

Port Sorell & Environs Strategic Plan Review

Enquiry by Design

3rd - 13th March, 2008

Outcomes and Recommendations



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An Initiative of Latrobe Council

Foreword

The relatively recent 'Sea Change' phenomena has witnessed many people considering a lifestyle change and pursuing the opportunity to "live and play" in the wonderful area of Port Sorell and the Rubicon Estuary.

Climate change, or the increasing awareness of its debilitating evolutionary effects, means that we do need to re-examine issues such as housing density, infrastructure costing, water availability, transport and educational access as well as encouraging economic growth for communities to be sustainable. The noticeable differing weather patterns being experienced across the nation and ever increasing community expectations are also reflected in increased government statutory requirements and compliance, forcing Councils to continually re-assess plans and develop new guidelines and policies, as well as to revisit strategies to attest and support the mandated changes.



Therefore it was very important for Council to be proactive and further explore ways and means of planning for the future of Port Sorell. It was decided to call for Expressions of Interest from planning consultants, with an aim to determine a future framework for the Port Sorell area. A design template, once adopted, would help guide Council and the community and provide a plan for growth for several decades. It was also exceptionally important that the design reflected a collaborative and consultative approach with residents, businesses and interested parties.

I would like to thank all community members and Council staff who have been involved in discussions and many meetings during, before and after the EBD. I would like to highlight the tremendous efforts of ESD Pty Ltd (Wendy, Chip and team) for their efforts, enthusiasm and energy in bringing all of this together.

I encourage residents, community groups and developers to respond to the recommendations in this report during the sixty (60) day public exhibition period which closes on September 12th, 2008.

We are under no illusion that there will still need to be some serious, objective and rational undertakings and decisions made to determine the future design and implementation of the plan for the Port Sorell area. We must all look forward to the challenge and appreciate that the journey has just begun.

Mike Gaffney
Latrobe Mayor

July 2008

This report has been prepared for the Latrobe Council by Ecologically Sustainable Design Pty Ltd. It documents the Outcomes of the Enquiry By Design (EBD) Workshop held from 3rd to 13th March 2008.

The EBD was held in response to Council's Project Brief of November 2007, requiring a Land Use Study and Strategic Plan Review for Port Sorell and Environs.

Joint Council/Consultant EBD Team

Council and the Consultants chose to form a Joint Enquiry by Design Team, to maximise mutual learning and cost-effectiveness. What neither side anticipated was how much we would enjoy the process! The Joint Team would like to thank the hundreds of Port Sorell citizens, and the many State agency staff who worked so hard to produce the EBD outcomes.

The following were key members of the Joint Council/Consultant EBD Team:

Council Team

Sharon Holland - Strategic Planning Officer, Gerald Monson - General Manager, Jonathan Magor - Manager Engineering Services, Ronald Viney - Manager Development Services, Candice Gardam - Executive Assistant, Peter Dawson - Latrobe Works Team Leader - Building, Jason Bellchambers - Asset Management Officer

Consultant Team

Ecologically Sustainable Design Pty Ltd
Wendy Morris and Chip Kaufman - EBD Leaders
Mark Carolane - Assistant

TTM Consulting
Jim Higgs - Traffic Engineer

Peter Edgeley - Illustrator

Suzanne Barker - Urban design volunteer

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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to explain the inter-locking set of planning proposals for Port Sorell's future, as produced during the Enquiry by Design (EBD), conducted on 3-13 March, 2008, by Latrobe Council.

The EBD proposals are a combination of the indicative plans, sketches and accompanying text. The text explains the design intentions behind the plans, as well as recommendations about implementation and staging. Together these proposals will provide the basis of a forthcoming Structure Plan for land use and development in the Port Sorell Study Area.

The Study Area

The Study Area includes Hawley, Shearwater, Port Sorell and Squeaking Point, and is broadly defined to the west and southwest by the ridgeline of the surrounding hills, and to the north and east by the water. The Study Area boundaries are shown in the plan below.



Port Sorell Study Area

What is Enquiry by Design?

Enquiry by Design (EBD) is a design-based planning process well suited to resolving complex and controversial urban growth, revitalization and settlement extension issues in an integrated manner. The EBD process relies on extensive input from the community and from government, developers and other stakeholders.

Many conventional planning studies are undertaken with an emphasis on written statements, intentions and policies. Unfortunately, such written outcomes are often found to be hard to deliver, or controversial, when applied to a specific site or area. In addition, conventional planning studies often deal sequentially with issues such as traffic, retail, housing, environment, etc. In fact these issues all need to be considered together, in order to produce a well-resolved planning strategy.

The EBD process produces indicative designs to test the outcomes of planning intentions. Through design, all major issues are considered in an integrative manner, as they apply to a specific area. By engaging with a wide range of stakeholders throughout the EBD, the design outcomes can be discussed, debated and refined. From these designs, a preferred planning strategy can be derived, with the community having a good understanding of the underlying design principles. An EBD is informed by extensive background information and uses comprehensive base maps and constraints maps to provide a sound basis for design investigations.

Why hold an EBD for Port Sorell?

Recent growth pressures have seen Port Sorell changing quickly, placing pressure on the environment and demanding a more holistic form of growth management than Council has so far been able to provide. In mid 2007 Council became concerned that the 2004 *Strategic Plan for the Port Sorell Area* might be insufficient to deliver the preferred long-term results. In responding to this, Council conducted a Scoping Workshop on 25 September, 2007, during which relevant stakeholders considered the issues that growth in the area was presenting and how best to deal with them. The stakeholders represented a wide array of community interests, including commercial business operators, potential developers, sporting groups, environmental groups, senior citizens, youth organisations and others.

As a result of the Scoping Workshop, a complex array of issues were identified. Council decided that the best means of addressing Port Sorell's challenges was to conduct an EBD in order to produce a new Structure Plan to guide future development in the area. Council appointed Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD), an urban design consultancy based in Melbourne, to lead the EBD.

The EBD Objectives

The Port Sorell EBD had the following two key objectives:

1. To engage the community and relevant government agencies to reach a shared understanding of the interdependent variables affecting the future of Port Sorell, and collaboratively to develop an achievable and widely supported Vision for the short and longer-term future of Port Sorell/Shearwater/Hawley/Squeaking Point and environs (the Study Area).
2. To produce a visual concept for the development of the Study Area, which will form the basis of regulations that, if worthy, Council will expeditiously produce, adopt and implement in order to guide its development.

What Happened at the EBD

A joint Council/ESD Team conducted the intensive EBD from 3-13 March, 2008, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including government agency representatives, community, landowners and developers. The nine-day event began with a team briefing and site tour, followed by an Opening Public Meeting, held at Camp Banksia. This meeting was attended by approximately 200 people who were briefed by the consultant on the key issues and opportunities affecting the Study Area, and then given an overview of the key areas that would be subject to design investigation. Attendees then broke up into small groups to discuss the strengths and problems of the area, and to propose future visions for its growth.



The opening public meeting, at which the consultants gave an introduction to the EBD process and conducted an introductory public consultation exercise.

On the second day the design team received briefings from government agencies, council staff, developers and key community groups. Throughout the rest of the EBD, participants continually learned from each other and

gained a wider understanding of the interdependent factors affecting Port Sorell. The EBD Team tested by design how, where and whether certain proposals could work, guided by ongoing consultation and topical and place-specific meetings. Areas investigated included the proposed new town centre, the existing Shearwater commercial centre, traffic and transport, rural residential development, bushland preservation, environmental and community concerns.



The EBD Team meets with Shearwater business owners.

Over the final two days the EBD team finalized the designs into an integrated set of EBD Outcomes. These Outcomes were presented by ESD at the Concluding Public Meeting on 13 March.

An Interlocking Set of Proposals

Because the planning issues facing Port Sorell are so interdependent, the EBD proposals are equally interlocking. It is generally not possible to successfully address interdependent issues separately, or to remove some controversial proposals and to expect the whole to still succeed. Therefore, stakeholders should consider the proposals in this report as an integrated whole, rather than separately.

Indicative Nature of the EBD Plans

The EBD plans for specific parts of the Study Area are to be regarded as 'indicative' of a preferred outcome for that area. These drawings represent *options* of how the EBD objectives may be actually achieved for these sites. The development of a given site may well be implemented somewhat differently from the plans, provided that the final designs still achieve the overall growth management philosophy and satisfy the specific design principles underlying each of the site-specific EBD proposals, as explained in this report.

2. Port Sorell's Challenges & Opportunities

This section first introduces a summary of the key issues and challenges facing Port Sorell. It then provides an overview of the Study Area, followed by a more detailed overview of the main issues, challenges and opportunities influencing Port Sorell's future. It is vital to understand how the EBD Team approached the place and its growth, in order to understand why and how the EBD Outcomes address these matters.

Some of the key issues and challenges facing Port Sorell include:

- The increasing imperative to plan for sustainability, climate change and reduced oil dependence;
- A relatively high growth rate, raising questions of where and how the area should grow and whether the growth will continue, coupled with a concern that recent growth has not been managed holistically;
- An inadequate supply of local jobs, services and facilities to serve the growing population;
- Very few tourism jobs;
- How to establish a new Town Centre, whilst maintaining the vitality of the existing Shearwater Centre;
- High car dependence and long drives to access many services, as well as poor local street connectivity generating increased traffic loads on local streets;
- Conflicts between development and bushland retention and other environmental issues;
- Conflicts about the type and amount of rural residential development;
- Poor quality public spaces, including streets, foreshores and parks;
- Housing development that is regarded as out of character and not well-matched to the population demographics.

Port Sorell Today

Port Sorell is one of the highest-growth areas in Tasmania, with a recent annual average growth rate of around 3.4%. Tasmania's annual growth rate over the same period was 0.7%. The current population of the Study Area is 3583 and there are 1933 dwellings. Of these, around 25% are holiday homes and around 23% are on rural residential lots.

Most recent growth has been on conventional residential lots in the new subdivisions in Hawley Beach and Shearwater. This growth is coming mainly from newcomers, often in older age groups, moving from both the mainland and from other parts of Tasmania. There is virtually no nett population growth coming from children being born to the existing population.



View to the estuary and National Park from the Luck Land, a significant developable property.

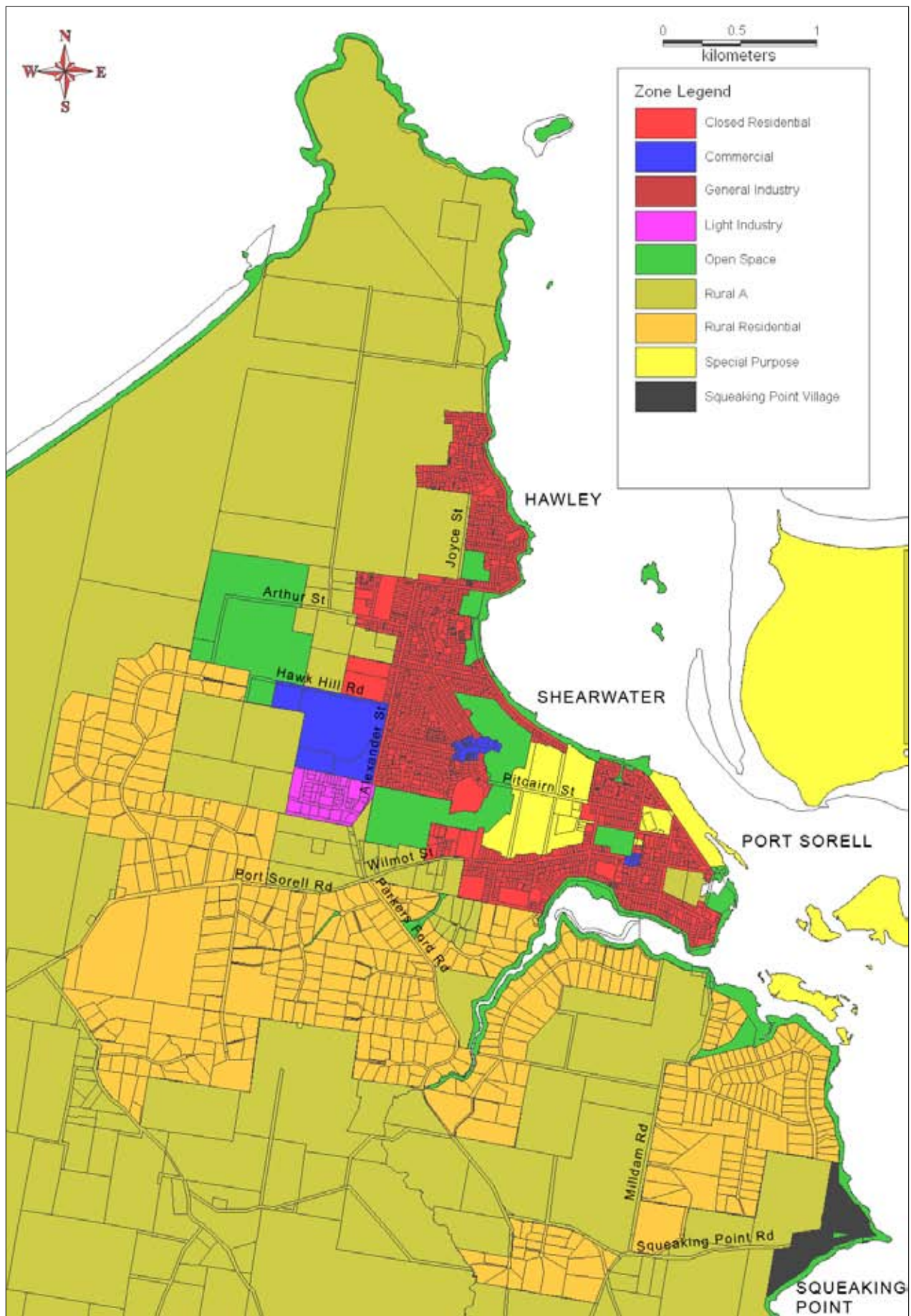
There are only limited areas of undeveloped residential-zoned land remaining. The three settlements of Port Sorell, Shearwater and Hawley are now essentially joined together. However, despite the growth, there are only limited services and facilities in the area.



The Shearwater Centre currently provides retail and hospitality services.

In recognition of the need for a new commercial centre for the growing population, Council recently rezoned the former tip site on Alexander Street to Commercial, and has appointed a developer to build a new Town Centre.

The urban area is ringed by rural residential lots to the west and south, but retains areas of rural-zoned land between these lots and the urban area. These rural-zoned lots offer significant opportunity for efficient urban development relatively close to the new Town Centre.



Port Sorell's current zoning plan.

From an Aerial Perspective

Studying aerial photographs of a place can yield understandings not easily accessible from normal passage through it. The aerial photo on the facing page was compiled as a base map for the EBD, and shows a range of features of this place. For example, it shows how Port Sorell is focused into three fairly distinct communities, with areas of undeveloped land and/or bush separating them.

The aerial shows that the forthcoming Town Centre (keynote 1) is located in a roughly central position, with good access via Alexander Street and the proposed “Pink Street” to its west. Council has proposed “Pink St” as a new parallel secondary route to Alexander Street to relieve future congestion on Alexander Street. The aerial also shows several undeveloped areas (keynotes 2) within about a 10-minute (800m) walk from the new centre, and these appear to be appropriate locations for development as part of a new town core. The existing industrial area (keynote 5) is already committed for its current use.



An aerial perspective view of Squeaking Point and environs, looking south. Note the fragmentation of bush on rural residential land and the unconstrained farmland to the south of Squeaking Point Road.

The bush to the north and west of the town centre suggests itself as a western ‘frame’ for the town, as it sits on a gently rising north-south ridge that defines the edge of the Port Sorell basin. Other bush separates Port Sorell and Shearwater, adding bush character within the town. A third area of bush and a working farm south of Panatana Rivulet (keynote 4) are the only remaining rural-zoned land on that peninsula, as rural residential subdivision has occurred over the rest of it.

The EBD and its proposals were significantly informed by these aerial photographs, along with zoning maps, subdivision plans, extensive site tours by car and on foot and, of course, community and government agency input.



Alexander Street crossing Poyston Creek (looking north).

The yellow dashed lines on the aerial are topographic contour lines. Keynote 3 shows a significant hill. This hill seems thus far to have contained most rural residential development to its north and east, while extensive and relatively viable farming has continued to flourish to its south and west.

The photo hatching indicates three types of bushland. Areas hatched in green have significant habitat values and are in public ownership as conservation areas. Areas hatched in blue reportedly have significant habitat/conservation values and are privately owned. Other areas of bush with no hatching over them have less known habitat significance, with the exception of the orange-lined drainages shown in the Shearwater Resort land, where burrowing crayfish, a threatened species, has been found.

Facing Page: Keynotes

- 1 - New Town Centre
- 2 - Currently undeveloped land within a 10 minute walking distance of the new Town Centre
- 3 - Hill forming the south western town ‘frame’
- 4 - Rural-zoned land constrained by neighbouring rural residential development
- 5 - Industrial area



Aerial photo of Port Sorell Study Area.

Planning for Climate Change and Reduced Oil Dependence

Port Sorell has grown in a manner that is now considered unsustainable due to high car dependency, inadequate provision of jobs and services, poor management of streams, vegetation and habitat resources, energy-inefficient buildings, and so on. Globally this type of growth is responsible for climate change through the consumption of oil and generation of high levels of carbon emissions.



Perspective view of the Rubicon Estuary looking south-east from Hawley. Much of the residential area shown is very low-lying and therefore may be vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surges.

Climate change is likely to have some very direct impacts on Port Sorell. These will include rising sea levels and increased severity and frequency of storms, with increased storm damage, storm surges and problems for the storm water system. Lower and more variable rainfall is likely to increase the risk and severity of bushfires and increase watering requirements for gardens.

Oil dependency results from the way in which towns are structured, which determines how, and how far, people travel. Reduced dependence is achieved in towns that are compact and walkable, with safe streets for cycling, a high level of self-sufficiency in terms of shops, businesses, jobs, community facilities and services, and relatively dense housing. These towns generate fewer car trips, shorter trips and more combined-purpose trips.

The way the Port Sorell area is growing needs to change significantly in order to address these key issues.

Population and Dwelling Projections

Port Sorell grew by 17% between the 2001 and 2006 censuses. In order to better understand the likely future population growth of Port Sorell, Council commissioned a demographic analysis by Associate Professor Natalie

Jackson, of the Demographic Analytical Services Unit at the University of Tasmania (UTAS). The report is entitled *Port Sorell and Suburbs – Projections* (February 2008).

This report indicates that an increase in population from the current (2006) number of 3583 to around 5000 is quite possible within ten years. However this would require the in-migration of newcomers to double from its recent rate. As the newcomers are mainly in older age groups, and the existing population is already concentrated into older age groups, the established population is likely to stay in natural decline (more deaths than births) for the foreseeable future.

The projections were done under a conservative and a higher growth scenario, and provide a range of population projections for 2011, 2016 and 2021. These are detailed as the UTAS projections column in the chart below.

| Year | Dwellings * | Population * | UTAS population projections ** |
|------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 2001 | 1657 | 3064 | |
| 2006 | 1933 (+17%) | 3583 (+17%) | |
| 2011 | 2261 | 4192 | 4023-5456 |
| 2016 | 2645 | 4905 | 4429-7257 |
| 2021 | 3095 | 5739 | 4802-8963 |
| 2026 | 3621 | 6714 | |
| 2031 | 4236 | 7855 | |

* Extending 2001-2006 trends to the year 2031
** Medium-range population growth projections (high- and low-growth scenarios not shown)

Population and dwelling growth projections for Port Sorell.

