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## A PLANNED SUSTAINABLE FUTURE SCENARIO

Given the scenario of declining population, realistic strategies need to be put in place which will achieve the following objectives: -

- Arrest population decline to at least maintain threshold populations and maintain delivery of minimum services;
- Build robust local economies in townships and in the Shire generally;
- Manage rural land sustainably, and discourage use and development which has the potential to restrict or adversely affect rural activities;
- Maintain access to a range and level of community and commercial services in townships; and
- Improve presentation of townships and of the Shire as a whole.

The townships in Yarriambiack Shire are presently at various stages of decline. Some of the towns will continue to lose population and services regardless of the amount of resources channelled towards revitalising them. Others have the potential to be revitalised if initiatives are taken and resources are injected. Part of the strategy is to identify those towns with the potential to be revitalised based on the following characteristics:

- Threshold population - the minimum population size of a town for the delivery of a range of private and government services;
- Location - by providing accessibility to persons who will support the town businesses;
- Environment - capitalising on the attributes of the built environment and physical setting of the towns; and
- Entrepreneurial initiative - capitalising on what might be considered the negative aspects of the declining townships, for example the rural lifestyle and the cheap housing available.

To achieve the scenario there needs to be a hierarchical grouping of townships with the potential to attract and maintain sufficient threshold populations and minimum levels of service delivery. These townships generally fall into three groups:

**Group 1:** These townships which include Warracknabeal, Murtoa and Hopetoun have the most potential. Warracknabeal is classified as a district service centre while Murtoa and Hopetoun are subdistrict service centres. These towns essentially have threshold populations for a range of services to be maintained in the short term planning period. They have the highest potential to build on their assets and population bases to increase population and attract more services in the longer term. The vision is to have these towns enter the next planning period with sustainable growth and critical mass sufficient to attract larger developments to create more employment opportunities which will have positive flow on effects to other parts of the Shire and townships.

**Group 2:** This group includes Minyip and Rupanyup which have service centre roles and a range of retail and commercial facilities. These townships have some important businesses. They have both the potential and capability of being rejuvenated through location and environmental attributes, and entrepreneurial initiative at the grassroots level supported with incentives and infrastructure injection.

**Group 3:** These townships play a local service centre role providing local convenience shopping for the surrounding farming communities. Some of these townships may support a post office, a hotel, or local hardware shop. Townships in this grouping include Beulah and Woomelang.

Settlements such as Patchewollock, Brim, Yaapeet, Tempe, Speed, and Lascelles which have small but relatively stable populations continue to play a role in servicing the rural hinterland.

Map 1 – Settlement and Transport

