



9. Commercial Development Strategy

9.1 Context

Although not a specific element of the project brief, commercial uses are an important consideration in the context of the Colac Structure Plan. Issues relating to the location of commercial development and strategies to ensure that commercial and retail facilities are provided in appropriate locations have been an indirect outcome of the industrial strategy and urban design framework.

The following section provides a brief context for commercial development in Colac and presents a number of strategies in relation to such land uses.

9.2 Policy and Strategic Context

9.2.1 State Planning Policy

Although specifically intended to apply to Melbourne, Clause 12 Metropolitan Development contains some strategies relevant to economic development in Colac. Specifically, Clause 12.01 - a more compact city aims to ensure that existing settlement patterns and infrastructure is utilised so as to create more sustainable development.

The implementation of this strategy relies on the hierarchy of activity centres established under *Melbourne 2030*, with the idea that commercial and core services are concentrated in a central area that is well serviced by public transport and covers a specified catchment area, depending on the size of the activity centre.

The principal of activity centres is used to ensure that new commercial and retail developments are located in areas specifically designated for such uses, to avoid ad hoc, unplanned commercial development that can compromise the existence of areas that already function as commercial and retail cores.

9.2.2 Local Planning Policy

Municipal Strategic Statement (Current)

Following is a summary of the relevant points from the current Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) relating to commercial development.

- Promoting Colac as a regional centre for community services and retail and business investment.
- Concentrating commercial and retail facilities in the central area.

Municipal Strategic Statement (Proposed)

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is currently under review, with the revised MSS being drafted. Following is a summary of the key elements of the proposed MSS that relate to commercial development.

- Prepare design guidelines for development on the eastern and western approaches to Colac.
- Colac is to be promoted as the municipal and regional administrative and commercial centre for the Colac Otway Shire.



- Retail and business development in the town is to be promoted, particularly the central area.
- An urban design study is to be developed for the central commercial and adjoining areas to include clear links between key activity centres.

9.3 Consultation Outcomes

During the various stages of consultation undertaken for the project, some themes and issues have arisen in relation to commercial land, and these have been summarized in **Appendix B**. A summary of the proposed changes to the Structure Plan as a result of the consultation has also been provided in this appendix.

9.4 Vision and Objective Statements

Although commercial and retail development is not a key feature of the Structure Plan, vision and objectives statements have been developed to guide Council in making decisions on future use of land for commercial and retail uses.

9.4.1 Vision for Commercial Development in Colac

The Colac Town Centre will be a prosperous and thriving precinct, supported by smaller scale commercial and retail development in specifically targeted locations to provide convenience services for the Colac and Elliminyt communities.

9.4.2 Objectives for Commercial Development in Colac

Manage Growth

- Designate the Colac Town Centre as the Principal Activity Centre, where major retail and commercial development should occur.
- Provide areas for the location of support services, particularly those that provide convenience services and serve primarily local functions.

Enhance Environmental Benefits

- Protect important viewsheds and town entrances from inappropriate commercial development and its associated signage.

Balance Service Provision

- Allow commercial development only in areas that can be easily serviced with sewerage and other infrastructure required for the ordinary operations of the business.

Manage Social Change

- Ensure that residents of Colac are provided with sufficient choice so as to allow for affordable retail options in locations that are easily accessible, both by road and by alternative transport methods.



9.5 Commercial Development in Colac

9.5.1 Location and Type of Commercial Land

There are currently three areas of commercial and retail development in Colac. The primary location is the Colac Town Centre, which serves as the commercial and retail core for the town and surrounding region. Uses in this area are predominantly retail and small business commercial operations. This area is zoned Business 1.

A small area of Business 4 Zoned area exists in the eastern area of Colac, on the northern and southern sides of the Princes Highway. This is currently used for businesses that require larger land holdings, including Thrifty Link Hardware.

The third area of commercial land in Colac is also zoned Business 4, and is located on the western outskirts of the town, also along the Princes Highway. Land on the southern side of the Highway is predominantly occupied by car and machinery sales uses that are generally attractively landscaped and designed so as to present a positive image when entering Colac. Land uses on the northern side, however, are generally of a poor standard of building design and lack appropriate landscaping.

9.6 Recent Rezoning Requests

Recent rezoning requests in relation to commercial development in Colac are summarised in Table 15 below. Other than the request at Connor Street, these are site specific and do not impact on the overall development of Colac.

Table 15. Recent rezoning requests.

Site Location	Rezoning Request
22 Princes Highway, Colac	Western part of site is in Business 4 Zone. Rezone all of site from Farming and Business 4 Zones to Business 2 Zone.
344-350 Murray Street, Colac	Northern part of site is Business 2 Zone, southern is Residential 1 Zone. Rezone all of site to Business 2 Zone.
36-44 Connor Street, Colac	Rezone from Residential 1 Zone to commercial.

9.7 Issues and Implications of Commercial / Retail Development

9.7.1 Location

The location of commercial and retail development is vital to ensure that businesses are successful and attract customers. Currently, each of the commercial areas within Colac serve an individual function and cater for specific needs of the Colac and surrounding communities (e.g. primary retail, car sales etc).

Requests to rezone land so as to provide for specific commercial and retail uses in areas where these uses are currently not located may result in other commercial and retail areas being compromised. Examples of such inappropriate development would be drawing key retail uses out of the Colac central area, or locating a supermarket within an existing residential area.



9.7.2 Servicing

Barwon Water has, through various stages in the consultation process, expressed concern at the potential for future development of commercial land on the western outskirts of Colac. This land is difficult and expensive to service with sewerage infrastructure due to its distance from the Sewerage Reclamation Plant. As such, additional future commercial development in this area should be restricted.

9.8 SWOT Analysis

Following is an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in relation to commercial development in Colac.

Table 16 – SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active commercial centre • Good retail mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial land in central area • Lack of large commercial land holdings
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth in Elliminyt • Relocation of inappropriate uses will free up space • Improved linkages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing retail uses may undermine the existing centre • Retail activities that are not consistent with the Structure Plan

9.9 Strategy for Future Commercial and Retail Development in Colac

Based on the assessment undertaken as part of this strategy, it is recommended that commercial and retail development be contained to existing areas within Colac, with the only new development to occur in Elliminyt. These areas are depicted in Figure 25 and summarized below. Table 16 also provides a summary as well as the required implementation measures.

9.9.1 Community / Commercial Nodes

Context

It is evident that there are a number of parcels of land on the corner of Colac-Lavers Hill Road (Main Street) and Irrewillipe Road that have previously been used for commercial purposes. Whilst some commercial and retail operations exist in this intersection, they serve only to provide basic services, and residents of Elliminyt still need to go to Colac to purchase most convenience items and services.

Recent population growth in Elliminyt has been extremely strong compared with Colac as a whole, and this trend is likely to continue with many young families choosing to locate in the area. As such there will be a need to provide a greater level of service to the Elliminyt Community, parallel to that currently provided by the Colac Town Centre to the more central areas of Colac.

Related Objectives

Manage Growth

- Provide areas for the location of support services, particularly those that provide convenience services and serve primarily local functions.



Balance Service Provision

- Allow commercial development only in areas that can be easily serviced with sewerage and other infrastructure required for the ordinary operations of the business.

Manage Social Change

- Ensure that residents of Colac are provided with sufficient choice so as to allow for affordable retail options in locations that are easily accessible, both by road and by alternative transport methods.

Intended Outcome

It is intended that this area become a focal point for Elliminyt, and provide essential commercial and retail services so that residents do not need to travel into Colac for convenience items and services.

Strategic Justification

The intersection of Irrewillipe Road and Colac-Lavers Hill Road has been designated as a community / commercial node and zoned Business 1. The purpose of the Business 1 Zone is:

“To encourage the intensive development of business centres for retailing and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community uses”.

Currently there exists a small convenience store at this location, however future redevelopment and / or expansion of this site is envisaged to cater for the convenience needs of the growing Elliminyt community potentially including a small supermarket, bakery, video store and take away food premises.

This land has frontage to the major road that connects Colac with Elliminyt, and access can be easily provided from Colac-Lavers Hill Road or from Irrewillipe Road. Development in this area is not likely to generate a significant amount of additional traffic, as it will provide services primarily to residents of Elliminyt.

Consultation in the early phases of the project indicated support for a small convenience based centre in Elliminyt.

Strong growth in housing and population in the Elliminyt area and predictions that this will continue on the basis of the amount of residential land available in the area provides sound argument to review this area for potential as a local shopping centre. The presence of community uses such as the school and church and nearby commercial uses adds weight to the strategic justification for this land use.

