

Emerging Options Paper
Draft February 2022



Romsey

Structure Plan



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**Macedon
Ranges**
Shire Council

This report is the Emerging Options Draft Paper – Romsey Structure Plan (v4) for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. It has been prepared with expertise, advice and inputs from the consultant team of Plan2Place Consulting, Design Urban, Spatial Vision, HipVHive, Obliqua Pty Ltd, Movement and Place Consulting Pty Ltd, Wayfarer Consulting, Cardno, Peter Boyle_Urban Design+Landscape Architecture and Tim Nott Economic Analysis and Strategy using background reports and information provided by Council and from other government sources. The report issue date is February 2022.

Every reasonable effort has been made to validate information provided by the client, Council staff, stakeholders and other participants in the preparation of this report throughout the project during 2021 and 2022.

The report has been prepared in conjunction with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and is based upon up-to-date information provided at the time of report preparation and finalisation.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country, and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

Version	Date	Notes
V1	25 November 2021	Draft 1 Prepared for Officer Review
V2	31 January 2022	Incorporates Officer and Councillor input
V3	10 February 2022	Incorporates final Officer and Councillor inputs
V4	11 February 2022	Updates the Settlement Framework

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ABBREVIATIONS AND LEGISLATION

Abbreviations

BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
C1Z	Commercial 1 Zone
C2Z	Commercial 2 Zone
DELWP	Department of Land, Environment, Water and Planning
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Development
GRZ	General Residential Zone
GWW	Greater Western Water
HWS 2018	Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018
IWM	Integrated Water Management
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
MRPS	Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme
Council	Macedon Ranges Shire Council
MRSPP	Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
RRWP	Romsey Recycled Water Plant
RRV	Regional Roads Victoria
RSP	Romsey Structure Plan
RLUS	Rural Land Use Study
SWM	Stormwater Management
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design

Numeric Abbreviations

GL	gigalitres
ha	hectares
%	percent
m ²	metres squared
kms	kilometres
sqm	square metres

Related Legislation and Regulations

Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This Emerging Options Paper provides further information and analysis to support the development of the new Structure Plan for Romsey. It builds on the previous Issues and Opportunities Paper released and consulted on in 2018 by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council (Council). The Romsey Structure Plan will replace the current Romsey Outline Development Plan which sets directions for the town to 2021. The structure plan will determine the settlement boundary as required under the Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy.

An analysis of thematic issues and a draft vision and objectives to guide the structure plan are presented based on community feedback provided to the Issues and Opportunities Paper in 2018. This will test whether community views have changed since that time following the recent pandemic.



A summary of previous information identified in the Issues and Opportunities Paper is provided along with new information and further analysis. Principles to guide the new settlement boundary are proposed along with further actions for consideration by the community.

Three growth options for township growth are presented along with an assessment of their ability to respond to the evidence, the vision and objectives and draft principles presented in the Paper. Potential options are presented for residential, commercial and industrial growth. Council is seeking your views on these options.

 This symbol indicates new strategies and policies endorsed by Council since the preparation of the Issues and Opportunities Paper three years ago. The documents provide valuable further information and policy direction to inform

the development of the structure plan. The stages involved in the development of the structure plan are shown in **Figure 1**.

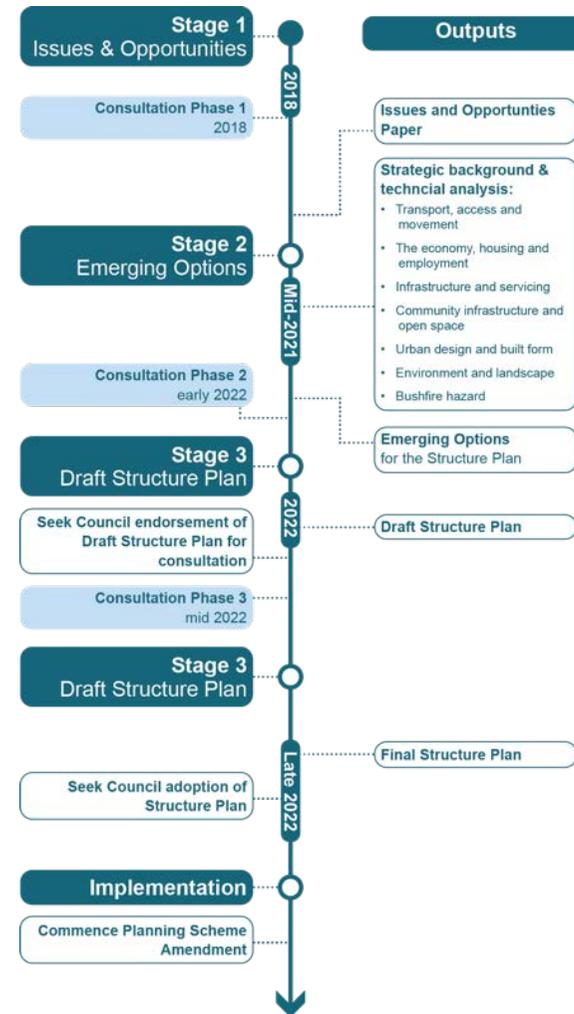


Figure 1: Stages in Preparing the Romsey Structure Plan

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 What is a Structure Plan?

A structure plan is a long-term plan developed with the community and stakeholders to manage the future of a specific area through a development framework. A structure plan guides the future of land uses and activities, infrastructure, transport, development, physical environment and amenity in a township. The Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy (MRSP) requires the Romsey Structure Plan to determine the future boundary of the township to guide development to 2050.

The purpose and function of the Romsey Structure Plan is to plan for the future of Romsey by protecting the distinctive positive elements of the township and building upon its opportunities. This will guide the physical and natural environment, amenity and activities of the township and its growth.

According to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme (MRPS), Romsey is a developing township and is planned to grow to 2036 with an anticipated population at the cusp of a district town (6,000 people) and a large district town (10,000 people). The structure plan is required to provide direction to manage sustainable development of the township by defining its unique character, facilitating orderly growth, enlivening the town centre, strengthening the local economy, protecting unique environmental qualities and building community resilience. The new structure plan will guide the development of the town to the year 2050 and will establish a protected settlement boundary consistent with the MRSP.

2.2 Existing Romsey Outline Development Plan

The current Romsey Outline Development Plan (ODP), which is similar to a structure plan, has guided the development of the town since 2009. The ODP is shown in **Figure 2** and includes a town boundary, various initiatives to manage growth and change and several land rezonings that have been implemented by Council. The ODP has served its purpose and now needs to be renewed through the preparation of a new structure plan for the town.

2.3 Policy Considerations

The Issues and Opportunities Paper identified a range of policy considerations in developing the structure plan. The key consideration emanates from the designation of Macedon Ranges as a distinctive area and landscape and the subsequent MRSP. Other considerations include the settlement boundary, State's Agricultural Land Review, revised economic, population and demographic projections, local impacts emanating from the Covid-19 pandemic, the approval of the 5 Mile Creek Masterplan, and inclusion of the Buffer Area Overlay and other revisions to the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP). These new considerations and issues raised by the community are detailed below and a new draft vision is proposed.

2.4 Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy (MRSP) and Distinctive Landscapes

The MRSP sets a long term vision and provides a framework to ensure the outstanding and valuable landscapes, layers of settlement history, impressive landforms, diverse natural environment, catchments and biodiversity of the Macedon Ranges are protected, conserved and enhanced and continue to be of special significance to the people of Victoria.

The MRSP was adopted by Council and approved by the Victorian Government as part of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) through planning scheme amendment VC185 in April 2021. State policy at Clause 11.03-5S of the MRPS recognises the importance of distinctive areas and landscapes and their valued attributes. The MRSP's key influences for Romsey are reflected in Clauses 21.02, 21.04, 21.05, 21.06, 21.07, 21.08, 21.09 and 21.10 of the MRPS.

The statement defines protected township settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Woodend that require parliamentary approval to be changed. The MRSP requires Council to determine a protected settlement boundary for Romsey based on an updated township structure plan.

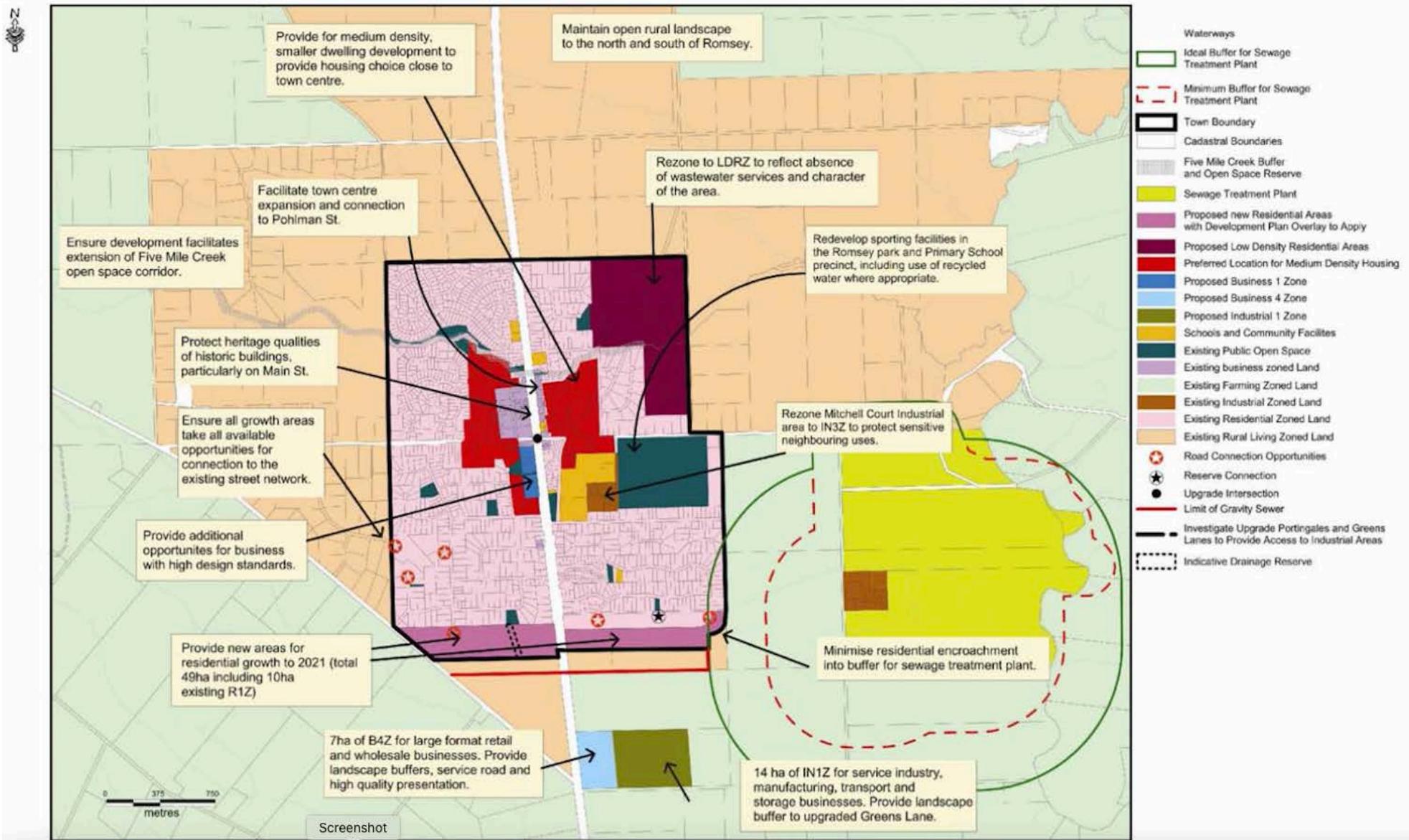


Figure 2: Romsey Outline Development Plan and Current Town Boundary

2.5 Settlement Boundary

State planning policy at Clause 11.01-1S of the MRPS requires that a settlement boundary be created and reinforced to direct growth and provide compact urban areas. This is to create high-quality, integrated settlements with a strong identity and sense of place that are prosperous, sustainable and support resilient communities and their ability to adapt and change.

A settlement boundary should identify and protect any land required for future urban expansion and be used to help preserve and protect features of rural land and natural resources and features. Sufficient land should be provided to meet forecast demands by accommodating projected population growth over at least a 15 year period with clear directions on locations where growth should occur.

2.6 Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land (State Agricultural Land Review)

The Victorian Government has undertaken a review of agricultural land outside Melbourne's urban growth boundary and within 100 kms of central Melbourne, consulting local governments, communities and stakeholders in this area. The entire Macedon Ranges Shire is located within this 100 km area identified as strategic agricultural land. Council has also recently undertaken a Rural Land Use Study (RLUS) to further inform settings for rural land at the local level.

New or revised zones and State planning policy to protect productive farm land are being considered as part of the suite of implementation measures by the Victorian Government but a package of measures are yet to be announced. Some recent changes have been made to the Farming Zone around the definition, and use, of farm workers accommodation. Careful consideration of this agricultural review is required before rezoning of any Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone land around Romsey.

2.7 What the Community Have Already Told Us

Consultation undertaken in 2018 with the community in relation to the Issues and Opportunities Paper identified the following key issues to be addressed in the future Romsey Structure Plan. These issues were consistently identified during the community workshops and through the resident survey results. A summary of community views and ideas are further outlined in each of the themes in this paper.

Town Centre and Local Employment

The town centre requires support to re-invigorate its attraction as a vibrant place. There is a need for the town centre to reinvent itself to better support the existing community's needs.

Five Mile Creek

The creek corridor is a valued asset within the Romsey community that meanders through the northern region of the township. Accessibility and linkages to the corridor need improvement to enable residents to better interact with and utilise the open space.

Housing Diversity

Greater housing diversity within the town is required to provide alternate living opportunities to all residents with options for people to have access to a diverse range of housing styles.

Servicing and Utilities

The current service offering such as gas, sewer and telecommunications within Romsey needs substantial up-grades to support both the existing and future community.

Public Transport

Greater investment in the public transport offering is required to encourage the community to utilise public transport. Improvements in service frequency and bus and train integration is needed to lessen the car dependence of Romsey residents.

Walking and Cycling

Footpath and shared path infrastructure needs improvement to encourage residents to utilise alternate modes of transport for their health and wellbeing. New links to the footpath and cycle network have been identified.

Education and Community Facilities

Need for a local secondary college and local aquatic/gym facilities were considered of high importance given the reliance on services outside of the township.

Need for Further Work and Analysis

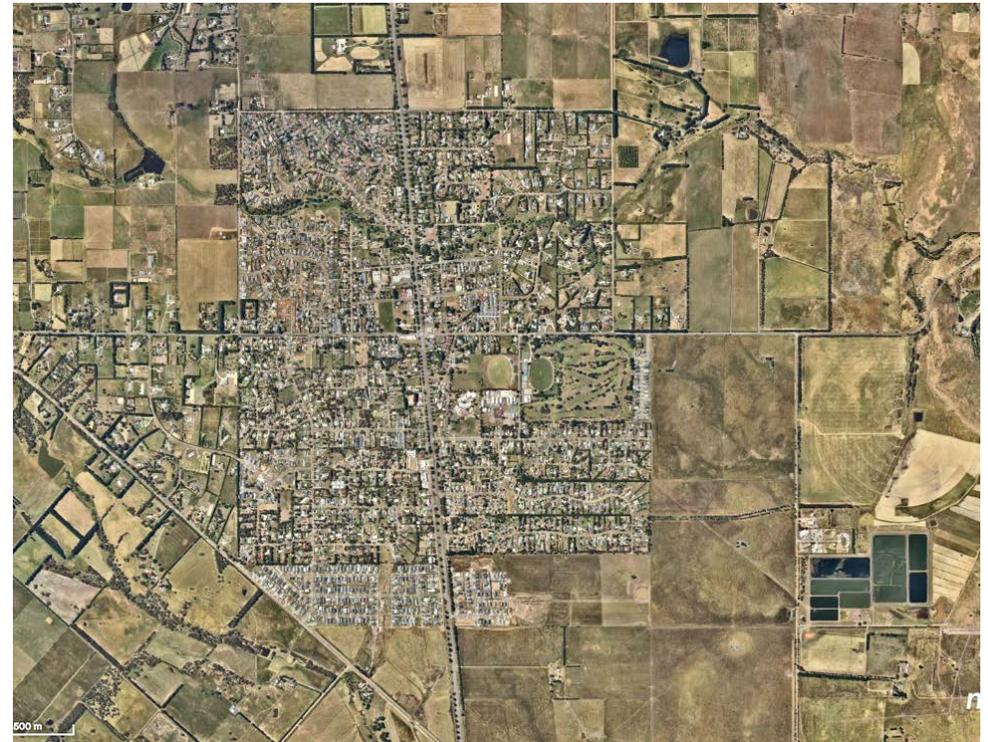
It is now nearly four years since the original consultation occurred. Community views may have changed as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic and new residents and businesses may have moved to the area. It is timely to seek further community input before the structure plan is prepared.

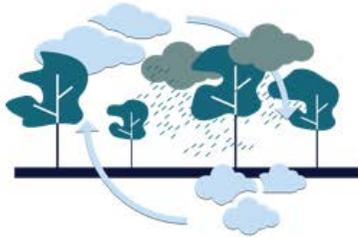
The Issues and Opportunities Paper identified a number of areas where some further evidence and analysis was required to underpin the development of the structure plan. This has now been undertaken and a summary of the results are provided in this paper.

This paper should be read in conjunction with the Issues and Opportunities Paper except where this paper provides updated information.

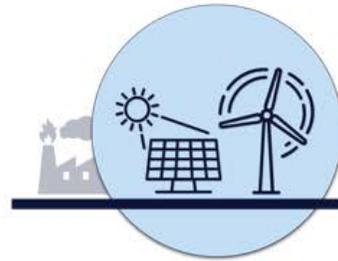
2.8 Broader Strategic Issues

There are a range of broader global and regional strategic issues that need to be considered in developing a new structure plan for Romsey. Drawing from a range of strategic planning policy documents from the state and local level, the key issues are outlined in **Figure 3**.





Impacts of climate change will be felt
weather patterns will be more extreme and unpredictable



Phasing out of fossil fuels
Greater use of renewable energy and localised energy networks



Population growth
managing impacts on resources and meeting human needs



Increased bushfire risk
dispersed settlements increase risk to populations



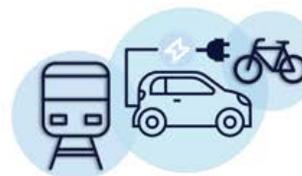
Increased migration to peri-urban areas
attracted by landscape and lifestyle factors



Threats to agriculture and loss of productive land
squeezed out by lifestyle residents and small lot subdivision



Water resources will become scarcer
reuse and recycling will become more prominent



Transport changes
movement away from fossil fuels to more sustainable modes (rate and technology unknown)

Figure 3: Romsey Structure Plan – Broad Global and Regional Strategic Issues

2.9 Draft Vision and Objectives – What Do You Think?

Draft Vision

Romsey will be a rural township building on its long and celebrated history as an attractive and affordable place, providing a range of housing types and excellent facilities and services to support the community today and into the future. The town's heritage and rural appeal is maintained through large open spaces, linear creek corridors, trees, landscapes, views to the surrounding countryside, good recreational facilities and enhanced heritage places. A vibrant town centre, thriving commercial and industrial areas, improved public spaces and better connectivity has enhanced the sense of community with greater employment opportunities, while transport infrastructure ensures that residents can continue to enjoy the benefits of the township's rural location.

Draft Objectives (to Support the Vision)

Objective: To maintain the setting of Romsey as a township within a rural landscape.

Objective: To ensure development is appropriate to the township character.

Objective: To create a more sustainable and resilient township.

Objective: To create additional and appropriate housing, jobs and activity in the township with a vibrant town centre and employment areas.

Objective: To ensure the township provides community infrastructure to meet the social and cultural needs of its residents.

Objective: To ensure residents are provided with a variety of movement options that are safe, accessible, integrated and do not rely on vehicle ownership within the township.

Have your say

Do the vision and objectives align with your ideas for Romsey's future?



3. THEMES

3.1 Theme: Landscape and Natural Environment

Key background information from the Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- Majority of the township and surrounds has been partially cleared of native vegetation and highly modified since European settlement.
- There is sparse cover of native vegetation across the Romsey area with some Plains Grassy Woodland within roadside areas and some Stream Bank Shrubland along Deep Creek.
- The ranges on the eastern and western sides of the township provide a highly visual landscape and visual setting to Romsey.
- High quality agricultural land to the north of the township is utilised for farming purposes.
- Planning policy requires retention of a separation or break between Romsey and Lancefield.
- Five Mile Creek traverses the township and is a significant feature and asset of the town used as a passive recreation corridor but public access is limited due to private ownership.
- Deep Creek is an ephemeral watercourse on the town's eastern boundary.
- Romsey South Drain is a narrow drain capturing stormwater runoff and directing it to Deep Creek.

