

● Book 1 Strategy

Planning Framework



Introduction

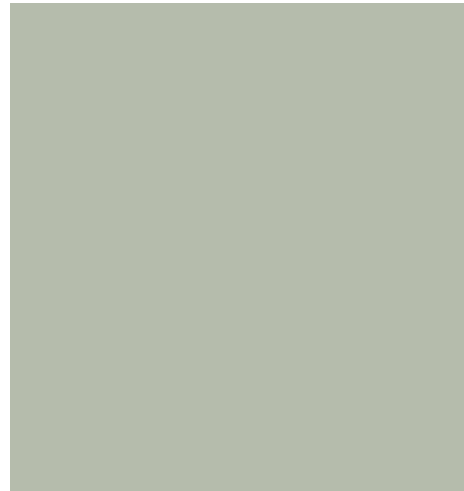
The provision of services and activities accessed in traditional town centres, is progressing through a rapid period of change. These changes are also impacting on the form and function of our built environment and in turn, how that environment responds to the community. It is therefore important that there be planned guidance in the way that both present and future development reflects the community desire for that interaction now, and in the future.

The purpose of the Structure Plan is to therefore:

- guide future development;
- set priorities for the provision of new community facilities and services;
- establish a series of project led initiatives to achieve the community desire for a regional centre;
- clearly outline the character of future development and its contribution to the town environment;
- position Council and community to move ahead with confidence in the growth of Batemans Bay.

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1.0 Structure Plan Framework

1.1 What is a Structure Plan?

Batemans Bay is the main activity centre for the Eurobodalla Shire. As such, it will be the continued focus for increased commercial, tourism and retail development over the next 25 years. The Town Centre Structure Plan (The Plan) has been prepared to direct and manage this increased growth and activity, and to ensure that it occurs in such a way that reflects the aspirations of the people who live, work and visit the town centre.

In order to manage this growth and change, the Plan sets out objectives, strategies and actions to be achieved in future development and improvements within the town centre. These objectives and directions have been grouped into seven main themes, which will apply over the whole town centre. Implementation of these objectives and directions will be through the framework of the precincts and key sites ('Book 2') Design theme objectives and built-form framework are outlined within 'Book 3'. Collectively, these three books reflect the vision for the town centre.

Community consultation was carried out during December 2005 and January 2006, including community open days and information sessions. Separate community workshops and business group presentations were conducted, to identify outcomes for traffic management and parking. Feedback from these sessions has been used to finalise and improve the Plan. The re-drafting of the Plan has sought to respond to the community input in identifying important issues, such as a more diverse residential/accommodation mix, identifying where higher structures may be acceptable and which areas should be protected from higher densities, improving streetscapes and public places, and improving accessibility, particularly for pedestrians.

The Plan is an enduring document, incorporating objectives for the next 25 years. The changes proposed in the Plan, will take place incrementally, with some occurring in the short term but most over a longer time scale. Monitoring the implementation of the structure plan and reviewing and updating to take these changes into account, will be important throughout the life of the Plan, to ensure that it remains a responsive and flexible planning tool.

The Structure Plan is not a legislative document; it is a visionary document setting out the strategic planning framework for future development. It does not propose, change or imply zoning over individual sites, this is the job of the Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The Structure Plan does however provide guidance for the preparation of the Shire-wide LEP and provide a framework within which decisions on development, use and scale can be made. Given that the Plan deals with outcomes on a broad scale, the more detailed development controls will be included within a Shire-wide Development Control Plan and Place statements. Book 4, 'Future Directions', details the development standards, provisions and directions for drafting of the new LEP and Shire-wide DCP

1.2 Land to which the Plan Applies

The study area is identified as the Batemans Bay town centre and adjacent industrial areas. The plan also relates to the immediate residential areas where they interact with the town centre. These residential areas, in terms of their future planning are guided by the directions within the Greater Batemans Bay Structure Plan, (Adopted by Council May 2007) They are referred to here in their support role of present and future capacity to respond and direct immediate town centre development.

The plan has effect over all land within the Town Centre presently zoned 3(a) – Business, Industrial land zoned 4(a) and adjacent Residential 2T zone, under the Eurobodalla Urban Local Environmental Plan 1999 as shown on the study area map.

1.3 Structure Plan Core Principles

Promote and reinforce the role of Batemans Bay as the main 'street-based' activity centre for the Shire, supported by strategically located major retail/commercial businesses;

Support and enhance the diversity of services and activities within the town centre, together with the primacy of active street frontages and foreshore atmosphere;

Enhance the existing pedestrian network and reinforce the town centre as a pedestrian based environment with the opportunity for Clyde and Orient streets to be a shared walking and traffic zone;

Over the next 25 years, facilitate the integration of additional commercial and



residential floorspace within new development on land currently used for at-grade car parking;

Improve recreational opportunities along the foreshore and the interface between the foreshore and the commercial sectors of the town centre;

Maintain a 'human scale' of the built-form with building heights limited to 3 or 4 floors with upper floors stepped back, such that larger developments have respect for the immediate environment and consideration of view sharing with other sites within the centre.

Create a range of strategically located spaces that facilitate community activity interaction and that have good pedestrian links both to the active street frontages and foreshore areas

Provide a network of access pathways and linkages that allow easy pedestrian mobility through, and into the town centre, including access by alternate transport modes.

Facilitate improvements to the public transport services linking the centre with its catchment and the provision/arrangement of transport access facilities

Facilitate additional and improved public parking to accommodate the increasing demand, whilst requiring that residential development provides adequate on-site parking.

1.4 Process to Develop the Structure Plan

The project to develop a Structure Plan for the Batemans Bay town centre commenced in May 2005, and has involved considerable community input and guidance throughout the process as well as background research and analysis

by the project team. This has provided an important basis for the development of the structure plan. The key stages of the process are outlined below.

The Draft Structure Plan Framework

- The **Key Issues and Opportunities** provides a detailed analysis and review of the form and function of the present Batemans Bay town centre. This analysis will set the context for the development of the structure plan document and subsidiary studies.
- Establishing the **Vision** will be the starting point for the development of plans for the town centre area. The vision is based on an expression of the views, values and ideas put to Council and the Steering Team during workshops and community open days. The outcomes of the shire-wide IRIS study also raised aspects of town centre form which many in the community were keen to see reflected within structure plan principles. Visioning for areas like the town centre explore the depth and breadth of local values, going beyond individual site or development context. It will identify what is desired to create an active and vibrant centre for the next twenty-five year period.
- Strategic **Core Principles** link the vision and the strategic framework directions. The strategic core principles were established to provide a common set of 'planning rules' for the preparation of the precinct functions and urban design form. These principles represent strategic planning, urban design and integrated access objectives and relationships for the town centre.
- The **Draft Structure Plan** (framework) was prepared for two main reasons. Firstly it is a means to "telegraph" the planning principles for future development both at a local and regional level. In turn, providing clear guidance for the design parameters of future development, such that it reflects the intended form to be inscribed by the Structure Plan.

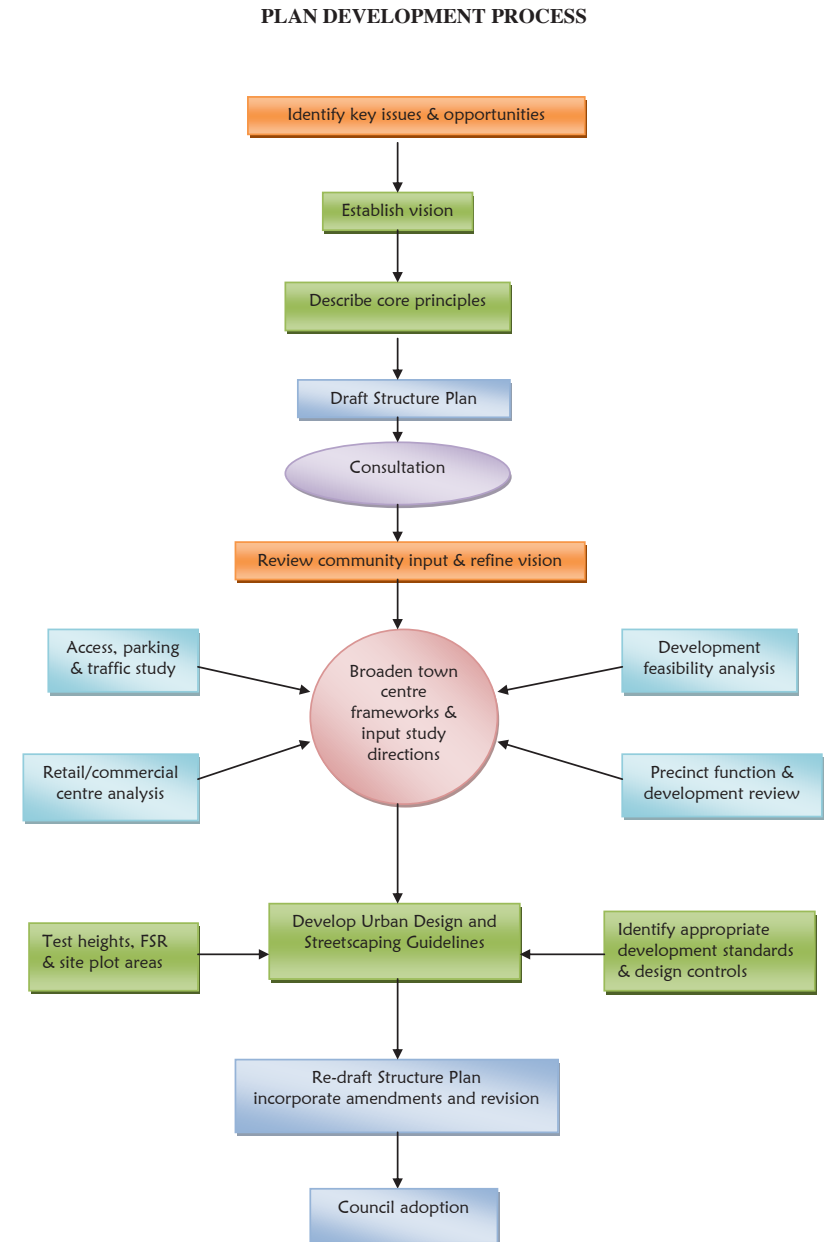


fig 1.4.1 plan development process

Secondly, it provides security to the community about adopted key aspects of the preferred design framework. In particular, the structure plan incorporates guidance on the overall layout of the town centre and its appearance, expressed in over-all heights, streetscaping, urban-form and access provisions.

- **Community Consultation** has taken place both prior and following the preparation of the draft Structure Plan. Councillor workshops and community open days were held to discuss the vision and planning directions. Council's project steering committee together with presentation and feed-back from the business and development community of Batemans Bay, have committed time expertise and knowledge to the drafting of the frameworks. The consultation process was aided by detailed graphics of future streetscapes prepared by a local artist, enabling visual presentation of the town centre vision.

The Structure Plan Format

The structure plan is divided into four main sections or 'books'. Figure 1.4.2 illustrates the structure Plan layout. Although, these sections are technically self-inclusive, the core principles are 'woven' through the objectives of all sections.

Book 1: Planning Framework;

This section enunciates the vision and how the town centre will reflect this vision in development growth over the next twenty five years. The 'vision' is derived partly from the setting and historic influences that have shaped the activity within the Town Centre and partly also by the communities desire and aspirations for the town centre environment. This section also sets out the legislative requirements, 'fundamentals' in moving through the planning process.

This section also sets the thematic framework and consequent directions to be achieved in future development and investment in the town centre. The thematic framework is grouped into seven main themes of:

- Economy and employment
- Community – population
- Community – facilities
- Health & education
- Enhancing the "Nature Coast"
- Managing urban growth
- Access & transport integration

The directions provide the purpose or aim of each of these themes and the actions describe how these aims will be achieved.

Book 2: Centre Framework;

Contains greater detail on the emerging precincts Framework and how the town centre 'functions' in meeting the day-to-day community and visitor needs. These precincts play a key role in both meeting these needs, and in sustaining the economic vitality required to stimulate future growth. Business co-location within precincts, encourages support synergies for those businesses and flow-on efficiencies for public servicing and participation.

Encouraging new development and re-development to respect the principles of each precinct, will assist in realising the other strategies in the Plan. For example, designing and locating mainly tourist retail and services within the Foreshore precinct will assist in meeting the pedestrian and vehicular access strategies for pedestrian friendly thoroughfares within this area.

