



Romsey Structure Plan

Draft Structure Plan

June 2023



This report is the Draft Romsey Structure Plan (v1) for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. It has been prepared with expertise, advice and inputs from the consultant team of Plan2Place Consulting, Design Urban, Spatial Vision, HipVHive, Obliqua Pty Ltd, Movement and Place Consulting Pty Ltd, Wayfarer Consulting, Cardno, Peter Boyle_Urban Design+Landscape Architecture and Tim Nott economic analysis and strategy using background reports and information provided by Council and from other government sources. The report issue date is May 2023.

Every reasonable effort has been made to validate information provided by the client, Council staff, stakeholders and other participants in the preparation of this report throughout the project during 2021 and 2023.

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

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

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

Version	Date	Notes
V1	5/4/2023	Draft 1 Prepared for Officer Review
V2	26/4/2023	Additional maps and map changes incorporated
V3	31/5/2023	Changes post Council officer and Councillor briefing
V4	23/6/2023	Changes following officer and Councillor review

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ABBREVIATIONS AND LEGISLATION

Abbreviations

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

Numeric Abbreviations

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

Related Legislation and Regulations

Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)



The Romsey Structure Plan has been developed to manage growth and development in Romsey to 2050.

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

The Romsey Structure Plan will replace the current Romsey Outline Development Plan which sets directions for the town to 2021. The structure plan will determine the settlement boundary for the town as required under the Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy.

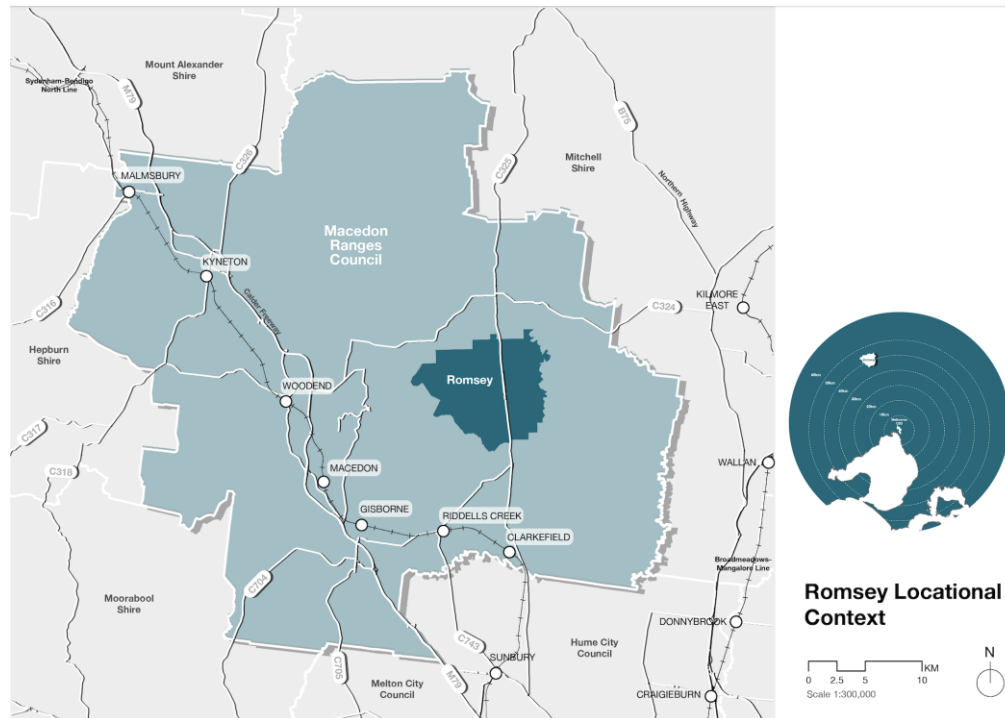


1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Regional context

Romsey is located within the Macedon Ranges Shire on the Lancefield-Melbourne Road, approximately 63km north-west of the Melbourne CBD.

Romsey sits within the peri-urban region of metropolitan Melbourne. This region has strong economic ties to the Melbourne Airport corridor and Sunbury while being predominantly rural in character.



1.2 About Romsey

The Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people are the traditional owners of the land around Romsey with the first European settlers arriving in the early 1850s.

The township is the major urban centre in the east of the municipality providing a regional lifestyle hub and service centre for the region. Surrounded by productive agricultural land, the township supports a range of retail, commercial and industrial activities. Residential properties range from small historic homes, suburban style development through to larger rural living lots.

The main street is the main spine of activity, and its spacious qualities are enhanced by the historic red-brick buildings and the mature European trees. The Five Mile Creek provides an attractive open space and walking spine east-west and is a valued component of the towns open space network.

1.3 Macedon Ranges statement of planning policy and distinctive landscapes

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

The MRSP relates to the declared area of the municipal district of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. It was approved on 10 December 2019 and came into effect on 12 December 2019. The MRSP anticipates that Romsey will grow towards the lower end of a large district town, which is between 6,000 and 10,000 people.

To satisfy the requirements of the MRSP, Council needs to determine a protected settlement boundary for Romsey. The statement has already defined

protected township settlement boundaries for Kyneton, Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Woodend that require parliamentary approval to be changed.

This structure plan will provide the basis for the protected settlement boundary for Romsey. The MRSPP states that rezoning beyond a town boundary for township growth should not be considered until a protected settlement boundary has been finalised.

1.4 Policy Drivers

State policy

- Plan Melbourne (2017)
- Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014)
- Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy (2019)

State Government policy including Plan Melbourne (2017-2050) and the Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014) identify Romsey as a town/rural centre providing localised services to rural and commuter communities with growth to be contained within settlement boundaries.

Plan Melbourne states that “development in peri-urban areas must be in keeping with local character, attractiveness and amenity. Growth boundaries should be established for each town to avoid urban sprawl and protect agricultural land and environmental assets”.

The Settlement objective within State Policy is “To plan and manage growth of settlements in the declared area consistent with protection of the area’s significant landscapes, protection of catchments, biodiversity, ecological and environmental values, and consistent with the unique character, role and function of each settlement.” State Policy at Clause 11.03-5S of the MRPS recognises the importance of distinctive areas and landscapes and their valued attributes.

Local planning policies

- Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy (2011)
- Romsey Outline Development Plan (2009)

The Macedon Ranges Settlement Strategy identifies a settlement hierarchy for all towns within the Shire. Romsey is identified to grow from a district town to a large district town by 2036. This modest growth will reflect the more limited infrastructure available and the need to protect both the character of the town and the surrounding higher quality agricultural land.

The Romsey Outline Development Plan identifies a town boundary, various initiatives to manage growth and change and several land rezonings that have now been implemented by Council. The ODP has served its purpose and now needs to be renewed through the preparation of a new structure plan for the town.

Council prepared the Romsey Issues and Opportunities Paper in December 2018 which provided the basis for the Emerging Options Paper in 2022.



Both these documents provide the strategic background for the draft Romsey Structure Plan. The stages involved in the development of the structure plan are shown in **Figure 1**.

Key population, demographic and a range of other information for Romsey is provided in the town’s snapshot in **Figure 2**.

Figure 1: Stages in preparing the Romsey Structure Plan

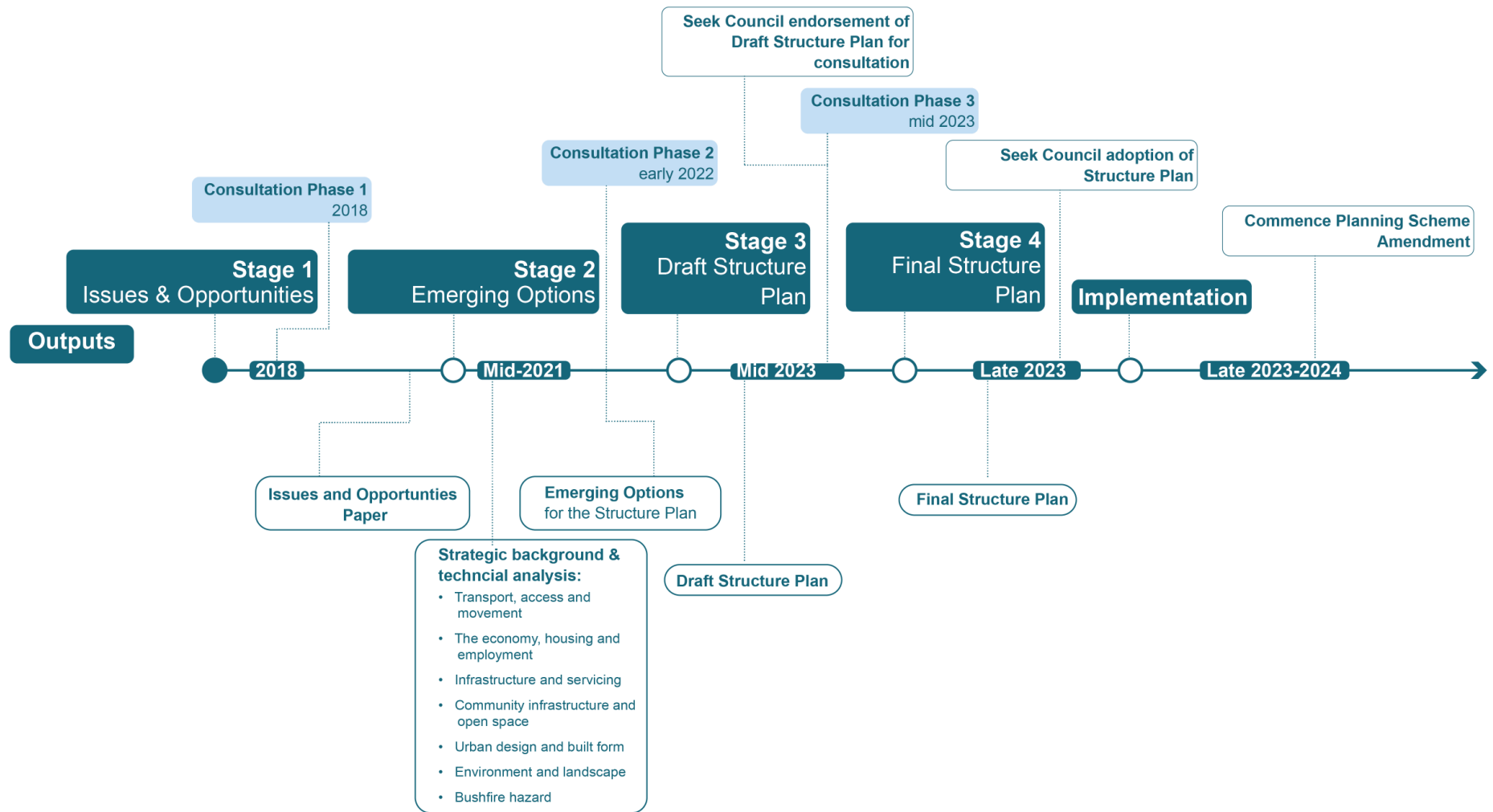
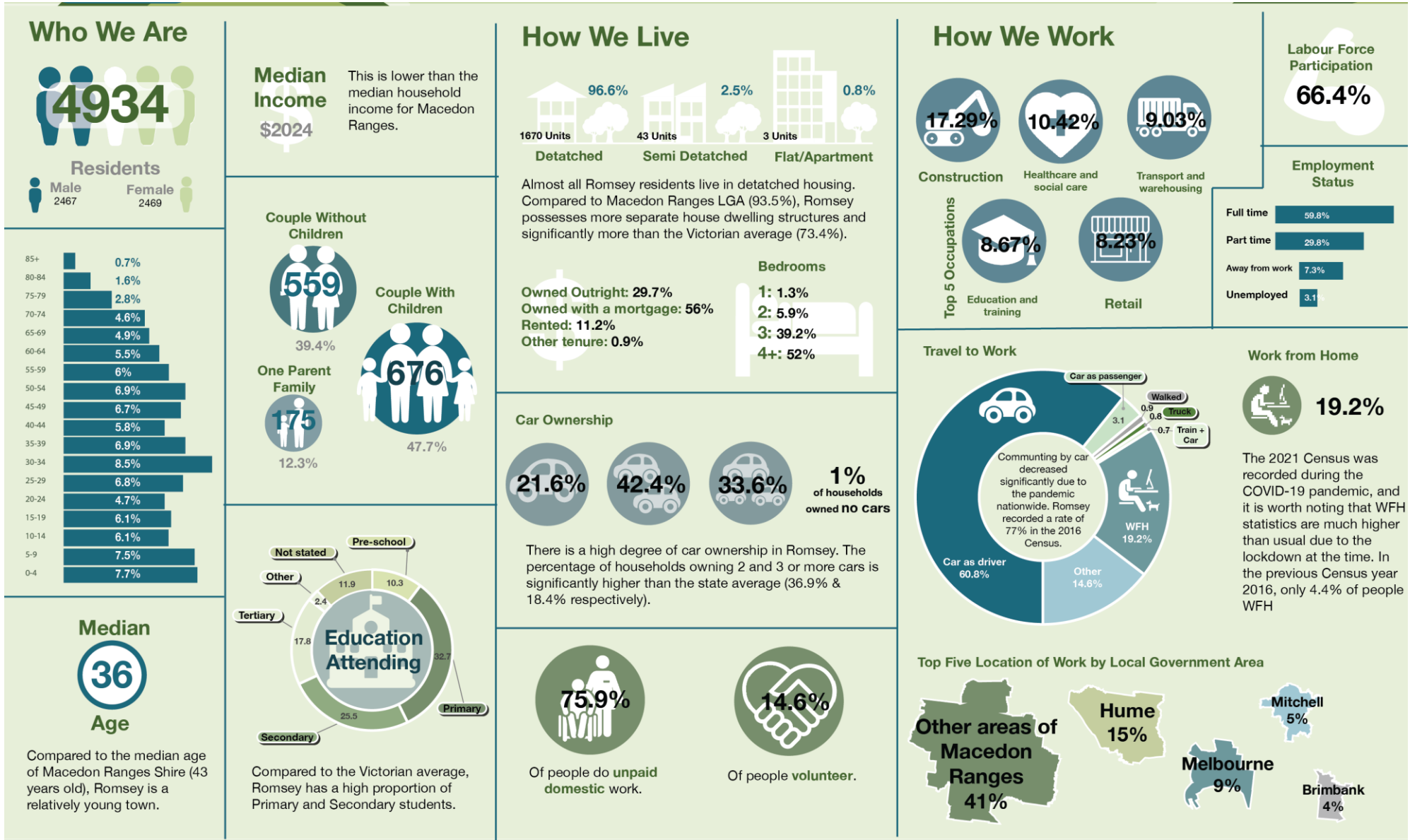


Figure 2: Key population, demographic and other information, Romsey 2021



2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Engagement to date

The Romsey Community has been involved in developing the draft Structure Plan. There have been two formal opportunities to contribute to date through the:

- Romsey Issues and Opportunities Paper, December 2018.
- Romsey Emerging Options Paper, March 2022.

The feedback from each consultation has informed the development of the next stage of the structure plan and there are further opportunities to input.

What we heard

The community of Romsey is apprehensive about the impacts of growth on the town particularly on the township character and impact on the town's setting surrounded by productive agricultural land.

There are a range of community views around whether and where growth should occur in Romsey. These range from no growth to growth on multiple fronts – north, west, south and east.

Council conducted community engagement sessions via online and face to face channels in early 2022. A total of 416 survey responses and 58 written submissions were received. The general consensus towards the vision and objectives of the Emerging Options Paper was positively received.

Residents displayed strong support for reinvigorating the commercial services in the town centre, improving natural landscape features such as Five Mile Creek, upgrading infrastructure such as sewage, gas, electricity and transport networks before further development occurs. There was a very strong consensus from residents that the town should receive a secondary school and other amenities such as a pool, public library and sporting facilities. The importance of establishing a strong climate resilient town was also raised, addressing the need to provide for mitigation strategies related to renewables, water management and extreme weather events.

Residents expressed a strong desire to uphold the heritage value of the built environment, preserve natural features and maintain neighbourhood character within the township. Concerns were raised about housing diversity, which was seen as a potential threat to the established neighbourhood character of Romsey. Expansion of the existing settlement boundary was met with concern, with the majority of respondents preferring 'Option 1' to contain development within the boundary, as opposed to Options 2 and 3 from the Emerging Options Paper, which were received with apprehension. The loss of farmland was a concern for respondents as they feel it may threaten their livelihoods and the surrounding landscape character.

