



NORTHERN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY BACKGROUND & ISSUES REPORT

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL APRIL 2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

Golden Plains Shire (“the Shire”) is located in south western Victoria, strategically positioned between Geelong and Ballarat and approximately 100 kilometres west of Melbourne. The northern portion of the Shire forms part of the Central Highlands Region (see **Figure 1**). The traditional owners of the land are the Wadawurrung people.

The Shire's location determines that the majority of residents commute for employment and higher order services in Ballarat, Geelong and metropolitan Melbourne. The close proximity to these cities provides residents the opportunity to live in a rural environment, while still being able to access the opportunities that cities offer.

Of specific relevance to the northern portion of the Shire, is its proximity to Ballarat, with the Shire's most northern boundary adjoining Ballarat West. Significant growth occurring within Ballarat will undoubtedly have an impact on the northern part of the Shire, with this portion of the Shire projecting population growth of approximately 2000 additional residents by 2030.

The Northern Settlement Strategy (“NSS”) responds to the Shire's identified need for long term strategic direction to manage growth and development in the northern portion of the Shire.

The intent of the NSS is to provide clear strategic direction in regard to the where growth is best located and pre-conditions for future growth to adhere to. The NSS examines the spatial and land use composition of the northern portion of the Shire including the location, distribution and relationship of land uses, development and infrastructure.

1.2 ROLE OF THE BACKGROUND & ISSUES REPORT

The NSS has been prepared in two parts:

> **NSS Strategy**

The Strategy provides a concise framework to assist in managing future growth in the north of the Shire. The Strategy introduces the strategic directions plan - a visual representation of key findings and directions.

> **Background & Issues Report**

This document provides the contextual information regarding the current status, influences, opportunities, challenges and constraints on settlement in the north of the Shire. This Report also considers feedback received as part of the extensive stakeholder and community engagement undertaken.

This document captures and analyses the research and findings to reveal key directions for considering growth in the north of the Shire.

The **Background & Issues Report** reviews the existing framework for the northern portion of the Shire including:

- > policy context;
- > drivers, challenges, opportunities and constraints;
- > issues and influences;
- > existing towns and settlements;
- > land supply; and
- > services and employment.

The Background & Issues Report is supported by a number of studies including:

- > Area Profiles (GPS 2016)
- > Residential Land Demand and Supply Assessment (Spatial Economics Pty Ltd 2016)
- > Land Use Economic Modelling – (HillPDA Consulting 2016)

This document captures in detail all information which has been used to support the development of the NSS.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH AIMS

The Northern Settlement Strategy is a spatial expression of population distribution, settlement size and settlement role. This long term strategic plan considers where appropriate growth can be located, and ensures growth occurs within the bounds of good strategic policy that guides development in the best interest of communities in the Golden Plains Shire. In addition, the strategy provides a planning framework for the location of development and encourages growth in those locations where there is the greatest opportunity to maximise benefit from existing infrastructure.

Collective and coordinated strategic thinking, planning and management is critical if the Shire is to manage its own future, adjust to change and continue to prosper. Not managing growth in a coordinated way may result in:

- Inappropriate growth in locations that are less suited to accommodate growth in a sustainable way.
- Poor access to facilities and services, if towns are planned in isolation without fully understanding their broader role in the Shire and region.
- Limited investment guidance and opportunities, resulting in ad-hoc delivery of services and infrastructure with little or no cost efficiencies.
- Potential damage to the environment and loss of natural assets, such as water quality, biodiversity and significant landscapes.
- New development undermining the historic or valued character of townships.
- Difficulties in managing rural living development in a sustainable way, particularly the coordination of rural living development with long term township development.

Northern Settlement Strategy Study Area

The study area covers approximately 1,928 square kilometres (192,800 ha) bordered by the City of Ballarat, City of Greater Geelong and the Shires of Pyrenees, Moorabool and Corangamite. The study area includes 22 towns of which Smythesdale is the largest. Smythesdale is one of only two townships serviced by reticulated sewerage in the study area. The boundaries of the study area align to the portion of the Shire situated within the Central Highlands Region as illustrated by Figure 1.

2.2 PROJECT PHASES AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The NSS has required a multi-staged approach that has been informed by both State and Local plans and strategies, information and comments from technical experts, various agencies and community consultation.

In preparing the Background & Issues Report & Strategy Document the project phases outlined in figure 2 were undertaken to ensure a transparent and all-encompassing process.

Project Phases



Figure 2 Project Phases

PHASE

Phase 1 – Project Inception and Information Gathering

1. Engagement - Initial key stakeholder consultation (internal and external stakeholders).
2. Collate known township information to develop township profiles. Township profiles include constraints mapping such as wildfire risk, native vegetation, water supply catchments and natural resources. In addition the profiles will map existing infrastructure networks and identify infrastructure constraints including electricity, gas, water supply telecommunications, and sewerage.
3. Engagement - verify town profile information accuracy (what we know, is it correct, have we missed anything).
4. Developed map-base community engagement tool and web pages.
5. Engagement - determined settlement roles, functionality and linkages (through online survey).

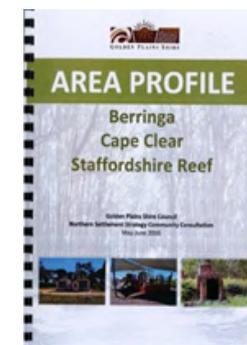
Phase 2 – Information Analysis

6. Broad scale landscape and character analysis of the north of the Shire, with particular attention to intrinsic values of environmental, heritage and landscape assets.
7. A residential land supply review to identify areas where the existing (historical) lot configuration has potential for a greater level of development than currently exists and consider appropriateness (or otherwise) of such development.
8. Analysis of supply and demand for residential land and future population projections.
9. Assessed existing state, regional and local policy that contributes to the direction of the Settlement Strategy, including:
 - State and regional policy (e.g. Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan, Ballarat Strategy 2040);
 - Local policy and strategies (e.g. Golden Plains Shire Rural Land Use Strategy 2008, Golden Plains Residential Land Supply 2009, North West Area Strategic directions Plan 2000);
10. Considered relevant broader trends and implications (Ballarat Grow West, Ballarat West-West, Western Highway Link, demographic change, affordable housing, open space and local employment) and identify how they need to be addressed within the Shire.
11. Scenario Planning (development options and cost to Council).
12. Synthesized researched information into a background and issues report.
13. Engagement – informing community of key findings.

PRODUCTS

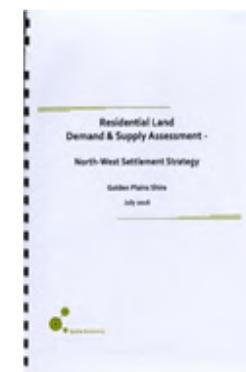
AREA PROFILES

The Area Profiles provide detailed information on each of the townships and localities within the study area, including population, infrastructure and services available. The profiles were compiled as a reference and basis for the development of the typology of settlements for the NSS.



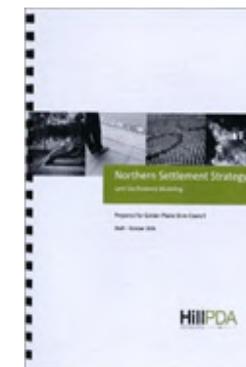
RESIDENTIAL LAND USE ANALYSIS

This assessment provides detailed information on the availability of residential land supply and estimated current and future demand for residential land (zoned Township, Low Density Residential Zone and Rural Living Zone) across each of the townships/ localities in the study area.



LAND USE ECONOMIC MODELLING

The findings of this document demonstrate the financial cost of different settlement patterns and uses a number of development scenarios to identify the likely costs to Council servicing a variety of settlement patterns. The scenarios include a potential zone reform, urban consolidation and conceptual greenfield growth development. The modelling aims to guide Council in determining sustainable areas in the northern settlement strategy to accommodate estimated population growth.



PHASE

PRODUCTS

Phase 3 – Strategy Development

14. Defined the relative role, function and distinctive typology of settlements and developed the strategy to support those typologies/roles and linkages between larger and smaller settlements.
15. Provided an indication of population growth and areas where population growth will be encouraged.
16. Identified land supply requirements to meet population projections and land for supporting infrastructure and employment.
17. Presented the Draft Settlement Strategy to Council for adoption.
18. Prepared the Draft Settlement Strategy and Framework that facilitates a subsequent Planning Scheme Amendment/implementation.

Phase 4 – Implementation (Planning Scheme Amendment)

19. Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Strategy.
20. Exhibit amendment and consider submissions.
21. Submit to the Minister for approval.



Background Report



Strategy

Table 1 Project Phases

3. LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

A comprehensive Literature Review was undertaken to capture the complex web of policy documents currently providing directions for development in the north of the Shire. A summary of Literature Review findings is provided in Table 2.

DOCUMENT	OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES	DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NSS
<p>Plan Melbourne Refresh 2014</p> <p>Is the current State Government's planning strategy. Plan Melbourne outlines the vision for Melbourne's growth to 2050 and also integrates planning for Victoria's regional and peri-urban areas.</p>	<p>Plan for Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas</p> <p>Victoria's Regional Statement articulates that government investment and decision-making in regional Victoria will reflect the strategic priorities regional communities have identified for themselves - across economic, social and environmental issues.</p>	<p>4.5 Avoid development in locations where there is risk to life, property, the natural environment and infrastructure from natural hazards such as bushfire and flooding.</p> <p>Accommodate additional housing and employment in established towns that have the capacity for growth</p>
<p>Central Highlands Growth Plan</p> <p>The Regional Growth Plan recognises Smythesdale is the preferred location for growth in the northern part of the Golden Plains Shire.</p>	<p>INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT</p> <p>Recognise that employment growth needs to underpin population growth to enable residents to work locally</p>	<p>11.4 Encourage local employment opportunities and provide industrial land to support population growth.</p>
	<p>ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE</p> <p>Protect rural character</p>	<p>12.2 Protect the rural landscape character as a major contributor to its liveability, tourism and growth.</p> <p>12.3 Direct settlement growth and development to areas where it will avoid impacting on high value environment.</p> <p>12.4 Encourage strategic land use planning which promotes adaptable land uses that respond to climate change and enable economic diversification.</p>
	<p>NATURAL HAZARD LINKS</p> <p>Risks presented to land use from climate change and natural hazards including flooding and bushfire must be considered in strategic and statutory planning.</p>	<p>Take a precautionary approach in planning new developments by avoiding locations that pose an extreme risk from bushfire or flooding.</p> <p>13.2 Plan for development and facilities shared around clusters of linked settlements without easy access to a close major settlement.</p>
	<p>LIVING IN THE REGION</p> <p>Future settlement planning should consider relationships between settlements</p>	<p>13.6 Support Smythesdale as the preferred growth town. Favour infill development and planned growth areas.</p> <p>13.7 Encourage small settlements to be planned as part of a cluster of settlements to improve access to key services.</p>

DOCUMENT	OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES	DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NSS
	and along key corridors to determine the suitability of proposals for development for development and growth.	13.8 Provide rural residential development in well-planned locations that support existing settlements
	WATER, ENERGY AND UTILITIES Planning for growth should be integrated with the provision of infrastructure	14.3 Direct development to locations that make the best use of existing water, energy and utility infrastructure and minimise the need for infrastructure upgrades or expansion.
Golden Plains Planning Scheme	Local Policy Framework	To make efficient use of land. Encourage the consolidation of existing township areas Less conflict in rural areas between agriculture and non-agricultural land uses.
North West Area (Jan 2000)	This Strategy provides the form and direction of rural residential of rural residential development in the north of the Golden Plains Shire	4.31 Current land supply provides vacant lots capable of further rural residential development within the north west area. Encourages continued residential development policy that consolidates existing townships and communities and provides a clear boundary from surrounding rural and rural living areas.
Corangamite CMA Regional Floodplain Management Strategy	The Strategy provides a single regional planning document for floodplain management. The northern communities of the Golden Plains Shire exist among a complex network of creeks and small tributaries that contribute flows to the Woody Yaloak and Yarrowee River systems.	4.6 Undertake a review of current planning overlays (FO and LSIO) to determine if an upgrade to the Planning Scheme is required, particularly for areas where there is development pressure.
Financial cost of settlement patterns in rural Victoria 2013	The report provides the cost of capital, maintenance and service provision for different rural settlement typologies and the cumulative effect and cost of development decisions over time	Provides the overarching framework for the development of the cost of settlement patterns in the Northern Settlement Strategy study area.
Various Victorian Settlement & Housing Strategies	Key directions and priorities for land use development and population growth in Victorian towns.	A number of Victorian Settlement Strategies were reviewed to provide consistence in approach.

DOCUMENT	OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES	DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NSS
Golden Plains Domestic Waste Water Strategy	<p>3.2 ACTIONS FOR UNSEWERED GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>The options for greenfield sites are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewerage infrastructure and encourage higher density development or • Lot sizes are sufficient for long-term sustainable onsite wastewater management <p>3.3 INFILL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Infill development can take two forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New houses on existing lots within the built-up parts of towns like Meredith, Rokewood, Linton and Scarsdale • Re-subdivision of existing lots 	<p>Action 8</p> <p>Requires comprehensive Land Capability Assessments be prepared prior to the detailed design of Greenfield sub-divisions.</p> <p>Action 9</p> <p>Minimum lot size for sub-division in unsewered areas is 4,000 m2</p> <p>Action 12</p> <p>Limit new development on existing small lots (<4000 m2)</p> <p>Action 14</p> <p>Promote best practice onsite wastewater management in Meredith</p> <p>Action 15</p> <p>Undertake stormwater quality analysis programs in Meredith</p> <p>Consider alternative style sewerage for Meredith. Wastewater management will be subject to additional stormwater monitoring.</p> <p>Linton should be considered a lower priority for reticulated sewerage than Meredith.</p>
City of Ballarat The Ballarat Strategy 2040	<p>Support rural Lifestyle Development within Existing Rural Living Zone and Township areas</p> <p>Continue to Work in Partnership with the Victorian Government to Deliver the Ballarat West Employment Zone</p>	<p>3.10 Consider the regional supply of land for rural lifestyle housing, including in Ballarat and adjacent shires (Golden Plains Shire).</p> <p>4.7 Complete the Western Link road with the Western from the Western Freeway to the Midland Highway along Bells Road. The Western Link Rd will provide access to the Midland and Western Highways for Golden Plains Shire residents.</p>
Golden Plains Environment Strategy 2019-2027	<p>1.1 Environmentally active and resilient communities</p> <p>1.2 Communities connected to the environment</p> <p>3.1 Biodiversity</p> <p>3.3 Water security</p> <p>4.1 Environmentally responsive infrastructure design</p> <p>4.2 Parks and green places</p>	<p>1.1 Support the community to improve their environmentally sustainable practises and build their capacity to respond to environmental changes.</p> <p>1.2 Increase the Golden Plains Shire community's connection with nature enabling them to draw from the benefits of improved physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>3.1 Protect, restore and increase the health of our natural ecosystems, biodiversity and natural habitats to ensure they survive and thrive</p> <p>3.3 Protect the ecological health of our waterways and facilitate the sustainable use of water through education and integrated Water Management.</p> <p>4.1 Provide well-designed built environments that minimise environmental impacts, improve liveability and support community resilience</p> <p>4.2 Protect, enhance and increase our parks and green spaces to ensure a network of land and water that supports a range of community uses.</p>

Table 2 Literature Review

3.1 DOCUMENT TABLE

TOWNS	OPEN SPACE STRATEGY 2013-2017	PATHS AND TRIALS 2013-17	RECREATION STRATEGY 2015-2019	COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021	HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTION PLAN 2017-2021
Berringa	Investigate camping areas along or near Rainbow Bird Trail.	Improve the quality and safety of the Rainbow Bird Trail. Provide more signs and seating along the trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repaint the Old Berringa School buildings. 	Preserve and protect bio-diversity and native vegetation through effective land use planning.	3.1 Invest in maintenance, renewal and improvement of community infrastructure.
Dereel	Potential for camping facilities along or near Dereel Swamp area and develop the Dereel Swamp area.	Upgrade the quality and safety of the Kuruc-a-ruc Trail including bike racks and seats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelop the Dereel Recreation Reserve masterplan. Upgrade the skate park and Dereel/Hall Community Centre. 	Manage the impact of population growth and reinforce township character through effective strategic land use planning.	3.2 Respect, celebrate and protect the history and diversity of our heritage, the arts and community spaces.
Enfield	Enhance play areas and other infrastructure at Harrison Reserve	Explore feasibility of trail linking Enfield and Napoleons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install water tanks and solar panelling and construct a public toilet block at Harrison Reserve 	Work with fire management agencies and the community to manage and reduce the risk of fire, protect life and property and maintain our natural environment.	3.3 Support and encourage community resilience to respond to a changing climate and the impact of natural disasters.
Garibaldi	Create a wildlife sculpture in Grenville or Garibaldi.	Explore feasibility of developing a trail between Napoleons and Grenville.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair tennis courts at Grenville Recreation Reserve. Upgrade Grenville Hall and playground at Grenville Hall. 	Work with the community to plan and provide natural and built environments that create safe, accessible, inclusive and inviting public spaces, social infrastructure.	3.4 Promote and support innovative and environmentally sustainable management of water resources through strategic partnerships.

Haddon	Upgrade camping ground at Lions Park.	Improve quality of Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail surface. Develop a path along Haddon School Rd from Blackberry Road to the existing path in central Haddon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade tennis courts at Haddon Recreation Reserve and upgrade floor of Haddon Stadium. • Erect lights over the playing field. 	Build strong, vibrant communities that provide opportunities for all people to engage, connect and participate.	3.5 work with the community and emergency management agencies to improve community preparedness and resilience.
Illabarook/ Rokewood Junction/ Cape Clear		Restore Path along Pitfield Road in Cape Clear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a disabled ramp at the Illabarook Hall. 	Support, deliver and provide opportunities for all people to engage, connect and participate.	
Linton	Directional signage to bush trails in Linton. Potential to develop Mortchup Rd Reserve as a recreation asset.	Develop a path on the highway near Linton-Niarighill Rd turnoff. Seal gravel path in Clyde Street. Develop a new path along York St and along Surrey St. Explore potential for developing loop trails around the town which connect to the Ballarat to Skipton Rail trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the upgrade of the toilet block in the master planning process for the Reserve. • Develop the reservoirs around Linton as recreation assets. • Consider stocking the reservoirs with fish for recreational fishing. 	Support and nurture local business development and economic growth to generate local employment opportunities. Seek to establish Golden Plains Shire as a location of choice to attract new business investment and facilitate	
Meredith	Develop the Police Paddocks and enhance Pioneer Park.	Establish a path network in Pioneer Park. Develop paths along Mercer, Russell, Lawler, Wilson, Read Street and a trail network with the Police Paddocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade playground at Pioneer Park. • Provide seating around the oval and provide a spectator shelter. 		
Napoleons	Consider Skate Park at the Napoleons Rec Reserve	Explore feasibility of a trail linking Enfield and Napoleons and a trail from Yarrowee River to Garibaldi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make improvements to the Napoleons Community Hall. 		
Rokewood/ Corindhap	Provide camping areas and facilities throughout the district	Develop path from the school along Aitchinson St and Gipps St to the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the feasibility of providing an indoor recreation facility in Rokewood. 		

	Upgrade play spaces at Rokewood Rec Reserve and the Lagoon.	service station and paths along McMillan and Wilson St to the creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade the floor at the Rokewood Hall. • Repair the roof and install heating/cooling system at the Corindhap Memorial Hall. 		
Ross/Smythes Creek	Develop Ross Creek Recreation Reserve.	Explore the feasibility of developing a horse-riding trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a Masterplan for the Ross Creek Rec Res. 		
Smythesdale/Scarsdale	Picnic facilities at the Smythesdale wetlands. Improve Skate Park at Woody Yaloak Recreation Reserve.	Consider developing a path which links the equestrian centre to the Smythesdale township and then to the Roadhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Masterplan for the Woody Yaloak Recreation Reserve and make it an 'Access for all Abilities' facility. • Upgrade lighting over the oval. • Develop the Woody Yaloak Equestrian Centre as a state/regional level equestrian venue. • Underworks at the Smythesdale Public Gardens. 		

Table 3 Review of Council Strategies

4. POLICY CONTEXT

The NSS is a municipal approach to land use planning for the northern part of Golden Plains Shire. The Strategy will guide the structure, function and character of the Shire's settlements, taking into account municipal, regional and State contexts and obligations as illustrated in Figure 3.