Further landscape and open space assessment of Romsey has been prepared by Peter Boyle Urban Design and Landscape Architecture and is outlined below.

Landscape

Romsey is a picturesque town nestled in the shallow valley of Five Mile Creek, between the Macedon Ranges in the west and the hills rising above Deep Creek in the east. The *Macedon Ranges Landscape Assessment 2019* identifies Romsey as a landscape character type 2 – Central Volcanic Plain. The landform is gently undulating with rich volcanic soils that support a productive agricultural hinterland. The eastern side of the town is relatively flat until it reaches the Deep Creek where rolling hills and deep valleys are found. To the west the landform rises up slowly creating opportunities to view over the town and to the Mt.

William ridge and Chinton Hills. The north-west area of town rises to a high point around Ochiltrees Road and falls steeply to the Five Mile Creek. More recent development in this area has required extensive cut and fill.

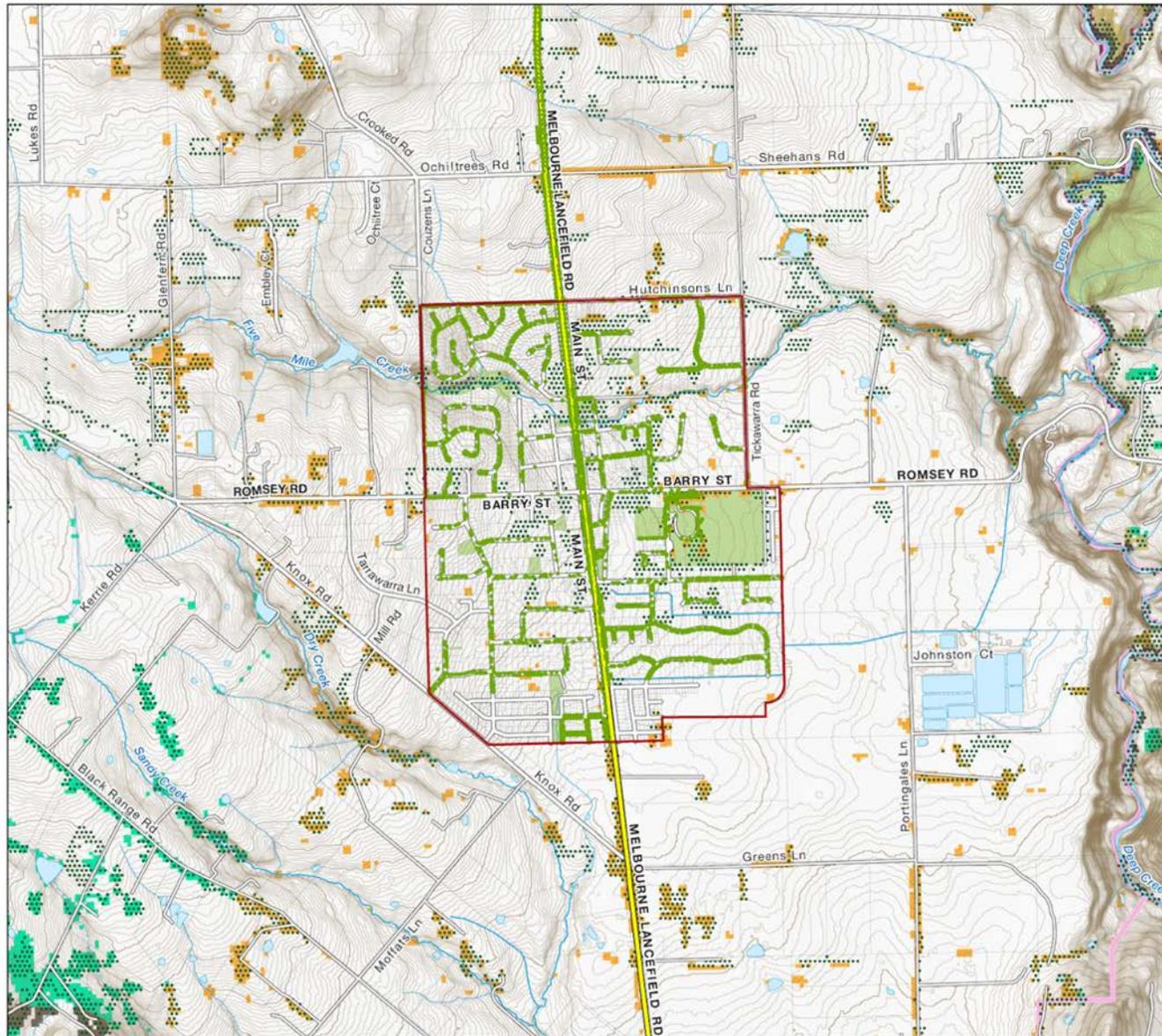
The township benefits from a legacy of notable avenues of exotic trees along the Melbourne-Lancefield Rd (or Main Street) that extend into and through the township. These are key to the sense of arrival to the town and its identity. Within the township well established, mainly exotic trees mostly on private property are a defining characteristic. Some exceptional trees with great structure and canopies are present particularly along the Five Mile Creek corridor and within the Recreation Reserve and Golf Course.

The town's central core has wide, gridded streets, some street trees and discontinuous footpaths with variable surfaces. Many of these streets have grassed verges with swale drains, rather than kerb and channel, contributing to the town's valued rural character. Future public realm works should reinforce the established landscape character of the township. The town's landscape and environment is shown in **Figure 4**.

Open Space Analysis

Open spaces in Romsey currently comprise a range of types including neighbourhood parks, natural and semi-natural spaces, a skate park, sports fields and organised recreation. These include the largest space at the Romsey Recreation Reserve and Golf Course, the Five Mile Creek corridor and a range of small parks and median areas as shown in **Figure 5**. Design of an upgrade/rebuild of the skate park is funded with the park being highly used by younger people.

Increasing the population of the town will result in a need for additional open space and linkages as shown in **Figure 6**. Developers of residential, commercial and industrial land are required to provide 5% of land or cash in lieu towards the provision of open space for a growing population. Open space should be provided within walking distance of all properties, ideally 500 metres (m). A range of different types of open space should be provided of a suitable size to meet the needs of the community. Analysis of existing open space highlights a number of areas where open space is already deficient. The disconnected, curvilinear street network impacts access significantly.



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN

Landscape & natural environment

Legend

- 1 metre contour
- 10 metre contour

Trees

- Street trees
- Tree cover

EVC 2005

- Herb-rich Foothill Forest
- Valley Grassy Forest
- Grassy Dry Forest
- Plains Grassy Woodland
- Stream Bank Shrubland
- Existing town boundary

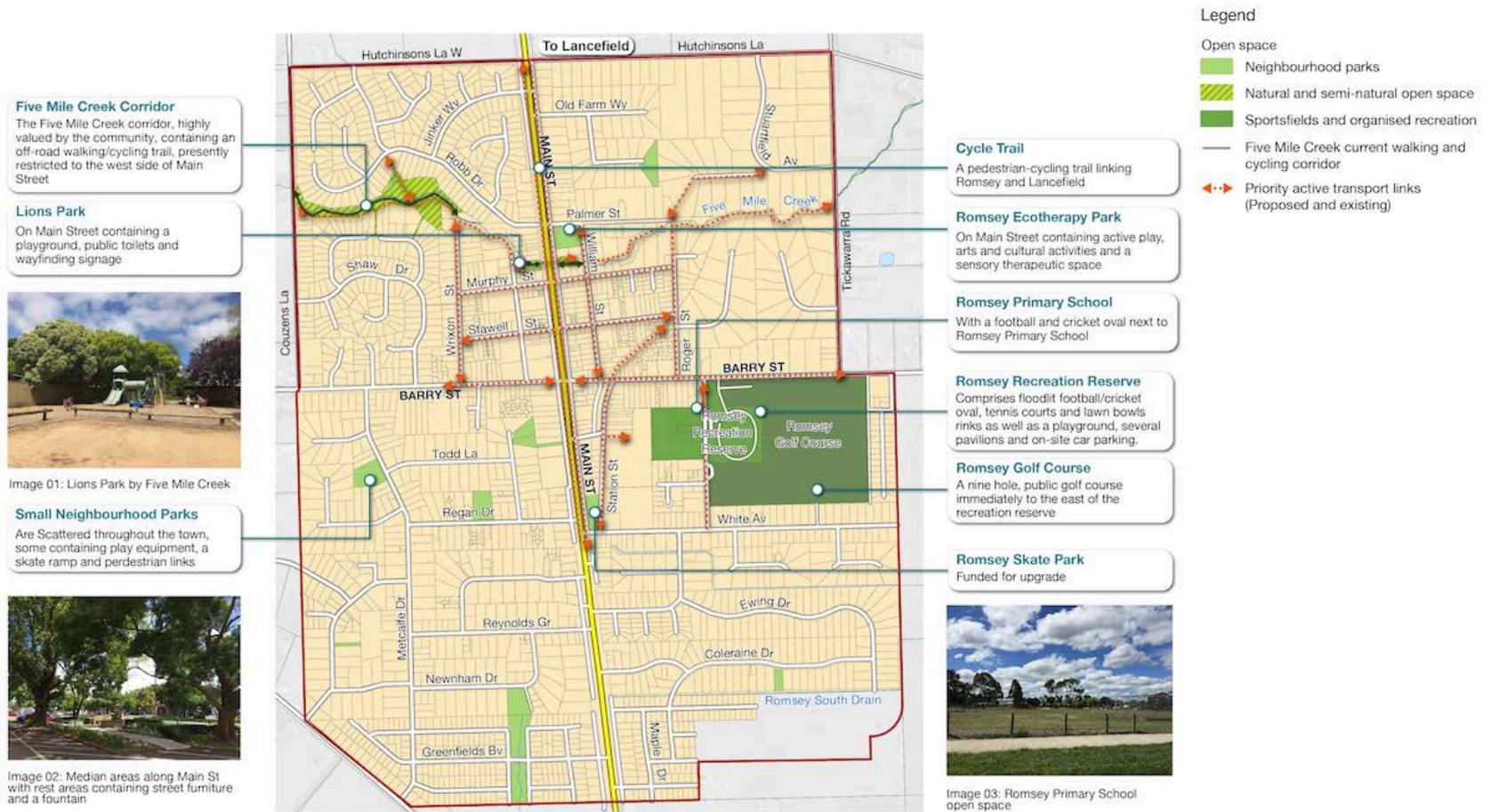
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Figure 4: Romsey Landscape and Environment

ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN Open space Assessment and Opportunities

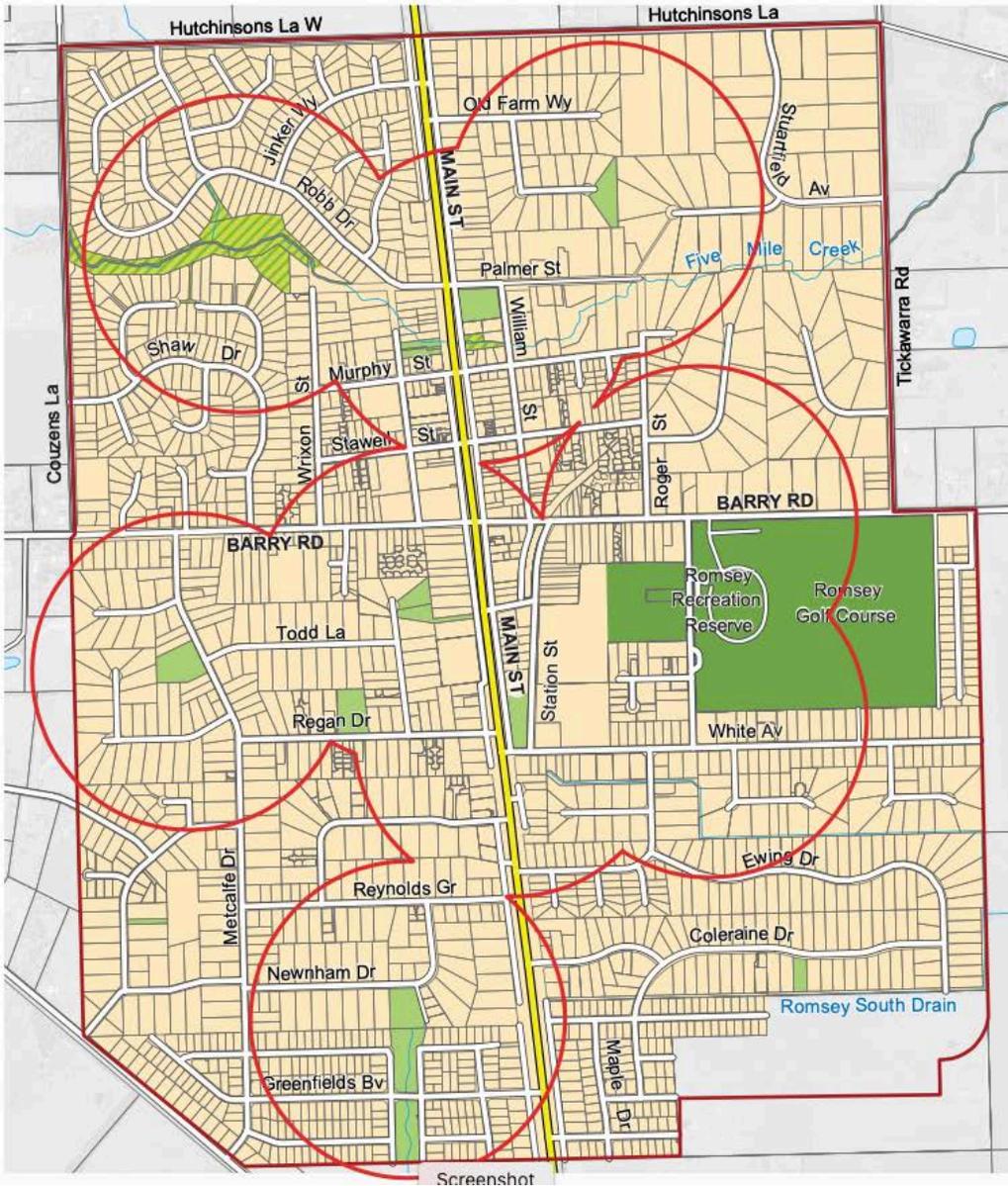


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Figure 5: Romsey Open Space Assessment and Opportunities



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN
Access to Open Space Assessment

Legend

- Open space
 - Neighbourhood parks
 - Natural and semi-natural open space
 - Sportsfields and organised recreation
 - 400m walking catchment to parks

0 200 400 600 800m



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CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 6: Romsey Open Space and Accessibility

The best serviced area for open space is the north-west corner of the township with access to Five Mile Creek reserve and then the areas around the Recreation Reserve. The south-west and south-east areas of the town are not well serviced though they do tend to have large lots with plenty of private open space.

The municipal Open Space Strategy 2013 is currently being reviewed. It identified the following open space provision for a Large District Town such as Romsey:

- Multiple district sports open space.
- One district social/family recreation open space.
- Multiple local social/family recreation open spaces equitably distributed throughout the urban area.
- Off-road trail network.

Tree Canopy

Analysis of existing data sources indicates a reasonable amount of tree canopy within the study area mainly confined to private property. Roadside trees are found along the main road leading into and through the township contributing to a definable and attractive character. Street trees are present on few of Romsey's other streets and only sporadically. The coordinated and widespread planting of locally appropriate street trees would increase canopy cover and benefit the town's character while also contributing to its climate resilience and biodiversity.



Five Mile Creek Masterplan

Since the preparation of the Issues and Opportunities Paper, Council has prepared the Five Mile Creek Masterplan providing a 10 year plan establishing a vision and priorities for improvements to the reserve to increase the social, cultural, historical and environmental qualities of the creek. A set of initiatives including pathway extensions, environmental improvements, signage and passive recreation infrastructure are proposed. The Creek is a priority area for establishment of vegetation buffers along waterways by Melbourne Water and a priority bio-link within the Macedon Ranges Biodiversity Strategy.

The Masterplan is supported by an Environmental Works Plan to guide works improvements to the environment and vegetation with priorities areas identified.



Images of Five Mile Creek including recent plantings.



There are a variety of interfaces with the Five Mile Creek

What we have previously heard:

Consultation to date identified Five Mile Creek as a valued asset with a desire to improve accessibility to the corridor to allow residents to interact and utilise the open space to improve their health and well-being. There was also strong support to keep a clear separation between the Romsey and Lancefield townships and encourage town growth on the southern side where soils are less fertile and serviceability easier.

The town setting amongst the rural areas and the range, and the trees along Main Street and throughout the town are recognised elements in the town's attractive character that warrant protection.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by the following principles:

- Maintain settlement boundaries and a visual break between Romsey and Lancefield.
- Ensure growth does not impact on the visual and environmental setting of the township.
- Carefully consider any township expansion into agricultural land.

Potential Responses

- Continue to implement the Five Mile Creek Masterplan.
- Explore opportunities to acquire land/rezone land along the Five Mile Creek to the east of Main Street, creating a permanent walking and cycling path along the creek in public ownership.
- Explore the creation of a public meeting place/space in the town centre such as near the church.
- Ensure growth does not impact on the visual and environmental setting of the township.
- Identify opportunities to use native species to revegetate creeks and encourage restoration in appropriate locations.
- Extending the Avenue of trees along the Melbourne - Lancefield Road, and renewing awareness of the Avenue of Honour with signage and additional canopy trees.
- Prioritising planting along Barry Street to create a new landscape corridor contributing to the rural character of the town.
- Undertake further studies to investigate protection of large canopy trees in the township to retain the landscape values.
- Encourage the planting of native and indigenous plantings in public and private spaces subject to the consideration of bushfire impacts.
- Encourage development along Five Mile Creek to interface with the park and trail.

- Rezone incorrectly zoned existing open spaces to Public Park and Recreation Zone.

Opportunities for Romsey's Landscape Include:

- Maintain existing trees and replace senescing ones, particularly along the Melbourne-Lancefield Road.
- Expand street tree planting throughout the town building on the legacy provided by past generations. Plant a large spreading canopy tree in the centre of the main roundabout to mark this important junction.
- Expand a network of continuous, connected paths to improve the walkability of the town. Ensure use of materials that reinforce the rural character such as asphalt or compacted gravel, rather than concrete.
- Ensure public realm works including street designs respond to, and reinforce, the valued rural character including street cross sections with grassed verges and swale drains.
- Use bluestone kerbs and asphalt pavements in new street works in the town centre.
- Implement programmed park improvements like the WSUD works in Five Mile Creek.
- Review and rationalise signage, furniture and other roadside elements to improve the township amenity, image and arrival experience.

Have your say

Do you agree with the Potential Responses outlined?

Do you agree Five Mile Creek provides an opportunity to focus open space, habitat and biodiversity activities?

Do you agree that maintaining the landscape break between Romsey and Lancefield is important?

Should there be opportunities for more greening of the town?

3.2 Theme: Urban Structure and Built Form

Key background information from the Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- Township structure is defined by the Lancefield-Melbourne Road and Barry Street forming the main north-south and east-west axes.
- Five Mile Creek, Deep Creek and Dry Creek have been identified as areas of Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity.
- There are a number of post contact heritage sites that reinforce the rural past and are significant in defining the character of the township.
- Town centre heritage is recognised through listings.
- The structure of the town reflects the age of development with an historic grid pattern in the centre of town with lots of around 1,500 sqm+.
- Early 2000s curvilinear street network in the north-east with lots of around 1,500 sqm.
- Newer development in the south with lots of around 800 – 1,000 sqm.
- Most housing in Romsey is detached resulting in less housing diversity.
- Romsey is bushfire prone which is critical in planning future growth of the town (further work about bushfire hazard is outlined below).

Further work to assess the urban structure and built form of Romsey has been prepared by Design Urban and Peter Boyle Urban Design and Landscape Architecture and is outlined below.

3.2.1 Urban Structure and Built Form Analysis

From its origin, Romsey has seen a significant shift in the approach taken to urban structure. The original town had a simple grid structure, but over time this has changed to a structure dominated by cul-de-sacs and curvilinear street patterns. This later pattern of development leaves few opportunities for connecting possible new areas to the town centre, thereby locking in car dependence. Areas to the south have opportunities for potential new local road links, but only Barry Street and White Avenue have opportunities for connections to the town centre through to main roads and collector roads. This is shown in **Figure 7**.

The original gridded urban structure supports options for people to access the town centre with its retail and associated services. In particular, it supports walking access to the town centre. This doesn't mean everyone has to walk, but

the option is made available by the good urban structure. This can be measured using a "ped-shed" technique. This technique measures the areas able to access the centre within a five or ten-minute walk using safe streets and pathways. This is measured and expressed as a percentage of a theoretical five or ten-minute walking distance in a 400m radius circle and an 800m radius circle respectively. These are measured from the town centre, and the minimum target for a walkable town centre, is that at least 60% of the area within these circles should be able to access the centre using safe streets and pathways. Safe streets and walkways are those where there is a high level of surveillance from adjacent houses. Romsey performs well owing to its original grid structure.

