

21.09 SMALL TOWNS26/02/2015
C53**21.09-1 Gordon**26/02/2015
C53**Key Issues and Influences**

- Gordon is the third largest town in the Shire located on the Western Freeway some 23 kilometres from central Ballarat. The town layout is characterised by two residential areas and a denser central core with larger lots on its outskirts that provide a distinctly rural character. Sewerage reticulation is planned for the town in the short term that will provide opportunities and increased demand for residential growth.
- Gordon is strategically located on the Western Freeway between Bacchus Marsh and Ballarat, and has direct access to both Ballarat and Melbourne by rail with the Gordon Railway Station located less than a kilometre south of the town centre that could be re-opened to support public transport to both Ballarat and Melbourne. Sewerage and the proximity to Ballarat and major employers such as the University of Ballarat and IBM are anticipated to drive growth that must be planned for.
- Future growth of the township will be based initially on infill development within the existing township boundary.
- There are significant environmental constraints within Gordon and surrounds, including bushfire risks and special water catchments, which affect future potential for expansion of the town.
- Long term future growth in Gordon will be concentrated between the southern boundary of the existing township and the railway line and areas to the west on Old Melbourne Road.

Objective—Township Growth

- To identify and manage urban growth opportunities driven by the upcoming sewerage of Gordon and other growth drivers.
- To ensure that development within Gordon responds to, and mitigates, any identified bushfire risks.

Strategies

- Manage the development of Gordon consistent with the principles of establishing walkable catchments with access to community facilities, shops, and public transport.
- Require a detailed development plan to be prepared for any areas to be rezoned to residential to accommodate long term growth of the Gordon township.
- Protect the urban and landscape elements including view lines, windbreak planting, large freestanding native trees and areas of bushland that adjoin the township, that contribute to the township's village and rural character.
- Provide for the progressive development of a linked series of parks to serve township and local needs.
- Maintain a clear township boundary.
- Contain urban growth by promoting infill development.
- Ensure that new development in the township responds to bushfire risk in a manner which minimises loss of the environmental values of the surrounding landscape.

- Require new development to provide adequate drainage infrastructure.
- Provide for the progressive development of a designated pedestrian and cycle pathway system.

Implementation

Further Strategic Work

- Prepare a small towns development strategy that includes Gordon.
- Investigate areas identified for future growth of the township.
- Complete a Heritage Study of Gordon and surrounds.
- Investigate the opportunity to introduce a schedule to the Bushfire Management Overlay where the Bushfire Management Overlay applies to land within the existing township.
- Prepare a revised Structure Plan for Gordon.
- Apply the Neighbourhood Residential Zone to Gordon to reflect the landscape character and minimum lot size requirements (infrastructure capacity constraints) within the Gordon Structure Plan.

Other Actions

- Advocate for the reopening of the Gordon Railway station.
- Advocate for the provision of natural gas for Gordon.

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Blackwood

Key Issues and Influences

- Blackwood is a small village situated in the Wombat Forest on the Lerderderg River that includes the satellite townships of Simmons Reef, Barry's Reef, and Golden Point. The town's settlement pattern has been influenced by its historical development as a goldmining area and its steep undulating terrain.
- Blackwood provides some of the most scenic localities within Moorabool Shire and is a significant tourist and weekend retreat market for Melbourne, Moorabool Shire and surrounding areas. The township has a considerable number of historic buildings, and an open treed aspect in part influenced by the need for the disposal of onsite sewerage.
- Blackwood is planned to be sewered because of ongoing water quality issues with the Lerderderg River. Sewering will provide the potential for infill development that should be managed to limit its affect on the character of the township.

Objective—Managing Growth

- Provide for orderly and controlled development in Blackwood.

Strategies

- Develop a structure plan that controls the scope and type of development in Blackwood.

- Until a structure plan is implemented ensure that the location, form, and design of new development in Blackwood are consistent with the Moorabool Shire Land Use and Development Strategy 1997.
- Protect significant built heritage and streetscape assets.

Objective—Built and Natural Environment

- To preserve the heritage and treed character of Blackwood.

