

# Great Western Future Plan 2014-2024

Final Report  
July 2014

SED

a great town to visit.....

a great town to live



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## Report statement

The information contained in this document has been gained from anecdotal evidence and research. It has been prepared in good faith and is based on a review of documentation and data as well as interviews with Council staff, community members and relevant stakeholders and communities of interest. Neither SED Advisory nor its servants, consultants, agents or staff shall be responsible in any way whatsoever to any person in respect to the report, including errors or omission therein, however caused.

## Acknowledgements

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## Executive summary

The Great Western Future Plan (GWFP) has been developed in partnership with Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC) and through engagement and consultation with the community and other important stakeholders. The GWFP presents a range of development and growth initiatives for the township. These have considered and responded to current and future investments and projects that influence community sustainability and liveability. In addition, the proposed initiatives aim to align to the attributes of Great Western that are valued by the community including its village feel, heritage and history, natural environment and community services. The primary factors that have been considered include:

- ▶ The implementation of the Western Highway duplication between Ballarat and Stawell and the planned bypass of Great Western;
- ▶ Recent investment in sewer infrastructure in the township centre that will enhance resident attraction and improve environmental outcomes;
- ▶ Growth in tourism to the region and in particular the Grampians National Park, food and wine destination and festivals and events;
- ▶ Regional investment projects and regional development policy that can provide economic and population opportunities whilst recognising that Great Western is a small but vibrant country community; and
- ▶ The aspirations and vision that the community have for the town and its residents.

The GWFP has identified five development themes with supporting strategies that will guide future development and investment and support sustainable and beneficial social and economic outcomes.

### Tourism and economic development

The history and heritage of the township, including its gold mining, vineyards, winemaking and settlement are significant points of difference and present a unique and strong proposition upon which to build tourism and appropriate economic activity

- ▶ Building upon the unique cluster of international quality wineries and the visibility of winemaking within the township and surrounds, consolidate products, marketing and events that have a close association to this tourism and economic proposition for the township and the wider region.
- ▶ Enhance the linkages with and tourism opportunities that can accrue from proximity to the Grampians National Park, regional food and wine destinations and its location on the Western Highway.
- ▶ Improve information for visitors through web and print media and via investment in sympathetic signage, information boards and heritage interpretation within the township.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities to create low impact visitor experiences including cycling and walking tracks and trails, events, visitor accommodation options, local food and other services.

## Gateways and streetscapes

The natural and built features of Great Western should be protected and sympathetically enhanced. Improvements should contribute to the existing village attributes and the wine village brand, and encourage travellers and visitors to stop and visit Great Western.

- ▶ Clearly define gateways and arrival points within the township and township boundaries to create a more visible and integrated identity and brand, and provide points of interest and destinations for travellers. Consideration should be given to the Highway and Bypass treatments and associated 'arrival' points.
- ▶ Strategically plan and implement streetscape and township renewal projects to enhance community and visitor amenity prior to Western Highway related works and that which also create better places and spaces that will present once the Bypass is operational.

## Community assets and services

Community assets and services contribute to community life for residents and provide facilities for local and visitor activities and events. The community have an important role in their management, upkeep, planning and development and therefore is the major stakeholder in determining their future.

- ▶ Further community engagement and strategic asset and land use planning should be undertaken to determine evidenced, and community wide preferred options for the future function, use and sustainability of key community sport and recreation assets. This includes the Recreation Reserve, Racecourse Precinct, football oval, netball and tennis facilities and Memorial Park under a master plan process.
- ▶ Community services and activities should be promoted to existing, potential and future residents to build on community strengths, foster participation and provide a welcome to new community members and their families.

## Living and lifestyle

Residential development should be encouraged where essential services are located and that contribute to the retention and enhancement of the village environment. Expansion of township boundaries through ribbon development should be monitored to reduce impacts on these village characteristics and supported through appropriate planning scheme and urban design mechanisms and frameworks.

- ▶ Facilitate and support appropriate residential development including the uptake of existing vacant lots and well-planned sub-divisions within the residential heart of Great Western that can take advantage of existing services and utilities.
- ▶ Revision and updates of the current UDF should be completed to reflect current and future development and investment activities including the Western Highway and Bypass projects, the recommendations of the GWFP, infrastructure and assets investments and future urban design, signage and streetscape works.
- ▶ The revised UDF should be incorporated into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme to guide and inform planning application and decisions.

## Governance and advocacy

Community initiatives and services are supported by a range of committed and passionate community volunteers. A key issue for communities is the capacity to sustain a number of associations and groups, encourage participation in community governance by a wide number of residents and reduce volunteer fatigue. There is strong community support for some level of rationalisation of effort to help deliver sustainability for groups and to support community projects and initiatives.

- ▶ Establish a Great Western Future Plan Committee that incorporates existing groups and associations under an umbrella organisation to oversee the progression of the GWFP and to provide a platform for various interest groups to have an opportunity to participate and be involved in strategic projects for Great Western.
- ▶ The Committee, in partnership with Council and other peak agencies, should also be an advocate for community issues including ongoing planning for the Bypass and future investment and community development and growth.



## Future Plan key elements

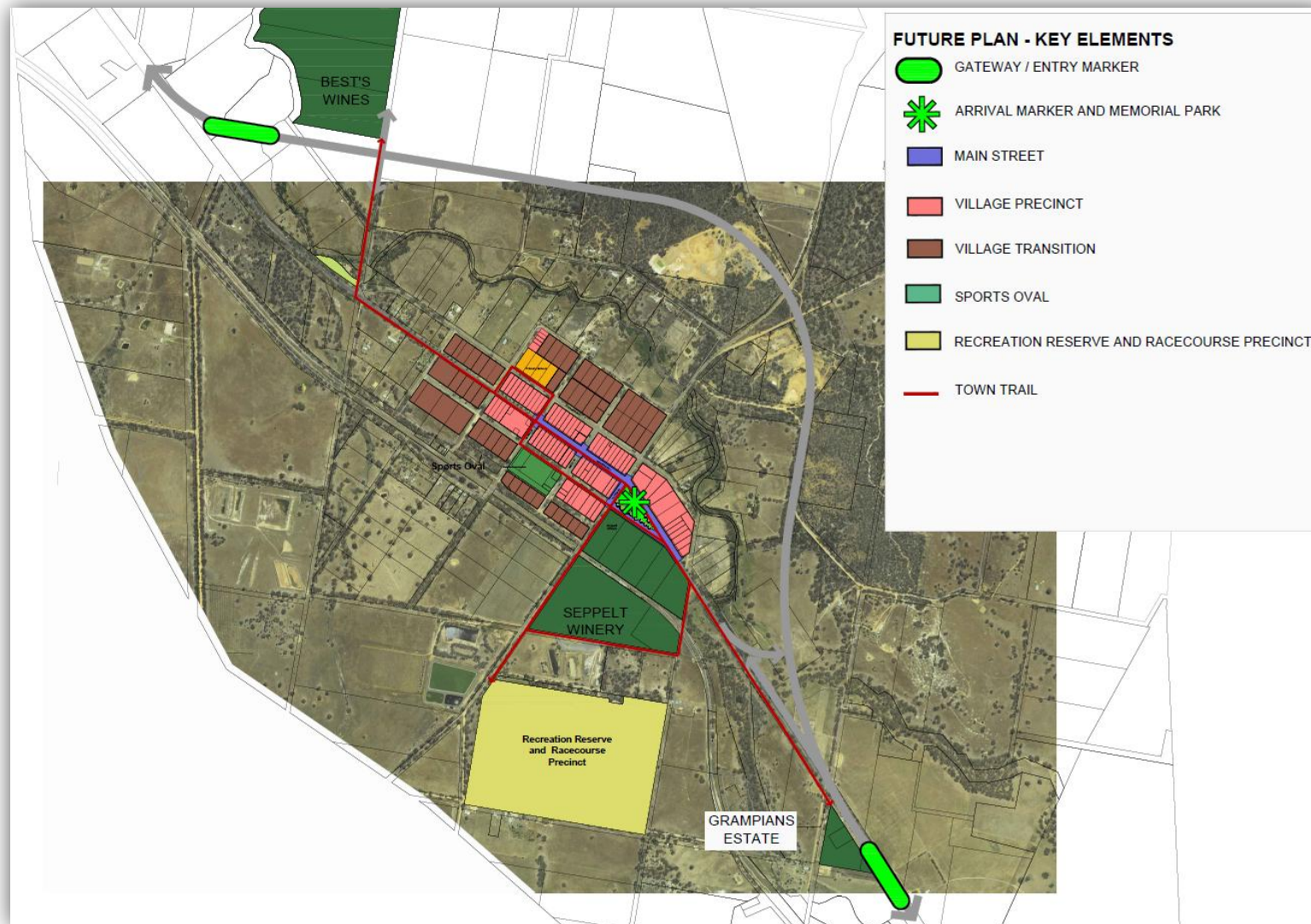


Figure 1 - Future Plan key elements

# Introduction



## Introduction

Located in western Victoria between the regional centres of Stawell to the west and Ararat to the east, Great Western is an attractive county village located on the Western Highway. Home to internationally renowned wineries with a heritage going back to the 1860s, the town is now vibrant community with local businesses, services and community assets that provide for a highly liveable community within the wider Grampians region.

The Great Western Future Plan (GWFP) provides a vision for future social, economic and investment opportunities through integrated township development over the next five to 15 years. The GWFP makes recommendations relating to a range of factors that will enable the achievement of this vision for the community. This includes land, infrastructure, community assets and residential and business growth opportunities. The GWFP will guide and inform economic and social development and land use planning through consideration of relevant investment and development factors including:

- ▶ Duplication of the Western Highway and in particular the Bypass planned for Great Western;
- ▶ Connection to mains sewerage and waste water treatment in the township and the residential growth potential this presents;
- ▶ Opportunities to sustain and enhance the economic and tourism potential of the township;
- ▶ Development and investment options for the recreational assets that align to local and regional strategic priorities and development opportunities; and
- ▶ Land use planning and urban design considerations and recommendations to meet community and NGSC objectives for the township.

In particular, the GWFP considered the following:

- ▶ The values and aspirations of a range of residents, business operator, community groups and associations and their Vision for the township;
- ▶ Community and Council economic and social growth and development preferences including type and location and which maximise infrastructure and community assets; and
- ▶ The impacts, challenges and opportunities presented by the Western Highway duplication and the Great Western Bypass projects.

## Purpose of the Plan

The GWFP provides rationale to support future funding and investment attraction activities and surety and direction to NGSC and the community on strategic and sustainable township development. In addition, the outcomes will inform future planning scheme amendments as required from the recommendations presented.



### A potted history

Although Great Western is recognised today as a centre for quality wine production, the first European settlers who arrived in the 1840s were mainly sheep graziers. Gold was found at Hard Hill to the south of Great Western in 1856 and which continued to be the site of alluvial mining until the 1870s.

