

MURRINDINDI SHIRE

ALEXANDRA

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



NOVEMBER 2005

Prepared for



Murrindindi Shire Council
P.O Box 138 Alexandra 3714
Telephone (03) 5772 0333
Facsimile (03) 5772 2291

Prepared by



389 St Georges Road
North Fitzroy Victoria 3068
Telephone (03) 9482 3888
Facsimile (03) 9482 3933

In conjunction with



52-54 Rathdowne Street
Carlton Victoria 3053
Telephone (03) 9348 2788
Facsimile (03) 9348 1965



Suite 1, 544 Mitcham Road
Mitcham Victoria 3132
Telephone (03) 9874 6466
Facsimile (03) 9874 6422

Authors

Urban Enterprise: Matt Ainsaar
 Katherine Morton

Land Design Partnership: Lindsay Fraser

John Piper Traffic: Bob Citroën

© Copyright, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, March 2006.

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under Copyright Act 1963, no part may be reproduced without written permission of Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd.

Document Information:

Filename: \\matt\c\my documents\alexandra udf\report-ma\final
report\alex udf-final-2 dec 05.doc

Last Saved: 2 December 2005 7:06 PM

Last Printed: 2 March 2006 12:02 PM

File Size: 1798kb

Disclaimer:

Neither Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. nor any member or employee of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. takes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person or organisation (other than that for which this report has been prepared) in respect of the information set out in this report, including any errors or omissions therein. In the course of our preparation of this report, projections have been prepared on the basis of assumptions and methodology which have been described in the report. It is possible that some of the assumptions underlying the projections may change. Nevertheless, the professional judgement of the members and employees of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. have been applied in making these assumptions, such that they constitute an understandable basis for estimates and projections. Beyond this, to the extent that the assumptions do not materialise, the estimates and projections of achievable results may vary.

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Urban Design.....	1
1.3	Key Influences	2
1.4	Key Issues	2
1.5	Reference to Recent Previous Studies	2
2.	METHODOLOGY	3
2.1	Study Inception.....	3
2.2	Analysis Stage.....	3
2.3	Synthesis and Consolidation Stages	3
3.	STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT	4
3.1	State Planning Policy Framework.....	4
3.2	Local Planning Policy Framework.....	5
3.3	Council Plan 2004/05-2007/08.....	6
3.4	Zones	7
3.5	Overlays	7
3.6	Murrindindi Economic Development Strategy	9
3.7	Alexandra and Yea Industrial Land Supply Study 2003	10
3.8	UT Creek Reserve 2005 – Master Plan	10
3.9	Murrindindi Shire Rural Residential Study	11
3.10	Conclusion.....	12
4.	EXISTING SITUATION	13
4.1	Strategic Context	13
4.2	Role of the Township	13
4.3	Population Profile	14
4.4	Population Profile of the Region	15
4.5	Land Use and Development	17
4.6	Open Space and Urban Design	19
5.	ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	22
5.1	Contextual Issues and Influences	22
5.2	Values to Protect and Enhance	23
5.3	Land Use and Development Issues and Opportunities	24
5.4	Open Space and Urban Design Issues and Opportunities.....	29
5.5	Traffic Management Issues and Opportunities.....	32
5.6	Key Priorities	37
6.	ANALYSIS PLANS.....	38
7.	STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	41
7.1	Land Use and Development Strategies	41
7.2	Open Space and Urban Design Strategies	44
7.3	Traffic Management Strategies	50

8.	STAGING PROGRAM FOR IMPLEMENTATION	52
8.1	Land Use and Development Implementation	53
8.2	Open Space and Urban Design Implementation	54
8.3	Traffic Management Implementation.....	55
9.	URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLANS.....	57
APPENDIX A. PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK.....		63
TABLES		
Table 1.	Population growth (northern metropolitan area).....	17
Table 2.	Household growth (northern metropolitan area).....	17

Acknowledgements

This project was initiated by Murrindindi Shire Council.

Urban Enterprise, Land Design Partnership and John Piper Traffic wish to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by the following:

Council Officers

Matt Parsons, Manager Development and Environmental Services

Karen Girvan, Statutory Planning Co-ordinator

Melissa Crane, Statutory Planner

Councillors

Cr Mike Dalmau

Cr Andrew Coller

Project Steering Committee

Greg Harland

David Newman

Peter Rice

Peter Waterhouse

Maurie Pawsey

Gus Simpson

Wal Ackerman

Bernie Taylor

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

<i>UDF</i>	Urban Design Framework
<i>DOI</i>	Department of Infrastructure
<i>DSE</i>	Department of Sustainability and Environment
<i>NVS</i>	National Visitor Survey
<i>SPPF</i>	State Planning Policy Framework
<i>MSS</i>	Municipal Strategic Statement
<i>UDF</i>	Urban Design Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Murrindindi Shire Council commissioned Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, to prepare an Urban Design Framework for the township of Alexandra. This study has been carried out with John Piper Traffic Pty Ltd and Land Design Partnership.

The *Urban Design Frameworks* will take the form of key strategic documents to guide:

- future design of buildings, landscapes, open space and streetscapes
- use and development of land, including gateway entrances into the towns
- prioritisation of capital works, budget allocations and external funding bids
- changes to strategic directions, structure plans, zoning and overlays in the Murrindindi Planning Scheme as required

The document provides advice that is relevant for the short and longer term, extending to the next 20 years. It is designed to be a flexible document that contains sufficient information for the concepts identified, to be tested on a regular basis.

1.2 Urban Design

Urban Design involves applying a design approach to how towns and urban areas are analysed and developed. Urban Design concerns physical solutions for urban problems and is a consultative, interactive and responsive process.

In an Urban Design Framework, non-physical actions and opportunities are also very important, in that they allow the physical actions and opportunities to be co-ordinated with other aims and agendas of Council and stakeholder groups. These may include social, environmental, management and economic actions.

The objectives of an urban design framework are reflected in Clause 19.03 of the State Planning Policy Framework, which states that design and built form should:

- Reflect the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community.
- Enhance liveability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm.
- Promote attractiveness of towns and cities within broader strategic contexts.

1.3 Key Influences

- Economic and historic significance of Alexandra in tourism, timber processing and service centre functions;
- Proximity of Alexandra to metropolitan Melbourne;
- Location of the town along the highway and major roads in Murrindindi Shire;
- Strong local community;
- Service provision and the need to guide the location of new services.

1.4 Key Issues

The Murrindindi Shire identified that the Alexandra Urban Design Framework should focus on the following key issues:

- The consolidation of commercial development within the Bayley Street, Webster Street and Nihil Street precinct. This includes:
 - providing for car parking at the rear of commercial premises on the western side of Grant Street. This includes improved pedestrian connections.
 - providing public toilet facilities, including possible site options for this facility and issues and opportunities for each option.
 - consideration of development controls for buildings in the core retail precinct
 - integration of proposed open space and trails along UT Creek.
- Provision for a community and education precinct, including the future location of the pre-school.
- Investigating the preferred future development of the area on Maroondah Highway between Hall and Albert Streets.
- Providing for the further development of the area along Maroondah Highway between Grant Street and Albert Street.

1.5 Reference to Recent Previous Studies

Alexandra has been the subject of two previous studies relevant to the UDF. These include:

- **Alexandra and Yea Industrial Land Supply Study:** This Study examined Alexandra and Yea's industrial land supply and other relevant planning issues for industrial land.
- **Rural Residential Study:** This study examined the development pressures on the Shire as a result of people seeking large blocks i.e. life style properties and made recommendations regarding the supply of rural living land.

This UDF will not revisit these themes, and will focus primarily on the commercial precinct of Alexandra.

2. METHODOLOGY

There were 4 key stages in the preparation of the Alexandra Urban Design Framework, namely the Study Inception Stage, Analysis Stage, Synthesis Stage and Consolidation Stage.

2.1 Study Inception

The first stage of the project involved holding an inception meeting at the Murrindindi Shire offices. Key study team members and the Project Steering Committee attended this meeting. The primary objectives of this meeting were:

- confirmation of the proposed study methodology, outputs and key dates;
- identification of available information and initiate information collation and collection tasks;
- identification of issues and opportunities from members of the Project Steering Committee that are relevant to the project;
- site visits to the key sites outlined earlier to obtain information about the physical characteristics of the land and identify issues and opportunities.

2.2 Analysis Stage

The steps undertaken as part of the analysis stage are summarised as follows:

- review of existing plans, policies, strategies and infrastructure programs;
- identification and analysis of issues and opportunities relating to land use and development, open space and urban design and mobility;
- identification of possible strategic actions.

The consultation process during the Analysis Stage comprised of:

- Interviews with key stakeholder groups and traders
- A town walk with members of the community
- Presentation of findings to the Steering Committee

2.3 Synthesis and Consolidation Stages

The comments received during the Analysis Stage were used by the consultants to further develop the strategies and actions. A draft Urban Design Framework report was then placed on public exhibition for a period of one month. Comments provided as part of the exhibition stage are summarised in Appendix A. These comments resulted in some refinement of the report.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

An Urban Design Framework needs to be considered within the broader strategic framework of the State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks and other strategic planning policies.

3.1 State Planning Policy Framework

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) forms part of every planning scheme in Victoria, and applies to all land in the State.

The State Planning Policy Framework provides the context for planning decision making by planning and responsible authorities. The primary objective of the SPPF is to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land. Planning authorities and responsible authorities must take account of and give effect to the general principles and the specific policies contained in the SPPF.

The SPPF comprises general principles for land use and development and specific policies. The following policies are considered to be most relevant to the preparation of the UDF.

Clause 14 - Settlement

The SPPF policy in relation to settlement states that planning authorities should plan to accommodate population growth over at least a 10 year period, taking account of opportunities for redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas, as well as the limits of land capability and natural hazards, environmental quality and the costs of providing infrastructure. It also states that in planning for urban growth, planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character.

Clause 15 - Environment

The SPPF policy in relation to environment states that planning and responsible authorities should consider the impacts of catchment management on downstream water quality. They should also ensure that land use activities reduce contaminated water runoff to waterways and consider flood risk in making planning decisions. The SPPF also contains policies in relation to air quality, open space and the conservation of native flora and fauna. In particular, planning authorities should have regard to Victorian's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action (DNRE, 2002).

Clause 16 – Housing

This policy states that subdivisions should be located with access to physical and community infrastructure and should provide a range of lot sizes. It also aims to encourage opportunities for increased residential densities in close proximity to existing infrastructure. The policy contains some specific directions about rural residential development, which state that rural residential development should only occur close to existing towns, but not in areas required for fully serviced urban development or on high quality agricultural land.

Clause 17 – Economic Development

The aim of this policy is to encourage the concentration of major retail, commercial, entertainment, administrative and cultural developments into activity centres. It also states that industrial activity in industrial zones should be protected from the encroachment of unplanned commercial, residential and other sensitive uses which would adversely affect industrial viability.

3.2 Local Planning Policy Framework

The Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) sets out the local and regional strategic policy context for the municipality. It comprises the Municipal Strategic Statement and specific Local Planning Policies. The LPPF must be consistent with the State Planning Policy Framework.

Currently, the Murrindindi LPPF is undergoing a process of review. The updated MSS will undergo an approvals process before being adopted by council.

3.2.1 Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in the Murrindindi Planning Scheme forms the strategic vision for the Shire. The MSS is part of the Local Planning Policy Framework and is a statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and strategies and actions for achieving those objectives.

The Municipal Strategic Statement has specific strategies and objectives that will influence the direction in which Alexandra will develop. The MSS (21.07-3) also places emphasis on strengthening the commercial district of Alexandra including:

- Consolidate commercial development within the Bayley Street, Myrtle Street and Nihil Street.
- Provide car parking for tourist and commercial operators at the rear of the commercial premises on the southern side of the Grant Street.
- Provide for peripheral sales along the Maroondah Highway.

3.2.2 Local Planning Policies

The Local Planning Policies are policy statements of intent or expectation. They state what the responsible authority will do when a particular planning issue arises, or its expectation as to what should happen in a particular area (Using Victoria's Planning System p7).

An LPP helps the community to understand how a proposal will be considered and what will influence decision-making. Over time, the consistent application of policy should achieve the desired outcome (Using Victoria's Planning System p7).

The Local Planning Policies that directly influence the influence the development of Alexandra include:

- Townships (22.08)

This policy includes sections that relate to design, car parking, sheds and outbuildings and industry and the provision of information for new uses and developments.

- Dwellings in Rural Areas (22.01) and Sub-Divisions & Siting and Design of Buildings in Rural Areas (22.03)

The policy relates to protecting the Shire's rural environment, this is particularly important in regions that are in close proximity to Alexandra.

- Economic Development (22.11)

This policy has sections that relate to the importance of developments within the Shire that will stimulate economic development, particularly development of the regions tourism industry.

The MSS and a range of strategic documents consider development of Tourism in Alexandra a high priority.

3.3 Council Plan 2004/05-2007/08

Council's 2004/05-2007/08 Council Plan sets out a vision and core values for the Shire. The Plan outlines the strategies and actions that Council will undertake in order to achieve these visions and meet the needs of the Murrindindi Community.

The Council Plan identified 5 themes, the following summarises some of the issues raised under each of these headings. These issues provide the broad strategic context for the preparation of the UDF. They identify the influences that will shape the Shire over the coming years and will underpin changes to the Municipal Strategic Statement.

Theme 1- Sustainable Growth and Development

- Review and implement initiatives that support the ongoing development of the Agriculture and Timber industries. This includes further exploring links between the timber and tourism sectors within the Shire.
- Whilst Primary Production remains the dominant sector of the economy, tourism is becoming a more significant component, and is expected to continue to grow as a significant economic sector.

Theme 2- Quality of Life

- Supporting and growing diverse and vibrant communities. Creating positive trends in socio-economic indicators.
- Redevelopment of the Alexandra Library Branch (now complete).

Theme 3 – Infrastructure

- Roads – improvements to roads, re-sealing, re-sheeting, road and bridge construction.
- Development contributions plan incorporating parking strategies.

Theme 4- Natural Environment

- Reduce the percentage of waste to land fill per head of population.

- Improve water quality of rivers downstream from major towns.

Theme 5- Leadership

- Represent interests of the community.
- Increase levels of community involvement.

These values have been adopted as well as the host of strategic objectives, indicators and strategies contained within the Plan in the formulation of the UDF.

3.4 Zones

Zones specify the controls that apply to the use and development of land. Development includes buildings and works and subdivision. A key purpose of each zone is that they are to be administered to implement the State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks, including the MSS and Local Planning Policies.

The majority of the land in Alexandra is located in one of the following zones: Residential 1 Zone (R1Z), Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ), Rural Living Zone (RLZ), Rural Zone (RUZ), Public Use Zone (PUZ) (this includes a range of public uses such as land zoned for education, health and community services, transport, utility and service provision etc), Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z), Industrial 2 Zone (IN2Z), Business 1 Zone (B1Z), Business 4 Zone (B4Z), Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) and Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).

The majority of land in the Alexandra Township has been zoned to have a residential use. Most of the township is zoned Residential 1 and there are pockets of Rural Living zoned land outlying the town. This provides for a variety of housing options for the population of Alexandra as well as allowing for a range of housing densities.

Land zoned Residential 1 occupies the central area of town and is bounded by Hall Street to the east and Lethbridge Street to the west. A Low Density Rural Zone exists to the west of the township with some land proposed to be rezoned to LDRZ to the east. The Maroondah Highway also marks the southern boundary for the Rural Living Zone.

The main business zone is located around the township's main junction on Grant Street, between Perkins Street and Nihil Street. Bayley Street (running parallel to Grant Street) has also been designated as a business zone.

3.5 Overlays

In addition to the requirements of the zone, further planning provisions may apply to a site or area through the application of an overlay. A key purpose of each overlay is that they are to be administered to implement the State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks, including the MSS and Local Planning Policies.