STRUCTURE PLAN LAYOUT

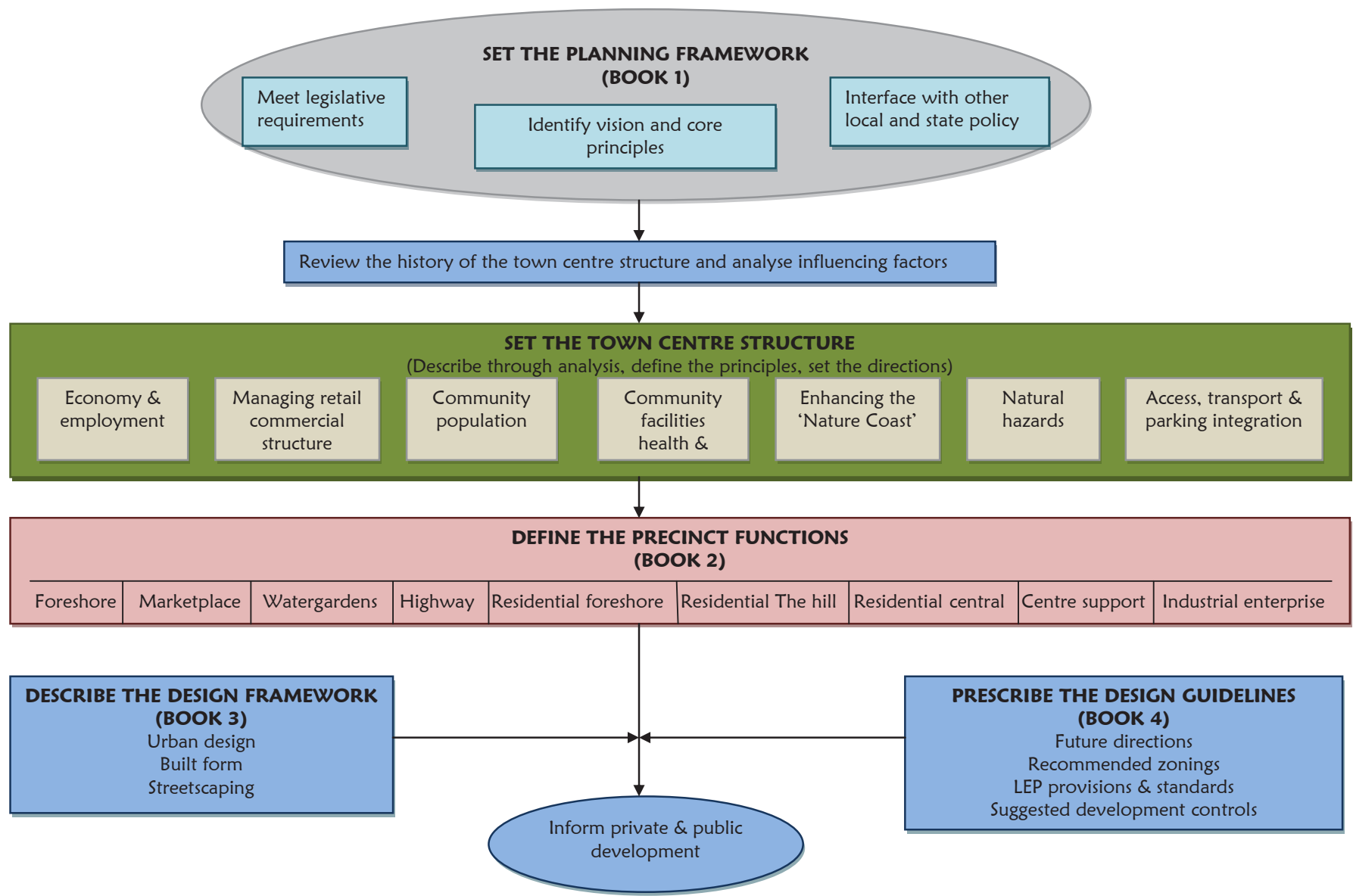


fig 1.4.2 structure plan layout

Book 3: Design Framework;

Describes the desired town centre 'form' or pattern framework. By using mainly graphical descriptors, this section provides existing best-use examples for describing the future vision for the form of the town centre. The issues of primary concern here, are the elements of development which have the greatest impact at the public interface. Urban design - the development in its setting; Built form - the way the building presents and functions for its purpose; and Streetscaping - is the building a 'good neighbour'? That it does not dominate or counter the contextual functioning of the whole street.

Book 4: Implementation;

Houses the prescriptive or 'development controls' in guiding the strategy outcomes. This section includes specific controls for the whole town centre which will inform the development standards and provisions for the drafting of the comprehensive LEP and Shire-wide DCP.

Other documents influencing this plan

- Other documents that complement and inform this Plan, include:
- Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy (Eurobodalla Shire Council 2006)
- Coastal Design Guidelines for NSW (Coastal Council of NSW, 2003)
- Batemans Bay Coastline Hazard Management Plan (Eurobodalla Shire Council, 2001)
- Batemans Bay Vulnerability Study (Eurobodalla Shire Council, 1996)
- Illawarra and South Coast Retail Centres Study (HILL PDA, 2004)
- Greater Batemans Bay Structure Plan (Eurobodalla Shire Council 2006)

- Community Employment Strategy (Diana Gibbs & Partners)
- The Social Plan (Eurobodalla Shire Council 2004)
- Business Retention and Expansion Study (Eurobodalla Shire Council)
- Eurobodalla Tourism Board Strategic Plan
- IRIS Survey Focus Paper 2005
- Eurobodalla Health Cluster Plan 2005 (GSAHS)

1.5 Sustainable Development

The Batemans Bay town centre Structure Plan is an informing and guiding document to Council's Management Plan. Through these plans, Council's aim is to mitigate the pressures of development on land, water, atmosphere, human resources, and biodiversity. Council also has a growing responsibility to plan for the consequences of, and impact from, climatic change.

Our aim is consistent with the Regional State of the Environment Reporting, (ACT Commissioner of Environment), in that we will work with the community towards achieving social, economic and ecological wellbeing. These same core tenets are ingrained in Councils Structure Plans to assist decision-making for appropriate development, where there are both individual and cumulative impacts of development activities on natural and built environments.

Central to the principles of sustainable development is the argument that there are limits to urban growth. Development that does not consider the ramifications of its impact and is inappropriate to its setting, is inefficient and brings with it a range of social inequities. This strategy recognises that the carrying capacity of the natural environment and the resources that are needed to sustain growing urban areas, are finite. The concepts of containment, optimal

use of our urban areas, maximising existing infrastructure, re-development through increased densities and urban renewal, is an attempt to address the challenge of capacity planning.

In terms of sustainable development, the primary purpose of the Structure Plan is to protect and enhance the environment and achieve a sustainable pattern and form of development. This will be done principally by:

- Encouraging a design ethos for additional economic, tourism and employment - generating development based on the principles of Sustainable development;
- Protecting the marine location and natural environment for future generations;
- Using infrastructure more efficiently by providing greater densities of development where existing areas are underdeveloped or appropriate for re-development, and where services will accommodate the development loading;
- To maximise centrality of activity to promote economic and social benefits and reduce impact on 'green-field' areas to accommodate alternative and changing forms of built development;
- Protecting and enhancing features of importance in the natural and built environment;
- Reducing the need to travel by private vehicle, encouraging the availability of a choice of transport modes and improve access for the community;

- Encouraging high-quality development and innovative design that reflects a principal activity centre identity and local character;
- Pursue additional opportunities for mixed uses within development styles, including residential development and affordable housing.

1.6 Financing

There are several avenues to source funds to implement the actions identified in the Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy. These same sources may also be used to fund public services and facilities identified in structure plans for the major towns.

Anticipating the growth in property owners capable of claiming a pension rebate on rates, water and sewerage charges will rise and potentially reduce the 'purchasing power' of the rate revenue, it is expected new public services - particularly in the area of community and environmental services - will be funded by government grants, development contributions and supplemented by rate revenues. It is expected the rise in pension rebates will erode the value of rating of new properties.

Sources of funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

Council general funds

General funds are allocated in the annual review of the Management Plan. This strategy may cause submissions to be made to the future reviews where consistent with the broad or specific objectives of the Management Plan.

State and federal programs

Submissions will be made to the NSW and Commonwealth Government where programs for funding are made available for which specific actions of the settlement strategy would qualify, for example, the state Planning Reform Program and the federal Natural Heritage Trust.

Public land assembly

Council-owned land may be assembled to facilitate development or to generate revenue through land sales for the provision of infrastructure. Commercial lease or licensing arrangements for the private use of public land, including Crown land vested in Council's care and control, may generate funds. Partnerships with the private sector may be arranged to facilitate development. Returns on development may then be used to seed other commercial acquisitions or developments, or to acquire land or facilities in strategic locations appropriate to demographic needs.

Debt

Raising debt against the income of Council may be used to fund services, studies and other actions. Servicing of some of that debt may be recouped through the leasing of crown land vested in Council's care and control, such as caravan parks, through public land assembly and sale, though development contributions for capital works and development servicing plans for water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure.

Development contributions and Planning Agreements

Recent changes to section 94 of the Environmental, Planning and Assessment Act have expanded the ways in which Council can levy new development to

contribute towards the cost of providing public facilities that caters to demands created by that development. Council can now negotiate planning agreements as one-off financing mechanisms for specific infrastructure items as well as preparing contributions plans to levy standard rates for particular developments.

Development contribution plans will draw on facilities or projects adopted in current plans of management, cultural plan and estuary management plans for example, identifying nett present value (NPV) of those facilities and amortising maintenance and renewal of those assets. When those public facilities cannot be provided on site, a contribution in accord with the development contribution plan may be paid to a public authority. Contributions are made towards upgrading or expanding roads, water, sewer, stormwater, waste, buildings and other infrastructure based on the additional demands or loads placed on the infrastructure by new development.

Development incentives

More intensive use of key sites that are identified in structure plans as being capable of accommodating higher densities or heights may be facilitated in exchange for the provision of public facilities, such as car parking, on or near those sites. Incentives such as bonus rights may also be used to secure land through dedication as public open space, road, car parking or environmental protection.

Rezoning levies

Opportunities to levy developers on the rezoning of land for a higher and more intense use, from rural residential to urban for example, will be explored. This mechanism may apply as a standard rate per hectare of land rezoned to provide funds for public services and facilities, and to respond to the environmental and

social impacts of population growth.

Infrastructure fund

Raised by special general rate variations, infrastructure funds are committed to the renewal and rehabilitation of existing road and bridges, civic buildings and recreation facilities. The value of the fund is increased by rate-pegging set annually by the state government.

Water cycle fund

Dividends derived from any profit on operations of water and sewer in accord with state government guidelines are dedicated to the management of the river catchments from which water is harvested or into which wastewater is discharged.

Stormwater fund

Raised by a flat charge on developed urban properties, the stormwater charge is used to maintain and renew existing stormwater systems. It will also be used to improve the quality of stormwater discharged into waterways. A mix of hard and soft (or natural) infrastructure may be used. Developed urban properties will be identified by connection to water, waste services or urban properties with buildings constructed as identified by land monitor.

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Matrix

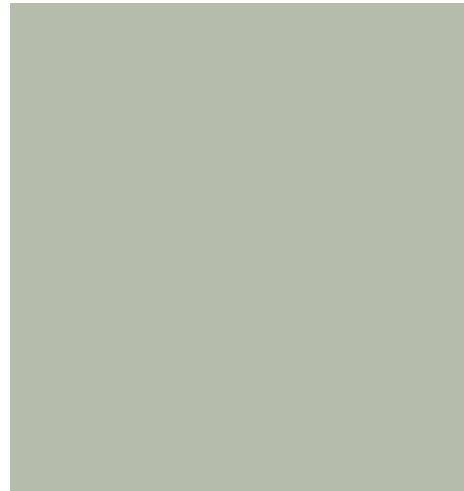
A TBL matrix that ranks projects according to the environmental, social and financial outcomes may be used to assist the prioritisation of new projects or facilities. The matrix places equal importance on each aspect and is a means to implement the principles of sustainable development.

A TBL matrix may be used along the following lines.