There are approximately 72% of people on properties within a theoretical five-minute walk able to access the town centre in five minutes using the streets. In addition, 65% of people on properties within a theoretical ten-minute walk can access the town centre in ten minutes using the streets and safe walkways. This is shown in **Figure 8**.

What we have previously heard:

Consultation has previously identified that the community like the character and community feel of the local area along with the natural environment and the country/semi-country lifestyle. The need for higher quality and more diverse housing types in the centre of town along with a desire for a higher quality environment in the town centre potentially including a town square was also highlighted. A desire to see the existing industrial area relocated and protect entrances to the township was also identified.

Built Form

Romsey's built form has four broad categories:

- Commercial and Civic Buildings.
- Suburban Residential Development.
- Infill Residential Development.
- Industrial Buildings.

Commercial and Civic Buildings

Civic and commercial buildings have the ability to add to a sense of pride in a community when they are well designed and express the local culture and history of a place.



Screenshot

ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN

Urban Structure

Legend

- Original Street Grid
- Recent Streets
- Potential Connections (regional)
- Potential Connections (local)

Figure 7: Changes in Urban Structure and Urban Pattern Over Time

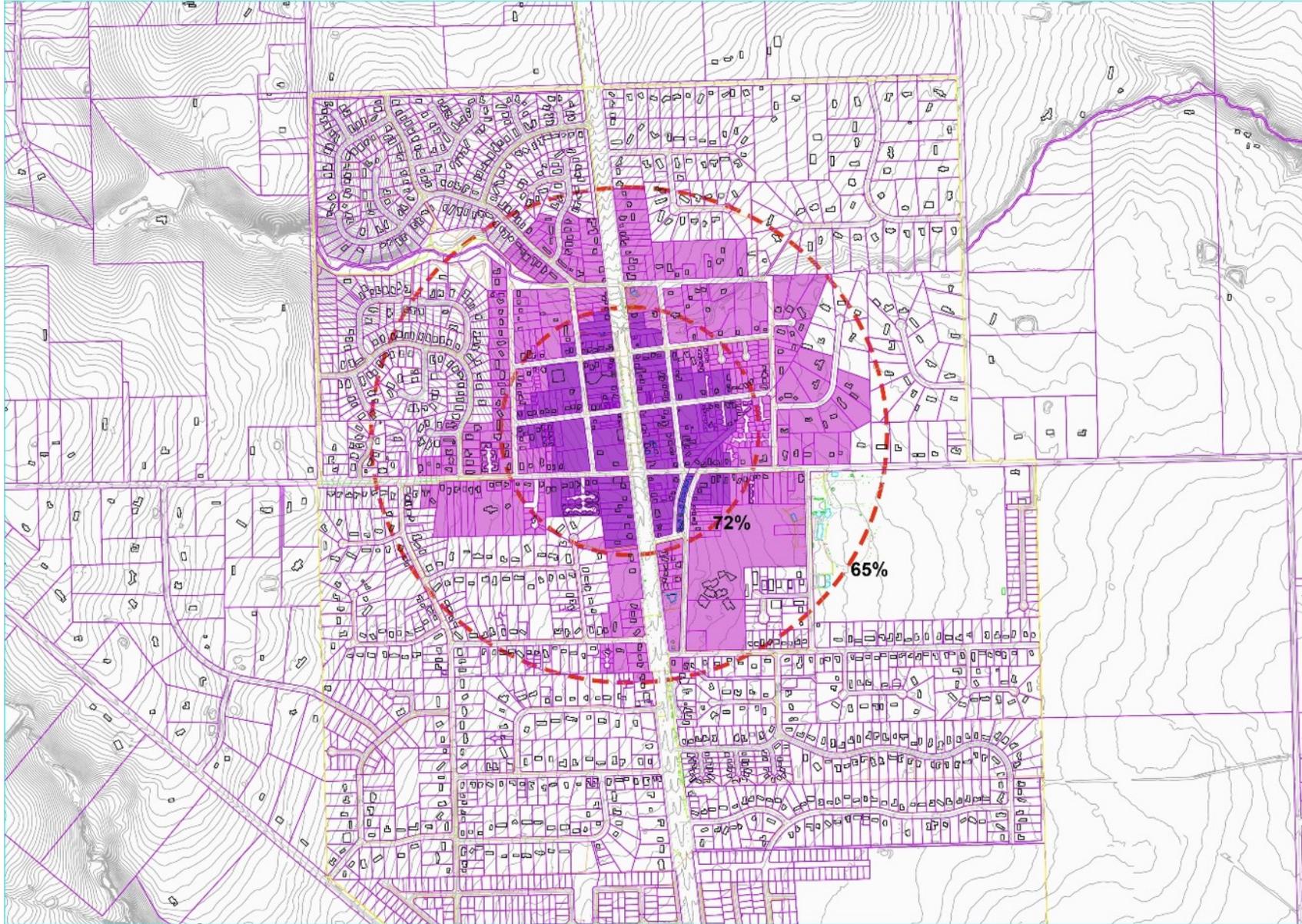


Figure 8: Romsey's Measured "Ped-shed"

Buildings such as the General Merchant Building built in 1877, and the Mechanics Institute Building add significantly to the character of Romsey town centre and its main street. It is significant that these are taller buildings as they assist in creating a sense of place in the very wide Main Street. Future buildings would do well to be at least two storeys in height to support creating a stronger sense of containment of Main Street. Good civic and commercial buildings are built close to the street with minimal setbacks, and preferably offer weather protection over the footpath. Examples are shown in **Figure 9**.



Figure 9: Examples of Quality Civic and Commercial Buildings

(Council Building, Mechanics Institute Building and the General Merchant Building, Fountain and St Mary's Church)

Buildings can either support a walking environment or entrench car dependence. Romsey has examples of both, and future built form should be required to support a future walking environment, especially if Council is to invest resources on supplying footpaths. The relationship between the street, parking and the building is critical to supporting a walking environment. Excessive setbacks with parking in front of buildings does little to support people walking and leads to

visual and spatial dominance of cars. Examples of both are shown in **Figures 10** and **11**. The urban design analysis of the town centre is detailed in **Figure 12**.



Source: Google Earth

Figure 10: Example of Buildings Setback Far From the Street with Front Parking



Source: Google Earth

Figure 11: Buildings Supporting People Walking in the Street

(minimal setback, weather protection, and parking behind buildings or in the street)



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN Main Street Urban Design Analysis

Legend

- C1Z Commercial Zone 1
- PUZ Public Use Zone
- Vacant sites
- Underutilised sites
- Buildings on street frontage
- Buildings set back from street
- Community facilities
- Pedestrian crossings

- Regularly maintain existing trees and replace senescing ones along Melbourne Lancefield Road and Main Street
- Improve pedestrian connections along and across Main Street.
- Use bluestone kerbs and asphalt pavements in new work in Town Centre
- Plant a large spreading canopy tree in the roundabout at this key junction
- Review and rationalise signage, furniture and other roadside elements along Melbourne Lancefield Road and Main Street to improve image and arrival experience

0 75 150 225 m



Figure 12: Town Centre Urban Design Analysis and Opportunities

Currently the retail offer in Romsey is spread thinly along Lancefield-Melbourne Road. This road is very wide and carries local and regional traffic. While this affords a high level of exposure for commercial and retail businesses, the road is excessively wide and difficult for pedestrians to cross, with only one set of pedestrian operated signals in the main retail area. Replacing the existing roundabout with traffic signals would create more opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. Given that the roundabout at Barry Street is relatively new this is unlikely but an additional set of pedestrian operated signals would achieve greater crossing opportunities of the Lancefield-Melbourne Road.

As the population of Romsey increases, the opportunity to consolidate the town centre with additional retail outlets will become increasingly viable. In the medium term, provision of a second supermarket may become possible, along with associated specialty shops. Pohlman Street could become a future retail street with dimensions more supportive of such land uses. This could begin on properties which are vacant now and, over time, spread north towards the existing supermarket. A possible and notional development plan of these sites is shown in **Figure 13**. Proposals for these sites are not currently anticipated but could be facilitated.

It is important to note that parking lots are placed behind buildings facing Pohlman Street. Also shown are a small public square, dedicated pedestrian walkways, a medium sized supermarket as well as future office space and infill residential units to maintain surveillance and activation of Barry and Stawell Streets. Shops facing Pohlman Street should have verandahs and awnings giving weather protection to people on footpaths as shown in **Figure 14**.

A key contribution to Romsey becoming a town where walking to the shops is encouraged would be a rolling program of delivering safe and level footpaths. This would give many more people a choice as to how to access their basic daily needs.



Figure 13: Possible Retail Development along Pohlman Street.



Figure 14: Examples of Good Retail Streets in Regional Towns

In these examples, weather protection over footpaths, tree planting for shade, shops with zero setback facing the street, and parallel parking is evident.

Angled parking should be avoided as it is relatively aggressive for pedestrians, alfresco diners and cyclists.

Suburban Residential Development

Discussions with local developers indicates a strong market for larger lots between 800 and 1,500 square metres in size. This is due to few larger lots on the market in metropolitan Melbourne and surrounding towns. Larger lots able to accommodate a dwelling as well as a large shed are highly attractive to builders and other contractors. This phenomenon may be a temporary condition and opportunities for a wider variety of lot sizes should be explored. A greater diversity of lots in the range of 400 to 600 square metres could support the:

- Opportunity for people to “age in place”.
- High amenity locations of creeks and other reserves.
- Town centre and surrounds through more convenient access.

Infill Residential Development

Future infill development should have a positive relationship to streets avoiding back fences facing streets. Houses immediately next to streets should face the street. There are examples of where this has been done successfully and others where houses present blank walls to the street, a condition best avoided (see **Figures 15** and **16**).

Lot sizes and dimensions within the town are generous lending themselves to consolidation or further subdivision. These should be encouraged in locations closer to the town centre and open space. Corner sites and those sites with multiple access points are also more likely to lead to better outcomes. As the walking environment is already compromised by a lack of footpaths and in some cases crossing points, it will be important to limit or manage the impacts of vehicle access to infill development. Standard responses like “battle axe” lots or “gun-barrel” driveways for units, don’t deliver high quality environments.



Source: Google Earth

Figure 15: Infill Housing Maintaining a Positive Relationship to the Street



Source: Google Earth

Figure 16: Infill Housing Turned Away from the Street (L); Facing the Street (R)

Future Subdivision of Lots

Many lots in Romsey are deep and are capable of being subdivided into small lots or unit lots. This process needs to be managed to yield quality urban design outcomes and not diminish the quality of residential development in the older parts of town. Examples of quality residential development showing good urban design and architectural character are shown in **Figure 17**. Houses face the street, are not setback excessively, and contribute to the sense of safety in the street, by maintaining passive surveillance of the street and avoiding high fences, walls and hedges. The houses include front verandahs where informal socialising between people sitting on verandahs and people walking passed on the footpath are possible. This supports to a strong sense of community.



Source: Google Earth, Plan2Place Consulting

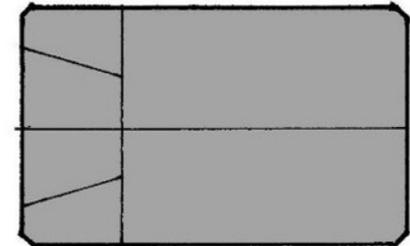
Figure 17: Romsey Residential Development

(positively contributing to urban quality and character)

Many existing lots have been subdivided to create small lots off a new cul-de-sac access road. This pattern of subdivision can lead to poor urban design outcomes. Alternative methods of subdivision could yield better urban design outcomes.

An example is shown in **Figure 18** where the short end of a larger lot is subdivided with a new rear lane providing vehicle access to new residential lots, ensuring high levels of street activation from new houses. This avoids a streetscape dominated by double garages, increasing surveillance from houses, an increasing sense of safety and supports safe walking in streets.

Existing



4 Lots Consolidated and Subdivided into 8 x 450 square metre lots with rear laneway access



Figure 18: Option for Subdividing Lots Increasing Residential Densities

(four lots become eight lots)

Industrial Development

Industrial development as shown in **Figure 19** consists of a range of sheds and buildings set back from the street. High roofs make many of them equivalent to two to three storey residential development. Many contain storage facilities and parking in the front setback and some have landscaping. The industrial estate in the centre of town is well maintained and has kerbs, verges and some footpaths, while the area on Portingales Lane has less amenity due to the types of activities being undertaken on sites such as concrete batching. The industrially zoned land on Greens Lane has not been developed to date and consists of paddocks in agricultural use. Council has a set of guidelines to improve the amenity of industrial development in the Shire which will shape future industrial development in Romsey.



Source: Plan2Place Consulting

Figure 19: Existing Industrial Development in Romsey

Public Realm

The treatment of the public realm is a key determinant of the town's character as shown in **Figures 20 and 21**. Streets within the original part of the town display bluestone or concrete kerbs and channels. Beyond the centre, street pavements are generally narrow and sealed, with grassed verges and swale drains giving the area a rural character, valued by the community. Recent development to the south-west displays more suburban elements of wider street pavements, concrete kerb and channel, grassed nature strips and footpaths on both sides. A strong high quality public realm can assist in maintaining the town's valued character as it grows.



Figure 20: Avenue Trees - Main St; Barry St Lacking Trees and Generous Path



Source: Plan2Place Consulting

Figure 21: Streets Lacking Trees and Footpaths

3.2.2 Bushfire Risk Assessment

The Issues and Opportunities Paper identified the need for further work to determine bushfire risk around Romsey. Obliqua Pty Ltd have prepared a bushfire risk assessment to guide future growth of the town. The assessment covered the township of Romsey and a 30km radius from the township.

The key guiding documents that have influenced the assessment include the:

- Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme Clause 13.02 Bushfire Planning.
- Bushfire and Planning Practice Note 64 Local planning for bushfire protection.
- Design Guidelines Settlement Planning at the Bushfire Interface.
- Municipal Fire Management Plan.
- Australian Standard AS 3959-2018 Construction of Buildings in Bush Fire Prone Areas.

Bushfire controls affect the locality with land surrounding the Romsey township designated as a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) under the *Building Regulations 2018* and the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) affecting areas further east and west of the township. Most of the existing Romsey township is not designated as bushfire prone.

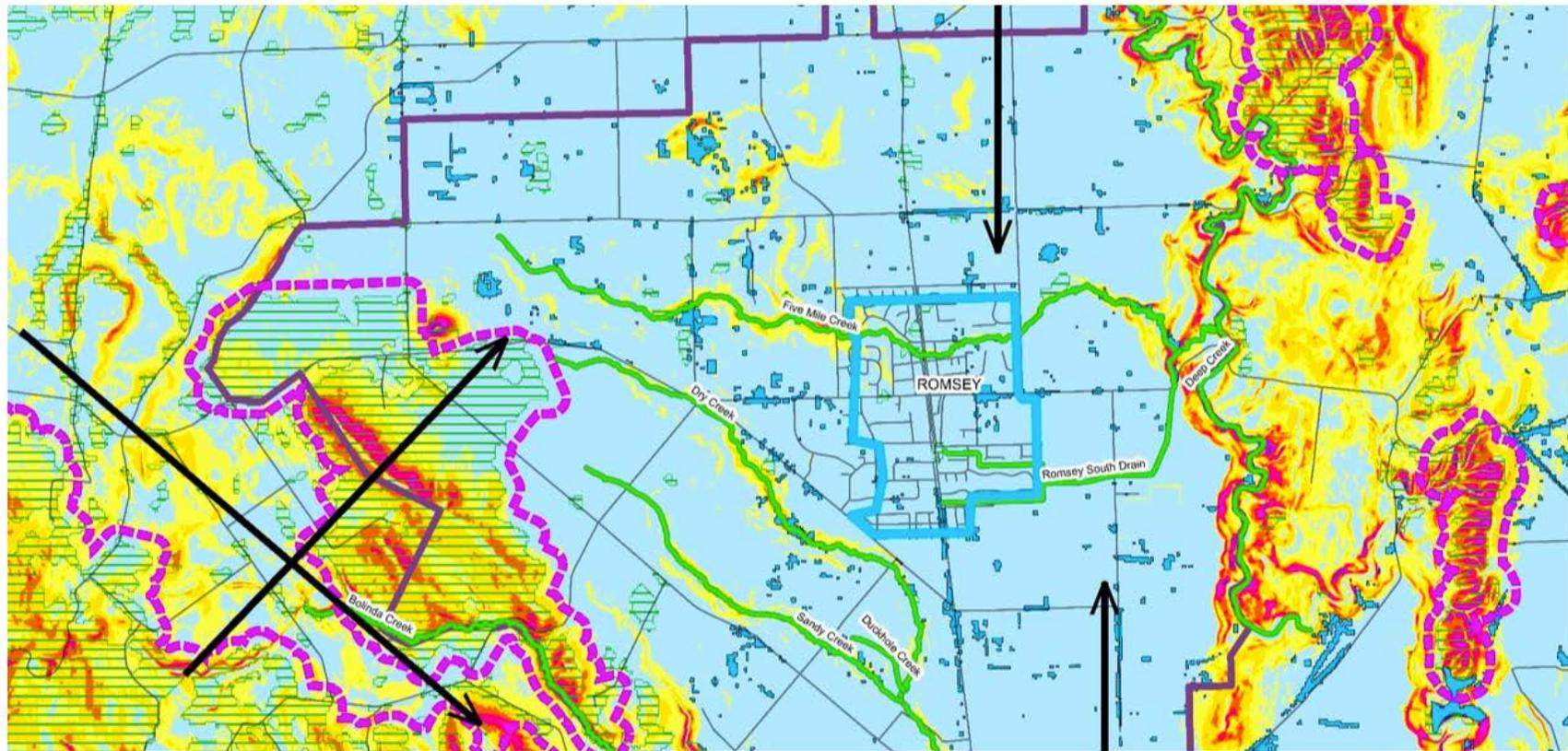
The assessment highlights that vegetation around Romsey is primarily grassland, with small patches of remnant woodland, and forest to the south-west. Slopes are low, except in gullies (along creeks). Vegetation in the township is primarily low threat; however corridors along creek lines can contribute to fire threat or perceived threat. Fire is most likely to arrive from the north-east to south-south-west directions. Conditions under which fire control may fail, may occur on average, on up to 4.4 days/year and more frequently under climate change. The assessment concludes that the town has low to moderate bushfire risk of house loss. Most of the current township is located outside the Bushfire Prone Area and can therefore be considered low threat (BAL-LOW) which is the lowest threat rating under AS 3959.

Based upon the approach in the Design Guidelines *Settlement Planning at the Bushfire Interface*, the following treatments are recommended in planning for the growth of the town to manage the bushfire risk shown in **Figure 22**:

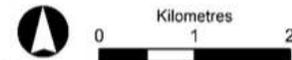
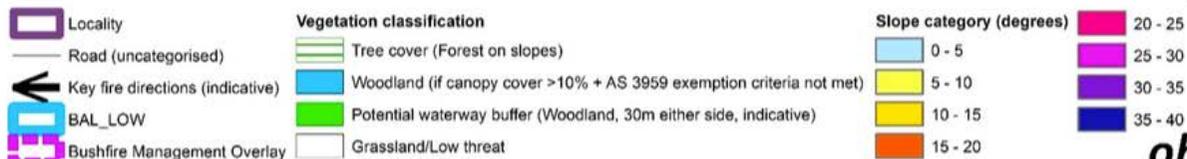
- Form and structure of the township:
 - The areas of lowest risk for growth are to the east of the town.
 - Township expansion be designed to not only meet the requirement under Clause 13.02-1S for BAL12.5 (the second lowest threat rating under AS 3959) but also meet the criteria for excision from the Bushfire Prone Area.
 - Vulnerable, hazardous and industrial uses to be located away from the interface, including north-east and south-west interface areas of the township.
 - Careful design and sensitive management of parklands and revegetation to minimise bushfire threat.
- The township interface:
 - Setbacks from vegetation have been provided for consideration including deemed-to-satisfy requirements (AS 3959 Method 1) to indicate minimum requirements and ‘enhanced’ setbacks based upon a severe climate change scenario. This requires residential use/development setbacks of 27-36 metres from grassland areas and 49-72 metres from woodland areas depending on the land slope under vegetation.

- Residential lot sizes in new development of between 800 m² and 1,200 m² are considered optimal.
- Recommendations have been provided regarding vegetation management, perimeter roads, open space, development in setback areas and access and egress.
- Protection measures at the settlement scale:
 - Recommendations provided regarding vegetation management including biodiversity protection, building construction standards and supporting community resilience.





Macedon Ranges Shire Council: Romsey Structure Plan
Bushfire assessment: Hazard assessment summary



File: Romsey_3_HazardAssessmentSummary_v1.0 | Coordinate system GDA_1994_MGA_Zone_55 EPSG: 28355
Image: Vicmap Basemap WMS | Other data: Government of Victoria

All features and dimensions shown on this map are approximate and must be verified on site, using where applicable calculations provided in the report for this site. obliqua pty ltd and its directors, employees and contractors accept no liability for loss or damage resulting from use of this map, whether due to unintended inaccuracy, error or omission or any other cause.

