

Batesford Structure Plan

1. Town Profile

1.1 Location

Batesford is a small township located on the Midland Highway, approximately 10km west of Geelong, midway between Geelong and Bannockburn. The township is positioned in both the Golden Plains Shire and the City of Greater Geelong. The Moorabool River and Dog Rocks Road forms the municipal boundary between Golden Plains Shire and the City of Greater Geelong.

The township of Batesford has the ambience of a village which is distinguished by its topography and low scale of development. The older area of Batesford is nestled within a small valley on the Midland Highway. The Dog Rocks area, including granite outcrop and rural residential development is situated west of the township, on Blackall Road. This is also a distinctive feature of Batesford.

1.2 Natural Environment

Batesford is located within a rural environment that has generally been cleared and used for cropping and grazing purposes. Some roadsides, landholdings and watercourses in the Batesford area contain important native vegetation and habitat environments. The area is within the Corangamite Catchment. Environmental issues arising across the catchment include water erosion and quality, salinity, pest plants and animals, flora and fauna conservation and localised flooding and fire risks (open grasslands and wooded forest/bush areas).

The Moorabool River with its floodplain and escarpment areas is a strong feature of Batesford. The City of Greater Geelong covers the River and associated floodplain.

The 'Dog Rocks' situated within the Golden Plains side of Batesford is a significant landscape feature created by granite and boulder outcrops. The 'Dog Rocks' have been identified as having natural heritage significance. Approximately 14 hectares of land containing the significant natural granite outcrop ('Dog Rocks') is to be transferred to the Trust of Nature (Victoria).

1.3 Built Environment

The City of Greater Geelong covers the older more established residential area and includes limited commercial development, fronting the Midland Highway. The township has a strong landscape character influenced by established trees, the riverside, the historic bluestone bridge and the low scale of development. Further development and growth of the eastern part of Batesford, under the City of Greater Geelong is constrained by the floodplain and escarpment area.

The Golden Plains side of Batesford is dominated by rural residential development located within an area generally bound by the Midland Highway, Dog Rocks Road and the Fyansford-Gheringhap Road. This area is located above the floodplain and is situated in a rural setting. It features a high quality rural residential development in an attractive physical environment featuring the Dog Rocks Outcrop which is complimented by landscape design treatments, planting and lighting.

1.4 Economic and Community

There are approximately 235 lots in the Batesford township. The majority of lots in the Batesford township are rural residential type lots which reflects the character of the area. Using projections from the Department of Infrastructure, an estimated demand for 105 new rural residential lots in the Dog Rocks area is expected in the next 5-10 years.

The township setting, encompassing the smaller township lots within the valley and around the riverbank, recreational facilities and Hotel, creates a small village atmosphere. The community is generally characterised by families with school aged children.

1.4 Economic and Community cont.

This includes a high proportion of young people (between 5-17 age group) and middle-aged groups (35-49 yrs). The demographic pattern is consistent with a rural area experiencing residential growth on the periphery of a larger provincial city such as Geelong.

Outside of the township area, is the Blackall and Dog Rocks Estates within the Golden Plains Shire. These have a rural residential character, with an emphasis on environmental and landscape qualities, based largely on the Dog Rocks Outcrop and areas of remnant native vegetation such as the Lilydale Sanctuary in Dog Rocks Road.

There is a significant demand for rural residential type lots in the Dog Rocks subdivision where 76 new lots have been created since 1997. Most lots were sold before, during or soon after construction, reflecting strong demand for the alternative rural residential lifestyle offered at Batesford.

2. Opportunities

- Batesford's close proximity to Geelong makes it attractive for commuters seeking an alternative rural-residential lifestyle.
- Strong consumer demand for rural residential development at Batesford, particularly the Dog Rocks area.
- The landscape and environmental qualities of the area, including the Moorabool River and the Dog Rocks Outcrop provide an attractive backdrop for rural residential development.
- Reticulated water supply is available to the Dog Rocks area through a 900 kilolitre tank provided for Dog Rocks subdivision, with spare capacity for additional lots (with upgrading to booster pump station).
- Barwon Water will review Batesford's water pressure situation over the next 5 years.
- Barwon Water's new Moorabool water treatment plant may provide an opportunity to provide a high-pressure system to Batesford through Bannockburn.
- Existing power and telecommunications infrastructure is available.
- Opportunities for tourism in the township from environmental and landscape features, including the Moorabool River and Dog Rocks Outcrop.
- Vehicular traffic is well serviced by main roads including the Midland Highway and the Fyansford-Gheringhap Road.
- Geelong to Ballarat rail line is located immediately north of the Batesford settlement.
- Close proximity to recreation, community and commercial facilities in Batesford, Bannockburn and Geelong.
- The plateau areas above the valley floor in the Moorabool Valley is generally cleared and is not considered as having high quality agricultural value in terms of production output.

