

21.04 OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

14/04/2016
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21.04-1 Community and Settlement

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Overview

Loddon Shire's settlement pattern consists of a number of townships set within rural areas. Some of these towns have a district centre function, providing education, health and employment services, others are purely residential in role. Loddon Shire is committed to actively pursuing population growth, and recognises that population growth is related to the viability and amenity of its settlements.

The ongoing viability of these settlements will also be related to the provision of suitable housing. Loddon Shire has a high proportion of older residents and this trend is expected to continue. Housing suited to the needs of this segment of the population needs to be a part of our towns.

Rural living is a popular lifestyle choice. Council supports this land use but for it to be sustainable, issues of environmental values, agricultural opportunities and access to infrastructure and town services need to be central to any decision making about suitable locations.

Key Strategic Issues

Maintaining viable settlements

Retaining and attracting population

Accommodating aging population

Access to a range of services and facilities

Sustainable rural living

Objective

To encourage population growth.

To encourage development of attractive and functional townships.

Strategies

- Direct urban development to key townships;
- Provide sufficient land for a range of urban uses in the townships;
- Support development of the towns in accordance with town structure plans;
- Support use of vacant lots within the urban areas for appropriate development in preference to development on the fringe of urban areas;
- Direct urban development to land that is cleared of native vegetation, where possible;
- Improve and enhance the gateways to the townships;
- Support location of a range of retail facilities in the towns to cater for the needs of the community and visitors;
- Encourage new commercial development and services to locate within the existing commercial/retail areas;

- Support location of new industry in appropriate areas of the town with access to appropriate infrastructure and without compromising residential amenity and the appearance of the town;
- Support the operation of a range of services and facilities in the town centre;
- Support the enhancement of aged, youth and health services;
- Assist in maintaining and retaining community recreation facilities;
- Support the improvement in quality and quantity of urban water supply;
- Maintain Inglewood reservoir as a supplementary local water supply;
- Develop options for wastewater management in small towns, in particular Newbridge and Tarnagulla;
- Improve presentation of townships in accordance with the recommendations of the Streetscape Enhancement Project and the Community Plans;
- Support the enhancement of telecommunications in the Shire;
- Encourage development that utilizes and augments existing infrastructure, rather creating the need for additional services and capital works.

Objective

To provide for growth and development, consistent with the needs of the community.

Strategies

- Support smaller sized housing close to shops and community facilities to meet the needs of the elderly community of the Shire.

Objective

To provide for sustainable rural living

Strategies

- Locate rural living development in areas close to urban centres with access to infrastructure and services.

Implementation

These strategic directions will be pursued through:

Loddon Planning Scheme

- *Use of the Heritage Local Planning Policy* to ensure the heritage character and assets of the Shire are considered when determining planning permit applications;
- *Use of the Industry Local Planning Policy* to ensure industry does not compromise the amenity of the town;
- *Application of Township Zone* to urban areas.
- *Application of Rural Living Zone* to provide for a quality lifestyle option in areas with access to infrastructure and close to urban centres.
- *Application of Industrial Zone* in suitable areas of townships for new industry and around existing industries to protect their ongoing operation.

- *Application of Heritage Overlay* to significant buildings and streetscapes to protect this part of the towns amenity.

