



HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE

ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

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INTRODUCTION

In December 2016 Council adopted the *Halls Gap Master-Plan for Commercial Investment and Public Land Development* (MvS Architects). The Master Plan identifies a number of initiatives for the town under four categories including: Events and Attractions, Services and Development, Halls Gap Village, Village Amenity and Grampians Peaks Trailhead (GPT).

The Master Plan identified a number of opportunities that are important for Halls Gap in order to capitalise on the Grampians Peaks Trail, including: public use facilities, services improvements and community amenity infrastructure. *The Grampians Tourism Destination Plan & Investment Roadmap* (AEC Group, 2014) identified a pressing need to 'improve the basics' (AEC Group, 2014). This includes improving services and amenities available as well as improving their quality and offer.

The *Halls Gap Village Centre Action Plan* is being prepared to implement elements of the Master Plan associated with amenity, pedestrian access, intensification of commercial land and the identification of Grampians Peaks Trailhead location and departure experience.

PROJECT DRIVERS

As the access point for the first completed section of Grampians Peak Trail (GPT), Halls Gap is on the cusp of becoming a major tourism and economic powerhouse for the region. The completion of each stage of the GPT will drive growth in tourism and visitors to the Grampians, as has been observed with the completion of stage one in May 2015. Construction of the entire GPT is expected to be finished in late 2019. Since the official opening of stage one of the GPT in May 2015, domestic and international overnight visitors to the Grampians have already increased by 79,000 in the Year Ending (YE) March 2016 (vs YE Mar 2015). The YE March 2017 also saw 78,000 more visitors compared to YE March 2015. These visitors contributed a cumulative total of 265,000 more visitor nights in the Grampians. With an estimated average spend of \$119 per night per domestic visitor and \$53 per night per international visitor, this equates to more than \$30 million more spending in the region since March 2015 (data from Grampians Tourism research for YE March 2017).

The *Halls Gap Village Centre Action Plan* is needed to ensure Halls Gap is able to capitalise on increased visitor numbers. Investment in the public realm is seen as critical to attracting new commercial investment, providing an exceptional visitor experience and to fully utilise the upcoming opportunities presented by the GPT. The project is needed in order to:

- Identify a vision for the future of Halls Gap Village Centre
- Enhance the function and amenity of the Halls Gap Village Centre as a means of meeting consumer expectations, enhancing dispersal of the overall tourism offering and capturing visitor spend associated with the GPT
- Intensify the use of commercial land in Halls Gap by upgrading and enhancing public space required in order to attract investment to the Village Centre
- Unlock and facilitate practical development opportunities for strategically important parcels of commercial land by improving access and movement outcomes
- Ensure that the Village Centre remains the retail and commercial heart of Halls Gap

The preparation of the Action Plan is intended to generate ideas and include the preparation of realistic design concepts based on consultation, research and analysis to implement key initiatives identified in the Master Plan. It will allow for solutions to be identified for urban problems in Halls Gap. The Action Plan is also intended to ensure that the best location for the Grampians Peak Trailhead and National Park walks and infrastructure associated with the 'departure experience' is chosen and that car parking issues and solutions are identified.

Although the Action Plan will be delivered as a specific project, its implementation will involve a series of infrastructure and landscaping projects and planning scheme amendments.

The Objectives of Stage 1 are to:

- Engage with key stakeholders.
- Develop a vision statement and visioning plan for the Halls Gap Village Centre.
- Understand existing conditions, current urban design constraints and opportunities for the connectivity of the Village Centre and the Grampians Peaks Trailhead and associated parking arrangements and pedestrian connectivity.
- Provide strategic responses to the identified constraints and opportunities

The project will be undertaken in three stages:

- Stage 1:
 - Background, context analysis, vision statement, framework and priority projects
 - Design specifications for high priority projects, identification of medium and long term projects and Implementation Plan
 - Implementation of high priority actions
- Stage 2:
 - Scope 'Other Initiatives' identified as medium-term projects identified in Stage 1.
 - Seek funding to implement medium-term projects identified in Stage 1.
 - Stakeholder consultation and design/planning of medium priority projects.
 - Implementation of medium-term projects pending funding.
- Stage 3:
 - Scope long-term projects identified in Stage 1.
 - Seek funding to implement outstanding medium-term projects identified in Stage 1.
 - Stakeholder consultation and design/planning of long-term projects.
 - Further implementation.

This document, *Action Plan: Stage One* comprises two sections:

- Part A: Provides some background and contextual information; and
- Part B: Outlines the vision for the Halls Gap Village Centre and actions and initiatives proposed to deliver that vision.



INTRODUCTION

STUDY AREA

The study area is shown on the aerial (Figure 1) and consists primarily of commercially zoned land and associated public spaces. Specifically, the Study Area is bounded by School Road to the west and north-west, Stoney Creek in the north-east, Heath Street and the rear boundary of commercially zoned land to the east and south-west. This area forms a critical part of the township's fabric, not only as a connective space but also through its contribution to the township's character and identity and the key driver of the town's economy.

Halls Gap Village Centre has approximately eight hectares of Commercial 1 zoned land across 31 lots. However the township currently comprises of approximately 11,263m² of retail floor space, suggesting that much of the Commercial 1 zoned land is underutilised.

It is important to acknowledge that within the identified study area, Council is just one of the parties with a responsibility or opportunity to deliver change. The other key parties include:

- The independent Committee of Management which has responsibility for the caravan park and recreation reserve (with the exception of the car parking areas and land to the north adjacent to Stoney Creek);
- Private landowners, who manage the majority of commercial and residentially zoned land within the Study Area; and
- VicRoads which manages the Grampians Road corridor.

PROJECT PROCESS

The process for the development of this draft document to date has been as follows:

- A thorough review of existing planning policies, prior consultation material (including community feedback) and background documentation.
- Site investigations and urban design analysis diagrams of the Study Area illustrating key features and attributes, as well as a car parking assessment undertaken by relevant experts.
- The identification of preliminary Issues & Opportunities and workshops with key stakeholders to confirm these, including a walking tour of the Village Centre.
- A design charrette with key participants to further discuss issues and opportunities and identify preliminary principles that can be a basis for visioning and the development of a concept sketch.
- The drafting of this document, including identification of priority actions and consultation with key stakeholders such as Parks Victoria on the content, a process which is on-going.

Consultation undertaken and the input so far is further detailed on Page 16.

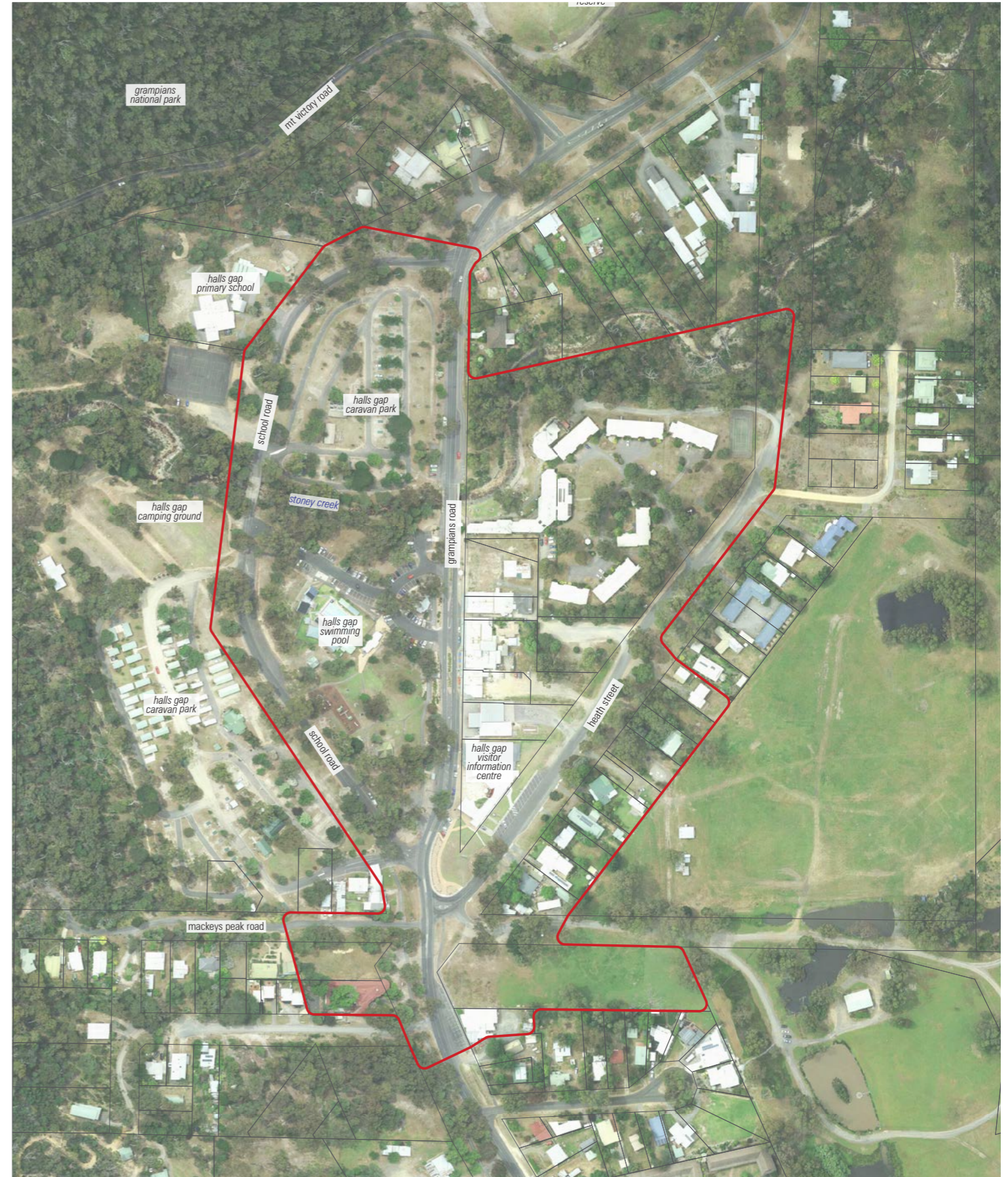


Figure 1. Study Area



PART A BACKGROUND

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Background analysis of the existing conditions within the Study Area, in addition to a review of existing strategic work and stakeholder consultation, has informed the Vision and Sketch Framework contained within this document.

These observations have been categorised into Zoning and Overlays (the planning controls), Land Use, Built Form, Landscape and Access & Movement, and are shown in the following pages. Accompanying the spatial analysis of access & movement conditions is an assessment of current car parking conditions within the Village Centre undertaken by SALT (traffic consultants).

ZONING & OVERLAYS

- The west side of Grampians Road is primarily publicly zoned land.
- The east side of Grampians Road is commercially zoned (Commercial 1 Zone), apart from the east side of Heath Street which is split between residential and commercial.
- Two sites at the south-west gateway are also zoned for residential use.
- The whole area is subject to a Bushfire Management Overlay.
- Private land has both a Vegetation Protection Overlay and a Design & Development Overlay which triggers a permit for any building over 5m without muted materials and finishes.

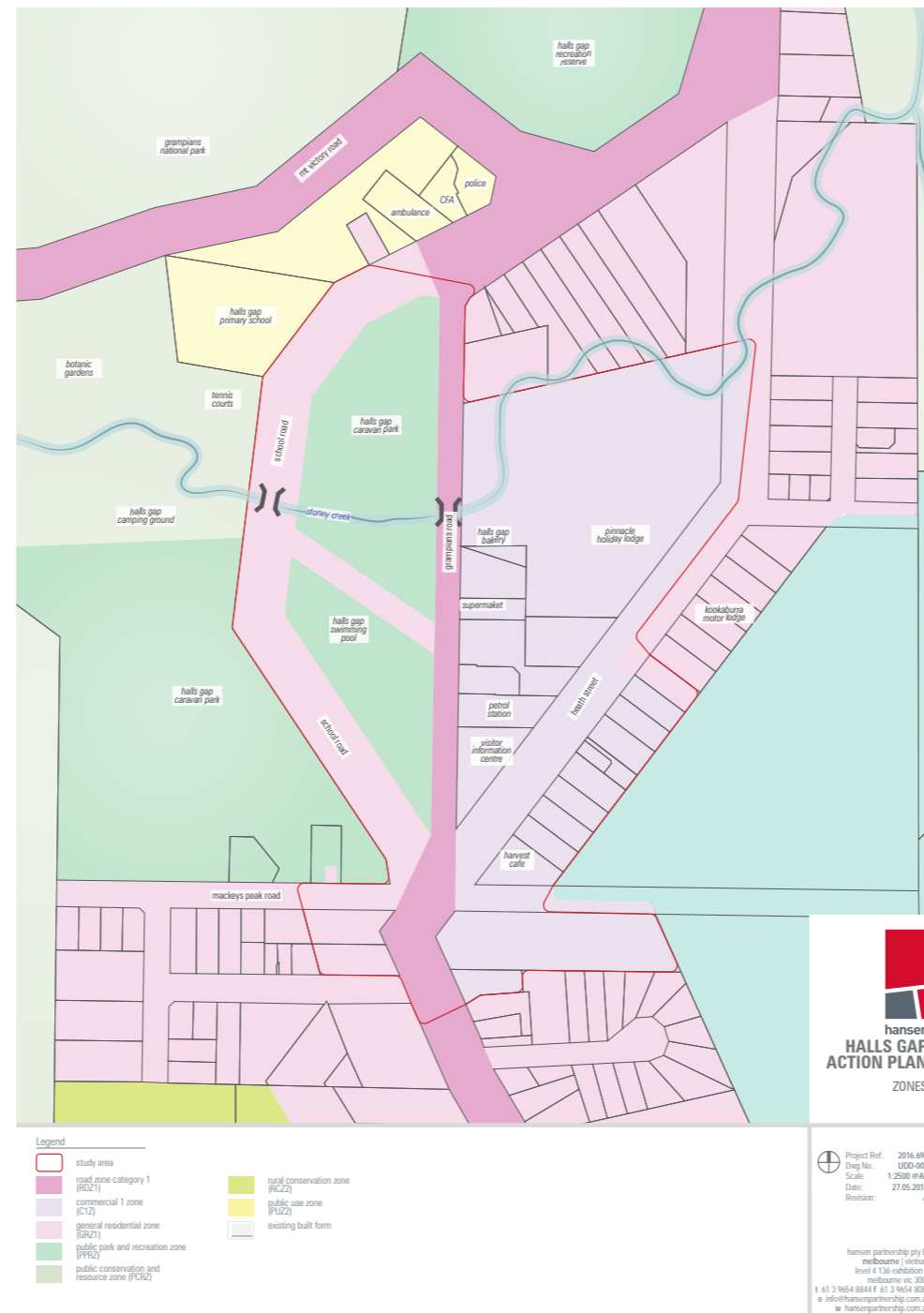


Figure 2. Zoning Map

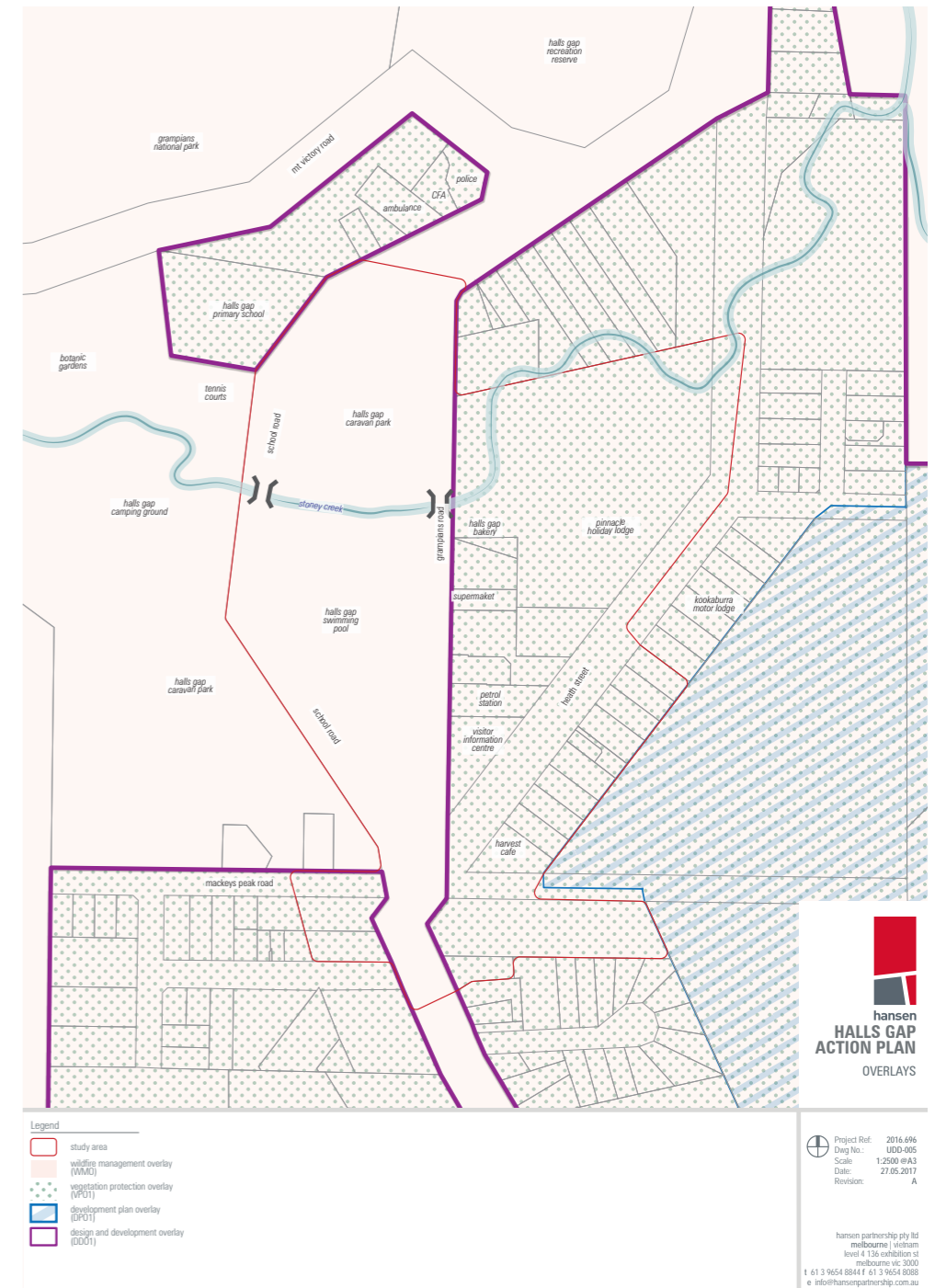


Figure 3. Overlay Map

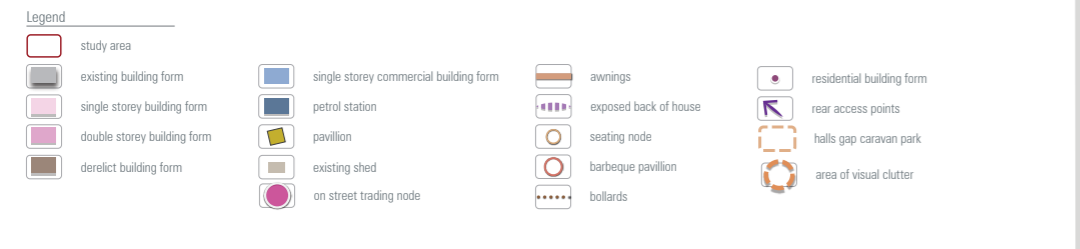
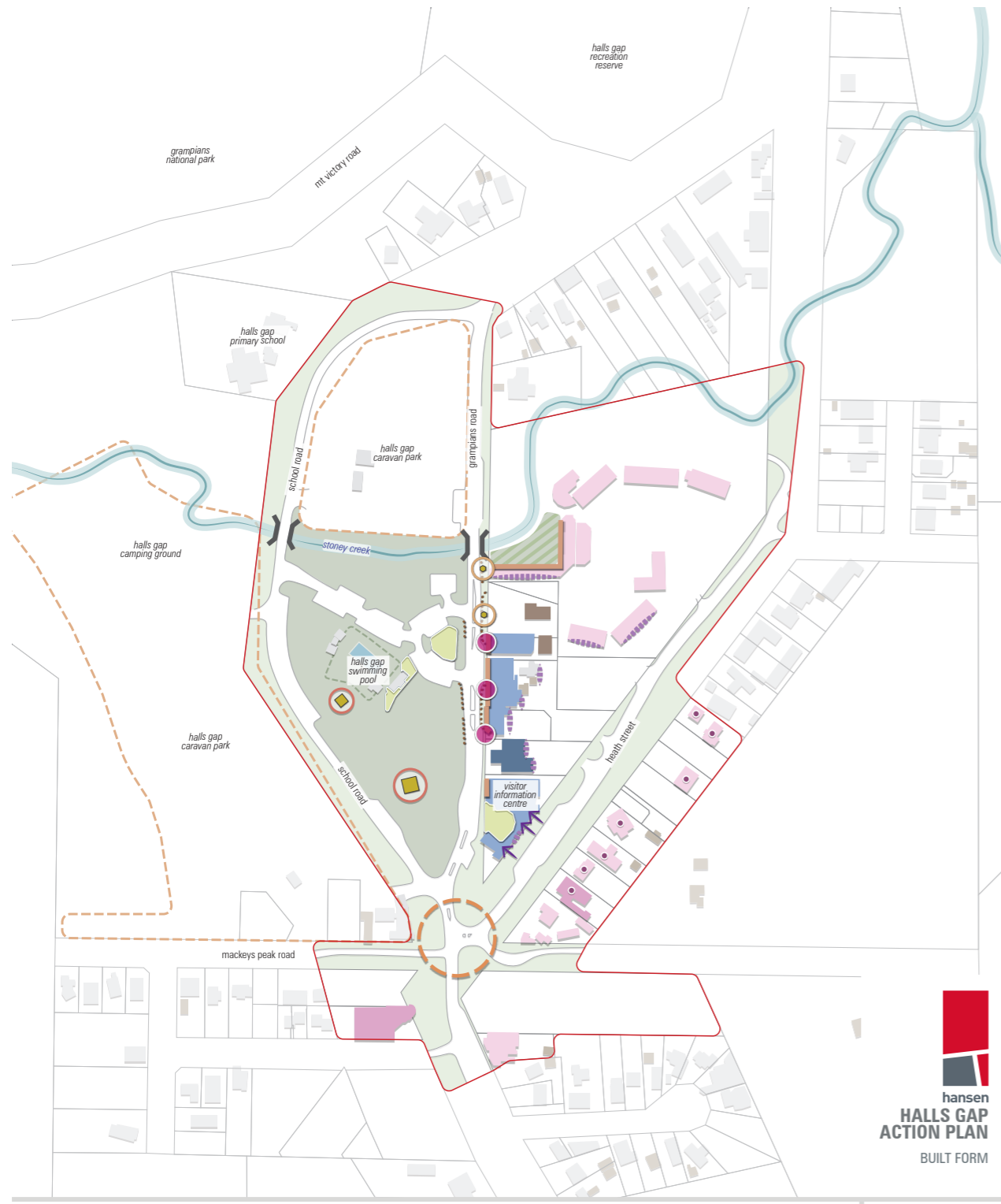
LAND USE

- Halls Gap Caravan Park wraps the Recreation Reserve to the north and west.
- The Reserve contains a mix of uses including the community pool, aging playground and large number of car parks.
- The mix of commercial uses within the Village Centre are not as diverse as may be expected to service tourism.
- Commercial land to east of Heath Street remains largely residential despite zoning.
- The Visitor Information Centre and community centre mark the southern gateway.
- Accommodation uses are provided to the rear of the main spine but are limited.
- A number of key sites within the Village Centre remain undeveloped.
- A cluster of community uses including the primary school are accessed to the north along School Road.



