

21.03 OBJECTIVES – STRATEGIES – IMPLEMENTATION21/04/2016
C7**21.03-1 Community Development**19/01/2006
VC37**Overview**

There are a number of community clubs, groups and associations currently active in the Shire which make up the fabric of the towns and villages. They are the focus for the community, particularly in generating social activities and maintaining community spirit, interest and association. There has been a changing focus towards greater self determination and management by communities of their needs as a result of the restructuring of governments functions. This has led to a contraction of public funding and greater promotion of self sufficiency in communities. The encouragement of self sufficiency within the community is most effectively promoted through the various clubs, groups and associations.

Key Issues

- Declining population across the Shire, including the towns.
- People leaving the Shire in search of better education and employment opportunities.
- The population in the townships and villages is aging and this trend is likely to continue as the older residents remain in town and retired farmers move into nearby towns.
- The declining population is having an impact on the viability of many commercial activities and the provision of community services.
- Population structure and composition, rather than size will be the most dramatic change in Hindmarsh's demography over the next 15 years.
- There is a need to cater for an aging population.
- There is some unemployment in the towns and an exodus of youth to larger centres to pursue employment and educational opportunities, particularly in the professional occupations.
- The limited choice in suitable housing for lifestyle changes.

References:

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Community Development Strategy:

- Hindmarsh Shire Recreation Strategy Plan, 1997
- Wimmera Regional Housing Needs Assessment, 1995
- The Provision of Health and Community Support Services in the Shire of Hindmarsh and West Wimmera: Stage 1, 1996.

Objective

To maintain sustainable communities throughout the Shire.

Strategies

- To promote and encourage greater community involvement and self sufficiency.

- To maintain community and commercial services and employment opportunities as integral components in achieving sustainable communities.
- To provide a range of accommodation opportunities to suit the various and changing needs of the Shire's residents.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Ensure sufficient and appropriately located land is zoned in the Planning Scheme for residential, commercial, industrial and community development.

Using Policy and the Exercise of Discretion

- Encourage development within existing serviced areas.

Other Actions

- Establish local committees with responsibility for identifying local needs and promoting local communities and acting as an adviser to Council.
- Retain and expand on the existing provision of services and employment opportunities through the implementation of those actions contained in the community service, infrastructure, towns and villages and economic sections of the strategy.
- Support private and public sector provision of a range of housing in the community.
- Continue to support the provision of aged and special care accommodation within the main towns.

21.03-2 Economic Development

22/03/2007
C2

Overview

Hindmarsh's economy is based on agricultural production, particularly cropping, grazing and wool. While these traditional agricultural pursuits have formed the basis of Hindmarsh's economy, diversity in production is being pursued. New enterprises based on value adding closer to the source of the product is a way of expanding and diversifying the economic base of the Shire. There are also a number of major industries and smaller service business activities which significantly contribute to the economy. More recently tourism associated with the Shire's environmental features and cultural elements is emerging as a small, but important component of the local economy.

Key Issues

- Australia's rural economy is continuing to change. Agriculture is diversifying, tourism is becoming more important as a component of the local economy, services have been reduced, technology is still having an impact on the workforce and there is increasing awareness of environmental degradation based on unsustainable land and water uses.
- The biggest change in the rural economy relates to economic rationalism and the focus upon new patterns of management.
- There is the constant threat of fluctuating prices for primary products, unemployment, casual employment, and restructuring of work conditions.
- The structure of the rural industry and nature of employment is changing. More skills and/or higher qualifications are being demanded.

- Expanding enterprises based on value adding closer to the source of the product are ways of expanding the economic base of the Shire.
- There is potential for further development in nature based tourism.
- There is the need for Economic Development and Tourism Strategies.

Objective

To support economic growth through both the retention and development of agricultural activities and through the development of new activities which are economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

Strategies

- To promote and support the traditional rural industries such as cropping and livestock, and also value adding opportunities.
- To promoting expansion and diversification of the agricultural base, and improved production.
- To promote sustainable agricultural development through the implementation of the actions referred to in the agricultural strategy.
- To encourage farm management practices and land use activities which are sustainable and maintain biodiversity.
- To seek valuing adding opportunities.
- To encourage new and existing economic and industrial activity in the Shire.
- To promote tourism throughout the Shire.
- To attract both visitors and permanent residents to the Shire, to widen its economic base and increase employment opportunities.
- To promote the retention and development of existing commercial enterprises within the Shire.
- To promote the establishment of service industries within the existing towns.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Retain high quality cleared land for sustainable agricultural production by including it in the Farming Zone.
- Support and foster compatible industrial and manufacturing activities through the provision of suitably located industrially zoned land.
- Provide sufficient zoned land around Nhill and Dimboola to attract industrial and business development to the Shire.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Support in the rural areas, the development of manufacturing and processing industries which could not otherwise be accommodated in or close to existing urban areas.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Develop a Tourism and Marketing Strategy by the end of December 1999 to identify the tourism potential of the Shire, potential market segments and a promotions strategy.

The Strategy should embrace the natural features, heritage significance and recreational opportunities of the Shire.

Other actions

- Identify and pursue projects considered to have a financial benefit to the Shire.
- Prepare an economic profile of the Shire as both a resource, but more importantly a promotional document for the Shire.
- Promote the use of Whole Farm Plans.
- Pursue appropriate means of value adding at the source which diversifies the base income of the rural sector.
- Enhancing the awareness and image of the Shire as an area to visit and invest in.
- Produce appropriate marketing information such as tourist brochures focusing on the natural features and sporting facilities available in Hindmarsh.
- Provide high quality informative tourist information signs.
- Promote the development of eco-tourism ventures in the Shire.
- Provide high quality informative tourist information signs.

21.03-3
22/03/2007
C2

Agriculture

Overview

While traditional forms of farming (ie grazing and cropping) have formed the backbone of the economy for many years, the profitability of such markets is declining. Accordingly, there is the need to pursue improved and alternative agricultural activities and diversify the agricultural base and develop additional local value adding opportunities to support local production and local economies.

There is a need for comprehensive land capability information relating to soil types, ground and surface water resources, drainage and salinity to improve farm production and address land degradation. This includes the identification of areas of environmental concern and developing and implementing appropriate strategies in conjunction with landowners, Landcare groups and relevant authorities and agencies.

Key Issues

- The profitability traditional forms of agriculture (grazing and cropping) is declining and as such there is the need to pursue alternative agricultural activities.
- There is an overall lack of land capability information relating to soil types, ground and surface water resources, drainage and salinity.
- Land and farm management problems relating to erosion, fencing, drainage and pest control exist within some local farming communities.
- There is the need to develop additional local value adding opportunities to support local production and local economies.

References

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Agriculture Strategy:

- Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 1996

- Wimmera River Integrated Catchment Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Catchment Salinity Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Catchment Irrigation Area Salinity Management Strategy, 1995
- Wimmera Regional Landcare Plan, 1993
- Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy
- Mallee Dryland Salinity Management Plan
- Draft Regional Catchment Vegetation Plans
- Hindmarsh Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

Objective

To maintain a viable and sustainable agricultural industry to ensure the future well being of the Shire and its residents.

Strategies

- To promote and support the traditional rural industries such as cropping, livestock and wool production.
- To promote existing, new and improved forms of production.
- To encourage essential services to support agricultural production and economic development.
- To promote effective land management and the integration of economic and environmental needs through sustainable agricultural practices.
- To recognise and protect farmland as an important resource through the development and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.
- To promote existing and new value adding industries.
- Limit the fragmentation of productive agricultural land to maintain sustainable holdings.
- Ensure that new development does not limit the viability of surrounding enterprises and reflects the optimum use of land.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Retain high quality cleared land for sustainable agricultural production by including it in the Farming Zone.
- Adopt minimum lot sizes which allow farmers to diversify while preventing inappropriate small subdivision.
- Provide adequate buffers around potential annoying activities such as cattle feed lots so as to avoid the creation of incompatible land use scenarios.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Restrict the non-agricultural use and development of high quality agricultural land.
- Require where applicable, whole farm plans to be submitted with subdivision proposals to demonstrate the environmental and economic sustainability of such proposals.

