





We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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## PART 1

# Introduction + Context

The Avenel Strategy (the Strategy) is the key strategic document used to guide land use and development for the town.

It provides a long-term strategic planning framework that seeks to ensure Avenel's community needs are met by guiding social and physical infrastructure delivery, managing growth and enhancing Avenel to be an attractive place to live and visit.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Avenel's growth and development is currently guided by Avenel 2030, which was prepared in 2008 and finalised in 2012.

However, since 2012 there have been numerous changes that continue to impact the present and future of Avenel including:

- › changes to State and Local policies, guidelines and plans;
- › economic pressures including the cost of living;
- › changes to the pace and type of growth occurring within the town including people seeking a lifestyle change and moving to regional areas;
- › demographic trends including an increased amount of residents seeking to remain in Avenel as they age;
- › a demand for increased housing diversity including smaller lots that have lower maintenance requirements;
- › improved delivery standards in regards to new development; and
- › community aspirations.

As such, the following strategic directions will be used by Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) to guide the future of Avenel:

- › Strengthen Avenel's role as an attractive lifestyle town, with supporting tourism opportunities.
- › Redefine Avenel's town centre as a community heart for the town.
- › Consolidate development within Avenel's existing town boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.
- › Optimise and connect Avenel's distributed community and open spaces.
- › Improve the standard of existing and new movement networks to strengthen connections and support active transport.

To guide and support appropriate land use and development within Avenel, the Avenel 2030 Strategy required an update to ensure it is providing clear strategic direction for the future of Avenel. As such, this Strategy will supersede Avenel 2030.

However, this report has been prepared using the existing strategic directions as a foundation, and further refined according to changes in policy directions and the consultation Council has undertaken with the Avenel community.

PREPARATION OF THE AVENEL STRATEGY

The Strategy has been prepared in five stages.



Technical Reports

These technical reports informed the development of the Strategy Refresh:

- › Residential Land Supply and Demand Assessment (prepared by Mesh)
- › Bushfire Risk Assessment (prepared by Bushfire Planning)
- › Draft Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan (prepared by About Architecture)

AVENEL 2030 DIRECTIONS

Avenel 2030 contains twelve strategic directions aimed at supporting future growth in Avenel.

As part of preparing the Strategy, these twelve directions have been distilled into five key strategic directions with supporting objectives, strategies and actions that work to implement the Vision for Avenel and guide future growth and development within the town.

These are further detailed in Part Two: Strategic Directions.

**The twelve directions from 2030, and their applicability to the Strategy can be summarised as follows:**

#	AVENEL 2030 DIRECTION	REFRESH (HOW WE HAVE PROGRESSED OR ADAPTED THE DIRECTION)	REFERENCE
1	Define an urban growth boundary that allows for long term township expansion	The Residential Land Supply and Demand Assessment has determined that there is sufficient land within the existing township boundary to accommodate long term growth within Avenel. As such an urban growth boundary has been set around Avenel which will accommodate projected future growth.	Refer to Framework Plan at Figure 11.
2	Plan and coordinate residential development through planning scheme tools	<p>The Strategy has identified numerous changes to existing planning controls within the town. This includes removing the Township Zone which largely applies to the town and recommends more specific zoning controls in regards to residential areas.</p> <p>Further Development Plan Overlays are recommended to be applied to large vacant land sites within Avenel and existing Development Plans (DPO1 and DPO2) are recommended for a review to ensure they achieving coordinated development outcomes that complement and enhance the town.</p>	Refer to Actions within Theme 3, Housing & Character in relation to recommendations around zoning and Development Plan Overlays.
3	Provide low density residential development within and adjacent to the urban growth boundary	The Strategy does not support low density development outside of the township boundary as it important to ensure that any growth in Avenel is strategically planned for and surrounding rural land is protected and provided with an appropriate interface between residential and rural development. However, Avenel North (Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 1) is zoned Low Density Residential and provides a significant amount of land within the township boundary for low density development.	Refer to Action A2 (Theme 3, Housing & Character) that recommends a review of DPO1 to ensure it provides a holistic and integrated low density residential development outcome that complements and enhances the town.
4	Provide rural living development beyond and adjacent to the urban growth boundary	Lovers Hill is identified as a Rural Living development area and subject to Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 2 (DPO2). While the Strategy has retained this development area outside of the township boundary, the Strategy does recommend a review of DPO2 to ensure it can be affectively implemented given the number of constraints that apply to the land.	Refer to Action 3 (Theme 3, Housing & Character) which recommends a review of DPO2.
5	Replace Township Zone with residential zones and other land use zones for coordinated town structure development	The Strategy has identified numerous changes to existing planning controls within the town. This includes removing the Township Zone which largely applies to the town and recommends applying more specific and appropriate zoning controls across Avenel.	Refer to Action A8 & A9 (Theme 3, Housing & Character) which sets out recommended zoning controls.

#	AVENEL 2030 DIRECTION	REFRESH (HOW WE HAVE PROGRESSED OR ADAPTED THE DIRECTION)	REFERENCE
6	Provide for greater housing choice and diversity	Increasing house diversity is a key direction of the Strategy, in appropriate locations.	Refer to Theme 3, Housing & Character that through the implementation of the identified Objectives, Strategies & Action will significantly improve housing diversity within Avenel.
7	Encourage environmentally sustainable development principles that respond to local and environmental conditions	Ensuring that environmentally sustainable development is responsive to environmental conditions is a key priority and this is reflected throughout the Strategy.	The identified Themes and associated Objectives, Strategies & Actions all seek to achieve sustainable development outcomes.
8	Plan for a town centre that allows for expansion and supports a strong sense of place	The Strategy sets out a number of Objectives, Strategies and Actions to support this direction, including rezoning the town centre to a commercial zone.	Refer to Theme 2, Town Centre.
9	Development that respects and enhances the neighbourhood character and the landscape features	Respectful development is a key direction in all sections of the Strategy, however, is specifically addressed within Theme 3, Housing & Character.	Refer to Theme 3, Housing & Character.
10	Develop open space network that responds to Hughes Creek and connects residential precincts to community nodes	Improving the open space network and connectivity within Avenel is a key priority and this is reflected throughout the Strategy, however, Theme 4 Community Facilities & Open Space specifically addresses this directive.	Refer to Theme 4, Community Facilities and Open Space.
11	Ensure that development respects landscape features of Avenel	Ensuring development respects existing landscape features is a key priority of the Strategy. However, Theme 1, Role & Identity specifically addresses this issue.	Refer to Theme 1, Role and Identify.
12	Ensure town entrances reflect and enhance Avenel's identity and character and are improved to ensure pedestrian and vehicle safety	Improving Avenel's gateways has been identified as a priority and addressed as part Theme 1 Role & Identity and Theme 5 Movement.	Refer to Theme 1, Role and Identify Actions A2 & A3, Theme 5, Movement Action A5

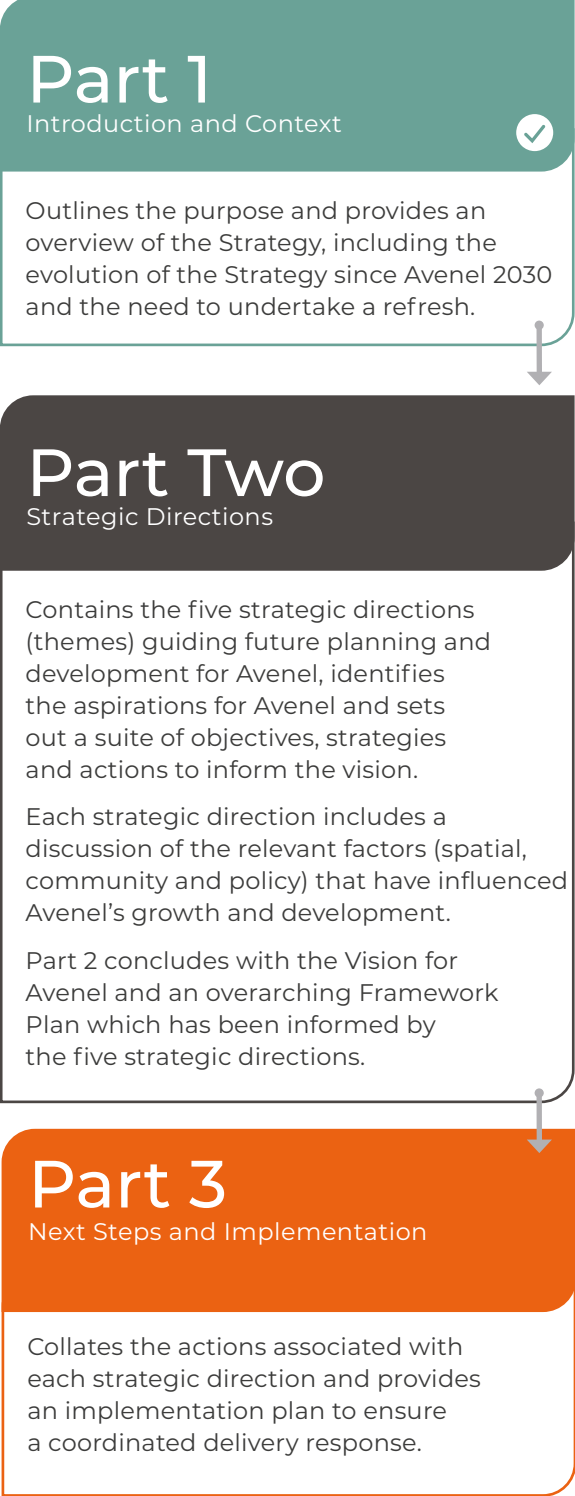


HOW TO READ THE AVENEL STRATEGY

In defining a land use vision for Avenel, there are five strategic directions (themes) that contain the objectives, strategies and actions used to direct township development, open space, community infrastructure (social & physical), and movement. Further each theme, has identified a set of aspirations for the town that will be used to inform the overarching vision.

The Strategy also includes an outline for implementing the identified key actions for each strategic direction, a timeframe for completion and who will be responsible for completing the actions.

The Strategy has been structured into three parts.





## PART 2

# Strategic Directions

Supporting the vision for Avenel are five key strategic directions (themes) required to guide future growth and development within the town.

The five strategic directions are:

**Theme 1. Role and Identity**

Strengthen Avenel’s role as an attractive lifestyle town, with supporting tourism opportunities.

**Theme 2. Town centre**

Redefine Avenel’s town centre as a community heart for the town.

**Theme 3. Housing and Character**

Support the consolidation of development within Avenel’s existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.

**Theme 4. Community Facilities and Open Space**

Optimise and connect Avenel’s distributed community and open space nodes.

**Theme 5. Movement and Access**

Improve the standard of existing and new movement networks to strengthen connections and support active transport modes.

OVERVIEW

Each strategic direction includes objectives, which are supported by a series of strategies and actions that set out how the objectives are to be achieved. These actions also specify the tools for implementation.

**Objectives** – Specifies the outcomes that are sought to be achieved. Objectives can be general or specific and must be clear and implementable.

**Strategies** – Statements that outline how an objective is to be achieved.

**Actions** – A series of recommended actions to implement the objectives and activate the strategies via the Planning Scheme or other relevant implementation tools.

KEY INFLUENCES

Since 2012, there have been substantial changes to the social, economic and political conditions relevant to Avenel and these changes will influence the future patterns of land use and development in the town.

These changes include factors such as government policy, emerging demographic trends, housing and infrastructure needs, and community aspirations. Collectively, these factors shape the opportunities and constraints in Avenel and provide the context for the vision, objectives and strategies within the Strategy.

The key influences shaping Avenel today can be understood as follows:

**Spatial influences** – How the town has grown over time and responds to its physical conditions, and where there are opportunities or constraints for growth in the future.

**Community influences** – The existing community profile, how it is expected to change over time, and the community’s aspirations for the future.

**Policy influences** – The current planning and policy conditions that shape what types of use and development can occur in Avenel, and where there may be opportunities to amend policy to support the vision for Avenel.



Theme 1. Role and Identity

Redefine Avenel's town centre as a community heart for the town.

SPATIAL INFLUENCES

Avenel is a rural town located 130 km north of the Melbourne CBD.

The town is part of a regional network of towns that includes Euroa, Nagambie and Seymour. Avenel's role in this context is generally that of a lifestyle town.

Residents are attracted to the town for:

- › its open, small scale, village and local feel;
- › its rich history including cultural heritage;
- › the visual and physical relationship between the town and the rural environment; and
- › the proximity to larger service centres (such as Seymour, Nagambie and Shepparton) for access to retail, services and employment needs.

Avenel is also strategically located to high order transport infrastructure, including passenger and freight rail and direct access to the Hume Freeway and close proximity to Goulburn Valley Freeway. Mangalore Airport is located just west of Avenel and is the third largest airport in rural Victoria and is an emerging hub for transport, training, and logistic industries.

Within Avenel, the presence of historic civic

buildings and rural streetscape treatments (such as mature trees, wide nature strips and swale drains) are defining features for the town. Key character elements include the visual relationship to the Strathbogie Ranges, and rural lifestyle amenities such as openness, connection to nature, and low-density living. To retain Avenel's valued village feel, the protection of key rural amenities, as well as the view lines to the adjacent hills and Strathbogie Ranges are critical in planning for the future growth and development of the town.

