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DRAFT Marong Township Structure Plan - For Community Engagement and Consultation
Summary

This document is the DRAFT Marong Township Structure Plan for Marong. This draft has been developed with extensive input from the community and relevant government agencies and departments. It provides a clear direction for the future growth of Marong township.

Overall direction
The long-term vision for Marong is a satellite township of 8,000 people built around a great community town centre and public space network.

The project so far
The first public consultation meetings were held in April 2016 and were well attended by the community. Attendees at these meetings helped to generate ideas that the project team could develop into principles and concepts. Online and paper surveys were made available for those who were unable to attend these meetings. The first round of public consultation also gathered a small group of 12 enthusiastic locals to form a Community Reference Group who would meet more frequently and receive more regular updates from the project team.

In July 2016, a Concept and Design workshop was held and an Issues and Opportunities Report was released for public comment which tested a series of key principles to guide the development of the Structure Plan. These were all received with broad support from the community.

The development of the Structure Plan was delayed in late 2016 for a number of reasons; the election of a new Council, finalisation of the Marong Business Park planning scheme amendment and clarification around major infrastructure which impacts and sets the framework for the town’s long term development.

Figure 1: Timeline
Figure 2: Draft Marong Township Structure Plan

Note: The planning of the Marong Township is based on the future development of a potential bypass to the north of the township boundary - the alignment of which is subject to extensive investigation.
Where to from here?
The draft Plan will be available for public comment for eight weeks until May 8 2017. After submissions have been received Council will review the comments, identify any changes that need to be made, and advise submitters and the community. A final draft Structure Plan will be prepared together with a proposed Development Contributions Plan. It is expected that these will be placed on public display about the end of August 2017. Council will adopt a final Plan and a planning scheme amendment will be prepared to assist in implementing the Plan. Refer to the timeline (page 5) for where we are in the process.

How you can have your say on this Draft Plan?
Community consultation sessions will be held to obtain feedback on the draft Structure Plan. These will be held at the Marong Community Hall (corner of High and Torrens Streets) on the following dates:
• Sunday 26 March 2017, 2-4pm
• Tuesday 28 March 2017, 7-8.30pm
• Sunday 30 April 2017, 2-4pm
A third community bulletin outlining the draft Structure Plan will be distributed to the project’s mailing list, the Marong Community Action Group, and in selected sites in the town during the display period.
An online and paper survey will be made available during this display period. These will be available through the Marong Community Action Group and online: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/MarongSP.
If you need a face to face – one to one meeting, please contact Council to arrange a time.
Submissions should be sent to Brendan Aikman in the Council’s Strategy Unit using one of the following methods:
• Email: b.aikman@bendigo.vic.gov.au
• Post: PO Box 733, Bendigo VIC 3552
• Phone: 5434 6287
Introduction

Township context

Marong is located on the western edge of the City of Greater Bendigo, approximately 13km from the centre of Bendigo. The original one-mile square township is centred at the intersection of the Calder, and Calder Alternate Highways. The town retains a number of important historic buildings, many with a civic and community function, such as the former Marong Shire offices. Marong has always served a larger catchment than the township itself, its various functions and services support the wider region of western Bendigo. The two highways together with the Wimmera Highway provide links to Bendigo, Melbourne and to the north west and west of the state. With the progressive development of the Calder Alternate Highway Marong has become a more important link in the development of the state’s highway network. The junction of these three highways severely compromises the role of the town centre because of high and growing volumes of traffic. Truck traffic particularly is compromising the functioning, amenity and safety of the town. The Bendigo to Inglewood broad gauge railway runs east-west through the centre of Marong, necessitating two major railway level crossings within the township. However, passenger and freight trains no longer travel on this section of the rail network. Marong’s rail station adjacent to the town centre has been decommissioned and demolished.

Bullock Creek, which flows from Ravenswood south east of Marong into the Pyramid Creek west of Leitchville near the Murray River traverses much of the town. It flows south-north and forms an important feature of the town. The reserve along Bullock Creek has contributed to the valuable network of public space in the town and has provided a habitat for the iconic large river red gums that create a sense of arrival into Marong. Areas surrounding the creek are subject to severe flooding. The setting of the township is generally flat, land

Figure 3: Location of Marong in the region
peaks to the east near Birchalls Road at 213m above sea level, falls to 188m where the Calder Highway and Bullock Creek intersect, and rises to 205m at the peak of Wilsons Hill to Marong’s west.

What is a Structure Plan?
A Structure Plan is a long-term plan which sets out the land uses and development of an area. It locates residential areas, places for retail and businesses, public spaces, sporting and recreation areas, transport, community facilities and supporting infrastructure. It also helps to ensure that a range of government agencies and service providers can coordinate their services and facilities and their development with the progressive growth of the town and an increasing population. In the case of Marong, the Structure Plan will guide the development of the township to provide for an eventual population of about 8,000 people. The Structure Plan will be linked to a Development Contributions Plan – a document that sets out the facilities that needed to be provided as the town develops that will be progressively paid for by a levy on new development. The final Structure Plan and Development Contributions Plan will become part of the City’s Planning Scheme and will therefore be the basis for decision-making by the City of Greater Bendigo.

The development of Marong within the context of planning for Greater Bendigo
The City of Greater Bendigo continues to develop a suite of integrated planning strategies that provide a framework for Greater Bendigo to become a more sustainable and liveable community. These include; Connecting Greater Bendigo – Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy, Greater Bendigo Residential Strategy, Commercial Land and Activity Centres Strategy and the Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan. Enhancing the quality of the various urban environments across the City is a major component of these strategies. A number of planning projects have been developed for the City’s activity centres and growing communities to deliver ‘place-based’ action plans and initiatives to help guide the development of land use, public space, buildings and urban landscapes.

