

West Wimmera Shire Council

MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 16 July 2025
2:00 pm

Kaniva Council Office
25 Baker Street, Kaniva Victoria 3419

Councillors and Shire Map



MAYOR
Cr. Tim Meyer



DEPUTY MAYOR
Cr. Jodie Pretlove



Cr. Richard Hicks



Cr. Helen Hobbs



Cr. Tom Houlihan



COUNCIL VISION

Our West Wimmera community is healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous, and self-sustaining, with regional and global connectivity.

OUR VALUES

INNOVATIVE – We will proactively respond to change, are optimistic about our future and pursue continuous improvement in everything that we do.

ACCOUNTABLE – We will be responsible, take ownership of our actions and are committed to good governance, excellence, transparency, achievement of goals and advocating for our community

UNITED – We will do everything within our ability to encourage and form trusting relationships, to work together as one team to achieve our goals and advocate for 'One West Wimmera'.

COLLABORATIVE – We will actively and openly consult with you and work constructively with community organisations, agencies, the business community and other levels of government to our community's benefit.

OUR GOALS



Purpose of Council meetings

(1) Council holds scheduled meetings and, when required, unscheduled meetings to conduct the business of Council.

(2) Council is committed to transparency in decision making and, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, Council and Delegated Committee meetings are open to the public and the community are able to attend.

(3) Meetings will only be closed to members of the public, in accordance with section 66 of the Act, if:

- *(a) there are clear reasons for particular matters to remain confidential; or*
- *(b) a meeting is required to be closed for security reasons; or*
- *(c) it is necessary to enable the meeting to proceed in an ordinary manner.*

(4) A meeting closed to the public for the reasons outlined in sub-rule 3(b) or 3(c) will continue to be livestreamed. In the event a livestream is not available:

- *(a) the meeting may be adjourned; or*
- *(b) a recording of the proceedings may be available on the Council website*

The West Wimmera Shire Council Governance Rules set out the meeting procedure rules for this Council Meeting.

Members of the public are reminded that they are required to remain silent during this meeting, except during Section 5 Questions from the Gallery.

This Council meeting will be recorded for live streaming.

Recording of Meeting and Disclaimer

Please note every Council Meeting (other than items deemed confidential under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2020) is being recorded and streamed live on West Wimmera Shire Council's website in accordance with Council's Governance Rules. Live streaming allows everyone to watch and listen to the meeting in real time, giving you greater access to Council debate and decision making and encouraging openness and transparency. All care is taken to maintain your privacy; however, as a visitor in the public gallery, your presence may be recorded. By remaining in the public gallery, it is understood your consent is given if your image is inadvertently broadcast. Opinions expressed or statements made by individual persons during a meeting are not the opinions or statements of West Wimmera Shire Council. Council therefore accepts no liability for any defamatory remarks that are made during a meeting.

Councillors pledge

As Councillors of West Wimmera Shire Council, we solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that we will consider each item on this agenda in the best interests of the whole municipal community.

In Attendance:

Councillors:

Tim Meyer, Mayor
Jodie Pretlove, Deputy Mayor
Richard Hicks
Helen Hobbs
Tom Houlihan

Executive Leadership Team:

David Bezuidenhout - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Dalton Burns – Director Corporate and Community Services (DCCS)
Brendan Pearce - Director Infrastructure Development & Works (DIDW)

Officers:

Philippa Hicks - EA to the CEO
Katie Frost - Governance Manager
James Magee - Manager Assets and GIS
Nicole Wearne - Manager Planning and Environment
Tracey Bone - Manager of Community Support and Wellbeing

Table of Contents

1 Welcome 9
2 Acknowledgement of Country 9
3 Opening Prayer.....9
4 Apologies, Leave of Absences, Declaration of Conflict of Interest.....9
4.1 Apologies 9
4.2 Leave of Absence 9
4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest 9
5 Questions from the Gallery 10
5.1 Written Questions on Notice.....10
5.2 Verbal Questions without Notice 11
6 Delegates Reports 12
6.1 Councillor Tim Meyer (Mayor) 12
6.2 Councillor Jodie Pretlove (Deputy Mayor).....12
6.3 Councillor Richard Hicks 12
6.4 Councillor Helen Hobbs 13
6.5 Councillor Tom Houlihan 13
7 Condolences.....13
8 Confirmation of Previous Minutes 14
8.1 Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 June 2025.....14
8.2 Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 27 June 2025.....14
9 Business Arising From Previous Minutes 16
10 Notices of Motion 16
11 Councillor Forum Record.....16
11.1 Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 2 July 2025 16
12 Deputations and Petitions.....16

13 Chief Executive Officer 16
14 Corporate and Community Services.....17
14.1 Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Application - West Wimmera Action Group 17
14.2 Provision of Maternal and Child Health Services.....20
14.3 Corporate Credit Card Policy 52
15 Infrastructure Development and Works 69
15.1 Planning Scheme Amendment C38wwim Update Flood Controls in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme 69
15.2 Planning Permit Application PA1196.....126
15.3 Small Towns Plan Draft for Community Consultation 166
15.4 Asset Management Plan Review 334
15.5 Road Management Plan Review.....398
16 Sealing Schedule.....423
17 Late Items of Business.....423
18 Confidential Reports 423
19 Close of Meeting 424

1 Welcome

The Mayor declared the meeting open at 2:03 pm.

2 Acknowledgement of Country

The West Wimmera Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, and pays respect to their elders, past, present and emerging.

3 Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we humbly ask your blessing upon this Council. Guide and prosper our decisions to the advancement of Your Glory and the true welfare of the people of West Wimmera Shire. Amen.

4 Apologies, Leave of Absences, Declaration of Conflict of Interest

4.1 Apologies

Nil

4.2 Leave of Absence

Nil

4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Cr Tim Meyer declared a conflict of interest in item 18.1 Confidential Termination of the Lease Agreement - Kaniva Aerodrome, stating that family lease the Aerodrome.

5 Questions from the Gallery

5.1 Written Questions on Notice

No questions on notice were received for inclusion in the agenda.

5.2 Verbal Questions without Notice

No questions without notice were received.

6 Delegates Reports

Delegate Reports are for providing feedback on formal council business and are for information only

6.1 Councillor Tim Meyer (Mayor)

Date	Event
19/06/2025	Timber Towns Victoria Meeting
23/06/2025	Budget and Annual Plan Meeting
24/06/2025	ALGA Conference Canberra
25/06/2025	ALGA Conference Canberra
26/06/2025	ALGA Conference Canberra
27/06/2025	ALGA Conference Canberra
27/06/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting
02/07/2025	Councillor Forum
13/07/2025	Kaniva Lions Club Changeover
14/07/2025	Council Plan Workshop
16/07/2025	Pre Council Meeting
16/07/2025	Council Meeting

6.2 Councillor Jodie Pretlove (Deputy Mayor)

Date	Event
23/06/2025	Budget and Annual Plan Meeting
27/06/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting
02/07/2025	Councillor Forum
14/07/2025	Council Plan Workshop
16/07/2025	Pre Council Meeting
16/07/2025	Council Meeting

6.3 Councillor Richard Hicks

Date	Event
23/06/2025	Budget and Annual Plan Meeting
27/06/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting
02/07/2025	Councillor Forum
14/07/2025	Council Plan Workshop
16/07/2025	Pre Council Meeting
16/07/2025	Council Meeting

6.4 Councillor Helen Hobbs

Date	Event
23/06/2025	Budget and Annual Plan Meeting
27/06/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting
02/07/2025	Councillor Forum
14/07/2025	Council Plan Workshop
16/07/2025	Pre Council Meeting
16/07/2025	Council Meeting

6.5 Councillor Tom Houlihan

Date	Event
23/06/2025	Budget and Annual Plan Meeting
27/06/2025	Unscheduled Council Meeting
02/07/2025	Councillor Forum
14/07/2025	Council Plan Workshop
16/07/2025	Pre Council Meeting
16/07/2025	Council Meeting

7 Condolences

Nil

8 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

8.1 Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 June 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 June 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 June 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil

8.2 Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 27 June 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 27 June 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That the Minutes of the Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Friday, 27 June 2025 be taken as an accurate record and confirmed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Attachments

Nil

9 Business Arising From Previous Minutes

10 Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion submitted for the agenda.

11 Councillor Forum Record

11.1 Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 2 July 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Record for the Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 2 July 2025 be received and noted.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That the Record for the Councillor Forum Record Wednesday, 2 July 2025 be received and noted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

12 Deputations and Petitions

There were no Petitions or Deputations submitted for the agenda.

13 Chief Executive Officer

No Reports

14 Corporate and Community Services

14.1 Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Application - West Wimmera Action Group

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Community Development Manager*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

An application has been received under Council's Sponsorship and Contribution Grant Guideline. The application has been assessed by officers as eligible for determination by Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council determines the attached application by the West Wimmera Action Group Inc. for a Sponsorship and Contributions Grant of $1,200.

OUTCOME:
Agenda item removed.

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

West Wimmera Shire Council Sponsorship and Contributions Grants is to support West Wimmera Shire groups and organisations that:

- Support community wellbeing.
- Encourage community participation.
- Bring economic benefit to the West Wimmera Shire.
- Assist in the recovery from catastrophic emergencies (funding to non-West Wimmera Shire groups and organisations assisting in catastrophic emergency recovery may be considered by Council in its discretion).

The West Wimmera Action Group was established in early 2025 to address community concerns and collaborate with relevant organisations to foster positive change through action and ensure ongoing accountability.
One of the first initiatives underway is the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF), which allegedly aims to support local emergency services and volunteer efforts. The group is currently assessing the anticipated impact of this levy on communities across the West Wimmera region.

Additional projects include evaluating the potential effects of the dingo breeding program in the Little Desert on local livestock farming and reviewing the management and Emergency Service response to the recent 96,000-hectare fire in the Little Desert National Park.

This grant would be of great benefit to help pay for printing costs and advertising through local media to keep the community informed.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

Social risk

Legislative Implications

Not Applicable

Environmental Implications

Nil

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The financial risk rating has been assessed as: Low

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Council Grants Policy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community

1.1 Create a healthy, active, and vibrant community.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The West Wimmera Action Group is committed to driving meaningful change by actively listening to community concerns and working collaboratively with stakeholders. Through initiatives like the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund, and by addressing critical regional issues such as wildlife management and fire recovery, the group aims to build a safer, more resilient, and better-informed West Wimmera.

Attachments

Nil

14.2 Provision of Maternal and Child Health Services

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Manager of Community Support and Wellbeing*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the outcomes of recent consultation with key stakeholders including Maternal and Child Health (MCH) staff, families, community members, and West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) regarding the potential transfer of Council's MCH service to a specialist rural health provider.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. **Endorse the transfer of the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service to West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) as a specialist provider with the clinical governance, systems, and multidisciplinary capability required to meet increasing family complexities, service complexity, safety obligations, and regulatory standards and reduce risk to council.**
2. **Formally notify the Department of Health of Council's intention to transition the MCH service to WWHS, enabling commencement of the formal transfer process in accordance with contractual timeframes.**

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That Council maintain the Maternal Child Health Services in its current form.

LOST (2 / 3)

Cr Richard Hicks called for a division

For:

Cr Richard Hicks and Cr Helen Hobbs

Against:

Cr Jodie Pretlove, Cr Tom Houlihan and Cr Tim Meyer

Cr Tom Houlihan moved a subsequent motion

Moved:	**Cr Tom Houlihan**
Seconded:	**Cr Jodie Pretlove**

That Council:

1. **Endorse the transfer of the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service to West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) as a specialist provider with the clinical governance, systems, and multidisciplinary capability required to meet increasing family complexities, service complexity, safety obligations, and regulatory standards and reduce risk to council.**
2. **Formally notify the Department of Health of Council's intention to transition the MCH service to WWHS, enabling commencement of the formal transfer process in accordance with contractual timeframes.**

CARRIED (3 / 2)

Cr Richard Hicks called for a division

For:

Cr Tom Houlihan, Cr Jodie Pretlove and Cr Tim Meyer

Against:

Cr Richard Hicks and Cr Helen Hobbs

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

The report outlines key considerations arising from increased service demands, including the growing need for a more enhanced, coordinated, consistent, and responsive support network for families with complex needs. It also addresses the escalating requirements for clinical governance and the associated risks for Council in continuing as the service provider.

Councillors are asked to consider the consultation findings and service delivery options presented, and to provide direction on the preferred future model for MCH services in West Wimmera Shire. Should Council resolve to proceed with the transition, a minimum of three

months' notice must be given to the Department of Health to formally commence the process.

This recommendation reflects the increasing need for integrated, wraparound care particularly for families experiencing vulnerability and the importance of ensuring staff and community safety under a well-established clinical governance framework. Transitioning to WWHS will place West Wimmera families on par with those in neighbouring municipalities such as Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack, also mirroring transition in Campaspe Shire Council where improved access, continuity of care, and system navigation are already being achieved under the WWHS model.

Council officers were directed to investigate opportunities to enhance outcomes for residents by exploring the potential transfer of certain services to specialist providers, including the MCH service. As part of this process, community feedback regarding the possible transition of council-managed MCH services in West Wimmera Shire was sought via the "Have Your Say" online platform.

At the May Council Meeting, Councilors resolved to conduct community meetings in Goroke, Edenhope, and Kaniva to obtain broader community input. Meeting times were scheduled in consultation with MCH staff to ensure accessibility for families currently using the service. These meetings were open to the public, and Councillors also requested that WWHS be invited to attend, in recognition of their experience delivering rural MCH services in neighboring municipalities.

Summary of Community Consultation – Future of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services

As part of the consultation process, Council engaged the community through various channels to explore the potential transition of MCH services from Council to WWHS. This included in-person forums held in Kaniva, Edenhope, and Goroke, alongside opportunities for written feedback via Council's online Have Your Say platform.

Across all consultation methods, families expressed strong appreciation for the current Council-delivered MCH service. Trusted relationships with nurses and the accessibility of the local service were highly valued, with a clear preference for continuity and maintaining local connections in any future service model.

At the Edenhope forum, attended by 14 community members, concerns were raised about the proposed transition to WWHS, focusing on the anticipated benefits, clinical governance improvements, and timelines for implementation. Many noted that community already had access to additional services through referrals to WWHS or Grampians Health. Subsequent

discussions with attendees possessing clinical or community health experience recognised that a dedicated health service like WWHS may better meet clinical governance standards due to greater resources and capacity.

The Kaniva forum, attended by approximately seven community members, staff, and service users, reflected some strong opposition to the proposed transition. Attendees questioned the need to change a highly regarded service and sought clarity on the reasons behind the review. Concerns were expressed about losing local control and the possibility of centralisation reducing accessibility, especially given other services under consideration for relocation.

The Goroke forum, with four attending families, reaffirmed the community's strong connection to the current service and its flexible, responsive approach. MCH nurses are valued not only for core services but also as a trusted resource for medical advice and support. Compared to other forums, Goroke participants showed more openness to change, provided relationships with nurses remain intact. The colocation of MCH services within the WWHS facility was seen positively. However, attendees also called for increased Council support for youth activities, sustaining the supported playgroup, and ensuring that local advocacy does not replace essential Council services.

While the transition remains a divisive topic, several community members strongly opposed the change. Others expressed concerns without outright opposition, and some supported the move contingent on preserving service quality and accessibility. It is important to assess how well these views represent the broader community and current service users.

WWHS indicated that if the transition proceeds, the service's valued qualities would be preserved and enhanced through integrated support. Their model offers a "one-stop-shop" with coordinated access to allied health, paediatric specialists, NDIS, and early intervention services within a robust clinical governance framework. This integration aims to reduce the need for multiple referrals and ease the burden on families.

Council must also consider the evolving service context. MCH staff increasingly support families facing complex challenges, including family violence, amid rising clinical governance, risk management, and staff safety expectations.

To ensure that MCH services remain safe, effective, and compliant in the future, Councillors are invited to consider the consultation outcomes alongside three proposed delivery options, and to provide guidance to Council officers on the preferred service delivery model for West Wimmera Shire.

Summary: Benefits to Families – West Wimmera Health Service Maternity and Early Years Model

WWHS delivers a unique, locally based model of maternity and early years care that supports families from pregnancy through to their child's fifth birthday and beyond. This model integrates three evidence-based frameworks the Rural Health Care Model, Relational Model of Care, and Feminist Model of Care to provide comprehensive, responsive, and inclusive support for families.

Key benefits to families include:

- **Local and consistent care:** MCH nurses provide ongoing, relationship-based care before and after birth, reducing the need to travel and building trust with families over time.
- **Holistic, person-centred support:** The service addresses not just physical health but also emotional, social, and cultural wellbeing, recognising the diverse needs of women and children.
- **Improved access and equity:** Outreach visits, home care, and combined appointments (e.g., immunisations and parenting education) reduce barriers for isolated or vulnerable families.
- **Collaborative service delivery:** Families are supported through coordinated care with local GPs, regional obstetricians, allied health professionals, and social services. WWHS also have longstanding connections with Level 6 Victorin tertiary hospitals.
- **Empowerment and choice:** Women are supported to make informed decisions through trauma-informed, respectful care that prioritises their voice and experiences.
- **Stonger clinical governance:** WWHS have in place a robust clinical governance system meeting both Safer Care Victoria's *Victorian Clinical Governance Framework* and Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care *Clinical Governance Standards* and will be able to instantly meet the increasing expectations and has in place clinical supervision models, clinical risk management and reviews, consumer feedback and responsiveness, worker safety and risk management amongst others.

Importantly, transferring these services to a health service model ensures they are delivered under a clinical governance framework that provides the oversight, systems, and accountability Council may not be compliant with. This umbrella of governance reduces risk to both community members and Council. With upcoming changes from the Department of Health set to increase clinical governance requirements, failure to meet these standards could place staff and community members at significant risk.

This model currently strengthens outcomes for children and families in Hindmarsh, Yarriambiack and now Campaspe Shires. It has potential for the same integrated, safe, and equitable care for families in West Wimmera Shire.

Options

Council understands that the potential transfer of services is a significant consideration for some members of our community. It is important to clarify that the intention behind any transfer is not to absolve Council of responsibility, but rather to form partnerships with community organisations that can help strengthen and enhance service delivery across our region.

Council remains fully committed to advocating for and supporting all services within our shire. In recognition that a transfer of service may not be the preferred option for all, we have developed alternative proposals for Council's consideration to ensure continuity and quality of service provision and address increasing clinical governance requirements.

Option 1: Proceed with the Transition of MCH Services to a Specialised Rural Health Provider

This option would see Council continue progressing the planned transition of MCH service delivery to WWHS, a provider with established clinical governance frameworks, staff safety protocols, and wrap-around service models in place. WWHS has stated their intention to maintain the existing MCH model, with the potential to enhance care through integrated access to their services such as NDIS, paediatric specialists, and other early intervention supports. This model reduces the need for multiple referrals, avoids families having to repeat their story, and aligns with service models successfully implemented in Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack Shires.

Benefits:

- Immediate access to clinical governance and safety systems
- Potential for enhanced service integration and timely support for complex families
- Reduces service fragmentation and improves continuity of care
- Aligns with regional best practice models
- Council would continue to remain engage with the new service provider without the responsiblity of service provision

Option 2a: Cease MCH Home Visits and Immunisations Temporarily While Internal Governance Frameworks Are Developed

Under this option, Council would continue delivering MCH clinic-based appointments and parent education sessions, while suspending home visits and immunisation services. If a suitable consultant can be identified, it is recommended that they be engaged to undertake a comprehensive gap analysis, develop an action plan, and support the implementation of key recommendations. It is anticipated that this process will identify the need for additional

resources and may include recommendations to explore partnership opportunities to support ongoing compliance with clinical governance standards.

Risks:

- Reduced service access for vulnerable families
- Non-compliance with contract obligations
- Fragmented care with multiple service providers and no shared case management
- Delayed response to family needs and increased risk to staff

Option 2b: Maintain the Current Council-Delivered MCH Model while undertaking clinical governance review

Under this option, Council would continue delivering the current MCH services while concurrently enhancing its clinical governance framework. If a suitable consultant can be identified, it is recommended they be engaged to undertake a comprehensive gap analysis, develop an action plan, and support the implementation of key recommendations. It is anticipated that the findings will highlight the need for additional resources and may include suggestions to explore partnership opportunities to ensure ongoing compliance with clinical governance requirements.

Risks:

- That we are not meeting the current clinical governance requirements of the service
- Incidents occur while we are aware of the possibility of non-compliance
- Additional costs to undertake a review and required remediation works
- Review identifies significant gaps in clinical governance and a transfer of services is ultimately the preferred option of remediation.

Option 3: Maintain the Current Council-Delivered MCH Model

Continuing with the current service arrangements without improving governance may limit Council's ability to effectively support staff and families, particularly when working with those experiencing complex needs such as family violence. Without a more integrated, centralised model, families may need to navigate multiple services on their own, potentially leading to duplicated efforts and fragmented support. Council would continue to hold responsibility for service delivery outcomes, including any challenges in maintaining access for vulnerable families.

Risks:

- Increased safety risks to staff and families
- Fragmented service delivery and poor outcomes for vulnerable families
- No access to integrated supports or triaged service pathways

- Full liability remains with Council for any critical incidents or service gaps for families knowing council officers are not adequately resourced

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

- **Reputational Risk:** There is a potential for reputational damage if service quality is perceived to decline or if changes to service delivery are not well communicated or managed.
- **Risk of Injury or Illness:** Inadequate clinical governance or reduced service levels may increase the risk of harm to clients or staff, particularly when engaging with families with complex needs.
- **Professional Indemnity Risk:** Without appropriate governance structures and compliance with clinical standards, there is a heightened risk of liability associated with professional practice and decision-making.

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Nil

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Community Engagement Policy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community
1.4 Deliver quality services that support community life.

Communication Implications

Consultation has already been undertaken in development of the plans

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

Extensive community consultation has highlighted the strong value local families place on MCH services. However, increasing clinical governance demands and the growing complexity of family needs mean that Council is currently not equipped to deliver these services safely and sustainably over the long term. Transitioning the MCH service to WWHS presents an immediate opportunity to enhance outcomes for families through integrated, comprehensive care delivered within an established clinical governance framework. This move also allows Council to maintain engagement with WWHS, which already provides aged care and other health services across the shire, including well-established facilities in Kaniva and Goroke. In contrast, failing to act may increase risks to staff and families and could result in non-compliance with regulatory requirements. Councillors are now invited to consider the consultation feedback and proposed service delivery options, and to provide clear direction to officers on the preferred future model for MCH services in West Wimmera Shire.

Attachments

1. Documenting WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service Final [**14.2.1** - 23 pages]

murdoch children's research institute

Centre for Community Child Health

Maternity and Early Years Service

Documentation of the West Wimmera Health Service's model

November 2024

Centre for Community Child Health

Maternity and Early Years Service: Documentation of the West Wimmera Health Service's model
Version 1.2

Authors / Prepared by:
Loretta Pilla, Senior Project Officer (Primary author)
Claire Jennings, Senior Project Coordinator
Julia Mayes, Manager, Policy and Service Development Unit

This report was prepared by the Centre for Community Child Health on behalf of By Five to understand and document West Wimmera Health Service's unique maternity and early years' service servicing remote communities in the Wimmera.

Suggested citation
Pilla, L., Jennings, C., and Mayes, J. (2024) Maternity and Early Years Service: Documentation of the West Wimmera Health Service's model. Prepared for the By Five Partnership. Parkville, Victoria: Centre for Community Child Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

The writing team would like to thank the WWHS stakeholders who took the time to participate in interviews that informed this report.

We also thank By Five, who provided design and editorial assistance and funding contribution in the preparation of this report.

This work is copyright. To request permission to reproduce any part of this material please contact the Centre for Community Child Health.

The Centre for Community Child Health is a department of The Royal Children's Hospital and a research group of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road, Parkville
Victoria 3052 Australia
Telephone: +61 9345 6150
Email: enquiries.ccch@rch.org.au
www.ccch.org.au

The Centre for Community Child Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and pay our respect to Elders past and present.

Contents

List of figures iii
Glossary iii
Background 4
By Five Learning Partnership 4
Health services spanning the antenatal to early years period 4
About the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service 5
Purpose of this clarificative evaluation 6
Methodology 6
Evaluation approach 6
Process 7
Data sources 7
Understanding the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service 8
West Wimmera Health Service 8
Governance 9
Staffing 10
Service locations 10
Service activities 11
Referral and Co-consultation 11
Quality Improvement and Evaluation 12
WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service: Models of Care 12
1. Rural Health Care Model 12
2. Relational Health Care Model 13
3. Feminist Model of Care 13
Practice Principles and Values 14
Theory of Change 15
Journey Map 17
What makes the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service work? 18
What are some of the challenges the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service experiences? 19
Next Steps 20
References 21

List of figures

Figure 1: The Department of Health's Capability Framework for Victorian maternity and newborn services 5
Figure 2: Map of WWHS clinics (WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service is also based at Dimboola – not shown on this map) 9
Figure 3: WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service Model of Care 14
Figure 4: Underpinning Practice Principles and Values 15

Glossary

AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AIHW	Australian Institute for Health and Wellbeing
CCCH	Centre for Community Child Health
CDIS	Child Development Information System
CT	Computed Tomography
GP	General Practitioner
HSP	Health Service Partnership (Grampians Region)
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
NMBA	National Midwifery Board Australia
OB	Obstetrician
WSM	Wimmera Southern Mallee
WWHS	West Wimmera Health Service

Background

By Five Learning Partnership

Children living in rural areas have many strengths and opportunities but at the same time are less likely to receive a safe, healthy and enriching start to life than their urban peers. Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data continues to point to high levels of developmental vulnerability and a growing gap between children living in the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM) region and children living in Melbourne, with higher proportions of children in the WSM region starting school with emerging health and development needs.

In 2021, a four-year funding commitment from the Victorian Government Department of Education was made to enable place-based actions to bridge the rural equity gap. A commitment to working with local providers and communities, alongside researchers, to co-design changes that work for and with our rural children was made.

With the permission to be flexible and adaptable, By Five are testing and trialling local ideas that create efficiency and improve access for children living in the WSM region. By Five also seek to identify and advocate for system and policy changes that foster better conditions for raising children in WSM.

By Five has partnered with the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, to support their work. By Five are focused on working alongside their communities to achieve better outcomes for their children.

Understanding the barriers to accessing antenatal care close to home and identifying proven solutions is one of By Five's core domains of focus.

Health services spanning the antenatal to early years period

Victoria employs a tiered system for **maternity and newborn services**, spanning six levels across both public and private sectors. The Department of Health's Capability Framework for Victorian maternity and newborn services outlines the roles of these services and establishes the minimum standards required for each care level. This framework ensures that maternity and newborn services are well-defined and adhere to specified standards to deliver appropriate care at different levels (Victorian Department of Health, 2022). The primary focus of maternity and newborn services covers the antenatal and birth periods, although there are standards for care relating to the immediate postnatal period following birth.

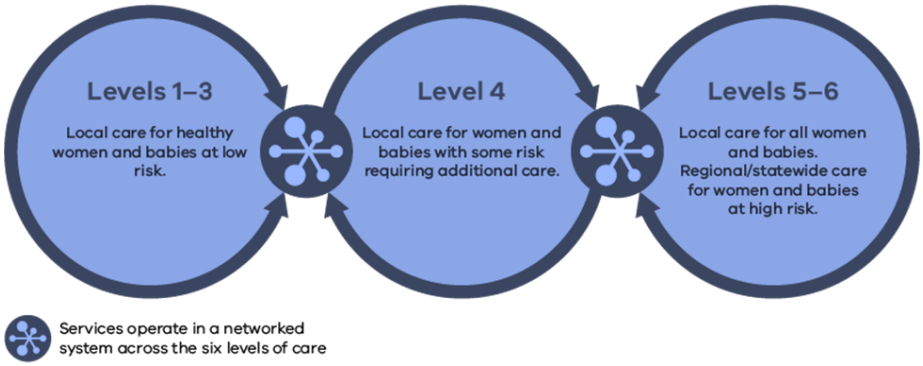


Figure 1: The Department of Health's Capability Framework for Victorian maternity and newborn services

Guidance pertaining to **postnatal care service delivery** is also provided by the Victorian Department of Health. These guidelines define the postnatal period as commencing upon the child's birth, through to approximately six weeks of age. Postnatal care continues to focus on both the mother and the child's health and wellbeing. These guidelines set out clear objectives and principles for implementation by Victorian public health services (Victorian Department of Health, 2012).

Victorian families and their children can also continue to access **postnatal and early years service support** via the Victorian Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service. This free service includes a univeral MCH program, an enhanced MCH program for families at risk of vulnerability and a 24 hour MCH telephone line. The MCH Service is offered from birth to school age (Victorian Department of Health, 2021).

A woman's experience of antenatal, birth, postnatal and early years services in Victoria varies due to a range of complex factors. These services tend to be offered separately by different providers in many local government areas. For example, in most municipalities, maternal and child health (MCH) services are offered by MCH nurses through council; these nurses are typically not involved in antenatal care. Further to this, there are different ways in which women can engage with antenatal care, though it is likely that women who live in metropolitan areas have more antenatal care options due to the higher number of local health services. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW, 2023) report that there are just over 1000 maternity models of care being used across Australia, with 207 of these models of care reported in Victoria. The most common models used in Victoria are: public hospital maternity care (40%), shared care (19%), and private obstetrician specialist care (16%).

About the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service

In 2022, By Five published *Antenatal Care in the Wimmera Southern Mallee: Understanding the Story* (By Five, 2023). This report highlighted a unique model of care delivered by West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) in response to the challenges of remoteness in the rural areas in which they operate and the demand for service by local women. Through the Maternity and Early Years Service, WWHS offers women a comprehensive place-based MCH nurse-led support model. This model allows for continuity of care to women living in Hindmarsh Shire from the early stages of the antenatal period, through to the child's fifth birthday. As such, this model of care goes beyond the typical timeframe of the maternity models of care described by AIHW. The perceived benefits of the model are:

- **Enables local care:** Women and their children in the WSM can receive local care close to home during these critical periods.
- **Fosters trust through continuity of care:** Women in the WSM region receive antenatal care from the same MCH provider throughout their pregnancy and early years, fostering trust and ensuring comprehensive care.
- **Supports a shared care model:** The service connects with local GPs, regional obstetricians, and other allied health specialists to offer a broad range of care and support services for pregnant women and families of young children.
- **Reduces barriers to access**: Recognising the challenges of distance, the service offers home visits and outreach clinics. The model combines multiple services in a single appointment, such as delivering antenatal education to parents while administering child immunisations during key stage maternal child health visits, ensuring that even the most isolated families have access to necessary care.
- **Optimises rural workforce:** The model utilises resources in a remote location, particularly in the context of rural midwife shortages.

The WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service has developed over a period of many years; there is currently minimal documentation about the model and how it is intended to work to achieve its desired outcomes.

Purpose of this clarificative evaluation

By Five approached CCCH to support their aim to improve documentation of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service. This report focuses on improving specification of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service.

Methodology

Evaluation approach

Clarificative evaluation (Owen, 2006) is used to identify various components of a model or program including key pathways or variables. This approach may also result in adaptations to how the model is specified. It is anticipated that clearer program specification enables better implementation, which in turn, increases the likelihood of attaining the desired outcomes. Due to the focus on building a shared understanding of the features of a model, this evaluation approach is well suited to enhancing the specification of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service. This stream of work will result in a) a well described and specified model of care, and b) a theory of change that articulates its key pathways or variables. The theory of change can be used in the future to guide further evaluation of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service.

The following questions were used to guide this clarificative evaluation:

1. How is the model anticipated to work?
   a) What are the key parts of the model?

Process

Given the limited documentation of the model and its organic evolution over the years, a qualitative approach was adopted to ensure an in depth understanding of the model. This evaluation was phased across the following three stages:

Stage 1 - Establish:

CCCH met with By Five personnel and key stakeholders from WWHS to identify potential interviewees and confirm project parameters. This was achieved through a series of email communication and online conversations. WWHS personnel also provided existing literature for review to inform the documentation process.

Stage 2 - Document:

CCCH conducted five one-to-one online interviews with identified stakeholders at WWHS. These interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes and were conducted between March 2024 - April 2024. These interviews were then coded and analysed to help develop a Theory of Change specific to the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service.

Stage 3- Refine:

CCCH conducted online sense-checking meetings as well as exchanged a series of emails to some of the interviewees to test for accuracy and to clarify any gaps in understanding. Sense-checking meetings were also conducted with By Five to ensure a deep understanding of the rural context. This iterative process was completed between May 2024 – September 2024. A final draft report was sent to all participants for their feedback.

Data sources

Data used to inform the clarificative evaluation was primarily drawn from the five WWHS stakeholders who were interviewed. Further to this, all the provided documents were reviewed, which included:

- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. (2023). *Australian Pregnancy Care Guidelines*. https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australian-pregnancy-care-guidelines
- Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services. (2020). *Guide to implementation of amendments to the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015*. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/safe-patient-care
- Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services. (2019). *Guide to implementation: Safe patient care*. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/safe-patient-care
- West Wimmera Health Service. (n.d.). *Hindmarsh Day Stay information brochure*. [URL if available]
- Level 1 Maternity Blank Framework
- National Consensus Framework for Rural Maternity Services: Maternity#2.indd (acrrm.org.au)
- Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine. (n.d.). *National Consensus Framework for Rural Maternity Services*. https://www.acrrm.org.au/resources/maternity2

- Australian College of Midwives. (2023, August 31). *National forum delivers key solutions for rural birthing challenges*. https://www.midwives.org.au/media-release-national-forum-rural-birthing-challenges
- Postnatal Care Program Guidelines for Victorian Health Services (2012)
  Victorian Government Department of Health. (2012). *Postnatal care program guidelines for Victorian health services*. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/postnatal-care-guidelines
- West Wimmera Health Service. (n.d.). WWHS Maternal and Child Health Services: Welcome Little One.

Understanding the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service

West Wimmera Health Service

West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) provides high-quality acute care, residential aged care, disability services and community health facilities to more than 22,000 people in the West Wimmera, Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack regions of Victoria. WWHS in Nhill has a longstanding history of providing maternity services for women, initially offering obstetric care at Nhill Hospital. In 2004, WWHS expanded to become the provider of MCH services for the Hindmarsh region. Although Nhill Hospital is no longer a birthing hospital, WWHS has developed a unique, integrated local model of maternity and maternal child health care for Hindmarsh women and their children across the period from conception to five years old: the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service. Facilities and resources available at WWHS, such as medication, diagnostic tools, and medical equipment are accessible to support implementation of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service. Information and communication technologies also enable remote consultations with regional obstetricians to review patient computed tomography (CT) scan results.

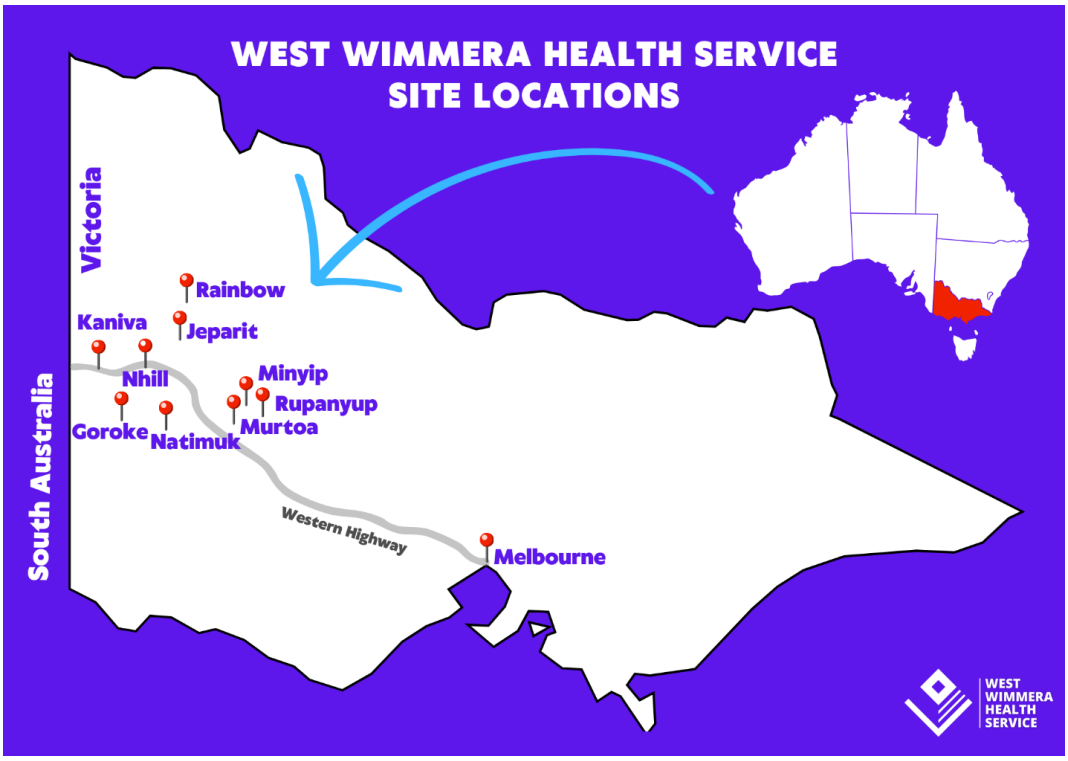


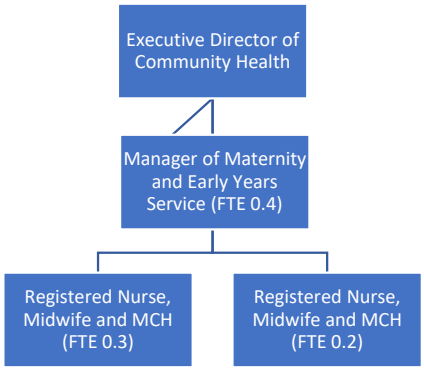
Figure 2: Map of WWHS clinics (WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service is also based at Dimboola – not shown on this map)

Governance

West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) operates across multiple divisions and campuses. The executive team at West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS) consists of several key leaders:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Executive Director, Business and Strategy
- Executive Director, Clinical Services
- Executive Director, Quality & Safety
- Executive Director, Finance and Administration
- Executive Director, Community Health.

The Maternity and Early Years Service sits under the Community Health division and is overseen by the Executive Director of Community Health. The following organisational chart illustrates staffing for WWHS's Maternity and Early Years Service:



WWHS is also a member of the Grampians Region Health Service Partnership (HSP). This partnership is one of five rural collaborations in Victoria and is comprised of public health services and hospitals in the Grampians region. The Grampians Region HSP has been formed to establish a more systematic and integrated approach to delivering health and hospital services across the partnership members.

The Executive Director for Clinical Services is WWHS representative on the Maternity and Newborn Steering Committee for the Grampians Region HSP. This group is responsible for mapping services in the Region and sharing learning of health services to ensure women receive appropriate care close to home. This information is filtered to those responsible for delivering Level 1 antenatal care at WWHS.

Staffing

In Victoria, MCH nurses must be a Division 1 Registered Nurse and a Registered Midwife. Additional qualifications must be obtained through postgraduate studies in maternal and child health nursing. Registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and participation in ongoing professional development is also required to maintain their certification (Victorian Department of Health, 2021). These extensive levels of qualifications place MCH nurses in a unique position to offer continuity of care for women in rural areas. The WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service is primarily coordinated and delivered by a MCH nurse employed at WWHS. There are additional MCH nurses who work alongside the primary nurse, to support delivery of MCH components of the service. Under the Level 1 framework, shared care arrangements are also in place with local and regional service providers (e.g., General Practitioners) and with staff (e.g., Obstetricians) at birthing hospitals.

Service locations

WWHS's Maternity and Early Years Service is currently offered at outreach clinics in four WWHS sites: Nhill (population of 2,401 people), Dimboola (population of 1,730), Rainbow (population of 672) and Jeparit (population of 477). These outreach services in Hindmarsh Shire provide care for women and children remotely dispersed across 7,527km2. Further to this, home visits are offered by appointment as part of the Service.

Eligibility criteria
All pregnant women living within Hindmarsh Shire are eligible for support through the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service. Referrals can be made formally by GPs, obstetricians at the mother's chosen birthing hospital or the West Wimmera Health Clinic. Informal referrals / self-referrals are also accepted for eligible women. Referral to, and engagement with, the Service is possible at any point during the antenatal and early years stages. For example, mandatory birthing notifications provided to the MCH team at WWHS help identify eligible women for the Service.

Service activities

The WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service comprises a range of activities that occur between conception and the child's fifth birthday. Examples of these activities include:

- Antenatal care (outreach and home visits)
- Antenatal immunisation, pathology and radiology assessments and follow up, where required
- Antenatal parent education classes (e.g., infant care practices, breastfeeding, and safe sleep practices)
- Referrals to relevant services and supports for vulnerable families – including the Hindmarsh Day Stay Program
- MCH Key Ages and Stages visits, EMCH visits for eligible families
- Child immunisations, and
- New parents' group

As part of all visits, MCH nurses working within the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service will ensure thorough documentation of visits occurs. Records relating to antenatal visits, assessments and interventions are securely forwarded to the manager of Maternity Services at WWHS. Records for MCH service provision are kept in accordance with the established MCH database system and specified procedures set out by the Victorian Department of Health.

Referral and Co-consultation

WWHS's Maternity and Early Years Service integrates seamlessly with the hospital's local allied health services, ensuring comprehensive support for patients. The model facilitates direct connections and referrals to various essential services, including:

- The Hindmarsh Day Stay Program
- Podiatry
- Physiotherapy
- Diabetes Education
- Massage Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Social Work
- Dental Services

The referral process is designed to meet individual patient needs based on risk assessments conducted by nurses. Referrals are conducted either in written or verbal formats, adhering to the hospital's standards to maintain quality and consistency in patient care.

- **Allied Health Services:** Referrals to allied health services are processed as needed, ensuring patients receive timely and appropriate care.
- **Obstetricians (OBs) and General Practitioners (GPs):** These referrals are made verbally or via email to guarantee comprehensive care for pregnant women to ensure communication and coordination among healthcare providers.
- **Co-consultations:** MCH nurses have participated in co-consultations with obstetricians. This includes obstetricians who work at birthing hospitals chosen by women living in Hindmarsh, as well as private obstetricians that have been engaged by women during their antenatal stage. This practice ensures that patients benefit from specialised expertise while receiving continuous support from their local healthcare providers.
- **Tertiary models of care:** MCH nurses maintain strong relationships with tertiary care systems, including Orange Door, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and through the regular use of the Royal Children's Hospital portal.

Quality Improvement and Evaluation

WWHS maintains a longstanding connection with Victorian Level 6 Victorian tertiary hospitals. This collaboration has facilitated quality improvement opportunities for the broader health service provider, which has enabled additional support of their Maternity and Early Years Service. These current supports to WWHS include:

- **Emergency Support:** Annual training is offered to all WWHS nurses on emergency births, ensuring timely and effective care during the emergency delivery and postnatal period.
- **Policy Updates:** In collaboration with the Chief Maternal and Child Health Nurse at Safer Care, WWHS has updated its emergency birthing policies to align with the latest best practices and standards.

WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service: Models of Care

The WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service is underpinned by, and seamlessly combines, key components of the following three models of care: 1) rural health care model; 2) relational model of care, and 3) feminist model of care.

1. Rural Health Care Model

A **Rural Health Care Model** (Wakerman et al 2008) refers to the unique strategies implemented to address the healthcare needs of people living in rural and remote areas, such as geographic isolation, limited access to healthcare facilities and specialists, workforce shortages, and socio-economic disparities. The rural health care model aims to overcome these challenges and ensure equitable access to quality healthcare services for individuals and communities in rural and remote regions.

Key components of the rural health care model reflected in the WWHS model include:

- **Shared Care:** shared care models involving a range of healthcare professionals, such as general practitioners (GPs), nurses, midwives, maternal and child health services, allied health professionals, and specialists, working together to deliver holistic and coordinated care to rural and remote communities that is accessible.

- **Digital health adoption:** Utilisation of mobile devices to bridge the gap in access to specialist services to improve healthcare delivery in remote areas. Mobile technology enables patients to consult with healthcare providers remotely, reducing the need for travel and improving access to timely care.

- **Outreach Services:** Outreach programs to provide maternal and child health screenings, immunisations, and early years education to ensure rural and remote communities are covered.

2. Relational Health Care Model

The **relational model of care** (Noseworthy, Phibbs & Benn, 2013) emphasises the importance of building and nurturing relationships between healthcare providers and patients, as well as among members of the healthcare team. This approach recognises that effective healthcare is not solely about diagnosing and treating medical conditions, but also about understanding and addressing the unique needs, preferences, and circumstances of individual patients within the context of their relationships and social environments.

Key principles of the relational model of care relevant to WWHS model include:

- **Patient-Centeredness:** Placing the patient at the centre of care and involving them in decision-making processes related to their health, considering the patient's preferences, values, and goals.
- **Continuity of Care:** Supporting ongoing and consistent relationships between patients and healthcare providers to facilitate continuity of care over time.

3. Feminist Model of Care

A **feminist model of care** (Andrist, 1997) aims to challenge traditional power dynamics, promote equality, and prioritise the experiences and needs of women within healthcare settings. It emphasises the intersecting factors that shape individuals' experiences of health and healthcare.

The key components of a feminist model of care relevant to WWHS are:

- **Empowerment:** Focuses on empowering patients to actively participate in decision-making processes related to their health and well-being. This includes providing patients with information, resources, and support to make informed choices about their care.
- **Holistic Approach:** Takes a holistic view of health that goes beyond just the physical aspects and considers the social, emotional, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of well-being.
- **Trauma-Informed Care:** Recognises and prioritises the prevalence and risk of trauma - including gender-based violence and birth trauma as a product of dislocation - and its impact

on individuals' health and healthcare experiences. Trauma-informed approaches promote safety, trust, and empowerment.

The figure below visualises these three models of care in the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service model context:

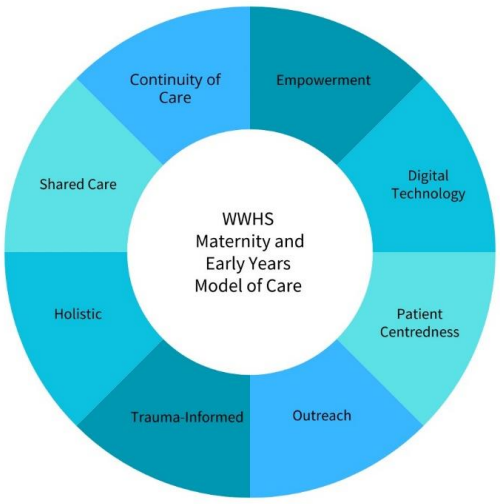


Figure 3: WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service Model of Care

Practice Principles and Values

Identifying and documenting practice principles and values is fundamental to ensuring that a model can be effectively scaled while maintaining its intended impact and integrity. The three underpinning models of care were therefore contrasted to interview data with WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service stakeholders. Consequently, the following practice principles and values have emerged as being particularly relevant to the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service:

Rural Equity: Ensuring fair, just and flexible access to healthcare resources and services for all individuals, regardless of their geographical location, gender, or social identity.

Women's Empowerment: Fostering patients' agency and autonomy in decision-making processes related to their health and well-being, while also empowering communities to advocate for their own healthcare needs.

Respect: Respecting and prioritising the preferences, needs, and values of the patient, ensuring that they guide all clinical decisions.

Holistic Continuity of Care: Taking a holistic approach to health that considers the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, social, and cultural factors, and providing a comprehensive continuity of care that addresses the full range of women and their children's needs and experiences, regardless of where a woman chooses to give birth.

The figure below visualises these underpinning practice principles and values.

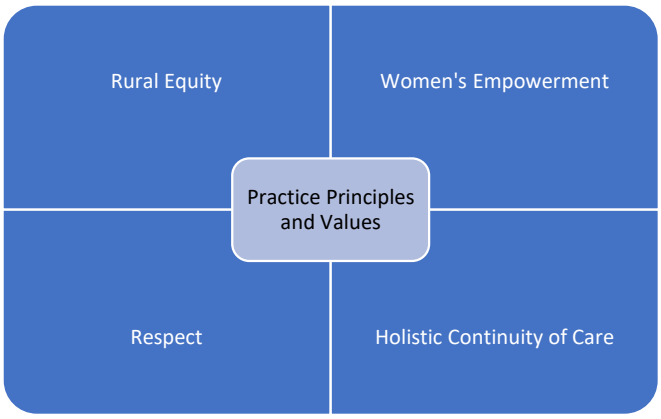


Figure 4: Underpinning Practice Principles and Values

Theory of Change

A Theory of Change provides a structured approach to planning, implementing, and evaluating initiatives. It enhances clarity, strategic focus, stakeholder engagement, accountability, and learning, all of which are crucial for achieving meaningful and sustainable change. The following Theory of Change has been developed based on the data collected for the clarificative evaluation. It is aimed at helping WWHS clearly define their long-term goals, their desired outcomes and the causal linkages between activities and results, providing a roadmap for achieving change.

If we do this…

Provide locally shared care for rural and remote women and their children living in Hindmarsh Shire, from the child's antenatal period through to five years of age.

By doing this…

Working with general practitioners, obstetricians, and WWHS providers to:

- Receive formal referrals from local GPs to ensure pregnant women receive local antenatal care;

- Utilise WWHS pathology facilities in Nhill to conduct routine Rh type blood tests, gestational diabetes blood test, urine tests in pregnancy, group B streptococcal tests;
- Utilise WWHS radiology services to access CT scans;
- Connect with regional obstetricians through mobile devices to read and interpret CT scans;
- Receive formal notification from any birthing service a woman accesses to ensure women receive domiciliary care post-birth.

And work with local stakeholders to:

- Provide educational programs to expectant and/or existing parents relating to education on infant care practices, breastfeeding, and safe sleep practices, to prepare them for the responsibilities of parenthood.
- Support families experiencing hardship through helping them connect with services such as The Orange Door, food and clothing relief, and child protection.

And working directly with our rural and remote women and children:

- To have an open door policy at Hubs where pregnant mothers utilsing MCH services and/or kindergartens can be identified or request additional care.
- To combine antenatal visits and maternal child health visits to ensure implementation of key age and stage (KAS) visits as well as delivery of immunisations to pregnant women and their children accessing services.
- To conduct home antenatal and MCH visits for women and their children living in isolated areas;
- To connect parents into New Parent's Groups.

Through applying our practice principles and values of rural equity, women's empowerment, respect and holistic continuity of care in all the work we do.

Then, this will happen…

For our regional health services:

- Increase optimisation of medical personnel in rural areas, including doctors, nurses, and specialists.
- Effectively integrate healthcare services to better utilise existing facilities and resources.
- Streamline the management of medical supplies, ensuring that essential items such as medications, diagnostic tools, and medical equipment are readily available when needed.
- Increases rural health practitioner capacity, knowledge and skills.

For our women and children:

- Increases opportunity for early detection and intervention of health issues for both mother and child, particularly for women less likely to access antenatal care due to remoteness.
- Increases the opportunity for women and families to make informed decisions and increase health seeking behaviour.
- Improves early intervention of developmental delays in children before school entry.
- Increase identification of pregnant women experiencing hardship who are then connected to local support services and resources prior to giving birth.

- Increases trust between care provider and women accessing services which leads to improved communication and feelings of safety.

For our communities:

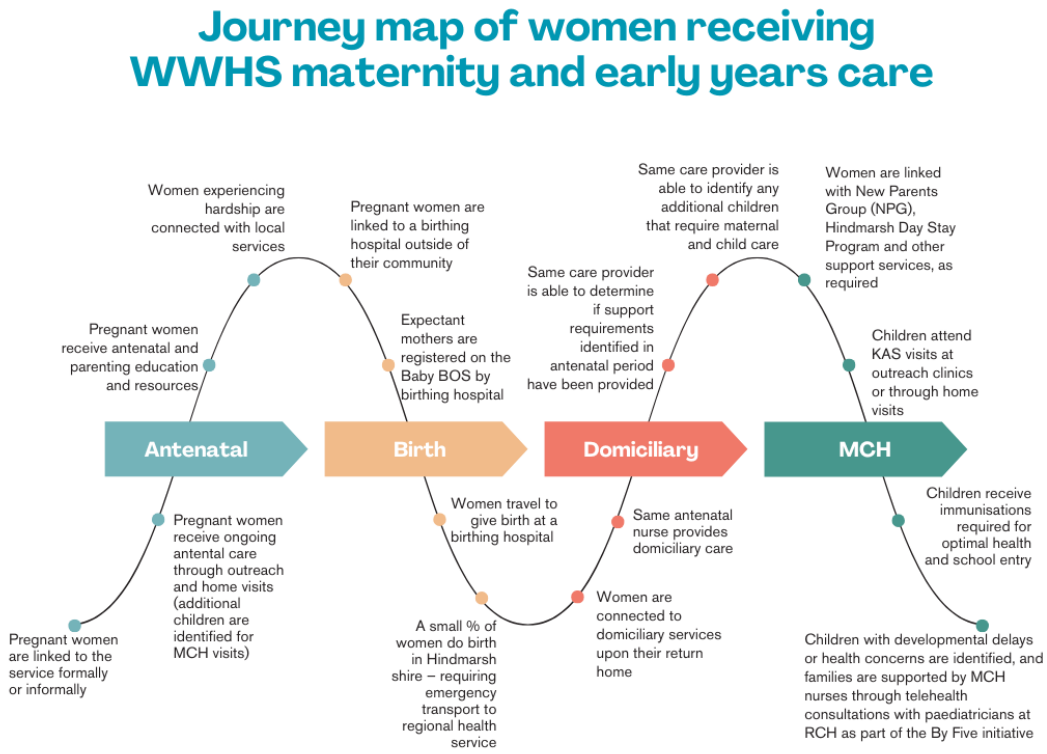
- Reduces health disparities by providing comprehensive and accessible care particularly for remote women and children who often face higher health risks due to limited access to healthcare.
- Reduces the economic burden on communities to travel long distances and take time off work to access healthcare facilities that are based outside of their local area.
- Enhances community trust in healthcare providers, encouraging more community members to seek care, follow medical advice, and engage in health-promoting behaviours.
- Increased confidence of mothers and families resulting in the increased ability to care for their children, and to the well-being of the family, creating a positive cycle of health and support.
- Improved maternal and child health outcomes can lead to more productive communities, with better educational attainment and economic opportunities.

And eventually lead to…

A collaborative rural health system that empowers women and ensures our rural and remote communities and families remain resilient, strong, healthy, and connected.

Journey Map

The following journey map helps visualise the continuity of care a mother will receive within the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service, regardless of where a woman chooses to give birth. The ‘birth’ phase of a woman’s pregnancy journey is not offered by WWHS but rather through the birthing service of the mother’s choice across the state.



What makes the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service work?

Through this documentation process, the following enablers were identified as supportive of implementation practices that are likely to lead to achieving the desired outcomes of the model:

- **Local Staff and Community Integration:** Local healthcare workers are often trusted and familiar faces within their communities, which fosters a higher level of trust and comfort among patients. For example, a community nurse who regularly attends local events and knows many residents by name can informally identify pregnant women in need of care and provide personalised support. This close integration helps bridge gaps in formal healthcare systems by ensuring that remote women are not overlooked.

- **Deep Relationships with Local Services and Beyond:** Building strong connections with local and regional GPs, midwives, OBs and allied health practitioner is crucial for a shared care model. For instance, if a midwife knows the specific capabilities and services of local clinics and

hospitals, they can coordinate care more effectively. Understanding the service landscape allows healthcare providers to refer patients to the right services promptly, ensuring comprehensive and continuous care. This network can streamline processes like prenatal visits, ultrasounds, and postnatal check-ups, improving overall health outcomes. It can also help build and foster connections between obstetricians based in tertiary level 6 hospitals and local teams.

- **Outreach Services and Home Visits:** Outreach services and home visits ensure that women in remote areas receive the care they need. For example, providing maternity services at an early years' hub in a remote area, providing prenatal check-ups, vaccinations, and health education. Home visits from healthcare workers ensure that pregnant women who cannot travel due to distance or mobility issues receive the necessary medical attention and support, preventing them from falling through the cracks of the healthcare system.

- **Based Out of a Hospital:** Being based out of a hospital provides access to a wide range of services and a robust governance structure. For instance, a maternity service operating within a hospital can easily collaborate with departments such as paediatrics, nutrition, and emergency care. The established processes and accreditation in place at the hospital ensure that changes in protocols or new healthcare policies are swiftly and effectively implemented. This integration enhances the quality and continuity of care provided to pregnant women and new mothers, leveraging the hospital's comprehensive resources and expertise.

These points assume the benefits of an integrated and localised healthcare services, particularly in enhancing accessibility, continuity of care, and overall health outcomes for women in rural and remote areas.

What are some of the challenges the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service experiences?

During the documentation of the WWHS Maternity and Early Years Service the following challenges were identified:

- **Centralisation of Services and Database Access:** The centralisation of services, including databases, results in limited access and transparency regarding which women will be birthing in various regional hospitals. Registration at a birthing hospital does not guarantee regular access to antenatal care. This situation complicates the continuity of care during the antenatal and postnatal periods, as local MCH nurses providing outreach care may struggle to deliver consistent and adequate education to prepare parents effectively.

- **Rural Workforce Development:** A significant challenge lies in the recruitment and retention of younger nurses, who often seek opportunities further afield. Effective succession planning is crucial to attract and retain young staff. However, Victoria's model poses limitations, as many

talented individuals leave for interstate positions where qualifications can be obtained more quickly.

- **MCH Nurse Confidence:** Nurses who have not practiced midwifery since their initial training reportedly feel inadequate to resume midwifery practice, suggesting ongoing training and support is needed. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding MCH nurses' confidence when adopting new technologies.

- **Community Awareness of Services:** There is a lack of awareness among some pregnant women and general practitioners (GPs) about the available maternity services. This gap in knowledge hinders the utilisation of these essential services, leading to unnecessary travel to regional centres.

Next Steps

1. Explore and understand how WWHS wish to utilise information documented in this report, in particular, addressing the following challenges:
    - Limited community knowledge regarding the service provision.
    - Limited GP knowledge about the potential for collaboration and service provision.
    - Need to build staff capacity and confidence in delivering ANC
    - Need for a Statewide database to ensure service providers can securely access comprehensive patient information and deliver more cohesive and effective care – similar to MCH's Child Development Information System (CDIS).

References

Andrist, L. (1997). A feminist model for women's health care. Nursing Inquiry, 4(4), 268-274. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1800.1997.tb00113.x

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023) Maternity models of care in Australia, 2023: Web report. https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/mothers-babies/maternity-models-of-care/contents/about

Victorian Department of Health. (2022). Capability frameworks for Victorian maternity and newborn services. https://www.example.com/Capability-frameworks-for-Victorian-maternity-and-newborn-services.pdf

Victorian Department of Health. (2021). Maternal and Child Health Service guidelines. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/node/17330

Victorian Department of Health (2012). Postnatal Care Program Guidelines for Victorian Health Services. https://content.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/files/collections/policies-and-guidelines/1/121022-postnatal-care-guidelines_web---pdf.pdf

Owen, J.M. (2006). Program evaluation: Forms and Approaches, 3rd edition. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Noseworthy, D. A., Phibbs, S. R., & Benn, C. A. (2013). Towards a relational model of decision-making in midwifery care. *Midwifery*, *29*(7), e42-e48. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.midw.2012.06.022

Wakerman, J., Humphreys, J. S., Wells, R., Kuipers, P., Entwistle, P., & Jones, J. A. (2008). Primary health care delivery models in rural and remote Australia – A systematic review. *BMC Health Services Research*, *8*, 276. https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6963-8-276



The Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road
Parkville 3052 VIC

www.ccch.org.au

14.3 Corporate Credit Card Policy

Directorate: *Corporate and Community Services*
Report Author: *Director Corporate and Community Services*
Report Purpose: *For Discussion*

Purpose

The Corporate Credit & Purchase Cards Policy is due for review and is presented to Council for consideration.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the revised *Corporate Credit & Purchase Cards Policy*.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That Council adopt the revised Corporate Credit & Purchase Cards Policy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

The purpose of the credit card policy is to establish clear guidelines and controls for the appropriate, transparent, and responsible use of corporate credit cards to ensure compliance with financial management, prevent misuse, and support efficient business operations. The Policy provides a comprehensive framework for the responsible use of Council-issued credit and purchase cards by authorised officers and the Mayor. It outlines the purpose, scope, and conditions of card use, aiming to streamline low-value purchases while ensuring strong financial controls, transparency, and accountability. The policy sets out clear definitions, usage limits, prohibited transactions, approval processes, training requirements, and responsibilities of cardholders, managers, and the program administrator. It includes procedures for card issuance, monitoring, reconciliation, and withdrawal, with defined consequences for policy breaches, including disciplinary action. The policy supports compliance with relevant Council policies such as the Procurement

Policy and Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and reinforces secure and ethical use of Council funds.

The Corporate Credit & Purchase Cards Policy was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 10 June 2025, where it was reviewed and formally endorsed. The Committee recommended no further changes, confirming that the policy in its current form appropriately addresses financial risk, supports strong governance practices, and aligns with Council's internal control frameworks.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

As with all policies concerning Council's financial matters, key risks include financial loss, fraudulent activity, and the potential for improper personal use of credit cards. The Corporate Credit and Purchase Cards Policy is designed to mitigate these risks by ensuring that Council officers and the Mayor use Council resources responsibly, act with integrity, and uphold the reputation of the organisation.

Financial risk

Legislative Implications

In Victoria, the *Local Government Act 2020* emphasises the need for strong financial management, transparency, and accountability—principles that a credit card policy can help uphold.

Section 101 – Financial Management Principles: This section outlines principles for effective financial management, including the need for councils to manage their financial risks and ensure accountability. A well-structured credit card policy aligns with these principles by setting clear guidelines and controls over credit card usage.

Section 106 – Chief Executive Officer's Responsibilities: The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the council's financial management complies with the Act's requirements. Implementing a credit card policy helps the CEO fulfill this responsibility by establishing procedures that promote transparency and prevent misuse.

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Nil

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Nil

Policy Implications

Fraud & Corruption Control Policy
Investment Policy
Procurement Policy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 4 – Good Governance
4.4 Develop a high performing accountable organisation.
4.5 Maintain a rigorous risk management framework.

Communication Implications

Internal training for all cardholders will be necessary to ensure understanding of, and adherence to, the policy. This will support consistent application of procedures and reduce the risk of noncompliance.

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The Corporate Credit & Purchase Cards Policy provides a clear and robust framework for the appropriate use of Council-issued credit and purchase cards. It supports Council's commitment to strong financial governance, transparency, and accountability, and aligns with relevant legislative obligations and internal policies. Having been reviewed and endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee with no changes recommended, the policy is now presented to Council for further discussion. Officers recommend that Council review the policy and suggest any amendments before it proceeds to the next Council meeting for formal adoption.

Attachments

1. WWSC Council Policy Corporate Credit Purchase Cards Policy draft DB 23052025 t [**14.3.1** - 13 pages]

Council Policy Manual
WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY		
CORPORATE CREDIT & PURCHASE CARDS POLICY	Policy No:	
	Adopted by Council:	~~16 December 2020~~ July 2025
	Next review date:	~~June 2027~~
Senior Manager:	Director Corporate & Community Services	
Responsible Officer:	~~Finance Coordinator~~Chief Financial Officer	
Functional Area:	Finance	

Introduction & Background	The usage of Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards (the card) is an alternative method of payment intended for purchases for which the use of Council's regular purchasing and creditor payment system is not appropriate. All purchases are to be in accordance with these guidelines. Credit cards can provide a convenient and efficient means of expediting the purchase process and reducing the internal costs involved to process a transaction. Credit cards are not a convenient alternative to seek reimbursement.
Purpose & Objectives	The purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidance on the use of all West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit and Purchase Cards. The objectives of this Policy are: • To have clear guidelines for usage of West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards; • To provide guidance on how a breach of the policy will be managed; and • To ensure purchases made via the card have appropriate internal controls and comply with the Council's Procurement Policy.
Response to the Overarching Governance Principals of the Local Government Act 2020	Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 state that a Council must in the performance of its role given effect to the overarching governance principals. This policy is in response to the following overarching governance principal/s of the Local Government act 2020. Financial management principles (section 101).

Definitions	**Corporate Card**: A Corporate Card includes a credit or debit card issued by Council's banker and specific supplier purchase cards. **Cardholder**: Refers to the Officer or Mayor whose name appears on the Corporate Credit/Purchase Card and is responsible for providing a clear audit trail. **Authorising Signatory:** In most circumstances, the authorising signatory will be the direct supervisor of the cardholder as per the financial delegations within Council's Instrument of Delegation. If the direct supervisor does not have the financial delegation, the next supervisor up line with the necessary delegation will be the authorising signatory.
	Program Administrator: The person assigned by the CEO under to be responsible for the administration of purchasing and credit cards within Council, typically the ~~Finance Coordinator~~Chief Financial Officer. **Tax Invoice**: Proof of payment containing the following information: • The supplier's ABN • The name of the supplier • GST Inclusive price of the taxable supply • The words 'Tax Invoice' • The date of issue, and • A brief description of each item supplied **Personal use**: Any purchase intended for personal use and any items not normally provided to an Officer or Mayor in the course of their daily functions with Council. **Unauthorised use:** Any instance of non-compliance with Councils policy or procedure by the cardholder or as a result of the card being lost or stolen or because of fraud.



Council Policy Manual
WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

Policy Details	
1.	**Scope of the Policy**
	This policy applies to all West Wimmera Shire Council Officers and Mayor who have been issued with a West Wimmera Shire Council Corporate Credit/Purchase Card. Cardholders and their Managers are responsible for adherence to this policy, ensuring internal control procedures are followed in order to reduce the risk of fraudulent or inappropriate use of Corporate Credit/Purchase Cards.
2.	**Relationship with other Council Policies**
	All purchases made on Council Credit/Purchase Cards shall comply with the following Council policies: • Procurement Policy • Fraud & Corruption Control Policy • Staff Code of Conduct (West Wimmera Shire Council Officers) • Councillor Code of Conduct (Mayor)
3.	**Inappropriate transactions**
	‘ Expenditure of a personal or private nature ‘ Cash advances of any nature ‘ Purchase of fuels for vehicles where the fuel card should be used, except for emergency situations ‘ Payment of a monthly statement or invoice received from a supplier where the transactions are usually paid by accounts payable ‘ Any item classified as a capital purchase ‘ Payment of personal fines and penalties ‘ Payment for any personal subscriptions or memberships to associations, unless authorised by an appropriate manager, director or CEO. ‘ Payment for travel, training, conferences or courses unless authorised by an appropriate manager, director or CEO. ‘ Incidental costs such as meals and drinks unless the officer is engaged in Council duties such as meetings or workshops ‘ The purchase of alcohol (except where incidental to consuming a meal) ‘ Splitting purchases to avoid the Procurement policy requirements ‘ Tips and gratuities ‘ Transactions when on leave ‘ Purchase of gifts and/or gift cards ‘ Medical costs related to employment i.e. doctors, physiotherapists, ambulance etc. ‘ Pay for an expense when reimbursement has been made (or will be made) to the cardholder for that same expense (for example, travel expenses)

4.	**Card Usage and Limits**
	As a guide, credit cards should be used: • When a purchase order will not be accepted by a supplier • When immediate payment is required to secure the goods/services • When it is a one-off purchase from a supplier • Where alternative payment options (ie. bank transfer, cheque or BPay) are not offered by the supplier • For small value transactions where the cost of processing through Accounts Payable is likely to exceed the cost of the original transaction. Credit/purchase cards are not to be used by persons other than the cardholder. It should never be handed to another staff member to use on your behalf, and if this occurs, it may result in disciplinary action including suspension and or cancellation of the card. Each cardholder is assigned an individual monthly credit limit based on their purchasing needs. A credit limit can be re-evaluated by written request submitted to the program administrator and CEO. Cardholders and card limits are to be reviewed annually by the senior management team and approved by the CEO. A register of credit cards issued and returned is to be kept and regularly maintained by the finance team. This register shall, at a minimum, include details of limits, issuance date, authorised signatory, and date their cardholder agreement was last signed/re-signed.
	Each card has a maximum transaction limit of $1,000 per supplier, per day, unless a different limit is approved by the CEO. All other purchases over $1,000 should be processed on a Purchase Order through Authority. Each cardholder is authorised to use no more than one card for each facility type (i.e. AMEX, Mastercard/Visa etc).

5.	**Authorisation and Issue of Credit/Purchase Cards**
	The initial application for a credit/purchase card is to be approved by the Director of the employee and the CEO. The application request must be in writing, then forwarded to the program administrator for action. Only employees and Councillors are eligible to be issued a credit/purchasing card. To be eligible, an employee must: · Occupy a position that has a regular and demonstrated need to purchase goods and services for use; and/or · Hold the Employee Procurement Authorisation level to commit or incur expenditure; and · Be able to satisfy a card provider "100 Point" identification check; and · Be willing to accept and abide by the conditions of use and comply with relevant City governing documents; and · Complete Corporate Purchasing Card training. Upon issuance of a credit/purchase card, the employee must immediately sign the back of the card.
6.	**Withdrawal of Credit/Purchase Cards**
	Credit/purchase cards are cancelled at the discretion of the relevant director, Program Administrator or the CEO. Credit/purchase cards are not to be retained by cardholders: • during periods leave for periods of greater than two weeks; • upon termination or resignation of employment; • if the cardholder is reassigned to a position where the use is not warranted/approved; • the card is insufficiently utilised (less than 12 transactions per year); • failure to reconcile the statements within the required timeframe; • failure to return the completed statement to the finance team within the required timeframe; • significant or systemic non-compliance with the policy; or • any other reason as determined by the Executive Leadership Team~~senior management team~~. The cards must be returned to the Program Administrator~~finance coordinator~~ or representative for safekeeping or cancellation.

7.	**Roles and Responsibilities**

7.1 Mayor and Councillors

The mayor and/or Councillors are responsible for reviewing the credit card transactions, typically via the audit committee. The Mayor may review the CEO's credit card transactions on a monthly basis.

7.2 Audit Committee

The audit committee are responsible for reviewing the credit/purchase card transactions of all cardholders upon request, in particular the transactions of any Councillor and the CEO, on a quarterly basis.

7.3 Chief Executive Officer

The CEO is responsible for reviewing and approving the credit/purchasing card transactions of the Mayor (and other Councillors where applicable). The CEO is also responsible for the following:

- Ensure cardholders and authorised signatories are aware cards are to be used for official business purposes only
- Assign a program administrator to manage the credit/purchase card program
- Assign authorised signatories to review and approve transactions and payments
- Ensure the efficient, effective and appropriate use of the credit/purchase card facility
- Ensure internal controls are maintained for the issue, use and acquittal of the purchase cards to prevent unauthorised use and non-compliance
- Set individual transaction limits and overall cardholder limits
- Review all instances of unauthorised use and non-compliance. They must also report any significant or systemic non-compliance to the audit committee, police and/or IBAC as applicable
- Determine the appropriate disciplinary action for non-compliance
- Approve the issuance and/or withdrawals of credit/purchase cards.

7.4 Program Administrator

The Program Administrator is responsible for:

- Issuing of Corporate Purchasing Cards and maintaining a register of all cards
- Conducting "100 Point Identification check" as required
- Assisting Cardholders with disputed transactions
- Forwarding appropriate documentation to the Bank
- Investigating reports of suspected or known breaches of procedures
- Arranging prompt cancellation or suspension of credit cards as applicable
- Ensuring cardholders and authorised signatories are provided the appropriate training, and agreements are updated as applicable, and ensuring cardholders acknowledge and agree with the responsibilities, liabilities and consequences of unauthorised use, and understand the policies and procedures established for card use
- Reviewing and updating the credit card policy and procedures as applicable

- Ensure cardholders have the appropriate financial delegation prior to issuance of the card
- Ensuring monthly reconciliations and reviews are completed in a timely manner
- Investigating all instances of unauthorised use and non-compliance, and reporting such instances to the CEO
- Issuing non-compliance notices to cardholders in regard to unacceptable use or non-compliance
- Reporting on credit card data to the audit committee on a quarterly basis
- Ensuring all records are available for audit
- Maintain a register of cardholders, limits etc
- Annually assess the requirement for ongoing issue of the card to current cardholders including limits and types of expenses

7.5 Authorised Signatories

When approving purchases, authorised signatories should scrutinise the purchases as if they were made through the mainstream procurement and payment systems. For example, are they for official purposes, appropriate for business use, have goods and services been received and is there sufficient supporting documentation. Authorised signatories are responsible for:

- Completing a detailed monthly review of cardholder transactions within 5 days of receiving a reconciled credit card statement from a cardholder, to ensure the expenditure is in accordance with the policy and account coding for the financial reporting is appropriate
- Reporting any potential non-compliance with the policy to the program administrator

7.6 Cardholders

Cardholders must always act in the best interest of Council (as opposed to personal interests of convenience), and perform their duties honestly and with skill and care. Where cardholders are unsure about a potential conflict of interest, the cardholder should refer to Council's relevant policies and discuss the purchase with the CEO. When it is unclear whether a purchase is for official/acceptable purposes, for example the purchase of gifts or flowers for staff who are leaving the organisation or are ill, they must take advice from their authorised signatory before incurring the expenditure. Cardholders are responsible for:

- Safe keeping of the credit/purchase card, including card details and security PIN
- Promptly informing the program administrator if the card is lost or stolen, or if the cardholder suspects any unauthorised use or transactions
- Ensuring they are present for all purchases on their credit/purchase card
- Reporting any disputed transactions to the program administrator and the bank immediately and ensure prompt resolution
- Signing the card immediately upon receiving it
- Ensuring the card is used only by the cardholder, and within the approved limits
- Returning the card to the delegated finance team member~~finance team~~ as required by section 6.
- Maintaining appropriate supporting documentation in the form of a valid tax invoice to verify the nature and amount of each transaction
- Where supporting documentation is lost, the cardholder must complete a statutory declaration confirming the nature and amount of the transaction

	• Ensure month end reconciliations are completed and passed onto their authorised signatory within 5 business days of receiving the statement from the finance team. ~~Refer to the Credit Card Procedure for further information on the monthly reconciliation procedures~~ • Ensuring there is adequate description on the monthly reconciliation to support the purpose of the transaction, particularly with regards to any travel or entertainment related expenses (i.e. meals, accommodation etc) • Ensure account coding for input into the finance system • Sign the credit/purchase card upon receiving it, and signing the monthly statement and reconciliation to verify the expenses are for business purposes only.
8.	**Training Requirements**
	Each cardholder and authorised signatory will be trained in this policy and the related procedure upon issue of the corporate credit card. Each cardholder will be required to acknowledge their understanding of the policy and responsibilities by way of a formal credit card agreement. Each authorised signatory will acknowledge their responsibilities by way of a formal authorised signatory agreement. When the policy is reviewed and updated, each cardholder and authorised signatory is required to be provided training on the updated policy, and must re-sign their cardholder/signatory agreement.
9.	**Breaches of Policy**
	The card is to be used in accordance with Council Policies and any deliberate misuse of the card will be considered a breach of Council responsibilities and will result in disciplinary action: • The first non-compliance notice will result in a suspension of the card for one week • The second non-compliance notice will result in a suspension of the card for one month • The third, and final, non-compliance will result in cancellation of the card. Further disciplinary action may also be taken as determined by the CEO. If a cardholder inadvertently incurs private expenses, for example, as part of a larger official business purpose transaction, the cardholder must notify the administrators and reimburse Council for all such private expenses as soon as practicable, unless: • The unauthorised use is due to a Corporate Credit/Purchase Card being lost/stolen (provided the cardholder to adequate measures to prevent the card from being lost or stolen); or • The use is the result of fraud on the part of a third party (such as a merchant). In all cases of misuse, the Council reserves the right to recover any money from the cardholder by whatever legal means are available.

	Any deliberate misuse of the card, or systemic non-compliance, may also result in termination of employment. Additionally, any breaches may be reported to the Police or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) as necessary.
10.	**Other Matters – Security**
	The security of credit cards is paramount. Cardholders must take all due care to ensure safe keeping of the credit/purchase card, including card details and security PIN. Cardholders must ensure there are adequate procedures in place for the storage and use of their card. Under no circumstance shall the cardholder allow the credit card to be photocopied. Cardholders must not provide the card, or a copy of the card, or the credit card details to someone other than the cardholder to allow purchases to be made without the cardholder present. **Review and Update** The credit and purchase card policy is to be reviewed at least every three years, unless circumstances are identified requiring a review and update to the policy. **Emergency Details** Should a card be lost, the cardholder is responsible for informing the program administrator to allow the card to be cancelled or suspended. Contact details are below: Program Administrator: ~~Finance Coordinator~~Chief Financial Officer Emergency Phone Number: (03) 5585 9927 The Program Administrator is responsible for contacting the bank to organise suspension and/or cancellation of the card Bank: National Australia Bank – Commercial Cards Centre Emergency Phone Number: 1800 033 103 (24 hours, 7 days a week) **Significant Losses** For the purposes of this policy, the value threshold above which an actual or suspected fraud, corruption or other loss in relation to credit cards is significant and reportable is $500. **Auditing** Each month the Cardholder will submit their Corporate Credit Card monthly statement to their authorised signatory who will review their purchases prior to submitting the statement to the finance team for processing. The Council's internal and external auditors may audit credit/purchasing card transactions at any time.

	Personal Rewards Cardholders are not permitted to tender personal rewards cards (e.g. "Fly Buys" cards) to accumulate points for personal use. **Records Management** The Program Administrator ~~Records Management team~~ is responsible for retaining all documentation associated with assigned credit/purchase cards in line with records keeping requirements including but not limited to applications and receipts for all transactions. **Emergency Management** Circumstances sometimes arise that require Council to invoke its Business Continuity Management Plan. In these instances, Council officers need to offer responsive support to the community and special provisions will apply. In order to assist officers in an emergency management situation, the Chief Executive Officer has the discretion to increase cardholder's credit limits should this be considered necessary. The program administrator will increase the credit limit on individual cardholders within the limits of Council's overall facility limit and the cardholder's financial delegation.
11.	**Supporting Documentation**
	All expenditure incurred on Credit/Purchasing Cards shall be supported by a tax invoice or receipt in compliance with the requirements of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*. If the tax invoice or receipt is lost or otherwise unobtainable, then a Statutory Declaration must be completed and signed by the cardholder. A legible copy of the Supporting Documentation must be scanned and attached to the expense as part of the monthly reconciliation process. A tax invoice must be requested for every purchase; an EFTPOS receipt is not a tax invoice & is not sufficient supporting documentation. When completing the monthly reconciliations, where a transaction has been made from a restaurant, hotel, motel or any other food and beverage providing business, cardholders must provide appropriate information to allow the finance team to split expenditure as required for Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) purposes. Limits are reviewed and set by the ATO each year.
12.	**Human Rights Statement**
	It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act. WWSC is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

Appendix B – Cardholder Agreement

Credit Card Cardholder Agreement

Cardholder name:	
Position:	
Accountable Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Authorised Signatory:	*<Position title of supervisor/reviewer>*
Administrator:	Finance Coordinator

I understand and agree that the Purchasing Card is issued to me on the express understanding that I will, at all times, comply with the following conditions:

Use

1) The purchasing card is the property of West Wimmera Shire Council and is in my possession and under my strict control.

2) I will not permit the purchasing card to be used by any person other than myself.

3) I will only use the purchasing card for official purposes.

4) I will immediately report any suspected or known unauthorised use of the purchasing card to the card provider and the program administrator.

5) I will not use the purchasing card to pay for expenses that have already been claimed (or will be claimed) by any form of allowance or reimbursement.

6) I will not use the purchasing card to pay for tips or gratuities, except in countries other than Australia, to the minimum extent expected in accordance with common practice in the country.

7) I will not use the purchasing card to obtain cash, except for prepaid debit cards, where cash may only be obtained if the CEO has authorised the use of the card for this purpose.

8) I can use the purchasing card to a maximum limit of $1,000 in any one transaction and to a maximum monthly limit of $ <Card Limit>.

9) My use of the purchasing card is subject to the following restrictions on transaction types (specify):
   - <Complete as applicable for individual cardholder>.

10) I will not split transactions on the purchasing card to avoid exceeding purchasing card transaction limits.

11) I hold a financial authorisation that is at least equivalent in value to the transaction limit in 8 above. For any transactions exceeding my level of financial authorisation, I will obtain approval from the appropriate officer as per the Procurement policy requirements prior to making the purchase.

12) I understand that purchasing information may be periodically reviewed by management, the audit committee, internal audit and/or Council.

Transaction/monthly reconciliation

13) I will be issued with a monthly statement by the card provider. I will ensure that all transactions that appear on the monthly statement are verified by me and that a tax invoice/receipt is attached to the monthly statement when it is submitted for approval. In the absence of a tax invoice/receipt, I will complete and sign a Statutory Declaration to verify the transaction. I will ensure that goods or services paid for using the purchasing card are actually delivered or provided. I will ensure that each transaction appearing on the card provider's statement is appropriately coded for accounting purposes.

14) I will sign the monthly statement provided by the card provider to indicate that the transactions being paid by the Council have been made only for official purposes and return to the finance department for processing within the requested timeframe.

15) I will ensure that credits are requested in relation to transactions made using the purchasing card as soon as I become aware of the need for a credit, for example, where a good or service is not delivered or not provided in accordance with original expectations.

Change in cardholder details

16) I will immediately advise the program administrator of any change in my name or contact details.

Upon resignation or transfer

17) I will immediately return my purchasing card to the program administrator if I resign or retire, or if my services as an employee of the Council are otherwise terminated, or if I am instructed to do so by the Accountable Officer or the program administrator.

Lost or stolen cards

18) I will immediately report the loss or theft of my purchasing card to the card provider and the program administrator.

Declaration

19) I confirm that I have access to only one purchasing card.

20) I acknowledge reading and understanding the WWSC Credit Card Policy and Procedure.

21) I have been briefed on all aspects of the operation and use of the purchasing card.

Cardholder Signature _____

Date _____

Accountable Officer Signature _____

Date _____

Authorised Signatory Signature _____

Date _____



Council Policy Manual
WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 18/06/15	Minute Book Page 30667	RecFind 15/002612
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 16/05/18	Minute Book Page 37956	RecFind 18/001838
	Council Meeting 16/12/20	Minute Book Page	RecFind E20/000398

15 Infrastructure Development and Works

15.1 Planning Scheme Amendment C38wwim Update Flood Controls in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Directorate: *Infrastructure Development and Works*
Report Author: *Manager Planning and Environment*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

This report discusses the process to proceed with Planning Scheme Amendment C38wwim that seeks to update the flood controls in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. **Request the written consent from the Minister for Planning under item 23 of the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee Terms of Reference to prepare and give notice of the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim to introduce flood planning controls, associated policy and material ordinance and mapping changes from the recommendations of the Harrow Flood Investigation June 2017 and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping June 2018 into the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.**

2. **After the Minister's written consent is obtained, undertake notice and engagement with the Harrow and Chetwynd communities and consider all submissions received for the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim to introduce the flood planning controls.**

3. **Where all submissions are resolved, or where the council does not receive submissions to the draft planning scheme amendment, request the Minister for Planning prepare Amendment C38wwim to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme under section 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, use their powers of intervention under section 20(4) to exempt themselves from the notice requirements of sections 17, 18 and 19 of the P&E Act, and adopt and approve the amendment under sections 29 and 35 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to introduce flood controls in accordance with the recommendations of the Harrow Flood Investigation June 2017 and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping June 2018.**

4. Where submissions remain unresolved, request the Minister for Planning to refer the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim and unresolved submissions to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee.

Moved: **Cr Richard Hicks**

Seconded: **Cr Jodie Pretlove**

That Council:

1. Request the written consent from the Minister for Planning under item 23 of the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee Terms of Reference to prepare and give notice of the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim to introduce flood planning controls, associated policy and material ordinance and mapping changes from the recommendations of the Harrow Flood Investigation June 2017 and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping June 2018 into the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

2. After the Minister's written consent is obtained, undertake notice and engagement with the Harrow and Chetwynd communities and consider all submissions received for the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim to introduce the flood planning controls.

3. Where all submissions are resolved, or where the council does not receive submissions to the draft planning scheme amendment, request the Minister for Planning prepare Amendment C38wwim to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme under section 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, use their powers of intervention under section 20(4) to exempt themselves from the notice requirements of sections 17, 18 and 19 of the P&E Act, and adopt and approve the amendment under sections 29 and 35 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to introduce flood controls in accordance with the recommendations of the Harrow Flood Investigation June 2017 and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping June 2018.

4. Where submissions remain unresolved, request the Minister for Planning to refer the draft planning scheme amendment C38wwim and unresolved submissions to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee.

CARRIED (4 / 1)

Cr Richard Hicks called for a division

For:

Cr Richard Hicks, Cr Helen Hobbs, Cr Tim Meyer and Cr Jodie Pretlove

Against:

Cr Tom Houlihan

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

The Harrow Flood Investigation was completed in 2017, and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping was completed in June 2018. The Planning Scheme Review completed in 2022 identified that the recommendations from these two studies have not been incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

Updating the flood controls in the Planning Scheme was identified as priority 2 in the Strategic Planning Work Plan.

In July 2024, Council adopted the Harrow Flood Investigation June 2017 and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping June 2018 via a resolution of Council.

In August 2024, Council was successful in attracting funding from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) that enabled the commencement of drafting an amendment to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

This report presents the draft amendment documents for the consideration of Councilors. Attached to this report are the following clauses proposed to be added to the Planning Scheme:

- Floodway Overlay
- Floodway Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding

Also attached to this report are the following Clauses proposed to be amended in the Planning Scheme:

- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding
- Schedule To Clause 72.03 What Does This Planning Scheme Consist Of?
- Schedule To Clause 72.08 Background Documents

Also attached is a list of supporting documents that form part of the amendment documentation. These include:

- Draft Amendment C38wwim Explanatory Report
- Draft Amendment C38wwim Instruction sheet
- Harrow Flood Investigation Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report
- Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report

The following maps also form part of the amendment:

- West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap34 Exhibition
- West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap36 Exhibition
- West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap33 Exhibition
- West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap34 Exhibition
- West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap35 Exhibition
- West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap36 Exhibition

Purpose Of Each Document Listed Above

The purpose of each document listed above is given below.

The **Floodway Overlay** is a State standard clause from the Victorian Planning Provisions. These State standard overlay clauses are often referred to as the "head clause". This is a new head clause being introduced to the planning scheme for the first time. The purpose of this clause is to allow for the Floodway Overlay to be applied to the planning scheme maps. The Floodway Overlay applies to the high risk area of the floodplain.

The **Floodway Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding** is the local (meaning West Wimmera Shire) schedule to the Overlay setting out the floodway objectives to be achieved, identifying what the risks are associated with flooding, and listing the types of development that do not require a planning permit under this overlay control.

The **Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding** is the local (meaning West Wimmera Shire) schedule to the Overlay setting out the objectives to be achieved, identifying what the risks are associated with flooding, and listing the types

of development that do not require a planning permit under this overlay control. It is a new schedule to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay, which replaces the current overlay schedule. NB: The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay head clause is already in the Planning Scheme and therefore does not form part of this amendment.

The **Schedule To Clause 72.03 What Does This Planning Scheme Consist Of?** Is a list of all the maps that form part of the Planning Scheme. As this amendment changes the name of some of the maps and introduces two new maps to the planning scheme, this schedule is being amended to include the new names and the new maps.

The **Schedule To Clause 72.08 Background Documents** is a list of background documents that have informed the preparation of, or an amendment to, this planning scheme; or provide information to explain the context within which a provision or clause has been prepared; or assist the understanding of this planning scheme. A background document does not form part of this planning scheme; however the list does form part of the Planning Scheme to provide guidance and direction to people reading the Planning Scheme on where they can find further information to assist in understanding the scheme.

The **Draft Amendment C38wwim Explanatory Report** is the document that provides the written response to the requirements of Section 7 (5) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) and is required for all planning scheme amendments. This section of the Act requires a planning authority to evaluate and document how an amendment addresses specified strategic considerations that are set out in Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

The **Draft Amendment C38wwim Instruction sheet** and the attached maps and documents to which it refers, constitute the amendment and provide the instructions for executing the amendment.

The **Harrow Flood Investigation Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report** is the document that describes how the information in the Harrow Flood Study was translated into the new Planning Scheme maps. This document is provided to assist the community in understanding how the amendment maps were derived from the Harrow Flood Study.

The **Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report** is the document that describes how the information in the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping report was translated into the new Planning Scheme maps. This document is provided to assist the community in understanding how the amendment maps were derived from the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping report.

The **West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap34 Exhibition** and **West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap36 Exhibition** are the two maps that show where the existing extent of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay is to be deleted from both Harrow and Chetwynd.

The **West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap33 Exhibition, West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap34 Exhibition, West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap35 Exhibition, and West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap36 Exhibition** are the four maps that show where the extent of the Floodway Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay will apply. The area within the Floodway Overlay is the high risk area of the floodplain, and the area withing the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay is the low risk area of the floodplain.

Next Steps

As identified in the recommendations to this report, it is proposed to utilise the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee process that has been established by the Minister for Planning under Part 7 of the Act.

This process requires that Council conduct community engagement with the Harrow and Chetwynd communities on the amendment and review and seek to resolve any submissions received during the community engagement process.

All submissions received during the community engagement process will be reported to Council, and should any submission remain unresolved, those submissions will be referred to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee for resolution. The advantage to Council to choose this process is a significant cost saving from having the Minister for Planning fund the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee, as opposed to Council funding an Independant Panel hearing. It is difficult to give an accurate estimate of the cost saving to Council, as the length of time required for a hearing is dependent on the number of submissions received. Independant Panel hearing usually cost $20,000.00 per day, and a hearing for a flood amendment can run for two to three days.

It is possible that submissions can be resolved, in which case there will be no need to refer the amendment to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee, however including this in the recommendation will ensure that the community have access to an arbitration hearing process to resolve outstanding issues.

The report by the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee will be presented to Council and the Minister. A date for a hearing at the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee has not been set, but will be determined prior to commencing community engagement.

Community Engagement

Community engagement has already occurred with the Harrow and Chetwynd communities during the preparation of the flood studies themselves.

The Harrow Flood Study was overseen by a community based Steering Committee which met on three occasions during the conduct of the study. Meetings were held on

18/02/2016, 02/06/2026, and 29/11/2016. In addition to these, meetings were held with the general Harrow community on the same dates.

Matters discussed at these meetings included:

- Understanding of recent and historic events
- Extent, depth and timing of inundation
- Dwellings, sheds and other assets at risk
- Impact or potential impact of channel decommissioning
- Potential mitigation options (asset removal, embankment construction)

One meeting was held with the Chetwynd community on 01/09/2017 to obtain input from the community on the extent, depth and timing of inundation; identification of dwellings, shed and other assets that are at risk of damage from flooding, and to identify impacts of flooding on structures, roads, channels etc.

The community engagement proposed for the amendment will include making all of the amendment documents available for view by the community available for inspection for a 1 month period. Drop in sessions will be held in both Harrow and Chetwynd during the 1 month period. Dates will be established for this period once Council has made its decision regarding the recommendations.

At the close of the 1 month period, Council officers will meet with submitters to discuss submissions with the view to resolving issues. Submissions that cannot be resolved will be forwarded to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee for resolution. The report of the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee will be presented to Council once it becomes available. The Minister for Planning will also be presented with a copy of the report.

The Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee report will include a recommendation on how to finalise the amendment.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

Environmental risk

Regulatory risk

Safety risk

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Planning and Environment Act 1987

Environmental Implications

Environmental Risk rating has been assessed as: High

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The financial risk rating has been assessed as: Medium

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Not applicable

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 3 – Sustainable Environment
3.1 Preserve and enhance the natural environment.
3.3 Protect and promote public open space and natural assets.

Goal 4 – Good Governance
4.2 Engage with the community in a timely and respectful way.

Communication Implications

Consultation has already been undertaken in development of the plans

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The recommendations contained in this report will allow the Planning Department to proceed with updating the flood controls in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme. The proposed process will ensure that the community are informed of the proposal and have te opportunity to make submissions. All submissions received will be discussed one on one with Council officers and the submitter with the view to resolving issues. Where issues cannot be resolved, the submission(s) will be referred to the Flood-related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee. The proposed process is cost effective for Council, and ensures natural justice for the community.

Attachments

1. C38wwim Amendment Mapping Report Chetwynd [**15.1.1** - 4 pages]
2. C38wwim Amendment Mapping Report Harrow [**15.1.2** - 4 pages]
3. Explanatory Report CMA edit June 2025 [**15.1.3** - 11 pages]
4. Explanatory Report FINAL DRAFT [**15.1.4** - 12 pages]
5. Floodway Overlay [**15.1.5** - 3 pages]
6. INSTRU 1 [**15.1.6** - 1 page]
7. Schedule 1 to the Floodway Overlay [**15.1.7** - 2 pages]
8. Schedule 1 to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay [**15.1.8** - 2 pages]
9. Schedule to Clause 72 03 What does this planning [**15.1.9** - 2 pages]
10. Schedule to Clause 72 08 Background Documents [**15.1.10** - 1 page]
11. West Wimmera C 38 wwim d-lsio-fo Map 34 Exhibition [**15.1.11** - 1 page]
12. West Wimmera C 38 wwim d-lsio-fo Map 36 Exhibition [**15.1.12** - 1 page]
13. West Wimmera C 38 wwim lsio-fo Map 33 Exhibition [**15.1.13** - 1 page]
14. West Wimmera C 38 wwim lsio-fo Map 34 Exhibition [**15.1.14** - 1 page]
15. West Wimmera C 38 wwim lsio-fo Map 35 Exhibition [**15.1.15** - 1 page]
16. West Wimmera C 38 wwim lsio-fo Map 36 Exhibition [**15.1.16** - 1 page]

Floodway Overlay

Floodway Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Schedule 1 West Wimmera Riverine Flooding

Schedule To Clause 72.03 What Does This Planning Scheme Consist Of?

Schedule To Clause 72.08 Background Documents

Draft Amendment C38wwim Explanatory Report

Draft Amendment C38wwim Instruction sheet

Harrow Flood Investigation Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report

Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report

West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap34 Exhibition

West Wimmera C38wwim d-lsio-foMap36 Exhibition

West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap33 Exhibition

West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap34 Exhibition

West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap35 Exhibition

West Wimmera C38wwim lsio-foMap36 Exhibition

Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report

June 2025

Author of report

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority

How to reference this report

Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report (Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025).

Overview

This report will provide an explanation of the flood mapping used for the Chetwynd C38wwim Amendment.

Name of original flood study

Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2018)

Does the draft amendment mapping reflect 'best available data'?

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority considers that the amendment mapping represents the best available data complying with the Victorian Planning Provisions Clause 13.01-1S.

Does the draft amendment mapping factor in climate change?

The Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2018) did not include the effects of climate change on flood behaviour. To align the draft amendment mapping with the objective of the Victorian Planning Provisions Clause 13.01-1S, the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event has been selected as the best representation of a climate change adjusted future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event utilising the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool in line with the Australian Rainfall and Runoff, Version 4.2.

Does the Catchment Management Authority or council have local policy on which emission scenario and time horizon to use?

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority adopts the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 to a planning horizon of 2100 when considering flood risk management and strategic planning. The planning horizon of 2100 complies with Coastal inundation and erosion strategies of the Victorian Planning Provisions

DRAFT

Clause 13.01-2S, and as Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority is a coastal Catchment Management Authority the 2100 planning horizon has been adopted throughout the catchment for riverine and coastal flooding. The Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 is used to ensure that planning decisions are made to protect the community under a wide range of possible climate change outcomes and their impacts on flood risk. Adoption of the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 provides for responsible flood risk management and planning outcomes that are sustainable to the 2100 planning horizon.

Explain the methodology used to update an original flood study to factor in climate change?

The draft amendment mapping has been prepared by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025. For flood investigations and intelligence prepared prior to the Australian Rainfall and Runoff Version 4.2 update, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority utilises the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool to determine a projected 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event for 2100. It should be noted that a limitation of the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool is that it provides an estimated 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event for 2090 as its maximum planning horizon, however Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority considers this a suitable proxy time horizon in the absence of flood information for 2100.

The draft amendment mapping factors in climate change using the following required inputs into the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool:

- Snap approach
- Initial Loss (mm) - 11
- Continuing Loss (mm/hr) - 2
- Critical Duration (hr) – 12
- Urbanisation (%) – 0
- Guideline – ARR V4.2 IFD and loss adjustment
- 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability
- Time Horizon – 2090
- Emission scenario - Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5

The WMA Climate Change Calculator tool projects that a future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood event under the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 for the year 2090 is equivalent to a 1 in 348.1 Annual Exceedance Probability historical event for Chetywnd. In Annual Exceedance Probability per centages this is between a 0.5 and 0.2 per cent event. The Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping produced modelling for a 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event, and as this is the largest modelled event and closest available modelling to the projected event, this event has been adopted as a suitable climate change scenario for the purpose of this amendment.

DRAFT

Has the draft amendment mapping undergone any other spatial changes from the raw flood modelling data found in the original study?

The raw Chetwynd flood modelling has been processed to produce the draft amendment mapping. A high hazard map extent was extracted using the following criteria from the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability mapping produced by the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd, 2018):

- Depth equal to or greater than 0.5 metres and,
- Velocity equal to or greater than 2 metres per second and,
- Depth x Velocity product equal to or greater than 0.4 metres squared per second.

Both the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent and the high hazard flood extent were smoothed through an automated GIS process and areas known as flood islands, which are areas fully surrounded by floodwaters, were filled in through an automated GIS process.

Within the Township Zone and Rural Living Zone to the north of Chetwynd (Mooree Road), the overlay applied was dependent on the level of flood hazard:

- The Floodway Overlay was applied within the high hazard flood extent
- The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay was applied to the remainder of the floodplain outside of the high hazard flood extent.

The Floodway Overlay was applied to the remainder of the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent outside of the areas previously mentioned. The decision to apply the Floodway Overlay to the remainder of the flood extent outside of the areas listed above was based on a desktop assessment undertaken between Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and West Wimmera Shire where it was noted that all properties within the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent were either entirely within the high hazard flood extent or had sufficient land available that any future development could be located entirely outside of the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent. This includes the Rural Living Zone to the south of Chetwynd (Casterton-Edenhope Road).

Minor adjustments to the mapping have been made to remove overlays from property boundaries where the area impacted is less than 30 metres squared. See Image 1 for an example of manual adjustments.

