

POSITIONING TIMBOON & SIMPSON

(incorporating Simpson Structure Plan)

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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PART A Project Overview, Economic & Tourism Profile

1.1 Project Overview

Corangamite Shire Council has engaged Echelon Planning and Urban Enterprise to prepare a Positioning Plan for Timboon and Simpson, as well as a Structure Plan for Simpson.

This *Positioning Timboon and Simpson (incorporating the Simpson Structure Plan)* [Draft Plan] builds on an Issues and Opportunities Report that was exhibited over a four week period in February and March 2020.

The Draft Plan acknowledges that tourism and the visitor economy have been impacted over the last few months with the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent reduction in overall overseas and interstate visitors to the Great Ocean Road Region. However, the Draft Plan continues to plan for projected increase in visitation to the Region as a long-term strategic context to planning for the future of Timboon and Simpson. A projected short-term increase in the local tourist market also presents opportunity.

Furthermore, the Plan needs to consider the potential for post Covid-19 population growth and associated demand for housing in regional locations, as people from metropolitan areas of Melbourne and Geelong seek to relocate to towns within Corangamite Shire.

1.2 Strategic Context

The Great Ocean Road Region [The Region] is one of Australia's premiere iconic tourism destinations. The *Visitor and Accommodation Forecast Great Ocean Road* prepared in 2018 for DELWP, estimates the total visitation to the Region is forecast to grow by an average of 4.0% per annum to reach 8.6 million travellers by 2026-27. This includes 5.6 million day trip visitors and 3 million overnight visitors.

Economic and planning policy for the Region has historically focused on the areas along the route of the Great Ocean Road, including the scenic natural landscape encompassing the Otway Ranges to the coastline and coastal towns. More recent development and growth within the coastal zone, has highlighted its limited capacity to sustain growth and development due to environmental sensitivity on a dynamic and fragile coastline. This includes exposure to natural hazard risk (bushfire and coastal processes).

Recent State Government legislative changes include introduction of the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Bill 2019* that gives effect to the reforms outlined in the Government's *Great Ocean Road Action Plan*. Amongst other things, it will form a new principal Act that amongst other things, recognises the State significance of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes and importantly provides for the development and implementation of an overarching planning framework for the region.

Importantly, the new *Act* and *GOR Action Plan* recognise that the land and towns between the coast and Princes Highway to the north - 'the hinterland' - will play a key future role in settlement planning for the Region (including for housing and employment growth), and as a significant contributor to the regional visitor economy.

The Twelve Apostles is one of the key destinations in the region and it attracts circa two million visitors per year. This attraction is located near to the coastal town of Port Campbell in the Corangamite Shire, but this township has limited capacity for growth due to its sensitive coastal setting. The hinterland towns of Timboon and Simpson are located approximately 15km inland from the coast with direct road access, and they have been identified by Council as being well located to fulfil a supporting service role to the coastal tourist attractions in the Region

By undertaking this Project in advance of the State Government's development of the overarching framework for the GOR Region, Corangamite Shire can articulate the regional role of Timboon and Simpson and advocate for, capitalise and leverage from policy directions and investments in key worker housing and the visitor economy. Providing this certainty will guide growth in the local economy and assist in attracting public and private investment.

POSITIONING TIMBOON & SIMPSON

Tourism is a major contributor to Corangamite Shire's economic prosperity. The forecast growth in tourism will require new development and building of infrastructure to service tourism operations.

This project identifies the capacity of the hinterland towns of Timboon and Simpson to act as key service centres with facilities to cater for the growing tourism in the Region, including their role and capability to service the increasing tourism facilities along the Great Ocean Road. Further, this Project provides direction on mechanisms to capitalise on the market and the growing visitor economy within the towns themselves.

In addition to the increasing tourism role, the broader region is experiencing substantial growth and investment in the agricultural and energy sectors.

A key element of Corangamite's strong economic competitiveness is underpinned by affordable land supply that must be maintained. Pressure on housing supply, including key worker housing, requires consideration for planning for future residential and rural residential land supply and opportunities. Council is working with the Victorian Government and other councils across the region to prepare a Housing for Key Workers Strategy. This Strategy provides direction for the role Simpson may play in supply of land for delivery of worker housing in Corangamite and its key directions have informed (and are complimentary to) the actions contained within this Plan.

Positioning Timboon is at Part B of this Report.

SIMPSON STRUCTURE PLAN

The Simpson Structure Plan provides a long-term land use and development planning framework and direction for the township. The Plan provides direction on how to revitalise the township and create a viable town centre, which provides for future business opportunities and captures tourism spending. The Structure Plan also provides direction for the location of designated affordable housing and key worker accommodation in the town.

Positioning Simpson (and the Simpson Structure Plan) is at Part C of this Report.

1.3 The Process

The Project is being prepared in the following five stages:

Stage 1: Inception and Research (complete)

Stage 2: Issues and Opportunities Analysis (complete)

Stage 3: Draft Structure Plan (current)

Stage 4: Final Structure Plan

Stage 5: Implementation

1.4 Community & Stakeholder Engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement is a critical component in the development of this Project.

Stages 1 & 2: Consultation on Issues and Opportunities

Within Stages 1 and 2, Echelon Planning and Urban Enterprise prepared background technical analysis to inform an *Issues and Opportunities Report*. This included targeted stakeholder engagement with Council, agencies, authorities and local stakeholders involved in tourism, business, real estate and land management.

Consultation on the Issues and Opportunities Report was the first of the two phases of community and stakeholder engagement in relation to this project. Consultation on that report commenced on 17 February 2020 and ended on Friday 13 March, and included:

- Two drop-in-sessions held on 6 March 2020 in Simpson, and 7 March 2020 in Timboon between 2.30pm and 7.30pm. The sessions were held at the Simpson Bowls Club and Timboon Senior Citizens Club respectively. A Council officer and member of the consultant team were available at both sessions to discuss the project. There were 55 recorded attendances including 38 in Timboon and 17 in Simpson.
- Webpage uploaded to Council's website containing information about the project, details of consultation and links to the document.
- Online survey on Council's webpage.

- Hard copies of documents available at Council Customer Service centres and in businesses within the individual towns.
- Information on Council's Facebook page.
- The Standard published an article on 23 February 2020 announcing the project and inviting feedback on issues and opportunities consultation.

In total, 23 written submissions were received by Council. Of these, eight were from Simpson residents, 10 from Timboon residents, three 'other' residential locations and one each from Wannon Water and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

A summary of the feedback can be found at Appendix 1.

Stage 3: Consultation on Draft Plan

This *Draft Plan* provides the second opportunity for the community to have their say in the development of the Plan.

1.5 Corangamite

Simpson and Timboon are located in the coastal hinterland of Corangamite Shire, approximately 2.5 hours drive south-west of Melbourne – refer to Figure 1. The name ‘Corangamite’ is said to be derived from the local aboriginal word for ‘bitter’ or ‘salt water’.

Part of the Great Ocean Road Region, the Shire shares municipal boundaries with Moyne to the west, Pyrenees Shire, Golden Plains Shire and Ararat Rural City to the north, and Colac Otway to the east. To the south is the Bass Strait coastline.

The region is a highly popular tourist destination, with the coastal area known as the ‘Shipwreck Coast’ and renowned for the Great Ocean Road that runs along the cliff-tops and the waterfront, linking towns such as Port Campbell and Princetown, with spectacular natural features including the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge amongst others. The Otway Ranges and undulating agricultural land frames the hinterland of the coast.

The Hamilton Highway and Princes Highway provide east-west connectivity through the Shire linking to Melbourne and Geelong to the east, and Warrnambool and Adelaide to the west. Secondary connector roads run north-south linking the main town of Camperdown and the highways to the coast, and volcanic plains, craters and lakes in the north of the Shire.



Figure 1. Regional Context Plan

1.6 Tourism Profile

VISITATION

It is estimated that the Great Ocean Road Region attracted 5.8 million visitor trips in 2016-17, of which 3.5 million were day trip visitors and 2.3 million were overnight visitors. Visitation is expected to grow strongly by 2026-27, with an additional 2.8 million trips taking total visitation to 8.6 million. Visitor nights in the region are also expected to increase by 2.3 million to 9.3 million by 2026-27 (Deloitte).

According to Parks Victoria, visitation for the 12 Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge grew from 1.8 million to 2.1 million between 2016 and 2018.

Visitors to the 12 Apostles account for over 35% of visitor trips to the Great Ocean Road region.



Image 1. Great Ocean Walk



Image 2. Great Ocean Road & Twelve Apostles

VISITOR PROFILE

The National Visitor Survey (NVS) and International Visitor Survey (IVS) data published by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) provide data on the visitor market to the Great Ocean Road region, and more specifically to the Corangamite South region which includes Timboon and Simpson. Some of the key findings from the 2019 Survey are set out as follows:

Purpose of Visit

The majority of visitors to Corangamite South are visiting for a holiday, including 70% of domestic overnight visitors, 97% of international visitors and 78% of daytrip visitors.

Holiday visitors typically require commercial accommodation rather than private accommodation. It is therefore critical there is an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation to cater to needs of this market.

TRAVEL PARTY

The profile of domestic overnight visitors to Corangamite South generally aligns to that of the Region consisting of adult couples, family groups, friends and relatives and lone travellers.

These visitor types have different accommodation requirements. The international market is characterised primarily by adult couples and lone travellers.

TRANSPORT

The overwhelming majority of overnight visitors are self-drive visitors. There is a greater potential to attract self-drive visitors to extend their stay and increase their exploration of the hinterland region.

There has also been strong growth in the number of self-drive international visitors to the GORR over the past 5 years providing increased opportunity for the hinterland to capture these visitors and drive growth in the local tourism economy.



Image 3. Sow & Piglets Brewery, Port Campbell



Image 4. Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre

TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

AIRBNB

Across the Shire there are approximately 204 active rentals, the majority of which are entire homes. For comparison, over 45% of active rentals in Corangamite Shire are located in Port Campbell. There are also approximately 21 active Airbnb rentals in and around Timboon and four in Simpson.

72% of rentals are available full time in Port Campbell and 63% are available full time in Timboon. Short stay accommodation therefore provides the majority of accommodation supply to the visitor market in Timboon.

Accommodation Performance

Historically, hotels attracted a room rate of \$175 per night and occupancy of 64%, whilst holiday parks attracted 47% occupancy at \$130 per night.

AirDNA data suggests Airbnb occupancy in Corangamite Shire is at 53%, with an average annual cost per room night of \$206. This is likely to be higher toward the coast.

A forecast of room demand estimates that between an additional 3,394 to 4,458 commercial accommodation rooms are required to be delivered across the Great Ocean Road region by 2026-27 (Deloitte)

EXISTING TOURISM PRODUCT

In addition to natural attractions, Corangamite's coast and hinterland area has an established regional tourist product that Timboon and Simpson can capitalise on including:

- 12 Apostles Food Artisans Trail
- Great Ocean Walk Trail
- 12 Apostles Trail

The key features of the existing tourism product in the region are illustrated on Image 5 and 6 (overleaf).

The Hinterland region provides impetus for visitors to stay longer in the region. Further development of the tourism offer, visitor infrastructure and accommodation are required to further realise this market opportunity.



Image 5. Existing Regional Offerings- Source: Shipwreck Coast Masterplan 2015



Follow the Gourmet Trail

Open All Year

- APOSTLE WHEY CHEESE & GELATERIA
8am - 5pm daily. Weekends 10am - 5pm
- DAIRYLICIOUS FARM FUDGE
Open daily from 11am until 5pm
- GORGE CHOCOLATES
10am - 5pm daily.
- SOW & PIGLETS MICRO BREWERY
Open daily from 4pm until 10.30pm
- TIMBOON FINE ICE CREAM
11am - 5pm daily
- TIMBOON RAILWAY SHED DISTILLERY
Open daily 10am - 4:30pm
- TIMBOON CHEESERY
Home of Schulz Organic Dairy & Timboon Cheese. 11am - 4pm daily

Seasonal Openings

- 1 SOW & PIGLETS PRODUCTION BREWERY
- 2 BERRY WORLD
- 3 ALDO'S OLIVES
- 4 THE PLACE OF WONDER

These 4 other seasonal operators Artisans hours can change. See next page for listed opening times. We advise you to contact them directly regarding their hours.

Let's Get Social

- 🐦 12ApostlesFoods
 - 📷 #12asfoodies
 - 📌 /12apostlesfoodartisans
- www.visit12apostles.com.au



Total Distance

Approximately 88km
Allow around 5 hours

SEASON 2018 - 2019

The main 12 Apostles food Artisans are open 7 days a week, all year. Take our gourmet food trail and visit us on site for factory door sales and tastings. We invite you to talk to us and experience the Artisan specialities the region has to offer.

WWW.12APOSTLESFOODARTISANS.COM.AU

Image 6. 12 Apostles Food Artisans

1.7 Planned and Proposed Projects

There are a number of projects either currently in planning or proposed that will have implications on the future development and growth opportunities for the region including Simpson and Timboon. They include the following:

ENERGY PROJECTS

There are a number of major gas projects, either currently operating or proposed for further development.

