROLE	FUTURE ROLE
<p><b>DISTRICT TOWN</b></p> <p>Dunkeld Coleraine</p>	<p>District Towns are defined as moderate to large towns with commercial centres. These settlements provide a variety of housing and a moderate employment base, with access to reticulated sewage and services.</p> <p>District Towns support the services and facilities provided by the Regional Centre (in this case, Hamilton), although residents may travel to Lifestyle centres for provision of some services.</p>	<p>Future growth - Population growth and residential development is supported, subject to consideration of environmental risk constraints (e.g. bushfire, flooding) and availability of servicing.</p> <p>Vision for Community Infrastructure - Growth in District Towns will be supported by the provision of required development and community infrastructure.</p> <p>Zoning/residential development – Demand for housing will be accommodated through infill development in established areas and within areas identified for future residential use in adopted or future Structure Plans.</p>
<p><b>LIFESTYLE RURAL SETTLEMENT</b></p> <p>Cavendish, Peshurst, Tarrington</p>	<p>Lifestyle Rural Settlements are defined as moderately sized towns with a commercial hub. These settlements provide some housing diversity, and often support specialist retail or tourism services, but lack reticulated sewerage provision.</p> <p>Lifestyle Rural Settlements support the services and facilities available at Regional Centres and District Towns.</p>	<p>Future growth – Population growth and residential development is supported, subject to consideration of environmental risk constraints (e.g. bushfire, flooding) and availability of servicing and infrastructure provision.</p> <p>Vision for Community Infrastructure – Growth in Lifestyle Rural Settlements will be supported through the maintenance of existing community facilities and infrastructure. Additionally, the development</p>

		<p>of community facilities and infrastructure will be dictated by the needs of the community.</p> <p>Zoning/residential development – Opportunities to provide housing development through infill housing and potential rezoning of land should be investigated on a township basis to support sustainable and considered growth given existing constraints such as infrastructure provision.</p>
<p><b>RURAL SETTLEMENT</b></p> <p>Balmoral, Branxholme, Byaduk, Glenthompson</p>	<p>Rural Settlements comprise the smaller towns within the network of regional towns. They provide some housing, and limited commercial and community infrastructure and facilities. Residents are often dependent on nearby centres to meet needs. There is no reticulated sewerage provided in these towns.</p>	<p>Future growth – Environmental risks such as bushfire and flooding significantly impact growth and development of the towns as well as the availability of servicing and infrastructure provision.</p> <p>Vision for Community Infrastructure – Current community facilities and infrastructure will be maintained, but development of new facilities should be rationalised and have a clear need demonstrated before commencing works.</p> <p>Zoning/residential development – Smaller Rural Settlements generally lack capacity to accommodate further intensive residential development through environmental or planning constraints.</p>



**Role in Hierarchy**

- District Town
- Lifestyle Rural Settlement
- Rural Settlement

# TOWN PRIORITIES

## TOWN PRIORITIES

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An assessment of the vision, existing attributes, community needs and actions for each of the key local towns has been undertaken and is outlined in this report. This assessment considers:

- The shared town vision for the growth and evolution of the town over the next 5-10 years
- Existing physical attributes of the town and its role within the broader hierarchy within the municipality
- The existence of retail services and community infrastructure as an indicator of the relative attractiveness to new residents.
- The availability of reticulated sewerage as an indicator of the capacity to accommodate additional growth;
- The level of recent development activity and property price movements as an indicator of local level housing demand; and
- The scale, type and capacity of residential land supply in the town.

All relevant Structure Plans and existing UDF's were reviewed, and key actions tested to confirm delivery and if found to be outstanding, ensure ongoing relevance and likelihood for implementation.






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# BALMORAL

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## Town Summary

Balmoral is a small rural service centre situated on the banks of the Glenelg River. The town consists of a small street grid surrounded by rural countryside and river red gums. It is 79 km south-west of Horsham, 65 km north of Hamilton and 328 km north-west of Melbourne. Balmoral is a farming community. Distance to Hamilton means the town needs some self-containment on local infrastructure. As of the 2021 census, Balmoral has a population of 162, which is a slight decline (loss of 20 residents) since 2011.

It came into existence as a suitable place to ford the Glenelg River, and today is known for its proximity to the Rocklands Reservoir, built in 1953, which is excellent for fishing, swimming and camping. There are many vacant lots, which gives the town the impression of being fragmented. Balmoral is located at the junction of three highways and has the opportunity to increase its appeal to transient visitors by increasing the retail and hospitality offering and visual appeal of the town. Balmoral has significantly high risk of bushfire due to its proximity to the Grampians National Park and Black Range State Park.

## Vision

The Balmoral and District Community Plan outlines a clear vision for its future: Balmoral should be a resilient, diverse and thriving town with a strong sense of community that is also a safe and attractive place to live. It should be desirable for tourists and have strong supporting infrastructure with quality services and facilities that service its resident and tourist population and that services a range of existing industries and encourage new commercial activities. Balmoral should also advocate for sustainable water levels in Rocklands Reservoir for recreation and tourism.

## Hierarchy Role

Classed as “Rural Settlement”. The overall role of Balmoral within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to low provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Low demand for housing and low supply of residential land.
- Relative isolation from key services and jobs, may indicate low suitability for rural living lifestyle.
- Indicates a consolidation of the towns existing features, allowing for some carefully planned growth in tourist and residential accommodation based on the individual town.

## Existing Attributes

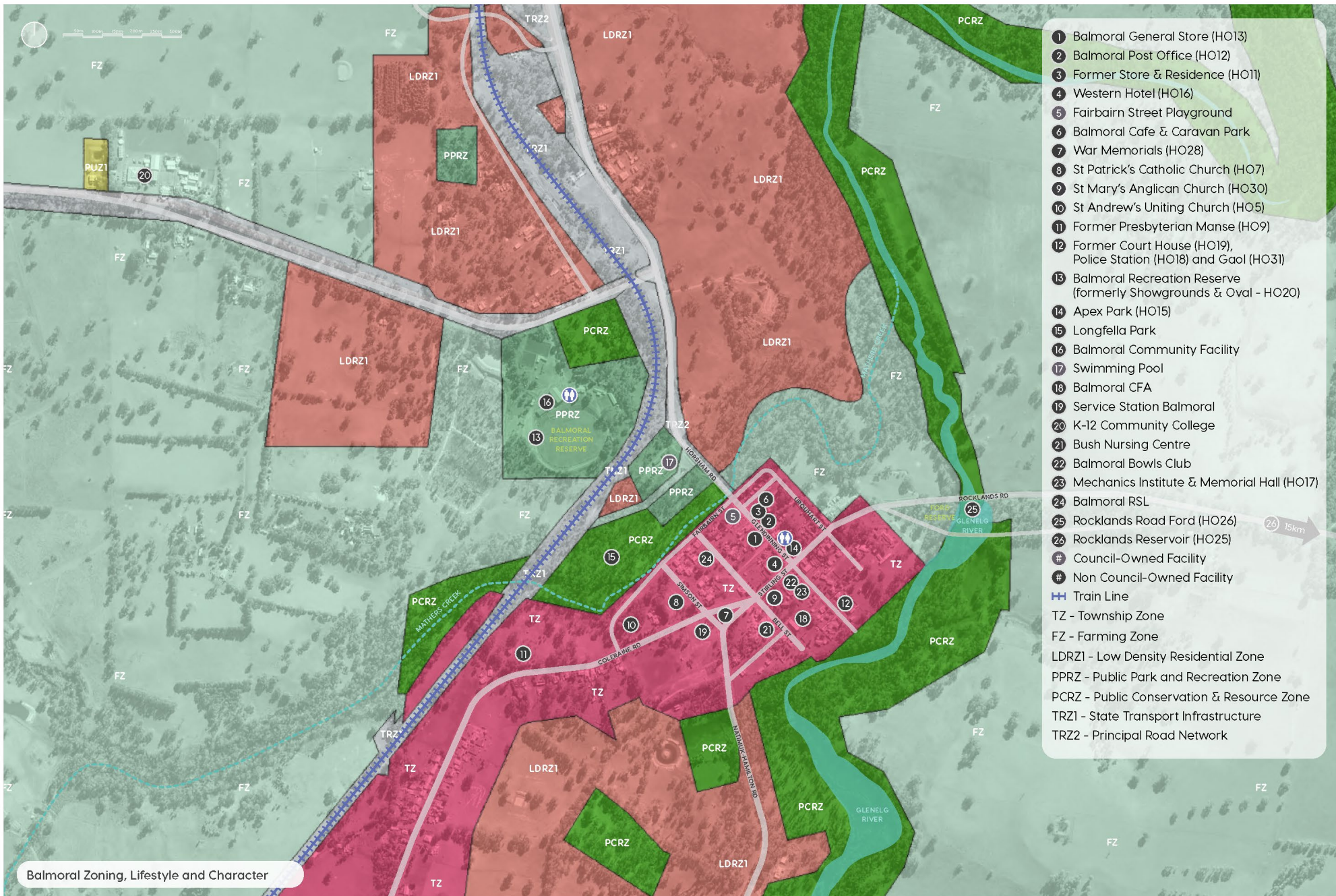
- The town has a district retail role, providing rural supplies as well as convenience retail. Well serviced with community infrastructure including a kindergarten, primary school, secondary school and medical centre, however compared with other study towns is relatively remote from Hamilton and other regional centres.
- Balmoral proved an important service role to the surrounding areas given relative remoteness to services in the northern parts of the Shire.
- Proximity to Grampians National Park and a substantial agricultural area underpins the importance of the town's housing, community infrastructure and retail in supporting ongoing economic activity and workers in the northern part of the Shire.
- Broader area has experienced population decline over the past 10 years. While some study towns have experienced a return to population growth in the past 4 years, Balmoral and surrounds has continued to experience slow population loss. No new dwellings have been approved for construction in the town over the past 8 years.
- No reticulated sewerage provision in the township.

Other notable background information includes:

- The small but historic town centre, located on Glendinning Street, has a mix of convenience retailing, rural supplies and civic infrastructure. The retail offer includes a small unbranded supermarket, clothes, toys, second hand goods and cafe. The Western Hotel is the primary hospitality offering in town, which also offers limited budget accommodation and a bottle shop. There is no pharmacist or separate butcher or baker. Activity floorspace in the centre amounts to around 2,600m<sup>2</sup> of which around 800m<sup>2</sup> is in retailing.
- Rocklands Reservoir has a big influence on the activity of the town – up to 5000 people have been known to camp there over Easter. As the closest service town to the Reservoir, there is the opportunity to increase the service offering to tourists interested in fishing and camping.
- The Bush Nursing Centre is struggling with financial viability, but it is an important asset to protect.
- The Balmoral Recreation Reserve and Community Complex has recently been upgraded with a fit-for-purpose building. The complex received substantial funding from the Federal and State Governments, with Council and donors from the community contributing to reach a total project goal of over \$1.4m. The Recreation Reserve is located about 1km from the town centre.
- Local Balmoral artists founded Chameleon Arts Collective Incorporated in 2003 as a not-for-profit organisation. The group present arts events, social gatherings and exhibitions that respond to the interests and needs of all age groups, cultures and demographics.
- Previous community consultation has revealed a commitment to sustainability practices: climate change adaptation and mitigation across agriculture, waste management and individual household practices.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Balmoral Bowling Club	Balmoral	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community meeting space
Balmoral Golf Club – Clubhouse	Balmoral	Other	Private	Community meeting space
Balmoral Mechanics Institute - Memorial Hall	Balmoral	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community meeting space
Balmoral Recreation Reserve - Community Complex	Balmoral	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community meeting space
Balmoral Recreation Reserve - Tennis pavilion	Balmoral	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community meeting space
Balmoral RSL	Balmoral	Council	Council; License and MOU	Community meeting space
Balmoral Pool	Balmoral	DELWP	Council	1 outdoor pool (25m)
Balmoral & District Recreation Reserve	Balmoral	Crown	Committee of Management	1 x Cricket, 1 x Football, 1 x Netball, 6 x Tennis
Balmoral Bowling Club	Balmoral	Crown	Committee of Management	1 x Lawn bowls
Fairbairn / Glendinning Street Playground	Balmoral	Council	Council	District (township)
Balmoral and District Kindergarten	Balmoral	Crown	Balmoral K-12 Community College	Sessional



## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Infrastructure and services to support wellbeing of youth and children are lacking.
- The Bush Nursing Centre needs to ensure consistent funding to continue to provide essential services to Balmoral and surrounding towns.
- There are three Halls in Balmoral of varying quality, and levels of utilisation are unclear.
- Emergency services—SES, CFA and Ambulance—are in need of upgrades.

#### Lifestyle and character

- Some heritage buildings in the town are not adequately maintained.
- There are many empty lots within town, leading to a fragmented environment.
- Visitor accommodation and temporary housing is either lacking or sub-standard. The Caravan Park is in need of upgrades.
- There are few local activation initiatives, and limited funding available.

#### Access, Connection and Transport

- Connection roads and signage should be upgraded to improve safety and connections to nearby Rocklands Reservoir.
- There is a lack of wayfinding and interpretation signage around the Glenelg River.
- The main street footpaths lack amenity, and few other streets in town have paved paths.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- There is a limited reticulated water and wastewater network..

#### Natural Values and Open Space

- Properties without reticulated water provision in Balmoral do not have adequate bushfire protection.
- Bushfire management remains a significant issue for much of Balmoral, indicating that the northern and south western portions are the only space suitable for future development.
- However, the northern site free from bushfire concerns contains native vegetation that would require independent assessments and permit applications for removal.



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Investigate financial viability of a more resilient business model for the Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre.
- Investigate re-purposing underutilised halls to other purposes, with an emphasis on supporting the wellbeing of youth and children.
- Support CFA investigations into delivery of fire station in town.

### Lifestyle and character

- Support the retail core of the Town in Glendinning Street in order to strengthen self-containment of the town and leverage tourism opportunities generated by Rocklands Reservoir.
- Develop a master plan for the “Balmoral Square” mural/car park area. This would strengthen the core of the town by providing a place for businesses to anchor events and activations, as well as increasing the desirability as a visitor destination.
- Make better use of the Glenelg River and deliver improvements to Red Gum Trail, including wayfinding signage and interpretation, to increase use amongst both locals and visitors.
- Strengthen the heritage character of the town and celebrate Aboriginal history by maintaining and restoring heritage façades in town centre and offering interpretive signage and information at important sites.
- Encourage the owners to upgrade Caravan Park to provide more visitor accommodation and temporary housing for both tourists and seasonal workers.
- Partner with Chameleon Arts Collective to present arts events, social gatherings and exhibitions that respond to the interests and needs of all age groups, cultures and demographics.

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Advocate to Department of Transport for broad and ongoing road renewal.
- Advocate for upgrades to connection roads and signage to better connect to Rocklands Reservoir.
- Identify streets where new pedestrian paths can be delivered.
- Increase safety around crossing point in front of the Community College.
- Deliver improved wayfinding and interpretation signage around Glenelg River.
- Deliver improved pedestrian and cycling paths to the Community College and Balmoral Recreation Reserve.





- 1 Balmoral General Store (HO13)
- 2 Balmoral Post Office (HO12)
- 3 Former Store & Residence (HO11)
- 4 Western Hotel (HO16)
- 5 Fairbairn Street Playground
- 6 Balmoral Cafe & Caravan Park
- 7 War Memorials (HO28)
- 8 St Patrick's Catholic Church (HO7)
- 9 St Mary's Anglican Church (HO30)
- 10 St Andrew's Uniting Church (HO5)
- 11 Former Presbyterian Manse (HO9)
- 12 Former Court House (HO19), Police Station (HO18) and Gaol (HO31)
- 13 Balmoral Recreation Reserve (formerly Showgrounds & Oval - HO20)
- 14 Apex Park (HO15)
- 15 Longfella Park
- 16 Balmoral Community Facility
- 17 Swimming Pool
- 18 Balmoral CFA
- 19 Service Station Balmoral
- 20 K-12 Community College
- 21 Bush Nursing Centre
- 22 Balmoral Bowls Club
- 23 Mechanics Institute & Memorial Hall (HO17)
- 24 Balmoral RSL
- 25 Rocklands Road Ford (HO26)
- 26 Rocklands Reservoir (HO25)
- # Council-Owned Facility
- # Non Council-Owned Facility
- PTV Regional Bus Route
- School Bus Route
- Train Line

Balmoral Access, Connection and Transport

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Investigate small town domestic waste-water management solutions in consultation with Wannon Water and local communities for Balmoral.
- Provide community water tanks/ overhead fill supply to get water supply faster in areas with non-reticulated water supply.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Implement a reviewed VPO for the protection of the River Red Gums, as these trees are a feature of the town.

## Housing Response

- Land in Balmoral is zoned as LDRZ1 and TZ, with the estimated capacity to accommodate 16 rural living lots (10 new, 6 infill).
- The lack of proximity to employment and services in Hamilton and Coleraine is likely to limit the attractiveness of Balmoral as a rural living location in the medium term.
- Absence of sewer infrastructure and presence of BMO / bushfire risk limits the potential for existing land to accommodate dwelling growth through subdivision.

## What the community wants

Residents found Lifestyle and Character, Environmental Values and Community infrastructure as the most important themes for their town. A number of improvements were also seen as necessary including:

- Emergency facilities.
- Cleaning of the creek.
- Adding an additional café.
- Public realm upgrades, including lighting and security.
- Improvements to community infrastructure and facilities as well as general servicing such as becoming a RV friendly town, a dump point and more bins a peak times.