Outlined below is a summary of overlays that currently apply to Alexandra.

3.5.1 Landscape Management Overlays

Floodway Overlays (FO): The purpose of this overlay is to identify waterways and areas, which have the greatest risk of being affected by flooding and to ensure that development maintains free passage and temporary storage of floodwater and minimizes flood damage. A permit is required for buildings and works, with the exception of minor house extensions and small outbuildings and sheds. A permit is required for subdivision, which cannot create any new lots.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO): This overlay identifies land affected by the 1 in 100 year flood and its purpose is similar to that of the Floodway Overlay. The overlay has less restrictive requirements in relation to buildings and works that require a planning permit. A permit is required for subdivision, however new lots can be created.

3.5.2 Environment and Landscape Overlays

Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO): The purpose of this overlay is to identify, areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints and to ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values. A town planning permit is required for most buildings and works.

3.5.3 Development Overlays

The Development Plan Overlay (DPO): The purpose of a Development Plan Overlay is to identify areas, which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be shown on a development plan.

The Development Plan Overlay requires that a permit must not be granted to use or subdivide land, construct a building or construct or carry out works until a development plan has been prepared to the satisfaction of Council. It also requires that any permit granted must be generally in accordance with the development plan, and any other conditions specified in the schedule to the overlay.

Heritage Overlay (HO): The purpose of the Heritage Overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance, enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places and to ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places. A heritage overlay has also been developed to conserve specifically identified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if the development can demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

A permit is required when carrying out works, demolishing, subdividing or altering the exterior of a building or its surrounding land that have been classified under a Heritage Overlay. Changes to the interior of a building can also fall under a Heritage Overlay.

3.6 Murrindindi Economic Development Strategy

The Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy (2003-2008) focuses on three key industry sectors in Murrindindi Shire: agriculture, forestry and tourism. These sectors were identified as being the most important sectors (excluding retail and government) in terms of employment, business locations and future growth.

Key observations made in the report are:

- *The agriculture industries in the Shire of Murrindindi have changed over the past decade, from a small range of traditional industries (cattle, sheep, wool) and horticulture products to a more diverse range of industries.*
- *Key agriculture industries include cattle, beef, wool, trout, and stone fruit.*
- *The forestry industry in the Shire of Murrindindi comprises two key sectors: native hardwood and plantation timber. The native hardwood industry is undergoing a restructure.*
- *Tourism is a major economic driver for the Shire of Murrindindi and the tourism industry provides a significant level of employment*
- *There is significant potential to improve the competitive position of the Shire of Murrindindi tourism sector*
- *There is an emerging food, wine and tourism sector in the Shire*

A recommendation made within the Economic Development Strategy was that an Industrial Land Strategy be carried out in Alexandra. This strategic document has since been completed.

The following actions, which were identified in the Economic Development Strategy are relevant for the future development of Alexandra.

Industry

- Increase industrial land supply.
- Investigate the possible redevelopment and disposal of the Council depot site.
- Investigate the potential for an industrial development on the Alexandra Saleyards site in the event that the Saleyards are no longer required (if and when this may happen).
- Support applications for subdivision of larger allotments to suit smaller users within Alexandra's industrial zone.

Tourism

- Encourage the development of boutique accommodation in Alexandra.
- Strengthen the relationship between tourism and forestry sectors within the Shire to allow for a cross promotion of the two industries.
- Develop a "Timber Precinct" strategy to allow for both contract and marketing of the industry.

Branding / Awareness

- Strengthen the awareness of the Shire of Murrindindi as an important hub and link between the Yarra Valley and the High Country.

Roads & Amenities

- Review tourism signage in the Shire to facilitate tourism and develop a signage strategy. Review tourism signage and directional signage at the Shire's gateways.
- Maintain communications with VicRoads and provide industry input regarding the condition of the Black Spur Road. Lobby VicRoads for improved turnouts (ongoing).

3.7 Alexandra and Yea Industrial Land Supply Study 2003

In March 2003, Murrindindi Shire Council commissioned Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd to undertake a study to investigate the potential for further industrial development in the townships of Yea and Alexandra.

The two main aims of the project were:

- To determine the likely future demand for industrial land and industrial development in Yea and Alexandra from both within and outside the Shire
- To provide appropriate and actionable recommendations with respect to land use planning, infrastructure / service provision and marketing support that will best achieve the development opportunities that exist.

This Urban Design Framework does not re-examine industrial land issues within the Alexandra Township.

3.8 UT Creek Reserve 2005 – Master Plan

The Council has recently adopted the UT Creek Enhancement Plan.

This Plan was initiated by Rotary but facilitated by the UT Creek Enhancement Community Support Group that formed in October 2001. This group comprises most of the community organisations in Alexandra. The group are tirelessly working to implement this Master Plan.

The UT Creek Reserve Master Plan had two primary findings, firstly, that the Reserve has the capacity to offer Alexandra with increased recreational opportunities and secondly that the Reserve has great potential to increase tourism to the Township of Alexandra. This study highlighted the strength of the UT Creek Reserve when combined with other local attractions such as McKenzie Flora Reserve, the Goulburn River, the Timber Tramway Museum, the proposed Rail Trail and Josephine Cutting Lookout.

The Master Plan is principally based upon unification of the whole park but has separated the park into 6 Zones. This ensures that all user requirements can be accommodated. These zones include: 1. Creek Beds and Banks, 2. An Active Recreation Zone, 3. Formal Gardens and War Memorial, 4. Rotary Park, 5. Urban Woodland and 6. Passive Recreation Zone. These sections of the park are proposed to be integrated by a network of trails.

To further integrate the different sections of the park the Plan recommends that Council should purchase the four properties adjoining Rotary Park. This recommendation has resulted from the Plan's observation that sections of the park are underutilised, due to poor visibility from one side of the park to the other.

The improvements recommended within the plan, once implemented, should provide Alexandra with an open space network that will attract a high level of usage and keep tourists in the town.

3.9 Murrindindi Shire Rural Residential Study

Murrindindi Shire Council has prepared a Rural Residential Study for the Shire (July 2003). The Rural Residential Study looks at the supply of land zoned Low Density Residential (LDRZ) and Rural Living (RLZ). The objective of the study was to investigate and make recommendations for changes to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme relating to the LDRZ and RLZ.

The study was prepared in response to the lack of land zoned for large-scale residential subdivision and small lot rural subdivision in the Shire. It recognizes that there is continued demand for this type of development within the Shire because of:

- the proximity of the Shire to the northeast of Melbourne;
- the Shire's naturally attractive foothills, valleys and landscapes;
- the area having or being a gateway to major recreation and tourism assets;
- the presence of attractive towns with significant character that provide a range of physical and community services¹

The UDF does not seek to review the LDRZ or RLZ in Alexandra.

¹ Murrindindi Shire Council, March 2003, *Rural Residential Study (Draft)* p6.

3.10 Conclusion

A review of the local policy and strategic documents for Murrindindi Shire demonstrate that much work has already been undertaken within Alexandra. These studies have identified a number of key influences that will affect the Shire in the future. These include greater pressure for rural residential type development, increase in industry land supply, and an agricultural sector that is likely to become more diverse and less reliant on traditional industries. This UDF will not revisit such work and analyse such issues but will rather focus on commercial development within Alexandra and issues and opportunities related to this. Identification and explanation of these issues will underpin changes to the MSS, which will in turn provide the strategic justification for any changes to the detailed controls contained within the Planning Scheme.

4. EXISTING SITUATION

4.1 Strategic Context

Alexandra is located approximately 131km north east of Melbourne, just north of the Goulburn River. Alexandra is the major commercial centre for the Murrindindi Shire, as well as acting at a gateway to the tourist destination Lake Eildon. The township is surrounded by rich pastoral land and consequently agriculture, horticulture and timber are the areas leading industries.

4.1.1 Vision for Alexandra

Alexandra will become a major commercial centre within the Shire servicing a growing and predominantly urban township, as well as surrounding townships, rural districts and visitors to the region. Alexandra will be a centre for light industry development and a regional centre for the provision of community services (including education and training). The township will cater for tourism, providing a base from which tourists can explore the surrounding districts.

An Urban Design Framework can play an important role in defining the future vision for a town. Once a preferred vision for a town has been established, the Urban Design Framework can help set directions for particular sites and the town as a whole. These directions influence capital budgets and town planning guidelines and controls.

4.2 Role of the Township

4.2.1 Historical Role of the Township

Alexandra, formally known as Red Gate Diggings, was rapidly settled in 1866 after gold was discovered in the region. A Shire was formed in 1869, however shortly after this time, the gold industry collapsed. In spite of this downfall, Alexandra recovered and started to sustain itself on agriculture and timber. The survival of the town through the next century was assured when the railway was constructed in 1909, facilitating the supply of wood to be processed at Alexandra's timber mills.

4.2.2 Role within the Local Area (25km radius)

The role of Alexandra within the local area is as a service centre for its residents and people who live in the surrounding rural hinterland and settlements such as Thornton and Koriella. Alexandra is the only town in the area that offers a full range of services, including banking, primary and secondary schools, shops and supermarkets, health facilities, and sporting and recreational facilities.

The town also provides specialist business services to the agricultural sector, which is becoming more diversified due to changes to the rural economy.

In terms of employment, the town provides jobs for residents of the local area in retail, hospitality and other service industries, as well as in the public service. The town also acts as a retirement destination for people who live on farms in the surrounding area.

Alexandra also serves visitors to the local area; the township is 26km west of the tourist destination Eildon.

4.2.3 Role within the Shire of Murrindindi

Alexandra is the largest township within the Murrindindi Shire and plays a significant role in service provision as well as greatly contributing to the health and vitality of the Shire. Alexandra is the commercial centre of Murrindindi; and services both the Shire's population as well as visitors to the region.

The Shire of Murrindindi is expecting its population to grow over the decade. Alexandra is considered to be one town within the municipality that will be able to absorb and accommodate this population growth.

4.2.4 Role within the Region

The Region includes Mitchell, Mansfield and Strathbogie Shires and the Cities of Whittlesea, Nillumbik and Yarra Ranges. This area is typified by river floodplains, wetlands, and high quality agricultural soils. Alexandra is located close to the junction of the Acheron River and the Goulburn River. The township is also located at the junction of the Maroondah Highway and the Goulburn Valley Highway.

4.2.5 Role in Relation to Melbourne

Alexandra has excellent connections with Melbourne; and the Metropolitan area can be reached in approximately 1.5 hours by car. These connections will improve in the future and Alexandra will become closer to Melbourne as development within Melbourne's north-eastern corridor continues. In addition, the town is also emerging as a place where retirees or people seeking a "lifestyle" property are settling on a permanent basis.

4.3 Population Profile

4.3.1 Age / Sex Profile

Alexandra Township

- At the 2001 census there were 2142 persons living in the township of Alexandra.
- This total population has increased by 235 persons or 13% since the 1996 census, and 218 persons or 12% between the 1991 and 1996 census.²

² CData, 2001, ABS Census Data

- The increase in population could be partially attributed to the overall growth experienced in the Melbourne metropolitan region.
- The township of Alexandra is gradually ageing. Since 1996 there has been an increase of 168 persons or 27% in the proportion of the population aged over 50 years.

Outer Alexandra

- The Collection Districts immediately surrounding Alexandra had a population of 1099 persons in 2001.
- The population of outer Alexandra is significantly older on average than the population of the Alexandra Township. For example, 47% of the population of outer Alexandra was aged above 50 years compared with 27% for township of Alexandra's population.

4.3.2 Industry

- The dominant industries in the Alexandra Township in terms of employment of the population in 2001 are retail trade (17%), Health and Community Services (11%), Manufacturing (10%), Education (10%), Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants (9%) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (7%).
- Alexandra had a higher proportion of its population working in Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants (9%), compared with the Victorian average (4%) in 2001.
- 25% of the working population living in the Collection Districts surrounding Alexandra are employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. 10% of this population are working in Retail Trade and Education.
- The Property and Business Services sector almost doubled the number of persons it employed between 1996 and 2001.

4.3.3 Occupation

- 17% of employed persons in the township of Alexandra work as professionals. A further 14% work as associate professionals.
- In outer Alexandra, over a quarter of the labour force are employed as Managers and Administrators, including the region's farmers. A further 14% of persons employed work as Professionals.

4.4 Population Profile of the Region

As referred to earlier in this report, as the supply of residential and rural land in the northern and eastern fringes of Melbourne is exhausted, the Alexandra area is expected to experience a growing demand for affordable residential, and rural residential land. The northern fringes of Melbourne, including the Plenty Valley growth corridor in the City of Whittlesea are approximately 1.5 hours from Alexandra by car. Commuting from the Alexandra area to Melbourne will become a more realistic proposition as these areas are developed.

The tables below show the growth in households and population for four selected municipalities on the northern fringes from 1996 to 2001, and the projected population growth to 2011.

The tables show that these areas will accommodate 23,000 households over the next 10 years.

Table 1. Population growth (northern metropolitan area)

Municipality	1996	2001	Projected 2011	Expected Change 2001-2011	% Change 2001-2011
Hume	120,819	131,585	149,675	18,090	14%
Whittlesea	106,212	114,082	136,099	22,017	19%
Nilumbik	57,219	58,161	61,307	3,146	5%
Yarra Ranges	137,173	137,539	139,081	1,542	1%

Source: ABS Census Data and Towns in Time (DOI)

Table 2. Household growth (northern metropolitan area)

Municipality	1996	2001	Projected 2011	Expected Change 2001-2011	% Change 2001-2011
Hume	37,164	42,723	51,683	8,960	21%
Whittlesea	32,296	36,906	46,745	9,839	27%
Nilumbik	17,643	19,254	21,212	1,958	10%
Yarra Ranges	46,462	50,983	53,571	2,588	5%

Source: ABS Census Data and Towns in Time (DOI)

4.5 Land Use and Development

4.5.1 Land use and settlement patterns

The boundaries of Alexandra Township are well defined to the north at the point where the Maroondah Highway connects to Aitken Street; to the east by Lethbridge Street; and to the south and west by the Goulburn River Reserve and the McKenzie Flora and Fauna Reserve.

The town has developed around the main road network. The growth of the town has led to the development of several distinct precincts:

- the commercial and retail centre along Grant Street, Bayley Street and Webster Street;
- active and passive recreational areas including McKenzie Flora and Fauna Reserve and land reserved around both the Goulburn River and U.T Creek;
- commercial uses along the major entries into town.
- a community precinct including council offices, Shire hall, library and churches in the block bounded by Grant Street, Perkins Street, Myrtle Street and Downey Street.

4.5.2 Development Activity

- Building approval data combined with census data provides an indication of development activity.
- Between 2003 and 2004, there were 41 dwelling approvals issued by Council. This rate of growth is generally consistent with population growth and dwelling trends between 1996 and 2001 as identified in the census. There were 995 dwellings in the Alexandra Township during the 2001 census. The number of dwellings has increased from 886 in the 1996.
- In 2001, 84% of dwellings in the Alexandra Township were classified as separate houses. A further, 9% were classified as flats, units or apartments.
- 132 (13%) dwellings within the Alexandra Township were unoccupied during the 2001 census. This number could be partially attributed to the number of dwellings that are expected to belong to non-resident owners who use Alexandra as a holiday/weekend destination.

4.5.3 Economic Drivers

An economic driver is an industry or set of other influences that sustains the local economy in terms of employment, expenditure, and investment.

Broadly, there are two key economic drivers that sustain the town namely, expenditure by residents of the town and surrounding area on goods and services, and expenditure by people passing through the town on the highway network.

Statistics on employment by industry indicate that a range of industries drive the local economy. For instance, retail trade, manufacturing, accommodation, cafes and restaurants, education, health and community services and agriculture, forestry and fishing each employ large proportions of the population.

Future economic opportunities for Alexandra could emerge through the further expansion of food and wine producers in the surrounding area. This includes the possibility of developing businesses associated with transport, grape crushing and food production.

