

21.05 OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

21.05-1 NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Context

The Shire's natural resource base is strong. There are large areas of agriculturally productive land, extensive areas are under forest and there is a substantial opportunity to increase timber production both in plantations and through on farm planting. The Shire has considerable stone and gravel resources, many of which have already been developed.

Natural resources management is an essential component in the overall planning of the Shire. Some of the historical land management practices associated with urban and agricultural land use have led to the degradation of the natural resource base. Soil erosion, particularly sheet and gully erosion has occurred due to the combined effects of clearing, overgrazing, and the elimination of native pastures. Areas such as the Tallarook Ranges and some fringe areas of townships including Seymour and Broadford have potential erosion management issues that need to be addressed through long term sustainable land management practices.

The clearing of trees and other native vegetation species, particularly on the steeper sedimentary hills, has increased groundwater recharge, resulting in a rising saline watertable and saline discharge areas. Land Capability mapping of the Shire has identified that all land north of the Divide could be subject to the risk of salinity if indiscriminate removal of native vegetation is undertaken. Effluent disposal, urban stormwater runoff, excessive use of agricultural chemicals and unsustainable grazing practices have added to the deterioration of water quality in the streams of the Shire.

The Shire contains important environmental features such as Mt Piper, roadside vegetation corridors and public land areas. These need to be protected and managed for their flora and fauna habitat and for biodiversity. There are also a significant number of places of cultural heritage, e.g. Kilmore - Victoria's oldest inland town. These sites also need to be managed so as to ensure their preservation.

Residential growth, where it has been associated with inadequate attention to effluent disposal and the maintenance of water quality, has impacted on the environment. The demand for rural residential allotments has often impacted on agricultural production through poor land management practices and the incompatibility of such uses with some agricultural activities. Maintenance of adequate environmental stream flows has also been affected by the number of on stream storages constructed.

The catchments of the various rivers and streams within the municipality include areas of flood prone land, where flooding has historically caused substantial damage to the natural and built environment. Floods are naturally occurring events and the inherent functions of the floodplains to convey and store floodwater should be recognised and preserved to minimise the deterioration of environmental values, the long term flood risk to floodplain production, assets and communities.

Flooding imposes substantial costs on individuals and the community. While significant costs are incurred by direct damage to public and private property, indirect costs to the community such as loss of productivity, displacement of residents, closure of roads, trauma and ill health are also significant. Notwithstanding these significant impacts, natural flooding of floodplains and their associated wetlands provide essential breeding habitats for bird and aquatic species, and promotes the health of rivers and floodplains.

It is evident that the impact of floods is increasing due to land use and vegetation changes. In particular:

- Raised earthworks (including but not limited to roadworks, levees and farm channels) have reduced natural flood storage, obstructed and/or redistributed flood flows, and increased flow velocities and levels
- Urban expansion has occurred in floodplains, reducing flood storage, obstructing flood flows and increasing the risk to life, health and safety to occupants of the floodplain

Sound floodplain management in the municipality is the critical means by which the economic, social and environmental risks associated with floodplain use and development can be minimised. This level of management is to be provided by a “local floodplain development plan (LFDP)” which has been prepared to provide a performance-based approach for decision making that reflect local issues and best practice in floodplain management. This LFDP has been prepared for the following precinct:

- Mitchell Local Floodplain Development Plan, Goulburn River Precinct, September 2003

This local floodplain development plan is incorporated into the scheme at Clause 81.

Objectives

- To protect and manage the natural attributes and features of the Shire, including the foothills and ranges, the river catchments, particularly the Goulburn River and its tributaries, and the variety of flora, fauna and forested areas of the Shire.
- To assist in the sustainable and productive use of land for agriculture, forestry and stone and gravel extraction.
- To improve the environmental performance and management of the Shire’s ecology and enhance the quality of the rural and urban landscapes.
- To protect places of cultural heritage and support preservation of those sites threatened by development or neglect.

Strategies

Rural Land

- Encourage land uses and developments which are environmentally and ecologically sustainable through the diversification of the agricultural base and the introduction of more intensive types of agricultural uses or other forms of farming practices that better use the land and its capabilities.
- Support and develop the existing timber industry (plantations and agro forestry, harvesting and processing).
- Diversify the economic base of the rural areas by attracting further investment, generating new employment opportunities and strengthening the role and identity of the major towns as service centres.
- Ensure that all development within the rural areas is assessed utilising the Shire’s Land Capability Mapping Information.
- Protect farming and other agricultural practises from the encroachment of urban growth.
- Manage land use so as to protect the Shire’s extractive industry resources.
- Protect areas and sites of high environmental value.
- Identify sites with cultural heritage values and ensure supporting information for all sites is contained on Shire’s Heritage Database.
- Obtain net environmental benefits (such as increased tree planting, fencing of environmentally sensitive areas, erosion control, control of pest animals and weeds, stormwater management and creation of linked environmental corridors/public reserves) when approving subdivision and/or development of rural land.

Urban Development

- Discourage the development of rural residential development within established agricultural areas.
- Retain productive land for agricultural purposes.
- Protect the cultural, built and natural environment.
- Reduce and better manage runoff, soil degradation, saline discharges or effluent release into watercourses.
- Develop and implement an effluent disposal strategy for unserviced residential areas of the Shire.
- Identify sites with cultural heritage values and ensure supporting information for all sites is contained on Shire's Heritage Database.
- Develop drainage and stormwater management programs for urban areas within the Shire.
- Look for opportunities to enhance environmental assets in urban areas, e.g. replanting of creek reserves and additional planting in road reserves.

Land Management

- Protect native vegetation and fauna.
- Ensure the long term management of the natural resources base.
- Manage the natural resources base to improve water quality, minimise damage to the Shire's water catchments and watercourses and reduce soil erosion, the loss of native vegetation, and the impacts associated with salinity by encouraging better land management practices.
- Continue to resource the Shire's 10 Year Weed Control Program.
- Develop a policy in collaboration with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Catchment Management Authorities and other councils on the Goulburn River which is classed as a Heritage River.

Strategy Implementation

To assist in the protection and conservation of the natural resources base and the environment, a number of measures have been introduced into the Planning Scheme, as a local policy or through the introduction of a relevant zone or overlay.

Planning Scheme Provisions

A range of zones and overlays have been applied to implement these strategies including:

- Rural Zone with a minimum lot size linked to the land capability of areas – generally 80ha minimum lot size in the former Seymour Shire area and 40ha in the remaining areas
- Environmental Rural Zone applied to a limited area east of Broadford associated with the Mt Hickey area in the Tallarook Ranges.
- Special Use Zone Extractive Industry applied to areas of major existing and planned extractive industry areas.
- Environmental Significance Overlay applied to:
 - Declared catchment of Lake Eppalock.
 - Major watercourses:
 - The Sunday Creek declared catchment
 - Mt Piper and surrounds

- Vegetation Protection Overlay applied to:
 - Major roadside vegetation corridors.
 - Major freeway vegetation corridors.
- Significant Landscape Overlay applied to:
 - Monument Hill.
 - Tallarook Ranges.
 - Mt Disappointment.
- Heritage Overlay applied to heritage places including a number of heritage precincts.
- Erosion Management Overlay applied to extensive areas of the Shire based on the Centre for Land Protection Research Land Capability Mapping.
- Salinity Management Overlay applied to extensive areas of the Shire based on the Land Capability Mapping.
- Urban Floodway Zone, Floodway Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay applied to areas identified as subject to flooding by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority. The incorporated document *Mitchell Local Floodplain Development Plan, Precinct of Goulburn River, September 2003* will assist in the administration of flood controls through the zone and overlays.

A range of Local Policies have also been applied to assist the implementation of these strategies including:

- Local Policy (22.01-1) to provide a basis for decision making in rural areas. This Policy references a number of relevant reports.
- Local Policy (22.03-01) to control effluent disposal treatment and water quality. This Policy requires proposals to demonstrate adequate methods to dispose of effluent and protect water quality.
- Local Policies (22.03-2, 22.03-4 & 22.03-8). These policies seek to ensure that development proposals in erosion risk areas, on steep slopes, hilltops and ridgelines addresses these issues associated with these constraints.
- Local Policy (22.03-05). Provide that the Shire's Land Capability Assessment is taken into account as a basis for preparing development proposals.
- Local Policies (22.03-6 and 22.03-7) refer to the Mt William Archaeological Area and the surrounds of the Puckapunyal Military Base. as areas of significance within the Shire and provide for their appropriate protection.