DRAFT

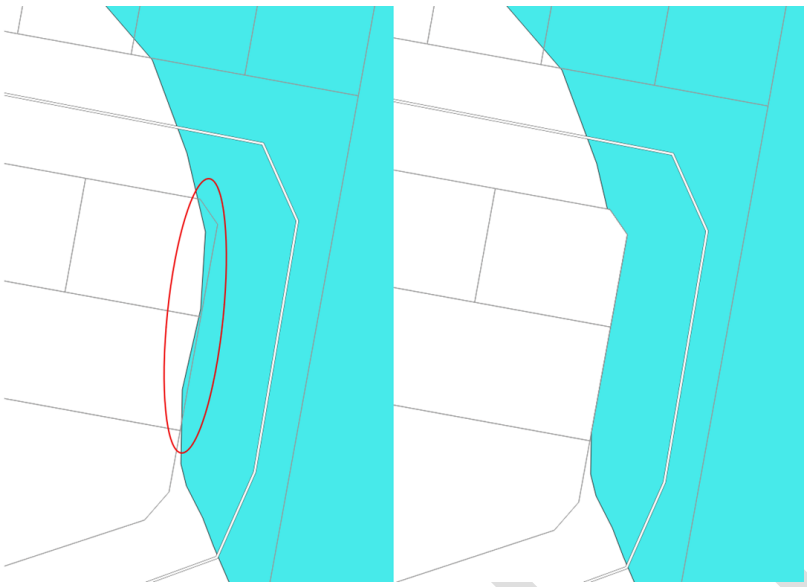


Figure 1 – Left: Properties impacted by amendment mapping based on flood mapping. Right: After manual adjustments have been applied to flood mapping.

Conclusion

The draft amendment mapping represents the best available flood information for a future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability by 2090 under the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 using outputs from the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd, 2018).

DRAFT

Harrow Flood Investigation Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report

June 2025

Author of report

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority

How to reference this report

Harrow Flood Investigation Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report (Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025).

Overview

This report will provide an explanation of the flood mapping used for the Harrow C38wwim Amendment.

Name of original flood study

Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017)

Does the draft amendment mapping reflect 'best available data'?

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority considers that the amendment mapping represents the best available data complying with the Victorian Planning Provisions Clause 13.01-1S.

Does the draft amendment mapping factor in climate change?

The Harrow Flood Investigation included modelling of 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 30 per cent increased rainfall intensity to the 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability hydrology, but only the 10 per cent increased rainfall intensity in the hydraulic model which produces the flood mapping. The flood investigation also modelled the 0.5 per cent and 0.2 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability scenarios. Climate change guidance for flood estimation has been updated since the completion of the Harrow Flood Investigation, with the release of Version 4.2 of Australian Rainfall and Runoff providing best practice guidance for flood estimation. The WMA Climate Change Calculator tool in line with the Australian Rainfall and Runoff, Version 4.2, was used to determine which modelled event was likely to best represent a climate change adjusted future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event, which determined to be the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event. The draft amendment mapping uses the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event as the best representation of a climate change adjusted 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event.

DRAFT

Does the Catchment Management Authority or council have local policy on which emission scenario and time horizon to use?

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority takes a conservative approach for flood risk management for planning purposes through adopting the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 to a planning horizon of 2100. The planning horizon of 2100 complies with Coastal inundation and erosion strategies of the Victorian Planning Provisions Clause 13.01-2S, and as Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority is a coastal Catchment Management Authority the 2100 planning horizon has been adopted throughout the catchment for riverine and coastal flooding. The Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 is used to ensure that planning decisions are made to protect the community under a wide range of possible climate change outcomes and their impacts on flood risk. Adoption of the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 provides for responsible flood risk management and planning outcomes that are sustainable to the 2100 planning horizon.

Explain the methodology used to update an original flood study to factor in climate change?

The draft amendment mapping has been prepared by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025. For flood investigations and intelligence prepared prior to the Australian Rainfall and Runoff Version 4.2 update, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority utilises the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool to determine a projected 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event for 2100. It should be noted that a limitation of the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool is that it provides an estimated 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event for 2090 as its maximum planning horizon, however Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority considers this a suitable proxy time horizon in the absence of flood information for 2100.

The draft amendment mapping factors in climate change using the following required inputs into the WMA Climate Change Calculator tool:

- Snap approach*
- Initial Loss (mm) - 35
- Continuing Loss (mm/hr) - 5
- Critical Duration (hr) - 30
- Urbanisation (%) – 0
- Guideline – ARR V4.2 IFD and loss adjustment
- 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability
- Time Horizon – 2090
- Emission scenario- Shared Socioeconomic Pathways 5-8.5

*Note that the snap approach includes the catchment upstream of Rocklands Reservoir and may overestimate the projected increases in flood magnitude.

DRAFT

The WMA Climate Change Calculator tool projects that a future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood event under the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 for the year 2090 is equivalent to a 1 in 139.3 Annual Exceedance Probability historical event for Harrow. In Annual Exceedance Probability per centages this is between a 1 and 0.5 per cent event. Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority compared the flood extents for the climate change modelling of the 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability with an increase in rainfall intensity of 10 per cent, and the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event and found that the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event was the smaller of the two. As the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event is the next largest event exceeding the 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability event it has been chosen to represent a suitable climate change scenario for the purpose of this amendment.

Has the draft amendment mapping undergone any other spatial changes from the raw flood modelling data found in the original study?

The raw Harrow flood modelling has been processed to produce the draft amendment mapping. A high hazard flood extent was extracted using the following criteria from the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability mapping produced by the Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, 2017) as the projected 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability by 2090:

- Depth equal to or greater than 0.5 metres and,
- Velocity equal to or greater than 2 metres per second and,
- Depth x Velocity product equal to or greater than 0.4 metres squared per second.

Both the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent and the high hazard flood extent were smoothed through an automated GIS process and areas known as flood islands, which are areas fully surrounded by floodwaters, were filled in through an automated GIS process.

Within the Township Zone, the overlay applied was dependent on the level of flood hazard:

- The Floodway Overlay was applied within the high hazard flood extent
- The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay was applied to the remainder of the floodplain outside of the high hazard flood extent.

Outside of the Township Zone the Floodway Overlay was applied to the entire 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent. The decision to apply the Floodway Overlay outside of the Township Zone was based on a desktop assessment undertaken between Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and West Wimmera Shire where it was noted that all properties within the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent, with the exception of a single property, were either entirely within the high hazard flood extent or had

DRAFT

sufficient land available that any future development could be located entirely outside of the 0.5 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent. The single property identified in the Farming Zone that did not meet this criteria had the overlays applied as per the Township Zone criteria above to not preclude development potential.

Minor adjustments to the mapping have been made to remove overlays from property boundaries where the area impacted is less than 30 metres squared. See Image 1 for an example of manual adjustments.

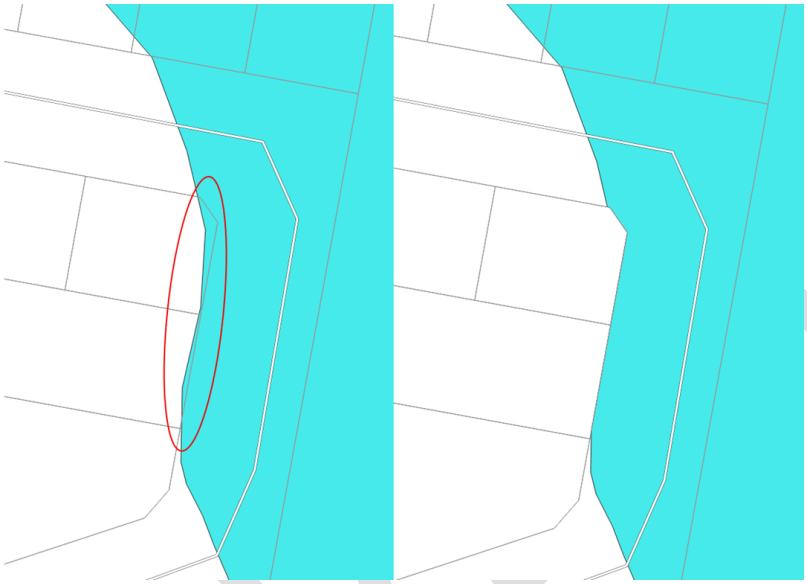


Figure 1 – Left: Properties impacted by amendment mapping based on flood mapping. Right: After manual adjustments have been applied to flood mapping.

Conclusion

The draft amendment mapping represents the best available flood information for a future 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability by 2090 under the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5-8.5 using outputs from the Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, 2017)

OFFICIAL

Planning and Environment Act 1987

West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Draft Amendment C38wwim

Explanatory Report

Overview

The draft amendment will implement updated flood modelling undertaken for local catchments within the West Wimmera Shire Council. It applies a new Floodway Overlay (FO) and modifies the existing Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to reduce risks associated with riverine flood events in the townships of Harrow and Chetwynd.

Where you may inspect this draft amendment

The draft amendment can be inspected free of charge at the West Wimmera Shire Council website at https://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Have-Your-Say.

And/or

The draft amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

West Wimmera Shire Council
49 Elizabeth Street
Edenhope 3318

West Wimmera Shire Council
25 Baker Street
Kaniva 3419

Submissions

Any person may make a submission to West Wimmera Shire Council about the draft amendment. Submissions about the draft amendment must be received by [insert submissions due date].

A submission must be sent to:

West Wimmera Shire Council
Attn Planning
PO Box 201
Edenhope
VIC 3318

Standing Advisory Committee hearing dates

If required, this draft amendment will be considered by the Flood-related

Commented [KW1]: We will confirm if this will apply

OFFICIAL

Amendments Standing Advisory Committee, appointed pursuant to Part 7, section 151 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to provide advice to the Council and the Minister for Planning on draft flood-related amendments.

Commented [KW2]: To be confirmed once the matter is reported to Council.

If required, dates for the [Name of Amendment] Flood-related Standing Advisory Committee are reserved for:

- Directions hearing: [insert directions hearing date]
- Committee hearing: [insert panel hearing date]

Details of the draft amendment

Who is the planning authority?

This draft amendment has been prepared by West Wimmera Shire Council. It is intended that the Minister for Planning will become the planning authority for this draft amendment.

The draft amendment has been made at the request of West Wimmera Shire Council in conjunction with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.

Land affected by the draft amendment

The draft amendment applies to land in the townships of Harrow and Chetwynd, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Commented [EL3]: Maps to be provided by DTP

Figure 1: Proposed Harrow FO1 and LSIO1.

Figure 2: Proposed Chetwynd FO1 and LSIO1.

What the draft amendment does

The draft amendment implements the recommendations of the *Harrow Flood Investigation* (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017) and the *Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping* (Water Technology Pty Ltd 14 June 2018).

The draft amendment reflects updated flood mapping adjusted for the inclusion of the impacts of climate change as per the *Australian Rainfall and Runoff, Version 4.2, Climate Change Considerations chapter* (Book 1, Chapter 6).

It applies a new Floodway Overlay – Schedule 1 (FO1) and modifies the extent of the existing Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – Schedule (LSIO) to land identified as flood prone in Harrow and Chetwynd to reflect this latest flood modelling.

Specifically, the draft amendment makes the following changes:

Overlay maps

- Deletes existing maps 34 LSIO and 36 LSIO.

OFFICIAL

- Inserts new maps 34 LSIO-FO and 36 LSIO-FO to apply new flood mapping in Harrow and Chetwynd respectively, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 and in the attached planning scheme maps.

Planning scheme ordinance

- Inserts Clause 44.03 (Floodway Overlay) into the planning scheme.
- Inserts Schedule 1 to Clause 44.03 (Floodway Overlay) to include objectives, a statement of risk and permit requirements.
- Amends the existing Schedule to Clause 44.04 (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay) to include new and revised objectives, a statement of risk and permit requirements. It also updates the naming convention to Schedule 1 which is an administrative change to comply with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) with a new Schedule to include the Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017) and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd 14 June 2018) as background documents.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What this planning scheme consists of) to include new planning scheme maps in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

Strategic assessment of the draft amendment

Why is the draft amendment required?

The draft amendment is required to reduce the impacts of riverine flooding in Harrow and Chetwynd by introducing flood-related planning controls to manage development in flood-prone areas. Recent flood events have affected these townships, and climate change is expected to increase the frequency of such events. Flooding poses significant environmental, social, and economic risks to the community.

Following significant flood events, the West Wimmera Shire Council undertook the Harrow and Chetwynd flood investigations to better understand and respond to the flood risk. These investigations reviewed flood water flow and behaviour in the study area and provide recommendations for establishing planning scheme controls in areas identified as being at risk of flooding.

The draft amendment is required to implement the findings of these investigations and will ensure that planning controls reflect the most recently mapped riverine flood risk in Harrow and Chetwynd. It will identify areas susceptible to higher and lower risk riverine flooding within the two small rural settlements.

Chetwynd, situated on the Chetwynd River, has a history of flooding, most recently in 2016. The settlement includes a community centre, fire station and a cluster of houses within the Township Zone and Rural Living Zone.

OFFICIAL

Harrow is located on the Glenelg River and Salt Creek (a tributary to the Glenelg River), immediately upstream of Harrow. It experiences riverine flooding from these waterways. This historic 19th century township is situated in a valley and includes the Johnny Murtagh Recreation Reserve, a commercial area and a residential area. It is mostly located in the Township Zone.

The draft amendment introduces and updates planning permit requirements to ensure that new buildings and works and subdivision are appropriate to the flood risk. The application of the controls will allow some development to occur in areas that are deemed lower risk but restrict development in high-risk areas. In most cases, the FO1 will prohibit the creation of new lots that are entirely within the overlay.

The draft amendment implements controls based on a 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood design event accounting for the projected influence of climate change. The flood modelling has been adjusted to incorporate climate change impacts as outlined in the *Australian Rainfall and Runoff Version 4.2*. The mapping aligns with the SSP5-8.5 emission scenario by 2090, see xxxxxxx [reference memo].

Commented [SK4]: Mapping report?

The new LSIO delineates land where flood hazard is relatively low and future development is likely. Areas within the LSIO have some potential for development but also carry some associated risks. If not managed appropriately, further development of land within the LSIO may worsen the social and economic consequences of future floods.

FO has been applied to the remainder of the 1 percent Annual Exceedance Probability floodplain denoting land where the flood hazard is high, or where properties are already subject to zone and other overlay development restrictions and have development potential outside the floodplain which is principally preferred.

The application of flood related overlays will ensure that areas at risk of flooding are shown on planning scheme maps, enabling West Wimmera Shire Council to make informed planning decisions based on the most accurate flood extent mapping available. The draft amendment will also provide landowners, purchasers and developers access to critical information in the early stages of the development and approval process, ensuring that new development is designed with flood risk in mind.

How does the draft amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The draft amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria as outlined in section 4(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as follows:

a) *Provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land.*

The draft amendment will result in the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land by addressing flooding impacts for the existing and future

communities of Harrow and Chetwynd. The draft amendment will regulate development in hazardous areas and implement a well-planned, holistic approach to waterway planning.

The draft amendment will assist landowners and occupiers to understand the potential flood risk and provide more certainty to the community. It will assist the Council and the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority to make more informed and effective decisions about land affected by flooding.

b) *Provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity.*

The draft amendment identifies and protects local environmental features by applying flood controls to protect the natural functions of floodplains from unsuitable development. The draft amendment will ensure that new development is appropriately designed and located in a manner that maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, and that future development does not compromise natural systems.

c) *Secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria.*

The draft amendment identifies areas prone to flooding and will ensure development is managed safely in and around the floodplains. This will assist in creating townships where communities can live, work and play safely and reduce the impacts of future flooding events.

f) *Facilitate development in accordance with the objectives.*

The draft amendment seeks to protect new development from the effects of flooding and minimise the effect of development on flood processes.

The draft amendment achieves the objectives of planning in Victoria by updating planning scheme provisions to guide development for the benefit of the Shire, consistent with state, regional and local planning policy.

g) *Balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.*

The draft amendment will reduce the impacts of flood events in the future, which will benefit present and future local interests. The overlays will create additional permit requirements, however, will ultimately benefit owners of new buildings, which will be less impacted by flood events. The overlay schedules have been drafted to balance the need for regulation with a desire to avoid unnecessarily impinging on the rights of landowners. It will ensure future development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the objectives of planning in Victoria.

How does the draft amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

The draft amendment is expected to have positive environmental, social and economic benefits for the municipality.

Environmental effects

The draft amendment will ensure that new development is appropriately designed and located for riverine flood risk in a manner that maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, and that future development does not compromise natural systems.

Social effects

Flooding can have significant consequences for individuals and for local communities.

Climate change and riverine flood risk could negatively impact on an area's future liveability. Planning provides an important function in managing the use and development of land in locations of potential flood risk.

Economic effects

Flood risk information will assist current and future landowners make informed choices prior to purchasing and developing land. This information will assist in establishing future housing, industries, tourism and community facilities in appropriate locations.

Does the draft amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The draft amendment meets bushfire policy in Clause 13.02 of the planning scheme. Much of the land affected by this draft amendment is unlikely to be intensified for urban purposes without subsequent planning approval. This will require consideration and assessment against the purpose and decision guidelines of the bushfire provisions, where applicable.

Parts of Harrow subject to this draft amendment are within the Bushfire Management Overlay and the whole of the draft amendment land is bushfire prone. Existing protections relating to bushfire, as set out in the planning scheme, will continue to apply to local development.

Does the draft amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the draft amendment?

The draft amendment complies with *Minister Direction No. 11, Strategic Assessment of Amendments*, which ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it produces. This explanatory report provides the required analysis of the draft amendment and the outcomes it produces.

The draft amendment also complies with the form and content requirements of the Ministerial Direction *The Form and Content of Plannings Schemes, section 7(5) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.*

How does the draft amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The draft amendment is consistent with the following clauses of the Planning Policy Framework and will assist in achieving objectives of the clauses:

Clause 11 - Settlement

This clause Identifies that planning for settlements must have regard to "*health, wellbeing and safety*" and "*…anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities…".* The draft amendment supports these principles by documenting and managing flood risk and reduces its potential for impacts upon the existing and future communities of Harrow and Chetwynd.

Clause 11.01-1S - Settlement

This clause seeks to "*to facilitate the sustainable growth and development of Victoria and deliver choice and opportunity for all Victorians through a network of settlements*". The draft amendment will ensure future development in the relevant area is sustainable and appropriate. It will also alert future purchasers of land to the flood risk. The draft amendment is consistent with the strategies of this clause, including "*minimising exposure to natural hazards, including increased risks due to climate change*" and "*support metropolitan and regional climate change adaption and mitigation measures*".

Clause 12.03-1S - River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs

This clause seeks "*to protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs*". The draft amendment achieves this objective as well as the following strategies: "*address the impacts of use and development on drought and flooding events at a catchment and site scale to protect the health and natural function of waterway systems and their surrounding landscape and environment"*; and "*design and site development to maintain and enhance the natural environment of waterway systems by… avoiding impeding the natural flow of waterways and future flood events*".

Clause 13 - Environmental risks and amenity

This clause states that "*planning should strengthen the resilience and safety of communities"* and should "i*dentify and manage the potential for the environment and environmental change to impact on the economic, environmental or social wellbeing of society*". It also states that "*planning should prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change*". The draft amendment is consistent with these outcomes as it adopts best practice environmental and risk management approaches in formulating updated planning controls, which intend to minimise exposure to flood risk. The draft amendment will also reduce the potential for development to detrimentally interfere upon important natural processes which occur in flood plains.

Clause 13.01-1S - Natural hazards and climate change

This clause seeks "*to minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the*

impacts of climate change through risk-based planning". Its strategies include: *"identify at risk areas using the best available data and climate change science"; "direct population growth and development to low risk locations"; "site and design development to minimise risk to life, health, property, the natural environment and community infrastructure from natural hazards*". The draft amendment achieves these objectives by updating the local flood modelling in line with the latest climate data.

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has updated the mapping for this draft amendment to account for climate change. It is based on the projected 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood design event while also taking into account the influence of climate change to 2090. The final modelling is primarily based on the original mapping but now also responds to the 'best available data' in accordance with Clause 13.01-1S.

Clause 13.03-1S - Floodplain management

This clause seeks to *"assist the protection of:*

- *Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flows.*
- *The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways.*
- *The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.*
- *Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland or coastal health".*

The draft amendment directly implements this policy as the updated flood mapping and new controls will provide enhanced protection for people and assets (built and natural) within the floodplain.

Clause 19.03-3S - Integrated water management

This clause seeks to "*sustainably manage water supply and demand, water resources, wastewater, drainage and stormwater through an integrated water management approach*". Strategies include plan and coordinate water management to minimise flood risk and provide environments which are more resilient to climate change. The draft amendment assists with integrated water management responses by implementing overlays which will guide decision making and help inform a holistic approach to water management.

How does the draft amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The draft amendment will support the Municipal Planning Strategy as follows:

The draft amendment is consistent with Council's Vision at 02.02, which is to ensure the community is "*healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous and self-sustaining*", and the following strategic objectives:

- *"Strategic objective 6: addressing health and wellbeing issues.*
- *Strategic objective 7: providing access to and promoting the natural environment".*

Clause 02.03-1 - Settlement

This clause describes Harrow as one of the municipality's predominant towns, which is "*particularly picturesque*" and a "*small pastoral town located on the banks of the Glenelg River, beneath the rolling hills and grand old red gums*". Strategic objectives of this clause include to "*minimise any detrimental impact development has on the landscape, the environment and the existing character*". The updated flood mapping will minimise the impact of new development on the river corridors and flood plains.

Clause 02.03-2 - Environmental and landscape values

This clause identifies that the decline and fragmentation of indigenous vegetation and loss of biodiversity is a major environmental issue in the Shire, and a contributing factor towards all other land and water degradation issues. In terms of waterways, this clause states that the lake system is an important environmental, cultural and economic feature and care is needed to ensure that the qualities of the significant waterways of the municipality are not degraded by upstream activities. Strategic directions of this clause include:

- *"Ensure small rural lots do not occur in environmentally sensitive areas.*
- *Maintain the environmental values of significant water courses, lakes and wetlands".*

Both the FO and LSIO trigger a requirement for a permit for subdivision which will ensure inappropriate new lots are not created in areas susceptible to flooding in the future. Together with the buildings and works provisions this will also improve the protection of the subject waterways.

Clause 02.03-3 - Environmental risks and amenity

This clause identifies that the Shire's agricultural base means that potential risks from climate change are significant. The draft amendment implements the following strategic direction which is identified in this clause: "*Adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning*".

This clause also identifies that: "*Some areas within the municipality are subjected to flooding and inundation from storms and flood events…".* The related strategic direction from this clause is to "*minimise the impact of flooding on the community by preventing inappropriately located use and development*". The draft amendment is consistent with this direction.

Overall, the Municipal Planning Strategy identifies flood risk as a local issue. The draft amendment directly responds to and aligns with this policy and does not necessitate any related modifications to policy.

OFFICIAL

Does the draft amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The draft amendment utilises the appropriate controls from the Victoria Planning Provisions. Consideration was given to the level of flood risk, depth and velocity of flood waters in choosing the proposed overlays. The draft amendment is also consistent with *Planning Practice Note 12: Applying the Flood Provisions in Planning Schemes* (PPN12).

PPN12 identifies that the LSIO and the FO can apply to mainstream flooding in rural and urban areas and are suitable where there is a need to control development but not use. The FO is generally applied to areas at higher flood risk than the LSIO. The Harrow and Chetwynd flood investigations identify flood extents and the level of applicable risk within that extent. The two overlays have been applied accordingly, which is consistent with PPN12.

The planning permit exemptions set out in the schedules to each of the overlays (FO1 and LSIO1) correspond to the level of flood risk.

How does the draft amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The draft amendment has been prepared in consultation with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, which is the relevant floodplain manager and recommending referral authority under Clause 66.03 of the planning scheme.

The extent and configuration of the mapping for the overlays, along with the application of the schedules is supported by Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority. Other agencies will be consulted via the exhibition process of this draft amendment.

Does the draft amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The draft amendment will not impact upon the transport system objectives and decision-making principles as set out in the Transport Integration Act 2010. The draft amendment identifies flood risk but has no direct impact on the transport system.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The draft amendment will have some impact on the resources of the responsible authority, as it will increase land contained within a flooding overlay and in turn create some additional planning permit triggers. The land subject to the draft amendment though is relatively confined and the overlay schedules have been prepared to reduce as many unnecessary permit triggers as possible, without

compromising the purpose or effect of the overlays.

Any costs from increased permit activity meets the test for net community benefit when compared with the benefits associated with ensuring development responds to flooding and the reduced demands on the Council's emergency management response and recovery resources from flooding events.

OFFICIAL

Planning and Environment Act 1987

West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Draft Amendment C38wwim

Explanatory Report

Overview

The draft amendment will implement updated flood modelling undertaken for local catchments within the West Wimmera Shire Council. It applies a new Floodway Overlay (FO) and modifies the existing Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to reduce risks associated with riverine flood events in the townships of Harrow and Chetwynd.

Where you may inspect this draft amendment

The draft amendment can be inspected free of charge at the West Wimmera Shire Council website at https://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Have-Your-Say.

And/or

The draft amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

West Wimmera Shire Council
49 Elizabeth Street
Edenhope 3318

West Wimmera Shire Council
25 Baker Street
Kaniva 3419

Submissions

Any person may make a submission to West Wimmera Shire Council about the draft amendment. Submissions about the draft amendment must be received by [insert submissions due date].

A submission must be sent to:

West Wimmera Shire Council
Attn Planning
PO Box 201
Edenhope
VIC 3318

Standing Advisory Committee hearing dates

If required, this draft amendment will be considered by the Flood-related

Amendments Standing Advisory Committee, appointed pursuant to Part 7, section 151 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to provide advice to the Council and the Minister for Planning on draft flood-related amendments.

If required, dates for the Amendment C38wwim Flood-related Standing Advisory Committee are reserved for:

- Directions hearing: [insert directions hearing date]
- Committee hearing: [insert panel hearing date]

Details of the draft amendment

Who is the planning authority?

This draft amendment has been prepared by West Wimmera Shire Council. It is intended that the Minister for Planning will become the planning authority for this draft amendment.

The draft amendment has been made at the request of West Wimmera Shire Council in conjunction with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.

Land affected by the draft amendment

The draft amendment applies to land in the townships of Harrow and Chetwynd, as shown in Figures 1 and 2.

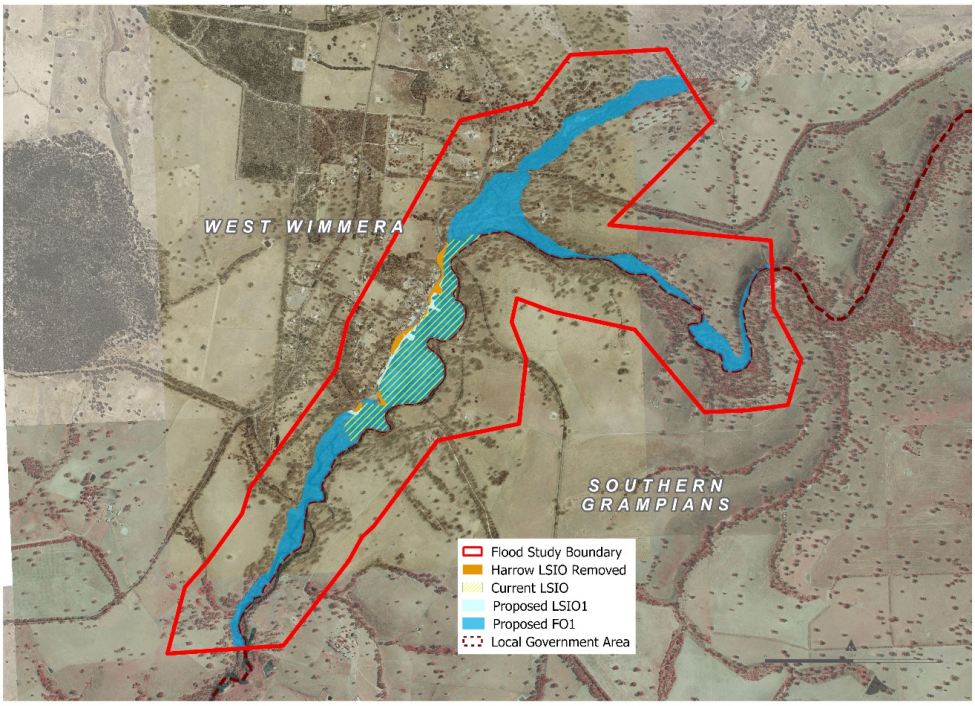


Figure 1: Proposed Harrow FO1 and LSIO1.

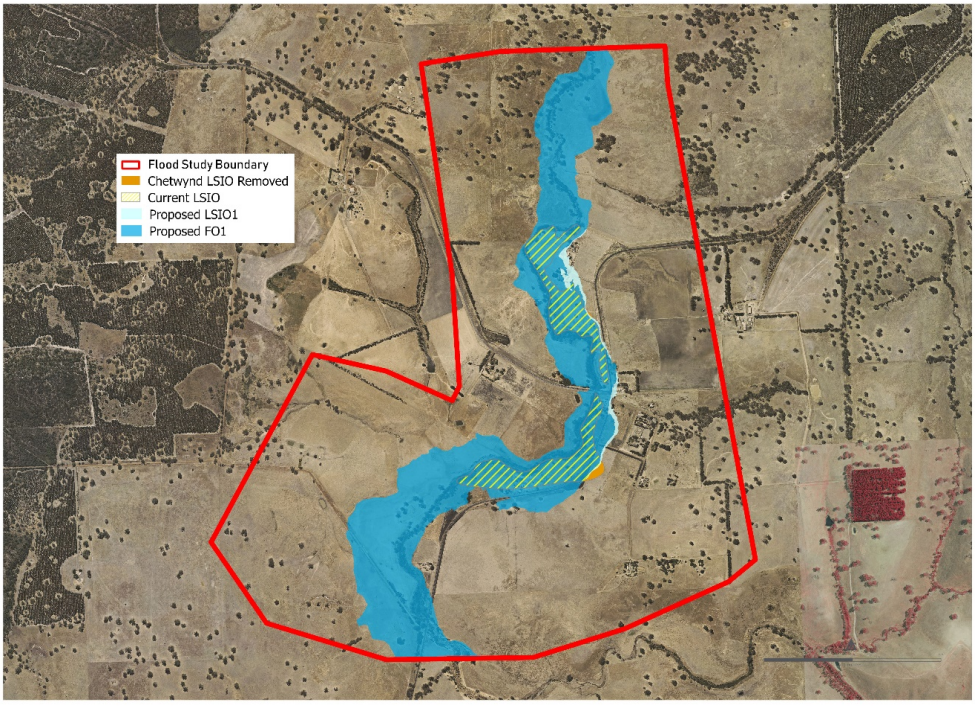


Figure 2: Proposed Chetwynd FO1 and LSIO1.

What the draft amendment does

The draft amendment implements the recommendations of the *Harrow Flood Investigation* (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017) and the *Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping* (Water Technology Pty Ltd 14 June 2018).

The draft amendment reflects updated flood mapping adjusted for the inclusion of the impacts of climate change as per the *Australian Rainfall and Runoff, Version 4.2, Climate Change Considerations chapter* (Book 1, Chapter 6).

It applies a new Floodway Overlay – Schedule 1 (FO1) and modifies the extent of the existing Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – Schedule (LSIO) to land identified as flood prone in Harrow and Chetwynd to reflect this latest flood modelling.

Specifically, the draft amendment makes the following changes:

Overlay maps

- Deletes existing maps 34 LSIO and 36 LSIO.
- Inserts new maps 34 LSIO-FO and 36 LSIO-FO to apply new flood mapping in Harrow and Chetwynd respectively, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 and in the attached planning scheme maps.

Planning scheme ordinance

- Inserts Clause 44.03 (Floodway Overlay) into the planning scheme.
- Inserts Schedule 1 to Clause 44.03 (Floodway Overlay) to include objectives, a statement of risk and permit requirements.
- Amends the existing Schedule to Clause 44.04 (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay) to include new and revised objectives, a statement of risk and permit requirements. It also updates the naming convention to Schedule 1 which is an administrative change to comply with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) with a new Schedule to include the Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017) and the Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd 14 June 2018) as background documents.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What this planning scheme consists of) to include new planning scheme maps in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

Strategic assessment of the draft amendment

Why is the draft amendment required?

The draft amendment is required to reduce the impacts of riverine flooding in Harrow and Chetwynd by introducing flood-related planning controls to manage development in flood-prone areas. Recent flood events have affected these townships, and climate change is expected to increase the frequency of such events. Flooding poses significant environmental, social, and economic risks to the community.

Following significant flood events, the West Wimmera Shire Council undertook the Harrow and Chetwynd flood investigations to better understand and respond to the flood risk. These investigations reviewed flood water flow and behaviour in the study area and provide recommendations for establishing planning scheme controls in areas identified as being at risk of flooding.

The draft amendment is required to implement the findings of these investigations and will ensure that planning controls reflect the most recently mapped riverine flood risk in Harrow and Chetwynd. It will identify areas susceptible to higher and lower risk riverine flooding within the two small rural settlements.

Chetwynd, situated on the Chetwynd River, has a history of flooding, most recently in 2016. The settlement includes a community centre, fire station and a cluster of houses within the Township Zone and Rural Living Zone.

Harrow is located on the Glenelg River and Salt Creek (a tributary to the Glenelg River), immediately upstream of Harrow. It experiences riverine flooding from these waterways. This historic 19th century township is situated in a valley and includes the Johnny Murtagh Recreation Reserve, a commercial area and a residential area. It is mostly located in the Township Zone.

The draft amendment introduces and updates planning permit requirements to ensure that new buildings and works and subdivision are appropriate to the flood risk. The application of the controls will allow some development to occur in areas that are deemed lower risk but restrict development in high-risk areas. In most cases, the FO1 will prohibit the creation of new lots that are entirely within the overlay.

The draft amendment implements controls based on a 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood design event accounting for the projected influence of climate change. The flood modelling has been adjusted to incorporate climate change impacts as outlined in the *Australian Rainfall and Runoff Version 4.2*. The mapping aligns with the SSP5-8.5 emission scenario by 2090 (see Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report (Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025) and the Harrow Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping Amendment C38wwim Mapping Report (Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, 2025)).

The new LSIO delineates land where flood hazard is relatively low and future development is likely. Areas within the LSIO have some potential for development but also carry some associated risks. If not managed appropriately, further development of land within the LSIO may worsen the social and economic consequences of future floods.

FO has been applied to the remainder of the 1 percent Annual Exceedance Probability floodplain denoting land where the flood hazard is high, or where properties are already subject to zone and other overlay development restrictions and have development potential outside the floodplain which is principally preferred.

The application of flood related overlays will ensure that areas at risk of flooding are shown on planning scheme maps, enabling West Wimmera Shire Council to make informed planning decisions based on the most accurate flood extent mapping available. The draft amendment will also provide landowners, purchasers and developers access to critical information in the early stages of the development and approval process, ensuring that new development is designed with flood risk in mind.

How does the draft amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The draft amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria as outlined in section 4(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as follows:

a) *Provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land.*

The draft amendment will result in the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land by addressing flooding impacts for the existing and future communities of Harrow and Chetwynd. The draft amendment will regulate development in hazardous areas and implement a well-planned, holistic approach to

waterway planning.

The draft amendment will assist landowners and occupiers to understand the potential flood risk and provide more certainty to the community. It will assist the Council and the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority to make more informed and effective decisions about land affected by flooding.

b) *Provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity.*

The draft amendment identifies and protects local environmental features by applying flood controls to protect the natural functions of floodplains from unsuitable development. The draft amendment will ensure that new development is appropriately designed and located in a manner that maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, and that future development does not compromise natural systems.

c) *Secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria.*

The draft amendment identifies areas prone to flooding and will ensure development is managed safely in and around the floodplains. This will assist in creating townships where communities can live, work and play safely and reduce the impacts of future flooding events.

f) *Facilitate development in accordance with the objectives.*

The draft amendment seeks to protect new development from the effects of flooding and minimise the effect of development on flood processes.

The draft amendment achieves the objectives of planning in Victoria by updating planning scheme provisions to guide development for the benefit of the Shire, consistent with state, regional and local planning policy.

g) *Balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.*

The draft amendment will reduce the impacts of flood events in the future, which will benefit present and future local interests. The overlays will create additional permit requirements, however, will ultimately benefit owners of new buildings, which will be less impacted by flood events. The overlay schedules have been drafted to balance the need for regulation with a desire to avoid unnecessarily impinging on the rights of landowners. It will ensure future development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the objectives of planning in Victoria.

How does the draft amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

The draft amendment is expected to have positive environmental, social and economic benefits for the municipality.

Environmental effects

The draft amendment will ensure that new development is appropriately designed and located for riverine flood risk in a manner that maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, and that future development does not compromise natural systems.

Social effects

Flooding can have significant consequences for individuals and for local communities.

Climate change and riverine flood risk could negatively impact on an area's future liveability. Planning provides an important function in managing the use and development of land in locations of potential flood risk.

Economic effects

Flood risk information will assist current and future landowners make informed choices prior to purchasing and developing land. This information will assist in establishing future housing, industries, tourism and community facilities in appropriate locations.

Does the draft amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The draft amendment meets bushfire policy in Clause 13.02 of the planning scheme. Much of the land affected by this draft amendment is unlikely to be intensified for urban purposes without subsequent planning approval. This will require consideration and assessment against the purpose and decision guidelines of the bushfire provisions, where applicable.

Parts of Harrow subject to this draft amendment are within the Bushfire Management Overlay and the whole of the draft amendment land is bushfire prone. Existing protections relating to bushfire, as set out in the planning scheme, will continue to apply to local development.

Does the draft amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the draft amendment?

The draft amendment complies with *Minister Direction No. 11, Strategic Assessment of Amendments*, which ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it produces. This explanatory report provides the required analysis of the draft amendment and the outcomes it produces.

The draft amendment also complies with the form and content requirements of the Ministerial Direction *The Form and Content of Plannings Schemes, section 7(5) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.*

How does the draft amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The draft amendment is consistent with the following clauses of the Planning Policy Framework and will assist in achieving objectives of the clauses:

Clause 11 - Settlement

This clause Identifies that planning for settlements must have regard to "*health, wellbeing and safety*" and "*…anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities…"*. The draft amendment supports these principles by documenting and managing flood risk and reduces its potential for impacts upon the existing and future communities of Harrow and Chetwynd.

Clause 11.01-1S - Settlement

This clause seeks to "*to facilitate the sustainable growth and development of Victoria and deliver choice and opportunity for all Victorians through a network of settlements*". The draft amendment will ensure future development in the relevant area is sustainable and appropriate. It will also alert future purchasers of land to the flood risk. The draft amendment is consistent with the strategies of this clause, including "*minimising exposure to natural hazards, including increased risks due to climate change*" and "*support metropolitan and regional climate change adaption and mitigation measures*".

Clause 12.03-1S - River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs

This clause seeks "*to protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs*". The draft amendment achieves this objective as well as the following strategies: "*address the impacts of use and development on drought and flooding events at a catchment and site scale to protect the health and natural function of waterway systems and their surrounding landscape and environment"*; and "*design and site development to maintain and enhance the natural environment of waterway systems by… avoiding impeding the natural flow of waterways and future flood events*".

Clause 13 - Environmental risks and amenity

This clause states that "*planning should strengthen the resilience and safety of communities"* and should "i*dentify and manage the potential for the environment and environmental change to impact on the economic, environmental or social wellbeing of society*". It also states that "*planning should prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change*". The draft amendment is consistent with these outcomes as it adopts best practice environmental and risk management approaches in formulating updated planning controls, which intend to minimise exposure to flood risk. The draft amendment will also reduce the potential for development to detrimentally interfere upon important natural processes which occur in flood plains.

Clause 13.01-1S - Natural hazards and climate change

This clause seeks "*to minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning*". Its strategies include: *"identify at risk areas using the best available data and climate change science";*

"direct population growth and development to low risk locations"; "site and design development to minimise risk to life, health, property, the natural environment and community infrastructure from natural hazards". The draft amendment achieves these objectives by updating the local flood modelling in line with the latest climate data.

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has updated the mapping for this draft amendment to account for climate change. It is based on the projected 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood design event while also taking into account the influence of climate change to 2090. The final modelling is primarily based on the original mapping but now also responds to the 'best available data' in accordance with Clause 13.01-1S.

Clause 13.03-1S - Floodplain management

This clause seeks to *"assist the protection of:*

- *Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flows.*
- *The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways.*
- *The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.*
- *Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland or coastal health".*

The draft amendment directly implements this policy as the updated flood mapping and new controls will provide enhanced protection for people and assets (built and natural) within the floodplain.

Clause 19.03-3S - Integrated water management

This clause seeks to "*sustainably manage water supply and demand, water resources, wastewater, drainage and stormwater through an integrated water management approach*". Strategies include plan and coordinate water management to minimise flood risk and provide environments which are more resilient to climate change. The draft amendment assists with integrated water management responses by implementing overlays which will guide decision making and help inform a holistic approach to water management.

How does the draft amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The draft amendment will support the Municipal Planning Strategy as follows:

The draft amendment is consistent with Council's Vision at 02.02, which is to ensure the community is "*healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous and self-sustaining*", and the following strategic objectives:

- *"Strategic objective 6: addressing health and wellbeing issues.*
- *Strategic objective 7: providing access to and promoting the natural*

environment".

Clause 02.03-1 - Settlement

This clause describes Harrow as one of the municipality's predominant towns, which is "*particularly picturesque*" and a "*small pastoral town located on the banks of the Glenelg River, beneath the rolling hills and grand old red gums*". Strategic objectives of this clause include to "*minimise any detrimental impact development has on the landscape, the environment and the existing character*". The updated flood mapping will minimise the impact of new development on the river corridors and flood plains.

Clause 02.03-2 - Environmental and landscape values

This clause identifies that the decline and fragmentation of indigenous vegetation and loss of biodiversity is a major environmental issue in the Shire, and a contributing factor towards all other land and water degradation issues. In terms of waterways, this clause states that the lake system is an important environmental, cultural and economic feature and care is needed to ensure that the qualities of the significant waterways of the municipality are not degraded by upstream activities. Strategic directions of this clause include:

- *"Ensure small rural lots do not occur in environmentally sensitive areas.*
- *Maintain the environmental values of significant water courses, lakes and wetlands".*

Both the FO and LSIO trigger a requirement for a permit for subdivision which will ensure inappropriate new lots are not created in areas susceptible to flooding in the future. Together with the buildings and works provisions this will also improve the protection of the subject waterways.

Clause 02.03-3 - Environmental risks and amenity

This clause identifies that the Shire's agricultural base means that potential risks from climate change are significant. The draft amendment implements the following strategic direction which is identified in this clause: "*Adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning*".

This clause also identifies that: "*Some areas within the municipality are subjected to flooding and inundation from storms and flood events…".* The related strategic direction from this clause is to "*minimise the impact of flooding on the community by preventing inappropriately located use and development*". The draft amendment is consistent with this direction.

Overall, the Municipal Planning Strategy identifies flood risk as a local issue. The draft amendment directly responds to and aligns with this policy and does not necessitate any related modifications to policy.

Does the draft amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The draft amendment utilises the appropriate controls from the Victoria Planning Provisions. Consideration was given to the level of flood risk, depth and velocity of flood waters in choosing the proposed overlays. The draft amendment is also consistent with *Planning Practice Note 12: Applying the Flood Provisions in Planning Schemes* (PPN12).

PPN12 identifies that the LSIO and the FO can apply to mainstream flooding in rural and urban areas and are suitable where there is a need to control development but not use. The FO is generally applied to areas at higher flood risk than the LSIO. The Harrow and Chetwynd flood investigations identify flood extents and the level of applicable risk within that extent. The two overlays have been applied accordingly, which is consistent with PPN12.

The planning permit exemptions set out in the schedules to each of the overlays (FO1 and LSIO1) correspond to the level of flood risk.

How does the draft amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The draft amendment has been prepared in consultation with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, which is the relevant floodplain manager and recommending referral authority under Clause 66.03 of the planning scheme.

The extent and configuration of the mapping for the overlays, along with the application of the schedules is supported by Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority. Other agencies will be consulted via the exhibition process of this draft amendment.

Does the draft amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The draft amendment will not impact upon the transport system objectives and decision-making principles as set out in the Transport Integration Act 2010. The draft amendment identifies flood risk but has no direct impact on the transport system.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The draft amendment will have some impact on the resources of the responsible authority, as it will increase land contained within a flooding overlay and in turn create some additional planning permit triggers. The land subject to the draft amendment though is relatively confined and the overlay schedules have been prepared to reduce as many unnecessary permit triggers as possible, without compromising the purpose or effect of the overlays.

Any costs from increased permit activity meets the test for net community benefit

when compared with the benefits associated with ensuring development responds to flooding and the reduced demands on the Council's emergency management response and recovery resources from flooding events.

VICTORIA PLANNING PROVISIONS

44.03 FLOODWAY OVERLAY

01/07/2021
VC203

Shown on the planning scheme map as **FO** or **RFO** with a number (if shown).

Purpose

To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

To identify waterways, major floodpaths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas which have the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding.

To ensure that any development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwater, minimises flood damage and is compatible with flood hazard, local drainage conditions and the minimisation of soil erosion, sedimentation and silting.

To reflect any declarations under Division 4 of Part 10 of the *Water Act, 1989* if a declaration has been made.

To protect water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.

To ensure that development maintains or improves river and wetland health, waterway protection and flood plain health.

44.03-1 Floodway objectives and statement of risk

31/07/2018
VC148

A schedule to this overlay may contain:

- Floodway management objectives to be achieved.
- A statement of risk.

44.03-2 Buildings and works

14/12/2023
VC253

A permit is required to construct a building or to construct or carry out works, including:

- A fence.
- Roadworks, if the water flow path is redirected or obstructed.
- Bicycle pathways and trails.
- Public toilets.
- A domestic swimming pool or spa and associated mechanical and safety equipment if associated with one dwelling on a lot.
- Rainwater tank with a capacity of not more than 10,000 litres.
- A pergola or verandah, including an open-sided pergola or verandah to a dwelling or a small second dwelling with a finished floor level not more than 800mm above ground level and a maximum building height of 3 metres above ground level.
- A deck, including a deck to a dwelling or a small second dwelling with a finished floor level not more than 800mm above ground level.
- A disabled access ramp.
-

This does not apply:

- If a schedule to this overlay specifically states that a permit is not required.
- To roadworks or bicycle paths and trails constructed or carried out by or on behalf of the Head, Transport for Victoria, to the satisfaction of the relevant floodplain management authority.

- To flood mitigation works carried out by the responsible authority or floodplain management authority.
- To the following works in accordance with plans prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority:
  - The laying of underground sewerage, water and gas mains, oil pipelines, underground telephone lines and underground power lines provided they do not alter the topography of the land.
  - The erection of telephone or power lines provided they do not involve the construction of towers or poles.
- To post and wire and post and rail fencing.

44.03-3 Subdivision

31/07/2018
VC148

A permit is required to subdivide land. A permit may only be granted to subdivide land if the following apply:

- The subdivision does not create any new lots, which are entirely within this overlay. This does not apply if the subdivision creates a lot, which by agreement between the owner and the relevant floodplain management authority, is to be transferred to an authority for a public purpose.
- The subdivision is the resubdivision of existing lots and the number of lots is not increased, unless a local floodplain development plan incorporated into this scheme specifically provides otherwise.

44.03-4 Application requirements

31/07/2018
VC148

Local floodplain development plan

If a local floodplain development plan has been developed for the area and has been incorporated into this scheme, an application must be consistent with the plan.

Flood risk report

If a local floodplain development plan for the area has not been incorporated into this scheme, an application must be accompanied by a flood risk report to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, which must consider the following, where applicable:

- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The existing use and development of the land.
- Whether the proposed use or development could be located on flood-free land or land with a lesser flood hazard outside this overlay.
- The susceptibility of the development to flooding and flood damage.
- The potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with the development. Flood risk factors to consider include:
  - The frequency, duration, extent, depth and velocity of flooding of the site and accessway.
  - The flood warning time available.
  - The danger to the occupants of the development, other floodplain residents and emergency personnel if the site or accessway is flooded.
- The effect of the development on redirecting or obstructing floodwater, stormwater or drainage water and the effect of the development on reducing flood storage and increasing flood levels and flow velocities.

- The effects of the development on river health values including wetlands, natural habitat, stream stability, erosion, environmental flows, water quality and sites of scientific significance.
- An application must be accompanied by any information specified in a schedule to this overlay.

44.03-5 Exemption from notice and review

31/07/2018
VC148

An application under this overlay is exempt from the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the Act.

44.03-6 Referral of applications

31/07/2018
VC148

An application must be referred to the relevant floodplain management authority under Section 55 of the Act unless in the opinion of the responsible authority the proposal satisfies requirements or conditions previously agreed in writing between the responsible authority and the floodplain management authority.

44.03-7 Decision guidelines

31/07/2018
VC148

Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The local floodplain development plan or flood risk report.
- Any comments of the relevant floodplain management authority.
- The Victorian River Health Strategy (2002) and any relevant regional river health strategy and associated wetland plan.
- Any other matters specified in a schedule to this overlay.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Draft Amendment C38wwim

Instruction sheet

The planning authority for this amendment is the Minister for Planning

The West Wimmera Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

Planning Scheme Maps

The Planning Scheme Maps are amended by a total of 2 attached map sheets.

Overlay Maps

1. Insert new Planning Scheme Maps No 34 LSIO-FO and 36 LSIO-FO in the manner shown on the 2 attached maps marked “West Wimmera Planning Scheme, Amendment C38wwim”.

2. Delete Planning Scheme Map No 34LSIO and 36 LSIO in the manner shown on the 2 attached maps marked “West Wimmera Planning Scheme, Amendment C38wwim”.

Planning Scheme Ordinance

The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

3. In **Overlays**- insert Clause 44.03 in the form of the attached document.

4. In **Overlays** – Clause 44.04, replace Schedule with a new Schedule 1 in the form of the attached document.

5. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 72.03, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.

End of document

Unofficial

Xxx
C38wwim

SCHEDULE 1 TO CLAUSE 44.03 FLOODWAY OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **FO1**.

1.0 FLOODWAY OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED

Xxx
C38wwim

To address the increasing effects of the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability riverine floods including reducing risk to human life and the economic impacts of damage to infrastructure and property.

To identify and manage development of land that according to the best available information, will be subject to:

- an inundation depth of 0.5 metres and above; and/or
- combined water velocity and depth of more than 0.4 metres squared per second, under the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood scenario accounting for the projected influence of climate change on flooding.

To avoid increasing development in areas with high flood risks.

2.0 Statement of risk

Xxx
C38wwim

A number of areas within West Wimmera Shire have been identified as being at high risk of flooding. This poses significant risk for the community in terms of economic, social and environmental impacts. The Floodway Overlay delineates land where flood hazard will be high during the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood scenario and where new development should be avoided.

3.0 Permit requirement

Xxx
C38wwim

A permit is not required to construct the following buildings and works:

- A non habitable upper storey extension to an existing building where there is no increase in ground floor footprint.
- A ground level addition to an existing building (not including an outbuilding associated with a dwelling) provided the floor level of the proposed addition is not less than the floor level of the existing building and the gross floor area of the addition does not exceed 20 square metres.
- An agricultural or farm building in the Farming Zone that is open on all sides, such as a hay shed, cattle yard, covered horse stable or other similar structure, provided the total floor area is less than 400 square metres, and the structure is set back at least 30 metres from any waterway.
- A verandah or decking area with a floor raised on stumps or piers and with unenclosed foundations on at least three sides.
- An open sided car port where the finished floor level will be no higher than 150 millimetres above ground level.
- Landscaping works or the construction of driveways, vehicle crossovers or pathways if there is no change to existing surface levels, or if the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path will not be obstructed.
- Road works, footpaths or bicycle pathways and trails carried out by a public authority if there is no change to the existing grounds levels, or if the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path is not obstructed.
- An outdoor sign fixed to an existing building or to a pole or pylon, where the display area is positioned above the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood level.
- A free-standing tower, pole or mast used as an antenna, satellite dish support, power pole, light pole provided any footings do not obstruct the flow of floodwater.
- A pump shed of less than 10 square metres gross floor area.
- One rainwater tank on a lot associated with an existing dwelling which has an open stand and is located at least 300 millimetres above ground level.
- Open fencing (excluding solid fences, such as brick, stone, wood or metal paling, sheet metal, colorbond, brick, stone, concrete or earthen walls, or cyclone type mesh fences)

- Earthworks that do not change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a boundary where the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path is not obstructed.
- A disabled access ramp.
- An in-ground swimming pool or spa, where the perimeter edging of the pool is constructed at ground level and excavated material is moved outside the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent.

4.0 Application requirements

Xxx
C38wwim

None specified.

5.0 Decision guidelines

Xxx
C38wwim

None specified.

Xxx
C38wwim

SCHEDULE 1 TO CLAUSE 44.04 LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **LSIO1**

1.0 LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED

Xxx
C38wwim

To address the increasing effects of the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability riverine floods including consideration of appropriate built form requirements that can assist in the reduction of identified risks.

To identify land subject to an inundation depth of below 0.5 metres and/or combined water velocity and depth of no more than 0.4 metres squared per second under the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood scenario accounting for the projected influence of climate change on flooding.

2.0 Statement of risk

Xxx
C38wwim

A number of areas within West Wimmera Shire have been identified as being at risk of riverine inundation. This poses significant risks for the community in terms of economic, social and environmental impacts.

The schedule delineates land where flood hazards will be relatively low during the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood scenario and where new development should be carefully managed if not avoided. Areas within the schedule have some potential for development but there are associated risks. If not managed appropriately, further development of land within the area delineated by the schedule may worsen the social and economic consequences of floods into the future.

3.0 Permit requirement

Xxx
C38wwim

A permit is not required to construct the following buildings and works:

- An upper storey extension to an existing building where there is no increase in ground floor footprint.
- A ground level addition to an existing building (not including an outbuilding associated with a dwelling) provided the floor level of the proposed addition is not less than the floor level of the existing building and the gross floor area of the addition does not exceed 20 square metres.
- A replacement dwelling provided:
    - The floor level is constructed at least 300 millimetres above the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood level; and
    - The replacement dwelling is constructed within the same footprint as the existing dwelling, except for up to 20 square meters of floor area, or entirely on higher ground inside the site.
    - The dwelling is on unenclosed foundations such as stumps or piers with open style cladding below floor level; and
- An agricultural or farm building in the Farming Zone that is open on all sides, such as a hay shed, cattle yard, covered horse stable or other similar structure, provided the total floor area is less than 400 square metres, and the structure is set back at least 30 metres from any waterway.
- An agricultural shed associated with a rural use in the Farming Zone used for the storage of farm machinery, farm vehicles or for a workshop with a floor area less than 200 square metres and which is set back at least 30 metres from any waterway.
- A non-habitable out-building, including an outbuilding associated with a dwelling, or a pump shed which has a floor area less than 20 square metres and which is the only non-habitable building on the lot.
- A verandah or decking area with a floor raised on stumps or piers and with unenclosed foundations on at least three sides.
- An open sided car port where the finished floor level will be no higher than 150 millimetres above ground level.

- Landscaping works or the construction of driveways, vehicle crossovers or pathways if there is no change to existing surface levels, or if the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path will not be obstructed.
- Road works, footpaths or bicycle pathways and trails carried out by a public authority if there is no change to the existing grounds levels, or if the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path is not obstructed.
- An outdoor sign fixed to an existing building or to a pole or pylon, where the display area is positioned above the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood level.
- A free-standing tower, pole or mast used as an antenna, satellite dish support, power pole, light pole provided any footings do not obstruct the flow of floodwater.
- One rainwater tank on a lot associated with an existing dwelling which has an open stand and is located at least 300 millimetres above ground level.
- Open fencing (excluding solid fences, such as brick, stone, wood or metal paling, sheet metal, colorbond, brick, stone, concrete or earthen walls, or cyclone type mesh fences).
- Earthworks that do not change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a boundary where the relevant floodplain management authority has agreed in writing that the flow path is not obstructed.
- A disabled access ramp.
- An in-ground swimming pool or spa, where the perimeter edging of the pool is constructed at ground level and excavated material is moved outside the planned for 1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability flood extent.

4.0 Application requirements

Xxx
C38wwim

None specified.

5.0 Decision guidelines

Xxx
C38wwim

None specified.

Xxx C38wwim

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.03 WHAT DOES THIS PLANNING SCHEME CONSIST OF?

1.0 Maps comprising part of this planning scheme:

Xxx C38wwim

- 1, 1BMO
- 2, 2BMO
- 3, 3ESO2, 3PAO, 3BMO
- 4, 4ESO2, 4HO
- 5, 5ESO2
- 6, 6ESO2, 6VPO, 6BMO
- 7, 7DDO, 7ESO2, 7HO
- 8
- 9, 9ESO2, 9BMO
- 10, 10ESO2, 10BMO
- 11, 11ESO2, 11HO, 11BMO
- 12, 12BMO
- 13, 13ESO2, 13BMO
- 14, 14ESO2, 14BMO
- 15, 15ESO2, 15BMO
- 16, 16ESO2
- 17, 17ESO2, 17BMO
- 18, 18ESO2, 18BMO
- 19, 19ESO2, 19BMO
- 20, 20ESO2, 20BMO
- 21, 21ESO2, 21BMO
- 22, 22ESO2, 22BMO
- 23, 23ESO2, 23BMO
- 24, 24ESO1, 24ESO2, 24BMO
- 25, 25ESO2, 25BMO
- 26, 26ESO1, 26ESO2, 26BMO
- 27, 27DDO, 27EAO, 27ESO2, 27BMO
- 28, 28ESO2, 28BMO
- 29, 29ESO2, 29BMO
- 30, 30ESO2, 30BMO
- 31, 31ESO1, 31ESO2, 31BMO
- 32, 32ESO1, 32ESO2, 32LSIO, 32BMO
- 33, 33ESO1, 33ESO2, 33LSIO, 33BMO
- 34, 34ESO1, 34ESO2, ~~34LSIO~~, 34LSIO-FO
- 35, 35ESO1, 35ESO2, 35HO, 35BMO
- 36, 36ESO1, 36ESO2, 36HO, ~~36LSIO,~~ 36LSIO-FO, 36BMO
- 37, 37ESO1, 37ESO2, 37BMO
- 38, 38ESO2, 38BMO

- 39, 39ESO1, 39ESO2, 39LSIO, 39BMO
- 40, 40ESO1, 40ESO2, 40LSIO, 40BMO
- 41, 41ESO2, 41BMO

Xxx C38wwim

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1.0 Background documents

Xxx C38wwim

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
Land Development Straetgy 2013-2017 (West Wimmera Shire Council, 2013)	C36 – Clause 02
Statements of Significance for Items on the West Wimmera Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay (Wendy Jacobs, October 2002)	C36 – Clause 02
West Wimmera Land Use Strategy 1998 (West Wimmera Shire Council, 1998)	C36 – Clause 02
Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 2003-2008 (Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, 2003)	C36 – Clause 02
Wimmera Regional Salinity Action Plan 2005-2010 (Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, 2005)	C36 – Clause 02
Roadside Weed and Rabbit Control Plan (West Wimmera Shire Council, 2013)	C36 – Clause 02
Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy (Mallee Catchment Management Authority, 2013)	C36 – Clause 02
Mallee Dryland Salinity Management Plan (Mallee Dryland Salinity Community Working Group, 1993)	C36 – Clause 02
Draft Wimmera Native Vegetation Plans (Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, 2000)	C36 – Clause 02
Land Conservation Council Final Recommendations for the Mallee Area (Land Conservation Council, 1989)	C36 – Clause 02
The Conservation Status of Roadsides in the Shire of Lowan (Martin E. Westbrooke, 1989)	C36 – Clause 02
Chetwynd Flood Intelligence and Flood Mapping (Water Technology Pty Ltd 14 June 2018)	C38wwim
Harrow Flood Investigation (Water Technology Pty Ltd, June 2017)	

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

D-LSIO - Area to be deleted from a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 225 450
Meters
Australian Map Grid Zone 54

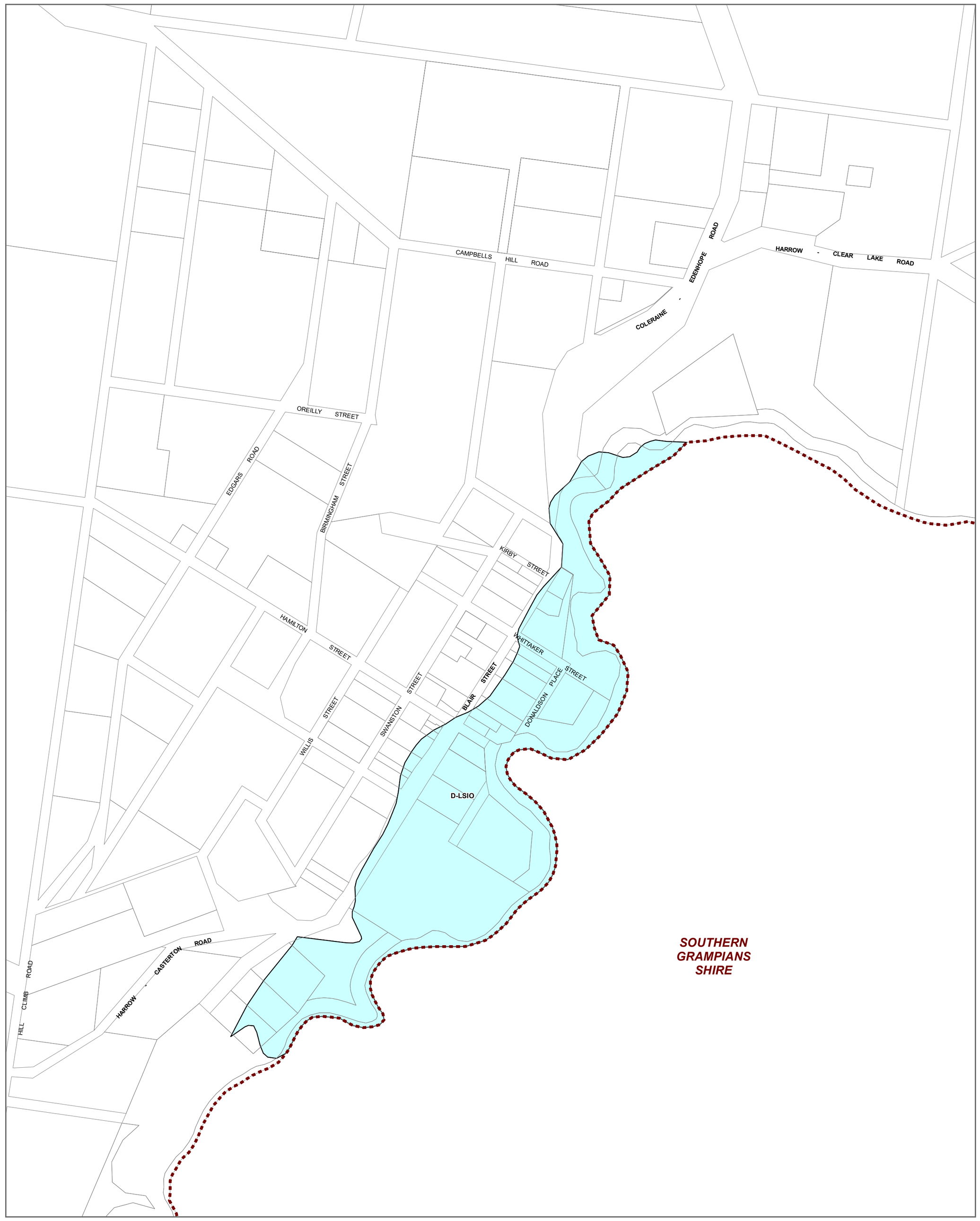
Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS

AREA TO BE DELETED FROM A LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY **MAP No 34LSIO-FO**

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

D-LSIO - Area to be deleted from a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 225 450
Meters
Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS

AREA TO BE DELETED FROM A LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY **MAP No 36LSIO-FO**

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

FO1 - Floodway Overlay - Schedule 1

Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 1,750 3,500
Meters

Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY — MAP No 33LSIO-FO

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

- FO1 - Floodway Overlay - Schedule 1
- LSIO1 - Land Subject to Inundation Overlay - Schedule 1
- Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 225 450
Meters

Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

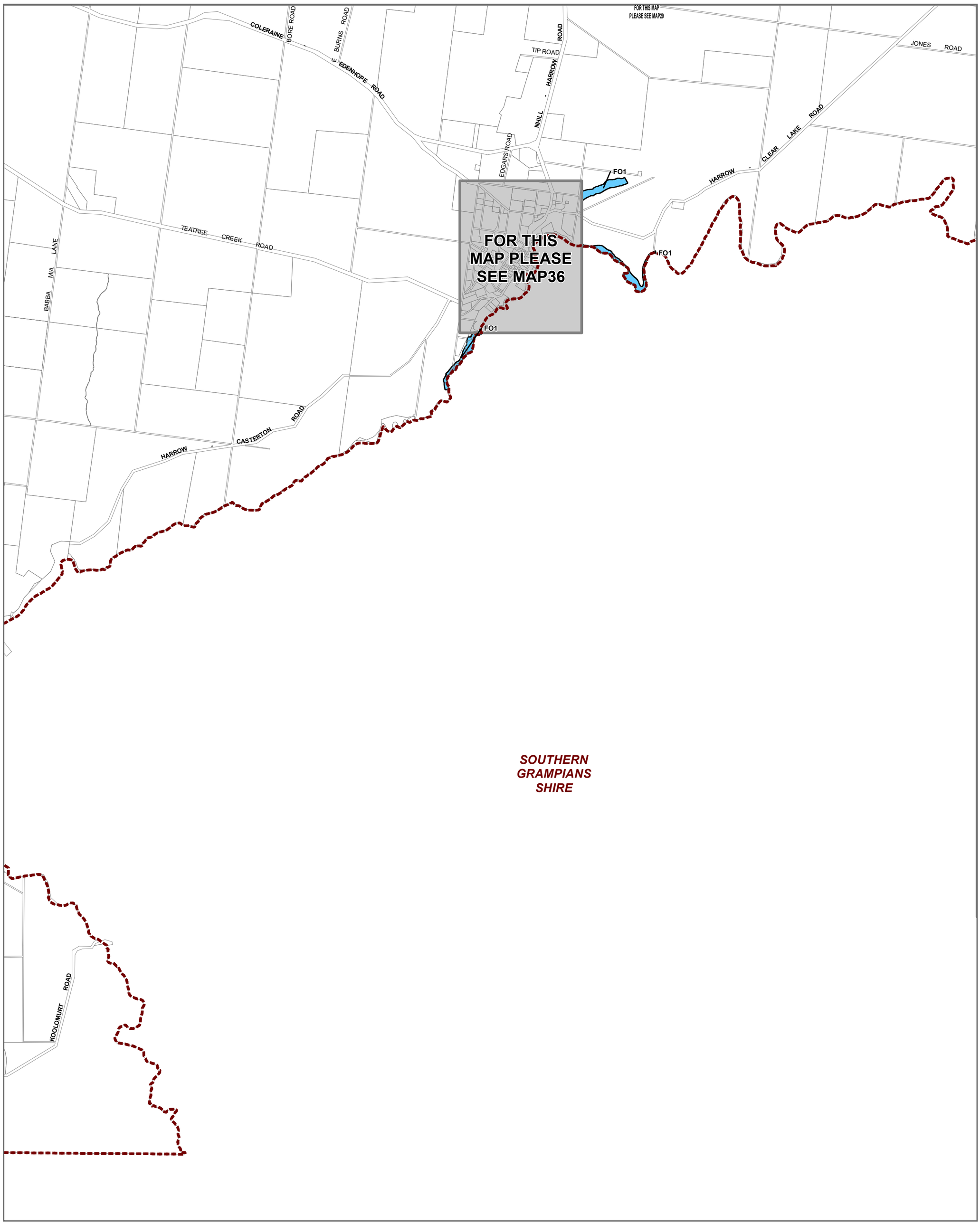
VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY — MAP No 34LSIO-FO

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

FO1 - Floodway Overlay - Schedule 1

Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 1,750 3,500
Meters

Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS

LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY — MAP No 35LSIO-FO

WEST WIMMERA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C38wwim



LEGEND

- FO1 - Floodway Overlay - Schedule 1
- LSIO1 - Land Subject to Inundation Overlay - Schedule 1
- Municipal Boundary

Disclaimer
This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

© The State of Victoria Department of Transport and Planning 2025

0 225 450
Meters
Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Planning Group
Print Date: 01/05/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS

LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY/FLOODWAY OVERLAY — MAP No 36LSIO-FO

15.2 Planning Permit Application PA1196

Directorate: *Infrastructure Development and Works*
Report Author: *Manager Planning and Environment*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

Council to consider Planning Permit application PA1196.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council, having caused notice to be given under Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to refuse to grant a permit under the provisions of Clauses 44.04-2 and Clause 44.06-2 (permit triggers) of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Blair Street Harrow Vic 3317 (Lot6, Lot 7 & Lot 8), for the Development of the land for a Dwelling, in accordance with the following grounds of refusal:

Grounds of refusal

1. **The development is not consistent with Strategic Direction 5 of Clause 02.02 Vision.**
2. **The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-1 Settlement.**
3. **The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3 under Climate Change Impacts and Floodplains.**
4. **The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 12.03-1S River and Riparian Corridors, Waterways, Lake, Wetlands and Billabongs.**
5. **The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 13.01-1S Natural Hazards and Climate Change and Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain Management.**
6. **The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 14.02-1S Catchment Planning and Management and Clause 14.02-2S Water Quality.**
7. **The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 15.01-1S Urban Design and Clause 15.01-2S Building Design.**

8. **The development does not support the purpose or decision guidelines of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.**

9. **The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has objected to the granting of a planning permit under Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 on the following grounds:**

- **The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site.**
- **The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site.**
- **The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel.**
- **The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets.**
- **The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained.**
- **The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality, or sites of significance.**
- **The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area.**

Moved: **Cr Jodie Pretlove**

Seconded: **Cr Richard Hicks**

That Council, having caused notice to be given under Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to refuse to grant a permit under the provisions of Clauses 44.04-2 and Clause 44.06-2 (permit triggers) of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Blair Street Harrow Vic 3317 (Lot6, Lot 7 & Lot 8), for the Development of the land for a Dwelling, in accordance with the following grounds of refusal:

Grounds of refusal

1. The development is not consistent with Strategic Direction 5 of Clause 02.02 Vision.

2. The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-1 Settlement.

3. The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3 under Climate Change Impacts and Floodplains.

4. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 12.03-1S River and Riparian Corridors, Waterways, Lake, Wetlands and Billabongs.

5. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 13.01-1S Natural Hazards and Climate Change and Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain Management.

6. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 14.02-1S Catchment Planning and Management and Clause 14.02-2S Water Quality.

7. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 15.01-1S Urban Design and Clause 15.01-2S Building Design.

8.The development does not support the purpose or decision guidelines of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.

9.The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has objected to the granting of a planning permit under Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 on the following grounds:

- **The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site.**
- **The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site.**
- **The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel.**

- **The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets.**
- **The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained.**
- **The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality, or sites of significance.**
- **The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area.**

CARRIED (4 / 1)

Cr Tom Houlihan called for a division

For:

Cr Richard Hicks, Cr Jodie Pretlove, Cr Helen Hobbs and Cr Tim Meyer

Against:

Cr Tom Houlihan

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

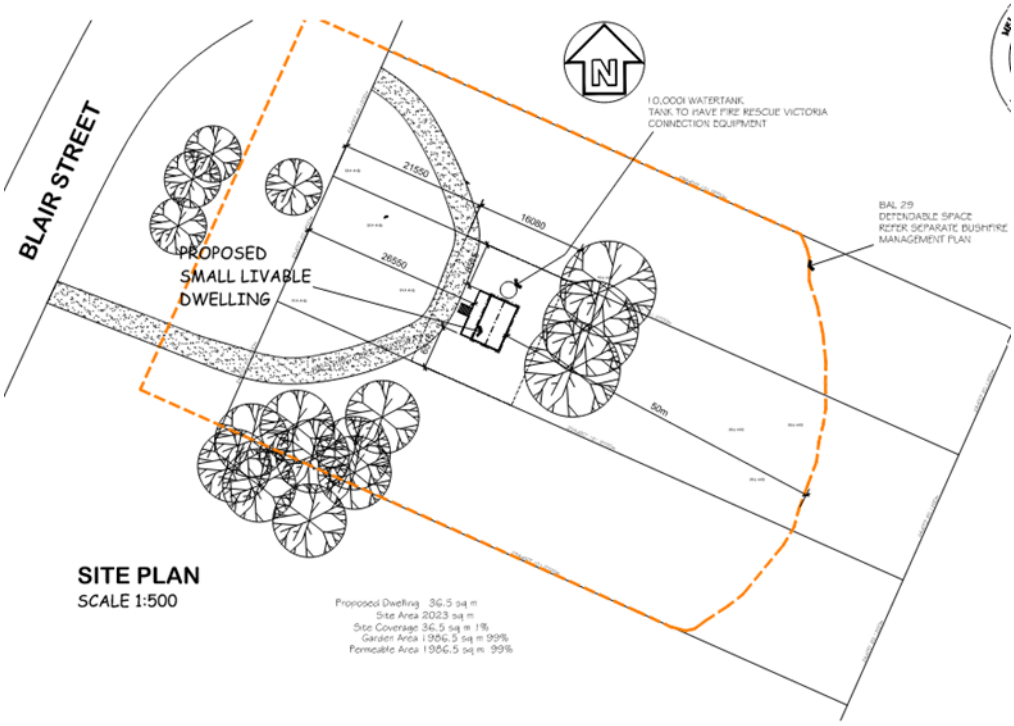
Background

The permit applicant, Zoltan Galambos, is seeking planning approval for the development of the land for a dwelling. The requirement for a Planning Permit is triggered by Clause 44.04-2 of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

The proposed dwelling will be setback 26.55m from the front road boundary and 26m from the northern, side boundary. The dwelling will measure 4.02m by 6.841m and contain a kitchen area, bathroom including shower, toilet and vanity and a single combined living room and bedroom area. The overall height of the dwelling will measure 4.808m from ground level and have a finished floor height of 101.07AHD, or 1.6m above natural ground level. The design of the dwelling will include a front verandah and set of stairs for access,

with low pitched gable ended roof clad in galvanised metal roof sheeting. The dwelling itself will be clad in Easylap Cladding with an off with coloured finish.

Vehicle access to the proposed dwelling will be from the existing access in the western Blair Street boundary corner of the site. A crescent-shaped driveway will provide internal access with egress located in the northwest corner of the subject site to Blair Street. See Site Plan, below.



The land is largely cleared of vegetation with the exception of one large native tree near the centre of the property, and three smaller trees near the western corner of the property.

The subject site is bordered to the north by similarly sized Township Zoned, vacant allotments. This land has been donated to the West Wimmera Shire Council by the previous landowners and is currently unused. Further north is the Harrow Library and public toilets approximately 80m to the north of the subject site. Beyond these buildings further north is the Harrow town centre on Blair Street that contains the Harrow Post Café, Hermitage Hotel and other shops and services.

While Clause 44.04-6 (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)) and Clause 44.06-7 (Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)) exempts the application from the notice and review requirements of Section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of Section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of Section 82(1) of the Act, the application was sent out on public notification due to the history of the occupation onsite, the relative small size of Harrow and for transparency to neighbouring residents.

The application was referred to West Wimmera Shire Council Environmental Health Officer, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, and the Country Fire Authority.

Assessment Against Planning Policy Framework

The settlement strategy for the township of Harrow at Clause 11.01-1L-05 seeks to avoid development within the floodplain of the Glenelg River. The proposal is located on land that is situated within the floodplain of the Glenelg River as assessed by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA) with a minimum flood depth of 0.78m in the 1% AEP event. The proposal is not consistent with the first strategy of Clause 11.01-1L-05.

The objective of Clause 12.03-1S (River and riparian corridors, waterways, lake, wetlands and billabongs) seeks to protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs.

The strategies and policy guidelines of this clause support this objective by siting buildings to avoid impeding the natural flow of waterways and future flood events and the views of the floodplain and waterway managers. The proposal is located on a property that is wholly subject to flood depths exceeding 0.78m in the 1% AEP event. The GHCMA (floodplain manager) provided an objection under Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 detailed on page 10 of this report. The proposal is not consistent with the objective, strategies, and policy guidelines of Clause 12.03-1s.

Clause 13.01-1S 'natural hazards and climate changes' builds upon the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3 by providing additional strategies for risk-based planning. The assessment of the proposal has considered all of the strategies of Clause 13.01-1S with assistance from GHCMA and their best available flood modelling. The subject site poses an unacceptably high flood risk due to the depth and velocity of potential flood waters over the land where future flooding events are likely to increase in frequency and severity as a result of climate change. The proposal is not considered in accordance with the objectives and strategies of Clause 13.01-1S.

The application included the application requirements of Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and was assessed by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) fire safety officer as part of the Section 55 referral under the BMO. The proposal includes the applicable area of defendable space and BAL 12.5 construction standard. The proposal meets the objective of Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning.

The proposal is not considered consistent with the objective and strategies of Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain management due to the location of the dwelling in an existing floodplain affected by the 1 in 100-year flood event. The proposal is at risk of inundation by floodwaters and would add to the cumulative impacts of flooding. Due to these factors, the GHCMA has objected to the granting of a planning permit.

Clause 14 Natural Resource Management includes Catchment Planning and Management and Water Quality as relevant clauses to the assessment of the proposal. The location of the

proposed dwelling within a floodplain exposed to the 1% AEP flood event is not considered compatible with the protection of water quality and waterways under Clause 14. The potential for inundation of the proposed onsite wastewater treatment system and the resulting discharge into the Glenelg River is not considered appropriate.

The objective of Clause 15.01-1S seeks to create urban environments that are 'safe, health, functional and enjoyable that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.' The location of the proposed dwelling on land affected by relatively deep flows and velocity of flood waters in the 1% AEP event is not considered to be a 'safe' outcome with regard to the built environment. The strategies of Clause 15.01-1S are not supported by the proposal as the building does not respond appropriately to the 'natural environment, surrounding landscape and climate'. Similarly, the proposal does not support the strategies of Clause 15.01-2S Building design as it will have a detrimental effect on the natural environment and public realm in the event of a flood.

The proposal does support the objectives of Clause 16.01-2S by providing an affordable dwelling but does not support the objective of Clause 16.01-1S Housing Supply as the dwelling is not considered to be 'well-located' due to the flood risks onsite detailed in the assessment above.

The application has been assessed against the Planning Policy Framework and it is considered that the proposed development is not consistent with relevant policies contained within this section of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

Assessment against the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Decision Guidelines

The proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) or the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

There is no applicable floodplain development plan for Harrow.

The comments received from the GHCMA determine that the entirety of the subject site would not be suitable for residential development, and the Section 55 referral response has objected to the granting of a planning permit due to the risk of flooding. The depth and velocity of a future flood on the subject site has been assessed to be too great a risk to human life and property. Other locations, building pad solutions and finished floor heights were explored as part of this application with the GHCMA, however there is nowhere suitable onsite for the development and any access to the building would be entirely underwater in a flood event. Any proposed pad onsite would also result in redirecting and obstructing the flow of floodwater across the site and surrounds.

The proposed wastewater disposal system onsite would also be inundated in a flood event which would result in effluent being discharged into floodplain and Glenelg River.

The proposal does not support the purposes of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay as the development is not in accordance with the MPS and PPF, does not allow the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, increases the risk to life, health and safety and would likely lead to detrimental water quality in a flood event.

Assessment Against the Bushfire Management Overlay

The proposal has been assessed by the CFA who have determine the application suitably responded to the relevant sections of Clause 53.02, subject to a condition requiring 50m of defendable space surrounding the dwelling or to the lot boundaries for a modified vegetation classification. The applicant subsequently amended the Bushfire Management Plan to comply with the CFA referral response when the application was amended as part of the Request for Further Information process.

Assessment Against Particular Provisions and General Provisions of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme

The relevant decision guidelines under Clause 65.01 relate to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework, purpose of the LSIO, effect on the environment and the degree of flood associated with the location of the development so as to minimize the hazard. The assessment of the proposed development has demonstrated that the application presents an unreasonable risk to human life, property and the environment due to the location of the building in an area subject to high flood depth and velocities. The proposal is not in accordance with the MPS, PPF or the purpose of the LSIO.

The application has been assessed against the relevant general provisions, specifically Clause 65 Decision Guidelines, and Clause 66 Notice and Referral Provisions, and it is considered that the proposed development is not in accordance with the guidelines contained with this section of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

There are no obvious risks for Council to mitigate or eliminate in regard to the proposal considered for funding support in this report.

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Planning and Environment Act 1987

Environmental Implications

Nil

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Nil

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Not applicable

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community
1.2 Support a safe and inclusive community.
1.6 Support a prepared and resilient community.

Goal 3 – Sustainable Environment
3.1 Preserve and enhance the natural environment.

Communication Implications

Consultation has already been undertaken in development of the plans

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the Municipal Planning Strategy, Planning Policy Framework, Land Subject to Inundation Overlay, Bushfire Management Overlay, Clause 53.02 and Decision Guidelines of Clause 65. The proposed dwelling is located on a floodplain where the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has identified a minimum flood depth of 0.78m and a maximum depth of 1.27m during a 1% AEP flood event, posing an unreasonably high risk to human life and property.

In addition to the assessment in this delegate report, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has undertaken their own assessment of the planning application and objected to the granting of a planning permit on the grounds:

1. The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site.
2. The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site.
3. The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel.
4. The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets.
5. The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage, the capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained.
6. The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality or sites of significance.
7. The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area.

The proposal is not considered appropriate under the West Wimmera Shire Planning Scheme.

Attachments

1. PA1196 Delegate Report signed 23 06 2025 [**15.2.1** - 27 pages]
2. GHCM A- F-2025-00103 Objection to P A 1196 [**15.2.2** - 3 pages]

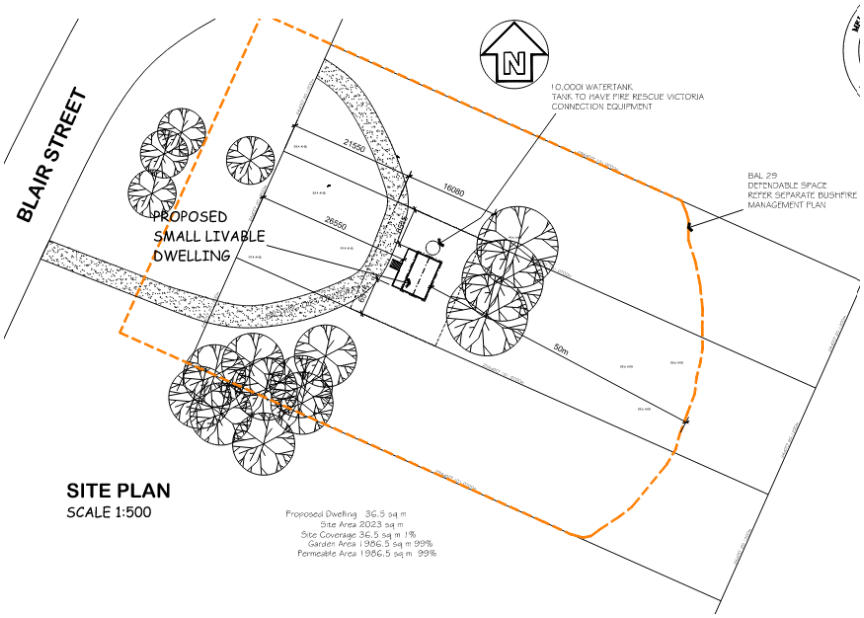
WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

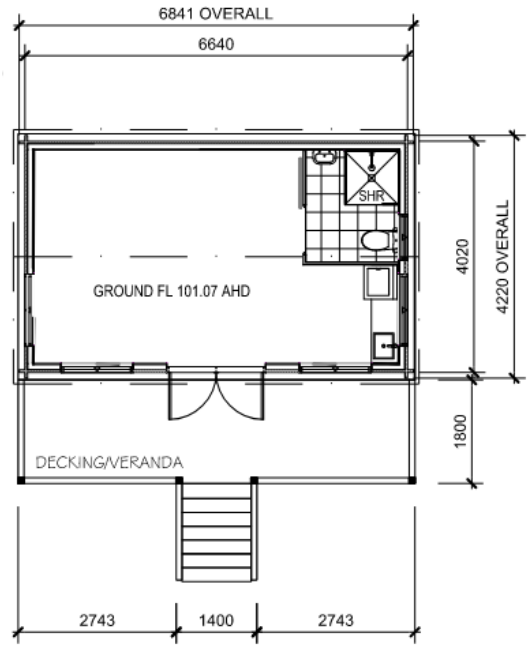
DELEGATE REPORT

Application:	PA1196
Proposal:	Development of the land for a Dwelling
Subject Site:	Blair Street Harrow Vic 3317 (Lot 6, 7 & 8)
Applicant:	Zoltan Galambos

Application number:	PA1196
Location:	Blair Street Harrow Vic 3317 CPN: 1023456
Proposal:	Development of the land for a Dwelling
Applicant:	Zoltan Galambos
Zoning/Overlay:	Township Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Bushfire Management Overlay
Adjoining Zoning/Overlays:	The surrounding land is predominantly in the Township Zone along Blair Street. the land to the south is located under the Public Park and Resource Zone  ***Figure 1 –*** *Zoning map. Vicplan 2025.*
Cultural Heritage Management Plan:	The subject site is identified as being within an area of aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, however a single dwelling is exempt from requiring the preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Restrictive Covenant:	There are no restrictive covenants registered on title.
Section 173 Agreement:	There is no Section 173 Agreement registered on title.
Planning History:	N/A
Site Inspection Date:	1st April 2025

Considered Plans:	The assessment has been undertaken on the following documents/plans: - Planning Permit Application Mr Zolten Galambos (5/3/25) - Certificate of title (5/3/25) - Bushfire Management Plan (5/3/25) - Property report (5/3/25) - Site, floor & elevation plans (5/3/25) Amended plans following RFI responses: - LCA Report & design dry compost greywater Cat 5 (16/5/25) - Wastewater site layout plan Galambos Harrow (16/5/25) - Plants & grasses for transpiration (16/5/25) - BMP 9 Blair Road Harrow Vic 2 (16/5/25) - AWWS WM21323 CR06_WMC Greywater (16/5/25) - Lair St Harrow – Site Plan and Dwelling Plans Rev3 (23/5/25) - Blair St – Amended Application Form (28/5/2025)
Permit Required Pursuant to:	**Land Subject to Inundation Overlay:** Pursuant to Clause 44.04-2, a planning permit is required to construct a building, or construct or carry out works **Bushfire Management Overlay:** Pursuant to Clause 44.06-2, a planning permit is required to construct a building, or construct or carry out works in association with Accommodation (including a moveable unit as defined under the *Housing Act 1983*).

Proposal Details:	**Development of the land for a Dwelling in the LSIO and BMO.** The permit applicant, Zoltan Galambos, is seeking planning approval for the development of the land for a dwelling. The proposed dwelling will be setback 26.55m from the front road boundary and 26m from the northern, side boundary. The dwelling will measure 4.02m by 6.841m and contain a kitchen area, bathroom including shower, toilet and vanity and a single combined living room and bedroom area. The overall height of the dwelling will measure 4.808m from ground level and have a finished floor height of 101.07AHD, or 1.6m above natural ground level. The design of the dwelling will include a front verandah and set of stairs for access, with low pitched gable ended roof clad in galvanised metal roof sheeting. The dwelling itself will be clad in Easylap Cladding with an off with coloured finish. Vehicle access to the proposed dwelling will be from the existing access in the western Blair Street boundary corner of the site. A crescent-shaped driveway will provide internal access with egress located in the northwest corner of the subject site to Blair Street.  ***Figure 2*** *– Proposed site plan*



FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1:100

Figure 3 *– Proposed dwelling layout*

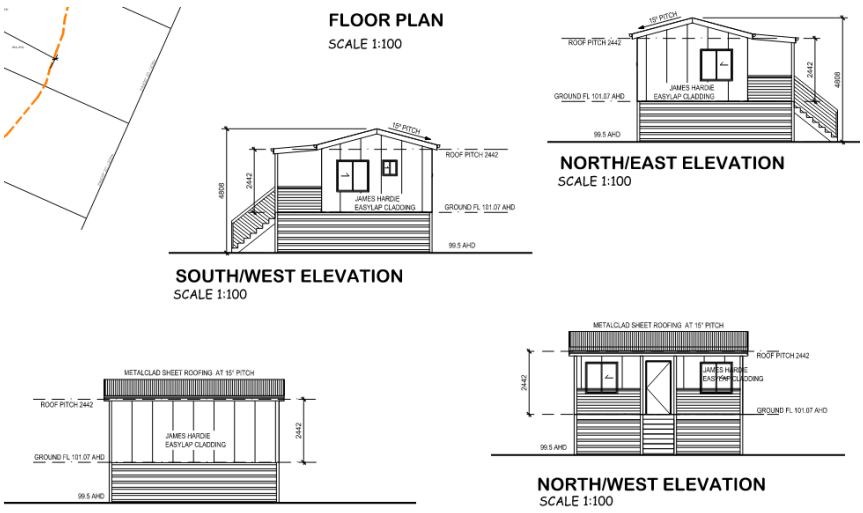


Figure 4 *– Proposed dwelling elevations*

Site and Surrounds:	The subject site consists of 3 allotments (Lot 6, 7 & 8) that are rectangular in shape. The property also includes four separate allotments to the south east that are separated from the subject land by an unopened road reserve (refer to Figure 1 above for lot layout). The allotments 6, 7 & 8 collectively measure approximately 6,00m² in area with a 60m frontage to Blair Street, Harrow. The land is largely flat with a slight fall from west to east away from Blair Street. The land currently contains two caravans that are being used as accommodation without a valid planning permit having been issued. A water tank is located near the eastern end of the site.



Figure 5: *Aerial image of the subject site and surrounds. The subject site is in centre image with the Glenelg River in the top right of the image. Google Earth 2025.*



Figure 6: *View of the subject site looking east from Blair Street showing the access to the site, caravans and the levee bank on the neighbouring property to the south shown on the right of the image. The Glenelg River meanders in the background.*

The land is largely cleared of vegetation with the exception of one large native tree near the centre of the property, and three smaller trees near the western corner of the property.

The subject site is bordered to the north by similarly sized Township Zoned, vacant allotments. This land has been donated to the West Wimmera Shire Council by the previous landowners and is currently unused. Further north is the Harrow Library and public toilets approximately 80m to the north of the subject site. Beyond these buildings further north is the Harrow town centre on Blair Street that contains the Harrow Post Café, Hermitage Hotel and other shops and services.



Figure 7: *View of the subject site in the background with caravans onsite looking south from the Harrow Library site. The neighbouring property to the north of the subject site is seen in the foreground.*

East of the subject site is an unopened road reserve that separates the three parcels that form the subject site, from the other half of the property in one ownership to the east of this road reserve. The Glenelg River is located approximately 85m east of the subject site which meanders along the eastern edge of the Harrow township in a north/south orientation.

To the south of the subject site is the John Mullagh Memorial Park. The boundary between the subject site, and the park contains an earthen levee bank that runs from Blair Street, adjacent to the southern boundary of the subject site to the west and then diverts to the south along the edge of the park.

Blair Steet is located to the west of the subject site with smaller residential allotments located on the opposite side of the road. The 'Kolmar House' convenience grocery store is located opposite the subject site. Beyond this single row of dwellings, the land rises sharply to the west with the land located under the Farming Zone beyond the crest of the hill.

Notification:	Clause 66 'Referral and Notice Provisions' of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme states the following in regards to notification of planning permit applications: Notice of an application of the kind listed below in Clauses 66.05 and 66.06 must be given in accordance with Section 52(1)(c) of the Act to the person or body specified as a person or body to be notified. Any requirement for notice under this or another clause does not apply if, in the opinion of the responsible authority, the proposal satisfies requirements or conditions previously agreed in writing between the responsible authority and the person or body to be notified. **Application referred to the CFA and GHCMA under Clause 66.** Further, Section 52(1)(a) of Planning and Environment Act 1987 - states the following: Unless the responsible authority requires the applicant to give notice, the responsible authority must give notice of an application in a prescribed form— (a) to the owners (except persons entitled to be registered under the Transfer of Land Act 1958 as proprietor of an estate in fee simple) and occupiers of allotments or lots adjoining the land to which the application applies unless the responsible authority is satisfied that the grant of the permit would not cause material detriment to any person. While Clause 44.04-6 (LSIO) and Clause 44.06-7 (BMO) exempts the application from the notice and review requirements of Section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of Section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of Section 82(1) of the Act, the application was sent out on public notification due to the history of the occupation onsite, the relative small size of Harrow and for transparency to neighbouring residents.

Referrals:	**Environmental Health Officer:** 1. The applicant or owner of the land will be required to submit an 'Application to Install an Onsite Wastewater Management System' to Council's Environmental Health team in order to obtain a permit to install a Onsite Wastewater Management system. 2. An approved Onsite Wastewater Management system must be installed concurrently with the erection of the dwelling and all waste must be disposed of within the curtilage of the property in accordance with the approved Land Capability Assessment, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority or Environmental Health Officer. **Glenelg Hopkins CMA:** Pursuant to Section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the CMA **objects to the granting of a permit on** the following grounds: 1. The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site. 2. The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site. 3. The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel. 4. The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets. 5. The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained. 6. The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality or sites of significance 7. The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area **Country Fire Authority:** CFA, as a Referral Authority pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* has considered and does not object to the grant of a permit for the above proposal subject to – • Any mandatory conditions specified within the planning scheme; and • The following conditions being included on any planning permit that may be issued. – Start of Conditions – 1. Bushfire Management Plan Required Before the development starts, a Bushfire Management Plan must be prepared to the satisfaction of CFA then submitted to and endorsed by the Responsible Authority. Once endorsed the plan must not be altered unless agreed to in writing by CFA and the Responsible Authority. The plan must be generally in accordance with the plan prepared by Brett Woodward (Version 1, dated 20/02/25) but modified to replace the conditions for Defendable space with: a) Defendable space Defendable space for a distance of 50 metres around the proposed building (or to the property boundary, whichever is the lesser

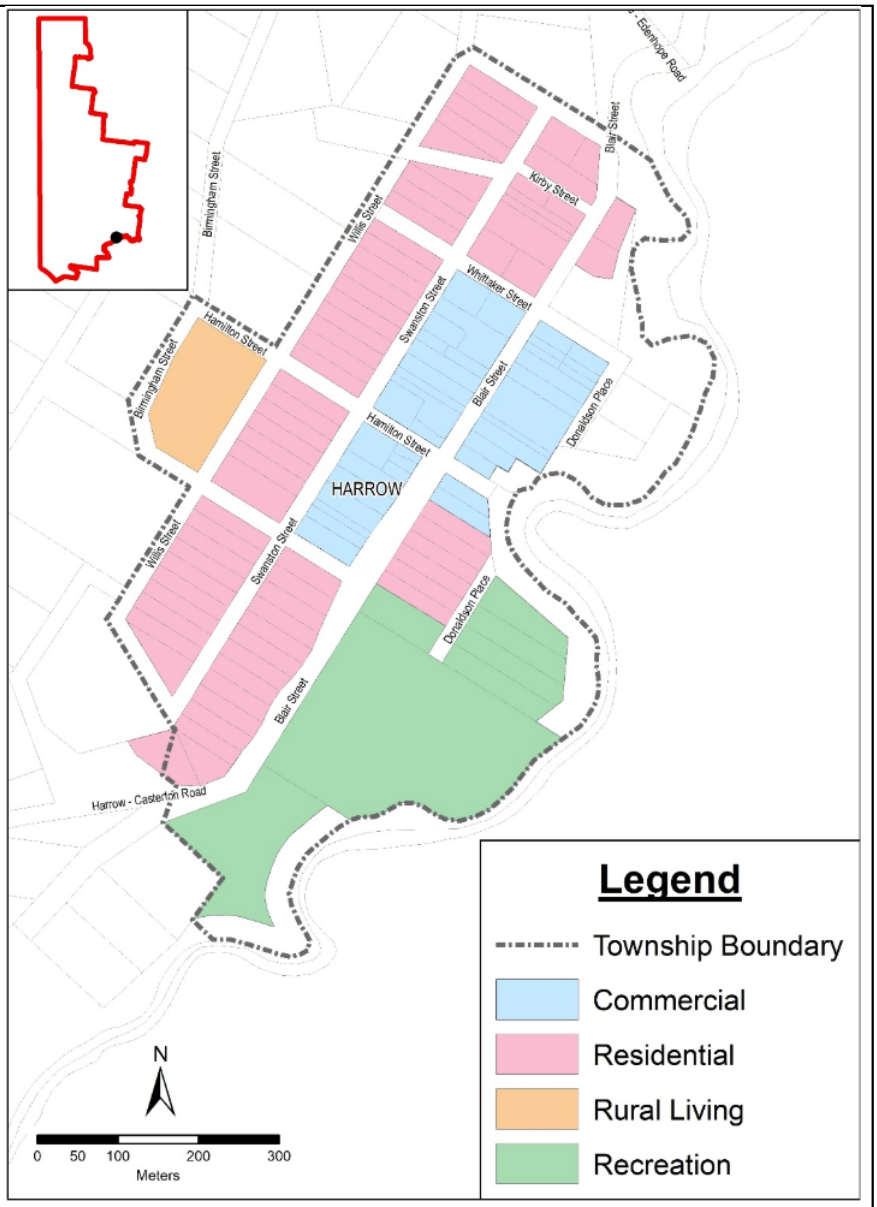
	distance) must be provided where vegetation (and other flammable materials) will be modified and managed in accordance with the following requirements: • Grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period. • All leaves and vegetation debris must be removed at regular intervals during the declared fire danger period. • Within 10 metres of a building, flammable objects must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building. • Plants greater than 10 centimetres in height must not be placed within 3m of a window or glass feature of the building. • Shrubs must not be located under the canopy of trees. • Individual and clumps of shrubs must not exceed 5 sq. metres in area and must be separated by at least 5 metres. • Trees must not overhang or touch any elements of the building. • The canopy of trees must be separated by at least 5 metres. • There must be a clearance of at least 2 metres between the lowest tree branches and ground level.

