21.07 BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

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This clause provides local content to support Clause 15 (Built environment and heritage) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

21.07-1 Urban environment

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The character of most of the Shire's highways, major roads and urban areas is strongly influenced by development that occurred during the gold mining era. Heritage places,mature street trees and established private gardens contribute to attractive and memorable streetscapes in many of the Shire's towns. Stands of remnant vegetation in urban areas and a backdrop of native vegetation also make a strong contribution to this character.

The residential areas of the Shire typically have a spacious feel derived from the generous size of lots and building setbacks and wide road reserves. Dwellings date from the mid 19th century to the present day. Urban areas often lack formal road and footpath treatments, which give these areas an informal character. Residential areas on the fringes of townships often feature remnant native vegetation that extends to private gardens, which contributes to a bushland character.

There are well defined strip shopping centres in Castlemaine and Maldon. These centres have a traditional, compact form, with buildings that have direct frontage to streets and laneways. Most of the Shire's smaller towns have pockets of commercial development that date from the mid 19th and early 20th centuries. There is potential for infill commercial development in most of the Shire's towns.

The Castlemaine Commercial Centre (refer Clause 21.09) features wide street blocks and road reserves that are interspersed with a network of laneways. In the areas beyond the Castlemaine Commercial Centre, commercial buildings are often larger and set in grounds, with greater emphasis on vehicle access and parking. Council's vision is for new development in the Castlemaine Commercial Centre to be pedestrian oriented and sympathetic to the built form and historic fabric of the town. Restoration of shopfronts and sympathetic streetscape design will be encouraged. The walkability of the Commercial Centre will be protected and enhanced.

Castlemaine has four highway entrances that play an important role for commercial and tourism development and act as the gateways to the township. These are:

- Pyrenees Highway / Elizabeth Street

- Pyrenees Highway / Duke Street and Forest Street

- Midland Highway / Barker Street

- Midland Highway / Johnstone Street

Key Issues

- Encouraging new development in the Shire's residential areas whilst ensuring that development respects the existing neighbourhood character and heritage places.

- Characterising the existing and preferred character of Castlemaine's residential areas, which have developed over a long period of time and where building styles often vary.

- Preserving compact commercial centres that are highly walkable and pedestrian friendly, whist accommodating modern retail requirements for parking and access.

- Encouraging the development of underutilised commercial buildings and sites in ways that respect traditional building forms and heritage character.

- Enhancing Castlemaine's laneways, which are largely under-utilised and have the potential to play a greater role in movement to places of activity and interest.

- Preserving the informal and often historic road, drainage and footpath treatments that contribute to the character of the Shire's towns, whilst meeting practical requirements.

- Improving the appearance of the Shire's industrial areas.

- Ensuring that highway entrances provide opportunities for commercial and tourism uses whilst respecting township character, heritage values and sensitive streetscapes.

- Protecting existing mature street trees and providing opportunities for new street trees, which are important for shade, amenity and character.

- Improving the safety and convenience of pedestrian movements across arterial roads, while maintaining their road function.

Objective 1

To protect the identity and existing urban character of the Shire's townships.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1   Encourage new residential and commercial development that respects the existing form and character of streetscapes and allows for contemporary architectural expression.

Strategy 1.2   Ensure street planting of exotic and indigenous vegetation, landscaping and other vegetation management is consistent with local streetscape plans and policies.

Strategy 1.3   Encourage land use and development to deliver positive urban design outcomes.

Objective 2

To create vibrant and attractive and town centres.

Strategies

Strategy 2.1   Encourage car parking to be located in areas of minimal visual impact or at the rear of buildings.

Strategy 2.2   Discourage development and subdivision within the Castlemaine Commercial Centre that does not allow for traditional, pedestrian focused building forms.

Strategy 2.3   Restore vitality to Barker Street, Castlemaine, by slowing traffic and encouraging the re-development or improvement of prominent corner sites on Barker Street.

Strategy 2.4   Encourage additional infill commercial development along Forest and Barker Streets, Castlemaine.

Objective 3

To create walkable and pedestrian friendly town centres.

