

barwon heads
urban design framework
including hitchcock avenue streetscape upgrade



plān|sphēre [urban strategy planners]

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Volume 2: The Report



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Helena Buxton	Landscape Architect and Project Officer

A thank you is extended to the local community of Barwon Heads who contributed by attending the community forums and emerging ideas exhibition, completing questionnaires and sending submissions.

Steering Committee

The volunteer members of the steering committee are particularly thanked for contributing their knowledge and insights over the course of the project. Committee members were:

- Cr Craig Farrell, City of Greater Geelong
- Jan Glover, Barwon Heads Residents Association
- Greg Hahn, Barwon Heads Residents Association
- Bernard Naphthine, Barwon Heads Trader and Tourism Association
- Heather McCarthy, Barwon Heads Trader and Tourism Association
- John Duthie, Friends of the Bluff
- Bob Jordan, Barwon Coast Committee of Management
- Sally Chandler-Ford, Parks Victoria
- David McArthur, Coordinator Design Engineering Services, City of Greater Geelong
- Julian Van der Noord, Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Ian Karutz and Rod Cottrill, Vic Roads

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Foreword

The brief for this project was to prepare an urban design framework for Barwon Heads and a streetscape concept for the commercial area of Hitchcock Avenue. When the City of Greater Geelong commissioned this study, it also established some broad expectations. These included developing a shared council and community vision, identifying the community's sense of place, expressing the town's relationship with the natural environment and achieving a strong identity for the town. The project was to involve residents, businesses, developers and the Council itself.

The project was undertaken in stages aimed at ensuring an 'inter-weaving' of the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade components of the study. A concurrent traffic and parking study was interweaved with the project. A heavy emphasis was placed on consultation and participation, with community participation built around a steering committee with local people and other stakeholders. There were community forums, an emerging ideas exhibition, two questionnaires and a series of community bulletins.

Despite experience in undertaking countless studies along similar lines, the study team was overwhelmed by the interest shown in the project by local people. Barwon Heads is a beautiful coastal town. It is also a passionate and strong-willed community, in the very best senses of these terms.

This was a stimulating project to work on, and we hope that the many people who participated in its preparation feel that the results have fulfilled their expectations.

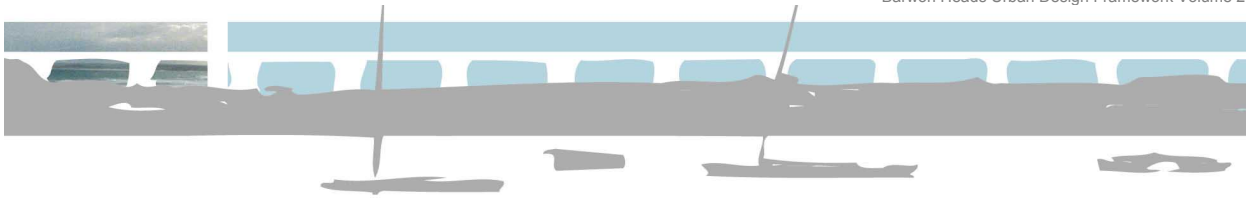
This document, Volume 2: 'The Report' contains an outline of the project brief and methodology; an explanation of the policy context for the study; a detailed description of analysis and issues; an outline of the 'key themes' for the township; and, a discussion of implementation options and recommendations. This volume is intended contain a detailed description of the methodology and other background material, while Volume 1 provides the key plans and outcomes from the study.

Mike Scott, Project Director
Claire Scott, Project Coordinator
September 2003



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1. Brief and Method





1.1 Brief

The City of Greater Geelong wished to undertake an urban design framework and streetscape project for Barwon Heads that:

Developed a shared council and community vision that:

- Identified the community's sense of place
- Expressed the town's relationship with the natural environment
- Achieved and maintained a strong identity for the town
- Took into account the community desire for 'diversity'

Provided direction for the broader community, including:

- Residents
- Businesses
- Developers
- Council

Improved access and provided safe, efficient movement networks that:

- Responded to the town's distinct character zones
- Provided pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links, including between:
 - The commercial zone
 - Recreational areas
 - The coast
 - The river foreshore
 - Residential areas
 - Community facilities
 - The Thirteenth Beach foreshore

Identified strategies to accommodate and strengthen tourism activities, that:

- Considered the different roles of the township as holiday destination and commuter residential area for Geelong
- Provided a context for considering the 'Seachange' influence and tourism trends
- Assisted with projecting future commercial trends (eg restaurant growth)

It was required that the township urban design framework address:

- Limits to growth of the township
- Sustainability of the town's expansion
- Impacts of the Thirteenth Beach Resort

The streetscape concept for the commercial area of Hitchcock Avenue was required to provide a solution that:

- Produced high quality public spaces
- Included a managed streetscape program and guidelines
- Reflected the town's special character
- Linked the commercial area to the river foreshore
- Gave expression to the 'village atmosphere' valued by the local people
- Provided support for trader and resident activity
- Defined the relationship between the township and the bridge and estuary, including the impact of future changes to the bridge



- Addressed the disjointed nature of the commercial area
- Responded to identified commercial demand (eg demand for restaurant growth)

The study area was defined as the whole of Barwon Heads, focusing on the activity centre and movement networks. The study area for the streetscape concept was specified as the commercial area of Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone Road and Bridge Road.

A copy of the project brief, which was further refined and clarified with the council's project manager prior to commencement, is included in [Appendix A](#).

Barwon Heads

Barwon Heads is located on the Bellarine Peninsula, approximately 25 kilometres south east of Geelong. It is situated at the mouth of the Barwon River and has a population of approximately 2,600 people, apart from when the influx of holiday makers during the summer period causes this number to treble.

The original inhabitants of the area were the Wathaurong people, before formal white settlement occurred in the 1870s. The first land was surveyed and original streets laid out soon after, and the small coastal town quickly became a popular holiday destination for Geelong residents. With the construction of a road to Geelong and popular vehicular ownership, Barwon Heads eventually attracted a permanent population. However, approximately one quarter of all dwellings in Barwon Heads are still holiday homes.

Barwon Heads is located in close proximity to Ocean Grove and other Bellarine Peninsula towns and enjoys good access to central Geelong and the remainder of the Surf Coast via arterial road links. Its popularity as a place to live has increased dramatically over the last couple of years, particularly since it featured as the 'seachange' town on the popular television series of the same name. This has resulted in increased land prices, the development of new residential estates and a revitalisation of the commercial centre with new restaurants and cafes, a trend set to continue in coming years.

1.2 Methodology

The project was undertaken in eight stages, concurring with the outline of tasks contained in the brief, but ensuring an 'inter-weaving' of the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade components of the study. Details on the community consultation aspects of the methodology are contained in [section 1.3](#) of this chapter.

Stage 1: Preliminaries and Literature Review

The first stage was to review the project brief and establish the process and details of the project program. This involved:

- Reading background documents
- Preparing a detailed time line, including meeting dates and consultation program
- Meeting with council officers to finalise the brief
- Establishing the steering committee membership



Stage 2: SWOT Analysis / Site and Context Analysis

This stage involved developing a clear picture of the township's constraints and opportunities, both from an urban design and planning perspective and from the local community's perspective. There was therefore survey and analysis to be undertaken by team members, and a major consultation event to involve as many people as possible in setting the parameters of the study. The following elements were involved in this stage:

- Steering committee 1
- Site analysis and survey of land use and built form. Some of the information was obtained from survey material gathered as part of the Neighbourhood Character Study, however detailed on-site surveys by an urban designer and/or planner and landscape architect were required
- Liaison with the traffic consultants to establish traffic and parking issues
- Identification of tourism management issues and opportunities
- Initial liaison with stakeholder authorities including Barwon Coast Committee of Management, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Parks Victoria, Friends of the Bluff, Vic Roads and other infrastructure providers as relevant
- Public consultation through a half day community forum in Barwon Heads

Stage 3: Identification of Vision

This stage produced three main outputs:

- An issues paper
- A site analysis report
- A draft vision statement

The source of the inputs was:

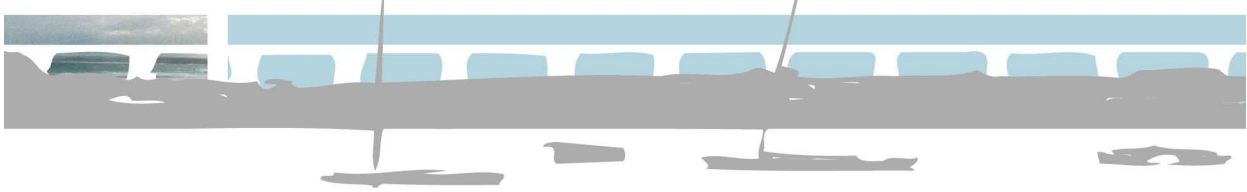
- The site analysis
- The community forum
- Previous consultation and analysis involved in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Character Study
- Steering committee discussion
- Results of the tourism research
- Input from the traffic consultants
- Input from the stakeholder authorities

The issues paper discussed all the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints of the area identified through the various consultation and analysis methods. It therefore set a brief for the remainder of the project as to which aspects were of particular concern and what questions needed to be resolved.

The draft vision statement was prepared based on all the available information and inputs from discussions with the steering committee.

Stage 4: Hitchcock Avenue Site Analysis and Issues Identification

It was necessary to commence the site analysis and issues identification of Hitchcock Avenue at this point in the process to ensure that any specific issues of relevance to the broad urban design framework were incorporated. The site analysis involved:



- Preparation of base plan and typical cross sections
- Identification of elements such as traffic lane widths, pedestrian and cycle crossing locations, desire lines, conflict points, parking and loading zones, tree and other street planting, kerb and footpath materials and street furniture

A presentation of the site analysis and preliminary issues was made to the steering committee. This information was also utilised, at this stage, in the preparation of the urban design framework 'emerging ideas'.

Stage 5: Urban Design Framework Emerging Ideas

Development of the urban design framework 'emerging ideas' involved plans and written material outlining the main features and directions of the framework. The urban design framework 'emerging ideas' addressed all issues identified earlier in the program including:

- Pedestrian and cycle linkages
- Entry points and treatments
- Vehicular movement and linkages
- Residential development impacts
- Built form and character
- Community safety
- Protection and enhancement of landscape, natural and historical features
- Functional and tourist related features
- Land use and interface management

The steering committee reviewed and commented upon the emerging directions prior to wider consultation with the Barwon Heads community. The consultation included a display of material, entitled the 'Emerging Ideas' exhibition, and sought broad comment on all aspects of the project undertaken to date. A second community forum was held in Barwon Heads during the display period.

Stage 6: Hitchcock Avenue Streetscape Options

The development and assessment of options for the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape was undertaken and included:

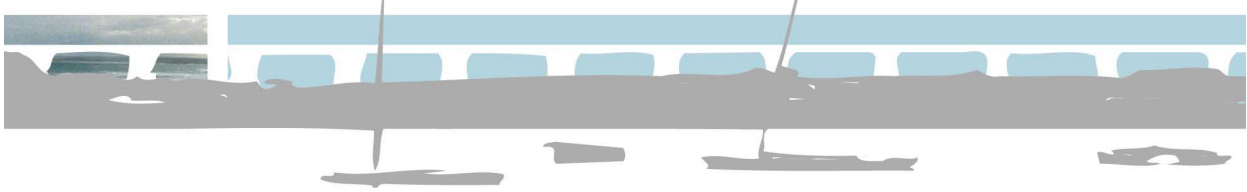
- Establishment of objectives for the streetscape upgrade
- Diagram design principles
- Rough concept plans of various options
- Typical sections
- Review with the traffic engineer and Vic Roads

The options were graphically depicted and presented to the steering committee for consideration. The options were exhibited for feedback from the wider community as part of the Emerging Ideas exhibition.

Stage 7: Final Urban Design Framework

Finalisation of the urban design framework proceeded, following receipt and analysis of community and council comments. Finalisation of the plan included:

- Preparation of a final report documenting the methodology and process, site analysis, community comment and input
- Relevant maps and plans, including earlier drafts
- Short, medium and long term actions



- Implementation plan, including capital works program. This involved the civil engineering and quantity surveyor (in relation to the streetscape upgrade concept)
- Suite of recommended planning scheme changes

Steering committee meeting 6 considered the proposed final recommendations of the urban design framework.

Stage 8: Final Hitchcock Avenue Streetscape Plan

The Hitchcock Avenue streetscape plan was also finalised following receipt and analysis of comments from the consultation process on options. Finalisation of the plan involved:

- Sketch design resolution
- Preparation of an overall streetscape plan
- Illustrative sections
- Street furniture and construction materials schedule / illustrations
- Planting scheme
- Indicative line marking and parking layout
- Indication of those aspects of the plan that will require further negotiation with Vic Roads (eg grade of pedestrian crossing)

The final directions for the streetscape plan were presented to steering committee meeting 6. The council may choose to consult further on the construction and design details of this plan during preparation of working drawings.

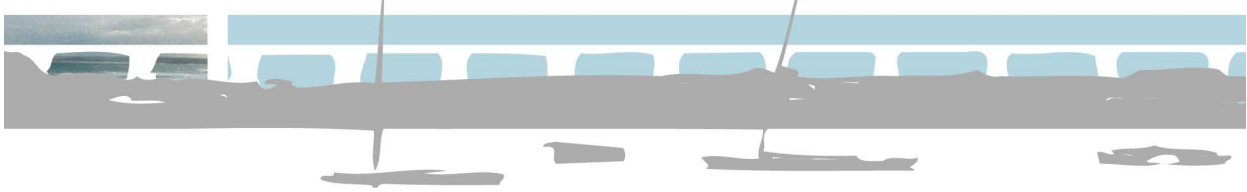
1.3 Communication and Consultation

A consultation strategy was developed with the council at the start of the study process. This focussed on three key elements, being communication, participation and consultation.

The aim of the *communication* strategy was to inform a wide audience of the existence of the study, its progress and opportunities for involvement. The *participation* strategy was to involve a necessarily small group in helping to shape the content of the study as it emerged. The *consultation* strategy provided an opportunity for widespread public comment on the issues that the study should address, emerging directions and ideas, and the final recommendations.

Therefore, the study team undertook a consultation methodology that:

- Began with establishing a strong link with the local community through considered selection of steering committee members
- Included two half day community forums at key stages of the project
- Relied on the steering committee to participate in shaping the study's outcomes
- Used a wider community exhibition to gain feedback and foster ownership as the plans were emerging
- Provided ongoing information to the wider community through community bulletins and the local media
- Assumed a broad based consultation period on the final urban design framework and streetscape concept after the conclusion of the study



Consultation and Participation

Steering Committee

Community participation was built around a steering committee, comprising representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- Barwon Heads Residents' Association
- Barwon Heads Trader and Tourism Association
- Friends of the Bluff
- Barwon Coast Committee of Management
- Parks Victoria
- Vic Roads
- Department of Sustainability and Environment
- City of Greater Geelong (Council and Departments of Urban Design and Special Projects, and Design Engineering Services)

A series of six meetings were held with the steering committee at the Barwon Heads community hall. The steering committee oversaw production of the study content, as well as acting as the operational / organisational management team for the study. Meetings occurred at key milestones throughout the study process to approve draft material and briefs for future work. The meetings allowed time for the steering committee to establish and gel, and to provide productive input into the study at key stages.

Agendas for each of the steering committee meetings are included in [Appendix B](#), and follow the format outlined below.

Meeting 1, 27 August 2002

The first steering committee meeting covered the following issues:

- Welcome and introduction of steering committee and project team members
- Presentation on study content, methodology and work program
- Discussion regarding the community consultation process, including agreement on the agenda for community forum 1
- Explanation regarding integration of the project with the concurrent Barwon Heads traffic and parking study
- Presentation on the approach to site analysis and tourism research, including a brainstorming session with the committee
- Facilitated strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis session to establish preliminary issues

Meeting 2, 9 October 2002

Steering committee meeting 2 was held after the first community forum and included discussion of the following issues:

- Presentation and discussion on findings from community forum 1
- Presentation of site analysis, issues paper and draft vision
- Presentation of tourism research
- Facilitated forum on traffic and car parking issues
- Establishment of preliminary issues for Hitchcock Avenue streetscape



Meeting 3, 30 October 2002

The third steering committee meeting focussed on the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape upgrade, and included:

- Presentation and discussion of Hitchcock Avenue site analysis and streetscape issues
- Presentation of feedback received on the draft issues paper and vision statement
- Overview on the next steps of the project
- Consideration of arrangements for the January consultation period

Meeting 4, 20 November 2002

Steering committee meeting 4 focussed on the emerging directions for the urban design framework, and included:

- Presentation of key directions, objectives and strategies for the urban design framework
- Explanation of the next steps of the project

Following steering committee meeting 4, an additional meeting was held on 25 November 2002, and was attended by most committee members. The purpose of the meeting was to fully explain and re-work some of the emerging directions due to committee concerns regarding some key issues, such as tree species selection and height and form of buildings in the town centre. The committee comments and evolution of the emerging directions into the final urban design framework and streetscape concept plan is fully discussed in [Chapter 3](#) of this volume.

Meeting 5, 5 December 2002

The fifth official meeting of the steering committee covered the following issues:

- Presentation and discussion of the Hitchcock Avenue design concept options
- Report back regarding feedback to the urban design framework objectives and strategies, and confirmation of any changes to the material
- Report and discussion on January 'emerging ideas' exhibition and community forum 2

Meeting 6, 9 April 2003

Steering committee meeting 6 was held following the January / February exhibition period and second community forum and included the following items of discussion:

- Presentation on feedback from February's community forum and how the feedback would be incorporated, followed by discussion
- Presentation and discussion on draft recommendations to council from the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade process

Following steering committee meeting 6, an additional meeting was held, without the consultant team, to further discuss the draft recommendations. This occurred on 8 May 2003 and resulted in further feedback being provided to the project team.

