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STAWELL STRUCTURE PLAN & URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK DISCUSSION PAPER

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for **Northern Grampians Shire Council**

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DRAFT - 1



Urban Planning | Urban Design | Landscape Architecture

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1.0 Introduction

Project Background & Purpose

The Stawell Town plan is an important project for Council to achieve a long term strategic vision to make Stawell a better place to live, work, invest and visit (Council Plan 2017-2021).

This project includes two components, a Structure Plan which sets the framework for the future planning and development of the entire township for the next 20-30 years and an Urban Design Framework relating to land along Western Highway, with an ambition to improve business opportunities along this corridor and enhance the arrival experience into Stawell.

The following report is the first stage of the project. This includes a detailed background assessment of Stawell and the Western Highway, providing analysis of the existing conditions, key issues or implications afforded by those conditions as well as the emerging opportunities in planning for the future of Stawell.

Hansen Partnership, Tim Nott Economics and Martyn Group have been engaged by Northern Grampians Shire Council to undertake this project on behalf of Council.

Project Process and outputs

The Stawell Town Plan is being undertaken in a number of phases as follows:

- Phase 1: Background Analysis & Discussion Paper to ensure a good understanding of existing conditions and identification of issues and opportunities that should be considered
- Phase 2: Preparation of an Urban Design Framework for the Western Highway.
- Phase 3: Preparation of a Structure Plan for the whole Town.

The Stawell Township Structure Plan

What is a Structure Plan?

A Structure Plan is a long-term plan to guide Council decisions about future development on private and public land within a town or centre. It outlines a vision and key policies and objectives to implement its goals in line with community expectations. Key outcomes of a structure plan usually result in changes to the Planning Scheme to provide direction on the assessment of planning permit applications and amendments to the Planning Scheme.

Why is a Structure Plan needed for Stawell?

The Structure Plan project will guide the type and location of future development in Stawell to accommodate future growth and to achieve the long term strategic vision of Council and the community.

The Stawell Structure Plan will outline a future vision for the township and provide a roadmap for fostering growth and development over the next 15 years. The purpose of the structure plan will be to:

- Identify locations for new residential development, including opportunities for infill housing.
- Focus on key access roads and traffic management solutions in the township.
- Confirm locations to accommodate commercial and industrial development.
- Determine new areas for public open space or community facilities where required.

Underpinning all this will be ensuring that the valued heritage character and environmental values of the town are protected.

The Western Highway Urban Design Framework

What is an urban design framework?

An Urban Design Framework (UDF) is a planning tool that provides a framework for managing change and setting clear directions for the future development of a place across both public and private land over time. They are intended to clearly articulate a 'vision' for what a place could be in the future and, as such, act as a catalyst for positive change within the built environment. In determining the preferred character of a place, community values are considered alongside the needs of government departments (local and state), service authorities and commercial stakeholders to ensure a viable plan is introduced, which can be supported by all users and stakeholders.

Why is an Urban Design Framework needed for the Western Highway?

The Western Highway is the major access route through Stawell between Melbourne and Adelaide. The highway is aligned to the south of the township with four alternate ways to enter Stawell from this road. There are presently limited incentives or wayfinding opportunities for travellers to turn off from the highway into the town centre. Along the highway itself, there is limited information and amenities for travellers.

Another important consideration for the UDF is the pattern of development along the highway. These highly exposed properties contribute to the 'first impressions' of the look and feel of the township. Presently, buildings are highly diverse, with no clear parameters for the preferred presentation and character of development.

A key driver for this project is the recent Western Highway duplication project undertaken by the State Government which includes the duplication of the road between Ararat and Stawell and the upgrade of the intersection with the Western Highway.

The role of the UDF is to identify built form and public realm design opportunities for the highway precinct to enhance the gateways into Stawell, attract additional visitors to drive economic development in the township and recognizes the role of the road as a national highway.

2.0 Summary: Key Themes and Directions

This section of the report provides a high-level summary of the key issues and opportunities that have been identified through the preparation of this background work. It also provides some potential directions that will inform the next phase of this project.

Issues and opportunities have been categorised into five themes:

- Living in Stawell
- Growth and Prosperity
- What I Love About Stawell
- Moving Around Stawell
- The Gateway to Stawell

The issues and opportunities outlined in this report are in no way exhaustive and will be further refined and clarified through consultation with the community and stakeholders.



Living in Stawell

The pressures for growth in Stawell are not as significant as in other areas of the state. While this is generally due to stable population trends, previous studies have also highlighted the difficulties associated with developing residential land within the town and the lack of a housing mix. There is therefore a need to ensure preferred locations are identified to accommodate any future growth potential and that appropriate controls are in place to guide this development to provide certainty.

Stawell contains a range of vacant residential zone land. This report identifies that there is currently approximately 74ha of vacant residentially zoned land with the theoretical potential to accommodate 713 new dwellings.

The Stawell Town Plan will provide direction and guidance on where residential growth should be accommodated and the type of housing that should be encouraged. The following options will be explored.

Housing at the Fringe

There will continue to be a need to accommodate housing at the fringe of Stawell, particularly as the majority of vacant residential land within the town is located on the outskirts. Previous work however has identified existing difficulties with developing this type of housing in Stawell.

Identifying suitable locations at the fringe to accommodate housing is an important consideration as Stawell contains significant environmental constraints to the north, east and west of the town that will inhibit growth in these directions. Most vacant residential land is located south and south west of the township on relatively unconstrained land. This includes land at the end of Sloane Street, which includes a large parcel in Council ownership, and land south of Pleasant Creek, accessed from Pickering Road.

A high level assessment of available servicing infrastructure indicates this land could be provided with sewerage, water, and electricity from the existing network. Land at the end of Sloane Street appears to provide a more suitable location for accommodating further growth as it has superior connections to the town centre along existing sealed roads.

The Stawell Town Plan will seek to ensure that there is a clear strategic direction to facilitate suitable housing at the fringe.

Incremental Infill

Stawell has a limited supply of vacant residentially zoned land close to the centre of the town. There are however a significant number of suitably sized and positioned lots containing a single dwelling that could provide redevelopment opportunity for dual occupancy and multi-unit development. This is particularly the case for locations with ageing housing stock, such as directly south west of the railway line. In this location there are a range of lots over 950sqm in size with dual frontages that pose significant potential for redevelopment.

Providing housing opportunities closer to the town centre has the benefit of locating new development close to existing services and for reducing reliance on car trips. To date Stawell has witnessed limited medium density development catering for alternative housing such as townhouses or unit development. This type of housing has the benefit of increasing housing diversity within the town to cater for changing demographics, particularly for residents wishing to downsize.

The Stawell Town Plan could place a focus on encouraging the redevelopment of currently developed residential zoned land closer to the centre of the town. Planning controls can facilitate this type of housing in specific locations.

Strategic Development Sites

There are a range of large vacant or underutilised parcels of land within the town that are either not residentially zoned or within public ownership. Examples include land at Darlington Lane, Grant Street behind the hospital, and the Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) land next to the train station.

The identification of strategic development sites and understanding their development viability can provide important direction for accommodating housing on existing land closer to the centre of town.

Township Boundary

Currently Stawell does not have a clear township boundary. It is important that the Town Plan identifies a clear township boundary to focus the development of the town and ensure important surrounding features are protected.

Identifying a township boundary can help to provide certainty around where township growth is expected and to ensure the avoidance of unsuitable development near significant environmental constraints and features at the periphery of the town.

Growth and Prosperity

Stawell is a key regional economic and service centre within Northern Grampians Shire. The economic analysis outlined within this report reveals a number of potential exciting economic growth opportunities for Stawell.

Large projects such as the proposed Nectar farm glass-houses and the Dark Matter underground laboratory have the potential to generate significant local employment opportunities. There also appears to be strong growth in health, tourism, professional services, education and social support sectors. The Western Highway duplication also brings significant opportunities.

There are also a number of economic challenges such as declines in goods and services industries, productivity improvements reducing the need for workers in local industries, limited educational opportunities to retain and attract young workers, and potentially insufficient services to attract older workers into the area.

This project can assist with ensuring there is sufficient land available to accommodate economic activity over the coming years and ensure the right planning controls are in place to facilitate this activity.

Tourism

Stawell benefits from key regional tourism strengths as forming part of the gateway to the Grampians and the well-renowned yearly Stawell Gift. It also attracts significant visitor numbers from passing traffic on route between Melbourne and Adelaide.

Commercial Land

This report has identified that there is a significant amount of existing commercial land in Stawell to meet likely demand over the next 15 years. It is likely then that no further areas for commercial growth are likely required for rezoning based on current trends.

Town Centre

The town centre will continue to be the main centre for local retail and commercial activity within Stawell. Overall, the commercial centre remains an attractive location for retailing, with generally well-maintained buildings, significant heritage qualities, evidence of recent streetscape works, and a compact and walkable structure. There is likely a sufficient supply of commercial land to accommodate economic activity within the town centre across a range of scenarios.

There is also likely potential to increase commercial floorspace within the town centre on strategic development sites should retail and commercial growth opportunities eventuate in the coming years.

Western Highway

The Western Highway will bring key economic benefits as Stawell will become the first township based service hub when travelling from Melbourne and form part of the quickest route to the Grampians.

The balance of economic activity on the Western Highway will need to be considered with respect to the continued role of the town centre as the local commercial hub. The economic activity of highway precinct will likely be predominantly driven by visitor services in line with regional tourism growth as the gateway to the Grampians. The highway may be improved through the establishment of visitor nodes that provide information, recreation and hospitality functions. The introduction of design requirements to improve built form in the central part of the precinct and reinforce the turn-off to the town centre will also assist with increased activity.

Industrial Land

Industrial land within Stawell is located within two precincts to the north and south of town. Approximately 16 hectares is currently available for development, the majority in the northern precinct. Recent demand for industrial land has been about 0.23 hectares per year. If this continues, a further 3.6 hectares of vacant Industrial will likely be consumed by small-scale industrial businesses over the period to 2036.



What I Love about Stawell

Based on the findings of this report, Stawell appears to be a well serviced town underpinned by a range of community facilities, active and passive open space, and supported by a well-functioning and attractive town centre.

This project can help to identify areas within the town that are particularly valued by the community whether for their important characteristics, heritage elements, community function, or as a meeting place. It will also help to identify any gaps within community facilities.

Character & Heritage

Stawell contains a historic urban fabric that has been progressively expanded upon over the years. Important historical and heritage elements underpin its urban character and a building stock from a range of periods characterise the residential areas.

Apart from a number of site specific Heritage Overlays on historic buildings within the town centre, there are currently limited planning controls in Stawell that recognise and seek to protect areas that may have significant heritage and character features.

Ensuring these elements are appropriately identified and the further work required to ensure that these places are protected will be explored through this project.

Environment & Landscape

Stawell is heavily characterised by the backdrop provided by the Grampians National Park and the range of bushland reserves that 'embrace' the town. Pleasant Creek traverses the southern extent of Stawell and provides a logical visual boundary to the town. Predominantly made up of the depleted Box Ironbark Forest Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC61), these reserves also provide important biodiversity and environmental functions. These environmental assets are also marked by constraints associated with bushfire and flooding.

This land also provides important constraints to the expansion of the town not only from an environmental perspective but also due to the constraints associated within bushfire and flooding.

Expectations around the development and expansion of the town will need to be appropriately tempered by these environmental considerations through the Town Plan to ensure the protection of these important assets.

Community Facilities

Based on a high-level assessment, Stawell is generally a well-serviced town underpinned by a range of community facilities and locations of active and passive open space. Numbers about servicing only reveals one side of the story, so it is important to hear from residents about community facilities and the presence or lack of community infrastructure.

Identifying any gaps is important for ensuring Council can feed this knowledge into future works programs and funding streams when considering upgrades to community infrastructure.



Moving Around Stawell

Stawell is well connected to the region acts as a regional gateway point. The completion of the Western Highway Upgrade will bring a range of opportunities for Stawell, and the design and management of its interaction with the local street and land use network will need to be carefully considered to promote safety and access.

The background work undertaken as part of this report highlights a number of key considerations for moving around Stawell:

- There are a range of existing access constraints, and both physical and perceived barriers, which present challenges for orientation, wayfinding, access and safety through the town.
- The level and composition of through traffic on the local network means Stawell functions as a regional gateway point, but careful management of modal priority and potential areas of conflict is required within the Structure Plan.
- There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainable transport modes, focussing on pedestrian and cyclist safety and level of service on the network.
- While planning for sustainable transport priority on key corridors, provision also needs to be made to retain the necessary level of vehicle access to support the needs and requirements of existing residents and businesses and regional transport connectivity.
- There may be opportunities to reconsider the management and use of public space currently allocated to both on and off-street car parking.

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The Gateway to Stawell

Western Highway

The analysis undertaken in this discussion paper for the Western Highway study area found the following key implications for developing an Urban Design Framework in the next stage of this project. The key implications related to the themes of Urban Structure, Built Form, Land Use & Activity, Landscape & Environment and Access & Movement.

These key implications provide a blueprint in understanding the opportunities and considerations in the development of an Urban Design Framework to guide future change and development of the Western Highway corridor.

Urban Structure

- Lot sizes and the layout of blocks south of Sutherland Street are generally mixed.
- Blocks between Playford and Sutherland Street are more consistent due to similar shaped, sized and oriented lots forming blocks.
- There are a number of vacant allotments throughout the Western Highway study area, on mixed lot sizes presenting new development opportunities.

Land Use & Activity

- The highway is mixed in building character and function, with distinct precincts along its length leading to the central township arrival core surrounding Seaby Street.
- Limited uses cater to the needs of travellers and short term visitors.
- There is a strong presence of uses relating to industry and business for the township and surrounding rural areas, particularly in the southern half of the highway study area.
- The role of the road as a national highway at the edge of a historic township is unclear in its land use and activity distribution.

Built Form

- The built form character along the Western Highway is mixed throughout, but broadly transitions between character areas defined by land use patterns and the layout of allotments and blocks.
- The highway study area is bookended by large warehouse buildings both to the north and south.
- Between Playford and Sutherland Street, building types and character are consistent with that of adjoining residential areas.
- Historic buildings are key to the image of the central area near Seaby Street.
- The presentation of buildings do not play a role in defining entrances or key routes into the township.

Landscape, Public Realm & Environment

- There is limited canopy tree planting in the road reserve contributing to the arrival experience into and through the township.
- There is a distinct change in landscape character along the journey of the highway. The southeast exhibits a rural, bush landscape character, shifting to a township garden setting to the northwest.
- Views to the Grampians can be experienced between vacant allotments at key intersections. These views contribute to wayfinding and identify of the town.
- Topographic changes along the highway contribute to the arrival experience into Stawell.
- The high level of heavy commercial vehicles resulting in noise and exhaust fumes has impact on pedestrian amenity and sense of safety.

Access & Movement

- While there are several key roads into the town, there is limited directional signage guiding travellers to amenities, or the town centre from the highway.
- Seaby Street is the most significant intersection along the Highway providing direct access into the CBD.
- Noting the stone wall signs at the northern and southern highway entrances, there are limited entry 'gestures' celebrating the arrival into Stawell.
- While it is expected that a highway environment would be car oriented - there is limited infrastructure dedicated to safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity.
- The provision of rear access lanes are important in providing alternate vehicle access options to property fronts that compete with highway traffic movement.
- The carriageway varies in width along the highway, occupying only 8m of the 30m wide road reserve in its narrowest segments.

Key Directions

In summary, the key implications combine to form the below key directions for developing the Urban Design Framework:

- There is opportunity to enhance the township entries through signage and landscaping gestures.
- There is opportunity to continue the landscape character approach the township and surrounding, through the Highway to enhance its image.
- Future landscaping and public realm upgrades should consider how the topography and bends in the road alignment can facilitate wayfinding and the visual experience through the township.
- There is opportunity to improve pedestrian amenity and safety along and across the Highway.
- The Seaby Street intersection presents a significant upgrade opportunity to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety at a critical wayfinding intersection.
- Building on the existing heritage fabric, reinforce Stawell's identity along the Highway, to foster a stronger connection to the township.
- Vacant sites along the highway that present development opportunities for new businesses that complement the role of the road as a national highway.
- Local and regional tourism attractions could be better signposted and celebrated in the image of the Western Highway through Stawell.
- There is opportunity to both direct visitors into the township as well as provide more visitor facilities and pause points along the highway.

The map overleaf illustrates these key themes and directions.

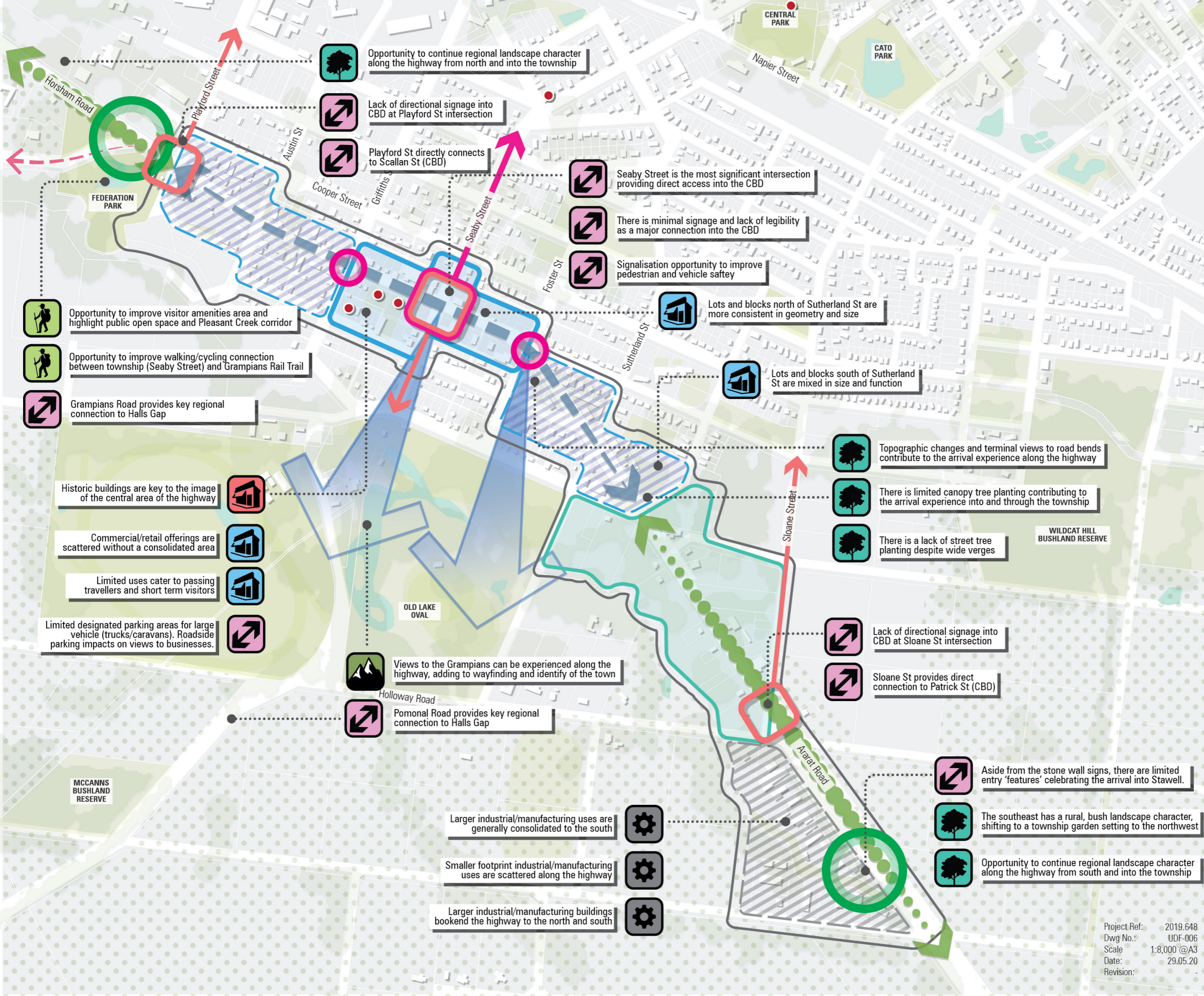


Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Summary Diagram
Western Highway

Legend

- Highway Core / Township Arrival
- Highway Mixed/ Commercial Precinct
- Green Transition Precinct
- Consolidated industrial
- Urban belt
- Primary town connection
- Secondary town connection
- Link to trail
- Landscape belt
- Key intersection
- Township arrival node
- Secondary intersection
- Green gateway
- Views to Grampians
- VHR building
- Connections & Arrival
- Street Appearance
- Historic Environment
- Industry & Service
- Landscape & Identity
- Regional Attributes
- Recreation



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3.0 Study Area

This project does not have a specified 'township' boundary for investigation. The Plan will address the township of Stawell in its entirety, and as such will extend beyond the existing land zoned for urban uses. It is important that this project considers not only developed land within, but also the interfaces with, the township and in particular the relationship to key land use areas such as the Stawell Gold Mine and Airport as well as important environmental assets including the Deep Lead Nature Conservation Reserve and Illawarra Nature Conservation Reserve.

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) will address in more detail both private and public land along the Western Highway between Playford Street and Sloane Street. A key area of this project will include the Seaby Street intersection as the main route into the town centre from the Highway. The project will also consider the implications of the proposed Western Highway duplication and intersection upgrade at London Road to the south of the township.

Refer to the Study Area map for the Focus Area extent.

Stawell is located approximately 236km to the west of Melbourne located in the Wimmera region of Victoria and is the main settlement in the Northern Grampians Shire. According to the 2016 Census, Stawell has a residential population of 6,052 persons.

The town centre first developed along Longfield Street, now known as the Western Highway, adjacent to Pleasant Creek where gold was first discovered in 1853. Several historic buildings still exist in this area including the former shire hall office (1866) and the original courthouse (1860), which now operates as a local history museum.

The Western Highway bypasses the town centre, along Longfield Street, to the south of the town centre. It is the most significant road in and out of Stawell, linking Melbourne and Adelaide.

The township is in close proximity to 2 major settlements (outside of the Shire) also accessed along the Highway including Ararat (30km to the south) and Horsham (67km to the north).

The town sits to the northeast of the Grampians National Park and therefore plays a large role in regional tourism. Other economic drivers in the township including mining, agriculture, manufacturing and retail.



Stawell Structure Plan Study Area

- Legend
- Township Study Area
 - Western Highway Study Area



4.0 Population & Demographics

2016 Census data provided by ABS provides an overview of population and demographic trends in Stawell.

Population

Stawell had a total population of 6,032 persons in 2016. This was just under half of the Northern Grampian Shire’s total population at the time (12,570 persons).

Stawell is slightly smaller in population than nearby Ararat (8,300 people) which functions in a similar and complementary manner. Horsham (16,500 people) is the nearest major regional centre with wider activity, commercial and retail offerings.

Historic ABS data has reveals that the population of Stawell has remained relatively stable over the 15 year period between 2001 and 2011.

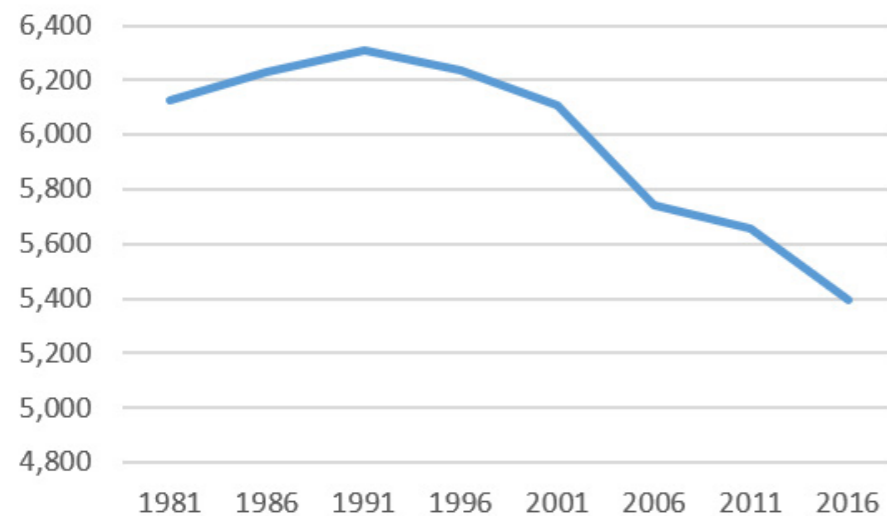
Beyond this 15 year period, the enumerated population (that is, the count of people at Census time) of the Stawell urban centre has been gradually declining since 1991, as shown in the below graph.

In terms of the wider Stawell district/catchment area, ABS data for 2019 estimated the residential population to be 8,109 (ABS, 2020). A review of historical ABS data has shown a slow decline in this area from a recent peak in 2010 and post-war high of 9,2000 in 1999.

Age Demographics

In 2016, children aged 0 – 14 made up 14.8% of the population, those aged 14 – 64 made up 60.4% and people aged 65 years and over made up 24.9% of the population. The medium age was 47 years, compared to 37 years in Victoria. The older population cohort (i.e. those over 65 years in age) in Stawell was greater than the State-wide percentage for this age group (15.6%).

Since 2006, the resident population of those aged 65 and over increased by 5.3%. This demonstrates that, similar to other regional centres, Stawell has an aging demographic.



Dwellings

61.4% of all households were comprised of family households, 34.9% were single person households and 3.7% were group households). The average household size was 2.2 persons.

Of the families in Stawell, 33.4% were couple families with children and 48.6% were couple families without children.

Of the occupied private dwellings in Stawell, 90.6% were detached houses, 2.1% were semi-detached, row or terrace houses, townhouses etc and 6.1% were flat or apartments. In terms of bedrooms, 4.2% of private dwellings had 1 bedroom, 17.8% had 2 bedrooms and 53.0% had 3 bedrooms.

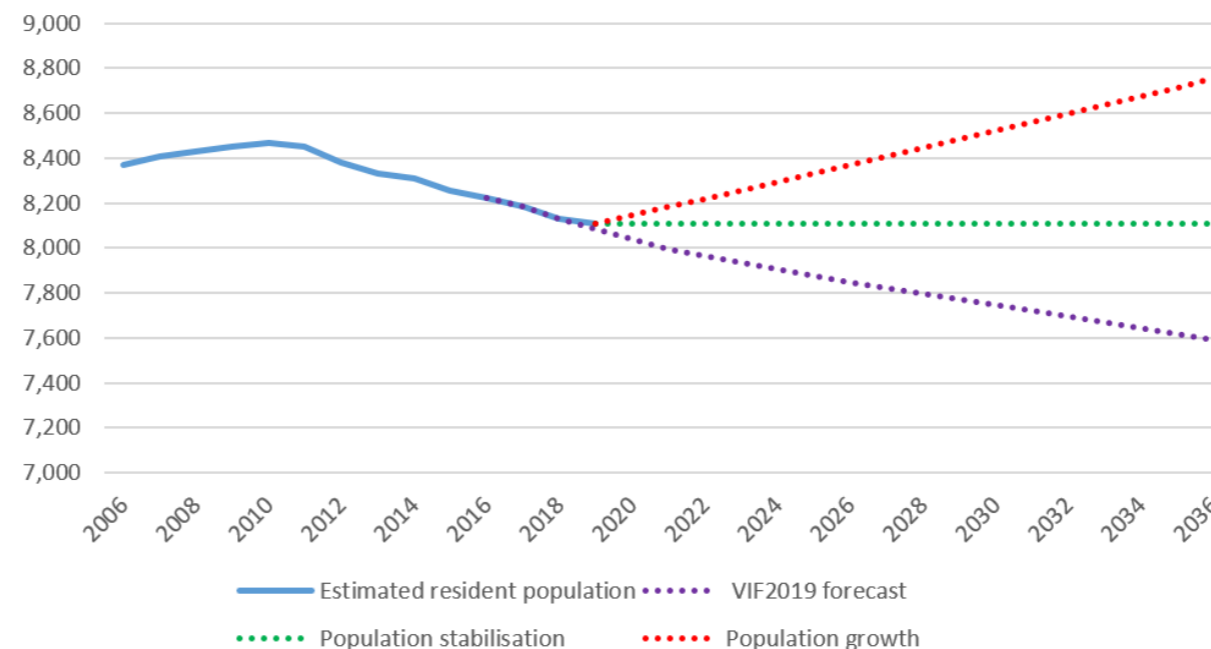
Motor vehicle ownership was high at 87.2%. Of the occupied private dwellings, 37.1% had one registered motor vehicle garaged or parked at their address, 33.5% had two registered motor vehicles and 16.6% had three or more registered motor vehicles.

Having regard to private dwelling ownership, 42.2% were owned outright, 27.4% were owned with a mortgage and 26.3% were rented.

Employment

2,592 residents were reported to be in the labour force in the week before the 2016 Census. Of these, 54.8% were employed full-time, 32.4% were employed part-time and 5.9% were reported to be unemployed.

Numbers of residents in full or part-time employment were comparatively higher in Stawell than the rest of the Shire. 6,452 residents were reported to be in the labour force across the Shire in 2016. Of this total, 28.9% were employed full-time, 17.82% were employed part-time and 2.38% were unemployed.



Population Projections

In 2019, the Victoria in Futures (VIF) projections anticipated a continued decline in the number of residents within the catchment area. Of note, the VIF2019 projections forecasted an average population decline of 0.4% per year between 2019 and 2036, with a total decline of 519 residents over that period and resulting in a total population of 7,590 residents.

This project has prepared two other population projections to test scenarios where there is a potential upturn in the number of people being attracted to Stawell and the wider district over the coming years.

The two alternative population scenarios are outlined as follows:

- Population stabilisation, which envisages a stabilisation in population numbers, maintaining the present population level.
- Population growth, in which current employment generating projects in the area create a steady resurgence in the population as new workers and their families are attracted to the district.

These scenarios are provided against the VIF2019 projections on the graph below.

The stabilisation scenario forecasts 519 more residents than the VIF2019 forecast by 2036. On the other hand, the population growth scenario envisages growth of 0.45% per year on average, resulting in 645 more residents than at present living in Stawell by 2036, bringing the total population to 8,754 residents.

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5.0 Economic Profile

An Economic Assessment of Stawell has been prepared as part of the background review for this project. This review provides an overview the economic drivers in the area and considers land area requirements to fulfil new economic activity forecasts over the coming 15 years or so.

The Economic Assessment is provided in Appendix 2.

A summary of the report is provided below.

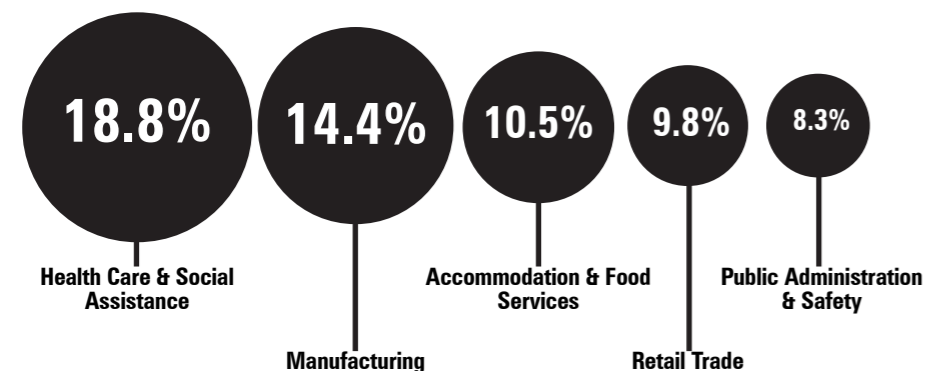
Industry

2016 Census data from ABS identifies that 3,387 jobs were counted in the Stawell district, which was a decline from 3,409 jobs counted in 2011. This shift correlates to significant changes in particular industries across the region. Notably, over the period between 2011 and 2016, there was growth in local manufacturing and health services however this was offset by significant declines in mining (as a result of declining production at the Stawell goldmine) and retail trade, due to the growth of online trading and other general changes in the industry.

The key industries for Stawell and district are:

- **Mining** - given the long-established gold mine just outside of town.
- **Agriculture** - given extensive farming practices within the region.
- **Manufacturing** - the Frew Group abattoir is the largest local employer. There are also a small range of other significant regional manufacturing enterprises making bricks and wine.
- **Arts, recreation, accommodation and food service** - all are related to the strong tourism industry in the region.
- **Public services and health care** – as a result of the concentration of these services in Stawell which service a wider district catchment.

Largest Industry Employers in Stawell



Economic Prospects

Stawell is currently presented with a number of significant economic growth opportunities. Large projects such as the proposed Nectar farm glass-houses and the Dark Matter underground laboratory have the potential to generate significant local employment opportunities. There also appears to be strong growth in health, tourism, professional services, education and social support sectors. The Western Highway duplication also brings significant opportunities.

There are also a number of economic challenges such as declines in goods and services industries, productivity improvements reducing the need for workers in local industries, limited educational opportunities to retain and attract young workers, and potentially insufficient services to attract older workers into the area.

Other industries such as retailing, agriculture, transport and distribution and manufacturing are experiencing broader changes that may adversely affect employment. Many of these trends will be accelerated by the current economic crisis, i.e. online retailing and automation.

The impacts of COVID-19 remain to be seen but it seems likely that the pandemic will accelerate some trends such as on-line retailing and process automation, as well as strengthening domestic tourism and health spending, and creating pressure to improve local resilience and self-sufficiency through diversification and strengthening of existing goods and services production industries.

Retail Analysis

Stawell has approximately 17,900 sqm of retail floorspace, of which 12,400 (69%) is located in the town centre, with most of the remainder located in the Western Highway precinct.

Retail sales are estimated at \$103 million in 2019. An estimated \$22 million (21%) of the sales come from visitors living outside the district. Around \$81 million comes from local residents, equivalent to 80% of their retail spending. The remaining 20% escapes mainly to larger centres such as Horsham, Ballarat and Melbourne, online retailers and foreign holidays.

Three retail floorspace demand scenarios have been prepared, corresponding with the three population growth scenarios. These range from a growth in demand for retail floorspace of 1,100 sqm (as per the population growth scenario) to a decline in demand of 1,100 sqm (under the population decline scenario) by 2036. Most of the change would affect retail floorspace in the town centre.

Many of the non-retail activities located in the town centre are also tied to the level of population in the district. If retailing is declining, these activities are also likely to be declining, unless they are catering to growing market segments such as visitors. Conversely, growth in retailing is likely to be matched by growth in other town centre service activities.

Industrial Land

Existing industrial activity in Stawell is of three types:

- **Processing of the region’s agricultural produce** – e.g. Frew Group abattoir.
- **Manufacturing for regional markets** – e.g. firms such as Advance Bricks.
- **Local industrial services** – e.g. auto-repairs, construction, equipment sales and hire, and transport.

The Industrially zoned land in Stawell is in two precincts located to the north-west and south-east of the town. The larger northern precinct contains a variety of general industrial activity and includes the Frew Group abattoir and the Advance Bricks factory. The smaller southern precinct is occupied mainly by service and construction-related businesses.

There is approximately 217 hectares of zoned industrial land in Stawell. Of this, 117 hectares is nominally undeveloped; however, much of this vacant land is owned by the Frew Group and used for livestock purposes or as a buffer between the abattoir and other sensitive land uses. Only around 16 hectares is currently available for development, the majority in the northern precinct.

In addition to the vacant land, there are a number of vacant industrial buildings, some of which are rather large – on sites up to 5.5 hectares. However, choice is currently limited, particularly for smaller firms requiring immediate occupation or for firms requiring high quality premises.

Recent demand for industrial land has been about 0.23 hectares per year. If this continued, a further 3.6 hectares of vacant industrial will likely be consumed by small-scale industrial businesses over the period to 2036.

In identifying the future need for Industrial land, it may be desirable to allow for occasional larger enterprises to locate in Stawell. Judging by past demand, such enterprises are likely to require allotments of between two and five hectares. Based on existing land, this would enable up to six substantial businesses to locate in Stawell over the next 16 years.

Even taking this occasional demand into account there is likely to be sufficient Industrially zoned land to accommodate demand over the period to 2036.

Further Industrial land beyond that already zoned is unlikely to be required for the foreseeable demand over the period to 2036. Should further land be required for a particular project, or because actual demand outstrips expectations, or to provide choice in the market, it is possible to identify several locations where existing industrial precincts could be expanded. This includes land around 14 Horsham Road in the northern industrial precinct (20+ hectares of land) and land either side of Gilchrist Road, adjacent to the existing southern industrial precinct (at least 30 hectares). Please refer to the economic assessment for further details.