There are a range of tourism attractions within the town and surrounds that highlight Avenel's local character including streetscapes, wineries, heritage sites, access to nature and the history of Ned Kelly. There is further potential to develop Avenel's tourism infrastructure in a way that celebrates the town's identity and emphasises the qualities that make it attractive to visitors.

The town's gateways also provide an opportunity to enhance placemaking for the town and direct visitors to key features within the town.

COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

Regional Victoria is experiencing population growth due to people seeking a tree change lifestyle as well as housing affordability, and an increase in flexible working arrangements.

Avenel's future role is dependent on the town's ability to attract new residents who are seeking to relocate to a more regional environment, and to retain young people and families. To achieve this a reasonable level of local services and facilities (e.g., kindergarten, maternal child & health, telecommunications sporting facilities, etc) will need to be provided and maintained to a satisfactory standard to respond to the existing and future needs of Avenel's residents.

Further, current population forecasts indicate that there is an increasingly high proportion of 60+ persons in Avenel.

To support Avenel's residents who are seeking to age in place there is a need for a range of dwellings that suit older residents, such as smaller lot sizes with less maintenance requirements.

It will be important in the future growth of Avenel that a mix of lot sizes are provided to accommodate a diverse range of housing needs while maintaining the township character.

ASPIRATIONS

Retention of Avenel as a rural lifestyle town.

Recognition of Avenel for its rich history and landscape.

Avenel and surrounds as a vibrant and attractive place to visit.



POPULATION SNAPSHOT

The population of Strathbogie Shire has increased by **10%** since 2016 and it is projected that this growth will continue.

The population of Avenel accounts for **just under 10% of the population** across Strathbogie Shire.

According to the 2021 census, the population of Avenel is **1,116** which represents a **7% increase** over the last 5 years. The age profile in Strathbogie Shire demonstrates increasing proportions of older adults.

The **60-69 years cohort** is the most common, with **2,166** people.

The **70-79 years cohort** has recorded the largest change in the Shire, showing a 34.2% increase from 2016 according to the ABS.

The trend of an ageing population is expected to continue and is a key consideration when planning for future development within Avenel.

Community consultation comments:

connect with Taungurung people  
connected & inclusive  
community minded  
mature street trees  
heritage rural atmosphere  
enhance country-town feel  
manage growth & development  
cyclability  
accessibility to overnight visitors  
proximity to city & surrounding towns  
improve economic development & employment options  
balance amenity

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Theme 1. Role and Identity

Redefine Avenel's town centre as a community heart for the town.

POLICY INFLUENCES

At a State level, Avenel has not been identified by Plan Melbourne or the Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014 as having a key role in accommodating Victoria's future growth, with the lifestyle role the town currently undertakes expected to continue.

While the town will still experience a small amount of growth annually, it is required to build on policy directives contained within Plan Melbourne that outline development goals for regional Victoria (Outcome 7). This includes supporting regional Victoria to be productive and sustainable with accessible employment opportunities. Specific policy directives relevant to Avenel include strengthening transport links, protecting productive land and biodiversity assets, and maintaining local character.

There is also a significant emphasis within State policy to strengthen and develop regional settlement networks, with the aim to increase the accessibility of employment, services and housing across Victoria's townships (Clause 11.01-1S). This objective is also embedded into Hume regional policy, which aims to strengthen the township network by facilitating sustainable growth and development throughout the region (Clause 11.01-1R). This policy aims to deliver resilience and sustainable small settlements such as Avenel, while also improving access to employment, education and services located in Seymour and Shepparton.

At a local level, Council's strategic direction for tourism is to encourage new and enhance existing tourist development that supports employment and recreation, the natural environment and heritage (Clause 02.03-7).

The strategies of this local policy include supporting sites of heritage significance and local industry associated with rural land uses. The increased development of niche and boutique industries that strengthen Avenel's natural environment, heritage and town character is also encouraged as part of this policy.

In regards to planning controls within Avenel, the town is largely zoned Township Zone (TZ), which is a flexible zone allowing for a range of residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses. As such, over many years Avenel has developed a defined character throughout the town and residential development at a range of densities. However, the Township Zone provides little direction in ensuring new uses and growth are directed to the best locations within a town, i.e., commercial uses within the town centre and smaller lot residential development closer to amenities, e.g., town centre, schools, open space etc.

Newer development in Avenel towards the north-eastern side of Avenel is zoned Rural Living Zone (RLZ) while to the north-west a mix of Low-Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) and Township Zone (TZ).

Avenel also has minimal Planning Overlays applied within the town which limits the towns protection of heritage values and other significant features of the town such as tree lined streetscapes and view lines to the Strathbogie Ranges.

\*Unless specified otherwise the Clauses referred to are found within the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

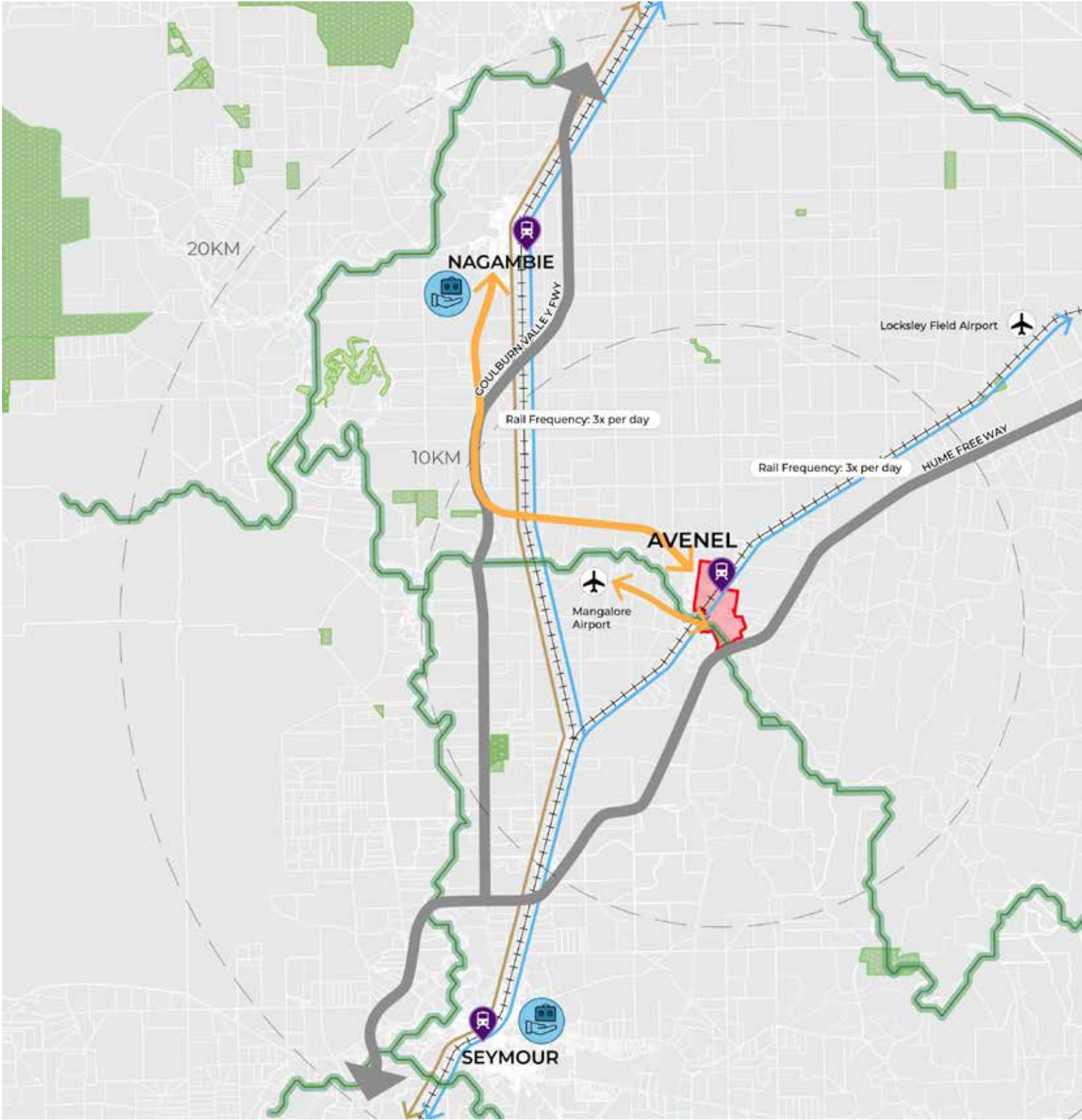
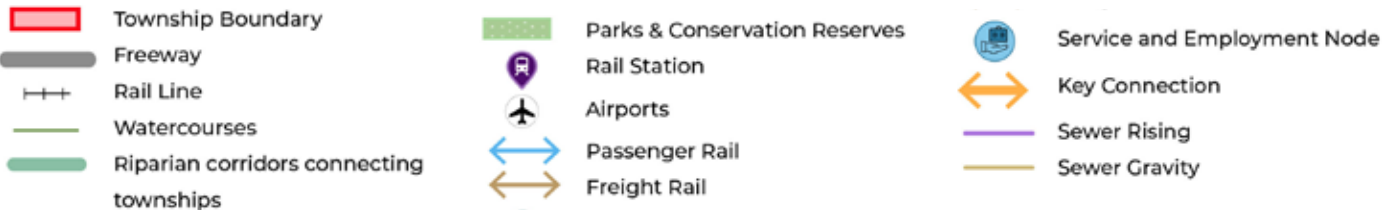


Figure 3: Theme 1 Role and Identity





**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

**OBJECTIVE 1**

**To retain the lifestyle role of Avenel and its connections to the surrounding network of towns, services, employment areas and agricultural.**

**Strategies**

- › Reinforce the connections and the relationship to Nagambie as a focus for employment and industrial development, as well as connections to Mangalore Airport as an emerging hub for transport, food processing and logistic industries.
- › Ensure new uses and development positively enhance Avenel’s role as a lifestyle town through contributing to liveability, town character including the natural environment and its public realm.
- › Ensure a clear separation between urban development and farming activities is retained.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

**To enhance the township gateways and streetscapes which will serve to define the entries to Avenel and sense of place.**

**Strategies**

- › Ensure town entrances reflect and enhance Avenel’s identity, character and heritage.
- › Support the enhancement of the existing gateways by encouraging gateway improvements as part of any developments that interface with the gateways.
- › Ensure a clear separation between urban development and farming activities is retained.

**OBJECTIVE 3**

**To encourage tourism uses within the town that complement existing uses and will assist in boosting the economic vitality of the town and attract visitors.**

**Strategies**

- › Encourage new business investment within the town that would assist in enhancing the town and the broader region with uses such as bed and breakfasts, food, beverage, arts and crafts etc.
- › Enhance Avenel’s existing tourism offerings within Avenel and surrounds such as the wine industry, cultural heritage and Ned Kelly heritage.

**OBJECTIVE 4**

**To retain features within the town that contribute to making Avenel the place it is today.**

**Strategies**

- › Ensure views and vistas to adjacent hills and Strathbogie Ranges are protected.
- › Ensure significant road side vegetation (including Vearings Road, Lambing Gully Road, Spencers Road, Mitchell Street, Saleyard Road and Hovell Street) and within the Hughes Creek corridor are protected.
- › Encourage remnant native vegetation be retained as important flora and fauna habitat.
- › Encourage vegetation in the street reserves that contribute to the town’s character to be retained including the many mature native and exotic species to preserve Avenel’s landscape character and visual qualities.

**OBJECTIVE 5**

**Celebrate the heritage of Avenel through the protection of existing heritage and cultural values.**

**Strategies**

- › Ensure existing heritage buildings continue to play a role in Avenel’s history and character
- › Ensure cultural heritage is celebrated within the town.



**ACTIONS**

- A1 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to reinforce Avenel’s role as a lifestyle town while recognising the importance of the regional landscape and ensuring the valued characteristics of Avenel are protected.
- A2 Finalise the draft Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan and proceed with its implementation in regards to the existing gateways to Avenel.
- A3 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to reinforce the importance of enhancing the gateways to the town.
- A4 As per Action A8 (Movement) implement the street tree planting guidelines to ensure the use of exotic and native species that will serve to contribute to Avenel’s character and biodiversity.
- A5 Promote existing tourism attractions and interests within Avenel and surrounds such as cultural heritage, the wine industry and Ned Kelly heritage.
- A6 Identify new tourism opportunities within the town that could assist in boosting the economic vitality through attracting visitors to the town.
- A7 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to promote and reinforce the importance of tourism within the town to assist in its economic viability.
- A8 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 (or apply a Vegetation Protection Overlay) to ensure the protection of remnant vegetation that is significant to the town and/or also provides important flora and fauna habitat.
- A9 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to ensure views and vistas to the Strathbogie Ranges are retained.
- A10 Undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings within the town to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.
- A11 Apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.
- A12 Engage with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to ensure the town is recognising its cultural history.



## Theme 2. Town centre

Redefine Avenel's town centre as a community heart for the town.

### SPATIAL INFLUENCES

Avenel's town centre is generally defined as the area extending along Queen Street, Bank Street, and the intersection around the railway line.

