

Conversation Report

Shepparton North Issues, Opportunities and Emerging Challenges Paper

November 2022

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About the Shepparton North Structure Plan

Shepparton is located approximately 180 kilometres north of Melbourne, and combined with the population of Mooroopna, forms Victoria's fourth largest regional city with an estimated population of approximately 66,000 in 2019. Shepparton-Mooroopna also services a wider catchment of more than 100,000 extending as far north as Deniliquin in New South Wales.

Shepparton North is experiencing strong population growth and significant investment in infrastructure, particularly planning for arterial road projects and the construction of stormwater drainage in recent years. The future expansion of Shepparton North is supported by several strategic planning documents including, but not limited to:

- *Commercial Activity Centres Strategy, November 2015;*
- *Draft Wanganui Road and Ford Road, Shepparton: Feasibility Study Design Report 2018;*
- *Greater Shepparton Freight and Land Use Study 2013;*
- *Land Supply Review - Shepparton and Mooroopna 2050: Regional City Growth Plan;*
- *Residential Land Supply and Demand Assessment City of Greater Shepparton 2022;*
- *Shepparton and Mooroopna 2050: Regional City Growth Plan;*
- *Shepparton Mooroopna Flood Mapping and Flood Intelligence Study 2021;*
- *Shepparton North Growth Corridor: Outline Development Plan Report;*
- *Shepparton North East Precinct Structure Plan;* and
- *Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas July 2006 and the Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas (Addendum) 2017.*

In May 2021, the Minister for Planning recommended that Greater Shepparton City Council (Council) prepare a structure plan for Shepparton North, including the Shepparton North Activity Centre (SNAC) (commercial land on the western side of Numurkah Road (Goulburn Valley Highway) between Ford Road and Hawkins Street), existing commercial uses along Pine Road and Hawkins Street, the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre and the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence.

Council engaged Mesh Liveable and Urban Communities Pty Ltd (Mesh) in November 2021 to prepare the Shepparton North Structure Plan (the Structure Plan).

An indicative boundary for the structure plan area was prepared and is included in Figure 1 below, which comprises:

- approximately 2km² of land;
- residential interface areas, including the recently constructed The Vines residential estate;
- commercial and industrial land on the western and eastern sides of Numurkah Road (Goulburn Valley Highway) between Pine Road and Ford / Wanganui Roads; and
- the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence, Shepparton Sports City, and the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre.