Stawell Town Centre

The town centre accommodates the majority of retail activity. Total active floorspace in the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) of the town centre is estimated at 27,900 sqm, of which around 10% (2,704 sqm) is currently vacant. A significant proportion (approximately 39%) of the vacancies are concentrated in the secondary location of Wimmera Street. Overall, the commercial centre remains an attractive location for retailing, with generally well-maintained buildings, significant heritage qualities, evidence of recent streetscape works, and a compact and walkable structure.

Accommodating Commercial Development

Growth Scenario

The existing town centre appears to have more than sufficient vacant land and building stock to accommodate the growth anticipated in any of the population growth scenarios. There is unlikely to be a need to expand the existing boundaries of the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) under the growth scenario, and even if there were, there are existing vacant sites adjacent to the boundary of the Zone that could accommodate significant further growth.

Within the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) of the town centre four strategic development sites totalling approximately 9,500 sqm have been identified. These sites are likely to be more than adequate to accommodate likely growth in the centre over the period to 2036. Should further space be required, there are two sites on the boundary of the Commercial Zone, at Sloane Street and Wimmera Street, which could provide a further 8,000+ sqm (please refer to Page 23 of Economic Assessment for further details).

The scale of anticipated growth means that it is unlikely that there will be demand for a new shop with a large footprint such as a new supermarket. However, if a new large-format business does require space in the town centre, there is vacant land within the centre that could accommodate new buildings. In addition, there are several sites that could be redeveloped.

Victoria in Future 2019 Scenario

Under the population decline scenario outlined in VIF2019, vacant space would be projected to grow. In this situation, there may be a shift to lower margin businesses - more charity shops, variety shops and take-away food outlets. The building stock may begin to deteriorate as building owners lack rental returns to reinvest and this could lead to the decline of the centre as an attractive location for residents or visitors.

However, there are several possible actions to manage the decline in a way that maintains the vibrancy of the centre and to seek new activities to fill vacant spaces. This could involve attracting more professional services to secondary spaces in the town centre (upper floors), concentrating retail outlets into core shopping precincts, developing new town centre uses including hotels or recreational activities, and developing a much stronger tourism focus, such as the Dark Matter visitor centre or reuse of vacant buildings on Wimmera Street for arts and crafts market, showcasing regional produce and artisans/artists work.

Western Highway Precinct

The Western Highway Precinct will be an increasingly sought after location in the region following the completion of the duplication. Currently the precinct accommodates visitor services, business supplies and services, and large format sales outlets as well as housing and some buildings of historic interest. However, activity in the precinct is dispersed and lacks a focal point or stopping area for visitors - it is typically a highway services corridor.

There a number of vacant sites available within the precinct. The largest of these is 1.2 hectares but most are smaller than 0.2 hectares. The total available vacant land is approximately 6 hectares, although there are several under-utilised sites as well as non-zone conforming low density housing which could be redeveloped.

Prospects for business growth in this precinct rely on expansion of visitor services in line with regional tourism growth as well as general business expansion that would increase demand for local business services. The development of the Pleasant Creek facility as a combined visitor and events space could provide a key activity node in the precinct.

Given the moderate prospects for growth, the existing stock of land in the Commercial 2 Zone should be sufficient, particularly given the extensive potential for redevelopment of non-conforming housing.

There is a policy imperative to direct normal retail development to the town centre rather than the Highway, given the likely subdued retail demand. However, the economic activity of the precinct and the wider district may be improved through the establishment of visitor nodes that provide information, recreation and hospitality functions, and the introduction of design requirements to improve built form in the central part of the precinct and reinforce the turn-off to the town centre.

	Town Centre	Western Highway	Other Retail	Total Retail
Food, groceries and liquor	5,312	600	180	6,092
Non-food goods	5,469	2,400	775	8,644
Food catering	1,085	950	600	2,635
Retail services	507	0	0	507
Total retail	12,373	3,950	1,555	17,878

Activity	sqm	Share
Retail	12,373	49%
Hotels, pubs and clubs	1,791	7%
Professional and medical services	1,851	7%
Real estate services	780	3%
Banks	632	3%
Employment services	676	3%
Other commercial services	3,134	12%
Community services	3,911	16%
Total activity	25,148	100%
Vacant space	2,704	10%
Total space	27,852	

Key Implications

- A number of major projects have the potential to generate significant local employment opportunities and health, tourism, professional services, education and social support sectors are growing strongly.
- Population decline has led to less activity in a number of population based sectors such as retailing however there has been some growth in manufacturing and health care and social assistance.
- There is likely sufficient remaining commercial land within the town centre and Western Highway precinct to accommodate further demand for commercial land over the next 15 years at least.
- There are a number of potential strategic development sites within the town centre should further land be required.
- The town centre will continue to be the focus of local economic activity with activity in the Western Highway precinct likely to be predominantly driven by visitor services in line with regional tourism growth.
- There is likely sufficient vacant industrial land (16ha) to accommodate new industrial activity over the next 15 years.
- Choice of industrial land is currently limited, particularly for smaller firms requiring immediate occupation or for firms requiring high quality premises.

6.0 Land Supply and Demand

Residential Land Supply and Demand Assessment

A Land Supply and Demand Assessment has been undertaken for Stawell to identify the current supply of residentially zoned land. This includes all land zoned within the General Residential Zone (GRZ), Mixed Use Zone (MUZ), and Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ).

A methodology outlining how the assessment has been undertaken is provided within Appendix 5.

Land Supply

Based on an analysis of vacant residentially zoned land within Stawell, the following is noted:

- There is approximately 74ha of vacant residentially zoned land across 172 lots within Stawell. This consists of:
 - Approximately 58ha General Residential Zone (GRZ) land across 146 lots.
 - Approximately 17ha Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) land across 26 lots.
- No land within the Mixed Use Zone is currently vacant. This excludes the approximately 60ha of Crown land located within the MUZ surrounding the train station.
- Approximately 80% (38ha) of the vacant GRZ land is located on the urban fringe of Stawell, particularly within the south along Sloane Street and near the Stawell Racecourse.
- Approximately 14% (8ha) of this land is considered to be constrained by native vegetation.
- There are a small number of larger vacant lots within inner urban locations just southeast of the town centre.
- Based on the methodology outlined within Appendix 5 the vacant land has the potential to accommodate 713 new dwellings on unconstrained land (687 on GRZ land and 26 on LDRZ land).
 - Approximately 468 (442 GRZ and 26 LDRZ) new dwellings would be accommodated at the urban fringe under this scenario.
 - Approximately 200 new dwellings would be located within 400m of the town centre.

Potential Number of new dwellings on currently vacant land			
Zone	Area	Vacant Lots	Potential New Dwellings
GRZ	58ha	146	687
LDRZ	17ha	26	26
Total	74ha	172	713

Land with Redevelopment Potential

There are a large number of lots within Stawell that currently contain a dwelling but potentially pose significant potential for either dual occupancy or multi-unit development. A significant number of lots, particularly south of the train line, contain dual frontage, which increases the development prospects.

Based on an analysis of land that currently contains a single dwelling but with the potential to be redeveloped for more than one dwelling, the following is noted:

- There is an approximate total of 957 lots within Stawell with redevelopment potential (i.e. over 950 sqm) for either dual occupancy development, multi-unit, or subdivision for traditional housing development.
- Larger lots are generally focused south of the town centre.
- If as little as 5% of these lots are developed for dual occupancy or multi-unit development and 10% for larger greenfield development, a further 89 new dwellings could be accommodated within Stawell over the next 15 year period.

Demand

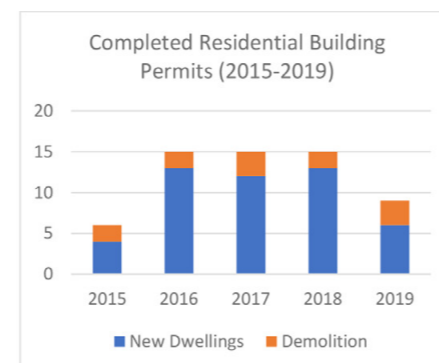
Two demand calculations have been undertaken. The first is based on population projections to 2036 outlined within previous sections and the second is based on previous building and planning permit approvals over the last 5 years.

Population Based Demand

As identified in previous sections, the population of Stawell has been slowly declining since the early 1990s. Projected forward, and as reflected in Victoria in Future 2019 figures, this results in an approximate decline of 519 residents by 2036 in the Stawell locality.

Under the population scenario where there is an increase in the population of 0.45% per year, this would potentially result in 645 new residents in the wider Stawell locality by 2036. Based on current population distribution, if 66% of these new residents locate in Stawell, this could likely result in 425 new residents by 2036.

With an average of 2.2 people per household, this could likely generate the need for 193 new dwellings by 2036.



Approval Based Demand

Population demand only provides one half of the demand picture. Planning and building permit data from the last five years has been analysed across the Stawell postcode.

Based on this analysis, the following is noted:

- An average of 10 building permits per year have been issued for residential development over the last five years. Only 3 were related to multi-unit development with two relating to the same development.
- 13 building permits have been issued for the demolition of houses over this period meaning approximately 80% have all new dwellings have been constructed on vacant land.
- A total of 28 planning permits have been issued over the last five years relating to 39 new dwellings (14 associated with multi-unit or dual occupancy development).
- Based on the above, it is estimated that approximately 8-10 new dwellings per year have been developed in Stawell over the last five years.

15 Year Residential Land Supply

Based on the above analysis, there is an estimated demand of approximately 150 new dwellings within Stawell over the next 15 years predominantly based on existing trends for building and planning permit approvals for new dwellings. While the population of Stawell is likely projected to stabilise or slightly decline, should population increase at a comparatively high growth rate scenario of 0.45%, this figure could potentially increase to a need for 200 new dwellings.

With a current supply of 74ha of vacant residentially zoned land to theoretically accommodate potentially 713 new dwellings, there is likely to be more than enough supply to meet this demand.

It is noted however, that the majority of this vacant land is on the periphery of the township. Towards the centre of the town there is only a small scattering of vacant residentially zoned land.

Should further development be desired towards the centre of town, there may be a need to place greater emphasis on the redevelopment of currently developed land for dual occupancy or medium density housing to place future residents closer to existing services. The lot sizes within Stawell have significant potential to accommodate greater dual occupancy and multi-unit development, particularly south and west of the town centre.

Providing housing opportunities closer to the town centre has the benefit of locating new development close to existing services and for reducing reliance on car trips. To date Stawell has witnessed limited medium density development catering for alternative housing such as townhouses or unit development. This type of housing has the benefit of increasing housing diversity within the town to cater for changing demographics, particularly for residents wishing to downsize.

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

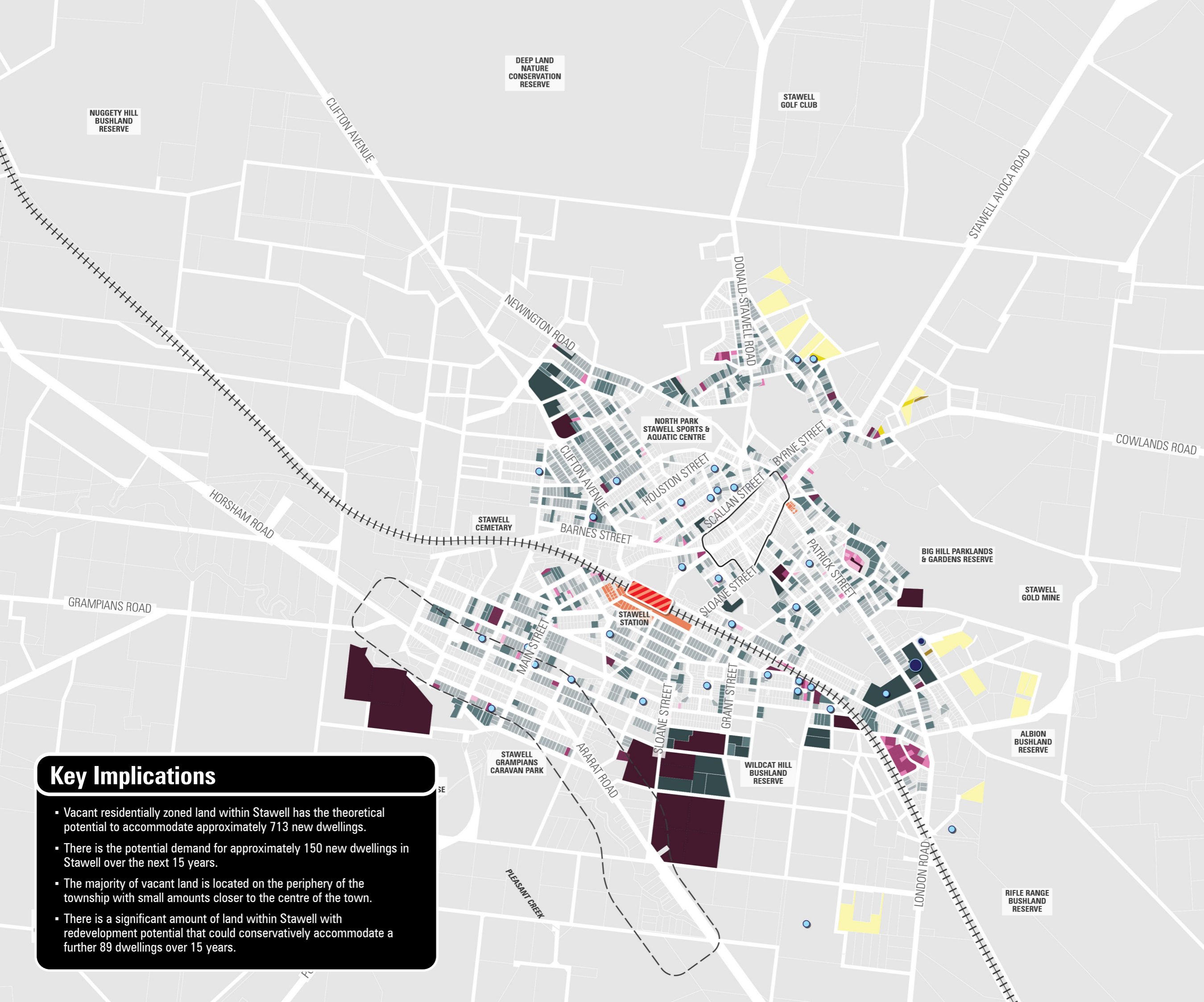
Vacant Residential Land Analysis

Legend

- Stawell Township Core
- Residential Surrounds
- Recent Single Dwelling Approved
- Recent Multi-Unit Approved
- GRZ VACANT LOTS**
- 0-600m²
- 600-950m²
- 950-1200m²
- 1200-3600m²
- 3600+m²
- LDRZ VACANT LOTS**
- 950-1200m²
- 1200-3600m²
- 3600+m²
- OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL LAND WITH REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**
- 950-1200m²
- 1200-3600m²
- 3600+m²
- Mixed Use Zone
- Public Open Space
- Train line
- Train Station
- Waterbody

Key Implications

- Vacant residentially zoned land within Stawell has the theoretical potential to accommodate approximately 713 new dwellings.
- There is the potential demand for approximately 150 new dwellings in Stawell over the next 15 years.
- The majority of vacant land is located on the periphery of the township with small amounts closer to the centre of the town.
- There is a significant amount of land within Stawell with redevelopment potential that could conservatively accommodate a further 89 dwellings over 15 years.



7.0 Planning Context

Policy

Appendix 3 and 4 provides a complete review of all relevant background documents and planning policy. The below provides a summary of the key elements.

State Policy

The State Planning Policy Framework (PPF) provides broad State level policy guidance for land use and development throughout the State. Within the PPF, Stawell is to be supported as a key service hub for the Wimmera Southern Mallee region, noting it has a cohesive relationship with Ararat (also a key service hub) which provides an opportunity to develop the towns as a sub-regional cluster of housing, employment and service provision. State policy also seeks to promote and provide for an ongoing supply of industrial land in Stawell, together with other regional and sub-regional hub locations.

The policies at the SPPF level are further elaborated at the municipal level through the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) which contains the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS).

Municipal Strategic Statement/ Local Planning Policy Framework

The MSS outlines the Northern Grampians Shire's strategic land use and development framework to achieve the vision for the Shire and details the key issues that have informed the development of this vision.

According to the MSS, a key strategy to achieve Council's vision is to encourage commercial and industrial development to generate jobs and stimulate economic growth across the region. It also seeks to promote the growth of Stawell as the Shire's largest urban centre, where the majority of the residential population reside.

Clear long term visions in the form of Local Area Strategic Framework Plans are included in the Planning Scheme to guide the development of key communities to provide a framework for informing future growth and development within the Shire. The local area policy for Stawell further emphasises the importance of promoting the Stawell-Ararat sub-regional cluster of housing, employment and services. It notes that Stawell is a complex township with a variety of land uses developed over time, which has resulted in conflicts between uses such as industries and residential areas.

Specific policy themes of the MSS and LPPF provides guidance on achieving Council's vision for Stawell and the wider region.

In terms of settlement and housing, a key policy priority is to accommodate population growth within Stawell whilst recognising potential landuse conflicts between rural zones and land identified for housing development. Environmental policy seeks to protect and conserve significant natural environments and landscapes of the region, including the Grampians and lake Lonsdale to the west of Stawell. Policy also seeks to manage environmental risk from bushfire and flooding, amongst other hazards.

Economic development policy seeks to recognise the commercial and industrial function of Stawell and promote the location of industrial, retail and commercial development within the Township. It also seeks to promote the regional economic significance of Stawell Gold Mine as Victoria's largest operating mine. Stawell's proximity to the Grampians National park makes it a key gateway location for tourism. As such, policy seeks to support integrated retail and tourism investment in Stawell to capitalise on its gateway status.

In terms of transport infrastructure, policy recognises the importance of the Western Highway for urban development, economic growth and tourism in the Shire and seeks to encourage development of land to support the duplication of the Western Highway to Stawell and also encourages development to support the service business centre function of the Highway. Policy also highlights the importance of the passenger and freight rail infrastructure to the community and local economy. Stawell Aerodrome is recognised as a valuable regional and strategic economic asset and major emergency response base. As such, policy supports its continued operation and future expansion.

A review of the relevant background documentation and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) and Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) has identified four clear strategic themes which underpin the delivery of the land use and development framework for Stawell:

Settlement and Housing

- Stawell is the Shire's largest urban centre (district town) and a key service hub for the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.
- Stawell and Ararat have a cohesive relationship, providing an opportunity to develop the towns as a sub-regional cluster of housing, employment and services.
- Stawell is a complex township with a variety of land uses developed over time. This has resulted in conflicts between uses such as industry and residential areas.
- Stawell has capacity to accommodate the majority of projected housing growth.
- The Northern Grampians Shire Housing Needs and Residential Land Supply Assessment (2018) outlines recommendations to address residential land supply in Stawell, which include diversification of housing mix (townhouses and aged care village style development), increasing greenfield land supply in serviceable locations, and reduce and rationalise the Rural Living Zones close to the Townships where land can be appropriately serviced.

Economic Development:

- Policy recognises the commercial and industrial function of Stawell and promotes the location of industrial, retail and commercial development within the Township.
- Policy promotes the regional economic significance of Stawell Gold Mine as Victoria's largest operating mine.
- Stawell's proximity to the Grampians National Park and Western Highway makes it a key gateway location for tourism - integrated retail and tourism investment in Stawell should be supported to capitalise on its gateway status
- Stawell has a surplus of underutilised industrial land – notably, the Western Stawell Business Precinct, which should be targeted as a clear area for investment and future expansion.

Infrastructure Development:

- In terms of transport infrastructure, policy recognises the importance of the Western Highway for urban development, economic growth and tourism.
- Policy seeks to encourage development of land to support the duplication of the Western Highway to Stawell and also encourages development to support the service business centre function of the Highway.
- Policy highlights the importance of the passenger and freight rail infrastructure to the community and local economy.
- Stawell Aerodrome is recognised as a valuable regional and strategic economic asset and major emergency response base. As such, policy supports its continued operation and future expansion.

Environment

- Policy seeks to protect and conserve significant natural environments and landscapes of the region, including the Grampians National Park, Lake Lonsdale and the surrounding waterways including Pleasant Creek and Concongella Creek.
- Policy also seeks to manage environmental risk from bushfire, landslides, flooding and salinity.
- Local policy specifically recognises the Grampians National Park as a major natural feature and tourist attraction.

Planning Controls Review

A 2018 Planning Scheme Review notes the following:

- The need for a review of the General Residential Zone (GRZ) application, noting its lack of strategic intent and anomalies in its application.
- The rationalisation and review of the Rural Living Zones (RLZ), to consider application of the Restructure Overlay on some of these areas to address older, smaller rural subdivisions.
- The rationalisation of the commercial zones near Pleasant Creek to align with property boundaries.
- The preparation of a Western Highway Land Use Strategy and Urban Design Framework to review the zoning and overlay regime on the Western Highway Precinct at Stawell, having regard to its development potential and the Western Highway Duplication Project.
- The preparation of a Structure Plan for Stawell to analyse opportunities and constraints and review the zoning and overlay regime to align with current environmental constraints.

Zones

Land within the Township study area is currently located within the following zones:

- Commercial Zone - (C1Z and C2Z);
- Farming Zone (FZ);
- General Residential Zone (GRZ);
- Industrial Zone (INZ1 and INZ3);
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ);
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ);
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ);
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ);
- Public Use Zone (PUZ2, PUZ3, PUZ4 and PUZ5);
- Road Zone (RDZ1 and RDZ2);
- Rural Living Zone (RLZ1, RLZ2, RLZ3 and RLZ5); and
- Special Use Zone (SUZ1 and SUZ2).

Land within the Township study area is currently located within the following zones:

- Commercial Zone - (C1Z and C2Z);
- General Residential Zone (GRZ);
- Industrial Zone (INZ1 and INZ3);
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ);
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ);
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ);
- Public Use Zone (PUZ2 and PUZ4);
- Road Zone (RDZ1); and
- Rural Living Zone (RLZ1, RLZ2, RLZ3 and RLZ5).

Overlays

The Township study area is also affected by a number of Overlays including:

- Airport Environs Overlay;
- Bushfire Management Overlay;
- Design and Development Overlay (DDO3, DDO4, DDO6 and DDO7);
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO);
- Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO);
- Floodway Overlay (FO);
- Heritage Overlay (HO);
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO); and
- Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO).

The Western Highway study area is also affected by a number of Overlays including:















- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO);
- Design and Development Overlay (DDO3);
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO3);
- Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO);
- Floodway Overlay (FO1);
- Heritage Overlay (HO); and
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO).

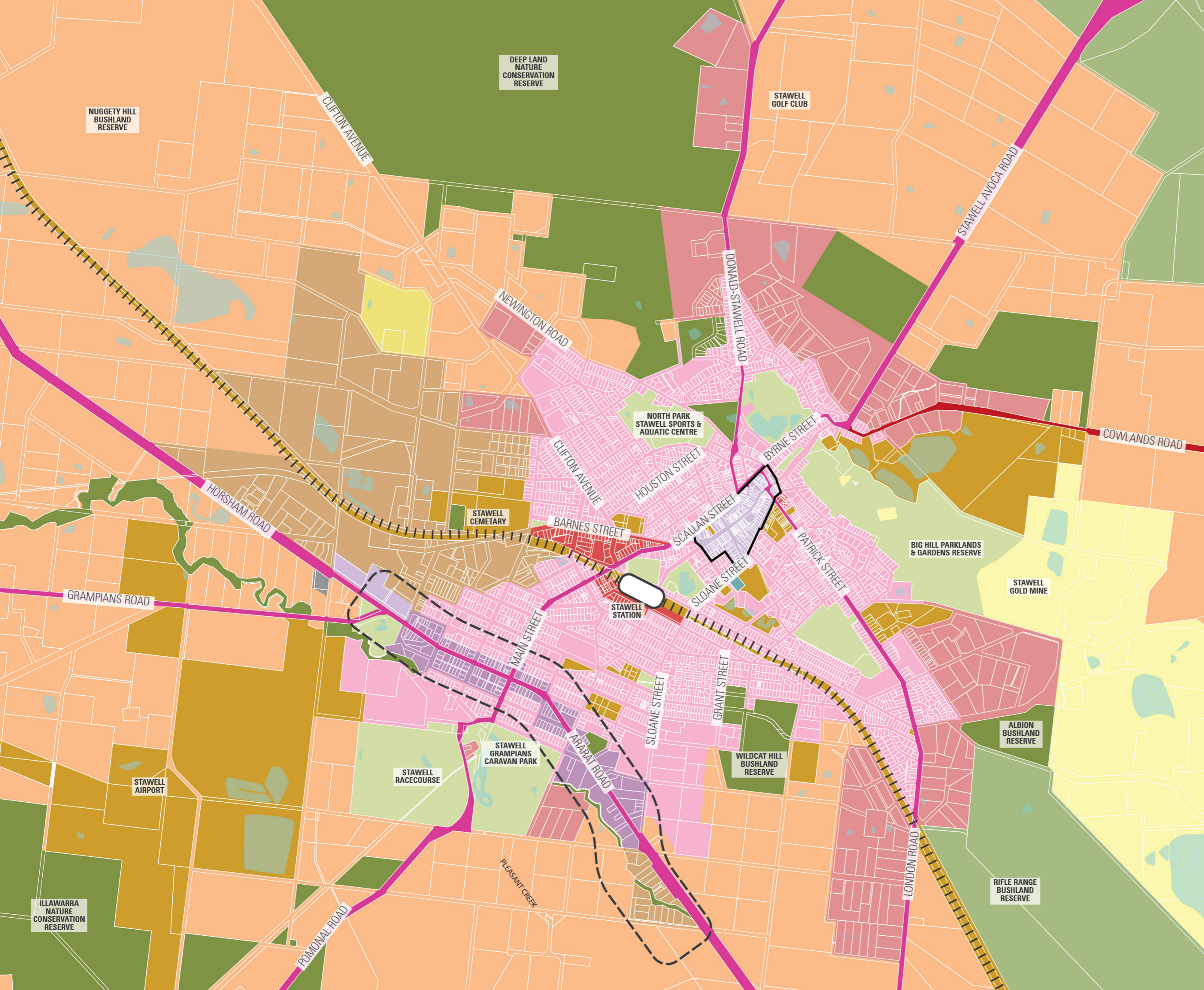
Zones and Overlays are illustrated overleaf. They are further described in Appendix 3.

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Planning Zones

Legend















- Commercial Centre 
- Western Highway Precinct 
- General Residential Zone (GRZ1) 
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) 
- Rural Living Zone (RLZ) 
- Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) 
- Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) 
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) 
- Commonwealth Land (CA) 
- Public Use Zone (PUZ) 
- Special Use Zone 1 (SUZ1) 
- Special Use Zone 2 (SUZ2) 
- Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) 
- Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) 
- Public Park & Recreation Zone (PPRZ) 
- Public Conservation & Recreation Zone (PCRZ) 
- Farming Zone (FZ) 
- Road Zone Category 1 (RDZ1) 
- Road Zone Category 2 (RDZ2) 
- Train line 
- Train station 

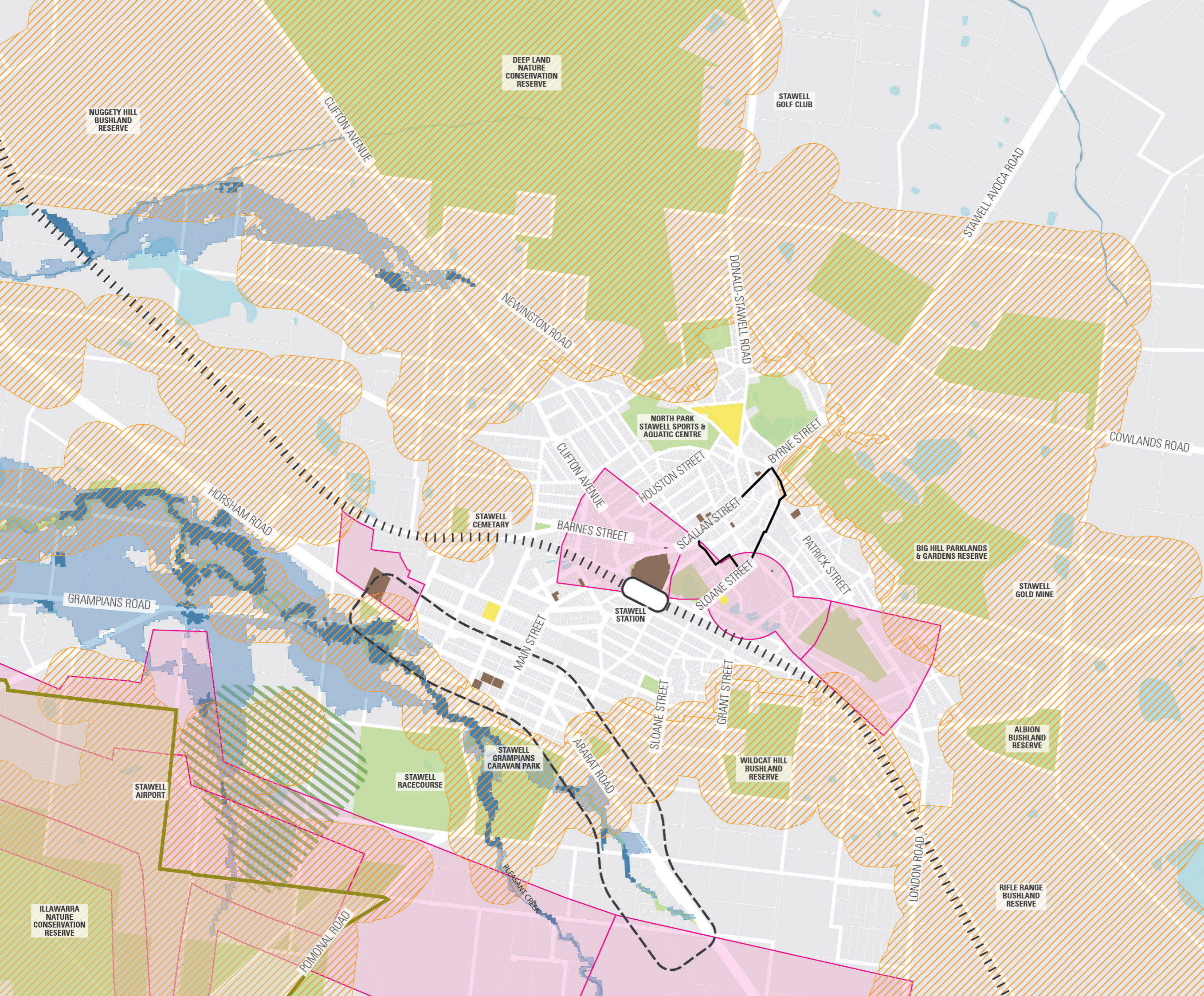


Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Planning Overlays

Legend

- Stawell Town Centre 
- Western Highway Precinct 
- Heritage Overlay (HO) 
- Design Development Overlay (DDO) 
- Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) 
- Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) 
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) 
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) 
- Land Subject To Inundation Overlay (LSIO) 
- Flooding Overlay (FO) 
- Train station 
- Open space 
- Waterbody 
- Waterway 



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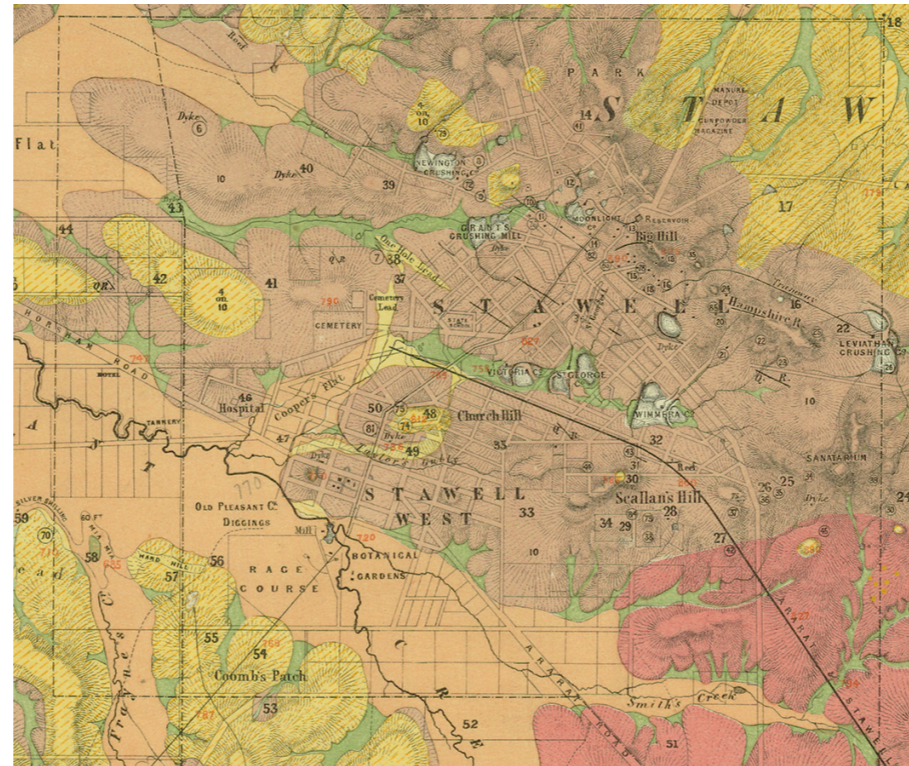
8.0 Urban Design Analysis

8.1 Urban Structure

Township

Key findings regarding the Urban Structure attributes of the township study area are as follows:

- The township of Stawell primarily comprises a linear arrangement – with a number of grid patterned areas converged by key movement routes. Anchoring the towns layout are the historical stock and mining routes and the rail corridor that traverse through the township.
- A geological map of the Stawell Gold Field dated 1878 (Victoria Mines Department) shows that these historic routes include Horsham and Ararat Road (now the Western Highway), Navarre Road (now Stawell-Avoca Road), and Darlington Road (now continuing to Stawell-Donaldson Road).
- The map also shows the alignment of Seaby Street, extending between the racecourse to the south and into Main Street. The adjoining grids of urban blocks resembles residential and commercial land uses in present times.
- The map also shows the alignment of the Ararat-Stawell Rail corridor, which now extends further west to Horsham and east to metropolitan Melbourne.
- Historically, these meandering main routes and rail corridor have stitched the several urban grids of Stawell together, still evident in the urban structure of present times.
- Studying the sizes and distribution of allotments of Stawell indicates a typical townscape with a dense urban core where commercial activities occur. The density begins to erode through the surrounding residential blocks.
- Urban blocks on the historic grids generally comprise medium sized allotments (1,000m² - 2,000m²), while more recently subdivided land for residential uses comprise smaller allotments (between 500m² – 1,000m²).
- Surrounding the residential fabric of the township, allotments further erode to large land parcels (10,000m² – 50,000m²) which are typically occupied by large commercial, industrial and agricultural functions.
- Further extending and forming the edges of the township are extra large land holdings (over 100,000m²) which are primarily farming purposes.
- There are also a number of large and extra large land holdings that are Crown Land, which are generally bushland and nature conservation reserves.



Key Implications

- Historical growth patterns have resulted in a complex urban grid underpinned by long standing key access routes.
- Historical allotments are generally in the order of 1,000 to 2,000sqm with smaller lots (5000 to 1,000sqm) located to the north of the town centre.



