Project Brief
Heathcote Township Plan

Project No.
January 2017
[V.0G]
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1.0 Project Background

Introduction

The City of Greater Bendigo is preparing a Township Plan for Heathcote.

Heathcote is a small rural township nestled in a picturesque bushland landscape and is located at the junction of three major highways, a convenient distance from Melbourne, Bendigo and a number of large regional centres and towns.

Heathcote is well resourced, with a hospital providing a range of integrated services, our own Council Service Centre, and a broad range of sporting and recreational facilities.

The Greater Bendigo Residential Strategy (2014) identifies Heathcote as a town that has the capacity to grow and develop and offer a lifestyle alternative to living in the Bendigo urban area.

Heathcote was identified on the basis that it is an established settlement, has a good range of services and facilities and importantly there is an appetite within the community to grow.

There is no current structure plan for the future growth of Heathcote but despite this the town has been growing by an average of 25 dwellings a year over the past 6 years. There has also been reasonably strong growth in tourism, commercial and retail services over this time.

The Heathcote Township Plan will provide a framework for the town to sustainably grow. It will go beyond planning for new housing but will also consider the town's future commercial, community and transport needs.

Given the level of bushfire risk associated with the landscape surrounding the township it is likely that the bulk of future growth will need to occur within existing township area.
Community Planning

The Heathcote and District Community Plan was led by the Heathcote Partnership Group. The ideas and opinions of those who live, work and visit Heathcote and its surrounds were sought through extensive consultation, personal exchanges and public meetings.

The plan sets consists of five goal areas:

1. Developing and promoting arts culture and social events:
   - creating a calendar of events
   - upgrading existing community facilities to be better equipped for events

2. Making the local environment more attractive welcoming and functional:
   - developing the first section of a cycle and walking network linked to the O’Keefe Rail Trail
   - present a business plan to all levels of Government for potential funding

3. Increasing awareness about and opportunities for education and learning:
   - undertaking an educational facilities and resources audit to identify opportunities and unmet needs
   - increasing access and resources to enable up-to-date facilities services and technology

4. Creating a vibrant and connected community:
   - planning and implementing the first Annual Heathcote Community Games
   - increasing intergenerational learning opportunities.
   - working with relevant agencies to ensure local public spaces are safe

5. Planning and developing local infrastructure to promote economic growth:
   - advocating for funding to progress the Barrack Reserve master plan, with a focus on completion of the Barrack Reserve Stadium and Community Facility
   - advocating for connection of natural gas to the town
   - construction of a pedestrian footbridge over the McIvor Creek in Chauncey Street

Each goal area has short medium and long-term priority actions. The Community Plan is due for review and this will be done concurrently with the Township Plan.
2.0 Study Area
3.0 Residential Development Objectives

The following are objectives for residential development as articulated in the *Greater Bendigo Residential Strategy* (2014). These objectives will underpin the preparation of the Heathcote Township Plan.

- To ensure that new developments are complementary to existing areas of heritage or neighbourhood character values.
- To ensure that medium and higher density housing is of high quality design.
- To protect the environmental assets of Greater Bendigo and in particular Crown Land and areas with significant biodiversity values.
- To avoid development in areas of higher levels of risk from bushfire and flooding.
- To promote more intensive residential development proximate to activity centres and along major transport corridors and nodes.
- To ensure residential areas are accessible by a variety of transport modes.
- To promote the intensive development of sites that are accessible by a variety of transport modes.
- To create communities that promotes social interaction and healthy living.
- To achieve high levels of community safety.
- To ensure that open space and the public domain are attractive and accessible.
- To ensure new development demonstrates high levels of sustainability and builds community resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- To provide for a range of housing types and densities that responds to the changing needs of the community.
- To provide and support affordable housing opportunities.
4.0 Objectives

Several primary objectives have been established for the project, as follows:

- Create a plan for the future development of the Heathcote Township that:
  - is responsive to the Residential Development Objectives;
  - is based on and connected to a wider understanding of issues, influences and vision for the overall Heathcote community and Greater Bendigo;
  - sets an appropriate physical footprint and land use structure for the township in response to the physical capability and values of the landscape, as well as social and economic functions of the community;
  - identifies the major strategic moves that must be made in the urban structure of Heathcote;
  - coordinates the planning of social and community infrastructure including the Town Centre, community facilities and public transport;
  - defines urban design principles for Heathcote and for the Heathcote Town Centre that will enable the creation of a distinctive character and identity for the community; and,
  - establish a logical sequence for the staging of development within the township.