Planning for the development of Marong
Recent long-term planning for Marong began in 2005 when Council adopted the first Bendigo Residential Development Strategy. It recommended the future growth of Marong as a satellite township to accommodate 8,000 people. The Strategy recommended that the growth of Marong start from 2016; however, by 2010 there was already a strong demand for housing within the existing township area. To outline priorities for the community, to address the immediate demand and to investigate potential growth areas, a Marong Plan was prepared and adopted by Council in 2011. The Marong Plan recommended that the development of a Structure Plan and the consequential land rezoning were medium priorities.

Since 2011, a number of residential subdivisions have been approved and developed in the Marong Township. The town’s population has increased from approximately 300 at the 2011 census to an
estimated current population of 900. For a profile of the town's current population we will need to await the results of the 2016 census which are expected in mid-2017. This population growth will continue as the 139 lot ‘Marong Links’ residential subdivision nears full development, the 226 lot ‘Discover Marong’ estate is currently selling lots in its first stage, and the 81 lot ‘Marong Run’ extension is due to start development within the next two years. As part of the approval of ‘Discover Marong’, the developer contributed to funding upgrades of the adjacent Malone Park. The management responsibilities of Malone Park have now been transferred to the City of Greater Bendigo, this is providing for the further development of the facility and provision for a higher level of maintenance.

**Why do we need a Structure Plan?**

It is important to plan for rapidly growing towns such as Marong. Marong’s growth is expected to continue as many people are drawn to the area's rural setting and lifestyle yet close proximity to Bendigo. The structure planning process takes into account a range of factors and provides for policies and plans to be formed in collaboration with the community and relevant stakeholders.

A Structure Plan is required to provide a strategic justification to amend the planning scheme and apply state-wide planning tools such as zones and overlays which provide for and support certain land uses and forms of development in specified areas and locations. While providing for growth and investment by the landowners, the Structure Plan also sets out the City of Greater Bendigo’s commitment to the area. A Structure Plan supports an advocacy role to attract additional funding for larger infrastructure projects that are provided by state departments and agencies, and it includes a Development Contributions Plan to fund facilities as the population grows, rather than being provided several years after residential growth.

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*DRAFT Marong Township Structure Plan - For Community Engagement and Consultation*
1. Marong Structure Plan - currently in preparation: 8000 people
2. Marong Business Park Site and Development Contributions Plan
4. Maiden Gully Main Street - Urban Design Framework to be prepared 2017
5. Eaglehawk Railway Station Master Plan - completed
6. Forest Park Residential Development - approved 1350 lots
7. Proposed Maiden Gully North West Structure Plan Area

Figure 5: Marong North West Development Precinct
Strategic context for Marong and the Marong Business Park

The proposed development of the Marong Business Park is a separate process from the Marong Structure Plan. The development of the Marong Business Park will have implications for the development of Marong Township, western Bendigo and the north west of the State.

Located on the regional transport routes of the Calder Highway and existing railway, the Marong Business Park is strategically positioned to serve Greater Bendigo and the wider region.

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan identified Marong as a future employment hub, with the Marong Business Park being a key new location for industry and business.

The site is also identified in Council Strategies including the Rural Areas Strategy and the Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy (ITLUS).

The Bendigo North West urban development precinct map on the previous page identifies the Marong Township in a wider context.

Marong Township study area

The study area embraces the existing township and the surrounding area. The approach adopted has been to examine the traditional township area as the first stage in the development of the town. The area around the traditional township has been assessed to determine which areas are capable of and best located to support the longer term development of the township. The assessed areas that are best located for longer term development have been designated as stage two. Stage One is based on the original survey of a one-mile square survey of a grid of streets. The feature of this plan is the wide road reserve of High Street running north south through the town. The alignment of the Calder Alternate Highway has subsumed this as a township feature south of the railway line. The area which can be described as ‘the original township’ is bounded by; Landry Lane to the west, the Wimmera Highway / Salverezza Road to the South, Hills Road / Fletchers Creek Road to the east and Bullock and Fletcher Creek to the north. The traditional township area will, at current rates of growth, be able to provide for 8-10 years of residential growth. In total it is estimated that when fully developed the original township area will accommodate about 3,000 – 3,500 people. To provide for a township of 8,000 people the township area will need to expand.
In nominating areas for expansion, planning has taken into account the following features of the wider study area. Future residential expansion of the town is limited by:

• The buffer distance from a major broiler farm to the west of the Township
• Provision for a proposed Calder Alternative Highway bypass to the west of the township. VicRoads has identified a proposed investigation corridor for a Western Bypass of the Township by the Calder Alternate Highway. They have indicated that the exact alignment would be subject to further detailed investigation. It would not be appropriate to allow development to ‘leap frog’ this road to the west or south west.
• Land west of Landry Lane is generally poorly drained and preliminary investigations indicate that substantial works would be required to enable it to be suitable for residential development
• The location of the south east corner of the proposed Marong Business Park and the need to maintain buffer distances to residential development
• Land to the north and south east of the Township is fairly heavily forested with native vegetation
• Coliban Water has identified that the 195 metre contour to the south east and east of the Township currently provides a ‘pressure constraint’ on the provision of reticulated water
• Substantial areas through the township along Bullock and Fletchers Creeks are subject to flooding as identified by the North Central Catchment Management Authority
• To cater for increasing transport demand to service growth in Marong including the development of the Marong Business Park, consideration will need to be given to significant capacity improvements to the Calder Highway. It is understood that any capacity improvements to the Calder Highway through the town centre will have significant property and amenity impacts.

Accordingly, planning will need to consider a Calder Highway bypass to the north of the township boundary. The initial suggestion is that the starting point of this road to the west of the Township be at the same point where the proposed western bypass of the Calder Alternate Highway would join the Calder Highway - close to the south east corner of the proposed Marong Business Park. Substantial further investigation will need to be undertaken by VicRoads in conjunction with the City of Greater Bendigo and other relevant bodies to determine a northern bypass route alignment and where it would link back to the Calder Highway to the east of Marong Township.