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sustainable land and bushfire management

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Figure 22: Bushfire Hazard: Romsey Township and Surrounds

3.2.3 Flooding

The existing LSIO map in **Figure 23** highlights the areas of Romsey that are currently subject to inundation as identified by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). This shows land along the Five Mile Creek as being subject to inundation but only for part of the creek corridor.

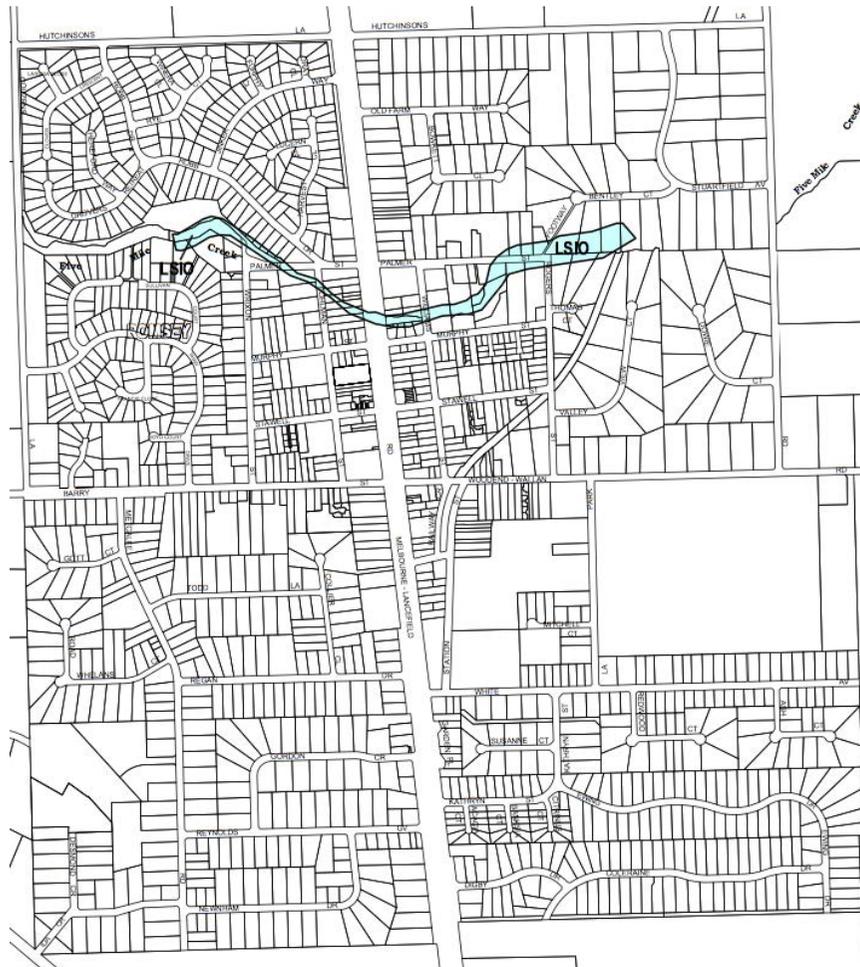


Figure 23: Existing LSIO Map for Romsey

The Issues and Opportunities Report included new maps of flood prone land in Romsey. These new areas were shown along the Five Mile Creek corridor as well as a significant area of residential land in the southern end of the township. This land is north of Ewing Drive, south of White Avenue and along the Romsey South Drain flowing towards Deep Creek. Melbourne Water has now updated information in and around the town as shown in **Figure 24** identifying land subject to a 1 in 100 year storm event.

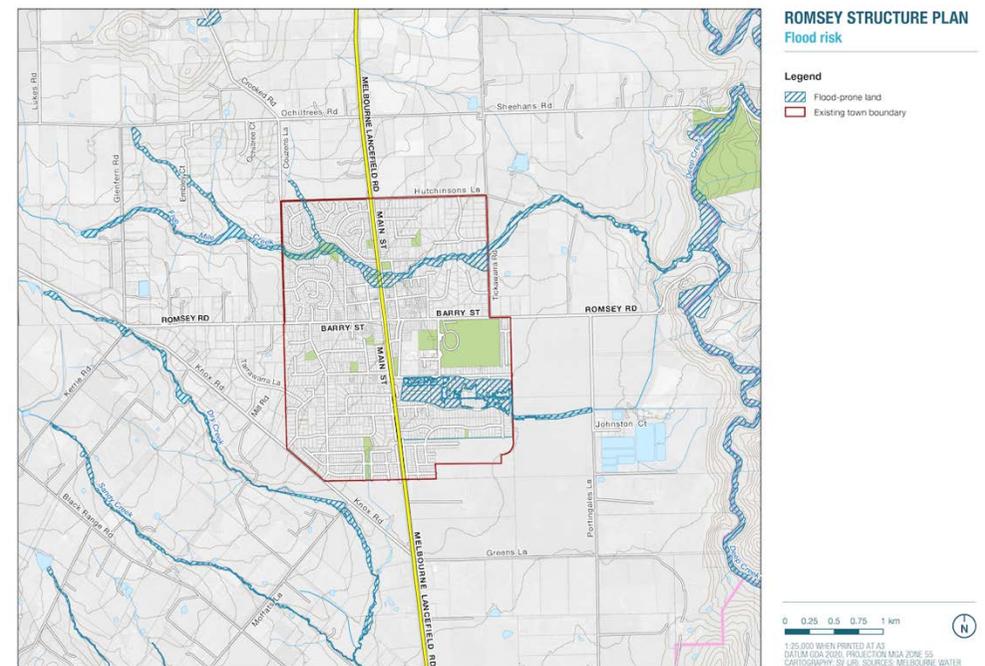


Figure 24: Flood risk In and Around Romsey

Figure 24 highlights those areas of Romsey that are subject to inundation with potential to be identified with the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme in order to mitigate the localised flooding risk. This usually requires buildings to be constructed a minimum of 300 mm above the relevant flood level.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by the following principles:

- Locate development away from areas of high bushfire risk
- Locate development to minimise the impact on the flood plain.
- Link new development into the existing town structure with permeable, walkable links to the town centre.

Potential Responses

Main Street

Romsey's Main Street would benefit from the following actions:

- Conserve and protect existing Main Street heritage features including street trees, bluestone kerbs and asphalt footpaths.
- Improve the distribution, quality, and energy performance of lighting within Main Street, including pedestrian areas.
- In coordination with Regional Roads Victoria (RRV), review and edit redundant traffic and directional signage to reduce the amount of visual clutter.
- Remove or replace outdated treated pine traffic control barriers in Main St.
- Review the location and orientation of benches to ensure they are accessible, safe and amenable.
- Develop a set of design guidelines for Main Street to create a consistent, high quality environment over time.
- Advocate with RRV to plant a tall, broad canopy tree in the roundabout at Barry Street to announce this important entry and intersection.

Township Streetscapes and Character

More broadly, the township streetscapes and character would benefit from:

- Respecting the valued elements of the town's neighbourhood character and reviewing the residential guidelines.
- Incorporation of a continuous, safe and connected walking and cycling network.
- Ensuring new street layouts, cross sections, materials, and detailing reinforce the desired rural township character. In residential areas, wherever possible, implement street cross sections with swales and WSUD treatments, or at the least low-profile kerb and channel. Avoid the use of natural concrete barrier

kerb and channel and adopt asphalt or compacted gravel foot and shared paths rather than concrete.

- Continuing to implement a coordinated street tree planting program to improve Romsey's identity, attractiveness, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

Fire

- Focus new development to areas of lowest bushfire risk.
- Optimum residential lot sizes for new development outside of the current Romsey Outline Development Plan to be in the range of 800 - 1,200 m².
- Site vulnerable, hazardous and industrial uses away from the township interface, including the north-east and south-west interface areas of the township.
- Ensure setbacks for residential use/development of 27-36 metres from grassland areas and 49-72 metres from woodland areas depending on the land slope under vegetation. *Comment: the lower figures are applicable where the hazard is upslope of the development which occurs to the north-west and south-west.*
- Ensure new development is designed to meet criteria for BAL12.5 at a minimum, and preferably BAL-LOW to meet criteria for excision from the Bushfire Prone Area.

Flood

Apply planning controls over flood prone land to ensure that land subject to inundation is appropriately identified and protected from the impacts of flooding and the risks that this poses to people and buildings.

Have your say

What are your thoughts on the Potential Responses?

What do you think about increasing the density of new development?

What other strategies are needed to revive Main Street?

3.3 Theme: Activities and Land Use

Key background information from the Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- The town centre straddles the eastern and western sides of Melbourne-Lancefield Road.
- Most business and community activities are located along Melbourne-Lancefield Road between Murphy and Barry Street.
- Commercial land varies between 1,000 sqm and 8,000 sqm.
- There are a number of vacant and under-utilised commercial properties in the town.
- There is a supermarket in town along with a range of local retail, service and community offerings.
- A majority of shopping and entertainment needs are undertaken in other centres.
- There are three industrial areas in the town providing for additional employment uses with a variety of businesses including mechanics, auto repairs and gyms.
- The industrial and commercial land on the corner of Greens Lane has not been occupied to date.
- Tourism is important in Macedon Ranges, however the Romsey area attracts the lowest number of visitors; lack of accommodation and conference facilities may be contributing to this.
- Romsey's housing market is attractive to purchasers also looking at the Melbourne fringe with opportunities to buy a larger and cheaper lot in commuting distance of Melbourne.

3.3.1 Economic Analysis

Further work to understand the economic drivers impacting the town has been prepared by Tim Nott Economics and Strategy and is summarised below.

Population growth

The key driver of change for housing and much of the commercial sector is the rate of population growth in the town and its local catchment. It is anticipated that household size will decline from the existing 2.75 persons per household to 2.62 persons per household by 2041 as suggested by VIF2019. There are three

population growth scenarios which illustrate the consequences of different rates of population growth for housing and commercial activity shown in **Figure 25**.

Residential

It was estimated that Romsey had a residential land supply of 488 housing lots in 2019, based on minimum lot sizes of General Residential Zone land of 800 sqm and Low Density Residential Zone land of 2,000 sqm (sewered) or 4,000 sqm (unsewered).

Given consumption trends prior to 2020, current residential lot supply is estimated to be approximately 380 lots, allowing for approximately two year's residential development in the town.

Social and Affordable Housing

A town such as Romsey should offer a range of housing. Under the Victorian Government's Big Housing Build, \$30M will be invested in social and affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire. Council has adopted an *Affordable Housing Interim Policy* that supports and seeks to extend these initiatives with significant growth in social and affordable housing and renewed housing stock in well serviced locations such as Romsey.

Commercial

Romsey acts as a small neighbourhood centre, providing a limited range of day to day goods and services to a local catchment with a small visitor services sector compromising:

- A town centre with total retail floorspace of 5,122 sqm.
- Retail activity comprising 38% of the total occupied floorspace in the town centre which is the largest single activity.
- A range of other town centre activities including health and professional services, local government and community services and light industrial activities.
- Significant vacant floorspace at 13% of the total space in the town centre compared with vacancies in typical main street centres in the 5% - 10% range.

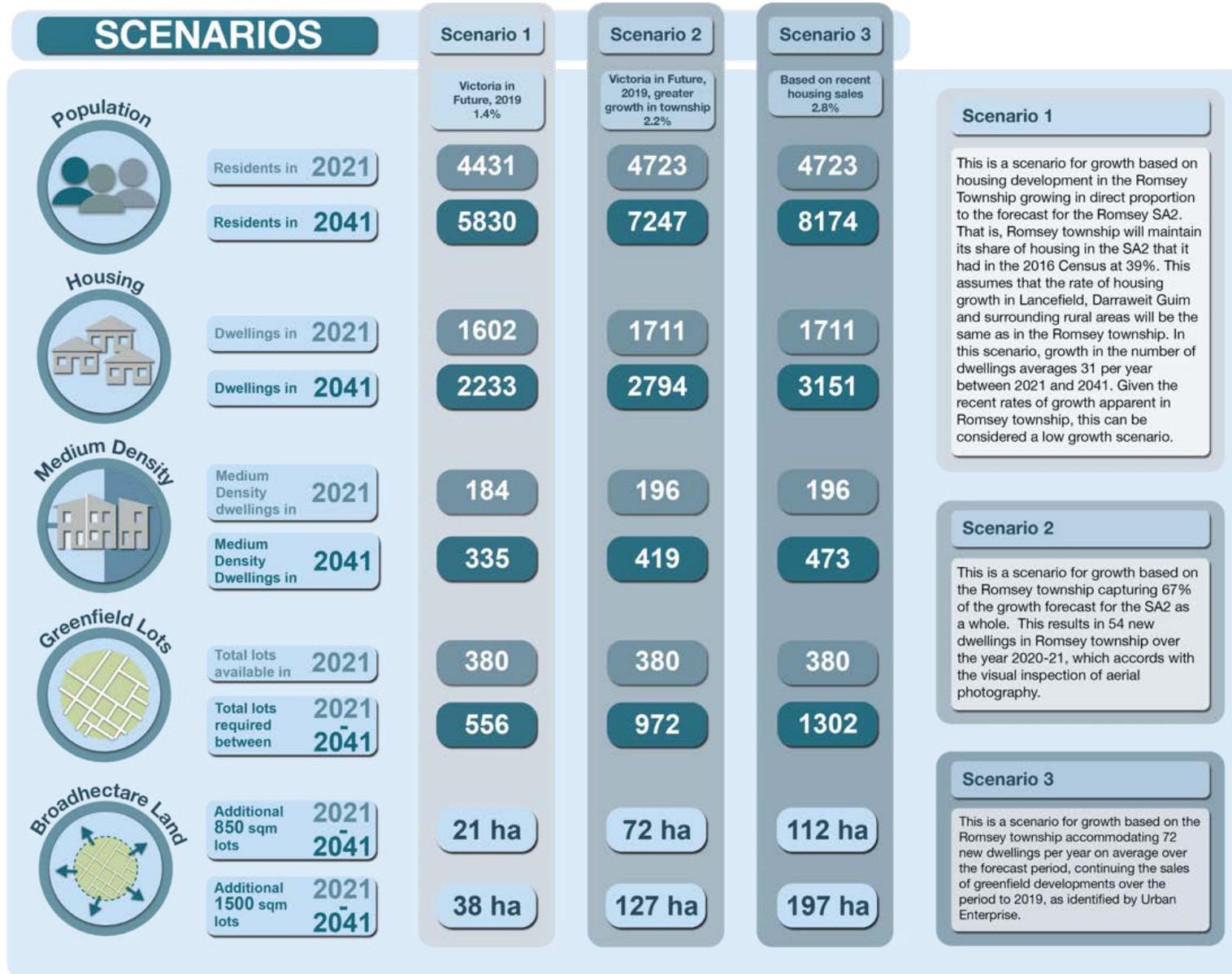


Figure 25: Romsey Population and Growth Scenarios

- Current under-provision of retail floorspace and services; if a market share of 30% spending can be achieved it can support around 1,600 sqm more retail floorspace.
- Support for a full-line supermarket of around 3,000 sqm with reorganisation of existing space and activity in the town centre.
- An additional 1.5 - 2 hectares of land for development required to meet long term commercial demand which can be provided by several vacant sites.

Employment

Romsey is largely a commuter settlement and relies on jobs in Melbourne and nearby towns. There are almost 2.5 resident workers for every local job in Romsey characterised by:

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing which is the largest local industry and the only local industry where jobs outnumber resident workers.
- Construction which is the largest industry for resident workers.
- A large number of workers in transport and warehousing, reflecting the proximity of Melbourne Airport and the industrial precincts of northern and western Melbourne.

Industrial

Growth in overall industrial demand is more likely than decline comprising:

- Net additional floorspace demand by 2041 varying across the three scenarios between 4,000 sqm and 5,300 sqm.
- Demand depending in part on the types of activities that seek a location in Romsey.
- Demand estimates over the next 20 years suggesting that an industrial precinct in the range of 10 to 17 hectares is required.
- The industrial precinct in a location that will enable further expansion over time, or if a significant industrial land-user seeks to establish.
- The new industrial precinct located within the buffer of the wastewater treatment facility with access provided along an upgraded Greens Lane and Portingales Road.

Tourism

There is a small but significant tourism industry in the Gisborne and Romsey-Lancefield sub-regions that are in particular need of tourism development and visitor dispersal strategies. The local tourism industry, with its wineries, other food outlets and cultural producers will create job opportunities that may spill over into retailing, accommodation and manufacturing (breweries, distilleries, specialist food production, etc.) within the town. There is currently a lack of accommodation in the town which hampers tourist visitation. Growing need for overnight recreational vehicle accommodation and a dump point at the Lions Park toilet block have also been identified for Romsey given its key location on major travelling routes through the region.



Macedon Ranges Visitor Attraction Strategy 2019- 2029

The Macedon Ranges Visitor Attraction Strategy sets out a long term vision to support the sustainable growth of the tourism sector. The Strategy highlights that the eastern corridor which includes Romsey requires further product development to support more tourists to the area. Initiatives such as walking and cycling trails, heritage values and townships, and investments in distilleries, food establishments and tourist routes can all contribute to visitor attractiveness.

Buffer Area Around Romsey Recycled Water Plant

The Romsey Recycled Water Plant (RRWP) services the town's sewage needs. It also provides opportunities for the use of recycled Class C water around town. Council already use some of this water on sporting fields. Other opportunities could be explored including those for agricultural and industrial recycled water use.

The extent of the buffer is a key determinant of growth options for the town. The RRWP buffer is determined by the calculation of the population served by the plant in the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) publication 1518, *Recommended Separation Distances Between Industrial Air Emissions*. This determines the separation distances between industrial land uses that emit odour or dust, and sensitive land uses, with a minimum separation distance of 200m for disposal areas for secondary treated effluent by spray irrigation. Clause 53.10 of the MRPS does not specify a threshold distance for the RRWP.

The Issues and Opportunities Paper stated that a preferred buffer area of 1000m is required from the treatment ponds at the plant with a minimum accepted buffer of 600m. The south-eastern edge of the township's existing residential area is partly within the preferred 1000m buffer. The Paper committed to a review of the buffer area and its application through an appropriate overlay in the MRPS. Before the Structure Plan is prepared, further discussions are required with Greater Western Water to determine the final buffer distance required.

What we have previously heard:

Consultation to date identified that the town centre has been identified as requiring support to re-invigorate its attraction as a vibrant town centre. There was a need for town centre to reinvent itself to assist with supporting the existing community's needs.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by:

- Reinforcing the town centre as the commercial and civic heart of the town.
- Providing additional employment areas to meet the needs of the population.
- Using the buffer area of the RRWP to limit the town's eastward and southward expansion.

Potential Responses

- Note there is enough appropriately zoned land for increased commercial activity in the town centre to cater for anticipated population growth.
- Consider increased municipal rates for vacant and underutilised commercial land in the town centre.
- Promote art in shop fronts, especially vacant premises.
- Identify locations for a full line supermarket and facilitate its development.
- Facilitate a range of housing types in the township particularly within walking distance of the town centre to enable people to age in place and provide for more affordable housing options.
- Identify appropriate locations away from township entries for additional industrial land, including well designed restricted retail premises, to support additional employment in the town.

- Ensuring that the buffer area protects the operations of the RRWP and that compatible land uses/developments are allowed within this area.

Have your say

What are your thoughts on the Potential Responses?

Where should new housing be focused?

Where should new industrial areas be located?

3.4 Theme: Community Infrastructure and Culture

Key background information from Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- The community is served by a range of local community and recreation facilities.
- The Romsey Community Hub provides library services, meeting spaces, programs and Council services. The town is also serviced by a CFA fire station, ambulance and police station.
- The Romsey recreation reserve and golf course provides local facilities including golf, football, lawn bowls and tennis. The Recreation Centre located within the reserve provides a range of indoor sports services including basketball, soccer, netball and squash.
- Romsey Primary School provides education services for P-6 students with capacity to expand to Yr 9. There is no high school.
- There is no aquatic centre/swimming pool resulting in residents travelling to Gisborne and Sunbury to access these facilities.

Aquatic Centre

A high level feasibility study into an indoor aquatic facility in Romsey was conducted in 2013. The study acknowledged community demand/aspirations for development of an indoor aquatic facility, however the financial implications of providing such a facility, in terms of capital cost and ongoing operational subsidy required, was determined to be currently beyond the realistic capacity of the Shire to provide in light of the current and expected population of the Romsey District. Council resolved to reassess this in five years (i.e. 2018). In 2018, Council resolved to review the Council's need for, and financial capacity to fund, an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027. More recently, Council listed the aquatic centre as a further project in the Aquatic Facility Feasibility Study MRSC (east).