Strategies

Strategy 3.1   Develop Frederick Street, Castlemaine, as a major pedestrian link connecting new development sites in the Castlemaine Commercial Centre.

Strategy 3.2   Improve the appearance and function of existing laneways in the Castlemaine Commercial Centre to encourage their use as mid-block links.

Strategy 3.3   Implement traffic calming and improve pedestrian linkages across Forest and Barker Streets, Castlemaine.

Strategy 3.4   Ensure that shading and seasonal comfort issues for pedestrian spaces are core considerations in new landscaping in road reserves and new development sites.

Strategy 3.5   Implement urban design and infrastructure works to maximise the integration between a future supermarket in Vincents Road, Maldon, and the balance of the town centre.

Objective 4

To ensure that new industrial development does not detract from the appearance of urban areas.

Strategies

Strategy 4.1   Encourage high standards of industrial development that adequately addresses issues such as access, parking, signage and landscaping.

Objective 5

To maintain the identity of the Shire's townships and create positive impressions for visitors.

Strategies

Strategy 5.1   Ensure that development protects the important character attributes and function of the reservations at the main entrances to townships.

Strategy 5.2   Encourage design, signage and landscape treatments that enhance the sense of arrival in the Shire's townships.

Strategy 5.3   Protect the avenue of exotic tree plantings along the Midland Highway entrances to Castlemaine.

Strategy 5.4   Require development along the entrances to all towns to be landscaped with species consistent with the existing and planned landscape for each town.

Strategy 5.5   Promote service roads, access from side roads and shared access to highway frontage sites.

Strategy 5.6   Improve the gateway presentation and character of Main Street, Chewton, (Pyrenees Highway) as a major tourist road.

Strategy 5.7   Provide Chewton with a special theme to distinguish the township from adjacent Wesley Hill and the outskirts of Castlemaine.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to urban environment will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Policy guidelines

▪ Applying Council's local policies Clause 22.01 (Heritage) and Clause 22.02 (Maldon) when deciding on applications that relate to the built environment and heritage, as appropriate.

▪ Applying Council's local policy Clause 22.03 (Design Guidelines for Industrial Development) when deciding on applications to use or develop land in industrial zones, as appropriate.

Application of zones and overlays

- Applying the Design and Development Overlay to the Castlemaine Commercial Centre.

- Applying the Design and Development Overlay to major commercial sites and precincts and new industrial areas.

Further strategic work

- Updating the Castlemaine Urban Design Framework.

- Preparing a structure plan and urban design framework for the Forest Street and Barker Street corridors.

Reference documents

- Barker Street Urban Design Guidelines, 1998

- Castlemaine Central Area Urban Design Framework, 2002

- Castlemaine Industrial Land Study, 2002

- Castlemaine Railway Precinct Masterplan, 2004

- Castlemaine Residential Strategy, 2004

- Castlemaine Town Entrances Land Use Strategy Addendum Report, 2009

- Castlemaine Town Entrances Land Use Strategy, 2002

- Castlemaine Townscape Improvement Plan, Building Guidelines for the Central Business Area, 1990

- Castlemaine Urban Design Strategy, 1998

- Chewton Urban Design Framework Addendum Report, 2010.

- Chewton Urban Design Framework, 2008

- Harcourt Town Centre Master Plan, 2011

- Maldon Urban Design Framework, 2004

- Victory Market Precinct Castlemaine, 1997

- Victory Park Conservation Management Plan, 1997

- Wesley Hill Business Park Urban Design & Landscape Guidelines, 2010

- Castlemaine Commercial Centre Study, 2012

21.07-2 Sustainable environments

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There are now higher community expectations that new urban development will incorporate sustainable development principles, including water and energy efficiency. The planning processes can directly influence these outcomes by ensuring that new urban development is environmentally and site responsive and encourages opportunities to incorporate sustainability measures.

The type, location and form of housing has a major influence on sustainability outcomes in terms of energy use and other resources. The consolidation of development into existing urban areas is usually the most sustainable form of development from an economic, social and environmental perspective. Issues relating to urban consolidation are addressed in more detail in Clause 21.03.