Taking these constraints into account the long term development of the town also seeks to capitalise on a range of opportunities:

• The original layout of the town featuring the wide road reserve of High Street is integral to how Marong should progressively develop
• The prospect that the town could be bypassed to the west and north – keeping all through traffic out of the town centre and along the alignments of the Calder and Calder Alternate Highways provides a major opportunity to provide a safer, much more community focused town centre
• The town centre, the four-way intersection, the wide boulevard which is High Street, and the relationship with Bullock Creek and Malone Park as an integrated concept is transformational in shaping the way that the Town can develop
• Combine those elements with the renewal of passenger rail and Marong township has all the prospects of becoming one of the most liveable township environments in the City of Greater Bendigo.

Taking into account all these features it is proposed that the township area will progressively extend east towards the 195m contour level, then to the 200m contour level which aligns with the Lockwood-Marong Channel. The maximum extent of the eastern growth front.
will be to Birchalls Road. Land north of the Calder Highway has been identified as a potential low density growth area due to fragmented ownership as well as current and potential future barriers created by transport infrastructure. The extent of growth to the south of the township will be dictated by the alignment of the proposed western bypass. It is expected that conventional residential growth will not extend further south than about one kilometre from the southern boundary of the original township.

Vision

The long-term vision for Marong is a satellite township of 8,000 people built around a great community town centre and civic focus with a railway station and an outstanding public space network.

Marong has the potential to progressively develop a vibrant community based town centre. The township has the structure to be a highly liveable place to live. The layout of the town centre and close proximity to the railway, the extensive public space network, the relatively flat landscape, and the short distance to Bendigo all contribute to its clear potential. The vision is that Marong can raise the bar for townships that are growing and can progressively develop as a benchmark for well-planned country towns.

To assist in achieving this vision, more specific elements have been developed in the progressive engagement with the community in the development of the Structure Plan. Through online and paper surveys and face to face meetings broad support for various ideas and concepts was established. The Marong community want to create a township that:

- Respects and protects existing environmental features, in particular the Bullock Creek frontage, the river red gums and other native vegetation and the palm trees
- Creates a strong sense of place derived from its distinctive buildings, trees and semi-rural setting
- Creates a healthy place to live, where all residents are well connected with each other and the Town Centre
- Strengthens the concept of Marong as a ‘village’ with the Town Centre as the focus of community life
- Creates a more diverse range of housing in locations close to the Town Centre so as to provide particularly for aged person housing and in other places that are well served by the public transport network, walking and cycling paths and public space
- Maintains the character of Marong as a semi-rural township
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by providing safe, attractive and convenient walking and cycling paths that make active travel a viable method of moving between neighbourhoods and the Town Centre
- Establishes sustainable housing designs and creates smaller carbon footprints
- Attracts a broad mix of people from different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds through the provision of a wide range of housing, community services and recreational opportunities
- Offers a wider range of services and employment opportunities, concentrated within the Town Centre and with employment in the Marong Business Park
- Enhances community safety through the design of buildings, public spaces and the structure of new residential areas
- Creates a resilient community that is able to adapt to changes in climate and changes in the cost and availability of energy and water resources
Objectives
The draft Structure Plan seeks to provide an effective framework for Marong to sustainably grow as a town towards an ultimate population of 8,000 people. The final Structure Plan will facilitate the development of Marong by providing:

• Sufficient land for residential development to accommodate a population of about 8,000 people
• The provision of more commercial land to support the growing population
• Efficient movement and access in and around the town for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and motorists
• The provision of new and upgraded infrastructure to support a town of 8,000 people
• Plans for the public space network, including Bullock and Fletcher Creeks by using public land and land subject to flooding
• The desired appearance of the town centre and residential areas
• Appropriate housing densities in various areas
• The provision of a range of community facilities that can support the growing population
• The response to the surrounding natural environment
• The protection of historical elements within the township
Established guiding principles

Informed by the Community Reference Group and adjusted in the design workshop in June 2016, a set of key guiding principles were established. Throughout the development of the Structure Plan, it has been helpful separating the principles into three themes: Overall Framework for Planning Marong, Key Defining Elements to be Retained and Enhanced, and Detailed Elements. These principles are illustrated in the following section.

Key directions

These principles have formed the basis of discussion with a range of departments and agencies, and various emerging decisions and concepts that are framing the role and progressive development of the township. As a result, the Structure Plan is now able to confidently plan for:

- Western and northern bypasses around the township to reduce the large amount of through traffic in the town centre. VicRoads are now undertaking preliminary planning. Note: determining the alignment of these two proposed bypasses will be subject to extensive investigation and justification. A major process working with the community will need to be undertaken. Any proposed alignments will be subject to a full community consultation process.
- A town of 8,000 people. Coliban Water have now factored this projection into their planning for the area.
- A reopened railway station in the town centre, an ungraded railway line able to carry passengers from Marong to Eaglehawk, and the construction of a new railway bridge over Bullock Creek. V/Line has factored this into their long term planning.

The trees of Marong, particularly the river red gums and mature palms along Bullock Creek at the Eastern entry, frame the town and provide a strong defining element.

The buildings of heritage significance throughout the town are important and need to be retained. They tell the story of the history and development of Marong.

Bullock and Fletcher Creeks represent a highly valued natural environment. They frame much of the town, provide great potential for public space corridors, walking and cycling tracks and community use.

Land impacted by the agreed 1 in 100 year flood event should not be developed for residential or other sensitive uses.

Infrastructure including water and sewer, walking and cycling paths, public space, recreation facilities and community facilities should be upgraded appropriately as further growth occurs.

Ensure that sufficient land is set aside for major future community and commercial needs such as schools, retail and commercial uses, local employment and emergency services.

Ensure that the Council and relevant departments and agencies work in partnership with the community to plan and manage the growth and development of Marong.

Facilitate planned growth while retaining and where possible reinforcing the rural feel of Marong.

Plan for the growth and development of Marong so it doesn't impact on the surrounding farmland and farming operations through a collaborative approach.

