



Municipal Strategic Statement

December 2014

21.01 INTRODUCTION

This Municipal Strategic Statement illustrates the desired land use planning framework for the Northern Grampians Shire.

The statement aims to provide strategic direction for the development of the municipality, considering the range of environmental, social and economic factors influencing the Shire.

The statement outlines the key strategic planning objectives, strategies and implementation mechanisms that, collectively, provide the rationale for policies, land use and development provisions of the Planning Scheme. It is Council's key planning tool and provides for development anticipated to be required until the year 2041.

In considering permit applications, both Council and applicants **must** consider whether the proposal or application is consistent with the vision, objectives, strategies, and implementation mechanisms contained in this statement.

21.02 MUNICIPAL PROFILE

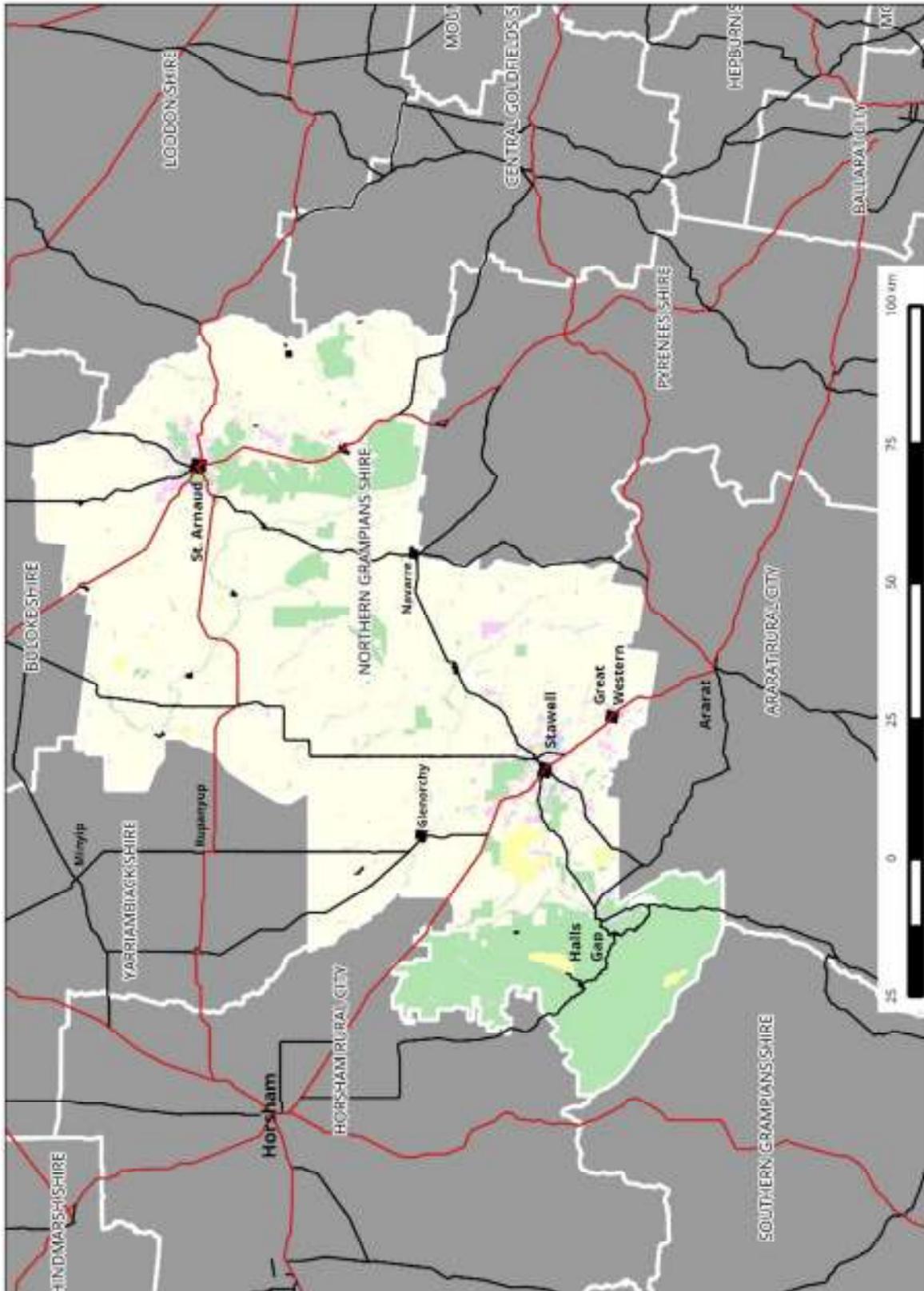
21.02-1 Local Context

Northern Grampians Shire is located in the Wimmera Southern Mallee Region of Victoria, and shares its boundaries with Yarriambiack Shire, and Buloke Shire to the north, Loddon Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, and Pyrenees Shire to the east, the Rural City of Ararat, and Southern Grampians Shire to the south, and the Rural City of Horsham to the west.

The Shire covers 5,918 km² of land and is traversed by the Wimmera River. The Grampian Ranges dominate the Shire's southern reaches and the Avoca River forms part of the municipality's eastern boundary. The north east part of the municipality consists of the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains and the north western area is part of the Wimmera Plains. The Shire also contains the headwaters of the Richardson and Avon Rivers (Refer Map 1 – Northern Grampians Shire Framework Plan).

The majority of the Shire's population resides in the district towns of Stawell and St Arnaud. Halls Gap is a significant regional town, and the small settlements of Great Western, Navarre, Stuart Mill, Marnoo, and Glenorchy provide important focal points for local communities.

Map 1: Northern Grampians Shire - Framework Plan



21.02-2 Key Land Use Themes

The following topic areas recognise the key land use planning themes for the municipality, and as such, are reflected throughout this Local Planning Policy Framework Section of Council's Planning Scheme.

- Settlement;
- Environment and Landscape Values;
- Landscape and Built Environment;
- Heritage;
- Housing;
- Economic Development;
- Community Development;
- Transport; and
- Infrastructure.

Settlement

Approximately 73% of the Shire's population reside in the towns of Stawell (approximately 6,000 people) and St Arnaud (approximately 3,000 people). These towns provide the focus of the Shire's retail, commercial, industrial, administrative, and service orientated employment and economic activity.

European settlement occurred in the 1850's. The settlement pattern of the Shire reflects that association with early gold mining towns with street layouts following old bullock trails.

The Shire's population was estimated to be approximately 11,799 in 2013. The Shire's population has sustained approximately 1.0% decrease over the last decade. Population forecasts to 2031 suggest the Shire's population will remain steady or continue to decrease slightly.

The Shire's population age structure is similar to Regional Victorian profiles. 55 – 74 year olds accounts for almost a quarter of the Shire's population, this population group accounts for the greatest change over the last Census period representing growth of this age cohort of over 400 individuals. The greatest loss across the age group classes included: 30 to 34 (-111 persons) and 5 to 9 (-105 persons).

The total number of households has increased over the last census periods; however, the average household size has decreased with a rise in single person and two person households. The average household size is 2.3 persons.

Many of the Shire's smaller rural townships and settlements are experiencing some population decline, with many elderly persons shifting to the larger townships where greater levels of community services are provided.

Environment and Landscape Values

With the Grampian Ranges to the south and the Pyrenees Ranges to the east, the Shire contains some of the most important environmental features in the State. Other major environmental assets of the Shire include Lake Lonsdale, Lake Fyans, the Teddington Reservoir, Walkers Lake, and the Kara Kara State Forest.

The Shire includes parts of three distinctive catchments, including:

- the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment in the southern most portion of the Shire;
- the Wimmera Catchment in the southern and western portions of the Shire; and
- the North Central Catchment which extends from Navarre to the northern boundaries of the Shire. This catchment has two major sub-catchments in the Shire, being the Avoca River catchment and the Avon-Richardson catchment.

The Shire has wide range of habitat areas supporting a diverse range of flora and fauna.

Flooding in the alluvial plains, wildfires, and salinity, and erosion in the more elevated discharge areas represent the Shire's major environmental concerns/issues.

The Avoca, Avon, Richardson and Wimmera rivers are all within the Shire. The upper catchment of the Wimmera River supplies a secure water supply to thousands of farms and over fifty towns in the Wimmera and Mallee regions. Stawell and St Arnaud townships are supplied water from Lake Fyans, Lake Bellfield, and the area known as the Volcano. In addition, flooding occurs along these river systems, and further sheet flooding also occurs throughout parts of the Shire, creating overland flow paths.

Heritage

The Grampians Region is a rich indigenous cultural location. The Northern Grampians Shire is part of the broader Grampians Region that containing over 70% of Victoria's indigenous art sites. The Shire's two main towns, Stawell and St Arnaud, were developed and settled by Europeans in Victoria's 1850's gold rush. The built heritage within these towns reflects their gold rush origins.