Figure 4. Land Use Map

EXISTING CONDITIONS



hansen
HALLS GAP
ACTION PLAN
BUILT FORM

Project Ref: 2016.696
Dwg No.: UDD-003
Scale: 1:2500 @A3
Date: 27.05.2017
Revision: A

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BUILT FORM

- Commercial buildings are exclusively single storey and generally simple in form, but dated and do not reflect contemporary practice in contextual response.
- Roof forms are mixed, with parapets prevalent along Grampians Road.
- Red brick is the predominant material for commercial forms along the main street, with greater use of timber along the Stoney Creek interface.
- Commercial forms to Grampians Road and Stoney Creek generally have verandahs.
- Residential buildings are generally set within landscaping and are a mix of single and double storey forms.
- The Stoney Creek Shops and the Pinnacle Motel are both set within landscapes, with the shops fronting open space along Stoney Creek and the motel buildings in a 'campus' setting.
- Buildings are orientated to Grampians Road and Stoney Creek resulting in a 'back of house' presentation to Heath Street.



Figure 5. Built form Map

LANDSCAPE

- There are incredible views to both the east, and particularly the west, of the surrounding ranges within which the Village Centre ‘nestles’.
- The landscape character of the Village Centre is also strongly influenced by the vegetated nature of the reserve on the western side of Grampians Road which forms a ‘foreground’ to these views.
- Extensive and significant canopy vegetation within the Village Centre is also critical to the ‘sense of place’ and notable along Heath Street.
- The Stoney Creek corridor forms an important northern boundary to the Village Centre.
- An existing drainage line cuts diagonally across Heath Street and connects to wetlands located on Valley Drive.

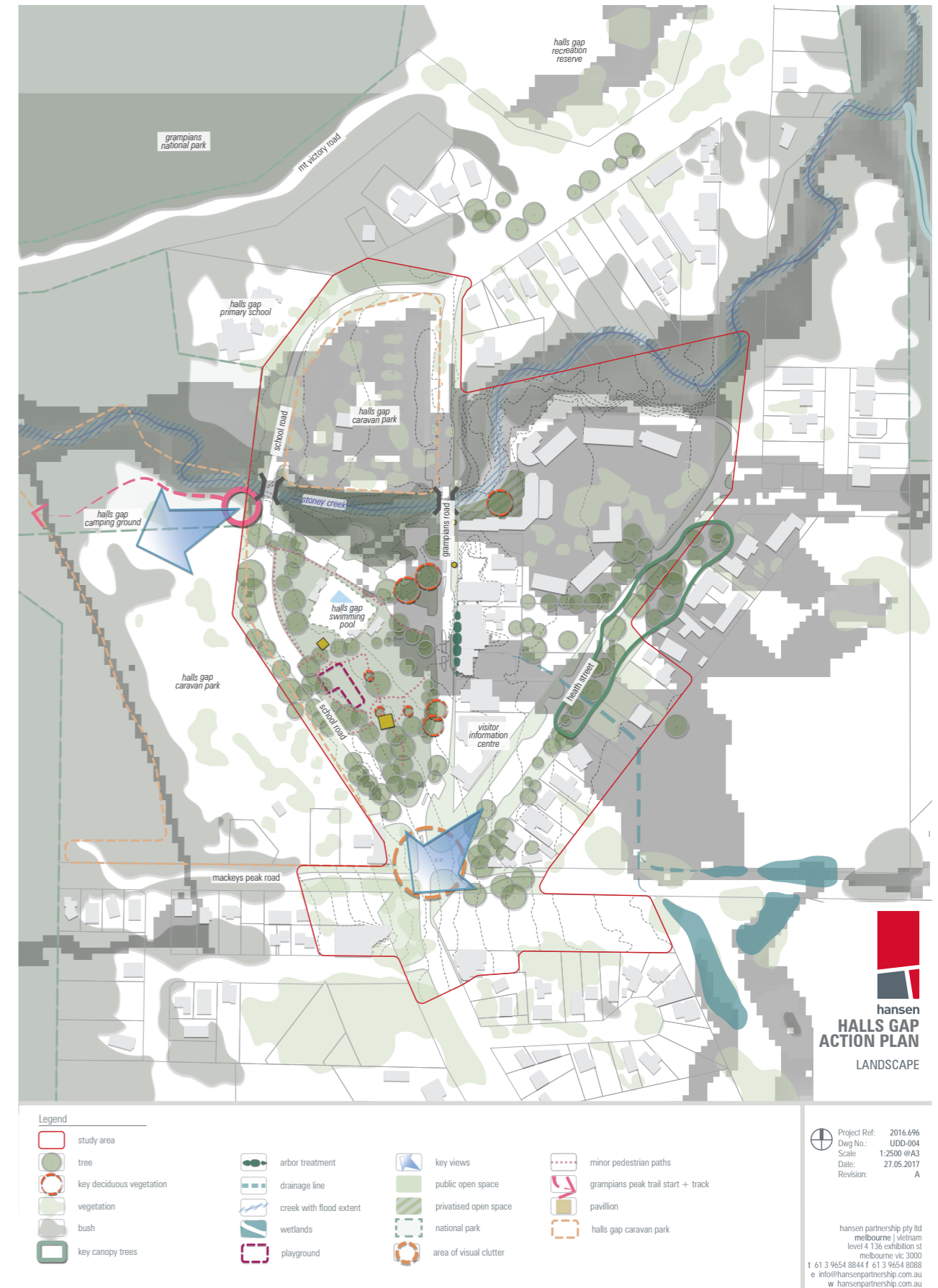
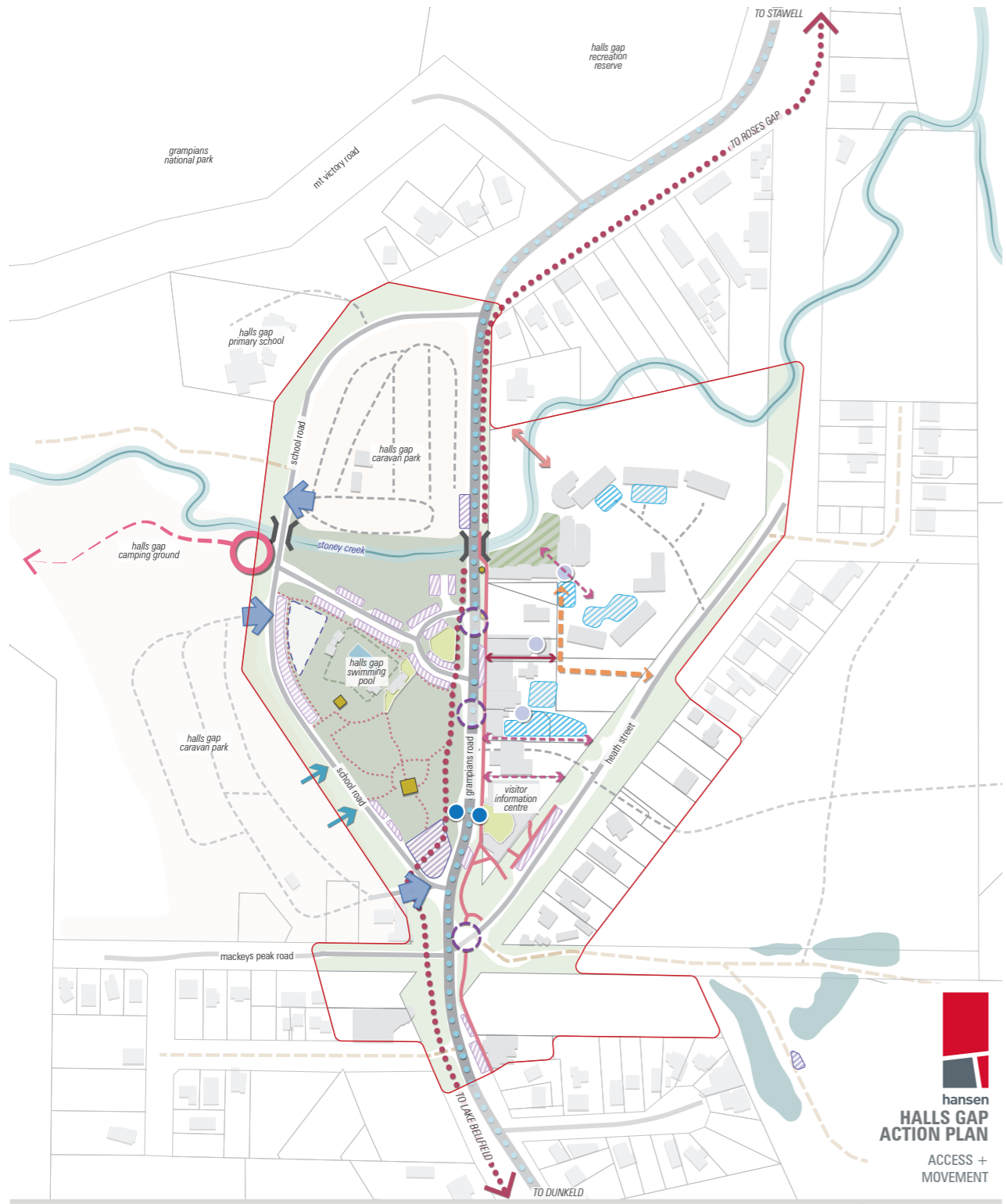


Figure 6. Landscape Map

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Legend							
	study area		side access way		pedestrian entry/exit points		main road
	footpath		informal pedestrian access		vehicle entry/exit points		sealed road
	shared path		grampians peak trail start + track		public carparking		unsealed road
	minor paths		loading zones		private carparking areas		private track/road
	informal creek crossing		bus stop		informal carparking areas		caravan park extent
	informal access ways		bus route		informal overflow car parking		public open space
	central pedestrian point		public plaza				

Project Ref: 2016.696
 Dwg No.: UDD-001
 Scale: 1:2500 @A3
 Date: 27.05.2017
 Revision: A

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ACCESS & MOVEMENT

- Grampians Road is the main movement corridor, and includes bus access and a shared trail. Conflicts exist between the shared trail and car parking areas and road crossing points are not clear.
- While some car parking is provided along Grampians Road, most car parking is in a convoluted arrangement within public reserve land.
- Connectivity to Health Street is very limited with some informal pedestrian desire lines but no formal linkages.
- Informal loading and access arrangements to the rear of the commercial strip rely on Council land.
- There is poor pedestrian connectivity to the existing 'Trailhead' location on School Road.



Figure 7. Access & Movement Map

CAR PARKING

Northern Grampians Shire Council commissioned SALT to undertake an assessment of car parking within the Village Centre to ensure that the Action Plan was underpinned by an evidence based understanding of existing conditions relating to car parking. Car parking occupancy, duration of stay surveys and user intercepts were undertaken on a typical weekday, a typical Saturday and an anticipated peak period (during an event) in May / June 2017. On all three survey days, the car parking surveys were undertaken hourly from 9am to 5pm.

The survey captured all publicly accessible car parking spaces within the survey area, including an informal car park located on the corner of Valley Drive and Grampians Road (private land used for overflow car parking during events). Weather conditions on all survey days were generally considered fine. In addition to the parking surveys above, user intercept surveys were also undertaken on the same days. These were conducted in order to gain an understanding of the parking experience for motorists, and whether or not there are differences in the experience between traders and visitors. An occupancy of 85% was adopted as a common point at which parking occupancy should be targeted at typical peak times.

A review of the survey data indicates that there are currently 599 car parking spaces available for public use within the survey area. These spaces are comprised of the following:

- Unrestricted x 286 spaces;
- Approximately 300 spaces in the overflow parking area;
- Disabled spaces x 8 spaces;
- P 30min x 4 spaces; and
- Mail Zone x 1 space.



Key findings from an analysis of the above are as follows:

The surveys found that in general, there was sufficient supply of car parking within the survey area to meet the demands generated on all of the survey days. However, parking along Grampians Road and adjacent to the Halls Gap Pool tended to have high occupancy rates during peak periods, which may cause drivers to circulate these areas or park elsewhere.

On an event day, the peak car parking demand (including the overflow car park) occurred at 3pm, where 153 car parking spaces were occupied of a total 599, equivalent to a car parking occupancy rate of 26%.

However, based on anecdotal information and on-site observations, it is understood that car parking along Grampians Road and adjacent to the Halls Gap Pool tend to be the most popular locations for car parking. As such, a targeted survey of these areas on the peak day was also undertaken. The peak parking demand within this area occurred at 1pm, where 100 of the 117 available spaces were occupied. This is equivalent to a car parking rate of 85%, which suggests that drivers may feel some frustration when searching for a parking space in these areas. On a weekday, the peak car parking demand (excluding the overflow car park) occurred at 2pm, with 154 of 299 car parking spaces occupied. This is equivalent to a rate of 52%. On a Saturday, the peak car parking demand (excluding the overflow car park) occurred at 12pm, where 189 of 299 car parking spaces were occupied. This equates to a car parking rate of 63%.

Although the majority of car parking spaces within the area are unrestricted, duration of stay surveys were also undertaken. These surveys found that generally, over half of all drivers tended to park for up to 2 hours. On the 'peak' day, over 50% of vehicles were observed to have parked for 2 hours or less. On the weekday exactly half of all vehicles stayed for no longer than 2 hours, while on the weekend only 40% were less than 2 hours, indicating that on the weekend people tended to stay for longer.

The visitor intercept surveys found the majority of vehicles parked in the area are private cars, with caravans being the next most popular vehicle. Most visitors parked along Grampians Road or next to the Halls Gap Pool, consistent with findings of the occupancy surveys.

The time required to find a space varied across survey days. On the 'peak' day respondents took between 5 and 10 minutes to find a park. However, the majority of respondents considered the convenience of parking in Halls Gap comparable to parking in similar town centres, with the remainder indicating they thought parking was better in Halls Gap. On weekdays, most respondents took less than 2 minutes to find a car parking spot and parked in the reserve. On the weekend the majority of respondents were from out of town and found a car park in less than 2 minutes. As with weekdays, the majority parked within the reserve. The average intended duration of stay in Halls Gap was 3 hours, with the highest indicated being 10 hours. Visitors unanimously considered the convenience of parking in Halls Gap to be similar or better than other town centres.

The employee intercept surveys found that most staff felt that there was sufficient parking in the area to cater for both staff and customers. All staff generally park for at least 3 hours at a time. The findings of the Destination Survey undertaken by SALT, were confirmed in consultation with local traders as employees utilised parking in the Village Centre.

Matters to consider in relation to car parking include the following:

- In considering how the delivery of a 'walkable town' can occur, the relationship with and location of car parking need to be evaluated. Understanding how people are likely to access the trailhead, as well as the number of car parks required is critical, particularly given the current dominance of car parking areas within the landscape setting of the Village Centre. The Action Plan will need to ensure that this balance between car parking and the pedestrian environment is addressed. The area of car parking in the reserve is clearly the most popular area for car parking across visitors, shoppers, local residents using facilities and employees.
- There is some evidence of excessive demand on car parking within the Reserve during peak periods, leading to circulation by cars as people try to find a space.
- However, the parking in this area is by far the most obvious and is clearly accessed by visitors entering the Village Centre along Grampians Road.
- There is no signage or direct pedestrian connections to any other car parking areas which may be contributing to lower levels of usage compared to the reserve spaces (i.e. most visitors may not be aware that parking is available on Health Street).
- Given the use of the reserve spaces by employees, potential may exist to place time restrictions on these spaces to encourage employees to use alternative spaces, freeing up additional spaces for visitors.

PLEASE NOTE: It is acknowledged that car parking numbers may be higher over the summer / school holidays and that additional actions to manage car parking at these times may be required. This will need to be addressed in the following stage of this project to ensure an appropriate balance between meeting this overflow demand and delivering objectives around pedestrian priority and amenity in the Village Centre is achieved.



GRAMPIANS PEAKS TRAIL

BACKGROUND

As noted in the Introduction to this document, the identification of a preferred location for the Peaks Trailhead was a key deliverable of this project.

It is therefore important for any Action Plan to be based on a solid understanding of just what the 'Peaks Trailhead' will comprise of to ensure that recommendations about the optimal location are sound. The majority of direction around the trailhead is included in the *Grampians Peaks Trail: Trailhead Report (2017)* prepared for Parks Victoria which built on the 2014 *Grampians Peaks Trail Master Plan*.

The Peaks Trail currently starts from the car park in Halls Gap, where walkers are directed to walk past the swimming pool, cross the road and follow signs to Venus Baths (see Figure 8).

Regarding aspirations associated with the delivery of the trailhead, perhaps most critical for this Action Plan is the intention to transform Halls Gap into an internationally recognised 'walking town' that will support the development of businesses that provide world class products and services for the Grampians Peaks Trail. The Action Plan for the Village Centre needs to consider this primacy of the walker / pedestrian in considering how the Centre may evolve over the coming years. For the most part this will relate to improvements in the 'public spaces' of the centre, but development on private land can, and will, exert a strong influence on the amenity and functionality of the pedestrian environment. Clear and legible linkages to the trailhead, wherever it is located, are clearly required. The *Trailhead Report* also clearly identifies the need to improve the presentation of the township and capitalise on the "stunning" landscape setting.

The Trailhead Report identifies that the Grampians is predominantly a self-drive destination with over 97% of visitors being self-drive tourists. Consequently, adequate car parking at trailheads should be provided, as many groups of independent walkers will car pool shuttle, dropping a car at either end of a walk segment. Because public transport around the Grampians is limited, the Trailhead Report identifies that the establishment of a regular and convenient shuttle service may be needed to assist the movement of walkers to and from different sections of their walk.

Major trailheads such as Halls Gap are identified as potentially including a range of facilities where appropriate and feasible, including shelter, seating, toilets, signage and track information, tank water and car parking (understood to be about 15 long term spaces in Halls Gap) and the Action Plan will need to consider the benefits of delivering / consolidating these requirements with existing facilities. It is understood that signage is the key priority for trailhead locations but the starting point of the actual walk may also comprise a visual marker, such as a small plaza or sculptural element. Previous discussions have identified the potential for the Brambuk Centre to function as the Halls Gap Trailhead. This is potentially problematic in terms of the delivery of the anticipated benefits to the Halls Gap Village Centre and is discussed further in the following sections.

Matters to consider in relation to the Peaks Trailhead include the following:

- There is a clear need for the priority of pedestrian movement to drive the delivery of public realm investment.
- Locating the trailhead some distance from the Village Centre may discourage walkers from accessing and interacting with services and facilities in the Village Centre and may compromise the aspirations to deliver a 'walkable town'.
- Improvements to the quality of design outcomes and protection of the landscape setting will be important to the tourism offer.
- The delivery of complementary car parking spaces will also need to be considered, but will need to be delivered in a way which has regard to the matters outlined above.
- In addition, an area which either provides or has easy access to shelter, seating, toilets, signage and track information and tank water will need to be provided. Public toilets are perhaps the 'big ticket' item here, and within the Village Centre are available in the reserve and at the Visitor Information Centre.
- Locating the Trailhead at the Brambuk Centre, while it would provide convenient car parking, would likely compromise the delivery of spin off economic benefits to Halls Gap.
- The *Halls Gap Masterplan* (see following section), puts forward a number of potential trailhead locations and provides a brief summary of advantages and disadvantages. Option 4 which adjoins the School Road bridge, responds most appropriately to the above considerations.



Figure 8. Existing Grampians Peaks Trail circuit (source: Parks Victoria website)

DOCUMENT REVIEW

Planning for Halls Gaps Village Centre over the last 17 years has largely been driven by three key documents; an urban design framework, a community plan and the masterplan which are discussed in the following section of this document.

In the case of the Urban Design Framework (which was undertaken in 2001) and the Community Plan (undertaken in 2011), the review has highlighted only those matters which are of continuing relevance to the Village Centre, and provided an assessment of whether there are outstanding matters which could be addressed by the Action Plan. In relation to the Masterplan, which addressed the full extent of Halls Gap, matters which are relevant to he Village Centre are highlighted, again, with comments on their continued relevance to the current project.

Where a matter may be relevant for consideration in later stages of this project, this is clearly highlighted (STAGE TWO).



Figure 9. 2001 Urban Design Framework

HALLS GAP URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The Urban Design Framework was developed in 2001. This comprehensive document outlined numerous actions to guide development in the centre, primarily focused around the public realm. While many of these actions have been implemented, others remain incomplete or no longer align with best practice.

Matters to consider in relation to aspirations expressed by the Urban Design Framework include:

1. Streetscape upgrades along Grampians Road proposed including greater pedestrianisation though reduced road width, 45 degree parking and a wider eastern side
2. Heath Street developed as the main vehicular route with a bridge over Stoney Creek providing a connection to the north

Further investigations may be needed to establish if this option is feasible, having regard to the cost and other relevant environmental matters such as the removal of vegetation and the impact on existing residents.

3. High design standards and the use of local materials (such as sandstone, timber, gravel) should be applied

For this aspiration to be realised, expectations and preferred materials need to be clearly defined and changes to the planning scheme undertaken to ensure their statutory weight. STAGE TWO

4. Planting of additional vegetation, in particular canopy trees (Manna Gums identified) with a focus on open space areas where many trees are getting older and along Heath Street.

Opportunities for the protection of existing canopy trees and the planting of new vegetation to ensure the landscape character is enhanced should be pursued, as well as how this can be managed within the constraints of the Bushfire Management Overlay.

5. Paths should be granitic sand

This may be appropriate in some areas but maintenance and accessibility issues will also need to be considered. STAGE TWO

6. An informal green link along Stoney Creek to Heath Street

This could be pursued but would need the consent of private land owners given this parcel is privately owned.

7. Car parking access in Heath Street

While some car parking has been added since the UDF, there are further opportunities that could be explored through the Action Plan.

HALLS GAP COMMUNITY PLAN (2011)

In addition to the formal 'planning' of the Village Centre through the 2001 Urban Design Framework, a Community Plan largely driven by local residents, also identified a number of actions relevant to the Village Centre which may influence this Action Plan.

Matters to consider in relation to aspirations expressed by the Community Plan include:

1. The undergrounding of powerlines

While the undergrounding of powerlines is not a Council responsibility, opportunities exist for Council to identify priority locations and consider where undergrounding or bundling of powerlines may be possible, particularly in association with any future public works projects. STAGE TWO

2. Decluttering of signage

The decluttering or rationalisation of signage along key corridor such as Grampians Road could be pursued through any proposed public realm works. STAGE TWO

3. Increased commercial floorspace

This is one of the drivers of this project and opportunities to unlock underutilised commercial land and to stimulate private investment in the Village Centre should be pursued.

4. Sustainability initiatives, particularly around active transport and water sensitive urban design (WSUD)

As with the decluttering of signage, opportunities for the integration of WSUD can be delivered through any subsequent public realm upgrades. STAGE TWO Improvements to pedestrian and cycle connections, both in terms of safety and amenity will increase the likelihood of residents making active transport choices and should be pursued through the Action Plan

5. Improved and extended pedestrian paths

As noted above, improvements to the pedestrian network will need to be addressed through the Action Plan.

6. Public gathering spaces and seating

Gathering spaces to complement the 'focal' space delivered through the Visitor Information Centre development will be identified in the Action Plan, with subsequent 'concept plans' to provide further design details around specific seating locations etc.

HALLS GAP MASTERPLAN (2015)

Perhaps the most relevant document, and the one which this Action Plan is intended to implement, is the *Halls Gap Master-Plan for Commercial Investment and Public Land Development* (the Masterplan), prepared by MvS Architects and adopted by Council in December 2016. The key focus of this document was the activation and further development of the tourism industry within Halls Gap, with particular reference to the delivery of the Grampians Peaks Long Distance Walk which will see further emphasis on Halls Gap as one of the Major Trailheads for this iconic walk. The Masterplan identifies a very broad range of actions and initiatives. The focus within this Action Plan is on those elements of the Masterplan which are relevant to the Village Centre area, noting many of these initiatives will be delivered by the private sector rather than Council. These relevant actions are identified to the right, along with some additional comments on their relevance to the Action Plan.