The town centre comprises of a range of civic, commercial and community uses. It contains a post office, several small retail stores and cafes, a pharmacy and community and recreation facilities, including a child and maternal health centre, a hall, bowling club and a neighbourhood house.

While the town centre is well-serviced for a town of its size, the area is fragmented and there is potential for consolidation and enhanced connectivity. There is an indirect relationship between the train station and the main retail strip on Queen Street, which creates a physical barrier (including safety and access concerns at the rail crossing) within the town centre and as a result lacks a heart to the town.

Commercial development within the town is limited to small-scale retail uses with residents reliant on Seymour and Nagambie for most their retail and servicing needs.

Given Avenel's continued role as a lifestyle town rather than a service town, it is likely that future commercial development will take the form of smaller scale retail catering to basic needs and the tourism market. It is important to highlight that the town centre does have several underutilised and vacant sites that can accommodate future commercial growth within the town. Ensuring any new development is well designed to complement and enhance the existing town centre will be critical in retaining Avenel as an attractive place to live and visit.

There are limited social gathering spaces and amenities within the town centre to activate public life and provide a sense of place within the town. In 2021, Council prepared a draft Streetscape Renewal Plan for the Avenel Town Centre. This ongoing project identifies a range of streetscape improvements for the town centre, including art, landscaping and wayfinding.

**The Renewal Plan seeks to bridge the connection between the two commercial areas on either side of the railway line to assist in creating a centralised and connected town centre.**

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### COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

The Avenel community has expressed interest in further establishing the town centre as a community heart.

This includes the identification of a commercial precinct, including multiple shops, outdoor art and placemaking features while maintaining its village feel. Improved wayfinding through the towns was highlighted by the community as an opportunity to encourage visitors into the town centre and establish it as a key destination.

The community has also identified opportunities for establishing new business within the town centre, including the potential for a small supermarket. While a small supermarket does usually require a larger population than what currently exists and is projected in Avenel to make it commercially viable, there are several vacant and underutilised sites that could accommodate such a use should it become commercially viable in the future.

#### ASPIRATIONS

**Improved wayfinding throughout the town centre and to key destinations.**

**The town centre as the heart to the town.**

**A town that welcomes visitors and encourages tourism.**

**New business opportunities within the town centre.**



Community consultation comments:

rezoning of retail area  
in town centre improve railway tracks

**keep village feel**

*town centre* improved  
*signage* streetscaping

create shopping precinct car parking at rail yard

**public art activate frontages**

extend street tree

planting to new housing

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## Theme 2. Town centre

Redefine Avenel's town centre as a community heart for the town.

### POLICY INFLUENCES

State policy encourages the centralisation of key commercial and civic services within towns so that they are highly accessible to the local community and responsive to the community's needs (Clause 19.02).

This includes the consolidation of retail, commercial, civic and cultural services.

Local policy directives aim to cultivate retail development within town centres across the Shire (Clause 02.03-8), including specifically, the commercial development of Avenel's town centre (Clause 11.01-1L-01). This area is currently zoned as Township Zone (TZ), which is a flexible zone permitting a range of commercial, residential and industrial uses.

As such, land uses within the town centre have not been protected for commercial activity specifically, which has limited the potential for the town centre to become a commercial precinct.

**State policy objectives (Clause 15.01) also encourage the use of place-based urban design when planning for towns and communities. This includes an increased focus on building design, heritage and energy efficiency in activity centres.**

This is further supported at the local policy level, which encourages development to be responsive to heritage, place, the streetscape and neighbourhood character (Clause 15.01-2L).

As there is limited direction within the local planning policy framework on preferred design outcomes for Avenel, the town would benefit from enhanced design guidance.



\*Unless specified otherwise the Clauses referred to are found within the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

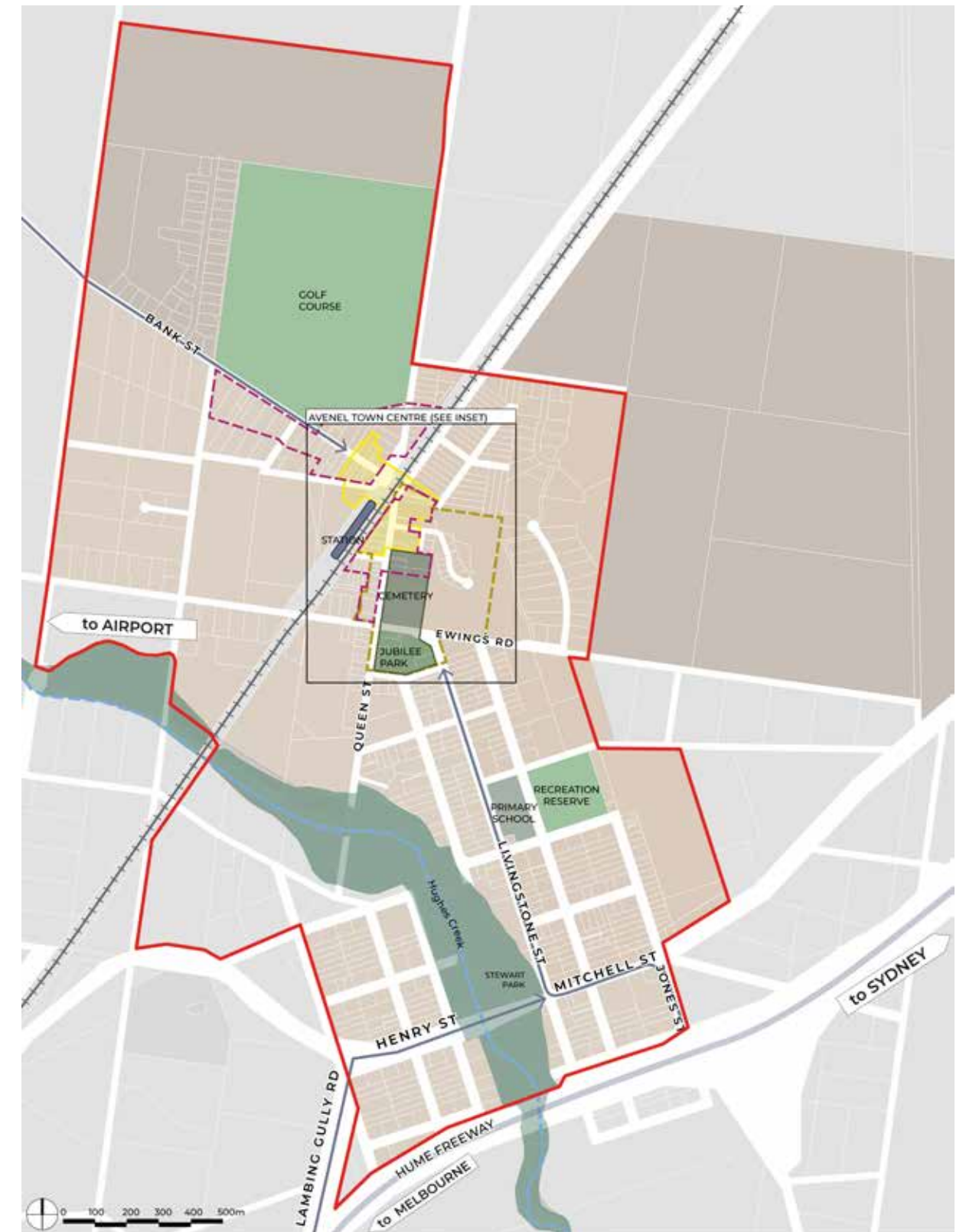


Figure 4: Theme 2 Town Centre Overall

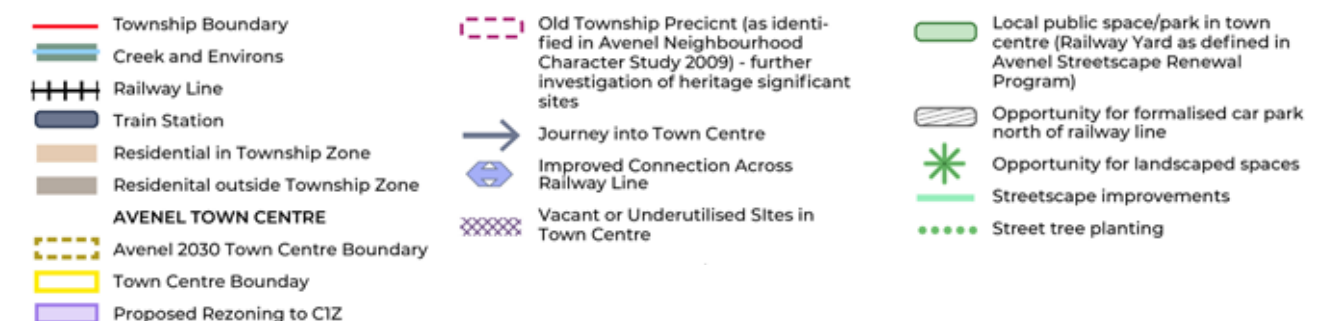






Figure 5: Theme 2 Town Centre



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

OBJECTIVE 1

To retain the town centre core as the main commercial and retail precinct that serves the needs of existing and future residents and visitors to the town.

Strategies

- › Clearly define the role and purpose of the town centre as the commercial and community heart to the town.
- › Provide greater guidance for land use and development outcomes of vacant and underutilised sites (strategic sites) within the town centre core.
- › Plan for a town centre that allows for expansion and encourages a strong sense of place.
- › Ensure the town centre has opportunities for uses (e.g., a small supermarket) that meet the needs of the growing community.
- › Discourage retail and commercial development outside of the town centre at locations such as Ash Street.
- › Encourage new business investment within the town that will assist in enhancing the town and the broader region with uses that would benefit the town including bed and breakfasts, food, beverage, arts and crafts etc.

OBJECTIVE 2

To encourage revitalisation of the town centre core as the commercial/ retail precinct of the town.

Strategies

- › Ensure heritage values within the town centre are protected for the long term.
- › Enhance landscaping, public furniture and other streetscape improvement works to improve amenity consistent with the Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan.
- › Ensure any new development complements and enhances the character of the town centre through appropriate urban design outcomes.

OBJECTIVE 3

To create a 'heart' to the town that can be used for passive purposes and as a meeting and gathering space.

Strategies

- › Create opportunities for community gathering spaces within the town centre core at the area referred to as the 'Railway Yard'.
- › Enhance landscaping, public furniture, wayfinding, car parking and other streetscape improvement works to improve amenity, to define the heart of the town centre consistent with the Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan.

ACTIONS

- A1 Rezone the town centre core to Commercial 1 Zone to encourage a complementary mix of retail/business uses and residential within the town centre boundary.
- A2 Actively engage with existing businesses to ensure uses that assist in the economic vitality and attract visitors to the town are retained.
- A3 Engage and monitor the needs of existing residents to ensure their reasonable daily needs are being met.
- A4 Monitor retail floor space within Avenel and engage with relevant providers to ensure retail needs for Avenel are met in the long term.
- A5 Finalise the draft Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan.
- A6 Support streetscape improvements to assist in improving the attractiveness and amenity of the town centre core and enhancing the experience of visitors to the town.
- A7 Undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings in the town centre to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.
- A8 Apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.
- A9 Undertake an urban design assessment for the town centre that articulates preferred design outcomes for any future development (including vacant sites) and implement through appropriate planning controls (i.e. Design and Development Overlay (DDO)).
- A10 Actively engage with VicTrack (landowner of the railway yard) to form an agreement in regards to the use and development of the Railway Yard as the community heart to the town.
- A11 Implement the Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan to deliver a community meeting and gathering space.
- A12 On delivery of the community gathering space at the Railway Yard, assist in activating the space through encouraging 'pop up' uses such as markets, stalls, coffee vans etc.



**Theme 3. Housing and Character**  
**Support the consolidation of development within Avenel's existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.**

SPATIAL INFLUENCES

As a lifestyle town, it is important that Avenel grows and evolves in a way that meets the needs of the community, and to protect and celebrate the important characteristics of the town that make it an attractive place to live.

Avenel contains a diverse series of neighbourhoods, with the original town growing to the south of the train line and around Hughes Creek. These neighbourhoods range in architectural styles from early settlement to post-war and current contemporary. The varying landscape patterns and streetscape treatments are reflective of the historical period in which the dwelling was constructed and are key character elements of the town.

This neighbourhood character, while carefully defined in the Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study 2009, is not currently protected by planning scheme tools. An existing challenge for the town is that the Township Zone (TZ) applies to the land within the township boundary and does not differentiate between neighbourhoods. As a result, it does not provide guidance on preferred development and neighbourhood character outcomes within the town.

Conventional residential development is occurring in the TZ to the west of the railway line. There are no planning tools (such as Development Plan Overlays) that enable Council officers to assess applications for subdivision in a holistic manner.

As such, there are missed opportunities to enhance the diversity of housing/lot types including ensuring lots are available to accommodate residents' ability to age in place, and to seek contributions to community and other infrastructure, such as open space, upgrades to the road network and connectivity to the broader open space networks.

