



HORSHAM NORTH ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES PAPER

Community Consultation
Summary Report

August 2022

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report summarises the outcomes of recent community consultation (April - May 2022) that is currently being used to inform the development of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for Horsham North.

Round 1 of community engagement aimed to:

- Build relationships and trust with the community.
- Enable the opportunity for any community member to provide input and influence outcomes.
- Gain insight into the lived experience in Horsham North and community aspirations.
- Provide an open and transparent process that the community understands and supports.
- Gain diverse community input into a plan for positive change in Horsham North.
- Clearly communicate the opportunity to be engaged and the progress of the project.

The report provides a summary of the key messages that emerged during community consultation for the ***Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper*** (written feedback and verbal feedback provided during workshops and drop in events).

The report also provides some further written clarity and information to questions and comments put forward by community members.



ABOUT THE DRAFT ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES PAPER PROJECT TIMELINE

The *Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper* for Horsham North was based on a review of the issues, opportunities, strategies and actions identified in the *Horsham North Urban Design Framework* (UDF), adopted by Council in 2013.

The purpose of the *Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper* was to bring forward the issues and opportunities set out in the *Horsham North UDF* and reinterpret the “Directions” and “Actions” of the UDF under a new set of themes and an expanded study area. It also identified new opportunities that could improve the urban environment of Horsham North and enhance its liveability and sustainability.

The *Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper* has been presented and workshoped with the community. Community feedback has been used to inform the development of the draft *Horsham North LAP*. The *Horsham North LAP* will align with current Council strategies and projects and will identify considerations for future changes to the Horsham Planning Scheme.

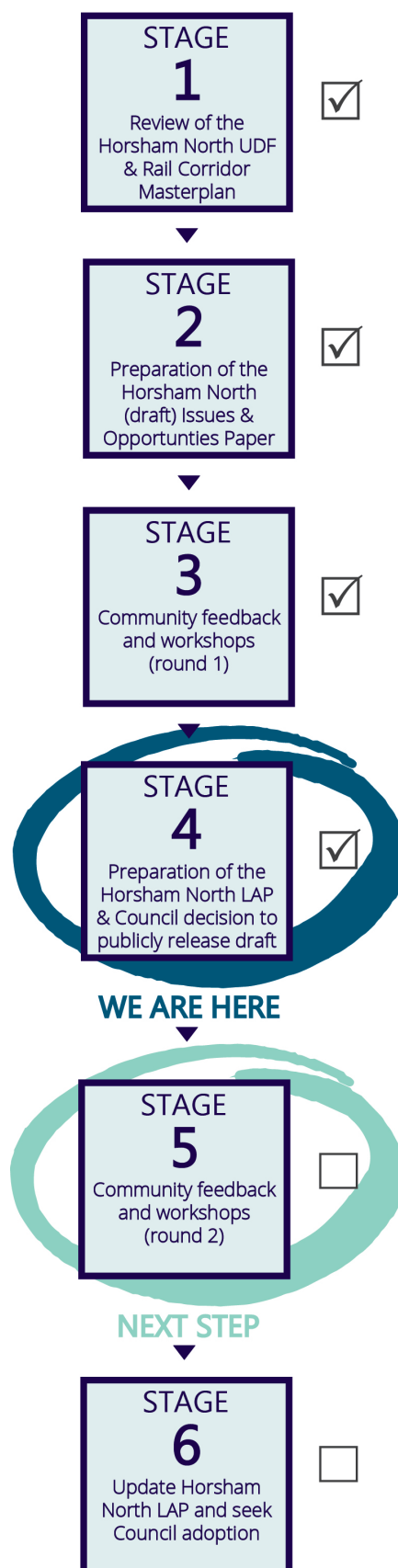
PROJECT OUTCOME

The *Issues and Opportunities Paper* is the background work that forms the basis, analysis and strategic justification for goals and strategies detailed in the *Horsham North LAP*.