Additionally, the project process will:

- Establish a governance structure and process to support the delivery of the project and which contributes a cross-section of representation including project sponsors, technical specialists and community; and,
- Coordinate the strategic and technical planning effort with the timely involvement and input of specialist government and private agencies and community groups.

- Provide reasonable certainty to the community, Council, agencies and developers regarding the long-term vision for Heathcote;
- Provide a range of opportunities for community involvement in the planning process, including contributions to decision-making, briefings and workshops as well as a reasonable period of public exhibition and review;
5.0 Outcomes

A series of measurable outcomes for the project have been identified for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the planning process. These outcomes apply to the primary study area.

- Create an attractive centralised, viable town centre that is accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and motorists.
- Allocate sufficient land for the establishment of new residential dwellings to meet future population needs.
- Designate all new settlement in areas that can be developed with a low risk of bushfire attack.
- Create a coherent overall urban character and identity with localised variety that draws on special features.
- Achieve a net gain in native vegetation.
- Provide a total area of unencumbered public open space that is equivalent to at least 10% of the net developable area.
- Locate at least 95% of dwellings within a reasonable walking catchment (up to 400m) of public open space.
- Locate at least 95% of dwellings within a reasonable proximity (up to 400m) of a shared walking and cycling trail.
- Ensure that all development staging includes delivery of infrastructure to connect residents to facilities, in particular the provision of pedestrian footpaths for all suburban streets.
- Provide and maintain a minimum 15 year supply of land for development according to the intended sequence.
6.0 **Technical Scope**

There will be six major project stages, covering the scoping of the project, the resourcing and establishment of the project and the completion of the project technical work.

**Project Work**

The core project work is to be completed in this Stage which is structured according to several phases, as follows:

Phase 1 – Inception

Phase 2 – Research, Technical Papers and Analysis Plans

Phase 3 – Issues and Opportunities

Phase 4 – Vision and Conceptual Structure Plan

Phase 5 – Draft Township Plan

Phase 6 – Community Exhibition and Township Plan Finalisation

Details of the tasks and outputs associated with each of the phases are given in Section 7.0.
7.0 **Tasks and Outputs**

This section details the tasks and outputs associated with Stages 1, 2 and 3.

7.1 **Phase 1 - Inception**

**Tasks**

The key tasks for this phase are to:

- Establish a work program including a schedule of meetings.
- Develop governance framework.
- Coordinate the 1st Steering Group meeting.
- Establish the Reference Group.
- Prepare a community engagement plan for the project in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo Community Engagement Policy.
- Develop project branding. Coordinate the project inception meeting/s (consolidated where possible).
- Procure base information inputs.
- Prepare and circulate Project Bulletin No.1 (project introduction and process).
- Prepare and issues media release.
- Coordinate project webpage start-up.

**Outputs**

- Inception meeting minutes.
- Project branding framework.
- Community engagement plan document.
- Reference Group meeting minutes.
- Project Bulletin No.1 (Introductory, project outline).
- Initial project media release.
- Project webpage.

