

Horsham North

Local Area Plan

May 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community. We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

The Horsham North Local Area Plan was adopted by Council in May 2023.

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1. Strategic Action Plan

1. INTRODUCTION + PURPOSE

The Horsham North Local Area Plan (the Plan) has been informed by previous background work, current research, investigation and valuable feedback from the Horsham North community, for which this plan is intended to serve. The *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper (March 2022)* forms the basis and background work for the Plan, providing the analysis and context for a goal setting framework to guide future change within the precinct.

The Plan has been informed through community engagement, much of which has affirmed many of the findings detailed in the *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper*. Public consultation has also highlighted the key issues and opportunities from the community's perspective, which is fundamental for the future planning of Horsham North.

The purpose of the Plan is to set out a clear direction and strategic framework for Council and the community in addressing identified issues, some historic, and responding to opportunities that will make Horsham North more liveable and sustainable into the future. It does this by setting out a Vision, 10 Goals and underpinning Strategies relating to land use, built form, public space, access to open space and transport matters.

The development of a Local Area Plan provides the opportunity for the local community to contribute to developing a shared vision, ensuring that local values are conserved and enhanced through good planning, and making certain that change and development are carefully managed to strengthen liveability.

Strategic Framework

Issues and Opportunities Paper

- Analysis of key influencing documents
- Identification of emerging issues
- Key issues and opportunities

Local Area Plan

- Demographic change
- Vision
- Themes
- Goals
- Strategies
- Strategic Directions

Strategic Action Plan

- Actions
- Measures
- Timeframe

2. WHAT IS A LOCAL AREA PLAN

A Local Area Plan sets out a vision for a clearly defined area for a set timeframe. It provides guidance on the appropriate directions and opportunities for change. Planning for change that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable is its key focus.

A Local Area Plan can include:

- Spatial plans to guide activities and land uses, including proposed locations for the colocation opportunities for future community facilities.
- Spatial plans to highlight opportunities for walking, cycling, and public transport routes.
- Guidance on building design and urban character.
- Spatial plans to enhance the open space network, including public gathering spaces and local parks.

Some changes proposed in a Local Area Plan will require amendments to a Council's Planning Scheme. This requires additional research, evidence, consultation, decision making and the involvement of the State Government. At times an independent planning panel is convened to assess changes and hear submissions about proposed land use and planning policy changes from the community and other stakeholders.

What is planning for environmental, social and economic sustainability?

Planning for change needs to consider environmental, social and economic elements in an integrated manner. For example, when a population increases, it creates demand for new homes. Planning for new residents requires more than considering where new housing will be located. It requires attention to the impact new housing and new residents might have on neighbourhood character, biodiversity values, capacity of existing services (i.e. schools, community centres), walkable distances to quality open space, local shopping opportunities and employment generating land uses (i.e. amenity impacts, sufficient employment opportunities). Planning in this integrated manner provides a comprehensive view and well formulated and sustainable outcomes.

Methodology and Process

PART 1

- 1. Issues and Opportunities Paper (2021)**
Understand context and existing conditions
- 2. Community Consultation (March - May 2022)**
Seek feedback on the background work findings

PART 2

- 3. Draft Local Area Plan (October 2022)**
Develop a plan that articulates a vision and desired outcomes
- 4. Community Consultation (September – November 2022)**
Seek community input on the plan
- 5. Final Local Area Plan (May 2023)**
Revise the plan in response to community feedback

Part 1

The project began in July 2021 with background investigation and research used to develop the *Issues and Opportunities Paper* and provide a contextual understanding of the precinct and its challenges to inform early consultation. From March to May 2022, Council placed the Paper on public consultation and multiple community workshops and drop in sessions were held. The workshops focused on understanding and clarifying the issues and constraints as well as the opportunities that should underpin the future planning of the precinct.

Part 2

The work undertaken in Part 1 has been used to develop the 10 year vision of the Local Area Plan and preferred direction for change and improvement. This draft was available for comment to the wider community from 28 September to 9 November 2022 for a six-week period. A community workshop was held to determine whether the vision and goals were supported, if anything was missed, and which areas were of most importance in terms of prioritising. The Plan has been finalised with consideration of the comments received during the consultation period.

2.2 HOW WILL IT BE USED

The Plan establishes a goal setting framework that reflects community aspirations and Council's strategic intentions. The framework will be used for the development of actions that should be mapped against the goals and strategies. It will ensure actions are carried out in pursuit of the relevant goal.

The goals in this Plan are summarised statements of desired outcomes Council has heard from the community as well as important issues that need addressing. They are broadly written but describe a future outcome that actions should aim towards. Strategies fit under each goal and are more specific statements. They can be considered as being stepping stones, guiding the development of the *Strategic Action Plan* (see Appedix 1).

Council will use the Plan in the following ways:

- To work with the community in identifying short, medium and long term projects and actions that Council can undertake in a planned and coordinated way.
- To inform future Council Annual Action Plans, budget cyles and team work programs.
- The adopted plan can be used for grant applications and advocacy with State government agencies.
- The plan can also be used to inform changes to the *Horsham Planning Scheme* (such as land use and planning policy changes).

A Goal Setting Framework

To help us consider where we are, where we want to be and how we will get there

10 year vision

Horsham North Vision

- **Purpose:** The 10 year vision lays the foundation for the strategic direction of the Plan. It articulates the conditions that will allow current and future generations to enjoy a high quality life in Horsham North.
- **Outcome:** The community came up with the vision at the 4 May 2022 community workshop.

3 Themes

- **Purpose:** Breaking down the urban area of Horsham North into core themes creates a structure for analysis and goal setting. The themes categorise the various elements that influence the quality of neighbourhoods and well-being of residents.
- **Outcome:** Background investigation and community consultation indicated that the issues and opportunities for Horsham North could be categorised into the following focus areas:
 1. Land Use + Future Character
 2. Access + Connectivity
 3. Public + Open Spaces

Desired Outcomes

- **Purpose:** Desired outcomes provide a brief analysis of the existing conditions and issues to be addressed and a description of the desired end state.
- **Outcome:** Desired outcomes are derived from the *Issues and Opportunities Paper*.

10 Goals

- **Purpose:** Goals are concise statements of what the Plan aims to accomplish over its life cycle and sit under a designated theme. They have been created in sequence with the vision statement and reflect desired results.
- **Outcome:** Ten results oriented goals have been developed.

Underpinning Strategies

- **Purpose:** Strategies are a detailed series of key steps in achieving the respective goal. The strategies have been used to develop actions and are shaped in pursuit of the goal.
- **Outcome:** 53 strategies have been developed.

Strategic Directions

- **Purpose:** Strategic Directions set the course of future land use planning, development and infrastructure provision and are illustrated by framework plans.
- **Outcomes:** A series of plans have been created that visually set out how Horsham North's evolution is envisaged.

Implementation (Strategic Action Plan)

The Local Area Plan will be implemented through a range of actions. These actions have been developed within the following categories:

- **Policy:** Actions that require a change to Council's policies and Planning Scheme.
- **Design:** Actions that require design work, e.g. a masterplan, landscape plan or concept plan, to progress the delivery of the action
- **Research:** Actions that require further research and investigation to gather evidence for future decision making.
- **Advocacy:** Actions where Council will take an active role in partnering or advocating to external organisations which have the primary responsibility to deliver the action.

Each action has been nominated a timeframe for delivery (1 to 4+ years).

3. KEY ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES + THEMES

The key issues and opportunities affecting Horsham North have been discussed within the *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper*, which provides the background and context, as an appendix to this plan.

The *Issues and Opportunities Paper* is derived from previous analysis and research undertaken for the *Horsham North Urban Design Framework* and some of the key issues have been brought forward into this plan, particularly in relation to the rail corridor.

The *Issues and Opportunities Paper* categorised issues and opportunities into three key themes:

- Land Use + Future Character
- Access + Connections
- Public + Open Spaces

These themes have been used to organise goals and strategies. They have also been used to guide the development of the *Strategic Action Plan* which outlines further strategic work and key areas for actions to achieve change across a number of issues that vary in complexity and constraints.

Planning for the improvement of open space and local area traffic management will become a priority for Council in relation to Horsham North, in addition to current operational works taking place. There has been an ongoing street tree planting program which will continue across parts of Horsham North to enhance the amenity and presentation of local streets and neighbourhoods. A comprehensive tree inventory is underway to determine the health, diversity and quality of existing trees. This will ensure the most suitable species are carefully selected and trees that are reaching their end of life are renewed.