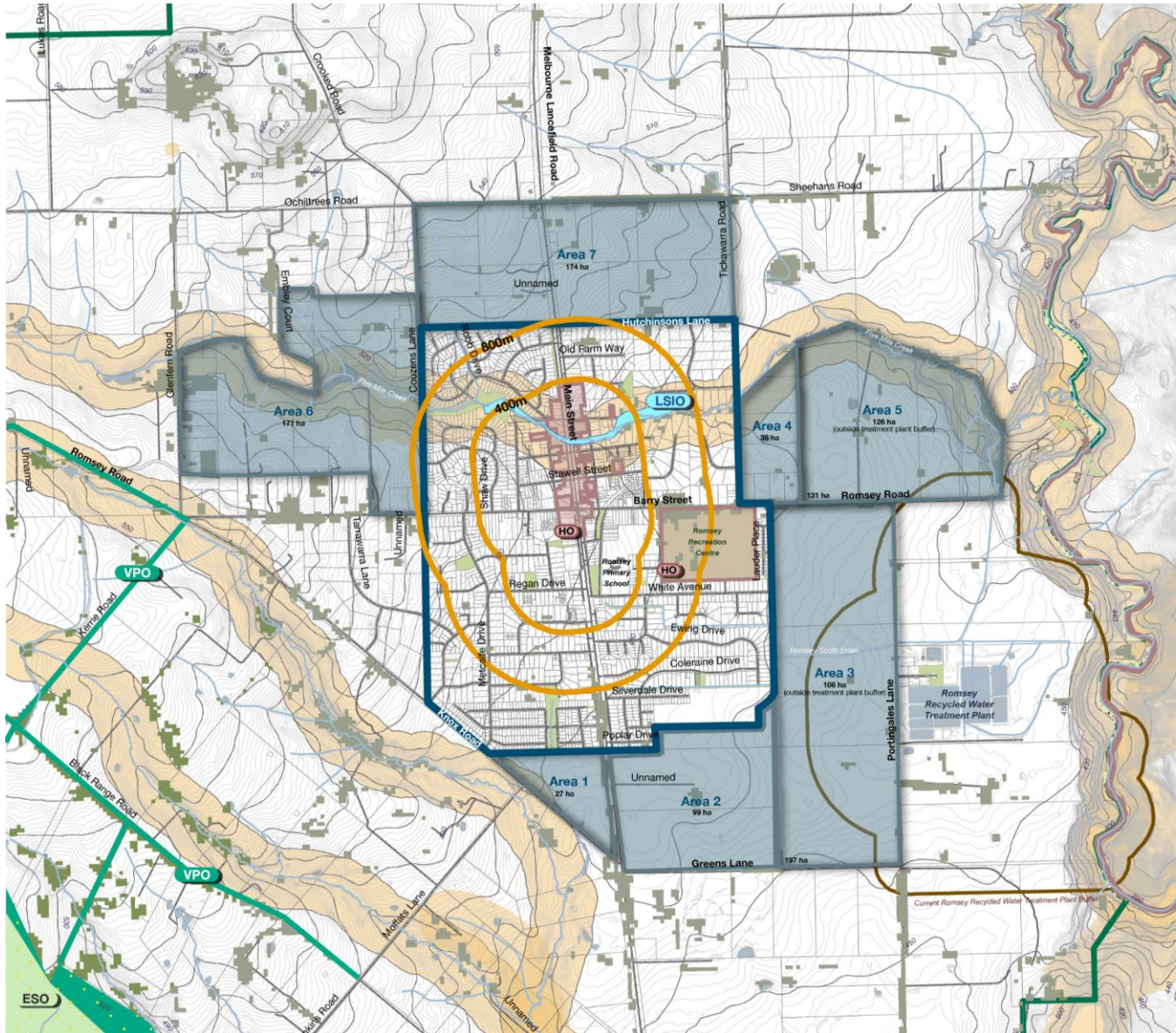
2.2 Further work to develop the structure plan

Following the release of the Emerging Options Paper and the feedback from the community, further investigation of the options for expansion was undertaken. This established the areas that best met the settlement principles that were tested and supported by the community through the consultation.



















As the Emerging Options Paper outlined, while the existing town boundary could support additional residential, commercial and industrial growth, there was a need for expansion of the town boundary to enable realistic and viable development in the township. Seven investigation areas were assessed against a set of ten criteria. **Figure 3** shows the location of the investigation areas and **Appendix 1** provides the list of criteria each area was assessed against.

Areas 1, 2 and 3 are best able to meet Romsey's needs to 2050. Areas 4 and 5 could be considered after 2050 if further growth of the town was required. Areas 6 and 7 are not considered suitable for growth at any time. This has shaped the growth areas and protected settlement boundary proposed for Romsey.

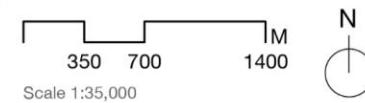
Figure 3: Romsey investigation areas



Legend

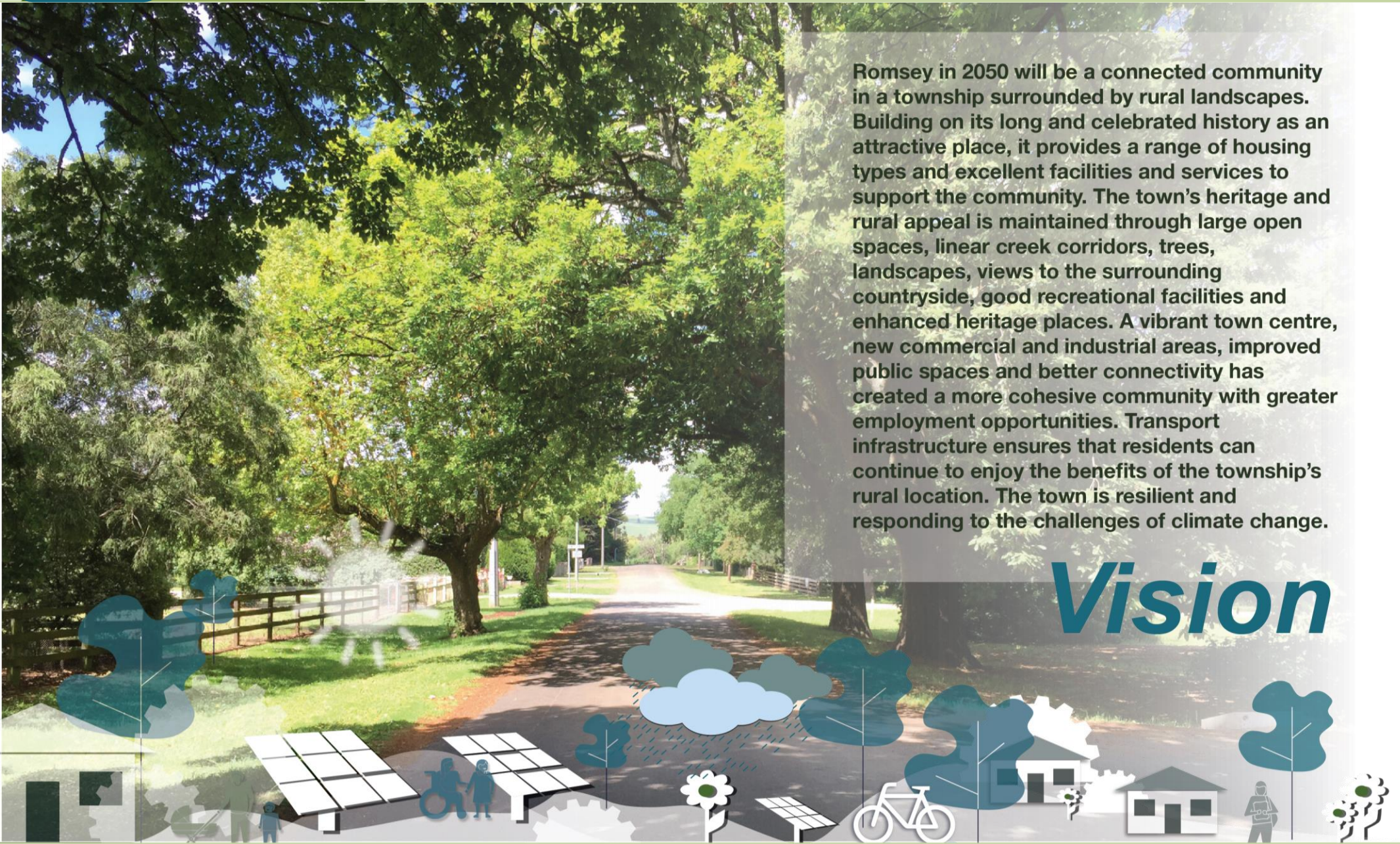
-  Existing Romsey Township
 -  Investigation Areas
 -  Waterways
 -  Waterbodies
 -  Open Spaces
 -  Contours 1m
 -  Contours 10m
 -  Distance from Commercial Centre
 -  Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity
 -  Heritage Overlay
 -  Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
 -  Environmental Significance Overlay
 -  Vegetation Protection Overlay
 -  Current Romsey Recycled Water Treatment Plant Buffer (Subject to EPA Licence Number 74268)
-
- 2005 EVCs**
-  Grassy Dry Forest
 -  Herb-Rich Foothill Forest
 -  Plains Grassy Woodland
 -  Stream Bank Shrubland

Romsey Township
Investigation Areas

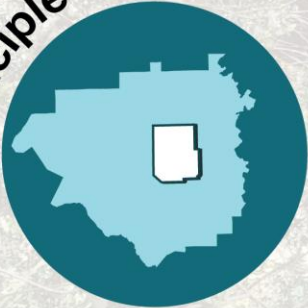


Romsey in 2050 will be a connected community in a township surrounded by rural landscapes. Building on its long and celebrated history as an attractive place, it provides a range of housing types and excellent facilities and services to support the community. The town's heritage and rural appeal is maintained through large open spaces, linear creek corridors, trees, landscapes, views to the surrounding countryside, good recreational facilities and enhanced heritage places. A vibrant town centre, new commercial and industrial areas, improved public spaces and better connectivity has created a more cohesive community with greater employment opportunities. Transport infrastructure ensures that residents can continue to enjoy the benefits of the township's rural location. The town is resilient and responding to the challenges of climate change.

Vision



Principle 1



A town with a defined boundary

Provide a township settlement boundary with distinct physical breaks that protect surrounding agricultural land and environmental features

Principle 2



A walkable town

Increase walking and cycling in the town by providing permeable links and connecting development into the existing town structure.

Principle 3



A climate responsive town

Mitigate climate risk by locating environmentally sustainable development away from the areas of high bushfire and flooding risk.

Principle 4



An environmentally responsible town

Promote urban consolidation and a town structure that minimises reliance on vehicles and the emission of greenhouse gases.

Principle 5



A town with a vibrant heart and town centre

Reinforce the town centre as the commercial and civic heart by increasing economic and social activity around Main Street.

Principle 6



A town with a unique rural character

Protect and enhance the neighbourhood character of the town.

Principle 7



A well serviced town

Service the town's population by providing community and cultural facilities and sustainable energy and water resources.

Principle 8



A town where people live and work

Provide additional employment areas to meet the needs of the population.

3. ROMSEY TOWNSHIP FRAMEWORK PLAN

3.1 Key objectives

To create a diverse mix of appropriate, affordable, well designed and responsive housing.

To create additional jobs and activity in the township with a vibrant town centre and employment areas.

To ensure development is appropriate to the landscape setting and township character.

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

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

To create a more sustainable and climate resilient township.

3.2 Key strategies

3.2.1 Housing

- Facilitate a range of housing types in the township particularly within walking distance of the town centre to enable people to age in place and provide for more affordable housing options.
- Ensure infill development reflects the valued character of Romsey's residential neighbourhoods with respect to built-form, scale, setbacks and vegetation.
- Ensure future urban growth in Romsey respects and enhances the township's rural township character; heritage streetscapes; and Five Mile Creek.
- Manage housing growth and land supply within a protected settlement boundary.

3.2.2 Activities and employment

- Strengthen the role of the Romsey town centre as a local and regional destination for business, retail, entertainment and community activities that provides access to a range of services and facilities.
- Reinforce the town centre as the commercial and civic heart of the town with a high-quality urban realm responsive to the town's character.
- Create a consolidated, compact, walkable town centre that is active day and night.
- Ensure there is adequate land supply for future economic growth and local employment.

3.2.3 Landscape and natural environment

- Maintain settlement boundaries and a significant visual break between Romsey and Lancefield.
- Enhance the town's setting within a treed landscape.
- Enhance the biodiversity of Romsey.
- Extend and enhance the Five Mile Creek corridor and environs.
- Create a network of open spaces throughout the town to meet the varied open space requirements of the community.

3.2.4 Movement and transport

- Provide an accessible town with clear and direct movement networks that are safe, connected and designed to meet the capacity requirements of existing and future communities.
- Create a movement network that provides a high level of amenity and safety for pedestrians and bicycle riders.
- Improve public transport opportunities for Romsey.
- Create an urban structure that facilitates movement options that are safe, integrated, accessible and do not rely on vehicle ownership within the township.

3.2.5 Community infrastructure and culture

- Ensure the necessary future community facilities are planned to support the growth of the town.
- Ensure community facilities meet the needs of the local community, are accessible, fit for purpose and provide for a range of activities and groups.
- Ensure new development appropriately responds to and celebrates Aboriginal cultural heritage sites, places and values.
- Ensure new development appropriately responds to and celebrates post contact cultural heritage sites, places and values.
-

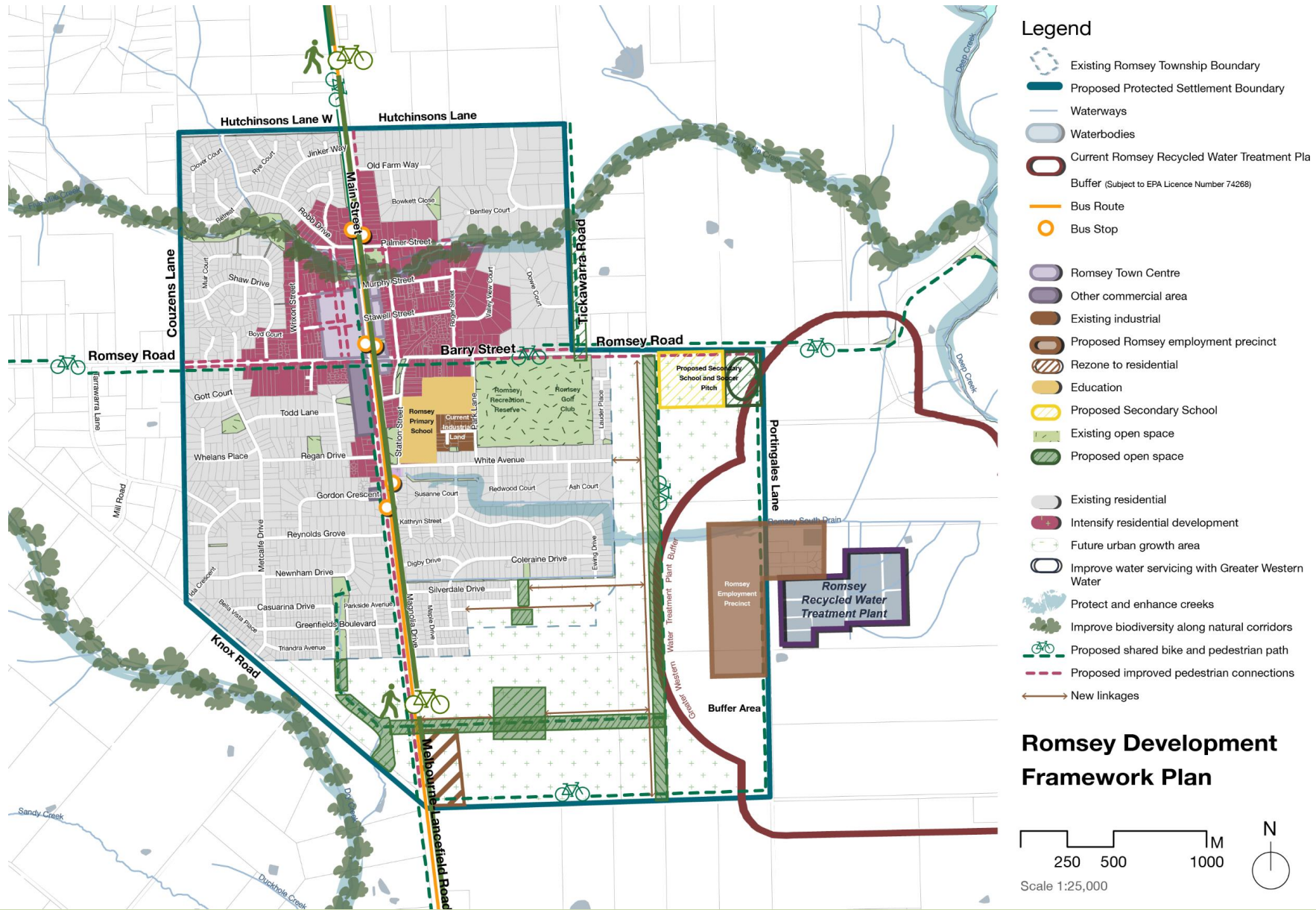
3.2.6 Sustainability and resilience

- Ensure new development increases the town's resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Reduce potable water usage and minimise the volume of urban run-off and pollution that reaches local creeks and waterways.
- Transform the town's energy system and infrastructure to one focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- Ensure new development improves the sustainability of communities and reduces impacts on the environment.

The Romsey Township Framework Plan is shown in **Figure 4**.



Figure 4: Romsey Township Framework Plan



4. HOUSING

To create a diverse mix of appropriate, affordable, well designed and responsive housing.

4.1 Housing diversity

Romsey will provide a greater variety of housing opportunities to ensure the needs of the community are met. While Romsey has a relatively young population with an average age of 36, and family types being couples (47.7%) or one parent families with children (12.3%), there are still a significant number of families that have no children (39.4%). Some of these households are part of an ageing cohort with very little housing to match their ongoing needs. Providing housing to enable ageing in place is a significant issue.

Romsey's housing market is attractive to purchasers looking at the Melbourne fringe with opportunities to buy a larger and cheaper lot within commuting distance of Melbourne.

It is anticipated that household size will decline from the existing 2.75 persons per household to 2.62 persons per household by 2041 as suggested by VIF2019.

