

WOODEND

TOWN STRUCTURE PLAN & NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | MAY 2014

Adopted by Council 28th May 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Project Control

Status	Version	PM checked	PD checked	Date released
Draft Woodend Town Structure Plan	1	HK	LR	October 2013
Final Woodend Town Structure Plan	1	HK	LR	May 2014

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Urban Enterprise (population analysis, economics): Paul Shipp, Matt Ainsaar

GTA Consultants (transport): Tom Courtice

TGM (infrastructure overview): Joe Lynch

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Why do a Plan?

The preparation of the Woodend Town Structure Plan is a means of developing a collective vision for the future of the township, and how it might evolve in a sustainable way over the next 15-20+ years.

Through consultation and dialogue, the Plan has assembled input from the local community and stakeholders, the Community Reference Group and the Council into a tangible strategy for the future.

As a key issue for the Woodend community, the Plan has examined in detail the potential growth in population and how this might be accommodated.

The Plan also addresses the many other factors that influence the township's role, function, character, amenity and sense of place.

The Town Structure Plan presents a vision for the future of the township, and details how this vision might be achieved. Strategies and actions for the future are suggested.

The Final Plan includes prioritised actions and responsibilities to ensure that the vision of the Plan is realised.

Study Aims

The main aims of the project are to:

- Consider the outcomes and recommendations of the Planning Panel appointed to hear submissions to Amendment C84 to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, which seeks to implement Council's Settlement Strategy;
- Provide an assessment of the estimated population growth for Woodend, based upon 2011 census data;
- Assess the demand for additional residential, commercial and industrial land;
- Prepare a neighbourhood character study of the town's residential and commercial areas, taking into account heritage and landscape values;
- Identify opportunity sites for medium density housing;
- Consider the need to provide additional land for open space, recreation, education and community facilities;
- Analyse traffic circulation, parking needs and pedestrian / cycling links through the town and identify improvements that could be made to the transport network;
- Assessment of drainage and flooding issues, servicing requirements for new development and bushfire risk; and
- Integrate community suggestions and feedback in all stages of the project to inform the preparation of the Plan, including the responses received to the Issues Paper prepared in 2012.

Project Stages & Consultation

The preparation of the Woodend Town Structure Plan has been undertaken over five stages:

1. **Background Analysis & Discussion Paper**
April - June 2013
2. **Draft Structure Plan Preparation**
July - October 2013
3. **Draft Structure Plan Exhibition**
November - December 2013
4. **Final Structure Plan**
May 2014
5. **Planning Scheme Amendment**
2014 - 2015

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Existing studies, reference documents and the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme have formed the background to the preparation of the Woodend Town Structure Plan.

These documents and their implications for the Plan are detailed in Appendix A: Background Review and include:

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- Statement of Planning Policy No. 8 - Macedon Ranges & Surrounds, 1975
- Land Capacity Study Shire of Newham and Woodend, 1992
- Planning Scheme Review for Shire of Newham and Woodend, 1994
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- Assessment of Selected Activity Centres in the Macedon Ranges, June 2010

- Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy, 2011, and background documents:
 - Draft Landscape Character Study, 2010
 - Sustainable Communities Report, 2010
- Woodend Town Structure Plan Issues Paper, 2012
- Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.
- Amendment C84 Exhibition Documents and September 2013 updates
- Interim and Final Panel Report – C84 to Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme
- Black Gum Strategy, 1984
- Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan, 2014
- DPCD Practice Note: Understanding Neighbourhood Character, 2001

THE STUDY AREA

The study area for the Town Structure Plan includes the existing township plus a broad area of surrounding land, shown on the map opposite and defined as follows.

Township Boundary

The township area is shown by the red line on the map opposite. This is the town boundary as adopted by Council for Amendment C84 and accepted in the Final Panel Report - Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme C84, April 2014 at Appendix B - Recommended MSS, Clause 21.13-3.

Settlement Strategy Study Area

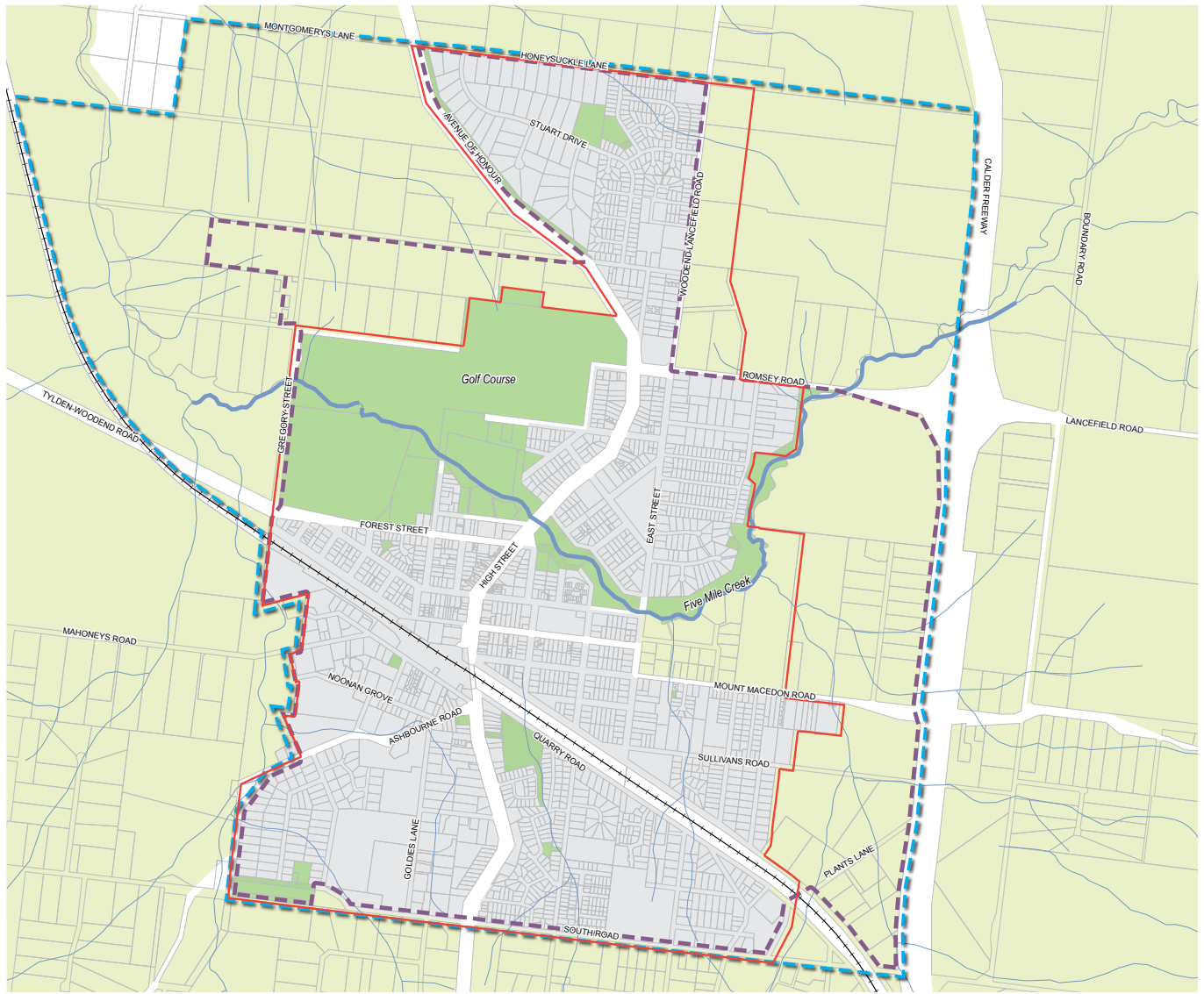
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This study area boundary was not intended to represent a proposed 'town boundary' for the purpose of containing urban growth. Rather, it was chosen to ensure that the future direction for Woodend was assessed with proper consideration of its rural living surrounds.

Town Structure Plan Study Area

A broad study area was adopted for the Town Structure Plan project, including rural zoned land to the east, northeast and northwest of the existing MSS town boundary.

As directed by the Planning Panel appointed to hear submissions relating to Amendment C84, this has allowed options for long-term future expansion of the town to be assessed in terms of known constraints and clear recommendations about future growth or containment to be made.



- - - Town Structure Plan study area
- Township boundary
- - - Settlement Strategy study area
- Property boundaries
- +—+— Railway
- Open space
- Rural zoned land
- Urban zoned land
- Creeks & waterways

STUDY AREA



VIEWS OF THE WOODEND COMMUNITY: WHAT WE'VE HEARD

The Woodend community have played an active role in the preparation of the Town Structure Plan.

To date, consultation has included:

- Written comments on the Issues Paper, September 2012.
- Photographs and written submissions for the Neighbourhood Character Photographic Survey, January 2013.
- Written comments on the Discussion Paper, April 2013.
- Community Workshop attended by over 100 residents, April 2013.
- 'Drop In' Information Afternoon/Evening in November 2013 attended by more than 30 residents.
- Consultation of the draft Structure Plan which received 40 submissions.

In addition, a Community Reference Group (CRG) formed in March 2013 has provided input and feedback at each project stage.

The thoughts and ideas of the Woodend community have been integral in forming the directions of the Plan. Numerous good ideas for Woodend's future have been suggested and these have been included wherever possible.

Quotes from community submissions are used in each topic theme to illustrate the range of views. Community photos provided through the Neighbourhood Character Photographic Survey are used throughout the report.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Township Role and Function

- Woodend is seen as a rural village, part of the Goldfields region, and not an outpost of Melbourne.
- Many people consider the Settlement Strategy with its low growth scenario to accurately reflect the consensus of the Woodend community.
- Most people believe the township does not need to expand outside the existing boundary as shown in the Planning Scheme.
- There is concern that significant growth would destroy the town's character and heritage, and create problems with traffic, infrastructure provision and basic amenity.
- However, some believe the pros and cons of allowing carefully managed development outside existing town boundaries as a longer term strategy should be considered.
- Woodend needs to provide various housing options for those who live, work and socialise locally, as well as those who commute to Melbourne, Bendigo or the major centres in the region.
- High value is placed upon local shops in terms of the town's identity and the benefit they bring to the tourist trade, as well as the ethic of shopping where you live.
- The theme of 'between the bridges' is a common term used to express how the commercial area of the town centre should be contained.

- The issue of local employment opportunities is important. This includes support for youth employment, and fostering a greater range of service and home based businesses.
- The tourism value of Woodend is noted by many, including the town's historic character, the range of events offered and recreational opportunities.
- The need for the Town Structure Plan to consider the infrastructure requirements of all age groups is noted.
- Management of bushfire risk, flooding and protection of potable water supply, as well as maintenance of basic town street infrastructure, are key considerations.
- People would like to see improved pedestrian and cycle pathways and links, to the station, the town centre and local tourist destinations such as Hanging Rock.
- Improved facilities at the train station for car and bike parking are also important.
- Traffic management on High Street, including heavy vehicle traffic and conflict at intersections is an issue.

Character and Sense of Place

- Woodend's village character and identity has been strongly expressed as one of the most highly valued aspects of the town.
- The town identity includes the range of cafes, shops and small local businesses and cultural events such as music and art festivals.
- The entrances to the town, particularly the beautiful Avenue of Honour and the Black Forest Drive, Romsey and Mt Macedon Road and the western entry from

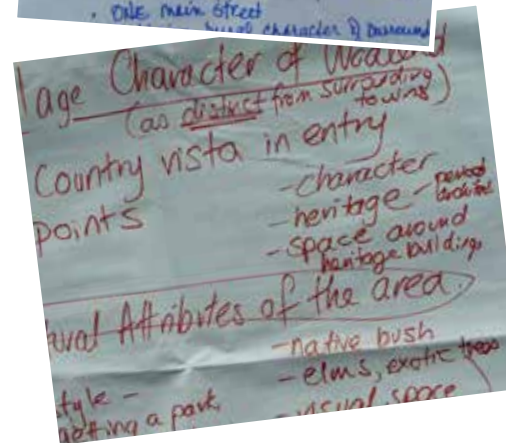
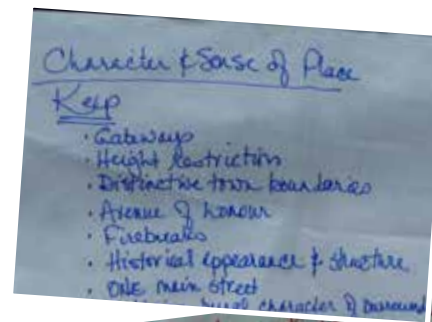
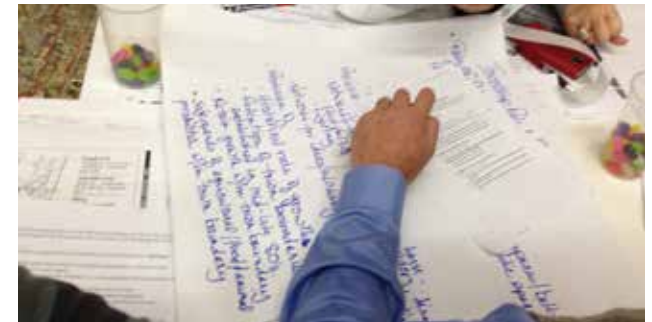
the Spa Region are highly valued, as is the contrast of the rural land or forest with the deciduous trees in town and their seasonal changes.

- The backdrops of Golf Course Hill and Mount Macedon are identified as iconic landscapes.
- Heritage buildings and the low scale of development are important to the town's character, particularly along the High Street spine.
- The character of the residential areas including precincts of heritage and garden settings are important.
- People are concerned about the quality of design in many new housing developments, in relation to the style of buildings and the lack of landscaping.
- Some people believe that better use could be made of many sites in the town centre, with second storey activity such as apartments, B&Bs or new office spaces adding vibrancy to the business area.
- Several people note the lack of a central community space in the township. This type of space is needed for regular market days and special events.

Community Action & Collaboration

- Volunteer activity, such as Landcare projects, have been highly successful and demonstrate the passion of the local people for their town. This offers a way for the community to become involved in the town's development.

- The potential for volunteering to make a difference is noted by one submitter: "People from all walks of life, proudly involved in local groups and encouraging volunteers to be a vibrant part of our community – in giving, we receive".



THE VISION FOR WOODEND

The Town Structure Plan needs a long-term vision to guide its direction and implementation over the next 15-20+ years.

From the feedback and dialogue with the Woodend community, the Council and the Community Reference Group, a vision has been prepared. This vision aims to encapsulate the key themes that emerged through consultation with the community.

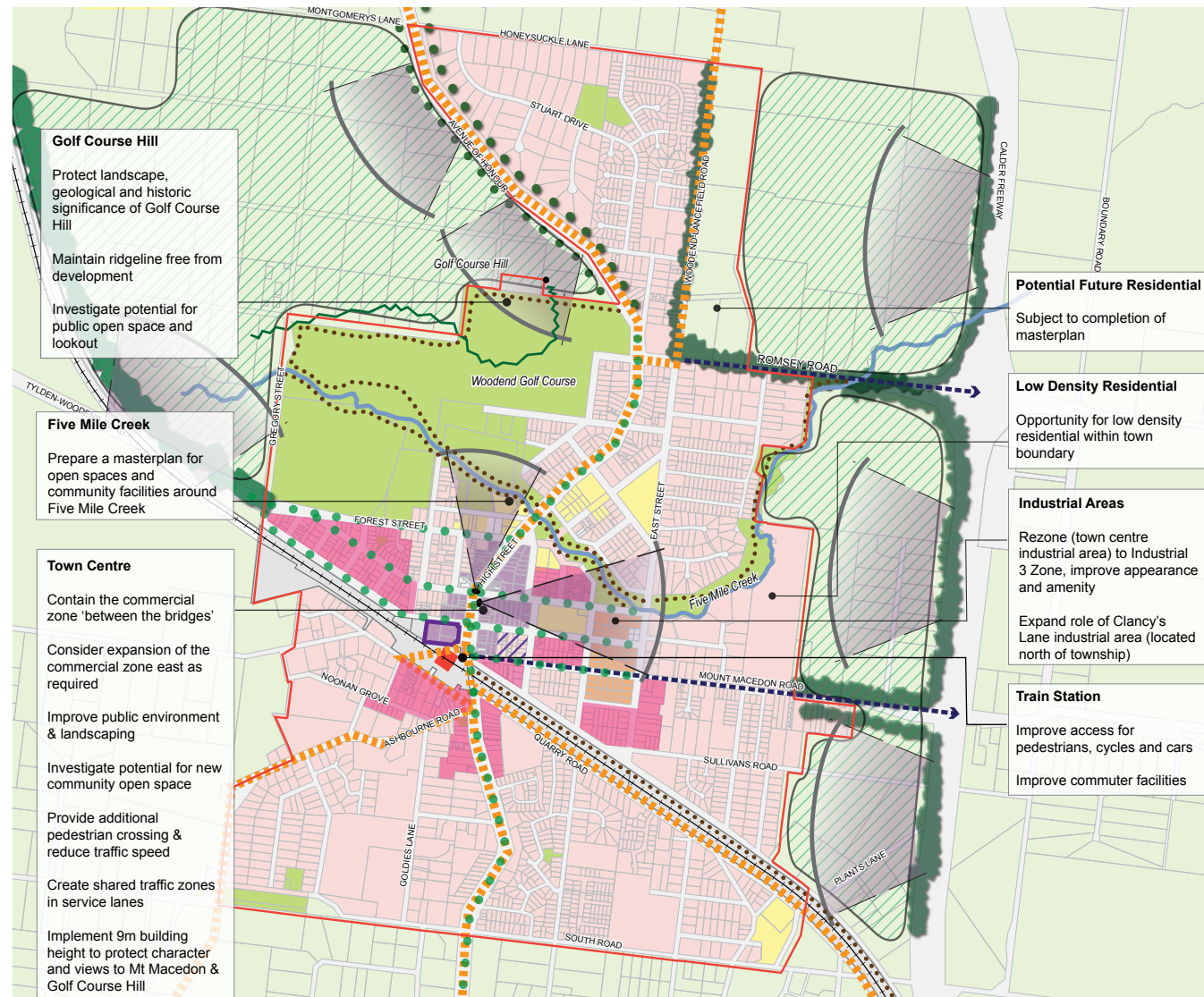
The Structure Plan addresses each of these themes and provides objectives for how they will be achieved, shown on the following pages. These are supported by detailed strategies and actions.

The key directions for the Structure Plan are summarised in the Strategic Framework Plan on the opposite page.

In the future Woodend will continue to be a town with...

- a distinctive village feel, where growth is managed and there is a clear town boundary.
- housing options to meet the needs of its different households, and dwellings that respect the valued character of its neighbourhoods.
- a sense of vibrancy; a town that provides jobs and services for local people, and opportunities for recreation.
- a town centre that has a strong 'village' character; that is walkable, local and friendly.
- a strong connection to its highly valued landscape features and surrounding natural environment.
- a range of sustainable and active transport options for efficient local and regional access.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



Golf Course Hill
Protect landscape, geological and historic significance of Golf Course Hill
Maintain ridgeline free from development
Investigate potential for public open space and lookout

Five Mile Creek
Prepare a masterplan for open spaces and community facilities around Five Mile Creek

Town Centre
Contain the commercial zone 'between the bridges'
Consider expansion of the commercial zone east as required
Improve public environment & landscaping
Investigate potential for new community open space
Provide additional pedestrian crossing & reduce traffic speed
Create shared traffic zones in service lanes
Implement 9m building height to protect character and views to Mt Macedon & Golf Course Hill

Potential Future Residential
Subject to completion of masterplan

Low Density Residential
Opportunity for low density residential within town boundary

Industrial Areas
Rezone (town centre industrial area) to Industrial 3 Zone, improve appearance and amenity
Expand role of Clancy's Lane industrial area (located north of township)

Train Station
Improve access for pedestrians, cycles and cars
Improve commuter facilities

- Town Boundary
- Property Boundaries
- Railway & Station
- Creeks & Waterways
- Avenue of Honour
- Golf Course Hill Ridgeline
- Key Views
- Residential (Contain Within Town Boundary - 15 Years' Land Supply)
- Encourage Medium Density Housing
- Commercial
- Potential Expansion of Commercial Zone
- Industrial
- Community Facilities
- Public Open Space / Recreation
- Rural
- Investigate options for residential expansion (long term - 15 years + supply)
- Encourage Mixed Use Development
- Landscape Buffer
- Open Space Links
- Shared Path Spines
- Potential Regional Bicycle Link
- Enhanced Street Tree Planting

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK MAP



HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

Future Growth & Township Boundary

- Provide for managed growth of the township to meet the demand for new housing.
- Ensure that future growth respects the valued 'village' character of Woodend and meets requirements for infrastructure, access and management of extreme weather conditions such as bushfires or flooding.
- Prioritise growth within the identified town boundary.
- Investigate options for growth outside the town boundary only if/when required to ensure 15+ years' residential land supply.