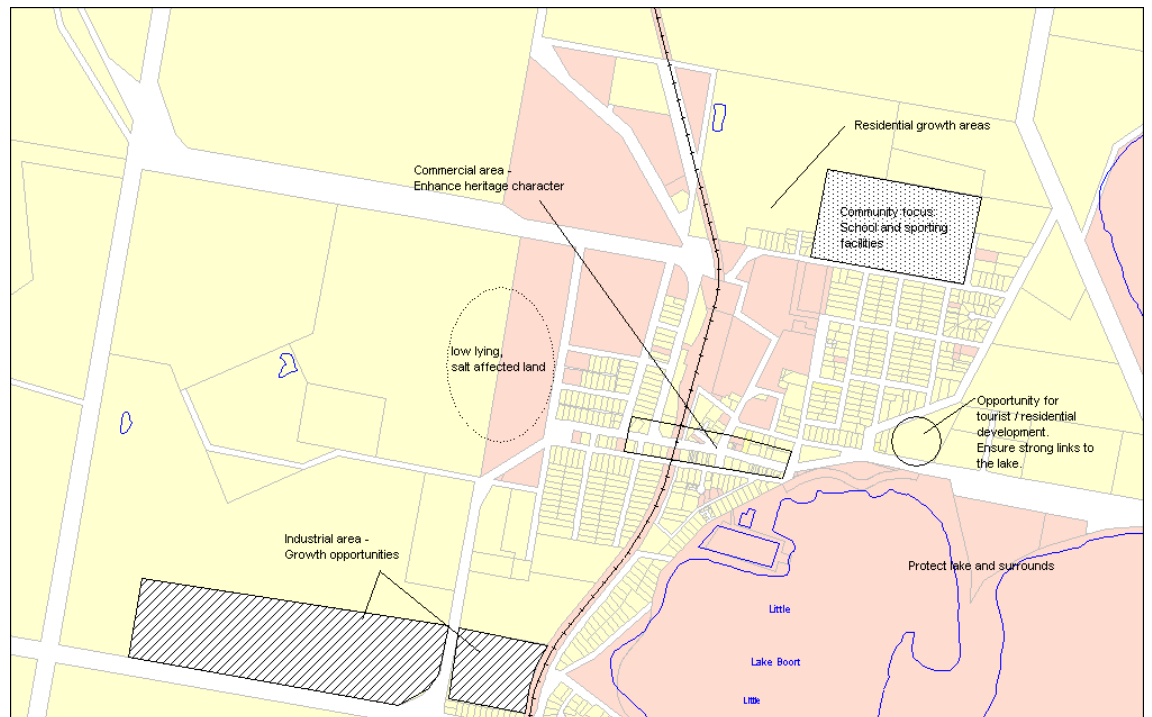
Other

- Support the development of Rural Transaction Centres.

BOORT STRUCTURE PLAN

Key strategies;

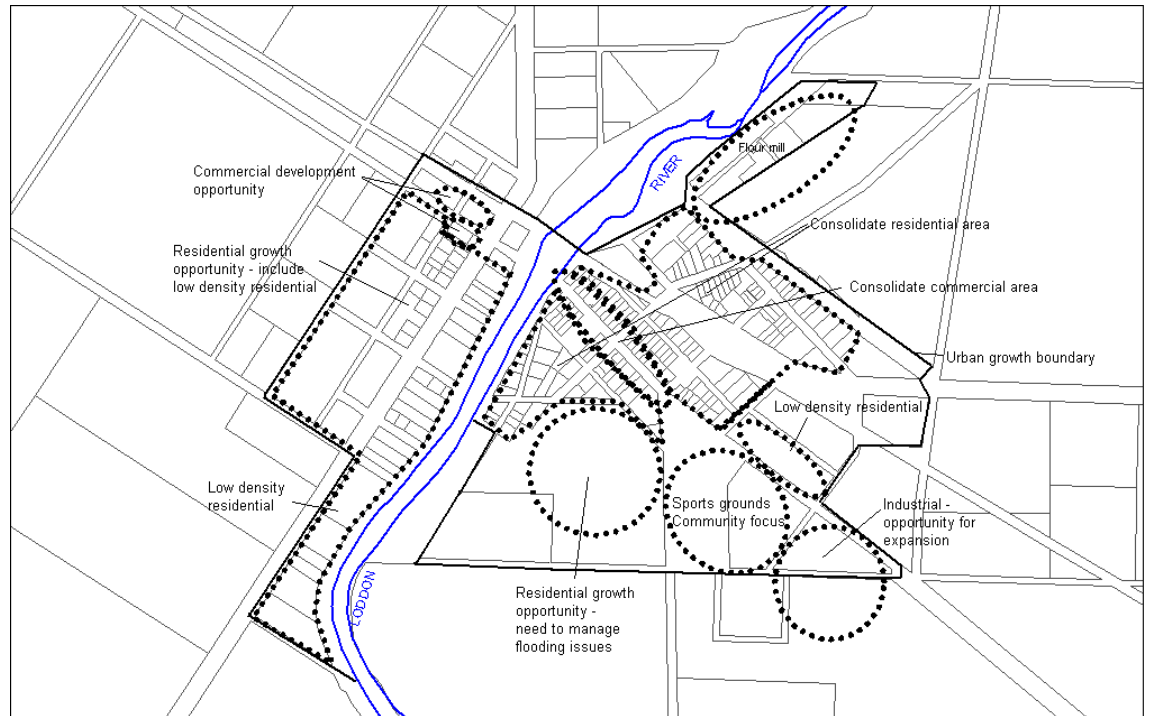
- Enhance the Lake focus of the town;
- Support a range of goods and services to be provided in the commercial area;
- Encourage residential growth;
- Encourage restoration of heritage buildings;
- Enhance natural quality of the Lakes and surrounds.