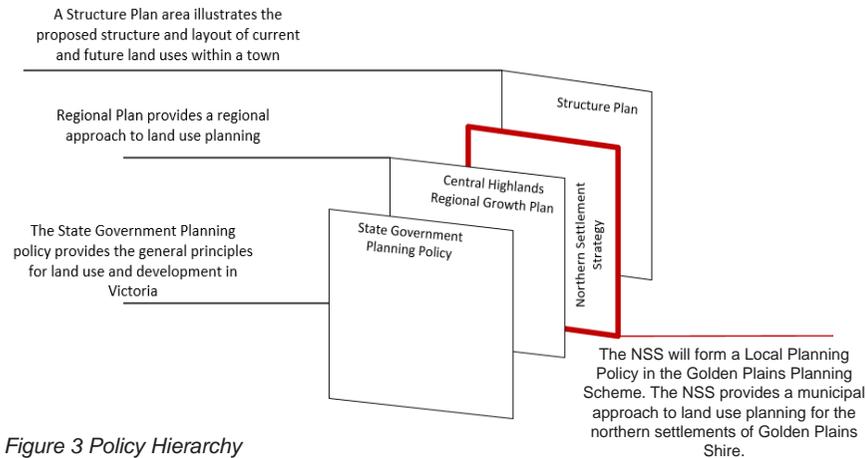


Figure 3 Policy Hierarchy

4.1 STATE PLANNING POLICY

The following policies provide key directions for planning in Victoria at a state and regional level. The directions provided by existing planning scheme policies have been carefully considered in the development of NSS directions. This policy must be considered and consistent with the directions of the Strategy.

Plan Melbourne

According to the Victoria's Plan Melbourne strategy, Victoria's population is expected to reach 10.1 million by 2051. Victoria's regions will house 2.2 million of these people, increasing from the 1.5 million currently residing in Regional Victoria. About 50% of that growth is expected to be in the regional centres of Greater Geelong, Greater Bendigo and Ballarat. Peri-urban areas beyond metropolitan Melbourne are expected to attract around 32% of regional Victoria's population.

A key direction of Plan Melbourne is to plan and manage sustainable urban growth that is concentrated in and around major towns within Melbourne's peri-urban area so as to provide employment, infrastructure, services and community facilities to new and

established urban areas in an equitable manner. In regards to rural living, **Plan Melbourne** recognises the importance of managing rural living to prevent negative impacts on agriculture, biodiversity and landscape values.

Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan

The **Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan (2014) (CHRGP)**, states that around 169,000 people are living in the Central Highlands Region with the City of Ballarat providing a home for approximately 98,000 residents. The CHRGP predicts 247,500 people will live in the region by 2041. The CHRGP aligns with Plan Melbourne and seeks to deliver outcomes which rebalance Victoria's population from Melbourne to rural and regional Victoria; integrate metropolitan, peri-urban and regional planning implementation and improve connections between cities.

4.2 EXISTING (STATE) PLANNING POLICY SUMMARY

The Victorian State Government is informed by a number of State Planning Policies. These unite existing State and regional policies and strategies within a central framework. The policies also set out general principles for land use planning and development.

Planning Policies specifically relevant to the northern settlement study area include:

- > PPF 11 Settlement
- > PPF 12 Environmental and Landscape Values
- > PPF 13 Environmental Risk
- > PPF 14 Natural Resource Management
- > PPF 16 Housing
- > PPF 19 Infrastructure

Planning Policy 11 – Settlement

This Policy sets out the principles and considerations that apply to planning for the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing in Victoria. The policy promotes growth in sustainable locations where new growth can benefit from existing infrastructure and established communities.

Settlement - Central Highlands

Provides local and sub-regional services at Avoca, Ballan, Beaufort, Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford and Smythesdale to support ongoing growth, particularly closer to Melbourne and Ballarat where towns will provide a key opportunity to target growth pressure.

Plan for growth by directing it to well serviced settlements with good access to Melbourne or Ballarat, particularly Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Creswick, Clunes, Beaufort and **Smythesdale**.

Environmental and Landscape Values

Ensure that decision making takes into account the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity, including consideration of:

- Cumulative impacts
- Fragmentation of habitat
- The spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystem.

Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.

Environmental Risk

This Policy aims to establish best practice environmental and risk management approach to planning which avoids or minimises environmental degradation and hazards. It encourages the identification of hazard areas in planning scheme maps to avoid inappropriately located uses and development within hazard areas.

Natural Resource Management

This Policy seeks to ensure that land use activities avoid discharging contaminated runoff or wastes to waterways and discourages incompatible land uses in areas subject to flooding, severe soil degradation, groundwater salinity or geotechnical hazards where the land cannot be sustainably managed to ensure minimum impact on downstream water quality or flow volumes.

Housing

The Policy objectives include the identification of land suitable for rural living and rural residential development. The Policy encourages the consolidation of new housing in existing settlements where investment in physical and community infrastructure and services has already been made; and there is a demonstrated need for rural residential development through a housing and settlement strategy. Additionally, new housing should have access to services and be planned for long term sustainability, including walkability to activity centres, public transport, schools and open space.

Infrastructure

This Policy outlines the principles and considerations for the use of development contributions in funding of infrastructure and facilitating the efficient use of existing infrastructure and human services. One of the objectives is to plan for the provision of water supply, sewerage and drainage services that efficiently and effectively meet State and community needs and protects the environment.

4.3 EXISTING (LOCAL) PLANNING POLICY SUMMARY

The following policies express the strategic vision, aims, strategies and action of the Council while reflecting local needs and aspirations.

Planning policies specifically relevant to the northern settlement study area include:

- > LPPF 21.01 Introduction
- > LPPF 21.02 Settlement
- > LPPF 21.03 Environment and Natural Resources
- > LPPF 21.04 Built Environment and Heritage
- > LPPF 21.05 Economic Development
- > LPPF 21.06 Transport and Infrastructure
- > LPPF 21.07 Local Areas - Townships
- > LPPF 21.08 Local Areas – Small Towns

Introduction

The north-west and south-east of the Shire have distinctly different settlement patterns and this is reflected both in subdivision patterns and provision of infrastructure including treated water and sewerage. Towns within the Shire operate in clustered networks with key towns providing services and facilities for the surrounding areas. Meredith, Smythesdale and Rokewood provide the focus points for these clusters in the north-west of the Shire.

Growth within the Shire is influenced by the Shire's proximity to Melbourne, Geelong and Ballarat and recent population projections indicate that the towns will continue to grow at current rates in the future. Future residential use and development will be considered in a regional level context in terms of settlement strategies for Ballarat and Geelong. The limited range of employment opportunities in the Shire accounts for the many Golden Plains Shire residents that travel outside the Shire for employment.

Residential development will predominantly be contained within townships, the natural environment will be protected and enhanced; and that the local economy will grow, particularly in township development and rural based and farming industries. The Golden Plains Strategic Framework Plan sets out the key land use planning directions for the Shire (see Figure 4).



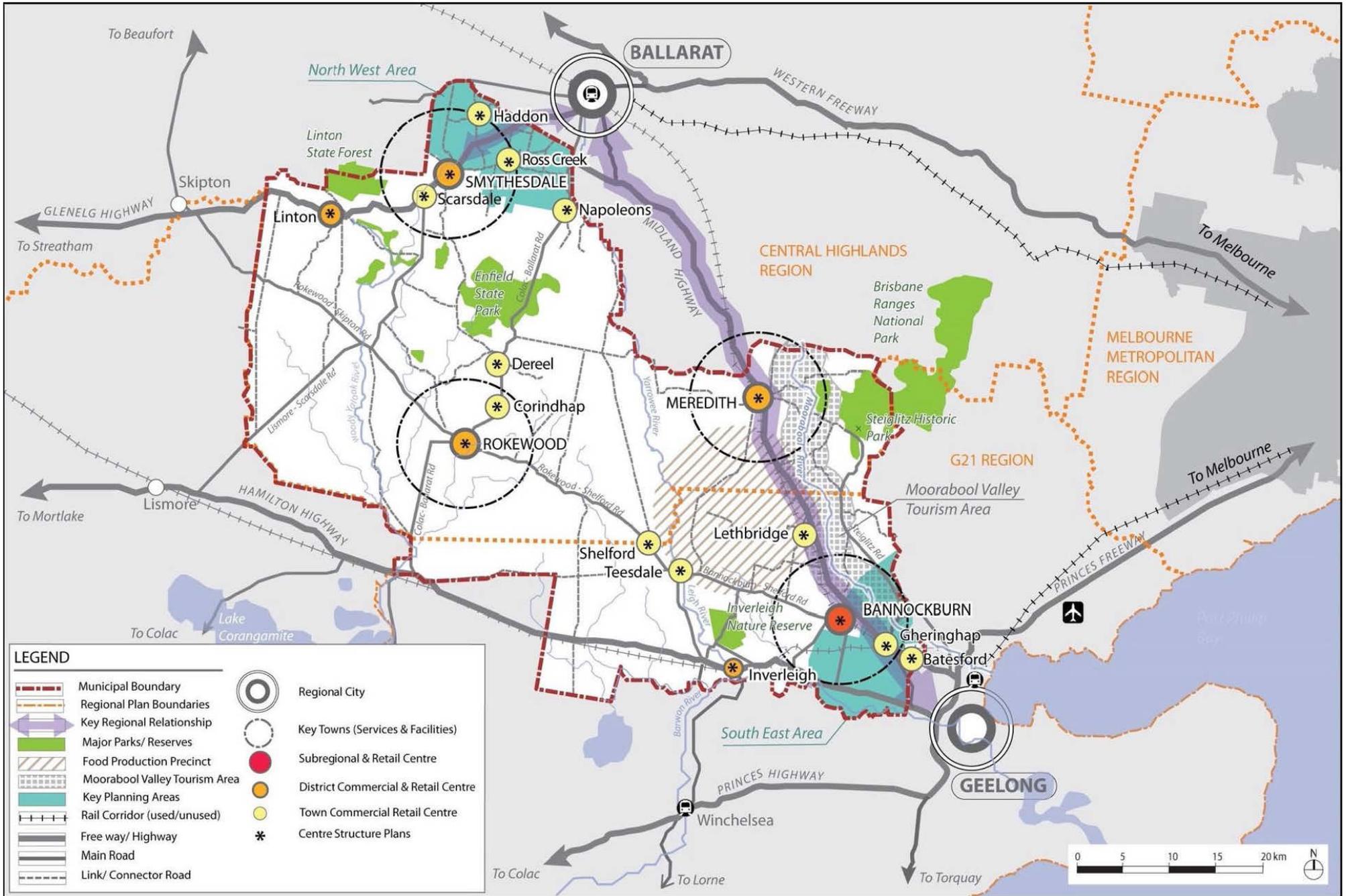


Figure 4 Key land use planning directions Clause 21.0-3 of Golden Plains Planning Scheme

Settlement

The majority of growth in the Shire has occurred in the small towns and communities in the south-east and north-west regions. The Shire offers affordable housing and a country lifestyle, whilst remaining close enough to services and facilities in Ballarat and Geelong.

In the north-west area, the population increased by 6% between 2005-2015. In the north-west:

- > Historic subdivisions and past decisions have left a legacy of fragmented landholdings in the north-west of the Shire and a proliferation of subdivisions and subsequent rural residential developments in isolated areas devoid of appropriate infrastructure;
- > it is recognised as an area that reflects a rural residential character, centred on communities of interest;
- > there is a large proportion of existing small lots, which include old crown titles;
- > many existing small lots have been developed for rural residential purposes and distinct communities have developed in these areas; and
- > to the north-west, all of the towns in the Central Highlands Water district are supplied with an interconnected, potable water supply. There is sufficient capacity to cater for all anticipated growth likely to occur over the next 20 years.

There is pressure for subdivision and development outside of townships, particularly for subdivision and hobby farm development close to Ballarat. This demand can be partly attributed to the issue of housing affordability and the relative cost of rural zoned land. Residential development is not supported by planning policy in these areas. A common theme of the local policy is the need for efficient use of land and to appropriately address the legacy of fragmented landholdings in the north-west of the Shire.

Better management of urban development in township areas affected by flooding, salinity or wildfire is required.

Future use and development of urban centres and small towns will largely centre on the traditional character and form of these towns. The maintenance of a clear distinction between urban and rural areas is essential to continued agriculture and efficient township development and to maximise the use of infrastructure.

Smythesdale has been identified as the northern growth centre for the Shire, providing a range of residential opportunities and services for the north-west district. Further strategic work is stipulated for the restructure of land in the north-west of the Shire to maintain viable agricultural holdings and rationalise all existing urban areas having regard to:

- > infrastructure and environmental constraints;
- > 10 year supply of urban land; and
- > the supply cost and provision of infrastructure to townships.

The Policy features a Township Hierarchy Framework that classifies Meredith, Rokewood and Smythesdale as the Shire's district commercial and retail centres. Corindhap, Dereel, Haddon, Napoleons, Ross Creek and Scarsdale are identified as town commercial and retail centres providing commercial and retail needs to service immediate residents.

An objective of this policy is to make efficient use of land by locating population growth to urban areas provided with water, sewerage and social infrastructure.

Environment and Natural Resources

This policy aims to encourage the protection of significant habitats, remnant vegetation and maintain biodiversity.

Significant bushfire risk exists in the Shire's open grass lands and wooded forest/bush areas. State Planning Policy clearly prioritises the protection of human

life over other policy considerations. At a local level, the Shire has identified vegetation conservation as a lower, but still important priority in bushfire prone areas. The Policy also identifies flood risk and salinity in areas across the Shire. Strategies within this Policy are implemented by applying relevant overlays to subject areas.

Catchment management and waterways and the effects of climate change on the natural environment with flow on effects on the community and economy are also recognised in this policy.

Built Environment and Heritage

This Policy recognises the Shire's rich history evident in the sites, structures, trees, landscapes, layout and settlement patterns of 19th century towns, rural properties and historic infrastructure related to agriculture and gold mining areas.

Economic Development

This Policy refers to the Shire's location on the edge of the Western District as a factor which underpins the strong role of agriculture for the economy of the Shire. Planning for continued agricultural productivity relies on maintaining farm size and managing the potential for conflict between sensitive uses and agricultural practices. The Shire has recognised the potential for growth in the intensive animal industries and in timber production. Forestry and timber production are increasingly significant local industries, given the climate, topography and the proximity to the Port of Geelong.

Similarly, the location of the Shire means that retail expenditure occurs outside of the Shire to major regional centres of Ballarat, Colac, Geelong and Melbourne. These regional centres also have an effect on the location of industrial development. Towns such as Linton, Meredith and Smythesdale perform important local shopping and business roles.

Tourism in the Shire is a relatively small industry sector with significant capacity to grow. Tourism attractions in the north include farmers' markets, events and festivals such as the Meredith Music Festival as well as heritage and equestrian facilities

There is a lack of tourism accommodation in the Shire, with opportunities to increase accommodation offerings across the region.

An objective of this policy is to support and improve tourism opportunities in the Shire.

Transport and Infrastructure

This Policy recognises that the Shire is well located to export and transport facilities. All towns have reticulated water supplies, provided by Central Highlands Water or Barwon Water. Central Highlands Water believes it can service most of the anticipated growth within its area. The exception is the higher land southeast of Scarsdale extending to the area south of Ross Creek. Central Highlands Water believes that the existing supply systems, with minor augmentation works, are adequate to cater for the existing populations and anticipated growth in the immediate future.

The extent of sewerage systems in the north of the shire is limited to Woodlands Estate (near Enfield) and Smythesdale. Central Highlands Water will assess the need for sewerage in Scarsdale and Linton when development and growth has reached a stage where it is warranted.

Some areas of the Shire are not suited to effluent disposal using conventional septic tank systems. The Policy recognises that to protect environmental quality and increase development potential other forms of effluent disposal will need to be utilised.

Local Areas - Townships

SMYTHESDALE - This Policy identifies Smythesdale as the urban growth centre for the northern part of the Shire, in a prime strategic location to service the wider catchment of rural and residential communities.

An objective of this policy is to develop Smythesdale as the service hub for the northern area of the Shire.

Strategies to support this objective include:

- > Promote a diversity of facilities in the town that will sustain the township as it grows to a population of up to 2,500 persons.
- > Support the establishment of a range of health services and facilities such as childcare, aged care accommodation and a medical centre.

A further objective of this policy is to support Smythesdale's growth with appropriate infrastructure. A strategy to support this objective is:

- > Locate new leisure and recreation facilities to adjoin the Rail Trail and Woody Yaloak Creek environs, building upon the central location of both the Woody Yaloak Primary School and the Recreation Centre.

Smythesdale has a distinct country-living character and the foundations of a thriving township within commuting distance of the regional city of Ballarat. Policy objectives include:

- > managed and sustainable growth in Smythesdale which directs growth within the identified town boundary;
- > progressively rezoning land in accordance with the Smythesdale Strategic Framework Plan;
- > develop infrastructure to support growth; and
- > new development that enhances the entrances and gateways to Smythesdale.

Key planning issues for Smythesdale that Council must consider include:

- > limited opportunities for new residential development within the historical township area;
- > fragmentation of the town area by crown land;
- > resolving effluent disposal issues; and
- > drainage design from residential areas to be designed and managed to minimise the volume and speed of run off entering the Woody Yaloak Creek.

North West Area Policy Summary

In 2000 a Study was undertaken to assess the relevance and application of current planning controls; provision and funding of infrastructure; land capabilities; residential supply/demand; and preparation of a structure plan to guide future development of the area.

At the time, extensive areas of rural residential development dominated land use in the north west area. Based on the demand patterns at the time, there was an estimated 50 year lot supply within the north west area. It was recognised that land use patterns were not clearly defined in the area, with a spread of rural residential development contained on a range of lot sizes and that the north west area was distinct from the rest of Golden Plains Shire where urban development is generally confined to existing townships and settlements.

While growth pressures were expected to continue from a Ballarat commuting base, consideration was also given to the City of Ballarat's policies for future development across the border of the north west area and it was understood that land on the northern side of the boundary, in the City of Ballarat would most likely be set aside for future rural residential development.

The strategic approach that evolved from the North West Study 2000 was to manage future growth, development and subdivision according to:

- > Infrastructure provision, constraints and availability.
- > Residential demand and take-up rates.
- > Urban and rural interface with future growth of Ballarat.
- > Environmental land management and land capability assessment including lot sizes capable of containing on-site effluent disposal.

The North West Area Policy identifies existing and potential development nodes and residential capacities according to infrastructure provision, urban and rural interface with the future growth of Ballarat and environmental constraints.

4.4 RESIDENTIAL ZONES

The NSS area covers approximately 13,800 hectares of zoned residential land in the north of the Shire. The Rural Living Zone (“RLZ”) covers 11,800 hectares of land and the Low Density Residential Zone (“LDRZ”), 1,270 hectares with the remaining 663 hectares zoned township.

Rural Living Zone (RLZ)

A significant area of land zoned for rural living (11,800ha) is located in the north-west of the Shire. The large area of rural living zoned land is a legacy of a translation which occurred when the rural living policies of the former Shires were incorporated into the new format planning scheme.

The RLZ is subject to a Schedule which provides a minimum area for subdivision and minimum areas for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling. Linked to the Schedule is a map which identifies RLZ areas with a two hectare minimum subdivision area and a specification that all other areas are subject to an eight hectare minimum.

Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

The LDRZ is typically located around the outskirts of the Township Zone and seeks to provide for low density residential development on lots which, in the absence of reticulated sewerage, can treat and retain all wastewater. There is approximately 1,270 hectares of land zoned LDRZ in the north-west of the Shire.

Subdivision of land within the LDRZ must be considered against the relevant requirements of Clause 22.09 of the Golden Plains Planning Scheme. Clause 22.09 addresses the two key elements of land capability and character.

Township Zone (TZ)

663 hectares of land is zoned Township in the north-west of the Shire. Whilst township zoned land exists in 14 rural localities, the majority is located on lots without sewerage. Sewerage is only available in the Township Zone (“TZ”) in Smythesdale.

A permit to construct a dwelling on a lot is not required unless the lot is less than 300 square metres in area.

Golden Plains Planning Scheme – Schedule modifications

Within the Golden Plains Planning Scheme (the Scheme), Council has the ability to modify schedules which can affect the development potential of particular areas.

The following is a list of Schedules to the current zones within the Scheme which are considered relevant to the NSS:

SCHEDULE	REQUIREMENT
Schedule to the RLZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Default minimum of 8 ha • 2ha minimum subdivision where indicated on 2ha Overlay Map
Schedule to the LDRZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum subdivision applies where reticulated sewerage is not connected • 0.2 minimum subdivision applies where lots are connected to reticulated sewerage
Schedule to the TZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A land assessment which demonstrates that each lot is capable of treating and retaining all wastewater

Table 4 List of Schedules to current zones

4.5 COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

The Shire has prepared a Council Plan (the Plan) for the period 2017-2021. The Plan outlines Council's position and objectives on a range of settlement related issues. The Plan's framework is structured around four key themes:



PROMOTING HEALTHY & CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Creating healthy, active and safe communities that provide opportunities for all residents to connect and engage with their local community.