Additional Avenues of Implementation

In addition to the provisions of the planning scheme, other actions, policies, strategies and legislative means will be used concurrently in the decision making process to assist Councils strategies. These include:

- Supporting the key elements of the relevant sections of the Goulburn-Broken, Port Phillip and North Central regional catchment strategies.
- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has a number of guidelines and standards that apply to applications for land uses and development. These will be applied as relevant.
- The Shire has prepared an Environment Strategy which will be supported through the land use planning process.
- Heritage studies have previously been prepared for a number of areas within the Shire. These studies include the Kilmore Heritage Study 1982, as well as three more recent documents, prepared for the Mitchell Shire; the Mitchell Shire Heritage Assets, 1996 and the Mitchell Shire Planning Scheme review - Heritage Assessment, 1996, and a report on Site 17, 1997. Further work is being undertaken to complete an

overall Heritage Study of the Shire which integrates this work and provides the Shire with a complete Heritage Analysis for inclusion in the Planning Scheme.

- The Country Fire Authority (CFA) has completed a mapping exercise of the Shire, detailing the areas considered to have potential for fire risk. This mapping has only been completed in draft form and upon its formalisation the information will be included in the scheme.
- The Centre for Land Protection Research Land Capability Assessment for the Mitchell Shire will be applied in the consideration of all proposals for land use and new development.
- Council's Land Management Rebate Scheme provides a rate rebate for works undertaken by landowners to address serious land degradation and environmental issues within the municipality, such as pest plants and animals, salinity, erosion and a loss of native flora and fauna.
- The employment of an Environment Officer to oversee environmental protection work including the implementation of a 10 year weed control program.
- Council has undertaken various environmental education initiatives, including the production of a new landholder kit and a Mitchell Shire Land Management information directory.

21.05-2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Context

The Shire has a diverse employment base, generally without being reliant or dependent upon a single employer or industrial sector. The employment sector includes retail and community services in each of the towns, agriculture and the service sector. Manufacturing ranges from home based industries in some of the smaller centres to the larger manufacturing and processing establishments in Broadford, Seymour and Kilmore. The economic contributions of the agricultural base, including the various ancillary and service industries are significant.

Because of the extensive commuting to employment outside of the Shire the workforce figures do not necessarily reflect the employment structure of the Shire. The 1996 census indicates that the largest employment sectors in Mitchell Shire include Manufacturing (1,588 Employees – 15.58% of workforce) and Retailing (1,344 Employees – 13.19% of workforce). Public administration and defence employs 1,250 people or 12.27% of the workforce; this is very high in comparison to the rest of Victoria which has just over 5%. The large number of people employed in this sector relates to the presence of the Puckapunyal military base. Other important employment sectors include health, education, wholesale, transport/ construction, agriculture and property.

While agriculture only employs 564 people or 5.53% of employed persons, it is still an important production industry. Agriculture associated with rural residential development is also becoming increasingly important, with the Seymour Alternative Farming Exposition showing the potential growth in this type of production. Agriculture is dominated by cattle and sheep grazing activities within the Shire. Grape production while only having a relatively small gross value is a significant crop because it is associated with the wine industry which has significant levels of value adding and tourism potential. It should be noted that Land Capability Mapping indicates that most of the Shire however does not have significant areas of high quality agricultural land. Two areas which are an exception to this pattern are the floodplain land along the Goulburn River at Seymour and land south of Wallan.

The forest industry is becoming increasingly important employment sector in the Shire. The timber and the related industries employ in excess of 300 persons in the Shire. The expansion of this industry is supported. Extractive industry is also an important economic and employment sector for the Shire with a number of quarries in operation, including Pioneer and Galli quarries near Kilmore, and a potential new quarry on the border with Whittlesea City.

Tourism generates employment through visitor spending and supports the local economy. In addition to the Shire's heritage assets, potential exists to promote and market the natural beauty of the Shire for recreational and leisure activities, scenic routes and events and festivals. The Shire has a number of unused railway lines that have the potential to be transformed into recreational 'rail-trails'. A long term strategy is to link these lines as part of an overall recreational network and to promote and protect the historical, architectural and landscape features throughout the Shire as a valuable tourist resource. The Goulburn River is one of Victoria's most important and scenic rivers. There is potential for the development of various parks and other areas of public land along the river as a further tourist resource.

Some interest has recently been expressed in locating both offensive industries and poultry farms in the Shire. This is as a consequence of continued pressure on these industries from urban expansion in Melbourne. Care needs to be taken in considering the approval of these industries. Often the employment/economic benefits to the local area are low, whilst the off-site amenity impacts can be significant.

The Shire has recently completed an Economic Development Strategy. The Shire's land use planning decisions will support this strategy.

Objectives

To focus on supporting the growth of the local economy and providing opportunities for local job creation.

To support and attract industrial and commercial activities which will contribute to the overall well being of the Shire and its residents.

To strengthen the Shire as an independent and fully functioning community.

To lobby for the retention of services, such as banks, and to attract new private and public sector service providers, such as medical specialists and financial advisory services.

To lobby for the improvement of local infrastructure, including telecommunications, water supply, sewerage, power and local roads.

Strategies

Employment

- Broaden the economic base by assisting and encouraging industries related to the Shire's environment natural resource base, the capacity of the local workforce and the servicing of the resident workforce.
- Support and develop the tourism industry by encouraging new uses that promote or assist local tourist attractions and visitation.
- Support the implementation program of the Planning Strategy detailed in Mitchell Shire Economic Development Planning Strategy.
- Support agriculture as a major contributor to the Shire's economy
- Continue to support and encourage the diversification and intensification of agricultural land uses which use the resource base in a sustainable manner.

Land Supply

- Encourage the consolidation of retail and commercial establishments as means of enhancing the 'town centres' within each community.
- Delineate areas within the Shire where specific industrial or employment sectors will be encouraged to locate, so as to support infrastructure capabilities, available workforce requirements and suitable land.
- Encourage, promote and direct industrial and manufacturing development to establish within Seymour, Kilmore and Broadford based on their proximity to available resources, availability and suitability of land, the existing labour force, provision of infrastructure and services and the location of these centres along the Hume Freeway corridor.
- Provide convenient and safe transport access to serviced and zoned industrial and commercial land.
- Discourage the location of industry in rural areas with exceptions only for those rural based industries that must by their nature be located within or close to the source of primary production.

Development Opportunities

Industrial

- Protect existing industrial zones from encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Introduce an Industrial Development Code to ensure a consistent and acceptable standard of development that will attract further industries and employers to the area and protect the amenity of each town.
- Examine the requirements for industries needing larger buffer areas (including noxious industries).

Retail / Commercial

- Continue to plan and coordinate existing retail and commercial areas of the towns in the Shire to reduce escape expenditure and generate greater self sufficiency.
- Protect the character of the main streets of the towns as important components in attracting both retailers and consumers to the towns.
- Improve the attractiveness of towns by the enhancement of their appearance, traffic circulation, urban design and parking.

Strategy Implementation

To assist in the promotion and identification of economic opportunities a number of measures have been introduced into the Planning Scheme as a local policy or through the introduction of a relevant zone or overlay.

Planning Scheme Provisions

A range of zones and overlays have been applied in the major towns of Seymour, Kilmore, Broadford and Wallan to implement these strategies including:

- Mixed Use, Industrial 1 and 3 zones and Business 1, 2 and 4 zones.
- The Township Zone, which provides for limited commercial and industrial development, has been applied to the smaller townships in the Shire.

The Special Use Zone has been applied to operating extractive industries.

A range of Local Policies have also been applied to assist the implementation of these strategies including:

- Local Policy (22.05-01) seeks to facilitate and promote agricultural production, associated industry and diversification of agricultural production.
- Local Policy (22.05-02) seeks to establish long term industrial expansion in appropriate areas within nominated towns and to improve existing industrial areas.
- Local Policy (22.05-03) provides for the promotion and improvement of the presentation of towns and associated entrances and streetscapes.

Additional Avenues of Implementation

To assist in the role of administering the planning scheme, other actions and initiatives will be used or have already been implemented to pursue Council planning strategies including:

- Employment of a Council Economic Development Officer.
- Establishment of an Economic Development Committee consisting of Council, key business and community representatives.
- Tourism strategy adopted by Council.
- Implementation of an Economic Development Strategy

21.05-3 SETTLEMENT

Context

Population Growth Rates

Mitchell Shire has had an annual population growth rate of approximately 3% to 5% over the past 10 years, with the population growth in rural areas and small towns with less than 200 people approaching a rate closer to 5%. This rate of growth in the non-urban areas highlights the increased pressure to provide rural residential allotments. The Department of Infrastructure have projected the population of Mitchell Shire to reach approximately 35,000 by the year 2011 (Victoria in Future, 1996). A more recent review of population forecasts by the Department based on 1996 Census data, indicates a more moderate growth rate between 1.37% and 1.86% (Victoria in Future). These growth rates however are also affected by the location and distance of areas within the Shire to the metropolitan growth corridors of Hume and Merri Creek. Areas in the south of the Shire will continue to experience more residential development pressure and higher growth rates than those areas to the north of the Divide, partly due to easier and shorter commuter access to metropolitan Melbourne.