In 1858, the gold diggings were significantly opened up and rushed by over 9,000 prospectors. In June 1858 a correspondent from the Great Western diggings reported in the *Mount Ararat Advertiser* that they 'could now boast of a Police Camp, Post Office, Dissenting Chapel and a Reading Room'<sup>1</sup>. In 1862 a further gold rush to Great Western attracted a large number of Chinese prospectors and was worked for several years until deposits declined. There are some remnants of this early gold history in the region which together with some other heritage assets in the area, are listed with Heritage Victoria.



Figure 2 - Hard Hill Mine site. Source Heritage Victoria

The first vineyards were established in 1863 by two Frenchmen Jean Pierre Trouette and Emile Blampied who met at the Daylesford gold diggings. However, much of the local vineyard and wine making history can be attributed to two English brothers, Joseph and Henry Best. In 1851 the brothers prospected on various goldfields, but returned to earlier cattle interests, setting up a saleyard and slaughterhouse at Great Western which supplied meat to the Ararat and Stawell goldfields.

In 1865 Joseph Best planted his vineyard known as Great Western with vine cuttings taken from the St Peter's vineyard of Blampied and Trouette. Joseph devoted his time to developing his viticulture enterprise even employing local miners to excavate his property and build tunnels for the storage of wine that became known as Drives. Active in local affairs, he helped to found the Mechanics' Institute, supported the racing club and was president of the cricket club.



Figure 3 - St Peters Vineyard 1887-1892.  
Source <http://www.queenslandfamilytrees.com>

<sup>1</sup> [http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/show\\_history/104917](http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/show_history/104917)

The winery was later purchased by Ballarat businessman Hans Irvine, who produced Australia's first sparkling Shiraz wine. Benno Seppelt took ownership of the winery in 1918 and put Great Western on the map with magnificent sparkling and exceptional table wines, particularly Shiraz. Today with winery is part of the Treasury Wine Estate group.



**Figure 4 - Crushing grapes.** Source [www.seppelt.com.au/en/History.aspx](http://www.seppelt.com.au/en/History.aspx)

Joseph Best's brother Henry established his vineyard 'Concongella' in 1886, to the north west of the Great Western settlement and successfully exported his wine to Britain and India for many years. He was also a member of the Stawell Shire Council in 1872-75, a trustee of various public institutions and founder and captain of the Great Western Rifle Club. Following his death, his son Charles ran the vineyard, before the business was sold to Frederick Thomson in 1920 with the Thomson descendants still operating the business today known as Best's Great Western.

Key buildings throughout the town were constructed between the late nineteenth century and the early to mid twentieth century. The town was surveyed in 1859 by George Langford who named many of the streets after prominent British engineers including Brunel, Stephenson, Paxton, Cubitt, Rennie and Locke. The sports reserve was established in 1915 and significant street planting occurred in the 1930's, followed by the creation of the Memorial Park in 1956.



**Figure 5 - Bests Great Western.** Source [www.bestswines.com/history](http://www.bestswines.com/history)

## Drivers for change

The community of Great Western has a wealth of gold, wine and settler history that contributes so much to the township's identity. The township has witnessed many changes over the generations including its population and economic and social characteristics. In addition, the growth of regional tourism including the development of the nearby Grampians National Park, food and wine destinations and visitor demand for authentic experiences have also presented challenges and opportunities for the township.

Through the collective efforts of the local community, Council and other agencies, there have been a number of investments made in community assets and amenities that provide benefits to residents and visitors alike. These include sporting and recreation facilities, service investment by local businesses, provision of improved community assets such as town sewer infrastructure, facilities at Memorial Park, as well resident participation in a range of other community projects and initiatives. A key feature of these initiatives is the retention of the village environment that is highly valued by the community as well as an understanding that in order to be a sustainable community, appropriate change and investment is sometimes required. The GWFP recognises these community values and has worked with residents to help ensure that future initiatives present appropriate and sustainable growth outcomes.

## The Western Highway and the Bypass

The township has experienced a significant increase in traffic activity along the Western Highway which cuts through the heart of the town and which is a significant freight and general vehicle corridor between Melbourne and South Australia. Over recent years, the State Government through its road transport agency VicRoads, have undertaken significant planning in relation to Highway upgrades between Melbourne and Stawell to improve transport efficiencies, safety and to enhance regional Victoria's competitiveness. Currently more than 5,500 vehicles travel the highway west of Ballarat each day including 1,500 trucks. This volume traffic is predicted to double by 2025. A funding partnership between the State and Federal Governments has resulted in a \$500+ million investment to duplicate the Western Highway between Ballarat and Stawell as a four-lane divided highway.

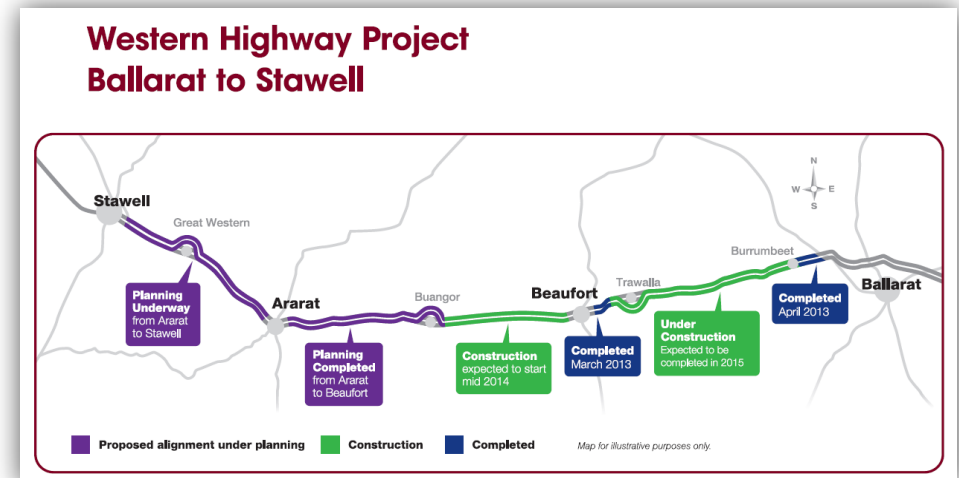
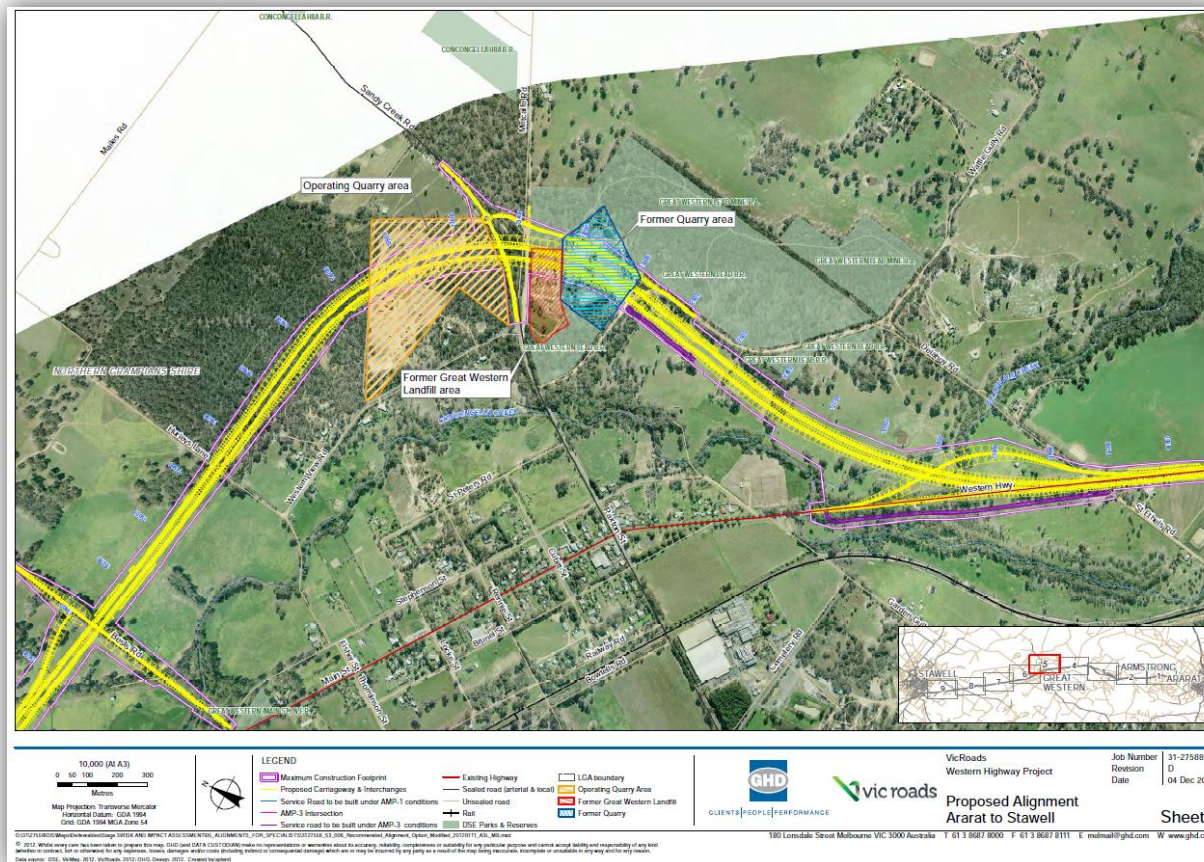


Figure 6 - Western Highway duplication. Source: VicRoads



As part of Highway upgrades and following a program of options assessment and consultations, a north eastern bypass has been identified for Great Western. Although funding (at the time of this report) has not been allocated for works west of Buangor to the east of Ararat, route and alignment and planning has progressed for future works. The proposed bypass (see Figure 7) would leave the existing highway just north-west of Delahoy Road and travel east. It would cross part of the former Great Western landfill and the adjacent quarry, to re-join the existing Western Highway near Briggs Lane to the west of the township. The bypass currently allows for an east-west exit along the current Western Highway alignment near Grampians Estate Winery and a west-east exit ramp at Bests Road to the west.