- list key directions, principles or objectives of those strategies and plans, grouped into the areas of environment, social and economic;
- cross-list the set of projects or facilities identified in those strategies and plans;
- rank the anticipated outcome brought about by those projects or facilities against the directions and objectives of each particular strategy or plan;
- calculate the initial capital and recurrent costs of the top projects or facilities in accord with asset management principles;
- estimate the sources of funds to support those top-ranked projects or facilities; and
- place those projects or facilities into the draft Management Plan.

● Strategy

Planning Framework



2.0 REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The town centre area has developed within a natural environment which if acknowledged and preserved, will contribute positively to the vitality, amenity and attractiveness of all precincts. The heavily vegetated slopes forming a backdrop, rising from the town centre, softens the hard form of the built environment hugging the foreshore.

The transformation of the foreshore parking area into a town park and recreation area will contribute another dimension and enhance the coastal setting. This park will be a destination area in itself and with improved accessibility, will provide direct pedestrian linkages to adjacent foreshore areas and open space surrounding the Town Centre. The Water Gardens at the southern fringe of the town will also be directly connected to the foreshore via the 'Green Boulevard', which together with providing vehicle access, will provide a linear open-space spine through the town.

2.1 Natural Setting and Character

The town centre, in its natural setting poses challenges for a prosperous and developing urban centre. The desire to maintain and enhance

the foreshore and coastal environs may be compromised if the planning for development is not understood and controlled in harmony with this environment.

Topography

The town centre is located on a sand spit extending northward into the Clyde River. The relatively flat terrain provides good conditions for development, although low elevation results in susceptibility to natural hazards, such as flooding and ocean inundation. The Centre is naturally constrained by the escarpment and steep land on the southern edge. Future development (particularly in terms of height) will need to be sensitive to these natural features.

Flooding

Much of the Town Centre is liable to flooding, coastal inundation or impact from wave run-up. The current town centre Development Control Plan provides ground floor height controls to minimise risk from flood and ocean inundation. These controls will remain a significant constraint on development (Batemans Bay Coastline Hazard Management Plan; Batemans Bay Vulnerability Study).

Vegetation

Pre-settlement vegetation of the sand spit – where the town centre is now located – consisted of communities of Coastal Wet Heath Swamp Forest and Mud Flat Salt Marshes. Tree species would have included Casuarina spp, Melaleuca spp and Mangroves. Remnants of the Heath Swamp Forest community remain on the low lying vacant land south of the Soldiers Club. Apart from this remnant, no other evidence of the original vegetation community remains within the Town Centre.

Trees, tree groups and green edges are, however, integral to the character of the town centre. The remnants of indigenous vegetation that occur along the southern edge of the centre and on the higher lands above the centre are visible in many locations within the town.

Vegetation within the Centre and views towards tree groups both within and surrounding the Centre contribute to the natural character of the centre and should be retained.



2.2 Regional Centre - Economy

Batemans Bay town centre has evolved to a sub-regional commercial centre supporting a strong trading position providing services to the greater local and regional area. The centre demonstrates a good history of minimal floorspace vacancies, which has contributed to its active retail presence and growing appeal for development potential. A role acknowledged by Council and will be enhanced in this position.

However, the centre, not unlike other centres of similar size and development status, is experiencing commercial/retail compartmentalisation of its service provision. Recent development and pressure for large floor-plate retail to complement the existing commercial offer has emphasised this centre evolution. The economic and community benefits of co-location synergies, have aided stabilisation and growth of other centres, therefore prompting precinct planning for the town centre. Although the precincts display differing commercial 'flavour' and offer, there are opportunities to build on these differing functions and roles to create an integrated and active centre.

Large-scale development is a recent phenomenon within the centre and is evidenced by the Stockland mall complex. This complex has set a commercial direction, and likely lead to further development pressure.

The Town Centre currently supports in excess of 65 000m² of active retail/commercial floor space 'Neighbourhood Centres Retail Study' (Wakefield Planning 2006). However this generous floorspace offer, does struggle to accommodate the seasonal influx of tourists and visitors during peak holiday demand periods, which in itself reflects the tourist centric nature of many businesses.

While busy during business hours, the Town Centre can be very quiet and somewhat deserted in the evenings and non-traditional trading hours. There are opportunities to introduce more varied and longer operational activities such as restaurants, bars and cultural spaces, which would increase activity levels and a sense of vibrancy and safety within the centre.

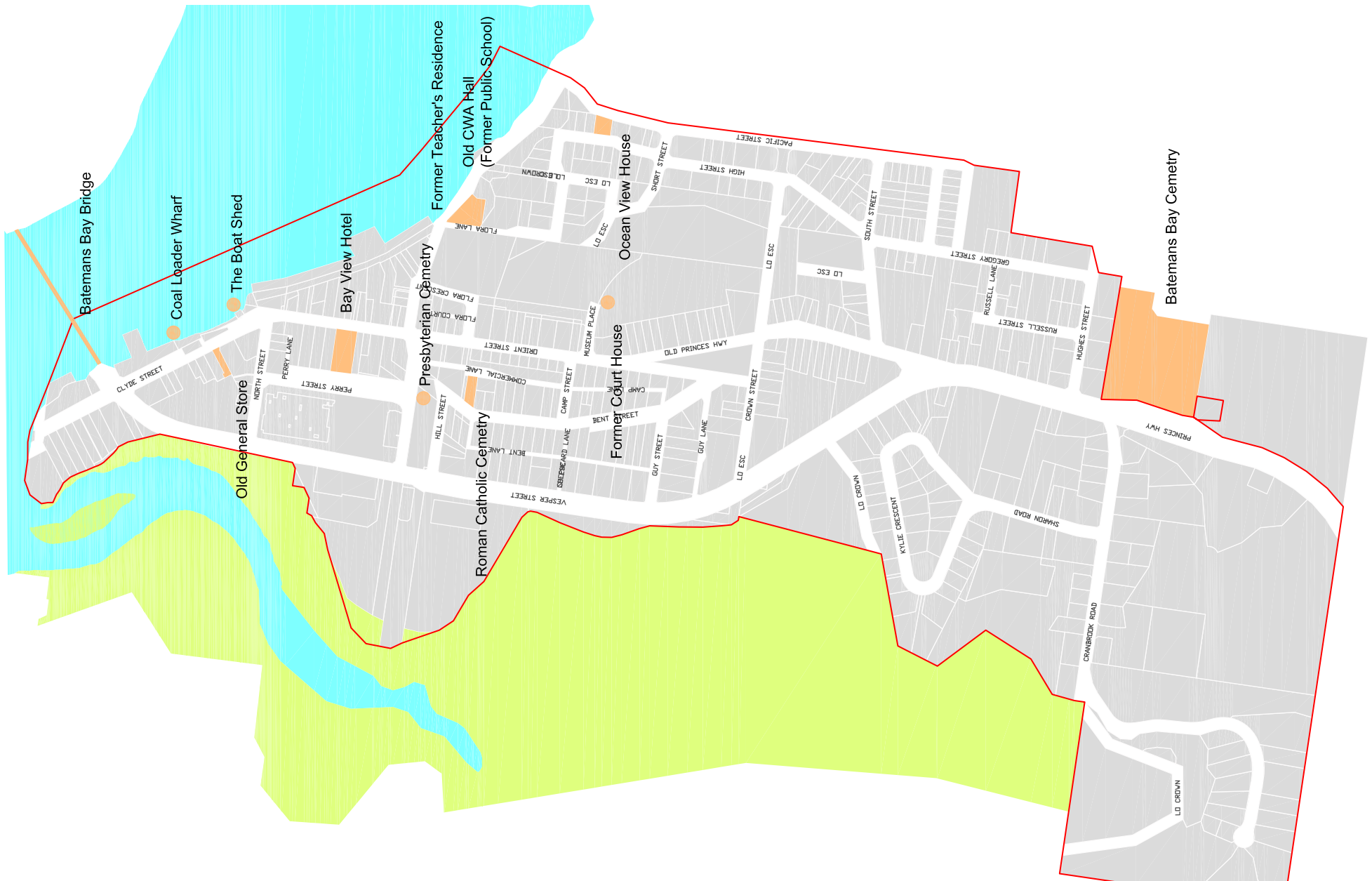
The town centre has not accommodated the usual level of in-town residential population that traditionally provide heightened levels of passive security. This may also explain, to some extent, the lack of out-of-hours entertainment options and mainly mono-retail purpose. Economic assessment of future development within the centre, would suggest a greater capacity for mixed-use - including higher densities of residential accommodation - directly benefiting diversity and imbue heightened levels of activity.

2.3 Historic Background

The Broulee, Walbanja, Budawang and Murramarang people originally populated the area for some 20,000 years prior to European settlement. Localised artefacts and similar indigenous coastal patterns indicate that permanent camps were set up along the river to take advantage of fresh water, fishing and the use of river pebbles to manufacture rudimentary tools. European settlers developed a fishing village in 1840 and in 1841 the town was surveyed for future sub-division.

Through the nineteenth century, the area incorporating the current Town Centre, developed around the industries of timbergetting, farming, fishing, mining (of quartz and alluvium) and shipbuilding, (Batemans Bay & Clyde River Historical Society). The popularity of the area as a holiday destination occurred gradually throughout the 20th century. The town centre and adjacent coastal

Batemans Bay Town Centre Structure Plan



map 2.3 heritage items





foreshores present a demonstrated record of Aboriginal habitation followed by European primary industry.

Heritage is an integral part of the town centre and is important for its current and future character, and long-term viability. Although in terms of representative numbers the items are not many, they do mark significant events and periods of architectural and cultural development within the area.

Heritage items

The following form the currently identified heritage items:

- Bay View Hotel, (1892), 20 Orient St, Batemans Bay.

- Presbyterian Cemetery, (1889), 1 Bent St (adjacent Beach Rd), Batemans Bay
- Roman Catholic Cemetery (1874), 1 Bent St, Batemans Bay.
- Former Court House and Police complex (1905), Museum Place, Batemans Bay.
- Coal Loader Wharf and other public wharves
- The Boatshed, Orient St (Cnr North Rd), Batemans Bay.
- Former Teacher's Residence, (1895), 8 Beach Rd, Batemans Bay.
- CWA Hall / former Public School (1894), 10 Beach Rd, Batemans Bay

2.4 Community and Culture

In addition to the retail, commercial and residential roles, the Town Centre has a vital role to play in the local and regional community life and the provision of social services and facilities. The town centre has a strong cluster of existing community and civic facilities on the southern fringe of the town, including Community Centre Youth Centre and museum. An aquatic centre is located to the immediate west of town and together with the playing fields provides a valuable venue for out-of-business-hours activity. The near-by presence of the University annex and library at Hanging Rock, south-east of the town provides educational and cultural opportunities for the local community, drawing people to the area.

The strong presence of community, civic and educational facilities in and around the Town Centre makes a significant contribution to ensuring Batemans Bay functions as a well-rounded activity centre, building on the strong retail offer.

Further opportunities to strengthen the social and community role of the town should be explored and promoted, particularly to improve social connectivity,

community health and wellbeing, invigoration of participation and involvement in community activities, and building the capacity of the community to identify and meet their own needs. The commitment by Council to the construction of the Foreshore Park, commenced 2006, will introduce a main activity and relaxation venue for the centre.

As the in-town and visiting population increases and ages, community and social infrastructure will need to respond to meet these new and expanded needs. Likewise, the housing stock will need to respond and reflect those changes, including the inclusion of affordable housing choices.

2.5 Access, Transport and Parking

Most trips to the town centre are currently made by private vehicle, which in itself places a high level of dependence upon the infrastructure and services that facilitate that access. Issues such as easy and efficient access into the town centre and selective parking have generally been seen with a high level of expectation. However, there is a need to shift the balance to provide greater priority to pedestrians and public transport, but also recognising the important role of the local and regional road network. The location of Clyde and Orient Streets diverting off the town Highway by-pass ensures, to some degree, that the impact of traffic on the pedestrian environment of the core retail area is managed. Unlike other towns, the main street has not become a physical barrier dividing the town functions.