The Grampians and Wimmera Plains have important aboriginal heritage.

The Brambuk Cultural Centre at Halls Gap, and aboriginal art at significant sites at Bunjils Cave, Lake Lonsdale and within the Grampians National Park, support promotion and preservation of the aboriginal heritage of the region.

Economic Development

Agriculture

Agriculture is the dominant land use, and industry, in the Shire, with key pursuits being sheep grazing in the south, and cropping (especially wheat) in the North West. Intensive animal industries, including piggeries and poultry, are important components in the rural landscape.

Viticulture is an established industry in and around Great Western. The industry is also establishing in the foothills of the Pyrenees. The Shire has a temperate climate ideal for wool, grain, and wine production with an average rainfall of 450 mm per year, ranging from 850 mm along the Grampians fringe to 600 mm per year in the Teddington area, and 400 mm in the northern plains.

Resource Exploration and Extraction

The Stawell Gold Mine is Victoria's longest operating gold mine. Earth and energy resources are continuing to be developed and extracted throughout the Shire and are of regional significance.

Industrial Development

Industry is generally concentrated in the towns of Stawell and St Arnaud, and includes activities such as brick making, meat processing, steel fabrication, feed production, supply and service of farm machinery, and small service industry. Historically, there has been concern throughout the municipality regarding the inappropriate siting of industry next to sensitive land uses, such as residential.

Commercial and Retail Uses

The Shire's main retail and commercial facilities are of a local service nature, and are located in Stawell and St Arnaud, with tourism service industries in and around Halls Gap. The Shire's residents obtain higher order goods and services from Melbourne and / or the regional cities of Bendigo, Ballarat, and Horsham.

Tourism

The Shire has a vibrant and expanding tourism industry, particularly in the settlements of Great Western (tourism based on the wine industry) and Halls Gap (tourism based on the Grampians National Park). Stawell is developing its tourist infrastructure in an attempt to capitalise on its gateway location to the Grampians.

St Arnaud has some potential as a tourist destination associated with the wine industry in the foothills of the Pyrenees, and recognition and enhancement of the heritage values in the town. Stawell hosts the annual Stawell Gift, over the Easter weekend, which is an internationally famous sporting festival.

Community Development

Key land use strategies within the Social, Community and Environment Strategy include:

1. Providing passive and active recreational opportunities for residents and visitors throughout the shire;
2. Facilitating and encouraging the development and use of land to support children's services and activities for children in Stawell and St Arnaud;
3. Facilitating and encouraging the development of post-secondary and tertiary educational facilities in the municipality;
4. Providing access to arts and cultural programs and events;
5. Advocating for accessible and affordable transport options for residents and visitors;
6. Advocating for the responsible management of lakes and waterways;
and
7. Advocating for renewable energy use and environmental sustainability.

Transport

The roles of road traffic and freight are strongly linked to settlement, economic development, and tourism activity within the Northern Grampians. In particular, the Western Highway, a National Highway, significantly influences movement throughout the Shire from Melbourne to South Australia. The road infrastructure drives pressure for land use development associated with the National Highway.

Council will continue to manage the land use tension of protecting a nationally significant road asset and encouraging economic development.

Other significant roads including the Grampians Road, the Stawell-Avoca Road, the Sunraysia Highway, and the St Arnaud to Ararat road, all support critical regional connectivity for community, economy and regional development.

Infrastructure

At a regional level, the roles of local energy systems that capture renewable resources, create employment and enable local energy generation, have been recognised. Their impact to stimulate economic investment and long term potential to create more resilient local energy solutions is supported within the Shire.

21.03 VISION STATEMENT

21.03-1 Corporate Vision

Council has, as its guiding document, the Council Plan 2013 – 2017. Council's central vision and objective for the municipality is to:

Improve the social and economic viability of the Shire.

Key strategies have been developed by Council to support the realisation of the vision, including:

- Economic strategy;
- Social, Community and Environment strategy;
- Emergency and Risk strategy;
- Data and Information strategy;
- Waste Strategy;
- Asset Strategy;
- Red Tape Reduction Strategy; and
- Financial Sustainability Strategy.

21.03-2 Land Use Planning Vision

Council have developed a Land Development Strategy 2013 – 2017. This strategy seeks to develop commercial and industrial land across the Northern Grampians Shire through public and private investment to generate jobs and stimulate economic growth. The strategy incorporates the following objectives:

Residential Land Development

- Access to a diverse range of housing will assist recruitment and enable population growth; and
- Development of suitable land for housing will provide opportunities for people to invest in new residential construction.

Commercial Land Development

- Improving access to commercial land will encourage new businesses and a greater diversity of business activity;
- Development of suitable land for commercial activity will enable retail and other enterprises to locate in clusters creating vibrancy in business areas within our townships;

- Ensuring access to the Shire is maintained by the dual carriageway on the Western Highway, between Melbourne and Stawell, the Sunraysia Highway, between Ballarat and St Arnaud, and passenger and freight train services;
- Enhancing the botanical and landscape significance of Queen Mary Gardens, St Arnaud; and promoting Pioneer Park in St Arnaud (designed by Edna Walling); and promoting Lord Nelson Park as a centre of active recreational and social facility;
- Promoting and facilitating the development of Stawell as the Shire's largest urban centre;
- Maintaining the existing parks of St Arnaud as places that provide safe, pleasant and convenient passive and active recreational facilities; and
- Retaining the character and charm of Halls Gap as a small township providing for tourists to experience a friendly country environment in a natural setting.

Productive use of Rural Land

- Protecting productive agricultural land for the purposes of agricultural production, and for value-adding industries;
- Ensuring agricultural land is managed in an environmentally sustainable and responsible manner in order to protect its productive use;
- Supporting sheep, cattle, and cropping as the dominant agricultural activities of the Shire and encourage the continued growth of intensive agricultural industry such as viticulture, poultry, and pigs; and
- Supporting the diversification of rural land use through expansion of renewable energy generation, and earth and energy resource extraction, in appropriate locations.

Tourism

- Capitalising on the Shire's tourism industry that is based on the Grampians National Park, historic buildings and places, the ironbark forests, the lakes, events such as the Stawell Gift, local wineries and gourmet and boutique foods;
- Supporting the unique and strong tourism and economic activity within Great Western, with a focus on heritage, winemaking as key differentiators; and

- Providing support for the growth of the tourism industry and by encouraging the development of a variety of experiences throughout the Shire with supporting and complementary infrastructure.

Retail

- Maintain but not limited to the central role of the Stawell commercial centre containing key retail activities, and the existing shopping precinct;
- Encourage commercial activity development and growth by enhancing the existing retail shopping precinct, and developing bulky goods retailing and rural supplies and services along major roads including the Western Highway.;
- Reinforce the main street of St Arnaud as a vibrant commercial centre; and
- Maintain services in small townships where postal services and convenient shopping centres (general stores and fuel stations) are provided, with community halls and sporting complexes providing the setting for community events and open space entertainment.

Industry / Industrial Land Development

- Investigating opportunities for greater utilisation of industrial land in Stawell and St Arnaud;
- Expanding manufacturing enterprises operations within industrial precincts, to facilitate economic development and job creation;
- Encourage and support the provision and development of health and government services in the municipality;
- Investigate the development potential of the Shire as a leading sustainable intensive and extensive meat and livestock production and processing area, as part of a mixed farming system in the area, supporting the current industry members (such as Frewstal Abattoirs and local lamb producers), and taking advantage of the fertile soils, available water, good access to markets and feed supplies to grow the industry, in addition to supporting value adding services such as packaging, grinding, slicing, marinades, quality inspection, research and development, etc.
- Undertaking improved planning for future development of industrial precincts to ensure investment confidence, and security for existing business to expand, and provide for diverse development and employment and career opportunities.

These statements provide very strong performance criteria for future planning and development in the Shire, and are the key reference points and foundation of the Strategic Planning Framework for the future development of the Northern Grampians Shire.

This comprehensive approach to planning will be enhanced by ongoing assessment and review of the strategic statement by Council.

21.04 STRATEGIC THEMES

21.04-1 Introduction

A series of objectives, strategies and implementation mechanisms reinforce the Shire's vision statement and preferred land use framework. They are grouped under the headings identified as the Shire's key land use themes, being:

- Settlement;
- Environment and Landscape Values;
- Landscape and Built Environment;
- Heritage;
- Housing;
- Economic Development;
- Community Development;
- Transport; and
- Infrastructure

Each of these topic areas is considered in detail in this section of the Local Planning Policy Framework, under the following headings:

<i>Overview:</i>	A brief overview of the topic area.
<i>Objectives:</i>	The planning scheme's aims for development that are aligned to Council's vision for the Municipality.
<i>Strategies:</i>	The ways in which the current situation will be moved towards its desired future to meet the objectives.
<i>Implementation:</i>	The means by which the strategies will be implemented.
<i>Reference Documents:</i>	Relevant strategic documentation that provides supporting context for understanding the Municipal Strategic Statement's policy basis.