Almost all residents of Romsey live in detached housing with only 3.3% of housing semi-detached or flats and apartments. Significantly 52% of housing is 4+ bedrooms with 39.2% being 3 bedrooms. This lack of housing diversity will mean that as the population changes and family structures change these people will not be able to find appropriate and affordable housing in Romsey. A target of 15% medium density housing was identified in the 2002 Outline Development Plan in order to improve housing choice in the township and to make more effective use of existing infrastructure. This has delivered some additional medium density housing but going forward more is required. Intensifying housing within walking distance of the town centre where there is existing infrastructure will remain the priority for medium density housing. These areas have good access to shops, services, open space, schools and public transport.

Greater housing diversity may be achieved by increasing the range of dwelling types including shop-top apartments, units and townhouses. Detached family homes of different sizes, and on different sized lots, provides for a range of affordability levels. There are many large and vacant lots in Romsey that provide the opportunity for well-designed multi-unit development that is not considered medium density.

It will be important for future medium density housing to provide a high level of amenity for residents, with quality buildings designed to reflect the character of its location.

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

Strategy 1

Facilitate a range of housing types in the township particularly within walking distance of the town centre to enable people to age in place and provide for more affordable housing options.

Actions

- Promote well designed medium density housing within convenient walking distance of the town centre.
- Retain residential land around the town centre within the township character area in the General Residential Zone (GRZ), to allow for medium density housing up to three storeys.
- Work with State and Federal governments to facilitate investment in Council owned seniors housing which is approaching its end of life.
- Support the subdivision of larger lots within the town centre and incremental change areas into dual occupancies or multi-unit developments provided that neighbourhood character requirements are met.
- Support the development of housing on upper levels of retail and commercial activities in the town centre.

4.2 Housing change areas

There are many areas around Romsey that have the potential for medium density infill development without impacting on the existing character of the area. The scale, intensity and amount of development will vary depending on a site's location and preferred future character. The following residential change areas have been identified.

Minimal change areas

Minimal Change Areas provide for a limited degree of housing growth and change in established residential areas. These areas have limited capacity for growth due to factors such as bushfire risk, and lack of sewage or have special characteristics such as heritage overlays limiting development outcomes.

Incremental change areas

Incremental Change Areas are where housing growth occurs within the context of existing or preferred neighbourhood character.

Substantial change areas

Substantial Change Areas are where housing diversity and intensity will be encouraged due to its location near jobs, services, facilities and public transport.

New areas

New areas are areas proposed to provide additional housing and diversity of housing in new neighbourhoods well linked to the existing township.

Housing change areas are shown in **Figure 5**.

4.3 Future residential growth areas

Township growth will be focused on areas to the south and east of the existing township boundary. Land to the north, and west was considered in the Emerging Options Paper but was ruled out due to a range of factors, particularly bushfire risk. Growth in any direction highlighted challenges, however growth to the south and east could be managed most efficiently. Further fine grain review highlighted

Strategy 2

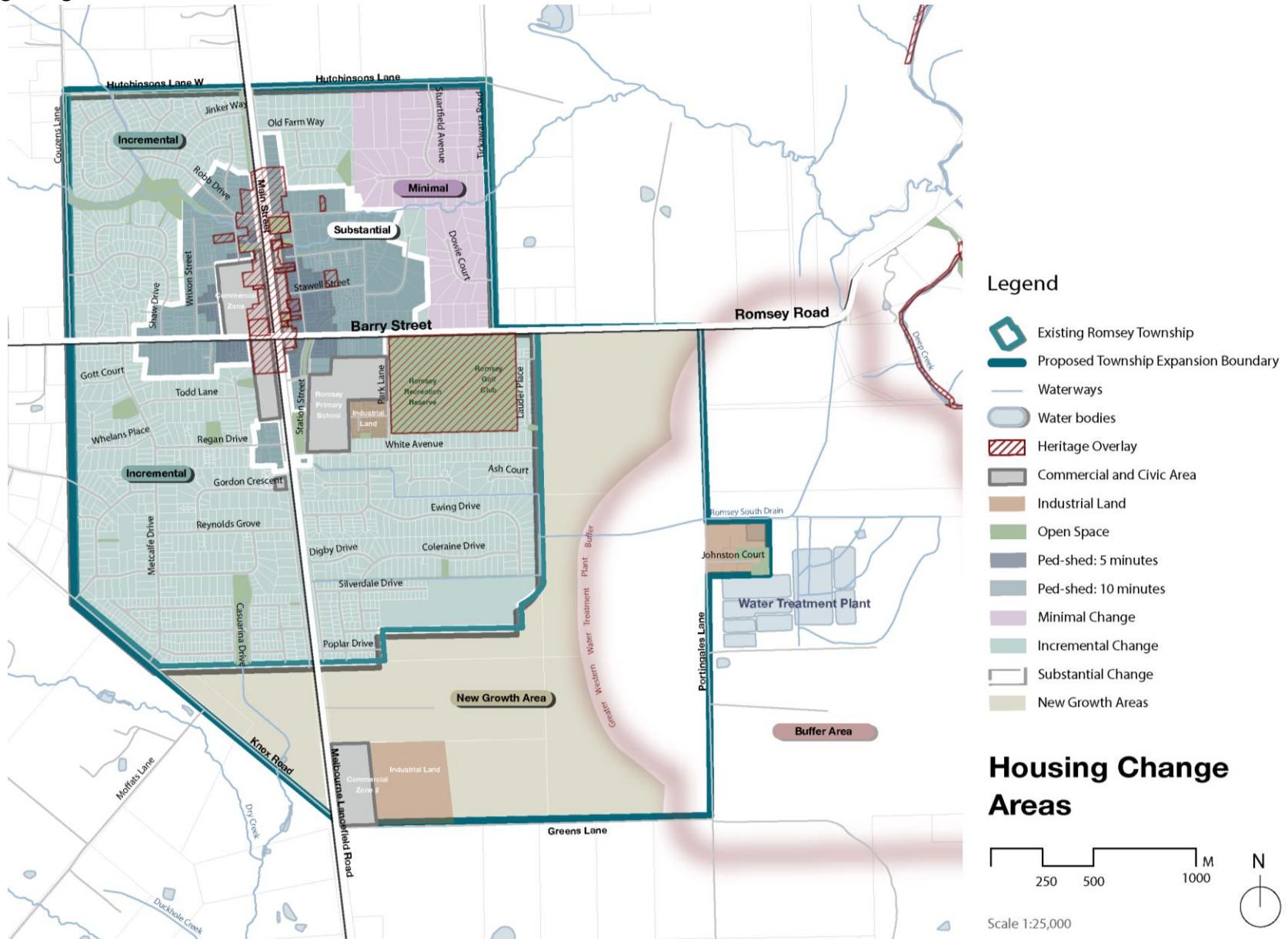
Ensure infill development reflects the valued character of Romsey's residential neighbourhoods with respect to built form, scale, setbacks and vegetation.

Actions

- Include a new Neighbourhood Character policy for Romsey and guidance in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme on achieving preferred neighbourhood character in Romsey.
- Retain the General Residential Zone over the Township Character area to enable a range of townhouse, dual occupancy and multi dwelling developments to occur within a built form of 1-3 storeys and improve guidance through a schedule to the zone with additional neighbourhood character direction (See Section 10.4).
- Rezone residential land (other than the Township Character type) to Neighbourhood Residential Zone to enable a range of dual occupancy and housing to be delivered at 1-2 storeys in line with the preferred neighbourhood character and improve guidance through a schedule to the zone with additional neighbourhood character direction (See Section 10.4).
- Retain the Low Density Residential Zone over land in the north east of the township to reflect its minimal change status.
- Remove the redundant DPO14 from land around Desmond Crescent and Tarrawarra Lane and from 27 Pohlman Crescent.
- Revise the controls in DPO14 to facilitate a high quality, higher density residential development.
- Revise DDO18 following the introduction of addition of neighbourhood character guidance in the residential schedules.
- Encourage development that reinforces Romsey's valued semi-rural built and landscape character.

areas to the south and east of the GRZ zoned land was adequate to meet the towns growth needs to 2050. Land to the east (north of Romsey Road) could be further considered post 2050. Land to the west and north of the town was not considered suitable at all for township expansion.

Figure 5: Housing change areas



Community consultation highlighted the desire to keep the footprint of Romsey as small as possible while allowing for population growth. This has resulted in an approach that enables some expansion of the existing township along with greater intensification within the existing boundary.

Growing the town south and east presents the opportunity to provide additional residential growth in light of lot supply becoming limited. Bushfire risk in the west and north makes these areas less safe as locations for urban expansion. Necessary infrastructure to service new dwellings to the east and south is also more readily available.

Romsey has been identified in the MRSP for a protected settlement boundary. Once in place, the settlement boundary will require approval of both houses of State Parliament to be amended.

The protected settlement boundary for Romsey was extensively examined in the Emerging Options Paper with analysis of the current structure, landscape and environmental features to be protected, bushfire analysis, commercial and industrial growth needs, infrastructure assessment and a review of transport and community infrastructure. The extent of the boundary provides enough land supply to accommodate growth beyond 2050. Areas identified in Figure 7 as Stage 1 for residential growth, are estimated to deliver around 1065 lots providing supply to nearly 2041. Land supply will require ongoing monitoring.

Connecting new growth areas into the existing township will require careful attention to the existing street network and provide an opportunity to improve some of the challenges to achieving a walkable town. Building on the existing environmental and landscape features and enhancing those that have been lost due to land clearing will enable sympathetic development in keeping with the rural township character.

Smaller lots will be encouraged around open spaces and key connection streets to the town centre along with a wider range of residential typologies including townhouses, cluster housing and medium density housing.

Strategy 3

Ensure future urban growth in Romsey respects and enhances the township's rural township character; heritage streetscapes; and Five Mile Creek.

Actions

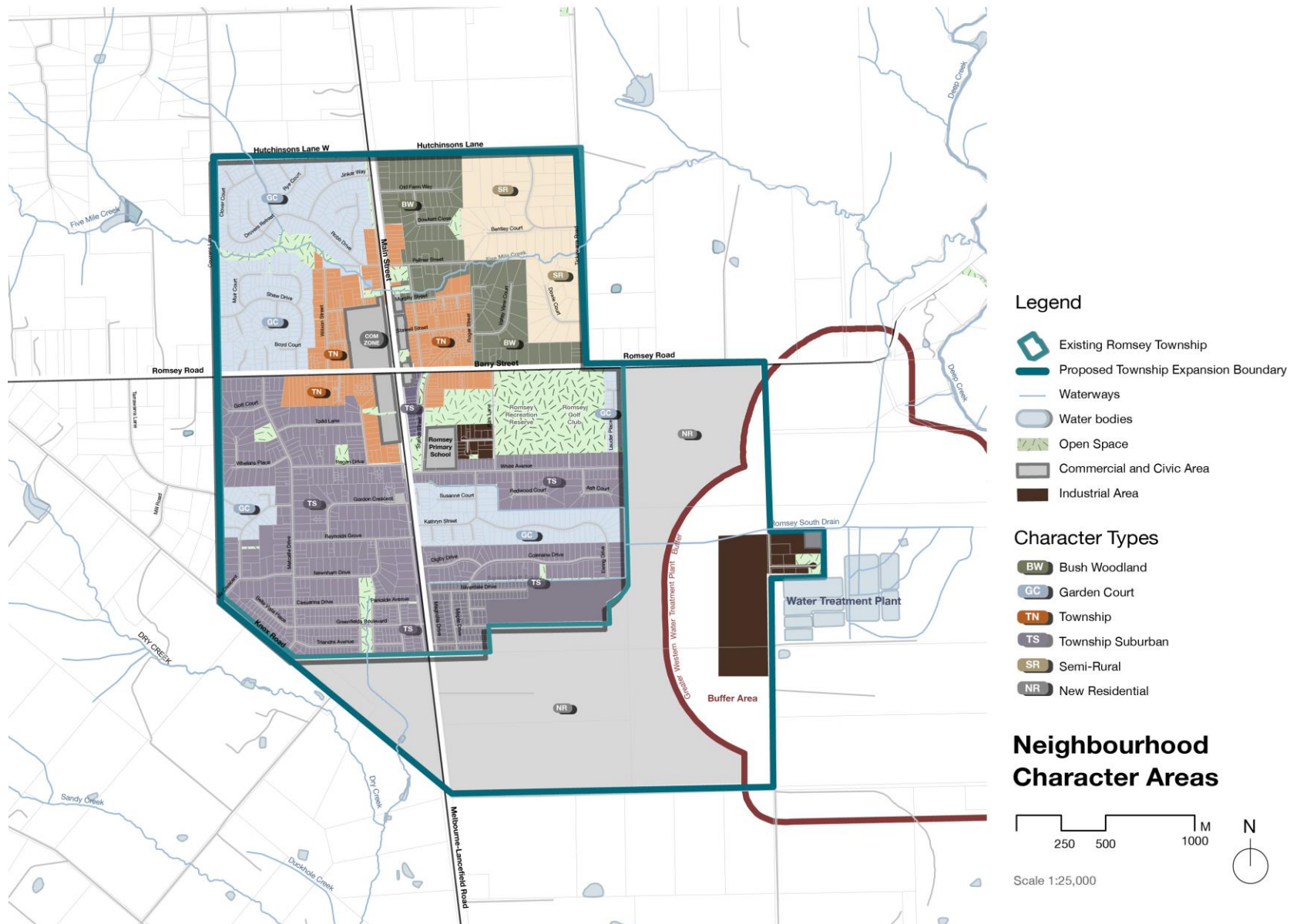
- Develop new residential areas in line with the guidelines outlined in Section 10.
- Connect new roads into the existing street network to form an interconnected network of streets and providing for the future expansion of the township within the protected settlement boundary.
- Ensure new roads are asphalt, sealed and provide opportunity for significant street tree planting within the public realm and opportunity for shared user footpaths to at least one side of the street.
- Ensure road reservation design is to give priority to Water Sensitive Urban Design and a strong vegetation theme.
- Road verges may consist of a combination of swale drains and roll-over kerbs, depending on necessary engineering design response.
- Orient lots to achieve good solar access.
- Have lots on the ends of street blocks oriented to face the short end of the street block to provide passive surveillance and avoid side fencing to these streets.
- Provide a variety of lot sizes.

4.4 Neighbourhood character

The Romsey Residential Character Study (2012) has been used as a basis to reflect the need to link the study to housing change outcomes and that greenfield areas have now been largely developed.

Five character typologies have been developed reflecting the existing and preferred future character and design objectives for each character type. These are outlined in **Chapter 10** and mapped in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6: Neighbourhood character map



Strategy 4

Manage housing growth and land supply within a protected settlement boundary.

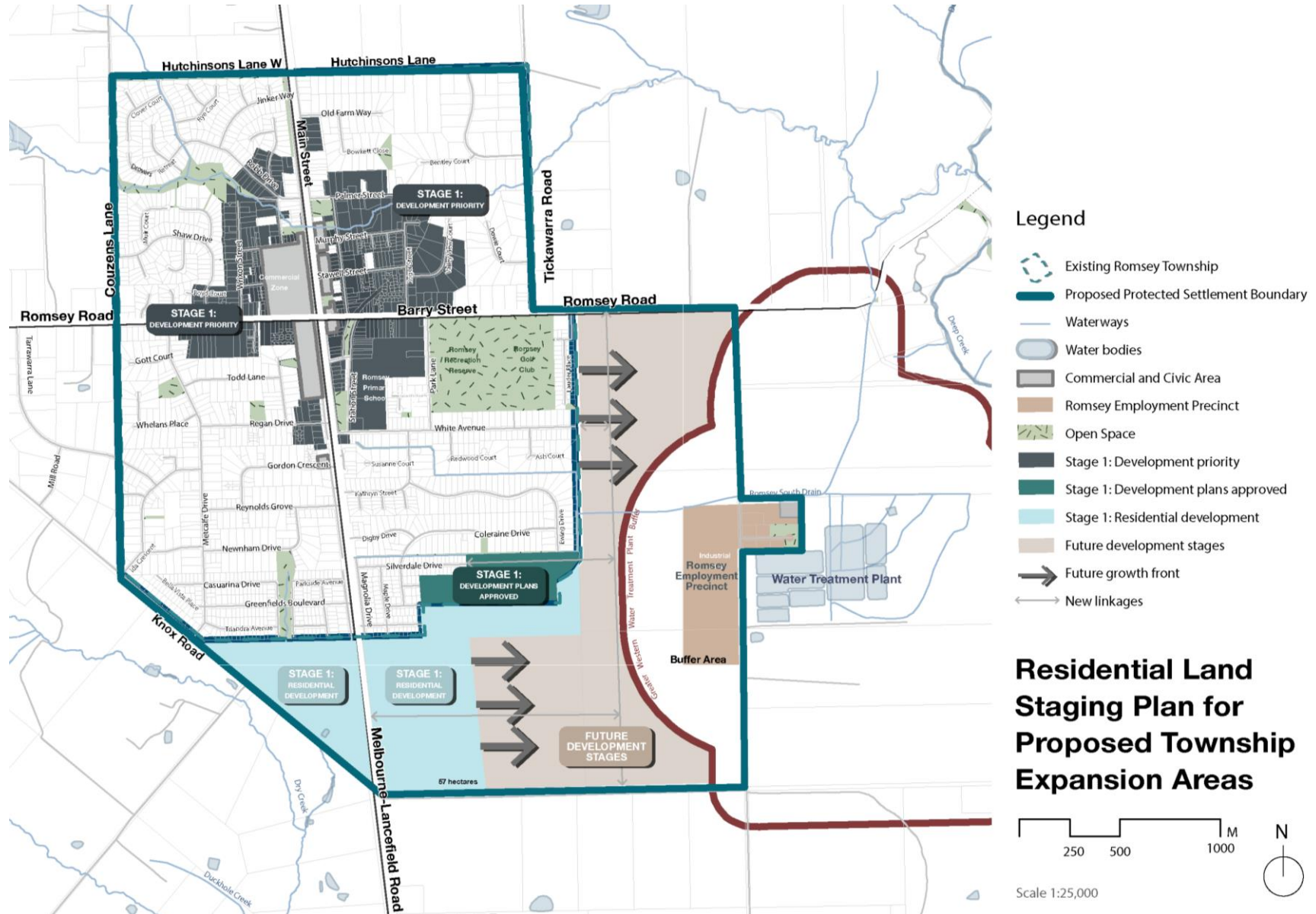
Actions

- Amend the Macedon Ranges Statement of Planning Policy to include the proposed protected settlement boundary for Romsey.
- Prioritise the development of land for housing within the existing ODP boundary.
- Rezone land on the east and west sides of Romsey-Lancefield Road to NRZ to facilitate high quality residential neighbourhoods as outlined in Figure 7.
- Monitor the supply of housing and review if additional land within the Protected Settlement Boundary should be opened up when supply drops below 400 lots or in 2031.
- Apply the DPO to Stage 1 land on the east and west side of Romsey-Lancefield Road to guide and stage development and infrastructure.
- Update the Romsey DCP based on the new structure plan.
- Prepare a staging plan for any newly developed residential areas to guide the timely and logical provision of new residential areas.
- Monitor residential growth and land supply on an on-going basis.
- Ensure that any future development considers cultural heritage values, housing diversity, landscape sensitivity, township character and the need for community infrastructure.