Population growth has been significant in the centres south of Broadford. In the 1991-1996 period, growth had been focussed in Wallan and Wandong-Heathcote Junction. From the beginning of 2000, however, there has been significant activity in Kilmore as well as the 2 southern townships.

Population growth has occurred throughout the southern areas of the Shire, whilst the northern part of the Shire has maintained the same population numbers. In addition to the proximity to Melbourne, the southern and central portion of the Shire is an attractive living environment due the cost of land, the availability of rural residential allotments and the portrayed lifestyle associated with the area.

In 1996 when the first MSS was prepared, the research showed a stronger demand for low density residential and rural residential compared to residential blocks. Recent feedback from developers, however, has revealed a strong demand for residential blocks of all sizes up to 2000m². It is understood the Federal Government's First Home Buyers' Grant has fuelled some of this demand, particularly in the south.

Settlement Strategy

The overall settlement strategy for the Mitchell Shire is to support continuing residential growth based on the areas which can be serviced with reticulated water and sewer and which are well served by the road infrastructure and planned community services and facilities. This will mean that residential growth will continue to be focussed on the traditional towns of Seymour, Kilmore, Broadford and Wallan and on the settlements of Wandong-Heathcote Junction and a new privately serviced residential area to the west of Beveridge. All these towns and settlements lie within the 'Hume Growth Corridor' served by the Hume Freeway and the national rail corridor. The strategy provides for the retention of the strong rural character and landscape values found in and around each of the townships and for the accommodation of some additional residential growth in the settlements of Pyalong, Tallarook, Tooborac and Beveridge within the physical capacity of these unsewered areas.

Council also acknowledges the strong demand for low density and rural residential allotments. Further research is needed to prepare a detailed inventory of those areas of the shire that are appropriate for rural residential development. Additional comments on this issue can be found in the notes on individual towns.

Traditionally the major towns for urban growth in the Shire have been Seymour, Kilmore and Broadford. Over the last two decades Wallan and the rural residential settlement of

Wandong-Heathcote Junction have developed considerably with their capacity to offer attractive rural lifestyle housing locations in close proximity to Melbourne. Rural areas generally in the southern part of the Shire have also proved very attractive for hobby farm and rural living. Limited development has also occurred in small traditional towns like Pyalong and Tooborac.

Take up rates for the recently constructed rural residential estate west of Wandong and for the Hidden Valley estate at Wallan have been strong. This reflects the trend in other locations around the fringe of Melbourne for strong interest in attractive rural residential blocks with good access to Melbourne and the increasing popularity of “planned communities” often focussed on golf courses, waterways, etc.

The increasing importance of development opportunities along the Corridor justifies further study of and planning for growth in this area. Its potential significance extends beyond Mitchell Shire boundaries and requires a regional response supported by State Government. The importance of growth on the north west sector of Melbourne’s urban fringe is not fully appreciated and the *Hume Corridor - Mitchell Shire: Strategic Development Issues - Non-urban and Urban Development Strategies* (HCGS) will help to highlight the issues that Mitchell (and other adjoining local government areas) and the State Government will need to deal with over the next few years. The HCGS is expected to be released for public discussion in 2002. This is also the expected date for the first release of the draft Melbourne Metropolitan Study by the State government.

Some of the relevant issues for the corridor include:

- Expected impacts following the construction of the Hume Freeway Craigieburn Bypass
- Consequences of the possible construction of a new water main from Craigieburn to service the Beveridge Golf Course Residential development
- What scale of development, if any, is allowed between the existing urban centres of Craigieburn, Mt Ridley, Kal Kallo, Beveridge and Wallan
- The identification of environmental assets including the watercourses that form part of the head waters of the Merri Creek

Most towns within the Shire have sufficient residential zoned land based on existing zoning, to exceed the 10 to 15 year residential land supply established as a bench mark by the Department of Infrastructure. In fact overall Shire supply of residential land based on current growth rates would be sufficient for up to 60 to 70 years. The exception to this is the Wallan township where continued strong growth of the residential areas justifies the rezoning of 2 areas (shown on the structure plan) which will create another 500-700 lots.

Based on this data it would be anticipated that no additional residential rezoning requests would be received outside the nominated growth boundaries established in the Structure Plans in the short to medium term for Kilmore, Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Broadford and Seymour. It is important however for the Shire to monitor this situation and ensure that continuing residential demand in the south of the Shire is adequately catered for by suitably located zoned land.

A clear 'urban edge' for each town has been provided for and is shown in the structure plans prepared for each town and by the use of the Rural zone zoning around each town. This pattern of development is designed to reinforce the rural setting and character of each town and facilitate a co-ordinated provision of infrastructure services and community facilities within the town boundaries. Development Plans are included within the planning scheme for new residential areas in Kilmore, Wallan and west of Beveridge. These Plans could also include buffer mechanisms through the use of parkland and other public land to further reinforce the urban and rural character of the towns. In these instances, together with the residential zonings in other towns, provision has been made for a staged residential front linked to the progressive extension of services and infrastructure. The Town Structure Plans indicate areas zoned for future residential development. The development of these areas is dependent on the staged sequential extension of the physical services, roads and supporting community facilities. Only where proposals are accompanied by a fully costed extension of these services will Council support a 'leap frog' approval to the expansion of residential areas within the zoned township area.

The older established towns of Seymour, Kilmore and Broadford have traditionally been the major population centres. From the early 1980s Kilmore and Broadford, given their proximity to Melbourne, experienced strong demand for new residential development growth. From the mid 1980's onwards, the major growth has taken place in the two newer townships of Wallan and Wandong-Heathcote Junction – both of which tripled their size in the period 1981-1996 so that now Wallan is after Seymour the second biggest town in the Shire. At the same time there was a substantial increase in the number of people living in the rural areas, particularly in the southern areas of the Shire.

The following table sets out the numbers of building approvals issued for the various townships between 1/7/96 – 30/6/2001

Beveridge	60
Wallan	630
Wandong	85
Kilmore	330
Broadford	160
Seymour	170
TOTAL	1435

This contrasts with the 643 approvals issued during 1991-1996.

In the previous Municipal Strategic Statement (prepared 1996), it was estimated that there were 9850 future potential residential lots and 3230 low density lots, however, Council now estimates that the true figures were approximately 60% of these totals. During the period 1996 – 2001, approximately 1300 allotments were developed and released onto the market.

These population growth rates together with the emerging roles of various centres and the realisation of the advantages of the Shire's location have forged a substantial new settlement strategy which forms an integral part of the Municipal Strategic Statement. The settlement strategy builds on the existing 'traditional' towns of Seymour, Kilmore and Broadford, embraces the 'new' towns of Wallan and Wandong-Heathcote Junction and incorporates the development of Beveridge based on the approved residential/golf course development west of the Hume Freeway and the small settlement at Beveridge. All these towns and settlements are seen as performing complementary roles within an overall strategy. The overall strategy is to utilise the Shire's locational advantage of being accessible to the metropolitan area via road and rail and to progressively build the population base of each of the major towns and settlements.

By establishing staged areas for development and pursuing a number of distinct roles or themes for each of the major urban areas, Council, the community, servicing authorities and the development industry will have a clearer idea and capacity to plan and develop relevant physical infrastructure, community services and facilities, commercial development and employment areas. Structuring the community's capacity to finance the necessary infrastructure will be a major task for Council. In the short term a Local Policy has been developed and placed into the Scheme which addresses the issue of residential infrastructure requirements (See Local Policy 22.06-1). In the longer term Council acknowledges the need to establish an equitable Development Contributions Plan which takes into account the different growth and development rates which occur from the south to the north of the Shire.

The key features of a number of urban areas as outlined below also provides the basis for respective town strategies in this section of the MSS.