- Otway Gas Plant (operating)
- Iona Gas Plant (operating)
- Beach Energy (proposed / in consultation)
- Beach Energy Enterprise Project (proposed / in consultation)
- Victorian Gas Program (current scientific research)
- Ferguson Wind Farm (in planning)

These large-scale projects create demand for extended stay accommodation for workers. Simpson is well positioned when considering locational proximity to large-scale projects and as a value proposition to facilitate the delivery of worker housing.

ACCOMMODATION & TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS

There are a series of significant accommodation development proposals along the Shipwreck Coast, which would assist in filling the gap in commercial accommodation in the region. These large-scale commercial accommodation developments are likely suited to strategic locations along the coast, with the hinterland servicing as a secondary location for accommodation development. The timing of development of major accommodation projects is uncertain. This uncertainty increases the risk of a widening gap in commercial accommodation provision, which may lead to an increase in private housing being moved to the short-term rental market, further reducing the availability of affordable residential accommodation and exacerbating issues related to housing for workers.

The Twelve Apostles Trail (Port Campbell to Timboon) project recently received State and local government funding and has the potential to provide a game changing development for the hinterland region and especially Timboon. This would assist in linking the coast to the hinterland, providing additional impetus for overnight stays, additional business development opportunities along the rail trail and opportunity for in town investment in accommodation, food and beverage and other visitor services and attractions.

PART B Positioning Timboon

2.1 Study Area: Timboon

Timboon is located approximately 217 kilometres south-west of Melbourne and is situated in a scenic landscape, amongst rolling hills and bushland. Linear urban development follows Powers Creek and the main road network that links the town to Cobden and the Princes Highway in the north, and Port Campbell to the south.

Timboon's post-European settlement history started in the 1870s within the Powers Creek valley. Low scale buildings set into the valley are secondary to canopy vegetation which is a feature of the town's character making it an attractive lifestyle residential destination.

Key businesses in the town centre include a small supermarket (IGA), multiple cafes, a pub, real estate businesses, hardware store, pharmacy and lolly shop. The town centre is well occupied and well presented and there appears to be limited availability of commercially zoned sites within the town centre either for business occupation or redevelopment. There is evidence of recent investment in commercial properties through reuse, refurbishment and/or development.

The Rail Trail connecting to Camperdown – and more recently obtaining State funding to connect to Port Campbell- runs through the town centre, and along with recent streetscape upgrades and pedestrianisation of the town centre, presents a very attractive townscape and visitor destination. This includes the whiskey distillery and ice creamery that are located around a naturally vegetated amphitheatre / open space setting to the west of the town centre, providing a hub of tourist activity. This area likely

presents further scope for tourism related activities.

Timboon Toybox apartments provides a contemporary example of quality self-contained accommodation in the town centre, providing two recently refurbished self-contained units that overlook Powers Creek. Apart from the pub there appears to be a lack of night time dining options in town.

The business precinct located on Bailey Street within the Mixed-Use Zone appears to be well occupied and includes population service businesses including mechanics, car dealerships, petrol station and car wash.

The town serves as a secondary health, education and employment centre to Cobden and Port Campbell, and includes outside of the town centre:

- P-12 School (primary and secondary)
- Hospital (Timboon and District Healthcare Service)
- Golf Course
- Indoor Sports Centre (including basketball/netball courts, gym)

Council's recent purchase of a site in Timboon provides a significant potential opportunity to address some of the issues in the region related to worker accommodation, rental housing and commercial accommodation. As part of Council's upcoming strategic investigation of the site near the landfill, the LDRZ will be reviewed for GRZ following a buffer distance assessment associated with the Council operated Waste Transfer Station.



Image 7. Timboon to Camperdown Trail



Image 8. Timboon Ice Creamery



Image 9. Timboon Distillery



Image 10. Powers Creek Reserve Natural Amphitheatre

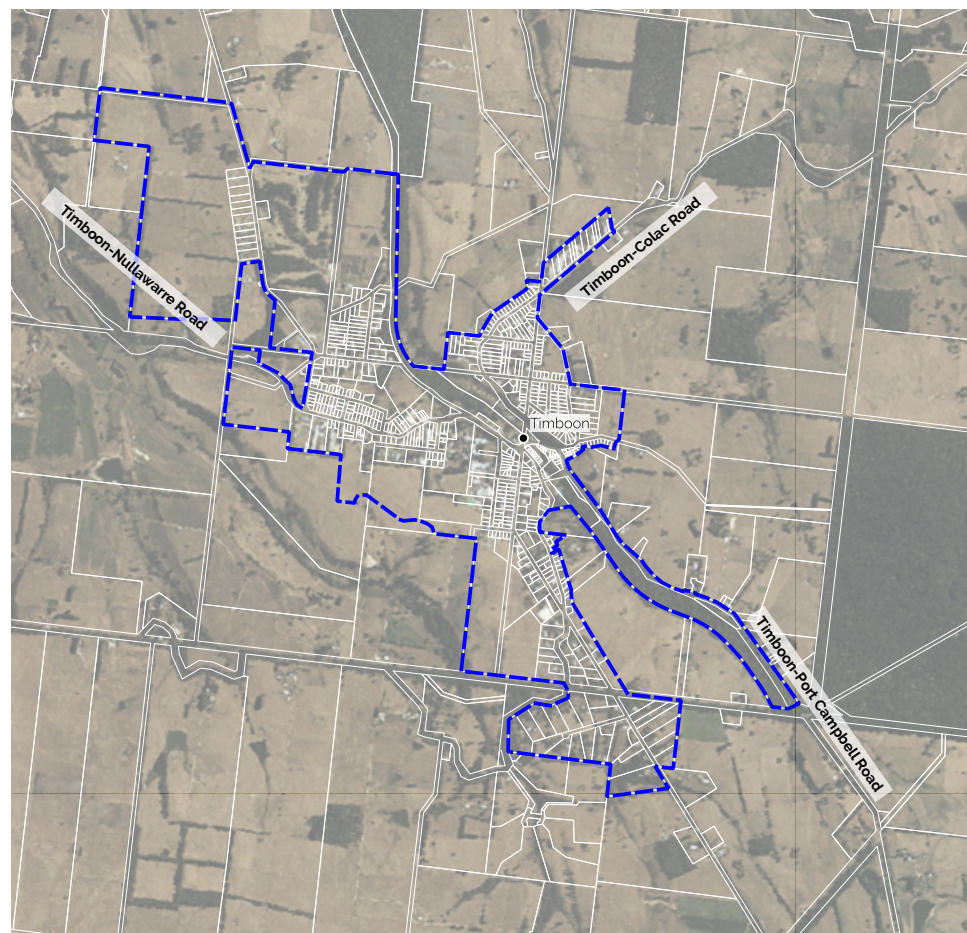


Figure 2. Timboon existing settlement

2.2 Positioning Timboon

FUTURE TOWN ROLE

There is significant opportunity to further develop Timboon as the tourism hub of the hinterland, capitalising on the existing mix of tourism product and experiences, the growing overnight and daytrip visitor market and the increasing number of self-drive visitors.

Timboon is well positioned to capitalise on its role as a lifestyle residential destination and hinterland visitor hub. Timboon is strategically located a short 15-minute drive from Port Campbell. The increasing pressure placed on development in Port Campbell makes Timboon the ideal location as both a service town and feeder town to Port Campbell.

This includes the potential for encouraging a mix of housing opportunities to cater for residential living, lifestyle properties and affordable housing options, and post Covid-19 relocation to regional Victoria (anecdotal), along with supporting the regional visitor economy.

KEY DRIVERS OF OPPORTUNITIES IN TIMBOON

- Capitalising on the growing visitor economy and Timboon's growing prominence as a visitor destination.
- Potential major tourism projects including accommodation, infrastructure and experiences which will create opportunities for Timboon.
- Current and projected skills gaps in the region, including in provision of labour to support the Accommodation and Food Services sector and the opportunity for Timboon to provide housing for these workers.
- Lifestyle amenity, natural setting and township community services as drivers for residential growth.
- Proximity to Warrnambool as a location for employment, education opportunities and provision of higher order goods and services.
- Pressure on coastal environments for increased development and spin off opportunities for Timboon.

KEY DIRECTIONS FOR POSITIONING TIMBOON

This Strategy establishes three key directions for Timboon:

TIMBOON STRATEGY 1 | Tourism hub of the hinterland

TIMBOON STRATEGY 2 | Lifestyle residential destination

TIMBOON STRATEGY 3 | Public realm improvements

Refer to Figure 4: Positioning Timboon Key Directions Map for detailed recommendations.



Timboon will be the tourism hub of the hinterland region, offering tourism product development opportunities

2.3 Timboon Strategy 1 | Tourism Hub of the Hinterland

Timboon has a strong foundation of tourism product which can be further enhanced and developed to improve the regions drawcard as a multi-night stay. Timboon has the potential to be developed as both a hub for overnight visitors as well as to service and attract touring visitors staying on the coast.

CYCLING TOURISM (SUPPORTED BY CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE)

The recently funded Port Campbell to Timboon (12 Apostles) Trail is a significant opportunity for Timboon. This is a critical project to further develop the hinterland tourism experience, increasing visitor dispersal into the hinterland region and attracting the overnight family visitor market.

Development of this trail will provide increased demand for other opportunities including commercial accommodation both on the rail trail and in Timboon (such as eco-accommodation, glamping, farm-stays, and boutique commercial accommodation, rail trail related business development (e.g. agri-tourism businesses on the trail, horse riding tours, eco-tourism development opportunities) and rail trail event opportunities.

Capitalising on cycling, exploration of further development could include exploration of new cycling product (e.g. mountain bike trails of varying difficulty) in regional bushland reserves in the Hinterland.

Cycling infrastructure including end of trip facilities

(toilets, showers and change area) and bicycle parking infrastructure at key destinations such as the Distillery and Ice Creamery and within the town centre will support cycling culture and tourism within the town.

Wayfinding signage on entry to and within Timboon, will assist cyclists to locate town centre destinations, end of trip facilities and accommodation.

FEATURE LOCAL PRODUCE / GOURMET FOOD TRAIL EXPANSION

Leveraging off Timboon's strategic advantage and association with food (Timboon Whiskey Distillery, Timboon Ice Creamery and Berry World) development of new or expanded food related tourism businesses should be encouraged. This could include developments such as a brewery, cidery, nursery and café/restaurant, wood fired pizza restaurant/cocktail bar within the town centre.

Business should be encouraged to operate longer hours to offer night time dining options. Council should investigate opportunities to streamline liquor license or other permit requirement and application processes.

Supporting existing food related tourism businesses to expand operations and offer, including hours of operation, should also be a priority of Council.

ACCOMMODATION

The visitor profile identifies the majority of holiday visitors typically require commercial accommodation, as opposed to private accommodation. It is therefore critical that there is an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation to cater to the needs of this market. Timboon has limited existing tourist accommodation including holiday homes. Of the accommodation currently offered, these are generally located within General Residential Zone or Commercial Zone land.

The local pub includes seven budget accommodation rooms at the rear of the pub at \$90 per night. The Timboon Recreation Reserve provides a free caravan parking and camping site and asks for a gold coin donation.

There is an opportunity for short-stay commercial accommodation within the town centre and likely demand for new commercial accommodation in Timboon. Key opportunities include eco-accommodation cabins, quality self-contained units, boutique commercial accommodation establishments and farm stay accommodation.

The Rural Activity Zoned (RAZ) land along the Powers Creek Reserve provides potential opportunity for eco-accommodation units, leveraging on the natural setting, walkable distance to the town centre and key tourism businesses (Timboon Ice Creamery and Whiskey Distillery) and rail trail. Berry World also offers potential

for accommodation which is supported by its RAZ zoning and existing popular tourism experience.

Building on the Timboon Toybox apartments, the Commercial 1 Zoned land between 13 and 31 Timboon- Curdievale Road offers potential for smaller scale accommodation close to the town centre. Any development of these sites should ensure dual frontage to activate and improve the appearance of the sites to the Creek valley. This area is underdeveloped with vacant sites and is within proximity to the town centre. Council should consider rezoning sites to a zone that may facilitate future tourism and accommodation opportunities such as the Comprehensive Development Zone or Rural Activity Zone (to be consistent with its existing use in the township), which in addition to land use, can incorporate design and siting objectives.

A streamlined decision making process within Council should be established to facilitate development.

Accommodation along the 12 Apostles Trail should be encouraged such as farm stay, agritourism and bed and breakfast opportunities. Action 14 of the GOR Action Plan requires scoping of a Sustainable Tourism Policy by the State government. In addition to preparation of the GOR Framework Plan, and DELWP's Strategic Agricultural Land Project (review of agricultural land which will result in possible changes to the Farming Zone provisions), Corangamite should use these opportunities to advocate for provision of growth in tourism facilities and visitor accommodation in set locations within, and outside, Timboon for this purpose.