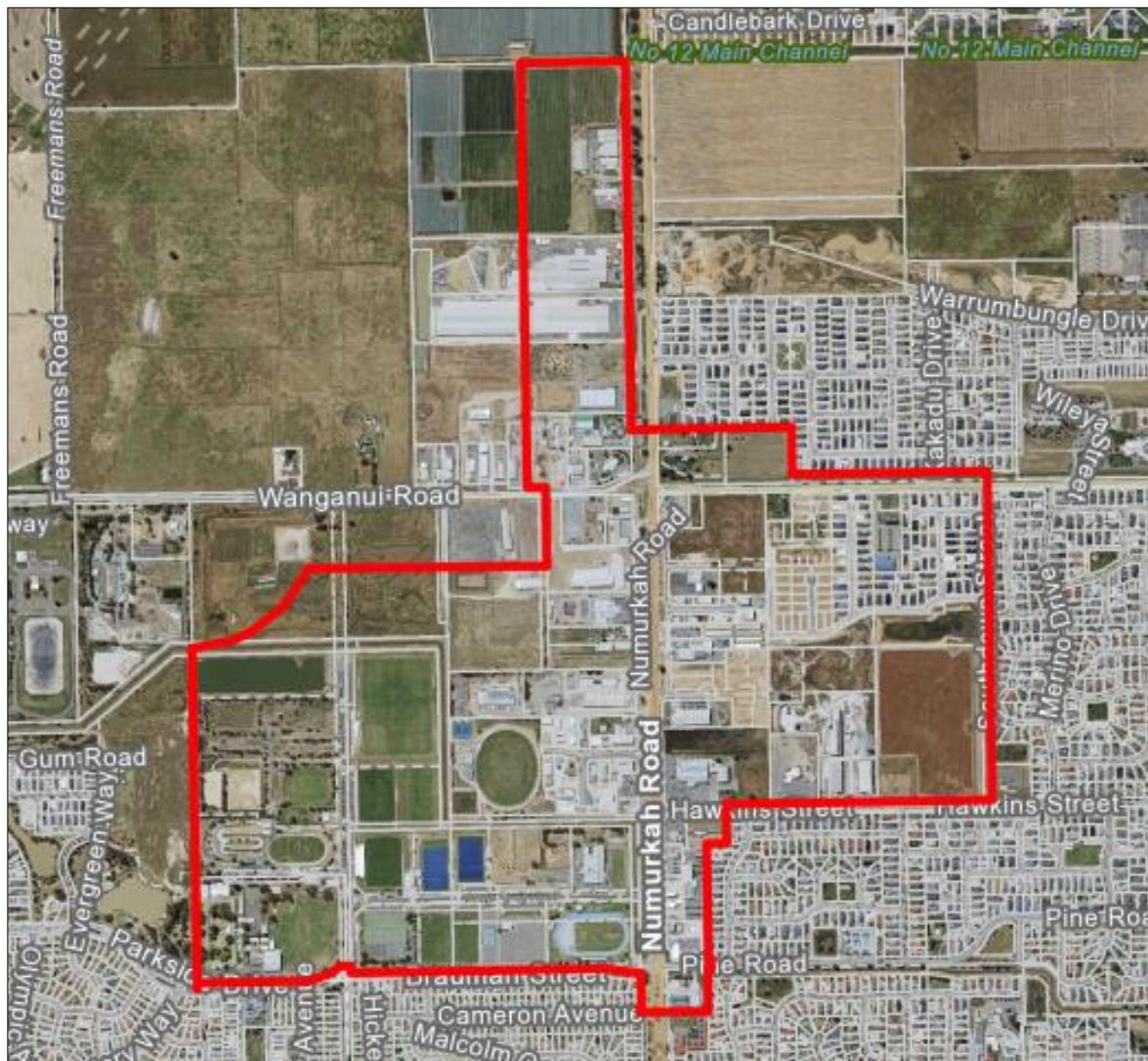


Figure 1: Indicative Shepparton North Structure Plan area outlined in red.

The Structure Plan will guide the future development of the SNAC for predominantly retail and commercial purposes whilst also investigating the wider Shepparton North area. This will better ensure that the Structure Plan provides appropriate connections to surrounding commercial, recreational and residential areas in the wider Shepparton North area.

Consultation

Council undertook pre-draft consultation with landowners, key stakeholders, referral authorities and government agencies, and members the community from 21 February to 21 March 2022. A total of ten (10) submissions were received by Council during the pre-draft consultation process.

These submissions were considered in the preparation of the Shepparton North Issues, Opportunities and Emerging Challenges Paper (Key Issues and Opportunities Paper), which will inform the preparation of a Draft Structure Plan. The Key Issues and Opportunities Paper has gathered and synthesised all of the background research and information into one consolidated document. It includes the following information:

- Council's aspirations for Shepparton North;
- key influences informing the growth of Shepparton North (e.g. growth constraints);

- the role of key land uses;
- how development can positively contribute to the growth of the area;
- what form commercial and residential development should take; and
- what the issues and opportunities for the transport network are.

Council undertook targeted consultation with landowners, key stakeholders, referral authorities and government agencies, and members of the community on the Key Issues and Opportunities Paper from 19 September to 21 October 2022. All submissions received will inform the preparation of a Draft Structure Plan.

Methods of engagement included:

- direct e-mails and letters sent to all landowners, occupiers of land, referral authorities and agencies, and previous submitters;
- information on Council's website including a submission portal on Shaping Greater Shepp allowing online submissions; and
- full page advertisements in the Shepparton News.

All stakeholders were invited to attend a 1-2-1 appointment with Council officers and the consultant.

A total of twenty-two (22) submissions were received by Council to the Key Issues and Opportunities Paper. This included:

- eighteen (18) submissions from (or on behalf of) landowners within the structure plan area;
- four (4) submissions from government referral agencies, including the:
 - Department of Environment Land Water and Planning;
 - Environment Protection Authority;
 - Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority; and
 - Goulburn Valley Water.

What we heard

Issues and Opportunities for Future Commercial Use

There was general consensus within submissions that a second full-line supermarket is required in the SNAC. Many residents' submissions highlighted that they were supportive of a second supermarket in Shepparton North as it would potentially improve convenience, allow for access to a wider range of grocery products and provide competition for the existing single supermarket. Opinions of whether a third full-line supermarket would be required and the timing for its delivery differed between submissions.

The location(s) of any additional full-line supermarket(s) will be resolved as part of the preparation and implementation of a structure plan for Shepparton North. The Draft Structure Plan will be informed by an economic analysis, and provide technical advice on retail, commercial and industrial economics, including an audit and analysis on retail floor space area and office demand. The analysis will also provide a range of recommendations to inform land use and development opportunities, and strategic direction in any final structure plan.

Submissions also noted that there was capacity to identify additional commercial uses outside of the SNAC but within the structure plan area and that these could be co-located with residential uses.

The feedback provided will inform the preparation of the Draft Structure Plan. The structure plan, once prepared, will provide recommendations on the appropriate preferred land uses for all land located within the final study area.

