BARWON HEADS STRUCTURE PLAN
Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong
Adopted March 2010
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PART A STRUCTURE PLAN

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Structure Plan

This Structure Plan is a strategic framework for the future development of the Barwon Heads township.

The purpose of the Structure Plan is to identify the key strategic planning issues facing the township, including community aspirations and needs, and to articulate the preferred future directions including the location of a settlement boundary and identification of appropriate planning controls.

An Urban Design Framework (UDF) has previously been prepared for the township. The role of the UDF is to provide specific direction regarding the development of public spaces, including improvement to open space areas, linkages and streetscapes. The research undertaken through the UDF and its final content included directions and objectives relating to the urban form and character of the town, the key elements of which are referenced in this Structure Plan.

Note: This version of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan was adopted by Council on the 23 March 2010 following adoption of Planning Scheme Amendment C159 to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme which resulted in a number of changes to the December 2007 version of the Structure Plan relating in particular to the treatment of Stage C of the Thirteenth Beach Resort site and climate change information. Minor changes have also been made including map corrections, strategy and planning scheme control updates including the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 and MSS review amendment C129.

1.2 How will this plan be used?

The Structure Plan is primarily a tool to be used by the City of Greater Geelong to determine the application of local planning policy, zones and overlays and the consideration of applications for planning permits and rezonings. Council will also reference the document when examining the future roll out of infrastructure and services.

Through its implementation, the Plan will create greater certainty for the residents and landowners regarding the future directions of the township over the next ten years.

1.3 Plan Components


Part A contains the Structure Plan which includes principles and directions in response to the key influences identified in the background report, for each of the following key themes:

- Urban Growth
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Natural Environment
- Economic Development and Employment
- Rural Areas
Part B contains a program for implementing the Structure Plan including the undertaking of other strategic work and future review of this Structure Plan.

Part C provides the foundation and contextual information for the Structure Plan and identifies the issues, opportunities and constraints facing the township, under the following headings:

- Policy Context
- Natural and Urban Environment
- Demographics & Social Profile
- Township Facilities and Services
- Physical Infrastructure and Transport
- Village Centre Growth, Residential Lot Supply and Further Development

1.4 The Study Area

For the purposes of the Structure Plan, Map 1 identifies the boundaries of the study area. The study area extends beyond the existing urban area of Barwon Heads to consider the role and future use of land to the west of the existing urban zones and the rural interface.

The study area also extends up to the western edge of the Thirteenth Beach Residential Estate & Golf Course, to consider the future development of Stage C of this development, the land east of Lings Road.
Map 1 - Study Area
2.0 Key Influences

The background report identifies and discusses in detail key issues, opportunities and constraints under the following headings which assist in determining the key directions of the Structure Plan.

2.1 Policy Context

- Barwon Heads is not a designated growth location for conventional residential or rural residential growth within Council’s Municipal Strategic Statement;
- Barwon Heads is not a designated location for intense commercial or industrial development;
- There is a need to nominate a clear growth boundary. Various sensitive environments and landscape features need to be protected and enhanced as appropriate;
- Barwon Heads and its surrounding area hold significant values for Indigenous cultural heritage and it is important that both the community and land managers recognise and protect these values;
- There is strong State and Local Planning Policy direction for:
  - the protection of coastal environments;
  - the protection of rural environments and agricultural activities;
  - enhancement of design and built form of the township including the application of a range of statutory planning controls;
  - planning to manage coastal hazards and the coastal impacts of climate change.
- There is a need to provide direction relating to traffic and parking issues within the township;
- Opportunities exist for enhancement of open space, recreational facilities and linkages;
- There is a need to ensure retail growth is consistent with the established retail hierarchy but which also provides for incremental growth as appropriate;
- There is a need to provide community facilities commensurate with community needs and sustainability of service provision.
2.2 Natural and Urban Environment

- The potential impacts associated with climate change including sea level rise and storm events on future settlement planning and development;
- Enhancement and protection of significant landscape and sensitive environmental setting;
- The need to appropriately manage the environment and landscape to conserve and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage values;
- Support for on-going management by public land managers of significant landscape and environmental features;
- Opportunity to protect and enhance key views and vistas;
- Opportunity to enhance and identify a preferred character for the commercial centre with the development of an Overlay and Local Policy which establishes broad principles and directions relating to built form and land use;
- Opportunity to control form of development and vegetation removal on residential properties in the river environs;
- Need for further strategic assessment to support the introduction of additional design and/or landscape planning controls over the Ewing Blyth/Golf Links Road area and the Warrenbeen Court;
- Ability to further protect the character of Stephens Parade, through application of the Low Density Residential Zone.

2.3 Demographics and Social Profile

- Average proportion of older residents and residents living alone requiring community and social services;
- Moderate dwelling vacancy rate and seasonal influx of large numbers of non-permanent residents and holiday-makers;
- Dwelling vacancy rate is decreasing, representing increased permanent population and resulting in pressure on community and social services;
- Car reliant population with the majority of people driving to work, including those persons who work within the town;
- Community survey revealed high proportion of newer residents, living in Barwon Heads less than ten years, and community opinion about frequency of public transport and poor supply of car parking.
2.4 Township Facilities and Services

- Single retail centre which provides for basic community needs and non-essential retail services;
- Reliance on region-wide social and community service provision;
- Opportunity to broadly support recommendations of the Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan to improve range of community support services;
- No forecast need to provide additional education facilities in town;
- Previous studies considered that the amount of open space within the town is sufficient;
- Opportunity to support recommendations of previous studies to enhance open space and recreation areas and further develop and improve linkages between existing range of recreational facilities;
- Tourism is a significant component of the local economy and opportunities exist to support and improve tourist accommodation options, tourism activities and uses which help broaden the tourism visitation period and improvements of facilities and access to the beach, waterway and environmental areas.

2.5 Transport and Physical Infrastructure

- Identified urban stormwater runoff threats to sensitive environments;
- Limited public transport coverage, both within and external to the township;
- Opportunity to improve the limited pedestrian and bicycle linkages throughout the township and within open space areas;
- Opportunity to make improvements to parking supply and use;
- Some opportunity for Council to improve road safety within the township;
- Opportunity to provide for more sustainable travel options within and to the township.

2.6 Village Centre Growth, Residential Lot Supply and Further Development

- Opportunity to provide for growth of the Village Centre;
- Existing pressure to expand western edge of township to convert rural land to residential use;
- Potential for some community benefit by way of expanded community services through the rezoning of land on the western edge;
- Direction from State and Local Planning Policies and strategies to protect significant coastal areas and their character.
3.0 The Plan

3.1 Vision

A vision for the township was developed during the preparation of the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan (BPSP), as follows:

“In the year 2016 Barwon Heads will be a unique, sustainable, residential and environmental hub; a landlocked community surrounded by pristine river, coast and wetlands. An intimate community which supports all age groups and provides a place of belonging for residents and visitors alike; where human impact is managed to support the fragile natural surroundings by:

- Clearly defined limitations on urban development
- Protecting and nurturing natural surroundings by managing human footprint
- Supporting walking, cycling, fishing, sailing, surfing, swimming and generally enjoying what our coastal village has to offer in an environmentally sensitive way”.

The UDF also included a vision for the township, which summarised the community’s aspirations for the future of the township and helped to canvass exactly what the urban design framework should achieve:

“A place that is defined by the natural landscape features that surround it – the Bellarine Peninsula’s ‘island’ community.

A town of diverse character where development is largely nestled into the coastal vegetation, or if development is not tucked away, it is honestly expressed and well designed.

A place where the informal qualities are retained, because it is these elements that give the town its special character, and where the interface of the town with the ocean, wetlands, river and rural land demonstrates an environmental sensitivity.

A township where people can walk safely, and experience a strong sense of nearness to the water through buildings and vegetation that highlight the coastal environment and unique landforms.

A place where a diverse and environmentally aware community want to live and visit”.

For Barwon Heads to achieve the visions established in the UDF and BPSP a shift to progressive, environmentally aware behaviour and actions is required from the community and its visitors. The topography and layout of the town provides tremendous opportunities for Barwon Heads to become a town which operates as a ‘sustainable village’, where protection of the sensitive environmental features and walking and cycling are parts of everyday life.

People are attracted to the town for its sensitive landscape, its river and coastal setting and scenic pedestrian environment, which are important features that need to be protected, to ensure that the very essence of the town’s attractiveness is not lost.

3.2 Role of the Township

Barwon Heads has many different roles, however its two main roles are as a commuter residential area for Geelong and the other as a holiday destination.

The town is not identified as a growth location within Council’s Urban Growth or Rural Residential strategies, for conventional or rural residential development, nor as a location for extensive commercial or industrial activity.
The sensitive coastal, environmental and rural setting of the township, and associated State and Local Planning Policies, preclude extensive township growth, while local services and facilities are generally limited to those which provide for daily needs and requirements, with a limited range of tourist and visitor related amenities.

3.3 Principles and Directions

The structure plan identifies principles (objectives) and directions (strategies) relating to the key planning themes:

- Urban Growth
- Infrastructure
- Settlement and Housing
- Natural Environment
- Economic Development and Employment
- Rural Areas

3.3.1 Urban Growth

Proposals have been put forward for the land on the south side of Barwon Heads Road to be rezoned residential, whilst providing for substantial setbacks from Murtnaghurt Lagoon. This land appears physically capable of providing an expansion to the township, subject to the imposition of a range of planning and environmental provisions. Arguments put forward in support of the application include the position that a relatively small increase in housing on this land alone would be unlikely seriously impact on the “coastal village” atmosphere of the township or overburden existing infrastructure and services.

While the rezoning of land on the northern side of Barwon Heads Road has not been received as formal rezoning requests the same conditions as outlined by the applicants on the south side of Barwon Heads Road could also be imposed on this land, to ensure that it also represents a development of the highest environmental sensitivity. Similarly, negotiations between Council and the developers could result in significant parcels of land being set aside for open space and recreation or other community services. Given the low lying nature of the land on the north side of Barwon Heads Road it is assumed that this area is more susceptible to overland flows and flooding however, it is considered that measures could be proposed to mitigate these issues.

The detailed development of Stage C of Thirteenth Beach resort, that land zoned Comprehensive Development Zone east of Lings Road, is an unresolved matter, which this Structure Plan seeks to address. In its original form both Stages B and C, which are adjacent to the main development in Stage A, were to be developed as an Agriculture – Model Farm. It is acknowledged that a recent Council decision considered further urban development on Stage B (Amendment C54) as being appropriate despite not being envisaged by the original rezoning of the land. Urban development of Stage B, while contrary to the original concept of the Tomara Resort, is considered acceptable as it represents an extension of the existing development of Stage A, with a shared entrance from Barwon Heads Road and a set of linked golf course holes, in conjunction with a linked built form.
At the time of adopting Amendment C54 Council included provisions in the Amendment regarding the development of Stage C, requiring that there be no development or buildings to be used as accommodation or commercial purpose. An additional purpose was also added to the Schedule which accompanied the Amendment, as follows:

“To ensure the development and use of the land east of Lings Road reinforces the non-urban break between the Barwon Heads Township and the Thirteenth Beach Resort”.

In advising Council of approval of Amendment C54 the Minister for Planning agreed with Council regarding the strict limitations to be placed on the Stage C land and urged Council to reflect this outcome in the new Barwon Heads Structure Plan.

Key factors for determining township growth and further development includes:

- State and local strategies, including the Victorian Coastal Strategy and Council’s Urban Growth Strategy;
- Net Community benefit;
- Location constraints;
- Township vision, role and function

Given the identified key influences, including a sensitive environmental setting and State and Local planning policy directions to maintain a compact urban form, it is appropriate to define a Settlement Boundary for Barwon Heads.

Taking into account the analysis included in Part C of this Structure Plan the rezoning of land for urban purposes between Murtnaghurt Lagoon and the existing residential edge and also the urban development of land at Stage C of 13th Beach Golf and Residential Resort is not supported. It is therefore appropriate that the Settlement Boundary for the town be established at the existing urban edge and that the land at Stage C be either rezoned to the appropriate rural zone or the Comprehensive Development Zone retained (consistent with the recommendations of the C159 Panel Report) but developed in a manner which achieves a net environmental benefit and is principally golf course related. It is considered that urban development outside of the existing boundary would irrevocably erode the “village” atmosphere of the town and undermine the vision of the town in 2016, which aspires to be a place ‘where human impact is managed to support the fragile natural surroundings’.

Fundamentally, it is not the physical capability of the land which is at question but the lack of strategic imperative for Barwon Heads to be subject to further growth and development. Rezoning and development of any parcel of land on the western fringe of the township has the potential to create an undesirable precedent along the whole western boundary of the township, with the prospect of further substantial urban growth to the extent that the village atmosphere of the township would be threatened and its centralised services and facilities seriously over-stretched.

It is acknowledged that any development of land on the western edge could be designed to be “hidden” from view, thus minimising visual intrusion on the landscape. However, attempts to minimise the visual intrusion of urban form, with the provision of setbacks and minimal access points, would lead to the development of isolated urban areas which lack connections to the broader township given limited connection points.
While some community benefit could be achieved through the rezoning of land to residential (ie. expanded sporting facilities, land for aged care and children’s services) these benefits do not outweigh the broader policy objectives. Advice from service authorities has stated that, at this time, there is no need to provide additional or expanded services within Barwon Heads, including education facilities. Ocean Grove has a significant role to play in the supply of secondary community and commercial services to Barwon Heads, now and in the future, as will Armstrong Creek. Residential growth into peripheral, poorly connected sites, is contrary State and Local Planning policies which support the development of centrally located facilities and services which can be efficiently accessed by the wider community.

The argument that western growth on the south side of Barwon Heads Road represents infill between the town and Thirteenth Beach resort is not considered justified as Thirteenth Beach is intended to be predominantly a recreational tourist facility in a golf links and rural setting.

Limiting further urban development in Barwon Heads also takes into account the potential impacts of climate change and the Precautionary Principle advocated by the Coastal Spaces report. Given its location and the history of flood events, the township will be particularly vulnerable to any effects of climate change. Although further information is required on climate change, it is considered that the ‘no-risk’ approach should be adopted for Barwon Heads, to avoid compounding the problem in the future. It is acknowledged that much of the land that will potentially be effected by climate change is located within the existing urban area and that the land on the southern side of the Barwon Heads Road will be less vulnerable to the impacts, given its elevated topography, nonetheless the effects of storm events and flooding will effect the land adjacent to Murtnaghurt Lagoon.

Arguments that further growth is required to maintain lot supply and housing affordability are not supported. Land supply in Barwon Heads must be considered in the context of the role and function of the settlement within the wider municipality. Barwon Heads is not designated as a growth location and is in fact situated between two areas which are strategically supported for further urban development; Ocean Grove and Armstrong Creek. These two locations have long been designated to accommodate the future expected growth in Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula, in order that other smaller coastal towns and sensitive environments can be protected. The release of some land could potentially result in market competition in Barwon Heads, however the effects on prices would be short-lived. Likewise, whether the price of this land would be realistically affordable is not within the control of the regulatory framework.

It is considered that further development in Barwon Heads does not meet the criteria of the Victorian Coastal Strategy, which states that further urban development in coastal areas should only be supported “If there is an overriding need for greenfield development and one that can be sustained on rigorous environmental planning grounds”. Only areas of low level impacts (defined as those where impacts on the ecology and aesthetics of the area, the coastal character, and other qualities would be minimal) should be selected for growth.

The DSE Practice Note for Settlement Boundaries clearly states that ‘there must be adequate recognition and consideration of the Victorian Coastal Strategy including an analysis of the hierarchy of principles for coastal planning and management and consistency with the Strategy’s objectives’. The objective for smaller coastal townships is to limit the scale and intensity of development to that appropriate to a township in a non-urban environment. ‘Coastal and marine environments are recognised as long term public assets which should not be compromised by inappropriate short term decisions or developments”. The short term benefit of market competition does not meet the principles of the VCS.
In regard to Stage C of Thirteenth Beach it is considered that the layout of the development in Stage A; the division of Stage A and Stage C by Lings Road and the presence of a rural zoned property between Stages A and C does not afford the Stage C land the same justification for development which has been afforded to Stage B.

The UDF identified that ‘the completely different character of the new estate and its physical separation from Barwon Heads by the wetlands system, new golf links course and the open, rural paddocks, it read as a separate township as opposed to an extension of the existing town’. Development in Stage B does not undermine the rural break between the town and the resort, merely represents an extension to this “separate township”.

In considering Amendment C54 the Panel recognised that the Stage C land was considered appropriate for development at some point in time, however the emphasis of the original Amendment was for an “integrated development”, which does not necessarily mean urban development on the land.

Based on the recommendations of the C159 Panel it is considered that the Comprehensive Development Zone be maintained for the life of this Structure Plan on the basis that any development of Stage C would need to:

- Be principally focused on an 18 hole golf course (or similar);
- Have a strong link with the existing resort;
- Provide a demonstrable net environmental benefit for the Murtnaghurt Lagoon and channel;
- Excludes residential development;
- Maintain the non urban appearance along the frontage to Barwon Heads Road.

**Principles**

- To protect the unique character of Barwon Heads as a small coastal village located within a sensitive environmental and significant landscape setting.
- To maintain a compact urban form and avoid outward sprawl.

**Directions**

- Ensure that urban development does not occur outside the defined Settlement Boundary as shown on the accompanying Structure Plan Map;
- Encourage appropriate infill residential development and medium density housing in residential zones where drainage and servicing issues can be addressed and which ensures urban development respects the low scale character of the township;
- Ensure any future development of Stage C of the Thirteenth Beach Golf Resort:
  - Is principally focused on an 18 hole golf course (or similar);
  - Has a strong link with the existing resort;
  - Provides a demonstrable net environmental benefit for the Murtnaghurt Lagoon and channel;
  - Excludes residential development;
  - Maintains the non urban appearance along the frontage to Barwon Heads Road.
3.3.2 Infrastructure

Given that the Settlement Boundary coincides with the existing developed and serviced residential land in Barwon Heads, no major capital improvements are required for road, water and sewerage services to the township.

The Barwon Heads UDF, Bellarine Peninsula Leisure and Recreation Needs Study 2005 and the City of Greater Geelong Study of Open Space Networks 2001 established recommendations relating to the enhancement and improvement of the existing leisure, recreation and open space areas. These actions are supported as being consistent with resident needs identified within this Structure Plan, and are considered to be of significant benefit to the community through the provision of improved recreational opportunities and linkages for all ages.

The Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan 2006-2016 establishes a plan for improved community and social service provision within the township. The actions included in this Service Plan are supported as being consistent with resident needs identified through this Structure Plan, particularly in relation to improved pedestrian and community linkages.

Traffic, movement and parking have consistently been raised by the community as requiring attention. Whilst it is acknowledged that the township is subject to increased pressure during the holiday periods, the solutions to such issues require progressive thinking, in order that Barwon Heads is able to achieve its potential role as an environmentally sustainable village. This requires innovative solutions to traffic and parking, as an alternative to more traditional measures; such as Council land purchasing. As established in the Background Report to this Plan, the costs associated with the purchase of land for parking is not considered to be equitable or efficient when taking into account the detriment it will have on the unique urban fabric of Barwon Heads and the long-term cost to the environment.

Taking into consideration the visions established by the community in the UDF and Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan, an approach to car parking is required which balances the long term goals of sustainability with concerns of continued economic sustainability and accessibility.

It is recognised that there are a number of physical enhancements to parking and traffic within the centre of town which should be undertaken, to facilitate an improved movement network and more efficient use of existing parking areas. The Directions relating to Infrastructure include these improvements, such that any future expansion of development within the village centre, including the supermarket, which necessitates the waiver of car parking, will require the contribution of these landowners to complete the identified improvements. Potential negative outcomes of applying standard parking rates, given high land costs could discourage investment and development or create pressure to establish secondary peripheral retail areas which would detrimentally impact on the town centre.

To equitably assist with infrastructure funding in the municipality, the City of Greater Geelong has resolved to implement Development Contributions Plans (DCP’s) in appropriate locations. A DCP is a statutory tool used to levy the proponents of new development for fair contributions towards specific, pre-scheduled infrastructure items. Following further investigation, Council may prepare a DCP for Barwon Heads to assist with the cost of delivering the infrastructure items needed to support the town’s future growth and development.

Fundamentally, a change in behaviour and travel choices is necessary. To support a change to more sustainable travel behaviour and choices the implementation of education programs for the community, regarding travel choices and the development of improved pedestrian and cyclist linkages, is necessary.
Of equal importance is the need to provide improved public transport services to and within the town. As outlined in the Background Report, Council has received funding to improve transport on the Bellarine, *Bellarine Building Connections*. It is intended that this study will identify improvements to non-motorised transport options and also improvements to existing public transport services. Barwon Heads is presently serviced with a community bus, which only operates during the summer holiday period. It is considered appropriate that on-going funding and support to operate this bus, either year round or within other holiday periods, be included as a direction of this Structure Plan. Such a direction will enable various Council departments, primarily Community Development, to facilitate funding and support for the bus.

The adopted Flood Study for Barwon Heads recommends the application of flood overlays to certain sections of the urban area of the town and the implementation of these overlays is supported by this Structure Plan.

### Principles

- To encourage the provision of a range of social and community services commensurate with the size and role of the township;
- To provide an improved transport, parking and movement network, including pedestrian and cyclist linkages and public transport options, which achieves sustainability objectives.

### Directions

- Support the ongoing upgrading of open space, leisure and recreation areas undertaken for and on behalf of public land managers, including provision of pedestrian/bicycle linkages;
- Encourage the implementation of a year-round 50km/ph speed limit in all streets in Barwon Heads, including along the new arterial route of Gold Links Road and Bridge Road;
- Prioritise the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Hitchcock Avenue and Geelong Road, upon transfer of the arterial road status to Golf Links Road;
- Investigate and install appropriate traffic calming measures on Margate Street, Seaview Avenue and the northern end of Riverside Terrace;
- At the southern end of Grandview Parade, on the east side, remove a single parking space near Bridge Road. In conjunction, relocate the no stopping sign northward to allow two cars to pass at the approach to the intersection;
- Encourage any future traffic works undertaken by VicRoads along Bridge Road to adequately consider and improve the pedestrian environment in this area;
- Traffic management solutions at the Barwon Heads bridge approaches be low key and reflect the prevailing coastal character of the township;
- Rationalise and formalise parking opportunities by:
  - Formalising the parking area on the corner of Ozone Road and Seaview Avenue, through the use of materials sympathetic to the coastal environment (E.g. Informal topping (no asphalt), informal markers and directional signage)
  - Improving the available parking areas along the east side of Flinders Parade, (directional bollards and line-marking on existing posts);
  - Formalising the on-street parking at the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue, on the
south side of Bridge Road, through the partial sealing of the roadway, the establishment of angle parking on the east side (using part of the road reserve) and the line-marking of parking bays;

- Following further investigation by Council Engineers install along Clifford Parade parking restriction signs, including provision for delivery and pick-up bays in front of the kindergarten and two hour parking limit restrictions for the remainder or part of the street, between Hitchcock Avenue and Grove Road;
- Informal sealing and line-marking the parking area at the rear of the community hall;
- Informal sealing and line-marking the parking area adjacent to the senior citizens centre;
- Installing direction signs to all off-street and appropriate on-street parking areas. Such signs should also be installed at the entrance to the township to direct visitors;
- Support the development, and implement the findings, of a strategic footpaths policy to achieve better pedestrian and cyclist linkages throughout the town;
- On one side of Clifford Parade provide a formal footpath, in recognition of the important east-west link to the town centre;
- Advocate for increased bus services between Barwon Heads and Geelong;
- Where appropriate, future development waivers for car parking requirements under the Planning Scheme will require the contribution of developers to improvements to the pedestrian and parking environment as outlined within this Structure Plan;
- Support applications for funding to the State Government’s TravelSmart program to enable funding for education and community awareness on sustainable travel choices;
- Support Community Development in the establishment of a year round community bus, funded in part by local business support. Such bus should provide for deliveries to and from businesses within township;
- Encourage the marketing of the town by Council and tourism operators and bodies as a walkable, sustainable village where human impacts are minimised;
- Implement the relevant flood overlays as identified in the Barwon Heads Drainage Flood Management Plan.

### 3.3.3 Settlement and Housing

Further concentration of development in the urban area will occur as existing housing stock is redeveloped, providing increased opportunities for sustainable service provision, including improvements to public transport services.

An important issue is the preservation of the residential character in the township, the elements of which include an open coastal setting, modest scale buildings and landscape features. Three areas of particular importance within Barwon Heads, which form an intrinsic part of the town’s character, are those residential areas within the river environs in the northern and north-west section of the town, the area surrounded by Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road, and within Warrenbeen Court. The residential area in Stephens Parade is located within a particularly sensitive coastal setting and it is important that the habitat and landscape values of this area are also protected through application of appropriate planning scheme controls.
Council’s adopted Housing Diversity Strategy supports the development of medium density housing within 400 metres walking distance of the town centre, subject to consideration of any site specific constraints, such as heritage or flooding controls.

The Implementation and Review section of the Structure Plan provides for a number of principles relating to urban form and character within the township, including the development of additional planning scheme controls and further studies for these areas, as appropriate.

The release of the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 which identifies a potential sea level rise of at least 0.8m by 2100 and a range of state and Commonwealth projects (i.e Future coasts) and reports (i.e CSIRO Extreme sea levels series) identify that coastal settlements like Barwon Heads are vulnerable to the future effects of climate change. Future reviews of the Structure Plan will need to be considered in the context of detailed settlement vulnerability assessments (including examination of cumulative impacts of stormwater flooding and asset/infrastructure impacts and revised planning control options). In the interim development proposals will need to consider the risks and impacts associated with sea level rise and extreme storm/tidal activity.

**Principles**

To ensure that future housing development complements the character of Barwon Heads and provides for a variety of housing sizes and types.

**Directions**

- Ensure new development considers the impacts associated with sea level rise and extreme storm/tidal activity;
- Encourage development which respects the coastal and river setting of Barwon Heads; by providing for contemporary design that addresses the existing scale, setback and building spacing, forms and materials of the locality and which provides for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast, river and foreshore;
- Encourage housing development which is consistent with the preferred character identified in the City of Greater Geelong Residential Character Study 2001;
- Encourage development which provides for the planting or protection of significant vegetation around buildings and minimises impacts on roadside vegetation;
- Rezone the residential properties on Stephens Parade to Low Density Residential Zone to ensure no further subdivision or multi-dwelling development occurs within this highly sensitive area;
- Implement overlays in the river frontage environs, as detailed in Part B of this Structure Plan, to control urban form and provide for the retention of vegetation in this sensitive location;
- Support the development of further vegetation studies in the Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road area and also in the Warrenbeen Court area with the intention to implement overlays;
- Support a mix of housing types, particularly around the town centre, including the provision of housing choices designed for elderly persons.
3.3.4 Natural Environment
The surrounding landscape features of Barwon Heads play important roles; providing intrinsic habitat and biodiversity values to the local and wider environment and establishing the identity of the township and community. The designation of a Settlement Boundary to exclude the key environmental features will assist in the protection of these areas, which are presently mostly unaffected by urban encroachment.

Significantly, the environment and landscape hold important values relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage, particularly within the river and coastal environs, and there is a strong need to appropriately protect and manage these values.

The majority of the key landscape features are managed by public land managers, such as the Barwon Coast Committee of Management, Parks Victoria and the City of Greater Geelong. A variety of community based groups, such as the Barwon Heads Association, the Friends of the Bluff and Below the Bluff, are also involved to a significant degree in the protection and improvement of the Barwon Heads environs. The on-going involvement by these agencies and groups will ensure that these areas are protected in the long-term. The Community Arts Garden which has been established at the west entrance to the town also has a significant role to play in environmental awareness and protection of the environment.

Further work recommended to be undertaken includes the investigation of sites of significant vegetation within the township and the application of additional Overlay controls where appropriate. This recommendation is identified in Part B Implementation and Review Section of the Structure Plan.

Principles
Protect the landscape character of the town and ecological sensitivity of the surrounding environment.