Planning Scheme Requirements:	The follow planning scheme provisions have been considered throughout the assessment of this application (refer section below for assessment against the specific, relevant provisions): **Municipal Planning Strategy** Clause 02.02 – Vision Clause 02.03-1 – Settlement Clause 02.03-3 – Environmental risks and amenity Clause 02.03-6 – Housing **Planning Policy Framework** Clause 11 – Settlement Clause 11.01-1L-05 – Settlement - Harrow Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values Clause 12.03-1S – River and riparian corridors, waterways, lake, wetlands and billabongs Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity Clause 13.01-1S – Natural hazards and climate change Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire planning Clause 13.03-1S – Floodplain management Clause 14 – Natural Resource Management Clause 14.02-1S – Catchment planning and management Clause 14.02-2S – Water quality Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage Clause 15.01-1S – Urban design Clause 15.01-2S - Building design Clause 16 – Housing Clause 16.01-1S - Housing supply Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability **Zoning Provisions** The subject site is zoned in the Township Zone. **Overlay Provisions** The subject site is affected by Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1, Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and the Bushfire Management Overlay. **Particular Provisions** The following particular provision is considered relevant to this application: - Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation **General Provisions** The following general provisions are considered to be relevant to this application: - Clause 53.02 – Bushfire Planning - Clause 63.12 – Decision Guidelines - Clause 65 – Decision Guidelines - Clause 65.01 – Approval of an Application or Plan - Clause 66 – Referral and Notice Provisions

Comparison against Planning Controls:	**Municipal Planning Strategy** Clause 02.02 – Vision West Wimmera Shire's Vision 2017-2020 is to ensure the municipality's communities are healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous and self-sustaining, with regional and global connectivity. From a land use and development perspective, this will be achieved by supporting the following objectives: • **Strategic objective 3:** quality sustainable community infrastructure. • **Strategic objective 4:** building on agricultural and business strengths and supporting economic development. • **Strategic objective 5:** thriving, safe and diverse communities. • **Strategic objective 6:** addressing health and wellbeing issues. • **Strategic objective 7:** providing access to and promoting the natural environment. Clause 02.03-1 – Settlement Strategic directions • Provide sufficient land and direct growth to the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow. • Enhance the roles of the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow as the service and business centres for the Shire and as focal points for communities. • Minimise any detrimental impact of development on the landscape, the environment and existing character. • Avoid encroachment of residential development on industry. • Promote Kaniva as a key service centre in the northern part of the Shire for the local and surrounding rural community. • Promote Goroke as the local community service centre within the centre of the Shire. • Promote development in Apsley that provides opportunities for service provision, new business initiatives and housing. • Promote Apsley as a dormitory town for Edenhope and Naracoorte. Clause 02.03-3 – Environmental risks and amenity *Climate change impacts* With the Shire's economy heavily reliant on agriculture, the potential risks to the municipality from changes in climate are significant. Council has a critical role to play in providing leadership and working with local communities to improve the environmental performance of the municipality, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the community, economy and environment of the municipality. Strategic directions • Improve the environmental performance of use and development, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. • Adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning. *Bushfire* There are large areas of grass/cropping land and bushland in the Shire which regularly burn as a result of natural causes, accidents or deliberate action. One of

	the major issues is that of uncontrolled bushfires. Planning is required to decrease the level of risk to life and property and ensure safe access for emergency services. Strategic directions • Restrict development on land prone to bushfire. • Ensure development is designed to respond to the risk of fire. *Floodplains* Some areas within the municipality are subjected to flooding and inundation from storms and flood events, as identified through the Floodway Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay. Planning should ensure that the community is protected from risks associated with these events. Strategic directions • Minimise the impact of flooding on the community by preventing inappropriately located use and development. Clause 02.03-6 – Housing Strategic directions • Encourage increased housing densities in existing settlements. • Encourage a diversity of housing types and lot sizes to meet the needs of all residents and visitors to the municipality. • Facilitate more affordable housing options in the municipality. **Municipal Planning Strategy Assessment** The Vision of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme includes the strategic objective 5 to support 'thriving, safe and diverse communities'. The proposal for a new dwelling located on a flood plane has been assessed by Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA) as having an unacceptably high level of risk to human life and property from flood waters. The proposal is not considered to be in accordance with the Vision at Clause 02.02. The strategic directions at Clause 02.03-1 seek to minimise impact of development on the landscape, the environment and existing character. The impact of the proposed dwelling on the environment has the potential to be significant in a flood event where the onsite wastewater system would be inundated and the destruction of the building has the potential to affect local water quality and environment. The impacts of climate change pose a significant risk to existing areas located under the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and Bushfire Management Overlay. Clause 02.03-3 highlights these risks from climate change, bushfire and floodplains and provides strategic directions to adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning, responding to the risk of bushfire through design and siting and preventing inappropriately located use and development on floodplains. While the proposal does respond appropriately to the risk of bushfire, the risk of flooding to human life and property has been assessed as significant on the subject site and through risk-based planning it has been determined that the proposal is inappropriately located with respect to flood risk. The proposal does not meet the climate change impacts and floodplains strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3. The proposal does support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-6 Housing by providing a diversity of housing types and affordable housing.

	The application has been assessed against the Municipal Planning Strategy and it is considered that the proposed development is not consistent with relevant policies contained within this section of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme, with particular focus on environmental risk levels to human life and property. **Planning Policy Framework** <u>Clause 11 – Settlement</u> Clause 11.01-1L-05 – Settlement – Harrow Strategies • Avoid development within the floodplain of the Glenelg River. • Ensure built form is responsive to Harrow's rural valley setting. • Ensure development enhances the town's historic 19th Century pastoral character.



Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values

Clause 12.03-1S – River and riparian corridors, waterways, lake, wetlands and billabongs

Objective

To protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs.

Strategies

Sensitively design and site development to maintain and enhance the waterway system and the surrounding landscape setting, environmental assets, and ecological and hydrological systems.

Design and site development to maintain and enhance the natural environment of waterway systems by:

- Minimising the visual intrusion of development on the natural landscape views from major roads, bridge crossings, public open space, recreation trails and within waterway systems themselves.
- Ensuring development is visually subordinate to the local landscape setting, including through the use of vegetation to filter views of development.
- Ensuring development adjacent to waterways adopts high quality materials and respectful design and siting.
- Avoiding impeding the natural flow of waterways and future flood events.
- Directing growth to established settlements where water and wastewater can be managed.

Policy guidelines
Consider as relevant:

- Locating earthworks, including dams, a minimum of 30 metres from waterway systems.
- Locating development a minimum of 30 metres from the banks of waterway systems.
- The views of floodplain and waterway managers.
- Any regional catchment strategy and related plans approved under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

<u>Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity</u>
Clause 13.01-1S – Natural hazards and climate change
Objective
To minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.

Strategies

- Respond to the risks associated with climate change in planning and management decision making processes.
- Identify at risk areas using the best available data and climate change science.
- Integrate strategic land use planning with emergency management decision making.
- Direct population growth and development to low risk locations.
- Develop adaptation response strategies for existing settlements in risk areas to accommodate change over time.
- Ensure planning controls allow for risk mitigation and climate change adaptation strategies to be implemented.
- Site and design development to minimise risk to life, health, property, the natural environment and community infrastructure from natural hazards.

Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire planning
Objective
To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

Clause 13.03-1S – Floodplain management
Objective
To assist the protection of:

- Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flows.
- The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways.
- The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.
- Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland or coastal health.

Strategies

- Identify land affected by flooding, including land inundated by the 1 in 100 year flood event (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) or as determined by the floodplain management authority in planning schemes.
- Avoid intensifying the impact of flooding through inappropriately located use and development.
- Plan for the cumulative impacts of use and development on flood behaviour.
- Locate emergency and community facilities (including hospitals, ambulance stations, police stations, fire stations, residential aged care facilities, communication facilities, transport facilities, community shelters, child care centres and schools) outside the 1 in 100 year (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) floodplain and, where possible, at levels above the height of the probable maximum flood.
- Locate use and development that involve the storage or disposal of environmentally hazardous industrial and agricultural chemicals or wastes and other dangerous goods (including intensive animal industries and sewage treatment plants) outside floodplains unless site design and management is such that potential contact between such substances and floodwaters is prevented, without affecting the flood carrying and flood storage functions of the floodplain.
- Ensure land use on floodplains minimises the risk of waterway contamination occurring during floods and floodplains are able to function as temporary storage to moderate peak flows and minimise downstream impacts.

<u>Clause 14 – Natural Resource Management</u>
Clause 14.02-1S – Catchment planning and management
Objective
To assist the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.

Clause 14.02-2S – Water quality
Objective
To protect water quality.

Strategies

- Protect reservoirs, water mains and local storage facilities from potential contamination.

	• Ensure that land use activities potentially discharging contaminated runoff or wastes to waterways are sited and managed to minimise such discharges and to protect the quality of surface water and groundwater resources, rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries and marine environments. • Discourage incompatible land use activities in areas subject to flooding, severe soil degradation, groundwater salinity or geotechnical hazards where the land cannot be sustainably managed to ensure minimum impact on downstream water quality or flow volumes. <u>Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage</u> Clause 15.01-1S – Urban design Objective To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity. Strategies • Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate. • Ensure that development, including signs, minimises detrimental impacts on amenity, on the natural and built environment and on the safety and efficiency of roads. Clause 15.01-2S - Building design Objective To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development. Strategies • Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment. <u>Clause 16 – Housing</u> Clause 16.01-1S - Housing supply Objective To facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs. Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability Objective To deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services. **<u>Planning Policy Framework Assessment</u>** The settlement strategy for the township of Harrow at Clause 11.01-1L-05 seeks to avoid development within the floodplain of the Glenelg River. The proposal is located on land that is situated within the floodplain of the Glenelg River as assessed by the GHCMA with a minimum flood depth of 0.78m in the 1% AEP event. The proposal is not consistent with the first strategy of Clause 11.01-1L-05.

	The objective of Clause 12.03-1S (River and riparian corridors, waterways, lake, wetlands and billabongs) seeks to protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs. The strategies and policy guidelines of this clause support this objective by siting buildings to avoid impeding the natural flow of waterways and future flood events and the views of the floodplain and waterway managers. The proposal is located on a property that is wholly subject to flood depths exceeding 0.78m in the 1% AEP event. The GHCMA (floodplain manager) provided an objection under Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 detailed on page 10 of this report. The proposal is not consistent with the objective, strategies and policy guidelines of Clause 12.03-1s. Clause 13.01-1S 'natural hazards and climate changes' builds upon the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3 by providing additional strategies for risk-based planning. The assessment of the proposal has considered all of the strategies of Clause 13.01-1S with assistance from GHCMA and their best available flood modelling. The subject site poses an unacceptably high flood risk due to the depth and velocity of potential flood waters over the land where future flooding events are likely to increase in frequency and severity as a result of climate change. The proposal is not considered in accordance with the objective and strategies of Clause 13.01-1S. The application included the application requirements of Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and was assessed by the CFA fire safety officer as part of the Section 55 referral under the BMO. The proposal includes the applicable area of defendable space and BAL 12.5 construction standard. The proposal meets the objective of Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning. The proposal is not considered consistent with the objective and strategies of Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain management due to the location of the dwelling in an existing floodplain affected by the 1 in 100-year flood event. The proposal is at risk of inundation by floodwaters and would add to the cumulative impacts of flooding. Due to these factors, the GHCMA has objected to the granting of a planning permit (refer to page 10 of this report for grounds of objection). Clause 14 Natural Resource Management includes Catchment Planning and Management and Water Quality as relevant clauses to the assessment of the proposal. The location of the proposed dwelling within a floodplain exposed to the 1% AEP flood event is not considered compatible with the protection of water quality and waterways under Clause 14. The potential for inundation of the proposed onsite wastewater treatment system and the resulting discharge into the Glenelg River is not considered appropriate. The objective of Clause 15.01-1S seeks to create urban environments that are 'safe, health, functional and enjoyable that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.' The location of the proposed dwelling on land affected by relatively deep flows and velocity of flood waters in the 1% AEP event is not considered to be a 'safe' outcome with regard to the built environment. The strategies of Clause 15.01-1S are not supported by the proposal as the building does not respond appropriately to the 'natural environment, surrounding landscape and climate'.

	Similarly, the proposal does not support the strategies of Clause 15.01-2S Building design as it will have a detrimental effect on the natural environment and public realm in the event of a flood. The proposal does support the objectives of Clause 16.01-2S by providing an affordable dwelling but does not support the objective of Clause 16.01-1S Housing Supply as the dwelling is not considered to be 'well-located' due to the flood risks onsite detailed in the assessment above. The application has been assessed against the Planning Policy Framework and it is considered that the proposed development is not consistent with relevant policies contained within this section of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme. **Zoning Provisions: Township Zone** Purpose of the zone: - *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.* - *To provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.* - *To encourage development that is responsive to the neighbourhood character of the area.* - *To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.* A planning permit is not required under the Township Zone for the use or development of the land for a dwelling. **Overlay Provisions: Land Subject to Inundation Overlay** Purpose of the overlay: - *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.* - *To identify flood prone land in a riverine or coastal area affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.* - *To ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.* - *To minimise the potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with development.* - *To reflect a declaration under Division 4 of Part 10 of the Water Act, 1989.* - *To protect water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.* - *To ensure that development maintains or improves river, marine, coastal and wetland health, waterway protection and floodplain health.*

	Planning Permit Trigger:
	A planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works pursuant to Clause 44.04-2.
	
	Decision Guidelines:
	Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:
	• The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
	• Any local floodplain development plan.
	• Any comments from the relevant floodplain management authority.
	• The existing use and development of the land.
	• Whether the proposed use or development could be located on flood-free land or land with a lesser flood hazard outside this overlay.
	• Alternative design or flood proofing responses.
	• The susceptibility of the development to flooding and flood damage.
	• The potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with the development. Flood risk factors to consider include:
	  ○ The frequency, duration, extent, depth and velocity of flooding of the site and accessway.
	  ○ The flood warning time available.
	  ○ Tidal patterns.
	  ○ Coastal inundation and erosion.
	  ○ The danger to the occupants of the development, other floodplain residents and emergency personnel if the site or accessway is flooded.
	• The effect of the development on redirecting or obstructing floodwater, stormwater or drainage water and the effect of the development on reducing flood storage and increasing flood levels and flow velocities.
	• The effect of the development on river, marine and coastal health values including wetlands, natural habitat, stream stability, erosion, environmental flows, water quality, estuaries and sites of scientific significance.
	• Any other matters specified in a schedule to this overlay.
	
	Assessment against the LSIO decision guidelines.
	
	The proposal is not consistent with the MPS or the PPF of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.
	
	There is no applicable floodplain development plan for Harrow.
	
	The comments received from the GHCMA determine that the entirety of the subject site would not be suitable for residential development and the Section 55 referral response has objected to the granting of a planning permit due to the risk of flood. The depth and velocity of a future flood on the subject site has been assessed to be too great a risk to human life and property. Other locations, building pad solutions and finished floor heights were explored as part of this application with the GHCMA, however there is nowhere suitable onsite for the development and any access to the building would be entirely underwater in a flood event. Any proposed pad onsite would also result in redirecting and obstructing the flow of floodwaters across the site and surrounds.

	The proposed wastewater disposal system onsite would also be inundated in a flood event which would result in effluent being discharged into floodplain and Glenelg River. The proposal does not support the purposes of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay as the development is not in accordance with the MPS and PPF, does not allow the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, increases the risk to life, health and safety and would likely lead to detrimental water quality in a flood event. **Overlay Provisions: Bushfire Management Overlay** Purpose of the overlay: - *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.* - *To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.* - *To identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented.* - *To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.* Planning Permit Trigger: A planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with Accommodation (including a moveable unit as defined under the Housing Act 1983) pursuant to Clause 44.06-2. Assessment: The proposal has been assessed by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) who have determine the application suitably responded to the relevant sections of Clause 53.02, subject to a condition requiring 50m of defendable space surrounding the dwelling or to the lot boundaries for a modified vegetation classification. The applicant subsequently amended the Bushfire Management Plan to comply with the CFA referral response when the application was amended as part of the Request for Further Information process. The application has been assessed against the relevant overlay provisions, and it is considered that the proposed buildings and works are not consistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay controls contained within the West Wimmera Planning Scheme. The proposal is consistent with the Bushfire Management Overlay. **Particular Provisions** The proposal has been assessed against the following relevant particular provisions: Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation: - The proposal does not include any native vegetation, or any consequential loss of native vegetation. The proposal was amended as part of the request for further information stage of the assessment to ensure no consequential loss would arise - No planning permit is triggered under Clause 52.17

General Provisions
The proposal has been assessed against the following relevant particular provisions:

Clause 53.02 Bushfire Planning:
Purpose

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.*
- *To ensure that the location, design and construction of development appropriately responds to the bushfire hazard.*
- *To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life, property and community infrastructure from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.*
- *To specify location, design and construction measures for a single dwelling that reduces the bushfire risk to life and property to an acceptable level.*

Clause 65.01 Approval of an Application or Plan

- *The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.*
- *Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.*
- *The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.*
- *Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.*
- *The orderly planning of the area.*
- *The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.*
- *The proximity of the land to any public land.*
- *Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.*
- *Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.*
- *The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.*
- *Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.*
- *The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.*
- *The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.*
- *The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.*

The relevant decision guidelines under Clause 65.01 relate to the MPS and PPF, purpose of the LSIO, effect on the environment and the degree of flood associated with the location of the development so as to minimize the hazard. The assessment of the proposed development has demonstrated that the application presents an unreasonable risk to human life, property and the environment due to the location

	of the building in an area subject to high flood depth and velocities. The proposal is not in accordance with the MPS, PPF or the purpose of the LSIO. The application has been assessed against the relevant general provisions, specifically Clause 65 Decision Guidelines, and Clause 66 Notice and Referral Provisions, and it is considered that the proposed development is not in accordance with the guidelines contained with this section of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.
Officer Comments:	The application has been assessed against the MPS, PPF, LSIO, BMO, Clause 53.02 and Decision Guidelines of Clause 65. The proposed dwelling is located on a floodplain where the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has identified a minimum flood depth of 0.78m and a maximum depth of 1.27m during a 1% AEP flood event, posing an unreasonably high risk to human life and property. In addition to the assessment in this delegate report, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has undertaken their own assessment of the planning application and objected to the granting of a planning permit on the grounds: 1. The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site. 2. The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site. 3. The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel. 4. The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets. 5. The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained. 6. The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality or sites of significance 7. The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area The proposal is not considered appropriate under the West Wimmera Shire Planning Scheme.

Recommendation:	That Council, having caused notice to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, decides to issue a **Notice of Decision to refuse to grant a permit** under the provisions of Clauses 44.04-2 and Clause 44.06-2 (permit triggers) of the West Wimmera Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as **Blair Street Harrow Vic 3317 (Lot6, Lot 7 & Lot 8)**, for the **Development of the land for a Dwelling,** in accordance with the following grounds of refusal: **Grounds of refusal** **1. The development is not consistent with Strategic Direction 5 of Clause 02.02 Vision.** **2. The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-1 Settlement.** **3. The development does not support the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3 under Climate Change Impacts and Floodplains.** **4. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 12.03-1S River and Riparian Corridors, Waterways, Lake, Wetlands and Billabongs.** **5. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 13.01-1S Natural Hazards and Climate Change and Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain Management.** **6. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 14.02-1S Catchment Planning and Management and Clause 14.02-2S Water Quality.** **7. The development does not support the objectives, strategies or policy guidelines of Clause 15.01-1S Urban Design and Clause 15.01-2S Building Design.** **8. The development does not support the purpose or decision guidelines of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.** **9. The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has objected to the granting of a planning permit under Section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* on the following grounds:** ***10. The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site.*** ***11. The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site.*** ***12. The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel.*** ***13. The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets.***

	14. ***The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained.*** 15. ***The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality or sites of significance.*** 16. ***The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area***
Planner/Officer: Sam Hockly Consultant Planner	**Signature:**  **Date: 22 July 2025**
Delegate: Edwin Irvine Senior Planner	**Signature:**  **Date: 22 July 2025**

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

25 March 2025

Samuel Hockly
West Wimmera Shire Council
PO Box 201,
Edenhope 3318

Dear Samuel

CMA Reference:	GHCMA-F-2025-00103
Council Reference:	PA1196
Property Address:	Blair Street Harrow 3317
Cadastral:	Allotment 7, Section 4, Parish Of Harrow
Development Description:	Construction of a dwelling

Thank you for your notice received at our office on 11 March 2025 in accordance with the provisions of *Section 52* of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Pursuant to Section 56 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, **the CMA objects to the granting of a permit on the following grounds:**

1. The proposed development is likely to result in danger to the life, health, and safety of the occupants due to flooding of the site.
2. The development relies on low level, flood affected access to and from the site.
3. The development is likely to increase the burden on emergency services and the risk to emergency personnel.
4. The development is likely to increase the amount of flood damage to private or public infrastructure and/or assets.
5. The development is likely to obstruct flood flows or reduce natural flood storage. The capacity of land subject to inundation to convey and store floodwater must be maintained.
6. The development is likely to be detrimental to natural habitats, waterway stability, water quality or sites of significance
7. The development is likely to increase the number of buildings located in a floodway area.

The following table summarises flood information relevant to the application. Unless stated otherwise, the 1% AEP flood level, depth and hazard information accounts for the effects of climate change according to the best available information - consistent with local and state planning policy.

Flood Information Summary

Item	Best Available Information
1% AEP flood level	100.31 m AHD
Nominal Flood Protection Level (NFPL)	100.61 m AHD
Minimum depth of flooding on site - 1% AEP	0.78m
Maximum depth of flooding on site - 1% AEP	1.27m
Property Hazard category - 1% AEP	High
Maximum depth of flooding on access - 1% AEP	1.21m
Access Hazard category - 1% AEP	High

This location is within the floodplain of Glenelg River.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Waterway Planning
79 French Street, Hamilton, Vic 3300 **T:** 03 5571 2526 **E:** ghcma@ghcma.vic.gov.au
ABN: 55 218 240 014 **www.ghcma.vic.gov.au**

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

The CMA's estimate of the 1% AEP flood level for this property is 100.31 metres AHD. This level comes from the Harrow Flood Investigation (2017). During 1% AEP floods the entire property would be subject to inundation by the Glenelg River as indicated by the blue shading in Figure 1.

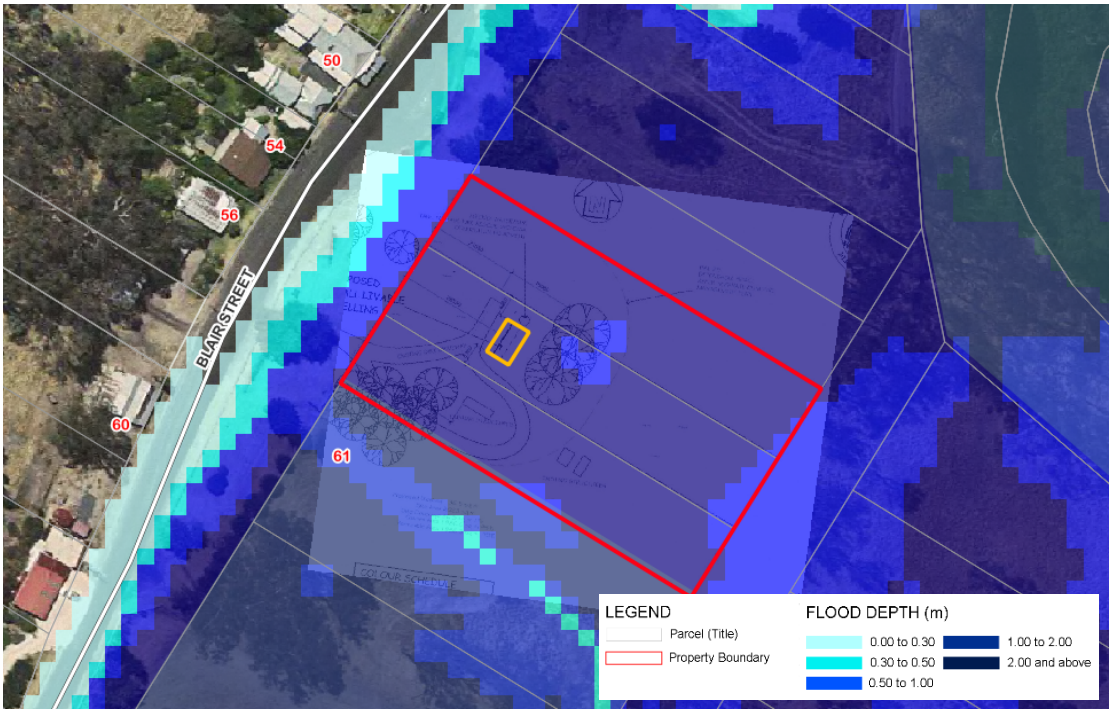
In addition to flooding of the property itself, it must be noted that access to the property will be cut by floodwater ranging in depth up to approximately 1.21m. This would pose an extreme level of hazard to anyone trying to gain access to or escape from the property during a flood of this magnitude.

Contact me at planning@ghcma.vic.gov.au or on 03 5571 2526 should you have any queries. Please quote **GHCMA-F-2025-00103** to assist the CMA in handling your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Robertson
Waterway Planning Manager

Figure 1: location of property with estimated 1% AEP flood depths, 2017 Harrow Flood Investigation (location of proposed dwelling shown in yellow)



Glenelg Hopkins CMA

Definitions and Disclaimers

1. The area referred to in this letter as the 'property' is the land parcel(s) that, according to the CMA's assessment, most closely represent(s) the location identified by the applicant. The identification of the 'property' on the CMA's Geographic Information System (GIS) has been done in good faith and in accordance with the information given to the CMA by the applicant(s) and/or relevant local government authority.

2. While every endeavour has been made by the CMA to identify the proposed development location on its GIS using VicMap Parcel and Address data, the CMA accepts no responsibility for or makes no warranty regarding the accuracy or naming of this proposed development location according to its official land title description.

3. No warranty is made as to the accuracy or liability of any studies, estimates, calculations, opinions, conclusions, recommendations (which may change without notice) or other information contained in this letter and, to the maximum extent permitted by the law, the CMA disclaims all liability and responsibility for any direct or indirect loss or damage which may be suffered by any recipient or other person through relying on anything contained in or omitted from this letter.

4. This letter has been prepared for the sole purpose by the party to whom it is addressed, and no responsibility is accepted by the CMA regarding any third-party use of the whole or of any part of its contents. Neither the whole nor any part of this letter or any reference thereto may be included in any document, circular or statement without the CMA's written approval of the form and context in which it would appear.

5. The flood information provided represents the best estimates based on current available information at the date of issue. This information is subject to change as latest information becomes available, further studies are carried out, flood events occur, or due to changes in State or Federal Policy.

6. The information contained in this letter is valid for three (3) months from date of issue and should not be relied upon for planning purposes beyond this time.

7. **AEP** refers to the Annual Exceedance Probability, which is a measure of the likelihood of a certain event happening in any given year expressed as a percentage (%) risk.

8. **1% AEP Flood** - A flood of this magnitude has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. The 1% AEP flood is the minimum standard for land use and development planning decisions in Victoria. The best available information shows that the magnitude of 1% AEP floods is increasing due to climate change.

9. **Planned for flood event -** The flood event to be accounted for in land use and development planning decisions. The planned for flood event accounts for plausible effects of the current trajectory of climate change on flood risk which may include, but is not limited to, changes in rainfall intensity and coastal influences (sea level rise & storm surge) where applicable. The planned for flood event usually accounts for the 1% AEP including increase in flood extent, depth and velocity by the year 2100.

10. **PMF** refers to Probable Maximum Flood, which is the largest flood theoretically possible for a location.

11. **AHD** - Australian Height Datum is the adopted national height datum that relates to height above mean sea level. Elevation is in metres.

12. **Freeboard -** if applied**,** is a height allowance above a flood level to provide additional protection from flood impacts. In the context of planning for development of flood-prone land, freeboard is applied to ensure floors are finished at a level that provides a margin of safety. Freeboard is applied to account for uncertainties in the planned for flood level. Uncertainties include factors such as the effect of waves caused by wind or the effect of vehicles moving through a flooded area, or the impact of rising mean sea level.

13. **Nominal Flood Protection Level (NFPL) -** is the minimum level (elevation) requirement for building floors and services (e.g., sewer openings & electrical fittings) and is measured in metres AHD. The NFPL affects the height of floors and building services above the ground surface, and accounts for the effects of climate change according to the best available information. It is subject to change according to the latest state of knowledge concerning the effects of climate change on flood risk.

15.3 Small Towns Plan Draft for Community Consultation

Directorate: *Infrastructure Development and Works*
Report Author: *Manager Planning and Environment*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the updated draft of the West Wimmera Small Towns Plan to Council before being circulated for community consultation.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorses the draft West Wimmera Shire Small Towns Plan for community consultation.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That Council endorses the draft West Wimmera Shire Small Towns Plan for community consultation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

Council staff successfully secured $80,000 in funding from the Regional Planning Hub to support the implementation of recommendations from the West Wimmera Shire Planning Scheme review. This funding is being used to develop two key strategic planning documents: the Small Towns Settlement Plan, which is currently underway, and the Kaniva Structure Plan, which will be developed following the completion of the Settlement Plan.

As part of the early consultation process, Council requested that a blank survey be distributed to the community instead of using pre-prepared consultation materials. This approach allowed for open-ended, community-led feedback.

A total of 74 completed surveys were received, and a summary of the survey results is attached to this report for Council reference. Key themes and priorities identified in the community responses will be used to inform updates to the draft Settlement Plan.

Paul Buxton from Plan2Place consulting presented at the June Councillor Forum the plan for discussion with the councillors, since the forum Plan2Place have amended the draft to include items discussed at that meeting. The updated draft is now being presented with the intention of going out to community consultation. A track changes version of the draft is attached for Councils consideration.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

Reputation risk

Strategic risk

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Planning and Environment Act 1987

Environmental Implications

Environmental Risk rating has been assessed as: Low

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The financial risk rating has been assessed as: Medium

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Not applicable

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community
1.3 Provide well planned and sustainable community infrastructure.
1.7 Improve the liveability of the shire to assist in growing our population into the future.

Goal 2 – Diverse and Prosperous Economy

2.2 Promote the Shire as a great place to visit, live and invest.
2.3 Facilitate the development of the local economy and jobs.
2.4 Create vibrant and attractive town centres.

Goal 3 – Sustainable Environment

3.1 Preserve and enhance the natural environment.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The Small Towns Settlement Plan and Kaniva Structure Plan are critical foundations for any future rezoning proposals, particularly those aimed at introducing or expanding Rural Living Zones across the municipality.

These documents:

- Provide a strategic framework to guide future land use and development;
- Document community aspirations and preferred growth directions;
- Identify land supply, infrastructure capacity, and potential constraints; and
- Establish planning justification that aligns with both local and State planning policies.

In the absence of such a strategic basis, any rezoning proposal—especially one involving Rural Living Zones—is unlikely to gain support through the Planning Scheme Amendment process or be approved by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). These plans are essential in demonstrating that land use changes are part of a coordinated, well-considered strategy with strong community backing.

Once finalised, the Small Towns Settlement Plan will also inform the development of the Kaniva Structure Plan, which will provide more detailed, place-specific planning guidance for Kaniva and surrounding areas.

In summary, finalising the Small Towns Settlement Plan is a necessary and foundational step in enabling future strategic land use changes, including Rural Living Zones. Council's input at this stage is vital to ensure the plan reflects both community needs and long-term planning objectives.

Attachments

1. West Wimmera Small Towns Plan V 6 07072025 [**15.3.1** - 82 pages]
2. West Wimmera Small Towns Plan V6 07072025- track changes [**15.3.2** - 82 pages]











WEST WIMMERA
SMALL TOWNS PLAN

[Draft for Consultation]

July 2025

PLAN2PLACE

This report is the Small Towns Plan for the Department of Transport and Planning and West Wimmera Shire Council. It has been prepared with expertise, advice and inputs from the consultant team of Plan2Place Consulting, Tim Nott Economics and Wayfarer Consulting, using background reports and information provided by Council and from other government sources. The report issue date is July 2025.

Every reasonable effort has been made to validate information provided by the client, Department staff, Council staff, stakeholders and other participants in the preparation of this report throughout the project during 2024 and 2025.

The report has been prepared in conjunction with the West Wimmera Shire Council and Department of Planning and Transport and is based upon up-to-date information provided at the time of report preparation and finalisation.

No part of the report can be replicated or reproduced in part or whole (other than by the West Wimmera Shire Council, Department of Transport and Planning or the consultant team) without the permission of Plan2Place Consulting – see www.plan2place.com.au.

Version	*Date*	*Notes*
V1	*20 November 2024*	*Draft Prepared for Council and DTP Officer Review*
V2	*28 January 2025*	*Draft for Council Executive Review*
V3	*18 June 2025*	*Draft Prepared for Councillors*
V4	*20 June 2025*	*Draft revision for Councillors*
V5	*30 June 2025*	*Draft incorporating Councillor comments*
V6	*7 July 2025*	*Draft for Councillor endorsement*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES 4
ABBREVIATIONS AND LEGISLATION 4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5
1. INTRODUCTION 6
1.1 Background and Context 6
1.2 What Comprises the Small Towns Plan 7
1.3 What is a Small Town Plan 7
1.4 Stakeholder Engagement 7
1.5 Additional Background Reports 7
2. POLICY AND PLANNING SCHEME CONTEXT 8
2.1 State Policy 8
2.2 Regional Policy 9
2.3 Council Strategies 10
2.4 Victoria Planning Provisions 11
2.5 Recent updates to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme 12
3. KEY CHANGE FACTORS 14
3.1 Population 14
3.2 Housing 15
3.3 Worker Accommodation 15
3.4 Climate 16
3.5 Industry 16
3.6 Visitation 17
3.7 Ageing 18
3.8 Social and Community Infrastrucutre 19
3.9 Transport Infrastructure 19
4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITES FACING THE TOWNS 20
4.1 Issues 20
4.2 Opportunities 22
5. APSLEY 26
5.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context 26
5.2 Population and Demographics 29
5.3 Housing 29
5.4 Economic Profile 29
5.5 Movement and Transport 29
5.6 Physical Infrastructure 30
5.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure 30
5.8 Built Form and Heritage 30
5.9 Landscape and Environment 31
5.10 Issues and Opportunities 31
6. EDENHOPE 34
6.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context 34
6.2 Population and Demographics 37
6.3 Housing 37
6.4 Economic Profile 37
6.5 Movement and Transport 38
6.6 Physical Infrastructure 38
6.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure 38
6.8 Built Form and Heritage 39
6.9 Landscape and Environment 39
6.10 Issues and Opportunities 40
7. GOROKE 44
7.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context 44
7.2 Population and Demographics 46
7.3 Housing 47
7.4 Economic Profile 47
7.5 Movement and Transport 47
7.6 Physical Infrastructure 47
7.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure 48
7.8 Built Form and Heritage 48
7.9 Landscape and Environment 48
7.10 Issues and Opportunities 49
8. HARROW 52
8.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context 52
8.2 Population and Demographics 55
8.3 Housing 55
8.4 Economic Profile 55
8.5 Movement and Transport 56
8.6 Physical Infrastructure 56
8.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure 56
8.8 Built Form and Heritage 57
8.9 Landscape and Environment 57
8.10 Issues and Opportunities 59
9. KANIVA 62
9.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context 62
9.2 Population and Demographics 66
9.3 Housing 66
9.4 Economic Profile 66
9.5 Movement and Transport 67
9.6 Physical Infrastructure 68
9.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure 68
9.8 Built Form and Heritage 69
9.9 Landscape and Environment 69
9.10 Issues and Opportunities 70
10. FUTURE SETTLEMENT STRATEGY 73
10.1 Determining a Settlement Strategy 73
10.2 Strategic Framework 74
Appendix A – Content overview from the WWPS 76
10.3 Zones 79
10.4 Overlays 80

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: West Wimmera Towns in Shire Context....6
Figure 2: Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP – Settlement Hierarchy....9
Figure 3: Existing West Wimmera Strategic Framework Plan, WWPS....13
Figure 4: Key External Centres Serving West Wimmera....14
Figure 5: Recent and Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns 2011 to 2036....15
Figure 6: West Wimmera Median House Price 2023....15
Figure 7: Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines study area for further investigation - Source: VicGrid, 2024....18
Figure 8: Forecast Change in Age Groups, West Wimmera, 2021 to 2036....18
Figure 9: Apsley Context Map....27
Figure 10: Apsley Framework Plan Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....28
Figure 11: Apsley - Existing Zones....28
Figure 12: Apsley - Existing Overlays....29
Figure 13: Edenhope Context Map....35
Figure 14: Edenhope Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....36
Figure 15: Edenhope - Existing Zones....36
Figure 16: Edenhope - Existing Overlays....37
Figure 17: Goroke Context Map....45
Figure 18: Goroke Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....46
Figure 19: Goroke - Existing Zones....46
Figure 20: Goroke - Existing Overlays....47
Figure 21: Harrow Context Map....53
Figure 22: Harrow Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....54
Figure 23: Harrow - Existing Zones....54
Figure 24: Harrow - Existing Overlays....55
Figure 25: Draft Harrow Flood Map 1% AEP Flood Extent....58
Figure 26: Kaniva Context Map....64
Figure 27: Kaniva Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....65
Figure 28: Kaniva - Existing Zones....65
Figure 29: Kaniva - Existing Overlays....66
Figure 30: Station Precinct with VicTrack Boundaries and Vacant Land....67
Figure 31: Yellow Crown Land in the Station Precinct....67
Figure 32: Proposed Strategic Framework Plan Update....75
Figure 33: Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan from the WWPS....76

Table 1: Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns, 2021 to 2036....14
Table 2: West Wimmera Change in Industrial Groups, 2011 to 2021....16
Table 3: Apsley Settlement and Key Recommendations....32
Table 4: Edenhope Settlement and Key Recommendations....41
Table 5: Goroke Settlement and Key Recommendations....50
Table 6: Harrow Settlement and Key Recommendations....60
Table 7: Kaniva Settlement and Key Recommendations....72
Table 8: Current Settlement Designations....73

ABBREVIATIONS AND LEGISLATION

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
BGLC	Barengi Gadjin Land Council
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
C1Z	Commercial 1 Zone
Council	West Wimmera Shire Council
DEECA	Department of Energy Environment and Climate Change
DELWP	Department of Land, Environment, Water and Planning
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
DDO	Design and Development Overlay
EPAV	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Development
FZ	Farming Zone
FO	Flooding Overlay
HO	Heritage Overlay
IN1Z	Industrial Zone 1
IN3Z	Industrial Zone 3
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
LDRZ	Low Density Residential Zone
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PUZ	Public Use Zone
RRV	Regional Roads Victoria
RLZ	Rural Living Zone
TZ	Township Zone
TRZ	Transport Zone
VIF2023	Victoria in Future 2023
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions
WWPS	West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Numeric Abbreviations

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

Related Legislation and Regulations

Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The West Wimmera Small Towns Plan (STP) has been developed to guide the role, function and purpose of the five largest towns in the Shire of West Wimmera (the Shire) and confirm the Municipal Settlement Strategy for West Wimmera.

Despite the significant change in population in the Shire, there have been limited updates to the planning policy framework in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme over the last 10 years. No new settlement policy has been introduced into the planning scheme since the new format schemes was introduced in February 2000.

The existing planning scheme settlement policies for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva are now outdated and do not reflect the population loss and ageing population, the challenges maintaining community services and environmental risks relating to threatened species and climate change. As a result there is a need to review and update the local settlement policies in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme to provide a framework for planning, development and investment decisions based on the current and projected social, environmental and economic context of the Shire.

Key findings and recommendations of the STP include:

- A clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- An updated Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 that includes a settlement framework.
- A suite of planning scheme amendment documents to support the implementation of the STP, including changes to the MPS and PPF.
- Finalise and implement flood studies for Edenhope and Aspley.
- Prepare a structure plan for Kaniva to further develop:
  - A vision for the town.
  - Identify key actions and priorities for capital works
  - Identify implementation of any changes to the MPS and PPF of the WWPS.
  - Prepare design guidelines for new development.
- Prepare a structure plan for Edenhope subject to funding.
- Prepare structure plans for Goroke, Harrow and Apsley subject to funding.
- Map flood risks as appropriate, as part of the preparation of structure plans for Edenhope and Harrow.
- Review existing heritage and marketing of Harrow and resident/visitor needs in terms of signage, trails networks, heritage interpretation and promote the experience of Harrow to the visitor market.
- Map fire risk as part of the preparation of structure plans for Harrow, Goroke and Apsley.

The existing settlement strategy for the small towns is identified in the WWPS. This reflects the designations applied in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP and outlined below. While the hierarchy has been analysed and reviewed, no change is recommended to this settlement hierarchy as a result of the STP shown below.

Current and Proposed Settlement Designations

Town	Existing planning scheme designation	Regional Growth Plan designation	Proposed planning scheme designation
Apsley	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Edenhope	District Town	District Town	District Town
Goroke	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Harrow	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Kaniva	Town	Town	Town

In addition to updating the local settlement policies several recommendations are provided to guide detailed planning for each of the five towns. Future work including structure planning, will provide guidance on the most appropriate planning including zones and overlays for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva. Recommendations specific to each of the five towns are also included.

The Small Towns Plan will be implemented via an update to the MPS and updates to local planning policy and further strategic work.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

The West Wimmera Shire straddles the Western and Wimmera Highways, situated midway between Melbourne and Adelaide. It is bordered to the north by the Rural City of Mildura, to the south by the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires, and to the east by Hindmarsh Shire and the Rural City of Horsham. To the west, it shares a boundary with the South Australian border.

Approximately 30 percent (%) of the Shire consists of public land, featuring significant natural attractions such as the Big Desert and Little Desert National Parks, part of the Natiumuk-Douglas Chain of Lakes, as well as part of the Mount Arapiles – Tooan State Park. The Shire is home to over 3,000 wetlands, which make up 25% of Victoria's total wetlands, serving as vital natural assets for both the municipality and the wider region.

Covering around 9,000 square kilometres, the Shire ranks among the largest municipalities in Victoria. Despite its expansive area, the Shire had a population of 4,006 people at the 2021 census, a slight increase from 2016 which was 3,903. Prior to that, the Shire experienced population decline, attributed to shifts in agricultural practices, an increase in average farm sizes, and the movement of individuals seeking other educational and employment prospects.

As one of Victoria's most diverse and productive agricultural regions, the local economy is closely linked to the performance of the agricultural sector. With dryland cropping and grazing being the dominant agricultural practice, the trend toward larger farms for greater viability has diminished the demand for services in the small rural towns that support them.

The predominant towns in the Shire are Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow, and Kaniva. There are also several smaller townships located throughout the Shire, including Dergholm, Chetwynd and Serviceton.

The West Wimmera Small Towns Plan (STP) will guide the role, function and purpose of each of the five towns in the Shire and confirm the municipal settlement strategy.

The towns and the Shire's context are shown in **Figure 1**.

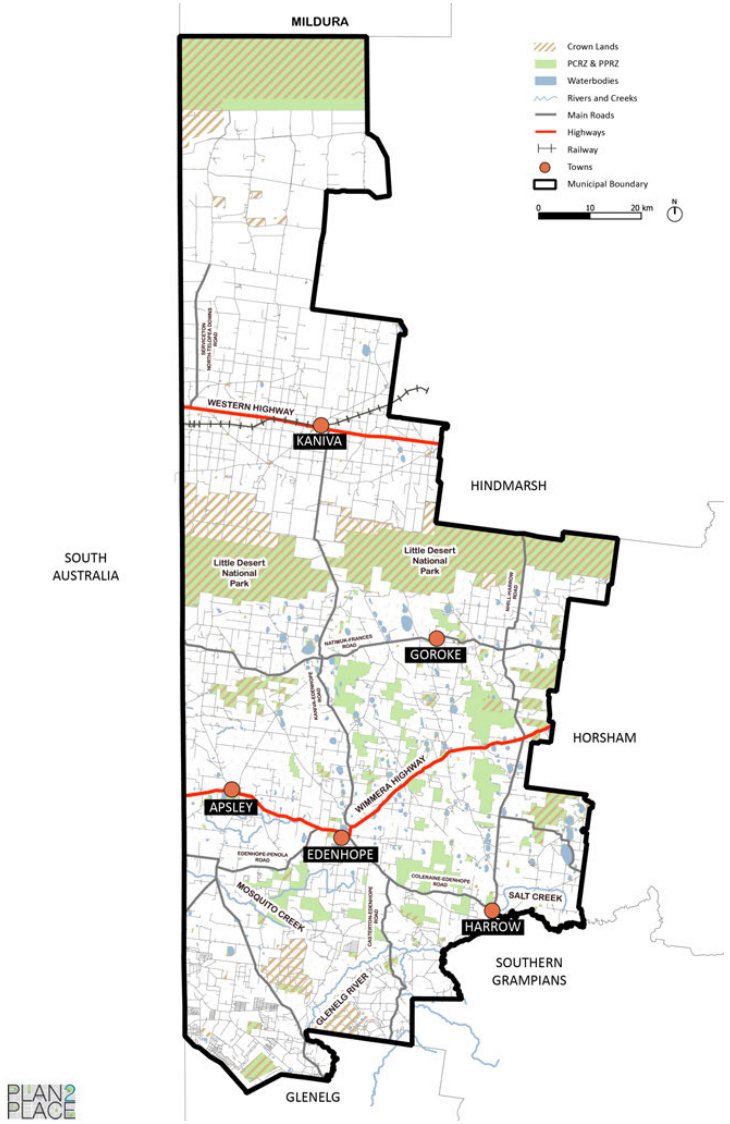


Figure 1: West Wimmera Towns in Shire Context

1.2 What Comprises the Small Towns Plan

The STP consists of eleven chapters that address the municipal settlement, policy and planning context, key settlement issues and themes for the towns including:

- Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context.
- Population and Demographics.
- Housing.
- Economic Profile.
- Movement and Transport.
- Physical Infrastructure.
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure.
- Built Form and Heritage.
- Landscape and Environment.
- Issues, Opportunities and Constraints.

1.3 What is a Small Town Plan

The STP is a plan that provides direction and guidance on the municipal settlement policies and strategies for the five towns and identifies further strategic work priorities for the towns.

The STP seeks to:

- Identify a clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Provide updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- Form the basis of a planning scheme amendment to update the policies and strategies relevant to the five towns in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Many key stakeholders and agencies have been consulted in the development of the STP to date. These include:

- Barengi Gadjin Land Council.
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) officers.
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) officers
- EPA Victoria.
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water.
- Regional Development Victoria.
- VicTrack.
- West Wimmera Shire Council officers.
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority

1.5 Additional Background Reports

Two reports were commissioned to inform the STP including the:

- West Wimmera Small Towns – Social and Community Infrastructure Analysis (Wayfarer Consulting).
- Small Towns Plan – Economic Input (Tim Nott Consulting).

The evidence and findings of these reports have been included in the STP.

2. POLICY AND PLANNING SCHEME CONTEXT

2.1 State Policy

A Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria was released in 2025 and is structured around five pillars which are:

- Self-determination and caring for Country: underpinning and informing the other pillars.
- Housing for all Victorians: delivering sufficient affordable homes for all Victorians.
- Accessible jobs and services: making sure you have good access to facilities and good jobs.
- Great places, suburbs and towns: creating thriving places that are attractive, safe and welcoming for everyone.
- Sustainable environments: preserving the natural values of Victoria and addressing climate change.

This plan sets out housing targets for every local government area across Victoria, specifying their share of the extra 2.24 million homes that are forecast. The housing targets that have been set for West Wimmera are for an additional 200 dwellings to 2051.

The plan seeks to deliver more jobs near homes by planning for, protecting and readying commercial and industrial land for development in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services.

As part the 2.24 million homes needed in Victoria by 2051, the Victorian Government has set a target to build 425,600 of those homes across the regions. There is a new $1 billion Regional Housing Fund to deliver more than 1,300 new homes across regional Victoria. The new homes will include a mix of social and affordable housing. There is also a $150 million Regional Worker Accommodation Fund to provide new housing options for regional communities where key workers are struggling to find affordable places to live. The package will make regional workers' jobs more secure and make it easier for businesses to find and keep staff.

Delivering the Goods: Victorian Freight Plan 2018

Delivering the Goods 2018 outlines key priorities to support Victoria's freight and logistics infrastructure amidst significant growth, driven by rising demand, global trends, and technological advancements. Freight volumes in regional Victoria are forecast to grow at an annual average rate of 1.5 per cent each year between 2014 and 2051. Towns such as Kaniva are on the Principal Freight Network for both Road and Rail which will mean more trucks on the road.

Victoria's Housing Statement, 2023

Victoria's Housing Statement has identified housing provision as one of the key challenges of the decade ahead. It aims to refresh Victoria's housing policy settings with a series of initiatives that respond to short-term issues of affordability and supply while still promoting long term economic growth.

The housing statement is supported by Amendments VC242, VC243,VC253 VC267 and VC276 which aim to facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs and to support the delivery of housing in Victoria.

Amendment VC267 revised Clause 55 to include the new Townhouse and Low Rise Code for residential multi-dwelling development. Key design changes include:

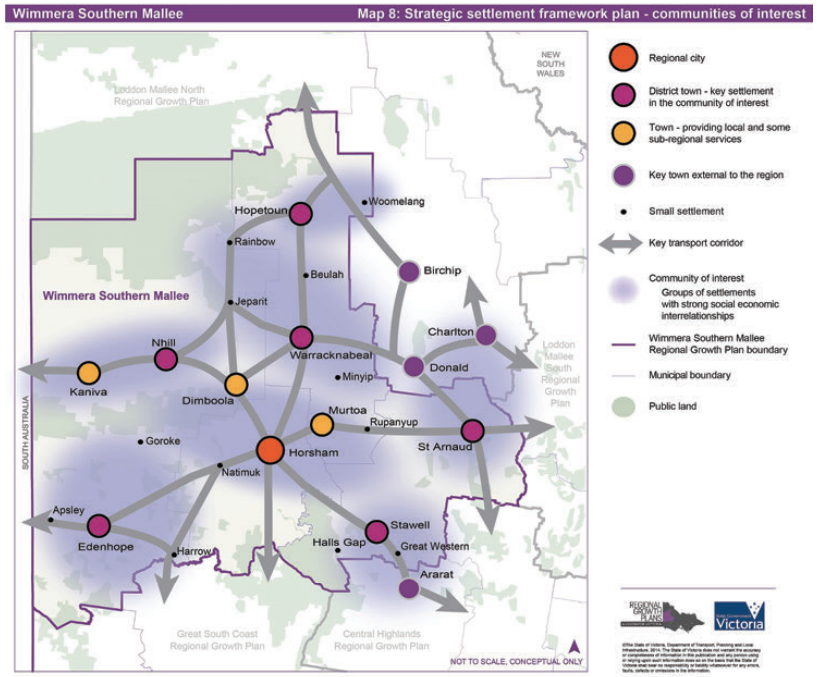
- Reduced minimum front setback of 6 metres, replacing the previous average setback rule or 9 metres.
- Private open space requirement reduced from 40 sqm to 25 sqm at ground level.
- Tree canopy coverage requirements introduced:
  - 10 per cent of site area for sites up to 1,000 sqm
  - 20 per cent of site area for sites over 1,000 sqm.
- Maximum site coverage increased to:
  - 65 per cent in General Residential Zone (GRZ)
  - 70 per cent in Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) and Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)
- Overlooking standards removed for bedroom windows only.

The recent changes to Clauses 55 and 57, as informed by the Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Code, have implications for the future building envelope and development standards within the West Wimmera LGA.

Amendment VC 276 amended all residential zone schedules and Neighbourhood Character Overlay schedules to implement the new residential development planning assessment provisions.

2.2 Regional Policy

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan 2014



Source: DTPLI, 2014

Figure 2: Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP – Settlement Hierarchy

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (RGP) covers the municipalities of Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack. The plan provides broad direction for regional land use and development in the region and a more detailed planning framework for the regional city of Horsham.

In **Figure 2**, Horsham is the major centre and provides a wide range of services to the whole region and adjoining areas. Edenhope is recognised as a district town supporting surrounding communities of interest. Kaniva is recognised as a key local service centre. The towns of Apsley, Goroke and Harrow are identified as small settlements.

District towns are identified as performing an important sub-regional goods and service role, meeting smaller town and rural district needs including local government, policing and ambulance services to a surrounding rural hinterland. They have a moderately diverse population and housing base and good access to services and retail. These towns may include some higher order services such as medical / hospital services and a variety of education facilities with some larger towns having post-secondary education facilities. District towns will have utility services with some larger towns having access to reticulated gas.

Towns are similar to district towns but generally service a more localised catchment. They will have a greater reliance on other centres for services and employment.

Small settlements have low population levels. They will have access to services such as a small primary school and usually a general store with postal facilities within a small retail area. These settlements may or may not have connection to reticulated water or sewer connections. Some are popular visitor locations and their role may include a low level supply of visitor accommodation and holiday homes resulting in seasonal variations in population.

Land use policies, strategies and actions for district towns and towns are to:

- Encourage the provision and maintenance of a wide range of services and facilities.
- Provide sufficient land to enable residential and employment growth.
- Prioritise infrastructure investment towards supporting growth.
- Support transport systems that provide access.

In smaller settlements, maintaining services where feasible and encouraging limited incremental growth is supported to allow for their ongoing transition.

For all areas, key priorities are protection of the valued character of urban areas and encouraging urban development that promotes and supports high quality streetscapes and urban design and contributes to attractive and healthy urban environments.

Further direction on Edenhope and Kaniva is also provided. This is summarised in the town profiles in this report.

2.3 Council Strategies

West Wimmera Council Plan, 2021 - 2025

The West Wimmera Council Plan sets out a roadmap for West Wimmera Shire, outlining where the municipality is heading and what is needed to get there. The Council Plan is a legislated requirement that is required to be prepared every four years and incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Community Vision and Future Directions outlined in the Council Plan provide a strong platform for the development of the STP as outlined below:

In 2041 West Wimmera is a great place to live, work and play. We are growing and we are known for our natural environment, resilience and sense of community. We are proud of our heritage and are building new economic capacity based on innovation and tourism, which is creating local employment. Our towns are vibrant and welcoming, offering the services and facilities that meet the needs of our community and visitors. We are a confident community and will empower everyone to be part of our future.

Future Directions

Active, healthy and safe – supporting our community to live full and rewarding lives.

Access to the right services – working confidently with partners to ensure health, education and digital services meet our needs.

The natural environment – valuing the time our community and visitors spend enjoying the natural environment.

Our roads – a safe and sustainable road network supporting businesses, our community and visitors.

Attractive and viable town centres – great places to live, visit and do business.

Thriving economy – taking advantage of our strengths in farming, business and tourism to generate employment and share our prosperity.

Sport and recreation – facilities that encourage participation in physical activity and add to community life.

Source: West Wimmera Council Plan 2021 - 2025

West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy, 2018

The West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy (Strategy) provides a 10-year plan to guide decisions about the management of, and investment in, trails and to provide a vision of what the trail network across West Wimmera will look like in the future. The Strategy aims to encourage and support active lifestyles in a positive way and address challenges faced by the Shire's residents. This includes issues related to high rates of physical inactivity as well as overweight, obesity and preventable mortality factors compared to the average across Victoria and other Australian districts. The opportunity to grow the visitor economy is also recognised.

The Strategy identifies a range of opportunities available to grow the trail network across the municipality and within the towns. This aims to build on proximity to international and national tourism features, the Shire's natural attributes, landscapes and features, location between Melbourne and Adelaide and diversity of environments.

There are a range of initiatives identified for each town to elevate the quality and extent of trails within each town.

West Wimmera Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 (WWEDS)

The WWEDS sets out the West Wimmera community's vision for the municipal economy along with strategies and actions to achieve that vision. It is aligned to the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) for the Wimmera Southern Mallee Region of Victoria, which is the umbrella economic development strategy prepared by the Victorian Government. The WWEDS is an overarching framework that will be used to guide economic development in the municipality and articulates the role, priorities and approach. It provides the rationale for engaging with identified priority sectors and delivering outcomes through implementation plans.

There are three pillars in the WWEDS Strategy that will drive the economy. These are:

- Continuing to support the growth of the agricultural sector throughout the municipality.
- Enhancing liveability to increase amenity and grow the appeal of the municipality's towns.
- Supporting small business growth.

There are also a range of initiatives outlined for the towns including:

- The preparation of town settlement plans to facilitate development (particularly for key workers).
- Promoting industrial estates in Kaniva and expanding the Edenhope estate.
- Advocating for road improvements.
- Mainstreet activation plans.
- Supporting development of business hubs.
- Formalising caravan and trailer parking in Kaniva's main street.
- Upgrading holiday visitor parks.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Economic Development Strategy, 2022 (REDS)

The REDS was developed by the (former) Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) for the regional partnership area of West Wimmera Mallee. The REDS should be used to drive strategic, whole of-government activity in the region, informed by a contemporary understanding of economic performance. The document is designed to communicate innovative capacity in the region, now and in the future, support collaboration with government to better understand regional strengths, challenges and opportunities and attract investment to the region based on clearly identified strategic priorities.

There are four strategic directions defined for economic development of the region. These are:

- Strengthen agriculture and food product manufacturing through diversification.
- Promote growth and development of the visitor economy, leveraging natural assets and Aboriginal heritage.
- Support and expand economic opportunities in growing sectors (health and social services).
- Position the region to benefit from emerging growth opportunities in natural resources.

2.4 Victoria Planning Provisions

This section provides an overview of the current clauses within the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) relating to strategic directions, policies, zones, overlays and particular provisions applicable to the five towns in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme (WWPS).

State (S), Regional (R) and Local (L) planning policy and provisions are included and discussed. State and regional planning policies are developed and implemented by state and local governments while local planning policies are developed by local municipalities providing greater local direction in addition to state and regional policies where required.

The most relevant provisions in Council's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF) are included below. Further background on the Victoria Planning Provisions is provided in Appendix A.

Clause 02.03-1 Settlement outlines the distinctive pattern of urban development based on separate townships and settlements, with the predominant towns being Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow.

The towns and settlements in the Shire have important roles as service and business centres and as a focus for the local community, visitors and the surrounding rural hinterland. Population decline within towns is a threat to service provision and liveability.

The Strategic Directions for the five towns are to:

- Provide sufficient land and direct growth to the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow.
- Enhance the roles of the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley and Harrow as the service and business centres for the Shire and as focal points for communities.
- Minimise any detrimental impact of development on the landscape, the environment and existing character.
- Avoid encroachment of residential development on industry.
- Promote Kaniva as a key service centre in the northern part of the Shire for the local and surrounding rural community.
- Promote Goroke as the local community service centre within the centre of the Shire.
- Promote development in Apsley that provides opportunities for service provision, new business initiatives and housing.
- Promote Apsley as a dormitory town for Edenhope and Naracoorte.

The strategic framework plan in the MPS at Clause 02.04 is shown in **Figure 3**.

2.5 Recent updates to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme

The West Wimmera Planning Scheme (WWPS) commenced on 17 February 2000. Since that time, amendments relating to the overarching policies have included Amendment C007 which made changes to Clause 21 of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) based on a 2006 review of the WWPS. In 2013 Amendment C030 was approved which introduced a new format MSS to the planning scheme. No local planning policy work for settlements across the Shire has been undertaken or implemented since this time.

The Local Planning Policy Framework of the WWPS was translated into the new MPS and PPF. A selected number of new and updated local schedules to operational provisions were implemented in a manner consistent with changes to the VPP in May 2011.

These include local policies relating to:

- Settlement for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva.
- Protection of biodiversity and indigenous vegetation.
- Protection of agricultural land, location of forestry and timber production, dwellings and quarry buffers.
- Residential subdivision design from content.
- Recreational facilities and infrastructure design.
- The new and revised strategic framework plan.

In June 2022, the Small Planning Local Schedules updated the West Wimmera Planning Scheme to remove inconsistencies in local schedules with the VPP and the Ministerial Direction - Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

The updated mapping for the Bushfire Management Overlay was introduced into the Planning Scheme in October 2017.

The WWPS was last amended in 2018. The age of strategic planning work underpinning the existing WWPS as well as new challenges and opportunities, makes it timely for the strategic basis of the settlement boundaries for the five towns and their strategic framework to be reviewed through the development of the Small Towns Plan.

Clause 11 Settlement

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement promotes the sustainable growth and development of Victoria to deliver choice and opportunity through a network of settlements. Regions are planned to reinforce settlement boundaries and provide for population growth and development of facilities and services. Growth is directed into existing settlements supported by a network of major and neighbourhood activity centres and townships of varying size, role and function. Urban consolidation is encouraged with density that supports sustainable transport and retail, office-based employment and community facilities and services.

The STP should clearly identify the network of settlements across the Shire, directing any new development into the existing settlements with a clear settlement boundary. Settlement should seek to consolidate urban uses to ensure a wide range of sustainable transport, retail, commercial and community facilities and services.

Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement seeks to support the role of Horsham as the key population and employment centre for the region. Edenhope is identified as a district town and key service hub where growth and development is encouraged while Kaniva is identified as providing local and some sub-regional services. Easy access to housing, education, employment and community facilities is to be provided particularly in Horsham and district towns along with an ongoing supply of infill and greenfield residential land. The regional settlement policy emanating from the RGP is shown in **Figure 3**.

The STP should seek to confirm and support the role of Edenhope as a district town and key service hub while Kaniva should be supported to provide local and some sub-regional services.

Clause 11.01-01-05L – Settlement sets out local settlement policies for each town. These are discussed further in the town profiles in the STP.

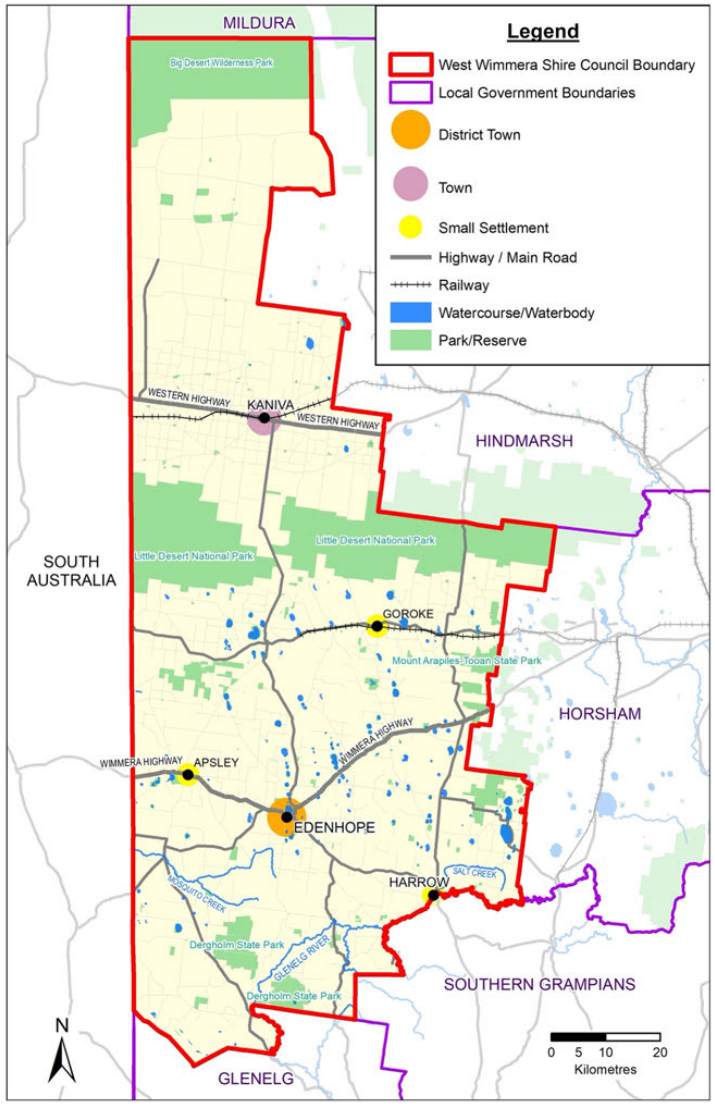


Figure 3: Existing West Wimmera Strategic Framework Plan, WWPS

3. KEY CHANGE FACTORS

This section considers the key socio-economic factors that are influencing population change and the demand for housing in the Shire.

The Shire is a farming district, which is served by several small towns providing a range of day-to-day services such as education, front-line health services and local retailing. It is part of a wider, cross-border agricultural region, often called the Green Triangle, that produces a wide variety of farm and forestry goods and in which larger towns act as resource collection and processing centres. These larger centres – Horsham, Hamilton, Mt Gambier, Naracoorte and Portland - provide more complex services for this region, including technical and further education, regional hospitals and sub-regional retailing.

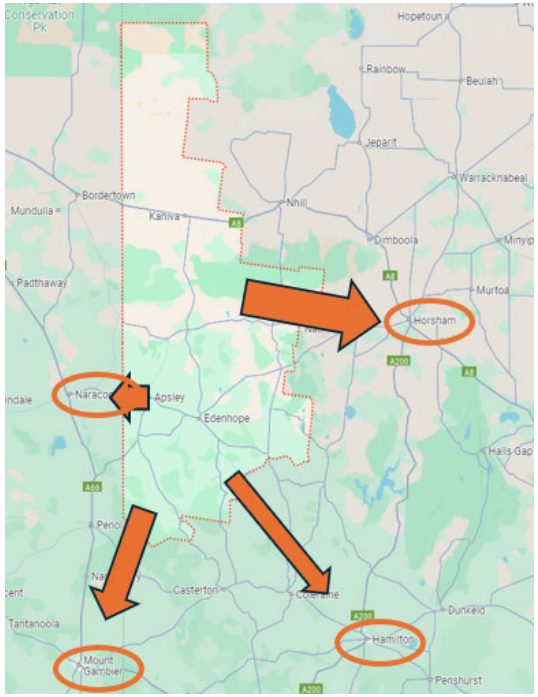


Figure 4: Key External Centres Serving West Wimmera

(Source: base map from Google Maps)

Horsham is the closest major centre for most of the Shire; however, the geographic shape and position of the municipality means that its communities can be serviced by different larger centres, as shown in **Figure 4**.

The region remains economically robust, based on farming, forestry, mineral sand extraction, processing of primary produce, renewable energy generation and tourism. However, the population of the region as a whole has been falling, with rural areas declining most rapidly as farming becomes less labour intensive.

3.1 Population

The population of the Shire is forecast to decline by 0.7% per year over the period from 2021 to 2036 (VIF 2023, Department of Transport and Planning, 2023). The following chart shown in **Figure 5**, details the forecast population outcomes for the five main towns, assuming they each take a proportionate share of the change. **Table 1** shows the forecast population change for the five main towns.

Table 1: Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns, 2021 to 2036

Change 2021 to 2036 (persons)	Population in 2021	Forecast population in 2036	Total change	Average annual change
Apsley	329	298	-31	-2.1
Edenhope	713	645	-68	-4.5
Goroke	208	188	-20	-1.3
Harrow	184	167	-17	-1.2
Kaniva	683	616	-67	-4.5

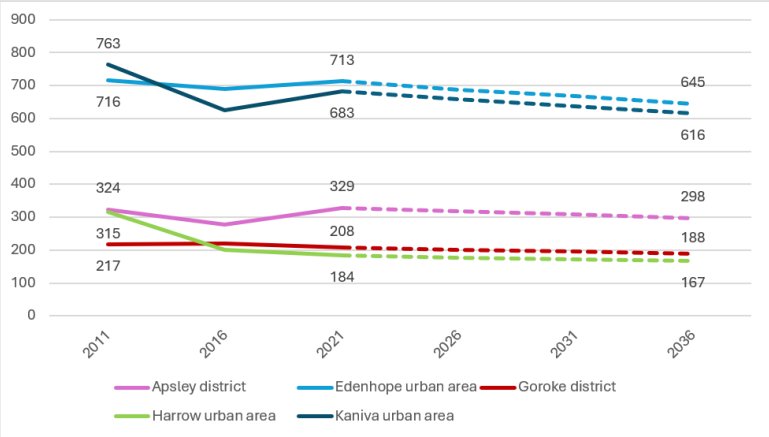
Source: ABS, 2024; VIF23; Tim Nott

Note: Kaniva, Edenhope and Harrow townships have statistical boundaries defined by the ABS as "urban areas".. Apsley and Goroke do not and are defined here by the SA1 of which they form a part, hence the term "district".

The loss of farm workers through farm amalgamations and mechanisation means reduced enrolment in schools and less spending at retailers. At certain thresholds, reduced demand triggers further loss of jobs and, with other local jobs not available, workers and their families move away. There is also a flow on effect that leads to the contraction of services including health care, social welfare and education.

This can mean a reduction, for example, in the number of volunteers available and in players to support the local sports teams and a general reduction of

community life. This is a process that has been occurring for decades and to which the community has become accustomed. Nevertheless, a halt to population decline would be welcomed by many local people who wish to maintain their levels of service and community networks. It is important to note that some rural municipalities in Victoria have previously reversed population decline through targeted and proactive interventions. The same could eventuate for West Wimmera.



(Source: ABS, 2022; Department of Transport and Planning, 2023; Tim Nott)

Figure 5: Recent and Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns 2011 to 2036

While Victorian Government projections are for continued loss of population in the municipality these are largely trend based and could be reversed through an interventionist, proactive and coordinated settlement planning approach.

3.2 Housing

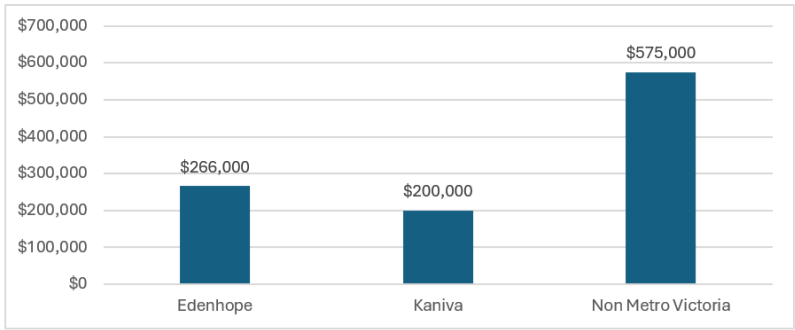
Despite a loss of population according to Census data, Victoria in Future (VIF 2023) is forecasting a rise in the number of dwellings required to 2036 because of a decline in the number of people per household and a growth in the vacancy rate. VIF2023 anticipates:

- A total of 47 dwellings in the West Wimmera SA2 – broadly, the area south of the Little Desert - between 2021 and 2036, or approximately 3.1 per year. Most of these would be likely to be constructed in Edenhope as the largest town in the area, although there may be some demand in the smaller towns of Apsley, Goroke and Harrow and in rural areas.
- A total of 41 dwellings in the area north of the Little Desert, or 2.7 per year. Most of these dwellings would be expected to be required in Kaniva, as the only significant town in the Shire north of the Little Desert.

Each new dwelling generates work for the construction industry as well as in infrastructure, retailing, health and community services. Much of this will be serviced from outside the Shire but there will be some local opportunities.

3.3 Worker Accommodation

Local enterprises reportedly find it difficult to attract workers, with a consequent impact on local economic development. This is partly a result of a lack of available accommodation. The Census indicates that the rate of unoccupied dwellings in 2021 was between 13% and 25% across the five main towns. However, many of these apparently vacant dwellings are unsuitable for occupation, or being kept as second homes or holiday homes, or available only as short stay rentals. Further work is needed to understand whether vacant dwellings can be made available. The purchase cost of housing is well below the median for non-metro Victoria as a whole, as shown in **Figure 6** below. These figures are based on actual stock sales. These relatively low prices may deter some investors from constructing additional dwellings. Some subsidies may be required to generate more dwellings.



Source Victorian Valuer General 2024

Figure 6: West Wimmera Median House Price 2023

Accommodation for a seasonal harvest work-force may be a special case requiring a collective response from affected farmers. In attracting new workers, it may be worth considering the potential for innovation including, for example, allowing more on-farm accommodation that could be integrated with adjacent townships.

3.4 Climate

The climate in the Shire is dominated by warm, dry summers and cool, wet winters. In recent years there has been a significant decrease in average spring and autumn rainfalls. The bushfire season generally runs from November to April. Prevailing weather conditions associated with the bushfire season in the West Wimmera Shire area is warm to hot north-westerly winds accompanied by high temperatures and low relative humidity followed by a cool south-westerly change.

Climate change in the wider region is driving changes in farming and in particular, has caused a conversion from grazing to cropping (see Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 2021). Cropping is likely to continue to push down from the north of the Shire, replacing pastureland and animal husbandry as the area dries. This may have further impacts on the number of workers required.

Irrigated agriculture in the wider district that uses the ground-water resource may come under pressure as the ground water fails to recharge to previous levels because of lower rainfall. There will also be increased demand for this resource from urban, recreational and environmental uses which may no longer be able to rely on consistent rainfall.

In addition to the impacts specific to agriculture, climate change will have an impact on outdoor living and the valued natural environment. There are likely to be, on average, more days of fire danger, less cool season rainfall and more intense downpours with risks of flooding (DELWP, 2019). Towns in the Shire are also at risk of climate change impacts especially to infrastructure such as damage to transport infrastructure (e.g. more potholes in roads). The risk of late season frost may also increase.

Under the Victorian Government climate change projections (DELWP 2019), the Shire can expect to:

- Be hotter with the greatest increases in temperature expected in summer
- Be drier with the greatest decreases in rainfall expected in spring
- Have fewer rainy days but increasing rainfall intensity.

3.5 Industry

Change in industry is constant, as a result of the introduction of new technologies and techniques, competitive pressures and shifts in market demand. Recent changes in the scale of broad industry groups in West Wimmera are shown in **Table 2**.

				Change 2011 to 2021		Comparison, 2021	
	2011	*2016*	*2021*	No	AAGR	West Wimmera	Non Metro Victoria
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	904	816	846	-58	-0.7%	45.1%	7.2%
Mining	10	3	7	-3	-3.5%	0.4%	0.7%
Manufacturing	83	59	45	-38	-5.9%	2.4%	7.4%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	7	3	9	2	2.5%	0.5%	1.4%
Construction	82	63	74	-8	-1.0%	3.9%	10.0%
Wholesale Trade	37	24	16	-21	-8.0%	0.9%	2.2%
Retail Trade	125	99	111	-14	-1.2%	5.9%	9.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	54	53	46	-8	-1.6%	2.5%	6.6%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	83	60	63	-20	-2.7%	3.4%	3.8%
Information Media and Telecommunications	7	11	10	3	3.6%	0.5%	0.8%
Financial and Insurance Services	23	22	12	-11	-6.3%	0.6%	1.9%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	5	9	3	-2	-5.0%	0.2%	1.0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	31	29	38	7	2.1%	2.0%	4.5%
Administrative and Support Services	27	28	39	12	3.7%	2.1%	2.8%
Public Administration and Safety	115	104	114	-1	-0.1%	6.1%	6.3%
Education and Training	131	133	138	7	0.5%	7.4%	8.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	234	229	226	-8	-0.3%	12.0%	16.2%
Arts and Recreation Services	7	13	10	3	3.6%	0.5%	1.5%
Other Services	27	46	35	8	2.6%	1.9%	3.6%
Inadequately described/Not stated	54	61	58	4	0.7%	3.1%	3.9%
Total	2,038	1,863	1,877	-161	-0.8%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ABS, 2022. Notes: AAGR = Average Annual Growth Rate; largest five industries highlighted

Table 2: West Wimmera Change in Industrial Groups, 2011 to 2021

The key points are:

- The number of local workers declined over the period 2011 to 2021, more or less in line with population decline. While there appeared to be a slight increase in local workers between 2016 and 2021, this was likely a temporary effect of the COVID19 pandemic.

- Nearly half (45%) of all workers in the Shire work in agriculture and forestry and while the number declined between 2011 and 2021, the share of the labour-force remained broadly the same.
- A number of small professional industries grew slightly over the period. Much of this was also likely a result of remote working by people displaced by the COVID19 pandemic.
- The number of workers in several of the largest industries – manufacturing, retailing, transport – declined by more than average, indicating ongoing structural change.
- Apart from farming, West Wimmera residents are reliant on work in the local population services sectors – health, education, public administration and retailing, all of which are concentrated in the five main towns.

Future change in employment will depend on the unique set of circumstances of each industry.

In agriculture, precision farming techniques are being deployed to improve yields and reduce inputs. These are likely to become more automated over time, further reducing the need for on-farm labour, although work for local technology providers and farm-data analysts could increase. Apart from the large scale agricultural producers, there may be potential for different types of farming that have more direct links to customers or which are satisfying niche and more high value markets. The Shire's Economic Development Strategy (West Wimmera Shire Council, 2024) identifies, garlic, honey, mushrooms, micro greens and flowers as being well-suited to the Shire and having potential for growth.

Automation and the roll-out of increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence techniques will affect all industries to some extent. Whether these changes have a centralising or decentralising effect will depend on the circumstances in each industry and could be impacted by the size of the retail business and their ability to invest in technology. In retailing, for example, ongoing changes in point of sale technology is reducing the need for check-out staff; and the continued growth of internet retailing will affect non-food goods sellers so critical to the needs of small town residents eg pharmacy/hardware/homewares, in particular. However, internet retailing also allows small producers located in the Shire access to global markets.

In the professional services sector, the internet and automated techniques allow small businesses to deliver increasingly sophisticated products from any location. The ongoing ability of the Shire to attract such businesses will depend on the capacity of the local infrastructure, that is, the excellence of the mobile and internet coverage, and on the relative attractiveness of its towns as places to live.

The Shire is on the periphery of the Western and South Western Renewable Energy Zones, which have been identified by the Victorian Government as suitable for concentrated investment in wind, solar and battery farms to power the grid. VicGrid has identified that large parts of the Shire are suitable for investigation as locations for renewable energy investment, as shown in Figure 7. The figure also identifies that a new solar farm has approval in the southern part of the Shire but has not yet been constructed.

There is potential for jobs in new windfarm, solar-farm or large battery projects to be taken up by people from the Shire and for the Shire to offer a home to people moving into the region for these projects. For southern parts of the Shire, there is also potential access to projects in south-east South Australia.

Mineral sands mining projects such as that proposed for Avonbank near Horsham will generate significant numbers of jobs that may be accessible to people living in West Wimmera Shire. All currently proposed projects remain some distance from Shire, with residents usually at least one hour's drive from the five towns within the Shire. This may mean that the Shire would need to incentivise project workers from outside the Shire to attract them to the five small towns. The ability of the five towns to provide unique residential opportunities could be capitalised on to capture some of this key worker growth.

3.6 Visitation

Visitor services – accommodation, food service, specialty retailing, tours – do not currently provide substantial employment in the Shire and tourism is still described as an emerging industry. The Shire's economic development strategy identifies visitor economy growth as one of four key pillars of local economic development for the municipality. The Strategy identifies opportunities to grow the visitor economy including food and farming tourism, ecotourism associated with the lakes and deserts, travellers' rest points and small town events. Potential actions recommended by the economic development strategy include upgrading and expanding lake-side caravan parks to provide accommodation for visitors and seasonal workers.

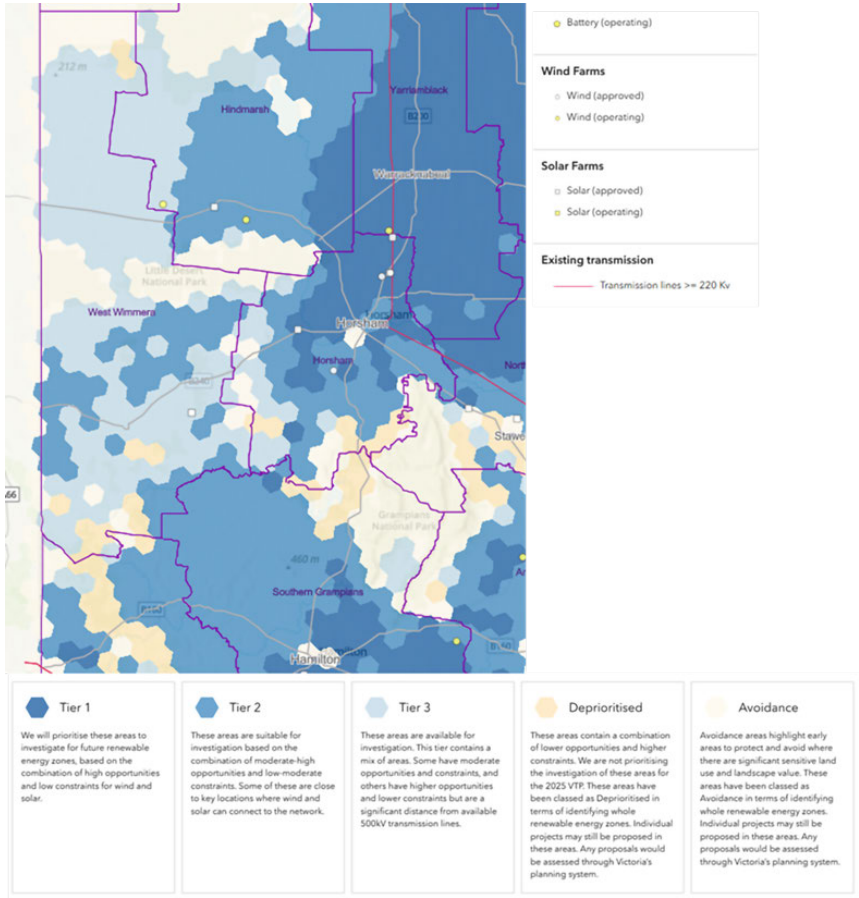
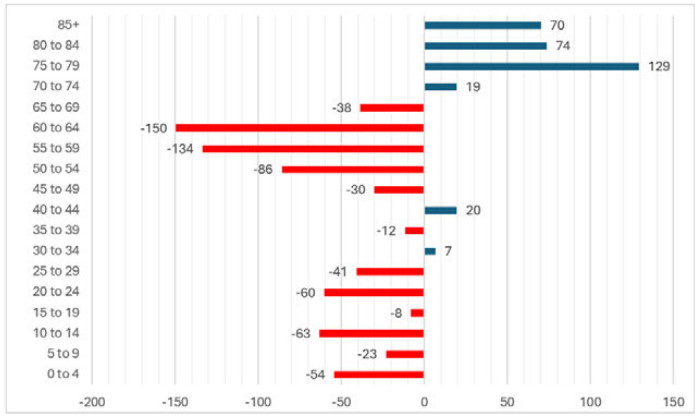


Figure 7: Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines study area for further investigation - Source: VicGrid, 2024

3.7 Ageing

In common with most of Victoria, the Shire is ageing and this is forecast to continue (VIF2023). **Figure 8** shows the forecast change by five year age group.



Source: VIF2023

Figure 8: Forecast Change in Age Groups, West Wimmera, 2021 to 2036

To 2036, the Shire is forecast to gain 292 people aged over 70 and lose 524 people in working age groups (20 to 69 year olds) or 28% of the current labour force. The number of people under 20 is forecast to decline by 149, so while there is forecast to be lower demand for educational services, there will be more demand for health and aged care services and a range of other "silver economy" services. These are services designed for the over 50s such as financial planning, specialised recreation and travel agencies. Whether these services can actually be provided remains doubtful under this scenario, given the loss of people in working age groups. If investment in these services can be achieved, that may go some way to ameliorate the loss of population that may otherwise occur.

The forecast ageing of the population and the loss of those in working age groups shows the importance of retaining residents and attracting new people to the Shire.

3.8 Social and Community Infrastrucutre

From 2025, four-year-old kindergarten will gradually transition to pre-prep, with programs across Victoria increasing from 15 to 30 hours each week. Additional kindergarten capacity will be needed for 30 hours of kindergarten. The current kindergarten facilities in Kaniva, Edenhope and Goroke are not large enough to deliver on the upcoming kindergarten reforms and there is limited room for expansion. Moving some of the kindergartens to the local school sites would allow for kindergarten expansion and has the potential to keep the school numbers to a viable level. This would also free up space in the current facilities for additional childcare and playgroups to support young families.

Childcare services provide an important service for families, community and the local economy. Access to suitable childcare provides an opportunity for parents and carers to work and helps maintain the local economy. In addition, it is an attractor for young parents to live in the region.

Community vitality, social and community infrastructure can help to maintain activities and events in a community. These have the potential to attract new residents and maintain community viability. There are opportunities for community infrastructure to support business activities (such as events) that are beneficial to the local economy. Likewise moving a service such as the kindergarten to a school site might maintain the school's viability.

There are limited places for young people to meet and those that are available might not meet the needs of this demographic. Providing spaces where young people can gather and interact reduces their need to travel and helps them form strong relationships, helping to anchor them in the community when they are ready to put down their roots.



Goroke Library

3.9 Transport Infrastructure

Public transport is very limited within the Shire which reduces the capacity of people to travel to access services and activities. Certain groups within the community are likely to have limited access to private transport and as a result require local access to facilities. Children, young people and older adults may have reduced capacity to travel to activities and services.

4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITES FACING THE TOWNS

4.1 Issues

There are a range of demographic, economic and social issues facing the small towns of West Wimmera.

Population Loss and Ageing

The Shire is losing population. The loss of farm workers through farm amalgamations and mechanisations means reduced enrolment in schools and less spending in shops and services. Future vulnerabilities, including larger landholdings managed by consortiums and serviced by contractors, are likely to lead to further loss of population across the Shire. This demographic, combined with an ageing population, has seen previously robust rural communities being replaced by smaller, older more vulnerable communities isolated from services. The shift in population could potentially lead to delayed fire management suppression activities in rural areas from reduced numbers of volunteers. In some cases, rural municipalities have reversed population decline through marketing, tourism and improved infrastructure.

Implications for the Towns:

- Population loss needs to be recognised and managed to minimise loss of access to goods and services, community and social services.
- Ensure that housing stock can be upgraded to ensure appropriate housing for ageing in place.
- Promote the desirability of the region as a place to visit.

Settlement and Subdivision Beyond Existing Townships

There are areas of farming zoned land within the current settlement boundaries in the towns. This is not an urban zone and should not form part of settlement boundaries unless identified as future residential land.

The location of farming zoned land within settlement boundaries has occurred due to several factors. Some are historical as a result of “soldier settlement” subdivisions established many years ago that were created on title but often never developed for housing. Many of these lots still operate as part of larger farming properties and often comprise what are referred to as tenements.

Other cases involve the excision of a smaller lot from a much larger farming lot usually for a new dwelling, which is permitted under the Farming Zone. Although allowed in some circumstances, excised lots through incremental decisions can result in the loss of productive agricultural land to housing and create conflicts with state and local planning policy.

Some dwellings on small lots have been incorrectly zoned as part of the development of planning schemes in the late 1990s. In some cases, these dwellings were not appropriately identified to reflect existing development on the ground surrounding a town. Reflecting the correct designation of this land is largely an administrative exercise, rather than a significant policy shift and will have no impact on existing agricultural production due to the existing conditions of the land.

Implications for the Towns:

- Review areas of land zoned for farming in each settlement boundary and consider their current and future use.
- In considering their future use, balance the need for additional residential land with the policy objective of protecting agricultural land.
- Council should investigate undertaking a rural land use strategy to ensure small lots in the Farming Zone within town boundaries are considered from a municipal perspective and prepare local policy for small lots within town boundaries altering town boundaries as appropriate.

Local Economy

Future change in employment will depend on the unique set of circumstances of each industry. In agriculture, precision farming techniques are being deployed to improve yields and reduce inputs. These are likely to become more automated over time, further reducing the need for on-farm labour. Automation and the roll-out of increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence techniques will affect all industries to some extent.

In the professional services sector, the internet and automated techniques allow small businesses to deliver increasingly sophisticated products from any location.

The Shire is on the periphery of the Western and South Western Renewable Energy Zones, which have been identified by the Victorian Government as suitable for concentrated investment in wind, solar and battery farms to power

the grid. There is potential for jobs in new windfarm, solar-farm or large battery projects to be taken up by people from the Shire and for the Shire to offer a home to people moving into the region for these projects

Mineral sands mining projects such as that proposed for Avonbank near Horsham will generate significant numbers of jobs that may be accessible to people living in the Shire

Implications for the Towns:

- There is a shortage of key worker housing in the region which is impacting the attraction of staff to local jobs. Local enterprises report finding it difficult to attract workers which is having an impact on the local economic development of the Shire.
- There is a challenge in delivering new housing stock as the current construction workforce is unable to meet demand for new housing development.

Flooding

Extreme short-duration 'rain bursts' are becoming more intense and more frequent especially during summer with thunderstorm rainfall. Existing infrastructure was not designed to cope with these unnatural extremes, and flash flooding is set to be a growing issue. The Shire has towns that are subject to stormwater and riverine flooding. Towns that are prone to stormwater flooding include Apsley and Edenhope. Flood events within West Wimmera have been infrequent over the last decade, however there are areas of significant flood risk in Harrow and Apsley.

Implications for the Towns:

- Implement flood studies for Edenhope and Apsley into the Planning Scheme as soon as possible.
- Direct housing away from flood prone areas.

Fire

The Shire is vulnerable to climate change, and already experiences significant climate variability, including exposure to extremes in rainfall, winds and drought. This is likely to lead to an increase in bushfires in the Shire. Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Apsley have Fire Ready Guides in place for all residents and the towns are covered by a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). The Fire Ready Guides are developed by the Wimmera Emergency Management team and aim to help communities prepare for the bushfire season particularly in areas identified as high risk. The entire municipality is categorised as bushfire prone.

Implications for the Towns:

- Expansion of the towns and any new housing should be directed away from areas at high risk of bushfire.

Environmentally Significant Areas

There are areas of environmental significance and high value habitat that need to be protected and preserved for habitat of endangered flora and fauna such as the Red-tailed Black cockatoo and other environmental considerations.

Implications for the Towns:

- Areas of environmental significance need to be better understood to ensure environmentally significant areas are identified.

Water

The quality of drinking water of most of the towns is an issue for all residents with many relying on tank water or poor tasting bore water. There is a lack of potable water in all towns except Edenhope and Kaniva. Not all of the towns have access to a reticulated sewage system which will impact on the future development of these towns as lot sizes will need to remain large to service septic systems. While this may be acceptable in some of the small towns, towns like Edenhope and Kaniva have good services and should be able to provide smaller lots to meet the changing needs of the community and provide more affordable housing options. Lack of sewerage also impacts the operations of commercial businesses such as pubs/restaurants and accommodation venues. A lack of maintenance of septic systems can also have public health and environmental impacts to adjacent waterways.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore the possibility of connecting the remaining three towns to potable water to improve the drinking water quality for all residents.
- Expand reticulated sewerage in Edenhope and Kaniva to facilitate the towns to grow and attract more residents, enabling smaller lots to meet community needs and minimising environmental impacts.

Climate Change

Similar to the rest of Victoria, the towns in the Shire are subject to climate change impacts and will need to develop mitigation strategies and improve infrastructure to improve resilience. Increased frequency of extreme heat events will require adaptation of the urban environment such as further shade and urban canopy to provide increasing shade for residents in town centres. An increased risk of bushfire and flooding events is also predicted and should be factored into future towns plans.

Implications for the Towns:

- Ensure both social and physical infrastructure is designed to mitigate and adapt to the implications of climate change.
- Direct development away from areas of bushfire and flooding risk taking a precautionary approach to the extent of predicted risks.

Social and Community Infrastructure

Services such as childcare provide an important service for families, community and the local economy. The childcare services in the Shire are limited and have been unable to expand or attract new staff due to a lack of key worker housing. This has limited the access of childcare places and services for parents and carers who work in the Shire. There are limited spaces for young people to meet and those that are available might not meet the needs of this group. Providing spaces where young people can gather and interact reduces their need to travel and keeps them occupied.

Implications for the Towns:

- Increase capacity to deliver kindergarten and other childrens' services – by providing more key worker housing.
- Create spaces for young people to meet.

Transport and Movement

Movement networks within a town and connecting out to surrounding towns need to be accessible, safe and reliable. Public transport is very limited within the Shire which reduces the capacity of people to travel to access services and activities. While passenger rail infrastructure passes through Kaniva, it does not currently stop and is unlikely to have transit stops in the medium term given the current population level and projected demand. Other options to meet regional movement needs will be required.

It is important for people to move easily and safely within their town. This means walking and cycling options and accessing local public transport. Good movement networks also support the community's health by encouraging daily physical activity, providing easy access to local services and reducing social isolation and increasing social interaction.

Implications for the Towns:

- Provide a local bus service to access services for residents between Apsley, Edenhope and Harrow. An aging population will need to be able to access services easily via public transport.
- Provide more footpaths and cycling paths within and around the towns to create safe movement pathways for people.

4.2 Opportunities

Locational Advantages and Assets

The towns all have their own unique characteristics and identity which is important for future service delivery and planning for the towns.

Kaniva is well placed to capitalise on its access to the highway attracting and growing the local agricultural industry and is a rest stop for travellers through to South Australia. Edenhope has Lake Wallace as the main drawcard and focal point. It is also the major service centre for the local agricultural industry. Harrow is a quaint, historic riverside town in a rural setting that attracts visitors. Apsley has a tranquil rural character and is close to the Coonawarra wine region just over the border in South Australia. Goroke is a small rural town providing access to the Little Desert and is a service centre for the local hinterland community.

Implications for the Towns:

- Kaniva could continue streetscape upgrades to encourage more through traffic to stop in the town and increase wayfinding signage to attract more visitors to the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park.
- Edenhope could increase wayfinding signage to draw more visitors down to Lake Wallace.

- Harrow could increase marketing and raise the profile of the town and its heritage assets.
- Goroke plays a complimentary function to larger nearby towns. It could also increase marketing to raise the profile of the town and continue to upgrade streetscape works and seek funding for capital works to upgrade the theatre/hall and events at the community facilities.
- Apsley could further promote the quarterly market, capitalise on sporting infrastructure and continue to upgrade/maintain the town hall.

Economy

There are a number of new investments in the Shire and surrounding region that may provide economic opportunities for the towns. There has been investment to date in renewable energy including a new solar farm. There is also potential for a new windfarm or large battery projects as part of the Western Renewable Energy Zone which will create new employment in the Shire. Mineral sands developments are proposed for Avonbank near Horsham which will generate a significant number of jobs that may be accessible to people living in the West Wimmera Shire. For southern parts of the Shire, there is also potential access to projects in south-east South Australia. These may provide opportunities for the towns to capitalise on the needs of these workers including permanent and temporary housing with flow on effects for community services and local shops and hospitality services.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore opportunities to incentivise project workers from outside the Shire to attract them to the five Small Towns.
- Identify opportunities to provide more key worker housing including by leveraging the development of Council owned land.

Tourism and Accommodation

The accommodation offering is important to support and grow the local tourism market with each town having opportunities to tap into different tourism markets. Currently there is a lack of local accommodation available to support the needs of visitors and house seasonal workers in the Shire. This needs to be increased and addressed to allow the local tourism market to grow and attract more seasonal workers to the Shire.

There are opportunities for eco-tourism in the Shire including the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park, the Glenelg River and access to the series of lakes and wetlands in the Shire. There are opportunities to expand the tourism offerings to service the 'silver economy' with specialised recreation and travel catering to this expanding market. The disused rail line between Goroke and Natimuk could be developed into a rail trail for cyclists attracting more people to the Shire.

The Silo Art Trail attracts visitors to the Shire as Australia's largest outdoor gallery, linking the Wimmera Mallee's treasured small towns across 700km through the region.

Implications for the Towns:

- Create more short-term accommodation options for new and seasonal employees in the region.
- Investigate further expanding caravan park accommodation to house key workers.
- Work with local traders and local producers to enhance the local food offerings in the Shire.
- Increase marketing for the Silo Art Trail as part of marketing for West Wimmera attractions.
- Encourage more food and accommodation offerings especially in Edenhope and Kaniva.
- Explore opportunities for a café and nature based recreation in Harrow.
- Explore opportunities for town retailers to capitalise on any local farm gate produce that is available.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC)

The Barengi Gadjin Land Council (the local Registered Aboriginal Party) would like to work with Council to provide skills training programs for the local community to support a local construction industry for housing. There is also an opportunity to work with the BGLC to produce cultural interpretive signage for place names, and wayfinding signage, as this could also provide signage in local language for local birds, flora and fauna in areas such as the Kaniva Wetlands.

Implications for the Towns:

- Develop a workforce training program to support the local industry and community.

- Work with the BGLC to develop cultural interpretive signage for the Shire.
- Work with BGLC to identify opportunities for economic independence.

Township Amenity and Character

Amenity and character is important to the people that live in the towns creating a sense of place. There are many heritage buildings in the five towns that could be further preserved and enhanced. Towns that have character are more appealing to visitors and will enhance their attractiveness as places to stay and spend money.

Continuing the streetscape improvements in Kaniva and implementing this program to the other four towns subject to budgetary considerations will be an important future piece of work.

Implications for the Towns:

- Develop a strategy to implement streetscape improvements for the five towns.
- Advocate for external grant funding for streetscape improvements.
- Plant more trees in the town centres to create shade, cooling the environment, reducing heat in the towns and improving amenity.
- Continue to build footpaths in the five towns to enhance pedestrian comfort and support walkability.
- Explore the long term upkeep and maintenance of heritage buildings.

Housing

Council owned land could be leveraged to encourage investment by housing providers and/or to engage in direct housing and infrastructure provision. This could also help to provide more key worker housing for the Shire and provide housing close to town for an ageing population.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore options for Council owned land to be developed as medium density housing to meet residential requirements for an ageing population and address the key worker housing shortage in Kaniva and Edenhope.
- Work on a strategy to deliver medium density housing.
- Further work is needed to understand whether vacant dwellings can be made available for key worker housing.
- Investigate opportunities to work with landowners to enhance the image of their properties.
- Investigate whether on farm accommodation is an option for seasonal workers.


APSLEY

5. APSLEY

Apsley is a small town set among red gums located approximately 10 kilometres east of the South Australian border. The town grew significantly in the late 1860s. Apsley's fertile agricultural land is highly valued and recognised as a prosperous agricultural district, supporting various land uses that contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. The town continues to provide a local service function for the surrounding community with a CFA, police station and post office. The town context map is shown in **Figure 9**.

5.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Apsley is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Apsley.

The RGP states that "*a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services".*

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-03

Clause 11.01-1L-03 Settlement - Aspley provides the existing settlement framework for the town. There is one strategy to the clause, which seeks to support the establishment of cycling and horse-riding trails as a way of attracting visitors to the area. The Clause 11.01-1L-03 settlement framework for Aspley is shown in **Figure 10**. There is an opportunity to undertake further work to improve the settlement directions to look at growth, development and ongoing maintenance for Apsley. There is also an opportunity to create a policy to support the framework plan in the scheme and look at housing, recreation and education in the town.

