

DRAFT LAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



OVERVIEW

In March 2021, Council commenced the preparation of the Alpine Shire Land Development Strategy (LDS) to determine the level of population growth expected in Alpine Shire, and where it should be located, considering state and regional planning policy guidance, environmental values and risks, development and infrastructure constraints, planning for future housing and employment needs, and the views of the community.

Detailed background research informed the preparation of the Alpine Shire Land Development Strategy: Future Directions Paper Community Consultation Report in October 2022. The report and associated appendices presented the findings of this stage of research and were made available for the first round of community consultation. To assist in the pre-draft consultation process, a summary document entitled the Your Town, Your Future: Future Directions Paper was also prepared and subject to community consultation from October 2022 to February 2023. This background research and feedback from the community informed the draft Alpine Shire Land Development Strategy 2023 (draft LDS).

The draft LDS shows how the expected population growth will be accommodated in Alpine Shire for at least 15 years and up to 2041.

The draft LDS considers projected population growth, and future housing and employment needs. It particularly focuses on the four Service Towns (Bright, Mount Beauty-Tawonga South, Myrtleford and Porepunkah), which will accommodate the majority of the municipality's future growth. It acknowledges the constraints to growth including bushfire risk, flood prone land, and infrastructure and servicing needs. It also highlights the key trends that have shifted demand for housing, and identifies key actions and objectives to deliver planning outcomes that are respectful of the unique character, landscape and natural landscapes of Alpine Shire.

Overall, the draft LDS:

1. demonstrates to the Department of Transport and Planning how Alpine Shire will accommodate future housing and employment land consistent with community values;
2. identifies the future role and function settlements to guide future decision making for liveable places; and
3. provides the basis and scope for future structure planning in the four Service Towns to address neighbourhood character, encourage greater housing diversity and accommodate employment activities.

Figure 1 shows the current population and employment profile of Alpine Shire.

