

Huntly

STRUCTURE PLAN PROJECT



Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 2 |
| <i>Purpose</i> | <i>2</i> |
| 2. HUNTLY TOWNSHIP HISTORY | 2 |
| 3. DEMOGRAPHIC, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC PROFILE | 3 |
| <i>Demographics.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Housing</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Active Living Census.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| 4. PLANNING CONTEXT..... | 4 |
| <i>Planning Context.....</i> | <i>9</i> |
| 5. BACKGROUND STUDIES TO INFORM THE STRUCTURE PLAN | 9 |
| <i>Commercial Floorspace Needs Analysis.....</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Preliminary Ecological and Bushfire Risk Assessment – Huntly East.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Community Needs Assessment</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Other Assessments</i> | <i>10</i> |
| 6. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION..... | 10 |
| <i>Road and Traffic Improvements.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Footpath and Cycle Path Improvements.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Community and Public Infrastructure</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Town Square and Open Space.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Retail and Service Offerings</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Density</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Stormwater Infrastructure and Flooding</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Other Matters</i> | <i>12</i> |
| 7. PROCESS..... | 13 |
| <i>Process</i> | <i>13</i> |

1. Introduction

Purpose

This background report executive summary has been prepared to provide an overview of the background on the key aspects which will guide the preparation of the Huntly Structure Plan and associated Urban Design Frameworks.

The purpose of the Huntly Structure Plan is to provide guidance for future expansion of the township, explore opportunities for additional commercial/retail offerings in the town and provide a coordinated strategic growth framework for the next 30 years.

The Structure Plan will investigate opportunities for the following key elements:

1. Urban Growth Zone land
2. Main Street / new activity centre opportunities
3. Transit-focused design proximate to the new train station
4. Activation of the Huntly Town Square
5. Review of the existing *Huntly Township Plan (2009)*
6. Identification of future township boundary expansion
7. Key infrastructure for existing and future residents, including transport and community

The Structure Plan will provide a wholistic review of the existing zoned land and future development opportunities to ensure the town develops in a considered and orderly manner. The Structure Plan is intended to include a vision, high level guidance for the location of land uses, including residential and commercial/retail, and guiding objectives and strategies to inform the future development of the township.

The Urban Design Frameworks will provide an overarching strategy specifically for the future development of the commercial and retail land in greater detail than that covered by the Structure Plan. The Urban Design Frameworks will set out an indicative urban structure, guiding urban design principles as well as requirements and guidelines to influence future development. They will allow a holistic plan for the centres, therefore minimising conflict with varying visions of multiple landowners.

2. Huntly Township History

The Shire of Huntly, measuring 878 square kilometres, was proclaimed on 13 July 1866. In 1875, the estimated population of the Shire of Huntly was 3,590; in 1954, 2,247; in 1979, 2,570 and in 1991, 4,542. This included the localities to the north of Huntly, including Bagshot, Kamarooka, Goornong and Elmore. The Shire was amalgamated into the City of Greater Bendigo in 1994.

The discovery of gold in Bendigo in 1851 led gold seekers to the Epsom Flats/Upper Huntly area in 1852. Many who tired of the hunt for gold saw the potential of the area and began vineyards and market gardens.

Following a “rush” to Epsom in 1856, Huntly experienced its own gold rush in 1859 and mining continued in the area until around 1900.

Following mining activities, the region’s agriculture consisted of tomatoes, white clay mining, dairying and the poultry and egg industry.

During its history, many culturally significant buildings had been constructed and remain, including the Huntly Post Office, Old Shire Offices, Huntly Hotel and Old Courthouse Building.

3. Demographic, Housing and Economic Profile

Demographics

At the 2021 Census there were 3,585 people residing in Huntly, consisting of 1,863 females and 1,732 males. The most prominent age bracket was persons aged between 0-4 years at 9.6% of the population, followed by 30-34 years at 9%. The median age was 32 years old. Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, there was an increase of 1,206 people.

Of the township's total population, 85% of people were born in Australia and 88% of people only spoke English at home.

At the 2021 Census, nearby townships of Huntly North, Bagshot North and Bagshot had a combined population of 449.

Housing

All houses within Huntly were identified as detached dwellings, with the majority (58.7%) including 4 or more bedrooms, followed by 3 bedrooms (36.5%). The average number of persons per household was 2.9.