21.05 SETTLEMENT

This clause provides local content to support Clause 11 (Settlement) of the State Planning Policy Framework. It provides local guidance for settlement activity, both within key towns, centres, and throughout rural areas of the Shire.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1 Facilitate the orderly development of the Shire's main townships

Strategy 1.1 Promote infill residential development in appropriate areas to maximise the use of existing infrastructure.

Strategy 1.2 Ensure that the future development of each of the Shire's major townships occurs in accordance with the strategic directions and in accordance with their Town Structure Plans.

Stawell: (also refer Stawell Strategic Framework Plan)

Overview of Township

Stawell is a complex township with a variety of land uses. The gradual development of the town over a period of 150 years has resulted in a mix of uses, with industries interspersed with residential uses. Conflicts between those uses are now apparent and it is recognised that industry needs to be located in specific areas and provided with the appropriate infrastructure.

Stawell has an established network of open space comprising both active and passive recreation areas and bushland reserves. Stawell has a mix of industrial uses, with gold mining, brick making, rubber manufacture, and meat processing being large industries. A mix of dwelling types exists, generally on large lots. Potential exists for infill development with smaller lot subdivisions close to the commercial area, and this should be encouraged.

The Western Highway passes through Stawell, and provides for a service business centre complementing the central commercial area. Land use and development that complements the Highway infrastructure should be encouraged in this area.

Stawell has a number of development constraints due to the presence of natural and built forms, including the Western Highway, sewerage treatment plant, the airport to the south, Stawell Gold Mine to the north east, and Iron Box forests to the north and north-west. For this reason residential development has to be strategically catered for, and encouraged to, an area in the south-east of town, north of the Western Highway. Industrial and intensive commercial development will be encouraged in areas to the north east of the town, including the in the vicinity of the gold mine, and to the west of the town.

Strategies

- All urban development will be encouraged at a suitable distance of the Western Highway, ensuring that its role as a bypass is not prejudiced;
- Industrial and intensive commercial development will be directed towards the north east of the town, including in the vicinity of the current gold mine site, and to the west of town;
- Retail and tourism development will be promoted by Council and should capitalise on Stawell's proximity to the Grampians National Park; and
- New industry should have regard to the locality in which they are proposing to establish, especially with regard to the proximity of sensitive uses, such as dwellings.

St Arnaud: (also refer to St Arnaud Strategic Framework Plan)

Overview of Township

St Arnaud is the second largest township in the Shire, and plays an important role as a service centre for the surrounding rural districts. St Arnaud offers both residents and visitors an attractive environment in which to live, shop, and spend leisure time. St Arnaud has an established network of open space, comprising a good mix of passive and active recreation reserves.

St Arnaud has a strong sense of architectural history, which should be maintained and enhanced through any new development.

St Arnaud township has few environmental development constraints, other than the State Forest which abuts its western boundary. The key development issue for the town is the consolidation of its available residential land, access to natural gas or alternative cost effective energy sources and improvement of physical services available for residential and commercial development.

Strategies

- Residential infill development should be encouraged to maximise use of existing infrastructure.
- Identified heritage buildings, streetscapes, and places be given due recognition, and any development have regard to the impact of such development on the significance of the locality in which they are to occur.

- Industrial development that offers services and goods for rural industry will be encouraged, capitalising on the existing rural service role of the town.
- Low density residential and rural living development will be encouraged in appropriate areas close to town, some of which are on marginal agricultural value.

Halls Gap: (Also refer to Halls Gap Strategic Framework Plan)

Overview of township

Halls Gap is a unique township located on freehold land in the heart of the Grampians National Park. The township is located in a river valley with steep, densely vegetated slopes either side, posing particular development constraints. The Grampians National Park is of national and international significance. Vistas of, and from, the park need to be protected and sensitive urban design is of extreme importance to conserve such vistas.

Halls Gap has the ability to accommodate 10,000 persons in peak periods in a range of accommodation styles. Infrastructure demands therefore need to be catered for which have regard to the environmental setting that make the township attractive. The land use framework for the town is now 10 years old and needs to be reviewed. Halls Gap is an area of extreme fire hazard, and is also subject to landslides and flooding, which presents certain development constraints. The community of Halls Gap, together with Council, have carried out detailed strategic work to ensure the character of Halls Gap is retained, with the future of the undeveloped valley floor being of major importance, and subject to future investigation.

Strategies

- All new development have regard to the site characteristics and the features of the surrounding locality;
- All development to have regard to the inherent danger of building in an area of high fire risk;
- Residential development have regard to the slope of the land and site constraints;
- That infill residential development be encouraged to make best use of land and infrastructure;
- Council to commission a study, recognising the undeveloped valley floor as an area of major importance, to facilitate appropriate development in that area, including, but not limited to, tourism and residential development.

Great Western: (also refer to Great Western Strategic Framework Plan)

Overview of Township

Great Western is located on the Western Highway, midway between Stawell and Ararat, and is a town with a history of grape growing and wine making. In recent years expansion of the Seppelt and Best Wineries operations has seen this role within the town consolidated. Development of Great Western is restricted by its physical features.

The area to the north is flood prone, and the entire area is located within an area of poor, rocky soils, which are suitable for viticulture but not suitable for septic waste disposal. The town is bisected by the Western Highway and the main Melbourne-Adelaide rail link.

Residential development in the township is limited due to only part of the township being serviced by a sewerage system. Adequate on-site treatment of effluent disposal needs to be catered for areas outside of the sewer district.

As Great Western is a small town with potential for industrial land use expansion to complement the wineries, adequate regard needs to be given to balance a mix of industrial and residential uses of land. Siting and design guidelines for buildings (both residential and industrial) need to be developed.

A recently conducted townscape study presents options for Great Western, as well as documenting the community's perceptions and desires for the future.

Strategies

- All development with frontage to the Western Highway will have regard to the importance of the highway as a national road;
- Industrial development will have regard to its location, siting, design and use with respect to adjoining and adjacent residential and commercial uses;
- Viticulture and wine production industries, together with boutique and gourmet food production and sales, be encouraged; and
- Retail uses generally are concentrated in the existing commercial area of town.

Objective 2 Minimise the potential for future land use conflicts

- Strategy 2.1 Rural living areas will largely be limited to areas where such development currently exists, and on the periphery of Stawell and St Arnaud.
- Strategy 2.2 Low density residential and rural living development will be encouraged in appropriate areas close to town, some of which are on land of marginal agricultural value.
- Strategy 2.3 All urban development will be directed a suitable distance of the Western Highway, ensuring that its role as a bypass is not prejudiced.

Strategies

- Encourage residential development within current township boundaries, particularly within the township centre and in proximity to the town sewerage scheme.
- The provision of a range of lot sizes and housing types that recognise changes in family structures will be encouraged in the towns of Stawell and St Arnaud.
- In Halls Gap, larger lot sizes with heavily treed boundaries (rather than fences) will be encouraged to maintain the village character of the town, unless treed boundaries would be adverse to the safety of the premises.
- Encourage a diversity of housing styles and densities, reflecting changing market demands, and recent trends, such as the development of units and smaller housing lots.
- Accommodate the demand for low-density allotments in planned estates rather than the ad hoc subdivision of, and excision from, rural land holdings.
- Encourage innovative forms of residential development such as those based on recreation and open space areas in suitable locations.
- Update the existing Great Western Urban Design Framework, and incorporate into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.

Guidelines for Decision Makers

Consider as relevant:

1. Land Development Strategy 2013 – 17.

Strategic Planning Guidelines

Strategic planning should:

1. Adopt and implement urban growth boundaries to clearly define the limits of urban growth in the Shire's main townships; and
2. Prepare a rural living land supply and demand assessment to review alternative locations for rural living land.