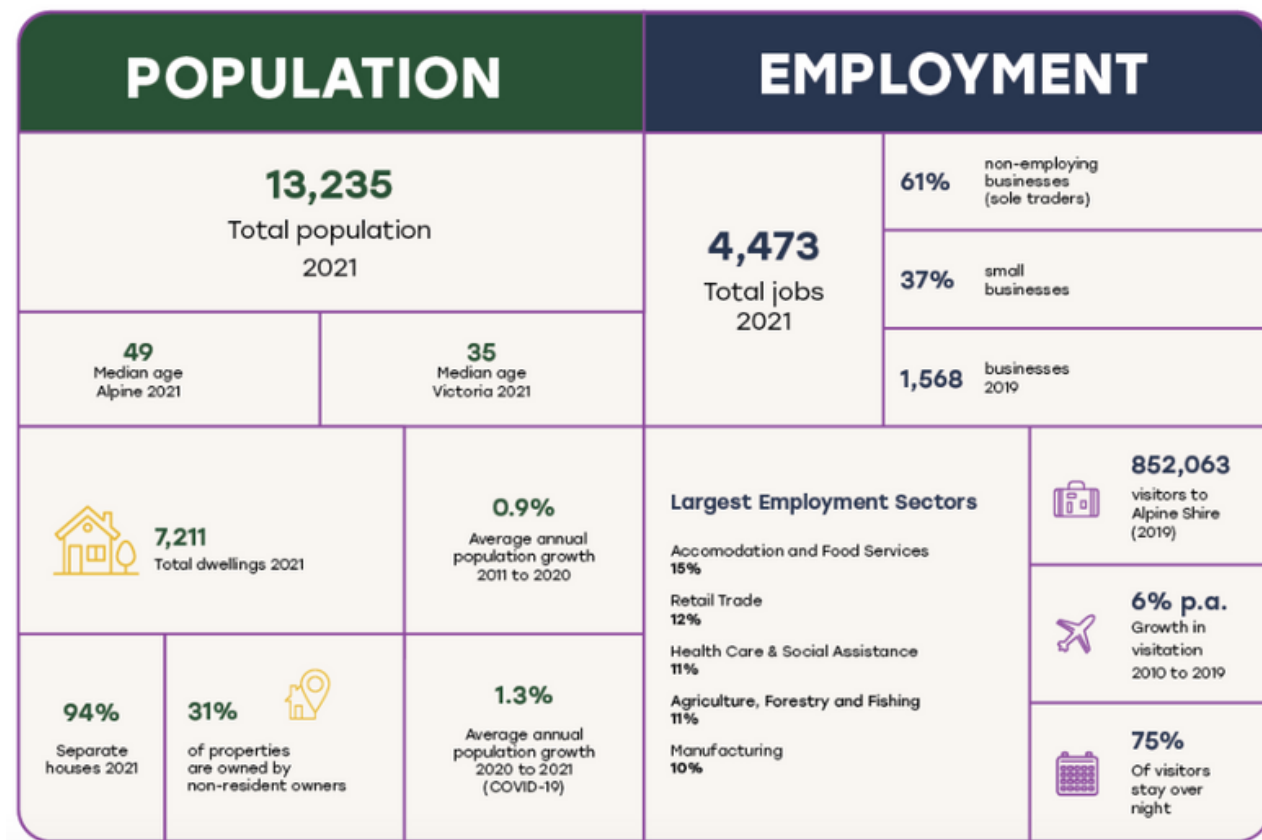


FIGURE 1: PROFILE OF ALPINE SHIRE IN 2021

FUTURE HOUSING - GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT

Housing Supply Constraints

Significant development constraints have in the past and are likely to continue to affect development within the Shire. These constraints include:

- Environmental risks that limit growth including steep topography, bushfire and flooding. These risks make development less achievable or more costly.
- Sewer, water and drainage infrastructure limiting growth capability.
- Landowner preference to retain larger blocks in urban areas.

Council will need to continue to strongly advocate for services, seek funding for infrastructure upgrades and complete further planning work to understand the improvements to amenity and community infrastructure needed to accommodate a growing population.

Housing Needs

Alpine Shire's population is growing, and its demographic profile is changing and becoming older. One of Council's responsibilities is to plan for this change to and manage it in an orderly way to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of communities, and preserve Alpine Shire's valued historic, cultural, and natural living landscape for future generations. This includes having a clear plan for where people will live, where they will access services, and how the local economy will prosper.

The draft LDS has used Victorian government data and economic modelling to understand the likely population growth, dwelling requirements and additional economic land that will be needed up to 2041. The analysis considers existing capacity of land already zoned for urban use, and opportunities for growth in greenfield areas adjacent to settlements.

The draft LDS establishes there is adequate land zoned for housing and employment land for the next 5-10 years. It is estimated that 1,266 new dwellings (or 77% of demand to 2041) can be accommodated in existing land zoned for urban use before further land will need to be released to accommodate the total 1,625 dwelling demand to 2041. The forecast dwelling total for urban areas of 1,625 over the next 20 years is consistent with past dwelling construction activity of about 79 dwellings a year between 2016 and 2021.

The assessment of expected future demand and the current capacity in each town between now and 2041 shows that:

- There is an undersupply of existing zoned land for residential development across Alpine Shire totalling 359 dwellings.
- The greatest share of future housing demand (34 per cent or 553 dwellings) is expected in Bright, where there is a shortfall in capacity of 104.
- There is capacity in Myrtleford and Mount Beauty-Tawonga South to meet expected demand.

- There is a shortfall in 'other' rural towns and settlements of 208, such as Wandiligong, Tawonga and Harrietville. These townships are highly constrained for future development due to landscape, environmental risks, and servicing. Further analysis of demand for housing in rural areas will be conducted through the preparation of a new Alpine Shire Rural Land Strategy.