Existing commercial node in Elliminyt at the intersection of Main Street and Irrewillipe Road.

Strategies

1. Designate land on the corner of and near Colac-Lavers Hill Road and Irrewillipe Road for a local convenience shopping centre.



9.9.2 Colac-Lavers Hill Road Commercial Area

Context

There are a number of existing commercial / light industrial uses on the eastern side of Colac-Lavers Hill Road that have developed in an ad hoc manner amongst residential uses. These uses generally have minimal impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, however are often of poor building and landscape design.

Related Objectives

Manage Growth

- Provide areas for the location of support services, particularly those that provide convenience services and serve primarily local functions.



Protect Viewsheds

- Protect important viewsheds and town entrances from inappropriate commercial development and its associated signage.

Balance Service Provision

- Allow commercial development only in areas that can be easily serviced with sewerage and other infrastructure required for the ordinary operations of the business.

Manage Social Change

- Ensure that residents of Colac are provided with sufficient choice so as to allow for affordable retail options in locations that are easily accessible, both by road and by alternative transport methods.

Intended Outcome

It is intended that this area continue to be used for the purposes of commercial / light industrial development so as to provide employment opportunities close to both Colac and Elliminyt.



Strategic Justification

This initiative is supported in Clause 21.04-06 the Colac Otway Municipal Strategic Statement, which strives to assist industries within the main urban area of Colac to develop whilst minimising off-site impacts.

The Business 3 Zone is seen as an appropriate control for this area, as its primary purpose is “to encourage the integrated development of offices and manufacturing industries and associated commercial and industrial uses”.

The B3Z will reflect the current uses of the land and allow for additional development to occur that will not detrimentally affect the surrounding land uses.

Strategies

Rezone land on the eastern side of Colac-Lavers Hill Road to Business 3 as shown on the Industrial Strategy Plan.

9.9.3 Eastern Colac (Bulky Goods - B4 Zone)

Context

A Business 4 Zone currently exists at the eastern entry to Colac, with uses generally being of a low scale and not presenting a high quality image when entering the town from the east.

Currently the zoning does not reflect the cadastral boundaries of the property on the eastern extremity of the zone, and there is an opportunity to extend the zoning to encompass this entire parcel of land. This will provide flexible development potential for large uses.

Related Objectives

Manage Growth

- Designate sufficient land to cater for the industrial land needs of Colac for a twenty year period.
- Provide appropriate buffer distances between proposed industrial areas and existing residential development.

Enhance Environmental Benefits

- Protect the environmental qualities of Lake Colac and its waterways.
- Ensure that industrial development incorporates water sensitive design.

Balance Service Provision

- Ensure the necessary infrastructure can be provided to new development in a cost-effective manner.

Integrate Social Change

- Provide linkages between places of employment and residential areas to cater for the needs of employees.

Intended Outcome

It is intended that, by rezoning this small portion of land, new development will be encouraged in the Business 4 Zone. With this new development there are



opportunities to improve the appearance and amenity of the current land uses and present a more attractive entrance to Colac from this direction.

Strategic Justification

Clause 22.01 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (Main Roads / Scenic Routes) applies to the Princes Highway, and aims to ensure that key roads are protected from inappropriate development, and development that is unsympathetic to its surrounds. One of the objectives of the policy is “to protect scenic roads from unsympathetic developments which would detract from the beauty of the area”.

The land in question is located on elevated land which has views to, and is visible from the Colac Township. As such it is important to ensure that development in this location is managed so that it is of an appropriate scale and form that will not detract from the significance of the land as an entrance to Colac.

The purpose of the Business 4 Zone is “to encourage the development of a mix of bulky goods retailing and manufacturing industry and their associated business services”.

The existing Business 4 Zone (B4Z) south of the Princes Highway should be extended slightly to the east, which will allow for the development of bulky goods uses on this land. This is considered to be a logical extension to the existing zone, and will create a hard edge to development in the eastern part of the town. This additional land will provide further opportunity for bulky goods uses to be developed, which is necessary given the servicing constraints on the B4Z land to the west of Colac.

Appropriate overlay controls should be implemented to ensure that the design of buildings and their surrounds presents a high quality entrance to Colac from this direction.

A key outcome of the proposed rezoning of this land will be the need to ensure activities capable of being developed within it do not undermine the economic capacity of Colac’s commercial centre. Uses within the extended B4 zone should reflect opportunities for bulky goods and large stores and light manufacturing that cannot be easily accommodated in the central area. Additionally, land uses such as shops, medical centres and convenience uses are not suited to the intent of this zone.

Strategy

1. Rezone land in eastern Colac (as shown on the Structure Plan) for Business 4 purposes.
2. Implement a Design and Development Overlay over the entire Business 4 Zone in East Colac to promote a high standard of building and landscape design and amenity.

9.9.4 Colac West Business 4 Zone

Context

The Business 4 Zoned land in West Colac has been developed in an ad-hoc manner, although some more recent developments (on the southern side of the



Princes Highway) have applied a higher standard of design and landscape amenity. On the northern side of the Highway, development has been of a low standard of design and presents a poor image when entering Colac.

Related Objectives

Manage Growth

Provide areas for the location of support services, particularly those that provide convenience services and serve primarily local functions.

Enhance Environmental Benefits

Protect important viewsheds and town entrances from inappropriate commercial development and its associated signage.

Balance Service Provision

Allow commercial development only in areas that can be easily serviced with sewerage and other infrastructure required for the ordinary operations of the business.

Intended Outcome

It is intended that the west Colac commercial area be an attractive, functional entry to the town.

Strategic Justification

There exists an opportunity to redevelop Business 4 Zoned land on the Princes Highway west of Colac. These opportunities primarily relate to land on the northern side of the Highway, which is currently being used for an ad-hoc range of uses and does not present a high quality road frontage.

Redevelopment should present a strong entrance statement and incorporate a high standard of design. The existing Design and Development Overlay (Schedule 2) provides some guidance on the desired appearance for buildings and landscaping of these areas. Further guidance could be incorporated into the Design and Development Overlay (Schedule 2) to ensure that any redevelopment is undertaken to a satisfactory design standard. The Municipal Strategic Statement should also include a reference to the enhancement of this area.

Strategies

1. Prevent further development of the Business 4 Zoned land pending the availability of sewerage services from Barwon Water.
2. In the short term, upgrade existing uses so as to present a high standard of design and amenity when entering Colac from the west.



Lake Colac

LEGEND

-  EXTEND BUSINESS 4 ZONE (B4Z)
-  REZONE TO BUSINESS 3
-  REZONE TO BUSINESS 1
-  REALIGNMENT OF EXISTING B4/IN1 ZONE BOUNDARY


Colac Otway
 SHIRE
 Naturally Progressive
COLAC STRUCTURE PLAN
COMMERCIAL STRATEGY


0 100 200 300 400 500
 1:15,000 @A2
 1,000 metres



Table 17. Implementation Plan for Commercial Strategy.

Action	Application	Purpose	How
1. Designate land in Elliminyt for a community / commercial node.	Land on the corner of Iriwillipe and Colac-Lavers Hill Roads, Elliminyt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide convenience services and facilities for the residents of Elliminyt. Encourage residents to walk or cycle when undertaking convenience trips and therefore reduce the need to travel to Colac. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rezone land to Business 1.
2. Provide for light industrial / commercial type uses on Colac-Lavers Hill Road.	Land on the eastern side of Colac-Lavers Hill Road north of Aireys Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the existing commercial use of land. Provide opportunities for the location of light industries, warehouses and a limited range of restricted retailing and office uses (eg. hardware stores) to service the Elliminyt community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially rezone land from Residential 1 to Business 3.
3. Provide opportunities for expansion of the east Colac Business 4 Zone.	Land on the south side of the Princes Highway immediately east of the existing Business 4 Zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage new development and redevelopment of the existing sites. Provide a strong and attractive entrance to Colac from the east. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rezone from Farming to Business 4. Include a Design and Development Overlay over the entire Business 4 Zone in East Colac to promote a high standard of built form and landscaping.
4. Enhance the west Colac Business 4 Zone.	Land on the northern side of the Princes Highway in West Colac.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the appearance of the existing uses along the Highway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the existing Design and Development Overlay (Schedule 2) to include further guidance on built form and landscaping.



10. Recreation and Open Space Framework

Colac's open space resources are facing continuing pressure in the context of increasing demand for land development, increasing regional-level use, increasing population density and limited public funds. There is a need, within Colac and across the Shire to address issues that relate to open space provision, such as how to protect the local environment, how to improve sustainability and what to do about declining levels of physical activity across the population.