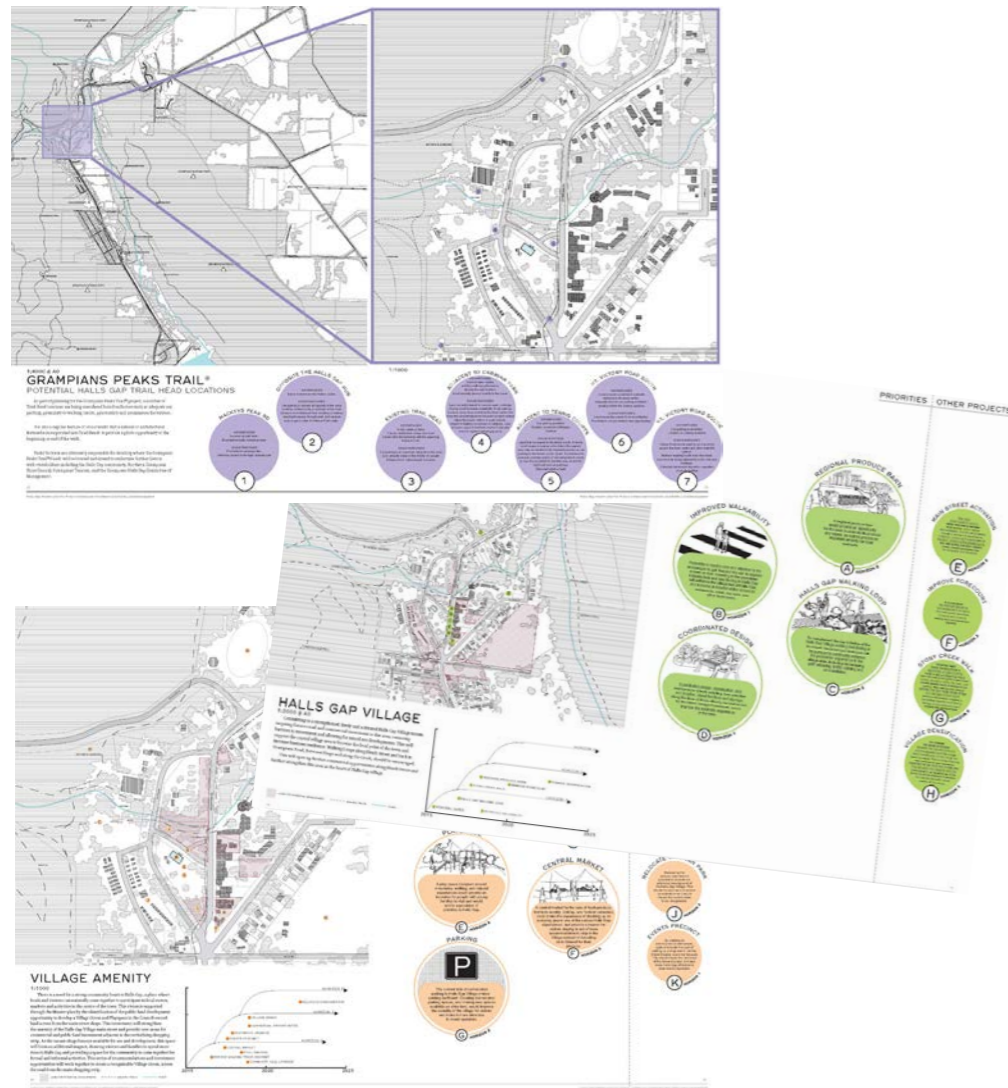


Figure 10. Pages from the Halls Gap Masterplan

Matters to consider in relation to aspirations expressed by the Masterplan include:

1. Transition Halls Gap to a 'walking town' with a connected network of walking and bicycle trails, including a Heath Street and Stoney Creek loop.
As above, the Action Plan should consider projects to deliver these aspirations.
2. Need for a strong community 'heart' / event space
The existing Community Hall contains a space for gathering, although this could be complemented by other spaces within the Village Centre.
3. Develop a Village Green and playspace on Council owned land across from main street shops
This land is, in fact, owned by the State Government and managed by a Committee of Management. The development of a Village Green and playspace would need to be facilitated through that group, although if wider benefits to the Village Centre are determined, there may be opportunities for both parties to work together towards complementary outcomes through the Action Plan.
4. Commercial expansion on western side of Grampians Road opposite community hall
The expansion of commercial uses into the green reserve is problematic and would require the transition of public open space to private ownership which is unlikely to be supported. It would also potentially compromise the critical 'landscape setting' of the Village Centre.
5. Heath Street further commercial opportunities
As above, the Action Plan should consider projects to deliver these aspirations.
6. Main Street activation
As above, the Action Plan should consider projects to deliver these aspirations.
7. 'Densify the Village'
While additional infilling of underutilised land is one of the objectives of this Action Plan, this will need to be managed carefully having consideration for critical parameters such as contextual responses.
8. Protect the feel of the Village Centre, including views and set parameters for private design to ensure centre is attractive to the 'inspired by nature' tourists
Following stages of the Action Plan could set these parameters and establish a rationale for an updated Design & Development Overlay. STAGE TWO
9. Establish a coordinated design approach of the public realm, including removal of overhead wires.
Any streetscape upgrade proposed as part of the Action Plan should include development of a preferred palette of materials and finishes to ensure a cohesive centre. Ideally these would also be implemented within other public spaces such as the reserve. STAGE TWO

10. Seven options for the location of Grampians Peaks Trailhead identified
The preferred Option (Option 4) is identified in this Action Plan.
11. The establishment of a brewery / distillery / deli / restaurant / lifestyle day spa targeted at walkers / regional produce barn / central market
The delivery of these private initiatives will rely on private interest, facilitated by Council through improving access to currently underutilised areas of commercial land.
12. Wayfinding and signage within the centre should be improved
This could be pursued through the second phase of the Action Plan. STAGE TWO
13. Create demarcated parking spaces
Parking spaces have progressively been linemarked but further areas could be identified through the Action Plan as relevant.
14. Additional landscaping throughout the centre
As above, the Action Plan should consider projects to deliver these aspirations.
15. Pool shading, minor renovations to the Community Hall and a sculpture for the forecourt, as well as free wifi within the Village Centre.
These minor works are likely to be pursued separately, noting free wifi has already been established at the Community Hall.
16. Recommendations around relocating the Caravan Park and removing sections of track to increase caravan park privacy
These are matters for the Committee of Management to determine.

REVIEW FINDINGS

There are a number of matters which need to be highlighted in relation to the document review which are relevant to Stage One of the Action Plan, as follows:

- The Plan will need to focus on the delivery of improved pedestrian safety and amenity and enhance the path network
- Opportunities to deliver increased commercial floorspace should be pursued.
- The Plan should consider creatively how a range of public spaces can be delivered to facilitate informal gathering within the Village Centre.
- Further opportunities for streetscape improvements to Grampians Road should be explored, particularly in relation to how additional space for pedestrian movement and outdoor dining could be delivered, through increased footpath width or 'decluttering' of street furniture.
- Opportunities to deliver new vegetation and protect existing canopy trees should be pursued.
- Consideration should be given to how linkages along Stoney Creek and additional car parking in Heath Street could be delivered.
- The costs and benefits of delivering a 'through' link along Heath Street by constructing a new road and bridge should be considered carefully to ensure that this is appropriately balanced with the broader vision and aspirations for the Village Centre and does not negatively impact on existing businesses.
- Opportunities to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes within the Recreation Reserve space should be considered, as with other land managers but projects which Council is able to deliver on land they manage should be prioritised.
- Option 4 from the Masterplan should be confirmed as the preferred location for the Grampians Peaks Trailhead.



CONSULTATION

Consultation for the Halls Gap Village Centre Action Plan will comprise two main phases:

- The first phase (which develops this document) will include engagement with key stakeholders and landowners.
- The second phase will focus on inputs from the broader Halls Gap resident and visitor communities.

Consultation in Phase 1 of the project included the following:

- One-on-one meetings with key landowners to identify aspirations for key land parcels and any barriers to development.
- Information Download sessions with key stakeholders to verify background analysis and confirm issues and opportunities, including a Walking Workshop of the Village Centre area with key stakeholders. These were held in June 2017. Attendees included Park Victoria, the Halls Gap Committee of Management, Council officers, local business owners and resident group representatives.
- These initial engagement activities were followed by a Design Charrette in August 2017 where ideas raised in the first sessions were tested and synthesised into a sketch framework for resolution.

Feedback received following the Information Download sessions and Walking Workshops included:

- There is a need to diversify the commercial offer in terms of mix between retail and commercial space available - is the mix of commercial space sizes meeting needs or are there too many small spaces that limit the variety of commercial offering?



Figure 11. Walking workshop brochure

- Should look closely at the redevelopment potential of the Pinnacle Motel site - better use of the commercial land - consider suggesting a mix of accommodation and retail/food and drink premises or 'arcade' style layout.
- Deliveries for the supermarket from the rear currently utilise Council land. Plans are in place to improve existing loading facilities to the rear, including possible demolition of the old dwelling on the site.
- Consider identifying a better location for the service station - could the service station in the middle of town be relocated? Look at engaging with the owners about the redevelopment of the site.
- Consideration should be given to widening the Grampians Road street frontage / footpath to allow more function outdoor dining.
- Consider controlling verandah heights, parapet heights, facade controls.
- There is potential to open up the existing access lane adjacent to the supermarket to allow pedestrian access to Heath Street via the Council site.
- Consider the width of the paths to accommodate all forms of traffic - walkers, bikes, prams etc.
- Improve the street lighting around the Visitor Information Centre at corner of Grampians Road and Heath Street.
- Look at opportunity to create designated pedestrian access through or beside the service station.
- Consider incorporating some car parking onto the Council owned site.
- Consider introducing paid and / or time restricted car parking to manage the distribution of car parking.
- Main street parking area (within the reserve) is reported by traders to be mainly used by workers - would providing other car parking with good link or time restrictions assist?
- Need to consider and resolve how to accommodate for waste trucks (skip bins), delivery trucks etc. at the rear of Stoney Creek shops when looking at options for legitimising shared use/access.

This feedback and other information received through the sessions was used to identify a range of issues and opportunities for the Village Centre, which are outlined in the following section.

Consultation in Phase 2 of the project included broad advertisement of a 'Consultation Draft', included exhibition and community drop in session. The findings of feedback received during this exhibition are comprehensively documented in the *Halls Gap Town Centre Action Plan: Consultation Summary* which can be found at Appendix One.



ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

A range of issues were identified through analysis of existing conditions and consultation with key stakeholders. These issues and opportunities do not comprise the full range of influences which should inform the Action Plan, but do highlight some of the key considerations. Matters requiring consideration outlined in earlier sections of this document are replicated for ease of use within the adjacent highlight box.

These issues are grouped under the themes of:

Public Spaces + Connections

- Dangerous and / or poorly located road crossings which do not reflect the desire lines of pedestrian movement, particularly across Grampians Road
- Informal parking areas create conflicts with shared path users
- The central public carparking limits pedestrian safety and movement, including connections to the Peaks trail
- Existing laneways lack definition and cohesion and are in private ownership
- Urban structure provides preference to vehicle movement over pedestrian movement

Grampians Scenery

- Apart from a height limit which may be restricting commercial growth there are no development controls to manage impacts on the scenic surrounds
- The reserve space currently lacks 'drawcard' tourism features and does not maximise opportunities to support the Village Centre landscape identity

Retail activities + Desintations

- The range of retail and tourism services do not encourage longer term stays or maximise the economic potential of tourism spending
- Lack of clear identity along Heath Street, including 'back of house' presentation which discourages investment
- Poor permeability through commercial land, in particular a lack of pedestrian connectivity from Grampians Road, through commercial land to Heath Street
- Much of the commercial land within the Village Centre is underutilised

Grampains Trail Links

- The current location of the Peaks trail lacks integration with Village Centre
- Lack of signage from Village Centre to walking trails

Main Street Presentation

- Lack of unity in streetscape and building presentation and wayfinding along Main Street
- Inconsistent built form quality and design response.
- Lack of retail and accommodation diversity along Main and Heath Streets
- Lack of continuous active frontage along Main Street, with large vacant blocks
- Visual clutter along main street detracts from the spectacular surrounds
- Village Centre gateways not defined or celebrated

Reserve Spaces

- Lack of hierarchy within open spaces and underutilisation of some areas
- Consideration of and protection of vegetation needs to be prioritised, having particular regard to long term retention of the town canopy cover which may diminish over time
- There is unlikely to be enough car parking for a Trailhead within the Reserve space, given this area is congested at peak times, and circulation for car parks may impact on the safety and amenity of pedestrians and walkers
- Programming of the reserve is unclear and delivery of street furniture such as bins appears uncoordinated

Environment + Drainage

- Drainage lines within the Village Centre will need to be considered through development
- Flood impacts of Stoney Creek will need to be managed, and consideration given to how water sensitive urban design may reduce impacts
- Opportunities for increased environmental education exist within the Village Centre

Opportunities identified through existing documents which are considered relevant and reflected in the 'key concepts and actions' list include:

- There is no signage or direct pedestrian connections to any other car parking areas which may be contributing to lower levels of usage compared to the reserve spaces (i.e. most visitors may not be aware that parking is available on Heath Street).
- Given the use of the reserve car parking spaces by employees, potential may exist to place time restrictions on these spaces to encourage employees to use alternative spaces, freeing up additional spaces for visitors.
- The Plan will need to focus on the delivery of improved pedestrian safety and amenity and enhance the path network.
- Opportunities to deliver increased commercial floorspace should be pursued.
- The Plan should consider creatively how a range of public spaces can be delivered to facilitate informal gathering within the Village Centre.
- Further opportunities for streetscape improvements to Grampians Road should be explored, particularly in relation to how additional space for pedestrian movement and outdoor dining could be delivered, through increased footpath width or 'decluttering' of street furniture.
- Opportunities to deliver new vegetation and protect existing canopy trees should be pursued.
- Consideration should be given to how linkages along Stoney Creek and additional car parking in Heath Street could be delivered.
- The costs and benefits of delivering a 'through' link along Heath Street by constructing a new road and bridge should be considered carefully to ensure that this is appropriately balanced with the broader vision and aspirations for the Village Centre and does not negatively impact on existing businesses.
- Opportunities to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes within the Recreation Reserve space should be considered (as with other land managers) but projects which Council is able to deliver should be prioritised.
- Option 4 from the Masterplan should be confirmed as the preferred location for the Grampians Peaks Trailhead.

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

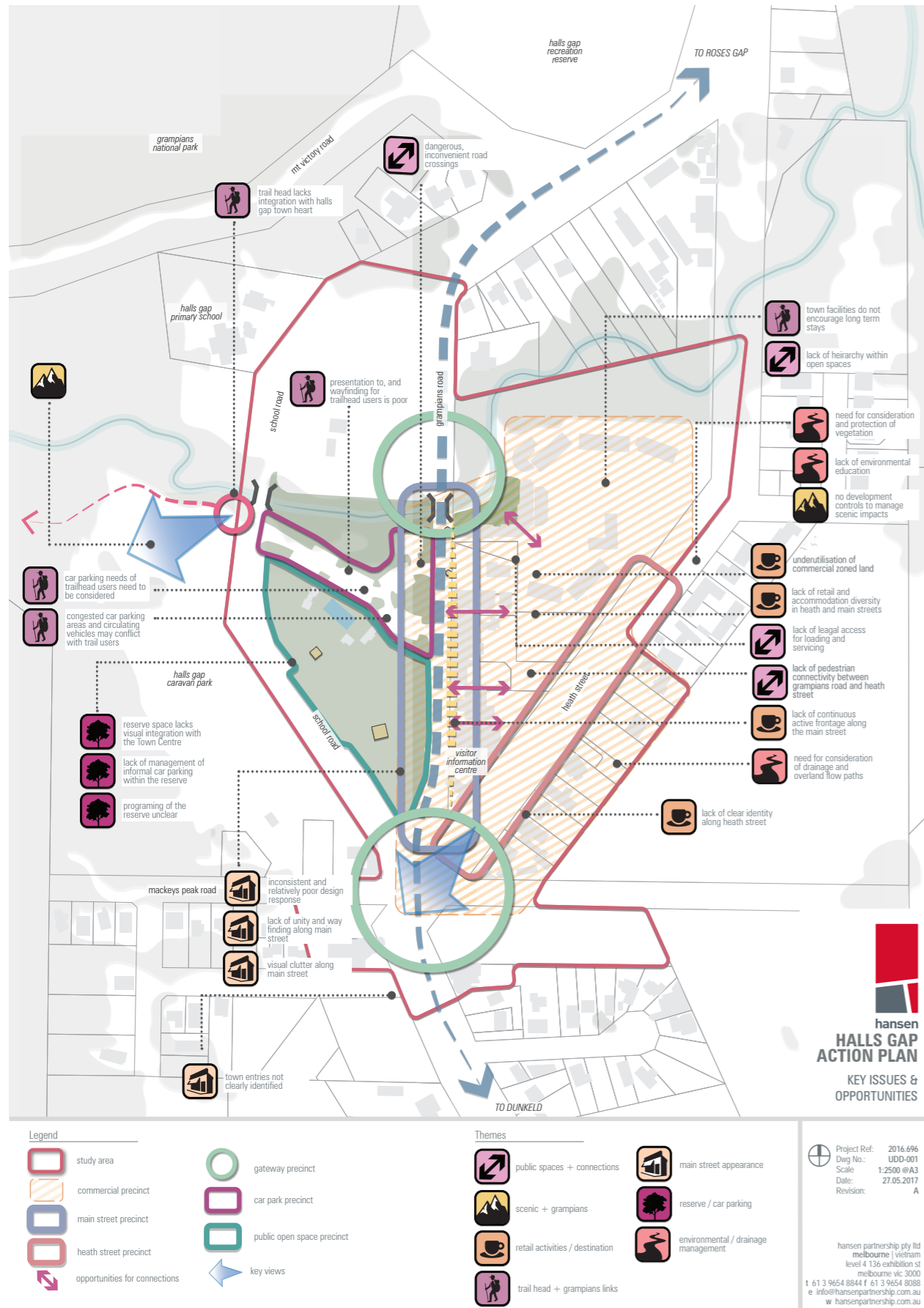


Figure 12. Issues & Opportunities



Figure 13. Undeveloped land along main street



Figure 14. Informal access & loading arrangements



Figure 15. Car parking compromising connections



Figure 16. Visual clutter along Main Street corridor



Figure 17. Disconnected spaces and level changes at Village Centre entry



Figure 19. Underutilised commercial land along Heath Street



Figure 18. Poor gateway presentation and pedestrian / vehicular conflict



PART B ACTION PLAN

VISION & FRAMEWORK

This section (Part B) of the document contains the future directions that should be refined with the community and confirmed through the next stage of this project. It comprises the following:

- A Stage One vision that has informed the 'sketch framework'
- A 'sketch framework' that provides a broad understanding of how all the 'pieces' of the Village Centre may evolve to deliver the aspiration of the community and to maximise the future benefits of the Peaks Trailhead for the township
- An 'Action Plan' which identifies areas for change which are considered priorities in achieving the objectives of this project
- A series of complementary initiatives which should also be pursued through the following stages of this project
- Further details on how these actions could be implemented.

PRINCIPLES

The 'vision' for Halls Gap Village Centre is centred on the delivery of key principles related to the three themes of activity, access and amenity which have been developed having regard to adopted Council and community aspirations, and having consideration for the identified issues and opportunities:

Increase activity: Increase the level and diversity of activity within the Village Centre, particularly activity which generates economic benefits for the town

Improve access: Improve the safety and amenity of pedestrian connections within the Village Centre and improve permeability, particularly between Grampians Road and Heath Street

Enhance amenity: Ensure that development has regard to the spectacular landscape setting and enhances interest and enjoyment of public spaces in the Village Centre



Framework Plan

Legend

- peak's trail head departure experience
- entry feature
- road crossing treatment
- recreation precincts
- shared trail
- new access lane
- pedestrian path
- new or improved pedestrian link
- internal pedestrian link
- longer term creek connections
- existing building
- potential infill development
- potential upper level development
- active frontage
- additional formalised car parking
- street upgrades to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety

Project Ref: 2016.696
 Dwg No.: UDD-008
 Scale: 1:1500 @A3
 1:750 @A1
 Date: 22.02.2018
 Revision: A

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Figure 20. Sketch Framework

VISION

The following 'vision' should be considered for the Village Centre:

The Halls Gap Village Centre is a world class 'walking village. A place where people 'stop, stay and spend' within the magnificent backdrop of the Grampians (Gariwerd) Ranges.

The centre offers a full array of community and commercial services, and key tourism destination activities supporting both the National Park and Grampians Peaks Trail.

The centre has a network of new and improved pedestrian paths and linkages, so that residents and visitors can move easily safely through the town to shops, amenities, open spaces and the National Park beyond.

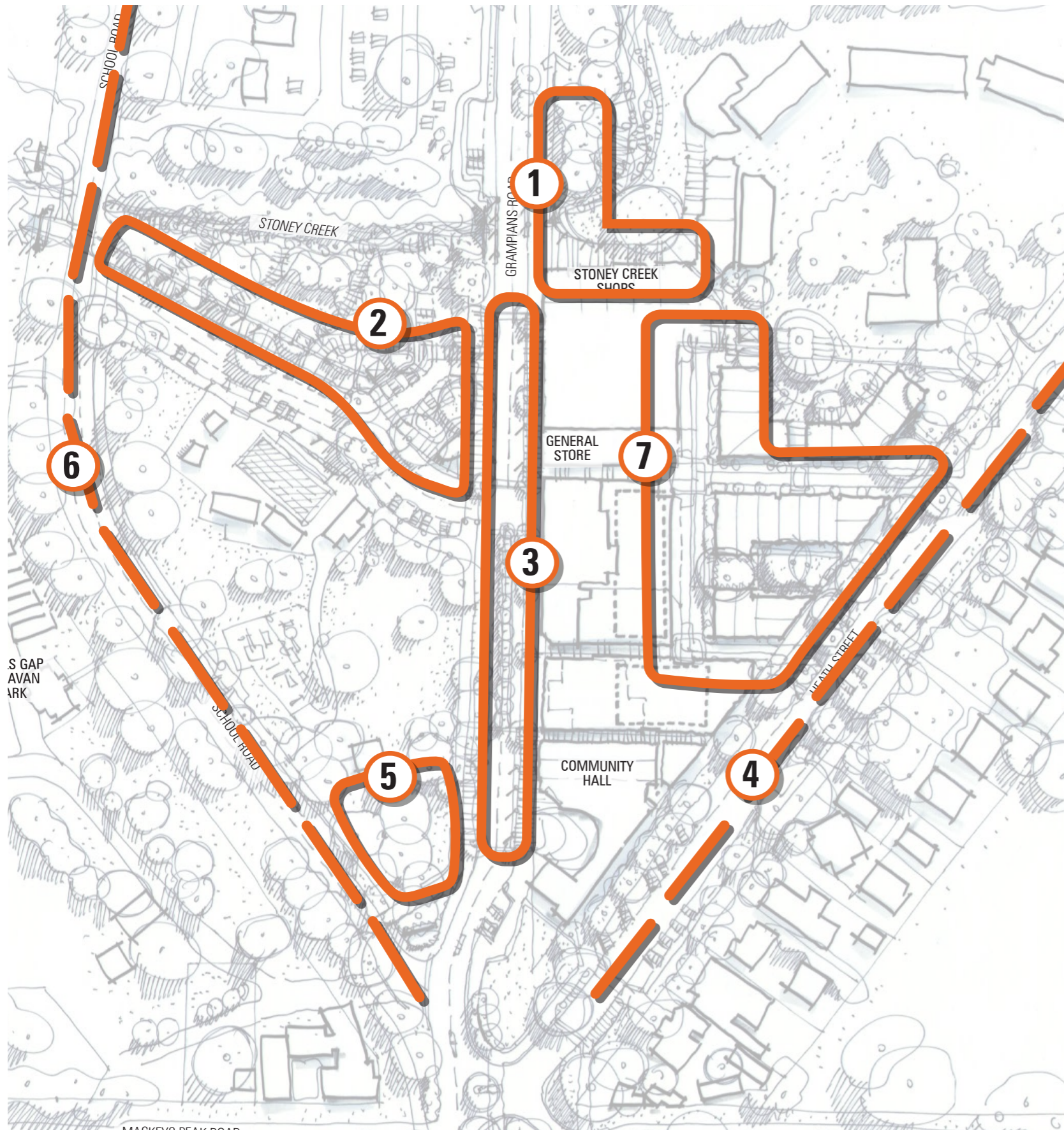
Public works and new development investment in the town is realised sensitively, with the highest regard for the landscape setting and the natural environment.