As it was also important to estimate the likely dwelling demand, ESD also calculated the number of dwellings needed if current dwelling construction and population rates continued through to 2031. This is not a forecast, but provided a basis for estimating how much residentially-zoned land might be required for the next 15-25 years.

A key conclusion from the UTAS projections is that the population of Port Sorell is already significantly older than the Tasmanian average, and in-migration is accentuating this aging trend. This indicates a need to plan for appropriate housing and other support facilities for mature residents, as well as to provide a town with services that can be accessed by people when they can no longer drive.

Port Sorell has a relatively low proportion of children and youth, in part because there are no schools in Port Sorell. Many primary school children attend the consolidated Wesley Vale School, whilst other students attend schools in Devonport or Latrobe. The community is keen to see one or more schools established in Port Sorell, both to support a younger population and help community-building, as well as to reduce school travel. Whilst a public school would be a great asset, it is more likely that a private school would be the first to establish, with an Anglican group already expressing interest.

Few Local Services or Facilities, but About to Have Two Town Centres

Port Sorell is unusual in that the recent increases in population have not been matched by a similar expansion in retail, commercial, tourism or community facilities. In order to increase local self-sufficiency to a level at least comparable to other towns of 3500 or more, there is a need to facilitate establishment of a wide range of professional and commercial businesses, including health care services, construction services and tourism-related businesses, as well as retail and entertainment.



Shearwater Centre

The main retail centre is the Shearwater Centre, which contains an IGA supermarket and a number of other shops and restaurants. Unfortunately, this centre is not well-located to serve a significantly larger population, nor is there room for substantial expansion of the centre. In recognition of this, Council has rezoned the Alexander Street tip site for commercial development, and appointed a developer to establish a new Town Centre there. The new Town Centre is meant to provide more convenience retail and a new heart for Port Sorell, enabling residents the choice not to drive out of town for so many of their daily needs. This new centre will give Port Sorell a new 'centre of gravity', around which much of its new growth should concentrate.

However, there are now difficulties attracting a supermarket to anchor the new site and concerns amongst the Shearwater traders about their future when the new centre is operating. There needs to be a new role found for the current Shearwater Centre, and support provided to help it transform over time.

A plan for the new Town Centre had been prepared well prior to the EBD. That plan was for a very car-oriented shopping centre that sets back from and turns its back on Alexander Street, and to which most shoppers would

need to drive. The EBD team explained these problems with the plan, and investigated whether an alternate plan for the Town Centre could be designed and negotiated. A different layout could work better for both the Port Sorell community and the owner/developers of the new centre.

Very Few Local Jobs

Port Sorell has very few local jobs, with only about 20% of the jobs its residents nominally need (at 1.2 jobs per household on average). There are few jobs in the relatively limited existing retail, service, tourism and community facilities, and there are no schools or childcare facilities. With roughly the same population, Latrobe has far more local jobs and services, partly because it matured well prior to the era of cars, so it had to establish a wide range of services.

The main jobs growth for Tasmania's urban areas is in service and knowledge-based businesses, including home-based businesses. More jobs in Port Sorell may well improve the quality of life of Port Sorell citizens, as they would need to commute less to Devonport or Launceston, being instead able to work and carry out business locally.



Burgess Drive Industrial Estate and commercial development fronting Alexander Street.

Another important set of jobs needed locally is from businesses like those found in Port Sorell's current light industrial area, which is quickly filling up. According to the Tasmanian Department of Economic Development, which was consulted during the EBD, at least twice the current light industrial area should be provided within Port Sorell to cater for future needs.

Another factor constraining local business growth is the lack of appropriately-zoned street frontages with good business exposure, along which a variety of service and knowledge-based businesses could establish. The EBD responded to this with its proposals.

Limited Tourism Infrastructure

Port Sorell is very well-located for tourism, being close to the Spirit of Tasmania Ferry and the Devonport Airport. Yet despite the attractions of its location, tourism is not a prominent activity in the area and very limited tourist accommodation and facilities exist here. Tasmanian tourist literature generally describes it as a quiet getaway for campers and boating enthusiasts. Despite its history as the first settlement on the north west coast, as a port dating from the 1820's, very little remains of the past.

Tourism offers a good opportunity to create local jobs, so it is vital for it to grow. There are a range of issues constraining tourism, including the town's entry point, its street legibility, and its tourist services and facilities.

Port Sorell's town entry from the west is unappealing to a first-time visitor, and it is relatively hard to find Port Sorell's tourism assets. The Alexander Street roundabout signifies the entry point of town, but road signage here generally fails to explain to visitors either the urban framework or the visitor assets of the area. Another constraint to tourism is that the Study Area's street network is fairly illegible for newcomers, partly because it is quite disconnected, and partly because some key assets (the water, Hawley Beach, Shearwater Beach and Resort, and so forth) are somewhat hidden away from main roads.



Hawley Beach. This is potentially a great tourist asset but it is currently hard for visitors to find and accommodation options are limited.

Despite the area's obvious appeal to boaters, boating facilities are hidden, with both the jetty and the boat launching ramp tucked away. There also appear to be very limited boat services across the water to the Narawntapu National Park. Many beaches are constrained as low tide exposes extensive mudflats and local knowledge is required to find good beaches. The proximity of bushland and the estuary creates excellent

wildlife encounter opportunities for visitors, but these have not been widely capitalized on.

Tourism information is limited to an information board in Alexander Street and a small Tourist Information Centre in the Shearwater Centre.

The EBD addressed significant improvements to the town entry and tourist information delivery as well as to town legibility and visitor accommodation in its proposals.

Boating Facilities and Possible Marina

Boating opportunities in Port Sorell are generally limited to boats that can be launched from trailers at the public boat ramp. This main boat ramp is very heavily used, and indicates the attraction of the Rubicon Estuary and nearby coast for recreational boating and fishing.



Privately owned low-lying land in Port Sorell where the EBD investigated a marina-based urban development.

Tidal fluctuations and shallow water at the inlet have until now prevented development of a marina, which theoretically would enable boat owners the choice of not having to trail their boats back and forth each time they use them. A marina might also allow larger boats and yachts not feasible for trailer launching to be based here, and thereby augment Port Sorell's tourism and attract new higher-income, boat-owning residents.

Before the EBD, Council had received a preliminary proposal for a marina. In response Council asked the EBD to investigate options for a marina at Port Sorell on a privately-owned, low-lying waterfront site.

Highly Car-Dependent Community and Poor Local Street Connectivity

Port Sorell is very car dependent, mainly because there are very few local jobs and services, but also because of its poorly connected local street network, and the high proportion of rural residential properties.

Many residents must drive daily to Devonport, Latrobe or even the Launceston area for jobs, shopping, services and schools. To become less car-dependent, Port Sorell needs many more local jobs and services.

It also needs a more interconnected street network to reduce local trip lengths. There are important missing links in the network of major streets, whilst the local street network in newer areas is dominated by culs-de-sac. Connected street networks disperse traffic compatibly and more slowly across many minor intersections, instead of congesting traffic at a few major intersections, such as at the Alexander Street roundabout. As the town grows, it will be vital to increase street connectivity to avoid traffic congestion. Poor street connectivity also makes provision of bus services difficult.

Streets not Attractive for Walking and Cycling

For the past few decades, Port Sorell's new streets have generally been constructed with wide pavements and without street trees, inducing higher vehicle speeds and limiting pedestrian and streetscape amenity. The good news is that, since the EBD, Council has already changed its street standards, so that all new streets in Port Sorell will have street trees and a footpath, and will be designed for slower vehicular speeds!

It is important to recognise the difference between traffic volumes and traffic behaviour, in terms of how Port Sorell's streets feel and function. Often, regardless of the posted speed limit, drivers will speed on streets with little traffic or other impediments to doing so. Therefore, those streets can become unsafe, especially to pedestrians and cyclists. Ironically, drivers generally slow down (drive more safely) when streets *seem* less safe. The safest local streets are those that are narrower and have more impediments such as parked cars, trees in parking lanes, and more traffic traveling (slowly!) in both directions, including pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, it is actually good for Port Sorell's local streets to be designed to include impediments to induce drivers to slow down and pay closer attention.

This principle applies, for example, to Hawley Esplanade especially during the peak summer season, when it is full

of cars, pedestrians and cyclists traveling both ways. Some well-meaning citizens had suggested before the EBD that Hawley Esplanade should become a one-way street. If that were to happen, vehicular traffic would indeed be simplified, but ironically drivers would be likely to drive with less care and more speed, making Hawley Esplanade less safe, and they would often have to drive further. The EBD considers that keeping Hawley Esplanade's current busy two-way condition during summer months will make it both safer and support shorter trips than if it were to be made a one-way street.

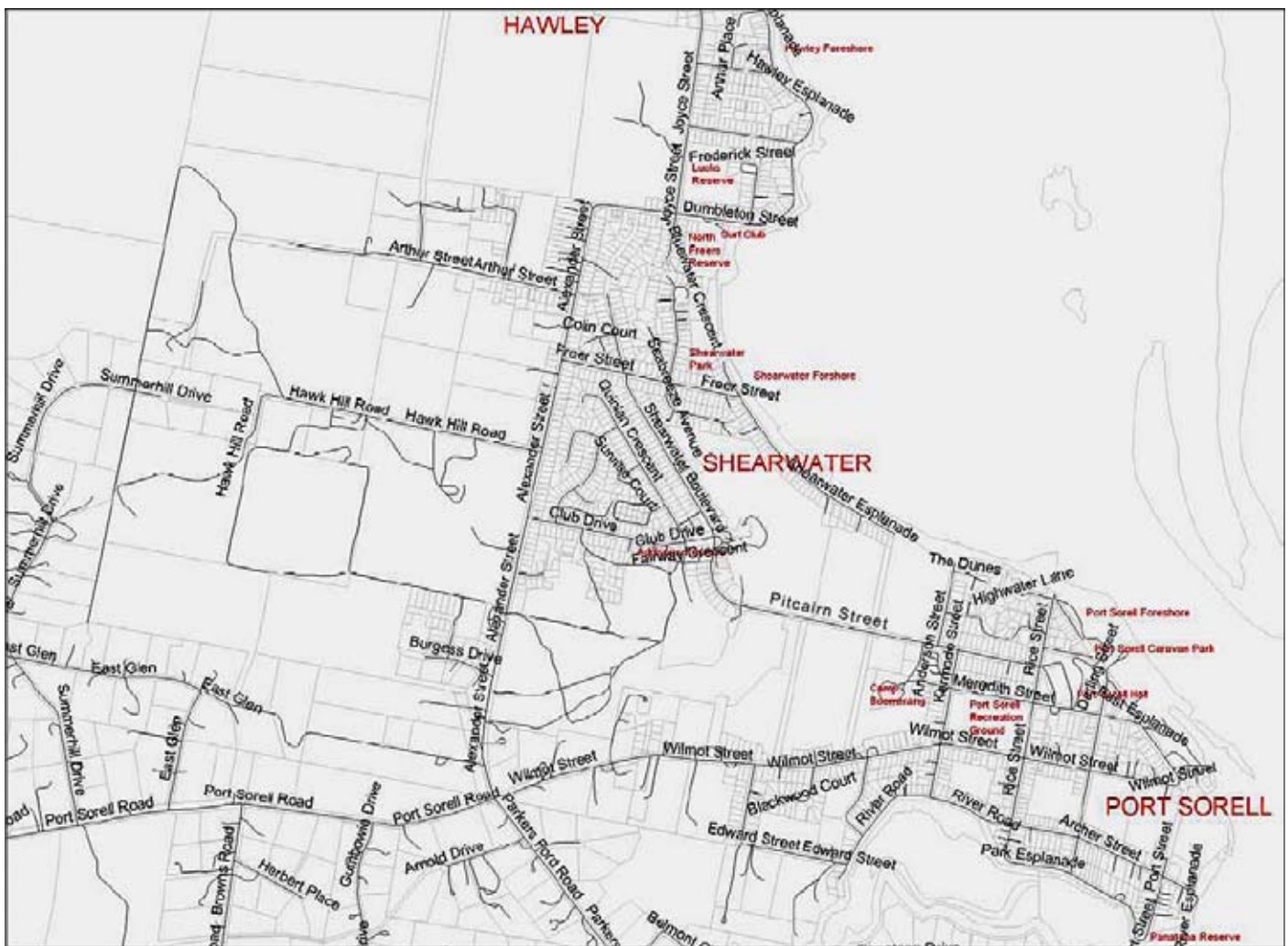


Two new streets under construction in Port Sorell. Neither design will provide a friendly pedestrian environment.



Street Name Confusion

Port Sorell's poor street connectivity is exacerbated by some confusion with street names. This creates difficulties for both visitors and emergency services. For example, there are seven 'Esplanades' (meaning a significant through street along water), but few are linked through, and some are short cul-de-sacs. There are two 'Drives' (meaning a significant through street) that are actually very long cul-de-sacs (Summerhill Drive and Panatana Drive). By contrast, Poyston Drive is less than 200 metres long. A 'Crescent' is usually a curved through-street,



Map of the Port Sorell area showing many of the town's street names. This plan will be a useful reference when reading through the EBD outcomes.

but both Quinlan Crescent and Bluewater Crescent are essentially straight cul-de-sacs.

Port Sorell Road does not get to Port Sorell proper, changing to either Wilmot Street or Main Street on different maps. A key recent street name change of Depot Road to Hawk Hill Road is not well-known to the community, whilst the parallel Shearwater Esplanade and Shearwater Boulevard also create some confusion.

There would be benefit in rationalizing these street names progressively as the street connectivity is increased, and ensuring that future street names do not create further confusion. To assist readers, the above map is included, showing most of the key street names in the Study Area.

Bushland Retention and Habitat Protection Versus Urban Priorities

Port Sorell is recognized as one of the few towns on the Tasmanian North Coast where the bush meets the sea, giving residents the lifestyle benefits of both. However there is concern over incremental, but widespread,

clearing of bush on private property. There are few regulations to limit clearing of bush areas zoned Rural, with essentially only those areas containing identified threatened species required to be retained. Many rural residential properties have been extensively cleared, in part because of bushfire concerns (particularly in the Squeaking Point area), but also because many of the lots are quite small, and people want cleared land for outbuildings and ancillary activities. Recently Council has introduced controls over clearing of rural residential lots, which should limit further clearing in this zone.

There are significant areas of bush remaining in the Study Area. Several areas such as the land west of Camps Banksia and Boomerang, the Squeaking Point Reserve and the Hawley Nature Reserve are public land. Council owns bushland west of the Industrial Area, and the tip site also contains some bush. The undeveloped Shearwater Resort land abutting Alexander Street is private bush, as are the areas to the south of Panatana Inlet. The rural residential lots to the west and southwest of the town, on the hillsides, have more retained bush, as the lots are larger and the bush here is trees rather than heathland.



Bush on land owned by the Shearwater Resort. This property is near the town centre and also contains important crayfish habitat in the streamlines.

Within the various bushland areas there are some places recognized for high conservation significance, including some threatened species. Of particular importance are the sections of streamline in the Port Sorell area that contain burrowing crayfish.

The management of urban runoff into Port Sorell's streams has previously been limited. However as the town grows, stormwater runoff from urban development needs to be treated adequately with regard to water quality and quantity to protect the environmental values of streams and the foreshore. There is a current plan for Council to construct extensive water quality treatment and detention features on the Shearwater Resort land near Alexander Street. This would address runoff from the upper parts of the Poyston Creek catchment.

The key challenge for the Study Area is how to maintain and manage sufficient and appropriate bushland in and around the town to retain the bush character and environmental values of the area, whilst at the same time ensuring that the town grows into an efficient urban structure. This is likely to mean that some bush which lies within the urban core (ie. walking distance of the new Town Centre) may need to be cleared for development, but that ways should be found to increase protection for other less central bush areas as well as establishment of key missing habitat links. Most areas considered for clearing will require more detailed habitat analysis and design before regulatory approval.

Parks and Recreation

There are few developed public parks in the Study Area. There is a public reserve along most of the waterfront, however it is for the most part simply grassed, with very few amenities. Walking and cycling trails are progressively

being developed by community groups. These are located mainly along the foreshore, although there are plans for a comprehensive network.



Shearwater Beach Foreshore showing limited picnicking facilities.

Recent subdivisions have provided remnant areas as public open space, but there has not been a strategy to create well-located, attractive and usable parks in new residential areas throughout the Study Area.

The Port Sorell Cricket Ground is well-used, but is undersized for football, and prone to water-logging. The Wesley Vale Football Club has expressed strong interest in re-locating to a new facility in Port Sorell, and the tip site has been proposed as one option. Camp Banksia has some recreational facilities that are shared with the community. There is also a Tennis Club with three courts, which is hoping to expand a little.

Extraordinarily High Proportion of Rural Residential Development

The Port Sorell area is unusual in that it has a very high proportion of its housing on rural residential lots. There are around 440 rural residential lots in the Study Area, most with houses on them, totaling around 23% of the area's 1933 dwellings. This may be one of the highest proportions of rural residential dwellings to other housing of any town in Australia. It has occurred here because of the attractive hilly or waterfront land, the low costs of subdivision (as only basic services have been required), and the extensive existing road network that could be used for access. The market for new rural residential lots continues because of a preference to buy vacant land on which to build, rather than established rural residential properties.

The question of whether to allow continued expansion of rural residential land is an important one for this community. During the EBD's community engagement

sessions, there were two very different positions voiced in relation to rural residential development. Either rural residential development is loved as a lifestyle or as a development opportunity, or is reviled for its negative impacts on the community and the environment, particularly because of the extensive vegetation clearance occurring in the Milldam Road area. At the EBD there remained a strong expectation on the part of many owners and developers of rural-zoned land in the Squeaking Point area that they should be able to subdivide more land into rural residential, to “carry on a long-standing tradition of rural residential living.”



Rural residential subdivision on Shannon Drive.

Rural residential concerns across Australia

To put this question in a broader context, in the last ten to twenty years across Australia there has been increasing recognition of the problems and community costs associated with rural residential development. These problems include:

- Provision of adequate and efficient services, and related ongoing operational and maintenance costs to Council; together with high expectations from residents for many urban services;
- Excessive vegetation clearance, erosion and landscape degradation;
- High levels of household vehicle travel for daily needs, and related high greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbated by poorly connected streets;
- Loss of agricultural land, and incompatibility between abutting farming and rural residential uses;
- Bushfire risk, and inefficient provision of bushfire protection and other emergency services;
- Lack of sewerage and evidence of groundwater and stream contamination;
- Inefficient and wasteful use of the land resource;
- Very difficult to convert to urban development in future, because of poor street layout, subdivision design and existing house siting making urban conversion uneconomic.



An example of vegetation clearance on rural residential properties.