The urban design framework and streetscape upgrade final report was then circulated to the steering committee for further feedback prior to completion.

The outcomes of the steering committee meetings and the way in which feedback was incorporated into the final plans is discussed in detail in [Chapter 3](#).



Community Forums

Two community forums were held at key milestones during the project. The forums were widely advertised in the local papers and community bulletins and via posters around the town, and were held locally, in the Barwon Heads community hall.

The first community forum was held during the early stages of the project on 31 August 2002. The purpose of the forum was to get feedback from the local community on likes, dislikes, key issues and aspirations for the future of the town.

The second community forum was held during the Emerging Ideas exhibition on 8 February 2003. The purpose of the second forum was to get feedback from the local community on the emerging ideas for the urban design framework and the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape upgrade concepts.

The community forums allowed a wider audience to hear about the studies being undertaken in the town and participate in the process. They also provided the opportunity to distribute questionnaires, and were attended by local media representatives. The forums contributed to a great deal of local publicity being generated about the projects, including articles in the local papers and a radio interview.

Emerging Ideas Exhibition

An exhibition of emerging ideas for the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade was held in Barwon Heads for 6 weeks over the summer holiday period. The exhibition material was on display in the Barwon Coast Committee of Management offices from 17 January 2003 until 3 March 2003, with posters and flyers promoting the exhibition throughout the town.

Many people attended the exhibition, which was also used to publicise the second community forum, held mid-way through the public display period.

Questionnaires

Two questionnaires were distributed throughout the study process, via the community bulletins and at the community forums. The questionnaires allowed the wider community to provide feedback, in an anonymous manner if preferred. The questionnaires also provided the opportunity for the study team to ask questions on detailed matters and priority areas.

Over 40 responses were received to the first community questionnaire, distributed at community forum 1. The questionnaire repeated the key questions posed at the forum as part of the initial SWOT research.

Approximately 110 responses were received to the second community questionnaire, distributed at community forum 2. The questionnaire picked up on the key questions that were included in the Emerging Ideas exhibition material.

All findings from the community consultation program, including the community forums, questionnaires and emerging ideas exhibition are discussed in more detail in [chapter 3](#).



Communication

A communication strategy was developed with the council at the start of the study process. This involved arriving at a list of key stakeholders for the steering committee, 'branding' the project and deciding on a variety of communication methods that would reach the majority of people in the local community.

Community Bulletins

Council's project manager prepared a series of community bulletins throughout the course of the project, with input from the study team. The community bulletins provided the main vehicle for informing the wider community about the existence of the study, its purpose, its approach and its findings. They were also used to announce the community forums, the emerging ideas exhibition period, and contained the community questionnaires on the rear. The bulletins were placed in the Barwon Heads post office, shops and cafes and were also distributed at the community forums and are attached in [Appendix M of this volume](#).

Graphic Design

The project team's graphic designer prepared an 'image' for the project, inspired by the coastal character of the town and its iconic structures such as the bridge and jetties. This image was used in the emerging ideas exhibition panels and again in the final report.

1.4 Traffic and Parking Study

At the same time as the preparation of the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade concept, council commissioned GTA Consultants to undertake a traffic and parking study for the town. The traffic and parking study examined traffic patterns and their impact, parking supply and demand, and considered the needs of residents, visitors, pedestrian and cyclists. In the interests of integrating the studies, GTA Consultants also provided specialist input into the urban design framework and streetscape concept plans. Consultation and communication about the studies was combined, streamlining the process for the community, who rightly did not view the projects as separate entities.

Undertaking the studies concurrently also resulted in many 'points of difference' arising and being debated by the local community and study teams. For instance, the traffic and parking consultants recommended the upgrade of unsealed roads due to dust, mud and corrugation problems, yet the 'non-engineered' and informal qualities of the streets is a characteristic which is highly valued by the local community. This and other issues are discussed in more detail in [Chapters 3 and 4](#) of this volume.



2. Policy Context





2.1 State Planning Policy Framework

Section 14 of the SPPF outlines Settlement policy. The following is relevant to Barwon Heads:

It is policy that:

- *Planning authorities should plan to accommodate projected population growth... taking account of opportunities for redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas as well as the limits of land capability and natural hazards, environmental quality and the costs of providing infrastructure...*
- *... planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character. Planning authorities should encourage higher density and mixed use development near public transport routes.*

Section 15 of the SPPF outlines Environment policy. The following is relevant to Barwon Heads:

15.01 Protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater

- *To assist the protection and, where possible, restoration of catchments, waterways, water bodies, ground water and the marine environment.*

15.08 Coastal areas

- *In coastal areas, to assist the protection and maintenance of significant environmental features and sustainable use of natural coastal resources.*

15.09 Conservation of flora and fauna

- *To assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals and control of pest plants and animals.*

15.11 Heritage

- *To assist the conservation of places that have natural, environmental, aesthetic, historic, cultural, scientific or social significance...*

15.12 Energy efficiency

- *To encourage land use and development that is consistent with the efficient use of energy and the minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions.*

Section 16 of the SPPF outlines policy for Housing. The policy covers a range of topics such as:

For single dwellings, to encourage:

- *Subdivisions in locations with access to physical and community infrastructure and providing a range of lot sizes, a convenient and safe road network, appropriate pedestrian and cycle paths, sufficient useable public open space...*
- *Residential development that is cost-effective in infrastructure provision and use, energy efficient, incorporates water-sensitive design principles and encourages public transport use.*
- *Opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.*



For medium density housing, to encourage the development of well-designed medium-density housing which:

- *Respects the neighbourhood character.*
- *Improves housing choice.*
- *Makes better use of existing infrastructure.*
- *Improves energy efficiency of housing.*

Section 17 of the SPPF outlines policy for Economic Development. Of relevance is:

Section 17.04 Tourism, stating that responsible authorities should:

- *... encourage the development of a range of well designed and sited tourist facilities. These include accommodation and retail opportunities.*

Section 19 of the SPPF outlines policy for Particular Use and Development. Relevant to Barwon Heads are:

19.03 Design and built form, to achieve high quality urban design and architecture that:

- *Reflects the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community.*
- *Enhances livability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm.*
- *Promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within broader strategic contexts.*

Municipal Strategic Statement

Clause 21.35 of the Municipal Strategic Statement which forms part of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme sets out key issues, objectives and strategies relating specifically to Barwon Heads. It outlines the importance of the township and the key issues, including:

- *The built environment blends with the coastal landscape and the built form is generally categorised by low, detached houses...*
- *It is a town, which is surrounded by sensitive natural environment and is developed in low-lying flood prone land...*
- *Maintenance of a 'village atmosphere' is also a valid reason for not supporting further urban growth westward...*
- *As a seaside town, which has to absorb massive seasonal adjustments, Barwon Heads requires a compact commercial centre to offer an efficient and pleasant trading environment...*
- *Open space provision is generous with the resources of the Village Park and the foreshore reserves complemented by small local parks. The opportunity exists to provide a continuous link between these reserves...*

The following objectives, derived largely from the Barwon Heads Structure Plan, are also included:

- *To define the limit to the urban expansion of Barwon Heads.*
- *To consolidate the commercial centre of Barwon Heads and encourage economic development opportunities especially relating to tourism.*
- *To promote and encourage innovation in subdivision, a variety of dwelling types, more energy efficient design and creative residential developments.*
- *To create a walking and cycling loop around Barwon Heads linking all major open spaces and to maintain these open space assets.*



Local Policies

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme contains a number of local policies, of which the following are relevant to Barwon Heads:

22.06 Subdivision, Excisions and Dwellings in Rural Areas

This policy applies to all land included in the Rural Zone (RUZ) and the Environmental Rural Zone (ERZ). The objectives of this policy are to limit the erection of dwellings or subdivision of land on prime or high quality agricultural land so as not to prejudice the use of the land for rural production activities. This includes encouraging the consolidation of lots and to maintain technically viable rural lot sizes so that agricultural land can be efficiently managed and continue to be traded for the purpose of agriculture.

22.20 Cultural Heritage

This policy applies to all properties affected by a Heritage Overlay. This policy is divided into an overall Heritage Policy with objectives and policy statements, and 26 individual policies that apply specifically to particular heritage areas within the municipality, although Barwon Heads is not subject to any of these specific heritage policies.

The objectives of the policy are:

- To encourage the retention of heritage places.
- To encourage development to be undertaken in accordance with the standards of the ICOMOS Burra Charter.
- To conserve and enhance the natural or cultural features and ensure that any alterations or development complement their form and appearance.
- To ensure that new development and alterations make a positive contribution to the built form and amenity of the area.
- To encourage the retention and re-instatement of street works.
- To discourage the demolition of heritage places.

2.2 Zones and Overlays

Residential Zone 1 (R1Z)

Most of the residential land in the established township of Barwon Heads is zoned R1Z. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings.

Rural Zone (RUZ)

Large areas of land surrounding Barwon Heads are zoned RUZ. Of particular importance to this study is the land immediately west of the town. The purpose of this zone is to provide land for extensive animal husbandry such as dairying and grazing, and crop raising.

Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ)

Beachfront areas, the Barwon River and shore area, and the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve are zoned PCRZ. The purpose of the zone is to protect and



conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values.

Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ1)

The 13th Beach Residential Estate is zoned CDZ1. The purpose of this zone is to provide for a range of uses and the development of land in accordance with a comprehensive development plan. In this case the development plan is for an integrated golf course and tourist resort.

Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

Parks in the area such as the Barwon Heads Park and Barwon Heads Village Park are zoned PPRZ. The purpose of this zone is to recognise and protect areas for public recreation and open space and where appropriate to provide for commercial uses.

Special Use Zone (SUZ3)

The Barwon Heads Golf Club is zoned SUZ3. The purpose of this zone is to provide for special uses which in this case is for a private golf course.

Business 1 Zone (B1Z)

Shops along Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road in the centre of Barwon Heads are zoned B1Z. The purpose of this zone is to encourage the intensive development of business centres for retailing and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community uses.

Environmental Rural Zone (ERZ)

The Murtnaghurt Lagoon and wetland is zoned ERZ. The purpose of this zone is to conserve and enhance areas of environmental significance thus maintaining flora and fauna species, soil and water quality, areas of historic, archaeological and scientific interest and areas of natural scenic beauty or importance.

Road Zone Category 1 (RDZ1)

Geelong Road, Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road east of Hitchcock Avenue are Declared Main Roads and therefore zoned Road Zone Category 1.

42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

The purpose of this overlay is to identify where development of the land may be affected by environmental constraints. The Stevens Parade residential area is covered by ESO1 (Areas of flora and fauna habitat and of geological and natural interest), and the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, Barwon River and wetlands are covered by ESO2 (High value wetlands and associated habitat protection).

42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)

The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas of significant vegetation. Land along River Parade and Barwon Terrace is covered by VPO1 for protection of Significant Roadsides and Linear Reserves.



43.01 Heritage Overlay (HO)

The purpose of this overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance. The Barwon Heads Bridge is covered by a HO schedule 1537.

43.02 Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

The purpose of this overlay is to implement specific design objectives. Coastal land along Stevens Road is covered by DDO3 (To protect the coast from visual intrusions from tall buildings).

44.03 Floodway Overlay (FO)

The purpose of the overlay is to identify land that has the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding and to ensure that any development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwater, minimises flood damage and is compatible with flood hazard. The Barwon River and the Lake Connewarre Wetlands are covered by FO.

44.04 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

The purpose of this overlay is to identify land that is in a flood storage or flood fringe area, and to allow the temporary storage of water and minimise flood damage. Parcels of land adjacent to the Murtnaghurt Lagoon and Lake Connewarre Wetlands, small area of land near the Lake Avenue Reserve are covered by LSIO.

44.05 Special Building Overlay (SBO)

The purpose of this overlay is to identify land in urban areas liable to inundation by overland flows from the urban drainage system. Residential estates in the newer northern section of Barwon Heads along Newbay Close and Knox Drive are covered by a SBO.

45.01 Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO)

The purpose of this overlay is to identify land which is to be acquired by a public authority. Land along the Barwon Heads Road out of the town centre to the west is covered by a PAO3 (Vic Roads Proposed Road).

2.3 Additional Background Documents

Barwon Heads Structure Plan (1996)

The Barwon Heads Structure Plan identifies policies and strategies to guide the development of Barwon Heads, recognising the opportunities and constraints of the township. The recommendations of the Structure Plan include the following:

- *Conduct a review of the Geelong Region Flood Study incorporating Barwon Heads.*
- *There will be no further expansion of Barwon Heads beyond its current urban-zoned limits.*
- *A variety of dwelling stock will be promoted within Barwon Heads to cater for differing needs and demands for housing.*



- *Medium density housing and tourist accommodation will be promoted around the commercial heart of Barwon Heads.*
- *Rural residential development to the west of the township is not supported.*
- *The Hitchcock Avenue shopping centre will remain the focus for retailing in Barwon Heads.*
- *No additional land will be zoned for retail or commercial development.*
- *No industrial land or zone will be provided in Barwon Heads – Ocean Grove and South Geelong are sufficient to meet local demand.*
- *Investigate the provision of a bicycle/pedestrian system, which links the significant public open space assets of the township.*
- *Continue development and upgrade of the Barwon Heads Village Park in accordance with the Masterplan.*
- *Ensure that new subdivisions provide public open space which links into an integrated open space system, and which is useable, accessible and safe.*
- *Investigations into the relocation of the Barwon Heads Football Club to an alternative location should continue to be a priority.*
- *Promote Barwon Heads as a destination for daytrippers and weekend visitors.*
- *Support the appropriate and sensitive development of the Tomara resort because of the benefits this will bring to the Geelong Region and for local employment opportunities.*
- *Barwon Heads will be promoted as a location for cycling activities. Investigate the opportunities to provide more cycling facilities in Barwon Heads.*

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Structure Plan forms the basis of Clause 21.35 of the MSS and is referenced in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The Plan's recommendations have been reviewed as part of the Urban Design Framework process and have been changed, retained or further justified with additional detail, where necessary. Many of the Plan's recommendations such as the encouragement of additional accommodation in the town centre and the prevention of further residential development beyond the town's western boundary, have been further ratified by the local community and are retained as solid principles around which the Urban Design Framework is built. It is envisaged that the Planning Scheme will be amended to reflect these changes and the up to date Urban Design Framework document.

City of Greater Geelong Residential Character Study (August 2001)

The study was prepared for the entire municipality by Planisphere, and identifies seven residential character precincts in Barwon Heads. The community consultation program undertaken as part of the study identified the following community concerns:

- *Retaining the coastal lifestyle feel of the town.*
- *Removal of native and indigenous vegetation.*
- *Protecting the coastal ecology, wildlife habitats and river environment.*
- *Maintaining a low scale building form.*
- *Retaining the 'quaintness' of the original settlement area.*
- *Encouraging and retaining an informal style of public domain streetscape treatments.*
- *Discouraging large, bulky dwellings with high site coverage and boundary to boundary development.*



Generally, the key existing characteristics of the residential areas in Barwon Heads are identified as:

- *Mix of eras and styles of dwellings, dating from late Victorian to recent development.*
- *Some areas contain a mixture of building materials, with a significant proportion of non-masonry.*
- *Ti-tree dominates the streetscape and/or the garden planting in some areas.*

The vision statement for the residential areas of Barwon Heads is outlined as follows:

The seaside character and identified heritage and environmental qualities of Barwon Heads will be maintained and strengthened through:

- *Encouraging the use of native vegetation.*
- *Encouraging the use of appropriate building materials.*
- *Ensuring the siting of buildings to provide adequate space for planting and to reflect spacing patterns.*
- *Managing site coverage to provide adequate space for planting.*
- *Ensuring building form and scale reflects predominant patterns.*

Things to be avoided in the residential areas of town are identified as:

- *Removal of native and indigenous vegetation in areas where this is an important characteristic.*
- *High site coverage or extensive paving in areas where vegetation is an important characteristic.*
- *Extensive use of brick, particularly in the central parts of the town.*

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Residential Character Study has been partially implemented in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme via the placement of a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO7) over the Ocean Grove coastal area. There are no formal implications for Barwon Heads, though the residential character findings are consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Urban Design Framework, and the community concerns reflect those identified throughout the Urban Design Framework process.

Study of Open Space Networks (August 2001)

The study was prepared for the entire City and includes a demographic profile summary of Barwon Heads, an open space inventory for the township and identifies a list of priorities for action in Barwon Heads. The priorities for action include:

- *Develop safe pedestrian and cycle routes around the town and to Ocean Grove...*
- *Reserve land for the provision of a new informal park/landscape and amenity sites in the area south of Barwon Heads Road, West of Golf Links Road.*
- *Investigate opportunities for the potential relocation of the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club...*
- *Take action to enhance the quality of existing informal park sites, public and civic spaces, including implementation of the Management Plan for the Village Park...*
- *Support the Barwon Heads proposal for the development of a circular trail around Barwon Heads including linkages to activity nodes within the town...*



Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Study of Open Space Networks has no formal status in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. However, the Study as it relates to Barwon Heads was reviewed and all priorities for action are consistent with the recommendations of the Urban Design Framework. As discussed later in this Report, the relocation of the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club was resolved via a separate process and is no longer a relevant action.

Barwon Regional Strategic Bicycle Plan (July 1996)

The strategic plan outlines a framework for a cycle network throughout the Barwon region including the City of Greater Geelong, Surfcoast Shire and Borough of Queenscliff. The plan also identifies works that need to be undertaken to implement the cycle network. A major issue identified in the report is the need to incorporate bicycle requirements into the planning stage of any new development. The strategy identifies a total network in excess of 1,200 kilometres and also indicates the types of road treatments required to improve the bicycle network.