3. Constraints

- Further development and growth of the eastern part of Batesford is constrained by the floodplain and escarpment area and generally poor drainage.
- Very limited land available for subdivision or development within the area of Batesford covered by the City of Greater Geelong.
- Existing Batesford water supply is limited to land up to 60 metre AHD contour, however higher elevations can be supplied by the construction of dedicated infrastructure.
- No plans for reticulated sewerage to Batesford within the next 10 years.
- Size of existing rural-residential lots would make sewer reticulation economically unviable.
- Limited commercial facilities in Batesford township.
- Public transport is limited.
- No available rail station to access the existing line at Batesford.
- Direct access from new lots to the Midland Highway or Fyansford Road would not be supported by Vic Roads.
- Limited recreation and community-based facilities in Batesford.
- Some areas of productive agricultural land with direct access to water supply and rich soils.
- Some areas along the escarpment of the Moorabool River valley have potential for erosion.
- Some areas potentially affected by salinity.
- Work Authority WA3 extractive industry is located in the Batesford area.

4. Strategic Principles

4.1 Rural Residential Development Principles

- That Batesford be designated as a Rural Residential Node within the context of the Golden Plains Planning Scheme Structure Plan.
- Over the next 5-10 year period, limited rural residential growth be supported on the western side of the existing Dog Rocks subdivision, with a rural zone buffer between the Fyansford-Ghernighap Road and rural residential development. This provision shall be based on demonstrated demand and supply and detailed land capability assessment and conditions that satisfy requirements under Ministerial Direction Number 6. Development standards shall generally reflect those required within the existing Dog Rocks subdivision and provide for a minimum lot size of 1.0 hectare.
- Proposals for rezoning land in the Hills Road area to be considered following development of the western side of the existing Dog Rocks subdivision. Proposals to rezone land south of the Dog Rocks Outcrop may be reviewed following development of all stages identified on the Batesford Structure Plan. This review shall consider demonstrated demand and supply and detailed land capability assessment and conditions that satisfy requirements under Ministerial Direction Number 6. Rezoning proposals shall consider the need to protect integrity of surrounding rural land, visual amenity to the Barrabool Hills, consolidation of Batesford township and provision of infrastructure including reticulated water supply and suitable alternative effluent disposal systems.
- Rezoning proposals need to consider the impact of the quarry activities of Work Authority WA3.

4.2 Infrastructure and Service Provision Principles

- That reticulated water supply continue to be the basis for all new residential development in Batesford and that water supply pressure to existing and new residential areas be upgraded according to ongoing demand.
- That infrastructure planning for Batesford is based on the continued efficient use of septic tank systems and other suitable alternative systems according to land capability assessment.
- That additional vehicular access requirements to main roads from new subdivisions be based on the use of service roads designed to the requirements of VicRoads and according to relevant policies contained within Council's Road Strategy.
- That stormwater management planning for existing and new development within Batesford include the use of sediment and erosion controls to maintain water quality from across the area.
- That provision of a second access point to the Dog Rocks estate be incorporated for safety in case of emergency.
- Excess landfill to be retained and rehabilitated on site, unless suitable alternatives are agreed to by the responsible authority.
- Planning permit applications on or within 60 metres of a transmission line should be referred to the controlling authority of the line.

4.3 Environmental Management Principles

- That environmental programs incorporate findings from land capability assessments to identify appropriate effluent and waste disposal systems that ensure environmental qualities of the area are sustained.
- That high quality revegetation planting programs and improvement of watercourses and habitat areas associated with watercourses and gully areas be planned for and implemented into new development.
- That the long term environmental integrity of the Moorabool River and immediate floodplain and escarpment areas be protected by restricting residential development in these localities.
- That support be given to a Moorabool River floodplain management plan for Batesford to guide future growth and development opportunities within Batesford.
- That salinity management around Batesford continues to be recognised through the application and refinement of the Salinity Management Overlay.