Directions
- Support the appropriate management and protection of Murtnaghurt Lagoon, the Bluff, the coastal and river environs and the estuary as undertaken by public land managers and community groups;
- Provide for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values, through community education and awareness;
- Encourage retention and enhancement of existing vegetation on private land, roadsides and reserves using locally indigenous plantings;
- Undertake an indigenous vegetation planting program, including an extension of the River Parade Moonah habitat down Sheepwash Road, including an informal avenue at the Geelong-Barwon Heads Road entrance to the town and a street tree planting program in the new area of Barwon Heads, north of Geelong-Barwon Heads Road, utilising appropriate indigenous species and ground covers;
- Encourage any future roadside planting and road reserve treatments to be designed to respect the informal, coastal qualities of the town;
- Support the appropriate development of the Barwon Heads Community Arts Garden;
- Ensure that development adjacent to Areas of Significant Landscape, Environment & Recreation as shown on the attached Structure Plan is undertaken in a manner which complements and does not adversely impact upon these features;
- Protect and enhance key vistas and viewlines to the coast and environmental features
as identified in the attached Structure Plan Map;

- Support the introduction of planning scheme controls over the residential areas adjacent to the river environs in the northern and north west section of the town to protect the landscaped, low scale qualities of this area;
- Undertake further studies in the Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road area and also in the Warrenbeen Court area;
- Rezone the residential properties on Stephens Parade to Low Density Residential Zone to ensure no further subdivision or multi-dwelling development occurs within this highly sensitive area.
3.3.5 Economic Development and Employment

Hitchcock Avenue should remain the sole focus for commercial development within Barwon Heads, to foster vitality and avoid fragmentation of uses and activities. This area is the main activity precinct for the township and should remain as a community focal point.

As included within the Barwon Heads UDF, the properties presently zoned Residential on Hitchcock Avenue, between Bridge and Ozone Roads, are to be supported for rezoning to Mixed Use. The purpose of rezoning is to achieve a mix of commercial, residential and community uses within the village centre.

Tourism is an essential part of the town’s economy and vitality and continued growth of sustainable tourism is to be supported. To support its growth further areas of expansion for tourist related facilities can be accommodated within an extended village centre, such as a visitor centre/booth and amenities.

While the Structure Plan does not support further residential or commercial zonings on the periphery of town, it is considered important that the small scale village atmosphere, the basis which attracts tourists and visitors to the town in the first place is maintained. The appropriate development of tourist-related accommodation, particularly the type targeted at the high end of the accommodation market should be supported to ensure a variety of accommodation options.

As noted in the Background Report the supermarket in Barwon Heads would like to expand in the future. The objectives for future expansion, to provide an increased range and variety of goods to the community is supported by this Structure Plan, however any expansion of floor space must be commensurate with the role this town centre plays in the municipal hierarchy and be directed at servicing the local catchment area. It must be acknowledged that any expansion may necessitate the waiver of car spaces, given the existing constraints on the site and within the surrounds and also that it may prove financially impractical for additional sites to be purchased for car parking.

The Business 1 zoned land on the south side of Bridge Road between Hitchcock Avenue and Golightly Street is considered of strategic importance to the town centre. This largely underutilised area occupies an important town entry junction between the waterfront area and the Hitchcock Avenue retail area with the opportunity to provide for a better integrated retail centre and expansion of a major retail facility (supermarket) with parking and good urban streetscape form which is not readily available within other Business 1 or identified Mixed use zone areas.

Development of this area as a single integrated activity site would recognise the importance of this area to the town centre and contribute to a cohesive character at this strategic site. Such a development direction would also provide an opportunity for a strategic approach to car parking in this area. Such an approach may require a small expansion of the business zone to the south into the residential area, to provide sufficient land area to maximise street frontages, orientation and centrally located car-parking facilities to the rear.

The policies of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme do not encourage the provision of land for industrial or service business use within Barwon Heads. In accordance with directions included within State and Local Planning Policies and strategies, the community will continue to rely on the supply of industrial zoned land within Geelong, Drysdale and Ocean Grove, for industrial and service business facilities. While the application of the Mixed Use zone, supported to be applied in Hitchcock Avenue, does allow for industry or warehousing providing a planning permit is approved, these types of uses would not be supported in Hitchcock Avenue given the detrimental impact such uses would have on the street’s vitality and amenity.
The Implementation and Review section of the Structure Plan identifies broad urban design principles for the development of the town centre which can be used as the basis for the assessment of development applications and for development of a Design and Development Overlay.

**Principles**

- To encourage a diverse mix of uses and activities in Hitchcock Avenue, including within any expansion of the village centre.
- To encourage the development of the town centre which enhances its coastal setting and retains the traditionally scaled and proportioned lot sizes in the street.
- To encourage the provision of additional tourist accommodation and related services and infrastructure which is responsive to the coastal setting and environment.

**Directions**

- Direct any additional business or mixed use zonings into that land supported for such purposes along Hitchcock Avenue, between Bridge and Ozone Road, as shown in Part B Implementation and Review Section;
- Encourage the development of a mix of commercial, community, visitor related and residential uses on individual sites in Hitchcock Avenue. The scale of new individual commercial uses should be commensurate with the role and function of the town centre;
- Support a variety of appropriate tourism based developments, particularly high-end accommodation, within the town and town centre;
- Support further reinvestment in existing caravan park infrastructure and tourist accommodation facilities and development including the potential for the tourist accommodation type and mix;
- Support the development of tourist related amenities in appropriate locations;
- Discourage the use of land on Hitchcock Avenue for industry or warehousing and make no provision for land to be rezoned for service business or industrial uses within Barwon Heads;
- Direct service business and industrial development to other designated locations identified in the Local Planning Policy Framework;
- Support the integration of the town centre and the wider township through the development of improved pedestrian linkages.
- Retain or restore the traditional subdivision pattern in the street (i.e. narrow frontage to longer depth of lot).
3.3.6 Rural Areas

Retention of the Bellarine Peninsula as a predominantly rural area, with distinctly defined townships, is a key tenet of both Council’s Urban Growth and the Rural Land Use Strategies.

Pro-active planning, through the definition of a boundary to coincide with the existing residential area will ensure that this occurs and will avoid the ad-hoc conversion of rural land to residential zones.

In accordance with State and Local Planning policies and strategies, no provision is to be made for rural residential development.

**Principles**

To ensure the preservation of the surrounding rural landscape and setting of Barwon Heads.

**Directions**

- Retain the existing Rural Zones outside the Settlement Boundary;
- Ensure any land use activities within Rural Zones retain an agricultural focus and preserve the rural, environmental and landscape qualities;
- Direct rural residential growth to designated locations within the municipality outside of Barwon Heads.

The above principles and directions for each of the key themes are summarised on the Structure Plan Map 2.
Map 2 - Structure Plan
PART B IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Implementation and Review Section identifies Review provisions and key Planning Scheme alterations, or supporting strategic work, necessary to attain the principles and directions identified in the Structure Plan including:

- Introduction of Planning Policy;
- Application of Zones and Overlays;
- Further strategic work required to support additional planning controls;
- Other Actions critical to attaining key principles directions.

1.0 Implementation of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Using policy and the exercise of discretion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Structure Plan into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applying Zones and Overlays</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rezone Residential 1 Zoned properties along Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone Road and Bridge Road to Mixed Use Zone, to be facilitated by Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rezone Residential 1 Zoned properties along Stephens Parade to Low Density Residential Zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain the Comprehensive Development Zone over Stage C Thirteenth Beach Resort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply a Significant Landscape Overlay to properties in the river environs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply Flood overlays to those areas shown in the Barwon Heads Drainage Flood Management Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended further strategic work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake a Coastal Vulnerability assessment for Barwon Heads as part of a review of planning controls and future review of the structure Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake a Landscape Assessment study for the Ewing Blyth/Golf Links/Bridge Road and the Warrenbeen Court residential areas with the intention to apply an overlay to protect the existing character and vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate application of ESO along coastal areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake a further traffic and parking analysis for town centre and key traffic routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other City of Greater Geelong Actions &amp; Key Agency Relationships</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number of directions require Council support in the work of key agencies and/or the support of key agencies to Council including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barwon Coast – ongoing improvements to foreshore areas and implementation support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks Victoria – ongoing improvements to key park and wetland areas.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
areas and implementation support.
- Bellarine Community Health – ongoing support of social and community health and support infrastructure.
- Departments of Victorian Communities, Human Services and Regional Development – as above
- Geelong Otway Tourism – with Bellarine Peninsula Tourism support for tourism and signage initiatives.
- Work with VicRoads to ensure appropriate treatment and installation of pedestrian crossings; review road classifications for Golf Links Road and Hitchcock Avenue; and develop appropriate Barwon Heads bridge traffic approach design.

### 2.0 Rezoning Recommendations and Development of Overlay Controls

#### 2.1 Rezoning of Properties in Hitchcock Avenue

As detailed in Part C, it is considered appropriate that those properties on Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone Road and Bridge Road, which are currently zoned Residential 1, should be supported for rezoning to Mixed Use.

The properties supported for rezoning to Mixed Use are shown on Map 3.
Map 3 – Properties supported for Rezoning to Mixed Use
2.2 Rezoning of Properties in Stephens Parade

There is strong policy and strategic basis for those properties on Stephens Parade which are currently zoned Residential 1 to be rezoned to Low Density Residential (LDRZ). The application of the LDRZ in this location is appropriate given:

- The purpose of LDRZ is to provide for 'low-density residential development on lots which, in the absence of reticulated sewerage, can treat and retain all wastewater'. A location where the LDRZ currently applies is Breamlea. The characteristics of this area are similar to those found in Stephens Parade, being a coastal location within a vegetated setting, in conjunction with the absence of reticulated sewerage. Significantly, the average lot size within Breamlea is 700 square metres, whereas the average lot size within Stephens Parade is 1,500 square metres.

- In conjunction with the purpose and provisions of the LDRZ, a local policy also applies to all land within the municipality which is LDRZ. This policy states that "the zone has been provided at selected locations as a means of preserving identified environmental characteristics such as high-quality vegetation or to ensure effective disposal of either wastewater or stormwater drainage". It is considered that the policy is applicable to this locality given its characteristics.

- The policy specifically discourages intensive urban activities which provide accommodation for large numbers of people or which attract substantial visitors to a site; encourages second dwellings on lots to be attached to or form part of an existing dwelling; and discourages second freestanding dwellings on a lot (except for a dependent person’s unit).

The properties recommended for rezoning to LDRZ are shown on Map 4.
Map 4 – Properties Recommended to be Rezoned to Low Density Residential
2.3 Proposed Overlays: River Frontage properties

A Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) is recommended to be applied to a section of properties fronting the river (refer Map 5). The purpose of the SLO is to protect the vegetated landscape character of the river and to limit the impact of buildings and minimise their intrusion within the landscape.

The SLO is to be developed around the following design objectives:

- To protect the open landscaped character and recreational values of the river frontage;
- To encourage building forms that complement the riverfront setting;
- To provide opportunities for vegetation retention and enhancement;
- To ensure that new development and extensions to existing buildings are compatible with the existing scale and bulk of buildings in the surrounding streetscape and river/coastal setting;
- To ensure that new development reflects the rhythm of existing building spacing and provides for visual permeability when viewed from the riverfront and from the street;
- To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the river.

It is proposed that a planning permit will not be required to construct or extend a building or buildings and works provided all of the following requirements (or similar requirements) are met:

- The height of any part of the building to be constructed or extension to an existing building, excluding any television antenna, chimney or flue, is less than 7.5 metres in height above natural ground level;
- One side boundary is clear of buildings for at least 2.0 metres except in the situation where a dwelling exists on site and the dwelling extension or building does not reduce the established side setbacks *
- The buildings and works are setback at least 5 metres from the property boundary adjacent to the river.

* Note: The intent of this particular clause for new developments is that there should be one side boundary clear of buildings (in this case limited to dwellings, garages, carports and outbuildings) for at least 2.0 metres. Where a dwelling exists on a site it is intended that a permit will not be required where any dwelling extension or outbuilding maintains or increases the established side setbacks. This does not apply where an existing building is rebuilt.

It is proposed that a planning permit will be required to remove, destroy or lop vegetation except where one of the following requirements is met:

- The vegetation is listed as an environmental weed in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.
- The vegetation is dead.
- The vegetation is less than 3 metres in height and is not shown on an approved landscape plan or site plan specifying its retention or the vegetation has a single trunk circumference of less than 0.5 metres measured 1 metre above the ground and is not shown on an approved landscape plan or site plan specifying its retention. This exemption does not apply to Moonah and Coastal Beard Heath.

A landscaping plan should be submitted with an application for buildings and works, or to remove, destroy or lop vegetation and should incorporate the use of local indigenous species.

**Decision guidelines are to include:**

- Whether the proposed development accords with the preferred character of the area and achieves the design objectives and design responses of the relevant Precinct
The need to ensure the design and siting of buildings exceeding 7.5 metres in height will not dominate the riverfront and the streetscape, and will not impact on long distance views; Dwellings which are proposed to exceed over 7.5 metres must respond to the flat topography and naturally occurring low vegetation types that contribute to broad and expansive view sheds;

The need to ensure the design and siting of buildings exceeding 7.5 metres in height will allow for the reasonable sharing of view(s) having regard to the extent of available view(s) and the significance of the view(s) from the properties affected;

Appropriate regard to the impact on the riverfront, streetscape and vegetation character, the rhythm of existing building spacing and the visual permeability of the existing built form when viewed from the riverfront and the street;

To encourage the use of indigenous planting that breaks up the views of the built form, and retains adequate sight lines for safety and to soften and improve the interface treatment to the waterway;

To maximise building set back from the property line that directly adjoins the waterway corridor and allow for substantial landscaping between buildings and the waterway corridor to soften the urban character. Buildings and works and jetties should be set back to maintain the open landscape area alongside the waterway;

2.4 Proposed Overlay: Hitchcock Avenue Urban Design Guidelines

A Design & Development Overlay (DDO) is recommended to be applied to identified properties within the Town Centre (refer Map 5).

The properties to be affected by the overlay only include those which are currently zoned Business 1 or Mixed Use fronting Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road. The DDO should be applied as part of any future application for rezoning to Mixed Use in respect to those properties presently zoned Residential 1 on Hitchcock Avenue. Given the importance of the bridge entrance to the town and the need to link this area with Hitchcock Avenue it is also proposed to include those Business 1 zoned properties which front Bridge Road within the proposed overlay area (excluding those properties along Bridge Road which are within a heritage overlay). There is a single Business 1 zoned property fronting Bridge Road on its north side, west of Hitchcock Avenue, and it is also recommended that this property be included within the overlay area, together with the properties at 1 and 3 Clifford Parade, which are also zoned Business 1.

The purpose of the DDO is to establish urban design principles for the town centre which enhances its appearance and vitality. The DDO is to be generally built around the objectives and responses included within the Barwon Heads UDF (refer Table 1).

(The original guidelines in the UDF included objectives relating to uses in the town centre. Given that objectives or requirements relating to use can not be included in a DDO, these objectives have been included in the principles relating to Economic Development and Settlement and Housing within Part A of the Structure Plan)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetscape Element</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Design Response</th>
<th>Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Setting</td>
<td>To reinforce the location of the street in the context of its wider setting within a coastal town.</td>
<td>• Protect and reinforce the views of the coastal vegetation on the higher dunal land to the south. • Protect and reinforce the view of the rise in topography to the coast of the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue.</td>
<td>• Loss of sense of nearness to the coast. • Loss of views to coastal vegetation from within the street. • Loss of view to the topographic rise of dunal landform at the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To protect existing views and vistas within and from the street.</td>
<td>• Protect and reinforce the vista from within the street to the existing or future avenue of trees at the entrance to the Village Park. • Protect and reinforce views of landmark buildings such as churches and the community hall from within the street.</td>
<td>• Loss of vista to the Village Park entrance. • Loss of views to landmark buildings from within the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape Character</td>
<td>To reinforce the casual, unpolished and beach qualities of the street.</td>
<td>• Utilise vegetation species suitable to local conditions in any new development. • Utilise and reinterpret traditional Barwon Heads building forms and finishes in any new development (ie. simple forms and detailing, and use of light materials such as timber etc). • New development should be responsive to the climatic conditions of the site and locality, and the amenity of neighbouring properties.</td>
<td>• Domination of the coastal landscape by exotic species. • Development that has no relationship to its site or the coastal setting. • Unreasonable amenity impacts on adjacent properties.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To encourage protection of the older dwellings and landmark buildings and their settings, in the street.</td>
<td>• Protect landmark structures such as churches and community halls and their settings. • Provide additional pedestrian comforts within the set backs around landmark buildings (i.e. landscaping, seating etc).</td>
<td>• Loss of diverse mix of building stock. • Demolition of landmark buildings. • Demolition of older dwellings. • Loss of ‘community space’ around existing landmark structures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 - Hitchcock Avenue: Design Guidelines (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetscape Element</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Building Siting     | To reinforce the linear layout of the street, as part of the historic street grid of the old part of town. | • If a building is to be set back, ensure it is parallel to the front boundary. | • Loss of impact of linear layout of the street.  
• Buildings that are not ‘square’ to the street. |
|                     | To ensure that new commercial buildings address the street. | • Generally, site new commercial buildings on the front boundary (i.e. 0 metre set back from front boundary).  
• Orientate commercial buildings to address the street.  
• If located on a corner site, ensure the commercial building addresses both street frontages. | • Commercial buildings that are not oriented towards the street.  
• Blank walls on the street. |
|                     | To ensure residential buildings address the street and are sited to protect the amenity of adjacent properties. | • Site residential buildings on the lot to contribute to the variety of set back distances in the street, ensuring that the amenity of adjacent properties is not unreasonably impacted.  
• If a set back is provided from the front boundary, provide vegetation within the front set back that contributes to the amenity of the street. | • Total uniformity in siting of buildings.  
• Lack of vegetation within a front set back. |
### Table 1 - Hitchcock Avenue: Design Guidelines (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetscape Element</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<th>Avoid</th>
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</table>
| Building Siting Continued    | To encourage creative departures from the traditional set back pattern of new buildings, in circumstances where it can be justified. | ▪ Consider setting back parts of commercial buildings such as cafes and restaurants to provide alcoves and spaces for people to sit outdoors.  
▪ Utilise existing set backs for outdoor dining or displays when recycling an existing residential building for a commercial use.  
▪ Design and landscape the space around community buildings so that it contributes to the amenity of the street and has the potential to be used by the wider community. | ▪ Loss of the practise of recycling buildings, together with the unique set back opportunities it creates for commercial uses.  
▪ Total uniformity in setbacks.  
▪ Loss of emphasis or 'landmark status' of community buildings in the street through utilisation of standard setbacks.  
▪ Loss of 'community space' around community and landmark buildings.  
▪ Car parking within the front setback. |
| Building Form                | To ensure that new buildings are designed to respond to the characteristics of the site and locality, and demonstrate a high standard of contemporary expression. | ▪ Retain existing trees wherever possible and provide for the planting of new vegetation, including canopy trees, well suited to local conditions.  
▪ Design buildings for energy efficiency, considering solar access and utilising sustainable energy and construction techniques wherever possible.  
▪ Respect the predominant building height in the street and of adjacent properties by generally restricting buildings to a maximum of 2 storeys.  
▪ Articulate the form of buildings and elevations. | ▪ Loss of existing trees.  
▪ No regard to the orientation of the lot in relation to solar access, prevalent wind directions etc.  
▪ Unsustainable design and construction techniques.  
▪ Buildings that exceed the predominant building height in the street by more than one storey.  
▪ Unarticulated, sheer facades and building forms.  
▪ Historical reproduction styles, |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Avoid</th>
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</table>
| Building Form Continued | To ensure that new dwellings and their settings contribute to the character and amenity of the street. | ▪ Ensure dwellings address the primary street frontage.  
▪ Provide open style front fences to a maximum height of 1.2 metres wherever possible.  
▪ Ensure front set backs are mostly permeable and able to support vegetation.  
▪ Locate garages, carport and car parking areas behind the line of the dwelling.  
▪ Provide only one vehicular crossover per frontage. | ▪ Car parks or car parking structures that dominate the front setback or view of the dwelling.  
▪ Domination of frontages by crossovers, driveways and car parking areas.  
▪ Lack of vegetation within front setbacks. |
| To ensure that new commercial buildings encourage social interaction and interest at street level. | Orientate commercial buildings towards the street and provide the entrance to the building directly from the street frontage.  
▪ Provide a well articulated façade, with shop front windows at street level. | ▪ Commercial buildings that do not address the street.  
▪ Lack of interest and activity at street level.  
▪ Blank facades or small areas of glazing at street level.  
▪ Roller shutters over shop fronts. |
| Building Details and Finishes | To encourage buildings that have regard to the palette of materials and colours in the street, and demonstrate a high level of contemporary finish. | ▪ Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary materials, colours and finishes.  
▪ Incorporate materials used traditionally in the town (ie. weatherboard). | ▪ Excessive decoration.  
▪ Historicist embellishment.  
▪ Materials such as artificial weatherboard, brick or sandstone. |
### Table 1 - Hitchcock Avenue: Design Guidelines (Continued)

<table>
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</table>
| **Building Details and Finishes Continued** | To encourage details which are integrated with the architecture of the building and contribute to the character and amenity of the street. | - Provide awnings without posts on commercial buildings wherever possible.  
- Locate awnings a minimum of 1700mm from the face of the kerb. In areas where the footpath is wider than the average width in the street, locate awnings a maximum of 2500mm from the front boundary.  
- Relate the height of the awning to the building elevation. On single storey buildings locate the awning below eaves level. On double storey buildings locate the awning at first floor level.  
- Provide subtle down lighting under awnings wherever possible.  
- Incorporate subtle façade lighting on landmark buildings or up lighting of vegetation features in the street. | - Posted verandahs or awnings.  
- Awnings that interfere with street trees, street furniture, traffic signage or truck or car movements.  
- Fluorescent style, ‘white’ lighting under awnings. |
| **To ensure that signage does not dominate the building or streetscape and contributes to the pedestrian environment.** | - Direct signage at pedestrians (i.e. awning or street level).  
- Provide signs only on the awning fascia or under the awning wherever possible.  
- If a flat wall sign is proposed, relate the sign to the architecture of the buildings in style and placement (i.e. individual letters as opposed to large, flat rectangular signs).  
- If a hanging wall sign is proposed, consider an artistic or individual approach and ensure it is constructed to a high level of finish. | - Roof signs, sky signs and above awning signs.  
- Large, visually dominant signs, particularly above first floor level.  
- Internally illuminated signs.  
- Large wall signs that do not relate to the building. |
2.5 Principles for Further Study for the Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road Area and the Warrenbeen Court Area

Inquiries during the preparation of the Structure Plan revealed that the protection of the character of the areas between Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road and also Warrenbeen Court, for their ecological and aesthetic values is important to the community. Whilst the landscape qualities of these areas are evident, it is appropriate that Council undertake a further Landscape Assessment study, prior to application of an Overlay. Such a study would be required to:

- Investigate the vegetation setting and quality of the vegetation;
- Investigate the built form;
- Identify landscape elements to be protected, in regard to built form and vegetation;
- Provide recommendations regarding the appropriate application of planning scheme controls (including site coverage, building height and siting, vegetation removal and enhancement, materials and built form); and
- Develop guidelines for the assessment of future development applications.

The areas recommended to be part of the Landscape Assessment Study are shown on Map 5.
Map 5 - Proposed Overlay and Further Investigation Areas
3.0 Review of Structure Plan

As with all other areas in the municipality the take-up of land and redevelopment within Barwon Heads needs to be regularly monitored. It is appropriate that a basic review of the Structure Plan, including rates of development and lot supply within the township be undertaken every five years with a full review of the Plan in ten years.

As this plan sets a Settlement Boundary it is not intended that any short term review would examine further areas for urban development. However, it must be acknowledged that the ten year review would need to examine the Settlement Boundary in the context of the State and Local policies which exist at the time.

The need and timing of a future review will also be determined in the context of any Coastal Hazard Vulnerability Assessment undertaken for Barwon Heads which would also examine impacts of stormwater flooding, asset/infrastructure impacts, the need for revised planning controls and policy and a longer term settlement planning response strategy. Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, to be developed over 2010/2011 will provide strategic direction around the timing, nature and staging of this work.
PART C BACKGROUNDB REPORT

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 1996 the City of Greater Geelong prepared the inaugural Barwon Heads Structure Plan, to guide the development and planning of the township over a period of ten years.

The role of the Structure Plan was to identify the key strategic planning issues and opportunities facing the township and articulate the preferred future directions, including the location of a growth boundary, future residential and commercial growth and future community service provision. The 1996 Structure Plan set the western boundary of the town at the present Residential 1 zoned edge, identifying only two areas for future subdivision opportunity; land on the south west corner of Golf Links and Barwon Heads Roads and an area of land south of Taits Road. These two areas have since been developed for residential purposes, with the land to the south of Barwon Heads Road currently subject to a staged subdivision.

Significant events have influenced the town since the 1996 Structure Plan, one of those being the popularity of the ABC “SeaChange” television series and the related “sea change phenomena”, the other being the development of the Thirteenth Beach Golf Links Resort. Another recent event is the decision by the Minister for Planning regarding the heritage listed Barwon Heads Bridge.

To resolve ongoing costs and maintenance issues associated with the bridge, in March 2005 VicRoads initiated community consultation on three crossing points for replacing the bridge:

- Corridor 1 – constructing a new bridge along the alignment of the existing Bridge;
- Corridor 2 – building a new bridge along the extension of Geelong Road at its eastern end and linking with the Barwon Heads-Ocean Grove road roughly 500m upstream from the existing Bridge; or
- Corridor 3 – building a new bridge along the extension of Thacker Street in Ocean Grove to connect with Sheepwash or Barwon Heads Roads in Barwon Heads.

These three options were forwarded to the Minister for Planning for consideration; however Corridor 3 was subsequently excluded due to the environmental impacts. In July 2006 the Minister for Planning reinforced a decision made by Heritage Victoria, to not allow demolition of the bridge and in March 2007, following the consideration of the submissions received to the options by a Planning Advisory Committee, the Minister decided that, subject to further investigations, the existing bridge would be upgraded. The Minister did not rule out the possibility of a new bridge being built alongside the existing span, if Heritage Victoria did not support refurbishment of the existing bridge.

VicRoads has recently released details of a new bridge design including traffic management details for the bridge approach on the Barwon Heads side of the river which includes traffic lights or a large roundabout. It is considered that traffic management solutions at the bridge approaches should be low key and reflect the prevailing coastal character of the township.

In November 2003, following an extensive community consultation and preparation process, Council adopted an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for Barwon Heads. The content of the UDF includes directions relating to the character of the town, its open spaces and commercial area. The UDF also provides direction regarding the future growth of the town and in effect re-confirmed the boundary set in the 1996 Structure Plan.
During the preparation of this draft Structure Plan Council officers contacted various associations, interest groups and individuals from Barwon Heads to assist in the identification of key issues and community opinions on these issues. The major issues raised by a number of these parties were growth of the town and traffic and parking. Varied opinions and views were presented to officers on these issues, particularly with respect to the future growth of the town and whether such growth would be appropriate.

Contact with key agencies such as the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, VicRoads, Barwon Water, Barwon Coast Committee of Management, Bellarine Community Health and Bellarine Peninsula Tourism also provided an opportunity for valued input into the key issues and future directions for the township.

Advice from the Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE) regarding the Structure Plan recommended that Council should critically consider the appropriateness of further growth of the town in light of State and Local Planning Policies. The Department was ‘unaware of any overriding policy or strategic support for growth of the town beyond its existing boundaries’ and advised that their office would prefer that residential development did not approach Murtnaghurt Lagoon closer than the existing western boundary.

DSE also recommended that Council consider a range of measures to manage the pressure on parking and traffic in the town, emphasising the importance of considering alternative means of transport.

In light of the recent strengthening of State Planning Policies and strategies regarding Victoria’s coastal areas, including the Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report (DSE, April 2006), this Structure Plan is required to examine the appropriateness of the settlement boundary included in the UDF.

The Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016 is another significant strategic document adopted by Council in 2006. This Plan outlines a vision and contains objectives for the town and community over the coming ten years and has been used as a major reference tool within the background report of this Structure Plan.

### 1.2 Location

Barwon Heads is a seaside town located at the mouth of the Barwon River, 18km south-east of Geelong city. The location of the town in relation to the rest of the municipality and within the Bellarine Peninsula is indicated on Map 6 and Map 7.

Barwon Heads Road is the main entrance to the town from Geelong, with an indirect route to the southern part of the town along Thirteenth Beach Road and Ewing Blyth Drive. The only connection beyond the town to the east is across the Barwon Heads Bridge, which connects Barwon Heads to the rest of the Bellarine Peninsula via Ocean Grove.

To the north of the town lies the Barwon River and the Lake Connewarre system and to the east and south, the town is bordered by coastline to the river and Bass Strait. To the west of Barwon Heads is the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, Murtnaghurt Lagoon and the recently developed Thirteenth Beach Golf Links and residential resort.
Map 6 - Locality Map
Map 7 - Regional Plan
1.3 Indigenous Heritage

The environment of Barwon Heads holds significant values and associations with Aboriginal history.