Apsley experienced significant urban growth when thousands of European gold seekers passed through on their way to the gold fields. Many Chinese gold seekers also made their way to the diggings after arriving at the Port of Robe in the late 1850s. The introduction of the Free Selection Land Act in the 1860s led to an increase in the district's population and the expansion of Apsley. By 1897, approximately 60 children were enrolled at Apsley State School, along with several smaller schools in the area.[1]

1 Historic information drawn from https://www.apsley.vic.au/

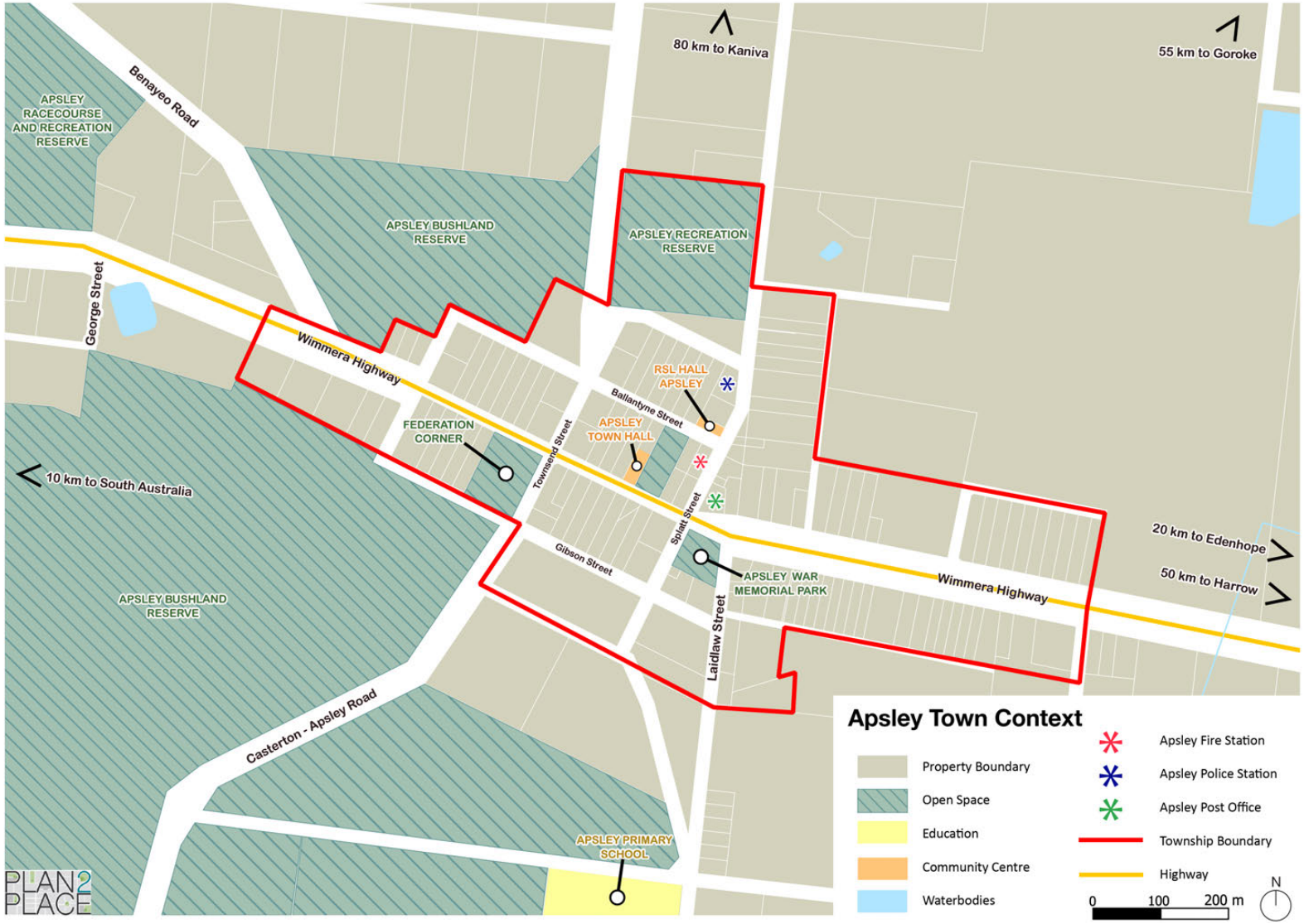


Figure 9: Apsley Context Map

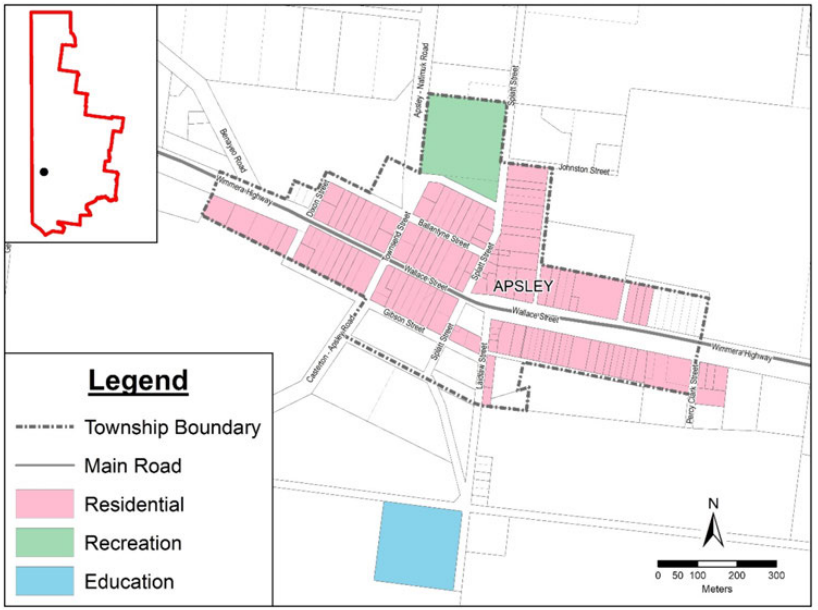


Figure 10: Apsley Framework Plan Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Apsley are shown in **Figure 11** and summarised below:

- The Township Zone (TZ) applies to land within the Apsley town boundary.
- The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) applies to the Apsley Recreation Reserve.
- The Transport Zone (TRZ) applies to the Wimmera Highway that runs through the centre of Apsley.
- Outside the town boundary, the Farming Zone (FZ) applies to agricultural land.
- The Public Use Zone (PUZ) – Schedule 2 (PUZ2) applies to the Apsley State School Reserve to the south of the town.
- The PUZ – Schedule 5 (PUZ5) applies to the Apsley Cemetery Reserve to the north of the town.
- The PCRZ applies over the Apsley Bushland Reserve and the Apsley Plantation.



Figure 11: Apsley - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS impacting Apsley are shown in **Figure 12** and summarised below:

- The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) – Schedule 2 (ESO2) applies to all of the land surrounding Apsley to ensure that development protects the habitat of the Red-tailed Black cockatoo. This will ensure that environmentally significant habitat is protected.
- The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to much of the land surrounding Apsley. This will allow development to directed away from fire prone areas.
- The current flood studies underway may result in Flood Overlay (FO) or Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) controls being added.

5.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Apsley had a population of 329 people. This is forecast to reduce over the period to 2036 to just below 300 people. The town is a small settlement servicing the surrounding agricultural district and is also within easy commuting distance of the larger town of Naracoorte and the Coonawarra wine district in South Australia.

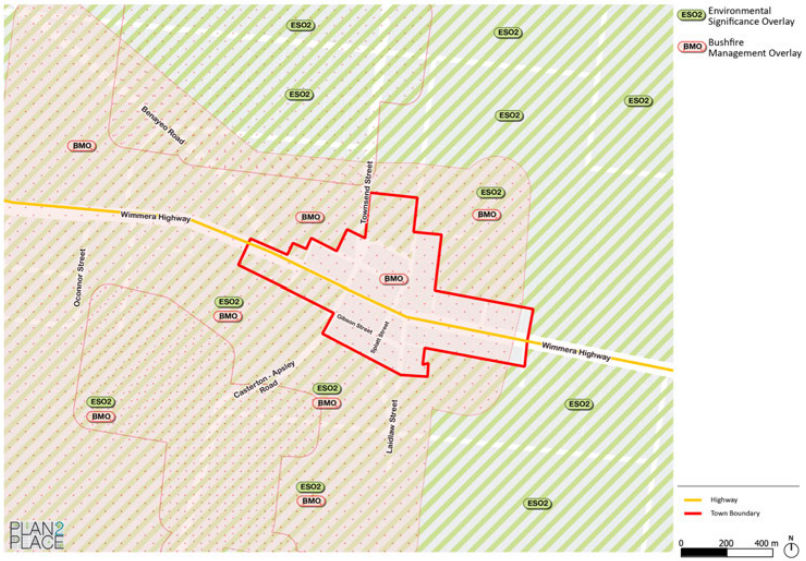


Figure 12: Apsley - Existing Overlays

5.3 Housing

While the Victorian Government forecasts a decline in population in the general area (see section 4), there may be occasional demand for a new house in Apsley over the forecast period. There are several vacant lots in the Township Zone. Any development needs to take account of the BMO , which covers most of the town, and any forthcoming flood management overlay that might arise from recent work conducted for Council. Therefore, no new rezoning of land for housing purposes is recommended for the town.

5.4 Economic Profile

Given the size of the catchment and its forecast decline, resident demand is unlikely to support further retailing, although there may be scope for new businesses that cater to visitors or to community needs. There may be scope to provide space for visiting professionals, which could be located within the community hall.

There is no zoned industrial land in the township. There is no demand or justification for industrial land. There is an industrial precinct in nearby Edenhope that could capture future demand for industrial land.

The town has a quarterly market which attracts people from across the region. There may be potential for further tourism activity including country style accommodation, glamping or camping/caravaning. However, the water supply in the town is not safe to drink according to GWM Water and this is an impediment to further commercial development for visitors, requiring potentially expensive remediation. There may be scope for visitor retailing such as art, food and wine, based on the nearby wineries.

There is only a small range of visitor accommodation in the town, with the art deco style Border Inn providing rooms and bungalows and offers free camping facilities. The wider township has several bushland rest-stops and reserves which provide points of interest for walkers, bird-watchers and cyclists. There are also opportunities to leverage the tourism market at the nearby wineries in the Coonawarra.

Apsley has a strong interdependence with nearby Naracoorte in South Australia. Residents regularly access services and jobs in towns close by and some services and facilities may be shared between the towns in the community of interest. Apsley is playing an increasing role in providing additional housing to service Naracoorte. Many residents in Apsley also access jobs located in Naracoorte.

5.5 Movement and Transport

Apsley is on the Wimmera Highway, one of the routes from Victoria to the popular Coonawarra wine district. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Apsley is via private vehicles. There are very limited public transport options available for residents in Apsley with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays.

5.6 Physical Infrastructure

The town of Apsley is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. Ground and surface water is not safe for drinking, however, water can be used for household activities, such as watering gardens, flushing toilets, irrigation and laundry. It can also be used for showering or bathing if caution is exercised. All houses are serviced by septic tanks as there is no wastewater treatment plant servicing the town with reticulated sewerage.

5.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The Apsley town centre consists of a concentration of activity around the intersection of the Wimmera Highway and Splatt Street with a corner store/café, post office, hotel, community hall, fire station, RSL hall and police station. The township contains a small town centre, a primary school, recreation reserve golf course, netball courts and a Lions Park playground. There is no library or access to childcare services or kindergarten in Apsley. The Apsley community group is very active and hosts a local playgroup. The nearest health facilities are in Edenhope, around 20 km to the east or Naracoorte, 31 kms to the west.

The Border Inn pub provides a key community service and has a camping ground at the rear. The recent re-opening of the pub through local entrepreneurship and community support has rejuvenated a key social asset and created a strong sense of optimism in the town that can be built on.

5.8 Built Form and Heritage

Apsley includes several historic buildings along its wide main street. The township extends along the Wimmera Highway for the most part and is adjacent to large bushland reserves to the south-west. There are several historic weatherboard buildings in the main street that are former commercial buildings. Most of the houses in the town are single storey weatherboard buildings. The main street is lined with mature street trees that provide much needed shade and tree canopy.



The Store – Main Street Apsley



Historic Building - Main Street Apsley

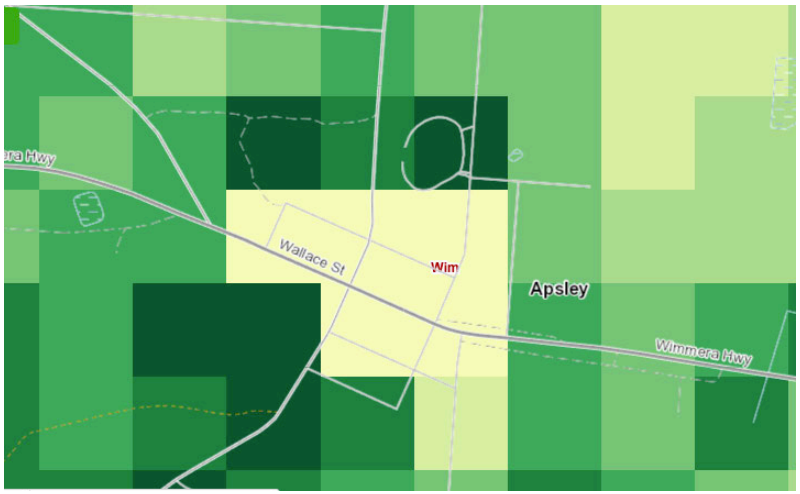
5.9 Landscape and Environment

There is a significant risk of flooding in Apsley especially around the main street where there is a dry creek bed that floods during significant rain events. A flood study for the town is currently underway and is expected to be finished shortly.

There is a risk of bushfire in Apsley with the town covered by a BMO . There is a Place of Last Resort in case of bushfire at the Apsley Recreation Reserve in Splatt Street. This is part of the Neighbourhood Safer Places program for West Wimmera Shire.

Apsley is located on flat undulating plains in West Wimmera. The dominant ecosystems are - Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils. The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green.



5.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- There is significant risk of flood in areas of the town.
- There is significant risk of fire.
- There is a lack of potable drinking water.
- The town is not connected to a reticulated sewage system.
- There are a large number of vacant shops within the town centre.
- Public transport is very limited and residents are reliant on private transport.
- The town is reliant on towns such as Naracoorte for higher-order goods and services including employment, retail, health, and secondary education.
- Without support from increased tourism and growth in population, there is insufficient demand for additional retail development.
- There is a limited accommodation offer with rooms and free camping at the hotel.
- Some of the historic buildings in the town are in need of repair and maintenance.

Opportunities

- There is an active and strong community advocacy group.
- There is a good range of community facilities for a small town.
- There is a high level of amenity.
- There is a Primary School in the town.
- Original township buildings provide opportunities for tourism and housing including bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Nearby lakes attract people to the region for recreation and tourism.
- The creation of home based and creative industries employment may be made possible by providing high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite).
- Leverage existing community groups to advocate for funding to repair, maintain and update significant buildings along the Wimmera Highway.

- The attractive town centre could be further enhanced through place making initiatives and upgrades to infrastructure.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Apsley are detailed in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Apsley Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Apsley
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, no reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Hotel, post office, town hall, emergency services, sport infrastructure
Growth Capacity	Low due to flood constraints, bushfire risk and lack of reticulated water and sewer
Expected Outcomes	Negligible Change
Recommendations	• Complete and implement the Apsley flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and to direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • Ensure new development to respond to local bushfire requirements. • Explore options to provide drinking water and a reticulated sewage system to the town with the local water authority. • Advocate for improved transport services between Apsley and the surrounding towns including community or public transport buses. • Explore opportunities to repurpose original township buildings to provide an increase in tourism and housing. • Undertake an audit/review of heritage assets to determine if a further heritage study is warranted for Apsley. • Review demand for further overnight accommodation. • Explore if there is any further Crown or Council land that could be utilised for housing and accommodation. • Enhance the attractiveness of the town centre by providing grants to landowners for repainting and other streetscape upgrade works. • Review zoning within the town boundary as part of the preparation of a structure plan for the town. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Consider including land zoned Farming Zone between the Wimmera Highway and Benayeo Road into the town boundary and consider rezoning to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ) to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses. • Include the Apsley Racecourse and Recreation Reserve (zoned PPRZ) into the town boundary to recognise its role as a public facility. • Consider including the land zoned FZ on the west and east side of Laidlaw Street into the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses. • Include the Apsley State School Reserve zoned PUZ2 into the town boundary. • Consider rezoning FZ land currently within the town boundary on the south side of Wimmera Highway to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ) to reflect the current lot sizes and current land uses.


EDENHOPE

6. EDENHOPE

Edenhope is the largest town in the Shire and has a role as an administrative centre. The town has a compact commercial area offering convenience and weekly shopping. Industrial activities are concentrated in the east of the town, with some service industries on the southern edge of the commercial area. The town is located on the shores of Lake Wallace, which has been integral to the formation of the character of the township. The lake provides recreation opportunities as well as a unique residential amenity.

Edenhope developed mainly as a wool grazing area. Several large properties have been subdivided for smaller family farms, particularly for soldier settlements after World War II.

Like many rural townships, Edenhope plays a vital role in providing opportunities for social interaction and civic engagement for residents across a large rural catchment. With its proximity to Lake Wallace and historical and contemporary ties to cricket and Australian Rules Football, Edenhope is viewed as a centre for sports and recreation. The town also offers its community a wide range of social and cultural opportunities across the arts, heritage and natural environment.

Edenhope is one of only two towns in the Shire that has safe drinking water. The town context map is shown in **Figure 13**.

6.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Edenhope is defined as a District Town in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. The future directions for Edenhope are to:

- Recognise Edenhope as the district town for the south-western Wimmera community of interest.
- Encourage the provision of a range of middle order health, education, retail, municipal and emergency services.
- Provide for residential growth through infill development.
- Provide additional industrial land to facilitate employment.

The RGP states "*Edenhope is the major centre in the south-western part of the Wimmera Southern Mallee region, providing various services to its community of interest, which includes Goroke, Harrow and Apsley. The town's proximity to South Australia enables a close relationship with Naracoorte and residents rely on this centre and Horsham for higher order services. The town is located on Lake Wallace, which should be protected as an important focus for recreation, tourism and amenity.*

Infill development will provide for residential growth in the short to medium-term. Over time, additional residential land supply will be required. This could be located to the south of the town or around limited, discrete parts of Lake Wallace. Development around Lake Wallace will require an extension of the reticulated sewerage system to limit the impact on the lake.

There is a need for additional industrial land to support employment growth. The preference is for this is to be located to the south-east of the town. Other key strategic issues for the town include the reliance on treated bore water for drinking supplies and the need to upgrade the airport/airfield to accommodate emergency flights to meet future community needs. "

The RGP outlines the following land use policies, strategies and actions for Edenhope:

- Focus investment in services and facilities for the south-western part of the region in Edenhope.
- Identify a preferred location for additional industrial land and facilitate development.
- Monitor the need for additional residential land.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-01

Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement - Edenhope provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to ensure active retail frontages within the commercial precinct and promote low density and rural living development in lifestyle living areas, as identified on the Edenhope Framework Plan. The Clause 11.01-1L-01 settlement framework for Edenhope is shown in **Figure 14**.

The clause encourages use and development to orient towards and activate Lake Wallace and its foreshore and to support the establishment of a pedestrian and cycle trail network for recreational purposes that accesses nearby environmental assets, such as Lake Wallace.

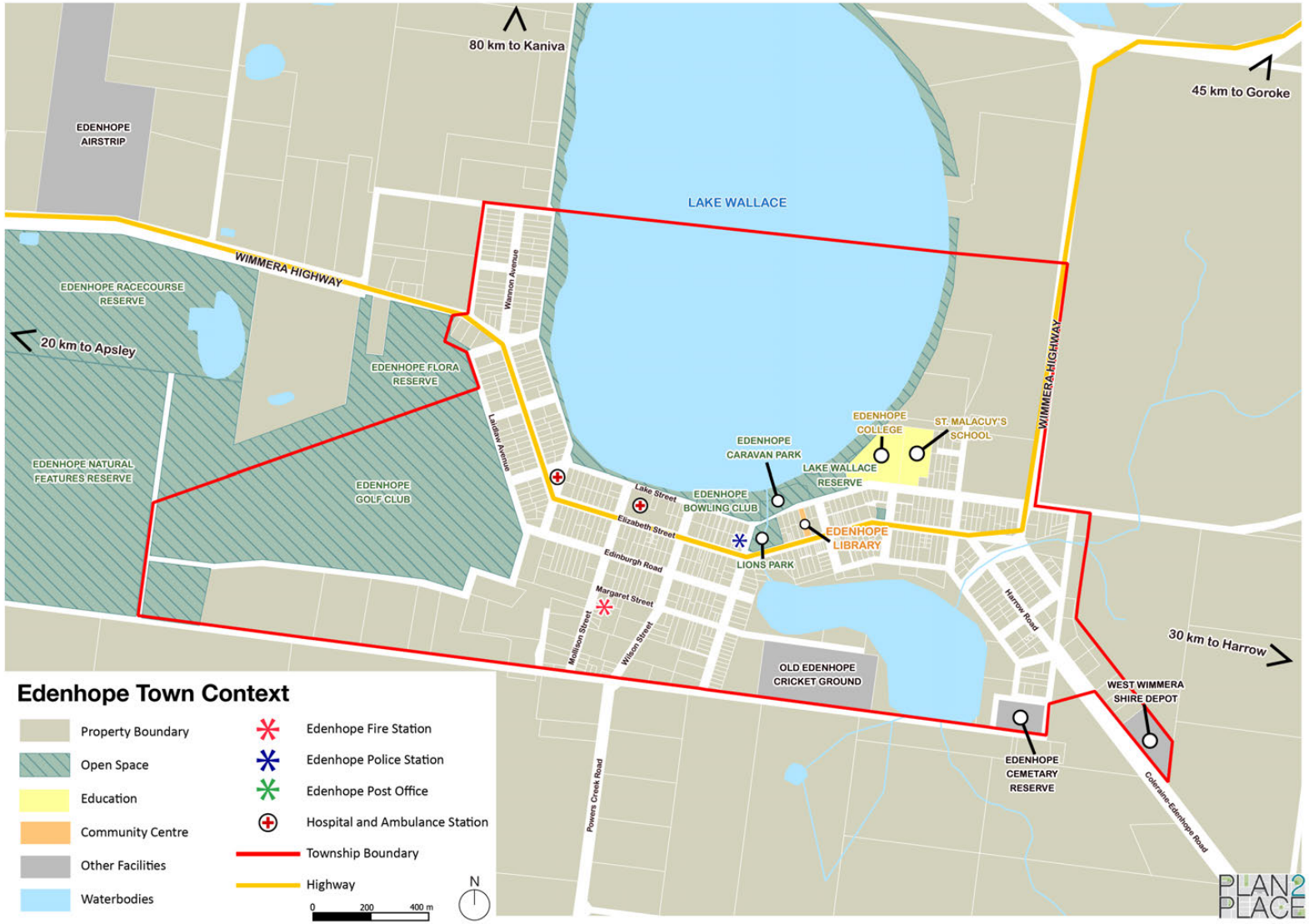


Figure 13: Edenhope Context Map

Additionally, the clause encourages the development and expansion of the Edenhope Industrial Estate and facilitates the relocation of storage uses from Elizabeth Street into the Edenhope Industrial Estate.

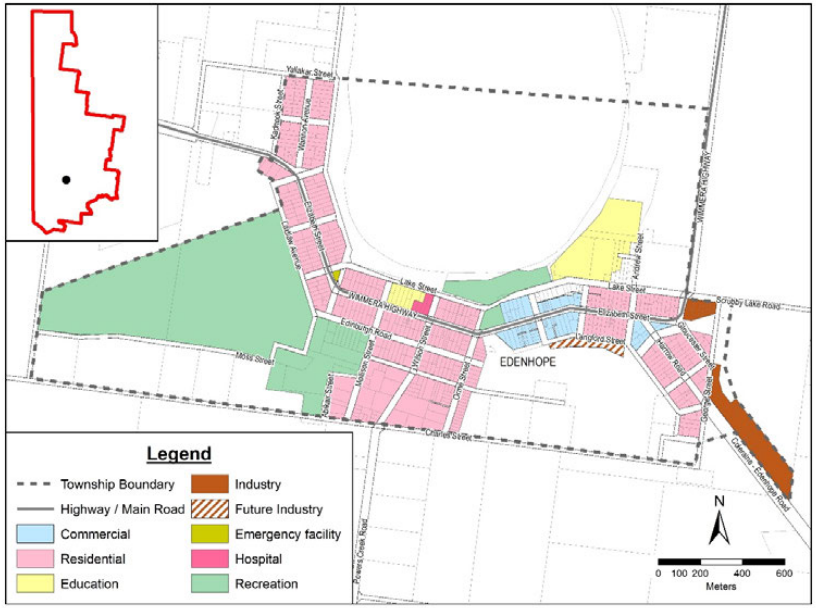


Figure 14: Edenhope Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Edenhope are shown in **Figure 15** and summarised below:

- The TZ applies to land within Edenhope and land surrounding Lake Wallace.
- The Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) applies to land along the Coleraine- Edenhope Road.
- The Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) applies to land adjoining the Coleraine-Edenhope Road.
- The Public Use Zone (PUZ5) is applied to the Edenhope cemetery.
- The Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) is applied over Lake Wallace, the Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve, Golf Course, Edenhope Flora Reserve, Racecourse and the Edenhope Natural Features Reserve.
- The Transport 2 Zone (TRZ2) is applied along the Coleraine- Edenhope Road.
- The Special Use Zone Schedule 3 (SUZ3) is applied to the Edenhope Airport.
- The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) applies to land outside of the town boundary.
- The Farming Zone (FZ) applies to agricultural and land surrounding the town boundaries.



Figure 15: Edenhope - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Edenhope are shown in **Figure 16** and summarised below:

- The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) applies to all of the land surrounding Edenhope to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to much of the land surrounding Edenhope.

- The Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1) applies to land along the Coleraine – Edenhope Road to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.
- The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) applies to selected land in the town to ensure that potentially contaminated land is suitable for a use which could be significantly and adversely affected by any contamination.

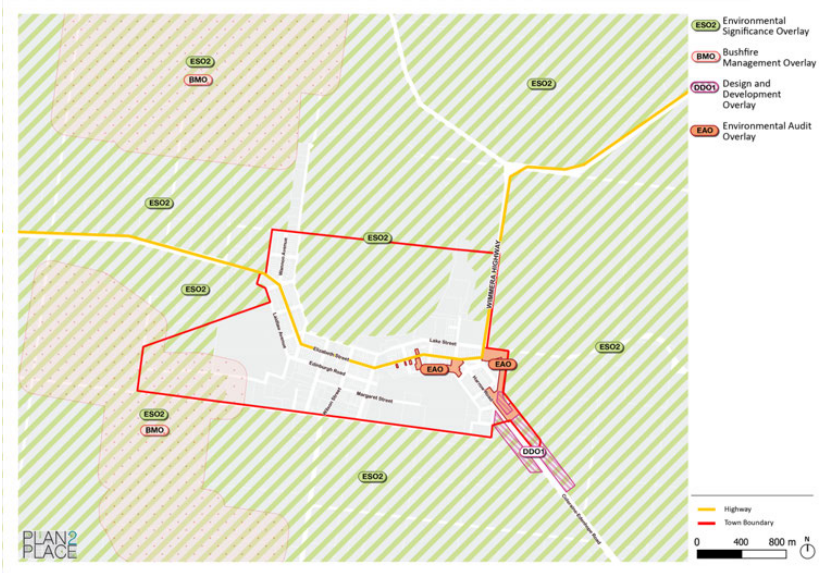


Figure 16: Edenhope - Existing Overlays

6.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Edenhope had a population of 713 people. Edenhope remains the largest town in the Shire and has the most significant population catchment. Its services are somewhat threatened by population decline and by the growth of larger centres outside the Shire.

Edenhope has a high number of residents over 45 years, and a very high proportion of residents aged 65 years and older. It also has a very high number of widowed individuals. The family composition of Edenhope skews towards households without children, but there are also working age parents with young children. Children in Edenhope are typically under 15 years of age. There are not many residents in Edenhope aged in their 20s and 30s.

6.3 Housing

Despite population decline, the town will need to accommodate some growth in dwellings – up to 3 per year according to forecasts. There are adequate parcels of vacant TZ land that could be used for housing, including, for example, a 5 hectare parcel on the corner of the Wimmera Highway and Lake Street as well as numbers of vacant lots in the south west of the town and on the western edge of the town. There are some parcels of land that are zoned TZ but which may not be suitable for housing development, including the Back Swamp area in the south-east of the town and the area on the eastern shores of Lake Wallace around the water treatment facility.

Providing services to the larger parcels of land may make the feasibility of development difficult. In this circumstance, there may be ways in which Council could take a long term interest in the development of the land by, for example, providing up-front funding for infrastructure which is recouped on the sale of lots.

There is an urgent need for key worker housing to allow the town to grow.

6.4 Economic Profile

The district produces mainly sheep, beef and broadacre crops with a total gross value of $303 million in 2021 (ABS, Data by region for West Wimmera SA2). This farming effort directly supports a range of businesses in the town including transport operators and a small abattoir.

The town wraps around the southern end of Lake Wallace, which provides a distinctive backdrop and recreational resource as well as being popular with visitors. Visitation to Edenhope and surrounds is supported by the presence of commercial accommodation including a caravan park and motel as well as short stay homes for rent. The racecourse, golf course, team sports facilities, nature conservation reserve and lakeshore walking trails all provide visitors with ample outdoor recreational opportunities. In the future, there may be potential for specialty accommodation – lakeside glamping, historic homes, ecotourism ventures, farm stays or permaculture farms – as well as potential to capitalise on

the unique dune and swale environment of West Wimmera and its local and regional produce through specialty outlets.

Edenhope has an extensive area of land zoned for industrial purposes. The land is located on both sides of the Coleraine-Edenhope Road at the south eastern entry to the town, with a narrow extension along George Street to Scrubby Lake Road. The land comprises approximately 32 hectares to accommodate the Edenhope Abattoir and 13 hectares to accommodate general industry. The general industrial land along the main road has largely been taken up (albeit with a low level of intensity) and includes activities such as the Shire depot. The land along George Street remains largely vacant and undeveloped. In the absence of a substantial incoming investor, the remaining land should be sufficient for local industrial needs, particularly since local industrial sectors have been changing substantially in recent years. Should further land be required, there is ample land immediately to the east of the existing zoned land, although this would need to be subject to environmental and engineering investigations.

6.5 Movement and Transport



Electric Vehicle Charging Station – Edenhope

Edenhope is on the Wimmera Highway, one of the routes from Victoria to the popular Coonawarra wine district. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Edenhope is via private vehicle. There are very limited public transport options available for residents in Edenhope with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays. There is an EV charging station on Anzac Avenue for electric vehicles.

6.6 Physical Infrastructure

Reticulated water and sewage are provided to the town and recycled water is also in use. The Golf Club uses recycled water from the water treatment plant. Trade waste stresses the current wastewater system and needs to be augmented. Drinking water quality needs to be upgraded and there are also water quality issues in Edenhope with saline bores.

6.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The town has a small hospital that accommodates a nursing home and urgent care services. A government P-12 school is one of three secondary facilities in the Shire. There is also a kindergarten and Catholic primary school. Edenhope has childcare and maternal child health services. The town has a library in the community hall, sports facilities and an old court house which is used as a visitor information centre and museum.

The key features of the main street commercial centre in Elizabeth Street are:

- The intact strip of commercial buildings developed mainly between 1930 and 1990.
- The small supermarket.
- Two significant hardware/rural supplies stores.
- The civic and social infrastructure including the Shire Hall, library, visitor information and prominent Catholic church.
- The Lake Wallace Hotel.
- Two banks.
- A small range of specialty shops, cafes and local shop-front services including legal, financial and veterinary services.
- The public amenities and visitor parking on Anzac Avenue.



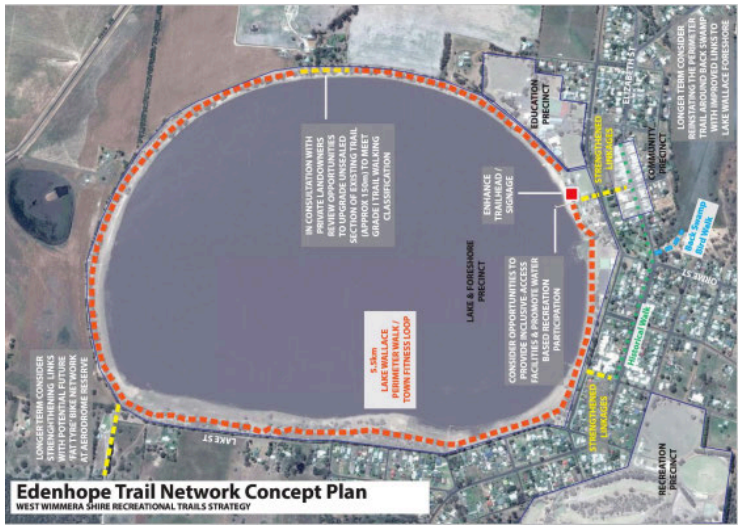
Edenhope Community Garden

While the strip would once have been occupied principally by retailers, there are now a range of other services – including health, financial, community and galleries. This is in keeping with trends throughout the retail sector.

Nearby Lake Charlegrark and Lake Bringalbert attract people to the region for recreation and tourism and are important cultural and community assets and provide opportunities for the town through visitor services including accommodation and hospitality.

Beyond the retail core of Edenhope, recreational facilities including Lake Wallace are key assets for the Edenhope community and visitors. The image below shows the Edenhope Trail Network Concept Plan.

Most of the Lake Wallace Perimeter Trail will be upgraded to an accessible walking trail with connectivity back to the town centre. There are two properties currently in private ownership that do not wish to have the bitumen Perimeter Trail along their properties. This area has been fenced off and there is a hole in the fence to provide access to a gravel path for local residents. The Edenhope Fat Tyre Cross Country Bike Loop is also a high priority project for the Shire as well as upgrading the Edenhope to Apsley Cycling Route.



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy November 2018

6.8 Built Form and Heritage

Edenhope is comprised of several historic buildings along its wide main street. The intact strip of commercial buildings was developed mainly between 1930 and 1990. The township extends along the Wimmera Highway for the most part and the key feature of Edenhope is Lake Wallace. Most of the houses in the town are single storey weatherboard buildings with some newer houses fronting Lake Wallace.

In 1866, the Edenhope cricket club recruited Thomas Wills who had played for the Rugby School football and cricket teams in England, cricket for Marylebone and for the Victorian cricket team. He became a coach of an Aboriginal cricket team which was the first Australian team to tour England in 1868. The team's famous batsman, Johnny Mullagh, is buried at Harrow, and there is a memorial to the cricket team in the grounds of the Edenhope secondary college, beside Lake Wallace, where Wills coached the team.

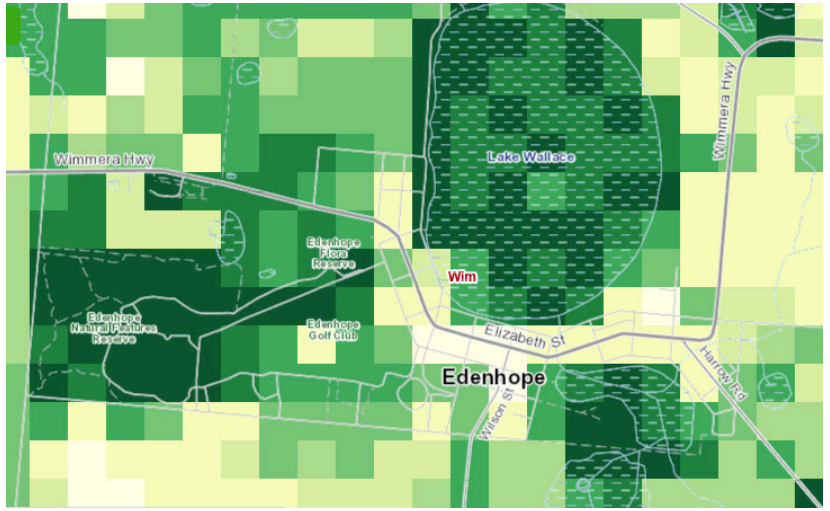
6.9 Landscape and Environment

There is a risk of flooding in Edenhope. A flood study for the town is currently underway and is expected to be finished in 2025. A consistent water level in Lake Wallace is an ongoing issue for the town and there are also frequent blue-green algae blooms.

There is a risk of bushfire in Edenhope with areas outside of the township boundary covered by a BMO. There is a Place of Last Resort in case of bushfire sited at the Lake Wallace Reserve corner of land and Anzac Avenue. This is part of the Neighbourhood Safer Places program for the West Wimmera Shire.

Edenhope is located on flat, undulating plains. The dominant ecosystems are - Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils. The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland. A Biodiversity audit is needed for the Back Swamp site. There is an ESO over the town to protect and preserve habitat for the Red Tail Cockatoo.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green which are in Lake Wallace and the Edenhope Natural Features Reserve.



6.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- A consistent water level in Lake Wallace is an ongoing issue for the town.
- There are frequent blue-green algae blooms in Lake Wallace.
- There is risk of flood in some areas of the town.
- There is risk of fire.
- Public transport is very limited and residents are reliant on private transport.
- There are not enough staff or places for childcare.
- The quality of the drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.

Opportunities

- Recreational tourism is a major driver of the economy and this could be further enhanced to service the “silver economy” as well as selling regional produce.

- Need to ensure that the town centre remains attractive and that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land for growing activities and supporting local enterprises to grow.
- The usage of the foreshore space and infrastructure on the Lake Wallace foreshore could be further optimised and connectivity improved back to the commercial centre.
- Provide more seating, shade and barbecues in the Lake Wallace foreshore area.
- Wayfinding signage around Edenhope and to Lake Wallace could be improved/increased.
- Place activation at the western end of Elizabeth Street could be promoted.
- A community bus service could be provided allow travel between the towns for community services.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- Original town buildings could provide future tourism and housing opportunities.
- Provide marketing of the town's connection to cricket and rugby to attract visitors to the town.
- Tourism opportunities would be enhanced by increases to the overnight accommodation offer in the town.
- The creation of home-based businesses and creative industries employment would be facilitated by high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite).
- The Back Swamp site should be protected from future development.
- More key worker housing would allow the town to grow.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Edenhope are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Edenhope Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Edenhope
Catchment Population	Up to 2,700
Role in the Hierarchy	District Town
Existing Infrastructure	Reticulated drinking water, reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Hospital, hotels, professional civic and recreational services, some retailing including hardware and agricultural services
Growth Capacity	The town has capacity to grow
Expected Outcomes	Minimal growth expected
Recommendations	• Prepare and implement a Structure Plan for Edenhope. • Complete and implement the Edenhope flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • Prepare a bushfire study and direct any new development away from areas of high bushfire risk. • Advocate for upgrades to the town's drinking water. • Advocate for a community bus service between Edenhope and the surrounding towns • Work with businesses to strengthen the overnight accommodation offer. • Undertake a biodiversity audit for the Back Swamp site to inform appropriate zoning for that area. • Ensure that the town centre remains attractive and that that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land for growing activities and supporting local enterprises to grow. • Optimise usage of the foreshore space and infrastructure on the Lake Wallace foreshore and improve connectivity improved to the commercial centre. • Improve wayfinding signage around Edenhope and to Lake Wallace should be • Promote place activation at the western end of Elizabeth Street commercial centre.

	• Explore opportunities to repurpose original township buildings to provide an increase in tourism and housing. • Market the town's connection to cricket and rugby. • Advocate for high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite) to facilitate the creation of home-based businesses and creative industries employment.by • Facilitate key worker housing to allow the town to grow. • Explore opportunities to enhance recreational Tourism as a major driver of the economy and this could be further enhanced to service the "silver economy" as well as selling regional produce. • Review the extent of urban growth outside the settlement boundary particularly surrounding Lake Wallace. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Consider extending the town boundary to include all of Lake Wallace to recognise the importance of this asset to the community and its contribution to the town's recreation and amenity. • Consider including the Industrial 1 and 3 zoned land on Coleraine-Edenhope Road into the town boundary to reflect its existing use and to provide clear direction on where industrial uses should be located. • Consider including the Township Zoned land on the west side of Lake Wallace into the town boundary to reflect its current residential land uses and Township zoning. • Include the Edenhope Racecourse and Edenhope Flora Reserve and Natural Features Reserve (PCRZ) into the town boundary to recognise the importance of these facilities to the town's recreation and community facilities.


GOROKE
& DISTRICT
MEMORIAL HALL
GOROKE

7. GOROKE

Goroke is a rural township in the centre of the Shire, midway between Horsham and the South Australian border. It is 10 km south of the Little Desert. The name is thought to have been derived from an Aboriginal word meaning magpie.

Goroke was established to serve the surrounding farm district which produces mainly wool, lamb, beef and cereals. The town is close to Lake Charlegrark and Lake Booroopki and many other district lakes, which provide for various visitor and recreational pursuits including yabbying, fishing, bird and wildlife watching. The Goroke town extends along Main Street with the Community Health Centre and Goroke College well separated from the hub of the town, located some 900 metres east of the centre. Rural land separates the hub of the town from the school, health centre and a handful of dwellings. The town context map is shown in **Figure 17**.

The Goroke area was occupied for pastoral runs in the mid-1840s. Farm allotments were taken up in the Goroke area in the late 1870s. A school was opened at Gymbowen, 10 km east of Goroke in 1881, and the Goroke school was opened in 1885. Goroke township was surveyed in 1882. Within a few years, the Victorian municipal directory recorded Goroke as having some stores, a flour mill, a hotel and a mechanics' institute. An agricultural and pastoral society was formed in 1887. The railway line was extended form Natimuk to Goroke in 1894, connecting it to Horsham.

Between 1910 and World War II, Goroke maintained a population of about 350-400 people with a bush-nursing centre and a memorial hall. In 1927 the railway line was extended further west to Carpolac. After World War II there was an influx of population as large pastoral holdings were subdivided, some being taken up by soldier settlers. In the early 1950s, several small district primary schools were closed and pupils bused to a consolidated school at Goroke. Education to years 10 and 11 was provided during the 1960s, with an active Young Farmers' Club attached to the school.

7.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Goroke is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Goroke.

The RGP states that "*a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services".*

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-04

Clause 11.01-1L-04 Settlement - Goroke provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to encourage commercial and industrial activities to locate along the main street or in the vicinity of the grain receiving silo. The clause supports the establishment of a walking and bicycle path alongside the train line that can connect with other rail trails emerging throughout the Wimmera region. The Clause 11.01-1L-04 settlement framework for Goroke is shown in **Figure 18**.

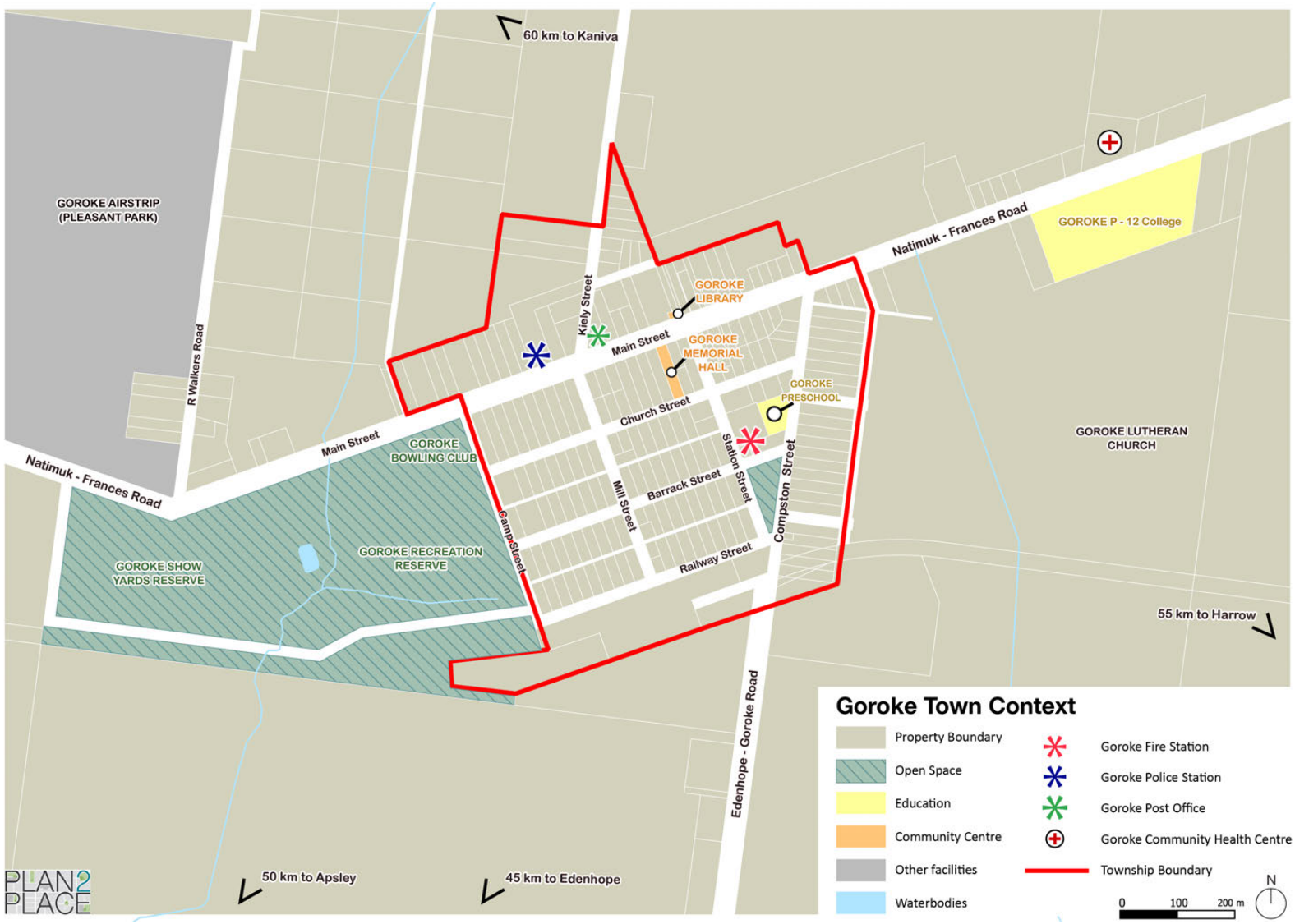


Figure 17: Goroke Context Map

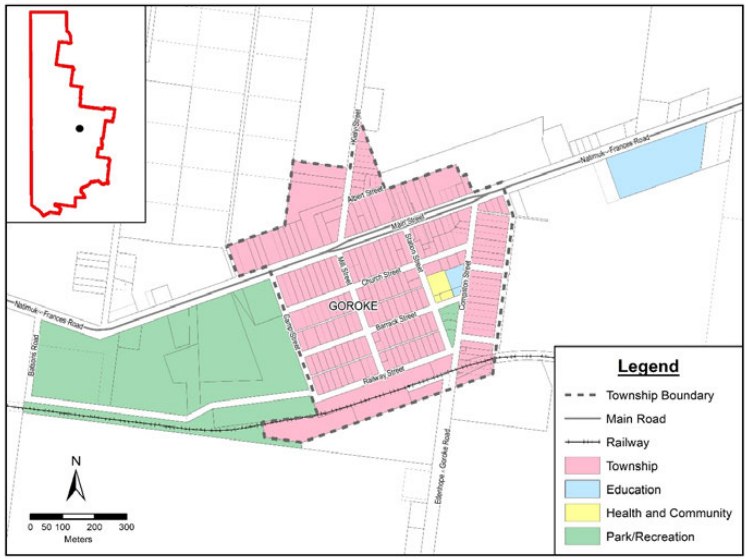


Figure 18: Goroke Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Goroke are shown in **Figure 19** and summarised below.

- The TZ applies to land within Goroke.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The PUZ2 applies to the Goroke P-12 college site and to the Goroke Preschool site.
- The PUZ5 applies to the Goroke Cemetery Reserve.
- The PUZ – Schedule 3 (PUZ3) applies to the Goroke Fire Station site.
- The PPRZ applies to the Goroke Recreation Reserve.
- The TRZ2 has been applied to the Natimuk Frances Road that runs through the centre of Goroke.



Figure 19: Goroke - Existing Zones

One relevant overlay within the WWPS affecting Goroke is shown in **Figure 20** and summarised as follows.

- The ESO2 is applied to all of the land surrounding Goroke to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

7.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Goroke had a population of 208 people. Goroke is experiencing a reducing population, which in turn is placing pressure on the ability of the town to provide services to residents in the town and the region.



Figure 20: Goroke - Existing Overlays

7.3 Housing

The local population is expected to continue to decline slowly but there may be occasional demand for a new house in the town. This may include demand for homes suitable for older people from the town and district who would like to age in place but do not want a large house.

The town is sewered, but the reticulated ground water is not safe to drink according to GWM Water. This may reduce demand from new residents who could seek to locate elsewhere. Within the town grid, there are several vacant lots in a range of sizes that would be suitable for single dwellings or multi-unit development.

7.4 Economic Profile

Goroke is on the Silo Art Trail and has some visitation associated with trips to the Little Desert, just to the north. The disused railway line (the old Carpolac Line) appears to provide a largely intact trail from Goroke to Natimuk which could be developed as a rail trail in the future. There is potential to formalise this trail as a cycle route as far as Horsham. There is potential to attract visitors from the regional centre of Horsham which is around 47 minutes to the east. Visitors could be attracted by food and wine offerings, art, retail offer and services to local outdoor pursuits. These kinds of activities would depend on the willingness of local entrepreneurs and Council may be able to assist by ensuring that streetscapes remain attractive. Shade trees are likely to be increasingly important for visitor and resident comfort.

There is no designated industrial land in Goroke. Grain Corp silos operate from land zoned TZ and there is, or has been, small farm-related engineering works on Main Street. No significant industrial activity is anticipated for the township and any such demand should be redirected to towns with designated industrial precincts.

Given the forecast decline in population, resident demand is unlikely to generate support for new retail activity in the centre. There may be some scope to reuse vacant buildings to deliver temporary services or to provide co-working spaces for residents and visiting professionals. The centre has several buildings that could be adapted for new activities. There may also be potential for some of the buildings in the centre to be reused for housing temporary workers on assignment in the district, this could include farm-workers, or those involved in infrastructure projects.

Should there be any future demand for development in the town centre, priority should be given to the repurposing of existing buildings.

7.5 Movement and Transport

Goroke is centred on Natimuk – Frances Road. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Goroke is via private vehicle. There are very limited public transport options available for residents with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays.

7.6 Physical Infrastructure

Goroke is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. GWM Water has worked with the West Wimmera Shire Council investing in Goroke to provide a new sewerage system. The Goroke Sewerage Scheme will provide residents with a reliable, and effective wastewater collection and treatment system. The sewerage scheme will use current septic

tanks on properties and deliver a reliable and effective wastewater collection and treatment system which will contribute to the prosperity and future growth of the town. The Goroke Caravan Park is now connected to the sewerage scheme.

Construction of Stage 1 of the Goroke Sewerage Scheme was completed in October 2021. In March 2022 the Goroke Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed. Stage 2 of the Goroke Sewerage Scheme was completed in June 2024.

7.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Goroke has some community infrastructure including a Community Health Centre and Goroke College, however they are not well connected to the main township and are separated by rural land and some dwellings. There is also a kindergarten in the town.

The core social infrastructure including the library, town hall, public toilets, Men's shed, agricultural services, farm engineering and parkland are all located within two blocks of the town centre. The commercial core supports a mix of local businesses, including an IGA supermarket, café, service station, post office and The Goroke Hotel.

VicTrack currently owns land in Goroke which was part of the former part of the former Carpolac Railway line which branched off from Horsham. The line has been closed since the 1980s and the railway station grounds were disposed of some time ago. There is an opportunity to create a rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk along the disused rail line.

Goroke is close to wetlands and lakes including Lake Charlegrark that could possibly be further utilised for ecotourism. There is also a town walk trail that is being created by the West Wimmera Shire Council in partnership with the community.

7.8 Built Form and Heritage

The residential street network forms a grid pattern to the south of the main road, and houses within easy walking distance of the town centre, churches and other community services and facilities. Church Street has three churches and Railway Street includes the railway siding and silos which are visible from the surrounding area. Goroke is 'book-ended' by the Prep-Year 12 school, and health centre at its eastern edge.



Goroke Men's Shed

The highway splits into a dual carriageway through the town centre Main Street with a median strip that has shade trees and parking. There are several vacant commercial premises as well as many former commercial buildings that appear to have been repurposed for housing. A series of recreational facilities are located to the west of the town, including a sports ground, outdoor swimming pool, showgrounds and a caravan park.

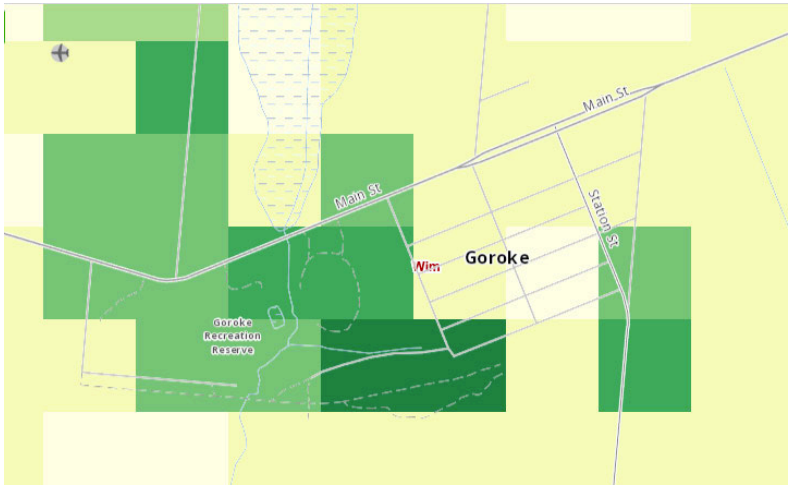
7.9 Landscape and Environment

Roadside vegetation on the way into Goroke is of high value. Connectivity in the landscape is important for biodiversity and to provide biodiversity corridors. There are also several registered Trust for Nature blocks just outside of town.

Goroke is part of the Wimmera bioregion, located in the far west of the central Victoria, and is typified by flat to gently undulating plains in the east, with black and grey cracking clay soils (Vertosols). Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland are the dominant ecosystems. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach

ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils (Vertosols and Sodosols). The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with the area of the highest value in the darkest green which is part of the Goroke Recreation Reserve.



7.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town.

Issues

- Drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.
- There is very limited public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport.
- There are no childcare services available for residents.
- Needs key worker housing to allow the town to grow.
- An ageing population and population loss which impacts viability of the school and investment in retail.
- Challenges to accessing health care services.

Opportunities

- Provide a community bus service to surrounding towns.
- Many of the main street buildings are currently empty and could be upgraded subject to funding.
- A rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk through to Horsham along the old Carpolac Line.
- There is potential for some of the buildings in the centre to be repurposed for housing temporary workers on assignment in the Shire.
- There is an economic development opportunity for ecotourism in the area.
- Plant more street trees to provide more shade in summer.
- Provide a greater diversity of housing for older people to age in place and stay in the town.
- Goroke is part of the Silo Art trail which attracts visitors to the town.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Goroke are detailed in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Goroke Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Goroke
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, Septic Tank Effluent Drainage sewerage system
Other Services Available	Hotel, take away, Post Office, Library, men's shed, community health, community hall, agricultural services, silo art
Growth Capacity	Low due to lack of drinking water and Septic Tank Effluent Drainage sewerage system
Expected Outcomes	Negligible Change
Recommendations	• Explore providing drinking water to the town. • Advocate for community bus services between Goroke and the surrounding towns. • Explore opportunities for childcare services to meet the needs of residents. • Explore opportunities to upgrade Main Street buildings to provide an increase in tourism (building on the Silo Art trail) and housing. • Investigate creating a rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk through to Horsham along the old Carpolac Line. • Work with land owners to reuse buildings in the centre to house temporary workers on assignment in the Shire. • Support economic development opportunities for eco-tourism in the area. • Plant more street trees to provide shade in summer. • Explore options to diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Include the Goroke P-12 College into the town boundary. • Consider including land on the north side of Natimuk-Frances Road into the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses and consider rezoning to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ). • Include the Goroke Show Yards Reserve, Recreation Reserve and Bowling Club facility into the town boundary to reflect their important role as community facilities.


HAMILTON ST
HAMILTON ST
HARROW

8. HARROW

Harrow is a small pastoral town located on the banks of the Glenelg River, beneath the rolling hills and grand old red gums. Harrow is particularly picturesque, boasting several heritage buildings which significantly contribute to the town's beauty and visitor potential. The town is located in the south of the Shire and served by the Coleraine-Edenhope Road. The town is a historic service town for the surrounding farm district where wool, lamb and beef are the main products. The town context map is shown in **Figure 21**.

Harrow is situated at a crossing place on the Glenelg River. In 1849, a postal receiving place, the Foresters Arms Inn, a store and a blacksmith were constructed. In 1852 the township was surveyed. The surveyor renamed the place Harrow, presumably inspired by Harrow, England. A police post was established in the town in 1853.

Harrow is a very early distant inland town, although Apsley (closer to the border) was surveyed a year earlier. Its oldest surviving building is a log gaol (1859). A Presbyterian church was constructed in the early 1860s and served as the first school building which opened in 1869.

The town is set in hilly surrounds, beyond which are plains occupied by several historic pastoral properties. They include Clunie Estate with a large bluestone woolshed, Pine Hills (c1858), Mullagh Station (1866) and Kout Norien (c1855). A slab cottage, woolshed and other outbuildings (1848) at Kout Norien are on the Victorian Heritage Register. Mullagh Station's name was attached to an Aboriginal cricketer, Johnny Mullagh, who was in Australia's first touring side in 1867. He is buried in the Harrow cemetery. The annual Mullagh Cricket Cup (1995) is contested each year in Harrow between the Indigenous descendants of the first Australian team versus cricketers from the Western District of Victoria. A mechanics' institute was opened in 1878, a flour mill in 1890, and by the turn of the century Harrow had several stores, two hotels and a population of about 250 people.

8.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Harrow is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Harrow.

The RGP states that "*a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services*".

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-05

Clause 11.01-1L-05 Settlement - Harrow provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to avoid development within the floodplain of the Glenelg River. The clause ensures built form is responsive to Harrow's rural valley setting and that development enhances the town's historic 19th Century pastoral character. The Clause 11.01-1L-05 settlement framework for Harrow is shown in **Figure 22**.

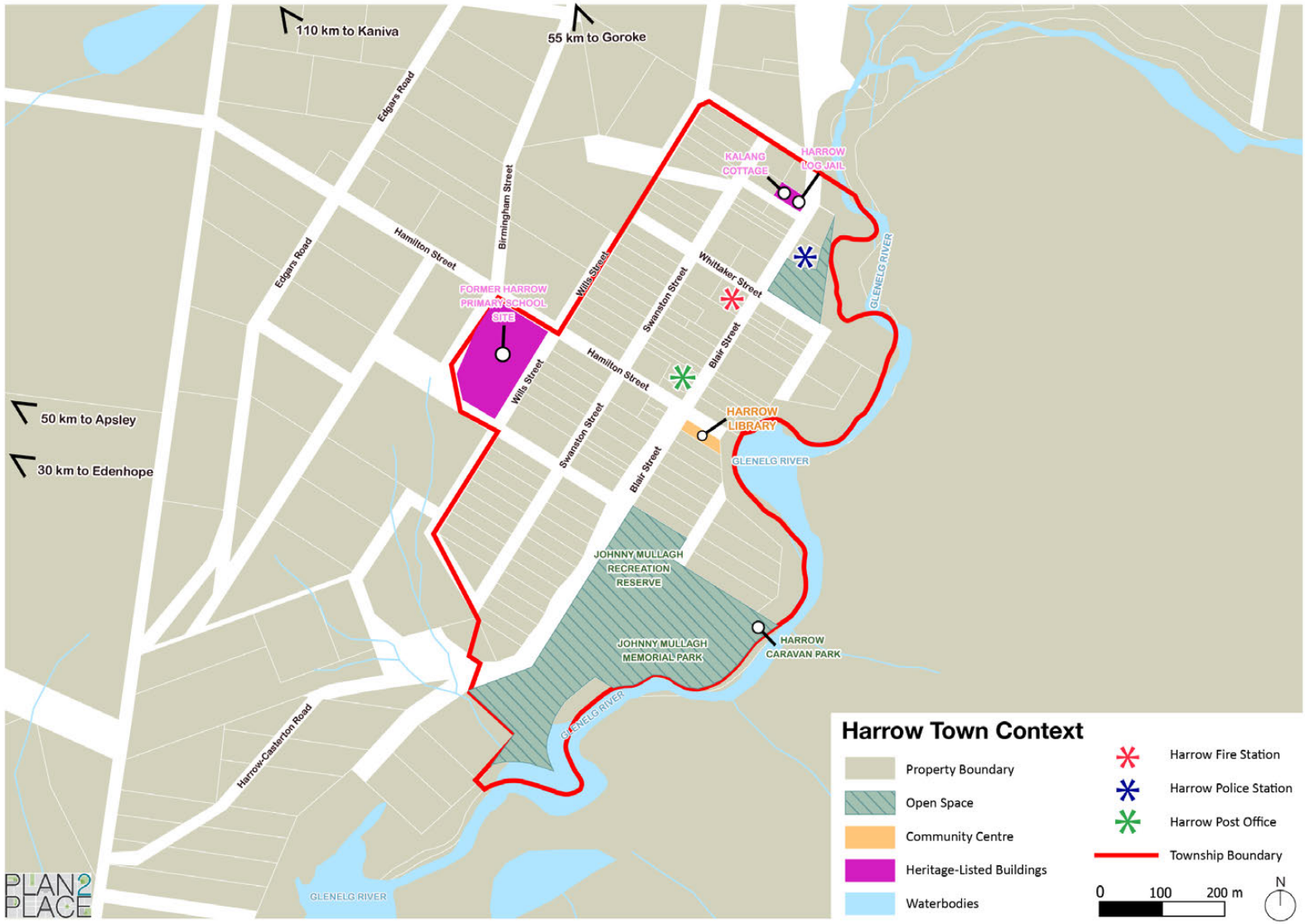


Figure 21: Harrow Context Map

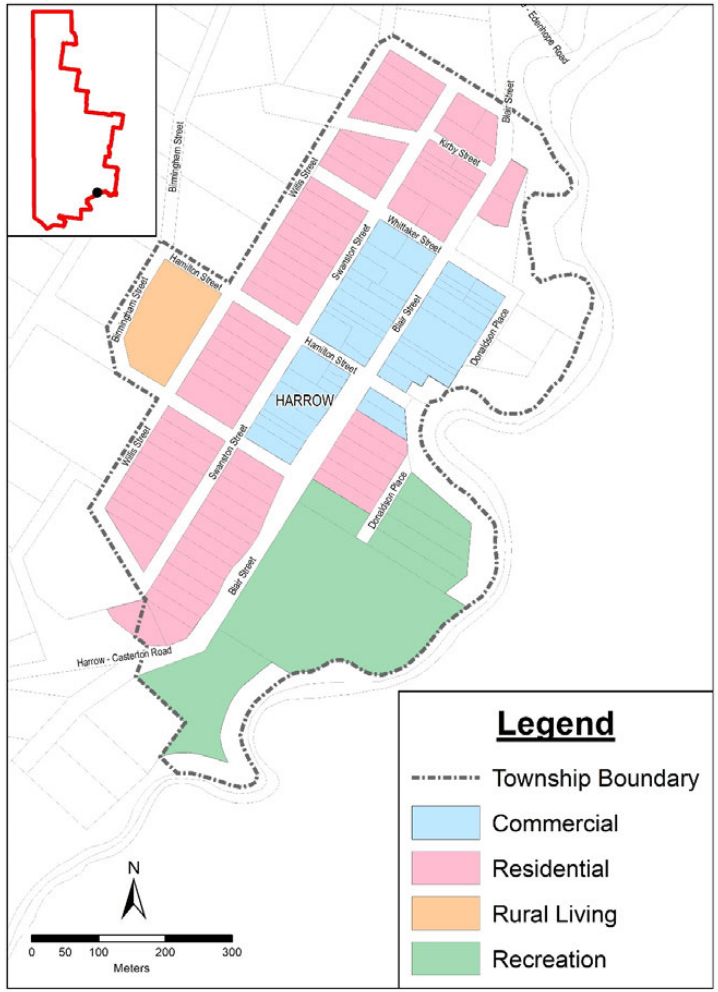


Figure 22: Harrow Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Harrow are shown in **Figure 23** and the are summarised below.

- The TZ applies to land within Harrow.
- The RLZ applies to the former Harrow Primary School site.
- The PPRZ applies to the caravan park.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The PCRZ is applied to the Johhny Mullagh Recreation Reserve to provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes and to provide for appropriate resource based uses.
- The TRZ applies to the Coleraine - Edenhope Road that runs through the centre of Harrow.

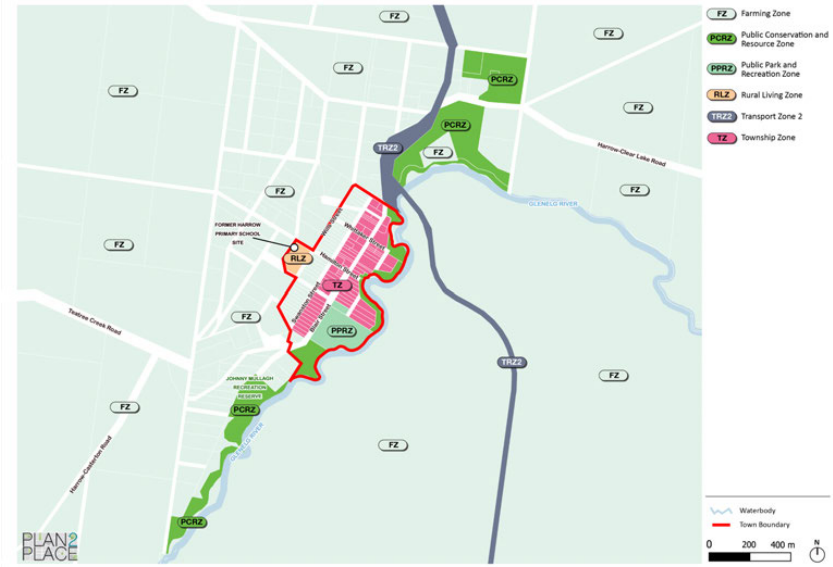


Figure 23: Harrow - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Harrow are shown in **Figure 24** and are summarised below.

- The ESO2 applies to all of the land within and surrounding Harrow to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The BMO applies land within Harrow and much of the land surrounding the town.

- The HO applies to two sites within Harrow which are the Log Gaol built in 1859 and the Presbyterian church which was constructed in the early 1860s and served as the first school building which opened in 1869.
- The LSIO applies along the edge of the Glenelg River in Harrow to identify flood prone land that will be affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood.

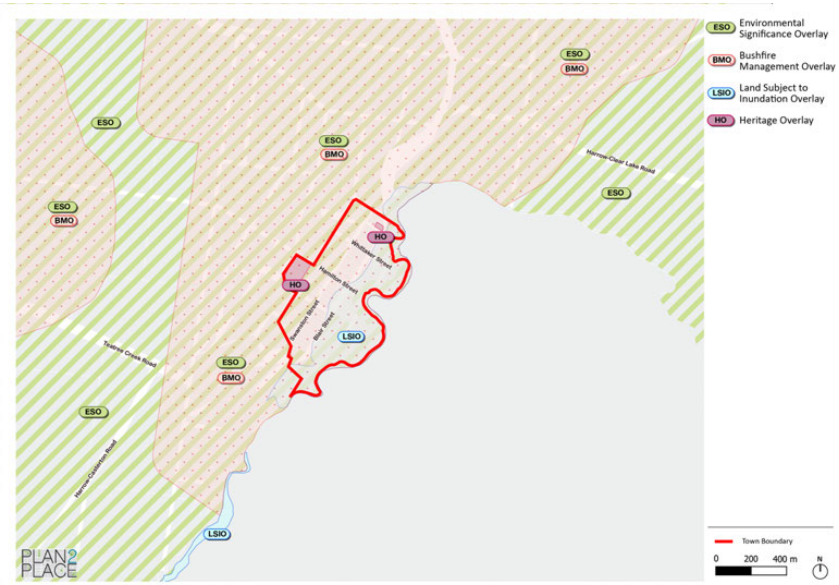


Figure 24: Harrow - Existing Overlays

The LSIO has been placed in Harrow along the Glenelg River to ensure that any development in Harrow:

- Maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.
- Minimises the potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with development.
- Reflects the declaration under Division 4 of Part 10 of the Water Act 1989.
- Protects water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.
- Ensures that it maintains or improves river, marine, coastal and wetland health, waterway protection and floodplain health.

8.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Harrow and the surrounding area had a population of 184 people. The town has a current population of approximately 170 which is forecast to continue to decline over the period to 2036.

8.3 Housing

The township has a unique, heavily treed setting in which the main commercial centre, Blair Street, runs beside the river floodplain, although many of the houses of the town are on the hillside above Blair Street to the west.

The local population is projected to continue to decline but there may be occasional demand for a new house in the town with people attracted to the natural beauty of the town.

The town is not served by sewerage and the reticulated ground water is not safe to drink according to GWM Water. These factors may reduce the demand from new residents who could seek safer options.

The Township Zone (TZ) covers only the land either side of Blair Street and not the land in larger allotments on the slopes to the west and north. Given the lack of sewerage services, the larger lots may be the only ones capable of accommodating new dwellings and the necessary septic tanks. There appears to be several vacant lots in this area, although the land is subject to the BMO.

8.4 Economic Profile

Harrow is a town with a significant heritage, being one of the first towns to be gazetted in Victoria. This is reflected in many of the buildings on Blair Street. This heritage and the bush-setting is attractive to visitors and provides a substantial underpinning of the commercial activities of the town, including several accommodation providers. There may be opportunities to expand this visitor

offering to include destination accommodation, food, wine, art and indigenous heritage.

There is no industrial land in the township and little industrial activity. Given the sloping topography and the fire risk, the township is not suited to industrial development, which should be redirected to industrial precincts at Edenhope and elsewhere.

8.5 Movement and Transport

Harrow is located along Blair Street just off the Coleraine-Edenhope Road. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Harrow is via private vehicle. There is currently no public transport currently available for residents of the town.

8.6 Physical Infrastructure

Harrow is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. Ground and surface water is not safe for drinking, however, water can be used for household activities, such as watering gardens, flushing toilets, irrigation and laundry. It can also be used for showering or bathing if caution is exercised. Drinking water could be piped in from Edenhope or Coleraine in the future subject to funding.

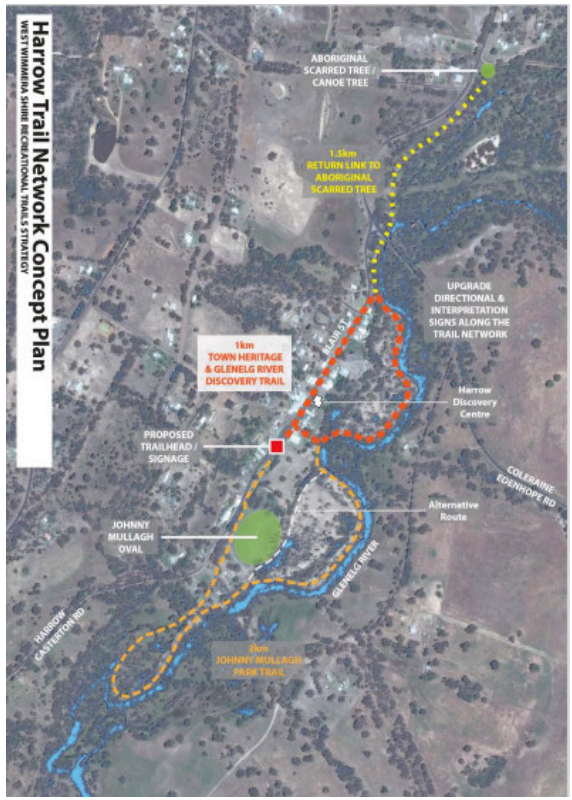
All houses are serviced by septic tanks as there is no wastewater treatment plant servicing the town with reticulated sewerage.

8.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The township has a small commercial and community centre. The town centre activities are dispersed along Blair Street and includes a combined post office/café and general store which provides a very limited range of fresh food and a stand alone general store. The Hermitage Hotel includes accommodation and there is a gift shop and a collectibles shop. There is the Harrow discovery centre, a garage and service station and an agricultural supplies outlet.

Harrow has a police station, fire station and a bush nursing centre. There is an RSL and Mechanics Institute (the library). The nearest schools are at Edenhope and Balmoral.

At the southern end of Blair Street, away from the town centre, is a Caravan Park with recently developed cabins owned by DEECA run by a Committee of Management.



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy Nov 2018

The Glenelg River is used for recreation activities such as fishing and canoeing. No powerboats are allowed on the river. There is a popular swimming hole near the caravan park along with riverside parks and walking trails. The West Wimmera Recreational Trails (2018) lists the Glenelg River Walking Trail at Harrow as a high priority project to be upgraded. This walking trail is designed to include signage that speaks to the local Indigenous history of the area as well as the early European contact in the area. There is also scope to introduce a horse riding trail

between Harrow and Dergholm and to develop the Glenelg River Canoe Trail from Harrow to Dergholm.

8.8 Built Form and Heritage

The town enjoys a very high level of amenity due to its well preserved heritage architecture, its location on the Glenelg River and the associated corridor of open space. Views into Harrow are limited due to the rolling landform and dense native vegetation screening. This creates a great sense of arrival entering from the highway as the road drops down to the centre of town. Once in the township, the steep, vegetated hills and limited sightlines create a sense of enclosure.

Harrow's sense of history resulted in the formation of a historical society in 1969, with an eye to the preservation of the log gaol. The gaol has since been listed on the Australian and Victorian heritage registers. Mullagh and Pine Hills homesteads are also on the Australian register, along with old bluestone offices which served the Kowree Shire during 1872-87.

The Presbyterian church was by far the grander, replacing an earlier structure in 1884 and the Anglicans built a church in 1933. Unusual in a town of such size, a bush nursing centre was opened in 1913, and it was rebuilt in 1995 at a time when such facilities were at risk of closure.



Historic Building – Harrow

Harrow has three church buildings, the bush nursing centre, the mechanics' institute, the Hermitage Hotel, a general store, a museum, a recreation reserve, a golf club and tennis courts. The school closed in 2002. The Johnny Mullagh Cricket Centre was developed by the Harrow community as a means of celebrating the story of the 1868 Aboriginal cricket team and the history of the Harrow township.[2]

There is ample on-street parking for residents, visitors and tourists in the central area of town. The majority of Harrow is zoned TZ, with the exception of the river corridor (PCRZ) and the Jonny Mullagh Reserve (PPRZ). A small area of land to the north of the town is zoned rural living (RLZ), and Council has identified this area as suitable for additional rural living development.

8.9 Landscape and Environment

The Glenelg River is a Victorian Heritage River. It is a regulated river system with water storage at Rocklands that was built in 1944 being kept 70% full due to structural issues with the dam. Water is periodically released downstream into the Glenelg River.

[2] *History. https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/harrow*

The Glenelg River provides habitat for rare and engendered fish and aquatic species. The estuary and has an ESO to protect habitat for the Red Tail Black Cockatoo.

Harrow is subject to flooding from the Glenelg River and land to the east of Blair Street is subject to an inundation overlay and the recent 2022 flood was approximately 1 metre deep. Harrow is in a valley that is at risk of significant flooding.

Current flood mapping was prepared in 2017 and may not be consistent with current climate change risk mitigation standards. These maps need to be updated to be compliant with current standards. A flood investigation report is currently underway for Harrow and new flood maps are being prepared for implementation into the WWPS. **Figure 25** shows the extent of flooding in a 1% AEP Flooding event.

Harrow and its surrounding area is affected by a BMO. There is a high risk of bushfire for the town as experienced in the summer of 2024-25. There are access constraints for residents and visitors in the case of bushfire as there is only one road into the town and one road out.

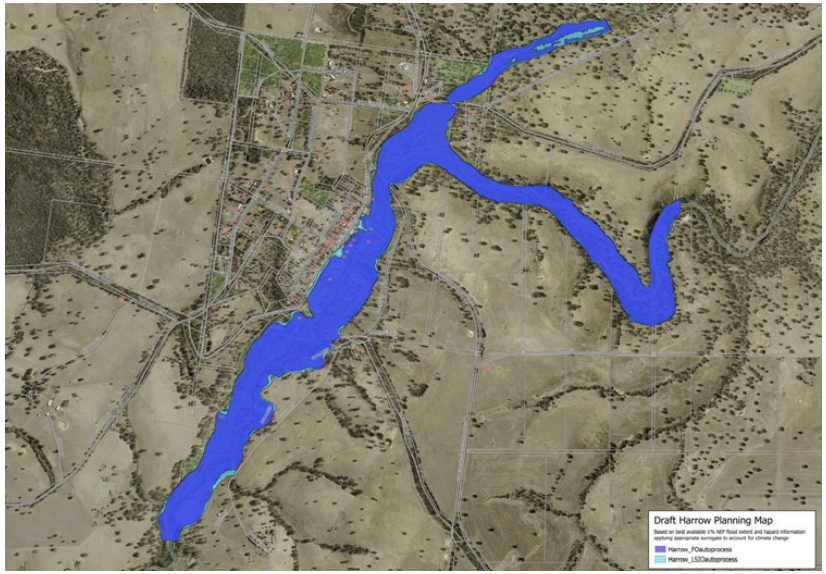
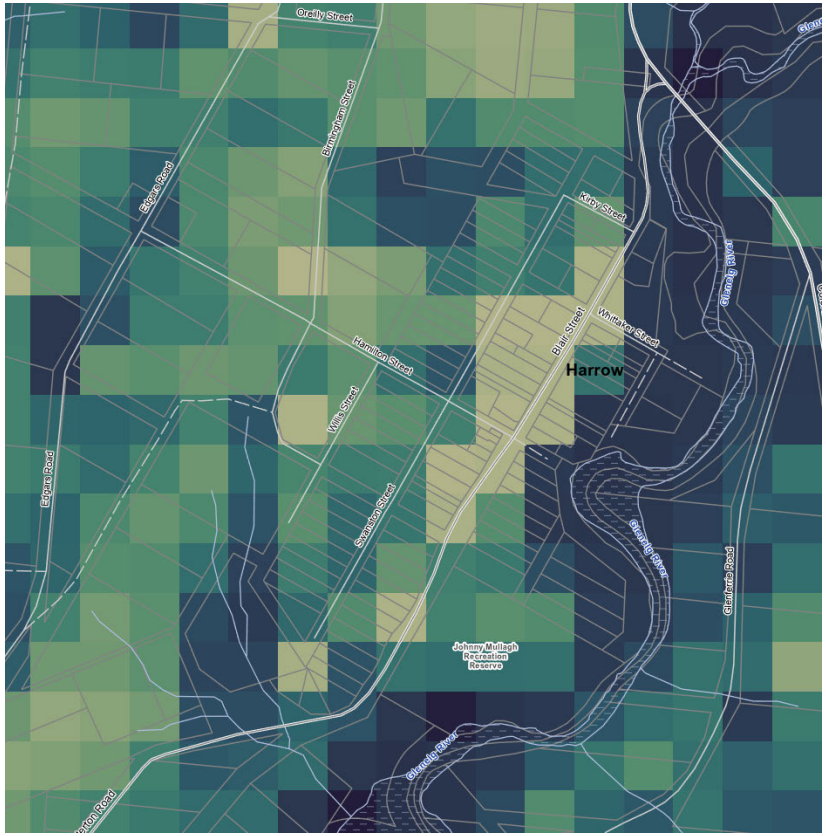


Figure 25: Draft Harrow Flood Map 1% AEP Flood Extent

Harrow is part of the Dundas Tablelands Bioregion and is located in the south-west of the State. The land is made up of a hard ironstone layer which resists erosion. Streams have cut deep narrow valleys across the tablelands. Black earths (Dermosols) dominate the valleys and the dissected Merino Tablelands, yellow texture contrast soils (Chromosols and Sodosols) and cracking clays (Vertosols) dominate the rest of the table tops. The bioregion includes an area south of the Grampians which does not have such strongly expressed tableland features but supports a similar range of ecosystems.

The vegetation is a complex mosaic of Plains Grassy Woodland, Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, Grassy Woodland and Creekline Grassy Woodland ecosystems. There are many areas of high value habitat close to Harrow that need to be preserved and protected. The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with the area of the highest value in the darkest green along the Glenelg River.



8.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- There is significant risk of flooding from the Glenelg River, with the eastern side of Blair Street subject to flooding.
- There is significant bushfire risk with one road in and one road out.
- There is a steep escarpment creating a barrier to movement and potentially development.
- The town is serviced by septic tanks.
- Drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.
- There is no public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport to move between towns.
- A bushfire assessment will need to be undertaken before any new development or structure planning work can commence.
- Currently projected for a reduction in population.

Opportunities

- The historic built form and natural beauty is an opportunity to attract residents and grow tourism in the town.
- There are under-utilised buildings and vacant lots that could accommodate new commercial and residential development along with visitor accommodation.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- There may be potential for some additional services.
- Additional tourism retailing is an opportunity including arts-related facilities.
- Provide a community bus service to surrounding towns.
- Capitalise on the history of Harrow while ensuring that the heritage of the township is preserved and enhanced.
- Land high on the escarpment is out of the flood area and could be suited to future development, noting this land is subject to the BMO.
- Plant more street trees to provide more shade in summer.
- Consider opportunities for growth of the town subject to environmental constraints.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Harrow are detailed in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Harrow Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Harrow
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, no reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Nursing post, accommodation, café, emergency services, hotel, library, heritage centre
Growth Capacity	Low due to fire and flood constraints
Expected Outcomes	Negligible change
Recommendations	• Complete and implement the Harrow flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and to direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • Prepare a bushfire study and direct any new development with high bushfire risk. • Work with GWM Water to explore options to provide drinking water to the town. • Explore the feasibility of providing a reticulated sewerage in consultation with GWM Water. • Advocate for a community bus services between Harrow and the surrounding towns. • Support the activation of under-utilised buildings and vacant lots to accommodate new commercial, residential and visitor accommodation development, subject to a bushfire assessment, noting that the eastern side of Blair Street is subject to flooding and would not be suitable without expensive building modifications. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings. • Support additional tourism retailing, including arts-related facilities. • Support the consolidation of Harrow's role as a visitor destination. • Work with the community to capitalise on the history of Harrow while ensuring that the heritage of the township is preserved and enhanced.
	• Explore the opportunity for future development on land located high on the escarpment out of the flood area. • Plant more street trees to provide shade in summer. • Undertake a bushfire risk assessment for the town. • Prepare and implement a structure plan for the town.
Potential Boundary Changes	• Consider undertaking a bushfire risk assessment to explore opportunities to appropriately zone land on the west side of Harrow to a zone that more accurately reflects its lot size and land uses. This could include the RLZ or LDRZ.


KANIVA
DAVID LEE PEREIRA

9. KANIVA

Kaniva is the largest town in the north of the Shire, located on the Western Highway and the Melbourne-Adelaide Railway. It is surrounded by agricultural land the Little Desert National Park to the south and the Big Desert Wilderness Park to the north. The town provides services to the surrounding farm districts and to travellers on the Western Highway.

Kaniva is a small but robust community and economy. Its location on the Western Highway provides significant strategic advantages relating to economic growth and land use. It has a wide range of community infrastructure to support its population, including sport and recreation facilities. Its economy is anchored by agriculture and farming. Kaniva is the gateway to the he Silo Art Trail and home to Sheep Art.

Kaniva functions both as a service centre for the surrounding agricultural area and as a popular rest stop for travellers on the way to regional destinations and Adelaide. The commercial area is centrally located along the Western Highway, putting it in a prime position to capture freight and logistics-oriented activity. The local community sees the location of the town on the Western Highway and the railway as a major asset and its location has significantly contributed to the formation of the town's character. The town context map is shown in **Figure 26**.

The first town in the area was Lawloit which developed in the 1860s. The first selector arrived in 1875 and many others followed, particularly from 1879. They established wheat farms and 'mullenised' the land, which is to say it was cleared with a red-gum roller invented by a South Australian named Mullens. Three metres long and one metre in diameter, it was hauled over the land by a team of 10 bullocks. This process squashed the mallee trees, after which the land was burnt then ploughed. The township of Lillimur South developed in the late 1870s and was soon followed by Lillimur North. Another settlement, initially named 'Budjik', (meaning stone axe) as it was situated on Budjik Hill, began to develop when a flour mill and grain shed was built there in 1881. The opening of a post office on the site in April 1882 saw the town officially change its name to Kaniva.

9.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Kaniva is defined as a Town in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Kaniva will continue as a key service centre. Residential development within the town's boundaries will also be promoted with recent upgrades to water infrastructure providing potable water to the town. Kaniva is similar to a district town but generally services a more localised catchment. It has a greater reliance on other centres for services and employment.

The future directions for Kaniva as outlined in the RGP are to:

- Recognise Kaniva as a key local service centre.
- Encourage the provision of a range of services appropriate for the local community.
- Provide for infill residential development within the town boundaries and provide for some additional low density and rural living land adjacent to the town.

The RGP states "*Kaniva will continue to provide services for its local community of interest which includes small rural settlements such as Lillimur, Miram, Serviceton and Telopea Downs. Kaniva's location on the Western Highway corridor means it has good access to Nhill and Horsham for higher order services.*

Kaniva has a compact and contiguous built form and is contained within the TZ with some zoned industrial land. Infill development will be encouraged to consolidate the existing urban form. Several small lots on the immediate western side of the town, currently located in the FZ, should be zoned for low density and rural living residential purposes. Industrial land is provided on the eastern side of Kaniva and is expected to meet demand for the immediate future."

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan outlines the following land use policies, strategies and actions for Kaniva:

- Promote residential development within current town boundaries
- Investigate rezoning small lots to the west of Kaniva to allow for low density residential and rural living development
- Provide a single zone for the town's aerodrome.

- Monitor the need for additional industrial land.
- Support improvements to the town's drinking water quality.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-02

Clause 11.01-1L-02 Settlement - Kaniva provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to encourage development of the Kaniva Industrial Estate that is mindful of residential growth in the town and to retain community and commercial facilities in the town. The Clause 11.01-1L-02 settlement framework for Kaniva is shown in **Figure 27**.



Commerical Street Kaniva

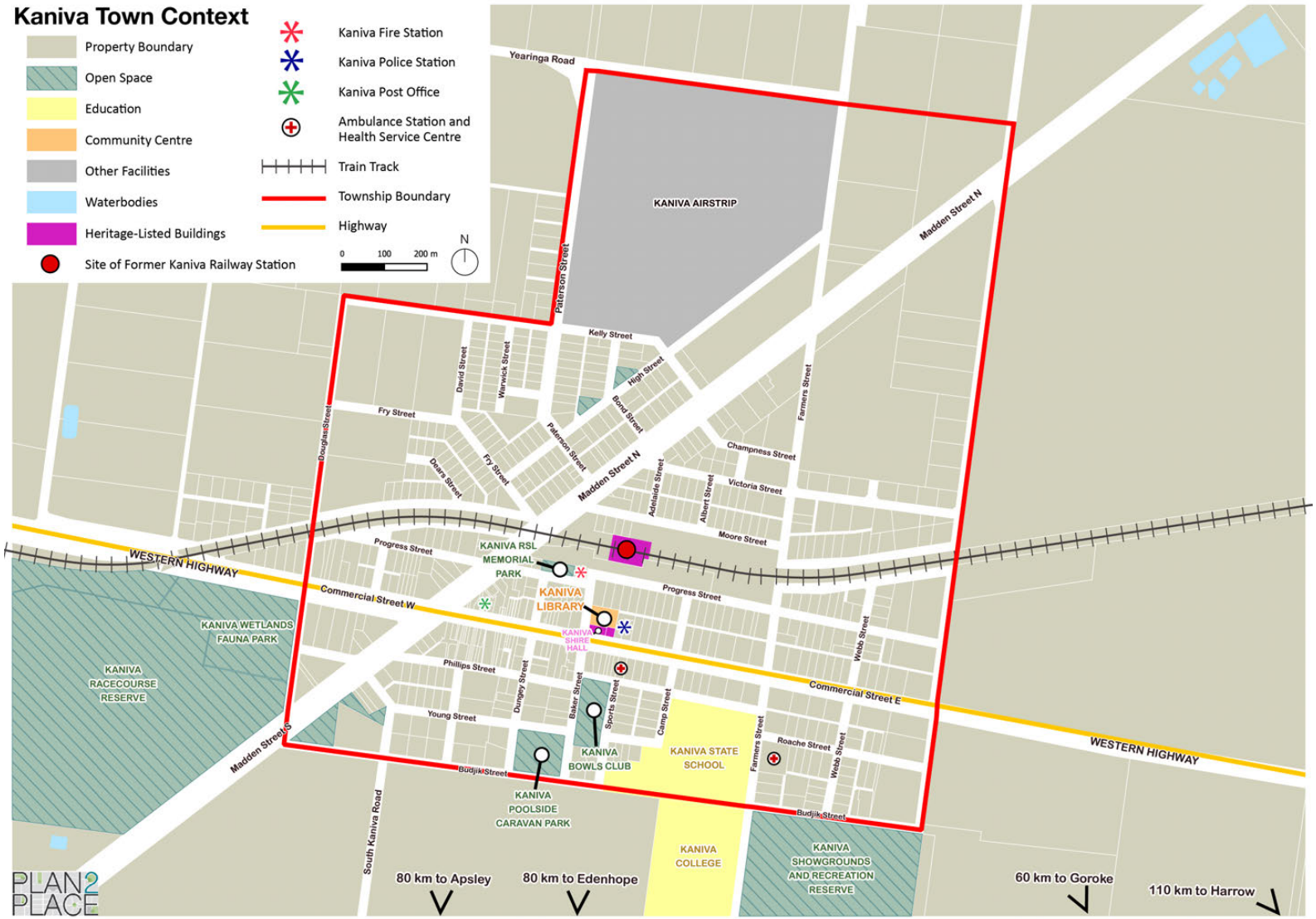


Figure 26: Kaniva Context Map



Figure 27: Kaniva Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Kaniva are shown in **Figure 28** and are summarised below:

- The TZ applies to land within Kaniva.
- The INZ1 applies to land within the existing township boundary.
- The INZ3 applies to land adjoining the INZ1 zone behind some residential housing that abuts the train line.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The TRZ applies to land for declared roads, railways and other important transportation infrastructure representing state and local designations. The TRZ1 is applied to the railway reserve land and the TRZ2 is applied to Commercial Street E.



Figure 28: Kaniva - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Kaniva are shown in **Figure 29** and are summarised below:

- The ESO2 applies to land at the southern end of Kaniva to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The HO applies to several sites within Kaniva close to the railway line. The former Kaniva Station Building is heritage listed but is no longer standing however the platform remains intact.
- A DDO2 applies to land to the south of Madden Street North to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.



Figure 29: Kaniva - Existing Overlays

9.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Kaniva had a population of 683 people. The population of the residential catchment area for the Kaniva town centre is currently around 1,200. Trends have it steadily reducing over the forecast period to 2036. It should be noted the population of Kaniva did grow between 2016 and 2021. However this is likely as a result of Covid-19 pandemic and the 2026 Census will enable a greater understanding of the long term impacts of the trends that occurred during the pandemic.

The number of travellers on the Western Highway, on the other hand, is likely to continue to grow in line with traffic forecasts and will provide a slowly expanding market for visitor services. A key concern for residents will be to ensure that the food and grocery offering can be maintained and updated as required. The local supermarket has recently been renovated and there are two food banks in operation to assist the community with the high cost of food.

9.3 Housing

The population of the town is forecast to decline despite taking account of dwelling downsizing due to demographic changes and an ageing community. The town will however need to accommodate some growth in the number of dwellings – up to 3 additional dwellings per year according to forecasts.

There are parcels of land within the TZ that are largely vacant and which could be suitable for residential development. This includes, for example, land in the north-west of the town in the area around Douglas Street; land on the south-eastern edge of the town; and the Council-owned land fronting Kelly Street which presently accommodates a little-used airstrip. Whether the privately-owned land is available for development is uncertain. Council may be able to help facilitate housing diversity and development by leveraging some Council owned land to encourage investment by affordable housing providers and/or to engage in direct housing and infrastructure provision.

The demand for new dwellings is likely to be for older age groups. Many of these people will prefer to be in smaller homes close to the services of the hospital and the town centre. There are some vacant lots among the existing development where there is potential to encourage redevelopment at higher densities and for previous farm owners to downsize to rural residential lots.

The town is connected to sewer and now potable water as a result of an extension to the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline. This new infrastructure may spark an upsurge in investment in housing and other activities in the town and is a factor that should be planned for now.

9.4 Economic Profile

Kaniva is roughly midway between Adelaide (3 hours and 20 minutes) and Melbourne (4 hours and 40 minutes) and is a convenient place to stop or rest on the journey. This has given rise to a local visitor services industry that comprises cafés, pubs and a service station in the town centre as well as two motels and a caravan park located in town as well as B&B accommodation and free pub camps. Kaniva provides places to rest, including the Madden Street car-park and the Wetlands and Fauna Park on the western edge of the town. The town is also the gateway to the Silo Art Trail, providing the western-most painted silo in Victoria as well as the home of Sheep Art.

While the number of travellers on the Western Highway will continue to grow, Kaniva faces competition for visitor expenditure from the nearby towns such as

Nhill, Bordertown and Dimboola which are slightly larger and with more services. In the case of Dimboola, there is direct access to the Wimmera River and the Little Desert National Park. In improving Kaniva as a travellers' rest stop, the provision of shade will be increasingly important. When upgrading the streetscape of the town centre, consideration should be given to the planting of shade trees, as well as extending verandas for the length of the pedestrian strip (particularly on the north side). Strengthening the provision of electric vehicle charging stations would also be beneficial. Council could also consider the provision of improved trailer and caravan parking spaces.

Kaniva has an industrial precinct located at the north east edge of the town. This comprises:

- Approximately 18.8 hectares of IN1Z land which is mostly vacant apart from three businesses on lots of 0.4 hectares or less.
- Approximately 3 hectares of IN3Z land on an adjacent site of which about 2 hectares is vacant.
- Approximately 2.7 hectares of adjacent land being used for industrial purposes in the TZ.

The zoning of land for industry in the precinct is somewhat problematic, with the TZ in particular, which allows housing to be interspersed with industrial activities. There may be some scope to reform the town's zoning to ensure that existing and future housing is kept separate from the industrial activity and to support industrial activities. The area of industrial land should be ample for likely future investment over the forecast period.

Agricultural supplies, storage and works depots are currently the principal activities in the precinct.

The residential and commercial areas of the town are currently covered by a TZ. If more functional zones were to be introduced, it would be a straightforward matter to identify an appropriate area for the Commercial 1 Zone to cover the town centre. There is only one vacant parcel of land in the main commercial centre.

9.5 Movement and Transport

Kaniva is on the Western Highway and it has an infrequent bus service to Horsham that runs once a week. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Kaniva is via private vehicle. There is an EV charging station on Madden Street North.

Kaniva is on the Serviceton line however the train no longer stops at Kaniva. The rail corridor is under lease to the ARTC. VicTrack boundaries are marked in dashed dark blue in **Figure 30**. The land under ARTC lease is orange and the land which is bright green is vacant land not under lease. Land shown yellow in **Figure 31** is Crown land within the station precinct.



Figure 30: Station Precinct with VicTrack Boundaries and Vacant Land



Figure 31: Yellow Crown Land in the Station Precinct

9.6 Physical Infrastructure

Since the discovery of alleged illegal dumping of waste 15 km south of Kaniva, GWM Water has been working closely with the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPAV), local government and other relevant agencies to ensure the safety of Kaniva's water supply.

Potable water is now available to the town. Water is available for industrial fire flows however industrial customers need to pay a fee to meet the building code's requirements.

There is a gravity sewer system in Kaniva to treat wastewater. However, the capacity of the waste water treatment plant needs to be increased to support growth in the town. Some homes remain on septic tanks and are not connected to the sewage treatment system.

9.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The town has a commercial services centre on the main Highway. The Kaniva hospital provides urgent care, acute care, residential aged care and community health services. Kaniva College P-12 Government school is one of three in the Shire. The Kaniva Kindergarten provides pre-school education services.

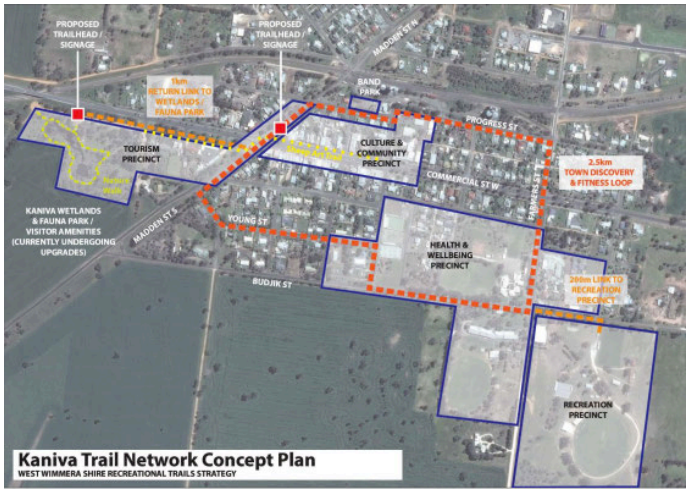
The main food and grocery outlet is a small IGA supermarket of approximately 650 sqm. There is a small selection of speciality retailers, including cafés, a butcher, pharmacy, hardware/agricultural supplies, hairdresser, thrift shop and puppet shop as well as a tattoo parlour, beauty salons, a post office and a homewares shop.

There are two hotels with accommodation in the town centre, catering to residents and visitors. The eastern end of the centre around Baker Street has a number of civic functions including the Kaniva Shire Hall, Council offices, library and police station. There are a limited number of professional services. The town has a combined service station and café which is a community enterprise, saved from closure by residents of the town.The strip has some vacant shops.. There are also several former commercial buildings that appear to have been repurposed for housing. There is no bank, although there is a post office which has some banking facilities. There is extensive visitor parking on the service roads as well as in Madden Street North where there are public toilets.