In addition, residents also pointed to the need for better aged care facilities as well as the addition of more businesses in the town centre and improved handling of waste and litter.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- There has never been a structure plan developed for the town, and town boundaries are currently unclear. This Strategy should consider the need to review township boundaries and develop a structure plan for Balmoral in the longer term.
- Consider rezoning opportunities once there has been adequate analysis of land supply and demand and use.
- Consider appropriate commercial and retail growth as part of the strategic planning process.
- Support the retail core of the Town in Glendinning Street in order to strengthen self-containment of the town and leverage tourism opportunities generated by Rocklands Reservoir.
- Capitalise on the proximity to Rocklands Reservoir and Balmoral's position as a service town for visitors by increasing retail, hospitality and service options.



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# BRANXHOLME

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## Town Summary

Branxholme is located along the Henty Highway between Heywood and Hamilton. It is located about 320km west of Melbourne, 25km south-west of Hamilton, and 60km north east of Portland. As of the 2021 census, Branxholme and the surrounding area had a population of 304, a moderate decline (loss of 84 residents) since 2011.

The traditional owners of the land now known as Branxholme are the Gunditjmara people. The first non-indigenous settlement of Branxholme was established around 1842 when several pastoral runs were established. As was common across Western Victoria, the initial settlers were predominantly Scottish. In 1843 the first hotel 'The Travellers Rest' was opened.

- Branxholme-Wallacedale Community School operates within the township serving years P-6.
- The township of Branxholme contains a number of historically significant places, which are recorded on the Victorian Heritage Database.
- The town core is located west of Creek St towards the former railway line and station.
- Branxholme township maintains a recreation reserve containing a football/cricket field and netball courts. It has a football team playing in the South West District Football League under the name Branxholme-Wallacedale.
- Branxholme recreation reserve also hosts the popular annual Branxholme Community Rodeo.
- The Heritage Park contains a timeline of the town and a pioneer's wall with plaques commemorating early settler families of the region. The wall itself is a fascinating collection of basalt blocks carefully collected from the original homesteads in the district. An avenue of honour lines the park commemorating those who served in WW1.
- Branxholme is located in close proximity to a number of nationally significant features, including Byaduk Caves, World Heritage listed Budj Bim, Lake Condah, Tumuli lava blisters, and the Volcanic Trails.
- No reticulated sewerage is provided within the township.

## Vision

Branxholme should be a peaceful and attractive place to live, in which people feel safe and secure, valuing its village-like atmosphere, historic beginnings, parks and open space, native flora and fauna, and is able to offer high quality education and sport and recreational opportunities for children whilst being an attractive place for tourists to stop and visit.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “Rural Settlement”. The overall role of Branxholme within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to low provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Low demand for housing and low supply of residential land.
- Relative isolation from key services and jobs, may indicate low suitability for rural living lifestyle.
- Indicates a consolidation of the towns existing features, allowing for some carefully planned growth in tourist and residential accommodation based on the individual town.

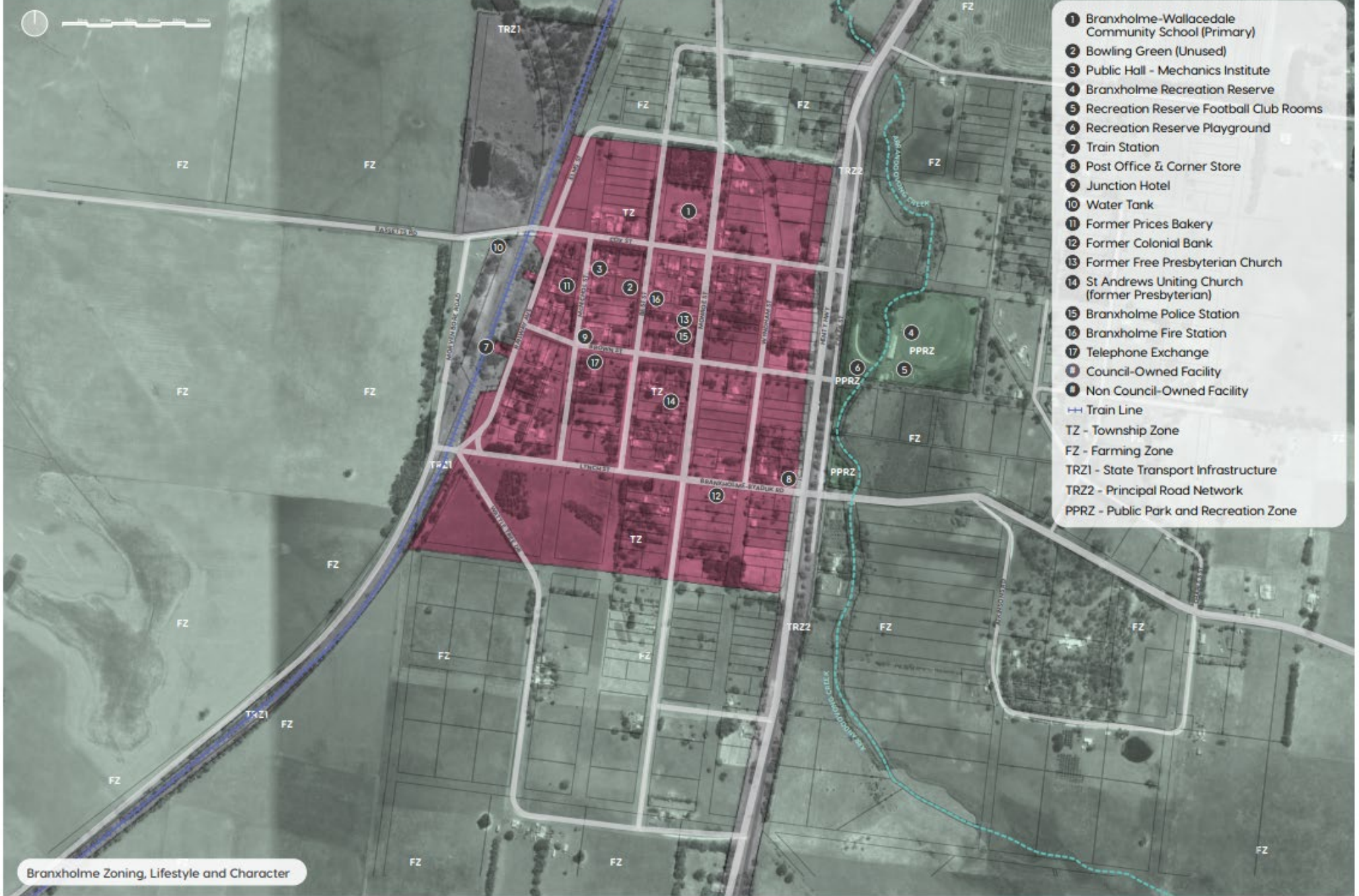
## Existing Attributes

- Some community infrastructure is available including a small community kindergarten and primary school and successful sporting clubs / recreation facilities.
- Only 2 new dwellings have been approved for construction in the town since 2014, very few property sales have occurred in the town, and there has been a steady loss of population over the past 10 years, indicators of very low demand for the current housing available.
- The absence of reticulated sewerage infrastructure is a key limitation to any further town development.
- The town is proximate to Hamilton which enables residents to access employment and services in the regional centre. Despite this proximity, several other towns in the area have equivalent proximity, meaning that ‘spill over’ demand for housing near Hamilton is not dependent on the availability of housing and residential land in Branxholme.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Branxholme Public Hall	Branxholme	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Branxholme Recreation Reserve Football Club Rooms	Branxholme	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Branxholme Recreation Reserve	Branxholme	Crown	CoM	1 x Cricket, 1 x Football, 2 x Netball
Branxholme Recreation Reserve Playground	Branxholme		State Govt (CoM)	Local (township)
Branxholme Kindergarten (at Branxholme Hall)	Branxholme	Crown	CPSG	Sessional





## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- The Town Hall is requires investment.
- The recreation reserve and toilets at sporting facilities are also in need of upgrades.

#### Lifestyle and character

- Native vegetation in township (such as the Woolly Tea Tree) are depleted.
- Safety is a concern around Stalkers Bend and Heritage Park
- Better maintenance of heritage buildings in Branxholme is needed.
- Limited demand for new housing due to servicing constraints
- Vacant store fronts have a negative effect on the town.
- Branxholme isn't integrated with nearby attractions Tumuli, Byaduk Caves, Budj Bim and Lake Condah

#### Access, Connection and Transport

- Roads are poorly maintained.
- Lack of streetscape amenity and planting creates a poor pedestrian environment for locals and visitors.
- Main streets are unpaved, comprised of a mix of coat bitumen seal and gravel.
- Poor connectivity between toilet/park opposite the shop with the oval and swimming holes
- Branxholme is on the Ararat to Portland trainline.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- The town experiences significant flood liability and drainage problems, especially west of Creek Street where the town core is located.
- Desire to become a RV friendly town.
- There are currently no sewerage services in Branxholme.

#### Natural Values and Open Space

- Both Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act and native vegetation are interspersed through the town, particularly on the western half and eastern boundary of the town.



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Investigate whether there is sufficient demand for Branxholme Kindergarten to be a permanent kindergarten.
- Assess condition and use of community facilities, and upgrade or re-purpose to better meet community needs.
- Deliver improvements to the recreation reserve and toilets at sporting facilities.
- Installing infrastructure to become a RV friendly town.

### Lifestyle and character

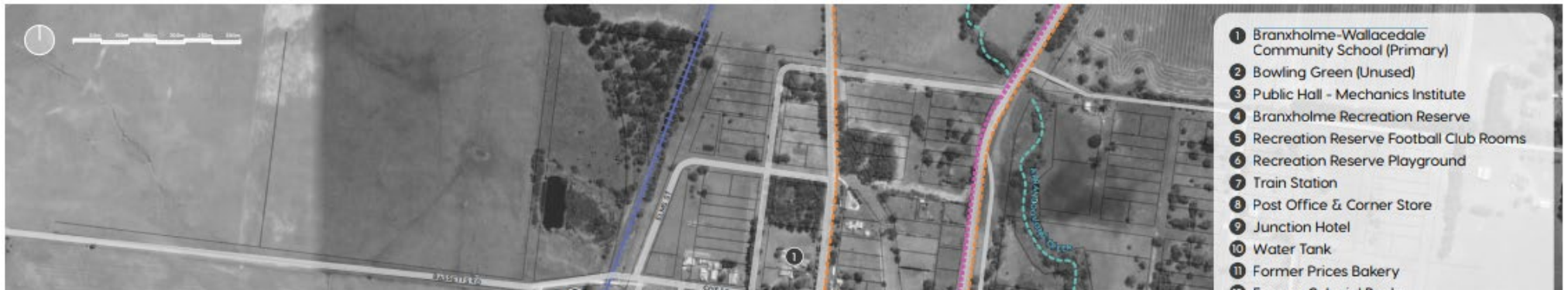
- Address safety concerns around Stalkers Bend and Heritage Park by providing improved lighting.
- Repurposing former bakery for alternative use.
- Develop a plan for the protection and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.
- Implement Volcanic Trails Masterplan.
- Provide signage and information about nearby attractions such as Tumuli, Byaduk Caves, Budj Bim and Lake Condah.
- Develop a staged streetscape and planting plan, addressing drainage issues across the town.

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Consider sealing of key streets Infrastructure (servicing)
- Advocate for improvements to internet infrastructure.
- Better manage bushfire risk by delivering community water tanks or overhead fill supply in areas with non-reticulated water supply.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Develop a flood management plan, incorporating water sensitive urban design and biological options for increasing drainage.
- Develop a plan for the conservation and restoration of native vegetation (e.g. Woolly Tea Tree restoration).



## Housing Response

There is potential to add 16 rural living lots to Branxholme.

## What the Community Want

Infrastructure and servicing were found to be the most important theme, with Natural Values and Community Infrastructure and Facilities were also noted but were not seen as important as the former. This emphasis on the importance of physical infrastructure is reflected in that residents also noted that roads improvements are needed the most, whilst general infrastructure also needs improvements.

Other important issues raised included the need for enhancing the public realm and public facilities such as improving lighting for security around Stalker Bend and Heritage Park, whilst also directing planning toward the Volcanic Trails Masterplan, to increase tourism. Becoming a RV friendly town is also on the town's agenda to encourage tourism.

Funding for a new kindergarten was also noted as a specific need due to a higher proportion of younger families entering the town or district.

Improving the road network by adding more signage and improving road quality and safety were also highlighted as needed improvements.

### Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Planning scheme review required for land on the peripheries of the town that are currently under an agricultural zone.
- Consider appropriate commercial and retail growth as part of the strategic planning process.
- Support the retail core of the town to leverage tourism opportunities generated by the Volcanic Plans Masterplan once implemented.



# BYADUK

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## Town Summary

Byaduk is a small rural town situated between Penhurst and Branxholme and south of Hamilton. The resident population is 336 as of the 2021 census, which represents a slight growth (additional 15 residents) since 2011.

It is a quaint European settlement dating back to the 1850's and provides a lovely setting for a meandering stop over for tourists, and a place to love for its small residential community. Byaduk heavily relies on these neighbouring towns for many of its community infrastructure, servicing, medial, retail and other needs. The town is situated near a network of Volcanic Caves that provide tourists and local residents with recreational opportunities.

## Vision

An existing publicly accepted vision for the town has not been prepared or made available through strategic documentation.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as "Rural Settlement". The overall role of Byaduk within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to low provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Low demand for housing and low supply of residential land.
- Relative isolation from key services and jobs, may indicate low suitability for rural living lifestyle.
- Indicates a consolidation of the towns existing features, allowing for some carefully planned growth in tourist and residential accommodation based on the individual town.

## Existing Attributes

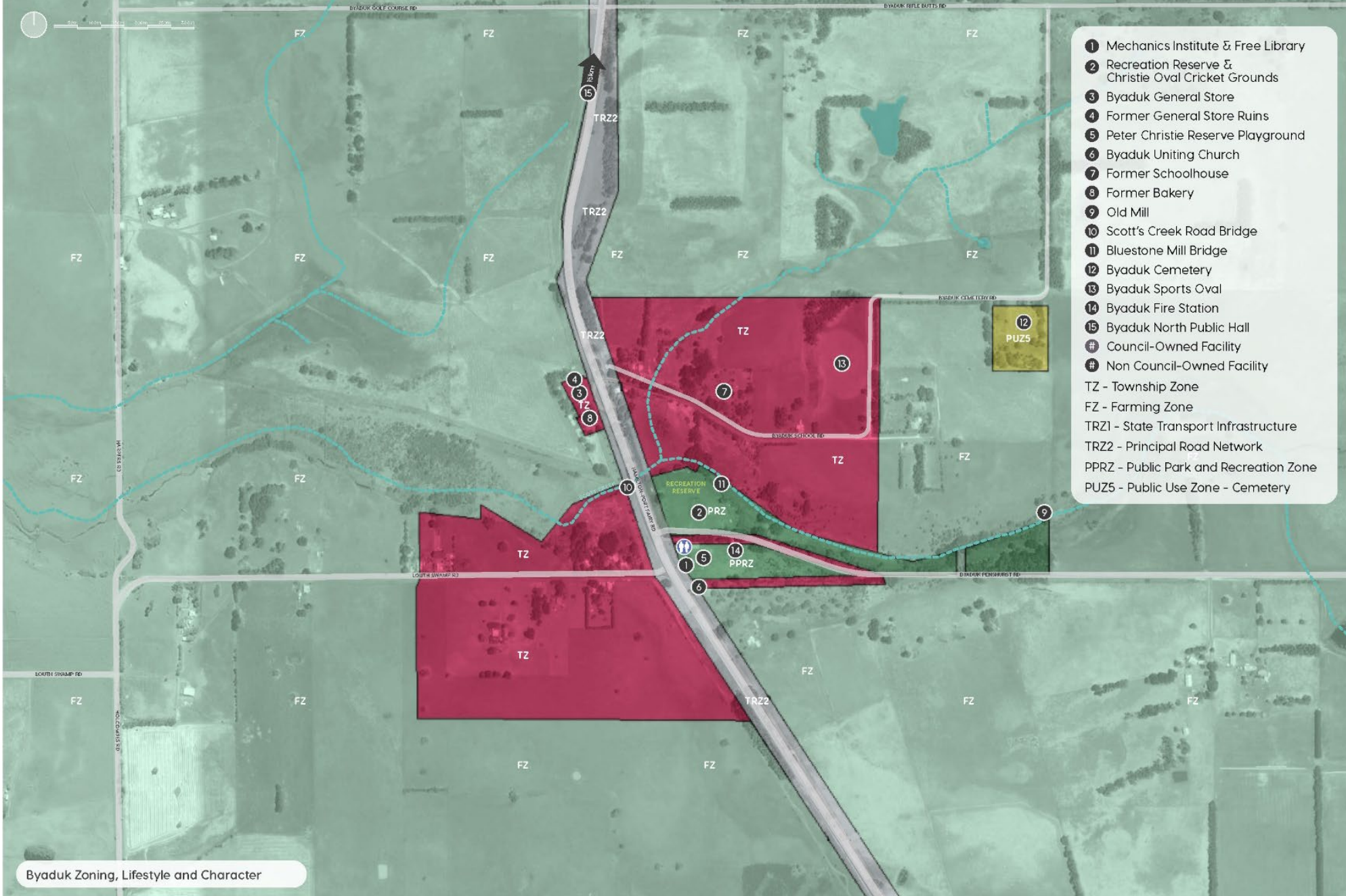
Community infrastructure is perhaps the key existing factor within Byaduk where future funding and attention should be directed to increase the liveability of the town. This is corroborated by the findings from the community engagement listed further below.