The timber industry is important for Murrindindi Shire and is a major employer. Alexandra contains the largest sawmill in the Shire and timber processing is an integral feature of the township's industry base. State government policies identify a significant increase in production over the next 20 years (MSS).

It is difficult to ascertain the relative importance of each of these industries without obtaining information about turnover and business investment within the town. The number of new cafés and restaurants in the town indicates that the hospitality industry has grown in recent years. The potential for the tourism industry to retain visitors for more than a short stop or meal break presents a significant opportunity for the town.

The local economy in Alexandra has also benefited to some degree from the general strength of the property market and building industry in the past few years. There are indications that Alexandra is attracting larger numbers of people from Melbourne who are looking for affordable houses or rural residential living. This will continue to provide an extensive range of flow on effects for the local economy through the demand for products and services.

4.5.4 Tourist Visitation

As identified previously, the tourism industry makes a significant contribution to the Shire's economy.

Tourist visitation data from the region in which Alexandra is located indicates that:-

- Most daytrip visitors and overnight visitors come from Melbourne (over 80%).
- NSW was the primary source of interstate visitors to the region (4% of total overnight visitors).
- Most visits are for "holiday and leisure."
- Peak periods for visitation include April (22%), which coincides with the Easter school holiday period, November (17%) and January, which coincides with the summer school holiday period.
- The most popular activities undertaken by visitors to the region include "visiting national parks" (almost half of all visitors), "general sightseeing" (more than 30% of visitors) and "eating out" (more than one quarter of all visitors).

4.6 Open Space and Urban Design

4.6.1 Topography and Landscape

Alexandra is 220m above sea level. The town is set within a mildly sloping valley formed by U.T Creek.

The broad character of Alexandra has been classified as "rolling pastures."³ The area is dominated by open grasslands and pasture, which contrast with a backdrop of wooded valley sides. Stands of remnant native woodland remnant are found along roadsides and in some hilltop situations. Large areas of clear pasture have been replanted with pine plantation throughout. Landscapes around Alexandra also include the flood plains from the Goulburn River.

4.6.2 Views and Vistas

Alexandra has extensive garden and streetscape planting. Outside the town, a sense of spaciousness is afforded by large spaces between homesteads, which are often set back from the roads and surrounded in exotic vegetation including shelterbelts.

³ Planisphere, March 2004, *Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw, Draft Character Analysis Paper*

From Alexandra there are views of high mountains that surround the town. Moreover, the Maroondah and Goulburn Valley Highways, which act as important touring routes in the area, carry large numbers of viewers. Along these Highways occasional lookout points have been established at roadsides and ridges, such as Acheron Valley Lookout, Maroondah Highway, South of Alexandra.

4.6.3 Building Form

Alexandra (formally the Red Gate Diggings) was settled during the Gold Rush of the 1860's; and a number of historic buildings testify to the town's prosperous past. The most prominent building in Alexandra is located on Grant Street and was originally constructed for the Union Bank in 1888. Today, this building is owned by the ANZ Bank and retains its grand, signature staircase and mantles. Another historical feature of Alexandra is seen today in the Tramway Museum; this museum is housed in the town's old railway buildings. These buildings make an important contribution to the character of the town, as do others including the Shire Hall and the former National Bank on the corner of Grant and Downey Streets.

4.6.4 Streetscape

Alexandra enjoys a range of distinctive streetscapes.

Most prominent amongst these is the Grant Street streetscape, which could be characterised as providing a "village" atmosphere for the township. This village character is produced through a mix of Urban Design elements. For example, buildings within the commercial precinct of Grant Street are generally low scale and single storey, each with generally consistent use of verandas over the footpath space. The main exceptions to this characteristic are a number of buildings, which would have played an important role historically, including the hotels and the current ANZ bank. This character is also reinforced by a generally consistent zero setback along the building frontages and zero lot line between buildings. The commercial precinct also benefits from a central planting of deciduous trees (mainly *Quercus palustris*) with a scale complementary to the adjoining buildings. These elements, which contribute significantly to the "village" character of the town centre, should be considered and respected in any future development proposals.

The north end of Grant Street is very different from the south end of Grant Street. This distinction provides a transition between the commercial town centre and the open space character of the U.T Creek.

4.6.5 Open Space

The key component of the open space system of the Alexandra Township is the UT Creek Reserve. This Reserve contains interesting displays of native Australian wildflowers and rare orchids. The reserve can be easily accessed from the eastern end of town. In addition, in the centre of town is Rotary Park with its swing bridge and barbecue/picnic facilities.

Alexandra fortunately has the potential for a strongly connected and easily accessible open space system in the heart of the township.

4.6.6 Conclusion

The combination of enclosing topography, a “natural” town edge, well-defined and directed vistas, some strong building form, a “green” town heart, and strong open space components, all produce a town with a strong existing character. The key issues related to urban design are to ensure that these strengths are built upon and drawn together into an integrated and high amenity town centre.

5. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Contextual Issues and Influences

There are a number of broad demographic and social issues and influences that provide the context for the Urban Design Framework:

- Alexandra has an important role to play as a service centre for the wider region. This role and response to development and population pressures must be balanced however, with the “village” atmosphere that the town offers.
- The Alexandra “village” atmosphere is related to the township’s scale, character and uniformity.
- Alexandra is experiencing growth however the population overall is aging; this is particularly acute in outer Alexandra. This factor may have an important influence upon future detailed design (including building design) within the Grant Street commercial area, in areas such as building access and mobility.
- Alexandra is located at the junction of three major highway routes: the Maroondah Highway (Downey Street) west approach from Melbourne, the Maroondah Highway (Aitken & Grant Streets) north approach from Yea and Mansfield, the Goulburn Valley Highway (Downey Street) east approach from Eildon.
- The entrances to the town are very important in providing a “first impression” to visitors to the town. Alexandra township has three key entrances:
 - The Maroondah Highway entrance from the south. The entrance experience commences at the crossing of the Goulburn River and extends along the Highway to the intersection with Grant Street. While this entrance has some fragments of a traditional tree avenue, with some very impressive European trees, the overall impression tends to lack an overall design concept or visual uniformity.
 - The Goulburn Valley Highway entrance from Yea, in the west. This entrance provides a dramatic sense of arrival by passing through the Josephine Cutting before descending into the main township area. The entrance is again characterised by some impressive European tree plantings, although these have potential for further strengthening.
 - The Goulburn Valley Highway entrance from Eildon, in the east. This entrance has less significance, in urban design, terms than those from Yea or Healesville, in terms of traffic volumes or sense of arrival. Nevertheless. This entry has some strong tree planting contributing to its landscape character.
- The pressure to subdivide rural land in proximity to the town has increased; particularly due to strong demand from the Melbourne based market.
- The residents of Alexandra recognise the importance of tourism to their township and continue to implement strategies that will increase visitation.

5.2 Values to Protect and Enhance

There are a number of elements that shape the character of Alexandra and are worthy of protection and enhancement:

- The U.T Creek Reserve – Alexandra enjoys significant public parkland along the UT Creek in close proximity to the town. This parkland forms part of a large open space network within the town and has a number of important community functions, including:
 - Provision of traditional active recreation and sporting uses;
 - Provision of a trail network which links residential neighbourhoods, civic and community facilities and the town centres;
 - Provision of a number of community facilities, including the Visitor Information Centre, playgrounds and Dove Cottage;
 - Playing a large role in defining the visual landscape character of the central area of Alexandra. The visual and spatial role played by the large European trees, which are characteristic of the U.T. Creek parklands, is an important element of their landscape character. In addition the creek and its surrounds present the opportunity for the re-introduction of some indigenous species through revegetation.

The Alexandra community have been instrumental in the preparation of a master plan to guide the future use and development of the U.T. Creek, recognising its important role within that community.

- Clearly Defined Precincts – Alexandra enjoys clearly delineated retail/commercial, civic, educational and recreational precincts. Each of these precincts is within close walking distance of each other. This aspect of Alexandra should be maintained and protected.
- Compact Commercial Area (Grant Street Precinct) – Alexandra enjoys an active, diverse and compact retail precinct centred on Grant Street between Downey Street and Nihil Street. The Grant Street streetscape could be characterised as providing a “village” atmosphere for the township. This village character is produced through a mix of Urban Design elements, including:
 - Its generally low scale, with the majority of buildings, other than the Hotels, being single storey;
 - The generally consistent use of verandas over the footpath space;
 - The central planting of deciduous trees with a scale complementary to the adjoining buildings;
 - The generally consistent zero setback along the Grant Street property boundaries, and zero lot line between adjacent properties;
 - The lack of cross roads within the main commercial area.

While some redevelopment is likely to occur within Grant Street over time, these elements, which contribute significantly to the “village” character of the town centre, should be considered and respected.

The north end of Grant Street is also very different from the south end of Grant Street, as a result of:

- The use and character of buildings between the intersection of Grant and Bon Streets and the U.T. Creek;
- The role of the northern section of Grant Street in providing a transition between the commercial town centre and the open space character of the U.T. Creek parklands.

This distinction should also be protected.

5.3 Land Use and Development Issues and Opportunities

5.3.1 Grant Street Precinct

Description

The Alexandra Township contains a range of retail and service businesses that service the surrounding regions.

The Grant Street Precinct accommodates a supermarket, banks, hotels, historic guesthouses, bakeries, hair salons, cafes, hardware store, limited legal and accounting services and retail clothing outlets. The Grant Street precinct benefits from being able to provide a diverse range of services and activities in a highly compact retail area.

The buildings in the Grant Street precinct exhibit a range of building styles and make an important contribution to the image of the town. The ANZ bank building is particularly striking and noteworthy architecturally. However, the secondary commercial buildings on Grant Street also play an important role in creating an integrated commercial strip through generally consistent setbacks and veranda heights.

This Grant Street precinct is also vitalised by surrounding community services; such as the local schools and the kindergarten, the Shire Offices, the library and Rotary Park (all walking distance to the Grant Street precinct). Each of these facilities provides opportunities for the Grant Street precinct as they attract visitors to the township.

The following specific opportunities have been identified for the Grant Street precinct:

- Development of public toilets to service shoppers;
- Development of vacant land purchased by Council within the education precinct for a new relocated kindergarten;
- Redevelopment of the western side of Grant Street, with improved pedestrian connections between this area and the main Grant Street commercial strip;

- Further development of Bakers Lane for retail uses;
- Provision of facilities for the vision impaired, the disabled, and the elderly.
- Protection of heritage values and the built form of the township
- Protection and enhancement of the “village” character of the town centre (as identified above) through protection of specific character elements, as well as encouraging “walkability” throughout the town centre

Each of these opportunities is discussed in detail in the following sections.

5.3.2 Public Toilets

The lack of public toilets (this includes the absence of baby changing facilities) has been identified as a primary issue for the Grant Street precinct. Currently, Alexandra does not have a toilet facility to serve shoppers, particularly parents with children.

Public toilet facilities exist in Rotary Park and Leckie Park (to serve park users) and at the rear of the Shire Hall to serve the Council Chambers and users of the Cinema. These toilets are both “hidden” and at a considerable walking distance from the Grant Street precinct.

A number of proposed locations have been suggested for establishment of a new toilet block in the Grant Street Precinct including:

- Bakers Lane – There is an opportunity to locate the facility within the Bakers Lane car park. This site would be appropriate as the car park is well utilised, well lit, easily accessed i.e. by prams or the disabled and in a very central location to the retail as well as education precinct.
- ANZ Bank Site – There is an opportunity to discuss leasing part of the ANZ Bank site (the area south of the bank building).
- A site on the western side of Grant Street – There is ample space behind the shops along the western side of Grant Street to locate a toilet block; however this site would be less appropriate due to difficulties in accessing the site by foot.
- A further option is to improve signage to the existing toilet facilities i.e. at the Shire Hall and Rotary Park rather than develop a new toilet facility.

The project’s Steering Committee agreed on the following criteria for selecting a location for the public toilets:

- Central to the main commercial precinct
- Services (water, sewer and power) available
- Site immediately available and not contingent on other decisions being made
- Highly visible, well lit and on a main pedestrian thoroughfare
- Highly accessible by foot or by car
- Close to or adjacent to car parking serving the retail area

5.3.3 Land Purchased by Council within the Education Precinct

Council has recently purchased land within the education precinct, which provides a major opportunity for Alexandra. Uses suggested for this site include additional car parking or a new kindergarten including the development of a childcare facility.

Relocation of the kindergarten would consolidate the education precinct whilst the existing kindergarten site could be used for commercial development and/or car parking.

The existing Kindergarten facility has been identified as a major issue for Alexandra.

The current Kindergarten is 50 years old. It has reached its maximum enrolment capacity and has no further space to expand. The Kindergarten Committee wishes to expand the facility to cater for increasing demand and to provide childcare facilities. Its preferred option is to relocate to the site purchased by Council in the education precinct.

Relocation of the Kindergarten to the site purchased by Council would provide for the following:

- utilisation of existing infrastructure i.e. bus/car drop off zone as well as existing car parking provisions;
- opportunities for additional car parking on Webster Street;
- further consolidation of the education precinct;
- the facilitation of linked trips i.e. parents dropping off children to the Kindergarten and the primary school. Also parents dropping off children and incorporating shopping trips.
- redevelopment opportunities on the existing Kindergarten site, including car parking or community development;

5.3.4 Re-development of the Western Side of Grant Street

Land at the rear of Grant Street on the western side is largely underutilised.

- The land parcels between Grant Street and Bayley Street are generally narrow and deep in configuration. Consequently the rear portion of each of these land parcels is undeveloped and used haphazardly for car parking.
- There is very limited pedestrian access between Grant Street and the rear land to the west of the shopping strip. This lack of access hinders opportunities for this land to be developed commercially or for car parking purposes.

There is also an opportunity for owners to come together to consolidate, subdivide and further develop underutilised land on the eastern side of Bayley Street for commercial uses. This long-term opportunity should be protected. This includes the potential for an arcade development from Grant Street, which would require two or more landowners to co-operate/ co-ordinate such a redevelopment. There are a number of potential access opportunities to the subject land. These include:

- Develop a pedestrian access way between the Mt Pleasant Hotel and the Commonwealth Bank. The existing boundary fence could be removed and lighting provided.

There are a number of issues associated with this proposal. These include:

- The proposed laneway is on private land and hence the consent of the owners and tenants would be needed;
- It will remain a narrow thoroughfare with poor visibility to the rear of properties along Grant Street;

Hence, this option should only be considered as a “stop gap” solution. However, development of this laneway is a short-term opportunity to overcome the access problems to the western side of Grant Street.

- Support the development of an arcade around the middle of the Grant Street precinct to provide pedestrian access to Bayley Street. This would involve the redevelopment of at least two adjoining properties to provide for retail and commercial uses along the arcade as well as a pedestrian link, similar to Bakers Lane.

Should this opportunity arise, it will be important to ensure that the pedestrian link between Grant Street and the land to the west is continually open, and not closed out of business hours.

- A further option is to improve access through existing stores, similar to that of the supermarket.

5.3.5 Enhancement of Bakers Lane

Potential enhancements to Bakers Lane include:

- Development of proposed toilet facilities in the car park;
- Creation of active street frontages along Bakers Lane, particularly on the southern side of Bakers Lane, facing the existing paved laneway, as well as facing the car park. There is opportunity to create new commercial development fronting the car park on the northern and southern sides.
- Bakers Lane would benefit from some consistency in built form, in terms of set backs and verandas. These should generally continue the character established along Grant Street. The farm supplies storage area at the rear of the VPC building is unsightly and presents an opportunity for further active frontages.
- Improvement to the connectivity within the car parking facilities. For example, the car park recently constructed by the computer/IT retailers fronting Bakers Lane Car Park has limited the opportunity for continuous and active shop frontages facing onto the car park. Moreover, the subject car park is underutilised because its design is not consistent with the Bakers Lane car park and car parking spaces are not clearly delineated.
- In the long term, the redevelopment of the western side of Webster Street could be undertaken and connected to Grant Street via Bakers Lane.