MANAGING NATURAL & BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

Promoting and protecting the natural environment to ensure that growth and change in the Shire will be managed for the benefit of all the community.



ENHANCING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Working with business, government and community partners to sustain a diverse, resilient, prosperous and socially responsible economy, through investment attraction, supporting local business and tourism development.



DELIVERING GOOD GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

Governing with integrity, planning for the future and for our communities.

.....

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

.....

HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED

.....

Manage the impact of population growth and reinforce township character through effective strategic land use planning.

Progressively reviewing township structure plans and urban design frameworks to effectively manage growth, encourage diversity and maintain township character.

Preserve and protect bio-diversity and native vegetation through effective land use planning.

Promoting and supporting innovative and environmentally sustainable management of water resources through strategic partnerships.

Work with the community to plan and provide natural and built environments that create safe, accessible, inclusive and inviting public spaces, social infrastructure, open space and destinations for all.

Proactively support and encourage an increase in civic pride and build ownership of place.

Table 5 Planning related objectives from the Council Plan 2017 - 21

4.6 PLANNING PERMIT/VCAT REVIEW

In the last ten years, there have been 2538 planning applications lodged for use and development in the study area. Approximately a third of applications lodged related to dwellings. A significant proportion (22%) were for sheds and another 6% were for subdivisions. The remaining applications sought for approval a wide range of developments and uses. Most applications were delegate approved, which means no objections were received and they were able to be determined by a delegated Council officer.

Applications which were considered by Council and where a 'Notice of Decision' was issued, included a telecommunication facility, restricted retail, mining, two intensive animal husbandries, two separate dwelling applications, a utility installation with vegetation removal and a 10 lot subdivision. Three of these applications are yet to be determined. The others were issued a planning permit.

About 20 applications were refused within the study area over the last 10 years. The types of applications refused include dwellings, sheds and associated native vegetation removal; a telecommunications facility, earthworks for the construction of a levy bank; a dam and dog breeding. Applications for dwellings in the Farming Zone are generally refused where they are not associated with a farming use on the land and have the potential to set an unwelcome precedent in areas supporting valued agricultural production.

Only one application in the study area was determined by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) which was an application for a dwelling. VCAT determined that a planning permit be issued for the dwelling in Mount Mercer, based on the details of a Farm Management Plan prepared in support of the application.



5. ISSUES AND INFLUENCES

5.1 REGIONAL PLANNING

The Ballarat West Growth Area in the City of Ballarat, will cater for much of Ballarat's residential growth and provide services and infrastructure for new communities. The Ballarat West Growth Area comprises 1,717 hectares of Greenfield land located to the west of the Ballarat suburbs of Alfredton, Delacombe and Sebastopol. The area straddles the northern side of Bells Road which marks the border between the City of Ballarat and Golden Plains Shire in the locality of Smythes Creek. The Growth Area will provide around 18,000 new houses at full development to accommodate a population of over 40,000 people.

Figure 6.1 shows the Ballarat West Precinct Structure Plan in the context of the Golden Plains Shire boundary. The timing schedule for the roll-out of the growth area where it directly borders Golden Plains Shire is expected to be developed from 2025 onwards.

Development Servicing Plans have been prepared by Central Highlands Water and City of Ballarat which show the extent of water and sewerage service provision for the Ballarat West growth area.

The City of Ballarat is committed to planning the Ballarat West Growth Area, in conjunction with the Ballarat Western Link Road and the Ballarat West Employment Zone. These projects are designed to ensure that population growth in the City of Ballarat is accommodated in a sustainable manner that capitalises on investment opportunities and improving efficiency of transportation.

The Ballarat Link Road (partially shown in Figure 6.1) is a 16 kilometre major north-south arterial road providing a direct link from the Western Freeway to the Midland Highway. The project will be constructed in stages over the new few decades, subject to demand and funding. The State Government has committed to the planning of the entire 16 kilometre road corridor and construction of Stage 1 between Remembrance Drive in Alfredton and Learmonth in Mitchell Park. Construction of Stage 1 is underway and the planning for Stage 2 is completed which includes around 12 kilometres of road from Alfredton to the Midland Highway. Stage 2 is expected to be constructed over the next few decades.

The Ballarat West Employment Zone is a staged development of 438 hectares of land adjacent to the Ballarat Airport providing for a range of manufacturing, agribusiness, construction, freight and logistics, and research and development uses. The Zone is expected to create up to 9000 jobs and investment of \$5 billion per annum into the Ballarat economy. Given the close proximity with Golden Plains Shire these three projects have implications for settlement planning in the north of the shire.



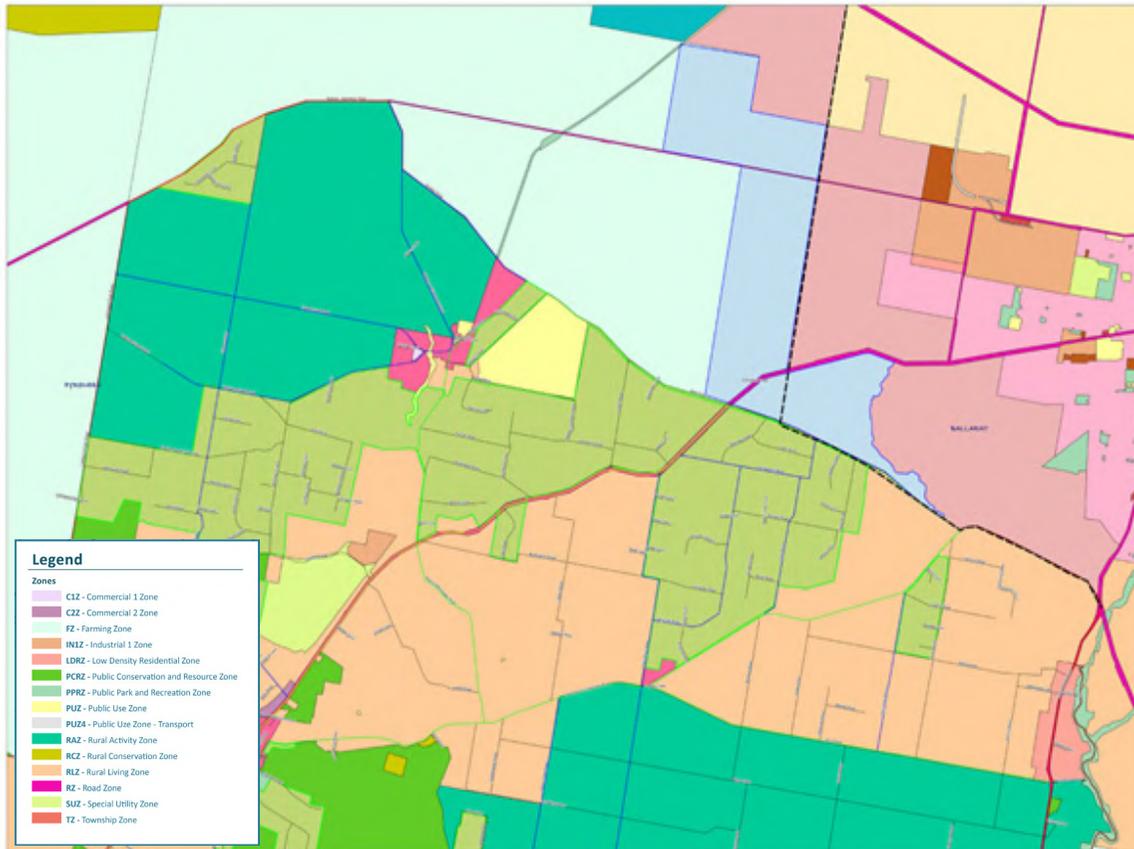


Figure 6 North-West area zoning (2ha RLZ areas highlighted)

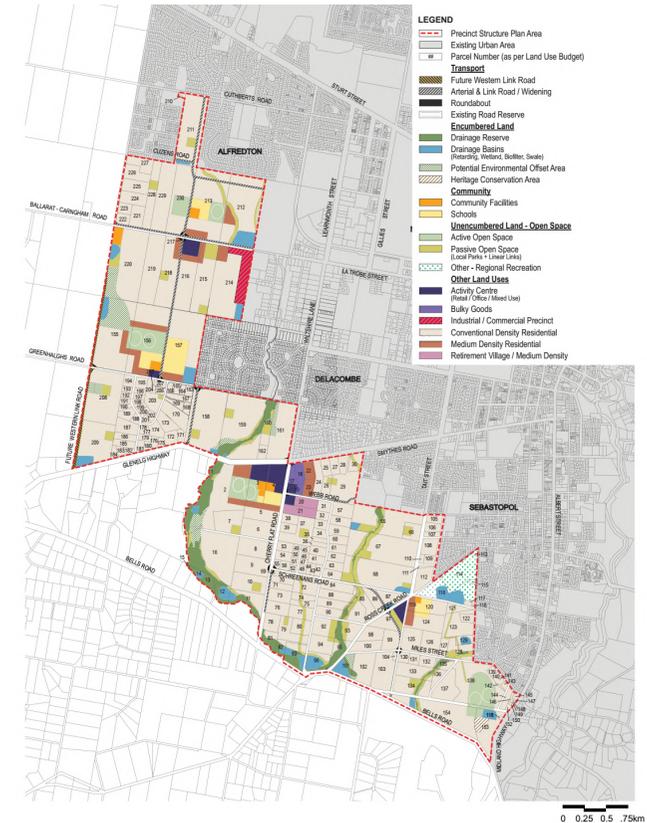


Figure 6.1 Ballarat West Precinct Plan: City of Ballarat 2016

5.2 RURAL LIVING ZONE – LAND SUPPLY

The Northern Settlement Strategy study area includes 13,800 hectares of zoned residential land. The settlement pattern includes a number of townships which contain land zoned either Township, Low Density Residential or Rural Living Zone. The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) applies to a substantial volume of this land accounting for 11,800 hectares of zoned residential land in the area. Located within close proximity to Ballarat, Golden Plains has been well positioned to accommodate a range of rural living options.

The RLZ is subject to a schedule which provides minimum areas for subdivision and minimum areas for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling. Linked to the schedule is a map which identifies RLZ areas with a two (2) hectare minimum subdivision size and a specification that all other areas are subject to an eight (8) hectare minimum subdivision area. For more than 10 years the current schedule has provided a strong framework for the prioritisation of new development in what is a vast area of previously undeveloped land. Aerial imagery confirms that a significant percentage of the RLZ land contains remnant and regenerated native vegetation. Statistics reveal that 44% of all RLZ parcels have 20% or more Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) coverage and therefore further subdivision and development potential is limited.

Despite an oversupply of RLZ land, Council continues to experience pressure to relax the 8 hectare lot size schedule and provide additional 2 hectare sized allotments. This study sought to investigate the implications of this, including cost to Council of servicing different forms of residential development, environmental risk, residential land supply within the study area and the relationship between existing northern townships and the adjoining regional city of Ballarat.

The Regional Growth Plan acknowledges the considerable supply of RLZ land in the north west of the Shire and provides policy considerations for determining where this form of development should be located.

5.3 POPULATION & HOUSING

Regional Growth

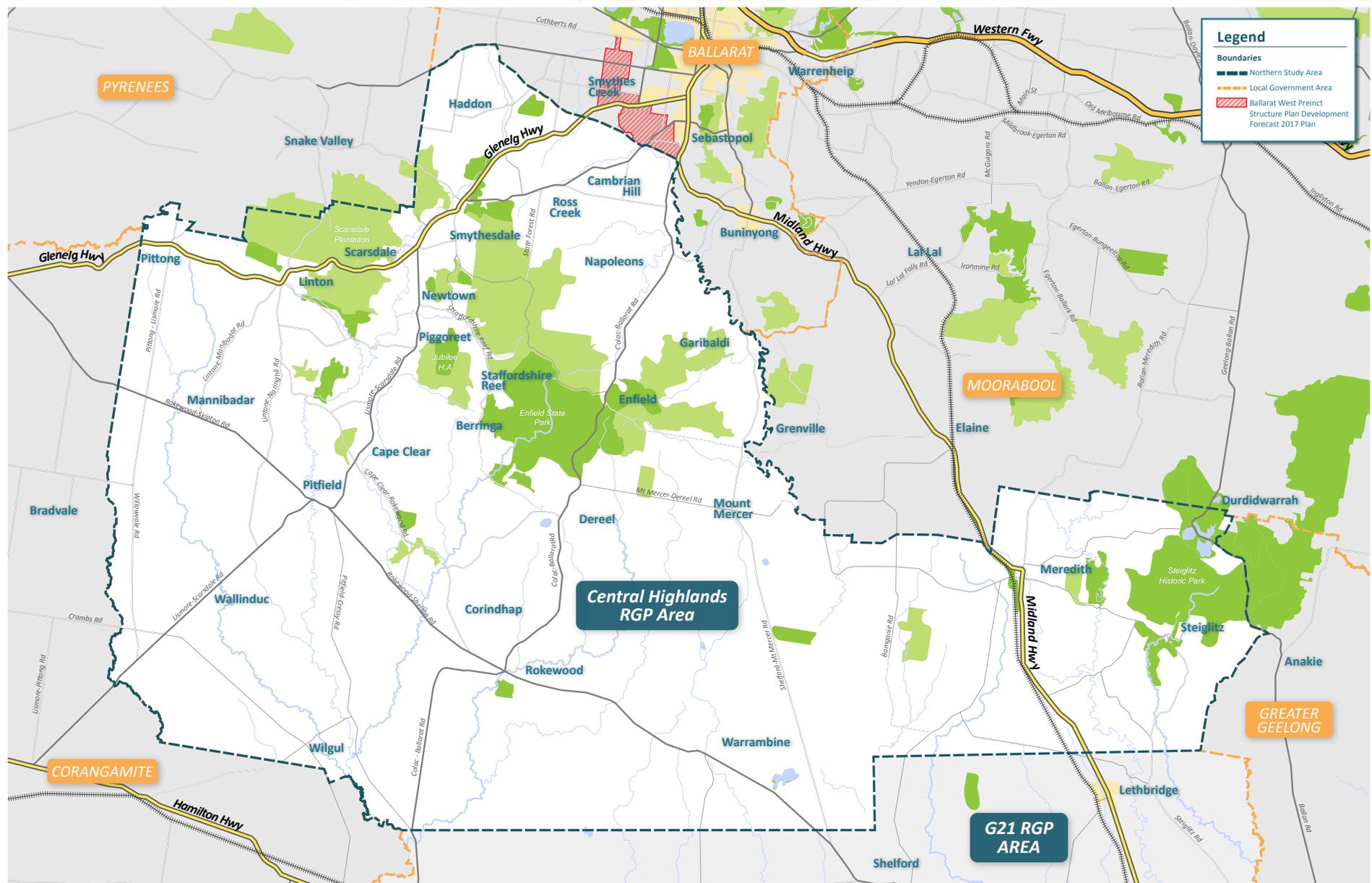
Victoria's population is expected to reach 10.1 million by 2051. A key principle of Plan Melbourne supports a 'networked state of cities' approach linking regional Victoria, with the major population base of Melbourne. Specifically, Plan Melbourne states:

“The central city will remain the focus for global business and knowledge-intensive industries linked to an extensive network of clusters, centres, precincts and gateways. These physical, social and economic links will be strengthened, turning Melbourne into a city of centres linked to regional Victoria—creating social and economic opportunities across the state”.

Regional centres and peri-urban areas beyond metropolitan Melbourne are expected to house about 2.2 million people by 2051.

The Ballarat West Growth Area in the City of Ballarat will cater for much of Ballarat's residential growth and provide services and infrastructure for new communities. The Ballarat West Growth Area comprises 1,717 hectares of Greenfield land located to the west of the Ballarat suburbs of Alfredton, Delacombe and Sebastopol. This area straddles the northern side of Bells Road which marks the border between the City of Ballarat and the Shire in the locality of Smythes Creek (see Figure 7). The Ballarat West Growth Area will provide around 18,000 new houses at full development to accommodate a population of over 40,000 people.





Prepared by: **mesh** URBAN PLANNING & DESIGN

On behalf of: **GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE**

0 2 4 6 8 km
1:100,000 at A1 1:200,000 at A3

NORTHERN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY
Ballarat West PSP in relation to Study Area
19 July 2018

Figure 7 Ballarat West PSP in relation to Study Area

Population And Households In The Study Area

The population of the study area has been calculated using the number of houses in the study area (4307) and the average household size of 2.5 persons, which is the average household size when measured across all the towns and localities in the study area. Based on this formula, the NSS study area has a population of 10,767 persons, spread across an area of 192,800 hectares. 8,000 people live on residential zoned land in settlements or localities. The remaining 2767 persons live in Rural Activity or Farming Zones.

The largest population resides in the locality of Smythes Creek (1,155), the second largest population is located in Haddon (1,075), followed by Smythesdale (866), Ross Creek (831) and Scarsdale (749). Meredith, Dereel, Linton, and Enfield have similar populations of around 500 persons. Napoleons has nearly 300 residents, followed by Nintingbool, Newtown, Cambrian Hill which have just under 200 persons. Corindhap, Rokewood and Berringa have populations of more than 100 residents. The towns and localities of Garibaldi, Happy Valley, Staffordshire Reef, Steiglitz, Cape Clear and Illabarook have populations of less than 100.

The table below presents a snapshot of the population highlights from 2016.

Across the study area there are 4307 houses. Of these, 3034 are in townships and localities, the remainder are in rural areas. The average household size is 2.5 persons, but a closer look at household sizes across settlements and localities reveals there are large variances across the area and between towns and localities. For example, in Illabarook and Staffordshire Reef the average household size is 1.5 whereas in Ross Creek and Smythes Creek, there are on average 3 people in every household. Linton has an average household size of 2.1 persons, while Nintingbool, Napoleons, Cambrian Hill, Enfield, Haddon and Meredith have an average household size close to 3 persons.

	Population (ERP 2017)	Median Age	Couples with children	Older couples without children	Lone Person households
Haddon - Smythesdale and district	5018	40	43%	10%	15%
Linton and district	1552	44	26%	11%	25%
Enfield and Napoleons district	1338	41	39%	15%	15%
Central West	1712	47	25%	12%	30%
Golden Plains Shire	22,480	39	40%	10%	16%

Table 6 Population Highlights

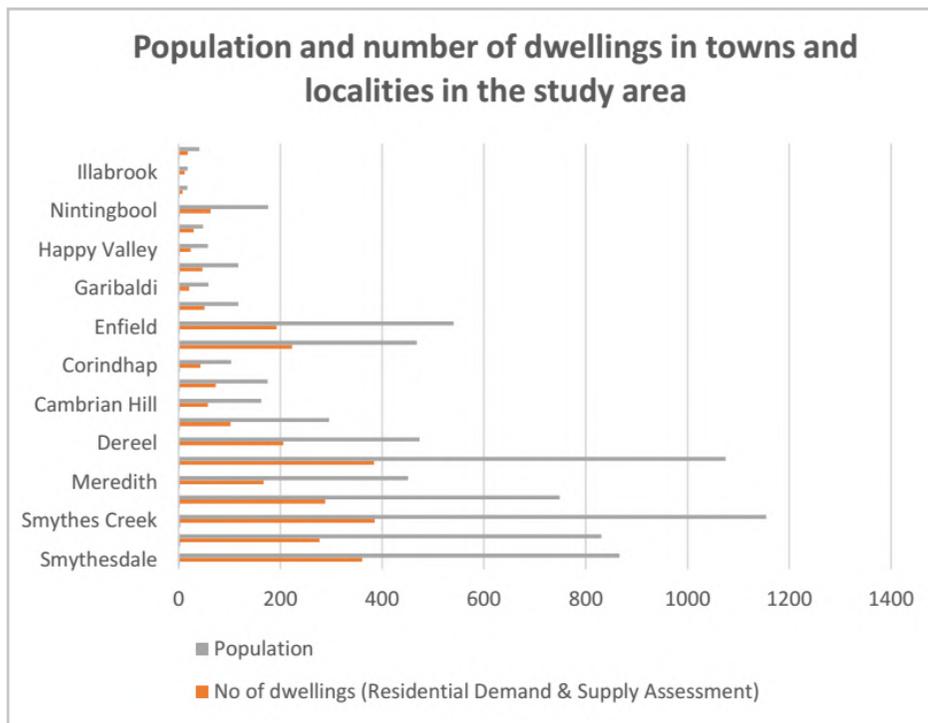


Table 7 population vs dwelling numbers

The Changing Role Of Settlements

Table 8 overleaf provides a snapshot of where subdivision and dwelling development is most active in the study area. It also outlines the amount of residentially zoned land (TZ, LDRZ and RLZ) available within each locality. It is evident that a higher rate of subdivision and development is occurring in those towns which are located within closer proximity to the City of Ballarat such as Smythesdale, Ross Creek, Smythes Creek, Scarsdale and Haddon. Growth in Smythesdale continues to occur as a result of reticulated sewerage and investment into key social infrastructure.