A Secondary School

The community have expressed a very strong desire to have a secondary school within the town as children need to travel to neighbouring towns to attend school via bus or car. Advice from the Department of Education based on a review in 2018 found there are not enough students in the Romsey area to offer Years 7- 9 at Romsey Primary School or Years 7-12 in the short or medium term. The low number of students would not allow for a broad and quality curriculum.

Population growth has been slower in Romsey compared to the broader Macedon Ranges they note, and current population projections will not be enough to justify provision of secondary school services at this time. The development of the new structure plan provides an opportunity to review likely population targets based on settlement boundaries and projected land supply and demand. The emerging options provides an opportunity for the community to understand the trade-offs that may be required if the population was to reach a threshold suitable for a secondary school. Preserving land at the existing primary school will enable this future possibility. Existing community infrastructure in the township is shown in **Figure 26**.

Youth and Family Services Needs

There are limited primary health support services in Romsey. An increasing population necessitates a pro-active health and wellbeing response and improved medical, maternal child health and kindergarten facilities. Transport, access and telecommunications connectivity is a significant issue for young people, in terms of education, training, employment and sporting activity provision. Improving transport, accessibility and connectivity is critical to help confronting issues of social and economic isolation. The engagement and involvement of young people in sport, recreation and other social pursuits is essential to strengthening their contribution to civic life and building social capital and cohesion. Maternal health and kindergarten facilities are beyond capacity and there are opportunities for enhanced learning for children through nature play facilities and activities.

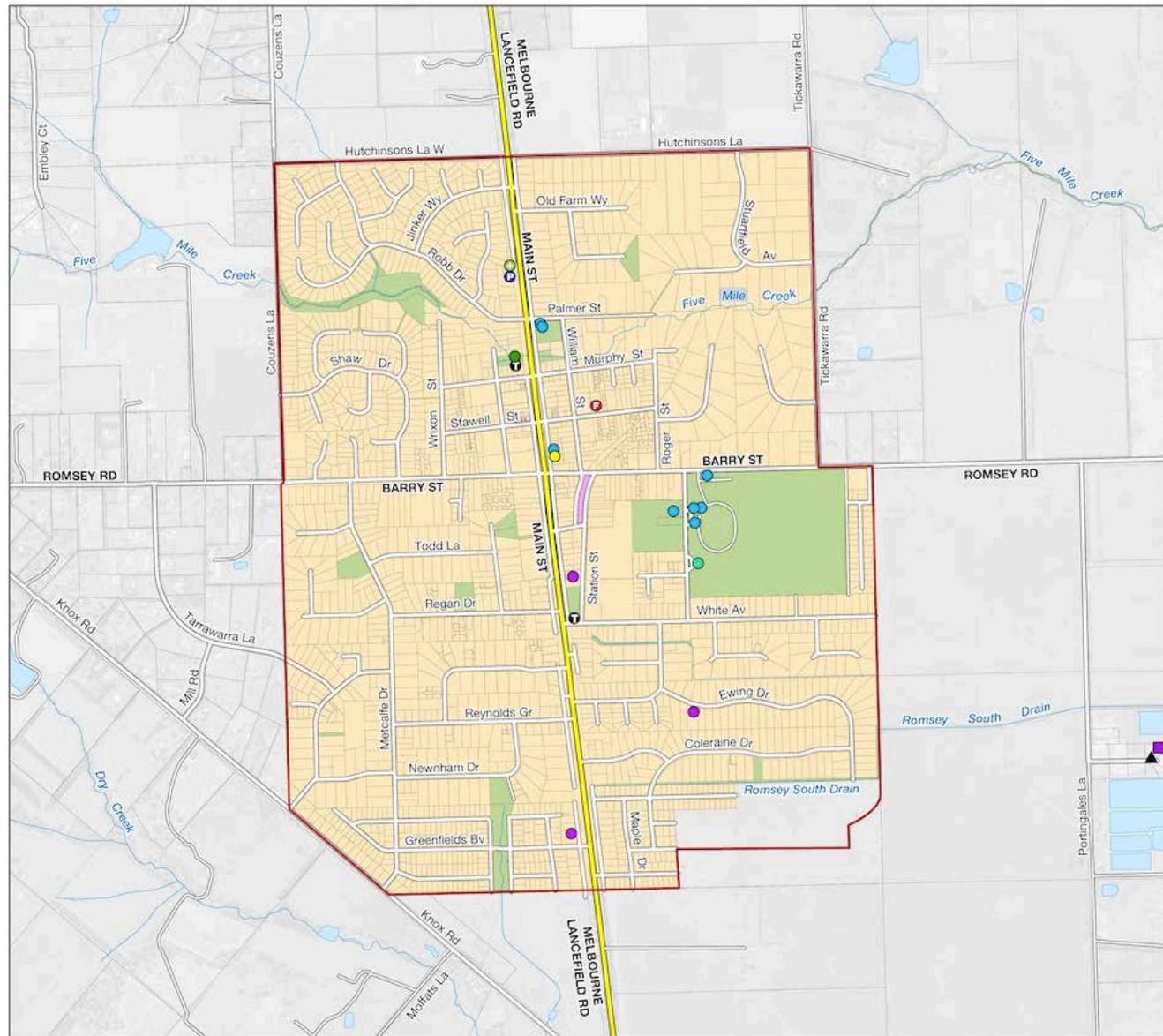
What we have previously heard:

The community have expressed a very strong desire for additional community facilities to be located in the town – specifically a secondary school and aquatic facilities as well as improved and increased community spaces where people can also meet and work, installing electric vehicle charging stations.



Romsey Children and Young People Told Us:

The children in Romsey love the skate park and school, visiting their friends' and cousins' houses and swimming. They also love the parks, bees and bugs, the creek, the grass, the playground (and all its equipment), the big buildings, the trees and visiting the library, the bakery, cafes and the sports field.



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN

Community infrastructure & culture

Legend

Infrastructure

- Club rooms and community hubs
- Early years service
- Leisure centre
- Library
- Shelter
- Shed
- Ⓣ Toilet block
- Ⓟ Police station
- Ⓡ Fire station
- Ⓜ Ambulance station
- ▲ Transfer station
- ▭ Community housing
- Existing town boundary

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CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 26: Romsey Existing Community Infrastructure

To make the Macedon Ranges more child-friendly, they would like to see more parks, a pool, more running paths (so they can run with their parents), more ice cream, cafes, nail salons and a fairyland. They would also like to play more, have more sleepovers, and see more unicorns, diggers, frogs and dinosaurs (Municipal Early Years Plan 2021-2025, p.17). Young people would also like to see new, improved and additional meeting spaces in the town and be involved in their design and in the design of recreational and other open spaces.



Older People

Council's older persons plan titled 'Participate' provides a framework for ensuring that Macedon Ranges including Romsey caters for the diverse interests, abilities and lifestyles of older people. Older people are expected to grow from 16.5% of the total population in 2016 to 20.4% in 2036. Consultation undertaken to inform the strategy identified that the main issues affecting older people were transport, health and wellbeing, safety and social connectedness and isolation. The most common ideas for an age-friendly town relate to accessibility and affordable services, facilities, housing and transport.



Sport and Active Recreation

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2018 to 2028, identified that based on Romsey at a population of over 8,500 in 2036, the town (based on current sporting trends) would need additional provision of sporting facilities of cricket soccer and outdoor netball.

A number of directions were identified to monitor the demand and explore options potentially collocating on existing facilities. Actions included installing outdoor fitness equipment/stations in Five Mile Creek, exploring skate park provision, upgrading Romsey Park as the Shire's premier AFL/Cricket sporting reserve including facilities for female participants and umpires, and upgrading sports lighting at ovals. Many of these actions have been implemented by Council and other partners, including design funding for the skatepark upgrade/rebuild.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by the following principles:

- Increase the town's population to enable appropriate services and facilities to be provided.
- Service the community facilities and cultural needs of the town's population.

Potential Responses

- Work with the Department of Education to monitor population and preserve the option for a P-9 school on the existing Romsey Primary School site.
- Identify a potential site for a future high school (dependent on likely population scenario).
- Review the Council's need for, and financial capacity to fund, an aquatic facility in Romsey in 2027.
- Identify locations for additional community meeting places in and around Main Street and other areas that cater for young people's needs.
- Ensure community facilities meet the needs of the local community, are accessible, fit for purpose and provide for a range of activities and groups.
- Investigate the introduction of a community bus to improve community access to the town's facilities.
- Investigate the provision of additional medical services, particularly for young people and families, maternal child health and kindergarten facilities.
- Engage with young people in the design of recreation and other open spaces to provide for their needs.
- Identify transport, access and telecommunications connectivity improvements to better support young people's education, training, employment and sporting needs.
- Create enhanced nature play opportunities for children.

Have your Say

What are your thoughts on the Potential Responses?

Where should the community meeting spaces be?

What types of meeting places are needed?

What types of other community infrastructure are needed?

3.5 Theme: Movement, Transport and Access

Key background information from the Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- Romsey is highly car dependent.
- The pedestrian and cycling network is focused on Main Street and town core; beyond these areas the network is fragmented and limited.
- A lack of infrastructure discourages people to walk and ride due to safety concerns.
- Inter-town footpaths connect Romsey to Lancefield however there is no connection to Monegeetta and Clarkefield.
- Access to the town centre is via a service road along the eastern and western sides of Melbourne-Lancefield Road with a footpath on both sides.
- There is no controlled pedestrian crossing point to link both sides of the centre. [Note a set has since been installed]
- Public transport consists of a VLine bus route running from Lancefield to Melbourne via Sunbury or Gisborne.
- Most people commuting to Melbourne access public transport by driving to Clarkefield Station.
- Lack of public transport is a significant issue for young people.
- Melbourne-Lancefield Road is the primary north-south road, also known as Main Street.

3.5.1 Transport Analysis

Movement and Place Consulting have provided further analysis of the transport network and the opportunities this provides for the growth of the town.

Transport context

In planning for the town's growth, it should be noted that maintaining a low density urban form will impact the viability of new services, and they will be difficult to access by walking or riding. This will exacerbate existing levels of auto-dependency and entrench the high cost of living for current and future residents. Containing jobs within the town and services including regular shopping, schools, health facilities and eateries and other social places will reduce the need for car dependency. Travel patterns for Romsey workers are shown in **Figure 27**.

Most people travel regionally to access essential services. Amenities and services such as large supermarkets are located in Woodend (20.8km) and Kilmore (30.4km), secondary schools in Woodend (18.2km) and Wallan (28.4km), and hospitals are located in nearby towns, Kilmore (30.3km) and Kyneton (32.1km).

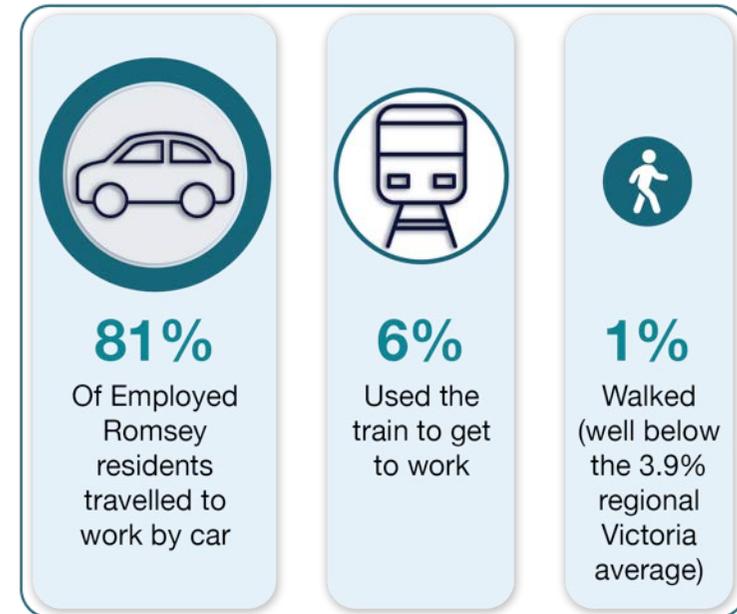


Figure 27: Travel Patterns of Romsey Workers

Services are mostly located along Main Street within walking distance of the majority of Romsey residents. Maintaining the proximity of residential growth within 400m of Main Street is an important way to increase the viability of these and additional future businesses.

For the 2,815 households (50% of total households in Romsey) who live within 1km of the town centre, errands to Main Street can be easily undertaken on foot. This area has a 'walk score' of 51 out of 100. As a result, these households can minimise their cost of living related to transport and gain incidental exercise that is critical to long-term health, longevity and quality of life in older age.

For the small number of households located further than 2km from Main Street, walking to any service is relatively unattractive, particularly compared to driving. The spread-out nature of the urban area, and lack of compact business intensity in Main Street force many residents to rely on private vehicle transport and services in other towns. With the exception of Lancefield which is a 5-10 minute drive to the north, all these other towns require a 20 minute drive to reach. This travel time impacts directly on household cost of living, and quality of life.

Travel destinations for Romsey workers are shown in **Figure 28**.

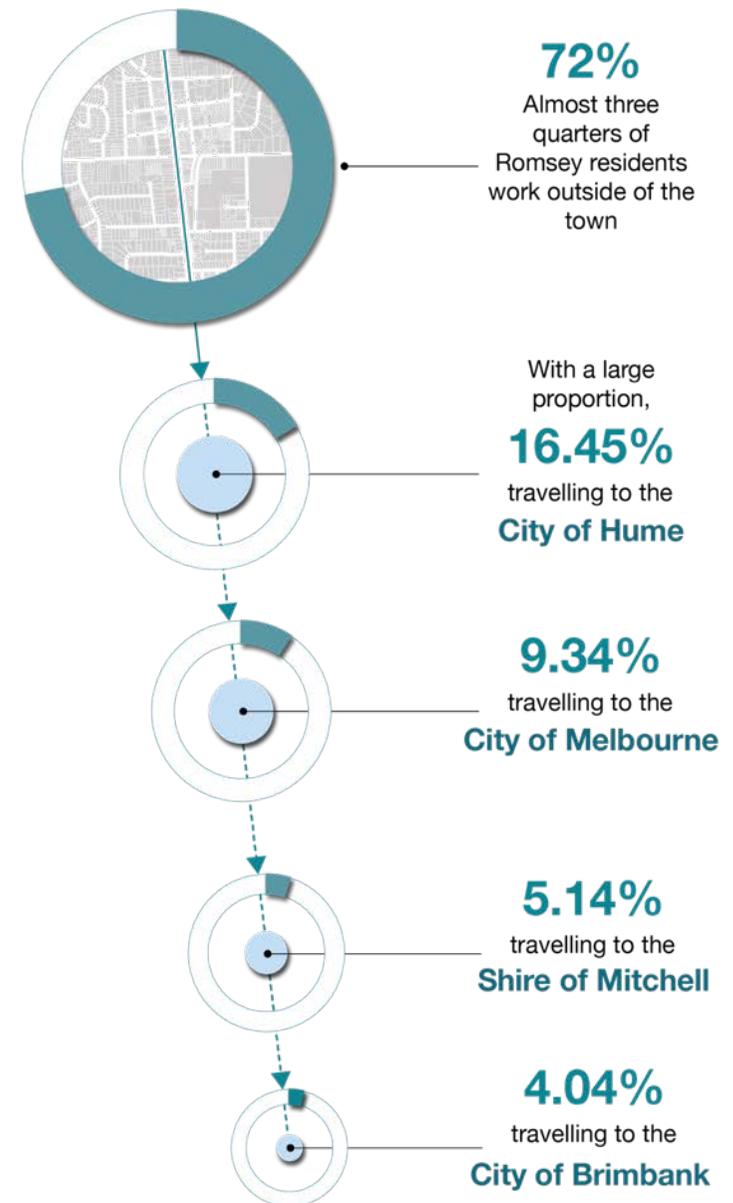


Figure 28: Romsey Worker Travel Destinations

Focussing residential growth within walking distance of the Main Street corridor will help make public transport viable in future. The nearest V/Line train station is 15km away in Clarkefield. Alternatively, people can access Metro Trains at Sunbury a further 15km away. Critical walking distance thresholds for residents in the town are shown in **Figure 29**.

Improving people’s choices to walk and ride will rely on growth occurring in the core of Romsey’s town centre and improving active transport networks to be useful, safe, comfortable and interesting. A lack of walking and cycling infrastructure beyond Main Street discourages people from travelling around Romsey by foot or bike due to safety concerns. Based around a linear, grid network with a tree-lined main street, Romsey has the potential for a very walkable township. Walkability is currently hampered by the low intensity built form and vacant land which reduces pedestrian amenity and attraction along Main Street. A lack of priority pedestrian crossing locations further inhibits walkability around the town.

The link between viability of businesses and foot traffic

New services become viable when a certain threshold of new residents (potential customers/clients) locate nearby. As more residences locate within 400m, footfall increases significantly, given that more trips can be made within a five to ten minute walk.

A recent Monash University study shows that planning for a 20-minute neighbourhood not only requires a threshold of residents to make the services viable, but also, that new residences are located in critical walking distance thresholds (400m – five-minute walk; 800m – ten-minute walk; 1.2km – 15-minute walk).

Studies show that 85% of walking trips are made within 15 minutes. The research calculates the number of dwellings needed to support services such as local shops and sports facilities in a 20-minute neighbourhood. Many of the services that could become viable require new dwellings to be located within 400m of new services located along Main Street. This is summarised in **Table 1**.

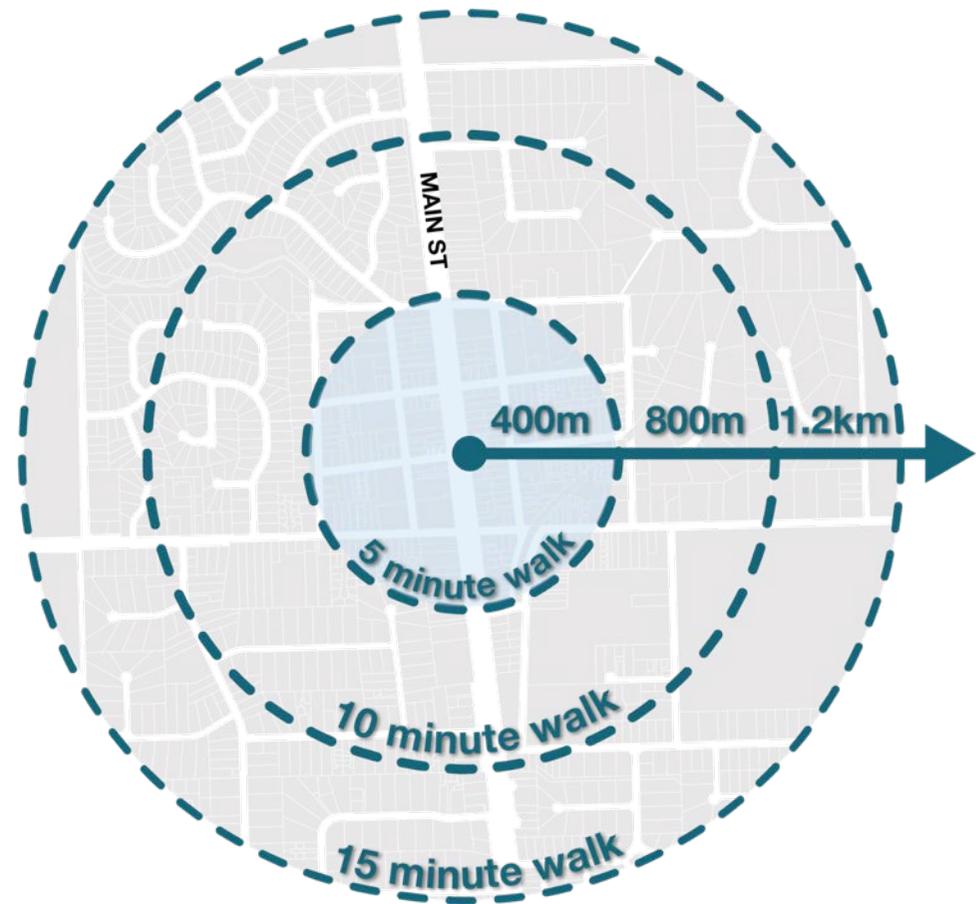


Figure 29: Critical Walking Distance Thresholds

Service	Residents	Dwellings	Catchment
Local Shops	3,500	~1,700	within 400m
Sports Facility	3,500	~1,700	within 400m
Post Office	3,500	~1,700	within 400m
Primary School	7,100	~3,400	within 800m
Community Health Centre	7,100	~3,400	within 800m
Secondary School	28,000	~13,600	within 1.2km

Source: Gradach, C., Kamruzzaman, L., Harper, L. (2020). 20-minute Neighbourhood - Living local research project. Monash University

Table 1: Dwelling Density Required for Essential Services

Optimising walkability must be a critical consideration in planning for this growth. If growth continues to expand Romsey's geographic boundary it will result in:

- Higher levels of traffic congestion than would be typical in a rural township.
- Erosion of township character and rural feel.
- Transport-related financial burdens on households.
- Significant losses of economic activity.
- Adverse health impacts as a result of sedentary lifestyles.