BRIDGEWATER STRUCTURE PLAN

Key strategies;

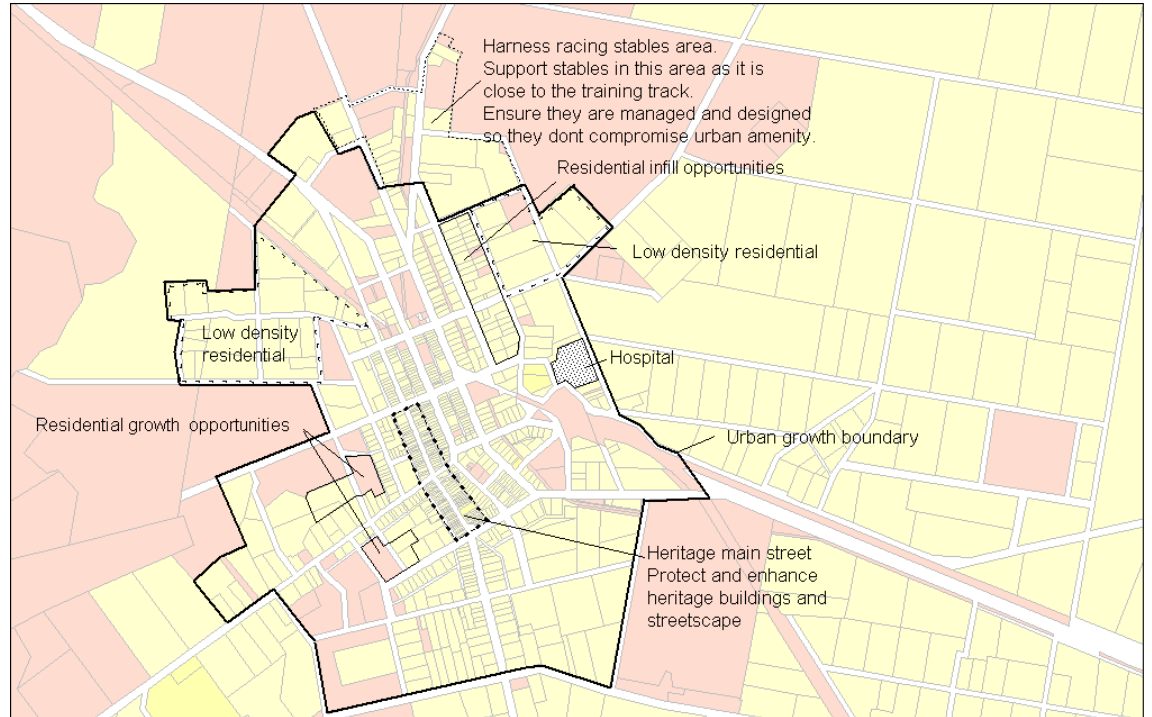
- Enhance links to the Loddon River;
- Consolidate commercial area;
- Encourage residential growth;
- Maintain urban development within the urban growth boundary to ensure protection of high quality agricultural land and valuable agricultural activity around the town.