The rail corridor and underpasses have been an ongoing issue and Council has been actively engaging with the relevant agencies within State Government over a number of years. These discussions will continue and the extent of the rail corridor (VicTrack) land should be pursued for the future conversion to a public use. Further planning and design is required to ensure safe and attractive spaces are created that facilitate pedestrian and cycling connectivity across and along the rail corridor.

The *Strategic Action Plan* comprises a suite of actions and identifies further work for Council and many of those actions will include further consultation and collaboration with the community.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Consultation with the community has been central to the development of this Plan. The *Engagement Summary Report (August 2022)* summarises the key messages that emerged during consultation of the *Horsham North Issues and Opportunities Paper (March 2022)* and have subsequently influenced the outcomes of this Plan.

4.1 COMMUNITY VISION

The following statements were made by the community in regards to their desired future for Horsham North. This Plan utilises these statements in establishing a ten year vision and for setting a course of action for positive change.

- A unique and celebrated identity
- Accessible, safe, clean and well maintained spaces and places
- A diversity of services
- Housing options that meet current needs and reflect the character of neighbourhoods
- Accessible green, active and inclusive open spaces that provide shade, shelter, play, recreation, design and art
- Fosters connections between neighbourhoods and greater Horsham
- Provides quality paths for pedestrians and cyclists, roads and public transport options
- Local businesses will contribute to the precinct's prosperity

5. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

5.1 PEOPLE AND HOUSEHOLDS

To plan for the next 10 years in Horsham North, it is important to look at who the community is today and how it got to this point. This section of the Plan will summarise Horsham North's past and present, in terms of its demographic profile and housing provision

5.1.1 POPULATION AND AGE

The estimated residential population of the Horsham North Study Area in 2021 was 3,376. The largest service age group in Horsham North in 2021 was the young workforce (25 to 34) and parents and homebuilders (35 to 49). Approximately 50.2% of residents were female and 49.8% were male. The available data from the 2021 Census did not include non-binary and other gender identifiers.

22.3% of residents in 2021 were children and teenagers (0 to 17), 25.5% were young adults (18 to 34) and 15.3% were adults aged 35-49. A total of 25.9% were aged over 60, a lower rate than the Horsham average.

(Please note the demographic data is based on Horsham North Census 2021 and does not include the population covered by the Horsham North Local Area Plan Study area south of the railway line. This area has an additional 652 residents. Data will be updated with the next Plan review)

5.1.2 CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Horsham North's residents are not particularly culturally diverse, when compared to the rest of Horsham or Victoria. 95% of people reported an ancestry which was either Australian, English or Scottish.

4% of Horsham North's community reported an Australian Aboriginal ancestry, while 3.6% indicated Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin (a separate Census question). This is approximately double the percentage in Horsham as a whole and a significant increase from 2016 (0.5%).

3.7% of residents speak a language other than English at home. The largest languages include Malayalam, Karen, Mandarin and Filipino/Tagalog. 7.3% of respondents did not state which language was spoken at home.

5.1.3 HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND TYPE

In 2021 the average household size was 2.16 people. It has decreased from 2.43 since 2001, a substantially larger fall than the Victorian average.

The most common household size in Horsham North at the time of the 2021 Census was lone-person households (37.7%) followed by two persons' households (32.6%).

The most common household type in Horsham North in 2021 was lone person households (648 households or 34.0% of total) followed by couples without children (398 or 20.9%) and couples with children (361 or 18.9%). As a percentage of all households these have all been relatively stable since 2016.

The proportion of household types in the Horsham North Study Area shows generally smaller household types and a higher proportion of one parent families (14.8% to 9.7%), though the largest increase in the past five years was among group households (34+).

5.1.4 EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The highest level of secondary school completed for residents of Horsham North has increased since 2016. The 2021 Census found that residents who had completed Year 12 had risen from 30.4% (in 2016) to 33.2%. However, compared to the municipality as a whole there still remains a higher proportion of people who left school at an early year (Year 10 or less) and a lower proportion of people who completed Year 12.

The employment status of Horsham North compared to the municipality as a whole shows that in 2021 there was a lower proportion in employment and a higher proportion of unemployment. Overall, 93% of the labour force was employed and 6.3% unemployed, compared with 96.9% and 3.1% respectively for the municipality. So the unemployment rate in the Horsham North Study Area is about double the Horsham average. Additionally, the labour force participation rate (proportion of population either working or looking for work) was lower at 55.6% compared to 61.0% across the municipality.

The 2021 Census indicates that the type of occupations for Horsham North residents are predominantly Technicians and Trade Workers, Labourers and Community and Personal Service Workers.

76.5% of residents on Census day in 2021 were recorded to have used a car as their method of travel to work. There was a decrease in active modes of travel (walking and bicycle) from 7.3% in 2016 to 5.8%, however, Horsham North still has a higher percentage using active modes of travel compared to the entire municipality (4.8%). 5.5% of Horsham North residents worked from home on Census day, exactly half that of the municipality (11.0%). This record might also be an outcome of lower car ownerships in Horsham North compared to the rest of the municipality.

5.2 CURRENT HOUSING STOCK

5.2.1 DWELLING NUMBERS IN 2021

2021 ABS Census shows there were a total of 2,086 dwellings in the Horsham North Study Area.

Dwelling Type	Number of Dwellings	Per cent (%)
Separate house	1,811	88%
Medium density (semi-detached, low-rise flats and apartments)	252	12%

Percentages have been rounded off to whole numbers.

5.2.2 NUMBER OF BEDROOMS PER DWELLING IN 2021

The following table indicates the number of bedrooms per dwelling type.

Dwelling type	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5 bedrooms	Not stated / NA
Separate house	0.7%	9.4%	59.1%	14.3%	1.6%	14.4%
Medium density (semi-detached, low-rise flats and apartments)	17.8%	55.6%	5.4%	0	0	24.7%

Percentages have been rounded down and therefore do not always add up to hundred percent.

A large proportion of all dwellings in Horsham North have three bedrooms, while the small share of medium density housing predominantly house two bedrooms.

The following table illustrates a comparison between Horsham North and the entire Horsham municipality in relation to the size of dwellings by number of bedrooms. The numbers are based on Census data from 2021.

Dwellings	Proportion of total dwellings	Horsham average
1-2 bedroom	19.4 %	18 %
3-4 bedroom	71.6 %	73.0 %
5+ bedroom	1.6 %	3.6 %

Based on 2021 Census data, Horsham North Study Area has a similar proportion of 1-2 bedroom and 3-4 bedroom houses compared to the entire municipality.

5.2.3 HOUSING TENURE

Housing tenure in Horsham North falls into one of the following four categories:

- Owned outright
- Owned with a mortgage
- Rented
- Other

The chart shows that housing tenure in Horsham North is relatively evenly distributed between the first two categories of tenure – people who own their homes outright and people who are buying their house with a mortgage. However, there is a larger proportion renting in Horsham North (35%) in comparison to the municipality as a whole (24.3%). There is also a small but significant share renting social housing (6.2% - part of the rented figure).

5.2.4 DWELLING SUITABILITY

The Census records a measure of dwelling suitability and relative housing affordability by considering whether the number of bedrooms in a dwelling is generally suitable for the number of residents of a household. Based on the assumptions of this measure (which does not include personal preferences or spare rooms are actually used), there is a need for more 1-2 bedroom dwellings (semi-detached and unit dwellings) to meet the dominant and emerging household size i.e. for people to comfortably downsize and living with a partner (projected to be the most common living arrangement in Australia in 2041) (ABS, 2019)¹. It is important that there are suitable alternatives to larger, detached houses to meet these needs, in close proximity to key transport routes and services. Providing greater opportunities for downsizing will also free up housing stock for larger households.

5.3 KEY FINDINGS

The Horsham North Study Area has (compared to the entire municipality unless otherwise indicated):

- A median age of 40
- An increasing number of 18-34 and 70-84 year olds
- A decreasing number of 50-59 years olds

¹ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/household-and-family-projections-australia/latest-release>

- A relatively high number of lone person households with a higher proportion of middle aged and older persons
- A higher number of single parent households
- An increasing amount of residents identifying as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- An increasing proportion of people who completed Year 12, however, it remains lower than the average
- Higher than average trade education and no qualifications
- Higher than average unemployment and lower participation rate
- More residents selecting active modes of travel (on Census day 2021)
- A predominantly higher proportion of 3-4 bedroom dwellings
- Higher than average share of people in private rentals and social housing

6. THEME 1: FUTURE LAND USE + CHARACTER

Horsham North will continue to evolve into a vibrant and attractive area of Horsham, with a strong sense of neighbourhood character and identity, complemented by tree-lined streets and well-designed housing. There are parts of the area that suffer from neglect and the legacy of past industrial and railway related activities, particularly in relation to the rail corridor and previously industrial focused land. This legacy detracts from the overall character and image of Horsham North and could be improved through changes to land use and urban design interventions. The desired outcomes discussed in this chapter aim to create a greater sense of place, identity and local pride in Horsham North.