Key Issues

▪ Managing urban stormwater run-off, which can adversely affect waterways and water quality.

▪ Recognising that urban development, transport and waste are significant contributors to greenhouse gas emissions.

Objective 1

To reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1   Encourage energy efficiency in the planning and design of urban communities in the Shire.

Strategy 1.2   Encourage high quality, environmentally responsible and affordable infill and higher density development including shop-top housing, particularly in Castlemaine.

Strategy 1.3   Ensure designs of subdivisions (e.g. lot orientation) maximise opportunities for passive heating and cooling.

Objective 2

To reduce water use and improve water quality in new urban development.

Strategies

Strategy 2.1   Encourage consideration of whole of water cycle solutions which may allow re-use of treated effluent or re-use of stormwater to minimise total water use.

Strategy 2.2   Encourage water capture and re-use in new developments.

Strategy 2.3   Ensure that proposals for new developments include the most appropriate systems for filtering of run-off storm water including during the construction phase.

Strategy 2.4   Encourage construction or retention of porous surfaces in lesser used roads and footpaths (where no erosion hazard exists), along with storm water management conducive to retention of both water and vegetation.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to sustainable environments will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Further strategic work

▪ Preparing a local policy on sustainable urban development.

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Heritage

The cultural heritage of the Shire is outstanding. Its built environment is inextricably linked to the discovery of alluvial gold in 1851. The Mount Alexander goldfield was one of the world's richest, attracting international attention. The Central Victorian goldfields transformed the colony demographically, socially, politically and economically. Today the remnant gold diggings are of major cultural heritage significance locally, and at state, national and world levels. This significance was recognised with the creation in 2002 of the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park, now on the state and national heritage lists, and being considered for nomination to the World Heritage List.

The pre-eminent historic theme and significance of the Shire lies in the concentrated evidence in the landscape of successive phases of gold mining and associated patterns of settlement, particularly the clear evolution from transient gold mining sites to permanent townships. The spatial relationships, condition and integrity of remnant structures, types of structures and their distribution contribute to the unique character of the Shire.

During the peak of alluvial mining between the 1850s and early 1870s the goldfields became a microcosm of international cultures. The interaction between the natural environment, topography and geology and social groups that occupied it, has resulted in distinctive 'cultural spaces'. Localities are imbued with special meaning and characteristics such as the Irish diggings at Fryers Creek, the Chinese miners at Mopoke Encampment, the Swiss-Italian settlements between Newstead and Yandoit. Place names reflect the origins and experience of the thousands who came to the diggings. Ruined structures of early dwellings, their stone fireplaces or walls associated with the diggings, are prolific in the landscape. More permanent villages mark the location of successful quartz gold operations. Here the formal European architecture reflects the wealth won from gold, and the surveyed street layouts present a contrast with the vernacular architecture and organic settlement in adjacent goldfields. This has left a rich legacy of historic buildings, structures, such as freestanding miners' cottages, superb railway infrastructure, water systems, churches and cemeteries, public buildings, formal and remnant exotic plantings and remnant mining sites.

There is extensive evidence of Aboriginal occupation and activity throughout the Shire. These sites include traditional and cultural places, ceremonial and camping sites, mining sites, rock wells, middens and ovens. Systematic historical and archaeological research is likely to yield further detailed information on pre and post contact Aboriginal land use in the area and post contact land use by Europeans and other nationalities.

Early pastoral and agricultural use, before and after the gold rush, and its relics are still an important part of the cultural landscape. Industries which were established to support mining and the population have also created a distinctive built legacy and some continue to underpin the local economy. Castlemaine, the largest town in the Shire, was the centre of government administration on the goldfields and became a hub for commerce, transport, education, health services, religious observance and the whole range of social activity. It boasts a high degree of intact and authentic 19th century buildings which reflect those functions. Maldon is one of the most intact 19th century towns in Australia. There are also outstanding collections of historic buildings in many of the smaller towns in the Shire.