Residential land supply for proposed township expansion areas is shown in **Figure 7**.



Figure 7: Residential Land Staging Plan for proposed township expansion areas



5. ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT

To create additional jobs and activity in the township with a vibrant town centre and employment areas.

The town centre is the focus for activity and employment in Romsey. The town centre is supported by the functioning industrial precincts of Mitchell Court near the Romsey Primary School and Johnstone Court next to the Water Treatment Plant.

The town centre straddles the eastern and western sides of Melbourne-Lancefield Road with most business and community activities located between Murphy and Barry Street.

5.1 Town centre

Romsey acts as a small neighbourhood centre, providing a limited range of day-to-day goods and services to a local catchment with a small visitor services sector. There is a supermarket in town along with several other local retail, service and community offerings. There is currently 5,122 sqm of total retail floor space in the town centre of which retail activity comprises 38%. Other town centre activities include health and professional services, local government and community services, with light industrial activities comprising the remainder of the centre.

There are a number of vacant and under-utilised commercial properties in the centre along with significant vacant floorspace of 13% (compared with vacancies in typical main street centres in the 5% - 10% range). This, along with a significant loss of market share to other towns, means that Romsey's town centre is not performing at an optimum level. This impacts the vibrancy of the centre, the retail offer, local employment opportunities and results in people driving elsewhere to shop.

Improving the retail mix and the spatial and access conditions of the town centre along with population growth in the town and its local catchment provide the conditions for an additional 1,600 sqm of retail space. The provision of a full line supermarket will enable people to live and shop locally and bring people from

areas around Romsey into town. It is however important that this additional retail provision is located to consolidate the town centre rather than develop a new retail node.

An additional 1.5 – 2 hectares of land for development is required to meet long term commercial demand and can be provided by several vacant sites that are already zoned appropriately.

Consolidating the town centre into a walkable centre requires a concentration of those types of activities that foster walking. Consolidating the town centre and improving routes to the town centre has the potential to increase foot traffic which is essential to improving the viability of businesses and the town centre as a whole. Encouraging more people to live within 400m of the town centre will also potentially increase foot fall significantly. This needs to be anchored by a supermarket. Land south of Barry Road will focus on other commercial uses not of a convenience shopping function.

Romsey is largely a commuter settlement and relies on jobs in Melbourne and nearby towns. There are almost 2.5 resident workers for every local job in Romsey with many residents working in construction, transport and warehousing. Creating more jobs in Romsey to limit people's travel times and environmental impacts will benefit the whole town.

Strategy 5

Strengthen the role of the Romsey town centre as a local and regional destination for business, retail, entertainment and community activities that provides access to a range of services and facilities.

Actions

- Accommodate demand for commercial and retail land in the town centre through the development of existing vacant and development opportunity sites.

- Support development in the town centre which provides opportunities for night-time dining, entertainment, arts, cultural and tourism uses and residences in upper levels.
- Revise DPO 15 to reflect the Structure Plan, ensure it is facilitative and gives direction on appropriate uses and built form outcomes.
- Locate non-core retailing uses in commercial areas south of Barry Road to reflect existing land uses.
- Rezone Commercial 1 Zone land south of Barry Road to Commercial 2 Zone.
- Ensure that new developments reinforce pedestrian amenity, business presentation and streetscape activation through locating buildings and their entries at the front of properties and car parking to the rear or sides. See **Appendix 2** for Design Guidelines for the town centre.
- Support adaptive re-use of heritage buildings that contribute to the character of the town centre.
- Work with landowners to facilitate development on key sites such as the Romsey Pub, the former shopping centre on Main Road and the Pohlman Street west development site.
- Explore the creation of a public meeting place/space in the town centre such as near the church.
- Work with traders' organisations to help improve the vibrancy of the centre and the resilience of its stakeholders.

Strategy 6

Reinforce the town centre as the commercial and civic heart of the town with a high-quality urban realm responsive to the towns character.

Actions

- Implement the Precinct 1 objectives and design guidelines in Chapter 4.
- Support the establishment of a full-line supermarket of around 3,000 sqm with reorganisation of existing space and activity in the town centre.
- Work with landowners of vacant commercial land in the centre of town to redevelop their land for retail and commercial activities.
- Develop art and place making initiatives in the town centre with input from young people.

- Ensure that substantial new developments within the town centre are predominantly street-based and incorporate well-designed public spaces.

Strategy 7

Create a consolidated, compact, walkable town centre that is active day and night.

Actions

- Ensure that buildings are built with their main entrance on the property boundary, and any car parking is provided behind the building without direct access into the building.
- Optimize management of on-street parking to maximise commercial turnover.
- Locate on-site parking and longer stay parking to the rear or sides of buildings away from main streets and shop frontages.
- Ensure that dwellings on streets which link to the town centre, face the street, and avoid garages and bedrooms dominating front facades. This is to ensure a high level of passive surveillance is created to support walking to the town centre.

5.2 Industry in Romsey

There are three industrial areas in the town providing for additional employment uses with a variety of businesses including mechanics, auto repairs and gyms. The industrial and commercial land on the corner of Greens Lane has not been occupied or serviced to date.

Growth in industry is anticipated with demand estimates over the next 20 years suggesting that an employment precinct in the range of 10 to 17 hectares is required. Locating the precinct within the buffer of the wastewater treatment facility provides the opportunity for further expansion over time, or if a significant industrial land-user seeks to establish in the area. Use of treated wastewater would enable an efficient source of water and signal a shift to a more circular economy.

Improving the access and amenity of current and future industrial precincts will provide an attractive setting for future private investment into the town.

Strategy 8

Ensure there is adequate land supply for future economic growth and local employment.

Actions

- Develop a new Romsey Employment Precinct on the west side of Portingales Lane to support the growth of jobs and employment in the town.
- Ensure that shared user paths are provided on the west side of Portingales Lane prior to any additional development of the Employment Precinct
- Rezone Farming Zone land adjacent to Portingales Lane to Industrial 1 Zone.
- Incorporate a DPO into the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme based on the layout shown in **Figure 8** to set out requirements for the Employment Precinct including:
 - Develop industrial design guidelines for the proposed new Romsey Employment Precinct.
- Provide a landscaped buffer between the Romsey Water Treatment Plant and residential areas.
- Provide a minimum 200 m buffer between the new Employment Precinct and any new residential development within proximity.
- Rezone commercial and industrial land on the corner of Greens Lane and Romsey-Melbourne Road to a residential zone.
- Include infrastructure provision to the new Employment Precinct is incorporated into the new DCP for Romsey (such as services, road upgrades, landscaping and other associated public works).



5.3 Growth within the buffer

The Romsey Recycled Water Plant (RRWP) provides opportunities for the further use of recycled water around town. Other opportunities could be explored including those for agricultural and industrial recycled water use. Locating new industrial areas and/or solar energy generators in close proximity to the plant and exploring options in the surrounding farming zoned land will enable this synergy to be capitalised on.

The extent of the buffer is a key determinant of growth options for the town. The existing buffer requirements of 1000m from the treatment ponds remain in place until such time as this can be resolved between Greater Western Water and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria.

Ensuring that the buffer area protects the operations of the RRWP and that compatible land uses/developments are allowed within this area is essential for the growth of Romsey.

5.4 Tourism development

Tourism is important in Macedon Ranges, although the Romsey area attracts a relatively small number of visitors. Lack of accommodation and conference facilities and other infrastructure is contributing to this. The local tourism industry, with its wineries, other food outlets and cultural producers will create job opportunities that may spill over into retailing, accommodation and manufacturing (breweries, distilleries, specialist food production, etc.) within the town. A multi-pronged strategy is needed to attract tourists and tourism to the town.

Strategy 9

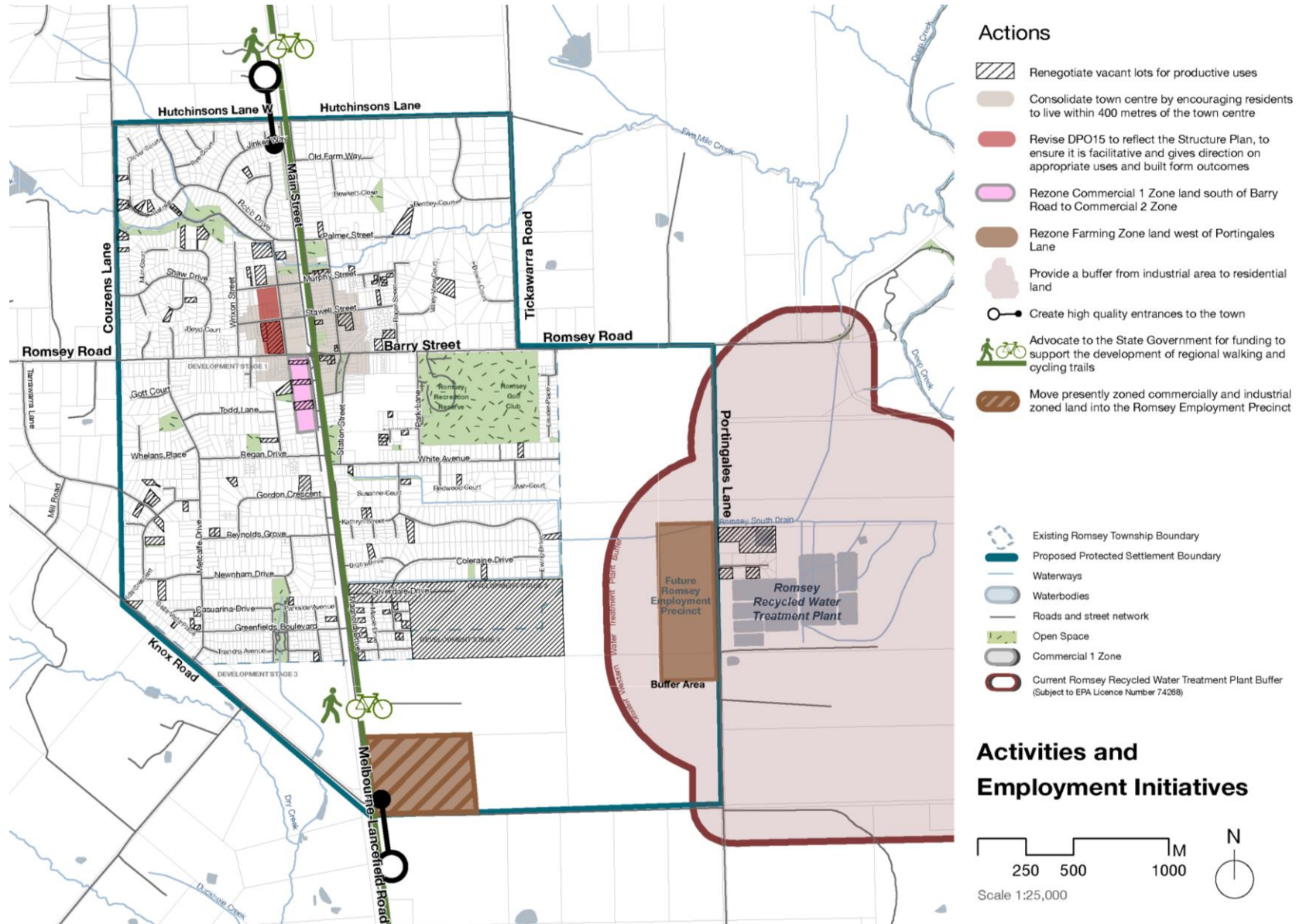
Facilitate the necessary infrastructure and services to boost tourism opportunities in the town, building on existing tourism providers within the region.

Actions

- Continue to implement the Macedon Ranges Visitor Attraction Strategy working with the Romsey Region Business and Tourism Association.
- Support the development of tourist accommodation and facilities in the town centre to encourage overnight visitation and increased spending in the town.
- Provide overnight recreational vehicle accommodation and a dump point at the Lions Park given its key location on major travelling routes through the region.
- Extend and promote the regional walking and cycling trails as a tourism asset, extending the walking and cycling trail development from Romsey.
- Advocate to the State Government for funding to support the development of the regional walking and cycling trail through programs such as 'Victoria's Great Outdoors Program'.
- Work with Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) to create high quality entrances to the town.
- Improve the town centre and town entrance design to create a sense of arrival and place through public art, landscape and other place making initiatives.
- Locate tourism uses and associated tourist accommodation within or adjacent to the town centre.



Figure 8: Activities and employment



6. LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

To ensure development is appropriate to the landscape setting and township character.

Romsey is a picturesque town nestled in the shallow valley of Five Mile Creek, between the Macedon Ranges in the west and the hills rising above Deep Creek in the east. The eastern side of the town is relatively flat until it reaches the Deep Creek where rolling hills and deep valleys are found.

The ranges on the eastern and western sides of the township provide a highly visual landscape and visual setting to Romsey. High quality agricultural land to the north of the township is utilised for farming purposes and creates a separation or break between Romsey and Lancefield. Retaining this break has been identified in planning policy and its importance highlighted by the community.

Five Mile Creek traverses the township and is a significant feature and asset of the town used as a passive recreation corridor but public access is limited due to private ownership. Deep Creek is an ephemeral watercourse on the town's eastern boundary. Romsey South Drain is a narrow drain capturing stormwater runoff and directing it to Deep Creek.

6.1 Landscape

To the west of Romsey, the landform rises up slowly creating opportunities to view over the town and to the Mt. William ridge and Chinton Hills. The north-west area of town rises to a high point around Ochiltrees Road and falls steeply to the Five Mile Creek. Recent development in this area has required extensive cut and fill.

Strategy 10

Maintain settlement boundaries and a significant visual break between Romsey and Lancefield.

Actions

- Ensure the importance of this visual break is recognised in planning policy and through the establishment of the protected settlement boundary for Romsey.
- Maintain rural zones with 40ha minimum lot sizes between the towns.
- Advocate to the Victorian Government to make changes to the Rural Living Zone to either require a permit or prohibit inappropriate urban uses (such as accommodation, residential aged care facilities, education centres and similar) so that these types of uses are not located within green breaks/urban breaks between townships.
- Ensure that the roads between Lancefield and Romsey are heavily landscaped to maintain the visual separation of the two towns.

Tree canopy cover within Romsey is mainly confined to private property. Roadside trees are found along the main road leading into and through the township contributing to a definable and attractive character. Street trees are present on few of Romsey's other streets and only sporadically. The coordinated and widespread planting of locally appropriate street trees would increase canopy cover and benefit the town's character while also contributing to its climate resilience and biodiversity. A program of street tree planting would also increase climate change resilience and improve biodiversity.

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

Strategy 11

Enhance the town's setting within a treed landscape.

Actions

- Identify opportunities to use native species to revegetate creeks and encourage restoration in appropriate locations.
- Extend the avenue of trees along the Melbourne - Lancefield Road, and renew awareness of the Avenue of Honour with signage and additional canopy trees.
- Prioritise tree planting along Barry Street to create a new landscape corridor contributing to the rural township character of the town.

- Plant street trees in ultimate locations as part of a vision for Barry Street including dedicated shared path facilities.
- Undertake street tree planting throughout the town prioritising areas shown in **Figure 10**.
- Undertake further studies to investigate protection of large canopy trees in the township to retain the landscape values.
- Encourage the planting of native and indigenous plantings in public and private spaces subject to the consideration of bushfire impacts.



6.2 Biodiversity

While the area around the Romsey township is largely cleared, the structure and future growth of the town can make a contribution to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the Shire. Deep Creek is identified as a waterway link that contains significant habitat patches, support threatened species and has strong community interest. Plans for Five Mile Creek have identified biodiversity as a key role which can assist with creating new connectivity across the landscape.

Strategy 11

Enhance the biodiversity of Romsey.