- Although Byaduk is located relatively close to Hamilton, the town is poorly serviced by community infrastructure and does not have reticulated sewerage provision. Residents utilise nearby towns such as Hamilton for key services including education and retail.
- The town and surrounding rural areas have experienced relatively stable population levels in the past 5-10 years with no material increase in the local housing stock.
- The lack of housing development and sales indicates low demand for the current housing stock, and despite good proximity to Hamilton, several other towns in the area have equivalent proximity, indicating that 'spill over' demand for housing near Hamilton is not dependent on the availability of housing and residential land in Byaduk.
- Although the closest study town to Port Fairy which is experiencing housing shortages for key workers, Byaduk is unlikely to present an attractive location for workers commuting to Port Fairy and the coast given the drive time of approximately 40 minutes.



Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Byaduk Mechanics Institute	Byaduk	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community meeting space
Byaduk North Public Hall	Byaduk North	Other	CoM	Community meeting space
Byaduk Recreation Reserve	Byaduk	Crown	CoM	1 x Cricket
Byaduk Recreation Reserve - Tennis Courts (derelict)	Byaduk	Crown	CoM	
Peter Christie Reserve (Byaduk) Playground	Byaduk		State Govt (CoM)	District (township)



# Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

## Considerations

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- The value the community places on the community hall and recreation reserve as a meeting place.

### Lifestyle and character

- Lack of maintenance in public green spaces discourages use.
- Poor maintenance of vegetation on verge.

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Current speed zones discourage walkability and negatively impact the public realm.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Poor waste management services, especially recycling.
- Poor internet connectivity limits town growth.
- The town experiences drainage issues.
- There is no sewerage or water services in Byaduk.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Improved maintenance needed for Cricket oval and club, which are on Crown Land.
- Byaduk Caves are a significant site yet are poorly managed by Parks Vic. Ongoing investment in infrastructure such as fencing, facilities, signage, and trails is needed.
- Properties without reticulated water provision in Byaduk do not have adequate bushfire protection.
- Further development with the town boundary is not significantly limited by environmental factors, however there is significant flora under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (FFG) interspersed throughout the town as well as native vegetation requiring a permit for removal.



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Advocate to DEECA to make improvements to the facilities at the cricket oval (such as toilets, shade for playground, gender inclusive change facilities, seating).

### Lifestyle and character

- Investigation of whether investment in Byaduk Caves under the Volcanic Trails Masterplan project changes local demands for services
- Advocate to Parks Victoria to deliver infrastructure such as fencing, facilities, signage and trails at the Byaduk Caves

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Advocate to Department of Transport to current speed zones through Byaduk and reduce as necessary to increase safety and walkability.
- Advocate to DoT for broad and ongoing road renewal
- Improve amenity and safety of path from Byaduk - Peshurst Road up to the tennis courts.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Implement better waste management services, including offering recycling and community composting initiatives.
- Deliver better internet infrastructure.
- Better manage bushfire risk by delivering community water tanks or overhead fill supply in areas with non-reticulated water supply.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Develop a drainage management plan, incorporating water sensitive urban design and drainage solutions into verge planting.
- Community water tanks or overhead fill supply needed to get water supply faster in areas with non-reticulated water supply.
- Prioritise the protection of native flora and fauna, especially microbats in the Byaduk Caves.
- Protect avenue of mature trees along Port Fairy Road and identify key areas for additional planting.
- Deliver improvements to Byaduk Recreation Reserve and the oval.



Byaduk Access, Connection and Transport

## Housing Response

Byaduk consists of TZ zoned land, with the estimated capacity to accommodate up to 16 additional lots (1 new and 15 infill).

## What the Community Want

Residents found Infrastructure (servicing) and Community Infrastructure and Facilities to be the most important themes for their town, however a wider array of improvements were noted, including:

- The road network and surface quality
- Better pedestrian and cycle paths
- General town maintenance and improvements to the Town Hall
- Improved waste collection
- Better public facilities at the cricket oval
- Increase opportunities for attracting tourists.
- Improved protection for local flora and fauna
- Speed limit reductions in the town
- RV friendly town initiatives

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documents

- Development of a future thinking, community involved vision for the town of Byaduk.
- Byaduk is a rural settlement - the Township Zone suggests a level of development probably beyond what the community would want. The zoning may be more realistically RLZ. A restructure overlay may have benefits to the west and east.

SETTLERS WALK  
→



# CAVENDISH

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## Town Summary

Cavendish is located on the Wannon River, which is a key aspect of community identity – fishing, walking, camping and Indigenous stories. The town has a population of 366, as of the 2021 census, a slight decline in population (loss of 9 residents) since 2011. The township was settled in the early 1850's, and Settlers Walk is a 2km walking and cycling trail, an iconic attraction in the Grampians established to honour the Soldier Settlers of the mid-20th century. The walk features plaques on the riverbank rocks, each bearing short stories recounting the experiences of pioneers from the mid-50s.

## Vision

Cavendish is a small rural town that values 'pride of place' and a sense of belonging for all generations. It should treasure peaceful, natural environmental values being nestled between Mount Dundas and the Grampians Ranges among the red gums. Set on the banks of the Wannon River, it draws inspiration from this important body of water and should remain connected to it and protect its long-term viability.

The community is an involved one and seeks to take responsibility for fostering partnerships in support of the towns-built assets, education and essential services for its potential and future growth.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as "Lifestyle Rural Settlement" the overall role of Cavendish within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a specialist supporting role, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to high provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Indicates suitability for incremental change and growth that builds on the opportunities within the town.
- Increase in residentially zoned land would increase demand and thus place the town in the category above.
- No provision of reticulated sewerage.

## Existing Attributes

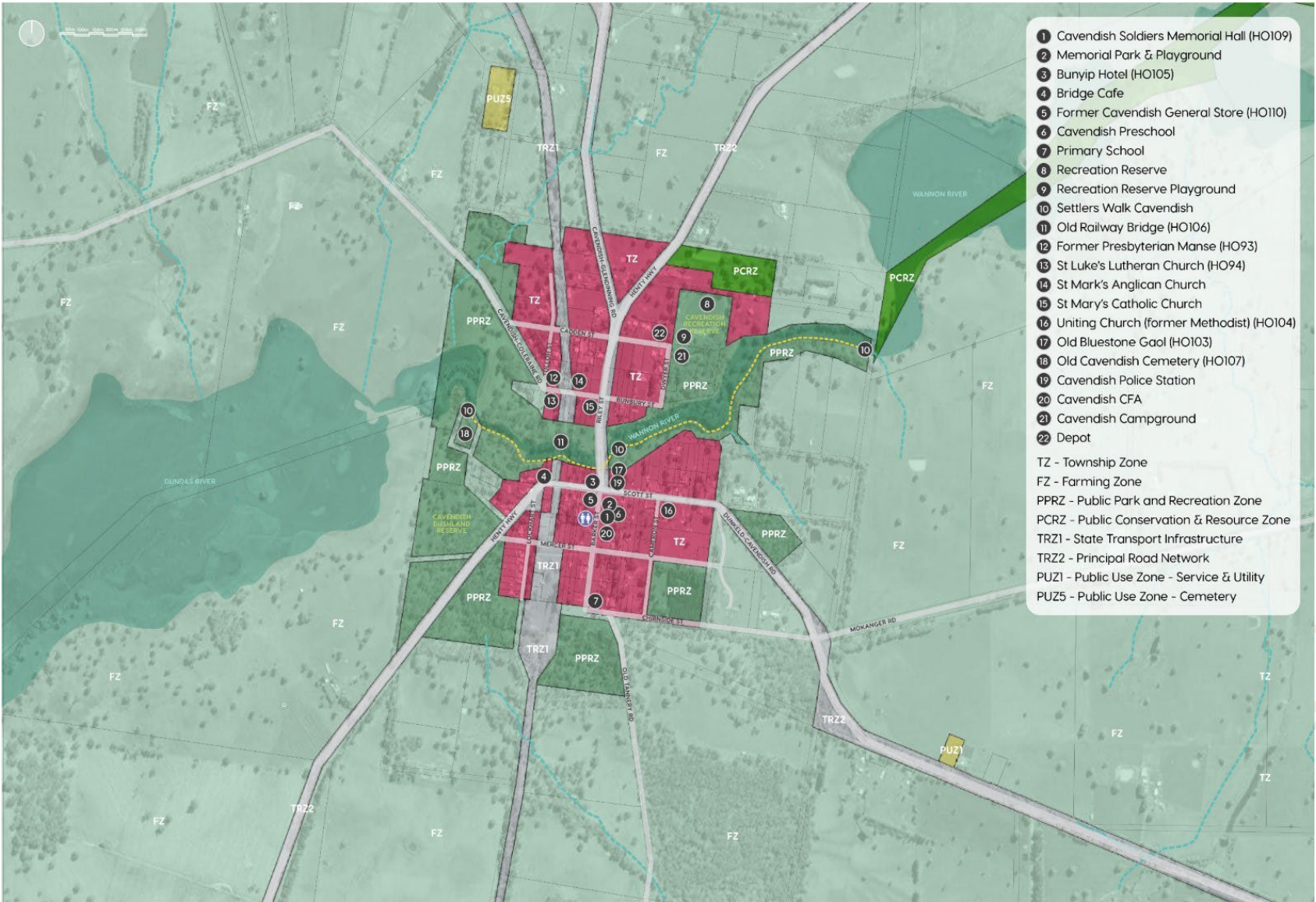


A key existing condition that should be addressed is the relative lack of community infrastructure within the town, especially considering it's potential to accommodate medium levels of growth.

- The background report for the Cavendish Structure Plan provides support for future residential and economic growth within the town while identifying the many environmental constraints such as bushfire, vegetation and agricultural land.
- Proximity to Hamilton is a clear advantage in terms of accommodating future growth, as is proximity to the Grampians in terms of accommodating visitors and tourism workers.
- Overall, Cavendish is well located to perform a moderate growth role as part of the strategy in terms of lower density lifestyle housing, subject to other Strategy findings regarding environmental constraints.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Cavendish Memorial Hall	Cavendish	Council	Council; Council / S65 Committee	Community Meeting Space
Cavendish Recreation Reserve - Pavilion	Cavendish	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Cavendish Recreation Reserve	Cavendish	Crown	CoM	1 x Football
Cavendish Recreation Reserve - Multipurpose courts	Cavendish	Crown	CoM	2 x Netball, 3 x Tennis
Cavendish Memorial Park Playground	Cavendish		Council	District (township)
Cavendish Recreation Reserve Playground	Cavendish		State Govt (CoM)	District (township)
Cavendish Kindergarten	Cavendish	Council	CPSG	Sessional



Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

## Considerations

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- None

### Lifestyle and character

- There is a shortage of aged care housing and housing suitable for young families.
- Historic shopfronts need improved maintenance or grant program to encourage improvements.

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Recent discussions with potential sand mining companies in the Wimmera/Horsham area foreshadow using the local road network and driving through Cavendish (WIM Resources). A stronger rail network on the Maroona to Portland line would remove need for road freight. Impact on Cavendish is unclear noting 24 hr/day operation and B double trucks.
- Settlers Walk lacks wayfinding signage.

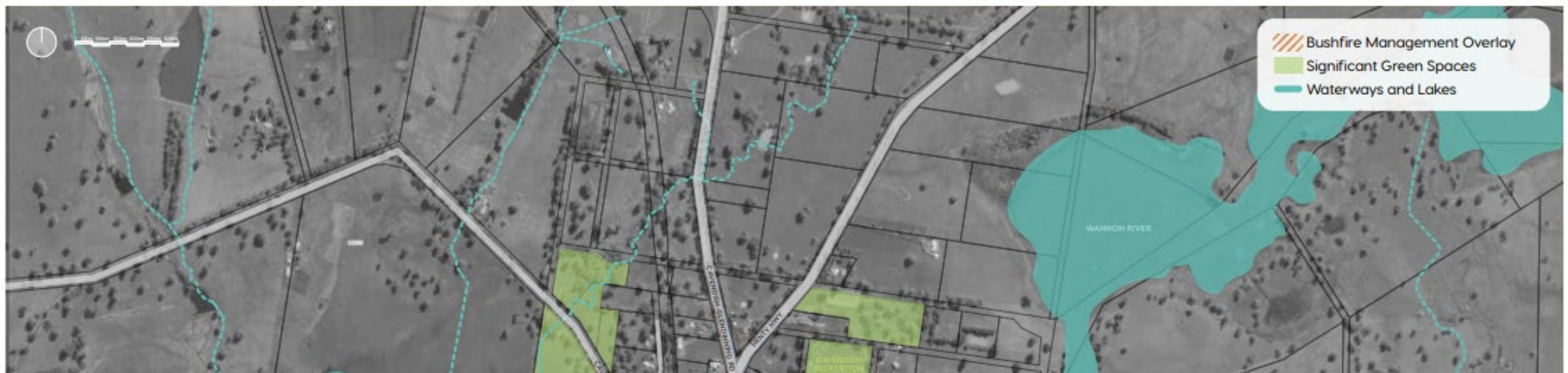
### Infrastructure (servicing)

- There are no reticulated sewerage services in Cavendish.

### Natural Values and Open Space

There are a number of factors inhibiting potential future residential growth within the town boundary:

- Part of the southern portion of the town is covered by a bushfire overlay.
- Native vegetation requiring a permit for removal is interspersed throughout the majority of the town.
- The River Red Gums around Cavendish require a re-mapped VMO.



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Ongoing development of the Cavendish Red Gum Festival.
- Support and strengthen Kinder and Primary Education through completing building repairs or advocating for funding for them to be completed.

### Lifestyle and character

- Improve opportunities for tourism.
- Continue to deliver upgrades to Cavendish Camping ground.
- Deliver improvements to wayfinding signage on the Settlers Walk
- Elevate heritage character of township.
- Maintain the heritage buildings in the town.
- Deliver interpretation signage throughout the town to acknowledge Traditional Owners and better incorporate Aboriginal history.

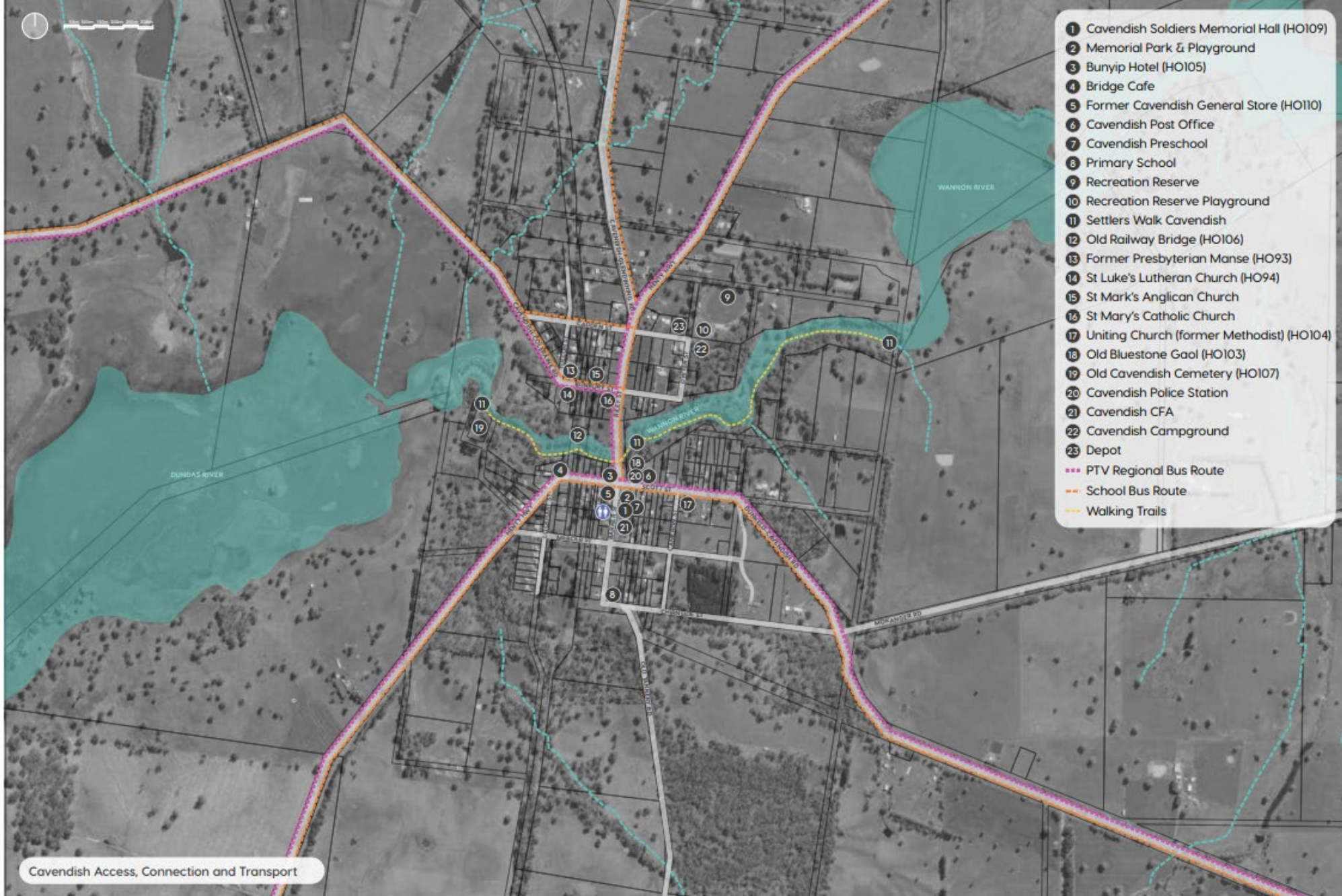
### Access, Connection and Transport

- Improve and extend footpaths in the town centre and walking tracks.
- Increase transport options including a Community Bus
- Advocate for a bus service to Hamilton

### Infrastructure (servicing)

Support adaptive wastewater solutions for future land use to address lack of reticulated sewer in the township. Natural Values and Open Space

- Remap VMO application on River Red Gums.