Nevertheless, vehicle circulation through the town centre from south to north can pose difficulties, mainly in navigating across Beach Road. Council has committed to the construction of the Batemans Bay by-pass which will divert through traffic from Beach Road along the Highway and by-pass the town

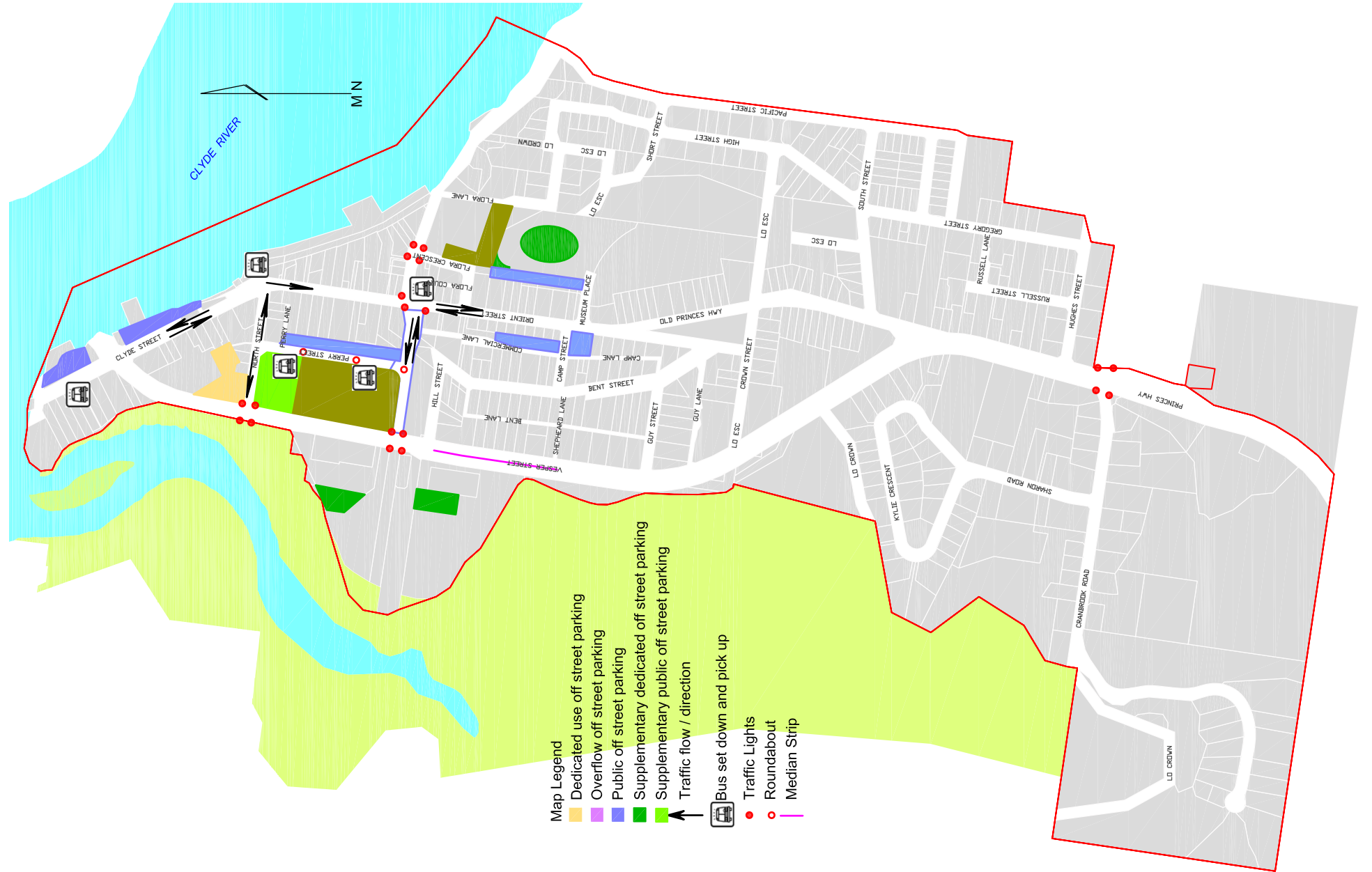
centre. Despite experiencing circulation difficulties at peak seasonal tourist times, the capacity of the existing road network appears adequate to sustain likely future growth needs; however there will be a need to consider traffic management measures and other initiatives.

Council has in the past, considered options such as closed pedestrian malls and limiting private vehicle movements. Town Centre businesses do however, rely heavily on vehicle access and parking convenience and these would suffer under a mall arrangement. Although this will invariably change as the centre grows and other forms of people movement and access are integrated with new development types and use locations.

Although there are peak periods when the centre experiences over-demand parking issues, in comparable terms Batemans Bay enjoys a high level of parking facilities and access. Akin to a good road infrastructure, adequate convenient and safe parking is crucial for the health of the commercial activities in the centre. Although a significant portion of parking currently accommodated on the foreshore will be removed as the town Park emerges, other parking options will come on stream, both through private and public development.

The effectiveness of additional retail and commercial floor space will be dependent on the timely provision of additional parking, management of access and time availability of spaces. It is also important that the pressure of development led parking demand does not compromise the amenity of the Centre and importantly, the foreshore areas.

Recent road infrastructure works carried out by both Council and RTA have gone a long way to alleviating route management and access into the Town Centre. Private developments (principally the new retail centre) have expanded available



map 2.5 Batemans Bay Town access and parking

parking spaces. Currently there is a greater number of carparking spaces within the Centre than previously provided.

Parking location	Prior to Stockland Mall development	Prior to Foreshore Park	Upon completion of Foreshore Park
Off-street parking	715	559	503
On-street parking	298	282	298 (+ 19 LVP)
Development sites public parking	395	925	925
Total	1408	1766	1726

Note; LVP = Long vehicle parking

table 2.5 current and past public parking status

Council has previously engaged consultants to reassess traffic flow modelling for the Town Centre. The results of this study will reinforce and support the carparking options outlined later in the Plan.

2.6 Views

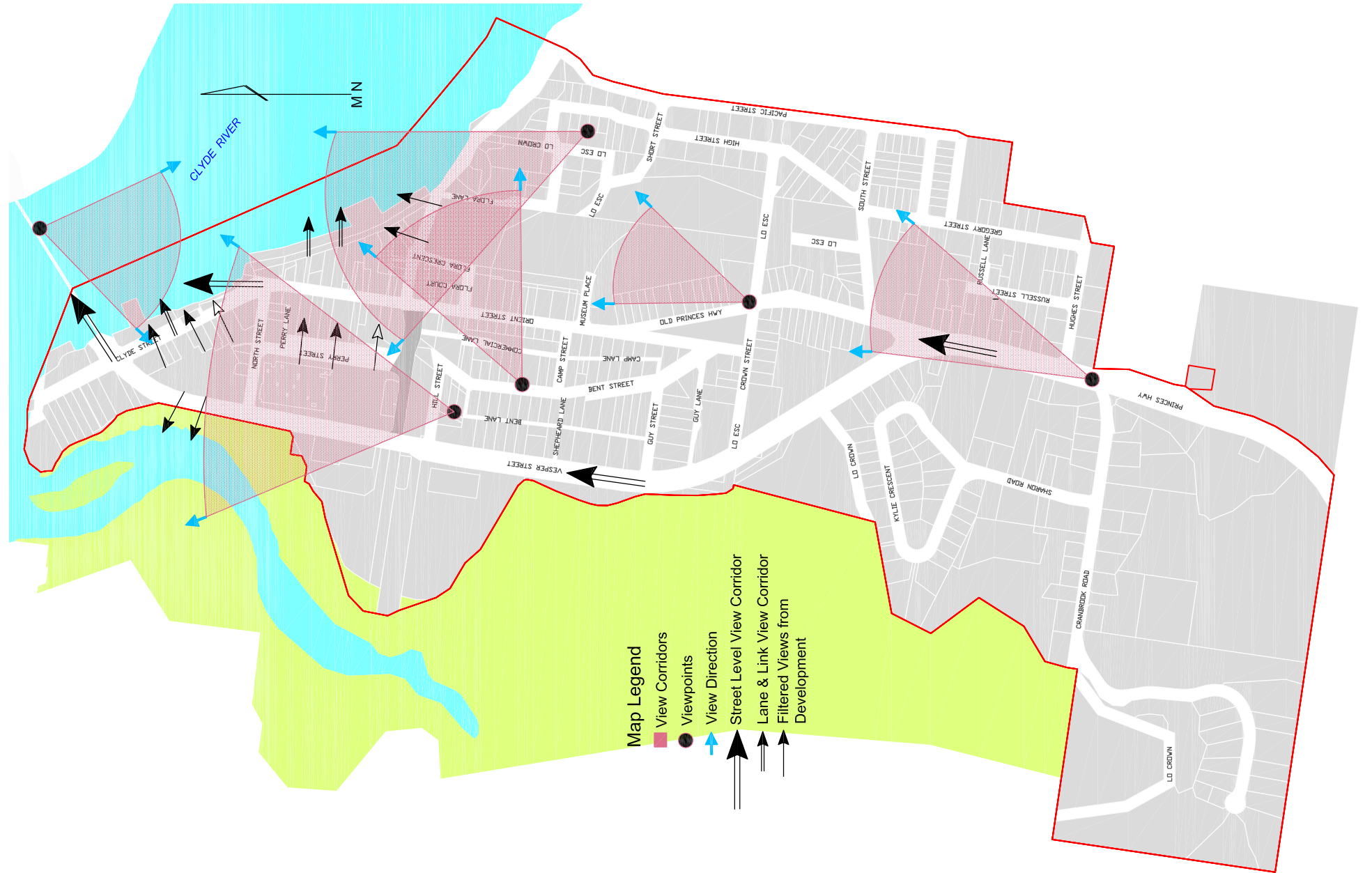
The town centre has a unique sense of place, imparted by its proximity to the bay, human scale architecture and ambience derived from its history as a ‘seaside village’. The approach to the town across the bridge and Clyde Street in particular is characterised by sweeping views of the foreshore and wharf area, extending to the forested backdrop.

Views out of the centre to the elevated residential areas and across the bay serve as important reference points whilst navigating through the town and

add visual character. Open views, both to the vegetated residential areas and to the forested hill-lines distant, are prominent features for the town environment. These views can be less dominant from within the centre, and often screened by the close range buildings. However, well framed views are afforded, and it is important that these are retained and preferably enhanced, both by creating new viewing opportunities and in improvements in surrounding built-form design.

Views to the water accessed along street and linkage view lines are of particular importance because they assist in associating the town centre with the foreshore and marine heritage. Water views also act as destination attractors, directing the curious to the waters edge, creating further opportunities for business in foreshore locations.





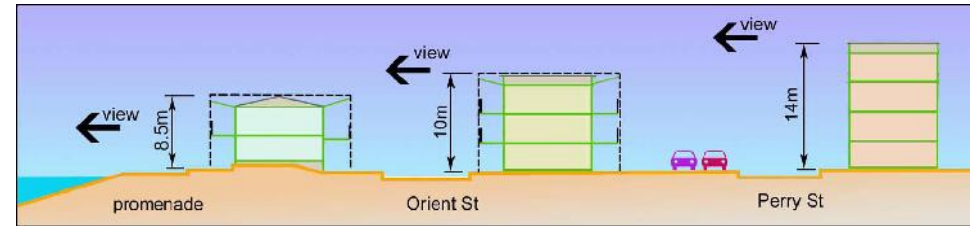
map 2.6 Batemans Bay Town centre view corridors

The roof forms within the town centre are visually prominent due to the low lying topography. This allows views from one roof to another, and from higher roofs down to lower roofs. Roofscapes also have the potential to diminish views into, and out of, the centre. These roofscapes are also present as a prominent aspect of the centre's form, when viewed from the waterways and the bridge approach.

2.7 Existing Heights

The town centre currently exhibits a low scale built form, with most buildings either single or two storey in height. The suite of buildings making up the Soldier's Club and the IRT aged living facility are the exceptions, but still only extend to a maximum of four storeys. As a result the street spaces within the town centre generally have an 'open' appearance, due to the low scale buildings and wide road reserves. Many of the buildings reflect a period of construction and design that requires either re-furbishment or re-development. Also, many sites remain under-developed and could support greater intensification to optimise site and development potential. Due to the location and proximity to the town centre, it is the foreshore areas that will experience first, the pressure to develop.