KEY ELEMENTS

Key elements of the Stage One Sketch Framework are as follows:

- Upgrades to the three main roads (Heath Street, Grampians Road and School Road) to improve pedestrian amenity and functionality;
- Identification of the location of the Peaks Trailhead and an associated 'Trailhead Connection' experience connecting the Village Centre to maximise benefits of increased tourism for local businesses;
- Delivery of landscape features to mark Village Centre gateways;
- Establishment of a rear lane network and pedestrian connections to improve connections to Heath Street and resolve servicing of commercial development;
- Improvements to the Stoney Creek bridge to both mark the Village Centre gateway and improve integration of the Storey Creek shops;
- Delivery of alternative car parking locations to reduce congestion within the Recreation Reserve; and
- Activation of Heath Street and construction of bridge to unlock the potential of underutilised commercially zoned land and facilitate delivery of the 'walkable town'.

PRIORITY ACTIONS



PRIORITY ACTIONS

Complementing the Sketch Framework prepared for Halls Gap is an 'Action Plan' of Priority actions and future initiatives. These are the key concepts which should underpin further planning and design work, changes to the Northern Grampians Shire Planning Scheme and future public works. The Priority Actions represent key initiatives which Council can take an active role in pursuing in the shorter term, and which can deliver on the vision established through the framework. These seven Priority Actions are supported by a further seven initiatives which complement these priority actions.



1 PROJECT 1:
STONEY CREEK BRIDGE & BOARDWALK



2 PROJECT 2:
NATIONAL PARK & PEAKS TRAILHEAD CONNECTION



3 PROJECT 3:
RAISED PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS



4 PROJECT 4:
HEATH STREET UPGRADES & BRIDGE



5 PROJECT 5:
SOUTHERN GATEWAY



6 PROJECT 6:
SCHOOL ROAD UPGRADE



7 PROJECT 7:
REAR LANEWAY COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

Figure 21. Priority Actions

PROJECT 1:
STONEY CREEK BRIDGE & BOARDWALK

Project Description

This project seeks to establish a wrapping timber boardwalk structure from the existing Stoney Creek bridge to the Stoney Creek shops providing steps from the existing deck toward the lawn area and creek edge. This structure will not only improve pedestrian connectivity from the north to Halls Gap Village Centre, it also has the potential to provide much needed seating and informal outdoor dining areas for visitors during peak periods.

In addition to the boardwalk, a new formalised pedestrian crossing is proposed to the south of the bridge, improving connectivity from the on-grade car park to this critical tourism destination.

The key objectives of the proposed Stoney Creek Boardwalk include:

- Provide additional seating along the creek edge and increase the functionality of the open space during peak tourism periods;
- Enhance the function and design of a popular public space within Halls Gap commercial precinct, having regard to the surrounding character;
- Improve east-west pedestrian and cycle connectivity across Grampians Road to key tourism destination; and.
- Unlock development potential within Stoney Creek shops and the adjoining Pinnacle Holiday lodge to enhance key tourism destination.



Figure 22. Existing Stoney Creek bridge

Indicative Material Palette



New public open space (viewing area) opposite Stoney Creek

Wrapping boardwalk structure from Stoney Creek bridge to shops

New pedestrian crossing to south of bridge

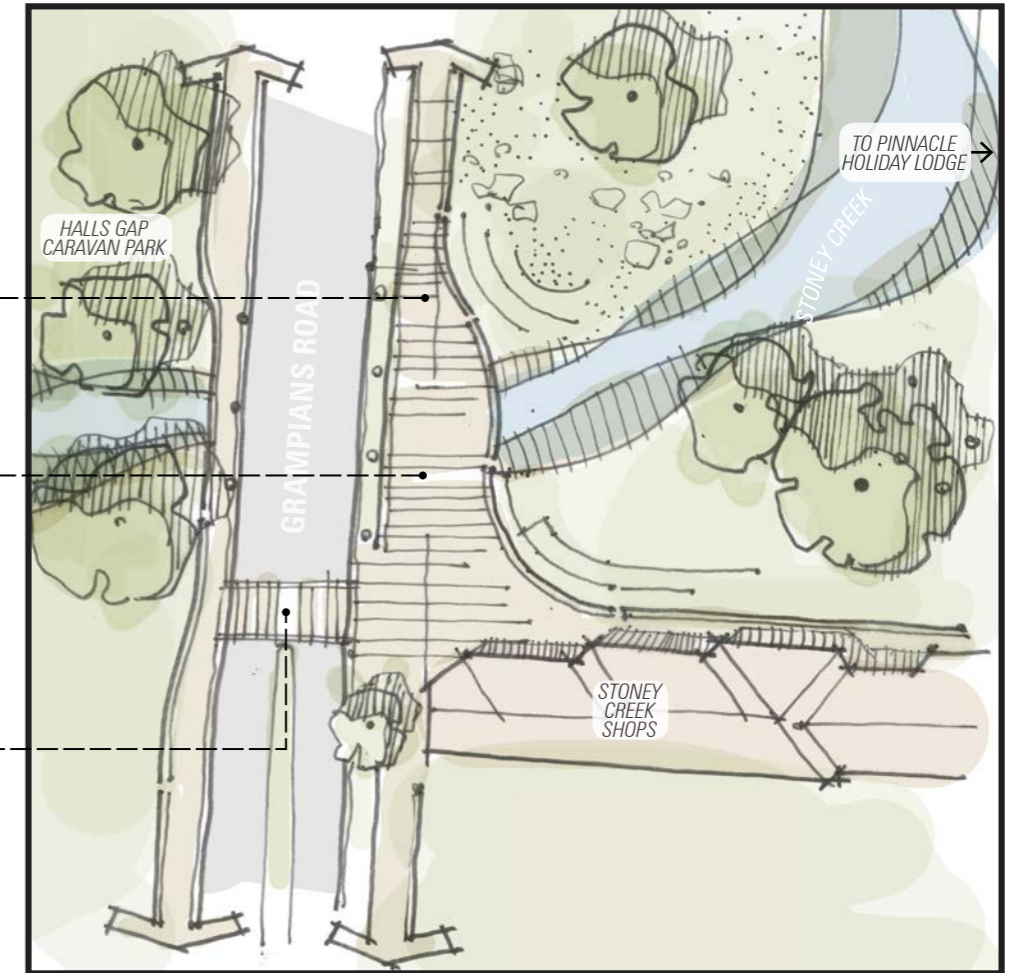


Figure 23. Indicative plan of potential bridge crossing and deck

Stepped seating from boardwalk to lawn area and creek edge

Viewing area accommodated along boardwalk

Design and materiality to be sympathetic to the natural environment

Expanded pedestrian crossing over Stoney Creek



Figure 24. Indicative perspective illustration of potential bridge crossing and deck

**PROJECT 2:
NATIONAL PARK AND PEAKS TRAILHEAD CONNECTION**

Project Description

The optimal location for the Peaks Trailhead within Halls Gap has been one of the key questions the development of the sketch framework has contemplated. There are various thoughts, issues, and requirements around the identification of a trailhead and Parks Victoria have undertaken background work which sets some of these parameters, however the final ‘form’ of the trailhead remains flexible. The main Peaks Trailhead is recommended to be near the intersection of Stoney Creek and School Road. The location adjacent to School Road (Option 4 in the Halls Gap Masterplan) at the end of the reserve parking provides clear benefits over other locations. Firstly, it is considered crucial that the trailhead is located within the Village Centre to ensure economic spin-offs are maximised. The proposed location also allows for any infrastructure delivered through this project, particularly to pathways and connections, to benefit multiple users. While the Visitor Information Centre has been raised as a possible location, and has an important role to play, the selected site for the trailhead provides a better ‘fit’ for the anticipated role. The proposed approach to the delivery of the trailhead within Halls Gap seeks to conceptualise the trailhead as not just a singular static space, but as a series of activities and sites along a ‘journey’. The enactment of this journey within visually prominent areas of the Village Centre has the potential to add vibrancy and excitement to the area – for all users of the centre to be conscious of the ‘theatre of departure’.

The key objectives of the proposed Peaks Trailhead Connection Project include:

- Deliver a major tourist drawcard within the Village Centre;
- Ensure that economic development benefits possible through the siting of the Trailhead are maximized;
- Celebrate the role of ‘walkers’ within the Village Centre, in line with objectives to transform Halls Gap to a ‘walkable’ town;
- Improve pedestrian safety and amenity between the commercial centre and the Grampians Peaks Trail;
- Activate and celebrate the Stoney Creek corridor; and
- Provide additional areas for informal gathering within the Village Centre.

The key elements of this concept are outlined below and shown graphically in the diagram on page 25, and it will be important that the design of these spaces occurs in a cohesive manner.

PARK

While the number of long term carparking spaces required are relatively modest, the delivery of these spaces at the periphery of the Village Centre allows the exposure of trail users to the activities and facilities of the Village Centre to be maximised. Car parking areas are identified both along Heath Street and on a key private land parcel. Shuttle drop-off areas could also be facilitated in these locations if required.

INFORM

Access to information about the trail and registration (if required) should be delivered in conjunction with the new Visitor Information Centre. This is likely to require a rearrangement of existing uses within the building to ensure that access to relevant facilities such as toilets, showers and lockers (currently unable to be accessed) is available.

SHOP

The next stage of this journey provides the opportunity to ‘stock up’ on last minute supplies or refreshments within the Village Centre, though the facilitation of pedestrian movement along the Grampians Road frontages, or through the proposed network of pedestrian connections which form part of this Action Plan.

GATHER

This concept sees a significant upgrade to the existing area of covered plaza area on Grampians Road, and the closure of one car parking access and the introduction of raised pedestrian threshold on Grampians Road. This area then becomes where walkers can gather, socialise, and prepare for their journey alongside other visitors to the Village Centre, in a highly visible location – the ‘departure lounge’ for the trail. Proximity to another public toilet facility is also important. Key signage and information boards relating to the trail could be incorporated into this space.

EXPERIENCE

The concept sees the delivery of a raised boardwalk connecting this new street front plaza through a relatively underutilised parcel of land managed by Council. A raised boardwalk enables a path to not only overcome practical considerations, such as the existing rock groynes, but also adds to the sense of occasion and theatre in setting off on the trail. This arrangement also provides opportunities to more actively engage with the currently underutilised creek frontage within this portion of the reserve, and the boardwalk could accommodate step seating to allow for informal seating with attractive creek outlooks, complementary to the proposed Stoney Creek Bridge & Boardwalk (Initiative 1).

CAPTURE

The ability to ‘capture’ events, moments and key activities is a critical part of today’s experiences and the Peaks Trailhead should be responsive to this. Providing a key element, sculpture or framed view which allows people to document the beginning of their journey on the Trail is considered extremely important. As such, the trailhead is seen as a relatively low key and small space (for instance a gravel plaza with informal seating) with the delivery of a ‘selfie spot’ being the key feature of this site. The identified location offers a spectacular view up to one of the rock faces of the Peaks, allowing for the ‘framing’ of a key landscape feature relevant to the broader trail experience.



Figure 25. Current trail departure point



Precedent Images

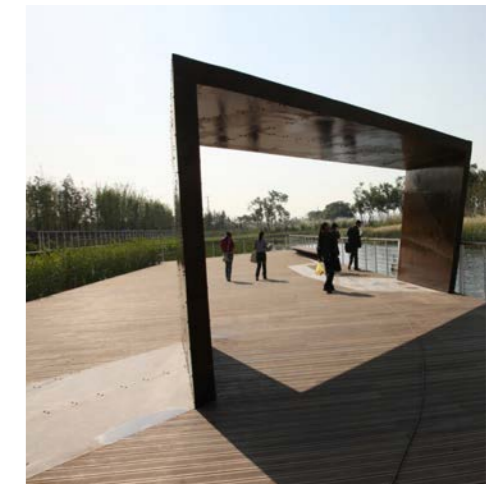


Figure 26. The Grampians Peaks Trail 'journey of departure' concept (inset - rock face view from proposed trailhead location)

PROJECT 3: RAISED PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Project Description

This project seeks to improve east / west pedestrian access from the reserve to the shops. This will be achieved with a raised pedestrian threshold over Grampians Road between the general store and car park, with a second crossing to be investigated between the Visitor Information Centre and the Recreation Reserve. This project will decrease vehicle speeds through the Village Centre and improve pedestrian safety across Grampians Road. The bike path will also be redirected away from vehicle crossovers and car parking, providing improved connectivity to open space and environmental assets. The project will also assist in integrating the 'green' reserve space with the commercial parts of the Village Centre.

The key objectives of the proposed raised pedestrian crossing include:

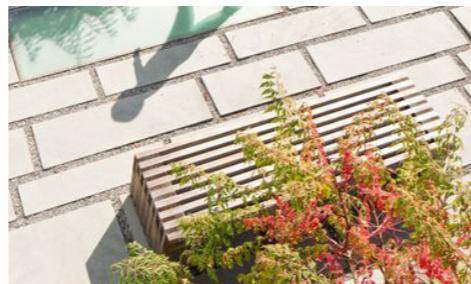
- Improve pedestrian safety and wayfinding over Grampians Road from the reserve car park and proposed Trailhead Connection to retail and tourism uses, while slowing the movement of vehicles through the Village Centre;
- Improve cycle connectivity along Grampians Road, directing bike movement away from crossovers and car parking; and
- Enhance the legibility and definition of the Village Centre through landscape and hardscape improvements, while framing key views to surrounding natural assets.

** ensure that the design of the crossings strikes the appropriate balance between allowing for current vehicular movement to be maintained (without sending additional vehicles down School Road)*



Figure 27. Current pedestrian crossing conditions

Indicative Material Palette



Opportunity for improved lighting and signage

Pedestrian crossing comprising new paved surface from footpath to car park

New seating and garden beds to frame pedestrian crossing

Upgraded picnic area incorporating new landscape and seating

Realigned bike path, moving cyclists away from vehicle movement in car park

Pedestrian crossing to connect Stoney Creek shops with the Peaks Trailhead and National Park

Ensure crossings reflect pedestrian desire lines and use methods for guiding that are effective but not dominant

As part of Stage 2, consider reconfiguration of car parking and seating areas

Removal of 1 vehicle crossover to enhance pedestrian and cycle safety along Grampians Road.

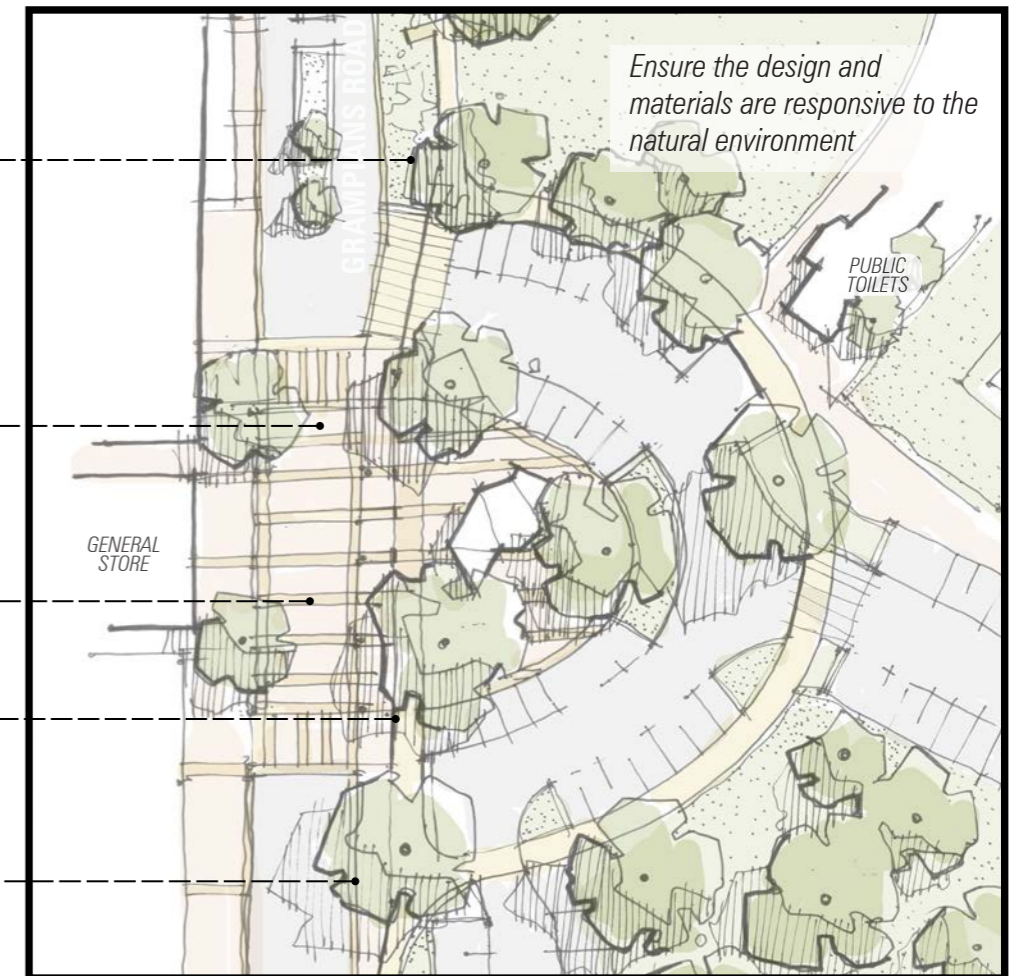


Figure 28. Indicative plan of raised pedestrian crossing and streetscape improvements at Grampians Road



Figure 29. Indicative perspective illustration raised pedestrian crossing and streetscape improvements at Grampians Road

PROJECT 4:
HEATH STREET UPGRADES & BRIDGE

Project Description

This project seeks to create a village bypass by extending Heath Street and creating a new bridge connection over Stoney Creek. This route would connect Heath Street through to Grampians Road, just north of Mount Victory Road, as identified in the 2001 Urban Design Framework, providing a direct route for vehicles traveling through Halls Gap. This would contribute to an easing of traffic congestion and conflict between vehicles and pedestrians within the Village Centre. The Heath Street bridge connection is considered critical to the delivery of a world class walkable town. The project also seeks to transition Heath Street from a 'back of house' area to a vibrant part of the Village Centre. The project includes formalisation of the road space, expansion of car parking along the western street edge, as well as new pedestrian paths and planting of canopy vegetation. Retention of mature canopy vegetation along this corridor (particularly to the eastern edge) will be important in maintaining the amenity and attractiveness of this street in the longer term.

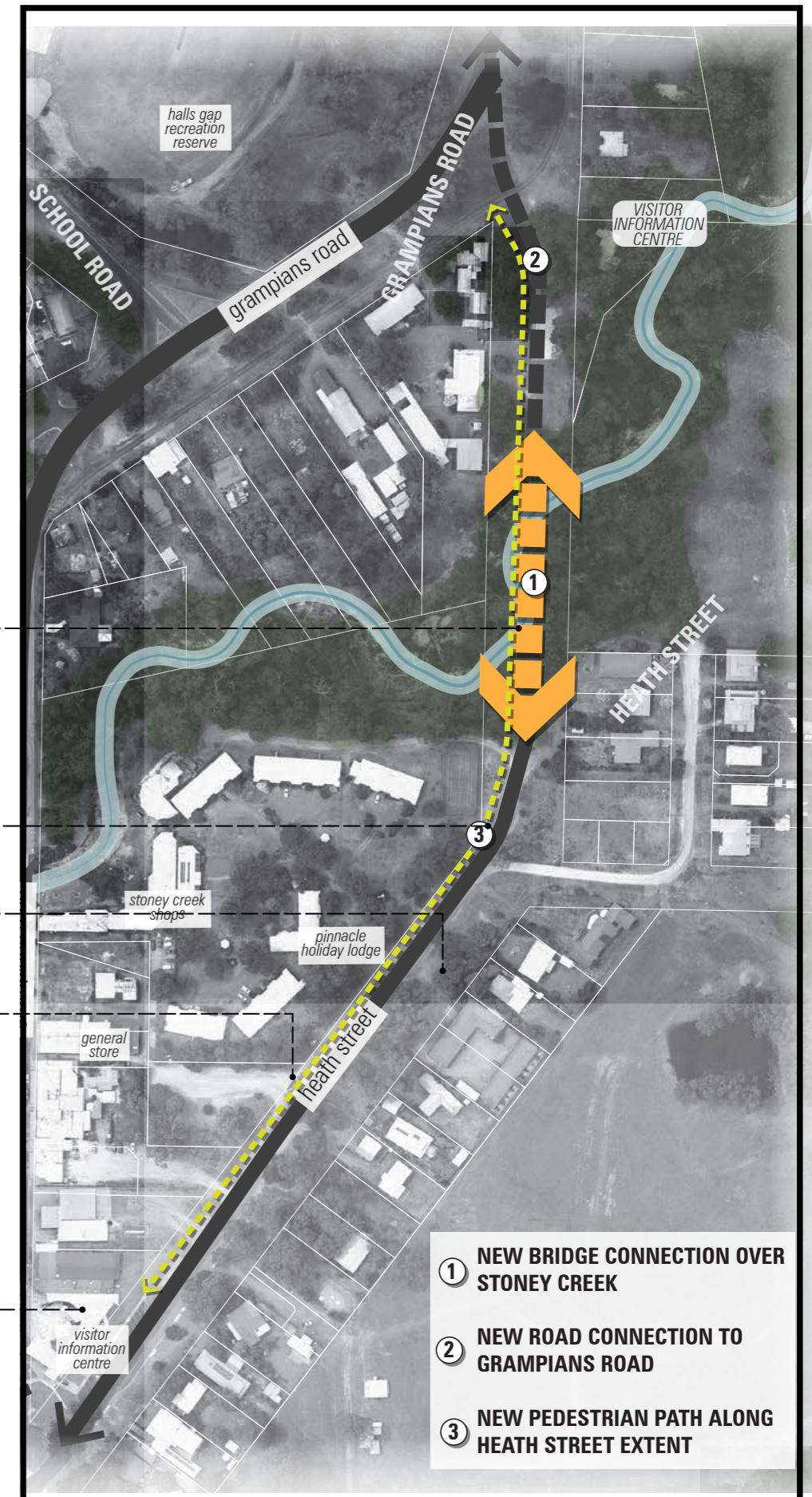
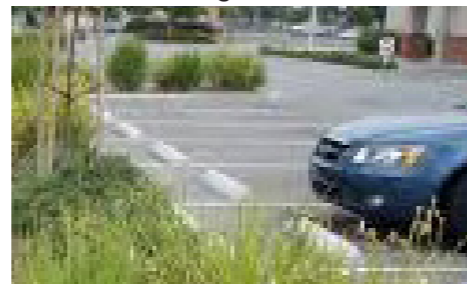
The key objectives of the proposed Heath Street upgrades include:

- Reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian connections within the Village Centre through provision of an alternate route for through vehicles;
- Support the redevelopment of underutilised commercial land along Heath Street;
- Facilitate the development of the Valley floor zoned Rural Activity Zone;
- Identify opportunities to direct through traffic around the Village Centre, enhancing the pedestrian focus of the main street spine.



Figure 30. Existing conditions of Heath Street

Precedent Images



Investigation of bridge feasibility

Road alignment to consider vegetation and other contextual responses

Protection of existing mature canopy vegetation

New car parking, pedestrian path and canopy tree planting along the western edge

Consideration of impacts on residents and business, as well as southern intersection

- ① NEW BRIDGE CONNECTION OVER STONEY CREEK
- ② NEW ROAD CONNECTION TO GRAMPIANS ROAD
- ③ NEW PEDESTRIAN PATH ALONG HEATH STREET EXTENT

**PROJECT 5:
SOUTHERN GATEWAY**

Project Description

The southern corner of the reserve is currently an informal gravel car park transversed by the shared path. This creates both significant potential for modal conflict and impacts on vehicular movements along both School Road and Grampians Road. There are also clear opportunities to provide a more attractive feature at what is the termination of a key view when entering the Village Centre from the south. Linking the shared path and a new area of landscaping to the V.I.C via a raised pedestrian threshold across Grampians Road also improves the setting and outlook from that important asset. This project seeks to enhance the arrival experience to Halls Gap from the south through the implementation of new landscape and signage at the critical junction of Grampians Road, School Road and Heath Street. The relocation of existing informal car parking to Heath Street is also required in an effort to improve pedestrian and cycle safety and enhance the visual experience along Grampians Road to the Village Centre. Landscape treatments should consider the broader intersection, as well as the critical junction space.

