

UrbanFold

**DRAFT**

# Horsham CAD Revitalisation & Streetscape Plan

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS & PRELIMINARY OPPORTUNITIES

NOVEMBER 2021



# Contents

1 Project Context	4
2 Background Review	6
3 Urban Design Analysis	14
Planning Framework	
Precincts and Key Sites	
Public Realm and Tree Canopy	
Streetscape Amenity	
Access & Movement	
Built Form	
4 Engagement Summary	40
5 Preliminary Opportunities & Recommendations	46

The Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five traditional owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. It also acknowledges all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Horsham Rural City community today. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

# 1 | PROJECT CONTEXT

## Introduction

In mid 2021, Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) commissioned the Central Activities District (CAD) Framework and Streetscape Plan (the Plan). The aim of the Plan is to identify opportunities to revitalise the Horsham CAD to attract new business activity and people to the Town Centre. It is envisioned that this will be realised through a series of public realm, built form and streetscape interventions that will improve the visual amenity, design quality, vitality and function of the urban environment within the Horsham commercial core. The Plan will assist Council to prioritise public domain improvement works in the CAD, anticipate future renewal works and improve the overall function of the local streets. It will also inform preferred future built form outcomes.

## What is a CAD Framework and Streetscape Plan?

The framework will centre on the CAD, and could include several areas of focus such as public realm and streetscape, key development opportunities, infrastructure and services, heritage, built form control, retail strategy and housing strategy. The Council's focus for now is public realm and streetscape, although the plan will also touch on built form, heritage and retail where it interfaces with public realm. The Plan will seek to outline improvements in the public realm that can also act as catalyst by triggering private investment. The public realm refers to any publicly owned land within the CAD. This includes streets, footpaths, parks, and government-owned land.

- The Plan may seek to influence the design of:
- Open space (e.g., parks, plazas)
- Footpaths, laneways and streets
- Places for sitting, gathering, socialising, outdoor dining
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Street trees and canopy
- Wayfinding and signage
- Façades

This project will recognise and reference the suite of previous HRCC strategic documents that already offer excellent insight into how to invest in Horsham's CAD. A chapter of this report is dedicated to summarising and referencing the salient points from previous strategic work.

## Study Area

The area of focus for the project is the Central Activities District (CAD). The CAD refers predominantly to Horsham's Town Centre. It is bound to the north by Baillie Street, to the east by Urquhart Street, and to the west by Darlot Street. The Study Area also includes the main arrival corridor of O'Callaghans Parade from the river, and Horsham Plaza to the west of Darlot Street. In this document the Study Area will be referred to as the Study Area, the CAD or the Town Centre interchangeably. (Fig.1)

## Project Approach

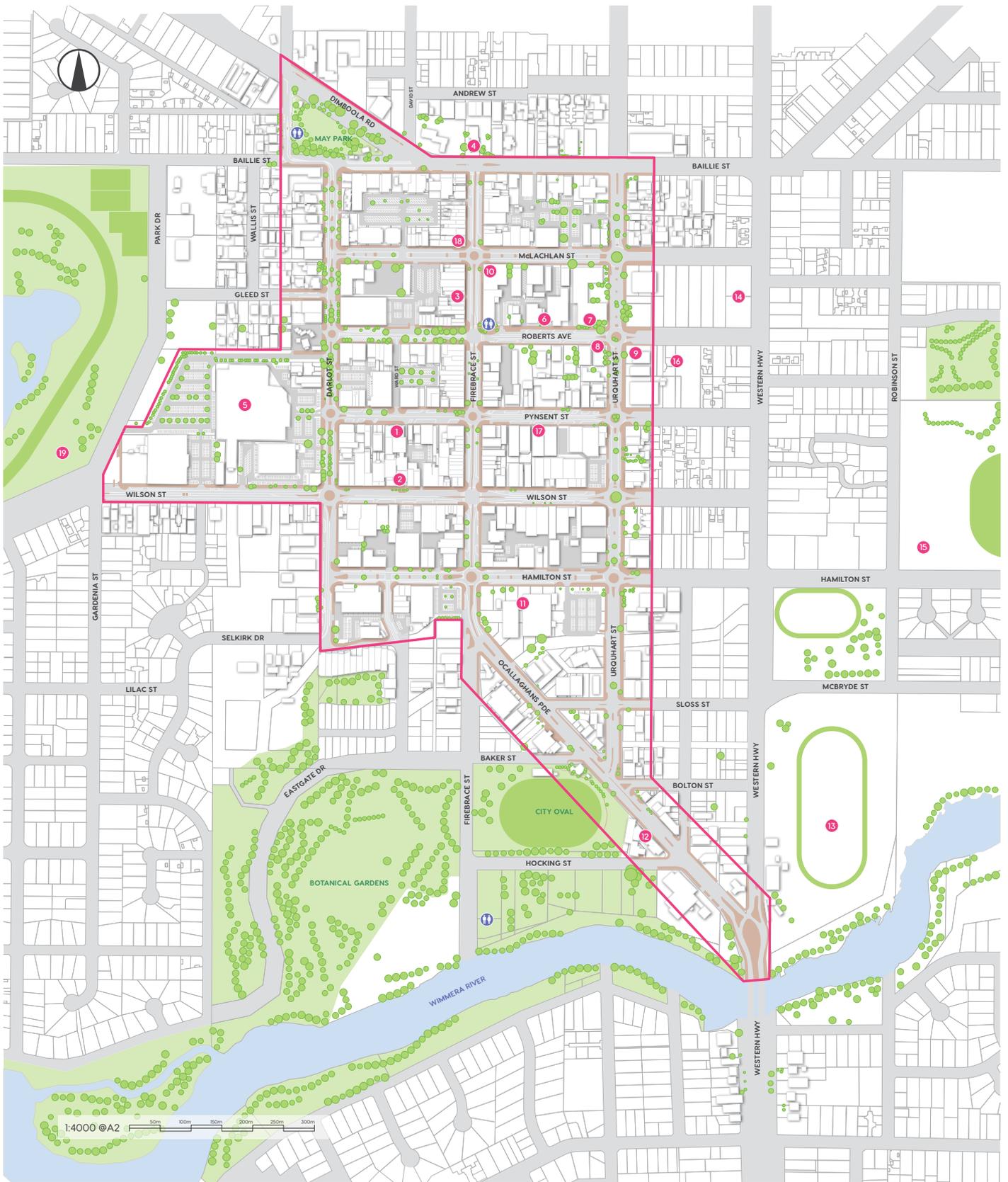
The Plan comprises two broad stages. In order to identify the required scope of capital works, Stage 1 of the project will include an Urban Design Analysis of the Horsham CAD that will examine broad components of the urban environment within Horsham. This will include:

- Land use and activity patterns
- The public and open space network (the public realm)
- Access and movement networks (across the various modes)
- Streetscape infrastructure
- The built environment

This document represents Stage 1 of the project. The analysis in this document will be used to guide the development of the Streetscape Plan which will form Stage 2 of the project, the Streetscape Plan. The Streetscape Plan will establish a framework with key objectives and strategies for developing safe, attractive, coherent and high quality streetscapes and public spaces to support and sustain a dynamic range of economic activity within the CAD. It will also identify projects for capital investment with an accompanying implementation strategy.

## Project Outcome

The ultimate goal for this project is to take the ideas from previous strategic work, add new ideas, test them all with the community and stakeholders, and develop a more detailed set of recommendations focused on urban design, landscape architectural, public realm and transport improvements. The end product will be a set of costed recommendations and a prioritised list of improvements. It will be a document that is usable, practical and leads directly to funding opportunities and ultimately constructed projects.



- |   |                                      |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Horsham Town Hall and Information Centre | 8. Wesley Performing Arts Centre     | 15. St Brigid's College                |
| 2. Horsham Regional Art Gallery             | 9. Horsham Senior Citizens Centre    | 16. Horsham Community Childcare Centre |
| 3. Bradbury Lane Mural                      | 10. Horsham Post Office              | 17. Horsham Theatre                    |
| 4. Anglican Parish of Horsham               | 11. Horsham Aquatic Centre           | 18. T&G Building                       |
| 5. Horsham Plaza                            | 12. Horsham Mens Shed                | 19. Skate Park                         |
| 6. Police Station & Magistrates' Court      | 13. Horsham Greyhound Racing Complex |  |
| 7. Horsham Rural City Council               | 14. Michael & John's Primary School  |  |

**Figure 1** Study Area Central Activities District (CAD)

## 2 | BACKGROUND REVIEW

### Previous Urban Design work, Strategic Planning and Community Consultation

A number of Council projects have been undertaken over the years that seek to enhance and revitalise the Horsham CAD, Wimmera Riverfront and Showground Precincts through a series of projects that will improve the urban environment.

Whilst a number of opportunities have been identified across the different strategic documents, further work is required to identify and cost those

opportunities specifically from an urban design perspective, to maximise the impact of future capital works projects as a coherent and unified approach to revitalising the Horsham CAD.

This project knits together a number of strategic objectives, taking recommendations from the extensive work and consultation that has already been completed to date.

The following summary of key influencing documents will inform the understanding of the area and guide the delivery of the Streetscape Plan.



# The Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan plays an influential role in Horsham's future over a four year period. It is a key strategic document describing Council's and the community's vision for the future, where and how Council will focus its efforts over the four year period and how it will measure progress as it strives towards that vision. The plan is based on series of 5 goals that support the Horsham City Council vision of "A vibrant, inclusive community to live, work, play and invest". These goals were established through a rigorous series of community engagement exercises.

## 1. Community

Horsham Rural City Council will develop the municipality as a diverse, inclusive and vibrant community.

## 2. Liveability

Horsham Rural City Council will actively work to create a healthy and connected community that is a great place to live, work invest and explore for all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

## 3. Sustainability

Horsham Rural City Council will actively lead in sustainable growth and development of the community and the economy.

## 4. Accessibility

Horsham Rural City Council will meet community needs through connected transport networks and the provision of accessible and welcoming places and spaces

## 5. Leadership

Horsham Rural City Council, will build trust and connections with the community through good governance, community consultation, accountability, transparent decision making and financial stability.

## The CAD Revitalisation Project supports these goals in a number of ways, including:

- Increasing accessibility with streetscape improvements such as footpath widening, and removing obstacles from main movement path
- Increasing safety and accessibility by installing roundabout and mid-block crossings to enable safe street crossings for everyone, especially vulnerable residents like children and seniors.
- Creating a series of meeting places at different scales that cater to a diverse range of people.
- Enabling better connections between the great attractions Horsham already has to offer
- Making the CAD a destination for people to spend time, not just complete errands.
- Listening to and acting upon community concerns and aspirations for Horsham.
- Building resilience to climate change by planting appropriate trees and plant species.

## Imagine Horsham Community & Stakeholder Engagement Summary 2017

An engagement process was undertaken in 2017, with the aim of building community trust and momentum in city revitalisation projects.

A series of activities was undertaken in order to engage with a range of participants, including:

- Horsham Rural City Council
- Horsham business community
- Relevant agencies and authorities.
- Horsham community members.

Engagement activities ranged from formal workshops and meetings, to fun and interactive listening posts on the street.

Key actions that emerged from the consultation were divided into categories based on the level of investment required.

### Quick wins included:

- Feature lighting including fairy lights in trees, highlighting heritage buildings, increased illumination of shop fronts and significant trees.
- Increased vibrancy and colour in the streets by incorporating artwork, murals, colourful planting and community activities
- Regular markets complimentary to existing local markets, including produce and craft markets, and a night food market (combined with Friday night shopping).
- Activated vacant shop fronts by displaying local art or photography.
- Free outdoor community events such as concerts and cinema held at local parks.
- Pop-up cafe / food trucks along the river, with areas to sit and enjoy the surrounds

### Medium term goals included:

- Improved signage and wayfinding around the CBD and surrounding areas.
- A cohesive identity and branding for Horsham, with community input.
- Upgrade all town entrances, based on Horsham's identity and branding - possibilities include a sign trail promoting features; character or identity bollards; and acknowledging Aboriginal land and culture.

- Promoting Horsham regionally, drawing in travellers, making locals proud, align with identity and branding

### Longer term goals included:

- A new town square or public place to anchor placemaking opportunities.
- River facilities including possible community and hospitality venues, tying in to existing and revitalised river walks.
- Street improvements, including pedestrian prioritisation, universal access, outdoor dining, and beautification.

### The community prioritised:

- More colour and vibrancy
- More greenery
- Signage including wayfinding, events and attractions
- More seating and meeting areas
- Better access and walkability around the city
- New public spaces
- Free activities for all ages, including children, young people, families and the elderly
- Programmed with events, such as markets, workshops, groups, films, music

### The specific recommendations relevant to CAD Revitalisation Project include:

- The delivery of a new town square at the corner of Roberts Ave and Ward Streets.
- Pedestrianisation of Roberts Ave between Ward and Firebrace Streets for a hospitality precinct.
- Creation of a shared space (pedestrian priority) on Roberts Ave between Darlot and Ward Streets.
- Utilisation of laneways for street art, greenery and gathering opportunities.

# Horsham Economic Development Strategy 2018

Horsham's Central Activity District (CAD) is a vibrant hub of retail, commercial, entertainment, hospitality, cultural and community activity. The Town Centre services a catchment far greater than the Council area, attracting people from across the Wimmera for a range of retail, entertainment, health and medical, and professional and financial services.

It is estimated that Horsham's CAD services a resident catchment of 51,000 people. Horsham has a strong service role for the surrounding Local Government Areas of Northern Grampians, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack. Residents within the broader catchment travel to Horsham for higher order retail and commercial needs.

The Economic Development Strategy identifies Horsham's CAD as a key economic driver for Horsham. It suggests that revitalising the CAD will encourage and attract new business to the centre of Horsham and sets out the following considerations:

- Discourage out of centre development;
- Address challenges facing retailers (e.g. online retail, impact of seasonal agriculture production on retail expenditure, customer satisfaction)
- Improve CAD's connection to the Wimmera River
- Encourage investment/redevelopment of key sites in the CAD
- Capturing passing trade – attracting self-drive visitors into the CAD
- Under-representation of professional, financial and creative services
- Strengthening of hospitality and entertainment in the CAD
- Recognise the role of the Horsham Town Hall as the arts precinct.

There are several key focus areas that the strategy identifies as being important to ensure robust future growth for Horsham.

## **High quality food, beverage and hospitality offerings.**

Having a range of high quality options is important for locals and visitors alike - it encourages investment in the CAD as well as encouraging ancillary activities and expenditure. This may include venues such as gastronomy pubs, more restaurants and cafés, provedore and wine bars/ microbrewery.

## **Public realm improvements**

Beautification of the public realm through streetscape improvements, tree plantings, and upgrading the major entrances to the town will be central to improvement the CAD.

## **Wayfinding and promotional signage**

This is important not only for residents but also to capture the 800,000+ self-drive visitors that travel through Horsham each year. Promotional signage should refer to events and festivals, local attractions (e.g. Town Hall, Wimmera River, Botanical Gardens, Visitor Information Centre and popular hospitality precincts.

## **Promote creative and professional industry opportunities in Horsham**

Working with the community development team, the report recommends a focus on promoting the creative sector to enhance liveability, attraction and the economy.

Analysis of the local business base highlights a significant gap in creative industry, particularly in digital and creative professional services such as marketing, advertising, design, software & IT, architecture and public relations. There is an opportunity to work with existing professional businesses to attract new workers, and understand business needs.

## **Specific recommendations relevant to CAD Revitalisation Project include:**

- Wayfinding and signage throughout the CAD
- Hospitality precincts with high quality food and beverage offerings
- Public realm improvements
- Increased tree planting
- Upgrades to the major town entrances

## Horsham CBD Revitalisation Strategy 2017

The Horsham CBD revitalisation program is designed to strengthen the economic performance of the region, improve social outcomes, including health and community wellbeing, and future proof infrastructure by adapting to climate change. It also responds to some of the key challenges facing the CBD and the broader region.

The program will support the following major themes from the Council Plan:

### Community and Cultural Development

The CBD revitalisation program supports the Council Plan goals for a “vibrant and diverse community” with enhanced access to cultural activities. It strengthens the CBD as the cultural and social hub of the region. It supports three of the seven priority areas identified by the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; ‘social connection’, ‘physical activity’ and ‘healthy, safe, liveable environments’ - by providing a high amenity CBD environment that supports walking and social interaction.

### Sustaining the Economy

The CBD revitalisation program supports the Council Plan priorities for increased visitor numbers and promotion of Horsham as a regional city. It makes the CBD a more attractive location for business to locate and for visitors to spend time.