Fine grained character of the CBD



Detached, single storey dwellings are typical of the residential areas















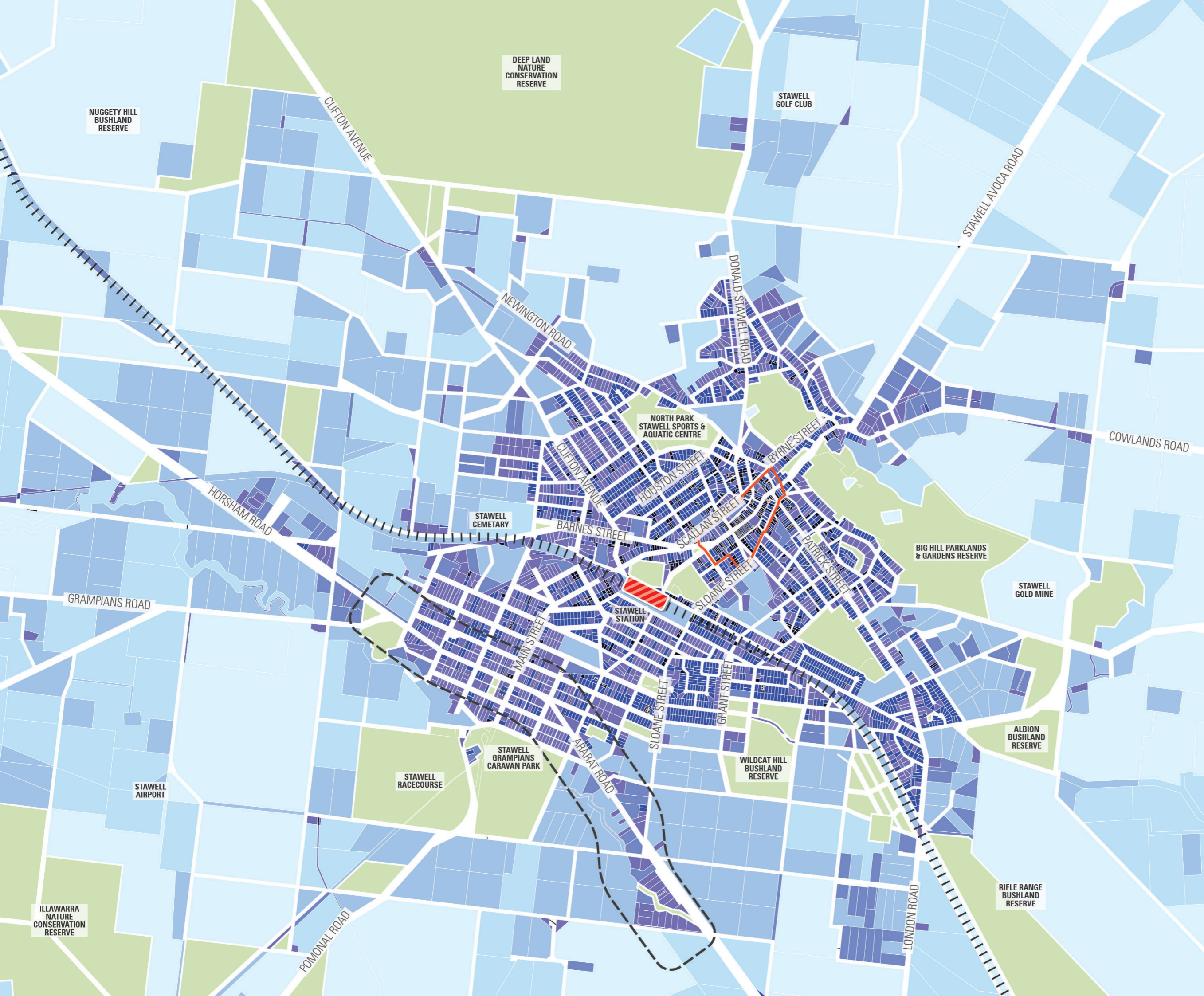
More recent residential residential comprise a greater density of allotments

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Urban Structure - Lot Areas
Township

Legend

- Stawell Town Centre 
- Western Highway Precinct 
- Lot Area
 - 0 - 499m² 
 - 500 - 999m² 
 - 1,000 - 4,999m² 
 - 5,000 - 9,999m² 
 - 10,000 - 49,999m² 
 - 50,000 - 99,999m² 
 - 100,000 + m² 
 - Open space 
 - Train line 
 - Train station 



8.1 Urban Structure

Western Highway

Key findings regarding the Urban Structure attributes of the Western Highway study area are as follows:

- The urban structure of the Western Highway study area is mixed and generally influenced by adjoining land uses.
- Allotments are most regular in geometry and consistent in size with adjoining land areas, toward the 'core' of the study area at the Seaby Street intersection. Between Griffiths Street and Sutherland Street, urban blocks are clearly stitched in with the street network and parcel geometry of the adjoining residential areas. In essence, the pattern of adjoining residential blocks seamlessly flow onto the Western Highway, with some exceptions at corners where civic functions occur (for example, the historic sites on the southern side of the road reserve).
- Allotments along this section of the highway are smallest and most fine in grain, generally between 1,000m² – 2,000m² in area. There are instances where smaller allotments have been amalgamated to form a larger lots such as in the case of the service station on the Seaby Street corner.
- Allotments between Griffiths and Playford Street/Federation Park begin to transition to more irregular sizes and shapes, toward the industrial/commercial area to the northern edge of the township. Therefore, this stretch of highway currently accommodates a diverse mix of land uses including low density residential, service stations, a car yard, a plant nursery and bushland conservation.
- Lots along this section of the highway are largest, with a number of properties over 5,000m² in area.

Key Implications

- Lot sizes and the layout of blocks south of Sutherland Street are generally mixed.
- Blocks between Playford and Sutherland Street are more consistent due to similar shaped, sized and oriented lots forming blocks.
- There are a number of vacant allotments throughout the Western Highway study area, on mixed lot sizes presenting new development opportunities.

- Further south between Sutherland Street and Sloane Street, sizes and shapes of lots and urban blocks are highly irregular due to generally inconsistent and sparse land uses occurring in adjoining areas, as well as the alignment of the creek forming the southern boundary of the study area.
- South of Holloway Road, more regular lot shapes and sizes exist in a commercial area separated from the Western Highway by a service road. This results in a greater degree of consistency in land uses and built form on this block. Dividing the urban block is a creek to the rear of commercial properties fronting the service road. Forming the southern boundary of the study area are a string of commercial properties fronting Gilchrist Road.
- Within the Western Highway study area is a number of vacant allotments, presenting as opportunity for infill development to occur, including a corner allotment at the Seaby Street intersection.
- A number of vacancies on large allotments are present in the irregular urban blocks between Sutherland Street and Holloway Road. Paired with neighbouring large allotments with minimal site coverage, there is a sense of 'openness' in this setting.
- Most urban blocks in the study area are serviced with rear laneways. Rectangular blocks are generally divided into quadrants by mid-block laneways.



Highway residential building stock toward the northern end of the study area



Vacant allotments indicate development opportunities














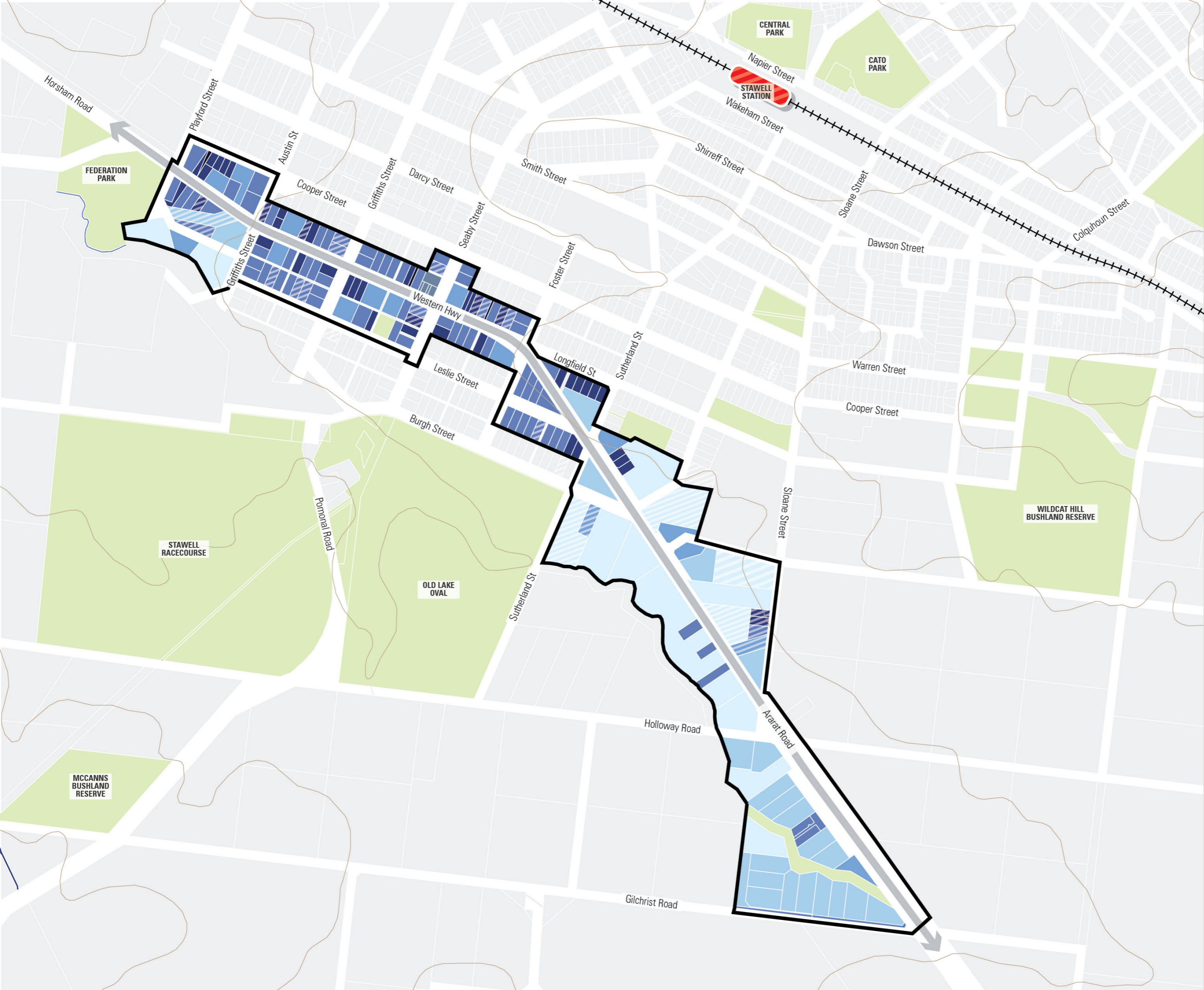
Warehouse forms occupying large allotments toward the south of the study area

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Urban Structure - Lot Areas
Western Highway

Legend

- Study Area 
- Lot Area
 - 0 - 499m² 
 - 500 - 999m² 
 - 1,000 - 1,999m² 
 - 2,000 - 2,999m² 
 - 3,000 - 4,999m² 
 - 5,000m² + 
- Vacant allotment 
- Open Space 
- Train line 
- Train Station 



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 Dwg No.: UDF-001
 Scale: 1:8,000 @A3
 Date: 29.05.20
 Revision: -

8.2 Land Use & Activity

Township

Key findings regarding the Land Use & Activity attributes of the township study area are as follows:

- The township of Stawell has historically serviced mining and agricultural industries operating in the region. While it continues to service these industries, it also services the local community and tourism activity in the broader Grampians region.
- The historic mining activity remains socially and economically important for the township, with the Stawell Gold mine continuing to function. Other key employment in the town includes the abattoir, Stawell Regional Health hospital, Grampians Community Health, the wool mill and various businesses in the automobile servicing industry.
- The CBD at the core of the township is the main anchor for commercial and retail activity in the township. The meandering Main Street lined with fine grain Victorian terrace buildings operates as the traditional 'mall' typology, with more contemporary large format retail (such as Woolworths) occurring behind. While there is no clear boundary of the CBD, it is generally formed by Patrick Street to the north, St. Georges Street to the south, Sloane Street to the east and Scallan Street to the west.
- Accommodation is scattered throughout the town, with a concentration of motels along the Western Highway servicing the through-movement of vehicles. Accommodation in the township services the tourism industry in the broader Grampians region, as well as events in the township itself including the Easter Stawell Gift. This is complemented by two caravan parks and 'bed-and-breakfast' types of accommodation offerings.
- While the town traditionally would have serviced vehicular traffic passing between Melbourne, Ararat, Horsham and Adelaide, the Western Highway in its 'bypass' format has become the avenue for roadside servicing. There is opportunity to recapture passing traffic and direct it into the township core.
- The Western Highway predominantly comprises activity oriented toward service industries and light industrial land uses. There is limited retail activity that occurs along the highway, which typically occurs in proximity to service stations.

Key Implications

- The town centre along Main Street is the key commercial core of the township with the Western Highway precinct currently generally providing a service industry function.
- Key community uses are focused in a number of clusters such as North Park and Patrick Street.
- A significant number of bushland reserves and a large amount of Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land surrounds the town limiting township expansion in a number of directions.

- Other notable activity nodes include the Stawell Hospital Central Park – the site of the Stawell Gift which is otherwise used as a football/cricket oval. The Stawell Gift Hall of Fame is also located within the park.
- Stawell is well serviced by an active and passive open space network. Active open space and recreational facilities generally occur in three main clusters. In addition to the sporting facilities and events hosted at Central Park, North Park comprises the Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre and a range of sporting facilities including ovals, tennis courts and athletics track. Others include the Big Hill Parklands & Gardens Reserve, Grange Golf Club to the south and Stawell Golf Club to the north of town.
- A third cluster is located south of the Western Highway which includes the Stawell Racecourse as well as Old Lake Oval which accommodates cricket facilities and a cycling track set within a densely vegetation setting. Also sited with the oval is the Grampians Gate Caravan Park.
- A number of shooting/rifle facilities are located on the eastern edge of the township within bushland reserves settings.
- Horse racing provides for additional recreational and social activity in the township, with Stawell Racecourse located southwest of the Western Highway, and Stawell Harness Racing & Showgrounds located more centrally.
- Surrounding the town are a number of bushland reserves and a network of parks in the passive open space network. Particularly to the north and west, forest areas provide walking tracks that offer passive recreation opportunity.
- A large amount of Rural Living Zone land surrounds the town that is either used for low scale agriculture or for rural living purposes.
- The combination of highly vegetated bush reserves, old mine sites, and rural living land surrounding Stawell limits township expansion opportunities in a number of directions.



Main Street comprises retail and commercial activity






























Large format retail outlets on the town periphery



Historic mining activity remains active in the township

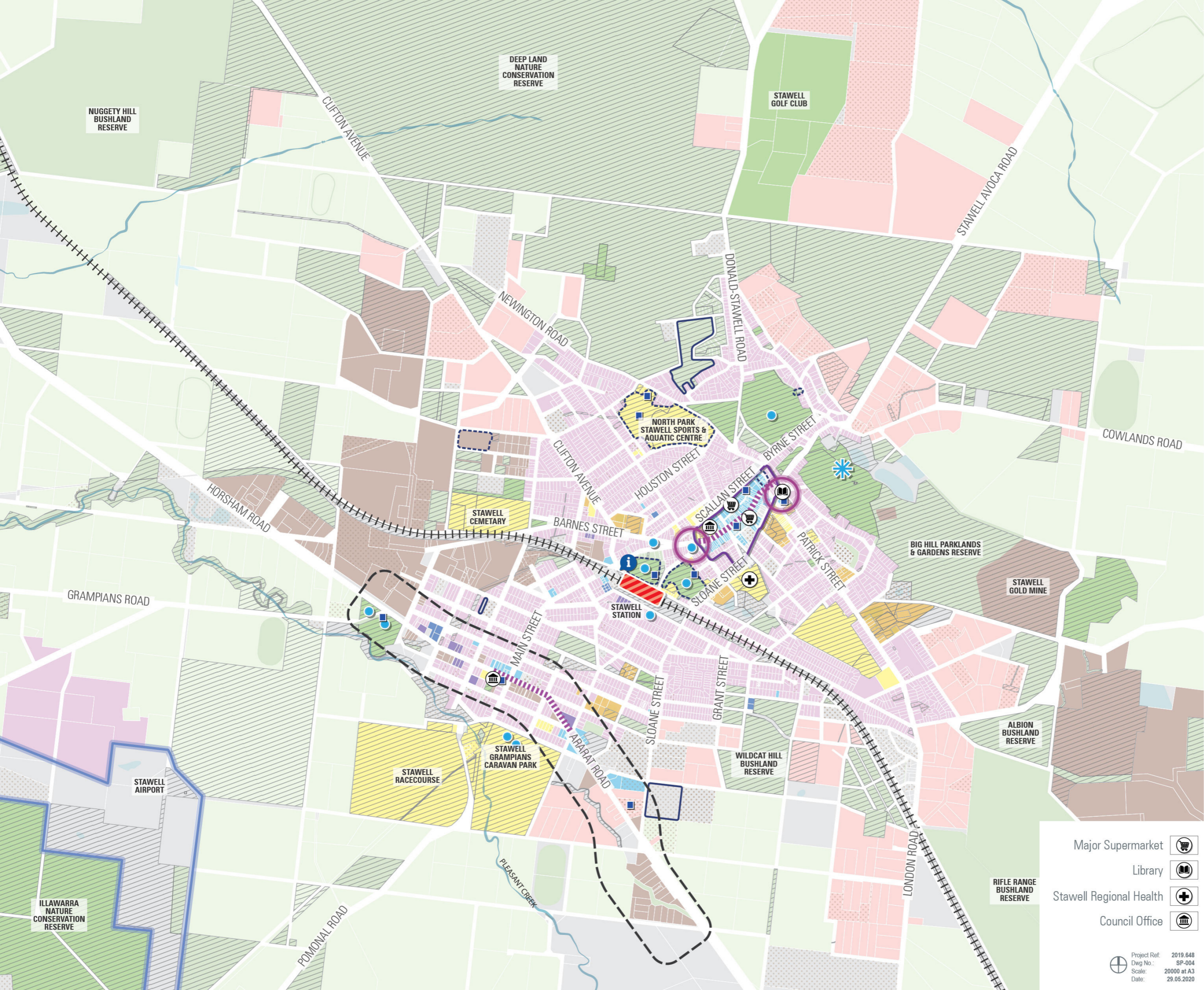
Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Land Use & Activity Township
Legend

- Stawell Town Centre 
- Western Highway Precinct 
- Active Frontage 
- Activity Node 
- Crown Land 
- Township Residential 
- Rural Residential 
- Commercial 
- Retail 
- Accommodation 
- Education 
- Civic 
- Industrial 
- Farmland 
- Public Park/Garden 
- Public Reserve 
- Vacant 
- Stawell Airport 
- Train line 
- Train Station 
- Waterbody 
- Strategic Development Sites 
- Residential Development Sites 
- Tourism Nodes 
- Information Centre 
- Big Hill Lookout 
- Public Toilets 

- Major Supermarket 
- Library 
- Stawell Regional Health 
- Council Office 

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Dwg No.: SP-004
Scale: 20000 at A3
Date: 29.05.2020



8.2 Land Use & Activity

Western Highway

Key findings regarding the Land Use & Activity attributes of the Western Highway study area are as follows:

- The land use pattern along the Western Highway varies, but throughout is consistently interspersed with functions relating to vehicle servicing as well as the surrounding tourism network, including motel accommodation.
- At the southern entrance, large commercial allotments on the western side of the road reserve comprise light industrial uses such as steel, joinery and glass businesses. These are accessed via a service road parallel to the Western Highway with informal parking on the grassed median.
- Between Holloway Road and Sutherland Road, the land use pattern is mixed – reflecting the mixed configuration of allotment size and grain. This strip comprises a car dealership, lawn mower store, plant nursery and two service/petrol stations, including one under construction.
- Towards the Sutherland Road intersection is a strip of shops set back from the Highway behind car parking, including food and beverage outlets. Dispersed throughout this section of the highway are also residential dwellings on large allotments. Also within this section of highway is a Bushland Reserve on the northern side of the road.
- The section of highway between Sutherland and Griffiths Street presents a more urban condition typical of the township. On allotments more consistent in size and regular in shape are vehicle oriented businesses, accommodation motels, commercial and retail businesses as well as the civic functions of the Stawell Historical Society and the Council occupied Shire Hall. Dispersed throughout are residential dwellings typically in pairs or small groups between commercial and civic functions.
- Between Griffiths Street and Playford Street, the land use pattern continues that of the previous precinct with greater emphasis on motels and with 3 in close proximity.
- Buildings are generally set back from the street meaning there is limited ‘active frontage’ occurring at the street interface. There are some exceptions, generally were food and beverage outlets on commercial allotments with 0m street setbacks provide greater opportunity for activity to engage with the street interface.
- Due to the predominantly automobile-centric land use pattern, building are set back behind customer parking. Service businesses and residential dwellings remain dispersed between commercial uses. At the edge of the study area is Federation park and a large warehouse home and hardware store (Mitre 10) set behind landscaping and car parking.

- Commercial allotments along the Western Highway are generally bound by residential areas to both the north and south. The northern residential interface is typical of the Stawell township suburban areas, while properties to the south contain more lower density and rural living settings.
- While it is difficult to identify the critical juncture of activity due to its varying nature throughout the corridor, the Seaby Street intersection arguably contains the greatest mix and intensity of uses. It also offers connection to the main commercial strip of Stawell, Main Street.
- The intensity of activity along the Western Highway generally occurs in peaks and troughs. This is due to the mix in allotment sizes resulting in low density development in the eastern half of the study area, a number of vacant sites, the bushland reserve, mixed building setbacks from street interfaces, as well as clusters of residential dwellings dispersed between commercial functions.
- The experience of the Highway is generally a transient one linked to its history as a key motorist connection to and through Stawell, reflected in the land use pattern of vehicle oriented businesses and motel style accommodation.
- Federation Park at the northern edge of the study area accommodates a driver pull-in area, toilet facilities, picnic facilities and pedestrian tracks around the wetland area.



Large format retail and commercial warehouses bookend the study area



Passive open space to the rear of civic buildings along the Highway



Roadside servicing is common along the study area





















Key Implications

- The highway has a mixed land use character along its extent. While some similar uses are consolidated, others are scattered throughout.
- Limited uses cater to the needs of travellers and short term visitors.
- There is a strong presence of uses relating to industry and business for the township and surrounding rural areas, particularly in the southern half of the highway study area.
- The role of the road as a national highway at the edge of a historic township is unclear in its land use and activity distribution.

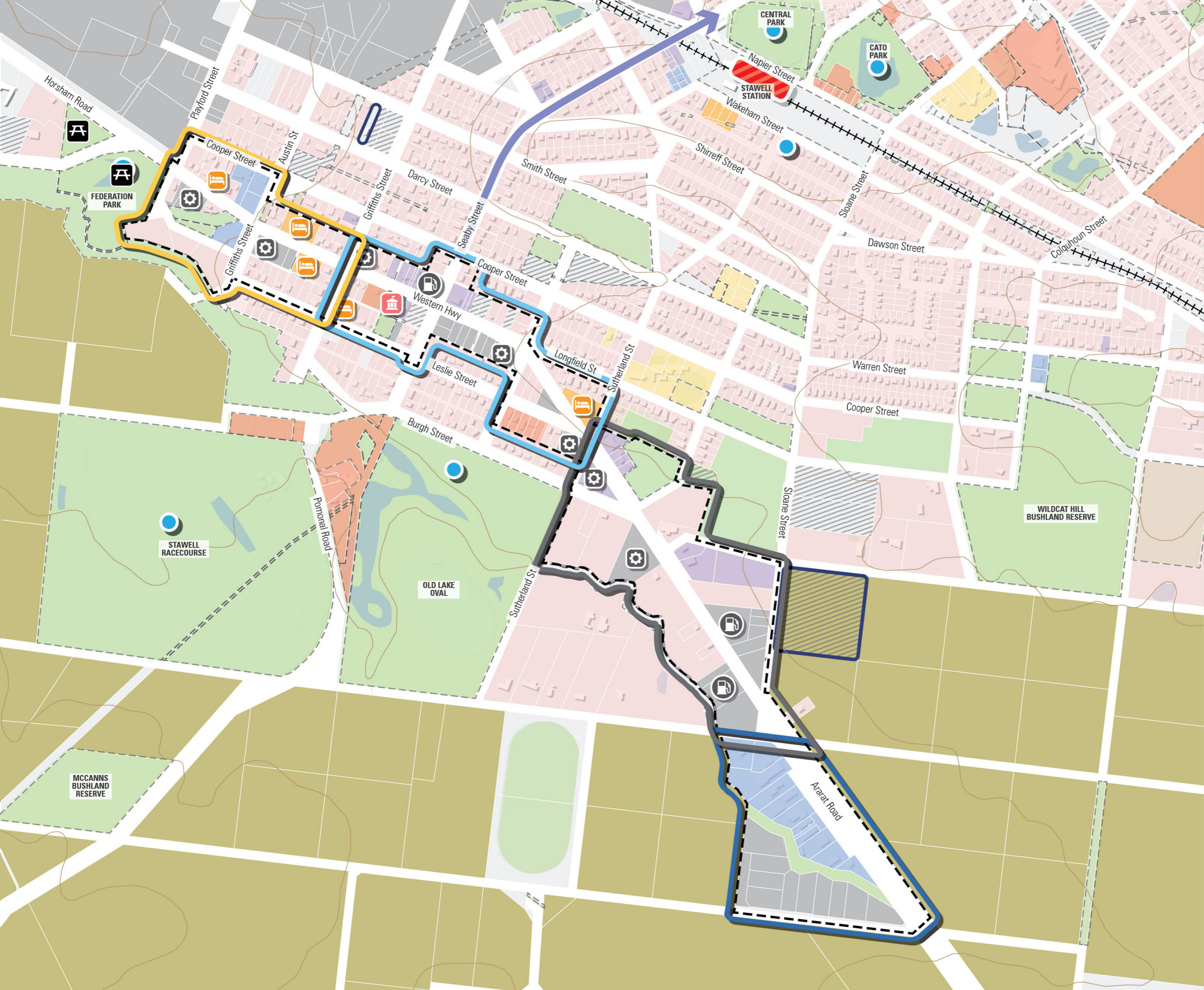
Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Land Use & Activity
Western Highway

Legend

- UDF Study Area 
- Industrial precinct 
- Service/mixed precinct 
- Commercial precinct 
- Motel/mixed precinct 
- Open Space 
- Crown Land 
- Residential 
- Commercial 
- Business 
- Industrial 
- Civic 
- Accommodation 
- Vacant 
- Petrol Station 
- Automobile/service business 
- Motel 
- Civic Building 
- Picnic/Rest Area 
- Tourism node 

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 Date: 29.05.20
 Revision: -



8.3 Built Form & Heritage

Township

Key findings regarding the Urban Structure attributes of the Township study area are as follows:

- The general pattern of the built form fabric in the Township comprises a 'dense' urban core in the town centre, tightly bound by a suburban residential fabric before dispersing to low density and rural building typologies. At the fringe of the suburban residential fabric where it transitions to a more rural setting are also pockets of industrial precincts, of which are generally traversed by the rail corridor or key freight routes such as the Western Highway.
- Beyond the northern extent of the township suburban environs are large areas of nature conservation reserves, including historic conservation sites regarding Stawell's mining history, as well as recreational in the form of the golf club.
- Integral to the character and image of the Stawell Township is the 'Central Business District' (CBD) anchored by Main Street. The Street is lined by a mix of single and double storey, generally attached Victorian buildings with retail and commercial offerings.
- Contemporary commercial forms adopt large-format retail typologies behind the main street, such as Woolworths, sited with expansive surface car parking.
- Other larger building typologies generally occur on civic land uses such as education and healthcare, including the Stawell Regional Health hospital along Sloane Street.
- The broad character of built stock in Stawell's residential suburban areas comprises predominantly single storey, detached post-war dwellings, of brick veneer and weatherboard materials. There are a number of cases where more recent residential subdivision has occurred – resulting in more attached and semi-detached dwellings.
- Closer to the 'CBD,' more traditional residential building stock can be found in Victorian and Edwardian styles in streets such as Scallan Street.
- Scattered throughout the suburban residential area of Stawell are a number of vacant blocks and run down dwellings that indicate opportunity for infill housing development to occur. In recent years, Fisher Street has seen the subdivision of large allotments to create a number of infill opportunities on lot sizes commensurate with the existing pattern in the immediate surrounds.
- Seaby Street represents a ribbon of Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) heritage buildings, key to the journey between the Western Highway and the CBD. Near its corner with the Western Highway is a cluster of VHR and heritage buildings; the Former Pleasant Creek Court House and Former Literary & Scientific Institute buildings, adjacent to the Shire Hall building.

- Other VHR buildings along the Seaby Street corridor are Diamond House, the Commonwealth Memorial statue and Central Park of which the Grandstand is its most prominent feature. Central Park also has social and cultural significance, hosting the annual and long running Stawell Gift event over the Easter weekend.
- The other VHR building in the township is found in Patrick Street at the edge of the CBD; the Stawell Court House. It is a highly intact Victorian court building comprising the local Stawell sandstone from the nearby Heatherlie quarry. The same material was used in Melbourne's Parliament House.
- Prominent buildings in Main Street include the Town Hall, Post Office and a number of prominent, decorative single and double storey Victorian terrace buildings. The prominent feature of the Town Hall building is its clocktower and flag pole, which due to its height and township topography and wide road reserves, has an expansive viewshed through the town.
- The Township and its edges are dotted with structures and building remnants of the historic (and contemporary) gold mining practices.
- Some peripheries of the Stawell township are rounded out by industrial and business precincts which generally comprise large warehouse and shed forms. This includes the abattoirs occupying a large land holding to the town's northwest.
- Similarly, the Western Highway is lined with many car servicing and mechanic oriented businesses that in part, results in a roadside service built form character with buildings setback from the street behind car parking.
- It is noted that Stawell does not contain any heritage or character overlays or variations in zone schedules distinguishing built form areas that could identify areas with a particular character or heritage value.

Key Implications

- Heritage and historical buildings are important landmarks and serve as visual landmarks across the Township and through road corridors.
- Rows of attached terrace buildings mixed with civic buildings are important in defining the commercial and township core along Main Street (and immediately adjoining blocks).
- There are currently limited planning controls in Stawell that recognise and seek to protect areas or precincts that may have significant heritage and character features.



Main Street (CBD) is characterised by fine grain building stock



Views to church spires and the clock tower provide wayfinding



The VHR building in Patrick Street

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Built Form - Township

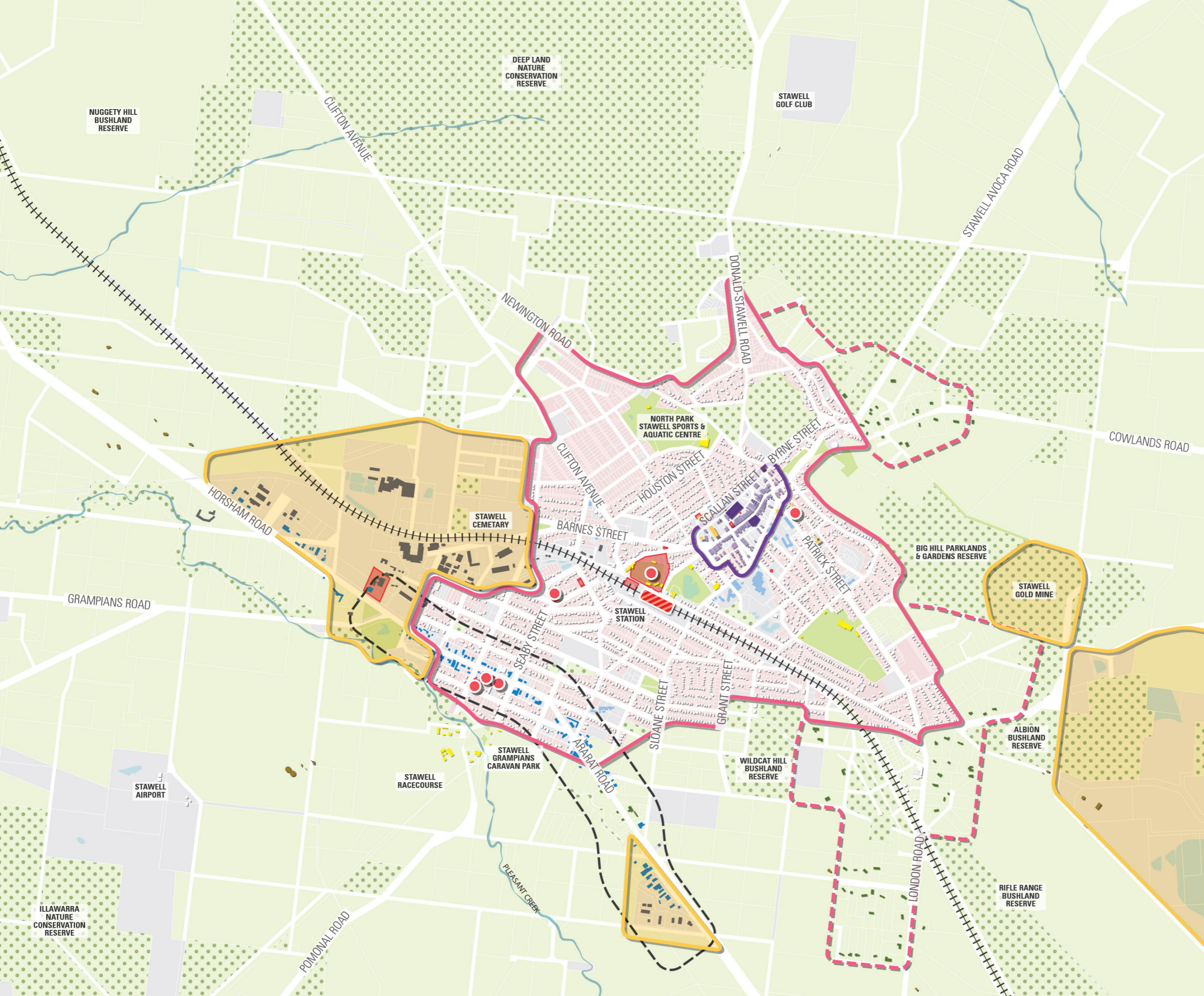
Legend

- UDF Extent 
- VHR Site 
- Heritage Overlay 

- Built Form Areas**
- Stawell Township Core 
- Residential Surrounds 
- Low Density Residential 
- Industry & Service 

- Built Form Typologies**
- Large Format Retail 
- Main Street Retail 
- Road Side Service 
- Rural Residential 
- Farming 
- Industrial 
- Institutional 
- Recreation 
- Civic 
- Dwelling 

- Surrounds**
- Public Open Space 
- Farming & Rural Living 
- Public Reserves 
- Train line 
- Train Station 



8.3 Built Form & Heritage

Western Highway

Key findings regarding the Urban Structure attributes of the Western Highway study area are as follows:

- The built form character in the Western Highway study area is mixed, but generally reflective of the land use pattern.
- Buildings throughout the Western Highway study area are typically all single storey, detached forms. While predominantly single storey buildings, they range in height depending on land use function.
- Mapping the built 'typologies' and broad 'character' areas, indicates that 5-character areas emerge. These are:
 - Industrial character area;
 - Mixed-rural character area;
 - Commercial character area;
 - Heritage character area; and
 - Residential character area.
- The broad nature of these mapped areas is acknowledged, but aims to roughly capture the experience along the Western Highway, influenced by building types. Building typologies identified within these character areas are warehouse forms, commercial forms, shop forms, dwelling forms and the less common civic forms.
- Warehouse/shed forms comprise large warehouse/shed structures that typically host manufacturing and light industrial uses. They are most commonly located in the south eastern portion of the study area, within the industrial and mixed-rural character areas. While mostly single storey in height, they are typically tall structures and more representative of 2-3 storey typical building heights.
- Smaller warehouse forms are also interspersed through the remainder of the study area, and are generally smaller west of the Seaby Street intersection. Warehouse forms are generally set back from their front boundaries to the Western Highway, allowing space for car parking and servicing.
- Commercial forms in the study area are buildings that comprise attributes of both the warehouse and shop forms. Spatially and typologically, they are broadly a transition between the two. Commercial forms comprise medium sized building footprints with a more public interface due to glazed frontages presenting the display of goods and services.
- Similarly to the warehouse forms, they are typically set back from the street to allow car parking and vehicle through-movement. Petrol stations and service businesses are included in this typology. They are most commonly located in the commercial character area, with others dispersed through the residential and mixed-rural character areas.

- Shop forms are less common along the Western Highway, and are broadly defined by smaller commercial/retail buildings that are typically built closer to the street interface than the larger commercial forms. They generally have a stronger relationship with pedestrian areas, with the display of goods in windows and access directly onto footpaths. They are common within the residential and commercial character areas of the study area.
- Dwelling forms are the residential buildings that are distributed through most of the Western Highway study area, except for the industrial character area to the south. The dwellings are mostly all single storey, detached buildings of brick and weatherboard materials. Between Playford and Sutherland Street, dwellings are set back 5-10m behind front gardens. South of Sutherland Street, dwellings are located on larger allotments but also sited toward the road reserve.
- The few 'civic forms' are located within the heritage character area on the southern side of the highway between Griffiths and Seaby Street and comprise the Historical Society building and the former shire hall building. They are distinct from other buildings within the study area, due to their heritage fabric and 'hall' typology.
- Within the study area are three of Stawell's nine sites (including on the Victorian Heritage Register. These are:
 - Former Literary & Scientific Institute (54 Longfield Street);
 - Former Pleasant Creek Court House (46-48 Longfield Street);
 - Former Police Superintendent's Residence (17 Leslie Street).