- If the Kindergarten were relocated to the education precinct, this will contribute to the importance of this Bakers Lane connection.

5.3.6 Heritage and Protection of the Built Form

Protection and enhancement of the heritage qualities

Stage 1 grant funding has been obtained to undertake a Shire-wide heritage study. The UDF highlights some of the issues that should be addressed by the heritage study for Alexandra.

It must be noted that while Alexandra may lack many heritage buildings comparative to many other townships in regional Victoria, the township still offers an aesthetically pleasing streetscape, which make an essential contribution to the “village” atmosphere of the town centre. In this regard it is the collective contribution of the built form of Grant Street, which is most significant, rather than the specific qualities of individual buildings. This is most important to protect.

Protection and enhancement of the “village” character of the town centre

It is important to define, protect and build upon the range of qualities, which contribute to the particular “village” character found in Alexandra (some of which have been outlined above). This includes:-

- Identification of specific significant built form elements such as scale, form and setback which should be reflected in future development or re-development of Grant Street properties;
- Potential for further tree planting to improve pedestrian amenity and the general “ambience” of the street;
- Further refinement of pedestrian amenity through improved pavement spaces and street furniture;
- Opportunities to direct the visual character of Grant Street, beyond built form, in areas such as signage.

5.3.7 Further Commercial Development

Commercial land available for development was identified as a long-term issue in Alexandra. Currently there are 2-3 stores available to be leased in the strip facing Grant Street. In the long term further space for commercial activity will be needed.

Opportunity for further commercial development exists in the following areas:-

- There is substantial redevelopment potential at the rear of properties on the western side of Grant Street.
- There is substantial redevelopment potential along the western side of Webster Street, particularly near Bakers Lane.
- There is further opportunity for development fronting Bakers Lane and fronting the car park at the end of Bakers Lane.

5.3.8 Facilities for the Aging Population

The aging of Alexandra's population raises some issues for the township. These include the following:

- It will become increasingly important that facilities in the township can cater to both vision impaired and disabled persons i.e. ramps up to shops in the Grant Street Precinct and the pedestrian crossing at Grant Street.
- While there is no immediate need, in the life of this plan there could arise a need for the potential expansion of Kellock Lodge. This organisation of 39 Hostel Beds is likely to require an additional 5-7 acres of land over the next decade.

5.3.9 Land for Expansion of the Cemetery

The supply of land available for the existing cemetery is anticipated to be exhausted within several years. Further land will need to be set aside and purchased adjoining the cemetery.

5.4 Open Space and Urban Design Issues and Opportunities

5.4.1 UT Creek Reserve

UT Creek provides significant opportunity for Alexandra both in terms of tourism and recreation. It is seen as a link between most of the precincts in Alexandra, containing vital pedestrian and cycling connections, it provides open space and a focus for community activities.

In terms of tourism, the UT Creek Reserve provides the following opportunities:

- UT Creek should be a primary focus for Alexandra as one of the most attractive aspects of the town to visitors.
- Council has recently adopted the UT Creek Enhancement Plan. This Plan proposes substantial improvements to the quality of the reserve.
- The Reserve has great potential, combined with other local attractions such as McKenzie Flora Reserve, the Goulburn River, the Timber Tramway Museum, the proposed Rail Trail and Josephine Cutting Lookout.
- The Enhancement Plan proposes establishing a range of connections with the township, which is more likely to draw visitors into the township.
- The UT Creek Reserve contains Dove Cottage. This cottage could be redeveloped as a point of interest in the park and potentially adopt a tourism function. In physical terms, Dove Cottage should be treated as a building within the park, rather than as a stand-alone entity, which is how it appears at present.

- A range of recreational uses for the UT Creek Reserve has been identified. These uses however, will be confined to different zones to ensure that the maximum number of people can enjoy and feel comfortable in the Parklands. The continued integration of both active and passive recreational uses can clearly be accommodated within the reserve and will further add to the important role that the reserve plays within the Alexandra community.
- The Plan proposes significant indigenous re-vegetation, which will improve the quality of the environment for all park users.
- Further enhancement of the existing “European” character of existing mature plantings throughout the Reserve. The integration of this established and attractive landscape character with an emerging indigenous character, particularly associated with the creek bed and banks presents important spatial and visual opportunities.
- The Park can potentially be integrated into the proposed rail trail network that has the potential to emerge as the major recreational facility in the Shire.
- Potential to link with the Goulburn River Reserve, to the south west of the town, and with McKenzie Reserve, on Mt. Pleasant Road, south of the township (perhaps via Wattle Creek).
- Visitor and community awareness of the U.T. Creek parklands could be improved through better treatment of the landscape in the vicinity of the Aitkin Street Bridge crossing of the creek. This would involve consideration of appropriate tree species, as well as lower level species, in order to ensure improved views into the Leckie Park area.

To improve connectivity of Alexandra’s open space network the following connections are considered to be important to the township:

- The existing footbridges over the creek (eg Jack Shiels Gardens where the connection is already formed)
- Perkins St, across public property
- Underneath Grant Street bridge. This connection across Grant Street is vital however its viability is doubtful due to flooding. Other possibilities include an at-grade pedestrian crossing.
- Connection to the Youth Precinct
- Alongside the motor cycle establishment
- Rose Street Footbridge. This could potentially connect with the urban woodland (connection already formed).

The following foot tracks have also been proposed (some of these have already been mentioned above):

- McKenzie Reserve, via Wattle Creek and/or Rose Street
- Josephine Cutting from Leckie Park via John Street and Grant Street Extension

- Extension of the main track along UT Creek to Goulburn River and along the River.
- Extension via the Timber Tramway Museum to Tallarook Rail Trail
- A footbridge has been proposed to the tennis courts and this has been proposed as a link.

Other opportunities to strengthen the town's open space system include improving the integration and connection of the Showgrounds with the U.T. Creek parklands and the Grant Street commercial precinct, and the incorporation of land at the south-western edge of the racecourse into the U.T. Creek reserve.

5.4.2 Town Entrances

As outlined above, there are three main entrances into Alexandra:

- South: Maroondah Highway, ie from Healesville
- East: Goulbourn Valley Highway, ie from Eildon
- North: Maroondah Highway, ie from Yea.

Of the three entrances, the Maroondah Highway approach from the south is the most significant, in terms of length and usage. This approach is currently characterised by a mixture of exotic and native vegetation occurring haphazardly along the roadside. Some of the trees have had to be severely pruned due to the presence of overhead powerlines, while in other areas limited space within the road reserve has prevented tree planting.

This town entrance also offers potential for additional Business 4 zoned land, provided that development controls are in place to enhance the visual and spatial quality of the existing highway landscape. Proposed development, where fronting the Maroondah Highway, should be both consistent in form and incorporate landscape treatments. Design should also be aesthetically sensitive where it fronts the UT Creek.

While recognising that a traditional single species avenue would be difficult to achieve due to the variety of physical conditions and the range of existing tree types along the highway verge, a number of opportunities exist to improve the aesthetics of the Maroondah Highway entry, including:

- Beginning the entrance concept at the Goulburn River, at the crossing of Riversdale Bridge.
- Investigating the potential to place powerlines underground on the eastern side of the road;
- Re-grading steep roadside batters, particularly on the eastern side of the road, to allow for dense planting of distinctive ground level vegetation. Such vegetation could also be introduced into the roadside drainage swale in order to improve its appearance and reduce the susceptibility to erosion;

- Incorporating important adjacent uses, such as the Alexandra Secondary College and the Hec Ingram Reserve- the Youth Precinct and Skate Park, into the landscape of the approach, through integrated tree planting initiatives which benefit both the road landscape and the adjacent use;
- Supplementing existing themes, such as the use of Oak trees near the School, or the existing Poplar avenue just north of the Goulburn River;
- Integrating the use of indigenous trees closer to the Goulburn River, with exotic plantings closer to the town centre;
- Encouraging development in the existing Business 4 zone to be consistent in form and incorporate landscape treatments on the Maroondah Highway frontage. Design should also be aesthetically sensitive where it fronts the UT Creek.

The Yea and Eildon entrances are both less critical and present fewer opportunities for detailed improvement. Both entrances however would benefit from supplementing their existing landscape themes. For the Maroondah Highway entrance from Yea, a strengthened landscape treatment should extend from the highway cutting north of Endicott Road. For the Goulburn Valley Highway entrance, from Eildon, a distinct and recognisable landscape should be reinforced from the bend at Wattle Street / Station Street.

5.4.3 Other Urban Design Opportunities

Other important opportunities to strengthen the civic character of Alexandra include:

- The implementation of an overall street tree strategy throughout the town, contributing to an integrated urban landscape character. This strategy should focus particularly on reinforcing streets with a strong existing landscape character, including the replacement of trees recently removed within Grant Street.
- The updating of existing urban furniture, such as seats, bins, bollards, streetlights etc, throughout the town centre, particularly within the commercial, civic and educational precincts.
- Appropriate urban design treatment of the section of Maroondah Highway between Vickery Street and Downey Street, creating a transition between the outer northern edge of the town and the Grant Street commercial centre. The treatment of heritage buildings within this precinct is a particularly important consideration.

5.5 Traffic Management Issues and Opportunities

5.5.1 Car Parking

Issues related to car parking include the following:

- There is a perceived lack of parking. However, car parking provision seems to be appropriate in Grant Street, with the only periods when parking space is at a premium being Saturday mornings and the peak of the holiday period in early January.
- Car parking needs; primarily concerning:
 - Appropriate provision for disabled parking. This parking should be strategically located to minimise the travel distances for disabled users to their most frequent destinations, and to assist them to safely negotiate the Downey Street/Grant Street intersection by using the pedestrian crossing facilities in Downey Street west of the intersection.
 - Lack of access to rear parking for staff of Grant Street businesses who consequently park in Grant Street. Access to the ample parking space along Bayley Street would provide the logical solution
 - Disregard of the nominal time limits. Council is reluctant to enforce this issue and again access to the parking space off Bayley Street would offer the solution
- The school car park is reported to be generally half to three quarters full while anecdotal reports indicate many teachers using the Bakers Lane car park for convenience.

There are several opportunities to create additional car parking for the retail precinct at the following locations:

- Masonic Temple in Nihil Street; improvement of access and resurfacing to enable public use of this car park has been the subject of discussions by the Temple management with Council and is likely to be implemented in the near future.
- The ANZ Bank; development of this car parking behind the ANZ Bank for public use has the advantage that it could be integrated with the existing Bakers Lane car park.
- The main opportunity for car parking however is along the east side of Bayley Street. Parking is currently haphazard, the area is not attractive (unsealed and not lit) but most importantly it is difficult to access from Grant Street.

Should the Kindergarten relocate to Webster Street there will be a need to review the adequacy of parking in the education precinct. Means of enhancing traffic management in Webster Street are discussed below and include options to increase parking capacity in the education precinct by:

- Converting the section of this street from Downey Street to Nihil Street to one-way operation in a southerly direction;
- Retaining sufficient parallel parking along the eastern kerb for bus drop-offs and pick-ups;

- Providing short term parallel parking along the remainder of the eastern kerb for parent drop-offs and pick-ups at the critical times before and after school/kinder;
- Converting parking along the western kerb line to angle parking, thereby significantly increasing capacity for staff and longer term parent parking. Care will need to be taken in the design to provide continued access to existing driveways.

It should be noted that these proposed parking alterations do not affect the existing short-term parallel parking bays near the post boxes and increases parking for Post Office visits along the western side of Webster Street. There is also no change to customer parking along the Post Office frontage in Downey Street.

- Provision of on-site staff parking for the kindergarten accessed from the laneway south of the Post Office. It is noted that access to the rear of the Post Office by delivery vehicles currently uses part of the land south of the lane purchased by Council (and mooted as the new kindergarten site). This mode of access to the Post Office will require review to avoid encroachment onto abutting property.

The recommendations contained in the Review of Parking undertaken for Council by John Piper Traffic in March 2004 should be reassessed and progressively implemented in the context of this Framework document. Key recommendations of the parking review relate to opportunities to increase capacity and improve the standard of parking for staff and clients of businesses in the retail and civic precincts of the township and are summarised as follows:

- **Grant Street opposite Rotary Park:** introduction of angle parking along the eastern roadside will create 11 additional car parking bays (requires formal VicRoads approval).
- **Vickery Street along Rotary Park:** approx 90m of parallel parking is available for long vehicles (buses and car/caravan or boat combinations).
- **UT Creek Reserve at RSL:** formalising and sealing of the existing ad-hoc parking will allow a total of 34 car parking spaces to be created (8 adjacent to the RSL rooms and 26 fronting the creek reserve). Additional long vehicle parking can be provided along the western side of Bayley Street north of Downey Street.
- **Grant Street opposite Perkins Street:** any redevelopment of the McKenzie bus depot in the future could present an opportunity to convert all parking along this frontage to angle bays, yielding an additional 8 spaces. If the site is redeveloped, it is suggested that the V/Line bus stop could be relocated 30m south, adjacent to the hotel. However, this would only occur in the event that the bus depot is redeveloped and should involve consultation with all affected landowners.
- **Webster Street, Downey Street to Perkins Street:** conversion of this street to one-way operation in a northerly direction would allow installation of angle parking along the eastern frontage yielding 7 additional car parks.

- **Perkins Street:** conversion of the current parallel parking along the northern boundary east of Webster Street would allow the current 7 bays to be increased to 12 indented angle bays (an increase of 5 spaces at significant capital cost).
- **Bowling Club:** formalising parking at the bowling club would provide at least 34 spaces, with a reduced impact on the parkland and opportunity for dual use of this facility by Council staff.

The report further recommended that any revision of parking needed to be accompanied by a comprehensive review of signing to:

- Provide direction to long vehicle facilities parking for visitors;
- Maximise the use of long term parking areas and thereby release short-term customer parking in the shopping centre;
- Standardise and upgrade the current mix of parking sign formats;
- Ensure that time limits are applied appropriately and consistently.

The Council-owned vacant block at the rear of 51 Bayley Street is within walking distance of the shopping centre and could provide an opportunity to create long-term car parking for staff working in nearby businesses. However, development of this parking area has witnessed minimal use. With the intension of creating better access from Grant Street to parking in Bayley Street it is unlikely that this relatively remote parking opportunity will gain future acceptance. It is recommended that Council consider alternative uses for this block or dispose of the land.

5.5.2 Truck By-Pass

An issue raised within the scope of the UDF is the use of local streets within the town by trucks. To overcome difficulties experienced by over-size vehicles in negotiating the Grant Street/Downey Street intersection, an over-dimensional route was established using Green Street, William Street and Station Street. This route is now also used by normal truck traffic to access the industrial area and saleyards off the northern end of Station Street. This use of local streets is environmentally undesirable, is unsafe and it contributes to deterioration of these local roads.

Development of a potential alternative truck by-pass route has been proposed for further investigation to overcome the over-dimensional vehicle problem and provide a superior means of access to the industry/saleyards precinct to Alexandra's north.

The Route proposed at the Steering Committee Meeting comprises:

- Development of a heavy vehicle link from Maroondah Highway to Maintongoon Road/ Crusoe Lane via Endicott Lane over Victoria Cutting;
- Upgrading of Crusoe Lane south to link with Shamrock Street, or preferably,
- Construct an extension of Station Street to link with Crusoe Lane.

Continuation of the by-pass route in the north-west of the town (linking to Maroondah Highway) should be further investigated in the long term.