TABLE 1: HOUSING DEMAND VS CAPACITY BY TOWN

Capacity Area	Expected % of housing growth to 2041	Demand to 2041	Capacity estimate	Difference at 2041
Bright	34%	553	448	-104
Porepunkah	16%	260	100	-160
Myrtleford	19%	309	330	21
Mount Beauty-Tawonga South	11%	179	270	92
Other	20%	325	117	-208
Total	100%	1625	1266	-359

2

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

The draft LDS provides estimates of land required to accommodate future employment growth. It shows that a modest future rezoning of land for trades and light industrial uses in each of the three main towns is needed.

There is greater potential for redevelopment and intensification of uses in commercial centres due to the higher value of land uses and the adaptability of floorspace in these locations. Therefore, the capacity gaps identified for 'local centre' uses are less pressing. Future employment is likely to be absorbed within the extent of existing Commercial 1 Zone areas without the need to rezone further land.

The draft LDS identifies 2.2 hectares of employment land will be required to meet future needs.

3 VISION & KEY DIRECTIONS

The Draft LDS establishes a Vision and Key Directions to guide the use and development of land for housing and employment in Alpine Shire until 2041.

The vision for future land uses in the Shire is:

In 2041, the diverse housing needs of our community will be met, while preserving the unique local character of our many towns and settlements. The Shire will be a thriving visitor destination, with diverse local industry, and a strong jobs, goods, and services offering. Growth and development will be managed in a way that recognises the significant natural values of the Shire, and the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

Underpinning the vision is a set of directions for land use and development which reflect Victorian Government policy and preferred local outcomes for the community. The directions provide the framing for objectives, strategies and actions of the LDS and will also be used to inform future decision-making regarding housing and employment outcomes. These key strategic directions are to:

- Avoid development in areas of **environmental and landscape significance** and at risk of **natural hazards** to preserve natural resources and protect human life.
- Direct future population and housing development in accordance with the defined **future roles of service towns, rural towns, small settlements** and rural localities.
- Prioritise the creation of **compact towns and settlements** to enable more efficient use of land and infrastructure.
- Improve the **diversity of housing** to provide greater choice for residents throughout all stages of life.
- Support diversification, prosperity, **sustainability, and innovation on employment land**.
- Support new development that contributes to the unique local **character of towns and settlements**.
- Deliver appropriate **utility, transport, and community infrastructure** when and where it is needed to support growth.

The draft LDS contains a detailed implementation plan in Chapter 8 that outlines the way in which each of the Key Directions will be delivered.

As well as these Key Directions, the draft LDS introduces a new Settlement Hierarchy for Alpine Shire, and Framework Plans for each of the four Service Towns to show how growth will be managed.

The draft LDS seeks to identify settlement futures and township descriptions for the Alpine Planning Scheme and to guide future decision-making for liveable places.

Constraints

The population growth projections have considered several scenarios with key assumptions for housing demand and existing zoned capacity for new dwellings. The draft LDS also looks at physical, servicing and planning constraints to development across the Shire to understand preferred locations for housing based on:

- Bushfire
- Flooding
- Topography and slope risk
- Existing infrastructure and capacity for necessary infrastructure upgrades
- Co-location to existing amenity
- Other location specific issues, as relevant.

These physical constraints and further work have helped form a basis of review of the current and future descriptions of each township.

The draft LDS recommends that the larger settlements with potential for growth will need to accommodate the bulk of the expected future population to support safe and sustainable patterns of growth. Bright, Myrtleford and Mount Beauty-Tawonga South are classified as ‘Service Towns’ and Porepunkah has been classified as an emerging ‘Service Town’. Service towns will accommodate the largest amount of future housing and employment growth.

There are four quite non-typical settlements in Alpine Shire that require unique planning approaches. These include Dinner Plain, Freeburgh, Ovens and Bogong Village. The draft LDS articulates their role and function in the settlement hierarchy.

The draft LDS also states that the Small Settlements and Rural Localities, are characterised by dispersed housing within primarily agricultural zoned areas. Preparation of an updated Rural Land Strategy is required to identify opportunities to support these settlements, recognising the need to balance consideration for protection of human life from natural hazards, safeguarding productive agricultural and other commercial uses, and broader economic and demographic trends and servicing constraints.