Housing & Neighbourhood Character

- Protect and enhance the preferred neighbourhood character of Woodend's residential areas.
- Enhance Woodend's 'country town' character and landscape quality.
- Foster architectural excellence in new development.
- Increase the range of housing options to cater for the longer term needs of all members of the Woodend community.
- Encourage environmentally sustainable housing that minimises energy use and maximises occupant comfort.

Township Activity

- Retain the strong retail and commercial role of the town centre - 'between the bridges'.
- Provide opportunities for local economic development in all business sectors.
- Develop Woodend's tourism potential.
- Strengthen the role of the town centre as the hub of community life.
- Provide a range of community services to support the diverse needs of the town's residents.

Town Centre Character

- Retain and enhance the 'village' character of Woodend's town centre.
- Protect older buildings that are an important part of the character and heritage of the township.
- Ensure development in the centre maintains views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill.
- Maintain the prominence of Mount Macedon as a backdrop to views from the town centre.
- Design new development to respect the identified values of heritage buildings.
- Improve the quality of streetscape treatments throughout the town centre and surrounding precincts.
- Improve pedestrian amenity, safety and streetscape legibility.

Landscape & Environment

- Preserve the visual and physical integrity of Woodend's key landscape features.
- Provide a network of trails and paths that connect landscape features and open spaces.
- Protect views to key landscape elements around the township.
- Preserve Woodend's secluded nature from the Calder Freeway by carefully managing any development east of the township.

Transport

- Create a pedestrian-focused and well-connected public realm.
- Promote sustainable methods of transport, supporting walking and cycling as viable alternatives to car travel.
- Manage the road network to optimise its safety, efficiency and amenity for all users.
- Enhance existing connections to, from and between the nearby regional destinations.
- Manage car parking demand and provision to support the activity and amenity of the town centre.
- Advocate for improved public transport provision.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Woodend Town Structure Plan recommends a wide range of strategies to implement the plan.

These include statutory implementation options that would be introduced to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme. Others will operate outside of the Planning Scheme and include capital works projects, community partnership projects or economic development initiatives.

Statutory actions include amending the Planning Scheme to:

- Set the township boundary.
- Encourage development of vacant land within the township boundary.
- Include preferred areas for medium density housing within the town boundary.
- Illustrate where future growth outside the township boundary might be investigated if required.
- Rezone the industrial area in the town centre to Industrial 3 Zone and expand the role of the Clancy's Lane industrial area.
- Retain the existing Commercial 1 Zone as the focus of retail and commercial activity in the town centre.
- Investigate the potential to expand the Commercial 1 Zone to the east if required, up to Templeton Street.
- Expansion of the Heritage Overlay.
- Implement controls to ensure that all development issues and constraints are appropriately managed, within and outside of the town boundary. This includes consideration of issues relating to:

- neighbourhood character, landscape and the environment;
- access and bushfire risk management;
- floodways and drainage provision;
- connection to reticulated services.

Non-statutory actions include:

- Work with the local business community and tourism service providers to prepare economic development, tourism and marketing strategies for Woodend.
- Apply the Streetscape Design Guidelines to assist in a co-ordinated approach to future public realm upgrades and planting.
- Work with traders to enhance the appearance of shopfronts and businesses along High Street. For example, applying a consistent approach to the planting and maintenance of the wine barrel planters, or to discuss their replacement.
- Develop masterplans for key sites, such as around the Five Mile Creek.
- Capital works programs such as street and town gateway planting enhancements and street furniture upgrades.
- Continue to assess the needs of the community as the resident population grows or changes in the future.
- Implement shared trails and pathways, seeking participation interest from relevant landowners or community groups.
- Advocate for upgrades to the station and the implementation of a local bus service.

- Expand the pedestrian and bicycle network throughout the town.
- Apply an ESO to provide a buffer zone around the recycled water plant in Montgomerys Lane in accordance with EPA guidelines for minimum separation distances.
- Review the need for an extension to the LSIO as it applies to Five Mile Creek and its tributaries.



Photo: Carl Poletti



Photo: Ken Hayes



Photo: Planisphere



Photo: Peter Moon



Photo: Planisphere



Photo: Hubert Weisrock



Photo: Alan Grinton



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Photo: Nicole Barbe



Photo: Annie Morrison



Photo: Fiona Slechten



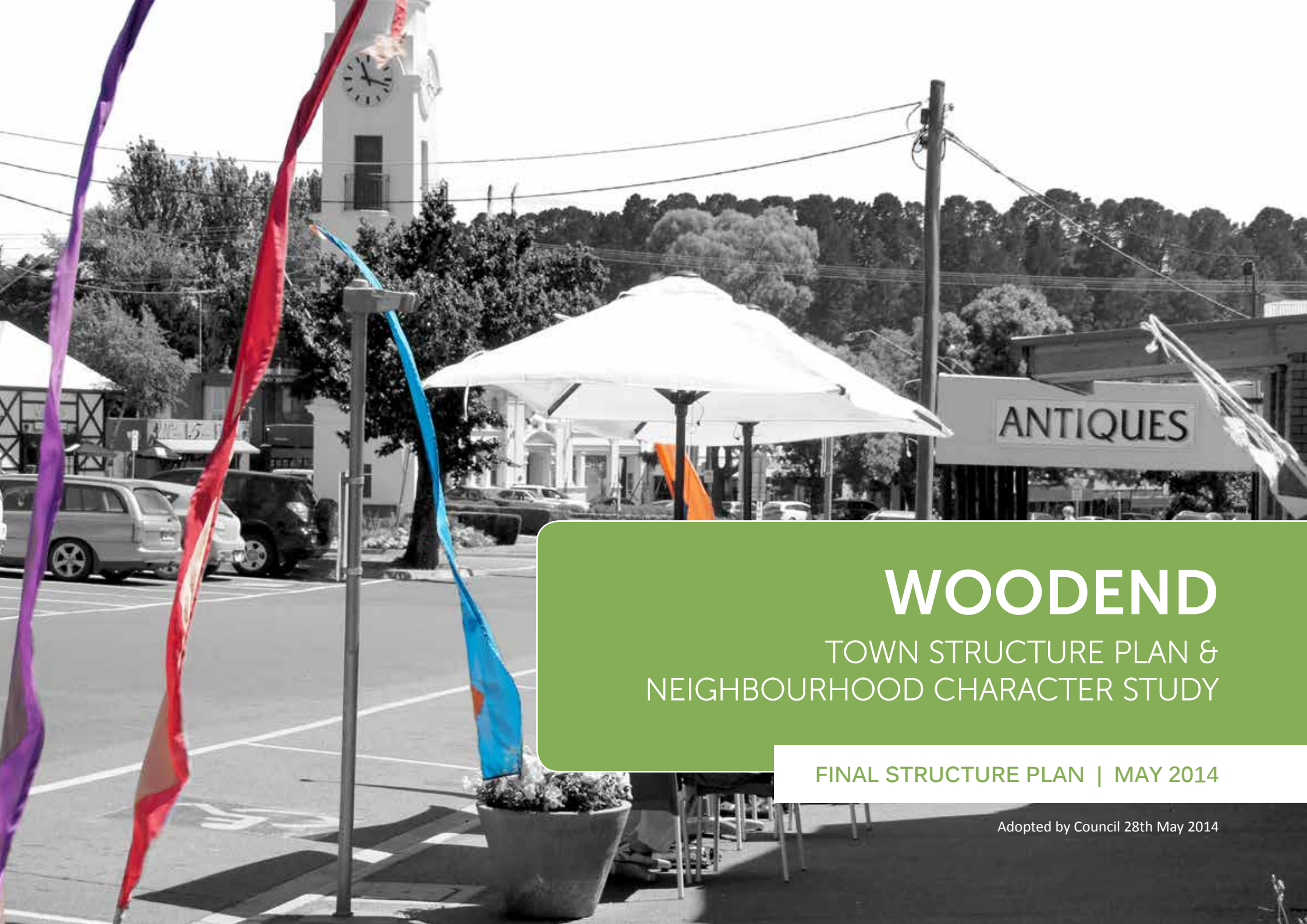
Photo: Hubert Weisrock



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Photo: Nicole Barbe



WOODEND

TOWN STRUCTURE PLAN &
NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STUDY

FINAL STRUCTURE PLAN | MAY 2014

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Photo Credits

Many photos included in this report have been submitted by the Woodend community. The study team are grateful for the time and effort of those who submitted photographs. Photo credits are added to those photos submitted by the community.

Photo credits are also added to those photos submitted by other members of the study team or obtained from secondary sources.

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1.

INTRODUCTION

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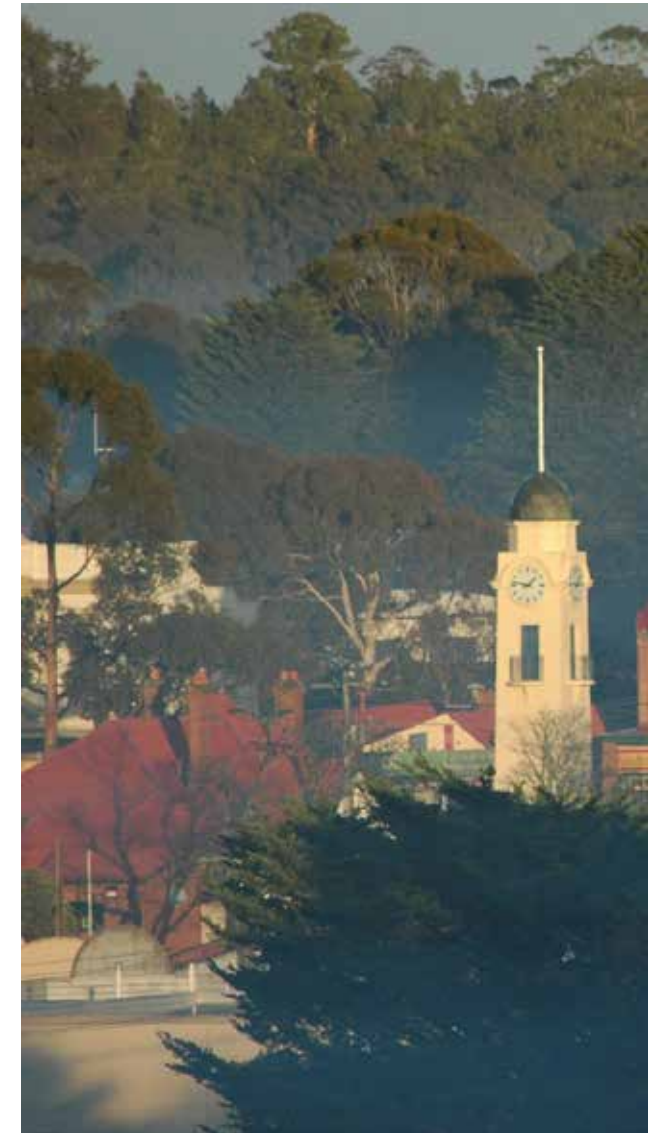


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The township boundary in the north-east is approximately 250m east of Old Lancefield Road. Council officers investigated the history of this boundary in response to a number of submissions querying how this boundary was determined.

The records from 1997 confirm that changes to the Old Lancefield Road boundary were made after exhibition of the new format Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme (August 1997), but before Panel hearings. Submitters to the amendment, as well as the wider community, were notified of the change before the Panel hearings commenced. The Panel reporting on the new format Planning Scheme (March 1999) accepted the township boundary as currently shown.

Settlement Strategy Study Area

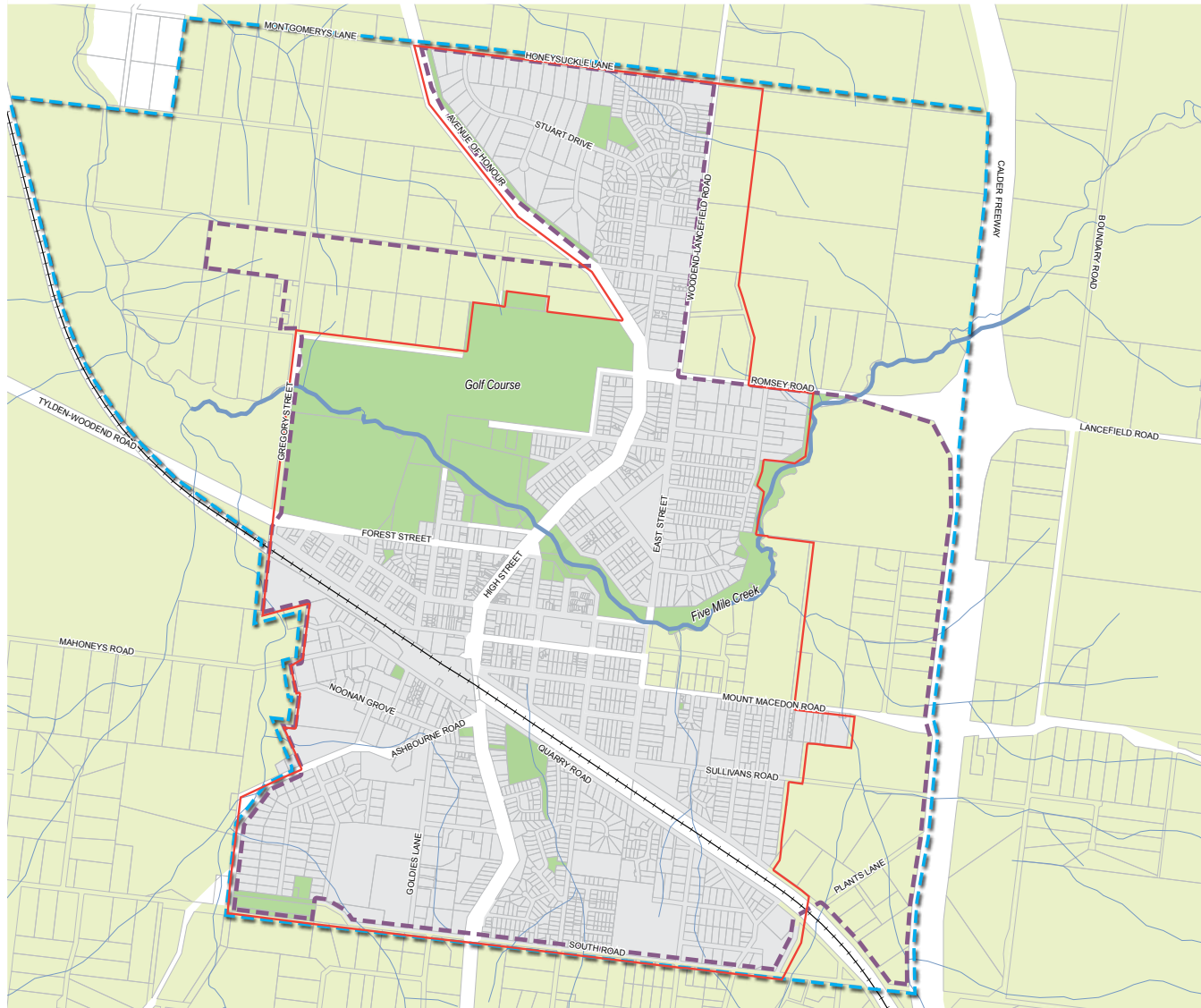
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STUDY AREA



WOODEND IN CONTEXT

Woodend is located on the Melbourne to Bendigo railway line and just off the Calder Freeway, approximately 70 km northwest of Melbourne and 80km southeast of Bendigo.

The township sits within a gentle hillside valley around the Five Mile Creek, towards the centre of the Macedon Ranges Shire. The Macedon Ranges to the east of the township and the densely vegetated Black Forest to the south are significant landscape features and landmarks for the town.

Woodend's many historic buildings and wide streetscapes are also integral to its character. The town is based around High Street which is a traditional, wide 'country town' commercial main street.

High Street was established during the 1850s gold rush as a stopping off point for miners and travellers heading to or from the Mt Alexander goldfields. The former Keatings Hotel (1898) and Clock Tower (1928) at the corner of High and Anslow Streets are local heritage icons.

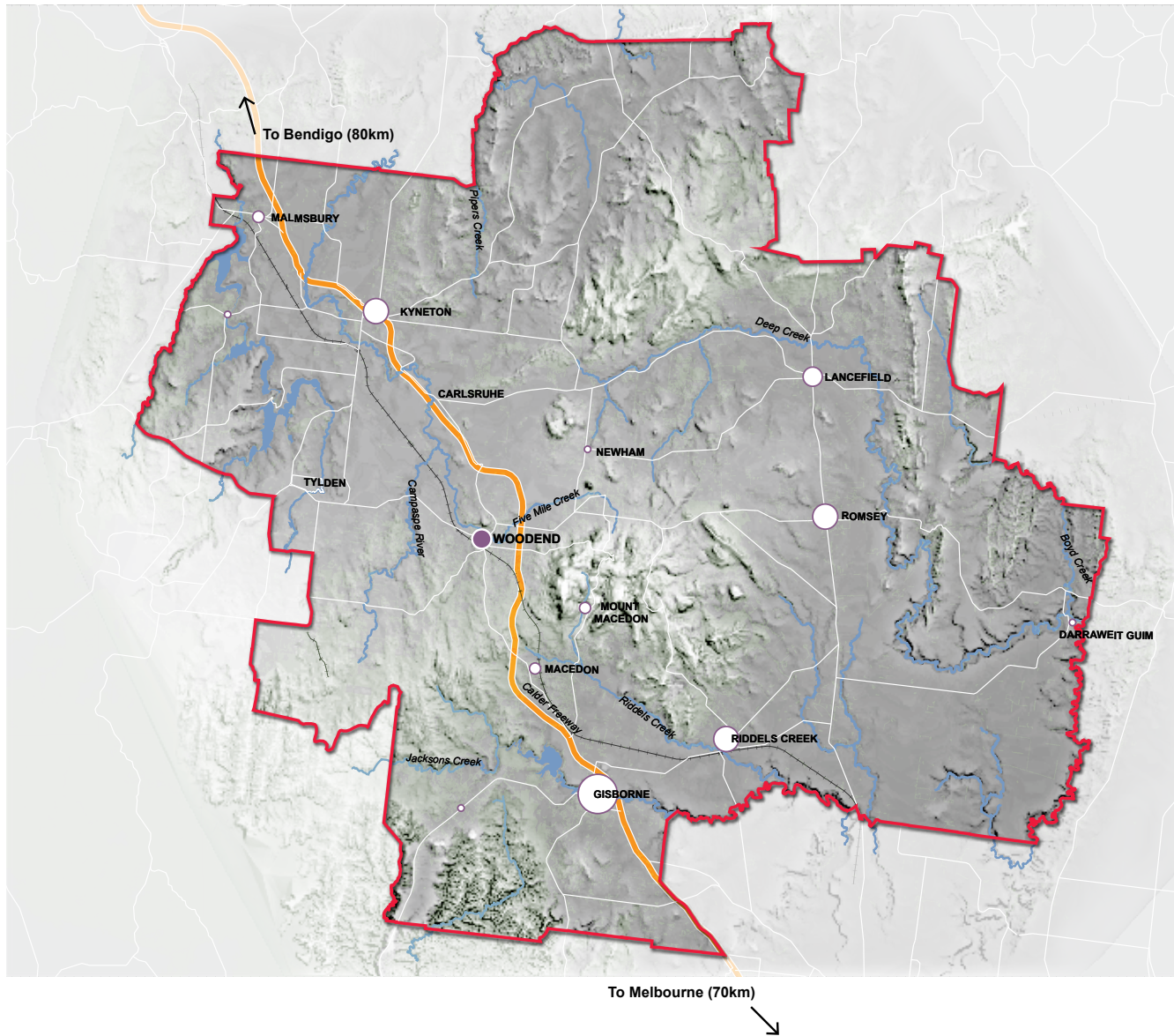
The township has a strong rural setting and is surrounded by forest, bushland and open grazing areas. There are clear edges to the town and delineation between urban and rural land.