Key Implications

- The built form character along the Western Highway is mixed throughout, but broadly transitions between character areas defined by land use patterns and the layout of allotments and blocks.
- The highway study area is bookended by large warehouse buildings both to the north and south.
- Between Playford and Sutherland Street, building types and character merge with that of surrounding residential areas.
- Historic buildings are key to the image of the central area near Seaby Street.
- The presentation of buildings do not play a role in defining entrances or key routes into the township.



Heritage buildings near the Seaby Street intersection stand out along the Highway



Residential building fabric toward the north of the study area



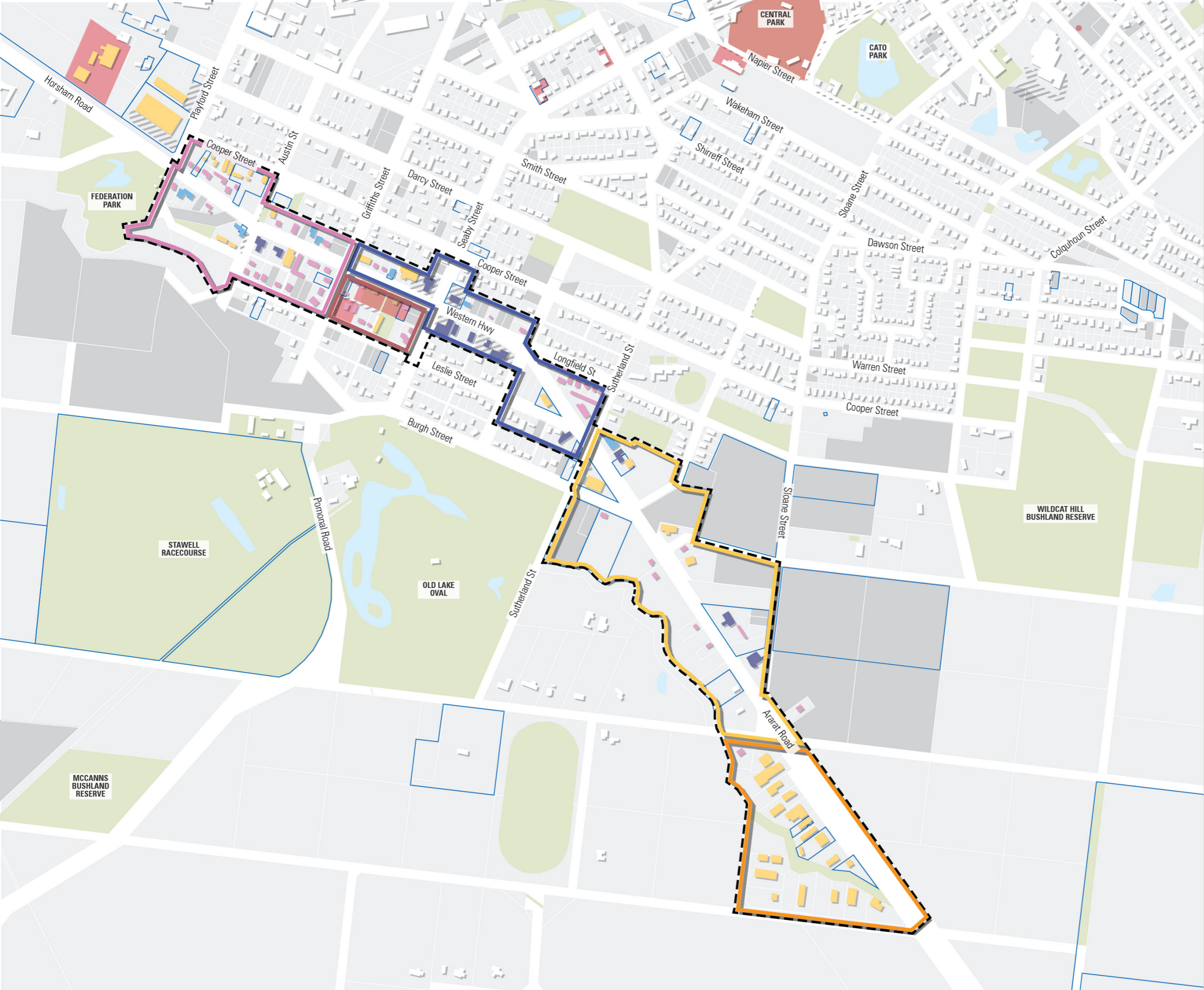
Buildings are commonly set behind car parking

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Built Form - Western Highway

Legend

- UDF Study Area 
- Warehouse/shed form 
- Commercial form 
- Shop form 
- Dwelling form 
- Civic form 
- Industrial character 
- Mixed character 
- Commercial character 
- Heritage character 
- Residential character 
- Vacant allotment 
- Surface car parking 
- Recent development application (>2015) 
- Heritage Overlay 



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8.4 Landscape, Environment & Public Realm

Township

Key findings regarding the Landscape & Environment attributes of the township study area are as follows:

- On approach to Stawell, the landscape setting is defined by gently undulating, open agricultural plains. Hills and ranges of the Grampians punctuate the open setting with sudden changes in the topographic landscape resulting in stark contrasts.
- Key approaches into the township including the Western Highway, Stawell-Avoca Road, Donald-Stawell Road, Grampians Road and Pomonal Road have segments of dense canopy tree-lined road reserves, resulting in an 'avenue' type of approach into the town.
- High points in the township and surrounds include the Big Hill Lookout, offering panoramic views across Stawell, within the Big Hill Parklands and Gardens Reserve. Atop the lookout is an observation pavilion where car parking and picnic facilities are also present. Looking south from the lookout, the horizon is the tall ridgeline of the Grampians which have an imposing presence in the otherwise expansive open setting, due to the contrast in topography.
- The lookout also provides a glimpse of the landscape character within the township. The view is dotted with buildings amidst the canopy cover of street trees and bushland reserves. The wide streets of the township including residential streets provide opportunity for wide grassed verges and street trees, while the generally low density building environs allow for vegetation plantings between buildings.
- Standing out in the view is the commercial core of the CBD, where tree density is lower due to attached terrace buildings and the more 'urban' character of Main Street and its immediate surrounds.
- Other high points occur in the broader setting in the Albion Bushland Reserve and the Deep Land Nature Conservation Reserve. On the lower plain in the setting is the Stawell Airport to the southwest of town.
- Most broadly, the landscape character of Stawell ranges between urban, suburban, rural, agricultural, conservation and public open space typologies.
- The core of the town in and surround the CBD represents the urban typology. This setting comprises a 'hard' environment with more paved surfaces that define the Main Street typology, including formal footpaths, sealed roads and large, sealed surface car parking areas. Street trees are still present, but generally more formal, within tree-grates or curb outstands near pedestrian crossings and in association with parallel parking. Ornamental gardens areas are also present – such as in the war memorial on a landscaped median at the convergence of Victoria Street with Main Street.
- The residential suburban setting is defined by the residential area radially binding the CBD. Due to the wide road reserves – typically of 20m to 30m profiles, grassed verges, footpaths and street trees are available on both sides of streets. Generally,

overhead powerlines are present to one side of the street. The wide streets allow for unmarked parallel parking, while properties generally all have driveways resulting in 1 vehicle crossover per property.

- Residential properties typically have generous front setbacks, with dwellings set between 5m-10m from the street. Front yards typically comprise lawn and garden areas; some with established canopy tree plantings. Therefore, the 'private realm' of the suburban areas contribute to the landscape setting of streets.
- Despite the wide street profiles, there is generally a mix in consistencies of tree plantings. For example, Shirreff Street (south of rail corridor) contains few street trees within the grassed verges. In contrast, the parallel Brown Street to the south comprises a far more treed setting – generally with 1 tree between vehicle crossovers.
- The residential rural setting comprises low density dwellings on large properties, which generally fall within the Rural Living Zone. These settings are generally positioned between the suburban residential context and the surrounding agricultural setting, resulting in a sense of transition between the two settings. Dwellings are generally set back further from street address, upwards of 50m. Property boundaries are commonly lined with vegetation and canopy trees, demarcating boundaries and offering privacy.
- The agricultural setting comprises the vast farming context that sprawls between townships in this region of Victoria. The landscape is largely cleared of vegetation and is dotted with dwellings and farming structures. 'Windrow' vegetation often lines property boundaries and paddock fencing, while native canopy trees follow the alignment of creeks and other watercourses.
- There are a number of significant environmental considerations surrounding the town due to the large areas of surrounding bushland and Pleasant Creek environs.
- The conservation setting comprises the many bushland reserves on the periphery of the township as well as in the surrounds – generally forming stark contrasts and transitions with the agricultural setting. Bushland reserves are commonly associated with other natural assets such as water as well as changes in topography – typically high points (hills and ranges).
- The range of bushland reserves that 'embrace' the town and the Pleasant Creek environs traversing the southern extent of the town are predominantly made up of the depleted Box Ironbark Forest Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC61). State government mapping identifies the vegetation within and the surrounding reserves as having high strategic biodiversity importance.
- A large portion of the study area is identified as having a high bushfire risk, and is therefore within a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) under the Planning Scheme. Sections of land along Pleasant Creek are also identified as being subject to the 1 in 100 year flooding event.



Main Street of the CBD comprises wide footpaths and street trees



A number of active and passive open spaces service the Township



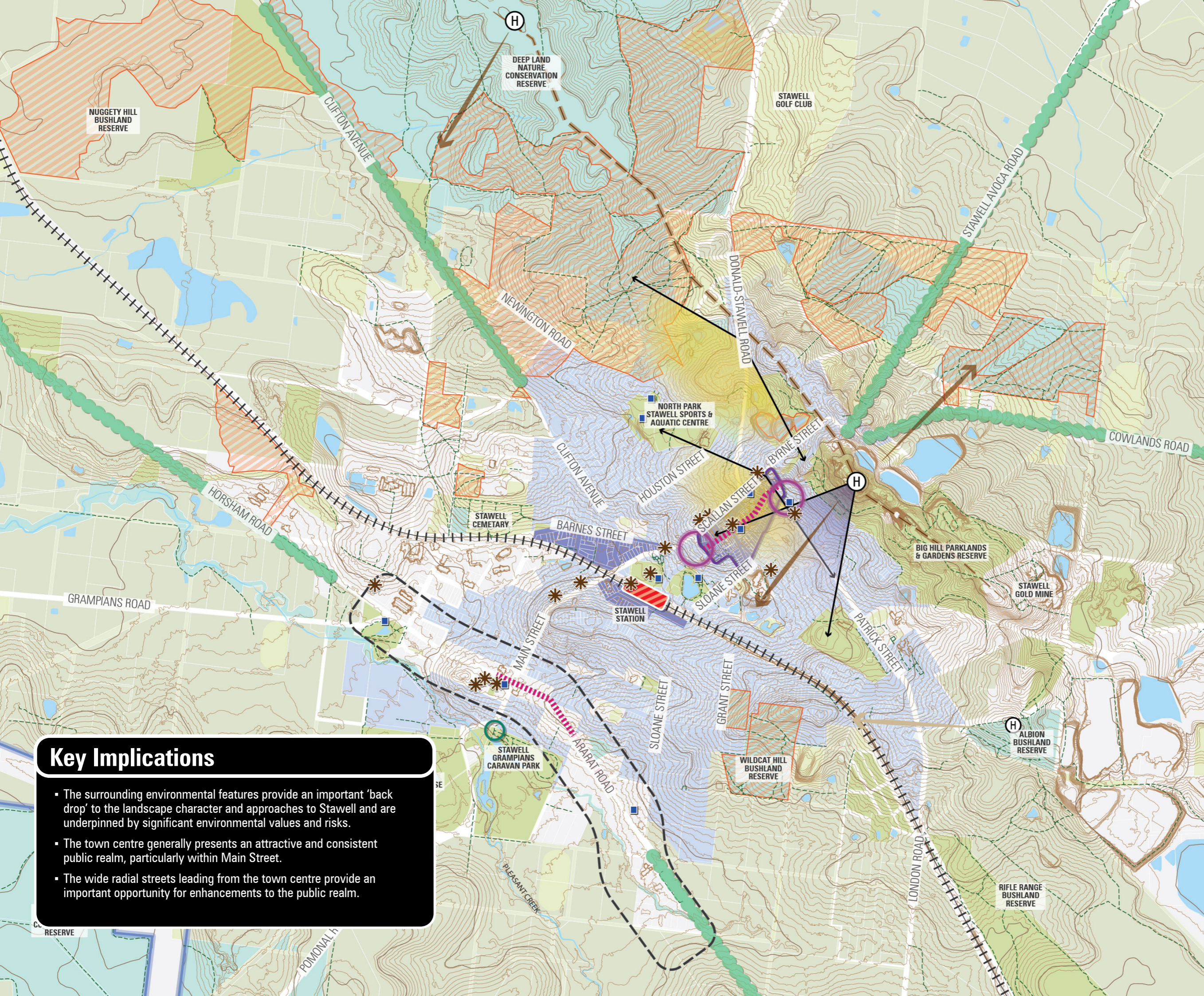
The imposing silhouette of the Grampians visible from Big Hill Lookout

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Landscape & Public Realm Township

Legend

- Stawell Town Centre
- Western Highway Precinct
- Activity Street Spine
- High Point
- Lookout
- Experiential Views
- Ridgeline
- Slope
- Pedestrian Tracks & Trails
- Vegetation Coverage
- Tree Lined Avenue
- Contour 1m
- Bushfire Prone Areas
- Urban
- Residential surrounds
- Rural & Farming
- Conservation
- Public Open Space
- Green Space
- Activity Node
- Caravan Park Entrance
- Heritage Sites
- Stawell Airport
- Train line
- Train Station
- Waterbody
- Public Toilets



Key Implications

- The surrounding environmental features provide an important 'back drop' to the landscape character and approaches to Stawell and are underpinned by significant environmental values and risks.
- The town centre generally presents an attractive and consistent public realm, particularly within Main Street.
- The wide radial streets leading from the town centre provide an important opportunity for enhancements to the public realm.

8.4 Landscape, Environment & Public Realm

Western Highway

Key findings regarding the Landscape & Environment attributes of the Western Highway study area are as follows:

- Overall, the Western Highway study area comprises an open setting, owed to the wide road reserve, low scale of adjoining built form and lack of canopy vegetation throughout the full extent. Beyond the northern and southern ‘portals,’ dense linings of mature, native vegetation along the road reserve contribute to more enclosed settings. Overhead powerlines are present along the full extent of the Western Highway study area, alternating to both sides of the street. They are located on the northern side of the road reserve between Sloane Street and Sutherland Street, then switch the southern side of the road reserve for the remaining north-eastern extent of the study area.
- Powerlines can limit the viability of large trees in road reserves, which are often used to define town entries and main roads.
- The profile of the Western Highway road reserve is generous, accommodating grassed verges which are particularly wide at the northern and southern extent of the study area. These contribute to an overall ‘green’ character and accommodate mature canopy plantings, particularly between Sloane Street and the southern entrance to the study area.
- Along the centre of the highway precinct streetscape, e.g. around the Seaby Street intersection, grassed verges provide a spatial buffer between pedestrian areas and the road carriageway but generally do not accommodate tree plantings of vegetation.
- In parts of the Western Highway study area, the landscape area of the corridor is largely ‘borrowed’ from the visual amenity of landscaping in the front setbacks of private properties. In the residential context, this is in the form of garden areas while across more infusorial and commercial land uses – some landscape setbacks accommodate canopy trees and mulched vegetation beds.
- A number of vacant allotments, as well as large allotments with minimal building footprint or buildings set back from the street interface, contribute to the open setting along the Western Highway. An example of where this open setting is emphasised is at the Seaby Street intersection, due to the large vacant allotment at the southwestern corner and Service Station and McDonalds buildings set back from their street frontages.
- Established landscape attributes are key to forming terminal views within and to outside the study area. Residential streets such as Griffiths, Foster and Longfield Street are truncated by public open space or bushland areas. Internally, the main bend in the Highway at Longfield Street creates a view terminus with a cluster of mature eucalyptus trees planted in the verge.
- There is one landscaped central median is at the approach to the Seaby Street intersection. The median accommodates grasses, flagpoles and opportunity for pedestrians to cross (unsignalized), key to the visual setting of the intersection.

- A number of diverse landscape settings are found within and surrounding the highway study area. These are:
 - The southern boundary of the Stawell residential area to the north;
 - Open space/parkland network to the south;
 - Farming land and rural living to the south and east;
 - Riverine setting of Pleasant Creek to the west.
- Further southwest, the imposing ridgeline of the Grampians punctuates the otherwise expansive and generally flatter setting.
- The VHR Heritage buildings along the Western Highway between Seaby and Griffiths Street are a distinct contrast to the predominantly roadside service and industrial character further east.
- The VHR building sites present formal garden areas within the study area – presenting to both front and rear interfaces. To the rear is public open space and car parking associated with the civic functions of the buildings.
- The topography of the Western Highway corridor is generally flat, with gentle undulations – rising approximately midway at the Sutherland Street intersection and falling again between Griffiths Street and Austin Street. The topography contributes to the arrival experience within the town.
- There is a gradual rise in landform from the southeast at the commencement of large industry/commercial sites to the crest at Foster Street before the sweeping road bend. The bend provides an important viewshed toward the main intersection into the town centre along Seaby Street.
- The highway topography gradually declines at Griffiths Street toward Pleasant Creek at Federation park
- At the northern edge of the extent is Federation Park. It comprises a loop car park with toilet and picnic facilities. The park’s wetland setting feeds into the Stawell Rail Trail following Pleasant Creek.

Key Implications

- There is limited canopy tree planting in road reserves (such as Seaby Street) contributing to the arrival experience through the township.
- There is a distinct change in landscape character along the journey of the highway. The southeast exhibits a rural, bush landscape character, shifting to a township garden setting to the northwest.
- Views to the Grampians can be experienced between vacant allotments at key intersections. These views contribute to wayfinding and identify of the town.
- Topographic changes along the highway contribute to the arrival experience into Stawell.



Federation Park provides passive parklands and a rest area



Wide grassed verges are common along the Highway through the township



















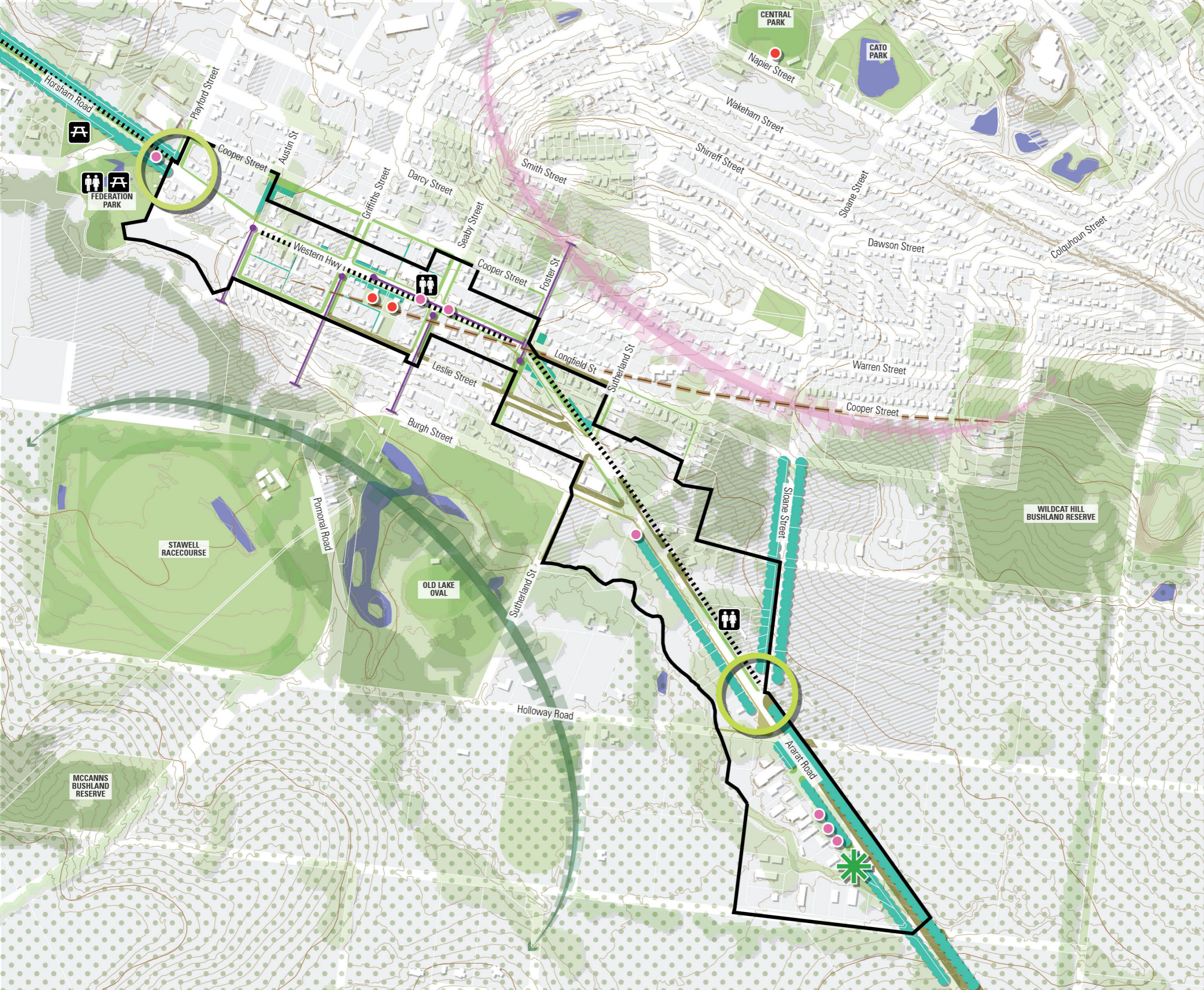
Signage provides some gesture of entry into the Township

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Landscape & Public Realm
Western Highway

Legend

- UDF Study Area 
- Open Space 
- Agricultural surrounds 
- Contours (1m - 10m) 
- Ridgeline 
- Tree lined roads 
- 'Green' township entry 
- Grassed verges 
- Informal grassed verges 
- Powerlines 
- Tree canopy cover 
- Landscape terminal view 
- Heritage landmark 
- Signage/wayfinding 
- Toilet facilities 
- Picnic facilities 



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8.5 Access & Movement

Township

This section should be read in conjunction with the Transport Findings outlined at Appendix 1.

Key findings regarding the Access & Movement attributes of the Stawell Township are as follows:

- Stawell is well connected to regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne via the Western Highway, skirting the southern extent of the township. The Western Highway provides eastern connections to Ararat, Ballarat and Melbourne, as well as western connections to Horsham and Adelaide. The highway is of national significant; a key segment in the Melbourne-Adelaide corridor.
- The road network and hierarchy of the township is influenced by the historical mining routes. Many residential streets are therefore wide, upwards of 30m, accommodating two-way traffic movement and parallel parking to both sides. Residential and commercial urban blocks are commonly divided by rear laneways providing access to properties.
- From the Western Highway are a number of routes into the Stawell Township. The most signposted route is Seaby Street which provides one of the most direct links to the CBD as it traverses into Scallan and Main Streets. The 30m wide Seaby Street represents the most 'urban' entrance into town, consistently lined by residential dwellings and Central Park, before transitioning into the commercial core of the township.
- From the southern approach to the township, London Road provides connection to the eastern and northern extent of the township as it meanders into Patrick Street, eventually intersecting with Sloane and Main Streets, terminating at Scallan Street. The 30m wide London Road is a more 'rural' entrance, as it is largely bound by agricultural paddocks, low density residential areas and bushland reserve before transitioning into the outer suburban areas of the township.
- Further along the Western Highway is the Sloane Street intersection, a relatively inconspicuous route given the lack of signage directing traffic into town. The 20m wide route shares both characteristics of the 'urban' Seaby Street connection and the more 'rural' London Road connection. It initially traverses through an agricultural setting.
- Approaching from the northwest along the Western Highway, Playford Street provides connection into the township as it traverses into Lake Road and eventually Barnes Street. The 30m wide Playford Street represents a more industrial and servicing connection and it passes through large commercial and industrial land holdings.
- Alternatively, secondary and tertiary connections from the Western Highway are available including Griffiths and Sutherland Street.

- It is noteworthy that there are currently no signalised traffic intersections or pedestrian operated crossings in the Stawell township, including at key entrances from the Western Highway.
- Within the commercial core of the township, streets are generally well serviced with pedestrian infrastructure with paths to both sides of road reserves, with several pedestrian crossings through Main Street. A number of mid-block pedestrian connections increase pedestrian permeability between Main Street and car parking areas to the rear.
- In the surrounding residential suburban areas, pedestrian infrastructure is mixed. Some residential streets have footpaths to both sides, some are one sided, and some have neither. However, given the wide profile of streetscapes that generally comprise wide grassed verges, pedestrian movement remains viable through these streets.
- Other than the Western Highway, a number of other key entrances into the township form a radial network that provides connectivity in all directions. This includes Grampians Road and Pominal Road intersecting the Western Highway connecting to Halls Gap and Pomonal to the southwest. Donald-Stawell Road and Stawell-Avooca Road provide connectivity to north and north-eastern townships.
- Public Transport is an important form of connectivity for Stawell to Melbourne and Regional Victoria, via V-Line rail services through the rail corridor, and V-Line coach services operating via the Western Highway. Additionally, a local bus route provides internal public transport options within Stawell, providing connectivity between residential areas, health and education institutes and the CBD.
- There appears to be limited cycling infrastructure throughout the township.
- The rail corridor also forms a segment of the Melbourne-Adelaide overland rail passenger service and accommodates regional and national transport of freight.
- Stawell has an airport which offers another port of access to the township, which is predominantly used for general aviation purposes.

Key Implications

- The town is well connected to the surrounding region by the nationally significant Western Highway.
- Lack of a clearly signed main route to the town centre from the Western Highway.
- Lack of signalised traffic intersections and pedestrian operated crossings within the whole town, including key entrance points.
- Minimal cycling infrastructure is evident throughout the town.



A pedestrian lane within the CBD



A pedestrian crossing providing safety and permeability through the CBD




















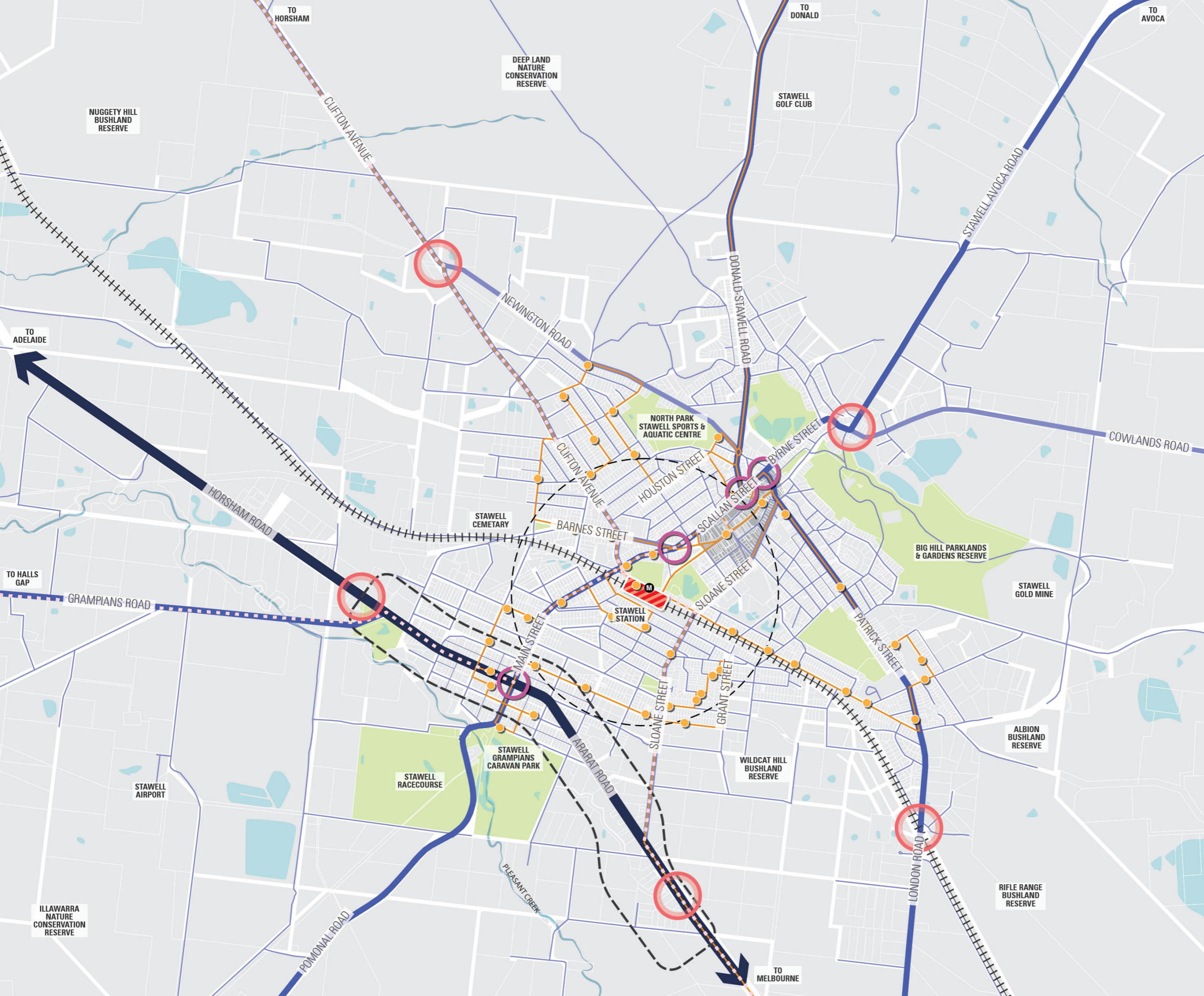
Stawell Train Station

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Movement - Township

Legend

- Stawell Town Centre 
- Western Highway Precinct 
- Key Entrances 
- Key Intersections 
- Western Highway 
- Key Routes 
- Secondary Routes 
- Township Road Network 
- Train Line 
- Train Station 
- Train Station Entrance 
- 800m Train Station Catchment 
- Regional Coach Route 
- Bus Route 
- Bus Stop 
- Public Open Space 
- Waterbody 



8.5 Access & Movement

Western Highway

Key findings regarding the Access & Movement attributes of the Western Highway study area are as follows:

- The Western Highway is the primary access corridor through the township accommodating through-traffic between Ararat to the southeast and Horsham to the northwest.
- The road reserve of the highway is consistently 30m wide. However, the carriageway width varies depending on number of lanes. It is narrowest where it accommodates two traffic lanes (8m), south of Foster Street. It is widest at the Seaby Street intersection (20m) where four lanes of traffic and turning lanes are present.
- Primary connections into the Stawell Township are provided at the Sloane Street and Seaby Street intersections. These are not signalised intersections but provide the most direct connections to the township.
- The Seaby Street intersection is the most legible connection to the township from the Western Highway – comprising median flagpoles and township signage marking it as a key connection. The Sloane Street intersection as a route into town is not as well marked, with limited signage and intersection infrastructure.
- The study area accommodates segments of local bus routes that traverse through residential streets as well as more direct routes via Seaby and Sloane Streets.
- The Western Highway also hosts the 'V-Line' coach service offering regional connections to Melbourne and other rural townships. In this network, connectivity is provided to Stawell and Stawell Railway Station via Seaby and Sloane Streets.
- The Stawell train station is located approximately 900m from the Seaby Street intersection, generally within a walking distance of residential properties within the UDF study area.
- There is generally limited pedestrian infrastructure within the Western Highway study area. Pedestrian paths are provided on both sides of the road reserve between the northern portal and Sutherland Street – approximately the midpoint of the study area. Between there and the southern portal, no pedestrian paths are provided.
- The distribution of pedestrian paths generally accord with land use patterns along the Western Highway – not provided along the more industrial oriented southern end of the corridor where pedestrian demand is possibly more limited.
- The Seaby Street intersection is the only intersection in the study area where pedestrian paths are provided on all approaches to the intersection – further emphasising it as a critical junction for both vehicles and pedestrians.
- The provision of pedestrian paths in surrounding residential streets is mixed. While some streets have pedestrian paths provided on at least one side of the reserve, such as Griffiths, Longfield and Sutherland Streets, others rely on wide grassed verges and the carriageway for pedestrian movement.

- Between Griffiths and Sutherland Streets, rear laneway are common in the residential context, providing rear access away from the Western Highway frontage.
- The presence of formal bicycle infrastructure in the Western Highway study area is limited. Toward the northern end, Grampians Road provides connection the Grampians Rail Trail, following the alignment of segments of Pleasant Creek.
- Despite the generous road profile of the Western Highway including wide road shoulders, no marked bicycle lanes are provided. However, wide road shoulders could accommodate bicycle movement, although traffic and freight movement may be a deterrent to bicycle movement.
- The car parking condition along the Western Highway is also mixed, with the highest concentration of on-road parallel parking found between Griffiths and Seaby Streets. A number of properties (generally larger commercial and industrial allotments) contain customer/staff parking in street setback areas.
- In addition, larger public parking areas are found at Federation Park – containing roadside toilet facilities, and to the rear of the historic Council buildings along the Western Highway.
- Broadly, two 'zones' emerge within the study area – one with some provision for pedestrian activity and others with little to none. This is influenced by footpaths but also factors that influence the pedestrian experience including allotment sizes, land use patterns, building types and street setback distances.

Key Implications

- Seaby Street is the most significant intersection along the Highway providing direct access into the CBD.
- There is limited signage or demarcation of key routes into the CBD except for at Seaby Street.
- Noting the stone wall signs at the northern and southern highway entrances, there are limited entry 'gestures' celebrating the arrival into Stawell.
- While it is expected that a highway environment would be car oriented - there is limited infrastructure dedicated to safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity.
- The provision of rear access lanes are important in providing alternate vehicle access options to property fronts that compete with highway traffic movement.
- The carriageway varies in width along the highway, occupying only 8m of the 30m wide road reserve in its narrowest segments.