Meredith is also experiencing steady growth as a result of its central location on the Midland Highway. Meredith offers an opportunity for a rural lifestyle within commuting distance to Geelong or Ballarat. Other locations, such as Napoleons and Cambrian Hill, experiencing a moderate amount of development are situated along a 'Strategic Movement Corridor' which also allows for easy access to the City of Ballarat.

As shown in Table 7, there are a number of localities which are experiencing very little or no growth. Historically these locations may have played an important role as gold rush settlements or in servicing the surrounding district through a local post office, general store or service station. Many of these local conveniences are now grouped with higher order services or significant community and recreation facilities in the larger localities. Growth is also limited in many towns such as Steiglitz, Berringa and Enfield due to environmental risk (bushfire) or the limitations of sewerage infrastructure. Although growth in these towns is limited there is enough zoned residential land available to ensure housing development can be realised where considered appropriate.



KEY FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

- Directing growth to preferred locations that are supported by infrastructure and services.
- Containing growth in areas that present high hazard risk to life and infrastructure (i.e. identified fire prone areas).
- Retaining the intrinsic character of rural townships in the North of the Shire.
- Containing dispersed growth in line with the cost of settlement patterns.
- Leverage opportunities from key strategic movement corridors.
- Ensure that any identified greenfield developments are master-planned developments that have consideration to the long term requirements of future residents.

Towns	Lots created through subdivision July 2010- March 2016	Distribution of lots per zone	Dwellings created July 2010- March 2016	Distribution of dwelling stock per zone	Vac ha TZ	Vac ha LDRZ	Vac ha RLZ
Smythesdale	43	34 ● 9 ●	50	21 ● 29 ●	25	92	564
Ross Creek	37	37 ●	26	26 ●	5	N/A	527
Smythes Creek	28	28 ●	23	23 ●	N/A	N/A	454
Scarsdale	20	5 ● 3 ● 12 ●	31	6 ● 9 ● 16 ●	15	119	794
Meredith	12	10 ● 2 ●	33	31 ● 2 ●	12	24	N/A
Haddon	17	13 ● 4 ●	30	4 ● 26 ●	14	N/A	229
Dereel	14	2 ● 12 ●	11	1 ● 1 ● 9 ●	20	76	359
Napoleons	10	5 ● 5 ●	5	2 ● 3 ●	33	N/A	149
Cambrian Hill	8	4 ● 4 ●	14	3 ● 11 ●	N/A	16	334
Newtown	8	8 ●	10	2 ● 8 ●	N/A	3	260
Corindhap	3	3 ●	9	3 ● 6 ●	3	25	N/A
Linton	1	1 ●	13	6 ● 4 ● 3 ●	30	41	280
Enfield	0	0	20	3 ● 17 ●	2	37	N/A
Rokewood	2	2 ●	2	2 ●	14	2	N/A
Garibaldi	2	2 ●	1	1 ●	N/A	N/A	229
Berringa	2	2 ●	2	2 ●	14	N/A	419
Happy Valley	2	3 ●	3	3 ●	N/A	N/A	111
Staffordshire Reef	3	3 ●	5	5 ●	3	N/A	N/A
Nintingbool	0	0	1	1 ●	N/A	N/A	2
Steiglitz	0	0	2	2 ●	N/A	N/A	165
Illabarook	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	100
Cape Clear	0	0	0	0	35	N/A	N/A
TOTAL ha					225ha	435ha	4,976ha

● - TZ ● - LDRZ ● - RLZ

Table 8 summary of Activity: Lots Created and Dwellings Constructed July 2010 - March 2016

5.4 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

From 2005 to 2015, the median sale price of housing across regional Victoria increased 49% from \$206,000 to \$307,500. The Real Estate Institute of Victoria recently reported that the median sale price in regional Victoria for dwellings is now \$385,000. An outcome of the significant increase in the cost of housing is that many people are now unable to afford a home, or they struggle to find suitable, affordable rental accommodation¹.

Declining housing affordability has spatial implications, as lower income households move to areas with lower property values which are generally in areas that are less accessible to employment, services and infrastructure and often on the periphery of cities or in rural areas. These locations often necessitate long commute times to access jobs or schooling. As a result, these areas become characterised by high levels of car dependence, low median weekly household incomes and high proportions of households with unaffordable mortgages. Vulnerability to petrol prices, inflation and interest rate increases is a significant issue for households in these areas.

The table below provides a snapshot of renting and mortgage data for particular districts within the study area.

	Population (ERP 2017)	Median Age	Couples with children	Older couples without children	Lone Person households
Haddon - Smythesdale and district	5016	40	43%	10%	15%
Linton and district	1552	44	26%	11%	25%
Enfield and Napoleons district	1338	41	39%	15%	15%
Central West	1712	47	25%	12%	30%
Golden Plains Shire	22,480	39	40%	10%	16%

Table 9 renting & mortgage snapshot

A recent report into mortgage stress in Australia determined that there are one in four mortgaged households in stress. The report showed that, though there are some postcodes where less than 10% of mortgaged households are in stress, there are others where at least 90% are in stress with most of these postcodes in regional and remote areas of Australia.



KEY FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

There are vulnerabilities across the study area with mortgage stress, lack of transport and inaccessibility to services compounding some of the difficulties faced by today's residents.

Housing affordability will continue to influence in-migration of those seeking a more affordable lifestyle in rural areas.

ABS 2016 data indicates the dominant age structure for persons in the North West area was ages 45-49. By 2026, the largest cohort group will be aged 50-54 years, a total of 612 persons.

Future greenfield development can provide housing options including traditional houses, townhouses and apartments to meet the needs of people at different stages of their life.

Infill development will generally be in the form of detached dwellings on conventional sized blocks however the demand for smaller dwellings may escalate. This trend may be driven by significant growth in smaller households.

The aging population will contribute substantially to the increase in demand for low maintenance dwellings and retirement accommodation, particularly close to town centres. In order to meet demands, there is a need to provide for a range of housing typologies including unit and apartment style dwellings.

Future greenfield development can provide housing options including traditional houses, townhouses and apartments to meet the needs of people at different stages of their life.

In postcode 3357 – Smythes Creek, there are 1,545 mortgaged households. At current interest rates, 45% of mortgaged households are in stress. The study further indicated that, should interest rates rise by 0.5%, mortgage stress rates jump from one in four mortgaged households to one in three. An increase of 2.0% from current rates would place half of all mortgaged households in Australia into stress².

1. See: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/publications/research-reports/download/36-research-Reports/13840-housing-affordability-in-victoria> and <https://www.vic.gov.au/affordablehousing.html>

2. See <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-21/how-interest-rate-rises-could-affect-home-loan-stress/8798274#DSIstressmap>.

Median house prices sourced from www.realestate.com.au show that house prices range from \$290,000 to \$462,000 across the northern end of the Shire. For many localities, there is no data available due to the low number of recent sales. The median prices are comparable to nearby suburbs in the City of Ballarat including Sebastopol, Alfredton, Delacombe and Buninyong, which range from \$260,000 to \$499,500. There is no public housing in the Shire, nor are there any community housing projects.

5.5 HOUSING DIVERSITY

State Planning policy requires planning to provide for housing diversity and ensure the efficient provision of supporting infrastructure. New housing should have access to services and be planned for long term sustainability, including walkability to activity centres, public transport, schools and open space. Planning for housing should include providing land for affordable housing.

Specific strategies include:

- > promoting a housing market that meets community needs;
- > locating new housing with good access to jobs;
- > services and transport;
- > providing a range of housing types to meet diverse needs; and
- > delivering more affordable housing close to jobs, transport and services.

This is achieved by:

- > ensuring land supply is sufficient to meet demand;
- > increasing choice in type, tenure and cost of housing;
- > promoting good urban design; and
- > encouraging a significant proportion of new housing to be affordable for households on low to moderate incomes.

According to the **CHRGP Background Report**, 2014, there are significant differences in the supply of, and demand for, housing across the Central Highlands region. The supply of housing across the region should ideally reflect and anticipate the housing and service needs of new and existing residents and should consider access to employment, social infrastructure and transport. Recognising these dynamic needs can contribute to the understanding of internal and external migration and whether the housing markets adequately meet the needs of communities or workforces. For example, in Ballarat 29.4 per cent of private occupied dwellings were being rented, while in the Shire, just 8.7 per cent of private occupied dwellings were being rented (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Diversity of housing can impact on the ability of some communities to attract skilled workers and thus affect service provision and the local economy. Given the aging population, the mix of housing available is also an important issue.

The **CHRGP (p.13)**, expressed a view that the range of housing options across the region does not match the current and projected needs of many households as follows:

“Much of the type, form and location of residential areas and new housing being built in the region is working against the likely future needs of many households. Household sizes are getting smaller, single person households are increasing and households are often structured differently to traditional forms and sizes. These changes have implications for the supply of relevant forms of housing. New urban development and residential layouts across the region do not necessarily support the provision of cost effective and sustainable transport systems.”

The **CHRGP** identifies a need to develop a regional housing strategy to address issues such as appropriate housing choice, availability and affordability within the region.

5.6 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

Figure 8 identifies the spread and age of housing across the whole of Shire and identifies the emergence of a settlement pattern which clearly shows the strong containment of dwellings to township boundaries in the south of the Shire. The northern settlements are also clearly identifiable for the clustering of houses, particularly Linton, Cape Clear, Rokewood, Meredith, Corindhap, Napoleons, Scarsdale and Smythesdale. However, there is also housing dispersed through most of the northern periphery of the Shire reflecting the rural residential tenure of the area.

Furthermore, Figure 8 identifies that older housing stock is predominantly located in townships. Newer dwellings (aged between 1-30 years) are more predominantly spread through Rural Living Zoned areas rather than the township areas in the north of the Shire.

There is a likely correlation between the age of housing stock and the relative efficiency or sustainability of the product.

Why Does Development Occur?

Development occurs because there is expected to be a buyer (either for a lot or dwelling) who will pay more for the product than the cost of development. Development is therefore fundamentally driven by the ability of developers to make profits on their investment. While land use planning and other planning instruments can have significant impacts on urban development they cannot determine by themselves the pattern of growth.

Council frequently receives requests from landowners seeking development outcomes for their land. However, there is already substantial undeveloped Rural Living Zoned land within the Shire.

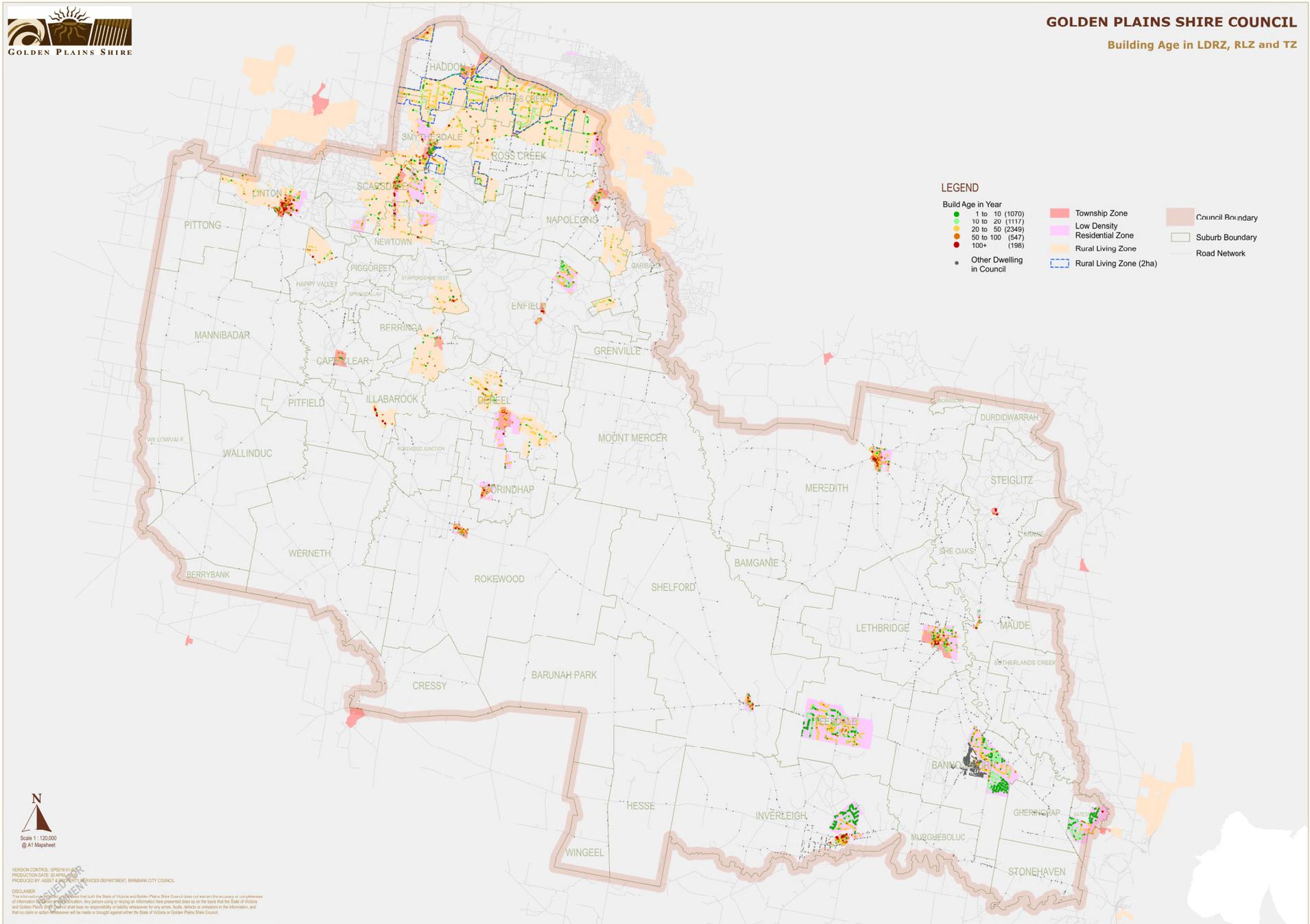
The range of options to accommodate future population growth within the Shire can be broadly divided into the following categories:

> **Greenfield development** - Whilst infill development is likely to play an important role in accommodating future population growth, it is expected there will be an increased demand for greenfield development within close proximity to infrastructure generated by the Ballarat West growth area.

> **Infill development** - Infill development will be directed to existing serviced townships. This involves developing undeveloped areas within existing settlements and creating higher density housing close to 'centres' that provide some levels of service.

LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Build Age in Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 to 10 (1070) ● 10 to 20 (1117) ● 20 to 50 (2349) ● 50 to 100 (547) ● 100+ (198) ● Other Dwelling in Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Township Zone ■ Low Density Residential Zone ■ Rural Living Zone ■ Rural Living Zone (2ha) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▭ Council Boundary ▭ Suburb Boundary ▭ Road Network |
|--|---|---|



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Figure 8 Age of dwellings

Id. Profile is a software program that uses ABS data to populate forecast statistics for the NSS study area. Id. Profile delineates the NSS study area into 2 parts, the North West and the Central West.

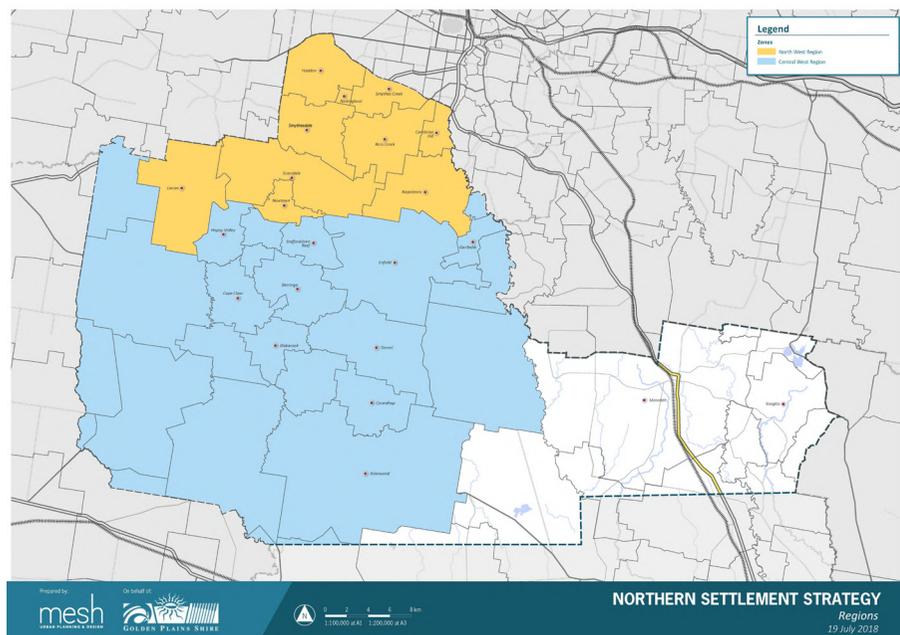


Figure 9 North West and Central Study Area

AREA	2018	2036	GROWTH
North West Area Population	7021	8555	1534
Central West Area Population	2631	3203	512
TOTAL POPULATION	9,652	11,758	2,106

Table 10 Profile forecasting

AREA	2018	2036	GROWTH
North West Area Dwellings	2808	3422	614
Central West Area Dwellings	1052	1281	229
TOTAL DWELLINGS	3,860	4,703	843

Table 11 Dwellings Forecast

5.7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

The Shire has a number of environmental features and assets that contribute to the uniqueness of the northern area, however these attributes also create a number of challenges when considering the potential for increased population growth.

Protection of environmental assets is best achieved by directing settlement growth and development to areas where it will avoid impacting on high value environmental assets including designated water supply catchment areas, strategically important terrestrial habitat, soil health, waterways and wetlands.

An overview of the environmental assets and challenges is set out in the following chapters.

Water Catchments

The Shire is located in the Corangamite Catchment Region. Significant waterways located in the NSS Study Area include the Moorabool River, Woody Yaloak River, Leigh River and Yarrowee River.

While there are many creeks and streams in the north of the Shire, the Moorabool, Leigh and Woody Yaloak rivers comprise the three major river systems in the NSS Study Area. The Moorabool River in the east has the unfortunate reputation of being one of the most severely flow stressed waterways in Victoria (CCMA 2009). The Leigh River flows through the centre of the Shire and is kept artificially flowing as it is an outlet for Ballarat's treated sewerage and the Woody Yaloak River flows along the western edge of the Shire.

Soils

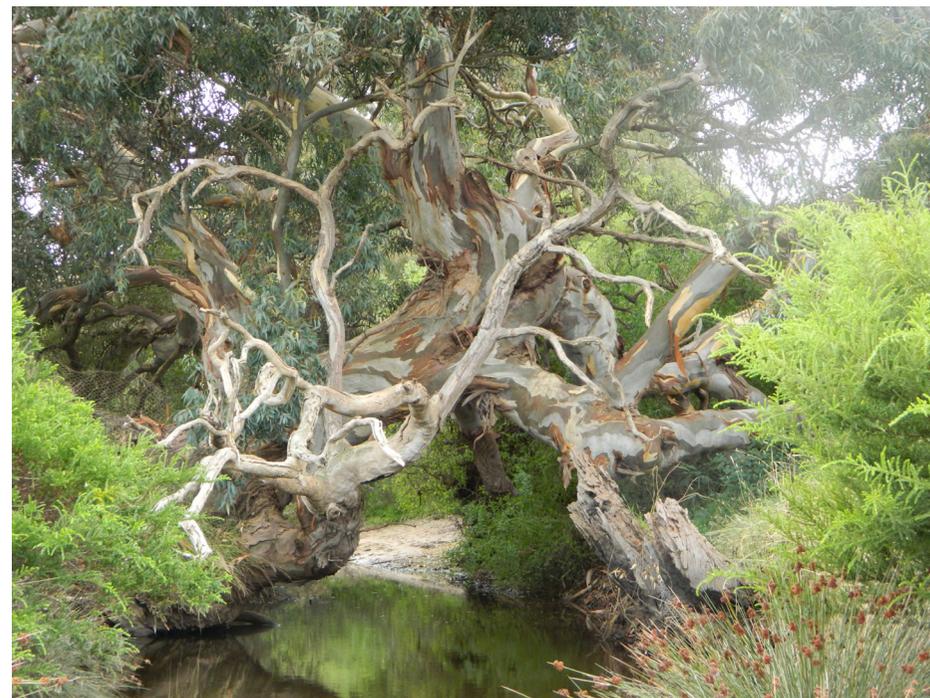
The north of the Shire forms part of the Central Victoria Uplands bioregion and is typified by very old soils that are poor in nutrients and dominated by open eucalypt forests. Future development must recognise that poor soil quality and the potential for localised inundation, combined with poor drainage and ongoing maintenance problems with some septic tank systems will prevent small lot residential development of some areas. This is particularly evident in Linton which is unsewered and where small lots under 2000sqm are identified by the Golden Plains Domestic Wastewater Management Plan as unsuitable for development.