In regards to new growth areas, Avenel 2030 unlocked new land for development which secured ample land supply to meet the towns growth projections in the long term (refer to Mesh Land Supply Analysis). The new growth areas are located to the east of town, and low density residential areas to the north and west of town. Some of these areas have been partially developed (particularly those to the north), while others remain vacant to the north and northeast of town. Land to the north and northeast of the town is not well serviced by community or recreation facilities and lacks connectivity to the broader town including the town centre.

These physical conditions continue to shape residential development within Avenel today.

**Ensuring future development appropriately provides for new residents through upgrades to existing infrastructure (such as roads and drainage) and providing open space with connectivity to the existing network will be critical in providing a sustainable development outcome for the town.**

COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

Neighbourhood character is highly valued by the Avenel community. This includes the character of the town itself and its placement in a rural environment with views and vistas to the Strathbogie Ranges. As such, there is a strong preference among the community to preserve these features of the town including heritage materials, such as granitic sand paths, open drains and rural edge kerbs in neighbourhoods throughout the town. However, these rural character elements, particularly open drains, require ongoing maintenance.

Achieving a balance between infrastructure upgrades to meet the needs of the town while also protecting and enhancing the rural features of the town will require careful consideration to ensure the rural character of Avenel is retained through upgrades and new residential development.

**ASPIRATIONS**  
**Retention of the rural feel of the town and its surrounds.**  
**Balancing new growth while preserving the towns character.**  
**Ensuring new growth is provided with reasonable access to open space, services and facilities.**



Community consultation comments:

new development to respect  
enhance & protect existing character  
mature trees consider heritage protection  
smaller lots closer to station  
informal consider site constraints  
path treatment minimum lot sizes  
manage drainage maintain  
developer contributions village feel  
retain native flora and fauna

Theme 3. Housing and Character

Support the consolidation of development within Avenel's existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.

POLICY INFLUENCES

Housing supply and affordability (Clause 16) are key State policy directives that aim to facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meet community needs, while delivering affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services.

To align with this policy, Avenel requires new housing supply that provides a diversity of lot sizes to meet the needs of residents in appropriate locations. This includes smaller blocks with lower maintenance requirements and alternative housing models that would appeal to an ageing population.



At a local level, policy encourages medium density housing choices close to the town centre and rural living growth on the township fringe (Clause 11.01-1L-01). At present, there is limited evidence that these policy directives are successfully being achieved through recent housing development. Applying the suite of residential zones to Avenel will assist in directing densities of development to appropriate locations.

The protection of neighbourhood character is a key priority as set out in Clause 11.01-1L-01. While Avenel's rich character is strongly valued by the community, existing planning controls used to guide development in Avenel's new growth areas do not provide effective mechanisms to satisfactorily protect the valued characteristics of the town.

The rural living land at Lovers Hill to the northeast of the town (outside of the township boundary) remains underdeveloped despite previous investigations identifying a demand for this type of development.



The Development Plan Overlay (DPO2) that applies to the land identifies a range of constraints (slope, native vegetation, buffers to endangered ecological communities and local industry, sensitive views, areas subject to erosion) and sets out a proposed lot layout (with lots restricted to key areas). However, with a number of constraints applying to the land, it is a possibility that this development will not be able to fully come to fruition. Further review of Lovers Hill is required to determine its suitability for development.

While Avenel's rural feel is a valued character element by the community, the town will require infrastructure contributions to support future residential development. At present, planning controls do not require developers to contribute to infrastructure upgrades for the expanding town. As a result, new neighbourhoods have developed without local infrastructure or upgrades to existing infrastructure.

**A review of the existing and future developments sites for the application or update of Development Plans to ensure the appropriate infrastructure is supplied with land use outcomes that complement and enhance the town is required, in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM).**



\*Unless specified otherwise the Clauses referred to are found within the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.



### Theme 3. Housing and Character

Support the consolidation of development within Avenel's existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.

#### ZONES

A summary of key existing zones in Avenel is outlined below:

##### Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

To the north-west there is a mix of Township Zone (TZ) and Low-Density Residential Zone (LDRZ).

##### Rural Living Zones (RLZ)

Toward the north-eastern side of Avenel, land is comprised of Rural Living Zone (RLZ).

##### Farming Zone (FZ)

To the south-east and south-west is Farming Zone (FZ)

##### Township Zone (TZ)

Land within the Avenel township is mainly Township Zone (TZ). The TZ is a flexible zone applied to small townships, usually those that are unsewered, and it allows for a range of commercial, industrial, and other uses. As Avenel is a sewered town that now has clear residential and commercial areas, it is appropriate to consider whether the town should be rezoned to more clearly define these uses.

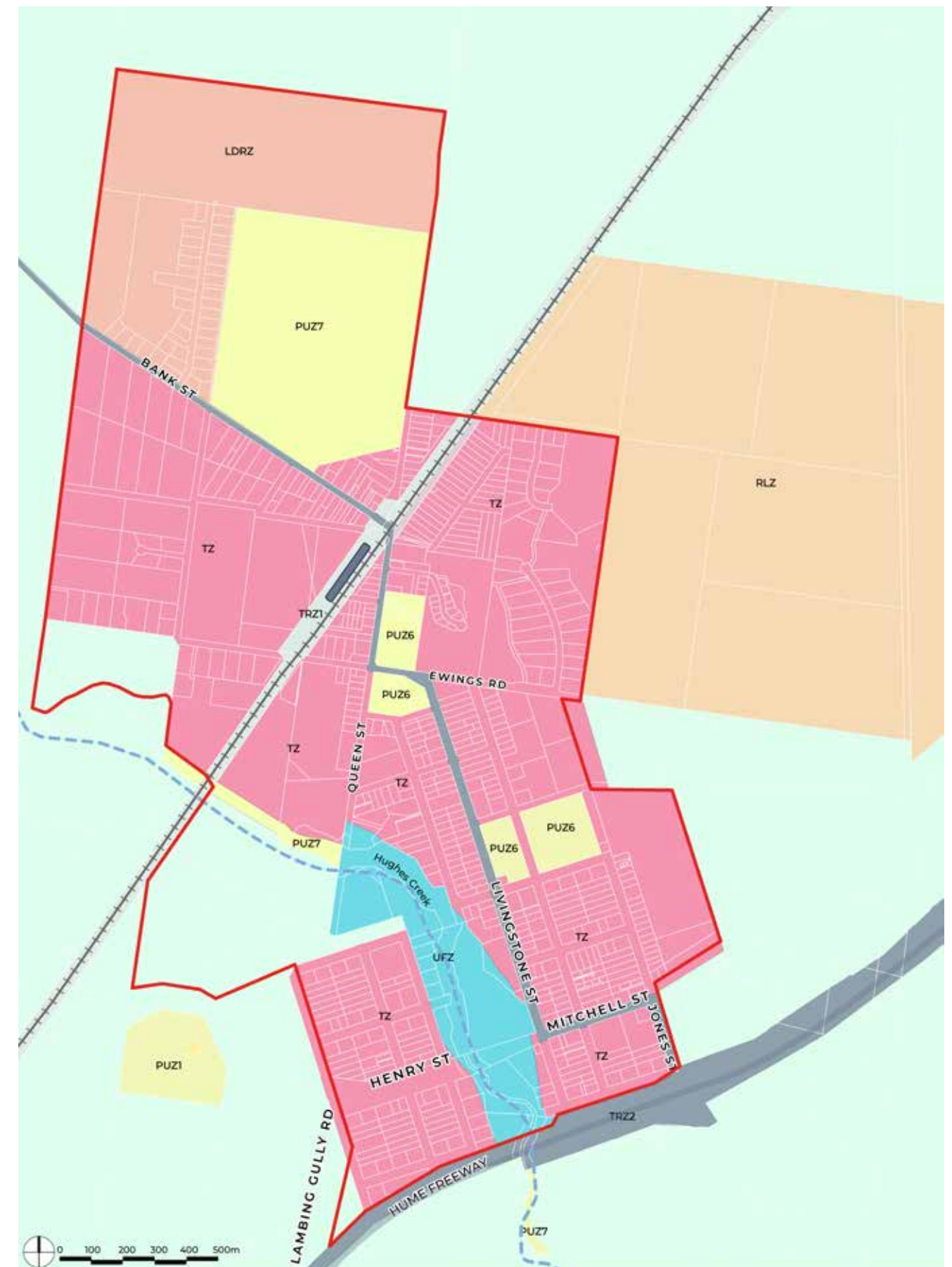
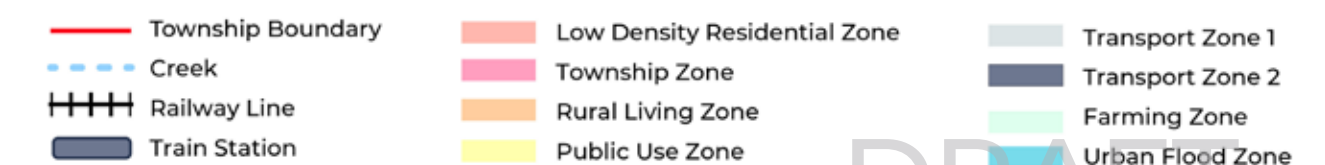


Figure 6: Zones Plan





### Theme 3. Housing and Character

Support the consolidation of development within Avenel's existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.

#### OVERLAYS

Existing overlays significantly shape development potential within the town.

A range of overlays apply to the township boundary area as follows:

**Land Subject to Inundation (LSIO) Floodway (FO) and Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)**

The Land Subject to Inundation (LSIO) and Floodway Overlays (FO) apply to Hughes Creek.

The Vegetation Protection Overlay applies to the slopes of Lovers Hill and vegetation along the Hume Freeway

The Bushfire Management Overlay applies to discrete forested areas in the rural areas surrounding the town.

**Development Plan Overlay (DPO)**

Development Plan Overlays (DPOs) are applied to Avenel North (DPO1) and Lovers Hill (DPO2) to guide and coordinate residential development of these two growth areas.

**Heritage Overlay (HO)**

Three Heritage Overlays apply in Avenel – Royal Mail Hotel and Cottage (HO1), Bridge over Hughes Creek (HO7) and Avenel Primary School (HO31).

The purpose of this overlay is the conservation of these heritage spaces, including requiring a planning permit for demolition.

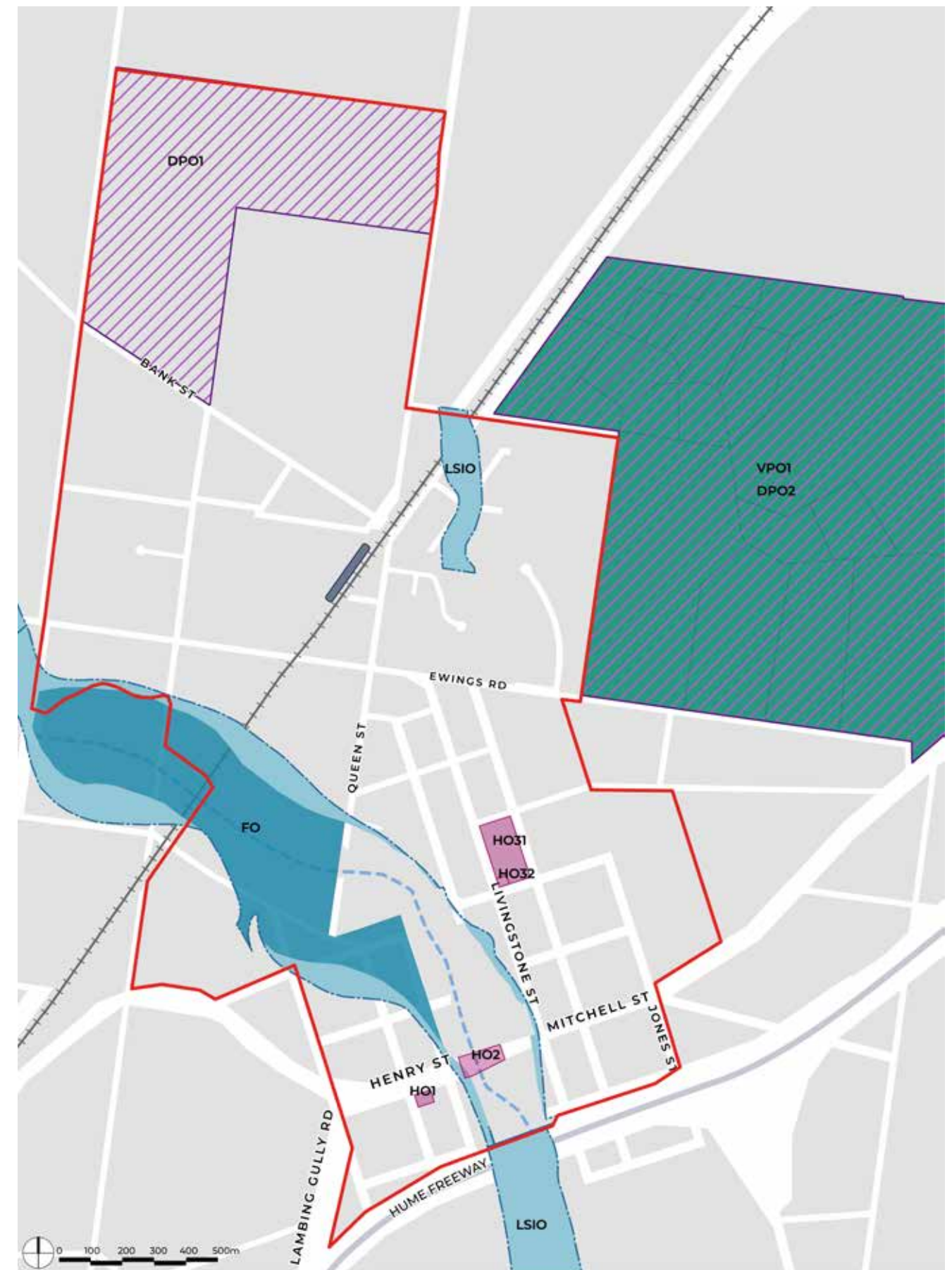
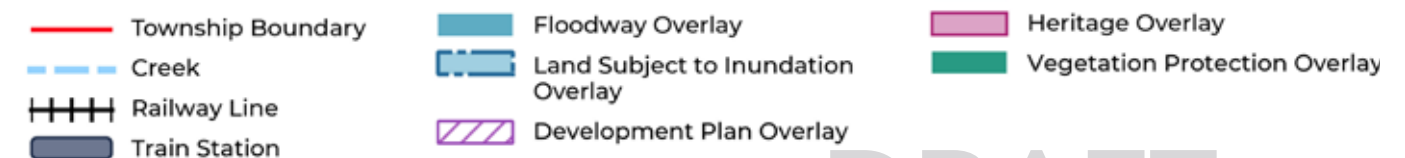


Figure 7: Overlays Plan



DRAFT



Theme 3. Housing and Character

Support the consolidation of development within Avenel's existing township boundary, to create and support diverse and sustainable residential communities.