INGLEWOOD STRUCTURE PLAN

Key strategies;

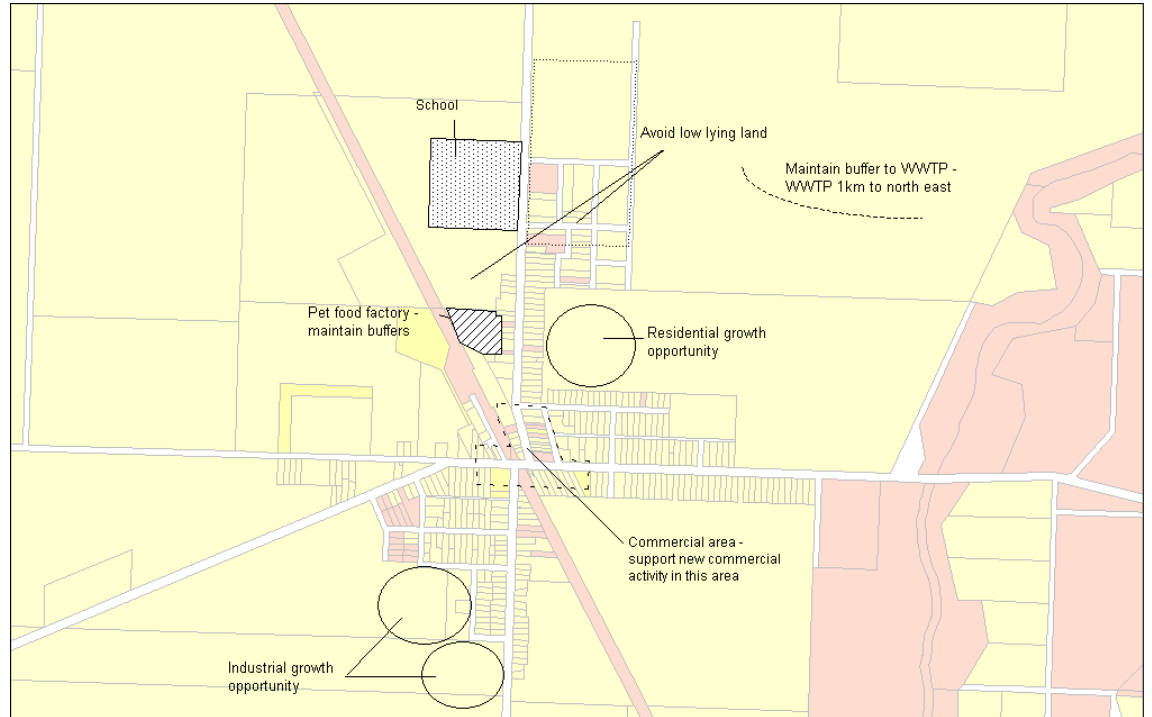
- Enhance heritage character of Brooke Street;
- Consolidate residential area;
- Identify suitable industrial area.