As a result of these environmental issues and inequitable costs placed on the broader community, effectively cross-subsidising this type of lifestyle, many state and local governments have now essentially stopped allowing rezoning of land to rural residential. These issues were discussed with the community during the EBD.

Supply of rural residential land in Port Sorell

In order to be confident that people seeking a rural residential lifestyle in Port Sorell would have a reasonable ability to purchase a property, market research was carried out during the EBD with the local real estate agents. The findings included:

- There are 440 existing rural residential properties in the study area.
- These properties turn over on average every 5-7 years, the same rate as ‘closed residential’ properties.
- Therefore approximately 60 properties come on to the market each year, which is considered to be a good supply, offering reasonable choice;
- Town water is important to resale appeal, as fire insurance premiums are very high without it.
- Farmlet lots (5-10ha) are rare and sought after, particularly if cleared and ready for stock.

From this research it was concluded that limiting further expansion of rural residential subdivisions will not deprive people of the opportunity to enjoy a rural residential property in this area. In addition, there are several zoned rural residential parcels, mainly along the Port Sorell Road that have not yet been subdivided. It is likely that these will provide an additional 40 to 50 lots.

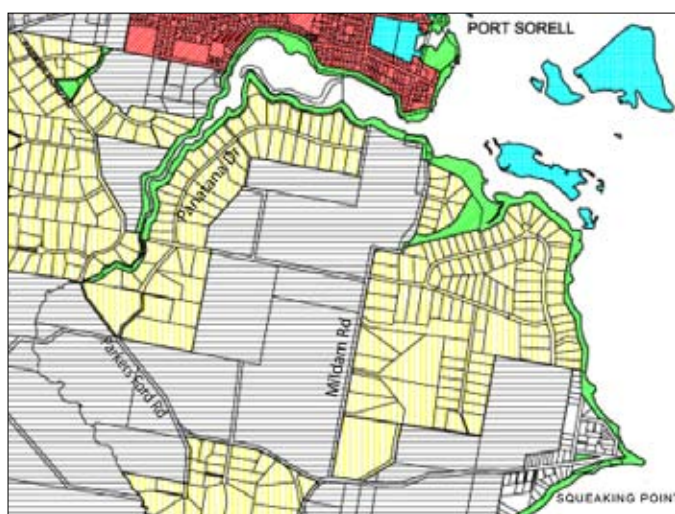
Impact of Rural Residential on Farmland

Rural residential lots have often been justified as a ‘buffer use’ between rural and urban uses. However, farmers with land adjoining rural residential now find that, despite the agricultural capacity of the land itself, it is no longer viable for them to farm, because of the impacts of farming

on their rural residential neighbours. Issues include insecticide spraying, dust, farm machinery noise, and problems with livestock interacting with domestic pets. Faced with such constraints to farming, landowners often decide to convert their otherwise viable farms to rural residential. This dynamic fuels the continued spread of rural residential development.

In Tasmania, there is a Statewide Protection of Agricultural Land Policy (Resource Planning & Development Commission 2000 and revised draft 2007), which has as its key objectives both the protection of agricultural land and to ensure that farmers can farm without being unreasonably constrained by conflicts with adjoining non-agricultural land uses. Its underlying intention is to stop the creep of non-agricultural uses.

In investigating whether, where and how further rural residential subdivision should occur in Port Sorell, the EBD considered all the above issues, as well as investigating whether there were opportunities to allow some rural residential on cleared land in the Squeaking Point/Milldam Road area provided that the development could support the establishment of better habitat links between existing areas of bush and permanently resolve the farming-rural residential interface problems in the area.



Current zoning of the land between Panatana Rivulet, Squeaking Point and Parkers Ford Road (pale yellow is current Rural Residential Zone).

Housing Types a Mismatch for Port Sorell's Demographics

Much of Port Sorell's housing stock does not match well to future local demographics. About 70% of Port Sorell's households contain one or two people, and the population is aging. However, most of its housing is relatively large detached dwellings on 'Closed Residential' lots (minimum 720sqm) suited for families, along with a high proportion of rural residential. There are only a very few units. There is no housing choice between

these extremes, such as smaller detached houses on smaller lots, attached cottages or terrace houses, or even apartments, although these housing types might be better suited for many of Port Sorell's current and future households.

There are several reasons why a variety of smaller lots and smaller dwellings should be provided as Port Sorell grows. These dwellings provide a real choice for older people and single people wishing to downsize whilst staying in their local community; they can also offer a more affordable housing option. Additionally, they can enable higher density of development with more efficient use of land, particularly within walking distance of the town centre.

Housing Designs not Contributing to Streetscapes or Local Character

Most of Port Sorell residents like it here because of the natural beauty and lifestyle. Yet most of Port Sorell's newer streets are treeless, and houses are set back and dominated by large garage doors. There are few front fences in some areas. This type of streetscape does not generally create an attractive and welcoming seaside village character.



Recent streetscape. Houses do not relate well to the street, and do not contribute to an attractive streetscape.

Many of the house styles are quite anonymous in character, although some have very strong characters, which sometimes clash with others in the street. The characters of houses in some new streets are very varied, and do not create a harmonious townscape.

In sessions at the EBD dealing with housing, many residents expressed concern about the recent poor quality suburban-style streetscapes and their desire for future housing to create a 'contemporary seacoast village' character.

The EBD heeded this input and responded accordingly in its proposals.

Infrastructure and Services

The Study Area is generally well serviced with storm water, sewer and water infrastructure to meet current needs. However, future growth will require a range of service expansions and system upgrades. These services have until now been the responsibility of Council, but as of July 2009, a new North West Regional Water and Sewerage Company will have responsibility for water and sewer. Council will retain responsibility for stormwater. It is important that Council prepare for this transition by having a comprehensive plan prepared for its future infrastructure needs to serve growth within the next 10-15 years.

Water supply is provided by a scheme that was installed in the early 1980s. It can generally be expanded to cater for new growth. However water supply service is generally constrained above the 35-50 metre contour level, as these areas are above the gravity-feed tank systems.

Sewerage is provided by a scheme installed in the early 1980s. It generally consists of a mains sewer pipeline running generally along the foreshore northwards to a lagoon system north of Hawley. This system has a series of holding basins and pump stations along its route.

A recent survey of sewerage infrastructure for Port Sorell noted that a number of upgrades to the pump stations will be required to service future development in the area. The major upgrade required is to the pump station capacity at Freer Street, with minor upgrades to other stations required, together with installation of a capacity-balancing telemetry system to enable more efficient use of existing holding basin capacity.

Council's *Stormwater Management Strategy for the Port Sorell Area* (2006) identifies a number of issues including the need for a substantial stormwater detention and water quality basin system on Poyston Creek within the Shearwater Resort land, which must also protect the habitat of the endangered burrowing crayfish. The Strategy also notes that interceptor traps are now to be installed on all new subdivisions, and stormwater detention/cleansing facilities are to be installed on-site in future developments.

Stormwater outlets along the coast are noted as being increasingly vulnerable to sand blockage and storm surge problems associated with climate change.

The key challenge is for Council to continue to implement the required infrastructure upgrades and update future infrastructure plans well ahead of need.



View across the estuary from the Port Sorell Foreshore. Foreshore management is a very high priority for Council.

Foreshore Management

The Port Sorell Foreshore is a very important and valuable asset, and is one of the few urban foreshore locations in Tasmania to still retain extensive native coastal vegetation. In 2004 Council commissioned a report from Helen Dunn entitled: *Port Sorell to Squeaking Point Foreshore Area: Blueprint for Action 2004-2009*. The report was endorsed by Council in December 2004, and has informed foreshore management works since then. This Plan is closely linked to the Council's Stormwater Management Strategy explained above.

This foreshore report was considered by the EBD to still represent an appropriate way to balance the competing environmental and recreational pressures on the foreshore, whilst also giving due regard to changing coastal dynamics. However, the implementation time frame should be reviewed, as it is likely that this report will apply well beyond 2009.

Responses Needed to these Challenges

The issues and challenges outlined above provided the framework for the EBD outcomes, which are outlined in the next chapter. The EBD participants recognise that Port Sorell needs to make hard decisions to change the direction in which it is growing.





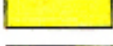
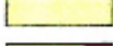
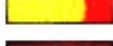
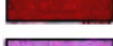
A comprehensive and decisive growth strategy will help the community to address the challenges outlined above. By constructively managing its sea change growth pressures, Port Sorell has a real opportunity to enhance its cherished quality of life, and to incrementally adapt its urban fabric towards long-term sustainability.

3. The EBD Outcomes

The EBD produced a series of plans for specific parts of the Study Area and each of these is explained in this chapter. In addition to plans and related text, there are street cross-sections and perspective sketches that help illustrate the proposed outcomes. All proposals were developed to respond to their specific sites and to contribute to the broad principles for the town as a whole that are explained below in relation to the Port Sorell Structure Plan.

Land Use Colour Schedule

The EBD plans use a standard colour scheme to depict different land uses. The following chart illustrates what land use is represented by each of the colours.

| Land Use Colour Schedule | |
|---|----------------------------|
|  | Pedestrian Based Retail |
|  | Business/Commercial |
|  | Bulky Goods Commercial |
|  | Community Facilities |
|  | Medium Density Residential |
|  | Lower Density Residential |
|  | Rural Residential |
|  | Home Business |
|  | Home Workshop |
|  | Light Industry |

In this chart, “Pedestrian-Based Retail” means shops typically found in a Main Street that are generally small-scale and create a walkable environment. ‘Medium Density Residential’ refers to townhouses, cottages on small lots, units and apartments, whilst ‘Lower Density Residential’ means housing on lots larger than around 500 square metres, and generally similar to the existing Closed Residential Zone. Areas shown white indicate existing development.

Port Sorell Structure Plan

The Port Sorell Structure Plan is the principal plan produced during the EBD. It is intended to guide the growth of the Study Area over the next 15 to 20 years. It aims to ensure that Port Sorell grows and matures into a more sustainable, more attractive and better-functioning town that provides a quality lifestyle for residents and an appealing environment for visitors.

The Port Sorell Structure Plan is shown on the next page. It is essentially a composite of all the incremental changes that were proposed by the EBD, together with clarification of the future role of the few areas not investigated in detail.

There are several key principles informing the Structure Plan. In summary these are:

- Frame the town – to define the town boundaries
- Develop an efficient town structure – define the relationships between different uses
- Connect up the town – define a robust street network for the town
- Mature the town – facilitate adaptation of the existing parts of town to better support the long-term role of the town.

Each of these principles is explained further below, with direct reference to the Plan.

Frame the Town

The EBD proposed establishment of a strong and permanent green edge to the town, defined in different ways in different places. Broadly, the aim is to protect the ridge from development, to give the town a green backdrop when viewed from the water and the beach, to preserve bush close to the township, and to encourage urban development to concentrate around the town centre.

Northern frame

The northern end of town (Hawley) is already bordered by a ridge with high quality bush and an historic property and vineyard. Both the bush and the property (Hawley House) are important assets for the community, the environment and, increasingly, for tourists.



Historic Hawley House. The Houghton property forms a significant part of the northern town frame.



Overall Port Sorell Structure Plan

KEYNOTES

- 1 - New Town Centre
- 2 - Shearwater Centre
- 3 - Port Sorell Neighbourhood Centre
- 4 - Hawley Neighbourhood Centre
- 5 - New 'Inner Urban' residential areas
- 6 - Industrial Estate Extension & new Town Entry

- 7 - New northern residential area
- 8 - New rural residential area incorporating habitat corridors
- 9 - Longer term future residential areas converted from rural residential
- 10 - Potential residential, subject to water supply feasibility

Western frame

The high ridge to the west of town is established rural residential properties, most of which remain well-treed. It is important that vegetation is at least retained, if not restored, in this area. Vegetation clearance should be carefully controlled on these elevated rural residential and rural properties.

In the west and south-west, the town edge approximately follows the 40-metre contour for two important reasons. First, above this level it is difficult to supply town water to homes, and second, the hillside is clearly visible from the beach above this level.



Port Sorell Fire Station. Note the forested hills forming a backdrop to the town.

In addition to controlling vegetation removal, design guidelines relating to the colour, roof materials and form of new dwellings, as well as controls on land re-shaping (cut and fill), would be beneficial to minimize the visual intrusion of future housing on rural residential lots in this elevated western area.

Southern frame

Significant privately-owned bushland areas exist to the south of the main town and these should be preserved and, where possible, linked by retaining and regenerating bush on private property. Parkers Ford Road and the Squeaking Point Road and village approximately define the southern extent of the town. Beyond this, farmlets transition into genuine farming land, which should be protected from intrusion by non-agricultural uses.

This southern edge could be reinforced by re-establishing and intensifying roadside vegetation along Parkers Ford Road/Squeaking Point Road, and encouraging tree planting on existing and proposed rural residential properties north of these streets.

Develop an Efficient Town Structure

A key aspect of an efficient town structure is ensuring that most residents are within walking distance of a centre that provides a range of basic services and local jobs, as well as creating an attractive node that provides a sense of place and identity for the local community. In addition, a good urban structure is highly legible, that is, easy to understand and easy to get around.

The combined EBD proposals organise the town around a new primary town centre on Alexander Street, and three neighbourhood centres – Shearwater, Hawley and Port Sorell. The plan shows circles of 400 metre radii around each neighbourhood centre (400 metres is approximately a five minute walk) and an 800 metre (ten-minute walk) radius around the Town Centre.

New Town Centre

The plan seeks to concentrate new development around the new town centre so it becomes a true mixed-use walkable centre - located centrally and a focus for the town's activity. To achieve this, significant urban development is required in and around the centre. The area inside the 800m radius shown on the adjacent plan should therefore absorb most of the town's new growth in the near term.

The town centre is proposed to be a highly attractive place with appealing and safe streets, with good public spaces and other assets to create a strong community identity. Most new retail development and other related services such as a possible hotel, a medical centre and child care are concentrated into this new core.

Neighbourhood Centres

The Shearwater Centre is the largest 'neighbourhood' centre. It should develop a stronger niche role for leisure and tourism, as well as providing a good range of local services. Shearwater Centre would benefit from improved access, particularly from the east and from Wilmot Street and areas to the south. The street network plan on the following page proposes a number of new connections, some of which will improve access to Shearwater Centre.

Hawley and Port Sorell Neighbourhood Centres are currently small, however they have the potential to grow stronger. The Hawley Centre will be helped by the Surf Club expansion, whilst Port Sorell has several little-used shop fronts that could become home to local businesses.

Neighbourhood commercial and community facilities should aggregate at the neighbourhood centres, rather



Port Sorell General Store is an important asset that needs to be supported by encouraging other businesses to locate around it.

than dispersing, in order to create strong local nodes that provide a range of services within walking distance of most of the neighbourhood.

Denser and More Walkable Neighbourhoods

Incremental intensification and some infill development should be concentrated within the 400m walking distance of the existing neighbourhood centres, to strengthen them and to help increase the number of smaller dwellings in line with Port Sorell's emerging demographics.

The EBD recommends that Port Sorell's existing urban areas be able to gradually become denser and more walkable. In order to better cater to Port Sorell's current and projected population, which is generally aging and decreasing in household size, relatively small dwellings on small lots should be allowed. This transition toward more medium-density housing should encourage a different form of unit to most of the units currently existing in Port Sorell, which are typically placed one behind the other on a conventional lot. This type of unit provides no street address for most of the units, and requires a strata title and body corporate.

Small houses on small street-front lots (smaller than current 'Closed Residential' lot size minimums, typically 300-450qm) can form an attractive streetscape, while still providing compact but useful private rear yards. Such houses and lots, including attached terrace houses with rear lanes, may be owned 'fee simple' as are larger houses.

New Residential Areas

Several new residential areas are proposed. These include:

- *Areas around the new Town Centre* – several sites to the west, north and south-east of the new town centre are proposed as new 'inner' residential precincts.

They should be developed to a greater density than existing residential areas, in recognition of their proximity to the town centre.

- *Areas to the north of the Town Centre* – these areas include development of farmlets around the Arthur Street area and land behind Hawley Beach, including the Luck land.
- *Mixed-use development along Wilmot Street east of the roundabout* – land currently zoned rural in this area is proposed to change to business uses along the Wilmot Street frontage, and residential uses behind.
- *Longer-term urban development* – existing rural residential areas, such as between Wilmot Street and Panatana Rivulet, may gradually convert to residential development after the above areas have been developed. Only a small part of this area, north of the creek, is shown coloured as residential at this stage.

Overall Growth Strategy

The EBD proposes for the town structure to concentrate activity as much as possible in and around its core, and eventually for the town to grow right up to the green edge, with a relatively dense and walkable fabric that fits its current and expected future demographics. The existing neighbourhood centres and residential areas will benefit from greater accessibility and the town will 'mature' by growing local jobs and services, as explained in the 'Complete the Town' section below.

Growing Local Jobs and Services

The Structure Plan provides opportunities to generate many more local jobs and services in Port Sorell, and proposes where they should locate. Generally, new jobs related to commercial and business services should locate in or near the new Town Centre and on major streets near the town entrance. Key areas to be made available for business uses include the western part of Wilmot Street, and the southern part of Alexander Street (up to Club Drive). Additional land for industrial uses is provided through a southerly expansion of the existing industrial estate.

Jobs and services are also encouraged to establish in the existing neighbourhood centres to strengthen them and reduce car dependence for local trips.

Home-based businesses are encouraged anywhere, so long as they are compatible with their neighbours in terms of use and traffic impacts.

Tourism jobs, including new accommodation and restaurants, may locate in a number of places including

Shearwater Centre and the marina (if developed). There is also potential for environmentally-based tourism developments, for example in the Hawley area.

A New “Town Entry”

The Structure Plan shows development to create an upgraded and landscaped “town entry” precinct on Port Sorell Road approaching the main roundabout, with a new Information Centre, Council Depot and Emergency Services.

Urban Streams, Bush and Green Network

The Structure Plan and the detailed plans show all bush areas and streams that are proposed to be protected and/or enhanced. The Poyston Creek and its tributaries and the Panatana Rivulet are the two main streams that should be enhanced as green corridors. The lower reaches of Poyston Creek connect with the public bushland west of Camps Banksia and Boomerang. This bushland is currently quite degraded, and requires significant restoration. The Hawley Nature Reserve is high quality public bushland bordering the northwest part of the town.

Most of the private forest to the north of town is to be retained. To the south of town, the bulk of the existing bush at Browns Lookout is to be retained and linked with a new forested corridor to the privately-owned conservation area on Parkers Ford Road, and to the Squeaking Point Reserve. Vegetation removal in the rural residential zones is now controlled by Council under a 2006 planning scheme amendment. These controls should be periodically reviewed to ensure that they are satisfactorily protecting the treed character of the rural residential areas.

Rural Residential Development

The Overall Plan shows limited areas for proposed new rural residential development (coloured very light yellow on the plan and located south of Panatana Rivulet). Rural residential growth is to be contained within areas already partially subdivided. These new rural residential areas will be required to establish new habitat corridors to link existing significant bushland areas. No further rural residential is proposed south of Parkers Ford Road/Squeaking Point Road.

Overall Development Capacity

The plan has an approximate development capacity to allow for a total population of around 7700, together with sufficient non-residential land to provide for a significant increase in local shops, services, community facilities and local jobs, providing for a relatively more self-contained town.