**Figure 7 - Proposed Great Western bypass alignment. Source VicRoads**

The bypass of Great Western presents a range of benefits and challenges for the community, which the GWFP has investigated and considered. These include:

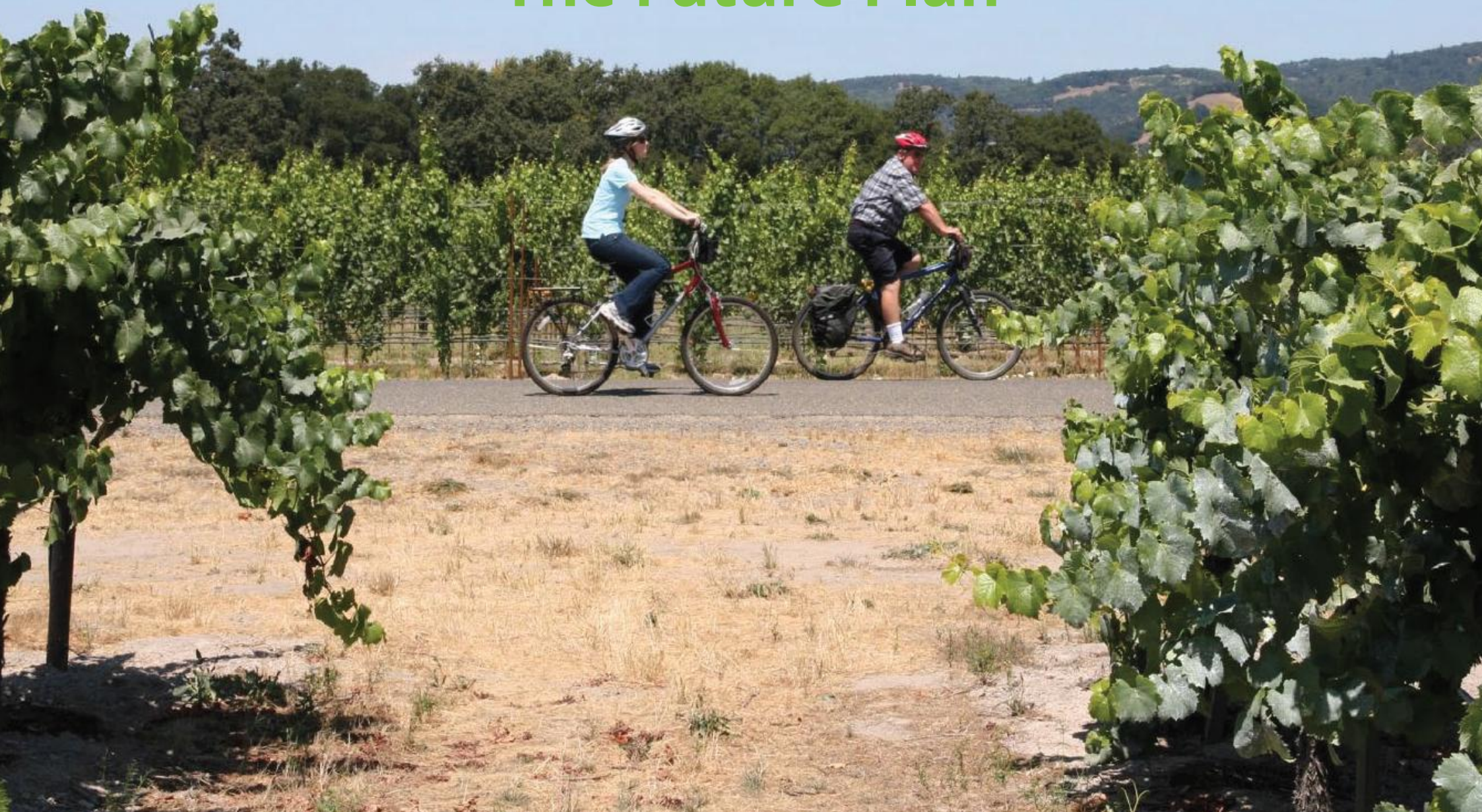
- ▶ The amenity benefits that would be enjoyed by the community following a significant reduction in heavy vehicle and other traffic movements through the centre of the township;
- ▶ Opportunities to enhance the physical amenity and presentation of the township centre and surrounds and the benefits this would deliver for environmental, social, community, economic and visitor activity;
- ▶ Potential impacts on patronage of local businesses by regular commuter, freight and visitor traffic that uses the Highway;
- ▶ Understanding community issues and concerns relating to the bypass including the nature and configuration of the currently proposed exit treatments;
- ▶ The opportunity to enhance township arrival and gateway points that may be different to those that present today; and
- ▶ Sequencing of GWFP projects given current unknowns associated with the funding and timing of construction works.

The GWFP has undertaken an analysis of the key documents associated with the bypass and has consulted with VicRoads, Council and the community in relation to this major project. Although the project represents a significant change for the community and has been a major consideration during the development of the GWFP, many of the initiatives presented in the Plan are not reliant on the timing of construction works, and can be developed and implemented independently of the Western Highway project. That being said, the GWFP does make clear reference to the current known alignment and design of the bypass to both reflect and inform some of the proposed initiatives.



ideas + inspiration | the wine trail

# The Future Plan





## Vision

The following vision was developed by the community as part of the 2009-2013 Great Western Community Action Plan and has been largely retained as the vision for the community.

*"A vibrant village, well connected with its community, spirited in providing a safe, clean, self sustaining and caring environment and that is a great town to visit, a great town to live"*

## Study area

The township of Great Western is located on the Western Highway between Stawell and Ararat within the municipality of Northern Grampians Shire. The Melbourne to Adelaide Western Railway passes the southern edge of the township. Home to approximately 200 residents, the town has a strong viticulture identity and rural village character.

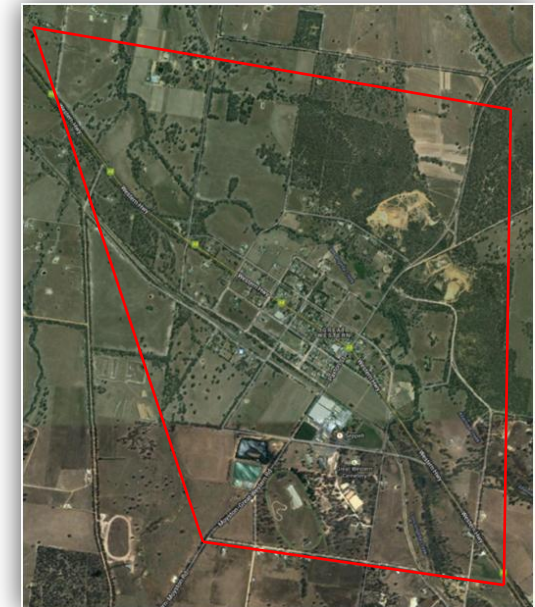
The project encompasses the following study area with a focus on the main township and primary activity locations within the following boundaries as shown hatched red in

- ▶ Briggs Lane to the north west;
- ▶ The alignment of the bypass to the north east including the environs around Bests Winery;
- ▶ St Ethels Road and Grampians Estate and vineyard to the south east; and
- ▶ The western edge of the main township towards St George Road.

## Policy and strategy alignment

The GWFP aligns to local and regional development policy and strategy in key areas of:

- ▶ Tourism and destination planning including enhancement of Great Western's unique wine product offer, trails and touring routes and improved visitor information and interpretation of primary heritage and other assets;
- ▶ Sustainable development of settlements and in particular supporting the liveability features of smaller communities;
- ▶ Planning for the eventuation of the Great Western Bypass including enhancement of the townships liveability characteristics and population attraction; and
- ▶ Development of infrastructure and asset strategies in the areas of township streetscapes, signage and gateways.



**Figure 8 - Primary study area**

## The opportunities and challenges

- ▶ The history and heritage of wine making is a unique proposition that can support further tourism and event activity and strengthen the links with the Grampians as a major tourism drawcard for the region.
- ▶ Although demand for new residential is not high, the attractiveness of Great Western as a place to live is anticipated to grow.
- ▶ Enhancing the accommodation and food offer will support future tourism, economic growth and attract investment.
- ▶ Further planning should be undertaken in relation to sporting and recreation assets to ensure best outcomes for the community and community groups.
- ▶ Other key assets such as the Memorial Park, heritage and historical features and the natural environment can be better promoted and sympathetically enhanced and protected
- ▶ The Bypass will enable beautification treatments to the main High Street and support the development of Great Western as a place to live and visit.
- ▶ Marketing and promotion of businesses and services will go some way to negate possible economic disbenefits from the Bypass. Over time, this may include adapting to a shift in customer markets to a higher focus on the destination visitor rather than the volumes of passing trade.
- ▶ Highway and Bypass works will redefine the entrances and gateways to Great Western. These gateways should reinforce the profile of the township as a Wine Village.
- ▶ Visitor information both in the township and provided by external sources – websites, marketing activities and regional tourism links can be enhanced.
- ▶ Retention of the village characteristics of the community are very important and need to be retained through appropriate land use and development planning and appropriate design principles.





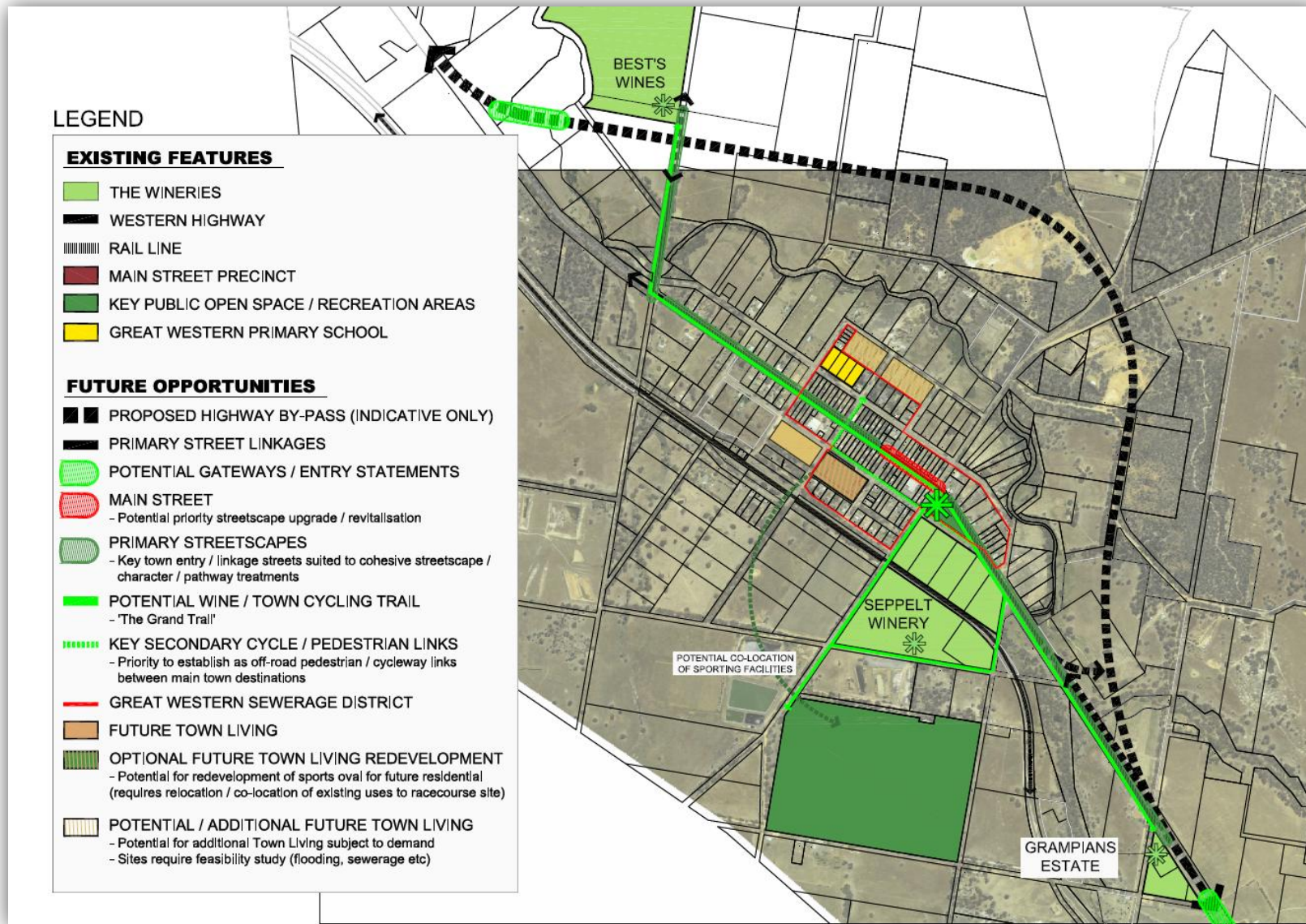


Figure 9 - Existing features



A photograph of a vineyard with young grapevines in the foreground, supported by wooden stakes and wires. The vines have bright green leaves. In the background, there is a rolling green hill and a large, dark mountain peak under a cloudy sky. The text "Primary recommendations" is overlaid in the center.