Colac Otway Shire has an important planning role for open space development. Colac and Elliminyt have experienced considerable residential growth over the last 5 years that has led to increased demand for open space provision and changes to how, why and who uses open space. In some instances it is evident that Council's planning responses to this growth have not been adequate.

10.1 Open Space and Leisure Trends

A lot is known about open space development and use in Victoria. Relevant open space and leisure trends identified in open space studies in the past few years are listed below. Many of these apply to Colac Otway Shire.

- The health and environmental benefits of open space are being increasingly recognised.
- Larger houses and smaller lot sizes have increased the need for community outdoor recreation opportunities, including spaces for children.
- Recent large-scale new subdivisions (in Melbourne) frequently include provision for 8-12% open space with well-developed off-road pathways. Developers are realising the 'market' benefits of providing quality open spaces within their developments and are working collaboratively with councils to increase provision. In some cases developers are providing not only land but also paying for the land to be developed into quality spaces.
- Many people want pleasant, quiet, attractive and well-maintained open space with provision for walking, socialising, relaxing and play.
- There is strong support for settings with shady trees, seating and quality facilities.
- A diverse range of settings is important to cater for differing needs in the community.
- Informal recreation is more important than playing sport for most people.
- Shared pathways linked to facilities and residential areas are increasingly important.
- Footpaths are a high community priority for improvement in many areas: pedestrian access to facilities and walking for exercise, are growing in importance.
- Greater emphasis is being placed on access for all, user safety and risk management.
- More attention needs to be paid to the needs of children, youth and the elderly.
- Improving existing open space is generally a higher priority than providing additional open space (except in new areas).
- There is increasing pressure to provide for multiple-use of sporting reserves and facilities, including passive use.



10.2 Standards for Open Space Provision

Clause 56 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme (and other council planning schemes) includes ResCode requirements for residential subdivision and provides a framework for provision of open space. This framework will help the Shire to plan effectively for open space in new growth areas in Colac and Elliminyt and assess the adequacy of open space within infill areas.

Standards noted within ResCode include:

- Provision of a safe, accessible, convenient, effective and logical pedestrian and bicycle network. (Standard C2)
- Subdivision layouts that retain significant vegetation incorporate natural and cultural features and encourage on-site water retention and use drainage methods that protect and enhance streams. (Standard C7)
- Street network should facilitate walking, cycling and the use of public transport for access to daily activities. (Standard C12)

The public open space provision objectives of ResCode (Clause 56.05-2 of the Planning Scheme) are to:

- Ensure that public open space of appropriate quality and quantity is provided to contribute towards meeting the recreational and social needs of the community in convenient locations.
- Incorporate natural and cultural features in the design of public open space where appropriate.

Standard C16 of ResCode specifies that the provision of open space should:

- Provide a balance between local, district and regional open space.
- Take advantage of and protect natural and cultural features.
- Incorporate land for regional linear open space where appropriate.
- Provide for district parks of 3 hectare minimum, combining active and passive use, within 2 kilometres of all dwellings.
- Provide for large local parks of 1 hectare minimum, for active and passive use within 500 metres safe walking distance from all dwellings.
- Provide small local parks within 150 to 300 metres safe walking distance of all dwellings.
- Take into account shared use of active open space.
- Take into account land used for drainage control or stream and floodway purposes, if generally available for recreational use.

10.3 Existing Open Space in Colac

An assessment of public open space in Colac and Elliminyt in accordance with the above standards has been undertaken and this is shown below in Figure 26. This assessment indicates that Colac is well serviced by district parks, but some areas have deficient supply of large and small local parks and linear open space. This assessment can be utilized to assist in determining future public open space requirements and guiding consideration of public open space contributions from new subdivisions. It is therefore recommended the Council commence the planning for the development of parks in those residential areas without them.



Draft Analysis of Public Open Space against Clause 56.05-2
 (Public open space provision objectives - Standard C16) of the Planning Scheme

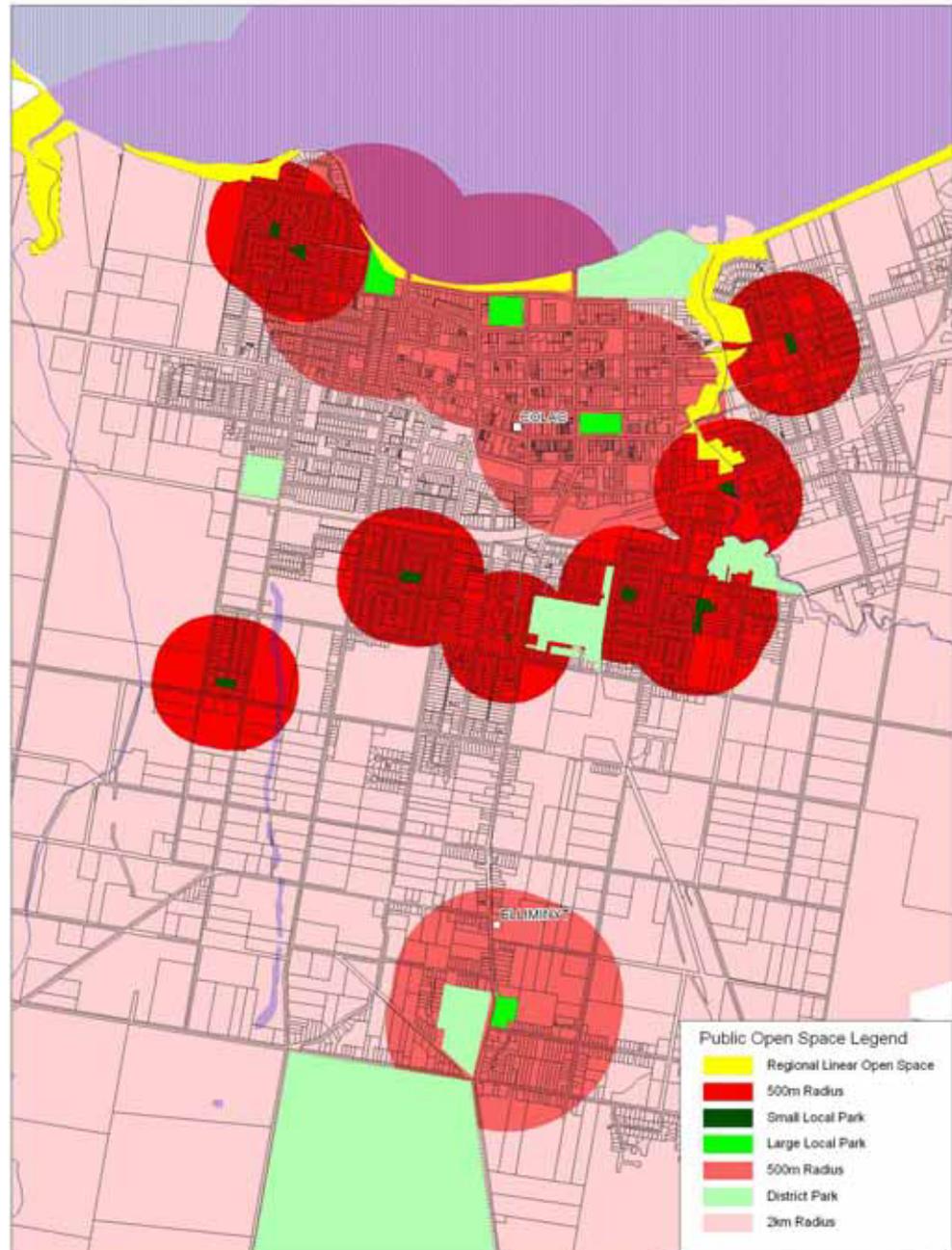


Figure 26. Existing public open space provision as per Clause 56 standards.



10.4 Open Space and the Structure Plan

The Structure Plan recognises that a Recreation and Open Space Framework is required for Colac and Elliminyt that provides the means to manage the recent shift in demographic recreational trends towards unstructured sporting activities such as non-team sports such as walking, running and bike riding, and a minimalist design approach to private open space in lieu of the provision of more public open space areas (local parks).

From a recreational perspective, the Colac Structure Plan promotes the development and enhancement of linear trails along creeks to meet the strong social demand in exercising along tracks and routes that provide interesting landscapes, opportunities for exercise stops and which, through appropriate infrastructure provision provide safe passage for users. Linear trails will also provide alternative transport routes for people walking or cycling from residential areas to places of employment, education or recreation.