The Seaby Street intersection is a major connection into the CBD



The carriageway is widest toward the Seaby Street intersection





















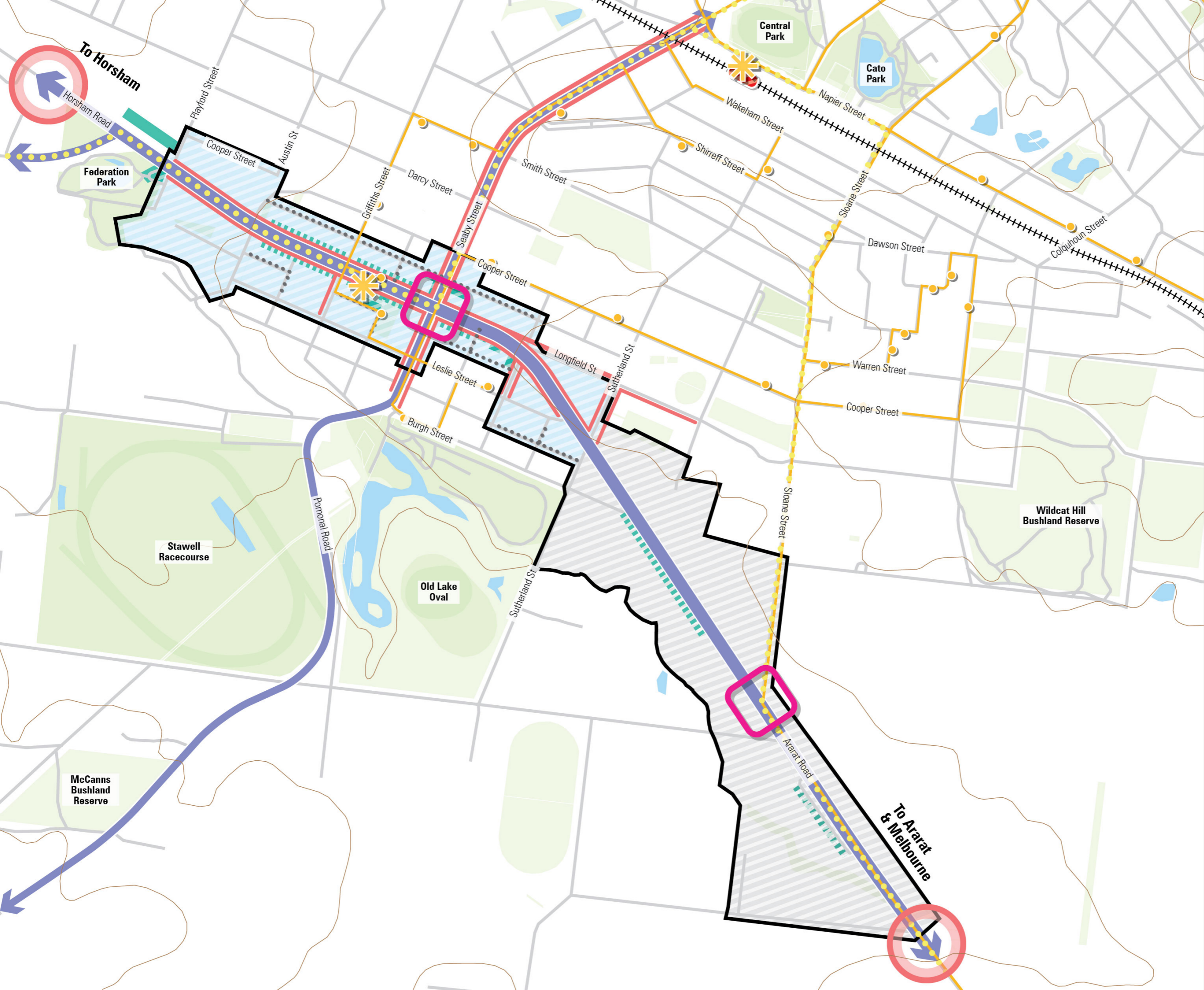
Laneways are common to the rear of properties fronting the highway

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Access & Movement
Western Highway

Legend

- UDF Study Area 
- Highway 
- Arterial road 
- Local street 
- Laneway 
- Train corridor 
- Train station 
- Regional coach route 
- Local bus route 
- Regional coach stop 
- Local bus stop 
- Signed township entrance 
- Key highway intersection 
- Pedestrian footpath 
- Car parking 
- Parallel parking 
- Pedestrian provision 
- Limited pedestrian provision 



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8.6 Community Infrastructure

A high level assessment has been undertaken of the available community infrastructure in Stawell. Further details of which will be confirmed through consultation with the community to provide a better understanding of the service provisions in the town.

An audit of existing community infrastructure including recreation and passive open space facilities has been undertaken.

The table opposite lists the community infrastructure found within Stawell.

Benchmarks ratios for the provision of community infrastructure are outlined within precinct planning guidelines (Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas) prepared by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA). These benchmarks are intended for application in Melbourne’s growth areas but provide an indication of the types of facilities that should be provided per population numbers and can be used to provide a basic assessment of ‘gaps’ within the provision of community infrastructure.

The table provides an analysis of available community infrastructure within Stawell. Given Stawell acts as a regional centre, the analysis has been based on the 2016 Stawell district population of 8,109 people in the Stawell district.

It is highlighted that these benchmarks provide a high-level assessment only. It does not assess the adequacy, acceptability or accessibility of the current service provision nor incorporate specific local requirements. It should be used as a general guide only.

Key Implications

- Based on a high-level assessment, Stawell appears to be well provided with a range of community infrastructure with some facilities available that would usually be found in much larger settlements.
- A civic node is situated along Patrick Street consisting of Grampians Community Health, the library, police station and Magistrates Court.
- There is a significant range of active and passive open space opportunities underpinned by Central Park and North Park.
- A range of land that appears to be publicly owned bushland reserves are in a residential zone.
- The range of services available situates the town well to accommodate further population growth.





















Community Infrastructure in Stawell	
Facility Type	Facility
School	Stawell Primary School (Government) Stawell West Primary School (Government) Skene Street Specialist School St Patricks School Stawell Secondary College
Kindergarten	Marrang Kindergarten Aussie Kindies Early Learning Stawell Cooinda Kindergarten
Active Open Space	North Park Recreation Reserve
Passive Open Space	Big Hill Parklands and Gardens Reserve Central Park Cato Park Wildcat Hill Bushland Reserve Stawell Recreation and Drainage Reserve Deep Lead Nature Conservation Reserve Illawarra Nature Conservation Reserve
Recreation Facilities	Stawell Athletic Club Stawell Sports and Aquatic Club Stawell Skate Park North Park Tennis Courts Stawell Bowling Club
Community and Cultural Facilities	Entertainment Centre (Stawell Town Hall) Stawell Library – WRLC Stawell Neighbourhood House 1st Stawell Scout Hall Stawell Arboretum Stawell Gallery (Pleasant Creek Historic Precinct)
Health Facilities	Stawell Regional Health Grampians Community Health Stawell Hearing Clinic Stawell Maternal & Child Health
Emergency and Law and Order Services	Stawell Magistrates Court Stawell Police Station Stawell State Emergency Service Stawell CFA

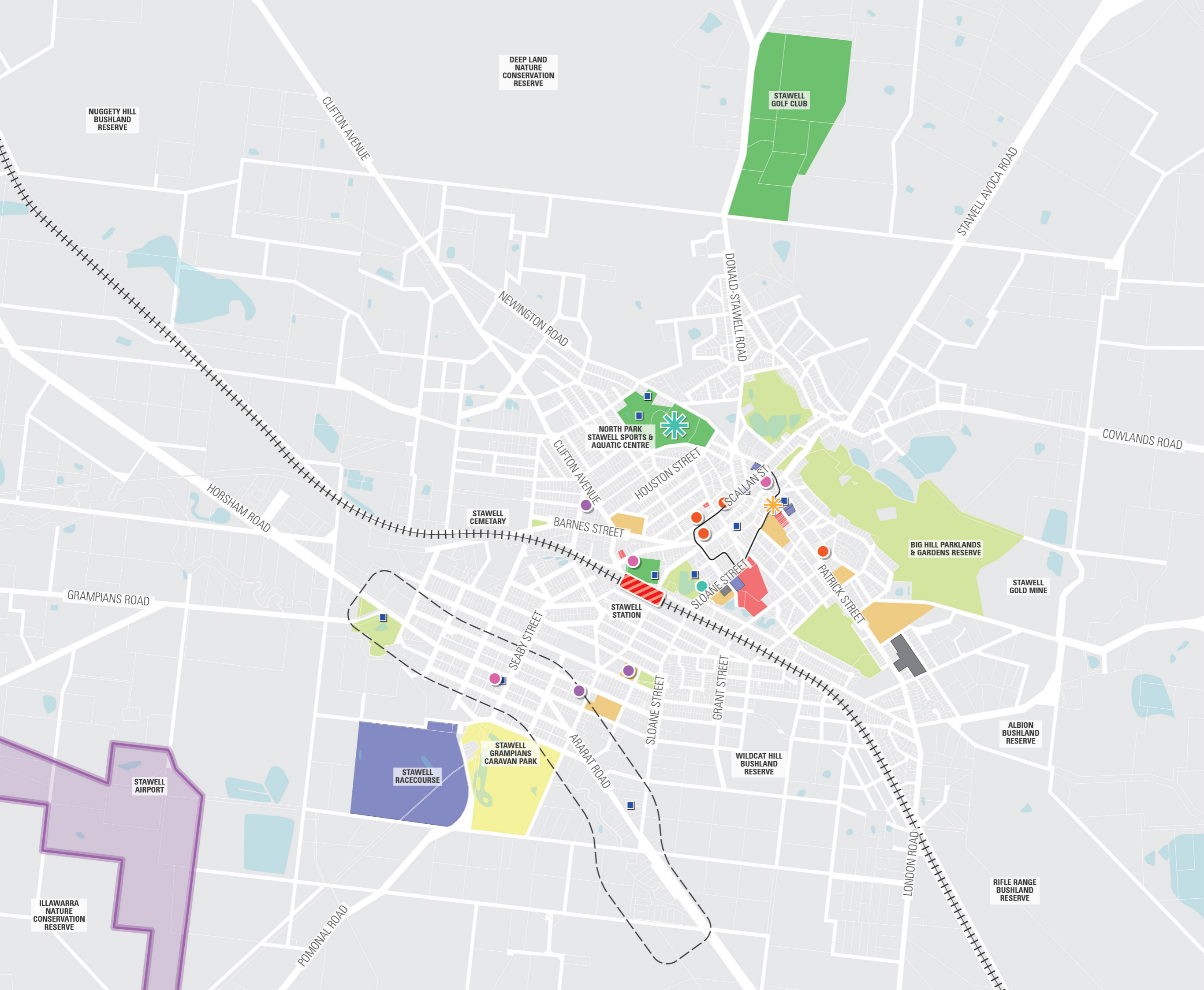
Assessment Against Provision Benchmarks			
Facility / Service	Recommended Provision Level (per resident)	Current Provision	Adequacy
Library	1 per 30,000-60,000 people	1	Above benchmark
Neighbourhood House Program	1 per 20,000 people	1	Meets benchmark
Multi-Purpose Community Centre	1 per 8,000 to 10,000 people	2	Above benchmark
Community Meeting Spaces	1x 101-200 people venue per 8,000 people	409 at Town Hall	Above benchmark
Government Second-ary School	1x Government secondary school per 25,000-30,000 people	1	Meets benchmark
Government Primary School	1x Government primary school per 8,000-10,000 population	2	Above benchmark
Kindergarten	1x 4 year old kindergarten facility per 10,000 people	3	Above benchmark
Maternal and Child Health Centre	1x facility per 16,000 people	1	Meets benchmark
Senior’s Groups	Access to 1 large multi-purpose meeting space per 8,000 to 10,000 people		
Youth Facilities	Youth friendly spaces de-signed as part of multi-purpose council community centres (1 Centre per 8,000 people)		
Arts and Cultural Facilities	1x multi-purpose community centre per 8,000 people	2	Meets benchmark
Multi-purpose Aquatic Leisure Centre	1x Council Aquatic Leisure Centre per 30,000 – 60,000 people	1	Above benchmark
Low order Passive Open Space Reserves	0.7 to 1 ha of passive open space per 1,000 people		Above benchmark
Active Open Space Reserves	2.0 ha of active open space (excluding golf courses) per 1,000 people	Over 80ha	Above benchmark
Tennis Courts	1 x 2 court (free to the public) facility (no pavilion) per 25,000 to 35,000 people	1	Above benchmark
Netball Courts	1 x 2 court outdoor netball facility per 16,000 people		Above benchmark
Lawn Bowls	1 lawn bowls facility (4 greens) per 40,000 people	1	Above benchmark

Stawell Structure Plan & Western Highway UDF

Community Infrastructure

Legend

- Stawell Township Core 
- UDF Extent 
- Active Open Space 
- Passive Open Space 
- Caravan Parks 
- Education 
- Health 
- Aged Care / Retirement 
- Other 
- Churches 
- Kindergarten / Childcare 
- Playground 
- Public Toilets 
- Gallery / Museum 
- Library 
- Stawell Sports & Aquatic Centre 
- Airport 
- Train line 
- Train Station 
- Waterbody 



APPENDIX 1:
Transport Input
- Martyn Group





Stawell Structure Plan and Western Highway Urban Design Framework Discussion Paper – Transport Input

Martyn Group
May 2020

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1 Context and existing network use

1.1 Existing travel behaviour

Australian Census data represents one of the only reliable, consistent data sets providing insight into travel behaviour trends across regional communities. However, the data is limited to high level quantitative data on respondents travel to work on a specific day of the year and offers little in the way of support or the qualitative data required for strong evidenced based transport planning.

Analysis of the available data related to method of travel to work of the residents in Stawell on the day of the Census, the most common methods of travel to work for employed people were: Car, as driver 68.7%, Car, as passenger 5.7% and Walked only 5.1%. Other common responses were Worked at home 3.3% and Truck 0.9%. On the day, 0.7% of employed people used public transport as at least one of their methods of travel to work.

The major differences in persons between the method of travel to work of Stawell and Victoria were:

- A larger percentage of persons who travelled by car (as driver and passenger) with a total of 74.4% compared to 65.8%.
- A slightly smaller percentage of persons who worked at home (3.3% compared to 4.6%)

Car ownership of the households in Stawell (State Suburbs), 37.1% of occupied private dwellings had one registered motor vehicle garaged or parked at their address, 33.5% had two registered motor vehicles and 16.6% had three or more registered motor vehicles, which is close to the Victorian average. It is noted that 7.4% of households do not have access to a motor vehicle.

The relatively low percentage of non-car-based travel means that improvements to public and active transport connections within the precinct hold potential to support a greater mode shift away from cars for workers and residents.

2 Policy and Strategic Direction

State Government and Council policy documents provide guidance on the appropriate type, scale and density of land use change and development within the study area. A range of investigations and studies have also been commissioned in recent years by Council. Along with available data sources, this information contributes to an understanding of the issues and opportunities for Stawell.

A summary of the policy documentation and previous study findings relevant in the context of integrated transport and land use planning is presented below:

2.1 State Policy Guidance

2.1.1 Transport Integration Act 2010

The Transport Integration Act is the primary transport statute for Victoria. The Act promotes a triple bottom line approach to decision making about transport and land use and requires that all transport agencies work together to achieve an integrated and sustainable transport system, and that land use agencies take account of transport issues in land use decisions.

The Act:

- provides a framework for integrated and sustainable transport policy and operations

- recognises that the transport system should be conceived and planned as a single system performing multiple tasks rather than separate transport modes
- integrates land use and transport planning and decision-making by extending the framework to land use agencies whose decisions can significantly impact on transport

The Act forms an overarching legislative framework for transport related state planning policies and has been integrated within the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP).

2.1.2 Movement and Place in Victoria – Department of Transport 2019

This document sets out an overview of the theory and application of a movement and place approach to integrated transport and land use planning, and steps through the four modules in the Movement and Place Framework.

Through this document, State Government recognises that in order to respond to increasing demand for road space brought about by population growth and change, a new approach to designing, planning and delivering a modern transport system that meets the increasing needs of people and businesses whilst creating and improving places is required.

The document states that fundamental to movement and place thinking is recognising that streets perform multiple functions. Transport links not only move people, goods and services, they also serve as key places and destinations in their own right. There is a natural tension

between these two functions. As a movement corridor, every link aims to minimise travel time and keep people and goods moving. Contrarily as a destination, it aims to increase visitor dwell time.

2.2 Council Adopted Plans

2.2.1 Northern Grampians Shire Council Plan – 2017 - 2021

This plan sets out the key objectives and priorities for Northern Grampians Shires Council over a 4-year period (2017 - 2021). This simplified Plan focuses on achieving one of two objectives – improving the social and economic viability of the shire or delivering targeted projects and core services.

The Plan contains the following strategies:

- Economic strategy
- Social, community and environment strategy
- Emergency and risk strategy
- Data and information strategy
- Waste strategy
- Asset strategy
- Red tape reduction strategy
- Financial sustainability strategy

The Council Plan also contains a Strategic Resource Plan which outlines the resources, both financial and non-financial, required to enable the Council Plan.

2.3 Council Commissioned Investigations

2.3.1 Draft Western Stawell Business Precinct Master Plan 2014 - Report (December Draft)

The draft Masterplan addresses Access and Connectivity in Section 5.3. The findings and proposals are still relevant and provide useful guidance for the Structure Plan and UDF project, as summarised below and referenced throughout this document.

Challenges

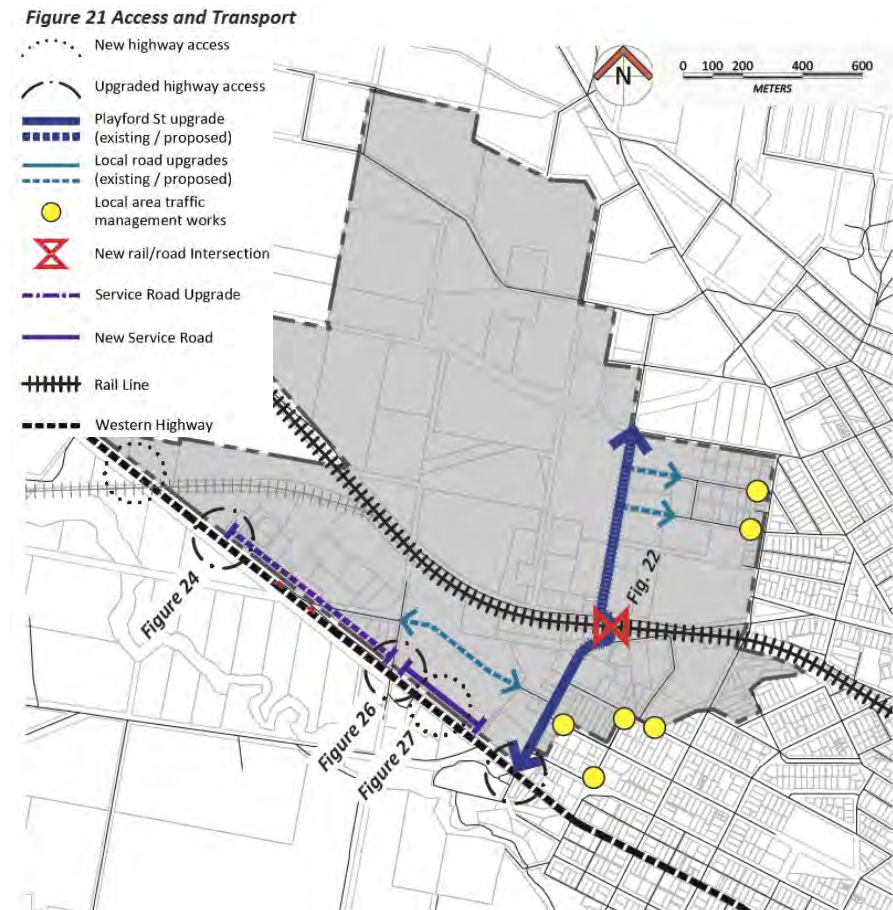
- The existing at-grade crossing of the rail line at Lake Road is unsafe and needs to be addressed. Options exist to relocate the crossing further west, which would result in not only a safer and more efficient road network for freight and passenger vehicles, but it would improve the operational efficiency of the rail line.
- Aspects of the existing access to the service road along the Western Highway are unsafe and need to be addressed. This is an important business address for Stawell, and it is important that access to this area is both efficient and safe for workers and visitors.
- Realising the economic potential of the former Pleasant Creek Hospital site will require improvements to its access onto the Western Highway. Such improvements need to address safety and efficiency considerations for users of the Western highway and nearby roads.

Opportunities

- Improve connectivity in the local road network, including extensions to Harris Lane, Coates Lane, Mary and Playford Streets.
- Options exist to use local area traffic management treatments to minimise the potential or commercial traffic entering nearby local residential streets.

The recommended actions of the draft Masterplan are presented in map form at Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Draft Western Stawell Business Precinct Master Plan 2014



2.4 Other reports

- 2.4.1 Grampians RDV Region Cycling and Trails Infrastructure Business and Master Plan, September 2018

This Master Plan was prepared for Regional Development Victoria to consider all cycling formats, as well as the range of potential visitors to the Grampians RDV region, to help establish the region as a premier tourism destination for cycling and trail related experiences.

The Master Plan aims to encourage cycle tourism by enhancing existing, and developing new, products and experiences that improve and expand the cycling experience within the region; therefore, dispersing visitors further and raising awareness of destinations.

The Master Plan recognises that Stawell is near the Grampians National Park and provides a good base for road cyclists wishing to explore the region. There are numerous quiet roads around Stawell that are utilised for cycling which has led to high participation in the local community. The findings of the Master Plan are further addressed in the cycling section of this document.

3 Issues and Opportunities

Presented below is a summary of the key issues and opportunities identified from background documentation review, investigations, and analysis.

3.1 Integrated Transport and Land Use Planning

Any proposed or anticipated change to land use driven by new development, demographic change or infrastructure investment is likely to have an effect on the local patterns of access and demand on the transport and street network. Such changes have implications on the

level of accessibility for existing residents and those visiting for work or leisure, as well as standards of living for the future Stawell community.

It is anticipated that traffic volumes and demand will continue to slowly increase with development in and around Stawell and the surrounding regional area. For Stawell to develop in a sustainable way and successfully provide an access network and public realm that can meet future travel demands and preferences, a greater emphasis must be placed on sustainable modes, addressing barriers to movement, and access management.

State Government recommends a movement and place approach to recognise, plan for and manage the range of competing demands on roads and streets. This way of thinking means that when we plan and develop the transport network, we need to consider the breadth of community needs, expectations and aspirations for the places they live and the roads and streets they pass through. The Movement and Place approach is considered to offer progressive ways of working so that a variety of considerations and outcomes in land-use and transport planning are better integrated.

Movement and Place principles will be an important input to guide identification and prioritisation of transport actions and inform the Structure Plan. This approach will enable a focus on specific components of the network which will come under the greatest pressure to accommodate a number of competing demands.

It is anticipated that, to a large extent, the majority of street space within the study area will continue to function as it currently does, minimising disruption and change for the existing community and trade

within the centre. However, as has become clear through the initial issue identification stage, there are key aspects of and locations on the network which may need to be managed in a different way to enable and promote the future success of the town.

3.2 Movement and Access

Access to/from and within the Stawell study area is influenced by a range of factors including:

- The Adelaide-Melbourne train line running southeast – northwest through Stawell, creating a strong physical barrier to movement and access.
- The Western Highway and implications of the ongoing upgrade project which, once completed, will mean Stawell is the closest town to Melbourne that Highway traffic will drive through (and not be diverted around).
- Seaby Street (Stawell – Avoca Road), Alfred Street/Darlington Road (Donald - Stawell Road) and Patrick Street (Ararat – Stawell Road) are all arterial roads on the State Declared Road Network. While the arterial road linkages provide direct regional connections to/from Stawell, they are also highly utilised and carry a significant volume of through traffic without an origin or destination in the area for the wider region. This through traffic can also generate increased traffic volumes on Stawell's local road networks and create traffic congestion.
- Intersections - Vehicle access to the town is concentrated at the key road intersections of Western Highway/Seaby Road, Western Highway/Sloane Street and Western Highway/Playford

Street which could be considered the key gateways to the precinct.

- A street network that generally prioritises car traffic and parking and incorporates short sections of marked on-street cycle lanes.
- Areas of at grade car parking which do not have allocated pedestrian space or walkways through and may present safety concerns in the evening due to lack of activity and not overlooked.

3.2.1 Perceived Barriers

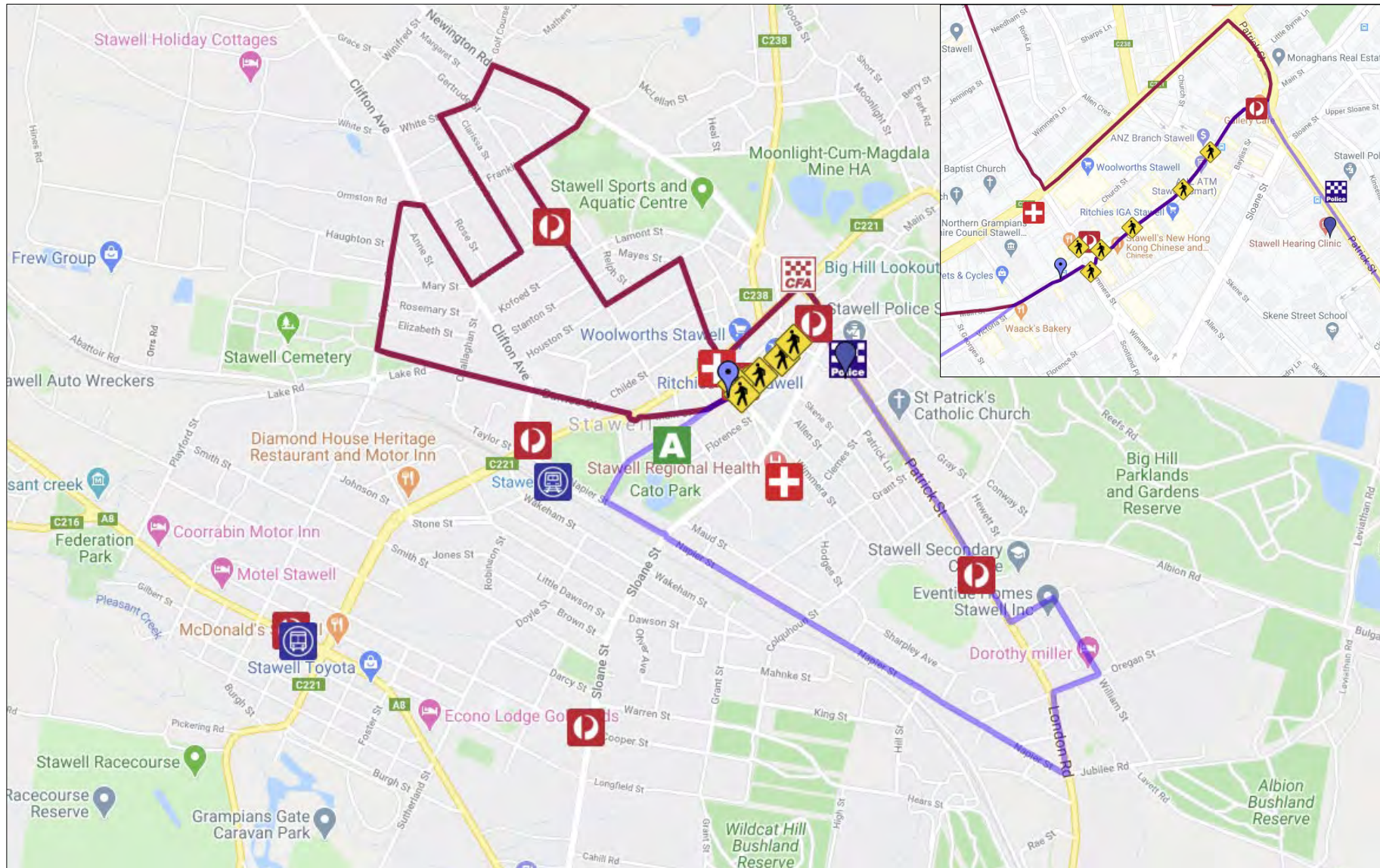
Along with the physical barriers to access, it is also important to consider the wide ranges of ages, experiences and abilities of network users, and the impact or existence of perceived barriers which can be created by a range of urban design and network factors. The effect of these barriers on movement and access patterns can be just as significant as physical barriers and within the study area are likely to include:

- Pedestrian network – proximity to fast moving traffic and heavy vehicles, areas of intermodal conflict, areas with poor lighting or not overlooked (ie open space, at grade car parking), overgrown vegetation, access to DDA compliant facilities including signalised crossing points, shelter or shade, wayfinding or orientation features.
- Cyclists – proximity to fast moving traffic and heavy vehicles, access to separated facilities, end of trip facilities, surface conditions, behaviour of other road users.

- Public Transport – service frequency and reliability, interchange environment, safety and operation, DDA compliant facilities, service information, cost and ticketing availability.

These barriers can be effectively identified and addressed through the application of strong integrated transport planning principles.

Figure 2 - Stawell Access and Attractors Map - with town centre inset



3.3 Walking

The Stawell Town Centre is generally walkable with a well-developed pedestrian network comprising of local streets with established footpaths on both sides along with several laneways that provide direct access between the commercial precinct and car parking areas in the town centre.

Although the majority of the streets in the centre provide some pedestrian facilities, the scale and barriers to movement mean the centre is not considered to be strongly conducive to active modes of transport. It is important to consider pedestrian permeability across arterial roads and the railway line and there are few formal pedestrian crossings to assist safe walking access. (see Figure 2).

Despite investments by Council into pedestrian improvements across the centre, in particular within the Main Street precinct, which will have improved safety and priority in these areas, there is potential to improve pedestrian safety and access.

Much of the local population could access day to-day goods and services within a short walk or cycle. However, an abundance of free on and off-street car parking, safety concerns associated with the barriers to access, lack of consistent active transport priority across the study area and entrenched patterns of behaviour means encouraging greater uptake of walking and cycling is difficult.

The existing street space management approach prioritises the provision of on-street car parking over wider footpaths, cycle infrastructure provision and opportunities for public open space.

3.3.1 Opportunities

There is an opportunity to work to further identify and implement a pedestrian priority network within Stawell which incorporates an enhanced level of service for walking measures such as:

- high quality, DDA compliant footpaths with safe, dedicated crossing points on desire lines
- incorporation of '8-80 design' principles which ensure the pedestrian network is accessible to all
- addressing barriers to pedestrian movement created through perceptions of safety through minimising conflict between pedestrians and other transport users, lighting, improved public realm, including pause points incorporating facilities such as seating and shade
- improved wayfinding which could include directional signage and local information

A pedestrian priority network could potentially include repurposing of off-street parking space complemented by improved open space links to create north-south and east-west movement spines. This network could incorporate or better link to improved crossings of the Western Highway and arterial road barriers.

The designation of a pedestrian priority network provides further opportunity to:

- improve pedestrian connections to regional community infrastructure and open space
- enhance pedestrian safety and access between the key commercial and gateway precincts of Stawell
- Enable Council to identify and leverage the economic, environmental and social benefits improved pedestrian connections and access can provide

3.4 Cycling

Cycling presents a number of advantages over other modes of transport. Individuals benefit from the fact that cycling is a healthy and cheap form of transport that can often prove to be faster than other transport modes and also allows cyclists to avoid traffic congestion. For society, the advantages of cycling include environmental sustainability (no direct emissions of pollutants, CO₂ or noise), relatively low-cost infrastructure requirements and improvements in public health.

It has been recognised in background studies, and confirmed through on-site investigations and analysis, that provision for bicycle access to/from and within the Stawell study area could be improved. There are obvious impediments to safety and access within the area, including the major rail and road barriers, a lack of safe, continuous on-street infrastructure, cycle priority, opportunities for strong intermodal interchange and public end-of-trip facilities in the area.

3.4.1 Town Centre Access

There are on-road bicycle lanes, consisting of pavement markings used to indicate an allocation of road space for bicycles between vehicle lanes and kerbside parking, on parts of Barnes Street, Alfred Street, Scallan Street, Sloane Street, and Byrne Street but any dedicated on-street cycling infrastructure terminates on approach to intersections or roundabouts and does not effectively or continuously link with the centre's core. Gaps in the cycling network constrain the coverage and attractiveness of cycling as a mode and the rail line and Western Highway are major barriers to achieving convenient and continuous north south links where cyclists do not have to dismount to cross.

The existing on-road bicycle routes provide little protection for cyclists and do not offer a safe or attractive alternative for short trips to/from the centre. This is further compounded by volume of vehicles (light and heavy) on several components of the network, and a range of other factors such as an abundance of free car parking, lack of space at intersections for cyclists, and a lack of specific State policy guidance, support or investment for improvements to cycling.

There is currently no dedicated pedestrian/cycling paths to the abattoir, although a number of workers walk or ride to this site. The 2014 Western Stawell Business Precinct Masterplan proposed a new 2.5m shared walking/cycling path along the north side of Abattoir road between the abattoir entrance and the Griffiths Street roundabout to enable workers to travel more safely to/from the site.

3.4.2 Recreational Cycling

In terms of recreational cycling, the Grampians Rail Trail starts at a small car park on the Grampians Road, 700 metres south of the Western Highway. This is an 11km disused rail trail linking Stawell to a stone quarry at Heatherlie at the base of the Grampians, with potential for a future link to Halls Gap.

The Grampians RDV Region Cycling and Trails Infrastructure Business and Master Plan (2018) recognised that, for the local population level, there is a substantial amount of road cycling participation in the area as Stawell provides a good base for road cyclists wishing to explore the region. There are numerous quiet roads around Stawell that are utilised for cycling which has led to high participation in the local community. The mixed terrain is recognised as being suitable for several road cycling markets, evidenced by the exceptionally high level of road cycling activity around the Grampians National Park

3.4.3 Opportunities

There is an opportunity to better connect Stawell Town Centre with the surrounding regional area as well as providing more effective links through the Study precinct. A similar approach to identifying and prioritising pedestrian pathways can be taken with cycle access planning, to provide safe, dedicated routes that, where possible minimise conflict between cyclists and other modes of transport (including pedestrian). Such a cycling network would be designed to:

- improve cycle connections to regional community infrastructure and commercial services in the centre of the study area
- Recognise the trip demand generators around the centre, and link these through a high level of service on the cycling network
- Provide cycle facilities or infrastructure on key links, but provide safe cycle environments across the street network, particularly on low speed local traffic streets which may provide a local access function
- Recognise that cycle uptake and growth in modeshare is driver by perceptions of safety, comfort and consistent facilities for cyclists. Cycle networks are only as good as the weakest link and are often let down by lack of priority or provision for cyclists at conflict points, such as intersections, around public transport hubs and on arterial road corridors.

3.5 Public transport

Public transport services are strong drivers of pedestrian activity and need to be well connected to an effective pedestrian network. It is important to note that all public transport trips have a walking component, so improvements to pedestrian facilities can make both these modes of sustainable transport more attractive choices for access throughout the precinct.

3.5.1 Regional and Interstate

The Melbourne - Adelaide rail line runs through Stawell, creating a strong physical barrier to movement and access. Stawell Train Station is located on Napier Street on the north side of the rail corridor, approximately 750m southwest of the town centre, and 1km northeast of the Western Highway intersection with Seaby Street. The Station was served by V/Line Dimboola rail services until these were withdrawn in August 1993.

The Station is a stop on The Overland interstate rail service connecting Melbourne – Adelaide. This train runs twice weekly between Melbourne and Adelaide, stopping in Nhill, Dimboola, Horsham, Stawell and Ararat. It is operated by the private company Great Southern Rail, which relies on state government subsidies to run the service

However, the future of this service is uncertain given the South Australian Government decision to stop funding the service, and the Victorian State Government recently extend the Overland train subsidy until the end of March 2020. The operational status of this service is currently unclear.

Stawell forms part of the Melbourne-Halls Gap VLine coach service, which stops twice daily at the Stawell Town Hall on Main Street and at Stawell Station. The VLine coach also stops on the Western Highway at the former Pleasant Creek Courthouse on the way from Melbourne to Halls Gap, but not on the return journey.

3.5.2 Local

Stawell is serviced by two local bus routes, Stawell South and Stawell North, as shown at Figure 3. These services run on an hourly peak frequency and provide a broad coverage of the town centre.

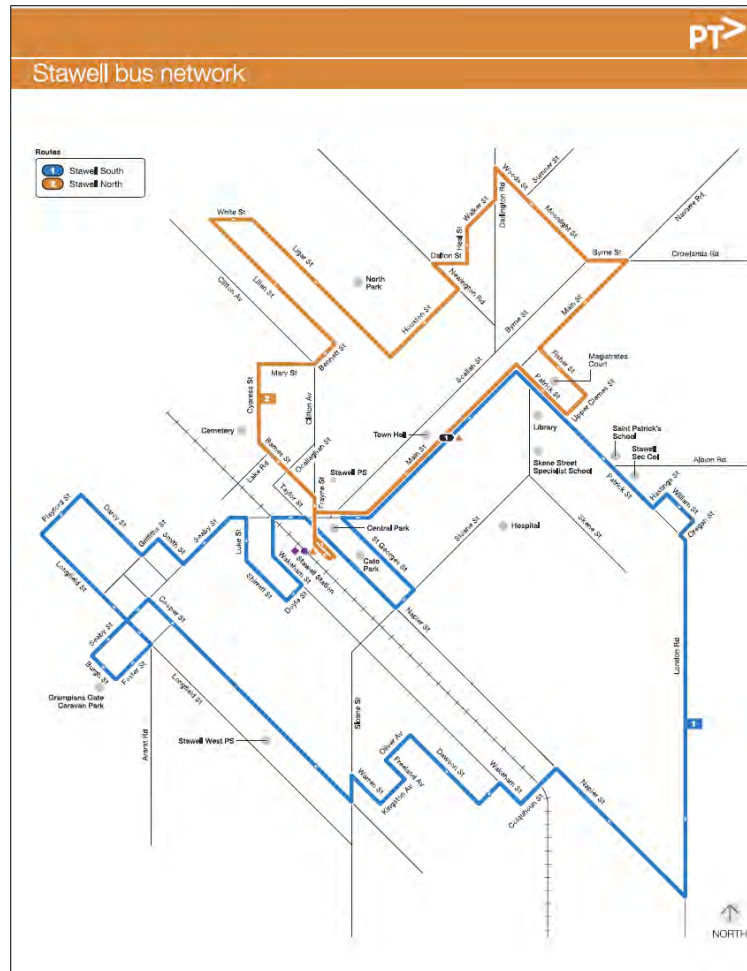


Figure 3 - Stawell bus network map

3.5.3 Opportunities

There are opportunities to improve public transport infrastructure and services to/from and within the study area. However, it is also recognised that this type of investment is usually demand driven, and the priority is on identifying actions or investment that can be led by Council and ensure the most efficient use of existing facilities.

