

MERNDA TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



**Amended
November 2018**

Mernda Town Centre Development Plan- (Amended)

The Development Plan was approved by the City of Whittlesea on 30 June 2009, and amended on 25 September 2012 and 28 November 2018, in accordance with Clause 43.04 Schedule 15 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

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28/11/2018

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Signature of the Responsible Authority

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1. Introduction

The Mernda Town Centre Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 15 to the Development Plan Overlay (DPO 15) at Clause 43.04 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

This is the third version of the Development Plan with previous versions approved in June 2009 and September 2012.

The Mernda Town Centre Development Plan (Development Plan) applies to land bound by Bridge-Inn Road to the north, Plenty Road to the west, residential land to the south and the Mernda Rail Corridor to the east. In the context of the Mernda Strategy Plan, the land sits within Precinct 5.

The Development Plan provides a broad urban framework to deliver an integrated environment which features a range of residential densities, a retail core area, key conservation areas, passive open space and a fine grain movement network to provide excellent connectivity with surrounding precincts.

The Development Plan comprises the following:

- A detailed site analysis over the Development Plan area.
- A summary of the statutory and strategic planning context.
- A set of principles which will guide the development of the precinct.
- A description of the proposed land uses and response to key design issues.
- Overview of developer contribution requirements and staging matters.

This document in its totality comprises the approved Development Plan.

A number of Development Plan area assessments and background reports have been undertaken for the subject area by the proponent in accordance with the requirements of the DPO15. These assessments have been used to inform the preparation of the Development Plan and future permit applications but do not form part of this approved Development Plan.

The background reports include the following:

- Traffic Engineering Assessment, prepared by Cardno.
- Flora and Fauna Assessment, prepared by Biosis Research.
- Arboricultural Assessment, prepared by TreeLogic.
- Soil Assessment Report, prepared by Environmental Earth Services.
- Geotechnical Report, prepared by Coffey Geotechnics.
- Historical Assessment, prepared by Biosis Research.
- Conservation Management Plan, prepared by Robert Sands.
- Services Infrastructure and Drainage Report, prepared by GTA Consulting.

2. Background

The original version of this Development Plan for Mernda Town Centre was approved on 30 June 2009.

An amended Development Plan was approved by Council in September 2012 and showed the town centre core towards the centre of the site rather than towards the railway line and proposed Mernda Railway Station.

In 2016, the Level Crossing Removal Authority progressed plans to construct the railway extension to the Mernda Railway. Additionally, the plans for the new Mernda Train Station showed it located further north than previously anticipated.

This Development Plan reflects this decision, showing more town centre core land adjacent to the recently constructed Mernda Train Station to facilitate a better integrated centre and transport hub.