## Housing Response

Residential land in Cavendish is currently zoned TZ. There is potential to add 23 rural living lots to Cavendish (19 supply, 4 infill), although the capacity of existing zoned land in these towns is severely limited by the absence of reticulated sewer. Cavendish has experienced moderate levels of housing increase in recent years however the town is well-located to accommodate demand for lower density / lifestyle development through changes to zoning and town boundaries

## What the Community Want

Community Infrastructure and Facilities was found to be the most important theme, with Natural Values and Infrastructure and Servicing were also noted. This emphasis on the importance of physical infrastructure is reflected in that residents also noted that general retail needs expansion in the town, as does improvement to telecommunication services.

Other important issues raised included enhancing the public realm and public facilities such as improving the public toilets at the recreation grounds, increased seating and improved wayfinding by the river. The town should reflect the unique character of the river red gums in the area to increase the sense of place and locality for the community.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Cavendish has a background report only. Provide gaps analysis of existing strategic planning work (structure plans or other key docs) developed across all small towns, identifying any changes/refinements required. This would also examine UDFs and have regard to the issues identified in existing community plans. Review recently collected feedback on Council Plan 2021-2025 as to local priorities.
- Cavendish is sufficiently close to Hamilton to support rural living, possibly low-density residential use.
- Examination of appropriate zoning for public utilities and education facilities; appropriate zoning for conservation and public open space assets; appropriate zoning of small, fragmented lots on Farming Zone land adjoining Natimuk-Hamilton Road, Cemetery Road and Dunkeld-Cavendish Road; examination of planning policy to encourage the intensification of Farming Zone land along Cavendish East Boundary Road which adjoins strategic water assets and the re-examination of the towns boundaries and opportunities that exist to create RLZ to the east and the north of the town . This can all be completed through a new structure plan for the town.
- A number of conservation reserves have been included in the Public Park and Recreation Zone. Consideration should be given to rezoning these public reserves to accurately reflect their status as conservation areas, as distinct from parks and recreational uses.

COLERAINE  
HOTEL  
ACCOMMODATION

COLERAINE HOTEL

MEALS A  
12.00  
6.00

TAB

COLERAINE  
HOTEL  
LOUNGE





# COLERAINE

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## Town Summary

Coleraine is a rural service centre with some small manufacturing, wholesale and tourism activities, located on the key east-west corridor to Mt Gambier. The Western District Health Service has a presence in Coleraine, which will mean Coleraine will service surrounding townships. Key activities in the town centre are the chocolate factory, hotels, professional services, wholesalers and the retail outlets. The retail offer includes a supermarket, convenience stores and cafes. As of the 2021 census, Coleraine had a resident population of 869. This is a slight decline in residential population since 2011, with a total loss of 36 residents.

## Vision

Coleraine to be a vibrant, thriving and inclusive community with a strong, caring community spirit. Residents want Coleraine to prosper with successful, locally-supported businesses, servicing surrounding agricultural industries, whilst protecting our natural environment and historical features and encourage visitors to the region to enjoy them. Furthermore, residents also support a range of activities for all ages as well as a healthy and active lifestyle.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “District Town”. The overall role of Coleraine within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is as a service centre supporting Hamilton, due to the following considerations:

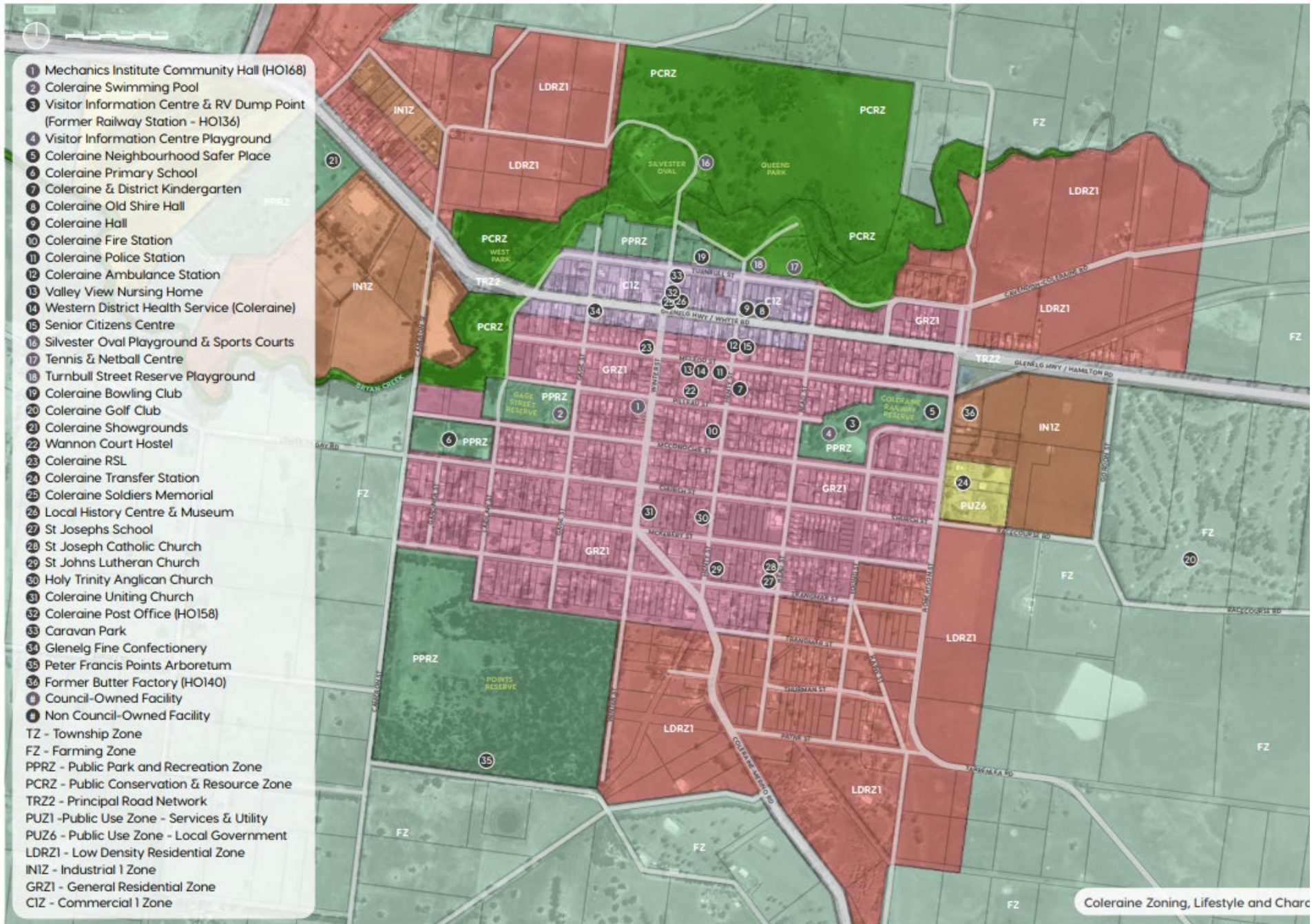
- Moderate to high provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Lower demand for housing alongside underutilised supply.
- Combination of demand indicators point to moderate suitability to accommodate demand.
- Indicates suitability for incremental change and growth that builds on the opportunities within the town.

## Existing Conditions

- Coleraine is an important service centre for the western part of the Shire. The town has a district retail role and is relatively well serviced by community infrastructure, a small hospital, kindergarten, primary school and a medical centre.
- House prices are low relative to the municipal median and development activity has been very low (5 new dwellings approved since 2014). Although there are some examples of minor subdivision occurring, demand indicators are substantially weaker than other towns such as Hamilton and Dunkeld.
- Coleraine is well placed to accommodate future residential growth base on proximity to Hamilton (25 minutes by car) and excellent health and community infrastructure. The town is one of few in the municipality with reticulated sewer.
- The Strategy should consider the opportunity for the town in providing incremental housing growth, especially to support older residents seeking proximity to health services and key workers seeking affordable housing. The GRZ has substantial capacity to accommodate infill development which should be investigated and encouraged.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Coleraine Bowling Club	Coleraine	Other	Private	Community Meeting Space
Coleraine Mechanics Institute Hall	Coleraine	Council	Council; Council / S65 Committee	Community Meeting Space
Coleraine RSL	Coleraine	Other	Other	Community Meeting Space
Coleraine Senior Citizens	Coleraine	Council	Council	Community Meeting Space
Coleraine Silvester Oval - Football Pavilion	Coleraine	Crown	Council; Council / S65 Committee	Community Meeting Space
Coleraine Racing Club	Coleraine	Other	Private	
Coleraine Golf Club	Coleraine	Other	Private	
Coleraine Pool	Coleraine	DELWP	Council	1 outdoor pool (50m)
Coleraine Bowling Club	Coleraine	Other	Other	
Gage Street cricket pitch	Coleraine	Other	Other	1 x Cricket
Coleraine Silvester Oval	Coleraine	Other	Other	1 x Football, 2 x Netball, 2 x Tennis
Coleraine Tennis Club - Courts	Coleraine	Crown	Council	4 x Tennis
Coleraine Silvester Oval Playground	Coleraine		State Govt (CoM)	Local (township)
Coleraine Skate Park	Coleraine		State Govt (CoM)	District (skate park)
Coleraine Visitor Information Centre Playground	Coleraine		Council	Local (township)
Turnbull Street Reserve Playground	Coleraine		Council	District (township)
Coleraine & District Kindergarten	Coleraine	Council	CPSG	Sessional



## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Old Council Chambers are currently underutilised.
- Management of the Arboretum (Parks Victoria) could be improved and through the new management agreement the community has secured with Parks Victoria this is anticipated to be achieved.

#### Lifestyle and character

- Amenity and character of town is negatively impacted by some poorly maintained shop frontages.
- A substantial proportion of activity space and heritage buildings in the town centre are underutilised.
- Some of the street furniture in the town is of need of improvements.

#### Access, Connection and Transport

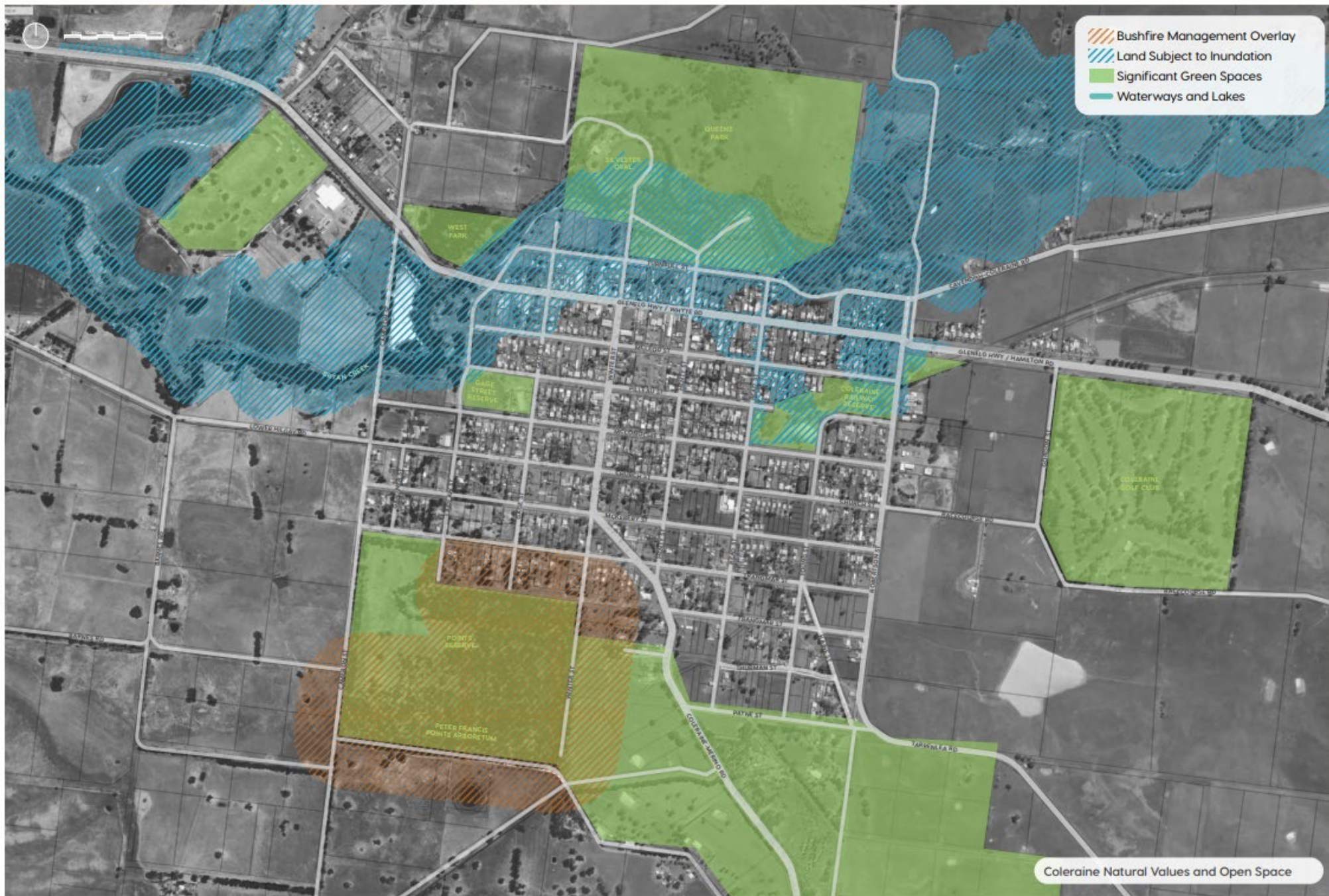
- Some of the roads and streetscapes in the town lack amenity.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Properties on the edge of town do not have access to reticulated sewerage.

#### Natural Values and Open Space

- A floodway and land subject to inundation impacts the northern and southern banks of the river that bisects the town.
- Native vegetation in the northern and southern portions of the town boundary would require a permit for removal.
- The main street lacks sufficient street trees, which contributes to urban heat and negatively impacts amenity.



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Investigation needed into utilisation of Racecourse, Golf Course and Showgrounds and how they can better function as community spaces.
- Investigate future use of the old Council Chambers.
- Encourage community use of the Coleraine swimming pool.
- Support the community to deliver improvements to the Arboretum through its new management agreement.
- Police station redevelopment is needed.

### Lifestyle and character

- Maximise opportunities for tourism in the town.
- Deliver ongoing RV friendly infrastructure to improve tourism around the lagoon precinct.
- Encourage investment in heritage buildings to support heritage-based tourism and improve amenity
- Provide better signage to nearby tourist attractions.
- Deliver more street tree planting on main street.
- Deliver upgrades to street furniture, in particular seats and waste bins.
- Upgrade picnic facilities.
- Investigation into a dog park for the town.





### Access, Connection and Transport

- Advocate to DoT for broad and ongoing road renewal.
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist paths.
- Increase accessible shared paths throughout town,
- Connect existing walking tracks to the Arboretum.
- Provide a walking path to Silvester Oval.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Identify key sites to deliver additional waste disposal.
- Investigate whether reticulated sewerage is required on lots on edge of town.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Advocate to Parks Victoria to deliver improvements to the Arboretum, such as improving the lookout and providing a connecting walking trail with street tree planting. Investigate possibility of Committees of Management.
- Investigate ways to increase use of the lake at the historic Railway Station/Community Park.
- Implement landscape protection at the foothills of township.
- Enhance Bryan Creek Corridor:
  - Deliver revegetation using indigenous species.
  - Establish waterholes and wetlands.
  - Deliver recreational trails on both sides of the creek.
  - Deliver new pedestrian bridges.

## Housing Response

Residential land in Coleraine is zoned mainly GRZ1, with some zoned LDRZ1. Coleraine can deliver a significant amount of potential new housing lots, with an estimated total of 168 new supply lots and 174 infill lots, across township, lifestyle and rural living zoning.

The capacity of existing zoned land to accommodate urban lots is relatively substantial (84 lots) when considered alongside the rate of new dwelling construction in recent years (1 per annum) and low property values, however delivery of the remaining 'vacant' capacity will rely on development of many smaller parcels which is inherently uncertain.

Housing and land development rates in Coleraine have been very low over the medium term, however the availability of rural services (especially health) and the policy designation as a 'rural service centre' and 'district town' highlights the importance of retaining existing population and accommodating low growth through appropriate housing provision, including housing suitable for older residents. The extent to which infrastructure or other constraints have limited development opportunities should be investigated as part of the Strategy process.

## What the community want

As noticed with other towns, residents tended to find Community Infrastructure and Facilities as the most important, with values relating to Lifestyle and Character and Natural Values and Infrastructure (servicing) were also seen as important. This predominance of Community Infrastructure is echoed in the improvements residents believe are needed most, camping ground toilets and improvements to Silvester and Gage St oval were both advocated for. Streetscape improvements are also noted, including needing new café's/restaurants and replacing diseased trees.