- Encourage the co-location of additional houses on farms adjacent to the existing house without the need for subdivision.
- Encourage sustainable environment and farm management practices.
- Control levee bank construction, laser grading and other forms of land forming so that the results of such activities do not have an adverse impact on adjacent properties or natural water courses or sites of environmental significance.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Undertake the following studies by the end of 2001:
 - a land capability study, including an assessment of soil types and water resources to ascertain the suitability of the Shire for various agricultural pursuits; and
 - a study to determine the suitability of establishing aquaculture activities.

Other actions

- Promote the expansion or establishment of agricultural and horticultural activities, having regard to potential impacts on natural resources, including:
 - wine grape production;
 - woodlots;
 - pasture seed production;
 - hay production for both the domestic and export markets;
 - broom bush production;
 - native flower production for both domestic and export markets; and
 - the production of herbs.
- Provide support to farmers wishing to establish private wood lots.
- Promote cattle feedlot in areas of relatively low rainfall with easy access to feed suppliers, water and slaughter facilities.
- Promote the continual expansion of the poultry industry such as Luv-a-Duck Pty. Ltd.
- Seek value adding opportunities and encourage emerging agricultural activities that introduce diversity and productivity improvements.
- Investigate the opportunity for the development of other agricultural based value added industries with a preference for those industries which have an economic sustainable advantage.
- Promote effective land management and the integration of economic and environmental needs through sustainable agricultural practices.
- Promote effective land management by facilitating and encouraging community drainage schemes and controlling drainage works.
- Liaise with other agencies and the community to address land degradation.
- Encourage sustainable farm management practice through the implementation of farm and water management plans.
- Support a review of fertiliser and chemical usage in order to reduce conflict between land uses and minimise nutrient run off.

21.03-419/01/2006
VC37**Environment****Overview**

Hindmarsh Shire contains a range of physiographic features which need to be carefully managed to facilitate the sustainable development of the Shire.

The condition of land, water and biological resources in the region is declining. Human activity exerts pressure on natural resources and changes the state or condition of the resources. Continuous reduction of the region's biodiversity in turn affects our ability to use the natural resources in a sustainable way. The Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy and the Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy seek to create sustainable land management through the better co-ordination and linkages with government, land and water managers and the community. The strategies have identified a need to:

- Significantly reduce the impact of pest plants and animals on the regions resources and production.
- Protect the region's soil resources for the long term benefit of all users.
- Balance competing demands for water while maintaining and improving water quality through responsible waterway and drainage arrangements.
- Protect and enhance the region's indigenous genetic biodiversity by maintaining the extent and diversity of the various ecosystems.

There are also 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 to be addressed is that of uncontrolled wildfires. Planning can assist to decrease the level of risk to life and property and to facilitate the efforts of the emergency services to direct their limited resources to handling crisis.

Lake Albacutya is recognised as a wetland of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971). It is one of 10 listed Ramsar sites in Victoria.

Lake Albacutya is regarded under the Ramsar Convention as a particularly good representative example of a terminal lake in the Murray-Darling Depression biogeographic region and in the wider Murray-Darling Basin. It supports a wide variety of indigenous flora and fauna species, including species threatened within Victoria (of which 10 fauna species are listed in the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act). It is also a habitat for a number of internationally recognised migratory birds listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (The Bonn Convention). When flooded, Lake Albacutya has supported up to 20 000 waterfowl, including large numbers of ducks and Banded Stilt.

The primary objective in relation to Ramsar sites is to maintain their ecological character in accordance with the obligations of the Ramsar Convention. This is protected under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999 (EPBC Act), which introduces an environmental assessment and approval regime for actions that are likely to have a significant impact.

Lake Albacutya Park is reserved under the National Parks Act, 1975 and managed by Parks Victoria.

Key Issues

- There is a lack of detailed information on soil types across the Shire.
- There is a lack of information on land capability throughout the Shire.

- While all forms of erosion occur in the Shire, wind erosion causes the greatest problem. This can be severe when hot, dry winds remove top soil from fallow or overgrazed land.
- There are increasing areas of salinity and salt occurrence throughout the Shire.
- There is a need to address the issue of uncontrolled wildfires

References:

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Environment Strategy:

- Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 1996
- Wimmera River Integrated Catchment Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Catchment Salinity Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Catchment Irrigation Area Salinity Management Strategy, 1995
- Wimmera Regional Landcare Plan, 1993
- Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy
- Mallee Dryland Salinity Management Plan
- Draft Regional Catchment Vegetation Plans
- LCC Final Recommendations for the Mallee Area 1989
- National Park Management Plans
- Hindmarsh Shire Municipal Fire Prevention Plan
- Hindmarsh Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- The Conservation Status of Roadsides in the Shire of Lowan, 1989

Objective

To facilitate the sustainable development of the Shire through careful management of its physiographic features.

Strategies

- To ensure land is developed and managed in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
- To minimise the existence and impacts of soil salinity within the Shire.
- To minimise the threat and potential impact of bushfires throughout the Shire.
- To educate the community on the environmental sensitivity of land as an important economic and environmental resource which requires protection and careful management.
- To foster responsible land management through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the Planning Scheme.
- To ensure that new land use and development does not increase the level of fire risk and includes adequate fire protection measures.
- To preserve the original biodiversity of the Shire through the identification of Biolink road reserves.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Incorporate Vegetation Protection Overlays into the Planning Scheme for the protection of Roadside Vegetation and Remnant Vegetation (sites of Biological Significance).
- Apply the Environmental Significance Overlay to stream frontages and other areas and sites of significance.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Require all land forming, extractive industries such as removal of road making material and construction works to be undertaken in accordance with EPA guidelines relating to sediment pollution control and any other approved strategies and plans.
- Minimise land clearing (including native grasslands) and where land clearing is proposed, require a site analysis, management and remediation plan demonstrating the consideration of any rare or threatened species on or adjacent to the site and the continued integrity of the remnant vegetation and habitat.
- Require a minimum of five indigenous trees to be planted for every one removed, with the overall objective to obtain a net conservation gain in all situations.
- Refer to the Catchment Management Strategies, Management Plans, Landcare Plans and any other approved strategies or plans when making land development and management decisions.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Assess and map further areas of roadside vegetation within the Shire by the end of 2000.
- By the end of 2002:
 - Identify highly degraded areas or those areas subject to significant erosion, with a view to introducing Erosion Management Overlays over these areas.
 - Identify those areas prone to moderate or severe salinity, with a view to introducing Salinity Management Overlays over these areas.

Other actions

- Support the undertaking of an extension of the assessment of the extent and severity of soil structure decline, specifically wind and other forms of erosion, salinity and protection of remnant vegetation in the whole of the Shire.
- Support the undertaking of a land capability study of the whole of the Shire.
- Encourage farmers to develop whole farm plans to promote the effective management of individual properties.
- Support the development of action plans for the revegetation or stabilisation of eroding sites along the waterways.
- Actively encourage and support the retention and protection of remnant vegetation and habitat through incentives and programs such as rate reduction/rebates and National Heritage Trust funds.
- Encourage the development of tree planting, tree lots and agroforestry as mechanisms to reduce land degradation and salinity throughout the Shire.
- Foster the retention and protection of remnant vegetation as the first step to reduce land degradation.

- Support the preparation of detailed fire hazard mapping of the Shire.
- Encourage the development of ploughed or graded fire breaks on private property, particularly where such property abuts public land.
- Discourage ploughed fire breaks on public land and road reserves.
- Site, design and construct buildings, public open space and roads to minimise the impact and the emergency conditions arising from fire.
- Incorporate fire prevention measures in accordance with the relevant fire prevention guidelines for development associated with residential and public use.
- Maximise access, fencing and the location of dams for fire fighting potential and minimise the interference with fire fighting measures.
- Provide adequate water supplies with suitable flow rates where practicable.
- Support the design of plantations to minimise the risk of fire.
- Areas where bushfire behaviour is likely to pose a significant threat to life and property need to be identified by the CFA. Once identified, these areas will be incorporated in the planning scheme by way of a future amendment.
- Support Parks Victoria in maintaining the ecological character of Lake Albacutya in accordance with the obligations of the Ramsar Convention.
- To protect and appropriately manage sites containing rare and significant flora and fauna.

21.03-5

21/04/2016
C7

Water

Overview

The widespread clearing of land for agriculture has led to increased pollution of waterways and the increased salinity recharge and runoff. The natural watercourses have changed, with extensive harvesting and redistribution from the surface water system to sustain agriculture and the rural and township communities. The ground water resources in the Shire are limited both in terms of quality and yield.