As outlined in the UTAS demographic projections study,

it is difficult to know when a population level of 7700 will be reached, as there are many variables affecting growth rates. With very accelerated in-migration and easy availability of lots and housing, it could be reached by 2016, although this is highly unlikely. If current growth rates continue, it may not be until 2031.

Connect Up the Town

Completing missing road connections is vital in Port Sorell, where so many streets end in dead ends. Connectivity needs to be improved for a number of reasons:

- Minimising congestion
- Improving legibility
- Better connecting communities
- Shortening travel distances
- Keeping all traffic volumes reasonable
- Ensuring no four-lane roads or traffic lights will be needed
- Improving bushfire safety and emergency services access
- Maintaining long term urban network options.

In addition, there is an inadequate street network to accommodate future growth of the town. The plan on the following page shows the existing and proposed street network.

The EBD proposed a number of key links, the most important of which is ‘Pink Street’, running from Port Sorell Road to Hawk Hill Road, and continuing north to Arthur Street. Being parallel to and west of Alexander Street, this new street would provide an alternative route to and from town from the Port Sorell Road, avoiding the Alexander Street roundabout. It would also serve the new Town Centre and the expanded industrial area. Being able to choose an alternate route is particularly important at busy times because dispersing traffic reduces pressure on individual intersections.

Other key links required include:

- Shearwater Esplanade to Wilmot Street connection (with a new street in an existing street reserve west of the Camps);
- From the Shearwater Centre via Quinlan Crescent to Wilmot Street;
- Summerhill Drive through to Hawk Hill Road;
- Freer Street extension westward to the new ‘Pink’ Street, to provide good beach access to the proposed urban area west of Alexander Street.
- The ‘Greenhill Link’, to provide an alternative access to the Milldam Road/Shannon Drive area via Panatana Drive;
- A new east-west connection along the southern edge of the Greenhill bushland, linking Milldam Road to Gardams Road.



Plan showing existing street pattern (in black) and key proposed street links (in dashed red and orange coloured lines).

In addition, several options are identified for a longer term Panatana Rivulet crossing. It is important to retain these in case of future urban expansion across the creek. The link from Panatana Drive, north-west to River Road would provide the best and shortest connection to the main areas of town.

All these connections can be made over time as opportunity arises; the important thing is to set aside appropriate road reserves where required, and to ensure that new development is designed so as not to close off future options.

Mature the Town

In addition to creating new areas for growth and new street networks, it will be important to 'mature' the town by growing local jobs, services, housing choice and schools, in order to make it a relatively self-sufficient and complete community. This will reduce travel away from town, and support local community cohesion and prosperity. This will also improve local walkability and

community fitness by having more daily needs and destinations within walking or cycling distance. Instead of just walking for exercise or the fun of walking by itself, people will be able to walk as part of their necessary daily routines.

Some of the maturing of the town will involve intensification or redevelopment of existing urban and semi-urban areas. Increasing housing choice will likely involve replacement of some existing single dwellings with units and apartments. Facilitating jobs growth will require pro-active strategies from Council and the community. Maturing the town will also include adjustments to the locations of various business types to areas better suited to them as the town grows.

New Mixed-Use Town Centre Precinct

A new mixed-use town centre precinct is proposed for the area west of Alexander Street containing the tip site and the OneCare Aged Care Facility (currently under construction). The area is bounded to the south by the existing Industrial Estate. Club Drive has recently been extended into this area. Extensive studies are being conducted into methods of rehabilitation of the tip site. Preliminary results show that parts of the site are likely to be suited to building on, and other parts may be suited to sporting fields.

The south-eastern part of the site had already been identified as the new retail centre for the Port Sorell area and the land has been contracted to a major developer, who had concept plans prepared. However, in negotiations with the developer it became apparent that there was an opportunity for the EBD to propose an alternative development plan for the whole precinct, including the town centre core, which better met the future vision for Port Sorell.

Town Centre Core

The town centre core is located in the bottom (south-eastern) corner of the site, next to Alexander Street (see plan on facing page). The EBD proposed a very different form of new town centre to a conventional shopping centre plan, where buildings are set back behind a large expanse of car parking. In the EBD plan, the same uses - supermarket, medical centre, shops, etc - are reconfigured into a street-based town centre, typical of the best traditional Tasmanian country towns. Shops and other businesses front the streets, perhaps with apartments or offices on a second storey. The centre is easy to access by car and is a pleasant environment for pedestrians. There are attractive tree-lined footpaths with verandahs, and car parking is on-street, with extra parking behind the shops.



Plan of the New Mixed Use Town Centre Precinct, containing a street-based Town Centre Core off Alexander St, and the tip site to its north shown redeveloped into sporting fields, a possible school and some medium density housing. The star-shaped OneCare Aged Care Facility (under construction) and its additional land is to the west of the Town Centre core.

What is more, this structure is able to mature and adapt over time, hopefully into a place that reflects and serves the needs and tastes of the people who live here.

The new main street runs between Alexander Street, at the Poyston Drive intersection, and Club Drive Extension. There is a pronounced bend in the middle and the view along the street terminates on the bushland beside the creek, as shown in the sketch overleaf. A small plaza is formed at the bend in the street and framed by shops and the entrance to the supermarket.

Parallel parking is provided on the street, providing some prime spaces. However its main role is to buffer pedestrians from traffic on the street, and to slow traffic.

Generous parking space is available behind the shops and supermarket, with easy access to the shops via the main street.

Many users of the centre will drive to get there, but once there, the scale and design of the place make it pleasant, easy and safe to walk in. All buildings face directly onto the main street with active frontages and in most cases verandahs.

Development of the expanded industrial area to the immediate south of the centre is important for the growth of both areas. A new street connection between the town centre and the industrial area is shown, allowing them to grow together, for example through industrial area workers coming to shop and lunch on the main street.



View looking along the town centre main street from Alexander Street

Town Centre Stage 1

The centre is likely to develop in stages. The plan at right shows the recommended first stage of development. The supermarket is the catalyst and the anchor for this development, which also includes some small shops, preferably with offices or housing above, and with sufficient car parking. The most important thing is that the main street be built first, as it is the backbone for the future build-out of this plan.



Stage One of Town Centre development, showing new Main Street, supermarket and small shops forming a plaza.

Alexander Street and its Frontage

Alexander Street is the busiest street in town and, as the town centre develops, this central part of it should become an excellent business address. This can only happen, however, if properties on both sides are able to develop to front the street.

The EBD proposal involves actively fronting Alexander Street on the west with two or three storey mixed-use buildings, and re-constructing Alexander Street into a treed boulevard section with a central median and on-street parking. Housing on the eastern side is proposed

to be re-zoned to allow for commercial development, so they can choose over time to either operate small businesses out of the existing dwellings, redevelop, or remain as housing.



Plan of Alexander Street at Town Centre, showing treed boulevard with median

The median treatment will announce the welcoming central segment of Alexander Street as the town centre. The treed median strip and on street parking achieve this by:

- Slowing traffic;
- Letting people know that they are in the centre;
- Improving the outlook of houses on the east side of the street;
- Improving the outlook of business premises;
- Making it easier for pedestrians to cross.

In order to help attract businesses, and therefore jobs, this central part of Alexander Street needs to be allowed to capitalise on its exposure to passing traffic to become part of the town centre and home to local businesses.



Looking north along the Town Centre section of Alexander Street, showing new median, with existing housing on the east which may convert to small businesses.

Medical Offices, Child Care and Independent Living Complex

Immediately west of the Town Centre Core is an area that is planned to be the first stage of the Town Centre development. It is to include a medical centre and child care centre. To the west of these facilities is a vacant part of the OneCare land, edged by a landscaped stream and pond. A potential street link into the Industrial area forms the eastern boundary of this area.

Preliminary designs for the medical centre and childcare, done before the EBD, showed these as buildings set back behind car parks. However, in order to build an attractive and walkable streetscape throughout the Town Centre precinct, the EBD proposed a revised layout for these facilities. Also, an area of independent retirement living units that make efficient use of the additional land is proposed, providing an opportunity for elderly people to live within walking distance of the Town Centre.

The plan above right shows a new street south from Club Drive Extension into the industrial estate, creating a direct link between it and the Town Centre. Fronting onto this street is the proposed medical centre (keynote 2), whilst the new child care centre (keynote 1) fronts the Club Drive extension. Both facilities are in easy walking distance of the OneCare Centre west of the creek. The medical centre has a special parking arrangement for emergency ambulances, whilst customer parking is provided on-street and in a parking lot behind it to the southwest. The child care centre has a sunny play area to its north, with staff and drop-off parking just in front of it, along a one-way slip lane off Club Drive, with angle parking.

Both the child care and medical centre buildings had already been fully designed prior to the EBD, and their proponents agreed to consider repositioning these buildings as explained above. The repositioning makes more efficient use of the site, and created room for an elderly persons' independent living complex to the south.



Plan showing OneCare Aged Care Centre, Child Care (keynote 1), Medical Centre (keynote 2), and Independent Living complex (keynotes 3 and 4).

The independent living complex could also include the triangular-shaped property owned by OneCare, just southeast of the creek. A new small street would extend westward to the creek, with a pedestrian bridge over the creek, linking to the OneCare Facility. Attached units (keynotes 3) would front the creek and small attached courtyard houses (keynote 4) would front the street. Courtyard housing on the south side of the new street has a rear lane for its garages, so that all these courtyard houses actively front the little street. The rear lane would separate the courtyard houses from the industrial estate to the south.

OneCare Retirement Community Land (Rubicon Grove)

The star-shaped OneCare Aged Care Centre occupies the centre of a large site. No specific development was designed during the EBD on the remainder of the OneCare land that occupies the south-west corner of the Town Centre Precinct. Future additional uses on this land might include independent living for seniors, businesses, possibly an Anglican school or relatively dense residential. The new 'Pink Street' is proposed to run along the western boundary of the site.

There are several key principles that should guide any future development on the OneCare land. No blank walls or high fences should line either Club Drive Extension or 'Pink Street'. Buildings should address and actively front these streets, with parking located behind buildings (not car parks out front). This will help stimulate activity on the street, and improve amenity for pedestrians coming from residential areas proposed to the west of 'Pink Street', as well as improving community safety with 'passive' surveillance from the fronting buildings.

Tip Site Redevelopment

The northern half of the town centre site is currently a tip, soon to close. At the time of the EBD, Council was still investigating how best to decontaminate and redevelop the land. On current understandings, parts of the site can be developed for buildings, and the rest for open space. However, all EBD proposals for the tip site are subject to the final outcome of the reclamation investigations.



Plan of Proposed Tip Site Redevelopment

A large proportion of the old tip site is proposed for a football ground (keynote 1), hockey/soccer pitch and netball courts, with a licensed clubhouse. The Wesley Vale Football Club has expressed interest in moving here, which is potentially a major community asset.

The process of decontaminating the tip will likely require some cleaned fill to be placed above the current ground level. The excess fill could usefully be formed into a slight berm around the proposed football field, providing elevated areas for spectators. A new high quality skatepark (keynote 2) is proposed atop the southern part of this berm closest to the Town Centre.

Medium-density terrace housing development with rear lanes is proposed in two locations, at the western and



View of new Skate Park & town centre beyond

eastern edges of the site (keynotes 3). These sites can contribute to increasing the population close to the Town Centre, as well as providing evening activity and passive surveillance in the core of the town. The southern edge of the eastern housing area should incorporate commercial premises at street level, fronting across Club Drive Extension to commercial development in the Town Centre.

Possible Primary School on Tip Site

The plan also proposes a primary school on the site (keynote 4), with an oval and buildings shown in blue. If a school does not locate here, then this land should also be able to be developed for medium-density housing.

Shearwater Centre

The shopping centre at Shearwater is currently the main retail area in town. However the forthcoming larger and better-located new town centre on Alexander Street will ultimately become Port Sorell's primary centre. It is unlikely that the Shearwater Centre will be able to compete directly with the new Town Centre for convenience retail such as groceries. However, the Shearwater Centre should be able to remain viable and even thrive, if it adapts itself to capitalise more on leisure and tourism.

In order to do so, the Shearwater Centre will need to become much more physically attractive and spatially efficient. It is currently very spread out with lots of tarmac, low building scale and with few established trees. There is little 'sense of place' or amenity such as verandahs. All the street reserves are wider than necessary for their existing parking, which further weakens the centre's sense of place. In addition, the centre has no direct link to the beach to capitalise on that attraction.

New mixed-use developments - for example ground floor retail with upstairs residential, holiday apartments and/or small office premises - should be encouraged to locate in and around the centre. Buildings should help to frame the centre and make it more vital. In addition, improvements are needed to the public realm, especially the footpaths and parking layout.

Completing the Retail Core of the Centre

The vacant site on the north-east corner (keynote 1) should be built as a two-to-three storey mixed use building, including one or more cafes or restaurants on the ground floor. The existing supermarket (keynote 2) should ultimately be redeveloped into a multi-storey building, with a prominent corner café spreading out onto the generous footpath area, and residential or holiday accommodation above.



Shearwater Centre Plan showing incremental redevelopment and parking/streetscape improvements.

Strengthening the Western Corners

The EBD proposes the incremental redevelopment of the two western corners of the centre (keynotes 3), including the Council's land, by relocating the existing skate park to the redeveloped tip site. The boat business and yard on these corners may benefit by relocating to better-exposed premises on Port Sorell Road or Wilmot Street. Redevelopment on these corners should be allowed to encroach several metres into the existing overly-wide street reserves. This would enable the two western corners of Shearwater Centre to better 'frame' the centre, and gain additional developable land by using the excess street width, with minimal loss of on-street parking, and significant gains to intra-block parking efficiency, behind new buildings.

On the corners of these sites would be actively-fronting businesses at street level with continuous verandahs, together with one or more storeys above of residential, holiday accommodation, or office uses. Medium density residential or holiday accommodation is proposed for the southern parcel of Council land (keynote 4). It should be at least two storeys in height, with home-offices encouraged at street level, and with parallel parking on-street and additional parking in the rear.

Revised Parking Layout

The Shearwater Centre is currently well-supplied with car parking, with the very wide streets supporting extensive angle and right angle parking. However, the layout is quite inefficient and creates an excessive expanse of bitumen. In addition, in some places, such as in front of the Shearwater Resort pub, parking is in front of buildings, which decreases the amenity and walkability of the Centre.

The EBD proposal reconfigures the car parking so that as much as possible is retained on-street in more efficient and legible layouts, while additional spaces are placed behind buildings rather than in front. The pavements are narrowed to help slow traffic, especially on Shearwater Boulevard, and trees are added. All of this will improve the pedestrian amenity and visual appeal of the centre.

The key street layout changes proposed are:

- Quinlan Crescent (keynote 5): narrowing of street reserve on west by around 9-10m, and reconfiguring parking to either angle (shown) or centre parking, with paved footpaths to match Club Drive footpath paving;

- Shearwater Boulevard (keynote 6): possible reconfiguring of current one-sided right angled parking to dual-sided angle parking with chicanes at entry points to slow traffic, and modified roundabout entry points to match (subject to detailed design). Overall parking numbers will be increased. Paved footpaths should be extended, and the bus stop relocated nearby;
- Club Drive: removal of four parking bays to enable large shade trees to be introduced is proposed. To generate additional parking off-street shop owners are encouraged to co-operate to rationalize the inefficient pie-shaped spaces at the rear of shops into rectangular parking areas.

If additional parking spaces are generated both on-street and behind shops, it may be possible to use the current off street car park opposite the medical centre for development.

Streetscape Improvements

Overall, the public realm (streets and footpaths) needs to be significantly enhanced here to make it a comfortable, useable and very attractive place in which people would like to spend their leisure time.

The EBD proposes new plantings of hardy, fast-growing, large trees (possibly plane trees) to form a shady summertime canopy and a higher-amenity streetscape. Verandahs are proposed on all new buildings and are encouraged to be added to existing structures. Footpath enhancement needs to be continued into the side streets.

Shearwater Resort Frontage

The eastern end of the centre comprises the entry to the Shearwater Resort. The entry is currently dominated by a large car park, and as such the Resort does not contribute strongly to the sense of place of the centre.



Shearwater Resort's new mixed-use 'frame'

This car park area should be developed for mixed-use, multi-storey buildings containing street-level businesses with apartments or offices above fronting out onto

Shearwater Boulevard (keynote 7). These buildings will frame both the centre and the resort facilities beyond. The car parking layout should be rationalized and located behind the new development. The sketch below right shows how such a development might look.

Reduced Parking for Appropriate Development

In order to facilitate the transformation of the Shearwater Centre to an increased leisure and recreation focus, consideration should be given to reducing or removing on-site parking requirements for development of new cafes, restaurants, bars etc that are likely to have peak parking times that are outside normal daytime parking peaks. Alternatively, a financial contribution could be taken in lieu of parking space provision, and the funds used to contribute to the public realm upgrade works in the centre.

Shearwater Resort and Golf Course

The Shearwater Resort owns approximately 14 hectares of land between the western end of the golf course and Alexander Street. With the establishment of the new town centre and residential development already under construction to the north, there is a rationale for this land to also develop for residential and mixed use.

Poyston Creek and a number of its tributaries flow through the site, providing habitat for an endangered species of burrowing crayfish. The Shearwater Resort proposes to use this block in part for flood mitigation and irrigation storage related to the golf course. Council also plans to implement storm water management works on this site to deal with water quality and quantity impacts associated with development further upstream.

Residential development could include a range of lot sizes and housing types, with denser housing focusing on the open spaces and water features.

Several possible development options

The Shearwater Resort may choose to combine development of this western land with some level of re-design and upgrading of the existing golf course. The EBD produced two possible options for this land. The first option retained the existing layout of the golf course, whilst the second option extended the golf course westward into the Alexander Street site, and developed the northernmost part of the course closest to the water for housing and tourism uses.

Mixed uses along Alexander Street

For both options described below, the frontage to Alexander Street is proposed to be mixed-use and commercial buildings, taking advantage of their exposure

to the busiest street in town and the proximity to the Town Centre and industrial precinct.

New street connections

For both options the new development provides for a network of streets that connect the site into the existing town to the north, north-east, south and west. A street to the north links to existing residential streets. One key street links the Shearwater Centre to the site, via the southern extension of Quinlan Crescent. To the south, several streets are proposed to connect the site to Wilmot Street, by linking into proposed streets provided by future development of the land currently zoned Rural south of the Shearwater site. Several connections are made to Alexander Street in the west, thereby linking the area to the Town Centre and industrial area. All of these small local streets would carry low traffic volumes at low speeds, but would be important in linking communities and reducing travel distances.

Option A: Development Concentrated to the West

Option A makes minimal change to the existing golf course and instead aims to maximise residential development close to the town centre in conjunction with the stormwater management and habitat requirements of the site.

The location and layout of the golf course is unchanged in this option. The only change is the rehabilitation of the creek through the golf course to replace the existing concrete channel with a natural stream. This will significantly benefit the endangered burrowing crayfish. This would also add more vegetation to the golf course



Option A Plan for development of Shearwater Resort land with all new development at the Alexander Street end.

and potentially enhance the golfing challenge of the course.