EVENTS

There is potential for Timboon to increase the number of events held over the calendar year. The Powers Creek Reserve precinct provides opportunity to host a hallmark event for the township.

The development of the 12 Apostles Trail provides the opportunity for establishment of a cycling related event between Camperdown, Timboon and Port Campbell, with the Powers Creek Reserve providing the event hub in Timboon.

The gourmet food trail and local produce could also be featured as part of events within the town.

2.4 Timboon Strategy 2 | Lifestyle Residential Destination

The lifestyle residential market is a key buyer for housing in Timboon, which anecdotally is driving new population growth to the region. Adequate land supply opportunities should be made available to support the growth of this market, however, standard residential development also needs to be encouraged to ensure a diversity of housing types and residents to support the economy. While Simpson will be the focus for provision of worker accommodation in the Shire, provision of worker accommodation in Timboon can also act as a supplier location for tourism businesses in the region.

There is potential to investigate the Council owned site on Curdies-River Road as a development site for worker accommodation and/or a mix of accommodation types. Consideration could be given to worker accommodation, provision of smaller dwellings to cater to single person households to increase the availability of larger households to the family market and for rental accommodation, and aged care/retirement living. There is also opportunity for the establishment of pedestrian and cycling connections from this site to the Timboon-Camperdown Rail Trail/Powers Creek Reserve via Snake Track Road.

The Timboon market is a favourable investment environment due to its growing population and visitor market and favourable property investment conditions. Council's ownership of the site coupled with multiple investment drivers provide increased opportunity for Council to partner with the private sector in development of this site to achieve regional strategic objectives. Timboon offers opportunity for aged care and retirement living, leveraging off Timboon's provision

of community services and ageing regional population.

A strong theme in community consultation was residents desire to age-in-place and interest in smaller dwelling product within Timboon to support downsizing of residence.

As part of Council's upcoming strategic investigation of the site near the landfill, the LDRZ will be reviewed for General Residential Zone following a buffer distance assessment associated with the Council operated Waste Transfer Station. This is a key opportunity for Council to facilitate residential development within Timboon including the potential for affordable or key worker housing. The *Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan 2020* provides Council with a tool kit of mechanisms to facilitate and achieve such outcomes on the site.

To support Timboon as the lifestyle residential destination for this part of the municipality, Council should facilitate residential development by supporting:

- proposed rezoning of land for residential development to ensure adequate supply of land for subdivision.
- subdivision of existing Residential Zone land to enable continued land supply and the potential for a greater diversity of lot (and dwelling) sizes.
- subdivision of existing residential zoned land including the provision of larger lot sizes to provide for rural lifestyle properties.

Community feedback and strong demand for housing suggest Timboon has a strong lifestyle residential market that should be supported through provision of appropriate residential zoned land, community services and investment in family friendly services and infrastructure.



2.5 Timboon Strategy 3 | Public Realm

Council has invested in upgrading the town centre to make it more pedestrian focused. Further investment in public realm upgrades should include:

- Pathways, creek crossings and landscaping in the Powers Creek Reserve to better connect the commercial centre, provide opportunities for businesses to establish a 'frontage' to the Powers Creek Reserve and providing increased opportunity for in town walks and picnics.
- The IGA supermarket should be encouraged to redevelop or reconfigure site operations to avoid waste management and bin storage areas adjacent to the creek. As part of any redevelopment car parking to the rear of the site and adjacent to the creek should create a safe pedestrian path connecting to Main Street.
- New pedestrian connection between Whiskey Distillery and Timboon Ice Creamery to unify the precinct and improve physical visitor connections between businesses.
- Long vehicle parking options to increase capacity of the town to accommodate touring visitors (internationals and grey nomads).
- Cycling infrastructure including bicycle parking hoops should be required as part of new development, and provided at key destinations within the town.

Making public space available for business will be an important step in post Covid-19 business recovery given constraints to internal patron numbers and requirements to create social distancing. On-street dining adds to the activity and vibrancy of a town centre and should be supported throughout Timboon's commercial centre. Council can facilitate business recovery and encourage further on-street dining opportunities by waiving any permit or levy requirements.



Undertake public realm improvements to support business investment, resident attraction and increase visitation to Timboon

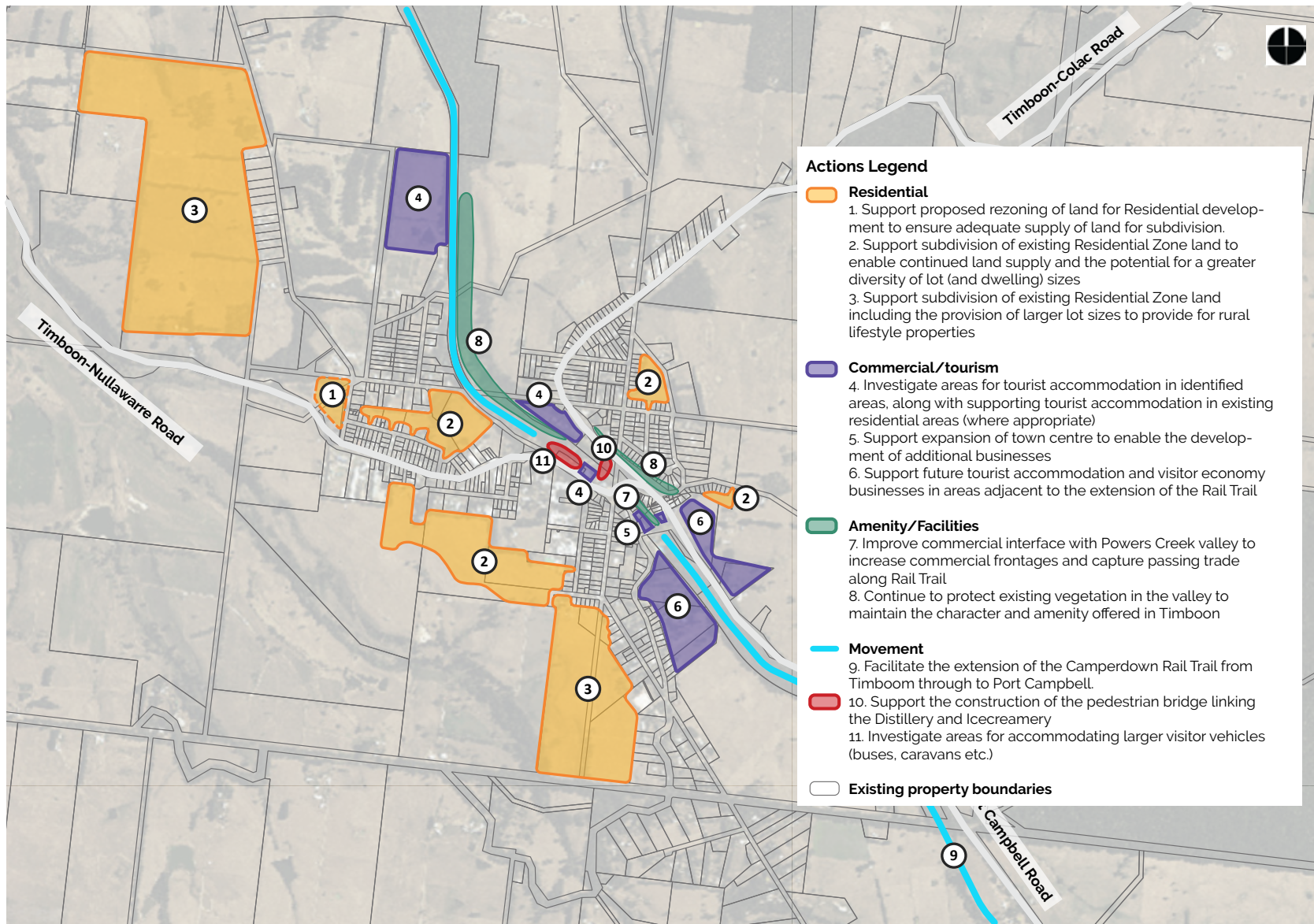


Figure 3. Timboon Positioning Strategy

PART C Positioning Simpson (& Structure Plan)

3.1 Study Area: Simpson

Simpson, established as part of the Second World War Heytesbury Settlement Scheme, is approximately 198 kilometres from Melbourne. It is a small town with a strong rural character and is surrounded by open agricultural land. Simpson sits at the junction of Lavers Hill-Cobden Road and Princetown Road.

Simpson is strategically located on one of the key inland routes to the Great Ocean Road and positioned approximately 15km from the Port Campbell coastline which includes the 12 Apostles.

The Lavers Hill - Cobden Road dissects the town and presents a wide carriageway with a takeaway store, the Heytesbury Historic Settlement Park and Recreation Oval to the east, and the remaining town centre including residential areas to the west. Jaycees Park (which comprises public toilets, playground and BBQ facilities), the Bowls Club and industrial premises sit on its western spine, with a commercial centre including a supermarket, Ball and Chain Hotel/Motel and hardware store further west of Jaycees Park. The primary school and community centre are adjacent to these businesses forming a community hub.

The residential area sits behind and to the west of the town centre with low scale detached dwellings. There is a row of dwellings adjoining the former Kraft Factory industrial land to the south-east of town.

The Recreation Reserve has a myriad of buildings hosting a range of sporting activities, recreation oval and grandstand. It hosts a gold coin donation caravan and camping area, with both powered and un-powered sites. Increasing

the visibility of the caravan and camping facility at the Recreation Reserve and highlighting the presence of the Ball and Chain Hotel-Motel should be encouraged. The proposal to re-purpose the former Kraft factory is in its infancy, however provides a major opportunity for catalyst reinvestment in Simpson, which could assist in providing new employment opportunities, act as a driver for population growth and provide other business development opportunities.

Local activity and employment are based upon the surrounding dairy industry and other farming sectors including the Heytesbury Stockfeeds. It is noted that Simpson plays an important ongoing service role for these industries in the surrounding region. A small industrial estate is located on the northern outskirts of the township.

While Simpson showed population growth between 2011 and 2016, low growth patterns in recent times may be the result of limited residential land supply amongst other factors. Sustaining continued growth in Simpson is important to support the local community and maintain services within the town.



Image 11. Simpson Takeaway



Image 12. Barramul Street Commercial Centre- General Store and Hardware Store



Image 13. Ball and Chain Hotel / Motel



Image 14. Looking west from Historic Park across Jaycees Park to Barramul Street commercial centre

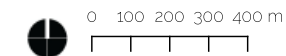


Figure 4. Simpson existing settlement

Legend

 Township boundary*

*As defined by the 2019 Rural Living Strategy



3.2 Positioning Simpson

FUTURE TOWN ROLE

Simpson's role as a small agricultural service town should continue to be supported, whilst capitalising on the growing regional visitor economy through realisation of niche tourism opportunities and incremental developments.

Simpson is positioned to incrementally capitalise on the growing regional visitor economy due to its location close to the coast, on the inland road route from the 12 Apostles to Melbourne and on the Gourmet food trail. This includes potential to attract the increasing self drive tourist by providing service station and/or other food and short stay accommodation businesses.

In addition to the increasing tourism role, the broader region is experiencing substantial growth and investment in the agricultural and energy sectors. A key element of Corangamite's strong economic competitiveness is underpinned by affordable land supply that must be maintained. Pressure on housing supply, including key worker housing, requires consideration for planning for future residential and rural residential land supply and opportunities. The Housing for Workers Project provides direction for the role Simpson may play in supply of land for delivery of worker housing in Corangamite and its key directions guide this Plan.

Simpson is well located to offer housing for nearby energy projects and to support coastal tourist developments.

KEY DRIVERS OF OPPORTUNITIES IN SIMPSON

Key drivers of opportunities in Simpson include:

- A growing regional visitor economy and Simpson's position on a key inland route to and from the 12 Apostles to Melbourne.
- Council's focus to strategically place and designate Simpson as the Shire's primary location for worker and affordable housing, catering for future coastal tourism development and nearby energy projects.
- Strategic opportunities related to the redevelopment of the former Kraft factory.
- Simpson's position on the Gourmet Food Trail.
- Pressure on coastal environments for increased development.
- Increase in self drive visitors.

KEY DIRECTIONS FOR POSITIONING TIMBOON

This Strategy establishes two key directions for Simpson:

SIMPSON STRATEGY 1 | Public realm investment

SIMPSON STRATEGY 2 | Shire's primary location for worker and affordable housing

SIMPSON STRATEGY 3 | Small scale short stay accommodation

SIMPSON STRATEGY 4 | Support new business and industrial opportunities

SIMPSON STRATEGY 5 | Implementing the Simpson Structure Plan

Refer to Figure 6: Positioning Simpson Key Directions Map for detailed recommendations.

Refer to Figure 7: Simpson Land Use Framework

3.3 Simpson Strategy 1 | Public Realm Investment

Simpson is strategically positioned in the inland route from the 12 Apostles and has a number of existing facilities that promote visitor stopovers including such things as public toilets. However, currently the Lavers Hill-Cobden Road that passes through the town provides few visual cues and business opportunities to attract passing traffic and as such there is a low rate of passing traffic actually stopping in the town.