Public Transport

Public transport services in Romsey are insufficient to meet many of the needs of existing and future residents. The weekday hourly services from Lancefield to Sunbury cater for some needs, such as connection to Melbourne via Metro Train services (although these operate every 40 minutes, so they will not align with the bus services), shopping and some job opportunities.

Pedestrian Network

The pedestrian network is fragmented and limits accessibility, particularly for those without a car. This disproportionately affects younger, elderly and low-income residents. Main Street in particular, has high volumes of traffic, fewer breaks in traffic and limited priority for pedestrians to cross the road. Current and future businesses and dwellings will benefit from slower speeds and priority pedestrian facilities.

Bicycle Network

Similarly, bicycle network coverage in Romsey is fragmented. The better the bicycle network and safety in the town, the more people will use this mode of transport for daily trips. Mode shift, even modest, from cars to walking and bicycle riding improve the health of residents, reduce the financial burden of cars, and ease traffic congestion, among other benefits. Key bicycle network issues and opportunities are outlined below.

Local Road Network, Traffic and Parking

Romsey's road network is highly car dominant. It is highly likely that regardless of the level of growth in Romsey, there will be an oversupply of parking due to planning provisions. Clause 52.06 requires a minimum of parking which is designed to exceed foreseeable demand. It applies state-wide and does not account for differences in context (i.e. between a small rural town and Chadstone Shopping Centre). Excessive parking has a range of negative impacts, including:

- Opportunity cost of other uses due to the large amount of space cars occupy.
- Induced car trips that might otherwise be undertaken on foot or by bicycle.
- High costs to implement and maintain, funds that could be better spent for greater public benefit.

Parking requirements should be reviewed considering the social, economic and environmental objectives for the Romsey town centre.

Romsey's Movement, Transport and Access is shown in **Figure 30**.

Public Transport

No east to west public transport services to Wallan or Woodend limiting travel mode choice

No public transport connections to Craigieburn Metro Service or Melbourne Airport limiting employment options

Poor bus stop facilities lacking seating, shelter and wheelchair accessibility

Poorly coordinated timetables



Image 01: Palmer Street bus stop on Main Street



Image 02: Community Hub bus stop on Main Street

Bicycle Network

Fragmented cycle network

Safety concerns with drivers using Knox and Glenfern Roads to bypass Main Street traffic

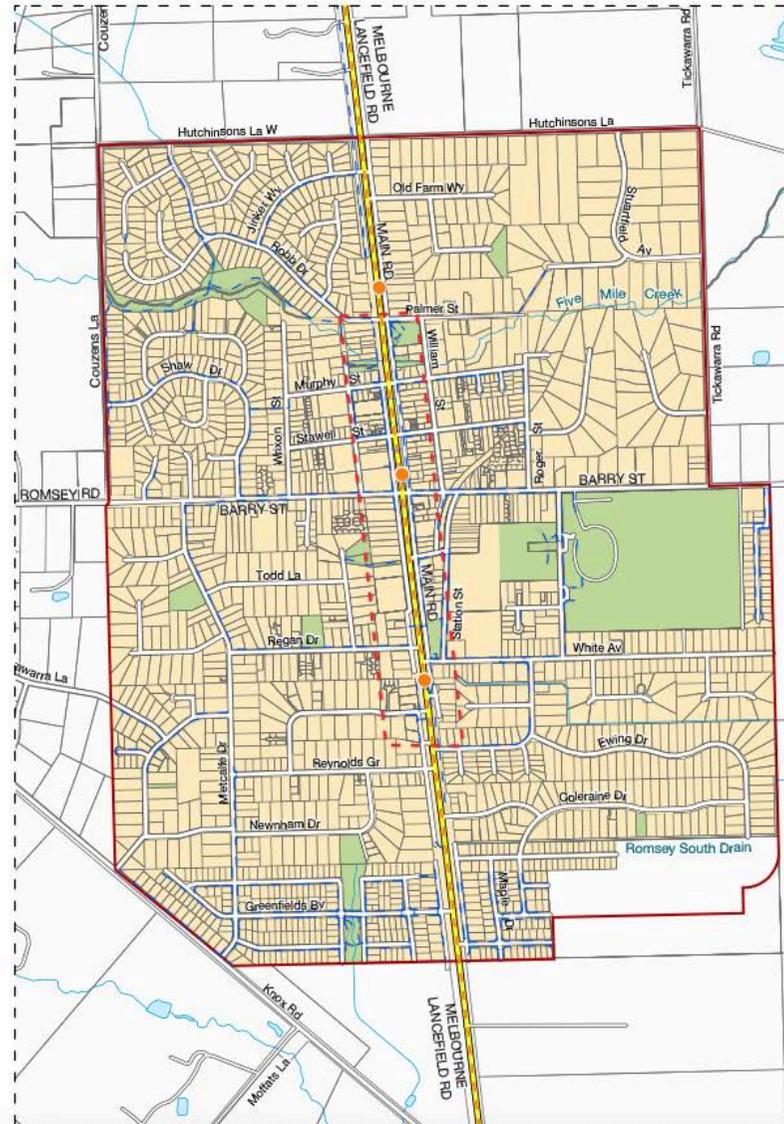
Main Street, Knox Road and Glenfern Road - no protected bike lanes and narrow footpaths

High risk for bicycle riders at the Barry Street/Main Street roundabout



Image 03: Poor cycle connections and limited crossings on Main Street

Screenshot



Main Street

Eleven crashes in the last five years along Main Street

Prioritises vehicle movements over pedestrians

Limited crossing points and high volumes of traffic with few breaks

Footpaths and both sides of the street are fragmented

About 90% of the 60m wide road reserve is for driving, parking and medians, detracting from community congregation and enjoyment

Palmer Street/Main Street bus stops have no seating/shelter and are only wheelchair accessible from the road with no connecting path

Intersection footpaths adopt a traditional kerb-cut pram crossing, unsafely forcing pedestrians onto the roadway

Intersection of Barry Street/Main Street lacks adequate pedestrian priority crossing facilities - wombat or zebra treatments are required in addition to existing pedestrian refuge medians

Beyond the town centre grid road network, the footpath network lacks permeability and accessibility due to the large number of dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs

Limited street tree canopy makes walking uncomfortable in hot or rainy conditions

Walking trail along File Mile Creek ends at Main Street and is absent east of Main Street



Image 04: Main Street

Legend

- VicRoads managed road
- Local road
- Minor road, lane
- Footpath
- Bus route
- Bus stop
- Waterways
- Existing town boundary
- Main Street urban centre

Pedestrian Network

Fragmented pedestrian network limits accessibility particularly affecting younger, elderly and low-income residents without a car



Image 05: Fragmented pedestrian network in residential areas



Image 06: No footpath on some residential streets

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DATUM GDA 2020, PROJECTION MGA ZONE 55
CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 30: Romsey Movement, Transport and Access

What we have previously heard:

Consultation to date has identified the desire for an improved walking and cycling network using key roads and linear open space to improve connections between neighbourhoods and destinations (including to surrounding towns). Transport is a key issue for young people and older people.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by the following principles:

- Increase the concentration of development within 400m of the town centre to increase the walkability and foot traffic in the town centre.
- Create an urban structure that promotes walking.

Potential Responses

- Develop an above kerb active transport link along Barry Road with safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Prioritise the development of footpath infrastructure to the town centre, between key destinations and around the school (priority being a 400m radius of the town centre).
- Provide an intertown path from Romsey to Monegeeta and Clarkefield similar to the Lancefield connection.
- Work with DoT to improve public transport to provide more frequent services and integrated timetables.
- Work with DoT to improve the shuttle bus service to Clarkefield Station with a mixture of public bus and volunteer car drivers to provide services which align with the V/Line train timetable.
- Consider working with non-profit Community Transport service providers such as Link Community Transport to expand the availability of peri-public transport services in Romsey.
- Improve tree canopy coverage across the whole town.
- Conduct a DDA compliance assessment along Main Street and prioritise actions to address shortfalls for those of the community with limited mobility and disabilities.
- Establish an off-road shared path network, particularly linking the Town Centre with the Recreation Reserve, Primary School, childcare facilities and Five Mile Creek to allow for safe bicycle travel both for transit and recreationally

- Design and construct a shared user path along Five Mile Creek.
- Provide opportunities for larger vehicles to park near the town centre.
- Limit speeds on Glenfern and Knox Roads to 80kmh.
- Slowing traffic on Main Street and providing pedestrian priority crossings in the main strip of shops would improve safety for both drivers and pedestrians as the area becomes busier.
- Investigate locations for wombat or zebra crossings across Barry Street and Main Street.
- Consider the need for a signalised pedestrian crossing near bus stops in Main Street.
- Renew awareness of the Avenue of Honour with signage and additional canopy trees.
- Consider restricting access to Stawell Street to be from the service lanes only, removing the intersections with Main Street through lanes.
- Investigate parking provision on Main Street and outside Romsey Primary School on Station Street to determine the best use of road space for the community.

Have your say

What are your thoughts on the Potential Responses outlined?

What do you think about the focus on Barry Street for improved safety and movement of walkers and cyclists?

What do you think about focusing footpath upgrades around Main Street and the Romsey Primary School?

3.6 Theme: Sustainability and Resilience

Key background information from the Issues and Opportunities Paper:

- Reticulated potable water is supplied through a range of reservoirs, water bores and connection to the Melbourne supply system.
- A gravity fed sewage system which flows to the Romsey Recycled Water Plant services most of Romsey's residential land.
- Septic tanks are used in the LDRZ land in the north east of the town.
- Electricity is provided in high voltage 22Kv on overhead powerlines transforming to low voltage via overhead powerlines to homes and businesses. Newer greenfield sites have underground powerlines.
- Reticulated gas is provided to residential lots however the industrial areas on Portingales Lane or Greens Lane are serviced by the gas pipeline network.
- Stormwater infrastructure is provided by both Council and Melbourne Water. There is some variation in the age, condition and design of the infrastructure.
- Flooding is an issue in areas adjacent to the Five Mile Creek corridor and south of White Avenue.

3.6.1 New Information



Cool Changes : Lancefield and Romsey September 2021

This document showcases the huge range of community projects that together build local resilience, strengthen local social connections, address climate change, and help us live more locally and more sustainably. It includes projects that are happening now, new and emerging projects, and some ideas for the future.



Southern Macedon Ranges Integrated Water Management Plan, 2020

Since the development of the Issues and Opportunities Paper, the Southern Macedon Ranges Integrated Water Management Plan has been prepared covering Romsey. The Plan aims to improve stormwater management for development across the catchment by implementing targets from the *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018*. This will require new development to meet new stormwater targets for harvesting (77%) and infiltration (22%) of impervious surface runoff.

Stormwater management will therefore need to be one of the key principles for any new development. This will involve techniques such as use of domestic tanks, rain gardens, limiting site coverage, greater vegetation requirements and more pervious surfaces which may lead to a different development character to the existing.

The Plan also highlights that irrigation may be possible south of Romsey noting that due to soil type may require more careful management to prevent waterlogging.



Biodiversity Strategy, 2018

The Macedon Ranges Biodiversity Strategy was adopted by Council in 2018, and establishes a shared vision between Council, the community and other stakeholders for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity values across the Shire. It aims to protect existing biodiversity and native vegetation and improve its range across public and private land, extend native vegetation and fauna habitat and improve community understanding and connection to biodiversity. While the area around the Romsey township is largely cleared, the structure and future growth of the town can make a contribution to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the Shire. Deep Creek is identified as a waterway link that contains significant habitat patches, support threatened species and has strong community interest. Plans for Five Mile Creek have identified biodiversity as a key role which can assist with creating new connectivity across the landscape.



Environment Strategy, 2021

Council's 2021 Environment Strategy builds on the original strategy providing direction on climate emergency, sustainable transport, waterway health, bio-links and habitat links, private land conservation, waste minimisation and community. These include promoting climate change action and renewable energy generation, working with traditional owners to understand and identify cultural heritage or areas of significance in reserves and areas managed by Council, incorporating water sensitive design treatments when designing roadworks (like grass swales and filtration ponds), and improving waterway

health and restoring riparian corridors as bio-links as a means of improving ecosystem connectivity across the Shire.

3.6.2 Utility Analysis

Services and infrastructure for the township are critical in determining the growth opportunities for Romsey. Recent work prepared by Cardno identified the following issues.

Sewerage

The Romsey Recycled Water Plant (RRWP) treats sewage from Romsey and Lancefield and is nearing capacity. Greater Western Water (GWW) are planning a significant upgrade of the capacity of the RRWP. The buffer from the RRWP to residential development is currently under assessment including the impact of the upgrade.

GWW's only currently planned future sewer asset in Romsey comprises a proposed branch sewer to provide gravity outfall for the Lomandra and Autumn Views residential estates at the southern edge of town. This will allow for the removal of the temporary sewer pump stations currently servicing this area.

GWW has advised that generally land to the south of this is too low to be controlled by the existing sewer. A dedicated sewerage pump station and rising main back to the RRWP would be required to service growth to the south.

GWW has advised that large areas of growth would need to be assessed on a case by case basis to understand the impact of this growth on the sewer network. Any significant growth to the west of Romsey may be problematic as it is the furthest point from the RRWP and the network here is of minimal size. Significant augmentation of the sewer network through the centre of Romsey may be required to have sufficient capacity to cater for growth to the west.

Water Supply

GWW expect that there is some capacity in their existing potable water supply network to cater for additional growth in Romsey, with peak day water demands dropping significantly from allowances in their previous modelling. Network modelling is required to assess the impact of both the water supply demands and

the location of proposed large scale development. GWW is currently investigating options for the long term water supply for Romsey and Lancefield. The current supply sources can supply both towns for the short to medium term, with further investigations required for longer term solutions including a mass water balance project for the region.

The RRWP currently has limited capacity to manage additional recycled water produced from additional development through local reuse solutions. The planned upgrade of the RRWP will include additional recycled water storage to better manage recycled water levels across the year. GWW are also progressing Stage 2 of the Romsey Irrigation Upgrade which allows for more recycled water to be supplied to the irrigation site south of the plant.

Integrated Water Management options have been recently assessed by Council and opportunities have been identified for the use of recycled and alternative water sources to reduce potable water demand and increase the availability of potable water.

Electricity Supply

Powercor's 22kV overhead feeder that currently supplies Romsey has reached capacity and a new feeder is required to be brought to the area to provide more load for future development. The provision of underground cables to new development areas requires additional electrical infrastructure for bushfire protection and needs to be assessed by Powercor to ensure that this additional infrastructure can be provided.

Gas Supply

Ausnet Services gas supply infrastructure in Romsey will require upgrading to service significant additional growth in the town. It should be noted that encouraging growth of the gas network is inconsistent with Council's policy to limit fossil fuel use.

Telecommunications

NBN Co provides fixed line services to Romsey and they advise that their current infrastructure has capacity to service any long term planned expansion of the township without the need for any new key infrastructure.

Council has previously assessed the provision of mobile internet in the municipality. Council engagement with the individual carriers is important to achieving improvement in mobile internet.

3.6.3 Sustainability Opportunities

Further work to understand the environmental and sustainability opportunities available to the town has been prepared by Hip V. Hype.

The report presents the environmental and sustainability issues and opportunities that exist within Romsey to ensure the town's development is sustainable and adheres and responds to the impacts of climate change, while elevating the natural assets and connection with the environment.

Due to recent population growth and the increased pressures on Romsey (and regional towns) as a result of COVID-19, ensuring development is climate responsive, fosters economic development and creates community is critical.

A range of Council policy documents provide direction in developing a range of options that could be considered in developing the Structure Plan. These include Council's Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Action Plan, Environment Strategy, Heat Response Plan and the Five Mile Creek Masterplan.

Six opportunities have been developed that would provide a range of benefits to the town related to sustainable transport, health and wellbeing, lower greenhouse gas emissions (with new development being connected only to electricity infrastructure and not gas), social cohesion, climate action and adaptation, community connection with natural assets, ecological restoration and waterway health and increased climate resilience. These environmental opportunities are summarised **Figure 31**.

What we have previously heard:

Consultation to date identified issues with the quality of mobile and internet connections in the town. Concern was also raised about the high level of car dependence.

Settlement Principles

The Settlement boundary should be guided by the following principles:

- Promote urban consolidation and a town structure that minimises reliance on vehicles and their subsequent greenhouse gas emissions and walkability to increase health and wellbeing.
- Increase activity within proximity to Main Street to increase economic development and keep benefits within the township.
- Servicing capacity which highlights that growth to the west may be constrained.
- Maintain buffers to waterways.
- Ensure land provision in close proximity to the town to future proof the town's energy and water needs.
- Minimise the size of the town and make the most efficient use of land.

Potential Responses

- Enhance environmental assets of the town and create a healthy urban forest for shade and urban cooling.
- Increase climate resilience of the town through reduced reliance on electricity and gas from the grid and support for renewable sources of energy.
- Consult with utility providers in relation to proposed township development options and implications for future infrastructure.
- Best practice examples of integrated water management (IWM), including stormwater management (SWM) and water sensitive urban design (WSUD).
- Manage roadsides as vegetation corridors contributing to biodiversity protection.
- Encourage the planting of species at the edges of town that won't become environmental weeds.
- Protect any identified remnant patches of Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC55).

ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN
Environmental Opportunities

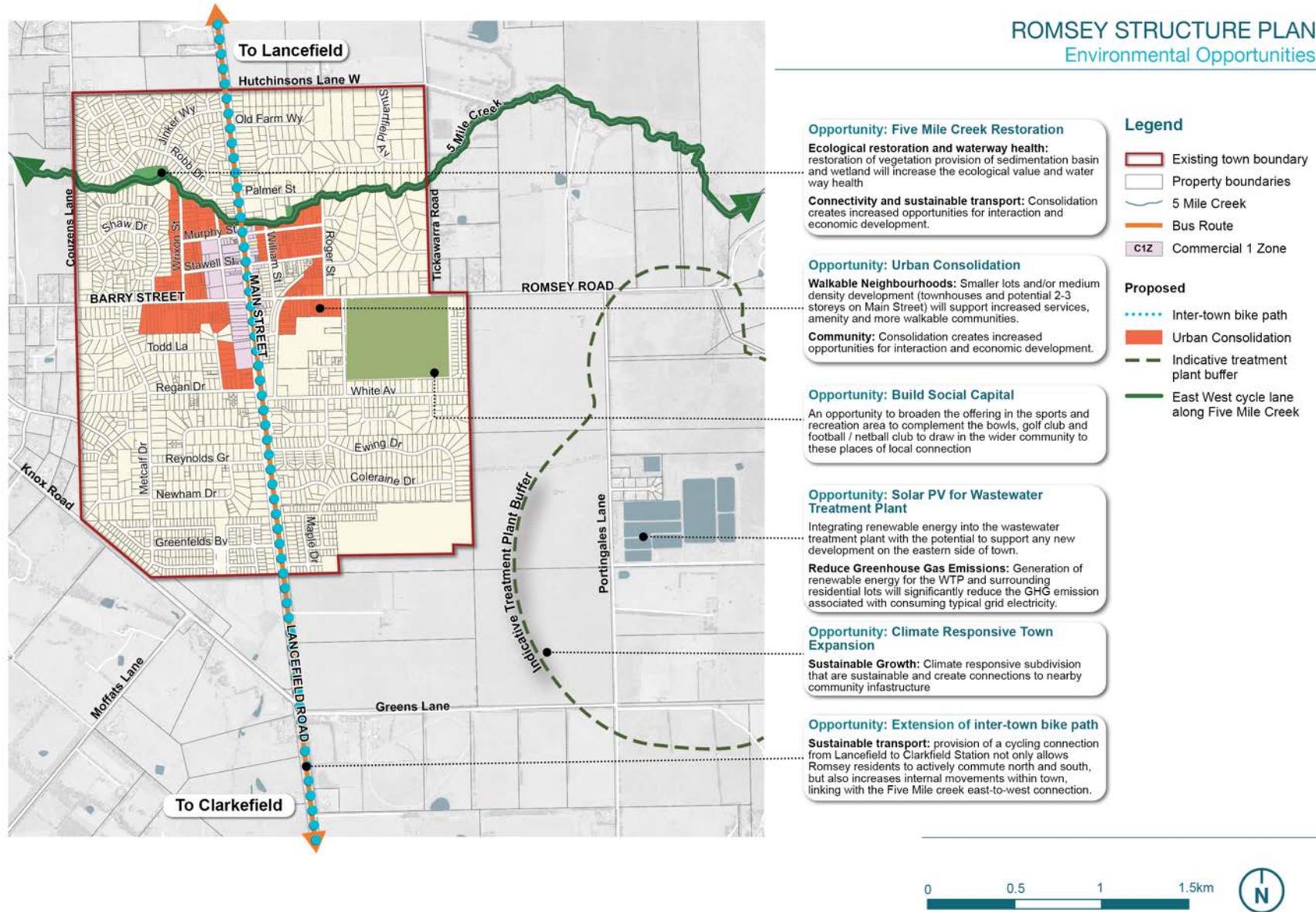


Figure 31: Romsey Environmental Opportunities

- Ensure any new development near Five Mile and Deep Creek contributes to biodiversity conservation and improves waterway health and riparian habitat.
- Design new development with climate change in mind including orientation, provision of vegetation and shade canopy and thermal performance.
- Consider opportunities for the circular economy through supporting industry, e.g. reuse of waste water for irrigation.
- Investigate options for a micro-grid to power the growth of the township.
- Install a public electric vehicle charging station in the Main Street.
- Ensuring development is not located on the immediate edges of the creeks to limit impact on water quality.

