



# Bairnsdale Growth Strategy

Volume 2 Background Analysis  
Building a Better Bairnsdale

November 2009

Prepared by CPG Australia Pty Ltd

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## **1 Introduction**

CPG Australia (formerly Coomes Consulting Group) has been engaged by East Gippsland Shire Council to prepare a “growth strategy” for the township of Bairnsdale. The *Bairnsdale Growth Strategy* is outlined in Volume 1.

This report comprises Volume 2 of the Strategy which provides the detailed background analysis informing the Strategy, including key future drivers for change. Specific issues canvassed in this report relate to:

- The regional role and context of Bairnsdale;
- Key planning policy framework;
- Bairnsdale’s demographic profile;
- Bairnsdale’s land supply profile;
- Economic development;
- Activity centre;
- Community infrastructure, open space and recreation;
- Environment;
- Traffic and transport; and
- Services and infrastructure.

In analysing each of the above, a series of opportunities and constraints have been identified which form the backbone to strategies developed in for Volume 1.

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## 2 The Regional Role and Context of Bairnsdale

In the context of East Gippsland, Bairnsdale plays the role of a major centre, providing quality and regionally significant health, education and retail services.

With its population of 11,000, Bairnsdale contains the most significant local population for towns in the sub-region, providing the critical mass to bolster its role as the key “service centre”.

Bairnsdale cannot be considered in isolation of other significant proximate towns such as Sale, Traralgon and Morwell. Despite the distance of these towns, the ability to provide complimentary and competitive roles to the services offered in Bairnsdale is an important consideration when determining the ongoing future positioning of Bairnsdale in the region.

The competitive retail, health and employment sectors in these towns will, for many people, act as a driver in their patterns of consumption and job choice location. It is important to note that, given the relatively larger populations of these towns, they will be able to offer a more significant depth and breadth of services in the future as they have the critical mass to support them. Growing the local and sub-regional population of Bairnsdale will therefore be an important factor in securing its long term role and success in the broader region.

Despite the competitive role of larger towns in the region, Bairnsdale will continue to play an integral role in servicing its immediate satellite towns of Paynesville and Metung, as well as Lakes Entrance, Bruthen and Orbost, as a key service hub.

In addition to local daily services, Bairnsdale’s provision of higher order services such as tertiary education, specialised health and a broad employment base (including significant public administration jobs) plays an important role in serving the needs of the regional population.

The ability to achieve this is critical for Bairnsdale to maintain its role as the key service centre in the sub-region as supported in the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) of the East Gippsland Planning Scheme (EGPS). The Strategy will seek to strengthen and broaden this range of services to consolidate the subregional role of Bairnsdale.

The following matrix provides a comparative analysis of the regional strengths of Bairnsdale relative to other towns within the broader region (refer to Figure 1). This comparative analysis is summarised on pages 5-7.

Figure 1. Bairnsdale and Region - Facilities Comparison Matrix

Key:	Bairnsdale	Orbost	Bruthen	Metung	Paynesville	Lakes Entrance	Stratford	Maffra	Sale	Traralgon	Morwell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Has Facilities</li> <li><span style="color: red;">■</span> Does Not Have Facilities</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">■</span> Has Partial or Limited Facilities</li> </ul>											
<b>Service / Function</b>											
<b>Education Facilities</b>											
University											
Tafe											
Other - Adult / Special											
Secondary Schools											
<b>Health Facilities</b>											
Hospitals											
Specialist Clinics											
MCHC											
Mental Health											
General Clinics											
Nursing Homes											
<b>Transport</b>											
Train											
Buses											
Airport											
Taxi											
<b>Utilities</b>											
Sewerage Services											
Gas											
Telecommunications											
Landfill / Transfer Station											
<b>Community Services / Facilities</b>											
Arts Centre											
Library											
Regional Sports Facilities											
SES & CFA											
Pools											
Police											
<b>Retail</b>											
Department Stores (Including Discount Stores - Kmart, Target, Etc.)											
Warehouse / Bulky Goods											
Major Supermarkets											
Service Stations											
Banks											
Fast Food Chains											
<b>Government offices</b>											
Departments											
VicRoads											
Centrelink											
Cattle Yards / Sale Yards											
<b>Tourism</b>											
Major Hotel Chain											
Caravan Parks											
Tourist Information Centre											
Racecourse											
Golf Course											
<b>Demographics</b>											
Population	11000	2000	N/A	1000	3400	5500	N/A	4500	13000	27000	22000
SEIFA (postal areas)	968	920	961	1021	991	941	992	972	972	993	915
<b>Major Employment Sectors (Top 5)</b>											
Bairnsdale	Orbost	Bruthen	Metung	Paynesville	Lakes Entrance	Stratford	Maffra	Sale	Traralgon	Morwell	
Residential Care	Hospitals	Freight	Accommodation	Education	Accommodation	Hospitals	Education	Education	Education	Food Services	
Education	Grocery Stores	Food Services	Residential Construction	Residential Care	Education	Freight	Hospitals	Hospitals	Hospitals	Hospitals	
Bakery Good Manufacturing	Education	Health Services	Residential Care	Food Services	Food Services	Education	Dairy Manufacturing	Defence	Paper Manufacturing	Education	
Food Services	Timber Processing	Social Services	Retail	Grocery Stores	Grocery Stores	Food Services	Grocery Stores	Food Services	Food Services	Electricity Generation	
Grocery Stores	Freight	Education	Archtecture & Tech Services	Archtecture & Tech Services	Residential Care	Specialty Food Retail	Food Services	Oil & Gas Extraction	Government Administration	Grocery Stores	

## Summary of regional role:

### Education:

- As illustrated in the matrix, Bairnsdale is a regional educational hub, containing a TAFE and secondary schools, as well as adult and special needs education facilities.
- The TAFE has an association with Monash University providing some tertiary places.
- Of particular note, however, is the absence of a university campus in town - the nearest being a partial (limited course) campus of the University of Melbourne in Sale. A tertiary facility of this nature would be a significant asset in education, training and potential retention of the skilled population for the region.

### Health:

- As a major centre in the region, Bairnsdale is also a hub for health and medical services, playing a vital role in providing access to emergency hospital services and more specialised services such as nursing homes and limited mental health services.
- As part of its role as a medical hub for the region, a new facility for rural doctor training has been established at the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service.
- These services are critical for the local population and nearby communities such as Bruthen, Metung, Paynesville and Lakes Entrance which have very limited (if any) medical and specialist services and facilities available to them.

### Transport:

- Despite being located a considerable distance from Melbourne, Bairnsdale is provided with good connectivity to the capital city via the Princes Highway. The regional rail service to Bairnsdale, however, is limited in its scheduling of services. While trips to Melbourne are undertaken regularly by passenger rail, more frequent are trips to Traralgon, Sale and other regional centres. Provision of sprinter operations to these locations would enhance connectivity and accessibility for users.
- The focus of Bairnsdale as a regional passenger transport interchange is evidenced by the frequency and volume of bus connections with smaller surrounding towns. This is an important role, particularly for people travelling to work, school and leisure in this major centre.
- Bairnsdale also has a regional airport, which provides for the only such service in South-East Gippsland, beyond Sale (1 hour drive closer to Melbourne).

### Utilities:

- The utilities servicing Bairnsdale are reasonable compared to those in the region, with most of the town generally connected to reticulated infrastructure. Broadband and wireless telecommunications coverage, however, is limited in the whole region. The provision of these services in Bairnsdale would improve the attractiveness of the town as a destination to live and work.

### Community services / facilities:

- The community facilities available in Bairnsdale are reasonably comprehensive when compared with other larger centres (such as Sale, Traralgon, etc). The BARC provides for regional level sporting competitions to be focussed in Bairnsdale. However, there are no formal community or cultural arts facilities/centres in



Bairnsdale. The performing arts centre and gallery in Sale are the closest facilities of this nature.

- To anchor the role of Bairnsdale, and meet the needs of its significant population, including the local schools and community groups, the future development of such a centre for Bairnsdale should be considered.
- This type of facility would also contribute to the lifestyle assets serving the growing knowledge economy in Bairnsdale, as well as contributing to overall social capital within the township and broader region.

#### **Retail:**

- As a key service centre, Bairnsdale provides a broad range of retail services, and is a significant location for daily-needs and specialty shopping.
- Despite the absence of a department store, Bairnsdale offers a number of discount department stores including Kmart and Target, as well as speciality fashion retail. Bairnsdale is, however, limited in its provision of “high end” fashion retail, with people tending to look to metropolitan locations for this type of retailing.
- Bulky-goods is an emerging retail opportunity in Bairnsdale, anchored by Dahlsens. There is a significant ongoing role for this type of retail to service the broader-sub regional population, with a future 40,000sqm of retail floor-space currently being considered by Council. The significance of such bulky-good retail expansion in the region cannot be understated. The consolidation of these activities in Bairnsdale would act to reinforce the township’s ‘retail pull’.
- Bairnsdale also provides a very strong offer in car and boating sales with all major brands represented in town, representing the important service function to the population in town and the broader sub-region.

#### **Government offices:**

- Bairnsdale is also an important centre for government offices and departments in the region. As well as being the local government base, there are numerous other local, state and federal department/services/authority offices including:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE),
- Department of Primary Industries (DPI),
- Department of Human Services (DHS),
- East Gippsland Water (EGW),
- East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA),
- Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (DIIRD), and
- Parks Victoria.

- Bairnsdale is one of three settlements in the region (also Sale and Lakes Entrance) with a fully functional Centrelink office.

#### **Tourism:**

- While the matrix indicates that Bairnsdale has comprehensive tourism facilities such as hotels and caravan parks, it is fair to say that it is not a key tourist destination in its own right.



- Bairnsdale plays an important role as the gateway for tourism in the region, providing the final significant ‘stop over’ before the lakes district. Importantly, Bairnsdale has a tourist information centre that acts to support the local tourism industry.
- The town also makes for a central point in the region for holiday makers to use as a base or even for day trips. However, many of the tourism assets of Bairnsdale are currently untapped, or overlooked, for the natural beauty and environmental assets of the surrounding townships. The opportunity to re-focus tourism to the river and surrounds, including reinforcing the cultural and café nodes around the river, would enhance the gateway role for tourism to the region and beyond.

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### 3 Key Planning Policy Framework

The following is a summary of the pertinent local planning policies affecting the future growth of Bairnsdale.

#### 3.1 The Bairnsdale Strategy Plan (1991)

The aim of this original Bairnsdale Strategy Plan is to direct future growth and assist in guiding decision making. This Strategy is now seventeen years old. The current project seeks to review and update this Strategy in order to provide Council with clearer direction to inform strategic decision making.

While the 1991 Plan contains a number of strategies and objectives that maintain currency today, overall, the plan requires updating to respond to the changed social, economic and environmental profile of the town. In particular, the following issues have resulted in the general redundancy of this plan over time:

- **Council amalgamations:** The 1991 Plan was prepared pre-amalgamations. Bairnsdale can now be planned for in a more integrated and holistic way to respond to new administrative structures.
- **Demographics:** Population assumptions in the 1991 Plan were over-estimated. Despite this, land supply take-up rates in recent times have resulted in a situation whereby new growth areas for both residential and employment activities need to be identified.
- **Housing:** Issues and trends such as changing preferences in household size and type; preferred density; and an ageing population require new thinking around the issues of housing supply and product, as well as overall growth and consolidation options.
- **Economic development:** The changing profile of retail, industrial and commercial activity has had a significant impact on the town's role and structure. Assumptions made in the 1991 Plan have been challenged due to emerging trends related to demand for, and format of, retail floor space; land requirements for industry; and demand for purpose-built commercial premises.
- **Environment:** Since the 1991 Plan, the State Government has established a clear agenda in terms of environmental management and native vegetation protection.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Since the 1991 Plan, the State Government has established a clear framework for consideration and respect of cultural heritage in planning and development. The role of Aboriginal people is significant in the history of Bairnsdale and will require key consideration in the formation of the Strategy.
- **Access:** Improvements have been made to the overall traffic and pedestrian circulation in town through the introduction of traffic lights on Main Street. The presence of heavy vehicle trucks in town, however, remains an issue. Strategies related to access therefore require re-visiting to ensure better management of these issues.

### 3.2 Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)

The following key policies contained in the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) influence the future direction of growth and development in Bairnsdale.

#### **Clause 21.06: Strategies for Sub-Regions, Towns and Localities**

A key clause in the MSS, this policy encourages:

- Allowing residential development on zoned land including continuing development in Eastwood Estate and north along the Omeo Highway (though without direct frontage to the Highway), together with the Wy Yung area along Bullumwaal Road;
- Infill industrial uses on existing serviced zoned land;
- Affirming the retail core as being from Wood Street to Pyke Street, and encouraging major retail development to locate within this area;
- Reinforcing the position as a preferred location for heavy industry;
- Enhancing gateway amenity at east and west ends of Princes Highway;
- Developing mixed use areas in accordance with appropriate policy;
- Investigating long term parking needs; and
- Protecting MacLeod Morass from adverse impacts associated with proximate urban uses.

#### **Clause 22.04: Bairnsdale Mixed Use Zones Policy**

Clause 22.04 identifies key defined precincts of mixed use development including service industry, medical, motels and high exposure retailing. The policy identifies the need to consolidate and manage the role of these precincts in the future.

#### **Clause 22.10: Heritage Policy**

Clause 22.10 identifies defined heritage precincts in Bairnsdale and establishes a policy framework within which to manage and protect these areas in the future. The key precincts covered by this policy are Riverine Street & Nicholson Street; Main Street; and the Mitchell River Valley.



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## **4 Bairnsdale's Demographic Profile**

The following is an analysis of the key demographic features of Bairnsdale, including:

- Population mix and growth;
- Age structure;
- Dwelling type and structure; and
- Employment profile.

### **4.1 Population**

According to the 2006 Census, Bairnsdale has a total population of 11,282 people. This represents 28.8% of the total East Gippsland population (refer to Table 1).

Generally, the population of Bairnsdale is experiencing reasonable growth. Between 1996 and 2001 the population declined 0.1%, however, this improved between 2001 and 2006 with an annual change of approximately 3% a year. Such growth in the population, whilst below the Victorian average, is equal to and in some cases higher than the regional Victorian average.

Population trends indicate that Bairnsdale will continue to grow steadily and will have an ageing population consistent with Australian trends. It is important to note, however, that these growth rates are below the Victorian average.

With regards to nationality, people living in Bairnsdale were predominately born in Australia (86%). Approximately 4.4% of the population are Indigenous Australians, compared to the Australian average of 2.3%.

### **4.2 Age structure**

Table 2, contains the age structure of the Bairnsdale population over time for 2001 and 2006. This table indicates that in 2006, approximately 30% of the population were aged over 55 years of age. Combined with a large proportion of the population between 25-54 years (35% at 2006), the medium- to long-term future will see the age structure skewed towards an ageing population. It is forecast that sea-change towns in East Gippsland, such as Metung and Paynesville, will play a key role in attracting and accommodating an ageing population. As such, these areas may experience growth that is currently assumed to be catered for in Bairnsdale.

Despite the ageing population, approximately 20% of the population at 2006 was aged between 0 – 14 years. Providing opportunities for the retention of this young population in Bairnsdale will be critical to ensuring equilibrium in the age structure and the overall function of the town in future.

**Table 1: Population profile**

Town	1981	1986	1991	Annual Change 1981-1991	1996	2001	% Annual Change 1991-2001	2006	Annual Change 2001-2006
Bairnsdale	9,459	10,328	10,770	1.3%	10,890	10,667	-0.1%	11,026	0.7%
Lakes Entrance	3,414	4,104	4,622	3.1%	5,248	5,503	1.8%	5,645	0.5%
Metung	395	520	536	3.1%	635	655	2.0%	712	1.7%
Paynesville	1,608	2,224	2,459	4.3%	2,689	2,861	1.5%	3,233	2.5%
Orbost	2,592	2,514	2,525	-0.3%	2,180	2,129	-1.7%	2,055	-0.7%
Mallacoota	726	826	961	2.8%	982	1,041	0.8%	932	-2.2%

Source: Census Data, 2006

**Table 2: Age structure**

Age Group	Bairnsdale		Lakes Entrance		Metung		Paynesville		East Gippsland	
	2001	2006	2001	2006	2001	2006	2001	2006	2001	2006
0-4	7.1	6.3	5.5	5.5	4.2	4	4.1	3.6	5.7	5.3
5-14	14.7	13.8	12.9	11.4	9.8	11.8	9.3	10.8	15.1	13.1
15-24	12.5	12.6	10.6	9.9	7.1	6.1	6.2	6.5	10.4	10.2
25-54	37.6	35.6	35.4	32.5	33.5	30.3	32.7	27.6	38.0	35.2
55-64	9.5	11.8	13.1	15.2	18.7	18.5	16.5	17.4	12.5	15.2
65+	18.7	19.9	22.4	25.5	24.9	29.5	31.5	34.1	18.3	21.0
Median Age		40		47		54		55		45

Source: Census Data, 2006

### 4.3 Dwelling type and structure

The Census data indicates that there were a total of 4,557 occupied dwellings in Bairnsdale in 2006, of which 85% were separate houses, 5.2% were semi detached and 7.6% were units, flats or apartments. Of these dwellings, 38% were fully owned, 27% were being purchased and 29% were rented.

At 2006, the median monthly housing repayment was \$910 compared to the Australian average of \$1,300; and the median weekly rent was \$150 a week compared to the Australian average of \$190 per week.

The structure of this housing is defined as follows (refer to Table 3):

- 69% of private occupied dwellings were defined as family households;
- 31% of private occupied dwellings were defined as lone person households; and
- The average household size in 2006 was 2.3 people per dwelling.

These figures indicate a disparity between housing stock and population structure, highlighting the high proportion of single people living in family homes. This trend presents a potential social issue in the future as the population continues to age, particularly if individuals continue to live alone in keeping with the current housing trends.

**Table 3: Occupied private dwellings by type**

Dwelling Type	2001	%	2006	%
Separate house	3,541	82.1%	3,888	85.3%
Semi-detached	108	2.5%	239	5.2%
Flat, unit, apartment	551	12.8%	347	7.6%
Other dwelling	73	1.7%	83	1.8%
Not stated	39	0.9%	-	-

Source: Census Data, 2006

### 4.4 Employment

Over 50% of the Bairnsdale Urban Centre population aged over 15 years of age were engaged in the labour force. Of this, 54% were employed in full-time work while 32% were employed in part-time work. Table 4 provides a breakdown of Bairnsdale's employment profile, indicating that employment is primarily in industry, health, education and the service sector.

The employment profile reflects in part the regional role played by Bairnsdale in terms of large industry, education and health services, as well as the limited diversity of the business sector to date (refer to Table 5). Opportunities to broaden the skill base through increased education and training, and provide for retention of skilled workers through a diversified job market are important issues to be addressed in the future.

**Table 4: Labour force status by sex 2006 (Persons over 15)**

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Persons</b>
Employed, worked full-time	1,7121	890	2,611
Employed, worked part-time	447	1,112	1,559
Employed away from work*	189	154	343
Unemployed, looking for full-time work	140	66	206
Unemployed, looking for part-time work	39	70	109
Not in the labour force	1,403	2,185	3,588
Not stated	255	348	603
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,194</b>	<b>4,825</b>	<b>9,019</b>

\* Comprises employed people who did not work any hours in the week prior to Census Night.

Source: Census Data, 2006

**Table 5: Industry of employment 2006**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>2006 Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Retail trade	749	16.60
Health care & social assistance	637	14.10
Manufacturing	482	10.68
Construction	444	9.84
Education & training	357	7.91
Accommodation & food services	294	6.51
Public administration & safety	209	4.63
Other services	180	3.99
Transport, postal & warehousing	178	3.95
Wholesale trade	174	3.85
Professional, scientific & technical services	162	3.59
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	121	2.68
Administrative and support services	115	2.55
Inadequately described/not stated	102	2.26
Financial & insurance services	76	1.68
Renting, hiring and real estate services	60	1.33
Electricity, gas, water & waste	50	1.10
Arts & recreations services	47	1.04
Information media & telecommunications	44	0.97
Mining	31	0.68





#### **4.5 Summary**

In summary, the preceding demographic analysis demonstrates that the following key trends and issues:

- The population of Bairnsdale is ageing at higher than average rate;
- The dwelling stock is characterised by single detached dwellings;
- The average household size is 2.3 people; however the majority of occupied dwellings defined as being lone person households;
- The median household income is two-thirds lower than the Australian median;
- There are a comparatively high number of one-parent families;
- Almost half of the population aged over 15 is not actively participating in the labour force; and
- Employment is generally provided for in industry, health, education and the service sector.

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## **5 Bairnsdale's Land Supply Profile**

Given the preceding analysis of Bairnsdale's demographic characteristics, the following is a discussion of the township's settlement patterns and future land supply scenarios.

The analysis includes a review of overall land supply in terms of rural and urban zoned land, as well as a breakdown of land use types and associated available land. Land use types include residential (standard, low density and rural living) and industrial (including business) land.

This analysis leads to estimated land supply scenarios for each land use component, as well as a series of opportunities and constraints concerning overall land supply and future growth potential.

### **5.1 Settlement patterns**

The study area is characterised by a mixture of land uses. Bairnsdale has generally evolved over time in a northerly and westerly direction from the traditional main street shopping spine of the township to form the established area of Bairnsdale.