The northern entry into Woodend along Macedon-Woodend Road is formed by the 'Avenue of Honour', which is one of the most significant Avenues of Honour in the State.

Woodend is defined as a district town in the Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy (2011) and has a current population of just over 3,400 people. It performs an important retail, service and tourism role for the local area and beyond.



Images: Trove National Library of Australia



-  Macedon Ranges Shire Boundary
-  Major Roads
-  Railway Line
-  Calder Freeway
-  Township Areas
-  Woodend
-  Waterbodies



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In addition, a Community Reference Group (CRG) formed in March 2013 has provided input and feedback at each project stage.

The thoughts and ideas of the Woodend community have been integral in forming the directions of the Plan. Numerous good ideas for Woodend's future have been suggested and these have been included wherever possible.

Quotes from community submissions are used in each topic theme to illustrate the range of views. Community photos provided through the Neighbourhood Character Photographic Survey are used throughout the report.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Township Role and Function

- Woodend is seen as a rural village, part of the Goldfields region, and not an outpost of Melbourne.
- Many people consider the Settlement Strategy with its low growth scenario to accurately reflect the consensus of the Woodend community.
- Most people believe the township does not need to expand outside the existing boundary as shown in the Planning Scheme.
- There is concern that significant growth would destroy the town's character and heritage, and create problems with traffic, infrastructure provision and basic amenity.
- However, some believe the pros and cons of allowing carefully managed development outside existing town boundaries as a longer term strategy should be considered.
- Woodend needs to provide various housing options for those who live, work and socialise locally, as well as those who commute to Melbourne, Bendigo or the major centres in the region.
- High value is placed upon local shops in terms of the town's identity and the benefit they bring to the tourist trade, as well as the ethic of shopping where you live.
- The theme of 'between the bridges' is a common term used to express how the commercial area of the town centre should be contained.

- The issue of local employment opportunities is important. This includes support for youth employment, and fostering a greater range of service and home based businesses.
- The tourism value of Woodend is noted by many, including the town's historic character, the range of events offered and recreational opportunities.
- The need for the Town Structure Plan to consider the infrastructure requirements of all age groups is noted.
- Management of bushfire risk, flooding and protection of potable water supply, as well as maintenance of basic town street infrastructure, are key considerations.
- People would like to see improved pedestrian and cycle pathways and links, to the station, the town centre and local tourist destinations such as Hanging Rock.
- Improved facilities at the train station for car and bike parking are also important.
- Traffic management on High Street, including heavy vehicle traffic and conflict at intersections is an issue.

Character and Sense of Place

- Woodend's village character and identity has been strongly expressed as one of the most highly valued aspects of the town.
- The town identity includes the range of cafes, shops and small local businesses and cultural events such as music and art festivals.
- The entrances to the town, particularly the beautiful Avenue of Honour and the Black Forest Drive, Romsey and Mt Macedon Road and the western entry from

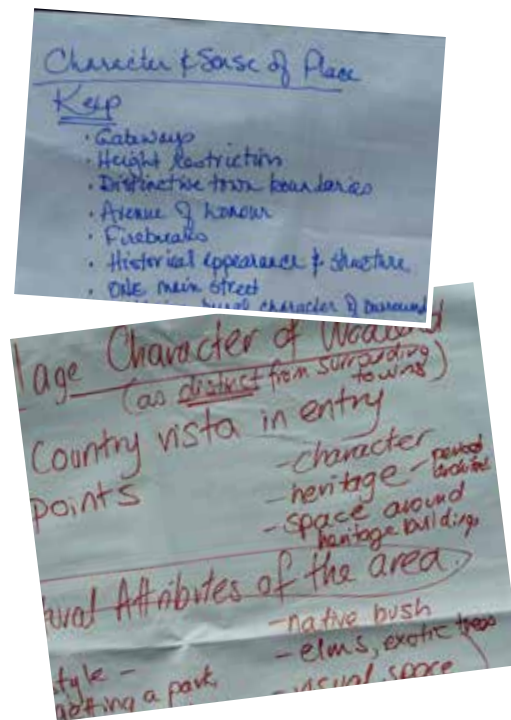
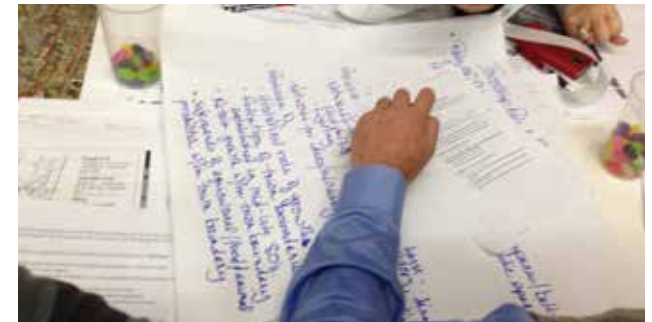
the Spa Region are highly valued, as is the contrast of the rural land or forest with the deciduous trees in town and their seasonal changes.

- The backdrops of Golf Course Hill and Mount Macedon are identified as iconic landscapes.
- Heritage buildings and the low scale of development are important to the town's character, particularly along the High Street spine.
- The character of the residential areas including precincts of heritage and garden settings are important.
- People are concerned about the quality of design in many new housing developments, in relation to the style of buildings and the lack of landscaping.
- Some people believe that better use could be made of many sites in the town centre, with second storey activity such as apartments, B&Bs or new office spaces adding vibrancy to the business area.
- Several people note the lack of a central community space in the township. This type of space is needed for regular market days and special events.

Community Action & Collaboration

- Volunteer activity, such as Landcare projects, have been highly successful and demonstrate the passion of the local people for their town. This offers a way for the community to become involved in the town's development.

- The potential for volunteering to make a difference is noted by one submitter: "People from all walks of life, proudly involved in local groups and encouraging volunteers to be a vibrant part of our community – in giving, we receive".



THE VISION FOR WOODEND

The Town Structure Plan needs a long-term vision to guide its direction and implementation over the next 15-20+ years.

From the feedback and dialogue with the Woodend community, the Council and the Community Reference Group, a vision has been prepared. This vision aims to encapsulate the key themes that emerged through consultation with the community.

The Structure Plan addresses each of these themes and provides objectives for how they will be achieved, listed on the opposite page. These are supported by detailed strategies and actions.

The key directions for the Structure Plan are summarised in the Strategic Framework Plan on the following page.

In the future Woodend will continue to be a town with...

- a distinctive village feel, where growth is managed and there is a clear town boundary.
- housing options to meet the needs of its different households, and dwellings that respect the valued character of its neighbourhoods.
- a sense of vibrancy; a town that provides jobs and services for local people, and opportunities for recreation.
- a town centre that has a strong 'village' character; that is walkable, local and friendly.
- a strong connection to its highly valued landscape features and surrounding natural environment.
- a range of sustainable and active transport options for efficient local and regional access.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

Future Growth & Township Boundary

- Provide for managed growth of the township to meet the demand for new housing.
- Ensure that future growth respects the valued 'village' character of Woodend and meets requirements for infrastructure, access and management of extreme weather conditions such as bushfires or flooding.
- Prioritise growth within the identified town boundary.
- Investigate options for growth outside the town boundary only if/when required to ensure 15+ years' residential land supply.

Housing & Neighbourhood Character

- Protect and enhance the preferred neighbourhood character of Woodend's residential areas.
- Enhance Woodend's 'country town' character and landscape quality.
- Foster architectural excellence in new development.
- Increase the range of housing options to cater for the longer term needs of all members of the Woodend community.
- Encourage environmentally sustainable housing that minimises energy use and maximises occupant comfort.

Township Activity

- Retain the strong retail and commercial role of the town centre - 'between the bridges'.
- Provide opportunities for local economic development in all business sectors.
- Develop Woodend's tourism potential.
- Strengthen the role of the town centre as the hub of community life.
- Provide a range of community services to support the diverse needs of the town's residents.

Town Centre Character

- Retain and enhance the 'village' character of Woodend's town centre.
- Protect older buildings that are an important part of the character and heritage of the township.
- Ensure development in the centre maintains views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill.
- Maintain the prominence of Mount Macedon as a backdrop to views from the town centre.
- Design new development to respect the identified values of heritage buildings.
- Improve the quality of streetscape treatments throughout the town centre and surrounding precincts.
- Improve pedestrian amenity, safety and streetscape legibility.

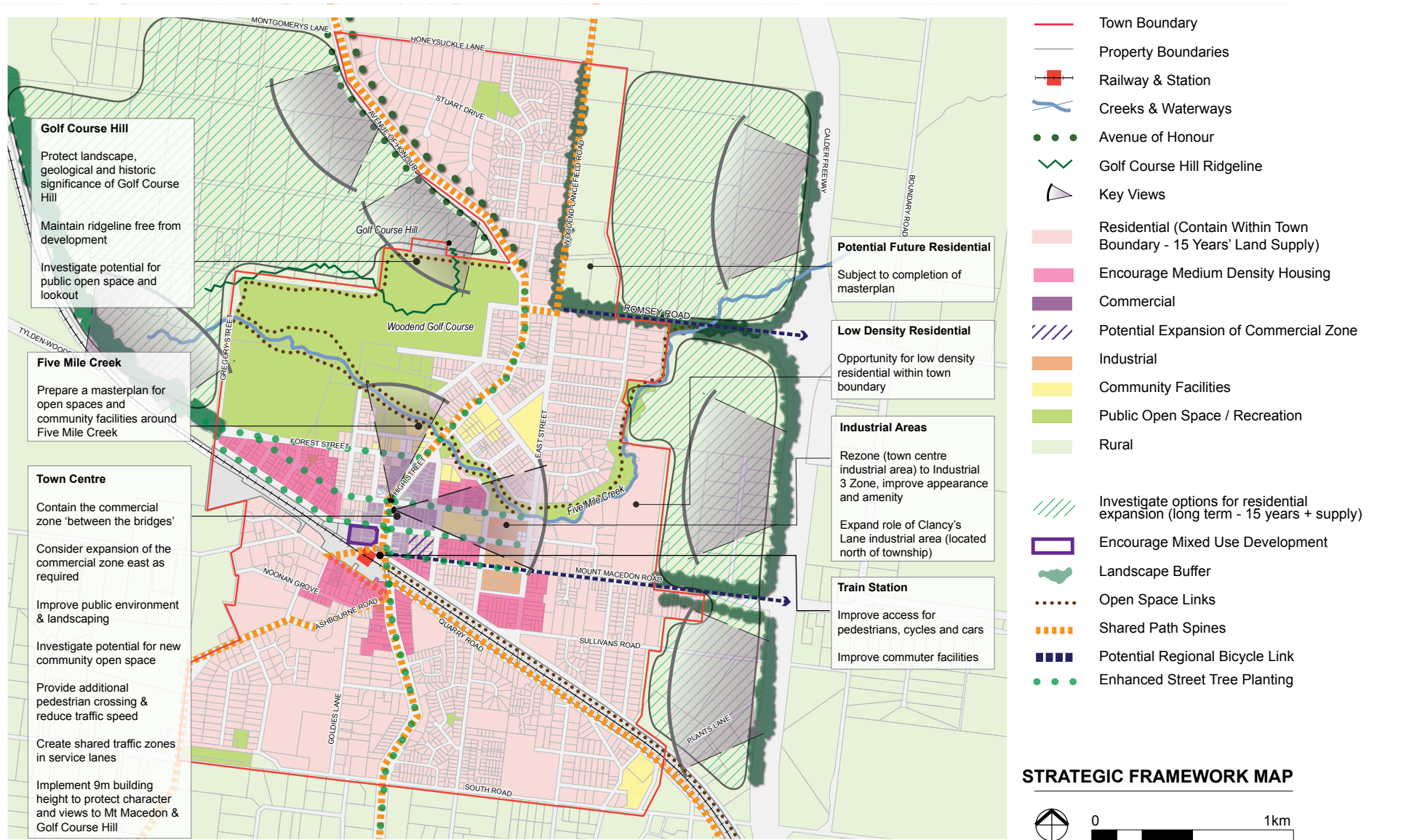
Landscape & Environment

- Preserve the visual and physical integrity of Woodend's key landscape features.
- Provide a network of trails and paths that connect landscape features and open spaces.
- Protect views to key landscape elements around the township.
- Preserve Woodend's secluded nature from the Calder Freeway by carefully managing any development east of the township.

Transport

- Create a pedestrian-focused and well-connected public realm.
- Promote sustainable methods of transport, supporting walking and cycling as viable alternatives to car travel.
- Manage the road network to optimise its safety, efficiency and amenity for all users.
- Enhance existing connections to, from and between the nearby regional destinations.
- Manage car parking demand and provision to support the activity and amenity of the town centre.
- Advocate for improved public transport provision.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK





2.

FUTURE GROWTH & TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY

Photo: Hubert Weisrock

VISION

In the future, Woodend will continue to be a town with a distinctive village feel, where growth is managed and there is a clear town boundary.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Views of the Woodend community about the future growth of the town include:

- ... growth should occur within the town boundaries*
- ... the pace, scope and design of development must be managed to fit into the village character*
- ... town boundaries need to be set*
- ... Woodend cannot operate in a population vacuum*

WHAT WE KNOW

The issue of Woodend's future population growth and the need to establish a clear township boundary are fundamental aspects of the Town Structure Plan's investigations.

There has been much debate within the community about an acceptable rate of population growth for Woodend and how and where this could be accommodated.

Community feedback has shown that there is widespread concern about how additional population would affect the town's identity, amenity and function. The overwhelming majority of residents show strong support for limiting growth to within Woodend's current town boundary.

At the same time, others believe that there is scope for Woodend to grow in a managed way, potentially outside of the existing boundary, to allow more options for future housing.

Council must address the issue of future population and growth in a comprehensive manner that is both realistic and strategically sound. The preparation of the Town Structure Plan has therefore included detailed analysis of the anticipated future population for Woodend and assessment of the availability of land within the existing town boundary to accommodate this growth.

Recommendations for future growth in the long term are made on the basis of this analysis, taking into account the outcomes of Council's Settlement Strategy and broader policy directions of State and Regional planning.

POLICY CONTEXT

State Planning Policy

The requirements of State Planning Policy are a key consideration in the preparation of the Town Structure Plan. A Planning Scheme amendment that introduces the Plan into the Planning Scheme needs to demonstrate compliance with State Planning Policy.

In relation to planning for future urban growth, the State Planning Policy at Clause 11.02-1 of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme requires each municipality to:

“... plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15 year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur. Residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis, rather than a town-by-town basis”.

State Policy adopts a time horizon of 15 years as a standard benchmark figure for strategic planning across Victoria. This takes into account the business and economic cycles of property development and planning processes to ensure a timely and non-restrictive supply of residential land and to avoid speculative pressure.

State Policy also requires that growth be considered in relation to neighbourhood character and landscape values, natural hazards, environmental quality and infrastructure provision.

Council notes that this State policy is a municipal wide requirement. However, in developing structure plans and in response to Council's Settlement Strategy, Council has based growth needs for individual townships on a 15 year supply scenario. This differs from the State requirement

and has been used as a robust approach that should stand up to scrutiny in the planning scheme amendment process, therefore reducing potential delays and uncertainties.

Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan

The State Government has recently completed Regional Growth Plans for each part of the State.

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan (May 2014) was prepared for the region including Macedon Ranges, Greater Bendigo, Central Goldfields, Loddon and Mount Alexander Shires and exhibited for public comment in April- May, 2013.

The plan anticipates that most of the growth within this region will occur in Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander, mainly due to rail and road infrastructure improvements in the Calder corridor and the increasing attractiveness of the region as an alternative to Metropolitan Melbourne.

The plan identifies that capacity for expansion of many settlements in the region is limited by surrounding forest, and that urban expansion needs to carefully consider fire risk.

The main urban centres of Macedon Ranges Shire are denoted as 'key hinterland towns' for the region, where growth and expansion can 'capitalise on excellent access to Melbourne and/or Bendigo'.

The plan directs most of this growth to Gisborne and Kyneton, identified as locations to 'manage and support growth', or Riddells Creek and Romsey, identified as 'rural towns' with capacity for growth.

The Plan supports the current structure planning for Woodend but has not identified Woodend for high or moderate growth.

Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy

The Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy (MRSS) was completed in 2011, through extensive consultation with the community. It is Council's currently adopted position on the strategic growth of the Shire, including the Woodend township.

The aim of the MRSS was to apportion growth across the Shire and establish the role of each urban centre. A hierarchy of the role and function of each town was recommended.

The MRSS recommended that Woodend remain as a District Town in the broader settlement hierarchy. District Towns are described as having a population range of between 2,000-6,000 persons. However, it was determined that Woodend has capacity to support a population of 5,000 persons, taking identified constraints into consideration. It was concluded that no further greenfield residential land was required to 2036 as the vacant lot supply could cater for this level of growth.

It is important to note that the MRSS was based on 2006 census figures. As the information from the 2011 census is now available, the Woodend Town Structure Plan study has been able to use the most recent population data. The Estimated Resident Population of Woodend at the 2011 Census was 3,463 persons (Woodend Urban Centre, Usual Resident Population). This increased from 3,095 in 2001 and 3,306 in 2006.

The process of preparing the MRSS identified that there were significant constraints to urban growth around Woodend, including bushfire risk, flooding, high landscape values and environmental sensitivity, and that there was strong community sentiment to limit population growth.

Planning Scheme Amendment C84

The MRSS is currently being implemented through Amendment C84 to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme. In 2012 an independent Planning Panel was appointed to hear submissions to the Amendment.

An Interim Panel report was released in September 2012. The Panel made a number of key recommendations that the preparation of the Town Structure Plan has taken into consideration:

- Rather than nominating a specific recommended population for Woodend, the designation as a District Town (population 2,000 – 6,000) should be maintained, to establish the town's place in the Shire's hierarchy with a broad limit for growth;
- The recommended population provisions in the MRSS should be deleted, with a range of population scenarios to be considered based on Victoria in Future and Council projections;
- The Woodend Structure Plan should consider residential, commercial and industrial land supply and capacity issues, and identify preferred and non-preferred greenfield development areas, infill development areas, and medium density areas.
- A final Panel report released in April 2014 includes a revised Policy for the planning of Woodend (Clause

21.3-3). Guidance was also given around protecting the "rural landscape .. along the western side of the northern approach to the town" and the need to consider the impacts for growth on the Very Special Kids Glen Osmond Farm. The Town Structure Plan responds to these issues in the objectives and strategies set out in the revised Clause 21.3-3 (C84).

POPULATION ANALYSIS

In response to the issues raised by the C84 Panel, detailed analysis of potential future population for Woodend has been undertaken. This work draws upon a range of data sources and indicators, the most important of which is the 2011 census data not previously available in the preparation of the Settlement Strategy.

The method of analysis involves examination of historical dwelling construction and population growth rates alongside regional population projections in order to arrive at an estimate of the most likely population demand rate for Woodend. This constitutes a 'weight of evidence' approach.

Data sources referenced are:

- Historical population growth rates over the last 5-10 years;
- State Government population projections (Victoria in Future);
- Council population projections;
- Dwelling approvals to determine the rate of new development;

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data (2001, 2006 & 2011).

A variety of possible growth rates have been considered. These range from an annual growth rate of 1.13% (as evidenced by the historical growth rate of the last 10 years) to a rate of 1.76% (as projected by Victoria in Future).

Using a weight of evidence approach, the data analysed indicates that the most likely population growth rate for Woodend will be 1.35% per annum - an average of the population growth indicators assessed.

This approach ensures that the population projection has regard to the most detailed State projections available (Victoria in Future), but that local conditions and historical growth are also considered in applying the projections at a township scale.

The Estimated Resident Population of Woodend at June 30, 2011 was 3,463 persons (Woodend Urban Centre). Using the growth rate of 1.35%, it is anticipated that by the year 2036 the population of Woodend would be 4,842 persons.

RESIDENTIAL LAND DEMAND

The anticipated level of population growth has been translated into an estimated demand for new housing.