Actions

- Increase the planting of local understorey species in street and open space planting.
- Rethink the Romsey South Drain as a biodiversity corridor feeding Deep Creek.

- Ensure new development along the Romsey South Drain creates a naturalised water system.
- Enhance environmental assets of the town such as the Five Mile Creek.
- Manage roadsides as vegetation corridors contributing to biodiversity protection.
- Encourage the planting of species at the edges of town that are/will not become environmental weeds.
- Protect any identified remnant patches of Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC55).
- Ensure development is not located on the immediate edges of the creeks to limit impact on water quality.

6.3 Five Mile Creek

Five Mile Creek is a valued asset providing a range of biodiversity, health and wellbeing, environmental and social benefits to the community. Opportunities to expand the extent and public ownership of the creek environs while extending the values into the surrounding settlement will be essential.

The Five Mile Creek Masterplan provides a 10-year plan establishing a vision and priorities for improvements to the reserve. The Creek is a priority area for establishment of vegetation buffers along waterways by Melbourne Water and a priority bio-link within the Macedon Ranges Biodiversity Strategy.

Strategy 12

Extend and enhance the Five Mile Creek corridor and environs.

Actions

- Continue to implement the Five Mile Creek Masterplan.
- Encourage development along Five Mile Creek to interface with the park and trail through strategies such as low fencing, entrance points onto the park and balconies overlooking.
- Explore opportunities to acquire land/rezone land along the Five Mile Creek to the east of Main Street, creating a permanent walking and cycling path along the creek in public ownership.

- Create a minimum 3 m wide walking, cycling and horse trail from Greens Road through to Five Mile Creek within the buffer area, parallel to Portingales Lane linking new residents in the south to the Five Mile Creek open space network.



6.4 Open space

Open spaces in Romsey currently comprise a range of types including neighbourhood parks, natural and semi-natural spaces, a skate park, sports fields and organised recreation. Increasing the population of the town will result in a need for additional open space and linkages ideally within walking distance of all properties. An important part of the plan is to create a continuous open space

network that joins all of the new urban areas to the Five Mile Creek corridor. The north-south open space link would also form a buffer to the new industrial area adjacent to the Romsey Recycled Water Treatment Plant and be a fire break area. The proposed cross section for the east-west link is shown in Figure 9.

A range of different types of open space should be provided of a suitable size to meet the different needs of the community. Analysis of existing open space highlights a number of areas where open space provision needs improvement. The disconnected, curvilinear street network impacts access significantly.

Planning for organised sport has identified the need for increased provision of outdoor netball courts and the need to find a location for a soccer pitch.

Strategy 13

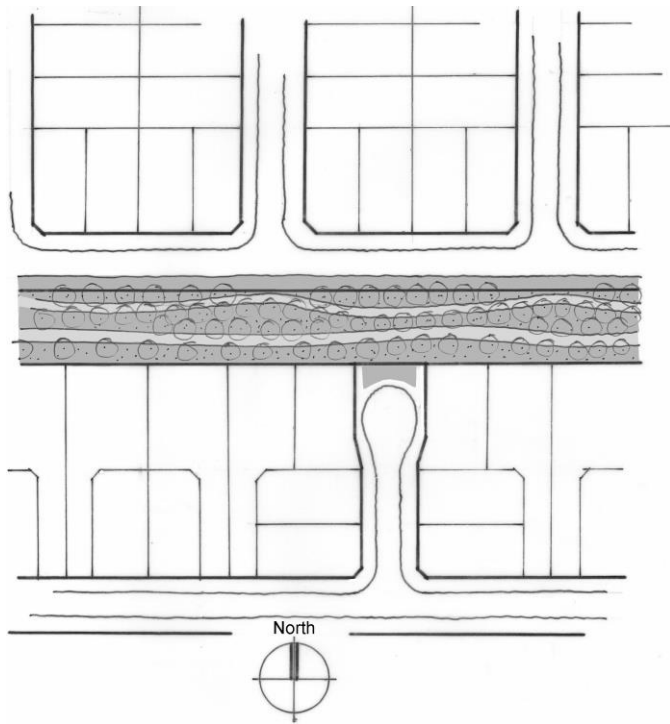
Create a network of open spaces throughout the town to meet the varied open space requirements of the community.

Actions

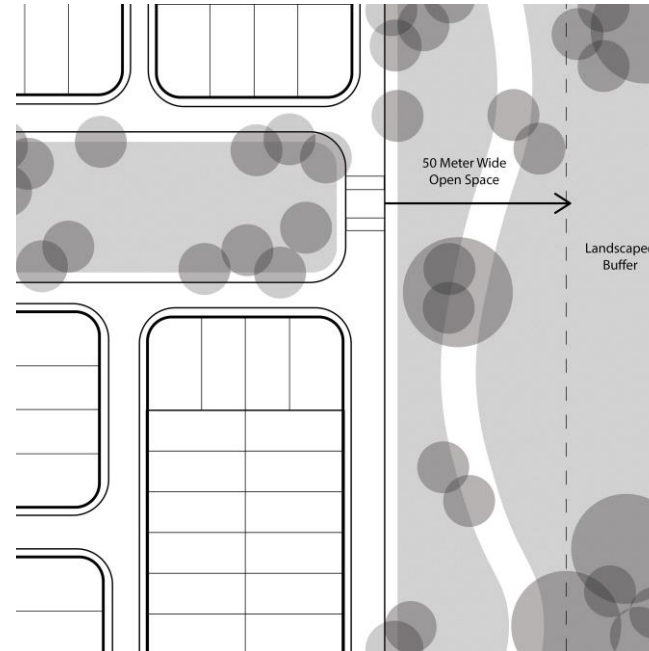
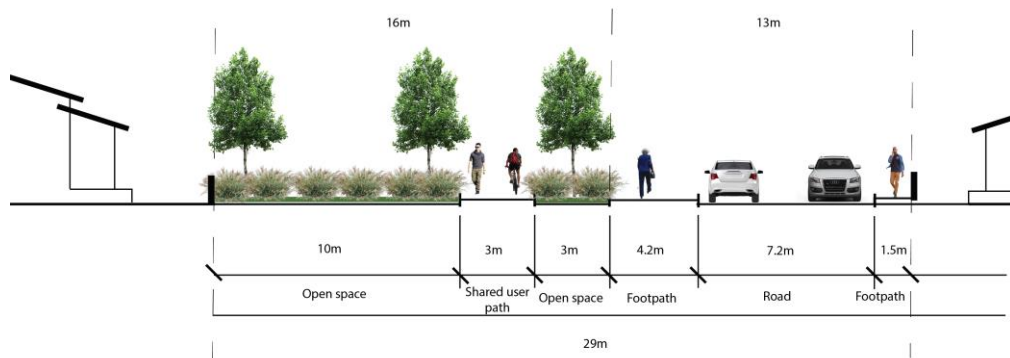
- Create a range of new open spaces as outlined in **Figure 9**.
- Rezone incorrectly zoned existing open spaces to Public Park and Recreation Zone as outlined in **Figure 9**.
- Reserve land for a new soccer pitch on Romsey Road within the water treatment plant buffer area with a potential new high school site.
- Provide new outdoor netball courts in line with the Romsey Recreation Reserve Masterplan.
- Establish new dog off leash areas.
- Ensure young people are engaged in the design process for recreational and open spaces in Romsey that are utilised by young people.

Romsey's landscape and natural environment initiatives are shown in **Figure 10**.

Figure 9: Proposed cross sections of the new open space links

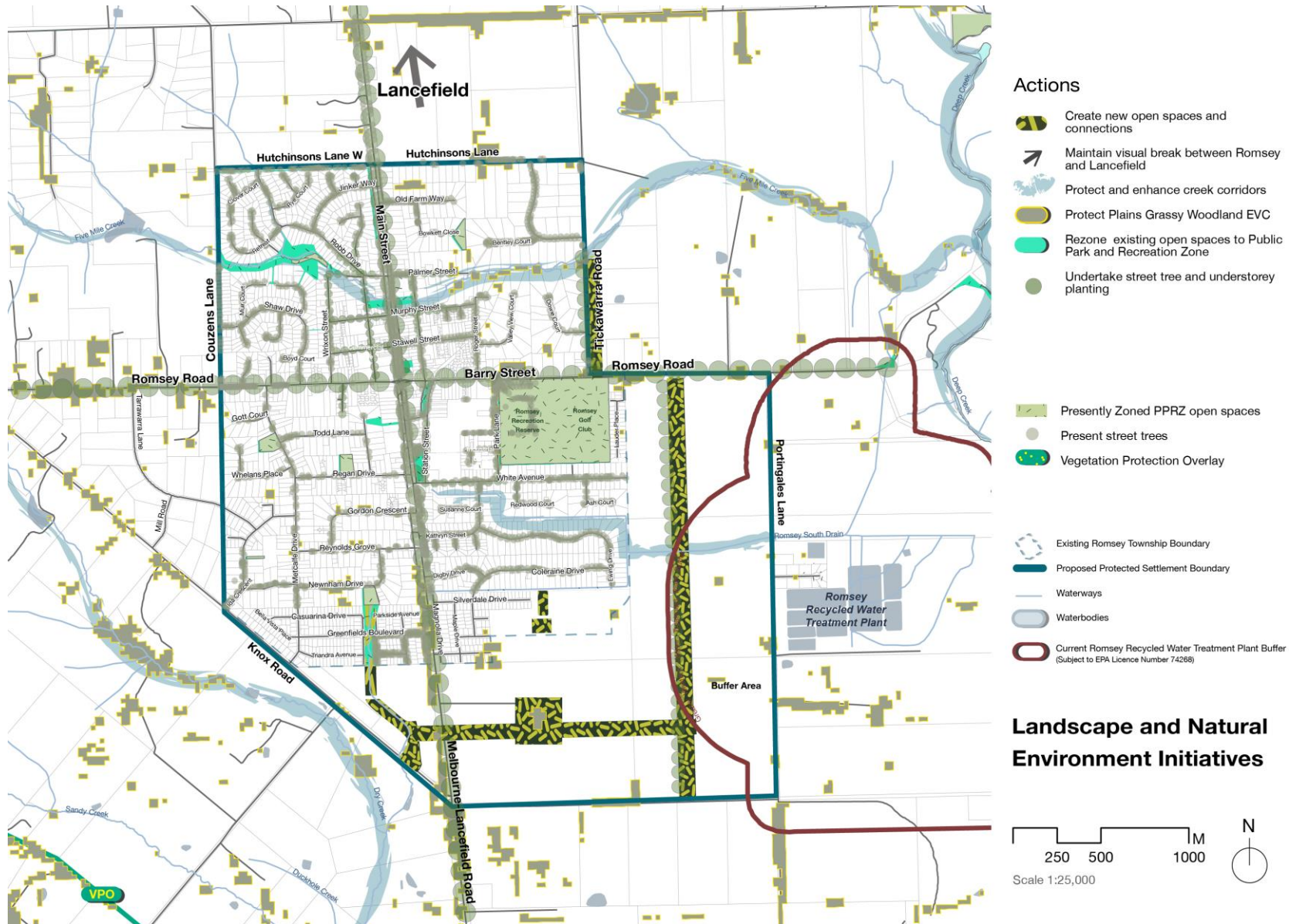


East – west open space and lot orientation



North – south open space and landscape buffer with lot orientation

Figure 10: Landscape and natural environment



7. MOVEMENT, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

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

The Romsey township road hierarchy is characteristic of similar regional towns across Victoria. It includes the north-south primary arterial, Melbourne-Lancefield Road (Main Road) along which the town is centred. The hierarchy also includes an east-west secondary arterial road, surrounding collector roads along the town's edges, and local access roads throughout the town.

Romsey is a highly car dependent town. This is mainly influenced by the lack of development intensity in the town centre, resulting in fewer local economic opportunities and an over-reliance on longer distance travel to Woodend, Wallan and Sunbury. Development of the Commercial 2 Zone at the southern edge of the township will increase car use rather than create real options for residents. This suburban form is not helped by fragmented pedestrian networks and minimal opportunities for bicycle riding segregated from vehicles. Reducing car dependence is critical to achieve Macedon Ranges' vision for the area and essential to create local economy, sustainability and community health benefits.

In planning Romsey's growth, it should be noted that maintaining a low-density suburban form will impact the viability of new services, and they will be difficult to access by walking or riding. This will exacerbate existing levels of car ownership and use and entrench the high cost of living for current and future residents. Containing jobs within the town and services including regular shopping, schools, health facilities and eateries and other social places will reduce the need for car dependency. Using the Movement and Place Framework will assist in moving the town's transport network to one that is more focused on active transport.

Managing the impacts of car parking and ensuring that the impacts of oversupply such as reducing opportunities for other uses, inducing more people to drive and the maintenance costs are central to the quality of the town centre and its long-term viability.

Strategy 14

Provide an accessible town with clear and direct movement networks that are safe, connected and designed to meet the capacity requirements of existing and future communities.

Actions

- Increase development intensity in the town centre and specifically along Main Street.
- Ensure any new development on Main Street is built up to the property boundary with the main entrance onto Main Street and any car parking at the rear of the building without a public entrance to the main building.
- Review the Romsey Development Contributions Plan to include upgrade works identified in **Figure 10**.
- Provide opportunities for larger vehicles to park near the town centre to support tourism within the town.
- Limit speeds on Glenfern and Knox Roads to 80kmh.
- Decrease speed limits across the town to 40km/h to improve safety for pedestrians and bicycle users.
- Consider restricting access to Stawell Street to be from the service lanes only, removing the intersections with the Main Street through lanes as part of a streetscape plan for the service lanes to enhance pedestrian safety, mode shift and quality of the town centre environment.
- Investigate parking provision on Main Street and outside Romsey Primary School on Station Street to determine the best use of road space for the community.

7.1 Active transport opportunities

Improving people's choices to walk and ride will rely on growth occurring in the core of Romsey's town centre and improving active transport networks to be useful, safe, comfortable and interesting. A lack of walking and cycling infrastructure beyond Main Street discourages people from travelling around Romsey by foot or bike due to safety concerns.

Based around a linear, grid network with a tree-lined main street, Romsey has the potential to be a very walkable township. Fifty percent of current Romsey households live within 1km of the town centre making errands to Main Street easily undertaken on foot. For the small number of households located further than 2km from Main Street, walking to any service needs to be really attractive, particularly compared to driving.

In Main Street, walkability is currently hampered by the low-intensity built form and vacant land which reduces pedestrian amenity and attractiveness. A lack of priority pedestrian crossing locations further inhibits walkability around the town.

Strategy 15

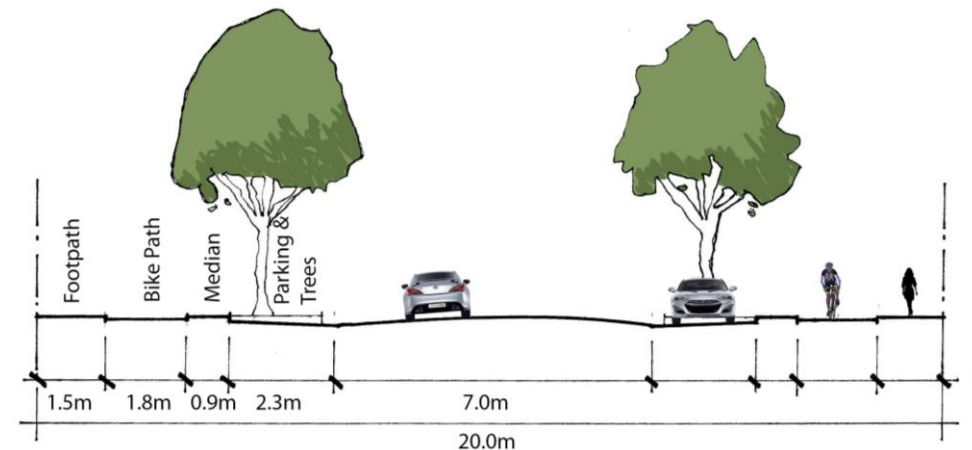
Create a movement network that provides a high level of amenity and safety for pedestrians and bicycle riders.

Actions

- Slow traffic on Main Street and provide pedestrian priority crossings in the town centre to improve safety for both drivers and pedestrians as the area becomes busier.
- Investigate locations for additional raised zebra (wombat) crossings around all legs of Barry Street and Main Street including at the intersection of those two streets, and at existing pedestrian refuges to promote pedestrian safety and easy road crossing.
- Work with RRV to install a signalised pedestrian crossing near bus stops in Main Street.
- Develop shared user path along Barry Street with safe crossing points for pedestrians and bicycle riders. See potential cross section **Figure 11**.
- Ensure the plan identifies future cycling and walking infrastructure including connections to bus stops.
- Prioritise the development of footpath infrastructure to the town centre, between key community and commercial destinations and around the school and childcare centres (priority being a 400m radius of the town centre).
- Provide an intertown shared user path from Romsey to Monegeeta and Clarkefield similar to the Lancefield connection.

- Improve tree canopy coverage across the whole town improving environmental conditions for walkers and cyclists.
- Conduct a DDA compliance assessment along Main Street and prioritise actions to address shortfalls for those of the community with limited mobility and disabilities.
- Establish an off-road shared user path network, particularly linking the Town Centre with the Recreation Reserve, Primary School, childcare facilities and Five Mile Creek to allow for safe bicycle travel both for transit and recreationally.
- Design and construct a shared user path along Five Mile Creek and work to extend this east and west of the current path in the town.
- Ensure new development areas are connected into the existing and proposed walking and cycling links into the town centre.