The plan shows a variety of denser housing types on a well-connected, highly walkable street grid, all within 300-600m of the Town Centre. The stream and its water management ponds provide an opportunity to create a significant public wetlands park as the centre of this higher density residential precinct.



View of Option A apartments overlooking detention ponds, which would fill as shown following heavy rain

Option B: Redesign and upgrade Golf Course, with development at both ends of the Shearwater Resort property

In response to discussions with the Golf Club and Shearwater Resort, a second option was designed, which modifies the golf course layout with the aim of improving the overall quality of the course. A new golf clubhouse would be built fronting Pitcairn Street. The golf course would be extended westward beside the water management and habitat features as shown on Option A. A reduced area of residential development at the western end of the property.

The north-eastern part of the golf course would be developed for medium density residential and/or tourism facilities, with a new street added, linking the Shearwater Centre to the beach. The main area of new development would thus be in a highly attractive location, between the Shearwater Centre, the beach and the upgraded golf course to the south. The additional population would also help strengthen the Shearwater Centre.

However, the EBD noted that this north-eastern golf course land is relatively low-lying, and as such would need to be fully assessed against rising sea level risk before development could proceed.

At present, a row of existing houses on Shearwater Boulevard has an excellent outlook over the north-eastern end of the golf course from the rear of their properties. To maintain a reasonable sense of outlook for these houses, a park would be created between the new development



Plan of Option B for redevelopment of Shearwater Resort land, showing the golf course re-configured, a new club house on Pitcairn Street and new development at both ends of the property.

and the existing houses, including a wetland in the north-western corner. Streets running across the new development will help retain some beach views, however it is acknowledged that new two-storey development would partially impact the beach views of some existing residents in Shearwater Boulevard.

In the medium term, it is proposed that the existing properties on Shearwater Boulevard be encouraged to redevelop to higher density residential, such as apartments on consolidated lots, as the increased population here would also help strengthen the Shearwater Centre.

The new street link to the beach starts at the roundabout at the eastern end of the Shearwater Centre, and bends its way east past the existing and proposed Resort buildings, and redeveloped golf clubhouse, before running straight to Shearwater Esplanade, connecting through an existing vacant lot and walkway.

This option also develops the western end of the land close to the new town centre, for mixed uses, with two or

three-storey town houses and/or apartments overlooking the new golf course and ponds, all with good walking access to the town centre.

Option Resolution

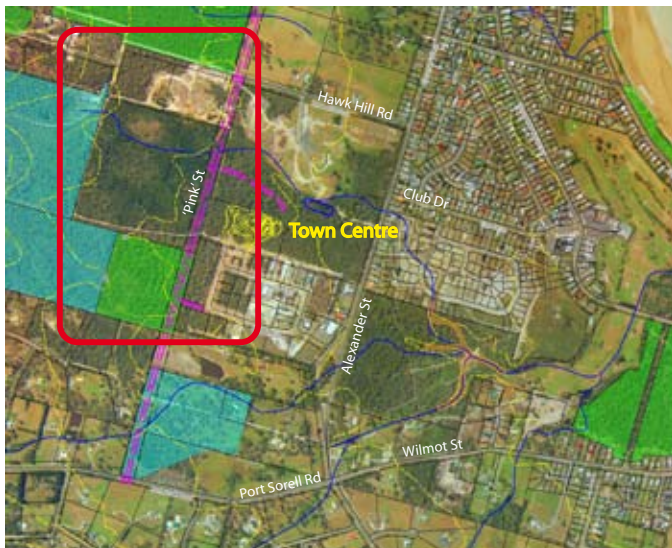
The Shearwater Resort owners have not expressed a preference for either option. Both options require further technical investigation and feasibility analysis before a final design could be proposed.

New 'Inner Suburbs' Around the Town Centre

The overall plan proposes concentrating new housing growth within walking distance of the Town Centre core, to the west, north and east of the centre. To the south, the industrial precinct will expand and reinforce the town centre by providing jobs close by. These areas are next described in more detail.

Inner Western Residential

The land immediately to the west of the town centre is currently partly owned by a private developer and partly owned by Council. This land has excellent potential for denser residential development as it is within easy walking distance of the town centre.



Aerial of the site. The area bounded in red is represented on the plan at right.

Development on this site, as shown on the indicative plan at right, must obey the broad principles of urban design set out elsewhere in this document. Namely it should:

- Have an interconnected street network;
- Streets should connect with surrounding areas;
- Streets should border bushland as a firebreak;



View of denser housing across cascading ponds on the Jochro land

- Parks should be bounded by streets or by dwelling fronts;
- A variety of housing types and residential lot sizes should be provided;
- Smaller lots should include rear-lane or carcourt vehicle access to minimize garage dominance of streets;
- Development should front all streets, including the new 'Pink Street'.

Jochro Land

The developer of the central site in this area had already proposed a series of cascading ponds through the main valley of the site, for aesthetic and stormwater detention purposes. This idea is retained in the indicative design below. The street network and lot orientation responds to other topographic features such as hill slopes, forest edges, solar access and views.



Indicative plan for the 'inner west' precinct. Note the well-connected street network, possible business frontages along 'Pink Street', and the wide range of lot sizes.

Western Council lands

Two Council-owned parcels to the north and south of the Jochro Land should form part of this inner residential area in the short-to-medium term. However, both have extensive vegetation that requires assessment before any clearance could occur.

Cleared slopes west of Jochro land

The plan shows potential development one block wide on the slope to the west of the Jochro and Council lands. This land is already cleared and its proximity to the Town Centre may justify its developing, depending on the demand after development of the main areas. This proposal is also dependent on being able to augment the water supply to serve this slightly higher elevation.

'Pink Street' active frontage

It is vital that the proposed 'Pink Street' is lined with active frontages of home-based-businesses and residential buildings. OneCare development also needs to front onto this street to ensure its vibrancy.

The street should be tree-lined, with footpaths against both property boundaries. The combination of these factors will ensure that pedestrians feel at home on this street.

Inner South

Tourism, Heritage, Environment and Arts (THEA) Centre and Town Entry

Through the public consultation and from the consultant's own observations it was noted that Port Sorell does not have a clear and inviting town entry. It was also noted that the property on the corner of Port Sorell Road and Alexander Street was for sale at the time of the EBD.

The property is approximately seven hectares, running along Port Sorell Road west of the roundabout. A weatherboard farm house is located near the corner. This lot provides the opportunity to create a prominent, welcoming and attractive town entry precinct.

The EBD recommended that Council purchase the land for the community, and proposed that the house be converted into a combined Tourism, Heritage, Environment and Arts (THEA) Centre (keynote 1). It is proposed that the THEA Centre would provide visitor information and would serve as headquarters for community groups contributing to or promoting tourism, heritage, the environment and arts in the area.

The building needs some renovation to make it an attractive and functional space, and the site is suited to



Indicative plan for Inner South precinct, showing new town entry development including THEA Centre and industrial area expansion

re-vegetation and landscaping work, all of which could be done using the expertise of people and groups within the community. This site could be a showcase for the community, people and place of Port Sorell.

The highly accessible location is also suited to emergency services facilities such as fire brigade, SES, police and ambulance (keynotes 2). The council may also relocate its depot here in the future (keynote 3).



The 'THEA' Information and Arts Centre at the town entry

Industrial Estate Expansion

During the EBD the team received clear advice that more industrial land is needed in Port Sorell if the local economy is to grow. Industrial jobs, as well as being important in themselves, are essential to stimulate other business activity in the town.

Presently, industrial zoned land is located immediately to the south of the town centre in the Burgess Estate. The EBD proposed to expand industrial land southward into the area between the existing industrial estate and Port Sorell Road, on land that is currently zoned Rural.

This location offers easy access for trucks, without them having to go through the Town Centre or residential areas. The new 'Pink Street' will provide alternative access to Alexander Street, to both the existing and new industrial areas. The Alexander Street frontage will have commercial uses as an attractive urban business precinct close to the town centre. The interface between industrial and other land uses will need to be carefully managed to ensure conflict is avoided.

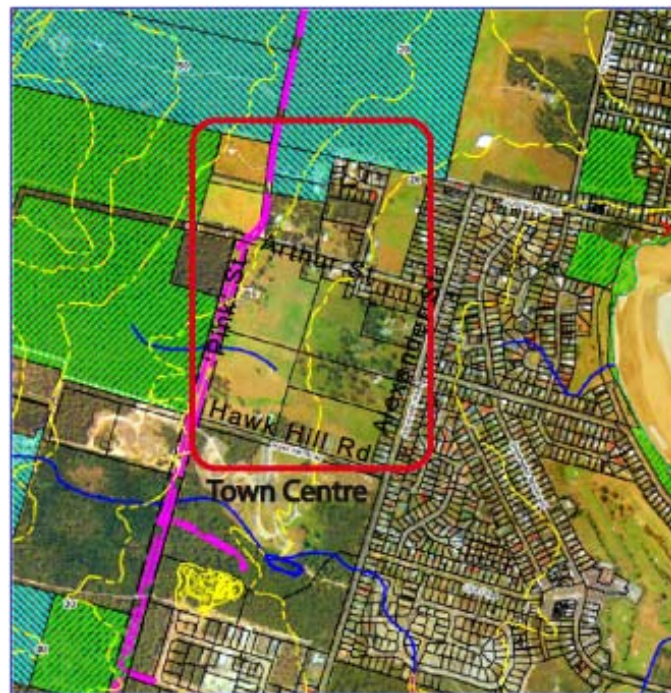
The precinct plan shows corridors of vegetation running through the proposed industrial areas. These corridors follow gullies that are to be retained for drainage and stormwater management, as well as habitat protection. Vegetation is also retained and enhanced fronting Port Sorell Road in order to protect the attractiveness of the town entry by screening the industrial area.

Rural residential lots to west

Several rural residential lots to the west of the expanded industrial area are proposed for medium to longer term urban development.

The Inner North: Arthur Park Precinct

The area to the immediate north of the new Town Centre, bounded by Hawk Hill Road, Alexander Street and the Hawley Bushland Reserve, is currently farmland and small farmlet lots. Despite its proximity to the Town Centre, most of the area retained its Rural A zone in the 2004 Strategic Plan.



Aerial photo of the inner north precinct

The land is very well located close to the town centre and nestled against the bushland edge of the Hawley Reserve. The beach is also highly accessible if Freer Street is extended into the precinct, as suggested in the EBD Plan.

The EBD proposed that all of this area be designated for future residential development. The precinct should contain a substantial urban park (Arthur Park) as a central amenity. Because of its proximity to the town centre, this area could contain a significant number of smaller residential lots, suited to cottages, terraces and town houses.

The Inner North Precinct plan features a well-connected and walkable street network providing excellent accessibility to all properties within the neighbourhood and 'plugging in' to the surrounding street network and the Town Centre. The western edge of the residential area is bounded by streets along the edge of the bush, including the northern extension of 'Pink Street'.

The southern half of the subdivision is built around the park, sketched on the next page. In contrast to the neighbouring bushland, the vision for this space is for an urban park used for barbeques, playing with the dog and kicking a

football. This sort of public space adds amenity and value to the surrounding neighbourhood, as do features such as treed median strips, shown in the centre of some streets.

The northern end of the residential area is shown extended into the Houghton bushland, and is discussed in more detail in a later section on the Northern Precinct.

There is apparently a prominent rock outcrop in the Hawley Reserve to the west of this area. The EBD proposed investigating the construction of a public walking track from this precinct up to this feature.



View of Arthur Park, an urban space providing an attractive focus for the inner northern community



Inner North Residential Precinct, showing the proposed centrally-located Arthur Park, the Freer Street western extension, and 'Pink' Street running north to Arthur Street

Surf Club and Shearwater Park

Surf Club

The Surf Lifesaving Club is located south of Hawley Beach, abutting the North Freers Reserve to its west, and is accessed off Dumbleton Street. It is in need of expansion in order to accommodate the projected growth in membership. Future expansions are constrained, however, because of significant indigenous vegetation to the immediate west and southwest of the site as well as sensitive coastal dune systems to the east.

The proposed layout of the Surf Club allows for a modest expansion of the building to incorporate room for a new amenities block, extra storage space, and a dedicated area for surf rescue boats whilst respecting the environmental constraints inherent with the club's location. The expansion takes advantage of already cleared areas to minimise additional vegetation loss.



Detailed plan of the Surf Club redevelopment, showing new car park areas and revised water access points for lifesaving boats

The design improves beach access for the various surf rescue water crafts, allowing vehicles towing surf boats a direct access route from the road to the water. The outdoor storage area is also enlarged and sited to improve the efficient running of surf carnivals and events.

The issue of on-site parking is addressed by formalising some of the existing parking areas and increasing parking at the rear of the club rooms. This, in conjunction with the recently approved new Council car park off Dumbleton Street and a small number of additional on-street parking bays, is considered adequate to address the seasonal parking demand associated with the Surf Club.

Finally, pedestrian access is consolidated and improved by formalising pathways, providing direct and clear tracks for people to access both the Surf Club and the beach.



Plan of the Surf Club redevelopment and the Shearwater Park recreation enhancement

Dumbleton Street/Hawley Store Area

The Hawley General Store on Dumbleton Street provides an important local service for residents in the northern part of the town and for visitors to the Surf Club and the beach.

The potential exists for a small number of businesses linked with beach and surf club activities to be developed on properties near the Hawley General Store, creating a slightly-expanded community and business node in this area. The actual extent of this business node should be subject to further investigation, and then appropriate rezoning applied.

Shearwater Park

Further south along the beach at the Shearwater Park, a small recreational node is proposed. This would include picnic tables and chairs, BBQ facilities, an amenities block and play equipment. This area should be further enhanced with a detailed planting plan to provide shaded areas to improve the overall amenity of this location.

The layout of the new facilities should complement and enhance the existing water-side community events that are currently held in this area.

Port Sorell: Local Centre Enhancement and Camp Options

The oldest neighbourhood in the study area is Port Sorell itself. The area boasts significant assets, such as the jetty, the busiest boat ramp on Tasmania's north coast, the Lions Caravan Park, and the Memorial Hall. There is also a local store here, which conveniently serves visitors and residents. However many of Port Sorell's facilities are now somewhat outdated. The neighbourhood needs to plan for growth and for the revitalisation of many of its assets.

Camps Boomerang and Banksia need to plan for their futures and define their roles. The two camps provide largely overlapping functions. Would the community be better served by closing Camp Boomerang to use the site for something else, such as a school, whilst allowing Camp Banksia to strengthen and expand?

The Memorial Hall is now not ideal for many of its uses. Should alternative uses be considered for this building? For example, it could capitalise on its location close to the beach and the Lions Caravan Park to convert to backpacker accommodation. If so, should a new multi-purpose community centre be built and if so where?

New street west of camps

A new street is proposed along the western boundary

of both camps (keynote 1). This street provides an important link between Shearwater Esplanade and Wilmot Street. This is a major link that is currently missing from the town. There already exists a reserve for this road. The street will also help in providing a bushfire protection buffer and fire access into the bushland to its west.

Port Sorell Village Centre enhancement

The store and surrounding shops along Wilmot Street (keynote 2) would benefit from enhancement of the streets, with street trees, improved footpaths and kerb extensions. These improvements would promote the centre as an attractive node, which would help attract additional small businesses to the centre. Opportunities for residential intensification in this area also exist as there are several older houses on relatively large lots.

Sports field enhancement

The sports field, which currently suffers from poor drainage, is proposed to be upgraded and two tennis courts added to add capacity to the nearby tennis club. A wetland, which could be landscaped into an attractive passive park, would be constructed next to the oval (keynote 3). Fill from the wetland could be used to build up the oval to improve its drainage.



Port Sorell Precinct Plan, showing the expanded Port Sorell Neighbourhood Centre with its 400m walkable catchment, the enhanced Port Sorell sportsfield, an upgraded Camp Banksia, and the Camp Boomerang site redeveloped for a school and housing.

Camps Banksia and Boomerang

Camps Banksia and Boomerang have for many years provided educational and recreational facilities for students, clubs and the general public with dormitory-style accommodation in a beachside environment. There are two main options for the camps: retain one (Camp Banksia) and convert the other for other uses, or retain both as operating camps. Based on available information relating to the need for and likely future viability of both camps, the EBD focused on exploring the option of retaining and strengthening Camp Banksia and re-developing the Camp Boomerang site. The two options are outlined below.

Option A: Conversion of Camp Boomerang into a school, with an expanded role for Camp Banksia

Option A, shown below, proposes that Camp Boomerang closes, with its remaining functions being transferred to Camp Banksia. This would free up the Camp Boomerang site to be used for a local school (keynote 4 on previous plan). The school would make use of the nearby Port Sorell sports field and some of the facilities on Camp Banksia in order to fit on a compact two-hectare site.



Detailed plan showing an enhanced Camp Banksia and the Camp Boomerang site converted to a school and some housing.

The school is proposed to front towards Camp Banksia so that some of the school's facilities may also be shared by that camp and vice versa. There is currently interest from an Anglican School to establish in Port Sorell, and the proposed site is understood to generally meet their needs. The school site has streets proposed on several sides, providing good student drop-off and pick-up and staff parking.

The southern part of the Camp Boomerang site is shown as a residential development of relatively small lots together with a unit development amongst an attractive clump of existing trees. The residential development is important to help to pay for new streets and infrastructure upgrades in the area, and to provide well-located housing diversity close to the Port Sorell Neighbourhood Centre.



Sketch of proposed multi-purpose community centre located on the Pitcairn St corner frontage of Camp Banksia.

A new multi-purpose community facility

The closure of Camp Boomerang would require Camp Banksia to take on an expanded role. New facilities may include more accommodation and expansion of the gym to become a full-sized sports hall. One part of the proposed Camp Banksia upgrade, illustrated above, is for a multi-purpose community building on the south-eastern corner. This building would contain meeting rooms of a range of sizes and a kitchen and could be used for community events such as market days and festivals, as well as for conferences and other events associated with the Camp. It would enable the Memorial Hall to close or to take on a different function, as discussed above. Adjacent to the community building there is potential to establish a formal memorial garden celebrating significant events in the history of this area.

Option B: Retention of Both Camps

Option B would see the retention of both camps. This would require an expanded role for Camp Boomerang that avoids duplication of Camp Banksia's role. In addition to expanding its usage, Camp Boomerang requires extensive maintenance and upgrading of its current facilities. On balance, it is difficult to envisage the long term viability of two very similar camps.

Possible Port Sorell Marina

Council asked the EBD to investigate and preliminarily design a marina for a low-lying private waterfront development site south of Wilmot Street (see photo, below). A key design criteria is that the marina itself would be fully accessible to the whole of Port Sorell. Feasibility from the standpoints of engineering and environmental impacts was not known at the EBD, and Council made it clear it would not support such a marina in the future unless its proponents could demonstrate technical and environmental feasibility.



Aerial of the marina site south of Wilmot Street

Site Description, Constraints and Opportunities

The site sits at the tip of the Port Sorell peninsula formed by the Panatana Rivulet on its south and the Rubicon Inlet on its north. The site is in single ownership. The site is surrounded on three sides by existing housing, generally detached residential, and opens eastward to the Rubicon Inlet. The site is partially flood-prone from stormwater, partly inundated at high tide, and vulnerable to possible sea level rises due to climate change. Any marina buildings would need to be safely above the current and projected flood levels.