PYRAMID HILL STRUCTURE PLAN

Key strategies;

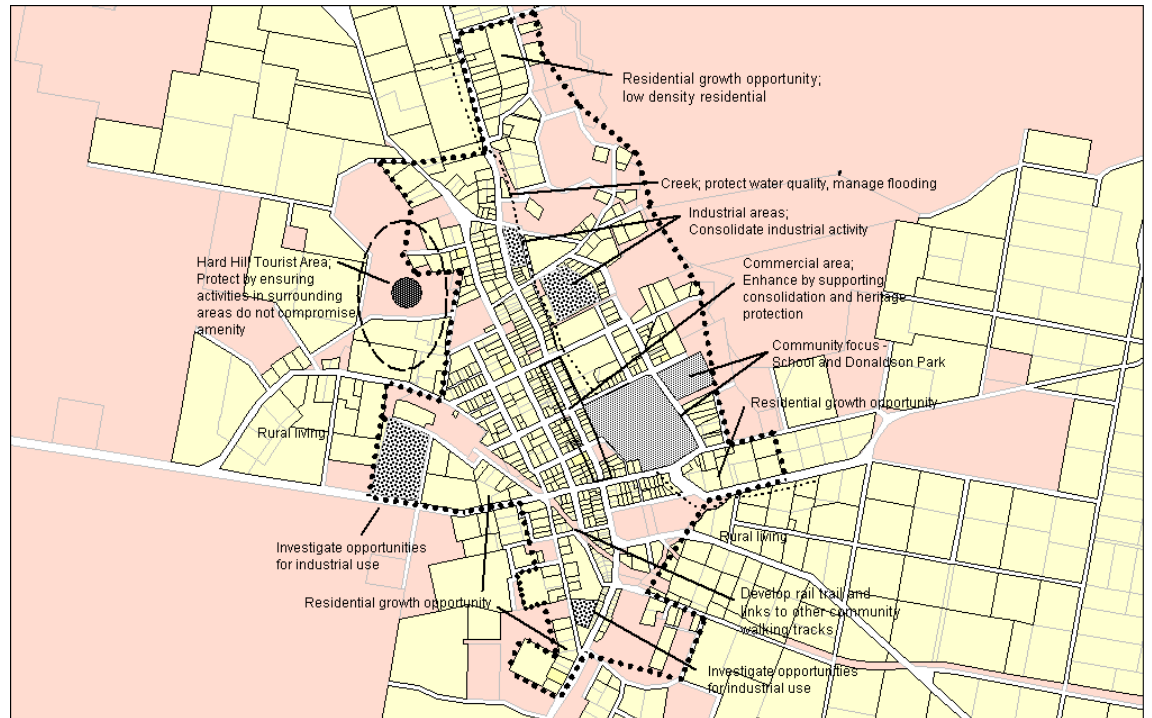
- Enhance the amenity of the town;
- Protect heritage buildings;
- Provide for residential, commercial and industrial growth in suitable locations.



WEDDERBURN STRUCTURE PLAN

Key strategies;

- Protect heritage features;
- Protect amenity of residential areas;
- Enhance walking links around the town;
- Protect forest surrounds;
- Encourage new commercial activity in town centre.



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The Loddon Shire contains significant heritage assets including pre settlement Aboriginal heritage, towns and places associated with gold mining and pastoral properties. Heritage places are important for their contribution to our understanding of the past, for their role in the character of towns and places and as attractions for visitors.

Key Strategic Issues

Protection of heritage places and items;

Ensuring new development in Inglewood does not detract from the significant main street streetscape;

Management of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage places and sites.

Objective

To support the protection of significant heritage places and items.

Strategies

- Encourage re-use and redevelopment which retains the important fabric of these places;
- Work with relevant Aboriginal organisations to determine how to recognise and preserve Aboriginal heritage places, including investigating initiatives such as establishing an Aboriginal Heritage Advisory Committee, undertaking an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study, reviewing Aboriginal cultural heritage values on Shire owned / managed land, developing protocols for ensuring appropriate liaison with respect to development proposals and encouraging staff to undertake cross cultural training to better manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
- Incorporate the findings of the recently completed heritage studies into the planning scheme;
- Develop Inglewood Main Street Heritage Policy;
- Support nomination of significant places for state and federal protection;
- Promote the significance of Aboriginal heritage in the Shire.