Figure 11: Potential Barry Street cross section



7.2 Public transport

Public transport services in Romsey are insufficient to meet the needs of existing and future residents. However, the lack of development intensity in the area makes public transport difficult to provide viably and ensures long wait times for funding of additional services. Bus services are provided on weekdays every hour from Lancefield to Sunbury via Romsey. These are not used by the number of people they need to be in order to be improved.

Most people from Romsey commuting to Melbourne either drive or access public transport by driving to Clarkefield Station. The lack of public transport caused by the lack of development intensity in the town centre where the bus stops are located is a significant issue that makes access to education, employment and services difficult for young people.

Focussing residential growth within walking distance of the Main Street corridor will help make public transport viable in future.

Strategy 16

Improve public transport opportunities for Romsey.

Actions

- Continue discussions and advocacy with DTP regarding improved public transport options for Romsey.
- Advocate to DTP to provide more frequent services and integrated timetables for public transport.
- Work with DTP to improve the shuttle bus service to Clarkefield Station with a mixture of public bus and volunteer car drivers to provide services which align with the V/Line train timetable.
- Consider working with non-profit community transport service providers such as Link Community Transport to expand the range of transport services on offer in Romsey.



7.3 Township expansion

As Romsey grows over the coming decades, new and wider roads will be required to facilitate urban expansion. As roads form a critical role in a place's urban structure, it is important that the allocation of space in these road reserves holistically improves movement options and where possible remedies previous poor decisions.

Portingales Lane and Greens Road will need to be sealed and widened to facilitate expansion to the south and facilitate a larger employment precinct. This road reserve also has potential to move truck movements out of the town centre. Any upgrade to Portingales Lane should focus on pedestrian and bicycle rider safety and prioritise provision of a shared user path that provides all people with a safe alternative to travelling by car. This will also improve safety and efficiency of truck movements along Portingales Lane, avoiding the need for truck drivers to be apprehensive about pedestrians and bicycle riders sharing the roadway with heavy vehicles.

Strategy 17

Create an urban structure that facilitates movement options that are safe, integrated, accessible and do not rely on vehicle ownership within the township.

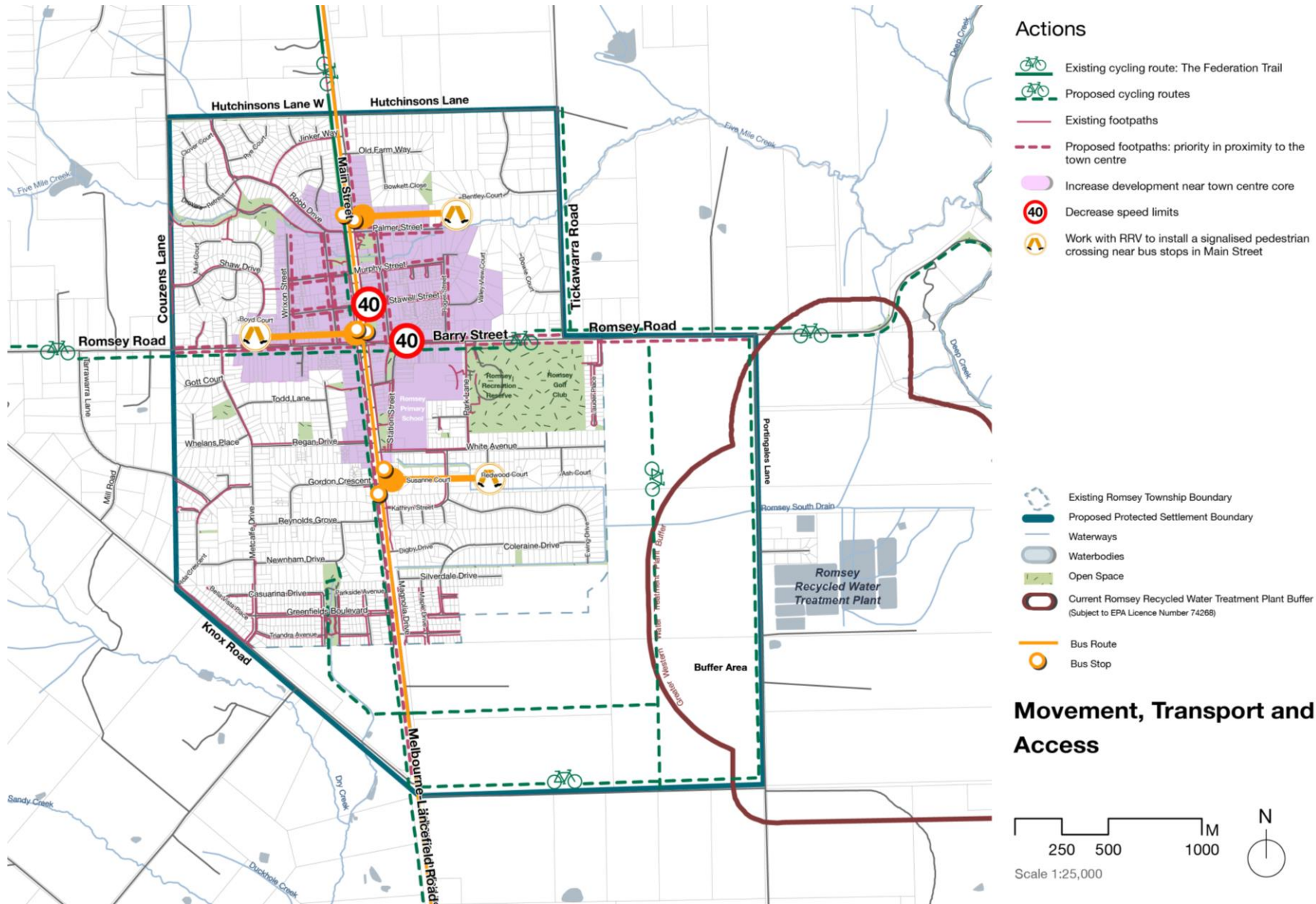
Actions

- Upgrade Portingales Lane to ensure pedestrian and bicycle rider safety and better cater for heavier vehicles to support the expansion of the Romsey Employment Precinct and reduce traffic movements in the town centre.
- Consider options to improve the intersection of Greens Lane and Knox Road.
- Deliver a grid network of streets and connect into existing street networks as outlined in **Figure 11** (see Section 10 for further guidance).
- Advocate to RRV to ensure that new road works and upgrades respects the character and heritage of the town and aligns with neighbourhood character objectives.



Romsey's movement, transport and access is shown in **Figure 12**.

Figure 12: Romsey movement, transport and access



8. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE

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

The community is served by several local community and recreation facilities. The Romsey Community Hub provides library services, meeting spaces, programs and Council services. The town is also serviced by a CFA fire station, ambulance and police station. The Romsey recreation reserve and golf course provides local facilities including golf, football, lawn bowls and tennis and the Recreation Centre provides for a range of indoor sports.

8.1 New community facilities

It is important to preserve space for the facilities the community needs and desires as it grows to a large district town over the coming decades. Preserving the land for a high school and an aquatic centre have been identified and will be provided as the population grows.

Strategy 18

Ensure the necessary future community facilities are planned to support the growth of the town.

Actions

- Advocate to the Department of Education to review the provision of a secondary school in Romsey.
- Preserve the option for a P-9 school on the existing Romsey Primary School site.
- Reserve space on the south side of Romsey Road for a future high school within walking distance of the town centre.
- Ensure land uses adjoining the Romsey Primary School do not compromise the long-term viability of Romsey's education facilities.
- Undertake a feasibility study into the provision of an aquatic facility in the east of the shire.



8.2 Facilities for all

Ensuring new facilities and services are appropriate for all sections of the community as it grows is essential. An increasing population necessitates a proactive health and wellbeing response and improved medical, maternal child health and kindergarten facilities. Transport, access and telecommunications connectivity is a significant issue for young people, in terms of education, training, employment and sporting activity provision. Improving transport, accessibility and connectivity is critical to help confronting issues of social and economic isolation.

The engagement and involvement of young people in sport, recreation and other social pursuits is essential to strengthening their contribution to civic life and building social capital and cohesion.

Council through several strategies has worked with the community to identify specific requirements. Making the town more child-friendly, along with new and additional meeting spaces and design of recreational and other open spaces were identified by children and young people. Older people identified that an age-friendly town would concentrate on accessibility and affordable services, facilities, housing and transport.

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2018 to 2028 identified that the town will need additional provision of sporting facilities of cricket soccer and outdoor netball over the coming decades.

Strategy 19

Ensure community facilities meet the needs of the local community, are accessible, fit for purpose and provide for a range of activities and groups.

Actions

- Identify locations for additional community meeting places in and around Main Street and other areas that cater for young people's needs.
- Investigate the introduction of a community bus to improve community access to the town's facilities.
- Investigate the provision of additional medical services, particularly for young people and families, maternal child health and kindergarten facilities.
- Engage with young people in the design of recreation and other open spaces to provide for their needs.
- Identify transport, access and telecommunications connectivity improvements to better support young people's education, training, employment and sporting needs.
- Create enhanced nature play opportunities for children.
- Consider opportunities for increasing the range of sporting options for the town in the design and redevelopment of sporting facilities.
- Continue a staged implementation of the Romsey Park Sports Precinct Masterplan.

8.3 Heritage and culture

Aboriginal cultural heritage

Cultural values in this area are important within the landscape as Romsey is located close to Taungurung Country, the Deep Creek waterway, and the culturally important Hanging Rock reserve. Deep Creek was also likely an important Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung travel route and source of resources facilitating travel to Will-ee-im Moor-ing (Mt William Greenstone Axe Quarry) and Taungurung Country.

Council and Wurundjeri Council have been working in partnership to ensure that cultural values and cultural heritage management occur within planning processes.

Strategy 20

Ensure new development appropriately responds to and celebrates Aboriginal cultural heritage sites, places and values.

Actions

- Work with Wurundjeri Council to consider early planning consultation to avoid existing cultural heritage and to provide advice regarding where sites and cultural places are prior to development approvals.
- Encourage the planting of indigenous plant species for their cultural values to the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung community and create habitat for fauna of importance to Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung lore, culture, and have value.
- Undertake a cultural survey of culturally modified trees in the area and remaining remnant trees working with landowners to facilitate this process.
- Work with Wurundjeri Council for on-going involvement in landscape management in urban design, naming, as part of the effort to appropriately emphasise the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung clans.
- Where possible expand cultural protection of Deep Creek, offset greater than 200m and revegetate the area (recommendations driven by Waterways of the West Ministerial Advisory Committee).
- Identify and protect the local eruption points as cultural places with the support of local landowners.

Post-contact heritage

Evidence of the post contact development of Romsey can be found throughout the town but is most visible in Main Street. The street is lined with classic Australian architecture including battered corrugated iron structures, gothic bluestone churches, turn-of-the-century houses and the impressive red brick facade of the local Mechanics Institute. Many of these properties are protected under the heritage overlay however there is community concern that many other heritage worthy places are not protected.

Growth and development of the town will need to recognise the cultural and heritage value of these buildings, their curtilage and setting. They have a strong place value, contribute to the character of the town and provide tourism opportunities.

Strategy 21

Ensure new development appropriately responds to and celebrates post contact cultural heritage sites, places and values.

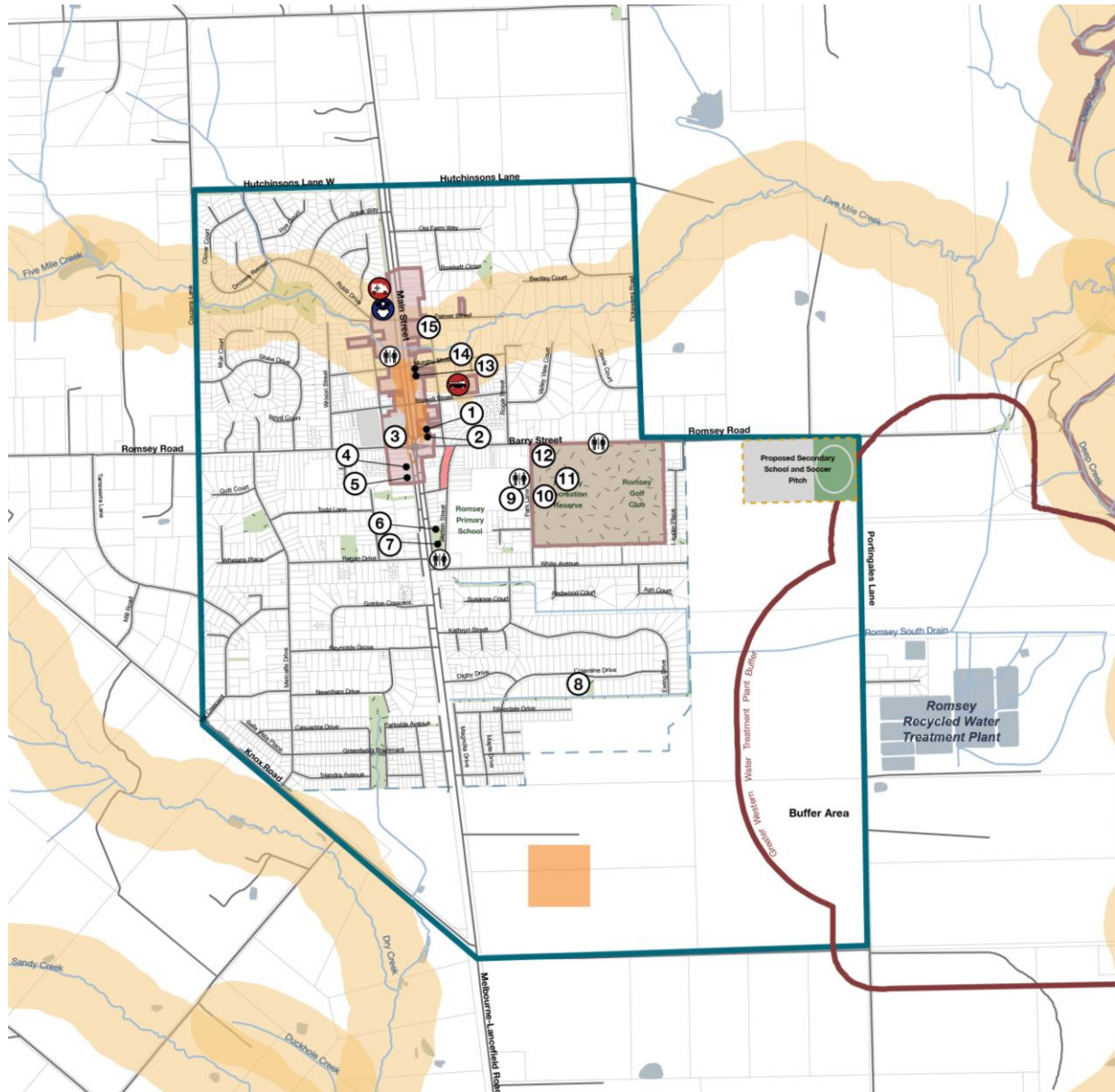
Actions

- Undertake a review of the heritage protections within Romsey and district as part of Council's ongoing heritage work including an assessment of places that are not currently protected.
- Renew awareness of the Avenue of Honour with signage and additional canopy trees.
- Explore opportunities to build on the heritage assets of the town for their intrinsic, cultural and tourism values.

Romsey's community infrastructure and culture is shown in **Figure 13**.



Figure 13: Romsey community infrastructure and culture



Actions

-  Enhance existing community housing and work with social housing providers to deliver additional housing
-  Establish new meeting spaces such as squares
-  Potential community facilities
-  Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage
-  Protect built heritage

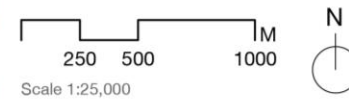
Current Romsey Community Facilities

- 1 Romsey Community Hub
- 2 Romsey Library
- 3 St Mary's Catholic Church
- 4 St Paul's Anglican Church
- 5 Macedon Ranges Masonic Centre
- 6 Romsey Kindergarden
- 7 Romsey Skatepark
- 8 Romsey Early Education Centre
- 9 Romsey Oval
- 10 Romsey Tennis Club
- 11 Romsey Bowling Club
- 12 Romsey Kennel Club
- 13 Romsey Mechanics Institute
- 14 Romsey Community Co-op
- 15 Romsey Eco-Therapy Park

-  Police Station
-  Fire Brigade
-  Ambulance Station

-  Existing Romsey Township Boundary
-  Proposed Protected Settlement Boundary
-  Waterways
-  Waterbodies
-  Open Spaces
-  Current Romsey Recycled Water Treatment Plant Buffer (Subject to EPA Licence Number 74268)

Romsey Community Infrastructure and Culture



9. SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

To create a more sustainable and climate resilient township.

9.1 Climate change

Romsey must be prepared for the effects of climate change and resilient to the challenges of increasingly hotter and drier conditions with heatwaves, drought and greater intensity of floods and storms. The community is concerned about these issues and has identified this as an important issue to be addressed in planning the future growth and development of Romsey.

Council's 2021 Environment Strategy supports these goals by promoting climate change action and renewable energy generation, working with traditional owners to understand and identify cultural heritage, incorporating water sensitive design treatments when designing roadworks (like grass swales and filtration ponds), and improving waterway health and restoring riparian corridors as bio-links as a means of improving ecosystem connectivity across the Shire.