What can land use change achieve?

Land use planning plays a key role in enhancing the built environment within which people, communities and businesses can thrive. A planning scheme controls land use and development within a local government context. It is made up of State, regional and local planning policies, zones and overlays that affect how land can be used and developed. Council has the ability to introduce and change the local planning policies, land use or development objectives to better reflect local priorities, needs, issues and circumstances. These changes must be informed by a plan, strategy or study such as a housing strategy or a structure plan. A housing strategy can identify preferred locations for housing growth and subsequently inform a land use zone change. This land use change could be accompanied by a new overlay that ensures future development must address the type of design outcomes Council seeks.

What are urban design interventions?

Good urban design is central to ensuring the liveability of our towns and neighbourhoods. Good urban design focuses on public places where people like to be and will feel safe. It is not just a well-designed building, it can also include the spaces between buildings, infrastructure, landscaped areas and streetscapes.

Council plays a critical role in investing in and advocating for good design. It is imperative that Council continues to invest in good design through its procurements of capital works projects as well as its influence in the planning framework on the development of private property.

There is an opportunity for Council to act on a range of urban design interventions that can improve the built environment in Horsham North through planning regulation (i.e. effective policy in the Horsham Planning Scheme) and process improvements (i.e. design guidelines that can provide a visual aid to assist in the interpretation of Council's expectations regarding quality design for private development).

DESIRE OUTCOMES

1. Conversion of industrial and commercial zoned land
2. Overcome the barrier effect of the rail corridor
3. Diverse and affordable housing options
4. Strong precinct identity
5. Equitable access to community facilities and services

6.1 CONVERSION OF INDUSTRIAL + COMMERCIAL ZONED LAND

Neighbourhood character and local amenity can be enhanced through the relocation of industries to more suitable locations within Horsham and by changing land uses that are more conducive to surrounding residential areas.

Across the precinct there are sites with existing and historical commercial or industrial uses in close proximity to or co-existing within residential areas. The historical development pattern in Horsham North is reflective of many settlements where employment and industry activity is located close to housing. This can, however, cause conflicts between land uses as well as amenity impacts for residential areas. There is a need for future planning to address land use incompatibility in order to minimise off-site impacts such as noise, dust, odour, privacy, commercial traffic movement, visual amenity and local character. It became apparent during community consultation that this is one of the most important issues which requires addressing.

Existing major industrial and trade uses will be encouraged to relocate to more compatible locations. An *Industrial and Commercial Land Use Strategy* will provide the strategic guidance and identify preferred industrial and commercial precincts for relocation. Whilst the desirable outcome is to relocate all incompatible uses from the precinct it is also important to recognise that the rail corridor and industrial and commercial sites have a long history in the area and provide local employment and activity. Furthermore, many businesses are operating within the legal framework of the *Horsham Planning Scheme* and the industrial and commercial zones. Changes to land use will not impact on the ability of these uses to continue. A balance between what is viable for business operators and how the community wants this area to develop will evolve and improve over time.

Due to past activities within the precinct there will be pockets of land contamination which will need to be identified and addressed before sensitive uses, such as housing and recreational uses, are allowed to occur. The application of the Environmental Audit Overlay should be considered by Council when any future rezoning process occurs, and in accordance the *Planning Practice Note on Potentially Contaminated Land (PPN31)*.

Rezoning of land must be considered in a holistic way that is consistent with a longer-term strategic planning approach. Individual rezoning requests are to be discouraged and avoided as they are not a long-term planning solution and can contribute to (and exacerbate) current and potential land use conflicts. A precinct plan or investigation of uses around the rail corridor should be undertaken to inform any rezoning.

6.2 OVERCOME THE BARRIER EFFECT OF THE RAIL CORRIDOR

A sequenced planning approach for the redevelopment of the rail corridor will ensure constraints are appropriately understood and future possible land uses and activities are properly evaluated.

The land identified as the rail corridor is considered all of the land currently owned by VicTrack. The rail corridor is comprised of four quadrants that each offer significant opportunities to benefit the community through:

- Activation through appropriate mix of recreational, public use, residential and/or commercial use
- Increased pedestrian and cyclist connectivity
- Increased public open space, landscaping and activation
- Increased public safety through appropriately designed public spaces

- Increased character and amenity through the transition of land use activity away from commercial and industrial use

Council has the opportunity to plan for each of these areas. It will continue to actively engage with VicTrack in the pursuit of the remediation, acquisition and redevelopment of key sites to serve a strategic purpose towards those benefits listed above. The extent of land development within the rail corridor and the process for Council to acquire land will be dependent on negotiations with VicTrack, the level of contamination found, remediation required, remediation undertaken and the extent of land required for railway operations. A thorough evaluation of these issues will inform potential uses and activities within the rail corridor.

6.3 DIVERSE + AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

A diversity of housing types and sizes offers something for everyone.

Infill development has been a significant part of residential development across Horsham in recent years. Horsham has seen a number of multi-unit and town house developments north of Baillie Street and around Kalkee Road. Across the precinct there is evidence of home renovations, new dwellings and multi-unit developments occurring, indicating that the area is attractive for future residents as the community grows. The size and price of some properties are an indication of the opportunities that exist for residential in-fill development on sites in excess of 1,000m².

Industrial and commercial sites have the potential to facilitate future housing. This will be subject to the relocation of current business operations that will cause direct amenity impacts for residents. Furthermore, this will require investigation and remediation of sites known to have accommodated activities with a high likelihood of contamination.

There are currently two existing greenfield development fronts within Horsham North; one with an approved subdivision plan in place and one undergoing a development plan approval process. The site with the approved subdivision plan is located north centrally of the precinct and the site currently undergoing the approval process is located in the far north-west of the precinct. These two sites could accommodate up to 340 lots varying from 400-900m² to larger lifestyle blocks. There is also a potential strategic development site on the north-eastern edge of Horsham North that is undeveloped and located within the General Residential and Farming Zones. The site presents a potential opportunity to accommodate future urban growth. Council has recently resolved to undertake a *Housing Strategy* that will provide a strategic direction for housing across the municipality, including the identification and prioritisation of opportunities for future housing growth. The relative merits of the site to potentially help with meeting the City's housing needs will be tested through the *Housing Strategy*.

The provision and standard of open space has been highlighted as a gap in past Council asset management and planning processes. It is important that future development has regard to the principles set out in the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* and standards within the *Horsham Planning Scheme* that require dwellings to be within a 400m walking distance to local parks and within 1km of sporting facilities.

6.4 STRONG PRECINCT IDENTITY

Neighbourhood character and heritage is what makes a neighbourhood distinctive and brings identity to a place.

There are several landmarks including the Horsham Railway Station, Horsham Silo and Noske Mill Complex and GWM Water Tower as well as various residential parts of Horsham North that define the history and character of the area. By protecting these places under a Heritage Overlay it will ensure that heritage values and attractive aesthetic qualities are retained. The second consideration is views to landmark buildings, in particularly the newly painted silos where artwork displays a local significantly story of Yanggendinyanyuk, an important Wotjobaluk leader in the community.

A *Housing Strategy* will require the need for a *Neighbourhood Character Assessment* to ensure valued characteristics and qualities of Horsham’s residential areas are identified and remain protected when planning for growth. Neighbourhood character is what makes a neighbourhood different from others. This includes the way it looks and feels which can be influenced by built form, street layout, setbacks and vegetation. It is important that appropriate planning controls that provide design guidance for new development, are applied at the time of rezoning, to ensure new housing is well designed within the context of its surrounds and the further enhancement of the local urban environment.