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Barwon Regional Strategic Bicycle Bike Plan has no formal status in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. However, its contents were noted during preparation of the Urban Design Framework. The priority route that is listed in the table of actions in the Bicycle Plan and is promoted as the route through Barwon Heads in various brochures is: Geelong-Barwon Heads Road – Golf Links Road – Bridge Road – Barwon Heads-Ocean Grove Road. Though it would also be ideal to provide a dedicated bicycle lane through Hitchcock Avenue as part of its upgrade, the space available within the road reservation made this impractical without severely compromising the width of the footpaths.

Barwon Heads Village Park Final Management Plan (June 2002)

The Management Plan sets the direction for the future use and management of the Village Park in the short, medium and long terms. The plan provides for current and future users while protecting and enhancing the environmental, cultural and aesthetic values of the site. Inherent to the development of the plan was an assessment of the feasibility of relocating the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club from their current location at the Howard Harmer Reserve to the Village Park.

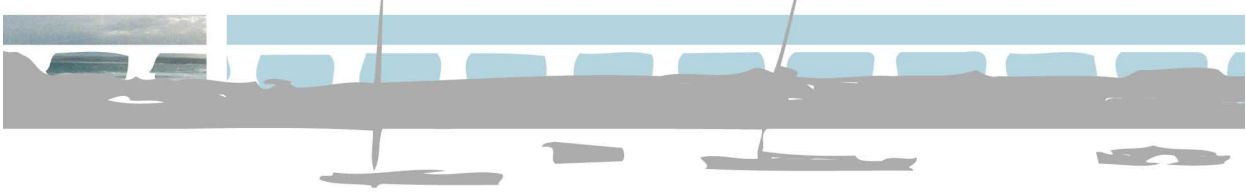
The objectives and recommended actions required to implement the final plan include the following, with priority status noted in brackets:

Enhance and protect the existing character of the Village Park

- *Protect and manage the Avenue planting so that it is retained as a landscape feature... (Medium)*

Protect the Moonah Vegetation Community

- *Retain all Moonah vegetation in the park. (High)*



- *Minimise human disturbance... by rationalising the pathway system and fencing the vegetation internally. (High)*

Protect the significance of the Remnant Dune

- *Address the erosion currently occurring in the dune by prohibiting horse access. (High)*

Do not relocate the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Barwon Heads Village Park Final Management Plan has no formal status within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. However, objectives, strategies and actions within the Urban Design Framework were checked against the Management Plan document for consistency. Protection of moonah vegetation in the Village Park and throughout the town is a high priority for the local community and is taken further in the Urban Design Framework via a recommendation to introduce a Vegetation Protection Overlay. The Barwon Heads community remains supportive of the Village Park Management Plan and requested a statement in the Urban Design Framework recommending its implementation.

Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan *Draft* (July 2002)

The main purpose of the plan is to guide the future recreational use and landscape character of the river and adjoining open space in a manner that is compatible with its environmental values. The plan also considers adjoining land use and its visual and physical influence on the open space corridor and waterway values.

The summary outcomes and recommendations for Reach 6, which extends downstream of Sheepwash Road, through the townships of Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove are as follows:

Outcomes

- *Improve the open space links along the waterway compatible with the environmental values.*
- *Support continued boating and fishing access to the waterway compatible with environmental values.*
- *Protect and enhance the natural view sheds from the Barwon River Estuary.*

Summary Recommendations

- *Improve walking links through (and) along the Barwon River and associated open space system.*
- *Retain current boating and fishing access...establish fishing access points along the bank, to reduce damage to waterway banks.*
- *Protect and improve the natural riparian vegetation values including White mangroves and Moonah Woodland...*
- *Introduce the Significant Landscape Overlay... on freehold land adjoining the Barwon River... to protect significant view sheds form significant change to built form and urban fabric.*



Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan is a draft document with no formal status in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The objectives, strategies and actions contained in the Urban Design Framework are consistent with the recommendations of the draft Plan, and emphasise further the importance of rationalising pedestrian access to the river in order to minimise environmental disturbance.

City of Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 (1998-2000)

The study identifies the following areas of heritage significance within Barwon Heads:

Flinders Precinct

This precinct is significant for its seaside character, enhanced by its clear views of the Barwon River, ocean, bridge, jetties and parkland. The area has a high proportion of intact, detached single and double storey horizontal weatherboard houses and a combination of large, medium and small scale late Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and Inter-war Bungalow dwellings. The area is also characterised by the pitched gable and/or hipped roofs adorned with early chimneys.

Golf Links Precinct

This precinct is significant for its intact links type golf course of 1920-22 and large to medium scale Inter-war Bungalow houses developed on the Golf Links/Golf Lands subdivision of c. 1920. It is the only course in Australia set on a links design and includes open, natural and semi-rural undulating terrain; manicured, rolling greens and sandy hillocks; fairways covered in native and exotic grasses; and views to the clubhouse and coastal panoramas. The Stephens parade section of the precinct follows the contours of the coastline and is significant for its large allotment sizes.

The study also provides an overview of the post-Aboriginal settlement of the town from approximately 1871 when the first land was sold. Residents of Geelong proceeded to build holiday homes during the 1880s and 1890s, many of which had boat houses located side by side, just north of the jetty. The boat houses were used as temporary accommodation and totalled 56 at one stage. During the 1930s the locals began agitating for the removal of the boat houses and at least half were relocated to Ocean Grove.

Barwon Heads also has links to the development of the Great Ocean Road, with Howard Hitchcock, a local resident and businessman, being elected Chairman of the Great Ocean Road Trust when it formed in 1918.

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

In relation to the Golf Links Precinct, Council has initiated an amendment to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme (Amendment C49) which proposes to include a heritage overlay over the golf land and adjacent Stephens Parade properties. The heritage overlay comprises a local heritage precinct known as Golf Links Heritage Area, which contains its own policies and objectives for the precinct. One of these objectives is to discourage the subdivision of land.



Barwon Coast *Draft* Landscape Management Plan (July 1999)

The Barwon Coast Committee of Management Inc is responsible for the management of Crown land reserves that were previously managed by the Barwon Heads Park Committee and the Ocean Grove Foreshore Committee. The study area covered by this document includes the coastal reserves between Fellows Road, Point Lonsdale and Breamlea Road, east of Breamlea.

The draft Management Plan identifies nine landscape character zones within the study area, including Thirteenth Beach, the Bluff and the Barwon River Estuary/Port. Key values, the role, key issues and management recommendations are outlined for each of the zones, including:

Barwon River Estuary/Port

Role

- *Provision of a range of primarily passive/quiet water-based recreational opportunities... while preserving conservation values...*

Key Issues

- *... protection of the strong visual character...*
- *Allowing for appropriate beach/river access...*
- *Vegetation enhancement...*
- *Protection of the white mangrove system.*

'Opportunities'

- *Limited boardwalks allowing restricted access into the mangrove/mudflat area providing an experience of this ecosystem, and otherwise protecting the landform and habitat of the area...*
- *... a stronger relationship with the foreshore reserve would improve both the image of the township and the experience of the visitor...*

The Bluff

Role

- *Protection and enhancement of indigenous flora and fauna, with allowance for community education and passive eco-based recreation...*

Key Issues

- *Protection of wildlife habitat...*
- *Revegetation...*
- *Interpretation...*
- *Protection of views...*

It is noted that most of the key opportunities and recommendations are already covered by existing reports.



Thirteenth Beach

Role

- ... protection and enhancement of indigenous dune flora, with allowance for passive eco-based recreation, including surfing...

Key Issues

- Protection of existing dune flora... and fauna.
- ... Vegetation management...
- Ensuring dune stability...
- ... Protection of views...
- Development behind the dunes.

It is noted that the majority of opportunities and recommendations are well covered in existing documents.

Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The Barwon Coast Landscape Management Plan is a draft document of informal status. All objectives, strategies and actions contained in the Urban Design Framework are generally consistent with the Management Plan recommendations, particularly the protection of environmental qualities of coastal areas, and the opportunities to rationalise access to the riverfront and strengthen the links between the foreshore and the town centre.

Barwon Heads Flood Study

The Council prepared a consultant brief for a Drainage and Flood Management Plan for Barwon Heads, comprising drainage surveying, flood plain mapping and the development of a drainage and flood management strategy for the flood-prone areas of the township.

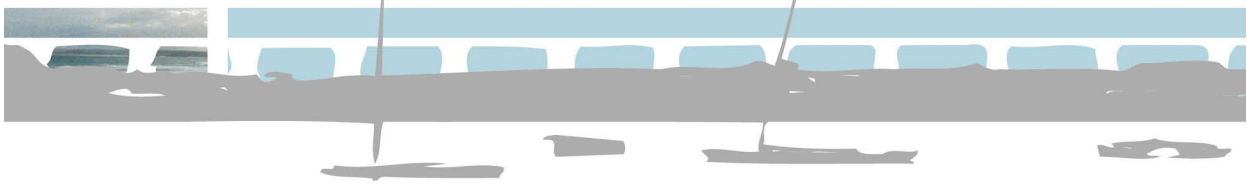
Implications for the Urban Design Framework

The study was still in progress by the time the UDF was completed.



3. Analysis and Issues





3.1 Analysis and Issues

Analysis and issues identification was undertaken for the entire township and Hitchcock Avenue concurrently, in accordance with the methodology outlined in [Chapter 1](#) of this volume. These primary tasks were performed in close consultation with the steering committee, and the wider population of Barwon Heads at the community forums. The study team also undertook a detailed field survey and utilised consultation tools such as questionnaires to ensure a thorough scoping of the strengths, weaknesses, constraints and opportunities of the township.

3.2 SWOT Analysis

Following a review of the study policy context and other relevant background documents by the study team, the first meeting was held with the steering committee. A key task of the first meeting was to undertake a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis for the township.

The primary findings from the facilitated SWOT discussion are summarised below, with a full version of the notes attached in [Appendix C](#).

Strengths

- Flat topography
- Diversity of population
- Eccentricities of the town
- Physical constraints on urban expansion
- River and ocean environment
- People resources in the community
- 'Shabby chic' atmosphere
- Tourism
- The laneways
- The Village Park
- Hitchcock Avenue as the social hub

Opportunities

- Environmental trail around perimeter
- The natural environment
- Promote environmental awareness
- Appropriately sited medium density development
- Protect the bridge (heritage values)
- New roundabout needed: Geelong Road and Hitchcock Avenue
- The community can input skills and talent into plan

Weaknesses

- Traffic flow - implementing a preferred main route
- Location of bus stops
- Lack of parking
- One road entrance to the town
- Pedestrians v's vehicles conflict
- Volume of traffic and speed
- Heavy vehicles
- Sheepwash Road – poor pedestrian environment
- Tourism causes capacity problems

Threats

- Drainage issues
- Urban encroachment into natural surrounds
- 'Inappropriate development' ie overly dense development
- Limited strength of the bridge
- Closure of lanes for development



Reflect art in physical form

Determine a plan for the coast road area, and other non-urban areas

Target young people in this process eg skills, sporting clubs

Reconnect the laneway network / use for parking

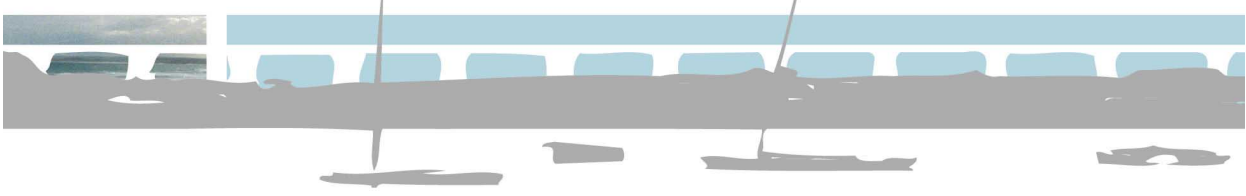
Key SWOT Issues

A number of key themes emerged from this initial SWOT scoping, and have remained pertinent issues throughout the process.

The environmental qualities of the township, being surrounded almost entirely by water bodies in the form of the ocean, river and wetlands, were raised both as a strength and an opportunity. This was emphasised again at the first community forum, where the town was referred to as an 'island' with a strong connection to the natural environment that surrounds it. The physical constraints that the encompassing water bodies place on the urban expansion of the township were also viewed as a strength. Other strengths and opportunities described were the pedestrian laneways that exist throughout the old township and provide intimately scaled, mid-block shortcuts, and the bridge, which is one of the strongest iconic structures in the township. The "shabby chic" atmosphere was also cited as a strength. This is perhaps better described as a 'casual beachyness' which results from a combination of characteristics, including unsealed roadways with unmade grassy verges, fibro and weatherboard shacks and cottages, indigenous coastal vegetation and the seaside location.

The location of the town close to the ocean, river and wetlands was emphasised by the community as a key strength.





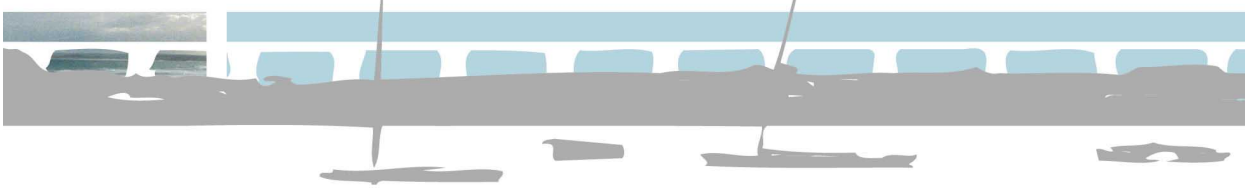
Traffic and parking issues were raised as weaknesses and threats to the township, particularly the speed of vehicles and volume of heavy traffic in Hitchcock Avenue. The Main Road status of the street, which prioritises vehicles over pedestrians, was seen as a conflict with its role as the community and social hub of the town. The location of the bus stops in Hitchcock Avenue, in areas of high parking demand, were seen as a weakness, and the lack of pedestrian infrastructure in Sheepwash Road was cited as a negative. The influx of tourists during the summer period was also raised as an issue, particularly the effect it has on traffic volumes and availability of car parking. Other threats to the township described were the encroachment of development onto the natural environment surrounding Barwon Heads, new development that is “overly dense” for the site, and the strength of the bridge.

3.3 Study Team Survey

A detailed survey of the study area was undertaken by the study team’s landscape architect, architect/urban designer and project coordinator, after the preliminary SWOT exercise with the steering committee. The survey was undertaken over a period of two days and aimed to gather information about the township, with the benefit of having undertaken the preliminary identification of issues and review of background documents. The survey resulted in the creation of a photographic library of every part of the township, and was enriched by the information collected as part of the street by street neighbourhood character survey, performed by Planisphere the year before.

A list of preliminary issues was prepared, from which a series of key survey questions were framed. The key survey questions posed to the survey team included the following:

- Describe the town and its relationship with the natural landscape. How can this relationship be maintained and strengthened?
- Think about the ‘structure’ of the town – grid v’s curvilinear. Is it ‘legible’?
- Describe the relationship of the town (built form edge) to the coast. What type/form of development is appropriate at this interface?
- Describe the relationship of the town (built form edge) with the river. What impacts is built form adjacent to the river having on the environment? What type/form of development is appropriate at this interface?
- Describe the relationship of the town (built form edge) with the open, rural landscape and wetlands to the north and west. What type/form of development is appropriate at this interface?
- The community has identified the ‘shabby chic’ or ‘incompleteness’ of the town as a strength. Describe. What elements contribute to this look and feel? How can this be maintained?
- What are the physical limits to the growth of the town? Should the town expand to or beyond its current urban zoned limits?
- What are the impacts of the Thirteenth Beach development on the ‘established’ town’s character, physical form and relationship with the landscape? Can this be improved? How?
- The DNRE as land managers believe that the current location of the Barwon Heads Football Club (BHFC) on the foreshore (Howard Harmer Reserve) is inappropriate. Council officers and many community members disagree as the oval provides some ‘green visual relief’ and is important as an informal recreation area. Thoughts?



- The Barwon Heads Structure Plan (1996) notes that medium density development and tourism accommodation should be promoted in and around the commercial centre (Hitchcock Avenue). Has this occurred? (Please map). Are there sites available? What form should this development take?
- The Barwon Heads (Residents) Association describe Barwon Heads as an 'island' around which a bicycle/walking path should be formalised. (Refer proposed plan). Is this appropriate?
- New residential development is resulting in the gradual erosion of the informal, grassy laneways. Are the laneways important to the character of Barwon Heads? How? How can this conflict be resolved?
- Describe the relationship of the commercial centre to adjacent residential areas. Are there any conflicts? Are the edges of the commercial centre clearly defined? Can this be improved?
- Map and describe the entrances to Barwon Heads. How can these be improved and enhanced? Describe the journeys and approaches to the town.
- Access, choice and legibility - how do people get around? Are there any barriers to movement?
- How do people use public space? (Streets and open space). Where are the nodes of activity? Are they 'robust' or flexible? Are public spaces safe? Examples.
- Photograph and describe the most significant views and vistas. Describe views of the town from prominent locations such as the bridge and Peers Crescent (Ocean Grove).
- Views and vistas from inside the town – how do you connect to the natural landscape from inside the town? Describe and map.
- Is there a built form 'typology' in Barwon Heads? What are the key characteristics?
- History – are there any visual (and other) links to the past?

The survey team also collected basic data and material on features such as:

- Significant trees and vegetation
- Parking locations and restrictions
- Bicycle/walking paths
- Public transport routes
- Road verge treatments, including footpath locations and treatments
- Iconic buildings
- Town centre built form characteristics
- Town centre uses

The detailed survey of the township informed the content of the issues paper, and resulted in the study team being well briefed and familiar with the characteristics of the town before the first community forum.

3.4 Site Analysis

The key features and characteristics of the town that were noted on the study team survey were summarised graphically in the form of a Landscape Types and Town Structure plan and a Site Analysis plan. These plans are included in this volume on pages 35 and 36 respectively.