The population included 37.3% of a couple family with children and 26.4% of a couple family without children. This is largely consistent with the balance of Victoria, 30.9% and 24.6% respectively.

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/bendigo/households?WebID=180&BMID=40>)

The following table includes a summary of house prices within the suburb and a comparison to other places within the municipality.

From REIV, September Quarter 2022 (<https://reiv.com.au/>)

| | Huntly (3551) | Epsom (3551) | Bendigo (3550) |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| Median House Price | \$600,000 | \$580,000 | \$670,000 |
| Median House Rent P/W | \$420 | \$450 | \$380 |

As shown above, the median house purchase is lower than Bendigo and slightly higher than nearby Epsom, however the rental price is greater within Huntly compared to Bendigo.

Active Living Census

The Active Living Census was conducted in 2019 by the City of Greater Bendigo to help with planning for health and recreation services to understand the residents of Bendigo's activity levels and preferences. 202 residents responded within Huntly, consisting of approximately 10.3% of the population.

Of the residents who contributed to the census, 29.7% reported themselves to be overweight and 33.6% reported themselves to be obese. This is in comparison to 35.6% and 26.6% for the Greater Bendigo region, respectively. Walking was reported as the most popular activity with 24.6% of the residents reporting to have participated in the past year, followed by active play (11.1%) and swimming (8%).

The census identified that residents within Huntly, along with Epsom-Ascot and rural areas, travelled furthest to get to their health and recreation activities, travelling an average of 14.9 kilometres. Across the municipality, identified improvements that would encourage more regular use of public facilities and open spaces included walking tracks / footpaths (21.4%), bicycle tracks / lanes and skate facilities (14.5%), exercise equipment / facilities (14.2%), toilets / change rooms (13.5%) and lighting (13%).

4. Planning Context

Growth and future development of Huntly will be informed by a number of existing planning policies and documents. The documents which have the greatest impact on the Huntly Structure Plan include:

- **Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan**
The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan establishes a framework for accommodating growth and change while supporting the preservation of economic, environmental, social and cultural resources. The plan sets an aspirational population target of 200,000 people over the next 30 years, the majority of which will be accommodated in Bendigo. The Plan sets out direction for the growth of regional centres and towns and identifies regional centres and towns that have capacity for growth in the region. Whilst Huntly has not been identified along with other district towns such as Riddells Creek or Romsey, the additional residential land supply of the town through the current strategic process and Managed Growth Strategy would likely qualify for Huntly inclusion in this category. We note the plan was prepared in 2014 prior to the recent growth of Huntly facilitated by the additional servicing capacity. The only specific reference to Huntly relates to the investigations for upgrades and extensions to the natural gas supplies to the regions. The plan will provide the overarching framework for strategic land use planning within Huntly.
- **Council Plan 2021-2025 (Mir wimbul)**
The Council Plan 2021-2025 was informed by the Imagine Greater Bendigo engagement program, undertaken to meet the requirements of the new Local Government Act (2020). The Council Plan includes seven outcomes, of which the following are relevant to Huntly:
 - *Healthy, liveable spaces and places*
 - *Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy*
 - *A climate-resilient built and natural environment*
 - *A vibrant, creative community**In order to achieve the goal of planning for sustainable population growth, the plan identifies the need to progress the strategic planning for the Urban Growth Zone land within Huntly South East. The current strategic process will achieve this action through providing guidance for the development of this land. To prevent or mitigate emergencies, the plan also identifies the need to advocate for funding of works to protect Huntly as identified in the Epsom Ascot Huntly Flood Mitigation Study. The plan will provide guiding principles for the preparation of the Huntly Structure Plan.*
- **Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy**
The strategy seeks to reduce car use by supporting greater levels of walking, cycling and public transport use. Implementing the actions of the strategy will help Bendigo to better manage its existing transport infrastructure and capacity. There are potential significant benefits in improving connections to and within the Huntly area. Huntly to the City Centre is identified as a main transit corridor of urban Bendigo, whereby the plan advocates as a high priority for a high frequency, longer span bus services and more train services. The implementation of these initiatives would require collaboration between the City of Greater Bendigo and various stakeholders including Department of Transport and Public Transport Victoria. The strategy will guide the proposed active and public transport connections and transport principles within the Huntly Structure Plan.
- **Greater Bendigo Residential Strategy**
The strategy sets out a plan to manage the future residential development of the whole of the

municipality over at least the next 20 years. This would require an average of 900 dwellings per annum to be built to meet forecast demand.