The catchments of the various waterways within the municipality include areas of flood prone land, where flooding may cause damage to the natural and built environment. Floods are naturally occurring events and the inherent function of floodplains to convey and store floodwater should be recognised and protected to ensure risk to agricultural production, the built and natural environment, and the community is minimised.

Natural flooding, long term productivity of flood prone land, and river and wetland health are all interconnected. Development within floodplains has the ability to adversely affect this inter-relationship, and as such needs to be managed. The natural drainage patterns in the flat parts of the Shire are dramatically affected by activities such as clearing, roads and railway lines and the creation of levee banks and channels. The drainage of agricultural land without regard to adjoining, downstream and upstream land holders also significantly affects natural drainage patterns. Drainage is being undertaken continuously as farmers try to make more land suitable for cropping. The interference with natural drainage patterns also has major implications for the conservation of wetlands. The lakes system is an important environmental, cultural and economic feature of the Shire.

Key Issues

- The widespread clearing of land for agriculture has led to increased pollution of waterways.

- The natural water courses have changed, with extensive harvesting and redistribution from the surface water system to sustain agriculture and the rural and township communities.
- The drainage and land forming of agricultural land can significantly affect natural drainage patterns and the ability of floodplains to store and convey floodwaters.
- Potential for the ground water resource to be depleted through over extraction.
- Contamination of the groundwater resource from pollution by pesticides and herbicides.
- The lakes system is an important environmental, cultural and economic feature of the Shire, yet there is no overall management plan for the protection and utilisation of the lakes.
- There is a lack of detailed information on the hydrology of the region.

References

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Water Strategy:

- Dimboola Flood Study, February 2003
- Draft Regional Catchment Vegetation Plans
- Floodplain Management Strategy, 2002 (Wimmera Catchment Management Authority)
- Jeparit Flood Study, June 2008
- LCC Final Recommendations for the Mallee Area 1989
- Mallee Dryland Salinity Management Plan
- Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy
- Wimmera Catchment Salinity Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Catchment Irrigation Area Salinity Management Strategy, 1995
- Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy, 1996
- Wimmera Regional Landcare Plan, 1993
- Wimmera River Integrated Catchment Management Plan, 1992
- Wimmera Waterway Health Strategy 2006-2011

Objective

To protect and manage water resources and floodplains to ensure the long term sustainability of the Shire.

Strategies

- To develop and promote greater understanding of the significance of water in maintaining sustainable communities.
- To protect the quality of both ground and surface waters throughout the Shire.
- To support the undertaking of a detailed study of the hydrology of waterways throughout the Shire, particularly the lakes area in the north.
- To have regard to areas subject to flooding and inundation, particularly around the various towns.
- To maintain rural flows and natural conditions within waterways where possible.

- To recognise the significance of water courses and bodies such as lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams as areas for the storage and conveyance of flood waters, as well as being areas of environmental significance and sensitivity.
- To utilise water in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- To ensure that drainage of agricultural land has due regard for adjoining, downstream and upstream landholders and is ecologically sustainable.
- To promote effective land management as a critical element in the protection of water resources.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Incorporate into the Planning Scheme:
 - Planning controls to retain and protect high quality cleared agricultural land for sustainable agricultural use;
 - Appropriate setback provisions to waterways;
 - Environmental Significance Overlays over wetland areas identified to be of regional or State significance and important waterways, and
 - Vegetation Protection Overlays.
- As information becomes available in the future, introduce further overlays into the Planning Scheme, including additional Environmental Significance Overlays, and Salinity Management Overlays.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Support the actions espoused in the Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategy 1997, with regard to drainage and any other relevant recommendations espoused in salinity management plans or approved plans and strategies.
- Have regard to areas subject to flooding, particularly around the various towns.
- Ensure future development does not impinge on water quality by requiring the on site retention and treatment of stormwater and waste water prior to entering natural systems.
- Require new developments to be connected to reticulated sewerage systems or to have on site treatment and disposal facilities which will not have an adverse impact on surface or groundwater quality.
- Maintaining native vegetation as a means of managing the water table.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Prepare a drainage management strategy for the Shire by the end of 2000.
- Identify highly degraded areas or those areas subject to significant erosion by the end of 2002, with a view to introducing Erosion Management Overlays over these areas.

Other actions

- Support the undertaking of a detailed study of the hydrology of waterways throughout the Shire, particularly the lakes area in the north.
- Promote community awareness of salinity and other forms of degradation through education so that desired land and water management practices are undertaken.
- Liaise and form linkages with GWM Water, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (Wimmera CMA) and Mallee Catchment Management Authority (MCMA).

- Support the establishment of ‘artificial wetlands’ and stormwater pollution traps as a means of controlling the quality of stormwater runoff from urban areas.
- Support the water manager (GWM Water) to manage both the quantity and quality of the water resource to ensure its availability for future uses.
- Support Mallee and Wimmera Regional Catchment Strategies and the relevant salinity plans to ensure an integrated approach to water management.
- Consider the introduction of rate incentive or special programs to promote fencing and revegetation to address erosion, remnant vegetation and habitat management, water quality, aquatic habitat and salinity problems.
- In liaison with land managers undertake the necessary actions to protect and establish high quality stream frontage environments along waterways.
- Assist and co-operate with the Catchment Management Authorities (Mallee and Wimmera) in undertaking a regional approach to land management and the protection of water resources.
- Support the development of a Regional Catchment Drainage Management Strategy.

21.03-6**Urban Development**21/05/2015
C15**Overview**

Hindmarsh Shire retains a distinctive pattern of urban development based on separate townships and villages which have developed as a result of historical, locational and environmental factors. The predominant towns in the Shire are Nhill, Dimboola, Rainbow and Jeparit. The towns and villages in the Shire have important roles as service and business centres and community focus for the local community, visitors and the surrounding rural hinterland. There are also a number of smaller villages located throughout the Shire. Each retains its own local history and culture, individual character and roles, which contribute to their sense of place and community association. There is a reasonably clear hierarchy among the towns and villages related to their function and the range of services and facilities provided.

Nhill has an important role as a service and business centre for the local community, travellers along the Western Highway and the surrounding rural hinterland. The Melbourne to Adelaide Railway also passes through the town. Nhill has a number of notable places of heritage significance. Nhill contains a number of substantial manufacturing and processing establishments and smaller industrial businesses. Further development should consolidate the town and be accommodated by infill development. Land appropriate for future residential development is located on the south side of George Street. Nhill is well served with community services and facilities. Nhill is the western gateway to the Little Desert.

Dimboola is located on the Wimmera River and the Melbourne to Adelaide Railway passes through the town. The Wimmera River constrains further development of the town to the south. There is sufficient vacant industrial land in the town, although there is no substantial industrial activity located in Dimboola. As such, Dimboola is likely to experience slow growth pressures in the next 10 years. Dimboola has many vacant residential lots within the existing residential area and has sufficient residential land to support gradual development. The town is well catered for with community facilities and services and contains a number of places of heritage significance.

Dimboola is located on the banks of the Wimmera River, and is the eastern gateway to the Little Desert and the Adelaide to Melbourne Railway passes through the town.

Rainbow has a quaint old-world charm and rural character, which is largely attributed to the number of sites of architectural or historic significance. Rainbow contains a number of vacant residential lots and land suitable for small scale low intensity industrial activity.

There is no significant industrial activity located in Rainbow and there is low or no growth pressure.

Rainbow is a picturesque town which gives ready access to Lake Hindmarsh and Lake Albacutya Park. The character of the town which is based on its places of heritage significance, should be conserved. The surrounding natural features and the town's rich culture should be marketed to attract tourists to the town. A series of hand painted murals around the town and district take a significant step to achieving this.

Jeparit has a quaint old-world charm and rural character, which is largely attributed to the number of sites of architectural or historic significance. Jeparit contains a number of vacant residential lots and land suitable for small scale low intensity industrial activity. There is little industrial activity located in Jeparit and there is low or no growth pressure likely. The Wimmera Mallee pioneer's Museum houses one of Victoria's most significant collections of our pioneering history.

Jeparit is located on the banks of the Wimmera River and is a service centre for the local and surrounding rural community. It is located only 6 kilometres from Lake Hindmarsh, Victoria's largest freshwater lake.

There are a number of smaller townships located throughout the Shire which provide a local convenience shopping role and an important community focus. The population in these townships is declining and therefore there is unlikely to be pressure for growth in the foreseeable future.