The key features of Seymour are:

- An integrated settlement with a broad range of facilities and services.
- A balanced social and economic profile with a high proportion of lower income residents.
- A broad range of recreational and tourist uses located within and near to the township.
- A concentrated commercial centre with some dispersed nodes along the major approach routes.
- Commercial facilities which benefit from the highway associated locations, have created an extended ribbon - form of development along key arterials.
- A broad range of residential environments have been established including those which offer a strong relationship with open space - recreation facilities.
- Dispersed residential precincts with good pedestrian accessibility to the town centre and other community facilities.
- A strong relationship between the transport interchange location and the commercial centre facilities.
- A broad based economy including some local manufacturing, defence force related employment and agricultural services.
- Access to airport facilities at Mangalore.
- A variable range of housing stock including areas potentially suitable for redevelopment, especially in the public housing rental accommodation sector.
- A need for continued investment in civic facilities following recent projects to construct an aquatic centre, walking tracks and transport interchange facilities.
- The existing landfill site has only enough remaining air space for 1 to 2 years and a new site should be identified
- Significant enclaves of public housing stock providing rental accommodation for low income and in many cases disadvantaged residents.

The key features of Kilmore are:

- A “country” township with a blend of town focussed and metropolitan commuter population.
- A wide range of facilities and services able to meet the needs of the regional community.
- A strong historical and cultural base to the community development.
- An integrated range of economic and social infrastructure.
- A disproportionately high quantity of education facilities (a feature of the township).
- An attractive physical setting for existing and future development.
- Structure of the township is strongly influenced by the topography and drainage pattern.
- The growth and development of specific commercial facilities is greatly dependent on the traffic passing through the township, however, increasing heavy commercial vehicle traffic adversely affects town amenity.
- Facilities and services within the town centre are servicing the township and wider hinterland.

The key features of Broadford are:

- An environmentally attractive context for a dispersed centre providing a broad range of facilities and services.
- An integrated social and economic structure, based on a range of industrial and service sectors.
- A range of residential treatments, including traditional grid pattern subdivisions and metropolitan residential influenced curvilinear forms.
- A developed infrastructure system with capacity well beyond current residential densities.
- Key civic and community facilities within the town centre.
- A wide range of affordable housing choices

The key features of Wallan are:

- Wallan is a community that has grown rapidly in the last 15 years and requires continued development and expansion of a wide range of community infrastructure items, e.g. footpaths, main street streetscapes and a secondary college.
- It has a high proportion of escape expenditure and a continued pattern of economic linkages outside the region.
- There are significant deficiencies in the range of services provided to residents, commensurate with the lack of strategic planning in the growth of the community.
- Although the environmental setting of the township is not in itself highly significant, the wider context of the site is attractive and contributes to the character of the township.
- The construction of the Hidden Valley Estate on the north-eastern edge of Wallan has added additional choice to the housing stock in the town. Constructed in the manner of a “planned community”, Council needs to ensure that appropriate linkages are developed with the rest of the town.

The key features of Wandong-Heathcote Junction are:

- Each village has historically developed with a reliance on the rail system and station.
- The potential growth of the area is restricted or constrained by a number of physical characteristics including the rail and highway to the west and the foothills and steep country to the east.
- The consolidation of the two villages should be recognised through future growth and development patterns.
- The commercial facilities for the town have developed on the other side of the railway line from the main residential area. The commercial area requires attention to improve its appearance and connection to the rest of the town.

The key features of Pyalong are:

- A township historically reliant upon the surrounding farming community.
- An area limited in growth potential due to the lack of available infrastructure particularly quality water and sewerage.
- The topography of the area creates a pleasant village atmosphere.
- The varied soil structure throughout the area does not enable all sites to adequately accommodate effluent disposal.
- The highway intersects the town and the uncertainty of VicRoads to commit to the construction of the by-pass has placed a burden on urban residential and commercial development.
- The continual development of rural residential developments on the fringe of the town has strangled the opportunity for the growth of the urban areas of the town.

The key features of Tallarook are:

- Historic township in an attractive rural setting.
- Limited opportunities are available for future residential development.
- The town has considerable character in its main street buildings, older houses and recreational area.
- The development of the town is physically constrained by its setting and lack of sewerage.

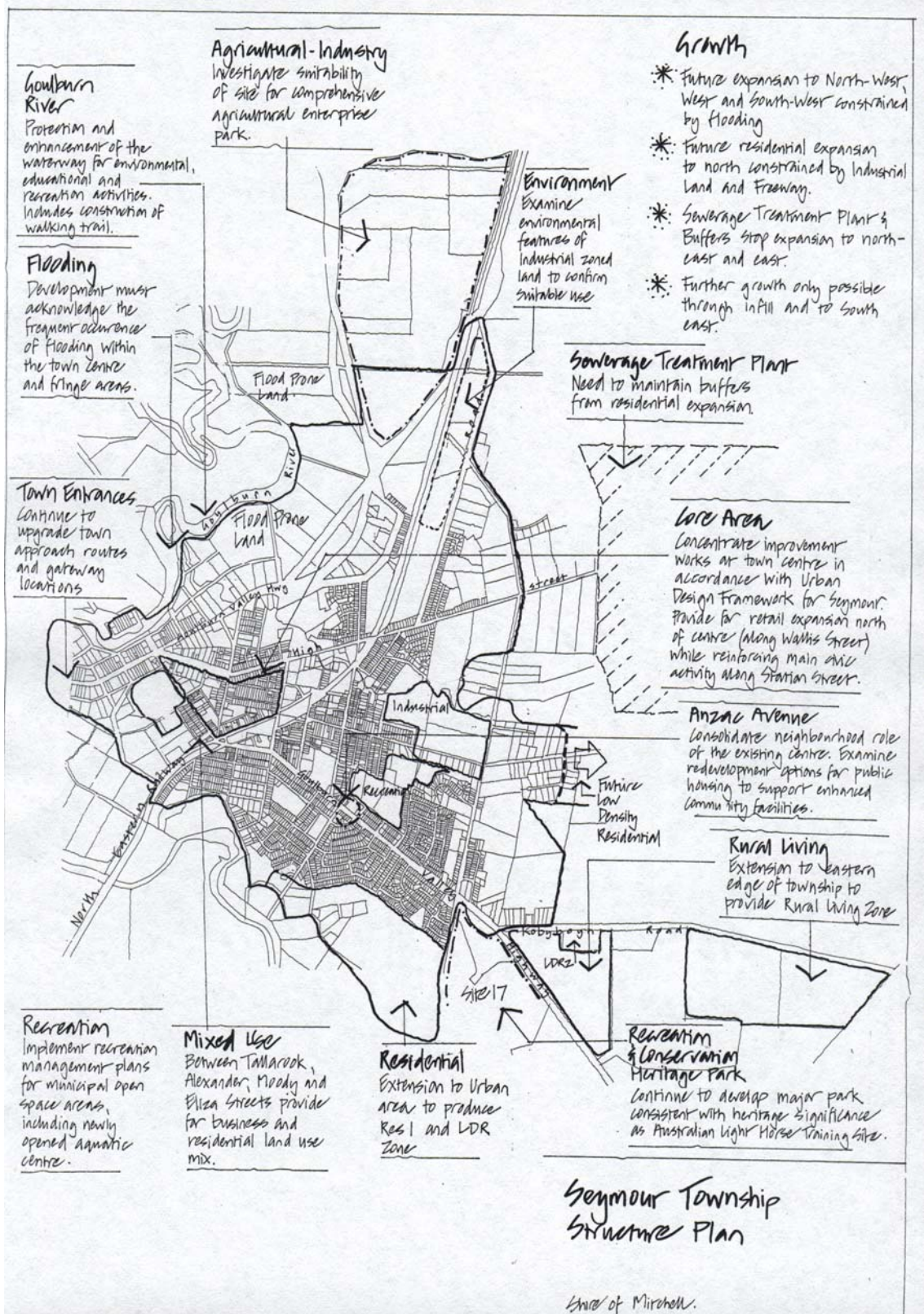
The key features of Beveridge are:

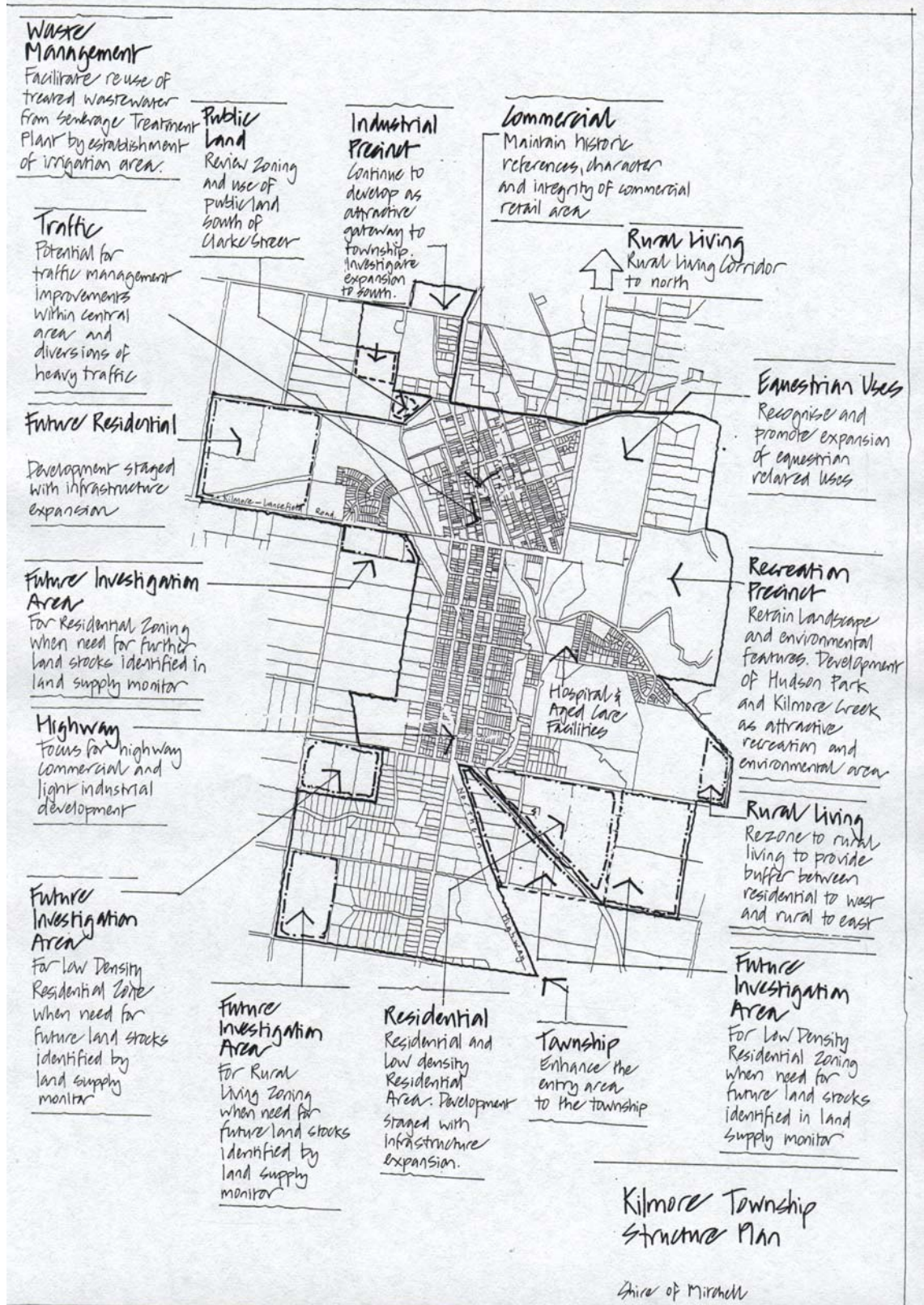
- Historical township which is now primarily a rural residential settlement.
- Accessed by the Hume Freeway and is the first settlement in the Shire north of the metropolitan area.
- The town has limited services and lacks the physical infrastructure to support the development of the township.
- The Beveridge area is seen to have a number of distinct advantages by the development industry, essentially it has a rural setting and outlook yet is very accessible to the metropolitan area.
- Some 256ha of land on the west side of the township is zoned for a comprehensive development comprising some 2200 residential lots, a golf course and some community/commercial facilities. This development is based on the proponent meeting the full cost of reticulated water and sewer.
- The appeal of Beveridge for rural residential development coupled with the west Beveridge rezoning signals that this area will undergo significant change in the next 10 years. The upgrading of physical infrastructure will be a major issue.

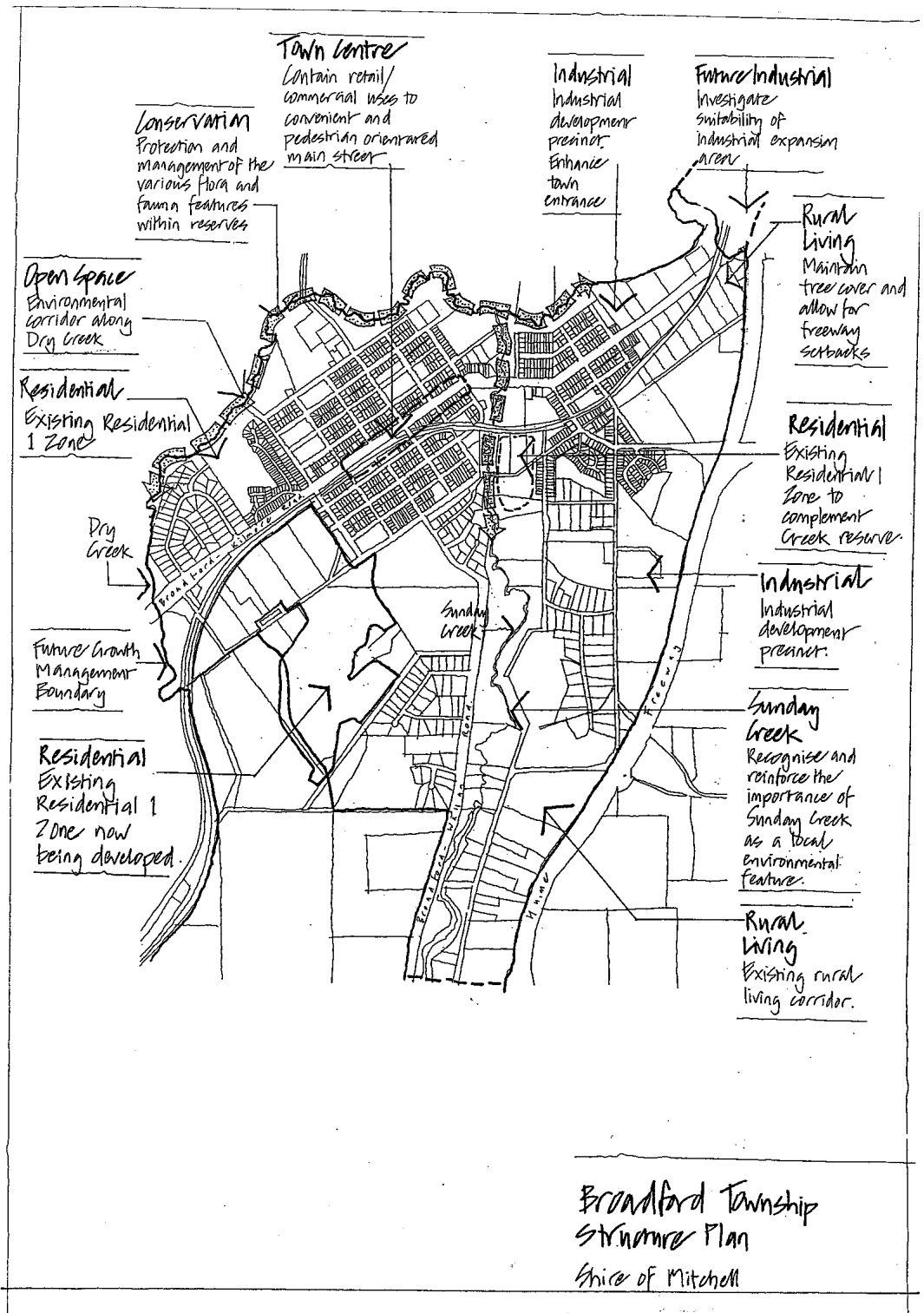
- An Outline Development Plan, to guide possible future urban development, previously applied to land between the existing Beveridge township and the railway to the east. This plan will need to be re-evaluated given the approval for the west Beveridge development proposal and the resultant implications for the availability and provision of physical and social infrastructure and supply and location of any further residential land. Significant additional development in the Beveridge area may justify the opening of a station on the rail line.