Today, this distinctive heritage is a source of pride for the Shire and its communities. It also sustains economic growth as it attracts visitors and residents, supporting the tourist and building industries, and provides a stimulating context for arts, hospitality, professional and knowledge based businesses.

Key Issues

- Properly identifying and describing the extensive heritage assets in the Shire and evaluating their significance.
- Arresting the loss of heritage places and the deterioration of their condition or integrity.
- Managing the impacts of new subdivision and development on heritage places.
- Adapting heritage buildings to new uses to ensure their long-term survival.
- Raising awareness of the importance of lesser known heritage places, including miners' cottages, mining infrastructure and industrial heritage.

Objective 1

To protect and conserve the significance of all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage places.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1   Ensure that all new developments within the Heritage Overlay harmoniously integrate with the heritage character of towns and areas.

Strategy 1.2   Ensure that all heritage places are conserved in a sympathetic manner and in ways that reveal the heritage value of the place.

Strategy 1.3   Strengthen and extend heritage provisions to protect identified heritage places.

Strategy 1.4   Review existing heritage studies and prepare new heritage studies in accordance with the recommendations of a Thematic History for the Shire.

Strategy 1.5   Ensure that land use and development proposals protect and manage sites of archaeological significance.

Objective 2

To protect significant natural and cultural heritage landscapes.

Strategies

Strategy 2.1   Protect and conserve the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and the cultural landscape significance of Pennyweight Cemetery, Pennyweight Flat, Moonlight Flat and Lady Gully.

Strategy 2.2   Ensure that development on land adjacent to the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park does not detrimentally affect its significance and cultural heritage values.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to heritage will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Policy guidelines

Applying Council's local policies Clause 22.01 (Heritage) and Clause 22.02 (Maldon) when deciding on applications in relation to heritage, as appropriate.

When deciding on applications for development in Maldon considering implementation of the Maldon Design Guidelines, as appropriate.

Application of zones and overlays

▪ Applying the Heritage Overlay to places of identified heritage significance.

Further strategic work

▪ Preparing a Thematic Environmental History for the Shire including recommendations for reviews of existing heritage studies, statements of significance and areas not previously assessed.

▪ Preparing a comprehensive conservation strategy for the Shire including recommendations for planning provisions and policies, conservation management, development guidelines and other actions to protect and conserve the heritage of the Shire.

▪ Implementing the recommendations of the Metcalfe Heritage Study in the planning scheme.

▪ Updating the Maldon Design Guidelines to improve useability and consistency.

- Reviewing the local planning policy for Maldon at Clause 22.02 to improve consistency with other provisions.

- Investigating the application of the Significant Landscape Overlay from Tunnel Hill to Chewton.

- Investigating the application of the Significant Landscape Overlay to areas of high visual sensitivity including those areas adjacent to the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park.

Reference documents

- Aboriginal Cultural Resources Management Grid Map, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV)

- Advertising Signs and Signage and Street Furniture for the Shire of Maldon, 1994

- Chewton Conservation Study, 1977

- City of Castlemaine Architectural & Historical Study, 1979

- Draft Management Plan - Maldon Historic Areas, Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, 1987

- Former Shire of Newstead Heritage Study, 2004

- Heritage and Property Valuations in the Shire of Maldon, 1992

- Historic Mining sites in the Castlemaine Mining Division, 1993

- Historic mining sites in the Castlemaine/Fryers Creek Mining Divisions, 1993

- Historic Mining sites in the Chewton Mining Division, 1993

- Historic Mining sites in the Maldon Mining Division, 1993

- Historical Summary of the Happy Valley-Moonlight Flat Study Area, 2003

- Maldon Conservation Study, 1977

- Maldon Design Guidelines, 1998

- Maldon Historic Reserve Management Plan, 1989

- Maldon Urban Design Framework, 2004

- Metcalfe Heritage Study, 1994

- Mount Alexander Shire Heritage Strategy, 2012-2016

- The Burra Charter: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance

- Trees and Gardens from the Goldmining Era - A Study of the Maldon Landscape, Royal Botanical Gardens, 1981

- Forest Street to Forest Creek Heritage Assessment Report, May 2016