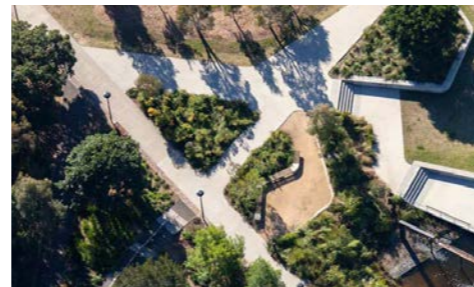
The key objectives of the proposed Gateway Enhancement Project include:

- Enhance the sense of arrival along Grampians Road to the Village Centre of Halls Gap.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle safety at a critical vehicle junction.
- Improve vehicular congestion at peak periods, particularly around the caravan park entrance
- Improve pedestrian movement across Grampians Road to the Visitor Information Centre.



Figure 31. Existing conditions of Grampians & School Roads junction

Indicative Material Palette



New pedestrian crossing to Visitor Information Centre frontage

Relocation of car parking to Heath Street

New signage sculpture and landscape at critical Village Centre gateway

Ensure that the design is considered in conjunction with potential changes to School Road particularly around the caravan park entrance.

New landscape to frame gateway to Village Centre

Ensure any changes to road configuration consider longer term Heath Street aspirations



Figure 32. Indicative plan of gateway signage and landscape upgrades at Grampians & School Roads

Signage sculpture to reference landscape surrounds

New garden beds with native species to complement entry feature

Formalised pedestrian crossing



Figure 33. Indicative perspective illustration of gateway signage and landscape upgrades at Grampians & School Roads

PROJECT 6: SCHOOL ROAD UPGRADES

Project Description

In conjunction with other Priority Actions, upgrades to School Road should be pursued to ensure a clear resolution of existing and potential future pedestrian / vehicular conflict. Further investigations will be required to establish the optimal solutions along this road corridor but ensuring safe passage between the caravan park and the Recreation Reserve and providing safe connections to key destinations such as the School and the Trailhead will be important. While Council can deliver upgrades to the road corridor to implement a pedestrian priority crossing at School Road as part of the Trailhead Connection (Project 2) and can seek to address functional issues affecting the caravan park entry, other actions will require partnership with other groups such as the delivery of a dedicated pedestrian path along the western edge of the Recreation Reserve. This path is important in providing an alternative for pedestrians, in particular school children, to walking along the School Road corridor, where limited room is available to develop a separate pedestrian path. Other improvements to School Road, such as a school 'drop off' point and pedestrian connections to the school also need to be considered as part of any planning for this project. Key conflict points are identified on Figure 35.

The key objectives of the proposed School Road upgrade include:

- Improve pedestrian and cycle safety along a key corridor;
- Anticipate potentially increased vehicular movements over time and ensure these are planned for; and
- Facilitate safe and legible access between the V.I.C. and commercial areas and the Trailhead.



Figure 34. Existing conditions of Grampians & School Roads junction

Precedent Images



Figure 35. Potential path alignments affecting School Road (existing conflict points highlighted by blue circles)

PROJECT 7:
REAR LANEWAY COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

Project Description

Council owns a large parcel of land within the Village Centre which represents a unique opportunity to use a landholding in a key strategic location to further influence how the Village Centre evolves. This project seeks to establish a formal rear laneway network between Grampians Road and Heath Street to facilitate the development of underutilised commercial land. Currently, access to existing shops for servicing and staff parking is provided via an informal arrangement across Council land. This project sees this access resolved in a legal manner and establishes the potential for greater pedestrian permeability. The development of this lane, in conjunction with other initiatives outlined in this Action Plan, is intended to act as a catalyst for development of land fronting Heath Street. The Council site provides a key opportunity to diversify the commercial offer within the centre and to demonstrate a new model of mixed use development within the centre. Development on this site could serve as a catalyst for development of surrounding sites, and is critical to the development of a new network of rear access lanes and pedestrian connections. While it is currently used as an informal car park, these informal spaces could be replaced on Heath Street and formalising car parking on this site may be incompatible with the aims of this plan which is to 'activate' delivery of investment in the Village Centre.

The key objectives of the proposed Rear Laneway commercial expansion initiative include:

- Resolve access to commercial development fronting Grampians Road and Stoney Creek and provide security for existing business owners;
- Provide a catalyst for private investment;
- Increase the availability and diversity of commercial floorspace and accommodation within the Village Centre;
- Improve pedestrian permeability between Grampians Road and Heath Street; and
- Facilitate the development of land and increased activity fronting Heath Street.



Figure 36. Existing use of Council site

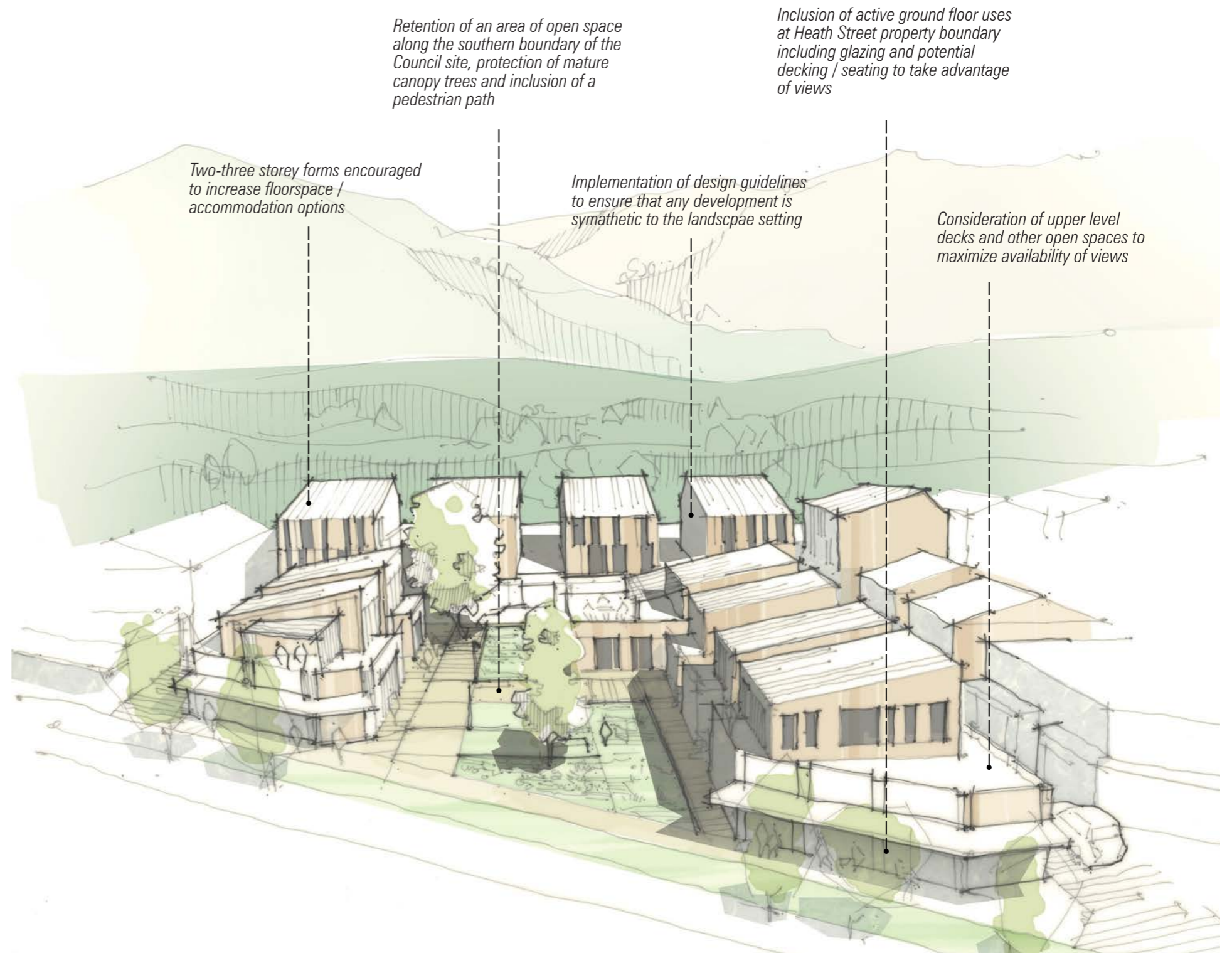


Figure 37. Indicative perspective illustration of potential development of Council land and adjoining landholdings

Precedent Images



Alignment of new formal laneway along northern boundary of Council site including potential removal of paperbark trees

Incorporation of a north-south laneway along the western boundary of the site to provide connectivity with private laneways

New pedestrian connection to be incorporated as private land develops

Development of laneways, in particular the north / south laneway to allow for use by pedestrians

Redevelopment of the southern portion of the Pinnacle Motel site encouraged to take advantage of new laneway and increased connectivity to Grampians Road



Figure 38. Indicative plan of potential development of Council site and adjoining landholdings

OTHER ACTIONS

Alongside the Priority Actions outlined in the previous section of this report, a number of complementary initiatives have been identified to deliver the vision and framework. Feedback was sought on their importance during consultation exercise and these have been ranked in accordance with community priorities. These initiatives will be further scoped/investigated as part of Stage 2 and 3 of this project. These other actions are as follows:

INITIATIVE 1: RESOLUTION OF CAR PARKING TO REDUCE CONGESTION AND DELIVER A 'WALKABLE' VILLAGE CENTRE.

There are a number of complementary actions around car parking which are recommended to deliver the vision for the Village Centre. In order to ensure the aspiration of the Halls Gap Masterplan and Grampians Peaks Masterplan and deliver a walkable town, the balance between pedestrian priority and car parking areas needs to be addressed. These will require careful consideration and appropriate staging to ensure that existing congestion, particularly in peak periods, is not exacerbated. Overflow car parking sufficient to appropriately address holiday volumes will be required.

- Relocate some reserve car parking: With the proposed trailhead and the introduction of the idea of the 'theatre of departure' comes a need to provide a clear connection between the Grampians Road spine and the trailhead location. Given the current pressures for parking in this area, opportunities which utilise existing 'leftover spaces' to provide a clear physical and visual connections have been proposed. It will be critical to 'clear out' sightlines, and delineated pedestrian crossings and boardwalks can deliver this. In the longer term, if car parking pressures are reduced or redistributed, opportunities would exist to remove the two northernmost car parking cells, reducing the visual prominence of car parking.
- Institute time limits in reserve: While some reduction in car parking within the reserve space is proposed once alternative convenient locations are available, this area will remain a critical area for car parking, not only for visitors but also locals accessing the swimming pool. However there is some evidence that this area is being used for longer term car parking (for example by employees). Introducing time limits such as 2 or 3hrs may reduce the pressure and congestion on this area by diverting longer term car parking to alternate locations within the Village Centre.
- Delivery of clear directional signage for car parking: One observation from the car parking background investigations was that, without clear signage indicating the location of alternate car parking locations (for example on Heath Street) all visitors would seek to park within the reserve space as a first priority. As such as alternative locations for car parking are delivered it will be critical that visitors are directed to these areas.

- Additional spaces on Heath Street: In supporting further intensification of development on Heath Street's western edge, the delivery of additional car parking spaces along Heath Street can serve to provide an alternative to the popular reserve car parking spaces. This delivery of car parking needs to be coordinated with the delivery of clear pedestrian pathways through to Grampians Road, which in turn will support further activation and exposure of development sites fronting Heath Street. In delivering attractive commercial frontage to Heath Street it will be important that car parking areas retain and incorporate additional canopy tree planting and pedestrian paths as they are developed. Signage to this car parking area on Grampians Road is also critical.
- Longer term consolidated car parking at Village Centre edges: Council should also investigate potential sites, both private and public, which have the potential to provide long term / all day car parking areas on the periphery of the Village Centre. The delivery of a consolidated body of car parking in a convenient location, with good pedestrian connectivity on the Village Centre periphery will allow the town to provide convenient parking which does not compromise the aspirations for a 'walking town' established through the Masterplan and will allow the Village Centre to manage the long term requirements of car parking associated with the Grampians Peaks Trail in a coordinated manner. Options for investigation include private land to the south and east of the Village Centre, both of which would encourage walkers to traverse the Village Centre enroute to the Trailhead, increasing exposure for local businesses.



Figure 39. Consolidated car parking on Village Centre periphery

INITIATIVE 2: NEW NATURE BASED PLAYSPACE

This initiative seeks to encourage the development of a high quality nature based playspace as a replacement for aging traditional playground. While development on the reserve land is generally a matter for the Committee of Management, the delivery of a very high quality nature based playspace in lieu of the aging equipment on site has broader ramifications for the Village Centre and, as such, is considered through this Action Plan. Halls Gap is a premier nature based tourism location and attracts a significant number of family groups. The opportunity to establish a nature based playspace with a heavy focus on landscape elements is not only a great 'fit' for the location but would also serve to enhance the tourism offer of the Village Centre. Council's role will be to advocate and assist the Committee in the planning and delivery of this facility, rather than as the lead proponent.

INITIATIVE 3: UNDERGROUNDING OF POWERLINES

The undergrounding of powerlines within the Village Centre is an important step in improving the visual qualities of the centre and enhancing views of the landscape beyond. It has long been a community aspiration, and the removal of these powerlines is also in keeping with the broader vision for the centre outlined in this document. This undergrounding is likely to be an expensive process but opportunities for advocacy by Council and consideration of opportunities for the undergrounding of powerlines as part of any future public realm upgrades should be noted.



Figure 40. Site responsive design

INITIATIVE 4: URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND PLANNING CONTROLS

Develop Urban Design Guidelines and associated planning controls to ensure that the design of new built form within the Village Centre responds to the spectacular landscape setting and improves overall design quality. As new development occurs in Halls Gap, there are a number of important considerations which should drive built form proposals. Firstly, forms should be simple and material natural, with a particular focus on wood as the dominant material. Secondly, building siting should consider firstly how it can be broken up or arranged where relevant to preserve notable mature vegetation, but also how forms can be orientated and arranged to maximise the opportunities, particularly at upper levels, to engage with the landscape beyond.

INITIATIVE 5: VEGETATION RETENTION AND ENHANCEMENT

Canopy vegetation within the Village Centre makes a critical contribution to the town's identity and the amenity and attractiveness of the Village Centre, both of which are particularly important given the tourism role. However, the management of vegetation within both the private and public realm will require careful consideration, particularly how the retention and enhancement of vegetation relates to the bushfire risk which affects the town. In addition, Heath Street is currently an informal roadway and as development intensifies along this street, upgrades are likely to be needed. There is a significant area of canopy vegetation on the eastern side of the road reserve which acts as a foreground to the longer range mountain views. Any upgrades to the roadway in this area should be designed to ensure that these trees are retained to preserve the important integration of landscape into the Village Centre itself, as this close sense of connection between the landscape within and surrounding the Village Centre is a notable asset.

INITIATIVE 6: EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE A NETWORK OF CREEKSIDE TRACKS.

This initiative seeks to connect the Fyans Creek Trail to Heath Street and Grampians Road, utilising private land along this important waterway. The first stage of this initiative is for the section between the Stoney Creek Shops and Heath Street which will need to be developed in partnership with the relevant landowners. However, the Fyans Creek Trail, which is one of the key paths within the township and which links the Village Centre to Brambuk, currently lacks a connection through to the Village Centre. In considering longer term connections, a pedestrian bridge across Fyans Creek and connection through to Heath Street from that trail should be explored. This would further diversify the access and exposure of the Heath Street area.



Figure 43. Existing vacant gateway sites



Figure 42. Nature based play

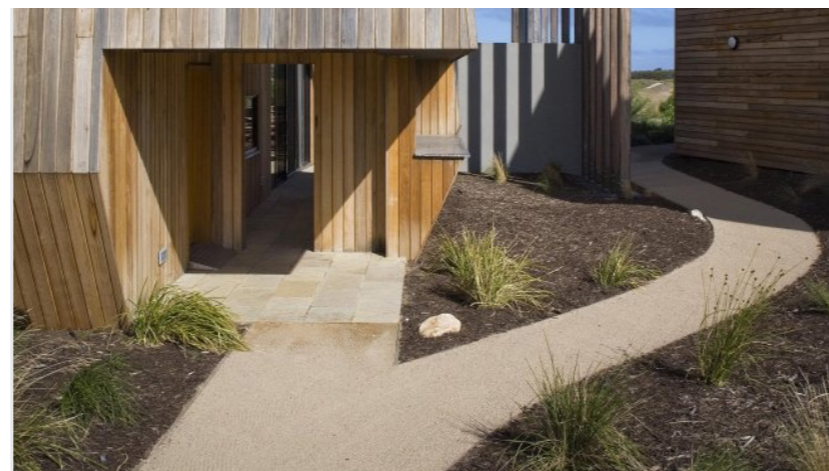


Figure 41. Vibrant pedestrian connections

INITIATIVE 7: LARGE SCALE EVENT SPACE

Halls Gap has a long and continuing history of hosting large scale events. These have traditionally been held at the reserve space to the north of the Village Centre, but some events are growing too large for this space. Council will need to look more broadly as to where larger events can be sustainably delivered within the wider township area. Relevant to the Village Centre Action Plan however, is that these decisions should have clear regard to the relationship of this event space to the Village Centre and the need for clear pedestrian connections between the two areas.

INITIATIVE 8: GRAMPIANS ROAD PUBLIC REALM UPGRADES

Use landscape and road treatments to link the eastern and western sides of Grampians Road - The Sketch Framework seeks to provide a clear distinction between the eastern side of Grampians Road which accommodates consolidated development, and the west, which retains a dominant 'landscape' character, providing the foreground for the mountains beyond. Closer linkages between these two areas are envisaged through the expansion of the footpath on the east side, to allow more on-street activity, and the introduction of raised pedestrian crossings at key points along the road (see Project 2). The use of a common material palette across both sides of the road will further link the two precincts.

INITIATIVE 9: SIGNAGE CONSOLIDATION AND WAYFINDING IMPROVEMENTS

As with powerlines, the current distribution of signage affects the visual amenity of the Village Centre, with the Community Plan identifying this 'visual clutter' as a key issue. While many of these signs are required by statutory law, there are opportunities for the distribution of these to be consolidated. An audit could be undertaken to document existing signage in the Centre, and to clarify the relevant requirements in order to establish opportunities for consolidation. In addition, there is a clear need for a co-ordinated and carefully designed program of wayfinding signage within the Centre, particularly given its tourism role. This program should be co-ordinated with any consolidation or removal of existing signage.

INITIATIVE 10: NEW PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

This initiative seeks to encourage the inclusion of new pedestrian connections between Grampians Road and Heath Street as part of any redevelopment and to assist landowners in upgrading existing connections. One of the critical aspects of the activation of the Heath Street precinct is the connectivity to Grampians Road and the Stoney Creek shops. The area currently feels disconnected from the 'activity' of the Village Centre. Establishing and formalising a range of opportunities for pedestrians to filter through this area will not only increase the attractiveness of this area for development but may also reduce the pressure on parking within the reserve, offering a viable alternative. As such, existing connections next to the service station, supermarket and through the Stoney Creek shops should be formalised and clear pedestrian connections should be integrated into any major redevelopment initiatives.



Figure 44. Existing vegetation on Heath Street to be protected

INITIATIVE 11: SUPPORT PREFERRED OUTCOMES THROUGH PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

A number of initiatives within the Village Centre rely on the development aspirations of individual landowners within the Village Centre. Council can play a role in the delivery of these initiatives by ensuring these outcomes are identified within the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme and requiring or advocating for delivery of these as part of any development applications. Council can also play a role through facilitation or brokering of appropriate outcomes. Key private development initiatives include

- Focus new commercial development to the western side of Heath Street to activate this street edge. While the redevelopment of Grampians Road is strongly encouraged, new opportunities are to be focused along Heath Street. While commercial zoning extends along part of the eastern edge of the street, the Action Plan seeks to focus more intensive development to the west where consolidation activities and investment in public works can be maximised. It is also where connections to Grampians Road can be maximised. While potential 'spill over' of commercial activity to the commercially zoned land on the eastern side of Heath Street is encouraged, the shift from residential to commercial uses is likely to occur subsequent to development on the western side.
- Encourage the careful development southern gateway sites, including potential for the inclusion of future public car parking areas. The southern gateway to the Village Centre currently contains two vacant sites. The western site is residential in character and should respond to the landscape character of that side of the road, noting Initiative 5 which seeks to deliver improvements within the public realm. More substantial development opportunities exist on the eastern site. The western portion should be focussed on commercial opportunities which increase the delivery of floorspace and link to the V.I.C. However, the scale of the site means that there are also longer term opportunities to accommodate some additional public car parking on the site, servicing long term walkers for the Peaks Trail, as well as accommodation which maximises the rural and mountain outlook of the eastern portion of the site.
- Encourage the relocation of the service station out of the town centre. While the role of this Action Plan is not to provide specific direction as to how individual landowners within the Centre should use their land, the presence of a service station in the main street, particularly between a key destination such as the Visitor Information Centre / Community hall and the remainder of the commercial area is unusual. Most service stations are located outside of core commercial areas or at their periphery. The opportunities afforded to improve the pedestrian amenity and enhance the delivery of commercial floorspace through the relocation of the service station mean this should be encouraged.

FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The first key stage of implementing the identified sketch framework and concepts outlined in this document will be a program of engagement with the local community and traders to seek feedback as to whether they feel the proposed concepts deliver an appropriate outcome for the Village Centre. This feedback should be considered as the Action Plan is progressed into its next phase.

A series of further actions will also be needed to underpin Stage 2 of this project and the project's eventual implementation. These actions include:

- Further work with identified key stakeholders to test and develop concepts for identified Priority Actions.
- The confirmation of proposed pedestrian path alignments and the allocation of responsibilities for delivery.
- The development of an agreed palette of materials and finishes to inform works within the public realm across the different management areas of the Village Centre.
- The identification and testing of any design controls which may be needed to achieve preferred built form outcomes.
- Further consideration of flood impacts within the Village Centre including potential depth of inundation to ensure appropriate design responses are considered.
- Discussion with the CFA around ways of appropriately balancing the retention and enhancement of canopy vegetation within the Village Centre with bushfire risk.
- Confirmation with Parks Victoria as to the 'theatre of departure' concept and the Peaks Trailhead location.



APPENDIX ONE



HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE

ACTION PLAN: CONSULTATION SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

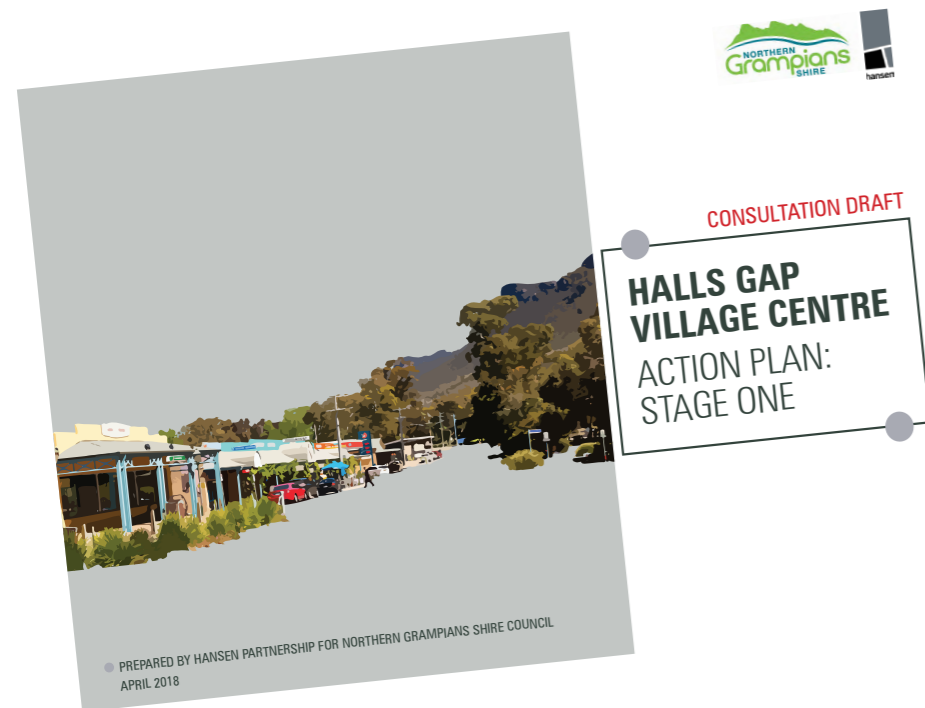
Following the preparation of a ‘consultation draft’ Action Plan for the Halls Gap Town Centre, an extensive program of consultation was undertaken by Council to seek community comments on the plan and to draw on local knowledge to ensure the plan delivered the stated objectives. These were:

- **Increase activity:** Increase the level and diversity of activity within the Village Centre, particularly activity which generates economic benefits for the town
- **Improve access:** Improve the safety and amenity of pedestrian connections within the Village Centre and improve permeability, particularly between Grampians Road and Heath Street
- **Enhance amenity:** Ensure that development has regard to the spectacular landscape setting and enhances interest and enjoyment of public spaces in the Village Centre

While targeted consultation with key stakeholders and landowners was undertaken in Stage One of the project, the exhibition of the draft document and associated events was the first input sought from the broader Halls Gap community. As such, it represented an important ‘testing’ of the ideas outlined within the draft Action Plan.