A Streetscape Masterplan (refer to Figure 5) has been prepared to guide investment in the public realm of Simpson's Town Centre, including Barramul Street. A number of initiatives are recommended, including:

- Improving gateway entrances into town through rationalisation of signage, and a reduction in speed to 50km through the town centre.
- Improved and consolidated wayfinding signage.
- Narrowing of road carriageway adjacent to Jaycees Park to formalise parking and create a safe pedestrian crossing point across Lavers Hill – Cobden Road between the Simpson Historical Park to Jaycees Park.
- Improved connections between the town centre, including areas east and west of Jaycees Park.
- Removal of understorey planting to open viewsheds across the park to Barramul Street businesses.
- Increase exposure of Simpson Historical Park to visitors.
- Long vehicle parking in Murrock Street opposite the Bowls Club to increase capacity of the town

to accommodate touring visitors.

- Placement of a unique large-scale public art installation in Jaycees Park. A camera friendly, large-scale public art installation that appeals to visitor's propensity to engage with social media could increase the number of stopovers and support incremental opportunities for investment in tourism related uses and businesses.
- Increase the number of public toilets in Jaycees Park to accommodate for larger tourist buses.
- Provide footpath connection to the Ball and Chain Hotel / Motel along Williams Road.
- Formalise pedestrian connection between the Milk Bar and Simpson Recreation Reserve.

There is an opportunity to establish new or expanded tourism hospitality businesses targeting visitors on the inland route to and from the 12 Apostles. This concept could include a café, regional produce store or provodore. This type of business could cater to the significant number of visitors passing through Simpson as well as capitalise on the gourmet food trail. This type of use would ideally be located where there is a unique outlook or setting such as the Simpson Historic Park.

There is strong opportunity for the existing takeaway store to expand operations into this type of business, including providing outlook to the parkland. The Streetscape Masterplan identifies this opportunity.

Council should fund or seek funding to implement the Streetscape Masterplan in the short to medium term.

Simpson has the opportunity to increase incidental township visitation through improvements to the public realm that facilitate visitation and encourage business investment.



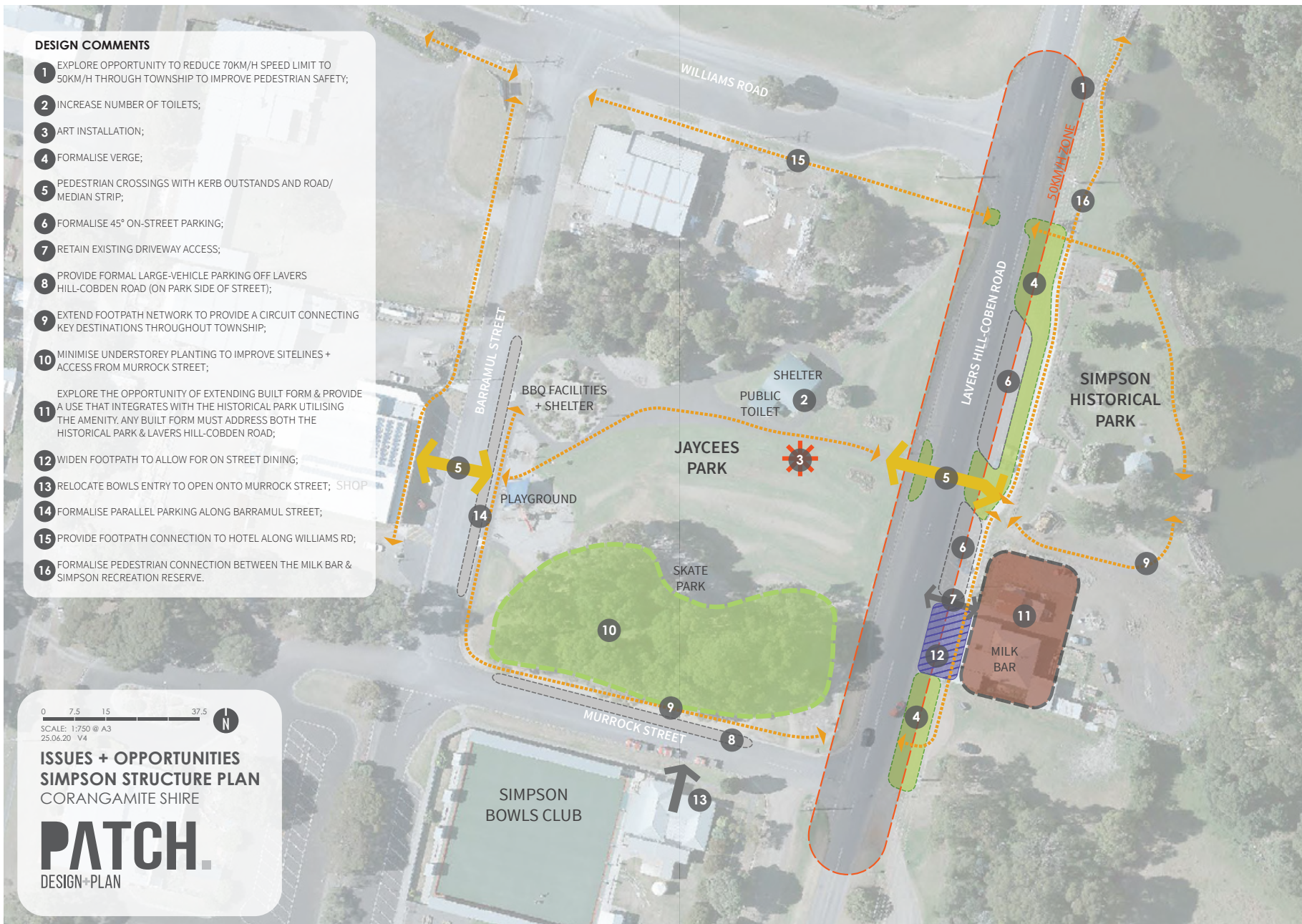


Figure 5. Simpson Streetscape Masterplan

3.4 Simpson Strategy 2 | Primary Location for Key Worker and Affordable Housing

A key element of Corangamite’s strong economic competitiveness is underpinned by affordable land supply and housing that must be maintained. A shortage of key worker housing across the Region and in Corangamite Shire is an opportunity for Simpson.

Simpson is strategically located on the inland road network providing access for workers between the coast and Princes Highway, connecting it to towns including Cobden, Camperdown, Colac and Timboon, and to the locations of large gas projects and other employment creating industries. Simpson also has availability of affordable land that can be rezoned for additional residential land.

The Victorian Planning Authority in conjunction with Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Surf Coast, Colac Otway and Southern Grampians Shires (Councils) is preparing the *Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan 2020*. The purpose of the Action Plan is to provide each Council with a toolkit to increase the supply of low to high-end rental and ownership accommodation for permanent and seasonal key workers from a range of industries.

As part of this Project, a residential growth area has been identified to the south of the existing Simpson township that can accommodate housing for this purpose. The site is identified for rezoning from Farming Zone to General Residential Zone in the Simpson Structure Plan. The land owner has been consulted as is supportive of rezoning of the site. Further the site can be serviced however may have buffer requirements from existing Wannon Water infrastructure.

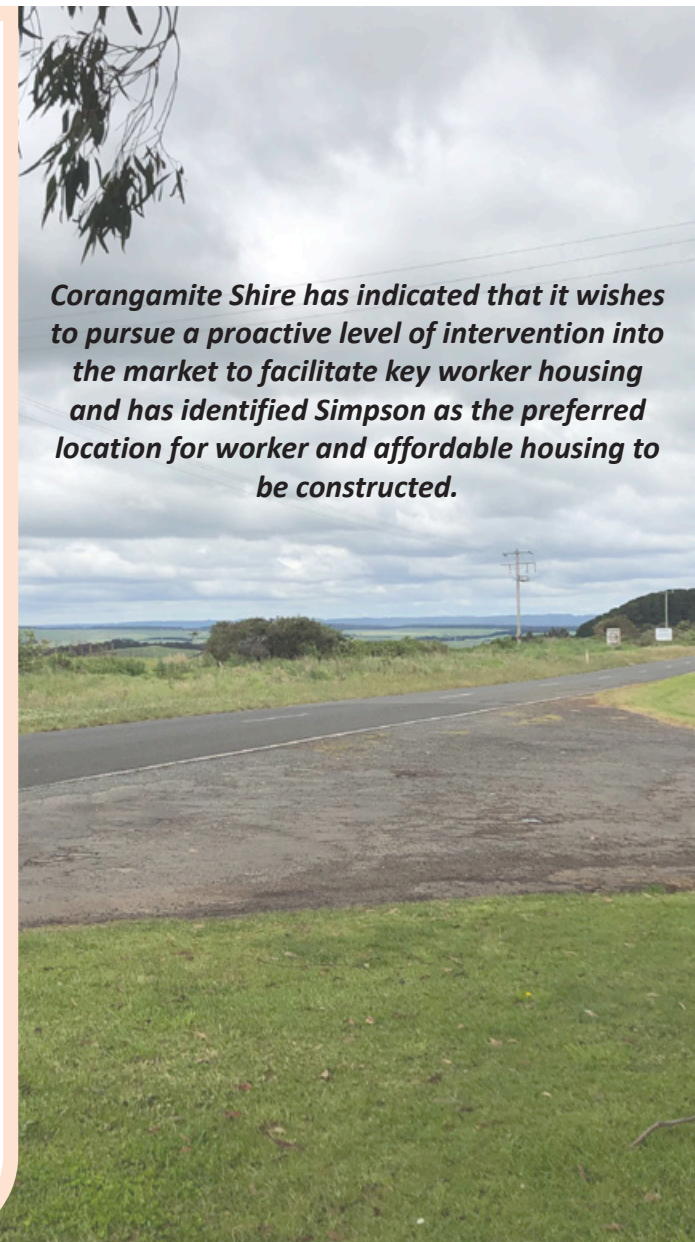
The Draft Action Plan provides further detail on mechanisms to achieve the intended development outcomes on the site, and as such will not be repeated in this report.

The Action Plan identifies that in order to provide as many opportunities as possible for higher quality large dwellings to be constructed, the rezoning of the land in Simpson should be prioritized. The State Government should if possible provide additional resources to assist in fast tracking the rezoning process which would occur as part of a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Simpson Structure Plan.

The Action Plan’s second action regarding the site is that the Simpson residential expansion area will require sewer upgrades before it can be developed. To encourage development as soon as possible, Council could look to contribute to the upgrades, potentially with assistance from grants from the State or Federal Government.

As a high priority project, Council should rezone land identified for residential growth as part of a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Simpson Structure Plan- see Simpson Strategy 5.

Council should work with the Country Fire Authority, Wannon Water and other authorities to resolve issues with regard to design and siting of infrastructure and housing to avoid exposure to natural hazard risk and to provide a business case for investment and government funding.



Corangamite Shire has indicated that it wishes to pursue a proactive level of intervention into the market to facilitate key worker housing and has identified Simpson as the preferred location for worker and affordable housing to be constructed.

3.5 Simpson Strategy 3 | Small Scale Short Stay Accommodation Opportunities

The visitor profile identifies the majority holiday visitors typically require commercial accommodation, as opposed to private accommodation. It is therefore critical that there is an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation to cater to the needs of this market.

Simpson currently has few formal tourist accommodation options. Caravan and camping facilities are found at the Simpson Recreation Reserve for a gold coin donation while the Ball and Chain Hotel/Motel includes five accommodation units that have been recently refurbished by the new owners. As of December 2019 there were four rental properties/rooms listed on AirBnB within the Simpson Township and surrounds.

The proximity of Simpson to the coast and key tourist destinations therein, suggests small scale short stay accommodation opportunities should be pursued, including:

- Promotion of the caravan and camping sites at the Recreation Reserve, including potential for provision of free caravan sites to entice overnight stays in Simpson by touring visitors. A free camping and caravan area could provide an opportunity to 'test' the market for a commercial caravan park provider. This could be incorporated as part of a site within the PPRZ or potentially as part of the recreation reserve. The existing facilities at the recreation reserve need updating and expanding. Attracting a commercial caravan park provider may provide

private investment in upgrade of existing facilities.

- Farm stay accommodation, including potential for self-contained units on farming land within natural setting or coupled with agri-tourism providers.
- Budget self-contained accommodation targeting backpackers and touring visitors.

The proximity of Simpson to the coast and key tourist destinations therein, provides opportunity for small scale short stay accommodation opportunities



3.6 Simpson Strategy 4 | Support New Business and Industrial Opportunities

RE-PURPOSE & REUSE FORMER KRAFT FACTORY

The proposed re-purposing and reuse of the former Kraft factory is a potential economic development opportunity for Simpson. The proposal is currently in its infancy however, the re-purposing and reuse of the site for agricultural production, pharmaceutical and cosmetic product manufacturing, green power generation, aquaculture and/or accommodation could provide new local employment opportunities and value add to the local economy.