Colac is fortunate that it has a major point of interest as a destination in Lake Colac with the town centre activity node and residential areas providing origins for recreational journeys along such linear corridors.

The ongoing provision of open space within new subdivisions is also promoted as a key requirement of this Structure Plan to ensure Colac and Elliminyt maintain a balance of new development which is supported by areas promoting recreation and lifestyle advantages which best respond to the needs of new residents.

The general application of the requirements outlined in Section 9.2 above, in new subdivisions in Colac and Elliminyt will markedly improve open space provision. It is also important to consider factors such as attractiveness, useability, accessibility, multiple use and provision of a range of settings. Standards can also assume uniformity in community needs for open space, failing to recognise differences between communities, and changing community interests and opportunities, e.g. provision for skateboards, more walking tracks and additional habitat links.

It is therefore not always appropriate to rigidly apply quantitative standards for open space in established areas in Colac and Elliminyt, although an off-road path network and proximity to quality open space within 500m safe walking distance of existing residential areas are desirable objectives. It will not always be possible to realise this due to development constraints. In new subdivisions, however, open space should be provided to meet ResCode and community requirements.

An Open Space framework is required to ensure that new residential subdivisions are provided with open space areas in accordance with ResCode standards, that extend beyond retention basins or land subject to inundation. The Structure Plan strongly supports the provision of open space requirements which are consistent with ResCode standards and the provisions of the Subdivision Act. It is recognised that as a minimum, both a monetary requirement of 5% and a physical requirement of 5% exists through section 18 of the Subdivision Act and that the imposition of these requirements will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis.



For example, traditional /established residential areas are more likely to accommodate existing open space areas that will benefit from monetary contribution to drive their enhancement whereas new residential estates will benefit from a physical provision of open space to respond to residents needs, contribute to an estate's aesthetic qualities and delivering a chain of open space networks across greenfield areas.

About 20 councils in Victoria are now using the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to ensure adequate provision of open space in new subdivisions. This is achieved by specifying mandatory open space requirements in Clause 52.01 in the council's Planning Scheme. For example, for specified areas, Casey requires between 5 and 11% open space, Greater Geelong requires 10%, Mornington Peninsula 9%, Melton 9%, Cardinia 8% and Whittlesea 8%. The use of Clause 52.01 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme is recommended to better manage open space contributions in new subdivisions by requiring a mandatory 10% open space contribution.

10.5 Open Space Recommendations

In summary the Structure Plan supports:

- An increase in the amount of linear open space to support recreational land uses and linkages between activities, including:
 - Connection of the Old Beechy Rail Trail to Lake Colac via Bromfield and Gellibrand Streets and through the Botanic Gardens to Barongarook Creek;
 - Linkage between the Old Beechy Rail Trail through the Education, Recreation and Community Precinct through to the CBD;
 - Linkage between the Old Beechy Rail Trail and Barongarook Creek via Hearn and Fulton Streets;
 - Linkage of the Old Beechy Rail Trail from the Education, Recreation and Community Precinct through to the south of Elliminyt to the rear of Wyuna Estate following the original alignment where possible; and
 - Linear reserve along Deans Creek.
- The development of policy framework supporting future open space provision for residential development in new and established residential areas, including the use of the schedule to clause 52.01 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme to require a mandatory 10% open space contribution which will be utilised for the provision of new open space or the improvement of existing open space.
- Urban design improvements for the enhancement of the Colac Town Centre.
- The planning for the development of parks in those residential areas without them.



11. Education, Recreation and Community Precinct

11.1 Introduction

The development of a new secondary school in Colac, near Central Reserve, in the context of the State Government's "Building Futures" policy provides an opportunity to design a precinct that can benefit the whole community for decades to come. The Concept Plan and Design Guidelines developed herein provide a mechanism or management tool to retain, recognise or modify the spatial development that currently exists and which, through any expansion, has the potential to exist on this site.

The Guidelines can be used to set the parameters for appropriate development on the site and in the context of a whole precinct that integrates facilities at Central Reserve, the Special Development School, Bluewater Fitness and Recreation Centre, the CBD and the Civic Centre precinct. The guidelines provide the basis for a master plan to be developed that incorporates both existing and potential new elements that would provide increased benefits to the community.

11.2 Vision and Objectives

11.2.1 Vision

To deliver a new precinct for Colac which integrates a range of educational recreational and community facilities which together provide a focus for an active, learning community.

The precinct will focus around the new secondary school, which has been announced as the site bordering Queen and Hearn Streets, and Central Reserve which is Colac Otway Shire's premier sporting and recreational facility. The further development of the Old Beechy Rail Trail will provide links for the precinct to the South of Colac and to the Civic Centre precinct and the CBD precinct.

The vision aims to encourage the development of facilities which can be jointly used by the secondary school, other sectors of education – particularly post compulsory education – and the broader community.

The vision also aims to support the continued sustainable growth of the Colac Otway Shire economy by encouraging an innovative and 'whole of community' approach to education, learning, health and wellbeing, and community development.

The precinct will aim to set a new standard for educational precincts in rural Victoria providing a safe, accessible and functional school precinct with high amenity spaces and quality environmental conditions.



11.2.2 Key Objectives:

The Key Objectives of these guidelines are to ensure:

- Development within the precinct achieves the desired spatial outcomes and appearance and contributes to the activities on the site
- New development enhances the precinct's role as a strategically significant community asset and centre for learning, recreation and personal development
- The provision of safe access to and from the school and between shared school and community facilities
- New development reflects the scale of existing development and natural features within the precinct
- New development recognises and responds to the environmental and open space qualities of the site and on adjoining land uses
- Buildings, car parking, traffic management facilities and landscaped areas that offer a high level of amenity and safety to users

11.3 Site Activities

Activities to be promoted in the precinct should result in the integration of secondary school, post compulsory, community, recreation, cultural and performing arts facilities, with a significant focus on shared use of facilities by different groups and community members.

Some facilities will be available for use by the community at most times, other facilities will be used by the secondary school during school hours and for the other members of the community outside these hours. Facilities will be subject to joint use agreements.

Key elements within the precinct may include:

- Indoor rooms and lecture theatres which are suitable for both secondary education rooms and other learning and community uses including large internal spaces to provide for physical movement and drama classes (which could be used for black box theatre productions), music, a multi-media hub (which could for example be a partnership between community radio, media and the school) and facilities suitable for developing skills in manufacturing, business, tourism, hospitality and other industries.
- Outdoor areas for promoting learning in agriculture, horticulture, natural resource management, tourism, physical education, sciences, arts, etc
- A library which is accessible for the general public (for example, from a separate street entrance) and which has zones which are primarily for secondary school use and zones which are for the broader community including, breakout spaces for educational purposes, internet/information technology rooms and private study areas.
- Breakout spaces for interactive/social purposes such as common rooms for staff/students, recreation/sports hall (multi-purpose room), media areas, arts and gallery areas
- Recreational facilities some of which are primarily for the whole community (eg some existing central reserve facilities) and some of which are primarily for secondary school use during school hours but are shared use facilities at other times. These would include:
 - Current facilities which will be prioritised for improvement such as the Recreation Centre, Bluewater Fitness Centre, Central Reserve Playing fields
 - Potential new facilities including a biomechanics exercise circuit and multi-purpose facilities accommodating a range of sports (racquetball, soccer and hockey).



- Outdoor areas should encourage health and wellbeing, through sport, relaxation and recreation. The Old Beechy Rail Trail could be further developed to provide an improved link between the precinct, the civic precinct, the CBD and Lake Colac. Facilities should aim to be of a standard to host regional and state-wide events.
- Performing arts area including both indoor and outdoor auditoriums with audience areas and interactive and visually stimulating performing spaces.
- Retail and commercial facilities, particularly where these have educational objectives as their primary focus (for example a school café could also be a community café with tourism/hospitality students running it, and using products from the agriculture/horticulture students; or a design innovation studio may also have a shop front to sell quality manufactured items).

A summary of possible activities in the Colac Education, Recreation and Community Precinct is as follows:

- Indoor classrooms and lecture theatres
- Physical movement, drama and music rooms
- Multi-media hub
- Business Skills Centre
- Agricultural and Horticultural centre,
- Environmental education activity area,
- Library,
- Technology centre
- Multi-purpose facility
- Pre-school and after school care
- Performing arts area with indoor and outdoor auditoriums
- Central Reserve Playing Fields
- New sports facilities e.g. biomechanics (fitness circuit), all weather playing field / athletics track, soccer, hockey,
- Bluewater Fitness and Recreation Centre
- Enhanced Old Beechy Rail Trail for improved links between:
 - Education precinct;
 - The civic precinct; and
 - The CBD and Lake Colac.
- Retail and commercial training facilities, for example:
 - Community café with tourism/hospitality focus for students; and
 - Design innovation studio.