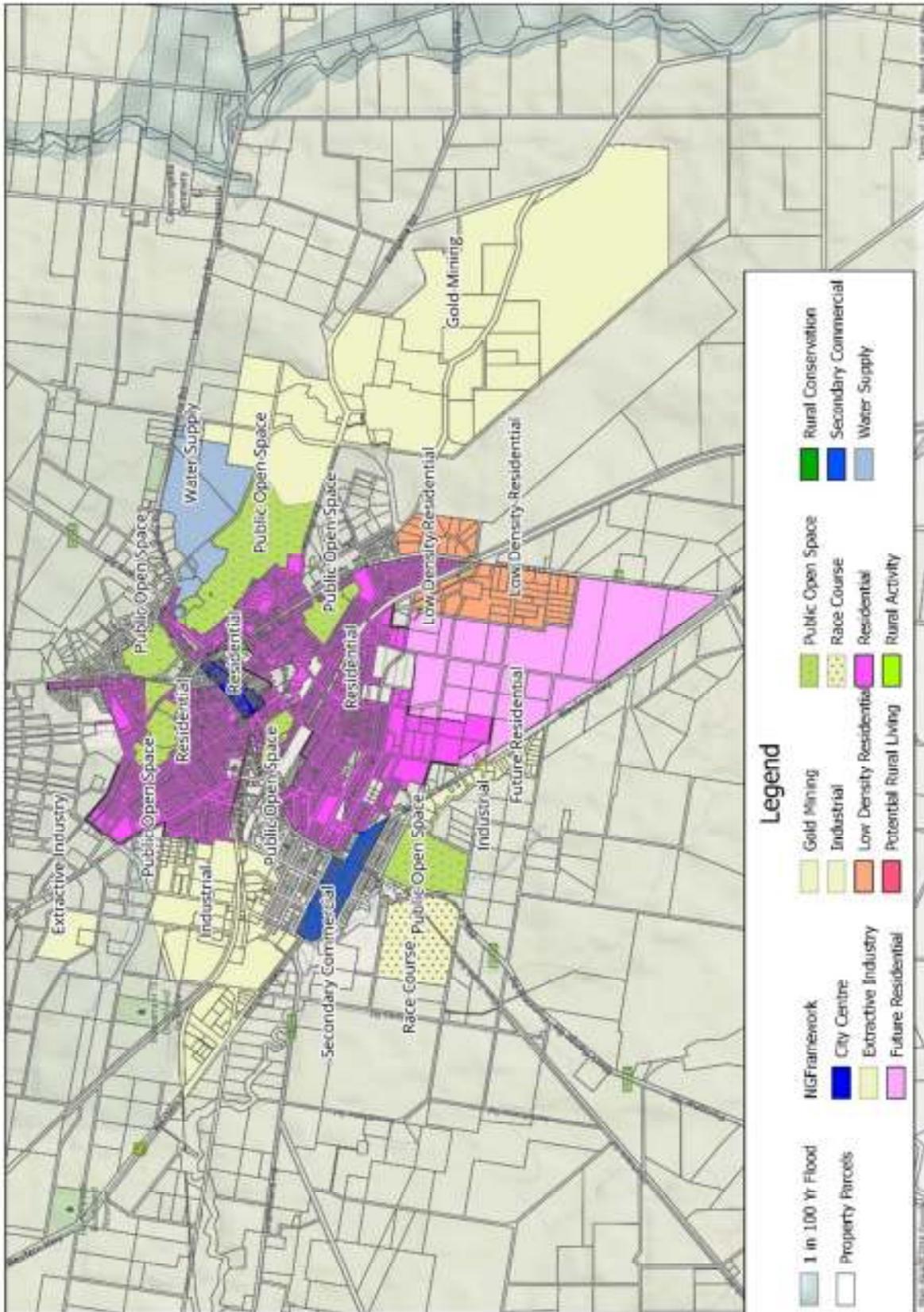
Application of Zones and Overlays

Apply:

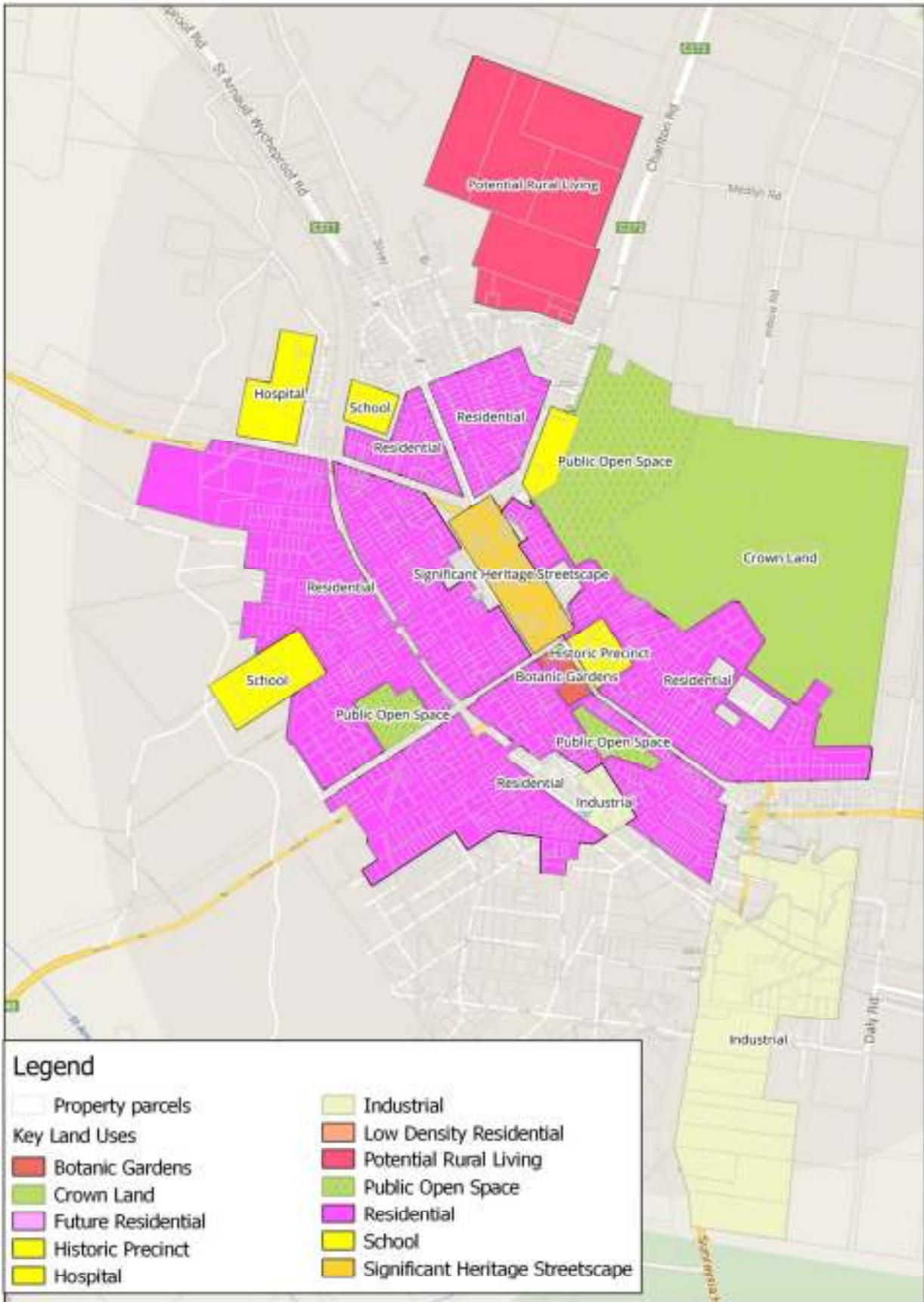
1. General Residential Zone
2. Rural Living Zone