WHAT IS THE HORSHAM NORTH LOCAL AREA PLAN

The *Horsham North LAP* will provide strategic guidance on developing the precinct as a vibrant, well connected and attractive area of Horsham, with a strong sense of neighbourhood character and individual identity, complemented by tree lined streets and well designed housing. The goals and strategies detailed in the *Horsham North LAP* will aim to address key issues and opportunities, as identified by Council and the community, and set out a direction for project delivery, further work, grant funding and future planning scheme changes.

The *Horsham North LAP* will be developed in six stages:



THEME 1: LAND USE + CHARACTER

There are parts of Horsham North 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 both land use change and urban design interventions.

Feedback from the community reinforced many of the issues identified in the *Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper*. Some of the issues and concerns expressed by the community included:

- The industrial land and remaining activities are viewed as both inappropriate and a constraint on future residential development and the ability to improve the amenity and character of the area.
- The rail corridor remains a significant constraint and barrier and presents a negative image of Horsham North to visitors and the broader Horsham community. The issue is compounded by the industrial area immediately to the north between Mill and Lynott Streets.
- There was mixed feedback on the types of housing the community would like to see in the future and this was related to concerns about neighbourhood character and also concerns about traffic. On the other hand there is support for a more diverse and affordable supply of housing.
- Future planning should avoid clusters of social housing (a dispersed approach would be more preferable).
- There was a desire to see heritage places protected.
- The opportunity for future public art projects was identified (such as the GWM Water tower).

Industrial land and activity

The community would like to see the current industrial and commercial activity move out of Horsham North. It has been suggested that the industrial land generally bounded by Wawunna Road, Mill, Lynott and Gertrude Streets, be rezoned to a zone that allows residential development. This

idea is acknowledged and supported by Council officers in principle, however, there are a number of other complex factors to consider before doing so, which include:

- There are a number of commercial and industrial land uses that still exist within the area, including petroleum storage and associated infrastructure.
- There is likely to be varying levels of contamination across some of the sites within the Industrial 1 Zone and the extent of contamination is currently unknown.
- There is a lack of strategic guidance (i.e. *Housing Strategy*) in terms of new housing opportunities and the types of housing that might be suitable for this location. The development of a *Housing Strategy* is currently identified on Council's work program to commence later this year. It will provide a long term and overarching direction to manage future housing growth and change so that it best meets the ongoing needs of the community.
- There is a lack of strategic guidance in terms of the future of commercial and industrial land supply for the more peripheral (commercial and industrial) land across Horsham, and it is recommended to undertake a *Commercial and Industrial Land Strategy* to understand current supply, demand and emerging trends in commercial and industrial land use.

Future housing

There were mixed feedback in relation to the form and density of future housing. Whilst this feedback is acknowledged, Council is also planning to undertake a *Housing Strategy* to better understand the issues based on newly released 2021 ABS census data. Further community engagement will occur when that project is underway to understand the full range of housing issues. The the demographic profile for Horsham North will be updated using the 2021 ABS census data.

Heritage + character

The community has identified the following opportunities:

- Acknowledging neighbourhood character and protecting valued characteristics
- Protecting and celebrating the heritage of Horsham Railway Station.
- The landmark qualities (and potential heritage values) of the GWM Water tower.
- The opportunity to transform the current industrial area between Mill and Lynott Streets.

As part of the upcoming *Housing Strategy* a *Neighbourhood Character Assessment* will accompany the strategy to help identify existing and preferred residential character and ensure it is protected while accommodating housing diversity.

The rail corridor

The issues related to the rail corridor are well known and the community's frustration is acknowledged by Council. The *Horsham North Urban Design Framework (2013)* highlighted the issues and Council has been advocating for a number of improvements since that time.

Discussions with VicTrack are progressing and it is important that Council considers the entirety of the rail corridor (will be identified in the *Horsham North LAP*) for any future work that involves the following:

- Identification of potential future land uses to encourage activation.
- Open space and landscaping opportunities (including the provision of trees).
- Pedestrian and cyclist connections, including shared paths.
- Improving the existing pedestrian underpasses and surrounding public realm to address safety, access and amenity issues.
- Car park upgrade opportunities at the station.
- Investigations for a new pedestrian underpass.
- A potential location for a bus depot/interchange.
- Land contamination and remediation process.
- Council acquisition of land from VicTrack.