### Asset Management

The CBD revitalisation program supports the Council Plan priority for “developing and maintaining council’s physical assets for long term sustainability, amenity and safety” by improving the quality of infrastructure within the CBD.

### The key principles guiding the CBD revitalisation works are:

- Prioritise place function over movement function
- Maintain a compact CBD
- Prioritise walkability
- Connect the CBD with its surrounds
- Focus on the main streets
- Celebrate heritage

These principles will aid in the delivery of the planned package of works, and assist in compromising between competing priorities.

The works planned under the CBD revitalisation programme fall into three categories:

### Foundations

Upgrades to basic infrastructure including upgrading footpaths and water supply, improved power supply and street lighting, and rolling out free WiFi across the CBD

### Public realm improvements

Improvements to streetscapes and public spaces, including the development of a new Town Square.

### Transport improvements

Improvements to the transport network and safety in the CBD. This will include intersection upgrades and new mid-block crossings to prioritise pedestrian safety, and efforts to provide for bicycles within the CBD.

An over-supply of car parking can be repurposed to form part of a parklet or public space network, contributing to the walkability of the CBD.

### Specific recommendations relevant to CAD Revitalisation Project include:

- Upgrading footpaths to consistent material and aesthetic to aid legibility
- Implementing low water-use street trees and landscaping elements
- A new Town Square
- Intersection improvements to encourage safer pedestrian crossings.
- Managing CBD parking time restrictions to encourage parking in peripheral areas in order to increase foot traffic in the CBD
- Identifying key cycle routes for the CBD that connect legibly with a broader network of paths throughout Horsham.
- Tree plantings and landscaping in median car parking areas
- Greater provision of shade and shelter across the CBD area
- Free WiFi across the CAD

## City to River Masterplan 2020

The City to River (CTR) Masterplan provides guidance on the revitalisation of the Horsham CAD and its connection with the Wimmera River Corridor to the south. Some of the objectives and principles are referenced in the CTR Masterplan but an overarching urban design analysis of the CAD has not been undertaken to date.

**Objective 2** of the CTR Masterplan is the catalyst for the preparation of a CAD Urban Design Analysis and Streetscape Plan:

Improve the amenity of the CAD and the diversity of land uses to strengthen the existing business environment, attract more visitors and accommodate greater housing, hospitality, open space and events.

Objective 2 is supported by five Key directions, two of which are to lead the preparation of the CAD Urban Design Analysis and Streetscape Plan:

- Implement the recommendations of the CAD Revitalisation Strategy - Including improving streetscapes, prioritising pedestrian/cycling transport and connectivity and better integrating the CAD and the Riverfront precinct with clear visual connections and landscaping.
- Develop of a series of meeting places in the CAD - In consultation with residents and the business community, investigate the opportunity to develop a meeting place or series of meeting places in the CAD. This could link with other CAD anchors (e.g. the Town Hall, May Park, the Riverfront).

### CAD Retail and Commercial Focus

The Masterplan recognises that the CAD accommodates the majority of retail, commercial and civic land uses. It is important that a compact commercial core is maintained to encourage trip sharing and to enable a concentration of economic and social activity to occur within the central area.

Demand for new retail and commercial floorspace is not expected to result in the need for any significant extensions to the core area – **therefore the vision for this area is to continue to improve the physical conditions and infrastructure for visitors and businesses through public realm and transport initiatives.**

There are opportunities for the public realm to perform a greater linear open space role to promote recreation and social activity in appropriate locations in the CAD. This will encourage greater visitation, footfall and length of stay in the area, leading to greater private sector investment across a variety of retail, commercial, hospitality and creative opportunities.

Opportunities for commercial and retail uses to extend to the south towards the river precinct are proposed in the vicinity of Firebrace Street and Darlot Street as part of two mixed-use 'urban renewal' areas.

### Specific recommendations relevant to CAD Revitalisation Project include:

- Raised mid-block pedestrian crossings
- Increased shade / canopy cover
- Investigating potential for town plaza at Ward Street car park and Town Hall car park.

## Municipal Parking Strategy 2021

**This Strategy assists Council to understand the complexities of the current parking environment and provides recommendations to manage car parking efficiently and sustainably in the Horsham CBD.**

The Municipal Parking Strategy is centred on the recognition that car parking and the convenience of travel afforded by private vehicle travel, inevitably results in increased vehicular movements, which also poses irreversible impacts on land use patterns and development. Of primary interest to this strategy, is the detrimental impact that an oversupply of car parking can have on a town centre environment, like the Horsham CAD.

Below is a summary of key findings which have been used to inform recommendations for this strategy:

- There are 3,508 car parking spaces within the survey area, comprising 1,575 on-street spaces and 1,933 off-street spaces.
- Peak period occupancy is low. There was a peak occupancy level of 62%, which is significantly lower to the best practice benchmark level of 75% which is advised in regional settings.
- Paid parking is operational at central CBD locations at a cost of \$1 for on-street parking (1P, 2P and 4P) while unrestricted parking is largely available at peripheral areas to the CBD
- 4P parking experiences the highest occupancy of any time restriction, peaking at 9am, suggesting that there are not enough 4P spaces available and implying peripheral unrestricted parking is poorly utilised.
- Restricted parking experiences greater demand which infers motorists are not willing to park at unrestricted locations on the periphery of the CBD and then walk to their destination, because they are guaranteed a parking space at a central and conveniently located CBD location
- Parking occupancy has remained stagnant since 2012. While there has been an increase in supply, approximately 150 (including the Target car park) since 2012, parking demand has largely remained consistent during the same period

- Despite perceptions held by some local stakeholders, there are no current demand pressures for car parking in the Horsham CBD however it is appreciated that there are some 'hot spots' throughout the CBD that can experience demand pressures at certain times of the day.

The Strategy identifies that Horsham has an over-supply of car parking based on surveys of occupancy rates. This means that there are opportunities to re-purpose under-utilised parking in some locations.

It also identifies the importance of improving the pedestrian and cycle network, and viewing any works in those areas in conjunction with the provision of car parking.

### **Specific recommendations relevant to CAD Revitalisation Project include:**

- Improving signage and wayfinding for off-street car parks throughout the town to enable strong utilisation of peripheral and longer-term parking
- Improving amenity by increasing shade through street planting, verandahs and shade in Council owned car parks
- Considering covered walkways and incentives to encourage people to park on the outer of the CAD and walk to work
- Creating a network of generous protected on-street bike lanes provided between the kerb and the parking lane to encourage more cyclists.

## Other Relevant Strategies and Projects

There are a number of other plans and strategies in place over the Horsham area, many of which intersect with the Central Activity District study area. The following are brief summaries of the main priorities that overlap with the objectives of the CAD revitalisation. The list below outlines a few of these studies and some of their more relevant recommendations.

### Open Space Strategy

- Provide Open Space for a range of ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds which address equity and equality.
- Improve accessibility and connections into existing open space by removing barriers and increasing lines of sight.
- Provide a diverse range of activities for quality active and passive environments.
- Incorporate CPTED principles in all future development of open space to create and sustain safe communities.
- Develop flexible, innovative and robust approaches to open space planning and design to include both temporary and permanent uses.
- Ensure all existing and future open space is aligned with best practice and Victoria's Urban Design Guidelines to ensure high quality spaces are achieved.
- Provide places and spaces that contribute to social cohesion, physical and mental health, engagement, human connection, cultural diversity and connection to nature to improve liveability and wellbeing.
- Improve connectivity between Horsham CAD, existing and new residential developments, community services and key open spaces.

### Draft Horsham (Tree/Greening) Strategy

- Increase the canopy cover in the Horsham CAD. Current canopy cover is low, at around 6%.
- Median strips along Firebrace, Urquhart and O'Callaghans Parade are key opportunities.

### Horsham Heritage Study Stage 2

- The study identifies current and proposed heritage buildings (to be included in Heritage Overlay through an amendment process
- The Heritage Strategy advocates for the re-construction of verandas on heritage buildings along the main streets of the CAD.

### Horsham Urban Transport Plan

- Provide a more active and vibrant CBD and river precinct with opportunities for increased active transport and road safety improvements.
- Improve vehicle and pedestrian safety at nominated priority intersections
- Provide mid-block crossings in the CBD
- Improve the design of roundabouts in Horsham for pedestrian and cycling safety
- Review the current cycling strategy

### Horsham CAD Strategy 2013

- Summary of issues and opportunities associated with the urban design features of the Horsham CAD, including a review of the Horsham CBD Urban Design Framework conducted in 2001.
- Generally the findings in this document are consistent with analysis of the current issues and opportunities within the CAD.

### Horsham Rural City Council Arts & Cultural Plan 2014-2018

- Activating public spaces throughout the CAD and considering the role of public art.

### Public Arts Implementation Plan

- Integrate public art into the planning and design of Horsham Central Activities District.
- Increase the understanding and enjoyment of contemporary art by the community.

## Other Relevant Strategies and Projects

### Horsham Youth Strategy

- Identify and develop opportunities for youth-friendly places.
- Co-design with young people youth-friendly public spaces in Horsham Town Centre.
- Create safe public places through lighting and CPTED principles, with a particular focus on creating safe places for young women.
- Incorporate Universal Design outcomes into all built environment external projects specifications and contracts.

### Social Infrastructure Plan

- Planning for social infrastructure should be undertaken strategically as part of precinct or centre planning, as social infrastructure can contribute to place making and the activation of public space.

### Community Inclusion Plan

- The document sets out the principles to be applied in terms of community inclusion (providing access to buildings, services, technology, etc.) for all sectors of the community.
- This applies strongly to the design of the public realm and could include access to WiFi in the CAD

### Age Friendly Communities Plan

- Create and maintain safe and accessible public spaces which are important for the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to age in the community



## Summary of Key Objectives

**Some of the most relevant recommendations from Council's previous strategic work are summarised below. These recommendations will be included as part of the Streetscape Plan.**

### Community Meeting and Gathering Spaces

- Deliver a new town square at the corner of Roberts Ave and Ward Street.
- Create shared space (pedestrian priority) on Roberts Ave between Darlot and Ward Streets.
- Utilise laneways for street art, greenery and gathering opportunities.
- Devise and implement public realm improvements
- Investigate potential for town plaza at Ward Street car park and Town Hall car park.

### Safety and Walkability

- Investigate intersection improvements to encourage safer pedestrian crossings.
- Consider raised mid-block pedestrian crossings
- Upgrade footpaths to consistent material and aesthetic to aid legibility
- Manage CAD parking time restrictions to encourage parking in peripheral areas in order to increase foot traffic in the CAD
- Identify key cycle routes for the CAD that connect legibly with a broader network of paths

throughout Horsham.

- Consider covered walkways and incentives to encourage people to park on the outer of the CAD and walk to work
- Create a network of generous protected on-street bike lanes provided between the kerb and the parking lane to encourage more cyclists.

### Trees, shade and shelter

- Increase tree planting and landscaping in streets, medians and car parking areas
- Provide more shade and shelter across the CAD
- Implement low water-use street trees and landscaping elements
- Improve amenity by increasing shade through street planting, and reinstated verandahs

### Increased amenity for locals and visitors

- Pedestrianise Roberts Ave between Ward and Firebrace Streets to make way for a hospitality precinct
- Improve signage and wayfinding
- Upgrade major town entrances
- Utilise public art for activation and enhancing public spaces
- Provide free WiFi across the CAD

## 3 | URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

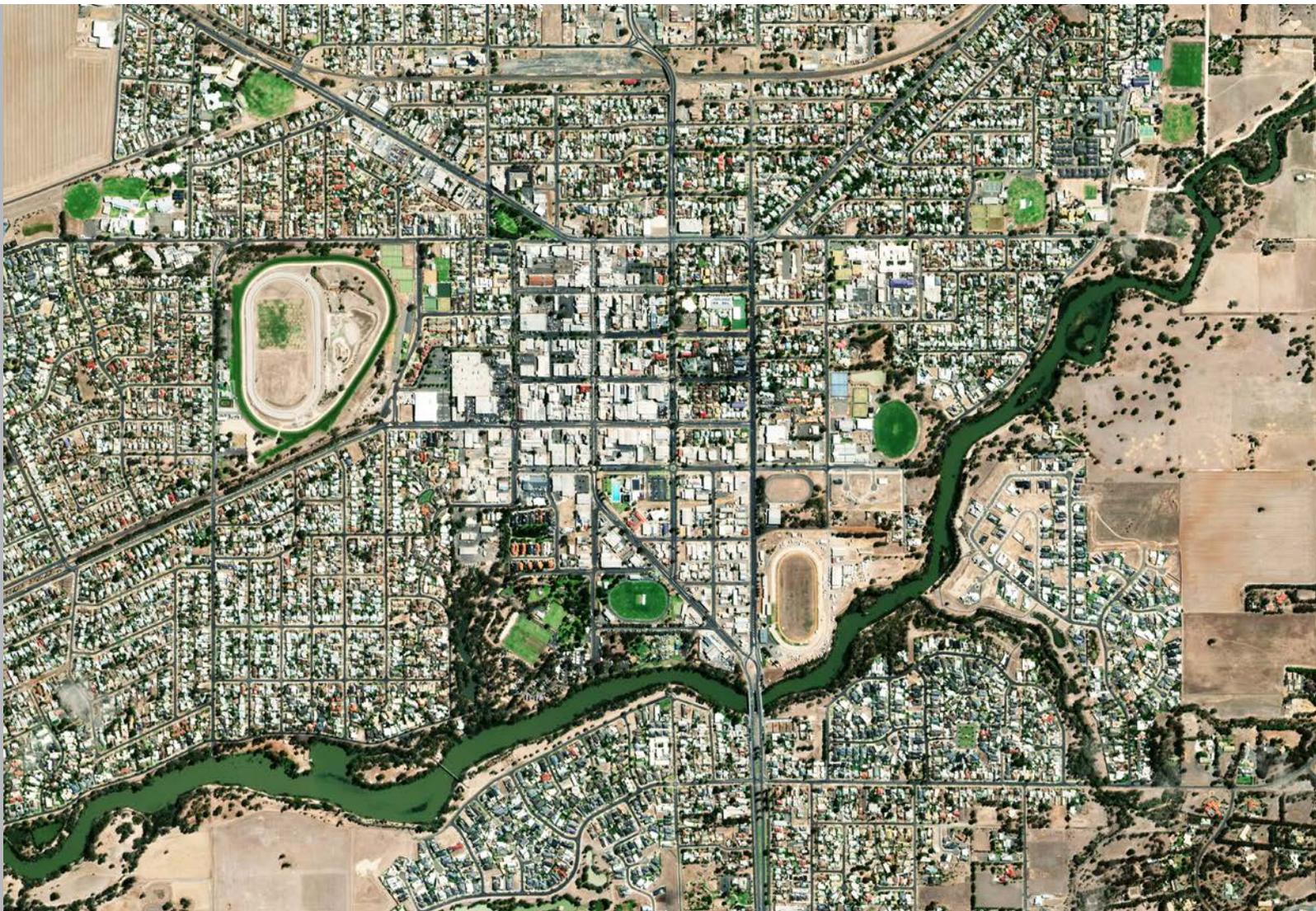
### Planning Framework

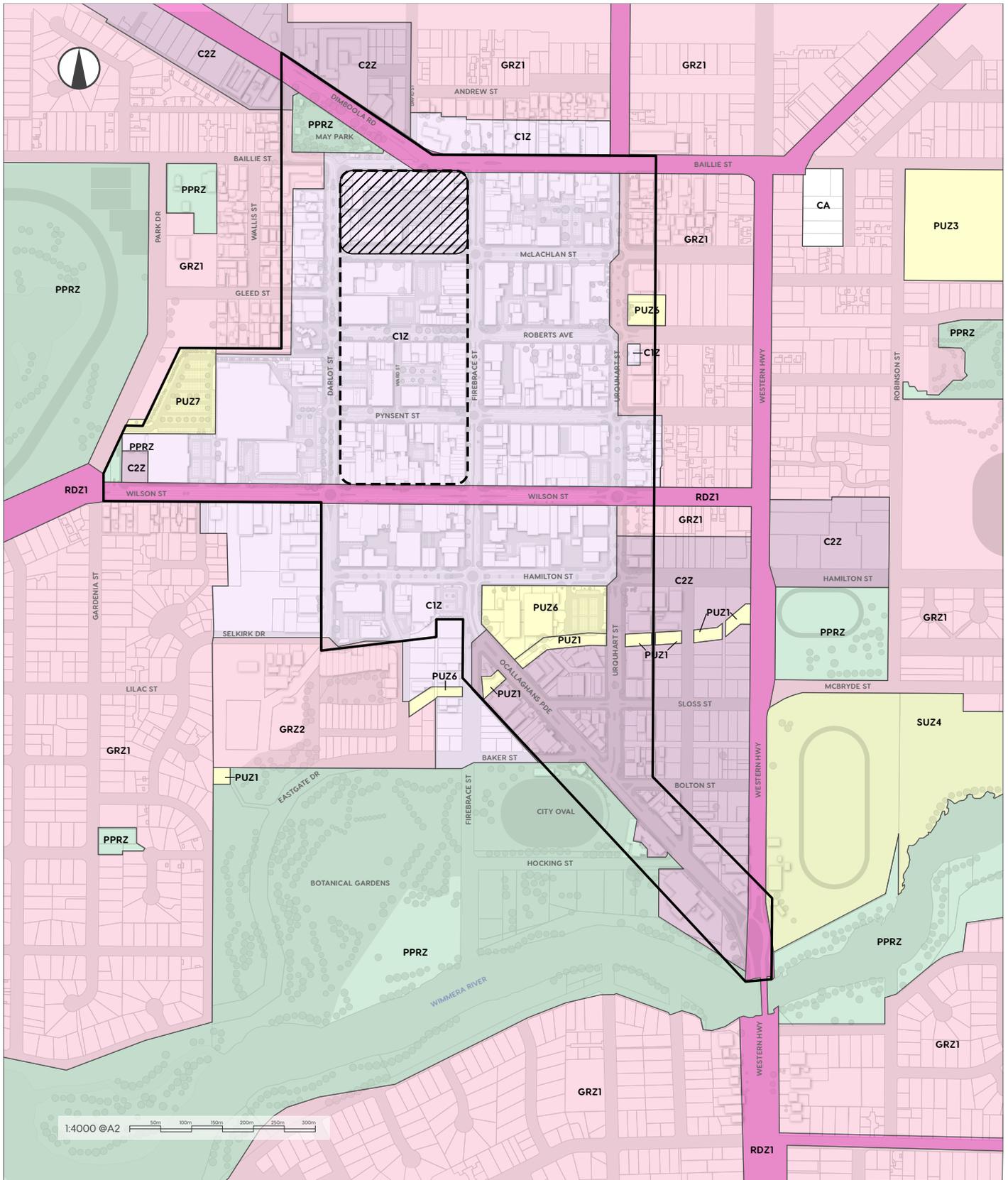
Most of the Study Area is zoned Commercial 1 Zone with smaller areas of General Residential Zone on the east and west and small areas of Public Use Zone and Commercial 2 Zone dotted in the southern and western parts of the Study Area.