Background documents

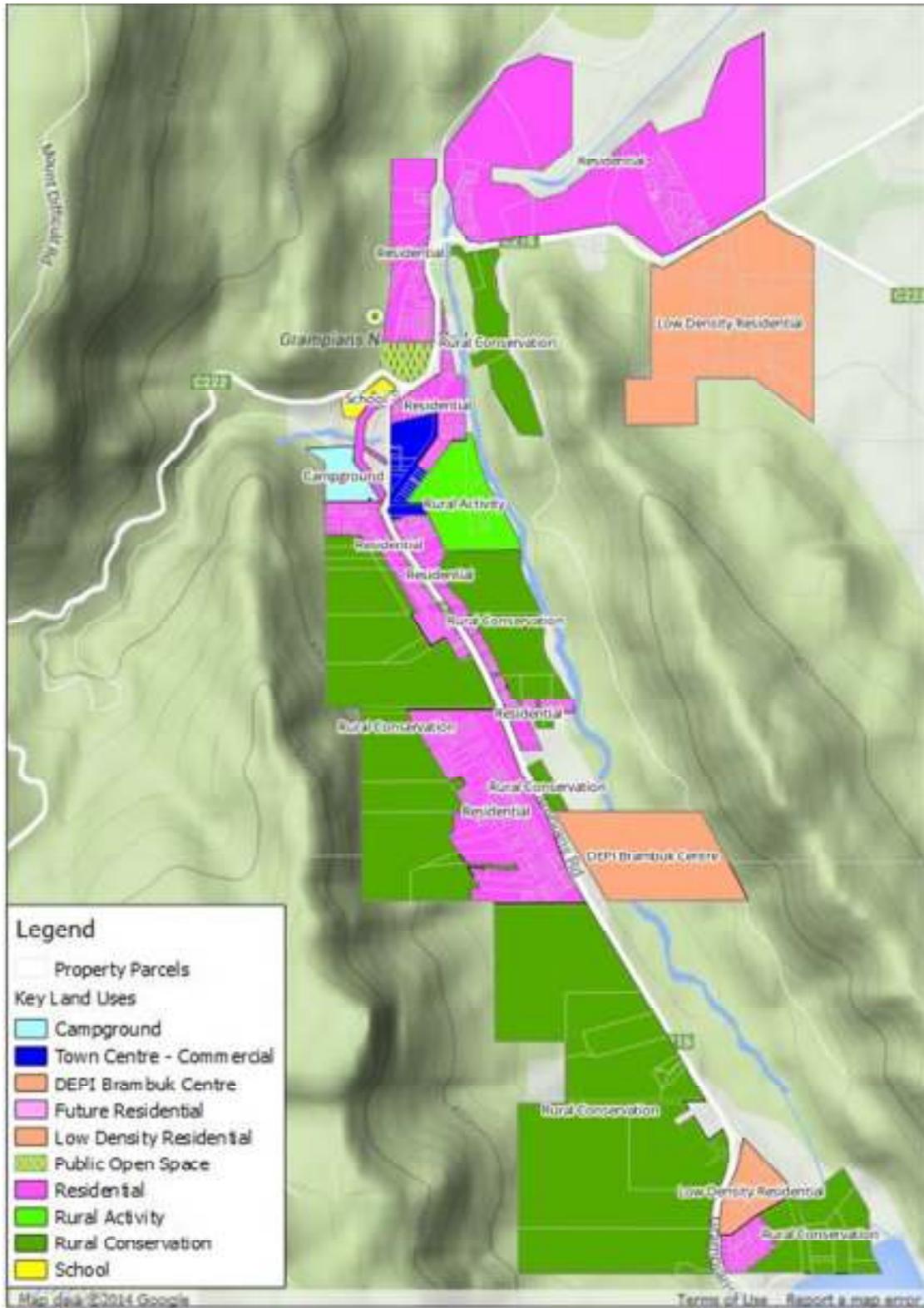
- Halls Gap Resort Town Master Plan (Underway)
- St Arnaud Civic Precinct Plan 2014
- Great Western Future Plan 2014 – 2024
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy 2014
- Planisphere (2012) DRAFT Stawell – Ararat – Halls Gap Triangle – Rural Zone Review
- St Arnaud Business/Marketing Plan 2005
- Northern Grampians Shire Planning Strategy, Report 1 – The Existing Situation and Issues (October 1996)
- Northern Grampians Shire Planning Strategy, Report 2 (March 1997)
- A Land Use Planning Framework for the Halls Gap Lake Bellfield Area (1990)
- Great Western Townscape Plan (1998)
- Halls Gap Townscape Plan (1999)
- Grampians Surrounds Strategy (1991)

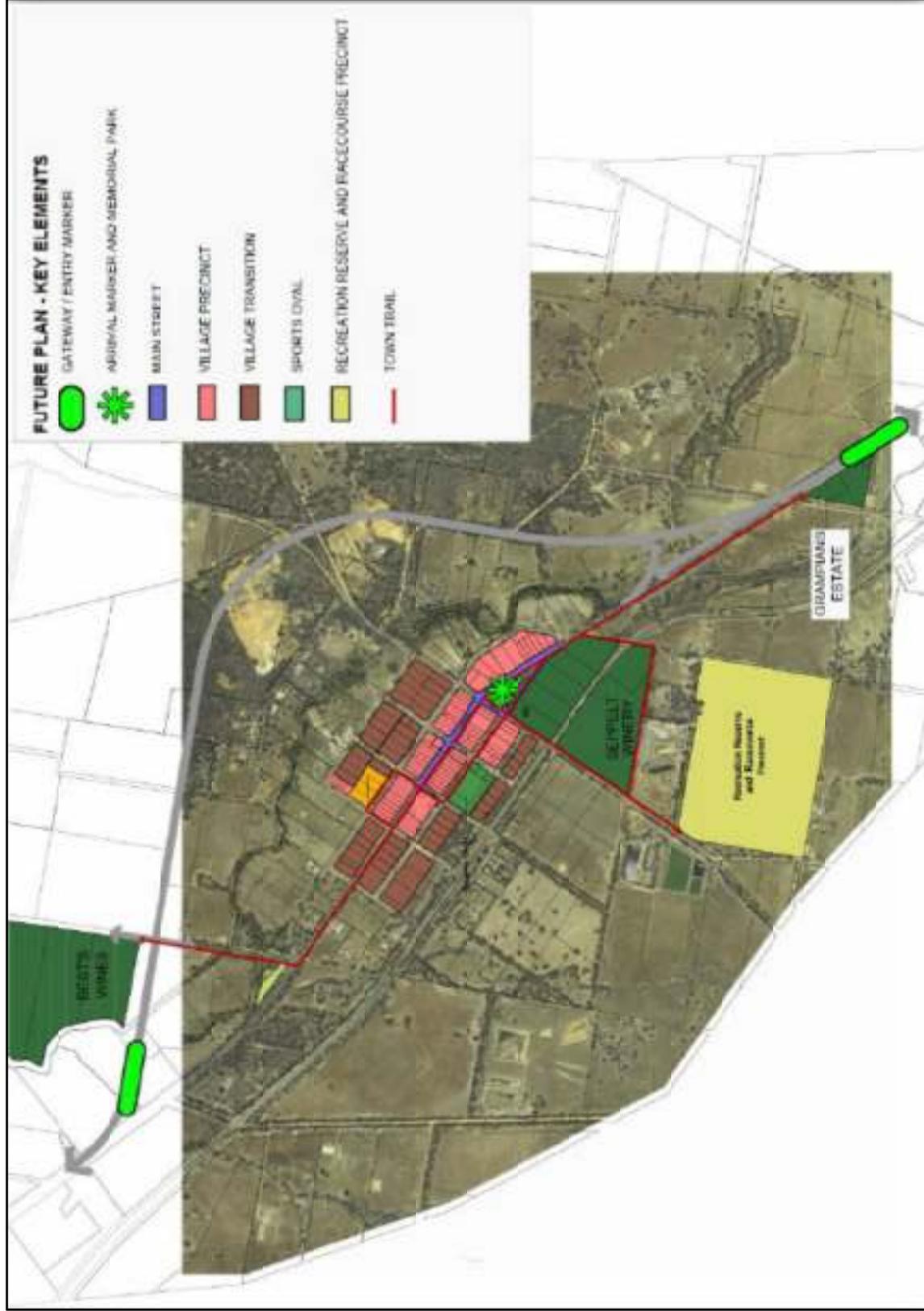


St. Arnaud – Strategic Framework Plan



Halls Gap – Strategic Framework Plan





21.06 ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1 To protect local flora and fauna.

Strategy 1.1 Reinforce existing wildlife corridors along road and railway reserves with supplementary revegetation in adjacent private lands to establish strong bio links between important habitats.

Strategy 1.2 Protect and reinforce significant environmental nodes or bio links on private land.

Strategy 1.3 Support the location of services on private cleared land rather than on roadsides.

Objective 2 To manage salinity.

Strategy 2.1 Reduce salinity risk by reducing ground water accessions, preventing development within high risk salinity areas and stabilising salinised areas.

Guidelines for decision makers

Consider as relevant:

1. Salinity Management Plans

Application of zones and overlays

Apply:

1. Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
2. Wildfire Management Overlay
3. Environmental Significance Overlay
4. Erosion Management Overlay
5. Significant Landscape Overlay

Background documents

- Glenelg Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy 2013 – 2019
- Glenelg Hopkins Regional Catchment Strategy
- Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy 2013 – 2019. Wimmera CMA
- North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2013 – 2019. North Central CMA

21.07 LANDSCAPE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Halls Gap/Lake Bellfield

The Halls Gap / Lake Bellfield area is the main focus for development activities associated with the Grampians National Park.

Halls Gap is a unique township located on freehold land in the heart of the National Park. The town is located in a river valley with steep densely vegetated slopes on its sides which impose severe development constraints.

The township and the immediate area contain business, residential, rural and public land and it serves an important social, economic, tourist and landscape role in the local community.

The area needs to be managed to ensure that the characteristics that make it significant and attractive are not eroded by inappropriate development activities. In particular, sensitive urban design is of critical importance in order to conserve the important vistas in the area.

Objective 1 To encourage consolidation of urban development in and around the existing subdivided areas at Halls Gap that is compatible with the land's capability to accommodate such development.

Strategy 1.1 Reinforce agricultural and other rural activities in those areas currently used for agricultural activities particularly in those areas away from Halls Gap and Lake Bellfield.