## Primary recommendations

## 1. Tourism and economic development

The development of tourism will be an important part of economic opportunities for Great Western. The strategic location of the township along a major transport corridor, its proximity to the Grampians National Park and other destination regions and the quality and long standing of wine making present tangible development and marketing opportunities.

In addition, the village features of the township and the opportunities to expand the retail and service offer for both residents and visitors without impacting on the village aesthetics of the township will also add to tourism-based outcomes.

The history and heritage of the township, including its gold mining, vineyards and winemaking are a significant point of difference and present a unique and strong proposition upon which to build tourism and appropriate economic activity. This includes strengthening the brand and marketing of Great Western as a wine village and ensuring that these important elements are integrated into strategic projects and marketing initiatives.

Where product gaps exist, these may be developed over time, with appropriate planning and development partnerships that will help to create an investment attractive location for future opportunities. Sequencing of investments will need to focus on product to attract overnight stays and therefore increased tourism spend and also provide sufficient tourism product and activities to attract investment in accommodation provision.



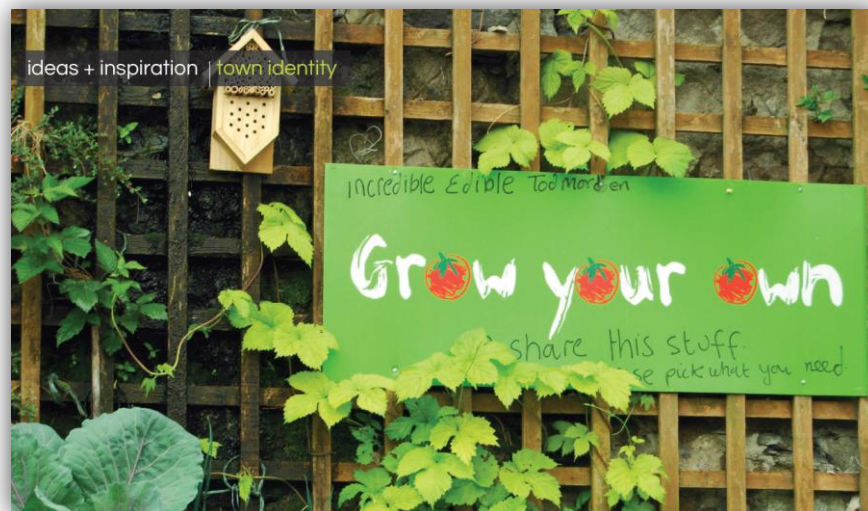
**Table 1 – Tourism and economic development strategies**

Key opportunity themes	Primary recommendations	Implementation strategy
The unique proposition presented by Great Western as the Wine Village should be enhanced and promoted	<p>► Establish a unique and identifiable brand proposition for Great Western that should carry through to marketing, promotion and related township improvement initiatives. It is proposed to build upon the 'Great' of the township name to create brand and marketing positioning including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► The Great Weekend / Have a Great Weekend</li> <li>► Great Western – Great Lifestyle / Great Living</li> <li>► Great to Visit</li> <li>► Great to Invest</li> <li>► Great Community / Welcome to a Great Community</li> </ul>	<p>1.1. Commission professional design concepts, brand messages, brand strategies and logos that should integrate the marketing, promotion and positioning of Great Western, and to inform future design and interpretation elements proposed under the Future Plan.</p>

Key opportunity themes	Primary recommendations	Implementation strategy
The unique proposition presented by Great Western as the Wine Village should be enhanced and promoted cntd....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate opportunities to build on the importance of Halls Gap and the Grampians National Park as a significant source of visitors to the region and the township under the auspice and support of Grampians Tourism and the strategies contained in the 2014 Grampians Destination Plan. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional and 'village' events;</li> <li>Development of touring routes between 'villages' e.g. Halls Gap, Pomonal, Moyston and Great Western; and</li> <li>Support for planning and investment in 'village' and produce development, investment attraction, events and other activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.2. Through active participation on Grampians Tourism, ensure that the tourism development opportunities for Great Western are considered and included in future tourism investment and product development strategies.
The unique proposition presented by Great Western as a Wine Village should be enhanced and promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the history and heritage of wine making in GW through information boards, interpretation signage, and appropriate feature treatments at gateways and key destination points such as township boundaries and Memorial Park. This could also form the basis for the development of self-guided tours and trails including the proposed Great Trail.</li> <li>Enhance the interpretation of heritage and historic assets and features of the township through signage, online information and supporting materials. (2004 NGSC Heritage Report).</li> </ul>	1.3. In addition to the proposed Master Plan for Memorial Park (see Community Assets and Services), in a partnership between the community, Council and Grampians Tourism commission a Great Trail Implementation Plan to include possible trail route(s), costings, design and supporting assets and infrastructure that would be required to enhance its link to the Great Western visitor product and support community use.  1.4. Seek EOIs from signage designers and copy writers to develop a program of signage and other information source development.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities to develop events associated with wine making and food and wine more broadly such as a Vignerons Field Day, Wine Makers Ball and a seasonal market.</li> </ul>	1.5. Council and Grampians Tourism to work with the community on opportunities to enhance existing events and to support the development of new events that are based upon the wine and food product of the region. This could include development of an umbrella event(s) and activities for Great Western as part of the existing Grampians Grape Escape Wine and Food event.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve information on the history and heritage of winemaking and other Great Western features and attractions on relevant websites – NGSC, tourism, community, regional groups and business websites.</li> </ul>	1.6. Through a partnership between community, Council and Grampians Tourism, develop informative marketing collateral for Great Western that can be utilised in online, print and media channels and that aligns to the Township signage project presented in 1.5.



Key opportunity themes	Primary recommendations	Implementation strategy
<p>The unique proposition presented by Great Western as a Wine Village should be enhanced and promoted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ How to address some strategic tourism gaps needs consideration and further planning. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Attracting investment in tourism accommodation particularly for the camping/caravan market;</li> <li>▶ Developing the food offer through café and general retail supply outlets; and</li> <li>▶ Building on the local food and networks such as the Grampians Produce Group, Grampians Winemakers Inc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1.7. Include assessment of camping and caravan facilities as part of the proposed Master Plan for the Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct.</p> <p>1.8. Council to work with the community on supporting the attraction and retention retail and food outlets and provide proactive assistance and advice to new and existing operators in relation to statutory and other business management requirements.</p> <p>1.9. Continue to promote and support local and regional food and wine networks.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Through a partnership with NGSC and Grampians Tourism, corridor councils and other agencies, consider the development of Western Highway Discovery Trail to build awareness of attractions along the transport corridor particularly prior to Highway and Bypass construction activities.</li> </ul>	<p>1.10. Support the development of a Western Highway Discovery Trail and where possible, integrate into future VicRoads Highway planning and implementation strategies.</p>





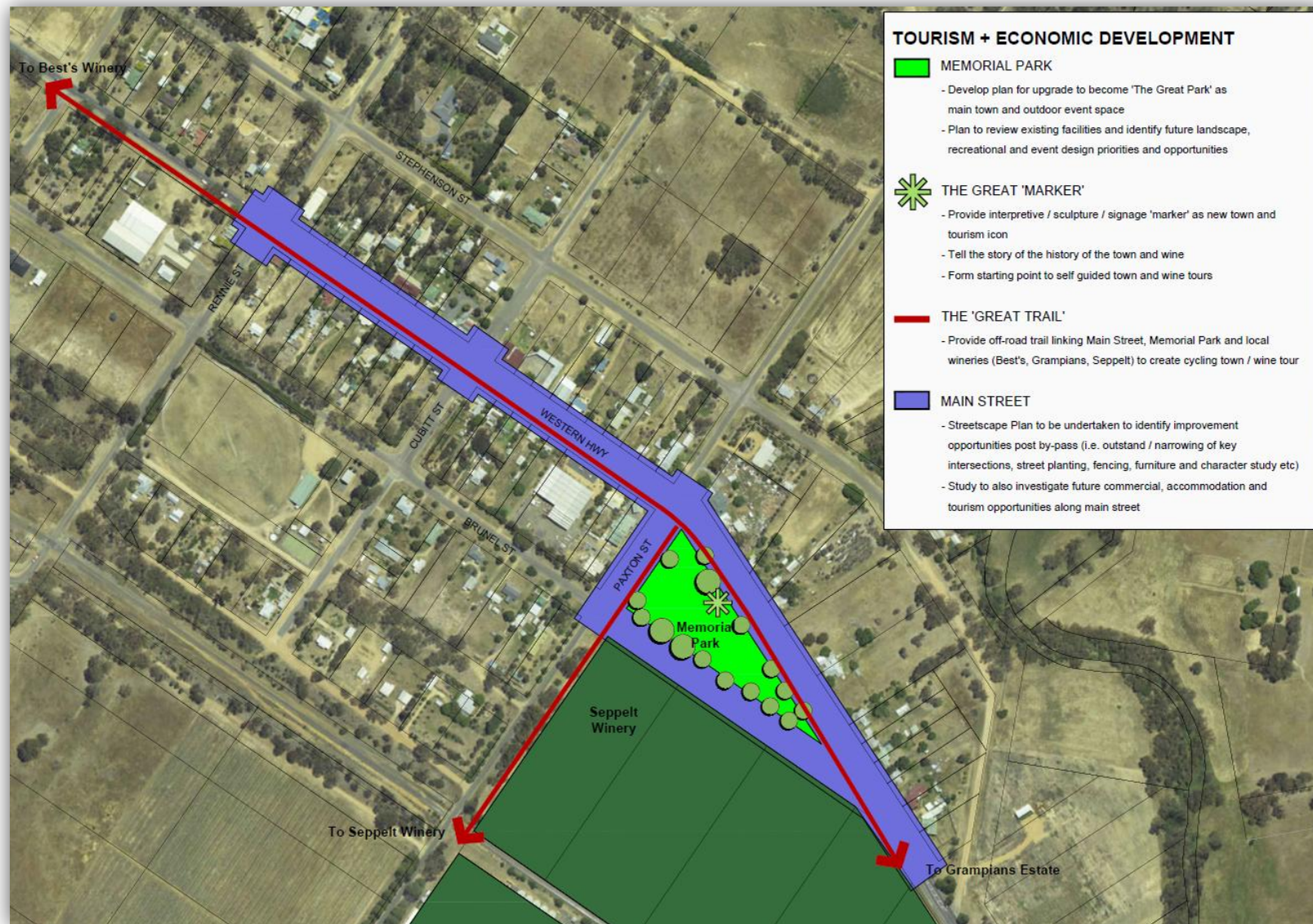


Figure 10 - Tourism and economic development concepts



## 2. Gateway and streetscape treatments

The natural and built features of Great Western should be protected and sympathetically enhanced. Although some streetscape treatments will be reliant on the removal of heavy traffic volumes once the bypass is operational, there are a range of other improvements that can be made in the interim.