Due to natural and physical constraints to the west, residential development has gradually been directed north, over the Mitchell River, and is characterised by a variety of density and housing options.

Extending north to the rural hinterland, larger-lot residential opportunities have been pursued, providing opportunities for ongoing rural activities of various scales to be undertaken on this land.

East Bairnsdale has experienced reasonable rates of growth, and contains a mix of high quality, traditional housing stock adjacent the river, with more recent development towards the east and north-east.

Consultation has revealed that despite its proximity to town, and access to the high amenity river environs, East Bairnsdale suffers a negative perception by some. Proximity to large industrial activity and flood prone land, as well as the high proportion of public housing in this area is presumed to be contributing to this perception – an issue that needs to be addressed in the Strategy.

Development north-west to Wy Yung has occurred in an ad-hoc manner over time. Focussed initially along the north-south spine road, development has filtered east and west. Such development, however, is constrained by the natural boundaries created by the River and flood plains.

## 5.2 Overall land supply (rural and urban zoned land)

The following tables identify the overall land supply scenario for the study area. Table 6 contains the total land supply for urban zoned land, whilst Table 7 details the total land supply for rural zoned land. Figure 2 (Zoning Map) illustrates all zoned land in Bairnsdale.

In summary, the abovementioned tables identify that, in total, the study area contains 3,915 hectares of urban zoned land and 75,779 hectares of rural zoned land. The breakdown of this land is contained in Tables 8 and 9 below.

**Table 6: Urban zoned land**

Type of land	Zone	Sub-total area (hectares)	Total (hectares)
Residential	Residential 1	943	1,828
	Low Density Residential	885	
Industrial	Industrial 1	255	257
	Industrial 3	2	
Business	Business 1	34	74.76
	Business 4	0.76	
	Mixed Use	40	
Public	Recreation	123.6	1,645.60
	Conservation Reserve	1,271.7	
	Public Use (balance)	250.3	
<b>Total urban zoned land</b>			<b>3,805.36</b>

**Table 7: Rural zoned land**

Type of land	Zone	Sub-total area (hectares)	Total (hectares)
Rural living	Rural Living 1	1,087.7	3,678.9
	Rural Living 2	10.2	
	Rural Living 3	2,581.0	
Farming	Farming 1	62,299	72,098.7
	Farming 2	6,454	
	Farming 3	21.7	
	Farming 4	3,324	
Rural Conservation	Rural Conservation	2.1	2.1
<b>Total rural zoned land</b>			<b>75,780</b>

To make sense of the overall land supply scenario, it is critical to understand the quantity of vacant land in both the urban and rural zoned land categories.

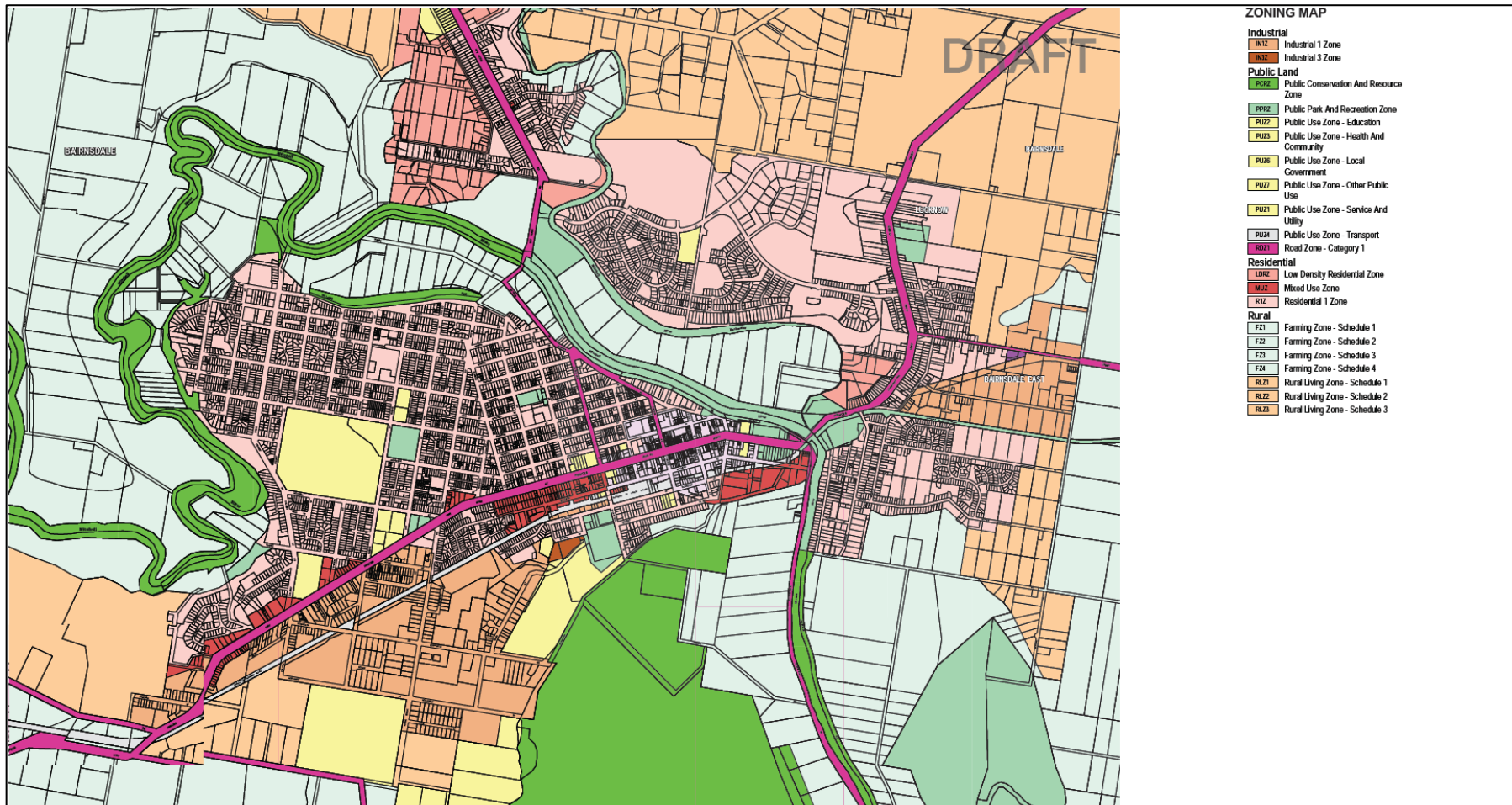
The quantity of vacant land provides the core indicator of the town's ability to support future demand and growth in the various land use categories. The take-up rates for this surplus land, extrapolated from current trends and population growth, will inform the



Strategy as to the need for additional land in the short- to long-term. Decision-making regarding the location of this new zoned land will be determined through the broader strategic planning process undertaken as part of this project.

The following sections of this report provide an overview of the actual land supply scenario in the study area. (The 'actual land supply scenario' is defined as the current available zoned land that is vacant or undeveloped).





**Bairnsdale Strategy Plan**

Client: East Gippsland Shire Council Date: 09.01.09  
Drawing No: 133.420 Revision: 00.00.00

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Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management Strategic Consulting

**coomes consulting**



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**Figure 2 - Zoning Map**

### 5.3 Current development activity

Key development proposals that will influence the future direction of growth and settlement in Bairnsdale are summarised as follows:

- **Amendment C64: Rezoning of Rural Living Zone land to Residential I Zone** (20 Bairnsdale Dargo Road; 100 Bairnsdale Dargo Road; 170 Bairnsdale Dargo Road). This Amendment has been exhibited and is soon to be adopted by Council following the resolution of a Section 173 Agreement with the land owner. The Amendment has been exhibited and received seven submissions. A Panel has been set for 4<sup>th</sup> February to deal with this matter.
- **Amendment C62: Rezoning of Rural Living Zone to Residential I Zone and Business I Zone** (135 Great Alpine Road, Brookfield Lakes Pty Ltd). This Amendment seeks to provide for future residential subdivision and local convenience retailing. A Planning Panel has found that the Amendment should be adopted subject to recommendations including the preparation of a Vegetation Management Plan.
- **Amendment C72: Rezoning of Residential Zone to Business I Zone** (Eastwood Village). This Amendment seeks to provide for the development of a convenience retail centre incorporating shops, offices and a medical centre in the Eastwood Village. Authorisation from the Minister is currently being sought for the preparation of a Planning Scheme Amendment and planning permit.

### 5.4 Residential development potential

The data contained within this section of the report has been compiled from a variety of sources including:

- Council's GIS data;
- Aerial photography dated 17 February 2007; and
- The *Bairnsdale Residential Demand-Supply Study* (Ratio Consultants, November 2007).

The analysis draws primarily from the Council data and aerial photography and has been cross-checked and supplemented with relevant information from the Ratio report where necessary.

The areas contained within the land supply analysis are identified in Appendix I.

It is noted that the method for calculating land areas in the Ratio report is not clearly articulated. There are some differences in interpretation of land areas and vacancy rates. Coomes consider that the Council GIS and aerial photography are accurate and have prepared the analysis on this basis. Where a discrepancy with the Ratio data exists, an explanation has been provided.



### 5.4.1 Standard residential density

The residential land supply scenario is outlined in Table 8 and represents total land areas for the Residential 1 Zone (R1Z) and Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) as provided by Council. Figure 2 indicatively identifies where this land is located.

Table 8 identifies that there is currently approximately 215 hectares of zoned land available for standard density residential development.

**Table 8: Residential land supply**

Residential Land	Total (Ha)	Vacant (Ha)	% Total Supply Vacant
Residential 1 Zone	943ha	197ha	21%
Low Density Residential Zone	885ha	305ha	34.5%

The total vacant land figure has been derived from Council sources, and reflects both vacant subdivided zoned land and vacant broad-hectare zoned land in Bairnsdale. The Ratio study identifies a total of 86 hectares of vacant subdivided and zoned land due to various applied assumptions. The analysis contained in this report goes back to first principles and assesses the data based Councils current data.

While Table 8 identifies that there is 197 hectares of vacant residential land, some of this land (such as Eastwood Village) is committed for residential purposes in the short- to medium-term forming part of approved subdivision plans or Outline Development Plans (ODP's). Nonetheless, as this land is vacant, it has been included in the calculations of indicative future yield.

An indicative yield of 7.6 dwellings per hectare is assumed by the Ratio study. Applying this figure, it is assumed that Bairnsdale can currently accommodate a total of 1,497 lots on the existing zoned residential land.

According to the Ratio study, a 15 year lot supply for Bairnsdale would require the need for 1,665 lots to be provided. Applying the allotment demand average per annum for 2006-2011 as identified in the Ratio study (91 lots per year), it is assumed that the current zoned land provides a 16.5 year supply of land for standard residential development. (Note: this figure is higher than the Ratio study based on the assumptions contained in the calculation of vacant land as defined above).

Since the Ratio study was prepared in November 2007, based on the total allotment demand identified in this study, it could be assumed that a total of 106 lots would have been taken up for residential development by January 2009. This take up rate would reduce the overall lot supply that can be accommodated on the current zoned land to 1,391 lots.

However, the vacancy rate contained in the Ratio study is generally consistent with Council's current data for vacant residential land as at January 2009, indicating that the take-up may not have occurred at this rate. Based on assumptions of accuracy, this report has, however, adopted the Ratio progression of thought and has assumed that 106 lots have been taken up between November 2007 and January 2009. On this basis, it is therefore assumed that Bairnsdale contains a **16 year supply of zoned residential land**.

While there may be a 16 year lot supply of actual zoned land, this analysis assumes a 10% threshold for potential undevelopable land based on development constraints such as drainage, flooding and native vegetation. Applying this threshold effectively reduces the lot supply to 1,252 lots, equating to a total 14 year supply of zoned land. As such, Bairnsdale could absorb an additional 12 hectares of residential land to meet the **15 year lot supply**.

It is understood that, due to long lead times for development, and the demographic profile of Bairnsdale, Council supports an increased supply of residential zoned land beyond this 15 year supply. As such, the Strategy should identify additional future potential residential development sites for rezoning at an appropriate time in the future.

The indicative yield that will be achieved on zoned land is defined in a preliminary manner in Table 9 and illustrated in Figure 3.

**Table 9: Indicative residential yield – existing zoned land**

Area of Bairnsdale	Vacant Zoned Land (Ha)	Potential Yield (assume 7.6 dwellings/ha)
East Bairnsdale	35.76Ha	272
North Bairnsdale*	120.24Ha	914
Bairnsdale	30.61Ha	233
Wy Yung	10.7Ha	81
<b>TOTAL</b>	197.31Ha	1,500 dwellings

*Note: the calculations in Table 10 are indicative and do not include opportunities for consolidation or infill in existing established residential areas.*

#### 5.4.2 Low density residential

Based on Council GIS data and the aerial photography, it has been calculated that there is a total of 885 hectares of Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) land in Bairnsdale, with 305 hectares of this land being currently vacant. This figure is significantly different to the Ratio study which identifies that there is only 13.4 hectares of vacant land. It is assumed that a rezoning(s) has occurred since the study's release, accounting for the increase in land supply.

Applying the 0.4 hectare minimum in the Schedule to the LDRZ, it is considered that Bairnsdale will be able to accommodate **762 low density lots** based on the current land supply scenario.



### 5.4.3 Rural living

The rural living land supply scenario is contained in Table 10. This analysis is based solely on GIS data provided by Council. Figure 3 identifies indicatively where the identified land is located.

Table 10 indicates that there is currently approximately **69.08 hectares of zoned rural residential land** in the study area that does not contain a house. It is unclear as yet as to what the literal interpretation of this is in terms of housing yield.

**Table 10: Rural residential supply**

Rural land	Total (Ha)	Vacant (Ha)	% Total Supply Vacant
<b>Rural Living (Total)</b>	3,678.2	1487.8	40%
<b>RLZ1</b>	1087.7	540.25	49.6%
<b>RLZ2</b>	10.2	6.6	64.7%
<b>RLZ3</b>	2581.2	940.94	36.4%

In accord with the Schedule to the Rural Living Zone, the minimum subdivision areas are as follows:

- RLZ1: 2 hectares;
- RLZ2: 4 hectares;
- RLZ3: 8 hectares.

Overall, lot yield for rural residential development is difficult to determine accurately. Yield will vary given the current subdivision of land on a single title, and the remaining subdivision potential of land on this same title.

The indicative yield that will be achieved in this surplus land is defined in a preliminary manner in Table 11 and illustrated on Figure 3.

**Table 11: Indicative rural residential yield – existing zoned land**

Rural residential	Vacant Zoned Land (Ha)	Potential Yield (based on minimum subdivision area)
<b>RLZ1</b>	540.25	270 lots
<b>RLZ2</b>	6.6	1 lot
<b>RLZ3</b>	940.94	118 lots
<b>TOTAL</b>	1487.8	389 lots

At this point, the take up rates for rural land in Bairnsdale is unclear. As such, it cannot be determined as yet how many years supply is currently provided based on the above scenario.



*Note: Simply assuming a yield for the total land without a house in each category of rural zone will provide an approximation of potential yield, however, it may not reflect the actual ability to realise this on the ground. For the purposes of this Strategy, therefore, it is considered that an indicative yield will suffice.*



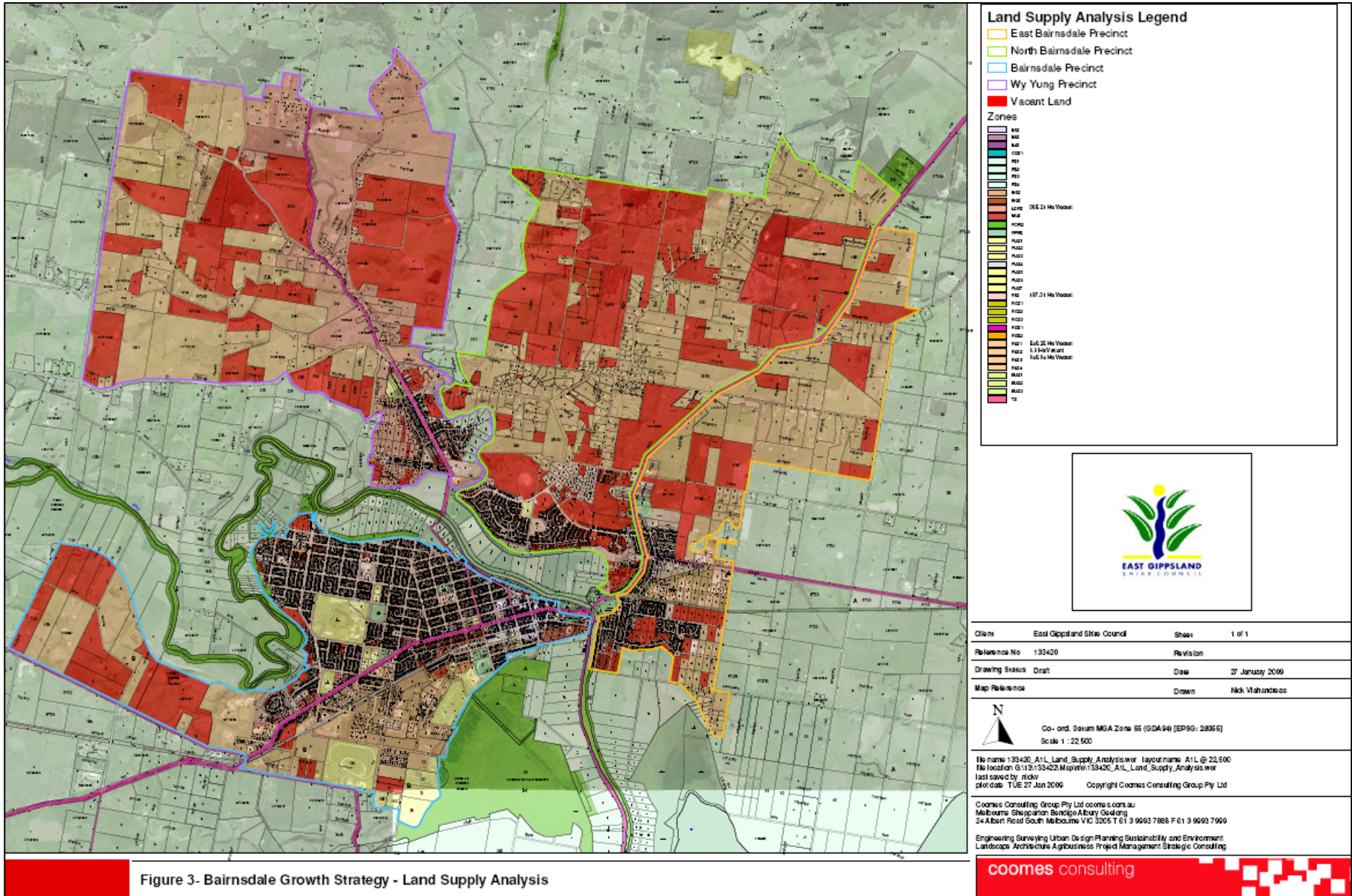


Figure 3- Bairnsdale Growth Strategy - Land Supply Analysis





## 5.5 Industrial / commercial development potential

The following land supply analysis is based on GIS data provided by Council.

Current relevant development applications are as follows:

- **Amendment C65: Rezoning land at the Bairnsdale Holiday Park and Patties Foods to Industrial 1 Zone and Rural Living Zone.** In total, 27 hectares of land is affected by this proposal. The Amendment seeks to provide for the expansion of Patties operations as well as future opportunities for ongoing consolidation of the Holiday Park.
- The Panel recommended that the Amendment be adopted, with the condition that subdivisions are not to create any additional lots.

### 5.5.1 Industrial land supply

Table 12 below provides a summary of vacant industrial land in the study area. The determination of vacant land is based on zoned land with no development.

**Table 12: Industrial land supply**

Industrial land	Total (Ha)	Vacant (Ha)	% Total Supply Vacant
Industrial Land	257	Data unavailable	Data unavailable

Currently, there is evidence of a high proportion of vacant or undeveloped industrial land within the study area. This land is generally located south and south-west of the Princes Highway. There is also a large amount of vacant or underutilised industrial land around the East Bairnsdale area, proximate to Patties and the future Dahlsens' site.

Large tracts of unused VicTrack land are located in the core industrial / business area in town. If surplus to rail requirements, this land has the potential to be utilised for alternate, employment-generating activities in the future. Other uses may also be considered appropriate such as mixed use development (including the vertical integration of business and residential uses), long stay car parking, etc.

### 5.5.2 Business land supply

Table 13 provides a summary of vacant industrial land in the study area. The determination of vacant land is based on zoned land with no development. This definition will not pick up business zoned land containing vacant or underutilised buildings. To cover address this short-coming, it is assumed that approximately 10% of existing developed and zoned land will in fact contain vacant or underutilised buildings that provide opportunities to accommodate business growth in their current buildings, or provide opportunities for consolidation / infill development.





**Table 13: Industrial / business land supply**

	Total (Ha)	Vacant (Ha)	% Total Supply Vacant
<b>Business Land</b>	74.76	Data unavailable	Data unavailable

Business zoned land in the study area is generally well occupied. Should the Dahlsens rezoning application in East Bairnsdale be approved, the current Dahlsens site in the core service industry business area in the south-west of the study area would become available. The impact of the re-location of this business on business viability and mix in the south-west area will be investigated throughout the Strategy process.