In addition to understanding the projected population of the town, residential land demand is estimated through an assessment of historical dwelling approvals, median property values and growth and anecdotal discussions with local real estate agents.

From this assessment it is anticipated there will be a demand for between 20 - 21 new dwellings per annum over the next 15 years, based upon the average household size of 2.6 persons. This equates to approximately 300 new dwellings over that timeframe.

RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

Detailed analysis of residentially zoned land was undertaken in order to estimate the level of population growth that could be accommodated within the town boundary.

It was found that at the present time, the current supply of residentially zoned land within the existing township boundary is adequate to meet demand.

The assessment included consideration of lots that are currently vacant or underutilised (for example, a large site supporting a small building) and identified as having potential for subdivision and/or new development as determined from aerial photography and site visits. The supply also included the additional yield allowed by Amendment C88 that rezoned land from Rural Living Zone to Low Density Residential Zone.

The development potential for each vacant site was measured against the recommended lot size for the relevant precinct identified in the Neighbourhood Character Study (refer Section 3.2 of this report).

Areas with development constraints such as flooding potential, heritage or significant stands of vegetation (including sites without specific planning scheme controls) were excluded from the assessment. Properties with known single dwelling covenants were also excluded.

Existing net capacity of vacant lots within the town boundary is estimated at 468 lots.

In order to account for land that may not be made available to the market over the period of this assessment, a 20% discount has been applied to the overall lot supply, resulting in a total estimated available lot supply of 374 lots. This acknowledges that land in Woodend is typically tightly held for investment purposes, and not all vacant lots are expected to be available for sale or development in the next 15 years.

At a projected lot consumption rate of 20 - 21 lots per annum, the current lot supply equates to between 18 - 19 years' supply. Therefore, there is no immediate need to rezone land.

It is important to note that this is a conservative estimate of potential land supply. This analysis does not take into consideration the potential for housing demand to be met through subdivision of lots that are currently developed, where the proposed neighbourhood character guidelines would allow a smaller lot size. In addition, land that has been broadly identified as constrained in this analysis could also potentially be developed. Therefore, the currently available land supply is likely to be higher.

PROVIDING FOR MANAGED GROWTH

Woodend has understandably experienced a strong demand for growth and new housing. Potential residents desire to experience Woodend's country town charm and character in its beautiful landscaped setting, with the benefit of easy access to Melbourne and Bendigo and all that the region has to offer.

Housing demand also occurs from within the township itself of course, due to new household formations.

In considering the issue of future growth for Woodend it is important to understand that it is not possible to completely control the demand for new housing. Attempting to do so by limiting the supply of residentially zoned land opens the potential for 'ad hoc' responses to development or rezoning proposals that may have unacceptable outcomes.

Rather, it is in the best interest of the community that demand for growth is strategically managed through the development of a comprehensive and holistic plan for the town that identifies realistic development opportunities to meet long term demand.

The residential demand and supply analysis shows that there is adequate land within the existing town boundaries to meet at least the next 18-19 years' demand for new housing based on current trends and policies. **Any expansion of the town boundaries or rezoning of land for residential development will not be supported until further demographic data demonstrates that the trigger point of a 15 year land supply has been exhausted.** However, it is vital that this plan considers longer term options for growth, which may be required beyond the 15 year timeframe.

Through the process of preparing the Woodend Town Structure Plan, potential future growth scenarios have been fully assessed against known development constraints, community values and aspirations.

OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Within the town boundary

Within the town boundary, the Town Structure Plan has identified a range of options for residential growth. They include:

- Several large undeveloped and unconstrained sites that present significant development opportunities.
- Preferred locations for medium density housing identified in the Neighbourhood Character Study that provide opportunities for a range of housing types in proximity to the town centre.
- Incremental infill development that may be possible within other established residential areas, subject to meeting neighbourhood character objectives.
- Land on the northern side of Mount Macedon Road was rezoned to Low Density Residential in 2013 (Amendment C88), where a minimum lot size of 0.2 hectares (where connected to sewerage) will apply under the new zone and allow approximately 16 new lots.
- Land on the eastern side of Woodend-Lancefield Road that comprises part of large rural lots within the Farming Zone. Development of the land within the town boundary would require subdivision from the larger lot parcels. This should only occur through a comprehensive reassessment of the entire northeast investigation area as part of a planning scheme rezoning amendment.

Additional residential land

In the longer term, options for residential development outside of the town boundary and on the rural zoned land within the town boundary will need to be considered when there is a demonstrated need for additional residential land.

It is suggested that a 'trigger point' for expanding beyond the town boundary or rezoning to residential within it is activated when a structure plan review assesses that there is less than 15 years' supply within the township boundary or should 2016 census data indicate a change in population growth trends. The supply and demand for residential land will therefore need to be closely monitored and reviewed when census data is updated.

A preliminary assessment of options for development outside of the current town boundary has been undertaken, as a starting point for discussion about future township growth. This analysis is included as Appendix B.

These options include:

- East Investigation Area: Land to the east of the town boundary, up to the Calder Freeway.
- North-east Investigation Area: Land to the northeast of the town boundary.
- North-west Investigation Area: Land to the northwest of the town boundary.

The potential for expansion to the south or west of the town boundary has not been considered due to the environmental and landscape constraints of these areas, and the heightened risk of bushfire, as evidenced by their

Rural Conservation Zoning, the Vegetation Protection Overlay and the Bushfire Management Overlay.

Each option has been analysed against opportunities and known constraints relating to current planning controls, bushfire risk, flooding, infrastructure provision, environmental, views and landscape considerations, access, the potential to create new open spaces and community feedback.

When the 'trigger point' is hit, a more detailed assessment of opportunities and constraints will be necessary to decide a preferred growth option.

OBJECTIVES

Provide for managed growth of the township to meet the demand for new housing

Ensure that future growth respects the valued 'village' character of Woodend and meets requirements for infrastructure, access and management of bushfire or flooding risk

Prioritise growth within the identified town boundary

Investigate options for growth outside the town boundary only if/when required to ensure a minimum of 15+ years' land supply

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Recommended strategies and actions to meet these objectives:

- Accept a range of future population growth scenarios from 1.2%-1.8%, with 1.35% as the recommended figure.
 - Adopt the town boundary from Amendment C84, which has been assessed as able to accommodate a minimum of 18-19 years' growth.
 - Implement neighbourhood character guidelines in the Planning Scheme.
 - Encourage development of vacant or underused land within the town boundary (aside from Farm Zoned land), subject to meeting neighbourhood character guidelines.
 - Prepare a masterplan prior to rezoning Farm Zoned land within the MSS boundary.
 - Revise the township map in the MSS to include preferred areas for medium density housing within the town boundary.
 - Support removal of restrictive covenants wherever possible to increase potential for residential development within the town boundary.
 - Set a 'trigger point' of less than 15 years' land supply being available within the town boundary before land is rezoned for residential development. This would be determined through a review of the Woodend Town Structure Plan when the next census data is available.
- Relevant data from the 2016 census is likely to be available in 2018.
- Set up a monitoring and review process to ensure an appropriate strategic response to development proposals outside of the town boundary.
 - Investigate options for growth to the northeast or east of the town boundary as preferred options for expansion, if/when it is required.
 - Revise the MSS to recognise these preferred options with broad guidelines based on the analysis of this Plan.
 - Implement development controls in the Planning Scheme to ensure that all development issues and constraints are appropriately managed, within and outside of the town boundary. Specifically, this includes consideration of issues relating to:
 - neighbourhood character, landscape and the environment.
 - access and bushfire risk management.
 - floodways and drainage provision.
 - connection to reticulated services.



3.

HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

VISION

In the future, Woodend will continue to be a town with a range of housing options to meet the needs of its different households, and with dwellings that respect the valued character of its neighbourhoods.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Views of the Woodend community about housing and neighbourhood character include:

- ... variation in building styles is needed for specific neighbourhoods to reflect the location*
- ... housing should respond to climate issues (eg. be orientated to achieve solar access)*
- ... maintain a dominance of vegetation over housing*
- ... a mix of lot sizes is necessary and they should be distributed through the town*

WHAT WE KNOW

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER PHOTO SURVEY

In preparing the Neighbourhood Character Study, the community was invited to submit photographs of the features and elements that define Woodend's neighbourhood character.

These photos provide an illustration of what people value about Woodend and how they believe it could be improved in the future. The selection of photos on the following page and throughout the Plan show some of the community responses.

Many photos highlighted the distinctive landscaped setting of Woodend, the distant views to Mount Macedon and the rural outlook as defining elements of its character. Heritage buildings are also highly valued.

People frequently spoke of Woodend's small town, rural character. In particular, the informal nature of many of Woodend's roads is considered important. Often these are either unsealed or have soft edges with space for planting.

Many comments were also made about the eclectic architecture of Woodend, and the fact that there appears to be no single 'Woodend style'. A lot of people value this diversity as a part of the town's character.

There was much concern expressed about the quality of new housing, either as new estates or infill development. This includes poor site layout and small block sizes that leave little space for landscaping, 'cookie cutter' style housing and formalised road treatments that 'could be anywhere'. Many people would like to see greater controls in place to ensure improved design outcomes and adequate landscaping.



"Character houses with large gardens" - Peter Moon



Fiona Slechten



Peter Moon



Ken Hayes



Peter Smith



Jennie Morrison



*"New development on 2000m2 lots balancing character & environment"
- Fiona Slechten*



"Town centre: older houses, canopy trees, building scale maintains views to Mt. Macedon" - Fiona Slechten

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

What is neighbourhood character?

Neighbourhood character is essentially the combination of the public and private realms. Every property, public place or piece of infrastructure makes a contribution, whether great or small. It is the cumulative impact of all these contributions that establishes neighbourhood character (DPCD Practice Note).

Neighbourhood character in Woodend

Through field surveys and input from the community, the study team has been able to gain an understanding of the distinguishing neighbourhood character qualities of Woodend.

Seven broad neighbourhood character precincts have been identified, shown on the following page. These areas have similar character attributes, including the size of lots, the style and siting of buildings, the landscape quality, the street layout and the roadscape treatment, among other character elements analysed.

A preferred future character has been drafted for each precinct, outlined on the following pages.

These precincts include the historic areas around the commercial centre of town, later suburban style developments that surround this historic core, and large lot areas at the periphery. Some of the established areas are characterised by a distinctive bush setting, while others have a more formalised character.

Prominent components of Woodend's neighbourhood character include:

- The natural landscape elements of the undulating topography formed around the valley of the Five

Mile Creek, views towards Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill and rural landscapes at the edge of town.

- A diversity of architectural styles representing all eras of the town's development.
- Heritage or older buildings that have a distinct character, such as Victorian or Edwardian era detached dwellings or small workers' cottages, and interwar era dwellings such as Californian Bungalows.
- Elements of town structure, such as the High Street spine, the railway line and the variety of street layouts which include both formal grid patterns and contemporary 'cul de sac' type layouts.
- The well-maintained gardens in the older parts of Woodend that consist largely of exotic species interwoven with mature, remnant native species.
- Properties towards the southern edge of the town surrounded by less formal, native gardens, with this planting theme flowing across property boundaries and through the streets of the neighbourhood.
- Formally planted streetscape vegetation, including established avenues of trees, close to the town centre.
- In other areas, dispersed roadside vegetation and unsealed roads with swale drains that result in an informal atmosphere with vegetation encompassing the private and public domains.
- Contemporary subdivisions on the edge of town or large infill sites which are characterised by a uniformity of housing stock, small sites with minimal space for vegetation and formal roadscape treatment.

Neighbourhood Character Guidelines

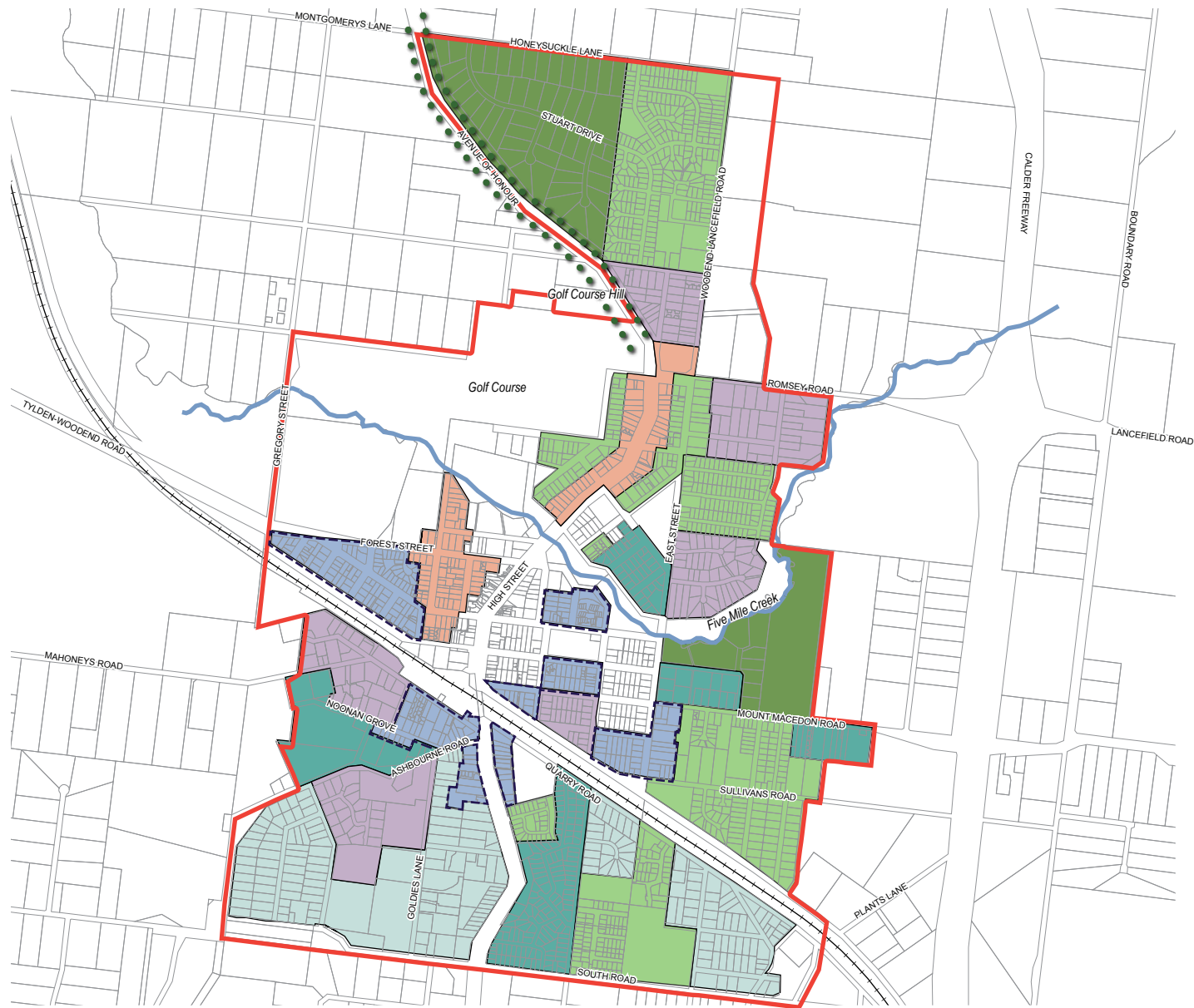
Neighbourhood Character Guidelines have been set out for each precinct. The Guidelines provide a description of each precinct, the preferred future character and siting and design parameters for new development required to achieve this preferred future character. The Guidelines are included at Appendix C, Neighbourhood Character Guidelines.

The Guidelines include detailed requirements for minimum lot size, site coverage, permeability, building height and setbacks. These requirements are based upon analysis of existing conditions in each neighbourhood character precinct, and the design outcomes considered necessary to achieve the desired future character.

Heritage

Heritage buildings are dotted throughout the residential areas and these are primarily managed through the Heritage Overlay (HO). They often contribute to the character of their precinct.

The northern extent of High Street between Five Mile Creek and Romsey Road and encompassing the Bentink property also has a predominance of heritage buildings that are an important element of this north gateway.



- Town Boundary
- Property Boundaries
- +—+ Railway
- Avenue of Honour

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER PRECINCTS

- 1. Historic Residential
- 2. Township Residential
- 3. Garden Setting
- 4. Bush Setting
- 5. Bush Rural Living
- 6. Large Lot Rural Living
- 7. Large Lot Township

- Preferred Areas for Medium Density Housing

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER PRECINCTS



NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER PRECINCTS: PREFERRED FUTURE CHARACTER

1. HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL

The Historic Residential precinct will be defined by its distinctive streetscapes of small cottages set in established garden surrounds. This includes the continued presence of the town's older buildings, and new development that is designed to integrate with and maintain the significance of key features of the existing historic character.



2. TOWNSHIP RESIDENTIAL

The Township Residential precinct will be defined by its distinctive 'country town' character, with dwellings set in garden surrounds and wide, tree-lined streets with informal edges. New buildings will respond to the existing character by providing generous front setbacks and space around dwellings for canopy trees and low, permeable front fencing. A range of dwelling types can be provided in this precinct, with smaller dwellings designed to reflect the character and landscape quality of the streetscape.



3. GARDEN SETTING

The Garden Setting precinct will comprise dwellings set within garden surrounds, with spacing around buildings to provide for canopy trees and landscaping. The low scale of buildings and low pitched roofs will allow the vegetation to dominate, and the delineation of public and private realms will be open, with low and permeable or non-existent front fences. New buildings will also respond to the existing character by providing generous front setbacks and space around dwellings for canopy trees.



4. BUSH SETTING

The Bush Setting precinct is defined by the informal, native planting of the precinct. Native canopy trees and shrubby vegetation will continue to delineate public and private realms, and generous spacing between houses will allow ample room for vegetation to be retained or established. Dwellings will be sited to fit within the topography and will use a mixture of materials that integrate with the bush garden setting in neutral, earthy tones.



5. BUSH RURAL LIVING

The Bush Rural Living precinct will provide an interface between the large, bush lots located to the south of the township boundary and the more densely developed residential parts of Woodend. Vegetation and generous open spaces will remain the dominant visual element. New houses will be well designed to sit within the topography and informal bush setting. Rural style fencing and informal road treatments will retain the semi-rural feel of the streetscapes.



6. LARGE LOT RURAL LIVING

The open, semi-rural character of the Large Lot Rural Living precinct will be retained through the maintenance of large lot sizes and low site coverage. Vegetation will remain a dominant characteristic with retention of large canopy trees, wide setbacks from roadsides and generous spacing between dwellings. New buildings will continue to display a high quality of architectural style and detail. Formal gardens with perimeter planting and simple post and wire fencing will delineate private properties from the open grassland or bush surrounds.



7. LARGE LOT TOWNSHIP LIVING

The interesting variety in architectural style and form will continue to be a defining aspect of the Large Lot Township precinct. This will be enhanced through landscaped gardens and street tree plantings. The spaciousness of the housing pattern will be maintained through generous front and side setbacks, and rural style fencing. Where applicable, views to Mount Macedon will be retained through appropriate siting of dwellings within the topography.



HOUSING

Housing in Woodend consists of predominantly detached dwellings, and this lack of variety has been noted by many as an issue.

Providing a range of housing options helps to respond to the needs of all people in the community as they change over time. While the population of Woodend is expected to age, more young families are also locating here. Family structures change with the life cycle and a long term plan must cater for these diverse needs.

Housing options should include a range of dwelling types (e.g. shop-top apartment, unit, townhouse, detached family home) of different sizes, and on different sized lots, that provide for a range of affordability levels.

In Woodend it is recognised that the concept of 'downsizing' is different to that which might be expected in the metropolitan setting. For example, it has been noted that people who live on a large rural property may see downsizing as a shift to a house near town, on a 1,000m² site, not necessarily to a small unit. Nevertheless, demand for smaller dwelling types is increasing. Within the Woodend context, a smaller dwelling could vary depending on the neighbourhood, and range from sites of 500m² to 1,000m².

The Neighbourhood Character Guidelines address the need for a variety of specific lots sizes for each character precinct, to reflect the preferred character of the area. Within these parameters there is potential to provide different housing options, of various types and sizes. Given the large lot sizes within the town, many sites within the

existing established areas could support an incremental increase in density.