The opportunities relating to Public Transport will therefore focus on providing safe, high quality pedestrian access to and from services and stations, and public realm improvements around these hubs to improve the travel experience and attractiveness of this transport mode.

Many of the opportunities closely relate to, and are reliant on pedestrian network and public realm opportunities including:

- Improvements to the existing pedestrian network, with the highest level of service around public transport stops
- Improvements to connectivity with the station and bus stops from the local street network, including opportunities for increased user safety and public realm around these facilities
- Consideration of distribution of access routes to identify the key existing and potential drivers of bus patronage, such as schools and town centre, minimise duplication of routes and seek to improve service reliability and minimise conflict with other vehicles in these areas.

It will also be important to consider the role of the Western Highway UDF precinct as a tourism gateway and commercial centre, and the

opportunities for improved both regional and local public transport access and services to this area.

3.6 Vehicle Access and Movement

3.6.1 Western Highway upgrade

A review of the Environmental Effects Statements relating to the Western Highway Upgrade Project has been undertaken. With the relevant information summarised below.

The Western Highway is part of the National Land Transport Network, which is the national network of strategically important land transport linkages. As part of the Nation Building Program, VicRoads was allocated funding from both the Commonwealth and State Governments to progressively upgrade the Western Highway into a four-lane divided highway. This larger project, known as the Western Highway Project, extends for approximately 100km, commencing at the western edge of Ballarat and finishing at the south-eastern edge of Stawell.

Completing the duplication of the highway between Ballarat and Stawell would improve road safety and freight efficiency, delivering benefits to communities and industries that depend upon the highway for access to services, facilities, resources, domestic and export markets. These drivers are key elements of Victorian Government transport policies, as well as the VicRoads operating charter as set out in the Transport Integration Act 2010.

The Western Highway currently supports a large variety of vehicle types, ranging from tourist traffic and commuter traffic to large B-double trucks, and farm machinery. Over the past 20 years, the total traffic volumes along the Western Highway between Ballarat and Stawell have increased by approximately 47%. The proportion of heavy vehicles has increased by 12% over the same period.

Section 3 of the Western Highway Project involves the duplication of the Western Highway over approximately 24 km between Ararat and Stawell. It is noted the northern extent of the Western Highway duplication project boundary is intersection of Gilchrist Road, approximately 1.9km from Seaby Street intersection and 650m from Sloane Street intersection.

The Traffic and Transport Assessment undertaken to inform the EES examined the extent to which the Project is expected to address road safety, accessibility, transport efficiency and capacity. It also examines how the Project would affect road users during both the construction and operation phases.

The EES states that the Project is expected to provide the following benefits to road users:

- Increased capacity, which would enable the highway to accommodate the expected future traffic volumes.
- Travel time savings by a reduction in the number of intersections, continuous overtaking opportunities and removing the need to reduce speed through townships.

- Increased safety by reducing traffic volumes within Great Western, continuous overtaking opportunities, grade separated intersections, improved alignment geometry and treatment of roadside hazards.
- Improved efficiency and safety for freight; and
- The potential to reduce the traffic on local roads due to the Western Highway becoming the preferred route.

In relation to active transport, project documentation states that cyclists would be able to continue using the Western Highway between Ararat and Stawell via the proposed 3m sealed road shoulder. No specific provisions have been included within the design for pedestrians.

The EES states that the majority of adverse impacts on the operation of the existing Western Highway, including potential impacts to road safety through a change in road conditions, and a reduction in transport efficiency, are expected to be short term only and occur during the construction phase of the Project.

3.6.2 State Declared Road Network

Stawell is located at the intersection of a number of regional arterial roads which form part of the State's Declared Road Network, including:

- The Western Highway (A8)
- Stawell – Avoca Road (C221)- comprising Black Range Road, Seaby Street, Main Street, Scallan Street and Byrde Street

- Stawell – Donald Road (C238) – comprising Darlington Road and Alfred Street
- Stawell – Ararat Road comprising London Road – Patrick Street
- Grampians Road – (C216)

In order to better understand the operation of the arterial road network throughout Stawell, Department of Transport open traffic data (2020) was referenced and is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - State Declared Road network volumes

Road	Section	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)	% heavy vehicles
Western Highway (A8)	Longfield Rd – Seaby Street	7500	21%
	Warracknabeal Rd – Grampian Rd	5600	32%
Grampians Road (C216)	Western Hwy – Grampians Rd	1000	17%
Stawell-Avoca Rd (C221)	Black Range Rd	930	12%
	Seaby Street	5000	4%
	Byrne Street from Layzell - Darlington	3400	8%
	Byrne Street from Navarre - Layzell	2000	3%
Donald – Stawell Rd (C238)	Darlington Rd	1400	14%
Ararat – Stawell Rd (C)	Bryne St – Holloway Rd	1800	9%
	Holloway Rd – Western Hwy	1900	7%

The Western Highway and arterial network including Seaby Street (C221) Alfred Street/Darlington Road (C238), in particular, provide effective regional traffic access routes to and from the study area. However, while these components of the network perform an effective arterial road role, this in conflict with the local role and successful operation of Stawell town centre also requires consideration.

By definition, the purpose of an effective arterial road network is to carry a large proportion of regional through traffic, providing linkages to local connector roads and streets. The arterial roads traversing the study area carry out this function, with a high proportion of traffic movements created by vehicles without an origin or destination within Stawell.

In carrying high volumes of traffic at a relatively high 60kph speed limit, the Western Highway creates a strong barrier to access, particularly for active transport users.

3.6.3 Local traffic network

The draft Western Stawell Business Precinct Masterplan (2014) recognises that the existing road network is sufficient to cater for the forecast traffic growth associated with both infill development of the vacant land within the study precinct, and traffic associated with development further north travelling through the precinct.

Local access routes generally operate well below the typical two-way daily design capacity of these roads which are in the order of 12,000 vehicles per day (based on Austroads Guide to Traffic management).

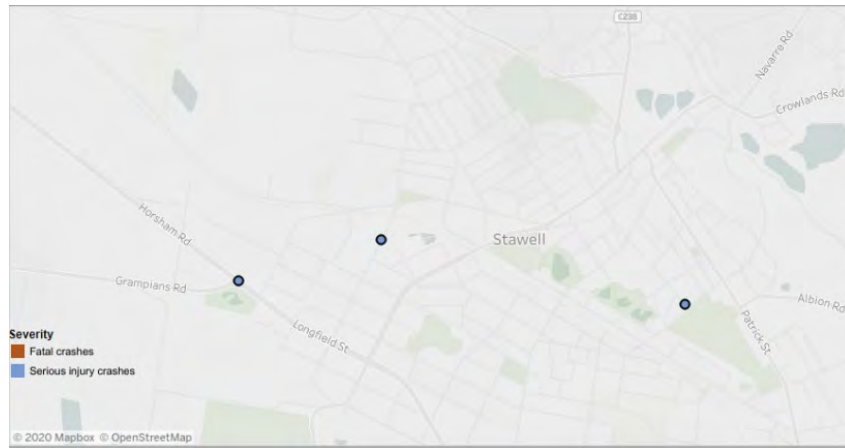
Whilst the potential increase in commercial traffic filtering through local east-west residential streets in the Western Business Precinct was expected to be low, the masterplan makes provision for road narrowing and road/speed humps as a means of discouraging commercial and 'rat-run' traffic through local streets.

Given the level of growth over the last 5 years, it is not considered the assessment provided in the draft Masterplan would have changed significantly. The precinct is served by a relatively wide and well-connected street network which must accommodate multiple, interacting functions including vehicle movements and servicing (including rubbish collection), cycle corridors, pedestrian links, car parking and contribute to the public realm. Competition for space causes safety concerns for some users, particularly at the intersections with major roads which form the gateways for centre access.

3.6.4 CrashStats Data

A review of VicRoads CrashStats data for the latest available 5-year period (2013 – 2018) indicates three serious injury crashes in the Stawell study area (two in 2015 and one in 2017), as shown Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Serious Injury and Fatality accidents - 2013 - 2018, Source CrashStats Data



3.6.5 Opportunities

Based on the background information review, observations and data analysis undertaken so far, there is some potential to consider the way traffic is managed within Stawell to meet strategic objectives of the Structure Plan. These opportunities will be further developed and addressed in consultation with Council through the preparation of the Structure Plan, but are considered to include:

- Considering how to manage vehicle movement and speed at sites of potential conflict with active transport modes
- Providing a level of vehicle access to centre periphery then encouraging walking or public transport alternatives from there.

- Discouraging high levels of through traffic on the local residential network – minimise through encouraging access around periphery and as far removed from pedestrian priority areas as possible.
- Consider the role of the local street network for better dispersed patterns of movement

3.6.5.1 Western Highway

At the completion of the Western Highway upgrade, Stawell will become the closest town to Melbourne that the Highway passes through before duplication and bypasses. This presents some significant commercial opportunities in relation to local tourism, services and industry, as well as strengthening Stawell's position as a regional gateway.

The Urban Design Framework will need to carefully consider and respond to a range of transport implications associated with the duplication, including:

- Increased demand for large vehicle parking, including truck, coach, motorhome, caravan and other towing vehicles
- Consideration of the Western Highway as a higher functioning commercial and retail area
- Management of strong active and sustainable transport linkages and pathways to/from and along the Western Highway gateway
- An access hierarchy to effectively encourage appropriate pathways into Stawell for different vehicle types according to

destinations and purpose. This includes consideration of the treatment and role of the London Road intersection, with a grade separated interchange proposed as ultimate treatment

- Location of key services and facilities related to visitor demand
- Linkages to and opportunities for the town centre
- Design treatment of the Western Highway frontage as a gateway to Stawell – not the only visitation component

The draft Masterplan recognises improvements are required at number of existing Western Highway intersections to address the current potential for rear end collisions between a slowing or stationary vehicle and a faster moving vehicle (potentially a heavily laden truck) travelling behind it.

The draft Masterplan includes proposals to:

- widen the Western Highway road pavement to provide auxiliary lanes for both left and right turns from Western Highway to Playford Road, Saleyards Road and the western end of the service road
- close two existing intermediate service road connections to the Western Highway, and
- widen the existing service road to 10 metres to allow for two-way truck movements and an occasional parked vehicle on one side only
- construct a new service road along the western Highway frontage at the Pleasant Creek Precinct.

Safety for all road users and recognising the important movement function of this link are key considerations for the Western Highway Urban Design Framework. Opportunities to extend and/or implement similar treatments within the Western Highway Urban Design Framework precinct should be considered to address objectives including:

- Ensure that access onto the Western Highway from within the precinct is safe and accessible.
- Create a safe and efficient road freight link across the Melbourne-Adelaide rail line.
- Improve the local connectivity between the Western Highway and Playford Street.
- Minimise the need for commercial and industrial traffic to utilise Griffith street as a means of access to the precinct.
- Reduce the potential for commercial and industrial traffic to travel on local residential streets.

3.6.5.2 Lake Road Level Crossing

The layout and positioning of the existing Lake Road level crossing, in relation to its intersections with both Abattoir Road and Wilson Street, make it difficult for vehicles coming from these locations to use the level crossing adequately and safely. Previous studies have observed that this would have the likely outcome of a high proportion of heavy vehicles utilising Griffiths Street level crossing on an alternative route between the Western Highway and the Abattoir.

State Government have previously proposed two options for improvement to this crossing, neither of which were considered to adequately address all safety and/or operational deficiencies of the existing site.

In 2014 a Council commissioned investigation identified where a new/realigned section of Lake Road could be constructed to cross the railway line, at or close to 90 degrees, before intersecting directly with Abattoir Road, approximately 200 metres towards Adelaide from the current Lake Road level crossing. Relocation of the rail crossing 200 metres to the west could significantly reduce the durations for which the boom barriers and flashing lights would be in operation, shorten and significantly increase the convenience with which truck movements could be made between Western Highway and the Frewstall Abattoir site and potential future development sites.

This upgrade is also expected to result in the majority of truck movements to/from the abattoir utilising a more appropriate connection to the Western Highway via Playford Street and increasing local traffic safety on Griffith Street.

3.7 Car Parking

It is recognised that on-street short-term parking is relatively abundant throughout the study area to meet demands of residents, businesses and other visitors to Stawell. Most streets provide for all-day unrestricted parking.

The observed levels of parking occupancy and demand create an opportunity to consider if the level of vacant parking space (in particular on-street) across centre could be better managed or utilised.

While the quantum and use of on and off-street public space dedicated to car parking is an important consideration, the way this space is accessed also has a significant influence on the operation of the transport network. Where possible, vehicle circulation generated by drivers seeking to access car parking spaces (on, or off-street) should be minimised, and diverted from areas of highest pedestrian, cycle and public transport activity, and away from residential street and public open space or community facilities.

Identification of ways to promote access to carparking around the periphery of the study area, providing the most direct access to the arterial road network, and avoiding more sensitive land uses will be considered in the Structure Plan. There is also an opportunity to consider how to encourage centre visitors to park in one location and visit a range of services or destinations through walking, rather than generating multiple car trips for each visit to destinations across the centre.

It is acknowledged the potential for changes to on-street parking within Main Street in particular may meet with resistance from traders and regular users and visitors to Stawell. Where on-street parking can be, or is currently, accommodated without adversely affecting the safety, access or amenity of all centre users, and is consistent with

other considerations driven by a modal priority hierarchy, then this is a perfectly justifiable and appropriate use of the public space resource.

Given the local context and level of space available across the road access network within Stawell, it is anticipated the requirements of all centre users can largely be accommodated without significant change to areas of on-street car parking.

Opportunities may include

- Prioritisation of short-term bays for servicing, drop off etc on-streets in high demand and high-change areas
- Application of technology and industry developments to identify methods of utilising space currently used for car parking more efficiently across a 24hr period. For example, for pedestrian or traffic movement at times of AM/PM peak demand, public realm or open space at off-peak during the day (including weekend or during events), and visitor car parking in the evening or overnight.
- Greater utilisation and provision for car-share for both on and off-street spaces to encourage take up from new business, employees, residents and visitors.

4 Summary

A range of issues and opportunities identified in relation to Access and Movement in the Stawell study area have been identified. The existing conditions and issues can essentially be summarised in the following set of statements:

1. There are a range of existing access constraints and both physical and perceived barriers which present challenges for orientation, wayfinding, access and safety.
2. The level and composition of through traffic on the local network means Stawell functions as a regional gateway point, but careful management of modal priority and potential areas of conflict is required within the Structure Plan.
3. The completion of the Western Highway Upgrade will bring a range of opportunities for Stawell, and the design and management of interaction with the local street and land use network will need to be carefully considered to promote safety and access.
4. There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainable transport modes, focussing on pedestrian and cyclist safety and level of service on the network.
5. While planning for sustainable transport priority on key corridors, provision also needs to be made to retain the necessary level of vehicle access to support the needs and requirements of existing residents and businesses and regional transport connectivity.
6. There may be opportunities to reconsider the management and use of public space currently allocated to both on and off-street car parking.

5 Gap Analysis

A key challenge for effective integrated transport planning is fully understanding future demand and the implications of different land use mixes, rates of development, on and off-street parking management and infrastructure priorities within, and beyond, the

Study Area. There is an understanding that Stawell is evolving with a strong focus on regional and community services but there is limited accurate data on the future transport demand mix.

The design of a strong evidenced-based response to the issues and opportunities identified, which ensures all analysis and guidance provided to decision makers is well informed, would benefit from further data and consideration in the following areas:

- pedestrian analysis – volumes across the day/week on key routes, origin/destination data, observations on pedestrian safety, delay, conflict, and audits of network levels of service
- bicycle analysis – volumes across the day/week on key routes, propensity to cycle analysis, justification for the location and installation of bike lanes on existing roads
- understanding public transport usage, access and demand beyond just journey to work data set – origin to destination data, user profile and implications.
- data relating to parking occupancy and type– future demand projections for long vehicle parking and truck parking in the Western Highway UDF precinct.
- visitation data – in particular related to the completion of the Western Highway Upgrade.

APPENDIX 2:
Economic Assessment
- Tim Nott





Stawell Structure Plan: Draft Economic Assessment

by Tim Nott for
Hansen Partnership and Northern Grampians Shire Council

May 2020

Report Data

Version	Date	Approved By	Sent to
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Front cover image: Tim Nott

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Project

Northern Grampians Shire Council is undertaking a structure plan for the town of Stawell. Council has engaged a team led by land-use planners and urban designers Hansen Partnership to prepare the plan, which will help guide development in the town over coming years. As part of the planning process a review of the economic drivers of development in the area is required. The review will give land-use planners information about the amount of land that will be required for new economic activity over the coming 15 years or so. This report provides that review and has been prepared by development economist Tim Nott.

1.2 This Report

Section 2 of this report provides a brief economic profile of the town including scenarios for population growth over the period to 2036

Section 3 looks at retailing, including a demand and supply assessment for retail floorspace and activity

Section 4 assesses the prospects for development in the town centre

Section 5 assesses the prospects for development in the Western Highway precinct

Section 6 assesses the industrial sector, providing a broad estimate of demand for land over the period to 2036 in the industrial precincts of the town

Section 7 provides a summary

Readers looking for an executive summary of the report should turn to Section 7.

2 STAWELL ECONOMIC PROFILE

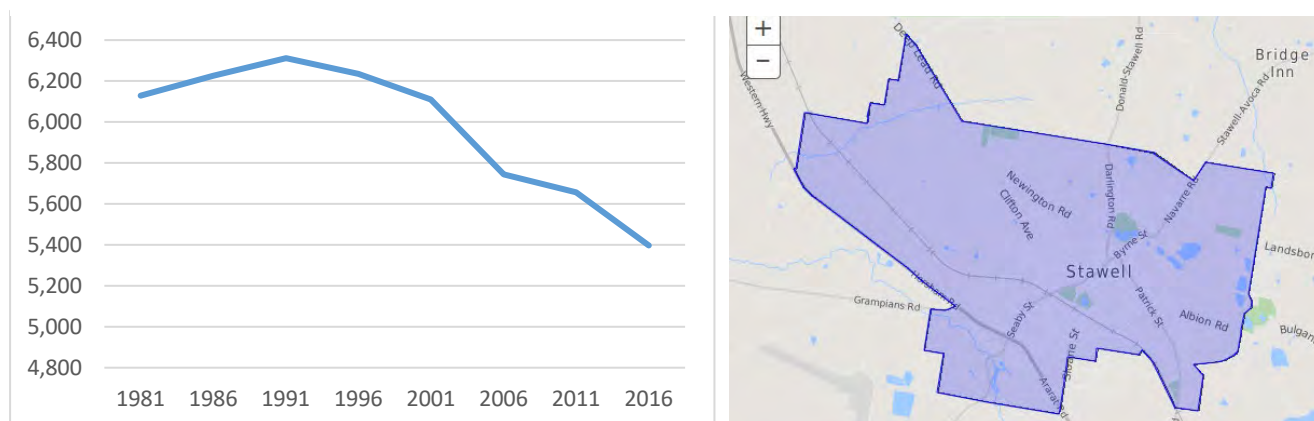
This section of the report identifies the economic base of Stawell – the factors that are driving investment and development – in order to understand the likely future demand for land that can accommodate economic activities.

2.1 Population

The level of population and population trends are the most important determinants of local demand for goods and services.

The enumerated population (that is, the count of people at Census time) of the Stawell urban centre has been gradually declining since 1991, as shown in the following chart.

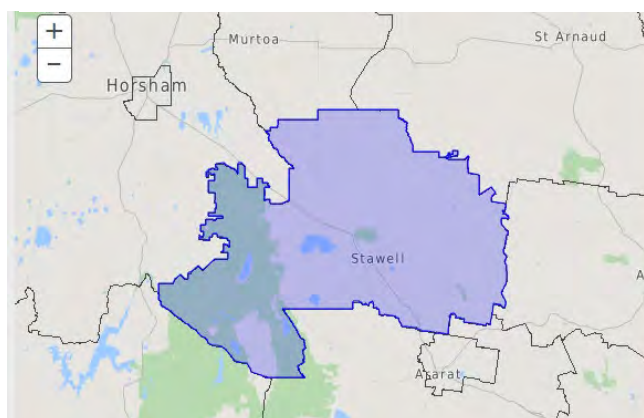
Figure 1: Stawell urban centre population count, 1981 to 2016



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, various dates

Perhaps more useful from an economic viewpoint is to look at the population in the area that Stawell serves. The Stawell catchment area is defined by the distance to surrounding competing or similar centres, including Horsham, Ararat and St Arnaud. In general terms, the Stawell catchment is equivalent to the Stawell Statistical Area 2 (SA2). The estimated resident population of this area in 2019 was 8,109 (ABS, 2020), and the number of people had declined slowly from a recent peak in 2010, and post-war high of 9,200 in 1999.

Figure 2: Stawell SA2

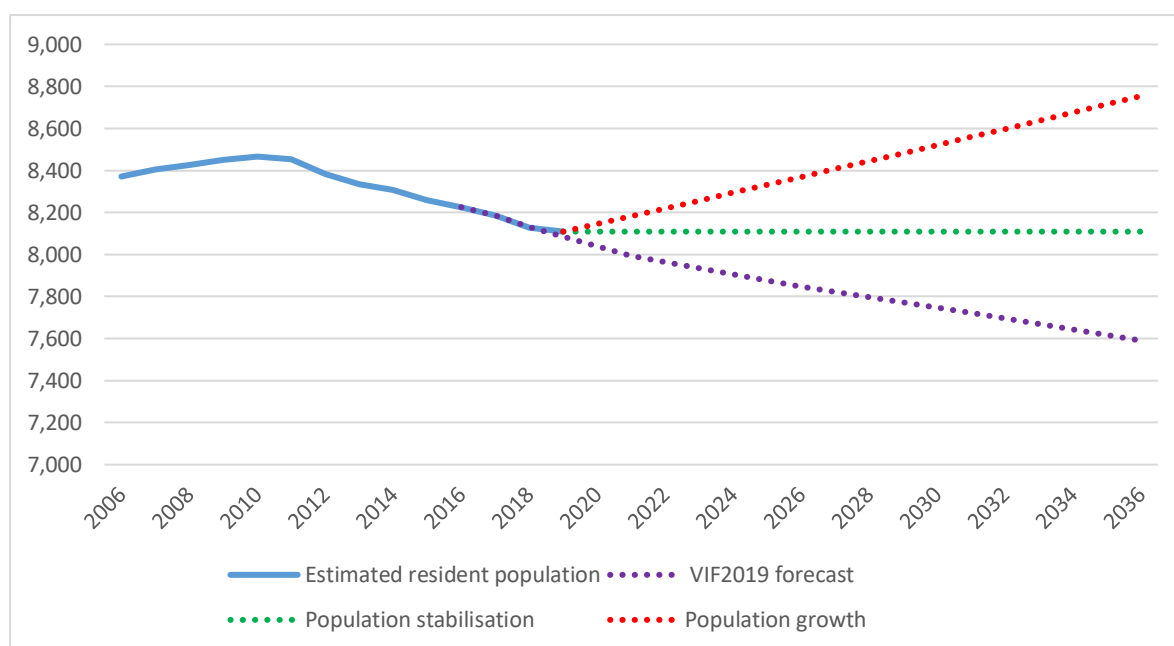


Population forecasts for this area have been prepared most recently by State Government demographers in 2019. These show a continued decline in the number of residents. However, these forecasts are simply the outworking of population models which are largely based on existing trends. There are potential projects in Stawell and district which could lead to more people being attracted to live in the area. For this reason, two alternative population scenarios are also outlined here:

- **Population stabilisation**, which envisages a stabilisation in population numbers, maintaining the present population level
- **Population growth**, in which current projects create a steady resurgence in the population of the area as new workers and their families are attracted to the district

The recent and forecast population trends are shown in the figure below.

Figure 3: Population trends and future scenarios, 2006 to 2036



Source: ABS Regional Population Growth Australia, 2020; Victoria in Future 2019; Tim Nott

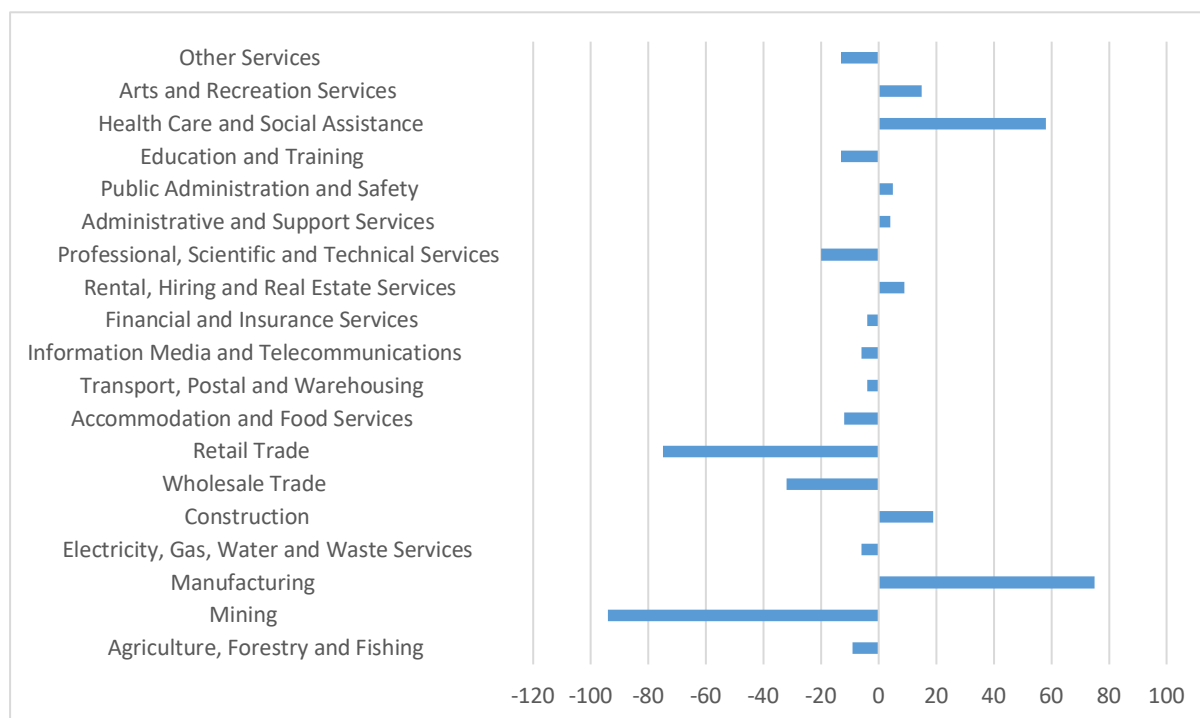
The population decline forecast by State Government averages 0.4% between 2019 and 2036, with a total decline of 519 over the period. The stabilisation scenario therefore has 519 more residents than the VIF2019 forecast by 2036. The population growth scenario envisages growth of 0.45% per year on average, resulting in 645 more residents than at present by 2036. As can be seen later in the report, these additional residents would generate significant differences in demand between the three scenarios.

2.2 Industry

At the last Census of Population and Housing in 2016, 3,387 jobs were counted in the Stawell SA2. This was down slightly from the 3,409 jobs that were counted in 2011. This small shift masks significant changes in particular industries, as shown below.

The chart shows that, over the period 2011 to 2016, there was growth in local manufacturing and health services and significant declines in mining (as a result of declining production at the Stawell goldmine) and in retail trade, with the growth of online trading and other general changes in the industry.

Figure 4: Change in jobs by industry, Stawell SA2, 2011 to 2016



Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Most places have products and industries which are locally dominant; for which the place is known and in which it may have a competitive advantage. For Stawell, these key industries can be identified by comparing the share of jobs in each industry with the share in Victoria as a whole. This produces a figure called the location quotient. In the table below, those industries with a location quotient of 1 are of the same importance to the Stawell economy as they are to the economy of Victoria as a whole. The industries with a location quotient of more than 1 are more prevalent in Stawell and are those industries for which Stawell can be said to have some advantages.

The table shows that Stawell and district has a strong showing in the following industries:

- Mining, because of the long-established gold mine just outside of town
- Agriculture, because of the extensive farming, mainly beef, cereals and sheep, with grapes centred around Great Western
- Manufacturing, with the Frew Group abattoir being the largest local employer and a small range of other significant regional manufacturing enterprises making bricks and wine
- Arts, recreation, accommodation and food service are all related to the strong visitor industry in the region which is strongly associated with the Grampians and Halls Gap but also includes visitor services on the Western Highway and events throughout the area, including the Stawell Easter Gift
- Public services and health care, which is a result of the concentration of these services in Stawell that service a wider district

On the other hand, there is a wide range of range of industries which are less well represented in Stawell than in Victoria as a whole. Some of these industries may be prospects for growth in the

district in order to deliver appropriate levels of service. This might include, for example, education and training, wholesale trade or professional services.

Table 1: Share of jobs in Stawell SA2 and location quotient, 2018

Industry	Jobs No.	Stawell SA2 Share	Victoria Share	Location quotient Index
Mining	201	6.1%	0.3%	20.23
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	208	6.3%	2.3%	2.71
Manufacturing	476	14.4%	8.2%	1.76
Accommodation & food services	349	10.5%	6.9%	1.52
Public administration & safety	275	8.3%	5.5%	1.50
Health care & social assistance	621	18.8%	13.1%	1.43
Arts & recreation services	93	2.8%	2.0%	1.39
Retail trade	325	9.8%	10.8%	0.91
Administrative & support services	93	2.8%	3.6%	0.78
Other services	95	2.9%	3.8%	0.76
Education & training	203	6.1%	9.1%	0.68
Construction	176	5.3%	8.7%	0.61
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	22	0.7%	1.2%	0.56
Rental, hiring & real estate services	24	0.7%	1.7%	0.44
Transport, postal & warehousing	48	1.5%	5.0%	0.29
Wholesale trade	30	0.9%	3.4%	0.27
Information media & telecommunications	12	0.4%	2.0%	0.18
Professional, scientific & technical services	46	1.4%	8.3%	0.17
Financial & insurance services	13	0.4%	4.1%	0.10

Source: REMPLAN, 2020; see text for explanation of location quotient

Readers should note that the figures given above are a snapshot of the estimated situation in 2018. Employment can be volatile, especially, for example, in the mining industry, where production and employment can vary depending on global commodity prices.

2.3 Building Activity

The table on the following page summarises the scale of recent building development in Stawell and surrounding district. The key points from the table are:

- New retail and commercial floorspace has averaged 94 square metres per year in the Stawell town, with one new project per year on average.
- “Other” activity, largely accommodation, has averaged 55 square metres per year across the Stawell SA2, with one new project per year on average.
- Industrial activity (laboratories, factories and warehousing) has averaged 658 square metres per year in the town and 1,026 square metres per year in the surrounding district, with all of the activity outside the town being farm buildings.

Table 2: Building permit activity, Stawell and district, 2015 to 2020

Number of building permits					Additional floor area (sqm)				
	Retail	Com- mercial	Other	Indus- trial		Retail	Com- mercial	Other	Indus- trial
Stawell town					Stawell town				
2015				1	2015				198
2016		1			2016		38		
2017	2			1	2017	337			1,104
2018	1			3	2018	43			911
2019		1	2	2	2019		81	213	1,013
2020				2	2020				260
Sub-total	3	2	2	9	Subtotal	380	119	213	3,486
Annual average	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.7	Annual average	72	22	40	658
Surrounding district					Surrounding district				
2015	1				2015	150			
2016	1			1	2016	17		40	
2017			1		2017			40	
2018				1	2018				591
2019	1			2	2019	145			3,077
2020				3	2020				1,768
Sub-total	3	0	1	7	Sub-total	312	0	80	5,436
Annual average	0.6	0.0	0.2	1.3	Annual average	59	0	15	1,026
Total Stawell SA2					Total Stawell SA2				
2015	1	0	0	1	2015	150	0	0	198
2016	1	1	0	1	2016	17	38	40	0
2017	2	0	1	1	2017	337	0	40	1,104
2018	1	0	0	4	2018	43	0	0	1,502
2019	1	1	2	4	2019	145	81	213	4,090
2020	0	0	0	5	2020	0	0	0	2,028
Sub-total	6	2	3	16	Sub-total	692	119	293	8,922
Annual average	1.1	0.4	0.6	3.0	Annual average	131	22	55	1,683

Source: Northern Grampians Shire Council records (unpublished)

Notes: "other" development is mostly accommodation but also includes government buildings, hospitals etc
 "Industrial" includes laboratories, factories and warehousing

Only building permits resulting in new floorspace have been counted – includes new buildings and additions to existing buildings.

Stawell and its surrounding district have been attracting a steady but modest amount of development over the past five years or so. This indicates a modest level of reinvestment by existing enterprises but no major new activity in that time. This is a typical pattern for a town such as Stawell but the pattern will be punctuated, infrequently, by major new investments such as the occasional new large factory or new public institution – hospital or school, for example. In the absence of significant changes in industry structure, this pattern is likely to continue.

2.4 Economic Prospects

On one hand, the economic prospects of the district may be indicated by the State Government forecast for slow decline of the local population. Such a decline would suggest that the goods and services produced by the district will not be growing, or that productivity improvements in local industries will reduce the need for workers. It may also suggest that there are not sufficient educational opportunities to retain and attract young workers, and not enough services to attract older workers and retirees back into the area. This is a common set of circumstances in many smaller regional towns.

On the other hand, however, there are a number of projects across a range of industries that may result in job growth in the district. These include:

- **Nectar farms** is a proposed glass-house development growing vegetables for the domestic and export market to be co-located with the Bulgana wind farm around 20km east of Stawell. Together these will amount to a \$220 million project with over 1,000 jobs in construction, 300 ongoing jobs and a further 150 jobs in up- and down-stream enterprises. If the glass-house project is successfully delivered, it will be one of the largest employers in the district and may lead to further value-adding opportunities. It would attract new workers and their families into the district as well as providing work for existing residents.
- A **dark matter laboratory** is currently being constructed in a disused part of the Stawell gold-mine. This laboratory will be undertaking fundamental physics experiments under the auspices of Melbourne University. Related enterprises are proposing the development of a visitor centre to showcase the search for dark matter. Land has been purchased in the town centre on Sloane Street for such a centre and associated accommodation. However, plans have not progressed further at this stage. Together, these facilities could employ **XX people**, some of whom could be highly skilled research scientists.


Prospects for employment growth in some other industries are also buoyant, including:

- the rapidly growing health and social support sector, which is likely to see a further boost through and following the COVID-19 pandemic
- further education, with plans to re-open the local TAFE

Prospects in other local industries are more mixed.

- Agriculture has seen a gradual and long term decline in employment, with mechanisation and farm amalgamation. However, changing farm practices, new approaches to market, and a switch to higher value products could see a rise in jobs. Water availability in a drying climate will be a key limiting factor.

Investment	Summary description
Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory Stage 1 estimated value \$4 million.	Located 1 kilometre underground in the Stawell Gold Mine, the world class low background radiation physics laboratory will be used to conduct research into dark matter, as well as sensitive physics and biomedical experiments. When operational it will be the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. The project is expected to attract world-class researchers and will involve partnerships between the University of Melbourne, the Centre of Excellence for Particle Physics, the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation and the Italian National Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics. Up to 50 direct and indirect jobs are forecast during construction and operation phases of the project.