Kaniva has a Recreation Reserve that houses active sports groups including cricket, hockey football and netball. This land is owned by DEECA and managed by a Committee of Management. There is also a tennis, bowls club and a rifle range. Funds are being sought for an upgrade to the Kaniva swimming pool including a splash park.



Kaniva Bowling and Croquet Club



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy Nov 2018

The Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park is a popular spot with locals and visitors. The Wetlands and Fauna Park was upgraded in 2018/19 as part of a community partnership project instigated by Kaniva & District Progress Association. There is the Sheep Art Trail connecting the Silo Art, Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park to the main street. Council has recently upgraded the Kaniva Town Walk, a town discovery and fitness loop, starting at the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park and connecting back to the town centre. For further details see the Kaniva Trail Network Concept Plan above.

9.8 Built Form and Heritage

The Kaniva town centre extends along the Western Highway but is principally concentrated in the area from just east of the intersection with Baker Street to just west of the intersection with Madden Street.

The Western Highway is a major through-route and the commercial activities on the northern and southern side of the road are accessed via two service roads, each separated from the Highway by a median strip. This acts as a barrier to movement between the two sides of the main street.

The core centre has had extensive landscape treatment including planting of vines on verandas and paving as well as some public art in the form of decorated grazing sheep scattered throughout. There is a rest area including a small shady park on the former Methodist church site at the corner of the Highway and Baker Street.



Painted Sheep – Kaniva

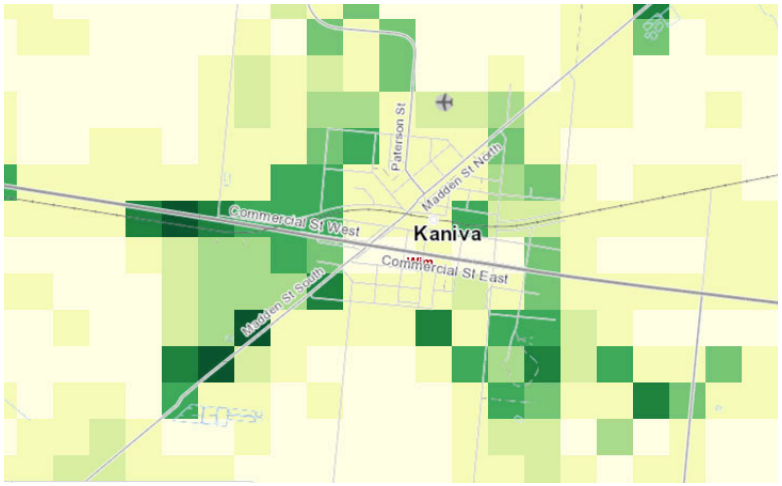
9.9 Landscape and Environment

Kaniva is not at significant risk of bushfire, however Terramatrix has led a bushfire assessment and the delivery of a Bushfire Development Report (BDR) that meets the requirements of the WWPS Clause 13.02. This has taken into account relevant building and bushfire regulations for the town. Kaniva has limited flooding issues, mainly from stormwater flooding. Kaniva sits on land that was once a retreated ancient sea and there is a limestone aquifer which sits under the Kaniva district.

Kaniva is located in the Wimmera bioregion in the far west of the central Victoria, typified by flat to gently undulating plains in the east, with black and grey cracking clay soils (Vertosols). Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland are the dominant ecosystems.

The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges with interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils (Vertosols and Sodosols). The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green.



9.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- While the trainline runs through the town, passenger services are no longer available to residents to board in Kaniva.
- There is insufficient public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport.
- Manage any impacts from industry runoff into the wetlands that may cause pollution.
- There is a lack of key worker housing.
- Current trends are that population loss will continue.
- There is limited short term or long term rental accommodation available in Kaniva.
- There is a mismatch between the cost to build a house and the market value of a house making it unviable to build dwellings unless property prices were to increase or housing building costs were to decline.
- There is a limited local housing construction industry to provide new housing in the town.
- There is a need for more key worker and higher quality housing.
- Land banking is an issue.
- There are not enough staff or places for childcare.
- Kaniva is bisected by the Western Highway which is a major truck route day and night.

Opportunities

- Leverage the potential for town development provided by potable water infrastructure.
- Kaniva has a slowly reducing residential catchment but there is growth in the demand for visitor services as traffic on the Western Highway continues to increase.
- Kaniva is part of the Silo Art Trail which attracts visitors to the town.
- Attract more visitors and visitors to the area by improving wayfinding signage to the Wetlands and Fauna Park.
- Opportunity to collaborate with the BGLC to develop and install culturally relevant signage that identifies local plants and animals in traditional language, fostering education, language revitalization, and connection to Country.
- Bird watching and ecotourism could be a major attraction for visitors in the area and should be explored further.
- Kaniva location provides opportunities to promote itself as Victoria's 'Bordertown' including new billboard signage.
- Overnight accommodation offerings could be expanded and upgraded to attract more tourists and visitors to the area.
- There are likely to be opportunities in the "silver economy" as well as visitor services.
- Explore the development of a free camp on the old racecourse, at the Wetlands and the Recreation Reserve.
- Greater low cost and affordable housing options in the town.
- Diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place.

- Providing apprenticeships for local people to upskill in building and construction.
- Maintaining the liveability of the town including the attractiveness of the town centre, as well as ensuring that there is sufficient serviced and available land for commercial, industrial and residential development.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- Provision of electric vehicle charging stations in easily accessible locations for visitors and travellers.
- Improvements to trailer and caravan parking spaces in the town.
- Exploring opportunities for additional key worker housing.
- Further development of the local construction industry would assist in providing new housing for Kaniva.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Kaniva are detailed in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Kaniva Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Kaniva
Catchment Population	Up to 1,200
Role in the Hierarchy	Town
Existing Infrastructure	Potable water is now available. Limited reticulated sewage system available.
Other Services Available	Accommodation, hotels, professional, civic and recreational services. Some retailing including hardware, and agricultural services
Growth Capacity	The town has capacity to grow.
Expected Outcomes	Minimal growth expected
Recommendations	• Prepare and implement a Structure Plan for Kaniva. • Advocate for increased public transport to and from Kaniva. • Facilitate key worker housing and increase quality of housing. • Explore options to provide more places for childcare for residents in the town and the staff to facilitate places. • Improve wayfinding signage to attract more visitors to the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park. . • Work with the BGLC to provide signage of local plants and animals in language. • Explore opportunities to grow bird watching and eco-tourism. • Promote Kaniva as Victoria's 'Bordertown' encouraging people to stop and stay on way to Adelaide. • Expand and upgrade overnight accommodation offerings to attract more tourists and visitors to the area. • Explore options to work with a housing provider to provide low cost and affordable housing in the town. • Explore options to diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place. • Explore opportunities for apprenticeships for local people to upskill in building and construction. • Ensure that there is sufficient serviced and available land for commercial, industrial and residential development. • Facilitate more electric vehicle charging stations. • Consider the provision of improved trailer and caravan parking spaces. • Leverage opportunities associated with being part of the Silo Art Trail. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Include the Kaniva Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve in the town boundary. • Include the Kaniva College in the town boundary. • Include the Kaniva Wetlands Fauna Park and Kaniva Racecourse Reserve into the town boundary to recognise their important recreation and tourism roles. • Consider including land on the west side of Paterson Street between Kelly Street and Yeararinga Road in the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current residential land uses. Consider rezoning to an urban zone to reflect the residential land uses.

10. FUTURE SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

10.1 Determining a Settlement Strategy

The Small Towns Plan (STP) provides improved strategic directions for the West Wimmera Shire for the management and direction of its five towns. A revised settlement hierarchy is proposed that promotes settlement growth or containment, consistent with the availability of infrastructure, environmental constraints, existing supply and demand, and state and local government policy and strategy. The STP has been developed in response to increasing pressure to maintain and enhance the sustainability of the small towns and settlements within the Shire.

Growth in West Wimmera is influenced by many factors, including population loss, bushfire and flood risk, community infrastructure, transportation infrastructure and the availability of utility services. Reticulated water is available in Edenhope and Kaniva. Reticulated sewerage is not provided to all of towns in the Shire and the provision of these services is the responsibility of water authorities and private sector utility providers. These factors have been considered in informing the recommendations for future growth in the Shire.

Key findings and recommendations of the STP include:

- A clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- An updated Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 that includes a settlement framework.
- A suite of planning scheme amendment documents to support the implementation of the STP, including changes to the MPS and PPF.
- Finalise and implement flood studies for Edenhope and Aspley.
- Prepare a structure plan for Kaniva to further develop:
  - A vision for the town.
  - Identify key actions and priorities for capital works
  - Identify implementation of any changes to the MPS and PPF of the WWPS.
  - Prepare design guidelines for new development.
- Prepare a structure plan for Edenhope subject to funding.
- Prepare structure plans for Goroke, Harrow and Apsley subject to funding.
- Map flood risks as appropriate, as part of the preparation of structure plans for Edenhope and Harrow.
- Review existing heritage and marketing of Harrow and resident/visitor needs in terms of signage, trails networks, heritage interpretation and promote the experience of Harrow to the visitor market.
- Map fire risk as part of the preparation of structure plans for Harrow, Goroke and Apsley.

The existing settlement strategy for the small towns is identified in the WWPS. This reflects the designations applied in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP and outlined in **Table 8**.

While the hierarchy has been analysed and reviewed, no change is recommended to this settlement hierarchy as a result of the STP as shown below.

Table 8: Current and Proposed Settlement Designations

Town	Existing planning scheme designation	Regional Growth Plan designation	Proposed planning scheme designation
Apsley	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Edenhope	District Town	District Town	District Town
Goroke	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Harrow	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Kaniva	Town	Town	Town

10.2 Strategic Framework

The WWPS could be enhanced to provide clearer direction for land use and development in the five small towns. This includes direction provided through the MPS , through local planning policy and the application of zones and overlays.

MPS Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the MPS in the WWPS:

- Update Clause 02.03-1 Settlement with the settlement hierarchy for the five towns and related strategic directions.
- Strengthen the strategic directions around bushfire and flooding at Clause 02.03-3 in relation to the five towns.
- Update Clause 02.04 to reflect the settlement hierarchy for the five towns, show agricultural land and include identified environmental risks.
- Update Clause 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage with strategic directions to incorporate recommendations such as the need for additional tree planting to mitigate climate change impacts and opportunities to incorporate aboriginal cultural heritage into the built environment.
- Update 02.03-6 Housing to reflect the challenges for the towns in supplying housing and introduce a strategic direction in relation to key worker housing.
- Update Clause 02.03-7 Economic development to provide strategic directions on tourism opportunities in the towns.
- Update Clause 02.03-9 Infrastructure to highlight the challenges of water and sewerage infrastructure in the towns and the implications on development of the towns.

Strategic Framework Plan

The current Strategic Framework Plan for West Wimmera currently reflects the hierarchy included in the STP. However, several improvements to the cartography and content of the map could be made to provide clearer directions on land use and development for the municipality. **Figure 32** outlines a proposed map for inclusion at Clause 02.04 of the WWPS.

PPF Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the PPF in the WWPS:

- Update Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement – Edenhope to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-02 Settlement – Kaniva to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-03 Settlement – Apsley to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-04 Settlement – Goroke to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-05 Settlement – Harrow to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.

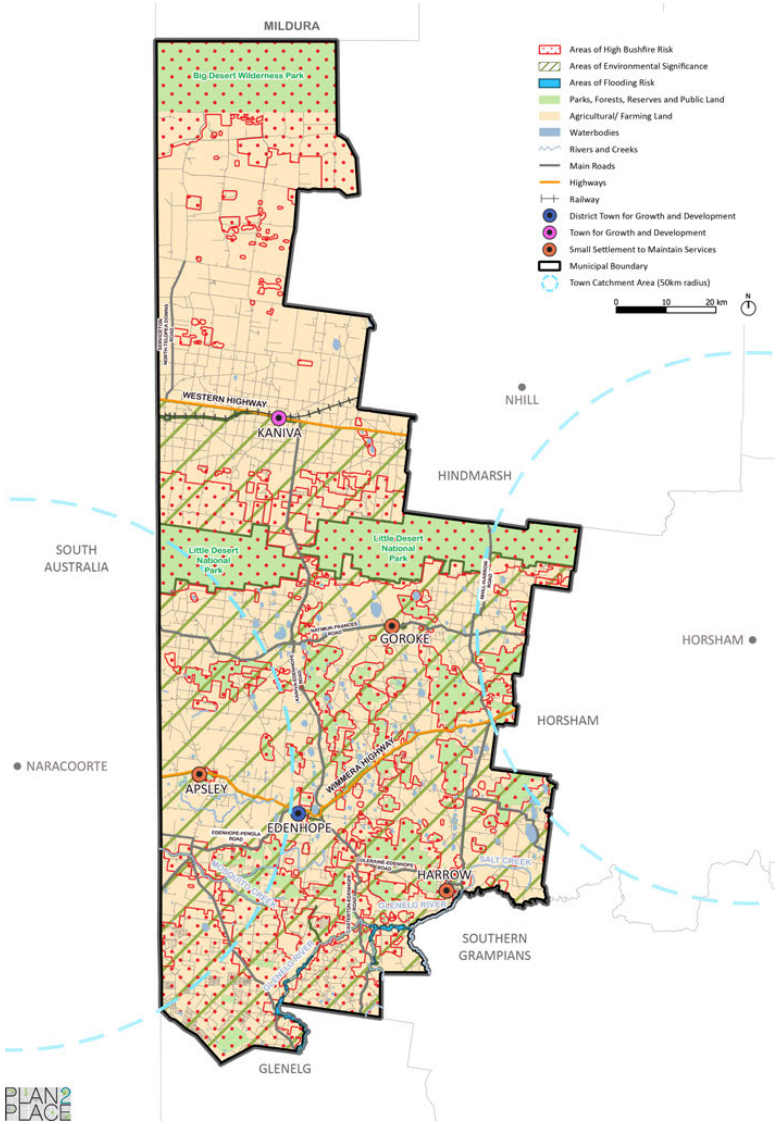


Figure 32: Proposed Strategic Framework Plan Update

Appendix A – Content overview from the WWPS

Clause 11 Settlement

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement promotes the sustainable growth and development of Victoria to deliver choice and opportunity through a network of settlements. Regions are planned to reinforce settlement boundaries and provide for population growth and development of facilities and services. Growth is directed into existing settlements supported by a network of major and neighbourhood activity centres and townships of varying size, role and function. Urban consolidation is encouraged with density that supports sustainable transport and retail, office-based employment and community facilities and services.

Settlement should seek to consolidate urban uses to ensure a wide range of sustainable transport, retail, commercial and community facilities and services.

Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement seeks to support the role of Horsham as the key population and employment centre for the region. Edenhope is identified as a district town and key service hub where growth and development is encouraged while Kaniva is identified as providing local and some sub-regional services. Easy access to housing, education, employment and community facilities is to be provided particularly in Horsham and district towns along with an ongoing supply of infill and greenfield residential land. The regional settlement network from the RGP is shown in **Figure 33**.

Clause 11.01-01L-05L – Settlement sets out local settlement policies for each town.

Clause 12 Environmental and Landscape Values

Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of biodiversity focuses on protecting and enhancing Victoria's biodiversity by identifying and strategically planning for the protection and conservation of important areas of biodiversity through recognition of various international conventions.

Clause 12.01-1L – Protection of biodiversity – West Wimmera – seeks to protect the Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo and Jumping Jack Wattle habitat within the Shire through clear delineation of boundaries and protection from incursion by adjacent land uses. Planting of native species and management of weeds is encouraged.

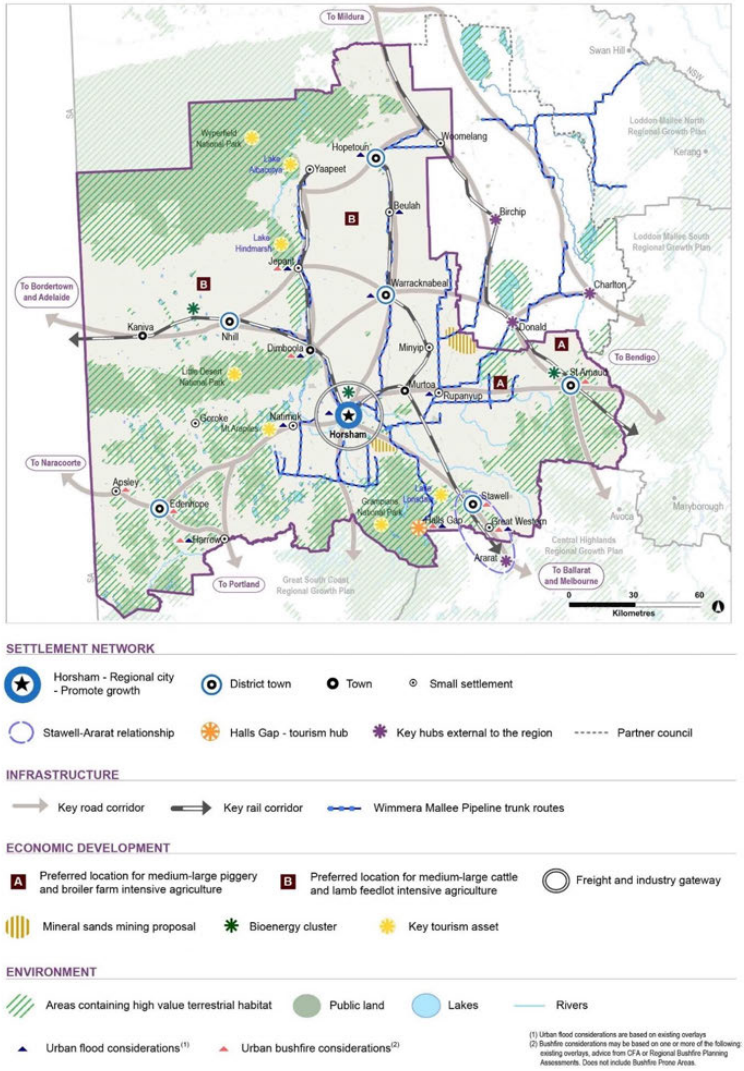


Figure 33: Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan from the WWPS

Clause 12.01-2S – Native vegetation management aims to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation by avoiding the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, minimising impacts where vegetation removal cannot be avoided and providing offsets to compensate for biodiversity impacts where vegetation removal is required.

Clause 12.03-1S – River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs seeks to protect these areas for their significant economic, environmental and cultural assets by conserving surrounding systems and landscapes and environmental values. Design and development should be sensitively designed to protect the waterway system while recreation and amenity values and a sense of place and landscape are also to be protected.

Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity

Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire planning prioritises the protection of human life over all other policy considerations, directing growth to low risk locations. It identifies and assesses bushfire hazard, applying the Bushfire Management Overlay and considering bushfire hazard on the basis of the site, neighbourhood and local conditions. Strategies promote future land use and development that will not result in increased bushfire risk to existing and future communities.

Clause 13.03-1S – Floodplain management focuses on protecting life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard along with the natural flood carrying capacity of these areas enabling flood storage to occur. Intensifying development in areas impacted by the 1 in 100 year flood event is to be avoided including the consideration of cumulative impacts.

Clause 14 Natural Resource Management

Clause 14.01-1S – Protection of agricultural land aims to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. Strategies seek to identify areas of productive agricultural land, including land for primary production and intensive agriculture and to protect it from incompatible uses or loss due to changes in land use without consideration of the economic importance of the land for agricultural production. New housing in rural areas should be avoided by directing housing growth into existing settlements and discouraging development in isolated small lots in rural zones. When considering proposals to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, land capability and compatibility between the proposed development and the existing use of the surrounding land should be assessed.

Clause 14.01-1L – Protection of agricultural land – West Wimmera seeks to consolidate land holdings in the Farming Zone to increase economies of scale and ensure viability of farms and ensure a clear link between the need for a dwelling and the agricultural use of the land.

Clause 14.01-2S – Sustainable agricultural land use encourages sustainable agricultural land use and ensuring that agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.

Clause 14.01-2R – Agricultural productivity – West Wimmera Southern Mallee seeks to support local industries, activities and infrastructure that complements and enhances the region's agricultural sector and facilitate opportunities presented by the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

Clause 14.02-1S – Catchment planning and management aims to protect and restore catchments, waterways, and marine environments. The clause seeks to ensure clean drinking water by safeguarding catchments, considering downstream impacts on water quality, maintaining natural drainage corridors, minimising stormwater runoff, filtering sediment and wastes, enhancing waterway environments during development, and reducing nutrient contributions and sediment discharges. Coordination with catchment management authorities and designing infrastructure to minimise harm to surface waters and groundwater are also emphasised.

Clause 15 Built Environment and Heritage

Clause 15.01-1S – Urban Design aims to create environments that are safe, healthy, functional an enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Clause 15.01-2S – Building Design aims to achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Clause 15.01-3L – Subdivision design – West Wimmera encourages residential subdivision to include permeable fencing of landscaping in areas adjacent to roads and reserves.

Clause 15.01-4S – Healthy neighbourhoods seeks to achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.

Clause 15.01-5S – Neighbourhood character seeks to recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity and sense of place.

Clause 15.01-6S – Design for rural areas seeks to ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.

Clause 15.03-1S – Heritage conservation aims to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance by identifying and protecting through the planning scheme. Providing protection, conservation and enhancement of significant places and encouraging appropriate development is also identified.

Clause 15.03-2S – Aboriginal cultural heritage conservation aims to ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance by identifying and protecting through the planning scheme. Providing protection and conservation of both pre-contact and post- contact places and ensuring that permit approvals align with any relevant Cultural Heritage Management Plan are also identified.

Clause 16 Housing

Clause 16.01-1S – Housing supply aims to ensure an appropriate quantity, quality and mix of housing types and lot sizes are provided, with an increased portion of housing provided in established urban areas that are well served by jobs, services and public transport. Development should provide well designed housing that provides a high level of amenity and provides an adaptable internal design.

Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability aims to improve housing affordability by ensuring a continued land supply to meet demand. The policy also aims to facilitate a choice of housing type, tenure and cost in suburbs, activity centres, infill and surplus government land and encourage a significant portion of new development to be affordable for low to moderate income households.

Clause 16.01-3S – Rural residential development aims to manage rural residential development to avoid hindering future urban growth opportunities and discourage reliance on irrigation water supply. The clause advocates for diverse and flexible lot sizes to mitigate low density residential "sprawl". Existing character, density patterns, site constraints, infrastructure provision and land capability should be considered when determining appropriate lot sizes and development.

Clause 17 Economic Development

Clause 17.01-1S – Diversified economy aims to diversity the economy by protecting existing and planned new employment areas, facilitating regional relationships to harness emerging economic opportunities. Growth is to be facilitated building on the emerging and existing strengths of the region. Improving access to jobs and supporting rural economies to grow and diversify is also supported.

Clause 17.01-1R – Diversified economy – West Wimmera aims to capitalise on the municipality's opportunities including agriculture, energy, mining and tourism. Facilitating the use of secure water supplies to develop the economy is also encouraged.

Clause 17.03-1R – Industrial land supply – Wimmera Southern Mallee aims to provide ongoing supply of industrial land particularly in towns including Edenhope and facilitating new opportunities due to the investment of the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline.

Clause 17.04-1R – Tourism – Wimmera Southern Mallee aims to support and provide direction on the location of tourism development. Facilitating nature based tourism around key attractions including the Little Desert National Park and major lakes is encouraged along with economic opportunities presented by the region's wetlands and lakes to encourage more tourism.

Clause 18 Transport

Clause 18.01-1S – Land use and transport integration seeks to protect existing and planned transport infrastructure from encroachment and development that could prejudice such development and to plan movement networks and land uses to minimise disruption to residential communities. Strategies also seek to plan for the timely delivery of transport infrastructure to support changing land uses and transport demands, including public transport, walking and cycling within existing urban areas.

Clause 19 Infrastructure

Clause 19.02- 4S – Social and cultural infrastructure aims to ensure a fair distribution of, and access to, social and cultural infrastructure. The clause seeks to identify and address gaps in facilities, encouraging their location in activity

centres, and ensuring they are accessible. It emphasises early delivery of social infrastructure in growth areas, adaptable design of community buildings to accommodate changing populations, and innovative service delivery in areas with limited growth.

Clause 19.02-4R – Social and cultural infrastructure – Wimmera Southern Mallee seeks to maintain and enhance social and community facilities in key service centres particularly district towns ensuring they are sustainable and continue to attract new residents.

Clause 19.02-4L – Recreational facilities seeks to ensure recreational facilities provide for year-round activities and seeks to encourage water based activities and facilities in suitable locations.

Clause 19.02-6S – Open space aims to develop a diverse and integrated public open space network that meets community needs. It seeks to include planning regional and local open spaces for recreation and conservation, ensuring connectivity through walking and cycling trails, maintaining public access to waterways and coasts, and improving the quality and distribution of open spaces.

Clause 19.03-1S – Development and infrastructure contributions plans aims to facilitate the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of development contributions plans and infrastructure contributions plans. Strategies also promote the integrated provision of water supply, water resources, sewerage, drainage and stormwater as well as utilities such as electricity, gas (not new connections) and telecommunications.

Clause 74.02 – **Further strategic work** is a concise list of strategic planning projects that Council intends to complete before the next planning scheme review. For West Wimmera there are no projects identified in the schedule to the clause.

10.3 Zones

There are a range of zones applied to the towns in the WWPS as summarised below. The relevant zones affecting the towns are shown in the town profiles.

Clause 32.05 Township Zone (TZ)

The Township Zone (TZ) is applied to small towns with no specific structure of residential, commercial, industrial and public uses. Development should be connected to reticulated sewerage unless an alternative potable water supply is provided to the satisfaction of Council.

Clause 33.01 Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z)

The Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) is applied to land where the industrial land uses and associated commercial uses are promoted. Other than a caretaker's house, all other forms of accommodation are prohibited.

Clause 33.03 Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z)

The Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) serves as a transitional buffer between industrial and residential areas, addressing issues like industrial traffic, noise and emissions. It is applied in industrial zones needing special attention to minimise conflicts and promote less hazardous uses. The zone includes amenity standards based on specified separation distances. A schedule restricts maximum office floor space, shops and supermarkets outside the Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and accommodation and hospitals are prohibited uses.

Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone (RLZ)

The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) seeks to provide for residential use in a rural environment and supporting agricultural land uses that do not affect surrounding amenity. It aims to protect and enhance natural resources, biodiversity, and landscape and heritage values, while promoting sustainable land management and infrastructure provision.

Clause 35.07 Farming Zone (FZ)

The Farming Zone (FZ) is applied to encourage the retention of productive agricultural land and employment and population to support rural communities. The zone provides a minimum lot size of 40 hectares unless an alternative is specified in a schedule to the zone. The creation of smaller lots is allowed under particular circumstances.

Clause 36.01 Public Use Zone (PUZ)
The Public Use Zone (PUZ) is applied to public land recognising land use for public utility, infrastructure and community services. It requires the public land manager's approval/consent for land management and development. The PUZ2 relates to education land uses, the PUZ3 relates to health and community land uses while the PUZ5 relates to cemetery/crematorium land uses.

Clause 36.02 Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)
The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) is applied to public parkland including reserves and parks recognising areas for public recreation and open space and protecting and conserving areas of significance where appropriate.

Clause 36.03 Public Conservation and Recreation Zone (PCRZ)
The Public Conservation and Recreation Zone (PCRZ) is applied to places where the primary intention is to conserve and protect the natural environment or resources such as public conservation reserves and parks and allows associated educational activities and resource-based uses.

Clause 36.04 Transport Zone (TRZ)
The Transport Zone (TRZ) is applied to land for declared roads, railways and other important transportation infrastructure representing state and local designations. The TRZ1 is applied to railway land and the TRZ2 is applied to main roads.

Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone (SUZ)
The Special Use Zone (SUZ) provides for tailored provisions for a wide range of purposes, such as showgrounds, freight logistics centres and tourism precincts. It forms part of a suite of special purpose zones that are used when a standard zone cannot address the individual circumstances of a site.

10.4 Overlays

There are a range of overlays applied to the towns in the WWPS. These are summarised below. The relevant overlays affecting the towns are shown in the town profiles.

Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)
The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) is applied to areas where the development of land may be affected by either environmental constraints such as the effects from noise or industrial buffer areas or issued related to the significance of the natural environment. ESO2 relates to the protection of the Red-tailed black cockatoo habitat.

Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay (HO)
The Heritage Overlay (HO) is applied to a heritage place with a recognised citation identified through the Victorian Heritage Register or in a local heritage study. A heritage place should include a statement of significance, establishing the importance of the place, and can affect land, buildings, trees and/or vegetation.

Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay (DDOO)
The Design and Development Overlay (DDO) manages built form and the built environment through building height and setback provisions. DDO1 applies to the Edenhope Industrial Precinct while DDO2 is applied to the Kaniva Industrial Precinct, with both aiming to ensure high quality development.

Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation (LSIO)
The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) is applied to land that is subject to inundation related to flooding from waterways but is not part of the primary floodway as identified by the relevant floodplain management authority.

Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) identifies areas where the bushfire hazard requires bushfire protection measures to be implemented, seeking to ensure that development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire. Development is permitted only where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.

Clause 45.03 Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO)
The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) is applied to sites that have known, identified or reasonably suspected contamination or potential contamination.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Small Towns of West Wimmera that form the subject of this report are located on the lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagalk Nations and Gunditjmara people. They are acknowledged as the Traditional Owners of their traditional lands and waters.

A Recognition and Settlement Agreement has been signed between the Victorian Government and the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) on behalf of the Wotjobaluk Nation. The State is to facilitate relationships between local government and the BGLC under this agreement.

The Local Government Engagement Strategy provides direction on how this could occur, which will inform the development and implementation actions of the Small Towns Plan. This includes:

- Opportunities for renaming, signage and interpretive information.
- Consulting in relation to the preparation of studies/plans that impact issues including roadsides, public health, wellbeing, and fire management.
- Recognising that Traditional Owner businesses can make valuable and unique contributions to local economies and communities: driving innovation, providing access to new markets, creating new jobs and attracting visitors.
- Management of Council controlled lands and waters that should be undertaken with WJJWJ People recognising their role as sole managers of their lands and waters.
- Developing a framework for ensuring alignment of each planning scheme with WJJWJ People's rights, interests and aspirations.
- Identifying, assessing and documenting places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance for inclusion in the planning scheme

CONTACT

Paul Buxton
Director
Plan2Place Consulting
PLAN2PLACE
m. 0402 839 002 e. paul@plan2place.com.au w. www.plan2place.com.au

Kellie Marks
Principal
Plan2Place Consulting
PLAN2PLACE
m. 0409 560 637 e. kellie@plan2place.com.au w. www.plan2place.com.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that every project enabled or assisted by Plan2Place Consulting in Victoria exists on traditional aboriginal lands which have been sustained for thousands of years.

We honour their ongoing connection to these lands and seek to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians in our work.









WEST WIMMERA
SMALL TOWNS PLAN

[Draft for Consultation]

July 2025

PLAN2PLACE



This report is the Small Towns Plan for the Department of Transport and Planning and West Wimmera Shire Council. It has been prepared with expertise, advice and inputs from the consultant team of Plan2Place Consulting, Tim Nott Economics and Wayfarer Consulting, using background reports and information provided by Council and from other government sources. The report issue date is July ~~June~~ 2025.

Every reasonable effort has been made to validate information provided by the client, Department staff, Council staff, stakeholders and other participants in the preparation of this report throughout the project during 2024 and 2025.

The report has been prepared in conjunction with the West Wimmera Shire Council and Department of Planning and Transport and is based upon up-to-date information provided at the time of report preparation and finalisation.

No part of the report can be replicated or reproduced in part or whole (other than by the West Wimmera Shire Council, Department of Transport and Planning or the consultant team) without the permission of Plan2Place Consulting – see www.plan2place.com.au.

Version	*Date*	*Notes*
V1	*20 November 2024*	*Draft Prepared for Council and DTP Officer Review*
V2	*28 January 2025*	*Draft for Council Executive Review*
V3	*18 June 2025*	*Draft Prepared for Councillors*
V4	*20 June 2025*	*Draft revision for Councillors*
V5	*30 June 2025*	*Draft incorporating Councillor comments*
V6	*7 July 2025*	*Draft for Councillor endorsement*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ***5***
1. INTRODUCTION ***6***
1.1 Background and Context *6*
1.2 What Comprises the Small Towns Plan *7*
1.3 What is a Small Town Plan *7*
1.4 Stakeholder Engagement *7*
1.5 Additional Background Reports *7*
2. POLICY AND PLANNING SCHEME CONTEXT ***8***
2.1 State Policy *8*
2.2 Regional Policy *9*
2.3 Council Strategies *10*
2.4 Victoria Planning Provisions *11*
2.5 Recent updates to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme *12*
3. KEY CHANGE FACTORS ***14***
3.1 Population *14*
3.2 Housing *15*
3.3 Worker Accommodation *15*
3.4 Climate *16*
3.5 Industry *16*
3.6 Visitation *17*
3.7 Ageing *18*
3.8 Social and Community Infrastrucutre *19*
3.9 Transport Infrastructure *19*
4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITES FACING THE TOWNS ***20***
4.1 Issues *20*
4.2 Opportunities *22*
5. APSLEY ***26***
5.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context *26*
5.2 Population and Demographics *29*
5.3 Housing *29*
5.4 Economic Profile *29*
5.5 Movement and Transport *29*
5.6 Physical Infrastructure *30*
5.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure *30*
5.8 Built Form and Heritage *30*
5.9 Landscape and Environment *31*
5.10 Issues and Opportunities *31*
6. EDENHOPE ***34***
6.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context *34*
6.2 Population and Demographics *37*
6.3 Housing *37*
6.4 Economic Profile *37*
6.5 Movement and Transport *38*
6.6 Physical Infrastructure *38*
6.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure *38*
6.8 Built Form and Heritage *39*
6.9 Landscape and Environment *39*
6.10 Issues and Opportunities *40*
7. GOROKE ***43***
7.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context *43*
7.2 Population and Demographics *45*
7.3 Housing *46*
7.4 Economic Profile *46*
7.5 Movement and Transport *46*
7.6 Physical Infrastructure *46*
7.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure *47*
7.8 Built Form and Heritage *47*
7.9 Landscape and Environment *47*
7.10 Issues and Opportunities *48*
8. HARROW ***51***
8.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context *51*
8.2 Population and Demographics *54*
8.3 Housing *54*
8.4 Economic Profile *54*
8.5 Movement and Transport *55*
8.6 Physical Infrastructure *55*
8.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure *55*
8.8 Built Form and Heritage *56*
8.9 Landscape and Environment *56*
8.10 Issues and Opportunities *57*
9. KANIVA ***60***
9.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context *60*
9.2 Population and Demographics *63*
9.3 Housing *63*
9.4 Economic Profile *63*
9.5 Movement and Transport *64*
9.6 Physical Infrastructure *64*
9.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure *65*
9.8 Built Form and Heritage *66*
9.9 Landscape and Environment *66*
9.10 Issues and Opportunities *67*
10. FUTURE SETTLEMENT STRATEGY ***69***
10.1 Determining a Settlement Strategy *69*
10.2 Strategic Framework *70*
References ..... *Error! Bookmark not defined.*
Appendix A – Content overview from the WWPS ***72***
10.3 Zones *75*
10.4 Overlays *76*

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: West Wimmera Towns in Shire Context....6
Figure 2: Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP – Settlement Hierarchy....9
Figure 3: Existing West Wimmera Strategic Framework Plan, WWPS....13
Figure 4: Key External Centres Serving West Wimmera....14
Figure 5: Recent and Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns 2011 to 2036....15
Figure 6: West Wimmera Median House Price 2023....15
Figure 7: Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines study area for further investigation - Source: VicGrid, 2024....18
Figure 8: Forecast Change in Age Groups, West Wimmera, 2021 to 2036....18
Figure 9: Apsley Context Map....27
Figure 10: Apsley Framework Plan Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....28
Figure 11: Apsley - Existing Zones....28
Figure 12: Apsley - Existing Overlays....29
Figure 13: Edenhope Context Map....35
Figure 14: Edenhope Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....36
Figure 15: Edenhope - Existing Zones....36
Figure 16: Edenhope - Existing Overlays....37
Figure 17: Goroke Context Map....44
Figure 18: Goroke Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....45
Figure 19: Goroke - Existing Zones....45
Figure 20: Goroke - Existing Overlays....46
Figure 21: Harrow Context Map....52
Figure 22: Harrow Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....53
Figure 23: Harrow - Existing Zones....53
Figure 24: Harrow - Existing Overlays....54
Figure 25: Draft Harrow Flood Map 1% AEP Flood Extent....57
Figure 26: Kaniva Context Map....61
Figure 27: Kaniva Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L....62
Figure 28: Kaniva - Existing Zones....62
Figure 29: Kaniva - Existing Overlays....63
Figure 30: Station Precinct with VicTrack Boundaries and Vacant Land....64
Figure 31: Yellow Crown Land in the Station Precinct....64
Figure 32: Proposed Strategic Framework Plan Update....71
Figure 33: Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan from the WWPS....72

Table 1: Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns, 2021 to 2036....14
Table 2: West Wimmera Change in Industrial Groups, 2011 to 2021....16
Table 3: Apsley Settlement and Key Recommendations....32
Table 4: Edenhope Settlement and Key Recommendations....41
Table 5: Goroke Settlement and Key Recommendations....48
Table 6: Harrow Settlement and Key Recommendations....58
Table 7: Kaniva Settlement and Key Recommendations....68
Table 8: Current Settlement Designations....69

ABBREVIATIONS AND LEGISLATION

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
BGLC	Barengi Gadjin Land Council
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
C1Z	Commercial 1 Zone
Council	West Wimmera Shire Council
DEECA	Department of Energy Environment and Climate Change
DELWP	Department of Land, Environment, Water and Planning
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
DDO	Design and Development Overlay
EPAV	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Development
FZ	Farming Zone
FO	Flooding Overlay
HO	Heritage Overlay
IN1Z	Industrial Zone 1
IN3Z	Industrial Zone 3
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
LDRZ	Low Density Residential Zone
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PUZ	Public Use Zone
RRV	Regional Roads Victoria
RLZ	Rural Living Zone
TZ	Township Zone
TRZ	Transport Zone
VIF2023	Victoria in Future 2023
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions
WWPS	West Wimmera Planning Scheme

Numeric Abbreviations

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

Related Legislation and Regulations

Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The West Wimmera Small Towns Plan (STP) has been developed to guide the role, function and purpose of the five largest towns in the Shire of West Wimmera (the Shire) and confirm the Municipal Settlement Strategy for West Wimmera.

Despite the significant change in population in the Shire, there have been limited updates to the planning policy framework in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme over the last 10 years. No new settlement policy has been introduced into the planning scheme since the new format schemes was introduced in February 2000.

The existing planning scheme settlement policies for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva are now outdated and do not reflect the ~~declining~~ population loss and ageing population, the challenges maintaining community services and environmental risks relating to threatened species and climate change. As a result there is a need to review and update the local settlement policies in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme to provide a framework for planning, development and investment decisions based on the current and projected social, environmental and economic context of the Shire.

Key findings and recommendations of the STP include:

- A clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- An updated Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 that includes a settlement framework.
- A suite of planning scheme amendment documents to support the implementation of the STP, including changes to the MPS and PPF.
- Finalise and implement flood studies for Edenhope and Aspley.
- Prepare a structure plan for Kaniva to further develop:
  - A vision for the town.
  - Identify key actions and priorities for capital works
  - Identify implementation of any changes to the MPS and PPF of the WWPS.
  - Prepare design guidelines for new development.
- Prepare a structure plan for Edenhope subject to funding.
- Prepare structure plans for Goroke, Harrow and Apsley subject to funding.
- Map flood risks as appropriate, as part of the preparation of structure plans for Edenhope and Harrow.
- Review existing heritage and marketing of Harrow and resident/visitor needs in terms of signage, trails networks, heritage interpretation and promote the experience of Harrow to the visitor market.
- Map fire risk as part of the preparation of structure plans for Harrow, Goroke and Apsley.

The existing settlement strategy for the small towns is identified in the WWPS. This reflects the designations applied in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP and outlined below. While the hierarchy has been analysed and reviewed, no change is recommended to this settlement hierarchy as a result of the STP shown below.

Current and Proposed Settlement Designations

Town	Existing planning scheme designation	Regional Growth Plan designation	Proposed planning scheme designation
Apsley	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Edenhope	District Town	District Town	District Town
Goroke	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Harrow	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Kaniva	Town	Town	Town

In addition to updating the local settlement policies several recommendations are provided to guide detailed planning for each of the five towns. Future work including structure planning, will provide guidance on the most appropriate planning including zones and overlays for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva. Recommendations specific to each of the five towns are also included.

The Small Towns Plan will be implemented via an update to the MPS and updates to local planning policy and further strategic work.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

The West Wimmera Shire straddles the Western and Wimmera Highways, situated midway between Melbourne and Adelaide. It is bordered to the north by the Rural City of Mildura, to the south by the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires, and to the east by Hindmarsh Shire and the Rural City of Horsham. To the west, it shares a boundary with the South Australian border.

Approximately 30 percent (%) of the Shire consists of public land, featuring significant natural attractions such as the Big Desert and Little Desert National Parks, part of the Natiumuk-Douglas Chain of Lakes, as well as part of the Mount Arapiles – Tooan State Park. The Shire is home to over 3,000 wetlands, which make up 25% of Victoria's total wetlands, serving as vital natural assets for both the municipality and the wider region.

Covering around 9,000 square kilometres, the Shire ranks among the largest municipalities in Victoria. Despite its expansive area, the Shire had a population of 4,006 people at the 2021 census, a slight increase from 2016 which was 3,903. Prior to that, the Shire experienced population decline, attributed to shifts in agricultural practices, an increase in average farm sizes, and the movement of individuals seeking other educational and employment prospects.

As one of Victoria's most diverse and productive agricultural regions, the local economy is closely linked to the performance of the agricultural sector. With dryland cropping and grazing being the dominant agricultural practice, the trend toward larger farms for greater viability has diminished the demand for services in the small rural towns that support them.

The predominant towns in the Shire are Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow, and Kaniva. There are also several smaller townships located throughout the Shire, including Dergholm, Chetwynd and Serviceton.

The West Wimmera Small Towns Plan (STP) will guide the role, function and purpose of each of the five towns in the Shire and confirm the municipal settlement strategy.

The towns and the Shire's context are shown in **Figure 1**.

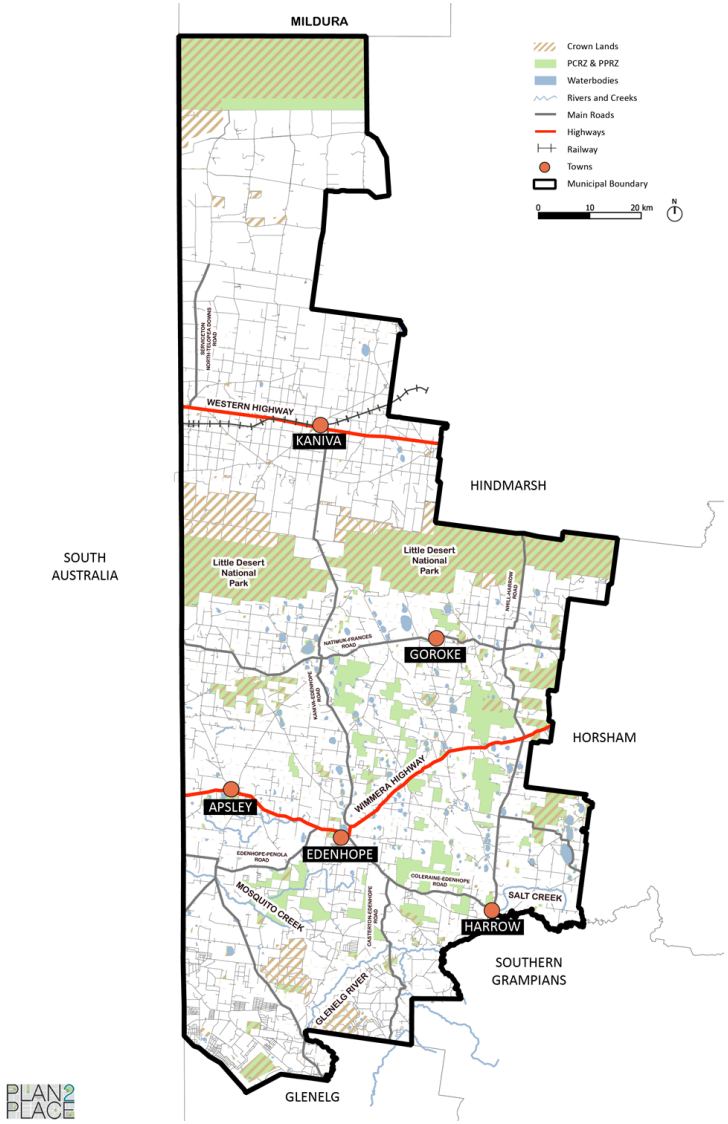


Figure 1: West Wimmera Towns in Shire Context

1.2 What Comprises the Small Towns Plan

The STP consists of eleven chapters that address the municipal settlement, policy and planning context, key settlement issues and themes for the towns including:

- Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context.
- Population and Demographics.
- Housing.
- Economic Profile.
- Movement and Transport.
- Physical Infrastructure.
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure.
- Built Form and Heritage.
- Landscape and Environment.
- Issues, Opportunities and Constraints.

1.3 What is a Small Town Plan

The STP is a plan that provides direction and guidance on the municipal settlement policies and strategies for the five towns and identifies further strategic work priorities for the towns.

The STP seeks to:

- Identify a clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Provide updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- Form the basis of a planning scheme amendment to update the policies and strategies relevant to the five towns in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme.

1.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Many key stakeholders and agencies have been consulted in the development of the STP to date. These include:

- Barengi Gadjin Land Council.
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) officers.
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) officers
- EPA Victoria.
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water.
- Regional Development Victoria.
- VicTrack.
- West Wimmera Shire Council officers.
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority

1.5 Additional Background Reports

Two reports were commissioned to inform the STP including the:

- West Wimmera Small Towns – Social and Community Infrastructure Analysis (Wayfarer Consulting).
- Small Towns Plan – Economic Input (Tim Nott Consulting).

The evidence and findings of these reports have been included in the STP.

2. POLICY AND PLANNING SCHEME CONTEXT

2.1 State Policy

A Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria was released in 2025 and is structured around five pillars which are:

- Self-determination and caring for Country: underpinning and informing the other pillars.
- Housing for all Victorians: delivering sufficient affordable homes for all Victorians.
- Accessible jobs and services: making sure you have good access to facilities and good jobs.
- Great places, suburbs and towns: creating thriving places that are attractive, safe and welcoming for everyone.
- Sustainable environments: preserving the natural values of Victoria and addressing climate change.

This plan sets out housing targets for every local government area across Victoria, specifying their share of the extra 2.24 million homes that are forecast. The housing targets that have been set for West Wimmera are for an additional 200 dwellings to 2051.

The plan seeks to deliver more jobs near homes by planning for, protecting and readying commercial and industrial land for development in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services.

As part the 2.24 million homes needed in Victoria by 2051, the Victorian Government has set a target to build 425,600 of those homes across the regions. There is a new $1 billion Regional Housing Fund to deliver more than 1,300 new homes across regional Victoria. The new homes will include a mix of social and affordable housing. There is also a $150 million Regional Worker Accommodation Fund to provide new housing options for regional communities where key workers are struggling to find affordable places to live. The package will make regional workers' jobs more secure and make it easier for businesses to find and keep staff.

Delivering the Goods: Victorian Freight Plan 2018

Delivering the Goods 2018 outlines key priorities to support Victoria's freight and logistics infrastructure amidst significant growth, driven by rising demand, global trends, and technological advancements. Freight volumes in regional Victoria are forecast to grow at an annual average rate of 1.5 per cent each year between 2014 and 2051. Towns such as Kaniva are on the Principal Freight Network for both Road and Rail which will mean more trucks on the road.

Victoria's Housing Statement, 2023

Victoria's Housing Statement has identified housing provision as one of the key challenges of the decade ahead. It aims to refresh Victoria's housing policy settings with a series of initiatives that respond to short-term issues of affordability and supply while still promoting long term economic growth.

The housing statement is supported by Amendments VC242, VC243,VC253 VC267 and VC276 which aim to facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs and to support the delivery of housing in Victoria.

Amendment VC267 revised Clause 55 to include the new Townhouse and Low Rise Code for residential multi-dwelling development. Key design changes include:

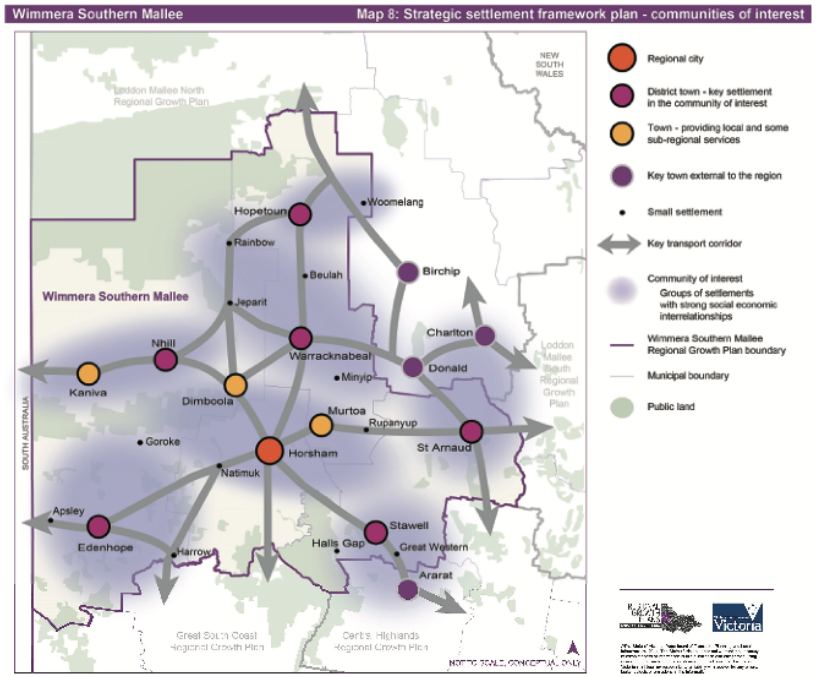
- Reduced minimum front setback of 6 metres, replacing the previous average setback rule or 9 metres.
- Private open space requirement reduced from 40 sqm to 25 sqm at ground level.
- Tree canopy coverage requirements introduced:
  - 10 per cent of site area for sites up to 1,000 sqm
  - 20 per cent of site area for sites over 1,000 sqm.
- Maximum site coverage increased to:
  - 65 per cent in General Residential Zone (GRZ)
  - 70 per cent in Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) and Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)
- Overlooking standards removed for bedroom windows only.

The recent changes to Clauses 55 and 57, as informed by the Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Code, have implications for the future building envelope and development standards within the West Wimmera LGA.

Amendment VC 276 amended all residential zone schedules and Neighbourhood Character Overlay schedules to implement the new residential development planning assessment provisions.

2.2 Regional Policy

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan 2014



Source: DTPLI, 2014

Figure 2: Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP – Settlement Hierarchy

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (RGP) covers the municipalities of Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack. The plan provides broad direction for regional land use and development in the region and a more detailed planning framework for the regional city of Horsham.

In **Figure 2**, Horsham is the major centre and provides a wide range of services to the whole region and adjoining areas. Edenhope is recognised as a district town supporting surrounding communities of interest. Kaniva is recognised as a key local service centre. The towns of Apsley, Goroke and Harrow are identified as small settlements.

District towns are identified as performing an important sub-regional goods and service role, meeting smaller town and rural district needs including local government, policing and ambulance services to a surrounding rural hinterland. They have a moderately diverse population and housing base and good access to services and retail. These towns may include some higher order services such as medical / hospital services and a variety of education facilities with some larger towns having post-secondary education facilities. District towns will have utility services with some larger towns having access to reticulated gas.

Towns are similar to district towns but generally service a more localised catchment. They will have a greater reliance on other centres for services and employment.

Small settlements have low population levels. They will have access to services such as a small primary school and usually a general store with postal facilities within a small retail area. These settlements may or may not have connection to reticulated water or sewer connections. Some are popular visitor locations and their role may include a low level supply of visitor accommodation and holiday homes resulting in seasonal variations in population.

Land use policies, strategies and actions for district towns and towns are to:

- Encourage the provision and maintenance of a wide range of services and facilities.
- Provide sufficient land to enable residential and employment growth.
- Prioritise infrastructure investment towards supporting growth.
- Support transport systems that provide access.

In smaller settlements, maintaining services where feasible and encouraging limited incremental growth is supported to allow for their ongoing transition.

For all areas, key priorities are protection of the valued character of urban areas and encouraging urban development that promotes and supports high quality streetscapes and urban design and contributes to attractive and healthy urban environments.

Further direction on Edenhope and Kaniva is also provided. This is summarised in the town profiles in this report.

2.3 Council Strategies

West Wimmera Council Plan, 2021 - 2025

The West Wimmera Council Plan sets out a roadmap for West Wimmera Shire, outlining where the municipality is heading and what is needed to get there. The Council Plan is a legislated requirement that is required to be prepared every four years and incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Community Vision and Future Directions outlined in the Council Plan provide a strong platform for the development of the STP as outlined below:

In 2041 West Wimmera is a great place to live, work and play. We are growing and we are known for our natural environment, resilience and sense of community. We are proud of our heritage and are building new economic capacity based on innovation and tourism, which is creating local employment. Our towns are vibrant and welcoming, offering the services and facilities that meet the needs of our community and visitors. We are a confident community and will empower everyone to be part of our future.

Future Directions

Active, healthy and safe – supporting our community to live full and rewarding lives.

Access to the right services – working confidently with partners to ensure health, education and digital services meet our needs.

The natural environment – valuing the time our community and visitors spend enjoying the natural environment.

Our roads – a safe and sustainable road network supporting businesses, our community and visitors.

Attractive and viable town centres – great places to live, visit and do business.

Thriving economy – taking advantage of our strengths in farming, business and tourism to generate employment and share our prosperity.

Sport and recreation – facilities that encourage participation in physical activity and add to community life.

Source: West Wimmera Council Plan 2021 - 2025

West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy, 2018

The West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy (Strategy) provides a 10-year plan to guide decisions about the management of, and investment in, trails and to provide a vision of what the trail network across West Wimmera will look like in the future. The Strategy aims to encourage and support active lifestyles in a positive way and address challenges faced by the Shire's residents. This includes issues related to high rates of physical inactivity as well as overweight, obesity and preventable mortality factors compared to the average across Victoria and other Australian districts. The opportunity to grow the visitor economy is also recognised.

The Strategy identifies a range of opportunities available to grow the trail network across the municipality and within the towns. This aims to build on proximity to international and national tourism features, the Shire's natural attributes, landscapes and features, location between Melbourne and Adelaide and diversity of environments.

There are a range of initiatives identified for each town to elevate the quality and extent of trails within each town.

West Wimmera Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 (WWEDS)

The WWEDS sets out the West Wimmera community's vision for the municipal economy along with strategies and actions to achieve that vision. It is aligned to the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) for the Wimmera Southern Mallee Region of Victoria, which is the umbrella economic development strategy prepared by the Victorian Government. The WWEDS is an overarching framework that will be used to guide economic development in the municipality and articulates the role, priorities and approach. It provides the rationale for engaging with identified priority sectors and delivering outcomes through implementation plans.

There are three pillars in the WWEDS Strategy that will drive the economy. These are:

- Continuing to support the growth of the agricultural sector throughout the municipality.
- Enhancing liveability to increase amenity and grow the appeal of the municipality's towns.
- Supporting small business growth.

There are also a range of initiatives outlined for the towns including:

- The preparation of town settlement plans to facilitate development (particularly for key workers).
- Promoting industrial estates in Kaniva and expanding the Edenhope estate.
- Advocating for road improvements.
- Mainstreet activation plans.
- Supporting development of business hubs.
- Formalising caravan and trailer parking in Kaniva's main street.
- Upgrading holiday visitor parks.

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Economic Development Strategy, 2022 (REDS)

The REDS was developed by the (former) Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) for the regional partnership area of West Wimmera Mallee. The REDS should be used to drive strategic, whole of-government activity in the region, informed by a contemporary understanding of economic performance. The document is designed to communicate innovative capacity in the region, now and in the future, support collaboration with government to better understand regional strengths, challenges and opportunities and attract investment to the region based on clearly identified strategic priorities.

There are four strategic directions defined for economic development of the region. These are:

- Strengthen agriculture and food product manufacturing through diversification.
- Promote growth and development of the visitor economy, leveraging natural assets and Aboriginal heritage.
- Support and expand economic opportunities in growing sectors (health and social services).
- Position the region to benefit from emerging growth opportunities in natural resources.

2.4 Victoria Planning Provisions

This section provides an overview of the current clauses within the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) relating to strategic directions, policies, zones, overlays and particular provisions applicable to the five towns in the West Wimmera Planning Scheme (WWPS).

State (S), Regional (R) and Local (L) planning policy and provisions are included and discussed. State and regional planning policies are developed and implemented by state and local governments while local planning policies are developed by local municipalities providing greater local direction in addition to state and regional policies where required.

The most relevant provisions in Council's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF) are included below. Further background on the Victoria Planning Provisions is provided in Appendix A.

Clause 02.03-1 Settlement outlines the distinctive pattern of urban development based on separate townships and settlements, with the predominant towns being Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow.

The towns and settlements in the Shire have important roles as service and business centres and as a focus for the local community, visitors and the surrounding rural hinterland. Population decline within towns is a threat to service provision and liveability.

The Strategic Directions for the five towns are to:

- Provide sufficient land and direct growth to the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley, and Harrow.
- Enhance the roles of the major townships of Edenhope, Kaniva, Goroke, Apsley and Harrow as the service and business centres for the Shire and as focal points for communities.
- Minimise any detrimental impact of development on the landscape, the environment and existing character.
- Avoid encroachment of residential development on industry.
- Promote Kaniva as a key service centre in the northern part of the Shire for the local and surrounding rural community.
- Promote Goroke as the local community service centre within the centre of the Shire.
- Promote development in Apsley that provides opportunities for service provision, new business initiatives and housing.
- Promote Apsley as a dormitory town for Edenhope and Naracoorte.

The strategic framework plan in the MPS at Clause 02.04 is shown in **Figure 3**.

2.5 Recent updates to the West Wimmera Planning Scheme

The West Wimmera Planning Scheme (WWPS) commenced on 17 February 2000. Since that time, amendments relating to the overarching policies have included Amendment C007 which made changes to Clause 21 of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) based on a 2006 review of the WWPS . In 2013 Amendment C030 was approved which introduced a new format MSS to the planning scheme. No local planning policy work for settlements across the Shire has been undertaken or implemented since this time.

The Local Planning Policy Framework of the WWPS was translated into the new MPS and PPF. A selected number of new and updated local schedules to operational provisions were implemented in a manner consistent with changes to the VPP in May 2011.

These include local policies relating to:

- Settlement for Apsley, Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Kaniva.
- Protection of biodiversity and indigenous vegetation.
- Protection of agricultural land, location of forestry and timber production, dwellings and quarry buffers.
- Residential subdivision design from content.
- Recreational facilities and infrastructure design.
- The new and revised strategic framework plan.

In June 2022, the Small Planning Local Schedules updated the West Wimmera Planning Scheme to remove inconsistencies in local schedules with the VPP and the Ministerial Direction - Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

The updated mapping for the Bushfire Management Overlay was introduced into the Planning Scheme in October 2017.

The WWPS was last amended in 2018. The age of strategic planning work underpinning the existing WWPS as well as new challenges and opportunities, makes it timely for the strategic basis of the settlement boundaries for the five towns and their strategic framework to be reviewed through the development of the Small Towns Plan.

Clause 11 Settlement

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement promotes the sustainable growth and development of Victoria to deliver choice and opportunity through a network of settlements. Regions are planned to reinforce settlement boundaries and provide for population growth and development of facilities and services. Growth is directed into existing settlements supported by a network of major and neighbourhood activity centres and townships of varying size, role and function. Urban consolidation is encouraged with density that supports sustainable transport and retail, office-based employment and community facilities and services.

The STP should clearly identify the network of settlements across the Shire, directing any new development into the existing settlements with a clear settlement boundary. Settlement should seek to consolidate urban uses to ensure a wide range of sustainable transport, retail, commercial and community facilities and services.

Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement seeks to support the role of Horsham as the key population and employment centre for the region. Edenhope is identified as a district town and key service hub where growth and development is encouraged while Kaniva is identified as providing local and some sub-regional services. Easy access to housing, education, employment and community facilities is to be provided particularly in Horsham and district towns along with an ongoing supply of infill and greenfield residential land. The regional settlement policy emanating from the RGP is shown in **Figure 3**.

The STP should seek to confirm and support the role of Edenhope as a district town and key service hub while Kaniva should be supported to provide local and some sub-regional services.

Clause 11.01-01-05L – Settlement sets out local settlement policies for each town. These are discussed further in the town profiles in the STP.

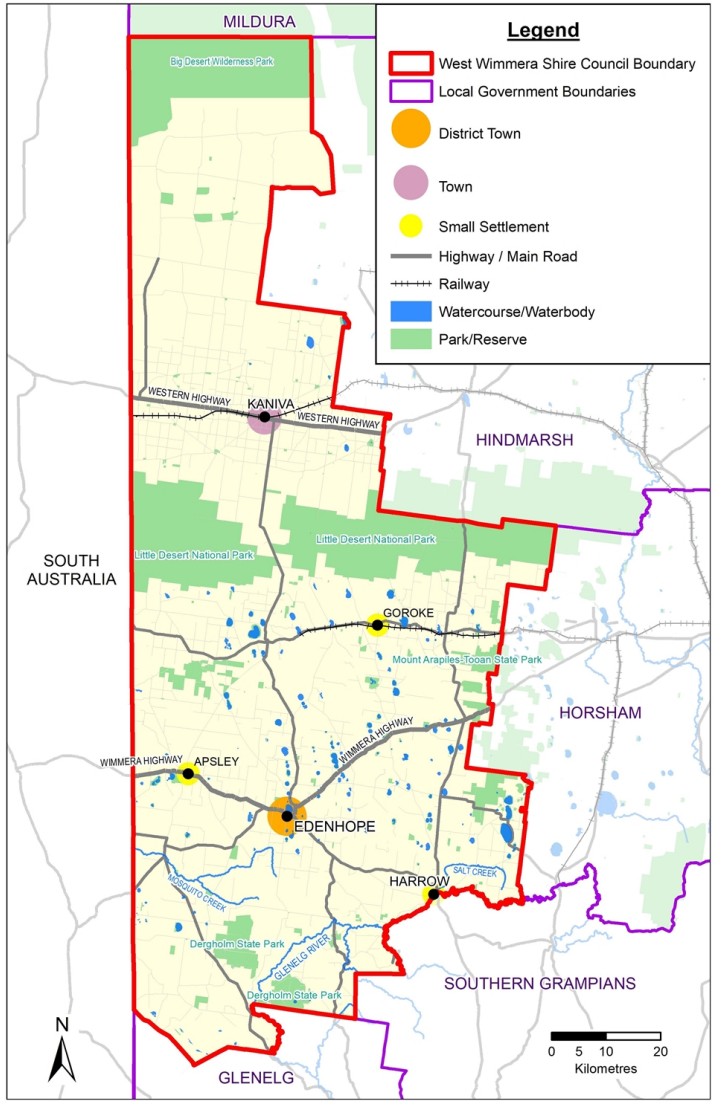


Figure 3: Existing West Wimmera Strategic Framework Plan, WWPS

3. KEY CHANGE FACTORS

This section considers the key socio-economic factors that are influencing population change and the demand for housing in the Shire.

The Shire is a farming district, which is served by several small towns providing a range of day-to-day services such as education, front-line health services and local retailing. It is part of a wider, cross-border agricultural region, often called the Green Triangle, that produces a wide variety of farm and forestry goods and in which larger towns act as resource collection and processing centres. These larger centres – Horsham, Hamilton, Mt Gambier, Naracoorte and Portland - provide more complex services for this region, including technical and further education, regional hospitals and sub-regional retailing.

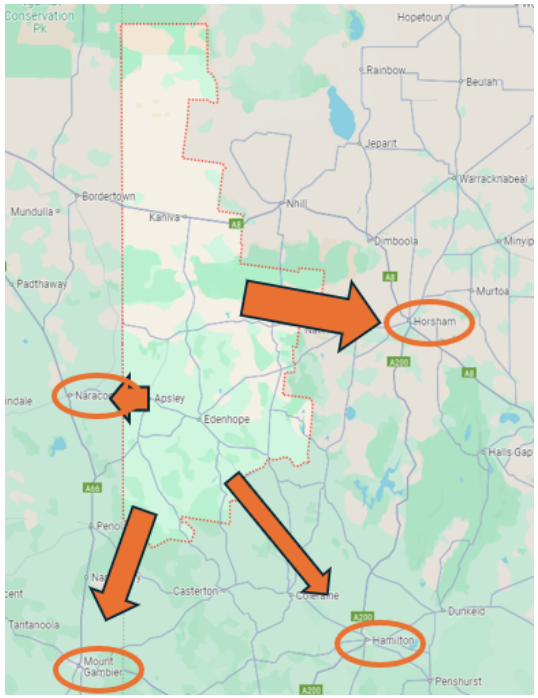


Figure 4: Key External Centres Serving West Wimmera

(Source: base map from Google Maps)

Horsham is the closest major centre for most of the Shire; however, the geographic shape and position of the municipality means that its communities can be serviced by different larger centres, as shown in **Figure 4**.

The region remains economically robust, based on farming, forestry, mineral sand extraction, processing of primary produce, renewable energy generation and tourism. However, the population of the region as a whole has been falling, with rural areas declining most rapidly as farming becomes less labour intensive.

3.1 Population

The population of the Shire is forecast to decline by 0.7% per year over the period from 2021 to 2036 (VIF 2023, Department of Transport and Planning–, 2023). The following chart shown in **Figure 5**, details the forecast population outcomes for the five main towns, assuming they each take a proportionate share of the change. **Table 1** shows the forecast population change for the five main towns.

Table 1: Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns, 2021 to 2036

Change 2021 to 2036 (persons)	Population in 2021	Forecast population in 2036	Total change	Average annual change
Apsley	329	298	-31	-2.1
Edenhope	713	645	-68	-4.5
Goroke	208	188	-20	-1.3
Harrow	184	167	-17	-1.2
Kaniva	683	616	-67	-4.5

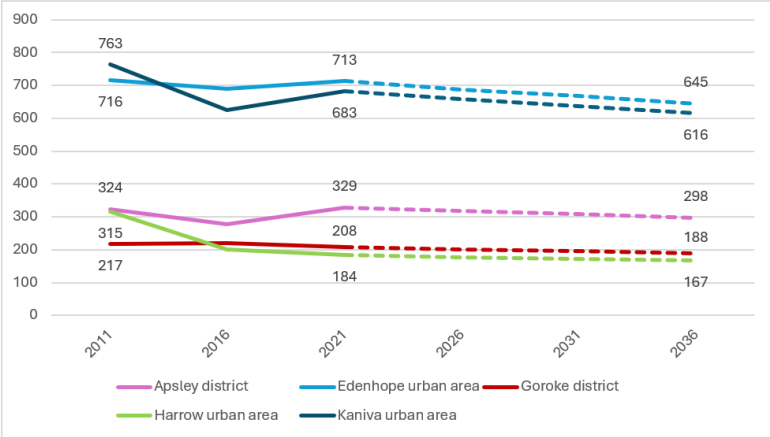
Source: ABS, 2024; VIF23; Tim Nott

Note: Kaniva, Edenhope and Harrow townships have statistical boundaries defined by the ABS as "urban areas".. Apsley and Goroke do not and are defined here by the SA1 of which they form a part, hence the term "district".

The loss of farm workers through farm amalgamations and mechanisation means reduced enrolment in schools and less spending at retailers. At certain thresholds, reduced demand triggers further loss of jobs and, with other local jobs not available, workers and their families move away. There is also a flow on effect that leads to the contraction of services including health care, social welfare and education.

This can mean a reduction, for example, in the number of volunteers available and in players to support the local sports teams and a general reduction of

community life. This is a process that has been occurring for decades and to which the community has become accustomed. Nevertheless, a halt to population decline would be welcomed by many local people who wish to maintain their levels of service and community networks. It is important to note that some rural municipalities in Victoria have previously reversed population decline through targeted and proactive interventions. The same could eventuate for West Wimmera.



(Source: ABS, 2022; Department of Transport and Planning , 2023; Tim Nott)

Figure 5: Recent and Forecast Population Change, West Wimmera Towns 2011 to 2036

While Victorian Government projections are for continued loss of population ~~decline~~ in the municipality these are largely trend based and could be reversed through an interventionist, proactive and coordinated settlement planning approach.

3.2 Housing

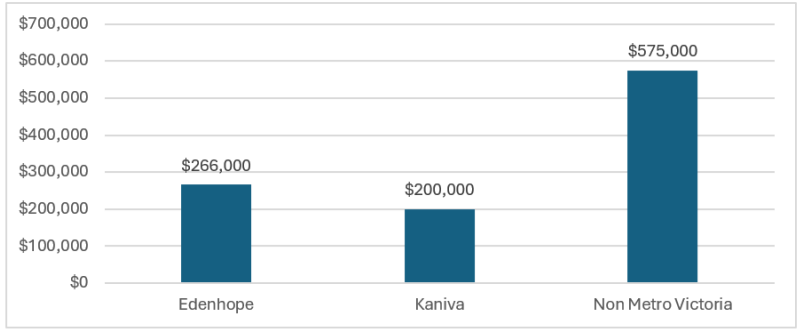
Despite ~~a declining~~a loss of population according to Census data, Victoria in Future (VIF 2023) is forecasting a rise in the number of dwellings required to 2036 because of a decline in the number of people per household and a growth in the vacancy rate. VIF2023 anticipates:

- A total of 47 dwellings in the West Wimmera SA2 – broadly, the area south of the Little Desert - between 2021 and 2036, or approximately 3.1 per year. Most of these would be likely to be constructed in Edenhope as the largest town in the area, although there may be some demand in the smaller towns of Apsley, Goroke and Harrow and in rural areas.
- A total of 41 dwellings in the area north of the Little Desert, or 2.7 per year. Most of these dwellings would be expected to be required in Kaniva, as the only significant town in the Shire north of the Little Desert.

Each new dwelling generates work for the construction industry as well as in infrastructure, retailing, health and community services. Much of this will be serviced from outside the Shire but there will be some local opportunities.

3.3 Worker Accommodation

Local enterprises reportedly find it difficult to attract workers, with a consequent impact on local economic development. This is partly a result of a lack of available accommodation. The Census indicates that the rate of unoccupied dwellings in 2021 was between 13% and 25% across the five main towns. However, many of these apparently vacant dwellings are unsuitable for occupation, or being kept as second homes or holiday homes, or available only as short stay rentals. Further work is needed to understand whether vacant dwellings can be made available. The purchase cost of housing is well below the median for non-metro Victoria as a whole, as shown in **Figure 6** below. These figures are based on actual stock sales. These relatively low prices may deter some investors from constructing additional dwellings. Some subsidies may be required to generate more dwellings.



Source Victorian Valuer General 2024

Figure 6: West Wimmera Median House Price 2023

Accommodation for a seasonal harvest work-force may be a special case requiring a collective response from affected farmers. In attracting new workers, it may be worth considering the potential for innovation including, for example, allowing more on-farm accommodation that could be integrated with adjacent townships.

3.4 Climate

The climate in the Shire is dominated by warm, dry summers and cool, wet winters. In recent years there has been a significant decrease in average spring and autumn rainfalls. The bushfire season generally runs from November to April. Prevailing weather conditions associated with the bushfire season in the West Wimmera Shire area is warm to hot north-westerly winds accompanied by high temperatures and low relative humidity followed by a cool south-westerly change.

Climate change in the wider region is driving changes in farming and in particular, has caused a conversion from grazing to cropping (see Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 2021). Cropping is likely to continue to push down from the north of the Shire, replacing pastureland and animal husbandry as the area dries. This may have further impacts on the number of workers required.

Irrigated agriculture in the wider district that uses the ground-water resource may come under pressure as the ground water fails to recharge to previous levels because of lower rainfall. There will also be increased demand for this resource from urban, recreational and environmental uses which may no longer be able to rely on consistent rainfall.

In addition to the impacts specific to agriculture, climate change will have an impact on outdoor living and the valued natural environment. There are likely to be, on average, more days of fire danger, less cool season rainfall and more intense downpours with risks of flooding (DELWP, 2019). Towns in the Shire are also at risk of climate change impacts especially to infrastructure such as damage to transport infrastructure (e.g. more potholes in roads). The risk of late season frost may also increase.

Under the Victorian Government climate change projections (DELWP 2019), the Shire can expect to:

- Be hotter with the greatest increases in temperature expected in summer
- Be drier with the greatest decreases in rainfall expected in spring
- Have fewer rainy days but increasing rainfall intensity.

3.5 Industry

Change in industry is constant, as a result of the introduction of new technologies and techniques, competitive pressures and shifts in market demand. Recent changes in the scale of broad industry groups in West Wimmera are shown in **Table 2**.

				Change 2011 to 2021		Comparison, 2021	
	2011	*2016*	*2021*	No	AAGR	West Wimmera	Non Metro Victoria
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	904	816	846	-58	-0.7%	45.1%	7.2%
Mining	10	3	7	-3	-3.5%	0.4%	0.7%
Manufacturing	83	59	45	-38	-5.9%	2.4%	7.4%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	7	3	9	2	2.5%	0.5%	1.4%
Construction	82	63	74	-8	-1.0%	3.9%	10.0%
Wholesale Trade	37	24	16	-21	-8.0%	0.9%	2.2%
Retail Trade	125	99	111	-14	-1.2%	5.9%	9.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	54	53	46	-8	-1.6%	2.5%	6.6%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	83	60	63	-20	-2.7%	3.4%	3.8%
Information Media and Telecommunications	7	11	10	3	3.6%	0.5%	0.8%
Financial and Insurance Services	23	22	12	-11	-6.3%	0.6%	1.9%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	5	9	3	-2	-5.0%	0.2%	1.0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	31	29	38	7	2.1%	2.0%	4.5%
Administrative and Support Services	27	28	39	12	3.7%	2.1%	2.8%
Public Administration and Safety	115	104	114	-1	-0.1%	6.1%	6.3%
Education and Training	131	133	138	7	0.5%	7.4%	8.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	234	229	226	-8	-0.3%	12.0%	16.2%
Arts and Recreation Services	7	13	10	3	3.6%	0.5%	1.5%
Other Services	27	46	35	8	2.6%	1.9%	3.6%
Inadequately described/Not stated	54	61	58	4	0.7%	3.1%	3.9%
Total	2,038	1,863	1,877	-161	-0.8%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ABS, 2022. Notes: AAGR = Average Annual Growth Rate; largest five industries highlighted

Table 2: West Wimmera Change in Industrial Groups, 2011 to 2021

The key points are:

- The number of local workers declined over the period 2011 to 2021, more or less in line with population decline. While there appeared to be a slight

increase in local workers between 2016 and 2021, this was likely a temporary effect of the COVID19 pandemic.

- Nearly half (45%) of all workers in the Shire work in agriculture and forestry and while the number declined between 2011 and 2021, the share of the labour-force remained broadly the same.
- A number of small professional industries grew slightly over the period. Much of this was also likely a result of remote working by people displaced by the COVID19 pandemic.
- The number of workers in several of the largest industries – manufacturing, retailing, transport – declined by more than average, indicating ongoing structural change.
- Apart from farming, West Wimmera residents are reliant on work in the local population services sectors – health, education, public administration and retailing, all of which are concentrated in the five main towns.

Future change in employment will depend on the unique set of circumstances of each industry.

In agriculture, precision farming techniques are being deployed to improve yields and reduce inputs. These are likely to become more automated over time, further reducing the need for on-farm labour, although work for local technology providers and farm-data analysts could increase. Apart from the large scale agricultural producers, there may be potential for different types of farming that have more direct links to customers or which are satisfying niche and more high value markets. The Shire's Economic Development Strategy (West Wimmera Shire Council, 2024) identifies, garlic, honey, mushrooms, micro greens and flowers as being well-suited to the Shire and having potential for growth.

Automation and the roll-out of increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence techniques will affect all industries to some extent. Whether these changes have a centralising or decentralising effect will depend on the circumstances in each industry and could be impacted by the size of the retail business and their ability to invest in technology. In retailing, for example, ongoing changes in point of sale technology is reducing the need for check-out staff; and the continued growth of internet retailing will affect non-food goods sellers so critical to the needs of small town residents eg pharmacy/hardware/homewares, in particular. However, internet retailing also allows small producers located in the Shire access to global markets.

In the professional services sector, the internet and automated techniques allow small businesses to deliver increasingly sophisticated products from any location. The ongoing ability of the Shire to attract such businesses will depend on the capacity of the local infrastructure, that is, the excellence of the mobile and internet coverage, and on the relative attractiveness of its towns as places to live.

The Shire is on the periphery of the Western and South Western Renewable Energy Zones, which have been identified by the Victorian Government as suitable for concentrated investment in wind, solar and battery farms to power the grid. VicGrid has identified that large parts of the Shire are suitable for investigation as locations for renewable energy investment, as shown in Figure 7. The figure also identifies that a new solar farm has approval in the southern part of the Shire but has not yet been constructed.

There is potential for jobs in new windfarm, solar-farm or large battery projects to be taken up by people from the Shire and for the Shire to offer a home to people moving into the region for these projects. For southern parts of the Shire, there is also potential access to projects in south-east South Australia.

Mineral sands mining projects such as that proposed for Avonbank near Horsham will generate significant numbers of jobs that may be accessible to people living in West Wimmera Shire. All currently proposed projects remain some distance from Shire, with residents usually at least one hour's drive from the five towns within the Shire. This may mean that the Shire would need to incentivise project workers from outside the Shire to attract them to the five small towns. The ability of the five towns to provide unique residential opportunities could be capitalised on to capture some of this key worker growth.

3.6 Visitation

Visitor services – accommodation, food service, specialty retailing, tours – do not currently provide substantial employment in the Shire and tourism is still described as an emerging industry. The Shire's economic development strategy identifies visitor economy growth as one of four key pillars of local economic development for the municipality. The Strategy identifies opportunities to grow the visitor economy including food and farming tourism, ecotourism associated with the lakes and deserts, travellers' rest points, and small town events. Potential actions recommended by the economic development strategy include upgrading and expanding lake-side caravan parks to provide accommodation for visitors and seasonal workers.

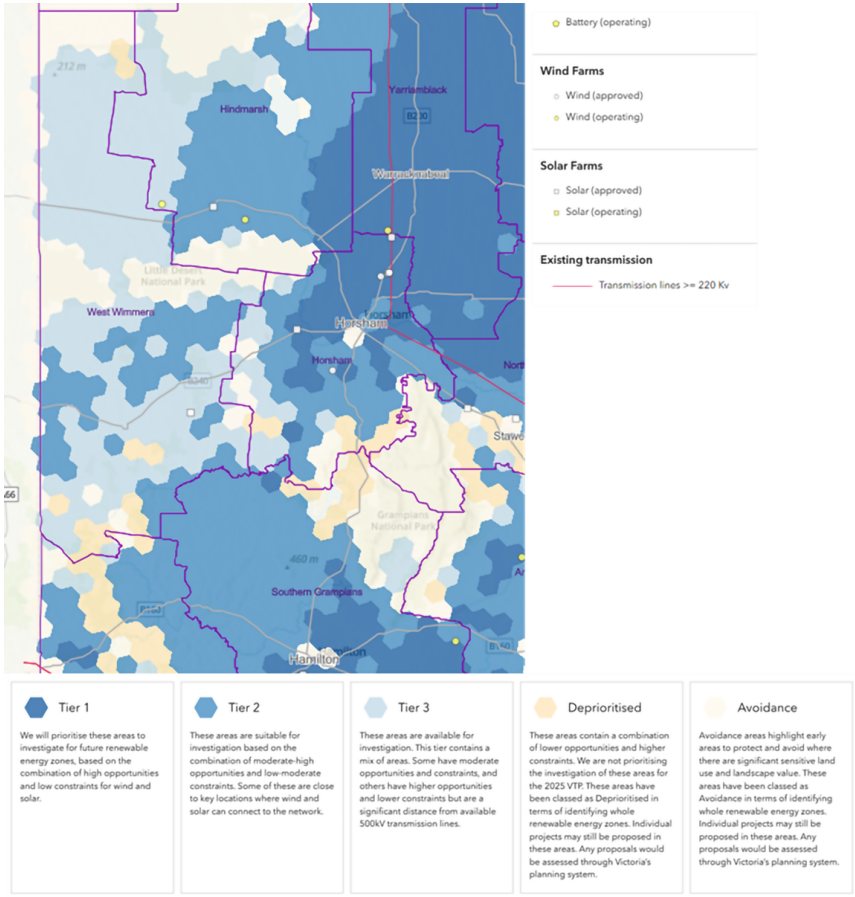
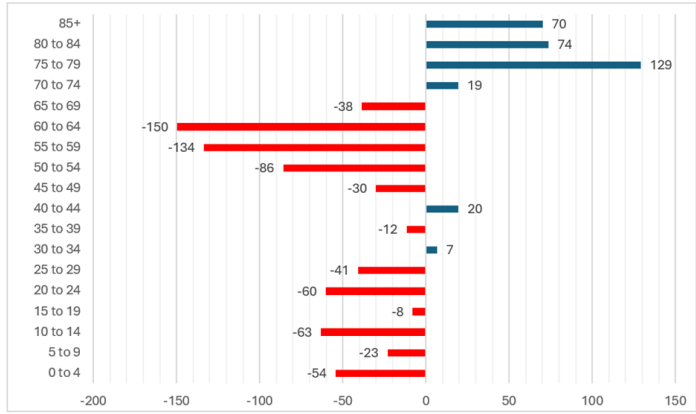


Figure 7: Draft Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines study area for further investigation - Source: VicGrid, 2024

3.7 Ageing

In common with most of Victoria, the Shire is ageing and this is forecast to continue (VIF2023). **Figure 8** shows the forecast change by five year age group.



Source: VIF2023

Figure 8: Forecast Change in Age Groups, West Wimmera, 2021 to 2036

To 2036, the Shire is forecast to gain 292 people aged over 70 and lose 524 people in working age groups (20 to 69 year olds) or 28% of the current labour force. The number of people under 20 is forecast to decline by 149, so while there is forecast to be lower demand for educational services, there will be more demand for health and aged care services and a range of other "silver economy" services. These are services designed for the over 50s such as financial planning, specialised recreation and travel agencies. Whether these services can actually be provided remains doubtful under this scenario, given the loss of people in working age groups. If investment in these services can be achieved, that may go some way to ameliorate the loss of population that may otherwise occur.

The forecast ageing of the population and the loss of those in working age groups shows the importance of retaining residents and attracting new people to the Shire.

3.8 Social and Community Infrastrucutre

From 2025, four-year-old kindergarten will gradually transition to pre-prep, with programs across Victoria increasing from 15 to 30 hours each week. Additional kindergarten capacity will be needed for 30 hours of kindergarten. The current kindergarten facilities in Kaniva, Edenhope and Goroke are not large enough to deliver on the upcoming kindergarten reforms and there is limited room for expansion. Moving some of the kindergartens to the local school sites would allow for kindergarten expansion and has the potential to keep the school numbers to a viable level. This would also free up space in the current facilities for additional childcare and playgroups to support young families.

Childcare services provide an important service for families, community and the local economy. Access to suitable childcare provides an opportunity for parents and carers to work and helps maintain the local economy. In addition, it is an attractor for young parents to live in the region.

Community vitality, social and community infrastructure can help to maintain activities and events in a community. These have the potential to attract new residents and maintain community viability. There are opportunities for community infrastructure to support business activities (such as events) that are beneficial to the local economy. Likewise moving a service such as the kindergarten to a school site might maintain the school's viability.

There are limited places for young people to meet and those that are available might not meet the needs of this demographic. Providing spaces where young people can gather and interact reduces their need to travel and helps them form strong relationships, helping to anchor them in the community when they are ready to put down their roots.



Goroke Library

3.9 Transport Infrastructure

Public transport is very limited within the Shire which reduces the capacity of people to travel to access services and activities. Certain groups within the community are likely to have limited access to private transport and as a result require local access to facilities. Children, young people and older adults may have reduced capacity to travel to activities and services.

4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITES FACING THE TOWNS

4.1 Issues

There are a range of demographic, economic and social issues facing the small towns of West Wimmera.

~~Declining~~ Population Loss and Ageing ~~Population~~

The ~~population of the~~ Shire is losing population~~declining~~. The loss of farm workers through farm amalgamations and mechanisations means reduced enrolment in schools and less spending in shops and services. Future vulnerabilities, including larger landholdings managed by consortiums and serviced by contractors, are likely to~~–~~ lead to ~~declining~~ further loss of population~~s~~ across the Shire. This demographic, combined with an ageing population, has seen previously robust rural communities being replaced by smaller, older more vulnerable communities isolated from services. The shift in population could potentially lead to delayed fire management suppression activities in rural areas from reduced numbers of volunteers. In some cases, rural municipalities have reversed population decline through marketing, tourism and improved infrastructure.

Implications for the Towns:

- Population ~~decline~~ loss needs to be recognised and managed to minimise loss of access to goods and services, community and social services.
- Ensure that housing stock can be upgraded to ensure appropriate housing for ageing in place.
- Promote the desirability of the region as a place to visit.

Settlement and ~~-~~Subdivision ~~-~~Beyond Existing Townships

There are areas of farming zoned land within the current settlement boundaries in the towns. This is not an urban zone and should not form part of settlement boundaries unless identified as future residential land.

The location of farming zoned land within settlement boundaries has occurred due to several factors. Some are historical as a result of “soldier settlement” subdivisions established many years ago that were created on title but often never developed for housing. Many of these lots still operate as part of larger farming properties and often comprise what are referred to as tenements.

Other cases involve the excision of a smaller lot from a much larger farming lot usually for a new dwelling, which is permitted under the Farming Zone. Although allowed in some circumstances, excised lots through incremental decisions can result in the loss of productive agricultural land to housing and create conflicts with state and local planning policy.

Some dwellings on small lots have been incorrectly zoned as part of the development of planning schemes in the late 1990s. In some cases, these dwellings were not appropriately identified to reflect existing development on the ground surrounding a town. Reflecting the correct designation of this land is largely an administrative exercise, rather than a significant policy shift and will have no impact on existing agricultural production due to the existing conditions of the land.

Implications for the Towns:

- Review areas of land zoned for farming in each settlement boundary and consider their current and future use.
- In considering their future use, balance the need for additional residential land with the policy objective of protecting agricultural land.
- Council should investigate undertaking a rural land use strategy to ensure small lots in the Farming Zone within town boundaries are considered from a municipal perspective and prepare local policy for small lots within town boundaries altering town boundaries as appropriate.

Local Economy

Future change in employment will depend on the unique set of circumstances of each industry. In agriculture, precision farming techniques are being deployed to improve yields and reduce inputs. These are likely to become more automated over time, further reducing the need for on-farm labour. Automation and the roll-out of increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence techniques will affect all industries to some extent.

In the professional services sector, the internet and automated techniques allow small businesses to deliver increasingly sophisticated products from any location.

The Shire is on the periphery of the Western and South Western Renewable Energy Zones, which have been identified by the Victorian Government as suitable for concentrated investment in wind, solar and battery farms to power

the grid. There is potential for jobs in new windfarm, solar-farm or large battery projects to be taken up by people from the Shire and for the Shire to offer a home to people moving into the region for these projects

Mineral sands mining projects such as that proposed for Avonbank near Horsham will generate significant numbers of jobs that may be accessible to people living in ~~the Shire~~the Shire

Implications for the Towns:

- There is a shortage of key worker housing in the region which is impacting the attraction of staff to local jobs. Local enterprises report finding it difficult to attract workers which is having an impact on the local economic development of the Shire.
- There is a challenge in delivering new housing stock as the current construction workforce is unable to meet demand for new housing development.

Flooding

Extreme short-duration 'rain bursts' are becoming more intense and more frequent especially during summer with thunderstorm rainfall. Existing infrastructure was not designed to cope with these unnatural extremes, and flash flooding is set to be a growing issue. The Shire has towns that are subject to stormwater and riverine flooding. Towns that are prone to stormwater flooding include Apsley and Edenhope. Flood events within West Wimmera have been infrequent over the last decade, however there are areas of significant flood risk in Harrow and Apsley.

Implications for the Towns:

- Implement flood studies for Edenhope and Apsley into the Planning Scheme as soon as possible.
- Direct housing away from flood prone areas.

Fire

The Shire is vulnerable to climate change, and already experiences significant climate variability, including exposure to extremes in rainfall, winds and drought. This is likely to lead to an increase in bushfires in the Shire. Edenhope, Goroke, Harrow and Apsley have Fire Ready Guides in place for all residents and the towns are covered by a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). The Fire Ready Guides are developed by the Wimmera Emergency Management team and aim to help communities prepare for the bushfire season particularly in areas identified as high risk. The entire municipality is categorised as bushfire prone.

Implications for the Towns:

- Expansion of the towns and any new housing should be directed away from areas at high risk of bushfire.

Environmentally Significant Areas

There are areas of environmental significance and high value habitat that need to be protected and preserved for habitat of endangered flora and fauna such as the Red-tailed Black cockatoo and other environmental considerations.

Implications for the Towns:

- Areas of environmental significance need to be better understood to ensure environmentally significant areas are identified.

Water

The quality of drinking water of most of the towns is an issue for all residents with many relying on tank water or poor tasting bore water. There is a lack of potable water in all towns except Edenhope and Kaniva. Not all of the towns have access to a reticulated sewage system which will impact on the future development of these towns as lot sizes will need to remain large to service septic systems. While this may be acceptable in some of the small towns, towns like Edenhope and Kaniva have good services and should be able to provide smaller lots to meet the changing needs of the community and provide more affordable housing options. Lack of sewerage also impacts the operations of commercial businesses such as pubs/restaurants and accommodation venues. A lack of maintenance of septic systems can also have public health and environmental impacts to adjacent waterways.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore the possibility of connecting the remaining three towns to potable water to improve the drinking water quality for all residents.
- Expand reticulated sewerage in Edenhope and Kaniva to facilitate the towns to grow and attract more residents, enabling smaller lots to meet community needs and minimising environmental impacts.

Climate Change

Similar to the rest of Victoria, the towns in the Shire are subject to climate change impacts and will need to develop mitigation strategies and improve infrastructure to improve resilience. Increased frequency of extreme heat events will require adaptation of the urban environment such as further shade and urban canopy to provide increasing shade for residents in town centres. An increased risk of bushfire and flooding events is also predicted and should be factored into future towns plans.

Implications for the Towns:

- Ensure both social and physical infrastructure is designed to mitigate and adapt to the implications of climate change.
- Direct development away from areas of bushfire and flooding risk taking a precautionary approach to the extent of predicted risks.

Social and Community Infrastructure

Services such as childcare provide an important service for families, community and the local economy. The childcare services in the Shire are limited and have been unable to expand or attract new staff due to a lack of key worker housing. This has limited the access of childcare places and services for parents and carers who work in the Shire. There are limited spaces for young people to meet and those that are available might not meet the needs of this group. Providing spaces where young people can gather and interact reduces their need to travel and keeps them occupied.

Implications for the Towns:

- Increase capacity to deliver kindergarten and other childrens' services – by providing more key worker housing.
- Create spaces for young people to meet.

Transport and Movement

Movement networks within a town and connecting out to surrounding towns need to be accessible, safe and reliable. Public transport is very limited within the Shire which reduces the capacity of people to travel to access services and activities. While passenger rail infrastructure passes through Kaniva, it does not currently stop and is unlikely to have transit stops in the medium term given the current population level and projected demand. Other options to meet regional movement needs will be required.

It is important for people to move easily and safely within their town. This means walking and cycling options and accessing local public transport. Good movement networks also support the community's health by encouraging daily physical activity, providing easy access to local services and reducing social isolation and increasing social interaction.

Implications for the Towns:

- Provide a local bus service to access services for residents between Apsley, Edenhope and Harrow. An aging population will need to be able to access services easily via public transport.
- Provide more footpaths and cycling paths within and around the towns to create safe movement pathways for people.

4.2 Opportunities

Locational Advantages and Assets

The towns all have their own unique characteristics and identity which is important for future service delivery and planning for the towns.

Kaniva is well placed to capitalise on its access to the highway attracting and growing the local agricultural industry and is a rest stop for travellers through to South Australia. Edenhope has Lake Wallace as the main drawcard and focal point. It is also the major service centre for the local agricultural industry. Harrow is a quaint, historic riverside town in a rural setting that attracts visitors. Apsley has a tranquil rural character and is close to the Coonawarra wine region just over the border in South Australia. Goroke is a small rural town providing access to the Little Desert and is a service centre for the local hinterland community.

Implications for the Towns:

- Kaniva could continue streetscape upgrades to encourage more through traffic to stop in the town and increase wayfinding signage to attract more visitors to the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park.
- Edenhope could increase wayfinding signage to draw more visitors down to Lake Wallace.

- Harrow could increase marketing and raise the profile of the town and its heritage assets.
- Goroke plays a complimentary function to larger nearby towns. It could also increase marketing to raise the profile of the town and continue to upgrade streetscape works and seek funding for capital works to upgrade the theatre/hall and events at the community facilities.
- Apsley could further promote the quarterly market, capitalise on sporting infrastructure and continue to upgrade/maintain the town hall.

Economy

There are a number of new investments in the Shire and surrounding region that may provide economic opportunities for the towns. There has been investment to date in renewable energy including a new solar farm. There is also potential for a new windfarm or large battery projects as part of the Western Renewable Energy Zone which will create new employment in the Shire. Mineral sands developments are proposed for Avonbank near Horsham which will generate a significant number of jobs that may be accessible to people living in the West Wimmera Shire. For southern parts of the Shire, there is also potential access to projects in south-east South Australia. These may provide opportunities for the towns to capitalise on the needs of these workers including permanent and temporary housing with flow on effects for community services and local shops and hospitality services.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore opportunities to incentivise project workers from outside the Shire to attract them to the five Small Towns.
- Identify opportunities to provide more key worker housing including by leveraging the development of Council owned land.

Tourism and Accommodation

The accommodation offering is important to support and grow the local tourism market with each town having opportunities to tap into different tourism markets. Currently there is a lack of local accommodation available to support the needs of visitors and house seasonal workers in the Shire. This needs to be increased and addressed to allow the local tourism market to grow and attract more seasonal workers to the Shire.

There are opportunities for eco-tourism in the Shire including the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park, the Glenelg River and access to the series of lakes and wetlands in the Shire. There are opportunities to expand the tourism offerings to service the 'silver economy' with specialised recreation and travel catering to this expanding market. The disused rail line between Goroke and Natimuk could be developed into a rail trail for cyclists attracting more people to the Shire.

The Silo Art Trail attracts visitors to the Shire as Australia's largest outdoor gallery, linking the Wimmera Mallee's treasured small towns across 700km through the region.

Implications for the Towns:

- Create more short-term accommodation options for new and seasonal employees in the region.
- Investigate further expanding caravan park accommodation to house key workers.
- Work with local traders and local producers to enhance the local food offerings in the Shire.
- Increase marketing for the Silo Art Trail as part of marketing for West Wimmera attractions.
- Encourage more food and accommodation offerings especially in Edenhope and Kaniva.
- Explore opportunities for a café and nature based recreation in Harrow.
- Explore opportunities for town retailers to capitalise on any local farm gate produce that is available.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC)

The Barengi Gadjin Land Council (the local Registered Aboriginal Party) would like to work with Council to provide skills training programs for the local community to support a local construction industry for housing. There is also an opportunity to work with the BGLC to produce cultural interpretive signage for place names, and wayfinding signage, as this could also provide signage in local language for local birds, flora and fauna in areas such as the Kaniva Wetlands.

Implications for the Towns:

- Develop a workforce training program to support the local industry and community.

- Work with the BGLC to develop cultural interpretive signage for the Shire.
- Work with BGLC to identify opportunities for economic independence.

Township Amenity and Character

Amenity and character is important to the people that live in the towns creating a sense of place. There are many heritage buildings in the five towns that could be further preserved and enhanced. Towns that have character are more appealing to visitors and will enhance their attractiveness as places to stay and spend money.

Continuing the streetscape improvements in Kaniva and implementing this program to the other four towns subject to budgetary considerations will be an important future piece of work.

Implications for the Towns:

- Develop a strategy to implement streetscape improvements for the five towns.
- Advocate for external grant funding for streetscape improvements.
- Plant more trees in the town centres to create shade, cooling the environment, reducing heat in the towns and improving amenity.
- Continue to build footpaths in the five towns to enhance pedestrian comfort and support walkability.
- Explore the long term upkeep and maintenance of heritage buildings.

Housing

Council owned land could be leveraged to encourage investment by housing providers and/or to engage in direct housing and infrastructure provision. This could also help to provide more key worker housing for the Shire and provide housing close to town for an ageing population.

Implications for the Towns:

- Explore options for Council owned land to be developed as medium density housing to meet residential requirements for an ageing population and address the key worker housing shortage in Kaniva and Edenhope.
- Work on a strategy to deliver medium density housing.
- Further work is needed to understand whether vacant dwellings can be made available for key worker housing.
- Investigate opportunities to work with landowners to enhance the image of their properties.
- Investigate whether on farm accommodation is an option for seasonal workers.


APSLEY

5. APSLEY

Apsley is a small town set among red gums located approximately 10 kilometres east of the South Australian border. The town grew significantly in the late 1860s. Apsley's fertile agricultural land is highly valued and recognised as a prosperous agricultural district, supporting various land uses that contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. The town continues to provide a local service function for the surrounding community with a CFA, police station and post office. The town context map is shown in **Figure 9**.

5.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Apsley is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Apsley.

The RGP states that *"a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services".*

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-03

Clause 11.01-1L-03 Settlement - Aspley provides the existing settlement framework for the town. There is one strategy to the clause, which seeks to support the establishment of cycling and horse-riding trails as a way of attracting visitors to the area. The Clause 11.01-1L-03 settlement framework for Aspley is shown in **Figure 10**. There is an opportunity to undertake further work to improve the settlement directions to look at growth, development and ongoing maintenance for Apsley. There is also an opportunity to create a policy to support the framework plan in the scheme and look at housing, recreation and education in the town.