Given around 85 per cent of residential growth is expected to be provided within the Bendigo Urban Growth Boundary, the provision of high quality, well designed medium density residential development is essential to achieving the aims of this Strategy. This includes in and around the 10 minute neighbourhoods. The strategy identifies an opportunity to develop medium density of two to four storeys in and around the Huntly train station.

The strategy also seeks to continue to provide for planned new residential development within the existing Urban Growth Boundary including within Huntly.

The strategy will provide overarching guidance for planning within Huntly.

- **Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy**

The strategy provides a floor space analysis for each Activity Centre in Bendigo.

The Strategy expects Huntly to have an undersupply of commercial floor space by 2021, with this undersupply expected to significantly increase by 2031. The strategy notes it is difficult to attract non-population serving businesses to suburban areas and therefore new residents of Huntly are expected to commute to central Bendigo to access the higher order, knowledge intensive employment.

Specifically, the strategy notes:

- *By 2021 Huntly could support approximately 1,700sqm of retail floorspace (1,400sqm supermarket and 300sqm specialty retail)*
- *By 2031 the centre could grow to approximately 2,900sqm (2,400sqm supermarket and 500sqm specialty retail)*

A Strategic Direction is included to facilitate the development of a new activity centre in Huntly.

The Huntly Structure Plan will have regard to the identified gaps for Huntly and the hierarchy set out in the strategy.

- **Greening Greater Bendigo 2020-2070**

The urban forest strategy is a 50-year strategic vision for increasing tree cover and improving tree health across our urban areas and townships.

The strategy provides a strategic response to the complex challenges that threaten the health of the natural environment, the health of our residents and the liveability of the City and townships over the coming decades.

The strategy identifies Huntly as having a 15.4% tree canopy cover which is significantly lower than many other parts of the municipality and the urban area average of 20.4%.

The strategy will provide overarching guidance for planning within Huntly and seek to plan for the extreme heat caused by the prevalence of buildings, roads and impervious surfaces evident within the existing growth areas of Huntly.

- **Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026**

The strategy is an investment in regenerating and protecting Bendigo's natural environment.

The strategy has six action areas, which collectively contribute to all seven outcomes in the Council Plan. The contribution of the strategy to achieving our community vision is to:

regenerate biodiversity in natural environment and green spaces, reach zero carbon emissions, create a circular economy, have an active and sustainable transport network, support sustainable food systems and have water sensitive places and communities. The strategy includes various 2036 goals and associated 2026 targets to achieve them. Relevant to Huntly, this includes delivering a shared path network from Huntly to Bendigo (2036) and an adjusted bus service to reach the growth areas in Huntly (2026).

The strategy will provide overarching guidance for planning within Huntly.

- Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan 2019

The plan has been developed as a long term strategy to guide the public space of Greater Bendigo encompassing parks, gardens, creek corridors, bushland and sporting reserves as well as its streets and road reserves, urban spaces such as squares, malls and plazas, and rail corridors and easements.

The plan identifies a need to investigate options to close large gaps in the forest which surround and define the edge of the Bendigo urban area, including between Epsom and Huntly within the band of flood prone land.

The plan also identifies the need for a new primary public space corridor network within the Huntly-Epsom corridor, which would provide a holistic, integrated and placed-based network. There is also the potential to work with the Shire of Campaspe and the State Government to create a regional trail from Huntly through to Goornong and Elmore and ultimately to Echuca via Rochester.

The existing Epsom Huntly Recreation Reserve in Huntly is identified as an area of public open space for investigation with the strategic intent to create a continuous reserve frontage to the Midland Highway, complete vehicle access to and within the reserve and increase flexibility for locating reserve facilities and infrastructure.

The plan will provide overarching guidance for open space planning within Huntly.

- Walk, Cycle Greater Bendigo Strategy

The strategy outlines a strategic framework to provide the conditions and support to enable more people to walk and cycle more often.

The strategy includes a series of key directions and identifies a desire to provide connections to the Bendigo urban trail network for larger towns including Huntly to Epsom.

The strategy will provide overarching guidance for walking and cycling infrastructure planning within Huntly.

- Library Services and Infrastructure Strategy

The strategy provides an opportunity to consider what is required to continue to engage and meet the needs of community over the next decade, as Bendigo grows and changes.