Salinity is another key soil issue identified in the north of the Shire. The Golden Plains Planning Scheme Salinity Management Overlay (SMO) has 399 mapped salinity sites ranging in size from 158 ha to 10 square metres (average size of 5ha) with most located within the northern part of the Shire. The vast majority of the salinity is induced by hydrological changes resulting from land use changes over the past 200 years. Secondary salinity accounts for 88% of the total of 1923ha. The remainder is naturally occurring primary salinity, with Wingeel Swamp the only mapped saline wetland and the largest primary site. Large areas to the south of Ross Creek and Cambrian Hill and north-west of Haddon are potentially affected by salinity.

Vegetation

Native vegetation in the north of the Study Area is dominated by stringybark eucalypt open forests across large areas of Crown Land reserves and privately owned land. These forests are associated with the very old soils of the Central Victorian Uplands bioregion. There are small localised and significant occurrences of vulnerable Grassy Woodlands located on areas of old basalt flows and granitic outcrops. Riparian zones along streams and waterways host the rarer Valley Grassy Forest, Creekline Herb-Rich Woodland and Riparian Woodland. Most arable land on flatter country and along water courses has been cleared for development and farming and contains only remnants of the vegetation that once occurred. Subdivision and infill development, along with incremental removal of forest cover on private properties contributes significantly to the fragmentation and loss of native vegetation in this area.

These rare vegetation communities are the last refuge for a number of very rare flora and fauna species and protection of these remnants is of great importance.



Any future planning in the north of the Shire must take into account the impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity and consider:

- Cumulative impacts
- Fragmentation of habitat
- The spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystems.

Flooding

The development of future residential areas will need to consider the potential for localised flooding and avoid new buildings and works on land identified by the Scheme's Floodway Overlay ("FO") and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay ("LSIO").

Areas to the north west of Haddon are affected by inundation and localised flooding.

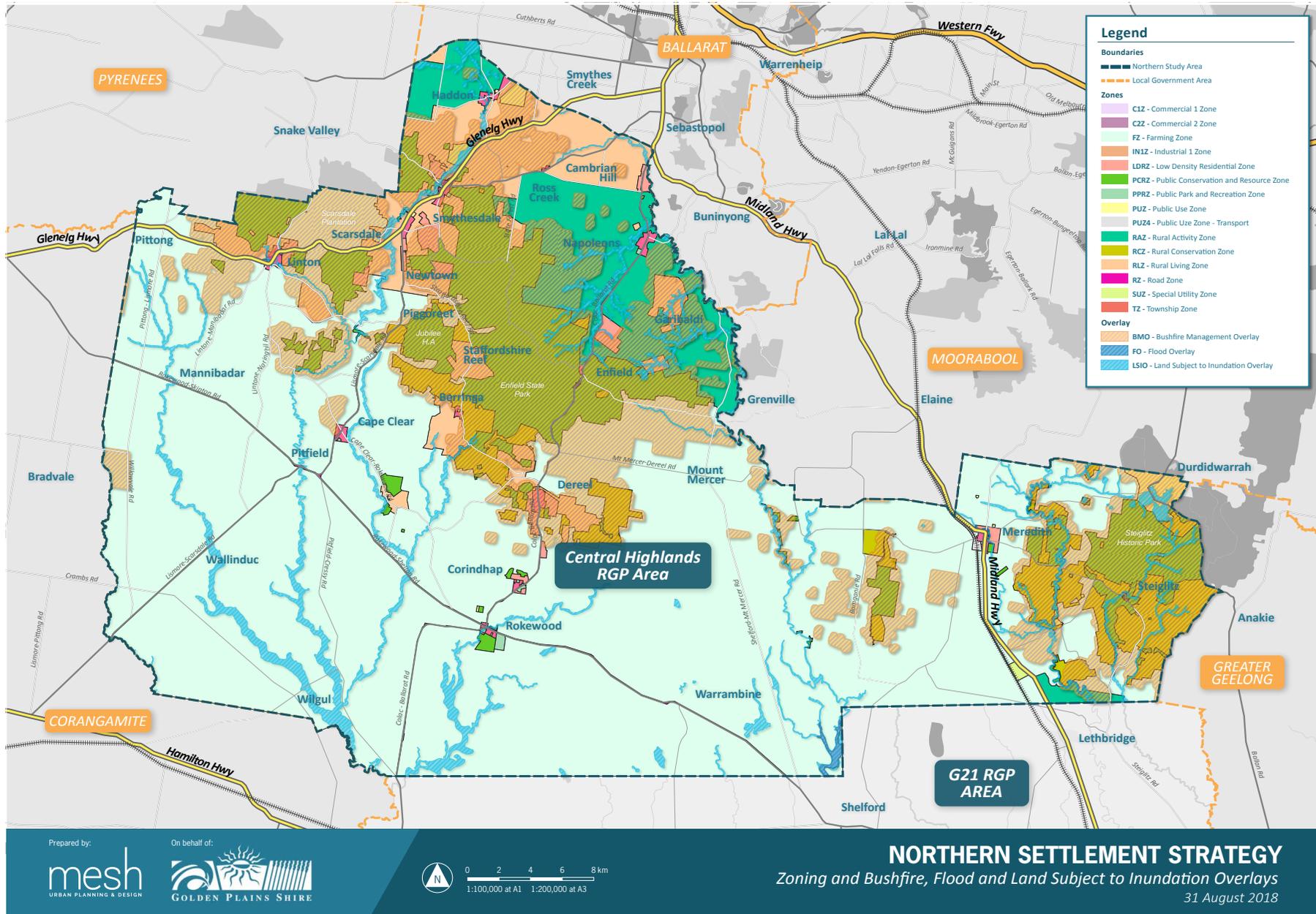


Figure 10 Zoning, FO, LSIO & BMO Overlay Map

Bushfire Threat

State Government policy on fire risk requires that planning for settlements must have a much greater regard for the risk to human life, that may occur as a result of encouraging development at or near any areas identified as being subject to high risk from wildfire.

The Scheme’s Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) identifies areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented. Subdivision and development of land covered by the BMO requires a permit accompanied by a number of requirements which may include a hazard site assessment, hazard landscape assessment and a bushfire management statement.

A number of settlements within the Study Area are affected by the BMO which applies to large areas within each locality. Settlements with greater than 50% of land within the locality covered by the BMO include:

SETTLEMENT	LOCALITY IN HA	BMO AFFECTED AREA	% OF LOCALITY
Enfield	9,866	8,986ha	91%
Dereel	5,998	4,429ha	74%
Linton	5,859	3,120ha	53%
Scarsdale	6,654	5,750ha	86%
Dereel	3,086	3,452ha	89%
Linton	5,859	3,120ha	53%
Scarsdale	6,654	5,750ha	86%

Table 11 BMO Affected Areas

Wildfire threatens open grass lands and wooded forest/bush areas including the Haddon and Ross Creek areas and land to the south east of Napoleons.



KEY ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

Protection of environmental assets is best achieved by directing settlement growth and development into areas that will avoid impacting on environmental assets.

Future development in the north of the Shire must consider poor soil quality, the potential for localised inundation and poor drainage. These constraints may prevent small lot residential development in some areas.

The vast majority of mapped saline sites occur in the north of the Golden Plains Shire. Unmitigated saline soil can undermine the integrity of structures and infrastructure. Development on saline soil should be avoided.

Development of future residential areas will need to consider the potential for localised and riverine flooding.

Planning of settlements must have high regard for the risk to human life that may occur from development at or near any area identified as being subject to high risk from wildfire.

5.8 INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The availability and capacity of service infrastructure varies across the study area. A summary of existing infrastructure and its capacity is set out in the following.

Roads

The Golden Plains Shire contains 1,837km of sealed roads, gravel roads and unformed roads. At least half of those roads are located within the study area. The Highways are maintained by VicRoads (except in Township bounds). The remaining roads, including arterial, sealed and gravel formations are maintained by Golden Plains Shire Council. Roads represent vital infrastructure for residents, the economy and for the connectivity of settlements and regional centres.

The Study Area has good road access to Ballarat, Melbourne and Geelong, making it popular for commuting generally via the Midland or the Glenelg Highway. The Ballarat Western Link Road is currently under construction and large sections of the road will abut the boundary between the Shire and the City of Ballarat. The Ballarat Link Road will ultimately link the Western Freeway to the Midland Highway providing greater access to both these highways for residents within the Study Area.

Transport logistics via road also link the Study Area to rail facilities and airports in Geelong, Ballarat and Melbourne and port facilities in Geelong and Melbourne.

Water Supply

All towns in the study have reticulated water supplies provided either by Central Highlands Water or Barwon Water. Both authorities have programs to improve water quality. Central Highlands Water, which has its involvement in the northern part of the Shire, believes it can service most of the anticipated growth within its area. An exception exists in a band of high-ground land located southeast of Scarsdale extending to the area south of Ross Creek. Central Highlands Water submits the existing supply systems, with minor augmentation works are adequate to cater for the existing populations and anticipated growth in the immediate future.

Gas Supply

There is no reticulated gas supply within the Study Area.

Wastewater Management

The extent of sewerage systems in the Study Area is limited to Woodlands Estate (near Enfield) and Smythesdale. Central Highlands Water will assess the need for sewerage in Scarsdale and Linton when development and growth has reached a stage where it is warranted.

The ability to provide sewer infrastructure may, in some locations, form a key determinant of the growth potential of towns. For example, the sewerage of Linton may facilitate development of medium density housing types, suitable for providing aged accommodation and affordable housing options. In Smythesdale, which has recently been seweraged, the direction of future growth will be determined by the location of sewerage infrastructure. The Woodlands Estate sewerage system has no capacity for future growth of the residential area. Some areas in the Study Area are not suited to effluent disposal using conventional septic tanks systems. To protect environmental quality and increase development potential, other forms of effluent disposal will need to be utilised. Council's Domestic Waste Water Management Plan 2015 guides development and use applications where reticulated sewerage is unavailable.

Waste Management

The State Government is responsible for policy development and regulation around waste management, and for promoting environmental sustainability. Local governments are responsible for providing waste collection, transport and reprocessing, or disposal to landfill services. Regional waste management groups are responsible for planning and coordinating the management of municipal solid waste for local governments within their regions, as well as helping to reduce waste, maximise recovery and reduce environmental harm.

A regional landfill is located at Smythesdale. The landfill is currently close to capacity under its current Work Authority. The potential for land use conflict with planned growth areas around Smythesdale is a serious consideration when planning for and managing the waste associated with the population forecast for the region. The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan states there are opportunities to encourage and support investment into advanced technology that can convert waste into energy or fuel products. The Plan recognises the need to encourage local energy generation from waste sources. The Plan goes on to suggest the Region could benefit from a regional plant that includes material recycling facilities, composting facilities for green waste and bioenergy plants for processing food and animal production wastes, however the CHRGP – Background Report (p.97) recognised that “any such facility would require suitable buffer zones to minimise conflict with areas of sensitive uses.”

Telecommunications

Development of the National Broadband Network (NBN) is underway within the Study Area and is likely to improve access to broadband internet services across the region. NBN fixed wireless towers have been built in Cape Clear, Dereel, Enfield, Haddon, Haddon West, Linton, Linton Central, Rokewood, Ross Creek, Sebastopol South (providing some coverage in Golden Plains Shire) and Smythesdale. A new NBN fixed wireless tower will also be built in Meredith. New mobile towers have recently been constructed at Dereel and Steiglitz. At the time of this study, new Optus mobile towers are proposed to be built in Cape Clear and Haddon. There may be implications from the improved broadband internet service for communities and settlements across the study area and the way in which communities rely on local and regional service centres for business, work, education, shopping, lifestyle, medical and educational purposes.

Power

The majority of the three phase power lines in the Study Area follow the Glenelg and Midland Highway corridors. Areas serviced by above or underground three phase power lines have the most capacity and are best suited for new power connections.

Renewable Energy

Wind farm development in the Study Area includes an operational wind farm at Mt Mercer. The farm has 64 wind turbines and the capacity to produce 131MW of power, which is enough energy to power a city the size of Ballarat. There is also State Government approval to build a wind farm at Berrybank, which comprises 79 wind turbines in the southern end of Golden Plains Shire. The wind farm will have the capacity to produce 277MW of power and will see 41 turbines built in the Shire and 38 built in Corangamite Shire.

A planning permit has been approved by the State Government to allow the construction of a large wind farm near Rokewood. The proposal would see construction of up to 228 wind turbines with a capacity of 800MW, which is enough energy to power 500,000 homes.

Transport

Apart from road transport, there are limited alternatives for passenger transport. There is a coach service from Geelong to Ballarat along the Midland Highway and also a V-Line coach service through Smythesdale and Linton to Skipton.

The Study Area has access to airports in Ballarat, Lethbridge and Geelong. There is also good access to freight lines leading to markets and ports in Melbourne, Geelong and Portland. The Ballarat Link Road will enhance access to Ballarat and Melbourne markets.

The Geelong-Ballarat railway line is a broad-gauge railway between the two regional cities. Towns on route include Bannockburn, Lethbridge, Meredith, Elaine and Lal Lal. Passenger services were withdrawn in 1978. The line is used for freight transport including grain as well as general freight from the Mildura line. A study undertaken by the State Government concluded that returning rail passenger services to the line was not viable due to the high cost. However, there remains a continued push for the re-opening of the railway line for passenger traffic.

Summary of Transport and Infrastructure Issues

The availability of infrastructure is a key determinant when considering settlement patterns and areas suitable for development. Currently reticulated sewerage is available within two townships of the study area being Smythesdale and Enfield, however only Smythesdale's system has capacity to accommodate further growth. The availability of infrastructure such as sewer pump stations within close proximity to the Golden Plains Shire municipal boundary, shared with City of Ballarat is a factor which has potential to determine future settlement patterns for the north of the shire. Likewise the proximity to the Ballarat Link Road will provide increased pressure for development.

The largest population centres in the northern study area are located on or very near the two major highways being the Glenelg and the Colac-Ballarat Road. These roads provide a strong connection between settlements in the north and provide a conduit for shared services and connectivity between settlements.

The lack of public transport continues to be an issue for residents in the north of the Shire, with heavy reliance on vehicles to access all services in and outside of the Shire.



KEY INFRASTRUCTURE FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

The roll-out of broadband offers a potentially wide range of business, education and health opportunities to service rural communities.

Strategic movement corridors in the study area will provide greater access to infrastructure and services and regional towns. The Western Link Road when completed will provide continuous link between the Midland and Western Highways.

Water Authorities (Barwon Water and Central Highland Water) can adequately meet anticipated growth in the north of the Shire. However, the ability to provide sewer infrastructure may, in some locations, form a key determinant of the growth potential of towns.

Three phase power supply predominantly follows the strategic movement corridors, Lower grade power supplies such as SWER (single wire earth return) and single phase above ground power lines have limited capacity for connection. Lower grade power supply is prevalent in many of the smaller, less populated settlements in the Shire, which may affect home-based business requiring 3 phase power. (see appendix)

Smythesdale Regional Landfill is located 234 metres from land identified for low density development. The potential for land use conflict with planned growth areas around Smythesdale is a serious consideration when planning for and managing the waste associated with the population forecast for the region.

Much of the north of the Shire is vehicle dependent. Apart from road transport, there are limited alternatives for passenger transport. With limited public transport, increased population may facilitate better transport options.

5.9 SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT

Community Infrastructure

Planning for community infrastructure is an integral part of the land use planning process for areas experiencing growth. It delivers high-quality outcomes for growing communities and helps ensure that community facilities and services can meet the needs of existing and future residents.

In regional areas, the relative isolation of settlements and the long distances that people travel to access essential services is a consideration when determining what facilities are required. Attention should also be drawn to the ongoing health and wellbeing of residents, which can be linked to the physical availability of community, health and recreation facilities.

The Shire has a number of facilities located both in the north and south which act as community hubs or spaces for residents to seek information or use assets for recreational purposes. Smythesdale is however the principal service centre in the study area containing retail, commercial, community and recreational facilities.

In a policy context the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan supports the provision of local and sub-regional services in Smythesdale. Council's investment in Smythesdale is reflected in the development and expansion of 'The Well', a Business Health and Community Hub, which houses a doctor's clinic, pharmacy, various community programs and Council services. The Well is valued by not only the local Smythesdale community but also by many of the residents from the surrounding localities. This is apparent through the survey results which show a concentration of people use both Ballarat and Smythesdale as locations for medical services and general shopping.

Growth is encouraged in areas such as Smythesdale which are located close to existing community services and infrastructure. Given the connection of the town centre to reticulated sewer and investment into community facilities, infill development is strongly encouraged and supported.

Following Smythesdale, Meredith, Haddon and Linton offer a range of social infrastructure, and community facilities. These settlements cater to rural lifestyle markets located within easy commute to higher order employment and services in Ballarat.

Napoleons and Rokewood are the Shire's secondary service centres for outer rural localities. The remainder of smaller rural localities have limited existing physical and social infrastructure and play a more localised role than the other settlements. For the most part residents look to larger towns for immediate access to basic retail activities and social infrastructure.

The range of services provided in each of the towns in the study area is further detailed in the Area Profiles provided within the research chapter of this report. Together with the findings of the community survey it was found that the communities access services through a network of towns often located along the 'strategic movement corridors'.

Community Planning

Council has a Community Planning program where community members come together to develop and implement Community Plans to improve their own towns. There are currently 23 northern communities in the Shire involved in the program.

Economic Development

Local business and employment are key components for ensuring sustainable communities. The NSS seeks to understand business and employment trends and their impact on future population growth and settlement patterns.

Economic Growth

The Golden Plains local planning policy supports development that delivers economic growth. The northern townships of Smythesdale, Linton and Meredith are identified as key locations for commercial activity, including local shopping and business. While it is acknowledged that significant retail expenditure occurs outside of the Shire to major regional centres including Ballarat, the Commercial Zones 1 and 2 apply in Smythesdale to encourage and support business growth. The Township Zone is applied to smaller townships to facilitate and support a wide range of commercial uses that typically service a local community and surrounding rural base.

Agricultural industries continue to represent the most important economic sector, particularly grazing and cropping operations. More than 25% of the employment in the Shire is generated in agriculture and forestry. A critical element in planning for agricultural uses in the Shire is to maintain larger farm holdings. The loss or fragmentation of traditional farming land represents an important land use management issue for Council and the community. Inappropriate or poorly planned development has the potential to cause conflict between sensitive uses and agricultural practices. The Shire has recognised the potential for growth in the intensive agricultural industries and in timber production.

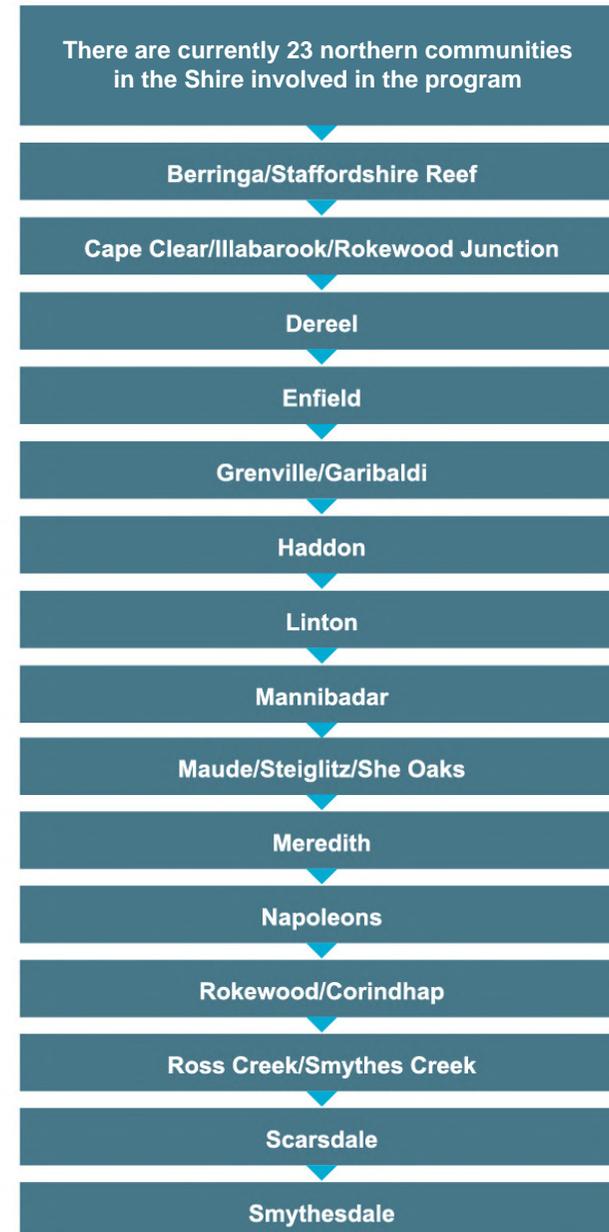


Figure 11 Communities involved in community planning

Strategies to maintain large farm holdings to support viable agriculture include:

- > avoiding fragmentation of land for non-agricultural purposes;
- > including rural residential development; and
- > avoiding dwellings on smaller rural lots, unrelated to legitimate farming enterprise.