Transport and Movement Considerations

Submissions indicated a strong desire to make Shepparton North safe and connected for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport whilst also ensuring ease of accessibility for vehicular traffic by providing an interconnected layout. It is noted that the roads within the structure plan area generally experience large volumes of traffic and arterial roads within Shepparton North accommodate significant freight movements.

Feedback received noted the proposed upgrades to the surrounding arterial road network and sought to ensure that the future growth of Shepparton North builds upon this investment.

Submissions explored possible internal connections on the east and west sides of Numurkah Road. In particular, feedback provided in a 1-2-1 session considered connections to support properties along the west side of Numurkah Road between the Wanganui Rd and John Mcewan Reserve.

The Structure Plan must be cognisant of a number of vehicular traffic matters, including various intersection upgrades within the study area and the Bypassing Shepparton Business Case. The Structure Plan must also account for the proposed upgrade of the Shepparton Sports City and the Shepparton Sports Stadium, and allow for appropriate pedestrian and cyclists connections within the area. A final structure plan layout will also incorporate the higher-order arterial roads capable of supporting freight, and identify opportunities for vehicular and pedestrian connections.

The Draft Structure Plan will be informed by a traffic and movement analysis to identify existing issues, constraints and opportunities for the local and arterial traffic network in Shepparton, including:

- barriers to movement;
- pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure necessary to support active transport and mode share;
- linkages for public transport services;
- key intersection performance;
- road capacity and function; and
- implications of external road projects (such as the Bypassing Shepparton Business Case).

Council will also seek input from heavy vehicle operators as part of the preparation of any final Structure Plan.

Opportunities for Landscaping and Gateway Treatments

Submissions noted that the northern gateway (Goulburn Valley Highway / Numurkah Road) would benefit from gateway treatment(s) and active road frontages, to project a sense of arrival into Shepparton proper. This could include the identification of landscaping, consistent road treatments and design guidelines.

The Key Issues and Opportunities Paper notes that there are areas along Numurkah Road, Wanganui Road, Ford Road and Hawkins Street with potential for streetscape improvement.

The Shepparton North commercial area is defined by 'big box' agricultural suppliers, and large scale commercial buildings with hard stand areas and warehouse built forms. *The*

Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas (Addendum) 2017 (the UDF Addendum) identified a number of built form objectives and design requirements for future businesses. The final structure plan will be informed by the objectives and design requirements outlined in the UDF Addendum and identify any additional opportunities for gateway treatments.

Mixed Use and Non-commercial Development

Submissions were generally supportive of the opportunity for mixed use development in the SNAC area. Additionally, submissions received from landowners generally expressed a willingness to develop mixed-use facilities. One submission did include concept plans for a mixed-use development to the north of the SNAC.

Opinions on what types of uses would be appropriate or preferred differed between submissions. Some supported residential uses, others only commercial, there were also submissions suggesting community facilities be established in the SNAC.

The Structure Plan, once prepared, will provide recommendations on the appropriate preferred land uses, urban design objectives and requirements for the land located within the SNAC and the wider structure plan area.

Location of Activity Centre

Submissions were generally supportive of the proposed uses within the SNAC. Residents were particularly supportive of having an alternative retail centre closer to northern residential areas. Additionally, it was noted that submissions on behalf of land owners within the SNAC generally expressed a willingness to develop land for the purpose of an activity centre.

The Structure Plan, once prepared, will provide a defined location for the SNAC and recommendations on the appropriate preferred land uses within the wider structure plan area.

Interface Issues

Submissions noted that the Structure Plan should identify appropriate interface and access opportunities between the future activity centre and existing development including the Shepparton Grammar School, Shepparton Sports City and residential subdivision areas.

One submission raised concerns over children crossing the Goulburn Valley Highway from the Shepparton Sports City to access existing businesses causing potential safety issues. Other submissions raised the potential for disjointed or inappropriate development to have negative impacts.

The Structure Plan, once prepared, will provide recommendations on the appropriate preferred land uses, urban design objectives and requirements for the land located within the structure plan area. The traffic and movement analysis will include pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure necessary to support active transport and mode share.

Servicing of Future Development

Council received a submission from Goulburn Valley Water (GVW), which noted that Council should continue to engage with GVW to facilitate appropriate water and sewer planning for future growth in the area.

Next Steps

All responses received during the consultation will be considered by Mesh and Council, and used to inform the preparation of a Draft Shepparton North Structure Plan.

Referral authorities and government agencies, landowners, key stakeholders and community members will have further opportunities to provide input through the consultation process associated with the Draft Structure Plan. These documents will be exhibited for public comment and feedback, following consideration at a future ordinary council meeting.