Implementation

These strategic directions will be pursued through:

Loddon Planning Scheme

Use of the Heritage Local Planning Policy to ensure the heritage character and assets of the shire are considered when determining planning permit applications;

Application of the Heritage Overlay to significant heritage places.

Other

Support development of the Boort Cultural Centre.

Further Strategic Work

Aboriginal cultural heritage protection study.

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Land Management and Environment

The natural resource base of the Loddon Shire is valuable as the economic foundation of the Shire. Preservation and enhancement of the natural resource base of the Shire is fundamental to the future of agriculture, ongoing biodiversity, maintenance of natural landscapes and the health and wellbeing of the Shire's population. The environmental values of the Shire include Box Ironbark Forests, native grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and the Loddon River.

Key Strategic Issues

Enhancement of land quality, through management of salinity;

Protection of water quality, in particular in the Loddon and Laanecoorie catchments;

Protection of remnant vegetation, in particular native grasslands around Mitiamo and Borung, Box Ironbark forest remnants in the south of the Shire and Black Box and Red Gums on the floodplains and along waterways. Key threats to grasslands include over grazing and land development;

Protection of habitat of threatened species, in particular Mallee that supports Malleefowl, grasslands that support Plains Wanderer, floodplains that support Grey-crowned Babbler and Bush Stone-curlew and Box Ironbark Forest that supports the Swift Parrot;

Management of land use adjacent to public land, in particular Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park and Kooyoora State Park;

Management of flood waters, in particular around Marmal and across the Loddon plains.

Objective

To protect and enhance the condition of the natural resource base of the Shire to provide for the environmental and economic health of the Shire.

Strategies

- Promote the dependence of the Shire's economy on the condition of the natural resource base;
- Identify and protect significant remnant vegetation parcels, especially in salinity recharge and discharge areas, along waterways and in erosion prone areas;
- Limit soil disturbance in areas with a high risk of soil erosion;
- Ensure all new land use and development aims for net improvement in the condition of the natural resource base. This may involve the use of permit conditions to offset, avoid, mitigate or repair degradation of land, water and air in the Loddon Shire that may arise from the proposed use and / or development. Such conditions may include fencing of waters, strategic replanting of indigenous vegetation and control of pest plants and animals;
- Ensure new use and/or development does not produce polluted run off that leaves the property untreated;
- Seek the advice of Goulburn Murray Water, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and North Central Catchment Management Authority on development

proposals in the Laanecoorie Reservoir Catchment and around wetlands, lakes and waterways to ensure water quality will not be compromised;

- Encourage sustainable reuse of effluent (intensive animal industry and urban), storm water and irrigation runoff;
- Ensure mining activity is conducted in such a way that minimal vegetation is removed, runoff polluted with soil or other contaminants does not leave the site and the site is rehabilitated promptly after mining is completed;
- Prevent inappropriate development in flood ways;
- Work cooperatively with Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Goulburn Murray Water and community environment groups.
- Ensure that land use is matched to soil capability.
- Support environmental living where natural values can be protected and enhanced.

Objective

To protect significant native vegetation and habitat

Strategies

- Identify and protect significant remnant vegetation parcels;
- Direct development to areas with no or lower vegetation values;
- Maintain remnant vegetation in viable sized parcels;
- Maintain and enhance linkages between remnant vegetation parcels;
- Protect wetlands.

Objective

To protect the integrity of public land parcels, in particular Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park and Kooyoora State Park.

Strategies

- Ensure private land is not used or developed in such a way that any adjoining public land values are compromised.
- Work with Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to determine the appropriate zoning of private land adjoining Terrick Terrick National Park and Kooyoora State Park, in particular inlier parcels;
- Ensure Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning are notified of planning permit applications for land adjoining significant public land parcels, including Terrick Terrick National Park and Kooyoora State Park.

Objective

To prevent development within the floodplain that would compromise its flood carrying capacity, threaten water quality and would be compromised by flood activity.

Strategies

- Identify flood plains and paths;
- Prevent banking that diverts and concentrates floodwaters beyond property boundaries;
- Prevent inappropriate urban development in flood ways.