Because there is a large tidal range, for a marina to have deep enough water for boats to use it at low tide dredging would be required first to build it, and then periodically to deal with siltation. The project proponent would need to demonstrate that the environmental impacts of such dredging are not unreasonable. The site is crossed by a public footbridge, which is located in a public reserve.

Three Design Options

The EBD produced three indicative designs reflecting different scenarios for a public marina, which in turn influenced designs for the surrounding urban development. In all options, trailer boat launching would continue to take place off-site, at the existing boat ramp further north.

All streets in all schemes would be public, meaning anyone can use them and they are not gated. Vehicular streets have parallel parking with street trees planted in the parking lanes for shade and to enhance pedestrian amenity, with no kerb cuts to garages. All private garages are accessed from public rear lanes (see keynotes 1 on Option A Plan, on the following page).

Residential development would be diverse and relatively dense for Port Sorell. Terrace house lots with rear lanes for garages might range from about 400sqm to perhaps 180sqm. These terrace lot sizes are comparable to those of many highly valued new and heritage neighbourhoods across Australia. Apartments would range from single to four-bedroom units, and there might be overnight accommodation and/or serviced apartments. Residents here would choose to have smaller private outdoor spaces because they would also have the public marina and nearby Rubicon Inlet to enjoy. Returns from this development would fund the marina and other related public amenities, which all of Port Sorell's residents would be welcome to use and enjoy.

Option A represents the densest design, while Option C is the least dense. The options vary according to the size and cost of the marina and related publicly-accessible amenities. Residential development along the northern and western edges of the site would be limited generally to two storeys for compatibility in size and character with adjoining neighbours. Because existing houses along the southern boundary back onto the site, a rear lane is proposed here. This will make a good transition to new development fronting the marina, giving the existing houses to the south the choice to redevelop over time, using the rear lane for their garages.

All three options would have some commercial/retail premises. There might be a corner shop to service the local neighbourhood. Leisure retail, such as restaurants and cafes, would hopefully flourish because of the marina. Small professional and service businesses should be encouraged, so long as they operate compatibly with the marina and residential users. There might be a small chandlery for the marina.

Option A: Large boat marina

Option A features the largest marina of the three options, with boat berths extending furthest west into the site. This gives more marina frontage for relatively high-value development, and taller buildings are envisioned fronting the water (attached terraces and/or apartments of perhaps three or even four storeys). Development would taper down to two storeys as it meets the surrounding neighbourhood.



Option A with maximised marina, overlooked by denser, mainly residential, development with some restaurants and other businesses

The crimson-coloured buildings indicate street-level restaurants and other small-scale leisure retail, while the red-coloured buildings indicate small business premises. For example, the red and crimson building in the southeast fronting the marina is proposed multi-storey accommodation and/or serviced apartments.

Restaurants might also locate in the crimson building at the western end of the marina, enjoying eastward views down the marina to the inlet. The crimson and red buildings north of the marina inlet might also be tourist accommodation and/or leisure retail related to the marina.

In this option the existing footbridge is to be retained and slightly raised in the middle, in order to allow motor boats to pass beneath it. Yacht moorings would be in the area east of the bridge.



Marina viewed from the east, towards the footbridge. The marina is overlooked by multi-storey mixed-use development and the bridge arches to allow boats to pass beneath it.



Marina frontage development at Mandurah Ocean Marina, Western Australia

Option B: Small boat marina and saltwater pool with beach

Option B is for a more modest marina with berths for boats limited to east of the footbridge and a seawater pool and sand beach west of the footbridge. Because of the large tidal range (~3m), a weir structure will be needed to retain water in the pool during low tides. The pool would flush and refill during night-time low tide by means of a valve to be installed in a pool wall beneath the footbridge.

This option has smaller area of marina development, and retains more land for development. Housing not fronting the



Option B with reduced marina space, with boats only in east and saltwater pool in west



Example of a constructed beach in an urban pool, such as proposed above

marina directly would be slightly less dense (but probably still two-storey and mostly attached terraces), all with garages on rear lanes and with on-street parking. Less commercial and leisure retail development is also shown in this option.

Option C: Small saltwater pool with beach

Option C is the most modest development, with no boat marina, but creating a pool and sand beach upstream of the footbridge. A valve in a new pool wall beneath the footbridge can capture and then flush fresh seawater at night to clean the pool. Medium density development fronts the pool and there would be lower density housing where it does not directly front the water amenities. This option has the least commercial and leisure retail premises, because the water attraction is modest.



Marina Option C, with saltwater pool. No actual marina for boats

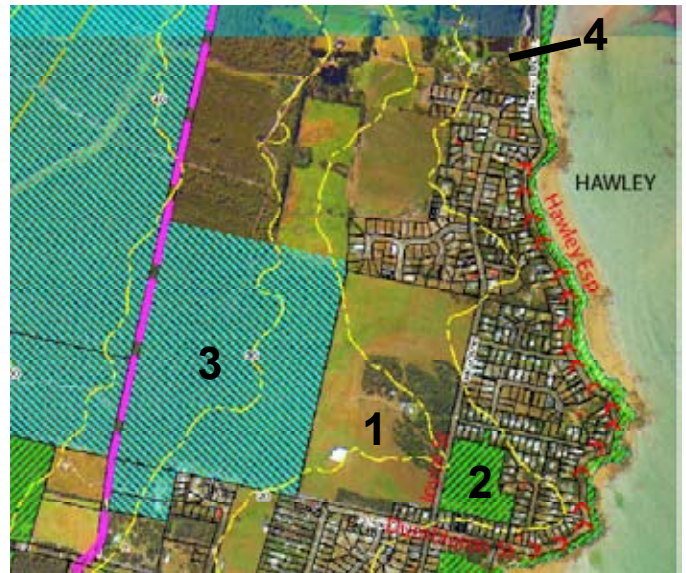
In Summary

A marina would provide a strong boost to Port Sorell's appeal to tourists. It would not only provide boating facilities, but also waterfront cafes and restaurants, and tourist accommodation. The feasibility of the three different options now needs to be fully investigated by the proponent.

Should the marina prove not feasible, and filling is feasible, this site could become a relatively dense infill of mostly housing, with an east-west street network capitalising on eastward views to the inlet and with north-south streets linking the existing neighbourhoods to the north and south.

Northern Precinct

North of the Town Centre's 10-minute walkable catchment is a parcel of mostly cleared land, about 20ha in area, owned by the Luck family (keynote 1 on the aerial below). This land falls partly within the walkable catchment of the Hawley neighbourhood centre. In addition, it has excellent sea views and proximity to Hawley Beach.



Aerial Photo of the northern precinct, including the Luck and Houghton lands

The Houghton family owns the bush land immediately to the west of the Luck land (keynote 3). The southern portion of this Houghton bushland, about 16ha in area, is reportedly of lower quality bush than that to its north. Both the Luck land and this southern portion of the Houghton land lie within the proposed 'Town Frame' explained earlier, and are proposed ultimately for residential development, if future development applications for these areas comply with the intent of the plans below.

The Houghton lands wrap around the northern end of the town, and include a vineyard, which is proposed for retention as part of the town frame, and the historic Hawley House near the beach. Along the beachfront, there is a small area of Houghton land that has potential for a boutique tourist development (keynote 4).

Luck Land

Straddling a small gentle east-west ridge, the mostly cleared Luck land enjoys distant sea views to the northeast from its northern slope, and southward views of the town and coast from its southern slope. The northern Luck boundary adjoins existing residential development east of the Houghton vineyard, and the two need to be connected. The southern Luck boundary adjoins Dumbleton Street. Its eastern boundary is with Joyce Street and should link into the Hawley Beach neighbourhood.



Plan for Northern Precinct - Luck and Houghton Lands and Environs

There is a stand of mostly she oak bush on the Luck property along Joyce Street. Before the EBD, this bush was analysed, and the Government has approved this bush to be cleared for development. The most mature and tallest area of this bush is near the centre of the clump, and along Joyce Street.

Some years ago the Luck family gifted to Council what is now the Luck Reserve on the eastern side of Joyce Street (keynote 2 on aerial photo). In return, no further public parkland is required by Council to be dedicated from the remaining Luck parcel, as part of its urban development. However, the Luck development may be more valuable and enjoyable for citizens, if it has some parkland included in it, such as a small urban green on its ridge and/or some retained she oak forest.

Design for the Luck land

The indicative design features an interconnected network of 'view streets' celebrating eastward views to the inlet and southern views to the distant township, by means of streets running toward these views. Residents would enjoy oblique views from their front living areas and verandahs, down the streets to these views. Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers would enjoy these views directly as they travel toward them. North-south streets connect into Alexander St, Dumbleton St and Chardonnay Drive, ensuring the development will be well-integrated with its abutting community.

In summary, the principles behind the street network are to:

- Link up site amenities and adjoining neighbourhoods

in order to optimise walkability and social interaction, while minimizing driving distance;

- Celebrate distant sea and town views;
- Converge on a proposed small central park, perhaps to be called the 'Luck Green';
- Provide a bushfire buffer to adjoining permanent bush;
- Manage stormwater running off the Luck land southward onto existing development.

Housing is proposed to be diverse, with denser housing located to overlook and capitalise on green spaces, including the proposed 'Luck Green', the best part of the existing she oak bush (proposed for retention), and the bushland edge adjoining the western boundary. The medium density housing (shown in orange on the plan) has rear lanes, so that these relatively narrow lots can actively front the streets, with all private garages accessed via the rear lanes.

Bushfire Buffering

A 'parkway' street along Luck's western boundary would help to buffer this development from bushfire coming from the west. Housing fronts this street, thereby capitalising on the amenity of the bush view. Housing design along this edge will be required to incorporate bushfire safety design features.

Diversion of southward stormwater

Some nuisance stormwater is reported to flow occasionally from the Luck land southward onto an existing unit development adjoining the southern boundary, west of Alexander Street. To address this problem, new lots are proposed to back onto the side boundary of this unit development, and front an east-west new street, whose stormwater drainage would divert the majority of this stormwater away from this existing development. This street is also an important link between the proposed Luck development and the proposed Houghton development to the west.

'Luck Green'

The interconnected network of 'view streets' also converges to and frames a small centrally-located park atop the gentle ridge, proposed by the EBD team to be called the 'Luck Green'. Two-storey attached terrace housing should frame this park, perhaps with three-storey terraces at the street corners. The corner buildings may have 'belvederes' (private towers from which to enjoy the distant views). These belvederes should also enhance the public streetscape framing the park.

A boutique tourist development, such as a bed-and-breakfast and/or a restaurant, might also locate adjoining the western corner of this green,

where it would enjoy an excellent view down the street southward toward the town. 'Luck Green' would add significant amenity value to this medium-density housing.

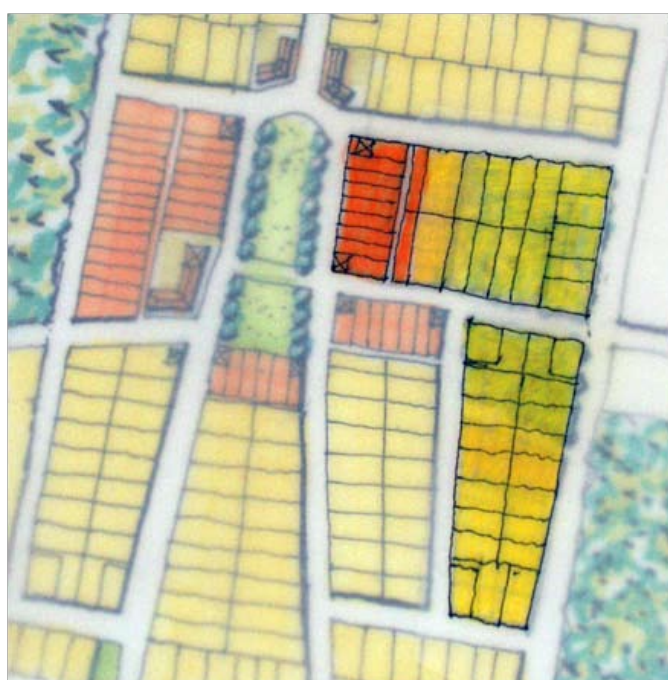


Sketch of proposed 'Luck Green' showing medium density terrace housing around it

She Oak Bush

The plan proposes retention of the most mature and perhaps prettiest part of the existing she oak bush along Joyce St. This could become an attractive entry feature from Joyce St, and provides a sense of separation and exclusivity from the existing Hawley development, as well as a marketing feature for the Luck land. Many developers find that provision of generous high amenity public parks increases sales appeal, and allows nominally lost housing yields to be recovered through higher density development together with faster sales and higher lot prices.

However, as there is no regulatory requirement for Luck to keep this bush, an alternative plan is included below to show how this bush could be replaced with another street block of houses.



Alternate plan showing how she oak bush could be replaced with another street block of houses

Houghton western land

Some of the Houghton bushland west of the Luck land is an important part of the ridge that forms the town 'frame', discussed earlier in this report. Most of this bush is valuable native habitat. However, a vegetation study has shown the southern-most slope of the Houghton bush to be of lower quality than that immediately to its north. This land is low enough to be serviceable with town water and it can be sewered. Therefore approximately 16 hectares of the Houghton property is proposed to be included within the town and to be developed for residential lots, subject to confirmation of the vegetation assessment.

There are a number of existing dwellings backing onto the southern Houghton boundary. A back fence interface with bush not only creates bushfire risk for the dwellings, but also often results in weeds and pets impacting on the bushland. A street between housing and bush provides a much better interface.

Proposed Plan

The proposed plan is shown in the plan on page 43. The proposed street network of this Houghton land connects eastward into the Luck development and southward into Port Sorell's 'inner north'. North-south short streets give northward views from the development into the bush to its north, and a 'parkway' edge street helps to separate this development from the bush, while giving good views to the lots that front across this street to the bush.

A small public park runs north-south along one street, offering views northward into the bush. Medium density terrace lots front directly onto a public footpath fronting this park, with parking for these lots via a rear lane. Guests driving to houses on these lots would park their cars alongside this small park and walk across it (about 30m) to the front veranda entries of the houses.

This Houghton development will form a clear and permanent boundary between the town's residential development and the northern bush ridge, which frames the town.

Hawley Beach Tourist Development

To attract more tourists and to augment local jobs, Port Sorell needs to make better use of its natural assets, one of which is Hawley Beach. The EBD proposal for the site immediately north of the current residential area, on Hawley Esplanade between the beach and Hawley House, is to establish additional visitor accommodation units, of a traditional architectural character, relating to and respecting the historic Hawley House.



Plan for Hawley Beach Tourist Accommodation, overlooking Hawley Beach



Sketch from the water of the proposed Hawley Beach Tourist Accommodation

To capitalise on its tourism potential, the site is proposed to be developed with a number of holiday cottages and apartments which would be sold to individuals, on the condition that they could not be occupied by the owner for more than three months of the year. The rest of the year, these premises would be required to be available for public accommodation. For many people this arrangement simultaneously provides a holiday house and an income stream, and for the town it provides much-needed tourist accommodation and revenue.

Rural Residential

The question of whether to allow continued expansion of rural residential land generated extensive debate during the EBD as outlined in Chapter 2. A wide diversity of views was expressed on the issue during discussions with landowners, community and Councillors. On balance the EBD proposed to identify only very limited expansion of rural residential zoning. The proposed area is limited to the Milldam Road area, and involved land where rezoning could be served by existing water supply, and combined with provision of important street linkages, habitat enhancement and resolution of farming/rural living conflicts.

The EBD also established a permanent edge to the rural residential development in the south, at Parkers Ford Road.

Whilst most of the area is proposed for conventional rural residential lots, the northern (Greenhill) property is

proposed to develop as two urban hamlets rather than to subdivide up the high quality Brown's Lookout bushland into rural residential lots.

Elphinstone Farm and Neighbouring Properties between Milldam Road and Gardams Road

The main area to be proposed for development as rural residential lots is bounded by Parkers Ford Road, Milldam Road and Gardams Road. This area is to be allowed to be subdivided to a minimum lot size of one hectare, in order to resolve existing interface problems, to link conservation areas and to establish a permanent edge of development. The land coloured yellow on the plan is currently mainly farming land that is surrounded by rural residential development, which constrains farming activity. Town water is available in this precinct.

The plan shows an indicative rural residential subdivision layout with road reserves established in case of future conversion to urban land use and, most importantly,



Plan showing proposed area of rural residential expansion, together with an indicative lot layout showing proposed habitat corridor and street connections

establishment and re-vegetation of habitat corridors, including some low lying land, linking three important conservation areas represented in green.

Possible long term conversion to urban

In the long term, the whole rural residential area south of the Panatana Inlet may convert to urban development. In this case more direct street connections would be needed back to Port Sorell, so three possible bridge crossings over the Inlet are identified on both this plan and the earlier Street Connectivity Plan.

Squeaking Point Village

The EBD did not propose any further development of the existing village. However there is a need to establish a link from the north end of the village to the rural residential area, essentially to Shannon Drive, for fire access and egress. A route around the north-eastern corner of the Reserve was provisionally identified.

Permanent rural residential boundary

The permanent boundary for rural residential subdivision is established as Parkers Ford/Squeaking Point Road, with no further rural residential development to be allowed to the south.

Greenhill property

The Greenhill property contains the large and valuable bushland area around Browns Lookout. It was recognised that allowing conventional rural residential subdivision would result in the severe degradation of the bushland.



Plan of the northern end of the Greenhill property, showing the two hamlets and the road linking Panatana Drive and Milldam Road



Sketch view of the western hamlet, as seen from new street link looking west, showing the narrow leading edge of the most easterly cottage. The sketch also shows the public footpath on the right, disappearing into the bush frontage of the Panatana Rivulet.

In consultation with the owners, the EBD team proposed an alternative solution: a pair of compact 'hamlets' to hug the northern corners of the base of the Brown's Lookout land, with the remainder of the parcel to be dedicated as a nature conservancy accessible to the public, and with a small public street connecting Panatana Drive to Milldam Road along the southern edge of the Panatana Rivulet. This is an important link in Port Sorell's street network, to reduce vehicle travel distance and to improve bush fire access and egress. This development would contain about 30 dwellings, about enough to justify a package sewage treatment system on-site.

These two hamlets have small lots of small mostly attached courtyard houses and terraces, providing a unique and compact housing choice close to the water and bushland.

The western hamlet nestles between the Rivulet public frontage with its public footpath, and the toe of the forested slope of Brown's Lookout as it rises steeply to the south. A key narrow street link fits between this hamlet and the slope. A rear lane loops through this western hamlet, so that virtually all of the private garages are off this lane. The front entries of the dwellings north of this rear lane will face the Rivulet, accessed via the public footpath along the escarpment.

Council owns a road reserve parcel abutting the existing large lot subdivision to the west. This plan proposes for this approximately 20m-wide parcel to have two dwellings developed on it as shown, one facing the Rivulet, and the other facing south to Panatana Drive. These two dwellings would be located on their eastern boundary, to enable a 'density blend' between the little cottages in the hamlet and the big house on the big lot in the existing subdivision.