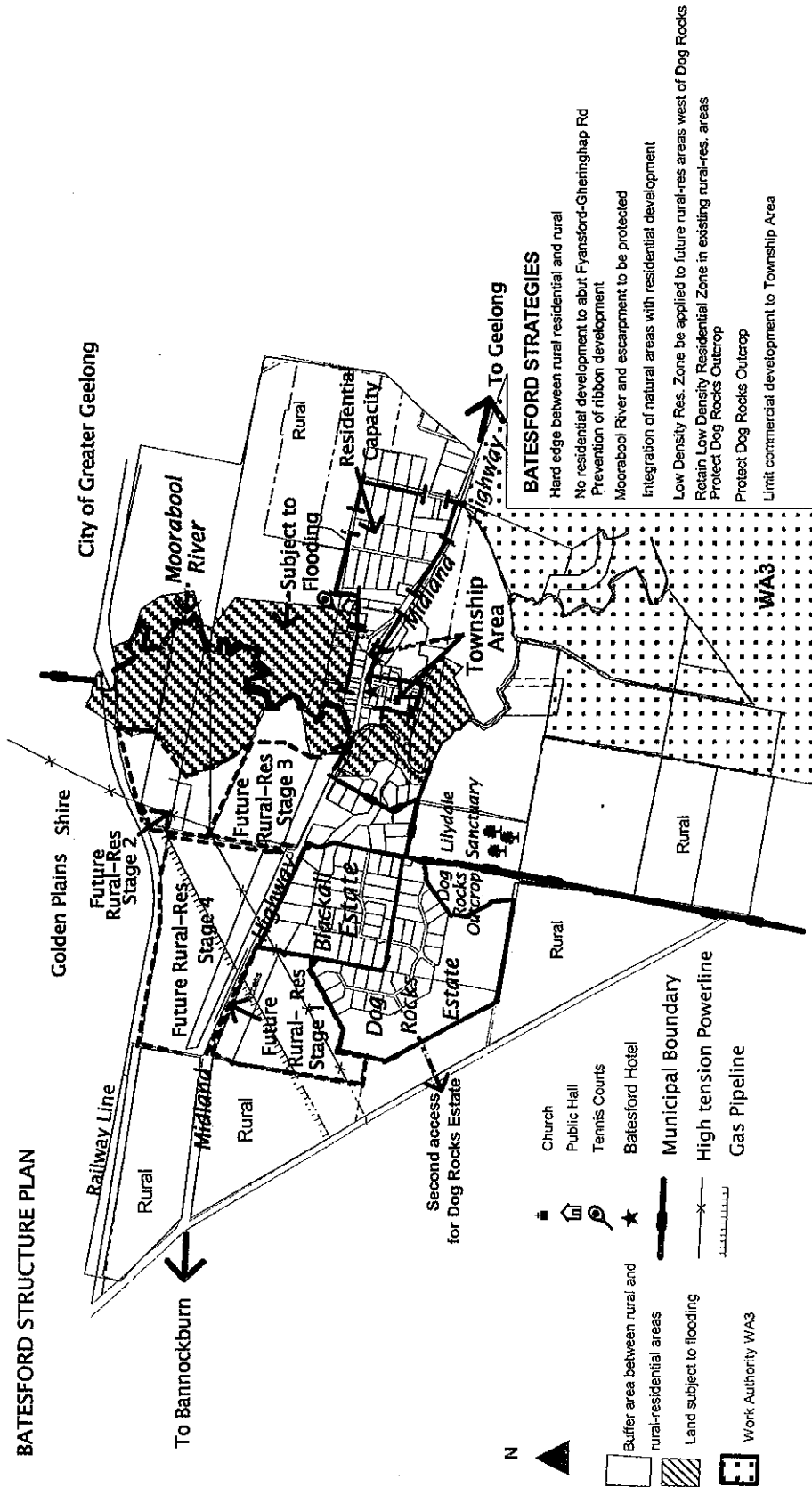
4.4 Planning Controls

- That the Low Density Residential Zone be maintained over the existing Blackall and Dog Rocks subdivisions and the Low Density Residential Development Local Policy be applied to these areas also.
- That the Low Density Residential Zone be applied to any future extension to the Dog Rocks subdivision area and that the Low Density Residential Development Local Policy be applied to ensure that the existing lot sizes in the Dog Rocks subdivision are reflected in any future development.
- That the integrity and outlook of the Dog Rocks granite outcrop be maintained and protected through the application of a Heritage Overlay within the Golden Plains Planning Scheme.

5. Strategic Issues for Future Development

- Prevention of ribbon development and confining future growth in close proximity to the existing township.
- Providing clear boundaries and a hard edge to residential development.
- Prevention of a potential fragmentation of residential development from the existing township area.
- That the amount of residential growth for Batesford be limited to a base figure, defined by the number of potential lots available on suitable land, rather than an estimated population figure.
- Contributions necessary (if any) to the establishment, upgrading and continued use of recreation and community facilities used by Batesford residents in Batesford and located outside of Batesford (eg. Bannockburn and Geelong).
- That support be given to investigating the public transport and local convenience shopping needs of the community in the medium to long term.

BATESFORD STRUCTURE PLAN



BATESFORD STRATEGIES

- Hard edge between rural residential and rural
- No residential development to abut Fyansford-Gheerghap Rd
- Prevention of ribbon development
- Moorabool River and escarpment to be protected
- Integration of natural areas with residential development
- Low Density Res. Zone be applied to future rural-res areas west of Dog Rocks
- Retain Low Density Residential Zone in existing rural-res. areas
- Protect Dog Rocks Outcrop
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- Limit commercial development to Township Area