Celebrating the local aquifers, environmental and cultural heritage was also expressed, whilst some residents expressed the desire for better quality public open space.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Market the town as a higher level service centre: with local shops, supermarket, health centre and primary school it has the basis to support growth.
- Develop a comprehensive heritage conservation strategy.
- There is a need to review township boundaries for Coleraine as some land on edge of towns is being used as rural living rather than agriculture and zoning could be reconsidered through a structure plan
- Planning Scheme Review Report recommended progressing South West Landscape Assessment and Grampians Landscape Assessment to protect significant landscapes – including the foothills of Coleraine. Findings of the studies need to be adopted by Council and consulted with the community in order to determine permit triggers.



The Old Bakery

Est. 1887

Wild Plum Café... wood-fired goodness

The Old Bakery

Sourdough Bakery

Accommodation

Cafe

ROX  
COFFEE  
ROASTERS

# DUNKELD

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## Town Summary

Dunkeld is a charming town at the foot of Mt Sturgeon (Wurgarri), widely recognised as the southern gateway to the Gariwerd National Park (Grampians) in both Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar Country.

The town is located 259 km west of Melbourne via the Western Freeway and Glenelg Highway, and 32km east of Hamilton. The Djab Wurrung lived in the region to the south and east of the Grampians for over 40,000 years prior to the arrival of the Europeans, when the first pastoralists took up properties in the late 1830s. A small township developed which was initially known as Mount Sturgeon, after the European name for the mountain behind the town.

At the 2021 census, Dunkeld had a permanent population of 510, down from the 658 recorded in 2016. This population increases significantly as a result of tourism during holiday periods.

The commercial centre of Dunkeld is located along the Glenelg Hwy (Parker St, B160) and incorporates a small shopping precinct, a caravan park, a recreation reserve, several cafes, the acclaimed Royal Mail Hotel, and a providore. There is a Visitor Information Centre in the centre of town on Parker Street. Memorial Park is located in the heart of the town and includes a war memorial, the local swimming pool (1966), playground, bowling green and tennis courts. The war memorial marks the fact that Dunkeld proportionately enlisted the fourth highest number of recruits in Victoria during World War I. The town also features Anglican, Catholic and Uniting churches. Salt Creek dissects the town just north of Parker Street (Glenelg Hwy) and is a small local waterway that is a minor tributary of the Wannon River to the north-west of the town. The creek corridor includes significant mature river red gums and native vegetation, wallabies and walking trails and crossings. The Mount Sturgeon homestead is near the Wannon River which runs between Dunkeld and the Grampians. Farming land around Dunkeld to the south and east is also relevant given it influences the character of the town and has the potential to accommodate future growth.

- The retail offer in the centre is geared mainly to visitors. There is no branded supermarket; there is a second-hand bookshop and pharmacy. There are no vacant commercial buildings in the centre, indicating a strong demand for commercial space. Total non-residential floorspace in the town centre is approximately 4,500 sqm, of which 2,100 sqm is in retailing.
- The Royal Mail Hotel is a destination in itself, and a significant attractor to the region especially for tourists from Melbourne. The restaurant sources fresh produce locally and from its expansive organic kitchen garden, and the onsite boutique accommodation comes with sweeping views of the Southern Grampians.
- The 18-hectare Dunkeld Arboretum is approx. 400m north of the main street, a natural sanctuary of walking tracks, giant red gums, lakes and a labyrinth reclaimed from the site of a wetlands and an old sawmill.

- The heritage trail takes in Dunkeld’s back streets and its history, with a historical museum accommodated in the former Presbyterian church (1865) and the art gallery in the old railway station building.
- The Peaks & Trails Run event, and the 3 Peaks Festival, with music, markets and activities are events attracting regional tourists to Dunkeld. Additionally, the Racing Club and the Dunkeld Races provide another tourism drawcard with the town also hosting the annual Serra Terror endurance event each year. All events provide opportunities to leverage further regional tourism development.

## Vision

Dunkeld has a strong history in agriculture and natural values and a local community spirit with a high proportion of local residents identifying as local volunteers. It should develop in respect of these values and ideals and build on its natural beauty, and strong sense of community spirit. It should be a popular destination for tourists being in close location to the Grampians Peaks Trail, whilst also becoming a greater draw card as a place to live and raise a family in the unique conditions that the town can offer to young families.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “District Town”. The overall role of Dunkeld within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is as a service centre to Hamilton, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to high provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Higher demand for housing coupled with availability for residential land.
- Combination of demand indicators point to high suitability to accommodate demand.
- Indicates suitability for consolidated change and growth in residential and commercial/retail development that builds on the opportunities within the town.

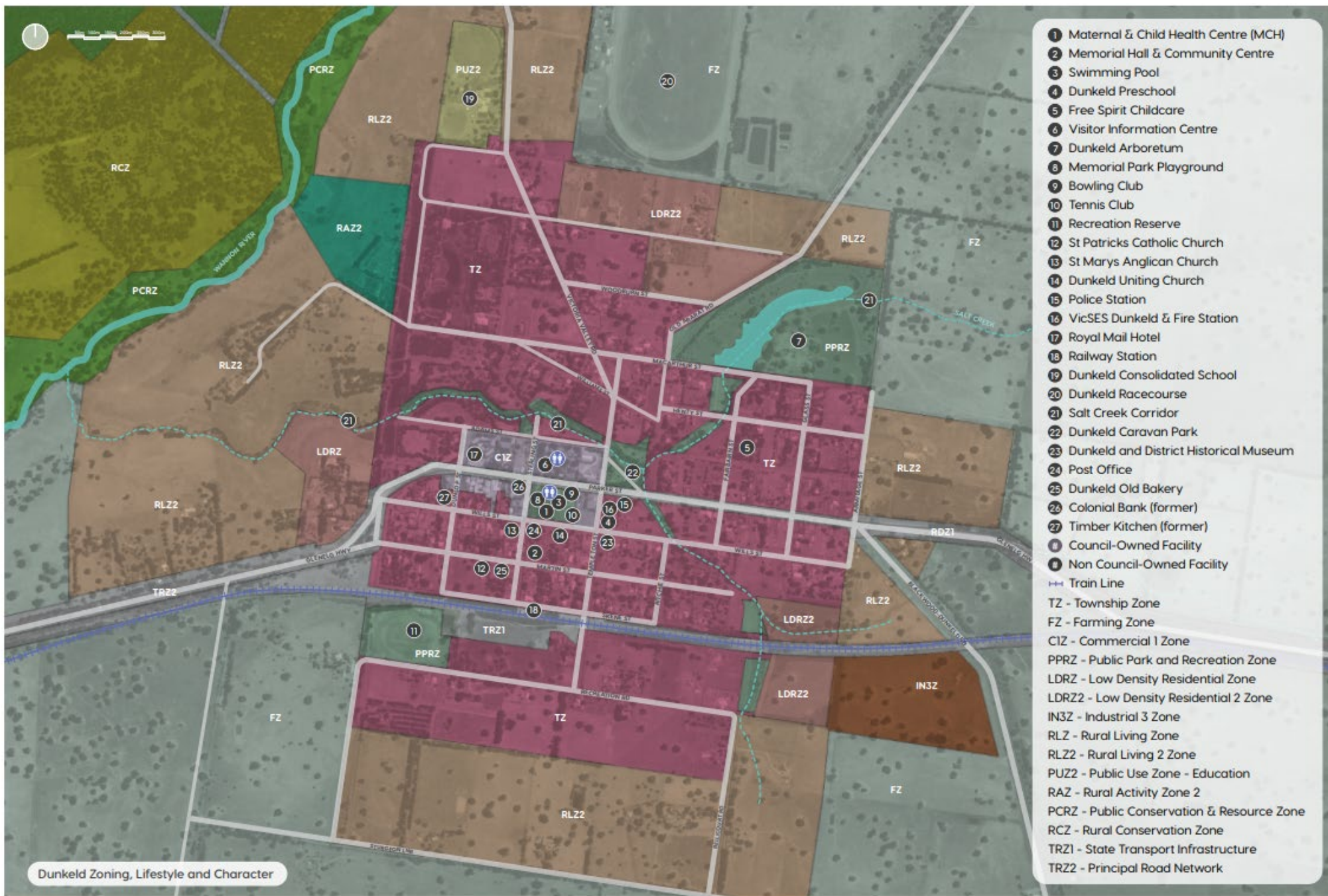
## Existing Attributes

- The town has a strengthening tourism role based on proximity to the Grampians and provision of hospitality and accommodation businesses.
- The town is serviced by reticulated sewer infrastructure and has a range of community infrastructure, including a kindergarten, primary school and community centre.
- The town is well located to accommodate demand from several market segments, including:
  - Those working and using education and services in Hamilton;
  - People seeking lifestyle properties close to the Grampians;
  - Visitors, workers and residents seeking short and long term rental and holiday home properties, primarily due to the close proximity to the Grampians National Park and the opportunity to accommodate visitors and hospitality workers linked to the tourism role of the town.
- Outside of Hamilton, Dunkeld has seen the greatest level of residential development activity in recent years.
- The median house price of \$575,500 is substantially higher than the Shire average and that of any other town in the municipality. This indicates strong demand for housing in the town, and is also likely to be the result of the attraction of new buyers from higher property values areas (such as Melbourne) following the onset of the COVID pandemic with greater capacity to pay higher house prices than local and regional residents.
- Consultation undertaken for the Key Worker Housing project identified that there is an acute shortage of rental housing available in the town to accommodate hospitality and other workers.
- There are several economic drivers which are likely to result in steady demand for housing in the town in the future, including the ongoing impacts of the COVID pandemic catalysing migration to high amenity regional.
- Investment in the Grampians Peak Trail and the associated expected strong overnight visitation growth, and ongoing employment growth and opportunity in Hamilton, for which Dunkeld is a popular ‘commuter’ location.
- Infrastructure scoping work completed for the Small Towns Strategy has identified drainage as a key constraint for development which would need to be addressed as part of strategic planning for growth.
- Lot sizes in the Township Zone provides substantial theoretical capacity to accommodate additional housing through infill development, however this would depend on a large number of individual land owners proposing subdivisions to be realised. Larger and vacant lots in the LDRZ and RLZ are very limited.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Dunkeld Bowling Club	Dunkeld	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Stirling Place Dunkeld Community Centre	Dunkeld	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting and Event Space
Dunkeld Recreation Reserve - Pavilion	Dunkeld	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Grampians Golf Club	Dunkeld	Crown	State Government; CoM	
Dunkeld Racing Club	Dunkeld	Private	Other	
Dunkeld Pool	Dunkeld	DELWP	Council	1 outdoor pool (25m)
Dunkeld Recreation Reserve	Dunkeld	Crown	CoM	1 x Football, 2 x Netball
Dunkeld Tennis Club - Tennis Courts	Dunkeld	Crown	CoM	3 x Tennis
Dunkeld Bowling Club	Dunkeld	Crown	CoM	1 x Lawnbowls
Dunkeld Consolidated School oval	Dunkeld	Crown	Other	2 x Cricket
Dunkeld Memorial Park Playground	Dunkeld	Crown	State Govt (CoM)	District (township)
Dunkeld Kindergarten	Dunkeld	Crown	CPSG	Sessional
Dunkeld Visitor Information Centre and Hub	Dunkeld	Council	Council/Volunteers	Information Centre and Community Meeting Space





- 1 Maternal & Child Health Centre (MCH)
- 2 Memorial Hall & Community Centre
- 3 Swimming Pool
- 4 Dunkeld Preschool
- 5 Free Spirit Childcare
- 6 Visitor Information Centre
- 7 Dunkeld Arboretum
- 8 Memorial Park Playground
- 9 Bowling Club
- 10 Tennis Club
- 11 Recreation Reserve
- 12 St Patricks Catholic Church
- 13 St Marys Anglican Church
- 14 Dunkeld Uniting Church
- 15 Police Station
- 16 VicSES Dunkeld & Fire Station
- 17 Royal Mail Hotel
- 18 Railway Station
- 19 Dunkeld Consolidated School
- 20 Dunkeld Racecourse
- 21 Salt Creek Corridor
- 22 Dunkeld Caravan Park
- 23 Dunkeld and District Historical Museum
- 24 Post Office
- 25 Dunkeld Old Bakery
- 26 Colonial Bank (former)
- 27 Timber Kitchen (former)
- Council-Owned Facility
- Non Council-Owned Facility
- Train Line
- TZ - Township Zone
- FZ - Farming Zone
- C1Z - Commercial 1 Zone
- PPRZ - Public Park and Recreation Zone
- LDRZ - Low Density Residential Zone
- LDR2Z - Low Density Residential 2 Zone
- IN3Z - Industrial 3 Zone
- RLZ - Rural Living Zone
- RL2Z - Rural Living 2 Zone
- PU2Z - Public Use Zone - Education
- RAZ2 - Rural Activity Zone 2
- PCRZ - Public Conservation & Resource Zone
- RCZ - Rural Conservation Zone
- TRZ1 - State Transport Infrastructure
- TR2Z - Principal Road Network

Dunkeld Zoning, Lifestyle and Character

## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- None.
- There is the opportunity for more use of Sterling Place for arts and culture.

#### Lifestyle and character

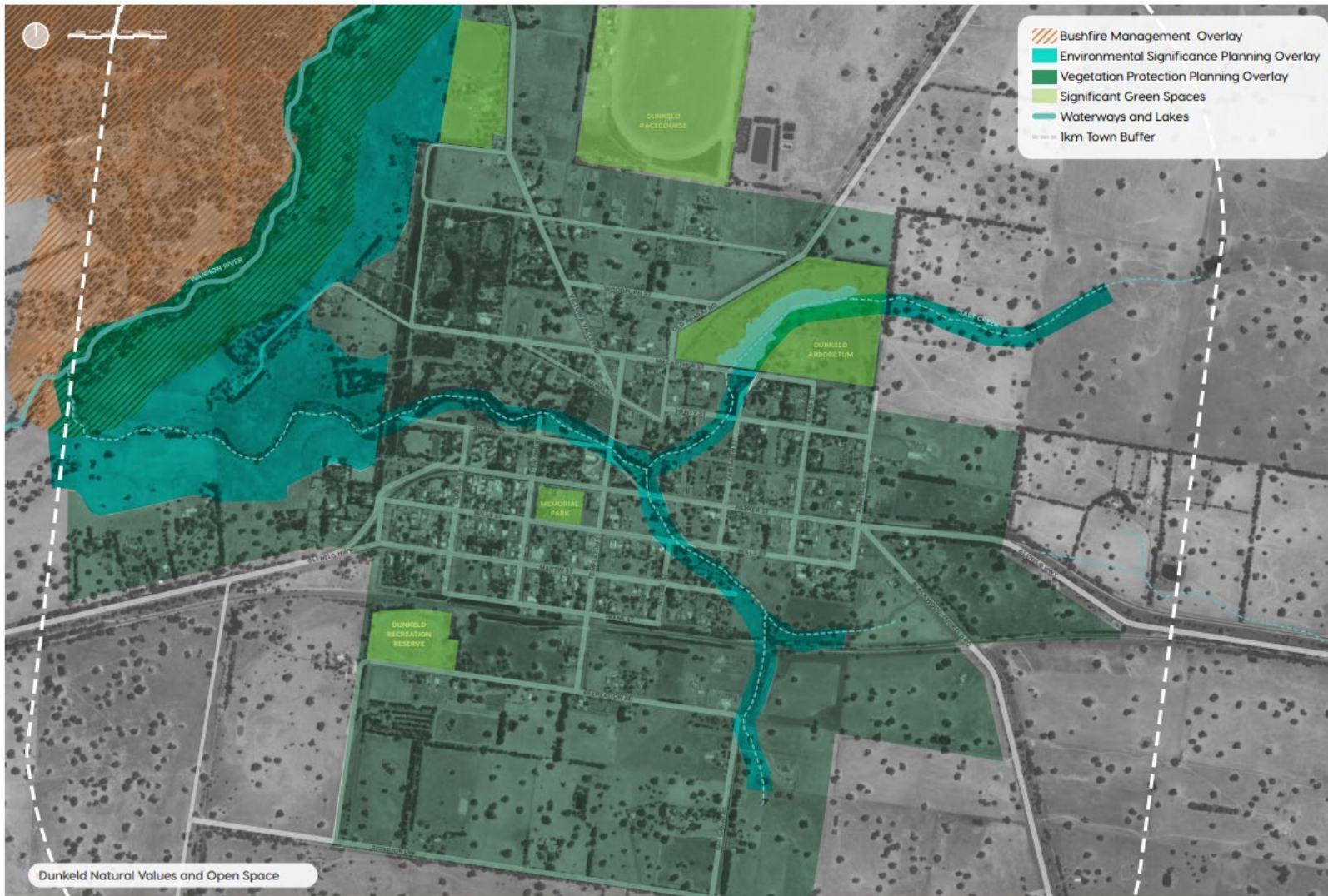
- Dunkeld does not currently have a supermarket equipped to meet demand of both locals and visitors.
- Dunkeld lacks suitable rental housing for key workers, hospitality staff and other temporary workers.
- Dunkeld needs more tourist and visitor accommodation

#### Access, Connection and Transport

- High-speed road environment to the Glenelg Hwy (B160) is lacking in safe crossing points for pedestrians.
- Lack of recreation activities for children and older youth
- Footpaths on main streets in town are either of poor quality or are lacking entirely.
- Dunkeld is on the Ararat to Portland trainline, which has potential to be re-activated.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- There is no sewerage design for unsewered parts of the town and the cost of reticulated sewerage outweigh the financial benefit for some property owners. Council to continue to work with Wannan Water to address.
- Drainage and flood liability is an ongoing issue, primarily relating to the current functionality the swale drains present in much of the town. Drainage plan for the town will look to address these issues with priorities for future works to be confirmed once complete.
- Power lines negatively impact the entrance to the town along key entry roads, and impact greening and amenity of the streets. Council to advocate for funding to help address these issues in line with Black Saturday Royal Commission findings.