Landscape Types and Town Structure Plan

The Landscape Types and Town Structure plan identifies the following broad landscape types occurring in the area:

- Bass Strait / Coastal Dune
- Secondary Dunes / Coastal Scrub
- Estuarine / River and Wetland
- Flat to Gently Rolling Agricultural

The plan highlights the underlying landscape qualities of the study area and provides a basic hypothesis of the broad landscape types found within the township. The plan also denotes public parks.

In addition, the plan identifies the basic townscape structure, comprising the 'old town' south of Geelong-Barwon Heads Road, including the town centre, and the 'new town' north of Geelong-Barwon Heads Road. The old town consists of the first streets laid out in the township and is in a grid formation, whereas the new town was more recently developed and consists of mostly cul-de-sacs. These areas have distinctly different qualities and are discussed in more detail later in this volume.

Site Analysis Plan

The Site Analysis plan depicts the following key features of the town:

- Key routes
- Key views
- Entrance nodes
- The town centre activity node
- Grassy laneways
- The western edge of town
- The vegetated edge to the river
- The built form edge to the river

Other features or characteristics of note, such as iconic structures, stands of significant vegetation and important sites are also highlighted on the plan. Overall, the Site Analysis plan provides a visual summary of the key features of the town, many of which relate to its coastal setting and the various opportunities and constraints this presents. The key features are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this volume and the Issues Paper, which is attached as [Appendix D](#).



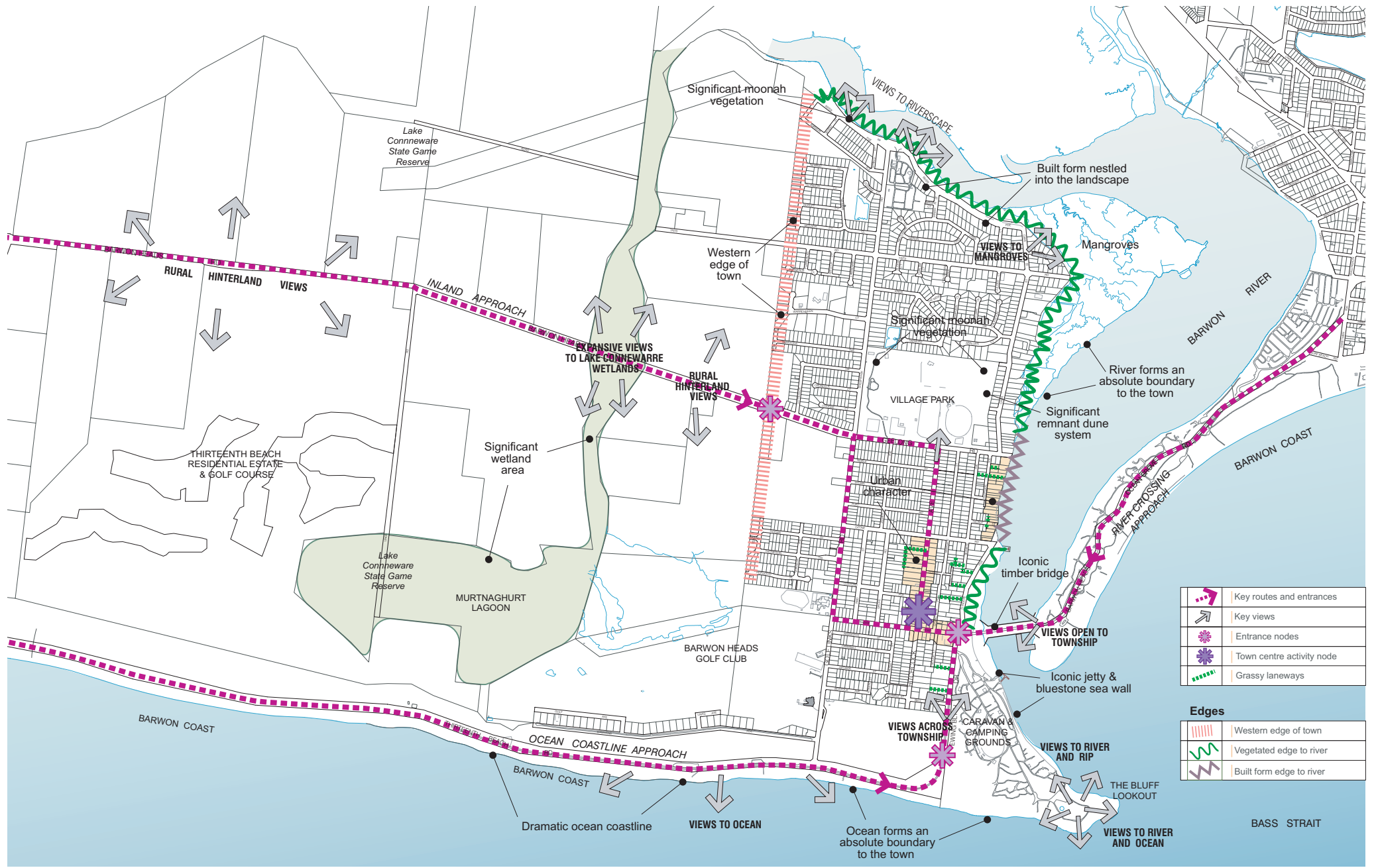
Landscape Types

	Bass Strait coastal dune
	Secondary dunes / coastal scrub
	Estuarine / river and wetland
	Flat to gently rolling agricultural
	Rural hinterland
	Historic links golf course
	Public parks

Town Structure

	Old town
	New town
	Town centre

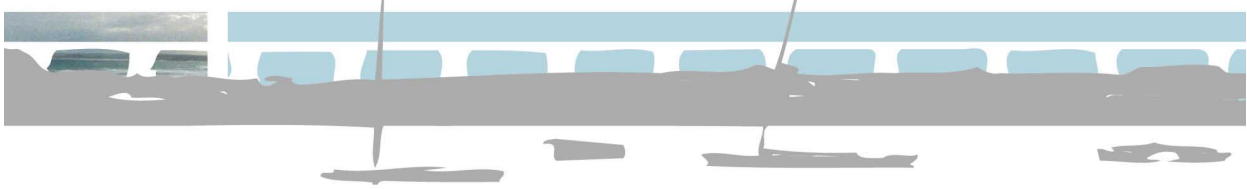




	Key routes and entrances
	Key views
	Entrance nodes
	Town centre activity node
	Grassy laneways

Edges	
	Western edge of town
	Vegetated edge to river
	Built form edge to river





3.5 Community Forum 1

Approximately 50 people attended the first half day community forum, held on 31 August 2002. The purpose of the forum was to get feedback from the local community on likes, dislikes, key issues and aspirations for the future of the town. This information was added to the findings of the SWOT analysis, undertaken with the steering committee.

The engineering department of council also used the opportunity to source information for the traffic and parking study, being undertaken concurrently.

The program for community forum 1 was:

- Introduction of the study team and steering committee members, and an overview of the projects under way in Barwon Heads
- Facilitated questions as a large group:
 - What do you like about Barwon Heads?
 - What do you dislike about Barwon Heads?
- Sum up of likes and dislikes
- Facilitated small group discussion:
 - What are the key issues facing the town?
- Sum up of key issues by small group spokes people
- Facilitated questions as a large group:
 - What is your vision for Barwon Heads?
 - How would you like to see Barwon Heads develop?
- Sum up of emerging vision for Barwon Heads
- Explanation of where to from here, followed by refreshments and informal discussion

3.6 Questionnaire 1

A questionnaire was also distributed at the first community forum, and over 40 questionnaire responses were received. The questionnaire repeated the key questions posed at the forum as part of the initial SWOT research:

- What do you like about Barwon Heads?
- What do you dislike?
- What are the key issues facing Barwon Heads?
- What is your vision for Barwon Heads. How would you like to see the town develop?

The 'likes', 'dislikes', 'issues' and 'vision' responses are summarised in the following table, and included in full in [Appendix E](#), along with the meeting notes from community forum 1.

Likes

Location within the natural landscape – an 'island'; the connection with the environment

Ability to walk and bicycle around

Peacefulness and laid back lifestyle

Dislikes

Drainage issues

Traffic - lack of parking and speeding

The car park opposite the pub, on the river front



Community spirit and sense of history	Over crowding
The town is not too big or commercialised	'Over-development' and 'resort-styled' new subdivisions
Natural beauty	Environmental concerns
Green and leafy streetscapes and setting	Lack of street trees
Beachy, 'cottagey' architecture	Lack of community facilities
Informal evolution of the place (no kerbs and channels; the unsealed roads)	
Issues	Vision
Over development and commercialisation	Natural beauty
Traffic management	Village atmosphere
Changing population / demographics	Community values
Increased tourism – more people, businesses and traffic	Slow, random development
Preservation of natural environment – under stress from new development	Enhance extraordinary landscape
Spread of the town	Small coastal community
Degradation of salt marsh, river, Murtnaghurt and dune systems	Distinctive local streetscapes
Maintenance of seaside village character and charm	Untouched river, bluff and beaches
Summer population influx	Retention of town's history
Development along the river foreshore	Non-suburban
More restaurants and cafes	Within its existing urban boundaries
	Indigenous vegetation in local gardens

Key Findings

The key findings that emerged from questionnaire 1 and the additional scoping of issues at the first community forum reflected those identified by the steering committee as part of the initial SWOT exercise.

The natural environment and coastal location of the township featured prominently as 'likes', as did the "beachy" and "cottagey" buildings. The informal and largely unplanned evolution of the place was also viewed as a positive, with the lack of kerbs and channels, and unsealed roads being mentioned again as a positive feature.

'Dislikes' included drainage issues and the potential of low lying areas of the town to flood periodically. Traffic and parking concerns were also noted as 'dislikes', along with "over development" and a lack of street trees. Again, there were concerns expressed regarding the impact of new development on the natural environment surrounding the township.

The increasing popularity of the town as a tourism destination was raised as a key 'issue' facing Barwon Heads, including the development and traffic pressures it places on the town. Preservation of the natural environment as the town develops was also noted as an issue, particularly degradation of the wetland, salt marsh, river



and dune systems. A further key 'issue' was the maintenance of the seaside character and "charm" of the township.

The community's vision for Barwon Heads included statements relating to the protection of the small coastal community and natural beauty. There was also reference to an "untouched" natural environment, with "slow" and "random" development and a "non-suburban" character.

3.7 Issues Paper

Following the initial SWOT analysis, study team survey and community forum 1, an issues paper was prepared. The purpose of the issues paper was to set the context and direction for the development of the urban design framework. A series of questions were considered by the study team members when undertaking the two day survey of Barwon Heads and also formed the basis of the issues paper. The questions were based on issues raised by the local community at the community forum and the steering committee at its first meeting, and were both broad-based and issue specific.

The questions were:

Landscape Setting

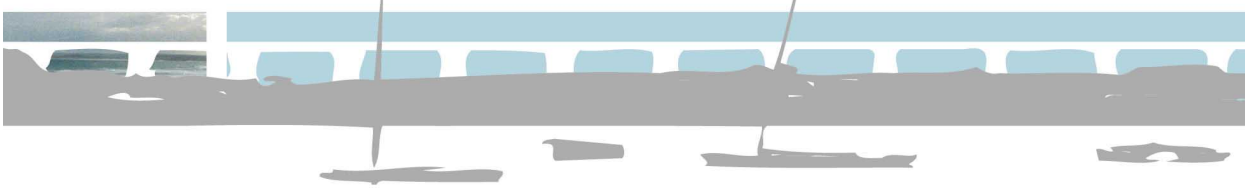
- What is the relationship of the town with the wider landscape setting?
- How can this relationship with the natural landscape be protected and enhanced?
- Are there significant views and vistas from the town to the natural landscape beyond?
- Are there significant views and vistas from outside?

Journey and Arrival

- Are there special qualities about the journey to the town and the arrival?

The relationship of the town with its landscape setting is an integral part of the identity and character of Barwon Heads.





- Where are the main entrances to the town and do these require strengthening?

Edges of the Town

- Are there physical limits to the growth of the town?
- Should the town expand to or beyond its urban zoned limits?

Interface with the Coast

- What is the relationship of the built form edge of the town with the coast? What are the interface issues?
- What type and form of development is appropriate on the coast?
- Is the location of the Barwon Heads Football Club at Howard Harmer still a 'live' issue?

Interface with the River

- What is the relationship of the built form edge of the town with the river?
- What impacts is development adjacent to the river having on the natural environment?
- What type and form of development is appropriate at the river interface?

Interface with the Open Rural Landscape and Wetlands

- What are the issues at the interface of the town with the open landscape to the west?
- What type and form of development is appropriate at the open edge?
- How has the Thirteen Beach development impacted on the town's character, physical form and relationship with the landscape?

The interface of the town with the river is dominated by a hard edge of urban character on the western side of Riverside Terrace.





Built form, Image and Character

- How is the built form of the town laid out and 'structured'?
- What types of built form exist in Barwon Heads?
- What are the components that contribute to the special image and character of the town? Are any of these special qualities at risk?
- How important are the grassy laneways to the character of Barwon Heads?

The Centre of Town

- What type and form of development is most appropriate in the centre of town?
- How does the centre of town relate to adjacent areas? Are the 'edges' defined?

Open Space, Recreation and Vegetation Character

- What are the key features of the open space network of Barwon Heads?
- How does open space and vegetation contribute to the landscape character of the town?
- Are areas of open space in and around the town accessible and well used?

Community Safety

- What issues of community safety exist in Barwon Heads?
- How can they be addressed?

Cultural Heritage

- Is the cultural history of Barwon Heads adequately expressed in the environment of the town?

Traffic and Parking

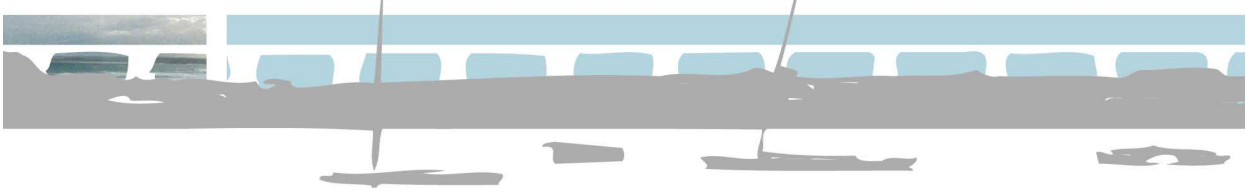
- What are the key traffic and parking issues facing the town?
 - Speeding?
 - Lack of public transport?
 - Location of the bus stops?
 - Lack of parking in the town centre?
 - 'Rat-running' in residential streets?
 - Pavement condition?
 - Dedicated through route?
 - Lack of pedestrians / cyclist paths?
 - Traffic queuing during peak periods?

The above points were discussed in more detail in a facilitated session with the project team's traffic and parking consultant, following preparation of the draft issues paper, at steering committee meeting 2.

Tourism

- What are the key tourism attributes in Barwon Heads?
- How can tourism growth be appropriately managed?

A demographic and tourism overview paper was prepared by the project team's land economist / tourism planner, and appended to the issues paper as part of the initial research and scoping of issues and opportunities. The paper included a demographic profile of the town, including recent population changes; an analysis of housing types and trends; identification of key tourism attributes, accommodation



and commercial services; an overview of the visitor market; and tourism growth issues and opportunities for the town.

The aim of preparing an issues paper was not to answer all the questions, but rather 'set the scene' for the development of the urban design framework. The full issues paper, including the demographic and tourism overview, is included in [Appendix D](#).

3.8 Draft Vision

A draft vision statement was prepared following completion of the issues paper. The aim of the vision statement was to summarise the community's aspirations for the future of the township. The draft vision statement was drawn from many sources, but particularly the first community forum where the issue was brainstormed at the end of the session. The preparation of a vision statement helped to canvass exactly what the urban design framework should achieve, and confirmed to the community that the project team would prepare a plan that reflected their ideals and values. The Township Vision is included in [Chapter 2, Volume 1: 'The Plans'](#).

3.9 Steering Committee Feedback

Site Analysis, Issues Paper and Draft Vision

The issues paper was presented at the second steering committee meeting, along with the site analysis plan and draft vision statement. Detailed feedback was received from the steering committee and is summarised with a response in [Appendix F](#). The following key issues were raised via the feedback:

Environment and Conservation

The incredibly rich and diverse natural environment of Barwon Heads was noted and discussed in the issues paper. However, additional feedback was received requesting the specific recognition of the Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary which came into effect as part of the gazettal of marine national parks and sanctuaries in November 2002, and the recognition of the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve as a Ramsar site, with international obligations. In addition, the need to manage the impact of people on the natural landscape was raised, particularly in relation to the interface of the town's edges with the ocean, river, lake and wetlands systems and in any future development of a walking trail around the periphery of the town. The suggestions to protect moonah vegetation, both on public and private land, and to prevent expansion of the town at its western edge were also highlighted by the steering committee.

Unmade Roads and Laneways

The grassy or gravel unmade roads and verges, and the narrow pedestrian laneways that permeate the town were highlighted in the issues paper as being a defining characteristic of Barwon Heads, and one that the community values highly. This was identified via the steering committee, at the community forums and during consultation for the Geelong neighbourhood character study. The issue of unmade roads and laneways was raised by the steering committee and council officers as there are concerns in the engineering team at council that they cause safety



problems, gravel run-off and maintenance issues. This view is at odds with the broader community and other council officers who cherish the 'non-engineered' and quaint qualities of the town. A question was posed via the feedback as to whether there is an alternative road construction method that would address the safety and maintenance concerns, yet maintain the non-urban road aesthetic that the community values?