Community feedback has indicated that while they value the low-scale and relative 'village' ambience of the centre, some areas may be suited to higher built form. Certainly, the community preference echoed a desire to retain development densification within the built footprint and reflect the existing centre hierarchy. This has reinforced centre development, which concentrates higher developments within town centres, emphasising the importance that the town centre is the civic and commercial heart of the region.



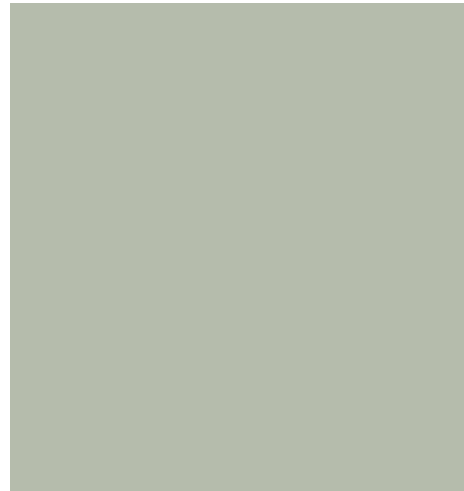
dia 2.7 existing height regime - view sharing

The present operating controls for the town centre have incorporated the principle of view/aspect sharing, (i.e. height envelope increases as the distance increases from the foreshore). Although this arrangement ensures level locality equity throughout the centre, it can present economic barriers for redevelopment of sensitive sites in marginal markets. It can also implant unintentional restrictions on achieving creative design outcomes.

There are therefore opportunities for higher scale development on landmark sites. These are sites that are the focus of activity, form entry points to the centre, display potential for public facility outcomes, or provide opportunities to consolidate existing activity through more efficient use of space.

● Strategy

Thematic Framework (Fundamentals)



3.0 TOWN CENTRE STRUCTURE

Batemans Bay is largely made up of single and two story buildings with a gentle increase in height around the commercial centres of Orient and Clyde Streets and Beach Road. Most commercial development consists of finer grained, smaller buildings that offer a variety, texture and atmosphere to the streetscape. One notable exception to this, is Stockland Mall shopping centre which is a larger format development consisting of a retail mall sitting atop podium parking.

Historically, residential developments have consisted of large single storey homes on substantial land parcels however many of these allotments close to the centre are now dominated by flat type housing and motel accommodation. More recently, increased land values around the foreshore have seen a rise in the development and proposed development of two and three storey medium density apartment and townhouse complexes, a trend which is expected to continue and will significantly alter the scale of built form around these areas in the coming decade.

Significant stretches of open space exist right along the foreshore that allows free access to the coast and creates an impressive and

continuous foreshore reserve. This will be augmented and expanded upon with the completion of the new Foreshore Park currently under construction by Council.

A pattern of higher intensity uses such as hospitality, speciality retail and professional offices are clustered around Orient Street and Beach road, this creates a bustling main street atmosphere and acts as a tourist drawcard. The proximity of these higher intensity areas to open space and the foreshore cafe, restaurant area, creates a hub of activity during the summer tourist season.

The southern portion of the study area is dominated by business service and industrial development, interspersed by higher density of residential accommodation.

Generally, the quality of more modern developments is average and has resulted in some incongruent additions to the streetscape. Overall the commercial buildings along Clyde and Orient Streets are poorly presented and in need of upgrading and restoration. Built form along the two main entrance roads, Beach road from the east and the Highway both north and south, is inconsistent in its quality and presentation. This gives motorists an uninviting and confusing reception into the main commercial/tourist areas.

Recent proposals for developments along the foreshore are moving toward a higher density apartment/ townhouse style of accommodation with limited commercial offer at ground level. These developments are purporting a high level of finish and are aimed at the upper end of the real estate market, however the bulk and scale of these developments has, and will continue to alter the traditional character of the foreshore and this area of town.

3.1 Economy and Employment

Analysis

Eurobodalla Shire has grown rapidly over the last decade, largely due to an influx of new residents bringing new investment. The clean environment and mild climate of the Nature Coast offers an attractive lifestyle for all residents. Many ratepayers are non-resident, living elsewhere but owning holiday homes and investment properties in the Shire.

The Shire is located within easy driving time from Sydney and Canberra, with Batemans Bay being less than two hours drive from the centre of the ACT. This position relative to Canberra and Sydney, together with its many beaches, estuaries, attractive climate, and natural beauty, are considered a catalyst for investment and population growth, as more people seek a coastal lifestyle and retirement changes.

The industry profile of the Shire has changed considerably in the last two decades, with a contraction in the traditional agriculture, forestry and fishing industries (declined 6.3% to 4.2%) and a corresponding rise in the personal services, retail and health and community services sectors (increased 8.3% to 11.5%). This shift has seen significant growth in these and flow-on employment areas, replicating the national trend of employment concentration within regional centres. Another trend of significance is the growth of those in casual and part-time work which would in some way reflect the increase in single parent households (Economic & Employment Study, Dianna Gibbs & Partners, 2005)

The changing population and economic profile has repercussions for future management of the town centre environment. Demonstrated potential for both

vertical and horizontal intensification of built-form and established commercial, retail and infrastructure provision, will place the centre well to accommodate growth expectations. The Department of Planning's South Coast Regional Strategy predicts an increase of 4600 jobs for the Shire, with many of these jobs being absorbed in retail and community services. Existing town centres will undoubtedly accommodate many of these positions.

The distance barrier to the neighbouring regional cities (Canberra and Wollongong), and the inconvenience for the local community to gain quick access for health and education needs, has seen a rise in professional specialist visitation. This gives rise to the need to provide both work and residential accommodation for this growing sector of the commercial market. The town centre provides the right environment and level of services for this style of business provision. However, a higher standard of both commercial space and residential accommodation will need to be added to the existing stock to attract these professions. The area also has the added advantage of easy access to the Moruya Airport with direct flights to Sydney, and via Merimbula to Melbourne, which can assist specialist short stay visitation to become more viable. New developments need, however, to consider more flexibility in design to accommodate the multiple ways businesses wish to operate.

Batemans Bay has the necessary infrastructure and urban facilities to qualify as a regional centre. There is adequate land area to intensify forecast growth of its commercial, retail, residential, cultural and social offers, Neighbourhood Retail Centres Study, (Wakefield Planning 2006). It can establish a strong competitive position in the region by enhancing the places for work, shopping, recreation and entertainment on offer. This outcome can, and should, happen in accord with the South Coast Regional Strategy (Dept. of Planning 2006) for existing

centres intensification, ensuring that Batemans Bay reaches a level of urban maturity and a differentiated competitive position in the 'urban centre' market.

Opportunities

- Availability of development land and floor space to adequately absorb future growth within the existing urban footprint;
- Opportunities exist, both within existing redevelopment and new development to absorb a diverse mix of uses, which will activate a more intense centre;
- Opportunities to capitalise on the natural environment to encourage further local and national tourism growth for the short-term stay market;
- Potential increase in specialist and consultant visitation and requirement for higher quality accommodation for both specialist office and residential;
- The growing demographics will create opportunities for a more diverse consumer/provider mix and the consequent demand for retail space;
- A growing town centre economy with greater numbers of participating businesses will activate a demand for service and support businesses within the region.

Constraints

- The distance to adjoining regional centres is relatively close to still permit daily access for higher-order consumer products. Therefore, marketing of businesses and products availability within the Batemans Bay centre need to counter the attraction of other centres.
- The current land market is not yet robust enough to support a higher level of development and redevelopment. This activity may come at a much

more measured pace thus resulting in some outcomes taking longer time-frames to achieve;

- The town centre is not well serviced by public transport, the population is very car dependent, which in turn infers mobility and access barriers to higher order goods for those without individual vehicle choice;
- Many allotments within the town centre are held as individual owner titling or strata titling. Until the development market is stronger, this will tend to inhibit redevelopment of existing under-developed sites.

Directions - Retail/commercial

- New developments should incorporate retail uses on the ground level to create active street frontages;
- Provide incentives for joint development and amalgamation of adjacent lots to achieve enhanced development and retailing benefits;
- Require developments that exceed 1200m² in gross floor area – either individual or in combination - to provide an economic impact statement and retail study, addressing the impact of the proposed development on the economic health of the remainder of the town centre;
- Developments with frontages to Clyde Street and those properties fronting Murra Murra Mia Walkway should include retail tourism type businesses at ground level;
- Multi-level office development within the Watergardens Precinct should provide institutional and agency type office accommodation; and
- Redevelop Council-owned land for commercial development where appropriate and where this complements and enhances the town centre's economic well-being.

Directions - Residential

- New developments should incorporate residential living spaces at upper levels. Potential recipient sites could be the re-development of the Bridge Plaza site and the underdeveloped sites within the Watergardens Precinct;
- Support residential development by undertaking amenity improvements, such as streetscape upgrades, landscaping, improved street furniture and opportunities for public activities;
- Building design should provide for a mix of uses within a development, particularly in foreshore areas, Clyde Street and Murra Murra Mia Walkway;
- Permit parking facilities only for tourism accommodation and residential, where included in developments, within the Foreshore Precinct;
- Private residential living spaces included in developments within the Foreshore Precinct shall not be located within the foreshore facing aspect of the development. (i.e. only tourist accommodation shall be located within the foreshore facing aspect of these developments);
- Private residential living spaces included within developments, should not predominate over tourist accommodation for developments within the Foreshore Precinct;
- Negotiate with developers for joint development of adjacent lots (if this achieves good mixed use, including tourist accommodation and residential) where economies of scale are required to achieve good design outcomes.

Directions - Tourism

- Ensure that sites on the foreshore should incorporate tourist accommodation within upper levels;

- Install town directional signage along the foreshore promenade, Walkway, Watergardens and 'Green Boulevard' to the Market Place Precinct, prominent tourist accommodation and tourist facilities;
- Investigate options to provide intra-town mobility via shuttle bus or similar tourist transport; and
- Ensure that upper levels above retail spaces within developments in the Foreshore Precinct should be dedicated to tourism accommodation.
- Ensure that designs for new developments include integration of ecologically sustainable water practices and run-off management, through the approvals and certification process;
- Ensure that new developments install conduits within the development for fibre optic cabling and telecommunications cabling; and
- Ensure that new development proposals co-ordinate and demonstrate compatibility with both Council and RTA road infrastructure and reserves.

Directions - Infrastructure

- Co-ordinate infrastructure and services to meet the demand of new development and redevelopment within the Town Centre;
- Carry out design and construction of the Batemans Bay link road and connection to Surf Beach by-pass to divert through traffic from inner town thoroughfares;
- Introduce enhanced signage on periphery roads for access to vehicle parking, away from the main activity streets;
- Together with the foreshore town park improvements integrate new areas for long-vehicle parking west of the bridge, including signage on approaches to the town area;
- Provide major intersection and road treatments, particularly on Beach Road and the Highway by-pass to better manage traffic at peak loadings;
- Facilitate improvements to the public transport services linking the centre with the catchment area;
- Ensure that all infrastructure and services are gradually located below ground or within built structures such that streetscapes and view corridors are not impeded by servicing conduits;

3.2 Managing Retail/commercial Structure

A major challenge for the Town Centre is to plan and manage growth so that the established and natural qualities of Batemans Bay valued by residents and visitors are conserved and enhanced. These areas of natural asset surrounding the township provide constraints and opportunities in structuring urban development.

Given the potential for future growth, the challenge will be to ensure that the economy can be balanced and sustainable over time. There will also be a need to integrate the new with the established, and to enhance the traditional values enjoyed by the community. Proposed developments that have limited interaction with the lifestyle of the town centre should be avoided.

This Structure Plan works toward reinforcing the status of Batemans Bay as the predominant centre of the retail and commercial hierarchy within the Shire and surrounding catchment. However, the commercial development opportunities may be jeopardised by the strength of demand for medium to high-density residential development as the primary use of land sited on key locations within the town centre. Permanent residential development – where it is developed as the principal site use - has the potential to instigate a process of land use

displacement and fragmentation. If uncontrolled this process, could result in a loss of the very elements (such as environmental amenity, access, and view sharing), required to enable the development of a sustainable commercial centre, and in turn the functional status of the centre. Both retail and commercial office-based activity depend, to a large extent on containment and a critical mass. They are activities that demand unique urban environments. If these areas are fragmented with high-density stand-alone residential buildings, which have a form, quite different to that of commercial buildings, the ability to create a cohesive and functional focus of commerce will be threatened.