Apsley experienced significant urban growth when thousands of European gold seekers passed through on their way to the gold fields. Many Chinese gold seekers also made their way to the diggings after arriving at the Port of Robe in the late 1850s. The introduction of the Free Selection Land Act in the 1860s led to an increase in the district's population and the expansion of Apsley. By 1897, approximately 60 children were enrolled at Apsley State School, along with several smaller schools in the area.[1]

1 Historic information drawn from https://www.apsley.vic.au/

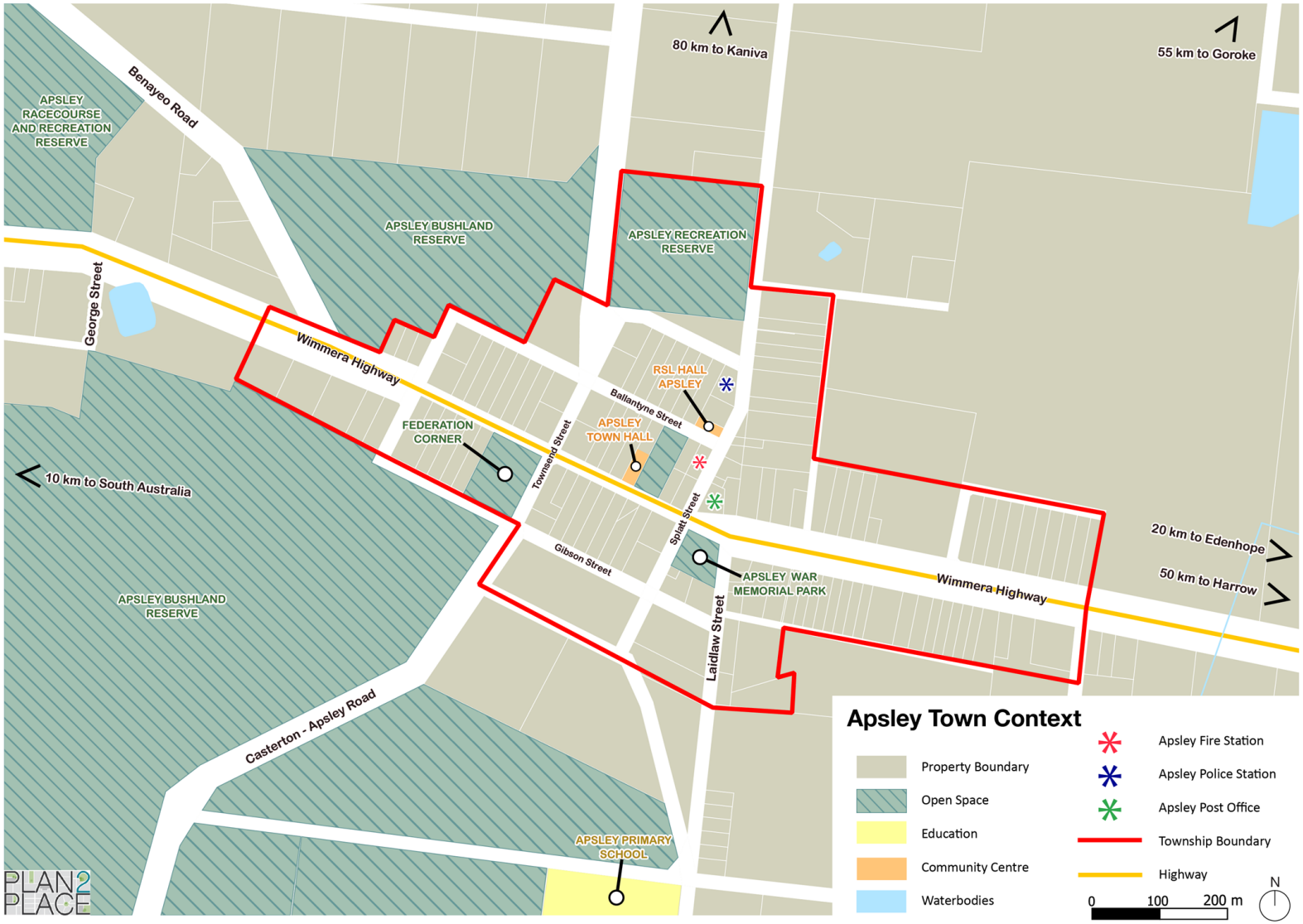


Figure 9: Apsley Context Map

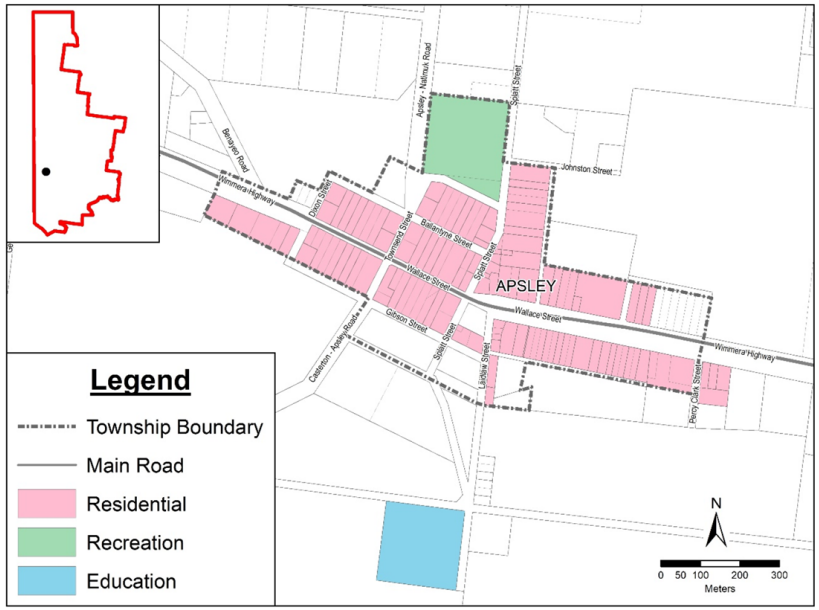


Figure 10: Apsley Framework Plan Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Apsley are shown in **Figure 11** and summarised below:

- The Township Zone (TZ) applies to land within the Apsley town boundary.
- The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) applies to the Apsley Recreation Reserve.
- The Transport Zone (TRZ) applies to the Wimmera Highway that runs through the centre of Apsley.
- Outside the town boundary, the Farming Zone (FZ) applies to agricultural land.
- The Public Use Zone (PUZ) – Schedule 2 (PUZ2) applies to the Apsley State School Reserve to the south of the town.
- The PUZ – Schedule 5 (PUZ5) applies to the Apsley Cemetery Reserve to the north of the town.
- The PCRZ applies over the Apsley Bushland Reserve and the Apsley Plantation.



Figure 11: Apsley - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS impacting Apsley are shown in **Figure 12** and summarised below:

- The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) – Schedule 2 (ESO2) applies to all of the land surrounding Apsley to ensure that development protects the habitat of the Red-tailed Black cockatoo. This will ensure that environmentally significant habitat is protected.
- The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to much of the land surrounding Apsley. This will allow development to directed away from fire prone areas.
- The current flood studies underway may result in Flood Overlay (FO) or Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) controls being added.

5.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Apsley had a population of 329 people. This is forecast to reduce over the period to 2036 to just below 300 people. The town is a small settlement servicing the surrounding agricultural district and is also within easy commuting distance of the larger town of Naracoorte and the Coonawarra wine district in South Australia.

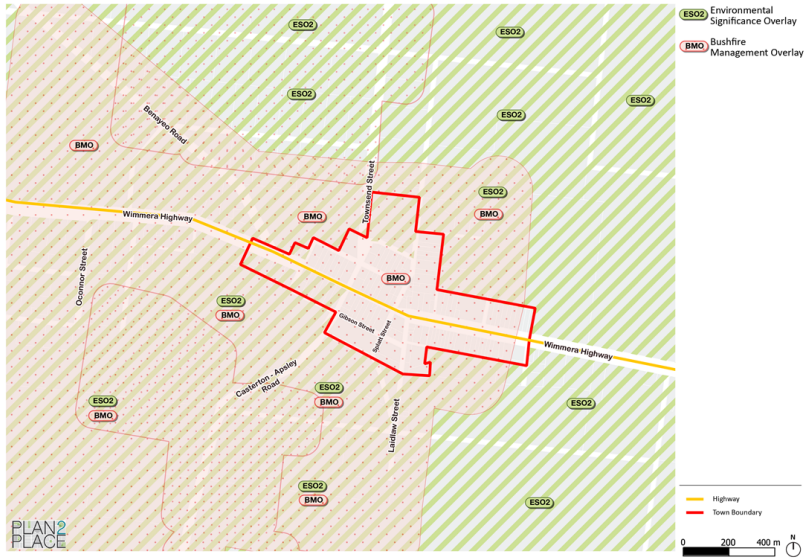


Figure 12: Apsley - Existing Overlays

5.3 Housing

While the Victorian Government forecasts a decline in population in the general area (see section 4), there may be occasional demand for a new house in Apsley over the forecast period. There are several vacant lots in the Township Zone. Any development needs to take account of the BMO , which covers most of the town, and any forthcoming flood management overlay that might arise from recent work conducted for Council. Therefore, no new rezoning of land for housing purposes is recommended for the town.

5.4 Economic Profile

Given the size of the catchment and its forecast decline, resident demand is unlikely to support further retailing, although there may be scope for new businesses that cater to visitors or to community needs. There may be scope to provide space for visiting professionals, which could be located within the community hall.

There is no zoned industrial land in the township. There is no demand or justification for industrial land. There is an industrial precinct in nearby Edenhope that could capture future demand for industrial land.

The town has a quarterly market which attracts people from across the region. There may be potential for further tourism activity including country style accommodation, glamping or camping/caravaning. However, the water supply in the town is not safe to drink according to GWM Water and this is an impediment to further commercial development for visitors, requiring potentially expensive remediation. There may be scope for visitor retailing such as art, food and wine, based on the nearby wineries.

There is only a small range of visitor accommodation in the town, with the art deco style Border Inn providing rooms and bungalows and offers free camping facilities. The wider township has several bushland rest-stops and reserves which provide points of interest for walkers, bird-watchers and cyclists. There are also opportunities to leverage the tourism market at the nearby wineries in the Coonawarra.

Apsley has a strong interdependence with nearby Naracoorte in South Australia. Residents regularly access services and jobs in towns close by and some services and facilities may be shared between the towns in the community of interest. Apsley is playing an increasing role in providing additional housing to service Naracoorte. Many residents in Apsley also access jobs located in Naracoorte.

5.5 Movement and Transport

Apsley is on the Wimmera Highway, one of the routes from Victoria to the popular Coonawarra wine district. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Apsley is via private vehicles. There are very limited public transport options available for residents in Apsley with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays.

5.6 Physical Infrastructure

The town of Apsley is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. Ground and surface water is not safe for drinking, however, water can be used for household activities, such as watering gardens, flushing toilets, irrigation and laundry. It can also be used for showering or bathing if caution is exercised. All houses are serviced by septic tanks as there is no wastewater treatment plant servicing the town with reticulated sewerage.

5.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The Apsley town centre consists of a concentration of activity around the intersection of the Wimmera Highway and Splatt Street with a corner store/café, post office, hotel, community hall, fire station, RSL hall and police station. The township contains a small town centre, a primary school, recreation reserve golf course, netball courts and a Lions Park playground. There is no library or access to childcare services or kindergarten in Apsley. The Apsley community group is very active and hosts a local playgroup. The nearest health facilities are in Edenhope, around 20 km to the east or Naracoorte, 31 kms to the west.

The Border Inn pub provides a key community service and has a camping ground at the rear. The recent re-opening of the pub through local entrepreneurship and community support has rejuvenated a key social asset and created a strong sense of optimism in the town that can be built on.

5.8 Built Form and Heritage

Apsley includes several historic buildings along its wide main street. The township extends along the Wimmera Highway for the most part and is adjacent to large bushland reserves to the south-west. There are several historic weatherboard buildings in the main street that are former commercial buildings. Most of the houses in the town are single storey weatherboard buildings. The main street is lined with mature street trees that provide much needed shade and tree canopy.



The Store – Main Street Apsley



Historic Building - Main Street Apsley

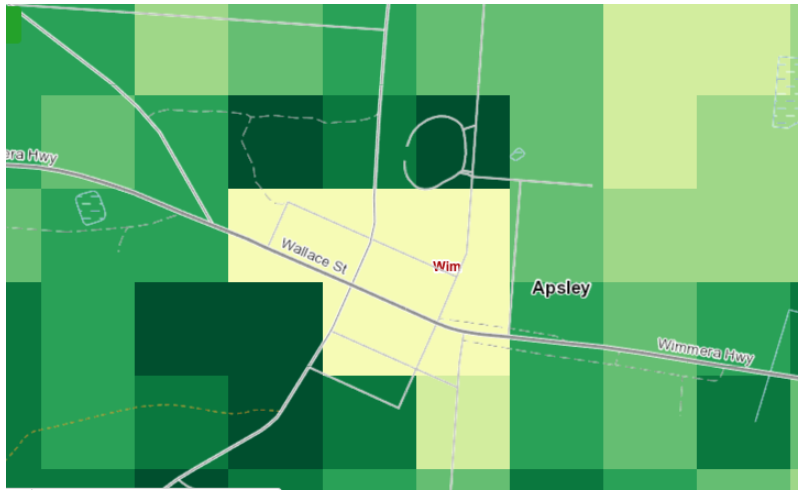
5.9 Landscape and Environment

There is a significant risk of flooding in Apsley especially around the main street where there is a dry creek bed that floods during significant rain events. A flood study for the town is currently underway and is expected to be finished shortly.

There is a risk of bushfire in Apsley with the town covered by a BMO . There is a Place of Last Resort in case of bushfire at the Apsley Recreation Reserve in Splatt Street. This is part of the Neighbourhood Safer Places program for West Wimmera Shire.

Apsley is located on flat undulating plains in West Wimmera. The dominant ecosystems are - Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils. The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green.



5.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- There is significant risk of flood in areas of the town.
- There is significant risk of fire.
- There is a lack of potable drinking water.
- The town is not connected to a reticulated sewage system.
- There are a large number of vacant shops within the town centre.
- Public transport is very limited and residents are reliant on private transport.
- The town is reliant on towns such as Naracoorte for higher-order goods and services including employment, retail, health, and secondary education.
- Without support from increased tourism and growth in population, there is insufficient demand for additional retail development.
- There is a limited accommodation offer with rooms and free camping at the hotel.
- Some of the historic buildings in the town are in need of repair and maintenance.

Opportunities

- There is an active and strong community advocacy group.
- There is a good range of community facilities for a small town.
- There is a high level of amenity.
- There is a Primary School in the town.
- Original township buildings provide opportunities for tourism and housing including bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Nearby lakes attract people to the region for recreation and tourism.
- The creation of home based and creative industries employment may be made possible by providing high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite).
- Leverage existing community groups to advocate for funding to repair, maintain and update significant buildings along the Wimmera Highway.

- The attractive town centre could be further enhanced through place making initiatives and upgrades to infrastructure.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings~~infrastructurebuildings~~.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Apsley are detailed in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Apsley Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Apsley
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, no reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Hotel, post office, town hall, emergency services, sport infrastructure
Growth Capacity	Low due to flood constraints, bushfire risk and lack of reticulated water and sewer
Expected Outcomes	Negligible Change
Recommendations	• Complete and implement the Apsley flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and to direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • ~~Any~~ Ensure new development to respond to local bushfire requirements. • Explore options to provide drinking water and a reticulated sewage system to the town with the local water authority. • Advocate for improved transport services between Apsley and the surrounding towns including community or public transport buses. • Explore opportunities to repurpose original township buildings to provide an increase in tourism and housing. • Undertake an audit/review of heritage assets to determine if a further heritage study is warranted for Apsley. • Review demand for further overnight accommodation. • Explore if there is any further Crown or Council land that could be utilised for housing and accommodation. • Enhance the attractiveness of the town centre by providing grants to landowners for repainting and other streetscape upgrade works. • Review zoning within the town boundary as part of the preparation of a structure plan for the town. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings~~sinfrastructurebuildings~~.
Boundary Considerations	• Consider including land zoned Farming Zone between the Wimmera Highway and Benayeo Road into the town boundary and consider rezoning to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ) to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses. • Include the Apsley Racecourse and Recreation Reserve (zoned PPRZ) into the town boundary to recognise its role as a public facility. • Consider including the land zoned FZ on the west and east side of Laidlaw Street into the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses. • Include the Apsley State School Reserve zoned PUZ2 into the town boundary. • Consider rezoning FZ land currently within the town boundary on the south side of Wimmera Highway to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ) to reflect the current lot sizes and current land uses.


EDENHOPE

6. EDENHOPE

Edenhope is the largest town in the Shire and has a role as an administrative centre. The town has a compact commercial area offering convenience and weekly shopping. Industrial activities are concentrated in the east of the town, with some service industries on the southern edge of the commercial area. The town is located on the shores of Lake Wallace, which has been integral to the formation of the character of the township. The lake provides recreation opportunities as well as a unique residential amenity.

Edenhope developed mainly as a wool grazing area. Several large properties have been subdivided for smaller family farms, particularly for soldier settlements after World War II.

Like many rural townships, Edenhope plays a vital role in providing opportunities for social interaction and civic engagement for residents across a large rural catchment. With its proximity to Lake Wallace and historical and contemporary ties to cricket and Australian Rules Football, Edenhope is viewed as a centre for sports and recreation. The town also offers its community a wide range of social and cultural opportunities across the arts, heritage and natural environment.

Edenhope is one of only two towns in the Shire that has safe drinking water. The town context map is shown in **Figure 13**.

6.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Edenhope is defined as a District Town in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. The future directions for Edenhope are to:

- Recognise Edenhope as the district town for the south-western Wimmera community of interest.
- Encourage the provision of a range of middle order health, education, retail, municipal and emergency services.
- Provide for residential growth through infill development.
- Provide additional industrial land to facilitate employment.

The RGP states "*Edenhope is the major centre in the south-western part of the Wimmera Southern Mallee region, providing various services to its community of interest, which includes Goroke, Harrow and Apsley. The town's proximity to South Australia enables a close relationship with Naracoorte and residents rely on this centre and Horsham for higher order services. The town is located on Lake Wallace, which should be protected as an important focus for recreation, tourism and amenity.*

Infill development will provide for residential growth in the short to medium-term. Over time, additional residential land supply will be required. This could be located to the south of the town or around limited, discrete parts of Lake Wallace. Development around Lake Wallace will require an extension of the reticulated sewerage system to limit the impact on the lake.

There is a need for additional industrial land to support employment growth. The preference is for this is to be located to the south-east of the town. Other key strategic issues for the town include the reliance on treated bore water for drinking supplies and the need to upgrade the airport/airfield to accommodate emergency flights to meet future community needs. "

The RGP outlines the following land use policies, strategies and actions for Edenhope:

- Focus investment in services and facilities for the south-western part of the region in Edenhope.
- Identify a preferred location for additional industrial land and facilitate development.
- Monitor the need for additional residential land.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-01

Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement - Edenhope provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to ensure active retail frontages within the commercial precinct and promote low density and rural living development in lifestyle living areas, as identified on the Edenhope Framework Plan. The Clause 11.01-1L-01 settlement framework for Edenhope is shown in **Figure 14**.

The clause encourages use and development to orient towards and activate Lake Wallace and its foreshore and to support the establishment of a pedestrian and cycle trail network for recreational purposes that accesses nearby environmental assets, such as Lake Wallace.

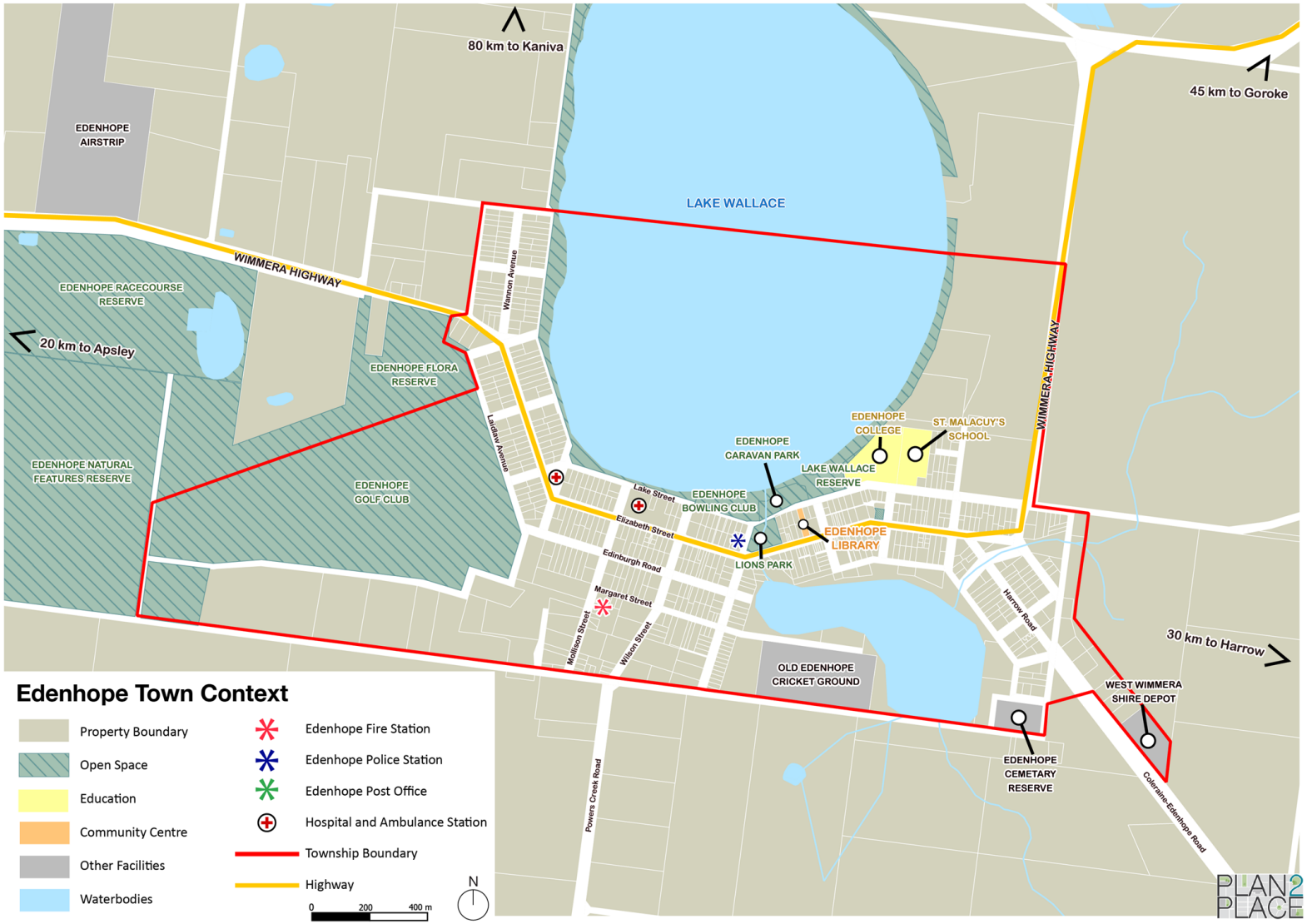


Figure 13: Edenhope Context Map

Additionally, the clause encourages the development and expansion of the Edenhope Industrial Estate and facilitates the relocation of storage uses from Elizabeth Street into the Edenhope Industrial Estate.

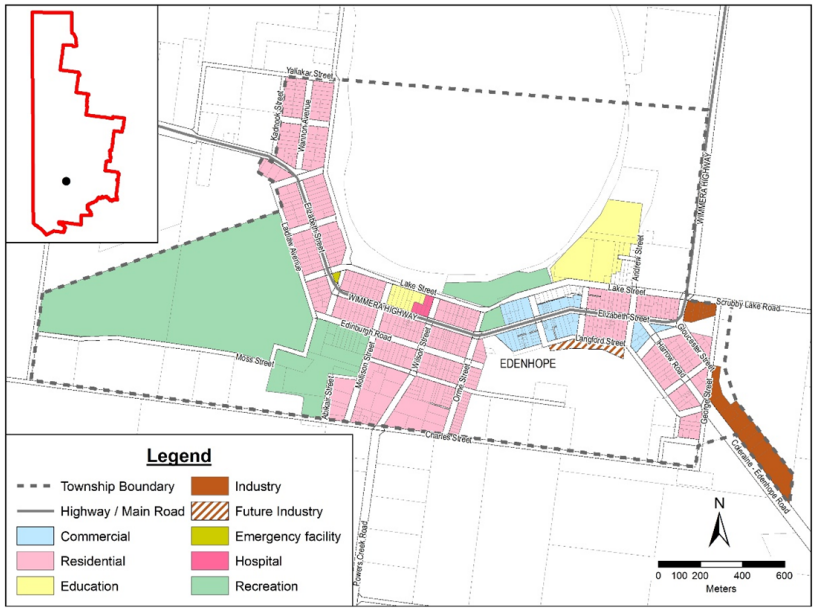


Figure 14: Edenhope Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Edenhope are shown in **Figure 15** and summarised below:

- The TZ applies to land within Edenhope and land surrounding Lake Wallace.
- The Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) applies to land along the Coleraine- Edenhope Road.
- The Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) applies to land adjoining the Coleraine-Edenhope Road.
- The Public Use Zone (PUZ5) is applied to the Edenhope cemetery.
- The Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) is applied over Lake Wallace, the Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve, Golf Course, Edenhope Flora Reserve, Racecourse and the Edenhope Natural Features Reserve.
- The Transport 2 Zone (TRZ2) is applied along the Coleraine- Edenhope Road.
- The Special Use Zone Schedule 3 (SUZ3) is applied to the Edenhope Airport.
- The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) applies to land outside of the town boundary.
- The Farming Zone (FZ) applies to agricultural and land surrounding the town boundaries.

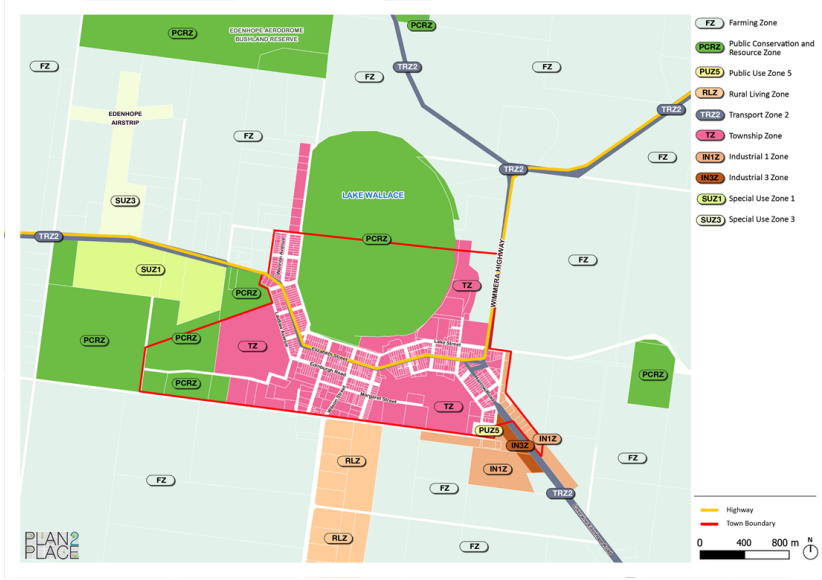


Figure 15: Edenhope - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Edenhope are shown in **Figure 16** and summarised below:

- The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) applies to all of the land surrounding Edenhope to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to much of the land surrounding Edenhope.

- The Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1 (DDO1) applies to land along the Coleraine – Edenhope Road to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.
- The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) applies to selected land in the town to ensure that potentially contaminated land is suitable for a use which could be significantly and adversely affected by any contamination.

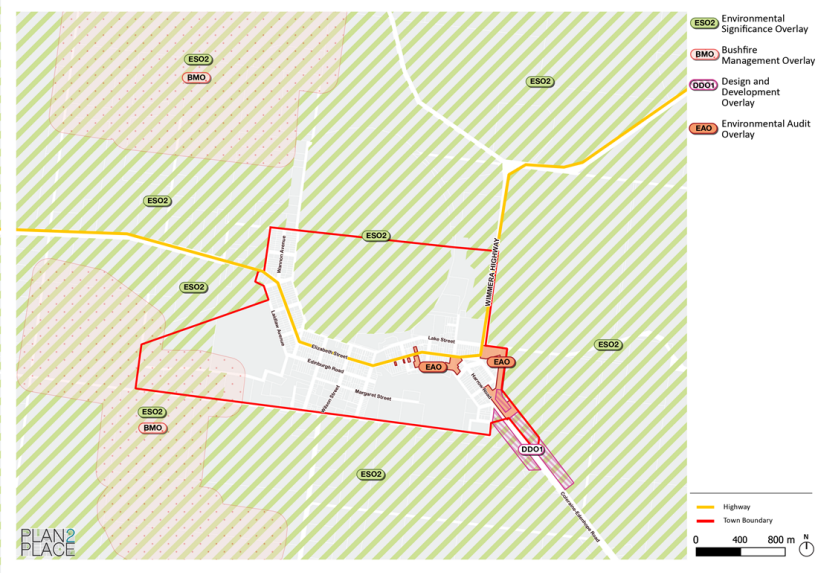


Figure 16: Edenhope - Existing Overlays

6.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Edenhope had a population of 713 people. Edenhope remains the largest town in the Shire and has the most significant population catchment. Its services are somewhat threatened by population decline and by the growth of larger centres outside the Shire.

Edenhope has a high number of residents over 45 years, and a very high proportion of residents aged 65 years and older. It also has a very high number of widowed individuals. The family composition of Edenhope skews towards households without children, but there are also working age parents with young children. Children in Edenhope are typically under 15 years of age. There are not many residents in Edenhope aged in their 20s and 30s.

6.3 Housing

Despite population decline, the town will need to accommodate some growth in dwellings – up to 3 per year according to forecasts. There are adequate parcels of vacant TZ land that could be used for housing, including, for example, a 5 hectare parcel on the corner of the Wimmera Highway and Lake Street as well as numbers of vacant lots in the south west of the town and on the western edge of the town. There are some parcels of land that are zoned TZ but which may not be suitable for housing development, including the Back Swamp area in the south-east of the town and the area on the eastern shores of Lake Wallace around the water treatment facility.

Providing services to the larger parcels of land may make the feasibility of development difficult. In this circumstance, there may be ways in which Council could take a long term interest in the development of the land by, for example, providing up-front funding for infrastructure which is recouped on the sale of lots.

There is an urgent need for key worker housing to allow the town to grow.

6.4 Economic Profile

The district produces mainly sheep, beef and broadacre crops with a total gross value of $303 million in 2021 (ABS, Data by region for West Wimmera SA2). This farming effort directly supports a range of businesses in the town including transport operators and a small abattoir.

The town wraps around the southern end of Lake Wallace, which provides a distinctive backdrop and recreational resource as well as being popular with visitors. Visitation to Edenhope and surrounds is supported by the presence of commercial accommodation including a caravan park and motel as well as short stay homes for rent. The racecourse, golf course, team sports facilities, nature conservation reserve and lakeshore walking trails all provide visitors with ample outdoor recreational opportunities. In the future, there may be potential for specialty accommodation – lakeside glamping, historic homes, ecotourism ventures, farm stays or permaculture farms – as well as potential to capitalise on

the unique dune and swale environment of West Wimmera and its local and regional produce through specialty outlets.

Edenhope has an extensive area of land zoned for industrial purposes. The land is located on both sides of the Coleraine-Edenhope Road at the south eastern entry to the town, with a narrow extension along George Street to Scrubby Lake Road. The land comprises approximately 32 hectares to accommodate the Edenhope Abattoir and 13 hectares to accommodate general industry. The general industrial land along the main road has largely been taken up (albeit with a low level of intensity) and includes activities such as the Shire depot. The land along George Street remains largely vacant and undeveloped. In the absence of a substantial incoming investor, the remaining land should be sufficient for local industrial needs, particularly since local industrial sectors have been ~~declining~~ changing substantially in recent years. Should further land be required, there is ample land immediately to the east of the existing zoned land, although this would need to be subject to environmental and engineering investigations.

6.5 Movement and Transport



Electric Vehicle Charging Station – Edenhope

Edenhope is on the Wimmera Highway, one of the routes from Victoria to the popular Coonawarra wine district. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Edenhope is via private vehicle. There are very limited public transport options available for residents in Edenhope with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays. There is an EV charging station on Anzac Avenue for electric vehicles.

6.6 Physical Infrastructure

Reticulated water and sewage are provided to the town and recycled water is also in use. The Golf Club uses recycled water from the water treatment plant. Trade waste stresses the current wastewater system and needs to be augmented. Drinking water quality needs to be upgraded and there are also water quality issues in Edenhope with saline bores.

6.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The town has a small hospital that accommodates a nursing home and urgent care services. A government P-12 school is one of three secondary facilities in the Shire. There is also a kindergarten and Catholic primary school. Edenhope has childcare and maternal child health services. The town has a library in the community hall, sports facilities and an old court house which is used as a visitor information centre and museum.

The key features of the main street commercial centre in Elizabeth Street are:

- The intact strip of commercial buildings developed mainly between 1930 and 1990.
- The small supermarket.
- Two significant hardware/rural supplies stores.
- The civic and social infrastructure including the Shire Hall, library, visitor information and prominent Catholic church.
- The Lake Wallace Hotel.
- Two banks.
- A small range of specialty shops, cafes and local shop-front services including legal, financial and veterinary services.
- The public amenities and visitor parking on Anzac Avenue.



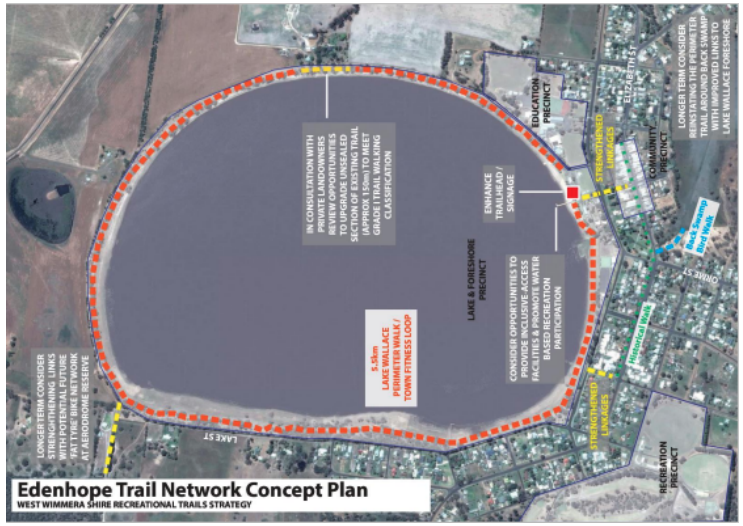
Edenhope Community Garden

While the strip would once have been occupied principally by retailers, there are now a range of other services – including health, ~~financial ,~~financial, community and galleries. This is in keeping with trends throughout the retail sector.

Nearby Lake Charlegrark and Lake Bringalbert attract people to the region for recreation and tourism and are important cultural and community assets and provide opportunities for the town through visitor services including accommodation and hospitality.

Beyond the retail core of Edenhope, recreational facilities including Lake Wallace are key assets for the Edenhope community and visitors. The image below shows the Edenhope Trail Network Concept Plan.

Most of the Lake Wallace Perimeter Trail will be upgraded to an accessible walking trail with connectivity back to the town centre. There are two properties currently in private ownership that do not wish to have the bitumen Perimeter Trail along their properties. This area has been fenced off and there is a hole in the fence to provide access to a gravel path for local residents. The Edenhope Fat Tyre Cross Country Bike Loop is also a high priority project for the Shire as well as upgrading the Edenhope to Apsley Cycling Route.



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy November 2018

6.8 Built Form and Heritage

Edenhope is comprised of several historic buildings along its wide main street. The intact strip of commercial buildings was developed mainly between 1930 and 1990. The township extends along the Wimmera Highway for the most part and the key feature of Edenhope is Lake Wallace. Most of the houses in the town are single storey weatherboard buildings with some newer houses fronting Lake Wallace.

In 1866, the Edenhope cricket club recruited Thomas Wills who had played for the Rugby School football and cricket teams in England, cricket for Marylebone and for the Victorian cricket team. He became a coach of an Aboriginal cricket team which was the first Australian team to tour England in 1868. The team's famous batsman, Johnny Mullagh, is buried at Harrow, and there is a memorial to the cricket team in the grounds of the Edenhope secondary college, beside Lake Wallace, where Wills coached the team.

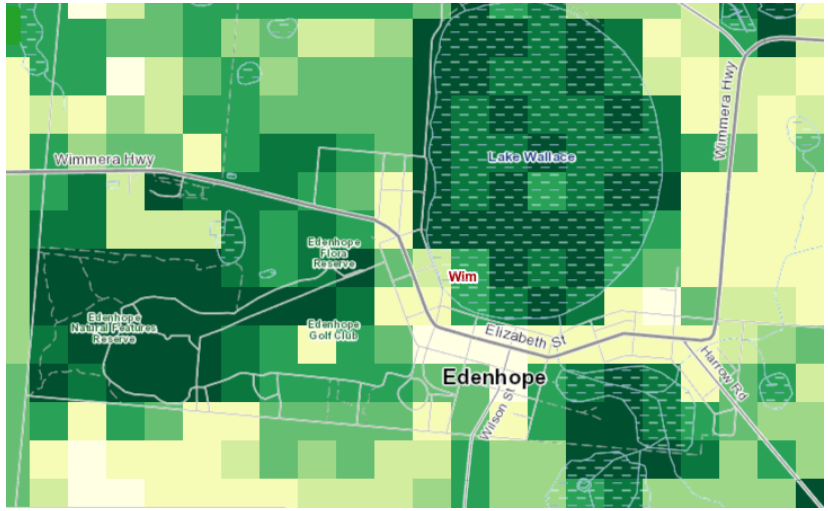
6.9 Landscape and Environment

There is a risk of flooding in Edenhope. A flood study for the town is currently underway and is expected to be finished in 2025. A consistent water level in Lake Wallace is an ongoing issue for the town and there are also frequent blue-green algae blooms.

There is a risk of bushfire in Edenhope with areas outside of the township boundary covered by a BMO. There is a Place of Last Resort in case of bushfire sited at the Lake Wallace Reserve corner of land and Anzac Avenue. This is part of the Neighbourhood Safer Places program for the West Wimmera Shire.

Edenhope is located on flat, undulating plains. The dominant ecosystems are - Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils. The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland. A Biodiversity audit is needed for the Back Swamp site. There is an ESO over the town to protect and preserve habitat for the Red Tail Cockatoo.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green which are in Lake Wallace and the Edenhope Natural Features Reserve.



6.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- A consistent water level in Lake Wallace is an ongoing issue for the town.
- There are frequent blue-green algae blooms in Lake Wallace.
- There is risk of flood in some areas of the town.
- There is risk of fire.
- Public transport is very limited and residents are reliant on private transport.
- There are not enough staff or places for childcare.
- The quality of the drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.

Opportunities

- Recreational tourism is a major driver of the economy and this could be further enhanced to service the “silver economy” as well as selling regional produce.

- Need to ensure that the town centre remains attractive and that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land for growing activities and supporting local enterprises to grow.
- The usage of the foreshore space and infrastructure on the Lake Wallace foreshore could be further optimised and connectivity improved back to the commercial centre.
- Provide more seating, shade and barbecues in the Lake Wallace foreshore area.
- Wayfinding signage around Edenhope and to Lake Wallace could be improved/increased.
- Place activation at the western end of Elizabeth Street could be promoted.
- A community bus service could be provided allow travel between the towns for community services.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- Original town buildings could provide future tourism and housing opportunities.
- Provide marketing of the town's connection to cricket and rugby to attract visitors to the town.
- Tourism opportunities would be enhanced by increases to the overnight accommodation offer in the town.
- The creation of home-based businesses and creative industries employment would be facilitated by high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite).
- The Back Swamp site should be protected from future development.
- More key worker housing would allow the town to grow.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Edenhope are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Edenhope Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Edenhope
Catchment Population	Up to 2,700
Role in the Hierarchy	District Town
Existing Infrastructure	Reticulated drinking water, reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Hospital, hotels, professional civic and recreational services, some retailing including hardware and agricultural services
Growth Capacity	The town has capacity to grow
Expected Outcomes	Minimal growth expected
Recommendations	• Prepare and implement a Structure Plan for Edenhope. • Complete and implement the Edenhope flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • Prepare a bushfire study and direct any new development away from areas of high bushfire risk. • ~~Drinking~~ Advocate for upgrades to the town's drinking water ~~needs to be upgraded for the town~~. • Advocate for a community bus service between Edenhope and the surrounding towns • ~~Strengthen~~ Work with businesses to strengthen the overnight accommodation offer. • Undertake a biodiversity audit for the Back Swamp site to inform appropriate zoning for that area. • Ensure that the town centre remains attractive and that that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land for growing activities and supporting local enterprises to grow. • ~~The~~ Optimise usage of the foreshore space and infrastructure on the Lake Wallace foreshore ~~needs to be optimised~~ and improve connectivity improved to the commercial centre. • Improve w~~W~~ayfinding signage around Edenhope and to Lake Wallace should be ~~improved/increased.~~ • Promote place activation at the western end of Elizabeth Street commercial centre.

	• Explore opportunities to repurpose original township buildings to provide an increase in tourism and housing. • Market the town's connection to cricket and rugby. • Advocate for high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite) to facilitate the~~The~~ creation of home-based businesses and creative industries employment~~. would be facilitated~~ by ~~high-speed internet (NBN fixed wireless or satellite).~~ • ~~Provide~~ Facilitate key worker housing to allow the town to grow. • Explore opportunities to enhance r~~R~~ecreational Tourism ~~is~~ as a major driver of the economy and this could be further enhanced to service the "silver economy" as well as selling regional produce. • Review the extent of urban growth outside the settlement boundary particularly surrounding Lake Wallace. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Consider extending the town boundary to include all of Lake Wallace to recognise the importance of this asset to the community and its contribution to the town's recreation and amenity. • Consider including the Industrial 1 and 3 zoned land on Coleraine-Edenhope Road into the town boundary to reflect its existing use and to provide clear direction on where industrial uses should be located. • Consider including the Township Zoned land on the west side of Lake Wallace into the town boundary to reflect its current residential land uses and Township zoning. • Include the Edenhope Racecourse and Edenhope Flora Reserve and Natural Features Reserve (PCRZ) into the town boundary to recognise the importance of these facilities to the town's recreation and community facilities.


GOROKE
& DISTRICT
MEMORIAL HALL
GOROKE

7. GOROKE

Goroke is a rural township in the centre of the Shire, midway between Horsham and the South Australian border. It is 10 km south of the Little Desert. The name is thought to have been derived from an Aboriginal word meaning magpie.

Goroke was established to serve the surrounding farm district which produces mainly wool, lamb, beef and cereals. The town is close to Lake Charlegrark and Lake Booroopki and many other district lakes, which provide for variousvisitor and recreational pursuits including yabbying, fishing, bird and wildlife watching. The Goroke town extends along Main Street with the Community Health Centre and Goroke College well separated from the hub of the town, located some 900 metres east of the centre. Rural land separates the hub of the town from the school, health centre and a handful of dwellings. The town context map is shown in **Figure 17**.

The Goroke area was occupied for pastoral runs in the mid-1840s. Farm allotments were taken up in the Goroke area in the late 1870s. A school was opened at Gymbowen, 10 km east of Goroke in 1881, and the Goroke school was opened in 1885. Goroke township was surveyed in 1882. Within a few years, the Victorian municipal directory recorded Goroke as having some stores, a flour mill, a hotel and a mechanics' institute. An agricultural and pastoral society was formed in 1887. The railway line was extended form Natimuk to Goroke in 1894, connecting it to Horsham.

Between 1910 and World War II, Goroke maintained a population of about 350-400 people with a bush-nursing centre and a memorial hall. In 1927 the railway line was extended further west to Carpolac. After World War II there was an influx of population as large pastoral holdings were subdivided, some being taken up by soldier settlers. In the early 1950s, several small district primary schools were closed and pupils bused to a consolidated school at Goroke. Education to years 10 and 11 was provided during the 1960s, with an active Young Farmers' Club attached to the school.

7.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Goroke is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Goroke.

The RGP states that *"a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services"*.

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-04

Clause 11.01-1L-04 Settlement - Goroke provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to encourage commercial and industrial activities to locate along the main street or in the vicinity of the grain receiving silo. The clause supports the establishment of a walking and bicycle path alongside the train line that can connect with other rail trails emerging throughout the Wimmera region. The Clause 11.01-1L-04 settlement framework for Goroke is shown in **Figure 18**.

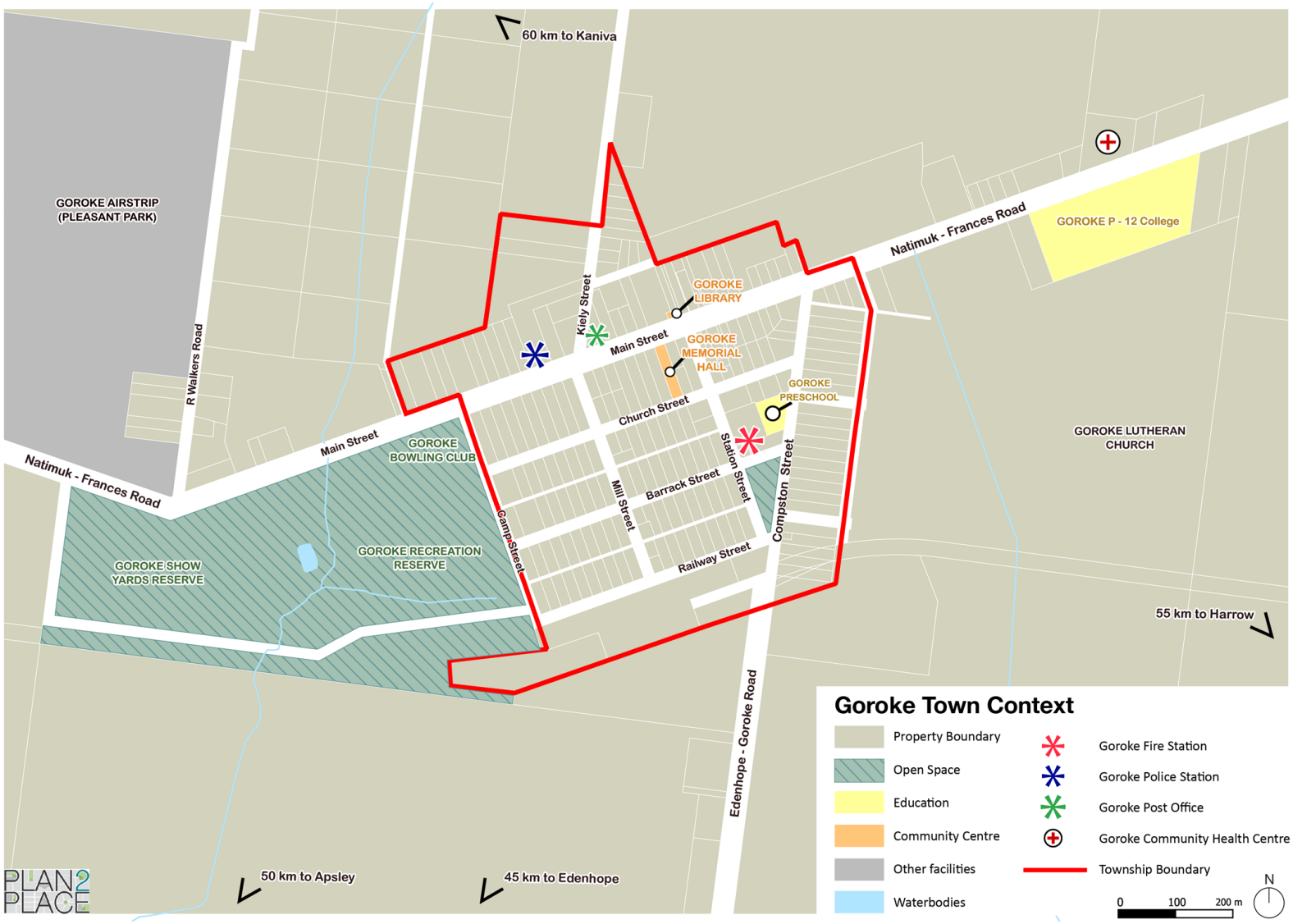


Figure 17: Goroke Context Map

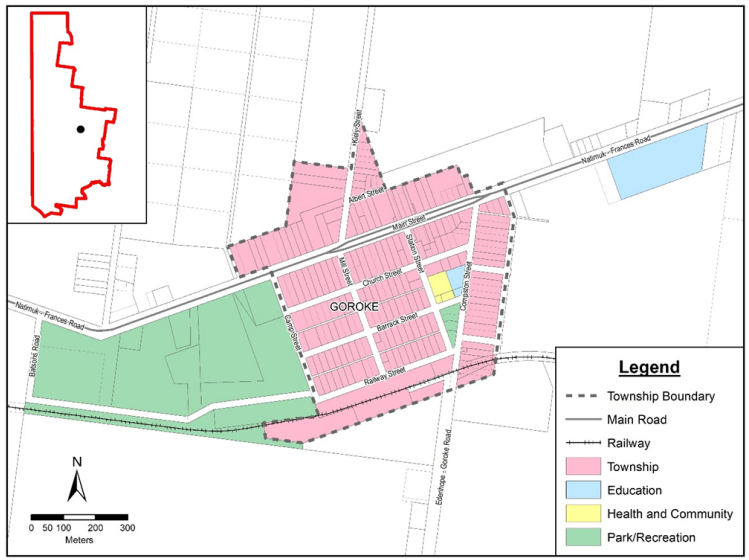


Figure 18: Goroke Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Goroke are shown in **Figure 19** and summarised below.

- The TZ applies to land within Goroke.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The PUZ2 applies to the Goroke P-12 college site and to the Goroke Preschool site.
- The PUZ5 applies to the Goroke Cemetery Reserve.
- The PUZ – Schedule 3 (PUZ3) applies to the Goroke Fire Station site.
- The PPRZ applies to the Goroke Recreation Reserve.
- The TRZ2 has been applied to the Natimuk Frances Road that runs through the centre of Goroke.



Figure 19: Goroke - Existing Zones

One relevant overlay within the WWPS affecting Goroke is shown in **Figure 20** and summarised as follows.

- The ESO2 is applied to all of the land surrounding Goroke to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

7.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Goroke had a population of 208 people. Goroke is experiencing a reducing population, which in turn is placing pressure on the ability of the town to provide services to residents in the town and the region.

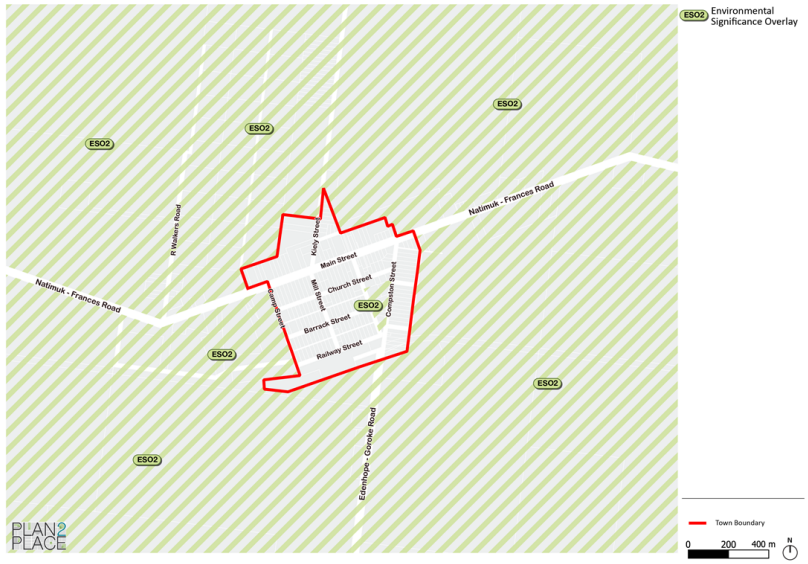


Figure 20: Goroke - Existing Overlays

7.3 Housing

The local population is expected to continue to decline slowly but there may be occasional demand for a new house in the town. This may include demand for homes suitable for older people from the town and district who would like to age in place but do not want a large house.

The town is sewered, but the reticulated ground water is not safe to drink according to GWM Water. This may reduce demand from new residents who could seek to locate elsewhere. Within the town grid, there are several vacant lots in a range of sizes that would be suitable for single dwellings or multi-unit development.

7.4 Economic Profile

Goroke is on the Silo Art Trail and has some visitation associated with trips to the Little Desert, just to the north. The disused railway line (the old Carpolac Line) appears to provide a largely intact trail from Goroke to Natimuk which could be developed as a rail trail in the future. There is potential to formalise this trail as a cycle route as far as Horsham. There is potential to attract visitors from the regional centre of Horsham which is around 47 minutes to the east. Visitors could be attracted by food and wine offerings, art, retail offer and services to local outdoor pursuits. These kinds of activities would depend on the willingness of local entrepreneurs and Council may be able to assist by ensuring that streetscapes remain attractive. Shade trees are likely to be increasingly important for visitor and resident comfort.

There is no designated industrial land in Goroke. Grain Corp silos operate from land zoned TZ and there is, or has been, small farm-related engineering works on Main Street. No significant industrial activity is anticipated for the township and any such demand should be redirected to towns with designated industrial precincts.

Given the forecast decline in population, resident demand is unlikely to generate support for new retail activity in the centre. There may be some scope to reuse vacant buildings to deliver temporary services or to provide co-working spaces for residents and visiting professionals. The centre has several buildings that could be adapted for new activities. There may also be potential for some of the buildings in the centre to be reused for housing temporary workers on assignment in the district, this could include farm-workers, or those involved in infrastructure projects.

Should there be any future demand for development in the town centre, priority should be given to the repurposing of existing buildings.

7.5 Movement and Transport

Goroke is centred on Natimuk – Frances Road. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Goroke is via private vehicle. There are very limited public transport options available for residents with a once a day service between Naracoorte and Horsham on weekdays.

7.6 Physical Infrastructure

Goroke is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. GWM Water has worked with the West Wimmera Shire Council investing in Goroke to provide a new sewerage system. The Goroke Sewerage Scheme will provide residents with a reliable, and effective wastewater collection and treatment system. The sewerage scheme will use current septic

tanks on properties and deliver a reliable and effective wastewater collection and treatment system which will contribute to the prosperity and future growth of the town. The Goroke Caravan Park is now connected to the sewerage scheme.

Construction of Stage 1 of the Goroke Sewerage Scheme was completed in October 2021. In March 2022 the Goroke Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed. Stage 2 of the Goroke Sewerage Scheme was completed in June 2024.

7.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Goroke has some community infrastructure including a Community Health Centre and Goroke College, however they are not well connected to the main township and are separated by rural land and some dwellings. There is also a kindergarten in the town.

The core social infrastructure including the library, town hall, public toilets, Men's shed, agricultural services, farm engineering and parkland are all located within two blocks of the town centre. The commercial core supports a mix of local businesses, including an IGA supermarket, café, service station, post office and The Goroke Hotel.

VicTrack currently owns land in Goroke which was part of the former part of the former Carpolac Railway line which branched off from Horsham. The line has been closed since the 1980s and the railway station grounds were disposed of some time ago. There is an opportunity to create a rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk along the disused rail line.

Goroke is close to wetlands and lakes including Lake Charlegrark that could possibly be further utilised for ecotourism. There is also a town walk trail that is being created by the West Wimmera Shire Council in partnership with the community.

7.8 Built Form and Heritage

The residential street network forms a grid pattern to the south of the main road, and houses within easy walking distance of the town centre, churches and other community services and facilities. Church Street has three churches and Railway Street includes the railway siding and silos which are visible from the surrounding area. Goroke is 'book-ended' by the Prep-Year 12 school, and health centre at its eastern edge.



Goroke Men's Shed

The highway splits into a dual carriageway through the town centre Main Street with a median strip that has shade trees and parking. There are several vacant commercial premises as well as many former commercial buildings that appear to have been repurposed for housing. A series of recreational facilities are located to the west of the town, including a sports ground, outdoor swimming pool, showgrounds and a caravan park.

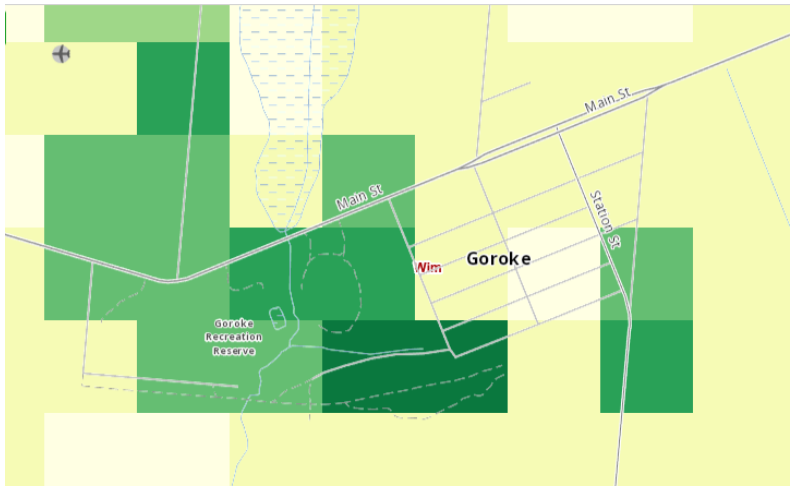
7.9 Landscape and Environment

Roadside vegetation on the way into Goroke is of high value. Connectivity in the landscape is important for biodiversity and to provide biodiversity corridors. There are also several registered Trust for Nature blocks just outside of town.

Goroke is part of the Wimmera bioregion, located in the far west of the central Victoria, and is typified by flat to gently undulating plains in the east, with black and grey cracking clay soils (Vertosols). Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland are the dominant ecosystems. The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach

ridges interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils (Vertosols and Sodosols). The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with the area of the highest value in the darkest green which is part of the Goroke Recreation Reserve.



7.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town.

Issues

- Drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.
- There is very limited public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport.
- There are no childcare services available for residents.
- Needs key worker housing to allow the town to grow.
- ~~Declining~~ An ~~and~~ ageing and reducing population ~~-~~ which impacts viability of the school and investment in retail.
- Challenges to accessing health care services.

Opportunities

- Provide a community bus service to surrounding towns.
- Many of the main street buildings are currently empty and could be upgraded subject to funding.
- A rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk through to Horsham along the old Carpolac Line.
- There is potential for some of the buildings in the centre to be repurposed for housing temporary workers on assignment in the Shire.
- There is an economic development opportunity for ecotourism in the area.
- Plant more street trees to provide more shade in summer.
- Provide a greater diversity of housing for older people to age in place and stay in the town.
- Goroke is part of the Silo Art trail which attracts visitors to the town.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Goroke are detailed in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Goroke Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Goroke
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, Septic Tank Effluent Drainage sewerage system
Other Services Available	Hotel, take away, Post Office, Library, men's shed, community health, community hall, agricultural services, silo art
Growth Capacity	Low due to lack of drinking water and Septic Tank Effluent Drainage sewerage system
Expected Outcomes	Negligible Change
Recommendations	• Explore providing drinking water to the town. • Advocate for community bus services between Goroke and the surrounding towns. • ~~Provide~~ Explore opportunities for childcare services to meet the needs of residents. • Explore opportunities to upgrade Main Street buildings to provide an increase in tourism (building on the Silo Art trail) and housing. • Investigate creating a rail trail from Goroke to Natimuk through to Horsham along the old Carpolac Line. • ~~Reuse~~ Work with land owners to reuse buildings in the centre to house temporary workers on assignment in the Shire. • Support economic development opportunities for eco-tourism in the area. • Plant more street trees to provide shade in summer. • Explore options to diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Include the Goroke P-12 College into the town boundary. • Consider including land on the north side of Natimuk-Frances Road into the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current land uses and consider rezoning to an urban zone (e.g. LDRZ). • Include the Goroke Show Yards Reserve, Recreation Reserve and Bowling Club facility into the town boundary to reflect their important role as community facilities.



HARROW

8. HARROW

Harrow is a small pastoral town located on the banks of the Glenelg River, beneath the rolling hills and grand old red gums. Harrow is particularly picturesque, boasting several heritage buildings which significantly contribute to the town's beauty and visitor potential. The town is located in the south of the Shire and served by the Coleraine-Edenhope Road. The town is a historic service town for the surrounding farm district where wool, lamb and beef are the main products. The town context map is shown in **Figure 21**.

Harrow is situated at a crossing place on the Glenelg River. In 1849, a postal receiving place, the Foresters Arms Inn, a store and a blacksmith were constructed. In 1852 the township was surveyed. The surveyor renamed the place Harrow, presumably inspired by Harrow, England. A police post was established in the town in 1853.

Harrow is a very early distant inland town, although Apsley (closer to the border) was surveyed a year earlier. Its oldest surviving building is a log gaol (1859). A Presbyterian church was constructed in the early 1860s and served as the first school building which opened in 1869.

The town is set in hilly surrounds, beyond which are plains occupied by several historic pastoral properties. They include Clunie Estate with a large bluestone woolshed, Pine Hills (c1858), Mullagh Station (1866) and Kout Norien (c1855). A slab cottage, woolshed and other outbuildings (1848) at Kout Norien are on the Victorian Heritage Register. Mullagh Station's name was attached to an Aboriginal cricketer, Johnny Mullagh, who was in Australia's first touring side in 1867. He is buried in the Harrow cemetery. The annual Mullagh Cricket Cup (1995) is contested each year in Harrow between the Indigenous descendants of the first Australian team versus cricketers from the Western District of Victoria. A mechanics' institute was opened in 1878, a flour mill in 1890, and by the turn of the century Harrow had several stores, two hotels and a population of about 250 people.

8.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Harrow is defined as a Small Settlement in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Access to services, economic diversification, providing infrastructure and managing change from significant investment are important for Harrow.

The RGP states that *"a small settlement (urban centres of less than 500 people) will play a role in providing for complementary functions to the larger nearby towns. They will need to continue to share services and facilities with other settlements in their community of interest and maintain services for their local communities. Larger towns will generally provide the size and critical mass to support higher services"*.

In the RGP, future directions for a Small Settlement are to:

- Plan for small settlements to manage local challenges and help these communities to be adaptable and resilient.
- Encourage small settlements to contribute to their local communities of interest to enable good access to key services.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-05

Clause 11.01-1L-05 Settlement - Harrow provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to avoid development within the floodplain of the Glenelg River. The clause ensures built form is responsive to Harrow's rural valley setting and that development enhances the town's historic 19th Century pastoral character. The Clause 11.01-1L-05 settlement framework for Harrow is shown in **Figure 22**.

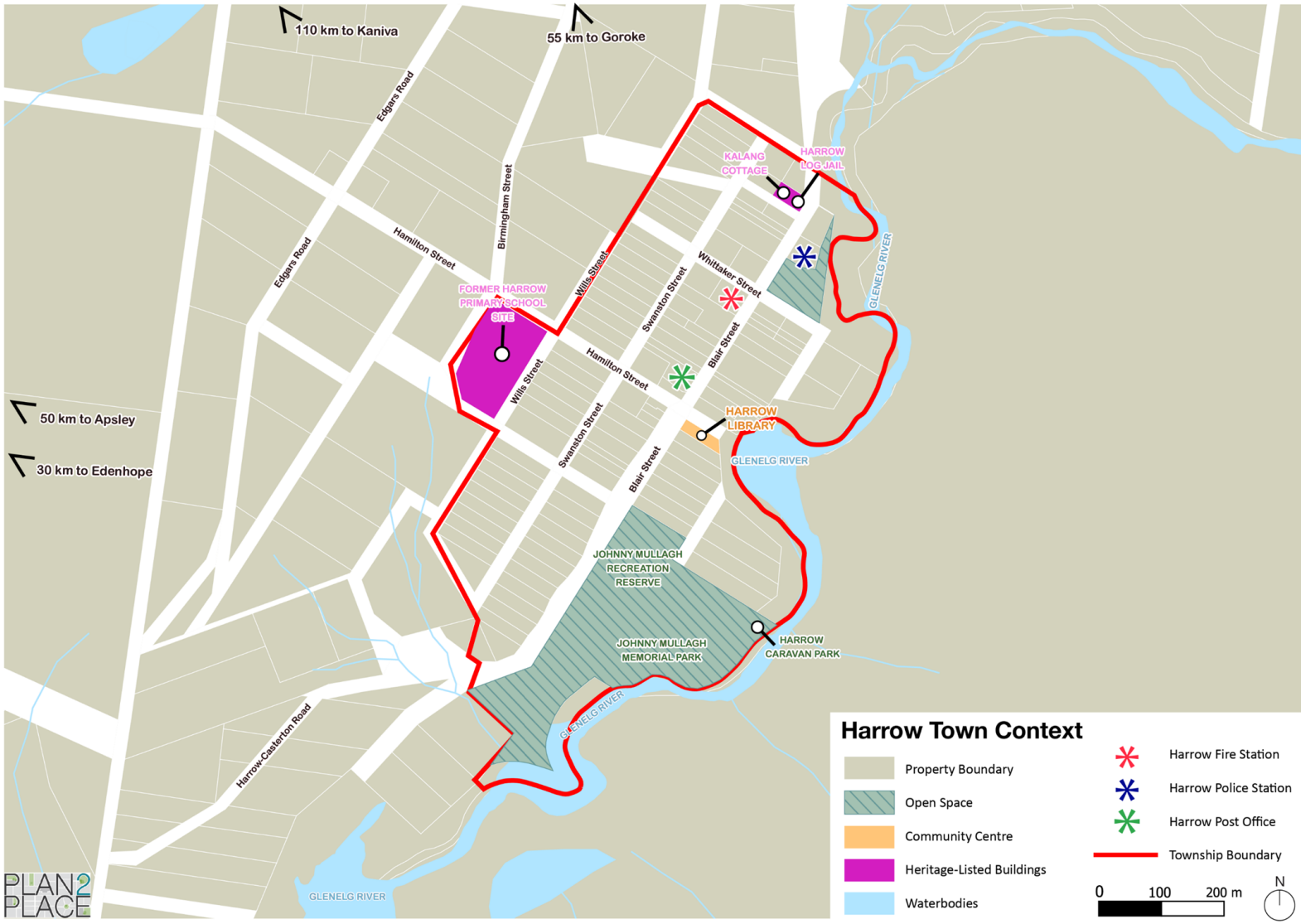


Figure 21: Harrow Context Map

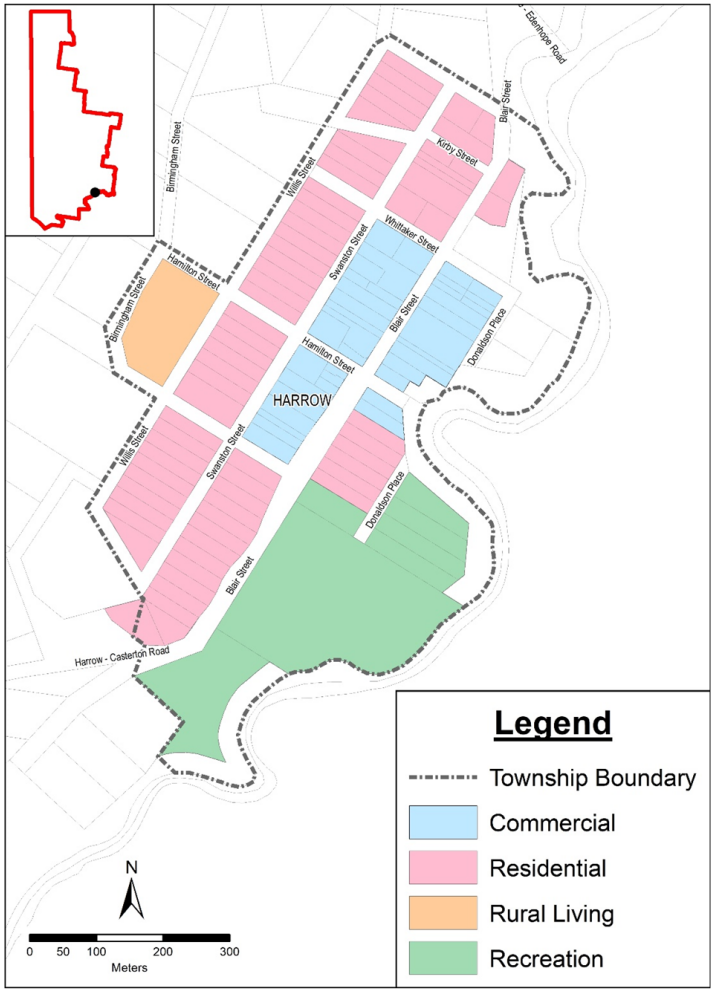


Figure 22: Harrow Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Harrow are shown in **Figure 23** and the are summarised below.

- The TZ applies to land within Harrow.
- The RLZ applies to the former Harrow Primary School site.
- The PPRZ applies to the caravan park.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The PCRZ is applied to the Johhny Mullagh Recreation Reserve to provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes and to provide for appropriate resource based uses.
- The TRZ applies to the Coleraine - Edenhope Road that runs through the centre of Harrow.

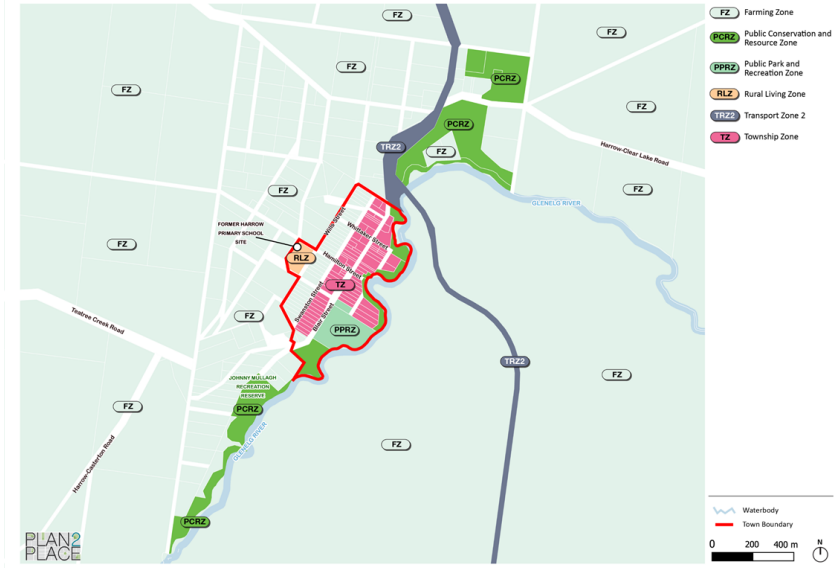


Figure 23: Harrow - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Harrow are shown in **Figure 24** and are summarised below.

- The ESO2 applies to all of the land within and surrounding Harrow to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The BMO applies land within Harrow and much of the land surrounding the town.

- The HO applies to two sites within Harrow which are the Log Gaol built in 1859 and the Presbyterian church which was constructed in the early 1860s and served as the first school building which opened in 1869.
- The LSIO applies along the edge of the Glenelg River in Harrow to identify flood prone land that will be affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood.

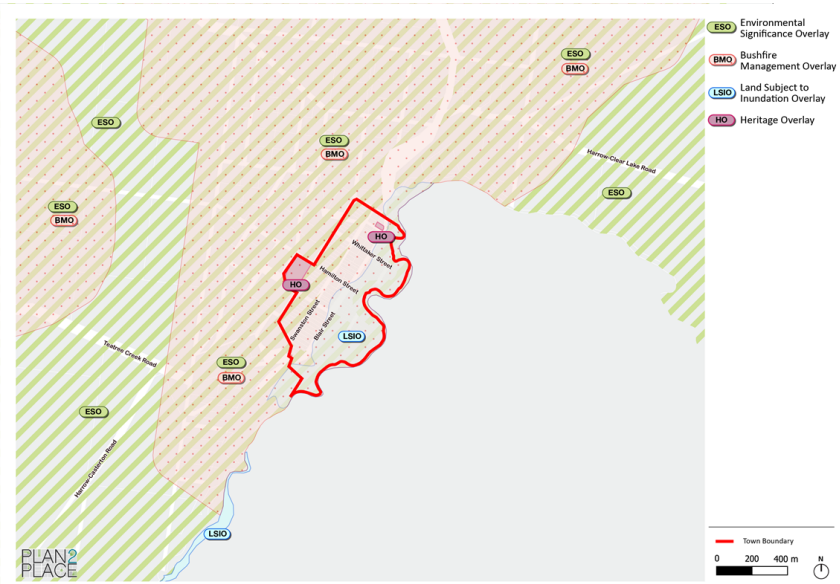


Figure 24: Harrow - Existing Overlays

The LSIO has been placed in Harrow along the Glenelg River to ensure that any development in Harrow:

- Maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.
- Minimises the potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with development.
- Reflects the declaration under Division 4 of Part 10 of the Water Act 1989.
- Protects water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.
- Ensures that it maintains or improves river, marine, coastal and wetland health, waterway protection and floodplain health.

8.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Harrow and the surrounding area had a population of 184 people. The town has a current population of approximately 170 which is forecast to continue to decline over the period to 2036.

8.3 Housing

The township has a unique, heavily treed setting in which the main commercial centre, Blair Street, runs beside the river floodplain, although many of the houses of the town are on the hillside above Blair Street to the west.

The local population is projected to continue to decline but there may be occasional demand for a new house in the town with people attracted to the natural beauty of the town.

The town is not served by sewerage and the reticulated ground water is not safe to drink according to GWM Water. These factors may reduce the demand from new residents who could seek safer options.

The Township Zone (TZ) covers only the land either side of Blair Street and not the land in larger allotments on the slopes to the west and north. Given the lack of sewerage services, the larger lots may be the only ones capable of accommodating new dwellings and the necessary septic tanks. There appears to be several vacant lots in this area, although the land is subject to the BMO.

8.4 Economic Profile

Harrow is a town with a significant heritage, being one of the first towns to be gazetted in Victoria~~the area~~. This is reflected in many of the buildings on Blair Street. This heritage and the bush-setting is attractive to visitors and provides a substantial underpinning of the commercial activities of the town, including several accommodation providers. There may be opportunities to expand this

visitor offering to include destination accommodation, food, wine, art and indigenous heritage.

There is no industrial land in the township and little industrial activity. Given the sloping topography and the fire risk, the township is not suited to industrial development, which should be redirected to industrial precincts at Edenhope and elsewhere.

8.5 Movement and Transport

Harrow is located along Blair Street just off the Coleraine-Edenhope Road. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Harrow is via private vehicle. There is currently no public transport currently available for residents of the town.

8.6 Physical Infrastructure

Harrow is supplied by tank water as there is no reticulated drinking water currently available to the town. Ground and surface water is not safe for drinking, however, water can be used for household activities, such as watering gardens, flushing toilets, irrigation and laundry. It can also be used for showering or bathing if caution is exercised. Drinking water could be piped in from Edenhope or Coleraine in the future subject to funding.

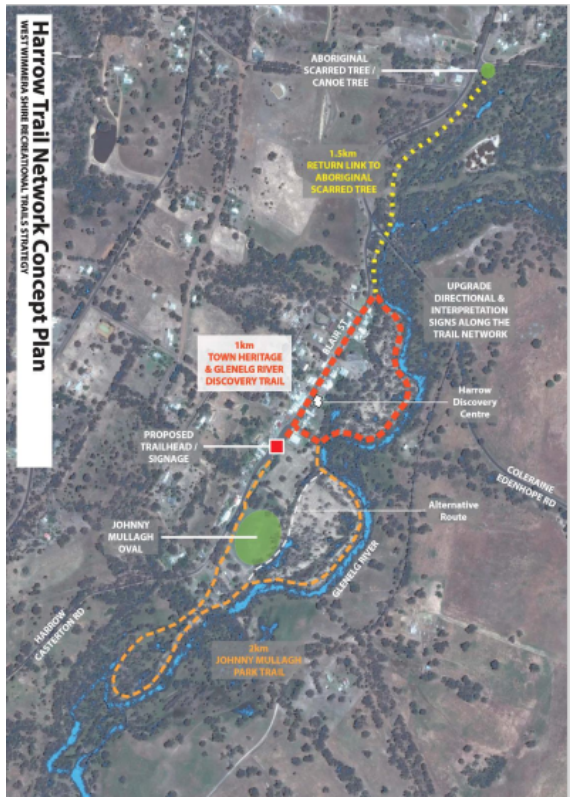
All houses are serviced by septic tanks as there is no wastewater treatment plant servicing the town with reticulated sewerage.

8.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The township has a small commercial and community centre. The town centre activities are dispersed along Blair Street and includes a combined post office/café and general store which provides a very limited range of fresh food and a stand alone general store. The Hermitage Hotel includes accommodation and there is a gift shop and a collectibles shop. There is the Harrow discovery centre, a garage and service station and an agricultural supplies outlet.

Harrow has a police station, fire station and a bush nursing centre. There is an RSL and Mechanics Institute (the library). The nearest schools are at Edenhope and Balmoral.

At the southern end of Blair Street, away from the town centre, is a Caravan Park with recently developed cabins owned by DEECA run by a Committee of Management.



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy Nov 2018

The Glenelg River is used for recreation activities such as fishing and canoeing. No powerboats are allowed on the river. There is a popular swimming hole near the caravan park along with riverside parks and walking trails. The West Wimmera Recreational Trails (2018) lists the Glenelg River Walking Trail at Harrow as a high priority project to be upgraded. This walking trail is designed to include signage that speaks to the local Indigenous history of the area as well as the early European contact in the area. There is also scope to introduce a horse riding trail

between Harrow and Dergholm and to develop the Glenelg River Canoe Trail from Harrow to Dergholm.

8.8 Built Form and Heritage

The town enjoys a very high level of amenity due to its well preserved heritage architecture, its location on the Glenelg River and the associated corridor of open space. Views into Harrow are limited due to the rolling landform and dense native vegetation screening. This creates a great sense of arrival entering from the highway as the road drops down to the centre of town. Once in the township, the steep, vegetated hills and limited sightlines create a sense of enclosure.

Harrow's sense of history resulted in the formation of a historical society in 1969, with an eye to the preservation of the log gaol. The gaol has since been listed on the Australian and Victorian heritage registers. Mullagh and Pine Hills homesteads are also on the Australian register, along with old bluestone offices which served the Kowree Shire during 1872-87.

The Presbyterian church was by far the grander, replacing an earlier structure in 1884 and the Anglicans built a church in 1933. Unusual in a town of such size, a bush nursing centre was opened in 1913, and it was rebuilt in 1995 at a time when such facilities were at risk of closure.



Historic Building – Harrow

Harrow has three church buildings, the bush nursing centre, the mechanics' institute, the Hermitage Hotel, a general store, a museum, a recreation reserve, a golf club and tennis courts. The school closed in 2002. The Johnny Mullagh Cricket Centre was developed by the Harrow community as a means of celebrating the story of the 1868 Aboriginal cricket team and the history of the Harrow township.[2]

There is ample on-street parking for residents, visitors and tourists in the central area of town. The majority of Harrow is zoned TZ, with the exception of the river corridor (PCRZ) and the Jonny Mullagh Reserve (PPRZ). A small area of land to the north of the town is zoned rural living (RLZ), and Council has identified this area as suitable for additional rural living development.

8.9 Landscape and Environment

The Glenelg River is a Victorian Heritage River. It is a regulated river system with water storage at Rocklands that was built in 1944 being kept 70% full due to structural issues with the dam. Water is periodically released downstream into the Glenelg River.

The Glenelg River provides habitat for rare and engendered fish and aquatic species. The estuary and has an ESO to protect habitat for the Red Tail Black Cockatoo.

Harrow is subject to flooding from the Glenelg River and land to the east of Blair Street is subject to an inundation overlay and the recent 2022 flood was approximately 1 metre deep. Harrow is in a valley that is at risk of significant flooding.

Current flood mapping was prepared in 2017 and may not be consistent with current climate change risk mitigation standards. These maps need to be updated to be compliant with current standards. A flood investigation report is currently underway for Harrow and new flood maps are being prepared for implementation into the WWPS. **Figure 25** shows the extent of flooding in a 1% AEP Flooding event.

Harrow and its surrounding area is affected by a BMO. There is a high risk of bushfire for the town as experienced in the summer of 2024-25. There are access

[2] *History. https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/harrow*

constraints for residents and visitors in the case of bushfire as there is only one road into the town and one road out.

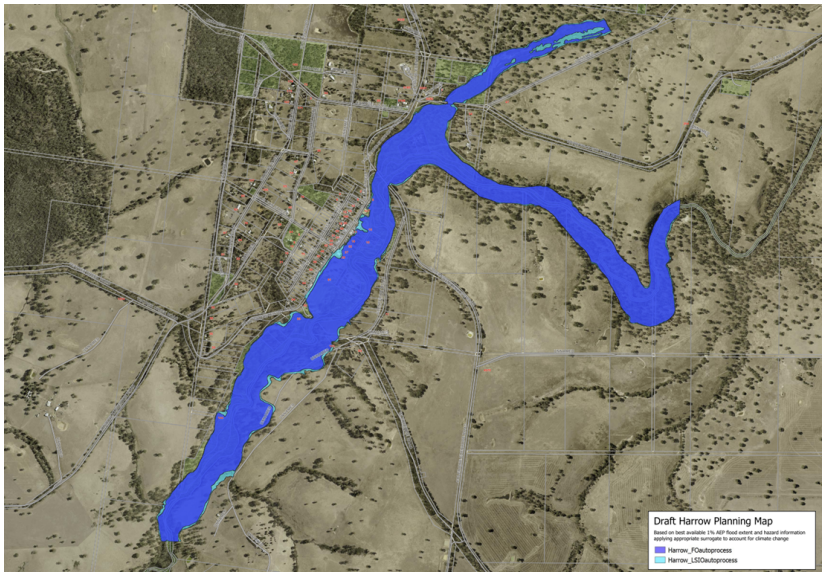


Figure 25: Draft Harrow Flood Map 1% AEP Flood Extent

Harrow is part of the Dundas Tablelands Bioregion and is located in the south-west of the State. The land is made up of a hard ironstone layer which resists erosion. Streams have cut deep narrow valleys across the tablelands. Black earths (Dermosols) dominate the valleys and the dissected Merino Tablelands, yellow texture contrast soils (Chromosols and Sodosols) and cracking clays (Vertosols) dominate the rest of the table tops. The bioregion includes an area south of the Grampians which does not have such strongly expressed tableland features but supports a similar range of ecosystems.

The vegetation is a complex mosaic of Plains Grassy Woodland, Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, Grassy Woodland and Creekline Grassy Woodland ecosystems. There are many areas of high value habitat close to Harrow that need to be preserved and protected. The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with the area of the highest value in the darkest green along the Glenelg River.



8.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- There is significant risk of flooding from the Glenelg River, with the eastern side of Blair Street subject to flooding.
- There is significant bushfire risk with one road in and one road out.
- There is a steep escarpment creating a barrier to movement and potentially development.

- The town is serviced by septic tanks.
- Drinking water needs to be upgraded for the town.
- There is no public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport to move between towns.
- A bushfire assessment will need to be undertaken before any new development or structure planning work can commence.
- Currently projected for a reduction in population.

Opportunities

- The historic built form and natural beauty is an opportunity to attract residents and grow tourism in the town.
- There are under-utilised buildings and vacant lots that could accommodate new commercial and residential development along with visitor accommodation.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- There may be potential for some additional services.
- Additional tourism retailing is an opportunity including arts-related facilities.
- Provide a community bus service to surrounding towns.
- Capitalise on the history of Harrow while ensuring that the heritage of the township is preserved and enhanced.
- Land high on the escarpment is out of the flood area and could be suited to future development, noting this land is subject to the BMO.
- Plant more street trees to provide more shade in summer.
- Consider opportunities for growth of the town subject to environmental constraints.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Harrow are detailed in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Harrow Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Harrow
Catchment Population	Up to 500
Role in the Hierarchy	Small Settlement
Existing Infrastructure	No reticulated drinking water, no reticulated sewage system
Other Services Available	Nursing post, accommodation, café, emergency services, hotel, library, heritage centre
Growth Capacity	Low due to fire and flood constraints
Expected Outcomes	Negligible change
Recommendations	• Complete and implement the Harrow flood study to determine the extent of flood risk and to direct any new housing away from flood prone areas. • Prepare a bushfire study and direct any new development with high bushfire risk. • ~~Explore~~ Work with GWM Water to explore options to provi~~ded~~ding drinking water to the town. • Explore the feasibility of providing a reticulated sewerage in consultation with GWM Water. • Advocate for a community bus services between Harrow and the surrounding towns. • Support the activation of under-utilised buildings and vacant lots to accommodate new commercial, residential and visitor accommodation development, subject to a bushfire assessment, noting that the eastern side of Blair Street is subject to flooding and would not be suitable without expensive building modifications. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings. • Support additional tourism retailing, including arts-related facilities. • Support the consolidation of Harrow's role as a visitor destination. • Work with the community to capitalise on the history of Harrow while ensuring that the heritage of the township is preserved and enhanced.

	• Explore the opportunity for future development on land located ~~Land~~ high on the escarpment ~~is~~ out of the flood area. ~~and could be more suited to future development.~~ • Plant more street trees to provide shade in summer. • Undertake a bushfire risk assessment for the town. • Prepare and implement a structure plan for the town.
Potential Boundary Changes	• Consider undertaking a bushfire risk assessment to explore opportunities to appropriately zone land on the west side of Harrow to a zone that more accurately reflects its lot size and land uses. This could include the RLZ or LDRZ.


KANIVA
DAVID LEE PEREIRA

9. KANIVA

Kaniva is the largest town in the north of the Shire, located on the Western Highway and the Melbourne-Adelaide Railway. It is surrounded by agricultural land the Little Desert National Park to the south and the Big Desert Wilderness ~~National~~ Park to the north. The town provides services to the surrounding farm districts and to travellers on the Western Highway.

Kaniva is a small but robust community and economy. Its location on the Western Highway provides significant strategic advantages relating to economic growth and land use. It has a wide range of community infrastructure to support its population, including sport and recreation facilities. Its economy is anchored by agriculture and farming. Kaniva is the gateway to the he Silo Art Trail and home to Sheep Art.

Kaniva functions both as a service centre for the surrounding agricultural area and as a popular rest stop for travellers on the way to regional destinations and Adelaide. The commercial area is centrally located along the Western Highway, putting it in a prime position to capture freight and logistics-oriented activity. The local community sees the location of the town on the Western Highway and the railway as a major asset and its location has significantly contributed to the formation of the town's character. The town context map is shown in **Figure 26**.

The first town in the area was Lawloit which developed in the 1860s. The first selector arrived in 1875 and many others followed, particularly from 1879. They established wheat farms and 'mullenised' the land, which is to say it was cleared with a red-gum roller invented by a South Australian named Mullens. Three metres long and one metre in diameter, it was hauled over the land by a team of 10 bullocks. This process squashed the mallee trees, after which the land was burnt then ploughed. The township of Lillimur South developed in the late 1870s and was soon followed by Lillimur North. Another settlement, initially named 'Budjik', (meaning stone axe) as it was situated on Budjik Hill, began to develop when a flour mill and grain shed was built there in 1881. The opening of a post office on the site in April 1882 saw the town officially change its name to Kaniva.

9.1 Existing Policy and Planning Scheme Context

Regional Growth Plan

Kaniva is defined as a Town in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP. Kaniva will continue as a key service centre. Residential development within the town's boundaries will also be promoted with recent upgrades to water infrastructure providing potable water to the town. Kaniva is similar to a district town but generally services a more localised catchment. It has a greater reliance on other centres for services and employment.

The future directions for Kaniva as outlined in the RGP are to:

- Recognise Kaniva as a key local service centre.
- Encourage the provision of a range of services appropriate for the local community.
- Provide for infill residential development within the town boundaries and provide for some additional low density and rural living land adjacent to the town.

The RGP states "*Kaniva will continue to provide services for its local community of interest which includes small rural settlements such as Lillimur, Miram, Serviceton and Telopea Downs. Kaniva's location on the Western Highway corridor means it has good access to Nhill and Horsham for higher order services.*

Kaniva has a compact and contiguous built form and is contained within the TZ with some zoned industrial land. Infill development will be encouraged to consolidate the existing urban form. Several small lots on the immediate western side of the town, currently located in the FZ, should be zoned for low density and rural living residential purposes. Industrial land is provided on the eastern side of Kaniva and is expected to meet demand for the immediate future."

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan outlines the following land use policies, strategies and actions for Kaniva:

- Promote residential development within current town boundaries
- Investigate rezoning small lots to the west of Kaniva to allow for low density residential and rural living development
- Provide a single zone for the town's aerodrome.

- Monitor the need for additional industrial land.
- Support improvements to the town's drinking water quality.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme Clause 11.01-1L-02

Clause 11.01-1L-02 Settlement - Kaniva provides the existing settlement framework for the town. Strategies to the clause seek to encourage development of the Kaniva Industrial Estate that is mindful of residential growth in the town and to retain community and commercial facilities in the town. The Clause 11.01-1L-02 settlement framework for Kaniva is shown in **Figure 27**.



Commerical Street Kaniva

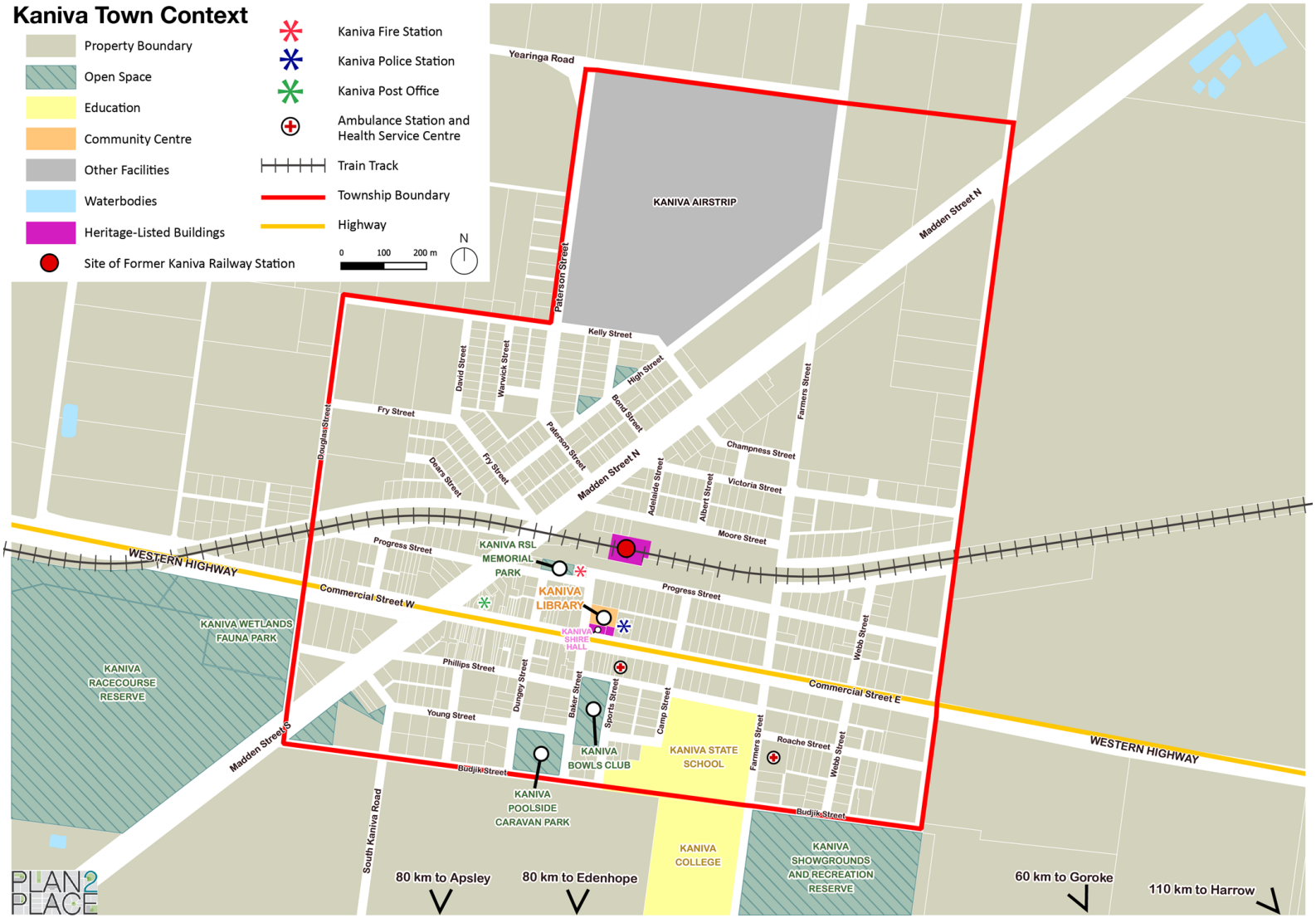


Figure 26: Kaniva Context Map

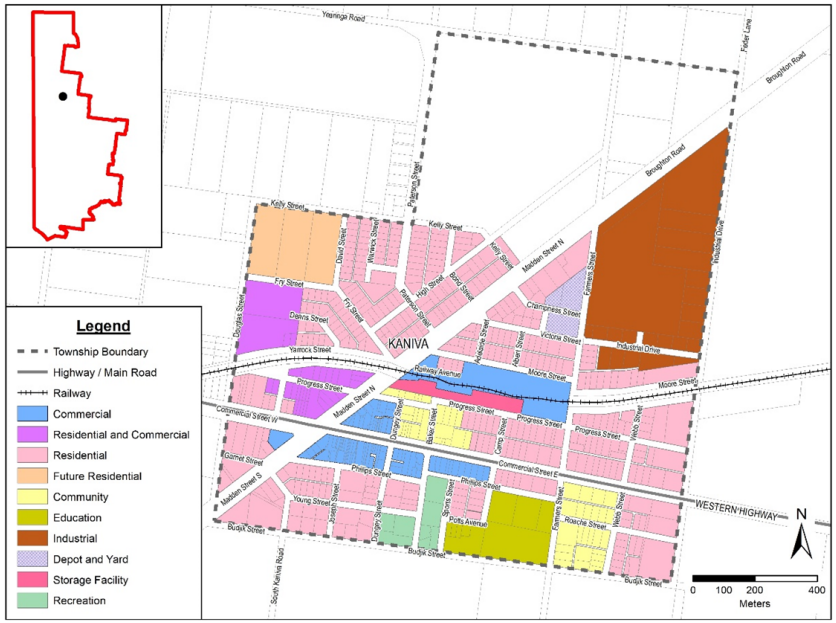


Figure 27: Kaniva Settlement Plan at Clause 11.01-1L

Relevant zones within the WWPS affecting Kaniva are shown in **Figure 28** and are summarised below:

- The TZ applies to land within Kaniva.
- The INZ1 applies to land within the existing township boundary.
- The INZ3 applies to land adjoining the INZ1 zone behind some residential housing that abuts the train line.
- The FZ applies to agricultural land surrounding the town boundaries.
- The TRZ applies to land for declared roads, railways and other important transportation infrastructure representing state and local designations. The TRZ1 is applied to the railway reserve land and the TRZ2 is applied to Commercial Street E.



Figure 28: Kaniva - Existing Zones

Relevant overlays within the WWPS affecting Kaniva are shown in **Figure 29** and are summarised below:

- The ESO2 applies to land at the southern end of Kaniva to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.
- The HO applies to several sites within Kaniva close to the railway line. The former Kaniva Station Building is heritage listed but is no longer standing however the platform remains intact.
- A DDO2 applies to land to the south of Madden Street North to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.



Figure 29: Kaniva - Existing Overlays

9.2 Population and Demographics

The 2021 Australian census reported Kaniva had a population of 683 people. The population of the residential catchment area for the Kaniva town centre is currently around 1,200. ~~and has~~T ~~been~~rends have it steadily ~~decline~~reducing. ~~This is~~ over the forecast period ~~to continue over the period~~ to 2036. It should be noted the population of Kaniva did grow between 2016 and 2021. However this is likely as a result of Covid-19 pandemic and the 2026 Census will enable a greater understanding of the long term impacts of the trends that occurred during the pandemic.

The number of travellers on the Western Highway, on the other hand, is likely to continue to grow in line with traffic forecasts and will provide a slowly expanding market for visitor services. A key concern for residents will be to ensure that the food and grocery offering can be maintained and updated as required. The local supermarket has recently been renovated and there are two food banks in operation to assist the community with the high cost of food.

9.3 Housing

The population of the town is forecast to decline despite taking account of dwelling downsizing due to demographic changes and an ageing community. The town will however need to accommodate some growth in the number of dwellings – up to 3 additional dwellings per year according to forecasts.

There are parcels of land within the TZ that are largely vacant and which ~~would~~ could be suitable for residential development. This includes, for example, land in the north-west of the town in the area around Douglas Street; land on the south-eastern edge of the town; and the Council-owned land fronting Kelly Street which presently accommodates a little-used airstrip. Whether the privately-owned land is available for development is uncertain. Council may be able to help facilitate housing diversity and development by leveraging some Council owned land– to encourage investment by affordable housing providers and/or to engage in direct housing and infrastructure provision.

The demand for new dwellings is likely to be for older age groups. Many of these people will prefer to be in smaller homes close to the services of the hospital and the town centre. There are some vacant lots among the existing development where there is potential to encourage redevelopment at higher densities and for previous farm owners to downsize to rural residential lots.

The town is connected to sewer and now potable water as a result of an extension to the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline. This new infrastructure may spark an upsurge in investment in housing and other activities in the town and is a factor that should be planned for now.

9.4 Economic Profile

Kaniva is roughly midway between Adelaide (3 hours and 20 minutes) and Melbourne (4 hours and 40 minutes) and is a convenient place to stop or rest on the journey. This has given rise to a local visitor services industry that comprises cafés, pubs and a service station in the town centre as well as two motels and a caravan park located in town as well as B&B accommodation and free pub camps. Kaniva provides places to rest, including the Madden Street car-park and the Wetlands and Fauna Park on the western edge of the town. The town is also the gateway to the Silo Art Trail, providing the western-most painted silo in Victoria as well as the home of Sheep Art.

While the number of travellers on the Western Highway will continue to grow, Kaniva faces competition for visitor expenditure from the nearby towns such as Nhill, Bordertown and Dimboola which are slightly larger and with more services. In the case of Dimboola, there is direct access to the Wimmera River and the Little Desert National Park. In improving Kaniva as a travellers' rest stop, the provision of shade will be increasingly important. When upgrading the streetscape of the town centre, consideration should be given to the planting of shade trees, as well as extending verandas for the length of the pedestrian strip (particularly on the north side). Strengthening the provision of electric vehicle charging stations would also be beneficial. Council could also consider the provision of improved trailer and caravan parking spaces.