The eastern hamlet has two access streets off Milldam Rd, which give access to a rear lane along the back of the existing long residential lot fronting Milldam Rd, to enable

a more comfortable transition with that existing dwelling (and to enable it to redevelop in future into smaller lots, if it wishes, using this rear lane for garages for its lots, as well).

These small terrace houses face west toward Brown's Lookout and front onto that proposed publicly-accessible nature conservancy, with a footpath along their frontages for visitors and for the public. Each small terrace house has its own small north-facing sunny private courtyard, and parking is off the rear lane. Guest parking is proposed in three street stubs, which also provide public access and views west to Brown's Lookout.

Housing Character

There has been extensive community concern that recent housing built in Port Sorell is not very appropriate to the sea coast village context. Based on several community meetings during the EBD, and the consultants' own site surveys, the EBD interpreted four interdependent housing design and character objectives.

Firstly, housing should more closely fit Port Sorell's current and future demographic profile, with a growing proportion of smaller and aging households, and therefore generally smaller homes on smaller lots. There was general agreement that Port Sorell's two current housing type choices of Closed Residential houses (with a 720sqm minimum lot size) and units in rows on redeveloped lots, was not providing an adequate or appealing housing choice. It was agreed that smaller detached dwellings and attached terrace houses should be added to the range of choices, so long as they contributed positively to Port Sorell's character.

Secondly, houses should be designed to be more compatible with their neighbours, in both character and detail, particularly as they front the public realm (streets and parks).



Thirdly, housing should support walking and community interaction, by having attractive frontages with front verandas, shallow front yards, front fences or defined planted borders, and narrow driveways with well set-back front garages, which do not dominate the streetscape.



Fourthly, new and remodeled housing should have a welcoming and contemporary seacoast village character, whilst the typical suburban brick veneer styles, or the relatively anonymous brick and tile boxy styles with no eaves or shade features and dominant front garages should be avoided from now on.

Key features of a contemporary sea coast village character

The examples shown (images courtesy of Annand Alcock Urban Design) illustrate a contemporary seacoast village character. The key features of this character include the use of light weight, light-coloured walls, colorbond roof materials, steeper pitched rooves, generous eaves, verandas and window shade overhangs, and vertically-emphasised decoration and detailing.





This design character also minimises garages on frontages and maximises choice for residents to interact with pedestrians on the footpaths, while retaining reasonable privacy as well. The first photo on the previous page is a row of units with a shared drive, with minimal impact from garages and with the floor level slightly elevated for privacy. The bottom photo on this page is of the Mandurah Ocean Marina south of Perth in WA, which illustrates the seacoast character that the proposed more dense marina development might have.



Housing character guidelines

If Council decides to support the four housing design and character objectives, and the key features of a contemporary seacoast village image, then Council should prepare housing guidelines to ensure that future housing in Port Sorell will have this character.

Traffic Planning and Design

Extensive traffic planning and design investigations were done during the EBD, to test and inform the urban design proposals as they evolved.

The key traffic matters investigated included:

- Opportunities for improving street network connectivity;
- Modeling of traffic volumes under different growth and street network scenarios;
- Improving the road to Devonport;
- Testing the traffic impact of having a school in Port Sorell;
- Defining appropriate street cross-sections for new development in Port Sorell;
- Enhancing the local street pattern around Wilmot St.

The conclusions reached in relation to each of these matters are explained in this section.

Opportunities for improving street network connectivity

The problems associated with the existing poor connectivity of the Port Sorell street network have already been explained in Chapter 2, and the key proposals to improve connectivity have been outlined in the section at the beginning of this chapter on the Port Sorell Structure Plan.

The addition of 'Pink Street', as a major new connector serving the west of town, and reducing pressure on Alexander Street, is the main initiative. However, all the connections proposed help significantly to ensure that the street network will continue to perform well, even with significant growth of the town.

Modeling of traffic volumes under different growth and street network scenarios

The EBD prepared a traffic modeling program to test various scenarios for traffic loading on major streets in Port Sorell, including the road to Devonport (Port Sorell Road), Alexander Street, and the proposed 'Pink Street'.

The traffic modeling was conducted based on the street network shown in the Port Sorell Structure Plan, and a range of assumptions about existing traffic patterns, as there is little data available.

The modeling tested three different population levels and three different levels of jobs self-containment. The population levels tested were:

- Existing (3583pp in 2006);
- Existing + 50% (5375pp); and
- Existing + 115% (7700pp)

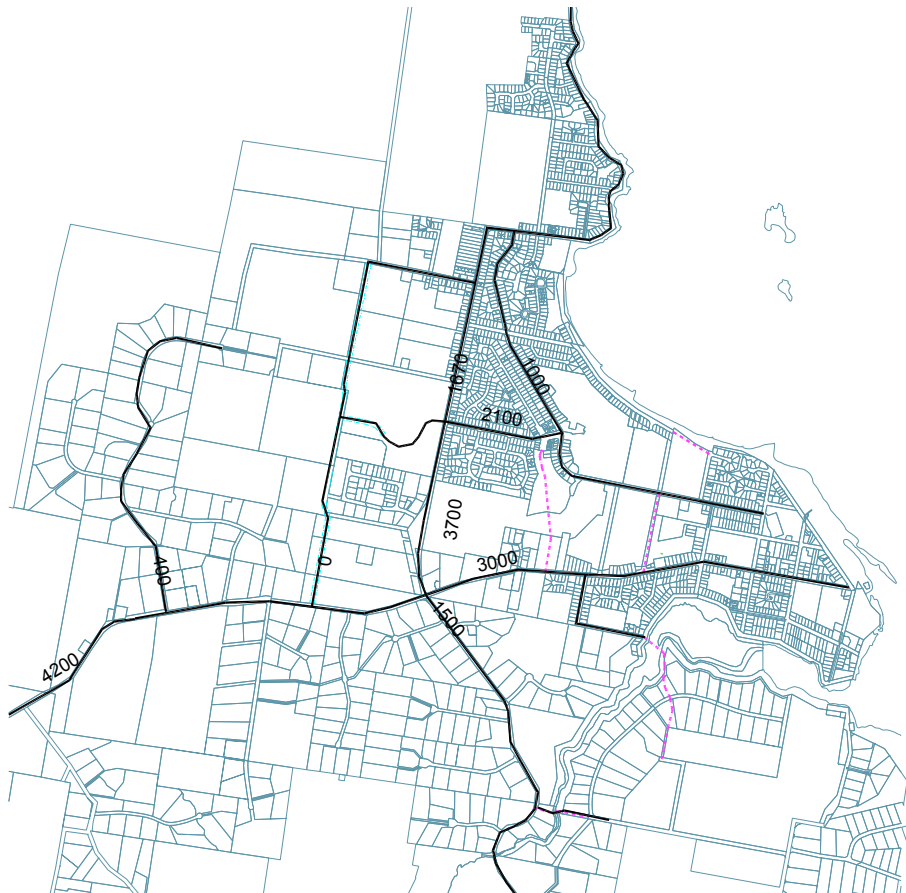
Jobs self-containment is a measure of the number of jobs needed by the population that are actually provided within the town. The jobs-self-containment levels tested were Existing (estimated at 20%), 30%, 40% and 60%. Around 60% represents an optimal level.

In all scenarios, the modeling shows that with the increased connections as proposed, no streets require more than one travel lane in each direction on any street. The modeling shows that Port Sorell's population can more than double and, if it also gains about 60% of its jobs locally, then the traffic on Port Sorell Road actually

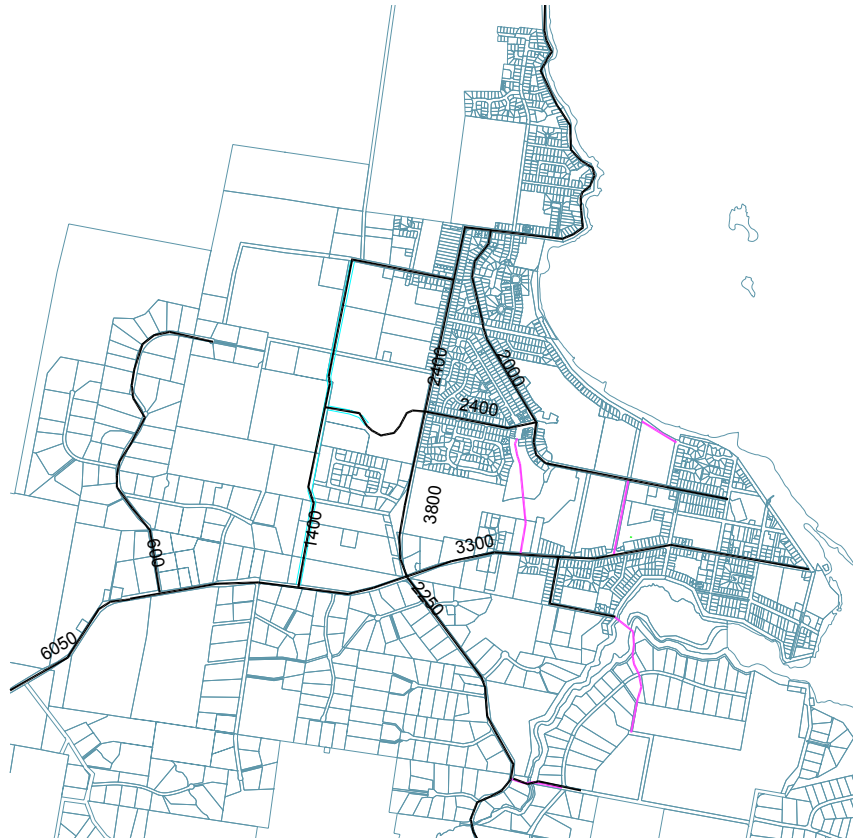
decreases, compared to the same level of population with a lower (40%) level of jobs self-containment.

Alexander Street in all cases stays a relatively low and acceptable volume, well under 5000 vehicles per day, because of the inclusion of "Pink Street", which helps spread the traffic loads.

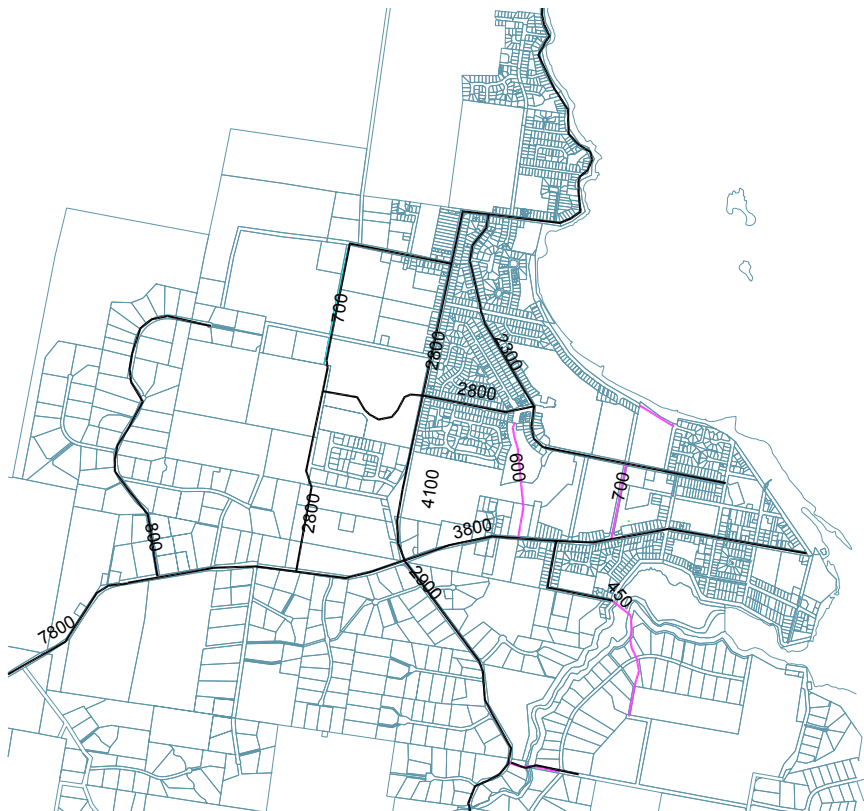
The plan below shows the existing traffic volumes, whilst the following two pages show the traffic volumes for the three scenarios.



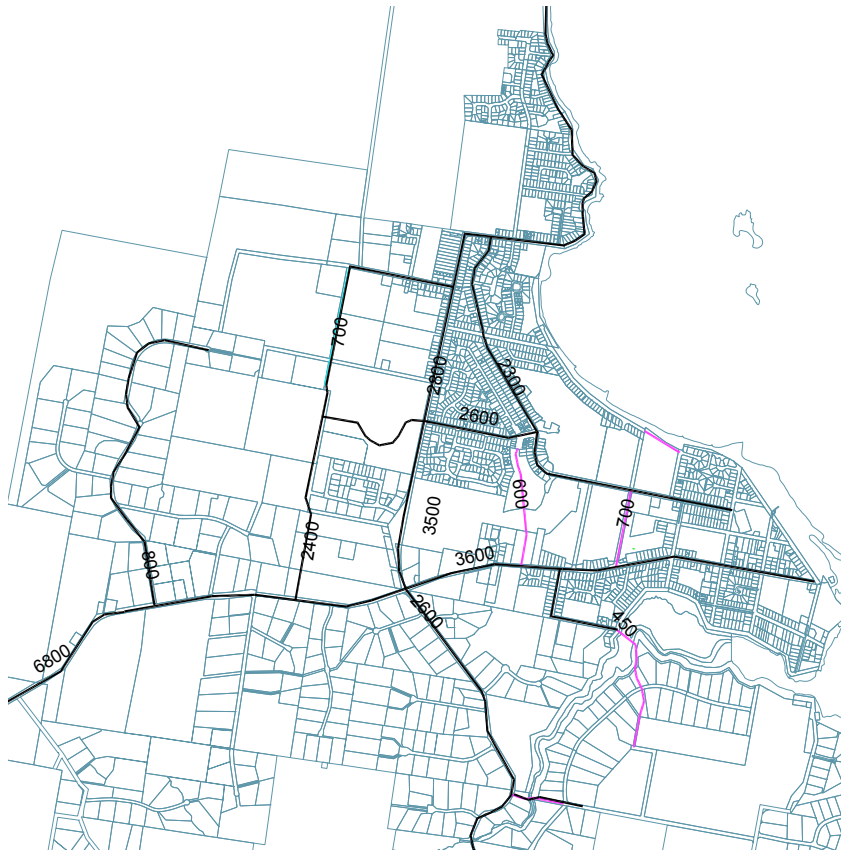
Scenario 1: Estimated existing traffic volumes in 2006 (population 3583 and approximately 20% local jobs.



Scenario 2: Population increased by 50% (to 5375) and local jobs increased to 30%.



Scenario 3: Population increased by 115% (to 7700) and local jobs increased to 40%.



Scenario 4: Population increased by 115% (to 7700) and local jobs increased to 60%.

Some key conclusions from the traffic modeling included:

- The greatest influence on travel patterns in Port Sorell is the location of jobs taken by Port Sorell residents. The more local jobs provided, the lower the overall traffic volumes for the same residential growth.
- The addition of 'Pink Street' and its cross links to Alexander Street provides an excellent traffic dispersal outcome that will alleviate pressure on both Alexander Street and particularly on the Alexander Street roundabout.
- Significant traffic is already generated by the rural residential areas, as there are more and longer trips needed because neither jobs nor services are accessible without a car.

The low density of most existing residential areas together with relatively poor pedestrian conditions on most streets, and the low level of local facilities means that walking trips are contributing a very low share of travel. For similar reasons, bus service and usage is insignificant.

Improving the road to Devonport

Many in the community sought upgrading of the road to Devonport, as it was regarded as busy and, in places, unsafe. The current volume on Port Sorell Rd is around 4200 vehicles per day. A \$4 million 'upgrade' is planned

for the Devonport Road in the near future, with passing lanes, turning lanes at key intersections, and widened shoulders.

However, making it easier to get to and from Devonport would induce more travel and carbon emissions, and does not deal with Port Sorell's car dependence and lack of local jobs and services, which cause the car dependence. Without addressing these issues, the road to Devonport will just continue to get more and more congested in peak times.

Testing the traffic impact of having a school in Port Sorell

The lack of any schools in Port Sorell is recognized as a key contributor to traffic congestion on the road to Devonport. An analysis was done of the traffic impacts of establishing a P-10 public school in Port Sorell. This revealed that many children were taken to school by parents as part of their work trip. However, around 450 trips by private car per day were likely to be school trips only. This represents over 10% of the traffic on Port Sorell Rd.

School-only car trips were calculated to total 2700 kilometres per school day or 540,000 kilometres per annum. This is expensive and a significant generator of carbon emissions, and can be equated to a community

cost of \$5 million. It is therefore a reasonable argument to support construction of a public school in Port Sorell, particularly as growth continues.

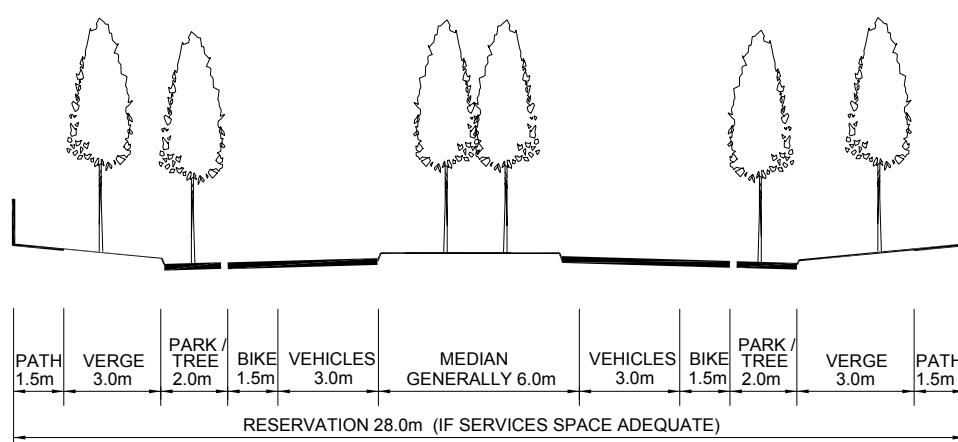
However, the Government is understood to currently not support relocating children from the Wesley Vale school to a new school in Port Sorell. The various arguments in favour of a new public school would need to be developed up in future. In order to retain the option of a public school, the EBD identified a suitable school site on the tip site.

Defining appropriate cross-sections for new streets in Port Sorell

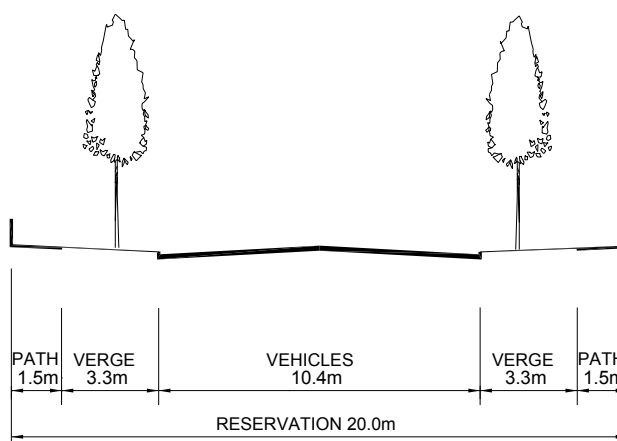
The EBD produced cross-sections for walkable local streets, all with street trees and footpaths with on-street parking on both sides, and with properly dimensioned narrow carriageways to slow vehicular traffic and augment pedestrian safety and amenity. The following principles inform the recommended street forms:

- Street carriageways should be of appropriate width to accommodate the vehicles that will use the street for travel and parking. Importantly, more width is not better than adequate width. 'In-between' dimensions are ambiguous and often lead to higher than appropriate vehicle speeds.