Overall Framework for Planning Marong
Development of the Structure Plan

The future development of the Marong Business Park, which will become a major employment precinct for the area and the wider region. The City of Greater Bendigo has adopted the planning scheme amendment and has submitted this to the Minister for Planning for approval.

The character of Marong

Most people involved with the first round of community consultation agreed that the character of Marong could be described as a rural or semi-rural village or town. While there were various descriptions for the character of the town, over 85% of survey respondents stated that they liked the character of Marong. There are several elements that contribute to the iconic character of the town:

- The various heritage buildings scattered throughout the town, providing a visual commentary of the history of the area. These include the former Shire Hall, various churches, the original school building and a number of houses in the area.
- The large river red gums that line Bullock Creek create an iconic entrance to the town, as well as the palm trees on Adams and High Streets which mark the town centre. These not only contribute to an attractive streetscape but tell a story of the town’s response to World War One.
- The unique public space network that is formed with the spine of Bullock Creek which flows northwards and is met with Fletcher Creek at the town’s northern edge.
- Malone Park and the Marong Golf Course are major features of the town, providing large amounts of community space and for various sporting facilities and activities.
- High Street, as a 60 metre wide boulevard contributes to the public space network of the town as well as providing space for established palms and eucalypts. The street provides a sense of openness within the town centre.

Through extensive community engagement, there is extensive support for the Structure Plan to maintain and enhance these elements as the town grows into the future.
Marong Town Centre

Opportunities and constraints

The layout of the town centre provides enormous potential for the future planning of the town. The four main corners are a defining element of the town centre, with the Marong Hotel, the former Shire Offices (now used for community purposes), the former railway station site, and a large vacant area previously occupied by a garage/service station. The focal point of the township would be substantially enhanced by reinstating the railway station and the provision of more commercial facilities.

Wide road reserves provide the opportunity to extend footpaths, plazas, and parkland, and provide high quality walking and cycling paths. However, given that this is currently where the Calder and Calder Alternate Highways meet, it is currently dominated by a large volume of traffic including trucks creating an unsafe and noisy environment for all road users, including pedestrians trying to cross the road.

Acknowledging that with population growth traffic will increase at this intersection, a collaborative effort has been pursued with VicRoads to address this issue. VicRoads has completed work that has concluded that widening the highways through the centre of Marong is not possible with the available road reserve. Widening would have a serious negative impact on the town centre. As a result, VicRoads have identified the need to consider the development of western and northern bypasses to be planned for to address this issue.

When constructed this will remove through traffic from the centre of Marong, including trucks. Once completed, the existing roads can be planned and developed to respond to the reduced traffic, which will allow for safer intersections and a more favourable environment for the provision of pedestrian crossings, widened footpaths, and green space.

Future planning of these bypasses will be coordinated by VicRoads with input from the City of Greater Bendigo and the community. Determining the final alignments will be subject to extensive planning studies and community engagement and consultation.

Marong’s key sites for public space are in close proximity to the town centre and the Primary School. Bullock Creek, Malone Park, and the golf course are all within walking distance; however, few connections for pedestrians are made to these areas. A strong opportunity presents itself to create an attractive walkway from the town centre to Bullock Creek along the Calder Highway, with a shared path along the creek and under the highway to link these key sites together. While there are no plans or proposals to support this idea, one possible idea is to consider whether the golf course could be relocated and the land made available for residential development. Part of the golf course is provided on the eastern side of the Calder Alternate Highway. There is no proposal to do so but the concept has been raised in community consultation.

Opportunities have arisen for development of a number of sites in and around the town centre to develop housing to accommodate an ageing community. Sites present themselves at various locations in and around the town centre to develop housing to accommodate an ageing community. Sites present themselves at various locations in and around the town centre to enable a series of housing choices based on in-fill opportunities which would assist in creating a livelier and more vibrant town centre.
### Key Features

- Historic structure
- Wide road reserve as town core
- Community facilities accessible to public
- Space spine on Bullock Creek
- Existing redevelopment sites
- Strong exotic tree planting theme
- Key heritage building
- Existing (unused) railway line to Bendigo
- Well connected self-sufficient satellite township
- Bullock Creek - public space and tree corridor

**Figure 9: Existing key features of the Marong Town Centre and surrounds**
Marong Town Centre

Vacant land in Town Centre
Highway with truck route creates a barrier
Railway line forms a barrier
Dispersed community facilities
Intersection too wide and not pedestrian friendly
Low walkability in the Town Centre because of traffic
Isolated neighbourhoods with low quality public space
Vegetated median used for car parking
School short of space and lack of access

Figure 10: Existing opportunities in the Marong Town Centre
Figure 11: Proposed Design Framework for the Marong Town Centre
Key directions

- Support the development of western and northern road bypasses of Marong because they will remove through traffic and improve town amenity
- Support the reinstatement of the Marong railway station and passenger services, with the opportunity for passenger services to be extended to Bridgewater and Inglewood
- Plan for the appropriate provision of commercial facilities in line with the forecast floor areas set out in the Council adopted Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy 2015
- Commercial buildings should have no setbacks from the road reserve, provide weather protection to footpaths with verandas, and with buildings being no higher than ten metres
- The development of the building on the north-western corner of High and Adams Streets should include an identifying feature that contributes positively to Marong's character
- Encourage on-street dining and trading
- Undertake significant works to the streetscape by reducing unnecessary road width, provide pedestrian crossings, plazas and green space in High Street
- Car parking should be located at the rear of commercial and community buildings
- Encourage housing choice and diversity close to the town centre
Figure 14: Artist’s vision of a possible future Marong Town Centre, looking north
Residential Development

Opportunities and constraints - original township

There is still sufficient land in the Marong Township to cater for 8-10 years of residential growth. As of February 2017, 307 new lots are approved for subdivision with the first stage of development selling currently. Once completed, it is expected that these new lots will house about 770 to 920 additional people based on 2.5 to 3 people per household. As well as these new lots, there is further land available within the original township that can be developed for residential areas. A key site for residential development is the land directly north-west of the former railway station site, 1427-1433 Calder Highway. This vacant 5.5 hectare land parcel is currently zoned Industrial 3, which it is assessed will not be needed as the Marong Business Park is developed. Given the close proximity to the town centre and future transport nodes, this site should be identified as land appropriate for housing development providing for housing choice including potential aged and affordable options. All these areas of land within the township area together with other smaller infill sites can provide for a total population within the original township of up to 3,500 people.