The issues, strategies and implementation measures for the respective towns and settlements in the Shire are as follows:

The issues, strategies and implementation measures for the respective towns and settlements in the Shire are as follows:

General

Objective

To promote and enhance the roles of the main towns as the service and business centres for the Shire and as a focus for communities.

Strategies

- To direct further urban development to the main towns, in order to increase the population to support a wider range of services and facilities.
- To foster and support the retention and enhancement of existing services and facilities in the towns as major assets serving the local and wider region.
- To foster and support new development within existing towns.
- To facilitate opportunities for increased employment opportunities within and adjacent to the towns.
- To contain urban development within defined township boundaries.
- To promote urban design and architecture that reflects the characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community, enhances livability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm and promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within broader strategic contexts.

Nhill

Key Issues

- Nhill has an important role as a service and business centre for the local community, travellers along the Western Highway and the surrounding rural hinterland. The Melbourne to Adelaide Railway passes through the town.
- Nhill has a number of notable heritage places.
- Nhill contains a number of substantial manufacturing, processing and industrial establishments.
- There are small parcels of industrial land scattered around the township.
- There are many vacant residential and rural residential lots in the town, but these are not all well located.
- Further development should consolidate the town and be accommodated by infill development.
- Land appropriate for future residential development is located on the south side of George Street.
- Nhill is well served with community services and facilities.
- The Nhill Sun Moth Reserve is one of the most significant sun moth sites in the world.

Objective

To promote the retention and development of **Nhill** as the major service and business centre in the Shire providing a range of economic and community opportunities.

Strategies

- To encourage Nhill to develop in accordance with the Nhill Framework Plan, and specifically to encourage new residential, commercial and industrial development in those areas indicated on the Framework Plan.
- To promote the expansion of existing industries and businesses.
- To promote and enhance the town as a key area for additional manufacturing and industrial establishments.
- To ensure that future development is generally contained within the existing established township boundaries.
- To maintain a viable and attractive town and high quality living environment.
- To foster community participation and 'ownership' in enhancing the social and economic opportunities in the town.
- To protect heritage sites and sites of environmental significance through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.
- To promote Nhill as a nature based tourism destination.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

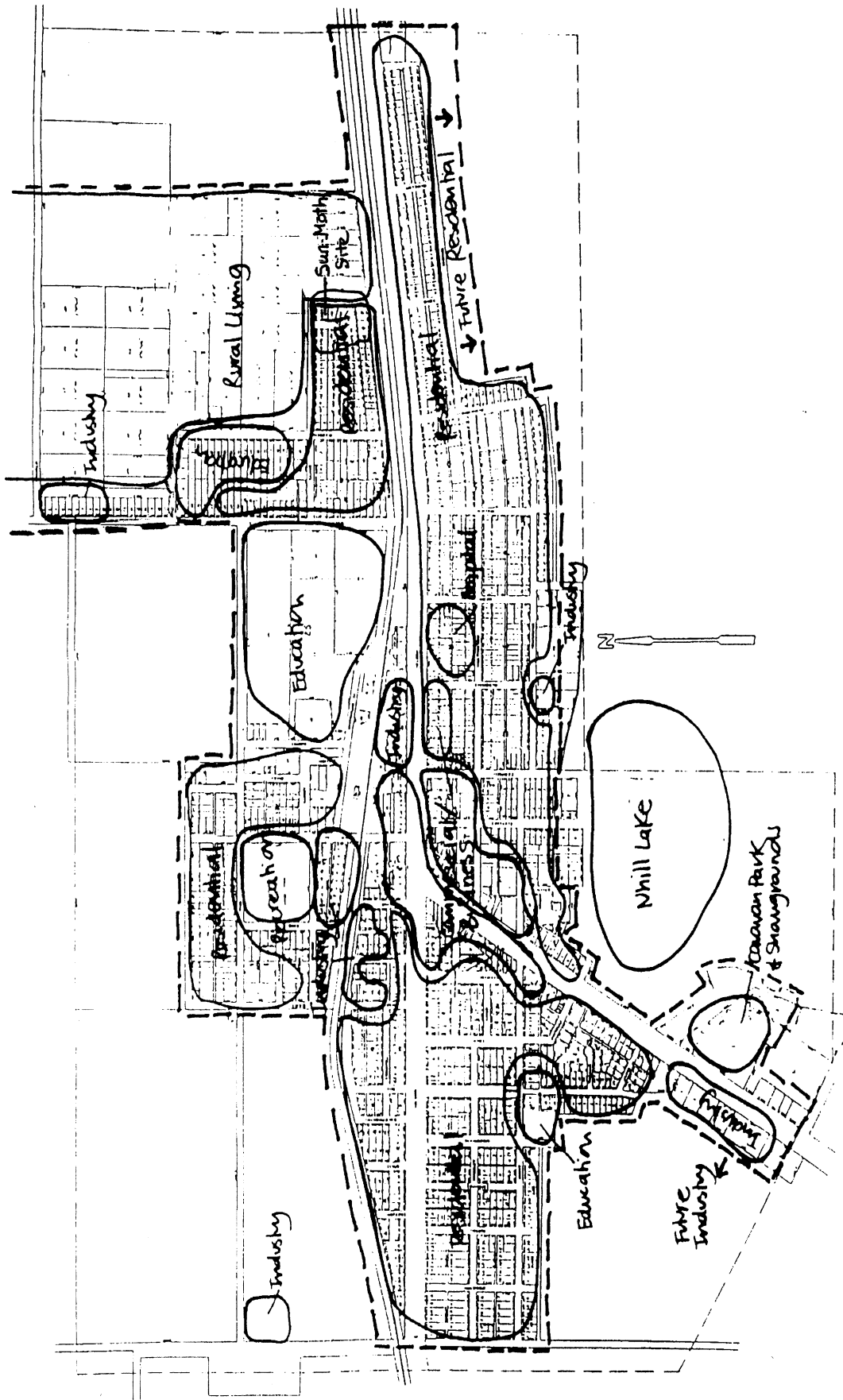
- Ensure sufficient industrial zoned land in the town.
- Provide additional industrial land in the long term if required, behind the Nhill Business Park.
- Retain the existing residential zones and promote residential development within these zones.
- Provide additional residential land on the south side of George Street.
- Retain the existing commercial zone and focus further commercial development within this area.
- Provide additional rural residential land in the northern part of town.
- Where appropriate, apply heritage controls over the existing and future places identified by the Australian Heritage Commission, Land Conservation Council, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Victorian Heritage Register.
- Apply the Environmental Significance Overlay to the Nhill Sun Moth site.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Develop a set of performance standards and design criteria for the presentation of industrial activities and developments located on entrance roads, by the end of 2000.

Other actions

- Develop and adopt a town and main street theme which can be utilised in promotion.
- Define the town centre boundaries with entry statements, such as landscaping and signage.
- Encourage home based industries in the town, subject to performance based measures.
- Encourage community involvement in the enhancement of the social, environmental and economic opportunities in the town, such as raising revenue for the aquatic centre.
- Continue to assist the Town Committee in improving the appearance of the town.
- Establish a community transport service network which links with other services to Horsham and Melbourne.
- Support the retention of the existing schools, hospital and other recreation and community services and facilities as major assets serving the region.
- Retain the natural setting of the town by maintaining the remnant vegetation and encouraging sensitive design and development.
- Develop a comprehensive community information directory.
- Work with the Town Committee to further their economic and tourism development projects.
- Appropriately manage the Sun Moth site in accordance with the management Plan prepared by Council.



NHILL FRAMEWORK PLAN

Dimboola

Key Issues

- Dimboola is located on the Wimmera River and the Melbourne to Adelaide Railway passes through the town.
- The Wimmera River constrains development to the south.
- There is only minor industrial activity located in Dimboola.
- Dimboola is likely to experience slow growth pressures in the next 10 years.
- Dimboola contains a number of sites of architectural or historic significance.
- Dimboola has many vacant residential lots within the existing residential area.
- While there are some rural living lots available, an opportunity exists for quality rural living lots to be provided along the Wimmera River.
- There is sufficient residential land to support the gradual development of Dimboola.
- There is sufficient vacant industrial land in the town.
- The town is well catered for with community facilities and services.

Objective

To promote and enhance the role of Dimboola as a key service and tourist centre in the Shire.