The purpose of the strategy has five key goals to achieve:

- *Articulate the role of libraries in supporting the delivery of Council's strategic goals.*
- *Quantify demographic changes expected in Greater Bendigo and match this to library infrastructure and service needs.*
- *Determine an appropriate service level hierarchy for library spaces and services in the City.*
- *Identify potential service gaps across the community.*
- *Identify and recommend infrastructure needs and potential co-location opportunities for libraries.*

Huntly has been identified as a gap in the current service provision.

The strategy will provide guidance in relation to the social and community infrastructure provision within Huntly.

- Huntly Township Plan 2009

The Huntly Township Plan provided a strategic framework for the development of Huntly. The purpose of the plan was to articulate a vision for the future development of Huntly and identify the strategic planning issues influencing the development of the Township, including community needs and aspirations. The plan refined the boundaries of the New Development Areas identified in the Bendigo Residential Development Strategy, excluding inappropriate land following a more detailed assessment and including the town

centre to ensure that an integrated approach is taken to the planning and development of the Huntly Township.

Since this plan had been prepared 13 years ago, there has been a significant change in the planning approach for Huntly, as well as the establishment of the new growth areas, train station and expected population growth. The plan will provide background for the Huntly Structure Plan, however will be expanded upon in line with current planning policy, population forecasts and expanded area.

- Huntly Native Vegetation Precinct Plan 2009

The plan has been developed based on a recommendation within the Huntly Township Plan.

The plan seeks to specify the native vegetation to be retained and the native vegetation to be removed, destroyed or lopped within the precinct as well as set out the works or other necessary actions required to achieve net gain for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation within the precinct.

The plan will provide background for the Huntly Structure Plan.

- Huntly Development Contributions Plan

The plan has been prepared to enable the equitable and efficient delivery of a range of infrastructure to service planned growth within the Huntly East growth area.

The plan identifies the necessary infrastructure and establishes a framework to ensure that the cost of infrastructure is shared equitably by all development proponents and by the broader community where relevant. The plan provides certainty for all developers and the future community by ensuring that all necessary infrastructure will be provided in a timely way and to a specified standard as development progressively takes place.

Through the Huntly Structure Plan process, the plan and associated infrastructure will be considered and incorporated into the new urban structure.

- Early Years Infrastructure Strategy (DRAFT)

The draft strategy defines Council's role in planning, developing and maintaining early years infrastructure, provides an overview of early years infrastructure in Greater Bendigo – both council and non-council owned, assesses the suitability of the council-owned and managed facilities for early years services, considering current practices, community expectations and anticipated future need and provides an overview of future demand for early years infrastructure, particularly with the introduction of funded three-year-old kindergarten in 2022.

The strategy will provide guidance in relation to the social and community infrastructure provision within Huntly.

The following existing planning policies and documents will also provide guidance for the development of Huntly:

- Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Healthy Greater Bendigo 2021-2025
- Greater Bendigo Food System Strategy 2020-2030
- Greater Bendigo Coalition Gender Equity Strategy 2020-2025
- Bendigo Freights Study
- Affordable Housing Action Plan 2021
- Plan Greater Bendigo
- Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Bendigo Local Floodplain Development Plan 2018
- Greater Creative Bendigo

- Asset Plan 2022-2032
- Reimagining Bendigo Creek Plan
- Greater Bendigo Public Toilet Strategy
- Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy
- Greater Bendigo Active Living Census 2019
- Active and Healthy Greater Bendigo Framework 2022
- Community Access and Inclusion Plan
- Greater Bendigo Reconciliation Plan 2021-2025
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025

There are also several concurrent projects underway in Huntly which have been considered in the preparation of the plan including:

- **Former Shire of Huntly Heritage Study**
The Former Shire of Huntly Heritage Study is the first comprehensive heritage study of the former shire. The intent of the study is to ensure that the important sites and features of the area are protected for future generations, and to provide clarity for future property owners and developers in understanding what is protected and what can be developed. The City is currently undertaking Stage 2 of the study, which assesses individual places and precincts for inclusion in the heritage overlay of the planning scheme. This builds on Stage 1, which provided a detailed examination of key periods and themes of development in the growth of the former Shire.
- **Managed Growth Strategy**
The Managed Growth Strategy (MGS) will integrate relevant adopted Council strategies and consider land use opportunities and constraints along with broader population and lifestyle trends to provide high level strategic direction as to future land use and change over the next 30 years across Greater Bendigo.
The MGS aims to:
 - Better understand current and future demographic, economic, social and environmental changes in Greater Bendigo to inform any changes around land use policy
 - Plan for growth which helps to support a welcoming, sustainable and prosperous community aligning with the Greater Bendigo community vision• Ensure future growth does not compromise the high value landscape, agricultural or environmental assets of Greater Bendigo
 - Review the existing urban growth boundary and whether there should be any changes• Encourage a mix of densities and uses in appropriate locations• Identify appropriate growth and change for different suburbs and rural townships based on their supporting infrastructure, community service provision, commercial opportunities, community expectations, as well as other issues and constraints and having regard to existing strategies

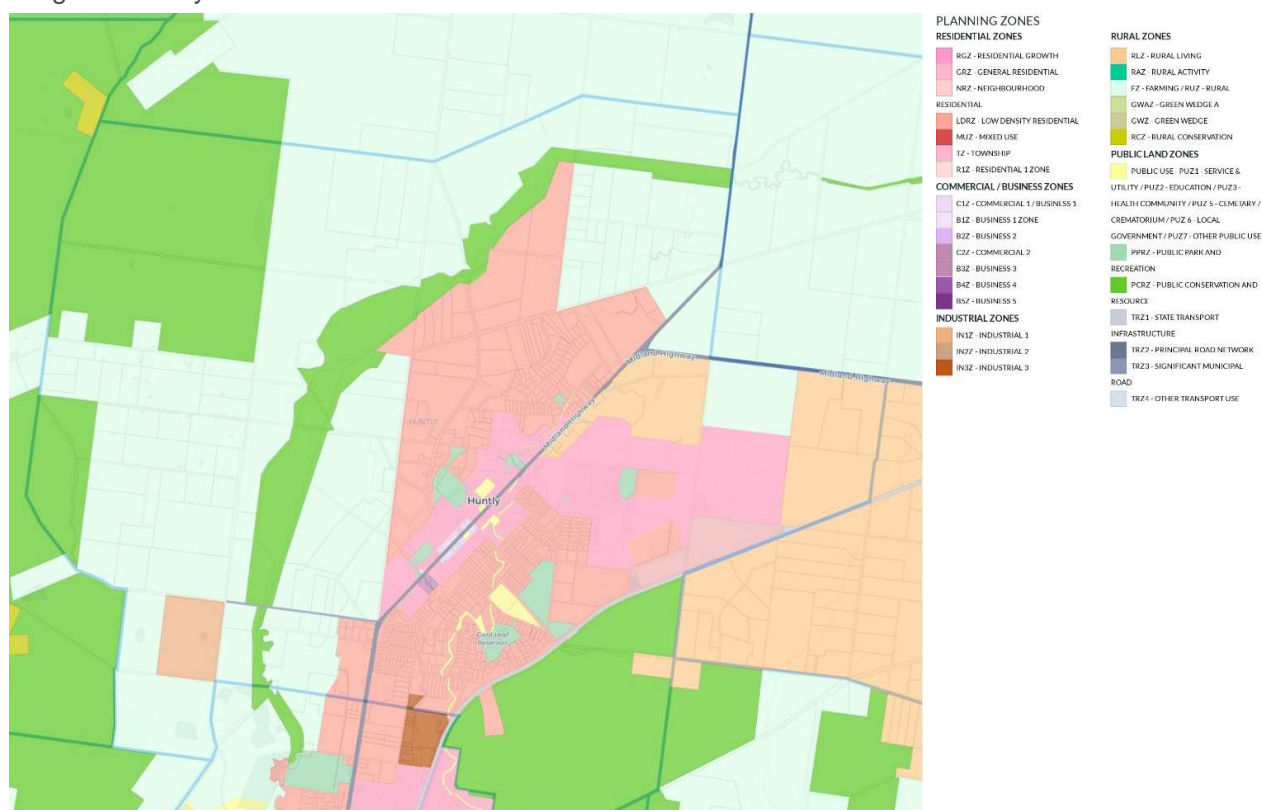
The MGS will be informed by a new Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy and will result in a planning scheme amendment including the application of the residential zones and other suitable planning controls. The MGS will provide more certainty for Council officers, service providers, the community, land owners and developers as to preferred development outcomes for the different areas of Greater Bendigo.