Kaniva has an industrial precinct located at the north east edge of the town. This comprises:

- Approximately 18.8 hectares of IN1Z land which is mostly vacant apart from three businesses on lots of 0.4 hectares or less.
- Approximately 3 hectares of IN3Z land on an adjacent site of which about 2 hectares is vacant.
- Approximately 2.7 hectares of adjacent land being used for industrial purposes in the TZ.

The zoning of land for industry in the precinct is somewhat problematic, with the TZ in particular, which allows housing to be interspersed with industrial activities. There may be some scope to reform the town's zoning to ensure that existing and future housing is kept separate from the industrial activity and to support industrial activities. The area of industrial land should be ample for likely future investment over the forecast period.

Agricultural supplies, storage and works depots are currently the principal activities in the precinct.

The residential and commercial areas of the town are currently covered by a TZ. If more functional zones were to be introduced, it would be a straightforward matter to identify an appropriate area for the Commercial 1 Zone to cover the town centre. There is only one vacant parcel of land in the main commercial centre.

9.5 Movement and Transport

Kaniva is on the Western Highway and it has an infrequent bus service to Horsham that runs once a week. The primary mode of transport for residents, workers and visitors to Kaniva is via private vehicle. There is an EV charging station on Madden Street North.

Kaniva is on the Serviceton line however the train no longer stops at Kaniva. The rail corridor is under lease to the ARTC. VicTrack boundaries are marked in dashed dark blue in **Figure 30**. The land under ARTC lease is orange and the land which is bright green is vacant land not under lease. Land shown yellow in **Figure 31** is Crown land within the station precinct.



Figure 30: Station Precinct with VicTrack Boundaries and Vacant Land

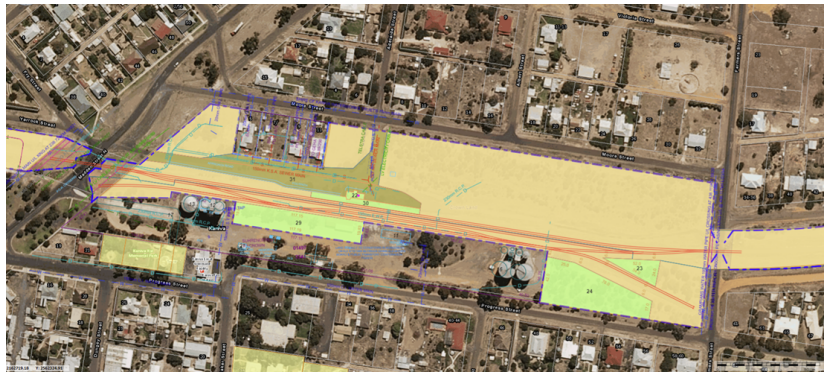


Figure 31: Yellow Crown Land in the Station Precinct

9.6 Physical Infrastructure

Since the discovery of alleged illegal dumping of waste 15 km south of Kaniva, GWM Water has been working closely with the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPAV), local government and other relevant agencies to ensure the safety of Kaniva's water supply.

Potable water is now available to the town. Water is available for industrial fire flows however industrial customers need to pay a fee to meet the building code's requirements.

There is a gravity sewer system in Kaniva to treat wastewater. However, the capacity of the waste water treatment plant needs to be increased to support growth in the town. Some homes remain on septic tanks and are not connected to the sewage treatment system.

9.7 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The town has a commercial services centre on the main Highway. The Kaniva hospital provides urgent care, acute care, residential aged care and community health services. Kaniva College P-12 Government school is one of three in the Shire. The Kaniva Kindergarten provides pre-school education services.

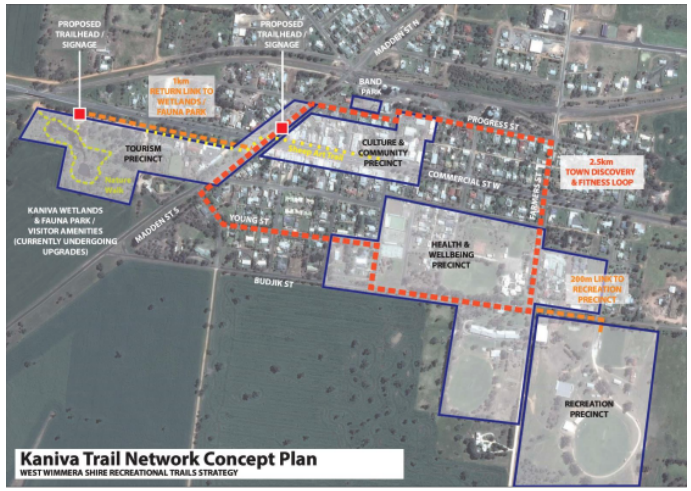
The main food and grocery outlet is a small IGA supermarket of approximately 650 sqm. There is a small selection of speciality retailers, including cafés, a butcher, pharmacy, hardware/agricultural supplies, hairdresser, thrift shop and puppet shop ~~seller~~ as well as a tattoo parlour, beauty salons, a post office and a homewares shop.

There are two hotels with accommodation in the town centre, catering to residents and visitors. The eastern end of the centre around Baker Street has a number of civic functions including the Kaniva Shire Hall, Council offices, library and police station. There are a limited number of professional services. The town has a combined service station and café which is a community enterprise, saved from closure by residents of the town. The strip has some vacant shops.~~The strip has some high-profile vacancies including a former small department/clothing store~~. There are also several former commercial buildings that appear to have been repurposed for housing. There is no bank, although there is a post office which has some banking facilities. There is extensive visitor parking on the service roads as well as in Madden Street North where there are public toilets.

Kaniva has a Recreation Reserve that houses active sports groups including cricket, hockey football and netball. This land is owned by DEECA and managed by a Committee of Management. There is also a tennis, bowls club and a rifle range. Funds are being sought for an upgrade to the Kaniva swimming pool including a splash park.



Kaniva Bowling and Croquet Club



Source: West Wimmera Recreational Trail Strategy – Volume 1: The Strategy Nov 2018

The Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park is a popular spot with locals and visitors. The Wetlands and Fauna Park was upgraded in 2018/19 as part of a community partnership project instigated by Kaniva & District Progress Association. There is the Sheep Art Trail connecting the Silo Art, Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park to the main street. Council has recently upgraded the Kaniva Town Walk, a town discovery and fitness loop, starting at the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park and connecting back to the town centre. For further details see the Kaniva Trail Network Concept Plan above.

9.8 Built Form and Heritage

The Kaniva town centre extends along the Western Highway but is principally concentrated in the area from just east of the intersection with Baker Street to just west of the intersection with Madden Street.

The Western Highway is a major through-route and the commercial activities on the northern and southern side of the road are accessed via two service roads, each separated from the Highway by a median strip. This acts as a barrier to movement between the two sides of the main street.

The core centre has had extensive landscape treatment including planting of vines on verandas and paving as well as some public art in the form of decorated grazing sheep scattered throughout. There is a rest area including a small shady park on the former Methodist church site ~~d~~ at the corner of the Highway and Baker Street.



Painted Sheep – Kaniva

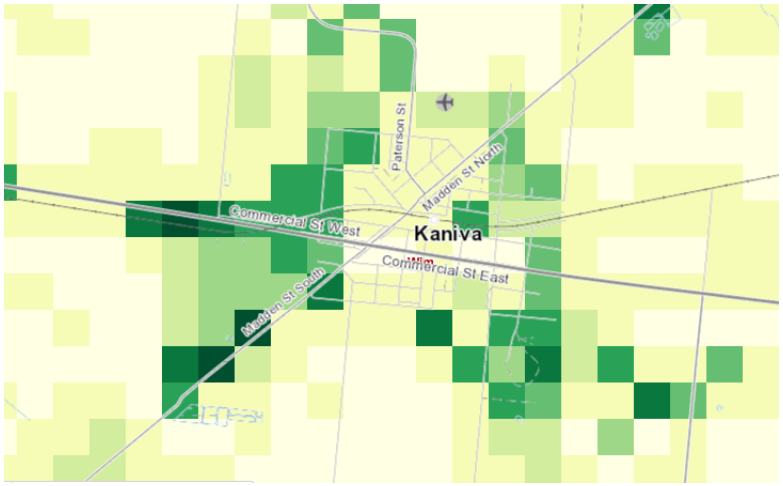
9.9 Landscape and Environment

Kaniva is not at significant risk of bushfire, however Terramatrix has led a bushfire assessment and the delivery of a Bushfire Development Report (BDR) that meets the requirements of the WWPS Clause 13.02. This has taken into account relevant building and bushfire regulations for the town. Kaniva has limited flooding issues, mainly from stormwater flooding. Kaniva sits on land that was once a retreated ancient sea and there is a limestone aquifer which sits under the Kaniva district.

Kaniva is located in the Wimmera bioregion in the far west of the central Victoria, typified by flat to gently undulating plains in the east, with black and grey cracking clay soils (Vertosols). Plains Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland, Plains Grassland, Red Gum Wetland and Grassy Woodland are the dominant ecosystems.

The western part is typified by ancient stranded beach ridges with interspersed with clay plains (where there are a mixture of swamp, lakes, lagoons and lunettes in the south) with cracking clay soils and red texture contrast soils (Vertosols and Sodosols). The vegetation on these less fertile plains is dominated by Heathy Woodland and Shallow Sands Woodland.

The NaturePrint map below identifies areas of biodiversity with areas of the highest value in the darkest green.



9.10 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities are identified for the town:

Issues

- While the trainline runs through the town, passenger services are no longer available to residents to board in Kaniva.
- There is insufficient public transport available for the town and residents are reliant on private transport.
- Manage any impacts from industry runoff into the wetlands that may cause pollution.
- There is a lack of key worker housing.
- ~~There is a declining~~Current trends are that population loss will continue.
- There is limited short term or long term rental accommodation available in Kaniva.
- There is a mismatch between the cost to build a house and the market value of a house making it unviable to build dwellings unless property prices were to increase or housing building costs were to decline.
- There is a limited local housing construction industry to provide new housing in the town.
- There is a need for more key worker and higher quality housing.
- Land banking is an issue.
- There are not enough staff or places for childcare.
- Kaniva is bisected by the Western Highway which is a major truck route day and night.

Opportunities

- Leverage the potential for town development provided by potable water infrastructure.
- Kaniva has a slowly reducing residential catchment but there is growth in the demand for visitor services as traffic on the Western Highway continues to increase.
- Kaniva is part of the Silo Art Ttrail which attracts visitors to the town.
- Attract more visitors and visitors to the area by improving wayfinding signage to the Wetlands and Fauna Park.
- Opportunity to collaborate with the BGLC to develop and install culturally relevant signage that identifies local plants and animals in traditional language, fostering education, language revitalization, and connection to Country.
- Bird watching and ecotourism could be a major attraction for visitors in the area and should be explored further.
- Kaniva location provides opportunities to promote itself as Victoria's 'Bordertown' including new billboard signage.
- Overnight accommodation offerings could be expanded and upgraded to attract more tourists and visitors to the area.
- There are likely to be opportunities in the "silver economy" as well as visitor services.

- Explore the development of a free camp on the old racecourse, at the Wetlands and the Recreation Reserve.
- Greater low cost and affordable housing options in the town.
- Diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place.
- Providing apprenticeships for local people to upskill in building and construction. ~~with working with the BGLC~~.
- Maintaining the liveability of the town including the attractiveness of the town centre, as well as ensuring that there is sufficient serviced and available land for commercial, industrial and residential development.
- Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
- Provision of electric vehicle charging stations in easily accessible locations for visitors and travellers.
- Improvements to trailer and caravan parking spaces in the town.
- Exploring opportunities for additional key worker housing.
- Further development of the local construction industry would assist in providing new housing for Kaniva.

The settlement attributes and key recommendations for Kaniva are detailed in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Kaniva Settlement and Key Recommendations

Settlement	Kaniva
Catchment Population	Up to 1,200
Role in the Hierarchy	Town
Existing Infrastructure	Potable water is now available. Limited reticulated sewage system available.
Other Services Available	Accommodation, hotels, professional, civic and recreational services. Some retailing including hardware, and agricultural services
Growth Capacity	The town has capacity to grow.
Expected Outcomes	Minimal growth expected
Recommendations	• Prepare and implement a Structure Plan for Kaniva. • Advocate for increased public transport to and from Kaniva. • ~~Provide key~~~~Provide~~Facilitate key worker housing and increase quality of housing. • ~~Provide~~ Explore options to provide more ~~staff and~~ places for childcare for residents in the town and the staff to facilitate places. • Improve wayfinding signage to attract more visitors to the Kaniva Wetlands and Fauna Park. ~~is a great attraction for visitors~~. • Work with the BGLC to provide signage of local plants and animals in language. • Explore opportunities to grow bird watching and eco-tourism. • Promote Kaniva as Victoria's 'Bordertown' encouraging people to stop and stay on way to Adelaide. • Expand and upgrade overnight accommodation offerings to attract more tourists and visitors to the area. • Explore options to work with a housing provider to provide low cost and affordable housing in the town. • Explore options to diversify the housing stock to enable people to age in place. • ~~Work with the BGLC to provide~~Explore opportunities for~~Explore providinge~~ apprenticeships for local people to upskill in building and construction. • Ensure that there is sufficient serviced and available land for commercial, industrial and residential development. • ~~Provide~~ Facilitate more electric vehicle charging stations. • Consider the provision of improved trailer and caravan parking spaces. • Leverage opportunities associated with being part of the Silo Art Trail. • Explore adaptive reuse of civic buildings.
Boundary Considerations	• Include the Kaniva Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve in the town boundary. • Include the Kaniva College in the town boundary. • Include the Kaniva Wetlands Fauna Park and Kaniva Racecourse Reserve into the town boundary to recognise their important recreation and tourism roles. • Consider including land on the west side of Paterson Street between Kelly Street and Yeararinga Road in the town boundary to reflect the small lot sizes and current residential land uses. Consider rezoning to an urban zone to reflect the residential land uses.

10. FUTURE SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

10.1 Determining a Settlement Strategy

The Small Towns Plan (STP) provides improved strategic directions for the West Wimmera Shire for the management and direction of its five towns. A revised settlement hierarchy is proposed that promotes settlement growth or containment, consistent with the availability of infrastructure, environmental constraints, existing supply and demand, and state and local government policy and strategy. The STP has been developed in response to increasing pressure to maintain and enhance the sustainability of the small towns and settlements within the Shire.

Growth in West Wimmera is influenced by many factors, including ~~a declining~~ population loss, bushfire and flood risk, community infrastructure, transportation infrastructure and the availability of utility services. Reticulated water is available in Edenhope and Kaniva. Reticulated sewerage is not provided to all of towns in the Shire and the provision of these services is the responsibility of water authorities and private sector utility providers. These factors have been considered in informing the recommendations for future growth in the Shire.

Key findings and recommendations of the STP include:

- A clear settlement hierarchy, classifying each of the five towns according to their current and future role.
- Updated strategies and policies for each of the five towns, reflecting the settlement hierarchy.
- An updated Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 that includes a settlement framework.
- A suite of planning scheme amendment documents to support the implementation of the STP, including changes to the MPS and PPF.
- Finalise and implement flood studies for Edenhope and Aspley.
- Prepare a structure plan for Kaniva to further develop:
  - A vision for the town.
  - Identify key actions and priorities for capital works
  - Identify implementation of any changes to the MPS and PPF of the WWPS.
  - Prepare design guidelines for new development.
- Prepare a structure plan for Edenhope subject to funding.
- Prepare structure plans for Goroke, Harrow and Apsley subject to funding.
- Map flood risks as appropriate, as part of the preparation of structure plans for Edenhope and Harrow.
- Review existing heritage and marketing of Harrow and resident/visitor needs in terms of signage, trails networks, heritage interpretation and promote the experience of Harrow to the visitor market.
- Map fire risk as part of the preparation of structure plans for Harrow, Goroke and Apsley.

The existing settlement strategy for the small towns is identified in the WWPS. This reflects the designations applied in the Wimmera Southern Mallee RGP and outlined in **Table 8**.

While the hierarchy has been analysed and reviewed, no change is recommended to this settlement hierarchy as a result of the STP as shown below.

Table 8: Current and Proposed Settlement Designations

Town	Existing planning scheme designation	Regional Growth Plan designation	Proposed planning scheme designation
Apsley	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Edenhope	District Town	District Town	District Town
Goroke	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Harrow	Small settlement	Small settlement	Small settlement
Kaniva	Town	Town	Town

10.2 Strategic Framework

The WWPS could be enhanced to provide clearer direction for land use and development in the five small towns. This includes direction provided through the MPS , through local planning policy and the application of zones and overlays.

MPS Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the MPS in the WWPS:

- Update Clause 02.03-1 Settlement with the settlement hierarchy for the five towns and related strategic directions.
- Strengthen the strategic directions around bushfire and flooding at Clause 02.03-3 in relation to the five towns.
- Update Clause 02.04 to reflect the settlement hierarchy for the five towns, show agricultural land and include identified environmental risks.
- Update Clause 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage with strategic directions to incorporate recommendations such as the need for additional tree planting to mitigate climate change impacts and opportunities to incorporate aboriginal cultural heritage into the built environment.
- Update 02.03-6 Housing to reflect the challenges for the towns in supplying housing and introduce a strategic direction in relation to key worker housing.
- Update Clause 02.03-7 Economic development to provide strategic directions on tourism opportunities in the towns.
- Update Clause 02.03-9 Infrastructure to highlight the challenges of water and sewerage infrastructure in the towns and the implications on development of the towns.

Strategic Framework Plan

The current Strategic Framework Plan for West Wimmera currently reflects the hierarchy included in the STP. However, several improvements to the cartography and content of the map could be made to provide clearer directions on land use and development for the municipality. **Figure 32** outlines a proposed map for inclusion at Clause 02.04 of the WWPS.

PPF Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the PPF in the WWPS:

- Update Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement – Edenhope to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-02 Settlement – Kaniva to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-03 Settlement – Apsley to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-04 Settlement – Goroke to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.
- Update Clause 11.01-1L-05 Settlement – Harrow to reflect the recommendations of the Small Towns Plan and replace the map with an updated Framework Plan.

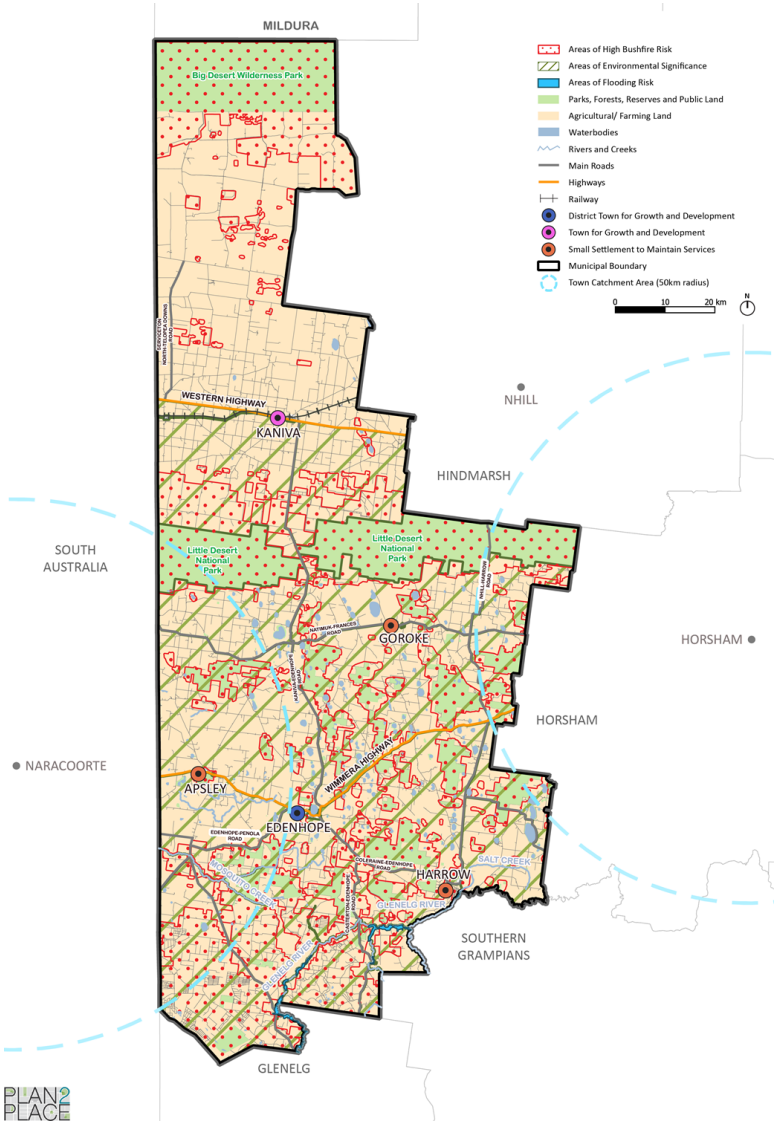


Figure 32: Proposed Strategic Framework Plan Update

Appendix A – Content overview from the WWPS

Clause 11 Settlement

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement promotes the sustainable growth and development of Victoria to deliver choice and opportunity through a network of settlements. Regions are planned to reinforce settlement boundaries and provide for population growth and development of facilities and services. Growth is directed into existing settlements supported by a network of major and neighbourhood activity centres and townships of varying size, role and function. Urban consolidation is encouraged with density that supports sustainable transport and retail, office-based employment and community facilities and services.

Settlement should seek to consolidate urban uses to ensure a wide range of sustainable transport, retail, commercial and community facilities and services.

Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement seeks to support the role of Horsham as the key population and employment centre for the region. Edenhope is identified as a district town and key service hub where growth and development is encouraged while Kaniva is identified as providing local and some sub-regional services. Easy access to housing, education, employment and community facilities is to be provided particularly in Horsham and district towns along with an ongoing supply of infill and greenfield residential land. The regional settlement network from the RGP is shown in **Figure 33**.

Clause 11.01-01L-05L – Settlement sets out local settlement policies for each town.

Clause 12 Environmental and Landscape Values

Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of biodiversity focuses on protecting and enhancing Victoria's biodiversity by identifying and strategically planning for the protection and conservation of important areas of biodiversity through recognition of various international conventions.

Clause 12.01-1L – Protection of biodiversity – West Wimmera – seeks to protect the ~~Red Tailed~~Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo and Jumping Jack Wattle habitat within the Shire through clear delineation of boundaries and protection from incursion by adjacent land uses. Planting of native species and management of weeds is encouraged.

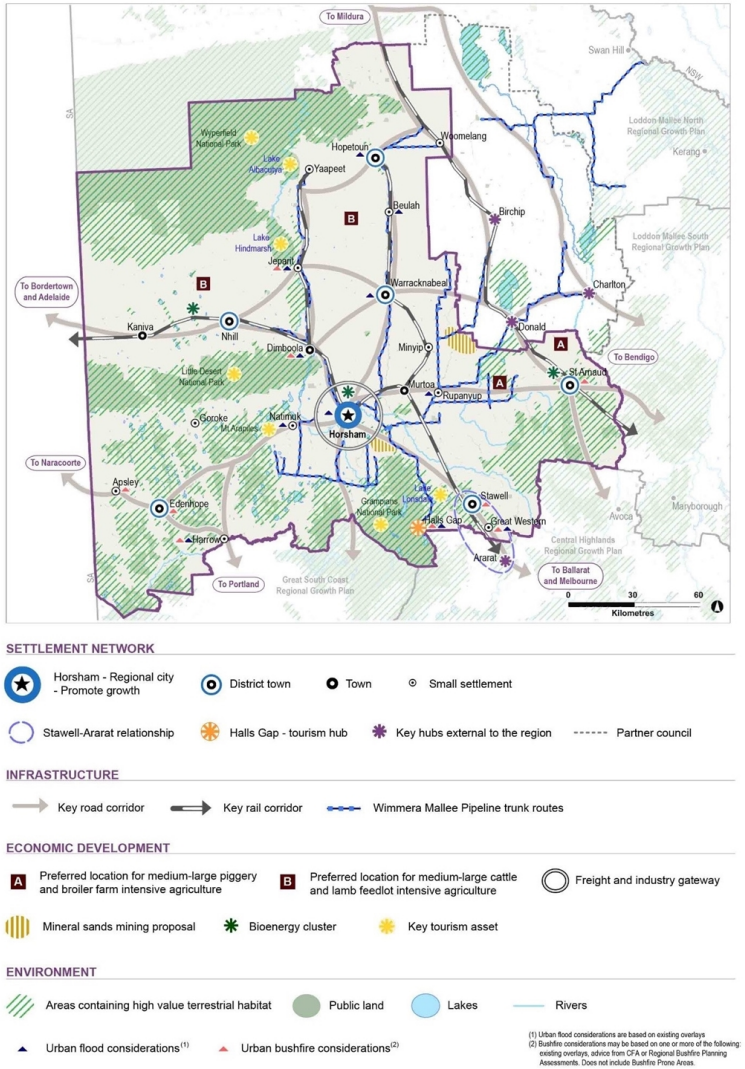


Figure 33: Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan from the WWPS

Clause 12.01-2S – Native vegetation management aims to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation by avoiding the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, minimising impacts where vegetation removal cannot be avoided and providing offsets to compensate for biodiversity impacts where vegetation removal is required.

Clause 12.03-1S – River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs seeks to protect these areas for their significant economic, environmental and cultural assets by conserving surrounding systems and landscapes and environmental values. Design and development should be sensitively designed to protect the waterway system while recreation and amenity values and a sense of place and landscape are also to be protected.

Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity

Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire planning prioritises the protection of human life over all other policy considerations, directing growth to low risk locations. It identifies and assesses bushfire hazard, applying the Bushfire Management Overlay and considering bushfire hazard on the basis of the site, neighbourhood and local conditions. Strategies promote future land use and development that will not result in increased bushfire risk to existing and future communities.

Clause 13.03-1S – Floodplain management focuses on protecting life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard along with the natural flood carrying capacity of these areas enabling flood storage to occur. Intensifying development in areas impacted by the 1 in 100 year flood event is to be avoided including the consideration of cumulative impacts.

Clause 14 Natural Resource Management

Clause 14.01-1S – Protection of agricultural land aims to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. Strategies seek to identify areas of productive agricultural land, including land for primary production and intensive agriculture and to protect it from incompatible uses or loss due to changes in land use without consideration of the economic importance of the land for agricultural production. New housing in rural areas should be avoided by directing housing growth into existing settlements and discouraging development in isolated small lots in rural zones. When considering proposals to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, land capability and compatibility between the proposed development and the existing use of the surrounding land should be assessed.

Clause 14.01-1L – Protection of agricultural land – West Wimmera seeks to consolidate land holdings in the Farming Zone to increase economies of scale and ensure viability of farms and ensure a clear link between the need for a dwelling and the agricultural use of the land.

Clause 14.01-2S – Sustainable agricultural land use encourages sustainable agricultural land use and ensuring that agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.

Clause 14.01-2R – Agricultural productivity – West Wimmera Southern Mallee seeks to support local industries, activities and infrastructure that complements and enhances the region's agricultural sector and facilitate opportunities presented by the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

Clause 14.02-1S – Catchment planning and management aims to protect and restore catchments, waterways, and marine environments. The clause seeks to ensure clean drinking water by safeguarding catchments, considering downstream impacts on water quality, maintaining natural drainage corridors, minimising stormwater runoff, filtering sediment and wastes, enhancing waterway environments during development, and reducing nutrient contributions and sediment discharges. Coordination with catchment management authorities and designing infrastructure to minimise harm to surface waters and groundwater are also emphasised.

Clause 15 Built Environment and Heritage

Clause 15.01-1S – Urban Design aims to create environments that are safe, healthy, functional an enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Clause 15.01-2S – Building Design aims to achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Clause 15.01-3L – Subdivision design – West Wimmera encourages residential subdivision to include permeable fencing of landscaping in areas adjacent to roads and reserves.

Clause 15.01-4S – Healthy neighbourhoods seeks to achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.

Clause 15.01-5S – Neighbourhood character seeks to recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity and sense of place.

Clause 15.01-6S – Design for rural areas seeks to ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.

Clause 15.03-1S – Heritage conservation aims to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance by identifying and protecting through the planning scheme. Providing protection, conservation and enhancement of significant places and encouraging appropriate development is also identified.

Clause 15.03-2S – Aboriginal cultural heritage conservation aims to ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance by identifying and protecting through the planning scheme. Providing protection and conservation of both pre-contact and post- contact places and ensuring that permit approvals align with any relevant Cultural Heritage Management Plan are also identified.

Clause 16 Housing

Clause 16.01-1S – Housing supply aims to ensure an appropriate quantity, quality and mix of housing types and lot sizes are provided, with an increased portion of housing provided in established urban areas that are well served by jobs, services and public transport. Development should provide well designed housing that provides a high level of amenity and provides an adaptable internal design.

Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability aims to improve housing affordability by ensuring a continued land supply to meet demand. The policy also aims to facilitate a choice of housing type, tenure and cost in suburbs, activity centres, infill and surplus government land and encourage a significant portion of new development to be affordable for low to moderate income households.

Clause 16.01-3S – Rural residential development aims to manage rural residential development to avoid hindering future urban growth opportunities and discourage reliance on irrigation water supply. The clause advocates for diverse and flexible lot sizes to mitigate low density residential "sprawl". Existing character, density patterns, site constraints, infrastructure provision and land capability should be considered when determining appropriate lot sizes and development.

Clause 17 Economic Development

Clause 17.01-1S – Diversified economy aims to diversity the economy by protecting existing and planned new employment areas, facilitating regional relationships to harness emerging economic opportunities. Growth is to be facilitated building on the emerging and existing strengths of the region. Improving access to jobs and supporting rural economies to grow and diversify is also supported.

Clause 17.01-1R – Diversified economy – West Wimmera aims to capitalise on the municipality's opportunities including agriculture, energy, mining and tourism. Facilitating the use of secure water supplies to develop the economy is also encouraged.

Clause 17.03-1R – Industrial land supply – Wimmera Southern Mallee aims to provide ongoing supply of industrial land particularly in towns including Edenhope and facilitating new opportunities due to the investment of the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline.

Clause 17.04-1R – Tourism – Wimmera Southern Mallee aims to support and provide direction on the location of tourism development. Facilitating nature based tourism around key attractions including the Little Desert National Park and major lakes is encouraged along with economic opportunities presented by the region's wetlands and lakes to encourage more tourism.

Clause 18 Transport

Clause 18.01-1S – Land use and transport integration seeks to protect existing and planned transport infrastructure from encroachment and development that could prejudice such development and to plan movement networks and land uses to minimise disruption to residential communities. Strategies also seek to plan for the timely delivery of transport infrastructure to support changing land uses and transport demands, including public transport, walking and cycling within existing urban areas.

Clause 19 Infrastructure

Clause 19.02- 4S – Social and cultural infrastructure aims to ensure a fair distribution of, and access to, social and cultural infrastructure. The clause seeks to identify and address gaps in facilities, encouraging their location in activity

centres, and ensuring they are accessible. It emphasises early delivery of social infrastructure in growth areas, adaptable design of community buildings to accommodate changing populations, and innovative service delivery in areas with limited growth.

Clause 19.02-4R – Social and cultural infrastructure – Wimmera Southern Mallee seeks to maintain and enhance social and community facilities in key service centres particularly district towns ensuring they are sustainable and continue to attract new residents.

Clause 19.02-4L – Recreational facilities seeks to ensure recreational facilities provide for year-round activities and seeks to encourage water based activities and facilities in suitable locations.

Clause 19.02-6S – Open space aims to develop a diverse and integrated public open space network that meets community needs. It seeks to include planning regional and local open spaces for recreation and conservation, ensuring connectivity through walking and cycling trails, maintaining public access to waterways and coasts, and improving the quality and distribution of open spaces.

Clause 19.03-1S – Development and infrastructure contributions plans aims to facilitate the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of development contributions plans and infrastructure contributions plans. Strategies also promote the integrated provision of water supply, water resources, sewerage, drainage and stormwater as well as utilities such as electricity, gas (not new connections) and telecommunications.

Clause 74.02 – **Further strategic work** is a concise list of strategic planning projects that Council intends to complete before the next planning scheme review. For West Wimmera there are no projects identified in the schedule to the clause.

10.3 Zones

There are a range of zones applied to the towns in the WWPS as summarised below. The relevant zones affecting the towns are shown in the town profiles.

Clause 32.05 Township Zone (TZ)

The Township Zone (TZ) is applied to small towns with no specific structure of residential, commercial, industrial and public uses. Development should be connected to reticulated sewerage unless an alternative potable water supply is provided to the satisfaction of Council.

Clause 33.01 Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z)

The Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) is applied to land where the industrial land uses and associated commercial uses are promoted. Other than a caretaker's house, all other forms of accommodation are prohibited.

Clause 33.03 Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z)

The Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) serves as a transitional buffer between industrial and residential areas, addressing issues like industrial traffic, noise and emissions. It is applied in industrial zones needing special attention to minimise conflicts and promote less hazardous uses. The zone includes amenity standards based on specified separation distances. A schedule restricts maximum office floor space, shops and supermarkets outside the Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and accommodation and hospitals are prohibited uses.

Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone (RLZ)

The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) seeks to provide for residential use in a rural environment and supporting agricultural land uses that do not affect surrounding amenity. It aims to protect and enhance natural resources, biodiversity, and landscape and heritage values, while promoting sustainable land management and infrastructure provision.

Clause 35.07 Farming Zone (FZ)

The Farming Zone (FZ) is applied to encourage the retention of productive agricultural land and employment and population to support rural communities. The zone provides a minimum lot size of 40 hectares unless an alternative is specified in a schedule to the zone. The creation of smaller lots is allowed under particular circumstances.

Clause 36.01 Public Use Zone (PUZ)
The Public Use Zone (PUZ) is applied to public land recognising land use for public utility, infrastructure and community services. It requires the public land manager's approval/consent for land management and development. The PUZ2 relates to education land uses, the PUZ3 relates to health and community land uses while the PUZ5 relates to cemetery/crematorium land uses.

Clause 36.02 Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)
The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) is applied to public parkland including reserves and parks recognising areas for public recreation and open space and protecting and conserving areas of significance where appropriate.

Clause 36.03 Public Conservation and Recreation Zone (PCRZ)
The Public Conservation and Recreation Zone (PCRZ) is applied to places where the primary intention is to conserve and protect the natural environment or resources such as public conservation reserves and parks and allows associated educational activities and resource-based uses.

Clause 36.04 Transport Zone (TRZ)
The Transport Zone (TRZ) is applied to land for declared roads, railways and other important transportation infrastructure representing state and local designations. The TRZ1 is applied to railway land and the TRZ2 is applied to main roads.

Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone (SUZ)
The Special Use Zone (SUZ) provides for tailored provisions for a wide range of purposes, such as showgrounds, freight logistics centres and tourism precincts. It forms part of a suite of special purpose zones that are used when a standard zone cannot address the individual circumstances of a site.

10.4 Overlays

There are a range of overlays applied to the towns in the WWPS. These are summarised below. The relevant overlays affecting the towns are shown in the town profiles.

Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)
The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) is applied to areas where the development of land may be affected by either environmental constraints such as the effects from noise or industrial buffer areas or issued related to the significance of the natural environment. ESO2 relates to the protection of the Red-tailed black cockatoo habitat.

Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay (HO)
The Heritage Overlay (HO) is applied to a heritage place with a recognised citation identified through the Victorian Heritage Register or in a local heritage study. A heritage place should include a statement of significance, establishing the importance of the place, and can affect land, buildings, trees and/or vegetation.

Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay (DDOO)
The Design and Development Overlay (DDO) manages built form and the built environment through building height and setback provisions. DDO1 applies to the Edenhope Industrial Precinct while DDO2 is applied to the Kaniva Industrial Precinct, with both aiming to ensure high quality development.

Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation (LSIO)
The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) is applied to land that is subject to inundation related to flooding from waterways but is not part of the primary floodway as identified by the relevant floodplain management authority.

Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) identifies areas where the bushfire hazard requires bushfire protection measures to be implemented, seeking to ensure that development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire. Development is permitted only where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.

Clause 45.03 Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO)
The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) is applied to sites that have known, identified or reasonably suspected contamination or potential contamination.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Small Towns of West Wimmera that form the subject of this report are located on the lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagalk Nations and Gunditjmara people. They are acknowledged as the Traditional Owners of their traditional lands and waters.

A Recognition and Settlement Agreement has been signed between the Victorian Government and the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) on behalf of the Wotjobaluk Nation. The State is to facilitate relationships between local government and the BGLC under this agreement.

The Local Government Engagement Strategy provides direction on how this could occur, which will inform the development and implementation actions of the Small Towns Plan. This includes:

- Opportunities for renaming, signage and interpretive information.
- Consulting in relation to the preparation of studies/plans that impact issues including roadsides, public health, wellbeing, and fire management.
- Recognising that Traditional Owner businesses can make valuable and unique contributions to local economies and communities: driving innovation, providing access to new markets, creating new jobs and attracting visitors.
- Management of Council controlled lands and waters that should be undertaken with WJJWJ People recognising their role as sole managers of their lands and waters.
- Developing a framework for ensuring alignment of each planning scheme with WJJWJ People's rights, interests and aspirations.
- Identifying, assessing and documenting places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance for inclusion in the planning scheme

CONTACT

Paul Buxton
Director
Plan2Place Consulting
PLAN2PLACE
m. 0402 839 002 e. paul@plan2place.com.au w. www.plan2place.com.au

Kellie Marks
Principal
Plan2Place Consulting
PLAN2PLACE
m. 0409 560 637 e. kellie@plan2place.com.au w. www.plan2place.com.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that every project enabled or assisted by Plan2Place Consulting in Victoria exists on traditional aboriginal lands which have been sustained for thousands of years.

We honour their ongoing connection to these lands and seek to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians in our work.

15.4 Asset Management Plan Review

Directorate: *Infrastructure Development and Works*
Report Author: *Assets & GIS Coordinator*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

The Asset Management Plan is due for review and a draft is presented to Council to consider.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopts the attached draft Asset Management and advertises the Plan in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Tom Houlihan**

That Council adopts the attached draft Asset Management and advertises the Plan in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan. The scope of an Asset Plan is for a minimum period of ten financial years. The Asset Plan needed to be initially adopted by 30 June 2022. Thereafter, the Council should review and adopt an Asset Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election of Council.

The Asset Plan must include the following:

- Information about maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, upgrade, disposal and decommissioning in relation to each class of infrastructure under the control of the Council.

Council has entitled their Asset Plan, the “Asset Management Plan” (AMP).

Council's 10-year AMP was first adopted in 2022. The plan has been updated where they have been reassessed for condition and valuation, so the most recent figures occur within the report. Updated data in AMP includes:

- all valuation data
- the Moloney data including asset renewal requirements
- the Improvement Plan section 7.0
- CRM data
- Customer Satisfaction Survey data

The original financial statements are listed. The original 10-year version commencing in 2021 and contained within the original report remain there for reference, while the equivalent 4-year version from the 25/26 budget has been added as an update.

As referenced throughout the Plan, much is dependent on the LTFP that will be developed by October 2025 and that another review of the AMP may be completed by Council thereafter if required.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

The AMP has a section entitled Risk Management Planning. The section details critical assets, risks, and treatment plans. Having an AMP is beneficial in reducing the long-term financial risk to Council and the preservation of assets in the long term

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

The Asset Management Plan provides guidance for future budget decisions by the Council with respect to assets. Some of the actions are already set in the routines and budgeting of Council while others will require specific decision in the appropriate budget year during the ten-year period

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Asset Capitalisation Policy
Asset Disposal Policy
Asset Management Policy
Asset Management Strategy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community
1.3 Provide well planned and sustainable community infrastructure.

Goal 2 – Diverse and Prosperous Economy
2.6 Provide infrastructure to sustain economic activity.

Goal 4 – Good Governance
4.1 Ensure long term financial sustainability.

Communication Implications

No Communication Implications

The draft Asset Management Plan is required to be advertised for public comment. The Council should make a final decision on the draft amended Asset Management Plan once submissions are received and reviewed.

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The amended Asset Management Plan is prepared and ready for public submission. Once the submission period is complete, the AMP may then be amended if required and adopted by the Council.

Attachments

1. WWS Asset Management Plan 2025 v 2 [**15.4.1** - 60 pages]

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN
2022-2032



WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

Document control	Asset Management Plan

Document ID :

Rev No	Date	Revision details	Author	Reviewer	Approver
1.0	10/08/2021	Introductory information and specific commentary added to template.	J Magee	J Griffiths	Director
2.0	13/10/2021	Financial data for renewal included.	J Magee	J Griffiths	Director
3.0	15/02/2022	Modifications after workshop consisting of Director Infrastructure Development and Works, Manager Infrastructure Engineering, Manager Financial Services and Assets GIS Coordinator. Inclusion of links to Council Plan 2021-2025 and other minor modifications.	J Magee	J Griffiths	R Upadhyaya
4.0	18/05/2022	Adopted by Council 18/5/22	J Magee	J Griffiths	Council
5.0	27/05/2025	Revise and update original AMP for Manager and Director review	J Magee	C Wilfred	B Pearce

© Copyright 2020 – All rights reserved
The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **5**

INTRODUCTION **12**

1.17 Background 12

1.18 Goals and objectives of asset ownership 13

2.0 LEVELS OF SERVICE **14**

2.1 Customer research and expectations 14

2.2 Strategic and corporate goals 14

2.3 Legislative requirements 14

2.4 Customer satisfaction and levels of service 15

2.5 Customer levels of service 16

2.6 Technical levels of service 16

3.0 3.0 FUTURE DEMAND **20**

3.8 Demand drivers 20

3.9 Demand forecasts 20

3.10 Demand impact and demand management plan 20

3.11 Asset programs to meet demand 21

3.12 Climate change adaptation 21

4.0 4.0 LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT PLAN **24**

4.8 Background data 24

4.9 Asset hierarchy 30

4.10 Renewal plan 31

4.11 Renewal/replacement plan 31

4.12 Summary of future renewal costs 34

4.13 Acquisition plan 36

4.14 Disposal plan 37

5.0 5.0 RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING **38**

5.8 Critical assets 38

5.9 Risk assessment 39

5.10 Infrastructure resilience approach 41

5.11 Service and risk trade-offs of additional assets 41

6.0 6.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY 42
6.8 Financial sustainability and projections....43
6.9 Funding strategy....44
6.10 Valuation forecasts....46
6.11 Key assumptions made in financial forecasts....47
6.12 Forecast reliability and confidence....47

7.0 7.0 PLAN IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING 48
7.8 Status of asset management practices....48
7.9 Improvement plan....48
7.10 Monitoring and review procedures....50
7.11 Performance measures....50

8.0 REFERENCES 51

9.0 APPENDICES 52
Appendix A Comprehensive Income Statement (10years)....52
Appendix B Projected Balance Sheet (10 years as of 2021)....54
Appendix C Cash Flow Statement (10 years as of 2021)....56
Appendix D Renewal Forecast Summary (as of October 2020)....58
Appendix E Asset Disposal Summary....60

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.8 THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This Asset Management Plan (AM Plan) details information about infrastructure assets with actions required to provide an agreed level of service in the most cost-effective manner while outlining associated risks. The plan defines the services to be provided, how the services are provided and what funds are required to provide over the 2022-2032 period. The AM Plan will link to a Long-Term Financial Plan, which also reflects the 10-year planning period. The original plan was first adopted in 2022. Its first review is in 2025.

1.9 Asset description

This plan covers the following infrastructure assets.

The Council asset network comprises:

- Sealed road pavements
- Sealed road surfaces
- Unsealed road pavements
- Kerbing
- Footpaths
- Buildings
- Land improvements (including parks and playgrounds)
- Fixed assets (including equipment, furniture and fittings)
- Plant and fleet
- Bridges and culverts

The above infrastructure assets have replacement value estimated at $349,060,224 (current as of May 2025)

1.10 Levels of service

The allocation in each budget should be sufficient to continue providing existing services at current levels for the planning period and to provide renewal at the prescribed intervention level for the 10-year period.

The key desired service requirements with respect to asset management are:

- Fund renewal of road, footpath replacement at a minimum of 90% of projected renewal requirement and higher if external funding allows.
- Continue maintenance at similar levels to current.
- Minimisation of new capital works unless significant supporting funding is available.
- The majority of the capital spend is directed to renewal of current assets.
- Upgrades will occur generally for category 3 roads with significant heavy traffic as well as challenging terrain and alignment, with a view to improving safety and productivity.
- Upgrades and renewal of buildings will generally occur when external funding sources are available, which Council will provide the required contribution.

1.11 Future demand

The factors influencing future demand and the impacts they have on service delivery are created by:

- Steady progression and development of the agricultural industry.
- Gradual increase in the freight task.
- Demand for larger trucks at speed requiring upgrading of sealed width for safety and productivity with desirable seal width being 6.2m minimum.
- Limited urban expansion or subdivision.
- Spasmodic but continuing demand from the timber industry.
- Slight population declines over time.

These demands will be approached using a combination of managing existing assets, upgrading existing assets and providing new assets to meet demand. Provision of new assets will be limited and sustaining those existing will be the priority. Demand management practices may also include a combination of non-asset solutions, insuring against risks and managing failures.

1.12 Lifecycle management plan

1.12.1 What does it cost?

The forecast lifecycle costs necessary to provide the services covered by this AM Plan includes operation, maintenance, renewal, acquisition, and disposal of assets. Although the AM Plan may be prepared for a range of time periods, this plan has adopted a long-term financial planning period of 10 years. Therefore, a summary output from the AM Plan is the forecast of 10-year total outlays, with the total expenditure and income for the 10-year period totals $23,702,200 estimated on average per year. The average capital works per annum for the 10-year period is $7,813,200, while the corresponding figure allocated for renewal is $6,893,200.

Note: Figures in this paragraph are correct as of adoption of this plan in 2022. It is intended to review these figures at the completion of the 2025 Long Term Financial Plan, which is due to be completed in October 2025.

1.13 Financial summary

1.13.1 What we will do

Estimated available funding for the 10 year period on average per year for renewal is $6,893,200, **as per the Long-Term Financial plan in 2022**. This is 100% of the cost to sustain the current level of service and restricting the level of over intervention assets to a similar level to what is current status, which is at a reasonable and sustainable standard. The renewal costs for sealed road pavements, sealed road surfaces, unsealed road pavements, kerbing and footpaths, are ascertained from the Moloney Management System survey and financial analysis. The confidence level for renewal forecast of these assets is quite reasonable.

A new Long Term Financial Plan will be developed late 2025, which will have impacts on this AM Plan and may facilitate another review of the plan.

Renewal predictions for other assets have less scientific basis and may be identified specifically in the Improvement Plan (see section 8.0). A key initiative of this plan is to improve the data and confidence level for renewal forecasting for buildings as well as bridges and culverts.

The infrastructure reality is that only what is funded in the long-term financial plan can be provided. The informed decision making depends on the AM Plan emphasising the consequences of planned budgets on the service levels provided and risks.

It is a fact that West Wimmera Shire Council relies heavily on external grants to help fund renewal of its comparatively large asset base. These will be monitored closely as will the asset condition and forecast after each assessment of the Moloney Management System.

1.13.2 What we cannot do

We currently do **not** allocate enough budget to provide some upgrades which may be deemed as appropriate by some members of the community, or to provide all new services being sought. Works and services that cannot be provided under present funding levels are:

- Upgrade footpaths or roads if incompatible with road hierarchy.
- Upgrade road widths until time of renewal unless specific safety priority or external funding provided.
- Undertake new construction or major upgrade to buildings without significant external funding.
- Upgrade timber roads without third party financial assistance.
- Install new kerb and channelling as renewal the priority unless
- Construction and or maintenance of timber cartage roads without support from timber industry.
- Broad scale widening of 3.6m seals to 6.2m or wider.
- Maintain gravel surface on roads in category 6.
- Take on additional services that may be a cost shifting exercise by state or federal governments, community groups or other organisations.

1.13.3 Managing the risks

Our present budget levels are sufficient to continue to manage risks in the medium term.

The main risk consequences are:

- large, unprecedented impacts by the timber industry
- being impacted by large natural disaster events without support being provided by government for rectification of damage
- decline of asset base earlier than predicted life span
- loss of external funding for road rehabilitation.

We will endeavour to manage these risks within available funding by:

- Having agreements in place with timber industry stakeholders to rectify damage caused to roads
- Ensure that photographic evidence is obtained for all paved and sealed roads to satisfy natural disaster funding criteria.
- Ensure that the annual reseal program is appropriately funded to protect the large pavement asset under the sealed road network
- Developing capital works programs with emphasis on prioritising higher priority roads
- Having regular asset life and condition assessments done on major assets (three yearly via the Moloney Maintenance Management System)
- Programming maintenance at an appropriate time to minimise overall cost of subsequent works
- Minimising expenditure on new assets and limiting upgrades with concentration on renewal
- Continue to lobby for continuation of Roads to Recovery funding program and other external capital funding
- Ensuring that required renewal allocations are provided during years when financial resources are available

1.14 Asset management planning practices

Key assumptions made in this AM Plan are:

- Annual budget allocations for capital works will be made considering the data provided by the Moloney Asset Management system for the following assets:
    - sealed road pavements
    - reseals
    - unsealed road pavements
    - kerbing
    - footpaths
- AssetAsyst will continue to be utilised for safety defect inspections and maintenance management on roads, footpaths and playgrounds. Alternative asset management software will be taken into consideration as part of ongoing improvement considerations, if such a system is seen as financially viable and the implementation and operation requirements are deemed achievable by a small rural council.
- Plant and fleet replacement budgets will be consistent as far as is practicable to provide certainty for planning practices in the longer term.
- Upgrades and renewal of buildings will occur when external sources of funding are available which Council will provide the required contribution.
- Condition assessment and valuation was undertaken on roads, footpaths and kerbing via the Moloney Management system in 2023, due again late 2026.
- A condition assessment of buildings was undertaken in 2022, 2025 and will be undertaken every three years thereafter.
- A valuation of buildings will be undertaken in September 2025 and every three years thereafter.
- Bridges and culverts have had a level 2 bridge inspection undertaken in 2024 and every three years thereafter targeting condition, safety and maintenance requirements and valuation.
- A smaller subset of major culverts will have a level 2 bridge inspection undertaken within the 2025/26 financial year. These should be undertaken each three years thereafter.

Assets requiring renewal are identified from a combination of asset register data, community requests, road hierarchy, Road Management Plan inspections and regular cyclical inspections for the various assets.

- The timing of capital renewals is usually based upon on the asset condition recorded in latest survey combined with a physical inspection.
- Alternatively, on ground staff, supervisors or community feedback may identify areas requiring rectification or renewal.

The Moloney Asset Management System was used to forecast the renewal lifecycle costs for the majority of assets in this AM Plan.

This AM Plan is based on a high level of confidence with respect to the information provided by the Moloney Management System as the same mechanism for performance of the assets has been utilised consistently since 2003. Less confidence is placed in the data for buildings, parks, reserves and playgrounds however their value is drastically smaller than the "roads" portfolio, so this is thought to be of acceptable risk to Council although improvements items are programmed within this plan to improve asset management in those areas.

The improvement in data and confidence levels for minor assets come at a high cost and resource effort for a small rural Council. This needs to be considered when assessing recommendations from auditors on asset management.

1.15 Monitoring and improvement program

The next steps resulting from this AM Plan to improve asset management practices are:

- Continue to engage Moloney Asset Management Systems to undertake the three-yearly asset survey and financial modelling
- Development of an asset acquisition policy
- Development of a resilience register, which includes the type of threats and hazards and the current and future measures that the organisation takes to ensure service delivery resilience
- Update the road hierarchy on an annual basis with a formal review every four years.
- Update AssetAsyst software to cloud based with unlimited licences to improve efficiency of inspection and data recording
- Inclusion of bridges and culvert data onto AssetAsyst
- Development of a 10-year maintenance and operations forecast
- Development of a 10-year renewal program for buildings
- Investigate the use of emerging technology, practices, or equipment to maintain or renew assets or purchase more efficient equipment
- Ensure that photographic evidence is obtained for all paved and sealed roads to satisfy natural disaster funding criteria
- Undertake an external valuation of buildings every three years during the 10-year period of this AM Plan
- Place a focus upon the sourcing of additional funding for rehabilitation or replacement of large assets
- Undertake condition assessment of drainage network to provide renewal information
- Undertake external assessment including updating of valuation of bridges and major culverts every three years
- Implement annual formal documented inspection of Council buildings with a view to improving maintenance practices and renewal information.

1.16 Asset 'control' and committees of management

This plan includes all building, recreation and open space assets where Council has a 'control' of that asset. Where **'control' is defined as: Council has the controlling interest, the final say, in decision making**.

Based on differing arrangements of land ownership and who is the facility manager the matrix below generally describes where Council has 'control' (shown clear).

Land and buildings can be owned by either:

- Crown
- Council (i.e., Council holds freehold title to the land)
- Road reserve (ownership can be either Crown or Council)

If the Crown appoints Council as the committee of management (COM) for crown land, Council inherits the responsibility for the management of facilities on that crown land, and Council then manages the facilities as if they were the owner. This includes situations where Council has entered into agreements with third parties for occupation of all or part of these reserves.

This plan may also address assets where Council has an 'interest' in the asset that may place Council in some form of risk exposure or maintenance responsibility. This might result from circumstances due to:

- Council land occupied by others
- Facility management and/or maintenance responsibility for buildings on land owned by others
- Some other form of possible exposure to liability

Similarly, if the Crown appoints a local COM for crown land, the local COM inherits the responsibility for the management of facilities on that crown land, and not Council.

If Council has facilities on road reserves, then Council is responsible for the management of these facilities.

At present Council does not have any committees of management appointed via section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, however the following table gives an outline of who is responsible in the various management scenarios that can exist.

1.16.1 Assets not included in this plan

The AM Plan shall not list assets specifically excluded from the plan;

- non-Council assets
- where Council does not have 'control' of the asset

	Asset owner			
Occupier/ land ownership	**Council**	**Section 65 committee**	**User committee**	**Private individual or single club or organisation**
Council	Council	Council appointed S65	Council with agreement in place	Council depending on lease conditions
				Occupier depending on lease conditions
Crown road reserve	Council	Council appointed S65	Council with agreement in place	Occupier with lease from council in place
Crown reserve	Council as DELWP committee	Council as DELWP committee Council appointed S65	DELWP committee of management	Council if lease/licence holder
				Occupier by lease/licence
Private	Council depending on lease conditions	Private owner	Private	Private
	Private owner depending on lease conditions			

1.16.2 Relationship to Council Plan 2021-2025, Community Vision, Long-Term Financial Plan and consultation with the community

The Shaping West Wimmera consultation process was held during June and July 2021. The consultation was undertaken knowing that Community Vision, Council Plan (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Long-Term Financial Plan would be developed and adopted within the following 12-month period. Council has undertaken an extensive engagement process. Council convened a community panel by inviting expressions of interest from community members to participate on a citizen panel to consider the Community Vision, Council Plan (incorporating the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Long-Term Financial Plan. The plans below support and feed into this AM Plan.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan 2021-2025 went through the community consultation phase during 2021.

The consultation was relevant to the develop of this plan and there are clear links. Key themes of the consultation relating to assets were:

- maintaining and improving the road network was important to the community
- the condition of roads was seen as variable
- attractive and viable town centres are a community focus
- upgrade of community facilities is required
- recreational facilities need to be improved

(Please note that during 2025 a new Council plan is under development and will be included in subsequent reviews of this plan).

The following Initiatives from the Council Plan 2021-2025 are directly related to this Asset Management Plan.

1.1.1 Review and improve Council's Asset Management System to manage Council buildings and facilities in accordance with legislative requirements.

1.1.2 Actively support committees of management in management of community facilities.

1.1.3 Ensure key infrastructure (roads and buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.

1.3.1 Review and improve Council's asset management system to manage Council buildings and facilities in accordance with legislative requirements.

1.3.2 Actively support committees of management in management of community facilities.

1.3.2 Ensure key infrastructure (roads and buildings) is maintained and renewed as required to support our economy, community use and involvement.

1.3.3 Actively assist community groups in applying for funding to upgrade sport and recreation community infrastructure in line with the municipal sport and recreation strategy.

1.3.4 Continue to extend Council's footpath network in towns and seek funding to develop and extend trails in accordance with recreational trails strategy.

1.4.1 Partner with key stakeholders to complete a study of current and future childcare requirements across the shire and define Council's role in the planning, service development and facility provision requirements.

1.4.7 Secure ongoing, flexible, rural appropriate funding to support maternal and child health and other early years initiatives.

1.5.1 Through membership of the Wimmera Regional Library Corporation continue to provide library services that are relevant and contemporary.

2.4.1 Seek funding and partnership opportunities to implement streetscape plans for Edenhope and Kaniva.

2.4.2 Continue to maintain and expand footpaths and shared paths in town centres.

2.4.5 Complete streetscape master plans for Harrow, Apsley, Serviceton, Dergholm and Goroke.

2.4.6 Actively work to improve the appearance of main streets and town entrances across the shire.

2.5.1 Review the Road Management Plan (RMP) within 12 months of the Council election.

2.5.2 Continue the programmed maintenance of the sealed and unsealed road network in accordance with the RMP and Moloney report.

2.5.3 Implement the annual capital works program in line with RMP and road network reporting requirements.
2.5.4 Implement asset management system to monitor and plan road and asset maintenance and renewal.
2.5.5 Advocate for additional external funding for roads and bridges.
2.5.7 Seek funding to upgrade local roads throughout the shire to support freight routes, heavy vehicles, and high traffic volumes
2.6.4 Advocate for the improvement of roads to meet requirements for road trains.
3.1.7 Advocate to relevant stakeholders to maintain safe infrastructure (i.e., roads, furniture, signage) on public land for recreation (lakes, parks, and natural environments).
4.1.1 Prepare and implement a 10-year financial plan.
4.1.2 Prepare and implement long term asset plan.
4.1.3 Provide quarterly financial reports tracking Council performance including annual plan performance measures and capital works program.
4.1.5 Maximise income from alternative sources.

Community vision

To prepare the community vision, Council undertook a deliberative engagement process. The learnings of these deliberations have provided the following information that is relevant to the AM Plan.

Two key deliverables of the community vision were:

- improving the road network
- public and community transport

The vision also received the following feedback from the community:

- the condition of our roads is variable, and in some locations very poor. Our roads should enable the safe and efficient transport of goods and people
- our community infrastructure needs to be improved so we can attract visitors and better support our community.

“Future directions” identified during the consultation and listed in the community vision included:

- safe and sustainable road network supporting businesses, community and visitors
- attractive and viable town centres
- taking advantage of our strengths in farming, business and tourism to generate employment and share our prosperity
- sport and recreation facilities that encourage participation in physical activity and add to community life

Long term financial plan

The purpose of the financial plan is to;

- aid in decision-making for West Wimmera Shire Council’s approach to delivering infrastructure and services to the community in a financially sustainable manner
- establish a framework for the next 10 years to plan for the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the Council plan
- to assess and plan for the financial sustainability of Council into the future.

The LTFP objectives include:

- to ensure Council maintains a sound financial position while meeting the service needs of the community now and into the future
- to enable adequate investment in capital works and meet the asset renewal requirements of Council's infrastructure as outlined in asset management planning
- to meet the financial requirements of the goals, objectives and initiatives outlined in the Council plan.

The data contained in the LTFP is utilised in this AM Plan.

Further consultation of Council’s asset management plan.
This plan, in its draft form will be advertised for public comment by resolution at a Council meeting. Council after considering any public submissions will make any necessary changes that the Council sees as necessary or appropriate before final adoption of the AM Plan.

INTRODUCTION

1.17 BACKGROUND

This AM Plan communicates the requirements for the sustainable delivery of services through management of assets, compliance with regulatory requirements, and required funding to provide the appropriate levels of service over the planning period.

The AM Plan is to be read with other West Wimmera Shire Council policy documents as per the following:

- Asset Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Long Term Financial Plan
- 2021-2025 Council Plan (and any subsequent Council plan adopted).

The infrastructure assets covered by this AM Plan include roads, footpaths, kerbing, drainage, land improvements, bridges, culverts, fixed assets and buildings. For a detailed summary of the assets covered in this AM Plan refer to table in section 5.

The infrastructure assets included in this plan have a total replacement value of **$349,060,224** as of May 2025.

Key stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of this AM Plan are shown in table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Key stakeholders in the AM Plan

Key stakeholder	Role in Asset Management Plan
West Wimmera Shire Council	■ Represent needs of community/shareholders ■ Allocate resources to meet planning objectives in providing services while managing risks ■ Ensure service sustainable
Director Infrastructure, Development and Works	Provision of structure and final approval of plan before submission to Council
Manager Infrastructure, Development and Works	Guidance in development of AM Plan and reviewing of such plan.
Assets GIS Coordinator	Combining data and information from various asset management and financial sources to develop the AM Plan
Director Corporate and Community Services	Oversee that plan aligns with corporate policies
Chief Financial Officer	Development of long-term financial plan

1.18 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF ASSET OWNERSHIP

Our goal for managing infrastructure assets is to meet the defined level of service (as amended from time to time) in the most cost effective manner for present and future consumers, while providing enough budget to allow renewal of assets to at a sustainable rate. The key elements of infrastructure asset management are:

- Providing a defined level of service and monitoring performance
- Managing the impact of growth through demand management and infrastructure investment
- Taking a lifecycle approach to developing cost-effective management strategies for the long-term that meet the defined level of service
- Identifying, assessing and appropriately controlling risks
- Linking to a long-term financial plan to ensure required expenditure can be allocated over the period of the plan

Key elements of the planning framework are:

- Levels of service – specifies the services and levels of service to be provided
- Risk management
- Future demand – how this will impact on future service delivery and how this is to be met
- Lifecycle management – how to manage its existing and future assets to provide defined levels of service
- Financial summary – what funds are required to provide the defined services
- Asset management practices – how we manage provision of the services
- Monitoring – how the plan will be monitored to ensure objectives are met
- Asset management improvement plan – how we increase asset management maturity

Other references to the benefits, fundamentals principles and objectives of asset management are:

- International Infrastructure Management Manual 2015 [1]
- ISO 55000[2]

[1] Based on IPWEA 2015 IIMM, Sec 2.1.3, p 2| 13
[2] ISO 55000 Overview, principles and terminology

2.0 LEVELS OF SERVICE

2.1 CUSTOMER RESEARCH AND EXPECTATIONS

This AM Plan is prepared to facilitate consultation prior to adoption of levels of service by the West Wimmera Shire Council. Future revisions of the AM Plan will incorporate customer consultation on service levels in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. This will assist the West Wimmera Shire Council and stakeholders in matching the level of service required, service risks and consequences with the customer's ability and willingness to pay for the service.

Table 3.4 summarises the results from the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. Results from 2020 and 2021 are provided.

2.2 STRATEGIC AND CORPORATE GOALS

This AM Plan is prepared under the direction of the West Wimmera Shire Council vision, mission, goals and objectives.

Our vision is:

> Our West Wimmera community is healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous and self-sustaining, with regional and global connectivity.

Strategic goals have been set by the West Wimmera Shire Council. The relevant goals and objectives and how these are addressed in this AM Plan are summarised in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Goals and how these are addressed in this plan

Goal	Objective	How goal and objectives are addressed in the AM Plan
Goal 1	Livable and healthy community	The plan provides the data to fund satisfactory renewal of assets is undertaken
Goal 2	Diverse and prosperous economy	Enable the Council to scope and provide the capital funds required to sustain Council and community infrastructure.
Goal 4	Good governance	New and upgrade of assets will sometimes be required as well as renewal, so provision and planning take into account the content of this plan.

2.3 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

There are many legislative requirements relating to the management of assets. Legislative requirements that impact the delivery of the asset services are outlined in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Legislative requirements

Legislation	Requirement
Local Government Act 2020	Section 92 asset plan requirements
Local Government Act 2020	Financial plan
Road Management Act 2004	Requirements for road management plan
Road Management (General) Regulations 2016	Review of road management plan
Transport Act 1983	Transport requirements
Local Government Act 2020	Community engagement requirements
Local Government Act 1989	Provision of appropriate services

2.4 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LEVELS OF SERVICE

Service levels are defined in three ways, customer satisfaction scores, customer levels of service and technical levels of service.

West Wimmera Shire Council participates in the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. This helps the Council to identify:

- what aspects of the service are important to the customer
- whether the community see value in what is currently provided
- the likely trend over time based on the current budget provision

Table 3.4: Community satisfaction survey results

Customer values	Customer satisfaction score (2023 survey)	Customer satisfaction score (2024 survey)	Average for small rural Councils 2024
Overall performance of Council	59	59	54
Appearance of public places	77	76	68
Waste management	63	68	67
Local streets and footpaths	63	62	51
Sealed local roads	53	51	41
Slashing and weed control on roads	50	49	45
Unsealed roads	43	43	35

2.5 CUSTOMER LEVELS OF SERVICE

The customer levels of service are considered in terms of:

Condition
How good is the service? What is the condition or quality of the service?

Function
Is it suitable for its intended purpose? Is it the right service?

Capacity/use
Is the service over or under used? Do we need more or less of these assets?

It is Council's intention to specify levels of service for each asset category via individual asset management plans. This will be an improvement action nominated within this AM Plan.

Currently the Council relies upon the annual Community Satisfaction Survey as well as direct consultation with the community by councillors and staff for feedback from the community.

The number of road-related customer requests from the Council's customer request management (CRM) system are also monitored. The results for the 2023/24 financial year were:

Trees/water over road	**56**
Road maintenance	215
General roads enquiry	65
Footpaths	26
Total	**362**

2.6 TECHNICAL LEVELS OF SERVICE

Technical levels of service – To deliver the customer values, and impact the achieved customer levels of service, are operational or technical measures of performance. These technical measures relate to the activities and allocation of resources to best achieve the desired customer outcomes and demonstrate effective performance.

Technical service measures are linked to the activities and annual budgets covering:

- **Acquisition or upgrade** – the activities to provide a higher level of service (e.g., widening a road, sealing an unsealed road, replacing a pipeline with a larger size) or a new service that did not exist previously (e.g., a new library).
- **Operation** – the regular activities to provide services
- **Maintenance** – the activities necessary to retain an asset as near as practicable to an appropriate service condition. Maintenance activities enable an asset to provide service for its planned life (e.g., road patching, unsealed road grading, building and structure repairs),
- **Renewal** – the activities that return the service capability of an asset up to that which it had originally provided (e.g., road resurfacing and pavement reconstruction, pipeline replacement and building component replacement),

Service and asset managers plan, implement and control technical service levels to influence the service outcomes.[3]

Table 3.6 shows the activities expected to be provided under the current 10-year planned budget allocation, and the forecast activity requirements being recommended in this AM Plan.

[3] IPWEA, 2015, IIMM, p 2|28.

Table 3.6: Technical levels of service

Lifecycle activity	Purpose of activity	Activity measure	Current performance*	Recommended performance **
TECHNICAL LEVELS OF SERVICE				
Acquisition or upgrade	Road widening	Upgrade of seal width	Where safety and/or traffic increase triggers upgrade with finance available.	Upgrade to 6.2m seal.
	Upgrade to gravel from unsealed surface	Change in hierarchy or use of road.	Earth formation	Gravel pavement of 100mm depth.
	Footpaths	Extension of, upgrade or new footpath	Council recognises the importance of footpaths within townships. Currently Council endeavors to provide capital allocation each year for new or upgraded path as financial constraints allow	Continue to commit to improving connectivity and standard of footpaths within available resources.
	Kerb and channel		Focus is on replacement of kerbing nearing intervention level	New kerbing may be built into an urban construction or upgrade project or where specific drainage benefits result
	New building or upgrade/renovation.	As specified	Where safety or service level change occurs.	To standard approved by Council. External funding is sought on most occasions
	Upgrade to seal from gravel surface	Change in hierarchy or use of road	Unsealed but paved surface	Seal to appropriate width with approval by Council
Operation and maintenance	Sealed Roads	Potholes	>400mm diameter and 75mm deep	As per Road Management Plan
		Edge breaks	5m long and >300mm wide	As per Road Management Plan
	Unsealed Roads	Potholes	>500mm diameter and 75mm deep	As per Road Management Plan
		Corrugations	*>100mm deep over 50m*	As per Road Management Plan
		Depression, wheel rut, shoving, scouring >150mm deep over 1.2m traverse or 3m longitudinal	>150mm deep over 1.2m traverse or 3m longitudinal	As per Road Management Plan

Lifecycle activity	Purpose of activity	Activity measure	Current performance*	Recommended performance **
	All roads	Dead animals	On road or trafficable portion of shoulder	As per Road Management Plan
		Fallen trees/limbs in traffic lane	If presenting a danger to traffic	As per Road Management Plan
		Guideposts	2 in a row missing on outside of curve or more than 20% missing at critical location	As per Road Management Plan
		Ponding of water	>200mm deep in trafficable area	As per Road Management Plan
		Other obstructions, materials or spills	If presenting a danger and in trafficable lane	As per Road Management Plan
		Culverts	Blocked with water over road or showing structural distortion	As per Road Management Plan
		Vegetation	Trees, shrubs, or grass obscuring regulatory or warning signs	As per Road Management Plan
		Line marking	Not visible at critical location	As per Road Management Plan
		Safety barrier	Detached or damaged making substantially ineffective	As per Road Management Plan
		Depression, wheel rut, shoving, scouring	>150mm deep over 1.2m traverse or 3m longitudinal	As per Road Management Plan
		Edge drop off	*100mm deep*	As per Road Management Plan
		Warning or regulatory signs	Faded or illegible	As per Road Management Plan
Renewal	Gravel road resheeting	Gravel pavement	Resheeting required when condition reaches intervention level 5. Specific site inspection during wet weather will override a condition level as safety or special traffic requirements may take precedence.	Typically apply gravel resheet layer of 100mm thickness. Heavy traffic or specific site conditions may prompt a thicker layer, while in some instances a layer of less than 100mm may be deemed satisfactory. For example, where reasonable depth of pavement is in place, but quality is poor, a 50mm layer of higher quality material may be utilised.

Lifecycle activity	Purpose of activity	Activity measure	Current performance*	Recommended performance **
	Sealed roads	Pavement	Rehabilitation and overlay if condition reaches intervention level of 7.0 (6.9 for link and collector roads) however early intervention at 6.0 preferred if financial resources allow	Rip and recompact existing, apply gravel overlay minimum 100mm
	Sealed road shoulders	Gravel shoulder	Resheeting is required when condition reaches intervention level of 5. Specific site inspection may be required to ascertain specific onsite conditions and safety requirements and may take precedence to condition rating	Apply gravel resheet layer 100mm thick or as otherwise deemed appropriate when site conditions are considered
	Sealed surface	Bitumen chip seal	Reseal required when condition reaches intervention level of condition rating 7.0 (6.5 for link and collector roads)	Apply 7, 10 or 14mm reseal
	Kerb and channel	Concrete	Replacement if the condition level reaches an intervention level of 7.5	Replace with appropriate standard kerb profile
	Footpaths	Concrete or pavers	Replacement required if condition reaches an intervention level of 6.0	Reconstruct with minimum 100mm reinforced concrete
Disposal	If assets are no longer required or their cost cannot be justified.	Applies to the following assets: -roads -footpaths -buildings -land and land improvements -parks and open space -plant and equipment -bridges -drainage	Assets identified by responsible officers with report to Council and decision by Council	Disposal in accordance with Council's Asset Disposal Policy

Note: Renewal projects may be modified to include improvement. Safety concerns, a focus on reducing ongoing maintenance costs, an endeavor to cater for more efficient freight transport and external funding are facilitators that may prompt a section of asset with a condition rating less than the intervention, being rehabilitated and widened as part of an improvement project.

It is important to monitor the service levels regularly as circumstances can and do change. Current performance is based on existing resource provision and work efficiencies. It is acknowledged changing circumstances such as technology and customer priorities will change over time.

3.0 FUTURE DEMAND

3.8 DEMAND DRIVERS

Drivers affecting demand include things such as population change, regulations, changes in demographics, seasonal factors, vehicle ownership rates, consumer preferences and expectations, technological changes, economic factors, agricultural practices, environmental awareness, etc.

3.9 DEMAND FORECASTS

The present position and projections for demand drivers that may impact future service delivery and use of assets have been identified and documented.

3.10 DEMAND IMPACT AND DEMAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The impact of demand drivers that may affect future service delivery and use of assets are shown in table 4.3.

Demand for new services will be managed through a combination of managing existing assets, upgrading of existing assets and providing new assets to meet demand and demand management. Demand management practices can include non-asset solutions, insuring against risks and managing failures.

Opportunities identified to date for demand management are shown in table 4.3. Further opportunities will be developed in future revisions of this AM Plan.

Table 4.3: Demand management plan

Demand driver	Current position	Projection	Impact on services	Demand management plan
Population	Very small population increase	Continuation of current minimal increase.	Little if any change as minimum service levels often apply anyway	Continue to monitor to see if service levels are adequate or assets can be disposed of
Greater freight task with increasing number and size of trucks	Increasing safety requirement to widen narrow sealed roads	Trend to continue	Greater demand for better quality freight routes	Reconstruct priority roads to upgraded standard including greater width at renewal time while seeking external funding support
Securing of employment and retention of staff	Ongoing difficulties.	No change	Greater degree of difficulty in provision of some services and probable increase in unit cost	Upskilling of local employees and utilisation of shared services if available. Utilisation of remote work by professionals
Aging population	Percentage of aged has increased	Continued increase likely	Greater demand for aged care and general care services	Lobby for increased support for aged care from state and federal governments
Production of grain and hay	Increasing with acreage and efficiencies	Efficiency will drive further production increase	Impact on integrity of roads and perception of decreased safety.	Reconstruct priority roads to upgraded standard including greater width at renewal time while seeking external funding support.

Timber production	Spasmodic but substantial transport of timber product in southern portion of shire	Trend will continue	Can have significant deterioration on specific local roads over a relatively short haulage period	Having agreements in place with timber industry stakeholders to rectify damage caused to roads or upgrade prior to commencement. Also, discussions and agreement on the most appropriate haulage route important
Gravel supply	Decline in availability and quality of local sources	Trend to continue	Increased unit costs as material from further afield is sourced	External gravel sources have been imported in recent years and unit rates for renewal and upgrade have been adjusted. Stabilisation of local material with addition of product to increase its performance can be undertaken where cost effective
Freight	Increase in number of axles allows more freight per trip	Trend to continue with longer, larger vehicles becoming more common	Impact on integrity of roads and perception of decreased safety	Reconstruct priority roads to upgraded standard including width at renewal time, while seeking external funding
Age of assets	Major assets, including roads, drainage and footpaths, are aging	Trend to continue in medium term	Predicted to be an increasing renewal demand over time	Obtain regular condition assessments at least every three years and examine modelling to see if additional budgets are required to reach renewal requirement
Early failure of some assets	Not uncommon for sections of road and other assets	Trend to continue	Predicted to be an increasing renewal demand over time	Obtain regular condition assessments at least every three years and examine modelling to see if additional budgets are required to reach renewal requirement

3.11 ASSET PROGRAMS TO MEET DEMAND

The new assets required to meet demand may be acquired, donated or constructed. Additional assets are discussed in section 5.4.

Acquiring new assets will commit the West Wimmera Shire to ongoing operations, maintenance and renewal costs for the period that the service provided from the assets is required. These future costs are identified and considered in developing forecasts of future operations, maintenance and renewal costs for inclusion in the long-term financial plan.

3.12 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

The impacts of climate change may have a significant impact on the assets we manage and the services they provide. In the context of the asset management planning process climate change can be considered as both a future demand and a risk.

How climate change impacts on assets will vary depending on the location and the type of services provided, as will the way in which we respond and manage those impacts.[4]

As a minimum we consider how to manage our existing assets given potential climate change impacts for our region.

Risk and opportunities identified to date are shown in table 4.5.1

Table 4.5.1 Managing the impact of climate change on assets and services

Climate change description	Projected change	Potential impact on assets and services	Management
Flash flooding	Increased frequency and intensity of storms	Damage to assets	Where assets are severely damaged after storm event, take opportunity to reconstruct to more resilient standard. Additional maintenance or cleaning may be required
Drought	Increased frequency and severity	Less water sources for roadworks increasing cost and decreasing effectiveness. More maintenance may be required	Maintain and upgrade current bores and construct additional bores. Lobby for extension of pipelines into WWSC. Increase unit rates for maintenance and construction
Impact on works staff	Greater difficulty maintaining productivity and efficiency in summer months due to high temperatures	Reduction in amount or quality of maintenance	Provide more mechanised equipment with less reliance for personnel on the ground. Greater capital allocation potentially required in plant replacement
Fire risk	Harsher and longer fire season	Damage to assets or unable to access certain areas during high-risk times to perform works	Undertake works in sensitive fire risk areas outside of the fire season where practicable
Storm intensity	More extreme weather events	Inundation of buildings	Improve stormwater system is maintained. Upgrade might be required

[4] IPWEA Practice Note 12.1 Climate change impacts on the useful life of infrastructure

Additionally, the way in which we construct new assets should recognise that there is opportunity to build in resilience to climate change impacts. Building resilience can have the following benefits:

- Assets will withstand the impacts of climate change.
- Services can be sustained; and
- Assets that can endure may potentially lower the lifecycle cost and reduce their carbon footprint

Table 4.5.2 summarises some asset climate change resilience opportunities.

Table 4.5.2 building asset resilience to climate change

New asset description	Climate change impact on these assets?	Build resilience in new works
Bridges and culverts	Greater capacity required	Design additional capacity where required at renewal or after damage from a natural disaster
Floodways	Potential for more damage during events	More resilient design at renewal or after damage during storm or flood event
Buildings	Fire damage risk	Upgrade design standards
	Increased energy use	Additional insulation and design focus on energy sustainability. Install solar panels or improve insulation
	Increased demand for water and restriction on supply	Installation of water tanks and dual supply considered for all new developments, renovations, and renewals. Water sensitive design utilised for new works
	Greater demand for power and hence increases to operational costs	Solar hot water and photo voltaic panels considered for all new developments, renovations and renewals
Plant	Might be a need to purchase plant with less reliance on labour where personnel are exposed to extreme weather	Utilisation of Jet patcher or similar equipment for bitumen maintenance to be considered. Larger water tankers to be purchased where applicable at changeover of plant
Unsealed roads	Greater maintenance and renewal requirement if greater occurrence of extreme weather	Use of better-quality materials or utilising stabilisation additives to enhance longevity
Sealed roads	Greater drainage requirements.]	Design additional drainage capacity at renewal

The impact of climate change on assets is a new and complex discussion and further opportunities will be developed in future revisions of this AM Plan.

4.0 LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The lifecycle management plan details how the West Wimmera Shire Council plans to manage and operate the assets at the agreed levels of service (refer to section 3) while managing life cycle costs.

4.8 BACKGROUND DATA

4.8.1 Physical parameters

The assets covered by this AM Plan are shown in table 5.1.1.

- Fixed assets
- Buildings
- Land improvements
- Bridges and culverts
- Footpath
- Kerbing
- Sealed pavements
- Unsealed pavements
- Sealed surface
- Plant
- Fleet

Table 5.1.1: assets covered by this plan

Asset category	Description	Replacement value
Fixed assets (furniture and equipment)	Various equipment, furniture and fittings	$1,596,666
Buildings	Various Council-owned or controlled buildings	$57,376,000
Land improvements	Playgrounds, bores, streetscape, transfer stations, amenities	$5,434,000
Bridges and culverts	Bridges and major culverts	$10,271,015
Footpath	36,908m2	$5,094,808
Kerbing	48,108m	$9,149,220
Sealed Pavements	4,822754 m2	$184,599,080
Unsealed pavements	6,309,469 m2	$38,091,018
Sealed surface	4,032,002 m2	$25,530,988
Plant	Heavy plant and equipment	$10,955,985
Fleet	Sedans, SUVs	$961,444
TOTAL		**$349,060,224**

All figure values are shown in current day dollars and current at the time of adoption of this plan. (Figures will change as an assessment is undertaken annually with adjusted figures adopted).

Age profile

Asset lives have been adopted for the following assets:

Footpaths	49.9yrs
Kerbing	66.5yrs
Sealed pavements	79.6yrs
Unsealed pavements	20.4yrs
Sealed surfaces	16.8yrs

Road (including kerb and bridges) and footpath assets make up 78% by valuation of the total asset portfolio of West Wimmera Shire Council. As such, the asset life and original construction dates and current condition are very important factors that determine the renewal requirements into the future. A peak in construction of road assets occurred in the 1960s, which indicates a lot of renewal might be required in the next 20 years.

West Wimmera Shire Council uses the Moloney Asset Management System to financially model the renewal requirements based on current condition and utilising a degradation curve. The software provides a recommended renewal funding profile that will deliver the cost to maintain assets at a certain condition.

4.8.2 Asset capacity and performance

Assets are generally provided to meet design standards where these are available. However, there is insufficient resources to address all known deficiencies. Locations where deficiencies in service performance are known are detailed in table 5.1.2.

Table 5.1.2: known service performance deficiencies

Location	Service deficiency
Unsealed roads with sandstone gravel surface	Pavement might have sufficient depth but be of poor quality, being problematic in sustained wet weather and requiring additional maintenance, which might be beyond resources. Resheeting with higher quality alternative material might be solution but subject to budgetary restraints as additional cost is incurred
Sealed roads with 3.6m width	Ideally should be wider where traffic or safety requirements are a trigger, high number of heavy vehicles or where there are horizontal or vertical alignment challenges. The priorities for widening for safety or heavy vehicle productivity are listed in the Wimmera Southern Mallee Transport Strategy. These will be updated as specific conditions or situations arise
Reconstruction of sealed roads	As Council's biggest renewal requirement falls in this sector, external funding to supplement this area is required for Council to approach its renewal target. Sufficient external funding is currently available however if it is reduced or withdrawn Council will be deficient in this area
Knowledge of asset condition of drainage assets	Minimal knowledge of asset condition. Condition assessment required as part of improvement plan

4.8.3 Asset condition

Condition is currently monitored using the Moloney Management System for the footpaths, kerbing, sealed pavements, unsealed pavements and sealed surfaces.

The purpose of condition surveys of the assets is to evaluate the condition and performance of the asset.

Assets are condition rated on a scheduled frequency based on the risk of failure of the asset and the rate of deterioration. Each AM Plan will specify the:

- asset
- survey name
- survey frequency, which might vary across the asset hierarchy
- the criteria to be evaluated and scored,
- responsibility for undertaking the survey
- dates of any previous surveys completed.

It is important that suitably experienced personnel undertake inspections and surveys to ensure consistency in surveys. Induction and training are provided prior to commencing any inspections and surveys.

4.8.4 Condition rating

Asset condition is rated on a 0 (good) to 10 (poor) system as per below via the Moloney Asset Management System. This rating method is applied to sealed road pavements, sealed road surfaces, unsealed road pavements, kerbing and footpaths.

Rating	Description	
0 = GOOD	New	New or an asset recently rehabilitated back to new condition
1	Near new	Near new, no visible signs of deterioration, often based upon the time since construction
2	Excellent	Excellent. Very slight condition declines obvious, no longer in new condition
3	Very good	Very good, early stages of deterioration minor, no serviceability problems
4	Good	Good, some obvious deterioration evident, slightly impaired serviceability
5	Fair	Fair - obvious deterioration some serviceability loss
6	Fair to poor	Fair to poor. Quite obvious deterioration serviceability would be affected and rising maintenance cost
7	Poor	Poor – severe deterioration serviceability limited high maintenance cost
8	Very poor	Very poor – serviceability heavily impacted. Very high maintenance cost needed
9	Extremely poor	Extremely poor – severe serviceability problems needing rehabilitation immediately. Could also be a risk to remain in service
10 = POOR	Failed	Failed, no longer serviceable and should not remain in service extreme risk

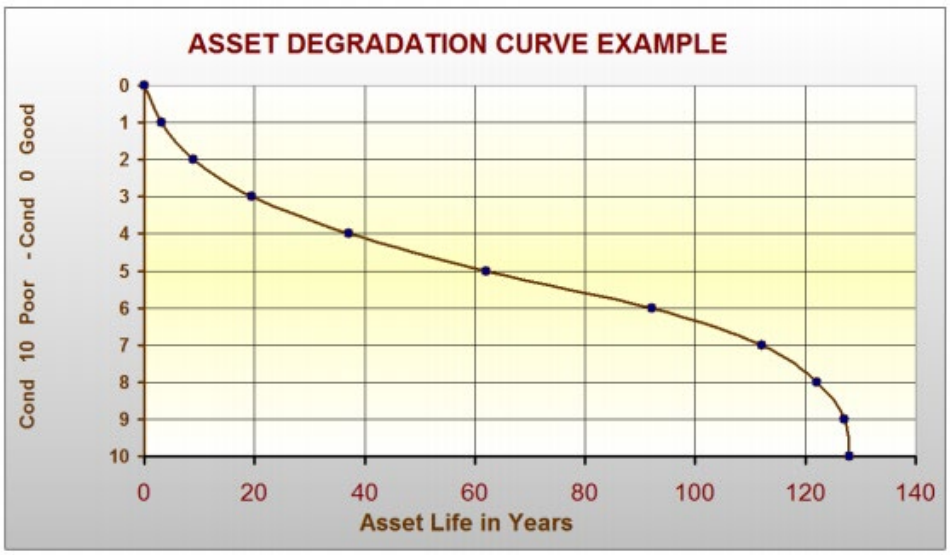
4.8.5 Deterioration curves

Deterioration curves provide a plot of the condition of the asset against the age of the asset and are best developed from the results of the condition survey. The curve demonstrates the assets performance as it ages.

Asset degradation or performance curves, unique to the district, can be developed once two or more consistent condition surveys have been undertaken. This is done in the Moloney system by examining all assets within a given condition rating following the first survey and determining which have degraded by the time of the second and or subsequent surveys.

The condition change between surveys is used to predict the annual statistical probability of an asset degrading from one asset condition to the next. In turn this equates to an expected average life within each condition rating. The degradation curves serve two very important functions. Firstly, they are used within the financial modelling section of the Moloney system to predict future asset condition movement and financial demand. Secondly, they should form the basis of the justification for the selection of the depreciation or service life cycled within the accounting system.

The term degradation curve comes from a particular format that the degradation data can be presented in. Figure B1 below is a graphical representation of one of the pavement groups to be modelled and shows how an average asset within the group would perform. In this case it commences at year zero in condition zero at the top left side of the graph and progresses to reach condition 10 after 128 years.



Degradation curves were produced for West Wimmera Shire Council by analysing the change in asset condition over up to six condition surveys between 2003 and 2020.

The degradation curves are specific for sealed pavements, sealed surfaces, unsealed pavements, kerbs and footpaths can be viewed in the 2020 Moloney Asset Management System report.

4.8.6 Asset useful lives and intervention level and basis for adopting useful lives

Useful life: The period over which a depreciable asset is expected to be used.

Intervention Level: The Intervention Level is that point in time the assets are at the end of their useful life. Ie the condition of the asset no longer meets the agreed level of service and requires renewal or replacement.

The deterioration graph may be used to estimate the useful life of the asset. Based on Council's adopted condition intervention level the corresponding age will be the useful life.

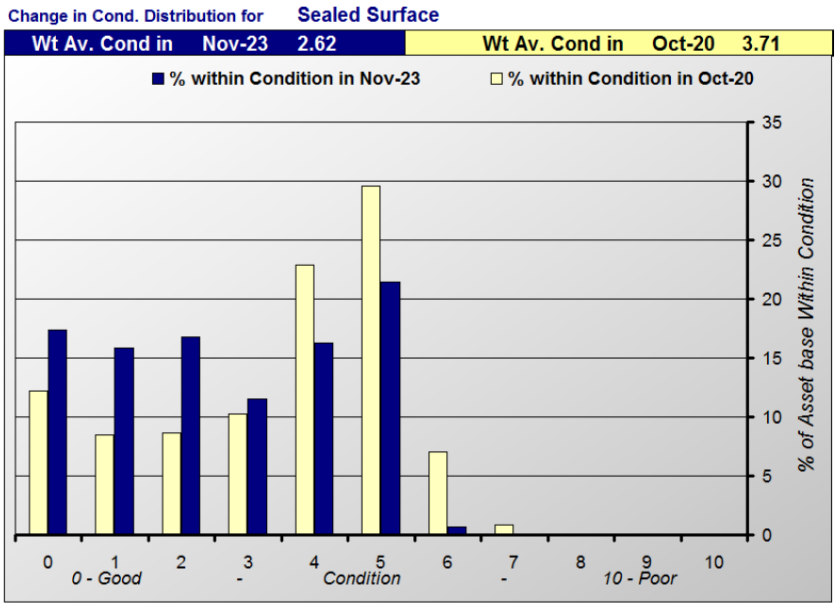
Intervention levels should be derived from current levels of service.

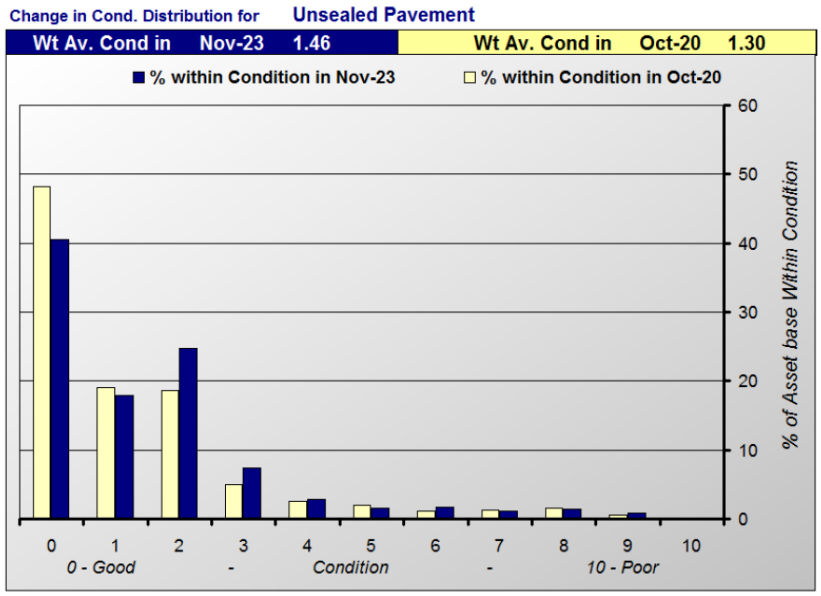
The AM Plan will detail the intervention level and useful life and the basis by which each has been adopted. The asset lives are reviewed annually and are detailed in the Valuations Justification Report.

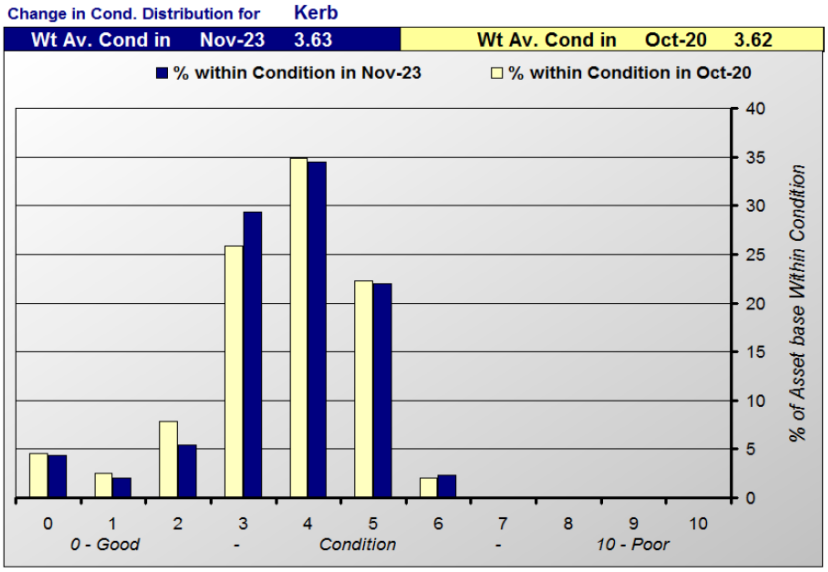
4.8.7 Asset condition

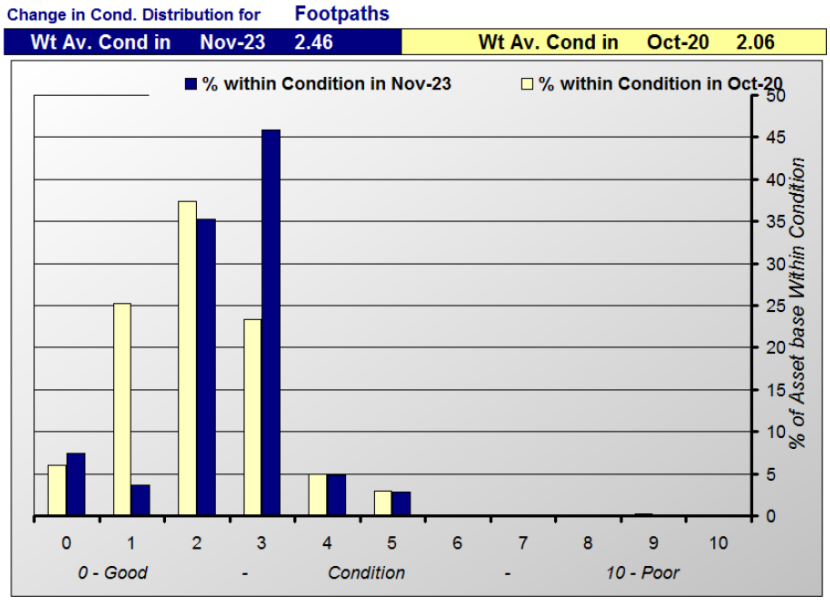
The condition profile of West Wimmera Shire Council major assets is shown below. (The graphs show the condition distribution for the various assets and has a comparison for the last two inspections being in 2018 and 2020)

Asset condition profile






Change in Cond. Distribution for Kerb
Wt Av. Cond in Nov-23 3.63
Wt Av. Cond in Oct-20 3.62
% within Condition in Nov-23
% within Condition in Oct-20
% of Asset base Within Condition
0 - Good - Condition - 10 - Poor


Change in Cond. Distribution for Footpaths
Wt Av. Cond in Nov-23 2.46
Wt Av. Cond in Oct-20 2.06
% within Condition in Nov-23
% within Condition in Oct-20
% of Asset base Within Condition
0 - Good - Condition - 10 - Poor

4.9 ASSET HIERARCHY

An asset hierarchy provides a framework for structuring data in an information system to assist in collection of data, reporting information and making decisions. The hierarchy includes the asset class and component used for asset planning and financial reporting, and service level hierarchy is used for service planning and delivery.

In determining both the standard of road construction and maintenance, as well as the road design standard, it is useful to have in place a hierarchy for the major asset being roads. Standards of road construction and maintenance can then be assigned to the various hierarchy categories. Also, frequencies of inspection as detailed in the Road Management Plan are specific to the hierarchy.

Hierarchies exist for roads, kerbing and footpaths.

Road hierarchy

Council has developed the following road hierarchy system for its road network:

- highways – state highways managed by Department of Transport
- arterial roads – declared arterial roads managed by Department of Transport.
- link roads – category 3
- collector roads – category 4
- access-dwelling roads – category 5A
- access-property roads – category 5B
- minor roads – category 6A
- minor roads (not maintained) – category 6B

Link roads	Category 3
Provide a link between highways, main roads, suburbs, or access to major tourist facilities, industrial centres, commercial areas and housing areas. Definition: a link road between townships and major rural communities and the arterial road network. Generally have traffic volumes in excess of 60 vehicles per day. Provide major access routes for heavy vehicles. These are sealed roads.	

Collector roads	Category 4
Provide connection between higher class roads, or access to major public facilities, smaller commercial centres, minor tourist facilities and industrial centres. Definition: A road that links communities to arterial roads and local link roads. These are both sealed and unsealed	

Access-dwelling roads	Category 5a
These roads serve as primary all weather access to at least one dwelling. Definition: Serve at least one occupied dwelling and link individual houses to higher classification roads, generally have traffic volumes less than 30 vehicles per day. Most of these roads are unsealed with a small percentage being sealed.	

Access-property roads	Category 5b.
These roads serve as all-weather access to rural, commercial, or industrial properties. Definition: serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 30 vehicles per day and have imported pavement material placed upon them.	

Minor roads	Category 6A
Provide dry weather access to rural, commercial or industrial properties. Definition: serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 10 vehicles per day and generally have no imported pavement material placed upon them.	

Minor roads (not maintained)	Category 6B
Category 6B roads are not proactively maintained by Council. These roads may be on Council's road register. They are not constructed roads. Definition: non-constructed roads within a road reserve which are not proactively maintained by Council.	

Footpath hierarchy

Council has developed the following footpath and kerb and channel hierarchy system.

High usage areas	Category 1
• Locations within 100m of commercial areas • Locations within 100m of schools and links to commercial areas • Links between commercial areas, schools and other high use areas which may include recreational areas	

Medium usage areas	Category 2
• All other areas where footpaths are constructed	

4.10 RENEWAL PLAN

Renewal is major capital work that does not significantly alter the original service provided by the asset, but restores, rehabilitates, replaces or renews an existing asset to its original service potential. Work over and above restoring an asset to original service potential is considered to be an acquisition or upgrade resulting in additional future operations and maintenance costs.