Strategies

- Protect remnant native vegetation and encourage planting of additional indigenous vegetation.
- Retain the visual dominance of the bush landscape and ensure development responds to the scenic qualities and vegetated landscape character of the townships

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Implementation

Zones and Overlays

Specific application of zones and overlays to achieve the strategic objectives includes:

- Apply heritage overlays to appropriate buildings and precincts in Blackwood;
- Apply a Vegetation Protection Overlay to Blackwood township environs; and
- Apply the Wildfire Management Overlay to the Blackwood Township.

Local policy and exercise of discretion

- It is policy to:
- Require the following information, where relevant, with any application in addition to that specified in any relevant overlay:
 - Property boundaries and roads (including unmade roads);
 - Existing building, fences and other site features;
 - The location of adjoining buildings;
 - Electricity and other service easements;
 - Watercourses, creeks, gullies, and drainage lines;
 - Contours and details of any proposed excavation or fill;
 - Views, ridge lines and rock outcrops; and
 - Significant vegetation, flora, and fauna areas.
- Ensure that development is located and designed to complement the scenic qualities and vegetated landscape character of the town;
- Minimise the removal of native vegetation and require replacement planting of indigenous trees;
- Avoid the development of visually dominant buildings and use materials and colours that blend with the natural bush setting of the area;
- Require lots to have access to an all weather public road;

- Design access roads and driveways to follow contours and minimise cut and fill in order to avoid potential for soil erosion, sedimentation, and runoff into streams;
- Minimise the location of access roads close streams and stream crossings;
- Require each lot to have access to a reliable water supply for household use, gardens, fire fighting, and stock purposes; and
- Require water storage tanks in accordance with CFA requirements.

Further Strategic Work

- Prepare and adopt a heritage study that includes Blackwood.
- Prepare and adopt a structure plan for Blackwood.

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Other Small Towns—Key Issues and Influences

- Other small towns in Moorabool such as Myrning, Bungaree, Dunnstown, Greendale, Wallace, Mt Egerton, Lal Lal, Yendon, Elaine, and Rowsley provide a limited level of services and facilities to their residents and the surrounding rural areas and are characterised by visual dominance of the rural landscape. These towns are integral to the cultural heritage of the Shire.
- The demand for alternate lifestyle choices has provided limited growth to the townships, particularly within the main Ballarat corridor.
- Myrning is well placed to continue to attract in-migration. There is a need for future investigation of the growth potential of Myrning. Future development in Myrning would necessarily be focused to the north as Myrning is bounded by the Western Freeway in the south.
- Wallace has a considerable infrastructure advantage including natural gas, the old butter factory and a full interchange to the Western freeway.
- Changing demographics and a reduction in the number of people working in farming around these small towns have resulted in a decrease in population in these small communities which threatens the viability of institutions such as sporting clubs and other community groups. Strategies are needed to achieve sustainable population sizes in these historically important small towns.
- The zones abutting small town boundaries need to be reviewed to identify where further sustainable residential development could occur and what the best zone would apply to support sustainable populations in these small communities, particularly Wallace, Dunnstown, and Bungaree.
- Many of the small towns are within Special Water Catchment Areas, therefore requiring consideration of sewerage. Soil absorption capacity and physical drainage issues need to be examined in any strategic work that aims to identify the development potential of these small towns.

Objective—Sustainable Small towns

- To provide for the sustainable development of small towns.

Strategies

- Support limited development in small towns as an additional residential choice.
- Provide a clearly defined and compact urban form and character for the small towns with rearrangement of lot boundaries that demonstrate beneficial and sustainable use.

- Protect prominent view-lines in small towns particularly to and from the Western Freeway.
- Advocate for sewerage in the small towns.

Implementation

Further Strategic Work

- Undertake a small town's strategy to review existing infrastructure within small towns including access to transport infrastructure, land capability, and suitability to different economic activities.
- Prepare and adopt structure plans for each of the small towns.

Other Actions

- Promote the lifestyle and tourist attractions of the small towns.