These improvements would contribute to overall village attributes and the wine village brand, and help to encourage travellers and visitors to stop and visit Great Western. In addition, they would enhance township amenity for residents.



**Table 2 – Gateway and streetscape strategies**

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Future streetscape and mobility works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Develop a Township Design and Streetscape Plan for the township centre prior to completion of Highway and Bypass works to build upon 'village features'. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Road narrowing and speed reductions;</li> <li>▶ Improved pedestrian linkages from the village green to the centre and within the centre;</li> <li>▶ Planting and landscaping features; and</li> <li>▶ Street furniture and improved parking conditions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Integrate the development of cycling and walking tracks and trails into the changed traffic conditions presented by Highway and Bypass works.</li> </ul>	<p>2.1. Seek EOLs to interest to undertake a Streetscape Design Plan for Great Western to be undertaken take in a stage approach to align to future planning and implementation of the Western Highway Duplication and Great Western bypass project.</p> <p>2.2. Integrate design and implementation of gateway and township interpretation elements, signage and landscaping treatments into the proposed Streetscape Design Plan.</p>
Improve the current and future 'sense of arrival' at the Great Western Wine Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Redefine the primary gateways and destination point of Great Western as being to the east of Grampians Estate, the 'village green' and Seppelt, and Bests Road to the west. These can be presented via new signage and interpretation elements, plantings and landscape features, and enhanced amenity at the 'village green'.</li> </ul>	
Retain and enhance the village features and design attributes of Great Western	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Streetscape study should investigate features worthy of enhancement and strategies that can be put in place to enhance their presentation.</li> </ul>	



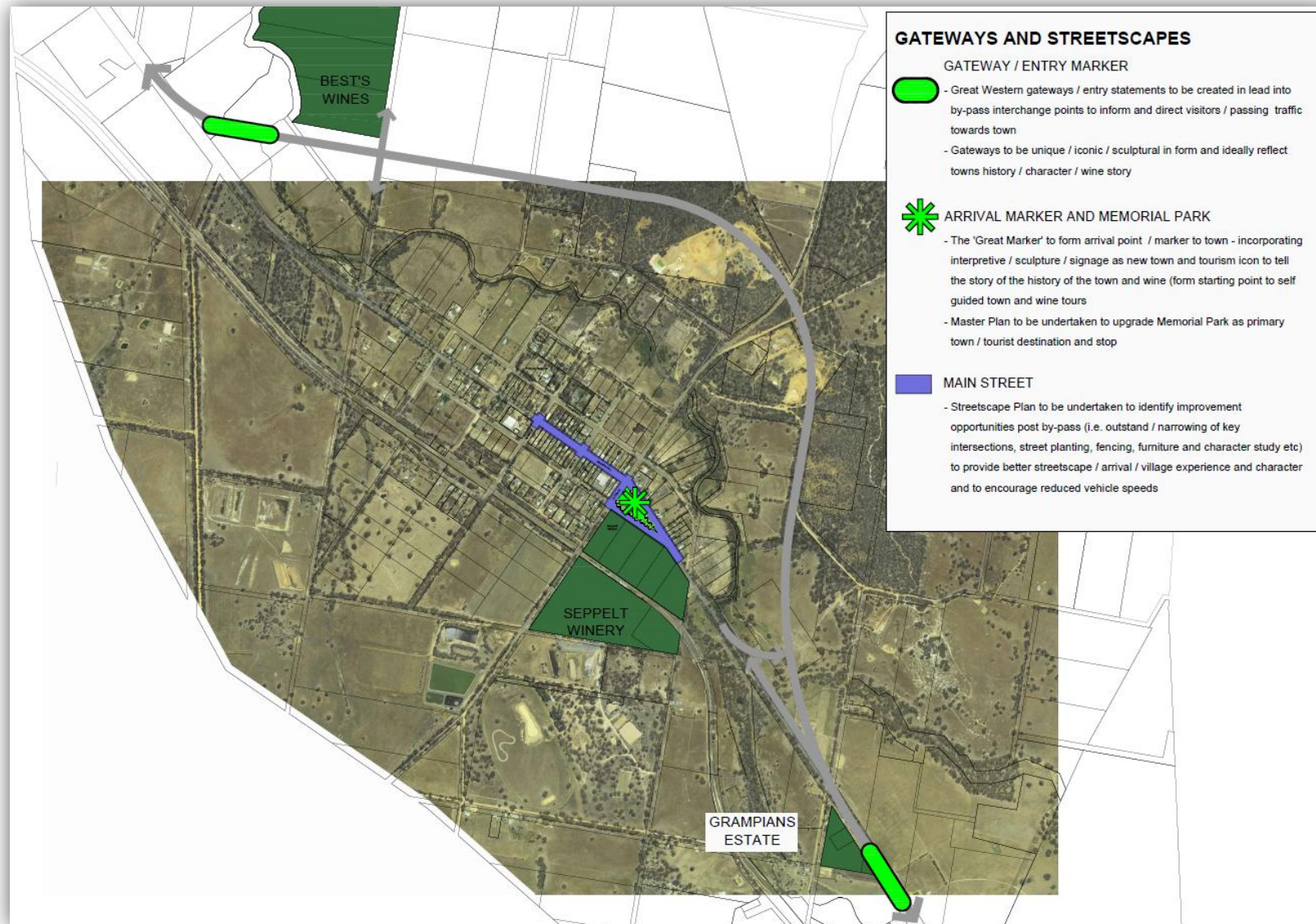


Figure 11 – Gateway and streetscapes concepts

### 3. Community assets and services

There are a number of community assets and services that contribute to community life for residents as well as providing facilities for local and visitor events. Many of these facilities have been developed by the community who continue to have an important role in their management, upkeep, planning and development. Facilities and services include the Primary School, Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct, Memorial Park, sports reserve, township businesses and community clubs and associations. Like many small communities, these facilities are highly reliant on the support and participation of residents for their management and ultimately their longer term sustainability. The community therefore is the major stakeholder in determining their future. Council and other agencies have an important role in supporting, guiding and contributing to community service planning and development and advocating for appropriate investment and development.

#### 3.1 Sporting related facilities

A key requirement for consideration by the GWFP was the future use and development of key sporting and open space assets within the community. One-on-one interviews, community conversations and follow-on submissions received from the community did not provide clear community agreement on the future direction of key community sporting assets including possible co-location of activities within a multi-purpose facility. There were strong arguments and cases presented for co-location and the retention of the current status of these assets. The GWFP has carefully considered a number of these issues including:

- ▶ Ongoing financial and management sustainability associated with maintaining and developing different facilities within the community which in some areas, have common (or similar) purposes, uses, facilities and investment demands;
- ▶ Future community uses and need for facilities as community social and participation interaction change over time;
- ▶ How current and possible future facilities contribute to the attraction of visitors particularly for events;
- ▶ Broad-based community responses to the future of these assets and facilities;
- ▶ The opportunities that relocation of current assets from the centre of township would present in terms of the release of land and/or open space; and
- ▶ The contribution these township centre based facilities play in the community life including activity, accessibility and social interaction for a range of residents.

The GWFP therefore recommends that further work be undertaken in partnership with the community to determine the optimum outcome for the future use of and investment in these important assets to ensure that:

- a) The community is fully aware of and understands the possible benefits and disbenefits of retention or co-location;
- b) All residents can play an active part in the future planning of these assets and services; and
- c) Rigorous business case, infrastructure designs and costings, demand modelling and management structures are developed that are clearly evidence-based and will therefore, provide improved opportunities to attract the level of funding that would be required for development.

### 3.2 Memorial Park

Memorial Park is an important community and visitor asset, which acts as an arrival and destination point for travellers along the Western Highway. With a backdrop of the Seppelt winery and fields of vines, the Park makes a distinct statement about Great Western. The Park features memorial structures to residents who served in military conflicts, seating, play and BBQ facilities, shade, various flora, toilet facilities, tennis courts, information boards and signage. There are some designated areas for car-parking and undesignated non-Highway street locations that accommodate caravans and larger vehicles.

The community in partnership with Council have made significant contributions to the planning, design and implementation of projects for the Park. The GWFP places significant focus on the Park as presenting as a village green for the community and visitors, and should be a major part of developing the village profile of the township. In addition, the Park should act as the primary arrival and dispersal point for visitors. The GWFP recommends that the Park should be the location for primary community and visitor information and should be sympathetically enhanced with appropriate features and treatments that support this objective and which present consistent design features for other streetscape, signage and township amenity works. An outline concept for Memorial Park is provided in Figure 13.