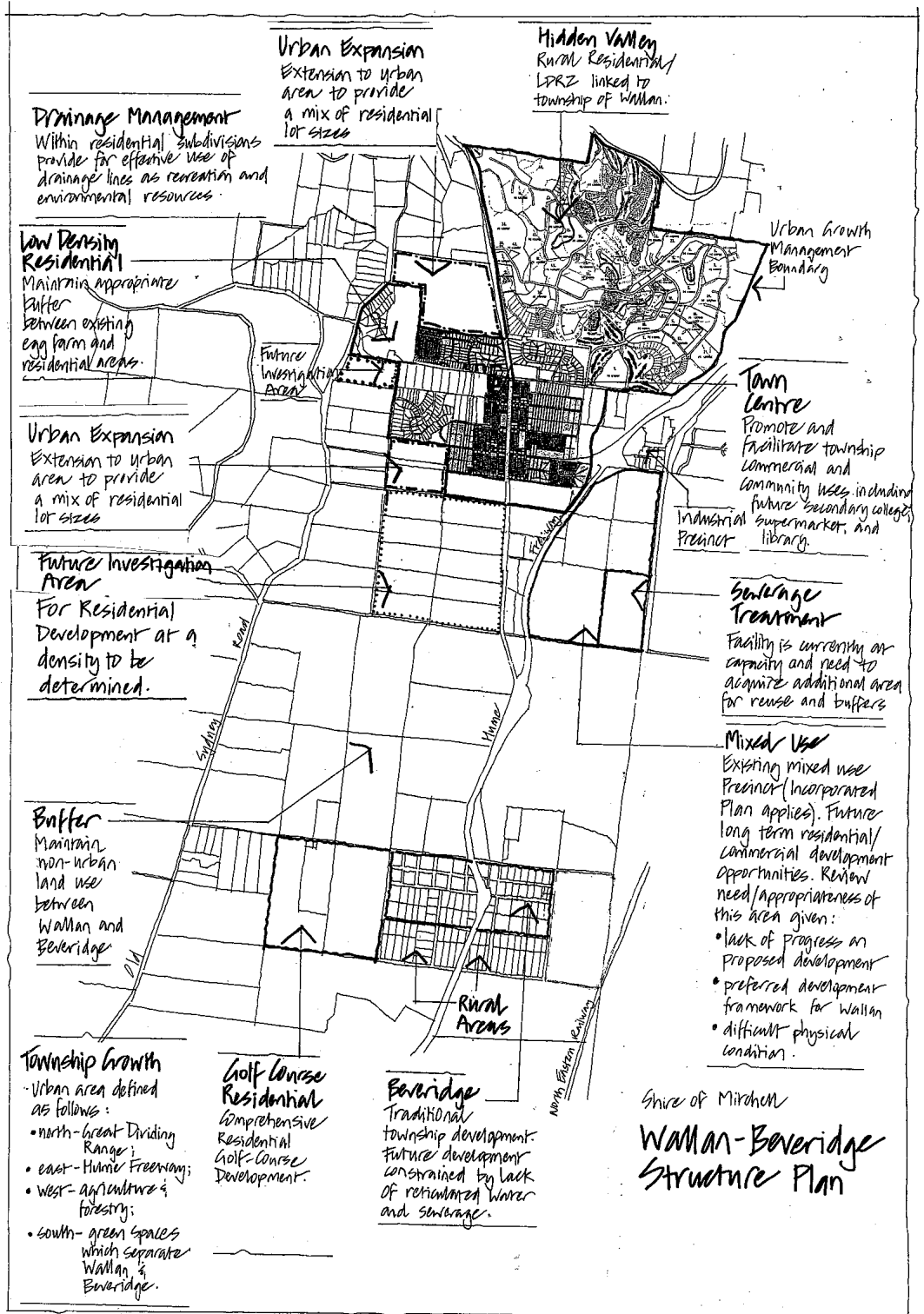
The key features of Waterford Park are:

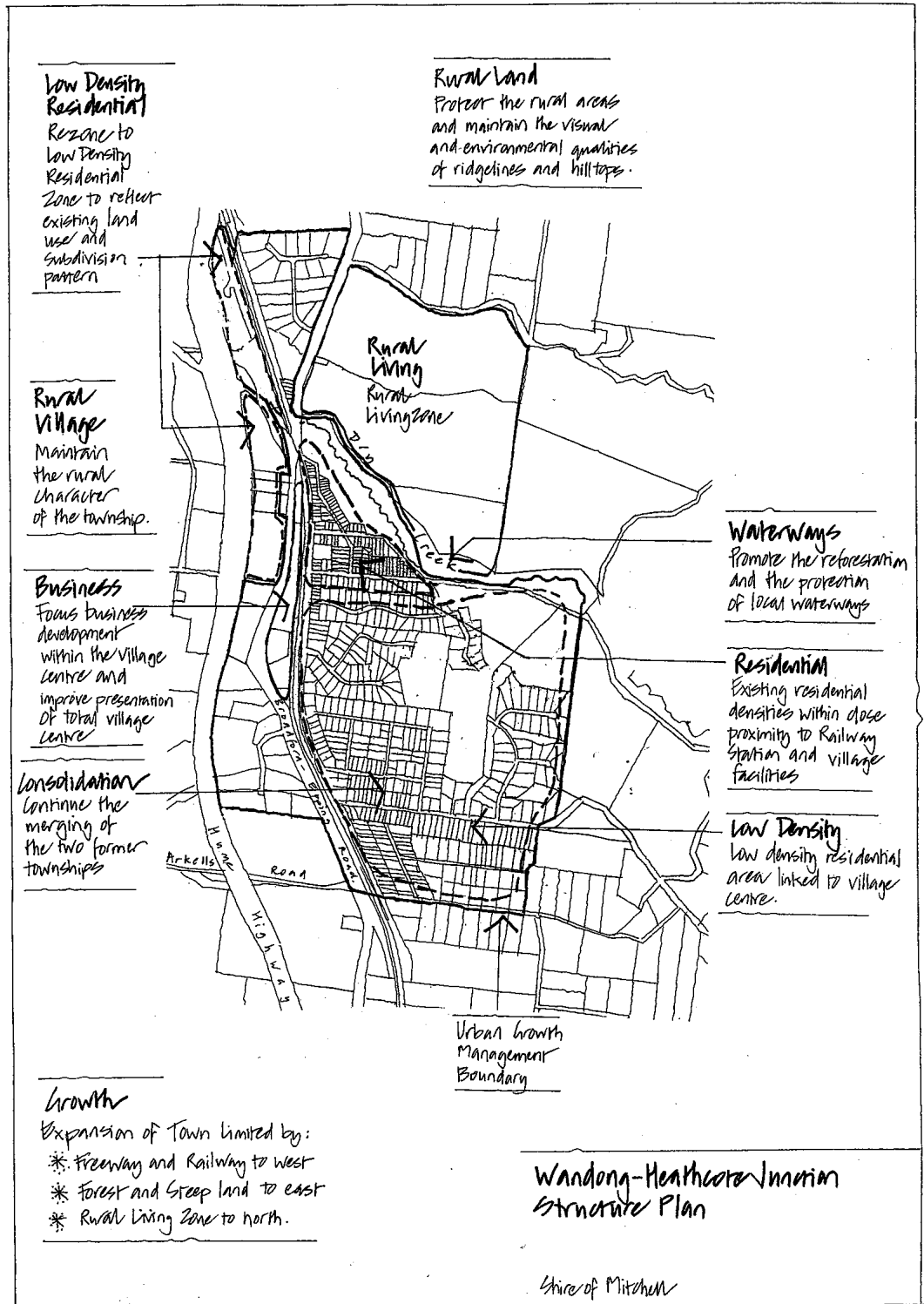
- An isolated residential subdivision set on the side of the valley of the creek.
- Subdivided into 104 urban sized allotments, most of which have been developed with detached houses.
- The settlement has insufficient scale to provide essential community and commercial facilities.
- In many cases existing lot sizes are too small to effectively contain effluent on site.