Source: SED, 2016

- Manufacturing in general has also experienced a long-term decline in employment and with ongoing automation this may continue. Nevertheless, Stawell has a manufacturing heritage and skills that would be useful if, for example, there is “re-shoring” of some manufacturing activity, that is, a shift of some activity back to Australia from overseas (and this trend could be reinforced following the COVID-19 pandemic). The level of manufacturing jobs may rely on the fortunes of one or two key employers such as the Frew Group abattoir.
- Tourism, especially accommodation and food services, arts and recreation activities, is currently entirely suppressed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, visitation to the Grampians Tourism region had been growing strongly at between 6% and 10% per year. The Commonwealth Government’s forecast of visitor numbers in regional Victoria was for growth of around 2% per year over the next 10 years (TRA, 2019) – with higher growth in international visitors and lower growth in domestic visitors. It will take some years for international tourism to return to these levels of growth. Domestic visitors will be the only source of income for this sector for some time. However, because domestic visitors will be restricted in their movements overseas, they will be a stronger than usual market. Regional tourism projects such as the Peaks Trail in the Grampians, being promoted as one of Victoria’s four iconic long-distance footpaths, will bring more visitors to the area. It remains to be seen whether these people will visit Stawell as part of their trip. Construction of the dark matter visitor centre in Stawell would bring some additional visitors. Nevertheless, it is important for the regional tourism industry that Stawell continues to be a strong service centre for Halls Gap and the other visitor destinations. This includes the ability of Stawell to provide attractive business and resident services as well as affordable housing for regional tourism workers.
- The retail sector has been in the midst of a structural shift that will see a greater share of sales made through online channels. This shift will be accelerated and consolidated through the current pandemic. Online sales do require picking, packing and distribution. Some of that may be undertaken locally - Woolworths, for example, are trialling extensive picking and packing solutions in existing supermarkets – and there may be some demand for additional warehousing in local industrial precincts. However, most is likely to be undertaken by producers or in regional distribution centres in Melbourne or provincial cities. Ongoing automation will also adversely affect retail employment, with introduction of staff-less check-outs in large stores likely to happen over the study period. In addition to the supply-side issues, demand is also changing. Many citizens are becoming less keen to amass goods that they do not need, to recycle and reuse in keeping with the need to reduce energy and resource use. On the positive side, there are continual shifts in the strategies that major retailers use to size their stores. Any shift to smaller store sizes that require smaller population catchments could benefit Stawell.
- General employment in the transport and distribution sector will decline in the long term as automated vehicles and stock control become widespread. However, vehicle servicing and transshipment facilities will still be required and this may be a role for Stawell given its position on the Western Highway and the availability of suitable land.
- Professional services of all sorts are a growing sector generally, and there may be scope for small-scale growth in Stawell, particularly for sole operators looking for a tree-change. This kind of growth will depend in part on the quality of housing and lifestyle services in Stawell and district compared with alternative locations. The lack of housing, for example, has been cited as a key issue in attracting new families to the area.

Producing a forecast for jobs in Stawell over the period to 2036 would be inadvisable given that the outcome will be generated by the ebbs and flows of competitive advantage, government policy and the wider environment across a very broad range of industries. Nevertheless, the comments above outline some of the trends that are apparent now. Many of these trends will be accelerated by the current economic crisis – online retailing and automation, for example. However, it is inevitable that new and unforeseen pressures will come to bear over the study period, altering the economic opportunities for Stawell in new and interesting ways. To some extent, the role of strategic land-use planning is to accommodate desired outcomes in the hope that having the land-use components in place will help bring those desired outcomes to fruition.

Desired outcomes are those expressed through existing local economic policy or policies constructed for this project through engagement with the Stawell community.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO MAKE PREDICTIONS,
ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE FUTURE

NIELS BOHR, NOBEL LAUREATE

2.5 Local Economic Policy

The key economic objectives in the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme are:

- Objective 1** To support the development of sustainable agriculture and horticultural industries, as the foundation to a strong and prosperous economy.
- Objective 2** To encourage intensive animal industries in areas of the shire where the potential for conflict with surrounding land uses, such as odour, waste disposal, protection of water quality and supply, vermin (mice and flies), traffic and noise can be minimised.
- Objective 3** To promote and facilitate mining and extractive industry in the shire in a responsible manner.
- Objective 4** To encourage and facilitate sustainable industrial development in appropriate locations (mainly in and around Stawell and St Arnaud)
- Objective 5** To determine and provide for land requirements that will be sufficient to cater for 15 years growth of existing and new industry development.
- Objective 6** To maintain and strengthen the functioning of retail centres throughout the shire.
- Objective 7** To encourage compatibility between similar tourist and retail uses.
- Objective 8** To increase visitor numbers, expenditure, and length of stay in the shire.
- Objective 9** To encourage tourism in the municipality based on the heritage and culture of the shire.

Each of these objectives is supported by a number of strategies.

In summary, the existing economic objectives in the planning scheme are for the sustainable development of the municipality based on more effective and efficient activity in its existing industrial base, particularly agribusiness, mining and tourism.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is yet to be fully appreciated. However, it seems likely that the priorities for local development will be to improve the resilience and self-sufficiency of the local economy through diversification and strengthening existing industries. Nevertheless, Stawell and district will remain an outwardly focused local economy because its income will continue to be generated by the export of goods and services – food, fibre, minerals and tourism.

3 RETAIL ANALYSIS

Retailing is one of the largest and most dynamic sectors taking up space in economic zones – especially land zoned Commercial 1 and Commercial 2 – including the Stawell town centre and the Western Highway corridor. An analysis of retailing will help identify whether, and how much, additional land will be required in these areas to accommodate growth and change.

3.1 Existing Retail Development

A summary of the existing retail development in Stawell is shown in the table below.

Table 3: Retail floorspace in Stawell, 2020 (square metres)

	Stawell town centre	Western Highway retailing	Other retail	Total Retail
Food, groceries and liquor	5,312	600	180	6,092
Non-food goods	5,469	2,400	775	8,644
Food catering	1,085	950	600	2,635
Retail services	507	0	0	507
Total retail	12,373	3,950	1,555	17,878

Source: Tim Nott, floorspace survey conducted on 23 March 2020. In “Non-food goods”, only a proportion of the space of large hardware stores has been counted as retail, with the remainder assumed to provide wholesale sales. “Other retail” includes milk bars and isolated stores scattered through the urban area.

The town has approximately 17,900 square metres of retail floorspace, most of which is located in the town centre.

The **Stawell town centre** is the principal retail centre for the district, providing two significant supermarkets and a collection of non-food goods stores, cafés and restaurants and retail services as well as a wide range of non-retail hospitality, professional and recreational services (see section 3.6). The town centre caters mainly for the weekly/monthly needs of the residents of the district. For a more comprehensive choice of retail goods and services, residents use online retailers or travel to the larger centres of Horsham, Ballarat, Bendigo and Melbourne.

The **Western Highway corridor** provides food and fuel services to travellers on the A8, with one large hardware store providing services to local businesses and residents.

Other retail comprises isolated milk bars and other stores scattered throughout the Stawell urban area.

For the purposes of this report, retail activity comprises the following categories:

Food, groceries and liquor – supermarkets, general stores, liquor outlets, specialty food outlets (butchers, bakers, greengrocers etc)

Non-food goods, comprising

- **Clothing** – clothes, shoes, manchester
- **Household goods** – homewares, electronic goods, hardware, furniture etc
- **Recreational goods** - sporting goods, toys, bookshops, newsagents
- **Other goods** –, chemists, florists, jewellers, second hand goods etc

Food catering – cafes, restaurants and take-away food outlets

Retail services – hairdressers, beauty parlours, video rental, clothing and household goods repairs

For the purposes of the analysis presented here, retailing excludes selling of motor vehicles, auto accessories and fuel. It also excludes outlets which are mainly engaged in wholesale sales.

3.2 Retail Sales

Retail sales in Stawell are estimated here at \$105.2 million in 2019. This has been calculated using industry standard figures for sales per square metre, adjusted for local conditions, as shown in the table below.

Table 4: Estimated retail sales, Stawell, 2019

	Floorspace sqm	Retail turnover	Retail sales
		density \$/sqm	\$m
Food, groceries and liquor	6,092	\$8,100	\$49.3
Non-food goods	8,644	\$4,400	\$38.0
Food catering	2,635	\$5,000	\$13.2
Retail services	507	\$4,500	\$2.3
Total retail	17,878		\$102.8

Source: Tim Nott

Note: Retail turnover density = sales per square metre of gross leasable area

3.3 Retail Spending

Retail spending estimates have been made using a variety of sources, including the ABS Retail Trade Australia series and data from Market Info, which provides calculations of spending for small areas. Annual retail spending per person in the Stawell trade area (the Stawell SA2) is estimated at an average of \$12,438 (2019). From section 2.1, the number of residents in the Stawell trade area is 8,109. The total spending pool of trade area residents is therefore \$99.9 million.

Table 5: Estimated annual retail spending, Stawell trade area, 2019

	Spending per person	Total spending
	\$	\$m
Food, groceries and liquor	\$5,580	\$45.2
Non-food goods	\$5,552	\$45.0
Food catering	\$902	\$7.3
Retail services	\$404	\$3.3
Total retail	\$12,438	\$100.9

Source: Tim Nott

This spending is directed to shops within the trade area as well as to shops in competing centres and online retailers.

3.4 Balance of Retail Supply and Demand

Given estimates of local sales and spending by residents, and making estimates for the share of spending by visitors, it is possible to provide an indicative balance between local retail supply and demand; that is, how much spending by local residents is captured by the town and how much “escapes” to other centres and to online retailers.

Table 6: Indicative balance of retail supply and demand, Stawell, 2019

	Retail sales	Visitor share	Visitor spending	Sales to residents	Total resident spending	Share captured by Stawell	Escape spending
	\$m	%	\$m	\$m	\$m	%	%
Food, groceries and liquor	\$49.3	15%	\$7.4	\$41.9	\$45.2	93%	7%
Non-food goods	\$38.0	20%	\$7.6	\$30.4	\$45.0	68%	32%
Food catering	\$13.2	52%	\$6.9	\$6.3	\$7.3	86%	14%
Retail services	\$2.3	10%	\$0.2	\$2.1	\$3.3	63%	37%
Total retail	\$102.8	21%	\$22.1	\$80.7	\$100.9	80%	20%

Source: Tim Nott

This table provides an estimate that visitors from outside the Stawell SA2 contribute 21% of spending in Stawell. These visitors may come from just outside the district – from St Arnaud or Pomonal, for example – or they may be travellers on the Western Highway from much further away. Taking this visitor expenditure into account, the town captures around 80% of the retail spending of residents. That means around 20% is spent elsewhere including:

- Other activity centres in the Stawell SA2 – Halls Gap, Great Western etc
- Nearby centres with higher order retailing such as discount department stores, department stores and large collections of bulky goods outlets in Horsham, Ballarat and Bendigo
- Capital city retailing in Melbourne
- Shopping that residents undertake while on holiday
- Shopping with online retailers not based in Stawell - with online retailing currently taking around 7%-9% of spending in Australia

Given the potential for retail leakage to these many other sources, especially projected growth in online retailing, it appears unlikely that retailing in Stawell would be able to substantially improve on its current market share in the future. Nevertheless, following COVID-19, there may be scope to increase the share of spending by visitors, although this would likely require some changes in the retail offering in the town centre.

3.5 Scenarios for Future Retail Demand

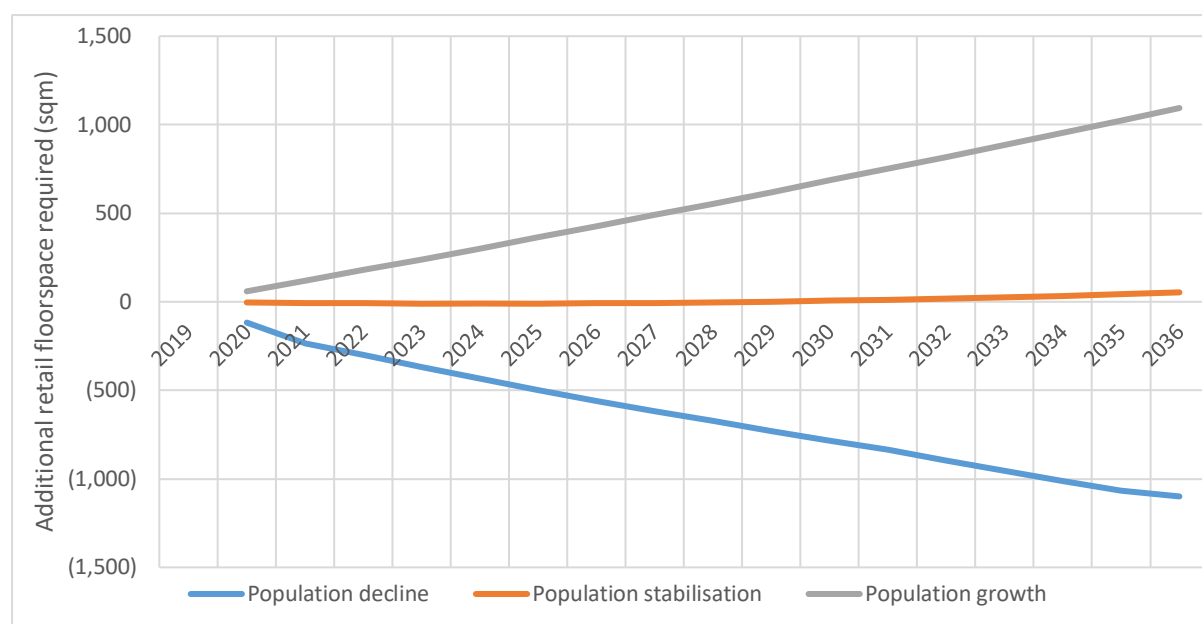
Three scenarios for the growth in demand for retail floorspace has been provided here, based on the population growth scenarios outlined earlier. In preparing such scenarios, it should be acknowledged that there are a wide range of variables that will influence the ultimate outcome and

that it would be impossible to model all these. Instead, most variables have been held constant and only a few key influences have been varied to generate the scenarios presented here. Differences in trade area population will likely be the single biggest influence, along with changes in the share of retail trade that Stawell can capture as a result of the growth in online retailing. The scale of visitor spending will also generate significant impacts. The key assumptions in generating the scenarios are as follows:

- Population growth in the study area will be as outlined in the three population scenarios presented in section 2.1
- Real spending per person in each of the four retail categories will remain constant through the study period to 2036. There has been long term growth in real retail spending per person until quite recently. However, the fact that real disposable incomes have not grown over the past five years (see Jericho, 2020); the emerging recession as a result of COVID-19; and the turn to a less consumerist mindset are all factors that suggest retail spending growth will be subdued
- The share of the spending by trade area residents which is captured by shops in Stawell is assumed to decline from 80% currently to 75% by 2036, commensurate with the expected growth in online retailing over the period
- In each scenario, spending by visitors to Stawell is assumed to grow from 21% of total sales to 25% of the total. This is on the basis that there will be a significant new attraction in the town, in the form of the Dark Matter visitors centre, and that, under the growth scenario at least, tourism will emerge as a much stronger local industry
- Retail turnover density, that is, retail sales per square metre of floorspace, is assumed to remain the same as at present

The outcome of the scenarios is presented in the chart below.

Table 7: Scenarios for net growth in retail floorspace, Stawell, 2019 to 2036



Source: Tim Nott

The **population growth scenario** results in demand for an additional 1,090 square metres of retail floorspace between 2019 and 2036. This includes roughly even growth of space for groceries, non-food goods and food catering, with no demand indicated for new stores with large footprints.

The **population stabilisation scenario** results in a marginal increase in demand for floorspace over the period of around 50 square metres. While this suggests that the existing space will be sufficient, there may still be some reorganisation of space, and therefore development, through the period.

The **population decline scenario** envisages decline in demand of 1,100 square metres of retail floorspace, with the majority of that decline in space for non-food goods. This would represent a decline of 6% of occupied retail floorspace in Stawell compared with present levels. Because this scenario stems from the Victorian Government's latest population projections, it should be seen as the base case; that is, what is likely to happen if there are no changes in policy. The continued decline in demand for retail space may be offset to a greater or lesser extent by growth in the uptake of space for non-retail activities, which could include health and professional services, recreation and entertainment, small scale and craft production, property services, or even accommodation.

The following section examines how the various scenarios will affect the activity precincts in Stawell.

4 STAWELL TOWN CENTRE

4.1 The Existing Town Centre

The Stawell town centre is the principal retail and commercial centre for the western part of the Northern Grampians Shire. With two substantial supermarkets and a range of clothing and homewares stores it serves a substantial part of the retail needs of the catchment population. It is also the principal source of a wide range of commercial, entertainment and other services for the community. Significant health and other community services (hospital, courts, library etc) are located just outside the boundaries of the commercial centre. The layout of the centre and surrounds is shown in the figure below.

Figure 5: Stawell town (commercial) centre



Source: base map from Google Maps

The total activity floorspace in the commercial centre is approximately 27,900 sqm, as shown in the table below.

Table 8: Floorspace estimate for Stawell commercial centre

Activity	Floorspace	
	sqm	share
Food, groceries and liquor	5,312	43%
Non-food goods	5,469	44%
Food catering	1,085	9%
Retail services	507	4%
Total retail	12,373	100%
Retail	12,373	49%
Hotels, pubs and clubs	1,791	7%
Professional and medical services	1,851	7%
Real estate services	780	3%
Banks	632	3%
Employment services	676	3%
Other commercial services	3,134	12%
Community services	3,911	16%
Total activity	25,148	100%
Vacant space	2,704	10%
Total space	27,852	

Source: Tim Nott, survey 23 March 2020

Retailing occupies around half of the floorspace in the town centre, with the remainder providing hotels, professional and medical services, real estate agents, banks and so on. Most of the original building stock is shops, banks and hotels, with few purpose-built offices. While there is some evidence of activities catering for visitors – gift shops and extensive food outlets, for example – it is clear that the centre caters mainly for local residents.

Main Street is the principal shopping strip, with arcades and lanes leading to car parking and secondary commercial activities to the north-west and south-east of the main strip. Woolworths supermarket, as a later addition to the town centre, has found a location to the north of Main Street.

The commercial centre has around 2,700 sqm of vacant floorspace, a vacancy rate of around 10%. A vacancy rate of 4%-6% has often been taken to indicate a good balance between supply and demand in mainstreet-style centres, so Stawell appears to have quite a high rate. A significant proportion – around 39% - of the vacancies are concentrated in the secondary location of Wimmera Street, and without these, the vacancy rate would be more acceptable. Nevertheless, the commercial centre remains an attractive location, with generally well-maintained buildings and evidence of recent streetscape works.

4.2 Accommodating the Growth Scenarios

The retail development scenarios outlined in section 3.5 identify potential for a change in retail demand in Stawell over the period to 2036. These scenarios would generate between a net decline of 1,100 sqm and net growth of 1,100 sqm of retail floorspace. In either case, most of the change

would likely fall on the town centre since it is the largest collection of shops including most of those likely to be affected by online retailing.

Many of the non-retail activities located in the town centre are also tied, if less directly, to the level of population in the district. If retailing is declining, these activities are also likely to be declining, unless they are catering to growing market segments such as visitors. Conversely, growth in retailing is likely to be matched by growth in other town centre service activities.

Population decline scenario

The consequences for the town centre of a continuing scenario of population decline are for the gradual closure of shops and services as they become unviable or move online, and for outlets to shift to lower margin businesses – more charity shops, \$2 shops and take-away food outlets. (These are important shops but a wide and balanced variety of goods and services is required to maintain the attractiveness of the centre as a whole.) The vacancy rate would creep up and the building stock may begin to deteriorate as building owners lack rental returns to reinvest. This would accelerate the decline of the centre as an attractive location for residents or visitors.

In this situation, several possible actions are open to local decision-makers, including:

- Manage the decline of retailing by concentrating retail outlets into the core shopping precinct – say, on Main Street between Wimmera Street and Victoria Place – which would require cooperation by landlords and tenants. Concentrating the retail outlets concentrates the foot-traffic, improving the vibrancy of the main street
- Encourage more professionals and other office services to locate in secondary spaces in the town centre, eg edge of centre and upstairs rooms; more people will improve the vibrancy of the centre and enlarge the market for other services
- Identify other uses for town centre properties, which might include hotel or other commercial accommodation, housing or recreational activities (nightclubs and bars, for example)
- Develop a strong tourist focus for the town centre, building on the Dark Matter visitor centre to be developed in Sloane Street, this could involve reuse of vacant buildings on Wimmera Street for a craft and/or regional produce market, development of an artisans precinct, activation of laneways and arcades

A declining population could, over time, be turned around if the town centre remains attractive and finds a new lease of life catering for growing markets.

Population growth scenario

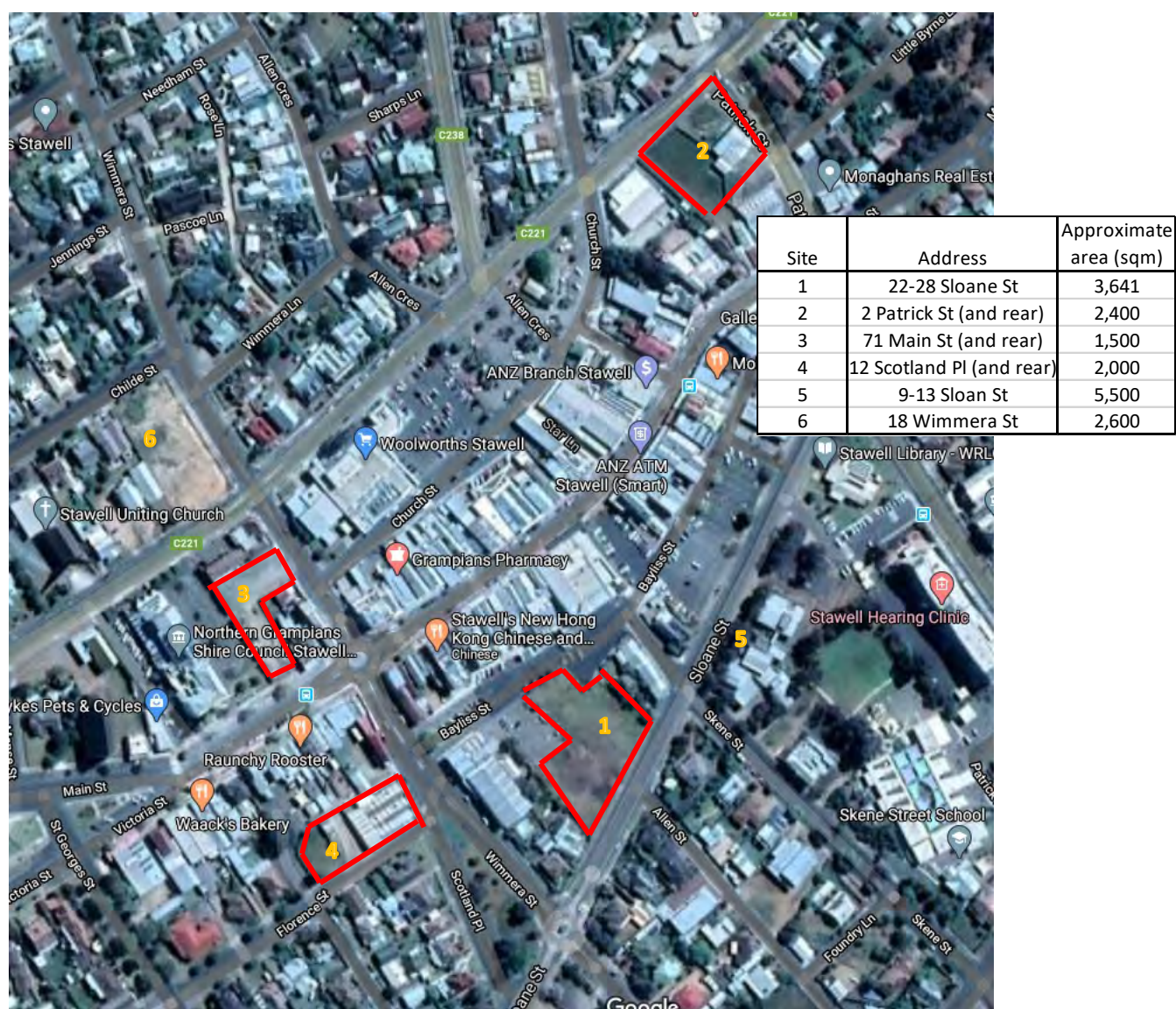
The population growth scenario estimates demand for an additional 1,100 sqm of retail floorspace over the period to 2036. Allowing for some growth in the Western Highway precinct, the town centre would likely need to accommodate 800sqm to 1,000 sqm of new retailing. However, with a growing population, demand for other services is also likely to expand. Given that retailing currently forms only 50% of floorspace in the town centre it would be prudent to allow for total net growth of 2,000 sqm over the period to 2036.

In nominal terms, this growth could be accommodated in the vacant space in the town centre, which totals 2,700 sqm in March 2020. Accommodating growth in existing space also means that no allowance for car-parking is required, increasing the efficiency of commercial development.

The scale of anticipated growth means that it is unlikely that there will be demand for a new shop with a large footprint such as a new supermarket. Nevertheless, if a new large-format business does require space in the town centre, there is vacant land within the centre that could accommodate new buildings. In addition, there are several sites that could be redeveloped. The largest currently vacant site in the Commercial 1 Zone is 3,600 sqm. If this site was also required to accommodate car-parking for the use, it could host a single storey building of around 2,000 sqm (assuming a car-parking rate of 2 spaces per 100 sqm, which is typical in town centres seeking to attract development). If no parking provision was required, given the extensive car-parking beside the site and elsewhere in the town centre, then a much larger building could be accommodated.

The vacant and potential development sites are shown in the following map.

Figure 6: Potential development sites, Stawell town centre



Source: Base map from Google Maps

Within the Commercial 1 Zone of the town centre are four significant development sites which total around 9,500 sqm. These sites should be more than adequate to accommodate likely growth in the centre over the period to 2036. Should further space be required, there are two sites on the boundary of the Commercial Zone, at Sloane Street and Wimmera Street (locations 5 and 6 on the map) which would provide a further 8,000+ sqm, although these sites may need to be rezoned prior to development. The building at site 5 is an attractive office complex which has been vacant for more than five years.

In summary, the existing town centre appears to have more than sufficient vacant land and building space to accommodate the growth anticipated in any of the population growth scenarios identified in the previous section.

5 WESTERN HIGHWAY PRECINCT

5.1 Existing Situation

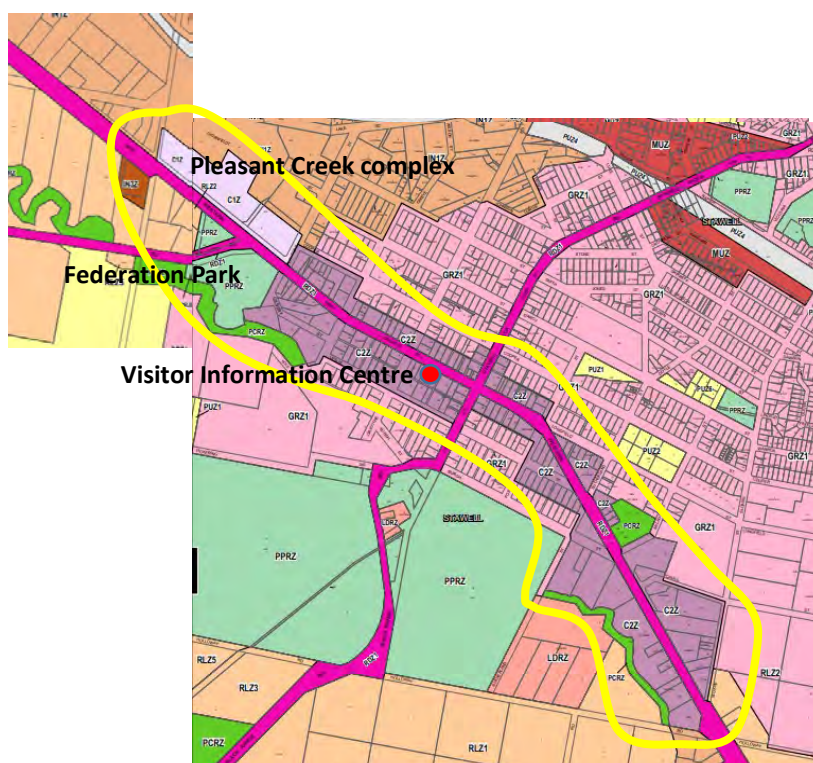
The Western Highway precinct comprises land zoned mainly Commercial 2, either side of the Western Highway as it runs through the town. This strip is bookended by land zoned Industrial 1 at the north-western and south-eastern entries to the town. The Commercial 2 land totals around 31 hectares of which around 6 hectares is vacant.

The Western Highway precinct provides a range of services to travellers, regional farmers, freight operators, and local businesses and residents. These businesses either sell goods and services to people travelling on the Highway – fuel, take-away food, accommodation etc - or are selling goods that require a large allotment which cannot be found in the town centre commercial precinct – cars, agricultural and business supplies, hardware, plants and garden equipment etc. The precinct also accommodates several light industrial storage, wholesaling and manufacturing enterprises that can take advantage of the exposure provided by a location on the main road through the region.

In addition to these businesses, the precinct does contain housing and some historic buildings and community services including:

- The Stawell Shire Hall, now the part-time visitor information centre
- The Stawell historical society
- Federation Park and rest stop
- Pleasant Creek arts and entertainment complex, a developing facility located in the former Pleasant Creek training centre and hospital (and this facility has been zoned Commercial 1)

Figure 7: Western Highway Precinct



Source: Northern Grampians Planning Scheme

There are a number of issues with the presentation and function of the precinct:

- It is a typical regional highway services corridor, with extensive and scattered land-uses, low value buildings, and a mixture of signage, paved and gravel driveways and forecourts, with no obvious focal point; this rather unattractive streetscape is the only view of Stawell for many people who drive through on the Highway.



Figure 8: Western Highway, signage clutter

- The travellers rest and services role is spread throughout the precinct; there is no obvious place to stop such as a large collection of branded fast food outlets with a common car-park, or a high profile recreational park
- The visitor information centre is only open part time and, although in an attractive building – the old Shire Hall - there are few facilities for visitors at that location such as a playground or food and beverages

Nevertheless, the precinct does accommodate many businesses and is a sought after location in the region. There are a number of vacant sites available. The largest of these is 1.2 hectares but most are smaller than 0.2 hectares. The total available vacant land is approximately 6 hectares, although there are several under-utilised sites as well as low density housing which could be redeveloped.

5.2 Future Prospects

Different aspects of the Western Highway precinct have different prospects:

- Visitor services are likely to grow in line with tourism traffic along the Western Highway. The loosening of COVID-19 restrictions may give an initial boost to domestic tourism as Australians will be prevented from travelling extensively elsewhere. This presents an opportunity for regional communities to sharpen and develop their offering to meet new demands. Any retail development on the Highway is most likely to be in the food and beverage sector.
- The commercial accommodation sector has been under pressure from air bnb. The motel sector, in particular, has lost much of its tourist trade and has been forced to rely on low budget commercial traffic. This means that investment in new motel accommodation is unlikely.
- Other elements of the highway commercial strip – fuel stops, agricultural supplies, construction wholesale/retail outlets – are geared to the population and commercial growth

of the wider district. Major projects may boost this, although the growth in demand from residents is likely to remain modest.

- Large format retailing, with the exception of auto sales, hardware and nurseries, has not been a feature of the Highway services strip in Stawell. The retail analysis suggests that this is an unlikely outcome in the future and other than those categories of goods already on the highway, large format retailers should be directed to the town centre.
- The vision for the Pleasant Creek facility is evolving but latest indications suggest that the buildings could provide a combination of events space, small offices and hospitality, including backpackers' accommodation. If successful, this will provide a key activity node in the precinct.

Given moderate prospects for growth, the existing stock of land in the Commercial 2 Zone should be sufficient, particularly given the extensive potential for redevelopment of non-conforming uses.

The economic activity of the precinct and the wider district may be improved through:

- Establishment of visitor nodes that provide information, recreation and hospitality functions serviced by ample car-parking
- Ensuring that there are ample and well-located rapid charging points for electric vehicles (this would send a signal that Stawell is a forward-thinking and well-connected location which has a progressive business culture)
- Introducing design codes that minimise signage clutter, improve built form in the central part of the precinct, and reinforce the turn-off to the town centre

Should demand for land in the precinct exceed the existing supply, either because of a large project or a need to provide choice in the market, there are likely to be opportunities in the Industrial 1 Zones, which are the subject of the following section.

6 INDUSTRIAL ASSESSMENT

This section looks at the demand for land zoned Industrial.

6.1 Existing Activity

Existing industrial activity in Stawell is of three types:

- Processing of the region's agricultural produce, including the Frew Group abattoir
- Manufacturing for regional markets, including firms such as Advance Bricks
- Local industrial services, including auto-repairs, construction, equipment sales and hire, and transport

These activities are mainly located on the land zoned Industrial in the town, as shown in Figure 5.

The town has an industrial heritage in part because of the long-standing goldmining activity and because it became established as a farm processing centre. This means that the town has a higher than average proportion of manufacturing workers in its workforce, as outlined in section 2.2. Nevertheless, there has been some reduction in manufacturing diversity in the town over the past decade with, for example, the closure of a substantial clothing factory operated by Aunde Australia. This has been a common experience nationwide as local manufacturing has retreated to include only those products in which Australia has a definitive advantage because of the presence of raw materials or a niche capability.

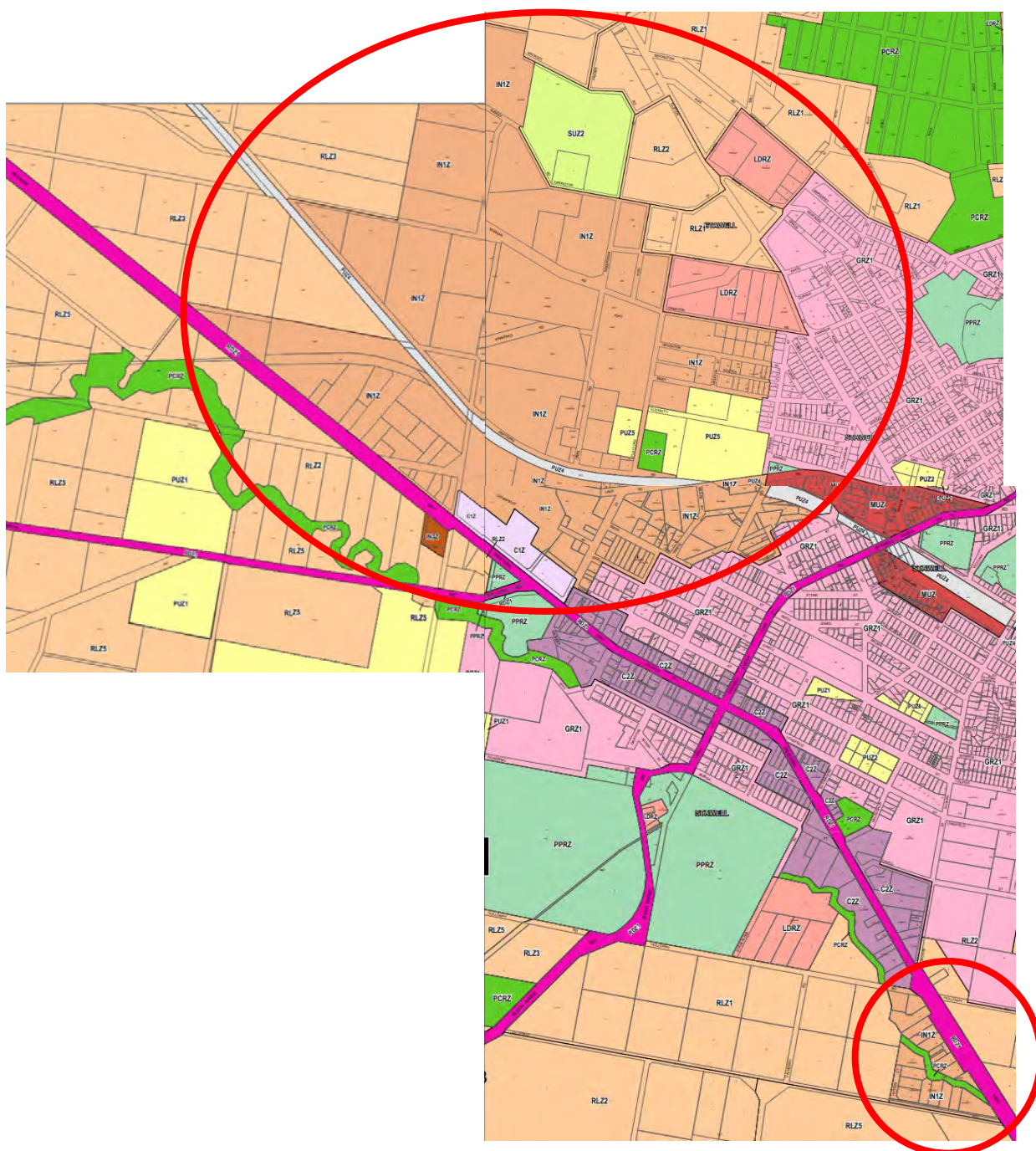
Between 2015 and 2020, the average annual addition of industrial floorspace has been 658 sqm, including additions to existing buildings and new builds. Given a typical site coverage of 30% for new buildings in Stawell, this equates to a land requirement of approximately 2,200 sqm per year.