11.4 Guiding Principles

Outlined below are a series of suggested guiding principles and design ideas which can be considered in the planning for the future development of the extended School.

11.4.1 Vehicle Areas and Parking, Pedestrian and Bicycle Access:

Provide safe access to and from the school grounds to include:

- Defined pedestrian thoroughfares and crossings which encourage formalised entry/exit of the school grounds for school children and through traffic along Hearn Street.



- Defined routes for bicycles between the school and key activity areas in the City centre
- Car parking areas for teachers, parents and visitors that reduces potential for conflict with students
- Student drop off / pick up facilities that accommodate vehicles travelling both east and west of the school with formalised access areas in Hearn Street to control/manage pedestrian movements.
- Direct through route for buses to minimise intrusion into the heart of the school grounds.
- Public access to shared community facilities
- Ensure that a strongly defined series of walkways link all areas of the School.

Safe, convenient and accessible facilities should be provided for:

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle users
- Vehicles for parents (drop off zone)
- Buses and bus passengers
- Teachers and visitors and older students parking area
- Disabled parking

Encourage the precinct's safety all hours of the day through:

- Use of the precinct in evenings and on weekends
- Good use of lighting
- View lines from streets, residences and other buildings

11.4.2 Pedestrian:

- Promote formalised crossings over heavily trafficked areas (roads) and in vicinity of public transport users (bus interchange)
- Provide clear, visual signage warning of dangers and potential conflicts including mobile phone free zones and at intersections with vehicles exiting/entering the school grounds and the precinct generally
- Ensure pedestrians do not congregate at potential points of conflict with vehicles.
- Establish clearly identifiable walkways within the school grounds by widening and repaving existing walkways, providing a consistent appearance and ensuring that they allow for emergency vehicle access.

11.4.3 Bicycles Users:

- Provide a secure centralised bike storage facility that is highly visible from buildings and external areas
- Ensure bicycle storage area and access to and from the bike storage facility is separated from high vehicle movement areas
- Provide signage diverting bike users away from pedestrian/vehicles into a safe bike friendly zone
- Identify opportunities for bike paths/lanes along lowly trafficked streets with formalised connections across major roads as well as improve the Old Beechy Rail Trail connections to the CBD



11.4.4 Parents Vehicles:

- Provide designated student drop off/pick up facility accommodating vehicles heading east and west along Hearn Street
- Provide formalised pedestrian crossing controlled by “Lollypop” person to ensure safe passage across road to waiting vehicles
- Promote the safe and vigilant use of student drop off/pick up zones by both school children and parents
- Use highly visible markers to encourage parents/ children to use designated student drop off/pick up zones



Good example of a safe and accessible “Student Drop off/Pick Up Zone”

11.4.5 Bus Pickup Point:

- Provide bus pickup area that minimises conflict with pedestrian, teachers and other vehicles
- Identify and provide a bus route that traverses the perimeter of school buildings and enters and leaves the site at areas and points of low pedestrian activity.
- Provide bus pickup and drop off areas that are easily and safely accessible, highly visible and accommodate a large number of passengers for waiting at any one time.



Good example of a safe, accessible Bus Pick Up Point (with weather protection)



11.4.6 Teachers and Visitor Parking Areas:

- Provide secure and formalised parking facilities away from highly pedestrian areas
- Ensure parking areas have direct access to key buildings via formalised walkways
- Parking areas should have low level vegetation, good lighting and clear signage directing movement away from student drop off/pick up zones and pedestrian gathering areas
- Ensure disabled parking areas are provided close to school facilities, are clearly marked and ramps provided to ensure ease of access from the parking area.

11.5 Views and Visual Connections:

- All outdoor activity areas to be highly visible from key buildings
- Perimeter boundaries should not have dense, low level planting in order to ensure personal safety and casual surveillance of boundaries (see photos below)
- Landscaped areas should be carefully designed /sited to ensure clear lines of sight along movement corridors



Before: Limited surveillance of rear of building due to landscaping and lack of maintenance



After: Enhanced surveillance of parked vehicles and building

Examples of Visual Connections

11.6 Built Form

- New development within the Education Recreation and Community Precinct should promote built form at a scale that is consistent with existing buildings on the site. This should include the length and width of buildings as well as the height.
- New buildings should be interesting and inviting, built to a human scale so as not to dominate the surroundings. New buildings should be low level and well spaced between other buildings to allow ample light and landscaping where appropriate.
- New buildings should offer a spatial response to site boundaries to ensure sufficient setbacks are achieved allowing adequate passage width between building and boundary.
- The design of new buildings should encourage opportunity for social interaction both internally and externally through provision of room for break out spaces, conversation areas and display of works/products created by students and others using the precinct.
- Buildings should be sited and designed so as to not cause a loss of amenity to adjoining properties.



- Encourage and facilitate the design and orientation of building components to maximise solar access. This requires the siting (and shape) of the building to avoid overshadowing, and allow sun penetration to open areas and classrooms. Classrooms to be located on the north side of the building.
- All new buildings should be designed for out-of-hours access and general patronage whether by an extended School group or wider community use.

11.7 Landscape and Vegetation

- Encourage landscaping which enhances the amenity and aesthetic appearance of the Precinct. This can include additional planting of perimeter trees and street trees to nurture habitat, provide wind breaks and reinforce the identity of the precinct.
- Encourage planting of native species which reduce water use, retain local biodiversity and reduce vegetation maintenance
- Avoid planting of species which are bushy and low as they hold windborne rubbish and can be unsafe.
- Use landscaping treatments to soften the impact of impervious areas along roads and paths.
- Retain and protect existing canopy trees and trees of environmental significance that provide shade in the middle of the day in frequently used outdoor areas.

11.8 Design Themes Colours and Materials

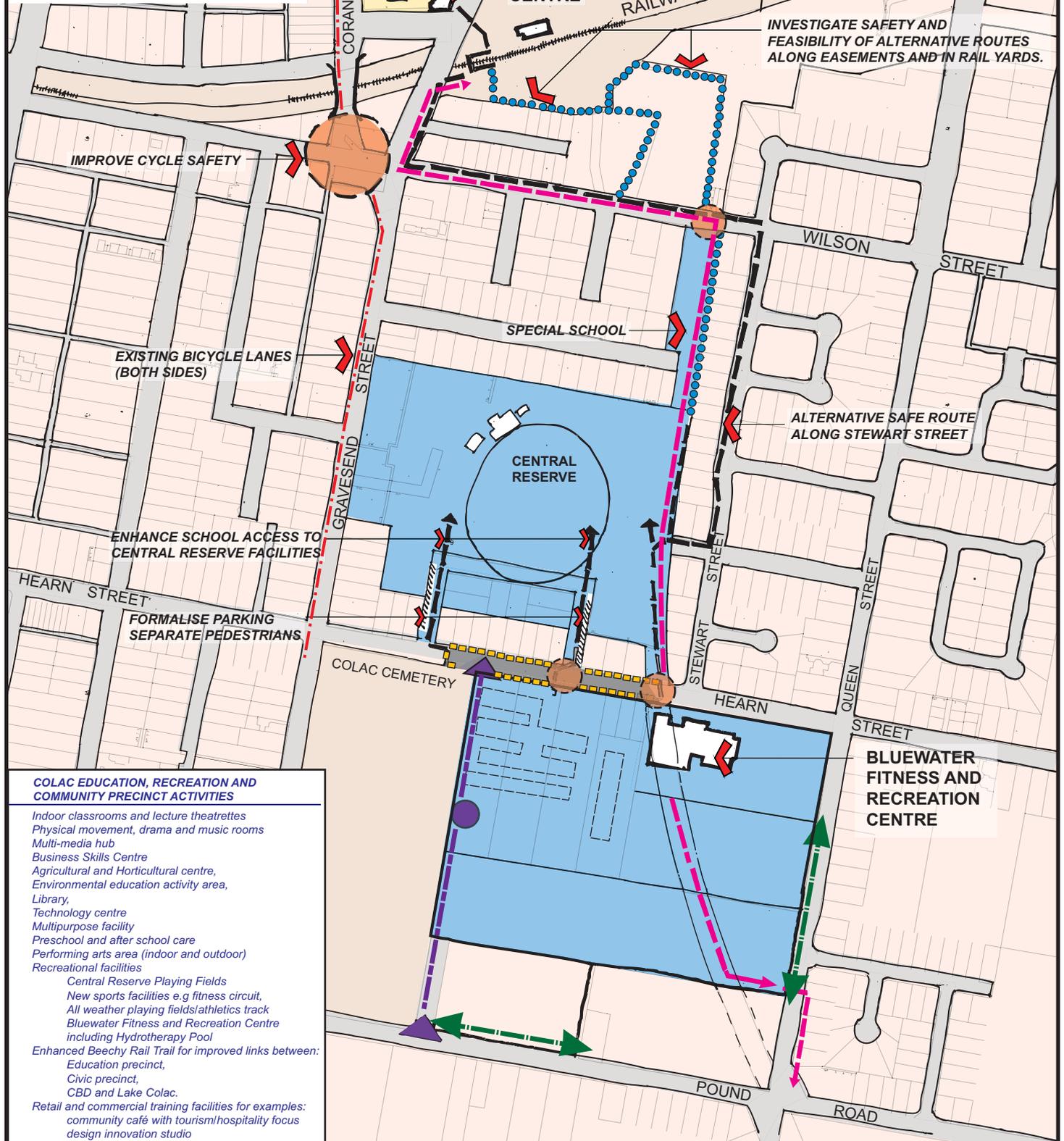
- Consistent with Department of Education standards for educational facilities
- High quality finishes which are durable, vandal resistant.
- Ensure all work to the front of buildings is of a high standard of design and that the sense of place within the Precinct is maintained through an integrated program of paving, landscaping, lighting, outdoor furniture and artworks.