The traditional inhabitants of Barwon Heads are the Wathaurong people. The Barwon marked the south-west boundary of the lands of the Bengalat Clan of the Wathaurong people, which included most of the Bellarine Peninsula east of Moolap. The other side of the Barwon and west to Point Danger was owned by the Mon Mart Clan. The Wathaurong word for the river is understood to be ‘Barra Warre N Yallok’ which means, in translation, ‘the great river which flows from the uplands (or Otways) to the sea’ (www.geelongaustralia.com.au)

‘The Wathaurong people are part of the greater Kulin nation surrounding Port Phillip and Western Port Bays. The Wathaurong area stretches south of Geelong toward Lorne, north toward Ballarat and then south east to the Werribee River’ (www.barwonbluff.com.au). Together with the entire area, places of particular significance in the area are the Lake Connewarre system, given its resource richness, and the Barwon Bluff area.

In relation to the Bluff, Parks Victoria states that:

“Barwon Bluff was a particularly significant place for local Wauthaurong (sic) people that made their home from Ballarat to the coast. Taking advantage of the combinations of sea, rock platforms, and river and to the north extensive wetlands, the area was an important summer camping area for many thousands of years” (www.parkweb.vic.gov.au).

The Bluff was known as “Kolo:oit which means the 'Mingling of fresh and salt water” (www.barwonbluff.com.au).

A number of Aboriginal archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the Barwon Heads area as part of the assessment of specific development proposals. According to Marshall and Collins (Barwon Heads Golf Club: An Archaeological Assessment, Terraculture 2004 p. 19) these previous investigations in the area demonstrate the following:

- “Midden deposits can occur in surface and subsurface contexts and in some places have managed to survive fairly intensive local developments…
- Midden deposits can occur up to 2 km from the source of the shellfish from which they are largely comprised…
- A range of landforms have been shown to yield Aboriginal archaeological material, including cliff tops, high secondary dunes, low dunes that back rock platforms, margins of swamps such as Murtnaghurt, and the shoreline of the Barwon River” (p. 19)

As noted by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV), there are two places in the area which are listed on their historic places register and they also hold records for numerous Aboriginal cultural heritage places within the Study Area. The AAV has recently stated that the extent of records:

“is not surprising given the location of the township along the coast and adjacent to the Barwon River as well as the presence of Murtnaghurt Lagoon…This geographical location provided an environment that would have been very attractive to Aboriginal people for its food and water resources”.
According to Marshall and Collins:

“A search of the AAV Register showed that there are approximately 67 registered Aboriginal archaeological sites between Black Rocks and Barwon Heads. Most of the sites are shell middens located near or within the Barwon Heads Caravan Park, or occur within a narrow coastal dune system along Thirteenth Beach and inland at the mouth of the Barwon River. While most of the sites are shell middens, there is small concentration of stone artefact scatters along Thirteenth Beach south and west of the Barwon Heads Golf Course” (Barwon Heads Golf Club: An Archaeological Assessment, Terraculture 2004 p. 19)

Council has entered into a formal arrangement, through a protocol, with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative to assist in identifying, conserving and protecting places of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The protocol between Council and the Wathaurong establishes a number of trigger points where Council is required to take into account the requirements of the relevant legislation and the views of the Community in providing for the conservation and enhancement of places, sites and objects of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Protection of Aboriginal sites was previously formalised through the State Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972 and the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984, however the new Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 came into effect on 28 May 2007. Under this new Act, the State has sole responsibility for Victoria’s Aboriginal cultural heritage instead of the previous mix of State and Federal legislation.

Key features of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 include:

- the creation of the Aboriginal Heritage Council, with membership of traditional owners who will advise on the protection of Aboriginal heritage;
- the use of cultural heritage management plans for certain development plans or activities;
- the ability for registered Aboriginal parties to evaluate management plans, advise on permit applications, enter into cultural heritage agreements and negotiate the repatriation of Aboriginal human remains; and
- alternative dispute resolution procedures.

As required by both the previous and new legislation, any person who discovers Aboriginal human remains or an Aboriginal place or object is required to report such discovery to the Secretary of the Department of Victorian Communities. The new Act includes penalties for persons who do not report such a discovery. These requirements apply if the person knows that the human remains are, or are likely to be, Aboriginal human remains and in the instance of the discovery of a place or object, if the person knows that it is Aboriginal place or object.

The disturbed urban areas of Barwon Heads have the potential to yield a significant level of Aboriginal places or objects, and potentially human remains, given their location adjacent to the coast and estuary and the known significance of this area to the traditional inhabitants.

Given that many people may unknowingly discover or disturb a site of Aboriginal cultural heritage, education plays an integral role in helping to protect these values and it is important the key bodies such the education sector and Council, in partnership with the Wathaurong and the AAV, act to educate the community.
The regulations of the new Act specify the circumstances in which a cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) is required for an activity or class of activity, which is specified as ‘high impact’ in areas of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity and also prescribes standards for the preparation of such plans. Advice from the AAV will be essential to ascertain when and if a CHMP is required for different activities and for different areas. According to the Municipal Association of Victoria ‘in essence, if an activity is both in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and is a high impact activity on land not previously significantly disturbed, it will require a CHMP before any planning permit can be determined’. An example of a high impact activity/use which will now require a CHMP is the construction of three or more dwellings on a lot and the subdivision of land into three or more lots.

Significantly for Barwon Heads, Cultural Heritage Sensitive Areas under the regulations includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Registered cultural heritage place or land within 50 metres of a registered place;
- Waterways (& within 200m) unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Prior waterways (& within 200m);
- Ancient lakes (& within 200m);
- Declared Ramsar wetlands (& within 200m);
- Coastal Crown land;
- Coastal land within 200m of high water mark unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Parks;
- Greenstone outcrops unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Volcanic cones of western Victoria unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Caves;
- Lunettes unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Dunes unless subject to significant ground disturbance;
- Sand sheets unless subject to significant ground disturbance

The new regulations include the ability to add more specific areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, replacing the State wide sensitivity areas for that particular area. The AAV has advised that, given the geography of Barwon Heads it may be beneficial for Council to consider a more specific analysis of the Barwon Heads area through this mechanism.

In conjunction with its role in educating the community in Indigenous culture and heritage, Council will continue to maintain a relationship with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative in regard to proposed developments that may impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage, in accordance with both the established protocol and legislation.

1.4 Post-Contact History

The first survey of the township of Barwon Heads occurred around 1870, but the largely open, treed land was not to be transformed into a seaside township until the turn of the century. First known as Point Flinders, Connewarre East and Mt. Colite, the early landholders of the riverside stretch of Barwon Heads were Alexander Cameron McDonald, John Middlemiss and, from 1876, Frederick Challis.

Following the first survey, further development of the town did not occur until the 1890s, due to international economic conditions these were difficult years for developing a town. The original survey land formed a large subdivision that had a frontage along the Barwon River, and also stretched as far west as Hitchcock Avenue (which was then known as Barwon Avenue).
Barwon Heads began as a boating, fishing and waterfowl hunting destination and by the early 1920’s, the township had a hotel, boarding houses and a golf links. Prior to the river being bridged in 1927, row boats and then motor ferries carried people to and from Ocean Grove and the highway. The Barwon Heads Bridge is one of the most significant examples of post-contact heritage on the Bellarine Peninsula, with its iconic status recently being ratified through the State Government’s decision to refuse its demolition. The bridge is believed to be one of the longest timber road bridges still existing in Victoria and is also the longest all-timber bridge ever built by the Country Roads Board.

Other examples of post-contact heritage are located throughout the township, formed by streetscapes, residences and shops. The significance of these buildings and streetscapes has been recognised through application of individual listings and precinct based heritage overlays within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

1.5 Role of the Township

The role of Barwon Heads has changed little since the preparation of the 1996 Structure Plan; a seaside resort and dormitory suburb of Geelong. The township retains a proportion of retirees and elderly people, however its function as a permanent home for families has increased in recent years and is expected to continue to increase over the next ten years.

The attraction of Barwon Heads as a seaside retreat continues to grow, with the estimated visitor numbers during the peak periods increasing each year since 1999; visitor numbers between 2000 and 2002 increased by over 10%.

The future development of the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth area and the Geelong Ring Road, have been cited as having the potential of attracting more people to Barwon Heads, those who are seeking permanent places of residence and also those seeking tourist related accommodation and activities.

Located across the Barwon River is Ocean Grove, one of the designated growth areas on the Bellarine Peninsula. The recently developed draft Ocean Grove Structure Plan (2006), estimates that further growth of this town will accommodate up to an additional 10,000 people, with plans for an extensive expansion of community, retail and industrial related activities. Given its proximity to the town, Barwon Heads is ideally located to take advantage of the future improved services provided in Ocean Grove.
2.0 Policy Context

Barwon Heads is located within the municipality of the City of Greater Geelong and is affected by various policies and strategies formulated by the State Government and Council. The following policies have specific relevance to Barwon Heads and have guided the development of this Structure Plan.

2.1 Key Strategies and Local Strategic Studies

2.1.1 Coastal

Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report (Department of Sustainability & Environment, April 2006)

The Coastal Spaces Recommendations Report is the product of a joint project between the Victorian Coastal Council and the Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE), to assist coastal councils protect the character of coastal townships and the open spaces between towns along the coast. The major aims of Coastal Spaces are to improve both strategic planning for sustainable development in coastal Victoria and the application of planning tools in coastal areas.

The Report contains the following key recommendations:

- Reaffirm the Government’s commitment to direct urban development to existing settlements.
- Establish settlement boundaries through planning schemes.
- Protect non-urban coastal landscapes by implementing the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study and applying the new rural zones.
- Target priority for infrastructure and innovative solutions in environmental hotspots where the provisions for potable water and reticulated sewerage services are not present.
- Encourage tourism investment and products that are sensitive to coastal settings and meets regional needs. Tourism proposals outside settlements must be of high quality, well designed and sited, add value to the coastal experience and be distinguishable from residential proposals.
- Establish clear planning policy that discourages disturbance of Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils.
- Establish a more comprehensive approach to asset management on public land through effective levels of service framework.
- Promote on-going regional coordination and communication mechanisms to maximise knowledge transfer and practice around coastal change management and planning.

Coastal Spaces recognises that climate change is expected to have implications for Victoria’s coastal areas including:

- Rising sea levels combined with higher temperatures and changes to wind and storm patterns which are expected to increase the potential for erosion and damage to coastal infrastructure, and intensify pressure on biodiversity assets.
- Production of more intense low pressure systems off Victoria’s coast causing a greater number of extreme storm events and storm surges. Parts of Victoria’s coast are more vulnerable to storm surge events, with low lying, sandy shorelines and low lying areas adjacent to estuaries and waterways at most risk.

With increasing pressure for residential and other developments in coastal regions, there is a pressing need to fully consider the risks related to climate change as part of the planning assessment process.
The report identifies that (p.9)

“Whilst limited information is available on the likely impacts of climate change specific to the Victorian coast, current estimates indicate sea levels will rise up to 55cm by 2070. Storm surges and potential estuarine flooding in storm conditions will result in further effective increase in areas affected by flooding. Not all areas of the coast are the same and therefore the level of risk and likely patterns of impact and change will vary.”

The report also recommends that (p.9):

“Notwithstanding the need for more detailed information to assess the impacts of climate change, it should be standard practice to adopt a Precautionary Principle approach when planning for areas likely to be vulnerable to climate change effects, such as estuaries, sandy shorelines and other low lying sites… Whilst the existing Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 advocates that development should be well set back from the coastline, a conscious change is required to ensure that future subdivision and development approvals actually achieve this, and more importantly, are located away from low lying coastal areas”.

(Note: The Precautionary Principle advocates taking action now despite a level of uncertainty, to minimise future risks. This principle may lead to a decision not to take action or proceed with a proposal because of a high level of uncertainty about beneficial outcomes).

**Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study – State Overview Report (September 2006)**

The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study is a comprehensive assessment of visual and scenic amenity along the Victorian coast, and its focus is the identification of the visually significant landscapes of Victoria’s non-urban coastline.

This Study provides a thorough assessment of landscape characteristics and identification of visually significant landscapes on the Victorian coastline including the Bellarine Peninsula.

The study identifies four Landscape Character Types and Areas for the Bellarine Peninsula. Barwon Heads is located in the following two Landscape Character Type Areas:

“Landscape Character Area 2.1: Lake Connewarre Flats

Much of this very flat Character Area is seasonally inundated or under large lakes including Lake Connewarre. The Character Area extends from Breamlea in the south (including the lower Thomsons Creek catchment) to Barwon Heads in the east, and Point Henry in Corio Bay where it is contained by large, high sand dunes at the southern edge, and flat, low-energy swamps and salt marshes in the north. There is an inland topographic boundary at Leopold and the northern edge of Lake Connewarre, as well as prominent topographic edges at the ocean coast dune”.

“Landscape Character Area 3.1: Coastal Cliffs and Dunes

The wild seas and winds at the southern edge of the Bellarine Peninsula have given rise to a varied and often dramatic landscape of sandy beaches, high dunes, low cliffs and rocky headlands. Steep escarpments are frequently vegetated with local species and landmark landscape features such as Point Lonsdale and The Bluff at Barwon Heads punctuate long sandy beaches and dunes. The Character Area also includes some coastal dune landforms fronting low-energy bay beaches in Swan Bay and Port Phillip Bay (Swan Island, Sand Island and Edwards Point). Similar characteristics are likely to occur outside the study area towards Torquay and at Point Nepean and the Mornington Peninsula Back Beach. Part of the settlements of Barwon Heads, Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale are also in the Character Area. Historical built elements such as the lighthouses at Point Lonsdale and Queenscliff are a feature of the area”.

The Study recommends the introduction of a Significant Landscape Overlay on parts of the Lake Connewarre escarpment, on the north side of the Barwon River.

Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast May 1998

This document aims to provide an understanding of the coastal landscape by identifying significant features and characteristics of various sections of the coast. The Barwon Heads area is within the “Lower Coastal Plains with features” setting type (between Anglesea and the heads). This setting type is characterised by lower coastal cliffs and dunes interspersed with inlets and limestone bluffs with low vegetation at the ocean interface grading to taller trees inland. Special considerations identified for the setting type include:

- Forward planning to ensure that future development does not adversely affect coastal values.
- The need to control access to beaches.
- The revegetation of dunes to maintain stability.

Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast May 1998

This document provides specific guidelines for appropriate building siting and design treatments along the coast to respond to landscape, environmental and view considerations.

Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 (Victorian Coastal Council)

Developed under the provisions of the Coastal Management Act 1995, the Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS) applies to the sea, seabed (to state limit) and land and inland waters within the coastal catchment (land that drains to a water course or estuary).

It seeks to provide for the long term planning of the Victorian coast, based on Ecologically Sustainable Development principles, to protect significant environmental features, provide clear direction for future sustainable use of the coast’s natural resources and identify suitable development opportunities. The strategy provides direction for activities on private land adjacent to, and within, the critical views of the foreshore.

The Strategy includes a hierarchy of principles for coastal planning is established under “Suitable development on the coast” (p21). Specific objectives and actions are grouped under six major themes including:

- Natural onshore environment – including restricting development on or disturbance to significant sites, improving long term management or conservation status of freehold land, achieving no ‘net loss’ of native vegetation and using planning schemes to identify significant conservation values.
- People on the coast – including protecting Aboriginal sites and managing coastal related tourism.
- Access – including reducing impact of traffic on the coastal environment.
- Built Environment – provide direction for the scale of use and development, improving design outcomes and protecting sensitive sites by:
  - Use of Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to identify the special nature and character of coast and role of townships
  - Protection of undisturbed areas between settlements by local policy and overlays for siting and design
  - Management of township growth through township boundaries;
  - Using planning schemes to avoid proliferation of development outside existing settlements and in the vicinity of free standing major visitor centres or resorts;
  - Coastal development pressure away from sensitive areas and directed to settlements and recreation nodes to minimize impact on coast and protect sensitive areas. For townships experiencing population growth and high use and regional visitation this means protecting areas of environmental significance and preserving areas between settlements in non-urban use.
  - Protecting scenic landscape through innovative coastal design and application of ‘Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast’ and ‘Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast’.
- Coastal dependent industry – including improving facilities for tourism.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 has since been replaced with the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 which retains the above directions but reinforces the coastal settlement hierarchy and roles and provides specific direction around planning for sea level rise associated with climate change and the application of the ‘precautionary principle’. In relation to climate change impacts the Strategy suggests a policy of planning for sea level rise of not less than 0.8m by 2100 in addition to considering impacts on the coast of storm surges and extreme tidal events. The Strategy which has since been included in the State Planning Policy Framework of all planning schemes. The need for coastal vulnerability assessments for significant development and rezoning is also identified in related Planning Practice Notes.

Work undertaken by the state government’s Future Coast program (including DEM and extreme event modelling) show that settlements such as Barwon Heads are at risk to the impacts of inundation due to storm and tidal surge events and longer term sea level rise) however more information is required to understand the full impacts (combined with estuary flooding from upstream rainfall-stormwater) on physical infrastructure, habitats, public and private land. Council’s Climate Change Adaptation strategy (to be undertaken over 2010-2011, settlement based vulnerability assessments and the Minister for Planning’s Advisory Committee on Coastal Climate Change will also provide guidance for future planning controls and strategic adaptation responses.

Central West Victoria Regional Coastal Action Plan (CAP) 2003 (Western Coastal Board)

The Central West Victoria Regional CAP was prepared in partnership through the Central West Victoria Coastal and Marine Planning Program (CMPP) and funded jointly by the Natural Heritage Trust, CMPP partners and the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority. The purpose of the CAP is to enable the broader principles and priorities of the VCS to be further developed and applied at a regional or local level.

As with the Victorian Coastal Strategy, the CAP is referenced in the coastal areas policies within the State and Local Planning Policy Framework of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, to inform and guide the planning authority when considering use and development proposals in coastal areas.
The Central West CAP applies to the geographic area of the Central West Victorian coastal region, between Point Lonsdale and Moonlight Head and covers:

- land and inland waters within the coastal catchment (i.e. rivers and streams that flow to sea within this coastal region); and
- the sea and seabed to the State limit - three nautical miles (or 5.5 kms).

The CAP identifies that “Barwon Heads distinctive urban character is symptomatic of its natural wetland systems and associated boating and other recreational activities and services” (p.39).

The CAP identifies many challenges facing the area, associated with Integrated Coastal Zone Planning & Management, Biodiversity, Natural and Cultural Heritage, Coastal Land, Coastal Waters, Human Settlement

Key strategic actions are identified through the document to meet these challenges.

**Central West Estuaries Coastal Action Plan 2005 (Western Coastal Board)**

The Central West Victoria Estuaries Coastal Action Plan was prepared in partnership through the Central West Victoria Coastal and Marine Planning Program (CMPP) and funded by the Natural Heritage Trust, CMPP partners and the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority. The document establishes a planning and management framework that will improve the protection of estuary values through integrated management planning.

The CAP states that “Estuaries and estuarine wetlands (including seagrasses, mangroves, saltmarshes and reed beds) are important natural systems linking catchments with the sea. They represent unique ecosystems requiring special management to recognise their ecology and to protect and improve their condition” (p.11).

The Study Area for the Central West Estuaries CAP is identical to the Regional CAP and includes eighteen estuaries. In a regional context the estuaries of Central West Victoria were considered to be affected by a number of key threatening processes including Inconsistent management practices, Land use, Development and recreational pressures, Littering and Lack of knowledge.

The Barwon River is identified as requiring, as a high priority, an Estuary Management Plan.

**Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary Draft Management Plan May 2006 (Parks Victoria)**

The Draft Management Plan, prepared under the National Parks Act 1975, proposes the basis and directions for the future management of Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary.

The 17 hectare sanctuary is located at Barwon Heads, where the Barwon River enters Bass Strait and “incorporates the rocky shores around the base of the headland at the mouth of the Barwon River, including a small section of riverbank beach, basalt and sandstone reefs at the base of The Bluff, 400 metres of beach fronting Bass Strait and the waters extending 400 metres to the east and south” (p.1).

The Plan recognises that the “Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary is significant in the statewide system for its valuable contribution to marine education” (page v) and identifies a number of strategies for natural and heritage values conservation, visitors, adjacent uses and community awareness and involvement

**RAMSAR Convention of Wetlands 1971**

The RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
Lake Connewarre, Reedy Lake, Murtnaghurt Lagoon and the Barwon River estuary are included on the RAMSAR list, within the Port Phillip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula Site Listing.

The RAMSAR convention is referenced in Clause 15.09 (Conservation of native flora and fauna) of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, where the planning authority must ensure that any changes in land use or development will “not adversely affect the habitat values of wetlands and wetland wildlife habitats designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance” (Ramsar).

**Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) & Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan**

The Strategic Management Plan (SMP) for the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site is an integral component of a program to develop a comprehensive management framework for Victoria’s RAMSAR Wetlands.

The purpose of the SMP for the site is to facilitate conservation, maintenance and restoration of the area.

The SMP identifies Lake Connewarre and Murtnaghurt as being directly affected by hydrological and water quality changes given their location at the bottom of the Barwon River catchment. The SMP further notes that this catchment contains some of the most intensively farmed land in Victoria, land uses that directly affect the quality and quantity of water entering the river, and associated wetlands. The harvesting of timber within the catchment area is also identified as an issue for the catchment and therefore the RAMSAR site, given the levels of sediment discharged into the river as a result of this activity.

Key risks identified in the SMP affecting the wetlands and estuary adjacent to Barwon Heads includes, altered water regimes, dredging, pest plants and animals, pollution and salinity.

**Barwon Coast Coastal Management Plan (1999 and Draft August 2006) (Barwon Coast Committee of Management (BCCoM))**

The Barwon Coast Committee of Management Inc. (established in 1995 under Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978) has responsibility for the management of 13km of coastal crown land from Collendina to Blue Rocks, including the beaches in Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads, and the Barwon Heads Bluff, through implementation of their 1999 Management Plan (reviewed in late 2006).

The mission statement for BCCoM in the draft 2006 Plan is:

“To conserve, present and enhance the natural and developed coastal environs for the enjoyment and use by all”

The management area is divided into six Landscape Character Zones, three of which are located within the Study Area. The specific roles, issues and management strategies for each of the relevant Zones are described below:

**Barwon River Estuary (22W to 27W)**

The role of this Zone is focused on the provision of sheltered beach and water based recreation activities in conjunction with the preservation of conservation values through protection and enhancement. The provision of a range of accommodation experiences and the retention of a strong and distinctive identity for the Port is also part of the role of this Zone. Management strategies for the Estuary Zone include:

- Review of the current work programme following resolution of the Barwon Heads Bridge;
- Implementation of the Trail Strategy;
- Undertake planting along the eastern river edge; and
- Review of parking demand and provision on the foreshore

**The Bluff Zone (27W to 30W)**

The role identified for this Zone is to protect and enhance the locally indigenous flora and fauna and provide for education and eco-based recreation which does not impact upon conservation values. The strategy for this Zone is to ensure that the current review of the Conservation Management Plan for the Bluff supports and reinforces the role of the Zone and provides access to the Marine Sanctuary.

**Thirteenth Beach (30W to 42W)**

Similar to the role of the Bluff Zone, the role of Thirteenth Beach Zone is primarily for the protection and enhancement of flora and fauna with allowance for eco-based recreation, including surfing. Strategies for the Zone include:

- Management of emerging pest plant and animal issues;
- Implementation of the Trail Strategy;
- Review of car park and road crossing safety;
- Continued implementation of car park upgrade projects; and
- Monitoring of safe and stable beach access for horses.

**Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy 2003-2008 (Corangamite Catchment and Land Protection Board)**

The Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) for 2003-2008 provides long-term direction for managing the future of land, water resources, biodiversity and seascape of the Region, and the foundation for investment decisions to ensure improved natural resource outcomes. The Strategy identifies opportunities for improving natural resource management, new planning tools, monitoring and evaluation.

The Plan recognises that the Barwon River is a significant resource for both recreation and for recreational fishing and that urbanisation and tourism are proceeding at a rapid rate in and around the township, with significant pressures on the surrounding environment.

Decision making by the planning authority must have regard to this strategy as required by the State and Local Planning Policy Framework of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme in Clauses 15.01 and 21.11 (Protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater).

**2.1.2 Environment**

**City of Greater Geelong Environment Management Strategy (EMS) 2006-2011**

The aim of the EMS is to actively promote sustainability in all the actions and activities undertaken by the City. The EMS includes an Action Plan, which comprises an assessment of the issues affecting the following key themes:

- Council Policy, Programs and Planning;
- Education & Partnerships;
- Biodiversity Management;
- Sustainable Agriculture;
- Coastal & Marine;
- Waterways & Wetlands;
- Air Quality;
- Resource Use;
- Waste, Recycling and Reuse; and
- Urban Settlements.
City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Strategy 2003

The development of this Strategy was a priority action of the 1999 EMS and presents the outcomes of the Biodiversity Strategy to date, including the background and status of biodiversity in Geelong. The vision of this strategy is for the City to be a place “within which biodiversity plays an important role, where the right of future generations to healthy, complete and vibrant biodiversity is entrenched, and to be a City that actively protects its biological wealth and prioritises long term responsibility over short-term gains”.

The Strategy notes that the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is one of only a small number of areas within the municipality which retains extensive vegetation remnants and fauna habitat of high quality. The lower Barwon River is also noted in the strategy due the high conservation significance of the riparian and in-stream vegetation within this location.

In conjunction with the above areas Murtnaghurt Swamp and 13th Beach Reserve are also considered to be significant habitat areas for a wide range of fauna including endangered species.

Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan (2003)

This plan was developed and adopted by Council in 2003 with its intent being to “guide the future recreational use and landscape character of the River and adjoining open spaces in a manner that is compatible with its environmental values” (p. 1).

Within the Plan the area around Barwon Heads is located within Reach 5 (Reedy Lake and Lake Connewarre) and Reach 6 (Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads). The key actions for the Barwon Heads area as included in Reach 6 are:

- Improve walking links through along the Barwon River and associated open space system.
- Retain current boating and fishing access to the Barwon River, including restriction to 5 knots. Support current proposals to establish fishing access points along the bank, to reduce damage to waterway banks.
- Protect and improve the natural riparian vegetation values including White Mangroves and Moonah Woodland through the continued adherence to the existing Environmental Significance Overlay.
- Introduce the Significant Landscape Overlay or other suitable planning mechanism on freehold land adjoining the Barwon River in Barwon Heads to protect the view sheds from significant change to built form and urban fabric.

City of Greater Geelong Stormwater Management Plan 2003

The Stormwater Management Plan has been developed to guide Council in improving the environmental management of stormwater. The Plan identified a number of sub-catchments within the municipality, with the township of Barwon Heads located within the Ocean Grove sub-catchment. This catchment is described as:

“… a predominantly rural subcatchment that is located on the lower reaches of the Barwon River, and contains the Barwon River Estuary draining to Bass Strait (a Very Highly valued receiving environment). The in-stream and riparian flora and habitat values in the Ocean Grove subcatchment are considered to be High to Very High, primarily due to the importance of Salt Swamp, Lake Murtnaghurt and the Barwon River Estuary which are sites of international importance. In addition, marine and foreshore habitat rate Very High due to the internationally significant Barwon River Estuary and the relatively undisturbed foreshore reserve. Both recreation and visual and
landscape amenity values are rated Very High. Property and tourism values are also rated as Very High. Flood conveyance is of High value to the flooding issues identified in the Barwon Township”.

Key threats facing stormwater quality and its management within the Barwon Heads area includes:

- Residential Land Use
- Commercial Land Use Runoff
- Land and Infrastructure Development
- Building Site Runoff
- Agriculture Land Use Runoff


Prepared by WBM Oceanics, this report characterises existing flooding and develops a flood management strategy to mitigate stormwater flooding in Barwon Heads.

The Report identified that the significant drainage related flooding problems within the township are related to the township being located within a number of low-lying depressions and the nature of the drainage systems. The study found that at least 440 properties within the study area are affected by the 100 year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) flood event, with 61 of these properties subject to above-floor flooding. The Plan stated that “it is not feasible to prevent above-floor flooding of all or most of the 61 affected properties. Physical constraints (eg existing built form) make it very expensive to ‘retrofit’ the required drainage infrastructure and in effect impossible to achieve the industry recognised 100 year ARI flood protection”.