Part of the MGS will be the preparation of a residential framework plan. This will provide direction as to if it is proposed to change the Urban Growth Boundary. This would then provide the strategic direction for more detailed work as required around growth areas such as Huntly.

Planning Context

The Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme is a legal document which contains policies and provisions that control land use and development. The Structure Plan will have regard to the relevant policies and provisions which relate to the township.

Currently the town is within various residential, commercial and agricultural zones, and affected by a range of overlays. Refer to Zone Plan below.



5. Background Studies to Inform the Structure Plan

Commercial Floorspace Needs Analysis

A Commercial Floorspace Needs Analysis has been undertaken of the existing commercial offerings within Huntly and expected future needs based on anticipated population growth.

Currently, there is 800 square metres of retail and commercial floor space servicing Huntly. This is within the Commercial 1 Zone land in the Huntly Centre which makes up approximately 35,000 square metres of the town.

By 2041, the catchment population is expected to demand an additional approximately 15,000 square metres of retail and commercial floor space.

A new centre of approximately 5,000-6,000 square metres of floorspace in the eastern part of Huntly proximate to the new train station could be pursued in the longer run without undermining the ultimate role and function of the main Huntly centre.

Further work will be undertaken to better inform the location, size and attributes of the future retail and commercial needs for Huntly. This will guide the Structure Plan and future Urban Design Frameworks.

Preliminary Ecological and Bushfire Risk Assessment – Huntly East

A Preliminary Ecological and Bushfire Risk Assessment has been undertaken of the Huntly East growth area (approximately 593 hectares).

The majority of the area is currently used for grazing and other agricultural purposes which have contributed to the treeless landscape. The most densely treed areas are located to the south of Wakeman Road, and include:

- the Sandy Creek corridor crossing the south-eastern corner of the Growth Area
- roadside vegetation, and
- large patches of bushland occurring in the south-western corner of the Growth Area, with these patches connected to a larger patch of native vegetation within the broader landscape.

The desktop assessment and the ground-truthing undertaken revealed that seven ecological Vegetation Classes are likely to occur on site across two Bioregions, in the form of patches of native vegetation or Scattered Trees.

A further preliminary ecological assessment will be undertaken for the balance of the Huntly Structure Plan area. This will guide the location of future growth and intensification for the Structure Plan.

Detailed site assessments will need to be undertaken by landowners to support future planning permit applications.

In relation to bushfire risk, portions of the Huntly East Growth Area are expected to meet the required 'Settlement Planning' strategy outlined in Clause 13.02-1S of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. Given the area is predominately managed farmland and has similarly managed terrain on most sides, there is opportunity for residential land uses and intensification within this area.

Detailed Bushfire Management Plans will need to be undertaken by landowners to support future planning permit applications.

Community Needs Assessment

A Community Needs Assessment is currently being undertaken for the Huntly Structure Plan area to inform the uses and spatial requirements of the future township and surrounding catchment. This assessment will consider the expected population growth, current shortfalls and expected future community and social infrastructure necessary for the area. This will guide the Structure Plan and future Urban Design Frameworks.

Other Assessments

As the Structure Plan progresses, additional assessments may be undertaken to inform and guide the document. These may include traffic, contamination, cultural heritage, flooding and servicing assessments.

6. Community Consultation

Initial community consultation has commenced in relation to the Structure Plan. This has included the following:

- Community Reference Group creation
- Workshop – Planning Huntly's Future held 8 September 2022
- Drop in session held 28 September 2022
- Huntly Structure Plan Survey, open from 22 August till 30 September 2022

- Various social media posts with calls for engagement

The information gathered from the consultation thus far will help to guide the draft Structure Plan.

The valued characteristics of Huntly which were expressed through the survey and sessions related to the sense of community, bushland setting, rural township feel, and existing heritage buildings and businesses present in the town. The Structure Plan will seek to build on these characteristics whilst delivering a plan for Huntly's development into the future.

The key themes that arose from the feedback included:

Road and Traffic Improvements

The condition of existing roads and traffic infrastructure improvements were raised by the community as a reoccurring theme to be addressed as part of the Structure Plan process. The concerns often related to the safety of roads, including with the anticipated additional traffic and the current condition of roads, including those which are unsealed or needed repairs.