The benefits of greening and retaining water in the urban environment to mitigate the effects of the UHI effect are increasingly understood as are their impacts on community wellbeing and liveability. Vegetation and water retention make an important contribution to regulating the local climate through both the provision of shade and evapotranspiration which reduces the surrounding air temperature.

Increasing the tree canopy cover in the town and minimising impervious surfaces will reduce urban heat and increase the town's amenity.

Areas of Romsey experience significant flood risk during heavy rainfall events. Flooding is an issue in areas adjacent to the Five Mile Creek corridor and south of White Avenue.

Strategy 20

Ensure new development increases the town's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Actions

- Work with Melbourne Water to identify areas at risk of flooding and ensure they are covered by suitable planning scheme controls to ensure the impact of flooding events on new development is minimised.
- Increase climate resilience of the town through reduced reliance on electricity and gas from the grid and support for renewable sources of energy through encouraging roof top solar, community projects.
- Work with Greater Western Water to explore opportunities for economic development through the reuse of their wastewater for irrigation or other industries that could use Class C water to relocate to the Romsey Employment Precinct and helping to create a circular economy.
- Continue to work with utility and service providers to ensure the town is adequately serviced and seek commitments for the timing of delivery upgrades.

Strategy 21

Reduce potable water usage and minimise the volume of urban run-off and pollution that reaches local creeks and waterways.

Actions

- Work with Greater Western Water to ensure there is adequate capacity within the Romsey Water Treatment Plant to facilitate the growth of Romsey and provide long term plans in place to deal with the impacts of climate change.
- Ensure new development meets new stormwater targets for harvesting (77%) and infiltration (22%) of impervious surface runoff as set out in the *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018*.
- Advocate to Greater Western Water to finalise the buffer area required around the Romsey Water Treatment Plant in conjunction with the EPA to ensure this outcome feeds into the final Romsey Structure Plan.
- Ensure the finalised buffer areas are incorporated into the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme via the appropriate planning overlays such as the BAO.
- Work with GWW to service growth to the south of the town through a dedicated sewerage pump station and rising main back to the RRWP. [determine if this requires land to be reserved]

9.2 Utilities

While Romsey has access to utilities including mains water, power, gas and telecommunications, there is a strong concern within the community about the quality of this infrastructure and its ability to handle additional population growth.

New developments provide the opportunity to ensure the most advanced technology is used to create, store and use utilities in both single dwelling development and at the subdivision level. This will improve environmental performance and reduce the burden on existing facilities.

Developments designed using ESD principles have the potential to produce their own power, to collect, store and re-use water efficiently, to have reduced heating and cooling demands and a reduced demand for fossil fuels. Integrated water management principles may also be applied to maintain safe and affordable water supply into the future. The benefits include a reduction in potable water use and supplementation of existing supply, and healthier waterways through a reduction in stormwater runoff.

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

The Romsey Recycled Water Plant (RRWP) treats sewage from Romsey and Lancefield and is planning a significant upgrade of the capacity and its workings to establish a buffer to residential development. This provides a number of opportunities for the town from wastewater reuse through to activities within the buffer.

Strategy 22

Transform the town's energy system and infrastructure to one focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Actions

- Investigate options for a micro-grid or solar farm to power the growth of the township located within the RRWP buffer.
- Install public electric vehicle charging stations in the Main Street and around the town centre.
- Continue to advocate to Powercor to upgrade the existing power supply to Romsey to ensure sufficient capacity for the existing town and provision for any additional growth.
- Ensure development adequately address bushfire protection and flood events in planning new infrastructure.
- Ensure new development is not connected to gas.
- Explore opportunities to increase the use of renewables and improve flexibility and reliability of power supply such as rooftop solar, micro-grids or a potential community energy system with Powercor.

Rooftop solar in Romsey today (source Nearmap)



Strategy 23

Ensure new development improves the sustainability of communities and reduces impacts on the environment.

Actions

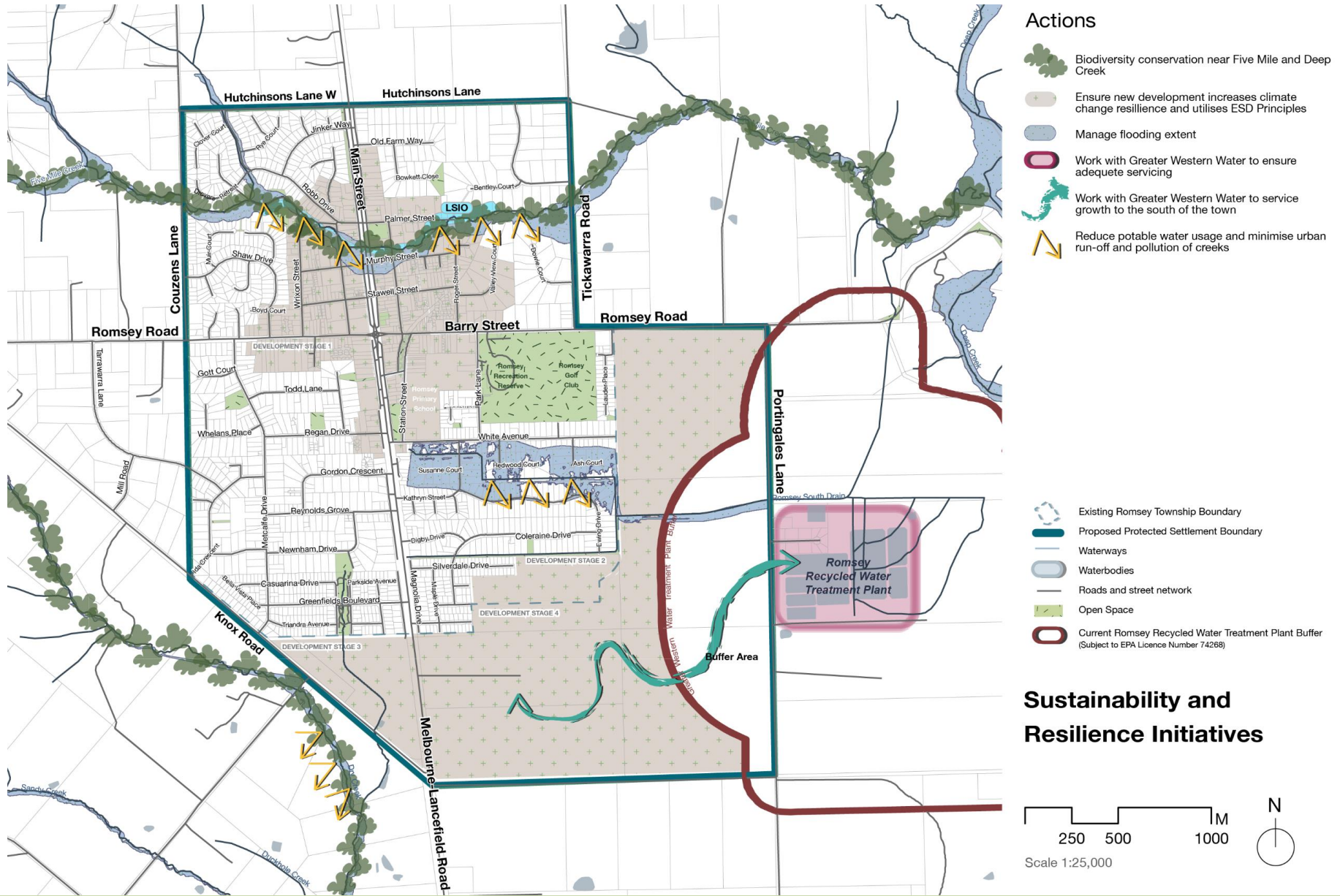
- Create a healthy urban forest across Romsey in both the public and private domain for shade and urban cooling.
- Ensure any new development near Five Mile and Deep Creek contributes to biodiversity conservation and improves waterway health and riparian habitat.
- Design new development with climate change in mind including orientation, provision of vegetation and shade canopy and thermal performance.
- Provide improved water sensitive urban design in all new development with best practice examples of integrated water management (IWM), stormwater management (SWM) and water reuse. (see MRSC Stormwater Guidelines and Policy)
- Work with CASBE to lobby State Government for higher sustainability standards in subdivision and building design.
- Require new developments to provide underground reticulated electricity and telecommunications services.

Romsey's sustainability and resilience initiatives are shown in **Figure 14**.



Victoria's biggest solar farm under construction amid debate over lost agricultural land
- ABC News

Figure 14: Romsey sustainability and resilience initiatives

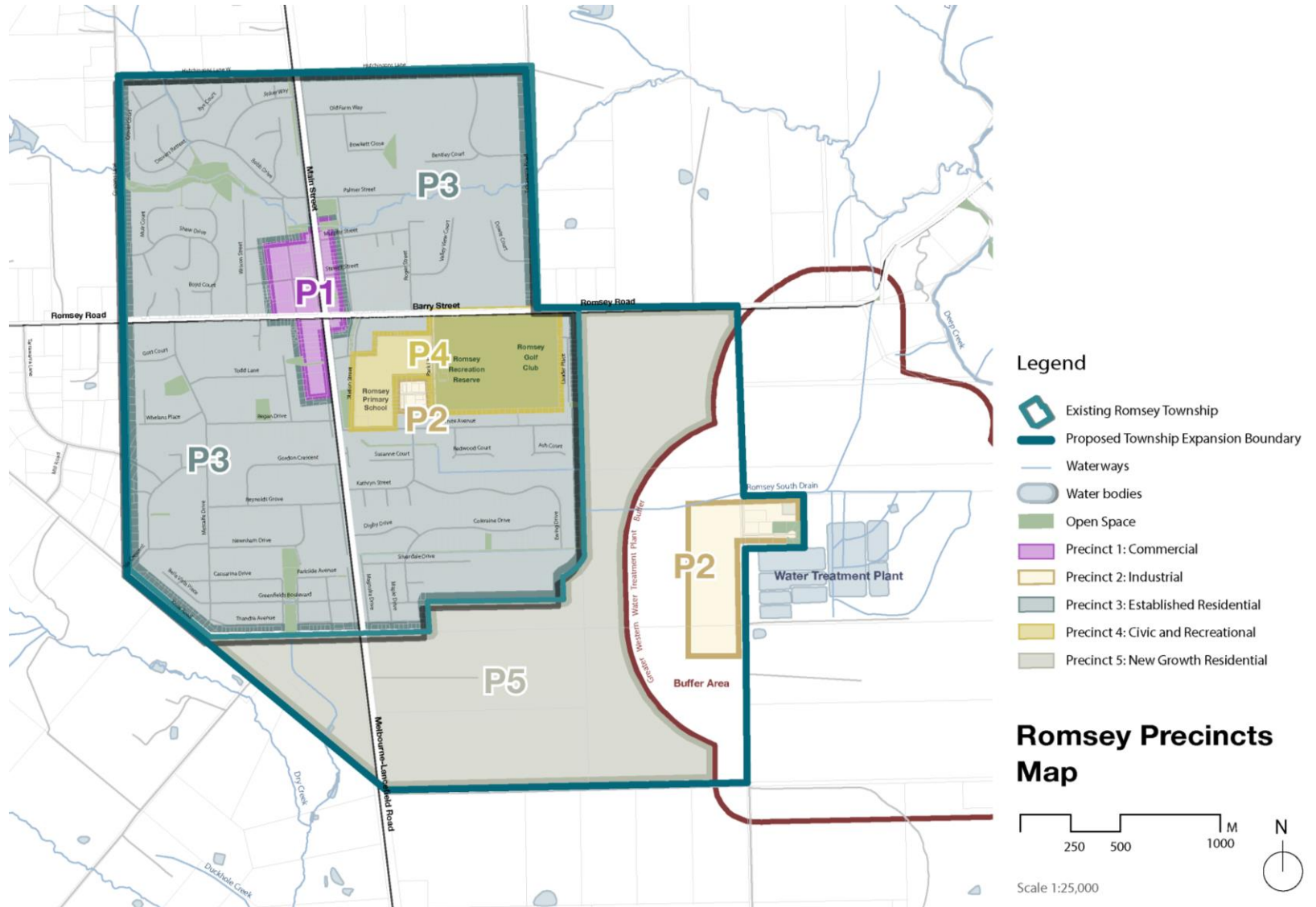


10. PRECINCT GUIDELINES

10.1 Guidelines

Five precincts have been identified for the preparation of guidelines to deliver high quality outcomes.

Figure 15: Romsey precincts



10.2 Precinct One: Town Centre

The Town Centre consists of the retail and commercial centre of Romsey centred around Main Street.



10.2.1 Town Centre character

Romsey's town centre has a low, highly dispersed, character of one and two storey buildings. Many of these are public or commercial buildings from the nineteenth century, built to the front boundary defining the street, and helping to characterize the town centre's clear heritage identity. The Heritage Overlay (HO) applies to Main Street and abutting properties, including some individual buildings, from just south of Barry Street northward to the ambulance station.

Other buildings within the centre from the twentieth century are often set back from the front boundary to accommodate car parking and access

requirements which has the effect of diluting the town centre's early built form character. Predominantly single storey, these buildings including many sheds and usually have a simple, unadorned and utilitarian expression in contrast to the more decorative nineteenth century buildings.

Built form considerations

Most recent development in Romsey is low scale, set back from the street and reduces the sense of place and spatial enclosure created by earlier buildings. Built form controls for heights and setbacks beyond those existing within the planning scheme do not appear to be sufficiently justified due to the current limited levels of development activity. Encouragement of new buildings of more than one storey, particularly within the town centre, will provide improved urban design outcomes through more efficient use of land, providing space for trees and landscape, and improved spatial definition of the very wide Main Street.

While the HO and the DPO over sites on Pohlman Street provide built form controls, there is little to guide development within the town centre.

Built form objectives

New built form within the town centre should complement and reinforce the important role and valued characteristics of Main Street including to:

- Provide a well-considered, contemporary design response to the character, form, architectural expression, and materiality of adjacent heritage buildings.

- Be low energy, low carbon and climate resilient.
- Be built to the front boundary to define, address and overlook the street space.
- Reinforce the prevailing fine-grain pattern of development.
- Ensure that uses at ground floors activate and add to the vitality of the street or adjoining public spaces with generous windows and doorways to front street facing facades.
- Encourage verandahs or awnings over footpaths to provide shelter and shade to pedestrians and reinforce the streetscape character.
- Encourage upper levels to be built to the front boundary to define and overlook the street space.
- Ensure car parking is located to the sides or rear of development and that driveways do not detract from the pedestrian environment.
- Ensure blank walls or service areas do not adversely impact on views from adjacent streets or sensitive interfaces.
- Encourage well designed buildings that are environmentally sustainable, energy efficient, and climate resilient.

10.2.2 Township entrances

The approaches to Romsey for some kilometres are lined with established evergreen trees from the south and deciduous trees from the north, creating an attractive and pleasant entry experience to the township. These trees and their grassed verges are a valued and key contributor to the townscape character, amenity and sustainability.



Future actions should seek to:

- Maintain the avenue trees, replacing senescing specimens and filling any gaps with supplementary trees, to ensure the long-term sustainability of these important assets.
- Establish new avenues of tall canopy trees along Barry Street and other major streets leading to the town centre.
- Maintain and reinforce wide grassed verges along the township approaches and within the town centre.
- Ensure new road and other civil works use materials and details that reinforce and are consistent with the township's heritage character.
- Audit and rationalise roadside signage, furniture and fittings along Main Street to reduce visual clutter, particularly within the town centre.
- Establish and extend safe and convenient shared paths along Main Street and Barry Street to

improve access for people using mobility aids, pedestrians, and cyclists.

- New residential areas which face approaching roads to consider the introduction of rear lanes to these properties, to reduce the visual impact of driveways and garages, and allow for significant tree planting to enhance the entries to the town.
- Art/entry signage, and landscaping should be combined and well designed to signal the entry to the town.

Apart from its north-east and north-west corners, the DDO has been applied to much of the balance of the already developed areas of the township controlling the heights and setbacks of new buildings.

10.3 Precinct Two: Employment Areas

There are currently two active industrial areas in Romsey located within the town around Mitchell Court off Park Lane and on Johnstone Street adjacent to Portingales Lane and the Romsey-Melbourne Road. These provide a range of employment uses with a variety of businesses including mechanics, auto repairs and gyms in Mitchell Court and a range of activities not suitable for residential areas such as the Romsey Waste Transfer Station on Johnstone Court.

A new employment area will be developed in Portingales Lane adjacent to Johnston Court. This area is located within the buffer of the Romsey Water Treatment Plant and is compatible with this use.



The development of the Romsey Employment Precinct will be guided by the *Design Guidelines for Industrial and Commercial Development in the Macedon Ranges*. Streets in the new employment precinct should be designed to include footpaths on both sides, as well as areas for the planting of street trees at relatively close centres, to provide significant tree canopies at maturity.

10.4 Precinct Three: Residential Areas

This precinct consists of the residentially zoned areas within the Romsey Township. These areas provide housing and a range of other community needs. Housing consists of almost exclusively detached housing which will increasingly mean that the housing needs of the community are not met as residents age and family structures change.

Design Guidelines for residential areas are included in **Appendix 2**.

10.4.1 Township character type

This precinct is located adjacent to the town centre of Romsey. The Outline Development Plan 2009 identified this area as the preferred location for medium density housing and that is supported by this structure plan. A range of single houses, dual occupancies, townhouses and multi-dwellings will be supported.



Character description

The township character type represents the early stages of development of Romsey. Developed in a strong grid pattern, the area contains dwellings from the earliest stages of development of the town to today.