Currently, professional business services are locating around the Council offices. Some of these businesses are in new purpose-built buildings, while others are located in redundant housing stock. This indicates that there is a limited supply of commercial office premises in the study area. Opportunities to consolidate these uses in the ‘vacant’ business zoned land will be explored throughout the Strategy.

## 5.6 Opportunities and constraints

Based on the preceding analysis, the following is a synopsis of the key opportunities and constraints as they relate to the future pattern of development in Bairnsdale. These are summarised as follows:

### Opportunities

- There is the potential to masterplan a large area of vacant land central to East Bairnsdale to improve overall neighbourhood structure and integration;
- There are significant parcels of vacant zoned land proximate to the emerging employment node (around Patties / future homemaker centre site) to accommodate new housing growth;
- There are opportunities for infill residential consolidation in established areas of Bairnsdale;
- There are potential infill opportunities in and around the BARC centre as part of the overall masterplan being undertaken by Council;
- A masterplan is being undertaken for the Bairnsdale Secondary College and the BARC site to better integrate the education facilities on the land, as well as to locate education support services on the site. This presents a key opportunity to consolidate educational services in one convenient location;
- There is the potential to consolidate mixed use opportunities on the former Dahlsens site, if relocation occurs.
- There is the potential for infill mixed use development on surplus VicTrack land.
- There are a number of larger lot, high amenity, residential and rural living opportunities to the north of the town, in the residential hinterland, creating a transition to rural and edge of town areas.

- There is evidence of a high proportion of vacant or undeveloped industrial land within the study area. The relocation of Dahlsens outside of the town centre would provide a substantial new development site within the town.

### **Constraints**

- The subdivision of small land holdings and a lack of co-ordinated or master planned development is compromising key growth fronts (i.e. North and East Bairnsdale).
- There is a high proportion of encumbered (especially flood-prone) land;
- Slow take-up rates will influence the pattern of development. Ad hoc, un-staged development may impact on the type of neighbourhood structure that is delivered;
- The emerging preference for large lot residential development will impact upon the density and efficiency of land development in areas that are serviceable and accessible to town;
- The negative perceptions and stigma associated with East Bairnsdale vis-à-vis north Bairnsdale will influence development timing and outcomes;
- Proximity and access to the town centre and key services from new growth fronts is challenging, particularly for land north of the river;
- There is a significant lack of consolidated, well located, neighbourhood facilities (i.e. shops and services), in newly establishing residential areas;. There is a limited supply of commercial office premises;
- The relocation of Dahlsens from the town centre will have implications in terms of the viability and health of existing businesses in the locality, and the pull of businesses away from the centre of town towards the new Dahlsens' site.

Overall, opportunities for future residential growth are indicated in Figure 3. These growth options include opportunities for take up of existing land, infill development in established areas, and the release of additional residential land for a variety of densities. The following are the key messages concerning future growth options:

- Infill development will be focussed in the existing established residential area, and the RIZ land in north Bairnsdale;
- New growth ought to be focused to the east and north-east of Bairnsdale. In this regard:
  - A masterplan for the East Bairnsdale Residential area is required,
  - There is a need to increase the critical mass around employment areas, and
  - Manage drainage solutions in north-east area around Patties to accommodate future growth.
- Growth should be limited in the north-west, allowing for natural change only;
- Larger lots and rural residential development should be provided for in the residential hinterland to the north; and finally,
- Limits for growth should be established via a township boundary, defined by the railway line in the west and Phillips Lane in the east.



With regards to industrial and commercial land, there is ample supply of zoned industrial land in the south-east of the township to accommodate future growth.

The future expansion of Patties and relocation of Dahlsens in the east Bairnsdale area will consolidate the industrial and business focus in the area. This will create future opportunities of underutilised industrial land proximate to the sites. Land in this general area is likely to accommodate and service a high job industry focus. Due to its proximity to the highway and the site characteristics, it will accommodate larger more intensive industrial activities, i.e. food production and manufacturing.

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## 6 Economic Development

This section of the report is dedicated to an analysis of the current economic situation in Bairnsdale and its future potential for growth.

This includes a review of the following key elements:

- Employment profile (key findings, trends and threats to the economy); and
- Issues and opportunities as they relate to the various sectors of the economy, including manufacturing, retail, tourism and healthcare and community services.

### 6.1 Employment profile

Table 14 provides an overview of employment in the Bairnsdale Urban Centre, i.e. the actual jobs that are located in this Urban Centre, with the largest employers listed by industry. For comparative purposes, employment in Bairnsdale Urban Centre is compared with employment in Sale SLA. Sale has a population of 13,090 and is slightly larger than Bairnsdale with a population of 11,300. However, both are regional activity centres and located in the same wider region (Gippsland) and the comparison is therefore of interest.

Employment data for Bairnsdale Urban Centre is only available for 2006 as this data was not available for all Urban Centres in 2001. Trends between 2001 and 2006 therefore are based on employment in the Bairnsdale SLA which also includes the towns of Paynesville, Metung and Lakes Entrance.

#### 6.1.1 Key findings

Bairnsdale is a largest centre of employment in East Gippsland and is larger than Sale (6,777 jobs compared with 6,284 jobs in Sale).

Bairnsdale's retail floor-space is estimated at 38,000m<sup>2</sup> compared with 60,000m<sup>2</sup> in Sale. Retail employment 'density' is greater in Bairnsdale at 1 job per 31m<sup>2</sup> compared with 1 job per 50m<sup>2</sup> in Sale. This is likely to be due to Sale having greater amount of large format retailing which generates a lower employment per square metre. *(Please note that it is unclear from the data if the Bairnsdale floor-space figure contains car sales/yards floor-space. This may influence job density).* For a more detailed description concerning the retail catchment of Bairnsdale relative to other town centres in the region, refer to 6.1.4 of this report.

Health care and social assistance is the second largest industry in Bairnsdale (1,075 jobs) and also in Sale (1,103 jobs). In Bairnsdale, a large share of this employment is in residential care services which account for 42% (454 jobs). Bairnsdale Regional Health Service provides 17 High Care and 73 Low Care places. In Sale, health care employment is split over Hospitals (the Base Hospital), medical services and residential care (50 High Care but no Low Care places).



Food manufacturing in Bairnsdale provides 490 jobs, and Agriculture provides another 46 jobs, indicating the importance of the food growing and processing industry to Bairnsdale and region's economy.

Transport employment in Bairnsdale is high for its size (3.2% in Bairnsdale compared with 2.6% in Sale): Road transport provides 158 jobs, mainly as drivers indicating that Bairnsdale has a role as a road transport hub. Rail transport employs 6 people.

Employment in the Bairnsdale area, i.e. the Bairnsdale SLA, has increased over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006 from 9,100 employed to 9,980 employed, i.e. by 880 persons (refer Table 16 below). Employment in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing as decreased significantly (from 5.3% to 2.4%), and employment in Retail and Manufacturing has also declined by 157 jobs and 50 jobs respectively. Industries on the rise include Public Administration & Safety (added 265 jobs), Health Care & Social Assistance (added 241 jobs), Accommodation & Food Services (added 192 jobs), Education & Training (added 112 jobs), and Transport, Postal & Warehousing (added 105 jobs). These changes reflect some regional and state-wide/national trends.

Regionally, Bairnsdale has increased in importance as a regional administration centre and tourism to the Gippsland Lakes area has increased. State-wide, there is increasing demand for health care including aged care in regional areas and therefore also in Bairnsdale, and a national trend of increasing specialisation in manufacturing and transport of goods over longer distances to service a growing regional population.

### **6.1.2 Unemployment trends**

In the Bairnsdale SLA (which includes Paynesville, Metung & Lakes Entrance) the current unemployment rate is 6.3% (June 2008 DWR), or 748 persons of a labour force of 11,950. This data relates to the winter period which is the low season for food processing and tourism employment. Food manufacturers are working towards reducing seasonality and this aspect is no longer as pronounced in the industry as it was, say, five years ago.

Unemployment has increased over the recent twelve month period by 95 persons, up from unemployment of 653 or 5.9% in June 2007.

### **6.1.3 Threats to the economy**

Most significant threat to the Bairnsdale economy and employment is loss of a food processing plant – when the suppliers to the food manufacturing industry and the services to the industry are included, this cluster probably accounts for 25% or more of jobs in the town.

Low ability to attract suitably (highly) skilled employees to technical and professional jobs in Bairnsdale may impact on employers' capability to expand.

**Table 14: Employment (place of work) in Bairnsdale urban centre compared with Sale urban centre, 2006**

Industry	Bairnsdale Industry of empl. №	Bairnsdale Industry of empl. %	Sale Industry of empl. №	Sale Industry of empl. %	Large employers in Bairnsdale by industry
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	80	1.2%	31	0.5%	Mulgowie Farming Company
Mining	0	0%	177	2.8%	
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	Patties Food (400+), VegCo (250+), Dennison Foods Manufacturing (490 jobs in food manufacturing), East Gippsland Newspapers, Auswest Timbers (sawmilling)
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	98	1.4%	48	0.8%	East Gippsland Water
Construction	450	6.6%	401	6.4%	Whelans Earthmoving, Cranes Asphalting, Bairnsdale Road Services
Wholesale trade	271	4.0%	118	1.9%	David Luckes Fresh Food Market
<b>Retail trade</b>	<b>1,228</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>1,190</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	Safeway/Woolworths, Coles, Kmart, Target, The Big Garage (Holden & Nissan dealer), Dwyers (Toyota & Nissan dealer), Gippsland Truck Centre (& truck service), Dahlsens (also wholesale)
Accommodation & food services	376	5.5%	470	7.5%	
Transport, postal & warehousing	215	3.2%	165	2.6%	
Information media & telecommunications	76	1.1%	72	1.1%	
Financial & insurance services	144	2.1%	140	2.2%	WHK Armitage Downie (accounting & financial services)
Rental, hiring & real estate services	88	1.3%	85	1.4%	
Professional, scientific & technical services	260	3.8%	236	3.8%	
Administrative & support services	156	2.3%	162	2.6%	
Public administration & safety	421	6.2%	461	7.3%	E Gipps Shire Council (150+), E Gipps Water, EGipps CMA, DSE, Parks Victoria, Gippsland Ports
Education & training	658	9.7%	639	10.2%	East Gippsland Institute of TAFE, DoE – high schools & primary schools (400+),
<b>Health care &amp; social assistance</b>	<b>1,075</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>1,103</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, Kilmory United Family Care
Arts & recreation services	67	1.0%	75	1.2%	
Other services	289	4.3%	289	4.6%	
Inadequately described/Not stated	45	0.7%	69	1.1%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,777</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,284</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Source: ABS custom data, ABS census data Cat. No. 2068.0, E Gipps Council list of employers

**Table 15: Industry of employment (place of work) in Bairnsdale SLA 2001 & 2006**

Industry	2001 No	2001 %	2006 No	2006 %
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	478	5.3%	241	2.4%
Mining	11	0.1%	13	0.1%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	91	1.0%	132	1.3%
Construction	486	5.3%	721	7.2%
Wholesale trade	412	4.5%	312	3.1%
<b>Retail trade</b>	<b>1,896</b>	<b>20.8%</b>	<b>1,739</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
Accommodation & food services	805	8.8%	997	10.0%
Transport, postal & warehousing	245	2.7%	350	3.5%
Information media & telecommunications	83	0.9%	95	1.0%
Financial & insurance services	178	2.0%	195	2.0%
Rental, hiring & real estate services	-	-	160	1.6%
Professional, scientific & technical services	<b>609<sup>1</sup></b>	6.7%	351	3.5%
Administrative & support services	-	-	235	2.4%
Public administration & safety	251	2.8%	516	5.2%
Education & training	785	8.6%	897	9.0%
<b>Health care &amp; social assistance</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>14.9%</b>
Arts & recreation services	195	2.1%	129	1.3%
Other services	369	4.1%	406	4.1%
Inadequately described/Not stated	85	0.9%	79	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9,980</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

Source: ABS census data Cat. No. 2068.0

Note: (1) ANZSIC classification in 2001 was 'Property and Business Services' which for 2006 census was expanded to include 'Rental, hiring & real estate services', 'Professional, scientific & technical services', and 'Administrative & Support Services'.

#### 6.1.4 Retail catchment

Bairnsdale is one of a number of towns along the Princes Highway, serving regional catchments to their north and south (refer to Figure 4).

**Table 16: Towns along the Princes Highway – west to east**

Town	Distance to next town	Municipality	Population	Role
<b>Pakenham</b>	45km to Warragul	Cardinia	18,630	Regional retail centre, administration
<b>Warragul</b>	33km to Moe	Baw Baw	11,345	Regional retail centre, administration
<b>Moe</b>	15km to Morwell	Latrobe	15,160	Sub-regional centre
<b>Morwell</b>	15km to Traralgon	Latrobe	13,190	Sub-regional centre
<b>Traralgon</b>	50km to Sale	Latrobe	21,960	Regional retail and commercial centre, transport hub, administration
<b>Sale</b>	68km to Bairnsdale	Wellington	13,090	Regional retail centre, administration
<b>Bairnsdale</b>	36km to Lakes Entrance	E Gippsland	11,300	Regional retail and commercial centre, transport hub, administration
<b>Lakes Entrance</b>	59km to Orbost	E Gippsland	5,650	Sub-regional centre, holiday destination, retirement living
<b>Orbost</b>	75km to Cann River	E Gippsland	2,060	Sub-regional centre
<b>Cann River</b>	70km to Mallacoota	E Gippsland	240	Rural community – travellers services
<b>(Mallacoota)<sup>1</sup></b>	-	E Gippsland	930	Local centre, holiday destination, retirement living

Source: ABS census data, DSE Towns in Time 2006

Note 1: Mallacoota is not directly on the Princes Highway. It is the eastern most town in Gippsland, Victoria, 22km from the Highway

Bairnsdale (population in 2006 of 11,300) is one of a series of larger regional towns along the Princes Highway in Gippsland, some bypassed, some not bypassed. Bairnsdale, Traralgon (population 22,000), and Sale (population 13,100) are not bypassed; their roles combine serving a regional catchment with catering to a significant amount of passing traffic. Warragul, Moe and Morwell, and in 2008 also Pakenham, are bypassed by the





Highway which has reduced the extent of services they provide to passing travellers, and increased the focus on residents in their regional catchments.

A series of smaller towns along the Princes Highway, e.g. Rosedale, Stratford, Bruthen and Orbost, provide services to both local residents and travellers. Lakes Entrance, Metung, Paynesville and Mallacoota are important coastal destinations in the region, and attract significant number of visitors over the Christmas/January high season, and have also attracted a younger retiree population. Small villages such as Dargo, Omeo, Swifts Creek and Buchan are recognised ‘high country’ locations, and service small local populations as well as providing tourism services to travellers to the region, particularly travellers to the national parks.

Bairnsdale is the regional centre serving East Gippsland, and is the administrative centre for the East Gippsland region (site of municipal offices, state government department offices, and regional organisation offices). It is also the largest employment centre in East Gippsland, providing some 6,780 jobs or 48% of the 14,000 jobs in the East Gippsland Local Government Area. It serves a large catchment that includes the townships of Dargo to the northwest, Omeo to the north, Buchan to the northeast, and Orbost, Marlo and Mallacoota to the east, and Paynesville and Lakes Entrance to the southeast, providing higher-order retail and services for these surrounding towns.

**Table 17: East Gippsland activity centre hierarchy**

Type	Services
Regional Centre	Higher order retail, choice of supermarkets for comparison and top-up shopping. Commercial, professional, and civic/administrative function. Arts/culture and entertainment. Medical services and hospital.
Sub-regional Centre	Smaller town offering a more limited range of retail compared with the regional centre. One or two supermarkets and several cafes/restaurants. A limited range of services. Visitor accommodation, tourist information.
Local centre	Small supermarket, post office, limited retail (chemist, hairdresser/beauty, plant nursery), community shop. Tourist information and ‘tourism’ retail e.g. antiques or old wares store, craft shop.
Village or rural community	General store, post office, newsagency, often combined in one outlet. Hotel/motel. Petrol. Some ‘tourism’ retail; eg. Antiques or old wares store, or a craft or gift shop.

Source: Adapted from Overview of Retailing in Regional Victoria, Essential Economics Pty Ltd, 2007, p4 (Table 1.1 Typical Hierarchy of Activity Centres Serving Regional Victoria)

**Table 18: Towns and villages in the Bairnsdale retail catchment**

Town	Pop.	Role	Retail and Services	Shopping Pattern
Sale	13,090	Regional centre	Retail, commercial, administration, arts/culture, hospital	Not part of Bairnsdale's Catchment
Dargo	<70	'Village'	Hotel/motel, petrol	Shop in Bairnsdale
Bairnsdale	11,300	Regional centre	Range of retail (Coles, Woolworths, ALDI supermarkets), homewares, commercial, administration, hospital, transport hub	Shop in Bairnsdale or Melbourne
Paynesville	3,230	Local centre	Limited retail (food works supermarket), tourist services/retail/accommodation,	Convenience shop in Paynesville, then to Bairnsdale
Lakes Entrance	5,650	Sub-regional centre	Limited retail (Foodworks supermarket), tourist services/retail/accommodation, fishing, retirement living	Convenience shop in L.E., then to Bairnsdale
Bruthen	600	Local centre	Hotel/motel, tourist services/retail, petrol	Shop in Bairnsdale
Buchan	120	Rural community	General store/post office, petrol	Shop in Bairnsdale
Swifts Creek	160	Rural community	Hotel/motel, tourist retail (e.g. gallery, bookshop, bakery), petrol	Shop in Bairnsdale
Omeo	270	Rural community	Supermarket (Foodworks supermarket), petrol, tourist services/retail	Convenience shopping in Omeo, then to Bairnsdale
Orbost	2,060	Sub-regional centre	Limited retail (Foodworks supermarket), tourist services/retail/accommodation, petrol	Convenience shopping in Orbost, then to Bairnsdale
Cann River	240	Rural community	Visitor information, hotel/motels, supermarket (small), sawmilling, petrol	Convenience shopping in Orbost, then to Bairnsdale
Bombala (NSW)	(1,500)	Local centre	Supermarket (Foodworks), hotel/motels, visitor	Convenience shopping in Bombala, then to



Town	Pop.	Role	Retail and Services	Shopping Pattern
			accommodation	Cooma
Delegate (NSW)	(700)	Village	Hotels/motels, tourist services/retail/accommodation, sawmilling	Shop in Bombala, then to Cooma
Mallacoota	930	Local centre	Hotel/motels, limited retail (Foodworks supermarket), holiday destination (Xmas, Jan is high season), fishing	Convenience shopping in Mallacoota or Eden (NSW), then to Bairnsdale

Source: DSE Towns in Time 2006, Matters More Pty Ltd. Population estimates marked with ( ) are not verified.

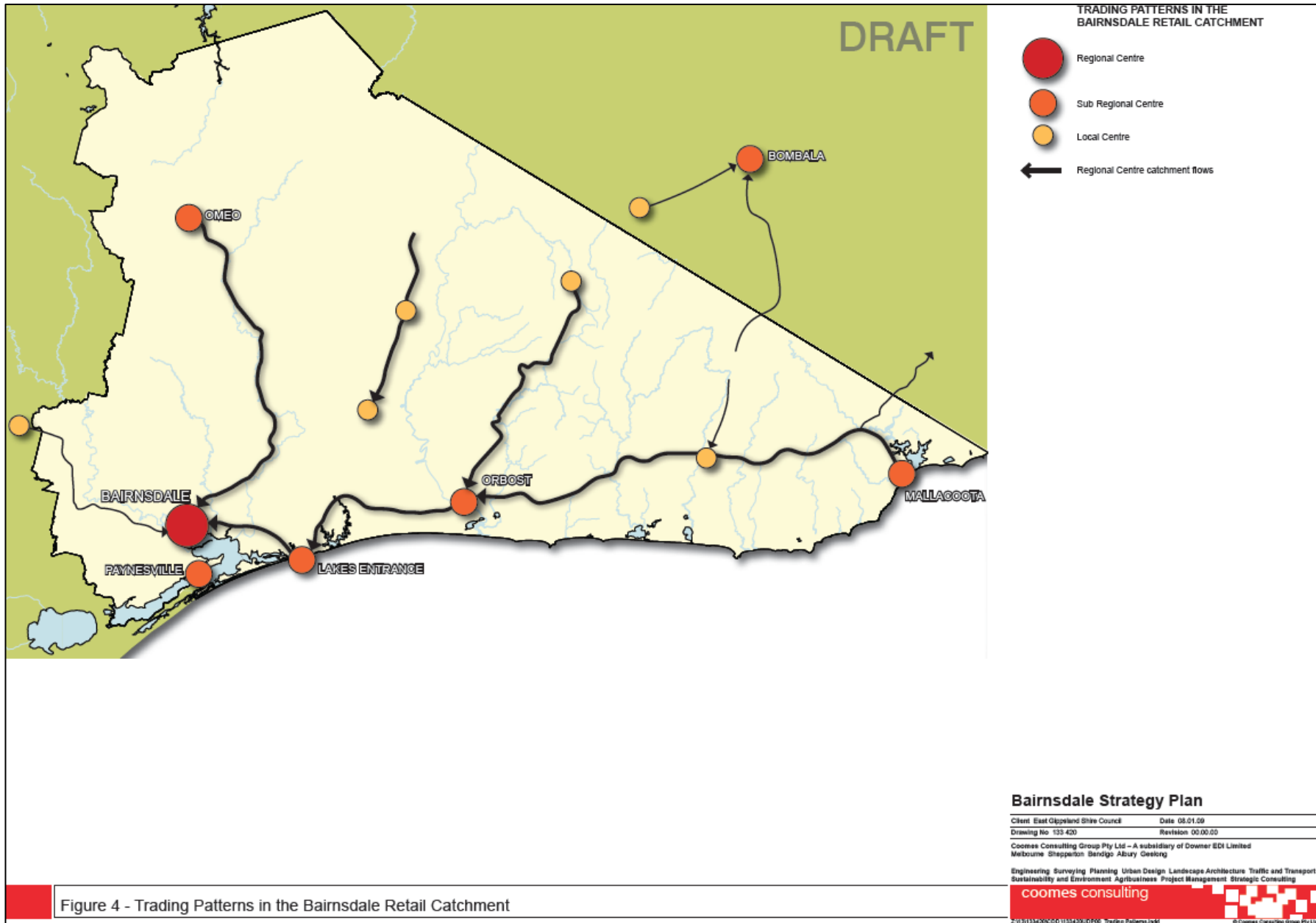


Figure 4 - Trading Patterns in the Bairnsdale Retail Catchment

## 6.2 Opportunities and constraints

Based on the preceding analysis, a range of issues and opportunities have been identified in relation to manufacturing, retail, tourism, healthcare and community services – each of which are summarised below.