Specific reference to upgrades /projects which were raised by the community included:

- Duplication of the Midland Highway to allow for two lanes of traffic in each direction
- Installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Midland Highway, Burgoyne Street and Huntly-Fosterville Road
- Median strip along Midland Highway within the town centre
- Midland Highway bypass
- Additional formalised car parking within the commercial centre
- Truck and large vehicle parking proximate to the commercial centre

Footpath and Cycle Path Improvements

Improvements to the pedestrian and cyclist network in relation to additional connections and improved conditions of infrastructure were raised by many members of the community. There is a clear demand for improved infrastructure to facilitate active transport movement within and beyond the Huntly township boundaries.

A key piece of infrastructure sought by members of the community was a sealed shared path, or separated bike path, connecting Huntly to Epsom.

General improvements raised included:

- Sealing footpaths
- Additional footpaths and cycling paths within both the established areas of Huntly and new estates connecting to key destinations such as:
 - Goldleaf Wetland
 - Bendigo Creek
 - Back Creek
 - Lions Park/Botanic Gardens
 - Strauch Reserve
 - Huntly train station
 - Existing commercial area

Community and Public Infrastructure

The community values the sense of community present within Huntly, however considers that there is additional infrastructure or upgrades necessary to foster it into the future.

Specific reference to upgrades /projects which were raised by the community included:

- Additional picnic and BBQ infrastructure
- Additional playgrounds and skateparks, for a range of ages
- Additional street furniture such as seating and rubbish bins
- Additional public toilets
- Dedicated dog park
- Public swimming pool
- Junior oval at Strauch Reserve and general upgrades to facilities and offerings
- Upgrades to the existing primary school and/or a new primary school

- Childcare
- Library
- Community centre
- Upgrades to the existing community hall
- Police station

Town Square and Open Space

The Town Square is to be located at 620-626 Midland Highway adjacent to the Former Huntly Shire Council Chambers. Relating to the community and public infrastructure theme above, the community expressed a desire for a centralised outdoor meeting place within town for residents and visitors alike. Responses included requests for public toilets, picnic tables, seating, trees and artwork within the future park.

More broadly, the residents expressed their fondness of the proximity to bushland and green spaces and sought for this to be maintained and strengthened through the Structure Plan process.

Retail and Service Offerings

A reoccurring theme within the responses related to the provision of additional retail and service offerings within Huntly, in order to become largely self sufficient from surrounding areas such as Epsom.

This included the desire for a larger supermarket, as well as a range of smaller speciality shops such as butchers and take away food premises. There was limited preference in relation to the location of the additional retail and commercial offerings, however there was a desire to protect the existing business owners within Huntly.

The provision of a GP practice as well as pharmacy/chemist was also raised by the community.

Density

Finding a suitable density for the future of Huntly was a reoccurring theme within the responses.

Many residents raised a concern with the size of lots present within the new estates, considering them to be too small, and sought to retain the existing low-density layout which currently surrounds the town centre.

However, other submissions referenced the need for a variety housing typologies and more affordable housing options within the township.

Stormwater Infrastructure and Flooding

Upgrades to existing stormwater infrastructure and future planning to limit the impact of flooding were raised within responses. These concerns largely related to safety of existing infrastructure and their suitability into the future, as well as futureproofing works related to climate change and additional development.

Specific reference to upgrades /projects which were raised by the community included:

- Replacing open stormwater drains with closed infrastructure
- Securing the levee bank
- Protecting creeks and waterways to ensure development does not result in additional flooding downstream

Other Matters

Not all matters raised within the survey can be included within the Structure Plan due to the nature of the items raised and scope of the project. Some of the items form part of other interrelated projects such as the Huntly Development Contributions Plan, Managed Growth Strategy, and other initiatives and policies currently being prepared by other Council departments.

Other matters are outside the scope of planning, however may be incorporated into future work by Council or other State Government agencies. These include:

- Provision of additional public transport services
- Postal service
- Police station and police presence

- Internet and mobile phone reception

7. Process

Process

It is expected that the preparation of the Structure Plan will follow the following process:

- Completion of background studies and analysis
- Initial community consultation and visioning
- Preparation of draft Structure Plan and further associated studies and analysis, as required
- Community engagement of draft Structure Plan
- Preparation of final Structure Plan informed by submissions received

The above is based on the current expected process, however may be amended based on the findings of background studies and feedback received by the community.

****End of document****