Through NSW Government directives, and directions within the Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy, there has been a clear message to not expand the existing urban footprint. This is particularly appropriate to commercial areas, as well as the urban residential component. Uncontrolled low-density urban sprawl can be environmentally, socially and economically destructive, and contributes to:

- uncontrolled speculative development;
- eroding of centre function efficiencies;
- disbursement of local transport services which undermines the efficiency of public transport between towns;
- increases in the servicing footprint, for both Council and other authorities infrastructure; and
- under utilisation of existing facilities and assets.

One of the significant community contributions already in existence in Batemans Bay is a robust commercial entity, which underscores the considerable economic, social and cultural value of the area, usually described as 'social

capital'. This resource must be acknowledged and enhanced, and made readily accessible to new members of the commercial community.

Management of the commercial environment should take a conservative, but 'no regrets' approach. At the same time however, the existing centre must be allowed to change socially and economically as the community embraces market initiatives. These changes should be allowed to grow within the existing zone parameters while ensuring that cultural, open space and design qualities are protected.

A vibrant, active centre is a prosperous centre - the two go hand-in-hand. Whilst the town centre is primarily a retail and commercial area, it needs to be reinforced by providing a range of diverse activities and complementary uses, including residential, tourism and entertainment, to round out its role as a



regional activity centre. This will attract more people to the area and encourage them to stay longer. Creating more reasons to visit the Centre, other than shopping, broadens the scope and long-term health of the business sector and ensures the future of the town centre as the heart of the community.

Analysis

The Illawarra and South Coast Retail Centres Study (Hill PDA for DIPNR 2004) identified the potential for growth within the existing commercial area. The Centre currently supports 65,308m² of retail floor area (Neighbourhood Centres Study'Wakefield Planning 2006). Based on catchment population and regional centre status this is a generous floor area offer although within similar regionalist range, compared to other like LGA areas, (Hill PDA 2004). Continued growth and changing retail floorplate arrangements will consume much of this supply.

With the introduction of the Stockland mall to the centre, the retail offer is now split between the semi-enclosed environment of the mall and the traditional street oriented, fine-grained mix of Clyde and Orient Streets. The fear that the introduction of the dedicated shopping mall could exert a negative impact on the traditional retail presence has not materialised with most businesses now enjoying improved turn-over, Batemans Bay Business Retention and Expansion Survey (Council annual survey 2005 - 06)

The role of the Town Centre needs to be strengthened to ensure its long-term economic sustainability, given the existing and potential competition from adjacent regional centres, such as Nowra-Bomaderry, Bega and Canberra. Future developments need to tailor their designs to target higher-order tenants. These developments will need to consider the mix of uses, ratio and placement within the development of these uses and co-location synergies with other similar uses.

The Batemans Bay business centre floor area inventory identified the principle uses for built spaces within the Town Centre. The 2006 audit distinguished the distribution of floorspace between retail, commercial (office space), institutional (Government agencies and departments), residential and vacant. The summary of the audit areas is set out below.

Floor space use	Current status (m ²)	% of Total
Retail	65308	67.43
Commercial (office space)	15515	16.02
Institutional	2115	2.18
Residential	11371	11.74
Vacant	2548	2.63
Total	96857	100.0

table 3.2 existing floor space usage

Whilst it is acknowledged that the centre's retailing has, and will suffer from nearby larger regional competition, its main street qualities offer great potential for competitive re-invention. The key is in managing land uses to avoid further fragmentation. Furthermore, new development should be vertically and horizontally integrated to concentrate retail, office, residential and community uses (mixed-use), and provide efficient access to public transport nodes and strategically located parking facilities. The challenge, therefore is for responsible stakeholders and Council to work together to create an environment in which retail can thrive.

The area of land currently incorporated within the commercial zoning covers a total of 196,206m², excluding open space and Crown lands. As indicated in

the above floorspace complement, total development only accounts for a little over 50% of this area. Commercial/retail development, even less. The centre therefore is, in representative floor area, under-developed. It is therefore a reasonable argument that greater development intensification can occur before land supply becomes a development constraint. This also does not consider the intensification that could occur vertically. In terms of future retail development in particular, Council needs to be cognisant of the social and economic impact of that new offer and whether both the commercial and consumer community can tolerate its entry to the market. In this regard Council will be instigating a centre specific commercial strategy to guide future use inclusion within the present retail structure. This strategy will be based on the quantum of floorspace proportion and the relationship of that supply in terms of time and demographic demand.

Large open-plan, higher-standard office accommodation is required to attract institutional and government tenancies which provide employment and inject significant participants into the Town Centre.

Improved residential development within the town centre would augment the customer base for the retail and entertainment sector, as well as contributing to the diversity and extended hour activities. Residential development requires careful consideration as to its positioning within the town centre.

It is essential that permanent residential development does not become the main use on foreshore sites and other location advantaged sites within the Centre. Privatisation of these prime locations locks out opportunities for tourist accommodation, which is vital for the long-term survival of the tourism and retail sector.

The benefits of town living include access to services, facilities and places of

employment. It is equally suitable for older people, 'empty nesters', and young professionals. In many cases, it can lead to less reliance on the car for transport, assisting in sustainability objectives. Developments incorporating the principles of sustainable urban design aid the sense of community, safety, and physical and social well-being.

Another challenge for the town centre is to encourage events and street activities. These functions enliven the Centre and make it a more pleasant and enjoyable place to visit. The town centre needs more informal, street based venues for such events, and more planning and coordination of activities annually to provide ongoing attractions and street life. Use of street banners to advertise events in the town centre and occasional public entertainment create a festive ambience and variety in day-to-day activities.

Opportunities

- The construction of the Stockland retail mall has demonstrated the versatility of appropriate design for location. The design, encompassing an open format for the main pedestrian thoroughfare, has replicated the traditional strip shop frontage environment which has not, on the whole, detracted from the experience of the activity streets. Also, the mall has introduced a different range of retailer to the town centre, rather than relocating existing traders and emptying the traditional retail environment.
- There are opportunities for incorporating open space and public/private activity spaces within ground level areas of development sites. These areas should ideally be in conjunction with or accessed directly from pedestrian linkages or walkways.
- To incorporate a mix of uses within developments that extends the activity time for the building and the immediate site environment.

Constraints

- The town centre is currently well represented in retail floor space, but suffers an under-supply of commercial office space. This is not inconsistent with centres that are in the margins between hierarchy regions, but will need to be addressed as the market and demographic numbers dictate a shift in provision positioning.
- The allotment arrangement and size currently representative of the town centre will require extensive amalgamation/consolidation or development co-ordination to permit larger development activity.
- Strata sub-division of many larger retail developments has further limited opportunities for re-development of those sites.
- The physical connections via pedestrian linkages existing within the town centre are limited, and do not provide further retail opportunities whilst in transit. Also the pedestrian traffic environment is currently confusing and unsafe. Better physical connections may encourage more people to walk between activity areas within the town centre.
- Current development indicators are favouring residential development as the preferred land use. Although the town centre would benefit by a higher presence of in-town living this should be in proportion with, and supportive of, the principal town commercial role. New development, although encouraged in rejuvenating established spaces within the centre should not be subverted by present market capriciousness.

Directions

- Work with developers and land-owners to facilitate site consolidation or amalgamation to achieve enhanced outcomes for multiple uses;

- Promote Batemans Bay as a regional centre;
- Permit height variations on key sites within precincts where the development will provide public facility outcomes and will not detract from the amenity of adjoining streetscape. (Refer to Built Form section for location of sites);
- Council will negotiate with prospective developers to instigate a voluntary planning agreement (VPA) in respect to achieving both public facility outcome and timing of development contribution, such that the overall amenity and economic functionality of the existing town commercial offer is not compromised.
- Encourage the location of future government and higher order civic uses within the Watergardens Precinct;
- Seek additional quality visitor accommodation and serviced apartments, particularly within the foreshore and Watergardens Precincts.
- Instigate an indepth commercial floorspace strategy for the town centre based on future provision in terms of the selected use, demographic demand and at what future time such provision can be accommodated.

3.3 Community – Population and Residential

Analysis

One of the strongest attributes of the town centre and its development as a main activity centre is the diversity of people who live and work both within and adjacent to the town. However, this community is ageing and household sizes are getting smaller, so in order to meet the needs of residents in the future, a greater diversity of housing types needs to be provided. This should include housing for different family types, age groups, levels of mobility and socio-economic groupings. The Department of Planning's South Coast

Regional Strategy has noted, that for Eurobodalla, the current proportion of the population over 65 years of age is 23%, with this expected to rise to 34% by 2026. With over a third of the static population falling within this age bracket, the imperative for suitable living options is becoming more and more apparent. The strategy adds further;

‘the identification of suitable locations for seniors living developments, close to amenities and services, and ensuring that these areas are appropriately zoned, is important to meeting the housing needs of the ageing population.’

Certainly some of these developments will be accommodated within the residential urban areas surrounding the town centre. However, demand for accommodation near and within the town centre is already strong; hence any inclusion of residential aged care facilities within this area is more likely to be market driven. Ensuring a supply of affordable and accessible housing will also be important, and Council can play a role in identifying appropriate sites or site amalgamation, advocating to the State Government and community agencies, and working in partnership with housing providers to facilitate this provision.

Between 1996 and 2006 Eurobodalla increased its stock of separate houses. Many of course were infill housing, but a large number of new residences were in newly sub-divided areas. During this same period, the Shire increased the number of medium density dwellings by over 650 compared to a 3300 increase in separate houses. Most of the new medium density dwellings were semi-detached houses.

These figures clearly indicate that housing development in the Shire has consistently been dominated by the development of separate houses although

‘other residential’ dwellings also achieved an activity peak in 2001-2. All categories of housing development have declined as the volatility in the market has subsided since this peak.

The inactivity in the medium-density and multi-unit housing market generally is consistent with past years, this being mainly due to the usually strong demand for single dwellings and speculative land market in the Shire. This trend is further exacerbated by both general industry disinterest in medium-density development, and industry’s perception that there is a lack of demand for this type of accommodation. A growing market acceptance of alternate housing styles, and both State and Shire planning direction of intensification of existing urban areas may change this picture. A significant change in the market’s perception of medium density housing that encourages local residents to consider purchasing medium density housing is required. The development industry and their financiers also need to see medium and higher density housing as a profitable opportunity before they take any market risks.

Although the Shire’s urban property market is still heavily weighted by single-dwellings as the accommodation of choice, changing demographics, household make up and lifestyles will stimulate greater acceptance of medium and high-density housing. For example, ABS projections contained in its 2004 Household and Family Projections, Australia 2001 to 2026 Report, indicate that by 2026, the structure of households and families in NSW will be very different to what it is today.

The town centre’s increasing range of activities, and good access to alternate modes of transport will assist in encouraging more housing choice. This in turn will increase the activity within the public domain, stimulate trade and ultimately reduce dependence on private vehicle transport.

Batemans Bay and its adjacent residential areas (defined as the 'Northern District'), currently supports a permanent population of 19,228 (Department of Planning SLA population data). During peak periods, this can increase to greater than 40,000, placing short-term stress on services, road networks and commercial providers. The Department of Planning estimates that the static population of the greater area could expand to 24,450 by 2021. The increase in population during peak periods gives reason for concern regarding the long-term effect on annual business viability. However, the opportunities for businesses catering for the tourist market indicate that future developments will most likely factor in a tourism services provision for the development. With such a heavy reliance on tourism-related developments and businesses, planning will need to take demographic changes into account when structuring the services to meet future market demands. The national trend of an aging population and the particular requirements of this generation, will also need to be reflected in future tourism developments and support service provision.

Council will therefore need to take a highly pro active role in demonstrating that the town centre offers the right housing, in the right urban environment, for a changing economy and a higher knowledge-based workforce. If it is to retain a dominant regional role in competition with nearby centres, attracting a greater portion of household income to Batemans Bay should be a policy imperative. Fortunately, the areas within a reasonable walk of Batemans Bay provide room for increased housing densities. However, higher-density housing does not necessarily mean high-rise development. Higher-density affordable housing can be delivered by encouraging the clever design of low-rise residential development which is integrated with open space and inclusive of community facilities.