The housing is largely detached, interspersed with newer medium density development. Dwellings are typically single storey using simple, modest building

forms. Some more recent unit development has occurred along with second dwellings being constructed to the rear of existing dwellings.

Managing the impacts of the resulting gun-barrel driveways can be challenging, which despite delivering additional housing stock, often remove “natural surveillance” of the street by buildings fronting the new driveway rather than the street. In addition, there is less permeable land for the management of stormwater runoff.

Older development is characterised by garages and carports being set back from the house and street allowing the front gardens to dominate the streetscape. Materials are often weatherboard while new dwellings are often brick or render which are much heavier in form than surrounding weatherboard dwellings.



Dwellings are set within gardens with a variety of forms and plant species. Fences are often in

keeping with the dwelling period and low in height which enables views to the houses and the vegetation to flow across from the private to the public domains.

The roads are sealed with gravel edges and kerbs providing an informal country town feel aided by the large grassy verges and often no footpath. Some formality is introduced to the streetscape through the plantings of avenue trees which coalesce the areas together.

Garages are usually new additions to these houses and can be poorly located along with sheds and carports intruding into the garden settings of the dwellings. Newer sealed driveways are also reducing the country town feel.

Preferred future character

The retention and restoration of older dwellings is encouraged with infill development occurring to the rear of properties. Dwellings feature low pitched roofs with eaves, constructed with light building materials and colour palettes that are sympathetic to existing weatherboard dwellings.

Consistent front setbacks maintain an intimate streetscape that is enhanced by an ornamental garden setting and canopy trees that soften the built form, while side setbacks maintain rhythm and spacing of dwellings along the streets.

Upper levels are setback from the ground floor to reduce visual bulk and allow overarching canopy trees within the public and private realms to remain the dominant visual feature of the streetscape.

This area will continue to evolve over time to contain a greater proportion of well-designed and site responsive medium density residential development. Development will appear as a single, detached dwelling of similar frontage width to the pattern of development in the street.

Wide road reserves, front verges and street trees are protected and maintained through single crossovers and provision of on-site parking.

10.4.2 Township Suburban character type

This precinct is located around Township areas reflecting a mix of older township development along with significant development from the 1980s to today. Incremental growth is anticipated in this character type consisting of dual occupancies, and multi-unit development around parks.



Due to the age of housing stock and generally large lot size, areas particularly in proximity to the town centre are likely to attract future redevelopment,

including replacement single dwelling development, subdivision and multi dwellings.

Character description

The Township Suburban represents the first stages of 'suburban' style development within the early township. This area consists of a largely modified grid with some cul-de-sac extensions often located at the edge of the township boundary. There is an informal township character to these areas due to the lack of kerbs and wide grassy verges and the lack of footpaths.

Architectural style varies and there are modern contemporary homes located next to older homes from various eras. Most dwellings are modest. Occasionally a set of units or a second dwelling has been constructed behind another. Large trees in backyards and in surrounding parks and reserves, frame long views to the treed landscape.

Despite the variety of architectural forms and materials found in Township Suburban, there are particular characteristics that define this character type. Spacing between buildings and the strong visual presence of trees and vegetation give strong character to these areas. Buildings are generally lower than the height of mature trees, and seldom exceed two storeys.

Fencing is varied with front fencing highly transparent and not more than 1.2m in height. Garages are generally located either behind dwellings, or setback from the front façade of dwellings.

Preferred character statement

Open and spacious streetscapes are enhanced through low profile built form, a consistent and generous front setback and lack of front fences that allows for views across the garden setting. Dwellings are sited informally and feature simple building forms with pitched roofs and eaves.

Buildings are no higher than two storeys with any upper-level set back from building frontages or incorporated into roof forms. Material palettes are simple and neutral, allowing the garden setting to dominate.

Separation between dwellings is maintained through generous side setbacks and allowance for landscaping. Garages and carports located behind dwelling frontages are recessive as viewed from the street. Driveway access is provided from a single crossover per lot, and garages and carports are located behind the front building line. Parks are activated through dwellings that front onto open spaces with low, permeable fencing and upper-level surveillance.

10.4.3 Garden Court

The Garden Court areas of Romsey encompass areas of Romsey in the north-west quadrant and on the east side of Main Street around Kathryn Street and Ewing Drive at the southern entry to the town. It also includes a number of areas under construction in the south and around Tarrawarra Lane.

Development potential is limited due to few vacant lots, title restrictions preventing further subdivision and the recent construction of dwellings.



Character description

Garden Court character areas represent the era from the 1960s when the cul-de-sac and curvilinear form of street layout became popular across

Victoria. In Romsey, these are largely cul-de-sacs off meandering roads.

While similar in many respects to the Township Suburban type, these areas have a greater formality due to the use of sealed roads with kerbs often barrier style, and roll over style in more recent developments. The north-west quadrant is located on rolling hills while the other areas are on flat land.

Footpaths are more common and often only on one side of the street. Verges tend to be wide but can also be narrower suburban style where there are footpaths. There is little street tree planting.

Dwellings in Garden Court areas are typically detached single and some double storey typically brick with predominantly low, hipped roof forms in a variety of materials. More recent developments are predominantly brick but can include materials such as timber and render with a variety of roof forms usually of tile.

Garages are integrated within the dwelling roof form and are often very prominent. Where garages are forward of the dwelling, they can dominate the streetscape and impact on the sense of address of the dwelling. Large sheds are often located on sites at the rear of lots, but this can result in large areas of hard paving with driveways.

Gardens are low level and often very simple using a mix of native and exotic plants. Front fences are not common while side fences are often solid. There is a sense of spaciousness due to the lack of front fences and the wide verges.

This character type could benefit from greater planting of street trees to enhance canopy cover.

Preferred character statement

Consistent dwelling setbacks and roof forms, no front fencing and setting back garages to reduce their visual dominance in the streetscape will preserve the sense of spaciousness that exists in the Garden Court precincts.

Planting of native and exotic vegetation in front gardens adds to the quality of the streetscape. Planting of large canopy street trees provide shading and cooling benefits and improves pedestrian environments.

Buildings are designed to reflect the context in form, proportioning and materials. Buildings do not attempt to replicate existing areas or historic architectural styles, instead reflecting a contemporary and unique response to the region's history and context, further adding to the local identity. Street patterns reflect the cul-de-sac pattern.

Development adjacent to Five Mile Creek front onto these spaces with low, permeable fencing and upper-level surveillance.

10.4.4 Bush Woodland

The Bush Woodland area of Romsey wraps around the Township areas in the north-east quadrant of the town.



Character description

The Bush Woodland area is a form of semi bush which unusually provides a transition to rural lifestyle and then the surrounding farm areas.

Dwellings are barely visible due to the large predominantly native vegetation. The 'ranch' or 'homestead' style designs, usually lie low across the block and often incorporate expansive verandahs. The building forms are simple and roof forms are low pitched. Large blocks enable dwellings to have large footprints but relative to the lot size, there is low site coverage and high amounts of site permeability.

Dwellings have generous front and side setbacks allowing large remnant trees and vegetation to

wrap around the dwellings and minimise their visibility from the street. Driveways are usually unsealed.

Materials are predominantly brick but occasionally timber or stone and newer dwellings often incorporate corrugated iron materials on walls. Garages are sometimes integrated into the dwelling form. The lack of kerbs and footpaths make a significant contribution to the area's informal character.



Preferred character statement

Dwellings will continue to be set in native vegetation garden settings with space provided around buildings for the planting of substantial trees. Limiting site coverage of hard surfaces and providing setbacks to the front, side and rear will ensure the vegetation frames the dwelling.

New development is low scale, one to two storey dwellings, using natural materials and colours that

reflect the natural surrounding environment and simple building forms to fit within the vegetated setting. Generous front and side setbacks provide for indigenous and native vegetation which embrace large canopy trees. Garages and carports are hidden from view, often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are integrated with the design of the dwelling.

Absent, low or transparent, front fencing contributes to the bush feel and informal transition between public and private realms.

Development adjacent to Five Mile Creek will front onto the creek where possible with low, permeable fencing and upper-level surveillance.

10.4.5 Semi-Rural

The Semi-Rural areas of Romsey encompasses the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) in the northwest corner of the town. The area is unsewered and the LDRZ requires lots to be a minimum of 4,000 square metres.

Development potential is limited to the subdivision of lots over 8,000 square metres which will prevent redevelopment such as multi-dwelling development and small lot subdivision. They provide lifestyle blocks enabling a range of semi-rural activities including horses and other recreational pursuits.



Character description

Dwellings often have large footprints and sit on sizeable acreage with low site coverage and high amounts of site permeability. They are often suburban in nature or lie low across the block and often ‘ranch’ or ‘homestead’ style incorporating expansive verandahs. The building forms are simple and roof forms are low pitched.

Dwellings have generous front and side setbacks allowing large trees and vast open lawns. Driveways may be landscaped and sometimes sealed with

entry gates. Dwellings sit below the existing tree canopy and are usually visible to the street. There are Materials are predominantly brick but occasionally timber and newer dwellings often incorporate corrugated iron materials on walls.

In these areas, few indigenous trees remain having been previously cleared for farming. Exotic gardens have been planted and there are often large canopy trees. The streetscapes feature an informal character with little roadside vegetation and are sealed with wide grassy verges.

Garages are integrated into the dwelling form. Sheds and outbuildings can be substantial and sometimes intrude into the foreground or the side off the driveway. Dwellings are to be sited within a generous garden setting allowing a strong landscape character to prevail.

Preferred character statement

Dwellings are sited on moderate to large lots that accommodate a mixture of species, and vast open lawns. New development provides generous front and side setbacks to allow for the retention and continued planting of large trees and open lawns.

New development reflects the low scale of dwellings with verandahs, using simple building forms and low-pitched roofs. Dwellings do not penetrate the existing tree canopy but are visible to the street. Dwellings utilise natural materials and colours that reflect the natural surrounding environment and vegetated landscape setting. The streetscapes feature an informal character which

embraces roadside vegetation and wide grassy verges.

Garages and carports are hidden from view, often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are integrated with the design of the dwelling. Open, post and wire or post and rail front fencing creates a low and permeable streetscape enabling vegetation to flow across the semi-rural landscape.

10.5 New residential growth areas

New residential growth areas are located in the expanded areas of the town to the south and east. Given that these areas do not have an existing residential character, their character will be created through their development over the next 20-30 years.

Design guidelines for these areas are included in **Appendix 2** and should be read in conjunction with Clause 56 and the Infrastructure Design Manual.

10.6 Community precinct

This precinct consists of the town's principal community assets of the Romsey Primary School and the Romsey Recreation Reserve and Golf Course.

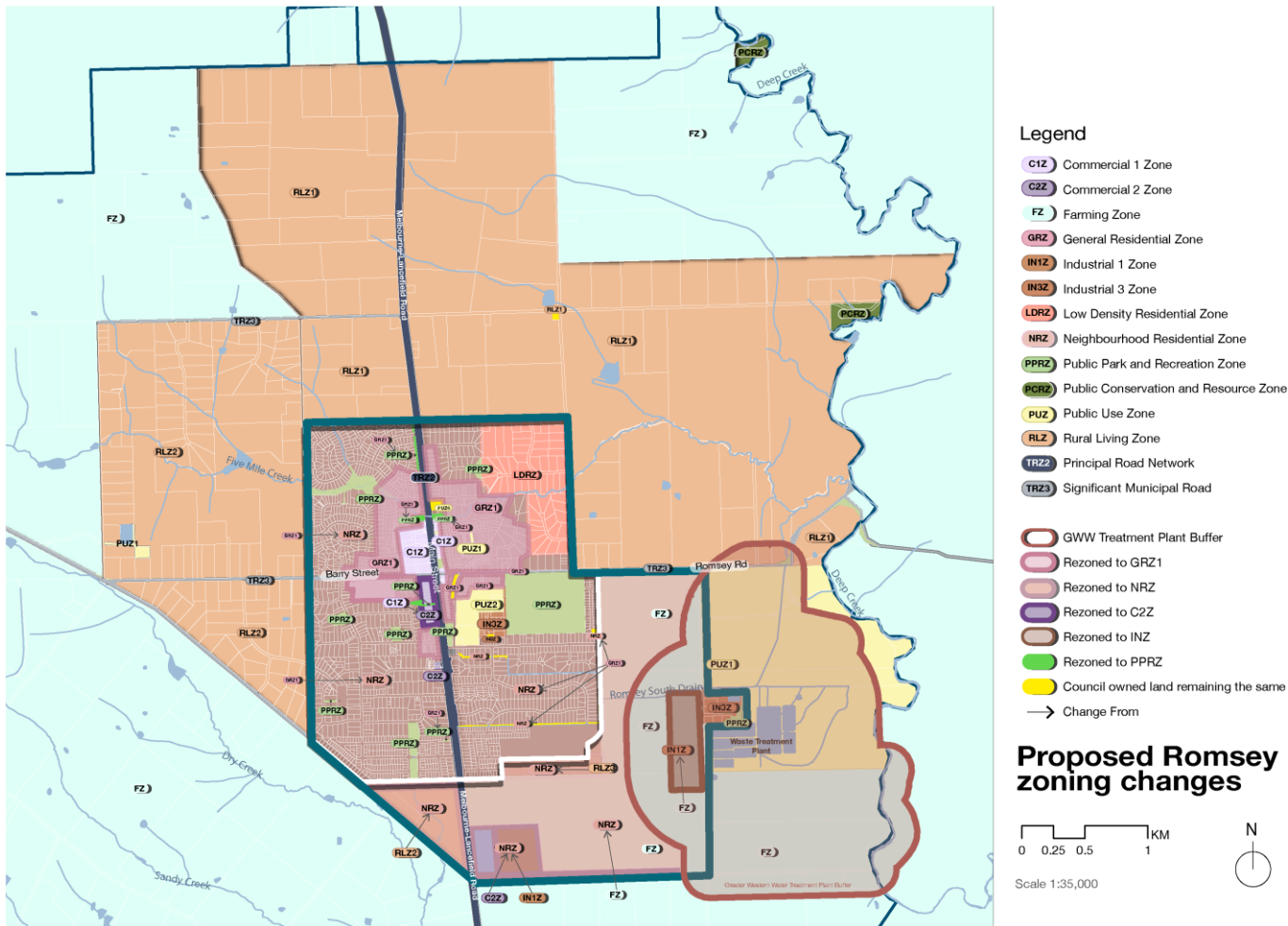


11. IMPLEMENTATION

11.1 Statutory planning

The implementation of the Structure Plan will involve the preparation of a planning scheme amendment to implement a range of actions outlined. The proposed long term changes to the zones are shown below. Changes to rezone FZ to NRZ will be undertaken over time in accordance with the Staging Plan at Figure 7.

Figure 16: Proposed Romsey zoning changes



12. NEXT STEPS

12.1 Community consultation

The draft Structure Plan will be presented to the community and other stakeholders for comment and feedback for period of six weeks. The findings of the consultation period will be carefully considered and will inform the final draft of the document and an implementation plan will be prepared.

12.2 Implementation Plan

An Implementation Plan will be prepared that builds on the strategies and actions highlighted throughout the structure plan to provide a framework for delivering the vision for Romsey. The Implementation Plan will be used as a guide to identify Council's role, responsibilities and priority for each recommended action.

12.3 Council's role

Macedon Ranges Shire Council will play different roles in the implementation of the Romsey Structure Plan project. These will vary between the roles of Planner, Provider, Advocate, Partner/ Facilitator, Educator and Regulator. A description of these various roles is provided below.

Planner

Develop detailed plans and drawings for construction, and in relation to its urban and social planning responsibilities.

Advocate

Represent community needs and interests to Federal and State Governments and the private sector for reform and funding.

Partner / Facilitator

Working closely with developers, landowners, residents and businesses to facilitate the outcomes in the Structure Plan.

Educator

Provide information to businesses, residents and interest groups.

Regulator

Ensure that built form, infrastructure and other elements of the environment meet town planning, building, transport and public health regulations and expectations.

12.4 Implementation

Implementation will involve seeking Council's formal adoption of the plan. This will enable commencement of the implementation of the plan. This will include a planning scheme amendment process to implement key policy and direction into the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme. Other non-statutory actions will commence subject to Council budget cycles.

Appendix 1: Investigation areas criteria and assessment

Table 1 provides an assessment of the seven investigation areas against the ten criteria. It highlights that the top three investigation areas are numbers 1, 2 and 3. These areas perform the best against the ten criteria.

Based on this assessment these areas were determined to form the basis for the development of the structure plan. Investigation areas 6 and 7 performed poorly against the criteria and should be removed from any discussion about expansion opportunities. Areas 4 and 5 partially meet criteria for most categories, however have significant challenges that could make expansion into these areas more difficult.

Table 1: Investigation area assessment criteria scoring

Criteria	Investigation Area							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	Consistency with existing strategic directions and policies	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
2	Whether land adjoins the existing town boundary	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
3	Minimising land fragmentation and maximising developable land	1	1	1	0	0.5	0	0
4	Capacity to deliver walkable access to shops, and services, and emphasise the town centre	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0
5	Impact of barriers to access	1	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0
6	Impact on the visual and environmental setting of the township	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0
7	Reduce the likelihood of environmental hazards	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0
8	Ability to access utility services	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0
9	Maintain a rural break between settlements	1	0.5	1	1	0.5	0	0
10	Minimising impact on high quality agricultural land	1	1	1	0.5	0.5	0	1
Total		9	8.5	7.5	6	4	1.5	2

Appendix 2: Design guidelines

Under Separate Cover