## Natural Values and Open Space

There are a number of environmental constraints that may inhibit future development in the town:

- Native vegetation (especially high conservation grasslands) are protected throughout the town boundary as well as residential lots outside the boundary.
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) protection covers the majority of the town boundary which can constrain development.

There are limitations around the restricted areas where the Salt Creek can be crossed and connectivity issues which need continued work between Council and State Government agencies to resolve.

## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Improve recreational and leisure facilities through:
  - Deliver improvements to pool and increase activities such as early morning swimming.
  - Deliver toilets and exercise equipment around Arboretum.
- Deliver a nature based all access/aged playground in the town for both residents and visitors Deliver childcare services.
- Encourage investment in emergency infrastructure and services.
  - Deliver an integrated emergency service hub.
- Support the delivery of a supermarket on main street.
- Foster sport, culture and community events
  - Invest in infrastructure
  - Support more community events or arts and culture events at Sterling Place

### Lifestyle and character

- Provide greater housing diversity in town to support key workers and tourism.
  - Support delivery of small footprint and affordable housing
  - Monitor impact of Airbnb and short term lets upon housing supply.
- Invest more in tourism.
  - Support delivery of more affordable overnight accommodation options (i.e., a backpackers or expansion of the caravan park)
  - Build eco-tourism-wellness and food related tourism.
  - Deliver more retail geared towards users of Peaks Trail (such as hiking equipment, food drops and transport options)
- Improve amenity of public realm and green spaces
  - Repair raised garden beds on Parker Street

- Glass screens for outdoor dining
- Celebrate history.
  - Introduce more wayfinding signage around the town.
  - Provide historical information at key sites (linked to app with audio).

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Improve footpaths and bike paths throughout the town including a potential cycling strategy
- Make Parker Street more pedestrian friendly - Introduce traffic calming measures and continued advocacy from Council to see speed limits reduced
- Provide additional car parking -Investigate appropriateness of delivering parking at 75 Parker Street and 83 Willis Street sites.
- Advocate to DoT to monitor speeds of trucks.
- Deliver additional electric vehicle charging stations.
  - Identify appropriate and feasible locations.
  - Ensure new infrastructure does not negatively impact amenity.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Deliver improved water servicing.
  - Deliver community water tanks in non-reticulated areas.
- Improve waste management.
  - Provide additional facilities for residents and in public realm for visitors to Grampians National Park.
  - Provide separated recycling.
  - Implement education programs.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Improve safety against bushfire risk.
  - Improving access and egress routes.
  - Improving telecommunications infrastructure.
  - Address excess grass loading on streetscape (with regard to native vegetation).
- Highlight environmental values.
  - Introduce township trail to provide information on surrounding environment.
  - Mark the points which where the town grid intersects with Salt Creek to enhance connections.
- Deliver native tree planting along main street.
- Complete drainage study.



## Housing Response

Residential land within Dunkeld is zoned either LDRZ, LDRZ2, RLZ2 or TZ, reflecting a diversity of dwelling types available. Existing TZ land has capacity to accommodate up to 250 urban lots. Existing lifestyle and larger lot areas have capacity to accommodate a further 44 lots, a low supply given the attractiveness of the town to households seeking the lifestyle attributes offered by Dunkeld's setting and services.

Dunkeld will need to accommodate several different housing types, given the role of housing in accommodating visitors, tourism and hospitality workers, permanent residents and lifestyle seekers. Facilitating re-subdivision of existing TZ land will be needed to enable this to occur. The likelihood of latent demand for housing in Dunkeld contrasts with the apparent availability of developable land across the Township Zone, warranting investigation of the extent to which development constraints are limiting dwelling growth in the town. Additional land in Dunkeld should be planned to accommodate demand for lifestyle housing.

The extension of sewer infrastructure to currently unsewered parts of the Township Zone could create additional housing opportunities. One example is the Recreation Road area, where Council and Wannon Water are working with landowners to establish an agreement regarding sewerage this area.

Additionally, Council have advised that a new flood overlay is proposed for parts of the town adjacent to existing waterways. This could further limit development potential in affected areas once implemented.

## What the Community Want

- A greater number of residents from Dunkeld responded to a wider range of themes that were found to be important, including Lifestyle and Character, Access, Connection and Transport. Again, Community Infrastructure and Facilities received was found to be the most important, with Natural Values and Environmental Risk and Infrastructure (servicing) and Access, Connection and Transport also found to be important by residents.
- A wider range of 'needed improvements' for the town was also observed. More social events were noted as well as more medical services, improvements to the supermarket among others. Improved waste collection, and better roads were recurring mentions.
- Confirming the concerns of residents in other towns, better servicing of the road network connecting the towns and improved pedestrian and cyclist access was noted as needed infrastructure, for tourists as well as residents.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- See Council 2018 review (p.30) - Schedule 6 to the Design and Development Overlay (Dunkeld Larger Lot Residential Areas). In the case of Design and Development Overlay 6, the Schedule has been written to require a permit for all buildings and works. This was not the intended outcome of the Schedule. The Schedule needs to be re-written to explicitly state that a permit is not required except for specific works (and these need to be measurable). This is an urgent issue as it is having implications on Council's resources and delaying simple works.
- Retain existing Farming Zone on approaches to town; transition land use densities towards the threshold of the Grampians by rezoning parcels of land (excluding parcels closest to Victoria Valley Road) on the northern side Taylor Street currently in the Township Zone to Low Density Residential Zone or Rural Living Zone; Rezone 'main street' section of Parker street to C1Z to encourage consolidation of business uses and reduce permit requirements; retain existing flexibility in current land use zoning to allow for appropriate commercial development; develop design guidelines for new industrial development - apply DDO as part of any industrial zoning; rezoning appropriate land to LDRZ to offset rezoning undertaken to reflect environmental constraints; rezone land currently in smaller lots within the FZ at the eastern and western edges of town to RLZ . See 5.1 of Structure Plan for further proposed change to zones and overlay controls.
- Potential conflicts between land uses allowed under the Township Zone and the management of these conflicts. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Need for more larger lot and 'rural lifestyle' residential opportunities. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014)
- Opportunity for growth is encouraged primarily as infill development within the Township Zone - through existing lots within the town which have the potential for easy re-subdivision. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Opportunity to protect the existing character of the town through the provision of 'design guidelines' responding to the character of different types of development, and implemented through a series of Design and Development Overlays. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).



- Opportunity identified for 'greenfield' type development within Dunkeld through the subdivision of existing larger lots within the boundaries of the town. Two areas are identified - an area to the north (in the 'northern residential precinct') and one to the south (around the Templeton Street / Recreation Road intersection) (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Opportunity for other types of residential growth in the adjoining areas through the introduction of the Rural Living Zone, on the basis of a 6ha minimum subdivision size for these areas. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- A Traffic & Pedestrian Management Plan is an initiative from the Dunkeld Structure Plan (2014).
- Challenges to the management of development within the town in relation to the threat of wildfire from the Grampians and also the threshold to the Wannon River floodplain. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Significant review of the Dunkeld Structure Plan needs to be linked to seeing the effect of the Grampians Peak Trail on tourism, retail and land use needs in Dunkeld. (Data on the effect of GPT on Dunkeld is likely to emerge in next 2-3 years).
- Ensure a delicate mix of local and tourism services ensuring local sense of place is not eroded.
- Create a safer, more accessible and convenient environment that is not dominated by vehicles.
- Residential or service vehicles accessing the Township are contained in discreet and well-concealed car parking courts off the main street.
- Pursue the occasional infilling of inactive/non-contributory sites with responsive contemporary architecture containing ground level retail activity.
- Deliver an updated Urban Design Framework for Dunkeld.
- Dunkeld has a structure plan. Provide gaps analysis of existing strategic planning work (structure plans or other key docs) developed across all small towns, identifying any changes refinements required. This would also examine UDFs and have regard to the issues identified in existing community plans but could also lead to an updated or new Structure Plan being completed for the town.



# GLENTHOMPSON

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## Town Summary

Glenthompson is a small rural town in western Victoria, situated on the Glenelg Highway 239km west of Melbourne, 48km east of Hamilton and 18km east of Dunkeld.

Pastoral settlement in the Glenthompson area began in 1848, and the subdivision of the land began in 1853. Nowadays it is a very quiet country town that serves as a minor transport and services hub for the surrounding farming district.

The population has reduced in Glenthompson from the 2011 census counting 264 people, to the 2021 census which recorded 246. Its most notable landmark is the tall brickworks chimney that is also the symbol of the town's main industry for a period of time, as it provided bricks for regional buildings constructed in the post-war era. The brickworks is now closed. Rose Cottage in McLennan Street was first built in 1850 and was used for business as a blacksmith, the local bakery, and the front room for dressmaking and alteration. In 1996 residents started the Glenthompson Historical Group Inc. which operates a museum out of the former Glenthompson Railway Station. The History Centre is open to visit on Sundays from 12pm or by appointment. St Peter's Anglican Church in McLennan St (Caramut Road) had the story of St Peter produced as a mural around the internal walls of the church. Local artist Gareth Colliton from Warrnambool used local identities in place of the traditional faces to produce this modern variation. The Church is open every day. More recently Oaklands Hill Wind Farm was constructed to the south of the town and has 32 wind turbines.

## Vision

Residents wish Glenthompson to be positioned as the eastern gateway to the Southern Grampians Region, providing a township that is not only an attractive place to live and work but for tourists to pass through and appreciate it's history, natural values and the quaint regional lifestyle on offer.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “Rural Settlement”. The overall role of Glenthompson within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

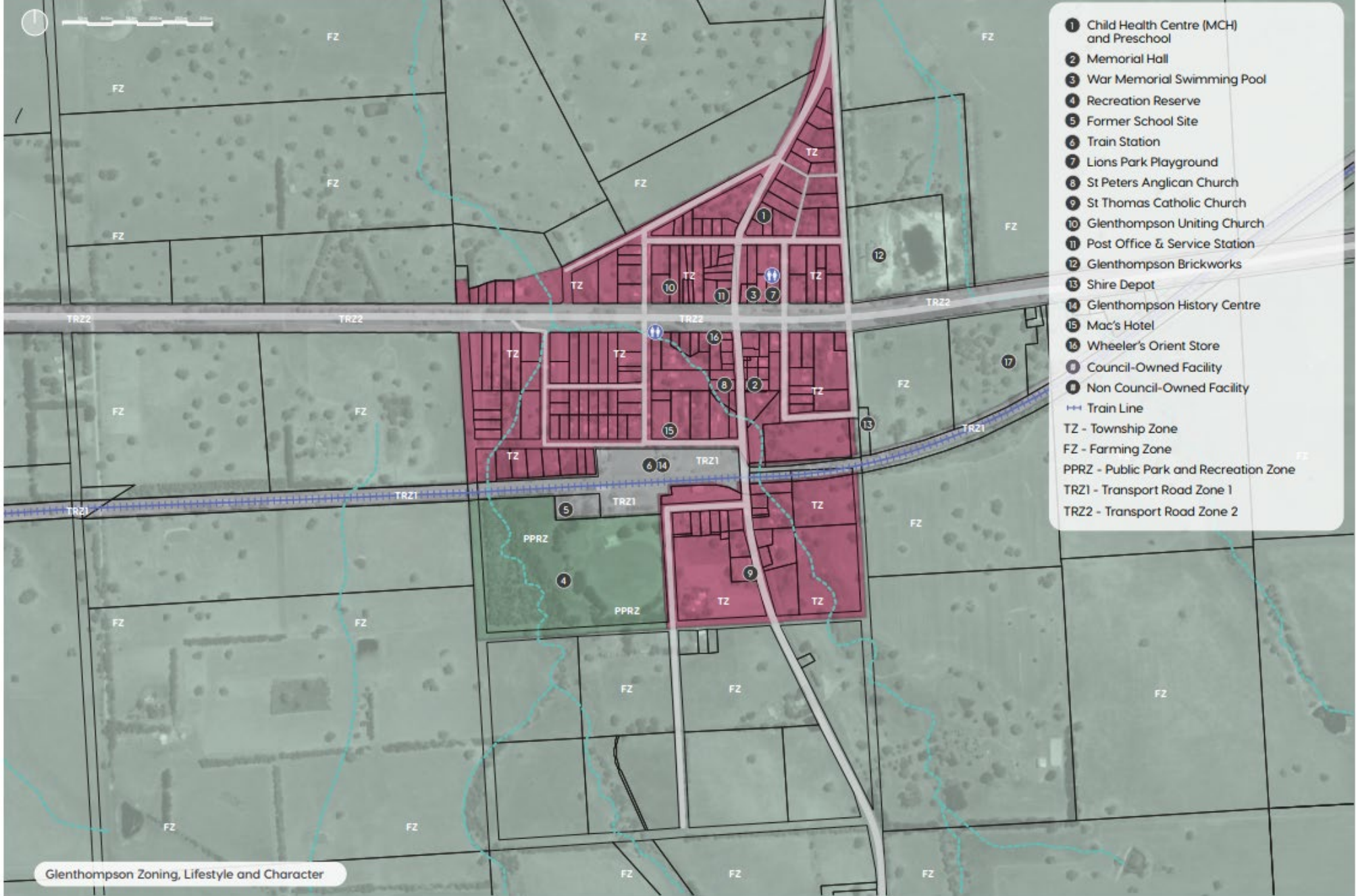
- Moderate to low provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Low demand for housing and low supply of residential land.
- Relative isolation from key services and jobs, may indicate low suitability for rural living lifestyle.
- Indicates a consolidation of the towns existing features, allowing for some carefully planned growth in tourist and residential accommodation based on the individual town.

## Existing Attributes

- The town is poorly serviced by community infrastructure with no kindergarten, primary or secondary school, hospital or medical centre or community centre located within the town. The town is well serviced by recreation infrastructure.
- Glenthompson has experienced very low levels of dwelling development activity. Property prices lower than the Shire median also indicate low demand for housing at present, a condition confirmed in consultation with real estate agents.
- The town is well located to respond to demand for housing and visitor accommodation generated by the Grampians National Park, however has less scenic values and topographical variation than nearby Dunkeld in support of a potential tourism role.
- Glenthompson is proximate to a substantial area of mineral exploration to the immediate east which, if mined, could lead to new employment in the area and housing demand in the town.
- There is limited capacity to accommodate additional housing in the town based on current zoning, lot size profile and the absence of sewerage infrastructure.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Glenthompson Memorial Hall	Glenthompson	Trust	Hall Committee	Community Meeting Space
Glenthompson Recreation Reserve - Pavilion	Glenthompson	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Glenthompson Pool	Glenthompson	Other	Council	1 outdoor pool (25m)
Glenthompson Recreation Reserve	Glenthompson	Crown	CoM	1 x Football
Glenthompson Recreation Reserve – Multipurpose courts	Glenthompson	Crown	CoM	2 x Netball, 2 x Tennis
Glenthompson Recreation Reserve Playground	Glenthompson		State Govt (CoM)	Local (township)
Lions Park Playground	Glenthompson		Council	District (township)



## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- There is limited patronage of Glenthompson pool and significant upgrades are required.
- Infrastructure, services and activities to support wellbeing of youth and children are lacking.

#### Lifestyle and character

- While Glenthompson is rich in history, the town doesn't currently maximise its tourist attractions.

#### Access, Connection and Transport

- The town lacks regular public transport options or active transport infrastructure.
- Inadequate signage at the Glenelg Highway/Cameron Street/McLennon Street intersection.
- Glenthompson is on the Ararat to Portland trainline, which has potential to be re-activated.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- There are no sewerage services in town and septic systems. Natural Values and Open Space

Constraints that may impact future development include:

- The Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) covers most of the town and land surrounding the town boundary with some native vegetation requiring a permit for removal located about 800m northwest of the town.
- Some privately owned green spaces are poorly maintained.





## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Repurpose pool / reinvest in alternative community infrastructure.
  - Develop the former school site.
  - Consider reducing pool service to a splash pad.
  - Improve playground or build a skatepark.
  - Demolish old brick toilets on highway and upgrade Lions Park toilets
- Investment in community hall
  - Ensure community facilities are accessible for all.
  - Implement programming of activities for young people and families.

### Lifestyle and character

- Celebrate history.
  - Introduce or improve current wayfinding signage including historical landmarks
  - Provide historical information at key sites (linked to app with audio).
- Activate the public realm.
  - Restore and promote the heritage significance of buildings within the town through a potential grant program
  - Activate and revitalise old shops through artist residencies.
  - Upgrade signage at town entrance to welcome visitors and promote attractiveness as a destination.
  - Fund mural in town to foster town beautification.
  - Deliver creek walk and dam beautification.