Opportunities

- Both the town centre and adjoining residential areas can provide the capacity to absorb and intensify development for residential purposes;
- Development inclusion (where appropriate) for both permanent residential and tourist accommodation would activate the added benefits of increase activity and out of hours activity, providing positive spin-off impacts for retailing and entertainment facilities;
- Residential development should encompass a full range of housing options, including shop-top housing, multi-unit/apartment and serviced apartment-style living;
- In centre living leads to a lesser reliance on private vehicle transport, assisting in ecological sustainability objectives;
- Expanding the residential opportunities within the town centre will assist in evening out the heavy reliance on seasonal trading of many town businesses;

Constraints

- A current housing market disinterest in medium-density and unit housing stock
- A higher than normal land value for commercial zoned land that is further limiting re-development within the business areas;
- The local community is still very vehicle-dependent and alternate transport is inadequate or non-existent;
- Current development costs would make the purchasing value of in-town medium-density and apartment dwellings uncompetitive with comparable

residential area equivalent.

- Local demographic information indicates that the area does not have a sufficient base to support the market for all dwelling types.

Directions

- Increase the range of housing provided in the town centre so that all family types, age groups, levels of mobility and affordability are accommodated;
- Ensure that new multi-dwelling developments provide a range of dwelling sizes, with an emphasis on providing an adequate number of smaller and/or more affordable dwellings;
- Work with developers and property owners in designing strategies that improve the feasibility of residential accommodation within the development mix;
- Maximise opportunities for shop top housing in the main activity streets, by encouraging:
 - construction of upper levels above existing single storey retail or office uses.
 - redevelopment of lower scale or poor quality buildings with multi-level buildings,
 - incorporating shop-top housing or apartments above;
- Within the town centre, encourage mixed use developments in key locations with commercial development at ground level and housing above;
- Ensure that the future residential development includes quality open space

areas that are integrated with existing open space networks and provide a high quality environment for the increased residential development; and

- Develop high quality pedestrian and alternate mobility routes, using the network of open spaces as a guide for linkages between the residential developments and main activity areas.

3.4 Community Facilities, Health And Education

Analysis

In addition to the retail, commercial, and residential roles of the town centre, the area has a vital role to play in enhancing regional community life. However, as the town centre continues to grow, future development will provide opportunities to expand and realise additional facilities. The Council has built a new Community Centre at the southern end of the town. This facility provides meeting rooms, youth cafe and facilities for small group activities. Adjacent to the Community Centre is the Watergardens, a significant town asset within easy walking distance to all areas of the town.

Council operates a tourist information service within easy access from the Princes Highway. Together with on-line information and access, this facility also provides a central service for accommodation and activity bookings. Other Council provided facilities such as a library, university access centre, meeting halls and sporting areas are located at Hanging Rock, some distance from the town centre. These facilities will need to be included in, and integrated with, with the public transport (shuttle service) and pathways to ensure that they make a real contribution to existing social infrastructure.

The implementation of the Murra Murra Mia Walkway and viewing platforms has provided good public access to the foreshore. However, many of the adjacent properties have not taken advantage of this facility to locate new or extended businesses fronting the walkway. Likewise, the new Foreshore Park will provide another dimension to the social interaction areas available to the community. The value of this area also depends on adjoining businesses encouragement and support of activities in the park.

There is a diverse complement of social infrastructure within the greater residential areas adjoining the town centre, including sporting, cultural and special interest clubs. The town centre will require development of public domain space and opportunities, rather than replicating that which already exists within easy access to the residential areas. Successful integration of this mix will ensure that the town centre makes a significant contribution as a well-rounded activity centre, rather than simply as a shopping destination. An increasing population makes it vital that social infrastructure is incorporated into the planning and design for areas of new development and re-development. Provision of social infrastructure should occur in sequence with new development, particularly for mixed development that includes a residential component.

Further opportunities to build on the community role of the town centre should be explored and promoted, to improve social connectivity, community health and wellbeing, participation and involvement in community activities, and building the capacity of the community to identify and meet their own needs. As the population in and around the town centre increases and the population ages, community and social infrastructure will need to respond to meet these new and expanded demands. Likewise, the housing stock will need to respond

to and reflect these changes, including exploring opportunities for affordable housing.

Opportunities

- The integration and co-location of services and facilities encourages a number of uses to occur in one locality. Facilities and services located in a common area, assists in cost-effective delivery, enhances access and maximises community use. These nodes should be safely and conveniently located adjacent to compatible land uses and accessible by public transport, pedestrian and alternate travel modes;
- The Community Centre in Museum Place has capacity for functionality over a broader scale of activities. This town facility, through broader promotion and better utilisation could operate over an extended time frame and for a greater range of activities;
- The intersection of Clyde Orient and North Streets is ideally sited to be the focal epicentre of the town, or town hub. Existing functions, such as local and tourist bus facilities, post office and various eateries are located there, and the forecourt plaza area is already a recognised communal meeting area within the town. This area could be further enhanced in this function, and complementary businesses encouraged to locate within the adjoining buildings;
- The Council has constructed the Murra Murra Mia walkway and is currently completing the walkway extension and Foreshore Park. There are opportunities for businesses, particularly those directly adjoining the walkway to access and reciprocate in trading benefits from locational advantages offered by these areas.

Constraints

- The town has developed with an emphasis on the commerciality of service provision. Development design, mainly due to a restrictive and seasonal market, has provided little in the way of community interaction space. New development and re-development must be encouraged to optimise the benefits of activity spaces associated with commercial uses.
- Foreshore properties, particularly those fronting Murra Murra Mia walkway have developed active frontages that interact with Orient Street. Many of these developments have no (or limited) active frontage to the walkway. This has resulted in the walkway being an under-utilised asset and not contributing adequately as a community well-being asset.

Directions

- Develop an enlarged plaza space as a community focal point town hub at the intersection of Clyde, Orient and North Streets, with increased activities focussed around an enlarged outdoor plaza and communal meeting area. Work with adjoining land owners to promote active uses and overlooking of the space during the day and in the evening to ensure safety, lighting and public art;
- Encourage more community uses and leisure opportunities to be located within the Community Centre complex where there are strong synergies with the existing Watergardens facility;
- New development should include activities and/or uses that directly interact with the public domain;
- Interactive activities should consider the potential impacts on the social environment;

- Encourage the use of all types of open space both public and private, within the town centre for passive recreation, formal and informal social interaction, and community involvement and participation; and
- Work in partnership with community groups, social service providers and educational providers to:
 - develop and implement initiatives that work towards invigorating the social environment by maximising broad community participation;
 - promote opportunities for new community facilities and leisure opportunities to be located in existing activity street areas and close to the existing walkway and Foreshore Park;
 - improve information and accessibility to health and community facilities.

3.5 Enhancing the 'Nature Coast'

Analysis

Environmental Values

Although Batemans Bay is highly urbanised, it is almost completely surrounded by natural elements of high environmental value. It is situated amongst unspoilt beaches, extensive estuary systems, protected wetlands and significant vegetation ecosystems. State Forest and National Park dominate the outlook to the hinterland. The Council has recognised the value of these natural assets and has adopted the Nature Coast theme to highlight these features.

The environmental, recreational and economic values of the Clyde River and the estuary are reliant upon good water quality. Continued use of the estuary

for recreational and commercial fishing, boating, swimming and oyster farming is dependent on maintaining the quality of the water. Clyde River oysters will continue to be a major contributor to the local economy. Due to the excellent tidal interchange within the estuary broadwater, the Bay maintains a high salinity level, which in turn supports a variety of aquatic fauna. The continued protection of this aquatic biodiversity is crucial to the future of all beneficiaries of this sector of the economy.

- The Batemans Bay Estuary Management Plan lists as high priorities:
- Maintain existing high water quality standards,
- Ensure recreational and commercial uses of estuary are sustainable, and
- To consider the implication of coastal foreshore hazards and other ocean impacts on development planning.

The manner in which the town centre is developed will impact on these priority issues.



The Batemans Bay and Clyde River estuary contains nationally significant wetlands. The dominant habitats recorded within Batemans Bay include rocky reefs, and sandy un-vegetated areas, although significant populations of seagrass exist. The estuary supports a number of the most extensive and productive oyster leases on the south coast. Protection of existing natural resources requires a pro active long-term strategic planning approach.

Tourism

It must be acknowledged that the natural environment is one of the main assets in attracting visitors to the area. The community has indicated the value of preserving the natural setting as essential in future planning for the area (IRIS Research, 2005).

In 2003, tourism accounted for a \$250 million injection into the Shire's economy. For this reason, Council has identified and formally recognised preservation of the natural environment as a major objective in all future planning.

The Council and Eurobodalla Tourism have identified a lack of high quality (4 to 4.5 star) visitor accommodation in the greater Batemans Bay area, as well as limited visitor accommodation in the town centre. A greater supply of this type of visitor accommodation would compliment the cultural and natural facilities, and support the retail/entertainment uses in the town. The town centre could sustain more than one quality establishment of this type (e.g. boutique hotel, large conference-based hotel). There is also a very limited number of quality conference facilities for groups of 100 or more people within the town centre. The proposed conversion (to permanent residential) of two larger tourism establishments near the town centre, has further aggravated this shortage.

Directions

- In-town plantings and street trees should be species which do not block views to the water where streets end at the foreshore or are contiguous with street/boulevard view corridors;
- Streetscape work undertaken on private land adjacent to public streets and public open spaces is to support the objectives of the adjoining reserve landscape work;
- Extend the works on the foreshore area to include the land west of the bridge including walkway under the southern bridge approach and co-ordinated landscaping;
- Provide visual continuity with the context by designing and selecting materials to complement the natural environment of the area; and
- Cultural and maritime markers should be retained and new signage installed as an important part of the character of the foreshore reserve.

3.6 Natural Hazards

Analysis

Over recent years Council has commissioned a number of marine hazard studies for various areas of the Clyde River and Bay environment. The conclusions and recommendations from these studies have been considered and incorporated within the Batemans Bay Coastline Hazard Management Plan, adopted by Council in 2003. This Plan identifies three main areas of susceptibility for the main town centre:

- current susceptibility, (wave run-up causing erosion);

- flood inundation, (the effects of severe rain events and catchment hydrology); and
- sea level rise; mainly due to the effects of climate change.

The effects of current generated run-up and tidal surge are considered the pre-eminent risk requiring both immediate mitigation and long-term damage minimisation through development controls.

The existing town centre training wall provides a relatively secure level of protection for the normal tidal range. However the Management Plan does identify,

‘at instances of major storm events the wall will be over-topped and limited near-shore inundation will occur’.

Council has adopted minimum floor levels for new development within the town centre to mitigate the effects of these risks.

The impact of flooding from local catchment and climate change must also be considered. Although the science in respect to climate change is not exact, and certainly the consequences in terms of sea-level rise is in its infancy, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the effects need to be a considered and factored into development design, within coastal towns. In some respects, Batemans Bay has a level of protection from the existing rockwalling, which extends from the river entrance at Corrigans Cove to McLeods Creek. However, the protection that this infrastructure provides, in terms of both height validity over time and accuracy of sea-level rise forecasting, may erode the capacity for protection provided.



The Hatched Area indicates alluvial sand underlying much of the Town Centre and is subject to a relatively high water table. This generally can be expected to affect works below 1.0AHD.

Geological investigation will be required for the positioning of structural elements below this level.

- Map Legend**
- Retention basin requiring further study
 - Approximate 1% AEP floodline
 - Areas of consideration for foreshore inundation
 - Areas of effect of wave impact to foreshore frontage

map 3.7 natural hazards

Commercial developments generally will be sited at or above the 5% AEP (1 : 20 year) flood level plus freeboard. In certain circumstances, this may need to be adjusted to account for tidal influences and extreme weather events. Where developments incorporate below grade carparking, entrances and other access ways shall be protected to the 1% AEP (1 : 100 year) flood level.

Another consideration for development located on the sand flat is the presence of high ground-water table. Generally sub-grade excavation work will be required to maintain a bench above this ground-water level or instigate expensive and extensive de-watering systems.

Directions

- New developments within identified areas of flood liable inundation and tidal surge are to take into consideration the potential impacts of these occurrences and incorporate design measures to reduce the potential impacts of hazard events;
- Proposed developments must respond to the recommendations of the Batemans Bay Coastline Hazard Management Plan in respect to adopted floor levels and measures to stabilise structures where those structures are subject to coastal hazards; and
- Prepare siting and height controls within the proposed town centre Development Control Plan to mitigate potential hazards within affected areas, based on the assessed risks for the development and the public.