4.11 RENEWAL/REPLACEMENT PLAN

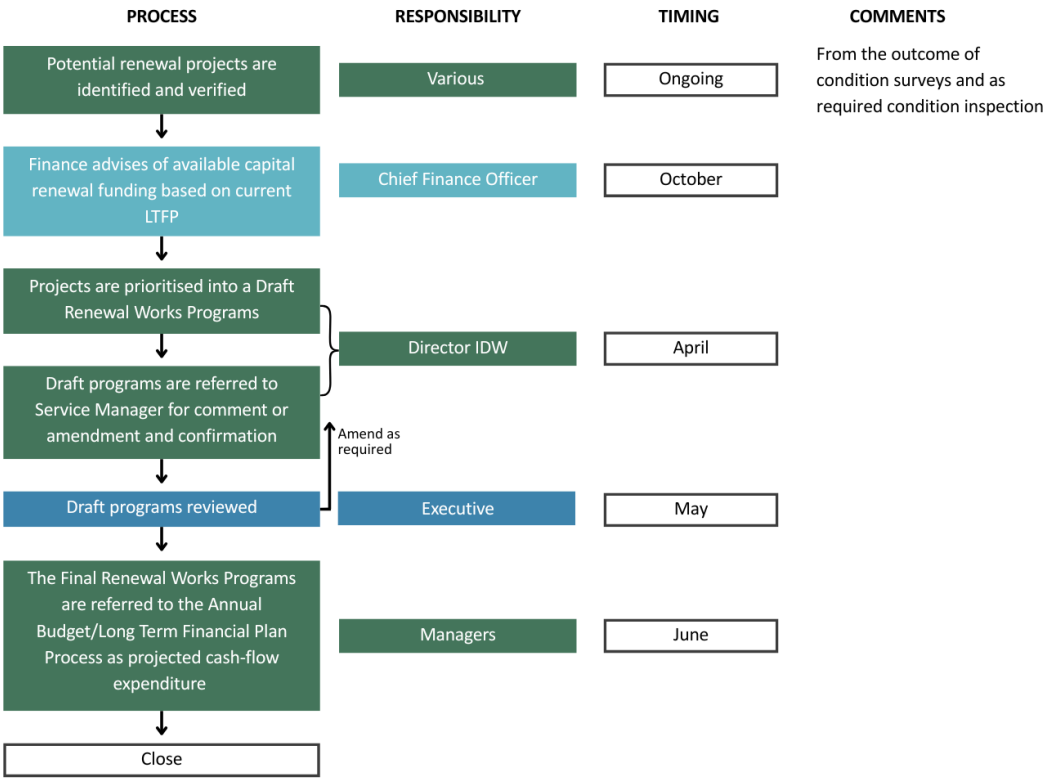
Renewal: Major work that does not increase the assets design capacity but restores, rehabilitates, replaces or renews an existing asset to its original capacity. Work over and above restoring an asset to original capacity is new works expenditure.

This section addresses how renewal projects are:

- are identified and planned for
- the standards which apply
- establishing the basis for determining future renewal costs.

4.11.1 Renewal planning process

Council's process for identifying and undertaking renewal works is shown below:



4.11.2 Renewal capital works program

The renewal works programs are developed from the condition ratings, age or priority rankings.

4.11.3 Renewal priority ranking

All renewal works programs are developed based on either of the following.

Typically, the methodology may be based on:

- 'Sorting' by a certain number of criteria. E.g., condition then by hierarchy, etc., or
- 'Weighting' where a range of criteria are each scored against pre-set values, allocated a relative %. The ranking is determined by the sum of the criteria scores multiplied by the weighting %.

4.11.4 Treatment options

Various treatments will be considered for each renewal. Particular attention is given to the possible use of low-cost treatments and utilisation of existing pavements where practicable.

4.11.5 Renewal modelling and renewal rates

To estimate renewal expenditure over the medium- and long-term Council utilises the:

- Moloney Renewal Modeling Software

The model requires the following input data:

Input data	Source
Intervention level	Section 5.1.6
Useful life	Section 5.1.1
Condition rating distribution	Asset register
Annual renewal expenditure	Annual budget/LTFP
Annual maintenance expenditure	Annual budget
Asset quantity	Asset register
Renewal rates	Moloney Management System
Deterioration graph profile	Moloney Management System

Within each asset group Council, based on its asset hierarchy, determines which assets shall be modelled, considering:

- differences in performance (asset life)
- differences in renewal rates
- materiality/total valuation

This AM Plan shall document the asset sets that are modelled and the basis for the renewal rate used. Typically, for budgeting on a year-to-year basis, the renewal rate shall be derived from actual costs incurred by Council in previous years with adjustments for inflation and specific parameters of each individual job where required.

4.11.5.1 Renewal demand and the renewal gap

The Moloney Asset Management System model can forecast the renewal demand and the renewal gap, where:

Renewal demand: The predicted renewal funding required to meet the prescribed standards.

Renewal gap: The shortfall in renewal funding. The difference between the predicted Renewal Demand and the actual/available funding.

The model produces graphs including:

a) the annual renewal demand and gap for the asset group
b) the annual renewal demand and gap for each asset set within the asset group
c) the cumulative renewal gap over time
d) the % of assets that are forecast to exceed the nominated intervention level over time

The renewal gap provides an indicator of the scale of the funding problem.

The Moloney Model is based estimates of the 'average' performance of assets and produces a high-level forecast of renewal costs. It is useful as a tool for directly creating works programs, but individual assets will perform differently into the future. All works programs shall be subject to verification on the ground.

4.11.5.2 Renewal funding solution

The funding required to address the renewal gap forecast is referred to the Long-Term Financial Plan for consideration. Should the available funding be less than the required funding a renewal funding solution must be developed.

However, this might not be achievable based on the available funding.

The model may then be used to test 'what-if' scenarios based on changing the funding scenario and predicting the percentage of assets than will exceed intervention. The Moloney Management System is utilised as detailed in section 5.5.

The manager of the asset shall assess the possible consequences resulting from any underfunding of renewal. These consequences may relate to:

- risk
- customer satisfaction
- increased maintenance costs
- compounding of the required renewal amount in later years

It is noted that the renewal gap forecasts will only substantially change as a result of a new condition survey.

Assets requiring renewal are identified from one of two approaches in the lifecycle model.

- The first method uses Moloney Asset Management System data to project the renewal costs (current replacement cost) and renewal timing (acquisition year plus updated useful life to determine the renewal year). This applies to the assets sealed surfaces, sealed road pavements, unsealed road pavements, footpaths and kerbs.
- The second method uses an alternative approach to estimate the timing and cost of forecast renewal work (i.e., condition modelling system, staff judgement, average network renewals, or other). This is applied to assets not listed for the first method. Sometimes a combination of the two approaches can be used.

The typical useful lives of assets used to develop projected asset renewal forecasts are shown in table 5.3. The asset lives were last reviewed in 2020.

Table 5.3: useful lives of assets

Asset (sub)category	Useful life
Footpaths	49.9yrs
Kerbing	66.5yrs
Sealed pavements	79.6yrs
Unsealed pavements	20.4yrs
Sealed surfaces	16.8yrs

The estimates for renewals in this AM Plan were based on the Moloney Management System for sealed surfaces, sealed road pavements, unsealed road pavements, footpaths and kerbs.

4.11.6 Renewal ranking criteria

Asset renewal is typically undertaken to either:

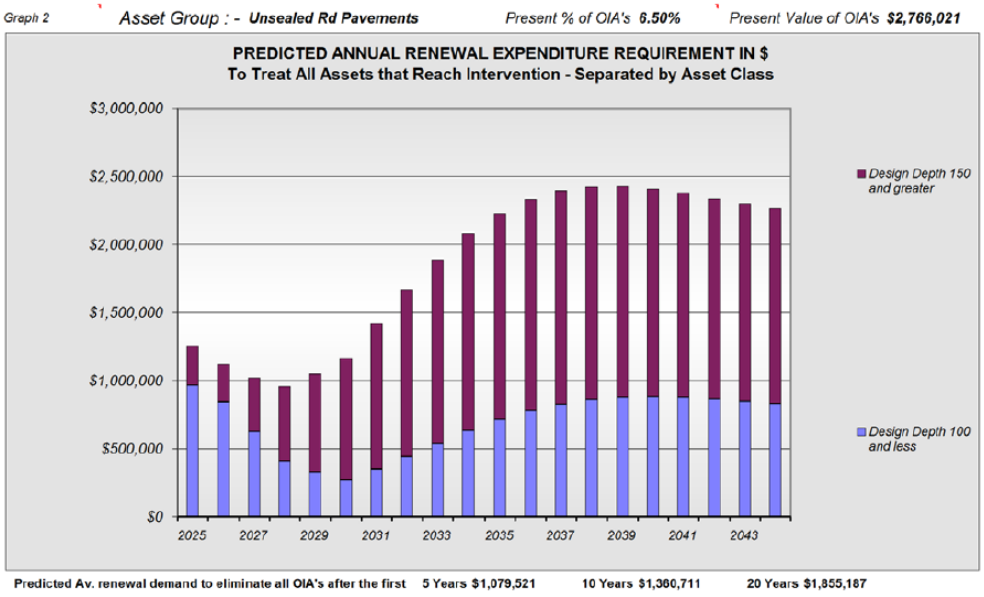
- ensure the reliability of the existing infrastructure to deliver the service it was constructed to facilitate (e.g., replacing a bridge that has a 5-t load limit with a similar capacity bridge)
- to ensure the infrastructure is of sufficient quality to meet the service requirements (e.g., condition of a playground).[5]

It is possible to prioritise renewals by identifying assets or asset groups that:

- have a high consequence of failure
- have high use and subsequent impact on users would be significant
- have higher than expected operational or maintenance costs
- have potential to reduce life cycle costs by replacement with a modern equivalent asset that would provide the equivalent service.[6]

4.12 SUMMARY OF FUTURE RENEWAL COSTS

Forecast renewal costs are projected to increase over time if the asset stock increases. The forecast costs associated with renewals are shown relative to the proposed renewal budget in the chart below. A detailed summary of the forecast renewal costs is shown in appendix D.



Forecast graph in today's dollars with no indexation. Formulated October 2023.

[5] IPWEA, 2015, IIMM, Sec 3.4.4, p 3|91.
[6] Based on IPWEA, 2015, IIMM, Sec 3.4.5, p 3|97.

All figure values are shown in current day dollars.

Sub Asset Description	Average renewal expenditure since the time of last survey	Average Planned renewal expenditure for the next 5 Years	Average Annual Liability (Based upon modelling lives and valuations) (AL)	Annual Depreciation based on Accounting valuations and lives (AD)	Average Capital Renewal Demand for next 5-years to eliminate all over intervention assets	Year of Condition Inspection	Recommended Year 1 funding level with 0.6% annual compounding increase
Sealed Pavements	$2,300,000	$2,300,000	$3,800,611	$2,556,492	$2,373,000	2023	$2,596,000
Sealed Surfaces	$1,500,000	$1,300,000	$1,521,769	$1,635,349	$1,110,000	2023	$1,147,000
Unsealed Pavements	$1,200,000	$1,400,000	$2,225,059	$1,904,381	$1,080,000	2023	$1,240,000
Kerbs	$50,000	$45,000	$97,349	$134,293	$52,000	2023	$61,000
Footpaths	$50,000	$20,000	$75,523	$100,867	$20,000	2023	$21,000
Totals	$5,100,000	$5,065,000	$7,721,486	$6,331,382	$4,635,000		$5,065,000
C - B Estimated Annual Consumption Rate		$2,656,486					

The Moloney financial modelling software was used to deliver the following three reports for each of the sub asset sets and to then combine the results into a whole of roads group single report.

1. Prediction of renewal demand to treat all over intervention assets – column E within figure 3.1 (and series 5 graphs in sub asset sections). Note that the figure in column E has been averaged over the first five years to better reflect how the model is structured.

2. Prediction of future asset condition based on the continuation of the planned renewal expenditure level (series 6 graphs in sub asset sections)

3. Delivery of a recommended funding profile – column G (series 7 graphs in sub asset sections). Note that within column G the recommended funding strategy can include in some cases a recommended annual compounding increase in funding (see column heading).

A – This is the planned upgrade or new asset expenditure. You may or may not have this data, but it is often very important to consider and perhaps re-allocate some of this expenditure to the renewal program if you are under funding the renewals in column B

B – The planned average renewal expenditure over the next five years. Note also that column H provides your planned expenditure expressed as a percentage of the annual liability rate in column C.

C – "Average annual liability" is the average annual renewal expenditure needed over the long term in order to maintain your asset base. The figure is similar to the accounting term "annual depreciation", but is calculated in a different way by directly linking it to the unit renewal rates and life cycles as used within the financial model. It can differ quite markedly from "annual depreciation" because of the requirement for the annual depreciation to comply with Australian and international accounting standards, which promote the delivery a tax deductible figure for "annual depreciation", often with little regard to what your actual future annual liability is.

D - "Annual depreciation" – This is similar to C above, but is designed to deliver a figure that a business can claim as a tax deduction rather than providing an estimate of your ongoing liability to maintain the capital value of your assets.

E – "Average capital renewal demand over the first five years". This figure comes from the Moloney "predicted capital requirement" model. It is the estimated renewal expenditure necessary to eliminate all over intervention assets within five years. The average figure over the first five years is used because in some cases where early renew demand is high the model eases in the demand over a five-year period.

In all cases if this average figure was allocated then the model predicts that all over intervention assets would be eliminated after five years.

F – This is a record of the year that the condition data was collected. It may vary between the asset sets if not all inspected at the same time.

G – The year one recommended commencing funding level. This comes from the Moloney funding scenario finder and mostly aims at the total commending expenditure that is the same or close to your current expenditure in column B. Note that within the title row there may be an annual compounding future percentage increase that is used to bring down the year one expenditure to more closely match your current total expenditure.

If the current renewal funding level is very low there may be a recommendation to lift the year one spend to a level above the planned total spend in column B. This would be done to avoid excessively high annual compounding percentage increases.

For West Wimmera it was found that the total planned renewal expenditure of $5,100,000 pa was at an appropriate total level for the next 10 years. This assumes that the total funding level will be lifted in line with the CPI increases as appropriate.

H + I – Two useful comparisons figures relating to the percentage of the annual liability rate being met by the planned renewal expenditure in Column B and the recommended in column G.

4.13 Acquisition plan

Acquisition assets are new assets that did not previously exist or function at the required level. They may require upgrade or improving an existing asset beyond its existing capacity. This may be caused by growth, demand, social or environmental needs. Upgrade may also occur by an increase in design standard or to improve safety.

The predominant reason for upgrade of assets within West Wimmera Shire would occur to improve safety, particularly in the category of sealed roads where the seal width is 3.7m. Having a wider seal has demonstrated safety benefits particularly with high traffic or heavy vehicle counts or a combination of the two. Undulating or winding road alignments can also prompt upgrade for safety and productivity reasons.

Assets may also be donated to the West Wimmera Shire Council. West Wimmera Shire Council would only take on an asset that was deemed to be in reasonable condition that was in the community interest, and at acceptable immediate and ongoing cost to Council. A policy for the acquisition of assets could be considered for development by Council and will be included in the improvement plan.

4.13.1 Selection criteria

Proposed acquisition of new assets, and upgrade of existing assets, are identified from various sources such as community requests, proposals identified by strategic plans or partnerships with others. Changing standards, government or safety requirements could be the trigger for the improvement works. Potential upgrade and new works should be reviewed to verify that they are essential to the entities needs. Proposed upgrade and new work analysis should also include the development of a preliminary renewal estimate to ensure that the services are sustainable over the longer term. Verified proposals can then be ranked by priority and available funds and scheduled in future works programmes.

Outside of plant, fixed assets and fleet, new assets are only occasionally acquired at WWSC. Plant and fleet items are generally replaced at the end of their practical life or at an opportune time to maximise return from sale of trade in.

Restricted urban development means that subdivision or new estates are not required, although some industrial estate development has been undertaken in the past ten years. There are no current plans for industrial development in the next 10 years.

New assets in the road area are rare but generally upgrades for safety reasons are undertaken each year and are generally achieved at renewal time. External funding in part is often sought for these upgrades.

Upgrade of road assets however is relatively common with widening of narrow sealed roads at renewal time quite common particularly for category 3 roads.

For building assets, new or upgraded assets are generally only supported where there is external funding in collaboration with a Council contribution. Whole of life costs and alternative solutions such as multi use of existing facilities are to be considered and encouraged.

Summary of future asset acquisition costs

Forecast acquisition asset costs will be provided in October 2025 when the latest long-term financial plan is adopted. A summary of expected expenditure will be included in this section in the next review of this plan.

Expenditure on new assets and services in the capital works program will be accommodated in the long-term financial plan, but only to the extent that there is available funding.

4.14 Disposal plan

Disposal includes any activity associated with the disposal of a decommissioned asset including sale, demolition or relocation. Assets identified for possible decommissioning and disposal are shown in table 5.6. A summary of the disposal costs and estimated reductions in annual operations and maintenance of disposing of the assets are also outlined in table 5.6. Any costs or revenue gained from asset disposals is included in the long-term financial plan.

Disposal of assets will be undertaken in accordance with Council's asset disposal policy.

Table 5.6: assets identified for disposal

Asset	Reason for disposal	Timing	Disposal costs	Operations & maintenance annual savings
Roach St, Kaniva, water tower	Redundant and safety concerns	2021	$50,000 (demolition and removal of debris)	$1000
Charam Hall, Charam	Surplus to Council needs	2022	$4000 (legal costs)	$3000
Kaniva airstrip	Surplus to Council needs	2026	Identified as little utilised and subject to future development	Investigate closure

Note: The Roach St, Kaniva water tower was demolished in 2021 while the Charam Hall transfer out of Council ownership was completed in 2024.

5.0 RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The purpose of infrastructure risk management is to document the findings and recommendations resulting from the periodic identification, assessment and treatment of risks associated with providing services from infrastructure, using the fundamentals of international standard ISO 31000:2018 risk management – principles and guidelines.

Risk management is defined in ISO 31000:2018 as: 'coordinated activities to direct and control with regard to risk'[7].

An assessment of risks[8] associated with service delivery will identify risks that will result in loss or reduction in service, personal injury, environmental impacts, a 'financial shock', reputational impacts, or other consequences. The risk assessment process identifies credible risks, the likelihood of the risk event occurring, and the consequences should the event occur. The risk assessment should also include the development of a risk rating, evaluation of the risks and development of a risk treatment plan for those risks that are deemed to be non-acceptable.

5.8 CRITICAL ASSETS

Critical assets are defined as those which have a high consequence of failure causing significant loss or reduction of service. Critical assets have been identified and along with their typical failure mode, and the impact on service delivery, are summarised in table 6.1. Failure modes may include physical failure, collapse or essential service interruption.

Table 6.1 critical assets

Critical asset(s)	Failure mode	Impact
Road network	Deterioration leads to safety concerns and lack of productivity	Loss of productivity, damage to vehicles and safety concerns
Urban drainage system	Blockage or collapse	Water over streets or roads, safety issues and inundation of property
Council offices	Fire/explosion	Customer service interruption
Server/software systems	Failure	Disruption to all services to varying degrees
Bridges and culverts	Collapse or blockage	Large detours, safety concerns, productivity loss
Early learning centres	Fire/explosion	Education service interruption/relocation of services

[7] ISO 31000:2009, p 2

[8] REPLACE with Reference to the Corporate or Infrastructure Risk Management Plan as the footnote

By identifying critical assets and failure modes an organisation can ensure that investigative activities, condition inspection programs, maintenance and capital expenditure plans are targeted at critical assets.

5.9 RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk management process used is shown in figure 6.2 below.

It is an analysis and problem-solving technique designed to provide a logical process for the selection of treatment plans and management actions to protect the community against unacceptable risks.

The process is based on the fundamentals of international standard ISO 31000:2018.

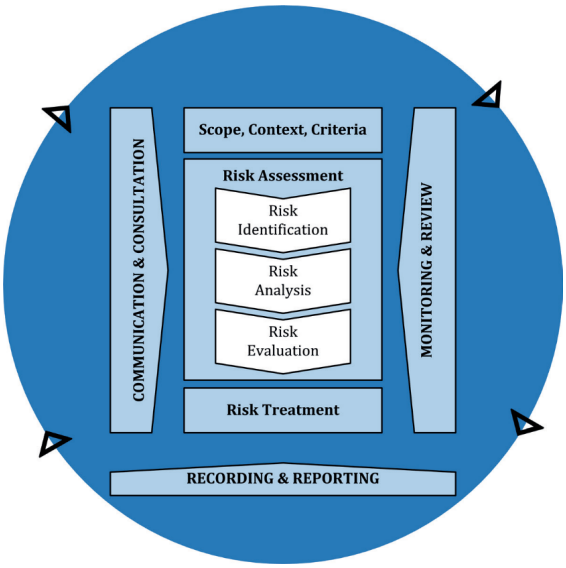


Fig 6.2 risk management process – abridged
Source: ISO 31000:2018, figure 1, p9

The risk assessment process identifies credible risks, the likelihood of the risk event occurring, the consequences should the event occur, development of a risk rating, evaluation of the risk and development of a risk treatment plan for non-acceptable risks.

An assessment of risks associated with service delivery will identify risks that will result in loss or reduction in service, personal injury, environmental impacts, a 'financial shock', reputational impacts, or other consequences.

Critical risks are those assessed with 'very high' (requiring immediate corrective action) and 'high' (requiring corrective action) risk ratings identified in the infrastructure risk management plan. The residual risk and treatment costs of implementing the selected treatment plan is shown in table 6.2. It is essential that these critical risks and costs are reported to management and West Wimmera Shire Council.

Table 6.2: risks and treatment plans

Asset at risk	What can happen	Risk rating	Risk treatment plan	Residual risk	Treatment costs
Road network	Deterioration leading to safety concerns and lack of productivity	H	Regular inspections via road management plan and provision of renewal requirement allocation	L	As per renewal forecast requirement via Moloney Asset Management System
Urban drainage system	Blockage or collapse	VH	Consider undertaking asset condition assessment	H	Est. cost $60,000
Council offices	Fire/explosion	M	Keep an updated business continuity plan. Utilise alternative venue and remote working	L	Ongoing costs in operation budget
Server/software systems	Failure	M	Develop business continuity plan. (Completed)	L	Ongoing costs in operation budget
Bridges and culverts	Collapse or blockage	VH	Annual inspections and provision of renewal budget	H	Annual budget set in accordance with immediate needs on year-by-year basis
Buildings with community usage (early learning centres)	Deteriorate to a standard not acceptable to public or able to satisfy regulations. Fire	H	Three-yearly asset condition inspections and provision of renewal budget. Relocate service	M	Annual budget set in accordance with immediate needs on year-by-year basis. Include in business continuity plan
Plant	Plant becomes old, noncompliant, unsafe or have high maintenance and running costs	H	Ensure plant replacement budget is adequate and have a five-year replacement plan in place as a minimum or investigate lease	M	Annual budget allocation. Investigate lease option

Note * The residual risk is the risk remaining after the selected risk treatment plan is implemented.

5.10 INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE APPROACH

The resilience of our critical infrastructure is vital to the ongoing provision of services to customers. To adapt to changing conditions we need to understand our capacity to 'withstand a given level of stress or demand', and to respond to possible disruptions to ensure continuity of service.

Resilience is built on aspects such as response and recovery planning, financial capacity, climate change, risk assessment and crisis leadership.

We do not currently measure our resilience in service delivery. This will be included in future iterations of the AM Plan and is included as an Improvement item is this plan.

5.11 SERVICE AND RISK TRADE-OFFS OF ADDITIONAL ASSETS

The decisions made in adopting this AM Plan are based on the objective to achieve the optimum benefits from the available resources.

5.11.1 What we cannot do

There are some operations and maintenance activities and capital projects that are unable to be undertaken within the next 10 years. These include:

- construction and or maintenance of timber cartage roads without support from timber industry
- broad scale widening of 3.7m seals to 6.2m or wider
- maintain gravel surface on roads in category 6
- upgrade of gravel surface to sealed (unless specific criteria exist and approved by Council)

5.11.2 Service trade-off

If there is forecast work (operations, maintenance, renewal, acquisition or disposal) that cannot be undertaken due to available resources, then this will result in service consequences for users. These service consequences include:

- reduction in the amount of upgrade works including widening of narrow seals.
- reduction in the annual coverage of the reseal program
- reduction in available contact time for services
- adjustment of renewal rates for all assets
- reduction in maintenance frequencies of all category roads
- possible amendment of Road Hierarchy or Road Management Plan.

5.11.3 Risk trade-off

The operations and maintenance activities and capital projects that cannot be undertaken may sustain or create risk consequences. These risk consequences include:

- a decrease in the overall condition of assets
- an increase in the forward projection of renewal requirements
- impact on the cost and efficiency of freight transportation
- community dissatisfaction with level of service provided by Council
- increased safety concerns while utilising Council's assets
- reduction in available contact time for services
- reduced capacity of internal resources meaning use of contractors and higher unit rates making the renewal task harder

6.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The following is the summary of findings from the Moloney Asset Management System after the last asset inspection in October 2023.

Major Findings

1. *The road assets within West Wimmera Shire were generally found to be in "Very Good to Excellent" overall condition when benchmarked against all 72 councils assessed by Moloney Asset Management Systems (MAMS). See Figure 2.1 for full details.*
2. *Your performance since our last survey in 2020 has delivered a solid condition improvement across all asset classes other than the unsealed road pavements where condition had declined a little due to some abnormally wet years.*
3. *The total present renewal shortfall or backlog of over intervention assets (OIA's) for the whole roads group is estimated at $4,278,446 representing 1.45% of the total road asset valuation. This equates to 55% of the level of one full year's annual liability for the renewal of the assets and as such is considered to be within the "Excellent" Condition range based on your retreatment intervention levels (see Appendix D - Figure D 1 for details). This condition rating relates only to the extent of OIA's*
4. *When your overall condition in three above is based on our industry standard intervention levels (Level of service), your "Excellent" condition lifts one ranking up to the "Exceptionally good" level.*
5. *The current planned future renewal funding level of $5,065,000 pa for the road assets is considered to be at an appropriate total level for the next 5 - 10 years subject to normal CPI increases.*
6. *We developed a recommended funding strategy using the Moloney funding scenario finder that delivered a commencing total annual renewal demand of $5,065,000 pa. This is predicted to result in a very small increase in the total level of OIA's, but you will remain within the Excellent condition range for your level of OIA's.*
7. *The recommended funding strategy does not include any allowance for asset upgrades as part or the renewal program.*
8. *The recommended funding level should be considered as an average figure over the next 5 - 10 years. It may vary year to year depending on project size and council priorities. It may also vary between the sub asset classes year to year.*
9. *Council has done a good job with the management of their road assets since our last survey in 2020 and more particularly over the last 20 years. Your assets are ageing. But your targeting of major maintenance and renewal programs has been excellent, resulting in a general condition improvement (See Fig 2.1 below for more details).*
10. *We have undertaken 7 condition surveys of your road network over the last 20 years and the long term trend, particularly over the last 10 years demonstrates a mostly continual condition improvement.*
11. *The one exception to 10 above is the unsealed road pavement sub asset set. Here the long term trend has been very good, but there has been a small condition decline since our last survey in 2020. It is felt that this is directly linked to the wetter than average weather conditions since 2020.*
12. *The recommended funding strategy is just one available option. With all data now within the Moloney model, different funding scenarios can be examined quite easily. Council is encouraged to use the model to deliver a funding strategy that best meets their needs.*
13. *All financial reporting within this document is based in today's values with no allowance for any CPI movement. The Moloney software has the capacity to adjust all outputs for an adopted annual CPI increase at the touch of a button. But it is felt that reporting with CPI included can present some difficult to interpret results.*

Other important findings

1. *Unique degradation curves have been produced based on actual condition change over seven condition surveys undertaken in 2003 and 2023. This has greatly enhanced the financial modelling results within this report.*
2. *Key performance indicators have been developed at a sub asset level that accurately benchmark asset condition change since the last survey*
3. *The same key performance indicators have been used to benchmark West Wimmera Shire externally against all 72 councils assessed by MAMS.*
4. *The report also tracks the movement in the key performance indicators over the last 20 years. The news here is a bit varied but mostly indicates a steady overall condition improvement particularly in recent times.*
5. *Our unique degradation curves suggest that your accounting service lives for all asset classes tend to be lower than what you are achieving. This is further supported by the measured condition improvement since 2020 with only around 66% of the consumption rate having being met. It is strongly recommended that council review its asset service lives with a view to increasing them. This is a trend that has been evident in the data since our second condition survey in 2008.*

6.8 Financial sustainability and projections

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The financial performance indicators below are those prescribed by part 3 of schedule 3 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

Targeted performance indicators - Financial

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual	Forecast	Target	Target Projections			Trend
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	+/o/-
Liquidity									
Working Capital (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	**Current assets compared to current liabilities** Current assets / current liabilities	5	136%	90%	94%	102%	112%	102%	+
Obligations									
Asset renewal (assets are renewed as planned)	**Asset renewal compared to depreciation** Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	6	146%	83%	51%	51%	40%	39%	-
Stability									
Rates concentration (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	**Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue** Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	7	40%	34%	36%	38%	40%	40%	-
Efficiency									
Expenditure level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	**Expenses per property assessment** Total expenses / no. of property assessments	8	$6,919	$6,280	$6,114	$5,990	$6,185	$6,384	0

6.8.1 Sustainability of service delivery

The financial performance indicators give an indication of Council's financial position and its ability to renew its assets at the required level and appropriate timing. Some explanation and commentary of the indicators is provided below:

Key financial indicators summary

Adjusted underlying result

An indicator of the sustainable operating required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. A steady trend predicted over the long term.

Working capital

The proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. Working capital is slightly in decline due to increasing current liabilities (provisions).

Unrestricted cash

This indicator represents unrestricted cash as a percentage of current liabilities. Slight decrease over time projected due to slightly increasing current liabilities.

Loans and borrowings

Council does not currently have borrowings, and none are projected in the financial plan.

Indebtedness

Non-current liabilities as a percentage of Council's own-sourced revenue. The trend is slightly increasing over time indicating a higher rate of increase in liabilities than that of rate and other internal income.

Asset renewal

An indicator to see if asset renewals and upgrades are in line with annual depreciation. Long-term trend is slight decline however it is noted that Council is still exceeding the minimum renewal requirements as per the Moloney Asset Management Plan.

Rates concentration

Rates concentration is expected to increase slightly over time, predominantly due to no increase in capital grants being projected in years 5-10. The trend indicates that Council will become more reliant on rate revenue compared with all other revenue sources.

Rates effort

The indicator shows rate revenue as a percentage of Capital Improved Value (CIV) of rateable properties. The long-range decline is due to the historic rise in CIV of properties significantly outweighing the increase in property rates.

Expenditure level

Expenditure when compared with the number of property assessments is increasing over time, noting the number of property assessments is projected to remain constant for the life of the financial plan.

Revenue level

Revenue level is projected to increase over time, again noting the number of property assessments is to remain constant for the life of the plan.

Asset renewal funding ratio

It is important to note that Council has satisfied the minimum renewal requirements as projected for the first three years of the 10-year period for the roads, kerbing, footpaths and bridges portfolio, which make up 85% of its assets. This will be monitored closely particularly after each asset condition review with the next one due in 2026. This will also be closely scrutinised when the 2025 Long-Term Financial Plan is developed.

6.9 Funding strategy

The proposed funding for assets is outlined in the entity's budget and long-term financial plan. The table below is an extract from that plan.

The financial strategy of the entity determines how funding will be provided, whereas the AM Plan communicates how and when this will be spent, along with the service and risk consequences.

PROJECTED STATEMENT OF CAPITAL WORKS (as identified in 2022 at the commencement of this plan)

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Projections								
	2020/21 $'000	2021/22 $'000	2022/23 $'000	2023/24 $'000	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000
Property											
Land	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land improvements	-	29	-	-	-	20	20	20	20	20	20
Total land	-	52	-	-	-	**20**	**20**	**20**	**20**	**20**	**20**
Buildings	724	138	140	142	144	350	355	361	366	371	377
Total buildings	724	138	140	142	144	350	355	361	366	371	377
Total property	**724**	**190**	**140**	**142**	**144**	**370**	**375**	**381**	**386**	**391**	**397**
Plant and equipment											
Plant, machinery and equipment	828	1,247	1,266	1,285	1,304	986	1,001	1,016	1,031	1,047	1,062
Computers and telecommunications	50	175	51	53	54	50	50	50	50	50	50
Total plant and equipment	**878**	**1,422**	**1,317**	**1,338**	**1,358**	**1,036**	**1,051**	**1,066**	**1,081**	**1,097**	**1,112**
Infrastructure											
Roads	5,865	5,916	6,005	6,095	6,186	5,800	5,800	5,800	5,800	5,800	5,800
Bridges	400	110	112	113	115	-	100	-	100	-	100
Footpaths and cycleways	140	192	195	198	201	100	100	100	100	100	100
Drainage	65	65	66	67	68	50	50	50	50	50	50
Parks, open space and streetscapes	60	180	183	185	188	150	150	150	150	150	150
Total infrastructure	**6,530**	**6,463**	**6,560**	**6,658**	**6,758**	**6,100**	**6,200**	**6,100**	**6,200**	**6,100**	**6,200**
Total capital works expenditure	**8,131**	**8,075**	**8,017**	**8,138**	**8,260**	**7,506**	**7,626**	**7,546**	**7,667**	**7,588**	**7,709**
Represented by:											
New asset expenditure	418	467	99	100	102	92	94	93	94	93	95
Asset renewal expenditure	7,386	6,755	7,117	7,225	7,334	6,664	6,770	6,700	6,807	6,737	6,844
Asset upgrade expenditure	327	853	801	813	825	750	762	754	766	758	770
Total capital works expenditure	**8,131**	**8,075**	**8,017**	**8,138**	**8,260**	**7,506**	**7,626**	**7,546**	**7,667**	**7,588**	**7,709**
Funding sources represented by:											
Grants	3,640	3,713	3,747	3,804	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861
Contributions	201	229	264	268	272	247	251	248	252	250	254
Council cash	4,290	4,133	4,006	4,067	4,128	3,398	3,514	3,437	3,554	3,477	3,595
Total capital works expenditure	**8,131**	**8,075**	**8,017**	**8,138**	**8,260**	**7,506**	**7,626**	**7,546**	**7,667**	**7,588**	**7,709**

6.10 Valuation forecasts

6.10.1 Asset valuations

Following the completion of the survey the data was placed into the Moloney asset management system and the table below represents a summary of the overall asset quantities and valuations. The annual depreciation figure of $6,331,382 pa is based upon the overall asset quantities and valuations. The annual depreciation figure of $6,331,328 pa is based upon the best available accounting greenfields construction costs and the adopted accounting service lives.

Annual depreciation has not been used within this report as the basis of the average long-term renewal demand. We have adopted what we call the “annual liability” for this purpose. See appendix E for the definitions of both figures.

The annual liability figures are all based on the estimated rehabilitation costs (Not greenfields construction costs) and we have more flexibility to set service lives that are closer to the lives coming out of the degradation curve analysis. In this way our financial modelling results can be more accurate, and we can compare planned or recommended expenditure levels with the actual average annual long-term liability rather than the annual depreciation, which is designed to deliver a tax deductible figure for use in business tax calculations.

ASSET DESCRIPTION	Total Quantity	Units	Replace. Value $	Asset Life in Years	Written Down Value $	Accumul. Deprec. $	Annual Deprec. $	Average Date of Cond. Assessment	Annual Liability from Modelling inputs
Footpath	21,165	Lin. Met	$5,094,608	54.2	$3,840,225	$1,254,383	$100,867	20-Nov-23	$75,523
Kerb	53,069	Lin. Met	$9,149,220	66.6	$5,827,211	$3,322,009	$134,293	20-Nov-23	$97,349
Sealed Pavements	829,466	Lin. Met	$184,599,080	79.5	$118,940,921	$65,658,159	$2,556,492	20-Nov-23	$3,800,611
Unsealed Pavement	1,496,574	Lin Met	$38,091,018	43.2	$32,538,421	$5,552,597	$1,904,381	8-Aug-20	$2,225,059
Sealed Surface	829,466	Lin. Met	$25,530,988	17.1	$18,853,707	$6,677,282	$1,635,349	24-Nov-23	$1,521,769
Sealed Rd Formation	829,466	Lin. Met	$19,636,297	100.0	$19,636,297	$0	$0	20-Nov-23	$0
U/S Rd Formation	2,021,213	Lin. Met	$13,037,435	100.0	$13,037,435	$0	$0	8-Aug-20	$0
TOTAL VALUATIONS			**$295,138,647**		**$212,674,218**	**$82,464,429**	**$6,331,382**		**$7,720,310**

6.11 Key assumptions made in financial forecasts

In compiling this AM Plan, it was necessary to make some assumptions. This section details the key assumptions made in the development of this AM Plan and should provide readers with an understanding of the level of confidence in the data behind the financial forecasts.

Key assumptions made at the commencement of this AM Plan are:

- Capital grant revenue increase at 1.5% for first 4 years but static for years 5-10. A conservative judgement has been made here
- A 1.5% rate cap for the first four years, 2.5% in years 5, 6 and 7 and 3% from year 8
- Operating grants expected to rise by 1.5% each year for the first four years and then increase with CPI
- Employee costs increased by 2.1% for the first four years, 3.5% in year 5, 3% annual increase thereafter
- Materials and services costs increased at 1.5% for first four years and 2.0% thereafter
- Depreciation increases by 1.0% each year
- The number of property assessments will not change much at all
- Subdivision and industrial development will be minimal
- Population will generally be static or a slight decline
- Moloney Management System will be utilised for the assets it is currently servicing for the foreseeable future
- New asset acquisition will be minimal and will often be supported by external income
- Upgrading of road assets will continue on similar levels to existing while externally sourced funds are provided at similar levels to both.

6.12 Forecast reliability and confidence

Council has a moderate to high confidence level in the reliability of the data provided by the Moloney Management System. The same system of inspection and analysis has been utilised six successive times since 2003 building up an accurate data set and being able to monitor the network over this period. This is utilised for the asset's footpaths, kerb and channel, sealed pavements, unsealed pavements and sealed surface.

The forecast costs, proposed budgets, and valuation projections in this AM Plan for other assets are based on the best available data, however there are deficiencies in the data and these are identified and improvements nominated in section 8.0.

7.0 PLAN IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING

7.8 Status of asset management practices[9]

7.8.1 Accounting and financial data sources

This AM Plan utilises accounting and financial data. The source of the data is the Long Term Financial Plan, the Moloney Asset Management System, the 2021 Land Register spreadsheet, 2021 2021 Asset Register Buildings spreadsheet and 2021 Plant Register and depreciation spreadsheet as provided by WWSC Chief Financial Officer.

7.8.2 Asset management data sources

This AM Plan also utilises asset management data. The source of the asset data is Moloney Management System, AssetAsyst and various spreadsheets.

7.9 Improvement plan

It is important that an entity recognise areas of their AM Plan and planning process that require future improvements to ensure effective asset management and informed decision making. The improvement plan generated from this AM Plan is shown in table 8.2.

Table 8.2: improvement plan

Task	Task	Responsibility	Resources required	Timeline
1	Development of an asset acquisition policy	Director Corporate and Community Services	Benchmarking with similar policies from other sources	2026
2	Development of a cyclic annual inspection regime of buildings utilising AssetAsyst for recording of defects and renewal data for budgeting purposes	Assets GIS Coordinator	AssetAsyst software upgrade	2027
3	Development of a strategic risk register, which includes the type of threats and hazards and the current and future measures that the organisation takes to ensure service delivery resilience	Occupational Health, Safety and Risk Coordinator	Analysis by managers and directors	2024 (In progress)
4	Update of the asset management software to allow tablet use by additional users enabling more efficient inspection, data recording and defect signoff	Assets GIS Coordinator	Software upgrade of current system	2023 (Completed)

[9] ISO 55000 Refers to this as the Asset Management System

5	Development of a 10-year maintenance and operations forecast within LTFP	Works and finance departments	Judgement on future trends for maintenance and operations	2025
6	Development of a 10-year renewal program for buildings	Director of Infrastructure, Development and Works.	Annual inspection data showing costed capital renewal tasks and urgency	2028
7	Asset condition assessment and valuation of underground drainage system	Manager Infrastructure and Engineering	Camera assessment with condition rating	2030 (a camera assessment has been completed in past however no condition ratings exist.)
8	Asset condition assessment and valuation of assets with Moloney Asset Management System	Assets GIS Coordinator	Ensure in budget	2023 (completed, redo in 2026)
10	Asset condition assessment and valuation of bridges and culverts	Assets GIS Coordinator	Ensure in budget	2024 (completed, redo in 2027)
11.	Ensure photographic evidence of existing condition is obtained for all paved and sealed roads to satisfy natural disaster funding criteria	Assets GIS Coordinator	Equipment purchased. Need to implement survey, retrieve and store data	2023 (completed, cyclical updating required)
12.	Develop individual asset management plans with service levels included for each category of asset as deemed necessary by Council	Manager Infrastructure and Engineering	Condition, asset life and depreciation information required	2024 -2029 (asset management plan for buildings due to be completed in 2025)
13.	Develop implementation plan for the roll out of individual asset management plans	Director Infrastructure, Development and Works	Timeline for AMP roll out	2023. (Buildings nominated as first individual AM Plan to be produced. To be completed by late 2025)
14.	Enable computer-generated depreciation for majority of assets	Director Infrastructure, Development and	To satisfy audit recommendation	2029

		Works and Chief Financial Officer		
15.	Undertake external valuation of all buildings	Chief Financial Officer	Undertaken every three years	2023 (completed in 2022 and 2025)
16.	Undertake condition assessment of all buildings	Director Infrastructure, Development and Works	To enable renewal and depreciation calculations	2024 (completed in 2022 and 2025)
17.	Develop a policy for the replacement of plant and fleet	Contracts and Procurement Manager	Develop policy	2026 (fleet policy adopted by Council May 27, 2025)
18.	Undertake level 2 inspections of remaining subset of major culverts	Manager Engineering	Arrange consultant	2026
19.	Undertake asbestos audit of buildings	Manager Engineering	Arrange consultant	2026

7.10 Monitoring and review procedures

This AM Plan will be monitored during the annual budget planning process and revised if required to show any material changes in service levels, risks, forecast costs and proposed budgets as a result of budget decisions.

The AM Plan will be monitored annually to ensure it represents the current service level, asset values, forecast operations, maintenance, renewals, acquisition and asset disposal costs and planned budgets. These forecast costs and proposed budget are incorporated into the Long-Term Financial Plan or will be incorporated into the Long-Term Financial Plan once completed.

The AM Plan has a maximum life of four years and is due for revision and updating by 31 October in the year following each West Wimmera Shire Council election.

7.11 Performance measures

The effectiveness of this AM Plan can be measured in the following ways:

- the degree to which the required forecast costs identified in this AM Plan are incorporated into the long-term financial plan
- the degree to which the improvement plan is delivered
- the degree to which the existing and projected service levels and service consequences, risks and residual risks are incorporated into the strategic planning documents and associated plans
- The asset renewal funding ratio achieving the target.

8.0 REFERENCES

- IPWEA, 2006, 'International Infrastructure Management Manual', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, www.ipwea.org/IIMM
- IPWEA, 2015, 3rd edn., 'International Infrastructure Management Manual', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, www.ipwea.org/IIMM
- IPWEA, 2008, 'NAMS.PLUS Asset Management', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, www.ipwea.org/namsplus.
- IPWEA, 2015, 2nd edn., 'Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Manual', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, www.ipwea.org/AIFMM.
- IPWEA, 2020 'International Infrastructure Financial Management Manual', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney
- IPWEA, 2018, Practice Note 12.1, 'Climate Change Impacts on the Useful Life of Assets', Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney
- IPWEA, 2012, Practice Note 6 Long-Term Financial Planning, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, https://www.ipwea.org/publications/ipweabookshop/practicenotes/pn6
- IPWEA, 2014, Practice Note 8 – Levels of Service & Community Engagement, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, Sydney, https://www.ipwea.org/publications/ipweabookshop/practicenotes/pn8
- ISO, 2014, ISO 55000:2014, Overview, principles and terminology
- ISO, 2018, ISO 31000:2018, Risk management – Guidelines
- West Wimmera Shire Asset Management Strategy
- West Wimmera Shire Asset Management Policy
- West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021-2025

9.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A Comprehensive Income Statement (10years)

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Projections								
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Income											
Rates and charges	7,958	8,080	8,201	8,324	8,449	8,661	8,877	9,099	9,372	9,653	9,943
Statutory fees and fines	121	131	133	135	137	140	143	145	148	151	154
User fees	689	714	725	736	747	762	777	792	808	824	841
Grants - Operating	7,611	7,623	7,690	7,805	7,922	8,081	8,242	8,407	8,575	8,747	8,922
Grants - Capital	3,475	3,692	3,747	3,804	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861
Contributions - monetary	182	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	95	100	102	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	118
Other income	1,828	1,681	1,706	1,732	1,758	1,775	1,793	1,811	1,829	1,847	1,866
Total income	21,959	22,027	22,310	22,644	22,984	23,391	23,807	24,232	24,712	25,205	25,710
Expenses											
Employee costs	7,891	8,152	8,323	8,498	8,676	8,980	9,250	9,527	9,813	10,107	10,410
Materials and services	5,681	5,992	6,060	6,150	6,243	6,368	6,495	6,625	6,758	6,893	7,031
Depreciation	7,998	8,019	8,099	8,180	8,262	8,345	8,428	8,512	8,597	8,683	8,770
Other expenses	275	297	300	303	306	312	318	325	331	338	345
Total expenses	21,845	22,460	22,782	23,131	23,487	24,005	24,491	24,989	25,499	26,021	26,556
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	114	(433)	(472)	(487)	(503)	(614)	(684)	(757)	(787)	(816)	(846)
Other comprehensive income											
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods											
Net asset revaluation increment /(decrement)	19,828	-	-	-	-	1,960	1,960	1,960	1,960	1,960	1,960
Total comprehensive result	19,942	(433)	(472)	(487)	(503)	1,346	1,276	1,203	1,173	1,144	1,114

Comprehensive income statement for four years ending 30 June 2029 (extract from draft 2025/26 budget)

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	NOTES	Forecast Actual 2024/25 $'000	Budget 2025/26 $'000	Projections 2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000
Income / Revenue						
Rates and charges	4.1.1	8,942	9,226	9,503	9,788	10,081
Statutory fees and fines	4.1.2	150	172	177	182	188
User fees	4.1.3	779	596	614	632	651
Grants - operating	4.1.4	10,271	10,015	9,137	9,411	9,694
Grants - capital	4.1.4	4,028	3,758	3,865	3,056	3,056
Contributions - monetary	4.1.5	189	302	-	-	-
Contributions - non-monetary	4.1.5	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(263)	115	-	-	-
Fair value adjustments for investment property		-	-	-	-	-
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures		-	-	-	-	-
Other income	4.1.6	1,886	1,428	1,471	1,515	1,560
Total income / revenue		25,982	25,612	24,767	24,585	25,231
Expenses						
Employee costs	4.1.7	11,385	11,301	11,640	11,989	12,349
Materials and services	4.1.8	10,080	8,768	7,496	7,721	7,953
Depreciation	4.1.9	8,050	8,369	8,700	9,044	9,388
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.1.10	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation - right of use assets	4.1.11	-	-	-	-	-
Allowance for impairment losses		-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing costs		-	80	72	64	56
Finance costs - leases		-	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	4.1.12	464	705	726	748	770
Total expenses		29,979	29,223	28,635	29,566	30,516
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		(3,997)	(3,611)	(3,868)	(4,982)	(5,285)
Other comprehensive income						
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods						
Net asset revaluation gain /(loss)		-	10,296	16,114	10,928	11,191
Share of other comprehensive income of associates and joint ventures		-	-	-	-	-
Items that may be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods (detail as appropriate)		-	-	-	-	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	10,296	16,114	10,928	11,191
Total comprehensive result		(3,997)	6,685	12,246	5,946	5,906

DRAFT

Appendix B Projected Balance Sheet (10 years as of 2021)

	Forecast Actual	Budget	Projections								
	2020/21 $'000	2021/22 $'000	2022/23 $'000	2023/24 $'000	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and cash equivalents	14,225	13,821	13,516	13,159	12,744	13,062	13,275	13,581	13,823	14,203	14,521
Trade and other receivables	385	391	397	403	409	415	421	427	434	440	447
Inventories	205	208	211	214	218	218	218	218	218	218	218
Other assets	356	356	356	356	356	356	356	356	356	356	356
Total current assets	15,171	14,776	14,480	14,131	13,726	14,050	14,269	14,581	14,831	15,217	15,541
Non-current assets											
Trade and other receivables	160	140	120	100	80	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments in associates, joint arrangement and subsidiaries	436	436	436	436	436	436	436	436	436	436	436
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	214,925	214,981	214,899	214,857	214,855	215,977	217,135	218,129	219,158	220,023	220,922
Total non-current assets	215,521	215,557	215,455	215,393	215,371	216,413	217,571	218,565	219,594	220,459	221,358
Total assets	230,692	230,333	229,935	229,524	229,097	230,463	231,840	233,146	234,425	235,676	236,899
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	718	729	740	751	762	762	762	762	762	762	762
Trust funds and deposits	232	232	232	232	232	232	232	232	232	232	232
Provisions	2,009	2,058	2,108	2,159	2,209	2,213	2,296	2,381	2,467	2,556	2,647
Lease liabilities	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
Total current liabilities	2,978	3,038	3,099	3,161	3,222	3,226	3,309	3,394	3,480	3,569	3,660
Non-current liabilities											
Provisions	633	646	660	674	688	705	723	741	759	778	798
Total non-current liabilities	633	646	660	674	688	705	723	741	759	778	798
Total liabilities	3,611	3,684	3,759	3,835	3,910	3,931	4,031	4,135	4,240	4,347	4,458
Net assets	227,081	226,649	226,176	225,690	225,187	226,533	227,809	229,012	230,185	231,329	232,443
Equity											
Accumulated surplus	45,664	44,764	44,115	43,451	42,871	44,217	45,493	46,696	47,870	49,014	50,127
Reserves	181,418	181,885	182,062	182,239	182,316	182,316	182,316	182,316	182,316	182,316	182,316
Total equity	227,082	226,649	226,177	225,690	225,187	226,533	227,809	229,012	230,186	231,330	232,443

Balance Sheet for the four years ending 30 June 2029 (extract from draft 2025/26 Budget)

Balance Sheet
For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	NOTES	Forecast Actual 2024/25 $'000	Budget 2025/26 $'000	Projections 2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000
Assets						
Current assets						
Cash and cash equivalents		8,003	7,640	7,642	7,962	8,169
Trade and other receivables		525	525	551	579	608
Other financial assets		-	-	-	-	-
Inventories		135	135	135	135	135
Prepayments		-	-	-	-	-
Non-current assets classified as held for sale		-	-	-	-	-
Contract assets		1,446	-	-	-	-
Other assets		-	-	-	-	-
Total current assets	4.2.1	10,109	8,300	8,328	8,676	8,912
Non-current assets						
Trade and other receivables		-	-	-	-	-
Other financial assets		-	-	-	-	-
Investments in associates, joint arrangement and subsidiaries		-	-	-	-	-
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment		271,292	268,694	271,433	269,451	267,388
Right-of-use assets	4.2.4	-	-	-	-	-
Investment property		-	-	-	-	-
Intangible assets		-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current assets	4.2.1	271,292	268,694	271,433	269,451	267,388
Total assets		281,401	276,994	279,761	278,127	276,300
Liabilities						
Current liabilities						
Trade and other payables		2,100	1,800	1,500	1,500	1,500
Trust funds and deposits		480	180	180	180	180
Contract and other liabilities		1,416	-	-	-	-
Provisions		2,229	2,340	2,457	2,580	2,709
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	500	500	500	500	500
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities	4.2.2	6,725	4,820	4,637	4,760	4,889
Non-current liabilities						
Provisions		377	396	416	436	458
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	4,500	4,000	3,500	3,000	2,500
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current liabilities	4.2.2	4,877	4,396	3,916	3,436	2,958
Total liabilities		11,602	9,216	8,553	8,197	7,848
Net assets		269,799	267,778	271,208	269,930	268,453
Equity						
Accumulated surplus		34,376	30,379	26,511	21,530	16,244
Reserves		235,423	245,719	261,833	272,761	283,952
Total equity		269,799	267,778	271,208	269,930	268,453

DRAFT

Appendix C Cash Flow Statement (10 years as of 2021)

	Forecast Actual 2020/21 $'000	Budget 2021/22 $'000	Projections 2022/23 $'000	2023/24 $'000	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and charges	7,827	8,074	8,196	8,319	8,443	8,650	8,866	9,088	9,361	9,642	9,931
Statutory fees and fines	133	144	146	148	151	154	157	160	163	166	170
User fees	689	714	725	736	747	762	777	792	808	824	841
Grants - operating	7,611	7,623	7,690	7,805	7,922	8,081	8,242	8,407	8,575	8,747	8,922
Grants - capital	3,475	3,692	3,747	3,804	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861	3,861
Contributions - monetary	182	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Interest received	120	100	101	101	102	104	106	108	110	112	114
Other receipts	1,828	2,279	2,311	2,346	2,381	2,412	2,443	2,474	2,505	2,537	2,569
Employee costs	(7,891)	(8,152)	(8,323)	(8,498)	(8,676)	(8,980)	(9,250)	(9,527)	(9,813)	(10,107)	(10,410)
Materials and services	(6,078)	(6,580)	(6,655)	(6,754)	(6,856)	(7,005)	(7,145)	(7,288)	(7,433)	(7,582)	(7,734)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other payments	(287)	(310)	(313)	(316)	(320)	(326)	(333)	(339)	(346)	(353)	(360)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	7,607	7,590	7,630	7,696	7,760	7,717	7,730	7,741	7,796	7,852	7,909
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(8,131)	(8,075)	(8,017)	(8,138)	(8,260)	(7,506)	(7,626)	(7,546)	(7,667)	(7,588)	(7,709)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	95	100	102	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	118
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	(8,036)	(7,975)	(7,915)	(8,035)	(8,155)	(7,399)	(7,517)	(7,435)	(7,554)	(7,473)	(7,591)
Cash flows from financing activities											
Repayment of lease liabilities	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)	(19)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	**(448)**	**(404)**	**(304)**	**(359)**	**(415)**	**318**	**213**	**306**	**243**	**380**	**318**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	14,674	14,225	13,821	13,516	13,159	12,744	13,062	13,275	13,581	13,823	14,203
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	**14,225**	**13,821**	**13,516**	**13,159**	**12,744**	**13,062**	**13,275**	**13,581**	**13,823**	**14,203**	**14,521**

Statement of Cashflows for four years ending 30 June 2029 (extract from draft budget 2025/26)

Statement of Cash Flows

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Notes	Forecast Actual 2024/25 $'000 Inflows (Outflows)	Budget 2025/26 $'000 Inflows (Outflows)	Projections 2026/27 $'000 Inflows (Outflows)	2027/28 $'000 Inflows (Outflows)	2028/29 $'000 Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities						
Rates and charges		8,742	9,226	9,477	9,760	10,053
Statutory fees and fines		163	172	177	182	188
User fees		779	596	614	632	651
Grants - operating		10,554	8,599	9,137	9,411	9,694
Grants - capital		2,388	5,474	3,865	3,056	3,056
Contributions - monetary		416	-	-	-	-
Interest received		291	-	-	-	-
Dividends received		-	-	-	-	-
Trust funds and deposits taken		-	-	-	-	-
Other receipts		1,577	1,428	1,471	1,515	1,560
Net GST refund / payment		1,520	904	777	772	795
Employee costs		(10,862)	(11,164)	(11,496)	(11,838)	(12,349)
Materials and services		(12,103)	(9,345)	(8,546)	(8,493)	(8,748)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments		-	-	-	-	-
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(29)	-	-	-	-
Other payments		(464)	(705)	(726)	(748)	(770)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	4.4.1	2,972	4,585	4,749	4,250	4,130
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(8,355)	(4,275)	(4,425)	(3,616)	(3,616)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		-	250	250	250	250
Payments for investments		-	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	-	-	-	-
Loans and advances made		-	-	-	-	-
Payments of loans and advances		-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	4.4.2	(8,355)	(4,025)	(4,175)	(3,366)	(3,366)
Cash flows from financing activities						
Finance costs		-	(80)	(72)	(64)	(56)
Proceeds from borrowings		5,000	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings		-	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)
Interest paid - lease liability		-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of lease liabilities		-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	4.4.3	5,000	(580)	(572)	(564)	(556)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents		(383)	(20)	2	320	208
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		8,043	7,660	7,640	7,642	7,962
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		7,660	7,640	7,642	7,962	8,169

DRAFT

Appendix D Renewal Forecast Summary (as of October 2020)

	Forecast Actual 2020/21 $'000	Budget 2021/22 $'000	Projections 2022/23 $'000	2023/24 $'000	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000
Asset renewal expenditure	7,386	6,755	7,117	7,225	7,334	6,664	6,770	6,700	6,807	6,737	6,844

D.1 – Renewal Forecast Assumptions and Source

The renewal figures are extracted from the Long-Term Financial Plan but are based on the 2020 renewal modelling report provided by the Moloney Asset Management System. The report was provided October 2020 after an on ground assessment at that time.

Asset Renewals by Asset Class
For the 10 years ending 30 June 2031

	Forecast Actual 2020/21 $'000	Budget 2021/22 $'000	Projections 2022/23 $'000	2023/24 $'000	2024/25 $'000	2025/26 $'000	2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000	2029/30 $'000	2030/31 $'000
Property											
Land	-	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land improvements	-	24	-	-	-	18	18	18	18	18	18
Total land	-	43	-	-	-	18	18	18	18	18	18
Buildings	658	115	124	126	128	311	315	320	325	330	335
Total buildings	658	115	124	126	128	311	315	320	325	330	335
Total property	**658**	**159**	**124**	**126**	**128**	**328**	**333**	**338**	**343**	**348**	**353**
Plant and equipment											
Plant, machinery and equipment	752	1,043	1,124	1,141	1,158	875	889	902	915	929	943
Computers and telecommunications	45	146	45	47	48	44	44	44	44	44	44
Total plant and equipment	**797**	**1,190**	**1,169**	**1,188**	**1,206**	**920**	**933**	**946**	**960**	**973**	**987**
Infrastructure											
Roads	5,327	4,949	5,331	5,411	5,492	5,149	5,149	5,149	5,149	5,149	5,149
Bridges	363	92	99	101	102	-	89	-	89	-	89
Footpaths and cycleways	127	161	173	176	178	89	89	89	89	89	89
Drainage	59	54	59	59	60	44	44	44	44	44	44
Parks, open space and streetscapes	55	151	162	165	167	133	133	133	133	133	133
Total infrastructure	**5,932**	**5,407**	**5,824**	**5,911**	**6,000**	**5,416**	**5,504**	**5,416**	**5,504**	**5,416**	**5,504**
Total capital works expenditure	**7,386**	**6,755**	**7,117**	**7,225**	**7,334**	**6,664**	**6,770**	**6,700**	**6,807**	**6,737**	**6,844**
Represented by:											
New asset expenditure	418	467	99	100	102	92	94	93	94	93	95
Asset renewal expenditure	**7,386**	**6,755**	**7,117**	**7,225**	**7,334**	**6,664**	**6,770**	**6,700**	**6,807**	**6,737**	**6,844**
Asset upgrade expenditure	327	853	801	813	825	750	762	754	766	758	770
Total capital works expenditure	**8,131**	**8,075**	**8,017**	**8,138**	**8,260**	**7,506**	**7,626**	**7,546**	**7,667**	**7,588**	**7,709**

D.2 Projected Asset Renewals by Asset Class

As included in the draft 25/26 Budget

Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	NOTES	Forecast Actual 2024/25 $'000	Budget 2025/26 $'000	Projections 2026/27 $'000	2027/28 $'000	2028/29 $'000
Property						
Land		-	-	-	-	-
Land improvements		-	-	-	-	-
Total land		-	-	-	-	-
Buildings		701	283	-	-	-
Heritage buildings		-	-	-	-	-
Building improvements		-	-	-	-	-
Leasehold improvements		-	-	-	-	-
Total buildings		701	283	-	-	-
Total property		701	283	-	-	-
Plant and equipment						
Heritage plant and equipment		-	-	-	-	-
Plant, machinery and equipment		1,643	-	500	500	500
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		-	-	-	-	-
Computers and telecommunications		23	-	-	-	-
Library books		-	-	-	-	-
Total plant and equipment		1,666	-	500	500	500
Infrastructure						
Roads		5,340	3,573	3,865	3,056	3,056
Bridges		20	-	-	-	-
Footpaths and cycleways		156	10	10	10	10
Drainage		12	30	30	30	30
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		385	259	-	-	-
Waste management		-	-	-	-	-
Parks, open space and streetscapes		-	110	20	20	20
Aerodromes		-	-	-	-	-
Off street car parks		-	-	-	-	-
Other infrastructure		55	10	-	-	-
Total infrastructure		5,968	3,992	3,925	3,116	3,116
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	8,335	4,275	4,425	3,616	3,616
Represented by:						
New asset expenditure		-	-	-	-	-
Asset renewal expenditure		7,180	3,992	3,925	3,116	3,116
Asset expansion expenditure		-	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure		1,155	283	500	500	500
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	8,335	4,275	4,425	3,616	3,616
Funding sources represented by:						
Grants		3,581	3,478	3,865	3,056	3,056
Contributions		200	299	-	-	-
Council cash		(446)	498	560	560	560
Borrowings		5,000	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	4.5.1	8,335	4,275	4,425	3,616	3,616 -

DRAFT

Appendix E Asset disposal summary

E.1 – Disposal forecast

The assets as listed were identified at the timing of development of the plan. Further items will be added as they are identified.

Asset	Reason for disposal	Timing	Disposal costs	Operations and maintenance annual savings
Roach St, Kaniva, water tower	Redundant and safety concerns	2021	$50,000 (demolition and removal of debris)	$1000
Charam Hall, Charam	Surplus to Council needs	2024	$4000 (legal costs)	$3000

.

15.5 Road Management Plan Review

Directorate: *Infrastructure Development and Works*
Report Author: *Design Engineer*
Report Purpose: *For Decision*

Purpose

The Road Management Plan (RMP) is due for review and is presented to Council for consideration.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the Road Management Plan 2025 and place a notice in the Government Gazette plus circulating in local newspapers and on the Council website.

Moved:	**Cr Richard Hicks**
Seconded:	**Cr Helen Hobbs**

That Council adopt the Road Management Plan 2025 and place a notice in the Government Gazette plus circulating in local newspapers and on the Council website.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

Declaration of Interest

No officer declared an interest under the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020) in the preparation of this report.

Background

Council first adopted a RMP in 2004. The plan has been amended and endorsed by Council four times since then with the last review being in 2021. The plan must be reviewed each four years, within a year of each Council election. A RMP is a voluntary plan which Council may undertake under the Road Management Act 2004. It may be used as a defence against common law proceedings.

The RMP establishes a management system for the inspection and maintenance road management functions of a road authority which is based on policy, operational objectives and available resources. It also sets relevant intervention levels for safety defects in relation to the discharge of duties in the performance of those road management functions.

The RMP also details the obligations of road users under section 17A of the Road Safety Act 1986.

The RMP includes an “Exceptional Circumstances” clause whereby Council has the power to suspend its RMP for a period if it cannot undertake its requirements due to extreme events such as floods, fire or pandemic or due to sudden lack of physical or financial resources.

The content of the proposed RMP is very similar to the existing RMP which has been in operation for the last 3.5 years. The new RMP has been compiled using a standard template provided by MAV Insurance. This is to ensure terminology and layout are correct. The defects and response times within the proposed plan are also recommended by the insurer.

The insurer has provided the template to somewhat standardise RMPs across Victoria so as to reduce the risk of claims to Councils.

In accordance with section 110 of the Road Management Act 2004, Council is not legally liable for property damages where the value of the damage is equal to or less than the threshold amount. The threshold amount is adjusted annually by the State Government. This is reinforced in the RMP.

The draft Road Management Plan must be advertised for public review and allow 28 days for submissions. The Council should then review those submissions, amend their draft if they see fit to do so, and then adopt the plan at a Council Meeting.

The notice advertising the review of the plan must be placed in a locally circulating newspaper and the Government Gazette. The draft RMP was advertised for a minimum period of 28 days as resolved by Council at the Council meeting held on 21 May 2025.

One submission was received. The submitter made an observation that guidepost and footpath maintenance had dropped off in recent years. Both aspects are covered in the RMP as proposed.

Risk Management Implications

Risk identified:

There are no obvious risks for the Council to mitigate or eliminate in regard to the proposal considered for funding support in this report.

Legislative Implications

The report complies with the requirements of the:
Local Government Act 2020

Environmental Implications

Not applicable

Financial and Budgetary Implications

Not applicable

Policy Implications

This report is supported by the following West Wimmera Shire Council Policy/s:

Asset Management Policy
Asset Management Strategy

Council Plan Implications

This report supports the following sections of the West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025:

Goal 1 – Liveable & Healthy Community
1.3 Provide well planned and sustainable community infrastructure.

Goal 2 – Diverse and Prosperous Economy
2.5 Enhance the local road network and explore transport options.

Goal 4 – Good Governance
4.1 Ensure long term financial sustainability.

Communication Implications

The draft Road Management Plan has been advertised for public comment for 28 days. Further advertising is required once Council has adopted the RMP stating that Council has adopted the plan.

Equal Impact Assessment

No Equal Impact Assessment is required

Conclusion

The draft Road Management Plan has been out for public submissions. No changes to the RMP are recommended. The Council may now adopt the RMP as attached.

Attachments

1. Road Management Plan 2025 [**15.5.1** - 21 pages]

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN
2025



WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

West Wimmera Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, and pays respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Responsible Service/Department:	Infrastructure Development and Works
Adoption authorised:	West Wimmera Shire Council
Date of adoption:	<<date>>
Date of effective from:	1 Dec 2025
Document Set ID:	
Endorsed CEO or ELT member or department manager to make and approve document editorial amendments:	Assets and GIS Manager
Next desktop review date:	01/12/2027
Review date:	1/11/2025
Completion date:	<<date>>
Version number:	See Review History (below)
Stakeholder review and engagement:	March-June 2025
Relevant Legislation:	Refer to "Legislation guising this plan"
Supersedes:	Road Management Plan 2021-2025

Document control: West Wimmera Shire Council – Road Management Plan - review history 2013 to 2025

Name	Content manager file reference	Date	Description of edits
D White	3.0	17/10/2013	Approved by Council
D Gyford	4.0	15/11/2017	Approved by Council
H Baird	4.1	21/03/2021	Draft for comment • Update to layout, styling and branding • Revised title page • Addition of back page • References to legislation updated • References to Council documents updated • Update to contents page • Addition of road register as appendix • Relocated terms and definitions • Inclusion of additional terms and definitions • Inclusion of list of figures and tables following contents page
J Magee	4.2	2/06/2021	Draft for comment by SMG: • Introduction abbreviated • Inclusion of property/stormwater drains paragraph • Customer requests/complains clause • Amendments to inspection frequencies • Inclusion of audit and monitoring clause • Inclusion of defects table for roads and footpaths
J Magee	4.3	22/06/2021	Amendments suggested by MAV insurance implemented including: • Footpath intervention level changed to 25mm • Inclusion of diagram showing responsibility re footpath/vehicle crossover
J Magee	4.4	17/11/2021	Approved by Council
J Magee & M Chenhall	5.0	20/01/2025	Template provided by MAV insurance adapted and populated with information specific to WWSC. Shared with Director and Operations Team for comment.
J Magee	5.01	07/05/2025	Council forum

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Definitions 4
Introduction 5
What is the purpose of this plan 5
Legislation guiding this plan 5
What is covered in this plan? 5
Updating the plan 6
Exceptional circumstances 6
Responsibility for the plan 7
Rights and responsibilities 7
Public roads 7
Key stakeholders 7
Coordinating & responsible road authority 7
General functions of a road authority 8
Rights of the road user 8
Obligations of road users 8
Road management systems 10
Background and process 10
Asset hierarchies – municipal road network 10
Our road network 11
Maintenance management system 12
Asset levels of service 13
Register of public roads 14
Maintenance demarcation (boundary) agreements 14
Roads not listed on the register 14
Technical references 14
Attachments 15
Attachment 1: Road hierarchy – rural and urban roads 15
Attachment 2: Customer request timeframes – reactive requests 16
Attachment 3: Pathway hierarchy 16
Attachment 4: Inspection requirements 17
Attachment 5: Inspection frequencies for roads and footpaths 18
Attachment 6: Road, footpath and kerb and channel repair timeframes 19

DEFINITIONS

Arterial road	Refers to freeways, highways and declared main roads, which are managed by the Victorian Government, through Head Transport for Victoria (as the co-ordinating road authority).
Co-ordinating road authority	The organisation that has the responsibility to co-ordinate works. Generally, if the road is a freeway or arterial road, this will be Head Transport for Victoria. Generally, if the road is a municipal road, this will be Council.
Council	Refers to West Wimmera Shire Council
Demarcation agreement	A formal agreement between Council and another organisation that defines areas of responsibility.
Motor vehicle	Refers to a vehicle that is propelled by an in-built motor and is intended to be used on a roadway. This does not include a motorised wheelchair or mobility scooter, which is incapable of travelling at a speed greater than 10 km/h and is solely used for the conveyance of an injured or disabled person.
Municipal road(s)	Road that the municipal council is the co-ordinating road authority. The Road Management Act 2004 imposes specific duties on the municipal council with respect to the inspection, repair and maintenance of these roads and associated road-related infrastructure.
Non-road infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure in, on, under or over a road, which is not road infrastructure. This includes (but is not limited to) such items as gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles and cables, tram wires, rail infrastructure, bus shelters, public telephones, mailboxes, roadside furniture and fences erected by utilities, or providers of public transport.
Other roads	Include roads in state forests and reserves, and roads on private property. Municipal councils are not responsible for the inspection, repair or maintenance of these roads.
Pathway	Refers to a footpath, bicycle path, shared path or other area that is constructed or developed by Council for members of the public (not motor vehicles) to use.
Plan	Refers to this Road Management Plan.
Public road	As defined by the Road Management Act 2004 and includes a freeway, an arterial road, a municipal road declared under section 14(1) of the Act and a road in respect of which Council has made a decision that it is reasonably required for general public use and is included on the Register of Public Roads.
Road	Has the same meaning as in the Road Management Act 2004, being inclusive of any public highway, any ancillary area and any land declared to be a road under section 11 of that Act or forming part of a public highway or ancillary area.
Road infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure that forms part of a roadway, pathway or shoulder, which includes structures and materials.
Road-related infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure installed or constructed by the relevant road authority to either facilitate the operation or use of the roadway or pathway, or support or protect the roadway or pathway.
Road reserve	Refers to the area of land that is within the boundaries of a road. Example: any nature strip, forest, bushland, grassland or landscaped area within the road reserve would be roadside.
Roadside	Refers to any land that is within the boundaries of the road (other than shoulders) which is not a roadway or pathway. This includes land on which any vehicle crossing or pathway, which connects from a roadway or pathway on a road to other land, has been constructed. Example: any nature strip, forest, bushland, grassland or landscaped area within the road reserve would be roadside
Roadway	Refers to the area of a public road that is open to, or used by, the public, and has been developed by a road authority for the driving or riding of motor vehicles. This does not include a driveway providing access to a public road, or other road, from adjoining land.
Shoulder	Refers to the cleared area, whether constructed or not, that adjoins a roadway to provide clearance between the roadway and roadside. This does not refer to any area that is not in the road reserve.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

Section 50 of the Road Management Act 2004 sets the following objectives for a municipal road management plan:

1. To establish a system for our road management functions, which is based on policy, operational objectives and available resources.
2. To set a performance standard for our road management functions.

Although it is termed a 'plan' in the legislation, it is functionally an operational protocol document, describing the systems and rules we use to make decisions and meet obligations within our available resources. The plan forms part of a larger Asset Management Framework related to maintenance and operations.

For the avoidance of doubt, this plan is a road management plan for the purposes of s.39 of the Road Management Act 2004.

LEGISLATION GUIDING THIS PLAN

In addition to the Road Management Act 2004, the plan also considers the following Acts, regulations and codes of practice:

- Local Government Act 2020
- Ministerial Codes of Practice
- Road Management (General) Regulations 2016
- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Wrongs Act 1958

WHAT IS COVERED IN THIS PLAN?

The plan is divided into six sections:

1. Introduction.
2. Rights and responsibilities – covers legislation and local laws relevant to road management.
3. Road management systems – how we classify roads, streets and footpaths (known as our asset hierarchy) and the plans and processes we use to maintain roads and road-related infrastructure.
4. Register of public roads – what's in it, how to access it and the process for making changes.
5. Technical references.
6. Attachments:
    a. Attachment 1, road hierarchy – rural and urban roads
    b. Attachment 2, customer request timeframes
    c. Attachment 3, pathway hierarchy
    d. Attachment 4, inspection requirements
    e. Attachment 5, inspection frequencies for roads and footpaths
    f. Attachment 6, road, footpath and kerb and channel repair timeframes

UPDATING THE PLAN

This plan must be updated within a set period following a Council election. Outside of this cycle, changes might be required from time to time.

The following process will be used to manage these changes:

- If material changes are made to standards and specifications, a report will be presented to Council, along with a brief explanation as to why such changes are necessary. The review process must follow the steps as set out in the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 Part 3 – Road Management Plans.
- When changes do not alter these technical aspects of road management, changes will be approved by the Infrastructure, Development and Works Director.

These changes will be made in accordance with the processes prescribed by the Road Management Act 2004. To assist with version control, these changes will be numbered as follows:

- Versions presented to Council will be renumbered by whole numbers – for example, from version 1.00 to 2.00.
- Those approved by the director will be renumbered by decimals – for example, from version 1.00 to 1.01.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Council will make every effort to meet its commitments under its plan.

However, there might be situations or circumstances that affect Council's business activities to the extent that it cannot deliver on the service levels of the plan. These include but are not limited to: natural disasters, such as fires, floods, or storms, or a prolonged labour or resource shortage, due to a need to commit or redeploy Council staff and/or equipment elsewhere or due to the effects of pandemic and or government intervention.

Suspension of the plan

In the event that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Council has considered the impact of such an event on the limited financial resources of Council and its other conflicting priorities, and determined that the plan cannot be met, then pursuant to Section 83 of the Wrongs Act 1958, the CEO will write to Council's officer in charge of the plan and inform them that some, or all, of the timeframes and responses in Council's plan are to be suspended.

Reinstatement of the plan

Once the scope of the event/s has been determined, and the resources committed to the event response have been identified, then there will be an ongoing consultation between Council's CEO and Council's officer responsible for the plan, to determine which parts of Council's plan are to be reactivated and when.

Communication and documentation around plan suspension

Council will provide information/statements to residents about the suspension or reduction of the services under its plan, including:

- How the work that will be done has been prioritised; and
- The period for which it is likely to be affected.

This information will be provided by the Council on its website where its plan is located and other channels as appropriate such as press releases or social media. Where Council has suspended, in part or whole, its plan, associated documents (e.g. communications, meeting minutes, schedules, etc.) will be recorded and stored.

Inspections and repairs during suspension of plan

The suspension of the plan will not necessarily mean that all inspections and repairs halt. However, it might mean that only certain categories of inspections and repairs are undertaken. These will be based on a risk assessment and resources available to the Council, taking into account the resources needed to address the impact of the trigger event. For example, some reactive inspections may take place and repair (temporary or permanent) of roads/footpaths, which pose a high risk, may be undertaken, depending on the resources available to Council and the accessibility of each asset.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLAN

Overall responsibility for administering and implementing the plan rests with the Infrastructure, Development and Works Director.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PUBLIC ROADS

Public roads are defined in the Road Management Act 2004 as including:

- a freeway
- an arterial road
- a road declared under section 204(1) of the Local Government Act 1989
- a municipal road declared under section 14(1) of the Road Management Act 2004
- a road in respect of which Council has made a decision that it is reasonably required for general public use and is included on the Register of Public Roads.

COORDINATING & RESPONSIBLE ROAD AUTHORITY

Section 35 of the Road Management Act 2004 provides that a road authority has power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions under the Act.

Section 36 of the Road Management Act 2004 outlines which road authority is the coordinating road authority. According to subsection (c), the coordinating road authority is:

If the road is a municipal road, the municipal council of the municipal district in which the road or part of the road is situated.

However, there are instances where several authorities are responsible for components of the road within the road reserve. Section 37 of the Road Management Act 2004 identifies who is the responsible road authority in particular circumstances.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The key stakeholders impacted by this plan include:

- the general community (for recreation, sport, leisure and business)
- residents and businesses adjoining the road network
- pedestrians
- vehicle users with motorised vehicles, such as trucks, buses, commercial vehicles, cars and motorcycles
- users of smaller, lightweight vehicles, such as pedal-powered bicycles, motorised buggies, wheelchairs, prams and so on
- tourists and visitors to the area
- emergency agencies (Victoria Police, Country Fire Authority, Ambulance Victoria, State Emergency Services)
- the military (in times of conflict and emergency)
- traffic and transportation managers
- managers of the road network asset
- construction and maintenance personnel, who build and maintain asset components
- utility agencies using the road reserve for infrastructure (water, sewerage, gas, electricity, telecommunications)
- state and federal governments, who periodically provide funding for roads.

GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF A ROAD AUTHORITY

The general functions of a road authority are described within Section 34 of the Road Management Act 2004.

RIGHTS OF THE ROAD USER

The rights of public road users, which are legally enforceable, are set out in Sections 8 to 10 of the Road Management Act 2004.

OBLIGATIONS OF ROAD USERS

General usage

The common law requires that a road user must take reasonable care for their own safety (see Ghantous v Hawkesbury City Council).

The Road Safety Act 1986 sets out obligations on road users, including section 17A which requires that a person who drives a motor vehicle on, or uses, a highway must drive in a safe manner have regard for all relevant factors, including without limiting their generality, the following:

a. physical characteristics of the road
b. prevailing weather conditions
c. level of visibility
d. the condition of any vehicle the person is driving or riding on the highway
e. prevailing traffic conditions
f. the relevant road laws and advisory signs
g. the physical and mental condition of the driver or road user.

Section 17A of the Road Safety Act 1986 also requires that a road user must take reasonable care:

a. to avoid any conduct that may endanger the safety or welfare of other road users.
b. to avoid any conduct that might damage road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve.
c. to avoid conduct that might harm the environment of the road reserve.

Incident claims

If a person proposes to make a claim in relation to a public road or infrastructure for which Council is the responsible road authority, that person should contact Council and Council will initiate respective investigation and insurance reporting processes.

In accordance with Section 110 of the Road Management Act 2004, Council is not legally liable for property damages where the value of the damage is equal to or less than the threshold amount.

In cases where the claim relates to assets Council does not own or is not responsible for on the road reserve, the person who proposes to make a claim must refer the claim to the other authority or person responsible for those assets.

Permits for work within a road reserve

In cases where an individual or organisation proposes to carry out works within the road reserve that may impede public access, or interfere with road infrastructure, they must apply for a 'works within road reserve' permit. There are some exemptions, as noted in the Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015.

Local laws also require property owners to apply for a vehicle crossing permit if they plan to build a driveway.

In both cases, a fee applies to cover the costs of the administration and inspection of the work.

Obligation of others

There are several assets within the road reserve that we do not have an obligation to inspect and/or maintain. These include:

- **Non-road infrastructure** - This includes (but is not limited to) such items as gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles and cables, tram wires, rail infrastructure, bus shelters, public telephones, mailboxes, roadside furniture and fences erected by utilities, or providers of public transport.
- **Vehicle driveways** – the vehicle crossing (including cross-over), located between the carriageway and the property boundary, must be maintained by the adjoining property owner. However, Council is responsible for the portion of the driveway where the constructed pathway is reasonably required by the public in accordance with the following diagram.
- **Single property stormwater drains** – for drains constructed within the reserve that carry water from a single property to an outlet in the kerb, or other drain.
- **Utilities** – including, but not limited to; telecommunication, power, water, gas and rail authority assets.
- **Roadside** – as per Section 107 of the Road Management Act, Council has no "statutory duty or a common law duty to perform road management functions in respect of a public highway, which is not a public road or to maintain, inspect or repair the roadside", described as "any land that is within the boundaries of the road (other than shoulders) which is not a roadway or pathway". This includes landscaped tree plots within the footpath/pathway where the surface of the tree plot is not constructed with the intention of providing a trafficable pedestrian surface.

Where Council becomes aware of a hazard created by the defective condition of assets / infrastructure owned by another party, Council may at its absolute discretion:

- If located within assets / infrastructure for which Council is responsible (e.g. footpaths, road surfaces, etc.), or otherwise presents an immediate and significant risk to members of the public, undertake temporary measures to reduce the risk to members of the public until such time as the respective owner can implement permanent repairs (subject also to Council's available resources),
- Report in writing (e.g. email or letter) the presence of the hazard to the responsible party and request that repairs be implemented within a reasonable timeframe.
- Where repairs are not completed by the responsible party within the respective timeframe, Council may complete necessary repairs and invoice the responsible party for the costs.

However, where another party has a duty in relation to the asset / infrastructure, and Council has a discretionary power to take remedial action in relation to that matter, only that other party with the duty is liable in a subsequent proceeding, in accordance with s.104 of the Road Management Act 2004.



ROAD MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

Road asset management involves managing both physical assets and uses and operation that have the potential to impact their condition. It applies to all road assets, including:

- the road – pavement and surface, as well as footpaths, kerb and channel
- structures – bridges, culverts and traffic management devices
- road infrastructure – traffic signals and on-road electrical assets.

The aim of our road management system is to deliver a safe and efficient road network and meet community needs to the best of our ability, within available resources.

To create a road asset management system that would best meet our needs when inspecting, maintaining and repairing public roads, we used the following nationally-recognised asset management frameworks:

- International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM) 2015, IPWEA
- IPWEA National Asset Management Systems (NAMS+)
- Other references, as listed in technical references.

The system is designed to set the direction for our asset management activities. It is also linked to the annual business planning cycle.

ASSET HIERARCHIES – MUNICIPAL ROAD NETWORK

All roads and footpaths within the municipal network are classified according to a hierarchy that takes into account how they are used, who uses them, and how often.
The classification is used to determine the levels of service required, prioritise works programs and determine defect intervention responses.

Council has developed the following road hierarchy system for its road network:

- Link roads – category 3
- Collector roads – category 4
- Access-dwelling roads – category 5A
- Access-property roads – category 5B
- Minor roads – category 6A
- Minor roads (not maintained) – category 6B

Urban road & street network

Link roads	Category 3
Provide a link between highways, main roads, suburbs, or access to major tourist facilities, industrial centres, commercial areas and housing areas. Definition: A link road between townships and major rural communities to the arterial road network. Generally, have traffic volumes in excess of 60 vehicles per day. Provide major access routes for heavy vehicles. These are sealed roads.	

Rural road network

Collector roads	Category 4
Provide connection between higher class roads, or access to major public facilities, smaller commercial centres, minor tourist facilities and industrial centres. Definition: A road that links communities to arterial roads and local link roads. These are both sealed and unsealed.	

Access-dwelling roads	Category 5a
These roads serve as primary all weather access to at least one dwelling. Definition: Serve at least one occupied dwelling and link individual houses to higher classification roads, generally have traffic volumes less than 30 vehicles per day. Many of these roads are unsealed with a small percentage being sealed.	

Access-property roads	Category 5b
These roads serve as all-weather access to rural, commercial or industrial properties. Definition: Serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 30 vehicles per day and usually have imported pavement material placed upon them.	

Minor roads	Category 6A

Provide dry weather access to rural, commercial or industrial properties.

Definition: Serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 10 vehicles per day and generally have no imported pavement material placed upon them.

Minor roads (not maintained)	Category 6B

Category 6B roads are not proactively maintained by Council. They are not constructed roads.

Definition: Non-constructed roads within a road reserve, which are not proactively maintained by Council.

Pathway network

Council has developed the following footpath and kerb and channel hierarchy system and the following descriptions provide guidance on each category.

High usage areas	Category 1

- Locations within 100m of commercial areas.
- Locations within 100m of schools and links to commercial areas.
- Links between commercial areas, schools and other high use areas, which may include recreational areas.

Medium usage areas	Category 2

- All other areas where footpaths are constructed.

OUR ROAD NETWORK

More information about the Council's road network is shown in the tables below.

Table 3.1 – Road length by hierarchy – date last updated: 18/12/2024

HIERARCHY	LENGTH (KM)	% OF NETWORK
Category 3: Link roads	435	15.8
Category 4: Collector roads	432	15.7
Category 5: Access roads	1,129	41
Category 6A: Minor roads	627	23
Category 6B: Minor roads (not maintained)	127	4.5
Total	**2,751**	**100**

Table 3.2 – Road length by surface type – date last updated: 18/12/2024

SURFACE TYPE	LENGTH (KM)	% OF NETWORK
Sealed	826	30
Unsealed	1,925	70
Total	**2751**	**100**

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Maintenance management

Council has responsibilities to road users and the community to maintain public roads to a reasonably safe and suitable standard, within our available funds and resources. By developing long-term maintenance programs for our assets, we are better able to plan how we do this.

The following maintenance requirements shape our annual program and budget:

Routine maintenance standards

Standards vary across the network depending on the asset type and relevant risk factors, such as traffic volumes and composition, operating speeds, the susceptibility of assets to deterioration and the cost effectiveness of repairs. Competing priorities for funding are also relevant.

Defect intervention levels have been established using the VicRoads Standard Specification Section 750 and adapting it to local conditions.

The standards will be reviewed periodically to make sure they are adequate (see section "updating the plan").

Repair and maintenance works

Works must be completed within a specified time, depending on the severity and location of the defect. Response times are determined using local knowledge and experience and past performance as a guide.

Response times are monitored and will be periodically reviewed (see section "updating the plan").

Temporary mitigation measures

These are temporary works designed to reduce the risk of an incident, until such time as repair or maintenance works can be completed.

Response times and safety measures – for example warning signs, flashing lights, and safety barriers – are determined by reference to the risk to safety, road type and traffic volume.

Emergency works

Works that result from emergency incidents and must be undertaken immediately, for the safety of road users and the public.

Emergency works might include traffic incident management, responses to fires, floods, storms and spillages, and any assistance required under the Victorian State Emergency Response Plan and Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

Asset management plans

Council's asset management plans guide the development of long-term asset renewal programs, helping Council to plan and finance asset renewal and replacement.

Maintenance surveys and inspections

A four-tier regime is used to inspect Council's road network assets. It covers safety issues, incidents, defects and condition inspections.

1.Reactive inspections (customer request via Customer Request Management (CRM) System)

These inspections are conducted in response to requests from the community. The inspection is carried out by a Council employee and assessed according to the timeframes nominated within attachment 2.

2. Proactive inspections

Regular timetabled inspections that are scheduled depending on traffic flow, the types of defects likely to impact the asset and the perceived risks of these defects.

3. Condition inspections

These inspections identify structural integrity issues, which, if untreated, are likely to adversely affect the network overall. These issues might impact short-term serviceability, as well as the ability of the asset to perform for the duration of its intended life span.

These inspections are carried out in accordance with Council’s asset management plans. They are undertaken by various consultants as appointed by Council on a three-yearly schedule.

Maintenance responsiveness and performance targets

The following information is recorded when we receive a customer request from the community (via the CRM system):

- Date the request was received.
- Details of the request, including the location and nature of the reported hazard/defect (including any specific measurements if provided), name of the person making the request, copies of any photographs provided, etc.
- The personnel / department to which the request has been assigned for action.
- Date by which the request must be actioned (based on the target response times specified in attachment 2).
- Date when the request was actioned and/or completed (this typically involves someone carrying out a customer request inspection, as described on page 12 "maintenance surveys and inspections", followed by any necessary repair works conducted).

By recording this information, we can monitor compliance against target response times – that is, the time it takes from receiving a request to carrying out an inspection and ultimately completing necessary works.

Customer requests will be inspected and assessed in accordance with timeframes specified in attachment 2. The following are some possible outcomes from a reactive inspection:

- If a safety defect on Council's RMP compliance system (currently AssetAsyst) is identified and exceeds a description and intervention levels specified in attachment 6, a work order would be created with a date for completion of works in line with respective specified repair timeframes.
- If repairs are significant – for example, rehabilitation works are required – temporary mitigation measures may be undertaken to reduce the risk posed by the hazard/defect until the proper works can be undertaken (and subject to available resources).
- If the defect is assessed as below the description and intervention level specified in attachment 6, it would be noted (including why), but no remedial action is required to be conducted. Council may however carry out an improvement or repair.

In all cases, the action taken would be noted against the original request.

Target response times and intervention times are based on 'normal' conditions. The same level of service would not apply in cases where the plan has been suspended, under section "exceptional circumstances".

ASSET LEVELS OF SERVICE

Five elements are considered when determining appropriate levels of service for the road network. These are:

- Community expectations
- Technical standards
- Organisational capacity
- Performance measures and targets
- Safety of road and footpath users

REGISTER OF PUBLIC ROADS

Council maintains a register of public roads – called the Public Road Register – with the details of all public roads and ancillary areas for which we are responsible.

The Public Road Register is available on Council's website. A hard copy is made available at Council Customer Service Centres, at Edenhope and Kaniva, upon request.

MAINTENANCE DEMARCATION (BOUNDARY) AGREEMENTS

Where there are boundary agreements between Council and other road authorities or private organisations, the schedule of roads affected, and agreements are listed in the Municipal Road Register.

We have agreements with the following road authorities:

- Hindmarsh Shire Council
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Tatiara District Council
- Naracoorte Lucindale Council
- Wattle Range Council
- Glenelg Shire Council
- Southern Grampians Shire Council

ROADS NOT LISTED ON THE REGISTER

The following roads are not listed on our Public Road Register:

- Roads that are the full responsibility of the state government, or a private enterprise.
- Unused roads for which Council has not accepted responsibility.
- Roads drawn out on a plan of subdivision, until such time that Council accept responsibility for these roads.
- Roads that Council has not determined are reasonably required for public use.

TECHNICAL REFERENCES

i. AS ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management – Guidelines
ii. Integrated Asset Management Guidelines for Road Networks (AP-R202) 2002, Austroads Inc.
iii. International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM) 2015, IPWEA
iv. VicRoads Risk Management Guidelines
v. VicRoads Standard Specification Section 750 – Routine Maintenance

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Road hierarchy – rural and urban roads

Category	Responsibility	Description*
Category 3	Link roads	A link road between townships and major rural communities to the arterial road network. May have traffic volumes in excess of 60 vehicles per day. Provide major access routes for heavy vehicles. Key features typically include: • Link between highways, main roads and suburbs • Access to major tourist facilities • Access to industrial centres • Access to commercial and housing areas • These are sealed roads
Category 4	Collector roads	A road that links communities to arterial roads and local link roads. Key features typically include: • Provide connection between higher class roads • Access to major public facilities • Access to smaller commercial centres • Access to minor tourist facilities and industrial centres • These are both sealed and unsealed
Category 5a	Access-dwelling roads	Serve at least one occupied dwelling and link individual houses to higher classification roads, generally have traffic volumes less than 30 vehicles per day. • Serve as primary all weather access to at least one dwelling or provide through access to a similarly classed road. • Majority of these roads are unsealed with a small percentage being sealed.
Category 5b	Access property roads	Serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 30 vehicles per day and usually have imported pavement material placed upon them. The road should have the ability to provide dry weather access to property. Key features typically include: • A side or rear entry lane, generally providing secondary access to properties • Paddock access in a rural area • Low traffic counts
Category 6a	Minor roads	Serve as access to non-residential properties only and link those non-residential properties to higher classification roads, they generally have average traffic volumes of less than 10 vehicles per day and generally have no imported pavement material placed upon them. Key features typically include: • Provide dry weather access to rural, commercial or industrial properties
Category 6b	Minor roads (not maintained)	Non-constructed roads within a road reserve that are not proactively maintained by Council. • Category 6B Roads are not proactively maintained by Council. • They are not constructed roads.

Attachment 2: Customer request timeframes – reactive requests

Asset group	Hierarchy category	Reactive inspection timeframe WD = working days H = hours
Roads and bridges	Category 3 Category 4 Category 5 Category 6a	5WD 10WD 15WD 20WD
Footpaths, kerbs and channels	Category 1 Category 2	5WD 10WD
Emergency response – All asset/categories *Reported incidents/hazards that present an immediate and significant risk to members of the public. Temporary measures (e.g. installing barriers, signage, closing the road/footpath etc.) will be implemented to reduce the risk to users of the road network until such time as appropriate repairs can be completed.		24H

*Customer generated complaints are entered into the Council's CRM system. The response times for the reactive inspections are listed. If the fault is deemed to be a safety defect as defined in the Road Management Plan, it will be forwarded to the Assets Inspector who will input the defect into AssetAsyst. The date of input to AssetAsyst will correspond to the "date found" of the defect and hence the repair timeframes under the RMP apply from that date.

Attachment 3: Pathway hierarchy

Footpaths

Category	Area	Description
Category 1	High-use areas	• Locations within 100m of commercial areas. • Locations within 100m of schools and links to commercial areas. • Links between commercial areas, schools and other high use areas which may include recreational areas.
Category 2	Moderate-use areas	• All other areas where footpaths are constructed.

Category 1 and 2 footpaths are detailed within Council's AssetAsyst program; however, the table above is a guide to the category of classification.

Attachment 4: Inspection requirements

Inspection type	Purpose	Inspection and reporting requirements
Reactive – request for service via Customer Requests Management System (CRM)	Reactive inspections are designed to confirm the nature of defects/hazards reported by members of the public or Council employees and identify any that exceed the intervention levels specified in attachment 6.	Performed by a Council representative with knowledge of description / intervention levels (attachment 6) and road maintenance techniques who may then call in a higher level of expertise if necessary. All reactive inspections are conducted on foot, with defects measured and photographed. The report is required to identify specific safety defect, time first reported, time inspected and by whom, subsequent action and time of completion.
Proactive inspection	Inspection undertaken in accordance with a formal programmed inspection schedule to determine if the road asset complies with the levels of service as specified. A record of each asset is to be completed detailing the name of the inspector, the inspection date, and a description of any defects found that exceed the intervention levels specified in attachment 6. In addition, details of the inspection will be electronically recorded against the particular asset inspected.	Proactive inspections of roads are conducted via a slow-moving vehicle, while proactive inspections of all other asset types are conducted on foot, with defects measured and photographed. Performed by a dedicated Road Management Plan inspector.
Night inspections	Inspection undertaken in accordance with a formal programmed inspection schedule to assess the reflectivity of road signage, cat's eyes and roadside guideposts, and the visibility of line marking at night.	Conducted via a slow-moving vehicle with standard driving lights (low beam), with visibility/legibility/reflectivity assessed by eye from distances specified respective of each asset defect type. Performed by a dedicated Road Management Plan inspector.

Attachment 5: Inspection frequencies for roads and footpaths

Hierarchy	Proactive inspection frequency M = months	Night inspections Y = years
Category 3	3M	1Y
Category 4	6M	1Y
Category 5	12M	N/A
Category 6A	12M	N/A
High usage footpaths (cat 1)	3M	N/A
Medium usage footpaths (cat 2)	6M	N/A
Kerb and channel adjacent to high usage footpaths	3M	N/A
Bridges and culverts	*To be inspected at same time as road inspection for respective category	N/A

Attachment 6: Road, footpath and kerb and channel repair timeframes

Road repair timeframes

		Roads (safety defects/response times) Road category					
		3	4		5		6a
		Sealed	Sealed	Unsld	Sealed	Unsld	Unsld
	Defect description and intervention levels	Response time	Response time	Response time	Response time	Response time	Response time
Sealed	Pothole – sealed road (>100mm deep and >400mm dia.)	1M	1M		2M		
	Edge break (>300mm wide and over 5m long)	3M	3M		6M		
	Depression/rut/shoving/scouring shoulder (>100mm deep, 1.2m traverse or 3m longitudinal)	1M	1M		3M		
	Edge drop-off (>100mm over 20m longitudinal)	1M	1M		2M		
Unsealed	Pothole – unsealed road (>100mm deep and >400mm in diameter)			2M		2M	6M
	Corrugations (>100mm deep over a 50m length)			2M		3M	6M
	Depression/rut/shoving/scouring (150mm deep 1.2m traverse or 3m longitudinal)			2M		2M	3M
Furniture	Regulatory and advisory signs (excluding info and parking signs) missing/illegible at >100m	2M	2M	3M	3M	3M	6M
	Safety barrier, detached or damaged make them substantially ineffective or dangerous	2M	2M	2M	3M	3M	6M
	Guideposts (two in a row on the outside of curve or >20% missing at a critical location)	2M	2M	2M	3M	6M	6M
	Line marking not visible or ineffective at critical location	3M	6M		12M		
Obstructions	Other obstructions. Materials or spills in traffic lanes if presenting a danger to traffic	72H	72H	72H	72H	1M	1M
Drainage	Bridge and culvert defects (visible damage likely to pose immediate and significant risk to members of the public)	1M	1M	1M	1M	2M	2M
Veg.	Vegetation (trees. shrubs or grasses obscuring regulatory or warning signs)	3M	3M	6M	6M	6M	6M
	Roadside vegetation (overhead clearance < 4.5m clearance over trafficable portion of road)	2M	4M	4M	6M	6M	N/A

H=hour/s M=month/s

Footpath repair timeframes

		Footpaths* (safety defects/response times) Footpath category	
		High usage	Medium usage
	Defect description and intervention levels	Response time	Response time
Vertical displacement	Vertical displacement >25mm in height	1M	2M
Loose segment-ed pavers	Loose and unstable segmented pavers (i.e. pavers, bricks, etc.) that move underfoot	1M	2M
Cracking	Cracking in footpaths >40mm wide	1M	2M
Undulations	Undulations (depressions/bumps) >75mm in depth/height under a 1.2m straight edge	1M	2M
Dislodged/ missing pieces/ potholes	Dislodged or missing pieces or potholes >150mm in length/width and >20mm in depth	1M	2M
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	1WD	2WD
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1M	2M
WD=weekday/s M=month/s			

* Pram crossings / ramps providing transition between road and pathway levels are treated as part of the pathways for the purposes of the application of description / intervention levels.

Kerb and channel repair timeframes

		Kerb and channel (safety defects/response times) Kerb/channel category	
		Adjacent high use footpath	**Adjacent medium use footpath**
	Defect description and intervention levels	Response time	Response time
Vertical displacement	Vertical displacement of section >50mm	1M	2M
Horizontal displacement	Horizontal displacement section >100mm	1M	2M
M=month/s			

16 Sealing Schedule

Nil.

17 Late Items of Business

Pursuant to West Wimmera Shire Council Governance Rules – Division 3 Section 20:

20. Late Business

If the agenda for a Council meeting makes provision for late business, business cannot be admitted as late business other than by resolution of Council, and only then if it:

- *20.1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and*
- *20.2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.*

18 Confidential Reports

OFFICER RECCOMENDATION:

That Council considers the confidential reports below in accordance with Section 66 (5) (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 2020 and records the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public as follows:

Item 18.1 Termination of Lease Agreement – Kaniva Aerodrome

(g) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;

Moved:	**Cr Jodie Pretlove**
Seconded:	**Cr Tom Houlihan**

That Council pursuant to Section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 close the meeting to members of the public at 3:45pm to resolve on matters pertaining to the following items:

Item 18.1 Termination of Lease Agreement – Kaniva Aerodrome

(g) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 / 0)

19 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed:

The Council Meeting - 16 July 2025 was declared closed at 3:55pm

Next Meeting:

20 August 2025

Edenhope

Mayor's Signature