Table 2 shows the proposed Settlement Hierarchy and outlines the future role of each settlement in the Shire.

TABLE 2: PROPOSED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

SETTLEMENT TYPE	CURRENT ROLE	FUTURE ROLE
Service Towns: Bright Myrtleford Mount Beauty-Tawonga South Porepunkah (emerging)	Moderate to large towns containing commercial centres providing a variety of housing and a moderate employment base. Service Towns provide important community services. Service Towns are fully or partially serviced with reticulated services. Service Towns are popular visitor and retirement destinations. Porepunkah is identified as a small town in the current Alpine Planning Scheme which also notes it has significant capacity for residential, commercial and industrial growth, and has been identified as an emerging service town through the development of the LDS.	<p>Future growth: Service Towns are supported as the primary locations for future residential and employment growth, subject to assessment of environmental risk (bushfire, flooding, landslip) constraints.</p> <p>Zoning for residential and employment development: Further rezoning for residential and employment purposes is supported in Service Towns to provide for population growth. However, infill development in existing zoned areas will be prioritised to make best and most efficient use of land and infrastructure. This includes infill development in established areas via development of medium and higher density housing types (villa units, townhouses, apartments and shop top housing), as well as further subdivision and development of existing zoned greenfield land on the fringe areas of Service Towns. Detailed guidance on growth will be provided through the preparation of structure plans and urban design frameworks. The zoning of Porepunkah will be reviewed through the structure planning process with an expectation that appropriate residential, industrial and commercial zones will be applied to recognise its transition to a Service Town. Additional commercial activity will be consolidated in the existing commercial centre of the township along Station Street.</p> <p>Development and community infrastructure: Growth in Service Towns will be supported by the provision of required development and community infrastructure which will be prioritised for delivery in Service Towns above other settlements.</p>

SETTLEMENT TYPE	CURRENT ROLE	FUTURE ROLE
<p>Rural Towns Dederang Harrietville Tawonga Wandiligong</p> <p>Dinner Plain (seasonal tourist town)</p>	<p>Most of the Rural Towns have limited urban zoned land with a variety of zones being applied including Township Zone, Low Density Residential Zone and Farming Zone. They accommodate small populations. Rural Towns have limited commercial and community facilities which is generally dispersed throughout the towns. Harrietville, Wandiligong and Dinner Plain have reticulated water services, while Dinner Plain is the only Rural Town with reticulated sewerage. Dinner Plain is zoned Special Use Zone and does not have reticulated services.</p>	<p>Future growth: Only incremental population growth and housing and employment development is supported in Rural Towns within existing urban zoned areas. Further growth will be accommodated via infill development in established Rural Town areas, subject to assessment of environmental risk (bushfire, flooding, landslip) constraints.</p> <p>There are substantial opportunities for growth within the existing zoned but undeveloped land in Dinner Plain and residential, commercial, and industrial growth is supported to support the ongoing sustainability of the Dinner Plain community. Dinner Plain is very vulnerable to bushfire risk so any future development is subject to assessment of this risk.</p> <p>Zoning for residential development: Some Farming Zone land in Wandiligong is functioning as rural residential land and requires further review. This review has been identified as further strategic work. Apart from this, no further rezoning for residential purposes is supported within Rural Towns.</p> <p>In Dinner Plain, Council may consider converting the existing Special Use Zones to the underlying residential, industrial and commercial zones.</p>
<p>Small Settlements</p> <p>Freeburgh Ovens</p>	<p>Small Settlements represent areas of dispersed dwellings primarily on small lots within the Farming Zone. They function as quasi-rural residential areas with the pattern of residential development not reflecting the zoning and subdivision restrictions on the land. Small Settlements include very limited urban zoning, commercial activity, community facilities or reticulated services.</p>	<p>Future growth: Further expansion or subdivision is not supported in these locations, however the zoning of these settlements requires review to ensure the subdivision lot size reflects the pattern of rural living / dwellings that has been supported in these locations up until now. It is recognised the strategic significance of the Farming Zone land in these settlements is limited, with Freeburgh in particular being highly constrained. An updated Rural Land Use Strategy will guide development in these small settlements and rural districts.</p>