THEME 2: ACCESS + CONNECTIONS

The community feedback provided on the *Draft Issues and Opportunities Paper* reinforced many of the long-standing issues this plan seeks to address in regards to the rail corridor, underpasses, walkability, network planning, supporting sustainable modes of transport and better connections generally. Traffic management has also become an issue that requires closer attention as projects, such as the Silo Art project, in addition to new development within the area incrementally increases traffic volumes.

The community feedback focussed on the following:

- The rail corridor blocks pedestrian movement and is a large, unattractive area that characterises the state of Horsham North (for many residents).
- Opportunities for shared (or multi-use) paths that connect key destinations.
- The need to address traffic management issues more proactively.
- The need to manage pedestrian and traffic issues along Mill Street, particularly with the arrival of the Silo Art project.
- Poor public transport services and amenities (such as bus shelters).

Traffic management

A range of issues were put forward in terms of local traffic issues, including:

- The need to either provide or improve speed humps, in order to slow down “hoon” drivers.
- Local traffic conditions along Mill Street and concerns that the Silo Art project could exacerbate current risks in terms of pedestrian/cyclists at the intersection of Wawunna Road and Mill Street.
- The need to identify and address traffic calming measures more generally across the area to better encourage and facilitate safe and well coordinated pedestrian and cycling movement.

THEME 3: PUBLIC + OPEN SPACES

Community feedback reinforced the need to carefully plan for and design public spaces with the community in mind. A basic but very important design consideration is for parks to be designed with street frontages. This needs to be assessed at the subdivision applications stage to ensure that parks are appropriately located with street frontages and provide pedestrian connectivity and maximise visibility through the creation of clear sightlines.

The community would like to see all existing and future parks and associated infrastructure not only improved, but planned and designed properly in the first instance. This is the critical element that has been missing in the delivery of parks and open space that needs to be addressed before further projects are undertaken by Council.

The community feedback highlighted the following issues and opportunities:

- More green spaces and greenery.
- Higher levels of maintenance.
- Provide appropriate play equipment and other facilities in parks.
- Explore options for more accessible parks / play grounds.
- Unattractive, poorly landscaped and lacking infrastructure and amenities.
- Conversion of the Rail Corridor for public use and open space.
- More community engagement in the design phase in order to better capture needs and aspirations.

Parks + reserves

The community would like to see all existing and future parks well planned for and designed to meet contemporary design standards. Current parks in Horsham North vary in quality. This often stems from past subdivision design and the lack of street frontages resulting in poor passive surveillance and safety.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This issue has been recognised by Council officers and the future planning and provision of parks will have regard to principles set out in the **Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria**, which will be referred to in the draft **Horsham North LAP**, and also the **Horsham Open Space Strategy (2019)**.

To read more about the Horsham North please visit: <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Planning-and-Building/Strategic-Planning/Planning-Projects/Horsham-North-Local-Area-Plan>

NEXT STEPS

1. Finalise the draft **Horsham North LAP** (August 2022).
2. Prepare s Council Report and brief Council on the draft **Horsham North LAP** (September 2022).
3. Council to make a decision on the release of the draft **Horsham North LAP** for public consultation (September 2022).
4. Undertake Round 2 of community consultation (October 2022).
5. Prepare an *Engagement Summary Report* for Round 2 of community consultation (November - December 2022)
6. Update the **Horsham North LAP** incorporating community feedback (November 2022 - early 2023).
7. Prepare a Council Report and brief Council on the updated **Horsham North LAP** (early 2023).
8. Council to make a decision on the aoption of the **Horsham North LAP** (early 2023).
9. Prepare an *Action and Implementation Plan* (early 2023).
10. Commence detailed planning and design for individual projects – further engagement will be undertaken (2023 - ongoing).



Prepared by