Following an extensive study and consultation process, elements of the Plan were adopted or endorsed by Council in November 2005, including one of the mitigation options. Council also resolved to commence the amendment process to incorporate the relevant zones and overlays into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, based on the information including within the Plan. The Plan also recommends designation under the Victorian Building (Interim) Regulations 2005 of flood-prone areas shown on the Plan’s flood mapping.

**2.1.3 Urban Growth and Land Use Planning**

**Barwon Heads Structure Plan 1996**

Prepared in 1996, to provide the strategic direction for the growth of the town over a period of ten years, this plan set the boundary of the town at the present day extent of the residential zoned land, with two areas identified for future subdivision development. Other significant elements of the Plan were:

- ‘Promotion of medium density housing around the Hitchcock Avenue centre;
- The consolidation of the commercial centre itself;
- A streetscape improvement plan for Hitchcock Avenue;
- Discourage further extension of the subdivision on Stephens Parade; and
- On-going improvement to public spaces and recreation area’.

Map 8 shows the 1996 Structure Plan map.
Map 8 – Structure Plan Map 1996 (not to scale)

The Barwon Heads Urban Design Framework (UDF) was undertaken through joint funding from the City of Greater Geelong and the State Government’s Pride of Place program.

The UDF identified Barwon Heads as a small residential coastal village undergoing considerable change and pressure because of a range of reasons. The UDF also identified a range of values for the area and the significant need to protect these values, including the underlying landscape and environmental qualities and street layout including the use of laneways within the urban fabric to provide pedestrian permeability.

The UDF was developed to provide protection through modifications to the planning scheme and included actions to:

- Strengthen the western boundary;
- Application of a Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) to provide protection for significant vegetation within the township;
- Some changes to the existing Residential 1 Zone within the commercial area on Hitchcock Avenue to provide Mixed Use opportunities; and
- Direction for streetscape improvement works.

In November 2003 Council resolved to endorse the UDF and, in relation to the proposed land use changes, commence the statutory process to bring about the necessary amendments to the planning scheme. At the time of endorsing the UDF Council also approved the streetscape project in concept, as contained within the report.

Map 9 shows the UDF summary map.
Map 9 - UDF Summary Map (not to scale)
**Melbourne 2030**

Melbourne 2030 is the State Government’s planning strategy for metropolitan Melbourne and its surrounding region for the next thirty years. One of the core directions of the strategy is to develop Metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding regional cites as a network of cities. This objective is to be achieved through implementation of the following strategies:

- Planning and supporting regional centres such as Geelong as viable alternative urban locations to Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Ensuring that infrastructure services are in place so that centres such as Geelong are able to take advantage of opportunities for growth.
- Encouraging planning for regional areas and cities that:
  - Delivers an adequate supply of land for housing and industry to meet forecast growth.
  - Limits the impact of urban development on non-urban areas and supports development in those areas that can accommodate growth.
  - Protects conservation and heritage values and the surrounding natural resource base.
  - Develops and reinforces the distinctive roles and character of each city.
- To control development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development by reducing new housing development provided in rural areas and encouraging the consolidation in existing settlements.
- Ensuring planning for rural living avoids or significantly reduces adverse economic, social and environmental impacts by:
  - Maintaining the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resource attributes in activities such as agricultural production.
  - Protecting existing landscape values and environmental qualities such as water quality, native vegetation, biodiversity and habitat.

**City, Coast, Country: City of Greater Geelong Urban Growth Strategy 1996**

The Urban Growth Strategy identifies the directions for urban development in order to accommodate Geelong’s expected growth to the year 2020.

The Strategy, which is reflected in Council’s Municipal Strategic Statement within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme (refer Clause 21.08 Urban Growth) does not include Barwon Heads as a targeted growth area.

The Strategy identifies the following locations for future growth:

- Armstrong Creek/Mount Duneed (primary growth corridor)
- Wandana Heights
- Urban Geelong (consolidation)
- Lara
- Leopold
- Ocean Grove
- Drysdale/Clifton Springs.

Another key element of the Strategy is the direction to consolidate existing urban areas and to provide for compact urban forms, particularly in respect to coastal townships.

**Rural Residential Strategy 1994**

The Rural Residential Strategy identifies preferred locations within the municipality for rural residential development, to ensure that valuable agricultural land is retained and that the designation of rural residential nodes takes into account localised infrastructure constraints.
Barwon Heads was not designated through this Strategy as a preferred location for future rural living growth.

**City of Greater Geelong Housing Diversity Strategy 2007**

The adopted Housing Diversity Strategy recommends that the residential areas of Barwon Heads which are within 400 metres of the Town Centre should be subject to Increased Housing Diversity. It recommends that the policy for the identified Increased Housing Diversity Areas should be to:

- Encourage increased residential densities, particularly within defined business zones and immediately adjoining business zones where mixed use and higher use of residential land can support the concepts of urban villages and activity centre planning. This may include the redevelopment of under-utilised commercial and industrial sites to provide additional housing. The intensity and scale of such development will need to be in keeping with the scale of individual centres;
- Acknowledge that residential character in these areas will adapt and evolve over time, particularly close to the centre of business areas;
- Ensure that greater consideration is given to the existing and preferred residential character (as defined by the Greater Geelong Residential Character Study – Precinct Brochures - 2001) at the edges of Increased Housing Diversity Areas, where the existing and preferred character of adjoining incremental change areas will dominate; and
- Promote greater use of walking and non private vehicle transport through design of new development that supports safe and accessible pedestrian environments to and through activity centres and Increased Housing Diversity Areas.

It is important to note that parts of the identified area within Barwon Heads are shown as being subject to constraints, such as, heritage overlays or flooding constraints, which may reduce the yield of medium density housing able to be provided in these areas. The remainder of the town is recommended to be an Incremental Housing Diversity Area, where the draft Strategy identifies that it should be policy to:

- Enable the evolution of Incremental Change Areas to include the incremental use and development of medium density housing, whilst respecting the preferred neighbourhood character as defined by the Greater Geelong Residential Character Guidelines – 2001
- Direct medium density housing to sites located within 400 metres of one or more:
  - Neighbourhood shopping centre;
  - Community facilities, including schools, community centres;
  - Active open space, including active walking trails (but not areas of environmental sensitivity);
  - Public transport stops.
- Preference will be given to sites where a greater number of the above mentioned facilities or services are provided in proximity to the subject site.
- In locations which are not within convenient walking distance of public transport and neighbourhood activity centres, encourage lower density housing forms with a predominance of single dwellings on average sized lots.

**City of Greater Geelong Rural Land Use Strategy 1997**

Council initiated the preparation of this Strategy to recognise the role and contribution of the rural areas to the regional economy and to ensure the conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. It provides a set of implementation tools combining progressive methods of planning and land management to ensure a productive and sustainable rural resource base now and in the future.
The aims of the Strategy are:

- to protect the agricultural and environmental resource base of Greater Geelong’s rural area for future generations;
- to enhance the role and contribution of Greater Geelong’s rural area to the regional economy;
- to secure the economic value of agricultural and productive uses of rural land; and
- to protect future opportunities for economic returns to sustain the community.

It identified the importance which the community places on the rural areas of the municipality, paying specific attention to its productive capability, habitat value and to its contribution to the scenic qualities of the region. The vision statement for the Bellarine Peninsula, encapsulated within the Strategy, reads as follows:

“The Bellarine Peninsula will feature an attractive rural landscape which reflects sustainable farming and land management practices, a commitment made by the whole community to protecting biodiversity and continued robust natural systems, and will benefit from a positive and responsive land use and planning approach. These factors will contribute towards efficient and sustained productivity levels.”

Three broad landforms exist within the region and are distinguishable through soil type, contour and climate. The Strategy describes the Bellarine Peninsula landform as:

“The Bellarine Peninsula is a gently to moderately undulating plain with the majority of soils consisting of grey-brown sedimentary sandy loams overlying a mottled to medium to heavy textured clay. The Bellarine Hills are a significant variation through being heavy black self mulching clay loams well suited to intensive crop production. Climate patterns are temperate. Average annual rainfall is 680 mm (Drysdale) with the growing season commencing with the autumn break in April and continuing through until late November, early December. The coastal location provides a frost free environment which is significant for potato and grape crops.”

According to the Strategy, the agricultural quality of land to the west of Barwon Heads, in the Coastal sands and estuaries land system, is considered to be unsuited to agriculture.

Rural Land Use Strategy 2007

In mid 2006, Council engaged Parsons Brinckerhoff to develop the new Rural Land Use Strategy in partnership with Council officers. This project represents a major review of the 1996 Rural Land Use Strategy. The purpose of the new Rural Land Use Strategy is to establish a new policy regime for appropriately regulating rural land use and development in the context of changing agricultural practices and continued rural land development pressures.

It identifies key directions in relation to the application of the State Government’s new Rural Zones and planning policies for the rural areas, including policies for animal keeping and training, dwellings and subdivisions, and tourism development in rural areas.

A number of key issues and findings are identified in the Strategy, including:

- Rural land has values and opportunities over and above agricultural values.
- Importance of protecting opportunities for agricultural activities that can contribute to the regional economy.
- Recognising the value of the rural areas and the farming landscape to the liveability of Geelong, wellbeing of the community and the ability to attract tourists and visitors.
The vision for the Peninsula outlined in the Strategy is to maintain it as an agricultural/farming area as these activities contribute to the unique landscape and character of this area, the regional agricultural economy, the liveability of Geelong, community wellbeing and the ability to attract tourists and visitors to the municipality.

In regard to the new Rural Zones, the Rural Land Use Strategy 2007 recommends the application of the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) over the land currently zoned rural on the Bellarine Peninsula, including the rural land within the Study Area. It is considered that Rural Conservation is the most appropriate zone for the Peninsula as it is the only zone which has purposes providing for both agricultural uses and landscape protection. The basis of the application of this zone is to recognise the Peninsula’s unique blend of farming, landscape and environmental values.

It is noted however that the introduction of this strategy into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme via amendment C129 resulted in the Farming Zone being applied as the primary rural zone for the Bellarine Peninsula's rural areas.


The Geelong Region Plan is an on-going joint project between G21 Geelong Region Alliance (G21), including the Councils of Greater Geelong, Queenscliffe, Surf Coast, Golden Plains and Colac Otway, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Department of Victorian Communities and the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development and the five local government authorities of the G21 Region.

The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Provide a long term land use strategy for sustainable development in the region to 2051;
- Identify regional infrastructure requirements;
- Provide a framework for the management of population growth and related economic, social and environmental change; and
- Develop implementation strategies and monitoring programs.

2.1.4 Community Development

Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016

The Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016 (the Plan) aims to respond to local communities’ aspirations to proactively and sustainably manage the range of pressures that are present on the Bellarine Peninsula. The project has built upon existing plans for the Peninsula and its townships. The Plan was undertaken in consultation with the community with the aim of developing a strong framework for future planning and provision of services and infrastructure.

The Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan produced:

- A snapshot of how we currently use land in the townships and rural areas of the Bellarine Peninsula;
- Current and projected population characteristics;
- A social service plan for each township and for the Peninsula overall;
- Unique visions for each of the townships on the Bellarine Peninsula; and
- An integrated vision for a healthy and sustainable community on the Bellarine Peninsula.
As part of developing the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan the Barwon Heads community developed a Community Vision for Barwon Heads. The vision was developed through two public forums; 13 local committee meetings; and public circulation of a draft vision. The Community Vision 2006 – 2016 identifies key strengths and concerns raised through previous urban design work, including:

**Strengths**
Beach side location; village atmosphere; surf, sun and sea; strong local cultural and community groups, events and festivals; community support for local heritage; well used and well planned open spaces.

**Concerns:**
Traffic management; pedestrian safety (particularly around school and supermarket area); drainage in town centre; limit town to natural boundaries (including Lake Murtnaghurt) to the west; maintain bridge access to Ocean Grove; need for youth activities (Skate Park); improved access to medical services for older years; public and community transport.

The Barwon Heads Vision for 2016 describes the town as:

“...a unique, sustainable, residential and environmental hub; a landlocked community surrounded by pristine river, coast and wetlands. An intimate community which supports all age groups and provides a place of belonging for residents and visitors alike; where human impact is managed to support the fragile natural surroundings by:

- Clearly defined limitations on urban development
- Protecting and nurturing natural surroundings by managing human footprint
- Supporting walking, cycling, fishing, sailing, surfing, swimming and generally enjoying what our coastal village has to offer in an environmentally sensitive way”.

The strategies and actions for Barwon Heads include:

- Preserve the unique qualities of the township by limiting hard surfaces, reinforcing and retaining informal streets, protecting and enhancing walking tracks, protecting and preserving views to the water, protecting coastal vegetation, parkland, river and beach
- Provide older persons in the town facilities to meet their physical and emotional well being and encourage their continued involvement and feeling of worth within the community
- Provide the youth of all ages facilities to meet their physical and emotional well being and encourage and promote a strong community awareness and belonging
- Ensure that town boundaries are clearly designated in the Barwon Heads local area planning provisions, the principles of the Coastal Spaces Project are embedded in the MSS and reflected in the Coastal Area provisions of the Geelong Planning Scheme
- Preserve the low key, coastal village character; limit population of town
- Revise overlays to restrict high density housing, including limiting height to 2 storey, and protect heritage and environment
- Provide improved parking, traffic management and public transport now and into the future by keeping abreast of local population and tourism growth
- Conserve natural environment and protect indigenous vegetation, implement new indigenous plantings and eradication of environmental weeds. Protection of native fauna and eradication of feral pests
2.1.5 Infrastructure and Economics

Geelong Transport Strategy December 2003

The Geelong Transport Strategy was prepared to provide clear direction on developing and managing existing and emerging transport issues in the city over the next decade.

The Strategy recommends specific transportation measures for the Bellarine Peninsula, including the construction of a regional public transport interchange in Drysdale to provide the focus for services to Geelong and services between the townships.

An action listed for Ocean Grove, located in close proximity to Barwon Heads, is the establishment of a local public transport interchange, serviced by a high-frequency fixed bus route. For the Peninsula another action proposed is the review of routes and timetables of bus services to eastern Bellarine Peninsula townships, to provide for improved services. The Strategy also includes general measures to be considered when developing new residential subdivisions, including the design of the road networks to accommodate buses and a transport network catering for pedestrian and bicycle movements.

One of the actions specific to Barwon Heads was the investigation of the condition of the Barwon Heads Bridge and the future river crossing needs. This action has been undertaken through the Advisory Committee process with a decision recently made by the Minister for Planning to retain and upgrade the bridge. This State Government process effectively ruled out an alternative access route in the near future either via an extension of Geelong Road or via a bypass further north.


This Study was prepared by consultants on behalf of Council in 2003 to

- Identify (both qualitatively and quantitatively) local amenity and safety issues related to traffic;
- Identify the current demand for both on-street and off-street parking within the area and to propose balanced and achievable solutions to the identified inadequacies.

The study's scope did not extend to broader arterial road issues relating to the regional highway network or river crossings. Following the completion of traffic and parking surveys, during peak and off-peak times, and an analysis of stakeholder and community consultation, the following objectives were developed to resolves the key issues raised:

- Improve traffic flow throughout the township with an identifiable and appropriate road hierarchy both through Barwon Heads and to the key attractions contained within;
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and connectivity;
- Improve the use of public on-street and off-street car parking spaces; and
- Ensure that the public transport infrastructure is located in the most suitable locations.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Study to achieve the above objectives were as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of Hitchcock Avenue as the VicRoads’ Declared Main Road and preferred route through Barwon Heads.</td>
<td>It is recommended that Council explore the option of downgrading the status of Hitchcock Avenue, with Golf Links Road to become the Main Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intersection of Geelong Road and Hitchcock Avenue is confusing and unsafe.</td>
<td>Replace the existing intersection with a single lane roundabout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some ‘rat-running’ through the residential streets of Seaview Avenue and Riverside Terrace was identified.</td>
<td>While it is recognised that some through traffic in these streets, the level of traffic is not considered to be significant during the off-peak season. However, in the interests of protecting residential amenity and encouraging the use of Hitchcock Avenue as the appropriate through route, it is recommended that chicanes be installed at each end of Margate Street, Seaview Avenue and at the northern end of Riverside Terrace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the summer period, the intersections of Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road and Bridge Road and Ewing Blyth Drive become congested.</td>
<td>While these intersections are busy and at times congested during the holiday season, they are coping well with acceptable performance indicators. No action is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speeds throughout the study area are considered inappropriate for the nature of the study area and the condition of the roads.</td>
<td>Reduce of all speeds within the study area to 50km/hr including Hitchcock Avenue and investigate the introduction of traffic calming devices as detailed within other recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number of local streets are stone sealed (including Seaview Avenue between Geelong Road and Riverside Terrace and the intersection of Grandview parade and Margate Street).</td>
<td>Where possible seal these roads, stone sealed shoulders should be retained for streetscaping purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive speeds in front of Barwon Heads Primary School.</td>
<td>In consultation with VicRoads, investigate the installation of 40km/h school zone speed limit during school drop off and pick up times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bus stop located within the main retail sector of Hitchcock Avenue is in an inappropriate location.</td>
<td>It is recommended that the bus stop be relocated south of Ozone Road with the existing bus zone to be reclaimed as 15 minute car parking spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An inadequate amount of car parking is supplied within the main activity district of Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road.</td>
<td>This contention is not supported by the results of the off-peak or holiday period parking inventories. As a result there is no need to provide additional parking within the area. Notwithstanding, it is recommended that each development proposal in the future be carefully examined for its parking requirements and provision be made wherever practical in the immediate vicinity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of car parking areas are currently underutilised.

Appropriately formalise car parks, install information signs and clearly sign post off-street car parks and limit on-street parking where inappropriate.

Limited opportunities exist for pedestrians to cross Hitchcock Avenue, Bridge Road or Ewing Blyth Drive.

In consultation with the community and VicRoads investigate the provision of pedestrian operated signals or zebra crossing with flashing lights opposite the post office on Hitchcock Avenue, the supermarket on Bridge Road and Ewing Blyth Drive in the vicinity of Bridge Road. Any installation should meet the warrants for such treatments including usage levels and surrounding facilities.

There is conflict between pedestrians / cyclists and vehicles on local roads.

Investigate the provision of footpaths along one side of local roads within the township. It is recommended these paths be constructed of “Lilydale topping:” or similar for streetscaping purposes.

There are no footpaths along Sheepwash Road causing a missing link in the pedestrian network within Barwon Heads.

Install pedestrian footpaths utilising materials that are consistent with existing paths in the area.

The footpath on the corner of Golf Links Road and Bridge Road is approximately 1.5m above the road surface.

Install pedestrian fencing along the length of footpath along corner.

The Clifford Parade carriageway is not of sufficient width to cater for car parking on both sides.

Car parking should be restricted to one side of the carriageway.

Sight distance within the vicinity of the crest located on Grandview Parade is substandard with car parking, which is available on both sides of the carriageway, often restricting flow and further exacerbating the limited sight distance.

Ban car parking on both sides of the carriageway within the vicinity of the crest.

**Geelong Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010**

The Geelong Economic Development Strategy provides a framework for Council activities in economic development by identifying priority actions for the next five years. The Strategy encourages the pursuit of activities that will maximise the Region’s competitive advantages, encourage investment and secure employment opportunities for the future. A number of Strategic Growth Sectors are identified in the Strategy, with prioritised actions and objectives for each Sector. The following sectors are considered most relevant to Barwon Heads, considering its role within the wider municipality:

- Tourism
- Small, Micro And Home Based Business
- Food and Horticulture
**Geelong Otway Tourism Strategic Business Plan 2004 – 2007**

Focuses on strategies to achieve a sustainable industry and visitor experience, address seasonal nature of visitation and long term tourism industry viability, increasing visitor expenditure and length of stay.

The Plan identified a number of tourism trends for the region including:

- Tourism growth in region is strong despite stagnant domestic market growth
- Employment growth in accommodation businesses
- Improvements in length of stay and off peak visitation
- ‘Going to beach’ remains strong activity with some shift commercial and indoor activities (eating out, shopping etc)
- Area seen as ‘holiday’ area as opposed to day trip
- Increased use of visitor information centres
- Over supply of some accommodation styles
- Increasing demand for experiential and education holiday experiences
- Visitor satisfaction eroded through overcrowding over summer period

**Bellarine Peninsula Tourism – Strategic Tourism Plan 2005 – 2008**

This Plan has the role of establishing the role of Bellarine Peninsula Tourism in representing the tourism industry, provide advice and set strategic direction by achieving a range of goals including:

- Coordination and representation
- Visitor services – including improve tourism signage and develop adequate visitor amenities
- Industry development
- Industry research
- Communication
- Marketing
- Product development – encourage development of new tourism attractions and accommodation, touring routes and support infrastructure
- Maintain partnerships

**City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 1998 (Review 2001) and Geelong Retail Strategy 2006**

The foundation of the Strategy is to support the established retail hierarchy within the municipality to provide for a viable and accessible retail sector having regard to population growth, socio-economic and demographic characteristics, retailing trends and growth in new residential areas.

Barwon Heads is identified as a “Town Centre” with its challenge being to continue to retain its retail role in the face of continuing competition from other larger centres.

Council recently commissioned Essential Economics Pty Ltd, in association with Planisphere, to prepare a new Retail Strategy to guide the on-going development of the retail sector and retail activity centres in the City. This updated Strategy (adopted 2006) reaffirmed Barwon Heads as a town centre,

> “which provides weekly grocery shopping facilities based around a supermarket tenant, as well as providing a broader town centre role as a focus for non-retail and community facilities and, in some instances, a lower-order comparison shopping role” (p. 32).
In relation to retailing and commercial uses within the township of Barwon Heads, the new strategy reaffirms the directions and objectives of the existing 1998 document, stating that:

“Growth and diversification of the town centres in Geelong is encouraged where this meets the planning assessment criteria. It will be important to ensure that the retail offer in town centres is aimed at the surrounding market, rather than generating a sub-regional function for the town centre” (p. 38).

2.1.6 Open Space and Recreation

City of Greater Geelong Study of Open Space Networks 2001

This Study provides an analysis of the existing open space within the municipality and aims to identify future uses for open space and linkages between open space areas, to maximise their relevance and accessibility to the community.

Barwon Heads is located within the Peninsula Zone, which includes all land on the Bellarine Peninsula, east of Moolap. For this Zone, the Study noted that connectivity between the small villages dotted along the foreshore is limited, creating a sense of isolation between each settlement. This “isolated” nature forms part of the character of each town, together with a strong connection to the foreshore and the sea. The Study identifies that it is this landscape setting which directs the strategy for open space provision/opportunities within the zone.

City of Greater Geelong Bellarine Peninsula Recreation & Leisure Needs Study 2005

This Study investigated and quantified the recreation, open space and leisure needs of the current and future Peninsula communities and provides a broad direction on future resource allocation.

The Study concluded that the current provision of open space is adequate to meet existing needs in Barwon Heads (aside from Pony Club cross-country activities) and noted that new informal parks would need to be acquired within any new residential areas. One issue raised in the Study was the lack of footpaths and walking tracks in some parts of the town.

2.2 Planning Scheme Provisions

Many of the strategies and guidelines detailed above form part of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, and are included as reference documents to guide the exercise of discretion when considering applications for uses and/or development within the municipality.

The key State and Local Planning Policies, together with the zone/overlay provisions are summarised in Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4.
Table 2 - State and Local Planning Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Key objectives and provisions</th>
<th>Implications for study area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.03: Melbourne 2030 – Networks with regional centres.</td>
<td>Establishes broad policy directions relating to urban planning for regional centres including Geelong.</td>
<td>Limited – Provides general direction for planning of rural and urban areas, to ensure an adequate and appropriate supply of residential land that does not negatively impact on the established rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.01: Settlement</td>
<td>Establishes general principles and objectives for urban settlement including provision of urban land supply and using Structure Plans for the orderly development of urban areas.</td>
<td>Development of Structure Plan must be consistent with State Environment Protection policies, the strategic and physical context of the location, respond to neighbourhood character and encourage consolidation of existing urban areas, provide for liveable and sustainable communities and efficient provision of infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15: Environment</td>
<td>Seeks to respect and respond to catchments and waterways, flooding, air and soil conditions, flora and fauna and coastal locations.</td>
<td>Requires development of coastal areas to be consistent with the principles of the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 and Coastal Management Act and the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. The Victorian Coastal Strategy provides direction in relation to sea-level rise and settlement role and hierarchy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16: Housing</td>
<td>Establishes objectives for subdivision and residential development including the application of Rescode via Clauses 54 - 56. Development of rural living and rural residential areas restricted by application of Ministerial Direction No 6.</td>
<td>Any residential standards should not replicate Rescode provisions. Recommendations relating to future residential and rural residential development must be consistent with state policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause</td>
<td>Key objectives and provisions</td>
<td>Implications for study area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17: Economic Development</td>
<td>Establishes a framework for the development of activity centres, protection of productive agricultural land and development of appropriate tourism opportunities.</td>
<td>Any recommendations relating to the further development of the retail area must be consistent with the broader municipal/regional retail hierarchy. Provides opportunity to establish objectives and policy relating to improvements to town centres and development of tourism based facilities commensurate with the scale and role of the town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18: Infrastructure</td>
<td>Establishes objectives for the provision of physical and community infrastructure.</td>
<td>Infrastructure provision must be efficient, sustainable and relate to key needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.03 Design and built form</td>
<td>Establishes a framework for ensuring high quality urban design and architecture.</td>
<td>Urban design and architecture must reflect the characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity. Provides opportunity to investigate and strengthen local policy and controls as appropriate – any policy provisions should avoid repetition of existing policy framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Local Planning Policy Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Key objectives and provisions</th>
<th>Implications for study area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 21.02: City of Greater Geelong Sustainability Framework | The Sustainable Growth Framework sets out key principles for ensuring that all actions and development undertaken in the City of Greater Geelong meets the needs of the present community, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. | Key implications for the study area include directions to:  
- Set clear settlement boundaries and consolidate development within those boundaries in a managed way  
- Design healthy walkable neighbourhoods  
- Deliver safe, accessible linkages within and between towns that encourage walking, cycling and the use of alternative modes of transport.  
- Take climate change into account when considering the location and design of urban areas.  
- Strive for environmentally sustainable design in all urban development. |
| 21.04 Framework Plan | This section contains a framework plan for the municipality which identifies growth areas, existing and preferred conditions. | Barwon Heads is not identified as a growth area. |
| 21.05: Natural Environment | This clause details key issues relating to vegetation, flora and fauna, coastal environments, climate change, and flooding. | Development is encouraged to avoid isolated wetlands and provide appropriate buffers to waterways and wetlands. Objectives are included in relation to protecting and enhancing the coast and respecting and managing coastal processes. Climate change impacts are recognised as an issue to plan for and adapt to. In relation to flooding, implementation of the Barwon Heads flood studies is recognised as further work and objectives relate to protection of floodplains and |
21.06: Settlement and Housing
This clause identifies growth areas in the municipality. Objectives relating to limiting urban sprawl and providing consolidation of existing urban areas in a managed way are relevant, along with managing the impact of urban change on existing neighbourhoods, ensuring new development responds to the existing neighbourhood character.

This clause references Council’s Housing Diversity Strategy and Residential Character Brochures.

Barwon Heads is not identified as a growth area. A key strategy of the policy is to maintain non-urban breaks between settlements. The policy also includes strategies in relation to maximising opportunities for housing within Increased Housing Diversity Areas. The area within 400m walking distance of Barwon Heads town centre is an identified IHDA. Residential areas that fall outside the IHDA are zoned Residential 3. Strategies also relate to ensuring development is responsive to the established character of areas.

21.07: Economic Development and Employment
The key issues and influences of this clause relate to industry, retail, rural and tourism. Relevant objectives to Barwon Heads relate to retail and rural areas.

This clause establishes and includes a map detailing the municipalities Retail Activity Centre Hierarchy, Barwon Heads retail area is acknowledged as a Town Centre. Strategies relate to ensuring development is directed to activity centres and is consistent with the role and function described in the Hierarchy map. Rural policies relate to protecting and enhancing the Bellarine Peninsula as a productive rural area with highly significant landscapes based on farming and environmental features.

21.08: Development and Community Infrastructure
Key objectives relate to transport, development contributions, open space and accessibility.