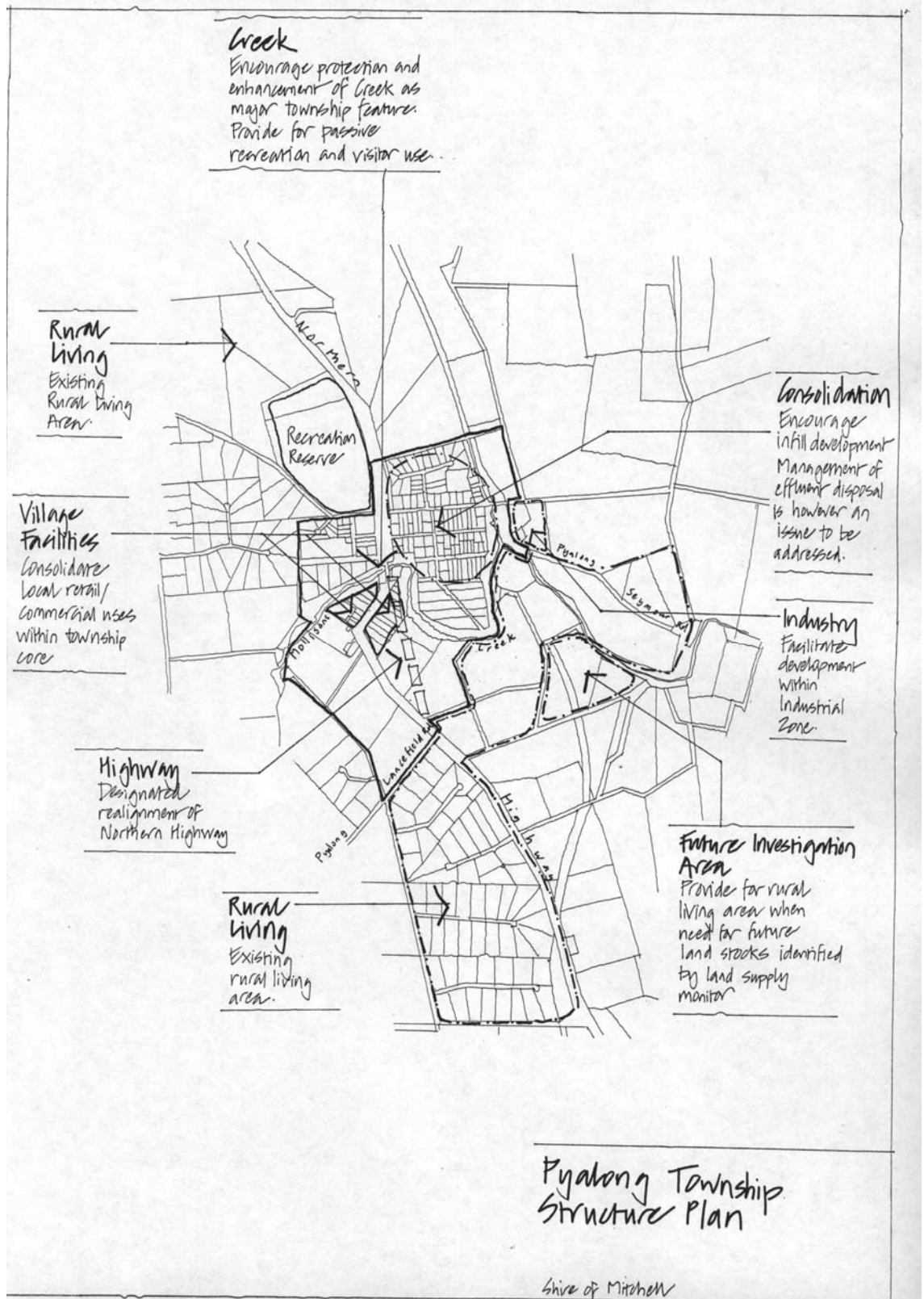












Objectives

To plan for new urban development primarily based on existing urban areas of townships.

To provide infrastructure and community facilities and services which meet the needs of the planned for population (approx 35,000 in Year 2011).

To effectively stage development in the various townships that maximises the efficiency of future investments in sewage and wastewater treatment plants and other infrastructure requirements. Infill developments will be encouraged where this can make use of existing infrastructure capacity.

To maintain the urban-rural lifestyle mix of existing townships.

General Strategies

- Provide for urban growth boundaries around each town to encompass the next ten-fifteen years residential growth bench mark. Proposals for residential development outside of the boundary must be able to demonstrate a justification based on the overall supply and demand of land, the reinforcement of the physical form of the town and the level of contribution by the developer to the development of the town's community facilities and physical infrastructure.
- New residential development proposals to be based upon:
 - full physical servicing of the development including a reticulated sewerage system;
 - the location of such areas so that they either relate directly to an existing town or community or that they reinforce the physical links between towns and communities;
 - the demonstrated capability of the land to support such development;
 - full provision of community facilities commensurate with the population level to be supported.

Unplanned development of rural areas for residential development will not be provided for. Some Structure Plans identify future residential development areas outside the nominated growth boundary on the basis of existing zoning patterns.

Town Strategies and Structure Plans

Seymour

Economic Development

- Actively promote and strengthen Seymour as a regional centre.
- Strengthen the relationship with the Australian Army and the Puckapunyal base.
- Provide assistance for the development of small business.
- Further develop and encourage the existing horse and dog racing activities and industries within the area, such as timber processing, concrete product manufacture and the abattoirs.

Cultural and Built Heritage

- Preserve the built heritage throughout Seymour including the social and cultural heritage associated with the Australian Army, in particular, Site 17 and New Crossing Place.

- Create a heritage theme for the important historical relationship with the railway and its service, and provide a central focus for the community as a social and cultural development initiative.
- Ensure that the subdivision of rural land takes into account the conservation values of adjacent roadsides and remnant vegetation.
- Establish programs to better market and promote local attractions and activities, including the availability of services.

Tourism

- Encourage the development of tourist related industry (services such as motels, gift shops, local craft stores) to further support the existing and potential tourist attractions.
- Enhance the range of attractions based on the rail heritage, wineries, the natural attractions such as the Tallarook Ranges and bushland parks, the variety of heritage buildings and sites, Puckapunyal and the Goulburn river and its surrounds by supporting and encouraging appropriate development initiatives.

Environmental and Natural Resource Management

- Protect and conserve the significant natural and built features within and around Seymour, including the Mangalore Flora Reserve and Bushland Park, Seymour Golf Course grass trees, the Hughes Creek, the Trawool Valley, the Seymour billabongs, geodetic cones and numerous foothills, ranges and forested areas.
- Develop linkages between the natural environment and tourism opportunities particularly corridors.
- Prohibit inappropriate development on the floodplain, allowing better drainage of existing table drains in outer areas of the town and adequately disposing of drainage created by urbanisation to avoid impacting downstream flooding.

Industrial Development

- Assist in the development of home base occupations as an alternative employment sector. This has particular reference for properties in the low density and rural residential areas.
- Establish a small business support program to assist the development and growth of local employers and businesses.
- Attract businesses that will compliment the existing industrial and manufacturing base.
- Encourage and promote future industrial and manufacturing business to locate in Seymour.
- Strengthen Seymour's position as a preferred location for industrial enterprises based on the availability of infrastructure, work forces and transportation.
- Prepare strategies and funding program for the long term planning of the Seymour urban area. This will need to include issues such as: town centre re-development, infrastructure, traffic management, urban design, flooding, railway crossing and residential area re-development strategies.

Commercial Redevelopment

- Work with Victoria Police to address public safety concerns
- Consolidate the urban centre to achieve a 'Town Centre'
- Encourage urban design practices and architectural standards in the development of new buildings.
- Complete the Station Street Streetscape improvement program
- Complete the Wallis Street traffic management and pedestrian crossing program

Residential Growth

- Future Investigation Areas identified on the town structure plan will be considered for rezoning from rural to residential or low density residential when existing residential zoned land will provide for less than 15 years projected demand.

Neighbourhood Renewal of Public Housing Areas

- Identify areas of public housing stock
- Encourage renewal of existing public housing stock in areas identified as not meeting acceptable community standards taking into account the special requirements of the occupants
- Encourage diversity of housing by sale of selected dwellings in areas of concentrated public ownership. Sales to be accompanied by corresponding purchases of public housing in alternative locations

Kilmore**Township Character**

- Seek funding to employ Council's Heritage Adviser to update the controls and guidelines for heritage assets in the town. Such work to include working with owners to assist them to make appropriate decisions that uphold the heritage importance of buildings and other structures.
- All developments along the main street to be undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic to the remainder of the streetscape having regard for the architectural and historical integrity of the area.
- Funding opportunities for streetscape improvements should be actively pursued.
- Support the realignment of the Highway from the town centre and ensure that additional traffic volumes can be accommodated within the urban boundaries.

Natural Environment

- Protect the town's significant landscapes and natural features.
- Encourage the use of public open space, by incorporating linkages within all new developments.
- Encourage the regeneration of the native vegetation reserves.
- Enhance the attractiveness of the Kilmore creek area running parallel to the main street as a passive recreational area.

Residential Growth

- Incorporate buffering between the rural, rural residential and urban developments. Where possible utilise natural and landscape features, parkland or public land as boundaries and buffers.
- Implement regulatory measures to ensure septic systems comply with present standards.
- Encourage the consolidation of urban development.
- Future Investigation Areas indicated on the town structure plan will be considered for rezoning from rural to residential or low density residential when existing residential zoned land will provide for less than 15 years projected
- Investigate the need for Neighbourhood Character statements or overlays with the Kilmore urban area.

Industrial Development

- Encourage and promote future industrial and manufacturing businesses to locate in the defined industrial area.
- Strengthen Kilmore's position as a preferred location for light industrial and small business enterprises based on the availability of infrastructure, work forces and transportation.
- Improve stormwater management in the industrial area through measures identified in Council's Stormwater Study (commenced September 2001).