There are three Design and Development Overlays throughout the Study Area, the most relevant of which is the one that defines an Urban Conservation Precinct (DD05) to conserve and enhance within the Town Centre Core. Additionally, DDO9 seeks to minimise the risk associated with stormwater flooding in the southern part of the Study Area.

Council's Heritage Study recognises the historic, social and architectural significance of Firebrace Street as well as sections of Wilson and Pynsent Streets. Council is investigating heritage controls to protect the character and intactness of commercial heritage buildings within the CAD extent. This will also ensure new buildings and modifications to existing buildings are mindful and sympathetic to heritage values.

There are also a number of building already protected under the heritage overlay within the CAD extent





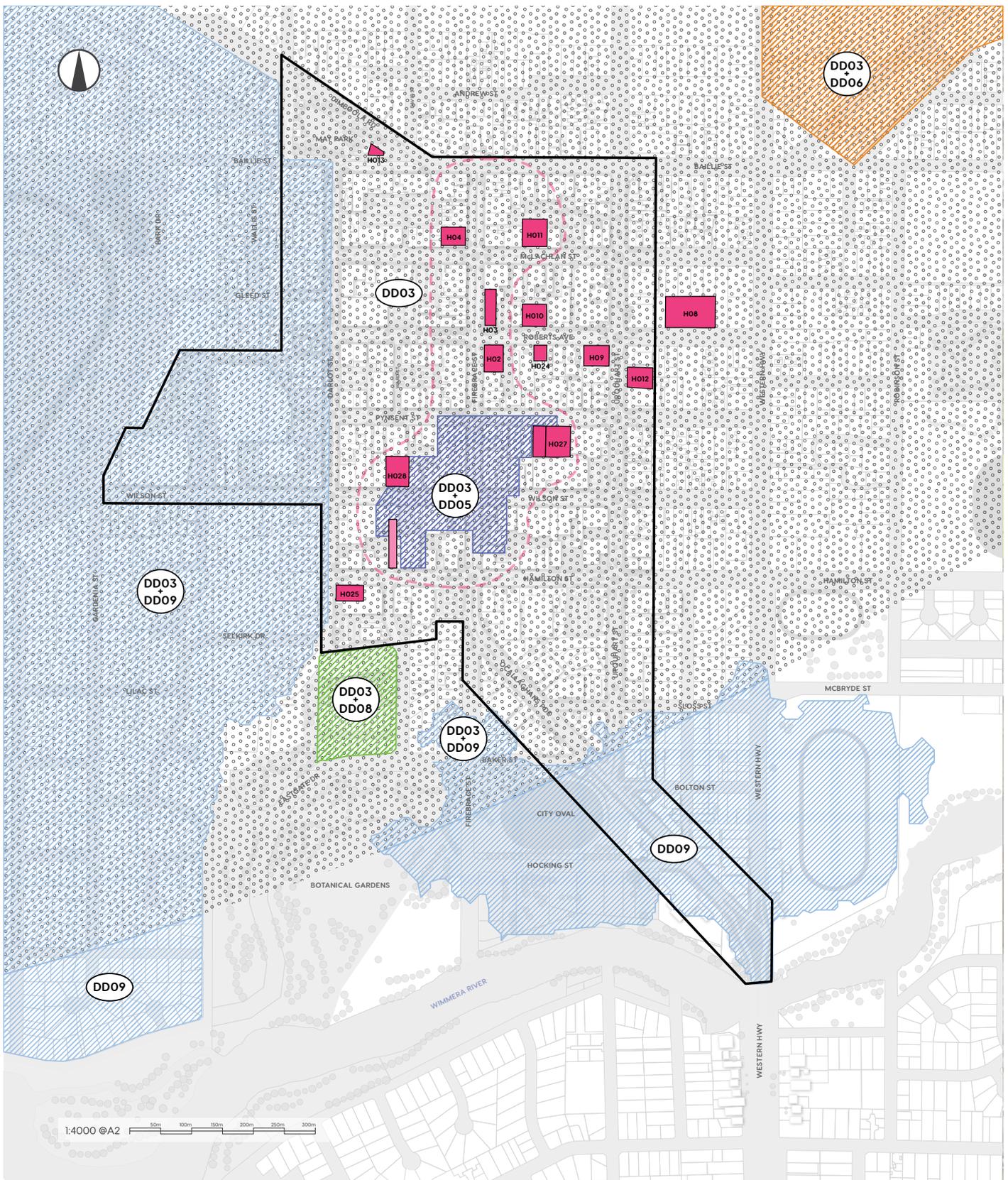
- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f08080; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> GRZ1 - General Residential Zone - Schedule 1</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> PPRZ - Public Park And Recreation Zone</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #d8bfd8; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> C1Z - Commercial 1 Zone</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #c08080; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> C2Z - Commercial 2 Zone</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ff69b4; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> RDZ1 - Road Zone - Category 1</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffff00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> PUZ1 - Public Use Zone - Service and Utility</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffff00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> PUZ3 - Public Use Zone - Health and Community</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ffff00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> PUZ6 - Public Use Zone - Local Government</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> SUZ4 - Special Use Zone - Schedule 4</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> CA - Commonwealth Land not controlled by Planning Scheme</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 2px dashed black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Redevelopment encouraged (Planning Scheme 11.03-1L)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Greater intensity of development encouraged (Planning Scheme 11.03-1L)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

**Figure 2** Planning Framework - zones

## Urban Design Response

- The introduction of new heritage controls will reinforce the status of Firebrace Street, Pynsent Street and Wilson Street as the heritage core and 'character' streets of Horsham. This additional protection and enhancement could generate momentum for additional streetscape and public realm improvements that will reinforce the idea of signature streets in Horsham based on existing retail activity and heritage charm.
  - The majority of land within the CAD area is Commercial 1 Zone which gives opportunity for a broad mix of future commercial activity, and residential land use.
  - There are two large parcels zoned Public Use in the south of the CAD at the Aquatic Centre and in the west at Horsham Plaza. Both parcels currently accommodate a significant amount of parking. There may be opportunity for alternate uses in these locations if the demand arises.
  - Additionally, a drainage line running east-west south of Hamilton Street connects several city blocks and is currently unimproved. There could be opportunities to make open space and WSUD (Water sensitive urban design) improvements within this area.
  - Given that some of Horsham's most historic buildings along Firebrace Street are not part of the current DDO5 area, it is critical that Council applies heritage controls to ensure their long term protection and enhance character within the CAD.
- significant if and when the demand is there. The current planning scheme (as outlined in 11.03-1L) encourages:
- Redevelopment on McLachlan Street between Darlot Street and Firebrace Street as the preferred location for economic activity including an additional anchor store.
  - A greater intensity of development supporting mixed-use with accommodation above the ground floor.
  - Commercial development to locate in existing commercial areas as opposed to developing on the outskirts of town.
  - Redevelopment of under-utilised sites throughout the CAD, including supporting consolidation of smaller sites.
  - While Council has been focussed on its growth areas (north, south, east and west of the CAD), it is worth noting that the CAD provides significant infill development potential which would provide the additional economic benefits of further activating and consolidating Horsham's Town Centre. Although this project brief is focused on the public realm, it is worth considering development potential within the CAD.

The development potential of the CAD is



-  DD03 - Wider Airport Environs Area
  -  DD05 - Urban Conservation Precinct Horsham Central Area
  -  DD06 - Urban Conservation Precincts Horsham Residential Areas
  -  DD08 - City Gardens
-  DD09 - Stormwater Management Area
  -  Heritage Overlay
  -  Heritage Investigation Area

**Figure 3** Planning Framework - overlays

## Precincts and Key Sites

### Existing Conditions

The Central Activities District can be broken into a number of Character Precincts as shown in Figure 4.

The **Town Centre Core** (from Baille Street to Wilson Street and Darlot Street to Firebrace Street inclusive) is the core of the Central Activities District, where the streets are activated and the built form grain is fine with numerous retail tenancies and food/beverage outlets.

**Firebrace Street**, within the Town Centre Core could be considered a character precinct in itself as the bustling heart of Horsham. Roberts Ave between Firebrace Street and Darlot Street is arguably the prettiest street in Central Horsham with its wide footpaths and mature street tree canopy. The Town Centre Core is also home to the most number of heritage buildings.

The area to the east of Firebrace Street to Urquhart Street, and to the south of Wilson Street can be considered the **Town Centre Transition Zone**. There is a mix of land uses (residential, retail, civic), new and old buildings, and building sizes and floorplates. It does not have the same fine grain retail as the Town Centre Core, and the uses are more car-based than the uses in the Town Centre Core.



Roberts Ave in the Town Centre Core has benefited from a number of streetscape improvements such as this mid-block crossing and widened footpath

The **Civic Precinct** is largely located along Roberts Ave in the Town Centre Transition Zone. The buildings in the Civic Precinct, such as the Council offices and GWM Water are significantly larger floorprints than anything else in the CAD.

**O'Callaghans Parade** from the Western Highway to Hamilton Street is the Town Centre arrival corridor. With little mature tree canopy and car-based development patterns, the character this area is significantly different to the Town Centre Core.

The **Horsham Plaza Shopping Centre** sits on the western boundary of the Study Area just outside the Town Centre Core, and is the only 'Big Box' development in the CAD.

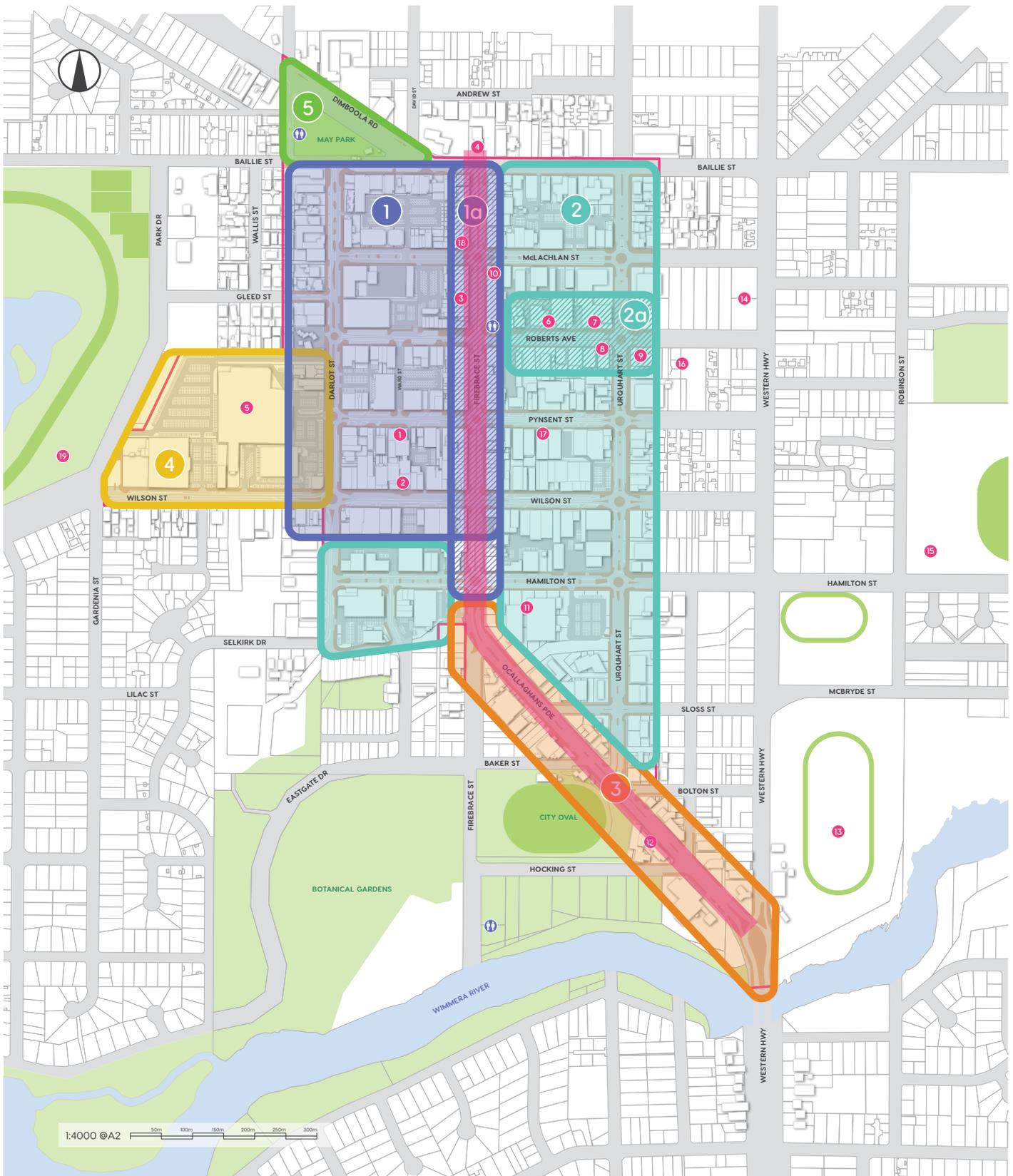
**May Park**, the CAD's only significant green space sits at the northern end of the Study Area, and contributes to the arrival experience into the CAD from the north.

**Pynsent Street** has the potential to establish itself as a food and entertainment precinct.

The **Horsham Theatre** and **Horsham Town Hall** are celebrated, historical community assets, reinforcing the heritage character and identity of Horsham.



