

21.01 MUNICIPAL OVERVIEW

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21.01-1 Context

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Ballarat is a city of communities, home to many diverse peoples, each contributing their own culture, ideas and aspirations to Ballarat's identity.

Ballarat's natural heritage was formed over 500 million years ago while its rich cultural heritage began over 40,000 years ago, extending over parts of the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples' country which is the ancestral land of modern indigenous people who remain connected to these places today. Ballarat's urban heritage and diverse community is much more recent. The city was born out of the hunt for gold and one of the most important international mass migrations of people in the 19th century: the 1850's gold rushes.

Today Ballarat exemplifies the natural, cultural and historical values of the Central Victorian Goldfields region. Its extensive and highly intact built heritage, landmark buildings, parks, lakes and gardens, statues and cultural and public institutions are a lasting legacy of this golden era.

As a regional centre, Ballarat's service catchment extends beyond its borders and encompasses major retail, health and education facilities. People from surrounding rural areas, particularly to the west, are attracted to Ballarat for employment and education purposes as well as its significant history, character and lifestyle. Ballarat also attracts many people from the Melbourne metropolitan area, including families seeking more affordable housing with good access to employment opportunities and better lifestyle choices. People also come to Ballarat as visitors and Ballarat is a key tourism location in the distinctive Central Victorian Goldfields region.

Ballarat encompasses an urban core, outlying townships and a large agricultural base across approximately 740 square km. The population in 2014 was approximately 100,000 people. It is forecast to grow to approximately 160,000 by 2040 making Ballarat one of Australia's fastest growing inland centres. Ballarat is also a significant source of jobs for regional Victoria.

There are shared boundaries, connections and relationships with Hepburn Shire to the north, Moorabool Shire to the east, Golden Plains Shire to the south, and Pyrenees Shire to the west. It also has a strong relationship to the Central Victorian Goldfields region due to its shared history and character. Ballarat's relative proximity to Melbourne, being just 110 kilometres to the west of the Capital, makes it a crucial part of the Victorian growth story.

21.01-2 Community vision

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The input from Ballarat's biggest-ever community conversation, 'Ballarat Imagine', led to the development of *Our Vision for 2040* which outlines what the community values about Ballarat now, the collective hopes for Ballarat's future (the vision), and how it is going to achieve the vision (the key principles). The community's vision guides the *Ballarat Strategy* (2015) which in turn is the basis to this MSS. The Ballarat Strategy is fundamental to Council's approach to managing future change and guiding new growth in Ballarat.

'Our Vision for 2040' outlines that Ballarat will be:

- A successful community that has built its future on its beautiful city and great lifestyle.
- A proud community that has retained its unique sense of identity.
- A desirable city that we love to live and work in, with excellent facilities and services.
- A friendly city where the sense of community is a daily cornerstone of our life.
- A healthy and safe community that supports and values its residents.

21.01-3 Land use vision22/12/2016
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The *Ballarat Strategy* (2015) applies the community values and key principles as a long-term strategic direction for Ballarat towards 2040. It outlines the shared community vision for a greener, more vibrant and connected Ballarat, embracing the following concepts:

The 10 Minute City

The '10 Minute City' concept in Ballarat reflects community aspirations to maintain existing levels of access to destinations and services even when the city grows over time. It supports the ability for all residents of Ballarat to be able to do more of their day to day shopping, accessing of services and business in local neighbourhood centres. It also promotes the improvement of walking and cycling connections in local neighbourhoods so residents find it easier to move around and reduce the need to use the car for short-journeys. It will help guide growth and change in Ballarat so in 2040 it is a place which has:

- Compact city form.
- Complete local neighbourhoods.
- Land uses and precincts supporting jobs, productivity and efficiency.
- High quality local connections.

The City in the Landscape

The 'City in the Landscape' concept reflects Ballarat's enviable physical, cultural and historical location within its landscape. It will help guide growth and change in Ballarat so in 2040 it is a place which:

- Supports urban areas linked and embedded with natural values and biodiversity.
- Manages change in its Historic Urban Landscape.
- Undertakes integrated local planning as vital for local communities.
- Builds upon the mixture of urban and rural areas, which contribute to Ballarat's identity.
- Recognises and responds to a changing climate, and is resilient to environmental impacts and risks.

21.01-4 Key Issues22/12/2016
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As an outcome of the above profile and vision, Clauses 21.02 to 21.09 provides strategic directions for the following key issues:

Settlement and Housing

- Accommodating a projected population of about 160,000 people by 2040.
- Maintaining a compact settlement form as part of Ballarat's '10 Minute City'.
- Encouraging significant residential growth in the CBD.
- Encouraging greater densities along key transport corridors.
- Facilitating urban renewal in areas with potential for higher density development.
- Identifying and protecting long-term growth opportunities.
- Recognising community values and infrastructure limitations unique to townships.
- Encouraging a variety of housing opportunities to respond to diverse community needs and aspirations for housing.
- Providing quality open space as essential for community health.

Environmental and Landscape Values

- Protecting and creating new connections between remnant vegetation and areas of high biodiversity value.
- Greening the urban area as an urban forest to improve biodiversity, manage heat, improve amenity and enhance Ballarat's rural identity.
- Protecting and enhancing the distinctive sense of place, cultural identity and the natural, cultural and historic landscape across the Ballarat municipality.

Environmental Resilience

- Minimising greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensuring new development adopts best practice approaches to minimising energy, resource and water use, reuse and recycling.
- Protecting the community from the economic, social and environmental risks associated with flooding.

Natural Resource Management

- Protecting productive agricultural land.
- Preventing ad-hoc and inappropriate use of productive agricultural land for non-agricultural uses, particularly lifestyle housing.
- Avoiding decision-making which creates long-term conflict with farming operations.
- Maintaining natural environmental processes within water catchments.
- Minimising the impacts of development on water catchments.
- Managing water demand including the impact of development and population growth.
- Managing the impact of climate change and below average rainfall.

Built Form, Heritage and Design

- Improving the presentation of built areas and entrances.
- Improving the design, siting and landscaping of development.
- Minimising the impact of advertising signage on visual amenity.
- Managing change as part of a historic urban landscape.
- Protecting significant areas and features of the built and natural environment.
- Ensuring infill development enhances the cultural significance and character of historic areas.

Economic Development

- Planning for sufficient land supply for economic growth.
- Supporting the agglomeration of key businesses and industries.
- Enabling innovation in key businesses and industries.
- Supporting the CBD as the primary centre in Ballarat.
- Providing sufficient land for industrial growth and expansion.
- Encouraging a cohesive built form and high quality landscaping in industrial areas.
- Ensuring industrial precincts are protected from intrusion by inappropriate land uses which put pressure on lawful existing industrial activities.
- Supporting growth in the tourism industry in Ballarat.
- Ensuring the urban realm contributes to a high quality visitor experience.

- Supporting growth in the racing industry in Ballarat.
- Minimising long-term impacts on the racing industry from new development.
- Minimising the potential harms associated with gaming.
- Identifying and encouraging the redevelopment of urban renewal precincts.

Transport and Infrastructure

- Transitioning Ballarat towards a more sustainable transport system.
- Supporting a less car dependent community.
- Improving the connectivity and quality of walking and cycling networks.
- Improving the efficiency of moving freight and people.
- Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with population and housing growth.

Figure 1 – Strategic Framework Plan