Realisation of the concept could lead to increased demand for local housing and new business development opportunities.

There are a number of potential considerations that will impact on the progression of the project, including:

- Requirement for Government approvals.
- Access to appropriately skilled labour force to support operations.
- Need for appropriate zoning. Part of the site is zoned industrial; however, the remainder of the site is zoned farming zone which may limit some of the proposed uses and/or developments.
- Potential site development constraints through the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).
- The need to provide adequate housing and accommodation available in the region to support the workforce, including potential for transient labour.

Potential exists to approach Regional Development Victoria (RDV) or Invest Victoria to facilitate funding to develop a business case or progress rezoning and fast tracking development of the site.

AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATELY ZONED LAND

Current land ownership patterns present a potential constraint to commercial and industrial land supply. Anecdotally, commercial land owners are unwilling to lease or sell land in large holdings within the town, impacting the ability of business growth to continue to operate in the town.

Feedback received during the public consultation on this Plan suggests that there are few if any opportunities for new businesses to find suitable buildings to establish, or for existing businesses to expand.

A site has been identified for commercial expansion that can accommodate new business on Princetown Road to the south-east of the town adjacent to the industrial zoned area.

There may also be potential to accommodate further commercial business such as a petrol station / service centre on an entry to Simpson to capture the increase in self drive tourists.

There are also currently limited vacant industrial sites available in Simpson. A site has been identified to the north-east of the town for potential rezoning to industrial

to facilitate industrial business growth subject to further investigation.

As a high priority project, Council should rezone land identified for commercial and industrial growth as part of a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the Simpson Structure Plan- see Simpson Strategy 6.

Support New Business and Industrial Opportunities in Simpson

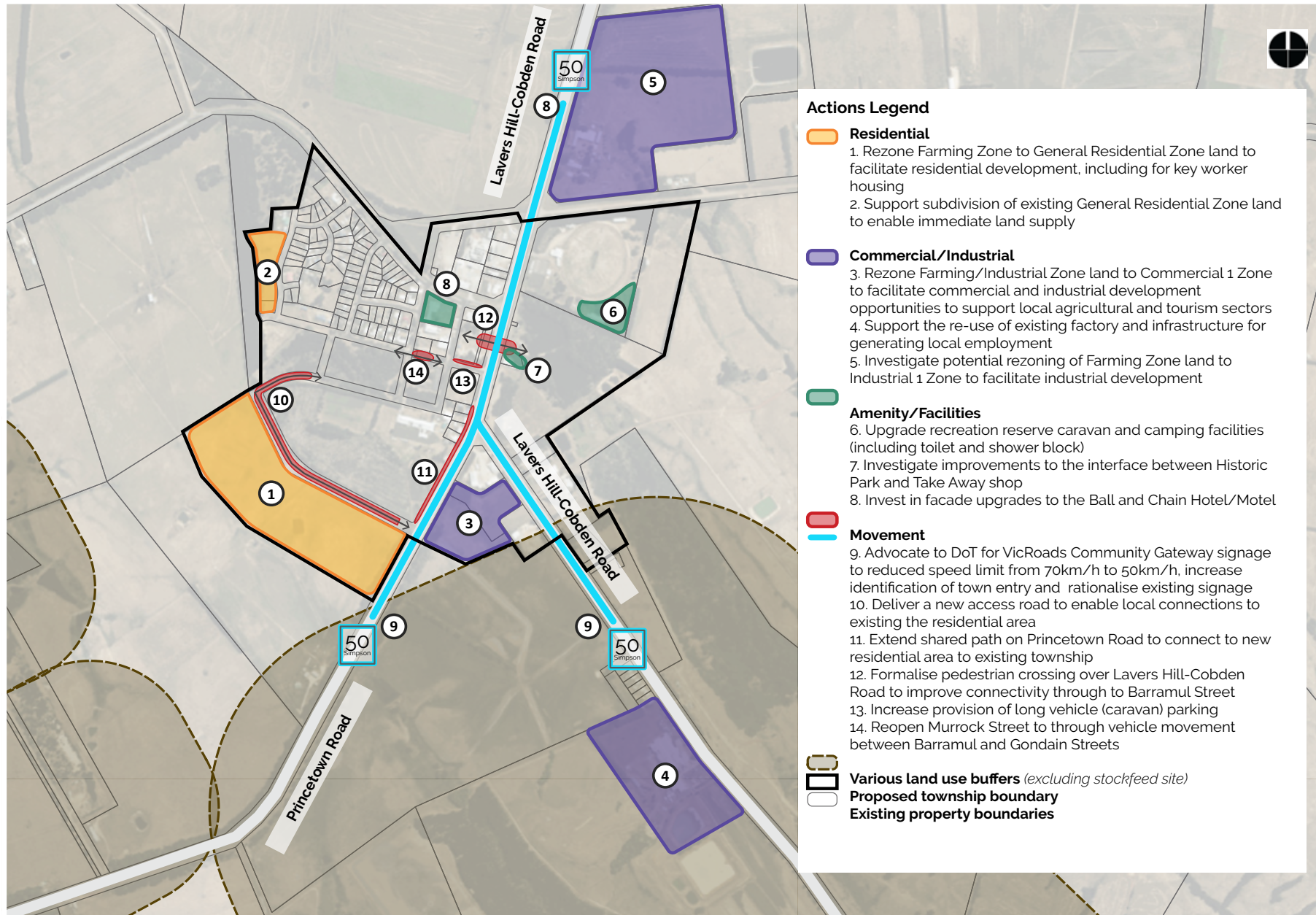


Figure 6. Simpson Positioning and Structure Plan Map

3.7 Simpson Strategy 5 | Simpson Structure Plan

PURPOSE OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN

Corangamite Shire Council has prepared a draft Simpson Structure Plan to provide Simpson with a long-term land use and development framework that can position the town to capitalise on the Great Ocean Road Regional economy, support the Shire's preference for Simpson as the location for key worker housing, ensure a town that functions and provides adequate land supply and services to support its residents, and certainty to investors and infrastructure providers.

HOW WILL THIS PLAN BE USED?

The Structure Plan is to be used by Corangamite Shire to determine the application of local planning policies, planning zones and overlays. It will guide Council's consideration of proposed rezonings and applications for planning permits. Council will also use the Structure Plan to inform the future provision of infrastructure and services in the township.

Implementation of the Structure Plan for Simpson will provide certainty for residents and landowners regarding the future planning of the township.

STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT

The *Great South Regional Growth Plan 2014* identifies Simpson as a 'small town' within the regional settlement hierarchy. The objective is to support development and investment in small towns that are facing economic and population challenges, which has been the case in Simpson since closure of the Kraft Factory.

The Regional Growth Plan directs that structure planning be undertaken for settlements that should include an appropriate supply of residential, commercial and industrial land balanced with consideration of the features of rural land and natural resources around each settlement that should be preserved and protected.

The Corangamite Planning Scheme supports Simpson's potential for further residential and commercial growth within the existing urban boundary, however the *Corangamite Shire Rural Living Strategy 2019* directs a Structure Plan be prepared for Simpson to investigate potential future growth areas and the potential to service vacant general residential development in the town and consider bushfire risk.

PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

The population of Simpson was 161 in 2016, an increase of 7 persons or 0.89% per annum since 2011. The growth in population in township areas including Simpson, Timboon (1.4% p/a) and Port Campbell (0.5% p/a) is in contrast to overall population decline in the Corangamite South region (-0.85% p/a) and Corangamite Shire (-0.40% p/a).

This is likely a result of decreasing population in rural areas, which may be a result of farming lot consolidations and falling household sizes, which is a general trend across rural Victoria.

The projected population figures vary from a growth rate of 0.35% p/a in Timboon and District to population decline of -0.02% in the Rural South. However, the projected population figures do not consider future worker housing demand in Simpson.

Land Supply and Demand

RESIDENTIAL

Anecdotally, the residential property market in Simpson has been through a small down turn recently and there has been limited stock come up for sale on the market. Critically, the market is relatively untested due to the lack of new land supply in the town.

The average occupied lot size in the GRZ1 is 0.13ha, however, majority of lots generally range between 600-800sqm.

There is no land designated for rural living in Simpson and no rural living land was recommended for Simpson in the *Rural Living Strategy (2019)*.

As identified previously in this Plan, Simpson will be the Shire's primary location for worker and affordable housing.

A site has been identified for future residential growth, including key worker housing, to the south of the existing township. It is recommend that the township be expanded through the rezoning of this additional residential land. In order to provide as many opportunities as possible for higher quality large dwellings to be constructed, the rezoning of this land should be prioritised. The State Government should if possible provide additional resources to assist in fast tracking the rezoning process. The site has an existing road easement from Princetown Road to provide direct access to the site. A Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to the northernmost part of the site, including the road easement. Development

of the site needs to consider siting and design to mitigate bushfire hazard risk.

COMMERCIAL

Refer to Section 3.6 for further demand / supply matters relating to commercial land in Simpson.

There is an estimated 1.8ha of commercial zoned land supply in the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) in Simpson, of which 1.67ha is considered occupied and 0.13ha is considered vacant.

Commercial property is generally well occupied in Simpson. There is only one site in the C1Z that appears vacant, however, it is potentially being utilised by an adjoining business for storage. Aside from this site, there are few if any opportunities for businesses to establish or expand within the town.

The town centre is small in scale. Key businesses in the commercial centre include a takeaway shop, convenience supermarket, Ball and Chain Hotel, vet (servicing the agricultural sector) and hardware store.

There is some evidence of recent investment, including current construction (Nov 2019) of a new dwelling, refurbishment of the Ball and Chain Hotel Motel bistro/bar area and rooms. The Ball and Chain Hotel and Motel was purchased in early 2019 and is now successfully operating under new management.

INDUSTRIAL

Refer to Section 3.6 for further demand / supply matters relating to industrial land in Simpson.

The town has primarily an agricultural business base, including Heytesbury Stockfeeds located in the Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) on the northern entry. Other industrial businesses operate in the IN1Z including for car sales.

The industrial area to the south was rezoned from the Township Zone (TZ) to Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) in 2014 as part of the *Corangamite Shire Industrial Land Strategy* and subsequent Amendment C38 to the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

The former Kraft factory located south of the township at 2492 Lavers Hill-Cobden Road provides an additional 11ha of industrial zoned land. The site was most recently occupied by Lion Dairy and Drinks and previously had also been operated by National Foods and Kraft. The site ceased production in 2014 and until recently has remained vacant. A new proponent is currently investigating options for the site including a mix of agricultural production, pharmaceutical products, cosmetics, green power generation, aquaculture and accommodation.

COMMUNITY USES

Community services include a primary school, skate park, bowls club which are zoned in the Public Use Zone 2 (PUZ2) precinct to the south of the town, and the recreation reserve with clubrooms and community pavilion in the Public Park and Recreation Zone in the north- east of the town (PPRZ).

The well-presented Jaycees Park sits at the centre of the town centre, although providing a pleasant setting, this can also create a disconnect between the highway and commercial centre to the west.

To the east of Lavers Hill-Cobden Road, is the picturesque Simpson Historical Park and wetlands, as well as historic artefacts relating to the days of settlement.