Implementation

These strategic directions will be pursued through:-

Loddon Planning Scheme:

- Use of the Drainage and Flooding Local Planning Policy to protect natural flow paths and flood plain storage.
- Use of the Dams Local Planning Policy to provide for environmentally sustainable dam design and construction.
- *Use of the Intensive Animal Industry Local Planning Policy* to provide for the environmentally sustainable siting and management of intensive animal industries.
- *Use of the Mining Local Planning Policy* to provide for environmentally sustainable mining activity.
- *Application of the Rural Conservation Zone* to protect environmentally significant areas.
- *Application of Salinity Management Overlay* to identify and prevent inappropriate development in areas of salinity recharge and discharge.
- *Application of Environmental Significance Overlay* over significant lakes, wetlands and water catchments to protect the function of these systems and protect water quality.
- Application of Land Subject to Inundation and Floodway Overlay to protect natural flood paths.
- *Application of Vegetation Protection Overlay* to protect significant remnant vegetation on road reserves and private land.
- *Application of Erosion Management Overlay* to identify areas subject to or at risk of erosion and prevent inappropriate development in these areas.
- *Work with* Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to review the VPO and develop an ESO or VPO for threatened species habitat.

Other

- Employment of a Landcare Coordinator
- Development and implementation of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan

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Economic Development

The Shire's economy is centred on agriculture. Produce of the Shire includes cereals, oil seeds, wool, pork, lamb, beef, chicken, milk, wine, export hay, nuts tomatoes and olives. In recent times opportunities for horticulture to replace broadacre activities have become apparent and been pursued, improving the viability of the local industry. Other economic development activities that are important to the local economy are manufacturing, gold mining, eucalyptus oil production and tourism.

Key Strategic Issues

Ongoing viable agriculture;
Diversified economy.

Objective

To encourage and support a diverse and environmentally sustainable economy in the Shire.

Strategies

Agriculture

- Encourage and support the protection and improvement of the condition of the natural resource base;
- Minimise dwellings in farming areas;
- Minimise further fragmentation of lots in farming areas;
- Support excision where it provides for farm consolidation and the excision will not compromise agricultural activities on surrounding land or remove an unreasonable amount of land from agriculture;
- Support development in accordance with the New Mediterranean Strategy;
- Support development that will provide for more sustainable, more intensive agriculture;
- Support initiatives and investigations into alternative and high value forms of agriculture and farm diversification;
- Encourage high value, sustainable, intensive agriculture on high quality agricultural land;
- Encourage the efficient use of irrigation water for commodities with high returns;
- Provide for the effective restructure and redevelopment of farm holdings to maximise opportunities for diversification and intensification;
- Ensure development (including subdivision) in farming areas is clearly related to ongoing farming prospects;
- Direct non soil based agricultural activity away from quality agricultural land;
- Protect and enhance the infrastructure of the Shire on which industry is dependant such as roads, rail, irrigation water and channels;
- Support initiatives for value adding and processing of local produce;
- Discourage non-agricultural land use and development in areas of high quality and productive agricultural potential;
- Encourage appropriate and sustainable farm management practices;
- Discourage ad hoc rural living development throughout rural areas. Within key agricultural areas ensure that any new dwellings are clearly ancillary to the agricultural use of the land and are necessary;
- Protect the future of the Loddon River corridor for agriculture and minimise the development of new dwellings beyond existing urban areas;
- Ensure the quality of water, including ground water, rivers and channels is protected;
- Encourage intensive animal industries to locate in isolated rural locations with sufficient buffers within the property boundary;

- Encourage the effective use of nutrients in wastes produced by intensive animal industries;
- Support upgrade and enhancement of the irrigation channel network, including redevelopment of the East Loddon Stock and Domestic System.