11.9 Environmentally Sustainable Design

- Provide stormwater retention techniques promoting on-site treatment and reuse applications appropriate to the scale of development, including:
- Infiltration devices such as swales, porous paving, and gross pollutant traps/trash racks.
- On-site stormwater retention, treatment and reuse (e.g. constructed wetlands and detention basins).
- Implement water sensitive urban design principles
- Minimise energy consumption by providing opportunities for solar/wind energy.
- Tree retention can aid energy conservation through shading. Planting of deciduous trees may be considered on the immediate north side of classrooms/buildings as they provide shade in summer while admitting light in winter.
- Promote water sensitive urban design in the expanded development to reduce water consumption, wastewater and the environmental impacts of stormwater on waterways, while also maximising water reuse opportunities on the site.
- Adherence to best practice principles of environmentally sustainable building design including water and energy efficiency.
- Minimise infrastructure costs through the provision of underground services, promoting trench sharing and reduction of hard paved areas.

LEGEND

- COLAC EDUCATION, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY PRECINCT
- BUS STOP
- SCHOOL BUS ROUTE
- OLD BEECHY TRAIL
- PEDESTRIAN ROUTES
- STUDENTS DROP OFF AND PICK UP
- FORMALISED PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
- VISUAL LINK OPENED UP ALONG BOUNDARY



COLAC EDUCATION, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY PRECINCT ACTIVITIES

- Indoor classrooms and lecture theatres
- Physical movement, drama and music rooms
- Multi-media hub
- Business Skills Centre
- Agricultural and Horticultural centre,
- Environmental education activity area,
- Library,
- Technology centre
- Multipurpose facility
- Preschool and after school care
- Performing arts area (indoor and outdoor)
- Recreational facilities
 - Central Reserve Playing Fields
 - New sports facilities e.g fitness circuit,
 - All weather playing fields/athletics track
 - Bluewater Fitness and Recreation Centre including Hydrotherapy Pool
- Enhanced Beechy Rail Trail for improved links between:
 - Education precinct,
 - Civic precinct,
 - CBD and Lake Colac.
- Retail and commercial training facilities for examples:
 - community café with tourism/hospitality focus
 - design innovation studio



12. Traffic Management

12.1 Context

Colac's Town Centre is a thriving commercial centre that is dominated by through traffic moving along Murray Street including heavy vehicles and passenger vehicles, the extent of which has given rise to safety and amenity concerns to pedestrians and businesses.

To address these issues and to provide a broader picture of the key transport issues confronting Colac and its surrounding areas, one of the components of the Structure Plan required investigation of the potential for alternative traffic management options, including:

1. A short term alternative (heavy vehicle) route.
2. A long term town bypass option.

The purpose of investigations was to actively seek the input of the community on a number of preliminary routes as part of the broader consultation on the Draft Colac Structure Plan. It was not to provide definitive routes for either option but to explore the opportunities and issues relating to each option.

In this regard two alternative (heavy vehicle) routes were identified in addition to the existing Murray Street route, these being:

1. Upgrade of Drapers Road from Princes Highway, Colac-Forrest Road, Forest Street, Aireys Street and Deans Creek Road to Princes Highway.
2. Upgrade of Forest Street south from Princes Highway, turning into Wilson Street until Cants Road and back onto the Princes Highway.

Both routes were strongly opposed during the exhibition of the Draft Colac Structure Plan.

Investigations into potential town bypass routes identified four possible alignments including:

1. Causeway across Lake Colac between the rifle range and the waste water reclamation plant.
2. Upgrade of Drapers Road from the Princes Highway to Colac-Forrest Road, a new road reservation to Aireys Street, upgrade of Aireys Street to Sinclair Street and a new road utilising both existing rural land and the disused railway reserve from Deans Creek Road to the Princes Highway.
3. Upgrade of Collins Road from the Princes Highway to Colac-Forrest Road, road reserve between Colac-Forrest Road and Aireys Street, upgrade of Aireys Street and Back Larpent Road and connecting back to the Princes Highway west of Colac.
4. Upgrade of Forest Street from the Princes Highway to Aireys Street, upgrade of Aireys Street to Sinclair Street and a new road utilising both rural land and the disused railway reserve from Deans Creek Road to the Princes Highway.



With the exception of the causeway option, which itself drew some attention, the bypass options were also strongly opposed.

12.2 Community Feedback

The consultation on the Draft Colac Structure Plan provided a very helpful means for engaging the community and gaining their feedback on the options, opportunities and constraints about potential future bypass options. The options presented were strongly contested, particularly by those residents in areas near possible routes. Some residents provided alternative solutions for such a bypass.

The consultation resulted in over 200 submissions being received commenting on the heavy vehicle/bypass route, some of the concerns voiced in the submissions included:

- The threat of declining property values occurring as a result of such a route;
- Concerns for pedestrian/school children's safety due to increased traffic;
- Issues with changes to traffic flows;
- Concerns for environmental changes from an increased volume and bulk of vehicles in terms of odours and noise and air pollution; and
- Issues with the aesthetics from such a bypass.

A quarter (50) residents who voiced concerns for the proposed options also provided alternative routes. Half of these respondents saw the need for such a route to extend around the north of Lake Colac ensuring that traffic does not travel through the main town, especially through residential areas. Findings also showed that 120 of the 200 plus respondents felt that the vehicle route should be kept in Murray Street where it is currently located.

By creating an avenue for feedback, Council was able to understand Colac residents' feelings on these issues. Such feedback also created the ability to broaden ideas/options for a bypass/heavy vehicle route as residents were able to provide input for alternative routes.

Given the substantial number of submissions received opposing the concept of a bypass and alternative (heavy vehicle) route, Council subsequently moved a notice of motion to remove these options from the Structure Plan with the only option that was retained being for the Causeway bypass over Lake Colac. This highlights the importance that such a community feedback exercise played in the formulation of a Structure Plan for Colac.

12.2.1 Summary of correspondence regarding the Colac Structure Plan

Following is a brief summary of the comments made by the community in relation to the bypass/heavy vehicle route options.

- There were approximately 200 submissions regarding the bypass/heavy vehicle route for Colac.
- 13 submissions that were received stated explicitly that they supported at least one option of the bypass. These included 11 supporting the proposed causeway option, (1 respondent saw this option as a second choice for a bypass) and the final respondent supporting both options 2 and 3 with the appropriate traffic assessments.



- Approximately 135 respondents were against the bypass/heavy vehicle options for the following main concerns;
 - o The proposed routes running through residential areas, many respondents believed that the route should be left in Murray Street;
 - o The majority of feedback was with regards to these residential options with many respondents not mentioning the causeway option; and
 - o Concern for loss of land value, safety and aesthetics were all factors in these submissions.
- Around 50 respondents provided alternative routes for the bypass/heavy vehicle options for Colac. 25 of these submissions suggested routes published by persons in the Colac Herald and involved routes going around the north of the lake etc.
- 10 respondents objected to one or more of the options, but not to the bypass in general, these respondents did not however provide an alternative strategy as a replacement.