Includes strategies relating to provision of open space to ensure a safe and accessible open space network is developed.
### Local Planning Policy Framework Continued...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Key objectives and provisions</th>
<th>Implications for study area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.14: Bellarine Peninsula</td>
<td>Key objectives include to:</td>
<td>Articulates location of a growth boundary, future residential and commercial growth and future community service provision in the township.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Protect and enhance the rural and coastal environment on the Bellarine Peninsula and maintain non-urban breaks between settlements.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To facilitate the development of Ocean Grove, Drysdale/Clifton Springs and Leopold as hubs of development and service provision on the Bellarine Peninsula. In all other townships on the Bellarine Peninsula provide retail, commercial and community uses and facilities that serve the daily needs of the community and encourages street based activity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To provide for sustainable industrial, commercial, retail, agricultural and tourism development in designated locations, to service the wider Bellarine community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To preserve the individual character, identity and role of each Bellarine township.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause</td>
<td>Key objectives and provisions</td>
<td>Implications for study area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. 36 HO1649: Flinders Heritage Area</td>
<td>This policy applies a Heritage Overlay area within Barwon Heads</td>
<td>The policy provides direction to Council when considering planning permit applications for buildings and works within the area. The policy notes that the precinct area “is significant for its seaside character, formed by the strong visual connections with the Barwon River, ocean, bridge, jetties and with the Barwon Heads Park and Frank Ellis Reserve”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.37 HO1650: Golf Links Heritage Area</td>
<td>This policy applies a Heritage Overlay area within Barwon Heads</td>
<td>The policy provides direction to Council when considering planning permit applications for buildings and works within the area. The policy notes that the precinct area “is significant for its intact links type golf course of 1920-22 and small number of large-medium scale, interwar Bungalow houses developed on the Golf Links/Golf Lands subdivision of c.1920”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zones</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential 1 Zone (R1Z)</td>
<td>Increased Housing Diversity Area (within 400 metre walking distance of the town centre) in Barwon Heads is zoned R1Z. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential 3 Zone (R3Z)</td>
<td>The majority of residential land in Barwon Heads is zoned Residential 3. The purpose of this zone includes to provide for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households and to encourage residential development that respects the neighbourhood character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming Zone (FZ)</td>
<td>The majority of the land beyond the western edge of the town is zoned FZ. The purpose of this zone is to provide for the sustainable use of land for extensive animal husbandry and crop raising.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ1)</td>
<td>The land occupied by the 13th Beach resort is zoned CDZ, Schedule 1. Amongst other objectives the main purpose of this zone is to provide for the development and use of an integrated golf and recreational tourist resort with conference and accommodation facilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business 1 Zone (B1Z)</td>
<td>The majority of the shopping village in the centre of the town is zoned B1Z. The purpose of the zone is to encourage the intensive development for retailing and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community uses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)</td>
<td>The service station on the southwest corner of Barwon Heads Road is zoned MUZ, as is the land on the north-west corner of Clifford Parade and Hitchcock Avenue. The purpose of this zone is to provide for a range of residential, commercial, industrial and other uses which complement the mixed-use function of the locality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ)</td>
<td>The 13th Beach foreshore, Murnaghurt Lagoon, Lake Connewarre and parts of the Bluff and the river foreshore-line are zoned PCRZ. The purpose of this zone is to protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values, to provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes and to provide for appropriate resource based uses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Use Zone (SUZ3)</td>
<td>The Barwon Heads Golf Course is zoned SUZ3. The purpose of this zone is to provide for the use and development of private golf courses and to ensure that the use and development of land for private golf courses does not prejudice the amenity of surrounding areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Rural Zone (ERZ10)</td>
<td>This zone has been applied to privately owned land that adjoins the publicly owned land forming the Murnaghurt Lagoon. It is physically part of the wetland system and subject to inundation. The environmental outcome is protection of the vegetation and faunal habitat, and to ensure that the Lagoon is protected from adverse storm water run-off.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)</td>
<td>Part of the Barwon Heads Caravan Park, the Village Park and other small informal parks throughout the township are zoned PPRZ. The purpose of this zone is to recognise areas for public recreation and open space, protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate and to provide for commercial uses where appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 4 - Overlays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overlays</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule 14 to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO14)</strong> – Dwellings Over 7.5 metres</td>
<td>This overlay applies to most residential areas within the City of Greater Geelong. This overlay aims to ensure new dwellings and extensions are compatible with the existing scale and character of adjoining dwellings and aims to ensure that the height and visual bulk of dwellings are acceptable in the neighbourhood setting. A planning permit is required to construct or extend a dwelling over 7.5 metres. This overlay will expire on 30 June 2009, however the current MSS amendment C129 proposes the permanent application of this overlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heritage Overlay (HO)</strong></td>
<td>There are two identified heritage precincts within the township:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The Flinders Heritage Area (bounded generally by Margate St, Ozone Road, Grandview Parade, Golightly Street, Ewing Blyth Drive, Barwon Heads Park and the Barwon River); and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The Golf Links Heritage Area (bounded generally by Stephens Parade, Ewing Blyth Drive, Golf Links Road and includes Barwon Heads Golf Club).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A number of single residences and shops that are covered by individual heritage listings in the township. The purpose of these overlays is to conserve and enhance heritage places or places of natural or cultural significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule 1 to the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO1)</strong> – Significant road sides and linear reserves</td>
<td>This overlay affects some of the roadsides in the northern part of the town, close to the river. The overlay triggers a planning permit requirement for the removal, destruction or lopping of any vegetation. The objectives of the overlay are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To maintain habitat corridors for indigenous flora and fauna.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To ensure that all development and works minimise the loss of indigenous vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schedule 2 to the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2)</strong> – High Value wetlands and associated Habitat Protection</td>
<td>This overlay affects Murtoghurt Lagoon, parts of the river foreshore, the Lake Connewarre wetland system and land along Stephens Parade. The overlay triggers a planning permit requirement for buildings and works within the overlay area. The primary objectives of the overlay are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To maintain the ecological character (the sum of the biological, physical and chemical components of the wetland ecosystem, and their interactions which maintain the wetland and its products, functions and attributes) of Ramsar wetlands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To protect natural resources and maintain ecological processes and genetic diversity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overlays

Floodway and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

These overlays affect part of the river foreshore and some of the land adjacent to Murtnaghurt Lagoon and all of Lake Connewarre. The overlays trigger a planning permit requirement for buildings and works within the overlay areas. The primary objectives of these overlays are:

- To identify waterways, major floodpaths, drainage depressions and high hazard areas which have the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding.
- To identify land in a flood storage or flood fringe area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.
- To ensure that any development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwater, minimises flood damage and is compatible with flood hazard, local drainage conditions and the minimisation of soil erosion, sedimentation and silting and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.

Schedule 8 to the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO8)

This overlay affects the Residential 1 zoned land on Stephens Parade. The area is described in the Schedule as having a "coastal dune scrub character that is dominated by tea-tree, indigenous shrubs and coastal grassland understorey. Dwellings are set within the vegetation cover and are sited to minimise disruption to the landform and vegetation". The overlay triggers a planning permit requirement for some vegetation removal, the construction of a building 7.5 metres in height and in the instance where more than 50% of the site is to be covered by buildings or impervious surfaces.

Special Building Overlay (SBO)

This overlay affects part of the Residential 1 zoned land in the northern part of the township. A permit requirement is triggered by the overlay for some buildings and works within the overlay area.

- To identify land in urban areas liable to inundation by overland flows from the urban drainage system as determined by, or in consultation with, the floodplain management authority.
- To ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, is compatible with the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.

Schedule 3 to the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO3)

This overlay affects part of the road reserve along the Barwon Heads Road, west of the existing urban edge. The purpose of this overlay is to identify land which is proposed to be acquired by a public authority in the instance of this Schedule being for a Proposed Road. A planning permit is required for a range of activities.
### 2.3 Key Influences

- Barwon Heads is not a designated growth location for conventional residential or rural residential growth within Council’s Municipal Strategic Statement;
- Barwon Heads is not a designated location for intense commercial or industrial development;
- There is a need to nominate a clear growth boundary and provide for a compact urban form. Various sensitive environments and landscape features need to be protected and enhanced as appropriate;
- Barwon Heads and its surrounding area hold significant values for Indigenous cultural heritage and it is important that both the community and land managers recognise and protect these values;
- There is strong State and Local Planning Policy direction for:
  - the protection of coastal environments;
  - the protection of rural environments and agricultural activities;
  - enhancement of design and built form of the township including the application of a range of statutory planning controls;
  - planning to manage coastal hazards and the coastal impacts of climate change.
- There is a need to provide direction relating to traffic and parking issues within the township;
- Opportunities exist for enhancement of open space, recreational facilities and linkages;
- There is a need to ensure retail growth is consistent with the established retail hierarchy but which also provides for incremental growth as appropriate;
- There is a need to provide community facilities commensurate with community needs and sustainability of service provision.
3.0 Natural and Urban Environment

The surrounding landscape of Barwon Heads is an intrinsic part of its identity. Uniquely, Barwon Heads is bounded by three significant water systems, Lake Connewarre and Murtnaghurt to the north and west, the Barwon River to the north and east and Bass Strait to the south.

The two main approaches to the town consolidate the “island” character of the town; the rural route to the west and the journey along the spit to the east from Ocean Grove. Undoubtedly, the term “Village by the Sea”, coined in the 1980’s, is still relevant today.

Within the Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (DSE, 2006) the land surrounding Barwon Heads to the west and north is described as ‘localised flatlands’, with the land to the south and east described as ‘coastal cliffs and dunes formed by the wild seas and winds at the southern edge of the Bellarine Peninsula’.

3.1 Natural Environment

3.1.1 Key Environmental Features

To the northwest of the township is Lake Connewarre which incorporates the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve. Murtnaghurt Lagoon lies directly to the west, across a section of rural land, stretching down from Lake Connewarre towards the coast. This wetland area, together with Reedy Lake and the Barwon River estuary, are included on the RAMSAR list, within the Port Phillip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula Site Listing. This entire area provides habitat for a number of migratory birds, including nationally and internationally threatened species. A number of threatened flora species are also found within the area, which is dominated by coastal saltmarsh, together with some sections of mangrove shrubland.

The Strategic Management Plan for the Ramsar site notes that, given its location at the bottom of the catchment, this area is ‘directly affected by hydrological and water quality changes due to catchment processes and land use…the ecological character of the wetland system depends greatly on water quality and flows’ (p.10).

Further to the west of the Lagoon is the Thirteenth Beach Golf Links and open rural land.

The Barwon estuary directly to the north and east is classified as a moderately stratified estuary which ‘experiences greater turbulent mixing due to a greater tidal range’ (Parks Victoria Technical Series No. 15 Estuary Opening Management, p.7). The Lower Barwon occasionally has a well mixed structure, during spring tides when river discharge is relatively low’ (Ibid). On the southern part of the river bank, as the river makes it way south to the sea, is extensive areas of mangrove shrubland. The white mangrove on the banks of the river is fringed with stands of significant Moonah woodland.

Across the Barwon River the Ocean Grove spit and the western coastline of the Ocean Grove township provide significant views to and from Barwon Heads.

To the south is Bass Strait, with the foreshore of Thirteenth Beach. The Barwon Heads UDF identified this coastline approach, along Thirteenth Beach Road, as the third entry point to the town, with “The glimpses of the ocean and panoramic view over the township...important vistas to protect” (Vol. 2 p. 55). Along this approach, at the urban edge of the town is the historic Barwon Heads Golf Club, set amongst secondary dunes and coastal scrub.
The Bluff is the south eastern edge of the town and is one of the significant landscape features of the Peninsula. This headland, the highest point of which is known as Mount Colite, was created by numerous geological processes, which ultimately produced the calcarenite rock/dune limestone formation present today. As noted by Parks Victoria ‘there are two separate reefs lying beneath the Bluff which are of geological and geomorphological significance at the regional and local level’ (www.parkweb.vic.gov.au). The Bluff landscape includes more than ‘80 indigenous species of fauna including many that are considered locally rare and threatened’ (www.barwonbluff.com.au). The eastern tip of this headland is known as Point Flinders.

The Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary extends southeast from the Bluff and covers 17 hectares of sea. This Sanctuary is part of the system of Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries within Victorian waters and was reserved as a sanctuary under the National Parks Act 1975 (Victoria) in November 2002. The major Marine Habitat Classes in the Marine Sanctuary are subtidal soft sediment and subtidal and intertidal reef, which provide habitat for a diverse range of marine flora and fauna. As outlined on the Barwon Bluff website (www.barwonbluff.com.au), the Bluff was an important meeting and camping place for the Wathaurong people, who continue their close association with the area. The Sanctuary is particularly significant for its values to marine education.

At the geographic centre of the town is the Village Park which contains sections of significant Moonah vegetation, some of which pre-dates European settlement. A remnant dune system lies at the eastern boundary of the park containing Coastal Tea Tree and Coastal Wattle (Barwon Heads Village Park Management Plan 2002, p.3).

These key landscape and environment features are shown on Map 10.
Map 10 - Significant Landscape and Environmental Features
3.1.2 Protection and Management of the Natural Environment

The management of the natural environment in Barwon Heads is complex due to the variety of natural features in the town and the diverse agency involvement. Principally, there exists a single lead agency responsible for each specific feature or area appointed either through Commonwealth or State legislation (ie. BCCoM), who undertake their activities through formal strategies and management plans. These lead agencies work in partnership with other groups and agencies, such as “Friends of” groups, to manage and protect these areas.

The groups and government agencies involved in Barwon Heads includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative;
- Friends of the Barwon River;
- Friends of the Bluff;
- Friends of Below the Bluff;
- Barwon Heads Association;
- Barwon Heads Traders and Tourism Association;
- Parks Victoria;
- Barwon Coast Committee of Management (BCCoM);
- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA);
- City of Greater Geelong; and
- Western Coastal Board.

The following table provides a simplified explanation of the roles and responsibilities for each area and the basic objectives for their on-going management.
Table 5 - Management of the Environment: Roles and Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Coastline and the Port</td>
<td>The BCCoM is responsible for management of all coastal reserves within the Study area, which is undertaken through their Coastal Management Plan (subject to review in mid 2006). Responsible for the Port of Barwon downstream of Sheepwash Road to the mouth of Barwon River, which also extends 200 metres southward from the low tide line into Bass Strait.</td>
<td>The over-arching objective for the area is the continued protection and management of the natural environment for its environmental values, whilst providing for recreation and accommodation activities which do not adversely impact on that environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bluff Marine Sanctuary</td>
<td>The lead agency for the protection and management of the Marine Sanctuary is Parks Victoria.</td>
<td>The overall objective is to maintain this area for its environmental values, whilst providing a valuable education resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands (Murtnaghurt Lagoon and Lake Connewarre)</td>
<td>The lead agency for management of these areas is Parks Victoria. They are responsible for waterway management downstream of lower Breakwater to Sheepwash Road. The wetlands extend into private land and golf course with associated management responsibility extending to land owners/managers.</td>
<td>Management of Murtnaghurt Lagoon and Lake Connewarre is undertaken in accordance with Nature Conservation Regulations and the RAMSAR Site Management Plan, the primary purpose being the on-going protection and enhancement of the areas for their environmental values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Park, small local parks and roadsides</td>
<td>The lead agency for the ongoing management and protection of these areas is the City of Greater Geelong</td>
<td>The overall objectives for these areas are to main their biodiversity and landscape values, whilst providing for passive and active recreation space and access.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Urban Environment

The urban environment of Barwon Heads is dominated by housing with a single commercial centre. The context of the urban environment is illustrated on Map 11.
Map 11 - The Urban Environment
As part of the preparation of the Barwon Heads UDF, an analysis of the built form, character and streetscapes of Barwon Heads was undertaken. Given the significant body of work which resulted from this Study it is considered appropriate that the findings of this Study, which includes the aspirations of the community, is referenced within this Structure Plan. The following section of this document includes extensive extracts from the UDF.

### 3.2.1 Town Centre and Hitchcock Avenue Streetscape

The activity centre of Barwon Heads is located along Hitchcock Avenue and extends east along the Bridge Road to the entrance of the town.

The UDF identified that “there is no defined edge between the centre of town and the adjacent residential areas” (Vol 2, p. 61). Along Hitchcock Avenue, south of Ozone Road, the zoning is mixed between Residential 1 and Business 1 and in some parts the zonings of the properties do not reflect the current use of the land, particularly between Ozone Road and Clifford Parade.

The town centre comprises a range of commercial premises, which fulfil both service and convenience shopping needs, and also provides an extensive range of other tourist retailing premises such as restaurants, which are substantially supported by holiday makers and visitors. In recent years new buildings have been developed in the town centre, providing shop-top accommodation in conjunction with ground floor commercial premises.

A supermarket is located on the southern side of Bridge Road, adjoining a residential dwelling and a disused garage, which has recently been utilised as a restaurant. This area of land between Hitchcock Avenue and Golightly Street is zoned Business 1 but is considered to be under-utilised given its location within the town centre and at a key intersection. The Barwon Heads Hotel is located adjacent to the bridge and foreshore parking area at the eastern end of Bridge Road.

There are no substantial off-street car-parking areas located within Hitchcock Avenue, with parking in the town centre being generally limited to on-street car parking. There does exist one off-street parking area in the centre, adjacent to the hotel, however this site is privately owned. The UDF concluded that the level of parking provision was ‘generally sufficient during the off-peak season, but recognised that the peak holiday periods presented both parking and traffic management issues’. Consideration of issues relating to parking provision and traffic are further explored in Section 6 of this Structure Plan.

The UDF provided a comprehensive analysis and description of the town centre and recognised that it is the ‘casual beachyness and unpolished’ character of the streetscape which provides the atmosphere, including the varied front boundary setbacks and mixed built form and materials. Through detailed analysis and community consultation the following objectives were developed for the urban environment of the town centre:

**Street Setting**
- To reinforce the location of the street in the context of its wider setting within a coastal town.
- To protect existing views and vistas within and from the street.

**Street Character**
- To reinforce the casual, unpolished and beachy qualities of the street.
- To encourage a diverse mix of uses and activities in the street.
- To encourage protection of the older dwellings and landmark buildings and their settings.
Building Siting
- To retain the traditionally scaled and proportioned lot sizes in the street.
- To reinforce the linear layout of Hitchcock Avenue, as part of the town’s original street grid.
- To ensure that new commercial buildings address the street.
- To ensure that residential buildings address the street and are sited to protect the amenity of adjacent properties.
- To encourage creative departures from the traditional set back pattern of buildings, in circumstances where it can be justified.
- To include opportunities for garden settings or landscape treatments on sites that contain set back buildings.

Building Form
- To ensure that new buildings are designed to respond to the characteristics of the site and locality, and demonstrate a high standard of contemporary expression.
- To encourage a mix of dwelling types that respond to the diverse needs of the community.
- To ensure that dwellings and their settings contribute to the character and amenity of the street.
- To ensure that commercial buildings encourage social interaction and interest at street level.
- To encourage environmentally sustainable design and material selection for refurbishment or development of new buildings.

Building Finishes and Details
- To encourage buildings that have regard to the palette of materials and colours used in the town, and demonstrate a high level of contemporary finish.
- To encourage details which are integrated with the architecture of the building and contribute to the character and amenity of the street.
- To ensure that signage does not dominate the building or street, and contributes to the pedestrian environment.

To further these objectives, a set of design guidelines were prepared within the UDF and proposed for inclusion in the Planning Scheme. It is appropriate that the Structure Plan realise the planning scheme controls proposed as part of the UDF.

As the above objectives include those relating to use and built form it is necessary for the Structure Plan to develop basic planning principles via both local policy and the application of a Design and Development Overlay to guide the future development of the Town Centre. While the UDF proposed the application of the overlay only to those properties fronting Hitchcock Avenue, it is considered appropriate that, given the importance of Bridge Road and the role it plays as the entrance to the town, the overlay should also be applied to those business zoned properties fronting Bridge Road, to the east and west of Hitchcock Avenue. As noted in the UDF the eastern end of Bridge Road, from Hitchcock Avenue “is an important activity node as well as being a significant arrival or entry point into the town” (UDF Vol.2, p. 65). It is also recommended that the properties at 1 and 3 Clifford Parade, which are presently zoned Business 1, also be included within the proposed overlay area.

Given the disparate nature of the zonings and uses south of Ozone Road, and in light of the above objectives, the UDF also included a recommendation to rezone the existing Residential 1 zoned properties fronting Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone and Bridge Roads, to Mixed Use. The UDF identified that the rezoning of these properties “would better reflect existing uses and provide for a flexible extension of the town centre to within its recognised limits” (Vol. 2, p. 70). Section 7 of this Structure Plan further explores the issue of rezoning properties to Mixed Use.
The development of the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape concept plans occurred in conjunction with the development of the UDF. This streetscape project includes new street lighting, removal of overhead powerlines, new road and footpaths, tree planting and street furniture. Also as part of the streetscapes redevelopment the existing toilet block in Hitchcock is to be renovated. Preceding these works the City carried out a major upgrade of the stormwater drainage in Hitchcock Avenue, in conjunction with works completed by the gas authority to install underground supply lines.

The redevelopment of the centre began on the 19th of March 2007 and was recently completed.

3.2.2 Streetscapes and Residential Character

A Residential Character Study for the City of Greater Geelong has previously been prepared, in consultation with the local community, which includes ‘Preferred Character Statements’ and ‘Design Guidelines’ for each area. It also establishes a ‘Vision Statement’ for the entire township, which emphasises the seaside character and identified heritage and environmental qualities of Barwon Heads.

These areas are shown on Map 11 and are described within the Study as follows:

**Precinct One** - This area is distinctive in Barwon Heads due to its newer building styles, which are predominantly brick, and an openness created by its lack of front fencing and low scale building forms. The retained indigenous coastal vegetation is important to its character and provides a linking element with the remainder of the township.

**Precinct Two** – This Precinct is distinctive in Barwon Heads due to its bushland setting and spaciousness created by large lot sizes that enable buildings to be well separated and setback substantial distances from the front. In most cases native vegetation has been retained and buildings are set in an open bushland environment, and sometimes hidden from the street.

**Precinct Three** – This Precinct is distinctive due to its strong seaside township character created by the low scale architectural styles and mixture of building materials. The buildings frequently have low pitched or flat roofs which adds to their low scale nature and the frequent lack of front fencing, or low open style fencing adds to an open streetscape. The buildings are set within established gardens frequently with retained native vegetation. The seaside feel of the area could be strengthened by encouraging the planting of indigenous species.

**Precinct Four** – The Precinct is distinctive due to its seaside township character derived from the remaining pre and interwar buildings, and the mixture of post war and recent styles with a variety of building materials. The generally low scale buildings are set within mature native and exotic gardens complemented by mature street trees and informal roadway treatments. The character of the area could be strengthened by encouraging a lack of front fencing, or open style front fences and further native planting.

**Precinct Five** – The Precinct is distinctive due to its isolation and spaciousness, due partly to its location between the golf course and the coast, and the appearance of buildings sited within and rising from the coastal scrub. The buildings are eclectic in style, and include older styles, however muted tones that blend with the scrub are preferable. Maintenance of the density of the vegetation is important to the areas character and buildings should be sited to minimize the extent of the buildings are visible from the roadway.

**Precinct Six** – This Precinct is distinctive due to its mixture of architectural styles and building materials, and its river-edge location, which encourages higher development. Development in this Precinct is therefore highly visible, particularly from the eastern entrance and vistas to the township. Vegetation cover varies from low level to more substantial gardens with trees including a predominance of natives and frequent Tea-tree.
**Precinct Seven** - *The Precinct is distinctive due to its bush garden court character, created by the frequent lack of front fencing, the regular front and side setbacks and established native gardens. The seaside location of the area is not always evident other than through the use of typical coastal vegetation such as Tea-tree and the mix of building materials.*

### 3.2.3 Protecting Residential Streetscapes and Character

A number of existing controls are included within the Planning Scheme to assist in protecting the valued elements of the streetscapes and residential character. The overlays existing within Barwon Heads are shown on Table 4 and on Map 11.

The Residential Character Brochures outlined above are a reference document within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. As such, developments which require planning approval such as multiple dwellings and the development of dwellings over 7.5 metres in height, must be assessed and considered against the guidelines contained within the Brochures.

### 3.2.4 Recommended Improvements of Planning Scheme Controls for Residential Areas

A number of strategic documents have been prepared by both Council and the State Government, which support development of planning scheme controls in various residential areas in Barwon Heads.

Council’s Environment and Natural Resources Unit has engaged a consultant to review and update the biodiversity sites that were listed in the original Biodiversity Strategy. This assessment will include the existing sites that were mapped back in 2002 as well as the mapping of new information that has been identified since the original study. To further this work other consultants have also been engaged to review existing planning controls and strategies, list proposed amendments that are identified in the EMS, Biodiversity Strategy and wetlands Strategy. The consultant will also prepare any relevant Planning Scheme Amendment documentation, including an Amendment providing interim protection, if required.

It is considered that there is strategic rationale for the development of Planning Scheme controls or the preparation of further studies to protect the valued character of parts Barwon Heads as detailed below. The new work which is being undertaken by Council’s Environment Unit will be able to significantly assist in the development of appropriate controls for the following identified areas:

**River Frontage and North East Residential Area Properties**

The river environs in Barwon Heads holds significant environmental and recreational values. In some parts, the residential interface is unique within the municipality where the properties have direct frontage to the estuary. In these circumstances vehicle access is from abutting streets to the rear (northern most section of Flinders Parade, Carr Street, Riverside Terrace and Riverside Lane), with some properties having right of carriageway over abutting properties and/or laneways. In the northern section, along River Parade, the character is also unique, with a strong sense of connection to the river and significant vegetation coverage, both on public and private land. Elements of this vegetation coverage also reach south, south east towards the Village Park.

The Victorian Coastal Council has established *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* (May 1998). These guidelines outline the impacts which built form has upon the coastal and foreshore areas and the importance of protecting these areas from inappropriate development. The intention of the guidelines is to increase our awareness of this landscape and to improve design standards and excellence for the whole of the coastline.

The Functional Guidelines section relating to Urban Infill states that “New development in existing settlements should respond to their context and be of an appropriate scale and form".
Problems identified within the guidelines which may be of particular relevance to built form fronting the river edge in Barwon Heads are:

- Buildings visually incompatible with their natural or built surroundings.
- Loss or spoiling of views to the water by buildings.

Another study which also highlights the need to protect and enhance the character of the river frontage is Council’s Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan (2003). This Plan identifies a number of objectives for the river frontage area including:

- Improving the interface treatment to the waterway and softening the urban character;
- Allowing for substantial landscaping;
- Providing for building heights and materials which complement the natural character of waterway; and
- Encouraging water sensitive urban design and best practice stormwater management in accordance with the municipal Stormwater Management Plan.

This study recommended the application of a planning control (a Significant Landscape Overlay was suggested) with reference to the design and development guidelines within the study. The study also recommends the application of site specific controls on residential development which is in close proximity to the mangroves and saltmarsh to:

- Encourage private landowners to use indigenous species,
- Limit human access and domestic pets in the Mangrove area.

There is currently little or no direction relating to the construction of buildings or structures within private properties in this area, including those which have river frontage. This includes a lack of direction about the development and use of private jetties. Private uses backing onto the riverside open space weaken and threaten all types of open space by:

- blocking public access to the river banks;
- breaking riverside public pedestrian trails;
- creating blind (insecure) edges to open space; and
- presenting the lowest quality built aspect to riverside open space.

Biodiversity mapping prepared by DSE indicates that some of the vegetation in the upper north and north-west residential area of town has a Conservation Status of Endangered or Vulnerable. Both Council’s Biodiversity Strategy and the Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan advocate the retention of vegetation in this area, given its vulnerable/endangered status and its role in biodiversity enhancement for the wider area. The Open Space Plan notes that there are extensive stands of mangroves and saltmarsh vegetation on the southwestern shore, along with some older stands of Moonah in the vicinity of Sheepwash Road which provide important habitat values and require ongoing protection.

In the existing policy context there is no direction relating to the removal of vegetation on private property in the north section of town, and adjacent to the river.

**Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road Area**

As described within the Residential Character Study, the residential area between Ewing Blyth and Golf Links Road (Precinct Four) provides a character of generally low scale buildings set within mature native and exotic gardens. Building styles vary from some pre and interwar buildings, together with post war and more recent styles comprising a variety of building materials. Vegetation is mostly indigenous/native tea-tree. The objectives of the precinct brochure encourage the retention and planting of indigenous vegetation, with the removal of Moonah and tea-trees, high site coverage and large bulky buildings is to be avoided.
Currently vegetation within the area can be removed without the requirement for a planning permit with the only permit requirements being for subdivision, a section 2 use, dwellings over 7.5 metres in height or multi dwelling applications, whilst some of this area is also subject to a Heritage Overlay which also triggers a planning permit in a number of instances, including for demolition. Single dwellings which propose high site coverage or boundary to boundary built form do not currently require a planning permit if they are not a part of a Heritage Overlay. A proliferation of this type of built form and the removal of significant vegetation has the potential to undermine the very character elements of the area which make it unique.