Good urban design has the ability to transform how places look and feel, increasing the desire of people to walk around and be in that place. The streets of Horsham North have the potential but there are particular locations where change is required in order to encourage more walking and cycling, and to increase perceptions of safety. The following elements should be incorporated into the design considerations for new development as the area changes over time, and to accompany any changes in land use to encourage a more diverse mix of uses and to discourage industrial activity and the storage of chemicals on sites in close proximity to residential areas:

- Interfaces
- Landscaping + Canopy Trees
- Key Sites and Architectural Design
- Activation / Passive Surveillance
- Pedestrian Amenity and Comfort

6.5 EQUITABLE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities are recognised as playing an important role in promoting social cohesion by providing focal points for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. Council must be responsive when it is identified that there is an increase in demand. Investment in social infrastructure and services will be consistent with Council’s principles and with a particular focus to deliver social equity and accessibility.

The community highlighted the important role the Neighbourhood House plays in Horsham North. The service brings people together to connect, learn and contribute in their local community through social, educational, recreational and supportive activities.

The relocation of the current kindergarten at the Children’s Hub to the Horsham Primary School Rasmussen Road Campus will revert the Children’s Hub to its original purpose and design facilitating a new long day care provider in 2024.

7. THEME 2: ACCESS + CONNECTIONS

As Horsham North continues to grow, in terms of population and housing, the issues that are currently present will only become magnified over time. The area suffers predominantly due accessibility constraints and the presence of the railway corridor. Horsham North also has a number of other issues to address such as improving footpaths and opportunities to improve and increase connectivity across and through the rail corridor land.

Traffic management issues have been highlighted during the community engagement phase, some of which were highlighted in the *Issues and Opportunities Paper*.

DESIRE OUTCOMES	
1.	A walking friendly precinct
2.	Effective transport networks
3.	Accessible public transport
4.	Safer streets
5.	Active travel within the rail corridor

7.1 A WALKING FRIENDLY PRECINCT

Enhancing the pedestrian environment is important in encouraging walking and promoting an active and healthy community whilst reducing our carbon footprint.

The current state of footpaths and pedestrian connections in Horsham North does not meet the needs of a range of users, creating persistent accessibility issues for older adults, people with disabilities and parents with prams. Council has undertaken an audit of footpaths in Horsham North and will commence footpath upgrades within this financial year (2022-23). Barriers that prevent people from choosing walking as a mode of transport for local trips within Horsham North should be removed. Such barriers include lack of formalised and regular crossing locations, discontinuous footpaths and a disjointed path network. New development presents an opportunity to do it right in the first instance including wider footpaths with sufficiently sized nature strips for tree planting. Planning and design principles should be adopted such as the Heart Foundation’s Healthy Active by Design guidelines to ensure industry best practice is applied.

Increasing the tree canopy in Horsham North will create shade and reduce temperatures on footpath surfaces. The provision of shade is an important component in the design and creation of safe and healthy neighbourhoods. It creates an environment and climate that is more comfortable to use in all seasons, improving active recreational opportunities, community health and wellbeing.

Designing quality footpaths for everyone will create an inclusionary built environment that will increase opportunities to participate in local activities and provides better access to services (e.g. Kalkee Children’s & Community Hub and Neighbourhood House). A built environment conducive to walking will also decrease the amount car trips needed, therefore decreasing the amount of carbon emissions.

7.2 EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Network planning is critical in the effective promotion of walking and cycling. Integrated cycling lanes and shared paths will provide convenient and direct routes enabling all users to move around the network according to their needs.

The pedestrian and cycling network can be improved to safely facilitate active modes of transport through the provision of shared paths, on-road cycling lanes and footpaths exits. The rail corridor and existing open spaces have the ability to support this outcome. Some of the opportunities are illustrated in this Plan and Council is currently undertaking a *Municipal Bike and Shared Path Plan* which will further identify a hierarchy in terms of the road network and potential shared path locations.

The need for a *Walking Strategy* to address accessibility of neighbourhoods has also been identified by Council. Together with the *Municipal Bike and Shared Path Plan*, comprehensive cycling and pedestrian networks will be developed that connect people to key destinations and services and support active recreation.

Council will also work to ensure new developments offer quality pedestrian and cycling environments. Street networks will be designed to maximise connections and minimise barriers to direct travel such as dead ends, court bowls, long street lengths and busy intersecting roads. The built environment should be safe, easy to navigate and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists with many routes to choose from in all areas of Horsham.

Creating safer connections through all public spaces will be prioritised in all future work particularly when planning for the re-design or upgrade of local parks. Local parks should be designed and located within a connected path network allowing easy and continuous pedestrian and cycling movement to and through parks.

Improving the integration of walking and cycling amenities will establish an environment conducive to active travel for leisure, commuting and visiting local services, facilities and shops. This will also naturally improve the quality of the public domain. Amenities include the installation of additional seating, shelters, signage, bike parking, bike repair station, drinking fountains and lighting.

7.3 ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Coordinated and direct connections to public transport as well as the provision of quality amenities will support public transport in becoming a realistic choice for everyday trips. In the longer term this investment in improved connections and amenities can increase the effectiveness and reliability of public transport.

Increased public transport patronage presents the opportunity to advocate for higher frequencies, longer operational times and expanded coverage of public transport services in Horsham North. Council will continue to liaise with the Department of Transport in terms of public transport provisions.

Often public transport trips involve some form of walking, such as walking to a bus stop for part of the journey. Providing convenient and comfortable paths to public transport services will better facilitate the use of public transport in Horsham North for people of all abilities. Improved integration between public transport and walking will ensure that the community has a choice of transport options when travelling to a bus stop as part of an onward journey. Equally important is the provision of bus stop amenities which is currently lacking in the precinct. Providing bus shelters,

lighting and bicycle hoops can make public transport a more appealing choice of transportation. There is a strong desire to reconnect Horsham to the regional rail network that ultimately connects with larger regional centres, such as Ballarat as well as Melbourne. When this occurs, investment in restoring and potentially expanding the current railway station will also be an opportunity to pursue. A new underpass in proximity to the train station will contribute to this ongoing transformation that Horsham North is ready and waiting for.

7.4 ENHANCE LOCAL AREA TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Traffic control and calming measures on a precinct wide basis will create streets that increase amenity and commuter safety for all road and path users.

Local roads are associated with more walking and cycling when traffic related issues are well managed. The safe use of local streets as a priority should be afforded to all users, not just vehicles. People will be discouraged from walking and cycling if road traffic is heavy and safety measures are not in place.

Much of Horsham North's traffic is generated by motorists travelling to Horsham North or through Horsham North via Kalkee Road to nearby settlements. Kalkee Road, Mill Street and Hazel Street currently present significant barriers for safe and convenient movement for pedestrians and cyclists. Mill Street and Hazel Street should be prioritised for short-term monitoring and intervention. This is due to the presence of heavy industry vehicles and an increase in vehicle and pedestrian activity as a result of the *Silo Art Project*. The traffic volumes and lack of pedestrian priority crossings on Kalkee Road is a barrier for safe pedestrian and cycle travel to services and facilities. These facilities include the Kalkee Children's and Community Hub, Dudley Cornell Park and the Neighbourhood House. Traffic calming strategies and interventions need to be considered to ensure streets are safe to cross without compromising their functional role. Furthermore, as the area develops walking and cycling will be actively encouraged. This will be facilitated through new and upgraded footpaths, provision of cycling and shared paths and local streets will require traffic management measures to improve pedestrian connections and create safer conditions.

The *Municipal Bike and Shared Path Plan* will help establish a connected path network of shared paths, on-road bike lanes and separated bike lanes with a focus on facilitating safe movement. The cycling network will identify busy commuter and recreational routes as shared paths. This includes relatively low-moderate speed limit locations for the provision of on-road bicycle lanes (with clear delineation and regular signs and pavement markings), and locations where safety and comfort for riders is to be addressed through separated bicycle lanes.

7.5 ACTIVE TRAVEL WITHIN THE RAIL CORRIDOR

The rail corridor will provide a safe corridor for cyclists and pedestrians and facilitate convenient access for commuters.

The rail corridor was consistently the number one issue raised by the community due to its unmistakable presence as you enter Horsham North via the Kalkee Road Bridge. People are presented with a waste-land which is further compounded by the industrial blocks to the north.

Whilst the rail corridor is perhaps the biggest issue it is also the biggest opportunity to address in Horsham North with the potential for it to become a place of community focus. Connectivity can be significantly improved along both sides of the rail corridor, allowing freedom of movement and potentially avoiding the use of Kalkee Road as a crossing point.

The community currently has three central options to pass the railway line. There are the two pedestrian underpasses, one at Wawunna Road and the second at Albert Street / McPherson Street, both of which are uninviting, poorly designed and placed and non-DDA compliant. The third option is the Kalkee Road Bridge which only has a footpath on the eastern side. Alternatively, some choose to enter the rail corridor and cross it wherever it is most convenient. This presents a significant community safety risk as freight trains come through regularly.