In terms of industry, there are a number of industrial sites throughout the northern area of the Shire that have been provided for industrial uses but remain vacant. A desktop review reveals that a significant proportion of small scale industrial uses are located within township areas or as part of existing residential land uses. Alternatively, it may be that land zoned for industrial purposes in the northern part of the Shire are not suitably located; of a sufficient size; or lack the appropriate infrastructure. Further opportunities in the larger regional centres of Ballarat and Geelong and the Melbourne Metropolitan Area may provide a more suitable alternative.

The Shire's economic growth objectives include:

- > to ensure a sufficient supply of land suitable for industrial uses is available;
- > to support locations for new industrial development where strategically justified; and
- > to encourage value-adding industries within the Shire and local enterprises.

Economic Perspective from the Central Highland Regional Growth Plan

The **CHRGP** recognises Ballarat as the 'economic powerhouse for growth in the region'. Whilst diversity of business activity has helped the region to adjust to changing economic conditions, the spread of economic growth has been uneven. The smaller settlements of the west Central Highlands region are cited as experiencing the lowest levels of economic growth.

The key opportunities and assets map for the Central Highlands region identifies the northern part of the NSS study area as a landscape that currently supports extensive broad acre cropping and grazing activities. A second area of land extending from Rokewood to Meredith is nominated as a key location for intensive animal husbandry. This area incorporates the Golden Plains Food Production Precinct. 'Out of centre' commercial activity is identified as a potential threat to the viability and vibrancy of town centres.

Relevant CHRGP principles and directions for regional growth:

PRINCIPLE	DIRECTIONS
The region's economy should be strengthened so that it is more diversified and resilient.	<p>Pursue economic development opportunities based on the emerging and existing strengths of the region.</p> <p>Support growth through the development of employment opportunities in towns identified for population growth.</p>
The development of sustainable and vibrant communities should be supported by enhancing the level of access to key services.	<p>Build on local opportunities to support sustainable growth and change in small towns.</p>
Land use patterns, development and infrastructure should make the region more self-reliant and sustainable.	<p>Develop communities that provide local jobs and services.</p>

Table 13 Directions for regional growth

Economy and Employment in the Study Area

Smythesdale was selected by the Shire in 2002 as a centre for delivery of services and a location to accommodate business growth. To facilitate business and industrial development Council undertook a land use rezoning of the land on the western side of the Glenelg Highway from Gardens Road in the south to include the allotment north of Whites Road, on which the Service Station/ Roadhouse is located. The site contained five privately owned allotments totalling approximately 7.4 hectares. The objective was to develop and implement a plan to identify and negotiate with home based businesses to relocate to industrially zoned land in Smythesdale.

The Northern Industrial Land Development Study was undertaken in 2003. The study identified a rapid growth in Home Based Businesses established on rural residential lots and an increasing propensity for people to opt for quality of life issues and work from home. In response to this growth, the Shire sought to support the growth of Home Based Businesses and their expansion onto appropriately zoned land within the municipality.

In 2003, there were 292 businesses recorded by ANZSIC in the combined postcodes of 3351 and 3360 covering the northern section of the Shire. The majority of these were manufacturing (24%), followed by construction (17%), then retail trade at 13% and personal and other services accounting for 10%.

In 2006, the Shire was increasingly becoming a place where people live, but not work and this was evidenced in the figures that the Shire provided less than one-third of the jobs needed for its employed resident workforce.

Having a dynamic and active small business sector contributes to a strong regional economy. The principle issue in regional economic development is job creation and the research and findings of past and recent business and economic studies show a significant number of small business and home based business across the northern settlement area. The trend towards home based business relates to a number of global change factors including a shift from manufacturing towards service and knowledge based business. At the same time, advances in information and communication technology have enabled more home and mobile offices. Home based business provides an attractive alternative compared to commercial business sites

due to lower set-up costs, overheads and operating expenses. Home based business also provide greater convenience and flexibility in operation. In effect, these advantages allow home based businesses to act as micro-incubators, enabling business to slowly grow and gain momentum in a low risk setting.

At a broader level, home based businesses have considerable potential to contribute to economic growth. The collective presence of home based businesses increases the economic diversity within an area and fosters sustainable communities (Contributions of home based businesses to Regional Economic Development, ANZAM 2009). At a community level, home based business add to the range of consumption choices available regionally and help diversify the economic base of regional industry. When combined with the potential to generate income, available for spending in the local economy, there is a strong case for supporting home based business in these communities.

The Golden Plains Economic Development Strategy prepared in 2013 identified economic opportunities and challenges for the northern communities. The Strategy found the number of Shire residents travelling to Ballarat or Geelong for work was significantly larger than the number of local jobs within the Shire. The agricultural sector was found to be the biggest employer (25% of jobs) followed by construction (10%) then manufacturing (7%).

The Strategy found that the Shire:

- > would continue to benefit from strong population growth, lower land prices and a competitive agricultural sector;
- > had a comparative advantage in sectors including wind energy and food production/ processing;
- > has a dependence on the agricultural sector making the local economy vulnerable to external economic shifts; and
- > has a low level of employment self-sufficiency.



CASE STUDY

Minitube: A Smythesdale Success Story

The Golden Plains Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2017-2021 found that the Shire has relatively low rates of unemployment (3.6%) compared to the State (5.7%). This statistic is considered to be attributed to the relatively close proximity of the regional centres. The key focus of Council's investment attraction is to create more Shire located jobs however it is also committed to working with regional partners to ensure the regional labour market can sustain the Shire's growing population.

Nationally, employment is projected to increase in 16 of the 19 broad industries up to 2020, with declines in employment projected for Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Mining and Manufacturing. Locally however, the Ballarat region runs against this trend with small increases forecast for Agriculture. This is relevant given the agricultural sector is the main driver of economic activity in the Shire, employing 26% of the Shire's workforce and worth \$159 million in economic output or 20% of the Shire's economy. (REMPPLAN 2016).

In 2018, the REMPLAN database tells us that there are 2,284 businesses operating in the northern settlement area. The majority of these, 21.8% are in the Construction industry. The next largest business sector is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing accounting for 14%. Of significance also is the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, accounting for nearly 8% of business, closely followed by Administrative and Support Services at 6.3%; Retail Trade at 5.8%; Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services at 5%; Transport, Postal and Warehousing at 4.7%.

Employment – Home Based Business Focus and Case Study

The importance of home based business support is a strong theme that has been uncovered through a review of previous economic development work as well as through Council's REMPLAN data and the online survey undertaken by 100 residents in the northern end of the Shire.

'Minitube is the world-wide leading supplier of systems for the field of assisted animal reproduction'. Founded in Germany in 1968 the company now boasts operations in many countries around the world. Minitube opened their Australian headquarters in 2004 and chose the town of Smythesdale as their base. Although the business has benefited from proximity to surrounding livestock operations the decision to develop in Smythesdale was not primarily driven by locational factors. Alan Smith explains "Originally, Minitube was looking to establish in Albury."

Alan and Terri Smith operated a home based business on a rural residential lot in the north of the Shire. They had a home office and a large shed which they used as a warehouse to operate out of. It made sense to utilise these facilities and meant their family life could remain unchanged with their children continuing to attend school in Ballarat. A decision was later made (around 2010) to purchase Commercial zoned land in Smythesdale to base the Australian Minitube operations. Council had purposefully zoned this land for business purposes to provide opportunity for home based business which out-grew the rural-residential environment.

Alan and Terri are surprised that more of the Commercial zoned land in Smythesdale hasn't been developed for growing local service business and trades. They own 2 hectares of Commercial zoned land with some land developed for their own purposes with additional sheds available for lease and the remaining land vacant. Future development of the remaining land will require further roads works adjacent to the Highway.

Their Minitube business employs nine (9) people, some local, some from Ballarat and the business has been growing steadily at 10% per annum. Alan and Terri see opportunity for niche businesses to support the rural residential population and properties; as well as the equine industry and veterinary related business. Opportunities for tourism related business Whilst a successful business has established in the Smythesdale Commercial 2 Zoned land, vacant land remains adjacent which has yet to be realised for business development. The Shire has actively planned and zoned land for business development, but competes with Ballarat's industrial parks.

Alan and wife Terri are passionate about supporting local business development and see significant potential for future investment in High Street, Smythesdale. From a lifestyle perspective the couple highly value the bush setting, the sense of community and the easy access to the high order services and schools located within Ballarat. They advise that the freight and postal services, which are important to their business are as reliable and timely as would be in metropolitan Melbourne. Locationally, for their business, there are no real disadvantages. Approximately 2-3 times per year there are network outages that put their business offline. It is difficult to ascertain the cause of these outages and whether they are networked based or particular to the service provider.

Alan and Terri believe that Smythesdale is well situated to leverage opportunities for further business investment services associated with the rapid population growth occurring in the Ballarat West precinct.

Ultimately the Minitube story reveals that above all else, it is the livability of the northern communities that will attract future population and business activity. The establishment of industrial land precincts in the north of the Shire has the potential to support local economic growth in alignment with residential growth. Revenue and expenditure by business communities has a positive impact on the local economy in addition to simply relying on domestic, or household consumption.

Proximity to the business support services, business infrastructure and transport links in Ballarat, provides the Study Area with opportunities for industry development. One of the key challenges is to have an impact on the form and nature of growth that will :

- Offer a diverse and robust local business base; complement and support the economy of Ballarat;
- Support attractive and self-reliant communities which have character and a shared vision between local businesses and residents
- Create jobs in several traditional and emerging sectors, including:
 - intensive agriculture,
 - other manufacturing (especially machinery and equipment),
 - professional, scientific and technical services,
 - warehousing and distribution.

Anecdotally and based on interviews with the local business Mini Tube, a business decision to establish in the northern end of the Shire will be based on lifestyle factors. The 2ha sized rural residential lot provides sufficient space for a large shed, with capacity to store materials, vehicles and machinery. It suits the kind of businesses that don't rely on drop-in traffic. Telecommunications and connectivity, together with freight and postal services are standard requirements. Provided there is accessibility to these, there is no disadvantage to being outside the regional centre or metropolitan Melbourne. In effect, the northern rural living landscape provides a perfect incubator for home based business in construction and trade, warehousing and logistics amongst others. The key advantages are proximity to a regional centre, space for storage of machinery and equipment and the alternative country lifestyle available.

The Shire is growing strongly and is expected to achieve further residential growth and with it, more Home Based Business or micro-businesses. Potentially, the forecast population growth for northern settlements could be achieved without the creation of any new local jobs. However, a proactive approach to targeted industry development could have a much greater impact in shaping the Shire's long term industry structure. A critical step in the process will see micro-businesses mature from an incubation stage to become sustainable local businesses providing local jobs for a growing local resident population.

One of the key challenges in developing a northern settlement strategy is to have an impact on the form and nature of growth so that it will offer a diverse and robust local business base; complement and support the economy of Ballarat; and support attractive and self-reliant communities.



KEY FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

Ballarat will grow irrespective of the Shire's planning.

The Western Link Road connecting the Western and Midland Highways will provide opportunities for greater access to services, employment and education in Ballarat.

Small settlements will grow as demand increases for rural lifestyle housing opportunities within commuting distance from Ballarat.

The currently zoned residential land supply can adequately accommodate projected population growth within the study area.

The integrity and character of towns in the north of the Shire will need to be protected through considered strategic planning work.

Population growth will have an impact on local and regional services. Nearby schools could get more crowded and hospital waiting lists could rise.

Any increase in lifestyle lots should consider the implications of aging on the use of the land.

Population growth in dispersed areas outside the strategic movement corridor accentuates the number of transport disadvantaged.

Growth at the interface with Ballarat West will create pressure on the demand for residential land.

Coupled families with dependents will remain the largest household type with an additional 843 households 2018-2036.

To benefit from access to better infrastructure, future greenfield development will need to be:

- Strategically located along a major transport corridor
- Supported by detailed plans for open space
- Provided with access to community facilities
- Linkages to existing settlements

Consider the development of the Western Link Road and its impact on local traffic.

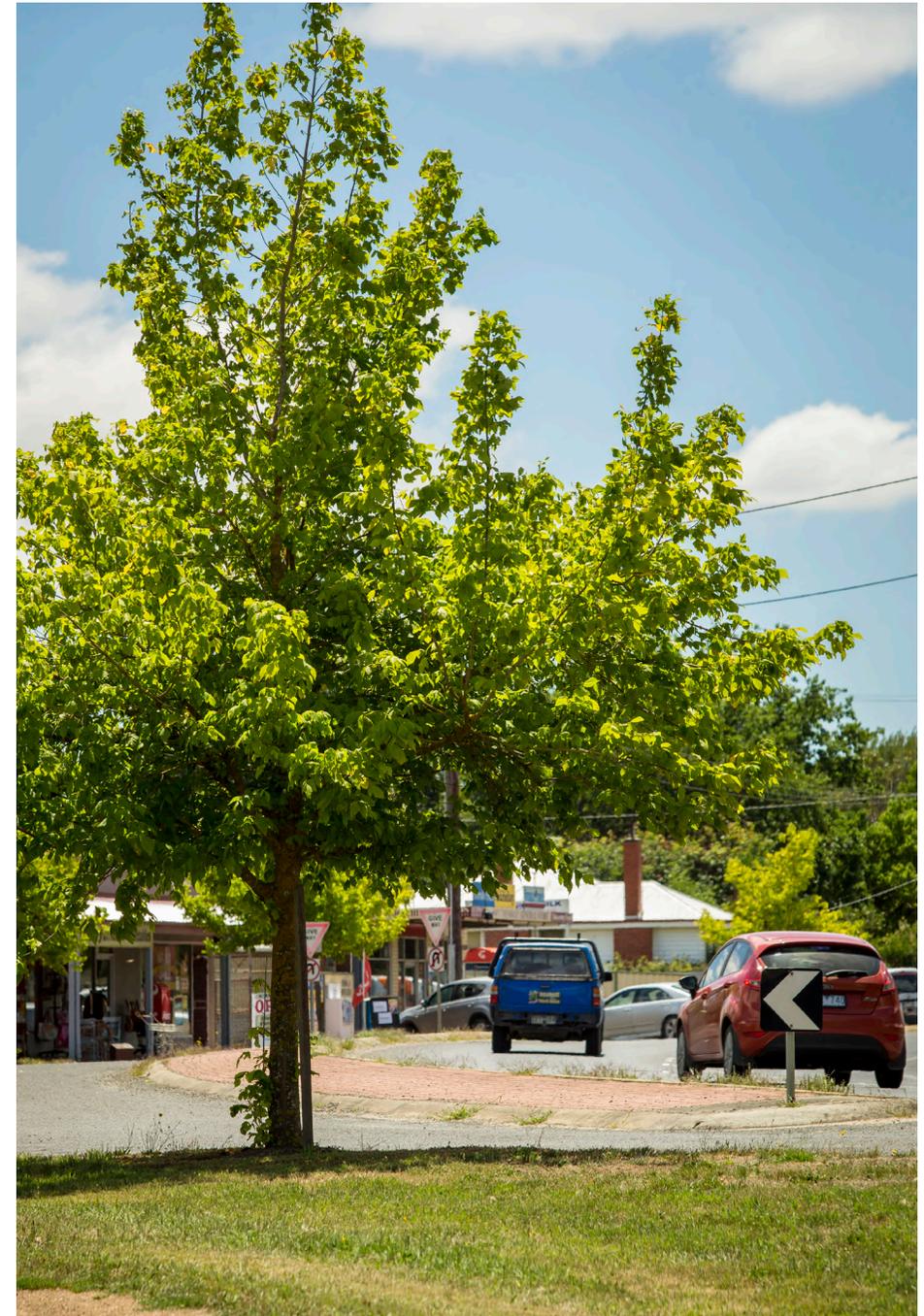
Greenfield development will require greater investment by Council toward the provision of social infrastructure.

Accept that increased density in rural areas will have an impact on amenity.

Directing population growth to serviced townships will facilitate appropriate infrastructure to support networked communities.

Ensure that greenfield development is not constrained by existing development to implement better urban form in terms of urban design, amenity and environmental conditions.

Prospective residents would place high value on locating to area with rural amenity, housing diversity, access to transport routes, social infrastructure and within commuting distance to commercial, employment and education.



5.10 DRIVERS, ATTRIBUTES, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

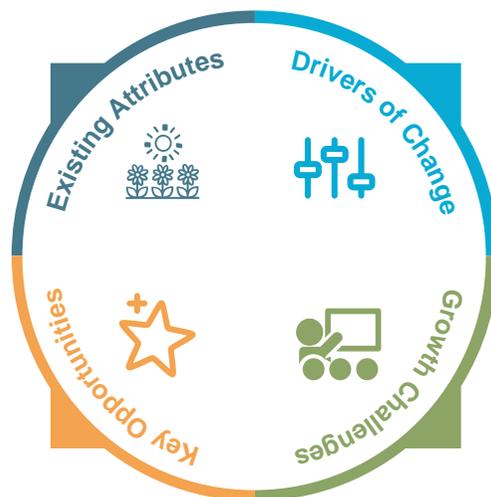
Over the long term, the northern settlement area is projected to grow and develop. It is important to understand the key drivers for this change. Existing attributes, challenges and opportunities have been identified to ensure that future strategic directions are appropriately targeted and responsive to the needs of a growing population.

Existing Attributes

- > Rural setting and associated lifestyle
- > Safe, friendly community with a strong community network and spirit
- > Close to the facilities and functions offered by the regional City of Ballarat
- > The natural landscape including a range of environmental features
- > Productive agricultural land

Key Opportunities

- > Major Projects that promote resilience and increase local services and liveability (The Well & Meredith)
- > Connections with Ballarat and leveraging off growth in Ballarat West
- > Affordable housing and proximity to a regional city
- > Shire's rural lifestyle with access to regional services



Drivers of Change

- > Economic diversification
- > Population growth
- > Improved technology & global access
- > State Government policy influences such as Plan Melbourne and the Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan
- > Regional employment, services & education opportunities

Growth Challenges

- > Development pressure in high amenity areas including areas in close proximity to regional services.
- > Environmental constraints such as bushfire, flooding and salinity
- > Spreading the benefits of population growth
- > Infrastructure & services shortfalls
- > Aging population
- > Lack of local employment opportunities
- > Climate change

6. SETTLEMENTS

6.1 OVERVIEW

Following the first rounds of stakeholder and community engagement, the NSS project team undertook a comprehensive profile review for each town within the study area, to identify a range of information not currently held in a single database. In developing the township profile summaries, the profile data was combined with findings from the Residential Land Supply & Demand Assessment to provide a clearer picture of opportunities and constraints by location.

The characteristics of settlements within the study area vary considerably. Settlement patterns within the study area are heavily influenced by:

- > history;
- > population;
- > existing infrastructure and services;
- > proximity to Ballarat; and
- > infrastructure development in key towns such as Smythesdale and Haddon. Settlement Profiles are included in the Appendices. The Profiles serve as a reference and are designed to support the development of a typology of settlements for the north-west of the Shire.

6.2 DEVELOPMENT OF TYPOLOGY OF SETTLEMENTS

In order to have a thorough understanding of each town in the study area and its role a Settlement Framework has been developed which establishes a typology of settlement's. A typology of settlements groups together settlements with similar characteristics and provides a hierarchical framework based on a number of factors including:

- > availability of residential land;
- > availability of services and infrastructure;
- > commercial activities;
- > character;
- > settlement patterns; and
- > population size.