McLachlan Street is located in the Town Centre Transition Zone where there is a mix of land uses, building size and floorplates



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 1 Town Centre Core</li> <li><span style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 1a Firebrace Street</li> <li><span style="background-color: #00a6c8; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 2 Town Centre Transition Zone</li> <li><span style="background-color: #00a6c8; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 2a Civic precinct</li> <li><span style="background-color: #ff9900; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 3 Arrival corridor</li> <li><span style="background-color: #ffcc00; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 4 Horsham Plaza</li> <li><span style="background-color: #90ee90; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 5 May Park</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Horsham Town Hall and Information Centre</li> <li>2. Horsham Regional Art Gallery</li> <li>3. Bradbury Lane Mural</li> <li>4. Anglican Parish of Horsham</li> <li>5. Horsham Plaza</li> <li>6. Police Station &amp; Magistrates' Court</li> <li>7. Horsham Rural City Council</li> <li>8. Wesley Performing Arts Centre</li> <li>9. Horsham Senior Citizens Centre</li> <li>10. Horsham Post Office</li> <li>11. Horsham Aquatic Centre</li> <li>12. Horsham Mens Shed</li> <li>13. Horsham Greyhound Racing Complex</li> <li>14. Michael &amp; John's Primary School</li> <li>15. St Brigid's College</li> <li>16. Horsham Community Childcare Centre</li> <li>17. Horsham Theatre</li> <li>18. T&amp;G Building</li> <li>19. Skate Park</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

**Figure 4** Precincts and Key Sites

## Urban Design Response

- The **Town Centre Core** is the most distinctive character area, where any future improvements stand to further strengthen it as the CAD's biggest asset. There is significant scope to improve Firebrace Street as the activity hub of the town and further cement it as the focus of the Town Centre and the 'postcard' street of Horsham.
- **O'Callaghan's Parade** is by comparison a weaker link in terms of character, sitting between the beautiful Wimmera River crossing and the Town Centre Core. Efforts to improve this stretch of road would significantly add to the charm of Horsham and draw visitors into Town.
- Improvements to **Firebrace Street** and **O'Callaghan's Parade** would create 'spine' of improvements through the town, and drastically improve the visitor experience in Horsham.
- The **Town Centre Transition Zone** would benefit from both access improvements (for bikes and pedestrians) and expanded tree canopy. The avenue of Eucalyptus trees along Urquhart Street could be further enhanced, expanded and protected in appropriately sized medians.
- **May Park** is a beautiful landmark particularly for those arriving from the north. Capitalising on that character by improving both the Park and the areas and streets immediately adjacent would further cement it as one of the Town's best open space assets.
- On a different note, improvements around the **Horsham Plaza Shopping Centre** could bring the character more into line with the immediately adjacent Town Centre Core.



Roberts Ave in the Town Centre Core has benefited from a number of streetscape improvements such as this mid-block crossing and widened footpath



McLachlan Street is located in the Town Centre Transition Zone where there is a mix of land uses, building size and floorplates



Firebrace Street in the Town Centre Core already has charm and character with its active streets and heritage buildings



As the main arrival into Horsham's Town Centre, O'Callaghans Parade could be significantly improved to create more of a grand arrival

## Public Realm and Tree Canopy

### Existing Conditions

There are a limited number of existing open spaces within the CAD. The most significant open space is May Park on the northern edge of the Study Area, however it is primarily the street rights-of-way that do and will continue to provide the bulk of the public realm in Horsham's Town Centre.

There are a number of small gathering spaces along the footpaths of the Town Centre which include a number of kerb extensions with minor amenities such as seats along Roberts Ave and the new pop-up park also along Roberts Ave. Additionally, there are a few restaurants and pubs along Firebrace Street that are utilising their footpaths for outdoor dining.

There are a significant number of existing, and mostly underutilised laneways within the blocks of the CAD, which do provide an additional off-street movement network to varying degrees.

Tree canopy is uneven across the CAD. Roberts Ave has the most mature and continuous canopy, while trees on Firebrace Street are surrounded by asphalt and are therefore smaller and under-performing. Urquhart Street is home to a row of Eucalyptus trees, many

of which are quite mature, and most of which are located in inadequately sized medians. In contrast, some streets within the CAD such as Wilson Street are almost completely devoid of street trees altogether. O'Callaghans Parade is also lacking any kind of consistent street tree canopy.

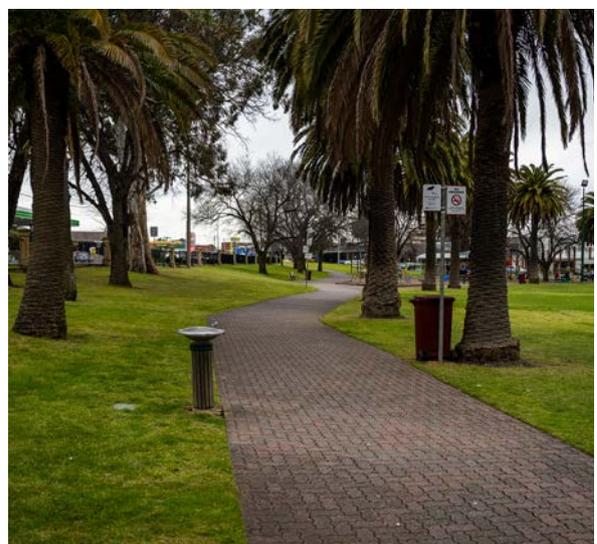
There is no existing Town Square of central gathering area in the CAD. Whilst May Park provides a substantial area of open space, it is located on the periphery of the Town Centre away from the activity of the Town Centre Core and Firebrace Street. Much of the community consultation over several years has centred on whether Horsham should have one central Town Square or a series of smaller gathering spaces.

Some streets in the CAD boast a high-quality streetscape with consistent paving, quality planting and street furniture, however this is not consistent across the CAD. Many of the streets have few or any amenities.

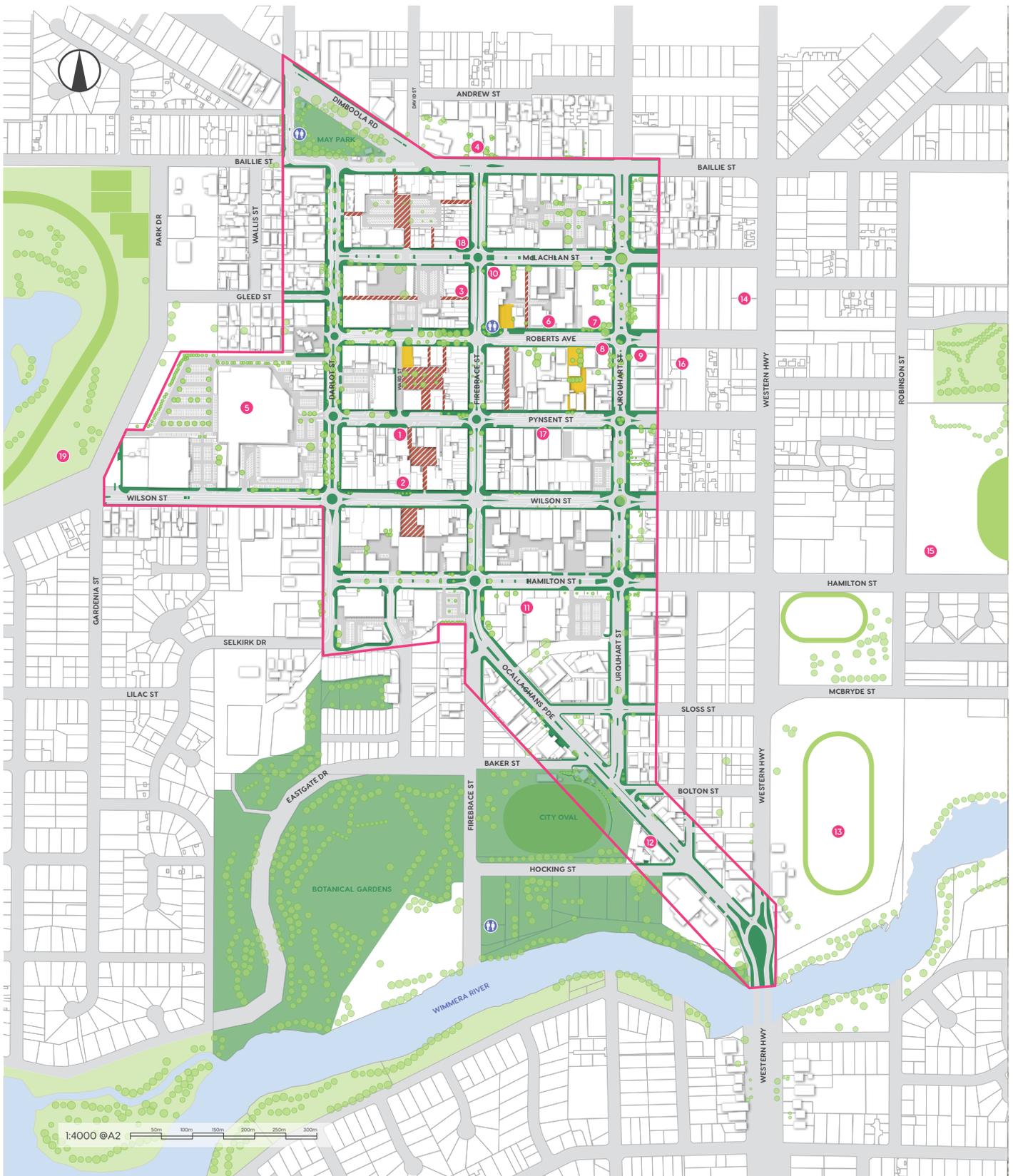
Retaining mature, established trees important for increasing overall tree canopy, which is a key objective in the Draft Street Tree Strategy.



Street trees with asphalt surround in Firebrace St



May Park is the only large public open space in the CAD, albeit on the northern edge



- Existing public parks
- Existing trees
- Existing laneway network and off-street carparks
- Opportunities for landscape improvements
- Opportunities for new public space
- ??? Opportunities for new or extended median strips to accommodate street trees and greenery.

1. Horsham Town Hall and Information Centre
2. Horsham Regional Art Gallery
3. Bradbury Lane Mural
4. Anglican Parish of Horsham
5. Horsham Plaza
6. Police Station & Magistrates' Court
7. Horsham Rural City Council
8. Wesley Performing Arts Centre
9. Horsham Senior Citizens Centre
10. Horsham Post Office
11. Horsham Aquatic Centre
12. Horsham Mens Shed
13. Horsham Greyhound Racing Complex
14. Michael & John's Primary School
15. St Brigid's College
16. Horsham Community Childcare Centre
17. Horsham Theatre
18. T&G Building
19. Skate Park

**Figure 5** Public Realm and Tree Canopy

## Urban Design Response

- There is a significant opportunity to activate and improve the existing **laneway network** to provide safe and interesting alternative routes and placemaking opportunities throughout the Town Centre. This concept appears to have considerable support from both Council staff and the community as evidenced by multiple rounds of consultation over several years. It is also supported by other programs such as Creative Horsham.
- There is a distinct need for substantially more **street tree planting** across the CAD (in footpaths, medians, and carparks) to combat the urban heat island effect and create a more comfortable climate within the CAD. While canopy on Roberts Ave, parts of Darlot Street and parts of Urquhart Street is good, the canopy in the streets across the rest of the CAD is considerably lacking. Despite Firebrace Street being home to a number of street trees they are mostly small and failing to thrive, likely due to poor root zones, compacted soil and not enough or too much water.
- Horsham's Town Centre would benefit from more **public open space**. There are currently few places for people to meet, socialise, rest and gather. This could be achieved through one main open space such as a 'Town Square' located in one of a few potential sites within the CAD. Alternatively, or in addition to, more public space could also be achieved through the creation of a series of smaller public places in the existing streets (kerb extensions and footpaths) and laneways throughout the CAD. These places could have public amenities such as seating and lighting as well as additional shade and weather protection.
- There are three **key sites** throughout the CAD that have been identified as potential public open space including a privately owned parcel on the corner of Ward Street and Roberts Ave, and two Council owned parcels on Roberts Ave east of Firebrace, one in the carpark behind the public toilets, and at the former Kindergarten site which extends through to the Old Station parcel on Pynsent Street.
- There is an opportunity to improve and add to the **streetscape amenity** throughout the CAD by making **footpath treatments** more consistent, and updating the **furniture palette** (street lights, benches, bins). These types of improvements don't need to be completed at once. Once appropriate fixtures and palettes have been selected, streetscape amenities can be added to incrementally over a period of years.



A network of laneways already exists in Horsham



Some small gathering places (both permanent and 'pop-up' like this one) already exist in widened footpaths along Robert Street



A successful example of small outdoor dining area and gathering space in Firebrace Street.



There are a number of parcels that could be considered for a large outdoor public space such as this one behind the public toilets on Roberts Ave



The privately owned vacant parcel on the corner of Ward Street and Roberts Ave has also been identified as a possible location for a larger public open space

# Streetscape Amenity

## Existing Conditions

The streetscape amenities in Horsham's CAD vary considerably. Roberts Ave and Firebrace Street have a range of public amenities including benches, bike racks, bins and drinking fountains. Other streets such as Wilson Street and Pynsent Street are mostly devoid of public amenities, high-quality paving or street trees.

Streetscape furnishings, currently limited to a few key streets is not consistent in form or colour, and not current by contemporary outdoor furnishings standards. In the same way, the street lights on Firebrace Street are neither contemporary or historical. There is also currently very limited historical interpretation through the CAD.

Many parts of the Town Centre's public realm have been recently paved with a two-tone brick paver that is practical and aesthetically pleasing. Other footpaths in the Town Centre are plain concrete.

The public toilets on Roberts Ave are said to be well-used and necessary, but in need of a renovation and modernisation.

As it stands, there is no storm water management integrated into the town's streetscapes, although efforts have been made to devise a new drought tolerant planting palette in kerb extensions outside the Town Hall.

Planting areas in the town centre are varied. Some garden areas boast exotic species while other newer areas, such as the one outside the Town Hall drought tolerant in gravel mulch.



The two-tone brick pavers are a feature of Firebrace Street

## Urban Design Response

The goal of the Streetscape Plan will be to consider the existing palette of street furnishings and materials to determine how best to utilise what exists and where to make improvements in a cost-effective and practical way.

- The two-tone **paving palette** utilised throughout parts of the town including Firebrace Street is current and effective, and should be retained and expanded throughout the Town Centre.
- The **furnishings palette** - benches, bins, lights, bike racks etc.- requires updating with an emphasis on consistency of colour and form throughout the Town Centre.
- Water sensitive urban design (**WSUD**) within the streets should be better addressed as part of any Town Centre improvements.
- The **public toilets** on Roberts Ave are a useful asset to the CAD and should be renovated and improved.
- **Bike infrastructure** such as bike racks, storage and end of trip facilities should be investigated.
- A **planting palette** suitable for Horsham's climate should be formalised and used consistently.
- Expanding the **historical interpretation** opportunities throughout the CAD would add to the Town Centre experience



Some of the existing streetscape furnishings are tired and need updating



The palette of furnishings would benefit from being updated and more consistent



The lights on Firebrace Street are not contemporary or historical



The new planting outside the Town Hall showcases a more drought tolerant palette set in gravel mulch



The current planting on Firebrace Street is attractive, but more labour intensive than other species



The public toilets on Roberts Ave need updating



There is limited bike infrastructure and few heritage markers throughout the Town Centre

## Access and Movement

### Existing Conditions

#### Traffic/road hierarchy, intersections

The majority of the streets in the Study Area are local access streets, which gives Council the discretion to redesign as appropriate. There are however two arterial roads within the Study Area which are under VicRoads jurisdiction. They are Wilson Street, and Baillie Street (Western Highway).

#### Firebrace Street

Firebrace Street is Horsham's main retail street. Currently the street is configured with a single lane in either direction, with a narrow paved median in the middle. There is angled parking on both sides of the street and what appears as a very wide bike lane in either direction. Although bike symbols have been painted on the road, the space was actually included as additional road space for reversing cars. Only about a quarter of the right-of-way is dedicated to pedestrian movement.

#### Arrival Experience

O'Callaghans Parade is the primary arrival corridor into Horsham from south of the town. Pedestrian and bicycle amenities are lacking along the length of O'Callaghans Parade- the street is without any crosswalks or dedicated bicycle lanes. There are sporadic medians.

#### Carparking

The recently adopted Parking Management Plan (June 2021) provides information around existing parking conditions and proposed changes. Key proposed changes include conversion of 1 hour parking spaces to 2 hour spaces, the establishment of a signposted 2-hour precinct, and more DDA spaces spread across the CAD in key locations. Council intends to implement and then monitor some of these changes imminently. It is unlikely that these changes will significantly affect the Streetscape Plan.

#### Pedestrian Movement - Off Street Laneway Network

Horsham has a significant off-street laneway network, some of which are improved and suitable for pedestrian thoroughfare, while others are unimproved. Community feedback garnered from multiple rounds of community consultation suggests that this network is well-used, and well-liked.

#### Pedestrian Movement - On street

An adequate pedestrian movement network of footpaths and crossings already exists in the CAD. There are many pedestrian crossings at existing intersections through the CAD. Where they don't exist, in many instances medians act as pedestrian refuges.

The Town Centre has a number of existing roundabouts which although not ideal for safe pedestrian crossing in that cars don't necessarily need to slow down, can be modified to improve safety with the use of wombat crossings (raised crossings at each leg of the roundabout). The roundabouts have actually increased public realm in the immediate surrounds with some very wide kerb extensions at several roundabouts.