Strategies

- To encourage Dimboola to develop in accordance with the Dimboola Framework Plan, and specifically to encourage new residential, commercial and industrial development in those areas indicated on the Framework Plan.
- To contain future development within the established township boundary.
- To consolidate and integrate future retail and business activity within the existing commercial centre.
- To protect heritage sites through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.
- To foster community participation and 'ownership' in enhancing the social and economic opportunities in the town.
- To maintain a viable and attractive town and high quality living environment.
- To provide a range of community services and facilities to meet the needs and expectations of the community.
- To promote the town as a safe and friendly retirement village.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

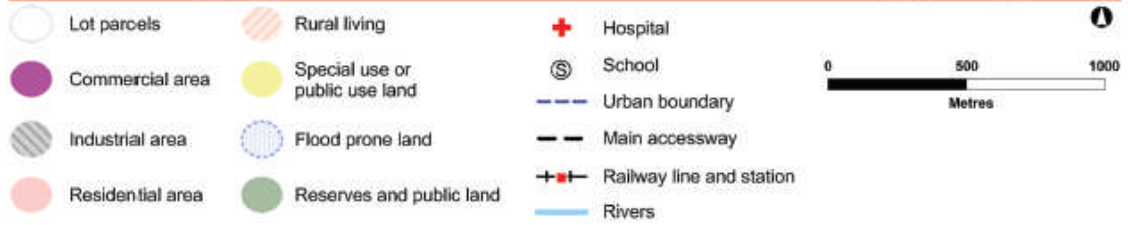
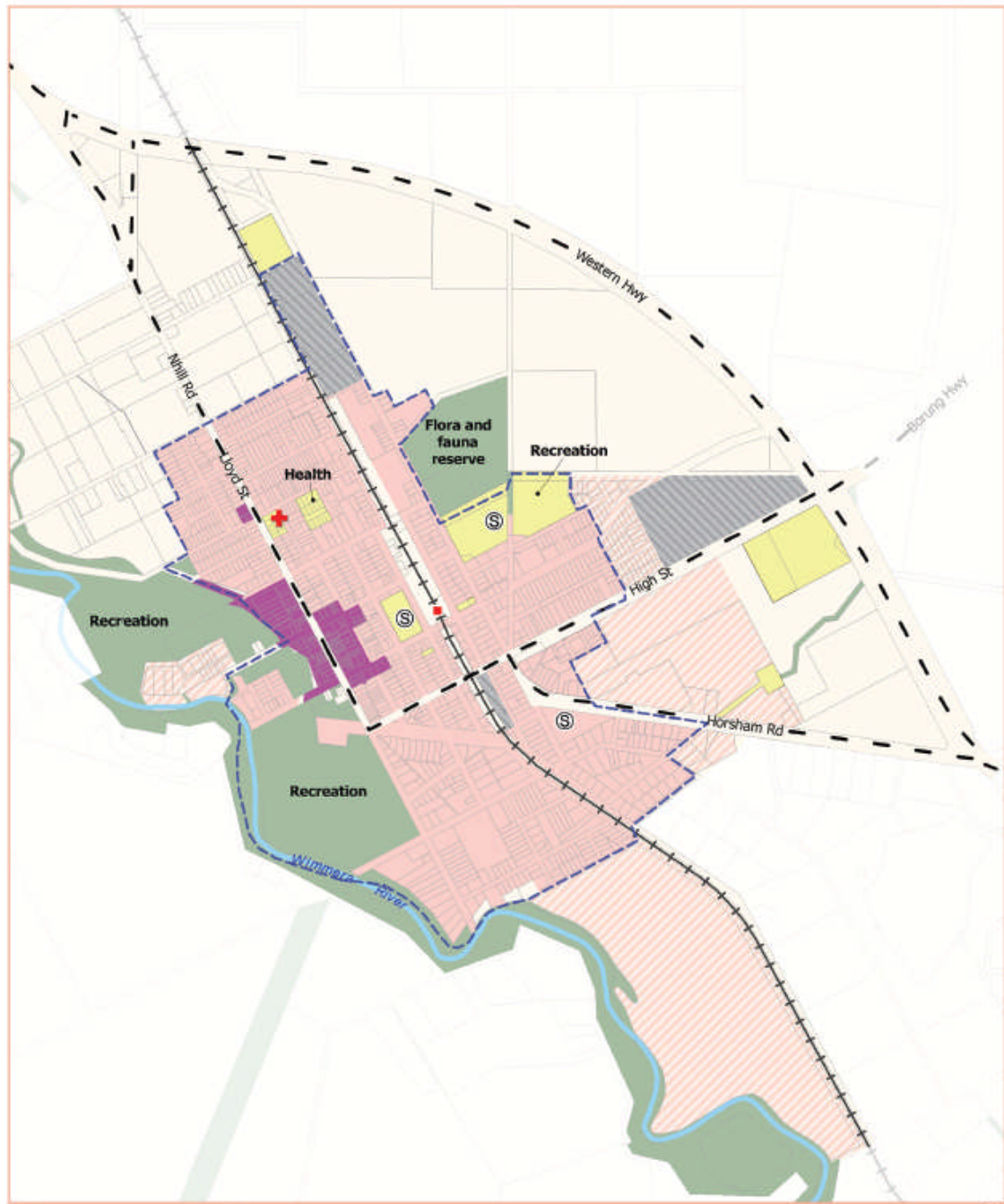
- Retain the existing residential zones and promote residential development within these zones.

- Retain the existing commercial zone and focus further commercial development within this area.
- Where appropriate, apply heritage controls over the existing and future places identified by the Australian Heritage Commission, Land Conservation Council, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Victorian Heritage Register.

Other actions

- Further develop the town and main street theme for promotion.
- Publicise Dimboola as a town possessing a rich heritage and as the eastern gateway to the Little Desert National Park.
- Encourage the establishment of tourist facilities in the area.
- Encourage the establishment of a Railway Museum.
- Encourage community involvement in the enhancement of the social, environmental and economic opportunities in the town.
- Continue to assist the Town Committee in improving the appearance of the town and in generating ideas and ways to attract visitors to the town.
- Establish an image for the town which can be promoted.
- Foster, improve and promote the shopping services within the town to encourage residents and visitors to support the shops and businesses in Dimboola rather than seek goods and services outside the town.
- Encourage home based industries in the town, subject to performance based measures.
- Investigate opportunities for resource sharing of existing facilities such as schools and their use by the community.
- Support the retention of the existing schools, hospital, and other recreation and community services and facilities as major assets serving the region.
- Foster and support the establishment of a community transport service network which links with other services and to Horsham and Melbourne.
- Retain existing recreation and leisure facilities and encourage the establishment of new facilities in existing recreation areas as shown on the Dimboola Framework Plan.

Dimboola framework plan



Rainbow

Key Issues

- Rainbow has a quaint old-world charm and rural character, with several murals around the town depicting the early days.
- Rainbow contains a number of sites of architectural or historic significance.
- Rainbow contains a number of vacant residential lots and land suitable for small scale low intensity industrial activity.
- There is low or no growth pressure likely for Rainbow.
- There is little industrial activity located in Rainbow.

Objective

To conserve Rainbow's character which is based on its places of heritage significance, and to attract tourists to the town by marketing the surrounding natural features and Rainbow's rich culture.

Strategies

- To encourage Rainbow to develop in accordance with the Rainbow Framework Plan, and specifically to encourage new residential, commercial and industrial development in those areas indicated on the Framework Plan.
- To contain future development within the established township boundary.
- To consolidate and integrate future retail and business activity within existing commercial centre.
- To protect heritage sites through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.
- To foster community participation and 'ownership' in enhancing the social and economic opportunities in the town.
- To provide a range of community services and facilities to meet the needs and expectations of the community.
- To maintain a viable and attractive town and high quality living environment.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Retain the existing residential areas and promote residential development on the east side of the railway.
- Provide sufficient commercial land in the existing commercial centre.
- Retain the existing commercial area and focus further commercial development within this area.
- Where appropriate, apply heritage controls over the existing and future places identified by the Australian Heritage Commission, Land Conservation Council, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Victorian Heritage Register.

- Promote the concentrated residential growth of the township east of the railway, focus services and facilities within the town centre 'hub' and light industrial activities along Railway Street.