### Access, Connection and Transport

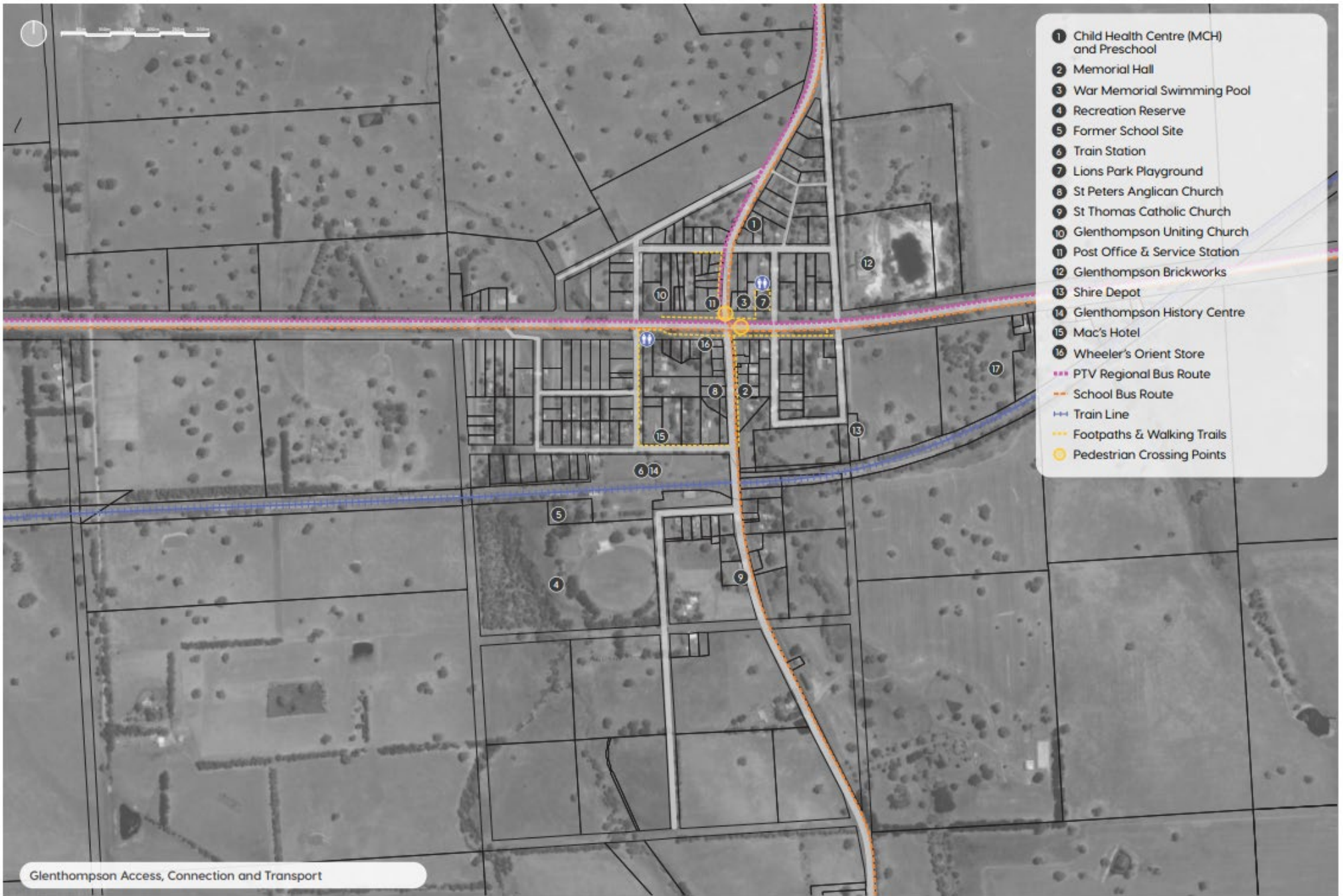
- Improve walking and cycling paths
  - Improve walking and cycling path to Dunkeld (such as Yuppeckiar Creek Walk).
  - Deliver an accessible shared path network.
- Improve bus services
  - Continue to advocate to the State Government for improved frequency on Ballarat-Hamilton-Mt. Gambier route.
  -
- Advocate to the State Government for road safety improvements.
  - Broad and ongoing road renewal.
  - Signage to direct trucks to avoid using brakes to reduce noise pollution.
  - Stop signs installed at Cameron Street and Mclennan Street at the Glenelg Highway intersection.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Investigate alternative wastewater management solutions
  - Pursue rectification/mitigation of off-site discharge.
- Improve waste management services
  - Provide additional waste facilities around public spaces.
  - Deliver smart bins for visitors

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Invest in reducing bushfire risk.
  - Reduce grass loading on streetscapes.
  - Provide community water tanks/ overhead fill in areas with non-reticulated water supply.
  - Improve telecommunications infrastructure (including areas in between towns).



## Housing Response

All residential land supply in Glenthompson is zoned TZ. There is the potential to add a further 13 new Rural Living lots to the supply. There is limited capacity to accommodate additional housing in the town based on current zoning, lot size profile and the absence of sewerage infrastructure.

There is opportunity for resource extraction in Southern Grampians, including near Glenthompson to increase into the future. This could drive additional future demand for housing, particularly in towns such as Glenthompson.

## What the Community Wants

Residents in Glenthompson viewed Community Infrastructure and Facilities as the most important theme which includes activation of the former school site for a community hub, with Access Connection and Transport as considerably important too. Lifestyle and Character and Infrastructure (servicing) and Natural Values and Environmental Risk were noted too.

Residents advocated for improvements to existing walking tracks are needed, which aligns with Access Transport and Connection receiving the most attention from residents. Most residents mentioned improvements to the commercial centre, which is assumed to refer to general uplift of the area. Better recycling, better sewerage and reopening the pub are also noted as important.

Reflecting the findings from other towns and those of the Intercept Survey, residents viewed all themes as needing funding and greater planning on behalf of Council, in particular with regards to Community Infrastructure and Facilities and Infrastructure (servicing). Community needs, such as a local GP, a men's shed and retainment of the local pool were noted as needed improvements whilst a greater number of social gathering opportunities were also argued for, such as morning tea in the super room.

Tourist accommodation and active street frontages as well as revitalising old shops, all to encourage greater tourist numbers, similar to that of other towns were noted.

Road safety improvements and clear parking markings, particularly for Memorial Road were argued for as well as improvements, and as previously noted in other towns, greater accessibility for pedestrians was also advocated for. Interestingly, the return of the passenger rail for the town was requested, as were other improvements to local public transport, such as a community bus service.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Investigate delivery of township plan
  - Position Glenthompson as the “eastern gateway” to Southern Grampians region
  - Identify infrastructure needs
  - Understand current community priorities
  - Review zoning regime and lot sizes



# PENSHURST

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## Town Summary

Penshurst is situated on a sensitive groundwater environment near an extinct volcano at the intersection of four major highways, 30km south of Hamilton. There is a natural spring of significance to the region's Traditional Owners, the Eastern Maar located within the Botanic Gardens. The town had a population of 491 as of the 2021 census, representing a slight population increase (22 people) from 2011.

## Vision

Being a small regional town, Penshurst could increase its stature in the hierarchy of towns and ensure that it grows as a healthy, happy and connected places for people to live, whilst encouraging growth in tourism and associated activities. Through this, Penshurst should enhance and add to its community assets to ensure that it grows as a viable and liveable community. Finally, considering Penshurst has wonderful natural environs and features, these assets should be sustained and preserved for future generations.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “Lifestyle Rural Settlement”. The overall role of Penshurst within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

- Moderate to high provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Lower demand for housing alongside underutilised supply.
- Combination of demand indicators point to moderate suitability to accommodate demand.
- Indicates suitability for incremental change and growth that builds on the opportunities within the town.
- Increase in residentially zoned land could increase demand and thus place the town in the category above.

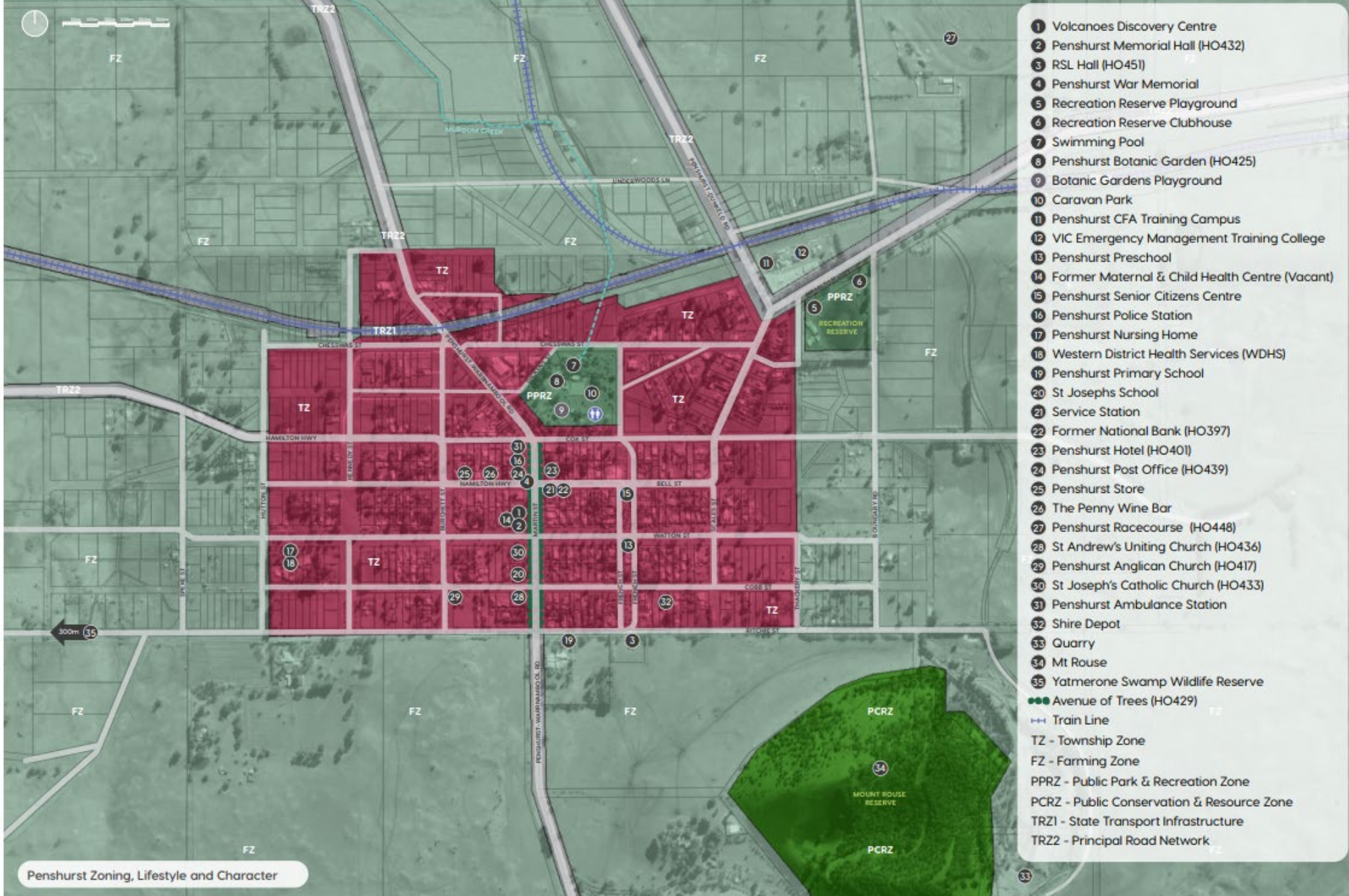
## Existing Attributes

- Peshurst is a rural service centre which provides a district role to township and rural residents and provides key community infrastructure, including a kindergarten, primary school and medical centre.
- The town is currently unsewered; however, Wannon Water is investigating opportunities to introduce reticulated sewer infrastructure to the town.
- Close proximity to Hamilton is the main advantage of Peshurst in terms of accommodating future demand, along with the availability of community infrastructure.
- The lack of sewerage restricts urban development in the town – only 3 new dwellings have been approved since 2014/15. The median house price in the town is \$310,000, approximately \$40,000 lower than the Southern Grampians median price.
- Discussions with real estate agents indicated that towns proximate to Hamilton are popular with buyers and would be expected to achieve good short-term sales rates if new township land was made available.
- Peshurst is a logical location to support moderate urban growth given proximity to Hamilton, the prospect of reticulated sewer and good supply of community infrastructure.



Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Penshurst Memorial Hall	Penshurst	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Penshurst Bowls Club	Penshurst	Crown	Council; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Penshurst Recreation Reserve - Pavilion	Penshurst	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Penshurst Senior Citizens	Penshurst	Crown	Council	Community Meeting Space
Penshurst Racing Club	Penshurst	Crown	CoM	
Penshurst Pool	Penshurst	DELWP	Council	1 outdoor pool (25m)
Penshurst Recreation Reserve	Penshurst	Crown	CoM	1 x Cricket, 1 x Football, 2 x Netball, 2 x Tennis
Penshurst Bowls Club	Penshurst	Crown	CoM	1 x Lawnbowls
Penshurst Recreation Reserve Playground	Penshurst		State Govt (CoM)	Local (township)
Penshurst Botanic Gardens Playground	Penshurst		Council	District (township)
Penshurst Kindergarten	Penshurst	Council	CPSG	Sessional



## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- The swimming pool in Peshurst is in poor condition, has low visitation and high operating costs.
- The caravan park is of a low standard, with limited infrastructure and no on-site supervision.

#### Lifestyle and character

- A high proportion of activity space in the town centre is apparently vacant.
- The amenity of the streetscape requires improvement, especially Bell and Martin Streets.
- The built form of the township better reflects historical uses and is poorly equipped to meet current needs.

#### Access, Connection and Transport

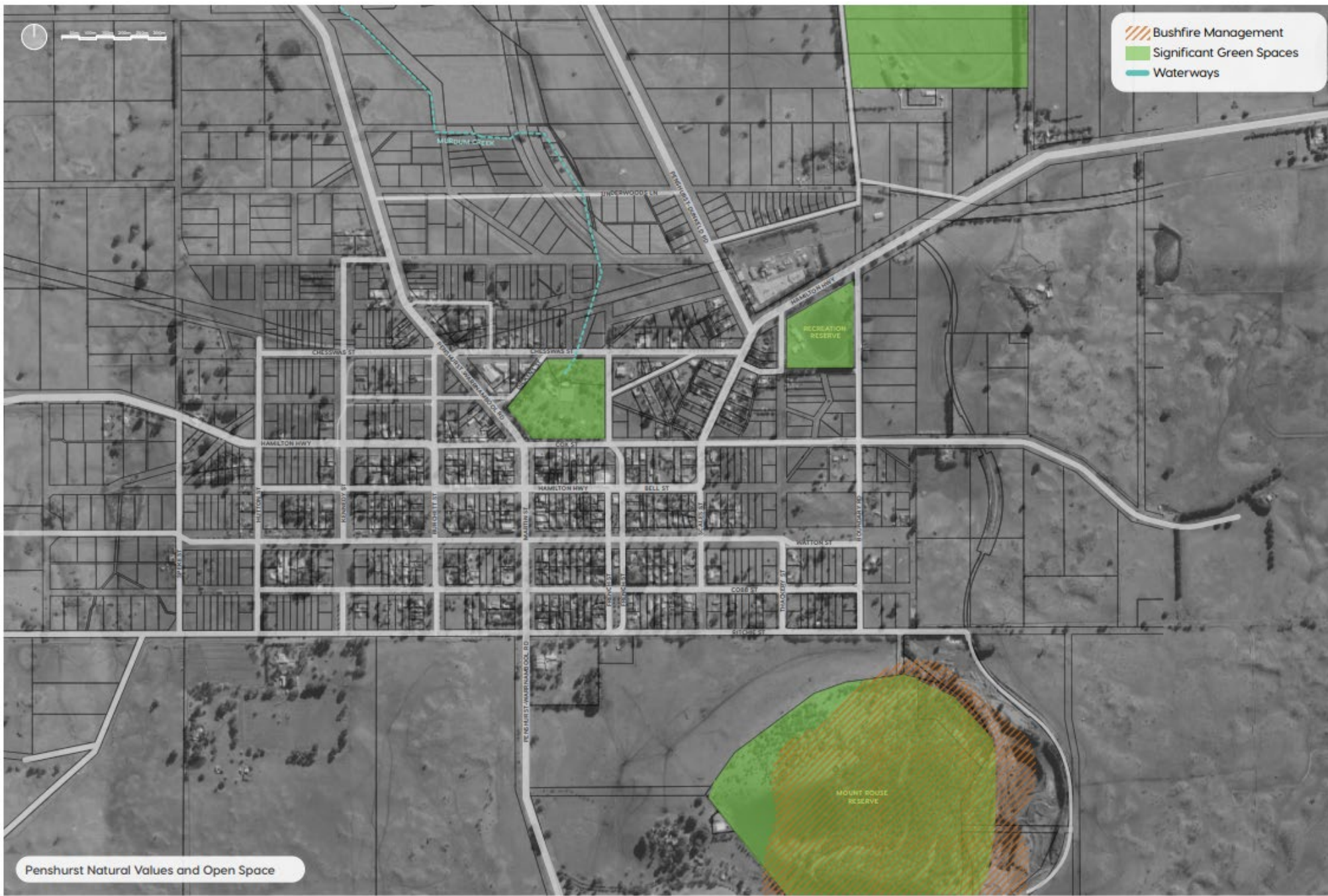
- The Botanic Gardens lack shared paths infrastructure.
- Ongoing road renewal is needed.
- Public transport access is limited.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- The most densely populated settlement without reticulated sewerage. Natural Values and Open Space

Several environmental constraints may inhibit development in certain areas of the town ship and its surrounds:

- Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) are located around the township boundary within a kilometre of the town, including Bandicoots, Readers Daisy, Australasian Shoveler, and Magpie Geese, among others.
- Some facilities in the Botanic Gardens require upgrades.
- The groundwater aquifers underlying the town are currently undervalued.



Penshurst Natural Values and Open Space

## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Investigate repurposing of swimming pool into a splash park or commit to re-investing in the facility.
- Investigate value of delivering a neighbourhood hub to Penshurst.
- Provide support to schools and kindergarten.