SETTLEMENT TYPE	CURRENT ROLE	FUTURE ROLE
Rural Localities Barwidgee Creek Buffalo River Buckland Valley Eurobin Gapsted Rosewhite Smoko	Rural localities are areas with dispersed dwellings on medium to large Farming Zone lots (and in Buffalo River, Rural Living Zone). The exception is Bogong Village which is zoned Special Use Zone. They have no retail activity, community facilities or reticulated services.	Future growth: Dwelling development that is not associated with the productive agricultural use of Farming Zone land is not supported in these locations due to risk to human life from natural hazards and impact on significant environmental landscapes and natural resources. Further expansion is not supported in these locations. An updated Rural Land Use Strategy will guide development in these small settlements and rural districts.
Bogong Village	Bogong Village has been functioning as a small settlement until recently, accommodating holiday houses and school camps and a general store. There are no reticulated services.	No future growth of Bogong Village is supported given the environmental risks (bushfire and erosion) and remoteness of the locality. Bogong Village does not form part of the Alpine settlement hierarchy.

The draft LDS contains framework plans for each of the four Service Towns. These framework plans will guide use and development in each of the Service Towns and will be inserted in the Alpine Planning Scheme once the LDS is finalised.

The draft LDS and these framework plans provide the basis and scope for future structure planning of the four Service Towns to accommodate the anticipated residential, commercial and industrial growth required, and to investigate and resolve whether the investigation areas identified on the Settlement Framework Plans for residential, commercial and industrial use should be rezoned. This process will also consider existing and preferred neighbourhood character, dwelling diversity, the infrastructure required to support any future residential or employment land and staging of development.

The following principles were applied when preparing the framework plans:

CURRENT DESIGNATION IN PLANNING SCHEME	RISK PROFILE FROM DRAFT LDS	INCLUDED AS INVESTIGATION AREA	INCLUDED IN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
Identified as investigation area	Limited risk	Yes	Yes
Identified as investigation area	High risk from bushfire or flooding or both	No	No
Not identified as investigation area	Limited risk	Yes	No

FIGURE 2:

BRIGHT & POREPUNKAH FRAMEWORK PLAN

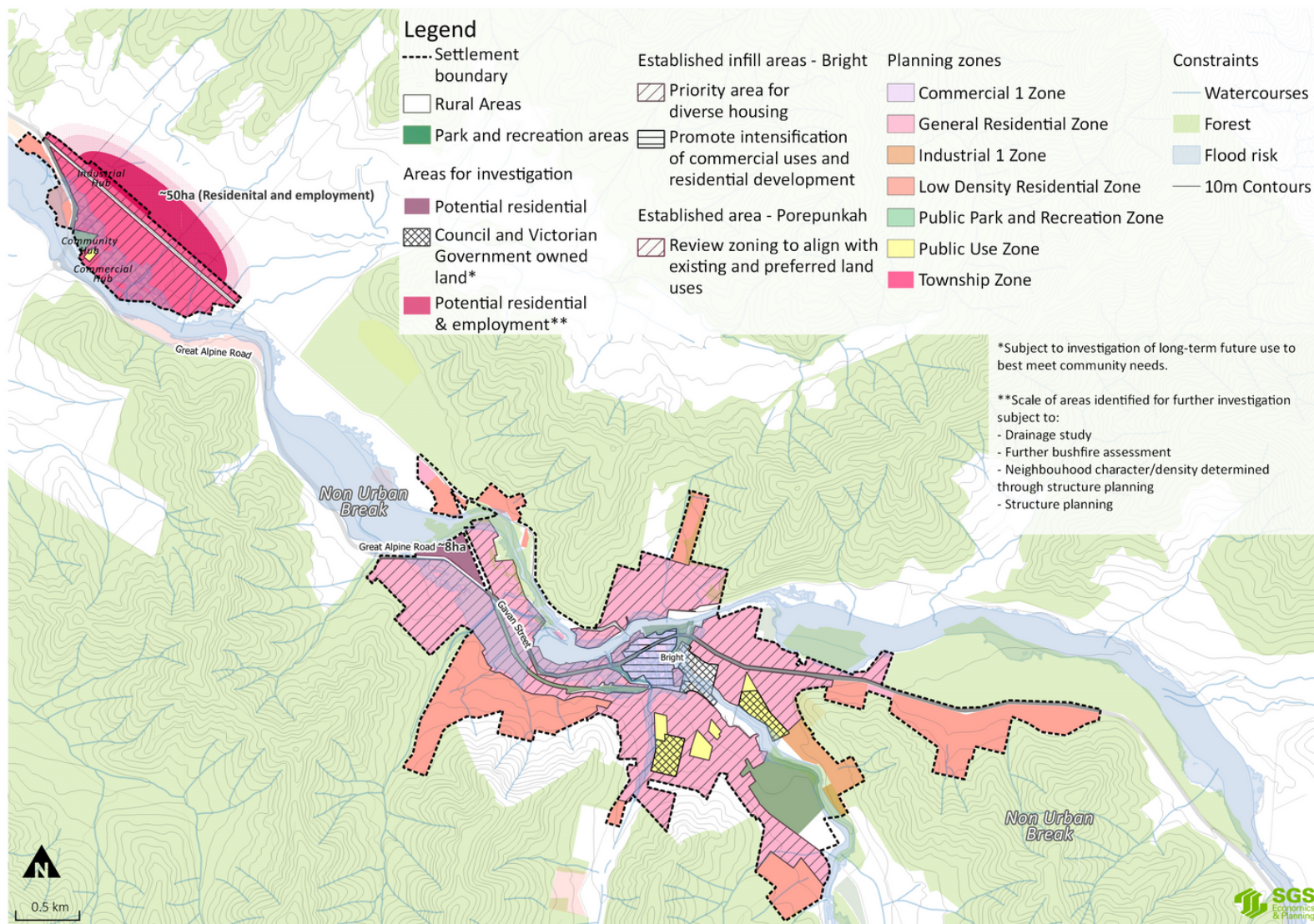