Council has already investigated the potential for upgrading the two existing underpasses to a DDA (*Disability Discrimination Act 1992*) compliant standard (slope and width). It was found, however, that there are significant barriers that prevent such upgrades from being possible. Council has now shifted its focus to investigating the feasibility of a new underpass that meets modern standards in terms of safety, design and accessibility. A location has been investigated that will link with the northern end of David Street. This location is also in close proximity to the Horsham Railway Station (200m) providing a convenient connection for train commuters if regional passenger services (V-Line) were to be reinstated. A further connection opportunity has been identified within the large vacant block between Mill Street and Lynott Street including the potential for new open space and a shared path connection (subject to contamination assessment and discussions with land holder). The appearance of the existing underpasses could be improved to appear more inviting and attractive.

8. THEME 3: PUBLIC + OPEN SPACES

Parks, reserves and other public spaces across Horsham North are generally suffering from the planning and subdivision design of the past. Stronger planning scheme requirements and further work is required to address this issues to ensure an equitable and high standard of open space for current and future residents in Horsham North.

Quality open space is lacking, despite the fact that Horsham North has a higher percentage (provision) of open space than other parts of Horsham, and the design and landscaping of open space is not adequate. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to review the current provision of open space and to improve the quality of parks through considered design measures such as better connections (shared paths), landscaped edges to soften the presence and impact of back fences, and park furniture and infrastructure in appropriate locations that are shaded and/or sheltered from weather and sun.

DESIRE OUTCOMES

1. Quality and welcoming open space
2. Unlock the potential of Dudley Cornell Reserve
3. Higher open space contributions
4. Conduct an open space audit
5. Shared use of the rail corridor

8.1 QUALITY AND WELCOMING OPEN SPACE

Open space is important in our daily lives for many reasons – providing recreation, socialisation, play, contemplation, green space and enjoyment. Open space should be safe for all users through better design reflecting best practice standards.

There are a number of opportunities across the precinct to improve the quality and distribution of the open space network. These opportunities include improving the amenity of existing open spaces, enlarging the size of existing open spaces and/or providing new open spaces within the precinct.

Council seeks to investigate and determine a process that will enable it to act quickly when a property is listed for a private sale which is in a priority location and meets suitability criteria for improving the open space network.

Council anticipates an increased community demand for safe, accessible and quality public spaces as the area grows. There are increasing expectations regarding the appropriate provision of public open spaces in new development and upgrades to existing public open spaces to meet the needs of people of different ages, interests and abilities. Developers are required (through landscape plans) to appropriately design new open spaces to enhance neighbourhood character and provide opportunities for active recreation.

Community involvement and strong partnerships will be encouraged in the planning, use and management of the open space network.

The *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* identifies lighting as an important component of achieving safe and inviting public spaces. Lighting supports wayfinding, orientation and safe movement at

night as well as providing decorative effects to building facades, landmarks and pathways. All new projects will address the provision and design of lighting.

8.2 UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF DUDLEY CORNELL RESERVE

Best practice approaches to open space and community facilities promote co-location with complementary services to create a stronger community hub. Together they create a focal point for community activity and allow people to make a single trip when accessing a wide range of services.

The three large sites immediately north of Dudley Cornell Reserve provide a strategic opportunity to enlarge the current provision of open space. This can be achieved by opening it up from Kalkee Road and providing connectivity opportunities. The Kalkee Road Children's and Community Hub also presents an opportunity to co-locate any future community facilities that could complement the Hub and Dudley Cornell Reserve. The process of discussions with land owners (including GWMWater, VicRoads and existing businesses) should be undertaken in order to advance the objectives of open space expansion and introduction of complementary new services and facilities.

8.3 HIGHER OPEN SPACE CONTRIBUTIONS

Open space standards in the planning scheme ensure equitable access, reasonable quality and user needs are addressed.

There are a range of provisions that the *Horsham Planning Scheme* can apply in order to achieve appropriate Open Space Contributions from new subdivisions and development. Council recommends that:

A review of the *Open Space Strategy* is intended to support an amendment to the *Horsham Planning Scheme* and to apply a fixed Open Space Contribution rate within the schedule to Clause 53.01 - Open Space Contributions. The contribution rate should allow a sufficient revenue for the investment in open space.

Larger sites should have appropriately drafted Development Plan Overlay schedules that specify open space and subdivision design requirements and guidelines.

Local planning policy should specify the urban design and open space provision requirements, aligning with the principles within the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria*.

The *Horsham Planning Scheme* should specify the circumstances where a cash contribution is preferred over land (when there is not land that meets the criteria set out for a land contribution, which needs to be set in the *Open Space Strategy*).

8.4 AN OPEN SPACE AUDIT

An audit will enable Council to develop a database for the future renewal of public open spaces.

An audit of existing open space will inform the redesign of parks, where required, to ensure that they are safe, inviting and functional for a range of users. Existing parks should be audited by a landscape design consultant and strategies put forward to ensure that they are re-designed and fit-for-purpose. Land that has been set aside for public open space should be prioritised. Due to the poor standard of some of the parks, redesign and retro-fitting are necessary to change their appearance and function.

Ideally, all public spaces should:

- Have at least three street frontages (avoid back fence interface conditions)
- Have a high level of passive surveillance from neighbouring houses
- Provide connecting paths that link with the broad pedestrian network
- Be regular in shape and not be designed with areas that fall out of the line of vision
- Be designed to provide infrastructure in appropriate locations
- Provide additional tree (canopy) cover and consider biodiversity values

8.5 SHARED USE OF THE RAIL CORRIDOR

The rail corridor is a long term opportunity to provide additional public open space that increases amenity and appearance for fronting neighbourhoods.

There is a degree of overlap with the Access & Connections Chapter, given that the Rail Corridor provides a range of opportunities that would benefit the community in terms of:

- Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity
- Future public open space
- Public transport connectivity
- Enhanced character, identity and amenity for Horsham North

9. GOALS + STRATEGIES

10 GOALS FOR HORSHAM NORTH

Land Use + Future Character

Goal 1. Facilitate sustainable housing + population growth

Goal 2. Improve the local image, character + identity

Goal 3. Promote economic activity + opportunities

Goal 4. Ensure the community has access to the social infrastructure it needs

Access + Connections

Goal 5. Create a walkable, wheelable + bikeable precinct

Goal 6. Enhance public transport services + promote regional connectivity

Goal 7. Create safer streets for all users

Public + Open Spaces

Goal 8. Increase the provision of open space

Goal 9. Create accessible, safe + activated public space

Goal 10. Increase tree canopy across all public spaces

Land Use + Future Character
Goal 1. Facilitate sustainable housing + population growth
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>1.1 Establish strategic direction for housing across the municipality, including the identification and prioritisation of opportunities for future housing growth.</p> <p>1.2 Promote Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles in all new development.</p> <p>1.3 Effectively manage environmental risks such as potentially contaminated land and flooding.</p> <p>1.4 Ensure new development is respectful of existing and valued neighbourhood character.</p>
Goal 2. Improve the local image, character + identity
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>2.1 Identify and protect heritage places and precincts.</p> <p>2.2 Improve the character, identity and amenity of the area through appropriate land use change and urban design guidance.</p> <p>2.3 Encourage the development and transformation of identified entry and gateway sites.</p> <p>2.4 Plan for the future conversion of VicTrack land that encourages activation.</p> <p>2.5 Build upon the <i>Silo Art Project</i> through public art projects that activate the public realm and create interest.</p>
Goal 3. Promote economic activity + opportunities
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>3.1 Establish an overall long term vision and objectives for industrial and commercial land in Horsham.</p> <p>3.2 Encourage a transition away from industrial land use towards commercial or mixed use activity with minimal off-site impacts.</p> <p>3.3 Promote a mix of uses within the area bounded by Lynott and Mill Streets currently zoned as Industrial 1 Zone.</p> <p>3.4 Encourage commercial and employment activity in existing industrial areas.</p> <p>3.5 Support convenience retail opportunities that activate local neighbourhoods and Kalkee Road.</p> <p>3.6 Consider rezonings that facilitates housing, commercial activity and light industrial in suitable locations.</p>
Goal 4. Ensure the community has access to the social infrastructure it needs
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>4.1 Ensure social infrastructure investment keeps pace with the scale of growth.</p> <p>4.2 Provide fair access to facilities and services that are needed across the precinct.</p> <p>4.3 Provide up to date community facilities for all user groups.</p> <p>4.4 Identify opportunities (sites) to provide improved or new community facilities and to colocate facilities where possible.</p> <p>4.5 Provide new sporting facilities to meet community needs in appropriate locations.</p> <p>4.6 Review the provision of open space and facilitate upgrading existing parks and recreational open space.</p>
Access + Connections
Goal 5. Create a walkable, wheelable + bikeable precinct
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>5.1 Improve the condition of footpaths along all developed streets so all footpaths users with any ability can access them and use them for their intended purpose.</p> <p>5.2 Plan an accessible environment that enables walkable distances (400m) to open space.</p> <p>5.3 Identify and suitably address barriers to pedestrian movement and safety.</p> <p>5.4 Develop targeted solutions for specific needs and destination choices.</p> <p>5.5 Provide the appropriate infrastructure and amenity to encourage active modes of transport.</p> <p>5.6 Provide way-finding signage at key locations and amenities that caters for all abilities.</p> <p>5.7 Provide trees that can offer canopy cover over all streets in Horsham North.</p>