RESIDENTIAL ZONE RECOMMENDATIONS



Mixed Use Zone: Not recommended.

There are sufficient residential areas abutting the commercial area (proposed Commercial 1 Zone in town centre) that could be further intensified. A Zone that encourages a mix of residential and non-residential development is not currently required.



Residential Growth Zone: Not recommended.

This Zone is identified for more intensified growth than what is likely to occur within Avenel in the long term.



General Residential Zone: Not recommended.

This Zone is applied to incremental and substantial change areas. As substantial change is not proposed within Avenel, this Zone is not currently required.



Neighbourhood Residential Zone: Recommended.

Proposed to apply to some areas identified for Incremental and Minimal residential growth with tailored Schedules, to address specific characteristics that have been identified within these areas including minimum lot sizes.



Low Density Residential Zone: Not Recommended.

This Zone is already applied to the residential estate to the east and north of the golf course. Increasing low density development above what is already identified within the township boundary is not required to service the projected growth within Avenel.



Rural Living Zone: Not Recommended.

This Zone is already applied to the properties east of the township boundary. No further areas have been identified in providing a transition from rural land to residential outside of the township boundary. It is recommended the balance of land outside of the township boundary is protected and retained for farming purposes.



Urban Growth Zone: Not Recommended

The purpose of this Zone is to generally manage the transition of non-urban land into urban land in accordance with a Precinct Structure Plan. Given the scale of the growth areas within Avenel being reasonably small in a growth context, it is not considered a Precinct Structure Plan is required to implement growth.

Table 1 Residential Zone Assessments and Suitability for Avenel

CONTROLS

RESCODE VARIATIONS

JUSTIFICATION

Town Centre Surrounds

Includes the residential land located within the Old Township Precinct identified within the Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study 2009, residential land immediately adjoining the town centre and the parcels of land to the west of the train station.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone - No minimum lot size (Schedule 1)

No ResCode variations recommended – allow for **Incremental Change**.

These areas are located adjacent to the town centre and the Avenel train station. Residential development in this area, being in a well-served location, should accommodate smaller lot sizes and support more diverse housing typologies through appropriate infill development that responds to the character of Avenel.

Established Residential

Includes the existing, established residential area within Avenel south of Ewings Road, and either side of Hughes Creek.

The area generally combines the Interwar/Post-war Mix and Post-War/Contemporary Mix Precincts identified within the Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study 2009.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone - No minimum lot size

Variations support **Minimal Change**.  
**Site coverage (A5 and B8)** The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 30% per cent.

This area comprises of the majority of the existing housing stock in Avenel. Clause 54 and 55 variations aim to capture the existing garden-feel and spacious character of the residential area, with modest setbacks, and low to no front fencing.

Neighbourhood Character objectives should capture the preferred neighbourhood character of the Interwar/Post-war Mix and Post-War/Contemporary Mix Precincts (Schedule 2)

**Landscaping (B13)** In addition to the requirements of B13, at least two canopy trees should be planted on the site.

**Street setback (A3 and B6)** Buildings should be setback a minimum of 8m from the street frontage.

**Side and rear setbacks (A10 and B17)** For a distance of at least 5 metres behind the front facade of the building fronting the street, setback new buildings a minimum of 2 metres from at least one side boundary and at least 1 metre from the other side boundary up to 3.6 metres in height.

The objectives of the NRZ schedule can capture the preferred character elements of both Neighbourhood Character Interwar/Post-war Mix and Post-War/Contemporary Mix precincts.

**Permeability (A6 and B9)** The site area covered by pervious surfaces should be at least 30 per

**Walls on boundary (A11 and B18)** Walls should not be located on side boundaries for a distance of 5 metres behind the front façade of the building fronting the street.

Rural Interface

Includes areas located on the edge of the township boundary interfacing with the Rural Living Zone or rural properties within the Farming Zone. The Rural Interface properties are in close proximity to the town centre, however generally have drainage constraints which prevent existing and future subdivision to meet the same level of development expected of the Town Centre Surrounds areas.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Minimum lot size of 1000sqm (Schedule 3)

Minimum lot size of 1000sqm supports **Minimal Change**.

Permit requirement to construct or extend a front fence within 3 metres of a street associated with a dwelling on a lot

A minimum lot size of 1000sqm is recommended to be applied to Rural Interface areas to retain the rural style character, and to respond to site constraints of properties within these areas. Further it is recommended that a permit should be required for fencing to ensure that fencing is consistent with a rural style character, that is post-and-wire, rural-style fencing.

Table 2: Residential Zone Recommendations



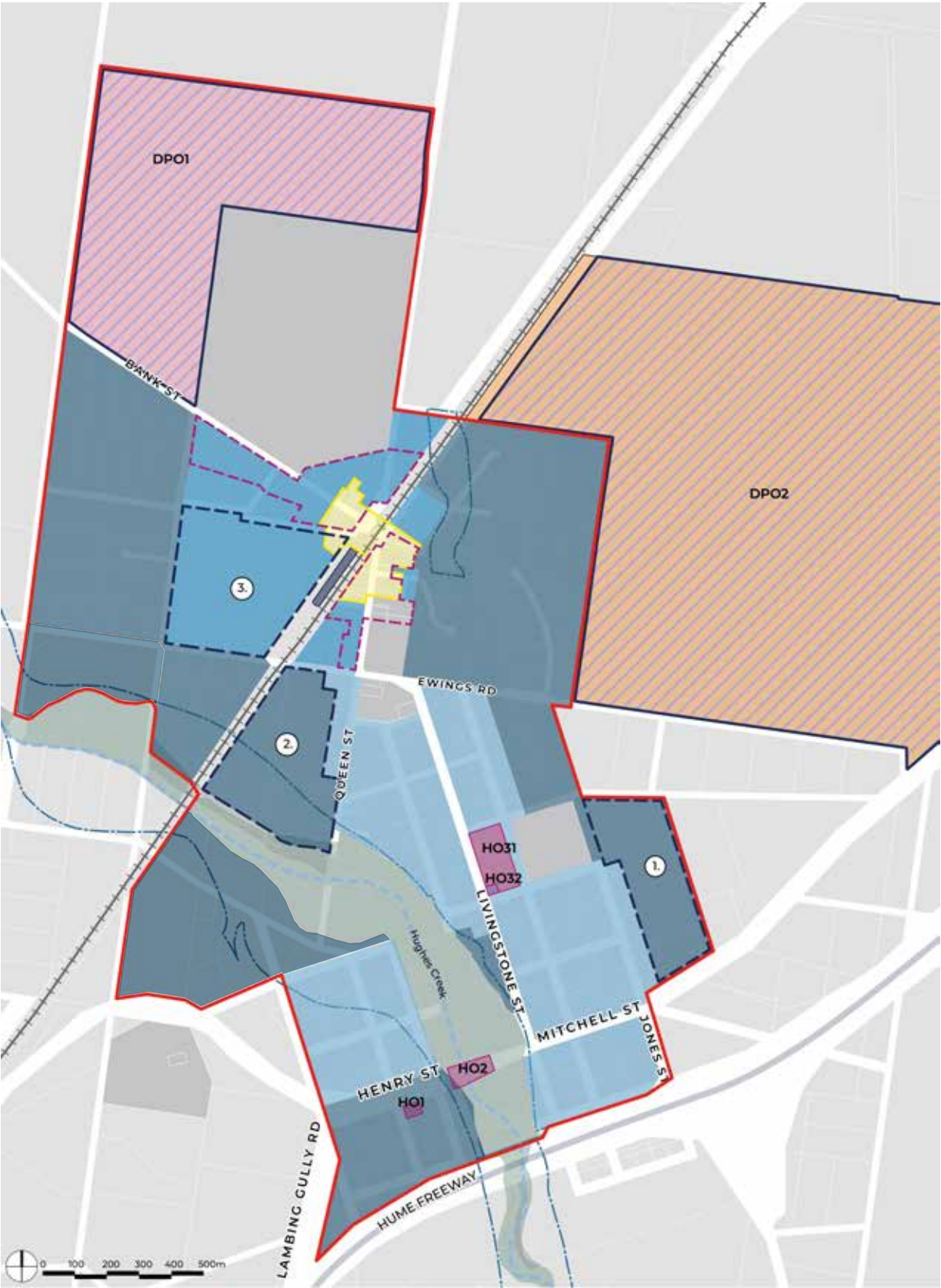


Figure 8 Theme 3: Housing and Character



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

OBJECTIVE 1

To support residential development within Avenel’s township boundary that is sustainable, cohesive, enhances and contributes to the community’s aspirations for the town, the rural lifestyle appeal and township character.

Strategies

- › Ensure a township boundary is established around Avenel that clearly separates between urban development and farming activities.
- › Ensure development planning processes deliver co-ordinated development of large sites that are notionally available for residential development.
- › Ensure new development areas are holistically planned for and provide a positive and sustainable contribution to the broader town including infrastructure needs, neighbourhood and towns character.
- › Ensure new development is consistent with the bushfire recommendations set out in the Bushfire Risk Assessment.

OBJECTIVE 2

To ensure Avenel provides for greater housing choice and diversity to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Strategies

- › Encourage vacant zoned land near the town centre and existing services and facilities to be developed with more diverse housing outcomes, including smaller blocks, lower maintenance housing types and alternative housing models that would appeal to an ageing population.
- › Encourage all new developments to provide a mix of lot sizes.

OBJECTIVE 3

To ensure the character of Avenel is protected for the long term and new development positively contributes to the existing character of the town.

Strategies

- › Ensure new residential development is identifiable and diverse in character and contributes to the overall character of Avenel.
- › Encourage new streets within Avenel to complement the dominant existing street characteristics of wide road reservations and high levels of landscaping and in accordance with the IDM.
- › Ensure heritage values that contribute to the character of Avenel are protected in the long term.



ACTIONS

- A1 Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to replace the map with the Avenel Framework Plan (Figure 11).

A2 Review Development Plan, Schedule 1 to ensure an appropriate land use outcome is achieved that complements and enhances the town while also considering fragmented land ownership patterns and physical site constraints.

The review should consider, but not be limited to amending:

The objectives of the Development Plan to ensure:

  - a coordinated development outcome is achieved that takes into account land fragmentation and staging;
  - future development provides good access to and along open space for the purpose of amenity, leisure and recreation;
  - future development integrates with the surrounding road, transport and movement networks;
  - future development positively contributes and enhances the existing character of Avenel; and
  - future development appropriately upgrades/contributes to existing infrastructure (such as roads and drainage) that is directly impacted by the proposed development.
- Include a requirement for an overarching Development Plan for the whole area that identifies:

  - a detailed site analysis
  - the location of all proposed land uses including roads, public open space, drainage reserves, and other known authority reserves to clearly shows how the development will work as a whole, including across fragmented land ownership patterns;
  - a consistent subdivision pattern across the development that maximises solar efficiency to as many lots as possible;
  - distribution of open space to ensure it is fair and equitable as well as connected to the broader open space network;
  - a Traffic Impact Assessment that considers the whole area and connectivity to the existing road network, including any upgrades required to the existing network;
  - a wholistic drainage solution to avoid site specific drainage responses;
  - the stages by which the development of the land is to proceed taking into account the fragmented land ownership;
  - a Bushfire Hazard Assessment in accordance with the recommendations in the Bushfire Risk Assessment; and
  - a Biodiversity Assessment that provides a wholistic response to environmental constraints.



ACTIONS

- A3 Undertake a substantial review of Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 2 to determine its ability to be developed in accordance with the current plan, noting that a review may impact the developable areas. The review should also have consideration to the recommendations contained within the Bushfire Risk Assessment.