### **Manufacturing**

The following opportunities for the manufacturing sector have emerged from the analysis:

- Growing the Food Processing Industry. Improve and grow local suppliers networks and services to the food processing industry to create a strong and nationally recognised food processing cluster. Stronger base will reduce risk of major processors relocating. The food growing and processing industry would be strengthened with a greater focus.
- Attracting further investment in supply/processing plants in Bairnsdale (and other locations) is broadly supported at local and state government levels (evidenced by the preparation of the Food Processing Prospectus completed in 2006/07 in cooperation with Wellington Shire & Regional Development Victoria).

### **Retail**

The following opportunities for the retail sector have emerged from the analysis:

- Low provision of retail in comparison with other regional centres (38,000m<sup>2</sup> compared with 60,000m<sup>2</sup> at Sale at employment of 1,230 compared with 1,190 in Sale);
- Opportunity to expand retail provision in Bairnsdale, particularly homemaker (bulky type retailing);
- Dahlsens plan to relocate to new site at eastern perimeter of town – establish homemaker centre for Dahlsens with room for other trade suppliers businesses, will increase employment, provide redevelopment opportunities on existing site & site in east industrial area;
- Small scale retail at West End Centre can become neighbourhood centre;
- A 13,000m<sup>2</sup> local convenience retailing centre to service the proposed residential development at Brookfield Lakes has been approved as per Amendment C62; and
- A proposal has been made for a medical and retail convenience centre at Eastwood Estate covering 16,500m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Tourism**

Bairnsdale is not the focus of tourism development in East Gippsland. Tourism opportunities in the Region are generally focussed on the coast and National Parks as follows:

- Mallacoota – Bluewater boating and Nature-based tourism destination (upgrade of bluewater access, upgrade of camp reserve);

- Gippsland Lakes – upgrade of facilities at cruise and sailing locations; eg. Port of Sale, Marlay Point, Hollands Landing, Wattle Point; improve parking, toilet, pump-out facilities, facilitate establishment of cafés;
- Boating facilities are located at Paynesville and Metung;
- Croajingolong Eco Cabins – eco accommodation in national park setting;
- Gippsland’s Heritage Ports – Port of Sale, Port Albert, Port Welshpool; and
- Other – Bullock Island development plans, Wingan Point, Farmstay, Geothermal Springs, Rail Trail.

Residents in regional areas see tourism as an opportunity to replace employment in agriculture, particularly in semi-retirement, but no strong draw-cards apart from established coastal parks in more remote areas of East Gippsland.

The highest tourism return in Bairnsdale is from passing trade – visitors stop at Bairnsdale to stock-up for groceries and equipment before heading elsewhere in East Gippsland with a lower retail provision. However, the following opportunities exist:

- Mitchell River and Bairnsdale Port provide opportunities for tourism activities and events – fun runs, canoeing, fairs, world’s longest lunch, etc.
- Opportunities for developing tourism products centred at Bairnsdale that target the “grey nomad” segment (e.g. caravan & camping, golf, fishing).

#### **Healthcare & community services**

The following opportunities for the health care and community services sector have emerged from the analysis:

- Bairnsdale is the regional centre for health care and community services. Opportunities for significant growth in employment in the health care sector exist.
- This sector is the second largest industry in Bairnsdale (1,075 jobs). Employment related to the population base and ageing population will increase demand for staff to provide aged care services (currently 454 jobs in residential care services). This represents significant opportunities for job growth in the future.
- Opportunities for providing retirement living – permits granted for retirement villages, but limited provision so far and all outside of the core township. Suitable locations are safe, secure, preferably urban with good connectivity to shops and services.

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## **7 Bairnsdale Activity Centre**

The Bairnsdale Central Business District (CBD) is a mixed land use feature of regional significance. For a substantial visitor and country population, as well as persons living within the city, it is the central meeting place; a place of service and work; a rest point; a place of recreation and vitality. It is the embodiment of the country town, the primary focus of the community; a multifaceted space that must service a multitude of function.

The following is an analysis of existing conditions within the activity centre, leading a series of identified opportunities and constraints.

### **7.1 Existing conditions**

For the purposes of systematic analysis and ease of comprehension the subject is addressed under the following headings.

- Land use, structure and boundaries
- Built form and development
- Access, traffic and movement
- Landscape, streetscape and recreation.

### **7.2 Land use, structure and boundaries**

The principal findings in terms of issues and opportunities associated with land use, structure and boundaries are presented in Figure 5.

#### **7.2.1 Overview**

- The CBD is a mixed land use activity centre of regional significance. For a substantial visitor and country population, as well as persons living within the city, it is the central meeting place; a place of service and work; a rest point; a place of recreation and vitality. It is the embodiment of the country town, the primary focus of the community; a multifaceted space that must serve a multitude of functions.
- The CBD is a highly defined space, contained by the floodplain of the Mitchell River on three boundaries. Growth might reasonably occur only in the context of further consolidation or expansion towards the west.
- The CBD could have a better relationship to the northern river environs, with better linkages and a capacity to more effectively capture the panoramic views to the north. There is a real opportunity to enhance and strengthen this association particularly if recreational opportunities associated with the river are nurtured.
- The highway has been a divisive element deterring the free flow of centre users and reinforcing a two-fold structure of convenience and conventional retail to the north and service and commerce to the south. The wisdom of maintaining and reinforcing this division should be challenged by this work.

- Despite this division the CBD is highly accessible and legible being based on a clearly evident grid of local streets.
- The underlying subdivision and tenure pattern of land within and around the CBD is highly fragmented into a series of relatively small and narrow allotments. This poses a significant constraint on the acquisition and assembly of larger sites to accommodate the bigger floor plate requirements of the emerging retail “big box” and “homemaker” style sectors.
- Approaching from the west the sense of arrival at the CBD is strongly conveyed by the church and water towers. The eastern approach is not as strongly or effectively expressed.

### 7.2.2 Challenges to the structure and role of the CBD

While the emergence of Bairnsdale has been witness to an ever increasing agglomeration of commercial activities with frontage to the highway, and a major focus of education and community services around the axis of McKean Street, the CBD has retained its primacy as the business and commercial centre of urban Bairnsdale.

The maintenance of this land use structure is currently being challenged. There is a proposal and planning scheme amendment under consideration to resite the Dahlsens hardware and building supplies store from its current major site in Dalmahoy Street to land with highway frontage at the eastern edge of Bairnsdale. The proposal embodies a substantial amount of restricted retail and commercial floor space. In a similar vein the recently abandoned proposal to establish a “business park” on land to the west of the intersection of the railway and the highway, at the western entrance into Bairnsdale, challenged the established role, primacy and structure of the CBD.

The Dahlsens proposal marks a potentially positive and significant investment for East Bairnsdale but it poses equally significant consequences for the CBD. Dahlsens is a major anchor business at the southern boundary of the centre around which a number of smaller, complementary businesses are established. The CBD south of the highway has a strong commercial based dominance of uses and the loss of the Dahlsens store could potentially have a disruptive impact on the area’s role and function.

At a time when country towns along the Latrobe Valley and into Gippsland are responding to the emergence of trends towards larger floor area “homemaker style” retailing, in locations remote from the traditional town centre, Bairnsdale faces such a challenge with this proposal. On the face of it the establishment of such an “out of town retail centre” is inconsistent with the intent of activity centre and retail planning policy as detailed in Sections 12 and 17 of the planning scheme. On the other hand it is difficult to identify a location in or at the edge of the CBD that can offer the exposure or space for such land use.

The issues raised by the above circumstances create a context in which it is open to consider strategies that seek to remove or reduce the established division and separate roles of the CBD, north and south of the highway. In addition to the Dahlsens site, there



are substantial areas of land, particularly along the existing and former rail-line, that present an opportunity to restructure and provide a new focus and role for the southern part of the CBD.

### **7.2.3 Recreation and entertainment**

A pertinent observation arising from consultation is the relative absence of recreation and entertainment facilities in and around the CBD. This report comments upon and makes recommendations about the use of public space to provide attractions and informal recreation utilising the median and the association between the CBD and the environs of the Mitchell River. Beyond that however it is appropriate to explore options to introduce active and passive indoor recreation opportunities in to or proximate to the centre for the benefit of visitors and residents of Bairnsdale.

### **7.2.4 Housing opportunities**

The diversification of the housing stock and the necessity to respond to the needs of the emerging aging sector, with reduced mobility and requirement for low maintenance accommodation proximate to a full range of retail and personal services, are matters to be considered in the context of the development of the emerging CBD.

There are large areas of land, particularly to the south of the highway, that are candidates for redevelopment and that could combine a high level of amenity with a capacity to make a positive contribution to the housing stock and function of the CBD. The economic, social wellbeing and vitality of the CBD will be enhanced by its capacity to attract and support a variety of household types which see and receive real benefit from a choice to walk to the services they need.

## **7.3 Built form and development**

Bairnsdale's CBD retains a human scale in its spatial extent (it remains compact and reasonably walkable) and in the height and setting of built form. There is a sense of consistency in the prevailing single and two storey built form. The principal built form and development issues are presented in Figure 5

The core area is distinguished from the fringe business areas by the greater reliance on residential building stock and layout in the latter case. In the core areas the strong themes are buildings with a relative high site coverage and development to the property boundary. This consistency of character is complemented by a select number of outstanding buildings, some of heritage and cultural significance that are found throughout the CBD and are illustrated in Figure 5.

Opportunities for more intense and higher built form are probably most suitably confined to areas where their presence will not impose on the main street experience. These potential areas are illustrated in Figure 5.

The most recent development of the Kmart and Aldi complex on the north east corner of Nicholson Street and Pyke Street, marks a substantial deviation from the traditional form of town centre development. In this case the buildings have been setback from the property boundary and the foreground set aside for parking. This manner of site development would be an unfortunate precedent for similar style development elsewhere in the CBD.

#### **7.4 Access, traffic and movement**

The framework for effective access and movement around the CBD is provided by the highly legible grid network of streets, but the performance of the network and traffic / transport based issues are matters to be addressed by the CBD plan. The circulation between car parks is confused by the mall in Nicholson Street. There is no clear pattern or direction to be followed. (Refer Figure 6)

##### **7.4.1 Heavy vehicle movement**

The State highway forms the central spine of the CBD. While its benefit is that it brings visitors to the region through the heart of the city, it also carries a considerable volume of heavy vehicle movements through to the same place. This causes considerable impact in terms of noise, disruption, intrusion upon the amenity of the CBD and the perceived safe use of the centre. A solution which retains the former benefit but removed the latter impact is sought. While an overall bypass is talked about it is neither feasible or viable in the life of this plan. Thus a lower order localised network that carries heavy vehicle movement around the CBD is an outcome that has been both the subject of historic consideration and warrants direction in this strategic statement.

##### **7.4.2 Oversized vehicles**

An allied consideration is the accommodation of large visitor coaches and visitors' vehicles with boats and trailers. The obvious attraction for these visitors is the retail core north of the highway, but there are negligible opportunities to park these oversized vehicles. It becomes equally if not more tempting to move on to a location where suitable parking is evident with consequential impacts on the retail and visitor economy of Bairnsdale.

##### **7.4.3 Use of the station and its environs**

The station is located relatively remotely from the main attractions of the CBD and the most advantageous access ways between them are not self evident. The station is the end of the line and the arrival /departure point for two regional services per day as well as various V/Line bus services. It is a notable generator of local and visitor traffic and yet its operation and location do not take the best advantage of integrating its function with the balance of the centre.

There are vast areas of surplus land surrounding the station, particularly since the closure of the line east of the station. Be it in its own right or in conjunction with the

operation of the station, there are a number of ways that this land might be used to address the some of the issues presented by the CBD.

#### **7.4.4 Parking**

CBD parking is usually a subject for debate and criticism. Some members of the community and users of the CBD consider that there never seems to be enough in the right location. As a result of a series of informal surveys and observations regarding parking and user behaviour in the CBD, we draw the following conclusions.

- Typical of country towns and regional cities, the on street, kerbside and centre median parking is heavily used and seemingly constantly occupied - particularly in the retail core but also along Macleod Street.
- Some of the off street car parks, such as around Spotlight, are well used, and fully occupied from early in the morning but it appears a proportion of these are staff working in the CBD, placing greater priority upon their convenience than the access of their customers.
- The more remote and yet conveniently located parks such as the K-Mart Aldi car park will be only 50-60% occupied while the car parks in the next block are at 90-100% full.
- The circulation between and access to the short term car parks north of the highway is disjointed and ill conceived. A considerable body of vehicle movement through the shopping streets is therefore vehicles trying to move between car parks looking for that most convenient space.
- Car parks north of the highway have also tended to be intrusive, located such that they disrupt retail frontage, create conflict points with the main pedestrian movement, or occupy a prominent location, such as the outlook over the Mitchell River flood plain where a better and more effective use of land is warranted.

The parking “problem” will not be “solved” by acquiring more land in and around the retail core or by the costly investment in a multi-storey car park, in a town where the returns on such an investment are questionable. Not only do such solutions tend to further fragment and remove retail and community land but also the car becomes more dominant, in the one location where the pedestrian should be the priority and where their comfortable and safe movement should be the focus.

There are management and land availability options, particularly to the south of the highway that can serve to strengthen the overall performance of the centre as well as make the most effective and sustainable use of CBD land and resources.

#### **7.4.5 Pedestrian movement and conflict**

The potential for conflict between pedestrians, use and enjoyment of the centre and vehicles is increased by poor resolution of circulation issues, poorly sited or managed crossings and disruptive traffic movements.

While there is scope for detailed design and finish improvements to the pedestrian space and greater attention to the needs and circulation of the disabled, there are two issues that warrant particular direction by this report.

The first is the role and future function of Nicholson Street. Directly or indirectly most of the major / larger retailers are located along or have access off its axis (Eg. Safeway / Coles / Target / K-Mart / Aldi). It also serves as an access to most of the retail core car parks. This arrangement has inherent conflict that warrants direction as to whether greater priority should be placed upon safe pedestrian movement or vehicle circulation.

The role and function of Nicholson Street is further complicated by two features; the part pedestrianisation of the street in front of Safeway, and the disruptive and potentially dangerous conflict between the use of the Safeway loading dock and the operation of the street for a range of other purposes. While the treed pedestrian space is a welcome relief and rest point in the centre of the town, it appears to create as many problems as it solves. It is a small and confined space with one side fully occupied by the relatively inactive frontage of the supermarket. At each end of the mall, the street forms a cul-de-sac and car park, in which circulating vehicles become highly disruptive.

The problem is significantly compounded on the west end of the mall when that space also serves as the manoeuvring areas for semi-trailers accessing the Safeway loading dock and an access way to the Spotlight car park. The potential for congestion, conflict and danger is a frequent daily event and unsustainable. In the absence of alternative loading arrangements there is a strong argument to encourage the resiting of the Safeway supermarket to address for the long term benefit of the centre a safer and less disrupted retail core.

At the same time it is necessary to seriously challenge the retention of the partial mall given its allied problems. Options to be considered are removal or extension or resiting.

## **7.5 Landscapes, streetscapes and recreation**

Bairnsdale is among a select family of regional towns and cities that are strongly characterised and remembered for their central medians as an entrance statement of the town and as a recreational resource available to the community. Analysis suggests a range of opportunities to further enhance the contribution and use of this space including:

- The removal of the numerous mid block vehicle circulation points along its course. Rather than being divided into 9 parts between Pyke Street and Wood Street there is a strong case to reduce to this to three parts with circulation only provided at the intersection of the highway with Pyke / Service / Bailey and Wood Streets (ie. where traffic lights are also provided).
- Pedestrian movement along the corridor of the median is disjointed and haphazard. A safe connected route would make the space more attractive to use.
- The use of the space appears to be agglomeration of ideas over an extended period of time. The place for public art through out Bairnsdale has been raised on a number

of occasions in consultation. The median presents an opportunity to showcase that art as a theme and attraction to visitor to the town.

Beyond the median, the analysis of streetscape and landscape identifies the following issues and opportunities.

- Opportunities to strengthen the continuity of retail and active street frontage (Figure 7)
- Opportunities to introduce and strengthen street tree planting into each of the main streets of the CAD to provide greater visual recognition and character association to the space, as well as amenity and environmental benefits.
- Opportunities to strengthen the principal and secondary view corridors and vistas around the CAD (Figure 7).
- Opportunities to enjoy the views over and the spaces adjacent to the Mitchell River including a review of the land and road space to the rear of the court and the gallery which offers the real prospect of enhanced recreational space while linking with important public uses (Figure 7).

## 7.6 Opportunities and constraints

The above analysis of the existing conditions of the activity centre lead to the following key opportunities and constraints, which are illustrated in Figures 5, 6 and 7.

### Opportunities

- Build on the grid system to enhance strong physical and visual permeability.
- Consolidate emerging precincts and anchor with new development, design treatments and landscaping to improve overall structure and legibility.
- Celebrate entrance statements including the water tower and St Mary's church to the west, and the Mitchell River and emerging architectural interest (TAFE) to the east.
- Maintain historic sense of place and enhance positive contribution to the streetscape and character.
- Create stronger physical and visual connections to the Railway Station.
- Option to redevelop the railway houses on the north-side of the rail line for commercial purposes.
- Enhance connections to the River.
- Re-development of large redundant site post Dahlsens re-location as significant anchor south to the Highway.
- Consolidation of car parking and more efficient allocation of short and long stay parking.
- Re-think mid block turning points in central gardens on Main Street.
- Opportunities for east-west pedestrian networks through the central gardens.
- Consistent landscaping themes to define street hierarchy and provide visual cues to improve permeability and way finding.

- Improve connections in bicycle network.
- Improve amenities and facilities in the central gardens.
- Provide seating, landscaping and informal 'waiting areas' near key uses including the Courthouse, library etc.
- Enhance and provide continuity in streetscape, paving and street furniture themes.

### **Constraints**

- Generally 'turns its back' on the Mitchell River.
- Potential loss of an anchor business from service industry area - Dahlsens.
- Lack of significant development opportunities i.e. of substantial size.
- Some new commercial development provides a poor interface to the street.
- Ad hoc arrangement of some uses i.e. location of the cinema, access to the station, development around the Mall.
- The role and function of the Mall as a public space, and the limited passive surveillance opportunities.
- Visual clutter and signage detract from Heritage façade and streetscape.
- Limited re-development sites for consolidated infill development.
- Vehicular traffic, particularly heavy vehicles through town and local 'search' traffic.
- Fragmentation of car parking areas.
- Pedestrian movements in car parking areas around the mall are often dangerous with vehicular and pedestrian movements overlapping.
- Car parking impacts on the streetscape by consuming space and creating breaks in the built form.
- Throughout the CBD disabled parking is limited and/or is located inappropriately.
- The impact of the Mall on movement and access in the otherwise permeable network.
- Inconsistency of the landscaping impacts upon the legibility of the streetscape.
- Disabled access and amenities are limited by the general condition of the footpath and lack of tactile markers and cross over ramps.
- Riverine Street provides an interface to the rivers edge that is dangerous for pedestrian movement due to high traffic speed and lack of footpath.
- Access to the riverfront is limited by topography and lack of an appropriate pedestrian path.
- There are no playground facilities in the CBD.
- There is a general lack of street / public art in town.