- Generally streets that will have development of housing or other uses on both sides should have parking on both sides, and a carriageway width of 7.2m where daily traffic volume will be less than about 2,000 vehicle movements. "One-sided" streets, such as along park edges, can have a 5.5m wide carriageway, which leaves clear passage for a truck or emergency services vehicle if there is a car parked.
- Streets that will have higher traffic volumes (Pink Street, Alexander Street and Club Drive Extension in the new town centre area) should have clear carriageway for two lanes. The total carriageway width for 'Pink Street' (including parking on both sides) is recommended at 9.6m north of Hawk Hill Road and 10.4m further south where some industrial traffic is expected. Kerb outstands should be provided at intersections.
- Alexander Street within the town centre precinct would benefit from a median that allows decent street tree plantings, provides a staging point for pedestrians crossing, and acts as a traffic-calming feature in this otherwise long straight street.

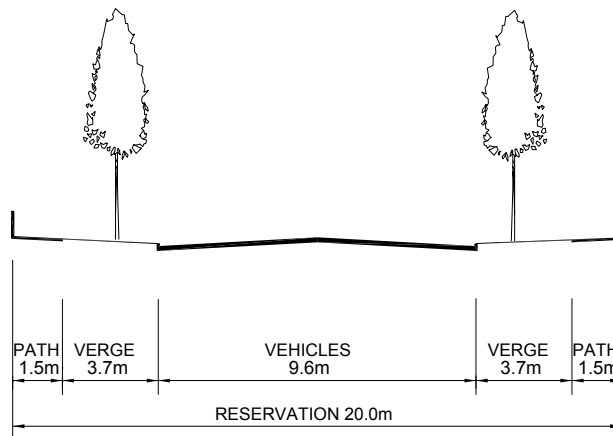


ALEXANDER STREET, TOWN CENTRE PRECINCT

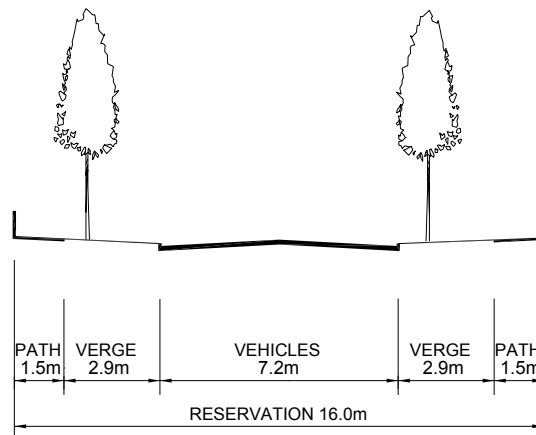


PINK STREET SOUTHERN SECTION

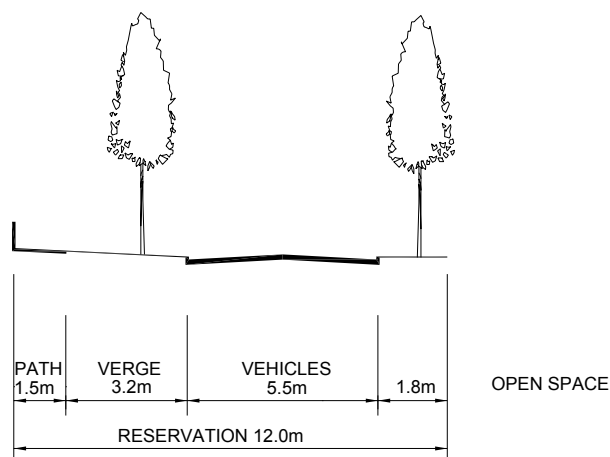
USE 2.0m KERB OUTSTANDS AT INTERSECTIONS AND ACCESS POINTS



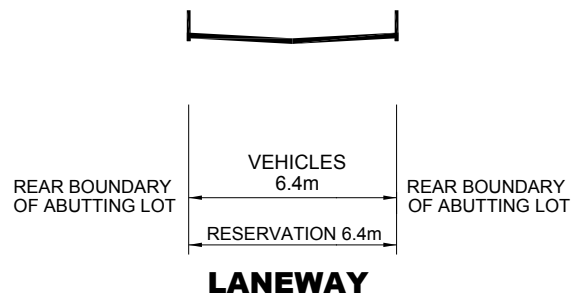
PINK STREET NORTHERN SECTION
USE 2.0m KERB OUTSTANDS AT INTERSECTIONS AND ACCESS POINTS



LOCAL STREET



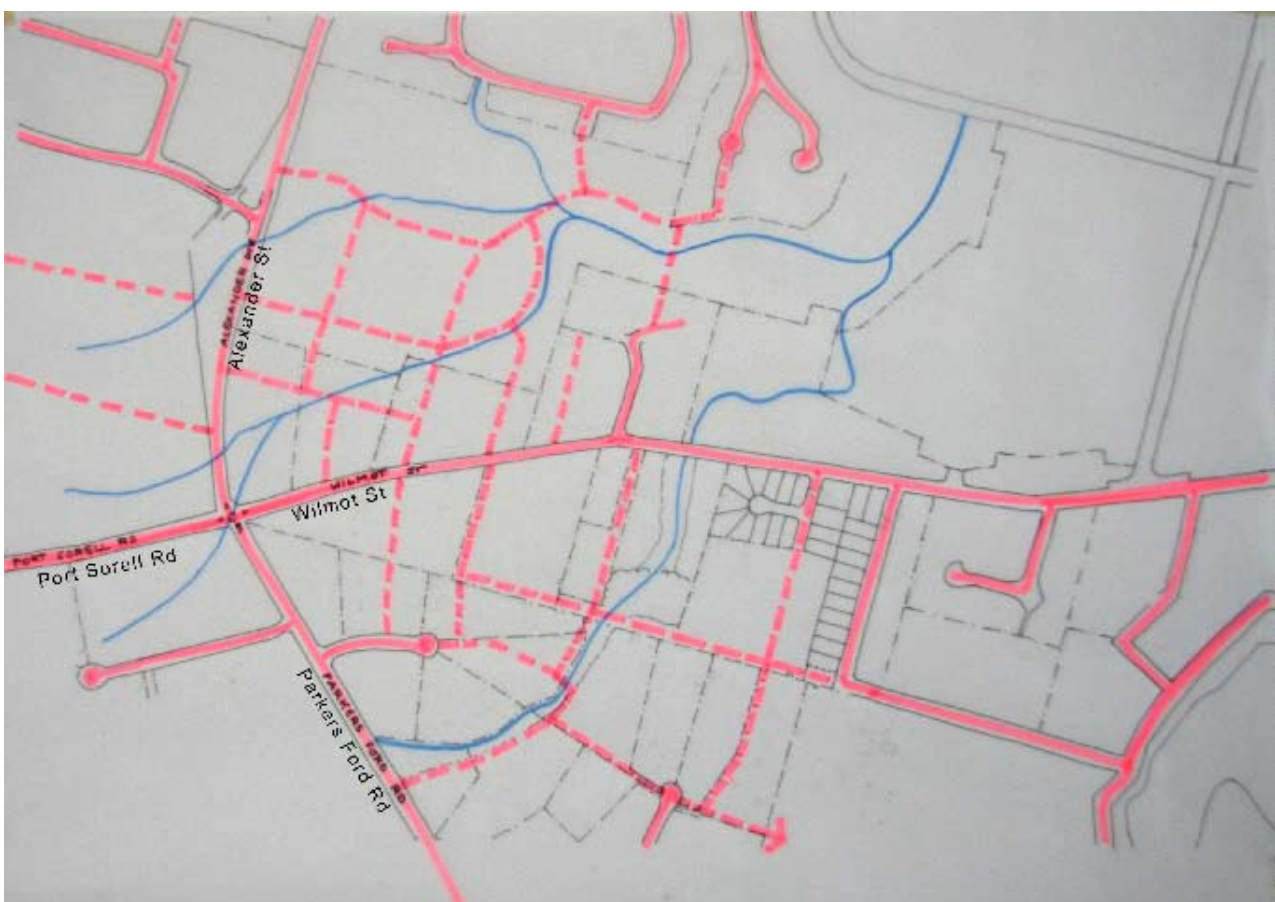
PARK EDGE STREET



Enhancing the local street pattern around Wilmot Street

The plan below shows the area east of the Alexander Street roundabout, on both sides of Wilmot Street. Due to its proximity to the town centre, this land is proposed for urban development in the medium to long term. The dotted pink lines on the plan represent a potential interconnected street network, to be achieved incrementally as the existing mainly rural residential lots are rezoned and developed.

Without such a plan there is a high risk that each lot would be developed in isolation, and no local street connections provided to development further away from Wilmot Street. Without a future well-connected local street system, people would need to drive further, and too much pressure would be put on Wilmot Street and Parkers Ford Road.



Plan of potential long-term street connections either side of Wilmot Street.

4. Development Staging Priorities

The EBD recommends three multi-year stages for development of Port Sorell, until about the year 2030. Each stage generally has three types of development, including private sector predominantly residential, private sector mixed-use, and public sector infrastructure and community facilities. Dates for stages are not fixed, because it is not possible so accurately to project future market absorption rates. However, before all parts of one stage are nearing completion, such as for private sector residential, more developers should already be preparing detailed preparation of development proposals, so that there is no delay between phases.

Once Council has approved the EBD outcomes in principle and then produced and adopted a planning scheme amendment based on these outcomes, the developments should happen as soon as feasible, if in compliance with that planning scheme and a staging plan attached to the Structure Plan.

At least two, and ideally three different residential development fronts should be selling and competing with each other at any time, in order to keep prices down and quality up, as a result of such competition. Changes to the Closed Residential Zone to remove the 720sqm lot size minimum is an urgent priority action, so that existing Closed Residential areas can be subdivided to provide a wider range of housing choice.

All new developments should use the proposed new street designs for more walkable, higher amenity, slower speed, narrower streets with street trees and footpaths generally on both sides. All new developments should construct their own storm water detention and cleansing on site, and/or provide cash in lieu for off-site facilities, if acceptable to Council.

Any proposals for redevelopments of existing properties that can show that they would advance most of the recommendations of the EBD and this Report, while compromising none of them, should be encouraged.

Priority Status Principles for Development

'Priority Status' means that Council will expedite its review and processing of recommended private development projects for relevant stages, so long as those developments support the EBD objectives and outcomes. The following are the priority principles:

1. New developments and/or redevelopments, which concentrate within the 800m catchment of the new town centre and the 400m catchment of Shearwater Centre, should have priority status.
2. Incremental intensification of the existing neighbourhoods of Hawley and Port Sorell broadly

within their 400m radii walkable catchments, which support the EBD objectives and outcomes, should have priority status.

3. Developments, which will help 'complete' the town with needed local jobs (including for tourism), services, public amenities and school/s should have priority status.
4. Developments which provide high amenity smaller dwellings and smaller lots catering to Port Sorell's aging demographics and smaller households, and contribute to affordability should have priority status. Average lot sizes should be 450-500sqm or less, with few lots larger than 600sqm. North-south facing lots with two-car garages should not exceed about 15m in width, and those with one-car garages about 12m in width. East-west facing lots should be shallower and wider to gain north sun to their northern side yards, with no wider than 17-18m wide lots for two-car garages, and 15m-wide lots for one-car garages. New, predominantly 'Closed Residential' subdivisions with most lots larger than the former minimum of 720sqm should not be approved, because such developments do not address Port Sorell's actual current or future household sizes as explained earlier, in Chapter 2.
5. Developments which provide key street links as shown on the Key Street Links Plan, and thereby reduce travel demand, and/or which convert appropriately located large private bush areas into publicly-accessible bush conservancies or public parkland, should have priority status.
6. Developments that locate to capitalise on existing infrastructure capacity such as water and sewer, may also be considered for priority status.

Indicative Housing Demand and Residential Lot Supply

There is currently sufficient residentially-zoned, but un-subdivided, land for around 200 lots (as at July 2008). Together this represents only two to two and a half years supply at the estimated average take-up rate of 80-100 lots per annum. In July 2007, a Council survey established that there were around 230 lots for sale, of a total of around 330 vacant lots. By June 2008, the 'available for sale' lot supply had dropped to around 93 vacant residential lots for sale.

In holiday towns such as Port Sorell there are usually more lots sold than houses built, as some lot buyers hold their lots for building on at a future time. From 2001 to 2006, Port Sorell added an average of 55 dwellings per annum, on both residential and rural residential lots.

However, in the 2007-8 year, there was increased activity, with a total of 84 dwelling permits issued, with 65 of these on residential lots.

It is normal practice for there to be around seven years supply of residential land either zoned and available for subdivision, or well-advanced in the rezoning process. As Port Sorell offers a strong growth prospect for Tasmania, and because there is benefit in increasing the growth rate in the short term to help support the establishment of much-needed services and facilities, there is a strong rationale for a greater amount of land to be available in Port Sorell than the current take-up rate would suggest.

Taking into account the above analysis, a residential lot supply of around 100 lots per annum is proposed as a reasonable basis for the Port Sorell staging strategy. Thus, land providing for around 600-700 new lots should soon be progressing through the rezoning process.

Stage 1

Private Sector Residential Developments

An initial total of about 600-700 dwellings should be sufficient to trigger ideally around three competing residential, or partly residential developments, which provide a variety of housing products both within and between them. Recommended candidates include:

- Housing in the new town centre core, including its residential components at the tip site and additional development associated with the OneCare land;
- The Jochro land and abutting areas of Council land in the 'Inner Western' Area, because it adjoins the town centre. On the Council land, habitat assessments will be required to identify any significant endangered species or exceptionally high habitat values on this land. This Council land is listed in the private residential development section, as it is probable that Council would sell this land to a private developer;
- The area north of Hawk Hill Road and south of the Freer Street extension in the 'Inner North' or Arthur Park Precinct, again because it is closest to the town centre;
- The southern slope of the Luck land approximately within the 400m catchment of the Hawley Neighbourhood Centre, so long as it meets the staging priority criteria above, including for provision of greater residential densities and housing diversity, and it at least approximately emulates the EBD plan for that area, particularly in its street network;
- Development of the Greenhill hamlets, because it would create the new street link along the south

shore of Panatana Rivulet, along with conversion of the private bush into publicly accessible conservancy or public parkland. Both these features merit early staging priority.

- No new rural residential subdivision is recommended during Stage 1, because there is still zoned but un-subdivided rural residential land available, and there is an annual supply of around 60 properties available for re-sale. As at June 2008, there were 19 vacant (i.e. undeveloped) rural residential lots on the market, plus a significant number of others with existing dwellings.

Private Sector Mixed-Use Developments

- The new town centre, particularly its Stage 1 retail area, and Arthur Street frontage commercial areas because it would generate local jobs and services;
- Infill developments in the Shearwater Centre, because it would enhance the tourism and leisure economy, and help the centre to adapt in response to the new town centre;
- The southward expansion of the industrial area, to enable more local light industrial sector jobs;
- The marina, if engineering and environmental studies show a 'green light' for that project, because it would deliver public coastal amenities, tourism and denser housing;
- The small Hawley Beach Tourism Development along the shore in front of the Houghton Winery, because it would provide needed tourism facilities and jobs for that area of Port Sorell;
- Possible other eco-tourism attractions, possibly including an eco-tourism resort on the Thomas Farm overlooking the north coast, so long as access to it is via the town centre and Alexander Street, so that the town might also benefit from custom from those visitors.

Public Sector Infrastructure & Community Facilities

- Establish the new Tourism, Heritage, Environment and Arts (THEA) Centre on Port Sorell Rd, together with associated relocated Council Depot and Emergency Services and related improvements to the town's entry;
- Establish a business development program to encourage new businesses and jobs into Port Sorell, including strong promotion of the range of business development sites and types becoming available;
- Commence decontamination works on the former tip site just north of the new town centre, to expedite its redevelopment to various urban and sports uses;

- Commence modifications and enhancement to the public realm of the Shearwater Centre;
- Begin improvements to Port Sorell neighbourhood centre area and Camp Banksia, together with the probable closure of Camp Boomerang, possibly to convert into a site for a school. Note that construction of the proposed street link from Wilmot St to the Shearwater Esplanade in the existing street reserve is a key priority for both this development and the town's wider connectivity;
- Design and construction of boulevard improvements to Alexander Street alongside the new town centre, with road widening on the west to be provided by the town centre development. Along with this, Council should rezone the houses along the eastern side of Alexander Street opposite the town centre to commercial, so that those houses may choose to convert over time to commercial uses.
- Improvements to the Surf Club and Shearwater Beach Park (as per EBD indicative designs), as this will boost tourism and community amenity, with minimal damage to adjoining bush;
- It is important, as soon as possible, to help support the ongoing viability of the Shearwater Neighbourhood Centre, for Council to try to negotiate at least one street link (and dedicate that street reserve), from Shearwater Centre south to Wilmot Street.
- Construct storm water detention and cleansing works on the Shearwater Resort land upstream of the golf club and environs.

Stage 2

Private Sector Residential Developments

A second stage should again total about 600-700 dwellings in order to trigger ideally three competing residential, or partly residential development fronts. Along with any candidates from Stage 1 which have not developed yet, recommended additional developments include:

- The northern remainder of the Luck Land, so long as it delivers denser residential development, and emulates the EBD plan for that area, including its street network and orientation;
- The northern part of the 'Inner North' or Arthur Park precinct;
- The Houghton land just west of the southern part of the Luck land; subject to satisfactory vegetation clearance assessment. This area should form a long term urban edge to the northern bush part of the Town Frame;
- Shearwater Resort development of its vacant land and possible improvements to and relocation of its golf course;
- New Rural Residential Development on the identified land north of Parkers Ford Rd, once the current stock of existing rural residential properties has been exhausted, and after Council has tightened site clearing requirements and revised its rating of rural residential development to reflect the true costs to Council of providing all relevant infrastructure and services.

Private Sector Mixed-Use Developments

- At this stage the gradual conversion to mixed-use development of rural and rural residential properties along Port Sorell Road and Wilmot Street, within about 1km of the town centre, should be encouraged, to capitalize on their position in the 'Movement Economy.' By this area coming in as a second stage, the Town Centre area is supported as the first hub for commercial development.

Public Sector Infrastructure and Community Facilities

- By this stage, Port Sorell should have at least one school, and perhaps more than one childcare centre.

Stage 3

Longer-term Developments

- In the longer term, most rural residential below the 40 metre contour, and larger residential lots, should be encouraged to convert to denser housing, and in so doing to increase street connectivity, reduce travel demand, support local neighbourhood centres, and reduce pressure for sprawl beyond the proposed 'Town Frame'.