Commercial Development

- Review the objective specified in the previous Municipal Strategic Statement to encourage and facilitate development along the rear of those properties backing onto the Kilmore Creek as an area housing cafes and other specialty shops with an open view of the creek. Such review to involve consultation with traders to see whether this objective is still warranted.
- Contain commercial development within the town centre and encourage larger peripheral retailers locate on the land at the southern entrance to the town.

Tourism and Economic Development

- Incorporate rest areas, truck stops and other such tourist facilities at appropriate locations.

Horse Industry

- Encourage and facilitate the horse industry and related activities on appropriate locations within the surrounds of the existing racecourse.
- Provide separation buffers between the activities related to the horse industry and neighbouring residential areas.
- Review access arrangements between the racecourse and nearby properties used to stable horses trained at the racecourse.

Broadford

Natural Features

- Encourage the protection of the surrounding natural features by limiting the intrusion of urban development.
- Maintain and encourage the expansion of the existing nature walks through the development of a trail strategy and acquiring land as development occurs.
- Protect and conserve the existing flora reserves within Broadford, namely the Mt. Piper Educational Reserve, the Fleming Drive Reserve and the Horwood Road Reserve, Reedy Creek Homestead, Tyaak Cemetery (Chinese area) , the former Bush Nursing Hospital, cemeteries and a former Prisoner of War Camp
- Ensure that those areas mapped by the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment as being either a salinity recharge or discharge area are not developed and regeneration of vegetation is encouraged.
- Ensure that development within the surrounds of the Broadford sewerage ponds which are an important artificial wetland are designed to compliment the natural and environmental qualities associated with the area.

Township Development

- Ensure that tourist development maintains and reinforces the rural / urban character of the town.
- Enhance the main street character.
- Improve the surrounds of the railway station.
- Enhance the highway entrances of the town.
- Support capital works (island car parking and bridge improvements) as part of the urban design and streetscape improvement programs.

Industrial Development

- Support new industrial development where it can utilise space, infrastructure capacity and is compatible with the maintenance of residential amenity.
- Review the need for additional industrial zoned land in conjunction with consultation about the future of the industrially zoned land north of the freeway on ramp (west side of freeway)

Residential Growth

- Incorporate conservation and beautification components as a part of the overall development of future residential subdivisions.
- Promote the development and creation of various lot sizes within the urban area.
- Encourage infill development in advance of urban expansion.
- Ensure all contaminated sites identified

Wallan

Community Focus and Development

- Progressively build the community into the physical form and function of a town rather than as a scattered residential area.
- Ensure that new development supports community and commercial services and facilities and contributes to a functioning urban form.
- Ensure new development is linked to the progressive funding of facilities and infrastructure.
- Progressively provide community services and facilities to assist in creating a central focus for all residents.
- Support the construction of a local secondary school and civic facilities such as a library.
- Further develop Hadfield Park to provide a central town feature.

Town Centre Development

- Encourage infill development to assist in establishing a formal centre to the town.
- Encourage initiatives to beautify the main streets, incorporating footpaths, tree planting and street furniture.
- Review the opportunities to improve the standard of Bentinck Street and the zoning of the adjoining properties.

Residential growth

- Encourage infill development within established residential communities.
- Limit the extent of rural residential development with the introduction of defined rural residential development boundaries.
- Support residential development that provides a variety of lot sizes.
- Support the conversion of inadequately serviced low density residential areas to residential development densities where full urban services are provided and the development is linked to the formation of the town centre.
- Future Investigation Areas indicated on the town structure plan will be considered for rezoning from rural to residential or low density residential when existing residential zoned land will provide for less than 15 years projected demand.
- Review impact of Hidden Valley on William Street
- Encourage the development of reserve links between and through the various residential estates, including linking Hidden Valley to the rest of the town.
- Work to ensure an improvement in the streetscapes of residential estates by ensuring footpaths are provided and street trees planted and maintained.

Natural Resources Management.

- Urban development along flood prone areas of the Merri Creek will not be supported.
- Develop wetlands to reduce flooding and improve water quality.

Industrial Development

- Support home based employment within the residential areas based on the use and type, to ensure compatibility with the residential community.

- Provide an adequate supply of serviced and zoned industrial land.
- Lobby to provide north-bound exit ramps and south-bound entrance ramps for the freeway at Wallan/Wallan East.
- Improve drainage and floodwater management at Wallan East.

Wandong-Heathcote Junction

Township Growth and Development

- Recognise that the community has developed a particular residential lifestyle which values environmental attributes and lifestyle.
- Continue to emphasise amenity values in new development and the need to link to other centres to provide higher order facilities and services.
- Local commercial development will be encouraged to utilise existing zoned land within the township area.
- Lobby to improve the standard and safety standards of roads around Wandong Heathcote Junction accessing the Mt Disappointment forest area.

Protection of Native Vegetation.

- New development will be encouraged to provide linkages to open space and greenbelt areas around the township.
- Development along the surrounding hilltops and ridges will be discouraged.
- Maintain Mount Disappointment as a significant natural feature of the area, for tourism and natural resources protection.
- Encourage sustainable land management practices within the designated catchment areas.

Pyalong

Township Growth

- Encourage infill type developments on vacant parcels of land within the urban boundaries of the town.
- Control rural residential development in order to create a more defined town boundary.
- Encourage local commercial development.
- Focus social and recreational facilities in a centralised and accessible location for all residents.
- Resolve development issues for the Ladderhill Road industrial area.

Natural Resources Management

- Protect agricultural land use around the town from residential development.
- Maintain visual linkages with the surrounding natural environment by restricting further development along any ridgeline or hilltop.
- Support efforts to obtain funding to improve the Mollisons Creek area through the town.
- Ensure that new development supports an environmental management plan for the local watercourses, in order to encourage revegetation of the streamsides and banks.

Tallarook

- Infill vacant land with residential development only where such sites can be serviced by efficient disposal methods which can contain all sullage within the site.
- Provide for new development to be in harmony with the historical character and cultural setting of the town and recognise a historic precinct through the planning scheme.
- Retain the strong environmental and landscape features of the town.

Beveridge

- Provide for further residential development of the township only where it can demonstrate that effluent and stormwater can be wholly contained and disposed of within the site.
- Review the impact of the Beveridge West Golf Course Residential development on both the facilities and infrastructure within Beveridge and the area south to Gunns Gully Road.
- Ensure the completion of the Restructure Plan for the lots in the township on the west side of the freeway.
- Provide for a level of population which will effectively achieve a 'self contained township' with a full range of urban and community facilities.
- Development to be in accordance with an approved development plan that establishes the urban growth boundary of the township, location of community facilities according to population needs, provision of infrastructure and the staging release of new residential areas.
- Ensure that development of this area is adequately serviced and integrated with the existing Beveridge township.

Waterford Park

- No further residential development is to be permitted without an effective effluent disposal system.
- Encourage restructuring of lots which cannot contain effluent disposal on site.

Strategy Implementation

To assist in the management of urban growth and development, a number of measures have been introduced into the Planning Scheme, as a local policy or through the introduction of a relevant zone or overlay.

Planning Scheme Provisions

A range of zones and overlays have been applied in each of the towns to implement these strategies including:

- Residential 1 Zone
- Township Zone
- Low Density Residential Zone
- Rural Living Zone
- Comprehensive Development Zone applied to the residential development area west of Beveridge and over the Hidden Valley residential area north of Wallan.
- Development Plan Overlay
- Restructure Overlay
- Development Contribution Plan Overlays (or their equivalent) will be introduced following completion of the government's review of the Development Contribution process in early/mid 2002.

A range of Local Policies have also been applied to assist the implementation of these strategies including:

- Local Policies (22.02-1 & 22.02-2) identify where structure plans apply and provide for future growth parameters for towns across the Shire.
- Local Policy (22.03-1) provides for effective effluent disposal.
- Local Policy (22.04-1) guides new housing development in rural areas.
- Local Policy (22.06-1) establishes future infrastructure requirements in residential areas.

Additional Avenues of Implementation

To assist in the role of administering the planning scheme, other policies and strategies will be pursued concurrently in the decision making process including:

- The completion of a strategy for the Hume Corridor which will address the issue of future growth management, transport and infrastructure provision at a local, regional and State level.
- Introducing Development Contribution Plans for the Shire taking into account the variables associated with projected growth and development patterns in the north and south of the Shire.
- Actively work with, encourage and assist State and Commonwealth Governments in carrying out Neighbourhood Renewal of selected public housing areas.
- Organise, participate in and encourage widely based community participation in a consultation exercise to:
- Identify areas suitable for neighbourhood renewal;
- Plan for and implement appropriate infrastructure improvements and social programs to assist disadvantaged residents.