Feedback to the Action Plan was overwhelmingly positive, with lots of useful feedback on how future stages could further deliver on the project objectives provided. The key issue which was raised by the community related to School Road, with the community keen to avoid any increase in vehicular traffic along that corridor.

Feedback within this document is provided in both its ‘raw’ form with a summary also provided to allow for the identification of key themes and identification of recommendations for any changes to the draft Action Plan.



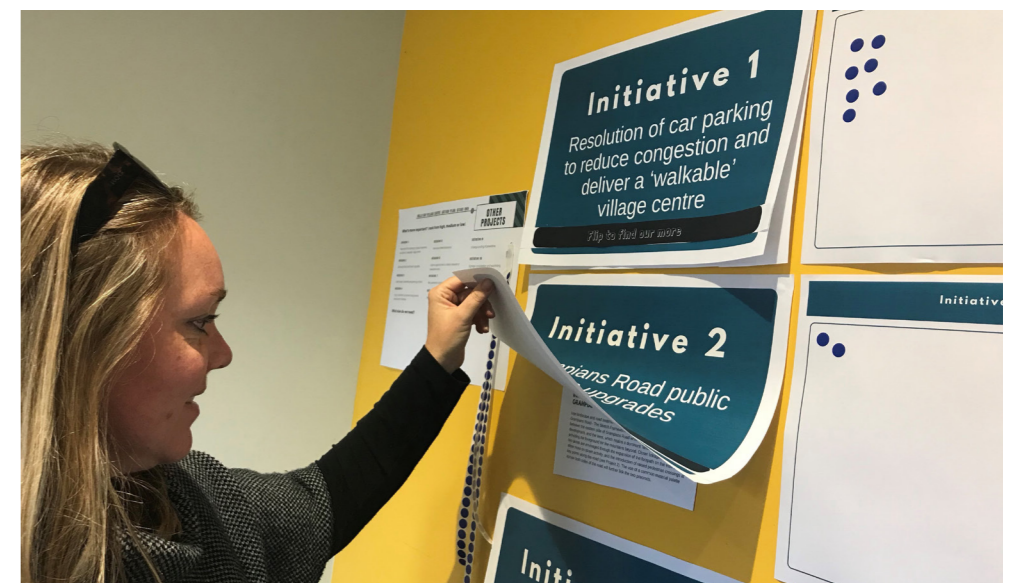
CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation was undertaken during a two week exhibition period (16 – 30 April 2018). During that time, a large area of the Halls Gap Information Centre hosted a standing display of A1 boards outlining key elements of the Actions Plan including the seven identified Priority Actions. The location of this display within the Information Centre meant feedback could be provided by visitors, as well as residents. A ‘drop-in’ session was held on the 18 May 3.30pm-6pm where both Council staff and the consultants who prepared the draft were available to answer questions and discuss the draft. Interactive elements including work sheets and large aerial photographs formed part of this display and hardcopies of the report were available for reading, as detailed below. At the exhibition space, questions were asked of attendees, with individual sheets for each of the priority actions allowing attendees to mark up plans as well as provide written comments. In addition, a large ‘communal map’ was available for ideas to be articulated. In addition, a website was set up for the project where the draft document (or parts) could be accessed and an online survey completed by those who would be unable to attend the display or drop in session.

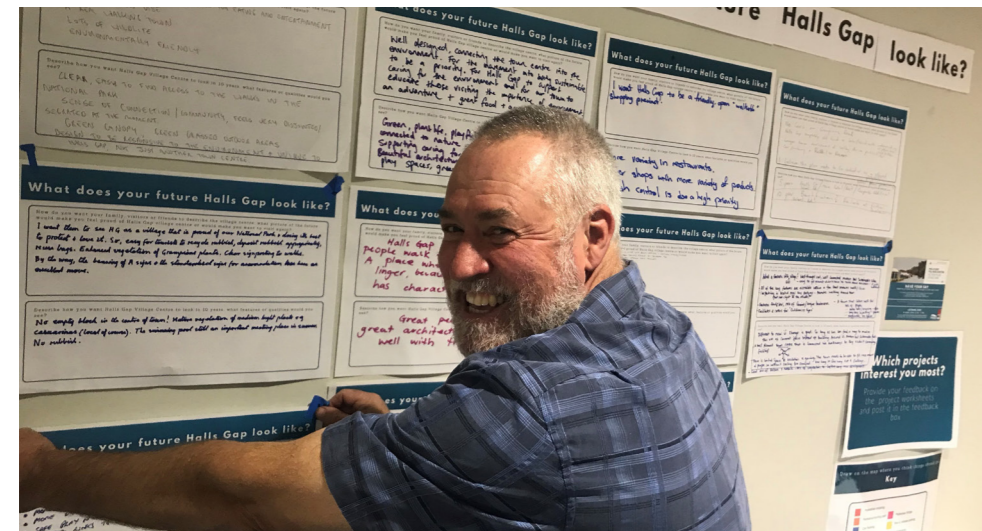
On the 23rd of May, the Grade 4 / 5 / 6 class from Halls Gap Primary School also participated in a workshop, allowing the town's younger members to articulate their vision statements and get their ideas for how the Town Centre could be improved on a map. This feedback is documented separately.

The exhibition phase was publicised by:

- Putting a 1/4 page add in the Wimmera Mail Times on the 16th & 23rd April
- Radio advertisements on AceRadio from 16 April
- Facebook updates on Council’s Facebook page that were shared with 2 Halls Gap Facebook Pages “Halls Gap Community Watch and Alert” and “Halls Gap Community”
- A Media release dated the 17 April
- A5 flyers posted in the local supermarket, school, post office, cafes and newsagency and Visitor Information Centre



HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE CONSULTATION SUMMARY



During consultation, in addition to casual verbal feedback provided to the Council a series of questions were asked of the respondents, consistent across the display / drop in session and the online survey. These questions were framed around three key areas.

1. General comments and comments on the overall 'vision' for the Village Centre:

- Do you have any comments on the Background section of the Action Plan?
- Describe how you want Halls Gap Village Centre to look in 10 years, what features or qualities would you see?
- How do you want your family, visitors or friends to describe the village centre, what picture of the future would make you feel proud of Halls Gap village centre or would make you want to visit again?
- What would you like to see/what are your comments on the 'sketch framework' based on your vision for the future?
- Are there any other ideas that you have that might contribute to the objectives of the Action Plan in Increasing activity, Improving access and enhancing amenity?

2. In addition to these broader questions, specific queries were asked regarding the seven 'priority actions' identified in the draft Action Plan, as follows:

- Project 1: Stoney Creek Bridge and Boardwalk - How could this project improve how safe, comfortable and enjoyable this area is?
- Project 2: Peaks Trailhead Connection - When looking at the Peaks Trailhead Connection 'Journey of Departure', what should be considered in the planning and design phase?
- Project 3: Raised Pedestrian Crossings - Do you think this project could help deliver the vision for the Village Centre and why? Do you have ideas that might make this project even better?
- Project 4: Heath Street Upgrades - What do you think about Project 4 and what should be considered during the planning and design phase? Do you think this project could help deliver the vision for the Village Centre and why?
- Project 5: Southern Gateway - What do you think about Project 5 and what should be considered during the planning and design phase? Do you think this project could help deliver the vision for the Village Centre and why?
- Project 6: School Road Upgrades - What do you think about Project 6 and what should be considered during the planning and design phase? Do you think this project could help deliver the vision for the Village Centre and why?
- Project 7: Rear Laneway Commercial Expansion - What do you think about Project 7 and what should be considered during the planning and design phase? Do you think this project could help deliver the vision for the village centre and why?

3. Lastly, respondents were also asked to rank the eleven 'other initiatives' outlined in the draft Action Plan as high medium or low priority,

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Combining the online and in person responses to the queries listed above the feedback from the Halls Gap community was as follows:

GENERAL COMMENTS AND VISION

Overarching community responses received verbally during the exhibition period are summarised broadly below, with more specific feedback following:

- School Road will be a major issue, a number of people were very concerned about this in terms of additional vehicular movements (although very supportive of pedestrian improvements)
- People were very keen to see an improvement to the intersection of School Road though, in particular, getting rid of the informal car parking and sorting out the caravan propping
- Pedestrian crossings and making sure people (in particular tourists) know where to cross Grampians Road was strongly supported
- Probably the two most popular items were Heath Street (both car parking / pedestrian connection improvements and the bridge) as well as the Stoney Creek bridge
- The Heath Street connection was strongly supported so that you don't end up with heavy vehicles along School Road but you do need to improve amenity and safety of Grampians Road at the same time
- Some uncertainty about whether three storeys would be appropriate
- Strong support for closing off at least one of the reserve car park entrances

Responses to question one (*Describe how you want to see Halls Gap Village to look in 10 years? What features or qualities would you see?*)

Summary of comments:

- Better pedestrian connections, boardwalks and links to trails
- Art and nature are key themes
- Landscape rather than development dominating, lots of vegetation and trees
- Make sure the centre remains open, not too crowded, recognise other business which are outside the centre and potential connections to these from the centre rather than crowding everything into centre
- Environmentally responsive and responsible, more sustainable buildings
- Great food offer, a 'foodies paradise'
- Greater recognition of local indigenous culture
- More modern but sensitively designed buildings
- Cohesion with the natural landscape and retention of the 'relaxed' atmosphere

- Safe and efficient movement to and through the centre
- Shops and services that reflect the needs of locals and the location within a National Park
- Improved recreation facilities
- Integration of public art with trails and kids activities, as well as celebrations of culture
- Concern over diverting traffic down School Road, closure of school road to traffic

Raw text responses:

A Nature play space at the heart of the village that is a large Open green area with the BBQ rotundas demolished and with a bmx / mountain bike pump track. School road closed to through traffic to allow for a world class walking track link along Stoney Creek through town, out across Fyans Creek to the east up to Venus baths in the west creating multiple day walk loops through town. Roads have kerb and channel gutters with carparking formalised. The 'hub' is repurposed and integrated with a revamped front of the hall for business opportunities and the historical society has investment to showcase local history. Art and nature should have a strong theme.

I think a "walking town" ie block off main Rd to pedestrians and diverting traffic past school and campground would be a major mistake.

The current layout works just fine. You just need to reduce [landowners] strangle hold on all major vacant blocks in the main street and encourage some real development and then things may change. It is such a shame that one individual (well 2 if you include Charles) can have such a negative impact on a place. In tens years nothing will have changed because it cant while these two own everything!"

"More recognition of the traditional people of the area. maybe an art gallery? more bush foods? signage at least giving some indigenous names to features in the park.

In 10 years I hope the WAMA gallery and garden are built and there is clear signage and maybe even a bike path to there via the zoo."

I want this iconic place to remain as it is now with the proposed changes to walking tracks etc fitting into the natural landscape as much as possible so the ambience of the Halls Gap township and surrounding areas do not look like a suburban precinct as found in Lorne or some other "resort style" sites. This place is well known to me for over 50 years and I would not like to see it turn into an overdeveloped, congested and tacky resort with too many irrelevant shops etc. It needs to retain especially its relaxed atmosphere and be seen as a place to see the natural features and unwind, enjoy the world class, unique terrain and walking tracks [we've been on a few walking tracks in our time in various places].

"A village that acknowledges that a significant number of residents live in the zone between the village centre and Lake Bellfield. These residents should be able to travel through the village zone safely and in a timely manner as they commute to work and to family activities in both Stawell and Ararat (major providers for sport, shopping, medical, libraries, etc.)

A village that encourages locals to both use it and support it - development needs to match local capacity to shop and access services in an affordable way.

A village that supports appropriate tourism - remembering that we are a national park and all about the environment. The limitation of inappropriate businesses etc that do not match the environment should be discouraged. A village that supports the movement around on foot with appropriate disability access and discourages the movement of cars - tentacles that reach out to outlying tourism needs to be considered eg Halls Gap Zoo. Sensitivity needs to be applied when allowing development that those businesses that are not in the village centre are still supported and included - they have been part of the backbone of the increased tourism Halls Gap is currently experiencing - it is not all about the village centre."

Increasing activity, improving access and enhancing amenity are all positive aspects of vision. Value could also be added if 'safe and efficient transit' could be added to the vision so that students could travel safely to school, commuters in and out of Halls Gap could travel without restriction and obstruction and vehicles traveling through Halls Gap could be separated entirely from those parking and milling within the village.

Eco/sustainable with a creative 'flair'. Art/Architecture/Eco/Sculpture mixing into surrounding environment. More Art! Yeah! Sculpture for kids to play on! Good Food/Family - Skate Park linking with playspace

Structures are not visible. Views and landscape - increased

A sporting facility on the old tennis courts

Pleasant, open, natural feel, with lots of trees/vegetation. Not over-commercialised - distributed, not concentrated

Different to now change is good. So long as we can find a way to involve the use of current space instead of building around it. Modern but sustainable look. A well planned town centre that is connected via walkways to key visitor and community facilities. There is limited space and visitation is growing. The town needs to be able to fit max amount of people in without feeling too cramped. One way in One way out a challenge. Good mix of urban and nature - lots of vegetation to soften any new developments.

5 years Heath St, School Rd/more retail/rest/carpark additional. 10 years Beautification? School Road? Re look at further development

Modern, flowing, modern buildings, great food, produce.

Green self sufficient in power.. Improved maintenance to Stony Creek Shop and Verandah area to seal Halls Gap Mount Zero Road. Some indoor activity for children beside food venue eg during inclement weather times.

You would want to see lots of bush and space from birds view.

With many of the current centre's gaps filled by beautiful developments. Building or open space (sensitive architecture). Clear path network safety from well controlled 'slow' motor traffic. At least somewhat a foodies paradise.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Great pedestrians connections, great architecture that sits well with the environment.

3rd Bridge on Stony Creek and Heath Street open to through traffic. Family friendly environment.

No empty block in the centre of town! Mature vegetation of medium height plants eg. casuarinas (local of course). The swimming pool still an important meeting place in summer. No rubbish.

Art, outdoor seating, shops

More variety in restaurants. Aboriginal food. Better shops with more variety of products. Rubbish control is also a high priority.

Clear, easy to find access to the walks in the National Park. Sense of connection/ community, feels very disjointed/segregated at the moment. Green canopy, green grassed outdoor areas. Design to be responsive to the environment and unique to Halls Gap, not just another Town Centre.

Green, plantlife, playful - known as a hiking destination connected to nature - supporting business and supporting caring for the National Park. Beautiful architecture and design, sustainable and amazing play spaces, green spaces, connection to car-parks etc.

All the above'. Great place to live and visit.

Responses to question two (What picture of the future would make you feel proud of Halls Gap Village Centre or would make you want to visit again?)

The following dot points represent what kind of place respondents see Halls Gap being in the future:

- A place that is vibrant but retains the same 'relaxed, natural' atmosphere
- A place that builds community
- A place that responds to its environmental setting and the environmental challenges
- A place where buildings are designed to be sustainable
- A place where urban spaces reflect nature, a natural palette
- A place with better range of shops and services, particularly food
- A place with fantastic tracks and linkages, where pedestrians are separated from cars just passing through
- A place where convenient car parking is available but doesn't dominate
- A place with a diverse range of activities for visitors
- A place with lots of areas for visitors and residents to stop and appreciate their surroundings
- A place with generous and welcoming spaces and paths

- A place that is self sustaining and emphasises renewable energy and recycling
- A place which is not visually cluttered but is easy to navigate
- A place with improved facilities and new features such as nature based play

Raw text responses:

Nature play space. Walking track linking the town to the park along Stoney creek.

"A properly funded VIC run by the shire with a Tourism officer, centre staff and volunteers if you like would be a great start. Horsham understands that over 20% of its GDP and subsequently rate base is generated by tourism so it has the foresight to employ Tourism staff. NG Shire needs to understand this or it will be left behind."

We visit regularly as we do a lot of bushwalking for recreation so want to see the essence of the place retained at all costs. If you mess with it in the wrong way it will be to the detriment of tourism engagement as The Grampians hosts many international visitors every year.

A village that is sensitive to the surrounding park, one that provides equal access for all living in and visiting. One that is forward thinking in ensuring it is attending to negative global changes. One that supports environmental building development that is in keeping with the surrounding landscape. One that is built upon strong community - the nature of tourism means a significant number of people come and go within a 5-8 year period. Those that make Halls Gap their home in the longer term need to feel and believe Halls Gap is a place worthy of such an important decision.

Complete separation of through traffic from the village area by diverting vehicles that do not want or need to stop through the proposed development of Heath Street so they can pass through without impacting the safety and amenity of those utilising the village for recreation, shopping or gathering.

More public/interactive are!! Good food shops! Better retail options, landscaped gardens done in a contemporary way. (Skate park/play space - something else for families to do!) I love the contemporary but 'earth' palette they proposed!!! I love the proposal!! Finally!! Its what Halls Gap has needed for a VERY LONG TIME!!

Space that is part of the Environment. Speed zones - animal friendly - animal access considered

More sporting facilities

A balance of features and facilities targeted at locals and visitors. Open Spaces - at least keep what is there. Free traffic flow during peak seasons. Adequate parking for visitors.

What a fantastic little Eco village! Well thought out, well connected, modern but sustainable vibe. Easy to get around - didn't have to think about directions - it just worked. All of the key features are accessible within a few short minutes walk/drive. Carparking is located near key features (but not right in the middle) - Promotes walking around town. Fantastic food and beverage, mix of quaint/unique businesses. Facilities and caters of outdoorsy types. A town that caters well for lots of people - better bins/recycling, Art, Long bay carparking, plants, playgrounds, recreation space.

No cars on Grampians Road. Halls Gap completely off grid ie. solar/wind with undergrounding of power lines. Longer term development of valley drive precinct held to then for carparking and retail or resort. I believe this plan needs to be looked at as a staged project rather than priorities.

we need to appreciate efforts for other people who make buildings

Better flow down main street. Better carparking for larger vehicles, peaks trail walkers. More diversity in shops, cafes. Other things for visitors to do other than walking. More seating/places for people to enjoy the environment in the town centre (without all being on top of each other) Better services for campers, caravans dump point, water, laundrette. Lake Bellfield developed to give people another place to go and do.

Buildings designed in line with bush settings - natural stone/timber. Underground power from Delleys Bridge to Tandara Road. Reduction of Heavy Traffic through main precinct. Cable car to Pinnacle with a small cafe at top. Improved signage and 'OH & S Free' obstructions on all walking tracks.

It would feel welcoming to visitors and to locals of all kind. I think everyone would enjoy it in many different ways. There would be very wide walking paths so people can overtake you without being bumped and there would be lots of people there. People would probably feel very happy and lucky that they have fresh water. There would be lots of space to put your houses and it would make people want to come back and visit it again. The town would be good for people visiting Halls Gap. Making food choices.

A 'relaxing' village which complements the incredible landscape, flora and fauna - which makes the Gap fairly unique/rare. A walkers village. No ugly powerlines (esp from Kookaburra south to Novel) - Agree. Own electricity generation like Daylesford.

Halls Gap is a vibrant village, where people walk freely and feel safe. A place where people want to linger, because it is relaxing and has character.

Good Parking options. Improved traffic flow. More retail shops, More coffee shops, More dining diversity, Safe play areas for children. Better links to walking tracks in the National Park.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE CONSULTATION SUMMARY

I want them to see Halls Gap as a village that is proud of our National Park and doing its best to protect and love it. So, easy for tourists to recycle rubbish, deposit rubbish appropriately, re use bags. Enhanced vegetation of Grampians plants. Clear signposting to walks. By the way, the banning of a signs and the standardised sign for accommodation has ben an excellent move.

Pedestrian friendly. Sports friendly - amenities for local residents/kids ie improved/upgraded tennis/bball/netball courts - even if relocated. Improved carparking and flow. Strict planning controls to create appropriate shopfronts/buildings

I want Halls Gap to be a friendly op 'walkable' shopping precinct. Understated design best as using local timber and stone to accentuate natural background. Not compete, as with this building - unlike Brambuk which has design reflecting the unique Aboriginal Heritage sustainable ecologically.

Quaint, friendly, good options for eating and entertainment. Outdoor/Indoor vibe. A real walking town. Lots of wildlife. Environmentally friendly.

Well designed, connecting the town centre into the environment. For the movement into being sustainable to be a priority. For Halls Gap to support caring for the environment and for our town to educate those visiting the importance of environment and adventure and great food and accommodation.

A sustainable environmentally friendly town. In line with 'nature' 'beautiful' gateway to the park. Supports local communitiy, local produce, locally made products (ie not tacky and touristy), local food "great coffee" and cafe's. Visitor friendly, open natural spaces to sit and enjoy scenery. Not congested. 'Dunkeld is a good model /Beechworth'.

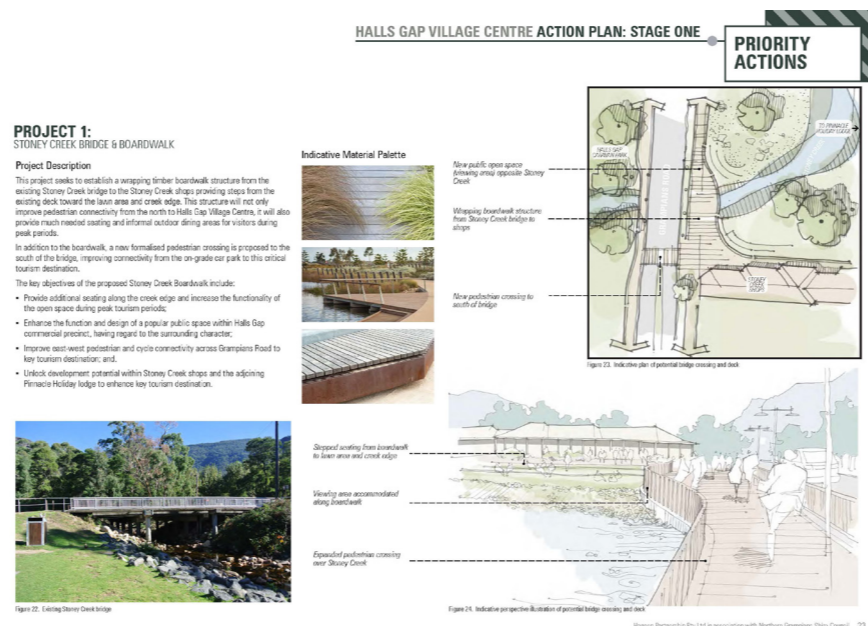
COMMENTS ON PROJECTS

Responses to questions three to nine (comments on seven 'priority Action' projects)

The following section contain the comments provided in relation to the specific projects on which feedback was sought. Each section begins with identification of key issues that will need to be considered moving forward, followed by comments in full.

Comments on Project #1: Stoney Creek bridge & boardwalk

Comments in relation to this action were generally supportive with most suggestions relating to other areas or complementary projects. Key considerations for the project moving forward in response to community feedback will be the appropriate integration of signage.



- Given the large amount of festivals this town now enjoys it would be prudent to incorporate amphitheatre type seating at both Stony creek stores and in the campground (public space 5) as this in the long term would save on marquee rental and would also show visitors that this town has lots of events.