3.7 Access, Transport & Parking

‘The rising costs of transport – fuel prices, congestion, greenhouse gas emission, air quality and community physical and mental health – are placing increasing burdens on families and business. Demand for travel is

increasing faster than population growth and the largest increase is in the use of private vehicles.’

(Infrastructure and Transport Strategy, NSW Department of Planning, 2006)

Analysis

One of the aims of the town centre strategy, in collaboration with other comparable traffic strategies, is to provide sustainable travel choices. The principal mechanism influencing higher usage of private vehicle travel however, is the intensification of residential development further removed and remote from retail and commercial service centres. Batemans Bay town centre has the necessary location attributes and land stocks to develop higher density residential development within the centre and nearby residential areas. Through the Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy and town centres strategies, Council is incorporating directions which promote opportunities for local employment growth, and which provide for a greater availability of alternate travel modes, as a further means of reducing private vehicle trips.

While most trips to the town centre are currently made by car, there is a need to shift the balance to provide greater priority to pedestrians, while still recognising the important role of the local and regional road network. The location of the main commercial streets away from the highway route helps to mitigate, to some extent, the impact of traffic on the pedestrian environment of the core shopping area. However, vehicle circulation through the town centre can be difficult for those unfamiliar with more efficient routes. Despite these circulation difficulties, the capacity of the existing road network appears adequate to sustain any likely future growth needs. Nevertheless, there is a need to consider traffic management measures for peak periods. Modelling of traffic movements

has been done and improvements will be made to the system to accommodate future development that is likely to result from this plan.

Continued improvements to passenger comfort, and service provision of local bus vehicles and destination facilities will see local public transport develop as a viable alternative. Improved pedestrian links and integration with main commercial streets and Stockland mall will also invigorate this role. As with walking and cycling, greater priority will need to be given to public transport infrastructure and service provision to promote a shift to more sustainable transport choices in the future.

Other options to further improve access across main arterial roads, such as providing additional or more direct crossings and shared zones, will also need to be explored. Additionally, improvements are needed to local bus routes servicing the town centre, which link Batemans Bay to other centres (including Moruya and further north to Ulladulla) and the residential areas in between. The frequency and availability of these services, could also be enhanced and co-ordinated with other services such as inter-regional and long-haul services.

At present the bus terminals are located within reasonable proximity to the main commercial activity. In spite of this, these facilities will need to be examined in the future to find an alternate location, particularly for a long-haul bus interchange that does not impact on the day-to-day town centre activities in such a direct way.

The Town Centre currently has substantial areas of car parking. On-street parking is provided for in all main commercial streets, with both private and public parking lots located to the rear of shops and arcades. Arcades and open pedestrian linkages provide good access through to active retail frontages.

There has been a history of community dissatisfaction with parking availability and ease of access to some areas within the centre. Much of the friction has stemmed from a community dependence on private vehicle use and the lack of adequate public transport facilities. However, the provision of parking within the town centre is comparable to other centres of similar size and provision structure.

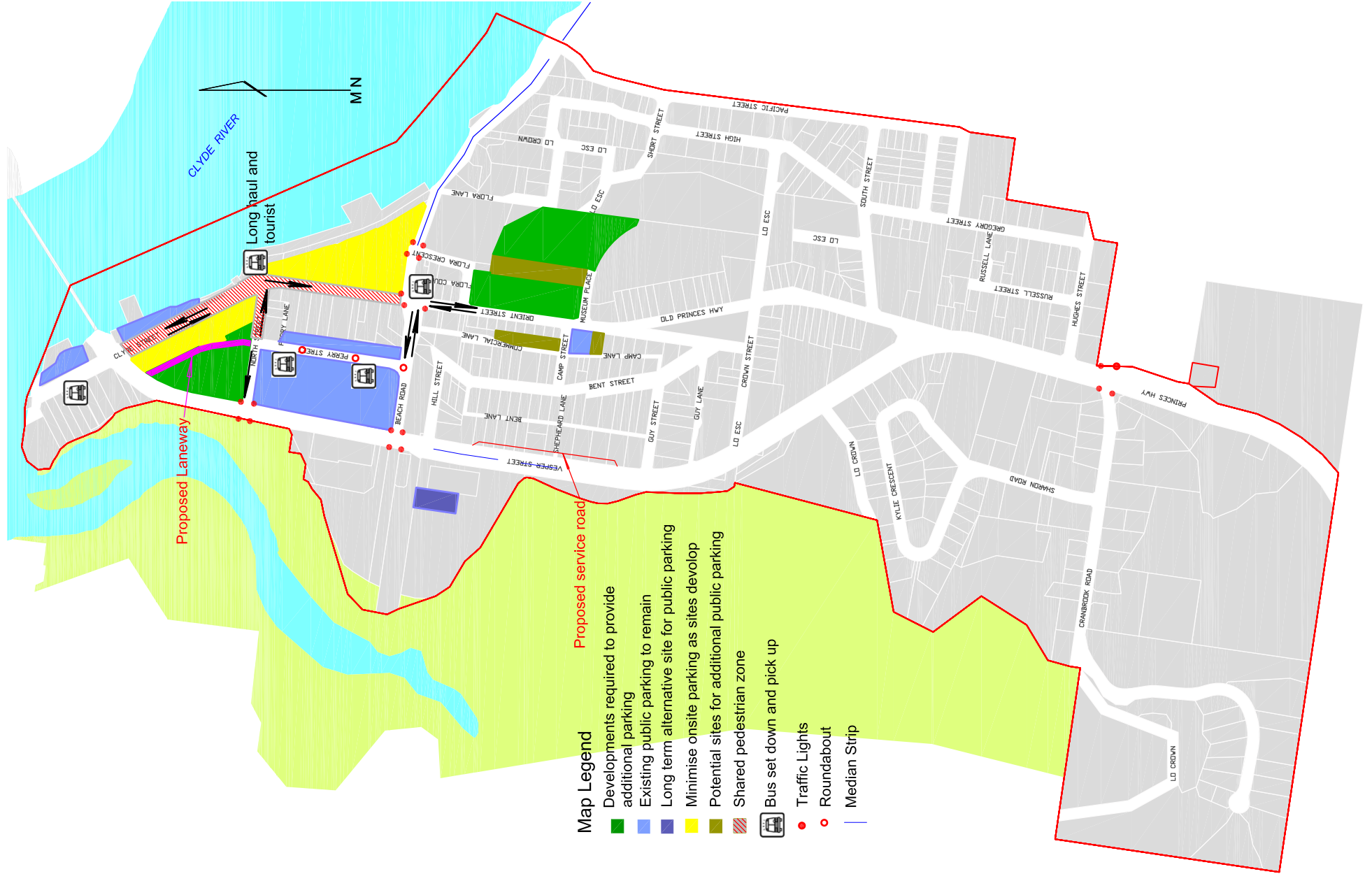
Recent road infrastructure works carried out by both Council and RTA have gone a long way to alleviating route management and access to the main public parking areas. Private developments (principally, Stockland mall) have expanded available parking spaces. Currently, there is a greater number of parking spaces (1726) within the Centre, than were provided prior to the development of the Mall (1408).

In conjunction with this strategy, Council has commissioned consultants SKM to re-evaluate the centre traffic modelling and provide recommendations on options for improving generalised traffic movement and for periods of peak visitation.

Increased tree planting and landscaping in the short term can assist in breaking up and softening the parking lots. In the long term, the redevelopment of existing informal parking lots (with the car parking provided in-development) would reduce the dominance of car parking in the town centre, and result in better utilisation of the land.

Opportunities

One way to encourage more efficient mixed-use of both existing and new development is to reduce the necessary on-site car parking requirement. New developments within the Foreshore Precinct, can reduce the provision of on-site



Map Legend

- Developments required to provide additional parking
- Existing public parking to remain
- Long term alternative site for public parking
- Minimise onsite parking as sites develop
- Potential sites for additional public parking
- Shared pedestrian zone
- Bus set down and pick up
- Traffic Lights
- Roundabout
- Median Strip

map 3.7 proposed access and parking layout

parking for retail and commercial use and only provide the parking component for residential use. However, all developments should design for the convenient provision of car parking (usually sub-grade, where hydrological imperatives permit) or within the development. Large parking aprons at street level (on-grade) will not be permitted.

There are opportunities to build parking structures on land owned by Council, and within future projects, in agreement with private developers. However, as efforts to improve public transport patronage increase, new investments in surface and structured commuter, employee or shopper parking by Council may be hard to justify. Equally, unless current Council subsidised parking policies are changed, land acquisition and construction costs would preclude significant expansion by replacing or supplementing existing parking spaces with decked structures.

Development of a stronger public transport network is the key to reducing problems with car parking congestion and conflicts between commuter, shopper and worker parking. Furthermore, increasing fuel prices may well result in higher levels of public transport patronage.

Issues

- Batemans Bay will continue to be the region's main commercial centre and transport hub into the future, due to its capacity for accommodating substantial retail, commercial and residential floor space growth. However, there are a number of issues surrounding further intensification of development that will need to be addressed, including:
- Recent developments, both within the town centre and adjacent residential areas, has been the major contributor to dependency on private vehicles for commuting and most local trips;

- At seasonal times of high visitation, the principal regional roads and intersections are near their design capacity, or fail to reach acceptable service efficiency levels;
- Private motor vehicle use will continue to put pressure on the regional and local road networks and, as a consequence, investments in eliminating 'bottle necks' must be made;
- Regional and local bus networks must be enhanced to connect residential areas efficiently, with the major transport hubs and strategies implemented to increase patronage; and
- Council and RTA must remain committed to the construction of the Batemans Bay and Surf Beach link roads to provide long-term through-traffic management to alleviate congestion within the town centre.

Directions

- Pedestrian Movement
- Improve pedestrian pathways along and to foreshore areas;
- Improve pedestrian access to and within public parking areas;
- Provide convenient and inviting pedestrian pathways along streets to the Town Centre to discourage unnecessary multiple car movements. Improved pedestrian access to and within public parking areas;
- Extend and complete the walkway along the foreshore;
- Improve the linkages to the foreshore down streets, lanes and paths, particularly in the blocks closest to the foreshore;
- Retain and improve the public domain by encouraging through block connections and continuous awnings as indicated on the Open Space and Pedestrian Linkages Map;

- Design the 'Green Boulevard' to be a shared corridor from the Watergardens through to the Foreshore walkway.

Traffic Movement

- Investigate speed reduction and improvements to pedestrian connectivity and amenity within Clyde, Orient and North Streets;
- Together with the improvements to the foreshore, instigate works to Clyde Street to introduce traffic management and on-street parking and pedestrian pathway improvements;
- Apply a reduced speed limit in key areas of high pedestrian and cyclist activity throughout the town centre;
- Apply traffic calming techniques at selected intersections that will encourage reduced speeds; and;
- Improve safety and the capacity of the intersection of Beach Road and Orient Streets and Beach Road and Commercial Lane.

Vehicle Parking

- Develop carpark monitor to track supply and demand of parking in relation to floor space changes;
- Improve directional signs to assist visitors navigate pedestrian networks and links to parking areas;
- Amend Councils parking code and Section 94 Plan, to remove requirements for commercial parking in the foreshore Precinct;
- Inclusion of tourist accommodation within mixed-use developments will still require the provision of on-site parking;

- Council will prepare an amended developer contribution Section 94 plan to collect funds for the construction of public parking in respect to sites within the Foreshore Precinct where a reduced parking requirement has been identified;
- During development of selected sites within the Marketplace and Watergardens Precincts, Council will negotiate the construction of additional public parking (over and above that parking required for the development) within those developments via the implementation of planning agreements;
- Council will instigate the purchase of additional properties for the purpose of expanding parking provision, where the location of those properties is consistent with the intent of de-centralising in-town parking. (The purchase of 40 Orient Street adjacent to The Camp Street parking facility has been identified as a potential site);
- Improve the appearance and amenity of car parks with improved landscaping and safer and more legible pedestrian access;
- Promote a more efficient use of the land by encouraging their redevelopment with mixed uses, and incorporating car parking underneath the development (or within the development). Existing car space numbers should be maintained, with additional parking provided for new uses;
- Avoid any increase in ground level parking lots by incorporating new car parking into the building design, set within the building to enable active frontages to be provided.