A4 Ensure no development occurs within DPO2 until the review identified in Action A3 is undertaken.

A5 Apply Development Plan Overlays to large parcels of vacant land, specifically the following sites:

  - 45 Spencer Road, 207-209 Ewings Road and 46-50 Queen Street
  - 1-3 Saleyard Road
  - 228 Ewings Road Avenel

The Schedule to the DPO should include a requirement for a Development Plan that responds to similar issues as those identified in Action A2 for the review of DPO1.

A6 Promote the benefits of appropriately located infill development to the community. This may include identifying the benefits that infill development can have on healthy living (e.g., building on the 'Active Living' Heart Foundation principles, less car dependent and encouraging walking due to being located within proximate locations to services and facilities).
- A7 Apply new residential zones to all residential zoned land in accordance with Figure 8 and Table 2.

A8 As part of the implementation of the suite of residential zones in accordance with Figure 8 and Table 2, ensure the Schedules clearly identify the neighbourhood, heritage, environmental or landscape character objectives for the relevant area.

A9 As per Action A7 (Movement) ensure the suite of cross sections are implemented to both reflects and enhance the character of the town.

A10 As per Action 10 (Role & Identity) undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings within the town to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.

A11 As per Action 11 (Role & Identity) apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.

A12 Require any new development to undertake bushfire mitigation measures in accordance with the Bushfire Risk Assessment.





**Theme 4. Community Facilities and Open Space**  
**Optimise and connect Avenel's distributed community and open space nodes.**

**SPATIAL INFLUENCES**

Avenel is well-serviced by community facilities and services for a town of its size.

Community facilities in Avenel include a pre-school and primary school, sports ground, recreation reserve, CFA fire station, churches, bowling club and community hall. Health services in the town include a maternal and child health service centre and pharmacy. A small selection of hospitality venues, a general store, hotel, service station and roadhouse comprise Avenel's commercial offerings. These key community nodes are located across the town, rather than clustered within the town centre, and have limited legible connections between them.

Avenel's open space network comprises a mixture of formal and informal recreation assets. A committee of management appointed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DECCA) controls the key open space assets of Stewart Park, Jubilee Park, Hughes Creek corridor, and the Golf Course.

This is a key barrier for Council in managing and improving these open spaces.

Hughes Creek is currently underutilised as a linear open space asset but provides an ideal route for a green corridor connecting the existing community to open space nodes and supporting active transport through integrated shared paths. The west side of Hughes Creek has an active interface with edge roads and houses fronting the corridor.

**Future residential development presents the opportunity to strengthen the Hughes Creek corridor to connect the community and open space nodes across Avenel and provide greater accessibility via active transport networks.**



**COMMUNITY INFLUENCES**

To support Avenel's role as a growing lifestyle town, the availability of community infrastructure such as childcare, kindergarten, and recreation spaces is increasingly important to families looking to move to Avenel.

Stakeholder consultation in preparing this Strategy indicated that prospective households value access to family-oriented open spaces, such as playgrounds and parklands and this is a key factor in their decision to relocate to Avenel. Currently, Council is currently preparing a Playground & Open Strategy which will assist in identifying open space needs for the town in the future.

Further, to support Avenel's ageing population, improved access to social and health services will be necessary.

It was noted in stakeholder consultation that accessibility-related infrastructure such as 'all-ability' pedestrian paths and well-maintained roads are specific priorities for Avenel's aged residents.

Increased availability of transportation options was also highlighted as a community issue.

consideration to ensure the rural character of Avenel is retained through upgrades and new residential development.

**ASPIRATIONS**

**Available childcare options and kindergarten to support families living within Avenel and surrounds.**

**Family-oriented, conveniently located open spaces, such as playgrounds and parklands.**

**A town support by community infrastructure to meet residents needs including health facilities, all-ability pedestrian paths, well-maintained roads and transportation options to support residents to age in place.**

Community consultation comments:

revegetation of Hughes  
further street Creek environs  
tree planting more play spaces  
sustainable development  
medical facilities maintaining biodiversity  
support primary school for future growth  
more walking and cycle trails  
north-south connections across Hughes Creek  
better connect Hughes  
Creek with town infrastructure  
needs



**Theme 4. Community Facilities and Open Space**  
**Optimise and connect Avenel's distributed community and open space nodes.**

POLICY INFLUENCES

Providing community infrastructure including health, education, cultural and social facilities is a key policy directive at a State level (Clause 19.02-1S).

This policy aims to ensure that the distribution of these community facilities is informed by demographic trends and maintains a high level of accessibility in their design.

State policy also encourages the provision of integrated public open space networks, which use pedestrian and bicycle paths to connect residential areas and key community nodes (Clause 19.02-6S). The protection of existing landscape features, such as natural drainage corridors, and the incorporation of these assets into the open space network is a key objective.

Industry benchmarks as set out in the 20-minute neighbourhood framework (Plan Melbourne), the PSP Guidelines (11.02-2S) and Clause 56 recommend that parks and linear open spaces should be provided within 400m and sports fields within 800m of each dwelling.

In Avenel, newer residential developments have limited access to open space within walking distance, and no new open spaces have been developed as part of recent developments. As such, ensuring future development within Avenel provide open space consistent with industry benchmarks is critical in providing residents with reasonable access to open space.

Further, local policy (Cause 02.03) and Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2021-25, identify the need to have a variety of services and social infrastructure available across the Shire, while recognising there will be an increased demand for services to support disability and an ageing population.

**Clause 02.03 highlights the need for expanded aged care facilities and services, and support for health, education, and community hubs in Nagambie and Euroa.**

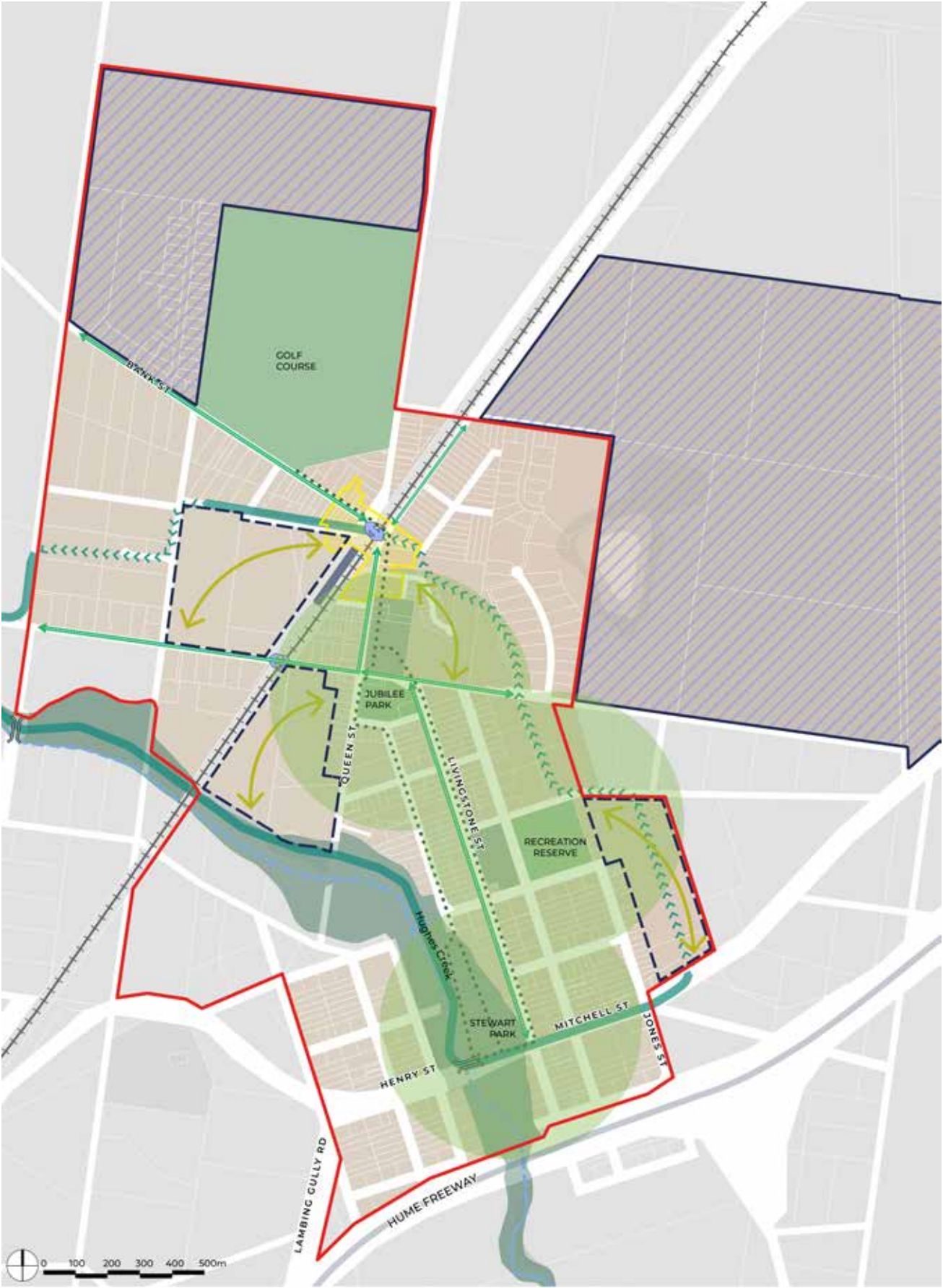


Figure 9: Theme 4 Community Facilities and Open Space



\*Unless specified otherwise the Clauses referred to are found within the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.



**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

**OBJECTIVE 1**

**To progressively establish an open space system which will connect Avenel's existing and new developments to key destinations including Hughes Creek, the town centre core, train station, active open space and the natural environment.**

**Strategies**

- › Plan for green corridors within new development areas that will connect Hughes Creek and link key community and recreation nodes around the town.
- › Plan for the creation of a high quality open space recreational loop connecting Hughes Creek (riverine trail) which prioritises vegetation and wildlife protection while connecting people to diverse open spaces and places as development occurs over time.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

**To protect and support Avenel's existing valued open spaces and undertake enhancements where required to meet the future needs of residents.**

**Strategies**

- › Conserve and enhance existing open spaces for their landscape qualities, recreation values and cultural significance.
- › Ensure existing passive and active open spaces are meeting the needs of residents.
- › Improve way finding to existing open spaces to encourage the use of the open spaces for passive purposes, which are to some extent hidden from the town centre core and often underutilised.

**OBJECTIVE 3**

**To ensure lower order community facilities, such as sports and recreation spaces, are available within Avenel to support existing and future residents.**

**Strategies**

- › Plan for strategic improvements to community facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose, multi-functional and can adapt to changes in service delivery requirements and community needs.

**ACTIONS**

- A1 Advocate to DEECA for the preparation of a masterplan for the Hughes Creek Riverine Trail that delivers a pedestrian and cycling network and a shared path 'green loop'.  
The masterplan should have consideration to:
  - Existing vegetation and its protection
  - Wildlife habitat
  - Public facilities to support the trail
  - Ongoing management of the trail
- A2 Review existing Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 to ensure they provide for the provision of open space within the Development Plan area including connections to the recreational loop.
- A3 Require any new Development Plans as recommended in Action 5 of Housing & Character to provide open space provisions including connections to the recreational loop.
- A4 As part of preparing the Playground & Open Space Strategy investigate the potential for loop walking paths and/or exercise tracks within the existing open space network, including at Pioneer Park, Shelton Street and Stewart Park.
- A5 Finalise the Playground & Open Space Strategy and implement its recommendations in regard to open space and playground needs within Avenel.
- A6 Undertake a review of existing way finding to the open space network and improve way finding where required.
- A7 Instigate regular engagement with community service providers within the town to monitor the relevance and utilisation of existing services and facilities, identify gaps in provisions and ensure that services and infrastructure continue to be viable and identify measures to support their growth.





Theme 5. Movement

Improve the standard of existing and new movement networks to strengthen connections and support active transport modes.

SPATIAL INFLUENCES

Avenel is well-serviced by higher order movement networks, such as passenger rail from Seymour and the services that run through to Albury (Melbourne to Albury line) and freeways – with direct access to the Hume Freeway, and a short drive to the Goulburn Valley Freeway.

Within Avenel, the older part of town reflects a modified grid with formed tree-lined streets, however, there is no clear primary route through the town. Instead, a series of streets form a general north-south connection requiring several turns at key intersections, reducing the legibility of the movement network, and limiting the connectivity between activity nodes exists. While a gridded street network usually supports walkability, the street network has limited footpaths, and key opportunities for connections to broader active transport and recreation trails are underutilised (such as connections along Hughes Creek).

Further a lack of adequate sealed road infrastructure to support new growth areas, particularly to the west of town exacerbates the need for road infrastructure upgrades and improved connectivity throughout the town. It is noted that some planning permits have already been issued for key areas, which may limit opportunities to seek upgrades by developers.

As the town grows Avenel is also experiencing increased pressure on a number of intersections and town access points which is exacerbating existing traffic safety concerns, in particular at level crossings where traffic congestion and truck manoeuvrability are problematic. These concerns also relate to the main entrance to Avenel from the Hume Freeway where the design of the intersection requires upgrades to improve safety, due to vehicles exiting the freeway at high speeds and within a short distance required to merge and turn.