Figure 5- Issues and Opportunities - Built Form and Development

**Bairnsdale Activity Centre**

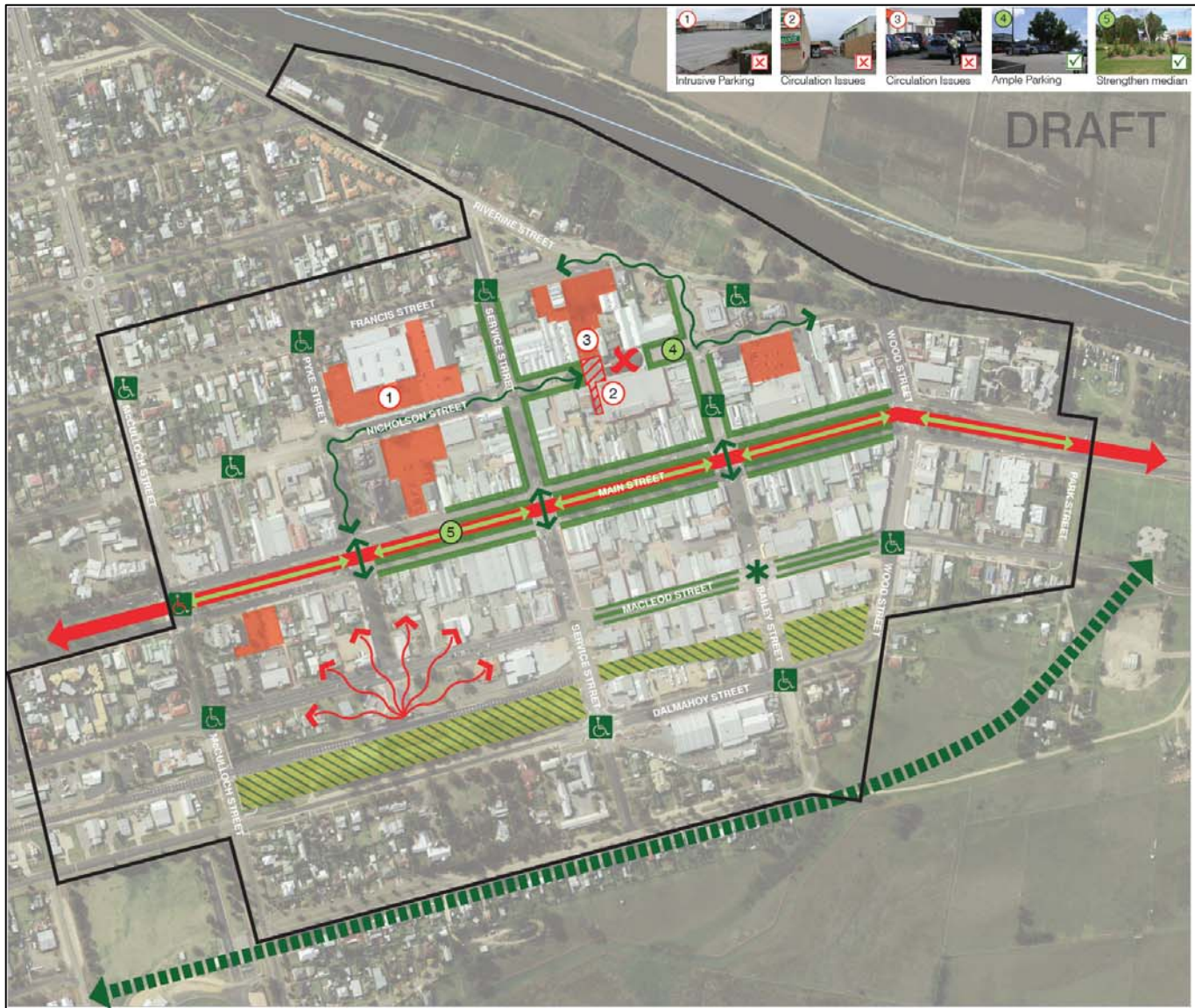
Client: East Gippsland Shire Council Date: 16.03.09  
Drawing No: 133 421 Revision: 00.00.01

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Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture Traffic and Transport  
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management Strategic Consulting







**ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND MOVEMENT**

✓ = Opportunity  
✗ = Issues

- █ Car parking  
Car parking is expansive and intrusive in the streetscape. ✓
- \* Opportunity to provide new car parking for long term needs, particularly south of the highway. ✓
- ▨ Opportunity to manage or relocate car parking south of the highway. ✓
- ▬ Highest utilisation of car parking is along Main, Service, Bailey and Macleod Streets. ✓
- Circulation**
- ↔ Opportunity to provide clear and direct access between car parking; including on street parking. ✓
- ♿ General opportunity to improve disabled facilities including footpaths and parking throughout the CBD. ✓
- ↔ Heavy vehicle movements detract from the safety and amenity of the CBD. ✗
- ↔ Contemplate the opportunity for a heavy vehicle bypass, south of the CBD. ✓
- ↔ Opportunity to strengthen the physical and visual continuity of the median strip. ✓
- ✗ The mall, while a small contemplative space, is poorly resolved with regard to the role of Nicholson Street as a street of circulation, pedestrianisation and parking - consider removing. ✗
- ↔ Links between the CBD and the train station are weak. ✗
- ↔ Maintain strong and safe pedestrian links between the south and the north of the highway. ✓
- ▨ Servicing and loading at supermarket seriously disrupts pedestrian and vehicular circulation. ✗
- NOTE Bike lanes have poor connections. ✗

**Bairnsdale Activity Centre**

Client East Gippsland Shire Council Date 05.03.09  
Drawing No 133421 Revision 00.00.01  
Coomes Consulting Group Pty Ltd - A subsidiary of Downer EDI Limited  
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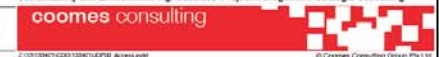


Figure 6- Issues and Opportunities - Access, Traffic and Movement





Figure 7- Issues and Opportunities - Landscapes, Streetscapes and Recreation

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## 8 Community Infrastructure, Open Space and Recreation

As the regional centre of East Gippsland, Bairnsdale provides for a range of community infrastructure and services, as well as a number of open space and recreation opportunities. This section of the report seeks to explore the range of opportunities and constraints in relation to such services. The analysis includes an audit of existing facilities and services, as well as a review of pertinent local policy and key stakeholder feedback.

### 8.1 Analysis of existing supply

A telephone audit has been conducted with community and recreation service / facility providers, to ascertain capacity, future plans and gaps in service and facility provision. This led to the following key conclusions:

#### **Health providers:**

- Catchments are generally whole-of-Shire; and
- Service capacity limitations are generally due to lack of funding and staffing shortages.

#### **Community service providers / community groups:**

- There is a housing shortage across East Gippsland and people are willing to travel for emergency accommodation;
- Community services located outside the town centre believe they lack exposure and that their activities often conflict with residential uses;
- There is a need to upgrade Dalmahoy Street – it is unkempt, lacks proper lighting and therefore problematic for people with disabilities;
- Facilities are often not fit-for-purpose; and
- The role of the RSL in the community should be recognised and supported as it plays an important role in providing rooms for community meetings.

#### **Education:**

- Education providers in Bairnsale includes preschools, kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, as well as a Technical College and the East Gippsland TAFE.
- A number of providers are currently going through the process of expansion or considering expansion in the near future.
- A masterplan is being undertaken for the Bairnsdale Secondary College and the BARC site to better integrate the education facilities on the land, as well as to locate education support services on the site.

#### **Recreation:**

- Whilst Bairnsdale is generally well-provisioned with sporting infrastructure, the majority of playing fields and indoor courts are inadequate for their use. Similarly, much of the clubhouse infrastructure at all venues is in need of repair – at least cosmetically – such as painting, fixtures and fittings.

- There is an opportunity to further consolidate sporting facilities, especially ovals;
- There is major Level 1 sporting and aquatic infrastructure in Bairnsdale, including the Bairnsdale City Oval;
- The Bairnsdale City Oval is incomplete, compromising the image and usability of the centre;
- There are limited youth specific recreation opportunities. There is an existing skate park at the Davidson Oval, but future opportunities should be considered;
- There is a planned indoor sports facility at Lucknow Recreation Reserve (also known as the “keen-agers” facility) is currently limited to table tennis and squash, but could be reviewed for potential additional scope, including volleyball, gymnastics and gymnasium facilities;
- Motor and gun sports are popular and well catered for;
- Australian Rules football and netball are also popular sports.
- Facilities are generally adequate with mostly only minor improvements required;
- Lawn bowls/croquet popularity is static or declining;
- Golf is popular with the ageing population; and
- There is a lack of good equestrian facilities and coherence of clubs. If achievable, plans for a new facility at the Bairnsdale landfill site will provide a central base.

## 8.2 Pertinent local planning policies, strategies and plans

The following is an overview of the key local planning policies and initiatives as they relate to recreation and community services / facilities. A more detailed description of each policy is provided in Appendix 2.

### 8.2.1 Recreation

The full suite of relevant documents for recreation services and facilities includes:

- *East Gippsland Shire Planning Scheme (2009)*;
- *Strategic Plan for Sporting Infrastructure (October 2008)*
- *Bairnsdale City Oval Master Plan (2004) – Part 1 Master Plan, Part 2 Feasibility Study*
- *East Gippsland Bicycle Strategy (1999)*
- *Leisure and Recreation Strategy Plan: Volume 1 (1997)*

The key messages to be found in these policies are as follows:

- To meet the recreational, cultural and information support needs of residents and visitors to East Gippsland by encouraging the provision of a range of integrated, accountable services and maximising access to them (Clause 21.05);
- Improve service and support amenities at leisure and recreation venues to upgrade physical access and use (Clause 21.05);

- Provide or encourage the provision of upgraded, additional and new leisure and recreation facilities (Clause 21.05);
- To enhance, upgrade, and where feasible, consolidate the existing range of recreation facilities within the township;
- Improve access to, and linkages between recreational facilities through alternative modes of transport to the car;
- A range of priority capital projects in relation to recreation facilities have been identified, including upgrading the Bairnsdale City Oval, preparing a Bairnsdale Equestrian Park Plan and upgrading the Wy Yung Recreation Reserve; and
- The increasing priority for walking and cycling facilities within the township is recognised, necessitating the need to upgrade pathways and linkages, especially to and between other recreation facilities.

### 8.2.2 Community infrastructure

The complete list of pertinent policies, strategies and plans concerning community infrastructure is as follows:

- *East Gippsland Shire Planning Scheme (2009)*
- *Disability Action Plan (2007-2009)*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Community Wellbeing Plan 2005-2008;*
- *The Council Plan 2006-2010;*
- *East Gippsland: Unlocking the Future – Long Term Community Vision 2030 (November 2008)*
- *Five Year Arts & Culture Strategic Plan 2006/07-2010/11 Prepared for Arts and Culture Advisory Board (March 2006)*
- *East Gippsland Shire Corporate Plan (2005-2008);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Strategic Community Plan (2005);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Community Wellbeing Plan (2005- 2008);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Arts & Culture Policy (2004).*
- *East Gippsland Early Years Plan (2005-2006)*
- *East Gippsland Ageing Strategy (2008-2013) [only in planning phase has not yet been drafted]*
- *East Gippsland Community Wellbeing Plan (2005-2008)*

Collectively, these documents relay the following key messages:

- Ensure that the ageing community has access to cultural, arts, recreation and leisure activities which can accommodate for all abilities and broad range of interests;
- Ensure the delivery of key community services remain flexible to meeting the changing demands of the community;
- Provide for greater access to local services for those with disabilities, including especially the library and local swimming pools;

- Increase access for all sectors of the community to modern communication technology to reduce social isolation;
- Increase access to information and opportunities for life-long learning, including schools, vocational training and tertiary education;
- To actively assist agencies and individuals working to provide a better future for the region's youth by encouraging the development of facilities and services which increase opportunities for young people in housing, leisure and recreation, education and employment; and
- Increase opportunities for, and access to early childhood development, including child-care centres.

### 8.3 Key stakeholder consultation

As part of early investigations, a series of interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders concerning the provision of both hard and soft recreation and community infrastructure. The following key themes emerged from the consultation:

#### **Hard infrastructure:**

- There is a perception that Council has invested very little in community infrastructure in the last 10 years;
- The town needs a cultural centre combining both visual and performing arts;
- Bairnsdale would benefit greatly from a university presence within the township (not just university places, but an actual campus);
- Cottage industries should be brought together in one precinct;
- There is a serious lack of crisis accommodation;
- The lack of public transport in and around the town (especially bus services) is a constraint to accessing employment and education opportunities;
- More needs to be made out of public open space. For instance, public art, performing arts spaces, community meeting places and other such facilities should be incorporated into such areas;
- There is a need to expand and opportunities to consolidate existing services at the Civic Centre;
- A Masterplanning exercise is being undertaken on the BARC site as a lifestyle hub. This may include the relocation of the West Bairnsdale Primary School;
- The opportunity for a sound shell or similar (that is transportable) should be investigated.
- Public art should be utilised to enliven Bairnsdale and make the township more vibrant;
- Howitt Park is an under-utilised and under-valued asset;
- The future of the West Bairnsdale oval in the longterm will be considered as part of the outcomes of the Department of Education exercise;

- The river should be further capitalised upon as an asset for community enjoyment, appreciation and pride;
- There is a need for more 'inclusive' public spaces (especially for children, mothers, disabled and the elderly);
- There is a lack of activities for teenagers, including and places to meet and gather.

**Soft infrastructure:**

- Education providers and the hospital need to strengthen opportunities for collaboration;
- Distance issues for business, education and community services could be overcome with video-conferencing facilities;
- There is a perception that Council has not consulted adequately with citizens in the past;
- There is a need for education/employment courses that are between TAFE and the Changing Lanes program;
- There is a need to improve the perception of East Bairnsdale and better integrate it with the wider township;
- There is a need to create cultural/tourism opportunities and this will require the consideration of the provisions of the caravan park's needs;
- The Aboriginal Co-operative provides much needed services to the Aboriginal community, with the Aboriginal population rapidly growing;
- There are very obvious and significant cultural divides in the town - both between culture and different residential areas. This is experienced especially within East Bairnsdale;
- Better coordination of volunteers is required;
- A "sense of place", "sense of community" and "township pride" could be increased. The town needs to be more focussed on building community and developing people not just economic development;
- A professional network (particularly for younger professionals) should be started to help support young professionals in particular remaining and flourishing in the region;
- Major community organisations generally work in isolation. More integration is required, and Council should take the lead role in ensuring this happens;
- Innovative and flexible approaches to community service delivery are required given the size of the Shire. In this regard, the "virtual hubs" model should be further investigated;
- The possibility of community reference groups in each town should be investigated (as has been achieved in the Shire of Wellington).

## 8.4 Opportunities and constraints

The key opportunities and constraints to be derived from the preceding analysis are outlined below illustrated in Figure 8:

### Constraints:

- Isolation is experienced in both Eastwood Estate and East Bairnsdale;
- The expansion of tourist/caravan parks facilities are severely limited to it's location on flood prone land and a new location may need to be considered;
- There has been an *ad hoc* approach to community infrastructure planning;
- There is a lack of outdoor and indoor community meeting/civic spaces;
- There is a real potential for methane contamination of the landfill site earmarked as a future equestrian centre, meaning that there is considerable uncertainty concerning any future re-use of the land, especially for sensitive uses;
- There is a lack of passive public open space in central Bairnsdale;
- Major sporting infrastructure is ageing;
- There is a serious lack of crisis accommodation and mental health services;
- The future of the Sea Sun Schools is unknown and currently presents a lost opportunity;
- Despite its recent establishment, the services provided by the Neighbourhood House in East Bairnsdale are in high demand. The House would like to further expand to meet this demand, however, the constraints imposed by the topography and drainage of the land preclude such expansion from occurring;
- The ageing population demands flexible and adaptable services and facilities.

### Opportunities:

- There are opportunities to improve connectivity between Eastwood and East Bairnsdale;
- An outdoor community meeting space could be created in Davidson Park;
- There is an opportunity to develop a "community hub" in East Bairnsdale;
- There is an opportunity to consolidate West Bairnsdale Primary School on the Masterplan of the Department of Education site;
- Following the above, there will then be an opportunity to create a reuse potential on the redundant school site;
- There is the potential to acquire the Sea Sun School and re-develop it for a community hub;
- There is the potential to refurbish the former Police Station as accommodation for travellers and temporary accommodation for young people accessing training/education in Bairnsdale;
- There is an opportunity to create a major community hub at the BARC site;
- There is an opportunity to consolidate of aquatic facilities; and



- There is the potential to accommodate other uses in the new Sports Stadium (“keenagers” facility);
- There is an potential to build on existing infrastructure such as the skate park area to enhance youth recreation and service provision;
- There is an opportunity to rethink the future use of the Bairnsdale Oval as part of an overall rationalisation of the sites.



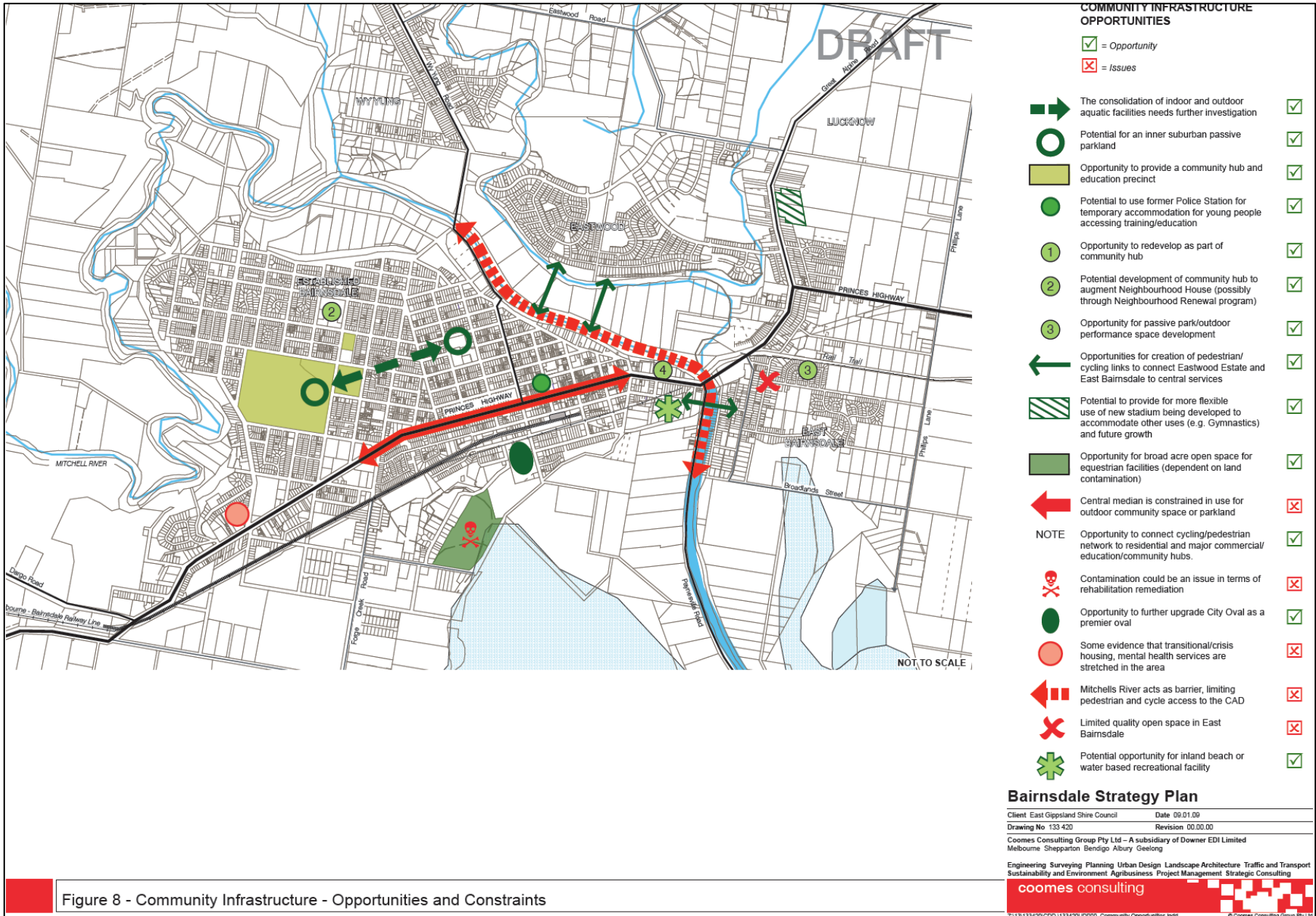


Figure 8 - Community Infrastructure - Opportunities and Constraints

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## 9 Environment

Being a regional township located on a river, Bairnsdale has a range of environmental assets and concerns. The following is a synopsis of the key issues and challenges derived from an analysis of pertinent State and local policy, existing conditions and stakeholder consultation. The analysis leads to the identification of a series of key opportunities and constraints.

### 9.1 Environmental planning policy framework

Following is a synopsis of the pertinent planning policies regarding the environment from both a State and local perspective.