An amphitheatre idea is great, but it may be difficult to accommodate this in the identified area without impeding pedestrian and cycle movement. The idea should be considered elsewhere in the centre

- It could do with an upgrade for sure as it's a key link between the caravan camping areas and the main street commercial sector/parking/picnic areas - make sure to do it with safe ped crossings but minimise ugly signage etc as this detracts from the feel of being in the mountains etc. Some fresh shops could be an advantage [not too many] - more options for visitors although would not like to see it as a 'shopping centre' as most people go to Halls Gap for the relaxing time eating nice food, ice creams and exploring the iconic trails and tracks e.g. Pinnacle, Zumsteins, Venus baths, etc etc. There is so much to do in the area people are spoiled for choice.

This project is just for works within the pedestrian areas and would not involve new development parcels (noting this is certainly encouraged and addressed in other parts of the Action Plan). Signage should certainly be carefully managed as part of the design process.

- The connectivity for walkers sounds great and seating for visitors also but make it natural - e.g no hot steel or ugly fake plastic materials, use wood etc or carved seating to blend in not stick out.

Natural materials which blend with the environment are proposed

- Yes - the damage to the creek area and the inappropriate attempts to repair etc and been disgraceful.

Noted

- The board walk and expanded bridge wings could effectively improve the public space around the creek and the Stoney Creek Stores.

Noted

- Way finding signage to the start of the National Park, to the shops, to visitor info. But nice signage, not too urban and not too much, subtle. Underbridge existing bridge put a pedestrian track to the National Park.

Design process should ensure that appropriate signage is integrated

- Agree with all of the proposed objectives including bring the centre of town/ carpark area to life as a key gathering area and kids/family play space. Love the new pedestrian bridge idea it really opens up the town entry and should modernise it - give it a more open feel rather than the tight bottle neck that it is.

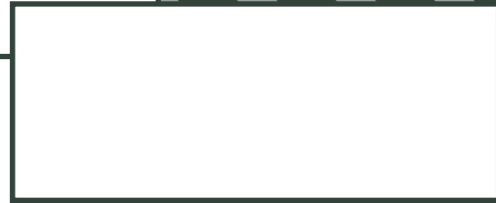
Noted

- All sounds good. Would welcome regular NGS gardeners time out here too! Would consider a small weir - fed occasionally by Bellfield, where Stony Creek intersects with Fyans Creek and have at least a trickle of water pumped/ circulated in a loop down/around creek in dry times.

Noted. Intersection of Fyans and Stony Creeks is beyond the scope of this project however.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY



- Cut of car parking access from Grampians Road access off School Road. Raised Pedestrian crossing the whole of Grampians Road - 20 km. Introduce car parking out of town centre and edge of town ie. large land next to Kookaburra - long lease.

Car parking out of the town centre and changes to the pedestrian environment are addressed through other identified Priority Actions

- Definitely agree with board walk beside the bridge. Is already too narrow when you meet a pram, and cyclists are unsure where they should cross. Need to access to the creek for kids. Elegant signage re feeding birds.

Noted

- This would significantly improve the attraction of this important tourist area.

Noted

Comments on Project #2: Peaks trailhead connection

Key considerations for the project moving forward in response to community feedback will be to ensure that the design is sympathetic to the surrounding natural environment, using materials and forms which reflect this. As with project one, the appropriate integration of associated infrastructure such as signage will also be important. Also requiring consideration is the car parking areas within the recreation reserve, particularly in terms of staging to allow for the gradual removal of some of these spaces to refocus the area on pedestrians. Ensuring a safe crossing at both Grampians Road and School Road can be considered through complementary projects.

- Don't install the art panel currently being worked on in this area. The art panel was originally meant for screening the demolished building site and will not integrate with the imagery, interpretation or construction materials used along the GPT. It will be a fantastic art screening, just not suitable for this area. The GPT trail needs to integrate seamlessly with town.

No integration of an art panel is proposed as part of this project.

- Lots of consultation and research should go into this and I suggest a visit to Milford sound and the Milford track may provide some answers. The Peaks Trail has already thrown up some interesting issues as one walker put it on trip advisor " Who planned a tent site in a windy gully full of Rats?" " The wind was so bad I had to pitch my tent behind the toilet which stank anyway! You would have thought that the large sum of money that went into the scoping study would have discovered these problems. So there are valuable lessons to be learnt and may even suggest trailing infrastructure before it is set in stone.

Noted

- Work hard to preserve the natural environment as much as possible and disturb to a minimum. too much infrastructure creates the opposite to what people come to enjoy and see.

Ensuring that any new infrastructure is sensitive to the environment within which it sits will be important in the design process.

- Walking and disabled access to tracks - no congestion of cars, buses etc - they should be removed from the area to the point where there would need to be a parking zone etc well away from the village area.

The idea of a dedicated parking zone outside this area is certainly supported however it removing all car parking from this area is likely to be contentious and should occur in a staged manner. Further, it will be important to retain some car parking in the area to allow access to the swimming pool.

- The existing visitor centre, which appears to be crying out for a legitimate use, would be an ideal information and send off point for the Peaks Trail combined with some of the transitional outdoor and shopping spaces suggested. If through traffic was using Heath Street and parking was developed along that side of the village, Peaks Trail walkers could transit the *park land without confronting through traffic in Grampians Road and School Road.*

The existing Visitor Information Centre is identified as forming part of the 'Journey of departure' proposed. As noted above, directing car parking to more peripheral areas of the Village Centre is also supported.

- Aboriginal Cultural Names and Markers. More ? in design. Any wood used should be local. Use of local products to build. Do not like large wooden wald ways. Venus Baths Great example of a walkway. (understated - support the surrounds). Create space natural - not over designed.

The design process should certainly ensure that any new structures utilise simple forms which reflect the natural environment and a local material palette.

- Acquisition of land next to supermarket an obvious. Cant really be walk start and a carpark. Refer picture sheet 2

Noted re car park, although the design allows for the construction of a boardwalk on Council land which allows for the development to occur in a manner which avoids existing car parking and use of recreation reserve land.

- Good quality pathways. Safe Road crossings. Views/Wow facto. Clear signage to the National Park. Refer sheet 3 for location of signage

Agreed that safe crossings and appropriate signage need to be an integral part of the design moving forward.

- Agree activate and celebrate the Stoney Creek corridor. Connection to Brambuk - This will be a vital Driver pre trip, Bus drop offs especially. Consider further trial enhancements along lake path to Brambuk. Long term parking @ Brambuk. Link park features such as skatepark and nature play space to trailhead.

Noted. Locating car parking at Brambuk risks walkers having a lesser engagement with the Village Centre and for that reason was not encouraged, in favour of new long terms carparking areas which required walkers to traverse the commercial area to access the trail. The proposed trail head location would be close to any nature based play should it be developed on the recreation reserve land.

- Continue to work with the Botanic Garden committee to improve the gates keeping animals out.

Noted, but beyond the scope of this project.

- Extend carpark in area as indicated on sheet 6.

The expansion of car parking in this area is not supported, as it is contrary to the development of the 'walking town' concept.

- Agree with key objectives of the proposed Peaks Trailhead Connection Project. Use the south bank of Stony Creek to maximum advantage in creating this connection. A pedestrian crossing will be needed on School Road to get to the actual trailhead.

The crossing at School Road should certainly be considered in the design process and has been identified in the draft Action Plan

PRIORITY ACTIONS

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION DRAFT

PROJECT 2: PEAKS TRAILHEAD CONNECTION

Project Description

The optimal location for the Peaks Trailhead within Halls Gap has been one of the key questions the development of the draft framework has contemplated. There are various strategic, issues, and requirements around the identification of a trailhead and Parks Victoria have undertaken background work which sets some of these parameters. However the final form of the trailhead remains flexible. The main Peaks Trailhead is recommended to be near the intersection of Stony Creek and School Road. The location adjacent to School Road (Corner 4 in the Halls Gap Masterplan) at the end of the reserve parking provides clear benefits over other locations. Firstly, it is considered crucial that the trailhead is located within the Village Centre to ensure economic spin-offs are maximised. The proposed location also allows for any infrastructure delivered through this project, particularly to pathways and connectors, to benefit multiple users. While the Visitor Information Centre has been raised as a possible location, and has an important role to play, the selected site for the trailhead provides a better fit for the anticipated role. The proposed approach to the delivery of the trailhead within Halls Gap seeks to conceptualise the trailhead as not just an integral static space, but as a series of activities and uses along a journey. The enactment of this journey within visually prominent areas of the Village Centre has the potential to add vibrancy and excitement to the area - for all users of the centre to be conscious of the 'heart of the town'.

- The key objectives of the proposed Peaks Trailhead Connection Project include:
- Deliver a major tourist drawcard within the Village Centre;
 - Ensure that economic development benefits possible through the siting of the trailhead are maximised;
 - Celebrate the role of 'walkers' within the Village Centre, in line with objectives to transform Halls Gap to a 'walkable' town;
 - Improve pedestrian safety and amenity between the commercial centre and the Grampians Peaks Trail;
 - Activate and collaborate the Stony Creek corridor; and
 - Provide additional areas for informal gathering within the Village Centre.

The key elements of this concept are outlined below and shown graphically in the diagram on page 25, and it will be important that the design of these spaces occurs in a cohesive manner:

PARK

While the number of long term carparking spaces required are relatively modest, the delivery of these spaces at the periphery of the Village Centre allows the exposure of trail users to the activities and facilities of the Village Centre to be maximised. Car parking areas are identified both along Heath Street and on a key private land parcel. Shuttle drop-off areas could also be facilitated in these locations if required.

INFORM

Access to information about the trail and registration (if required) should be delivered in conjunction with the new Visitor Information Centre. This is likely to require a reorganisation of existing uses within the building to ensure that access to relevant facilities such as toilets, showers and lockers (currently visible to be accessed) is available.

SHOP

The next stage of this journey provides the opportunity to 'stock up' on last minute supplies or refreshments within the Village Centre, though the facilitation of pedestrian movement along the Grampians Road frontages, or through the proposed network of pedestrian connections which form part of this Action Plan.

GATHER

This concept sees a significant upgrade to the existing area of covered paved area on Grampians Road, and the closure of one car parking access and the introduction of raised pedestrian thoroughfare on Grampians Road. This area then becomes where walkers can gather, socialise, and prepare for their journey alongside other visitors to the Village Centre, in a highly visible location - the 'departure lounge' for the trail. Proximity to another public toilet facility is also important. Key signage and information boards relating to the trail could be incorporated into this space.

EXPERIENCE

The concept sees the delivery of a raised boardwalk connecting this new street front plaza through a relatively underutilised parcel of land managed by Council. A raised boardwalk enables a path to not only overcome practical considerations, such as the existing rock groyves, but also adds to the sense of occasion and drama in setting off on the trail. This arrangement also provides opportunities to more actively engage with the recently rehabilitated creek frontage within this portion of the reserve, and the boardwalk could accommodate more seating to allow for informal seating with attractive creek outlooks, complementary to the proposed Stony Creek Ridge & Boardwalk (Initiative 1).

CAPTURE

The ability to 'capture' events, moments and key activities is a critical part of today's experience and the Peaks Trailhead should be responsive to this. Providing a key element, sculpture or framed view which allows people to document the beginning of their journey on the Trail is considered extremely important. As such, the trailhead is seen as a relatively low key and small space for instance a gravel plaza with informal seating) with the delivery of a 'rattle spot' being the key feature of this site. The identified location offers a spectacular view up to one of the rock faces of the Peaks, allowing for the 'framing' of a key landscape feature relevant to the broader trail experience.



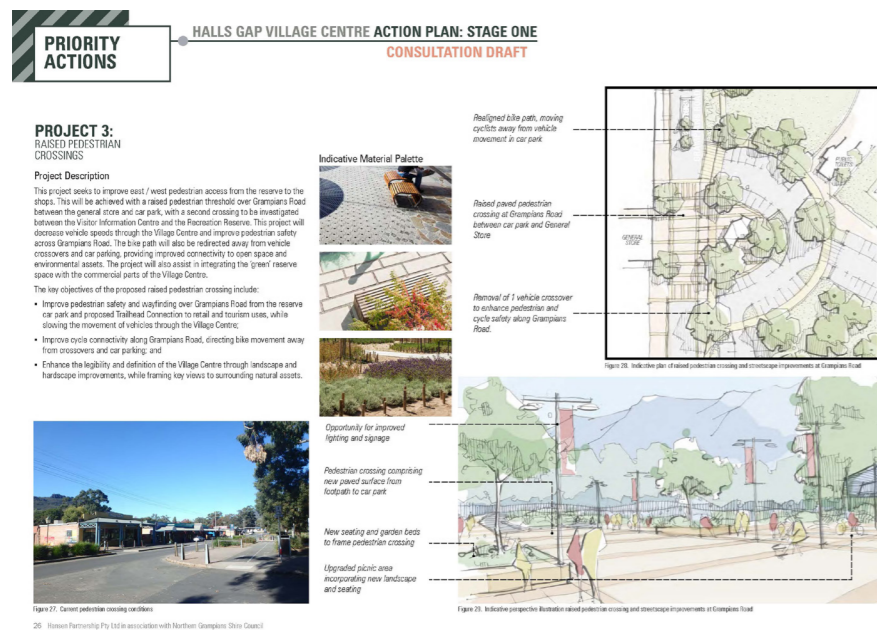
Figure 25. Conceptual gathering point

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Comments on Project #3: Raised pedestrian crossing

It is noted that while some respondents felt that this project was a lower priority and that it should not be delivered until such time as the proposed Heath Street connection was delivered, the overall response including those who provided verbal feedback was positive. Key considerations for the project moving forward in response to community feedback will be to ensure that the design of the crossings strikes the appropriate balance between allowing for current vehicular movement to be maintained (without sending additional vehicles down School Road). The range of options including zebra crossings, raised treatments and coloured paving should all be assessed. It will also be critical that the design of the crossings has due regard to the desire lines which exist across Grampians Road to work with flow of people, and that methods of directing pedestrians to these crossings are effective but not dominant. Support for closing off one of the car park entrances and for retaining some on-street car parking close to the post office was also noted.



- Yes. Better walking orientation and improved carparking

Noted

- The village currently has a 40 limit which is adequate. I think by putting raised speed hump style pedestrian crossings will seriously impede emergency vehicles and don't forget it is a major thoroughfare to other towns ie Dunkeld.

The role of Grampians Road in carrying through traffic and emergency vehicles will be an important consideration the design process. Noting the longer term ambitions regarding Heath Street, it may be that a staged delivery of these crossings may be explored.

- A raised pedestrian crossing is unlikely to reduce the wandering of pedestrians between car park and shops and will have the adverse effect of discouraging through traffic which will choose school road, creating another dangerous and unsatisfactory pedestrian/vehicle interface past the school, the pool and through the camping park. This project should be a much lower priority than realignment of Heath Street for through traffic.

Heath Street has certainly been identified as a priority by community members, as has a strong preference to avoid additional vehicular movement along School Road. The design of the crossings will need to consider the broader pedestrian movements along Grampians Road but it is considered two generous crossings can be achieved in balance with other matters.

- This could be a safer way for pedestrians to cross the busy roadway - needs to be well constructed and not be an eyesore with too many bollards and signage etc.

Noted, and agreed re bollards and additional visual clutter. Alternative to these should be considered though the design process., which should carefully consider 'desire lines' to work with, not against, pedestrian preferences.

- It would in the longer term however the Heath Street upgrade should be completed before this happens. The completion of Heath Street is critical in improving the traffic flow through the area. Raised walkways will only create a lot of distress and angst for those living further down the valley floor.

Noted, as per response to second and third points.

- There is no evidence that a raised pedestrian crossing will funnel pedestrians. Previous experience with wire fencing and other forms of barricading has failed to change the behaviour of pedestrians who habitually walk in the most direct and convenient way from their cars or the park to the shops and back. The few pedestrians that do use the crossing are likely to spread out in a way that seriously impedes the flow of vehicles along the road. Once motorists are aware of this they are likely to avoid the crossing by using School Road which will simply relocate the points of clash between vehicles and pedestrians.

Noted, as per response to second and third points.

- 2 formal pedestrian crossings - zebra. - Stoney creek bridge. - Near grocery store/post office area

Noted, and zebra crossing could be considered as an option during the design process, although these may prove problematic for through vehicles in peak seasons.

- Yes it could deliver the walkability vision - change colour /texture of the bitumen for a wide/long area.

Noted, and road paving changes are another option which should be considered as an alternative to raised crossings during the design process.

- Yes I like it

Noted

- Fantastic

Noted

- Keep short term parking outside shops but make the whole area as attractive (eg get rid of power lines!) and pedestrian friendly as possible. Consciously discourage heavy traffic from using this route.

The retention of parking outside the shops is unlikely to be significantly compromised, and it is acknowledge that short term on-street spaces need to be retained close to the post office.

- Rezoning Halls Gap properties from Delley's Bridge to the Indian Restaurant fronting Grampians Road as mixed use Zone. Widening the study area.

Noted, but this project is not looking at the broader township area, which is the role of a Structure Plan.

- Make sure it's friendly to the way people walk about these precincts as in my experience they usually take the most direct route from A to B - I have observed this everywhere where they try and force people to go around or in a serpentine fashion & people then tend to make their own pathway!!

Agreed, all projects need to have regard to 'desire lines' which represent how people choose to move through spaces, rather than where they're directed!

- Yes the construction of Heath Street and associated bridges to create another road through Halls Gap.

Noted

- The development of a through traffic 'by pass' along the Heath Street corridor would move much of the traffic out of the village and enable Grampians Road to be a 'pedestrian friendly' space with vehicles who choose to use it being restricted to walking pace only.

Noted

- Wide pedestrian crossing won't work for traffic flow - if Heath Street bridge isn't opened - too much congestion

Noted, and it is acknowledged that the delivery of this project will need to have regard to current and future vehicular movement.

- Consider having more than one raised area. Who gives way - pedestrians or vehicles on the raised area? Suggest pedestrians give way or will have traffic backing up during peak periods.

Noted, however if pedestrians give way then this does not support the prioritisation of pedestrians, but the issues of through traffic movement will certainly need to be considered through the design process.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

- Short term parking. Block off access from Grampians Road - both points. Have overflow carparking on edge of town for long term carparking. Have short term parking for post and shopping collection. Signage to long term parking.

The suggestion to close of one or two of the car parking entrances was popular during consultation and should be explored in the delivery of those projects. The closure of both entries may increase vehicular movement along School Road but should also be explored, but only once a larger accessible and well signposted area of car parking has been delivered on the periphery of the centre.

- Crossing or wider - dependent on what might change on west side.

Noted

Comments on Project #4: Heath Street upgrades

The proposed Heath Street connection was one of the most important projects in terms of community responses, with many respondents identifying that the bridge and upgrade were critical to the delivery of a walkable town. The support this would offer to events and growing tourism were also noted. Support was also expressed for other concepts such as increased car parking etc. No major design considerations were identified beyond those expressed in the Action Plan.

Heath Street is currently primarily zoned for commercial development and has long been identified for commercial uses. Poor levels of exposure and connectivity have hindered this development. Behind Heath Street land is zoned for Rural Activity, rather than Rural Living.

- Redirecting traffic will simply create problems for the school, campers and families in the campground which has a nice vibe to it.

Noted, although this relates to School Road (Priority Action #6)

- The bridge only has a (10 tonne limit and would have to be upgraded)

Noted, although this relates to School Road (Priority Action #6)

- Why are you trying to enhance the village centre when the major player or owner is not helping anyway?

Noted

- Once again try and make this change as environmentally friendly as possible with sensitive infrastructure and materials.

Agreed that a more sensitive approach is required to the delivery of infrastructure within the township

- This is critical and should one of the first things that happens. The construction of Heath Street and associated bridges would support all the other projects. This has been a recommendation that goes back 17 years, it is time to start acting on this one not just pushing it back even further. To create a walking village atmosphere the major traffic needs to be given an alternative to the side of town that is not the walking precinct planned.

Noted, this project was clearly a key priority for many community members.

- The most critical element of the Heath Street upgrades is the bridge to connect it with Grampians Road at a point north of the Mt Victory Road intersection. This corridor has been wisely retained through several planning phases and identified in a number of studies and community consultations as being the key to appropriate routing of traffic. Only by providing a suitable alternative for cars, buses and trucks that do not need to travel through the village will there be scope for the desirable and exciting plans in other sections of the Action Plan.

Noted, this project was clearly a key priority for many community members.

- Plan for more visitors than what we already have! Utilise Heath Street and School Road as main areas for access to a circular ring road around town. (Might need to consider school safety more though). Love the idea of using the Valley Floor as event space and car parking - so close to town but out of the way. Move Caravan Park to this Space (Radical I know!) - so we can utilise the space in town for town growth. Consider moving the School to the Rec Oval area away from future busy traffic area

Ideas like moving the caravan park and school are beyond the scope of this project, and most feedback received has been very concerned about increases in vehicular movement along School Road, noting support for Heath Street upgrades. Additional use of the Valley floor should be considered further.

- Eventually a road bridge will be needed but it will be very expensive. More parking in Heath Street make sense. If the road is extended, it would be good to provide a path and pedestrian bridge to join up with the track from Delleys Bridge to Tandara Road and beyond to Brambuk.

Cost of delivering the bridge is acknowledge as expensive but should be pursued, and creek connections to Brambuk are identified in the Action Plan.

- If we are to set up for the future and get the towns infrastructure right in our opinion the Heath Street bridge is essential - we can't have the main access road via School Road.

Noted.

- I think upgrading Heath Street with a new Bridge is one of the most important upgrades. It can move through traffic off the current Main Street, making it more pedestrian friendly. It will also provide a better route through town during major events and peak holiday season. This is a safety and functionality issue for residents and users of the National Park that brings people to the region

Noted.

- West side Heath Street tasteful development can only enhance what the East side residents look out upon now and could make the village more vibrant

Noted

- Need caravan and bus parking. Long term car parking. Priority for further Development Bypass found car park (short term) of turning carpark to project 7 is longterm refer to sheet 6.

Noted, and car parking is discussed in other areas, the priority for core parts of the commercial areas is for additional activation and delivery of commercial floorspace, with car parking directed to less 'core' areas.

- Refer sheet 7 for ideas

Noted



- Please give up on commercial development opportunities in Heath Street as it is a massive distraction. Heath Street is 95% housing. In the original master plan discussions, the valley floor was supported for lifestyle acreages and not commercial development.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE CONSULTATION SUMMARY

- Agree with objectives of the proposed Heath Street upgrades. The vision of a more attractive and pedestrian friendly village centre is an excellent one and most of the ideas put forward in this Stage 1 Plan are a good basis for further work to achieve these objectives. The FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM to be solved is that of TRAFFIC. 1. The plans to reduce traffic flow on Grampians Road are basically correct. 2. This inevitably means that more traffic will move on to School Road and new signs should accommodate this. The school will probably object to this so every effort should be made to satisfy their need for safety and convenience. 3. By far the BEST solution is the problem would be to take the main road over a new bridge at the end of Heath Street. A NEW BRIDGE over Fyans Creek has been the best and most favoured answer to the village's traffic problem since the beginning of this century. The obvious cost has prevented it from happening, but with the advent of the Grampians Peaks Trail the need for it has become even more obvious and urgent. Besides allowing through traffic to the area of Heath Street and Valley Drive that this plan favours for the majority of new parking. The idea of pedestrians flow from this area through the VIC and the village centre towards the Grampians Peaks trailhead is well worth pursuing.

Noted, as are the comments re traffic flow

Comments on priority action #5: Southern gateway

Key considerations for the project moving forward in response to community feedback will be to ensure that the design is considered in conjunction with potential changes to School Road, particularly around the caravan park entrance, and that car parking removed from this area is replaced elsewhere. Overall, community feedback was very positive to this project.

- See comments on map

Noted

- I would trial something first and gauge community response before setting stuff in stone.

Noted

- It's ok but need to make sure it doesn't dominate the landscape but makes it look like a natural transition - not all imposing as it will then be an ugly mess.

The intention is that any gateway would fit with the landscape

- Great but get the roads right beforehand.