5.5.3 Traffic Management

The following traffic management issues have been raised in community consultation:

- Congestion in Webster Street through the education precinct, particularly at the start and end of the school day, and travel speeds along this route at other times. Traffic measures that have been proposed include:
 - Converting the section of this street from Downey Street to Nihil Street to one-way operation in a southerly direction. The proposed southbound flow will facilitate use by school buses and avoid potential detouring of traffic via Grant Street;
 - Development of kerb extensions in Webster Street (at both ends and at the school crossing) to throttle traffic down to a single through lane and to create angle parking along the western kerb line;
 - Installation of threshold treatments at the northern entry and at the school crossing to reduce through speeds.
- Safety at the pedestrian crossing point in Grant Street opposite Bakers Lane. Community comment regarding the use of this flat top hump indicates that neither motorists nor pedestrians understand who has right of way. Although no injury collisions have been recorded, the confusion is dangerous and requires clarification through its formalisation as a Pedestrian Crossing (by the installation of VicRoads approved signs, lighting and pavement markings) or by erection of signs to warn pedestrians to give way to motorists.

This crossing should also be upgraded to comply with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act of 1992 by incorporating facilities for vision and mobility impaired users.

- Pedestrian crossing facilities of Grant Street at the bridge over UT Creek. The current level of use is highly unlikely to satisfy the VicRoads' warrants for a formal pedestrian crossing at this location. However, the need for a crossing can be revisited when pedestrian activity increases. In the meantime, the provision of pram crossings at strategic locations that maximise the visibility between motorists and pedestrians should be considered as part of the redevelopment of the UT Creek reserve in the vicinity of the Grant Street Bridge to facilitate safer pedestrian cross movements.
- Operation of the service road along the south side of Goulburn Valley Highway opposite Station Street requires review to improve access to abutting industry. The current unsatisfactory highway access to the old butter factory also requires review with a potential to reorient this driveway east to connect to Station Street or west to connect to George Street instead.
- The right-of-way servicing the industrial blocks fronting UT Creek accessed from the north end of Albert Street should be upgraded to all-weather use and provided with a court bowl at its east end. However, this lane should not be extended to connect with Bayley Street, so as to not impact upon the important connection between Hec Ingram Reserve and U.T. Creek.

- There is a need to formalise the lower speed environment through the shopping centre in Grant Street by installing a 40 km/h speed zone between Nihil Street and Downey Street. At the time of making the necessary application to VicRoads, it is suggested that a northern extension of this zone along the Maroondah Highway section of Grant Street to Vickery Street also be explored to encompass the retail and civic precinct south of UT Creek as well as the tourist area adjacent to Rotary Park. An extension of this reduced speed zone along the east-west highway route, between Bayley Street and Webster Street to encompass the full extent of the central activity area, should also be considered as part of such an application.

5.6 Key Priorities

Based on the community consultation and analysis of issues and opportunities the following key priorities are identified for Alexandra:

- Implementing the UT Creek Enhancement Plan and development of trails linking the town by comprehensive open space network.
- Development of a kindergarten and childcare facility in the education precinct, using Council land in Webster Street.
- Traffic management and control in Webster Street, and increasing parking supply.
- Landscape treatment of the Maroondah Highway entrance.
- Facilitating the development of land at the rear of the shops along the western side of Grant Street by the provision of pedestrian access to Grant Street and re-subdivision of the land.

6. ANALYSIS PLANS

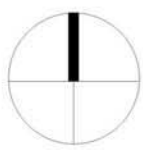
The following Analysis Plans show the context for the Alexandra Town Centre and the key connections and urban design considerations.

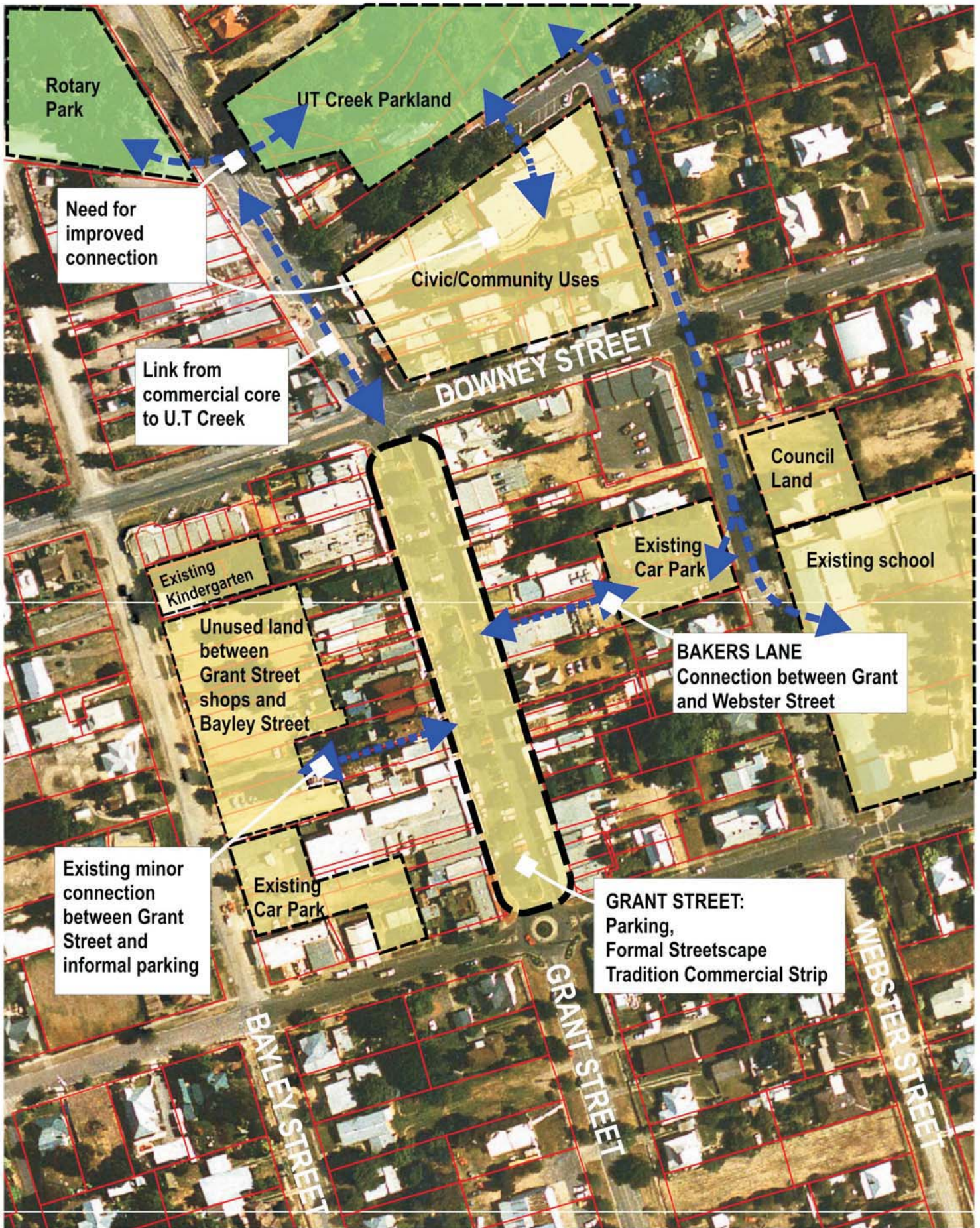


Alexandra Urban Design Framework

Town Centre Context

Prepared for Murrindindi Shire Council
by Urban Enterprise and Team

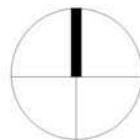




Alexandra Urban Design Framework

Key Urban Design Connections and Functions

Prepared for Murrindindi Shire Council
by Urban Enterprise and Team



7. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

7.1 Land Use and Development Strategies

Strategy 1 *Develop public toilets within the retail core*

Action 1A Locate public toilets in the car park at the end of Bakers Lane (on the eastern side of Grant Street).

Action 1B Install an Exceloo Self Cleaning Unisex Single Toilet.

Strategy 2 *Relocate the kindergarten to the vacant land purchased by Council within the education precinct*

Action 2A Relocate the kindergarten to land recently purchased by Council in Webster Street. This site is large enough to develop a state of the art kindergarten and childcare facility that is large enough to meet the needs of Alexandra residents. A new kindergarten on this site could also accommodate a “before and after school” childcare program, as well as 3 year old kinder classes and other child care facilities for the township.

Action 2B Facilitate the relocation via a land swap between the Kindergarten Committee and the Council and rezoning of the land to Public Use.

Strategy 3 *Support the re-development of the western side of Grant Street for commercial uses and car parking*

Alexandra has a compact and consolidated retail precinct and this should be retained by encouraging retail uses to locate within the core retail area. There is also an opportunity for owners to come together to consolidate, subdivide and further develop underutilised land on the eastern side of Bayley Street (behind the Grant street shops) for commercial uses and car parking. This longer-term opportunity should be protected.

Action 3A Develop a detailed master plan and apply a Development Plan Overlay (DPO) in accordance with the master plan. The land is already zoned for commercial development. The DPO should give effect to and facilitate the consolidation of land within the precinct. It should include:

- Plans for the development of a mid-block pedestrian connection through to the Grant Street shops;
- Adequate access for vehicles delivering goods and supplies to retailers;
- Plans for additional, formalised high quality car parking, including opportunities for tree planting and provision of dedicated pedestrian paths;

- Design standards to ensure that the character of the existing commercial precinct is maintained and reflected in new development; in terms of setbacks, building heights, development of verandas etc.
- Upgraded connections between the UT Creek Reserve/ Youth Precinct and the retail core.
- Improvements of the Bayley Street streetscape, especially in term of landscape improvement through street tree plantings.
- Policy and guidelines to protect long-term development opportunities for the site. Subdivision of this site should take place in a coordinated manner. There is little to be gained from this site for both landowners and the community if *ad hoc* development occurs.
- Retention of the existing Business 1 Zone. This land is the preferred area for future retail/commercial development. Retail development in Alexandra should be generally directed to the Grant Street precinct.

Strategy 4 Further develop Bakers Lane with commercial uses

Opportunity exists to further develop the properties fronting Bakers Lane and the adjoining car park for retail/commercial use.

Action 4A Apply a Design Development Overlay (DDO) or policy guidance in the planning scheme, to all properties fronting Bakers Lane and the car park. This should:

- Protect and enhance the character and form of the Bakers Lane precinct, particularly if adjacent residential uses are eventually redeveloped for commercial uses.
- Create consistency in built form, in terms of set backs, building height and verandas. The character of new buildings in this area should reflect that which has been established along Grant Street.
- Improve the connectivity and design of the car parking facilities and allow car parking contributions to be provided in lieu of providing additional parking spaces.
- Encourage active street frontages along Bakers Lane, particularly on the southern side of Bakers Lane, facing the existing paved laneway.
- Ensure that detailed materials and fittings, such as pavement materials, kerb profiles, public lighting, seats and other public furniture, are consistent with those used in Grant Street, contributing to the creation of an integrated urban character

Strategy 5 Establish a pedestrian connection from the eastern side of Bayley Street to Grant Street

It is important that a pedestrian connection be established between Grant Street and Bayley Street, to enhance the commercial appeal of the land and to increase the potential for this area to be used for car parking serving the retail precinct.

Action 5A In the short term, upgrade the existing pedestrian connection between the Commonwealth Bank and the Mount Pleasant Hotel by agreement with the property owners. This upgrade should include:

- Improved lighting
- Removal of existing fences
- Improved signage

Action 5B In the longer term, provide support to owners of property around the middle of the Grant Street block (west side) if they wish to develop their properties to incorporate an arcade style development. In developing an arcade the following is also recommended:

- The arcade should generally align with Bakers Lane;
- The arcade should be continuously open as a pedestrian link;
- The arcade should lead to the rear of Grant Street properties (west side) to facilitate the redevelopment of this area.

Strategy 6 Investigate Alexandra's heritage values

A Heritage Study is to be undertaken for the Murrindindi Shire.

Action 6A In Alexandra, the scope of the Heritage Study should address the following areas and issues:

- the significance of the original individual buildings located along Grant Street. This should consider the entire length of Grant Street from Vickery Street to Nihil Street
- the significance of the form, fixtures and profile of the Grant Street streetscape as a whole, from Vickery Street to Nihil Street. This should identify the specific buildings elements (veranda forms, roof forms, materials) that contribute to the heritage significance of the streetscape.
- the location and heritage value of any significant individual buildings beyond Grant Street, including civic buildings, churches etc
- the significance of Dove Cottage

- recommendations for appropriate future treatment or use of buildings and features with existing heritage controls, in the light of their heritage significance.

Action 6B Following this study a planning scheme amendment should be prepared to apply the Heritage Overlay to Alexandra in accordance with the Study's recommendations.

7.2 Open Space and Urban Design Strategies

Strategy 7 Implement the UT Creek Reserve Master Plan

Action 7A Both the current (2005) U.T. Creek Reserve Master Plan, prepared by the U.T. Creek Enhancement Community Support Group, and the earlier U.T. Creek Park Development Concept Plan, prepared by Richard Hammond in 1983, supported the development of the U.T. Creek Reserve so as to become the "heart of Alexandra". The UDF supports this role, the analysis phase having recognised the importance of the U.T. Creek Reserve to Alexandra, not only as an open space resource, but also as a primary connecting element within the township.

The U.T. Creek Reserve Master Plan contains a great deal of detailed guidance as to the future development and improvement of the reserve. It is recommended that the Master Plan be supplemented by an Implementation Strategy, including a cost schedule, to guide Council in the on-going implementation of the plan, as advised by the U.T. Creek Enhancement Community Support Group.

Strategy 8 Develop a "Drop in Centre" in the Youth Precinct

Action 8A A "drop in centre" would provide a safe supervised environment for children in Alexandra. This should be located in the existing Youth Precinct centred on Hec Ingram Reserve, further consolidating youth facilities in this precinct.

Strategy 9 Undertake a Master Plan for the McKenzie Gully

Action 9A The creek gully linking the U.T. Creek Reserve with McKenzie Reserve, on Mt. Pleasant Road, provides an opportunity to connect these two open space / conservation resources. A master plan for this area can only address public land areas. The existing land tenure and ownership arrangements should be investigated by Council.

Action 9B It is recommended that where any public land exists along the gully that a masterplan be prepared. This Master Plan should address:

- Identification of private and public land

- future planting programs;
- protection of existing trees, particularly remnant species;
- path locations, dimensions and materials;
- user amenities, such as seating and shelter;
- information and directional signage;

Strategy 10 Enhance Town Entrances

There are a number of opportunities to improve the visual and spatial impact of the town highway entrances, particularly the important Maroondah Highway entrances.

Maroondah Highway (southern entrance)

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Action 10A | Investigate funding opportunities for placement of powerlines underground; |
| Action 10B | <p>Prepare a detailed masterplan for the Highway, between the Goulburn River and Grant Street, addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locations of existing trees to be retained; - Locations of existing trees to be removed; - Preferred locations and species of new exotic trees, between the Goulburn River cutting and Grant Street, taking account of VicRoads required clear zones; - Preferred indigenous tree species for planting within the Highway reserve, near the Goulburn River; - Preferred lower level species for planting along road verges and roadside swales; - Potential use of the Alexandra Secondary College for tree planting along the edge of the Highway reserve; - Planting to integrate Hec. Ingram Reserve with the Highway landscape. |
| Action 10C | Rezone the land between Albert and Hall Streets (north side) from R1Z to B4Z, subject to a Design and Development Overlay or policy guidance in the planning scheme. |
| Action 10D | <p>The DDO or policy guidance should include the following requirements, in order to ensure that these properties make a positive contribution to the presentation of the Maroondah Highway landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that building set backs are generally consistent, creating an open highway verge of consistent dimension; - Restrict free standing signage (i.e. signage apart from buildings) within the building setbacks; |

- Encourage active frontages (i.e. entries, windows, external activities), and discourage solid walls and solid fencing facing the Highway, or the U.T. Creek Reserve;
- Locate storage areas and large vehicle parking away from Highway frontages, and frontages to the U.T. Creek Reserve;
- Provide extensive landscape development within setbacks, especially extending the character of the Highway and the U.T. Creek Reserve into the development;
- Ensure that future development does not detract from the visual appearance of the Highway landscape, or the U.T. Creek landscape;
- Continue to restrict vehicle access to the site from Aitkin Street. Direct access should be provided from the Maroondah Highway;
- Frontages onto both the Maroondah Highway and the UT Creek must be attractive and sufficiently set back and landscaped.