Some land within the original township is unsuitable for residential development due to flooding. Land directly west of the Allies Road-Calder Highway intersection is subject to flooding in significant rain events. Problems associated with drainage issues have already occurred in recent subdivisions in Marong. Areas subject to flooding and drainage issues are indicative only. Flooding issues are based on the January 2011 flood event and are not based on robust flood modelling. Comprehensive investigation of drainage issues and flood modelling will be required as part of the development of planning scheme provisions.

Opportunities and constraints - future growth areas

A range of opportunities have been investigated for expansion of the township boundaries. The Marong Plan (2011) planned for expansion to the east, west and south of the original township.

Land directly west of Landry Lane on the original township’s western boundary suffers from drainage issues that present difficulties for residential development. Some of this land west of the original township will also be subject to buffer distances from a nearby broiler farm in Wilsons Hill, which effectively limits any new housing within the...
buffer distance of the site. Buffer distances for residential development from the planned Marong Business Park, north-west of the township will also need to be considered.

Land north of the original township is bounded by Bullock and Fletcher Creeks, which already creates an attractive edge to the township. Further development north of the creeks is constrained by flood prone land, forests, the Marong Rifle Range, and a potential alignment of the northern bypass road. The limited opportunities in this area would create isolated neighbourhoods; zoning of more land for residential development should therefore be discouraged.

During the early stages of consultation, the community were clear in their desire to keep a rural break between Marong and Maiden Gully so as to reinforce the identity of the township separate to Maiden Gully. While developing to the east of the original township will reduce this rural break, there are other constraints that will reinforce this break. There are small sections of forest west of Maiden Gully, transport infrastructure, fragmented ownership, and the rise in altitude to the east all reinforce this. Coliban Water has outlined that issues will arise with water pressure when constructing new houses above the 195m contour line. Water pressure issues will also form an ultimate growth boundary to the east.

Parts of the land south of the original township will be constrained with the proposed alignment of the western bypass, some areas of flood prone land along Bullock Creek, and forests. Despite these constraints, there will be sufficient land to rezone to create attractive neighbourhoods. The area’s interface with the various public space sites will create unique opportunities for new residential developments, such as a range of housing choice where appropriate.

**Desired development**

Land calculations for accommodating a projected population have been based on the precedent in residential density that has been set from recent subdivisions in Marong. These have been between 8-10 dwellings per hectare. These subdivisions have very little diversity in lot sizes and housing choice which has resulted in over 90% of the lots sized between 650-800m². A greater diversity in lot sizes can deliver housing opportunities that cater for the community’s diverse needs, an ageing population in many cases looking for smaller – low maintenance properties. For Marong to be a liveable community sufficient variety of housing needs to be provided so that a person who has lived in the community for many years and wants to retire onto a

*Increase residential opportunities for areas interfacing with the golf course and Bullock Creek*

![Figure 16: Sketch showing how densities can be increased](image-url)
smaller low maintenance lot can find one in the township – preferably close to the town centre. Provision for these opportunities can still be made and maintain the current average lot sizes of 10 dwellings per hectare.

Lower density residential areas should be planned for within the town’s ultimate boundaries, where land is already highly fragmented due to multiple ownerships and road and rail infrastructure.

Higher density residential development areas that provide for choice (e.g. supporting people who wish to retire on a small compact, low maintenance lot need to be provided for) should be planned in areas that interface safely with Bullock Creek, Malone Park, the public space corridors and networks, the town centre and the planned railway station.

Movement

New residential subdivisions should provide sufficient walking and cycling connections to public space, particularly Bullock Creek, as the major spine of public space in the town, as well as Malone Park and the town centre. All new subdivisions should provide footpaths on both sides of the street.

Street layouts in new development areas should avoid dead-ends and cul-de-sacs where possible. Dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs should include a walkway to provide connections for pedestrians and cyclists.

Key directions

- Provide for new residential development within the original township
- Progressively rezone segments of land that provide for the expansion of the township area, outside the original township area, on the basis of detailed precinct planning
- Encourage an appropriate mix of housing choice in suitable areas, whilst aiming to achieve an overall density of at least ten dwellings per hectare
- Ensure new subdivisions connect well with the public space network of the town
- Apply an Urban Growth Boundary surrounding the ultimate growth areas of Marong township

Figure 17: Sketch showing new neighbourhoods connecting to Bullock Creek
Figure 18: Potential Public Space Connections

Figure 19: Major Forest/Vegetated areas on the periphery
Figure 20: Planned and proposed infrastructure constraints

- Existing Wimmera Highway
- Proposed alignment of the Western Bypass - subject to detailed investigation by VicRoads
- Calder and Calder Alternate Highway alignments in Marong Township
- Existing unused railway line
- Location of proposed Marong Business Park
- 1k radius from the intensive animal industry

Note: The planning of the Marong Township is based on the future development of a potential bypass to the north of the township boundary - the alignment of which is subject to extensive investigation.
DRAFT Marong Township Structure Plan - For Community Engagement and Consultation

**Figure 22: Future proposed expansion area for Township (Stage 2)**
- Proposed future expansion area
- Proposed future low density area - subject to detailed planning

**Figure 23: Future proposed development areas**
- Planned development areas (Stage 1)
- Proposed area for development (Stage 1)
- Proposed future areas for development (Stage 2)
Draft Marong Township Structure Plan
This plan is prepared to provide the long term framework for the development of the Marong Township. The next stage in the development of the Structure Plan will provide greater detail in the proposed precincts and link planned growth to a Development Contributions Plan.
Figure 24: Draft Marong Township Structure Plan

Note: The planning of the Marong Township is based on the future development of a potential bypass to the north of the township boundary - the alignment of which is subject to extensive investigation.
## Community Facilities

### Future needs

Based on the requirements of planning for growth areas, the table below sets out minimum land requirements for community facilities for a future population of 8,000, with an additional catchment of 2,000 people in the wider area served by Marong Township. The following table and commentary sets out the range and type of facilities, some or most of which should be funded through a Development Contributions Plan.