Town Centre

There were a number of issues raised by the steering committee and council officers regarding the commercial centre of town, including the question as to whether there is a need to plan for its future expansion, beyond the current Business 1 zoned properties. Other issues relating to the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape specifically are covered in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, Volume 1: 'The Plans', and include suggestions to reintroduce an avenue of trees in Hitchcock Avenue, and connect an additional pedestrian laneway through the existing public toilet site to Grandview Parade.

Planning for the future expansion of the town centre was a key question raised by Steering Committee Members and Council officers.



Traffic and Car Parking

A number of preliminary traffic and parking concerns were raised by the steering committee, which were brainstormed further at steering committee meeting 2. Specifically, the question of re-opening Golf Links Road was raised, as well as the pedestrian amenity and appearance of the foreshore car park, at the intersection of Ewing Blyth Drive and Bridge Road. The issue of the main road status of Hitchcock Avenue was also questioned by the steering committee, including the suggestion to relocate the main road status to Golf Links Road.



Implementation

In its feedback, the steering committee also emphasised the importance of prioritising and resolving the issues, and moving forward to implementation. It was noted that the local community gets frustrated when a plan is prepared, but results in no changes on the ground.

Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club Relocation

At the time of preparing the issues paper, the question of the relocation of the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club was still a 'live' issue, as explored in the Barwon Heads Village Park Final Management Plan report (June 2002). However, this issue has since been resolved, with the finalisation of the lease for the clubs to remain in their current location at Howard Hammer Reserve on the foreshore.

Emerging Directions

Following completion of the issues paper, the project team prepared the urban design framework 'emerging directions' in the form of key directions, objectives and strategies. These were presented to steering committee meeting 4, and all concerns and comments of the steering committee were addressed prior to the emerging ideas exhibition. Key concerns revolved around the following issues:

Tree Species

The steering committee were not supportive of reflecting the past use of dark exotics at entrances to the town or at other feature points, and were accepting of the fact that existing stands of cypress will eventually be lost. The committee noted that they would prefer tree species at key locations throughout the town that better reflect the character and location of Barwon Heads. The committee were very supportive of the strategies relating to the protection and extension of moonah vegetation, and suggested replacement of the word 'native' with 'indigenous' throughout.

As a result it was agreed to remove any reference to dark exotics in the plan, and focus on the protection and extension of the moonah communities and other indigenous vegetation.

Trees in Hitchcock Avenue

The steering committee largely agreed with the emerging strategy to reintroduce trees in Hitchcock Avenue, and with the following criteria relating to species selection:

- Suits local soils and coastal growing conditions.
- Will grow to an adequate size to ensure clear sight lines below the canopy.
- Will provide a sense of scale that dominates the streetscape.
- Allows some sun onto the footpath in cool weather (ie deciduous, light canopied evergreen or space so that canopies are not continuous.
- Encourages native birds rather than exotic species.
- Poses minimal risk of becoming a weed in bushland around the township.
- Contributes to the distinctive local character of the place.

Though not suggested in the draft material, the steering committee members wanted it noted that they did not want an avenue of dark exotics in the town centre.



As a result it was agreed to adopt the above criteria in selecting a tree species for Hitchcock Avenue, and test this issue further with the wider community during the emerging ideas exhibition.

Extension to the Business 1 Zone

There was concern expressed by the steering committee that an extension to the Business 1 zone in Hitchcock Avenue would not allow a mix of commercial and residential uses and building types. The steering committee emphasised the importance of flexibility in any rezoning that may be proposed for the town centre. The opportunities and constraints of various 'commercial' zones were discussed with the steering committee, and though the Business 1 zone does allow residential uses, they are 'permitted' only above ground floor level.

As a result it was agreed to further explore other 'commercial' zones, including retention of a Business 1 core, surrounded by the Mixed Use zone, which allows both commercial and residential uses with no restrictions on building form.

Building Heights

Concern was expressed by the steering committee regarding the emerging strategy to retain the low rise building height of the town with the possible exception of development in the area of defined urban character in the town centre. The steering committee was of the opinion that development over two stories, anywhere in the town, would detract from the charm of Barwon Heads. However, the committee did acknowledge that design is a critical issue, and that a poorly designed two storey building can look worse than a well designed three storey building.

As a result it was agreed to remove the 'possible exception' reference and deal with the issue of development in the town centre via performance based design guidelines, taking into account amenity as well as aesthetics and other issues.

A summary of key issues raised by the steering committee to the emerging framework is included in [Appendix G](#).

3.10 Emerging Ideas Exhibition

An exhibition of emerging ideas for the urban design framework and streetscape upgrade was held in Barwon Heads for 6 weeks over the summer holiday period. The exhibition material was on display in the Barwon Coast Committee of Management offices from 17 January 2003 until 3 March 2003, with posters and flyers promoting the exhibition throughout the town.

The emerging ideas exhibition used the feedback received at the first community forum and advice and suggestions offered by the steering committee as its starting point. Community quotes were highlighted and used as a feature of the exhibition. The feedback led the project team to base the exhibition on 11 key themes:

- Landscape Setting
- Journey and Arrival
- Edges
- Built Form
- Image and Character
- The Centre of Town
- Open Space and Vegetation



- Community Safety
- Cultural Heritage and Diversity
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Movement
- Traffic and Parking
- Tourism

Many people attended the exhibition, which was also used to publicise the second community forum, held mid-way through the public display period. A reduced version of the exhibition material is included in [Appendix H](#).

3.11 Community Forum 2

Just over 100 people attended the second community forum, held half way through the emerging ideas exhibition, on 8 February 2003. The purpose of the forum was to get feedback from the local community on the emerging ideas for the urban design framework and the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape upgrade concepts. The community forum was held during the summer holiday period when the population of the town swells due to an influx of holiday makers.

The engineering department of council used the opportunity to gauge feedback on the traffic and parking study, which was on display and available for public comment at the same time as the emerging ideas.

The program for community forum 2 was:

- Overview and update of the projects underway in Barwon Heads, and introduction of the study team
- Explanation of work undertaken to date and the program for the afternoon
- Snapshot presentations
 - Urban design framework: emerging ideas
 - Traffic and parking study: summary and key findings
- Facilitated questions and discussion in three 'corners':
 - Urban design framework
 - Streetscape upgrade concepts
 - Traffic and parking
- Open forum as a large group:
 - What do you think of the emerging ideas?
 - How are the plans shaping up?
 - Summary of burning issues
- Sum-up and re-cap on where to from here

A questionnaire was distributed at community forum 2 and canvasses all feedback received at the forum. The questionnaire was also available to use as a feedback form at the emerging ideas exhibition and was distributed on the rear of community bulletin 3. The findings from the questionnaire are discussed in the following section of this volume.

On the morning of the community forum, a market was held in the Barwon Heads community hall. This provided the opportunity for council's project manager to dedicate a market stall to the project, gauge feedback and further promote the community forum being held later that day.

3.12 Questionnaire 2

Approximately 110 responses were received to the second community questionnaire. The questionnaire picked up on the key questions that were included in the emerging ideas exhibition material:

- How do you think the natural environment at the town's edges could be better protected?
- Have you got any ideas for beautifying the entrances to the town? Would you like to see the bluestone welcome signs retained?
- Have you got any ideas about how the unpolished and casual qualities of the town could be retained?
- What are your priorities for the streetscape works in Hitchcock Avenue? Undergrounding the power lines? Footpath surfacing? Others?
- Do you agree with the idea to reintroduce street trees in Hitchcock Avenue? If so, would you prefer a consistent avenue or an informal placement of trees? Would you support choice of a deciduous species or would you rather an indigenous or Australian native species?
- Have you got any suggestions regarding the location of bus stops in Hitchcock Avenue? Do you support the idea for a signalised pedestrian crossing in Hitchcock Avenue? Where should it be located?
- Do you support the introduction of a 50km/hr speed limit in Hitchcock Avenue all year round?
- Do you agree that the protection of the moonah vegetation should remain a priority?
- Have you got any suggestions for improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in and around the town?
- Any other comments?

The questionnaire responses are summarised in the following table, and included in full in [Appendix I](#).

Environment at Edges

Environmental considerations predominate – recognition of special environmental qualities and the need to protect and enhance these

Protection of existing vegetation and planting of additional vegetation (majority stipulate indigenous vegetation)

Majority support for no additional urban development beyond the western edge of the town

Protection of open, 'green', rural qualities at western edge

Some suggestions for additional boardwalks through mangroves

Overwhelming support for protection of moonahs and mangroves

Suggestions for additional educational signage

Some maintenance suggestions – more bins and removal of rubbish

Entrances

Majority support to retain existing bluestone welcome signs

Many suggestions for additional landscaping, predominantly indigenous

Support for extension of moonah vegetation generally

Support for rationalising / minimising other signage at entrances

Few suggestions for sculpture and artworks



Casual Character

Retain unmade qualities of the streets and laneways – grassy verges, no kerbs and channelling, no formal footpaths

Do only what is necessary; let the town evolve naturally

Limit through traffic

Limit high density / high rise; introduce design guidelines

Retain / plant vegetation

Hitchcock Avenue Trees

Some concerns about maintenance issue of deciduous trees – leaves, falling boughs etc

Flowering gums a popular suggestion

Some concern about choosing the correct species if the power lines stay – anti-lopping sentiments

Approximately 14 preferred indigenous; 40 native; and, 21 deciduous

Evenly balanced in reference to formal v's informal placement of trees

Number of species suggested

Hitchcock Avenue Speed Limit

Vast majority of responses in favour of 50km/hr speed limit all year round

Only four responses opposed (no reasons given)

Some suggestions for even lower speed limits

Some suggestions for 50km/hr throughout entire town (already in place in residential streets)

Hitchcock Avenue Priorities

Support for a simple solution

Overall support for trees, responses split between formal avenue planting and 'clustering'

Overall support for all three suggestions (undergrounding, footpath, surfacing tree planting)

Some dissension regarding undergrounding (too costly, minimal visual impact etc)

Other suggestions relate to traffic ie discourage cars from town centre

Bus Stops and Pedestrian Crossings

Majority oppose signalised pedestrian crossings

Some suggest crossings are not required

Many support zebra crossings

Some support signalised crossings (more than the show of hands at the public forum)

Support for relocation of bus stops near Ozone Road; others feel they should remain centrally located

Moonah Vegetation

Majority support for protection of moonah vegetation

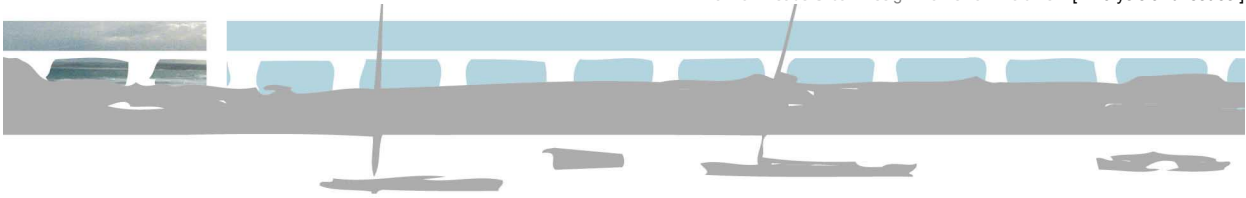
Also concern for other indigenous species and protection of vegetation in general

Support also for additional planting of moonahs

Some suggestions for protection through the planning scheme of other legislation

Many comments regarding moonahs being an integral part of the character of the town

Very few feedback form submissions (four) opposed the idea (no reasons outlined)



Pedestrian and Cyclist Facilities

Discouraging through traffic

Improving the safety and pedestrian environment of Sheepwash Road

Some suggestions for board walks, along the river front and through the mangroves

A lot of support for circular trail around the perimeter of the town

Wider footpaths

Support for retention of casual 'unpolished' look when upgrading the pedestrian environment

Bike lanes

Other Comments

Overall sense that 'less is more' when it comes to improvements

Keep it simple a strong message

Some suggestions to re-open Golf Links Road; while others endorse closure

Some suggestions for a skate park

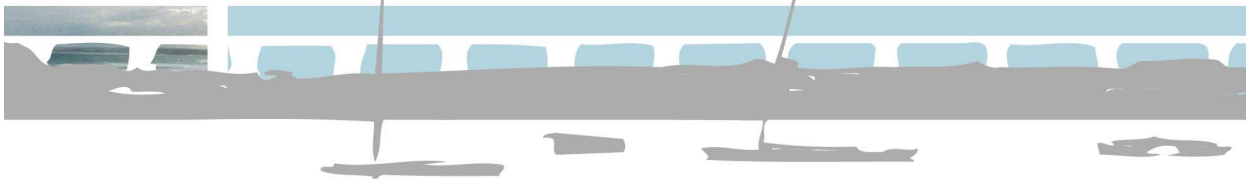
Many comments in relation to enforcement and maintenance of existing and future works

Some comments suggesting Golf Links Road be the declared main road

Many comments regarding discouraging through traffic

The questionnaire revealed overwhelming support for protection of moonah vegetation throughout the town.





3.13 Steering Committee Feedback

Key Recommendations

Following the emerging ideas exhibition, at the final official meeting of the steering committee, a set of draft key council recommendations was presented. These draft recommendations incorporated all feedback received from the steering committee, council officers and the wider community throughout the process, and are included in full in [Appendix J](#). Following the final official meeting, an additional meeting of the steering committee was held to further discuss the draft recommendations. A letter outlining the steering committee's comments from this meeting is attached in [Appendix K](#). The letter and other discussion covered at the steering committee meetings covered the following issues:

Greater Geelong Planning Scheme

The steering committee agreed with the proposed list of changes to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, including the introduction of the Mixed Use zone in Hitchcock Avenue. The steering committee also expressed a desire to retain the mix of frontage setbacks, encourage the continued recycling of existing buildings, and the need for future development to provide car parking. They requested that these issues be covered in any policy(s) prepared for the planning scheme.

Western Urban Growth Boundary

The steering committee, particularly the Parks Victoria representative, were very supportive of placing a limit on the western expansion of the township in order to protect the landscape character and fragile environmental values of the Murtnaghurt lagoon and associated wetland areas. A review of the current boundaries of the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) was also supported.

View across the Barwon Heads Golf Course from Thirteenth Beach Road, with the western boundary of the township visible in the distance.





Planting Program

Support was received for the various planting program initiatives recommended, including the extension of the River Parade moonah vegetation to the Geelong-Barwon Heads Road entrance to the town. It was also suggested that a recommendation be included relating to the implementation of the Village Park Final Management Plan (June 2002).

Streetscape Concepts

The proposed way forward for the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape concepts was supported by the steering committee and would include the formation of a future Streetscape Steering Committee to oversee the preparation of detailed working drawings. (VicRoads have since clarified that this is subject to a range of issues being addressed.) The steering committee did not overwhelming support the proposal for an avenue of flowering gums in the town centre, and finally agreed on white cedar as the preferred Hitchcock Avenue street tree. The steering committee agreed with the proposal to introduce non-signalised zebra crossings in Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road, and with the proposal to relocate existing bus stops in Hitchcock Avenue closer to Ozone Road. (This will be subject to further discussions between Council and VicRoads.)

Main Road Status of Hitchcock Avenue

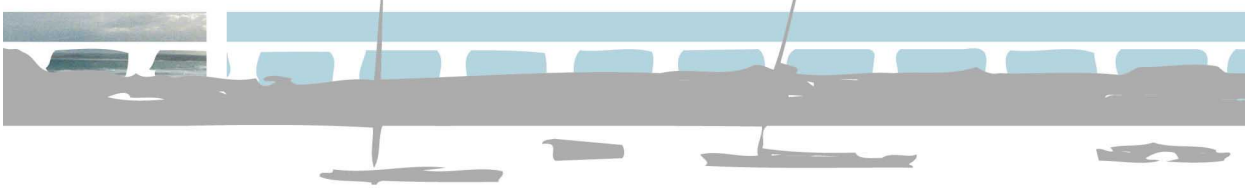
The steering committee supported the initiative to pursue the transfer of the Main Road status from Hitchcock Avenue to Golf Links Road, but emphasised that this must occur in consultation with the local community, particularly Golf Links Road residents and the school community. (Since then, VicRoads have clarified that personal opinions expressed at the meeting should not be attributed as formal VicRoads positions). It was noted by the Vic Roads representatives that it was up to council to undertake appropriate consultation, then make a request to Vic Roads for the transfer of the Main Road status. It was also noted that council would bear the costs of any works associated with the transfer.

Laneways, Engineering Works and Township Character

The steering committee were in favour of retention of the retention of unsealed roadways and grassy verges, and no kerb and channelling where it currently exists. However, it was stipulated that the retention of character should be secondary to traffic/pedestrian safety issues. The committee also discussed the need to improve pedestrian connections between the old and new neighbourhoods of Barwon Heads, and retain and introduce new pedestrian linkages, including laneways, in the future development of the town. In particular, the steering committee requested that the pedestrian environment of Sheepwash Road be improved, including a shared pathway for pedestrians and cyclists.

Access and Safety

All recommendations relating to access and safety issues were supported by the steering committee. These included the introduction of a 50km/hr speed limit in Hitchcock Avenue, the creation of a pedestrian laneway through the existing toilet block site connecting to Grandview Parade, and implementation of a circular walking trail, subject to no adverse environmental impacts. A permanent 50km/hr speed limit has since been implemented in Hitchcock Avenue from Ozone Road to Bridge Road. A summer speed zone of 50km/h extends from Sheepwash Road through Barwon Heads township to Ocean Grove.



Works Program

The steering committee agreed with the summary works program that was presented, provided any works associated with implementation of the Village Park Final Management Plan (June 2002) were included. It was also suggested that any recommendation for future streetscape works in Bridge Road be separated from those in Hitchcock Avenue, and treated as a longer term prospect. The importance of an effective maintenance program and 'whole of life' costing for future capital works were also emphasised by the steering committee.