**Expected Duration**

- Weeks (to be agreed by Steering Committee)

**Phase Hold Point**

- Not applicable
### 7.2 Phase 2 – Research, Technical Papers and Analysis Plans

#### Tasks

The key tasks for this phase include but are not limited to:

- Completion and assessment of technical papers.
- Produce a series of analysis plans which highlight the findings of the Consultant technical papers and their inter-relationships where applicable.
- Community Survey

#### Outputs

The key outputs for this stage are:

- Technical papers addressing the following planning aspects:
  - Demographic profile
  - Community Needs Analysis
  - Infrastructure Capacity Assessment
  - Open Space and Recreation Needs Assessment
  - Bushfire Risk Assessment
  - Transport Assessment
- Analysis plans.
- Survey results.

#### Expected Duration

- 10 weeks after completion of Phase 1.

#### Phase Hold Point

- Approval by Steering Group of Phase 2 outputs.
7.3 Phase 3 – Issues and Opportunities

Tasks

The key tasks for this phase include but are not limited to:

- Prepare a paper based on the inputs and findings of Phase 2 which documents the issues and opportunities that the Heathcote Township Plan should address.
- Coordinate the 1st Reference Group Meeting to review the issues and opportunities paper.
- Coordinate the 2nd Steering Group meeting to review the issues and opportunities paper.
- Prepare and circulate Project Bulletin No.2 (Phase 2 and 3 outcomes, lead in to Phases 4 and 5).
- Update the project webpage to Phases 2 and 3.

Outputs

The key outputs for this phase are:

- Issues and Opportunities paper.
- Reference Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Steering Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Project Bulletin No.2.
- Webpage update.

Expected Duration

- 6 weeks following satisfactory completion of Phase 2.

Phase Hold Point

- Approval by Steering Group of Phase 3 outputs.
7.4 Phase 4 – Vision and Conceptual Structure Plan

Tasks

The key tasks for this phase include but are not limited to:

- Formulate an illustrative, photographic and written composite of the vision and conceptual structure plan for Heathcote.
- Coordinate community workshops to inform the visioning and conceptual planning process and to validate the issues and opportunities analysis (Phase 3).
- Coordinate the 3rd Reference Group Meeting to review the issues and opportunities paper.
- Coordinate the 4th Steering Group meeting to review the vision and conceptual structure plan.
- Present to the Council Forum.
- Update the project webpage to Phase 4.

Outputs

The key outputs for this phase are:

- A vision and conceptual structure plan (produced as a large-format (A1) document with emphasis on conceptual diagrams, images, visionary statements and principles, and an overall plan.
- Reference Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Steering Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Council Forum presentation and meeting minutes.
- Webpage update.

Expected Duration

- 5 weeks after satisfactory completion of Phase 3.

Phase Hold Point

- Approval by Steering Group of Phase 4 outputs.
7.5 Phase 5 – Draft Township Plan

Tasks

The key tasks for this phase include but are not limited to:

- Prepare a Draft Township Plan, generally in accordance with the *Growth Area Authority Precinct Structure Plan Guidelines (2009)*, which includes without limitation:
  - Regional context plan
  - Local context plan
  - Township area plan
  - Role of the Township Plan
  - Strategic context
  - Monitoring and review
  - Vision
  - Overall (Future) Structure Plan
  - Community Structure
  - Summary Land Budget
  - Element 1: Image and Character
  - Element 2: Housing
  - Element 3: Employment and Activity Centres:
    - Element 4: Community Facilities
    - Element 5: Open Space
    - Element 5a: Walking and Trails
    - Element 5b: Natural Systems and Biodiversity
    - Element 5c: Heritage
    - Element 6: Transport and Movement
    - Element 7: Utilities and Energy
  - Element 8 (additional): Bushfire and Amenity Impact Management
  - Reference documents
  - Glossary
  - Appendices

- Coordinate the 4th Reference Group Meeting to review the Draft Township Plan.
- Coordinate the 5th Steering Group meeting to review the Draft Township Plan.
- Prepare and make a presentation to the Council on the Draft Township Plan.
- Prepare and circulate Project Bulletin No.3 (Draft Township Plan process and overview, lead in to community exhibition process).
- Update the project webpage to Phase 5.

Outputs

The key outputs for this phase are:

- Project Bulletin No.3.
- Reference Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Steering Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Council Forum presentation and meeting minutes.
- Webpage update.