*Note: this table is based on a general requirement for a planned growth area catering for an ultimate population 10,000 people. No commitments to provide these facilities have yet been made and their provision will be subject to future planning and development.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Infrastructure Item</th>
<th>Usual recommended provision of infrastructure</th>
<th>Usual land requirement in hectares</th>
<th>Current land provision in hectares</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-purpose community centre, including youth space/facility and community arts space</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>The current 0.6ha allotment contains redundant tennis courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school/3 year old activity group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>Currently shares land with the Marong Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgroups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 playgroup currently meets once per week on Tuesdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Closest Childcare Centre is in Maiden Gully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government primary school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Shares land with pre-school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local parks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>The majority of existing local parks are of a ‘poor’ quality, usually with no features or facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood sports facility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>The current provision for this category includes the trotting track and includes a junior oval at Malone Park. An upgrade of this facility is required consistent with the Malone Park Masterplan 2006.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community centre
The Marong Community Hall and Neighbourhood House currently occupy approximately 6,000m²; however, half of this land is occupied by tennis courts that are no longer in use after the construction of multi-purpose courts at Malone Park. This potential additional land opens the opportunity to extend the community centre and build on the popular community facility.

Education
At this stage in the Structure Plan process, the State Department of Education and Training has outlined that they have no plans for an additional school in Marong. Council will undertake future discussions with the Department regarding the future planning of school facilities. The Catholic Education Office has advised the City of Greater Bendigo that there are no plans for a Catholic Primary School in Marong given the developing Marist Brothers P-12 College in Maiden Gully.

Open space and recreation facilities
Malone Park is undergoing a staged upgrade consistent with the Malone Park Masterplan 2006. It contains an upgraded junior oval and a dressage arena within the existing trotting track. When fully upgraded, Malone Park should provide sufficient space for sporting purposes. If there is a future school developed in the expanded township area it should include a shared sporting facility to further contribute to the network.

While Malone Park and the Marong Golf Course are features of the open space network, the town lacks adequate passive recreation space. There are very few local parks, and the majority of these spaces contain no user-friendly features, such as shade including trees, play equipment, seating, or pathways. Future parks should contain these user-friendly features and be in-line with the direction of the City’s developing Public Space Plan.

Upgrading streamside areas of Bullock Creek has been strongly emphasised by the community; clearing weeds from the area, providing a shared path to follow the creek and an underpass of the Calder Highway. This aligns with the principles of the Structure Plan and other strategies adopted by Council, such as the Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy.

Figure 25: Existing Community facilities to be taken into account with the development of the DCP
Development contributions
As new developments, particularly major subdivisions, are assessed by the City of Greater Bendigo, there is the capacity for the requirement of developers to fund major infrastructure projects. This must be established through a Development Contributions Plan incorporated in the Planning Scheme. This is to ensure that additional community infrastructure that is required as the population grows is provided in a timely manner.

The Development Contributions Plan (DCP) which is being developed provides the capacity for a series of infrastructure priorities across the township to be built to support new residential development. It can include community facilities and transport infrastructure such as an upgraded intersection. The DCP cannot be prepared until the Structure Plan is fully drafted, as the direction and scale of future growth must be clear. A major task in refining the Structure Plan further will be to detail the Development Contributions Plan. This will be undertaken with further community input.

Key Directions
• Continue engaging with the Department of Education and Training while monitoring the capacity of the Marong Primary School
• Progressively develop the public space, walking and cycling capacity of Bullock and Fletcher Creeks and provide a shared path along Bullock Creek, including an underpass at the Calder Highway
• Continue to implement the Malone Park Masterplan 2006
• Ensure high quality local parks are provided as part of developers’ open space contributions
• Remove the redundant tennis courts and provide additional facilities to the established Community Centre in Torrens Street
Implementation

Planning scheme amendment

The final Structure Plan and Development Contributions Plan will be subject to a Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme amendment process. The amendment will follow the legislated process – full public exhibition to all land owners and occupiers, submissions, consideration by Council, referral of any submissions that do not support the Plan to an independent Panel, hearings by the Panel, Panel recommendations to Council and consideration by Council, if Council wishes to proceed then a recommendation to the Minister for Planning who makes the ultimate decision.

The first stage of the amendment process will be to rezone land and apply overlays within the original township area. The majority of rezoning is proposed to convert the existing Township Zone to the General Residential Zone. The first stage is proposed to include:

- The expansion of the Commercial 1 Zone
- Removal of the Industrial 3 Zone
- Application of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
- Application of a Design and Development Overlay in the town centre
- Correction of various anomalies, such as the Public Use Zone 6 which is applied for Local Government services.

The second stage will address residential demand once the original townships land is nearing full development. The majority of the changes for this stage will be to extend the General Residential Zone. The extent of this will be reliant of other considerations, such as the alignment of proposed bypasses, advice from Coliban Water on service provision and detailed studies of land suitability.

Subsequent planning scheme amendments will follow a similar process as the first stage.
All planning scheme amendments are subject to the statutory requirements of the Victorian planning system.

**Other actions**

The timeframe for all other actions arising from the Structure Plan will be discussed as part of this current community engagement and consultation period. The Structure Plan contains many key directions and subsequent actions which should be prioritised appropriately.