3. Development Plan Analysis

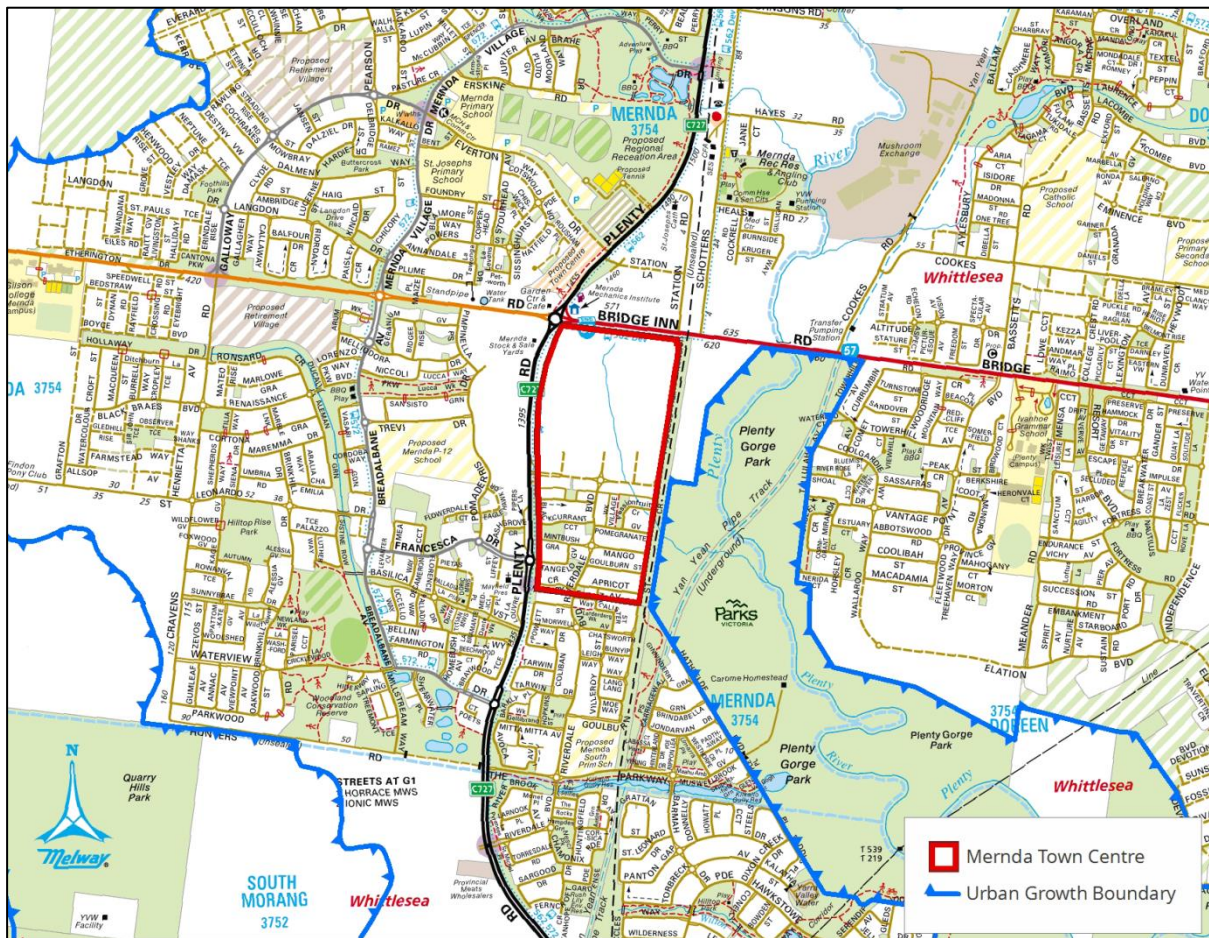
Mernda is located in the City of Whittlesea within the Plenty Valley Growth Corridor and on the northern fringe of the Melbourne metropolitan area, approximately 25 kilometres north of the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD).

The City of Whittlesea covers an area of approximately 487 square kilometres and is physically one of the largest municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne. In recent years, the City has been characterised by its rapidly expanding residential population and its continuing focus as a growth area of metropolitan significance. Being one of the designated growth areas within Metropolitan Melbourne, Mernda has been planned for significant residential, retail, commercial and community development since 2004 when the Mernda Strategy Plan was approved.

The Development Plan area sits amongst land developed or designated for residential uses and supported by a range of small scale retail uses, open space networks and community facilities both under construction and yet to be planned.

In a strategic sense the Development Plan area is situated in a relatively central location within the northern part of the Plenty Valley growth corridor. The Development Plan incorporates the important Mernda Town Centre which is to be the primary retail and commercial centre, servicing the broader area and surrounding residential community.

Figure 1: Location Plan



3.1 Topography and Views

The Development Plan area has generally flat or slightly undulating land and has historically been used for livestock grazing. The most significant landform feature is the hilltop that supports the heritage-listed Mayfield Farm buildings. This is located on the western part of the Development Plan area adjoining Plenty Road. The remains of the historic Berry Lane extend across the site in an east-west direction – connecting Mayfield Farm to the Plenty Gorge Parklands.

The prominent ridgelines surrounding the Development Plan area define the key vantage points and elevated views including the following key long distant views:

- To the north east towards the Kinglake foothills;
- To the south east towards Plenty Gorge, Plenty River and the undulating floodplain;
- To the south west towards the local gentle to moderate hills providing an important visual backdrop to the Development Plan area;
- Panoramic views to the regional features occur from the ridge tops to the Plenty River corridor, Yan Yean Reservoir, Laurimar and the distant Quarry hills environs to the west.

There are also some significant view lines from surrounding land into the Development Plan area, which are important to recognise in the planning and development of the Development Plan area.

These views primarily focus on the historic and natural features of the Development Plan area which are currently poorly defined and can be not easily recognised but provide significant opportunities for the future development of the site. These key internal views include:

- Mayfield Farm and the collection of buildings that currently make up this precinct;
- Berry Lane, although it is difficult to clearly define the boundaries of this historic access route;
- The stand of river red gums along the western boundary of the DP area along Plenty Road.