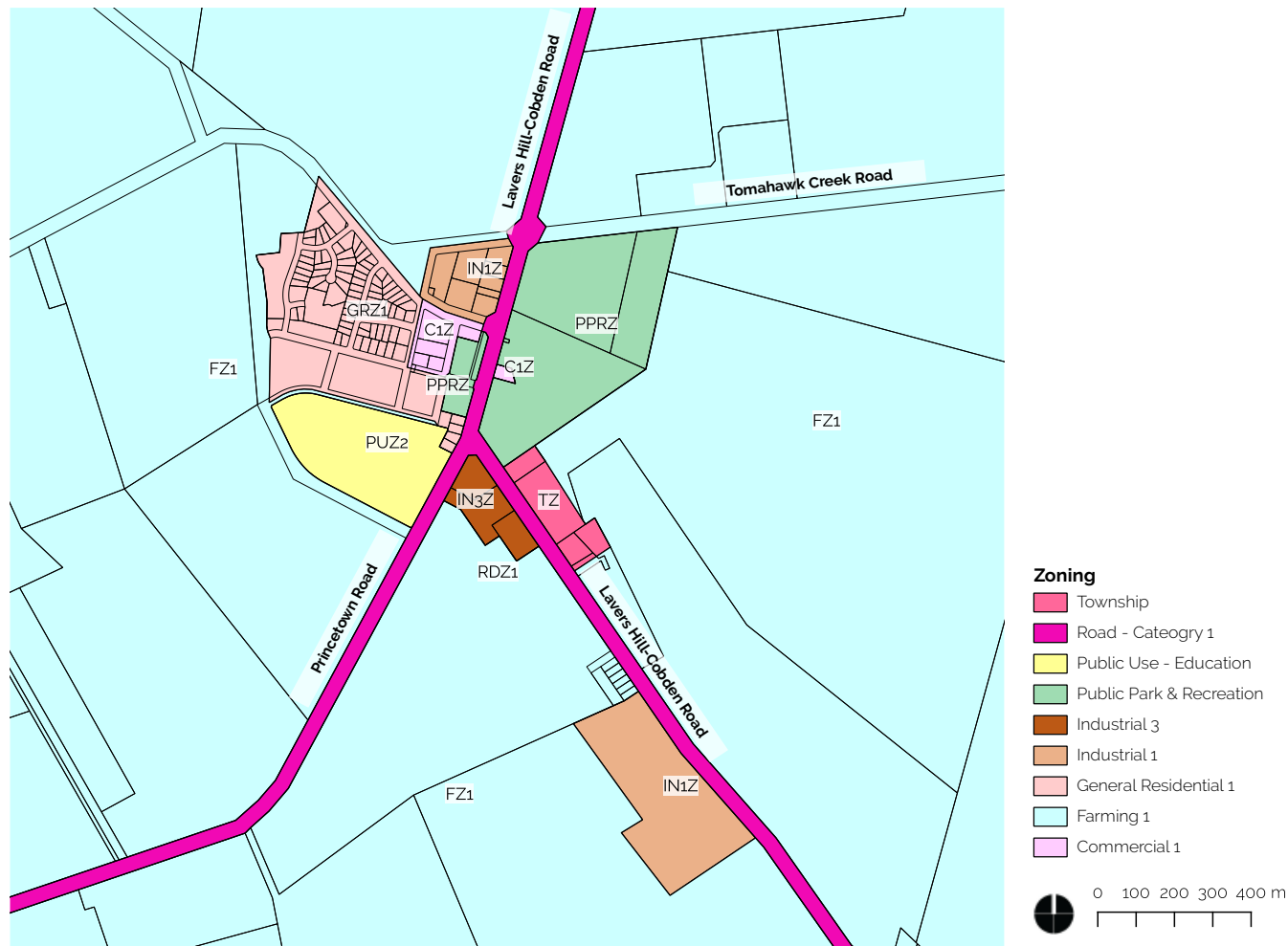


Figure 7. Simpson – Existing Zoning

Physical, Landscape and Environmental Constraints

ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

Biodiversity

No overlay controls identify areas of high value biodiversity nor are there any overlays that identify areas for the protection of native vegetation. Being located on the plains the existing vegetation is valued for its ability to provide wind protection.

The Heytesbury Settlement Historic Park includes significant areas of vegetation and two significant waterbodies. However the habitat and biodiversity value of the park is not known.

The extensive areas of vegetation in the southern area adjoining the residential land, and land located to the west of the town, are densely vegetated native species that offer wind protection.

Any expansion and development of Simpson should avoid, minimise or offset the removal of existing vegetation that can be assumed to offer potential biodiversity and weather protection.

Environmental and Landscape Significance

Simpson currently has no overlays that identify areas of high environmental or landscape significance nor are there any overlays that identify areas for protection.

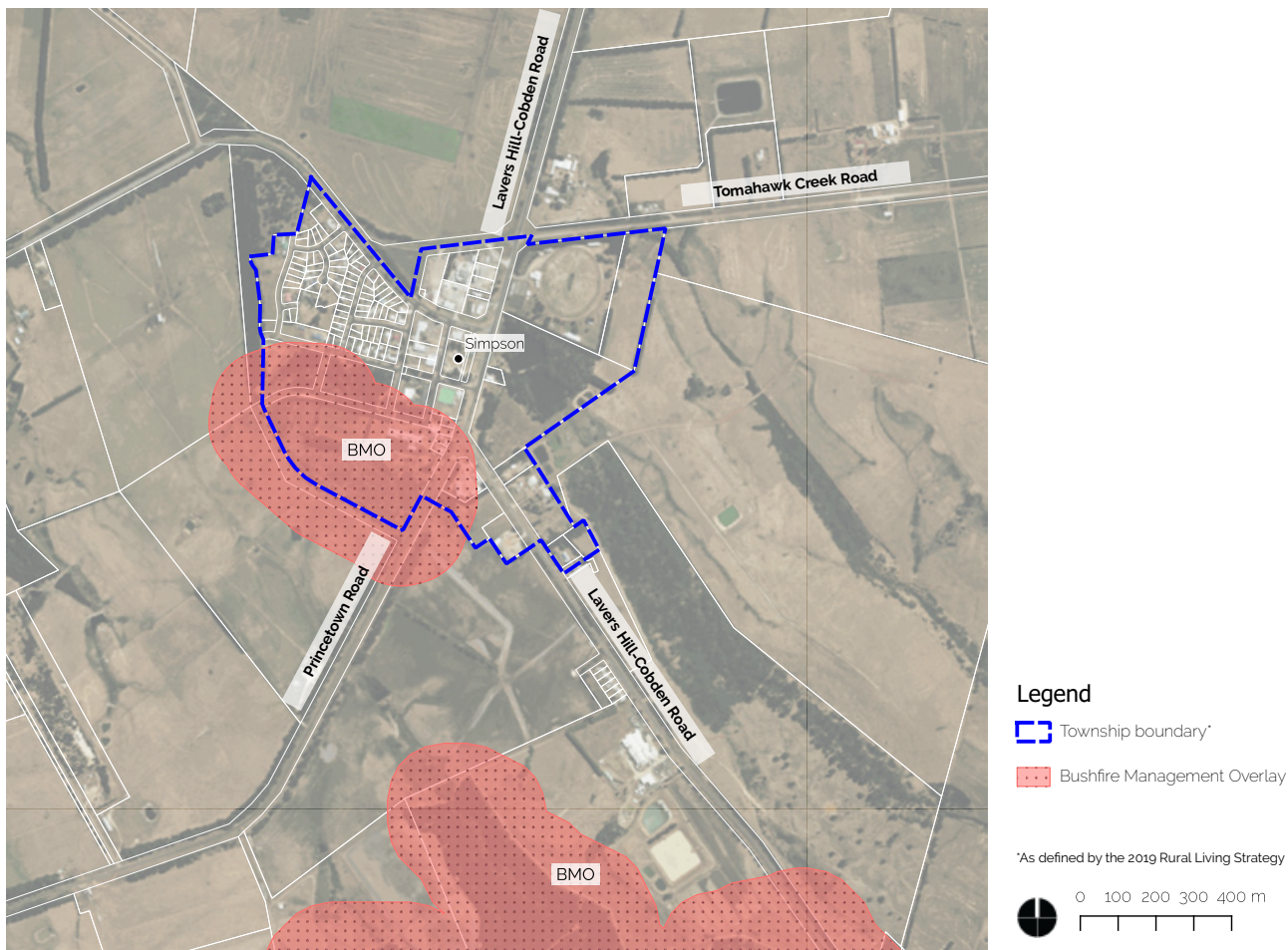


Figure 8. Simpson BMO

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK

Bushfire

Current State Planning Policy in relation to bushfire risk specifies that the protection of human life is to be prioritised over all other policy considerations.

The proximity of the BMO relating to the vegetation located on the south western boundary of the town, and dense vegetation areas along roadsides, will require development in the identified residential growth area to the south-west of town, to consider design and siting requirements for any future development as part of planning permit and subdivision.

Discussions have been held with the Country Fire Authority and should continue as a planning scheme amendment progresses.

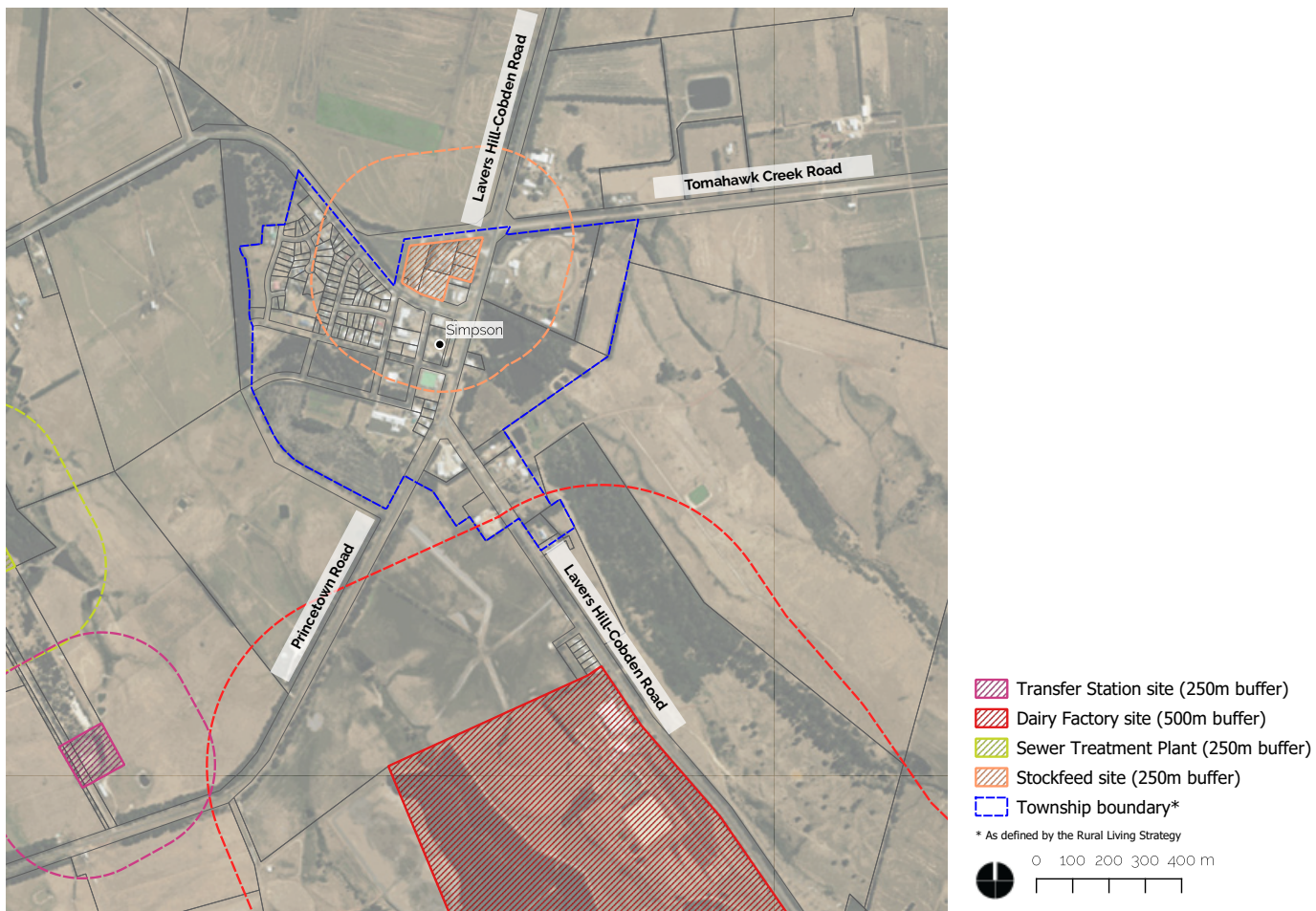


Figure 9. Simpson Existing Industrial buffers

INDUSTRIAL BUFFERS

The location of industrially zoned land within Simpson is generally positioned on the edges of the township to reduce amenity impacts upon nearby residential properties or sensitive commercial uses.

More broadly the existing Transfer Station site and Sewer Treatment Plan on the western edge of town include amenity buffers that currently affect land zoned for farming and agricultural purposes.

New residential development (including development within the existing township) and the residential growth areas will need to avoid location within a buffer as shown in image to right.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

There are no known sites of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, however, rezoning of land for residential, industrial and commercial uses should include a requirement for a Proponent - including if this is Council- to undertake a cultural heritage assessment of a site prior to development.

Post-Settlement Heritage

The Simpson Cheese Factory (Kraft Factory) and the Church on Lavers Hill-Cobden Road and the Simpson Historic Park are covered by a Heritage Overlay.

There are no heritage buildings registered on the National Trust Heritage Register within Simpson.

Urban Design

Located on the plains, the town of Simpson sits on relatively flat open landscape. The design of urban spaces and built form is of low scale, with tree canopy the dominant form. Public areas around the main town centre are manicured and well maintained.

New signage at the gateways to the town effectively provide a visual cue to town approach. Within the town multiple signs are located along the road reserve creating visual clutter and require consolidation and rationalisation. This is exacerbated by large signage in the private realm associated with industrial businesses.

The activity of the town centre is split between the Simpson Take Away on Lavers Hill-Cobden Road and the businesses on Barramul Street. Unfortunately this splits the commercial activity and movements in what is an already small town. The proposed Streetscape Masterplan provides options to improve links between the town centre areas.

Recent works have been undertaken to improve pedestrian connectivity on the eastern side of Lavers Hill-Cobden Road between to the Historic Park and the Simpson Recreation Reserve with footpaths upgraded. The activity node dislocation and street width contribute to a sense of expansiveness. There is the opportunity to create a more intimate and inviting space to stop in the key town centre zone- consolidated area on Lavers Hill- Cobden Road-

between the Recreation Reserve and Bowls Club. Refer to the Simpson Streetscape Masterplan.