6.2 Existing Land for Industrial Activities

The total area of Industrially zoned land in Stawell is 217 hectares and is in two precincts as indicated in red in the figure on the following page.

The larger northern precinct contains a variety of general industrial activity and includes the Frew Group abattoir and the Advance Bricks factory. The smaller southern precinct is occupied mainly by service and construction-related businesses.

Figure 9: Industrially zoned land in Stawell



6.3 Vacant Industrial Property

Around 117 hectares of the **Industrially zoned** land is nominally undeveloped; however, much of the vacant land is owned by the Frew Group and used for livestock holding pens or as a buffer between the abattoir and other land uses. Other parcels of industrial land have been set aside for bushland reserves. The amount of land which is vacant and available is much less, and probably around 16 hectares. Apart from one allotment of around 0.3 hectares, all the vacant land is in the northern precinct.

There are a number of vacant industrial buildings, with two currently listed for sale and none for rent (see realcommercial.com.au).

Choice of industrial property is currently limited, particularly for smaller firms requiring immediate occupation or for firms requiring high quality premises.

6.4 Industrial Growth Prospects

Australian manufacturing and industrial activity in general will continue to be subject to cost reduction pressures that have led to relocation to least-cost locations, increased automation and reductions in employment. Trends towards increased automation may be accelerated as a result of social distancing required for the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, employment and development outcomes will depend in part on the characteristics of each particular location. Prospects in Stawell will be determined by the type of industries that are already present and the opportunities for new investment provided by its position and availability of raw materials and demand factors. Some of these factors are explored broadly in section 2.4, others are identified below.

- The meat industry will be affected by declines in local meat consumption per capita but growing demand from export markets across Asia. The fortunes of the local processor may depend on growing its current export of lamb and goat products and consolidating its position as a major domestic producer. The processor appears to have no lack of land for its operations, even if there is significant expansion.
- The construction industry, including construction products and trades, constitutes a large component of local industrial activity. The fortunes of the industry will be tied to population and housing growth and to major projects.
- There may be scope for some uptick in local manufacturing if overseas supply chains are disrupted over the long term as a result of the COVID-19 response. There are several vacant factories which may be able to be reactivated.
- The freight transport industry will require fewer drivers over the long term as a result of automation. However, specialised servicing, transshipment and storage will still be required. Industrial land on the Western Highway in Stawell may provide an amenable location for these kinds of services, although there will be strong competition from locations in Horsham, Ararat and further afield. Consultation with the freight industry would be required to establish the requirements for a Stawell location. One possibility would be a transport services precinct that could service a number of enterprises with storage, vehicle servicing and transshipment facilities.
- Local retailers may require storage and warehousing to provide space for picking and packing for online orders. Packaging suppliers will also be in demand if this aspect of local retailing grows.
- In other places, Industrial (and Commercial 2) land has accommodated a wide variety of activities that do not fit in the traditional “industrial” category, including religious buildings, recreational centres and gyms, night clubs, education and training, office activities and so on. Stawell has some of these types of activities on its Industrial land – vets, for example. Given a scenario of population growth, there may be demand for more of these kinds of activities to locate in Stawell’s industrial and Highway service areas if there is insufficient room in commercial zones.

The outcome of these various prospects will depend on the plans and strategies of individual firms, competition from other locations, and the extent and quality of locations in Stawell.

6.5 Requirements for Industrial Land

Forecasting requirements for industrial land is not appropriate given that the potential decisions by a single business could have a major effect on the outcome. Instead, the approach taken here is to:

- Allow for the recent levels of industrial development (including highway services development) to continue
- Make allowances for the occasional significant enterprise to locate in Stawell
- Identify appropriate areas for the expansion of industrial land stocks if more land is required

This recent rate of industrial and “other” development has been running at around 0.23 hectares per year since 2015. If this were to continue over the period to 2036, then a further 3.6 hectares would be required in total to accommodate small-scale industrial businesses. Given the estimate of 16 hectares of actually vacant and available Industrial land currently, then at least 12.4 hectares would still be vacant at the end of the period if there were no major entrants to the local market. (This calculation does not include the potential for new entrants to take up existing vacant buildings or for the redevelopment of low density space.)

It is prudent – and desirable – to allow for the occasional large enterprise to locate in Stawell. It is impossible to identify how much land any such enterprises might require. However, judging by the past, significant enterprises have required between two and five hectares. The amount of vacant land, after allowing for 3.6 hectares to accommodate small businesses, would nominally enable up to six substantial businesses to locate in Stawell over the next 16 years. This rate of expansion in the number of large businesses would be much more rapid than in the previous fifteen years.

Despite there being apparently sufficient space in existing stocks of Industrial, there remains the question of whether the land is configured and located appropriately.

Small businesses will usually seek a rapid solution to their space requirements. As identified above, there appear to be few small industrial allotments or buildings for sale. There may be a case for development of a suitably located industrial estate which is able to provide small serviced allotments or small industrial buildings to cater for this segment of the market.

6.6 Location of Additional Space

The assessment above suggests that further Industrial land beyond that already zoned is unlikely to be required for the foreseeable demand over the period to 2036. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances in which more land is required for a particular project (such as a transport services precinct, for example), or because general demand has run ahead of expectations, or to provide choice in the market. In this case, it is prudent to identify the preferred location of such land so that all parties have a clear indication of potential outcomes.

The principles for identifying new industrial land are:

- The land should be contiguous with existing industrial land
- It should not adjoin intensive housing, community uses or parkland, nor should it constrain the urban development of the town
- It should not have significant existing activities that will create a legacy of non-conforming uses
- Unless designed for a single large operator, the land should be extensive enough to satisfy demand for a number of years (preferably 15 years or more)

- Ideally, some part of the land should have Highway frontage to create opportunities for highway services activities and to provide ease of access to the highway network, minimising freight impacts on other urban uses

Considering these principles, the following diagrams provide potential directions for the expansion of Industrial land stocks in the northern and southern industrial precincts.

Figure 10: Potential expansion of industrial land, Stawell



Source: Base map from Google Maps

The additional land parcel in Northern Stawell could provide 20+ hectares of additional industrial land. The parcels in southern Stawell could provide at least 30 hectares.

7 SUMMARY

1. The current population in Stawell and surrounding district is approximately 8,109. This has been slowly declining since 1999. Three population scenarios have been prepared for this project:
 - Population decline – a continuation of recent trends, matching the latest projection by State Government for the area, resulting in a population in Stawell and district of 7,590 by 2036, a decline of 519 people compared with 2019
 - Population stabilisation – retention of the existing number of residents in the district, with outmigration balanced by new residents attracted to work in major projects, or to take advantage of local retirement services
 - Population growth – anticipating that new investment projects and tourism growth in the wider district will generate significant employment, attracting workers and their families into the town, with growth of 645 residents by 2036 to a total of 8,754
2. The key industries for Stawell and district are:
 - Mining, because of the long-established gold mine just outside of town
 - Agriculture, because of the extensive farming, mainly beef, grains and sheep, with grapes centred around Great Western
 - Manufacturing, with the Frew Group abattoir being the largest local employer and a small range of other significant regional manufacturing enterprises making bricks and wine
 - Arts, recreation, accommodation and food service are all related to the strong visitor industry in the region
 - Public services and health care, which is a result of the concentration of these services in Stawell that service a wider district
3. The economic prospects of the town are mixed. Some industries such as retailing and manufacturing are experiencing broader changes that will adversely affect employment; other sectors, such as tourism and health-care, are growing strongly. Major projects such as the Nectar glass-houses and the Dark Matter Underground Laboratory have the potential to generate significant employment in the local economy, directly and indirectly. It is important that the planning strategy for the town enables and encourages the most sustainable economic outcomes in line with existing policy. The impacts of COVID-19 remain to be seen but it seems likely that the pandemic will accelerate some trends such as on-line retailing and process automation, as well as strengthening domestic tourism and health spending, and creating pressure for local production of key goods and services.
4. Stawell has approximately 17,900 sqm of retail floorspace, of which 12,400 (69%) is located in the town centre, with most of the remainder located in the Western Highway precinct. Retail sales are estimated at \$103 million in 2019. An estimated \$22 million (21%) of the sales come from people who live outside the district. Around \$81 million comes from local residents and this is equivalent to 80% of their retail spending. The remaining 20% escapes mainly to larger centres such as Horsham, Ballarat and Melbourne.
5. Three retail development scenarios have been prepared, corresponding with the three population growth scenarios. These range from a growth in demand for retail floorspace of 1,100 sqm to a decline in demand of 1,100 sqm by 2036. Most of the change would affect retail floorspace in the town centre.
6. Total activity floorspace in the Commercial 1 Zone of the town centre is estimated at 27,900 sqm of which around 10% is currently vacant. Even allowing for growth in non-retail development under a population growth scenario, the town centre would be able to

accommodate the likely expansion of activity in its vacant building stock and with judicious use of existing vacant sites. There is not likely to be call to expand the existing boundaries of the Commercial 1 Zone; and even if there were, there are existing vacant sites adjacent to the boundary of the Zone that could accommodate significant further growth. Under the population decline scenario, vacant space would grow substantially. In this situation it would be necessary to manage the decline in a way that maintains the vibrancy of the centre and to seek new activities to fill vacant spaces. This could involve attracting more professional services and developing a much stronger visitor offering, which might include arts and crafts market, regional produce, show-casing artisans and artists and so on.

7. The Western Highway precinct in Commercial 2 zoning, accommodates visitor services, business supplies and services, and large format sales outlets as well as housing and some buildings of historic interest. Activity in the precinct is dispersed and lacks a focal point for visitors. Prospects for business growth in this precinct rely on expansion of visitor services in line with regional tourism growth as well as general business expansion that would increase demand for local business services. Given the likely subdued retail demand, there is a policy imperative to direct normal retail development to the town centre rather than the Highway. This will improve the vibrancy of the main retail centre for the district, creating higher footfall that will support provision of a wider range of goods and services. An estimated six hectares of the 31 hectares of Commercial 2 Zoned land in this precinct is vacant. In addition, there are several low intensity uses and non-conforming housing that could be redeveloped. This should be sufficient to accommodate any growth in demand for land in the Highway precinct.
8. The Industrially zoned land in Stawell is in two precincts located to the north-west and south-east of the town. There are around 217 hectares of zoned land altogether. Of this, around 117 is nominally undeveloped, although only around 16 hectares is currently vacant and available; much of the rest is held by the Frew Group for animal stockyards and as a buffer to more sensitive uses. In addition to the vacant land, there are a number of vacant industrial buildings, some of which are quite large – on sites up to 5.5 hectares.
9. The prospects for growth in industrial activity will be driven by the needs of individual firms. There are trends leading to decline of demand including automation in manufacturing and transport. However, there is potential growth in warehousing for online retail fulfilment as well as accommodating re-shored manufacturing activity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There may also be potential for Stawell to be a transport servicing centre for the automated transport fleet.
10. Recent demand for industrial land has been about 0.23 hectares per year. If this continued, 3.6 hectares of vacant Industrial land would be consumed over the period to 2036 (and this assumes that all development occurs on vacant land rather than on already partly developed land). In identifying the future need for Industrial land, it is prudent to allow for occasional larger enterprises to locate in the town. Judging by past demand, such enterprises are likely to require allotments of between two and five hectares. Even taking this occasional demand into account there is likely to be sufficient Industrially zoned land to accommodate demand over the period to 2036.
11. Should further land be required because of a large project, or because actual demand outstrips these projections, it is possible to identify several locations where the existing industrial precincts could be expanded, including land around 14 Horsham Road in the northern industrial precinct and land either side of Gilchrist Road, adjacent to the existing southern industrial precinct. Each of these locations could provide 20+ hectares of additional land, if required.

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APPENDIX 3: Planning Policy Summary

Planning Policy Summary

Zones

Land within the study area is currently located within the following zones:

Stawell:

- Commercial Zone – the Commercial Zone is applied to land along Horsham Road, Longfield Street and Ararat Road/Western Highway to the south of the Township. The Commercial Zone is also applied to land within the city centre. This zone functions to create vibrant a vibrant mix of commercial and business uses within centres. Each zone has similar, but slightly different focuses. The Commercial 1 Zone allows for a great mix of uses including entertainment and community uses where appropriate, whereas the Commercial 2 Zone allows appropriate manufacturing and industries within centres.
- Farming Zone – surrounding the main study area to the north, east and south is land located within the Farming Zone. The Farming Zone is the standard agricultural zone within the planning scheme which seeks to encourage the retention of productive agricultural land. Such land is restricted for residential and other non-agricultural related development in that it does not allow for the construction of more than one dwelling on a lot and, unless specifically specified, does not allow for the subdivision of lots under 40 hectares in size.
- General Residential Zone - the majority of the residential land within the Stawell Township is located within the General Residential Zone apart from land toward the periphery (which is zoned Low Density Residential Zone). The purpose of this zone is to encourage a form of residential growth that diversifies the type of housing stock, particularly in locations with good access to transport and services, while at the same time, respecting the neighbourhood character of the area.
- Industrial Zone – the Industrial Zone is applied to land to the west of the Township along Abattoir Road and the railway line, also extending north to Errington Road. The zone is also applied to the south of the railway line, extending to Horsham Road in the southwest and creating an interface with the Commercial Zone and General Residential Zone to the southeast. It is also applied to an industrial estate on the southeastern periphery of the Township south of the Ararat Road/Western Highway. Both the Industrial 1 Zone and Industrial 3 Zone are found within the study area; each with similar but slightly different focuses. The Industrial 1 Zone seeks to provide for manufacturing industry and storage and distribution uses. The Industrial 3 Zone functions to provide a buffer between the industrial uses and local communities by allowing for uses compatible with the nearby community including retail and convenience.
- Low Density Residential Zone – The Low Density Residential Zone is applied to residential land toward the periphery of the Township. The purpose of this zone is to encourage low density residential development by restricting development density by not allowing more than two dwellings on a lot and, unless specifically specified, does not allow for the subdivision of lots under 0.2 hectares (with reticulated sewerage connections) or 0.4 hectares (without).

- **Mixed Use Zone** – the Mixed Use Zone applies to land located adjacent to the railway line along Barnes Street, Crothers Street, Frayne Street, Main Street, Ocallaghan Street, Taylor Street, Wakeham Street and Little Wakeham Street. Additional land is zoned for Mixed Use near to the centre of the Township along Kinsella Street, Patrick Street and Sloane Street. The zone makes provision for land capable of supporting a mixture of both residential development and commercial or industrial development, compatible with residential uses. A higher density form of residential development than that offered in the General Residential Zone is encouraged so long as it responds to the preferred neighbourhood character of the locality.
 - **Public Conservation and Resource Zone** - the Public Conservation and Resource Zone is applied to reserves within the Township as well as the larger Illawarra Nature Conservation Reserve and Deep Lead Nature Conservation Reserve (No.2) on the periphery. It is also applied to the peripheral Concongella and Pleasant Creeks. The Public Conservation and Resource Zone is applied to natural environments to be protected and conserved. It allows for public facilities where appropriate to assist with the enjoyment of the environments, whilst ensuring minimised degradation of the environment quality.
 - **Public Park and Recreation Zone** – the Public Park and Recreation Zone is applied to public parks and recreation land throughout the Township, which include parks, sports centres and ovals, and larger recreation areas such as the Big Hill Parklands and Garden Reserve and Stawell Racecourse. It functions to identify areas of public recreation and open space, whilst also protecting areas of significance.
 - **Public Use Zone** – the Public Use Zone is applied to various public land-holdings within the Township. Notably, PUZ4 is applied to the railway line and Stawell Airport environs. The purpose of this zone is to designate land used for publicity utility infrastructure such as the railway line (Public Use Zone 4) and community services and facilities which include education institutions (Public Use Zone 2), hospitals (Public Use Zone 3) and cemeteries (Public Use Zone 5).
 - **Road Zone** – the Road Zone is applied to major roads and highways within the study area and broader road network, including the Western Highway. By virtue of their status, these are typically maintained and managed by VicRoads rather than the local/municipal authority.
 - **Rural Living Zone** – surrounding the main study area to the north, south and west is land located within the Rural Living Zone. Various schedules to the zone are applied within the study area including RLZ1, RLZ2, RLZ3 and RLZ5. It functions to provide for residential use in the rural areas as well as agricultural land uses which do not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding land uses. It also seeks to protect and enhance the natural resources, biodiversity and landscape and heritage values of the area.
- **Special use Zone**– the Special Use Zone is applied to mining and quarry areas within the periphery of the Township, including Stawell Mine. As its name suggests, the Special Use Zone seeks to recognise and enable the use and development of land for specific purposes, including Stawell Gold Mine (Special Use Zone 1) and the earth and energy resources industry (Special Use Zone 2).
- Western Highway**
- **Commercial Zone** – the Commercial Zone is applied to land along Horsham Road, Longfield Street and Ararat Road/Western Highway to the south of the Township. This zone functions to create vibrant a vibrant mix of commercial and business uses within centres. Each zone has similar, but slightly different focuses. The Commercial 1 Zone allows for a great mix of uses including entertainment and community uses where appropriate, whereas the Commercial 2 Zone allows appropriate manufacturing and industries within centres.
 - **General Residential Zone** - the majority of the residential land within the Stawell Township is located within the General Residential Zone apart from land toward the periphery (which is zoned Low Density Residential Zone). The purpose of this zone is to encourage a form of residential growth that diversifies the type of housing stock, particularly in locations with good access to transport and services, while at the same time, respecting the neighbourhood character of the area.
 - **Industrial Zone** – the Industrial Zone is applied to land to the west of the Township along Abattoir Road and the railway line, also extending north to Errington Road. The zone is also applied to the south of the railway line, extending to Horsham Road in the southwest and creating an interface with the Commercial Zone and General Residential Zone to the southeast. It is also applied to an industrial estate on the southeastern periphery of the Township south of the Ararat Road/Western Highway. Both the Industrial 1 Zone and Industrial 3 Zone are found within the study area; each with similar but slightly different focuses. The Industrial 1 Zone seeks to provide for manufacturing industry and storage and distribution uses. The Industrial 3 Zone functions to provide a buffer between the industrial uses and local communities by allowing for uses compatible with the nearby community including retail and convenience.
 - **Low Density Residential Zone** – The Low Density Residential Zone is applied to residential land toward the periphery of the Township. The purpose of this zone is to encourage low density residential development by restricting development density by not allowing more than two dwellings on a lot and, unless specifically specified, does not allow for the subdivision of lots under 0.2 hectares (with reticulated sewerage connections) or 0.4 hectares (without).
- **Public Conservation and Resource Zone** - the Public Conservation and Resource Zone is applied to reserves within the Township as well Pleasant Creek. The Public Conservation and Resource Zone is applied to natural environments to be protected and conserved. It allows for public facilities where appropriate to assist with the enjoyment of the environments, whilst ensuring minimised degradation of the environment quality.
 - **Public Park and Recreation Zone** – the Public Park and Recreation Zone is applied to public parks and recreation land throughout the Township, which include Stawell Racecourse and Federation Park. It functions to identify areas of public recreation and open space, whilst also protecting areas of significance.
 - **Public Use Zone** – the Public Use Zone is applied to various public land-holdings within the Township. Notably, PUZ4 is applied to the railway line and Stawell Airport environs. The purpose of this zone is to designate land used for publicity utility infrastructure such as the railway line (Public Use Zone 4) and community services and facilities which include education institutions (Public Use Zone 2).
 - **Road Zone** – the Road Zone is applied to major roads and highways within the study area and broader road network, including the Western Highway. By virtue of their status, these are typically maintained and managed by VicRoads rather than the local/municipal authority.
 - **Rural Living Zone** – surrounding the main study area to the north, south and west is land located within the Rural Living Zone. Various schedules to the zone are applied within the study area including RLZ1, RLZ2, RLZ3 and RLZ5. It functions to provide for residential use in the rural areas as well as agricultural land uses which do not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding land uses. It also seeks to protect and enhance the natural resources, biodiversity and landscape and heritage values of the area.

Planning Policy Summary

Overlays

Overlays

The study area is also affected by a number of Overlays including:

Stawell:

- Airport Environs Overlay – Stawell Airport and its environs are subject to the Airport Environs Overlay, which seeks to address the impact of aircraft noise on surrounding land uses by requiring noise attenuation in new dwellings and other noise sensitive developments. It also seeks to restrict sensitive land uses within the airport environs to safeguard from noise risk.
- Bushfire Management Overlay – the Bushfire Management Overlay covers a significant proportion of the study area, notably the outer rural land areas as well as the Township periphery. This zone functions to identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented and ensure that development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.
- Design and Development Overlay – there are a number of Design and Development Overlays applied within the study area, which outline various design objectives, built form and permit requirements. Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 3 (DDO3) is applied to land forming the Pleasant Creek Estate and seeks to achieve a high standard of design and visual amenity, particularly having regard to the Western Highway frontage. Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 4 (DDO4) is applied to Stawell Airport environs and the surrounding landscape and functions to maintain the efficiency and safety of aircraft operations at the Airport by restricting taller development within proximity to the Airport and requiring a permit for developments above a certain height. Design and Development Overlays, Schedule 6 (DDO6) and Schedule 7 (DDO7) are applied to the Stawell Hospital and surrounding environs. These seek to provide clearance for emergency medical services helicopter flight paths within the vicinity of the hospital and require a permit for developments above a certain height.
- Environmental Significance Overlay – land within the Stawell Wastewater Treatment Plant land-holding is affected by the Environmental Significance Overlay, Schedule 3. This overlay recognises the importance of creating a buffer between the treatment plant and sensitive land uses within the surrounds. It seeks to ensure that surrounding land uses do not have a detrimental impact on the ongoing operation of the plant, which provides sewerage treatment and wastewater disposal for the Stawell urban area.
- Environmental Audit Overlay – the Environmental Audit Overlay is applied to a number of sites within the Township and functions to identify potentially contaminated land associated with existing or historic use. It requires environmental audits where necessary to ensure that appropriate sensitive uses can commence on site without risk of contamination hazard.
- Floodway Overlay – the Floodway Overlay predominantly affects land within close

proximity to the Concongella and Pleasant Creeks and its purpose is to identify high risk areas associated with the greatest frequency of flooding. It also seeks to ensure that development does not increase adversity of flooding and maintains or improves waterway and floodplain health. Schedule 1 to the overlay outlines specific planning permit requirements when developing land in the Glenorchy, Upper Wimmera, Mount William Creek and Concongella Catchment.

- Heritage Overlay – the Heritage Overlay is applied to a number of heritage places within the Township. The purpose of the overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance and ensure that development does not adversely affect this significance.
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – while still generally associated with the Concongella and Pleasant Creeks, land affected by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay covers a larger extent than that covered by the Floodway Overlay. The purpose of the overlay is to ensure that development is responsive to the effects of the 1 in 100 year flood by minimising the possibility of flood damage and ensuring the free passage and temporary storage of flood waters while also protecting water quality.
- Public Acquisition Overlay – the Public Acquisition Overlay concerns the Western Highway Duplication Project and is applied to land either side of the Western Highway to the southeast of the study area. The overlay functions to identify land which is proposed to be acquired by a Minister, public authority or municipal council to reserve land for a public purpose (in this case the Western Highway project) and to ensure that changes to the use or development of the land do not prejudice the purpose for which the land is to be acquired.

Western Highway:

- Bushfire Management Overlay – the Bushfire Management Overlay covers a significant proportion of the study area, notably the outer rural land areas as well as the Township periphery. This zone functions to identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented and ensure that development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.
- Design and Development Overlay – there are a number of Design and Development Overlays applied within the study area, which outline various design objectives, built form and permit requirements. Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 3 (DDO3) is applied to land forming the Pleasant Creek Estate and seeks to achieve a high standard of design and visual amenity, particularly having regard to the Western Highway frontage.

- Environmental Significance Overlay – land within the Stawell Wastewater Treatment Plant land-holding is affected by the Environmental Significance Overlay, Schedule 3. This overlay recognises the importance of creating a buffer between the treatment plant and sensitive land uses within the surrounds. It seeks to ensure that surrounding land uses do not have a detrimental impact on the ongoing operation of the plant, which provides sewerage treatment and wastewater disposal for the Stawell urban area.
- Environmental Audit Overlay – the Environmental Audit Overlay is applied to a number of sites within the Township and functions to identify potentially contaminated land associated with existing or historic use. It requires environmental audits where necessary to ensure that appropriate sensitive uses can commence on site without risk of contamination hazard.
- Floodway Overlay – the Floodway Overlay predominantly affects land within close proximity to the Concongella and Pleasant Creeks and its purpose is to identify high risk areas associated with the greatest frequency of flooding. It also seeks to ensure that development does not increase adversity of flooding and maintains or improves waterway and floodplain health. Schedule 1 to the overlay outlines specific planning permit requirements when developing land in the Glenorchy, Upper Wimmera, Mount William Creek and Concongella Catchment.
- Heritage Overlay – the Heritage Overlay is applied to a number of heritage places within the Township. The purpose of the overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance and ensure that development does not adversely affect this significance.
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – while still generally associated with the Concongella and Pleasant Creeks, land affected by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay covers a larger extent than that covered by the Floodway Overlay. The purpose of the overlay is to ensure that development is responsive to the effects of the 1 in 100 year flood by minimising the possibility of flood damage and ensuring the free passage and temporary storage of flood waters while also protecting water quality.

APPENDIX 4: Background Documentation Review



Background Documentation Review

Western Highway

A number of background documents have been reviewed by the consultant team as part of the preparation of the Discussion Paper to gain an appreciation of the relevant influencing factors. The findings of this review have been synthesised into key themes outlined earlier in the report. A brief summary of the reviewed documents is outlined as follows and includes:

- Draft Stawell Aerodrome Masterplan Review (2014);
- Western Stawell Business Precinct Master Plan, 2014 – Report (December Draft);
- Ararat – Stawell – Halls Gap Triangle Rural Zone Review, Final Report (2012);
- Northern Grampians Shire Council, Council Plan 2017 – 2021;
- Land Development Strategy 2013-2017;
- Northern Grampians Planning Scheme, Planning Scheme Review Report (2018);
- Northern Grampians Shire Council, Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy, Volume One: The Strategy and Recommendations (2014);
- Stawell Gold Mine Future Possibilities, Northern Grampians Shire Council, Business Case (2014);
- Housing Needs and Residential Land Supply Assessment, Northern Grampians, Draft (2018);
- Retail Gap Analysis, Stawell and St Arnaud, Update October 2018;
- Stawell Urban Design Framework;
- Stawell Parks Precinct Plan Directions (2019);
- Victorian Heritage Database Report: Former Literary & Scientific Institute (VHR Number H0531);
- Victorian Heritage Database Report: Former Pleasant Creek Court House (VHR Number H0998); and
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014).

In its broader policy context, these documents reveal Stawell is a key urban centre for the southern part of the Wimmera Southern Mallee region, having strong ties to Ararat as a sub-regional cluster of housing, employment and services; and having an availability of surplus industrial land and capacity to accommodate additional residential growth. A brief outline is provided below.

In terms of strategic land use, the documents reviewed included the **Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014), Northern Grampians Shire Land Development Strategy 2013-2017 and Northern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2017 – 2021** which provide direction on land use planning and growth management priorities at a regional and municipal level. As the Shire's largest urban centre, Stawell is highlighted as an important location for targeting future growth and investment in housing, business and service provision. Regional strategies seek to identify additional locations for residential development within Stawell and encourage expansion of the urban area to accommodate future residential growth. It is noted that there is significant underutilised industrial land in Stawell. As such, strategies also seek to target investment in the Western Stawell Business Precinct as a clear location for expansion of industry.

A number of documents have reviewed the existing planning scheme provisions. Notably, the **Northern Grampians Planning Scheme, Planning Scheme Review Report (2018)** provides an audit of the existing strategic and statutory provisions in the Planning Scheme, having regard to the performance of the scheme since the last review in 2014 and changes to the Victorian Planning system since that time. Notably, the existing Planning Scheme is considered to be 'neutral' and tends to 'hold the line' rather than embrace the opportunities for the Shire. Key recommendations in relation to Stawell include:

- General Residential Zone is used as a default zone with no strategic intent, and there are anomalies in the application of the zone in Stawell.
- Rationalisation and review of the Rural Living Zones, to consider application of the Restructure Overlay on some of these areas to address older, smaller rural subdivisions.
- Prepare a Western Highway Land Use Strategy and Urban Design Framework to review the zoning and overlay regime on the Western Highway Precinct at Stawell, having regard to its development potential and the Western Highway Duplication Project.
- Rationalise the commercial zones near Pleasant Creek to align with property boundaries.
- Prepare a Structure Plan for Stawell to analyse opportunities and constraints and review the zoning and overlay regime to align with current environmental constraints.

The Ararat – Stawell – Halls Gap Triangle Rural Zone Review, Final Report (2012) reviews existing planning controls that apply to the triangle, with an emphasis on assessing the application of the rural zones. Whilst it examines smaller settlements within the triangle, it does not provide detailed direction about township growth or structure. It makes recommendations for changes to local policy and planning controls having regard to the identified vision for the Triangle. The vision for the Triangle includes:

- Protecting and supporting agricultural production within the area.
- Encouraging tourism activities.
- Directing housing around existing settlements.
- Sustainable management of the areas' natural resources and landscapes.

At a municipal level, the **Northern Grampians Shire Housing Needs and Residential Land Supply Assessment (2018)** provides an audit of existing population growth, dwelling stock, housing demand, residential land supply and development activity. It identifies that the population of the Shire is declining as a whole, whilst population decline is slower within Stawell where most of the projected housing growth is anticipated to be accommodated. The Shire has sufficient residential land supply to provide for future dwelling construction. However, the supply is not catering for a diverse housing mix and there is an excess of Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land. Recommendations of the Strategy can be summarised as follows:

- Identify a precinct within Stawell to accommodate alternative forms of housing (townhouses and aged care village style development).
- Focus greenfield development in serviceable locations in Stawell that will offer a 'premium' housing product, working with utility providers and Council to acquire and service land.
- Work with aged and community care providers to address changing housing needs in the Shire, working with Council to make surplus Council land available for such development.
- Reduce and rationalise the Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land across the Shire, particularly close to Townships where it can be serviced and not impact primary production.

Existing retail offer in Stawell and St Arnaud is audited in the **Retail Gap Analysis, Stawell and St Arnaud, Update October 2018**. The analysis identifies gaps in retailing provision, floorspace requirements and development opportunities within these areas. It provides Council with an action plan to encourage retail activation and revitalisation as well as retail investment attraction. Notably, it is identified that there is no overarching strategy or clear vision for retailing in Stawell and a lack of tourism-based retail strategy activation. Opportunities are identified to capitalise on Stawell's tourism potential as a gateway to the Grampians, benefiting from its location off the Western Highway.

The Council's strategy for its open space, sport and recreation areas is outlined in the **Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy, Volume One: The Strategy and Recommendations (2014)**. The Strategy identifies priority projects for Council to support for the period 2013 to 2022 in response to changing community needs and the aim to increase community participation in sport and recreation activities. Recommendations are provided under the key strategy areas of: (1) facilities, (2) programs and (3) services. Also included within the Strategy is an inventory and overview of existing Council sporting facilities and recreation assets.

More specifically, at Township level, the **Stawell Urban Design Framework** provides the Council strategy for guiding land use and development within Stawell, with a particular focus on enhancing public areas such as the town centre, the appearance of the Western Highway, open space reserves and roads leading to the town centre. It breaks down the Township into a number of distinct precincts for the purposes of identifying key issues, opportunities and recommendations.

A number of site-specific documents are of relevance:

The **Draft Stawell Aerodrome Masterplan Review (2014)** is a review of the adopted Stawell Aerodrome Masterplan prepared by Airports Plus Pty Ltd (2009), which brings the Masterplan up-to-date with development that has occurred since the adoption of the Masterplan. It also accommodates future development, infrastructure and land ownership requirements in line with future growth of the Aerodrome.

The **Western Stawell Business Precinct Master Plan, 2014 – Report (December Draft)** is applied to industrially zoned land located generally west of Griffith Street, and north of the Western Highway. The Masterplan provides the strategic long-term direction to guide land use, development and investment within the precinct over a 15 year period. It identifies the infrastructure requirements to support new business and investment in the area as well as design guidelines and requirements to guide new development. Notably, the Strategy acknowledges that this precinct is a major industrial area for the Stawell Township and is identified in both the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme and Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan as the preferred location for industrial development.

The **Stawell Gold Mine Future Possibilities, Northern Grampians Shire Council, Business Case (2014)** is a long-term strategy document that identifies and assesses potential future uses of the Stawell Gold Mine. The business case considers the development potential of the site as (1) an education, training and research facility and (2) a hydroponic and greenhouse agricultural production facility. The strategy considers the market demand, suitability of the site and infrastructure needs to accommodate future development as well as the land and site development options for stakeholders to deliver the strategy.

The **Stawell Parks Precinct Plan Directions (2019)** outlines a preliminary Masterplan to guide passive and active recreation opportunities and future investment in the open space areas of Central Park, Cato Park and St George Street – Colquhoun Street. The report splits the precincts into three precincts for the purpose of identifying key issues and directions for each area.

Two **Victorian Heritage Database Reports** have been found which are of relevance to the study area. These reports outline the registration details and statements of significance for the **Former Literary & Scientific Institute (VHR Number H0531) and Former Pleasant Creek Court House (VHR Number H0998)**.

APPENDIX 5: Residential Land Supply Assessment Methodology



Residential Land Supply Assessment Methodology

The following outlines the methodology used for the land supply assessment.

Supply

The Land Supply Assessment was based on a desktop analysis of individual parcels of residential land within Stawell. This was based on an analysis of aerial imagery from 2016 and checked against data identifying completed building permits over the period from 2015 to March 2020 to capture recent constructions.

Lots were identified as follows:

Vacant

Lots which had no existing dwellings. Lots were removed from the analysis where they related to:

- Public reserves, easements, roads, and driveways (associated with unit developments).
- Where a building permit has been completed since 2015.

Vacant Lots with Subdivision Potential

Vacant land that was considered to be large enough to support subdivision was identified. A number of theoretical minimum lot sizes were defined based on existing patterns of development and across a range of development types within Stawell including single dwellings, dual occupancies, and multi-unit developments.

These were then utilised to determine the number of lots that could be created from vacant residential land across three lot size ranges and the potential type of development that could be accommodated within its location.

The below table provides a summary of the minimum lot sizes and lot ranges utilised.

Minimum lot sizes and lot ranges utilised			
	Potential Minimum Lot Size	Existing Lot Size	Type Of Development
1	475sqm	950-1,200sqm	Dual Occupancy
2	300sqm	1,200-3,600sqm	Multi-Unit (inner areas)
3	850sqm	3,600sqm +	Greenfield (outer areas)

Based on the available land, the below provides a summary of the theoretical number of new dwellings that could be accommodated.

Number of new dwellings that could be accommodated			
Zone	Area	Vacant Lots	Potential New Dwellings
GRZ	58ha	146	687
LDRZ	17ha	26	26
Total	74ha	172	713

Lots with Redevelopment Potential

Lots with existing dwellings but with the potential to support infill development or further subdivision were identified. Community uses such as churches and community centres were removed from the analysis.

The analysis was applied to lots over 950sqm in size and used the above minimum lot sizes.

It is highly unlikely for all lots to become available for redevelopment in the future, given the development potential will ultimately depend on the choices of current and future landholders. As such, to more accurately understand the future potential of the land, an assumption was made that only a certain percentage of this land will become available within a reasonable period of time.

The assumptions used and theoretical new dwellings is outlined below.

Assumptions			
Development Type	Existing Lot Size	Assumed Development	Potential New Dwellings
Dual Occupancy	950-1,200sqm	5%	26
Multi-Unit	1,200-3,600sqm	5%	43
Suburban	3,600sqm +	10%	20



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