**Table 3 – Community assets and services strategies**

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Enhance key recreation assets that provide demonstrated local and regional benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Develop a Master Plan for the Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The need and type of facilities that will build on current and future Precinct uses;</li> <li>▶ Current users, occupiers and 'tenants';</li> <li>▶ Co-location of other sporting and recreation facilities such as football, netball and tennis;</li> <li>▶ Hosting of community and visitor events;</li> <li>▶ Multi-purpose facilities for a range of uses and users;</li> <li>▶ Access, infrastructure, utilities and other usage and development considerations;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>3.1. Seek EOIs for the development of a detailed Master Plan including a supporting business case and preliminary design and infrastructure costings. Ensure a robust program of community consultation and participation is included in project management and delivery activities.</p>

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Development of visitor facilities including camping and caravan park;</li> <li>▶ Precinct design including facility locations, external and internal access, landscaping and supporting assets;</li> <li>▶ Development costings and longer term operational and management costs including a cost:benefit analysis; and</li> <li>▶ Implementation plan including staging and investment strategies</li> </ul>	
Enhance key recreation assets that provide demonstrated local and regional benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Undertake a Master Plan for the Memorial Park to inform future use and investment in community and visitor assets. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Linking with the Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct Master Plan in relation to sport and recreation facilities;</li> <li>▶ Installation of proposed Great Western interpretation feature(s) to act as a draw card for visitors, and encourage vehicles and visitors to stop in the township;</li> <li>▶ Additional visitor amenities including information boards, facilities and parking treatments;</li> <li>▶ Infrastructure and assets that would support wider use of the Park for community events and activities that are seen as important or worthwhile by the community;</li> <li>▶ Assessment of future landscaping and planting works at the Park including an assessment of the condition and longevity of existing significant trees; and</li> <li>▶ Design and implementation costings, including funding strategies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3.2. Seek EOIs for the development of a Master Plan for the Memorial Park as described to include a program of robust community consultation.
Promote the lifestyle and liveability assets and services of Great Western to attract and retain residents under the Great Western, Great Town branding concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Develop a Great Western promotion and welcome package to promote services and community activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local businesses and services;</li> <li>▶ Primary school;</li> <li>▶ Sporting and social groups;</li> <li>▶ Residential and land development opportunities; and</li> <li>▶ Locality – proximity to Stawell, Ararat, Ballarat, Horsham and regional attractions such as the Grampians and the Pyrenees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Promote through a partnership with NGSC, local real estate agents and larger businesses and institutions in the region and provide as a welcome package for new residents.</li> </ul>	<p>3.3. Partner with the community to update the current Great Western community website with current information.</p> <p>3.4. Liaise with local real estate agents, schools and major employers to seek support for the promotion of the Great Western, Great Town information pack to potential new residents and their families.</p>



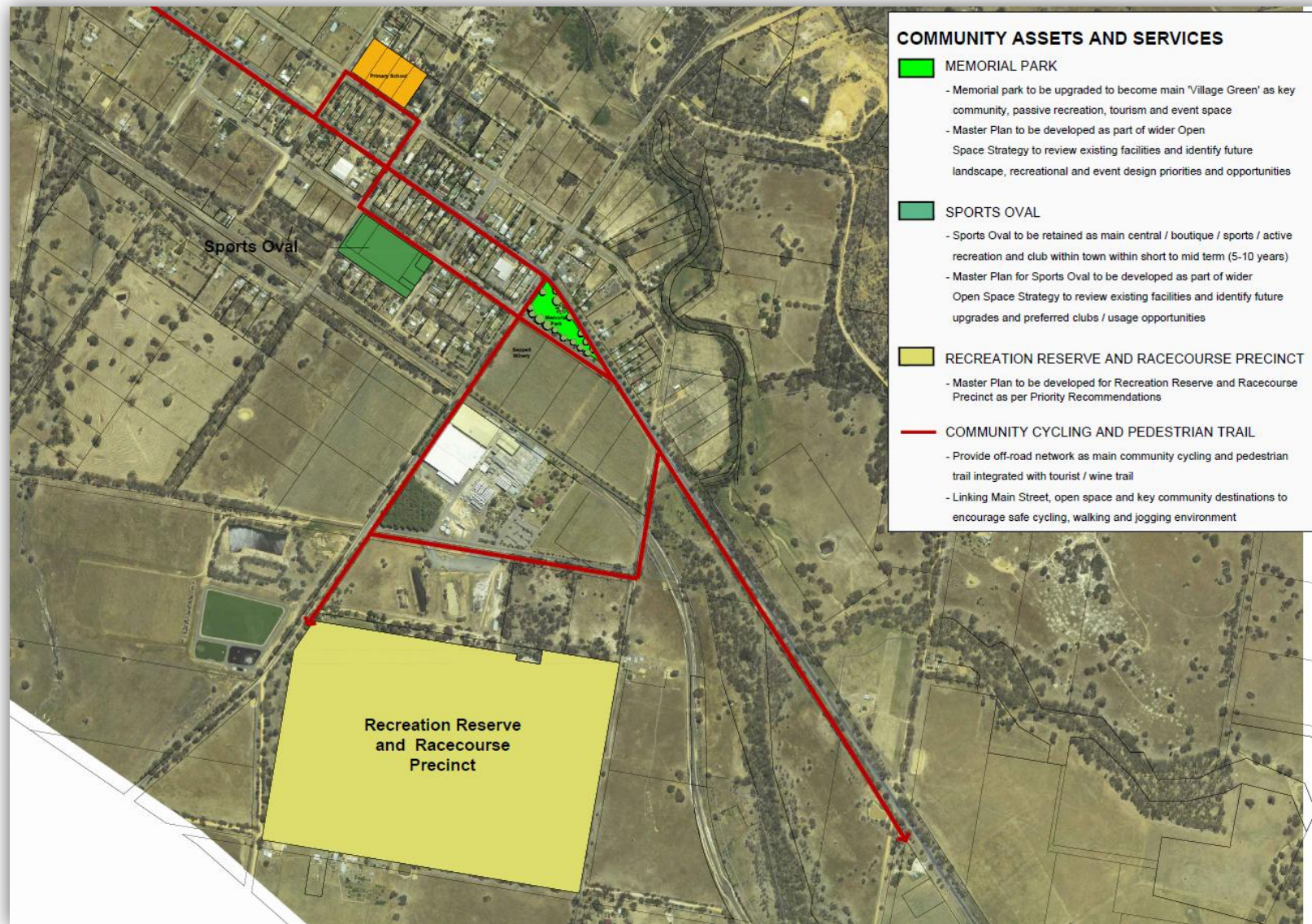


Figure 12 - Community assets and services concepts



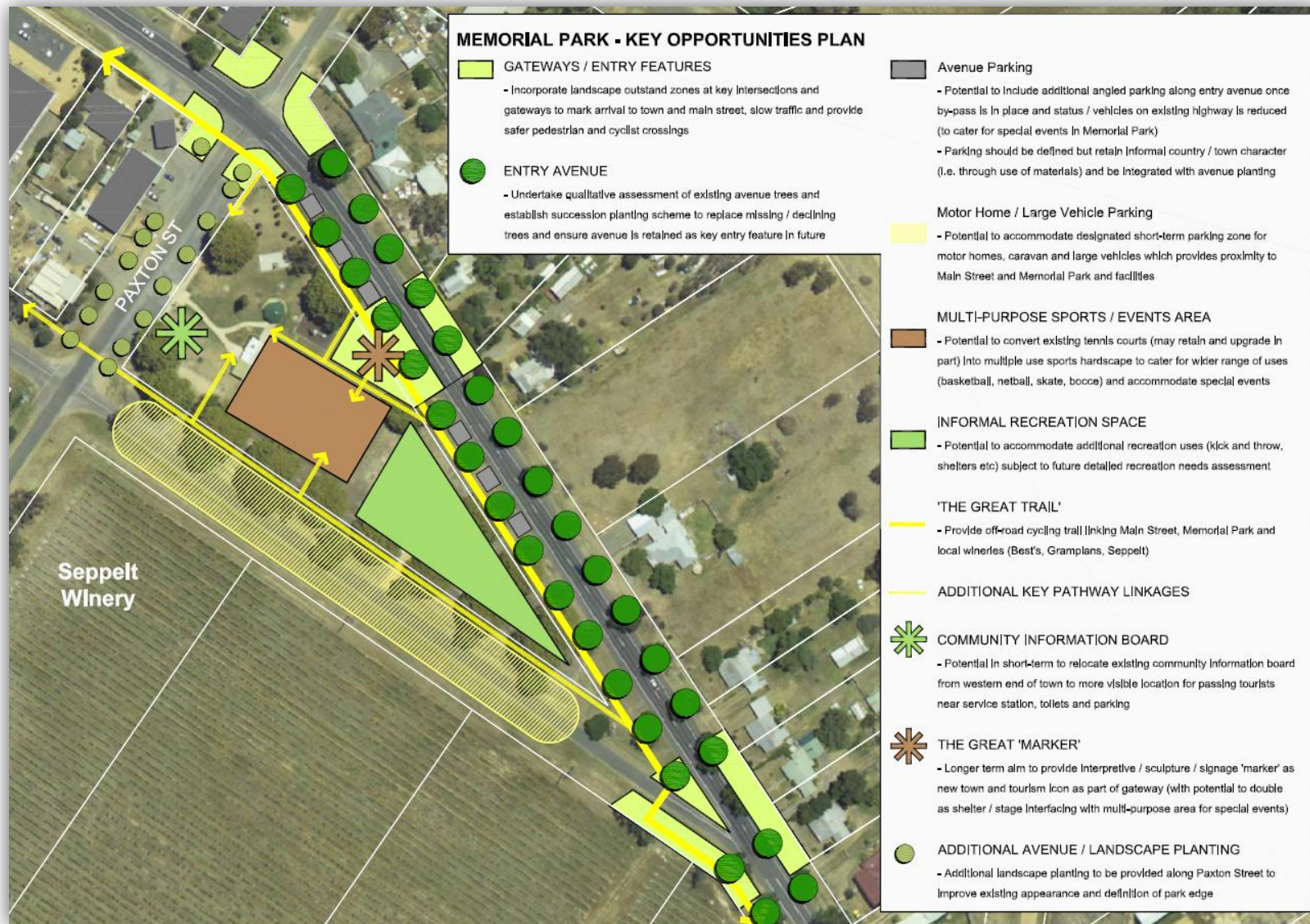


Figure 13 - Memorial Park Opportunities Plan

#### 4. Living, lifestyle and planning

The community places high importance on the retention of the village and community features of Great Western. The recent investment in sewer infrastructure in the centre of township also supports the concentration of appropriate development within the heart of Great Western and to constrain ribbon type development that will ultimately detract from the village characteristics. The number of larger lot sizes with multiple road access within the township present opportunities for land owners to have options for appropriately planned and designed sub-divisions.

Under current growth trends, there is sufficient supply of non-developed residential land within the township and covered by the Township Zone to support potential population growth over the next decade. Therefore the future residential plan (Figure 14) aligns to the current township zoning boundaries as this adequately allows for predicted growth and rezoning of land for residential is not required at this time. By providing a range of housing options including heritage cottages and houses and low density rural lots, Great Western will be a lifestyle choice for a diversity of people.

The GWFP recommends that short to medium term residential development should be encouraged within the township centre to both retain the current village characteristics and to benefit from the investment made in sewer infrastructure. Development guidelines and principles as described in Table 4 should also be included in the revised UDF.