#### 9.1.1 State policy

In essence, Clauses 11 (Introduction, Goals and Principles), 14 (Settlement) and 15 (Environment) require that planning contribute to the protection, conservation and management of key environmental assets and values. These include

- Minimising pollution, including of air, land and water (Clause 11.03, 15.04-5)
- Conserve indigenous flora and fauna (Clause 15.09 Conservation of native flora and fauna);
- Protecting environmentally sensitive areas with significant recreational value, including the Gippsland Lakes, from development which would diminish their environmental conservation or recreation values (Clause 14.01 – Settlement);
- Protecting catchments, waterways and groundwater from inappropriate development, pollution and nutrient loads, and Councils should have regard to the relevant Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). Where possible, a 30 metre wide vegetated buffer should be provided around drainage lines and water courses (Clause 15.01 Protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater);
- Managing floodplains and reduce the risk to life and property and protect the environmental values of floodplains (Clause 15.02 – Floodplain Management);
- Managing the impacts of salinity (Clause 15.03 – Salinity);
- To ensure that the State’s agricultural base is protected from the unplanned loss of productive land due to permanent changes of land use and to enable protection of productive farmland which is of strategic significance in the local or regional context (Clause 17.05 – Agriculture);
- Ensuring that potentially contaminated land is suitable for development (Clause 15.06 – Potentially contaminated land);
- Identifying and appropriately managing wildfire risks (Clause 15.07 – Protection from Wildfire);
- Protecting the environmental and cultural values of coastal areas, including minimising the risk associated with rising sea levels predicted to be as high as 0.8 metres by 2100 (Clause 15.08 – Coastal areas);
- Conserve and protect heritage places and sites (Clause 15.10 – Heritage); and

- Promoting energy efficiency, especially in subdivision design (Clause 11.03 1-3);

In achieving the above, responsible authorities should consider the following key documents:

- The National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia’s Biological Diversity;
- Action statements prepared under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*;
- Any regional vegetation plans and regional catchment strategy under the *Catchments and Land Protection Act 1994*;
- Relevant *State Environment Protection Policies*;
- The *Victorian Coastal Strategy*;
- Any *Municipal or Regional Fire Prevention Plans*; and
- The *Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management Framework – A Framework for Action*.

### 9.1.2 Local planning policy

The environmental values of East Gippsland are well recognised within the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS). In particular, Clauses 21.02-4 recognise:

- The intrinsic value of the Gippsland Lakes and their importance as wetlands of international significance;
- The Heritage River Status of the Mitchell River; and
- The importance and diversity of flora and fauna within the municipality.

Clause 21.03 also recognises the following challenges:

- Increased disturbance and nutrient runoff is affecting the health of the lakes and rivers;
- Pest plant and animal species;
- Land degradation from various activities;
- Loss of habitat extent and quality;
- Protecting high quality of agricultural and horticultural land; and
- Fire management and risk.

In much the same vein as the SPPF, Clause 21.05 sets out the key objectives with regards to natural resources, including:

- Minimising water erosion and sedimentation of waterways,
- Improving the quality of waterways within the municipality;
- Stabilising river banks;
- Protecting productive agricultural land from inappropriate subdivision and/or development;
- Minimising risks associated with wildfires and flooding;
- Reducing the extent and effect of pest plants and animals;

- Maintaining the environmental and cultural values associated with the coast;
- Maintaining, conserving and enhancing biological diversity; and
- Recognising, fostering and protecting Gippsland's cultural heritage.

In order to address the key issues raised, the following actions have been noted:

#### **Key environmental actions:**

##### General:

- Protect sites with environmental, cultural, aesthetic, geomorphologic or archaeological sites from inappropriate development;
- Recognise and protect areas with remnant EVC's of high conservation significance particularly those with a conservation status of threatened or endangered;
- Encourage private landholders to protect conservation values on their land;
- Minimise the impacts of Bairnsdale saleyards on McLeod Morass;
- Source information to confirm any land capability constraints that could be controlled through the planning scheme;
- Identify land with a high fire hazard and include it within the Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO);
- Implement the regional vegetation plan.

##### Water management:

- Ensure appropriate floodplain management plans are developed and implemented. It is noted that the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA) is in the process of finalising its Regional Floodplain Management Plan. This plan will recommend the creation of additional, localised floodplain management plans;
- Ensure that the planning scheme flood overlays (ie. both the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and Floodway Overlay (FO)) are updated to accurately reflect the true extent of land liable to flooding, and ensure that flood risk at various locations within the floodplain are accurately recorded;
- Ensure that urban stormwater flows into water bodies are in accordance with the requirements of the *Water Act 1989*, to ensure that future development proposals do not have an adverse impact on the health of the waterway;
- Implement stormwater management programs to prevent nutrient and sediment loads entering waterways;
- Manage soil erosion in the urban environment and surrounding rural hinterland to prevent sedimentation of waterways and minimise risk to property;
- Ensure that impacts of the Bairnsdale Saleyards and East Gippsland Water sewerage plant on the McLeod Morass are minimised;
- Undertake stormwater management pilot project in the Bairnsdale area.

Cultural heritage:

- Manage sites of identified by the *Bairnsdale City Heritage Study*, the Register of the National Estate, the Victorian Heritage Register, the National Trust of Australia [Victoria], Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and/or the Heritage Overlay in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*;
- Ensure that developers are sensitive to Aboriginal cultural values, and encourage developers of major projects in the region to carry out full archaeological surveys and detailed consultation with local Aboriginal communities in accordance with the requirements of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Coastal areas:

- Take into account the effects of anticipated climate change, including increased storm events and sea-level rise, in coastal planning; and
- Review and implement existing coastal strategies in light of the recently released amendments to the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*.

In addition to the MSS, the following local policies are of relevance to environmental considerations in Bairnsdale:

- Clause 22.09 (Identification of development constraints) seeks to ensure that development is compatible with any particular development constraints such as flooding, erosion, environmental constraints, potentially contaminated land and salinity.
- Clause 22.10 (Heritage) establishes a number of policies in relation to heritage precincts within Bairnsdale. Where there is the potential for heritage places to occur, this clause provides the framework for Council to consider the impacts of any buildings and works on places of heritage value.
- Clause 22.11 (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage) seeks to ensure that development also has proper regard to areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. This clause seeks to encourage developers to undertake an assessment of aboriginal cultural values on their land for major proposals.

## 9.2 River and wetlands

Bairnsdale is located on the Mitchell River, several kilometres inland from the river mouth where the waterway joins Lake King. The Mitchell River, its backwater (otherwise known as Clifton Creek) and associated floodplains have largely influenced the settlement patterns of the town.

The Mitchell River floodplain is well-defined, with significant banks and escarpments forming in both sides of the floodplain due to historical flooding and erosion. Due to the low lying nature of town and its location near the mouth of the River, significant land is susceptible to flooding, wildfire or erosion upon development. As a result, the floodplain is mostly covered by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and Erosion Management Overlay (refer to Figure 9). The EMO aims to protect areas prone to

erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development. The EGCMAs has advised that a proposed amendment to the East Gippsland Planning Scheme will update flood mapping to identify all areas of the floodplain that are likely to be inundated in anything up to a 1 in 100 year flood event.

Two nationally significant wetlands are located within the study area: Lake King and McLeod Morass (refer to Figure 9). These water bodies form part of the broader Gippsland Lakes Ramsar wetlands. The town currently has a poor interface to the McLeod Morass, with much of the interface being shared with an industrial area – the Bairnsdale Saleyards about the McLeod Morass to the west. Opportunities to provide connections between the Morass, Lake King and the Mitchell River will be of considerable importance to the Strategy.

Significant works (such as the removal of woody weeds, erosion management by geofabrics and replanting of banks with native vegetation) have been undertaken recently in the wetlands, with evidence of re-establishing flora and fauna reflecting the ecological integrity of the wetland. Opportunities to continue to improve the quality of the wetlands will be another important component of the Strategy.

### 9.3 Vegetation

The landscape and vegetation both within and surrounding Bairnsdale have been extensively modified by land clearing. Much of the surrounding land, particularly east and west of the town, is now utilized for cattle grazing, with land to the north utilized predominantly for rural living. Historically, these rural activities have contributed to the depletion of indigenous vegetation in the township over time. As such, most vegetation has a conservation significance of being either depleted or endangered in the bioregion (refer to Figure 10).

The DSE mapping identifies that most of the remnant vegetation is located along the Mitchell River and associated Clifton Creek. Visual inspections of these areas indicate that the River is heavily infested in parts with weeds including willow and poplar trees.

Other significant vegetation in Bairnsdale is noted as follows:

- Some significant Red Gums are located within the established subdivision to the north of town;
- Spotted Gums are an important environmental feature of town, particularly along the Princes Highway where they act as an important entry statement;
- Nationally threatened vegetation communities occur in the surrounding area including Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis subsp. mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland;
- Significant roadside vegetation is contained within road reserves on roads to the north and west of town. This vegetation is contained within the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 1 (Tambo-Bairnsdale Roadside Vegetation Protection Framework);

- Plane trees along the river bank in the town provide an important cultural feature.

Although indigenous vegetation has been extensively modified, the township is not devoid of vegetation characteristics. There are extensive plantings of exotic and native vegetation that assist in establishing a landscape character for Bairnsdale. The central gardens in the Main Street are a significant asset to the town; however the inconsistency in planting and hierarchy in this area and the surrounding streets reduces the legibility of the landscape and the way-finding ability for pedestrians and visitors to the town.

#### **9.4 Agricultural land**

Broadly speaking, agricultural activity has been relatively limited in East Gippsland. The climate, topography and high proportion of land within public ownership has limited agriculture to better quality lands along the river valleys and plateaus.

In terms of its economic value, the East Gippsland Regional Catchment identifies that, although occupying only about 18% of East Gippsland's land mass, agricultural production contributes approximately \$142 million to the economy. ABS data reveals that in the Bairnsdale SLA, the total value of agriculture in 2001 was \$11.2 million with horticultural crops worth approximately \$5.3 million, livestock slaughtered (\$4.2 million) and animal products (1.7 million).

A study the Bairnsdale and Dargo Plains (*East Gippsland Landcare Network, 2005*) reveals that soils in the area are variable and suited to a variety of agricultural enterprises, but predominantly pasture and grazing. Appendix 3 provides a synopsis of the key soil types and locations in this regard.

The biggest threat to agricultural land surrounding Bairnsdale has historically been land fragmentation particularly from rural living in particular to the north of town. The RCS recognises the value of agriculture to the economy and cultural values of the region. Agriculture has enabled industries such as vegetable packing to establish in the township which is a major employment generator. It is critical therefore that highly valued agriculture land is protected from inappropriate development.

#### **9.5 Cultural heritage**

##### **9.5.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage**

There is a strong presence of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Bairnsdale, reflecting the significant Aboriginal population and tradition of the locality. It is noted that the Gunai Kurnai is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the region. The Gunai Kurnai consisted of five major indigenous clans who occupied much of Gippsland and the southern slopes of the Victorian Alps prior to European settlement. It has been advised that Bairnsdale has been developed on a camping ground of the Gunai Kurnai people and has significant potential for new archaeological sites to be discovered.

As shown in Figure 11, the township comprises a number of significant cultural heritage sites. Being of significance to the traditional indigenous inhabitants, a high proportion of sensitive areas are located along the river and floodplains in and around Bairnsdale. Given the role of fishing and travel, the rivers have a high potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage, as do highpoints proximate to the rivers which were used for camping. All new development will be required to be cognisant of such significance via appropriate siting and design of built form.

### 9.5.2 Early European cultural heritage

Remnants of Bairnsdale development as a township still exist today. The discovery of gold in the 1850's in the areas surrounding Bairnsdale attracted an influx of miners to the area. The Mitchell River Crossing led to the developments of rail, road and water transport into the area that has become the township. Crop farming and dairying in the 1870's-1890's lead to the establishment of creameries and a butter factory in Bairnsdale and as the population and trade grew, many fine buildings were erected in the town during these years.

Today, three heritage precincts have been identified in Bairnsdale:

- **Heritage Precinct No. 1** – Riverine Street and Nicholson Street, is recognised for its remaining public buildings, including two churches, two major stores, two professional residences, and five other public buildings;
- **Heritage Precinct No. 2** – Main Street, includes the gardens and its ceremonial elements, and the traditional commercial centre of the town (except the Nicholson Street department stores);
- **Heritage Precinct No. 3** – Mitchell River Valley, including the Mitchell River Crossing

Today, a number of buildings and sites have been recognised by the Heritage Council of Victoria for their cultural significance at the State level. These include:

- Bairnsdale Pumping Station, Jennings Street
- Bairnsdale Court House, 14 Nicholson Street
- East Gippsland Shire Library (Former Bairnsdale Mechanics Institutes), 20 Service Street
- St Mary's Catholic Church, 240-256 Main Street
- Bairnsdale Wharf, Paynesville Road
- The Bairnsdale to Orbost Railway, Bairnsdale – Orbost
- Rail Bridge, over Stony Creek, Orbost-Bairnsdale
- Bullumwall Gold mining site, Bairnsdale – Bullumwaal Road

The Heritage overlay also recognises several residential houses and buildings in Bairnsdale for their municipal heritage significance.



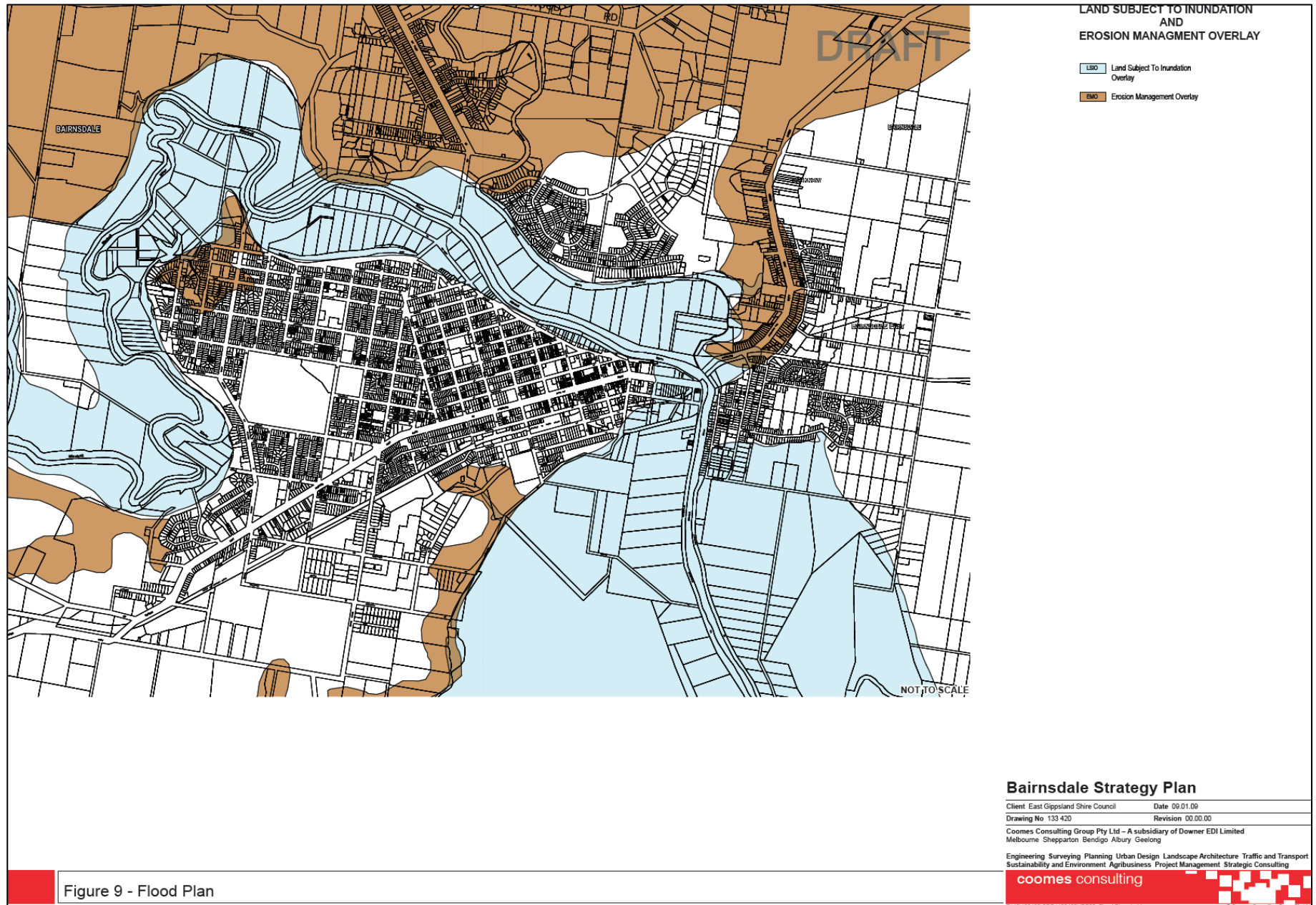


Figure 9 - Flood Plan

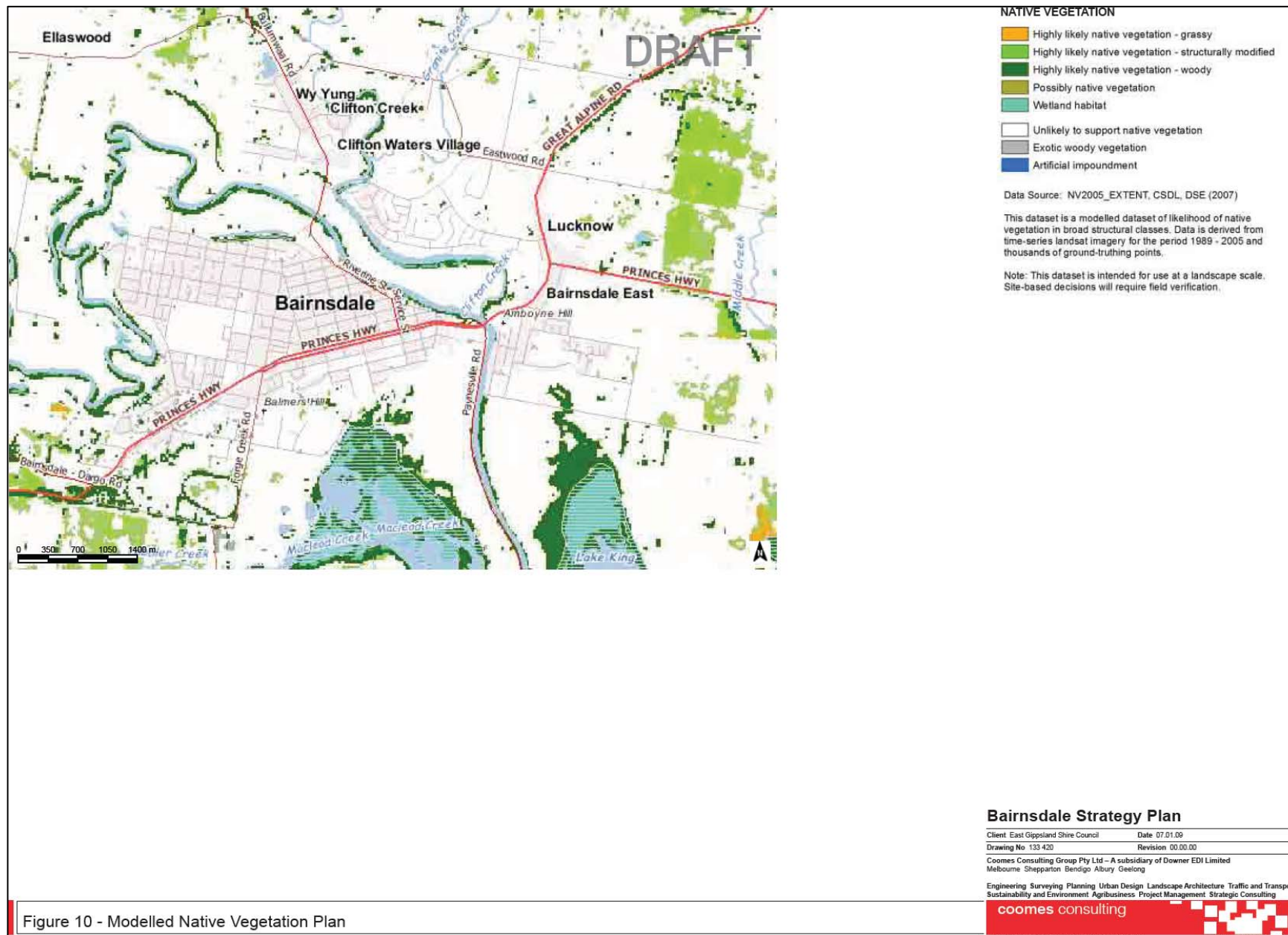


Figure 10 - Modelled Native Vegetation Plan



**Bairnsdale Strategy Plan**

Client: East Gippsland Shire Council	Date: 09.01.09
Drawing No: 133.420	Revision: 00.00.00

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Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management Strategic Consulting

**coomes consulting**

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Figure 11- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



## 9.6 Opportunities and constraints

Based on the preceding analysis, the key opportunities and constraints concerning environmental assets vis-à-vis future growth opportunities for Bairnsdale are summarised below, and illustrated on Figure 12.

### Constraints

- Land between the Mitchell River and associated Clifton Creek creates a significant barrier between the north and south the township which is difficult to overcome;
- Significant areas of land adjacent to, and surrounding the river and Clifton Creek are flood prone;
- Climate change and predicted associated extreme weather events have the potential to increase the frequency and severity of flood events, including potentially raising the 1:100 year flood level;
- A number of buildings are located within the flood prone land in the Mixed Use Zone;
- Not only is there are large area of river bank to manage, but there is extensive privately owned land adjacent to the banks of the Mitchell River and Clifton Creek, limiting the ability to provide for a single management plan along the river;
- Public access to the river bank largely unrestricted on public land;
- Stock access to the river bank in some areas creates the ongoing potential for erosion and degradation of the bank and riparian vegetation;
- There are significant weed infestations along the river, including of willows and poplars;
- There is a lack of connectivity between existing habitat remnants due to land clearing for agricultural use, especially between Paynesville Road and the McLeod Morass. This presents a significant constraint to linking the habitat areas of Morass, Mitchell River and Lake King;
- There are also limited opportunities to provide habitat sinks due to extensive development-based land clearing for rural living purposes;
- Rural land to the north of town is highly fragmented due to rural residential living;
- Vegetation and intact remnant EVC's are isolated from one-another, with riparian vegetation along Mitchell River and Clifton Creek being highly fragmented;
- The township relies on traditional, sometimes outmoded drainage systems, except in newer subdivisions where wetlands are being incorporated into design responses;
- There is the potential for significant Aboriginal cultural material to be found in all high points of the surrounding area and adjacent to the river which may constrain development opportunities.