Action 10E Upgrade Riversdale picnic area

Maroondah Highway (northern) entrance

Action 10F Prepare a detailed tree planting plan for the Highway, between the Highway cutting north of Endicott Road and Vickery Street. This masterplan should address

- Locations of existing trees to be retained;
- Locations of any existing trees to be removed, based on arboricultural advice;
- Preferred locations and species of new exotic trees to strengthen the existing avenue of Elm trees which characterises this entry into the township, taking account of VicRoads required clear zones. This may involve the removal of some existing *Grevillea robusta* (Silky Oak) and *Fraxinus spp* (Ash) in order to create a stronger avenue planting of elms;

Goulburn Valley Highway (eastern) entrance

Action 10G Prepare a detailed tree planting plan for the Highway entrance, between Station Street / Wattle Street and Grant Street. This masterplan should address

- Locations of existing trees to be retained;
- Locations of any existing trees to be removed, based on arboricultural advice;

- Preferred locations and species of new exotic trees to create a distinctive landscape from the Station Street / Wattle Street intersection, taking account of the form and character of existing buildings along this entrance, particularly the Anglican and Uniting Churches and the Catholic School.

Strategy 11 Install facilities for the aging population

Action 11A In recognition of the aging population of Alexandra, a review of access standards in areas of community focus, particularly in Grant Street, should be undertaken. This review should assess:

- Access into commercial and public buildings from public footpaths;
- Access from public footpaths to car parks and road crossings;
- Current provision of parking for the disabled.

Council should ensure that appropriate disabled access to commercial and community buildings and facilities is provided, when buildings are redeveloped or refurbished.

Strategy 12 Develop a formal Street Trees Strategy for the township

Action 12A The preparation and implementation of an overall street tree strategy throughout the township would play an important role in strengthening the civic character of Alexandra.

This strategy should address:

- The definition of tree species throughout the township area of Alexandra, establishing themes to reinforce the character and function of distinct areas, precincts, uses and streets, including:
 - i) Grant Street, between Vickery Street and Nihil Street. Suggested trees would include *Quercus spp* ;(Oaks) to reflect the established trees located on the northern section of Grant Street
 - ii) The education precinct bounded by Webster, Nihil, Myrtle and Downey Streets. Suggested trees would be medium height deciduous exotic trees, such as *Pyrus* (Ornamental Pear) *Platanus orientalis "Digitata"* (Cut-leaf Plane), *Acer x freemanii* (Maple);
 - iii) The civic precinct, including Perkins and Webster Streets. Suggested trees would be *Quercus spp* (Oaks)and *Ulmus procera* (English Elm) to reinforce existing themes, as well as the character of the adjoining Leckie Park;

- iv) John Street and Shamrock Street, connecting the showgrounds and U.T. Creek Reserve. Suggested trees would be Quercus spp (Oaks) and Ulmus procera (English Elm) to reinforce existing themes;
- v) Vickery Street, where it adjoins U.T. Creek Reserve.
Suggested trees would be Platanus x acerifolia (London Plane), reflecting prominent existing trees within the northern part of Leckie Park;
- vi) Wattle Street, Pendlebury Street, Hall Street, forming the general boundary of the southern half of the central township area. Suggested trees would be Australian species such as Angophora costata (Smooth Barked Apple Gum), Eucalyptus maculata (Spotted Gum), Eucalyptus rubida (Candlebark) reflecting the “rural” interface prominent on the southern and eastern boundaries of the township;
- vii) Station Street, forming the north-eastern boundary of the central township area. Suggested trees would be Quercus spp (Oaks) and Ulmus procera (English Elm) to reinforce existing themes prominent in adjoining streets and parkland areas;
- viii) Cooper Street, which is an important east-west connecting street within the southern half of the township. Suggested trees would be medium height deciduous exotic trees, such as Pyrus (Ornamental Pear) Platanus orientalis “Digitata” (Cut-leaf Plane), Acer x freemanii (Maple);
- ix) General planting themes within residential streets.
 - The replacement of trees recently removed within Grant Street.
 - The presentation of significant buildings within the township, such as churches, civic buildings, hotels etc, ensuring that this presentation is not compromised by inappropriate tree selection or planting locations;
 - The reinforcement of the “natural system” of the U.T. Creek through the use of some indigenous plantings in nearby local streets.

Strategy 13 **Replace existing urban furniture**

Action 13A The replacement of existing urban furniture, (such as seats, bins, bollards, streetlights etc), throughout the town centre, particularly within the commercial, civic and educational precincts, to both update the image of the town centre and to reflect current standards of rubbish collection, access and mobility issues, and the aging population of the town. An overall strategy should be prepared, considering:

- Appropriate location for urban furniture elements within the streetscape, considering car parking, pedestrian access etc;
- Nomination of specific furniture elements, considering the built form and streetscape character of Alexandra. In general, the elements chosen should respect the heritage of the central township area, without appearing to be heritage elements in their own right, unless the original usage of such elements within Alexandra can be verified. In response, furniture elements should be of simple contemporary design, appropriate to both older and modern built forms. The following images represent examples of the type of furniture, utilising both timber and steel, which would be considered appropriate in this context.



- The colour of urban furniture, which should be recessive, rather than dominating, so as not to overwhelm more significant streetscape elements such as buildings and trees. In this regard, it is suggested that timber furniture elements should have a simple dark stain, and steel elements a dark burgundy powdercoat.

7.3 Traffic Management Strategies

Strategy 14 Increase car parking capacity

- Action 14A Create convenient pedestrian access from Grant Street to existing parking areas off Bayley Street (see Strategy 5).
- Action 14B Convert Webster Street to one-way operation in a southbound direction from Downey Street to Nihil Street to allow the installation of angle parking along the west side.
- Action 14C Investigate the potential for public parking at the Masonic Temple and ANZ bank.
- Action 14D Include on-site staff parking, accessed from Post Office Lane, as part of the proposed kindergarten relocation to Webster Street.
- Action 14E Implement the recommendations of the Review of Parking report:
- Introduce angle parking in Grant Street opposite Rotary Park
 - Provide long vehicle parking in Vickery Street along Rotary Park and in Bayley Street north of Downey Street adjacent to Hec Ingram Reserve
 - Formalise the ad-hoc parking along UT Creek Reserve at the RSL
 - Convert Webster Street to one-way operation in a northbound direction from Downey Street to Perkins Street to allow the installation of angle parking along the east side
 - Convert parallel parking in Perkins Street to angle east of Webster Street
 - Formalise parking at the bowling club
 - Upgrade direction and regulatory signing for parking.

Strategy 15 Undertake traffic improvements

- Action 15A Construct and seal the extension of Albert Street to service the industrial blocks along UT Creek, but do not extend to connect to Bayley Street.
- Action 15B Construct kerb extensions and threshold treatments in Webster Street at Downey Street, Nihil Street and at the mid-block school crossing.

Action 15C Make application to VicRoads for a 40 km/h strip shopping centre speed zone along Grant Street from Nihil Street to Downey Street and investigate the potential to extend this reduced speed zone north along the Maroondah Highway section of Grant Street to Vickery Street.

Strategy 16 Reduce congestion in the commercial/education precinct

Action 16 Any congestion in the education precinct is expected to be reduced by implementing the one-way operation along Webster Street (see Strategy 14).

Strategy 17 Install pedestrian crossings

Improve pedestrian facilities in Grant Street by:

Action 17A Upgrading the speed hump at Bakers Lane to comply with the VicRoads requirements for a Zebra Crossing and install tactile paving for disabled users.

Action 17B Providing pram crossings as part of UT Creek reserve improvements at the Grant Street Bridge. When pedestrian traffic increases to a level that meets VicRoads criteria, application should be made for a formal pedestrian crossing.

Strategy 18 Investigate long term options for a truck by-pass

Action 18A Develop an alternative truck bypass route to access industry to the northeast and to avoid the town's local road system by:

- Upgrading Endicott Lane and Crusoe Lane
- Extending Station Street to connect with Crusoe Lane

Strategy 19 Investigate options for existing Council land

Action 19A Consider alternative uses for the Council land at the rear of No 51 Bayley Street or dispose of the land.

Strategy 20 Increase provision of disabled car parking

Action 20A In consultation with mobility advocates, select appropriate locations to dedicate disabled parking bays in the central activity area to best suit the needs of disabled users, including access to services and safely negotiate the Grant Street/Downey Street intersection.

Action 20B Create footpath access for the designated disabled parking bay along the school frontage in Webster Street.

8. STAGING PROGRAM FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The staging program for implementation, including estimated costs and recommended timeframe (priority) is outlined in the following table. The estimated costs are indicative only at this stage, but include allowances for design, construction and project management, where appropriate.

The Strategy/Action numbers in the Table correspond to the numbered recommendations in the relevant section of the report.

Recommended timeframes are defined as follows:

Immediate = within 1-2 years

Short term = within 3-5 years

Medium term = 6-10 years

Long term = beyond 10 years

8.1 Land Use and Development Implementation

Strategies Actions	Estimated Cost	Timeframe
<p>S1. Develop public toilets within the retail precinct</p> <p>Action 1A. Develop public toilet facility in the car park at the end of Bakers Lane</p> <p>Action 1B. Install a modular self-cleaning, unisex toilet (Exceloo)</p>	\$100,000	Immediate
<p>S2. Relocate the kindergarten to the vacant land purchased by Council in the education precinct (Webster Street)</p> <p>Action 2B. Facilitate via land swap for existing kindergarten site and rezoning to PUZ</p>	Council Staff	Short Term
<p>S3. Re-develop the land fronting Bayley Street behind Grant Street in the retail precinct for commercial uses and car parking</p> <p>Action 3A. Prepare a masterplan and apply a Development Plan Overlay to the land fronting Bayley Street behind Grant Street to preserve the long term opportunity by landowners to re-develop the underutilised land in a co-ordinated manner</p>	Council Staff	Long Term
<p>S4. Further develop properties fronting Bakers Lane and the car park with commercial uses</p> <p>Action 4A. Apply a DDO or policy guidance to control the form and siting of development</p>	Council Staff	Immediate
<p>S5. Establish a pedestrian connection between Grant Street and Bayley Street</p> <p>Action 5A. In the short term, upgrade the pedestrian connection between Mt. Pleasant Hotel and Commonwealth Bank, by agreement with property owners</p> <p>Action 5B. In the longer term, support the owners around the middle of the Grant Street block if they wish to develop a retail arcade to improve the pedestrian linkage between Grant Street and Bayley Street</p>	<p>Permission must be gained by Council from private landowners.</p> <p>Investment by private developers, landowner, council will make in-kind staffing provisions.</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Long Term</p>
<p>S6. Investigate Alexandra's heritage values</p> <p>Action 6A. Ensure that the Shire's Heritage Study identifies the significance of individual buildings along Grant Street, as well as the streetscape as a whole; and other buildings of heritage significance in Alexandra, including Dove Cottage.</p> <p>Action 6B. Amend the planning scheme to apply the Heritage Overlay, following the study</p>	Already funded	Immediate

8.2 Open Space and Urban Design Implementation

Strategies Actions	Estimated Cost	Timeframe
<p>S7. Implement the UT Creek Master Plan</p> <p>Action 7A. Prepare an Implementation Strategy and cost schedule</p> <p>Progressively implement UT Creek Master Plan, in accordance with Implementation Strategy, involving the U.T. Creek Enhancement Community Support Group as an advisory body</p> <p>Modify planting to improve visual connection across Grant Street</p>	<p>Council Staff</p> <p>On going</p> <p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>On going</p> <p>Immediate</p>
<p>S8. Develop a “Drop in Centre” in the Youth Precinct</p> <p>Action 8A. Provides a safe supervised environment for children in Alexandra. This would be in youth precinct to further reinforce precinct.</p>		
<p>S9. Undertake a Master Plan for public land areas in the creek gully linking UT Creek Reserve to McKenzie Reserve</p>		
<p>S10. Enhance town entrances</p> <p>Maroondah Highway, from Healesville</p> <p>Action 10A. Investigate funding for undergrounding powerlines along the Maroondah Highway (southern) entrance to town.</p> <p>Action 10B. Prepare detailed masterplan</p> <p>Action 10C. Rezone the Residential 1 zoned land between Albert and Hall Streets (north side) to Business 4, with a DDO or policy guidance to control building form and siting.</p> <p>Action 10E. Upgrade Riversdale picnic area</p> <p>Maroondah Highway, from Yea</p> <p>Action 10F. Prepare detailed planting plan Implement planting plan</p> <p>Goulburn Valley Highway, from Eildon</p> <p>Action 10G. Prepare detailed planting plan Cost to implement planting plan</p>	<p>Council Staff</p> <p>\$10,000</p> <p>Council Staff</p> <p>\$10,000</p> <p>\$5,000</p> <p>\$20,000</p> <p>\$5,000</p> <p>\$20,000</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p>
<p>S11. Install facilities for the aging population</p> <p>Action 11A. Undertake a review of pedestrian access arrangements for the elderly and disabled within the Grant Street commercial precinct. Ensure that disabled access is provided in any redevelopment of buildings.</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>	<p>Short Term</p>

S12. Develop a Street Tree Strategy for the township, identifying preferred species and locations for planting. Implement strategy	\$10,000 \$50,000	Short Term Short Term
S13. Prepare strategy for replacement of urban furniture in the town centre, including type and design of furniture and locations. Implement strategy	\$5,000 \$15,000	Immediate Short Term