Specific areas have been identified near the town centre which are recommended as preferred areas for medium density housing, which could contribute to the housing diversity of the town.

Areas suited to medium density housing are identified as those included within the Township Residential character area. These areas are in close proximity to the transport and services of the town centre and have a character that could accommodate a degree of change. Encouraging medium density housing in these locations will also help retain the low density rural interface at the edges of the town.

In all instances, medium density housing must be sited and designed to accommodate adequate landscaping and provision of canopy trees.

All areas have potential for infill development, designed in a way that is appropriate for their character. For example, infill development within the precincts closer to the town centre may be achieved in the form of multi-unit development. In other areas where larger lot sizes are an intrinsic aspect of the character, infill development will constitute subdivision of large lots to the minimum lot size, which for the outerlying precincts ranges up to 4000m².

Several suggestions were offered by the community about the way in which land at the edges of the town could be developed for sensitively designed new housing. This includes use of the land for larger residential allotments

(e.g. 1 or 2 acre lots), with a semi-rural feel retained. Suggestions were also made about providing smaller housing styles within new development areas at the edge of town, and not just near the centre of town.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS FOR HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

It is recommended that the new format residential zones are introduced to provide clear direction on the development parameters for each neighbourhood character precinct, as set out in Appendix C.

The new zones allow the creation of different schedules that can be tailored to implement the detailed design and siting requirements, including minimum lot size, building height, site coverage, setbacks and requirements for landscaping (which will also stipulate the minimum requirement for provision of canopy trees).

Where schedules are created for the new residential zones, the development parameters will apply to all applications for planning and building permits. Additionally, the decision guidelines and application requirements can be tailored to achieve the desired outcome for each neighbourhood character precinct.

Other design considerations set out in the neighbourhood character guidelines, such as roof form, colour, materials and fencing, will only be implemented where a planning permit is required, or where it is recommended that an overlay control apply.

The General Residential Zone is recommended to apply to the Township Residential precinct. This would allow

greater flexibility for medium density housing in this precinct, where the possibility of smaller lot sizes and multi-unit development on larger sites is envisaged.

The Neighbourhood Residential Zone is recommended to apply to the Historic Residential, Garden Setting, Bush Setting, Bush Rural Living and Large Lot Township precincts. The purpose of this zone is to encourage lower scale and density and it could impose a limit of two dwellings per site.

The two precincts of Large Lot Rural Living are currently included in the Low Density Residential Zone. It is recommended that this zoning remain, as it provides for management of large rural sites, particularly in relation to connection to services.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN QUALITY

Residential design quality is a key issue in Woodend, as evidenced by photographs and submissions received from the community.

Design principles to achieve a higher standard of residential design in new infill development or on broad hectare sites are set out, to reflect the character and quality of Woodend, and to address issues raised by the community.

A number of submissions noted the potential to improve environmental sustainability, including provision for solar panels and passive thermal design, and principles around sustainable design are also provided.

Examples of highly successful housing developments were noted by the community, including an example in Castlemaine (Munroe Court), suburban areas of Melbourne (Winter Park, Doncaster and the former Kew cottages redevelopment), as well as overseas. These are illustrated on the following pages. Some of the design principles of these developments could potentially be applied within the context of Woodend.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

DESIGNING WITH THE LANDSCAPE

Woodend has numerous significant landscape features and environmental conditions (see Section 6: Landscape & Environment). These features present opportunities to design sensitive housing (for all types of housing development) based around the landscape as a key aspect of the character.

This may be achieved by:

- Using drainage lines, creek corridors and areas of remnant vegetation as open space connections and linear parks within residential development.
- Investigating cluster housing design for medium density development that adopts an informal layout based around, and integrated with, the site's environmental and landscape features.
- Siting and designing new development to accommodate views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill from the public realm and neighbouring properties.
- Providing adequate space for the planting of canopy trees around buildings (in consideration of bushfire risk management). Typically, a minimum area of 4m² is required to support a canopy tree.
- Minimising the loss of mature vegetation and canopy trees when designing new development.
- Using materials, colour and building articulation to integrate built form into the landscape, rather than dominating the site.
- Providing substantial buffers between residential development and landscape features.

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING DESIGN

All new housing development in Woodend should incorporate principles of sustainable design. These may include:

- North-facing orientation of housing and glazing to maximise solar gain and natural light.
- Minimal glazing to the west to minimise afternoon heat entry.
- Screening devices (deep eaves, pergolas with deciduous vines) along north-facing facades to limit direct sunlight during summer.
- High thermal mass materials for external cladding and flooring material of buildings in north facing areas to absorb winter solar gain and stabilise internal temperature during summer.
- High insulation value to roof, walls and glazing to minimise uncontrolled heat loss/gain, and pelmeted curtains on the windows to reduce heat loss in winter.
- Achieving quality indoor environments that reduce the need for heating, cooling and artificial lighting by considering exposure to natural daylight and shadow. This may be achieved through building orientation, internal design and location of external vegetation such as canopy trees.
- Increasing the energy efficiency of dwellings through materials choices, use of on site power options such as solar panels or wind turbines, and reducing air leakage within internal structures.

- Siting large canopy trees so that they do not obscure sunlight to solar panels of the property or neighbouring roofs.
- Collection and reuse of storm and grey water to reduce use of potable water, irrigate landscapes and improve the quality of storm water runoff.
- Choice of housing materials with consideration for the environmental impacts of their production, longevity of use and potential to be recycled.

Some of these principles are included within the 6 Star Standard, required of all new buildings and alterations, while others are still only optional (such as siting of trees), and to be encouraged through dialogue with applicants.

MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING

Medium density housing should be sited and designed to integrate well with the existing neighbourhood character and to retain a sense of spaciousness within the streetscape. This may be achieved by:

- Maintaining the existing pattern of regular front and side setbacks which allow space for planting, including canopy trees.
- Designing buildings to have variations in scale and form to reduce the sense of building bulk.
- Providing a sense of space between buildings across the site. The number of buildings sharing a common wall should be limited, or a highly varied development footprint adopted that allows substantial setbacks for landscaping and variation in building form.
- Including a range of large, medium and small canopy trees across the site, in locations most favourable to

their growth. Trees should be complemented by low scale planting.

- Providing one canopy tree (at least 6m in height) per 400m² of site area. A minimum distance of 4m should be provided around the trunk clear of buildings or hard paving. A canopy tree should be provided in both the front and rear setbacks.
 - At the rear of the site, adopting a single storey scale or a large setback for double storey buildings, to retain the sense of openness across adjoining back gardens.
 - Ensuring that garages do not dominate the site frontage or internal driveways, by setting garages back from the building line of adjoining dwellings.
 - Providing a landscaped edge along internal accessways of a minimum width of 1m, to allow adequate space for planting.
 - Providing no or low fencing along internal accessways.
- Walking and cycling trails integrated with open spaces or natural features.
 - Responding to heritage and cultural sensitivity.
 - Provision of infrastructure requirements.
 - Responding to the neighbourhood character of adjoining areas.
 - Accommodation of a range of lot sizes and dwelling types to suit a variety of households.

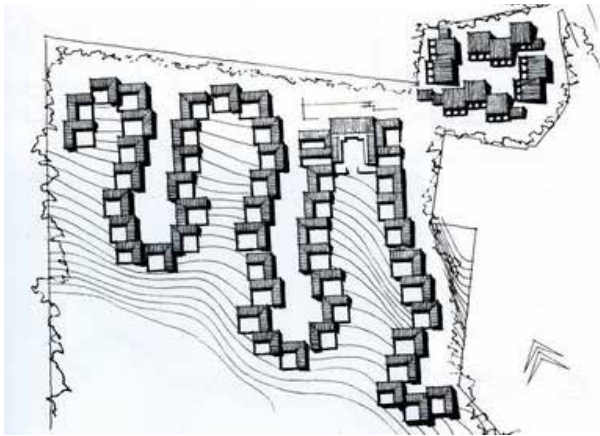
BROAD HECTARE DEVELOPMENT

Should greenfield or broad hectare development be considered, a detailed site masterplan would need to be prepared.

The masterplan should include requirements for:

- Integration of environmental and landscape features in the site and street layout and around open spaces.
- Street layouts designed to follow contour lines.
- Retention of existing trees and water features.
- Site access and circulation networks that provide clear and direct connection to surrounding main roads.

EXAMPLES OF MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING ON LARGE SITES



The Fredensborg houses by Jorn Utzon have been designed to integrate with the surrounding landscape. The sympathetic placement of each dwelling in relation to the slope of the site allows for high levels of natural light to each dwelling, views across the landscape and a general feeling of openness. Communal and private open spaces are important to achieving a sense of community within the development.

Photos: (left-right) tallerjordibadia.blogspot.com.au; www.kulturarv.dk; commons.wikimedia.org



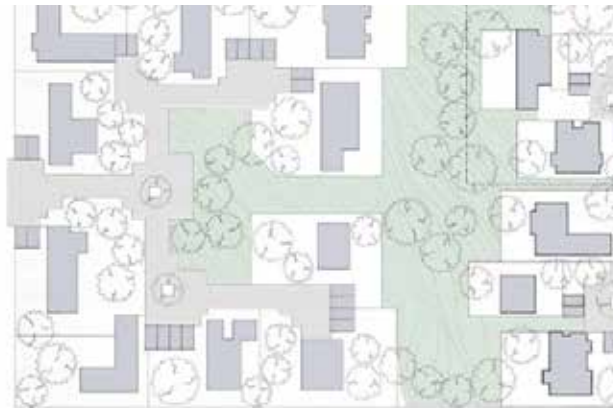
The former Kew Cottages redevelopment site also has buildings arranged around natural features, including existing significant trees and the undulating topography. While the buildings are of a distinctive contemporary design, they sit comfortably within the landscape. Timber and granitic sand landscape elements in the public realm assist the natural look of the development.

Photos: www.mdgla.com.au



Cluster housing design at Munroe Court, Castlemaine by Life House Design & Sam Cox Landscape. This ecologically sustainable development integrates medium density housing units into the landscape setting through sensitive design response that incorporates use of natural materials, endemic plant selection and water sensitive urban design. The site also features communal open spaces and productive gardens.

Photos: (left-right) samcoxlandscape.com; www.abc.net.au; samcoxlandscape.com



Winter Park cluster housing, Doncaster by Graeme Gunn. Challenging the traditional approach to subdivision design, the housing at Winter Park is carefully sited to take into account the natural features of the land and solar orientation. Communal open spaces flow through the site and feature a landscaping theme of Australian natives and remnant bush. Within each dwelling there is a strong connection between internal and external areas and buildings are sited to maximise views across the open spaces of site. Buildings are low scale and incorporate level changes to sit comfortably within the topography and use materials of muted, earthy tones. Photos: (left) assemblepapers.com.au; (middle & right) www.gunndyring.com.au

OBJECTIVES

Protect and enhance the preferred neighbourhood character of Woodend’s residential areas

Enhance Woodend’s ‘country town’ character and landscape quality

Foster architectural excellence in new development

Increase the range of housing options to cater for the longer term needs of all members of the Woodend community

Encourage environmentally sustainable housing that minimises energy use and improves occupant comfort

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Recommended strategies and actions to meet these objectives:

- Include neighbourhood character policy and design guidance in the Planning Scheme.
- Implement the design requirements for each neighbourhood character precinct (as detailed in Appendix C) through the introduction of the new residential zones.
- Apply the General Residential Zone to the Township Residential Precinct, to allow for development of medium density housing
- Retain land in the Low Density Residential Zone.
- Apply the Neighbourhood Residential Zone to all other residential areas, with the varying design and siting requirements expressed through zone schedules.
- Require new development to thoroughly analyse the natural and environmental qualities of the site and neighbourhood and respond to these in design proposals.
- Include policy in the Planning Scheme to encourage a range of housing options in preferred locations.
- Encourage the development of adaptable and affordable housing options that cater for different household types.
- Revise the MSS township map to include preferred areas for medium density housing in identified locations that have good access to the town centre, the station, community facilities and open spaces.
- Encourage shop-top residences with new development in the commercial areas as a means of increasing housing diversity.
- Implement guidelines for preferred housing densities, sizes and types for the town’s growth areas through schedules to the residential zones.
- Identify and protect heritage sites and precincts.
- Develop design guidelines for public realm treatments in residential areas.
- Incorporate environmentally sustainable design principles in new policy.



4.

TOWNSHIP ACTIVITY

Photo: Peter Moon

VISION

In the future, Woodend will continue to be a town with a sense of vibrancy, a town that provides jobs and services for local people, opportunities for recreation and activities for facilities for visitors.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Views of the Woodend community about the township activities include:

- ... Woodend's commercial precinct should stay between the bridges*
- ... retain local businesses, no big boxes*
- ... look at options for the industrial area in town*
- ... expand the industrial area on Clancys Lane*
- ... don't allow the commercial area to creep along the town entrance roads like every other small town*
- ... tourism is important – Woodend needs more facilities, accommodation, venues*
- ... Woodend needs a high school as a point of community focus*
- ... The Plan must consider the needs of all age groups*

WHAT WE KNOW

Woodend's business role, including its retail, commercial, industrial and tourism activity, has been analysed in order to assess long-term requirements for the township.

RETAIL & COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

Current retail & commercial activity

Woodend benefits from a compact retail and commercial core, confined to the central part of the township 'between the bridges'.

Shopping in Woodend has a distinctly 'local' character, focussed around the vibrant High Street spine. The many unique specialty stores, as well as cafes, restaurants and pubs, are an integral part of the town's appeal for residents and visitors alike.

The northern end of High Street has the retail anchors of the Nineteenth Hole Shopping Centre, which includes the Coles Supermarket and Target Country. The Mitre 10 hardware store and post office is also in this location.

Retail activity is not as strong at the southern end of High Street. However, a new supermarket has been proposed for the large site adjacent to the train station which is well positioned to facilitate retail development and urban renewal at this end of town.

Non-retail commercial activity includes a range of professional services such as banks and real estate agents that are located throughout the commercially zoned land. Sometimes these uses also extend into Residential and Industrial 1 Zones.

The current supply of floorspace for retail activity equates to approximately 12,700m² and for other commercial,

6,690m². Permits recently issued will provide for an additional 4,150m² of retail and commercial floorspace. The area of vacant land available for future retail and commercial activity (less sites where permits have been recently issued) equates to 5,000m².

Future demand for retail & commercial land

Over the next 15 years it is estimated that an additional 2,700m² of retail floorspace will be required to serve the increased population. In order to maintain the existing balance between retail and other commercial activity, a further 3,000m² will also be required for non-retail businesses. Allowing for access, parking and landscaping, this would require a land area of approximately 1.6ha.

Existing vacant sites within the Commercial 1 Zone equate to 0.5ha, therefore leaving an estimated future demand for commercial land of approximately 1.1ha.

A number of commercial businesses are located in residential and industrial areas close to High Street, which suggests a strong demand for business land in the town centre.

Options for the future

There is potential for many sites within the existing Commercial 1 Zone to be used more effectively. Many sites are occupied by small buildings with large areas of car parking or storage, and these sites could be redeveloped to accommodate additional business activity.

A number of large sites around the railway station offer a strategic opportunity to increase the retail and commercial activity in the southern part of the town centre, close to public transport. Commercial or office floorspace could

also be provided within the first floor of buildings, with retail at ground level.

Looking outside of the commercial zoned land, a logical extension of the town centre to provide for new business activity would be to the east of High Street.

The area between Urquhart Street and Brooke Street east of the existing Commercial 1 Zone and west of Templeton Street, could be considered. This area covers approximately 1.2ha.

Community feedback has shown a strong desire to maintain the local character of Woodend's town centre. While it is not possible to stipulate that new businesses are 'local', other issues can be managed through the Planning Scheme to ensure that the scale and type of new development is respectful of Woodend's valued character and amenity.

INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY

Current industrial activity

Woodend's two industrial areas are important contributors to local business activity and services provision.

The small industrial area within the town centre contains a range of small factories and workshops, wholesalers, automotive repairs and parts, depots and a vet clinic. There are also a number of dwellings in this precinct, and there is community concern about heavy goods traffic and amenity issues.

The industrial area at Clancys Lane contains a number of larger industrial businesses, including a major trailer

manufacturing plant and other factories and storage facilities.

Both industrial areas, at Brooke/Urquhart Streets in the town centre and at Clancys Lane to the north, have reached capacity. The need for serviced industrial land to support population growth and strengthen the local economy is clearly identified as a priority in the Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan.

The Macedon Ranges Industrial Land Strategy (2010) found that an additional 12ha of industrial land would be required within Woodend. Some of this demand may be taken up in Kyneton, primarily for businesses which require larger sites and greater buffer areas to sensitive land uses. However, the absence of smaller vacant industrial lots suggests that Kyneton is unlikely to be able to provide additional service and light industrial land to support population and small business growth in Woodend will be required locally. It is estimated that around 6-8ha of additional industrial land of small and medium lot sizes will be required within Woodend over the next 15 years.

Clancys Lane

Expansion of the Clancys Lane area is an option for providing this additional industrial land, and has the advantage of being located outside of the township which minimises potential conflict with residential uses. It will be important to maintain a minimum separation of 1km from residential zoned land and this industrial land to ensure its long term flexibility and viability. Issues to be addressed in considering this option include the capacity of the existing road network to provide access for heavy vehicles and the visual impact of industrial uses at the northern edge of the town.

Town centre industrial area

Different views have been offered by the community about the industrial area around Brooke/Urquhart Streets within the town centre. Commonly, there is concern about amenity impacts on surrounding sensitive land uses and heavy vehicle traffic in the centre of town.

Many suggestions have been made by the community about rezoning this land for residential or mixed use development and relocating industrial uses to Clancys Lane.

Amenity concerns regarding this precinct that have been raised by the community are acknowledged, such as heavy vehicle traffic and the appearance of some sites. However, there is considerable value in retaining this industrial zoned land close to the town centre, as it provides service industries (and local employment opportunities) within easy access for business and residents.

Given the high demand for industrial land or other types of commercial premises, it is recommended that the precinct's role as a service industrial/light industrial area is retained as an important asset in the town's local economy and a convenient location for service businesses that serve the resident community.

It is recommended that the Industrial 1 land is rezoned to the Industrial 3 Zone to provide for light industrial and service business uses. This would better reflect the existing range of businesses which are located in the precinct, and allow Council to more appropriately manage current and future interface conflicts. Permit requirements under this zone (as per the recently introduced reformed zones) are more extensive and therefore Council is able to consider potential amenity impacts upon surrounding areas and uses. Combined with a rezoning, new local policy direction

will guide the types of preferred activities appropriate to the Industrial 3 land.

This zoning and policy change would clearly differentiate this industrial precinct as a location for light industrial and low impact businesses, with larger operations directed towards the industrial precinct at Clancys Lane or Kyneton. It is important that the industrial areas do not allow for retail or bulky goods sales that compete with the retail core.

TOURISM

The Macedon Ranges Tourism Strategy (2010) includes a number of key strategic directions relating to Woodend and many suggestions have been received from the community about how Woodend's tourism role could be expanded to benefit local businesses.

Woodend is a popular destination for day trippers who appreciate the town's historic character and its landscaped setting, the High Street shops and the cafes, restaurants and pubs.

Woodend is also host to several key festivals and events, including the Winter Arts Festival and the MAD bike ride. Major events at Hanging Rock see many visitors passing through Woodend.

Implementation of the urban design and landscape guidelines recommended in the Town Structure Plan are important steps in enhancing the town's character and amenity as a key aspect of attracting visitors. Extended weekend opening hours, where appropriate, should also be considered.

The most pressing need in Woodend's tourism offer is for a greater range of accommodation options to suit all

budgets, given its location along the Calder Freeway and within close proximity to major tourism destinations. This would encourage more people to extend their visit to Woodend and stop overnight.

Woodend needs a greater supply of short stay options such as B&Bs, boutique hotels and a motel, all of which would serve both business and weekend visitors.

The extensive areas of State Forest and Macedon Regional Park close to the town centre provide a recreation resource and tourist attraction. Accommodation could be located in a natural setting to reflect the bush environs or provide links to bushland through walking or mountain bike trails.