The topography of the Development Plan area and key views are shown in *Figure 2: Development Plan Area Analysis Plan*.

Figure 2: Development Plan Area Site Analysis Plan



3.2 Movement and Access

Access to the Development Plan area is currently available via a number of points from both Bridge Inn Road and Plenty Road. A number of these access points are in poor condition, often grassed over and dilapidated.

Figure 2 outlines future access connection opportunities from Bridge Inn Road and Plenty Road.

Three bus routes operate within close proximity of the Development Plan area. These are:

- Route 381 which runs between South Morang and Diamond Creek via Mernda. There are bus stops on either side of Bridge Inn Road just to the north of the Development Plan area.
- Route 382 which operates along Plenty Road and runs between Northland Shopping Centre and Whittlesea via RMIT Bundoora and South Morang. There are bus stops for this route on either side of Plenty Road, just north of Bridge Inn Road.
- Route 386-387 which operates between Mernda Station and Bundoora RMIT.

- Route 955 Nightrider which operates between Melbourne Central and Bridge Inn Road and runs along Plenty Road.

3.3 Environment / Flora and Fauna

Flora and Fauna Assessment

A flora and fauna assessment was prepared for the Development Plan area, including several surveys of the vegetation at different times of the year and fauna that is supported on the land at different breeding seasons. *Figure 3: Site Features* shows the location of significant remnant trees on the site.

Flora

The Development Plan area supports a number of remnant trees, primarily River Red Gums, which are scattered across the Development Plan area and are remnants of the Plains Grassy Woodland which were once widespread across the western basalt plains of Victoria, but have largely been cleared. Indigenous understorey vegetation has generally been removed and replaced with improved pasture given much of the Development Plan area has been previously cultivated. As such the understorey across the Development Plan area can now be classified as being predominantly exotic grassland which is dominated by introduced grasses together with exotic shrubs such as the Hawthorn bush and Sweet Briar Rosa, particularly across 1360 Plenty Road. Due to modification of the vegetation across the Development Plan area and within the broader region, it is no longer fully representative of the woodland which would have been present on the Development Plan area.

Of ecological value, the assessment identified:

- The remnant mature trees and modified patches of Plains Grassy Woodland have high ecological significance.

- From the tree habitat assessment, 29 out of the 36 medium, large and very large River Red-gums assessed have high habitat value, while the remaining seven have medium habitat value. As all of the trees were considered to be part of a stand, all are of high ecological value.
- There are two small areas supporting native grasses in the south of the study area.

The remainder of the study area is modified and of low ecological value. Included within the study area is a small unnamed creek and two smaller tributary/drainage lines, which converge within the property. All of these drainage lines have been channelised. The creek is approximately 1.3 km in length; beyond the study area it includes an online dam and discharges into the Plenty River. The study area is within the Victorian Volcanic Plain Bioregion (DPI) and comprises five habitat types: River Red-gum Woodland (modified), Exotic Grassland, Wetlands (soak and drainage lines), rocky rises and Planted Vegetation.

Fauna

The Atlas of Victorian Wildlife (AVW) contains records of 291 vertebrate fauna species from the local area and an additional eight fish species. The Department of Environment, Water Resources, Heritage and the Arts database lists 22 species whose geographic range includes the Development Plan area.

Some of the species listed on the databases may inhabit, or visit the Development Plan area. However, the study area is highly modified and does not

have suitable habitat for many of the species listed on these databases.

A total of 29 indigenous fauna species (one mammal, 20 birds, four reptiles, and four frogs) and eight introduced fauna species (four mammals and four birds) were recorded in the Development Plan area.

One state significant fauna species was recorded in the Development Plan area. A White-bellied Sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) was recorded soaring over the Development Plan area heading north. This species is regularly recorded (AVW) at the nearby Yan Yean Reservoir and has also been previously recorded in South Morang. The Development Plan area does not support important habitat for this species.

Habitats

An ecological tree assessment was carried out that included detailed habitat survey of each medium, large and very large tree within the Development Plan area. A total of 69 trees were assessed. From this assessment, it has been concluded that the majority of trees within the Development Plan area are of high habitat value for native fauna.