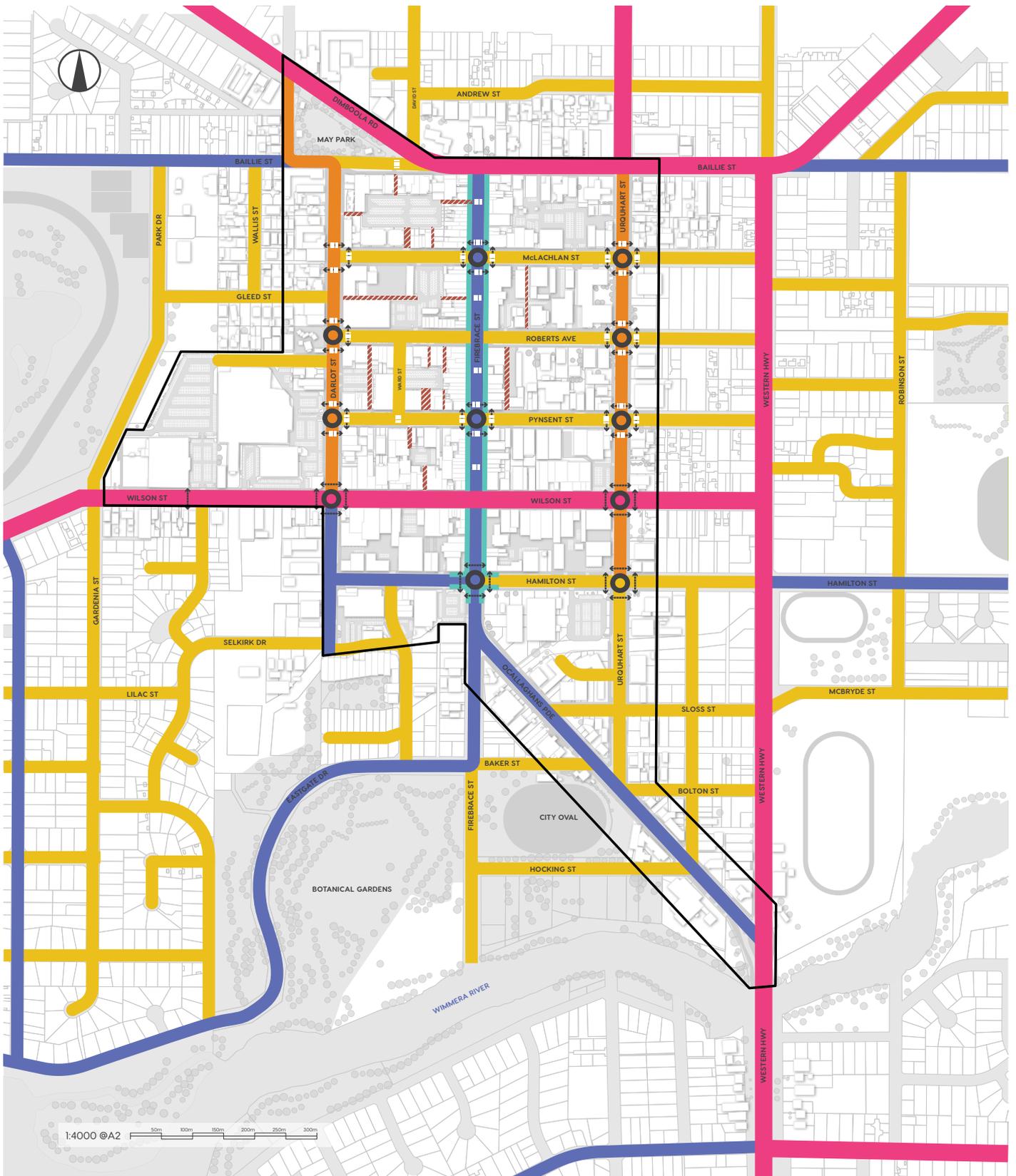
Additionally, the CAD already has a number of kerb extensions (widened footpaths) throughout and particularly at intersections which shorten pedestrian crossing distances.

#### Cycling Routes

Bicycle infrastructure is currently limited. Painted bike symbols appear on Firebrace Street and in a one other location at the roundabout at Firebrace Street and Wilson Street, but there is no overall bicycle network.

#### Connections to destinations beyond the CAD

There is also an opportunity to improve connectivity throughout the CAD to better connect destinations beyond the CAD, such as the bowls club and tennis courts. Making good pedestrian connections into and out of the CAD would further activate Horsham's Town Centre, by encouraging walking as a viable means of transport.



- Arterial Road
- Link Road
- Collector Road
- Access Road
- Bike Lane
- Existing pedestrian crossing points
- Proposed pedestrian crossing upgrades

**Figure 6** Access and Movement

### Urban Design Response

- Council intends to work with Regional Roads Victoria to make a number of **pedestrian improvements** throughout the CAD, including pedestrian priority roundabouts and mid-block crossing (as identified in Figure 6)
- There would appear to be opportunity to better utilise the **off-street laneway** network primarily for pedestrian movement. There are however some notable examples of lanes that could be used effectively as 'shared streets'. A 'shared street' is a slow street that is designed for all modes of transport including vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. **Ward Street** between Roberts Ave and Pynsent Street would be an ideal location for a shared street because of its central location between major destinations (such as the Town Hall) and the presence of cars and pedestrians because of the Town Hall carpark.
- O'Callaghans Parade, almost completely lacks any pedestrian or bicycle amenity. As the primary arrival corridor from the south, and as the location of the Horsham Aquatic Centre, better amenities should be considered as part of the Streetscape project.
- While the **two arterial roads** in the Study Area presumably function well for vehicles, on balance these streets do not have the same pedestrian or bicycle or placemaking amenity as the other streets in the CAD. Of particular interest, Wilson Street in the heart of the Town Centre, and home to many historic buildings is lacking any streetscape amenity or traffic calming, with the exception of the area immediately in front of the Art Gallery. Opportunities for improved pedestrian crossings and mid-block crossings should be considered.
- **Bike infrastructure** is generally very limited with no overall bicycle network. The bike symbols on Firebrace Street currently conflict with cars reversing out of angled parking spaces. Overall the bicycle network does not provide a safe or connected cycling experience throughout the CAD.
- **Connections beyond the CAD** such as the Bowls Club and the Tennis courts to the west of the Town Centre could be prioritised, by improving streetscape amenity to encourage pedestrian movement, e.g., safe crossings and shade.
- Identify suitable **locations for wayfinding** signage throughout the CAD



Ward Street could be an ideal location for a 'shared street'



Currently the Town Hall carpark is not directly connected to Pynsent Street because of a missing footpath on the east side of Ward Street



Firebrace Street currently has a single lane of traffic in either direction, a very narrow median and angled parking.



O'Callaghans Parade has little in the way of amenities for bikes or pedestrians



Several CAD streets including McLachlan Street have a centre aisle of parking.

## Built Form

### Existing Conditions

#### Heights

Buildings in the CAD are predominantly 1-storey with pockets of 2 storey buildings dotted throughout. 2-storey buildings are found primarily in the heritage precincts on Wilson Street and Firebrace Street where the old pubs and storefronts of early Horsham still stand. The size, bulk, materials and detail of the heritage buildings on Wilson Street give the street a permanence and grandeur that is missing from many of the other Town Centre streets where the buildings are smaller and less imposing.

Newer development has been largely single storey throughout the CAD. Within the Town Centre however, many of the contemporary storefronts have a large parapet adding scale to Firebrace Street particularly. There is one 5-storey state government office building on McLachlan Street

#### Setbacks

Throughout the Town Centre Core there is a fairly consistent zero setback which gives the CAD an urban character. Even throughout the Town Centre Transition Zone the setbacks are minimal and large setbacks rare. The lack of setbacks give Horsham an urban and permanent 'look' and 'feel', that should be reinforced through the Horsham Planning Scheme.

#### Character

The character of Horsham's Town Centre is mixed. While Wilson Street and Firebrace Street boast a number of heritage buildings, most of the buildings in the CAD are newer, built over the last several decades, and therefore there is not predominant or consistent character throughout the majority of the Town Centre.

Many of the heritage buildings have been modified over the decades, and there is several examples of pubs having had their verandahs removed. There are some preliminary efforts within Council to restore these verandahs.

#### Landmarks

The two built form landmarks that stand out in the CAD because of their height, grandeur and location are the T&G building (on the corner of Firebrace Street and McLachlan Street) & Anglican Church at the end of Firebrace Street on Baillie Street. Both buildings act as locational markers and landmark in the CAD, and views to them should be protected, framed and enhanced.

#### Vacant Parcels

There are very few vacant on-street parcels throughout the CAD with some notable exceptions such as the parcel on the corner of Ward Street and Roberts Ave.

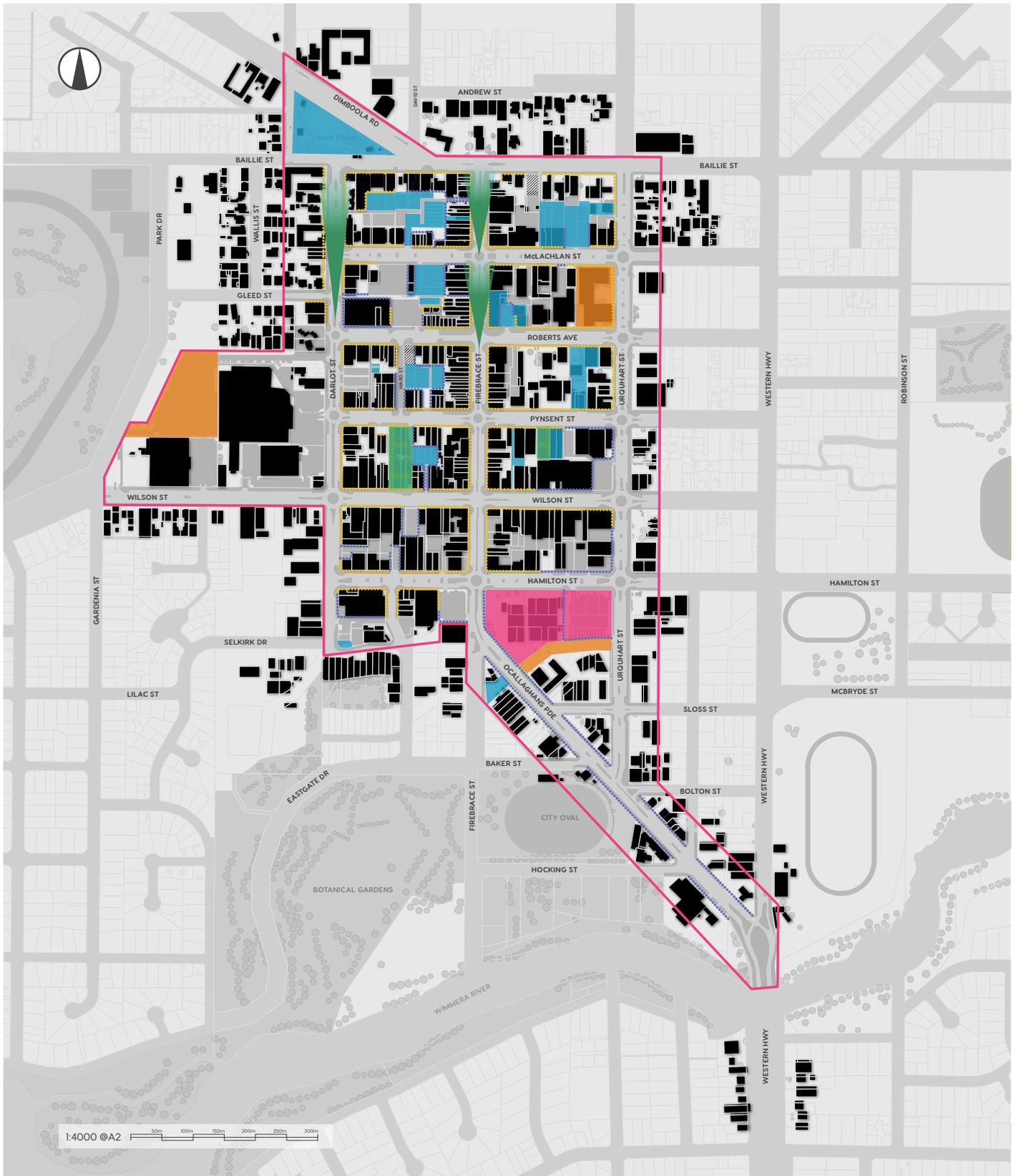
Additionally, while there are a number of carparks throughout the CAD, they are largely within the interior of the blocks and not along the street edge (with the exception of a large carparks on Wilson Street opposite the Art Gallery, on the corner of Hamilton Street and O'Callaghans Parade, and on the corner of Wilson street and Urquhart Street.) The result is that there is relative a consistent built form (although not character) throughout Horsham's Town Centre, which gives the town a feeling of prosperity and permanence

#### Active Street Frontages

Most of the streets throughout the CAD have active street frontages to varying degrees. Firebrace Street and Roberts Ave are the major retail streets with the finest grain of land use and the most activity. Active frontages are missing from the laneways (due to being at the backs of buildings) and in sections of the large-scale commercial (and car-based) blocks along Hamilton Street and O'Callaghans Parade.

#### Public Land

There are a number of publicly owned parcels throughout the CAD which are identified in Figure 7. Of note, are several of the existing internal carparks, and the large carpark behind Horsham Plaza.



- Building
- Vacant lot
- Active interfaces
- Inactive interfaces
- State listed Heritage buildings - Horsham Town Hall and Horsham Theatre
- Crown - HRCC Admin
- HRCC Freehold
- Part Crown - Part Freehold
- Viewlines to significant landmarks and heritage buildings.

**Figure 7** Built Form

### Urban Design Response

- The **scale** of the built form in Horsham is predominantly low-rise. Heights of 1- and 2-storeys are typical throughout the Town Centre.
- There are largely no **setbacks** throughout the CAD, which gives the Town an urban feel.
- Whilst there are a number of beautiful historical buildings throughout the Town Centre, there is a significant mix of old and new, but the zero setbacks and minimal vacant parcels do give the Town Centre an air of **permanence and urbanity**. Efforts should be made to guide future built form to respond to and further develop this **character** through the application of a Design Development Overlay.
- Proposed **building heights** above the typical 1- and 2-storey could and should be considered as appropriate. The Town Centre is large enough to accommodate some larger buildings, and it is the mix of old and new, big and small that gives Horsham its character.
- The **heritage buildings** of Horsham are without doubt the major built form asset of the Town Centre. All efforts should be made to maintain and restore them. Whilst an expensive proposition, reinstatement of verandahs and/or painting of façades in heritage colours would make a significant improvement to the Town Centre.
- Protection and framing of the major **landmarks and view corridors** in the CAD is important to strengthening the character of Horsham. These view corridors should be formally identified and protected.
- Investigation into possible uses for **vacant and/or publicly owned parcels** - both permanent and temporary should be considered. These parcels may offer catalytic development opportunities.
- The Horsham CAD lacks proper **built form guidance** in the form of a DDO (Design Development Overlay) in the Horsham Planning Scheme. This should be investigated by Council and implemented to provide guidance for future development.



The T&G Building is a key landmark in the Town Centre. Views to it should be identified and protected.