The active cycling community in Woodend has been frequently cited as a tourism drawcard, and there is potential for Woodend to become a regional cycling hub. In addition to the extensive mountain bike trails, road cycling routes could be improved through signage and safety measures. Trail connections to Hanging Rock are suggested and the rail-trail project between Woodend and Daylesford is gathering momentum. This group of visitors in particular could significantly increase the demand for overnight stays and hospitality businesses.

There are opportunities to further promote local food and wine production. In addition to the successful regular farmers' market, the role of cafes, restaurants and fresh food outlets in promoting local food and wine could be increased.

The creative community of Woodend play an important role in attracting visitors. This is evidenced by the popularity of the Winter Arts Festival. There is potential to investigate ways to leverage off creative strengths to deliver arts and cultural events and/or establish new galleries and creative spaces throughout the town.

Woodend's Visitor Information Centre is strategically located at Five Mile Creek, near to bus/caravan parking, toilets, shops and parkland. As the Woodend Visitor Information Centre is located in the township beyond the turn off for major attractions, it is vital to ensure that signage from the freeway is clear and effective.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Woodend has a range of community facilities to serve the needs of its population, typical of a town of its size.

Five Mile Creek & Forest Street Precinct

The Five Mile Creek Reserve and Forest Street area is a hub of community activity within the town centre. The various community sites and facilities within this area are shown on the map on page 43.

The Community Centre at the corner of Forest and High Streets is a community focal point, and includes the library and Council information desk. There are also meeting rooms of varying sizes that host many different activities, such as Scouts and Senior Citizens.

Recreational facilities include the swimming pool, skate park and sports ovals. The former squash courts building has significant potential for re-use as a community facility or, given the timber flooring, a music or dance venue. This building should be altered or redesigned to interact with the surrounding open spaces.

Woodend Neighbourhood House and Sustainability Centre are adjacent to the Community Centre in Forest Street. These are vital local resources and home to various community groups, activities and further education classes.

The popular monthly farmers' market is held in the area between the Community Centre and High Street, as an initiative of the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group. Formalised facilities could be provided to support the market, such as sealing of the carpark or a shelter structure.

This entire precinct needs to be planned as a community focal point for the town, with an integrated design for buildings, pedestrian pathways, car parking and the landscaped spaces between each facility.

Sports Facilities & Parks

Buffalo Sports Stadium on Forest Street is a major community resource. The Stadium hosts dance classes, basketball, soccer, volleyball, martial arts, netball and preschool programs, among other activities. Community feedback has indicated that the facility experiences high peak demands at after school times and weekends, and is in need of expansion.

Gilbert Gordon Oval, north of Five Mile Creek, hosts football and cricket matches. Woodend Racecourse Reserve on Forest Street includes the Pony Club and racetrack.

Suggestions from the community to improve sports and recreation facilities include a soccer pitch near the Buffalo complex, track and field courses, improvement of the swimming pool and walking / cycling routes, such as between Woodend and Hanging Rock along the Romsey Road, and along the Five Mile Creek corridor.

Campaspe Park and the Children's Park are part of the open spaces on either side of the Five Mile Creek in the town centre and include playgrounds and picnic facilities. Elsewhere, small reserves and playgrounds are located within residential neighbourhoods.

Schools

Woodend has a kindergarten and two primary schools, but does not have a high school. Braemar College is the closest secondary school, located outside Woodend on the western slopes of Mount Macedon. Otherwise, travel to Gisborne or Kyneton is necessary for high school students.

The need for a public high school in Woodend has been frequently raised by the community. Funding for new public schools in Victoria is managed by the State Government. However, a recent demographic analysis demonstrates that a new stand-alone government secondary school is not required within the Woodend Core Area.

Arts & Culture

Woodend has a strong and active arts community.

The Woodend Winter Arts Festival, held on the Queen's Birthday Weekend in June, is an event with a musical program which includes international and local performers as well as literary and visual arts events.

In addition, there are many small gallery and events spaces around the town. Small facilities such as these are an important aspect of the cultural offer of the town, as a means for creative expression and fostering local talent.

KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES

There are a number of key opportunity sites within the Woodend township that present significant potential for redevelopment. These sites include those which are currently vacant or have only a small building on a substantial site area. Some sites support buildings that are in need of renewal. Some of these sites are shown on the map opposite.

34 Urquhart St & 1 Brooke Street

A permit has recently been granted for use of these two sites for mixed use development, including retail at the ground floor and residential/office in the upper levels.

The proposed buildings are two storey, with distinctive high pitched roof forms.

72B High Street

A permit has been granted for use of this site for a mixed use development, including retail at the ground floor and residential/office in the upper levels.

A building on this site would increase the activity of this part of High Street and 'fill the gap' of the currently vacant site.

61 High Street & 28 Urquhart Street sites near station

A permit has been granted for development of a supermarket on 61 High Street. Council has received a revised proposal for a larger supermarket incorporating an additional parcel at 28 Urquhart Street abutting the railway line and CFA building.

The site, as well as the other sites in the block bound by High Street, Urquhart Street and the railway line, has significant

potential. Other businesses/uses to complement the supermarket proposal and take advantage of proximity to the town centre and station are encouraged.

Buildings on this site should be respectful of the key gateway location and contribute to a positive pedestrian environment along Urquhart and High Streets.

59 High Street

This site is a small area of Commercial Zoned land at the southern entrance to the town centre. It currently supports two older buildings and several large mature trees and has a steep incline to the west adjoining the railway station car park.

Development on this site should ensure an appropriate built form and signage design response in this significant gateway location. Buildings should be designed to address the High Street frontage and the interface with the station carpark and adjoining median space to the north. Importantly signage should be appropriate to the country town context in height, scale, materials and colours. Landscaping should be provided to the High Street interface. Retention of the mature trees on site should also be considered.

50 Anslow St (corner Templeton)

This large site presents a significant opportunity for new business or mixed use activity in the town centre.

Buildings on this site should provide a positive address to all street frontages. Landscaping should be included within frontage setbacks.

128 High Street (19th Hole Shopping Centre)

This site is anomalous to other buildings on High Street as it has a large area of surface car parking within the frontage setback. The car park has no trees. The hedge across the site frontage blocks views to the buildings and as such provides an inactive street integration. Feedback from the community has shown significant concern about the design of this site.

In the long term, should the site be redeveloped, it is recommended that buildings are located along the street frontage, in a 'fine-grain' format as per the other shop frontages of High Street. Car parking could be provided at the rear. Laneways or pedestrian access should be provided mid-block to encourage pedestrian access through to the town centre.

In the short term, it is recommended that the height of the hedge is lowered to open sight lines across the site. Tree planting should be introduced to the car park. This should include planters and drainage that apply Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles.

Other sites identified

There are numerous sites within the business zoned land that present opportunities for new development. These sites are either vacant or are occupied by only a small building. Redevelopment of these sites in accordance with the streetscape and building design guidelines would significantly improve the streetscape character, and add new activity to the town centre.



Prepare a masterplan for expanded and integrated open spaces and community facilities around Five Mile Creek

Contain the commercial zone 'between the bridges'
 Consider expansion of the commercial zone east as required
 Improve public environment & landscaping

Encourage mixed use development around station and make use of large sites for a range of uses

Consider commercial zone expansion

Rezone to Industrial 3 Zone, improve appearance and amenity

LEGEND

- Property Boundaries
- Railway
- Open Space
- Five Mile Creek
- Buildings
- Heritage Overlay Precinct
- Commercial Zoned Land
- Consider Commercial Zone Expansion
- Industrial Zoned Land
- Opportunity for Medium Density Housing
- Indicative Through-block Pedestrian Connections

Community Facilities

- 1** Tennis Club
- 2** Skate Park
- 3** Swimming Pool
- 4** Information Centre
- 5** Former Squash Courts
- 6** Civic Centre
- 7** Bowling Club
- 8** Netball Court
- 9** Children's Park

Key Opportunity Sites

- 1** 34 Urquhart & 1 Brooke Streets
- 2** 72B High Street
- 3** 61 High Street & 28 Urquhart Street (proposed supermarket)
- 4** 59 High Street
- 5** 19th Hole Shopping Centre
- 6** Other vacant/underused commercially zoned land

Woodend Town Centre



OBJECTIVES

Retain the strong retail and commercial role of the town centre - 'between the bridges'

Provide opportunities for local economic development in all business sectors

Develop Woodend's tourism potential

Strengthen the role of the town centre as the hub of community life

Provide a range of community services to support the diverse needs of the town's residents

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Recommended strategies and actions to meet these objectives:

Retail & commercial activity

- Retain the existing Commercial 1 Zone as the focus of retail and commercial activity in the town centre.
- Investigate the potential to expand the Commercial 1 Zone to the east, up to Templeton Street as a short to medium term action. Council should monitor applications for commercial development and instigate rezoning before currently available land is exhausted.
- Develop a policy to encourage redevelopment of strategic redevelopment sites, including vacant or underused sites and shop top spaces such as:
 - The Nineteenth Hole Shopping Centre.
 - Strategic sites near the station, on Urquhart Street.
 - Vacant sites in High Street, Urquhart Street and Brooke Street.
- Implement built form controls in the Planning Scheme to protect the character and amenity of the town centre and to ensure a high standard of design quality. Refer to Chapter 5 for detail.
- Prioritise options for streetscape improvements to enhance the pedestrian and visitor experience of the town centre (refer Section 5: Township Character).

Industrial activity

- Retain the town centre industrial area as a light industrial / service industrial area. Rezone to Industrial 3 Zone, to better manage the design and amenity impacts of future development and encourage a service business role. Implement a policy to prevent retail or bulky goods sales in this area.
- Investigate the potential to expand the Clancys Lane industrial precinct to provide additional Industrial 1 Zoned land to meet demand. If applicable, review the Industrial design guidelines (Clause 22.23 of the Planning Scheme) to reflect outcomes by expansion of this area.
- Implement traffic management strategies to address heavy vehicle access or amenity impacts should traffic volumes increase.

Tourism

- Encourage opportunities to provide new tourism accommodation in town.
- Promote Woodend as a regional centre for cycling, nature-based recreation activity, local food and wine produce and arts and culture.
- Identify other opportunities to improve the retail, commercial and tourism offer of the town.

Community & recreational facilities

- Support and encourage gallery, arts or music spaces to foster local creativity and talent.
- Consider options to re-use the squash courts as a new community space.
- Develop a comprehensive masterplan for the Five Mile Creek and Forest Street area as a future community hub of indoor and outdoor facilities within integrated, connected urban spaces.
- Investigate the need to upgrade sports facilities, including extending the role of the Buffalo Stadium.
- Continue to assess the needs of the community as the resident population grows or changes in the future.



Photo: Hubert Weisrock



Photo: Hubert Weisrock



Photo: Hubert Weisrock



Photo: Nicole Barbe





5.

TOWNSHIP CHARACTER

VISION

In the future Woodend will continue to be a town with a centre that has a strong ‘village’ character; that is walkable, local and friendly.

WHAT WE’VE HEARD

Views of the Woodend community about the town centre character include:

- ... tourists flock to this area because of many factors including the landscape character and the country atmosphere of the town*
- ... heritage buildings are integral to Woodend’s character, including the clock tower, St. Mary’s Church, the Masonic building, Woodend Railway Station, Islay House and the Victorian cottage Beth Shan to name a few*
- ... buildings should be low scale to maintain the character of the town and views to Mount Macedon*
- ... views from the town to the surrounding landscape are important*
- ... the main streets of the town are in need of attention*

WHAT WE KNOW

THE “VILLAGE” FEEL & RURAL ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere of Woodend’s town centre stems from the broad, tree-lined main street with its heritage character, low scale buildings and shop verandahs that all contribute to a distinctive streetscape. Outward views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill are available from most parts of the main street and are a key aspect of the town’s character which have been maintained to date through the pattern of built form.

Woodend has a clearly defined town centre, nestled within the valley of the Five Mile Creek and contained ‘between the bridges’ of the railway and the creek. The curve in the alignment of High Street and the change in topography between the two bridges also help to physically define the town centre. Retail, commercial and community activities are concentrated within this area and there is strong community support for this focus to be maintained in the future. This concentration of activity creates a clearly defined town centre that is compact and walkable.

A diversity of locally run businesses and quirky touches such as flag poles, planter boxes and use of bright colours has added vibrancy to the main street, as has footpath trading and respectful blending of new architecture with heritage detailing.

BUILDINGS

Woodend's town centre includes an eclectic range of architectural styles that represent all eras of its history. This diversity of building styles is an important part of Woodend's character.

Many buildings along the main street have heritage or character values and retain original features of the Victorian, Edwardian or Interwar eras, including timber fretwork, wrought iron detailing, decorative brickwork and indented doorways.

A number of heritage buildings are significant landmarks for Woodend. These include Keatings Hotel (Holgate Brewery, 1898), the former Commercial Bank of Australia (1884), the Mechanics Institute (1893), the former Post Office (1905), the former Shire Offices (1928), and the Clock Tower (1928) which is an iconic feature of the town centre.

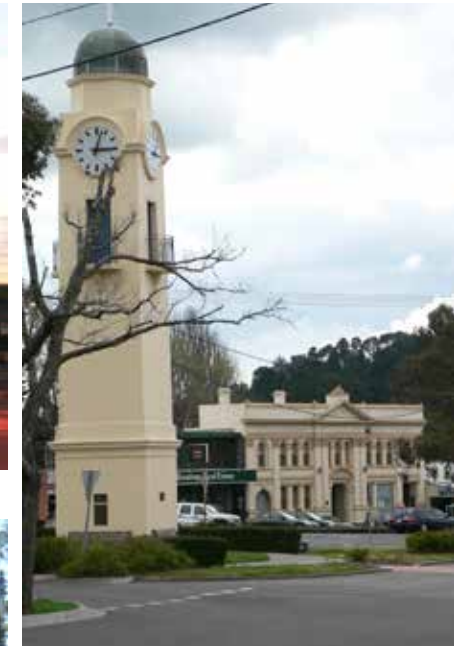
The design quality of new buildings is mixed. Many new buildings have drawn from the styles of the heritage streetscape, with varying degrees of success. Some new buildings lack the quality of the original architecture.

Buildings along High Street generally have a 'fine grain' of development, meaning that their frontages are narrow, and the standard width of a typical shopfront. Most buildings are set up to the street frontage, creating a clear edge for the street and footpath.

Additionally, most High Street shops have verandahs, which not only offer weather protection but are a key aspect of the character of Woodend's main streetscape.



High Street heritage & character. Photo: Peter Smith



Clock Tower & Mechanics Institute



New Leaves bookshop building - character valued by many. Photo: the Stockfelds



Post-supported verandah, heritage detailing



Buildings are either single or double storey in scale, with the double storey heritage buildings setting the maximum building scale in the streetscape. This low building scale has also retained a vegetated backdrop to the town centre formed by views to Mount Macedon, Golf Course Hill and the higher ground of the Black Forest.

Viewlines to Mount Macedon from the western side of High Street are an important aspect of the town's character. These views are available along side streets, and should be retained between buildings. Limiting building height will help to retain views. New development should be sited and designed to retain views between buildings on the eastern side of the street.

New development should be lower than the parapet height of the heritage buildings (which would equate to approximately 10m) on the west side of High Street. Single storey forms are preferred along the east side of High Street where it is necessary to maintain viewlines to Mt Macedon. However some double storey elements may be accommodated to the rear where the slope of land allows and in locations where viewlines can be maintained.

Throughout the town centre a range of building materials have been used including brick, stone and timber. Roof forms are also varied, and while many buildings have pitched roofs, the overall pattern of building and roof forms is mixed.

While the older styles of buildings are highly valued by the community, there is no single building style that defines the character of the town. Within general parameters of building scale and siting, there is much scope for



The Clock Tower, rooflines of heritage buildings and surrounding landscape are the key visual elements of High Street. Photo: Alan Grinton

contemporary and innovative architectural design expression to add to the town's character.

The design quality of new buildings is the most important consideration. There is the opportunity for all new development to add to the character of the town centre through architectural creativity and innovation.

HERITAGE

A substantial portion of Woodend's town centre has been identified as a heritage precinct and is covered by the Heritage Overlay. This includes all buildings between Anslow Street and Urquhart Streets.

The need to identify and protect further heritage buildings and areas by expanding the Heritage Overlay has been raised by the community.

PUBLIC SPACES

Aside from the parks and reserves around the Five Mile Creek, the town centre has no formal public spaces.

Many submissions from the community note the lack of a central community space in the township. This type of space is needed for regular market days and special events. Suggestions are made about the space near the library which could be pedestrianised as a permanent public space possibly incorporating market infrastructure or shelters.

Otherwise, the footpaths are the most important public spaces in the town centre, serving a dual role of pedestrian circulation and places to experience public life. The design of streets and landscaping in the town centre is integral to its image and character.

The pavement spaces of High Street are very wide and offer the opportunity to be used as informal public spaces. Cafes and shops have made use of the wide footpaths for outdoor dining and trading which adds life to the town centre. Additional informal 'pause places' could be created along the street, where people can stop and sit without purchasing food. In particular, the shared space zones (refer section 7: Transport) recommended for the High Street service roads could be used for small informal public spaces.

STREETSCAPE DETAIL

The variety and scale of vegetation and tree planting is a significant part of the character of Woodend's main streets. This includes planting within the High Street medians and



There are few 'pause places' in the town centre



Photo: Esther Kay



Colour & vibrancy of street trading and decorations

along adjoining streets. In some locations dense trees with low-lying branches create a visual and physical barrier from one side of the street to the other.

The quality of the paving and surfaces, including traffic islands, nature strips and kerb outstands, are inconsistent and in a number of places in a state of disrepair. The wine barrel planters are a distinctive feature of High Street, but not all are well maintained, and some contain plants of an inappropriate scale or that are not growing successfully. Street furniture is also in need of upgrading.

Overall, the location and style of all street furniture of the town centre should be reviewed to adopt a consistent approach to the style and location of items such as seats, rubbish bins, recycling bins, drinking fountains and bicycle hoops.

Streetscape Design Guidelines (on page 53) show recommendations for paving surfaces, planting themes, street furniture and signage, over the following pages.

The new Children's Park provides a good precedent for contemporary landscape design for spaces in the main street. Any new streetscape works should apply Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles where possible.



Pavements and planters need a consistent quality



Medians would benefit from upgraded landscaping and formalised pedestrian refuges



High Street includes a number of significant trees, although of mixed species

BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

All New Development in the Town Centre

- Ensure a high standard of contemporary architecture that complements the older buildings of the centre, while reflecting its distinct eclectic character.
- Protect important view lines to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill and town entrances from visually intrusive development or signage.
- Maintain a 2 storey or 10m height limit within the town centre and require new buildings on the east side of High Street to be sited and designed to allow views to Mount Macedon from within the village.
- New development should be lower than the parapet height of the heritage buildings (which would equate to approximately 10m) on the west side of High Street.
- Single storey forms are preferred along the east side of High Street where it is necessary to maintain viewlines to Mt Macedon. However some double storey elements may be accommodated to the rear where the slope of land allows and in locations where viewlines can be maintained.
- Demonstrate design innovation and careful composition of all the elements that comprise the design of built form – openings, colours, materials, textures etc.
- Avoid mock-heritage styles of architecture.
- Ensure that building facades facing streets, lanes or public spaces are activated through the inclusion of doors or windows.
- Buildings should use high quality materials that are durable and will age well over time. Materials that

reflect the character of Woodend should be used, such as stone, timber or brick. Muted tones and colours and non-reflective materials should be used.

- Ensure that new development within, or adjacent to, an identified heritage place respects the scale, form and siting of the heritage building.
- Encourage Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) measures to be integrated into new buildings or incorporated in the retrofitting of existing buildings e.g. energy efficiency and solar passive design, greater water efficiency, waste management practices, use of sustainable materials and adaptability of design.
- Consider how lighting could be used creatively to enhance the night time appearance of buildings and pedestrian safety on High Street and the surrounding street network (such as uplighting signature trees and heritage buildings, or the clocktower).
- Encourage the incorporation of advertising signs into building design and under awnings, avoiding roof top, above verandah and freestanding signs. Corporate branding and signage should be adapted to complement the character of Woodend.
- Retain and encourage mid-block access that provide pedestrian connection between main and rear streets, and encourage their upgrade and redevelopment with active uses.