Industry

- Ensure an adequate supply of serviced industrial land is available in the Shire at locations with good road access, drainage and reticulated services;
- Ensure industrial land use is sustainable with minimal on-site and off-site environmental and amenity impacts;
- Encourage well presented industrial development.

Retail

- Maintain a continuous program of improving the presentation of the townships and townscapes and heritage conservation;
- Support the provision of a range of retail services to prevent the need for the community to shop elsewhere;
- Encourage new businesses to locate within the existing retail centres.

Tourism

- Facilitate quality tourist uses and developments that are related to the productive base of the Shire, the environment and natural features and heritage buildings and places;
- Encourage tourist use and development that does not impact on the environment nor detract from the character of the towns and districts;
- Protect the natural and physical features that contribute to the 'tourism experience' including the natural environment, heritage elements, landscape features and cultural activities;
- Encourage the expansion and diversification of accommodation facilities, including bed and breakfast and farmstay;
- In consultation with the Roads Corporation and other state agencies, improve visitor signage and interpretive information on roads and at tourist destinations.

Gold Mining

- Work with Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources to ensure gold mining activity is effectively and efficiently undertaken and sites rehabilitated properly after completion.

Eucalyptus Oil Production

- Support eucalyptus harvesting in areas where flora values are not significant and soil erosion is not a risk.

Implementation

These strategic directions will be pursued through:

Loddon Planning Scheme

- *Use of the Mining Local Planning Policy* to provide for environmentally sustainable mining activity;
- *Use of the Industry Local Planning Policy* to ensure industry does not compromise the amenity of the town;

- *Use of the Development in Rural Areas Local Planning Policy* to ensure that development in rural areas does not compromise agricultural opportunities or landscape quality;
- *Use of the Intensive Animal Industry Local Planning Policy* to provide for the environmentally sustainable siting and management of intensive animal industries.
- *Application of the Farming Zone* in agricultural areas with a subdivision size conducive to ongoing viability;
- *Application of Rural Living Zone* in suitable areas to provide for this form of land use away from key agricultural areas;
- *Application of Industrial Zone* in suitable areas in key towns to provide for new industry and around existing industries to protect their ongoing operation;
- *Application of Heritage Overlay* to identify and protect significant heritage features;
- *Application of Salinity Management Overlay* to identify and prevent inappropriate development in areas of salinity recharge and discharge;
- *Application of Environmental Significance Overlay* over significant lakes and wetlands and water catchments to protect the function of these systems and protect water quality;
- Application of Land Subject to Inundation and Floodway Overlay to protect natural flood paths.
- *Application of Vegetation Protection Overlay* to protect significant remnant vegetation on road reserves and private land;
- *Application of Erosion Management Overlay* to identify areas subject to or at risk of erosion and prevent inappropriate development in these areas.

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Infrastructure

Objective

To provide a comprehensive and efficient range of infrastructure to provide for the needs of business and the community.

Strategies

- Direct development to areas with existing high quality transport infrastructure, reducing the overall current and future road maintenance pressure on the Shire;
- Encourage and support the provision of a comprehensive range of infrastructure and services in the Shire;
- Encourage housing development to locate in areas with access to a full range of infrastructure;
- Develop options for wastewater management in small towns;
- Promote ongoing urban water quality improvement;
- Protect the network of channels and drains traversing the Shire from undesirable impacts arising from developments;
- Support upgrade and enhancement of the irrigation channel network, including redevelopment of the East Loddon Stock and Domestic System and piping the Wimmera Mallee channel system;
- Encourage the efficient and economic use of irrigation water;

- Support upgrade of the telecommunications, in particular expansion of broadband and mobile phone access;
- Encourage an improvement in energy supplies to the Shire;
- Support continued improvement of the Boort Air Strip.

Implementation

Loddon Planning Scheme

- *Application of Township Zone* to urban areas with access to infrastructure;
- *Application of Industrial Zone* to areas with access to infrastructure;
- *Application of Rural Living Zone* to areas with access to infrastructure.