Noted

- The spirit of Project 5 provides a desirable rationale which would be further enhanced if travellers and visitors could park in the Heath Street precinct then continue their journey along the Heath Street corridor to reconnect with Grampians Road north of the Mt Victory Road intersection. Like several other aspects of the plan, this element will only be fully realised if the through traffic is directed along the Heath Street Corridor. Tidying up the approach and transit along School Road is clearly necessary for local traffic as currently. With pedestrians moving across the caravan park entrance, School Road and Grampians Road in front of the visitor centre, Heath Street provides a safe and obvious vehicle entry point and transition route into and around the village.

Noted, and Project #5 has already been identified as a community priority.

- Could you put a roundabout in here? Using some of the lawn space. This current intersection is terrible. Pedestrian flow doesn't work well currently for people wanting to access the park from the South East side of road. Some bikes trying to avoid the hub and get to the park. The caravan park entrance blocks the road in peak periods. The turning lane area is confusing - Need better long bay car parking near town and caravan park to facilitate peak periods. Refer sheet 1

Noted, and changes to School Road to improve the caravan park entrances and improve the safety and cyclists and pedestrian crossing this area form part of Project #6, noting they will also need to be considered to ensure that the design of Project #5 is compatible. Changes to traffic flow here would need to consider implications of Heath Street connection, and be undertaken in conjunction with VicRoads.

- This carpark is dangerous as cars cross the walking/bike path. Refer sheet 2

Agreed, car parking in this area conflicts with the shared path

- This area regularly congests with caravans. Especially at peak check in times each week. Most problematic/dangerous section of School Road for walkers and cyclist. Especially School Children. Refer sheet 3

Noted, and changes to School Road to improve the caravan park entrances and improve the safety and cyclists and pedestrian crossing this area form part of Project #6, noting they will also need to be considered to ensure that the design of Project #5 is compatible.

- Remove car parking and add roundabout. Refer sheet 4

Noted. While a roundabout could be considered, this is generally not an option preferred where the intention is to prioritise pedestrian movement as roundabouts are not known for their pedestrian friendliness. In addition, if the Heath Street connection is to be pursued, then a roundabout in this location may be obsolete given the road realignment that would be required to facilitate that.

- I agree the current informal carpark should go and be replaced with a garden area with local plants. I would accept that a car parking area on the vacant blocks on the corner with Heath Street. Any commercial development on that block would need to be very sensitively done

Noted

- The proposed sculpture/display would be a worthwhile enhancement if Road improvement eg. a roundabout or whatever considered best allows it. How are electric bikes or walkers leaving centre - going to work in such close proximity. Refer sheet 6

Noted, see above comments re roundabouts.

- Agree first 2 points. I think this plan is good. It will remove a number of parking spaces when there is a need to increase parking facilities overall, but it is appropriate in enhancing the southern entrance. Parking is a major challenge for planners.

Noted re car parking and the need for consolidated car parking to 'future proof' supply in the town centre is also acknowledged.

- See comments on map

Noted

- I see it as just window dressing and not addressing the real issues of properly funding the VIC in its desired location.

Noted

- Not seeing the really big picture of building a cable car to the Pinnacle (see Queenstown NZ).

Noted, however, this project built on the Masterplan for Halls Gap which was the 'bigger picture' and only addressed the Village Centre area

- It will improve the look of the entry to the main Halls Gap precinct.

Noted

- It would certainly highlight the park and why many of us choose to live in Halls Gap. Great project.



HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY



Noted

- If the key is pedestrian amenity, vehicles must be moved, not just obstructed and slowed. Local commuters, and others transitioning through Halls Gap need a safe and direct vehicular route which reduces the number of cars. If they do not need to be in village, they should not have to go through it.

Noted, and see Projects #5 and 6

Comments on priority action #6: School Road upgrades

Strong community opposition to any increases in vehicular movement along School Road have been expressed through consultation. However, support was expressed in terms of any improvements to assist in pedestrian safety (such as separated paths and crossings). Consideration of how the school drop off could be made safer were not considered through this project but should be considered by Council. The key ideas supported by the community are resolution of caravan park entrance, school drop-off zone, and the development of a footpath adjacent to School Road and boardwalk / crossing identified in Project #2. Verbal feedback from the community identified that creating pedestrian crossings, shared paths and improved access to the school entrance would improve how School Road functions.

- All good if the roads are safer for people and school children to navigate

Noted

- There should be no reason for vehicle traffic re the trail access. If the trail starts back further this zone should be protected from buses, cars etc. The school should be a main priority in ensuring traffic around it is kept to a minimum and that the safety of all concerned is a priority. Crossings, fencing, parking and drop off zones will need to be planned for in budgeting. As this is clearly a walking zone area the Heath Street road upgrade and bridges should happen first. I understand funding for Heath Street is a sticking point - the fact that it has been on the drawing board for at least 17 years indicates that it should be a priority.

Noted

- School Road currently cuts through the caravan and camping park, provides westerly access to the pool, access to Venus Baths/Mackeys Peak/Pinnacle trails and is the only road access to the school. As such it needs to remain safe for cyclists and pedestrians. Development should focus on improving safety for a mix of users and minimising through traffic. The proposed pedestrian emphasis along Grampians Road risks drivers using School Road as an alternative. School Road upgrades should be undertaken only when an appropriate through route is established along the Heath Street corridor.

pedestrian friendly. The entry to and exit from School Road will need modification, a slip road and designated parking should be created to service the school, and there is sufficient easement to widen the road in places. The northern gateway should be situated somewhere opposite the Fire Station, north of the entry to School Road. On the present plans it is situated too close to Stony Creek and would not welcome traffic going into School Road.

General feedback is that directing traffic to School Road would not be desirable, and so the location of the northern gateway would remain appropriate. Comments re school drop off are also noted.

- Consideration for School Road upgrade. Not making it the main thoroughfare if interim solution till Heath Street Bridge is in place. Need bike and pedestrian path along this road to connect to the school

Noted, and paths have been identified through this and other projects

Comments on priority action #7: Rear lane commercial expansion

While there was a mixed response to this project from written feedback, overall feedback was more positive, with most supportive of the opening up of additional commercial opportunities. Verbal feedback from Heath Street landowners and operators indicated that this project would encourage the intensification of commercial land through making it more accessible to Grampians Road on foot. Other feedback indicated that it would make direct access to the supermarket and post office easier by being able to park in Heath Street in busy periods and access shops directly. Some respondents expressed concern about the impact on existing businesses and concern about how it would work without access. Links to other projects are clearly important in terms of delivering this outcome. The other issue that would need to be addressed as this project progresses is the appropriate design and height for any buildings. This could be explored through the preparation of design guidelines.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PROJECT 6: SCHOOL ROAD UPGRADES

Project Description
In conjunction with other Priority Actions, upgrades to School Road should be pursued to ensure a clear resolution of existing and potential future pedestrian / vehicular conflict. Further investigations will be required to establish the optimal solutions along this road corridor to ensure safe passage between the caravan park and the Recreation Reserve and providing safe connectors to key destinations such as the School and the Trailhead will be important. While Council can deliver upgrades to the road corridor to improve pedestrian priority crossing at School Road as part of the Trailhead Connection Project 2, and can seek to address functional issues affecting the caravan park entry, other actions will require partnership with other groups such as the delivery of a dedicated pedestrian path along the western edge of the Recreation Reserve. This path is important in providing an alternative for pedestrians, in particular school children, to walking along the School Road corridor, where limited room is available to develop a separate pedestrian path. Key conflict points are identified in Figure 35.

- The key objectives of the proposed School Road upgrade include:
- Improve pedestrian and cycle safety along a key corridor.
 - Anticipate potentially increased vehicular movements over time and ensure these are planned for and
 - Facilitate safe and legible access between the V.I.C. and commercial areas and the Trailhead.



Figure 34: Existing condition of Grampians Road (Hansen Partnership)

Precedent Images



Figure 35: Potential path alignments affecting School Road (parking conflict points highlighted in blue circles). Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd in association with Northern Grampians Shire Council | 25

- Close School Rd to traffic. DO NOT increase traffic movement, make it a walking track linkage along Stony creek

Noted, and a walking link along Stony Creek is identified as part of Project #2

- This area functions just fine as it is. Any development here would potentially upset the ambience of a truly unique space which is a caravan park in the middle of a town.

Noted

Noted

- Need a safe footpath/bikepath to/from school and into town ie. pool shops. See a problem in the future if the road gets busier - you will need to move the school carpark drop off - potentially to where the tennis courts are? Yep VIC an important Hub to radiate from - use vacant space across the road as a "town centre" main connection area. Need much better footpaths and signage to increase pedestrian flow.

Noted

- All for upgrading walking paths and connection into the town. As for upgrading School Road, to encourage more traffic is NOT the solution to manage traffic. School Road, Primary School, swimming Pool, camping and entry into National Park

Noted

- Very important - the 5th Intersection near Caravan Park entrance is a mess: the 1 North heading lane is sometimes used as a Carpark! on weekends as people don't realise it is the carriageway.

Noted, and the caravan park entrance has been identified as a consideration in planning for this area

- I like the pedestrian boardwalk to School Road

Noted (this is part of Project #2)

- Agree with the key objectives of the proposed School Road upgrade. The map does not show School Road!! However it will receive more traffic if the village centre really is more

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

PRIORITY ACTIONS

CONSULTATION DRAFT

PROJECT 7: REAR LANEWAY COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

Project Description
Council owns a large parcel of land within the Village Centre which represents a unique opportunity to use as a backdrop in a key strategic location to further influence how the Village Centre evolves. This project seeks to establish a formal rear laneway network between Grampians Road and Heath Street to facilitate the development of unutilised commercial land. Currently, access to existing shops for servicing and staff parking is provided via an informal arrangement across Council land. This project sees this access resolved via a legal easement and establishes the potential for greater pedestrian permeability. The development of this lane, in conjunction with other initiatives outlined in this Action Plan, is intended to act as a catalyst for development of land fronting Heath Street. The Council site provides a key opportunity to diversify the commercial offer within the centre and to demonstrate a new model of mixed use development within the centre. Development on this site could serve as a catalyst for development of surrounding sites, and is critical to the development of a new network of rear access lanes and pedestrian connections. While it is currently used as an informal car park, these informal spaces could be replaced on Heath Street and formalising car parking on this site may be incompatible with the aims of this plan which is to 'indirectly' deliver investment in the Village Centre.

- The key objectives of the proposed Rear Laneway commercial expansion initiative include:
- Provide access to commercial development fronting Grampians Road and Stony Creek and provide access for existing business owners.
 - Provide a catalyst for private investment.
 - Increase the availability and diversity of commercial floorspace and accommodation within the Village Centre.
 - Improve pedestrian permeability between Grampians Road and Heath Street; and
 - Facilitate the development of land and increased activity fronting Heath Street.



Figure 36: Aerial view of Council site. Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd in association with Northern Grampians Shire Council | 26

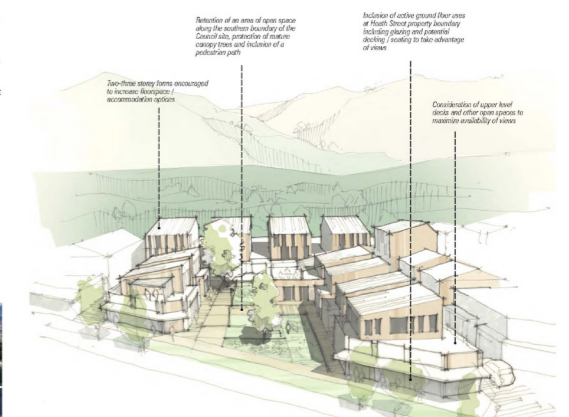


Figure 37: Illustrative perspective rendering of potential development of Council land and adjoining laneway.

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

- Waste of time and effort. The only time this should be investigated is when the vacant land between the supermarket and Stoney creek stores is sold and a genuine development proposal is on the table. Simply linking Heath street to Grampians Road with a footpath will not stimulate commercial development.

Noted, although this project should be considered in conjunction with the potential sale of council land, as well as proposed Heath Street improvements.

- This is a really silly idea as in the current climate it is difficult to fill commercial space anyway and any more in this space is going to put downward pressure on rentals. I doubt that much pedestrian traffic would head down a back laneway any how.

Noted.

- This will need to be sensitively delivered and the idea of multi-level buildings may have a negative impact on the existing landscape?? There must be a limit to the amount & type of development permitted here.

Noted, and agreed. Ant new development here will need to be sensitively designed and have appropriate planning controls in place to ensure this.

- Great but should be done earlier rather than later. There is also the commercial traffic that travels through Halls Gap to towns down the Southern Grampians and associated towns.

Noted

- This is a desirable long term plan and has the potential to develop Halls Gap in a way that has been inhibited for many years. The laneway expansion would be clearly within the pedestrian precinct and 'front and centre' if Heath Street became the main vehicular route through Halls Gap.

Noted

- Absolutely need more space at the rear of the buildings for quick access, or for All day parking for shop owners etc. Laneways through great idea! (better if shops either side). Refer sheet 7.

Noted

- I like the open space and laneway in the centre. Unsure about how viable the 2 and 3 story buildings would be. I don't object to 2 stories, but no higher.

Noted, and the appropriate height of buildings 2 – 3 storeys may need to be investigated further through the development of any design guidelines for this area to ensure heights do not dominate.

- Priorities development here then allow development on Council land. Short term use as car parking with view of long term development. Refer sheet 10

Noted, but the intention is to provide a variety of options for those interested in commercial development.

- Agree with key objectives of the proposed Rear Laneway commercial expansion initiative. The garage (somewhat ugly) is used at present formalise a lane near it (thus safer) and the obvious gap. Refer sheet 11

Noted, and the strip next to the garage has been identified as a future laneway.

- Refer sheet 12 with location of possible parking

Noted

- Agree with key objectives of the proposed Rear Laneway commercial expansion initiative. The suggested developments on the block currently owned by Council (this was news to me!!) should be limited to TWO STOREYS. If three storeys were allowed they would be too dominant visually and would set a very bad precedent for other developments in Halls Gap.

Noted, see response to earlier dot point regarding thneed to investigate appropriate heights through design guidelines.

- No support - there is hardly enough traffic to support current business.

Noted, but this project should be considered in conjunction with other projects

- Not sure and this is likely to be a commercial enterprise driven area which needs to be carefully planned.

Noted

- Yes it would soften the impact on the roads between shops, town park and national park peaks trails etc.

Noted

- For many years the village centre has been constrained by the linear road frontage and limited development space. The Stoney Creek Stores has been the only example of a creative alternative approach to commerce and visitor amenity. With projected growth it is clearly time for another ambitious development to enhance amenity for visitors and lifestyle for residents. The rear laneway concept clearly addresses this immediate and on going need.

Noted

Plans and mark-ups provided by the community *(see references within raw text)*

Other ideas and comments which were expressed visually on plans provided (noting many of these have been previously identified) included:

- Providing a pedestrian path under the Stoney Creek bridge
- Raising the whole of Grampians Road within the shopping strip
- Cutting off all access to recreation reserve car parking from Grampians Road
- Ensuring signage for the Peaks Tail is not located within car parking areas
- Providing a roundabout at the southern gateway
- Prioritising the development of the vacant site on Grampians Road
- Using the Council and for car parking in the shorter term before development is facilitated
- Changes to the Recreation Reserve car parking area to relocated existing sitting space so not in the middle of car parking, using space for pop-up markets, integrating short term car parking at the frontage
- Integrating a BMX / pump track within the Recreation Reserve
- Removing all on-street car parking along Grampians Road and widening footpath
- Shutting off School Road at the bridge
- Widening School Road near the Recreation reserve and including more car parking
- Installing a roundabout at the intersection of School Road and Grampians Road (beyond study area)
- Including long bay bus and caravan parking on Valley Drive

Some additional feedback was also received via email, which supplemented broader community feedback, as follows:

- Strong support for heath street bridge and very strong opposition to any increases in vehicular traffic along School Road

Noted

- Strong support for providing additional car parking on Heath Street and in peripheral areas to take pressure off the recreation reserve area

Noted

- Suggestion that a fire safe area needs to be provided in the town centre

Noted, but the identification of fire refuges is beyond the scope of this project and should be considered through any Structure Planning process

- Suggestion that more land needs to be rezoned to commercial (within 1km of the commercial area)

Existing commercially zoned land is not being utilised (i.e. along Heath Street) so the preference is to improve connectivity to encourage the development of existing zoned land in advance of any further rezoning

- Query as to whether a nature based play space could be located at the botanic gardens

While this is an option, the preference would still be for the play space to be located within the centre recreation reserve area as it then has the opportunity to become a 'showpiece' for the town and is easily seen and utilised by visitors, particularly in conjunction with existing picnicking and other functions such as the toilets

- Strong support for pedestrian improvements throughout the village centre

Noted

- Suggestion that car parking along Grampians Road should be metered for visitors or have time limits.

Some car parking spaces along Grampians Road area metered, and suggestions have been made to introduce some restrictions to prevent all day parking in central areas

- Suggestion that access to the Stoney Creek allow people to get to the creek to dangle feet in

The Stoney Creek boardwalk is not proposed to provide direct access to the creek, with the modified natural environment of grass and rocks remaining adjacent to the creek itself.

OTHER PRIORITIES

Within the Action Plan document a number of Other Actions which are important to the delivery of the overall vision and framework for the Village Centre are identified. During the consultation phase respondents were asked to identify which of these they considered to be priorities. The outcomes of this are outlined below, ranked in order of importance.

#1 Resolution of car parking to reduce congestion to deliver a 'walkable' Village Centre.

39 High

4 Medium

0 Low

#5 New nature based playspace

36 High Priority

6 Medium Priority

5 Low Priority

#9 Undergrounding of powerlines

35 High Priority

4 Medium Priority

3 Low Priority

#3 Urban design guidelines and planning controls

30 High Priority

6 Medium Priority

5 Low Priority

#8 Vegetation retention and enhancement

26 High Priority

1 Medium Priority

3 Low Priority

#6 Explore opportunities to create a network of creekside tracks.

21 High Priority

4 Medium Priority

6 Low Priority

#11 Large scale event space

14 High Priority

4 Medium Priority

5 Low Priority

#2 Grampians Road public realm upgrades

12 High Priority

7 Medium

1 Low

#10 Signage consolidation and wayfinding improvements

10 High Priority

4 Medium Priority

3 Low Priority

#7 New pedestrian connections

8 High Priority

5 Medium Priority

5 Low Priority

#4 Support preferred outcomes through private development initiatives

7 High Priority

8 Medium Priority

6 Low Priority

HALLS GAP VILLAGE CENTRE ACTION PLAN: STAGE ONE CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Given the identified 'top 5' of 'Other Priorities', key considerations for council moving forward should be:

- Where land could be acquired / utilised for a larger car parking area at the periphery of the centre
- Delivery of additional car parking along Heath Street
- Consideration of time limits on central Recreation Reserve car parking spaces
- Liaison with the Recreation reserve committee about potential future playground upgrades and assistance with funding applications
- Liaison with authorities to establish parameters for the undergrounding of powerlines to ensure these can be considered in any future upgrades or works within the public realm
- Development of urban design guidelines for the Town Centre
- Preparation of a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement agreed Design Guidelines
- Liaison with the CFA regarding how to best integrate and protect vegetation within the Village Centre
- Ensuring that all public realm projects (for example additional Heath Street car parking) consider how vegetation and canopy trees can be integrated

The draft Action Plan could be updated to ensure that the order of 'other initiatives' reflects the aspirations of the community in terms of their delivery.

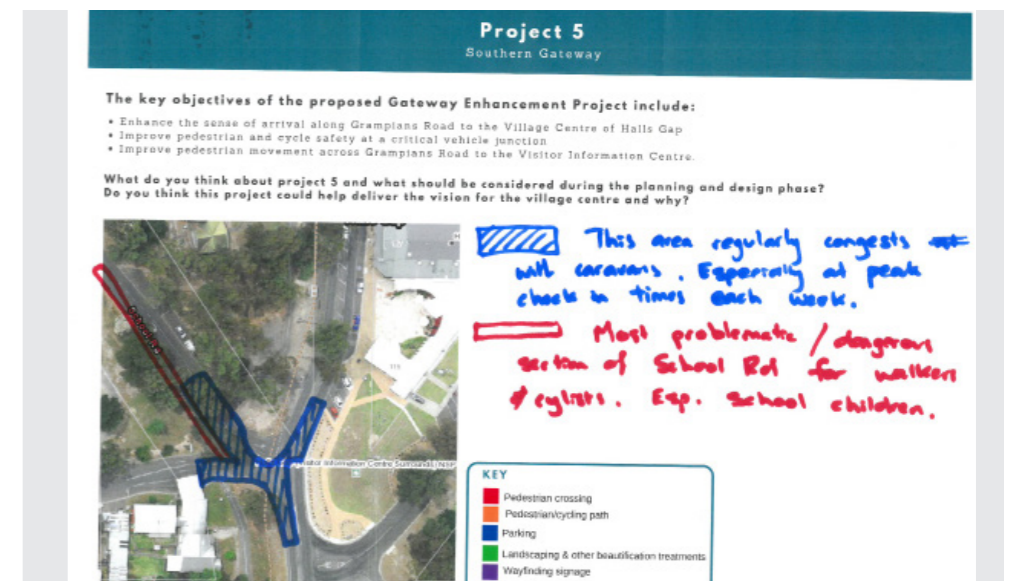
OTHER IDEAS & INITIATIVES

Other ideas and initiatives suggested through the consultation process included:

- BMX / mountain bike pump track.
- There has been no major hotel style investment in Halls Gap for over 10 years. Many of the operators are leaseholders on short term lease and the town has a small retired population from which to draw labour so most have to drive in from other towns.
- Providing some incentive for large developments would be helpful. What happened to the Wildlife Art Museum?
- An improved range of shops for browsing and buying. More efficient and direct public transport options. Availability of hire cars so those traveling to Halls Gap by public transport can access areas which require a car. Extend bike path out to zoo and winery on Ararat-Halls Gap Road.
- The town is quite accessible, it's just the quality of the experience when you get there.
- Visitor information. Does anyone serve food after 8.30pm because many arriving late from Melbourne are expecting late night dining, jazz even.
- Develop the front of the hall
- I believe increasing competition from Pomonal and Dunkeld will eventually force Halls Gap businesses to collectively improve their customer service and experience. You can streetscape all you like and you have to some extent with no real gains.

Ideas and initiatives suggested by the Primary School students who participated in the workshop included the following::

- The key improvement that kids wanted to see is an upgrade in the bike and pedestrian tracks throughout the precinct
- Potential new business ideas put forward included:
 - Sushi Train Store or Thai shop
 - Car Dealership
 - Potato Farm
 - Comic or Merchandise Shops
 - Restaurants
- Concerns surrounding lack of lighting were expressed by the kids. They wanted to see ovals improved through football lighting, club room and offering a variety of other uses like soccer
- Other improvements to leisure and recreation improvements expressed by kids include:
 - Transforming the existing Caravan park into a 'Treehouse Camp' and /or an Outdoor Cinema



CONCLUSION

- Transforming the existing Swimming Pool into an indoor one
- More parks/playgrounds/gardens
- Museums and galleries which exhibit the native wildlife
- Kids were also keen to see further environmental improvements including:
 - More ponds which allow fishing
 - More integration with the creek through activities and/or bridges (waterfalls)
 - Vegetation at intersections

In general, the response to the draft Action Plan was overwhelmingly positive, with a number of projects coming through as strong preferences for the community. The protection of School Road from increased vehicular traffic was the key issue with the plans as proposed and plans for Project #2 (raised pedestrian crossings) will need to be carefully considered in light of this. Other key areas where strong community support was found relate to the relocation of car parking to the periphery to deliver a more 'pedestrian orientated' centre, the Stoney Creek bridge project (Project #1) and a new nature based playspace. However, the key priority for the community was the delivery of the Heath Street upgrade and bridge to reduce through traffic along Grampians Road, without impacting School Road.

No major changes are required to the Action Plan, however, issues around School Road and the relationship to Project #2 should be highlighted, as should issues with the caravan park entrance, and other opportunities for larger car parking areas (i.e. valley floor) should be acknowledged.

The 'vision' should be reviewed to ensure it is consistent with the 'visions' expressed by the community, as should the objectives and annotation of the Projects to ensure that these are consistent with the matters outlined within this report. As noted, the order of 'Other Initiatives' could also be updated to reflect community priorities.