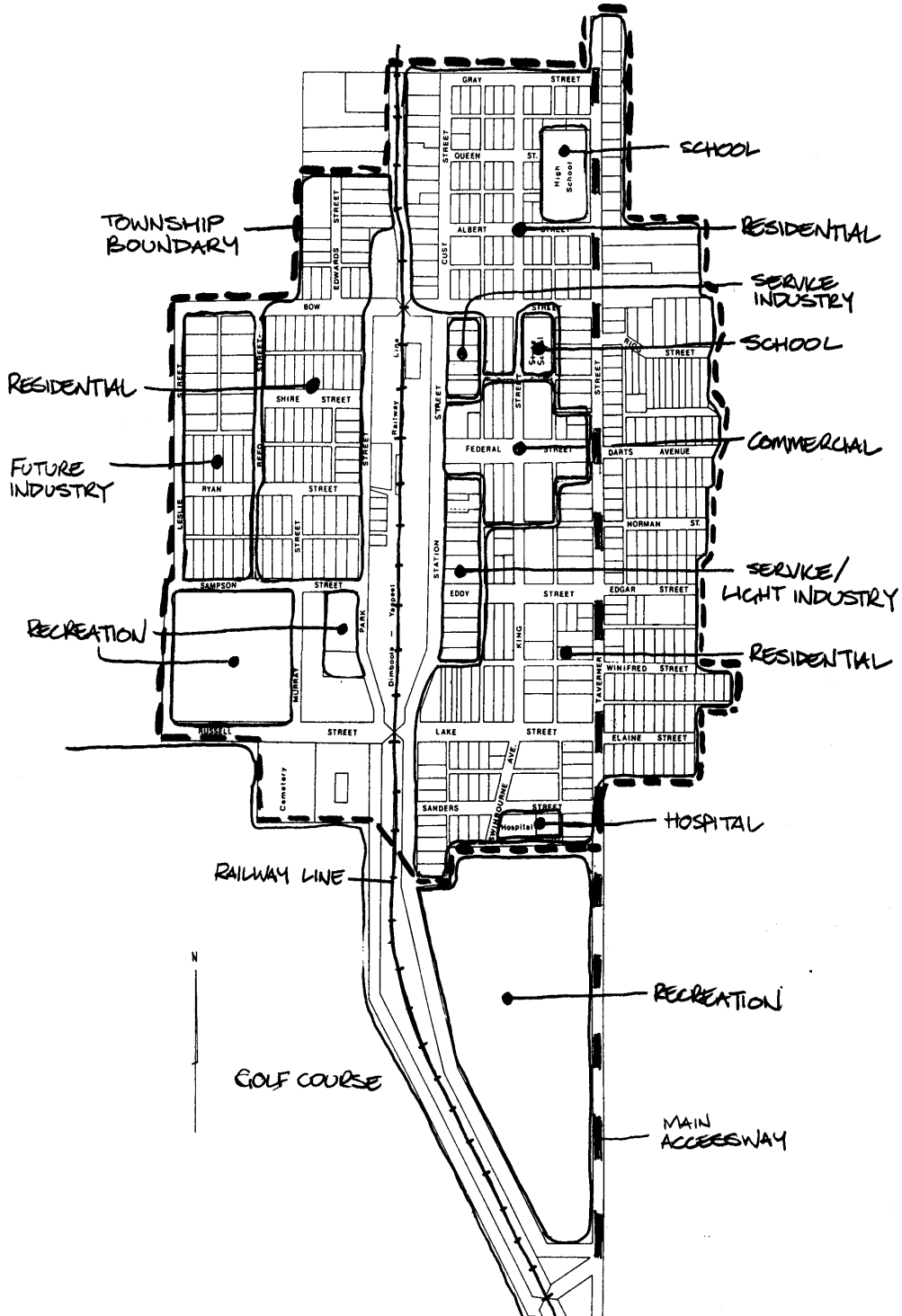
Undertaking further strategic work

- By the end of 2002, undertake a feasibility study into re-establishing regular water flows into Ross Lakes, having regard to an overall water strategy for the whole system, with the assistance from relevant stakeholders such as DNRE.

Other actions

- Encourage community involvement in the enhancement of the social, environmental and economic opportunities in the town.
- Continue to assist the Town Committee in improving the appearance of the town and determining ideas and ways of attracting people to the town.
- Investigate opportunities for resource sharing of existing facilities such as schools and their use by the community.
- Foster and support the establishment of a community transport service network which links with other services to Horsham and Melbourne and enables the local community to access the necessary services.
- Continue to encourage community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of the town.
- Establish an image for the town which can be promoted.
- Foster, improve and promote the shopping services within the town to encourage residents and visitors to support the shops and businesses in Rainbow rather than seek convenience goods and services outside the town.
- Encourage home based industries in the town, subject to performance.
- Promote tourist attractions.

RAINBOW FRAMEWORK PLAN



Jeparit

Key Issues

- Jeparit is only 6 kilometres from Victoria's largest freshwater lake.
- Jeparit has a quaint old-world charm and rural character.
- Jeparit contains a number of sites of architectural or historic significance.
- There are a number of vacant residential lots in the town.
- There is low or no growth pressure likely for Jeparit.
- There is no significant industrial activity located in Jeparit.
- Jeparit is the birthplace of Sir Robert Menzies.
- The Wimmera Mallee Pioneers' Museum is located at Jeparit.

Objective

To retain Jeparit as a local community and service centre.

Strategies

- To encourage Jeparit to develop in accordance with the Jeparit Framework Plan, and specifically to encourage new residential, commercial and industrial development in those areas indicated on the Framework Plan.
- To consolidate the township within its existing boundaries.
- To protect heritage sites through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.
- To foster community participation and 'ownership' in caring and enhancing the social, economic and environmental opportunities in the town.
- To maintain a viable and attractive town.
- To promote water based recreation on the Wimmera River and Lake Hindmarsh.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