To provide Avenel with a functional and connected movement network significant infrastructure upgrades are required to improve traffic safety, pedestrian connectivity, and amenity (e.g., noise and visual appearance) including the Bank Street crossing, the Queen Street and Nagambie Road crossing, and the interchange at the Hume Freeway entrance.

**This requires a commitment from both a State and Local Government to improve both higher order infrastructure and Council localised infrastructure such as the local roads, path and wayfinding which would significantly enhance the movement network within Avenel.**

.....



COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

Traffic safety at intersections and town access points is a key community concern.

In particular, high speed traffic at the Hume Freeway entrance creates safety and noise concerns due to the configuration of the interchange. Rail crossings at Queen Street and Avenel-Nagambie Road, and at Bank Street have been continually identified as having pedestrian and traffic safety issues, due to the increased traffic congestion.

- ASPIRATIONS**
- A connected movement network for both pedestrians and vehicles.
  - Improved pedestrian and traffic safety at key intersections and town access points.
  - Improved amenity, wayfinding and safety at the Hume Freeway entrance.



Community consultation comments:

improve accessiblilty across the broader network  
pedestrian crossing  
improve railway line intersection  
clearer signage  
improve railway precinct for future growth  
improve freeway entries into town  
links to community facilities  
improve town centre traffic conditions  
parking on north side of railway line  
improve town centre traffic conditions



Theme 5. Movement

Improve the standard of existing and new movement networks to strengthen connections and support active transport modes.

POLICY INFLUENCES

Plan Melbourne contains a policy objective that movement networks need to be integrated with land use planning to facilitate social, cultural and economic opportunities.

Plan Melbourne also provides strategic direction for local development through the application of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept, which is a practical framework used to support the idea that locally accessible transport options provide access to services, facilities and goods within 20-minutes from home. Avenel already exhibits many of the attributes of a 20-minute neighbourhood, however as the town develops, consideration will need to be given to sustainable transport infrastructure, and improved access to daily needs and services. In planning for Avenel's future movement network, consideration is required to be had to how the principles of a 20 minute neighbourhood can be achieved within the Avenel context including safe streets and spaces, safe cycling networks, and improved connectivity and walkability.

Local policy identifies the need to prioritise increased pedestrian and cycling connectivity between key areas such as town centres, health care facilities, schools, train stations and sporting facilities (Clause 02.03-8). There are also local policy objectives to increase provisions of bicycle infrastructure within and between townships as well as the development of walking tracks within townships (Clause 02.03-8). Currently, there is limited active transport connectivity between community activity nodes in Avenel, noting the town lacks designated shared paths, and formal and informal pedestrian paths across both established and new residential areas.

With regard to traffic movement and safety, local policy objectives aim to alleviate pressure on the town centre and railway crossing and at key intersection treatments. This includes the Hume Freeway and Bank Street intersections (Clause 11.01-1L-01).

**A reduced speed campaign for the Hume Freeway interchange was successful in slowing traffic, however further work is required to improve wayfinding signage and safety standards at this intersection, and the railway crossings in town.**

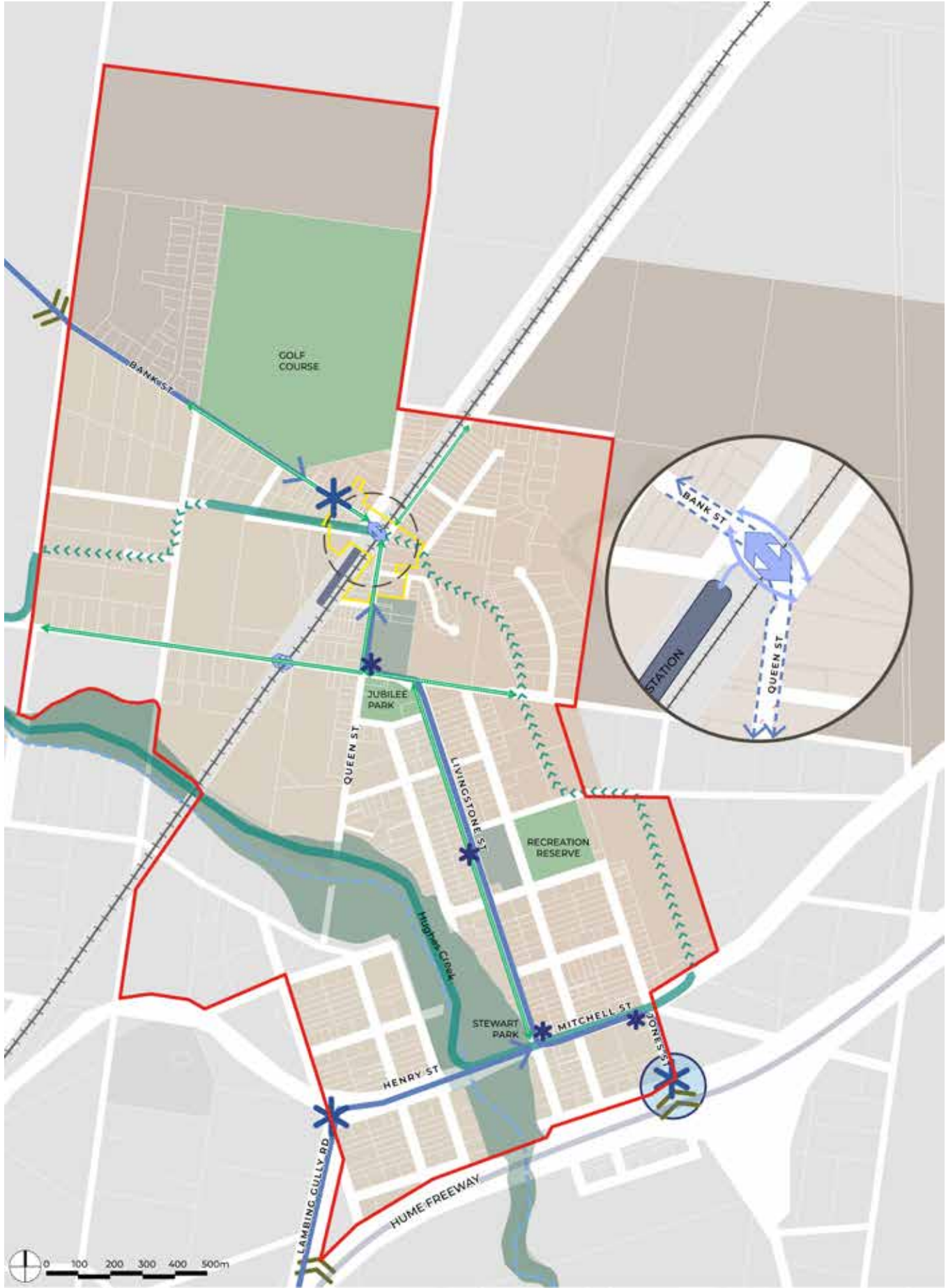


Figure 10: Theme 4 Movement Plan



\*Unless specified otherwise the Clauses referred to are found within the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.



**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

**OBJECTIVE 1**

**To create a highly connected and integrated Avenel through enhancing the movement network and facilitating linkages to key destinations within Avenel.**

**Strategies**

- › Improve the road and path network that encourages walking and cycling to the train station, the town centre core, open space and other key destinations within the town consistent with the path network identified in Figure 10.
- › Improve connectivity within and to the town through a series of wayfinding signage to key destinations including sites of cultural and heritage significance, identified in Figure 10. *(Note: The Streetscape Renewal Plan identifies some wayfinding that will assist in improving connectivity within the town).*

**OBJECTIVE 2**

**To provide a movement network that is safe and accessible for all.**

**Strategies**

- › To improve traffic management (including safety at rail crossings) and car parking within the town centre.
- › To enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and accessibility within the town.
- › To improve safety of the intersection with the Hume Freeway.

**OBJECTIVE 3**

**To encourage equitable and fair development that contributes to and complements the existing gridded network of the original town, the wide road reserves and connectivity to the town centre core and other key destinations within the town.**

**Strategies**

- › Ensure new street locations are designed to reflect the current north–south, east–west (modified) road pattern and provide accessibility and connectivity to the existing town.
- › Ensure new development contributes equitably and fairly to the cost of infrastructure that benefits Avenel including the upgrade of gravel roads to a residential standard.

**OBJECTIVE 4**

**To recognise and support the contribution of diverse streetscapes and pedestrian/cycle links to make a vibrant and activated public realm and township character.**

**Strategies**

- › Encourage thematic street planting along roads leading to the town centre.
- › Define the route from the Freeway to the town centre along Livingstone Street and Queen Street through enhanced landscaping to assist in wayfinding, improved civic presentation and enhanced character in accordance with the Streetscape Renewal Plan.

**ACTIONS**

- A1 Investigate how and where the movement network within the town centre and key destinations can be enhanced through improved pedestrian connectivity, road upgrades, wayfinding to key destinations and streetscape improvements (street furniture, lighting and landscaping).

A2 Prepare an Implementation Strategy (which builds on the investigations undertaken) that:

Identifies the exact location of any upgrades required to the movement network;

  - timing;
  - priorities;
  - potential funding implications/sources; and
  - staging.

A3 Progressively deliver the infrastructure upgrades and improvements in accordance with the Implementation Strategy identified at Table 2.

A4 Review car parking requirements within the town centre and ensure adequate, safe and accessible parking is available to support the town. *(Note: the Streetscape Renewal Plan has identified some additional carparking as part of the upgrades to the railway yard).*

A5 Advocate to State Government for a review and upgrade to State infrastructure within the town that has been identified as having safety concerns including:

  - the railway level crossings at Queen and Bank Street;
  - the Hume Freeway interchange; and
  - alternate truck routes from the Hume Freeway interchange to the town centre.
- A6 As part of the review of Development Plan Overlay Schedule 1 (DPO1) ensure the plans require the following in regards to the movement network:

  - Road design and construction costs in new residential areas to be met by developers;
  - water sensitive urban design for roads and drainage;
  - site responsive road design, including layout of roads to provide accessibility and connectivity, retention of road reserve, trees, surfaces and design that reduce future maintenance costs;
  - provision of road infrastructure in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM;)
  - provision of recreation corridors and trails that provide connectivity throughout the town, offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors and utilise natural features as far as possible, such as waterways and natural drainage lines, and
  - provision of a walking/pedestrian trail along Hughes Creek between the Hume Freeway and Vearings Road.

A7 Prepare a suite of cross sections to be applied to existing and new development that reflects and enhances the character of the town.

A8 Prepare street tree planting guidelines that ensure the use of exotic and native species that will serve to contribute to Avenel's movement network character, biodiversity values and gateways. The Guidelines should complement the suite of cross sections.

A9 Implement the wayfinding and landscaping recommendations for the entrance to Avenel in accordance with the Streetscape Renewal Plan.



# The Vision for Avenel

Avenel's role as a **rural lifestyle township** will be reinforced by **supporting housing needs, delivering community services and infrastructure, and activating valued public spaces in the town centre** to respond to changing community needs.

Avenel will continue to attract new residents and families, drawn to town's **rural charm and proximity to nearby regional hubs and Melbourne**, while also playing an important role in accommodating residents who seek **to age in place**.

**Celebrating Avenel's strong relationship to the surrounding landscape, rich local history, and valued village feel, will provide new opportunities for the town** to develop local industry, enhance economic viability, and to be recognised as a key lifestyle and tourism destination. **Future development will protect the existing character and heritage** and enhance the residential amenity of the town.

**Avenel's network of roads, trails and open space will have safe and accessible connections** that highlight the town's landscape features and better connect neighbourhoods to key community nodes.