<p>5.8 Improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity and safety across and along the Rail Corridor including the provision of an additional underpass.</p> <p>5.9 Identify and plan for a hierarchy of cycling routes and shared paths.</p> <p>5.10 Ensure that planning processes and provisions deliver good urban design outcomes such as pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and footpaths of a quality standard.</p> <p>5.11 Provide way-finding signage at key locations (such as the silos on Wawunna Road).</p>
<p>Goal 6. Enhance public transport services + promote regional connectivity</p>
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>6.1 Provide better pedestrian connectivity and amenities (e.g. seating, lighting, shelters) to encourage the use of public transport.</p> <p>6.2 Advocate for improved public transport services in terms of increased frequencies, operation times, and catchment coverage.</p> <p>6.3 Plan for new public transport infrastructure and services in population growth areas that are bus capable and provide a high quality amenities.</p> <p>6.4 Advocate on behalf of the community for the return of passenger rail services between Horsham and Melbourne.</p>
<p>Goal 7. Create safer streets for all users</p>
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>7.1 Manage local traffic movement and monitor over time.</p> <p>7.2 Provide sealed roads across the area.</p> <p>7.3 Introduce traffic calming strategies and interventions for high traffic locations and at key sites.</p> <p>7.4 Provide safe and clearly distinguished crossing locations.</p>
<p>Public + Open Spaces</p>
<p>Goal 8. Increase the provision of open space</p>
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>8.1 Provide quality open space that meets an identified threshold (quantity and quality).</p> <p>8.2 Develop a policy that guides Council in the identification and strategic acquisition of land (properties) to support the improvement of existing open space.</p> <p>8.3 Identify optimal locations for the provision of open space within greenfield sites.</p> <p>8.4 Redesign existing parks to improve their overall function and appeal for the community.</p>
<p>Goal 9. Create accessible, safe + activated public space</p>
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>9.1 Provide accessible and safe open spaces.</p> <p>9.2 Incorporate shared paths into the design of existing and future open spaces.</p> <p>9.3 Provide contemporary street lighting as part of the redesign of public spaces.</p> <p>9.4 Ensure that buildings provide passive surveillance to public spaces.</p> <p>9.5 Design and locate new public spaces to maximise exposure to surrounding streets through appropriate urban design guidance (e.g. by providing street frontages and connectivity with the surrounding area).</p> <p>9.6 Consider colocation of community facilities as part of any future planning at Dudley Cornell Reserve and land immediately north.</p>
<p>Goal 10. Increase tree canopy across all public spaces</p>
<p>Strategies to achieve the goal:</p> <p>10.1 Increase tree canopy along local streets and public spaces.</p> <p>10.2 Increase tree canopy and plan for biodiversity corridors within open spaces.</p>

10. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

10.1 LAND USE DIRECTIONS

(These directions relate to Figure 2. Land Use)

1. Continue to encourage commercial activity

Support the current activities in relation to the silos and existing commercial activities, and consider rezoning to a transitional zone (away from the Industrial 1 Zone) such as the Commercial 2 Zone, that supports a range of commercial uses that are compatible with the residential area to the north.

2. Transform the Rail Corridor (VicTrack) land for mixed use and stronger connectivity

Continue to liaise with VicTrack regarding the remediation and acquisition of sections of land in VicTrack's ownership. Investigations will determine the levels of contamination within the corridor and the level of remediation required for a future potential mix of land uses that can activate the area. Furthermore, it will need to be determined the extent of land required for continuing the rail operations. Future development should prioritise pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and the implementation of a shared path network that can be linked with the railway station and potentially, a pedestrian underpass. Continue to plan for an alternative underpass connection and advocate for a bus terminal to be located within the rail corridor (working with the Department of Transport and Planning) to support the argument of returning passenger rail.

3. Investigate long term opportunities to improve and extend the existing open space and/or consider as a long term option for residential

The future of this site is dependent on any history of contamination and current operations on the land. The site provides a long term strategic opportunity to provide access to the north and depending on levels of growth could be developed for an alternative purpose. There is also the opportunity to address interface constraints at Foundry Park.

4. Encourage a transition away from industrial use

Consider this location as a transitional area to allow a mix of uses and importantly, prevents future industrial activities from being established or consolidated in this location. Rezoning land to a more appropriate zone/s should be considered including Industrial 3 Zone, Commercial 2 Zone or Mixed Use Zone. Any consideration to rezone the area to a zone that allows sensitive uses should also provide for a safeguard to ensure that appropriate soil assessments are undertaken prior to any future development.

5. Consider a change in use when commercial activity has been relocated

The Commercial 2 Zone land has a direct interface with residential areas causing adverse amenity impacts for residents. Land uses are poorly located with regard to industrial and commercial land across Horsham. The future of these sites is dependent on whether the commercial activities can be relocated to a more suitable location. Future rezoning of this area as a precinct will allow for residential, pending the relocation of current commercial activities.

6. Consolidate community uses and open space around Dudley Cornell Reserve

Continue discussions with land holders regarding the future of these sites, east and west of Kalkee Road, whilst considering opportunities for new and extended public open space (in relation to Dudley Cornell Reserve) and also the potential for a new community and/or sporting facility (subject

to undertaking the necessary community needs assessment and the *Wimmera Regional Multi-Sport Precinct Feasibility Study*). Consolidate these sites into one zone. Facilitate their development to encourage a mix of uses, including residential, recreation and commercial uses, to encourage activation of the precinct.

7. Potential strategic development site

The potential strategic development site at the north-eastern edge of Horsham North is undeveloped land and currently zoned both General Residential and Farming Zones. The site is large in size and its location and attributes present a potential opportunity to accommodate future urban growth. The relative merits of the site to accommodate future urban growth will be tested through the development of the *Housing Strategy*. If the *Housing Strategy* identifies the site as being a potentially suitable location to accommodate future urban growth, any proposal for its future use and development will be required to implement the applicable goals and strategies of this Local Area Plan.

10.2 HERITAGE + LANDMARKS

It is recommended that the following planning provisions and policy be implemented into the *Horsham Planning Scheme*.

- Ensure that view lines to identified landmarks and heritage buildings are protected.
- Apply the Heritage Overlay to the Horsham Railway Station, the silos, GWMWater Tower and residential areas with heritage values, as per the recommendations of *Heritage Study Review*, to retain and celebrate their history and significance for Horsham.

10.3 URBAN DESIGN + LOCAL CHARACTER

(These directions relate to Figure 3. Urban Design and Local Character)

It is recommended that the following planning provisions and policy be implemented into the *Horsham Planning Scheme*. In future, new development will:

Character

- Reinforce and strengthen the existing residential character of local streets.
- Contribute to the residential and emerging mixed-use character of the (mixed use) area.
- Encourage the planting of canopy trees in front setbacks and the nature strips.

Key + Entry Sites

- Establish prominent, attractive built form at corners and entry and gateway sites.
- Demonstrate a high level of architectural design with well-articulated façades (avoiding blank walls).
- Be designed to address street corners and provide a relatively open frontage with passive surveillance (windows and entries) oriented to two street frontages.

Interfaces + Landscaping

- Be designed to contribute positively to the public spaces.
- Provide active interfaces, comprising of windows (passive surveillance) oriented towards the street and public spaces.
- Locate garages and warehouses towards the rear of properties, and avoid the development of garages and warehouses which are located on, or close to, the front property boundary.
- Provide a landscaped front setback that will accommodate trees and vegetation.
- Avoid the use of high fences and walls.