Car Parking

The steering committee felt that the issue car parking be further explored or more 'strongly stated' in the final documents. It was recommended that the text include stronger recommendations relating to clear, well located signage, directing drivers to existing car parks, and reference to future development providing sufficient car parking spaces. Recognition was also given to the fact that the purchase of additional land for off street car parking was not feasible due to the high cost of such an exercise, particularly when compared to the car parking yield that would result. The committee recognised the opportunity offered by surrounding streets to assist in the reduction of parking congestion and indicated this should be supported by the implementation of good pavement connections and maintenance of historic lane links.

A 'synthesis' of all analysis, issues and feedback into the key themes for Barwon Heads is provided in the following chapter of this volume.

The Urban Design Framework is included in Chapter 2, Volume 1: 'The Plans'. The Hitchcock Avenue streetscape upgrade concept plans are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, Volume 1: 'The Plans'.



4. Key Themes





4.1 Barwon Heads Key Themes

This chapter synthesises all analysis, issues and feedback into a description of the key themes that emerged for Barwon Heads, upon which the Emerging Ideas exhibition was based, and around which the urban design framework is structured. The urban design framework itself is included in [Chapter 2, Volume 1: 'The Plans'](#).

Landscape Setting

One of the special qualities of the Barwon Heads township is its relationship with the natural landscape.

On three sides it is bounded by water in the form of the ocean to the south and the Barwon River to the north and east (with the Lake Connewarre wetlands system to the north of the river). These landscape features provide a natural barrier to the town's development. On the fourth side to the west are open, rural paddocks that extend to wetlands, reflecting the character of the Connewarre District and significant parts of the Bellarine Peninsula. The Lake Connewarre wetlands system extends from the north of the river down the western side of this rural land. This diverse wetland area has a distinctively open and flat landscape character, and separates the recently developed Thirteenth Beach residential estate from the established township.

Unlike Ocean Grove, which has a sense of being 'perched' on the topography, Barwon Heads is nestled, or 'tucked' into the landscape. The older residential streets in the southern area of the town (Bell Street, Humble Street etc) typify this. Here, the grassy streets rise and fall with the dunal landforms, and the low-lying homes are set back behind informal planting that spills into the public domain. Some streets are unsealed with grassy edges, and their narrow width strengthens the sense of being nestled or sheltered from the coastal winds. In streets such as these, there is a feeling that the coast or beach is close by. There is a connection with the wider landscape. This is true for most of the town, where the roof tops sit below the coastal vegetation, and views from the town are out to the wider, 'big landscape' beyond.

There are some areas of the town that have a more urban character. This is most evident when looking back at the town from distant viewing points such as the bridge and the Barwon River Foreshore in Ocean Grove. From these locations, clusters of buildings around the Bridge Road entrance to the town and along the riverfront (Riverside Terrace) are dominant. These expressed areas of urban form do not occur as single buildings, but are grouped and provide small precincts of vastly different character. These 'urban clusters' provide a strong contrast to a predominantly vegetation dominated town, and reinforce and highlight those 'soft green' areas due to the very fact that they are different.





Journey and Arrival

There are three main entry points into Barwon Heads, each with a very different character.

Inland



The journey to the town via Geelong-Barwon Heads Road is through an open, but varied landscape, where there is a sense of leaving one built up area (Geelong), travelling through open space, and arriving at another 'settlement' (Barwon Heads). Expansive views are available across the Lake Connewarre wetlands system to the north, and as the views become more enclosed by vegetation along the roadside, there is a sense that you are approaching the edges of the township. The arrival is marked by a proliferation of community clubs signage, including a 'Barwon Heads: Village by the Sea' themed welcome sign. This entrance has the potential to be beautified and strengthened by extending the moonah habitat down Sheepwash Road and creating an informal avenue, as opposed to a formal 'gateway' treatment.

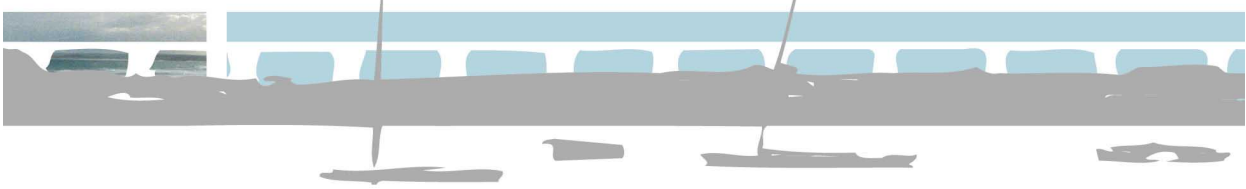
River Crossing



The approach to the town from Ocean Grove is, by contrast, quite dramatic. Barwon Heads-Ocean Grove Road meanders through dense coastal ti-tree and banksias, which prevents views out and results in a sense of enclosure, until you emerge at the bridge. Here, the view opens up to reveal the straight geometry of the bridge, the eastern built form edge of the township, the coast and river. Apart from the drama of the natural setting, the most visually dominant elements are the buildings at the activity node at Bridge Road, with the hotel façade being a particular feature. The white handrail on the bridge is also an important visual element. There is a sense of arrival at this entrance to the town due to the commercial activity and built-up nature of the area. However, there is also a sense of it being car-dominated and not conducive to pedestrian activity. This is due to the location of a large car park on the waterfront, and the fact that this entrance is centred on a roundabout. The visual and pedestrian amenity of this entrance has the potential to be improved by introducing shade landscaping and lighting to the waterfront car park. The pedestrian environment could be further enhanced by a future upgrade which, via a consistent treatment, could also be used to strengthen the link between the riverfront and Hitchcock Avenue.

Ocean Coastline

The journey to Barwon Heads via Thirteenth Beach Road is along the dramatic ocean coastline, where the dune system rises many metres above sea level from Thirteenth Beach. This coastal drive is dominated by low-lying coastal vegetation and spectacular glimpses to the ocean. As you approach the curve into Ewing Blyth Drive at the pinnacle of the dunal system, views are available to the Barwon Heads golf course and clubhouse, and across the golf links to the town. The descent into the town down Ewing Blyth Drive enables a panoramic view across the township, with the remnant stands of cypress trees in Golf Links Road and George Street being a particular feature. The glimpses to the ocean and panoramic view over the township are important vistas to protect.



Edges

The 'edges' are the areas where the town interfaces with the coast, river, open rural landscape and wetlands.

Interface with the Coast



The southern boundary of the town is the dramatic ocean coastline of Bass Strait. From sea level, the dune system rises many metres, but has been altered significantly through the subdivision and development of land, creation of the golf course and construction of road infrastructure. Development of this type has caused problems such as erosion, weed infestation, sand drift, loss of vegetation and haphazard access.

The Stephens Parade residential area is located at this interface and was examined as part of the Residential Character Study undertaken by Planisphere for the City of Greater Geelong in 2001. The precinct is dominated by indigenous ti-tree species, with mostly two storey contemporary homes jutting out of the vegetation. At the eastern end of the subdivision are some remnant large to medium scale Inter-war bungalow homes, developed on the original golf links subdivision of 1920. The character study describes the Stephens Parade precinct as follows:

The precinct is distinctive due to its isolation and spaciousness, due partly to its location beside the golf course, and the appearance of buildings sited within and rising from the coastal scrub. The buildings are eclectic in style, and include older styles, however muted tones that blend with the scrub are preferable. Maintenance of the density of the vegetation is important to the area's character and buildings should be sited to minimise the extent of buildings visible from the roadway. This area has no direct comparison.



This area is also noted in the City of Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study for its heritage significance as part of the Golf Links Heritage Area:

This precinct is significant for its intact links type golf course of 1920-22 and large to medium scale Inter-war Bungalow houses developed on the Golf Links/Golf Lands subdivision of c. 1920. It is the only course in Australia set on a links design and includes open, natural and semi-rural undulating terrain; manicured, rolling greens and sandy hillocks; fairways covered in native and exotic grasses; and views to the clubhouse and coastal panoramas. The Stephens Parade section of the precinct follows the contours of the coastline and is significant for its large allotment sizes.

It is council policy to prevent the expansion of the Stephens Parade subdivision as it would impinge on the dune system and further disturb the natural environment. This position has been endorsed again by the local community throughout the urban design framework process. The subdivision and adjacent golf links are covered by an Environmental Significance Overlay in the City of Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. Further to this, a heritage overlay is currently being proposed and will apply to the Barwon Heads Golf club house and golf links area.

The golf course, Foreshore Reserve, the Bluff, Howard Harmer Reserve and the Barwon Heads Caravan Park (to a certain extent) form a visual and physical green belt between the township and the coast.

Interface with the River

The Barwon River forms the eastern and northern boundaries of the town, with the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve further north and west. The interface of the town with the river varies in character along its length.



The dwellings that face Flinders Parade are separated from the river frontage by the road itself and river parkland (Frank Ellis Reserve). These dwellings are not visible from the opposite shore due to the screening nature of the coastal scrub in the parkland. This residential area is recognised in the Outer Areas Heritage Study for its heritage significance as follows:

This precinct is significant for its seaside character, enhanced by its clear views of the Barwon River, ocean, bridge, jetties and parkland. The area has a high proportion of intact, detached single and double storey horizontal weatherboard houses and a combination of large, medium and small scale late Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and Inter-war Bungalow dwellings. The area is also characterised by the pitched gable and/or hipped roofs adorned with early chimneys.

A heritage overlay is currently proposed (Amendment C49) and will apply to Flinders Parade, including private properties, the road reserve and Frank Ellis Reserve up to the waterline. The "Flinders Heritage Area" overlay also includes a number of significant buildings (eg The Corner Store and Monomeath). Local heritage policies and objectives will apply to this local heritage area, including both private and public properties, for example, the retention of gravel verges in Flinders Parade.

Further north, in the vicinity of Talbot Avenue and Riverside Terrace, the homes front onto the river directly ('Sydney style') and public access along the river at the front of these dwellings is only possible at low tide. This area is characterised by a highly visible cluster of built form, where the river edge location has led to more intense development both in terms of height and site coverage.



Still further north, the dwellings along Carr Street have a frontage to the road as well as backing onto the mangroves. The allotments along Carr Street are predominantly large, allowing generous setbacks from the street and substantial planting. This combined with the screening effect of the mangroves, results in a vegetation dominant area when viewed from both Carr Street and the opposite shore. Dwellings in Haynes Court, at the northern end of Carr Street, also back onto the mangroves. A lack of fencing combined with low-scale vegetation and lawn, means that views are available from the street, through the dwellings to the mangroves. Again, this area is not visible from Ocean Grove due to the screening effect of the dense mangrove vegetation. In these areas, where development is constructed in close proximity to the mangrove and saltmarsh areas, there is no environmental buffer zone between the housing and the mangrove habitat. This is degrading the environmental values of the area through the impact of garden weeds, human access and domestic pets. This would be improved through the introduction of a shared management zone between the residential allotments and mangrove habitat, an idea that is widely supported by the local community.



Dwellings along the northern edge of the township are separated from the river parkland by a street, River Parade. In the eastern section, the dwellings are visible from the street, as much of the indigenous vegetation has been cleared. However, west of Sheepwash Road, the dwellings in River Parade are screened by ti-tree, including moonah vegetation, creating that sense of the built form being nestled into the landscape.

Development along the river frontage was also examined as part of the Residential Character Study. The precinct extending along the river, from Bridge Road to Sheepwash Road is described in the study as follows:

This precinct is distinctive due to its mixture of architectural styles and building materials, and its river-edge location, which encourages higher development. Development in this precinct is therefore highly visible, particularly from the eastern entrance and vistas to the township. Vegetation cover varies from low level to more substantial gardens with trees including a predominance of natives and frequent ti-tree... The scale of development along the river



foreshore is quite distinct in some respects from that in the remainder of the precinct, and requires particular 'waterfront guidelines' to ensure development is compatible with the surrounding area, and with the vision for Barwon Heads.

The coastline of Bass Strait and the Barwon River form absolute boundaries to Barwon Heads, containing the town and influencing growth options. The containment of the township within these natural landforms is a unique feature and one that is cherished by the local community.

Interface with the Open Rural Landscape and Wetlands

The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is located to the north of the Barwon River and extends down the western edge of the town. The entire reserve incorporates the lower reaches of the Barwon River Estuary, Lake Connewarre itself, Reedy Lake, Murnaghurt Lagoon and Hospital Swamp. The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is the largest area of remnant indigenous vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula and is important for its wetlands, mangroves and saltmarsh communities. The system has also been recognised internationally as a Ramsar site, and for its role in maintaining the ecological and aesthetic diversity of the region.

Between the wetlands reserve and the town itself are open paddocks, and much of the developed residential land on the western fringe of the town simply backs onto these open areas. This green, open area is zoned Rural, with a minimum lot size of 80 hectares, and currently the town does not extend into this 'green belt'. However, unlike the northern, southern and eastern boundaries of Barwon Heads it is physically possible for further development to occur here and so this edge is the most vulnerable.

There is the sense that a 'spillage' of residential development into this open area would clutter the landscape and spoil the integrity of the edge. Another concern is the impact that encroaching development would have on the sensitive wetland environment. A review of the current boundaries of the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) in this area is about to commence and will determine if this 'protection zone' requires extension. The review will also provide management guidelines for wetland water treatment.

It is a strongly held view in the local community that the established township should not extend beyond its current urban zoned limits at the western edge. This position arises out of a concern for the environmental qualities of the internationally recognised site and a desire to protect the landscape character of the wetlands area, rather than a purely 'anti-development' stance.

The importance of the containment of coastal townships is also expressed in the documents Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast (May 1998) and Siting and Design Guidelines for the Victorian Coast (May 1998), with the former making specific reference to Barwon Heads:

Lake Connewarre and the Barwon River are inland extensions of the coastal experience with high conservation values and flat open landscape with low visual absorption. Urban development at Torquay, Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads is tending to spread and is compromising the coastal quality. Major threats are linear residential and holiday home developments...

At present the residential properties located on the western fringe of the township simply back onto the Rural zoned land, with high fences on the rear boundaries. This interface has the potential to be improved, and it may be that the implementation of a bicycle / walking path at this location* would demarcate the



western edge of the township and provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of the existing back fences with landscaping.

* The circular walking trail as envisaged by the Residents Association is not proposed to be located in this position. However, given the benefits of improving the visual environment of this edge and keeping the trail removed from the environmentally sensitive wetlands area, it has merit as a viable alternative. At the very least it could be considered as a second, shorter circular route.

Beyond this open area and still west of the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is the new Thirteenth Beach residential estate. This estate and its golf course also have an interface with the Barwon Coast to the south. This area has a very different character to the remainder of Barwon Heads, and some might argue that it has diluted the sense of containment of the town within the landscape. Strict design controls are evident in this planned estate, which is characterised by narrow, curvilinear road pavements, swale drains and pedestrian scaled bollard lighting. The few dwellings that have been constructed are contemporary in design, in a mixture of materials. There is a sense of exclusivity in this area, perhaps due to the estate housing a resort style golf course and being accessed via grand, entrance gates. Due to the completely different character of the new estate and its physical separation from Barwon Heads by the wetlands system, new golf links course and the open, rural paddocks, it reads as a separate township as opposed to an extension of the existing town.

Built form, Image and Character

The town of Barwon Heads has a casual and beachy quality.

The township is laid out in two distinct patterns. The 'old town' south of Geelong Road on a formal grid, and the 'new town' north of the Village Park on a curvilinear street system.



The order and connectivity of the historical grid in the 'old town' ties the natural and built environment together and despite the formality of the road layout, the character of the streets is informal and very unlike typical suburban streets found in metropolitan Melbourne. In part, this is due to the informal road verges where, even if there is a kerb and channel, a grassy 'footpath' directly abuts it. It is also due to the scattered tree planting in many streets, where there is no distinct line between private garden and public road reserve, and the predominantly single storey, modest homes with low-pitched roofs that sit below the tree canopy. The Residential Character Study identifies four residential precincts within, or partially within, the 'old town'. The main precinct, located generally to the west of Hitchcock Avenue is described in the character study as follows:

This precinct is distinctive due to its strong sea side township character created by the low scale architectural styles and mixture of building materials. The buildings frequently have low pitched or flat roofs which adds to their low scale nature... The buildings are set within established gardens frequently with retained native vegetation. The sea side feel of the area could be strengthened by encouraging the planting of indigenous species. The area has some similarities with the older areas of Ocean Grove... although the topography is flatter with less opportunity for views in Barwon Heads.

An additional precinct is identified as the residential area south of Bridge Road, which was previously described in this report for its exemplification of built form nestled within the landscape. This residential area is established in a dune system and retains a holiday shack quaintness, also described in the character study:



The precinct is distinctive due to its sea side township character derived from the remaining pre and inter war buildings, and the mixture of post war and recent styles with a variety of building materials. The generally low scale buildings are set within mature native and exotic gardens complemented by mature street trees and informal roadway treatments...



The local community has described Barwon Heads as “shabby chic”, “incomplete” and “non-suburban”. Much of this ‘unpolished’ character is found within the old parts of town. Perhaps this is best described as a ‘shackiness’ or a sense of being ‘unfinished’ or even ‘unplanned’, beyond the original grid. Some of the elements of built form that result in this quality are simple timber or fibro houses with low-pitched roofs, nestled in mostly native vegetation. Many streets or laneways also display non-engineered qualities, some being completely unsealed with informal grassy verges, or even completely covered in lawn. Bushy planting that spills from front gardens into the road reserve and minimal hard surfacing are other contributors to this informal incompleteness. Boundary treatments are also important as they are often more prominent than the housing itself. Front boundary fences are often medium to high timber brush or paling fences, with coastal vegetation scattered in front and behind. Based on sound urban design principles, this type of front fencing is not normally recommended in residential neighbourhoods, yet it is the very thing that contributes to the unplanned, informal, shabby qualities of Barwon Heads. A number of built form elements also contribute to the sense of place. These include structures such as the bridge with its white, timber handrail, ‘Diver Dan’s house’ and other waterfront icons such as the jetties and the bluestone sea wall, and the predominance of ti-tree and the remnant stands of cypress pines.