High Street

- Maintain a fine grain of retail development within the town centre. Frontages should be designed with horizontal and vertical articulation that reflects the design of existing shopfronts.
- Discourage site consolidation and ‘big box’ development.
- Buildings should be set up to the street and provide an active frontage. New developments should be built to the front boundary with zero setbacks.
- Encourage footpath trading and outdoor dining to increase activity and passive surveillance on High Street.
- Encourage new buildings to provide post-supported verandahs consistent with the predominant style along High Street.
- Implement these design guidelines through a Design and Development Overlay for the town centre.

STREETSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Paving and Landscape Treatments

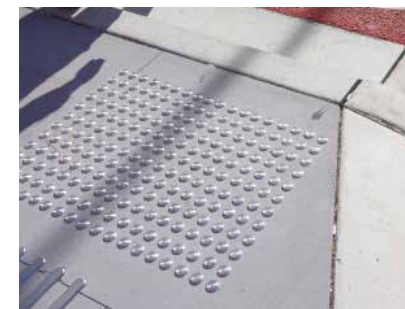
- Pavements should be designed to appear as a neutral ground plane, with an even colour palette and limited detail (people, street activities and planting provide colour and attraction within the streetscape).
- A consistent paving palette should be applied along High Street. Use light grey coloured paving materials to brighten the street beneath the wide verandahs on High Street, with darker grey asphalt infill or sawn bluestone details.
- Side streets off High Street should have a consistent yet simpler treatment of asphalt with concrete edging.
- A native planting palette that draws inspiration from the Children's Park should be used to visually connect the new landscaped areas to the main street and create a cohesive network of public spaces.
- Granitic sand paths should be used in informal areas to visually tie into the bush environment surrounding Woodend, particularly around the Five Mile Creek corridor.
- Pavements should have tactile surfaces at intersections and crossings to provide additional accessibility and legibility.
- A consistent landscape and planting theme should be applied to kerb outstands, pavement or street edges and traffic islands/nature strips.



Consistent paving theme in neutral or grey tones will brighten and update the footpath surfaces



Tactile paving treatments increase legibility and reflect "access for all" principles



Example of transition from formal pavers to informal granitic sand paths that respond to a bush setting



Consider introducing the native planting theme from the Children's Park to spaces in the main street to unite the two areas



Low profile planting set into street edge and kerb outstands

Street Furniture

- Upgrade and maintain wine barrel planters with a consistent planting theme, utilising low maintenance planting. Alternatively, replace with a low profile landscape treatment, allowing access through from kerbside parking.
- Use wood or similar surfaces for seating as it is a more comfortable material for a colder climate than metal or stone, and has a natural appearance suited to the town character.
- Introduce a suite of streetscape furniture that reflects a traditional, though updated, style in the main street.
- Introduce contemporary street furniture in new masterplanned areas (such as recommended in the Civic & Recreational Precinct).



Example of a timber bench seat that reflects a traditional form



Timber bins that match bench seats and introduce recycling options



Draw from the landscape theme of the Children's Park to assist in uniting this area with the main street



Potential for contemporary furniture to be introduced in new masterplanned areas



Contemporary street furniture in timber

OBJECTIVES

Retain and enhance the 'village' character of Woodend's town centre

Protect older buildings that are an important part of the character and heritage of the township

Ensure new development in the town centre maintains views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill

Design new development to respect the identified values of heritage buildings

Improve the quality of streetscape treatments throughout the town centre and surrounding precincts

Improve pedestrian amenity, safety and streetscape legibility

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Recommended strategies and actions to meet these objectives:

- Implement the Building Design Guidelines in the Planning Scheme.
- Identify and protect heritage sites and precincts.
- Apply the Streetscape Design Guidelines to assist in a co-ordinated approach to future public realm upgrades and planting.
- Investigate opportunities to create more informal public spaces in the town centre, for example within the High Street service roads.
- Support the retention of existing mature trees, and identify significant trees that require protection.
- Maintain the understory and canopy height of trees along High Street to allow for visibility across the road. Remove bushes and trees that compromise sightlines and replace with an appropriate species.
- Work with traders to enhance the appearance of shopfronts and businesses along High Street.
- Work with traders to apply a consistent approach to the planting and maintenance of the wine barrel planters, or to discuss their replacement.
- Work with traders and the wider community in the process of streetscape design and improvements.
- Provide additional bins for recycling and rubbish on High Street.



6.

LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENT

Photo: Alan Grinton

VISION

In the future Woodend will continue to be a town with a strong connection to its highly valued landscape features and surrounding natural environment.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Views of the Woodend community about the town's landscape and environment include:

... the character of Woodend arises from the contrast of rural land or forest with the deciduous trees, with their annual rhythms accentuated by the cold conditions

... amazing entry ways from each direction to our town of Woodend ... the Avenue of Honour, Black Forest Drive, Romsey Rd and Forest St are what people identify with our town

... land on Golf Course Hill could be set aside for a Botanic Garden, as was originally intended

... many new developments do not include adequate consideration of the natural landscape

...the lack of a consistent landscape theme throughout town has resulted in a very ragged look

WHAT WE KNOW

Woodend has numerous landscape features that contribute to the unique and highly valued character and setting of the town. Many of these have been identified through study team surveys and previous landscape and urban design studies. However, it has been contributions made by members of the community that have provided an intrinsic level of detail into how important the landscape and environment are to the people and identity of Woodend.

KEY LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Mount Macedon

Woodend is located at the base of Mount Macedon, with the heavily vegetated mountain providing a stunning backdrop to the town. Views to the Mount are available along High Street and from numerous residential streets on the eastern side of town. The low scale of commercial buildings along High Street has assisted in maintaining these view lines and frame the view from many different angles.

Hanging Rock

Close to the town is the unique geological feature of Hanging Rock, which has been drawing visitors to the area for decades. The reserve around Hanging Rock is used for many events during the year that draw large numbers of visitors to the area and through Woodend.

Five Mile Creek

The passage of Five Mile Creek has worn its way into a gentle valley that has defined the edges of the town centre. The dip in the topography at the creek crossing is a key part of the northern entrance to the Town Centre.

The historic bluestone bridge spanning this part of the creek is a local landmark. It is protected under the Heritage Overlay.

The open space corridor that follows the creek is a recreational and environmental asset for Woodend. There are aspirations to extend the existing shared trail/s through these spaces to Hanging Rock and Newham



Photo: Carl Poletti

which will create a broader regional connection to the town. Significant stretches of vegetation along the creek are currently protected under the Vegetation Protection Overlay VPO 1 (Black Gum) .

Golf Course Hill

Golf Course Hill is an important landscape feature of Woodend. The rise is of volcanic origin and positions Woodend at the edge of the Victorian Volcanic Plain and the Upland regions of Victoria. It is a site of great geological, aesthetic and historical significance. Part of the rise and its foreground setting are included within the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 (SLO1) of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

Golf Course Hill forms an important part of the gateway experience to Woodend from the north, in conjunction with the Avenue of Honour. It is a key element in the transition from the open rural landscape north of town to the more developed urban areas.

The southern edge of the ridgeline of Golf Course Hill, contained within the golf course itself, is covered in vegetation and forms part of the forested backdrop to the township when viewed from the south.

The golf course on the southern slopes has historical links to the area and provides an important recreational resource for the community.

Avenue of Honour

The Avenue of Honour is an outstanding gateway feature along the northern entry to town. It consists of 224 Oak trees, and extends 2.5km from Clarkes Lane into the town. The journey along the avenue also marks a transition from the open rural landscape to the developed, urban areas. Views out across the open rural landscape and to Golf Course Hill are filtered through these trees making it an important aspect of the entry experience into the township.

Woodend's Avenue of Honour is one of the most significant in the State, and this is acknowledged through its inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register.



Photo: Annie Morrison



Photo: Alan Grinton



Photo: Fiona Slechten

TOWNSHIP ENTRANCES & EDGES

Woodend has several gateways by road or rail that provide different arrival experiences into the town. These are not defined by specific points, rather they are linear in character and involve the collection of a number of elements that combine to create a unique landscape experience.

At each entry there is a clear distinction between the surrounding rural land and the township which is a highly valued element of the township's character.

As noted, the northern approach comprises the landscape feature of Golf Course Hill rising from the surrounding pastoral land and the journey through the Avenue of Honour. Entry from the south or southwest is a distinctly different experience, with the road winding through the densely vegetated Black Forest.

Entry from the east is not as clearly defined but comprises a transition from the Calder Freeway corridor (via Romsey Rd) and Mt Macedon (via Mt Macedon Road/Brookes St) through the outer rural and low density parts of the town into the urban centre. Importantly, the town is not visible from the Calder Freeway and this open view should be maintained in any future development. The western arrival zone is over a shorter distance but also features a distinct transition from rural to urban.

It is important that future development is designed to retain the rural, bush feel of the township settings. This can be achieved in a number of ways: requiring larger lots along entrances with large setbacks and provision for landscaping; continuation of service roads (e.g. Mt Macedon Rd); creating landscape buffers within road

reserves and along the edges of private properties; siting development away from steep land that is highly visible from prominent roads and gateways.

OPEN SPACES

There are many parks and open spaces within Woodend of differing sizes and roles that cater for a range of recreational opportunities.

The Five Mile Creek corridor supports a significant cluster of open spaces for both active and passive recreation. This includes sporting grounds, the racecourse, the golf course, parks and playgrounds. Elsewhere in the town are smaller open spaces and recreation reserves. A number of these have benefited from the work of Landcare or community groups to restore native vegetation, such as the Slaty Creek Reserve. The open space on Quarry Road that acts as a floodwater retarding basin also has potential as a community space.

TRAILS

The Five Mile Creek corridor includes an extensive trail system that links open spaces and community facilities.

Within residential neighbourhoods there are many wide streets that present opportunities to create shared trails along vegetated corridors.

Previous studies have identified a number of opportunities for trails in Woodend, including:

- Five Mile Creek to Hanging Rock
- Five Mile Creek – Golf Course Hill – Avenue of Honour
- Bike/horse trail from Woodend to Mt Macedon



Photo: Carl Poletti

- Rail Trail from Daylesford to Woodend
- Slatey Creek Trail.

PROTECTED VEGETATION

There are a number of remnant vegetation communities within Woodend that have warranted protection under the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO). These include rare grasslands found at the Woodend Racecourse (VPO3), remnant roadside vegetation (VPO2), wildlife corridors (VPO6), forested areas (VPO9) and specific areas that include threatened tree species including the Black Gum (VPO1) and Narrow-Leaved Peppermint Gum (VPO5). These VPOs may need review to ensure they are consistent with existing conditions.

STREET TREES

A large diversity of mature trees gives the town a distinctive vegetated character. These include native eucalypts and many different exotic deciduous species that create seasonal colour displays.

Several significant stands of trees currently exist, including avenues of exotic trees in Brooke and Urquhart Streets and the Centenary Plantation on Bawden Road, which is protected under the Heritage Overlay.



Photo: Alan Grinton



Photo: Carl Poletti



Photo: Hubert Weisrock



Photo: Carl Poletti

ROADSPACE DESIGN

Many people have commented that the informal and rural character of most of Woodend's roads are an integral part of the town's character. This should be maintained in new development, with roadspace design considering treatments such as swale drains and soft verges and integrated landscaping in accordance with the surrounding character.

WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN & DETENTION SYSTEMS

Woodend experiences significant stormwater management issues, some of which could be treated or mitigated through the use of water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and detention systems.

WSUD and detention systems are a means of integrating stormwater treatment retention into the design of a development. WSUD and detention systems helps to promote natural drainage and aids the piped network to cope with excessive rain and under-capacity pipes.

WSUD and detention systems can be used in a variety of different ways. Suitable treatments in Woodend could include detention and bioretention systems. When choosing a WSUD treatment it will be important to take into consideration a number of factors including:

- The objectives of the treatment (eg. to manage urban hydrology/achieve water quality targets).

- The nature of the catchment, i.e. the physical opportunities and constraints.
- Who will manage and maintain the system.

WSUD and detention systems can be implemented across different types of developments including new or existing roads, new or existing residential developments, commercial or industrial properties, car parks, driveways and access routes.

It is recommended that a co-ordinated approach is taken to the future design of drainage systems, with a focus on treatments with a natural and rural character.

Interpretive signage can be used to tell the story of how the WSUD is contributing to the health of the local environment.

Additional benefits include reduction of nuisance flooding and a reduction in drainage infrastructure costs of development due to reduced runoff and peak flows.

OBJECTIVES

Preserve the visual and physical integrity of Woodend's key landscape features

Enhance the Five Mile Creek corridor as a key landscape element of the town's setting

Provide a network of trails and paths that connect landscape features and open spaces

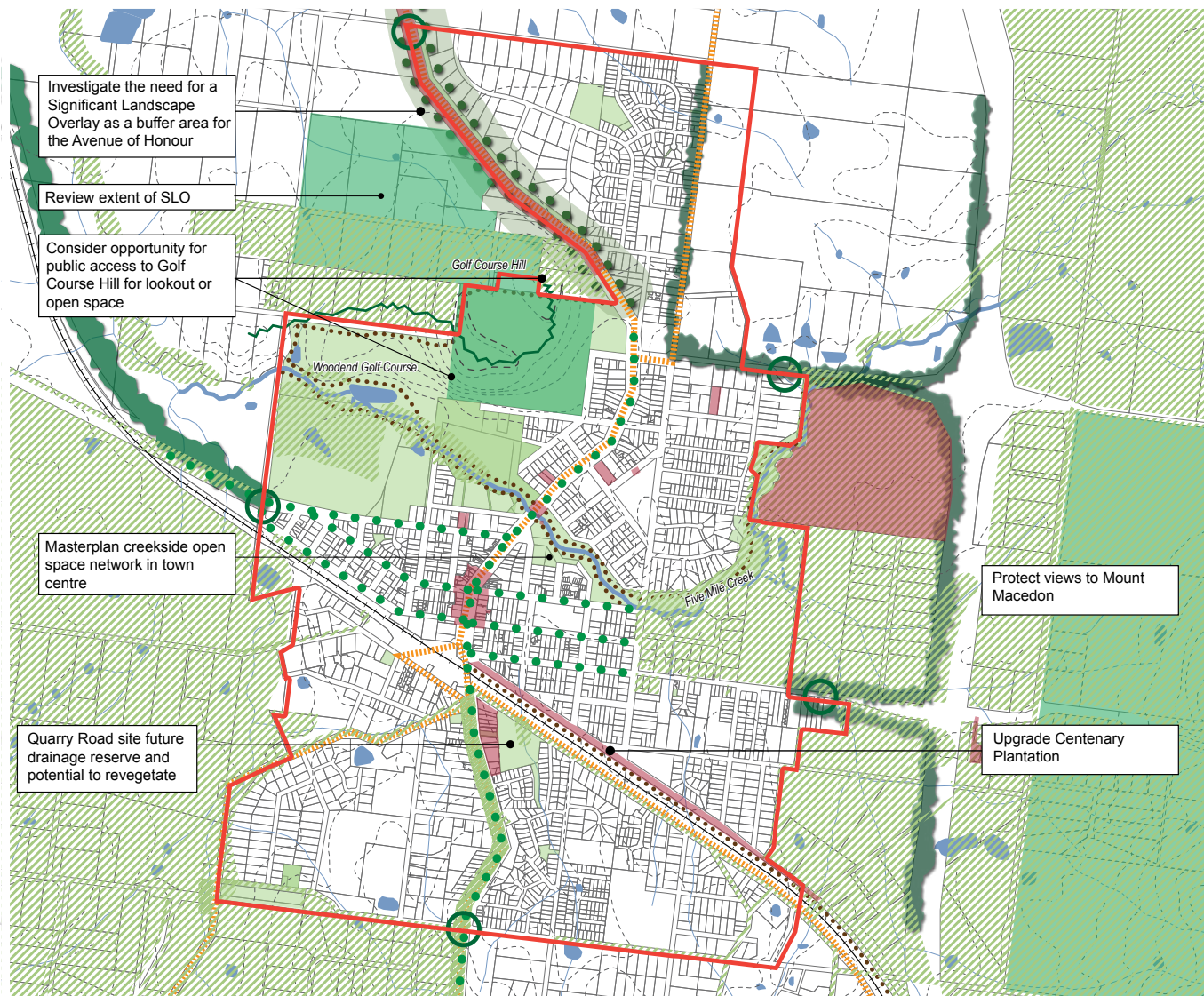
Strengthen the landscape themes of the town's streetscapes and neighbourhoods

Maintain and enhance the landscape features at each town gateway

Preserve Woodend's secluded aspect from the Calder Freeway by carefully managing any development east of the township

STRATEGIES

- Maintain the two storey scale of buildings in the town centre to preserve views to Mount Macedon and Golf Course Hill.
- Review the location and content of the Significant Landscape Overlay applied to Golf Course Hill to ensure that the significance of this feature is adequately represented and protected through the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.
- Investigate the potential for a public space with a lookout at the summit of Golf Course Hill in keeping with continued golf course operations and views of the hill.
- Investigate the potential to protect the broader landscape setting of the Avenue of Honour through the application of the Significant Landscape Overlay approximately 50m either side of the Avenue.
- Protect the distinct landscaped, rural edges of the township by discouraging ribbon development along Black Forest Drive, Romsey Road, Mount Macedon Road and Avenue of Honour.
- Protect the rural interface of the western gateway at Woodend-Tylden Road and provide a landscape buffer to new development.
- Discourage development along the Romsey Road in the vicinity of the freeway interchange to maintain a sense of separation from the freeway
- Protect the open spaces along Five Mile Creek corridor. Should an opportunity arise develop a walking trail that loops from Five Mile Creek to the summit of Golf Course Hill and returns via the Avenue of Honour.
- Implement the recommendations of the *Newham to Woodend Shared Trail Planning Report (2010)* to create a recreational connection between Woodend and Hanging Rock.
- Support the development of the rail trail to Daylesford.
- Implement other shared trails and pathways previously identified. Seek participation interest from relevant landowners or community groups.
- Retain the informal, natural and rural character of Woodend's streets through the use of informal streetscape treatments.
- Enhance the street planting avenues of the key pedestrian streets or entry points of the town, so that it has a clear and distinctive 'landscape structure'. This should prioritise additional planting along High Street and the main side streets in the town centre, as shown on the map.
- Elsewhere, strengthen street planting as required to contribute to neighbourhood character.
- Require new development to provide a well-considered landscaping response that includes canopy trees and appropriate understorey vegetation.
- As a long term consideration, provide landscape buffer treatments should new residential development be planned along main entry roads in the future.
- Support and encourage local community planting and environmental actions, such as Landcare groups.
- Review relevance of VPO controls against existing vegetation cover and quality.
- Apply an ESO to provide a buffer zone around the recycled water plant in Montgomerys Lane in accordance with EPA guidelines for minimum separation distances.
- Review the need for an extension to the LSIO as it applies to Five Mile Creek and its tributaries.



- Town Boundary
- Property Boundaries
- Railway
- ~ Creeks & Waterways
- Waterbodies
- Avenue of Honour
- ~ Ridgeline
- Contours
- Open Space
- Significant Landscape Overlay
- Vegetation Protection Overlay
- Heritage Overlay

STRATEGIES

- Landscape Buffer
- Shared Path Spine
- Creek Trail links
- Themed Street Planting
- Enhance Gateways

LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENT







7.

TRANSPORT

VISION

In the future Woodend will continue to be a town with a range of sustainable and active transport options for efficient local and regional access.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

- ... the station needs more parking and bike facilities*
- ... wider road reservations doubling as bike path and green route*
- ... footpaths are needed but should have a rural character*
- ... roundabouts are needed on High Street*
- ... it is dangerous for pedestrians crossing High Street*

WHAT WE KNOW

HEALTHY TRANSPORT, LIVABLE STREETS

The creation of a more liveable town centre requires a balanced approach to traffic management. Greater emphasis is to be placed on planning for the slow traffic movement of pedestrians and cyclists rather than streets that are primarily focused on the needs of the car.

Recent national and international examples have shown that in planning for town centres there is a strong emerging theme of creating 'streets for people'. Town centres that are vibrant places with a strong 'sense of place' typically plan for pedestrians and cyclists, not cars.

