

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Small Towns Strategy

WHAT IS THE SMALL TOWNS STRATEGY?

Over the last two decades Council has conducted extensive strategic planning work to guide the future growth and character of the region responding to the variety in size, infrastructure provision, history and community needs of each of the local towns surrounding Hamilton.

Accordingly, the specific strategic direction for each town, outlining a vision, existing assets, challenges, and a future plan for service and infrastructure delivery needs to be reviewed and updated.

The limitations in funding and resources available to Council means that creative approaches to service and infrastructure delivery are required.

Strategic thinking is necessary to determine how to best balance investment across the towns with projected growth and those experiencing population decline, while ensuring communities have fair access to the facilities and services necessary for liveability.

To do this, it is important to understand how each community uses the facilities in their town, what they need and value, and how/where they access services not available locally.

The vision for each town outlined in this Small Towns Strategy will enable each of our towns to complement and support one another to provide the services, infrastructure and opportunities necessary to ensure the wellbeing of the Shire's residents for years to come.

NEXT STEPS?

The project team is now pleased to exhibit this draft Small Towns Strategy to the community for a final engagement period.

Feedback on the document and on township priorities can be sent through to planning@sthgrampains.vic.gov.au.

All feedback received will be considered by Council prior to adoption of the Strategy early next year.





Key items in Strategy (more detail pages 88-100).

CONSIDERATIONS

Community Infrastructure and Services

- The Police Station in Dunkeld is nearing the end of its use.

Lifestyle and character

- Dunkeld does not currently have a supermarket equipped to meet demand of both locals and visitors.
- Community Spaces appealing to a range of demographics are lacking or sub-standard.
- Dunkeld lacks rental housing for key workers, hospitality staff and other temporary workers.
- Dunkeld lacks tourist and visitor accommodation

Access, Connection and Transport

- High-speed road environment to the Glenelg Hwy (B160) is lacking in safe crossing points for pedestrians.
- Lack of recreation activities for children and older youth
- Footpaths on main streets in town are either of poor quality or are lacking entirely.

Infrastructure (servicing)

- There is no sewerage design and the cost of reticulated sewerage outweigh the financial benefit.
- Drainage and flood liability is an ongoing issue, primarily relating to the current functionality the swale drains present in much of the town.
- Power lines negatively impact the entrance to the town along key entry roads, and impact greening and amenity of the streets.

Natural Values and Open Space

- Native vegetation is protected throughout the town boundary as well as residential lots outside the boundary.
- FFG protection covers the majority of the town boundary and lots without.
- There are limitations around the restricted areas where the Salt Creek can be crossed and connectivity issues when these are compromised.

OPPORTUNITIES

The following list of opportunities was developed to reflect previous strategic work and community engagement results.

Community Infrastructure and Services

- Improve recreational and leisure facilities through:
 - Deliver improvements to pool and increase activities.
 - Improving primary school oval
 - Deliver toilets and exercise equipment around Arboretum.
 - Deliver skate/bike park and rock-climbing wall.
- Increase childcare services.
- Invest in emergency infrastructure and services.
 - Deliver an integrated emergency service hub.
 - Invest in police station.
- Support the delivery of a supermarket on main street.

- Foster sport, culture and community events
 - Invest in infrastructure (such as the Racing Club)
 - Support community events (such as the Dunkeld Enduro bike race).

Lifestyle and character

- Provide greater housing diversity in town to support key workers and tourism.
 - Support delivery of small footprint and affordable housing
- Invest more in tourism.
 - Support delivery of more affordable overnight accommodation options (i.e., a backpackers or expansion of the caravan park)
 - Build eco-tourism-wellness and food related tourism.
 - Deliver more retail geared towards users of Peaks Trail (such as hiking equipment, food drops and transport options)
- Facilitate a registered training organization to provide full-time training opportunities within town.
- Improve amenity of public realm and green spaces
 - Repair raised garden beds on Parker Street
 - Glass screens for outdoor dining
- Celebrate history.
 - Introduce wayfinding signage.
 - Introduce dual street names to reflect Aboriginal history.
 - Provide historical information at key sites (linked to app with audio).

Access, Connection and Transport

- Improve footpaths and bike paths - Investigate areas to enhance existing connections and improve safety.
- Make Parker Street more pedestrian friendly - Introduce traffic calming measures.
- Provide additional car parking - Investigate appropriateness of delivering parking at 75 Parker Street and 83 Willis Street sites.
- Advocate to department of transport to monitor speeds of logging trucks.
 - Support implementation on both Main Road and Victoria Valley Road.
- Deliver additional electric vehicle charging stations.
 - Identify appropriate and feasible locations.
 - Ensure new infrastructure does not negatively impact amenity.