The landscape qualities of this area are evident and there is sufficient strategic rationale for the protection of these qualities through State and Local Planning policies. However, it is considered appropriate that Council first undertakes a comprehensive Landscape Assessment and Built Form study for the area, prior to the preparation of a planning scheme control.

**Warrenbeen Court Area**

The Warrenbeen Court area is acknowledged as being distinctive in the Residential Character Precinct brochures, where it is included as it’s own Precinct (2) and is described as having a ‘bushland setting, with its spaciousness created by large lot sizes that enable buildings to be well separated and setback substantial distances from the front’.

Currently, vegetation within the area can be removed without the requirement for a planning permit with the only permit requirements being for subdivision, dwellings over 7.5 metres in height, multi dwelling applications or any section 2 use. Dwellings which propose high site coverage or boundary to boundary built form do not currently require a planning permit. As with the Ewing Blyth/Golf Links Road area, a proliferation of this type of built form and the removal of significant vegetation has the potential to undermine the very character elements of the area which make it unique.

The landscape qualities of this area are evident and there is sufficient strategic rationale for the protection of these qualities through State and Local Planning policies. However, it is considered appropriate that Council first undertakes a comprehensive Landscape Assessment and Built Form study for the area, prior to the preparation of a planning scheme control.

**Stephens Parade**

Stephens Parade is located at the south-west edge of town, between Thirteenth Beach Road and the Barwon Heads Golf Course. Stephens Parade is a narrow unmade gravel road, accessed via the southern end of Golf Links Road. The area has a coastal dune scrub character that is dominated by tea-tree and Moonah species and the majority of the allotments are developed with single dwellings. Properties along Stephens Parade are not connected to reticulated sewerage, requiring the provision of septic tanks and associated effluent fields on the individual lots.

The properties fronting Stephens Parade at its western end are included within the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO, Schedule 8), with the dwellings at the eastern end covered by a Heritage Overlay (HO1650). Stephens Parade is included within Precinct Five of the Residential Character Brochures, with the brochure noting that the area is “distinctive due to its isolation and spaciousness”. The preferred character statement refers to retaining and enhancing the spacious setting within coastal vegetation. The entire street is also covered by the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO, Schedule 1) and the 1996 Structure Plan makes reference to the objective “no extension to subdivision in dunes”.

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The matter of further development and subdivision within Stephens Parade has been subject to two recent cases to the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), cases 1737/2002 and 3148/2003:

- In the former case, considered prior to the introduction of the SLO, the presiding member directed that a permit be issued for the development of two dwellings indicating that the 1996 Structure Plan “did not restrict or prohibit subdivision of the existing residential zoned land”, but did state that ‘not any conventional dual occupancy development should be approved in this location, rather any development should be designed having regard to the provision of the Planning Scheme, including the ESO’.

- In the second case (3148/2003), VCAT directed that no permit be issued for a second dwelling and two-lot subdivision, indicating that the design was inappropriate in terms of the Scheme's decision guidelines and the capability of the lots to accommodate standard septic tanks and effluent fields.

Given the purposes and objectives of the two overlays which affect Stephens Parade, the low density, vegetated character of the area is an important part of the locality which should be protected. The area is unique, given its setting between the coast and the golf course and more intense development is questionable, taking into account the unsewered nature of the locality and the capability of the lots to effectively accommodate on-site septic systems without damaging the fragile environment.

It is considered that the current controls do not provide adequate protection against further development, to ensure the attributes which form its unique setting are retained. Further subdivision and multi-dwelling development within Stephens Parade is likely to result in the loss of the original 1920’s subdivision layout which, although has previously been found to not warrant a heritage overlay, is important in understanding the original Golf Links development.

Options to respond to this issue include rezoning the properties fronting Stephens Parade to Low Density Residential (LDRZ) and retaining the SLO.

### 3.4 Key Influences

- The potential impacts associated with climate change including sea level rise and storm events on future settlement and development;
- Enhancement and protection of significant landscape and sensitive environmental setting;
- The need to appropriately manage the environment and landscape to conserve and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage values;
- Support for on-going management by public land managers of significant landscape and environmental features;
- Opportunity to protect and enhance key views and vistas;
- Opportunity to enhance and identify a preferred character for the commercial centre with the development of an Overlay and Local Policy which establishes broad principles and directions relating to built form and land use;
- Opportunity to control form of development and vegetation removal on residential properties in the river environs;
- Need for further strategic assessment to support the introduction of additional design and/or landscape planning controls over the Ewing Blyth/Golf Links Road area and the Warrenbeen Court;
- Ability to further protect the character of Stephens Parade, through application of the Low Density Residential Zone.
4.0 Demographics & Social Profile

4.1 Past Population Growth

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics census demonstrates that during the period between 1981 and 2001 the population of Barwon Heads doubled, from 1,245 persons to 2,600 persons. The most significant growth occurred between the census periods of 1981-1986 and 1996-2001.

4.2 Estimated Population in 2007

The population of Barwon Heads as at June 2007 is estimated to be 3,077 persons. This figure is illustrated below and is derived by calculating the number of dwelling approvals since the 2001 census, the average household size for the township (at 2001) and providing an estimate of the vacancy rate in 2007.

The vacancy rate in 2007 is estimated to be 32.7%, which has been determined by decreasing the vacancy rate by 0.5% each year since 2001 (35.7%). The decrease of 0.5% per annum is based on the observation that the vacancy rate in the town has been decreasing at an average of 0.5% per annum since 1981 (45.8% vacancy rate in 1981/35.7% vacancy rate in 2001).

Table 6 - Permanent Population Estimate at June 2007

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population at 2001 Census</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Occupied Dwellings at 2001 Census</td>
<td>1,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size in Barwon Heads 2001 (Total Population at 2001 Census ÷ Number of Occupied Dwellings)</td>
<td>2.46 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate number of dwelling approvals issued between census 2001 and June 2007</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Permanently Occupied 2001-2007 (New Dwellings minus estimated number built for non-permanent accommodation)</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Additional Population 2001-2007 (Permanently Occupied Dwellings X Average Household Size)</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(note figures are rounded)

4.3 Peak Population 2005

As a coastal township Barwon Heads experiences a relatively high dwelling vacancy rate however this rate has declined over the twenty year period between 1981 and 2001 by 10.1%. The biggest decline in the vacancy rate occurred between the 1981 and 1986 Census period, a drop of 4.7%.
As within coastal towns across Australia, a significant number of tourists and holiday makers visit Barwon Heads each holiday period, which can impact considerably on permanent residents and retail/service provision for the township. The estimated peak overnight population for the township in 2005/2006 is illustrated in Table 7 below, which provides a snapshot of the distribution of tourist/holiday maker accommodation.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,177</td>
<td>3,784</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>10,531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Geelong Economic Indicators Bulletin 2005/2006)

**4.4 Age Structure**

Census data provides information on the demographics of the township including age distribution. In 2001, 19.3% of the Barwon Heads population was aged 60 years and over. Notably, the proportion of persons aged 60 plus has been consistently decreasing since 1981, when the proportion of people over 60 comprised 28.8%. Decreases have also occurred in the proportion of persons aged between 18 and 34 years, from 25% in 1981 to 20% in 2001.

In contrast the proportion of persons aged between 0 and 17 years and between 35 and 59 years have increased since 1981.

**Figure 1 - Age Distribution 1981 - 2001**
In the year 2001, persons aged between 35 and 49 years represented the most significant age group in Barwon Heads followed by those aged between 5 and 17 years.

4.5 Dwellings & Household Size

The number of private dwellings in Barwon Heads in 2001 was 1,645, of which 1,057 were occupied on census night, which equates to a vacancy rate of 35.7%.

The average household size within the town in 2001 was 2.46 persons, slightly higher than the average for the rest of the municipality at 2.27 persons. The distribution of household size within the township is displayed in Figure 3 below.

![Figure 2 - Age Structure (2001)](image)

![Figure 3 - Household Size (2001)](image)
In 2001, of the *Occupied Private Dwellings* within the township, 43.86% were recorded as being fully owned and 30.15% being purchased. The tenure of the remainder of the occupied housing stock in the township was divided as follows:

- Privately Rented - 18.34%;
- Not stated - 5.67%;
- Government Rented – 1.98%

### 4.6 Labour Force & Income

ABS Census data ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)) identifies the “labour force” as consisting of persons aged 15 years and over who are employed, or those who do not have a job but are actively looking for work. Theoretically, persons not in the labour force include people below the age specified for measuring the economically active population (15 years) and older people who have retired from the workforce.

In 2001 the Labour Force participation rate of Barwon Heads was 62.2%, with an unemployment rate of 5.8%.

Barwon Heads has a relatively high proportion of persons employed in the construction, accommodation, cafes and restaurants, education, health and community services and cultural and recreational industries. There are low levels of employment in manufacturing and retail trade compared to Geelong.

### 4.7 Journey to Work

ABS Statistics for 2001 demonstrate that the private car is the dominant mode of transport for those residents of Barwon Heads who must travel to work.

On census night the private car was used by 90 per cent of employed persons in Barwon Heads who travel to work. These statistics include both drivers and passengers, and the statistics also demonstrate that only 4 per cent of the Barwon Heads work force walks to work. These statistics could lead to the conclusion that the majority of the town's workforce would be employed outside the township, utilising private vehicles to travel to work. However, the data gathered in the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan (BPSP) also found that the majority of those residents who do work within the town also drive to work.

### 4.8 Socio-Economic Index

The ABS produces a Socio Economic Index for Areas which considers Advantage/Disadvantage and takes into account variables relating to income, education, occupation, wealth and living conditions. This data rates Barwon Heads as an advantaged area.
4.9 Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan: Barwon Heads Survey

As part of the preparation of the BPSP a survey of the town’s residents was undertaken. The survey provided a random and indicative snapshot in time of the town in September 2005 (sampling 105 households, and 329 residents in total, or 12.7% of the total population of 2001).

Length of Residence and Age Grouping

Of the resident respondents 98.10% lived permanently in Barwon Heads and most were women (76.19%). A majority were aged between 30 and 50 years of age (67.62%). Two out of every five household respondents (40.95%) have lived in Barwon Heads less than five years and so are unrepresented in the Census 2001. A majority of respondent householders (60.0%) have lived in Barwon Heads less than ten years and 16.19% had lived in Barwon Heads between 11 and 15 years. Of the 43 new resident householder respondents of 5 years or less, almost two thirds (62.79%) were aged between were 36 and 45 years. A further 16.28% were pre-retirement age, 45 to 65 years, with smaller proportions 26 to 35 years (11.63%), and post retirement age (9.30%).

Household Size and Home Ownership

Householder respondents represented large family units, on average of 3.13 persons, 20% higher compared to the average household size for Geelong (2.57 persons). 60% of all respondents lived in households of three or more persons and almost half of the 3+ person household sample moved into Barwon Heads in the last five years (27.62% of the total sample and 46.03% of all 3+ person households).

57.14% of respondents owned their own homes and a further 23.81% were purchasing them. The survey respondents of home owners is significantly higher than the Census 2001 (43.03%). It is possible the seaside location and holiday nature of the stock influences its uniformity, however, its uniformity provides few housing choices for smaller and aging households.

Place of Employment

Although most people worked in Barwon Heads, or Barwon Heads in combination with at least one other place, most people travelled to work by car, or car in combination with another form of public or active transport.

Facilities and Services

Overall, the rating for recreation, such as parks and walking tracks was excellent, however infrastructure such as roads, public toilets, cycle paths, bus shelters and street lighting were rated as average. Parking rated poor for 54.29% of respondents. Footpaths were almost equally ranked average (44.76%) as poor (40.95%). Half the population thought bus availability average (24.76%) or poor (24.76%) while an overwhelming 42.86% had no opinion, perhaps reflecting the use of buses by the community.

In separate questions, respondents’ comments included that there was insufficient commercial bus services. Further comments were that buses should run to Waurn Ponds and that more buses were required particularly, between Geelong Station and other neighbouring townships, including Ocean Grove, Point Lonsdale, and Queenscliff.
4.10 Population Projection 2016

The projected population of Barwon Heads in 2016 is 4,207 persons, determined through application of a growth rate of 1.94%, as utilised by the ABS. Of note is that this projection presumes exponential growth without considering the available lot supply within the town or any future growth of lot supply. Both the available lot supply and household size will impact on the rate of growth.

Table 8¹ - Projected Population (Growth Rate 2004-2022 @ 1.94%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>3,193</td>
<td>3,666</td>
<td>3,998</td>
<td>4,207</td>
<td>4,509</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 illustrates the estimated number of persons within the critical age cohorts of the population in 2016. These figures have been used in the development of the Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan 2006-2016.

Table 9 - Estimated Population 2016 - Critical Age Cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage of Projected Population/Number of Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Years</td>
<td>0 – 4 years</td>
<td>6.3% / 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 – 9 years</td>
<td>6.6% / 278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>10 – 14 years</td>
<td>6.2% / 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 – 24 years</td>
<td>9.9% / 415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Years</td>
<td>65 plus</td>
<td>20% / 832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80 plus</td>
<td>7% / 296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.11 Key Influences

- Average proportion of older residents and residents living alone requiring community and social services;
- Moderate dwelling vacancy rate and seasonal influx of large numbers of non-permanent residents and holiday-makers;
- Dwelling vacancy rate is decreasing, representing increased permanent population and resulting in pressure on community and social services;
- Car reliant population with the majority of people driving to work, including those persons who work within the town;
- Community survey revealed high proportion of newer residents, living in Barwon Heads less than ten years, and community opinion about frequency of public transport and poor supply of car parking.

¹ These figures are based on a population of 3,193 persons in 2004, whereas it is estimated, through past dwelling approvals between 2001 and 2007, that the total number of persons in 2007 is 3,077.
5.0 Township Facilities & Services

The local services and facilities within a township are central to bringing people together and supporting a sense of community. Given the size of the town and population profile, to a certain extent the Barwon Heads community relies on Ocean Grove, and also Geelong, for a range of community services. The inter-relationship of Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads in providing services to residents of Barwon Heads is important for local needs.

5.1 Local Community Services and Facilities

The following is a list of the key local facilities available within the township:

- Kindergarten
- Maternal & Child Health Centre
- Senior Citizens
- Primary School
- Country Fire Station
- Hotel
- Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road Town Centre
- Three Churches
- Scouts Hall
- RSL
- Community Hall
- Library – Primary school (limited hours)
- Lobster Pot – Barwon Estuary Heritage Centre

The Bellarine Community Health Service and the City of Greater Geelong provide a wide range of services including medical, nursing and home-based allied health, youth, maternal and child health and adult day programs, including socialisation, respite and rehabilitation. The services are provided through centres in Barwon Heads, Point Lonsdale, Ocean Grove, Portarlington, Queenscliff and Drysdale.
Map 12 - Existing Community, Recreation and Open Space Facilities
Education Facilities

The Barwon Heads Primary School is located in Golf Links Road and currently has 238 enrolled students.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) plans for the future development of schools on a twenty-year timeframe and adopts a yield of 0.64 students per household to calculate the population threshold required to support a school. A minimum of 600 students is required to support a primary school, and if the student population reaches 900 a second primary school would typically be required. A student population of 1,000 is required to support the development of a secondary school.

Given the projected numbers of school aged children in 2016, it is not necessary for this Structure Plan to designate future areas for educational purposes, nor consider availability of land for additional educational facilities. Council has liaised with DET about future educational requirements and it has not indicated a need for any additional schools in the township. DET has informed Council that there is sufficient land to expand the school at its existing site, if required.

With regard to secondary education facilities there are two campuses of the Bellarine Secondary College both within 20 kilometres of the township, at Drysdale and Ocean Grove. These two facilities provide for secondary school education for the whole of the Bellarine Peninsula. It is envisaged that these schools will adequately service the secondary school aged population of Barwon Heads given that it is not anticipated that a secondary school could be supported for the life of this Structure Plan.

Emergency Services

Emergency services such as police and ambulance are provided to Barwon Heads via the 24 hour stations in Ocean Grove. The State Emergency Service operates a unit within the peninsula, co-located with the ambulance branch in Drysdale.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) operates a volunteer brigade out of premises in Sheepwash Road with reliance on the Ocean Grove station. At present the CFA is about to commence construction of a new fire station in Ocean Grove, which is to be staffed by full time firefighters and will provide support to the volunteer stations in the other towns on the Bellarine Peninsula.

The emergency service agencies have advised that they have no future plans to locate or improve their branches within Barwon Heads and that the expected growth of the town over the next ten years within the existing urban boundaries can be appropriately serviced by their existing branches on the peninsula.

5.1.1 Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan (BPCSP) 2006-2016

The Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan 2006-2016, has recently been prepared, as part of the BPSP, to provide an integrated community service response for the townships and rural areas of the Bellarine Peninsula.

The Plan includes:

- Current and projected populations and their composition for each township and rural areas.
- A summary of current and projected social service provision.
- An understanding and analysis of community needs both now and into the future.
- Action Plans to address identified needs.
Key Community Service issues:

Identified need for:

- extended hours of child and maternal health
- specialist youth services including recreation and entertainment
- facilities to allow residents to age in place
- community concern about accessibility and affordability of health facilities in older years age groups
- improved public transport options particularly for access to secondary schools
- community proposal for multi-purpose children’s learning and care hub

Based on the above issues, the projected population within the critical age cohorts and community input the following recommendations were developed for future community service planning in Barwon Heads:

1. Recommendation 1: Improve linkages between existing early years services
2. Recommendation 2: Investigate capacity for using existing facilities in Barwon Heads for increased delivery of community / family services, E.g. Bellarine Community Health Centre family support and allied paediatric services
3. Recommendation 3: Work in partnership with local community to increase number of programs for young people (E.g. FReeZA)
4. Recommendation 4: Continue to plan and build new skate park in Barwon Heads
5. Recommendation 5: Support Barwon Heads youth to use new skate park and develop as a youth friendly area
6. Recommendation 6: Explore future service growth for young people (Bellarine Community Health)
7. Recommendation 7: Explore possibility of Ocean Grove Neighbourhood Centre extension program using Barwon Heads hall for program delivery

This Structure Plan broadly supports the implementation of these recommendations.

5.2 Open Space, Leisure and Recreation Facilities

A number of public leisure and recreation facilities are offered in Barwon Heads. The following is a list of the leisure and recreation facilities within the township, further illustrated on Map 12.

- 13th Beach Surf Lifesaving Club
- Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club
- Village Park
- Barwon Heads Golf Club
- Various boat launching facilities.

The attractive coastal aspect offered in Barwon Heads provides a significant range of water based recreational activities. The Barwon Coast Committee of Management Inc. is the delegated Local Port Manager for the Port of Barwon Heads.
Barwon Heads Village Park has sporting ovals in the quiet bush setting close to the town centre. The reserve is large and accommodates two hard wicket ovals, tennis courts a bowling green and a pony club. The reserve is home to the following clubs and facilities:

- Barwon Heads and District Pony Club Inc Pavilion.
- Barwon Grove Golf Club Rooms
- Barwon Heads Bowling Club
- Barwon Heads Cricket Club and Pavilion
- Barwon Heads Scout Group Pavilion and Scouts Hall
- Barwon Heads Tennis Club, courts and pavilion.
- Adventure playground
- Amenities

5.2.1 Identified Improvements to Open Space, Leisure and Recreation Facilities

A number of previous studies have been previously undertaken by, or on behalf of, Council which have identified potential improvements in relation to open space, leisure and recreation provision and their linkages within the township. This Structure Plan broadly supports the key actions of those previous studies as detailed below.

City of Greater Geelong Study of Open Space Networks 2001

This Study recommended the following actions specifically relevant for Barwon Heads:

- Develop safe pedestrian and cycle routes around the town and to Ocean Grove, along the coast to the west and parallel to the western bank of the Barwon River so as to link with the proposed trail commencing in the vicinity of Breakwater in urban Geelong’s south-east.
- Take action to enhance the quality of existing Informal Park sites, public and civic spaces, including implementation of the Management Plan for the Village Park.
- Support the proposal for the development of a circular trail around Barwon Heads including linkages to activity nodes within the town in accordance with the recently approved concept plans (E.g. Barwon Heads town park and Lake Murtnaghurt).
- Ensure any potential residential development of the land west of Sheepwash Road incorporates an adequate open space buffer to Lake Connewarre Conservation Reserve.
- Investigate the possibility for a pedestrian/cycle path connecting the “Beacon Car Park” to Stephens Parade and then from the western end of Stephens Parade to the 13th Beach Surf Club.

South West Port Phillip & Adjacent Ocean Coast Public Boat Launching Review 2003.

In 2003 a review of the existing boat launching facilities in the areas was undertaken. The aim of the report was to provide a basis for future funding and capital works decisions regarding public boating facilities. The review including the following recommendations regarding facilities within the Study Area:

- Talbot Street (illegal boat launching area) – Management regime is to close this ramp.
- Flinders Parade – This ramp is used by Barwon Coast Committee of Management and other management authorities needing to service infrastructure. Access for very small craft which can be carried across the sand is acceptable. The management regime for this ramp is to maintain the status quo
- Minah Street – This ramp is classified as a low use ramp for very small non-powered craft. The management regime for the ramp is to maintain the status quo.
Pelican Street – The pontoon landings at Pelican Street are adequate to provide a suitable facility for small to medium-sized craft operating in the river. The management regime for this ramp is to upgrade it.

Bellarine Peninsula Leisure & Recreation Needs Study (BPLRN) 2005

The Bellarine Peninsula Leisure & Recreation Needs Study concluded that the town was adequately serviced by a range of leisure and recreation facilities.

The Study made various recommendations in relation to open space, its features and linkages throughout the township, based on the content of the Barwon Heads Urban Design Framework. It also recommends improvement or additions to existing recreation facilities and linkages within the township:

1. Upgrade the playgrounds in the Village Park (in accordance with the Master Plan, that is installation of more modern equipment to supplement existing features) and The Mews reserve. The later upgrade (The Mews) could specifically be targeted to cater for the toddler age group (2-5 years) as the park provides a safe location for this age group and is located close to young families. The Mews upgrade should include toddler swings, slide, rockers and a shade sail.

2. Install an appropriately designed playground (having due regard to potential drainage/flood events) within the drainage reserve off Newby Close.

3. Rezone the current Residential 1 Council owned land linking Fumeeaux Close, Warrenbeeen Court and Phillip Street to PPRZ in recognition of the Linear Link role that these areas play. Improve pedestrian and cycle access through these links including formalising a path system in the reserve on the north side of Barwon Heads Road. This could potentially be linked to the future residential area on the southern side of Barwon Heads Road if a safe crossing point could be established, and then to the Primary School.

4. Support Barwon Coast initiatives to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along 13th Beach Road.

5. Improve interpretive information and signage along walking trails to interpret the historical and environmental features of the town.

6. Support the Barwon Heads Pony Club to improve facilities for Show jumping, dressage and cross-country (practice jumps) within the Village Park. This needs to be undertaken within the context of improved protection and management of the existing Moonah community in the park. Clearer definition/delineation of areas available for the Pony Club will also help address public safety concerns. In the short-term, CoGG investment should be limited to immediate safety requirements pending resolution of a long-term vision by the Peninsula equestrian community.

7. Implement the recommendations of the Village Park Master Plan as funding becomes available, including acknowledging the aspirations of the Bowls Club to upgrade to a synthetic surface and continue to work with them to explore best avenues to achieve this.

8. Support the use of the Village Park by the Ocean Grove/Barwon Heads Little Athletics Club, through the provision of a modest extension to the existing Tennis Club pavilion to establish a storage area and minor improvements to the 2nd oval to accommodate use by Little Athletics.

9. Given the topography of Barwon Heads (relatively flat) there are opportunities to promote higher levels of walking within the town (as identified in the BH Urban Design Framework). This could be achieved via installation of footpaths on key routes, supporting the development of a “Round the Heads Walking Trail” and improving walking access/options to 13th Beach, including the Surf Club.
**Barwon Heads Village Park Final Management Plan June 2002**
The City of Greater Geelong is the appointed land manager of the Village Park under the Crown Land Reserves Act 1978. Management of the park is undertaken through the 2002 Management Plan, which has been prepared following extensive community consultation and development.

The Plan is reflective of the actions contained within BPLRN and includes the following main objectives and actions:

- Enhance and protect the existing character of the Village Park
- Protect the Moonah Vegetation Community
- Protect the Significance of the Remnant Dune
- Cease Cross-Country Equestrian in the Dune System
- Upgrade existing tenant club’s facilities
- Enhance informal and passive recreation opportunities in the park
- Enhance the existing playground
- Protect adjacent properties from possible disturbance
- Park Management (including a recommendation to form an “Adopt-a-Park/Friends of” Group for the Park)

**Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan 2003**
This plan was developed and adopted by Council in 2003 with its intent being to “guide the future recreational use and landscape character of the River and adjoining open spaces in a manner that is compatible with its environmental values” (p. 1).

Within the Plan, the area around Barwon Heads is located within Reach 5 (Reedy Lake and Lake Connewarre) and Reach 6 (Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads). In conjunction the overall intent for the Plan, the key outcomes for these areas are:

- Improve the open space links between Geelong and the coast;
- Ongoing protection of the natural view sheds and high visual qualities of the Lake Connewarre system;
- Support continued boating and fishing access to the waterway; and
- Protect and enhance the natural view sheds from the Barwon River estuary.

**Round the Heads Trail (2006)**
A feasibility study was undertaken in 2006 to establish a shared walking/cycling trail circumnavigating Barwon Heads.

The concept for such a trail has long been identified by the community and was also identified in the Barwon Heads UDF and the Bellarine Peninsula Leisure and Recreation Needs Study. Following its preparation by a specialist consulting firm, overseen by a steering committee, the study was placed on public exhibition for community comment in June 2006.

Further work on the alignment of the trail was required following public exhibition of the study, including a vegetation assessment, and it is anticipated that a final report will be produced mid-late 2007.

**13th Beach Trail - Barwon Coast Committee of Management (BCCoM)**
The concept of a trail was originally conceived as part of the 2004 Barwon Coast Committee of Management Trails Strategy Action Report, developed with the assistance of a community reference group and significant input from state and local government agencies. The construction of a 13th Beach Trail was specifically advocated for as a priority issue by the community reference group at their final meeting regarding the plan, particularly to improve the safety of young people accessing the beaches. The BCCoM are currently investigating a number of options to provide a shared walking/cycling pathway in this area which is envisaged to be a component of the proposed "Round the Heads Trail".
Barwon Heads Skate Park
This facility is proposed to be located in the Village Park and is to comprise a street course area as part of Stage 1 and a feature skate bowl in Stage 2. Community members were invited to comment on the proposed location of the site, adjacent to Sheepwash Road north of the bowl greens, in March 2007. Council is currently under consultation with residents about the proposed location.

5.3 Tourism

Tourism in an essential part of the vitality and economic future of Barwon Heads. Tourism based facilities are steadily growing in number and it is important that this Structure Plan supports the continued, sustainable growth of this aspect of the town.

Geelong Otway Tourism data for Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula alone shows that tourism generates $478 million into the local economy and employs approximately 4,200 equivalent full time workers. Hence, this industry will be fundamental to the future economic development of Barwon Heads and surrounding townships. Of relevance to Barwon Heads is that tourism is classified as one of the Strategic Growth Sectors of the Greater Geelong Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010.

The tourism industry within the Geelong Otway Region makes a significant contribution to the local economy and has many positive benefits associated with employment, diversity of cultural experiences and tourism opportunities and expanded infrastructure (improved facilities, upgraded amenities, walking and bicycle tracks, environmental improvements etc).

Regionally over 1.7 million domestic overnight visitors and 4.8m day trip visitors are received. In the Geelong municipality, tourism contributes $478M to the economy and provides 4,898 direct EFT jobs with a multiplier effect of 14,000 EFT jobs. A significant portion of this expenditure is on food and accommodation and a large portion of visitations are from Geelong (35% of day and overnight visitations) and from Melbourne (58%). A significant proportion of these visitations are to the Bellarine Peninsula.

Within the region tourists are accommodated in holiday homes (19%), friends (39%) and commercial accommodation (42%). Commercial accommodation capacity within the region comprises Caravan Parks (sites and cabins) 15%, large hotels/apartments 14%, small hotels/apartments 9%, B&B’s 2% and backpackers 0.04%. In terms of accommodation supply and demand distribution within Geelong, the supply is 57% with demand 61%. Barwon Heads itself serves a number of markets including the ‘short break’ segment, families, ‘seniors’ segment, couples and Visiting Friends and Relatives.