KEY FINDINGS / IMPLICATIONS

A significant percentage of future jobs in the region are likely to be based within the City of Ballarat and its surrounding growth fronts.

Planners should direct population growth into settlements where there are existing services, including recreation facilities to promote and sustain healthy communities. The scheme already does this to some extent.

Greenfield development must consider the provision for community infrastructure.

Future Structure Plans must consider the provision for community infrastructure.

There is existing strong policy support to facilitate investment in commercial business enterprise in the township of Smythesdale. An area of zoned land remains available for commercial/business park development in Smythesdale.

Research indicates that further opportunities exist for investment in niche industries supporting the rural living communities and rural enterprise.

Home based businesses will continue to provide a source of employment for the northern communities. Home based businesses will demand access to reliable internet connections.

New jobs will be created in service industries. Service industries should be strategically located to make the best use of existing infrastructure.

Council should consider the development and implementation for new local planning policy to support:

Future requests to rezone land to allow industrial land use should consider:

- Synergies with existing local business (equine cluster);
 - Infrastructure - waste water;
 - The location of industry development areas that are separate and discrete from residential and rural residential areas in the Shire's north-west.
- Future requests to rezone land to allow commercial land use should consider;
- Needs of RLZ and nearby rural communities;
 - Relationship to agriculture, rural residential and lifestyle sectors;
 - Synergies with tourism and existing local business; and
 - Infrastructure - costs associated with development on Highways (in particular access)

HADDON

Overview



Estimated resident population
1,075



Distance from Ballarat
12km



Hectares
3,340h

Haddon is sited on the Woody Yaloak River in a rural landscape of open paddocks, remnant trees and scattered dwellings. The township has a thriving primary school and offers a semi-rural lifestyle for its residents. Private land is mainly used for agriculture with grazing and cropping the dominant enterprises. Public land is largely forested and used for commercial timber production or conservation.

The Haddon township does not possess the typical urban built form of a compact rural town. The absence of a dominant main street or continuous street strip development belies the numerous community and sporting groups that support networks and links between individuals, communities, business and government.

Town Role

The Settlement Typology Framework identifies Haddon as a town whose key function is to provide a retail and service centre for the Haddon township and its rural hinterland. Haddon is a small urban centre that performs an important living, retail, service and community role to residents and its surrounding rural hinterland. The predominant characteristic of the township is the absence of a dominant main street and strong community services within commuting proximity of Ballarat.

Education
Primary



Early Years Maternal
and Child Care



Sports and
Recreation



COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Retail



Services



Policy Influences

The North West Area Structure Plan (2000) policy encourages consolidation of the town boundary and the maintenance of a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. Infrastructure and urban use and development outside the identified urban growth boundary should be discouraged. Further rezoning of land for urban purposes should demonstrate that alternative suitable locations are not available. Land adjacent to the town boundary is zoned for residential rural living. Land zoned for rural living should maintain the 2 hectares and 8 hectares minimum lot subdivision.

Land Supply And Demand

Land zoned for township use covers 72ha. Land zoned rural living land covers 1,120 hectares forming a larger continuous stretch of rural residential land that expands into neighbouring localities such as Nintingbool, Smythes Creek and Smythesdale. In the period July 2010-March 2016, 30 dwellings were constructed and 17 lots produced. Prominently, subdivisions (13 lots) have occurred on land zoned township whilst dwellings construction (26) has occurred in the rural living area.

ZONED LAND	TOTAL	OCCUPIED	VACANT	% AVAILABLE	VACANT LOTS AVAILABLE
Township Zone	72.9	58.7	14.2	19.47%	10
Rural Living Zone	1,120.2	891.2	229	20.44%	28
Low Density Res Zone	0	0	0	0%	
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL LAND	1,193.1	949.9	243.2	20.38%	38

Table 13 No. of Vacant Lots Available

Note: The number of vacant lots in the above table do not represent the final lot/ dwelling yield or capacity. Larger vacant lots have significant subdivision capacity and some existing vacant allotments have land development constraints that will impact the potential yield. In addition, not all vacant lots will be subdivided and will remain un-subdivided due to such factors due to consumer preference and preference.

Note: The scale of dwelling construction in the rural living zone has depleted available vacant lots with only 7-8 years supply remaining. There is capacity to subdivide both vacant and occupied lots, particularly the three vacant lots above 20 hectares in size. With the increased demand for small lots, consideration should be given to extending the TZ or rezoning RLZ land to LDRZ to increase lot stock to optimise dwelling capacity.

Raw data related to growth rates is influenced by a broad range of factors including but not limited to land tenure, market conditions, infrastructure and environmental constraints, employment and population growth and decline.

SCENARIO PLANNING	RURAL LIVING ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	TOWNSHIP ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	TOTAL DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL
Scenario 1 Assumption - 1 dwelling per vacant lot – no further subdivision	38	9	47
Scenario 2 Assumption- Subdivision of all available vacant lots	75	29	104
Scenario 3 Assumption -Subdivision of vacant lots with an existing dwelling	371	51	422

Table 14 Scenario planning

Housing

The residential property market in Haddon largely consists of rural lifestyle lots. During the period July 2010-March 2016, 30 dwellings were constructed.

Total No. of dwelling stock	Distribution of dwelling stock per zone	Avg age of dwelling (yrs)
384	41 ●	37.5
	343 ●	42.5

Legend

● Township Zone ● Rural Living Zone

Residential Land Use

The greatest portion of residential land in the Haddon locality is zoned Rural Living (1,112ha). The primary purpose of the Rural Living Zone is to provide for residential use in a rural environment and to provide for agriculture where it does not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area. The Zone is subject to a schedule (map) which identifies land for minimum subdivision of 2ha lots where a permit is not required to use or develop the land for a dwelling. Land outside the 2ha schedule is subject to an 8 hectare minimum lot size. Worth noting is the significant area of RLZ land in the Haddon locality covered by the BMO (630 hectares).

Land (72ha) in the township zone provides for residential and other uses. Township zoned land borders the Shire's boundary with Ballarat and follows a line of small lot development to the west of Ballarat. The Haddon township layout is fragmented and a legacy of previous government planning schemes prior to 1990.

A small portion of land (2 hectares) nestled within Haddon's township zone is zoned for Commercial 1 use. The purpose of the Commercial 1 Zone is to create mixed uses such as retail, office business and community use. Land identified as Commercial 1 comprises of 4 parcels ranging in size from 0.58ha to 0.43ha.

Key Constraints & Opportunities

Land use data indicates an increased demand for smaller lots in the Haddon residential area, the volume of dwelling construction has depleted vacant lots available in the RLZ. Increasing development density will need to consider the lack of reticulated gas or sewerage. Significant areas in the Haddon locality are constrained by environmental hazards such as wildfire, flood and salinity. A precautionary approach to planning for future development should be exercised in areas where there is significant flood or bushfire risk. Areas at risk include significant lots in the RLZ 2 hectare schedule. Consideration should be given to suitability for increased development in these areas.

The area is popular for its rural lifestyle characteristics within proximity to Ballarat. The Western Link Road and connection to the Western and Midland Highways will provide opportunities for accelerated access to higher order services, employment and education. Consideration should be given to the creation of additional lots through subdivision of RLZ lot greater than 20 hectares and rezoning of land RLZ to LDRZ or TZ to increase lot stock and optimise dwelling capacity. Consideration should be given to landscaping treatment and open space areas that strengthens the sense of township.

Actions

- > Create an increase in small lots through rezoning of land from RLZ to LDRZ or TZ.
- > Review the Haddon Structure Plan.
- > Develop a town landscape and open space plan.
- > Address development in areas of unacceptable environmental risk.

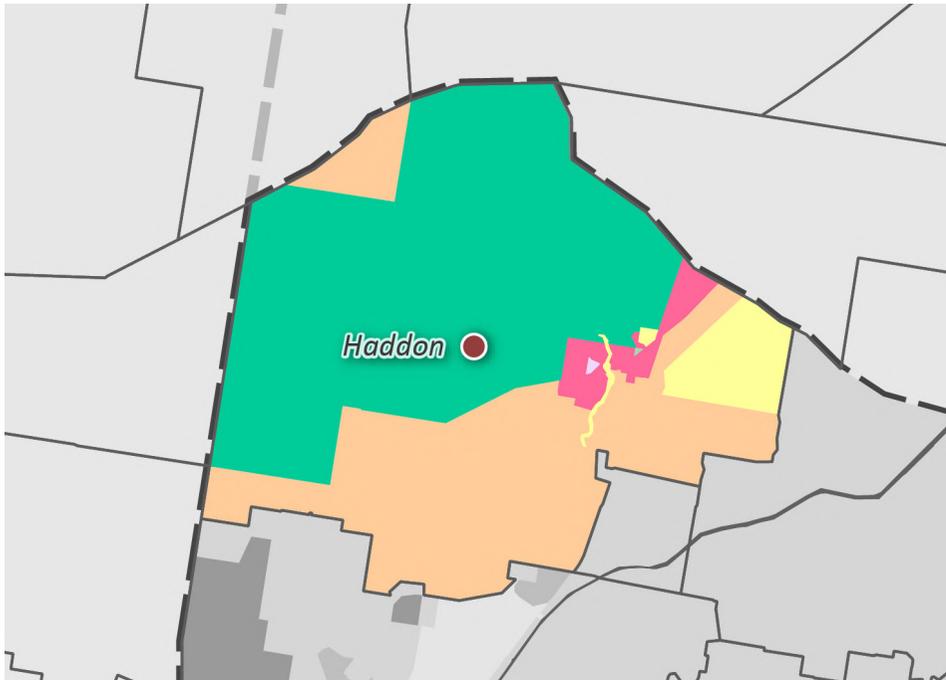


Figure 12 Haddon locality

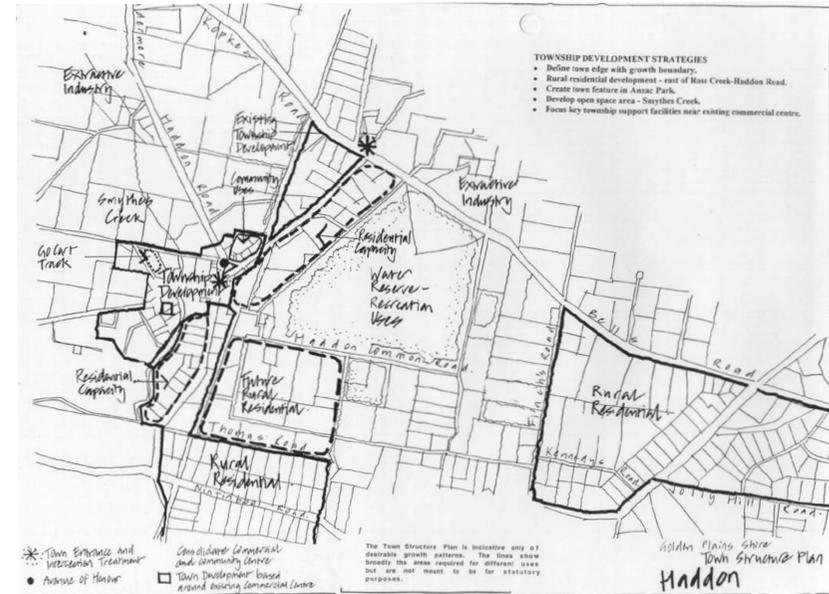


Figure 13 Haddon strategic framework

Legend	
Zones	
	C1Z - Commercial 1 Zone
	C2Z - Commercial 2 Zone
	FZ - Farming Zone
	IN1Z - Industrial 1 Zone
	LDRZ - Low Density Residential Zone
	PCRZ - Public Conservation and Resource Zone
	PPRZ - Public Park and Recreation Zone
	PUZ - Public Use Zone
	PUZ4 - Public Use Zone - Transport
	RAZ - Rural Activity Zone
	RCZ - Rural Conservation Zone
	RLZ - Rural Living Zone
	RZ - Road Zone
	SUZ - Special Utility Zone
	TZ - Township Zone

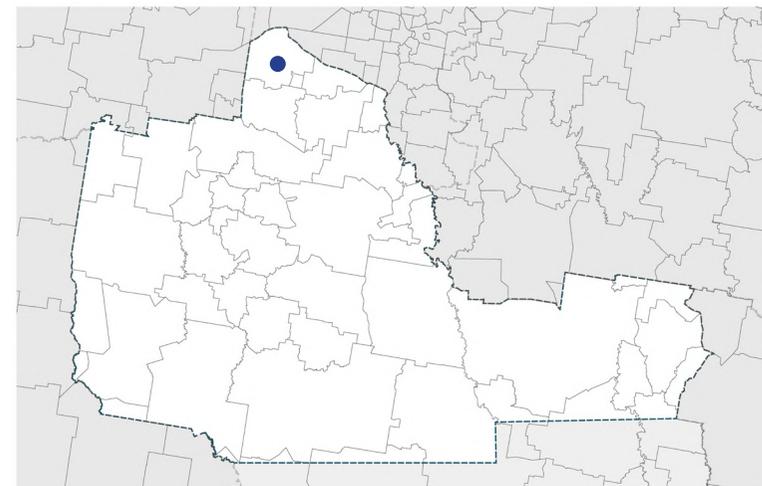


Figure 14 Haddon contextual map

SMYTHESDALE

Overview



Estimated resident population
866



Distance from Ballarat
17.97km



Hectares
3,452ha

Smythesdale is an urban settlement located on flat terrain north-east of the Woody Yallock River surrounded by significant regrowth forest areas. The town has a distinct rural character and the foundations of a thriving township, within commuter distance of the Ballarat regional centre.

The town layout features a curved main street and a Heritage listed Avenue of Honour consisting of 122 elm trees lining the Glenelg Highway. The greater portion of residential development is situated east of the Glenelg Highway. The Smythesdale regional landfill is located approximately 1 kilometre north-west of the township boundary. The landfill provides waste facilities for the City of Ballarat, Golden Plains Shire and Pyrenees Shire Councils. Hepburn and Central Goldfields will utilise the landfill facilities in the future.

Town Role

Smythesdale is identified as the northern Golden Plains Shire growth area. Reticulated sewerage is available in the township area. The town has a district commercial and retail centre servicing residents and the surrounding rural community. The town's proximity to Ballarat provides opportunities in lifestyle choice with access to housing and services in an independent rural town setting. The key function of the township is that of a retail and service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland communities.

Education Primary	Maternal Child Care	Doctor, Pharmacy Allied Health
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE		
Sports and Recreation	Retail	Services

Policy Influences

The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan identifies Smythesdale as the preferred location for growth in the northern part of the Golden Plains Shire. The Plan encourages growth to be directed to infill locations and the old Yellowglen winery site, however development should be mindful of land use constraints. The Smythesdale regional landfill is located in Smythesdale. The landfill has the capacity to accommodate demand for the next 20 years. The facility is owned and operated by the City of Ballarat. The Golden Plains and Pyrenees Shires contribute waste to the facility. Land use in proximity to the facility is zoned RLZ and LDRZ. Approximately 63 dwellings are located within a 1000 metre buffer of the facility presenting amenity concerns for future residential development in the area.

Smythesdale is situated along a key transport corridor linking Ballarat to the south west coast. The town has strong linkages to the regional city of Ballarat and functions as a key settlement providing local services to nearby localities.

The direction for the future development of Smythesdale is identified in the Smythesdale Urban Design Framework (UDF). The Framework specifies an urban town boundary, encourages the protection of the town's heritage, character, built and natural environment whilst capitalising on its convenient location to Ballarat.

Land Supply & Demand

The table below indicates existing vacant hectares and lots in Smythesdale as at December 2016

ZONED LAND	TOTAL	OCCUPIED	VACANT	PERCENTAGE AVAILABLE
Township Zone	55	30.2	24.8	45.09%
Rural Living Zone	1,458.8	895.2	563.6	38.63%
Low Density Res Zone	91.9	0	0	100%
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL LAND	1,605.6	925.4	680.3	42.37%

SCENARIO PLANNING	RURAL LIVING ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	TOWNSHIP ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE POTENTIAL	TOTAL DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL
Scenario 1 Assumption - 1 dwelling per vacant lot – no further subdivision	97	76	1	174
Scenario 2 Assumption - Subdivision of all avail- able vacant lots	97	283	161	541
Scenario 3 Assumption - Subdivision of vacant lots with an existing dwelling	374	196	1	571
Scenario 1 Assumption - 1 dwelling per vacant lot – no further subdivision	97	76	1	174



Housing

The residential property market in Smythesdale has experienced exponential growth for the north of the Golden Plains Shire. During the period July 2010-March 2016, 50 dwellings were constructed.

Total No. of dwelling stock

Distribution of dwelling stock per zone

Avg age of dwelling (yrs)

384

113 ●

● 35

159 ●

● 35.4

81 ●

● 25.6

LEGEND

● Township Zone ● Rural Living Zone ● Rural Living Zone 2ha Overlay

Residential Land Use

The greatest portion of land in the Smythesdale locality is zoned rural living (1,531 hectares). The primary purpose of the Rural Living Zone (RLZ) is to provide residential use in a rural environment and provide for agriculture where it does not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area. Land covered by the RLZ is subject to a schedule which provides an 8 ha minimum area for subdivision and minimum areas of 2 ha for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling. Of the 1,531 hectares zoned rural living, 459 hectares are covered by the 2 hectare overlay.

The Yellowglen site is an area of land (92 hectares) less than one kilometre west of the main Smythesdale township zoned for low density residential development in a rural setting. The Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) allows development on lots with a min of 0.4 hectares with capacity to treat wastewater where sewerage is not connected. The Smythesdale UDF identifies the Yellowglen site as future residential development.

Land covered by the Township Zone (59 hectares) allows for residential development in the urban settlement of Smythesdale. Areas of the urban settlement area allow for reticulated sewerage. The Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 applies to Smythesdale's central commercial area, and to parts of the north and south of the township zone. The objective of the overlay is to ensure that development has regard to design, siting and landscaping issues as well as heritage values and the built character.

Areas of heavily vegetated land (1,362 hectare) zoned Public Conservation Resource (RCZ) forms a number of State Park Reserves including: Woody Yaloak Streamside Reserve, Surface Hill Historic Reserve, Watson's Hill Bushland Reserve and the Smythesdale State Forest. The aim of the RCZ is to protect the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, archaeological, landscape, fauna habitat and cultural values. The Reserves and State Park are covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and are not suitable for development.

Key Constraints And Opportunities

The Smythesdale landfill site is located approximately one kilometre north east of Smythesdale. RLZ land to the north and south of the facility has subdivision potential. Planning policy may be required to manage future development of this area and the impact of the facility. Consideration should be given to enhancing the economic stability of the town by building on its historical significance and tourism opportunities. Sections of Smythesdale have access to sewerage infrastructure however the system is limited in its ability to increase provision. Significant areas of the locality (89.4%) are covered by the BMO. Infill development should be encouraged and capacity increased through the potential acquisition of vacant crown land within the township area and the restructure of old and inappropriate subdivisions in the urban area. There is opportunity and scope for improvements to the town streetscape and town entrances.

Actions

Investigate opportunities to increase infill within the urban area, consistent with the area serviced by reticulated sewerage.