10.4 DESIGNING ACCESSIBLE AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACES

In accordance with the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria*, public spaces should be easily and safely accessible to all. Focus should be given to connecting public spaces to the surrounding pedestrian network and creating informal surveillance onto communal open space from adjacent buildings and busy pedestrian routes. These are important elements to also be captured in a future subdivision design and open space local policy in the *Horsham Planning Scheme*. Below are a series of images that illustrate how to design spaces to feel safer and more accessible and are subsequently used more.

10.4.1 Open Space and Connectivity

The below two images are excerpts from the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017)* illustrating how to provide convenient and safe access to and through open space.

The below three images are examples of new local parks developed with pedestrian paths that are direct and logical, linking directly to surrounding pedestrian networks.

10.4.2 Open Space and Active Street Frontages

The below two images are excerpts from the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017)* illustrating local parks designed with at least three active street frontages, enabling buildings and passing traffic to overlook the park.

The below three images are examples of how to achieve public surveillance through active streets and adjacent buildings.

10.5 RE-DESIGNING EXISTING OPEN SPACE

(These directions relate to Figure 7. Redesign Opportunities for Existing Open Space)

Issues:

- Irregular shape creates “blind spots” resulting in public safety / surveillance issues
- Park is illegible in terms of layout / site-lines / exits
- Very poor pedestrian connectivity - users would feel lost if entering the park and trying to understand location
- Interface conditions - back-yard fences fronting open space result in lack of passive surveillance and sense of isolation
- Lack of street frontage adds to sense of isolation / lack of passive surveillance
- Usability and attractiveness of park is negatively affected by all of the above.

Opportunities:

- Undertake landscape masterplan for reserve
- Incorporate landscaping / vegetation along fence-line interfaces
- Consider biodiversity values when undertaking landscaping / vegetation
- Provide increased tree canopy as part of all park design
- Design and implement connecting (landscaped) paths through park
- Locate park benches and other facilities at appropriate locations
- Incorporate lighting

10.6 THE RAIL CORRIDOR

(These directions relate to Figure 8. Rail Corridor - Public + Open Spaces)

The following directions are set out for the Rail corridor to ensure coordinated future planning:

- Continue discussions with VicTrack regarding the long-term use and acquisition of the available sections (lots) within the Rail Corridor, owned by VicTrack.
- Ensure that the rail corridor is suitably remediated for future public use.
- Integrate the design of all interfaces with local streets and footpaths (including Mill Street and Railway Avenue)
- Undertake a landscape plan for the entirety of the Rail Corridor (VicTrack land) in order to further undertake detailed design of the four sections of land to maximise their open space, pedestrian/cyclist and public transport connectivity opportunities (dependent on contamination, remediation and land required for train operations)
- Liaise with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) regarding a potential location for a new underpass and the re-location of the current V-Line bus terminal in Horsham (Roberts Avenue). Furthermore, continue to advocate for the re-establishment of regional passenger rail services.
- Engage a landscape design professional to undertake landscape plans for each of the four sections of the VicTrack land, ensuring that public access and connectivity are the number one priority.
- Look to international examples (such as the “High Line” in New York City) and local examples (such as the Level Crossing Removal Project) as a precedent for the conversion of former rail corridors into attractive and popular public spaces.

- Investigate the potential to create a connection that links the new *Silo Art Project* with a future landmark public art project at the GWMWater tower, subject to further investigation and community input.

11. RELATED PROJECTS

11.1 STRATEGIC WORK UNDERWAY OR PLANNED

A number of teams within Council are currently undertaking work or have work planned in accordance with their work program that will address some of the issues, opportunities and strategies discussed in this Plan.

11.1.1 Strategic Planning Team

Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy

The purpose of the *Housing Strategy* is to develop a plan that will guide housing development and change in the right locations across Horsham City and Natimuk Township for the next 15 years. Horsham is experiencing significant housing pressures in terms of the availability of diverse and affordable housing. At present there is little direction in the *Horsham Planning Scheme* as to preferred locations for medium density housing and infill development and where neighbourhood character is to be protected. The *Housing Strategy* will be Council's long term plan to sustainably manage future housing growth and change so that it best meets the ongoing needs of the community. This project has recently commenced and future community consultation will occur.

Horsham and Natimuk Neighbourhood Character Study

The *Neighbourhood Character Study* involves a detailed assessment of neighbourhood character in Horsham and Natimuk's residential areas to ensure new development responds to existing and preferred residential character. This study will be prepared as part of the *Housing Strategy*. The *Neighbourhood Character Study* plays an important role in the application of Residential Zones in Horsham. In particular, the design objectives and design responses identified in the *Neighbourhood Character Study* will set out the planning controls (the New Residential Zone 'schedules') that new residential development will need to comply with. Public input will be sought on the desired future for residential neighbourhoods in Horsham and Natimuk. This work is currently underway.

Horsham Heritage Study Review

The purpose of *Horsham Heritage Study Review* is to ensure places and precincts identified by the *2014 Heritage Study* are sufficiently and strategically justified for heritage protection under the *Horsham Planning Scheme*. Since a significant amount of time has passed since the study was undertaken, a review must be conducted to ensure the assessment of heritage places meets current criteria. This work is currently underway and consultation with land owners will occur.

Open Space Contributions Rate Review

The purpose of this project is to assess the current and future open space requirements in Horsham, with regards to future development and population growth. This work will inform an Open Space Contribution Rate at Clause 53.01 (Open Space Contributions) in the *Horsham Planning Scheme*. It will also develop a local policy that sets out the selection criteria for accepting either a land or cash contribution at the subdivision stage of development (subdivision permits), and the format of land to be contributed. This work will commence mid-late 2023.

Municipal Tree Register

A *Significant Tree Register* for Horsham is an important initiative towards meeting the overall goal of protecting and increasing Horsham's urban forest. The register will ensure trees on private and public land with significant attributes (i.e. visual, aesthetic, social, cultural or horticultural/ botanical

characteristics and age or size) are identified and suitably protected. This work will commence mid-late 2023.

Industrial and Commercial Land Use Strategy

The objective of the *Industrial and Commercial Land Use Strategy* is to establish an overall vision and objectives for industrial and commercial land in Horsham. It will provide strategic direction on a precinct by precinct basis to support future planning and investigation of the potential rezoning of land to industrial land / commercial land and vice versa. It will identify the demand for and supply of industrial and commercial land and the attributes and characteristics of land required to service the existing and future needs of industry/businesses to help drive economic growth across the municipality. This work is to commence 2024-25.

Subdivision Design and Open Space Local Planning Policy

The purpose of preparing this policy is to outline a set of requirements for information to be provided with an application for subdivision in terms of:

- The design of subdivisions
- The provision of open space within subdivisions
- The design and layout (connectivity) pedestrian, cyclists and vehicle networks within subdivisions

This work will commence in 2024-25.

11.1.2 Recreation and Open Space Planning Team

Wimmera Regional Multi-Sports Precinct Feasibility Study

The *Wimmera Multi-Sports Precinct Feasibility Study* builds on previous projects exploring the possibility of constructing and operating regional sporting infrastructure in the municipality. The *Study* has considered:

- The demand for regional and upgraded sporting facilities (liaising with State Sporting Associations regarding their strategic plans and examining participation trends in the various sports)
- The functional requirements for each of the sports (what land area and facilities are required to meet facility requirements)
- The cost of developing and maintaining regional infrastructure and accessibility by the community (physical access and cost of entry and usage)
- Possible locations for new infrastructure or the upgrading of existing facilities

This study has explored the requirements of different sports, different locations and operating models. It is expected recommendations from the study will be presented to Council by mid-2023.

Community Facilities Analysis

Expectations regarding community buildings have changed. There is now a requirement to improve access to and within buildings (i.e. ramps and rails, width of doorways, toilets) as well as ensuring accessible parking facilities and safety (i.e. lighting and pathway access to buildings). Buildings are now used differently (i.e. Wi-Fi and technology) and the community's interests and needs have changed over time.

The *Community Facilities Analysis* will provide information about the way we use our buildings and what is required so facilities support the interests of our different community groups.

The project will be completed by the end of 2023.

Play and Public Spaces Review

The *Public Play Spaces Review* will involve an audit of existing play spaces to be assessed against the following criteria:

- Walkable catchments (how are public spaces distributed across the city and throughout the municipality)
- The number and type of play spaces (local, neighbourhood, municipal and regional parks and play spaces)
- Whether the play and public spaces are safe, accessible and invite us to gather or move through the spaces.