Along Barramul Street the commercial buildings have traditional parapets along with verandas providing generous shelter to public areas and enable the businesses to 'trade out'.

The Ball and Chain motel has modernist features such as a flat roof, breezeblock work and unaccentuated building openings. However its streetscape presentation with a large car park and dilapidated appearance adds to a sense of tiredness to the town. There is opportunity to improve the interface between the private and public realms.

Landscaping in the town is a mix of native species with some exotic species in the mix, especially at the shrub and ground cover level. The strategically positioned vegetation acts as windrows to provide protection from winds.

Neighbourhood Character

Simpson has no existing Design Guidelines or Neighbourhood Character policy.

Residential dwellings are almost entirely detached and have generous front setbacks and typical setbacks from side boundaries ensuring there is a spaciousness to individual dwellings. However, compared to the openness of the surrounding areas the residential streets can feel compact. The first character area includes late 60's through to mid 1980's designs located behind the commercial areas of the town along Jayarra and Kardella Streets. These houses are constructed of lightweight materials and typically have pitched rooves with minimal eaves. The overall architectural style is consistent with Department of Housing developments undertaken in the 1960's through to the 1980's.

The second character area is generally found in proximity to Wardoo Street and Polonia Road that in many instances have larger lot sizing and setback than the precinct closer to the town centre. The architectural detailing of these homes includes hipped rooves with in many instances verandahs around the perimeter of the dwelling.

The third character area is a small section of six dwellings located along Lavers Hill-Cobden Road that were developed as worker accommodation as part of the former Kraft factory. These dwellings are variations of a similar design incorporating brick walls, painted corrugated iron roofing and low height chain-link fencing.

MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT

Roads

The primary road access to Simpson includes the Lavers Hill-Cobden Road and Princetown Road. Both roads are classified as Road Zone Category 1 – RDZ1 and are under the management of VicRoads.

Lavers Hill-Cobden Road heading north provides connections for Simpson to Cobden and on to Camperdown and the Princes Highway. To the south, Princetown Road provides direct links to the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park and the Great Ocean Road. Tomahawk Creek Road and Williams Road provide minor connections to the surrounding areas to the east and west respectively.

Speed is an issue in the main town centre, with cars failing to slow to the 60km per hour speed limit. Each entrance to the town has multiple speed limit signs creating clutter and repetition and that are clearly not enforcing the speed limit on entry to the town centre. It is recommended that Council advocate for a larger more prominent speed sign at each entry to the town as part of the VicRoads Community Signage- this has been rolled out at Port Campbell. Further, that the speed limit in the town centre be reduced to 50 km/ per hour to create a safer town centre environment.

Jaycees Park and the Simpson Take Away along Lavers Hill-Cobden Road is a popular stop for passing tourists as a place to eat and use the well-kept public toilets. However

this section of Lavers Hill-Cobden Road is very wide with numerous informal parking and pedestrian crossing points creating areas of potential conflict.

Within the town, the older town centre features a grid street layout in contrast to residential area to the west, where road layout has followed subdivision and an ad hoc road network created.

Generally streets provide through connections with the notable exception of Murrock Street that does not connect through to Gondain Street. Tyre tracks in the grass verge indicate an informal car access between the residential area and town centre. It is recommended that Murrock Street be reopened to traffic. This would provide a second entry to the residential area providing emergency access should access via a main road be restricted.

The new residential area has a road easement adjacent to the treed School site in the Public Use Zone. Use of this easement for road access to the growth area will provide access on to Princetown Road and the potential for a circuit route into the existing residential area. The road will also provide a buffer to the heivil vegetated area include in the Bushfire Managment Overlay.

Walking and Cycling

The generally flat topography of Simpson and existing footpaths and pathways throughout the town facilitates walking as a mode of transport. No cycling paths were observed in Simpson.

In areas where footpaths are not provided, often pedestrian and bicycle access is via informal street spaces or on grassy verges with no footpaths resulting in a shared roadway for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. This is especially true of the residential areas to the west of the town centre.

There is opportunity to improve pedestrianisation of the town centre including safe access across Lavers Hill-Cobden Road adjacent to Jaycees Park, and connections to the Recreation Reserve into the town centre including the Ball and Chain Hotel. This is important for caravan and camping visitors to access services in the town.

The new residential growth area should ensure the provision of pedestrian access through connected footpaths.

Public Transport

There is no public transport service provided to Simpson.

The 2012 Plan for Simpson identifies as an action to arrange for the Timboon bus to come to Simpson on a loop service.

The community is very keen to advocate for and attract a bus service to Simpson that connects with train services and higher order towns including Cobden, Camperdown and Timboon.

The bus stop should be located in a 'high-activity' area such as Barramul Street that can be accessed from the residential and commercial areas and community services including the Bowls Club and school.

Car Parking

Simpson currently has three main areas of formalised parking being along Lavers Hill-Cobden Road in-front of the Simpson Take Away, along Barramul Street outside the town centre and further along Barramul Street in proximity to the Simpson Bowls Club and Child Care. Other areas of Simpson include unmarked kerbside parking.

Informal long vehicle parking is currently positioned along Lavers Hill-Cobden Road opposite the Simpson Bowls Club and adjacent to Jaycees Park. These areas are well utilised by cars towing caravans and a range of passing trade/commercial vehicles/trucks. Opportunity exists to formalise long vehicle parking in Murrock Street adjacent to Jaycees Park- refer to the Streetscape Masterplan.

This area is currently utilised by patrons of the Bowls Club, and will require consideration for improved access to alternative car parking for Bowls Club as part of upgrades to the Club facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Community Infrastructure

A hub of community facilities exists in Simpson on Barramul Street including a Primary School, Kindergarten, Maternal Child and Health Centre at the Simpson Kindergarten and Community Centre.

The Simpson and District Kindergarten located on Barramul Street provides a range of services for 3 and 4 year old children.

The Simpson Primary School is located on the southern extent of the township and is a public school that provides primary level education. The school was opened in 1972 to coincide with the development of the area associated with the Heytesbury Land Settlement scheme. As of 2019 there are 74 students enrolled in 4 classes. There is no secondary education institution in Simpson.

Community and sporting facilities include the Simpson Recreation Reserve, the Simpson Bowls Club, the Simpson and District Community Centre and the Simpson Men's Shed.

During consultation both the Bowls Club and Recreation Reserve committees expressed need for funding to upgrade facilities.

Development Infrastructure

Electricity and Gas

Simpson is connected to electricity. Gas is not offered via a mains connection in Simpson.

Water supply

Simpson is serviced by reticulated water supply. Wannon Water has informed that the urban growth area can be connected to reticulated services.

Sewer

Areas in Simpson's urban town centre area (General Residential Zone and Commercial Zone) are serviced with reticulated sewerage.

Areas zoned Township Zone, Low Density Residential Zone and Rural Living Zone utilise on-site waste disposal and septic tanks. These areas are located on the east of town and significantly limit any development of Simpson to the east of Lavers-Hill Cobden Road.

Wannon Water have informed that the identified residential growth area can be connected to existing services.

Telecommunications

Mobile telephone coverage is consistent across Simpson with both 3G and 4G coverage. The community reports the service is not reliable and needs improvement of service within the town.

Drainage

There are no known drainage issues.

Settlement Boundary

A key role of this Structure Plan is to define a settlement boundary for Simpson. Identifying a boundary that includes land supply for growth will support a coordinated and consistent approach to decision making for the Corangamite Shire, and provide certainty to residents regarding the future size and role of the township, and certainty for investment and infrastructure requirements.

In planning for the next 20 years of development of Simpson through intervention in residential land supply, and with designation of Simpson as the Shire's preferred location for key worker housing, providing adequate residential land supply for housing is an important outcome for this Plan.

The following criteria have been used to determine the settlement boundary:

- Constraints on development such as topography, native vegetation, rural land use activity and areas of environmental or landscape significance and sensitivity.
- Areas susceptible to natural hazard risk including bushfire and flooding.
- Areas within industrial buffers where land use conflicts may arise.
- Demand/Supply of land for a 10 year planning horizon and opportunities for future growth including residential development to support key worker housing aspirations for Simpson.
- Ability to connect to services.

The Rural Living Strategy identifies a series of indicative edges that provide a preliminary settlement boundary, including:

- The northern edge of the residential (GRZ1) and industrial (IN1Z) land along Tomahawk Creek Road to the west of Lavers Hill-Cobden Road;
- The interface between the PPRZ and Township Zone to the east; and
- The extensive vegetation and interface between the FZ and residential area (GRZ1) to the west.

Further refinements to this boundary include (refer to Figure 9):

- To support residential growth, a residential growth area has been identified to the south-west of the town on Princetown Road. Currently in the Farming Zone, the site should be rezoned to General Residential Zone (GRZ) and included within the settlement boundary.
- To accommodate commercial growth, a site between on the southern junction of Princeton Road and Lavers Hill- Cobden Road has extended the existing Industrial 3 Zone.

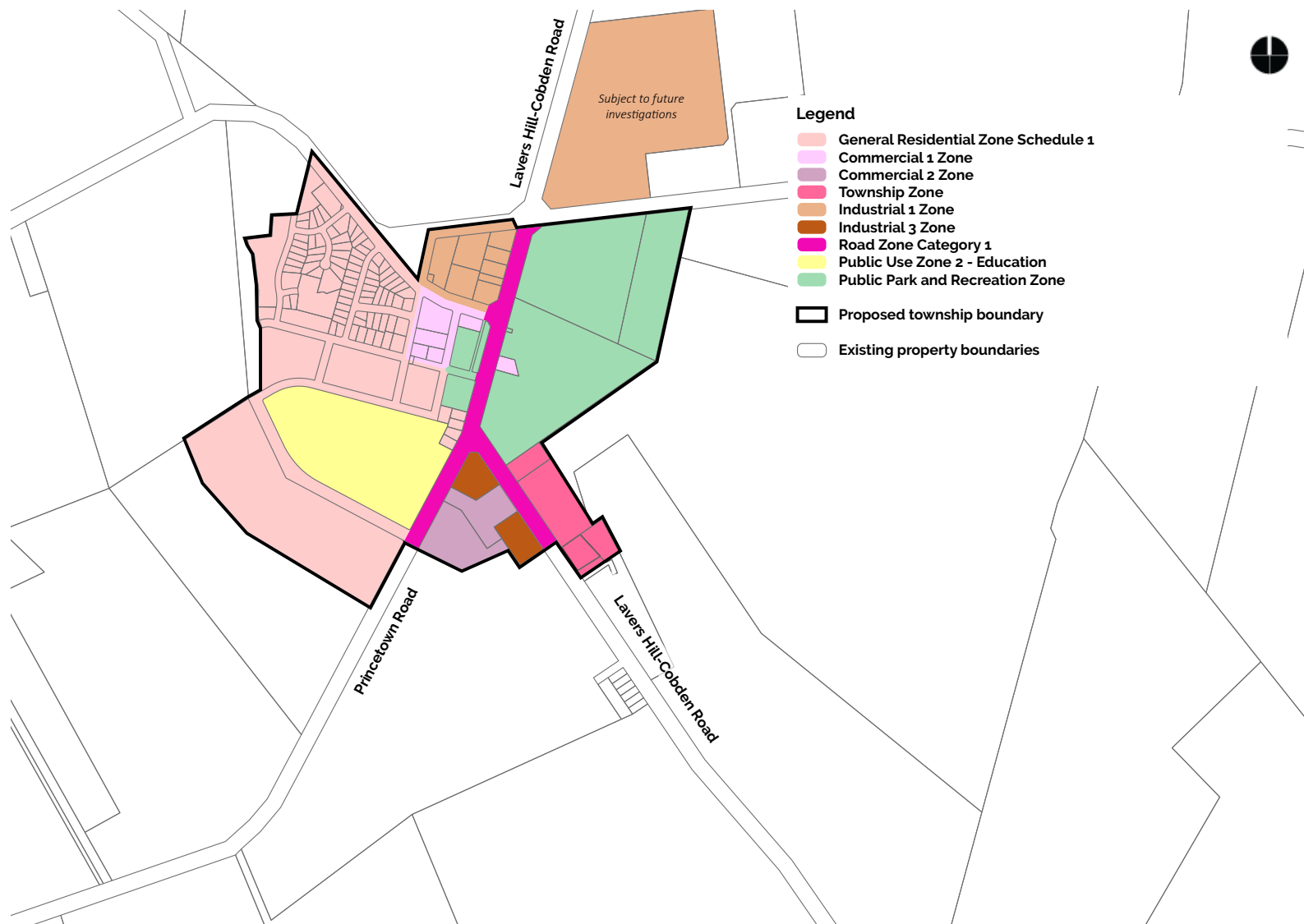


Figure 10. Simpson Land Use Framework- Proposed Zone Map including Settlement Boundary

3.8 Implementation

Refer to Simpson Land Use Framework Map (Figure 10 on page 44)

The Objectives, Strategies and Actions for implementation are proposed as a basis for inclusion in the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

Objectives

- To support population and economic growth of Simpson through appropriately zoned and staged residential, commercial and industrial land within the town settlement boundary.
- To promote Simpson as Corangamite Shire's preferred location for affordable and key worker housing.
- To position Simpson through quality urban design and tourism product to capitalise on the Great Ocean Road regional tourism market.
- To repurpose and facilitate re-use of the former Kraft Factory.