The Geelong Otway Tourism Commercial Accommodation Analysis and Forecast identifies future supply requirements (to 2006) within the Geelong sub region:

- 1 large caravan park (note: a planning permit has recently been granted for a large caravan park on the Bellarine Highway to the north of Ocean Grove);
- Conversion of some caravan sites to cabin sites,
- 1 large hotel or equivalent (97 rooms); and
- 5 smaller accommodation establishments (5 – 15 rooms each) in coastal population growth areas.
Given its scenic location and natural attributes, Barwon Heads continues to be a popular family holiday location and popular day visit locality. Some of the attributes which make Barwon Heads a popular tourist destination include:

- Beaches, both safe family beaches and surf beaches (with surf life saving club);
- Water based activities such as sailing, boating, diving, fishing;
- Natural features including Lake Connewarre, Murtnaghurt Lagoon, Barwon Bluff and the Marine Sanctuary, Barwon River and estuary; and
- Parklands.

Together with the natural attributes, illustrated on Map 10, the town is also provided with a range of other tourist attractions, further detailed below.

**Jirrahlinga Koala and Wildlife Sanctuary**
Jirrahlinga is an educational sanctuary and place of rehabilitation for sick, injured and orphaned animals. The sanctuary is a popular tourist attraction within the township Barwon Heads.

**13th Beach Golf Resort and Conference Centre**
The 13th Beach resort is promoted as a combination of prestigious accommodation, conferencing and golf experience. The resort offers 4.5-star accommodation within a range of one, two and three bedroom, self contained apartments and a 36-hole golf course development with two courses. Facilities also include a clubhouse with restaurant and bar, pro-shop, golf academy with driving range, swimming pool, spa, tennis court, and walking track access to 13th Beach.

**Barwon Heads Golf Club**
This 18-hole course is a private club, which provides a substantial range of clubhouse services including dining room, a number of bars and conference facilities. Accommodation is provided in the clubhouse, available only to members and their guests and members of registered golf clubs or affiliated golf clubs. The course is regularly rated in Australia's top 30 courses.

**Caravan and Camping Parks**
Two caravan and camping parks are located within Barwon Heads. The Rondor Caravan Park is located in the northern section of the town, on the corner of Sheepwash Road and River Parade. This park is surrounded by housing to the west, south and east and provides caravan and camping sites and self-contained cabins. The Barwon Heads Caravan Park is located adjacent to the historic Barwon Heads Bridge. This park is operated by Barwon Coast Committee of Management and offers camping and caravan sites, together with a number of self-contained cabins.

**Other**
- Entertainment/recreational facilities (including Barwon Heads hotel, various restaurants and cafes);
- Local shops.

Other tourist accommodation options include the Barwon Heads Hotel and various bed and breakfast properties, cottages and cabins throughout the township.
5.3.1 The Future of Tourism

Enhancement of the existing attractions, improvements to associated infrastructure and support for the establishment of tourist related activities will increase and broaden the tourist appeal of the town and deliver other associated community benefits.

Consultation processes undertaken relating to tourism on the Bellarine has identified a number of tourism opportunities including:

- Supporting markets and events in parklands;
- Improving around town open space linkages;
- Providing "park and ride" transit system;
- Providing for more tourist accommodation, particularly for Barwon Heads high-end accommodation and accommodation for larger groups;
- Improving beach access and activities near the beach E.g. cafes and restaurants;
- Improvements to directional signage; and
- Support for art/craft and food/wine related activities in peripheral rural areas.

There is concern from operators that high land costs and difficulty in expansion within an urban setting (residential zoning) will make it difficult for tourism operators to be viable in the longer term. Given that some of these operations are located on holdings made up of many lots there is an attraction to replace caravan parks with more intensive medium density housing. Areas which have caravan parks provide an accommodation option for a variety of budgets and cross sections of the community which further adds to the social diversity of communities via both visitors to these facilities and permanent residents. The importance of local caravan parks is recognised as is the need for further investment in caravan parks and the potential over time to vary the tourist accommodation mix; these existing operations are also an important part of the town’s relaxed coastal character and attraction.

The seasonal nature of tourism in the region focused on summer periods means that increased stress is placed on road networks, parking at the town centre and at key beach access points.

5.4 Key Influences

- Single retail centre which provides for basic community needs and non-essential retail services;
- Reliance on region-wide social and community service provision;
- Opportunity to broadly support recommendations of the Bellarine Peninsula Community Service Plan to improve range of community support services;
- No forecast need to provide additional education facilities in town;
- Previous studies considered that the amount of open space within the town is sufficient;
- Opportunity to support recommendations of previous studies to enhance open space and recreation areas and further develop and improve linkages between existing range of recreational facilities;
- Tourism is a significant component of the local economy and opportunities exist to support and improve tourist accommodation options, tourism activities and uses which help broaden the tourism visitation period and improvements of facilities and access to the beach, waterway and environmental areas.
6.0 Physical Infrastructure and Transport

6.1 Water Supply

Barwon Heads is supplied with water by gravity from Barwon Water’s Ocean Grove Tank in Grubb Road, Ocean Grove. The water is conveyed to the town, through Ocean Grove via a 375mm diameter feeder main located within the foreshore reserve adjoining the Barwon Heads-Ocean Grove Roads, with a 425mm diameter section across the Barwon Heads Bridge.

Additional comments from Barwon Water with regard to the proposed expansion of the western boundary state that the existing water supply system has the capacity to service the existing township and any zoned infill. There is no capacity in the current system to provide for any land west of the current western boundary (1900-1920 Barwon Heads Road); this area was not within the longstanding designated boundary for Barwon Heads.

The 1900-1920 Barwon Heads Road property could be serviced but it would require a significant length of 225mm connecting main from Barwon Water’s 375mm pipeline in Bridge Road. Because this main would only be required to service the 1900-1920 Barwon Heads Road development it is considered as a reticulation asset with the developer being required to fund it. If land north of the Barwon Heads-Geelong Road and north of the 1900-1920 Barwon Heads Road development is one day allowed to develop, it will require a dedicated tank and pumping system to ensure that supplies to existing adjacent properties are not compromised.

6.2 Sewer

The Barwon Heads wastewater system serves all of the existing development within the township apart from a small number of dwellings in Stephens Parade.

The system includes a number of pump stations serving separate drainage catchments.

Barwon Heads is serviced via a conventional gravity sewerage system along with ten sewerage pump stations (PS), which collect flows and pump them via a series of rising mains and gravity mains to the Barwon Heads PS No.1. The Barwon Heads Rising Main No.1 then injects into the Ocean Grove to Black Rock Rising Main, which transfers flows to the Black Rock Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) at Breamlea. Barwon Heads No. 1 pump station was substantially upgraded in 1998.

Further comments from Barwon Water state that the existing sewerage system in Barwon Heads does not have sufficient capacity to cater for growth beyond the town’s current western boundary. Any future growth of Barwon Heads will need to be investigated by the developer and it should be noted that the existing sewerage reticulation system to the east does not currently have capacity to accept these flows.

Bellarine Sewerage Strategy:

The Bellarine Peninsula Sewerage Management Study (BPSMS), which incorporates Barwon Heads, commenced in August 2005 and was completed in April 2007. The BPSMS has determined the sewerage strategies required to accommodate existing and future development within the wider Bellarine Peninsula for the next 40 years.

A conclusion of the BPSMS is that the strategic direction for sewerage on the Peninsula should be the continued operation of conventional sewerage systems in the southern and northern areas. This would involve continued transfer of flows to Black Rock Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) for treatment and disposal or recycling. Growth in the eastern Peninsula would be accommodated by expansion of the existing Portarlington WRP. Local treatment and recycled water schemes were investigated for both the northern and southern
system, however, these are not considered feasible, both financially and from a re-use demand perspective.

Based on the preliminary conclusions in the BPSMS, approximately $19m would need to be provided in Barwon Water’s capital works plan for several conventional upgrade projects across the Southern Bellarine sewerage system. These projects need to occur to meet the current demand. A project relevant to Barwon Heads is the installation of a new pump station west of Barwon Heads and new rising main to Black Rock WRP.

The existing reticulation system in Barwon Heads does not have sufficient capacity to cater for growth beyond the town’s current western boundary. As identified above, Barwon Heads will ultimately be serviced via a new pump station to the west of Barwon Heads. The station, to be known as ‘Barwon Heads West Pump Station’, will be located on the Geelong Road, just beyond the current extent of development. This pump station would have some contingency capacity able to accommodate additional growth west of the current township boundary.

6.3 Storm-water

Council recently developed and adopted the Barwon Heads Drainage Flood Management Plan (FMP, November 2005). The following section of this document includes significant extracts from the FMP.

Barwon Heads experiences relatively serious and frequent drainage related or “stormwater” flooding. The township is located on low lying land which was part of the floodplain for the Barwon River, prior to the construction of the earthen levee bank. This bank was constructed following the 1952 flooding Barwon Heads and is approximately 1,500 metres long, situated north west of the town.

As described in the FMP:

“Topography of the area is undulating, with the majority of the township situated in a low-lying depression, surrounded by ridgelines to the north and east and higher ground to the south. Ground levels range from 1.0m to 17.0m AHD (Australian Height Datum with 0.0m being approximately mean sea level)” (p. 1-1, FMP).

Drainage is primarily underground, with the stormwater runoff generally released to the Barwon River via a network of stormwater pipes and pumps, or it enters the groundwater through natural infiltration and constructed infiltration pits. Some of the more recent subdivisions in the northern section of the town have been designed to store stormwater runoff within depressed roadways and retarding basins in the event of pump failures or major storms. These areas have been covered by a Special Building Overlay (SBO) within the Planning Scheme and are effectively designated as being liable to flooding under the Building Regulations 1994. The SBO and designation enable control of intra-lot surface levels and minimum floor levels.

The FMP found that the pipe network for stormwater in the older areas of the township is generally undersized by today’s standards. Given that floodways are not provided in all areas of the town, during larger flood events, when the capacity of the network is exceeded, this results in above floor flooding in residential and commercial areas. The most recent significant drainage-related flood event was in February 2002, when 90mm of rainfall was recorded in 24 hours. Serious flooding occurred at a number of locations during this event. Approximately five dwellings/shops were flooded internally, with each of these buildings at separate locations.

As part of the study, the FMP identified four mitigation options to alleviate the flooding impacts and risks to property in Barwon Heads. In November 2005 Council resolved to adopt
Scheme 1 and refer this Scheme to the budget process to enable its consideration for funding.

Scheme 1 involves the following actions:

- Upgrade Clifford Pde pump station, gravity feeder pipes and rising main.
- New 750mm diameter stormwater gravity pipe along Ozone Rd from Grove Road to Barwon River to take flow from above mentioned rising main.
- New 825mm diameter stormwater pipe from corner of Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Rd to Clifford Pde pump station.
- Upgrade Heron Cr pump station, gravity feeder pipes and rising main.
- Construct infiltration pits in George St.

One of the other strategies recommended as part of the FMP was the recognition that further development within Barwon Heads has the potential to increase flood risk to people and property. The FMP recommended that assessment of rezoning proposals should include application of principle of zero adverse flood impact on adjacent, upstream and downstream areas. It was also recommended that the assessment of development and subdivision applications should include application of best practice guidelines for development within or upstream of flood-prone areas.

At the time of adopting Scheme 1 of the FMP, Council also resolved to commence the amendment process to incorporate the relevant flood zones and overlays into the Planning Scheme, based on the flood mapping in the FMP.

6.4 Transport Infrastructure

The transport network within Barwon Heads is focused on road based movements, with the provision of formal pedestrian paths and linkages between the open space areas, and to and from the town centre, being poor in some parts of the town.

6.4.1 Roads

The township of Barwon Heads is accessed via three main roads.

Barwon Heads Road is the main entry point to the town and provides direct access to the centre and the northern section of the town. This road collects the majority of motorists from Geelong and Melbourne. The other routes into town are across the Barwon Heads Bridge, from Ocean Grove, and Thirteenth Beach Road which becomes Ewing Blyth Drive. In its findings the UDF highlighted the importance of these entrances to the township, and the overall contribution they make to the towns “village character”.

Given its location, like other coastal towns Barwon Heads has a primary route which facilitates the majority of through traffic movements, with the eastern end of Bridge Road accommodating all traffic movements east out of the town given the single opportunity to cross the river. This main route through the town is managed by VicRoads and decisions relating to load and speed limits, pedestrian crossings and traffic devices are ultimately determined by VicRoads, not Council. Given the recent decision by the Minister for Planning, this existing configuration is to remain unchanged and Council must work within the limitations which this road alignment, and its management, presents in relation to traffic movements and associated issues for the wider township.

As part of the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape works, Council requested that VicRoads transfer the main road status from Hitchcock Avenue to Golf Links Road and the western end of Bridge Road. A decision regarding this matter was deferred pending the outcome of the bridge issue and it is expected that VicRoads will notify Council of its decision regarding the main road status soon.
As found within the Barwon Heads Traffic and Parking Study (2003), traffic levels on the major roads in Barwon Heads are typically low for most of the year, however the traffic network comes under increased pressure on weekends and during peak holiday periods. Undoubtedly, the growing popularity of the town as a holiday destination and the development of the Armstrong Creek growth area will intensify both the through traffic and the destination traffic into Barwon Heads.

Like many coastal towns, Barwon Heads has widely grassy verges on most roads, which form a significant character element for the town. The presence of these wide verges, often lacking any formal pedestrian treatment provides for narrow streets, which are made narrower close to the centre of town where parking occurs on both sides of the street.

The retention of the unsealed roadways and grassy verges within the township were a significant point of debate during the preparation of the UDF. The UDF cited overwhelming support for retention of these features at the second community forum for the study, given their association with the "unpolished" character of the town. In contrast, however, the Traffic and Parking Study supported the sealing of the unmade roads on safety and amenity grounds and to improve traffic flow.

There were a number of submissions regarding Clifford Parade or more specifically whether or not this street should become one way. The majority of submissions regarding this issue suggested that the conversion of this street to one way would be a better outcome from a traffic management and parking perspective. However comments from Council’s Traffic Department state that the introduction of one way traffic flow in Clifford Parade is not supported at this stage, for the following reasons;

- Inconvenience to property owners;
- Additional traffic needs to use Hitchcock Avenue;
- Higher vehicle speeds and an increased risk to parents crossing the street with children;
- Inconvenience to visitors in the area.

It was noted that the crossover to the Senior Citizens centre on Clifford Parade be widened to allow for two-way operation; it is noted that this would be the responsibility of the Senior Citizens centre.
Map 13 - Key Routes and Entrances
6.4.2 Parking

The supply of car parking in the township is continuously raised as an issue requiring immediate attention by residents and traders, with particular emphasis on the supply of parking in the southern section of Hitchcock Avenue.

Parking within Barwon Heads is principally provided for on-street. There are only two formalised off-street parking areas in the vicinity of town centre, the BCCoM foreshore car park and the hotel car park, which is privately owned. The supermarket is not provided with any separate car parking area; so it is necessary that it’s patrons use the hotel car park or available on-street parking in the vicinity. Parking restrictions in the town are limited to the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue, with the majority of on-street parking available unrestricted. Many of the business premises at the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue only provide limited off-street parking for customers and in some instances none is provided at all.

The Barwon Heads Traffic and Parking Study (2003) did not support the belief that parking supply in the township was inadequate, concluding that such views were not supported by the results of the off-peak or holiday period parking inventories. The area for the study was the land bounded by Grove Road and Flinders Parade and Ozone Road and Bridge Road, including part of Golightly Street, the hotel and BCCoM car parks. The inventories were undertaken on a Friday and Saturday in November 2002 (Off-peak) and on a Friday and Saturday in the middle of January 2002 (Peak).

In the case of usage rates during the off-peak inventory the highest occupancy rate was recorded to be 22% of total supply, excluding the majority of the privately owned car parks aside from the Hotel car park. For the supply on Hitchcock Avenue, the highest occupancy rate on Saturday 73%.

During the peak inventory study time, the highest usage was recorded to be 22% of total supply, once again excluding the majority of the privately owned car parks, aside from the Hotel car park. For Hitchcock Avenue, the highest occupancy rate on the Friday was 49% of total spaces, with the Saturday peak being 73% occupancy.

During the preparation stages of the draft Structure Plan Council undertook a further occupancy study for parking in the town centre. This inventory was taken on Wednesday the 28th March and Saturday 31st March, with the Saturday coinciding with the first weekend of the Easter school holiday period.

This latest inventory indicated the following:

Table 10 – Parking Inventory 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL AREA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Long Term Spaces</td>
<td>1542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy Level</td>
<td>26.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Short Term Spaces</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy Level</td>
<td>53.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH SOUTH ALIGNED STREETS - SHORT TERM SPACES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 1 and 2 Average Occupancy Level (Excluding Hotel Car Park)</td>
<td>77.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 1 and 2 Average Occupancy Level Hotel Car park</td>
<td>36.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above occupancy data, undertaken during a holiday period, it is clear that the short term spaces, located in the centre of town are able to cater for the parking demand.
6.4.3 Public Transport

Public transport in Barwon Heads is limited to a bus service to and from Geelong, which operates via Ocean Grove and Queenscliff. The bus service runs daily, between the hours of 9 am and 7pm Monday to Friday, with limited services on Saturdays and Sundays. The service enters Barwon Heads along Barwon Heads/Geelong Road, before turning in a southerly direction along Hitchcock Avenue. The service then continues along Bridge Road across the Barwon River. Some weekday services have an alternate route incorporating the Sheepwash Estate. This service travels north along Sheepwash Road from Barwon Heads Road. It then travels east along River Parade and south into Carr Street. The bus then returns to the intersection of Geelong Road and Hitchcock Avenue before continuing on the normal route.

A free shuttle bus service also operates between the town and Ocean Grove during the summer holiday period. The bus operates seven days a week, from 10am to 6pm following a looped route within the towns.

6.4.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

The majority of residential streets in Barwon Heads have no formal footpaths, where wide grassy verges and a lack of kerb and channel are a characteristic of the township.

Intra-township bicycle and pedestrian movements are generally delegated to the grassy verges and roadways, with the unmade lanes in the “old town” identified in the UDF as providing a unique connection to the town centre.

The network of paths in the Village Park provide for pedestrian connections between Hitchcock Avenue and the north-west corner of the park. In conjunction with these new footpaths Council has recently completed construction of formal footpaths on the west and east sides of Sheepwash Road.
Map 14 - Transport Network
6.5 Previous Studies and Referrals: Identified Improvements to Transport & Movement Network and Parking Supply

VicRoads have advised there are no planned major upgrades/improvements to the road network both within and to the township. A road reservation adjoins Barwon Heads Road for its entire length; however VicRoads have advised there are no plans to take up this reservation in the near future. Currently, Hitchcock Avenue is the declared main road through the township, however given the Minister’s decision regarding the Bridge, and the recommendations contained with the UDF, Council has recently written to VicRoads formally requesting the transfer of the arterial road status from Hitchcock Avenue to Golf Links Road.

As noted previously Council must work within the limitations which the road network, and the management of the major route through town, presents in relation to traffic movements and associated issues for the wider township. Given that decisions are yet to be made by VicRoads and Heritage Victoria regarding the bridge/intersection treatment at its western end Council can only strongly advocate to these bodies for appropriate measures to be included in any plans to ensure that safety, particularly in relation to pedestrian movements across Bridge Road, is fully considered. It is considered that a 50km/ph speed limit should be placed on all roads in the township, to assist in mitigating future issues resulting from an increase in the load limit on the bridge, as included in the Advisory Committee report regarding the bridge.

A number of previous studies and strategies have been undertaken which provide for other improvements to the transport and movement network both within and to the township. This Structure Plan broadly supports the key actions of those previous studies:

**Barwon Heads UDF**

**Access and Safety**
- Work with Vic Roads to introduce a 50km/hr speed limit throughout the township, including Hitchcock Avenue.
- Begin negotiations with relevant land managers and land owners to implement the circular walking trail around the perimeter of the town, with an emphasis on managing and minimisation of adverse environmental impacts.
- Retain all pedestrian laneways in Council ownership and embark on a program to subtly light, name, maintain and promote the use of the laneways.
- Work with the Barwon Coast Committee of Management to improve the visual amenity and pedestrian environment of the waterfront car park through the introduction of appropriate shade landscaping and pedestrian level lighting.

**Laneways, Engineering Works and Township Character:**
- Discourage vehicular access via the wider, unmade laneways, particularly if alternative car access exists, and prohibit new development, including garages and carports from fronting these laneways.
- Ensure that the unpolished, non-engineered and casual qualities of the town are reflected in any improvements to the pedestrian or vehicular environment, including:
  - Retention of unsealed roadways and grassy verges.
  - Retention of no kerb and channelling where it currently exists.
  - Avoiding the use of impervious surfacing for footpaths and pedestrian and bicycle pathways, where they are required.

**City of Greater Geelong Transport Strategy (2003)**
The Strategy also includes proposals to improve public transport services to the township on the Bellarine Peninsula, including a review of existing services (routes and timetables) and proposed upgrades to existing bus stop facilities.
Round the Heads Trail
The development of a trail around Barwon Heads is currently under development, and when in place will provide a vital scenic pedestrian link around the town.

6.6 The Future of Parking in Barwon Heads

The following section of the Plan outlines the various tools available to Council to resolve the issues around community concerns regarding parking in Barwon Heads:

Council Purchase and Development of Off-Street Car Parks

Through the accrual of various funds, including developer contributions, Council can purchase land for the purpose of public car parking. Essentially, the location of such parking facilities must be in close proximity to the businesses which they serve, particularly the case when development contributions are obtained in lieu of car spaces on individual sites. The cost of providing the parking facility includes the purchase of the land, the required earthworks and sealing of the car park and the on-going upkeep of the land.

The benefits of providing large, off-street car parking areas is that they provide direct access in the middle of activity centres, however the costs of such facilities can sometimes cause them to be unfeasible. This may particularly be the case in Barwon Heads given the value of land within the town. Properties within Hitchcock Avenue, where a car park would be most appropriately located to service the business area, are conservatively estimated to be worth between half a million and a million dollars with the value being dependent on land size. Given the existing lot layout and depth of lots in this area, Council would be required to purchase a number of adjoining lots to gain sufficient land to yield a viable number of car spaces. Within the centre of town, at the southern end of Hitchcock Avenue, this would be difficult considering the recent re-redevelopment of many sites in this section of town.

In the context of a site of around 900 square metres, which could yield around 25 useable car spaces, the development costs in addition to land costs, would be approximately $150,000 dependent on drainage requirements.

Rationalising and Formalising Existing Car Parking Areas

In many instances, particularly in coastal towns, car parking areas are provided informally, with a lack of formalised parking bays and lack of sufficient signage for visitors to be aware of their location. This can lead to an under-utilisation of these available spaces.

During the preparation stage of the Structure Plan, Council undertook a survey of existing parking areas in the vicinity of the town centre:

- East side of Flinders Parade;
- Lower end of Hitchcock Avenue, south of Bridge Road;
- Clifford Parade;
- Informal car park at the corner of Seaview Parade and Ozone Road;
- Lane and car parking area between hotel and supermarket;
- Senior citizens car park; and
- Community Hall car park.

Following this investigation it was concluded that some of the above areas could provide for an increase in the number of car spaces provided, through works such as the realigning of spaces to angle parking, defining parking bays (through the use of appropriate materials) and the sealing of parking areas (where appropriate).
In conjunction with improvements to car parking areas, appropriate signage must be erected at key intersections to indicate where parking is located. This concept was included in the Traffic and Parking Study, and if considered appropriate, should also include the location of signage at the entrances to the township indicating parking areas in proximity to the centre.

**Encouraging Alternative Transport Options**

Council’s Community Development and Engineering Departments are currently preparing the Strategic Walkable Footpaths Policy which seeks to promote walkability of the whole of the municipality for the whole of the community.

It aims to focus the development and delivery of new footpath infrastructure on providing for:

- strategic movement;
- active transport;
- continuous footpaths and contiguous footpaths in defined activity centres; and
- development of comprehensive footpath networks within defined ped-sheds across the municipality.

Increasing the level of walking and cycling, to realise their potential as transport modes, is likely to deliver a number of economic, environmental and social benefits including:

- helping manage peaks in passenger transport demand for road space (especially locally);
- improving the functionality of public transport;
- improving the population’s physical health;
- encouraging greater social interactions and community connectedness;
- revitalising the public realm and increasing perceptions of safety;
- supporting local economic development and is less costly; and
- less pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Travel Smart - Travel Behaviour Change Programs**

TravelSmart is an initiative of the Federal and State Government, the aims of which are to create less car traffic on the roads, less pollution and greenhouse gases, stronger local economies and improved community safety. According to the TravelSmart literature ‘there is a growing realisation that 'supply based' or 'demand satisfaction' approaches, which aim to satisfy future travel demands rather than seeking to manage those demands, are not the solution to our transport problems’. This is in part due to rising infrastructure costs and community concerns over trying to provide for car based travel in urban areas by continuing with the traditional 'supply' approach of expanding road network capacity'.

The TravelSmart program is designed to help people reduce their dependency on cars and if possible to choose alternatives such as cycling, walking or catching public transport. The program provides a variety of grants to the community, education bodies and local government to fund projects which meet the aims of TravelSmart.

**Building Bellarine Connections**

Council has recently received funding to undertake a review of public transport on the Bellarine Peninsula, under the Building Bellarine Connections project. The State Government is to contribute $300,000 to the project which aims to provide residents on the Peninsula with greater access to a greater variety of transport and to strengthen transport links between townships on the Bellarine, as well as links to and from Geelong. The project will provide a facilitator to work with local communities to address their specific transport concerns and investigate options for community transport that connects to existing public transport, including motorised transport such as buses and cars, as well as non-motorised options like walking and cycling.
The Building Bellarine Connections project involves the City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliffe, Bellarine Community Health Incorporated, Scope, the Barwon Disability Resource Council, Do Care, Leisure Networks and the Portarlington Building Initiative. Residents and transport providers will also participate in the project.

As part of the Bellarine Connections project it is considered that an appropriate option for Barwon Heads that should be investigated is the provision of a year round community bus to encourage more sustainable travel choices, which in turn lead to reduced parking and traffic issues.

### 6.6 Key Influences

- Identified urban stormwater runoff threats to sensitive environments;
- Limited public transport coverage, both within and external to the township;
- Opportunity to improve the limited pedestrian and bicycle linkages throughout the township and within open space areas;
- Opportunity to make improvements to parking supply and use;
- Some opportunity for Council to improve road safety within the township;
- Opportunity to provide for more sustainable travel options within and to the township.
7.0 Village Centre Growth, Residential Lot Supply and Further Development

7.1 Village Centre Growth

As discussed previously, the adopted Barwon Heads UDF included a recommendation to rezone those properties presently zoned Residential 1 on the east and west sides of Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone and Bridge Roads, to Mixed Use. This land is at the periphery of the existing Business 1 Zone and is developed with a variety of different uses including single dwellings on large sites, home occupations and commercial businesses.

The merits of the rezoning of these properties to Mixed Use as outlined in the UDF is:

- The purpose of the Mixed Use Zone supports the Urban Design Framework objectives and strategies for the Barwon Heads town centre, providing for a range of uses that complement the mixed-use function of the street; and
- The zone provisions provide flexibility in terms of uses and also allow a variety of building forms.

The UDF considered that the application of the Mixed Use Zone, as compared to application of a Business 1 Zone, would allow for the retention of a blend of uses, including conventional dwellings, given that the MUZ does not stipulate a maximum ground level frontage for dwellings. The UDF concluded that the Mixed Use Zone would protect this mix, whereas the Business 1 Zone would encourage only ‘shop top’ dwellings. Rezoning to Mixed Use will also provide future opportunities for any required or expanded community or visitor related infrastructure.

The recently adopted City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy (2006) also supports the further development of the commercial precinct within Barwon Heads, where its objectives include:

- Promoting economic development and job creation;
- Fostering small business development;
- Encouraging the development of interesting, viable and vibrant retail activity centres; and
- Introducing activities such as housing and mixed use development at appropriate locations which support the role of activity centres

It is considered that the rezoning of those properties along Hitchcock Avenue will not in any way undermine the established retail hierarchy within the municipality, where the Retail Strategy directly encourages the growth and diversification of town centres, providing this meets the relevant planning assessment criteria. Application of the Mixed Use Zone will require planning permit approval for shops and offices, which will need to be assessed against the criteria included in the Strategy. Criteria within the Strategy includes the provision that retail offerings in the town centres are to be aimed at the surrounding market, rather than generating a sub-regional function for the town centre (p. 38).