Debate has raged throughout the study process as to whether retention of the unsealed roadways and grassy verges is appropriate due to mud, dust, corrugation and possible safety issues. However when this topic was raised at the second community forum, the local residents indicated overwhelming support for the protection of these informal, non-engineered qualities, and expressed concern at proposals in the Traffic and Parking Study to seal roadways and introduce kerb and channelling. The community of Barwon Heads associates the unmade roads and verges with the special character of the coastal town, and have requested that they be retained, provided appropriate levels of pedestrian and vehicular safety are maintained.

Despite its setting on a curvilinear street pattern with cul-de-sacs, the new area of town displays more formal and planned characteristics than the older part of town established on the grid. This is primarily due to the engineered nature of the streets and the use of more hard surfacing generally, particularly within front setbacks. The newer homes also tend to be larger and double storey, and constructed in heavier materials such as brick or rendered block-work. The more recently constructed dwellings also tend to cover more of the site, the setbacks from boundaries not allowing generous gardens. The Residential Character Study identifies five residential precincts within, or partially within, the ‘new town’. The precinct located approximately between The Village Park, Carr Street, Sheepwash Road and River Parade is described as follows:

The precinct is distinctive due to its bush garden court character, created by the frequent lack of front fencing, the regular front and side setbacks and established native gardens. The sea side location of the area is not always evident other than through the use of typical coastal vegetation such as Tea-tree and the mix of building materials...

The precinct located generally to the north west of the intersection of Taits Road and Sheepwash Road differs in that it is an even newer area, comprising mainly post 1980s modern villas. Its description is as follows:



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

The location of the Village Park between the two distinct areas of the township provides a spatial separation between the old and the new. While this results in a gap between the two areas as opposed to a merging or blurring of the two development patterns, significant vegetation within the Village Park ensures that important landscape qualities and environmental values continue to influence both the new and old town character.

The Centre of Town

Hitchcock Avenue is the identifiable centre of town and centre of activity.

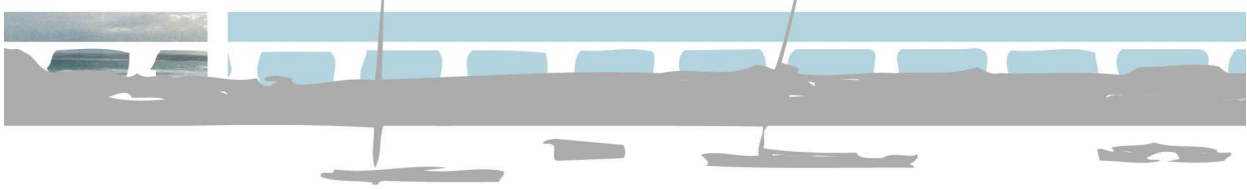


This activity extends to the eastern section of Bridge Road which is one of the main entrances into the town. Though this section of Bridge Road has previously served a stronger role as a 'gateway' and Hitchcock Avenue as the traditional town centre, the recent development of an IGA supermarket and redevelopment of selected businesses in Bridge Road has strengthened its commercial emphasis. The 'linking' building between the two streets is a disused service station, which is set at an angle to the intersection, and is currently undergoing a refurbishment. This, combined with a unifying streetscape treatment in the future, would result in these two areas being better 'tied together'.



Being located in the 'old town' and set on the historic grid, the centre of town demonstrates many of the 'unplanned' and 'unfinished' qualities that characterise Barwon Heads. One of these characteristics is the varying front boundary setback pattern of the buildings in Hitchcock Avenue. Some buildings or parts of buildings are setback 3 to 4 metres from the front boundary, while others have no setback. Some have even greater setbacks which is unusual for a town centre. This varying setback pattern provides the opportunity for street life in the form of outdoor dining and displays, not just in front of the buildings in a uniform manner, but in sheltered spaces between buildings and tucked around corners or in alcoves. The opportunity for outdoor dining also often extends to the rear of the properties where courtyard spaces or decks are provided. Again, often a uniformity of setbacks is considered 'good' urban design, but it is the very opposite which makes this part of Barwon Heads unique.

There is no defined 'edge' between the centre of town and the adjacent residential areas. This is partly due to the fact that there are a number of residential properties in the commercially zoned area of Hitchcock Avenue. Often these residential properties take the form of a single storey, brick veneer multi-unit development, with a central driveway. More recently a small number of shop tops have been converted for residential use or are currently being converted. An opportunity exists for additional residential accommodation including tourism accommodation in the centre of town, particularly at the rear of the properties on the eastern side of Hitchcock Avenue. Here, shop top accommodation and/or infill accommodation at the rear would provide views of the river. However, this would need to be assessed in terms of its visual impact *from* the river and whether a cluster of more visible built form adjacent to the centre of town is appropriate. The preparation of urban design guidelines for Hitchcock Avenue will ensure that new development protects and reinforces the special qualities of the street.



Open Space and Vegetation

Open space and vegetation are very important to the character of Barwon Heads.

The town is encircled by open space in the form of substantial foreshore reserves, beach areas and wetlands. It is these areas which result in a 'green belt' between the township and its interface with the water, contributing to the 'nestled' effect of the town and preventing Barwon Heads from presenting a continuous hard urban edge to the coastline and river.

As well as the significant natural open space resources in the Lake Connewarre wetlands, the Barwon River and adjacent parkland, the Bluff and the coastal dune systems, a number of 'man-made' open space and recreational venues exist in Barwon Heads. These include the Barwon Heads Golf Course, the Thirteenth Beach Golf Links, the Village Park and facilities within the Barwon Coast Committee of Management camping ground.

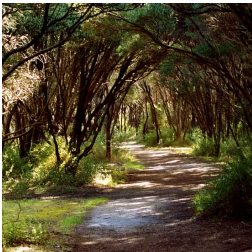
These reserves, parks, beach areas and recreational venues, combined with the streets of Barwon Heads, are all components of the public space network. Some of these public spaces are currently under-performing, due to factors such as awkward pedestrian access, unresolved environmental sensitivities, interface conflicts and domination of vehicular traffic. This complex situation results in some spaces being overused, and others not being used to their full potential; a situation which detracts from the potential functionality, image and environmental 'health' of the open space network as a whole.

For instance, the Barwon River corridor is very important in its open space contribution to the township. There are extensive stands of mangroves and saltmarsh vegetation on the south western shore (in the northern area of Barwon Heads), along with some older stands of moonah vegetation in the vicinity of Sheepwash Road. In some locations, this vegetation is experiencing decline due to recreational and residential development in close proximity. The river corridor is used extensively for walking and fishing. However, there is no open space link along the river in Barwon Heads, and where public access is provided it is largely without formalised tracks which can result in damage to vegetation.

The Village Park is the largest area of open space situated within the township itself and is located at the northern end of Hitchcock Avenue. The Village Park was once located on the edge of town, but with the subdivision of land to the north, it is now located centrally, between the 'old' and the 'new'. As such, the Village Park provides a pedestrian link between the more recently established residential areas to the north and west and the Primary School, Hitchcock Avenue and the foreshore. The park also provides opportunities for passive and active recreation, and is currently home to a number of local and regional sporting clubs.

One of the unique landscape features of the Village Park is the extension of Hitchcock Avenue into the park in the form of an avenue of tuart gums. The 169 gums are planted in the form of a double row avenue with associated row planting to form a cross shape at the centre of the park. Tuart gums do not occur naturally in or around Barwon Heads and it is estimated these gums are between 35 and 45 years old. However, these trees have been declared unhealthy and unsafe and may be removed and replaced with an avenue of suitable species in the future.

Another highly significant feature of the park is the extent of remnant moonah vegetation. This vegetation pre-dates European settlement, with a large woodland of moonah located at the centre of the park being particularly significant as a rare





example of large-scale remnant. As such, the moonah vegetation is recognised and protected under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, 1988. An open pathway through the moonah community has resulted in disturbance from human activity, and pest animals and weed invasion add to the damage occurring to the woodland.

There is also a remnant dune system located at the eastern boundary of the park which has been identified as an area of high cultural significance. This area contains regenerated vegetation such as coastal ti-Tree, swamp wattle and coastal wattle and is highly susceptible to erosion.

Increases in permanent residents and seasonal visitors to Barwon Heads have placed pressures on the park, including environmental threats, conflicts of use, loss of its 'natural' character and increased vehicular traffic. For this and other reasons, a Management Plan was prepared for the park in June 2002. Among its recommendations were to protect the moonah vegetation community and remnant dune system, cease equestrian activity in the dune system and not relocate the football oval and associated club facilities to the Village Park from its current location within the Barwon Coast Reserve. The local community is supportive of the recommendations of the management plan and have been lobbying for its implementation.

Community Safety

People's enjoyment of a place is often linked to their sense of security.

The local community generally refers to Barwon Heads as a 'safe' place, with the exception of some traffic and policing concerns. While there are some elements of Barwon Heads that have the potential to be unsafe, this issue is less about the current situation and more about future decisions that will affect the safety of the place.

Interestingly, in Barwon Heads many elements that contribute to the unique character of the place would not be recommended as solutions when designing for safety. The informal grassy laneways south of Bridge Road typify this dilemma. These quaint streets are not well lit and are abutted by high timber brush fencing and/or bushy vegetation. Often the vegetation spills from public gardens into the laneways, blurring the distinction between public and private space. It is this combination of unique characteristics that gives the laneways a sense of intimacy and informality, yet it breaks all the rules of designing for crime prevention. For example, the lack of lighting results in these streets being intimidating spaces for pedestrians after dark and the high fencing and bushy vegetation prevents clear views and natural surveillance, and results in potential 'entrapment spots'.

The principles of designing for safety will need to be applied to all aspects of the urban design framework for Barwon Heads and balanced against the very things that contribute to the unique character of the town. People's enjoyment of a place is often linked to their sense of security, and preventing crime through appropriate urban design should always be a goal. Principles that will need to be kept in mind include maintaining sight lines, avoiding the creation of entrapment spots and encouraging active frontages and uses near open space.



Cultural Heritage

The Barwon Heads area has been identified as being of Aboriginal cultural significance with several sites located within the region.



The landscape combination of river estuarine, mangrove and tidal zones reinforces the knowledge that this region was an important destination for the original Wathaurong inhabitants. A number of significant sites are located throughout the town at the river and coastal edges and with time more may be identified. Preliminary investigations have revealed a large Aboriginal significant site on land adjacent to the river, which requires further analysis. Further discussions need to be held with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op. Council, in partnership with State Government land managers must encourage a stewardship role with the local community to ensure shared management and protection on both public and private land containing significant sites.

The Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary has been listed under the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act, 1972.



A number of precincts and buildings of heritage significance have been identified in the township as part of the Outer Areas Heritage Study 2000. The Barwon Heads bridge, for example, is recognised for its heritage significance and is subject to a Heritage Overlay in the Planning Scheme due to its status as the longest timber bridge in Victoria. The Barwon Heads Golf Club and Links precinct and the residential area in Flinders Parade are also significant and will shortly be recognised with Heritage Overlays currently proposed for both areas.

Generally, there is a sense of time past in and around the township. This is related to the structure and built elements of the town, as well as its strong connection to the landscape and natural environment. Elements that contribute collectively to the sense of history include the older dwelling stock in the town, the historic street grid, including the grassy 'laneways', and the old stands of trees, including remnant stands of cypress pines. Individual buildings or items such as the bluestone sea wall, timber jetties and the golf clubhouse perched overlooking the ocean, are also reminders of the past.

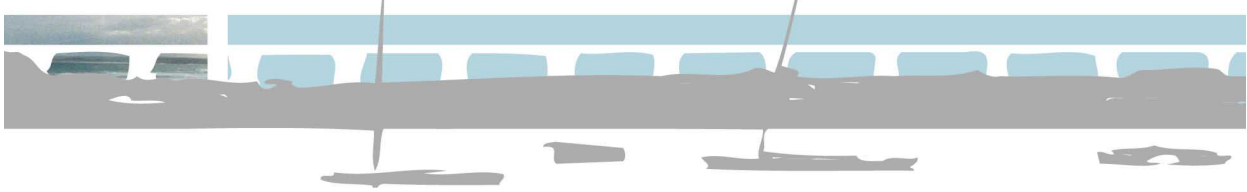
It is important to maintain and strengthen the built and natural cultural heritage of Barwon Heads. Expression of the historical depth of a place contributes to its character and the way people feel in that place, and it is important to ensure that the much loved assets of Barwon Heads, such as the grassy laneways, moonah vegetation and remnant dune systems, survive into the future.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Movement

A unique feature of Barwon Heads is its 'walkability' and the many opportunities it presents for linked walking and cycling trails.

Due to its containment within the natural landscape, the town is of a size that is possible to walk around and from one end to the other, with ease.

There are currently walking opportunities along unlinked and random sections of the riverfront, and a walking trail exists from the vicinity of Bridge Road up to the Bluff, providing spectacular coastal views. Other pieces of a potential network are dotted around the periphery of the town.



There is a need to improve linkages between public spaces along the riverfront, foreshore and throughout the town by ensuring ease of pedestrian movement at key locations. It is also important to improve conditions for cyclists in and around Barwon Heads. The enjoyment of Barwon Heads and its unique landscape features is dependent on people being able to find their way around, and in doing so, feel safe and comfortable.

An area that generates a lot of activity and provides a potentially strong link between the foreshore and the 'centre of town' is the section of Bridge Road from the bridge itself to Hitchcock Avenue. This area is an important activity node as well as being a significant arrival or entry point into the town. However, currently this area is dominated by vehicular traffic and a large area of 'lost space' in the form of a car park right on the foreshore. Pedestrian and bicycle movement in an area such as this can be improved by a variety of means. These include identifying natural pedestrian 'desire lines', recovering 'lost space' and strengthening the place-defining, structural role of the area.

Within the old town area a series of historic lane connections provide unusual pedestrian links between the river front and town centre. The character of these lanes is specific to Barwon Heads and important in contributing to the village atmosphere. Continued use of these connections ensures a cultural link with the town early history is retained. Basic maintenance together with understated 'casual' definition of the connections will encourage their use and ensure their relevance to future generations of residents.

Safe pedestrian and cyclist links between the 'old town' south of the Village Park and new town to the north are currently dependent on trails through the Village Park. Despite the fact that the town is flat and easy to walk or cycle the north west sector of the town is poorly serviced and links are dependent entirely on road infrastructure. The major access route along Sheepwash Road provides few or no facilities for pedestrians or cyclists, increasing the perception of distance between these two community groups.

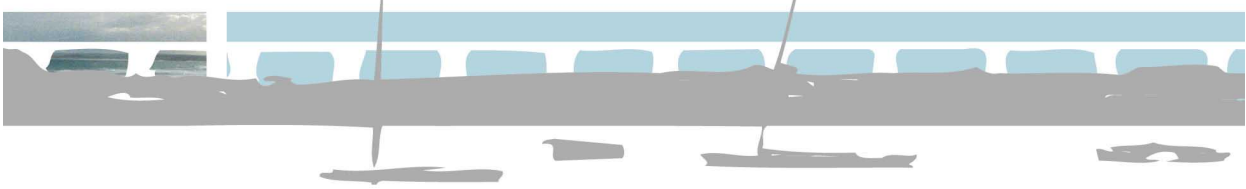
A trail around the perimeter of the town would be particularly unique for the variety of landscape experiences it would present. A trail of this nature would also present a tourism opportunity if it were linked to particular sites of interest. The exact location of the trail and its interface with the built form or open space that abuts it, would need to be carefully considered in terms of environmental impacts and designing for safety.

Traffic and Parking

It is important to provide a safe, integrated and convenient transport system in Barwon Heads.

The road network of Barwon Heads is characterised by a grid-like layout in the older area of town south of Geelong Road and a curvilinear network in the newer area of town north of Geelong Road. While Hitchcock Avenue is the Declared Main Road, Golf Links Road is a viable alternative route and generally carries equal amounts of traffic and a higher proportion of heavy vehicles. Many local roads within the area have a stone seal and no formal pedestrian paths. While substantially quieter during the off-peak season...

Parking within the town centre is generally restricted to on-street, with some off-street facilities provided at the Barwon Heads Hotel and IGA supermarket. Parking provision within the area is generally sufficient during the off-peak season. During



busy weekend and peak holiday periods, residents and visitors should be encouraged to use side streets and access the centre via path and historic laneway connections. The flat terrain of the town provides the perfect pedestrian environment. The provision of interesting laneway links and good pavement connections would encourage walking, contribute to vibrant street activity and reduce parking congestion.

Tourism

Barwon Heads has always been a popular destination for visitors, both day-trippers and holiday home owners or renters.

This has increased over recent years due to the attraction of the town's coastal ambience and lifestyle, which was popularised in the television series 'Seachange'. The same phenomenon has led to an increase in the town's permanent resident population. Data from the most recent census (2001) indicates that approximately one quarter of dwellings in Barwon Heads are holiday homes.

The key attributes that entice visitors to the town include the natural attractions such as the surf beaches and coastal views; the golf courses and other recreational opportunities such as fishing; and the location of the town close to Geelong and as a gateway to the Great Ocean Road.

The occupancy rate of foreshore caravan parks in Barwon Heads has increased significantly over the last two to three years. Occupancy is at saturation during the summer holiday period and school holidays, and there has also been a trend towards higher occupancies over longer periods beyond the summer peak.



5. Implementation





5.1 Implementation Context

There are a variety of means by which the council can implement the recommendations of the urban design framework. 'Statutory' implementation, meaning introduction of planning controls in the planning scheme to 'give weight' to the urban design framework, is of primary importance. This aspect of implementation is discussed first.