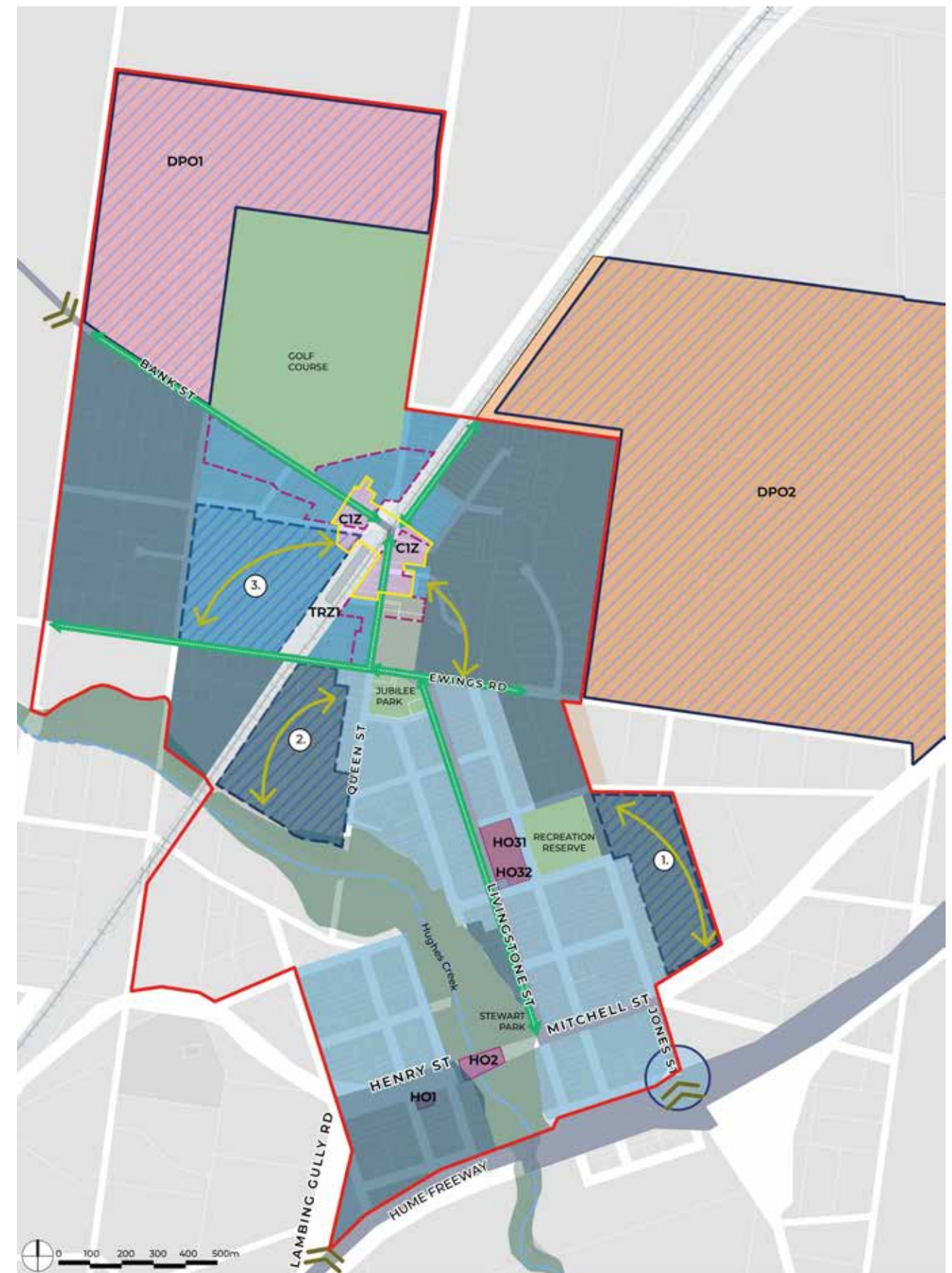


Figure 11: Avenel Strategic Framework Plan





PART 3

# Implementation

This section outlines an implementation plan that has been developed following from the Objective, Strategies and Actions identified within the Strategy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Avenel Strategy will be required to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure consistency with strategic plans such as Council Plans and the Hume Regional Growth Plan.

Implementing the actions of the Avenel Strategy will require ongoing review of progress and regular feedback to key stakeholders and the wider community. Council will monitor and review the Strategy to ensure that its planning priorities are being achieved.

Regular reviews will ensure that the Strategy reflects the vision the community has for the future of Avenel and is aligned to the latest trends and information available about the environment and the community’s social and economic needs.

AVENEL STRATEGY ACTIONS

Achieving the Vision and Objectives will require clear and logical planning controls.

The implementation of planning tools including zones, overlays and local policies into the Strathbogie Shire Planning Scheme are key components of the Strategy Refresh.



Key actions to achieve the preferred use and future built form outcomes for Avenel as outlined in this Plan

Priorities delivered into high, medium or low

There are two implementation types.  
1. Statutory implementation  
Involves review of and potential changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (i.e. changes to policy, zones and/or overlays), or actions that are undertaken as part of the planning permit application process.  
2. Non-statutory implementation  
Refers to measures such as master planning, further strategic work, studies, public works, relationship building and advocacy.

Identifies the key stakeholder (s) responsible for driving the action i.e. Council, landowners or the community.

Costs estimated at high, moderate or low

Estimated time to complete at short, medium and long

No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: ROLE AND IDENTITY						
A1	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to reinforce Avenel's role as a lifestyle town while recognising the importance of the regional landscape and ensuring the valued characteristics of Avenel are protected.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A2	Finalise the draft Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan and proceed with its implementation in regards to the existing gateways to Avenel.	High	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Short
A3	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to reinforce the importance of enhancing the gateways to the town.	Medium	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A4	As per Action 8 (Movement) implement the street tree planting guidelines to ensure the use of exotic and native species that will serve to contribute to Avenel's character and biodiversity.	Low	Non-Statutory	Engineering/ Environment	Moderate	Long
A5	Actively engage with existing businesses to ensure they remain viable and contribute to the economic vitality of the town.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Economic Development	Low	Short

Table 3 Avenel Strategy Actions

No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
A6	Promote existing tourism attractions and interests within Avenel and surrounds such as cultural heritage, the wine industry and Ned Kelly heritage.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Tourism	Low	Short
A7	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to promote and reinforce the importance of tourism within the town to assist in its economic viability.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A8	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 (or apply a Vegetation Protection Overlay) to ensure the protection of remnant vegetation that is significant to the town and/or also provides important flora and fauna habitat.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A9	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to ensure views and vistas to the Strathbogie Ranges are retained.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A10	Undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings within the town to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.	High	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Medium
A11	Apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.	Medium	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Medium
A12	Engage with the Taungurung party to ensure the town is recognising its cultural history.	High	Non-Statutory	Community and Culture	Low	Short



No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: TOWN CENTRE						
A1	Rezone the town centre core to Commercial 1 Zone to encourage a complementary mix of retail/ business uses and residential within the town centre boundary.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A2	Actively engage with existing businesses to ensure uses that assist in the economic vitality and attract visitors to the town are retained.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Economic Development and Tourism	Low	Short
A3	Engage and monitor the needs of existing residents to ensure their reasonable daily needs are being met.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Community and Culture	Low	Short
A4	Monitor retail floor space within Avenel and engage with relevant providers to ensure retail needs for Avenel are met in the long term.	Low	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning	Low	Short (Ongoing)
A5	Finalise the draft Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan.	High	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Short
A6	Support streetscape improvements to assist in improving the attractiveness and amenity of the town centre core and enhancing the experience of visitors to the town.	High	Non-Statutory	Engineering	High	Medium
A7	Undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings in the town centre to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.	High	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Medium

No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
A8	Apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.	Medium	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Long
A9	Undertake an urban design assessment for the town centre that articulates preferred design outcomes for any future development (including vacant sites) and implement through appropriate planning controls (i.e. Design and Development Overlay (DDO)).	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Long
A10	Actively engage with VicTrack (landowner of the railway yard) to form an agreement in regards to the use and development of the Railway Yard as the community heart to the town.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Short
A11	Implement the Avenel Streetscape Renewal Plan to deliver a community meeting and gathering space.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	High	Long
A12	On delivery of the community gathering space at the Railway Yard, assist in activating the space through encouraging 'pop up' uses such as markets, stalls, coffee vans etc	Low	Non-Statutory	Community and Culture, Economic Development	Low	Long



No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: HOUSING AND CHARACTER						
A1	Review and update Clause 11.01-1L-01 to replace the map with the Avenel Framework Plan (Figure 11).	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A2	Review Development Plan, Schedule 1 to ensure an appropriate land use outcome is achieved that complements and enhances the town while also considering fragmented land ownership patterns and physical site constraints.  *See Action A2 for additional requirements associated with this action.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A3	Undertake a substantial review of Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 2 to determine its ability to be developed in accordance with the current plan, noting that a review may impact the developable areas. The review should also have consideration to the recommendations contained within the Bushfire Risk Assessment.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Medium
A4	Ensure no development occurs within DPO2 until the review identified in Action A3 is undertaken.	High	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning	Low	Short
A5	Apply Development Plan Overlays to large parcels of vacant land. The Schedule to the DPO should include a requirement for a Development Plan that responds to similar issues as those identified in Action A2 for the review of DPO1.  *See Action A5 of the main body of this report for specific sites.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short

No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
A6	Promote the benefits of appropriately located infill development to the community. This may include identifying the benefits that infill development can have on healthy living (e.g. building on the 'Active Living' Heart Foundation principles, less car dependent and encouraging walking due to being located within proximate locations to services and facilities).	Low	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning, Community and Culture	Low	Short
A7	Apply new residential zones to all residential zoned land in accordance with Figure 8 and Table 2.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short
A8	As part of the implementation of the suite of residential zones in accordance with Figure 8 and Table 2, ensure the Schedules clearly identify the neighbourhood, heritage, environmental or landscape character objectives for the relevant area.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Low	Short
A9	As per Action 7 of Movement ensure the suite of cross sections are implemented to both reflect and enhance the character of the town.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Medium
A10	As per Action 10 of Role & Identity undertake a heritage assessment of heritage buildings within the town to ensure heritage values are protected in the long term.	High	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Medium
A11	As per Action 11 of Role & Identity apply a Heritage Overlay, to any significant heritage buildings identified in the heritage assessment as requiring protection.	Medium	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Long
A12	Require any new development to undertake bushfire mitigation measures in accordance with the Bushfire Risk Assessment.	High	Statutory	Strategic and Statutory Planning	Low	Short



No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE						
A1	<p>Advocate to DEECA for the preparation of a masterplan for the Hughes Creek Riverine Trail that delivers a pedestrian and cycling network and a shared path 'green loop'.</p> <p>The masterplan should have consideration to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Existing vegetation and its protection</li><li>- Wildlife habitat</li><li>- Public facilities to support the trail</li><li>- Ongoing management of the trail.</li></ul>	Medium	Non-Statutory	Community and Culture	Low	Short
A2	Review existing Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 to ensure they provide for the provision of open space within the Development Plan area including connections to the recreational loop.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Low	Short
A3	Require any new Development Plans as recommended in Action 5 of Housing & Character to provide open space provisions including connections to the recreational loop.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Low	Short
A4	As part of preparing the Playground & Open Space Strategy investigate the potential for loop walking paths and/or exercise tracks within the existing open space network, including at Pioneer Park, Shelton Street and Stewart Park.	High	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning and Engineering	Low	Short
A5	Finalise the Playground & Open Space Strategy and implement its recommendations in regards to open space and playground needs within Avenel	High	Non-Statutory	Council	High	Medium
A6	Undertake a review of existing way finding to the open space network and improve way finding where required.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Council	Moderate	Medium
A7	Instigate regular engagement with community service providers within the town to monitor the relevance and utilisation of existing services and facilities, identify gaps in provisions and ensure that services and infrastructure continue to be viable and identify measures to support their growth.	High	Statutory	Strategic Planning	Moderate	Short

No	Action	Priority	Action Type	Responsibility	Cost	Timeframe
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5: MOVEMENT						
A1	Investigate how and where the movement network within the town centre and key destinations can be enhanced through improved pedestrian connectivity, road upgrades, wayfinding to key destinations and streetscape improvements (street furniture, lighting and landscaping).	High	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Medium
A2	<p>Prepare an Implementation Strategy (which builds on the investigations undertaken) that:</p> <p>Identifies the exact location of any upgrades required to the movement network;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- timing;</li><li>- priorities;</li><li>- potential funding implications/sources; and</li><li>- staging.</li></ul>	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Medium
A3	Progressively deliver the infrastructure upgrades and improvements in accordance with the Implementation Strategy identified at Action A2.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	High	Long
A4	Review car parking requirements within the town centre and ensure adequate, safe and accessible parking is available to support the town. (Note the Streetscape Renewal Plan has identified some additional carparking as part of the upgrades to the railway yard).	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Medium
A5	<p>Advocate to State Government for a review and upgrade to State infrastructure within the town that has been identified as having safety concerns including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the railway level crossings at Queen and Bank Street;</li><li>- the Hume Freeway interchange; and</li><li>- alternate truck routes from the Hume Freeway interchange to the town centre.</li></ul>	High	Non-Statutory	Engineering	Low	Short
A6	<p>As part of the review of Development Plan Overlay Schedule 1 (DPO1) ensure the plans require the following in regards to the movement network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Road design and construction costs in new residential areas to be met by developers;</li><li>- water sensitive urban design for roads and drainage;</li><li>- site responsive road design, including layout of roads to provide accessibility and connectivity, retention of road reserve, trees, surfaces and design that reduce future maintenance costs;</li><li>- provision of road infrastructure in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM);</li><li>- provision of recreation corridors and trails that provide connectivity throughout the town, offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors and utilise natural features as far as possible, such as waterways and natural drainage lines, and provision of a walking/ pedestrian trail along Hughes Creek between the Hume Freeway and Vearings Road.</li></ul>	Medium	Non-Statutory	Council	Moderate	Medium
A7	Prepare a suite of cross sections to be applied to existing and new development that reflects and enhances the character of the town.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Strategic Planning and Engineering	Low	Medium
A8	Prepare street tree planting guidelines that ensure the use of exotic and native species that will serve to contribute to Avenel's movement network character, biodiversity values and gateways. The Guidelines should complement the suite of cross sections.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Environment and Engineering	Low	Medium
A9	Implement the wayfinding and landscaping recommendations for the entrance to Avenel in accordance with the Streetscape Renewal Plan.	Medium	Non-Statutory	Engineering	High	Medium