Strategy 1.2 Reinforce a high level of service, safety and amenity in the commercial centre.

Strategy 1.3 Maintain and enhance the road, cycling and walking track networks.

Objective 2 To recognise the natural attributes of the Grampians National Park and to ensure that any development on private land complements such attributes.

Strategy 2.1 To conserve areas or items of scientific, natural or historical significance.

Strategy 2.2 Council to commission a study, recognising the undeveloped valley floor as an area of major importance, to facilitate appropriate development in that area.

Guidelines for decision makers

Guidelines:

1. Lot sizes in the rural areas are to be of an average of 40ha.
2. Avoid low density residential development including small lot options under the Farming Zone, except for a small area in Reids Lane (at the northern entrance to Halls Gap), and a small area near Lake Bellfield.
3. Avoid commercial development other than around the existing Halls Gap town centre, as indicated on the Strategic Framework Plan.
4. Facilitate long term expansion of the commercial area south of Heath Street, as indicated on the Strategic Framework Plan.
5. Avoid industrial uses on land zoned for rural or business purposes.

Strategic planning guidelines

Strategic planning should:

1. Support short, medium and long term development as indicated on the Town Structure Plan.
2. Prepare urban design principles for all new development in the Halls Gap / Lake Bellfield area ensuring that development has regard to its natural setting, minimising visual intrusion and maintaining a bush setting.
3. Balance the possible effect of the subdivision, use, or development of land, on the Grampians National Park.
4. Balance the possible effect of the subdivision, use or development on the natural beauty and characteristics of the Halls Gap / Lake Bellfield area.
5. Recognise the urban design guidelines contained in the “Halls Gap Townscape Plan”.
6. Improve access to the open space network through integrating new community and other facilities.

Background documents

- Halls Gap Urban Design Framework
- Plansphere (2012) Stawell – Ararat – Halls Gap Triangle, Rural Zone Review

21.08 HERITAGE

Overview

Northern Grampians Shire has an abundance of natural, cultural and historically significant sites. Recognition and preservation of the natural, spiritual, cultural and built forms, including heritage buildings, monuments, streetscapes and precincts is important for conservation of the Shire's heritage.

Local Policy: Northern Grampians

Objective 1 Conserve and protect sites and precincts of architectural, cultural and historic significance.

Strategy 1.1 Protect individual precincts of significance.

Strategy 1.2 Ensure that development on or neighbouring a site or precinct which is considered to have natural, archaeological, architectural, cultural or historic significance (such as Sisters Rock) will give due consideration to the significance of the site.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage development of the main street of St Arnaud while recognising its heritage values, and for what it offers locals and visitors, as a pleasant environment in which to stop, shop and relax.

Strategic planning guidelines

Strategic planning should:

1. Enable development and use that complements and enhances significant items, places, and areas of natural and cultural heritage.

Application of zones and overlays

Apply:

1. Heritage Overlay.

Background documents

- Northern Grampians Heritage Study, Stage 1 (April 2000)
- Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe and Phil Taylor (2005) Heritage Study, Stage Two Northern Grampians Shire

21.09 HOUSING

Objective 1 Provide a diversity of housing styles and living opportunities throughout the municipality to ensure the attractiveness of the municipality as a place to live, work, and invest is maintained.

Strategy 1.1 The provision of a range of lot sizes and housing types that recognise changes in family structure and an ageing population will be encouraged in the towns of Stawell and St Arnaud.

Strategy 1.2 Accommodate the demand for low density allotments in planned estates rather than the ad-hoc subdivision of, and excision from, rural land holdings.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage innovative forms of residential development such as those based on recreation and open space areas in suitable locations.

Objective 2 Manage the risk of land use between forms of housing and other industry and rural activities.

Strategy 2.1 Limit the establishment of housing in locations where amenity may be negatively impacted on by farming and related activities, or where the location of housing may inhibit rural activities.

Application of zones and overlays

Apply:

1. General Residential Zone.

Background documents

- Land Development Strategy 2013 – 2017
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy 2014

21.10 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Agriculture

- Objective 1 Support the development of sustainable agricultural and horticultural industries, as the foundation of a strong and prosperous economy.**
- Strategy 1.1 Ensure that future subdivision of agricultural land is based on sustainable and viable farming methods, and sustainable environmental grounds.
- Strategy 1.2 Support existing and emerging agricultural activities, such as viticulture, intensive horticulture and intensive animal industries in locations, and on land, that is suited to such enterprises.
- Strategy 1.3 Discourage the division of rural land by small lot subdivision, as there is sufficient land zoned for smaller lot rural subdivision throughout the Shire.
- Strategy 1.4 Protect rural and agricultural infrastructure such as roads, drainage channels, and water supply.
- Strategy 1.5 Investigate the potential of the area to support and develop the equine industry, including the thoroughbred racing and harness racing industry, competitions, cross country, and endurance rides, equipment suppliers, pony clubs, equestrian facilities, and allied industries through the development of an equine sector plan, and implement appropriate Amendments.
- Objective 2 To encourage intensive animal industries in areas of the Shire where the potential for conflict with surrounding land uses, in areas such as issues such as odour, waste disposal, protection of water quality and supply, vermin (mice and flies), traffic, and noise can be minimised.**
- Strategy 2.1 Council to commission a strategic analysis to determine preferred locations for intensive animal industries within the Shire.
- Strategy 2.2 Encourage intensive animal industries, and associated industries, in appropriate locations that are conducted in a manner that fosters positive environmental sustainability, utilising modern technology, especially with regard to waste treatment and disposal.

Resource Exploration and Extraction

Objective 1 **To promote and facilitate mining and extractive industry in the Shire in a responsible manner.**

Strategy 1.1 Encourage mining and extractive industry activities, provided that the proposals adequately address environmental, amenity, health, and rehabilitation issues, to ensure the long term impacts of mining and extractive industry on the surrounding environment and community are minimised.

Strategy 1.2 Provide adequate separation, buffer zones, and biosecurity areas between sensitive land uses and mining and extractive industry to ensure that adverse environmental effects, nuisance or exposure to hazards do not affect existing and future residents.

Industrial Development

Objective 1 **Encourage and facilitate sustainable industrial development in appropriate locations.**

Strategy 1.1 New industry is particularly encouraged in appropriate locations around Stawell and St. Arnaud, as indicated in the Town Structure Plans contained at Clause 21.05, in order to build the capacity of these centres.

Strategy 1.2 Encourage industry associated with viticulture and food to locate in Great Western, to promote development of the town and of the wine and food industry in the Shire.

Strategy 1.3 Accommodate rural based industries adjacent to, or outside the two main urban centres, provided they can demonstrate access to physical (including roads, water and effluent disposal) and business services without imposing greater infrastructure costs on the local community.

Strategy 1.4 Determine appropriate sites for major new industries, and potentially noxious industries (such as abattoirs) based on an assessment of the individual needs of the business, and the potential impacts of the industry on existing urban and rural land uses. In “one off” instances, where there is an identified need to accommodate significantly large scale new development, it may be more appropriate to locate the industry in a rural zone, close to a major urban centre (Stawell or St Arnaud), where access to roads and reticulated services can be provided, whilst minimising any impact on urban uses by maintaining buffer distances within the site.

Consideration of such development and use of rural land should also consider the impacts on an area's land capability and environmental land management.

- Strategy 1.5 Protect existing industries and facilitate their expansion.
- Strategy 1.6 Industrial and intensive commercial development in Stawell will be directed towards the west of the town, or to the north east of the town, including near the current Stawell Gold Mine area where appropriate.
- Strategy 1.7 Industrial and commercial development that offers services and goods for rural industry will be encouraged in St Arnaud, capitalising on the existing rural service role of the town.
- Strategy 1.8 Industrial and intensive commercial development will be encouraged at locations that are already serviced, or can be readily serviced by essential services such as power, water, gas, where appropriate.
- Strategy 1.9 Viticulture, gourmet and boutique food and wine production industries are encouraged in and around Great Western that complement the viticulture and tourism industry.
- Objective 2 To determine and provide for land requirements that will be sufficient to cater for 15 years growth of existing and new industry development.**
- Strategy 2.1 Carry out strategic analysis in conjunction with existing industrial land uses to determine requirements for industrial land in the Shire's towns over the next 15 year period.
- Strategy 2.2 Having identified future industrial land requirements, apply appropriate zoning control regime and clearly indicate on Town Structure Plans (at Clause 21.05) areas that are designated for long term industrial development.