8.3 Traffic Management Implementation

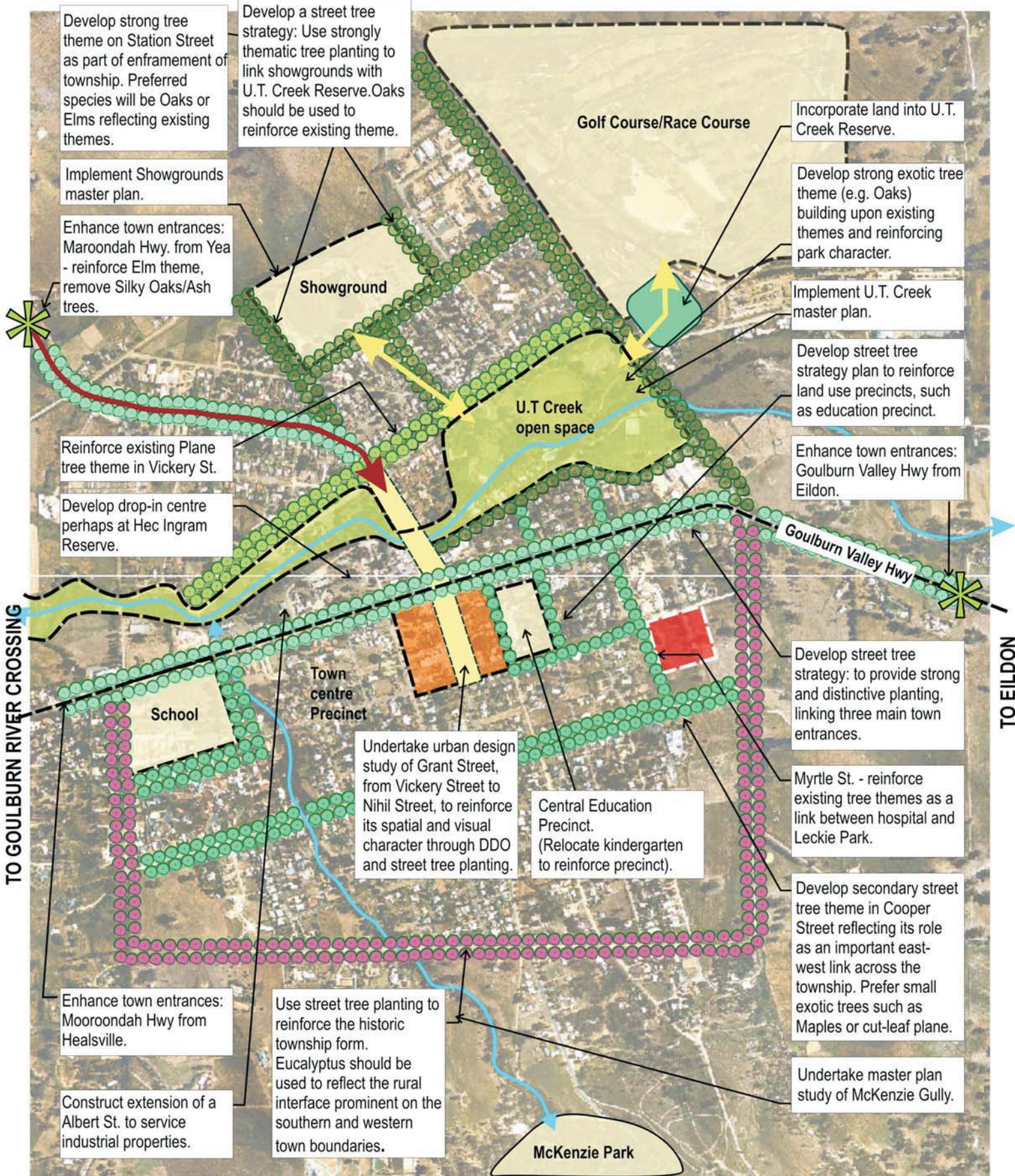
Strategies	Estimated Cost	Timeframe
S14. Increase car parking capacity		
Action 14A. Create convenient pedestrian access from Grant Street to parking areas in Bayley Street	\$1,000	Short term
Action 14B. Create angle parking in Webster St and convert to one-way operation	\$5,000	Short term
Action 14C. Investigate the potential for public parking at Masonic Temple and ANZ bank		
Action 14E. Implement recommendations from Parking Review previously undertaken by JPT	\$50,000	Immediate to long term
S15. Undertake Traffic Improvements		
Action 15A. Construct and seal Albert Street extension	\$15,000	Medium term
Action 15B. Construct curb extensions and threshold treatments in Webster Street at Downey, Nihil and mid-block.	\$20,000	Short term
Action 15C. Apply to VicRoads for a 40km/h speed zone along Grant Street from Nihil Street to Downey Street and investigate the potential to extend this reduced speed zone north along the Maroondah Highway section of Grant Street to Vickery Street.	Council Staff	Immediate
S16. Reduce congestion in commercial and education precinct		
Action 16A. Convert Webster Street to one-way operation	\$5,000	Short term
S17. Install pedestrian crossings		
Action 17A. Upgrade speed hump in Grant St (at Bakers Lane) to a Zebra Crossing. Install tactile paving for disabled users	\$15,000	Immediate
Action 17B. Install pram crossings from the UT Creek Reserve at the Grant Street Bridge	\$500	Immediate
S18. Investigate long term opportunities for a truck by-pass		
Action 18A. Develop alternative truck route via Endicott & Crusoe lane and Station St extension	\$500,000	Long term

Strategies	Estimated Cost	Timeframe
<p>S19. Investigate options for Council land at 51 Bayley Street</p> <p>Action 19A. Consider alternative uses or sell the land</p>	<p>Gain \$100,000</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>S20. Increase provision of disabled car parking</p> <p>Action 20A. Select appropriate locations for dedicated disabled parking bays in the commercial precinct</p> <p>Action 20B. Provide footpath access to the disabled bay along the school frontage in Webster St</p>	<p>\$500</p> <p>\$500</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Immediate</p>

9. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLANS

The following plans show the Urban Design Framework strategies. Specifically these plans relate to the:

- Alexandra Township
- Maroondah Highway entrance
- Alexandra Town Centre
- Proposed angle parking in Webster Street
- Proposed truck by-pass route.



Alexandra Urban Design Framework

Town Centre Context - Strategies

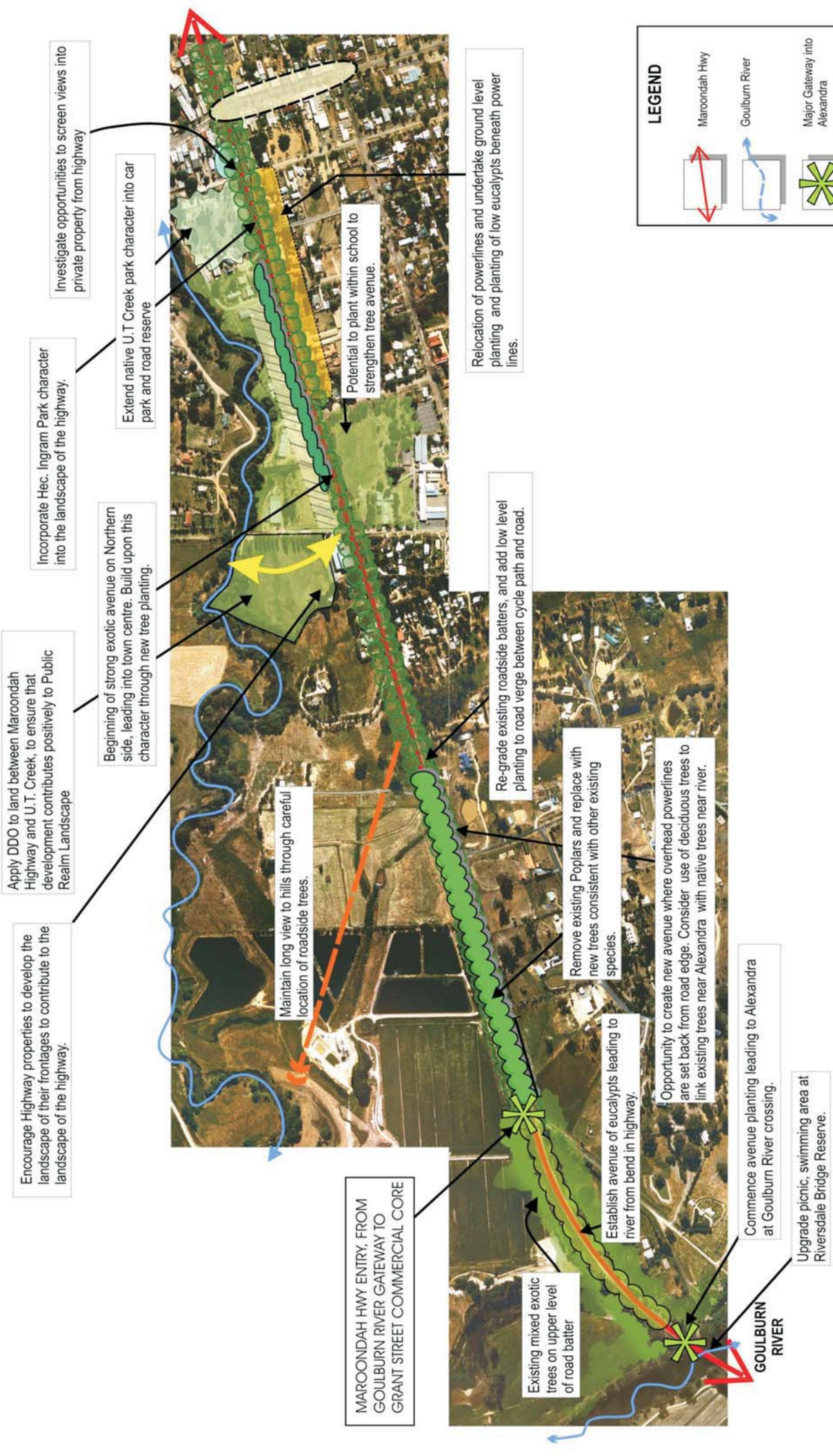
Prepared for Murrindindi Shire Council
by Urban Enterprise and Team
December 2005



LEGEND

- Maroondah Hwy
- Goulburn River
- Major Gateway into Alexandra
- U.T. Creek open space
- Entry from Yea





Encourage Highway properties to develop the landscape of their frontages to contribute to the landscape of the highway.

Apply DDO to land between Maroondah Highway and U.T. Creek, to ensure that development contributes positively to Public Realm Landscape

Incorporate Hec. Ingram Park character into the landscape of the highway.

Investigate opportunities to screen views into private property from highway

Beginning of strong exotic avenue on Northern side, leading into town centre. Build upon this character through new tree planting.

Extend native U.T. Creek park character into car park and road reserve

Maintain long view to hills through careful location of roadside trees.

MAROONDAH HWY ENTRY, FROM GOULBURN RIVER GATEWAY TO GRANT STREET COMMERCIAL CORE

Existing mixed exotic trees on upper level of road batter

Establish avenue of eucalypts leading to river from bend in highway.

Remove existing Poplars and replace with new trees consistent with other existing species.

Re-grade existing roadside batters, and add low level planting to road verge between cycle path and road.

Potential to plant within school to strengthen tree avenue.

Relocation of powerlines and undertake ground level planting and planting of low eucalypts beneath power lines.

Opportunity to create new avenue where overhead powerlines are set back from road edge. Consider use of deciduous trees to link existing trees near Alexandra with native trees near river.

Commence avenue planting leading to Alexandra at Goulburn River crossing.

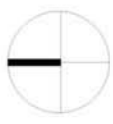
Upgrade picnic, swimming area at Riversdale Bridge Reserve.

LEGEND

- Maroondah Hwy
- Goulburn River
- Major Gateway into Alexandra
- U.T. Creek
- Grant Street Commercial core

Alexandra Urban Design Framework
Maroondah Highway Entry: Streetscape Improvement Strategy

Prepared for Murrumbidgee Shire Council
 by Urban Enterprise and Team

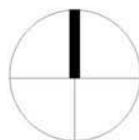


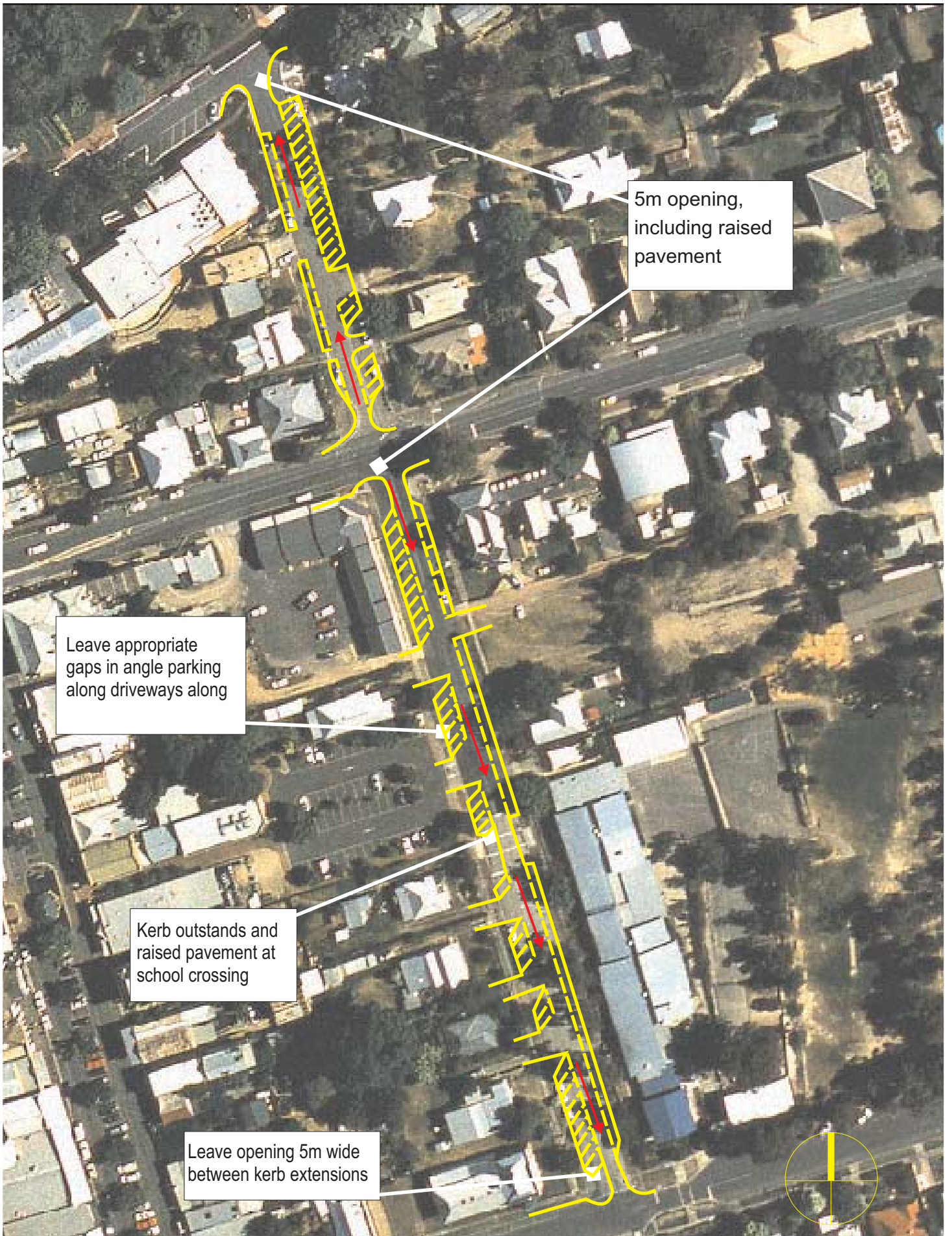


Alexandra Urban Design Framework

Town Centre Area: Key Strategies

Prepared for Murrindindi Shire Council
by Urban Enterprise and Team





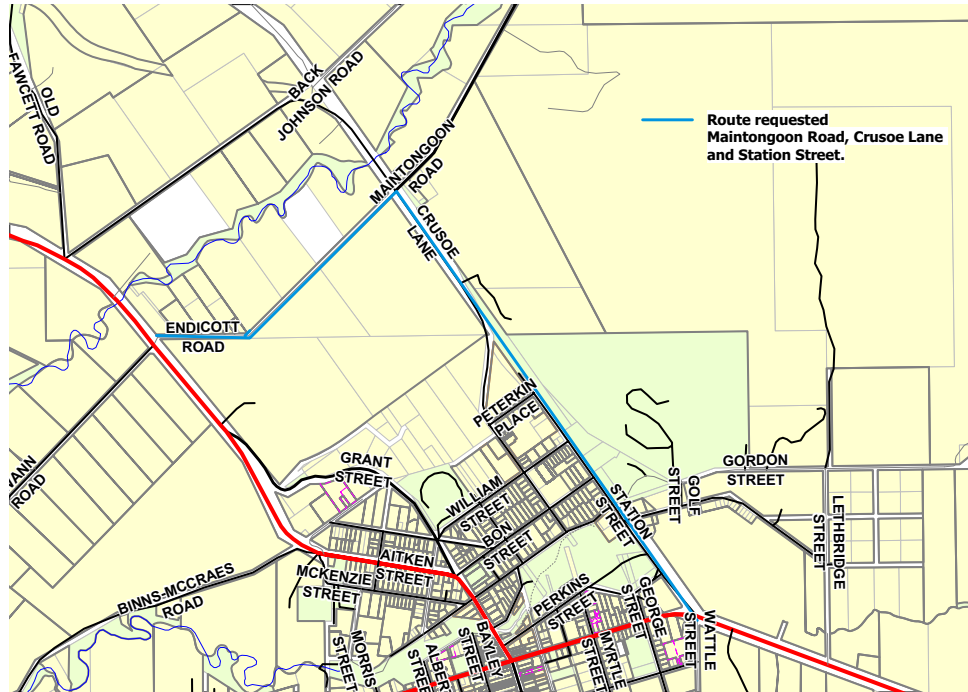
Alexandra Urban Design Framework

Webster Street - Car Parking Improvements

Prepared for Murrindindi Shire Council
by Urban Enterprise and Team



Map: Proposed Truck By-Pass
Bypass route highlighted in blue, below.