The Retail Strategy notes that the ‘Consolidation of retail and other business activities…and medium/high density housing at existing activity centres, will provide an important contribution to the achievement of vibrancy and sustainability in these centres’. As outlined in the UDF given the purpose of the Mixed Use zone is to provide for a range of uses which complement the mixed-use function of the locality, application of this zone will appropriately accommodate both residential and commercial uses which are a valued part of the character of the streetscape.

Hitchcock Avenue is unique in its mix of uses, which contribute to the “unpolished” character of the town and application of the Mixed Use Zone will assist in maintaining this blend of uses.
Of note is that the Mixed Use zone provides the ability to apply for a planning permit for Industry or Warehouse. However, the emphasis of the application of the Mixed Use in this instance is to achieve a balanced outcome of residential and compatible commercial and/or community uses.

In proposing these zone changes the UDF also recommended that the Schedule to the Mixed Use Zone include a maximum leasable floor area, to ensure the retention of the intimately scaled building forms and to prevent large, ‘big box’ retail outlets. It is considered that these objectives can be more appropriately achieved through their inclusion in the local policy content within the Planning Scheme for Barwon Heads and, given their design outcome, through the application of a Design & Development Overlay.

Council is aware that the owners of the supermarket on Bridge Road are interested in expanding their operation to meet growing demand. The further development of the supermarket, to provide for a greater range of goods for the community is supported, where the expansion is commensurate with the role the town centre plays in the municipal retail hierarchy and is directed at servicing the local catchment area. Any application to expand the retail floor area or relocate the facility within the town centre would be subject to the normal assessment process, including assessment against the criteria of the Geelong Retail Strategy 2006 and established retail hierarchy.

A new larger store, or any expansion, may necessitate the waiver of car spaces, given the existing constraints on the site and the substantial financial costs for purchasing new sites for car parking. Car parking waivers also need to be considered in the context of retaining an important ‘anchor’ store within the town centre. The alternative to accommodating a compact supermarket facility in the town centre is the location of a more spacious facility with full on-site car parking on the periphery of town. Taking into account the explicit directions of both State and Local Planning Policies, which encourage centralised activity centres within towns, to encourage sustainable development and accessibility, such a proposal has no strategic or community benefit.

The sites on the southern side of Bridge Road, between Hitchcock Avenue and Golightly Street, present a significant opportunity for a landmark development within Barwon Heads at this important entrance to the town centre. Given the existing configuration of these sites, with longer depths to narrow frontage, a consolidated redevelopment of these sites is considered more appropriate than re-development of each individual site separately. Such redevelopment could also provide opportunity for an expanded supermarket with shared parking with other uses on the land.

Such approach may require expansion of the business zone to the south into the residential area, to provide sufficient land area for development and car-parking.

7.2 Residential Lot Supply

Map 15 - Residential Lot Supply

Legend

Urban Growth Boundary
Residential Lot Supply Categories

Vacant Residential Lots (V) 80 Lots
Undeveloped Residential Zoned Land (UR)
63 Lots
Total Lot Supply
263 Lots

Barwon Heads

Future Residential Lot Supply Map 2005

Map 2B
Map 15, illustrates a concentration of vacant lots in the new subdivision to the south of Barwon Heads Road and also in the northern section of the town.

The total numbers of lots within the existing residential zoned land as at June 2005 was 280 and between June 2005 and June 2007, 65 dwelling approvals were issued within Barwon Heads. It is unknown whether these approvals were for new dwellings, replacement dwellings or for multi-dwelling developments. Therefore, it can only be estimated that the total supply as at July 2007 was around 215 lots.

To determine the years of residential growth this lot supply will sustain, it is necessary to calculate the rate of lot take-up through an analysis of residential building approvals in Barwon Heads over time.

The Geelong Economic Indicators Bulletin reports on new residential dwelling approvals for all suburbs and townships within the municipality. The figures for Barwon Heads since 1991/1992 are shown in Table 11 and Figure 4 below.

**Table 11 - Barwon Heads New Residential Dwelling Approvals 1991-2007**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>38</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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<td>32</td>
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**Figure 4 - New Residential Dwelling Approvals in Barwon Heads (1991-2007)**

To determine the years of lot supply, the take-up of land per year has been based on the average of new dwelling approvals per annum over a specific timeframe (1996-2007), to provide a reliable pattern of development activity.
Table 12- Estimated Supply of Residential 1 Zoned Land in Barwon Heads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Residential Lots (at June 2005)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Zoned Land with Approved Plan of Subdivision (No. of Lots) (as at June 2005)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped Residential Zoned Land (No. of lots at an intake of 10 lots per hectare)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Total Number of Zoned Lots available in June 2007 (minus number of dwelling approvals between June 2005-June 2007)</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years Supply</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand of lots is based on an average of 42.5 Building Permits per Annum.</td>
<td>5.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note figures are rounded)

7.3 Further Development

7.3.1 Rezoning Requests and Interest

A formal rezoning request and one indication of interest has been received by Council requesting that Council consider land for urban development outside of the growth boundary identified in the 1996 Structure Plan. The parcels of land, including their location and approximate lot yield are shown in Table 13.

Table 13 - Rezoning Requests/Indications of Interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rezoning Request</th>
<th>Approximate number of lots (@ 10 lots per hectare)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land on the south side of Barwon Heads Road, west of existing Residential zone (1920 Barwon Heads Road)</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land on the north side of Taits Road, west of existing Residential zone (122-138 Taits Road)</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Lots</strong></td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consideration of the further development on the entire western edge of the town up to Murtňaghurt Lagoon and development of the 13th Beach Golf and Residential Resort (land east of Lings Road) is discussed in the following Section of the Structure Plan.
A) 1920 Barwon Heads Road, Barwon Heads

Consideration of a 2004 request for the rezoning of 36 hectares of an existing 51ha rural zoned site south of Barwon Heads Road was deferred by Council pending a review of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan.

The draft concept plan for development of the site has been further refined by the proponents since Council’s original consideration in 2004. The development now envisaged by the owners is to subdivide 23.5 hectares of the land for residential purposes, with a significant area of public open space to abut the Murnaghurt Lagoon and also part of the site’s frontage to Barwon Heads Road. It is proposed that this land would be capable of yielding 240 residential lots.

The land used for urban purposes is to be located adjacent to the existing subdivision to the east, with the main access being from Barwon Heads Road. The proposed layout has been designed to locate the urban development away from Barwon Heads Road, to reduce the visual intrusion of built form at the edge of the existing township. Given the existing layout of the subdivision to the east, no vehicle access is proposed from this land.

Part of the southern section of the property is proposed to be rezoned Special Use Zone Schedule Three (Private Golf Courses) to enable this land to be incorporated into the existing Barwon Heads Golf Club.

Figure 5 illustrates a concept plan for the development.
Figure 5 – Draft Concept Plan for Rezoning at 1920 Barwon Heads Road.
As submitted by the owners in support of the rezoning application, a large proportion of the property is proposed to be available for public open space and recreation, including sporting areas, for the benefit of the wider township. Also as part of the development, the owners have proposed the use of some of the land for any required community services, including:

- Kindergarten/Pre-school;
- Community health centre;
- Expansion of the existing school; and
- Nursing home.

Arguments for the proposal, as outlined by the applicant’s include:

- ‘The proposal is essentially an infill of poor quality agriculture land between the Barwon Heads township and the Thirteenth Beach Golf Links/resort development rather than a major greenfield growth front;
- The Urban Growth Strategy did not envisage the increased growth rates now being experienced throughout the municipality;
- The land is physically capable of accommodating residential development in an environmentally sensitive manner and can be provided with reticulated water supply and sewerage services. Water sensitive urban design principles are intended to ensure stormwater is either used on site or captured for use on the adjoining golf course;
- The additional population likely to be generated by this development is unlikely to threaten the “village” atmosphere of the township;
- The staged release of lots on the land which will not commence until 2008 will assist in alleviating the dwindling residential lot supply available in the Barwon Heads township;
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be protected;
- Open space linkages throughout the land will benefit the wider community (which the applicants are prepared to construct prior to commencement of development); and
- It will assist in providing for the much-needed 9-hole extension to the Barwon Heads Golf Course’.

The land is located on higher ground than that on the north side of Barwon Heads Road and although zoned rural has not been used for rural purposes for some time. The land has an attractive outlook across to the Barwon Heads Golf Course, Murtnaghurt Lagoon and 13th Beach Golf Resort.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) did not object to the original 2004 proposal, but did state that the continual urban encroachment and development pressure were of concern to the open space, aesthetic and environmental values of reserves, such as Murtnaghurt Lagoon. DSE advised that they were supportive of any effort to incorporate green buffers and open space corridors in residential development, particularly where they are adjacent to protected natural areas. In not objecting to the original proposal DSE also advised that Council “should consider the current use of the public land, which will be within 400 metres of a future residential subdivision. The land is designated part of a Game Reserve and is therefore the site of seasonal game bird hunting which may cause conflict with future residents”.

Barwon Water has provided comments with regard to the proposed expansion of the western boundary and advised that although the existing water supply has the capacity to service the existing Barwon Heads township and any zoned infill, there is no capacity in the current system to provide for any land west of the current western boundary (1900-1920 Barwon Heads Road). Similarly the existing sewerage system does not have sufficient capacity to cater for growth beyond the town’s current western boundary. Additional projects would be
required to provide for any expansion to the western boundary, some of which would most likely be at the expense of the developer.

**B) Land north of Taits Road.**

This land lies on the north side of Taits Road, adjacent to the Jirrahlinga Wildlife Sanctuary. The land is relatively flat in topography and is currently developed with a single dwelling. Vegetation across the site is sparse. Similar to the land at 1920 Barwon Heads Road, the property abuts a Residential 1 Zone on its east frontage and is well located to take advantage of the existing road network.

The land to the east of this area is developed with dwellings, which are included within the Special Building Overlay that identifies the land as being liable to inundation by overland flows from the urban drainage system. The potential for this land to be included in the urban area of Barwon Heads has not been received as a formal rezoning request, and as such a concept plan for development of the area has not been submitted to Council.

**C) Stage C of Thirteenth Beach Golf Resort**

The Thirteenth Beach Golf Resort is located at the western extent of the Study Area. This development comprises a combined golf and residential resort, with both permanent and non-permanent accommodation facilities. The Independent Panel report on Amendment C54 provides a concise overview of the history of development of this land and the following section contains significant extracts from their report (September 2005):

Amendment R45 came into effect in April 1994. This amendment rezoned all the land known as 1662–1770 Barwon Heads Road, Connewarre to part Tomara Resort Zone and part Rural Natural Features Zone. The new Tomara Resort Zone provided for the development of a resort in accordance with the Tomara Concept Plan, with the Amendment also including the Tomara Concept Plan April 1993, as an Incorporated Document in the Geelong Planning Scheme.

The Tomara Resort Zone had as its purposes:

- To provide for the development of land near Thirteenth Beach, Barwon Heads for a golf and recreational tourist establishment with conference and accommodation facilities as set out in the Tomara Resort concept plan.
- To ensure that the development of the land within the zone is undertaken and staged in an orderly manner and does not prejudice the amenity of the surrounding area.
- To require the preparation of detailed development plans showing the use and development of the land within the zone.

The 1993 Concept Plan showed the land in three stages, A, B and C, with the major portion of the land, known as Stage A, containing:

- two golf courses;
- a golf clubhouse;
- a residential village providing for flexible accommodation for about 600 persons;
- a ‘hub’ building complex having a maximum floor area of 7000m² including reception, tourist related shops (max. 1000m²), restaurants, bars, conference facilities, crèche, gaming machines, theatre, indoor swimming complex, health club/gymnasium, and a number of similar and related uses; and
- an equestrian activities building.

This Concept Plan showed the Stage B land as being set aside for ‘Agriculture-Model Farm’ with ‘Proposed Golf Course and Future Recreation Areas’ with the land known
as Stage C, east of Lings Road, being the same. The plan indicated that the development was to commence in early 1995 and be completed by the year 2000.

This zone remained in place until the introduction of the new format Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, where on the 27th July 2000 the whole of the resort land was included in the Comprehensive Development Zone - Schedule 1 - Tomara Resort. The zone provisions were a ‘translation’ of the former zone provision. The Tomara Resort Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), dated February 2000, replaced the 1993 Plan and became an Incorporated Document at Clause 81 of the Scheme. The 2000 CDP did not show any development proposed in the Stage B or Stage C area.

Given that the 2000 CDP did not show any development within Stage B, a Planning Scheme Amendment was necessary to facilitate development of this portion of the site. The Amendment incorporates a “new” Stage B of the development and comprises the following:

- 130 golf “villa” lots (i.e. for detached houses) at average size of 700 to 900 sq. m.
- A golf training facility (Golf Academy) at which both individual and group training (e.g. school groups) will be trained in golf technique and will include dormitory style accommodation for up to 40 persons.
- 4 practice golf holes (2 par 3, 1 par 4, 1 par 5) and one practice fairway.
- New purpose-built boutique accommodation at the 5.3ha site of an existing homestead (to be demolished). This area forms part of an old quarry comprising an existing lake surrounded by dense vegetation.
- Extensive landscaping along the Barwon Heads Road frontage and along the western boundary of the land.

The Panel’s report made particular reference to the future development of the land in Stage C, east of Lings Road. Given that the land is located within the Comprehensive Development Zone, but its future use and development was not shown on the Comprehensive Development Plan incorporated into the Planning Scheme, the Panel considered that the area should be identified on a new consolidated Comprehensive Development Plan and commented that “the retention of the break between Barwon Heads and Lings Road is a key strategic direction in the Planning Scheme”.

In considering the Panel’s recommendations Council resolved that the Comprehensive Development Plan should contain the following wording:

“Land east of Lings Road: no development or buildings to be used as accommodation or commercial purpose”

and that an additional purpose should be added to the accompanying Schedule 1:

“To ensure the development and use of the land east of Lings Road reinforces the non-urban break between the Barwon Heads Township and the Thirteenth Beach Resort”.

The basis of this decision was that, whilst these provisions were more stringent than recommended by the Panel, they more clearly reflected Council’s planning policy framework and provide an unambiguous indication of current development expectations. The report further outlined that the issue of future urban development between the western edge of the Barwon Heads Township and the Thirteenth Beach resort would be reviewed as part of the preparation of the new Barwon Heads Structure Plan.

In approving Amendment C54 the Minister for Planning stated that he agreed with Council that strict limitations were necessary to manage future use and development of Stage C, to maintain the green break to the Barwon Heads township. In determining this position the Minister ‘urged Council to reflect this outcome in the new Barwon Heads Structure Plan’. The Panel’s report on amendment C159 supported the retention of the Comprehensive
Development Zone given its ability to provide the greatest level of control over future site outcomes and the potential to deliver net environmental benefits to Murtnaghurt Lagoon.

7.3.2 Analysis of Proposed Further Development

Further development of the entire western edge of town is considered in the context of the relevant State and Local guidelines and strategies and in the context of community benefit.

DSE Practice Note - ‘Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary’

The DSE Practice Note identifies that the process of establishing a coastal settlement boundary should be undertaken through a strategic planning process with a 10 year planning horizon. This process should identify the:

- desired future vision for a settlement;
- role and function of the settlement in comparison with other settlements within the region;
- constraints on development such as topography, native vegetation, rural land-use activity and areas of environmental or landscape significance and sensitivity, areas with susceptibility to flooding (both river and coastal inundation), landslip, erosion, coastal acid sulfate soils, salinity, wildfire or geotechnical risk;
- supply/demand of land within a 10 year planning horizon and opportunities for future growth (if any).

The following section provides a detailed analysis of the above points of the DSE Practice Note.

Desired Future Vision

In regard to the vision for the town, the UDF and the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan (BPSP) provide considerable direction to Council on the desired future of Barwon Heads.

The Barwon Heads UDF was prepared following a significant level of community consultation and analysis. Issues and ideas were discussed at community forums and meetings, culminating in a final set of key themes and directions for the township. The UDF was adopted by Council in 2003, and contained as one of its key recommendations the instatement of an Urban Growth Boundary on the western edge of township, following the boundary of the existing Residential 1 Zone. The application of such a boundary was to:

- Maintain and strengthen the valued character of the town as an ‘island’ with a powerful connection to the natural landscape that surrounds it.
- Retain the open landscape character between the 13th Beach Residential Estate and the established township through retention of the existing Rural zone abutting the western edge of the town (retain the current minimum Rural zone lot size of 80 hectares).
- Support the strongly held community view that the development of the township should be contained within its current urban zoned boundaries.

In regard to the interface with the open rural landscape and wetlands the UDF identified that:

“It is a strongly held view in the local community that the established township should not extend beyond its current urban zoned limits at the western edge. This position arises out of a concern for the environmental qualities of the internationally recognised site and a desire to protect the landscape character of the wetlands area, rather than a purely ‘anti-development’ stance…” (Vol.2, p. 58)
In recommending that the urban growth boundary for the town be aligned with the existing urban edge the UDF concluded that:

“There is the sense that a ‘spillage’ of residential development into this open area would clutter the landscape and spoil the integrity of the edge. Another concern is the impact that encroaching development would have on the sensitive wetland environment”. (Vol.2, p. 58)

The issue of the boundary of the town was Key Issue One of the BPSP, with the key action being to develop the 2006/2007 Structure Plan. The vision for Barwon Heads within the BPSP is reflective of that contained within the UDF with the “low-key, village” atmosphere being the most strongly valued element to be retained in the future.

Role and Function of the Settlement

The following strategies and policies provide direction to Council when considering the role and future direction of Barwon Heads:

- The Urban Growth Strategy
- The Rural Land Use Strategy
- The Victorian Coastal Strategy and the Corio Bay Coastal Action Plan

The key tenets of the above documents are to maintain a compact urban form and to avoid linear sprawl, particularly along the coastline.

As summarised in Clause 21.08 Urban Growth of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, the following objectives are to be upheld when undertaking strategic planning within the municipality:

- Maintain a compact urban form;
- Maintain non-urban breaks between settlements within Greater Geelong;
- Recognise the amenity of the Bellarine Peninsula and its role in attracting tourists and retirees;
- Ensure the environment is protected from uncontrolled urban sprawl;
- Retain viable agricultural land;
- Maintain the Bellarine Peninsula as a predominantly rural area;
- Account for existing natural and man-made constraints.

The Urban Growth Strategy, which forms the basis of Clause 21.08 does not designate Barwon Heads as a growth location. Significantly the town is located between two designated growth areas, Armstrong Creek and Ocean Grove.

Constraints

There are a number of constraints to developing the land on the western fringe and the land at Stage C of 13th Beach Golf and Residential Resort which chiefly relate to environmental/landscape significance and sensitivity.

In May 2005 the Minister for Planning wrote to all coastal municipalities, outlining DSE’s approach to coastal planning. The Minister advised that Planning Scheme Amendments within the coastal area were to minimise the overall impact of use and development on the coast and protect the most sensitive areas and significant landscapes between settlements. The Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast (1998) document makes specific reference to Barwon Heads, identifying that spreading urban development is compromising the coastal quality of the area, with its high conservation values and flat open landscape with low visual absorption.
The adopted Rural Land Use Strategy recommends the application of the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) over the land currently zoned rural in the Study Area. The reasons for the introduction of the RCZ are to recognise the unique blend of its landscape, environmental and farming values. The grounds for applying this zone are to elevate the role and value of the environment and the rural farmed landscape. (Note: change of status of RLUS at p 60)

The development of land at the western fringe or at Stage C would not constrain, or be affected by, rural land use activities being undertaken on surrounding land. The land holdings in this area are relatively small, and as concluded by the recently adopted Rural Land Use Strategy, its values go beyond pure production benefits. It is considered that developing the land for urban purposes would not remove a significant amount of farming land from production, given their existing usage and size.

Although the Flood Management Plan for Barwon Heads did not include the rural land on the western fringe of the town within its Study Area, it is considered appropriate to assume that some drainage and flooding constraints exist on this land. The land on the southern side of Barwon Heads Road, is higher that the northern side, and as such it is understood would not be as affected by overland flows and inundation as the land to the north.

Another constraint which needs to be considered when planning for any further development in Barwon Heads is climate change and the Precautionary Principle recommended in the DSE Coastal Spaces Report. As detailed previously in the Policy Context Section, this principle advocates taking action now, despite a level of uncertainty, to minimise future risks. This principle is recommended in the context that climate change is expected to produce more intense low pressure systems off Victoria’s coast causing a greater number of extreme storm events and storm surges. Particular parts of Victoria’s coast are more vulnerable to storm surge events, with low lying, sandy shorelines and low lying areas adjacent to estuaries and waterways at most risk. Given Barwon Heads location and characteristics it is expected the town would be one of the vulnerable locations.

Another constraint which needs to be taken into account is the location of a game reserve within Murtnaghurt Lagoon and conflicts with respect to the potential proximity of urban uses.

Each of the key strategic documents, including the Coastal Spaces report, place particular emphasis on the open-landscaped environment surrounding Barwon Heads and its value to the wider area.

Supply and Demand of Land

It is estimated that, calculated at the current building activity rate, the existing lot supply within Barwon Heads will have been exhausted in 5 to 6 years. An analysis of the future supply of medium density housing and its impacts on overall lot supply within the town, can not be adequately calculated however, it is important to note that the provision of increased housing within the existing urban area is a key objective of urban growth and land use policies within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme and also State government strategies.

The draft Medium Density Housing Strategy shows that those residential areas of Barwon Heads which are within 400 metres of the Hitchcock Avenue activity centre will be subject to Increased Housing Diversity. The policy for the identified Increased Housing Diversity Areas is to:

- Encourage increased residential densities, particularly within defined business zones and immediately adjoining business zones where mixed use and higher use of residential land can support the concepts of urban villages and activity centre planning. This may include the redevelopment of under-utilised commercial and industrial sites to provide additional housing. The intensity and scale of such development will need to be in keeping with the scale of individual centres;
Acknowledge that residential character in these areas will adapt and evolve over time, particularly close to the centre of business areas;

Ensure that greater consideration is given to the existing and preferred residential character (as defined by the Greater Geelong Residential Character Study – Precinct Brochures - 2001) at the edges of Increased Housing Diversity Areas, where the existing and preferred character of adjoining incremental change areas will dominate; and

Promote greater use of walking and non private vehicle transport through design of new development that supports safe and accessible pedestrian environments to and through activity centres and Increased Housing Diversity Areas.

It is important to note that a significant amount of the identified area is shown as being subject to constraints, such as flooding and heritage, which will ultimately reduce the yield of medium density housing able to be provided in these areas. The remainder of the town is shown as Incremental Housing Diversity Area, where the Strategy identifies that it will be policy to:

Enable the evolution of Incremental Change Areas to include the incremental use and development of medium density housing, whilst respecting the preferred neighbourhood character as defined by the Greater Geelong Residential Character Guidelines – 2001.

Direct medium density housing to sites located within 400 metres of one or more:
- Neighbourhood shopping centre;
- Community facilities, including schools, community centres;
- Active open space, including active walking trails (but not areas of environmental sensitivity);
- Public transport stops.

Preference will be given to sites where a greater number of the above mentioned facilities or services are provided in proximity to the subject site.

In suburban locations which are not within convenient walking distance of public transport and neighbourhood activity centres, encourage lower density housing forms with a predominance of single dwellings on average sized lots.

In the above context, it is expected that medium density housing will serve a role in providing for increased lot supply in the town, however it is difficult to estimate its exact impacts on supply and demand within the township.

A justification put forward for further development in Barwon Heads is the dwindling lot supply within the township and the need to meet the demand for lots. A second part to this argument is focused around increasing the supply to create a more affordable housing market. Arguments for this revolve around the premise that fringe housing is “entry level” housing; therefore if supply at the fringe is restricted, prices increase. Other influences on housing affordability which have been identified by various bodies are the sustained period of low interest rates, a boom in financial speculation inflating asset prices, and various new government incentives to spend up big on real estate.

Significantly, it is estimated that the amount of new population that can be accommodated within the existing vacant lots does not meet the population projected by the ABS for Barwon Heads.
Table 14 below illustrates the population capacity of the existing vacant lots. This table assumes that the average household size will remain the same as it was in 2001 (2.46 persons) and that the vacancy rate will continue to decline over the coming ten years, where 71.8% of all dwellings built on currently vacant land will be used for permanent occupation in 2016. Table 14 provides only a very basic calculation of lot supply, demand and population capacity and does not take into account changing demographic trends and the redevelopment of existing sites.

It is important to note that the following table represents only an approximate calculation and does not include the role which medium density development will be encouraged to play in accommodating future population growth.

Table 14 – Population Capacity of Existing Vacant Lots/ABS Population Projection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of vacant lots at June 2007</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of vacant lots developed with dwellings used for permanent occupation (71.8%)</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Permanent Population Accommodated in Vacant Lots (154 dwellings X 2.46 persons)</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population in Barwon Heads with all lots developed = Estimated Population in 2007 (3,077) + New Permanent Population in vacant lots (379)</td>
<td>3,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Projection for 2016 from ABS (Growth Rate of 1.94% p.a)</td>
<td>4,207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coastal Spaces and the Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS)
According to the principles of the VCS and Coastal Spaces, appropriate coastal development:

- enhances protection and rehabilitation of the natural environment and biodiversity;
- results in increased public benefit;
- is sensitively designed and sited;
- is setback from the coast as far as practicable;
- facilitates multiple uses of sites and existing infrastructure;
- facilitates improvements of sites or existing development; and
- is consistent with requirements of coastal planning strategies and plans, and relevant planning schemes.

- Built Environment – objectives and actions providing direction for the scale of use and development, improving design outcomes and protecting sensitive sites. Key actions include:
  - Use of Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to identify the special nature and character of coast and role of townships
  - Protection of undisturbed areas between settlements by local policy and overlays for siting and design
  - Management of township growth through township boundaries;
  - Ensuring planning schemes are the primary tool to avoid proliferation of development outside existing settlements and in the vicinity of free standing major visitor centres or resorts (i.e. separate unrelated activities);
Coastal development pressure directed away from sensitive areas and managed within activity (settlements) and recreation nodes to minimize impact on coast and protect sensitive areas, contain development to limited locations, manage development pressures according to certain criteria. For townships experiencing population growth and high use and regional visitation this means protecting areas of environmental significance and preserving areas between settlements in non-urban use.

Recommendations of the Coastal Spaces Report are to:

- Reaffirm the Government’s commitment to direct urban development to existing settlements. Continue to promote a network of regional and local settlements. New settlements on the coast should only be considered if genuine need is identified through a strategic assessment consistent with the Victorian Coastal Strategy.
- Encourage tourism investment and products that are sensitive to coastal settings and meets regional needs. Tourism proposals outside settlements must be of high quality, well designed and sited, add value to the coastal experience and be distinguishable from residential proposals.
- Establish clear planning policy that discourages disturbance of Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils.

The Draft Coastal Settlement Framework within the Coastal Spaces identifies Barwon Heads as a Town, with Low Growth Capacity. Growth is therefore to be “contained within existing urban or appropriate zoned land primarily through infill capacity and renewal within defined settlement boundaries” (DSE, p.16).

**The Local Planning Policy Framework (LLPF)**

The City of Greater Geelong’s LPPF provides direction about how towns within the municipality are to be planned, the overriding objectives being to maintain compact urban forms and, particularly on the Bellarine, provide for distinct settlements separated by non-urban breaks.

The LPPF designates Ocean Grove, Drysdale/Clifton Springs and Leopold as the towns suitable for further growth on the Bellarine Peninsula.

**Community Benefit**

Further development of the land on the western edge of town could enable the provision of a broader range of community services and facilities for the wider township.

The owners of the land on the southern side of Barwon Heads Road have clearly outlined their intention to provide for any required services, be that for a community centre, a larger kindergarten/maternal health centre or open space areas. There are also potential broader environmental benefits and opportunities in achieving a wide, publicly owned Belt of open space to the edge of Murtnaghurt lagoon and associated waterways.

Advice from internal Council departments and external servicing authorities, such as the Department of Education and Bellarine Community Health, have advised that their planning for the coming ten years does not necessitate expanded sites or the relocation of existing facilities to accommodate the expected future demands of the population. Council’s Open Space and Recreation Department have also advised that there are no future improvements to open space which require the purchase of land, instead future actions are to be focused on improvements to existing facilities. This advice is reflective of the findings of recent studies into open Space and its provision in the township.
### 7.4 Key Influences

- Opportunity to provide for growth of the Village Centre;
- Existing pressure to expand western edge of township to convert rural land to residential use;
- Potential for some community benefit by way of expanded community services through the rezoning of land on the western edge;
- Direction from State and Local Planning Policies and strategies to protect significant coastal areas and their character.
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