### Lifestyle and character

- Better leverage Penshurst's location on the Great Southern Touring Route.
- Maximise increased tourism opportunities generated by delivery of Penshurst Volcanic Discovery Centre.
- Seek funding to undertake a streetscape revitalisation project, involving improvements to building facades and street tree plantings.
- Investigate how to better utilise vacant heritage buildings.
- Complete Masterplan for the Caravan Park to enable future upgrades such as more space and a camp kitchen or upgrades to facilities in the Botanic Gardens.
- Investigate options for a dump point in the town noting that the town doesn't have access to reticulated sewerage.

### Access, Connection and Transport

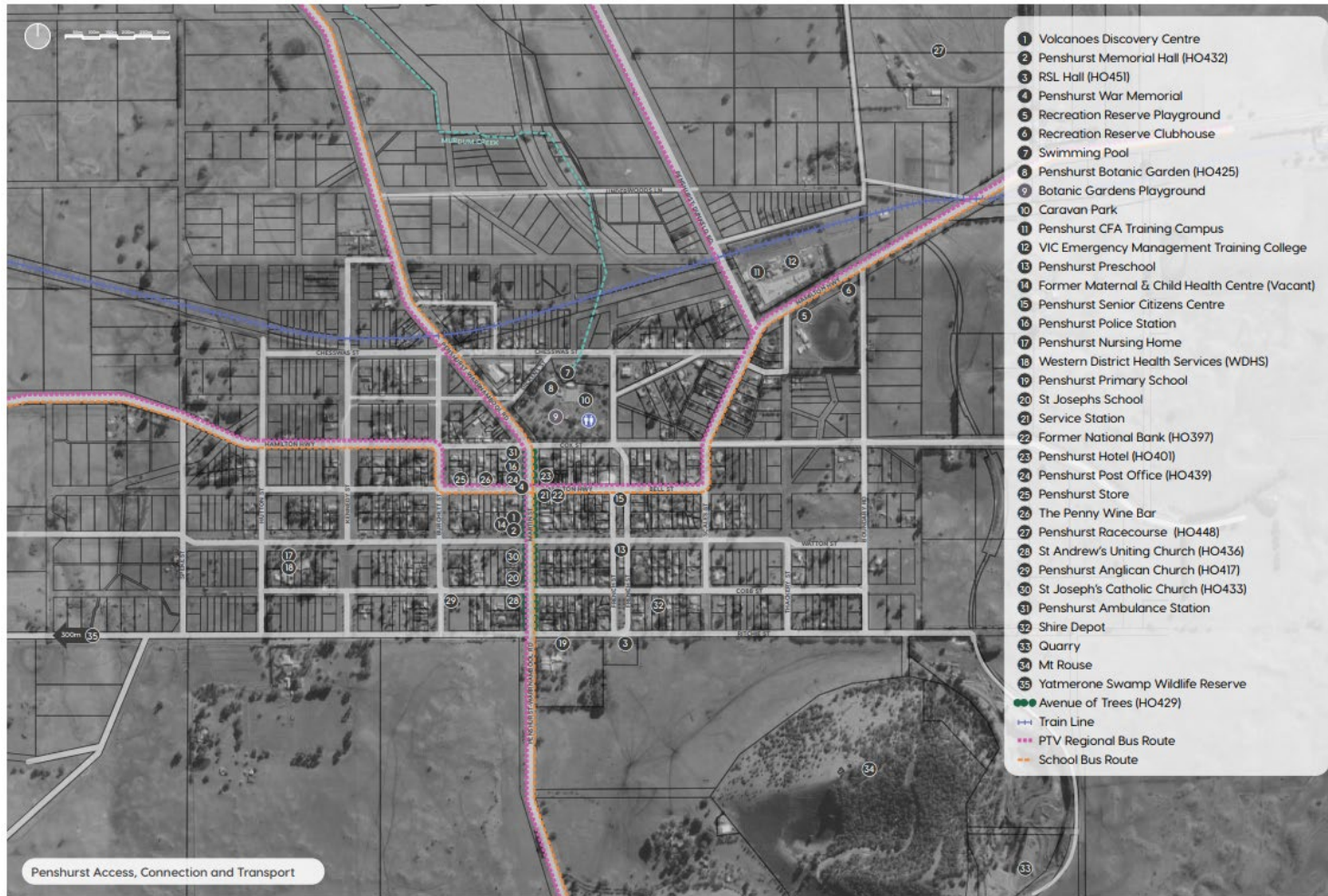
- Advocate to Department of Transport for broad and ongoing road renewal.
- Continue to advocate to Department of Transport to improve bus service.
- Explore potential to purchase a community bus and local school bus.
- Improve shared paths and active transport connectivity across the town.
- Create a walking and cycling loop that connects the Botanic Gardens.
- Improve the walking track to Mount Rouse
- Deliver signage and bicycle parking facilities in Botanic Gardens.
- Investigate changes to parking and in Bell Street to allow for some longer vehicle parking.
- Advocate for better crossing points across Bell Street.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Finalise funding model for Penshurst adaptive wastewater scheme, to be delivered with Wannon Water.

### Natural Values and Open Space

- Investigate the groundwater aquifers underlying Penshurst and surrounds and identify environmental, Indigenous and cultural significance and interconnection with the Mt Rouse volcano and nearby Wetlands including Yatmerone.



## Housing Response

Residential land in Penshurst is all zoned TZ. There is potential capacity to accommodate 43 new lots, with 1 additional infill lot. Penshurst is well placed in terms of relative proximity to several larger settlements including Hamilton, Dunkeld and Warrnambool and is currently the subject of a wastewater pilot project which could result in greater urban lot development being possible in the future.

## What the Community want

Contrary to most of the previous towns, Lifestyle and Character was mentioned the most while the remaining four themes were also noted as important but less frequently.

Road improvements, telecoms and medical services also received attention from residents.

Issues relating to Infrastructure (servicing), Lifestyle and Character and Access, Connection and Transport were brought up the most, suggesting that aspects of the natural environment and Community Infrastructure were regarded as less in need of improvement. However, a GP, and long term day care facilities were noted as needed aspects of Community Infrastructure as well as promoting funding for infrastructure upgrades to the kindergarten. Additionally, specific improvements to the Caravan Park, such as toilet upgrades were also noted.

General improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access, road safety and way finding measures were noted.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Require land owners to provide own infrastructure to provide water access in less concentrated urban areas as part of building permit, e.g. 10000L water tank with fitting for fire truck. Triggers in planning system needed.
- Penshurst is a good candidate town for consideration of rural living, especially with its support services (schools, local retail, quality open space, WDHS health centre etc).
- Vision of community infrastructure needs.
- Investigation areas for rural living/residential development and logical zone changes around existing townships in map form through a structure plan



TURBINGSTON  
Country School

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# TARRINGTON

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## Town Summary

Tarrington is a village located 9km south east of Hamilton with a strong German heritage, originally named Hochkirch by its German founder in 1853. At the 2021 census, Tarrington had a population of 467, which is a slight increase (additional 16 residents) since 2011.

The town has a large Lutheran Church, along with a school, church, hall, oval, , and a fire station. The township also supports a dedicated 10-kilometre cycling track, which links through the Henty Wine Region. The town is recognised for its local tourist attraction of hay bale art as part of the annual Laternenfest.

## Vision

Tarrington will be a place that makes the most of its existing and improved recreational and natural landscape features. By providing a range of housing options including heritage cottages and houses and low density rural lots, it will be a lifestyle choice for a diversity of people. Through community gatherings and events, we will recognise and celebrate our past and our community values. We will retain the village feel of our community whilst supporting the growth and attraction of appropriate business and cultural activities.

## Hierarchy Order

Classed as “Lifestyle Rural Settlement”. The overall role of Tarrington within the hierarchal network of small towns surrounding Hamilton is a supporting one, due to the following considerations:

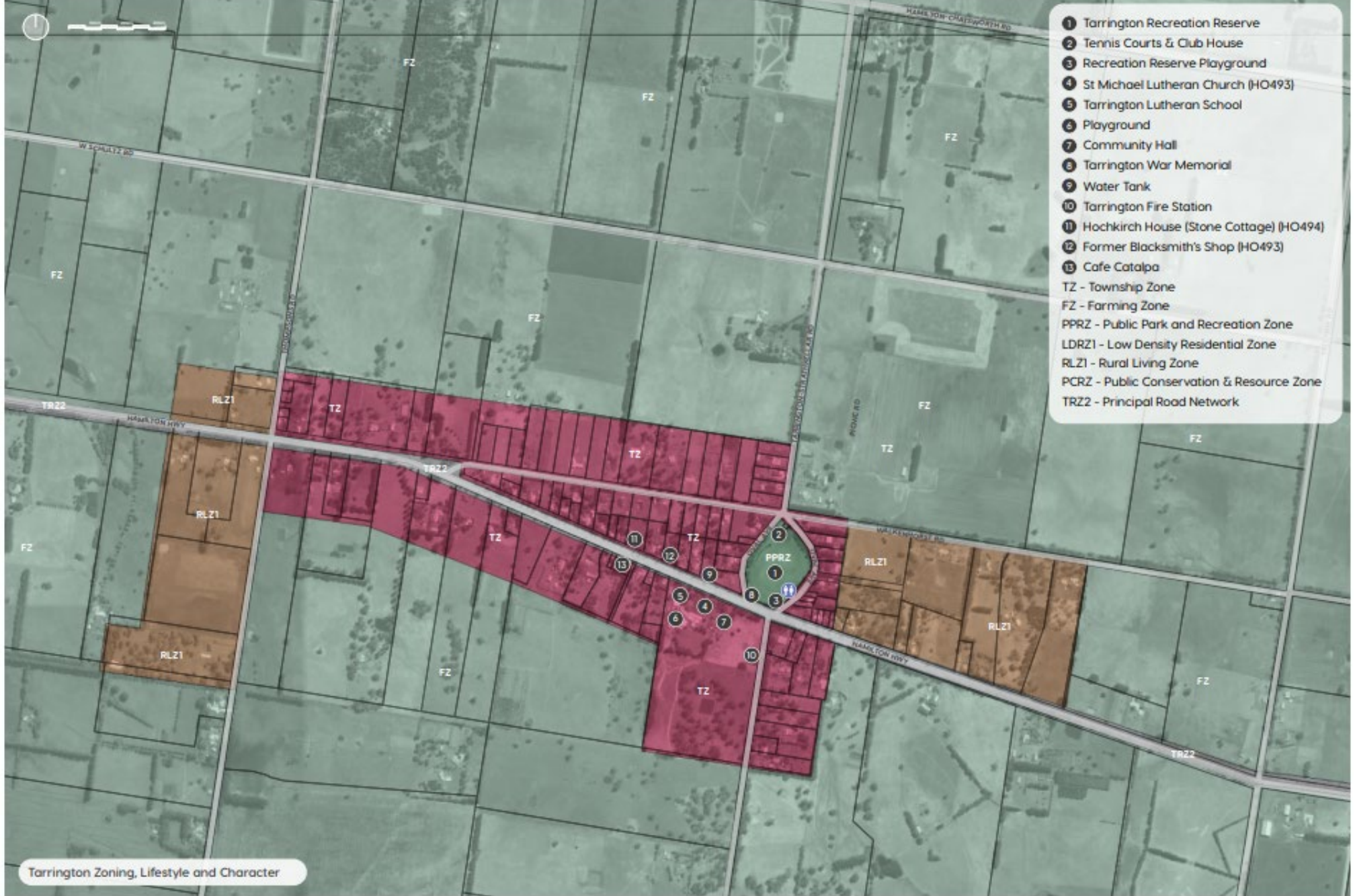
- Moderate to high provision of services, community infrastructure and retail/commercial opportunities.
- Lower demand for housing alongside underutilised supply.
- Combination of demand indicators point to moderate suitability to accommodate demand.
- Indicates suitability for incremental change and growth that builds on the opportunities within the town.
- Increase in residentially zoned land could increase demand and thus place the town in the category above.

## Existing Conditions

- Tarrington is located in close proximity to Hamilton and is only 9km from the Hamilton CBD. The western edge of the Tarrington RLZ is only 1.3km from the eastern edge of the Hamilton RLZ.
- No reticulated sewer is available and the town is relatively poorly serviced by community infrastructure, with only a primary school.
- Agents identified that there is moderate demand for housing in the town given proximity to Hamilton.
- The Tarrington Structure Plan encourages economic growth of the town including through increased tourism and agri-businesses. Any such increase in economic activity has the potential to underpin residential demand within the town.
- Proximity to employment and services in Hamilton is one of the main drivers of housing demand in the Shire.
- The lack of community infrastructure in Tarrington is a key weakness, indicating that a potential future role in accommodating lower density (off-sewer) could be contemplated by the Strategy subject to a constraints assessment.

Community infrastructure provision, as assessed by Council is described as follows:

Community Infrastructure	Location	Land Owner	Managed By	Facility Details
Tarrington Recreation Reserve - Pavilion	Tarrington	Crown	State Government; CoM	Community Meeting Space
Tarrington Recreation Reserve	Tarrington	Crown	CoM	1 x Cricket
Tarrington Recreation Reserve - Tennis courts	Tarrington	Crown	CoM	3 x Tennis
Tarrington Recreation Reserve Playground	Tarrington	Crown	State Govt (CoM)	District (township)



## Key items for consideration in ongoing Strategic Planning:

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### Considerations

#### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Tarrington lacks a community hall and an emergency meeting space
- Improvement to facilities at Recreation Reserve are required.

#### Lifestyle and character

- Highway trees require increased maintenance to better contribute to amenity.
- Street layout of Main Street encourages speeding and through-movement.

#### Access, Connection and Transport

- Broad and ongoing road renewal is needed – roads are not fit for purpose as they are based on decades old traffic and freight patterns.
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure needs improvements and increased wayfinding signage
- Telecommunications/poor network coverage is an issue in the town.
- Limited public transport options.

#### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Tarrington is not serviced by reticulated sewerage.

#### Natural Values and Open Space

- None



## Opportunities

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

### Community Infrastructure and Services

- Promote and develop Arts and Culture through community events.
- Invest in placemaking at the Recreation Reserve
- Advocate for funding to upgrade facilities at Recreation Reserve, including provision of new community centre.

### Lifestyle and character

- Upgrade interpretative signage along historic walk
- Enhance Tarrington's main street.
  - Deliver improvements to bus stop, post office box, telephone space, landscaping and pavement treatments.
  - Introduce traffic calming and urban design/landscaping treatments to slow through-traffic and encourage lingering in town.
  - Investigate civic art to highlight sites and improve visual amenity.
  - Better maintain vegetation on verges
- Explore creative utilisation of Water Tower

### Access, Connection and Transport

- Improve active transport infrastructure and connectivity.
  - Deliver regular rest stops/shaded seated areas on the path to Hamilton.
  - Improve quality of shared path to Hamilton and provide increased wayfinding signage.
  - Explore opportunities to develop pedestrian nodes within the wide Hamilton Highway road reserve
  - Provide a shared path connection to the highway crossing to join the Recreation Reserve to the Main Street pedestrian network
- Continue to advocate to Department of Transport to improve quality and safety of road network and for inclusion in Hamilton Town Bus Service.

### Infrastructure (servicing)

- Provide community water tanks or overhead fill supply to areas with non-reticulated water supply to protect against bushfire

## Natural Values and Open Space

- Continue to support the implementation of the of the Tarrington Recreation Reserve as a community and sporting facility.
- Explore the enhancement of stands of native vegetation throughout the town through the addition of native understorey planting.
- Apply the Vegetation Protection Overlay to significant stands of vegetation.





## Housing Response

Residential land in Tarrington is zoned RLZ1 and TZ. There is the capacity to add an additional 11 new lots and 11 potential infill lots to the residential and supply. Tarrington has experienced moderate levels of housing increase in recent years and is well-located to accommodate demand for lower density / lifestyle development. There is the possibility to investigate the relative suitability of Tarrington to accommodate lifestyle demand to support the housing role of Hamilton. The capacity of existing zoned land in Tarrington is severely limited by the absence of reticulated sewer.

## What the Community Wants

Community Infrastructure was noted as the most important theme that needs to be addressed through the building of a new multi-use community centre at the oval whilst the return of a café/restaurant was also mentioned as the improvements or additions that were needed most for the town.

Aspects of Community Infrastructure and Facilities, Lifestyle and Character and of the Natural Environment were mentioned the most. Specific point so improvements for residents include parking additions and playground enhancements.

In addition to this, residents also advocated for investment into civic art to highlight the character of town and improve visual amenity.

## Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- Tarrington has a structure plan. Provide gaps analysis of existing strategic planning work (structure plans or other key docs) developed across all small towns. This would also examine UDFs and have regard to the issues identified in existing community plans. Review recently collected feedback on Council Plan 2021-2025 as to local priorities.
- Provide a critique of existing structure plan, identifying any changes refinements required. Review recently collected feedback on Council Plan as to local priorities.
- In considering future growth and development of Tarrington, Council may contemplate a review and potential amendment to the existing Planning Scheme to integrate the provision of waste water management initiatives for a suite of lot sizes in potential residential areas in unsewered Townships.
- 2018 Planning Scheme Review states that Tarrington does not require urgent rezoning.
- Requiring land owners to provide own infrastructure to provide water access in less concentrated urban areas, as part of building permit. E.g. 10000 water tank with fitting for fire truck. Triggers in planning system needed.
- Vision of community infrastructure needs.
- Investigation areas for rural living/residential development and logical zone changes around existing townships in map form.