Please note: Continuation of the by-pass route in the north-west of the town (linking to Maroondah Highway) should be further investigated in the long term.

Appendix A.

PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The draft Urban Design Framework (UDF) was exhibited for a period of one month during October and November 2005. As part of this exhibition process, a questionnaire listing all of the strategies and actions in the draft UDF, was available to be completed by interested members of the community. The questionnaire sought people's opinion as to whether they agreed, disagreed or were unsure about each of the strategies and actions.

26 questionnaires were completed and returned to the Council. Not everyone provided a response for all strategies. Some people provided additional comments. A summary of the responses is provided in the Table below.

14 written submissions were made. A list of the submitters is provided below.

A summary of the comments made in the questionnaires and the written submissions is provided below.

Summary of Responses from Questionnaires

Land Use & Development							
	Strategy / Action	Agree	%	Undecided or Don't Know	%	Disagree	%
S1	Develop public toilets within the retail precinct	24	100%	0	0%	0	0%
A1a	Develop public toilet facility in the car park at the end of Bakers Lane	16	62%	5	19%	5	19%
A1b	Install a modular self-cleaning, unisex toilet (Exceloo)	8	36%	9	40%	5	24%
S2	Relocate the kindergarten to the vacant land purchased by Council in the education precinct (Webster Street)	26	100%	0	0%	0	0%
A2a	Facilitate via land swap for existing kindergarten site	22	85%	4	15%	0	0%
S3	Re-develop the land fronting Bayley Street behind Grant Street in the retail precinct for commercial uses and car parking	22	85%	3	11%	1	4%
A3a	Prepare a masterplan and apply a Development Plan Overlay to the land fronting Bayley Street behind Grant Street to preserve the long term opportunity by landowners to redevelop the underutilized land in a coordinated manner.	16	67%	8	33%	0	0%
A3b	Develop policy that stipulates Councils willingness to support an owner led redevelopment of the rear sections of Grant Street land parcels	12	80%	3	20%	0	0%
S4	Further develop properties fronting Bakers Lane and the car park with commercial uses	17	65%	6	23%	3	12%
A4a	Apply a Design Development Overlay to control the form and siting of development.	14	61%	8	35%	1	4%
S5	Establish a pedestrian connection between Grant Street and Bayley Street.	24	96%	0	0%	1	4%
A5a	In the short term, upgrade the pedestrian connection between Mt Pleasant Hotel and Commonwealth Bank, by agreement with property owners	23	95%	0	0%	1	5%
A5b	In the longer term, support the owners around the middle of the Grant Street block if they wish to develop a retail arcade to improve the pedestrian linkage between Grant Street and Bayley Street.	20	83%	3	13%	1	4%
S6	Investigate Alexandra's heritage values	21	88%	3	12%	0	0%
A6a	Ensure that the Shire's Heritage Study identifies the significance of individual buildings along Grant Street, as well as the streetscape as a whole; and other buildings of heritage significance in Alexandra, including Dove Cottage.	20	83%	4	17%	0	0%

Open Space and Urban Design Strategies							
	Strategy / Action	Agree	%	Undecided or Don't Know	%	Disagree	%
	Implement the UT Creek Master Plan						
S7		16	67%	8	33%	0	0%
A7a	Prepare an Implementation Strategy and cost schedule.	18	72%	7	28%	0	0%
	Develop a "Drop in Centre" in the Youth Precinct						
S8		15	65%	5	22%	3	13%
S9	Undertake a Master Plan for public land areas in the creek gully linking UT Creek reserve to McKenzie Reserve.	16	64%	8	32%	1	4%
S10	Enhance town entrances	21	88%	0	0%	3	12%
A10a	Investigate funding for undergrounding powerlines along the Maroondah Highway (western) entrance to town.	9	41%	10	45%	3	14%
A10b	Prepare detailed masterplan for landscaping of the Maroondah Highway (western and northern) entrances and the Goulburn Valley Hwy (eastern) entrance to town.	14	64%	4	18%	4	18%
A10c	Investigate rezoning of the Residential 1 zoned land west of Rose Street, to Business 4, with a DDO to control building form and siting.	7	30%	11	48%	5	22%
A10e	Upgrade Riversdale Picnic Area	18	85%	2	10%	1	5%
A10f	Prepare detailed planting plan along the Maroondah Highway (from Yea).	12	57%	7	33%	2	10%
A10g	Undertake traffic improvement works for Maroondah Highway (from Yea).	12	57%	7	33%	2	10%
A10h	Prepare and implement detailed planting plan for Goulburn Valley (from Eildon)	10	84%	1	8%	1	8%
S11	Install facilities for the aging population.	19	90%	2	10%	0	0%
A11a	Undertake a review of pedestrian access arrangements for the elderly and disabled within the Grant Street commercial precinct. Ensure that disabled access is provided in any redevelopment of buildings	20	91%	2	9%	0	0%
A11b	Replace footpaths in Grant Street commercial precinct	6	50%	4	33%	2	17%

Traffic Management Strategies							
	Strategy / Action	Agree	%	Undecided or Don't Know	%	Disagree	%
S14	Increase car parking capacity	13	68%	6	32%	0	0%
A14a	Create convenient pedestrian access from Grant St to parking areas in Bayley Street	20	91%	0	0%	2	9%
A14b	Create angle parking in Webster St and convert to one-way operation	13	54%	5	21%	6	25%
A14c	Investigate the potential for public parking at Masonic Temple and ANZ bank	16	70%	6	26%	1	4%
A14e	Implement recommendations from Parking Review previously undertaken by JPT.	7	39%	9	50%	2	11%
S15	Undertake Traffic Improvements						
A15a	Construct and seal Albert Street extension	13	62%	6	29%	2	9%
A15b	Construct kerb extensions and threshold treatments in Webster Street at Downey, Nihil and mid-block	11	50%	10	45%	1	5%
A15c	Apply to VicRoads for a 40 km/h speed zone along Grant Street from Nihil Street to Downey Street and investigate the potential to extend this reduced speed zone north along the Maroondah Highway section of Grant Street to Vickery Street.	18	82%	2	9%	2	9%
S16	Reduce congestion in commercial and education precinct	19	90%	2	10%	0	0%
A16a	Convert Webster Street to one-way operation	9	41%	8	36%	5	23%
S17	Install pedestrian crossings	18	82%	2	9%	2	9%
A17a	Upgrade speed hump in Grant St (at Bakers Lane) to a Zebra Crossing. Install tactile paving for disabled users	18	78%	2	9%	3	13%
A17b	Install pram crossings from the UT Creek Reserve at the Grant St Bridge	17	77%	2	9%	3	14%
S18	Investigate long term opportunities for a truck by-pass	19	79%	4	17%	1	4%
A18a	Develop alternative truck route via Endicott & Crusoie lane and Station St extension	15	63%	7	29%	2	8%
S19	Investigate options for Council land at 51 Bayley Street	14	61%	7	30%	2	9%

Summary of Comments From Questionnaires (not in any order)

Responses are shown in italics.

- Consideration should be given to a ten year planning review – *the UDF has a 15 year time horizon*
- Future housing subdivisions should be considered – *this is not part of the agreed scope for the UDF*
- Consideration for industry, action to be taken to increase employment possibilities - *this is not part of the agreed scope for the UDF*
- The plan should enhance the unique character of Alexandra. We have a lovely little shopping precinct without a major road going through it so hopefully this will keep the “village” atmosphere – *this is a major objective of the UDF*
- There needs to be a balance between the country town “feel” and public safety and amenity - *this is a major objective of the UDF*
- There is no demonstrated need for new commercial uses – there are always several vacant premises – *population growth over the next 15 years will require an increase in commercial uses*
- Need to keep the main street original. A mall from Webster to Bayley would disadvantage businesses north of Downey – *the UDF seeks to retain the character of the Grant Street retail precinct. Businesses north of Downey Street are of a different type to those in the retail precinct and should not be affected by an improvement to the precinct*
- Any further developments should be relevant to Alexandra - *this is a major objective of the UDF*
- Support public toilet issue. The ANZ Bank site should be considered – *the ANZ site is identified as a possible candidate site. However, for the reasons stated, the UDF recommends Baker Lane as the preferred site*
- Addressing the public toilet issue is overdue – *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- The kindergarten should be relocated to Webster Street - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- The kindergarten should be relocated to the Council land in Webster Street – the land should not be used for car parking - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Education precinct for pre-school age is pivotal to future planning Strongly recommend relocation of kindergarten to Webster Street - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- The kindergarten should be moved closer to the schools - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Putting Dindi and the kindergarten together is a great idea - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- It makes sense to relocate the kindergarten to the educational precinct - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Great opportunity to relocate the kindergarten - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- The kindergarten needs upgrading and it seems logical to move it closer to both Primary Schools - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*

- Strongly support the notion of building an “Early Childhood Precinct” in Webster St - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Dindi would benefit enormously to have its own dedicated facility, close to schools, kinder and the town centre - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Berry Street office would be a more appropriate location for a drop in centre – *the UDF recommends consolidating youth facilities in the youth precinct*
- Strongly support the implementation of the UT Creek master plan - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- More bike and walking tracks - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Photos of the main street in the 1800’s-early 1900’s have eucalypts lining the street
- Uniform signage (with character) eg. Marysville would be pleasing - *this is a recommendation in the UDF*
- Should seal the road in Rose St, the dust is a real problem – *should be considered by Council as part of its capital works program, not really an issue for the UDF*
- There is enough industrial land – *not part of the scope for the UDF*
- Has consideration been given to sealing the road verges in Perkins St. outside the swimming pool - *should be considered by Council as part of its capital works program, not really an issue for the UDF*
- No need for additional car parking – *the UDF identifies opportunities for additional parking having regard to growth over the next 15 years*
- Zebra crossing in Grant Street is not as important if reduced speed limits are adopted - *the consultation process identified a strong need for both initiatives*
- Understand the need for more parking in Webster Street but angle parking in Webster St should be on the “council” side of the street, not the residential side
- Would angle parking in Webster street be dangerous for children coming and going from kindergarten or school?
- There should be a formal pedestrian crossing at the Library, not just pram crossings – *a pedestrian crossing is highly unlikely to meet VicRoads criteria for need.*
- Prefer to bypass Alexandra completely and have a truck route from near the cemetery meet Maroondah Hwy near the sewerage treatment plant i.e. keep trucks out of Downey St and Grant St intersection.

List of People Who Made a Written Submission

Name	Organisation
Peter Rice	Member of UDF Steering Committee
Kylie Cairns	
Heather Byrne	Chief Executive Officer/ Director of Nursing Alexandra District Hospital
Maurice Pawsey	Member of UDF Steering Committee
Rowena Naufal	
Jody Collins	Murrindindi Family Resource Program Inc (commonly known as 'Dindi')
Joan A Edwards (Semmens)	
Marian Rice and Andrew Rice	
Jason Parker	
Margie Wright	Director of the Alexandra and District Kindergarten
Robert McNair	McNair's Hotel
Maureen and Steve Cody	Alexandra Australia Post Office
	The Committee of Management Alexandra & District Kindergarten Inc
Peter Waterhouse	Alexandra & District Kindergarten Committee

Substantive Comments Made in Written Submissions

Issue:

- Support proposal to use Council land in Webster Street for a children's centre (7 submissions). Occupiers of the Post Office support the proposal

Response:

- No change needed to UDF

Issue:

- Support proposal to develop public toilets in the retail precinct, but toilets should be in Grant Street, not the Bakers Lane car park. The land between the ANZ Bank and the Berry Street shop should be considered.

Response:

- The ANZ Bank is identified as a candidate site. Both sites meet the criteria identified for the siting and location of public toilets, with one exception – the Bakers Lane car park site is immediately available and is owned by Council. The ANZ Bank land is privately owned and is used as the staff entry to the Bank. Issues would need to be resolved in terms of the provision of long term tenure to Council over part of the land and possibly in terms of relocating the staff entry to the Bank. The resolution of these issues would take time and would incur costs. It may not be possible to resolve all of the issues. Given the frustration of the community that nothing has been done in respect of the toilet issue for so long, the ability to develop the toilets immediately is an important factor. For these reasons, the Bakers Lane car park is the preferred site.

Issues:

- Call for formal pedestrian crossing at UT Creek Bridge.

Response:

- Current levels of pedestrian traffic do not meet VicRoads' warrants for a formal crossing. The location of pram crossings can be sited to provide optimum visibility. In the longer term, if pedestrian traffic increases, the need for a formal pedestrian crossing can be revisited. The report has been amended to clarify this position.

Issue:

- Road names involved in Truck OD Route are incorrect - Crusoe Lane should be Maintongoon Road.

Response:

- The road names in the report are consistent with Council maps and the VicRoads Directory and have been confirmed in discussions with Council's engineering staff.

Issue:

- Objection to use of existing parallel parking bay adjacent to Hotel for use by V/Line bus

Response:

- Suggestion was included as a possible longer term strategy in the event that the McKenzie Bus Depot is relocated thereby presenting an opportunity to review parking along the west side of Grant Street. The V/Line bus makes a transit stop (pick up & drop off) for 5 minutes each day and causes negligible nuisance. Any change to the arrangements that exist at present would need to be made in consultation with landowners.

Issues:

- Lane beside Dental Surgery is private access to rear of No 20 Webster Street
- Concerned over potential loss of second driveway from Webster Street to the corner property at No 26 Perkins Street

- Query the need for additional parking for retail customers. Proposals will detract from residential amenity
- Suggest increased use of parking at RSL and Bowling Club
- Creation of angle parking in Perkins Street would increase congestion and reduce safety. Perkins Street is too narrow for angle parking
- Increased parking will reduce the view of the houses in Perkins Street
- There is no congestion that requires fixing with one-way traffic flow in Webster Street
- Angle parking is not suited to large vehicles
- Angle parking will detract from neighbourhood atmosphere
- Objection to closure of side access to No 26 Perkins Street
- One-way operation in Webster Street will be confusing for motorists in Perkins Street and reduce safety for pedestrians at the intersection
- One-way operation in Webster Street will cause confusion at Downey Street
- Angle parking will detract from the view of Jack Shiel Gardens

Responses:

- Mention of potential use of laneway beside the dental surgery has been removed from report.
- The possibility of closing the second driveway to 26 Perkins St to increase on-road parking has been removed from the report.
- Additional parking is not for retail customers but for staff at Council offices. This matter has been further clarified in the report. Increased parking for Council staff is unlikely to change nature of the streetscape.
- Improvements to existing parking at RSL and Bowling Club are already in the report.
- Suggested angle parking in Perkins Street is intended to be indented into the nature strip and not result in any reduction of traffic lane width.
- Change from parallel to angle parking will not alter the view of the houses.
- Aim is to increase parking capacity by converting one side to angle parking. This requires reduction of carriageway width in Webster Street and introduction of one-way traffic flow. Indented parking will not alter width available to traffic. Angle parking will improve efficiency of parking manoeuvres and reduce congestion.
- Parking strategy includes provision for long/towing vehicle parking at designated and signed locations.
- Angle parking for Council staff will not change the character of the neighbourhood.
- No Entry signing at north end of Webster Street should not cause confusion and the consequent reduction in traffic movements will allow the intersection to operate more safely.

- There is no impediment to vehicle entry into Webster Street from Downey Street, either to the north or south, so there should be no confusion at this intersection. The prohibition on exit movements from Webster Street into Downey Street will further improve the safe operation of the intersection.
- Angle parking will not affect the views of Jack Shiel Gardens.