Have your Say

What are your thoughts on the opportunities proposed?

4. SETTLEMENT PRINCIPLES

4.1 Settlement Principles and Constraints in Determining a Settlement Boundary

The new Romsey Structure Plan needs to establish a new settlement boundary for the town. This paper has identified a range of considerations to guide the establishment of the boundary.

The settlement principles and constraints are collated below with key considerations illustrated in **Figure 32** including:

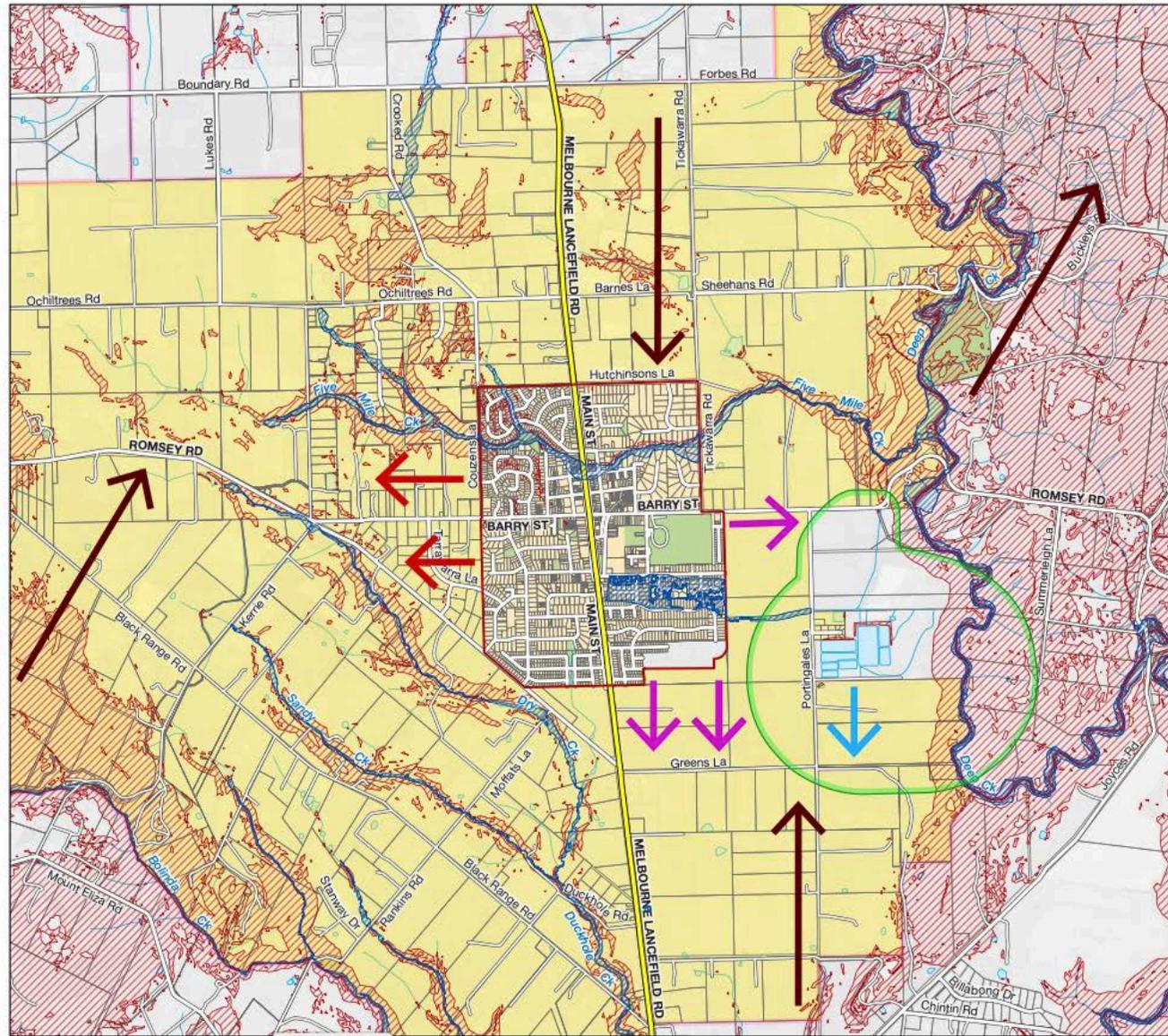
- Maintain settlement boundaries and a visual break between Romsey and Lancefield.
- Ensure growth does not impact on the visual and environmental setting of the township.
- Carefully consider any township expansion into agricultural land.
- Locate development away from areas of high bushfire risk.
- Locate development to minimise the impact on the flood plain.
- Link new development into the existing town structure with permeable, walkable links to the town centre.
- Reinforcing the town centre as the commercial and civic heart of the town.
- Providing additional employment areas to meet the needs of the population.
- Using the buffer area of the RRWP to act as limit to the town's eastward and southward expansion.
- Increase the town's population to enable appropriate services and facilities to be provided.
- Service the community facilities and cultural needs of the town's population.
- Increase the concentration of development within 400m of the town centre to increase the walkability and foot traffic in the town centre.
- Create an urban structure that promotes walking.
- Promote urban consolidation and a town structure that minimises reliance on vehicles and their subsequent greenhouse gas emissions and walkability to increase health and wellbeing.

- Increase activity within proximity to Main Street to increase economic development and keep benefits within the township.
- Servicing capacity which highlights that growth to the west may be constrained and that new, extensive infrastructure would be required for growth to the south and east.
- Maintain buffers to waterways.
- Ensure land provision in close proximity to the town to future proof the town's energy and water needs.
- Minimise the size of the town and make the most efficient use of land.

Have your Say

What are your thoughts on the settlement Principles proposed?

Is anything missing?



Screenshot

ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN Key settlement constraints

Legend

- Carefully consider loss of agricultural land
- Odour and dust buffer limits residential and sensitive land uses
- Bushfire risk is high and development is discouraged where human life cannot be adequately protected
- Flooding risk limits development potential
- Existing town boundary

- Key fire directions
- Significant sewage network upgrades may be required to grow west
- New extensive sewage infrastructure would be required to grow south and east
- Recycled water opportunities

Notes:

Electricity infrastructure requires upgrading to service town growth.



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CARTOGRAPHY: SV (L) | SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 32: Settlement Boundary – Key Settlement Constraints

5. EMERGING OPTIONS

5.1 Exploring Options for the Growth of Romsey

In exploring options for the growth of the Romsey township, the challenge is growing the town without losing the things that make Romsey a place where people want to live, work and recreate. Finding the right mix of population to support different services and facilities needs to be balanced against the impacts of that growth on agricultural land, landscape and environmental values, environmental risks and infrastructure capability.

The options presented are aimed to stimulate debate and discussion with the community and stakeholders. They are for testing and discussion and therefore not absolute. A combination of options may be the preferred outcome. The feedback from the community and stakeholders will be used to determine the settlement boundary and to guide the development of the structure plan.

5.2 What Might Different Township Populations Look Like?

Based on the three scenarios for potential growth presented earlier in this paper, the following diagram provides an indication of the land take required to meet those populations to illustrate visually the area of land that may be required. This assumes growth continues in the same pattern and form as experienced over the recent past. This is the current average lot size in Romsey of 1,500 sqm. A scenario of a higher density outcome of 850 sqm is also presented along with a further scenario (Scenario 4) which illustrates the land take to achieve a town population of 10,000 people (upper end of settlement strategy in Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme). **Figure 33** shows visually the land take that may be required to meet each of the four population scenarios.



Figure 33: Romsey Population and Growth Scenarios - Land Requirements

**Scenarios are based on work prepared by Tim Nott Economics and Strategy. Scenario assumptions include: existing vacant land is developed at recent densities; around half of the medium density housing requirement will be developed within the existing town boundary; housing lots occupy 70% of any broad-hectare land development, with the remainder required for open space, roads and community facilities*

5.3 Settlement Options

The following settlement options outline a range of ways the town could grow. These are assessed for their settlement boundary implications through considering their impact from an economic, social and environmental perspective (performance assessment) to enable consideration by the community of the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Options for residential, commercial and industrial growth are outlined.

5.4 Option 1: Development Within Existing Town Boundary

This option seeks to explore growing the town within the existing town boundary with a focus on a corridor along Main Street. Approximately 35-40% of residents live within 400m of the Main Street and about 60% live within 800m (ten-minute walk). The vast majority of residents in Romsey live within a 1.2km radius of Main Street. The potential net community benefit of this option is included in **Table 2**.

Development would occur on vacant land and through increasing the density of housing on existing lots. There are currently 142 vacant blocks within the existing town boundary equivalent to approximately 63.42 ha as shown in **Figure 34**.

Based on a vacant land being able to contribute an additional 3 residential dwellings (averaged out – some may be able to deliver more and some less), this option would provide an additional population* in the range of 1,115 people. Further consolidation opportunities through increased densities within 400m of Main Street could provide in the range of 2800** people living within the existing town boundary in a range of new housing and mixed use forms.

*population is based on average household number (2.6 persons per household)

**based on 1223 lots within 400m zone of Main Street minus the 142 vacant lots. One additional lot created on each lot multiplied by the household size (2.6 persons per household).

Performance Element	Issue
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Main Street and increased economic activity. • Unlikely to deliver significant population growth. • Requires high quality design to ensure neighbourhood character is not impacted.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth unlikely to support full line supermarket and other services and facilities. • Provides a range of new housing types for the community enabling ageing in place. • Promotes healthy lifestyles.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserves agricultural land. • A more compact town is good for walking and cycling and provision of public transport. • Maintain existing visual break between towns. • Potential to reduce car dependence. • Retain land on the edge of town for environmental uses, with the buffer zone of the RRWP being planted up/used for environmental offsets, or becoming a solar farm. • Minimal impact on utility services. • Minimises traffic congestion. • Reduced transport-related financial burdens on households • Maintains rural feel.

Table 2: Option 1 – Performance Assessment

Option 1 for development within the existing town boundary is shown in **Figure 35**.

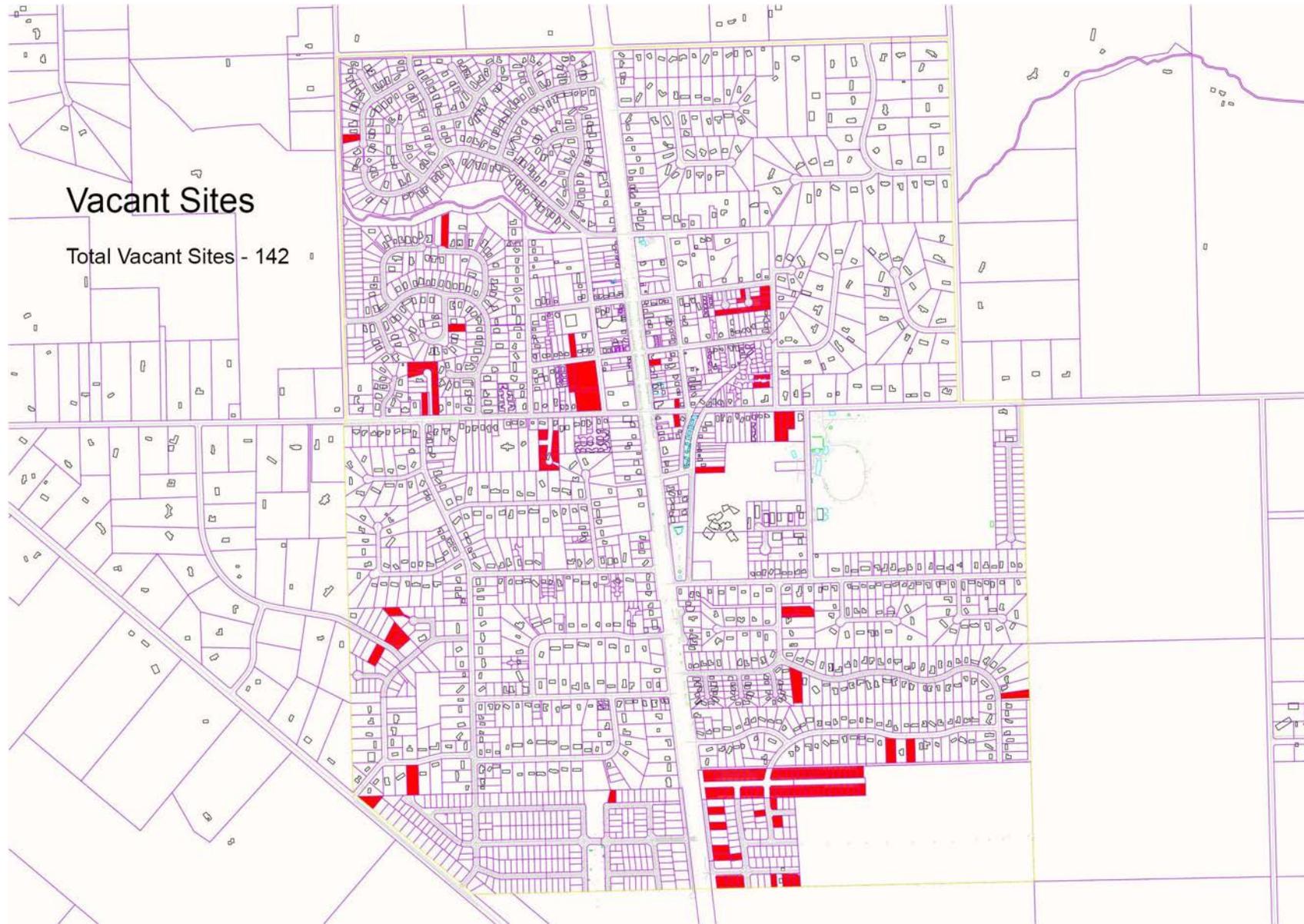
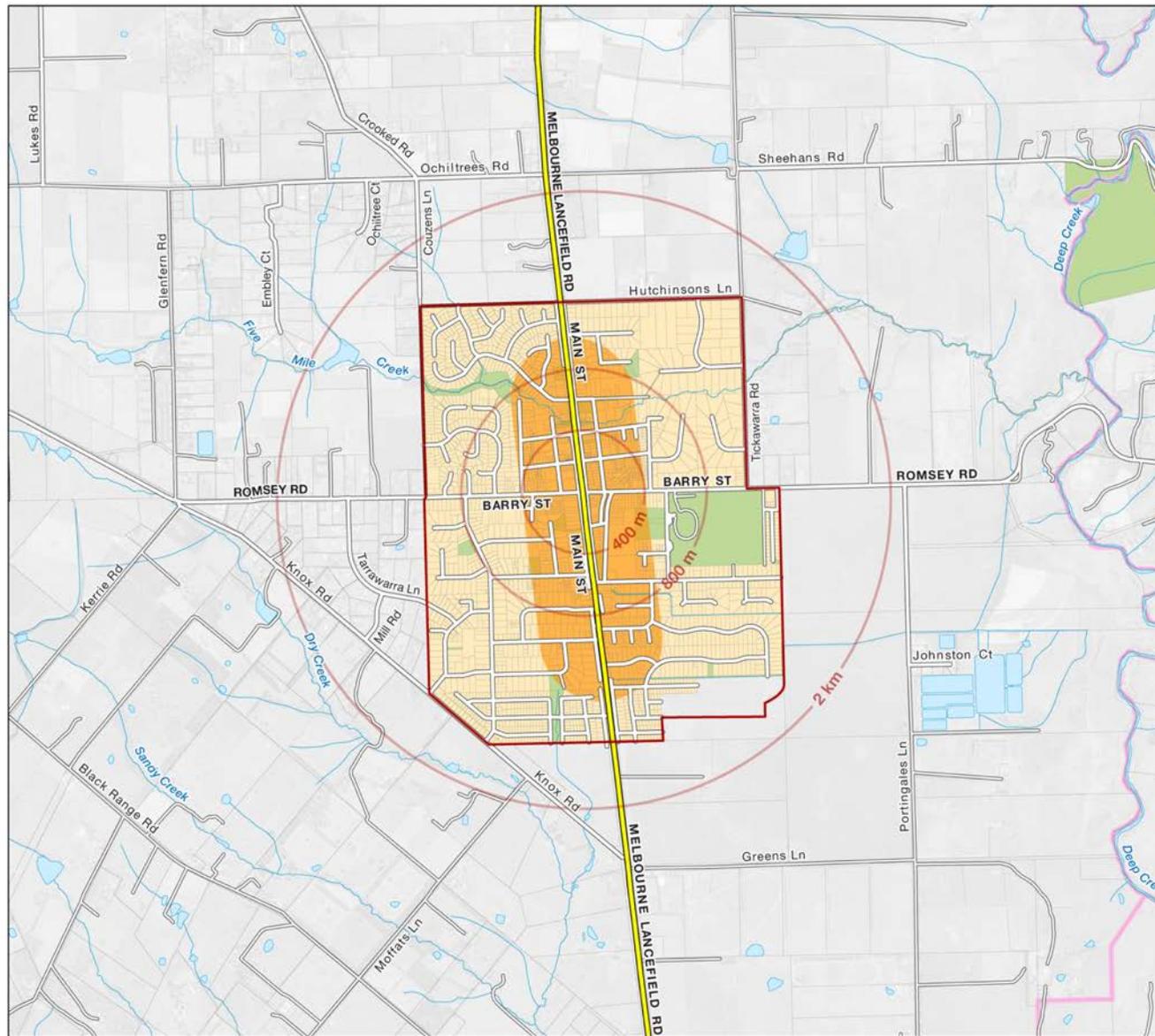


Figure 34: Romsey Vacant Lots



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN Option 1

Development within existing town boundary

Legend

-  Main street 400m catchment
-  Existing town boundary

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km



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CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 35: Option 1 - Development Within Existing Town Boundary

5.5 Option 2: North and West Growth

This option seeks to explore the township growing into existing Rural Living Zone land to the west and north of the town along the Five Mile Creek.

As a result of this option, anticipated numbers of residential lots for development based on differing lot sizes are included in **Table 3**.

Option 2 for development to the north and west of the existing town boundary is shown in **Figure 36**.

An assessment of the option is included in **Table 4**.