A full list of actions and their corresponding timeframes will be included in the adopted Structure Plan.
Appendix

Appendix A - Community Consultation

Webpage with direct sign-up to the project mailing list
www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/MarongSP - 741 visits since its creation
Project mailing list – 93 email addresses, and 12 physical mailing addresses
  - Webpage promoted on Facebook (31 March) – 17 likes, 10 comments, 0 shares, 2,784 reach.
  - Webpage promoted in the Bendigo Advertiser Community Planning Update – Tuesday 26 April

Community Workshops
Community Workshops:
Tuesday 12 April 2016 – 42 attendees, and
Sunday 17 April 2016 – 23 attendees
  - Promoted on Facebook (12 April) – 2 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 435 reach.
  - Promoted on Facebook (8 April) – 2 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 435 reach.
  - Promoted in the Marong Primary School Newsletter
  - Promoted in the first Marong Community Bulletin established for the project – sent to 1,026 land owners and occupiers
  - Promoted on the Marong Structure Plan project webpage
  - Promoted by posters placed around the township
  - Promoted in the Bendigo Advertiser Community Planning Update – Tuesday 29 March
  - Promoted in the Bendigo Advertiser Greater Bendigo News Update – Tuesday 5 April

Community Design Workshop:
Tuesday 28 June 2016 – 17 attendees
  - Promoted on Facebook (24 June) – 3 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 1,351 reach.
  - Promoted on Facebook (21 June) – 4 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 1,985 reach.
  - Promoted on Facebook (16 June) – 2 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 1,351 reach.
  - Promoted in the Marong Structure Plan project webpage
  - Promoted by posters placed around the township
  - Promoted through the second Community Bulletin (June 2016), sent to the project’s Mailing List

Surveys
Marong Structure Plan & Community Priorities Survey (Online) – 76 respondents
  - Promoted on Facebook (12 April) – 2 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 435 reach.
  - Promoted on Facebook (8 April) – 2 likes, 0 comments, 0 shares, 435 reach.
• Promoted in the Bendigo Advertiser Community Planning Update – Tuesday 26 April
Marong Structure Plan Youth Survey (Online) – 148 respondents
• Promoted on Facebook (19 April) – 67 likes, 43 comments, 21 shares, 14,180 reach.
Marong Structure Plan & Community Priorities Survey (Hard copies) – 12 respondents
• Distributed through the Marong Community Action Group
• Distributed and promoted through the Marong Post Office

Community Reference Group meetings
26 email addresses on the Community Reference Group, although a group of 6-12 people have been regularly attending meetings. Everyone from the community was invited to become part of this group, with the expectation that there would be a series of meetings to attend.

Tuesday 24 May 2016 – 9 attendees, 2 apologies
• This meeting was to test and further develop principles that were established from the results of the first round of community consultation. These principles now guide the direction of the Structure Plan.

Monday 27 June 2016 – 6 attendees
• This meeting was to finalise the principles, and develop more specific design ideas. It was in preparation for the Community Design Workshop that was held the following night.

Tuesday 29 November 2016 – 6 attendees, 3 apologies
• This meeting was to provide an update based on newfound information received from VicRoads, Coliban Water, and the City’s engineering unit. As a result, new ideas, following the same principles developed earlier in the project were tested with the group, which were received positively.

Monday 13 February 2017 – 14 attendees including 2 Councillors, 2 apologies
• This meeting was to provide a final update on the direction of the Structure Plan before a draft document was put before Council and released to the public for discussion.

Primary School Workshop
Grade 6 students from the Marong Primary School, Monday 18 April – 107 ideas written or illustrated, then recorded.

Issues and Opportunities Report
The Issues and Opportunities Report was released through the public in July 2016, after the second round of community consultation. The report contained the following:
• A summary of the first two rounds of consultation, including survey results and comments made at community workshops
• Reiteration of Council’s existing policy of developing the town for 8,000 people
• Illustrating the principles that were finalised by the Community Reference Group, by elaborating on the issues and opportunities that surround the future development of the town
• A summary of the Community Design Workshop, as part of the second round of consultation
• The next stages of developing the project
The report was published on the project’s webpage, and sent to everyone on the mailing list. The community had a period of four weeks to make comments. No written submissions were received during this period; however, five community members contacted project officers to arrange meetings to discuss their concerns.

Cross-organisational meetings
VicRoads – Friday 7 October 2016
- Preliminary discussion on future transport needs and consideration of bypasses on the western and northern sides of the township

Coliban Water – Friday 4 November 2016
- After identifying constraints in growth areas, Coliban Water advised of further possible constraints regarding water pressure. Future infrastructure projects for the western side of the municipality were also discussed

Marong Community Action Group – Wednesday 16 November 2016
- This meeting was to provide an update based on newfound information received from VicRoads, Coliban Water, and the City’s engineering unit. As a result, new ideas, following the same principles developed earlier in the project were tested with the group, which were received positively.

Department of Education and Training – Tuesday 6 December 2016
- This meeting was to advise the Department of Council’s plan to develop the town for 8,000 people and to enquire about any plans for new schools in Marong. The Department had no plans.

VicRoads – Friday 16 December 2016
- This meeting was to discuss opportunities and concerns surrounding the issue of the north and western bypasses.
Welcome to the first Community Bulletin and announcement of the preparation of the Marong Structure Plan.

Marong is growing and changing. The City of Greater Bendigo’s (CoGB) policy is to plan for the future and support the town’s growth for an expected population of 8,000 people by 2036, in 20 years time.

Planning for Marong is a collaborative process between the community and Council. It will not be rushed as the intention is to enable everyone an opportunity to participate. This Community Bulletin provides information about how you can be involved and have your say, the process that will be used and some of the things that will need to be considered.

WHAT IS A STRUCTURE PLAN?

A Structure Plan is a long-term plan for the town. It sets out housing areas, places for retail and business, open spaces and recreation, transport, community facilities, and infrastructure. It also helps to ensure that a range of government agencies and service providers coordinate their services and facilities with the development of the town. Essentially, it will be the village plan for the next 20 years.