**Table 4 – Living and lifestyle strategies**

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Encourage residential development within current township boundaries, particularly within the township centre and in proximity to the town sewerage scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Impose minimum lots size and/or street frontages to ensure subdivision retains the existing character of the village.</li> <li>▶ Avoid the use of unnecessary 'suburban' elements and infrastructure within the streetscape (e.g. bollards, kerb and channel, parking bay line marking) that could detract from the heritage / village character of the town.</li> <li>▶ Encourage the take up of sewerage options to allow increased development opportunities.</li> <li>▶ Support sustainable waste-water management and drainage practices and strategies: waste water collection and treatment systems, appropriate lot sizes to accommodation on-site treatments, monitoring and regulatory compliance issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1. Incorporate policy and direction guidelines into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.</li> <li>4.2. Update the existing Great Western Urban Design Framework to reflect recommendations and incorporate into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.</li> <li>4.3. In partnership with GWM Water, provide support and advice to existing and new residents on the processes for connection to the sewerage scheme.</li> <li>4.4. Develop and incorporate Wastewater Management Guidelines for the sustainable management of onsite waste water within the township and modify the Local Planning Policy Framework accordingly.</li> </ul>

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Defining a clear transition between rural surrounds and the township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Subdivision and development must be contained within the Township Zone and Rural Living Zone to create a strong differentiation between the town and the surrounding rural land.</li> <li>▶ New buildings should generally match the setbacks of neighbouring buildings, with a strong preference for buildings that address the street and visually contribute to the streetscape character.</li> </ul>	<p>4.5. Incorporate policy and direction guidelines into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.</p> <p>4.6. Update the existing Great Western Urban Design Framework to reflect recommendations and incorporate into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.</p>
Align the Urban Design Framework to the GWFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The 2002 UDF is in most part out-of-date and does not adequately reflect the current and future conditions that will impact upon Great Western's sustainable development. In addition, without the UDF being incorporated into the planning scheme, the process of good planning decisions by Council and community will be harder to achieve. The GWFP therefore recommends that the UDF be substantially updated to reflect and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Clear development principles focussing on protection and enhancement of the village, vineyard, heritage, open space and natural environment assets and features of the township and surrounds.</li> <li>▶ Incorporate references to key infrastructure projects including the Western Highway Duplication and Bypass, township sewerage scheme and GWFP proposed master plans, signage and streetscape plans.</li> <li>▶ Include GWFP concept maps and descriptors under appropriate sections.</li> <li>▶ Expand heritage and environmental overlays and other updates to the Local Planning Scheme.</li> <li>▶ Update reference documents, policies and strategies.</li> <li>▶ Development of an implementation strategy that should mirror that proposed in the GWFP.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>4.7. It is envisaged that updates and revisions to the UDF can be largely completed by NGSC and also integrate into current and future planned revisions and updates to the local planning scheme.</p> <p>4.8. It should be noted that some design principles, visualisations, design concepts and implementation that would form part of the UDF will occur as part of infrastructure and planning strategies proposed for the township under the GWFP.</p>



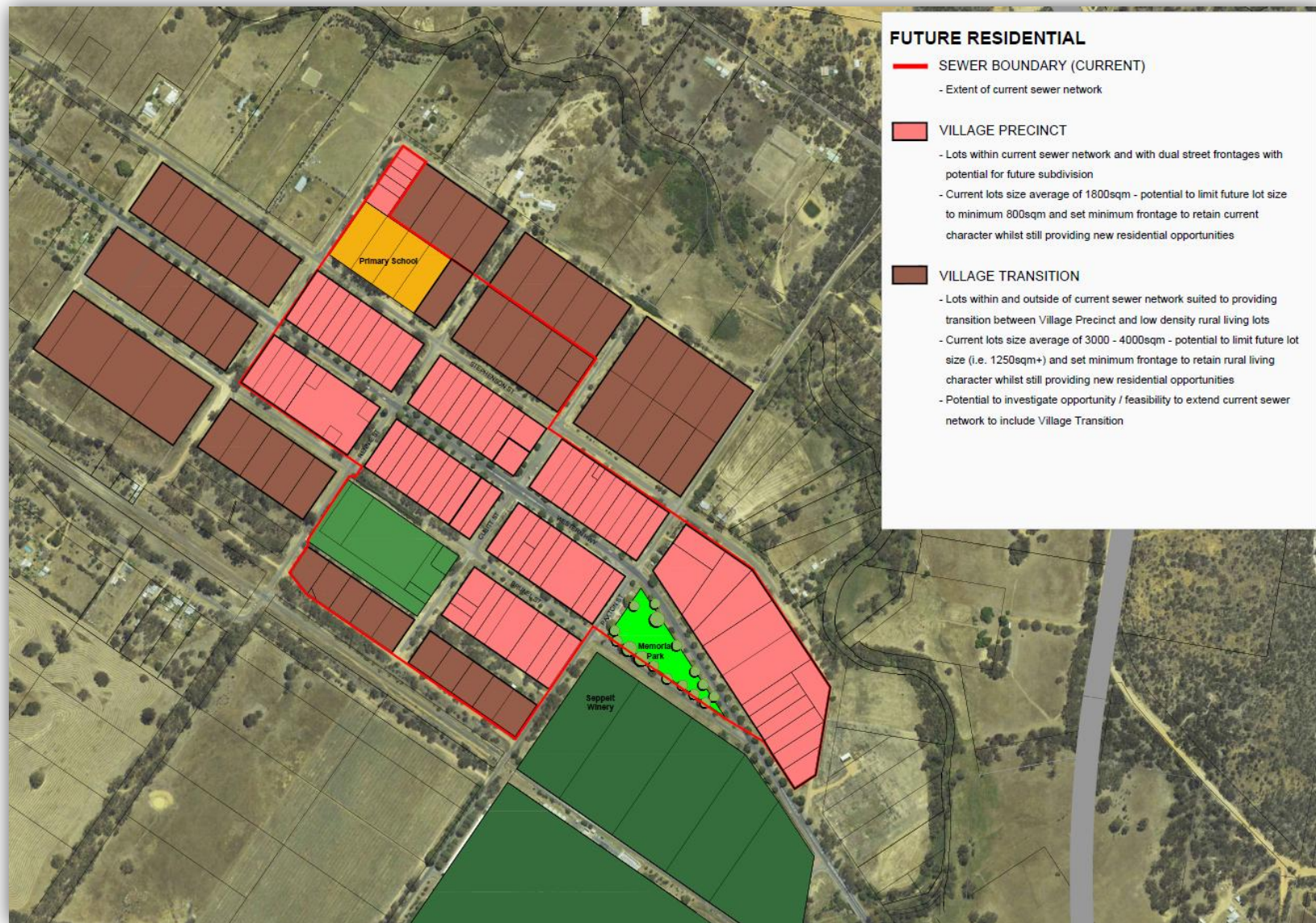


Figure 14 - Future residential concepts



## 5. Governance and advocacy

Like many small communities, Great Western is highly reliant on the participation and involvement of committed and passionate community volunteers for the delivery and management of township facilities and services. A key issue for communities is the capacity to sustain a number of associations and groups, encourage participation in community governance by a wide number of residents and reduce volunteer fatigue. There was strong community support for some level of rationalisation of effort to help deliver sustainability for groups and to collectively support community projects and initiatives. The GWFP therefore recommends that the community works together to identify how and where various activities can cohesively work under a Great Western Future Plan Committee, whilst allowing for the necessary autonomy and self-governance of particular interest groups. This Committee would also provide oversight for the implementation, evaluation and achievement of the GWFP. The capacity of Great Western residents to provide this oversight is evident in the number of successful projects and services they have achieved and continue to achieve.

**Table 5 – Governance and advocacy strategies**

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Support the sustainability of community resources and the implementation and oversight of the Great Western Future Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Consider the establishment of a Great Western Future Plan Committee to act as a liaison, communication and reference group between NGSC, the wider community and key partners on the ongoing implementation and review of the Great Western Future Plan. Representation should include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local businesses and associations;</li> <li>▶ NGSC;</li> <li>▶ Youth representative</li> <li>▶ Grampians Tourism; and</li> <li>▶ Secondment or invited participation of relevant stakeholders when activities or issues warrant wider, specified inclusion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Develop a terms of reference for the Committee to be developed as a partnership between the community, communities of interest and NGSC.</li> </ul>	<p>5.1. Council to support the facilitation of a community governance forum with key community groups and associations to collectively determine how to progress and establish the proposed Great Western Future Plan Committee.</p> <p>5.2. An agreed Committee Terms of Reference to be developed to clearly define the purpose, role, responsibilities and governance framework of the Committee to be reviewed on an annual basis.</p>
Maintain discussions with VicRoads on community issues associated with Bypass plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Council and community to continue to advocate on planning and design issues associated with the Bypass to relevant responsible authorities, and in particular the strong community position on having a further westbound exit ramp in the vicinity of Bests Road.</li> </ul>	<p>5.3. Under the auspices of the proposed Committee maintain and strengthen lines of dialogue and communication between the community, Council, VicRoads and other key agencies on issues that are important to the community in relation to the Western Highway Duplication and Great Western bypass projects.</p>

Key opportunity themes	Priority recommendations	Implementation strategy
Manage the impacts of future Highway and Bypass construction activities	▶ Through partnerships between NGSC, VicRoads, Grampians Tourism and other agencies, develop an 'open for business' strategy to mitigate potential disruption to Great Western business and access issues.	5.4. As 5.3.