However, other implementation measures that will assist in planning for the future of the township, and ensuring community support and ownership are equally important. These include capital works, including the streetscape upgrade, traffic actions, and other measures such as community encouragement and education, staff skilling and statutory support. These implementation measures are discussed in the sections that follow.

5.2 Statutory Implementation Options

Statutory implementation of the urban design framework is only one part of the total package of implementation techniques. However, it is perhaps the most important as it legally binds the council, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and the community to consider the outcomes of the study in the development arena.

Determining an Appropriate Statutory Approach

There are a number of actions that should be taken to improve the guidance provided to all parties involved in the development of Barwon Heads. These actions will collectively assist applicants to design high quality buildings; nearby residents, Council officers and Councillors to assess the suitability of development proposals; and where necessary, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal members to determine upon planning appeal cases in the township.

The aims of the statutory approach should be:

- To give the whole study recognition within the planning scheme, as an important background document;
- To provide appropriate 'triggers' within the MSS, to give an umbrella for policy and any proposed controls;
- To enable the Hitchcock Avenue Urban Design Guidelines to be used as an assessment tool for planning permit applications;
- To ensure that, where necessary, additional statutory controls are provided to require permits for buildings, works or tree removal so that the findings of the study, can be enacted.

The recommendations for statutory implementation must be framed having regard to the existing provisions of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. These include the Municipal Strategic Statement, particularly clause 21.35 that relates specifically to Barwon Heads and includes the Barwon Heads Structure Plan (1996) as a reference document. They must also consider:

- The qualities and characteristics identified in Barwon Heads and their relative significance in municipality-wide and regional terms.



- The extent to which the important qualities of the town are threatened. The areas subject to greatest change such as the town centre, where development is occurring most frequently, are sometimes, but not always, those where important elements are under greatest threat. The removal of significant vegetation throughout the town is another example.
- The likelihood of success of approval of the proposed controls by an independent State government appointed Panel/Advisory Committee and the Minister for Planning. There is little point in recommending measures to the Council that are unlikely to be approved. The most important aspect of this consideration is the need to determine which areas/elements are those that require additional planning controls and which areas/elements can be successfully managed with existing controls and the range of other implementation techniques discussed in the following sections.
- The likelihood of community acceptability of new controls over some forms of development or areas of the township, and the extent of community concern about the loss of particular aspects or elements of the township.
- Strategies, policies and controls already contained in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, and changes likely as a result of any forthcoming MSS review.

All these factors have been taken into consideration in developing the recommended approach to statutory implementation as described below.

Recommended Approach

There are four components of the urban design framework that need to be considered for inclusion in the planning scheme:

- Township Urban Design Framework
- Hitchcock Avenue Design Guidelines
- Rezoning of Hitchcock Avenue Properties
- Vegetation Protection

Township Urban Design Framework

The council's MSS makes reference to Barwon Heads specifically in clause 21.35. The contents of this clause are based on the findings of the 1996 Barwon Heads Structure Plan, and include the plan itself. This clause requires updating to reflect the findings of the urban design framework, which are consistent with, and build on, the directions outlined in the structure plan. The structure plan can be retained as a reference to this clause, in addition to the urban design framework.

The Township Urban Design Framework ([Chapter 2, Volume 1](#)) has 11 themes, each with one or more Objectives, plus the comprehensive listings of Strategies and Actions. The Objectives and Strategies summarise the future directions for Barwon Heads arising from this project, and most of them have direct relevance to the control of development. Therefore they should be included in the planning scheme, or referenced in some way, in order to give them statutory weight. Possible options include replacing the current MSS clauses on Barwon Heads with the new material, or adding a replacement section of Local Policy. In either case it may be necessary to edit some of the Strategies, so that they are concisely focused on development-related outcomes, and provide a succinct body of policy.



The inclusion of a Local Policy within the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) would enable the provision of policy guidance for the assessment of planning applications. The Local Policy would serve to provide a set of general considerations that apply to all proposals within the area to which the policy is applicable, and for which a planning permit is required. It is noted that a Local Policy forms part of the planning scheme, and therefore an amendment would be required to insert it into the scheme, and to alter it if necessary in future.

Hitchcock Avenue Design Guidelines

The Hitchcock Avenue Urban Design Guidelines ([Chapter 4, Volume 1](#)) provide the basis of a detailed development control policy, and should therefore be included in the planning scheme, probably as Local Policy (see comments above). The council may find that some of the guidelines are relevant to other activity centres in smaller townships, in which case the structure of the guidelines could be adjusted to differentiate between general guidance for township centres, and guidance specifically relevant to Barwon Heads.

Rezoning of Hitchcock Avenue Properties

The findings of the Urban Design Framework warrant the rezoning of the Residential 1 properties fronting Hitchcock Avenue, between Ozone Road and Bridge Road, to Mixed Use. This would better reflect existing uses, and provides for a flexible extension of the town centre to within its recognised limits. The purpose of the Mixed Use Zone supports the Urban Design Framework objective and strategies for the Barwon Heads town centre, providing for a range of uses that complement the mixed-use function of the street. As well as providing flexibility in terms of uses (both commercial and residential uses are allowed), the zone also allows a variety of building forms (unlike the Business 1 Zone, the Mixed Use Zone allows residential uses at ground floor level).

It is also recommended that the Schedule to the Mixed Use Zone include a maximum leasable floor area to ensure the retention of the intimately scaled building forms, intrinsic to the character of the street, and to prevent large, 'big box' retail outlets.

The purpose of the Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) is to provide for a range of uses that complement the mixed-use function of the locality. Uses such as single dwellings and bed and breakfast accommodation are permitted, as are shops and offices, subject to planning permit approval. Applying the Mixed Use Zone to parts of the town centre in Barwon Heads has an advantage over the Business 1 Zone, in that it does not stipulate a maximum ground level frontage for dwellings. One of the distinctive characteristics in Hitchcock Avenue is the mix of uses and building forms, and the recycling of existing buildings for new uses (units next door to shops, and cottages converted to cafes etc). The Mixed Use Zone would protect these qualities, whereas the Business 1 Zone would encourage only 'shop top' dwellings.

Vegetation Protection

The findings of the study support the introduction of vegetation protection controls for significant stands of moonah vegetation and/or individual moonah trees throughout the township, subject to environmental assessment together with the advice of a qualified arborist. This would result in a permit being required for the removal, destruction or lopping of recognised and listed trees. This form of control is possible through the application of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO), subject to specialist horticultural advice regarding which trees or stands of trees warrant protection.



A Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) requires a permit for removal of vegetation; and it can apply to all trees over a certain height or trunk diameter, whether native, indigenous or exotic. The only limitation to the variables included in the schedule are the ease of use and enforcement of the provisions. In order for a VPO to be justifiable, the vegetation or landscape must be demonstrated to be of significance to the area. The VPO is primarily aimed at situations where the vegetation is of individual significance. The VPO can only require a permit for vegetation removal, and not for buildings and works. It is preferable that VPO controls be confirmed by a parallel study that identifies the environmental significance of vegetation.

Process and Timing

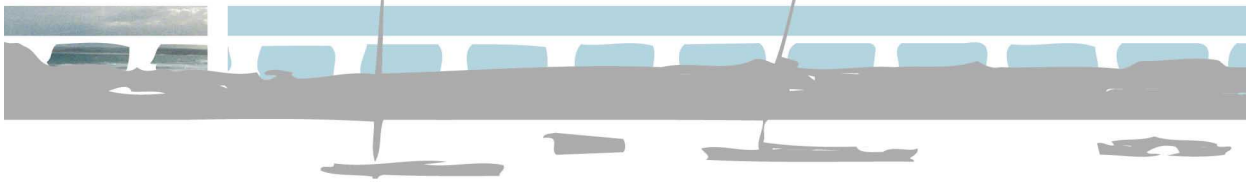
All these actions will require an amendment to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. This process is likely to take a minimum of six months. In the interim, the Council may wish to consider trialing the Urban Design Framework recommendations and Urban Design Guidelines, for use in the assessment of applications immediately. However, it must be recognised that these will have no statutory force or effect until they are at least exhibited as a planning scheme amendment.

5.3 Streetscape Concepts

The Hitchcock Avenue streetscape concept plan has been completed, and agreement has been reached by the Steering Committee members regarding the preferred street tree species (*Melia azedarach*, White Cedar). Details such as the exact location and grade of pedestrian crossing and dimensions of the lane widths require further consultation with the community and negotiation with Vic Roads. Resolution of these issues will largely depend on the whether the Main Road status of Hitchcock Avenue is retained.

In the short term, it is recommended that Council resolve to adopt the Streetscape Concept Plan, and:

- Include detailed planning and construction of the works in the 2004/2005 capital works program.
- Commission the preparation of detailed costings and working drawings.
- Make applications for funding to assist with the implementation of the works, including undergrounding of the powerlines.



5.4 Capital Works

As well as the Hitchcock Avenue streetscape upgrade, the Urban Design Framework recommends a number of other capital works initiatives. These initiatives are contained in the following works implementation schedule, which is also included in the Executive Summary in Volume 1: 'The Plans'. The columns in the schedule are explained below.

Works Initiative

Refers to the capital works initiative as recommended in the Urban Design Framework.

Short

Recommends a short timeframe for the works of 1 to 3 years.

Medium

Recommends a medium timeframe for the works of 3 to 5 years.

Long

Recommends a long timeframe for the works of 5 to 10 years.

Who

Indicates the agency responsible for implementing the works.

Cost

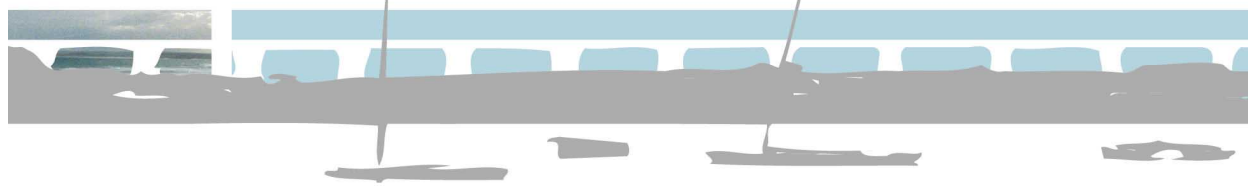
Indicates the cost range as either:

- * Low (eg minimal costs)
- ** Medium (eg works of moderate cost)
- *** High (eg major works program)



Works Implementation Schedule

Works Initiative	Short	Med	Long	Who	Cost
Streetscape (in suggested priority order)					
Adopt the streetscape concept plan for Hitchcock Avenue, and: Include construction of the works in the 2004/2005 council works program. Commission the preparation of detailed costings and working drawings. Make applications for grant funding to assist with the implementation of the works, including undergrounding of the powerlines.	●			Council	***
Begin negotiations to purchase land adjacent to the existing toilet block in Hitchcock Avenue with a view to creating an additional pedestrian laneway from Grandview Parade to Hitchcock Avenue. Upgrade the existing toilet, installing a smaller structure to the front of the current allotment, linking this to the new lane access.	●			Council	**
Relocate the bus stops in Hitchcock Avenue closer to Ozone Road.	●			Council with Vic Roads and DSE	**
Construct a single lane roundabout at the intersection of Geelong Road and Hitchcock Avenue.		●		Vic Roads with Council	**
Plan for a streetscape upgrade of Bridge Road between Hitchcock Avenue and Ewing Blyth Drive as a future stage of the project, to be included in a later year of the council works program.		●		Council with Vic Roads	***
Planting and Parks (in suggested priority order)					
Undertake an indigenous vegetation planting program, including the establishment of an informal avenue of moonahs at the Geelong-Barwon Heads Road entrance to the town.	●			Council	*
Create a landscaped setting for the existing bluestone 'Barwon Heads Village by the Sea' welcome signs at the entrances to the town, utilising low indigenous vegetation.	●			Council	*
Work with Parks Victoria, DNRE and the Barwon Foreshore Committee of Management on revegetation and weed eradication programs in coastal areas.	●	●	●	Parks Vic, BCC of M, DNRE with Council	**
Undertake a vegetation planting program that includes street tree planting in the new area of Barwon Heads, north of Geelong-Barwon Heads Road, utilising appropriate indigenous species and ground covers.	●	●	●	Council	**
Work with Parks Victoria and the Barwon Foreshore Committee of Management to provide a managed buffer between residential development and the mangrove community.	●	●		Parks Vic with Council	*
Embark on a neighbourhood parks improvement program, including pedestrian furniture and facilities and indigenous planting at the small parks throughout the township.		●		Council	*
Undertake an indigenous vegetation planting program including an extension of the moonah vegetation down Sheepwash Road, forming a habitat link between moonah communities in the Village Park, River Parade and the future informal avenue at the Geelong-Barwon Heads Road entrance to the town.		●		Council	*



Works Initiative	Short	Med	Long	Who	Cost
Signage & Interpretation (in suggested priority order)					
Provide consistent, clear and well designed directional signage to existing car parking in the town.	●			Council	*
Remove all illegal and unnecessary signage at the Barwon Heads-Geelong Road entrance to the town and amalgamate existing signage where possible.	●			Council	*
Highlight the historic pedestrian laneways that link to the town centre with uniquely designed directional signage stating 'walkway to town centre' or similar.	●			Council	*
Sign historic lanes and improved side street pavements to encourage the use of surrounding streets as viable parking for regular centre users.					
Provide information and shelter for visitors to Barwon Heads at bus stops, particularly in the town centre.	●			Council with DOI	*
Rationalise signage in coastal areas to minimise clutter and visual impact.	●			Council	*
Link sites of tourism interest into future walking/cycling trails and provide interpretive material.		●		Council	*
Promote the heritage status of the bridge through subtle interpretive material and by denoting it as a feature of interest on any bicycle and/or walking trail.		●		Council to clarify responsibilities	*
Work with Parks Victoria, DNRE and the Barwon Coastal Committee of Management to establish opportunities for interpretation of land, wetland and marine environments.		●		Parks Vic, BCC of M, DNRE with Council	*
Other (in suggested priority order)					
Begin negotiations with relevant land managers and land owners to implement the circular walking trail around the perimeter of the town, with an emphasis on managing and minimising adverse environmental impacts.	●	●		Council with Parks Vic, DNRE and BCC of M	***
Work with the Barwon Coast Committee of Management to improve the visual and pedestrian amenity of the waterfront car park through the introduction of appropriate shade landscaping and pedestrian level lighting.	●			BCC of M with Council	**
Embark on a program to name, maintain, promote the use of, and subtly light pedestrian laneways.	●	●		Council	**
Upgrade the pedestrian environment in Sheepwash Road, incorporating a shared pedestrian and bicycle pathway.	●			Council	**
Embark on a program to ensure that public space, particularly pedestrian laneways and parkland adjacent to the river, is well lit using pedestrian scale lighting with minimal upward light spill.	●	●		Parks Vic, BCC of M, DNRE and Council	**
Rationalise access and remove poorly located and unused pedestrian links to the riverfront.		●		Council, parks Vic and BCC of M	*

5.5 Main Road Status

Another key initiative recommended in the Urban Design Framework is the transfer of the Main Road status of Hitchcock Avenue to Golf Links Road, subject to consultation with the local community, particularly residents of Golf Links Road and the school community. Vic Roads representatives have indicated support for this proposal and have indicated that it is Council's responsibility to undertake the consultation, followed by a formal request to Vic Roads. It is recommended that this process begin immediately so that outstanding detailed issues relating to upgrade of Hitchcock Avenue can be resolved, the capital works project can be completed on schedule.

5.6 Other Measures

Community Encouragement and Education

Education and encouragement, partly by means of forming partnerships, is an essential aspect of implementation. The following strategies could be adopted:

- Education of real estate agents, developers and landowners generally on the recommendations of the Urban Design Framework and Urban Design Guidelines.
- Education of design and building professionals.
- Encouragement schemes for high quality developments that adhere to the principles contained in the Urban Design Framework and/or Urban Design Guidelines.

The kinds of techniques that could be used to give effect to these strategies include:

- Information leaflets
- Workshops
- Award schemes
- Displays
- Media articles/events

The partnership aspect could be fostered by bringing stakeholders with differing perspectives (eg residents and developers) together into the same forum. This may be best accomplished independently of a contentious planning application with statutory time limits. The Community Forums held as part of the study process, and the establishment of the Steering Committee, have already paved the way for these types of programs.

Staff Skilling and Design Advice

It takes time to come to grips with a new study and its implementation through the planning system. The Council's statutory planners, including those assessing subdivisions, need support and skilling to make the best use of the Urban Design Framework's recommendations. Training sessions, workshops and review of current applications against the objectives and strategies of the Urban Design Framework and/or the Urban Design Guidelines are useful techniques. In addition, training may be required by other parts of the Council organisation where the recommendations



impact upon public domain works designed and undertaken by engineering personnel or contractors in accordance with specifications prepared by Council staff.

Resourcing may be an issue in the implementation of the recommendations of this study, as some recommendations such as increasing controls over buildings and vegetation and more detailed assessment of design, may result in increased workloads for planning staff. Due to the size of Barwon Heads, implications for resourcing are expected to be minimal.

The Council must be aware of this potential and monitor the effect of introducing new controls to ensure that implementation of the Urban Design Framework is effective. Above all, the Council must determine to send out the right message to the development community through consistent decision making as well as communication techniques discussed earlier. That message must foster an expectation that the best quality design is expected, and that applicants will be subject to delays or refusal if they fail to meet this expectation.

Statutory Support

The main vehicles for statutory support are the MSS, proposed Local Policy and Urban Design Guidelines as described earlier. These planning controls will provide significant help, as will the community education and encouragement initiatives referred to above. However, there are allied or associated measures that can be taken. Possibilities include:

- Permit conditions.
- Increased enforcement of scheme provisions and permit conditions.
- Increased publicity about penalties.
- Active monitoring of works undertaken without permission (eg illegal carports).
- Local Laws.
- Title covenants, over single properties or groups of properties.