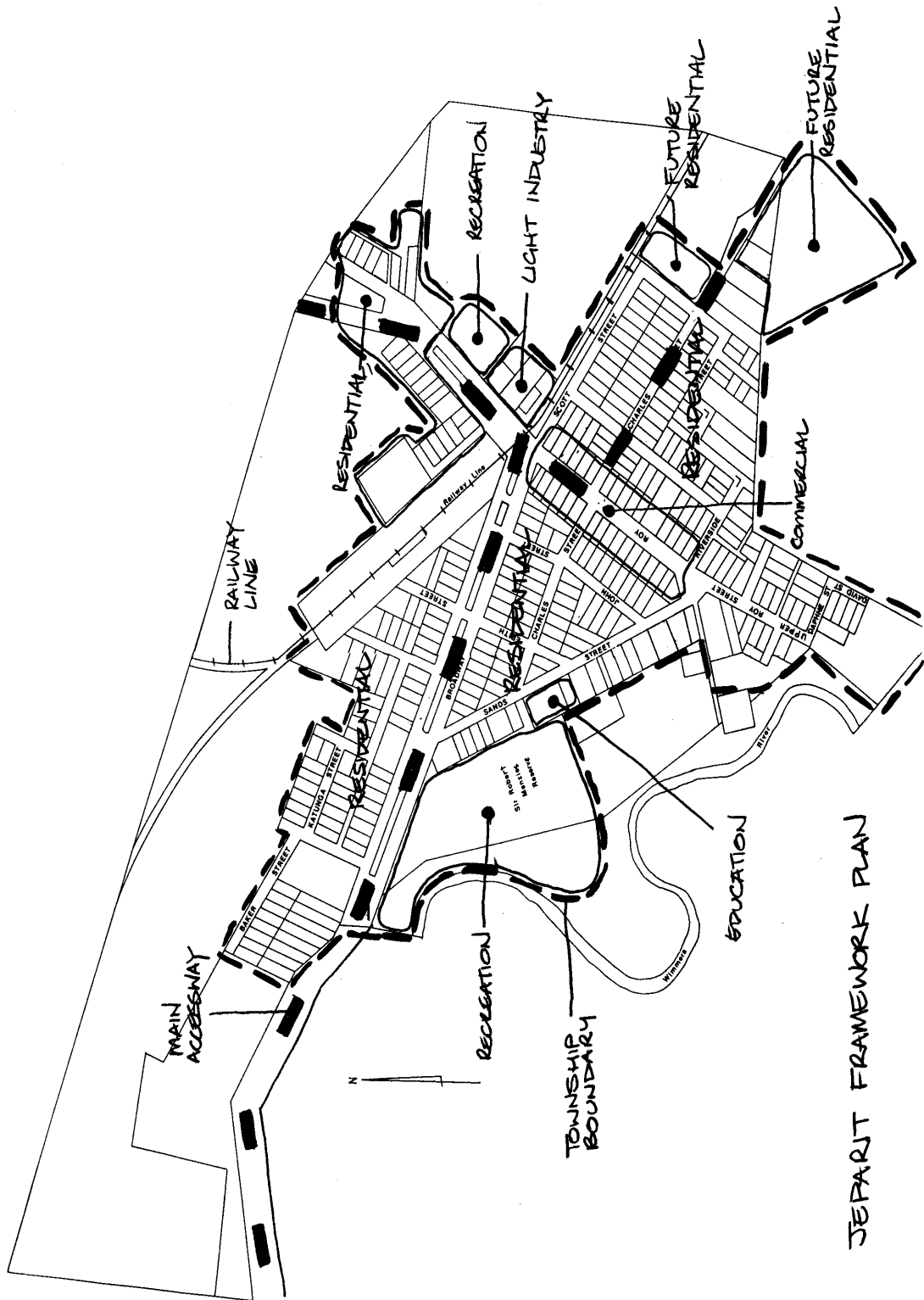
Applying Zones and Overlays

- Provide sufficient land in the existing township to accommodate further residential, commercial and small scale, low intensity industrial activities.
- Where appropriate, apply heritage controls over the existing and future places identified by the Australian Heritage Commission, Land Conservation Council, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Victorian Heritage Register.

Other actions

- Promote appropriate development within the Township Zone.
- Continue to encourage community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of the town.

- Continue to assist the Town Committee in determining ideas and ways of enhancing social and economic opportunities.
- Establish an image for the town which can be promoted, such as the Pioneer Museum and Lake Hindmarsh.
- Develop and adopt a town and main street theme which can be utilised in promotion.



Other Townships

Key Issues

- Declining population in the townships, therefore no pressure for growth likely in the next 10 years.
- The provision of adequate services and facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Objective

To recognise and promote the strong sense of identity that the **small towns** provide to the local community.

Strategies

- To foster community participation and 'ownership' in caring and enhancing the town/locality.
- To provide a focus for local interaction access to services and facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Actions

- Encourage community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of the town.
- Assist local communities in establishing festivals and events and tourist activities to promote the towns.
- Identify and promote a key feature in the town as a central focus point, such as a hall, school or similar facility.

21.03-7

19/01/2006
VC37

Heritage

Overview

Hindmarsh Shire contains a number of places of historic and cultural significance which are important to the local and wider community and must be protected and enhanced for their conservation and tourism potential.

Key Issues

- There are numerous places of historic interest.
- The lack of an overall plan for the identification and management of the places of historic interest.

References:

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Heritage Strategy:

- Australian Heritage Commission Register

- Land Conservation Council Recommendations
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
- Victorian Heritage Register

Objective

To protect those places in Hindmarsh Shire which are of historic and cultural significance.

Strategies

- To protect and enhance heritage places through their identification and the implementation of management plans.
- To ensure that the design of new development and additions to buildings involving places of special historic, natural and cultural heritage significance is compatible with the integrity of such places.
- To promote the identification, protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
- To protect heritage sites through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Where appropriate, apply heritage controls over the existing and future places identified by the Australian Heritage Commission, Land Conservation Council, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Victorian Heritage Register.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- When considering an application to develop or rezone land, consider whether the site might have significance to the Aboriginal population. Where there is a known site or the potential for Aboriginal archaeological sites to occur, request that a report be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist demonstrating that the impact of the proposed development on the Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been addressed.

Undertaking further strategic work

- By the end of 2000, undertake an investigation into funding opportunities available through the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC), Heritage Council Victoria and the National Trust for conservation and enhancement of places of special historic, natural and cultural heritage significance in the Shire.
- By the end of 2001:
 - Undertake a study to identify, assess and document places of special historic, natural and cultural heritage significance in the Shire, and implement the recommendations into the planning scheme heritage overlay where appropriate;
 - Identify significant places which require management plans and strategies; and
 - Develop guidelines to assist in assessing developments involving places of special historic, natural and cultural heritage significance.

Other actions

- Establish coordinated signage which identifies places of heritage significance.
- Prepare a guide to promote the heritage of the Shire to local residents and tourists alike.

21.03-819/01/2006
VC37**Community Services****Overview**

The Shire is adequately served by a range of community services which need to be retained as they are integral to maintaining the communities. However, Governments are no longer prepared to fund the levels of service which have come to be expected. The rationalisation and centralisation of services has increased the difficulties of access and expense for people in the towns to obtain these services, given the long distances, lack of public transport and the high cost of travelling. Accordingly, the standard of services should be provided in a manner which is both economically and socially sustainable. It is also important to consider current and projected demographics when planning for the provision of services and facilities. In addition, the limitations on access to services and facilities will require additional community support and alternative methods of providing service delivery and transport.

Key Issues

- Governments are no longer prepared to fund the levels of service which have come to be expected.
- The need for aged care is likely to increase in the future.
- The diminishing number of young people is likely to require the rationalisation of sporting facilities.
- Residents believe that there are insufficient leisure and cultural activities in the towns.
- Centralisation has increased the difficulties of access and expense for people in these towns to obtain these services, given the long distances, lack of public transport and the high cost of traveling.
- Population structure and composition, rather than size will be the most dramatic change in Hindmarsh's demography over the next 15 years.

References

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Community Services Strategy:

- Hindmarsh Shire Recreation Strategy Plan, 1997
- The Provision of Health and Community Support Services in the Shire of Hindmarsh and West Wimmera: Stage 1, 1996.

Objective

To maintain the existing provision and standard of community services in a manner which is both economically and socially sustainable.

Strategies

- To ensure that all communities are provided with facilities in both a social and cost effective manner.
- To provide a range of health services throughout the Shire.
- To provide a range of education services throughout the Shire.
- To encourage greater local involvement in identifying the need for and providing community services and facilities.
- To reflect and provide for the possible development of community services in the Planning Scheme.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Focus future development within existing serviced areas.

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Include land used for community services and facilities as a Public Use Zone.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Undertake a comprehensive audit of all community facilities and services in the Shire, by the end of 2000.
- Identify gaps in the provision of existing facilities and services and the need to upgrade existing facilities and services, by the end of 2001.
- Investigate means of coordinating the provision of services with neighbouring municipalities, by the end of 2002.

Other actions

- Encourage joint usage of existing facilities and the rationalisation of under utilised facilities.
- Implement the recommendations contained within the Recreation Strategy.
- Support the retention of the existing hospitals at Nhill, Dimboola, Rainbow and Jeparit.
- Continue to provide aged care and accommodation facilities at Nhill, Dimboola, Rainbow and Jeparit to support both urban and rural communities.
- Support the retention of the existing key facilities including all of the schools at Nhill, Dimboola, Rainbow and Jeparit.
- Assist in the provision of adult education training programs and short courses possibly through the utilisation of the existing secondary colleges.
- Investigate the potential for tertiary education resources in the Shire.
- Maximise community involvement in the pursuit and management of community services.
- Establish strong links with government agencies to promote cooperation and facilitation of services to meet the needs of the community.

21.03-919/01/2006
VC37**Infrastructure**

Infrastructure services are important in providing transport and protecting environmental and community health and should be provided in a cost effective manner. There is increasing pressure on the existing infrastructure services and on Council for the provision and maintenance of these infrastructure services, particularly the increased road maintenance cost. However, Council is unable to fund the level of infrastructure service which have come to be expected, due to the competing demands for other services.

Key Issues

- The increasing pressure on Council for the provision and maintenance of infrastructure services.
- Council is unable to fund the level of infrastructure services which have come to be expected.
- Considerable pressure on the existing infrastructure services.
- Increased road maintenance cost.

Objective

To provide infrastructure services to meet the needs of the community in a cost effective manner.