12.3 Other possibilities – Railway Land

One option that was not proposed as a local arterial road route is utilising the existing rail reserve. This option had in the past been promoted for a local arterial road when the rail line was being considered for closure (particularly for the use of heavy vehicles). This was on the basis that the reservation would have no further use for rail transport and would become available as public land.

This never eventuated and the rail route is still in use between Geelong and Warrnambool for both passenger and freight haulage.

Relocation of the rail line is therefore not considered a viable option whilst the present usage is in place.

In addition to the above there are several other key factors which result in the utilisation of the rail reservation being a prohibitive option. These include:

- The existing reserve has insufficient width to cater for both rail and vehicles (one way or two way) and any consideration of this option would require significant land acquisition along the length of the route to cater for the mixed uses.
- There are also several infrastructure limitations along the length of the route including bridges and intersection treatments that pose significant traffic engineering issues. Changes for these would be both costly and time consuming.
- In the event the rail line is retained, VicTrack would require sufficient space alongside the tracks to allow for vehicular access. The distance between the centreline of the track and the edge of this access area may vary between 6-15 metres. The width of the road reservation would be additional to this (estimate 20m for dual carriageway access). Providing for these spatial requirements along the entire length of the reserve through the Colac town centre will be extremely difficult and likely to require substantial construction constraints given topography and land use restrictions.
- Sufficient justification must be provided to VicTrack as to the necessity of utilising the railway reservation for the purpose of a local arterial route. VicTrack must be satisfied that the construction (and subsequent use) of the road will not have any implications on the continued use of the railway. With this in mind, in the event that the railway is



discontinued, replacement with a road bypass would render the rail connection and infrastructure completely defunct and be likely to prohibit any future availability of rail transport to Colac.

- The land to be used for the purpose of the local arterial road route may need to be purchased from VicTrack by the authority responsible for developing the road (e.g. Council) and arrangements would need to be made for the transfer of titles. This would be likely to add significant costs to the construction works.

12.4 Future Traffic/Transport Considerations

The community's response to the bypass and alternative route (heavy vehicle) options has provided clear feedback. In particular this will ensure that Council funding is not wasted undertaking detailed analysis of options that are not supported by the community. Substantial investigations, covering both local and regional factors can now be undertaken on those options that did not receive strong opposition and for additional suggestions made by the community. These can then again be presented to the Colac community for consideration.

12.4.1 Local Traffic / Transport Considerations

Locally, there are a number of key traffic issues that must be considered and these include:

Access through Colac's Commercial Centre

Murray Street currently has high volumes of traffic yet low accident statistics. However, ongoing amenity and safety concerns require a clearer understanding of the problems associated with the use of Murray Street, particularly by heavy vehicles. The John Piper Report prepared in November 2005 outlined a number of short term options to manage the flow of traffic through and around the Colac commercial centre and a review and implementation of these options on the basis of the community's feedback is now timely.

Adopting urban design improvements to Murray Street including a greater focus on improved pedestrian crossings, is strongly supported. Strategically placed landscape enhancements serve a dual purpose in providing amenity improvements and protection for pedestrians as they cross Murray Street.

Other alternatives to improving the flow of traffic and reducing the amenity and safety concerns can come through traffic improvement measures such as improving synchronisation of traffic lights and advance warning signage which will encourage improved flows at lower speeds thus meeting both safety and efficiency requirements.

Proposals that promote one way access through the town such as using Murray Street (north bound) and Dennis Street (south bound) are not readily supported by the Piper report and the Structure Plan on the basis that Murray Street has the potential to accommodate improvements that can be implemented quickly and at low cost. Similarly, proposals that seek to utilise parallel city streets such as Bromfield Street for alternative access may not only jeopardise the existing traffic arrangements in these streets but also conflict with core growth objectives to promote fringe development of the city centre and retain on street parking to encourage new development and investment in the city centre.



To assist traffic management of the Colac commercial centre, further analysis of Colac's off street car parking will be required as a by-product of increased activity in the business district and the ever changing and evolving land uses that are occurring. Key issues to be identified will include the ability to provide additional off street public spaces, availability of land in and around the commercial centre and the degree to which both on street car parking and private off street car parks can be relied upon to service demand.

Establishing strong road linkages (north and south) to proposed employment areas to the south of Colac and retaining strong access to existing employment areas.

The Colac Structure plan promotes new industrial development on the south of the city along Forest Street. Key objectives of these areas are to provide for new industry opportunities as well as to promote the relocation of inappropriate industry from the commercial centre and from residential areas.

Access to these areas will require efficient connections from the Princes Highway and from routes extending south of Colac to capture northbound traffic connecting with the Princes Highway. Whilst there is reasonable opportunity at present to attract vehicles to Forest Street from the Princes Highway, there will be greater investigation required to enable traffic from the south access into the proposed industrial areas without loss of amenity and safety to residents in Elliminyt and South Colac.

A review of road hierarchy's around Colac.

A review of the road hierarchy around Colac having regard to the movement of traffic in both an east-west and north-south direction across Colac and its surrounding environs is required as part of any future investigations. The need for review is influenced by the increased traffic movements moving northbound to the Princes Highway; the review should include consideration of the implications of changes to the Princes Highway resulting from the Geelong Bypass as well as any long term transport planning considerations such as a Colac bypass.

Reviewing pedestrian and bicycle routes as a result of the consolidation of secondary schools into the Education, Community and Recreation Precinct.

The intensification of activity that will emerge as a result of the consolidation of Colac's two secondary schools at the Colac Secondary College will be a key driver for reviewing pedestrian and bicycle links between the commercial centre, residential areas and the education centre. The added activity zones around the school including the recreational precinct adds weight to the need to review these links beyond the peak school times into the weekend.

Current links from the school to the residential areas and the commercial centre are defined but could be made safer through better use of open space linkages along the creeks and continued enhancement of the Beechy Rail Trail, particularly South to Elliminyt. The need to separate the pedestrian and bicycle links from heavy vehicle movements will tie into the urban design treatments proposed for the city centre as well as broader recreational strategies promoted by Council.



Alternative Bypass Strategies

The alternative suggestions emerging from the community feedback, particularly those regarding the bypass should also be included in any review. Whilst the opportunity for a causeway bypass has been retained, the suggested bypass alternative north of Lake Colac is worthy of assessment as a long term option for its connections with the Hamilton Highway and potential for use of existing road alignments and reduced impacts on Colac's principal residential land areas.

12.4.2 Regional Traffic / Transport Considerations

At a regional level there are two key areas that require consideration as part of any future transport planning for Colac. These issues focus on infrastructure upgrades to the Princes Highway at Geelong (Geelong Bypass) and the activities on the roads between Colac and the Victorian Coast.

Geelong Bypass Implications.

The Geelong Bypass is currently under construction and will be completed over 3 stages with the final completion due in 2009. Amongst its anticipated benefits, the Bypass will improve road freight efficiency and encourage tourism to south-western Victoria. More directly for Colac, the bypassing of the greater Geelong area has the potential benefit of increasing Colac's stopover role and contributing to the town's convenience services. On the negative side it may see a traffic bottleneck at Murray Street unless enhancements are put in place to manage the potential impacts.

Origin and destination surveys should be undertaken following completion of the Geelong Bypass and the establishment of settled traffic patterns (within 2 years following completion of the Bypass).

Upgrades to Colac's current road network should be considered as outcomes to an Integrated Traffic Management Plan for Colac and directions contained in this report relating to development of future industrial land.

Interaction of Main and Local Road Networks

Colac is connected to key economic activity nodes in the region through the main road network. To the north of Colac is the Colac-Ballarat Road, whilst to the south are the Colac-Carlisle River Road, Colac-Lavers Hill Road and Colac-Forrest Road. These roads provide corridors of key economic activity to the commercial and industrial areas of Colac. It is important that connectivity exists between these main roads (in particular the Colac-Lavers Hill Road), the Princes Hwy and commercial and industrial areas within Colac.

An outcome of origin destination and integrated traffic management plan studies will be to examine the local road network and identify improvements to help with the future disbursement of traffic across and through the local road network in Colac. In accordance with Council's resolution, this will not include a designated heavy vehicle route. The integrated traffic management plan studies should investigate a zone of interest connecting the Colac-Lavers Hill Road with Forest Street through to the Princes Highway. The key drivers for this will be to develop opportunities for a route that services local industry whilst minimizing conflict with residential areas and the key commercial centre.