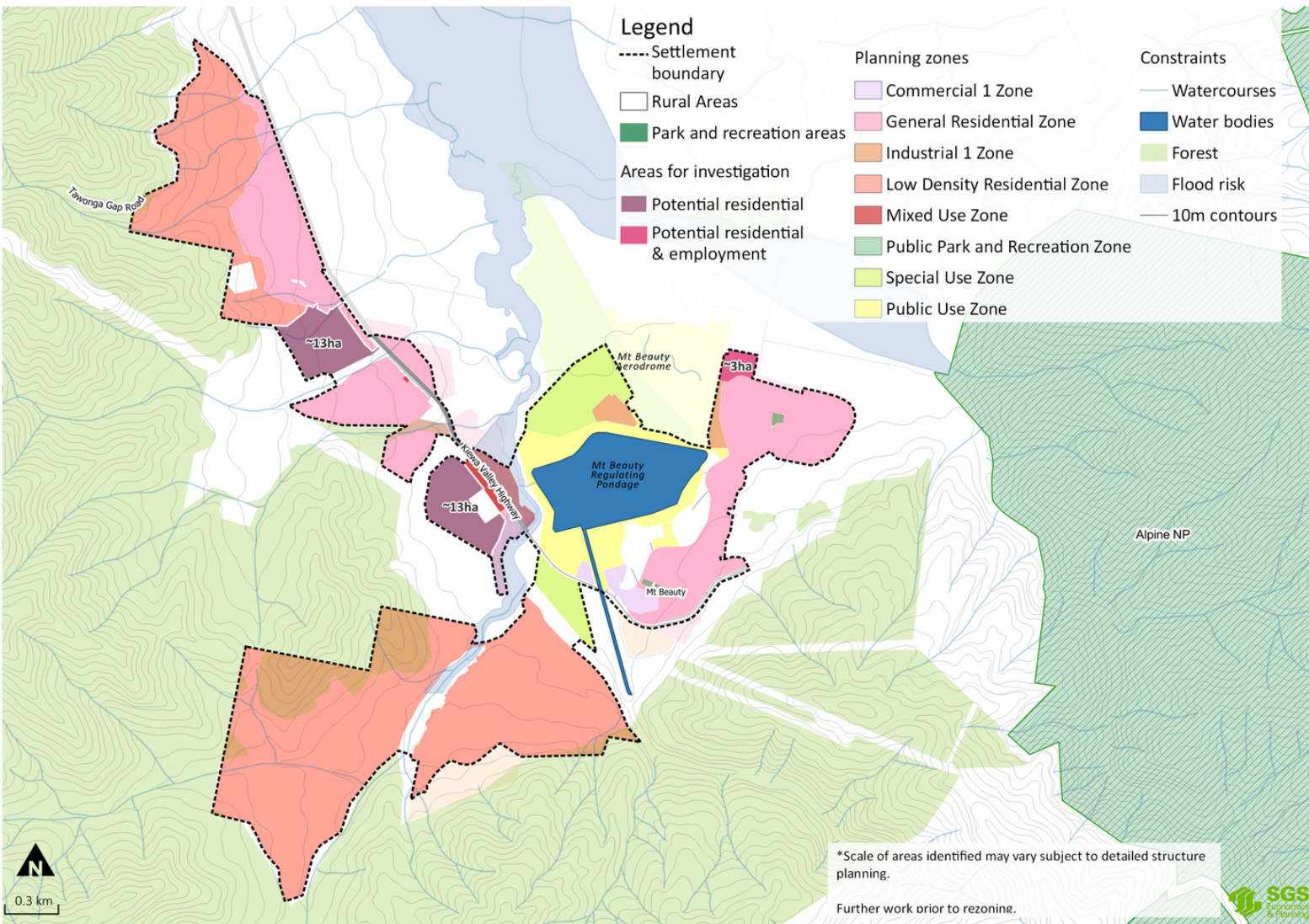
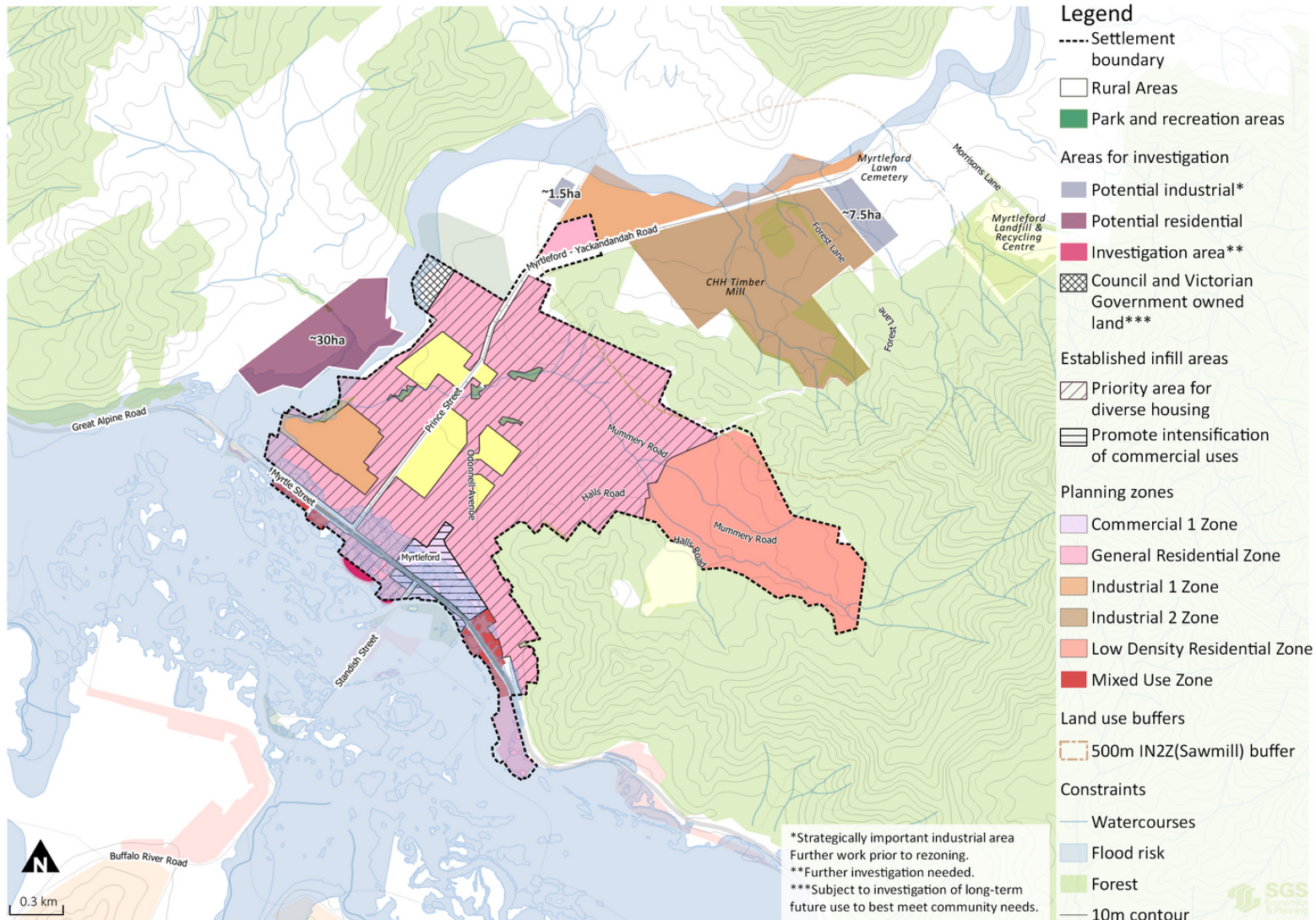