Expected Duration

- 11 weeks following satisfactory completion of Phase 4 (includes 3 week lead time for Council reporting).

Phase Hold Point
Approval by Steering Group of Phase 5 outputs and approval by Council of the Draft Township Plan.

7.6 Phase 6 – Community Exhibition and Township Finalisation

Tasks

The key tasks for this phase include but are not limited to:

- Coordinate the community exhibition process and materials.
- Review of and respond to submissions.
- Coordinate the 5th Reference Group meeting to review submissions and responses.
- Coordinate the 6th Steering Group meeting to review submissions and responses.
- Prepare a Council report and recommendations related to finalisation of the Township Plan.
- Prepare and make a presentation to the Council Forum.
- Revise the Township Plan and take any other actions required in response to Council-endorsed recommendations.
- Update the project webpage to Phase 6.

Outputs

The key outputs for this phase are:

- Project Bulletin No.4 (Phase 4 outcomes, lead in to Phase 5, specifically the community exhibition process).
- A summary of submissions received during the exhibition period and a Consultant response to each submission.
- Steering Group presentation and meeting minutes.
- Council Forum presentation and meeting minutes.

- A (revised) final Township Plan which responds, as required, to community submission any directions given by the Council*.
- Project Bulletin No.5 (Community exhibition outcomes, Township Plan changes, next steps).
- Webpage update.

Expected Duration

- 9 weeks following satisfactory completion of Phase 5 (includes 4 week community exhibition period and 3 week lead time for Council reporting).

Phase Hold Point

- Approval by Steering Group of Phase 6 outputs and approval by Council of the (revised) final Township Plan.
8.0 Project Management and Governance

8.1 Project Management

The Project Manager will be the CoGB’s Strategic Planner who will ensure the objectives and outcomes of the project are achieved within the specified timeframes.

The Project Manager is responsible for the overall delivery of the project and will coordinate and liaise directly with appointed Consultants.

8.2 Project Governance – Steering Group

The project will be overseen by a Steering Group of representatives from the City of Greater Bendigo (including officers and relevant Ward Councillors), the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP), Heathcote Health and Heathcote Tourism.

The Steering Group will meet in Phases 1, 3, 4 and 5 to be updated on project progress and issues, and to provide input and direction.

8.3 Project Advisory – Reference Group

The project will also be supported by a Reference Group. Nominations will be called for from the community to participate on this Group. The Reference Group will bring together individuals and representatives of organisations with a particular interest in the project, and/or the capacity to bring specialist knowledge, skills, information and resources to the project.

8.4 Project Reporting

The Project Manager shall be responsible for the preparation and submittal of project reports for the duration of the project. Reporting shall coincide with Steering Group meeting intervals. Items to be addressed in the monthly report shall include but not be limited to:

- Executive summary
- Progress report
- Issues
- Program
- Options
- Budget status
- Risk assessment
- Recommendations
## 9.0 Specialist Consultant Support

Several aspects of planning for the Heathcote Township Plan will require the technical services and skills of specialist Consultants. At this stage, the following areas of Consultant input have been identified:

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<th>General Description of Scope</th>
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<td>Infrastructure Capacity Analysis</td>
<td>• To get an understanding of what infrastructure exists, where there are issues with capacity and the like and what improvements are required into the future.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Space and Recreational Needs Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bushfire Risk Assessment</td>
<td>• To assess the level of bushfire risk in the study area.</td>
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11.0 Project Program

The preliminary project program is illustrated in Figure B below.

The overall project timeframe is inclusive of lead times for reporting to Council and an allowance for the Christmas / New Year holiday period.

(Timeline to be finalised)
12.0 Reference Documents

The following information will be utilised as part of the development process:

- Heathcote and District Community Plan
- Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme, including the MSS
- Greater Bendigo Residential Strategy 2014
- Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy 2015
- Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy 2015
- Available aerial photographs
- Bendigo GIS property and land use information