Infrastructure (servicing)

- Deliver improved water servicing.
 - Invest in the development of a raw water network in town.
 - Deliver community water tanks in non-reticulated areas.
- Improve waste management.
 - Provide additional facilities for residents and in public realm for visitors to Grampians National Park.
 - Provide separated recycling.
 - Implement education programs.

Natural Values and Open Space

- Improve safety against bushfire risk.
 - Improving access and egress routes.
 - Improving telecommunications infrastructure.
 - Address excess grass loading on streetscape (with regard to native vegetation).
- Highlight environmental values.
 - Introduce township trail to provide information on surrounding environment.
 - Mark the points which where the town grid intersects with Salt Creek to enhance connections.
- Deliver native tree planting along main street.
- Invest in drainage study.

Key Aspects to be Updated in Strategic Planning Documentation

- See Council 2018 review (p.30) – Schedule 6 to the Design and Development Overlay (Dunkeld Larger Lot Residential Areas). In the case of Design and Development Overlay 6, the Schedule has been written to require a permit for all buildings and works. This was not the intended outcome of the Schedule. The Schedule needs to be re-written to explicitly state that a permit is not required except for specific works (and these need to be measurable). This is an urgent issue as it is having implications on Council's resources and delaying simple works.
- Retain existing Farming Zone on approaches to town; transition land use densities towards the threshold of the Grampians by rezoning parcels of land (excluding parcels closest to Victoria Valley Road) on the northern side Taylor Street currently in the Township Zone to Low Density
- Residential Zone or Rural Living Zone; Rezone 'main street' section of Parker street to CIZ to encourage consolidation of business uses and reduce permit requirements; retain existing flexibility in current land use zoning to allow for appropriate commercial development; develop design guidelines for new industrial development – apply DDO as part of any industrial zoning; rezoning appropriate land to LDRZ to offset rezoning undertaken to reflect environmental constraints; rezone land currently in smaller lots within the FZ at the eastern and western edges of town to RLZ . See 5.1 of Structure Plan for further proposed change to zones and overlay controls.
- Potential conflicts between land uses allowed under the Township Zone and the management of these conflicts. (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Need for more larger lot and 'rural lifestyle' residential opportunities. (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014)
- Opportunity for growth is encouraged primarily as infill development within the Township Zone – through existing lots within the town which have the potential for easy re-subdivision. (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Opportunity to protect the existing character of the town through the provision of 'design guidelines' responding to the character of different types of development, and implemented through a series of Design and Development Overlays. (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Opportunity identified for 'greenfield' type development within Dunkeld through the subdivision of existing larger lots within the boundaries
- of the town. Two areas are identified – an area to the north (in the 'northern residential precinct') and one to the south (around the Templeton Street / Recreation Road intersection) (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Opportunity for other types of residential growth in the adjoining areas through the introduction of the Rural Living Zone, on the basis of a 6ha minimum subdivision size for these areas. (Identified issue – Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).

- A Traffic & Pedestrian Management Plan is an initiative from the Dunkeld Structure Plan (2014).
- Challenges to the management of development within the town in relation to the threat of wildfire from the Grampians and also the threshold to the Wannon River floodplain. (Identified issue - Dunkeld Structure Plan, 2014).
- Significant review of the Dunkeld Structure Plan needs to be linked to seeing the effect of the Grampians Peak Trail on tourism, retail and land use needs in Dunkeld. (Data on the effect of GPT on Dunkeld is likely to emerge in next 2-3 years).
- Ensure a delicate mix of local and tourism services ensuring local sense of place is not eroded.
- Create a safer, more accessible and convenient environment that is not dominated by vehicles.
- Residential or service vehicles accessing the Township are contained in discreet and well-concealed car parking courts off the main street.
- Pursue the occasional infilling of inactive/non-contributory sites with responsive contemporary architecture containing ground level retail activity.
- Undertake a desktop scan of all existing UDFs and key points which inform future planning of each settlement.
- Dunkeld has a structure plan. Provide gaps analysis of existing strategic planning work (structure plans or other key docs) developed across all small towns, identifying any changes refinements required. This would also examine UDFs and have regard to the issues identified in existing community plans. Review recently collected feedback on Council Plan 2021-2025 as to local priorities.