### Opportunities

- Create opportunities to connect habitat areas between McLeod Morass, Lake King and the Mitchell River, as well as along rural roadways;

- Improve habitat as information becomes available or significant habitat sites are identified on private land by updating Environmental Significance overlays (ESO) and Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPO);
- Utilise grants available from the EGCMA to improve habitat linkages and control weeds;
- Improve habitat quality along river bank. There are several good examples of appropriate public access to the river bank including pontoons and jetties in designated locations;
- Manage erosion, particularly to flood plain edges and banks of the Mitchell River;
- Improve conservation value in reserves adjacent to waterways whilst retaining recreational values particularly to south of Eastwood estate;
- Improve walkways and paths to McLeod Morass, especially from the centre of town;
- Explore opportunities for revegetation of VicRoads land and former railway land;
- Retain and strengthen significant exotic vegetation rows including Poplar trees, willow tree rows and *Corymbia maculata* (spotted gum rows to the entrance of town);
- Improve the quality of stormwater discharge that enters local waterways through utilization of wetland systems in new development proposals, which is already beginning to occur with some newer estates;
- Minimise the risk of exposure to flooding for land to the south of the township long term strategy to revert this land to provide a public purpose and conservation purpose potentially.
- Incorporate indigenous cultural heritage into conservation reserves through information boards etc;
- Consider the potential of urban forests in new residential areas;
- Protect individual buildings and places of heritage significance within Bairnsdale, as identified by the *Bairnsdale Heritage Study* and Heritage Overlay.



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## 10 Traffic and Transport

Being a regional town bisected by the Princes Highway, Bairnsdale has a range of traffic and transport issues. The following is a synopsis of the key issues and challenges derived from an analysis of pertinent policy, existing conditions and stakeholder consultation. The analysis leads to the identification of a series of key opportunities and constraints.

### 10.1 Transport planning policy framework

The following is a synopsis of the pertinent planning policies regarding traffic and transport in Bairnsdale from both a State and local perspective.

#### 10.1.1 State policy

##### **The Victorian Transport Plan (Department of Transport, 2008)**

The *Victorian Transport Plan* sets out the Government's vision for transforming the State's transport networks through an investment of \$38 billion in projects and initiatives. Initiatives and policies relevant to the Bairnsdale Growth Strategy include:

- Improving transport links across regional Victoria and between regional Victoria and Melbourne to support jobs and population growth;
- Supporting the future development of Port of Hastings;
- Providing more bus connections and flexible transport options for regional towns in order to improve access;
- Promoting enhanced integration of services, particularly bus and train services in regional areas;
- Supporting the “Transport Connections” program, to develop locally responsive transport initiatives;
- Support the development of intermodal freight hubs in regional areas to take pressure off the road network;
- Upgrading regional rail stations – minor works at Bairnsdale station have been included in the VTP;
- Improving bus services both within and between regional centres;
- Improving rail trails and cycling paths; and
- Upgrading the regional rail freight network to provide for transporting grain, livestock, dairy, horticulture, wine, resources and timber.

#### 10.1.2 Local policy

##### **Gippsland Transport Strategy (prepared for SEATS, February 2005)**

The *Draft Gippsland Transport Strategy* investigates opportunities to improve the transport of goods and people within the Gippsland Region. This study is currently being updated. The Draft Strategy outlines key issues and opportunities for the region. It supports the:



- Development of a truck bypass route for Bairnsdale to remove heavy vehicle traffic from Main Street;
- Development of a road-rail intermodal facility at Bairnsdale; and
- Better integration of public transport services through the Transport Connections program.

**Bairnsdale Heavy Vehicle Study (Turnbull Fenner & Earth Tech, August 2002)**

The *Bairnsdale Heavy Vehicle Study* investigated potential locations for a new truck route around Bairnsdale in order to improve the amenity and safety of Main Street and the surrounding commercial and residential areas. The report recommended three potential bypass routes.

**10.2 Existing conditions**

**10.2.1 Roads and parking**

**Roads**

Bairnsdale sits on the Princes Highway (Hwy) East (A1), approximately 280km south-east of Melbourne. It also forms the southern start to the Great Alpine Road (B500), linking East Gippsland to the north-east of Victoria across the Great Dividing Range. The remaining arterial road is Service Street, becoming Riverine Street and then Wy Yung Road (C603). The remainder of roads within Bairnsdale are local roads.

The Princes Hwy is part of the State’s Principal Freight Network. Traffic volumes on the Princes Hwy are shown in Table 19. The table shows that in 2006, total traffic volumes on the Princes west of Traralgon were approximately 12,000 vehicles per day and total volumes to the east of Bairnsdale were approximately 6,000 vehicles per day. Around 12% of the vehicles are heavy vehicles.

There is a signed heavy vehicle bypass route for Bairnsdale, directing traffic along Macleod Street, to the south of Main Street, connecting back to the Princes Highway via Paynesville Road, prior to crossing the Mitchell River.

**Table 19: Average daily traffic volumes 2006**

Location	Total Vehicles		Heavy Vehicles (incl in total)	
	5-Day Av	7-Day Av	5-Day Av	7-Day Av
100m west of Racecourse Road	12,356	11,158	1,555	1,348
900m east of Ellasville Road	5,968	5,633	778	692





## Parking

There is on-street parking within the commercial areas catering around Main Street and Service Street and to the south in Macleod Street. There are selected off-street car-parks servicing the supermarket and other commercial facilities.

Also at the Bairnsdale train station there are approx 25 commuter car spaces for V/Line customers and 10 car spaces for V/Line staff in a locked compound. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many train users' park on-street near the station.

### 10.2.2 Public transport

#### Rail

The broad gauge Gippsland line extends from Melbourne to Bairnsdale and is used for both passenger and freight trains; also the Bairnsdale line is identified as part of Victoria's Principal Freight Network.

There is a single track accommodating movement from Moe to Bairnsdale and both freight and passenger services share the same track apart from separation of loading facilities. Passenger trains are stabled at the Bairnsdale station platform when not in use.

V/Line operates passenger services between Melbourne and Bairnsdale. There are three services from Mondays to Saturdays and two services on Sundays (refer Table 20). Longer-term planning indicates increasing passenger services to five per day, although timing of this is unknown.

Finally, there is an inter-modal freight terminal at Bosworth Road. There is one train per day, operating five days per week, exporting logs to Melbourne and Geelong.

**Table 20 – Daily rail passenger services**

	Monday to Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Departing Bairnsdale</b>	06:20 12:40 17:45	06:40 12:25 16:30	07:50 16:30
<b>Arriving Bairnsdale</b>	11:30 17:06 22:02	11:25 16:00 22:01	12:12 22:01

#### Bus/Coach

Bairnsdale station bus interchange has V/Line coach services operating to Canberra, Merimbula/Pambula, Lakes Entrance/Lake Tyers, Sale and Omeo; while local bus services operate from Bairnsdale to Paynesville, Omeo, Lakes Entrance and Buchan



In addition to the Bairnsdale Station bus interchange, there are bus stops on the northern side of Main Street, near the corner of Bailey Street and in McCulloch Street between Main Street and Macleod Street.

There are three local bus services operating within Bairnsdale, servicing West Bairnsdale, East Bairnsdale and Wy Yung. These services provide access for shopping or other services, though there are either limited or no services during the commuter peak periods.

The Department of Transport has just commissioned GHD to conduct the Bairnsdale/Paynesville Bus Review. As part of this review, consultation will be conducted during February and March 2009. The review will make recommendations for local town bus services in Bairnsdale and connecting services to and from Paynesville.

### **Taxi**

Bairnsdale has one taxi operator with a fleet of eleven taxis with a taxi zone on the northern side of Main Street, west of the corner of Bailey Street.

Due to unavailability of public transport, taxis are sometimes used for trips between Bairnsdale and other local town centres, such as Paynesville, Metung and Lakes Entrance. The cost of these fares is very high. Taxi services are less affordable unless used for trips around town.

The Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) operates in Victoria and provides subsidised fares up to a capped amount for eligible users.

### **Pedestrian/Cycling**

Pedestrian and cycling facilities around the township of Bairnsdale are relatively poor. Apart from footpaths adjacent to main roads within the commercial centre of Bairnsdale and there are limited pedestrian paths.

There is a pedestrian overpass of the railway line, in line with McCulloch Street linking the areas south of the rail line to the main commercial and retail area north of the rail line.

Pedestrian crossings of Main Street are provided at the signalised intersections of McCulloch Street, Service Street and Bailey Street. In addition there is a pedestrian-only signal crossing Main Street between Services Street and Bailey Street. Council has received funding by the State Government's Local Area Access Program for a pedestrian and cycling connectivity project across the Mitchell River.

## **10.3 Opportunities and constraints**

Based on the preceding analysis, the key opportunities and constraints concerning traffic and transport vis-à-vis future growth opportunities for Bairnsdale are summarised below.

### **Constraints:**

- Support long-term planning investigations to identify a bypass route for the Princes Highway. The Government has committed to duplicating the Princes Highway between Traralgon and Sale. However, no planning for bypasses or duplication of the Princes Highway east of Sale is currently being conducted.
- Promote and enforce the existing heavy vehicle bypass route (using Macleod Street) through Bairnsdale.
- There are currently only three train services operating to Melbourne each day. Increasing these services is constrained by the existing track and signal infrastructure and the existing bridge over the Avon River at Stratford. In order to increase the number of Bairnsdale to Melbourne services available, explore operating express coaches from Bairnsdale to Traralgon to connect into train services at Traralgon.

### **Opportunities:**

- Investigate removing the road reserve for realignment of the Princes Highway through East Bairnsdale. Following engineering works at the intersection of the Great Alpine Road and Princes Highway, VicRoads has advised that the road reserve may no longer be required and other options for use of this land should be investigated.
- Investigate expanding the intermodal operations at a site to the west of Bairnsdale. Incorporate the existing timber freight operations at Bosworth Road. This would potentially remove some heavy vehicle traffic from Bairnsdale's Main Street.
- Investigate connectivity opportunities south of Eastwood Estate;
- Investigate parking supply around the commercial/retail precinct. Current total supply seems adequate; however greater enforcement of time limits could be improved.
- Investigate extending the car parking at Bairnsdale train station for all-day and overnight stays.
- Investigate greater security measures such as CCTV for train station parking.
- Investigate re-design of several off-street commercial car parks for greater ease of use.
- Provide peak-hour coach services connecting to other regional centres such as Sale and Traralgon (before 9am and after 5pm).
- Provide better integration of rail and bus and coach timetables.
- Provide peak hour services (before 9am and after 5pm) for intra-town bus services in Bairnsdale, servicing Eastwood, Lucknow, East Bairnsdale, Wy Yung, Mt Taylor, Bruthen, Lindenow, Paynesville, Newlands Arm, Eagle Point.
- Provide intra-town bus stops servicing key social, educational and employment nodes such as the TAFE, schools, childcare, major employers (Patties, Vegco, Bairnsdale Regional Hospital, East Gippsland Shire Council offices).
- Provide peak hour services (before 9am and after 5pm) for inter-town bus services between Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance and Metung.
- Provide inter-town services on weekends between Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Paynesville.



- Improve pedestrian links to the train station, to the retail and commercial precinct centred around Main Street and north of Main Street.
- Provide continuous pedestrian access along the Mitchell River;
- Investigate providing a pedestrian/cycling path from East Gippsland into the town centre. (Potentially linking Mary Street and Macleod Street via a pedestrian bridge over the Mitchell River.)
- Provide more permeable pedestrian pathways to the Mitchell River for East Bairnsdale.
- Rationalise mid-block turning points in Main Street median strip to use this land for either additional public open space or more car parking.

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## 11 Services and Infrastructure

Overall, Bairnsdale is generally well-serviced by physical infrastructure. The following is a review of existing conditions each of the following key services, followed by a synopsis of opportunities and constraints:

- Water supply;
- Sewerage;
- Recycled water supply;
- Drainage;
- Gas;
- Telecommunications; and
- Power.

### 11.1 Existing conditions

#### 11.1.1 Water supply

East Gippsland Water (EGW) is the authority responsible for the supply of potable water and the collection and treatment of wastewater within the Bairnsdale region. At present EGW considers that there is capacity for both sewerage and water to cater for future growth, however will determine the need for system augmentation works depending on the preferred growth option contained in the Strategy.

Plans for future upgrades are contained within EGW's Water Plan 2008-2013. This Plan includes the *Mitchell River Water Supply Augmentation program* (to cover the next 15 years).

The Mitchell River Water Supply Augmentation Program will improve water quality in the Mitchell River Supply System (MRWSS) serving Bairnsdale, Paynesville, Bruthen, Metung and Lakes Entrance. This program includes five major phases:

- Covering all open storage basins to protect water quality and reduce evaporation
- Construction of a second major Bairnsdale Storage
- Water Treatment Plant at Woodglen, at the head of the MRWSS (largest cost in the program)
- Pump Station Upgrades
- Pipeline replacement and duplication

The total expenditure for this program is \$38 million over the next 10-15 years.

#### 11.1.2 Sewerage

EGW identified that currently there are some capacity issues with the existing sewer system. EGW are yet to advise of the areas of concern/capacity constraints. This

information is subject to the preparation of *Master Plan Modelling* for Bairnsdale. This is a two year process that is currently underway. It is anticipated that the Modelling will highlight the sewer network constraints, and augmentation works required over the next 10 years

To cater for future growth in the study area, it is anticipated that the following works will be required:

- Upgrade to the Bairnsdale Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Pipeline replacement and duplication
- Pump Station Upgrades

EGW's Water Plan 2008-2013 outlines the sewerage augmentation works required over this period.

### **11.1.3 Recycled water supply**

EGW currently achieve 100% wastewater reuse. Currently wastewater that is collected from the surrounding district is filtered and treated at Bairnsdale WWTP. Re-use water is used at the Macleod Morass and the Bairnsdale racecourse, and other urban and industrial uses.

Increased growth and development in the area will create larger volumes of wastewater which in turn will create larger volumes wastewater reuse. Hence, improvements and upgrades will be required to Bairnsdale Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Plant in order to treat these larger volumes of effluent to an appropriate class for reuse.

EGW recognise the importance of providing recycled water to the community, however they do not have any plans in the short-term to deliver recycled water supply (via 3<sup>rd</sup> pipe) to residential or industrial developments. EGW have plans to assess the viability of delivering such services.

### **11.1.4 Drainage**

The East Gippsland Shire Council is responsible for the local drainage network within the region. Council have identified that currently there are not any drainage/flooding issues within Bairnsdale. However, there is some concern surrounding the Dahlsens property development near Phillips La and Princes Highway. Council drainage engineers have identified this area to be considerably flat which has resulted in some ponding and flooding. In conjunction with the engineering consultants for this development and with Council, a Stormwater Strategy is being undertaken to assess and treat the inundated land. Most flood prone areas are covered by the LSIO around the Mitchell River floodplain.

Despite the above, Council note that they expect future growth in the north of Bairnsdale to undergo major drainage redesign and upgrades of waterways, and to redefine catchments, in order for sustainable development to occur. As per Clause 56

(residential subdivision provisions) of the planning scheme, all future residential developments will need to incorporate provisions for best practice management of stormwater runoff, including the use of treatment wetlands and other Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) features. Any works in or adjacent to a waterway will also need approval from the EGCMA, under the *Water Act 1989*.

Information on local urban stormwater catchments and plans are currently being provided by Council.

#### **11.1.5 Gas**

APA (Envestra) is the authority responsible for providing reticulated gas to the Bairnsdale area. Currently there are no capacity issues.

Major infrastructure works would be required to service the area should future growth and development occur. There is a potential opportunity to tap off the high pressure 125mm transmission line on the Princes Fwy to service the area, however further consideration of this option will be required.

#### **11.1.6 Telecommunications**

Telstra are responsible for providing telecommunication services to the Bairnsdale area. According to their existing asset plans, they have local and main telephone copper cables and optic fibre. Telecommunications services could be extended to the area to meet development requirements.

Telstra do not plan/forecast planning requirements more than 12 months in advance.

#### **11.1.7 Power**

SP-AusNet provides power to the Bairnsdale area. SP-AusNet has advised that they have 3 Phase overhead and underground supplies within the vicinity of the study area.

Bairnsdale is supplied via a 66kV/22kV zone substation located at the intersection of Great Alpine Rd & Eastwood Rd, this substation also supplies the area including Paynesville, Metung, Lakes Entrance, Omeo, Buchan, Lindenow, and Dargo.

Several 66kV lines originating from the Morwell Termination station supply the East Gippsland area (Traralgon onwards) and is supported by the Bairnsdale Switching station that includes the 80MW Babcock & Brown gas power station.

The location of the study area is ideally situated (from the electrical infrastructure perspective), with the existing Bairnsdale zone substation in close proximity.

The expected works overtime would include capacity upgrade within the zone substation to cater for the new load, and new power lines to support the additional customer load.



Capacity to cater for future growth will be determined based on expected loadings, timelines and proportion of industry/commercial and residential development etc post preparation of the Strategy.

SP-AusNet have confirmed that Patties do not have their own feeder line and are using approximately 6MW of Low Voltage (LV) supply. This has resulted in Patties reporting a “reduced quality of supply”. The problem can be alleviated if they were to request SP-AusNet provide a dedicated High Voltage (HV) power line to service the Patties factory. The cost for this upgrade would be approximately several \$100,000, payable by Patties.

## 11.2 Opportunities and constraints

Based on the above analysis, there are a number of opportunities and constraints to growth, as summarised below:

### **Opportunities:**

- A lack of constraint with regards to water, gas, telecommunications and power supply means that new development can be readily connected to these services.

### **Constraints:**

- Works required to some services to accommodate future growth will create an impost on new development. Whilst costs in relation to water supply and recycled water appear to be minimal at this stage, major works required for sewerage, drainage and gas may affect housing affordability.



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## 12 Summary of Conclusions

This background report provides an overall synthesis of key technical information and data to inform the future direction of sustainable growth and development in the *Bairnsdale Growth Strategy*. The key messages that have emerged in this analysis are as follows:

- Bairnsdale currently has a significant supply of zoned land for residential purposes. This land will be taken up at various rates over the next 15 years. Due to changing demographics, lead times for development and a desire to establish multiple development fronts, Council accepts that the Strategy should identify future residential growth areas including land for staged priority rezonings in the medium term. Direction regarding the maintenance of a town boundary will be included in the Strategy to help guide and manage future growth pressure.
- The role of Paynesville and Metung in supporting the residential growth pressure in Bairnsdale will need to be factored into the supply requirements of the Strategy. It is acknowledged that given the proximity of these townships to Bairnsdale, and the lifestyle offer they present, these areas will absorb some of the residential demand.
- The economic profile of Bairnsdale is defined by jobs for service industry, health, education and retail workers. The local economy has strengths in food production and processing with key industry such as Patties and Vegco providing significant employment opportunities in town. Opportunities to diversify the economic base through skills training and education within the township will be sought through the Strategy.
- The Bairnsdale community is reasonably well served with community and recreation assets. Opportunities to rationalise some of the active open space areas has been identified as key recreation issue.
- Opportunities to provide services and support for aged and low income earners is a priority focus for community infrastructure. The delivery of an integrated East Bairnsdale will also be a key component in improving the sustainability of the overall community into the future. Significant new residential communities will be required to provide passive open space and some form of convenience retailing to support the local residents and realise the development of sustainable neighbourhoods.
- The natural environment in Bairnsdale is a key asset that will require careful management when growing the town. Opportunities to both enhance, and provide better access to environmental assets such as the wetlands and River will be a focus for the Strategy.
- Improving the overall accessibility for walking, cycling and cars in Bairnsdale will be another key focus of the Strategy, particularly in order to remedy the current barriers to pedestrian movements in the CBD. General structural changes to the CBD and the location of land uses will be required to support any potential to increase pedestrian movements. Opportunities to explore an alternative truck route around the southern edge of town, through the industrial area, will be addressed in the Strategy as a way to separate this traffic from general commuter traffic. As part of restructure, some rethinking of car parking to better manage supply and demand will be undertaken.