The majority of the CAD's built form has a zero setback alignment making the town feel quite urban



One of the many beautiful heritage buildings in Horsham Town Centre



The White Hart Hotel with its original verandahs

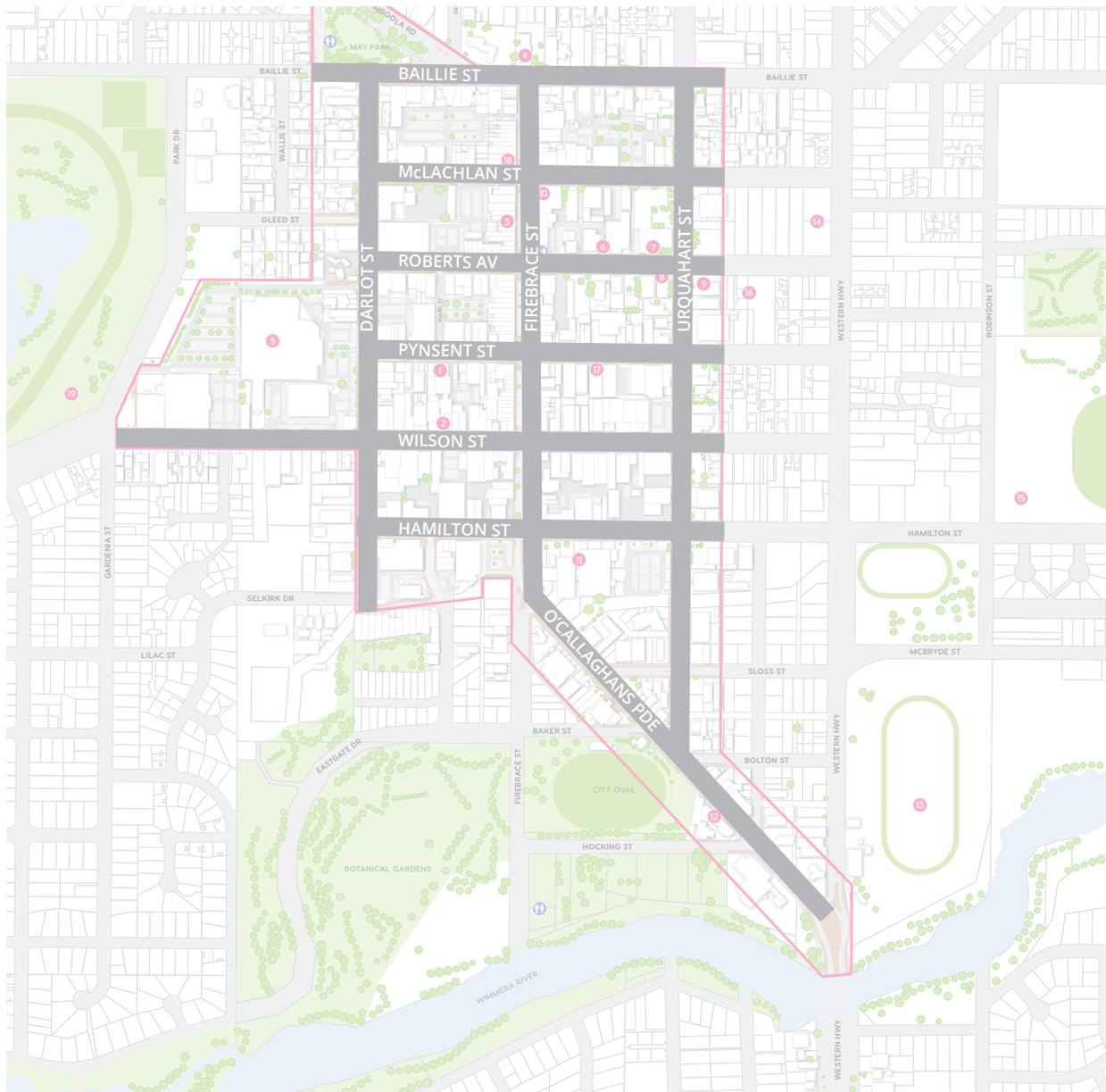


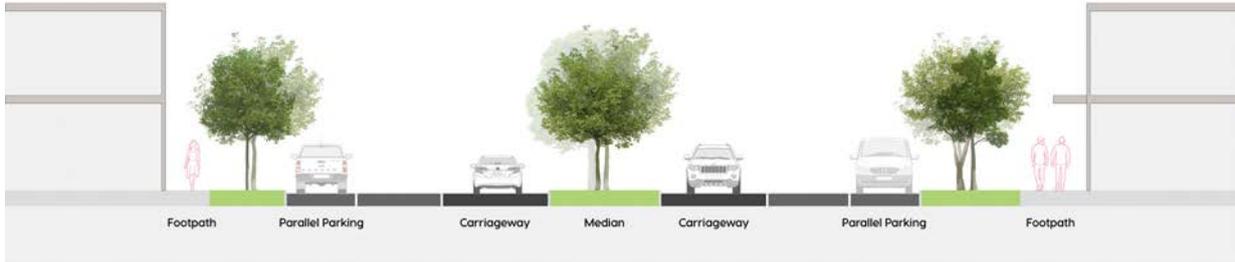
The White Hart Hotel now without verandahs

## Street Sections

### Existing Conditions

There are nine streets in the CAD area. Below is a series of cross sections that depict the current space allocation in the road way. Throughout the CAD revitalisation project, recommendations will be made to modify some of the street sections to better accommodate all users - cars, cyclists and pedestrians. There is the opportunity to improve or reconfigure a number of streets to support increased tree planting, expanded canopy and improved amenity and pedestrian conditions.





### Darlot Street

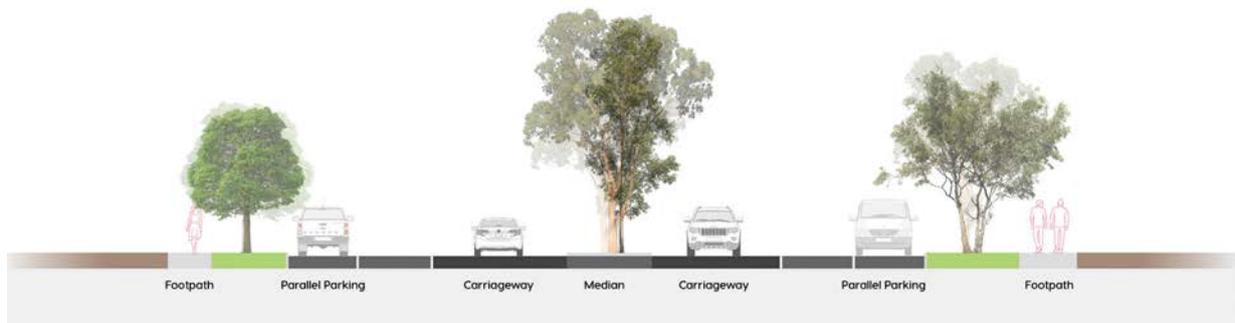
Darlot Street sits on the western edge of the Town Centre in the Town Centre Core zone. It has a consistent tree canopy both on the footpaths and in a wide central median. The western side of Darlot Street is home to Horsham Plaza Shopping Mall, therefore a significant portion of the street frontage is dedicated to car parks.



### Firebrace Street

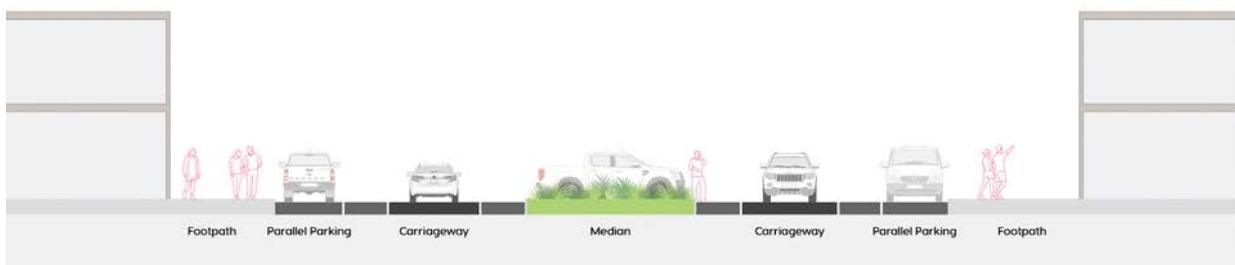
Firebrace Street is the main shopping and retail street in Horsham's Town Centre. It has a narrow central median which accommodates lightpoles, very wide bike lanes on either side of the street (which also double as reversing space from parking) and angled parking. Underperforming street trees are planted in small tree pits and surrounded by tree grilles within the parking area. There are 4m wide footpaths on both sides of the street.





### Urquhart Street

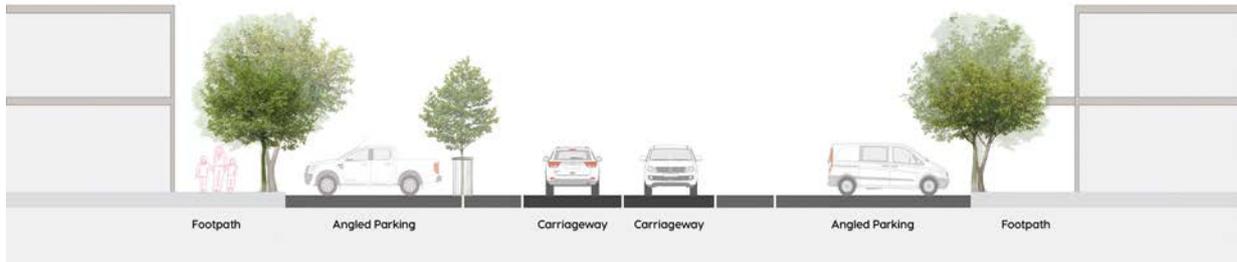
Urquhart Street lies on the eastern edge of the CAD. Just beyond the commercial area, it is one of the few streets in the Town Centre that has a somewhat consistent canopy of trees along its length and in each of its roundabouts. Primarily Eucalyptus trees, they are mostly accommodated in undersized medians. There is also significant excess right of way in this street with a large space between the parallel parking and the median.



### McLachlan Street

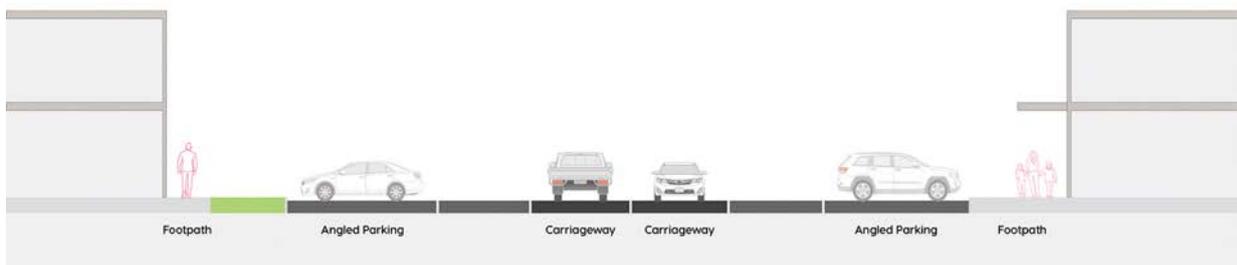
McLachlan Street is the only street in the CAD with a row of central parking, interspersed with pockets of planting and street trees. The central parking in the median in addition to parallel parking does give the street a car dominated character, despite no doubt providing significant numbers of parking spaces.





### Roberts Ave

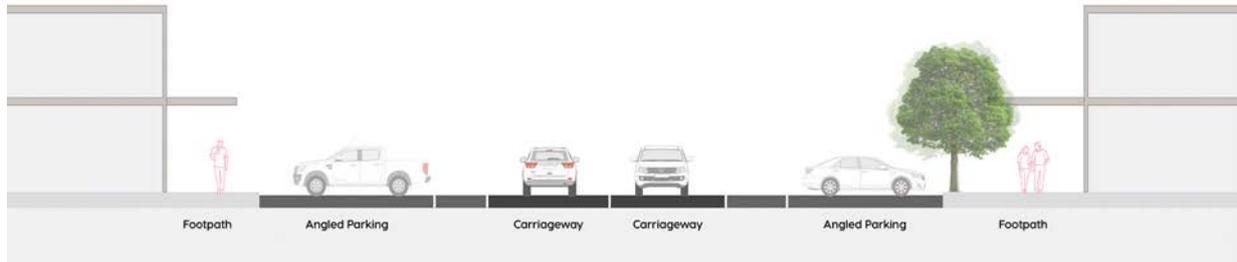
Roberts Avenue is in parts the most appealing street in the Town Centre due in part to its mature canopy and widened footpaths (between Firebrace Street and Darlot Street only). The widened footpaths are being used for small placemaking efforts. The existing kerb extensions at the roundabout with Firebrace Street have created some large public spaces on the footpath. Additionally, mid-block crossings make this street very accessible. The block between Firebrace Street and Urquhart Street however as shown in the section above has standard footpaths and significant amounts of excess right-of-way.



### Pynsent Street

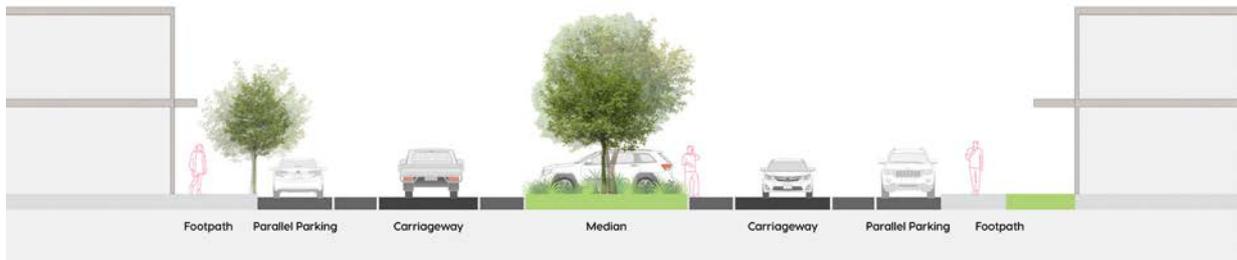
The built form in Pynsent Street is consistent, urban and largely quite appealing. Kerb extensions in some key locations near the Town Hall and at roundabouts have created some wide footpaths, some of which are being used for planting and dining. Overall Pynsent Street is missing consistent tree canopy, and once again there is significant excess right-of-way, as space has been provided for reversing out of angled parking.





### Wilson Street / Wimmera Highway

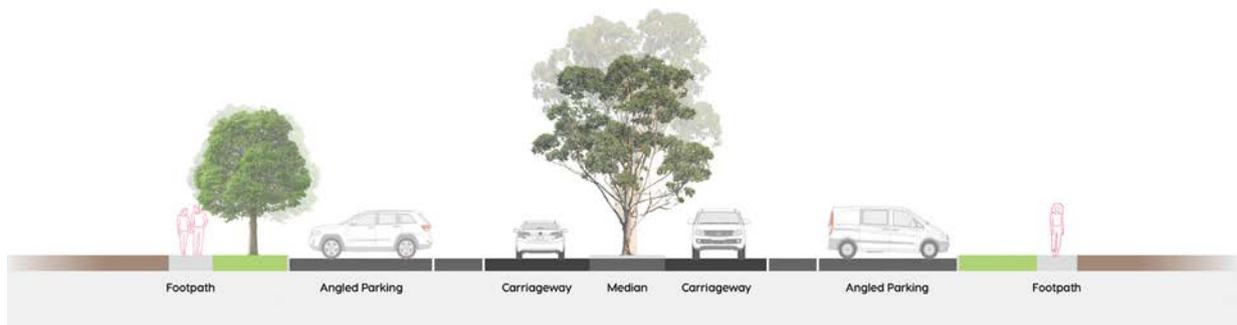
Wilson Street is home to some of the most beautiful heritage buildings in Horsham. A VicRoads road, it is lacking the streetscape amenities of many of the other streets, its canopy almost non-existent. A very successful kerb extension and planting has been added immediately out the front of the Art Gallery. With coordination with VicRoads there may be other opportunities for pedestrian amenity improvements.



### Hamilton Street

Hamilton Street is the southern most street in the CAD. Like McLachlan Street it too has a central row of parking - which although it makes the street very car-dominated, it does also provide opportunity for tree planting in appropriately sized tree pits. There have also been some recent bike lanes added at the McLachlan Street intersection.





### O'Callaghans Parade

O'Callaghans Parade is the main arrival corridor in the the CAD from the south. It too has a central median, and angled parking. As discussed previously in the report, it is lacking a consistent tree canopy, and pedestrian amenities (such as safe crossings) and bike infrastructure (such as bike lanes)



## 4 | ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Council has administered one round of broad community engagement through the Council Have Your Say website. The engagement ran for 4 weeks in September and October 2021. Participants were asked a series of questions which have been summarised in the subsequent pages in this section. Covid-19 restrictions forced Council to undertake consultation online, however more face-to-face consultation will occur later on in the CAD revitalisation process.

Additionally, a core group of Council staff - the members of the project's PCG (Project Control Group) were also asked a series of questions about their ideas for the CAD, the results are also summarised below.

The major themes stemming from both engagement processes are summarised on the opposite page.

## ENGAGEMENT MAJOR THEMES

**More canopy trees** This is the number 1 priority for improvement across the CAD, for both shade and aesthetic improvements.

**More meeting and gathering spaces** Providing more options that can support socialisation and small events. A number of people supported the idea that meeting places are prioritised over parking.

**Accessibility for all ages and abilities** Wider footpaths, and increased allocation of accessible parking bays along Firebrace Street. A clear pedestrian network that prioritises directness & interesting routes.

**Prioritise pedestrian safety** with improved crossing points, wayfinding and wider footpaths.

**A new town square and activated laneways** provide a focal point that acts as Horsham's central heart that is supported by activated laneways, pedestrian routes, shade, and cycling infrastructure.