Strategies

- Rezone land in accordance with the Simpson Land Use Framework (Figure 10).
- In consultation with the Simpson Community, investigate the potential of the land on Lavers Hill - Cobden Road north of the Recreation Reserve for further industrial expansion.
- Implement the recommendations of the *Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan 2020* for Simpson.

- Promote a mix of housing sizes and densities in infill development and the residential growth area.
- Encourage upgrade and expansion of the caravan and camping ground at the Recreation Reserve by assisting the Recreation Reserve Committee to identify commercial operators or investment, navigate lease and operational requirements, and provide Council or leverage other funding opportunities for facility upgrades.
- Support redevelopment of the Bowls Club to update facilities and provide additional meeting space and food and beverage on offer in Simpson.
- Implement the Simpson Streetscape Masterplan.
- Advocate to Department of Transport for reduction in speed limit in the town centre to 50 km per hour.
- Advocate to Department of Transport for consolidation of speed signs on entry to Simpson and introduction of a VicRoads Community Speed Sign at each gateway entrance to Simpson.
- Open Murrock Street to traffic between Barramul Street and Gondain Street.
- Investigate opportunity to partner with Regional Development Victoria and/or Victoria Assist to facilitate development of the former Kraft Factory including business case funding.
- In consultation with the Simpson Community, investigate opportunities for industrial use of the land to the north of the town on Lavers Hill-Cobden Road.

Actions

- As a short-term (within 1 year) priority, prepare a planning scheme amendment to the Corangamite Planning Scheme to rezone land in accordance with the Simpson Land Use Framework (Figure 10).
- Facilitate development of the residential growth area in line with the recommendations of the *Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan 2020* for Simpson, by:
 - Requesting the State Government provide additional resources to assist in fast tracking the rezoning of the residential growth area to General Residential Zone which would occur as part of a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement this Simpson Structure Plan.
 - Investigating opportunities for State or Federal Grants to fund sewer upgrades of the residential growth area to encourage development.
 - Undertaking forward site planning and design, including liaison with Authorities, to scope issues and opportunities for the site.
 - Seeking potential investors and developers for the site.
 - Considering how Council can streamline the decision making process for development of the site.
- In the short-term (1 to 3 years) apply for Council budget to fund implementation of the Simpson Streetscape Masterplan.

Appendix 1

Issues and Opportunities Feedback Summary

INTRODUCTION

Corangamite Shire Council is currently preparing the Timboon and Simpson Placement Strategy and Simpson Structure Plan. The project is investigating how the towns can act as future key service centres to the Great Ocean Road and coastal hinterland including tourism, accommodation, commercial and industrial opportunities. The Simpson Structure Plan will provide a long-term land use and development framework for the town. The project is currently at Stage 2 – Issues and Opportunities- of a five stage process. A key component of Stage 2 is consultation with the community and key stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities for the Plan. Further, to test and seek feedback on the report prepared by Council and a consultant team (Echelon Planning and Urban Enterprise) during the initial stages of the Project.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES CONSULTATION

Consultation on issues and opportunities commenced on 17 February 2020 and ended on Friday 13 March, and included:

- Webpage uploaded to Council’s website containing information about the project, details of consultation and links to the document.
- Online survey on Council’s webpage.
- Two drop-in-sessions held on 6 March 2020 in Simpson, and 7 March 2020 in Timboon between 2.30pm and 7.30pm. The sessions were held at the Simpson Bowls Club and Timboon Senior Citizens Club respectively. A Council officer and member of the consultant team were available at both sessions to discuss the project.
- Information on Council’s Facebook page.

MEDIA COVERAGE

The Standard published an article on 23 February 2020 announcing the project, and inviting feedback on issues and opportunities consultation.

NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS

In total, 23 written submissions were received by Council. Of these, eight were from Simpson residents, ten from Timboon residents, three ‘other’ residential locations and one each from Wannon Water and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

There were 55 recorded attendances at the two drop-in days, including 38 in Timboon and 17 in Simpson.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The feedback was provided via a feedback form for which four questions were asked:

1. What do you like about the Issues and Opportunities Paper?
2. What don’t you like about the Issues and Opportunities Paper?
3. Have we missed anything?
4. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

The responses are summarised below:

1. What do you like about the Issues and Opportunities Paper?

Simpson:

- The road opening to link Lavers Hill – Cobden Road to Barramul Street (continuation of Murrock Street).
- The potential development of Simpson with a view to getting the tourists to stop, vision for the town and opportunities to create visitor accommodation.
- General support for the Plan and its ideas and contribution to development of community.
- That Council is looking at ways to improve the town and hopefully carried out in the near future.

Timboon:

- Multiple submissions supported opportunities for increasing affordable housing.
- Market trends – agreement that lifestyle market is attracting people, including high uptake of small blocks. Retirement living and High Care Aged Care facility also required i.e.. Aberlea.
- Support for cycling trails were raised in numerous submissions including for more paths in Cowley's Creek – Timboon Bushland Reserve, the extension of Timboon to Port Campbell 12 Apostles Trail was well supported and its funding and acceleration encouraged. New mountain bike trails desired.

- Long Vehicle parking is long overdue in the town centre.
- Development of more capacity accommodation and quality dining.
- The way the information is presented, identification of project enablers and expected tourism growth.
- Identifying the value of the natural environment to tourism and attractiveness of township.

2. What don't you like about the Issues and Opportunities Paper?

Simpson:

- There is no land designated for rural living in Simpson.
- Future growth and development opportunities for Simpson to be investigated as part of this project, with the opportunities to place Simpson as an affordable housing and key worker destination, supporting future coastal commercial development and major projects.
- A couple of submissions raised concern for planting of more trees on public land, particularly given the existing mature vegetation within Jaycees Park blocks vision / views to businesses / shops in Barrumul Street. Also for bushfire safety.
- A decent sign would be good for alerting people to the businesses there.
- Focus seems to be on takeaway shop which is not the only business in town. For our town to

prosper all businesses need to be viable.

- Community Centre not being viewed as valued by the planners.
- Plan talks about airport at Peterborough, the existing airport at Cobden should also be mentioned and which is currently updating its facilities. Tourist and people on business to the Shire fly into Cobden.
- Council seem unaware that there is no public transport in Simpson.
- It was suggested that an art exhibit may be an idea in park to get people to stop – should be organised by Council not gas companies.
- As a business owner in Simpson, I was not happy that we were not consulted about the ideas put forward when other town people were.

Timboon:

- Does not go far enough. Still too restricted in the ability to subdivide land on the edge of Timboon.
- Would like to see more information about aged care and retirement living in Timboon.
- Incorrect naming of 12 Apostles Trail as Timboon Port Campbell Rail Trail. Within this it also identifies horse activity which is not permitted south of Timboon on this proposed infrastructure.
- Public transport, the services in and out of Timboon are not VLine, they are PTV public transport routes. The advocacy for expansion of these services has been ongoing for nearly a decade without traction.

- Type of different businesses to improve or offer different things.
- Assume business as usual continues. Tourists keep coming en masse to GOR (many flying from distant places). Can't rely on a stable climate and tourism anymore.

3. Have we missed anything?

Simpson:

- Include upgrade of Simpson Bowling Club clubhouse in the strategic plan.
- Opportunity to develop future housing block on south side of Murrock Street, clearing the bush and reducing bushfire risk.
- Footpath/cycling track along Lavers Hill – Cobden Road to the south-east linking the old Kraft factory and the houses to provide better and safer pedestrian access to the township.
- Current condition of VicRoads roads very poor and dangerous. Are Council prepared to develop the infrastructure and improve roads to support these changes?

Timboon:

- A couple of submissions raised concern regarding bushfire readiness and that there is no safe place in town for community to evacuate to. Further, the location of new development should consider bushfire.

- Need Council to be more open minded in future planning, for example consider a caravan park for the town.
- It is missing detail around Timboon's current infrastructure offering.
- Communications / internet- fixed wireless is not very good, need to get NBN. Mobile broadband within the town is excellent with Telstra only.
- Parking in the retail area is limited and needs to be expanded to meeting demand of more tourism.
- The existing supermarket is adequate but in the future needs to be extended, or preferably rebuilt. Where can this be done allowing for a much bigger supermarket and expanded car parking spaces?
- We all like water- maybe weirs on creek that runs through town to hold water for attraction and recreation.
- Big picture missed, or not in brief. We are in a climate emergency and the plan does not talk about climate change and preparing Timboon for this future,

General:

- What about Cobden? Cobden is part of the 12 Apostle Coast and Hinterland Destination Action Plan – why is Cobden not considered part of tourism potential in this Plan?

4. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Simpson:

- Land along Princetown Road, Lavers Hill Cobden Road to the north and south-east, as well as Williams Road could all be great positions for larger house block subdivisions (1 acre).
- Opportunity to develop future housing block on the south side of Murrock Street, clearing the bush and reducing bushfire risk.
- All assistance should be given to facilitate business at Kraft factory. This will give Simpson and the greater area of southern Corangamite better employment opportunities.
- Simpson Primary school down to 49 students in 2020, needs more students.
- Toilet block in Jaycees Park, Simpson too small to cater for busloads of tourists.
- Very heavy focus on the take away and not so much on the other businesses in town.
- Simpson has the proximity to the proposed 12 Apostles precinct projects both public and private, but it is lacking significantly aesthetic appeal when compared to Timboon. This is significant factor for new residents considering the region. Attracting population to both towns is important, but the opportunity to do this in Timboon offers greatest potential given the platform of infrastructure, the town layout and established branding as a foodie destination.

- Recreation Reserve – If the town is trying to attract tourist dollars and get people to stop, it would be good to improve the showground/football area for the use of travelers with caravans. A ‘dump point’ is now provided, that is a good start. In summer the grass gets long in some area and in winter it can be wet underfoot, not ideal to camp on, therefore, a bit of extra maintenance would be required. The Timboon area for ‘free camping’ get a good number of people.
- The EPA submission identifies the following the Simpson:
 - requests that the Simpson Structure Plan should include words to the effect of: “Development of Simpson should avoid areas within the recommended separation distances to uses with the potential for offsite adverse amenity impacts in accordance with EPA Publication 1518- Recommended Separation Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions.”
 - Identification of a putrescible waste landfill estimated to have closed in 1998 is noted on Princetown Road, Simpson in the Victorian Landfill Register. Due to potential for landfill gas risk as well as contamination of land and groundwater, EPA recommends Council consider and follow the steps in Assessing Planning Proposals within the buffer of a Landfill (EPA Publication 1642, October 2017) when considering the future of Simpson.

- The Wannon Water Submission identifies the four sites muted for future development and provides guidance on infrastructure requirements and constraints to inform the next stage of the project.

Timboon:

- Potential to support small organic farming businesses with rezoning of land on edge of Timboon.
- The Shire has land in the township that needs to be better maintained so as to defend the township against fire potential. More activity to suppress fire threat along roadsides. Road building leaves heaps of trees and concrete at times that needs tidying up around the district. Have the designated fire breaks along the Rail Trail denuded of burnable vegetation
- The overall gist of the opportunities for Timboon in the position paper are excellent. Future growth prospects in residential and retail, whilst to be encouraged, need to be balanced against the impact on existing services.
- Active transport – I cycle and its hilly. Timboon needs more back roads to smooth out the journey, so more people can cycle more often.
- Council should consider the EPA’s input into the Corangamite Rural Living Strategy and in particular the Timboon Waste Transfer Station.
-

- The Wannon Water Submission identifies the five key areas muted for future development in Timboon and provides guidance on infrastructure requirements and constraints to inform the next stage of the project.

General:

- Access to Issues and Opportunities Paper difficult, and was not aware made available in hard copy at shops.
- EPA requires the Plan to consider Clause 53.10 of the Corangamite Planning Scheme and the EPA Publication 1518 – Recommended Separation Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions to ensure any existing or proposed industries that may generate offsite impacts that have the potential to adversely impact on the environment, human health and amenity are considered and appropriately managed. This includes avoiding encroachment of sensitive uses into the separation distances of industry i.e.. Transfer Station, Sewage Treatment Plan and Kraft Factory to prevent future land use conflicts.
- EPA recommends consideration of Ministerial Direction 1 and the General Practice Note on Potentially Contaminated Land (PPN30) is considering long term planning for Timboon and Simpson – relating to environmental conditions of land proposed to be used for a sensitive use are suitable, including former farming activities on sites.

- Wannon Water request Integrated Water Management solutions be considered for both towns and Wannon Water work with Council to create a coordinated approach.
- Meeting local business owners and residents would be more effective than consultants developing the Plan.