12.5 Recommendations

To deliver a comprehensive assessment of the local and regional transport framework for Colac and its immediate environs, the following tasks are recommended.

Ref	Action	Timing
1	Review and implement the agreed recommendations of the John Piper Report (November 2005) relating to Murray St in light of the community feedback to alternative (heavy) vehicle routes and other strategic outcomes from the Colac Structure plan.	12 months
2	Undertake traffic volume and origin and destination surveys for trucks passing through Colac (north, south, east and west) to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the timing (based on traffic projection modelling) for a Colac Bypass; • Enable more detailed analysis of potential Bypass routes to the north of Colac and across Lake Colac; • Identify solutions linking the Colac – Lavers Hill Rd to Forest St and through to the Princes Highway. 	5 years
3	Undertake an Integrated Traffic Management Plan for Colac and environs to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of local road hierarchy and road networks; • Consideration of increased traffic movements around the Education , Recreation and Community precinct; • Linkages to the commercial precinct; • Pedestrian and cycling movements throughout the township • Identify solutions to best manage the disbursement of traffic within Colac in response to future growth and development of the commercial, industrial, residential and recreational nodes. 	1-2 years
4	Undertake a detailed analysis of parking issues within the Colac Commercial Centre (area bounded by Queen Street, Railway Line, Botanic Gardens and Armstrong Street,) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and develop appropriate parking time zones for both on street and off street parking; • To document the statutory process required to undertake enforcement of parking on privately owned parking areas; • Identify suitable areas to develop future carparks and pedestrian linkages to commercial centres; and • Develop a detailed carpark precinct plan including a carparking levy for incorporation into the planning scheme, to facilitate the development of future carparking areas. 	1 - 2years

Critical to the above will be the inclusion of detailed discussions with VicRoads, local and regional transport providers and the public transport providers who service local primary and secondary schools.

A key funding avenue for the Integrated Transport Plan could include the Traffic and Transport Integration (T&TI) Program through VicRoads. This will primarily focus on Murray Street, including safety and mobility issues.



Funds under the T&TI Program are available for localised area improvements, works, bus improvements, freight improvements, bicycle facilities and pedestrian facilities on the VicRoads arterial road network.

The evaluation criteria that VicRoads uses in assessing applications under the T&TI program include:

- (a) Reduction to delays at intersection
- (b) Improved safety to drivers using site
- (c) Improved geometry of intersection to facilitate vehicle movement
- (d) Impact of treatment to other road user—delays to other movements
- (e) Benefit of treatment to other road users—pedestrians, businesses

Each of these criteria has a degree of relevance to the current transport issues confronting Colac and specifically Murray Street where it interfaces with the commercial core and fringe activities.



13. Implementation Plan

13.1 Methods of Planning Scheme Implementation

The Colac Structure Plan will be implemented primarily through the revision of the Colac-Otway Municipal Strategic Statement and the adoption of zones and overlays. During the planning scheme amendment process, detailed consultation will be required with the community, service authorities and government agencies.

13.1.1 Municipal Strategic Statement

Minor modifications will be required to Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to include the Structure Plan and reinforce the local policy and planning scheme provisions. The Structure Plan will ultimately be the framework plan upon which future decisions regarding development in Colac are based. It is also essential that the vision and objectives for Colac, and those relating to industrial, residential and commercial development, also be included in the MSS. Recognition of these objectives when making statutory planning decisions will ensure that planners and the community are given a greater level of certainty in relation to the decision being made.

A key aspect of implementation of the Structure Plan in the MSS will be the inclusion of a township boundary map within the MSS identifying the extent of existing and future residential, industrial, commercial and rural living development to enable the protection of valuable farming land that surrounds the township.

13.1.2 Zoning

Rezoning of land has been recommended to accommodate new residential, rural residential, commercial and industrial development. This will be the primary mechanism for the implementation of the Structure Plan.

13.1.3 Overlays

If the building permit system and Building Code of Australia is considered inadequate to manage the impact of salinity on built structures, the proposed Salinity Management Overlay should be implemented as soon as possible via a planning scheme amendment. This will ensure that the development industry and the community can be given certainty as to the requirements to be fulfilled regarding land that is prone to or affected by salinity.

The planning scheme amendment should also include a number of Design and Development Overlays, including, but not limited to:

- The Business 4 Zones to the west and east of Colac;
- The proposed industrial area in south east Colac; and
- The Colac Town Centre, relating to the design of infill development.

13.2 Funding Opportunities

Following is an outline of the potential funding sources for the implementation of the Structure Plan.



13.2.1 Council

Council’s capital works budget could be used to implement walking and bicycle paths along the public open space network.

13.2.2 Service Authority Capital Works Programs

Certain elements of infrastructure costs may be covered through capital works programs of service authorities, including Telstra, Powercor and TRU.

13.2.3 Regional Flood Mitigation Programme

Local governments may apply for grants to implement flood mitigation works such as retarding basins, where they will provide benefits such as protecting the community and infrastructure, promoting community safety and preventing loss of life and enhancing the biological diversity / ecological amenity of the area.

13.2.4 State Government Pride of Place

Pride of Place is the State Government’s urban design grants program. Grants are available for eligible projects that meet the program’s published selection criteria, in the categories of:

- Urban Design Frameworks (UDF)
- Urban Design Advice (UDA)
- Design development and capital works recommended in urban design frameworks (DDCW).

13.2.5 Community Water Grants

These grants are available through the Australian Government, for projects that are related to water savings-efficiency, water reuse-recycling and surface groundwater health. Grants of up to \$50 000 are available.

13.2.6 Developer Contributions

Developer contributions are a mechanism to help fund the servicing of land. The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* sets out the statutory framework for the formation and scope of development contributions plans (DCPs), and the Department of Sustainability and Environment Development Contributions Guidelines give practical guidance on how to develop and implement DCPs. DCPs are “a mechanism used to levy new development for contributions to planned infrastructure needed by the future community”.

13.3 Sequencing, Roles and Responsibilities

The following table sets out the sequencing and roles in order to implement the strategies proposed in the Structure Plan, all of which are the responsibility of Council. Each of the implementation measures are linked to the actions identified in the UDF, Residential, Industrial, Other Land Use and Traffic Options Strategies.



Table 19. Implementation of Structure Plan

Ref	Implementation Measure	Related Action	Timing
1	Undertake flood investigation studies to determine additional areas to be included in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.	Implementation of structure plan recommendations.	12 months
2	Implement a Salinity Management Overlay by way of a Planning Scheme Amendment to Colac Otway Shire Planning Scheme.	Implementation of structure plan recommendations.	12 months
3	Implement a Traffic Management Strategy for the greater Colac area which will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigations into safety and amenity of Murray Street, - Road hierarchy structures for greater Colac, - Opportunities for major arterial bypass of Colac to the north of Colac - Strategic transport linkages to Colac's industrial and commercial areas - Pedestrian and bicycle networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake traffic volume surveys - Undertake origin and destination surveys - Prepare an Integrated Transport Plan for greater Colac - Undertake a central Colac Traffic Management Study 	1-5 years
4	Prepare Planning Scheme Amendment Stage 1 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisions to MSS to include Structure Plan • Inclusion of the Structure Plan as an Incorporated Document under Clause 81. • Rezoning of land identified for short term action. • Implementation of Design and Development Overlays. • Development Plan Overlay. 	Implementation of structure plan recommendations Implementation of UDF	12 months
5	Implement Education, Recreation and Community Precinct Plan	Development of detailed masterplan	12 months
6	Prepare Planning Scheme Amendment Stage 2 to rezone area identified for future industrial development.	Implementation of industrial strategy.	Review in 3-5 yrs

13.4 Monitoring and Review

One of the most important stages in the implementation of the Structure Plan will be its on-going monitoring and review. This stage is of critical importance if the progress of the Plan's implementation is to be measurable and if community acceptance is to be maintained.

Council and its stakeholders will need to review this Structure Plan regularly to see that its conclusions and proposed strategies remain valid. As new information comes to hand such as the changes in demographic profile, new Government policy or major infrastructure opportunities, the Strategy may need to be modified.

Monitoring and evaluation activities within the scope of the Strategy need to be undertaken continually and concurrently. It is important that the community be kept informed of the strategies being implemented and any review of the Structure Plan. It is recommended that Council undertake an annual review of the Plan and its implementation program. A commitment to the monitoring and review by Council in this way will ensure the Structure Plan remains current, is responsive to change and meets the needs of the community.



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