**More outdoor dining opportunities** The footpaths can provide more opportunity for eating outside.

**Improved streetscape and and amenity** The design will have minimal adverse impact on surrounding properties.

**Reconfigure parking within the CAD** Investigate methods to increase parking efficiency in the CBD

**Improve Firebrace Street** as the main shopping street in the CAD, and the 'spine' of Horsham, connecting the CAD to the River Precinct.

## Community Engagement Summary

**Below is a summary from the results of the community-wide online engagement process administered via Council's Have your Say website in September and October 2021.**

### What do you like most about the Horsham Town Centre?

The Roberts Ave pop-up park was mentioned several times as being a favourite space, and people asked to see more of this type of streetscape. Many people appreciated the planting and greenery in the town.

The ambience of Firebrace as the main street is well-liked, and people appreciate the close proximity and selection of shops. The local feeling and small businesses are important to the character of Horsham.

Ease of parking as well as walkability were both mentioned as positive aspects of the town centre.

### What do you see as the most important thing to improve within the Horsham town centre?

The majority of people want to see public realm improvements like increased shade, better lighting, consistent pavement treatments, and more seating and greenery. More amenities like new public toilets, water fountains, and better facilities for parents were also mentioned.

Improvements to walkability and pedestrian safety were also a high priority for respondents, with wider footpaths and better crossing points requested.

Respondents also asked for more outdoor dining options and better use of laneways, as well as better use of the river-frontage.

Metered parking was also raised by many, with people requesting more free parking, or 'first hour free' like in Ballarat.

### Which streets are hard to cross and could be improved for pedestrians?

30% of respondents said that all of the roundabouts in the CAD need to be improved.

Darlot and Wilson Streets received the most

number of complaints, and mid-block crossings on Firebrace and on Pynsent in front of the town hall were requested too.

Several people also mentioned the difficulty experienced by parents with small children, the mobility impaired and the elderly.

### Where should we locate new public spaces and meeting places?

Over 40% of respondents wanted to see new public spaces in Roberts Ave, and the permanent retention of the pop-up park. The vacant lot on the corner of Ward St was noted as an opportunity, and several people raised the possibility of Roberts being pedestrianised and closed to traffic.

Pynsent Street and McLachlan Street were each raised as opportunities to increase gathering spaces.

Better utilisation of laneways and a linear park or connection through the city to the river were mentioned, as was the site of the old kindergarten.

Just under 20% wanted to see the more public spaces along the river.

### Which streets should be a priority for more shade?

All the streets in the CAD were mentioned as needing more shade, and the vast majority of respondents wanted to see more trees throughout.

Several of the large car parks were also mentioned as requiring more shade and trees.

A couple of people raised concerns about removal of parking spaces and more trees interfering with traffic flow, as well as consideration for issues such as lighting and effective tree management.

### How can we improve walking and cycling within the town centre?

The majority of respondents wanted more pedestrian crossings, especially at roundabouts, and better and wider footpaths. More shade, shelter and seating, as well as better separation from vehicles was also desired by many.

Wayfinding signage with walking time estimates was also raised as a way of improving the pedestrian environment, and prioritising pedestrians in the main street.

End of trip facilities and more bike parking was raised as a concern for cyclists, as well as adding in bike lanes on the side streets.

### Do you think there are enough (or too many) parking areas within the town centre and where could changes occur?

There was an even split of respondents who thought there were too many parking spaces in the CAD, and those who thought there were enough or too few.

There were interesting points raised around where Horsham sits with being RV and EV friendly, given the changing habits of Australian travellers and drivers.

Additionally, one resident raised the idea of a multi-storey carpark for workers in the CAD, which would free up more spaces for shoppers and visitors.

### Is there anything else you would like to say?

- Lack of street lighting makes the CAD dangerous at night
- Firebrace St needs new life breathed into it
- Go ahead with beatifying the river front and leave the main street alone.
- Problems with dog poo across the town
- An open space that is not too hot in summer
- Close Roberts Ave and add a mall with festoon lights, outdoor eating areas, a small stage for live music, area for markets/food trucks.
- A revival of Firebrace Street and a dining and

food hub able to be temporarily closed for festivals and events.

- A focus group with young people would be great.
- Incentives are needed to attract business. Empty shops harm the overall image of the town.
- A nice grassy place to have lunch
- Hopefully these or whatever improvements you intend to not impact on traders
- More green spaces in and around the CBD
- Please keep improving the entrances to the city.
- Lights need to be upgraded and maintained
- We need more bike racks as a lot of people don't have a licence
- More artwork on buildings similar to the town of Sea Lake (brightens up the town)
- More publicized location of public toilets "
- The most important thing for me is for Council to ensure the protection of the historical buildings and streets including having a heritage overlay on certain buildings, eg hotels t & g building, old police station etc
- More grasses & gardens in the CBD
- "Community vegetable Gardens in the city centre
- CAD is a dreadful acronym pretentious dismal dreary & just utterly ridiculous "
- Establish a better Visitors information centre.
- Create some spaces for people to play music in intimate environments. "
- Do not change the parking unless it is to provide more spaces. Do not put in parallel parking.
- Changes are fine as long as they do not impact businesses that have been operating for decades.

## Council Stakeholder Engagement Summary

**Below is a summary from the results of the online engagement process for the CAD project's PCG (Project Control Group) administered in October 2021.**

### **What is your favourite place in the CAD (public or private) and why?**

Roberts Ave is mentioned the most, and seems to be the most common favourite place in Horsham.

Respondents appreciate the wide footpaths, outdoor dining, canopy trees, and transport options.

May Park, the Town Hall, and the main shopping strip along Firebrace were each mentioned as well.

### **What is your least favourite place in the CAD (public or private) and why?**

Overall, Unattractive carparks were the least favourite places in the CAD. The car parks between Baillie and McLachlan and McLachlan and Roberts were both called out twice for being unsightly and run down

Wilson and Pynsent were identified as sad streets lacking in activity, and Ocallghans Parade is confusing at night and offers no sense of arrival to the town of Horsham.

The vacant lot at the corner of Ward and Roberts was also called out for being a bleak void at the heart of the town, and the Roberts Ave terminal and courts area is dysfunctional and offers a poor welcome experience.

It was also mentioned that cycling feels unsafe, pedestrian safety is a problem, and signage art and heritage interpretation is lacking or dated.

### **In your opinion, what is the main issue that would need to be addressed as part of the CAD Revitalisation Plan for you to consider the project a success?**

Improving Firebrace Street seems to be a major measure of success. Making the street appealing to both retailers and shoppers is an important consideration, as is balancing parking requirements with the need for an improved and accessible pedestrian environment.

Public realm improvements were also important, with requests for more shade, greenery, and gathering spaces.

### **Could you support a plan that included the careful removal of specific parking spaces if it meant the opportunity to expand the public realm in key locations? If not, are there any circumstances where you could support the repurposing of on-street parking spaces for other uses?**

All respondents were supportive of the selective removal of parking spaces to improve the public realm.

A few people raised some concerns about backlash from the community and the necessity of replacing removed spaces elsewhere

### **Do you see any merit in reconfiguring angled parking spaces to parallel parking spaces? Are there any specific locations where you would see this as beneficial?**

There was support for this on the east-west oriented streets, with one respondent advocating for the complete removal of parking in Roberts Ave.

Several people wanted to see angled parking removed in Firebrace Street, with one respondent was strongly against this.

It was noted that angled parking makes cycling in the CAD dangerous, as cars reverse into the current cycle lane.

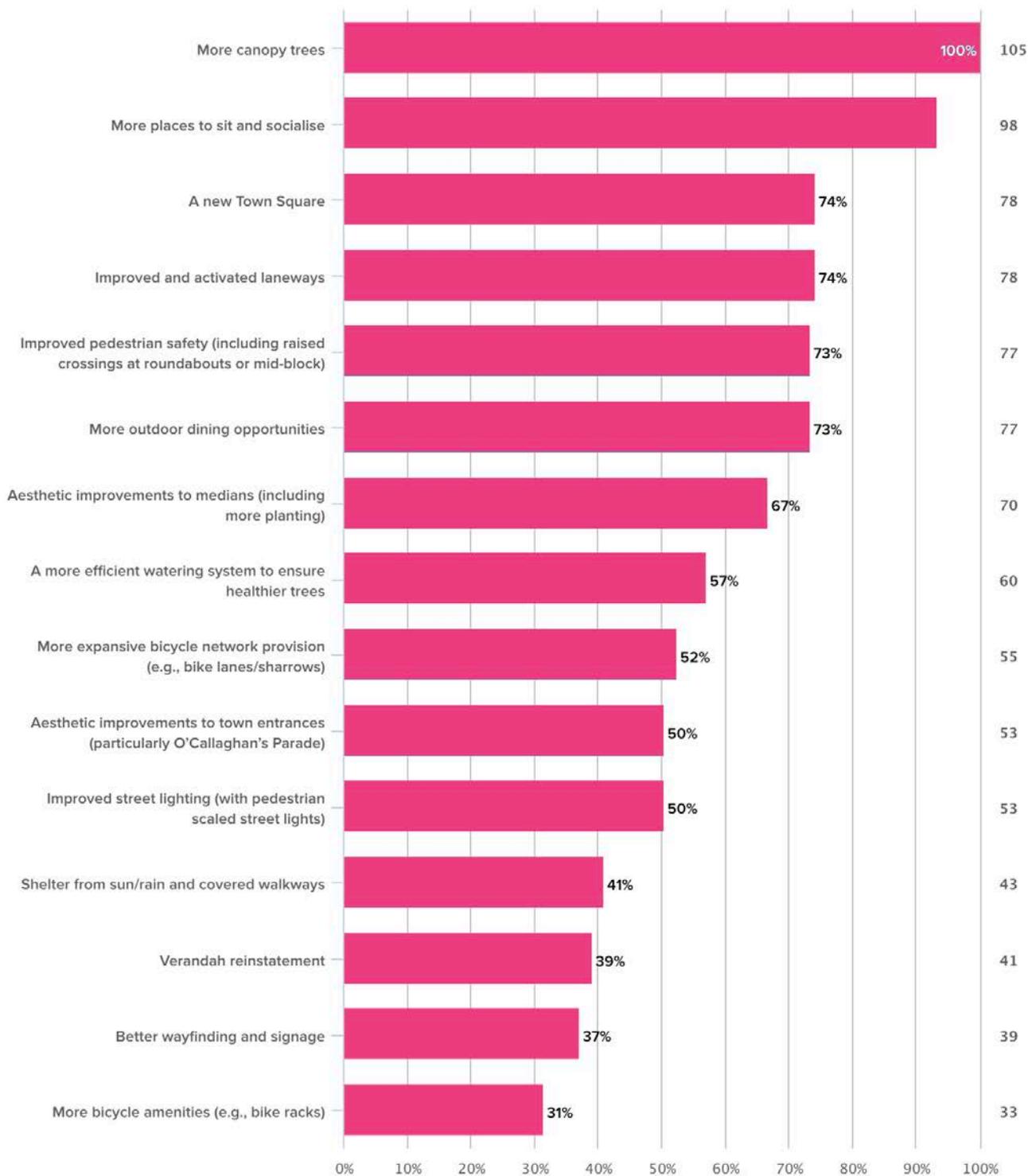
### **Rank the following in terms of priority and importance to the success of the CAD Revitalisation Plan:**

More canopy trees is the number one priority - everyone ranked this very highly, followed closely by more areas to sit and socialise.

A new town square, activated laneways, improved pedestrian safety and more outdoor dining opportunities had almost equal priority after that.

Improvements to central medians, lighting, planting, and general aesthetics were also important, for improving both the functionality and attractiveness of the CAD.

(N=8)



# 5 | PRELIMINARY OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

## The Big Moves

Seven big moves have been identified to start to frame the direction and the themes of the CAD revitalisation Plan. These are preliminary in nature and designed to elicit discussion and feedback.

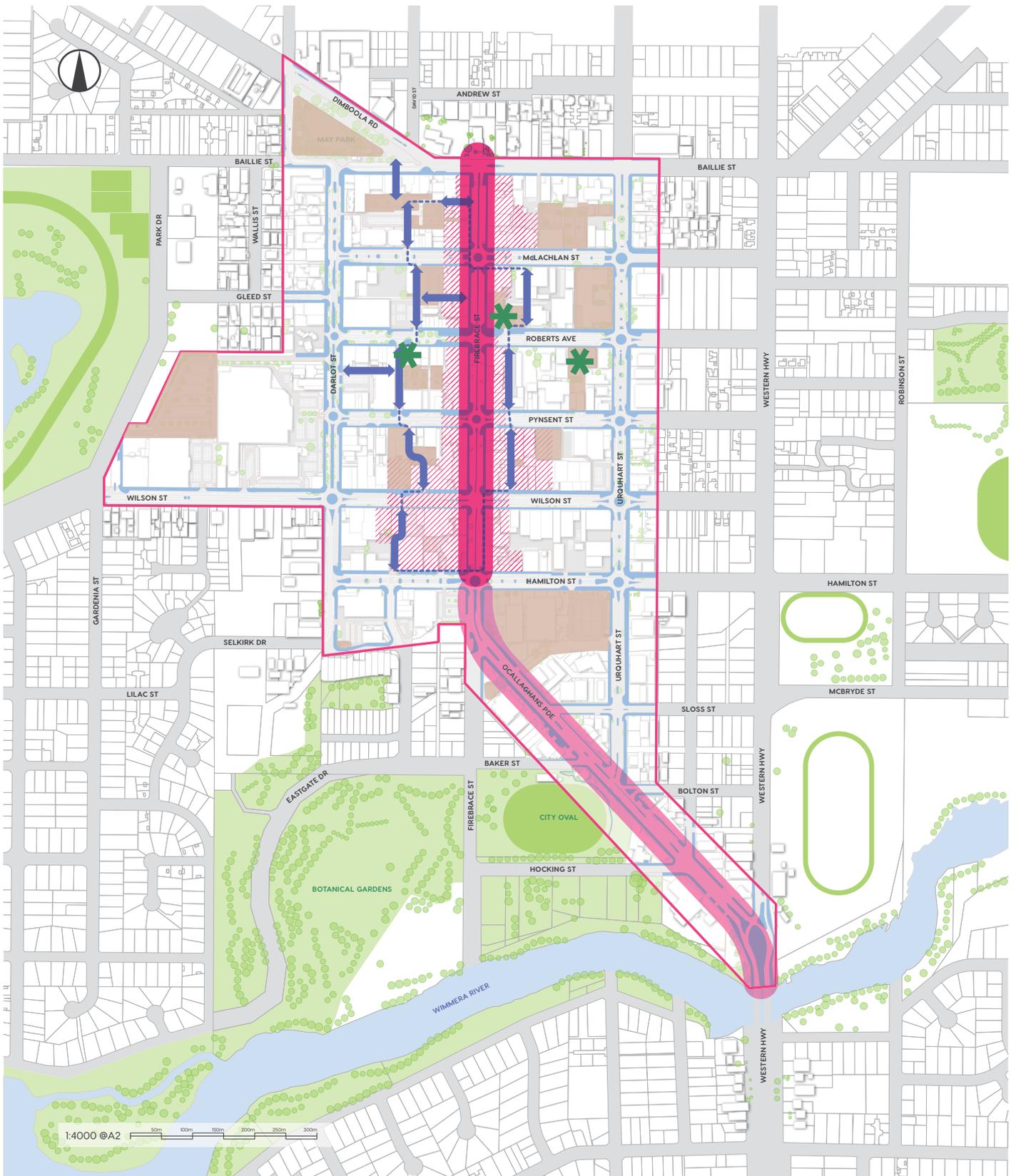
Many of these ideas have been raised previously. The intent of this Urban Design Analysis was always to build upon and add to the work that had already been done. The goal now is to get a level of agreement from Council and the community on these broad directions, before developing them further and providing Council with more detailed proposals.

The outcomes of typical streetscape projects most often focus on physical changes within the public realm. Most often the proposals outlined in a Streetscape Plan are for permanent improvements, although this project will also prioritise temporary improvements designed to test and trial. Additionally, there is a desire within Council to not ignore the importance of programming spaces. There is a view that spaces will not meet their ultimate potential if programming of individual spaces is not considered during the design phase. This sentiment will be considered throughout the Streetscape project.