Anticipated Residential Development Lots* and Population*		
Low Density (1,500sqm)	Medium Density (800sqm)	High Density (660 sqm)
2,257 lots	4,193 lots	5,031 lots
5,868 people	10,901 people	13,080 people

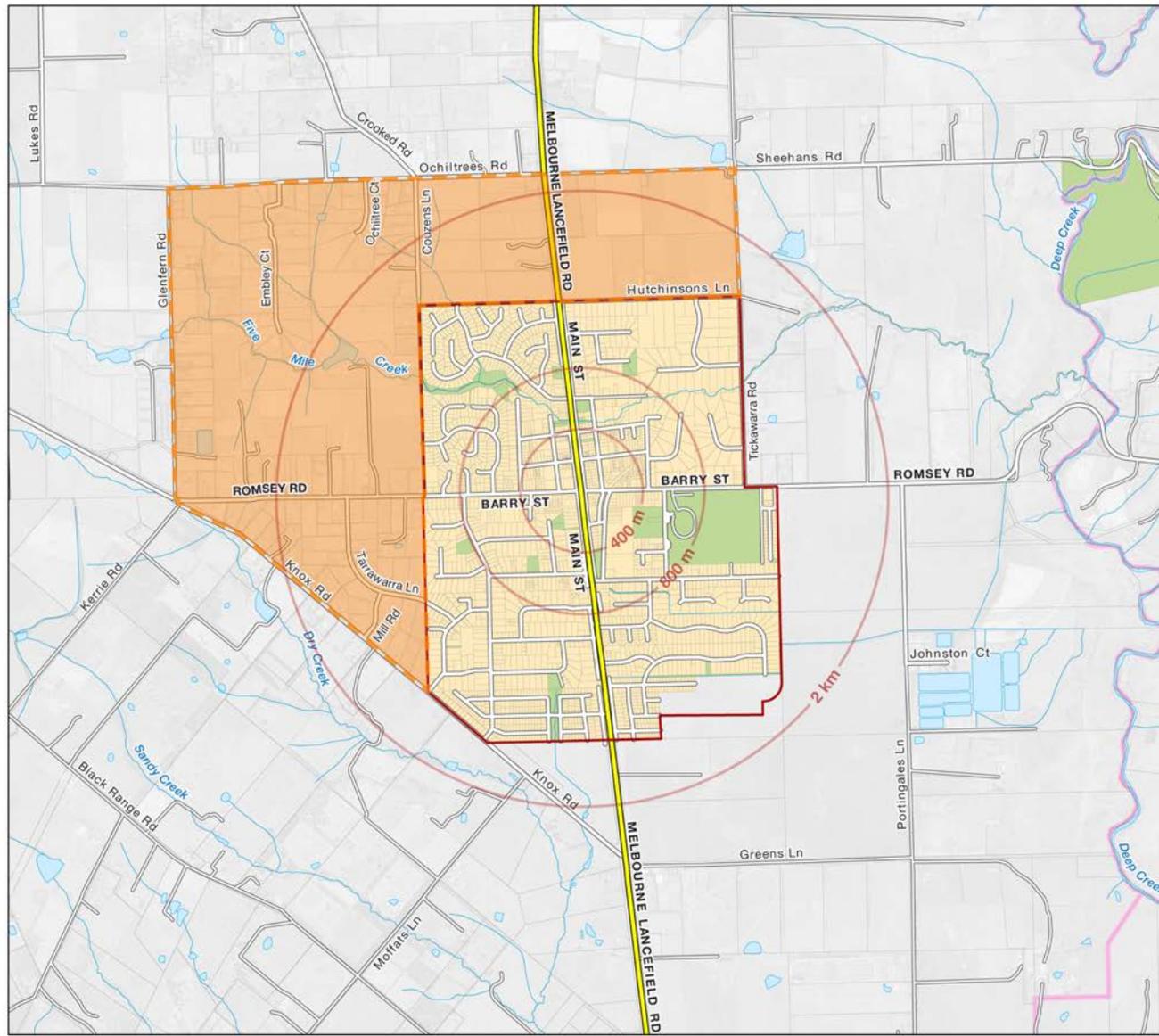
**population is based on average household number (2.6 persons per household)*

Table 3: Option 2 – Anticipated Residential Development Lots and Population in Option 2

This highlights that developing all the land in the north and west of the town will deliver significantly more population than is required to meet the settlement size of a large district town.

Performance Element	Issue
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could deliver significant population. • Requires high quality design to ensure neighbourhood character is not impacted. • A number of the blocks are already developed making a good urban form and structure challenging in some areas. • Servicing capacity limitations and cost likely to be higher.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth likely to support full line supermarket and other services and facilities. • Likely to deliver same forms of housing as currently exist. • Car dependency is further entrenched. • Not conducive to further investment in public transport services. • Adverse health impacts as a result of sedentary lifestyles.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Mile Creek becomes a focus of movement and open space through the town. • Higher environmental and landscape values. • Topography makes achieving development problematic and development form is likely to have significant impact on landform. • Increased bushfire risk to the town on the western side. • Reduces rural break between Romsey and Lancefield. • Higher levels of traffic congestion than would be typical in a rural township • Potential erosion of township character and rural feel. • Loss of agricultural land.

Table 4: Option 2 – Performance Assessment

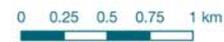


ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN
Option 2

North and West Growth

Legend

-  Potential expansion areas
-  Existing town boundary



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DATUM GDA 2020, PROJECTION MGA ZONE 55
CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 36: Option 2 - North and West Growth

5.6 Option 3: East and South Expansion

This option would see the township grow into existing Rural Living Zone land to the east of the town along the Five Mile Creek and south into Farming Zone land.

As a result of this option, anticipated numbers of residential lots for development based on differing lot sizes are included in **Table 5**.

Option 3 for development to the east and south of the existing town boundary is shown in **Figure 37**.

An assessment of this option is included in **Table 6**.

Anticipated Residential Development Lots* and Population*		
Low Density (1,500sqm)	Medium Density (800sqm)	High Density (660 sqm)
1,701 lots	3,189 lots	3,826 lots
4,422 people	8,290 people	9,950 people

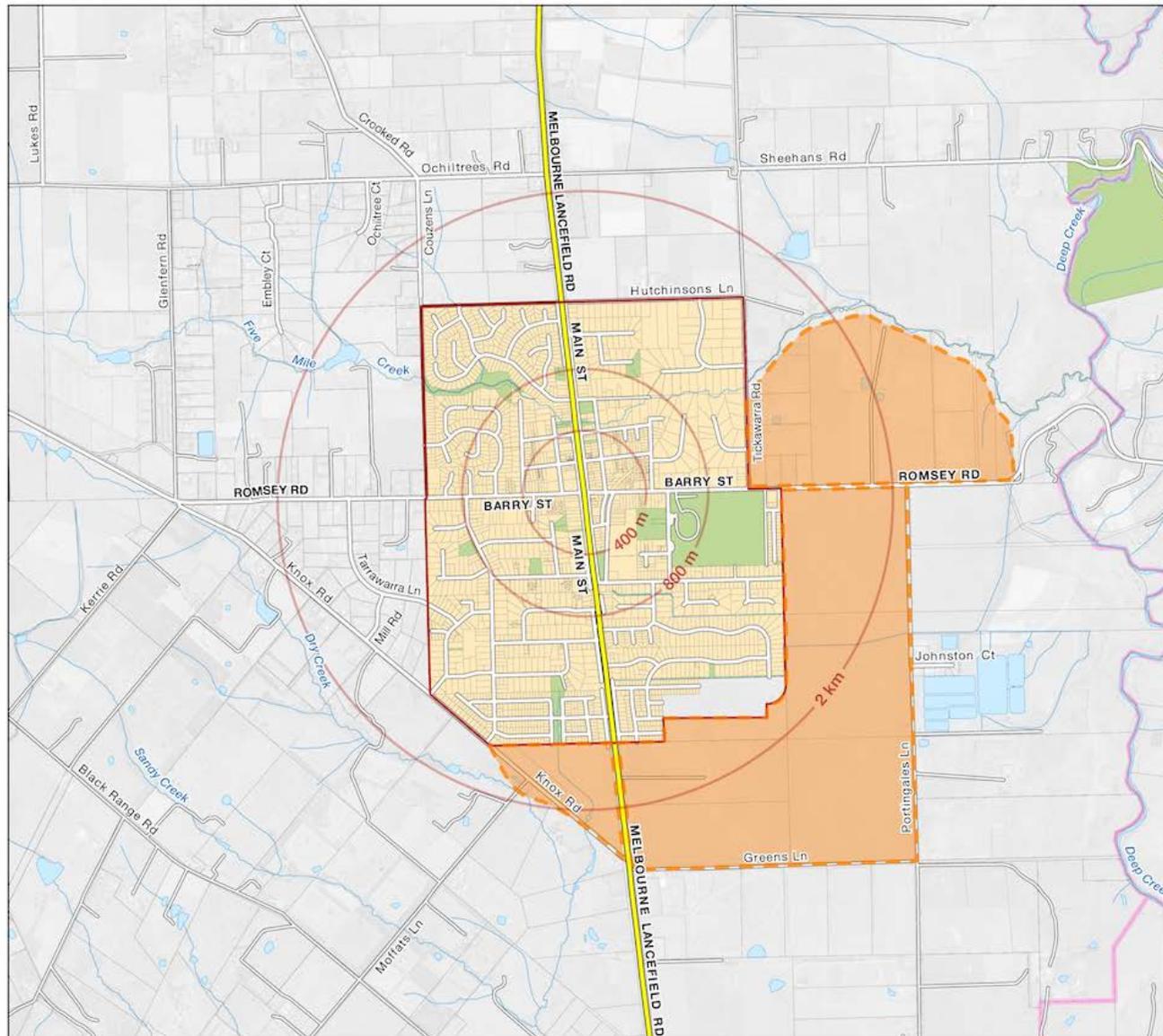
Table 5: Option 3 – Anticipated Residential Development Lots and Population

**population is based on average household number (2.6 persons per household)*

This highlights that developing all the land in the east and south of the town will deliver significantly more than is required to meet the settlement size of a large district town.

Performance Element	Issue
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could deliver significant population. • Requires high quality design to ensure neighbourhood character is not impacted. • Blocks are undeveloped providing the opportunity for good urban form and structure to be established. • Servicing capacity limitations and cost likely to be lower. • Waste Water treatment buffer limits residential development potential. • Impacts investment by GWW in recycled water for irrigation in area. • Consideration of land for employment uses in this area.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth likely to support full line supermarket and other services and facilities. • Delivers same forms of housing as currently exists. • Car dependency is further entrenched. • Not conducive to further investment in public transport services. • Adverse health impacts as a result of sedentary lifestyles.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Mile Creek becomes a focus of movement and open space through the town. • Reduced bushfire risk to the town. • Higher levels of traffic congestion than would be typical in a rural township • Reduced visual impact limiting township character and rural feel. • Loss of agricultural land.

Table 6: Option 3 – Performance Assessment



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN Option 3

East and South Growth

Legend

-  Potential expansion areas
-  Existing town boundary

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km



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CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 37: Option 3 - East and South Expansion

5.7 Facilitating the Commercial Core

There are two options for facilitating the growth of the town centre. As there is enough zoned land, the challenge is to facilitate existing vacant sites and sequencing in line with population growth. The creation of a new activity centre in Romsey on the outskirts of the town for new residential development would be a poor outcome for the Main Street and town centre and is not recommended. There is significant capacity in the town centre and surrounds for additional commercial and residential development as shown in **Figure 34**. Preserving a suitable site for a full line supermarket is important. **Figure 38** shows two potential sites for a future full line supermarket and associated facilities and how this can support the town.

Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) land is applied to employment land for offices and restricted retailing and can have an important role as a buffer between residential land and industrial land. There is a small amount of C2Z in the town along Romsey-Lancefield Road that is yet to be developed for employment purposes. Land in this zone can benefit from high exposure locations but can result in poor image and identity if not well located and designed. This suggests that another more appropriate location could be found in the town for this type of land.

5.8 Growing Industrial and Sustainable Services

The Structure Plan needs to find appropriate locations for an additional 10 – 17 ha of industrial land. The current Industrial 1 Zone and Commercial 2 Zone land on Greens Lane has not been developed to date.

In planning for new industrial land, State planning policy at Clauses 17.03-1 and 17.03-2 of the VPP requires consideration of the following:

“Provide an adequate supply of industrial land in appropriate locations including sufficient stocks of large sites for strategic investment.

Identify land for industrial development in urban growth areas where:

- *Good access for employees, freight and road transport is available.*

- *Appropriate buffer areas can be provided between the proposed industrial land and nearby sensitive land uses.*

Protect and carefully plan existing industrial areas to, where possible, facilitate further industrial development.

Avoid approving non-industrial land uses that will prejudice the availability of land in identified industrial areas for future industrial use.”...

“Protect industrial activity in industrial zones from the encroachment of commercial, residential and other sensitive uses that would adversely affect industry viability...

Provide adequate separation and buffer areas between sensitive uses and offensive or dangerous industries and quarries to ensure that residents are not affected by adverse environmental effects, nuisance or exposure to hazards.”

This limits options for locating new industrial land to an area not currently adjacent to existing residential and other sensitive land uses. Land in the vicinity of Greens Lane and Portingales Lane provides an opportunity to meet these requirements with industrial and employment options shown in **Figure 39**.

Have your Say

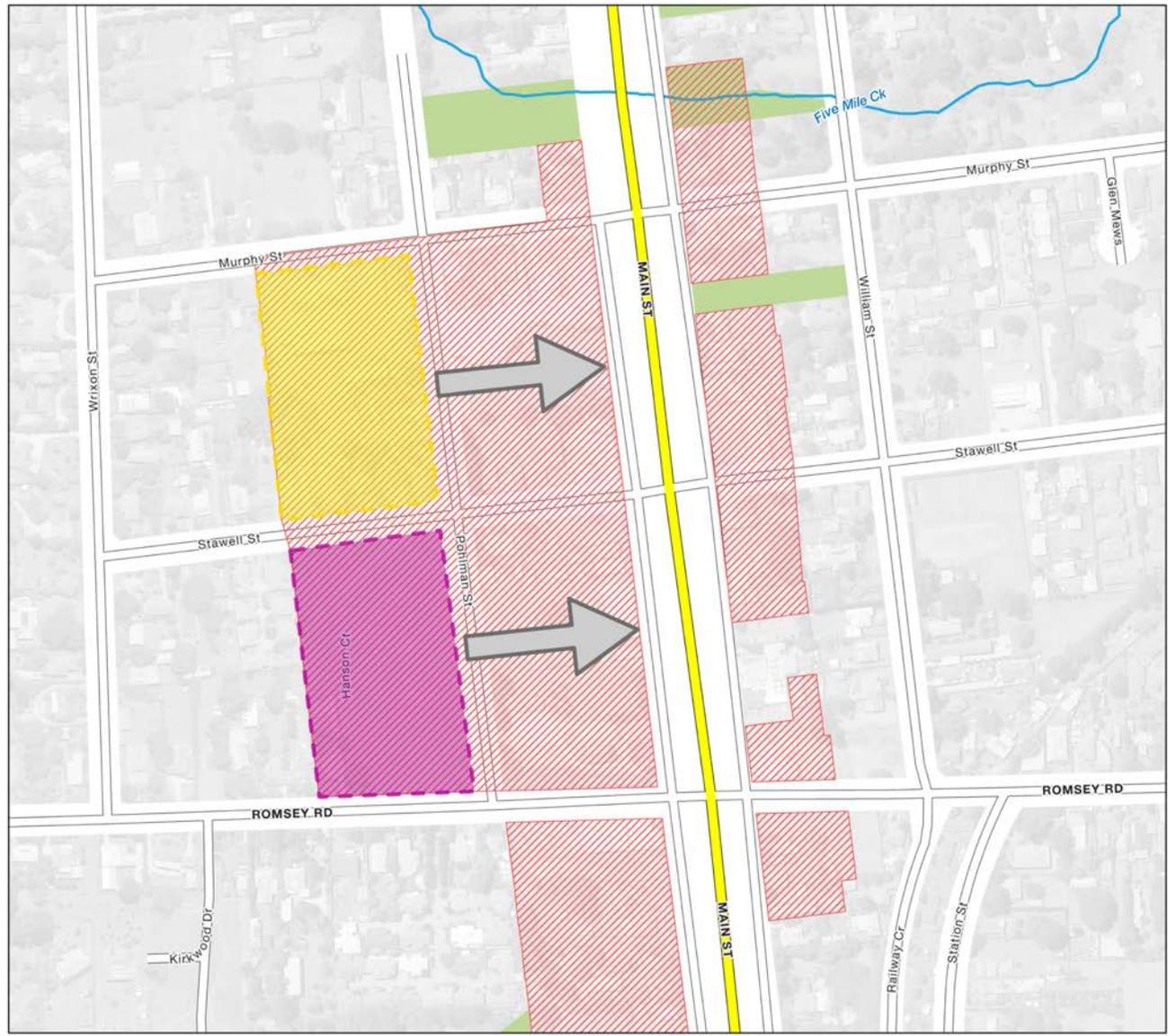
Should the town boundary be expanded to allow for more housing and commercial/ industrial development ?

What do you think about the various options presented for the growth of Romsey?

Which option best protects the elements you value of Romsey?

Which component of the options do you like and dislike?

Are there any options we haven't considered?



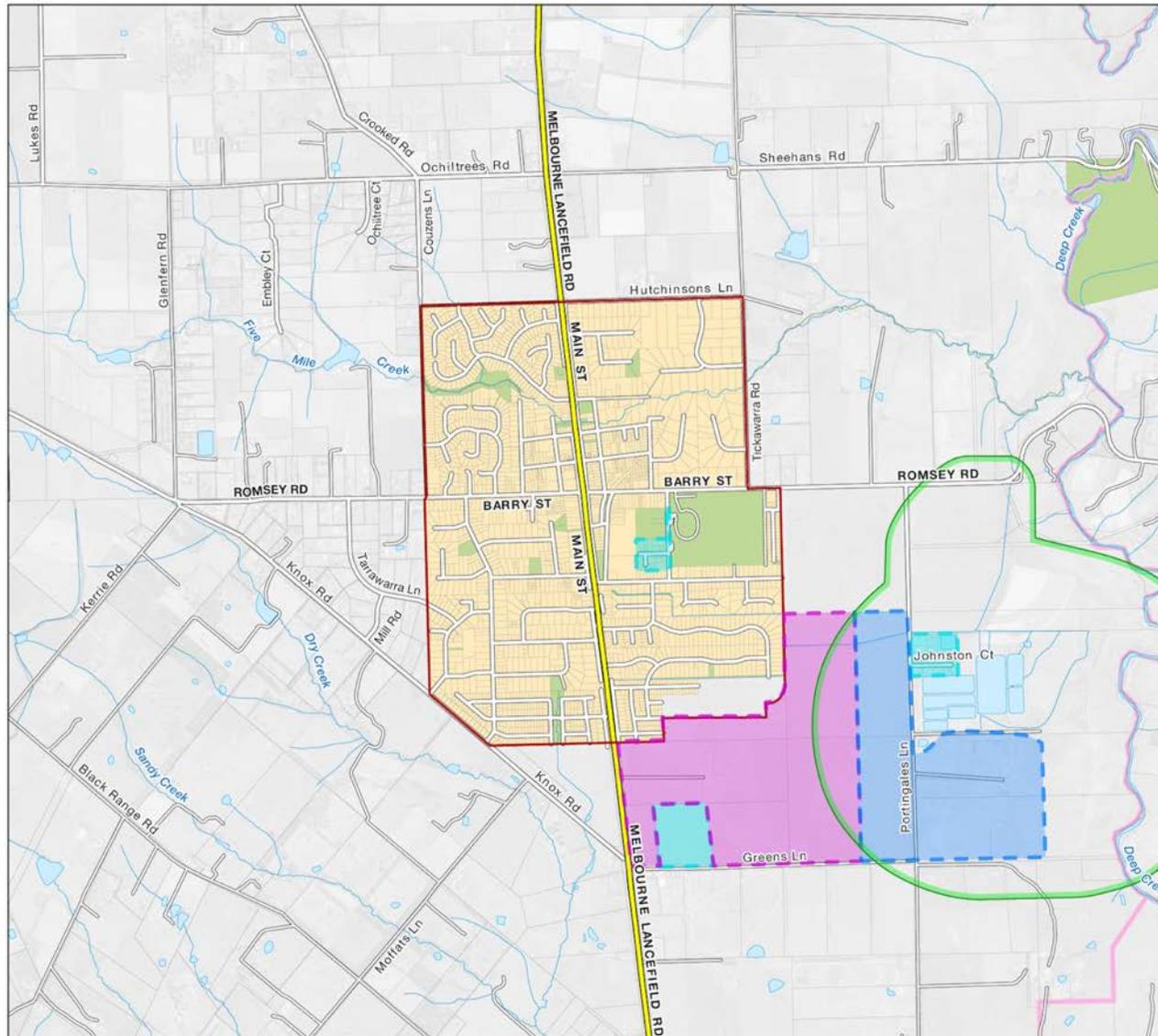
ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN
Commercial facilitation options

Legend

-  Murphy / Pohlman / Main St
-  Stawell / Pohlman / Main St
-  Existing commercial zone (C1Z)



Figure 38: Commercial Facilitation Options



ROMSEY STRUCTURE PLAN
Industrial and employment options

- Legend**
- Industry and sustainability services opportunities
 - Employment uses e.g. agriculture and horticulture
 - Existing industrial zoned land
 - Recommended EPAV separation
 - Existing town boundary

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km N

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DATUM GDA 2020, PROJECTION MGA ZONE 55
CARTOGRAPHY: SV (JR), SOURCES: DELWP, MRSC

Figure 39: Industrial and Employment Options

6. NEXT STEPS

Feedback on the Emerging Options

We look forward to receiving your feedback on the ideas proposed in this emerging options paper including the draft vision and objectives. Feedback on the paper will be used to inform the development of a structure plan and identify any further work required. A Community Engagement Summary will be published in April/May 2022.

In mid 2022, we will release a draft of the new structure plan. There will be an opportunity for the community and other stakeholders to engage on the draft plan. The Romsey Structure Plan will be presented to Council for adoption in late 2022. Council will then start implementing the plan, including the preparation of a Planning Scheme Amendment and other actions to implement the plan guided by the plan's vision.

How the Structure Plan Can Influence the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme

The Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme can be used to implement those elements of the new structure plan that influence land use and development. This could include changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy and local planning policy that provide local policy directions.

New zones could be applied that allow different uses to occur on land. These can be supported by overlays that set requirements for development such as the built form and responses to flooding impacts. These options would be outlined in the draft Structure Plan to enable community input. Any changes to the MRPS require a formal exhibition period where submissions are considered and assessed by Council and an independent Panel before a final decision is made.