Strategies

- To develop a strategic approach to the development of service infrastructure.
- To assist in the protection and enhancement of the integrity, security of supply and water quality in the catchment area.
- To encourage greater utilisation of the public transport network to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
- To identify, provide for and protect key infrastructure in the Planning Scheme.
- To provide effective separation distance between facilities with off-site effects and sensitive land uses, particularly dwellings, where practicable.
- To ensure that developments along highways and other major roads does not prejudice the efficiency and safety of such roads.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Apply the Environmental Significance Overlay to land around sewerage treatment plants to ensure that the development of dwellings takes place in a manner which will minimise the potential for residents to be adversely affected by odours and other adverse impacts emanating from these plants.
- Apply the Environmental Significance Overlay to land along water supply channels and around water supply reservoirs to ensure security of supply (domestic and stock) and to prevent pollution of water supplies, and to incorporate in the decision guidelines a requirement that Wimmera Mallee Water will be notified of applications which affect its assets.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Concentrate development in existing serviced areas.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Undertake an audit and prepare an Asset Management Strategy for the provision of physical infrastructure throughout the Shire, by the end of 2000.

Other actions

- Liaise with Wimmera Mallee Water to ensure integrity of water supply (for towns, stock and domestic) through the control of underground water supply licences.

21.03-10 Flora & Fauna

19/01/2006
VC37

Overview

Most of the Shire has been cleared for agriculture and the Shire contains probably less than 3% of its natural vegetation cover on private land. The protection and management of remnant vegetation on private and public land is important to provide a diversity of flora and wildlife refuge areas and habitat. There is a need for greater revegetation and management of pest plants and animals to address areas of degraded land.

Flora and fauna communities vary throughout the Shire ranging from woodlands and the riverine environment and desert scrublands in the north. However, with less than 3% of the original vegetation intact on private land and threats from pest species, grazing by stock, salinity discharge and development there is the need to protect existing communities on public and private land in order to maintain bio-diversity.

Key Issues

- Accurate, up-to-date information is required to assess the status of significant vegetation and wildlife in the Shire and native vegetation and wildlife surveys are incomplete.
- Most of the Shire has been cleared for agriculture and the Shire contains probably less than 3% of its natural vegetation cover.
- It will not be long before scattered trees on farms die out and the roadsides will be all that remains.
- The protection and management of the bushland reserves is important to provide a diversity of flora and wildlife refuge areas.
- The removal of native vegetation and loss of habitat.
- The responsibility for revegetation to address areas of degraded land.
- The management of pest plants and animals.

References

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Flora and Fauna Strategy:

- Wimmera Regional Landcare Plan, 1993
- Draft Regional Catchment Vegetation Plans (MCMA)
- The Conservation Status of Roadsides in the Shire of Lowan, 1989
- Rural Vegetation Study (Scalzo, 1997).

Objective

To protect flora and fauna communities on public and private land.

Strategies

- To identify, protect, conserve and enhance significant ecological communities hosting native flora and fauna.
- To liaise and participate in the co-ordination, management and action between all agencies and the community with environmental responsibilities in the Shire to improve biodiversity.
- To recognise not only the ecological significance but also the economic and cultural significance of flora and fauna.
- To encourage wildlife survival through the establishment of wildlife corridors and biolinks.
- To foster responsible land management to ensure that flora and fauna and ecological communities in Victoria can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild.
- To control pest plants and pest animals throughout the Shire.
- To protect significant flora and fauna communities through the incorporation and implementation of appropriate provisions in the planning scheme.

Implementation

The above strategies will be implemented by:

Applying Zones and Overlays

- Incorporate into the Planning Scheme:
 - Public Conservation and Resource Zoning over appropriate public land,
 - Public Park and Recreation Zoning over appropriate public land,
 - Environmental Significance Overlays over areas identified to be of regional or State significance, and
 - Vegetation Protection Overlays over areas identified as containing sensitive vegetation communities.

Using policy and the exercise of discretion

- Require a minimum of five indigenous trees to be planted for every one removed, with the overall objective to obtain a net conservation gain in all situations.
- Require a site and species analysis to be undertaken in respect of all proposed works in areas over which Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays are applied. The purpose of this requirement is to determine the suitability of such works or the need to control such works so they do not have an adverse impact on native flora and fauna.

Undertaking further strategic work

- Identify important wildlife corridors in the Shire by the end of 2000.
- Prepare guidelines and a municipal strategy for the control of pest plants and pest animals on public and private land throughout the Shire, by the end of 2001.

Other actions

- Foster the Catchment Management Authorities to maintain a co-ordinated approach to protect areas of environmental significance for their conservation value and to maintain their integrity and biological value.
- Support the preparation and adoption of a Native Vegetation Strategy incorporating a Roadside Management and Conservation Strategy.
- Undertake regeneration programs to ensure protection and enhancement of remaining areas of environmental significance.
- Continue to liaise with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, other agencies and the community to formulate a base of information on environmentally significant features and areas.
- Continue to encourage and foster the various groups such as Greening Australia, local Tree groups and Landcare to effectively tackle a range of land management issues such as pest control, revegetation, protection of remnant vegetation and salinity, cropping systems and soil erosion, as well as monitoring, assessment and communication and coordination.
- Develop and facilitate native vegetation retention education programs for Council staff and contractors.
- Encourage land owners to implement planting programs along the corridors, particularly where such plantings can supplement roadside and streamside corridors and provide valuable biolinks.
- Consider the introduction of rate incentives or special programs to promote fencing of remnant vegetation and revegetation to address problems of land degradation.
- Have regard to DNRE Flora and Fauna Action Statements.
- Support the preparation of a study of pest plants in the Shire.
- Encourage land owners to identify the extent of pest plants and pest animals on their properties.

21.03-1119/01/2006
VC37**Public Land****Overview**

Approximately 30% of the Shire is public land of high environmental and conservation significance, much of which is included in National Parks. The importance of the public land is all the greater given that less than 3% of private land in the Shire still retains its natural vegetation cover. Mismanagement of the public land will adversely affect the overall land resource, with consequences on a broad range of qualities including tourism. Accordingly, there is the need to recognise the public land resource and ensure that it and adjacent private land is properly managed. Roadside vegetation is also very important in maintaining and restoring connectivity to the fragmented parcels of public land, which is important for the survival of many species.

Key Issues

The key strategic issues include:

- The Shire contains significant areas of public land.
- The coordinated management of the interface between public and private land.
- Land mismanagement can affect a broad range of qualities from tourism to the health of the natural ecosystem.

- Roadside vegetation is very important in maintaining and restoring connectivity to the fragmented parcels of public land, which is important for the survival of many species.
- There are numerous bushland reserves which have been grazed to the point where there is little or no understorey left and where regeneration is not being allowed to occur.

References

The following reports are reference documents which were considered in the preparation of the Public Land Strategy:

- National Park Management Plans
- Land Conservation Council Recommendations
- The Conservation Status of Roadsides in the Shire of Lowan, 1989

Objective

To recognise the public land resource in the Shire and ensure that it and adjacent private land is properly managed.

Strategies

- To ensure that public land is managed to be compatible with adjacent private land and vice versa.
- To ensure that responsibilities in respect to the management of public land are clearly known.
- To recognise that much of the public land is of environmental significance and is an important home to many native flora and fauna species.
- To facilitate the use of public land for the purpose for which it is intended.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and Exercise of Discretion

- Reflect State Government and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment's policies with respect to public land.

Zones and Overlays

- Include public land in the Public Conservation & Resource Zone, Public Park & Recreation Zone or Public Use Zone as the case may be.

Further Strategic Planning Work

- Develop a Roadside Management Strategy by the end of 2001 that reflects a coordinated approach to protect areas of environmental significance for their conservation value, and to maintain their integrity and biological value.

Other actions

- Support the development of an overall management plan for the public land.
- Encourage community involvement in the development of public land policies.
- Support the regulation of logging and the collection of firewood from roadsides and public land.

- Support the establishment of woodlots on degraded or highly modified public land.
- Consult with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the local Wotjobaluk tribe with regard to issues relating to the management and protection of public land.
- Encourage the development of whole farm plans for properties adjacent to public land.
- Seek the development of biolinks and fire breaks on private land adjacent to public land where appropriate.
- Support the establishment of a register of all public land assets, along with details on who is responsible for managing and maintaining such land including responsibilities for maintenance, usage, fire control, the issuing of grazing and wood collection licenses and the like.
- Assist in the delegation of management of some small public land reserves to community groups and provide support, advice and incentives to ensure that areas are properly managed.
- Recognise the Mallee Parks Management Plan as a basis for present and future public land management.
- Support the revegetation of areas of public land which should not have been cleared using local species.
- Control grazing and droving on all roadsides and public bushland reserves through Council Local Laws.