This does not necessarily mean banishing cars entirely, as cars play an important role in many regional communities.

Rather, it involves reorganising the way space is used within towns to create places for people to interact and enjoy outdoor public life in an environment that is not dominated by cars. Through this reorganisation comes the ability to increase the activity and vitality of a town centre.

In the context of Woodend, the preparation of a Town Structure Plan that integrates transport and land use planning fulfils Council's obligations under the relevant policy framework. This includes the Transport Integration Act 2010, State Planning Policy and the Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan.

The key themes emerging from this strategic context are the promotion of sustainable transport (i.e. walking, cycling and public transport) for a wide range of reasons, including:

- Healthy, active communities – there is a strong link between active transport and health.

- Socially connected, liveable communities – places where people walk, cycle and use public transport are likely to perform better on a range of social indicators.
- Transport efficiency – increased use of sustainable transport has environmental and economic benefits through reduced greenhouse emissions and reduced space required for vehicle movement and storage.
- Access for all members of the community – a large number of people in the community don't or can't drive, and the provision of attractive and viable alternative means of transport is a key factor in whether a community is affected by transport disadvantage.
- Safety – increased sustainable and active transport improves safety and perceptions of safety.

Social determinants of health, including transport, have a clear impact on healthy outcomes for communities and individuals. Giving people a greater transport choice in a quality built environment improves social connections, access to employment and equity.

TRAVEL IN WOODEND

Currently the car is the dominant mode of transport in Woodend. Wide roads, a low level of traffic and currently adequate parking make car travel the most attractive transport option for many. There is a distinct lack of viable alternatives: there is no local public transport and limited taxi service; walking and cycling networks are discontinuous.

Approximately 45% of Woodend's population is aged 19 or under, or over 65. Additionally, a high proportion of households within Woodend own one car only (39%).

There are others in the community who do not drive due to disability or personal preference. All of these people require alternative modes of transport to the car.

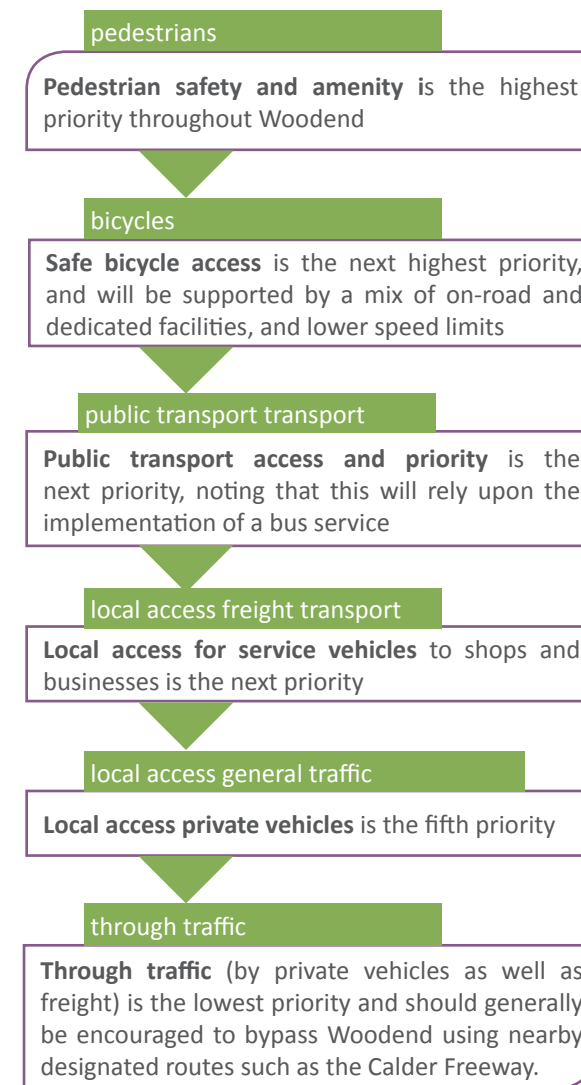
The lack of viable alternative options for daily transport needs may potentially impact on the day to day convenience for all local residents, as well as the cost of living. In some parts of Woodend, the dominance of cars in the environment detracts from the town's amenity.

REPRIORITISING TRANSPORT

The overall road user hierarchy recommended for Woodend responds to the existing transport conditions, and seeks to address issues and opportunities raised by the community. The hierarchy provides a reference point when making decisions about road network upgrades in the town centre.

Essentially, the hierarchy prioritises the slowest modes of transport over the fastest (or heaviest). Placing pedestrians as the top priority means that the streets and spaces of the town are designed for people, and not cars.

Road user hierarchy



PEDESTRIANS & BICYCLES

Pedestrian network

The pedestrian network in Woodend is generally poor outside of the town centre and in some new streets.

Within the town centre barriers exist to safe pedestrian movement, including limited crossing points over High Street, particularly near to the railway station, and a lack of pedestrian facilities suitable to less mobile users.

Outside the town centre, the character of the movement networks is typical of smaller regional towns, where many roads do not have footpaths.

The lack of formal pedestrian facilities is likely to be a significant issue for many groups in the town, such as the elderly, disabled and parents with young children.

Future planning must take every opportunity to ensure that footpaths and other formal pedestrian facilities are incorporated into new or upgraded road designs. Traffic calming or shared space initiatives could greatly benefit pedestrian movement and safety.

Pedestrian crossings

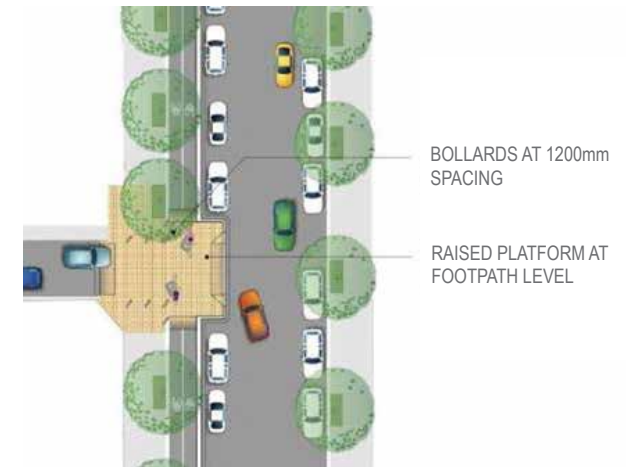
The limited number of crossing facilities along High Street has been noted by many in the community as a concern. High Street is very wide, and there is only one pedestrian crossing in the core retail area 'between the bridges' and no median to offer refuge for pedestrians crossing the road.

To improve pedestrian priority and access in the town centre, an additional crossing is suggested, shown on the map on the following page. Any new crossings would be subject to VicRoads approval and funding availability.

The type of facility required to support safe crossing will be dependent on the road layouts and traffic volumes. For example, a median refuge facility might be sufficient in some locations, or a signalised pedestrian crossing may be warranted in other locations.

Raised pedestrian threshold crossings on side streets allow a continuous ground plane for pedestrian movement and signal pedestrian priority, thereby assisting accessibility along the length of the street.

Whatever the chosen treatment, it should seek to minimise the crossing distances for pedestrians and, where possible, raise the road surface to footpath level in service roads.



Raised threshold crossings on side streets (could also potentially include zebra crossings and a bike lane). Image: GTA Consultants



Median crossing point and pedestrian refuge, High Street, Wodonga. Photo: GTA Consultants

Shared space zones

The wide service roads of High Street are opportunities to implement shared space zones. Shared space zones are places where pedestrian movement has priority.

This would not remove cars or car parking but would aim to moderate driver behaviour to give pedestrians priority. This would enable better use and integration of the landscaped areas between the roadway and service roads.

Pedestrian treatments for Woodend town centre

The map opposite shows how a range of streetscape treatments could improve the pedestrian environment:

- An additional pedestrian crossing at a key point along High Street (as shown on the map opposite)
- Shared space zones could potentially be introduced to the service lanes
- Upgrade median planting
- Raised threshold pedestrian crossings at side streets
- Reduced traffic speed

These suggested improvements would require a coordinated approach among VicRoads, traders and Council.



Bicycle network

Woodend has a very active cycling community and is gaining a reputation as a regional cycling hub. However, for day to day travel around the town, facilities for cyclists are limited.

There are few formal bicycle lanes aside from parts of High Street and several shared paths. A network of bicycle facilities connecting major land use attractors and residential areas could help encourage a shift towards this more active and sustainable form of travel for shorter trips.

Additionally, there are significant opportunities to improve and promote recreational cycling in Woodend, either around the town itself or as part of regional cycle trail connections, on or off-road.

Improving the pedestrian & cycle network

The key destinations of Woodend are located within or adjacent to the town centre, such as the shops, railway station, community facilities and primary schools. Therefore, pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the town centre and connecting to surrounding residential areas should be of the highest priority.

It is recommended that 'spines' of a shared pedestrian/cycle pathway network be established through the town along High Street and connecting to primary access roads to residential areas. The recommended alignment for these shared pedestrian/cyclist paths is shown on the map on page 71. In locating and designing the shared space zones, safety and minimising traffic/pedestrian conflict will be important, and potentially limiting considerations.

The shared path spines would be supported by a secondary network of footpaths through residential areas. The design of the secondary network will depend upon the character of each street: in some areas formalised concrete footpaths may be appropriate; in other locations a gravel path near the road shoulder would be a more suitable option.

End of trip facilities

End of trip facilities are currently lacking, including bicycle parking and shower and change facilities. These are also an important element of the bicycle network.

Within the town centre, additional short term bicycle parking spaces should be provided in the main pedestrian areas around High Street and considered as part of any new development. The opportunity to get creative with bicycle racks can also inject artistic and cultural expression in the town centre.

High security commuter bicycle parking should be provided at the station, such as a 'parkiteer' cage.



Innovative bicycle parking becomes street art.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Trains

Recent improvements to the Melbourne to Bendigo train service have prompted growth in usage, reflecting the number of people who commute from Woodend to other centres for their daily activity (currently around 9% of Woodend residents use public transport).

The railway station is not well integrated with the town centre, with a lack of clear and direct pedestrian connections. Pedestrians accessing the station from High Street must walk through the car park or negotiate steep level changes. Future redevelopment of the station precinct should provide a high quality, dedicated pedestrian link to High Street.

The commuter car parking demands at the station are beginning to exceed the supply, and parked cars are encroaching into surrounding residential areas.

While improved pedestrian and cyclist access to facilities at the station may have the potential to reduce demand for parking, the catchment for the station extends well beyond the local area and upgraded and expanded 'park and ride' facilities and 'kiss and ride' drop off points are required.

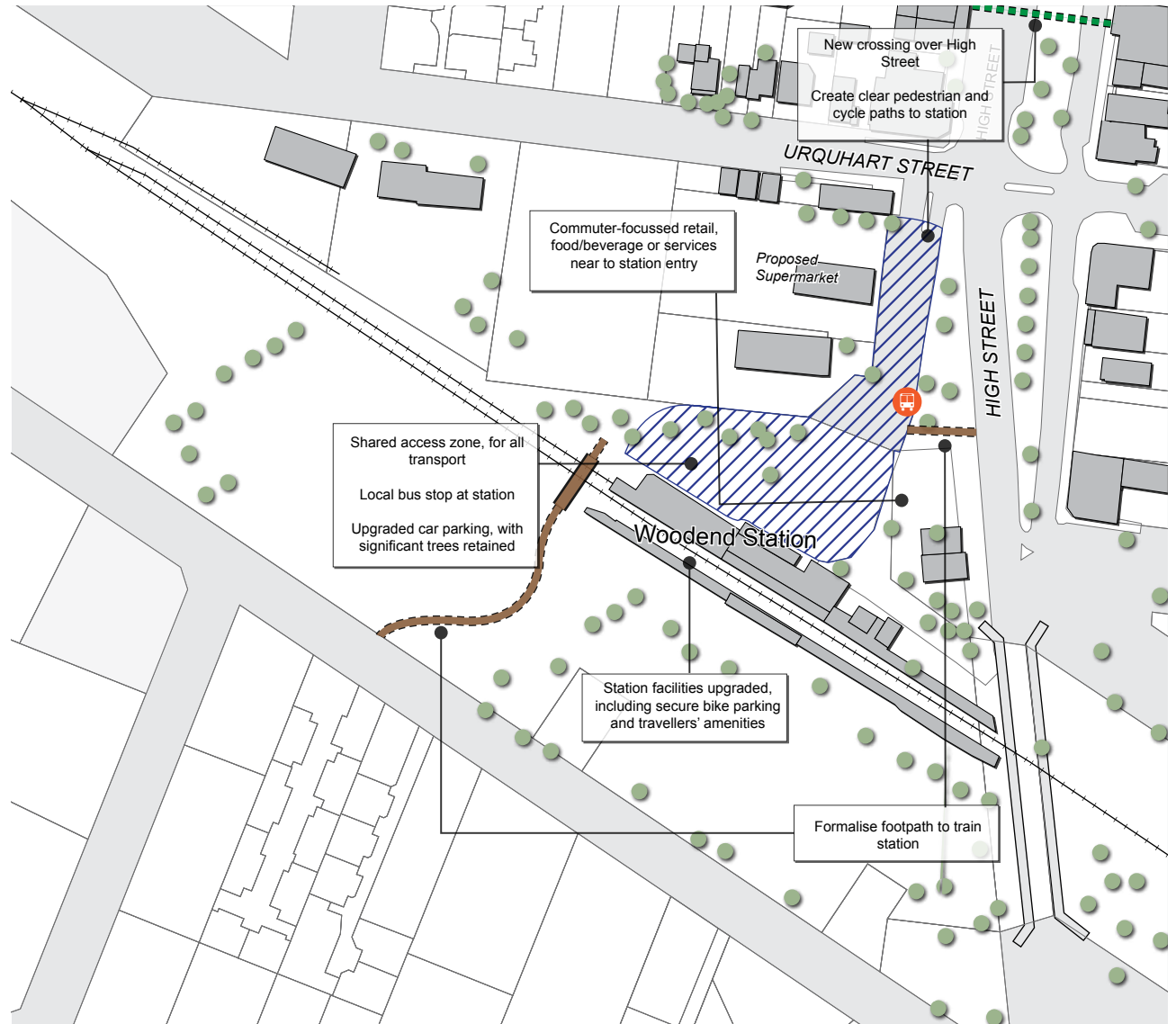
A number of large sites adjoining the station present opportunities for mixed use, transit oriented development.

The illustration on page 73 shows opportunities for the station precinct.

Local Bus & Taxi

The lack of a local bus service in Woodend is a significant issue for people who do not drive, including the elderly and less mobile residents. Council should continue to advocate for the implementation of a local bus service to provide basic access for residents to services and facilities in the town centre. The exact route would be identified in partnership with the bus operator and community, but should aim to locate all residents within 300-400m of a bus stop.

A local taxi service is an integral part of public transport provision and Council should support the ongoing operation of this service.



VEHICULAR NETWORK

ROADS

At present, there is a good level of service provided to cars within Woodend. Wide roads in the town centre are a legacy of the previous function of High Street as the main route between Bendigo and Melbourne. This provides the opportunity to reallocate some of the road space to other road uses, i.e. pedestrians and bicycles, as well as for landscaping and/or limited community spaces.

Community feedback has shown that there is concern around the safety of the main High Street intersections. Roundabouts have been suggested at these points. However, analysis of the current level of traffic volumes does not provide sufficient evidence to warrant upgrading of intersections. In particular, roundabouts typically prioritise car movement over pedestrians and are not recommended.

The traffic conditions in Woodend should be monitored periodically in order to identify critical thresholds for any future intersection upgrades if this remains an issue of concern.

Care should be taken to ensure that any future road upgrades provide a high priority for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as resolving the identified traffic issues. Facilities should be chosen and designed carefully to support the overall road user hierarchy for Woodend.

CAR PARKING

Currently adequate car parking is provided within the town centre, as either on street parking spaces or within designated car parks. While there have been comments from the community that parking is lacking, this is possibly the result of people desiring to always find a car space in immediate proximity to their destination. A new supermarket proposal at the train station would significantly add to parking supply in the town.

Car parking provision in the town centre should be monitored and, if necessary, parking restrictions could be extended to ensure parking turnover to support retail activity. Informal on-street car parking in the town centre could be formalised to increase parking capacity, and avoid amenity impacts and damage to verges.

The location and provision of disabled car parking spaces should be reviewed, noting that approximately twenty spaces could be provided throughout the town centre proximate to major trip generating land uses.

The existing supply of car parking is not uniform in the town. Consideration may be given to allowing parking reductions or waivers for land uses where it is not practical to provide parking on site (eg. small retail uses could rely on parking along road frontage), assuming that appropriate evidence of nearby parking supply can be provided. Larger developments should provide car parking on site or contribute to additional public parking space. In these cases, it must be demonstrated that parking will not rely on overflow into residential areas.

Parking for caravans or trailers exists near the Visitor Information Centre. The provision of long vehicle parking should be monitored and expanded if necessary. Directional signage to this parking should be provided.

FREIGHT ACCESS

The number of heavy vehicles travelling through Woodend has declined dramatically since the development of the upgraded Calder Freeway. Local freight access is still required and this occurs satisfactorily through the existing network of local and arterial roads.

The existing industrial area east of the town centre introduces some freight traffic into local streets. Although current freight volumes in this area are low, future expansion of these uses must consider the potential negative impacts of freight on sensitive uses such as the residential areas.

Given the recommended strategy to expand the industrial area at Clancys Lane, consideration should be given to upgraded road requirements to accommodate freight traffic, particularly turning movements from the freeway.

OBJECTIVES

Create a pedestrian-focused and well-connected public realm

Promote sustainable methods of transport, supporting walking and cycling as viable alternatives to car travel

Manage the road network to optimise its safety, efficiency and amenity for all users

Enhance existing connections to, from and between the nearby regional destinations

Manage car parking demand and provision to support the activity and amenity of the town centre

Advocate for improved public transport provision

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Recommended strategies and actions to meet these objectives:

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK

- Implement a shared path 'spine' through Woodend if practical.
- Implement a secondary network of footpaths on all other roads to complement the shared path 'spine'.
- Investigate the implementation of 'shared zones' or pedestrian priority areas in the town centre service lanes subject to availability of car parking and safety.
- Improve the regional bicycle links to local tourism attractors such as Mt Macedon and Hanging Rock.
- Implement additional pedestrian crossing facilities or central median on High Street.
- Improve pedestrian access between the railway station and the town centre in partnership with VicTrack.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

- Improve access to the station for pedestrian, bicycles and cars.
- Formalise car parking areas around the station to make better use of available space and to improve their safety and appearance.
- Upgrade commuter facilities at the station as required.
- Specifically, improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities at the station, including additional secure bicycle parking (eg 'parkiteer' cage), lockers or end of trip amenities.

- Advocate for the implementation of a local bus service connecting the residential areas of Woodend to the town centre and the railway station.

ROAD NETWORK

- Work with VicRoads to lower speed limits throughout Woodend.
- Monitor the performance of key intersections in the town centre and upgrade as required.
- Monitor changes to traffic flow and parking demand in the town centre.

CAR PARKING

- Monitor parking in the town centre and if necessary implement parking restrictions.
- Review provision of disabled car parking spaces throughout the town centre and increase as required.
- Formalise on-street car parking in the town centre.
- Allow parking reductions or waivers where it can be demonstrated that: parking can be provided on site, on street or in alternative location; where parking might be shared with other nearby sites; where overflow parking demand will not impact on residential areas; or where other means of transport than the car are likely to be taken.
- Work with VicTrack to monitor and if necessary, extend 'park and ride' commuter parking at the railway station.
- Investigate provision of caravan / trailer car parking and associated signage adjacent to the town centre.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS CONTINUED

FREIGHT ACCESS

- Discourage new land uses that rely on heavy freight access in the industrial area to the east of the town centre.
- Encourage heavy freight generating land uses in the industrial area at Clancys Lane. Investigate the need to improve road access to this area.
- New uses in the town centre should provide loading access via the rear of the properties where possible.



See detail on page 73

- LEGEND**
- Township Boundary
 - Property Boundaries
 - Railway
 - Open Space
 - Rural Zoned Land
 - Urban Zoned Land
 - Shared Path Spine
 - Regional Bicycle Link
 - Existing Pedestrian Crossing
 - Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

TRANSPORT