## Future Plan key elements

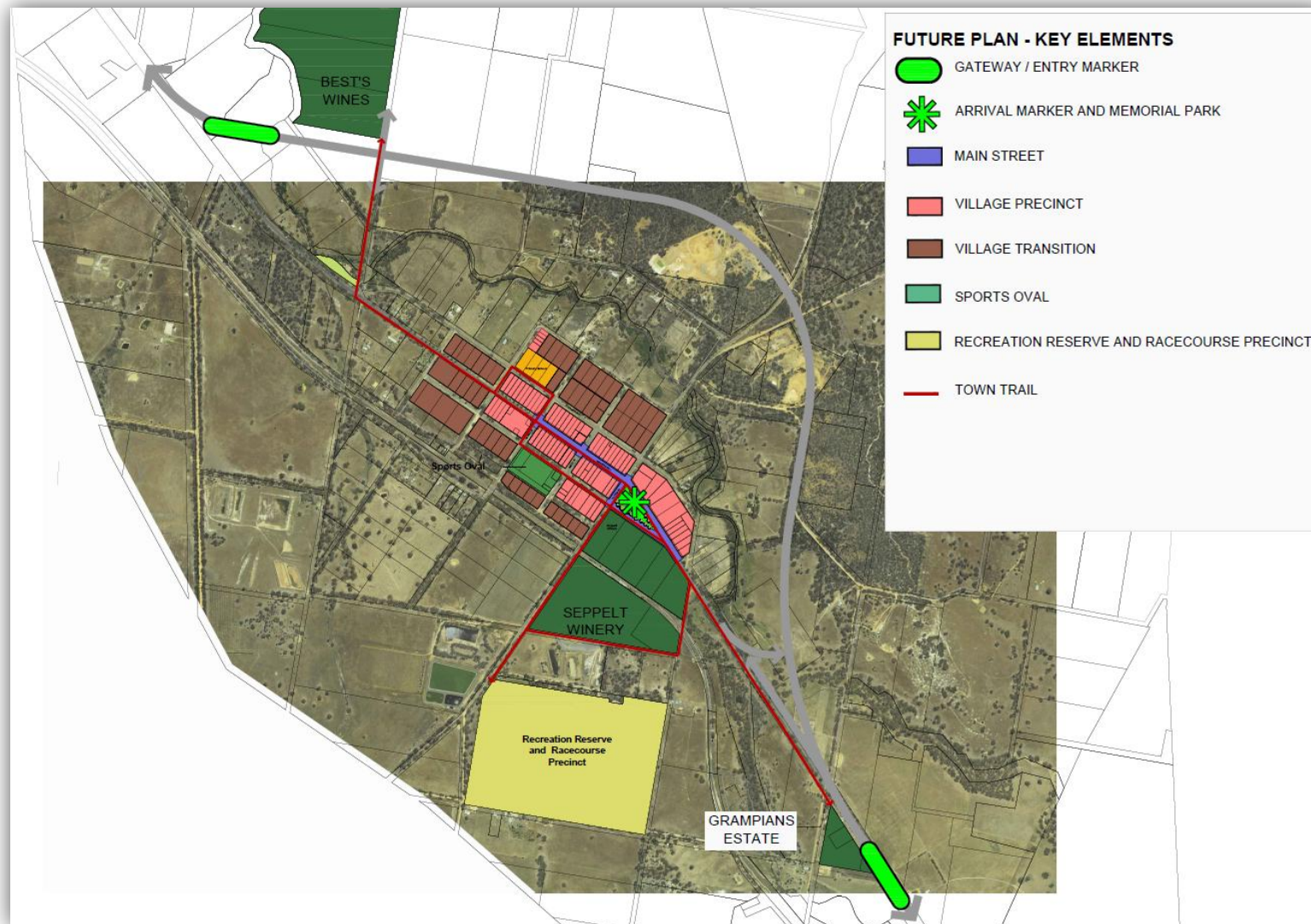


Figure 15 - Future Plan key elements



## Implementation plan

	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
Endorse the Great Western Future Plan	●			L		P				●		
<b>1. Tourism and economic development</b>												
1.1 Commission professional design concepts, brand messages, brand strategies and logos that should integrate the marketing, promotion and positioning of Great Western, and to inform future design and interpretation elements proposed under the Future Plan.	●			L		P		P		●		
1.2 Through active participation on Grampians Tourism, ensure that the tourism development opportunities for Great Western are considered and included in future tourism investment and product development strategies.	●	●	●	P		P		L		●		
1.3 In a partnership between the community, Council and Grampians Tourism, commission a Great Trail Implementation Plan to include possible trail route(s), costings, design and supporting assets and infrastructure that would be required to enhance its link to the Great Western visitor product and support community use.		●		L		P	P	P		●		★ <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Implementation phase

	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
1. Tourism and economic development cntd....												
1.4 Seek EOIs from signage designers and copy writers to develop a program of signage and other information sources and treatments.		●		P		L	P	P			●	
1.5 Council and Grampians Tourism to work with the community on opportunities to enhance existing events and to support the development of new events that are based upon the wine and food product of the region. This could include development of an umbrella event(s) and activities for Great Western as part of the existing Grampians Grape Escape Wine and Food event.	●	●	●	P	P	L		P		●	●	
1.6 Through a partnership between community, Council and Grampians Tourism, develop informative marketing collateral for Great Western that can be utilised in online, print and media channels and that aligns to the township signage project as above.	●	●		L		P		P		●		
1.7 Include assessment of camping and caravan facilities as part of the proposed Master Plan for the Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct.	●			L	P	P		P	P	●		
1.8 Council to work with the community on supporting the attraction and retention retail and food outlets and provide proactive assistance and advice to new and existing operators in relation to statutory and other business management requirements.	●	●	●	P		L				●		

	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
1. Tourism and economic development cntd....												
1.9 Continue to promote and support local and regional food and wine networks.	●	●	●	L		P				●		
1.10 Support the development of a Western Highway Discovery Trail and where possible, integrate into future VicRoads Highway planning and implementation strategies.		●	●	P		L	P	P			●	
2. Gateway and streetscape treatments												
2.1 Seek EOIs to interest to undertake a Township Design and Streetscape Plan to be undertaken take in a stage approach to align to future planning and implementation of the Western Highway Duplication and Great Western bypass project.	●	●		L		P	P	P		●		
2.2 Integrate design and implementation of gateway and township interpretation elements, signage and landscaping treatments into the proposed Streetscape Design Plan.	●	●		L		P	P	P		●		



	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
3. Community assets and services												
3.1 Seek EOIs for the development of a detailed Master Plan for the Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct to include a business case and preliminary design and infrastructure costings. Ensure a robust program of community consultation and participation is included in project planning and management and delivery activities.	●			P	P	L		P	P	●		★ <sup>3</sup>
3.2 Seek EOIs for the development of a Master Plan for the Memorial Park as described to include a program of robust community consultation.	●			P	P	L	P	P		●		
3.3 Partner with the community to update the current Great Western community website with current information.	●			P	P	L				●		
3.4 Liaise with local real estate agents, schools and major employers to seek support for the promotion of the Great Western, Great Town information pack to potential new residents												

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<sup>3</sup> Implementation phase

	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
4. Living, lifestyle and planning												
4.1 Incorporate policy and direction guidelines into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.	●			L	P	P				●		
4.2 Update the existing Great Western Urban Design Framework to reflect recommendations and incorporate into the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme	●			L	P	P				●		
4.3 In partnership with GWM Water, provide support and advice to existing and new residents on the processes for connection to the sewerage scheme	●			P		P			L	●		
4.4 Develop and incorporate Wastewater Management Guidelines for the sustainable management of onsite waste water within the township and modify the Local Planning Policy Framework accordingly.	●			L		P			P	●		
4.5 Updates and revisions to the UDF can be largely completed by NGSC and also integrate into current and future planned revisions and updates to the local planning scheme.	●			L	P	P				●		

	Timeframe			Responsibility / partnership – Lead (L), Partner (P)						Indicative investment		
	Short	Medium	Long	Council	State Govt	Community	VicRoads	Grampians Tourism	Other	Low	Medium	High
	0-2yrs	2-5yrs	5-10yrs							<\$100k	<\$500k	>\$500k
5. Governance and other matters												
5.1 Council to support the facilitation of a community governance forum with key community groups and associations to collectively determine how to progress and establish the proposed Great Western Future Plan Committee.	●	●	●	P		L				●		
5.2 An agreed Committee Terms of Reference to be developed to clearly define the purpose, role, responsibilities and governance framework of the Committee to be reviewed on an annual basis.												
5.3 Under the auspices of the proposed Great Western Future Plan Committee maintain and strengthen lines of dialogue and communication between the community, Council, VicRoads and other key agencies on issues that are important to the community in relation to the Western Highway Duplication and Great Western bypass projects.	●	●	●	P	P	L	P	P		●		



## Funding strategies

The following provides a summary of primary projects that will require a level of planning investment and funding. Implementation costings for infrastructure works are not known at this stage, as they will be informed by outcomes and recommendations from proposed planning activities. Given the cyclical nature of government budgets and funding programs, potential funding sources are provided based on what is understood to be available at the time of writing. Based on current knowledge, funding programs that could support proposed projects include:

- ▶ AusTrade's Demand-driver Infrastructure programme (tourism) that is currently under development with no guidelines or program details currently available;
- ▶ State Government's Regional Growth Fund including Putting Locals First, Local Government Infrastructure Program and the Local Community Initiatives Program;
- ▶ State Government's Sport and Recreation based funding such as the Community Facility Funding Program (Recreation Planning and Facility Feasibility);
- ▶ Tourism Victoria's Country Victoria Events Program; and
- ▶ Grampians Tourism discretionary project funds as well as incorporation of projects that may fall under their priority project investment strategies

As with any Government or other funding, the process for securing funds is highly competitive, subject to budget allocations and generally requires supporting contributions from Councils and / or communities of interest. The Future Plan provides grant information as a guide only. Funding may be subject to specific funding rounds and may also require the support of the relevant Regional Development Association Board.

## Summary of funding guidelines

**Table 6 – Possible funding program summary**

Program name	Department	Category / Purpose	\$ available	\$fund:\$contribution
Putting Locals First	Regional Development Victoria	Local Strategic and Project Planning	Up to \$30,000	\$3:\$1
Improved Local Infrastructure		Priority local infrastructure project implementation	\$300 - \$500k	\$2:\$1
Local Community Initiatives		Community-based skills and leadership development	Up to \$150,000	\$3:\$1
Community Facility Funding Program	Sport and Recreation Victoria	Major Facilities project implementation	Up to \$650k	\$1:\$1
		Minor facilities project implementation	Up to \$100k	\$2:\$1
		Planning – Facility Feasibility	Up to \$30,000	\$2:\$1
Country Victoria Events Program	Tourism Victoria	Potential and existing planning and development	Up to \$10,000	\$1:\$1

**Table 7 – Funding strategies**

Project	Indicative cost	Council	Community	State Govt	Other	Comments
Great Western Brand and Marketing Concepts development	\$12,000	\$4,000		\$8,000		
Great Trail Implementation Plan	\$20,000	\$5,000		\$15,000		
Township Design and Streetscape Plan	\$70,000	\$17,500	0	\$52,500		
Great Western Signage and Information Design Implementation	\$120,000	\$60,000	\$10,000	\$40,000	\$10,000*	*Grampians Tourism *Tourism Victoria *Tourism Australia
Great Western Events Development	\$20,000	\$10,000		\$10,000		Grampians Tourism *Tourism Victoria *Tourism Australia
Online and print Great Western Tourism marketing	\$25,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$5,000*	* Grampians Tourism *Tourism Victoria *Tourism Australia
Western Highway Discovery Trail and Open For Business Strategy	\$50,000	\$20,000*		\$10,000	\$20,000*	*Corridor Councils and VicRoads
Recreation Reserve and Racecourse Precinct Master Plan	\$55,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$30,000		
Great Western Memorial Park Master Plan	\$20,000	\$5,000		\$15,000		
Great Western, Great Lifestyle promotion packages	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$2,500		\$2,500*	*Business advertising revenues
Total*	\$407,000*	\$156,500	\$22,500	\$190,500	\$37,500	*Excludes costings for infrastructure and other works associated with recommendations and implementation of the final Recreation Reserve Master Plan and Streetscape Design Plan and Memorial Park Master Plan.



SED