The preliminary big moves which are described in more detail on the following pages are:

1. Develop the off-street laneway network into a series of comfortable and interesting places that also provide a safe and convenient pedestrian network throughout the CAD
2. As the primary retail area in Horsham, prioritise Firebrace Street to become the 'postcard' street in Horsham's Town Centre, in addition to it being one of the premier places for dining, meeting and greeting.
3. Strengthen the character and identity of Horsham by promoting the heritage and telling the stories of the town and the area.
4. Improve connections between the Town Centre and broader Horsham, and make O'Callaghans Parade a suitable and fitting arrival into Horsham's Town Centre.
5. Create more outdoor places for meeting, gathering, and socialising in Horsham's Town Centre.
6. Improve the streetscapes of Horsham's Town Centre with more shade, lighting, furnishings, paving, and planting.
7. Green the Town Centre and better utilise the streets and public spaces to provide a cooler, more climate-ready urban environment.





- Firebrace - The Postcard Street
- O'Callaghans Parade - Welcome to Horsham
- Heritage Investigation Area
- Council-owned land
- Streetscape Improvements
- Laneway network / Horsham Walk
- Potential Town Square locations

## Opportunity 1:

Develop the off-street laneway network into a series of comfortable and interesting places that also provide a safe and convenient pedestrian network throughout the CAD.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

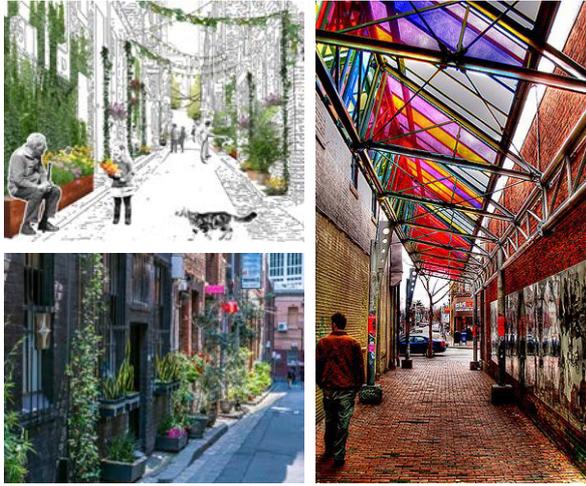
1. Integration of **public art and interpretation** opportunities within the laneways. Coordinate with **Creative Horsham** and Regional Arts Victoria to align strategies.
2. Creation of **'The Horsham Walk'** brand - a completely off-road pedestrian experience through the Town Centre.
3. Improving the **amenity** of the off-street laneway network by adding seating and lighting where appropriate.
4. Investigation of appropriate locations for a **shared street**. Ward Street between Roberts Ave and Pynsent Street has been mentioned as a possibility to better connect pedestrians between the carpark and the Town Hall (which currently provides pedestrian access on one side of the street only.)
5. Linking the laneways by safe **mid-block crossings**.
6. Investigation of **temporary re-purposing of internal carparks** for markets and events.
7. A **commitment to programming** efforts and initiatives when planning physical improvements to the public realm.
8. Consideration of the **programming implications** of laneway activation such as provision of a power source.
9. Consider **activation trials** using temporary materials such as the pop-up park on Roberts Avenue. Trials are a very effective way of determining the public level of support for an initiative without significant budget allocation.
10. Looking for opportunities to **trigger private investment** - for example an upgrade to a public laneway may be a catalyst for a cafe to add an off-street 'coffee window' accessed from the laneway.
11. Considering **redevelopment potential** of some of the Council-owned carpark sites located throughout the CAD, many of which are part of the laneway network.



Laneway art



The Horsham Walk



Improved laneway amenity



Shared street



Mid-block 'wombat' crossings



Temporary use of carpark for events

## Opportunity 2:

As the primary retail area in Horsham, prioritise Firebrace Street to become the 'postcard' street in Horsham's Town Centre, in addition to it being one of the premier places for dining, meeting and greeting.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

1. Widening the median to allow for a **grand boulevard** of trees down the middle of Firebrace Street.
2. **Widening the footpaths** in order to create more places for outdoor dining, more places to meet friends, and more places for shop owners to show their wares.
3. Ensuring an appropriate environment for **healthy tree growth** - a generous root zone in uncompacted soil with good drainage and a watering program.
4. Improved accommodation of **bikes** through better and safer connections and improved end-of-trip amenities.
5. Investigation of **new pedestrian-scaled lighting** that will help shape a Firebrace Street character. The location of lights should also be considered. The central median may be more suited to canopy trees, while lights may be better utilised to light footpaths (in addition to the roadway).
6. Further strengthening of the **furnishings and paving palette** in Firebrace Street.
7. More **mid-block crossings** to create better pedestrian movement across the street - which is good for business!
8. Further refinement of the **planting palette** suitable for the Horsham climate.



Grand Boulevard of trees



Widening footpaths for dining



Good environment for healthy tree growth



New pedestrian-scaled lights



Expanded footpaths give way to more places for people



Refined planting palette

## Opportunity 3:

Strengthen the character and identity of Horsham by promoting the heritage and telling the stories of the town and the area.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

1. Investigating **heritage controls** to ensure heritage values and character are protected and celebrated.
2. Conserving and enhancing **heritage buildings, for example painting facades of heritage** buildings consistent with their style and period or reinstating heritage features such as verandas, to strengthen and revitalise the unique historic character of the town centre.
3. Investigating how to incorporate and tell the **stories of Horsham** in the public realm and streetscape - both the indigenous history and post-settlement history through public art, wayfinding, historical markers, and QR code trails. Opportunities exist to coordinate with the Creative Horsham program.
4. Developing **advertising signage guidelines** to ensure that advertising signage is consistent and does not detract from the heritage architecture or streetscapes.
5. Commitment to a **cultural consultant** early on in a project to ensure that indigenous stories can be integrated in a meaningful and respectful way.
6. Investigation into reduction of visual intrusion such as ultimate removal of powerlines in key locations.
7. Working to integrate **Creative Horsham** ideas with the CAD Revitalisation ideas to ensure consistency and a chance to pool resources and budgets.



Bull & Mouth Hotel with verandah



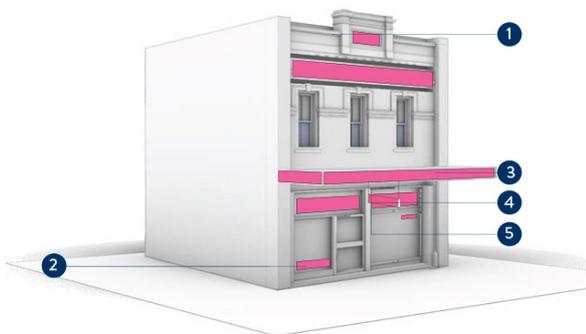
Bull & Mouth as it exists without verandah



Interpretive heritage signage or heritage trail



Aboriginal Cultural Heritage at Children's Hub



Example of advertising guidelines



Freshly painted Wimmera Shire Offices

## Opportunity 4:

# Improve connections between the Town Centre and broader Horsham, and make O'Callaghans Parade a suitable and fitting arrival into Horsham's Town Centre.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

1. Prioritising **connections to the river** from the CAD to ensure safe pedestrian and cyclist connections.
2. **Improving connections between destinations just beyond the CAD** to the CAD, such as the skate park, racecourse, tennis courts, and the bowls club. This would also involve providing bike infrastructure beyond the boundaries of the CAD such as bike loops.
3. Increasing the **canopy and tree planting** in O'Callaghans Parade median and in the nature strips on either side.
4. Referencing and carrying through the **new planting works** at the Western Highway junction through onto and along O'Callaghans Parade
5. Developing **advertising signage guidelines** to ensure that advertising signage along O'Callaghans Parade is appropriate and consistent, and that doesn't detract from the streetscape.
6. Considering a **boulevard of lights and trees** to strengthen the arrival experience into Horsham along O'Callaghans Parade and in the extension of Firebrace Street to the river.
7. Creating an **arrival feature** (piece of public art or feature tree) in the roundabout at Firebrace Street and Hamilton Street.
8. Defining **safe bicycle thoroughfares** along O'Callaghans Parade.
9. Providing safe and marked **pedestrian crossings** across O'Callaghans Parade.
10. Developing a **brand for identity and wayfinding signage**.
11. Investigating if the **drainage line** south of Hamilton Street can also be utilised as an off street open space connector.
12. Providing **wayfinding signage** at May Park and work with VicRoads/RRV to improve the pedestrian crossing to Wawunna Road, connecting with the artwork on the silos in Horsham North.



A Eucalyptus Boulevard



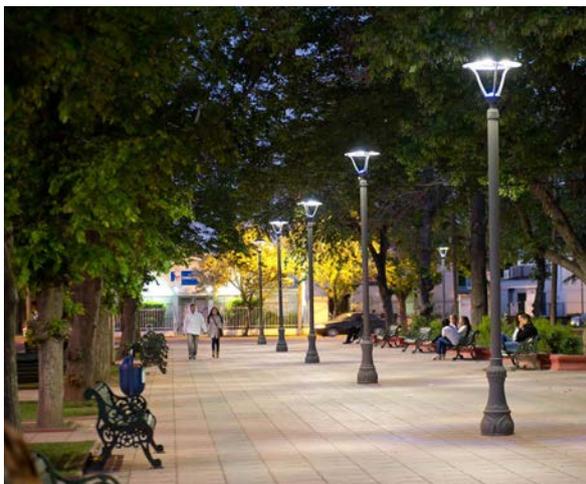
Bike infrastructure beyond the CAD



Arrival Features and lighting



Safe crossings on O'Callaghans Pde



Pedestrian-scaled lighting on street



Branded identity and wayfinding signage

## Opportunity 5:

# Create more outdoor places for meeting, gathering, and socialising in Horsham's Town Centre.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

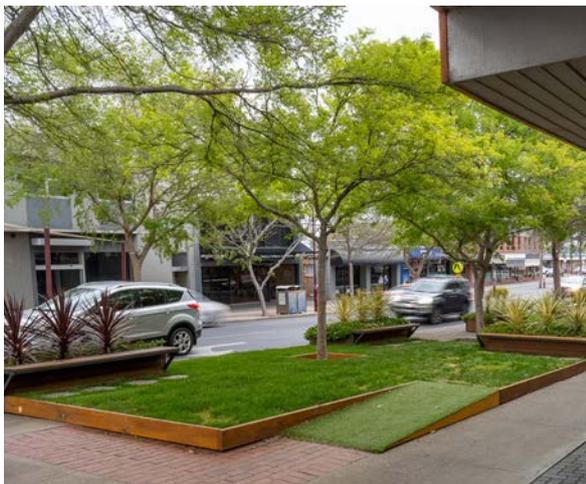
1. Investigating opportunities for **small gathering spaces** with minor amenities such as shade, seating and wayfinding signage on footpaths and in laneways. The 'Horsham Loop' could be the focus of these small public realm improvements. Since Roberts Ave has already benefited from several streetscape upgrades in previous years, now may be the opportunity to concentrate on creating small public realm improvements in footpaths and kerb extensions in other streets and particularly Firebrace Street, Pynsent Street and Wilson Street. An Outdoor (Footpath) Trading Policy will likely need to be developed.
2. Investigating potential for and community support for a **large Town Square** suitable for unprogrammed events such as eating lunch or catching up with a friend, and programmed events such as markets or outdoor movies. The Town Square could also have permanent features such as a Town Centre kids playground. A few sites have been identified as suitable - one is the vacant parcel on the corner of Roberts Ave and Ward Street (approximately 500m<sup>2</sup> and privately owned). Another site is the Council owned parcels between Roberts Ave and Pynsent Street - the site of the former kindergarten and the site called the Old Station (approximately 2500m<sup>2</sup>). A 3rd site could be being the Wimmera Shire Offices in the publicly owned carpark. It should be noted that there is very mixed support for the creation of one large Town Square with many people believing that smaller public spaces spread more evenly throughout the town would be more effective.
3. Planning for **short-term and long-term public realm improvements** in the Streetscape Plan and in the costed projects priority. Short-term projects may include temporary lighting, new banners, activation of vacant shopfronts, or more pop-up mini-park spaces such as the one on Roberts Ave which appears to have been very successful.
4. Investigate opportunities for upgrading **May Park**.
5. **Improve outdoor areas** in front of and **around key buildings** throughout the CAD.
6. **Activate public spaces through events** including music events and concerts, outdoor cinema
7. Incentivise and **promote seasonal trading events** like markets



Versatile and shaded comfortable spaces



Widening footpaths for dining



Temporary pop-up spaces



Mini-places for sitting



A formal town square



Small gathering places can be just as good as big ones

## Opportunity 6:

# Improve the streetscapes of Horsham's Town Centre with more shade, lighting, furnishings, paving, and planting.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

1. Identifying priority streets for improvements beyond Firebrace Street. Wilson Street (home to many historic buildings but lacking any streetscape amenity) and Urquhart Street (home to some significant Eucalyptus trees in poor conditions) could be prioritised.
2. Implementing the strategies put forward in the Street Tree Strategy to vastly improve the **street tree canopy** throughout the Town Centre. The recommendations in the Streetscape Plan must go further than just proposing more trees. A more nuanced strategy to plan for, cost and realise bigger tree pits with uncompromised root zones, and appropriate watering and drainage must be part of the Streetscape Plan, and reflect the sentiments of the Street Tree Strategy.
3. Investigating a more complete **lighting strategy** which may include temporary/pop up lighting (fairy lights/uplights) to activate areas at night. It may also consider new pedestrian-scaled street lights in key locations around the CAD.
4. Investigating how to incorporate the **stories of Horsham** - both the indigenous history and post-settlement history into the streetscape, and wayfinding/markers. There may be an opportunity to coordinate with the Creative Horsham program.
5. Expanding the modern two tone brick **paving palette** in the CAD to further cement the ground plane 'look and feel' of the Town Centre. The paving palette has been successfully used in many places throughout the Town Centre, and there is no reason to not continue with those materials.
6. Looking for opportunities to improve **universal access** throughout the CAD. This is challenging in some areas because of the grade changes across the CAD.
7. Investigating an updated, and contemporary **palette of furnishings** that will not only provide improved amenity through the Town Centre, but also strengthen and modernise the Horsham brand. The palette must be appropriate, affordable and available.
8. Confirming a CAD planting palette that is suitable for Horsham's climate. Currently one more decorative planting palette exists on Firebrace Street, whilst a new planting palette (drought tolerant) with gravel mulch is being trialled on Pynsent Street across from the Town Hall.



Paving Palette



Lighting



Wide footpaths for universal access



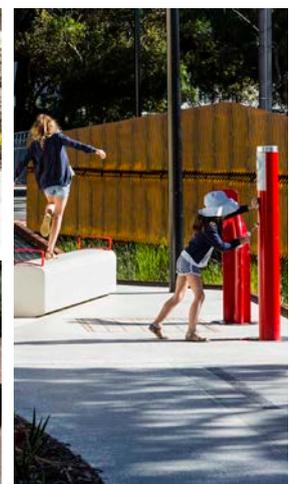
Interpretive Signage



Planting palette suitable for Horsham's climate



Refined furnishings palette



## Opportunity 7:

# Green the Town Centre and better utilise the streets and public spaces to create a cooler, more climate-ready urban environment.

### Consider the following improvement initiatives:

1. Implementing the strategies put forward in the Street Tree Strategy to vastly improve and expand the **street tree canopy** throughout the Town Centre. The recommendations in the Streetscape Plan must go further than just proposing more trees. A more nuanced strategy to plan for, cost and realise bigger tree pits with uncompromised root zones, and appropriate watering and drainage must be part of the Streetscape Plan, and reflect the sentiments of the Street Tree Strategy.
2. Expanding the **street tree canopy in not just the streets and parks of Horsham's CAD - but also the many carparks** which are currently largely devoid of trees.
3. Incorporating **Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)** and **creative stormwater management** interventions within the public realm - footpaths, roads, carparks, medians and parks. WSUD initiatives are versatile and economical in that they can be trialled in targeted locations. They are also an opportunity to combine water management with planting, greening and beautification of the Town Centre streets.
4. Committing to and implementing a '**1000 Trees for Horsham**' Campaign.
5. Confirming a CAD **planting palette** that is suitable for Horsham's climate. Currently a more decorative planting palette exists on Firebrace Street, whilst a new planting palette (drought tolerant) with gravel mulch is being trialled on Pynsent Street across from the Town Hall.
6. Possibilities to **reallocate excess road space** to provide more space for walking, cycling and green infrastructure.
7. Investigation into provision of appropriate infrastructure to ultimately support the shift to **electric vehicles**.
8. Confirmation that the paving palette is appropriate in terms of **reducing reflected heat and the urban heat island effect**.



Water Sensitive Urban Design in kerb extensions



Bio-swales/ Stormwater management in a park



Increased tree canopy in streets



Repurposing of excess roadway for public space



Shade in carparks - also incorporates stormwater management



In-street stormwater management