Pleasant Creek

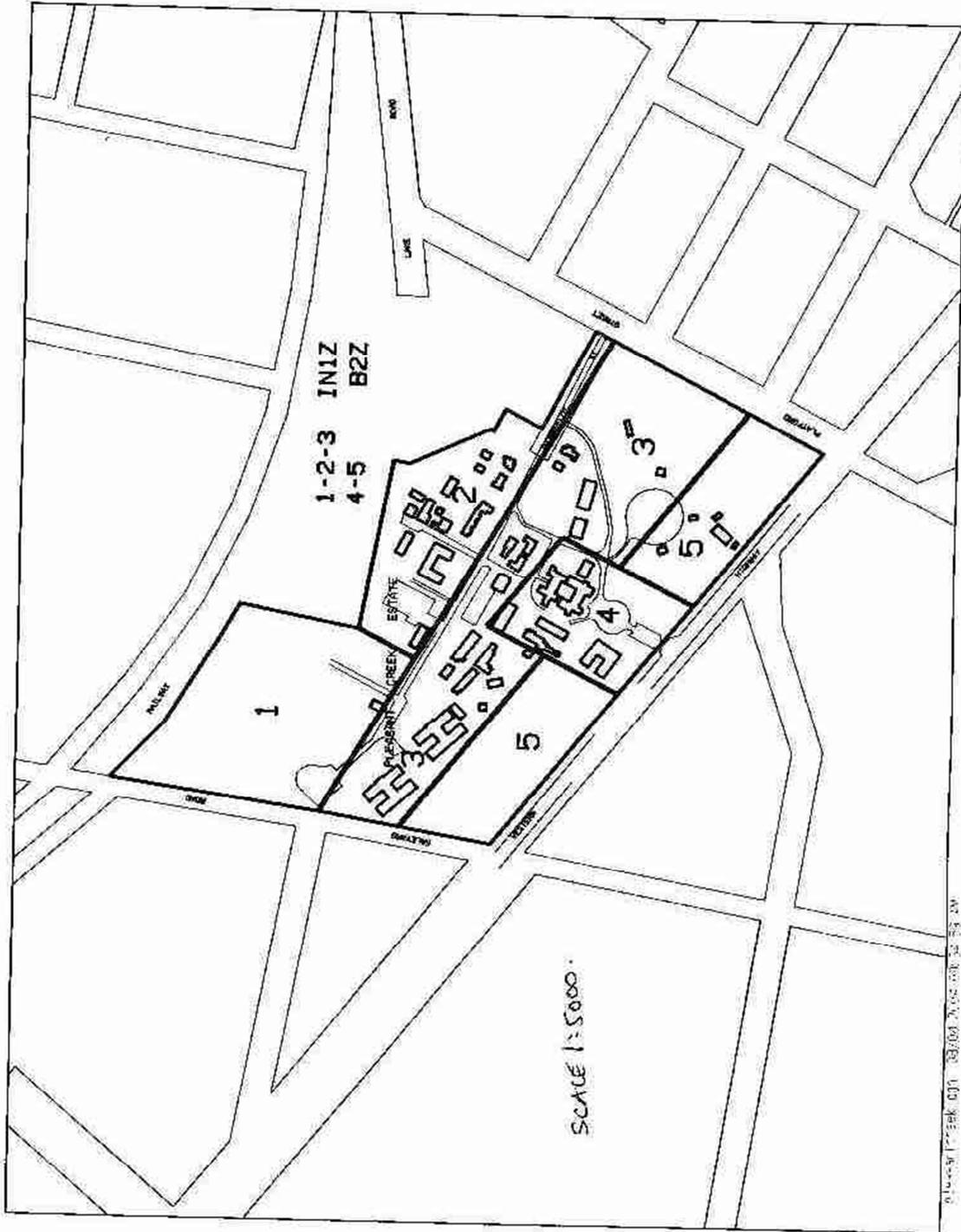
The Pleasant Creek Estate is appropriately located for the establishment of commercial and industry uses. Its location with frontage to the Western Highway means that it forms part of the western "gateway entrance" to Stawell.

It is important that land use in the Pleasant Creek Estate is sensitive to the heritage values of the site and the significance of the site's location in Stawell.

It is also important that land use within the Estate is compatible with established uses so that adverse amenity impacts are minimised.

- Objective 1** **To maximise the potential for development by industrial or warehousing uses that require large areas of land in Precinct 1.**
- Strategy 1.1 Require major industries, for manufacturing or storing and distribution facilities that require a large buffer distance from residential and other sensitive uses, to allow such a distance.
- Objective 2** **To encourage the establishment of uses that is compatible with the Textiles Mill and Frewstal Abattoir in Precinct 2.**
- Strategy 2.1 Support exiting small buildings suited to offices and workshops. Generally suited to uses that are not sensitive to neighbouring textile manufacturer and abattoir.
- Objective 3** **To encourage industrial uses and associated workshops and offices in Precinct 3.**
- Strategy 3.1 Support industrial uses that require a buffer distance from residential uses, and office uses within existing buildings.
- Objective 4** **To encourage uses that are compatible with the heritage values of Precinct 4.**
- Strategy 4.1 Support small scale light industrial uses, with associated offices, places of assembly, accommodation and food premises compatible with the heritage values of the precinct.
- Objective 5** **To encourage uses in Precinct 5 that will support the improved visual amenity of the Western Highway.**
- Strategy 5.1 Support office, intensive commercial, industrial, and other commercial uses that promote the amenity of the Western Highway, without affecting its role as a national highway.

Map of Pleasant Creek Estate Precincts



Commercial and Retail Uses

Objective 1 **To maintain and strengthen the functioning of retail centres throughout the Shire.**

Strategy 1.1 Concentrate further commercial and professional service activities in Stawell and St Arnaud, in the defined commercial core of the towns as indicated in the Town Structure Plans.

Strategy 1.2 Ensure that there is adequate land provision in both Stawell and St Arnaud for bulky goods retail development, and ensure that such areas are reserved solely for such land use and development proposals.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage the retention of convenience shopping opportunities in smaller rural settlements.

Strategy 1.4 Encourage new commercial and retail development to meet best practice environmentally sound development principles from the design stage, through to construction and operation, particularly in the areas of energy, water, and waste reduction and management.

Strategy 1.5 Development of local unique selling points and specialist niche markets by better understanding consumer behaviour within the Shire and adjoining areas, as well as the needs of visitors to the Shire.

Objective 2 **To encourage compatibility between similar tourist and retail uses.**

Strategy 2.1 Integrate tourist and retail services as a means of maximising marketing and purchasing impact and promoting a greater retention of local and tourist expenditure within the Shire.

Strategy 2.2 Promote integrated tourist and retail investment at the major tourist destinations of Halls Gap, Great Western, Stawell and St Arnaud.

Strategy 2.3 Infrastructure for tourists, including accommodation, restaurants, entertainment facilities, and recreation facilities will be encouraged to integrate where possible with town centre functions to maximise use of this infrastructure and enhance town centre activity.

Tourism

Objective 1 Increase visitor numbers, expenditure and length of stay in the Shire.

- Strategy 1.1 Actively promote the development of additional accommodation types in appropriate locations throughout the Shire, including adventure holiday accommodation, cabin and farm stays, motels, caravan parks, RV friendly facilities and conference and business facilities.
- Strategy 1.2 Facilitate tourism enterprises such as bed and breakfasts in rural areas.
- Strategy 1.3 Promote the development of Stawell as an attractive town with many heritage assets as the gateway to the Grampians.
- Strategy 1.4 Promote the expansion of wineries in the foothills of the Pyrenees mountain range.
- Strategy 1.5 Promote the development of St. Arnaud as a scenic tourist town to visit as part of a winery or heritage tour, and as a destination for arts and culture attractions.
- Strategy 1.6 Ensure that the Shire's natural and built heritage is enhanced and protected, as it is these assets that tourists come to see and experience.
- Strategy 1.7 Utilise the Design and Development Overlay to ensure commercial and tourist related developments have regard to the special environment in which they are locating.
- Strategy 1.8 Tourist attractions, particularly the natural features of the Grampians, Kara Kara National Park, and other areas of significant flora and fauna, such as the ironbark forests need to be protected and enhanced as non-renewable resources essential to the long term sustainability of tourism as an industry in the Shire.
- Strategy 1.9 Encourage tourism development and investment in Halls Gap and area through reforming planning and zoning regulations relating to the Halls Gap township precinct, and Grampians Way.

Objective 2 Encourage tourism in the municipality based on the heritage and culture of the municipality.

Strategy 2.1 Develop better interpretative signage and fixed heritage information to aid in the interpretation and awareness of the Shire's heritage.

Strategy 2.2 Retail and tourism development will be promoted by Council and should capitalise on Stawell's proximity to the Grampians National Park.