It will guide the development of the town because the final plan will become part of the City’s Planning Scheme. It will be the basis for decision-making by the City of Greater Bendigo and Council.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO DEVELOP THE PLAN?

CoGB expects the process will take 12 months. It is important to give all those interested opportunities to be involved.

HOW WILL THE COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED?

Each major step in the development of the Structure Plan will provide for extensive community input.

There are two opportunities for you to be involved and to contribute your views:

Community workshops will be held at the Community Hall on the following dates:

- Tuesday 12 April 6:30pm-8pm
- Sunday 17 April 2pm-4pm

These workshops are an initial opportunity for residents, landowners and community groups to participate in the early stages of the planning process.

Come along and contribute your views and knowledge of the local area. Tell us what it is about Marong that you like the best and your ideas for how the town and the community could grow. This is also a good opportunity for you to point out examples of development – locally or in other places – which you would or wouldn’t want to see in Marong.

Visit the dedicated webpage, to complete an online survey. Contact the project manager for a hard copy.

Look for more information?

Get in touch with the project manager:

Trevor Budge: t.budge@bendigo.vic.gov.au or 5434 6288

Go online for the journey and complete the survey: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/MarongSP

Looking for more information?

WHO IS PREPARING THE STRUCTURE PLAN?

CoGB’s Strategy Unit is managing the preparation of the Structure Plan. Consultants will be appointed to assist CoGB with some of the technical elements around issues such as traffic and drainage.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

TUESDAY 12 APRIL 6:30pm-8pm
SUNDAY 17 APRIL 2pm-4pm
MARONG COMMUNITY HALL
CNR. TORRENS & HIGH STREETS

“it will be our village plan for the next 20 years”
GROWTH AREA FOCUS
The township area of Marong has been initially identified as a growth area by the Bendigo Residential Development Strategy. The area consists of about 5.5 square kilometres and is shown in the map below.

MARONG TOWNSHIP POPULATION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2036</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>351</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PREVIOUS PLANNING FOR MARONG
In 2011 Council adopted a Marong Plan to provide an initial guide as to how the town should develop. This has been used but it is not in sufficient detail to provide the framework and to be part of the Planning Scheme. The Structure Plan will be examining issues in depth including drainage, flooding, traffic movement, the design of the town centre, open space, road networks, and community facilities and services.

PLANNING FOR LONG-TERM FUTURE GROWTH IN MARONG
It is important to plan for rapidly growing towns such as Marong. Marong’s growth is expected to continue as many people are drawn to the area’s rural lifestyle, yet close proximity to Bendigo. The reference of The Marong Plan (2011) will be useful in preparing this Structure Plan; however, a new Structure Plan is required as it will have more statutory weight.

SETTLEMENT
Where should we allocate land for this growth, whilst also respecting environmental constraints such as flooding and trees, and maintaining a compact township?

TOWN CENTRE
Marong will need to increase its commercial services and community facilities to respond to growth. Land will need to be allocated for this, whilst creating an attractive town centre.

TRANSPORT
Marong’s links with Bendigo will continue to be vital. How can we plan for a safer community whilst supporting public transport use and avoiding congestion?

CONNECTIONS
Future neighbourhoods will require good connections to the town centre and open spaces. How can we provide these whilst encouraging walking and cycling?
The first round of community consultation has been completed. The sessions were well attended, with about 65 people registering for the drop-in style workshops, 234 respondents from two different surveys, and a class of Grade 5/6 students from the Marong Primary School. A Community Reference Group has also been appointed and has met to agree on some fundamental principles that will guide the development of the Structure Plan.

Although the first round of consultation is over, it's not too late to have your say at this early stage in the development of the plan. The project team will be holding a Public Design Workshop on Tuesday 28 June, 6:00pm to 7:30pm at the Marong Community Hall. This workshop will be an opportunity for members of the public to explain their design ideas for the town and have them sketched on paper or digitally by artists. These workshops will help visualise a wide variety of ideas formed around the issues that the Structure Plan can address.

The most common comments from the first round of consultation were:
- The heritage buildings in the township need to be retained.
- Maintain the semi-rural feel of the area.
- Small residential blocks should be avoided.
- The town needs a truck bypass.
- More footpaths and bike paths should be constructed.
- Roads should be made safer for children, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- The water and sewer infrastructure needs improving.
- Marong needs better public transport services, including bus and rail.
- More commercial facilities are needed.
- The Primary School is at capacity. An additional school and secondary college should be planned for.
- Malone Park should be upgraded.
- There should be more open space, including a better playground.

For a full list of the comments made, visit the website, www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/MarongSP.

COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP
A team of 12 community members sat at the first Community Reference Group meeting on 24 May. Their role was to discuss and agree on a number of principles that will guide the development of the Plan. The agreed principles are outlined in the table below.

mailing list
To sign-up to the project’s mailing list, fill in your details at www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/MarongSP or by calling Council’s Strategy Unit on 5434 6200. Those who are signed up receive project updates, outcomes from consultation, and notice on upcoming events.

Survey results
A full summary of the survey results were sent to everyone on the mailing list. Some of the most interesting findings were the perceptions of the appearance of the Marong Town Centre, most respondents said that it looked “not attractive” or just “alright”. The youth survey asked what respondents disliked the most about Marong, the two most common answers were “no variety of shops” and “poor public transport”.

Developing Elements to be Sustained and Enhanced

- Buildings and streetscape
  - The streetscape and main streetscape
  - Pedestrian and cycling routes
  - Landscaped public spaces

- Ramifications
  - Landscaped public spaces
  - Pedestrian and cycling routes

- Public open spaces
  - Waterfront parks
  - Pedestrian and cycling routes

- Infrastructure
  - Roads
  - Energy
  - Water

- Social infrastructure
  - Public transport
  - Public open spaces

- Sustainable design
  - Pedestrian and cycling routes
  - Public open spaces

- Resilience
  - Landscaped public spaces
  - Pedestrian and cycling routes

- Leadership
  - Public open spaces