A *Public Play Spaces Strategy* will be developed as a result of the review, establishing a framework and a plan for action. Upgrades to existing play and public spaces will focus on creating public parks that are interesting, inviting, accessible and are used by people of different ages and abilities. It is expected the strategy will be completed by the end of 2023.

Municipal Bike and Shared Path Plan

The *Municipal Bike and Shared Path Plan* builds on the *2012-2016 Municipal and Shared Paths Plan* and identifies current best practice for the safety of cyclists. Existing bike pathways have been assessed against the principles of Austroad's *Safe System* and opportunities have been identified to create a connected network that reflects both the *Safe System* principles and Council's road hierarchy.

This plan provides a framework where safety treatments for cyclists are defined for different road types; arterial roads (highways) connector roads (key roads throughout towns) and link roads (residential streets). A prioritisation tool has been developed to assist with the scheduling of works. It is expected that the plan will be completed by mid-2023.

11.1.3 Community Inclusion

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

The purpose of the *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan* is to reduce barriers and increase inclusion and participation for people with a disability in Horsham. It provides a suite of actions relating to upgrading and maintaining public infrastructure and spaces as well as improving connectivity and accessibility across the community. This work is currently underway.

Aged Friendly Communities Action Plan

The purpose of the *Aged Friendly Communities Action Plan* is to develop actions that will focus on providing age-friendly access to Horsham and Horsham North. Actions will address:

- Improved gopher recharge facilities
- Improved parking
- Improved landscaping and lighting at major entrances
- Improved Dudley Cornell Park and install CCTV
- Upgrades to footpath

11.1.4 Strategic Projects Team

Rail Corridor Landscape Plan

The Rail Corridor Landscape Plan will provide designs of landscaping options within the rail corridor area. It will take into consideration parking, connecting paths, plantings, art and the future provision of a bus terminal (should it be required). Connecting paths to David Street, the Horsham Railway Station, Wawunna Road and Kalkee Road will be essential in making the new underpass accessible and safe for all uses.

Designs for larger open space areas will apply a native 'bush' theme comprising larger native trees, shrubs, grasses and bush rocks. Landscaping designs will aim to bring the Silo Art, proposed new underpass and the railway station together.

Design for pedestrian lighting will address safe levels of lighting when traveling through the underpass. Connecting paths will feature accent lighting within the underpass culverts and around the silo art could provide a visual experience and future talking points.

In keeping with the 'bush' theme depicted in the Silo Art illustrations, hard and soft landscape materials will be looked at to replicate the native and natural Australian bush look throughout the proposed landscape treatment. Native dryland plant species and natural materials will assist in long-term maintenance while also adding a sense of place and linkage between the Silo's and railway station.

Landscaping options, art, parking and connection paths will be discussed with the community when planning/funding commences.

Rail Underpass Investigation

A third rail underpass location in proximity to the railway station has been investigated and is considered feasible from a design perspective. Funding for this third underpass will continue to be investigated as part of the *Rail Corridor Landscape Plan*.

11.1.5 Parks and Gardens Team

Tree Inventory

A detailed inventory of all trees in Horsham is nearing completion, an action from the *Municipal Tree Strategy*. The purpose of the inventory is to record existing trees and identify vacant nature strips, exposure areas (i.e. pedestrian and shared paths) and local parks. This work has also determined the health, diversity and quality of existing trees. This information will be used to inform the selection of suitable and diverse tree species and where trees are reaching their end of life so they can be renewed.

Funding is available for the latter part of this financial year for a tree planting program. It will aim to increase the canopy cover across eight defined sub precincts within Horsham.

11.2. CAPITAL AND CIVIL WORKS

Council is rolling out a capital works program made up of projects designed to renew or upgrade infrastructure.

Upgraded Water Supply to Dudley Cornell, Cemetery and Langlands Parks

Council is looking to provide a more reliable water supply to Dudley Cornell Reserve, Langlands Park and the Horsham Cemetery from GWMWater's reclaimed water supply. This will ensure these public spaces are continuously irrigated providing residents with reliable access to green spaces. This work will commence mid-2023.

Frederick St Reconstruction

Rehabilitation works are planned for Frederick Street in late 2023 to improve the condition of the road surface.

11.3 RECENTLY COMPLETED WORK

- Mill Street roadworks
- Footpath upgrades to ensure all streets in Horsham North has a footpath on at least one side of the street
- Albert Street reconstruction
- Hennessy Street reconstruction
- Crump Street reconstruction
- Street tree planting

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is crucial that the Plan and *Strategic Action Plan* (Appendix 1) are monitored and reviewed 12 months following its adoption. This will ensure both documents remains relevant and update.

It will be necessary to understand whether:

- Are the 10 Goals, Strategies and Actions still relevant
- Are there any changes in circumstances

An important update to the Plan will be the inclusion of the Social-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) findings from the 2021 Census which is currently not available. Once available, the SEIFA data should be analysed and incorporated in the refreshed version of this Plan.

The *Strategic Action Plan* provides further guidance on the process of reviewing the Plan's effectiveness in planning for change in Horsham North as well as reporting on the status of actions and timeframes for completion.

13. GLOSSARY

Biodiversity

The variety of all life forms, the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain and the ecosystems of which they form a part.

Built Form

The combination of features of a building, including its style, façade, height and site coverage.

Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

The Design and Development Overlay outlines design objectives and requirements when permits for properties identified in the schedule to the design and development overlay. These properties are identified by a DDO number in the planning scheme maps and in the planning property report. The purpose of the design and development overlay is to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form for new development.

Development Plan Overlay (DPO)

The Development Plan Overlay (DPO) are flexible tools that can be used to implement a plan to guide the future use and development of the land. The purpose of a DPO is to identify areas that require the planning of future use or development to be shown on a plan before a permit can be granted.

Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO)

The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) is a planning tool applied by local councils and other planning authorities to identify sites that have known, identified or reasonably suspected contamination or potential contamination.

Environmental Sustainable Development (ESD)

Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) are a set of principles that aim to improve the health and comfort of buildings for occupants whilst at the same time reducing negative impacts on the environment.

Frontage

The road alignment at the front of a lot. If a lot abuts two or more roads, the one to which the building, or proposed building faces.

Greenfield Sites

Undeveloped land identified for residential or industrial/commercial development.

Infill Development

Infill development encourages the development of underutilised or vacant land in existing urban areas to increase density and place new development near existing resources and infrastructure.

Land Use

Land use planning is the process of regulating the use of land. Usually, this is done to promote more desirable social and environmental outcomes as well as a more efficient use of resources.

Neighbourhood Character

Neighbourhood character is a mix of various elements that give neighbourhoods their distinct 'personality'. These elements may include a neighbourhood's land use, urban design, visual amenity and vegetation.

Open Space

Land that provides outdoor recreation, leisure and/or environmental benefits and visual amenity.

Open Space Contribution

A contribution paid by a developer as part of a subdivision through negotiation or in accordance with the Planning Scheme or the Act. A contribution can include either cash or land.

Passive Surveillance

An environment where people can see and be seen through casual observation.

Planning Scheme

A document approved by the Victorian Government which outlines objectives, policies and controls for the use, development and protection of land for each municipality across Victoria.

Planning Scheme Amendment

Changes to the Planning Scheme are called amendments and the process is set out in the Planning and Environment Act 1987. An amendment may involve a change to a planning scheme map (a rezoning or overlay change), a change to the written part of the scheme, or both.

Precinct Identity

Precinct identity refers to the sense of community and belonging that individuals feel toward their specific geographic area or precinct, such as a neighborhood, town, or city. This identity may be influenced by a range of factors, including shared cultural, historical, or social experiences, common physical spaces, and shared values or beliefs.

Public Realm

The public realm consists of typical urban elements of streets, lanes, plazas, parks and environmental areas of different scales and purposes. These elements of public space are combined to create distinctive and unique places that invite use and activity.

Public Surveillance

Public surveillance is achieved when public space users can see and be seen by others. This highlights the importance of building layout, orientation and location; the strategic use of design; landscaping and lighting – it is a by-product of well-planned, well-designed and well-used space.

Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure is comprised of the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities.

Tree Canopy

A Tree Canopy is the upper layer of a mature tree. Tree canopies are a crucial part of the public realm by creating a cooler, more climate-ready urban environment.

Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria

These guidelines provide advice on the design of public spaces, building design in relation to a building's interface with public spaces, and the layout of cities, towns and neighbourhoods. They are a reference document in all planning schemes across the state.