

21.09 SMALL TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS

31/05/2018
C78

This clause focuses on local area implementation for the objectives and strategies set out in Clause 11 and Clause 21.03. It includes a section relating to all Small Towns and Settlements and a section relating to Gordon.

21.09-1 Small Towns and Settlements

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This section provides overarching strategies applicable to all Small Towns and Settlements (unless otherwise stated).

Vision

To promote distinctive and sustainable small towns and settlements by building clusters of linked small towns and settlements that respond to environmental risks, to ensure landscapes and heritage elements are preserved and to provide adequate community and physical infrastructure to service the community.

Key Issues

- Bushfire Risk is significant for many small towns and settlements.
- Flood Risk is not fully mapped or understood in many small towns and settlements.
- Limited development opportunities due to development constraints in small towns within Special Water Supply Catchments.
- Lack of retail choices and public infrastructure including medical and effective public transport infrastructure.
- Missed opportunities for tourism.
- The environmental value of surrounding land.
- Lacking the critical mass of local jobs, population and services to enable sustainable communities.

Key Influences

- Rural Environments with high quality landscapes and surrounding farmland.
- The distinctive character of small towns with a village feel.
- Many small towns have significant heritage buildings and streetscapes.
- Ageing populations in small towns and settlements and the need to provide access to services.
- Towns and Settlements in close proximity have strong social and economic connections to each other and operate as clusters.

Local Area Implementation

Residential Development

- Provide for limited growth in Bungaree, Dunnstown, Gordon Myrniong and Wallace and restrict residential development to within existing urban areas of the Shire's other small towns and settlements.
- Limit residential growth in small towns subject to severe bushfire risk and other serious constraints.
- Protect viable agricultural land from residential fragmentation, to preserve its use for farming purposes.

- **Blackwood** - Identify where lot consolidation of vacant land may enable limited new development, or more appropriately sized lots.

Economic Development and Tourism

- Strengthen and support local business and encourage further development of industrial and agricultural businesses to generate activity and employment locally.
- Ensure that suitable buffer distances are maintained, generally in accordance with Clause 52.10 to protect rural industry uses from encroachment by sensitive uses.
- Promote the growth of the tourism sector.
- **Blackwood** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the existing central area, especially those uses which draw people in from out of area.
- **Dunnstown** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area close to the main intersection.
- **Elaine** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area, in proximity to existing commercial uses.
- **Greendale** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area, in proximity to the existing hotel
- **Lal Lal** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area, in proximity to the existing Hotel.
- **Mt Egerton** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area, in proximity to the hall and former general store.
- **Myrning** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area in proximity to 'The Plough'.
- **Wallace** - Encourage any future commercial/retail development to establish in the central area, in proximity to existing commercial or public buildings.

Environment

- Identify flood risks in towns and settlements where it is poorly understood.
- Limit subdivision potential of towns subject to severe bushfire risk and other serious constraints including Korweinbugoora/Spargo Creek, Dales Creek, Blackwood, Greendale and Lal Lal.
- **Blackwood** - Protect remnant native vegetation and encourage planting of additional indigenous vegetation to preserve and enhance the amenity of Blackwood as a woodland settlement.
- **Blackwood** - Retain the visual dominance of the bush landscape and ensure development responds to the scenic qualities and vegetated landscape character of the township.
- **Elaine** - Investigate the potential for consolidation of vacant lots that support housing applying Council's Domestic Wastewater Policy.

Heritage

- Update the Heritage Overlay to reflect the findings of the West Moorabool Heritage Study.
- **Lal Lal and Mount Egerton** - Support the establishment of a heritage walk within and around the settlement to identify, interpret, and link locations of historical interest.

Built Form and Urban Design

- Identify and carry out public realm improvements including landscaping, signage, and other.

- Ensure the type and scope of development is sensitive to the character and heritage elements of the town.
- **Greendale** - Enhance local and visitor amenity, especially around the hotel and oval site.
- **Myrniong** - Encourage better landscaping integration between the old and new parts of the town.

Infrastructure

- Investigate opportunities for rationalising the efficient use of community infrastructure, including the sharing of existing facilities and resources. Future community infrastructure needs will be planned on the basis of small town clusters as functional areas and districts rather than individual towns competing with each other for infrastructure investment.
- **Bungaree** - Review the use of the vacant Council owned site opposite the Bungaree Recreation Reserve as part of a wider strategic review of the growth potential of Bungaree (such as through a structure plan).
- **Myrniong** - Enhance the amenity of the town including better pedestrian access to key facilities.
- **Wallace** - Investigate the potential for, and encourage alternative uses of, the dairy complex, community hall and Masonic Temple such as for community markets or pop up stores.

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Gordon

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. The recent sewerage of the town provides the capacity for residential growth up to a maximum of 800 residents.
- 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 Federation University 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.

Local Area Implementation

Built Form

- Manage the development of Gordon consistent with the principles of establishing walkable catchments with access to community facilities, shops, and public transport.
- Maintain a clear township boundary.
- Contain urban growth by promoting infill development.

Environment

- 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.
- 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.

Infrastructure

- Provide for the progressive development of a linked series of parks to serve township and local needs.
- Require new development to provide adequate drainage infrastructure.
- Provide for the progressive development of a designated pedestrian and cycle pathway system.
- Investigate the potential for more effective public transport links with Ballarat and Ballan.