FIGURE 3:

MT BEAUTY TAWONGA SOUTH FRAMEWORK PLAN



**FIGURE 4:
MYRTLEFORD FRAMEWORK PLAN**



6

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Monitoring and Review

Given the draft LDS is based on assumptions and forecast modelling that is subject to changes in expected trends or development patterns, it is critical for any final strategy to be reviewed every 5 years. A program for review of the LDS and Implementation Plan will ensure ongoing alignment between Council budgets, resources and funding opportunities.

Further Strategic Work

A range of further strategic work is recommended in the draft LDS. The key pieces of work are:

- A planning scheme amendment to incorporate the seven Key Directions and include the Service Town framework plans in the Alpine Planning Scheme.
- Preparation of Structure Plans for the four Service Towns to resolve land use, development, character, and infrastructure challenges. The order of preparation of the structure plans will be prioritised based on the pressure currently being experienced, forecast growth, the level of community support for change and infrastructure availability.
- Preparation of a Rural Land Strategy to resolve the future planning directions for the smaller settlements and rural land in the municipality. This will focus on resolving complex planning issues in Wandiligong, Dinner Plain, Freeburgh and Ovens, where the planning controls don't reflect the current use of the land appropriately.
- Further strategic work in the form of structure planning or place planning development.

Next Steps

Following the completion of draft consultation, Council will consider the feedback from the community and referral authorities. The LDS will be finalised and Council will consider it for adoption at a Council Meeting.

If adopted by Council, the high-level directions contained within a final strategy will be progressed via an amendment to the Alpine Planning Scheme. The planning scheme amendment process includes a period of public exhibition, providing an additional opportunity for comment and submissions.

The remaining work program including structure planning for Service Towns and Rural Land Strategy will follow later as shown in Figure 5.

The Implementation Plan will be coordinated and reviewed against a broader strategic work program. Recommendations from future work may lead to further planning scheme amendments in the future.

FIGURE 5: PROJECT PROCESS