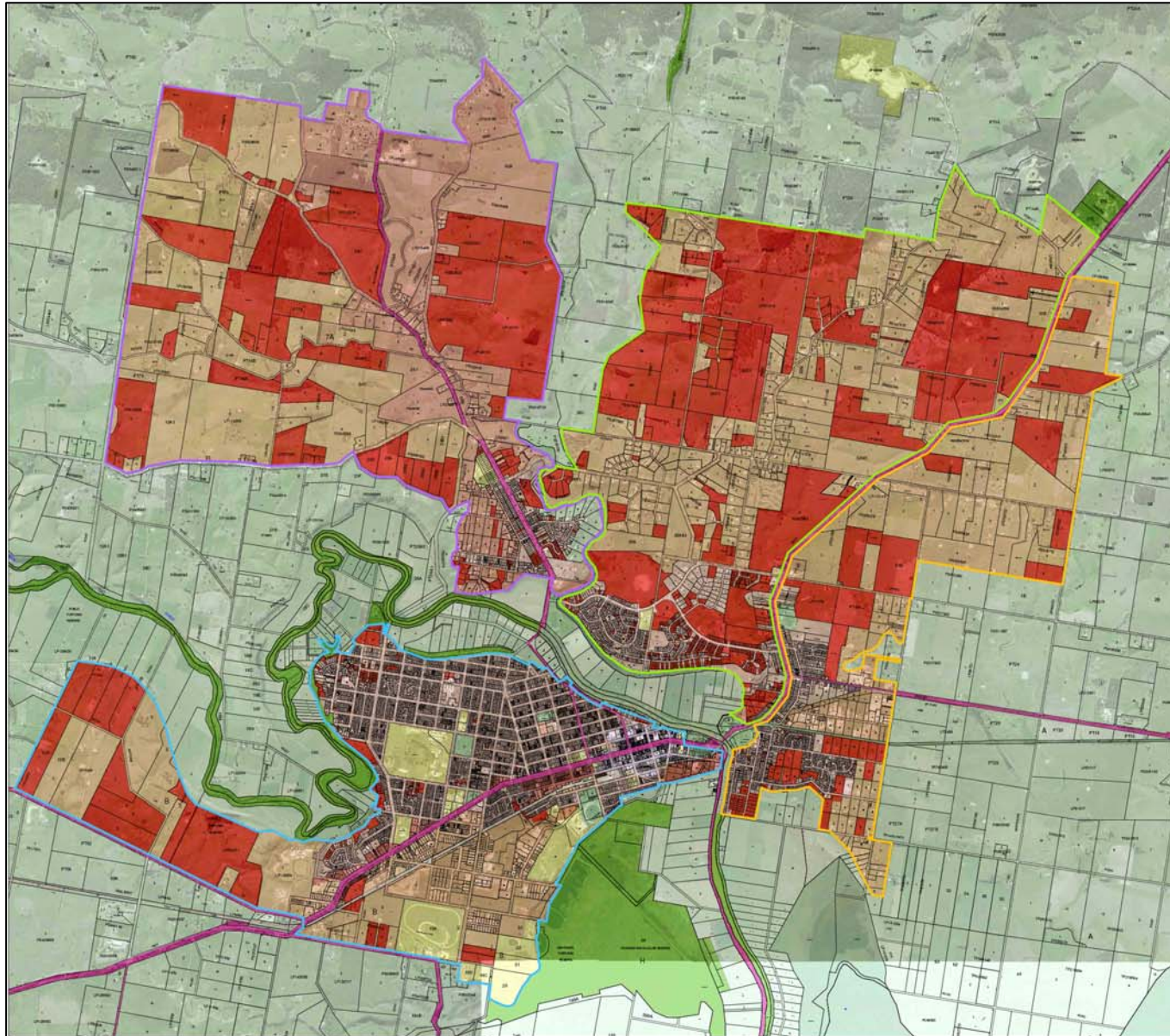
- The CBD of Bairnsdale functions as generally two core precincts north and south of Main Street. The Strategy will seek to re-think this structure and maximise development opportunities on both sides of the Highway to create clear anchors and destinations that encourage better movement and integration within the town centre. Should it be relocated, the Dahlsens site and surplus VicTrack land represent core development opportunities to re-energise the southern part of the town centre.

Each of the above key opportunities and constraints are primary influencing factors in the development of the final Strategy.



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**13      Appendix I: Areas Contained Within the Land Supply Analysis**



**Land Supply Analysis Legend**

- East Bairnsdale Precinct
- North Bairnsdale Precinct
- Bairnsdale Precinct
- Wy Yung Precinct
- Vacant Land

**Zones**

- B1Z
- B2Z
- B3Z
- C2Z1
- F2Z
- F2Z1
- F2Z2
- F2Z3
- F2Z4
- H1Z
- H2Z
- L2Z2 305.21 Ha Vacant
- M1Z
- P2Z2
- P2Z3
- P2Z4
- P2Z5
- P2Z6
- P2Z7
- R1Z 197.31 Ha Vacant
- R2Z1
- R2Z2
- R2Z3
- R2Z4
- R2Z5
- R2Z6 540.25 Ha Vacant
- R2Z7 6.6 Ha Vacant
- R2Z8 940.94 Ha Vacant
- R2Z9
- S1Z1
- S1Z2
- S1Z3
- T2



**EAST GIPPSLAND**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

<b>Client</b>	East Gippsland Shire Council	<b>Sheet</b>	1 of 1
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<b>Drawing Status</b>	Draft	<b>Date</b>	27 January 2009
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**14      Appendix 2: Detailed Overview of Key Recreation and Community  
Infrastructure Policies, Strategies and Plans**



## Recreation Policies, Strategies and Plans

### *Strategic Plan for Sporting Infrastructure (October 2008)*

This document provides an insight into current infrastructure provision. Key points specific to Bairnsdale, include:

- There is major Level I sporting and aquatic infrastructure located within Bairnsdale;
- East Gippsland Shire is generally well provisioned for sporting infrastructure – based on benchmark analysis and comparative analysis with Wellington Shire;
- The Bairnsdale City Oval (a Level I outdoor facility) is incomplete, compromising the image and usability of the venue;
- The planned indoor sports facility at Lucknow Recreation Reserve, currently limited to seniors table tennis and squash, should be reviewed for potential additional scope, including volleyball, gymnastics and gymnasium facilities;
- Aquatic provision in Bairnsdale warrants more detailed review and planning;
- Access issues / tenancy issues with the BARC should be reviewed to link to overall aquatic strategy;
- Equestrian has a fragmented provision – if achievable, plans for the new facility at the Bairnsdale Land-fill site will provide a central base;

The user group survey results identified general satisfaction with infrastructure overall, making the following observations:

- The site survey identified that the majority of playing fields and indoor courts were adequate for their use;
- WORLD centre outdoor fields are inadequate for hockey and require attention to turf quality; and
- Much of the clubhouse infrastructure at all venues is in need of repair – at least cosmetically - such as painting, fixtures and fittings.

Based on the above, the Plan identifies a range of priority capital projects, including:

- Completing renovations to the Bairnsdale City Oval (including upgrading lights, building renovations, landscaping and car parking, totalling \$380,000).
- Preparation of a Bairnsdale Equestrian Park Plan.
- Upgrading the Wy Yung Recreation Reserve with lighting (\$100,000).



*Bairnsdale City Oval Master Plan (2004) – Part 1 Master Plan, Part 2 Feasibility Study*

This document outlines key improvements required to the Bairnsdale City Oval, highlighting that the oval is the premier outdoor sports venue for Bairnsdale. The plan refers to the second part of the study which develops a feasibility study to ascertain the viability of an indoor recreation centre and social building at Bairnsdale City Oval. The plan also refers to a major redevelopment of the Peppercorn Park site as a sports playing field. Peppercorn Park is adjacent to the City Oval.

The Feasibility Study provides comparisons on the design of a new facility which incorporates both multi-function space and stadium. Eight different options are provided, ranging from several hundred thousand through to several million dollars in development. The final recommendation supports the first stage development of a 300-seat capacity facility with “provision if required in the future for a stage 2 development of an indoor multi purpose recreation or stadium like facilities.” The social facilities have been completed, however, the indoor stadium has now been moved to Lucknow Reserve as a stand-alone stadium

*East Gippsland Bicycle Strategy (1999)*

This Strategy presents a vision for 2010 in relation to cycling initiatives that promote and link community tourism, education and recreation facilities and opportunities. The Strategy specifically details cycling paths, but does not discuss walking.

The study provides a general recommendation of utilising the existing road network, and not constructing off-road trails. This approach, however, discounts use by walkers and other pedestrians, which needs to be addressed in the form of footpaths, off-road trails and foot bridges.

The Strategy identifies priority actions in terms of addressing danger points/sections in or adjacent to major towns, on routes regularly used by children. To this end, the Strategy recommends:

- Developing safe links to rail trail initiatives and other community tourist and recreation facilities; and
- Developing loop trails for recreation adjacent to major towns and key tourist centres.

The Strategy recognises that cycling and walking has become an increasing priority with a growing population of retired or older residents in the Bairnsdale area.

Key cycling linkages for Bairnsdale included “completion” of an on-road network in the main township, and “completion” of an off-road trail loop around the outskirts of Bairnsdale. Connections to new areas and walking



capacity on this network provides for an opportunity that needs to be realised in the Strategy.

*Leisure and Recreation Strategy Plan: Volume 1 (1997)*

This document is quite dated but provides some background on the provision of a hierarchy and specialisation of recreation facilities across the municipality. The recommendations are very broad - for example, “Upgrade service and support amenities at all leisure and recreation venues to improve physical access and use”.

Key priorities for action are broadly summarised as delivering:

- Venues and activities required for young people;
- Community information and liaison processes;
- Public and community transport improvement;
- Upgraded service and support amenities;
- Extended provision of indoor sports venues;
- Upgraded and expanded library facilities; and
- Improved cycle and pedestrian paths.

**Community services and facilities**

*Disability Action Plan (2007-2009)*

The disability plan is supported by the following plans and legislation:

- *East Gippsland Shire Council Community Wellbeing Plan 2005-2008;*
- *The Council Plan 2006-2010;*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Victorian Disability Act 2006*
- *Victorian State Disability Plan 2001-2012; and*
- The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

In terms of the demand for, and location of community facilities, the Plan aims to increase access to library services and recreation swimming pools. In this regard, the Plan seeks consultation with the DAC regarding plans for a new library in Bairnsdale by August 2009. The Plan also encourages comment on masterplans for an outdoor swimming pool. The locations for such facilities have not yet been determined.

*East Gippsland: Unlocking the Future – Long Term Community Vision 2030 (November 2008)*

This document denotes the vision for East Gippsland, rather than determining the demand for, and location of community facilities.

Key drivers for change in the Shire over the next 20 years are identified as:





- Climate change and resource use;
- Demographic and community change. As noted in the demographic profile provided earlier in this report, the Vision notes that the Shire has a sparse rural population. Most people live along the coast and in Bairnsdale, but there are also smaller communities which create issues of providing equitable access to services and faculties. East Gippsland will experience an ageing of its community which will impact on the workforce abilities, skills retention, health status, household structures, public safety and accessibility of services and faculties; And finally
- The increasing use and development of technology, and the increasing importance of the global community. Current levels of technology are perceived as inadequate.

The overall vision for East Gippsland is based on three central themes being liveability, sustainability and productivity. These are outlined below:

Liveability:

- Residents will relate closely to their own localities.
- Residents will have a key role in planning for the way their community runs and develops through a inclusive processes
- Increase the acceptance of cultural diversity – particularly the contribution of the Shire’s Aboriginal community will be recognised protected and opinions heard with relation to decision making about the future of the area.
- Health and community services will be delivered through a flexible means to meet the needs of all residents.
- Increase access to information and opportunities for life long learning, including schools, vocational training and tertiary education options.
- Increase recreational, cultural and sporting facilities which are supported by alternative forms of public transport.

Sustainability:

- Aim to be cleaner, healthier and more ecologically robust
- Productive, sustainably managed farmlands

Productivity:

- Create a synergy within the economy through a diverse industrial mix.
- Change in jobs due the “baby boomers” aging.

In order to achieve the vision, the following strategic actions have been noted:

- Council will use the vision to determine the strategic direction and the priorities to be taken; and



- The document will be used as a guide for developing issue-specific strategic documents.

*Five Year Arts & Culture Strategic Plan 2006/07-2010/11  
Prepared for Arts and Culture Advisory Board (March 2006)*

The aim of this five year plan is to progressively implement key strategies and actions within predetermined timeframes. The majority of objectives and strategies are concern recommendations to review policy and plan collaboratively for the future needs of the residents. Significantly, there is no mention of possible future locations of community facilities.

The Plan is supported by the following associated documents:

- *East Gippsland Shire Corporate Plan (2005-2008);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Strategic Community Plan (2005);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Community Wellbeing Plan (2005-2008);*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Municipal Strategic Statement (January 2005); and*
- *East Gippsland Shire Council Arts & Culture Policy (2004).*

*East Gippsland Early Years Plan (2005-2006)*

This Plan was formulated with the involvement of community consultation concerning East Gippsland's community facility provision for children. In relation to Bairnsdale specifically, the Plan notes that the following services are available to children:

Occasional Child Care, Long Day Child Care, Family Day Care, Playgroups, Maternal & Child Health, Pre Schools and Primary Schools.

The Plan proposes:

- A series of community and stakeholder consultations to develop a plan beyond 2005-2006;
- Research into existing models and examples of child friendly frameworks;
- Allocating adequate funding for early childhood development; and
- To work with service providers and users to determine where child care need will increase in the future.

*East Gippsland Ageing Strategy (2008-2013)*

This document is still in the planning and development stage and has not yet been drafted. Nonetheless, the key objectives of this Strategy are:

- For Council to support East Gippsland residents to age positively by fostering the provision of a range of suitable, accessible and affordable housing options.



- To provide the ageing community access to quality cultural, arts, recreation and leisure activities which can accommodate for all abilities and a broad range of interests; and
- To enable the ageing population to move about their community safely, and access services, facilities and physical infrastructure that meet their needs.

*East Gippsland Community Wellbeing Plan (2005-2008)*

This Plan is used as a check-list for councils when determining the needs of different community groups. The Plan incorporates the long term vision noted in the *East Gippsland Shire Council Plan (2003 - 2006)*. It outlines a series of actions, key performance indicators and responsible units. Primarily, the Plan concentrates on the development of further plans to help facilitate a higher level of wellbeing, with specific reference to each key focus group.

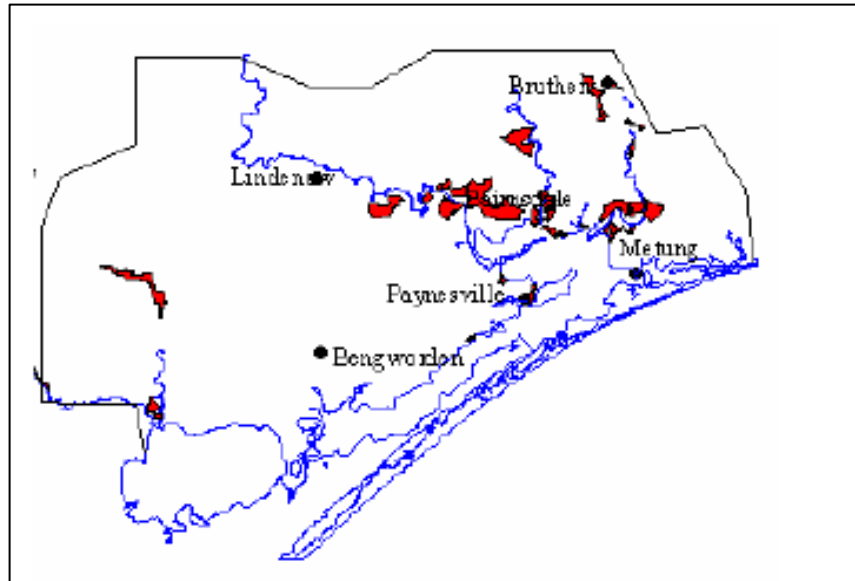
Significantly, the plan does not mention specific needs for new community facilities or their possible locations.



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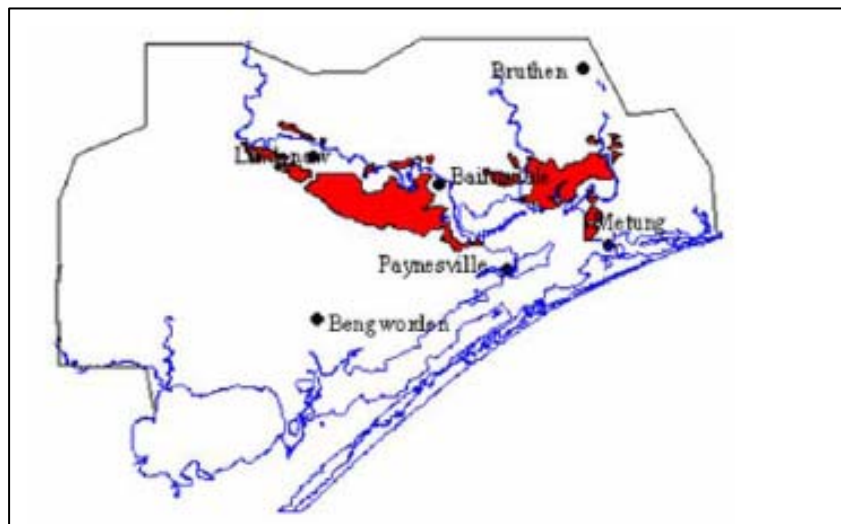
**15      Appendix 3: Agricultural Soil Types in Bairnsdale**

The following soil maps and management recommendations have been extracted from the East Gippsland Landcare Network (2005) - Sustainable Soil Management: A reference manual to the major agricultural soils of the Bairnsdale and Dargo regions.



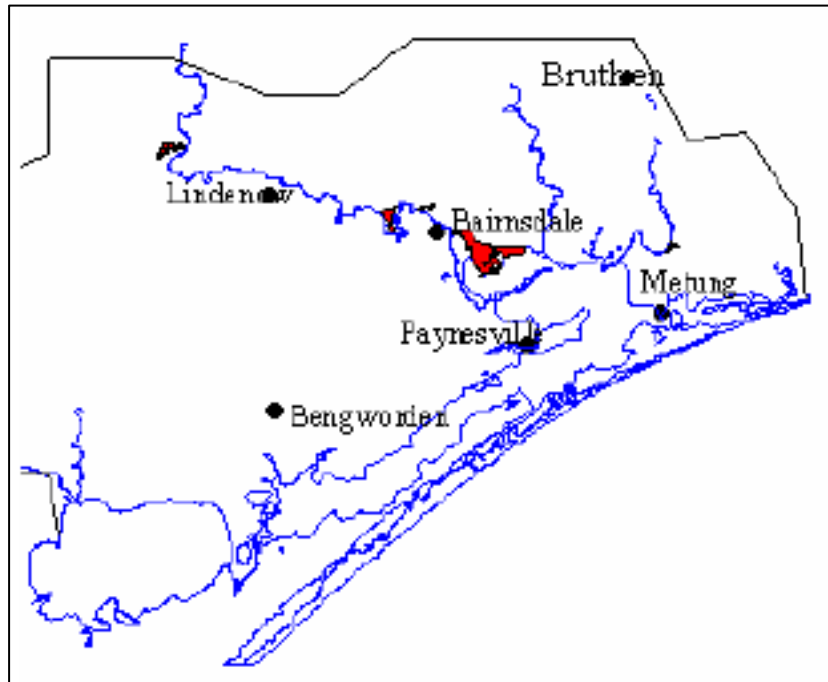
**Stratford Soil unit** – Mainly used for grazing:

- Management issues include fertilizer application, and potential for water to perch on the surface during winter and cause water-logging problems.



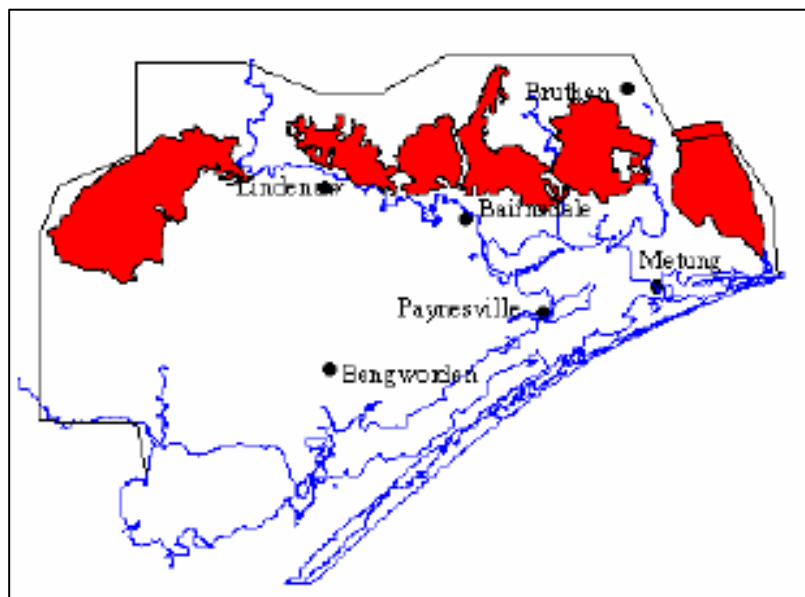
**Briagalong land unit** – land cleared and used for grazing:

- Management issues include fertilizer application, and potential for water to perch on the surface during wet winters.



**Tinamba Soil unit – Stagnant Alluvial Plain:**

- Identified as mostly used for grazing with some cropping to the west of Bairnsdale.
- No management issues identified.
- Land susceptible to flooding due to location in an alluvial plain.



**Munro Soil unit – May be used for:**

- Specialised crops (for example, horticulture and floriculture, such as Proteas) if sufficient water is available.
- As the soils are low in organic matter and clay, nutrients will be leached down the soil profile.
- Wind erosion may be a problem if the soils are left bare.
- Tunnel erosion is common over whole paddocks in this land system.



**Thomson soil unit** – May be used for:

- Pasture production, including lucerne and row crops, including asparagus.
- The likelihood of flooding is a major problem for vegetable cropping.