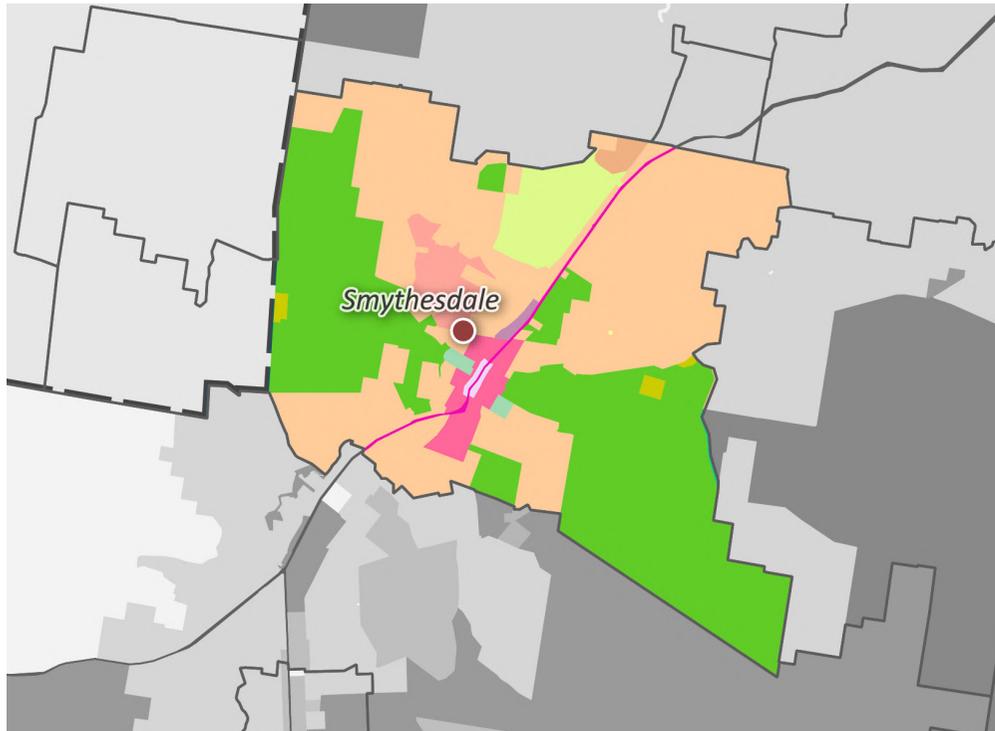


Figure 15 Smythesdale Locality

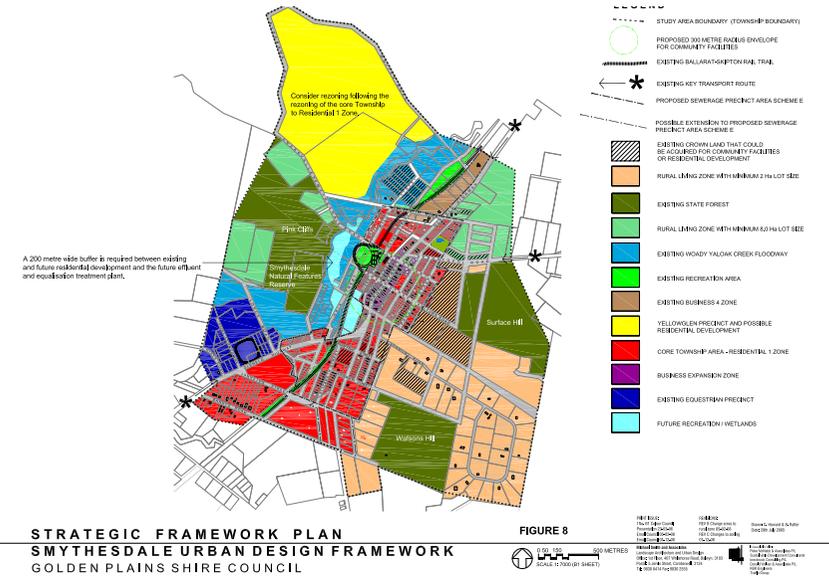


Figure 16 Smythesdale Structure Plan

Legend	
Zones	
	C1Z - Commercial 1 Zone
	C2Z - Commercial 2 Zone
	FZ - Farming Zone
	IN1Z - Industrial 1 Zone
	LDRZ - Low Density Residential Zone
	PCRZ - Public Conservation and Resource Zone
	PPRZ - Public Park and Recreation Zone
	PUZ - Public Use Zone
	PUZ4 - Public Use Zone - Transport
	RAZ - Rural Activity Zone
	RCZ - Rural Conservation Zone
	RLZ - Rural Living Zone
	RZ - Road Zone
	SUZ - Special Utility Zone
	TZ - Township Zone

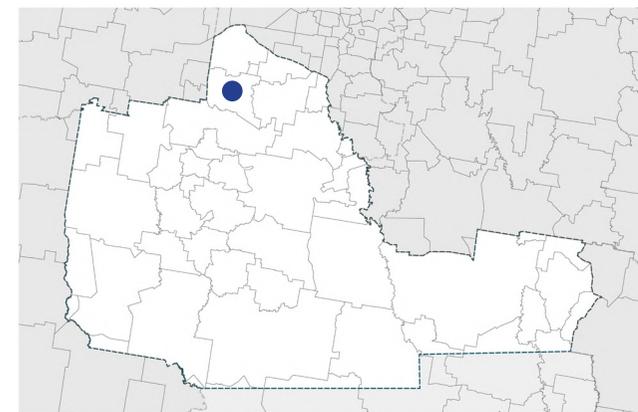


Figure 17 Smythesdale contextual map

DEREEL

Overview

The Dereel locality is 5,998 hectares in area and is situated along the Ballarat-Colac Road, 33 kilometres south of Ballarat. Dereel is 10 kilometres from the main service centre of Rokewood and 6 kilometres from the neighbouring locality of Corindhap. Dereel's early settlement was supported by timber cutting, gold mining and grazing. The Dereel settlement straddles the Colac-Ballarat Road. The Dereel Swamp is adjacent to Dereel's main services hub where a number of facilities can be located. Dereel's location is characterised by the extent of bushland and proximity of commercial forest.



Policy Influences

The Central Highland Regional Growth Plan provides future directions for small towns that includes planning for the sustainable growth of small towns by building on local opportunities and strengthening small settlements to be adaptable and resilient to local challenges.

Residential Land Use

The Dereel locality and the surrounding rural residential areas are over 1000 hectares in size. This is predominantly zoned Rural Living and covers 784 hectares. The Rural Living Zone provides for residential living in a rural environment and therefore generally restricts residential change. The 2 hectare Schedule to the Rural Living Zone was introduced to enable high quality rural living development within commuting distance to Ballarat. Rural Living Zone in Dereel is not covered by the 2 hectare Schedule. Lots range from 1.8 hectares – 16 hectares.

A significant area of land (200 hectares) in Dereel is zoned low density residential. The minimum lot size in the LDRZ is generally 0.2 hectares in areas with reticulated sewerage and 0.4 hectares in areas where sewerage is not connected. Lots in Dereel zoned LDRZ range in size from 1.2 hectares – 10.4 hectares.

Land zoned for township use (100 hectares) forms the central part of Dereel. The locality is bisected by the Colac-Ballarat Road. Lots in the township zone vary greatly from 2000sqm – 8 hectares.

Land Supply & Demand

The table below indicates existing vacant hectares and lots in Dereel as at December 2016

ZONED LAND	TOTAL	OCCUPIED	VACANT	PERCENTAGE AVAILABLE
Township Zone	99.7	79.2	20.5	20.58%
Rural Living Zone	784	424.7	359.3	45.82%
Low Density Res Zone	199.5	123.0	76.5	38.34%
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL LAND	1083.2	626.9	450.3	42.12%

SCENARIO PLANNING	TOWNSHIP ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE POTENTIAL	RURAL LIVING ZONE POTENTIAL	TOTAL DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL
Scenario 1 Assumption - 1 dwelling per vacant lot – no further subdivision	7	18	130	155
Scenario 2 Assumption - Subdivision of all available vacant lots	10	18	130	158
Scenario 3 Assumption - Subdivision of vacant lots with an existing dwelling	38	47	276	361

Housing

The residential property market in Dereel is situated on land zoned Township and a significant component of rural living zoned land. During the period July 2010 – March 2016, 11 dwellings were constructed.

Total No. of dwelling stock

Distribution of dwelling stock per zone

Avg age of dwelling (yrs)

206

31 ●

● 50.2

29 ●

● 29.9

146 ●

● 30.6

Legend

● Township Zone ● Rural Living Zone ● Low Density Residential Zone

Town Role

The Settlement Typology Framework identifies Dereel as a small town whose key function is provide a limited range of services for a rural hinterland and contain a small retail centre. This role reflects Council's investment in appropriate and relative growth.

Opportunities And Constraints

The Rokewood, Corindhap and Dereel UDF recommends maintaining larger lots in Dereel particularly in areas where there is significant vegetation. Maximize infill development and

promote Dereel as the local centre to serve smaller localities in geographical proximity. The close proximity of pine plantations to roads and adjacent properties may create a fire risk that is difficult for private property owners to manage.

Recommendations

The Dereel Structure Plan encourages town consolidation, protection of bushland and the low density residential character. The potential fire risk created by timber plantations should be mitigated by buffers between residential development and forestry plantations.

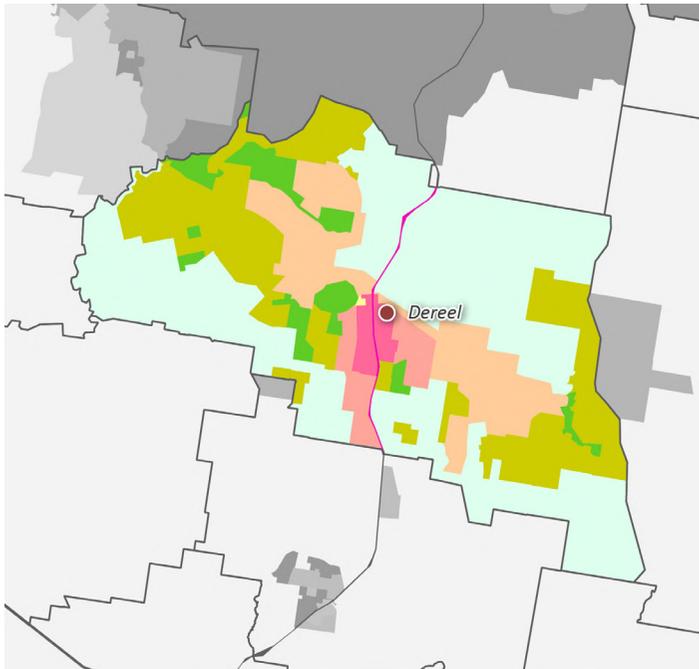
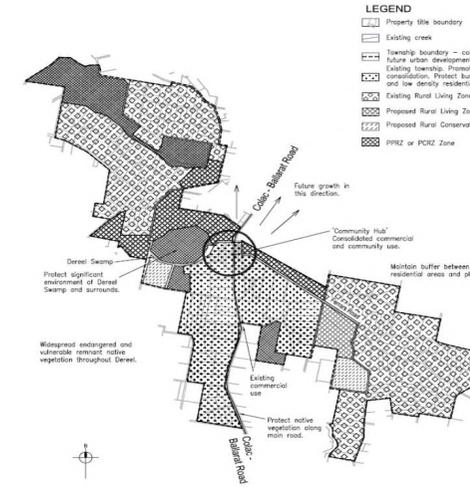


Figure 18 Dereel Locality



DEREEL TOWNSHIP
Figure 19 Dereel Structure Plan

Structure Plan
URBAN DESIGN FRAME
OCTOBER 2007

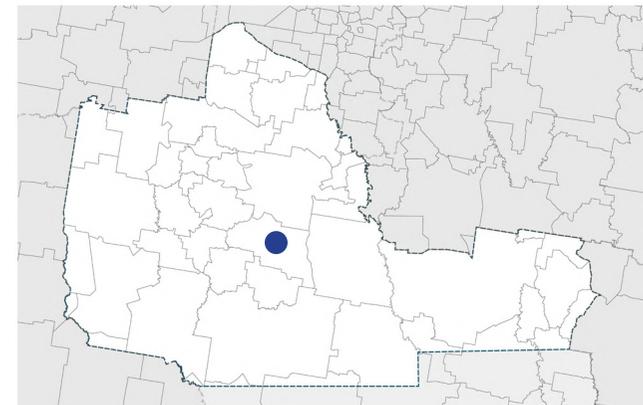


Figure 20 Dereel contextual map

LINTON

Overview



Estimated resident population
468



Distance from Ballarat
12km



Hectares
5,859h

The Linton locality is located on the Glenelg Highway 35 kilometres west of Ballarat and 2.9 kilometres from the north-west municipal border between the Golden Plains and Pyrenees Shires. Linton is a small historic town established on the Springdallah Creek, which flows into the Woody Yaloak River.

Linton is a picturesque town surrounded by undulating topography. The town is aligned north-east to south-west and is divided by Sussex Street (Glenelg Highway), which is wider than the other streets and divided in the centre of the precinct by a median strip. The streets are laid out in a regular grid generally to the north-west of Sussex Street and another smaller regular grid aligned north-south to the east.

The town is developed with a mix of public, commercial and private buildings with many structures dating back to the nineteenth century. The Linton Public Library is of particular social significance as a very rare surviving public building. One of Golden Plains Shire's Council's Customer Service offices is situated in Linton. The office acts as a Customer Service Centre to the northern area of Golden Plains Shire.

Town Role

Linton provides living, retail, service and community roles to residents and the rural community.

Education Primary	Maternal Child Care	Doctor, Pharmacy Allied Health
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE		
Sports and Recreation	Retail	Services

Policy Influences

The Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan recognises Linton as a small town. The Plan encourages planning for resilient small towns by building on local opportunities and maintaining existing services and infrastructure to locations where population growth is unlikely to be strong.

The Golden Plains Planning Scheme (Clause 21.02-2) identifies the preparation of a structure plan for the planned development of the commercial and retail areas in Linton.

Land Supply & Demand

The table below indicates existing vacant hectares and lots in Linton as at December 2016

ZONED LAND	TOTAL	OCCUPIED	VACANT	PERCENTAGE AVAILABLE
Township Zone	71.0	40.6	30.4	42.81%
Rural Living Zone	555.6	275.5	280.1	50.41%
Low Density Res Zone	93.3	52.7	40.6	43.51%
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL LAND	719.9	368.8	351.1	48.77%

SCENARIO PLANNING	TOWNSHIP ZONE DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE POTENTIAL	RURAL LIVING ZONE POTENTIAL	TOTAL DWELLING CAPACITY POTENTIAL
Scenario 1 Assumption - 1 dwelling per vacant lot – no further subdivision	25	16	32	73
Scenario 2 Assumption - Subdivision of all available vacant lots	46	22	30	98
Scenario 3 Assumption - Subdivision of vacant lots with an existing dwelling	201	38	85	324

Housing

The residential property market in Linton is a mix of TZ, LDRZ and RLZ land covering 70 hectares. During the period July 2010-March 2016, 13 dwellings were constructed.

Total No. of dwelling stock

Distribution of dwelling stock per zone

Avg age of dwelling (yrs)

223

129 ●

● 58

54 ●

● 32

40 ●

● 25

Legend

● Township Zone ● Rural Living Zone ● Low Density Residential Zone

Residential Land Use

The greatest portion of land (573 hectares) in the Linton locality is zoned Rural Activity. The purpose of the Rural Living Zone is to provide for residential living in a rural environment and therefore generally restricts residential change. The 2 hectare Schedule to the Rural Living Zone was introduced to enable high quality rural living development with access to service infrastructure within commuting distance to Ballarat. Lots range in size from 1.4 hectares – 23 hectares, the 2 hectare schedule does not apply to land located within the Linton locality.

Land zoned Township (87 hectares) is comprised of a substantial number of lots below 2,000sqm resulting in land development impediments due to the lack of reticulated sewerage. A substantial area of land (93.32 hectares) is zoned for low density residential living. The purpose of the low density residential zone is to provide for low density development on lots of 0.4 hectares which can treat and retain wastewater where sewerage is not connected. Lot sizes vary from 6000sqm - 8 hectares. Land zoned for low density has significant capacity for further subdivision.

The land located within the Commercial Zone is covered by the Heritage Overlay. Buildings identified as belonging to a Heritage Precinct are defined as an area that has been found to have heritage significance for aesthetic, architectural, historic, scientific and social reasons.

Significant areas of land in the Linton locality are covered by the BMO (3,120 hectares). The BMO covers land zoned for rural living and low density development. Land in the Township Zone (50 hectares) is affected by flood inundation.

Opportunities

Opportunity has emerged to encourage planning for resilient small towns by building on local opportunities and maintaining existing services and infrastructure. The Linton Structure Plan encourages infill development as a priority. Linton lends itself to opportunities for increased commercial and tourism opportunities associated with the area's historical assets.

Key Constraints

Lack of reticulated sewerage system. The Golden Plains DWMP identifies Linton as a key area of concern for domestic wastewater management where zones enable close development without sewerage. The Plan encourages limited development on small lots in the township zone under 2000sqm.

Recommendations

Investigate the potential for reticulated wastewater treatment to facilitate urban consolidation to meet long term demand requirements.

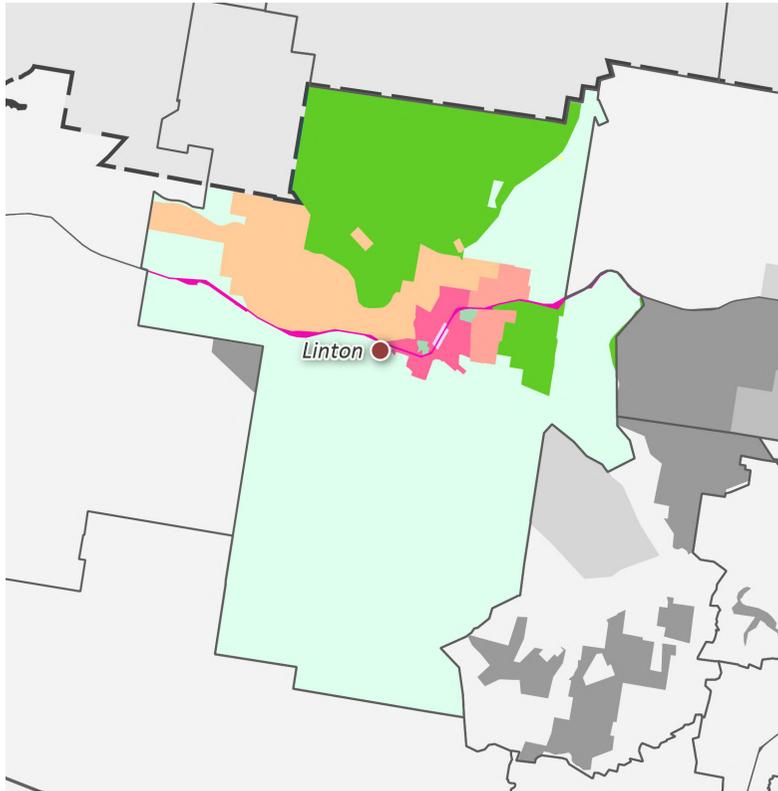


Figure 21 Linton Locality

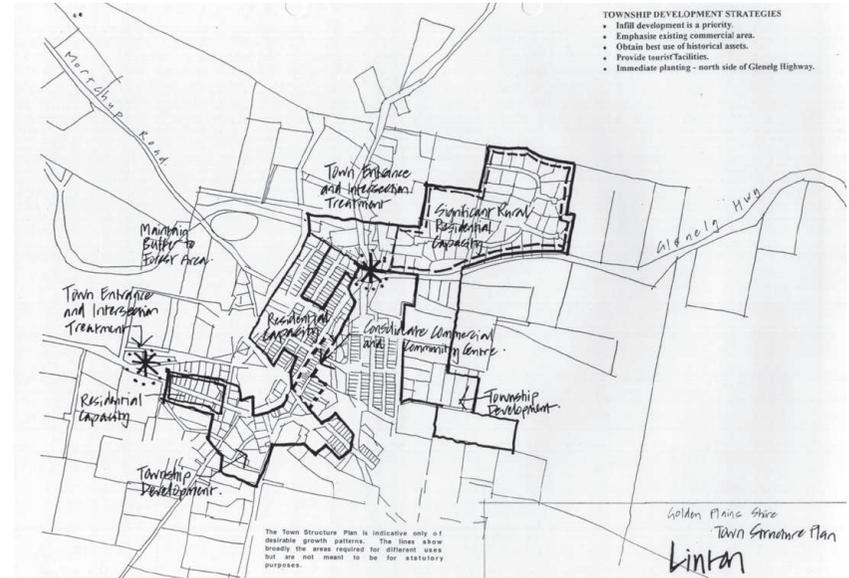


Figure 22 Linton Structure Plan

Legend	
Zones	
	C1Z - Commercial 1 Zone
	C2Z - Commercial 2 Zone
	FZ - Farming Zone
	IN1Z - Industrial 1 Zone
	LDRZ - Low Density Residential Zone
	PCRZ - Public Conservation and Resource Zone
	PPRZ - Public Park and Recreation Zone
	PUZ - Public Use Zone
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	RAZ - Rural Activity Zone
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	SUZ - Special Utility Zone
	TZ - Township Zone

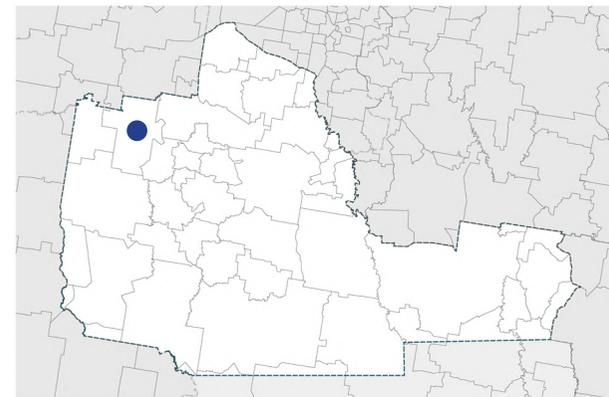


Figure 23 Linton contextual map