Strategy 2.3 Conserve and use unused road and rail reserves and stream reserves to establish walking, cycling and "all ability" networks to link tourist precincts across the municipality and to adjoining municipalities as an alternate way to experience these attractions

Application of zones and overlays

Apply:

1. Commercial 1 Zone
2. Industrial 1 Zone
3. Township Zone

Background documents

- Stawell Gold Mine Future Possibilities 2014
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy 2014
- Land Development Strategy 2013 – 2017
- Victorian Regional Tourism Strategy 2013 - 2016
- Grampians Tourism Strategic Plan 2012-2016
- Economic Development Strategy 2009 – 2012
- Great Western Future Plan 2014 – 2024
- Great Western Investment Strategy. A Strategic Wine Tourism Assessment. 2002
- Northern Grampians Tourism Strategy 2008 – 2011

21.11 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Distribution of Social and Cultural Infrastructure

Objective 1 Encourage social infrastructure that is designed with good access, and managed in a flexible way to ensure it is able to respond to changing to community needs, and encourages a strong sense of community.

Strategy 1.1 Plan for the provision of integrated social infrastructure across the municipality and allocation of resources for social infrastructure.

Strategy 1.2 Encourage lifecycle-targeted facilities and services, such as those for children, young people and older people, as well as facilities and services for groups with special needs, such as families, people with a disability and indigenous and culturally diverse people.

Community Facilities

Objective 1 Facilitate the development and maintenance of community facilities throughout the municipality's urban and rural communities.

Strategy 1.1 Focus development around existing community infrastructure and services to maximise the efficient use of community services in the municipality and surrounding region.

Strategy 1.2 Undertake social planning and community consultation in determining the provision of services and facilities.

Background documents

- Council Plan 2013 – 2017
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013 – 2017

Electricity Generation and Distribution

The following policy provides guidance for the establishment of renewable energy resources as a key local infrastructure asset. This reflects the recognised wind resources, and provides an increased opportunity for rural areas to support innovative energy or alternative renewal energy developments.

Objective 1 Support the reduction of the municipality’s reliance on non-renewable energy.

Strategy 1.1 Actively support the development of locally generated renewable energy.

Strategy 1.2 Encourage landowners, developers and builders to incorporate renewable energy systems, including, where possible, assisting to facilitating grants and other sources of funding.

Strategy 1.3 Promote reduced energy consumption and reliance on the supply network.

Strategy 1.4 Investigate the use of small-scale renewable energy systems for small townships.

21.13 TRANSPORT

Local Policy: Northern Grampians

- Objective 1** **Encourage a transportation system that provides a diverse range of mobility options for all, and supports appropriate access to employment, housing, services, and recreation areas, and facilitates economic growth within the shire.**
- Strategy 1.1 Cluster employment, shops and community facilities in activity centres.
- Strategy 1.2 Encourage land use planning to reduce reliance on car use, particularly in the main townships by improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, clustering services to support multi-purpose trips, supporting residential infill close to public transport nodes, and improving pedestrian amenity and facilities.
- Strategy 1.3 Improve the safety of pedestrian and bicycle links to public transport, activity centres, tourism precincts and attractions, community and recreation facilities, and industrial areas within the municipality.
- Strategy 1.4 Encourage truck movements on identified truck priority routes, including the Western Highway, to link freight hubs and reduce conflict with other transport modes, developing Stawell as a logistics hub, and discourage the development of freight and logistics related facilities in locations that require transport to use roads through residential areas.
- Strategy 1.5 Support inter-modal (road-to-rail, road-to-air freight) transfer facilities to make efficiencies in freight movement into the future.
- Strategy 1.6 Increase public transport opportunities between major towns and smaller settlements.
- Strategy 1.7 Ensure that planning decisions protect the environs of Stawell Airport to enable safe long term operation for general aviation and emergency services.

Western Highway

The planning and control of land use and development in the areas through which highways pass should be coordinated and integrated. Planning measures to control land use and development can materially assist the efficient performance of highways, and can protect the appearance of the areas through which they pass.

The Western Highway is a principal road linking Melbourne and Adelaide and is a designated National Highway. Land use and development planning should take full account of this national highway when development occurs in its vicinity.

Objective 1 To ensure that the use and development of land does not prejudice the levels of service, safety and amenity of the Western Highway.

Strategy 1.1 All urban development will be directed a suitable distance from the Western Highway, ensuring that its role as a national highway is not prejudiced.

Strategy 1.2 Encourage development and land use in the vicinity of the Western Highway that complements its role as a national highway.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage the development of land to support the duplication of the Western Highway through to Stawell.

Objective 2 To minimise any adverse effects of noise from traffic using the highway, particularly where the highway passes through Stawell and Great Western.

Strategy 2.1 All development with frontage to the Western Highway will have regard to the importance of the highway as a national highway. Residential development with frontage to the Western Highway should be discouraged, unless it is part of a multi-lot residential development.

Objective 3 Investigate potential development for the areas adjacent to the Western Highway

Strategy 3.1 Council to commission a study to investigate the provision of commercial services, such as retail, restaurants, and the delivery of highway services to travellers such as stopovers, fast food, vehicle repairs and fuel, adjacent to the Western Highway, and in such a way as to not impact on the Highway.

Guidelines for decision makers

A report prepared by a qualified acoustic consultant outlining the necessary noise control measures which should be undertaken as part of the proposed development.

Any new lot created for the purpose of constructing a dwelling should have sufficient space to allow a dwelling to be sited where the noise level does not exceed 70dB(A).

Dwellings should be designed and constructed to acoustic standards as set out in AS3671-1989 "Acoustics – Road Traffic Noise Intrusion – Building Siting and Construction" where the noise level is in excess of 60dB(A). (Noise levels quoted are free field L, (18 hr)).

Other buildings providing for noise sensitive uses should be designed and constructed to acoustic standards with interior noise levels not greater than those set out in AS2107-1987 "Acoustics – Recommended Design Sound Levels and Reverberation Times for Building Interiors."

Decision makers should consider the movement of local traffic, cyclists, pedestrians and other road or footpath users when considering new use and development in the vicinity of the Western Highway to ensure there is easy and safe movement between localities without the need to access the Western Highway.

Strategic planning guidelines

Strategic planning should:

Apply this policy to all use and development of land within 100 metres of the Western highway within the townships of Stawell and Great Western.

Background documents

- Land Development Strategy 2013 – 2017

21.14

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Council is committed to monitoring the implementation of this planning scheme with the aim of evaluating the achievement of strategic policy directions and the operational effectiveness of the administration of the scheme. The monitoring program will be reported on annually and will be used to inform the review of the Municipal Strategic Statement.

To evaluate the achievement of the key strategic directions of the scheme, the following elements will be monitored:

KEY STRATEGY ELEMENT	INDICATOR	TARGET
<p>Provide a diversity of housing styles and living opportunities (Objective 1, Clause 21.09).</p>	<p>Number and location of planning applications for use and development in the Rural Living Zone.</p> <p>Number and location of planning applications for use and development in the Low Density Residential Zone.</p>	<p>Uptake of land in both the RLZ and LDRZ thereby providing a stimulus to population growth in the Shire.</p> <p>If no uptake is evident, consider “back zoning” some land to rural.</p>
<p>To facilitate the sustainable growth of the horticulture and agriculture industries. (Agriculture Objective 1, Clause 21.10).</p>	<p>Number, type and locations of planning applications for use and development on rural land.</p> <p>Number, type and location of planning applications for excision of smaller lots in horticultural and agricultural areas.</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of applications and approvals for non-agricultural use or development on rural land.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of applications and approvals for small lot excisions which increase housing potential.</p>
<p>Encourage and facilitate sustainable industrial development in appropriate locations (Industrial Development Objective 1, Clause 21.10).</p>	<p>Number, type and location of planning applications in the IN1 zone in Stawell.</p>	<p>Increase in industrial development in order to provide employment for local residents.</p> <p>Management of the industrial – residential interface.</p>

In addition to monitoring the effectiveness of the scheme’s strategic direction, Council is committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the administration of the scheme and the new planning system.

In order to do this Council will maintain and monitor a comprehensive register of all planning applications made since gazettal which will include the following indicators:

KEY ELEMENT	INDICATOR
Efficient decision making process.	<p>Adherence of the Northern Grampians Shire Planning Scheme Charter.</p> <p>Number, type and location of applications received.</p> <p>Number and nature of decisions made.</p> <p>Time taken for decisions.</p> <p>Feedback from the development industry on timeframes and costs associated with applications processed.</p>
Efficient operation of the new system.	<p>Compliance or otherwise with the provisions of the Local Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>Degree of officer support at Council.</p> <p>Support for Council at VCAT.</p> <p>Extent to which scheme amendments have increased or decreased.</p> <p>Matters of process requiring DTPLI attention.</p> <p>Matter of content requiring DTPLI attention.</p>

By the third anniversary of the scheme's gazettal, it is intended that the whole scheme will have been reviewed to update it on the basis of the extra strategic work that will have been completed by this time.