Arboricultural Assessment

An arboricultural report, prepared by TreeLogic (9 May 2012 and updated 26 August 2016) has assessed the condition, structure, safety and suitability for preservation of the trees on the Development Plan area. The report also provides recommendations on tree protection and pruning requirements where applicable.

The Development Plan area and the Plenty Road road reserve contained scattered remnant indigenous trees, which were predominantly River Red Gums. A single Swamp Gum was assessed as part of this report. A prominent feature amongst the three properties is the presence of 'Mayfield Farm' at 1410A Plenty Road. The property is heritage listed with tree protection controls applying to mature trees as well as the Hawthorn hedge that is located south of the main residence. A total of 69 indigenous trees were assessed, which does not include trees within Mayfield Farm.

The overall health of the assessed trees was fair or typical. The majority of mature River Red Gums in the Development Plan area had existing defects and were developing form and branch attachments, which could ultimately lead to further branch failures. The structural deficiencies of the subject trees, coupled with the phenomenon called sudden limb failure, must be acknowledged and addressed if trees are going to be preserved in the vicinity of people or property.

Figure 3: Development Plan Area Existing Features Plan



3.4 Heritage

Aboriginal Heritage

An Aboriginal Heritage assessment undertaken and a Cultural Heritage Management Plan prepared for the Development Plan area, as required under Section 46(a) of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. The major aims of the study were:

- Conduct heritage register searches to identify any previously recorded cultural heritage sites within the survey area. Searches will include the Site Register at Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, the National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List and Local Council Heritage Overlays.
- Conduct additional background research in order to recognise any identifiable trends in site distribution and location.
- Undertake a comprehensive survey of the study area, locating any previously recorded sites within the study area, and aiming to identify and record as yet unidentified heritage sites.
- Record and assess sites identified during the survey, in compliance with the guidelines issued by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (2002).
- Identify impacts to all identified Aboriginal and places based on potential changes as a result of the proposed development.
- Make recommendations to minimise or mitigate impacts to cultural heritage values within the study area.

Three Aboriginal scarred trees have been previously registered with AAV. These are sites AAV7922/0294, AAV7922/0293 and AAV7922/0946.

No additional Aboriginal sites were recorded during the survey. An area of moderate sensitivity for Aboriginal sites was noted. This is the stony rise located along the western boundary of the study area. The stony rise has undergone disturbance as a result of construction, however it is still possible that sub-surface Aboriginal sites may be present. The floodplain has been assessed as being of low potential for Aboriginal sites.

All three scarred trees are protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and should be preserved in public open space. The trees should be protected during works by being fenced off for the duration of the works.

The Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the development of Mernda Town Centre was approved by the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Community Development on 11 March 2009.

European heritage

A European heritage assessment of the Development Plan Area was undertaken. The aims of the study were as follows:

- To determine whether there are previously unidentified historical archaeological sites and places within the study area.
- To provide assistance in incorporating the Mayfield historical area into the masterplan.
- To make recommendations regarding the management of any historical sites.
- To provide advice to the proponent regarding all necessary legislative requirements with regard to relevant heritage Acts.

Heritage Victoria were notified of the survey work conducted in the Development Plan area, as is required by the statutory provisions. In addition to the field survey work, a thorough desktop review of previous archaeological studies relating to Mernda was undertaken.

There are two previously identified sites within the Development Plan area. Both sites are listed on the Heritage Victoria Heritage Inventory (relates only to the potential for archaeological significance) and in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.

These sites are:

- H7022-048 Mayfield Homestead; and
- H7922-063 Berry Lane.

The heritage significance of each site has been made based on the criteria defined by Heritage Victoria. Both heritage sites are of local significance, but the Mayfield site contains a butter factory which may be of State significance, due to the uniqueness of the design.

The assessment found, in relation to Mayfield Homestead Complex, that:

- Mayfield has local historical importance due to its association with a local historical figure, Moses Thomas, who was instrumental in developing both the flour milling and dairying industry in the Plenty Valley.
- The butter factory is unique in that there is an underground well in the basement of the building.
- The intactness of the structures enable a potential to educate Victorians about the history of the region in the mid 1800's.
- The homestead exhibits fine aesthetic qualities in the U-shape design and presence of a courtyard.

In relation to Berry Lane, the heritage assessment found:

- The lane has local historical importance due to its association with a local historical figure, Moses Thomas.

The heritage sites are identified in *Figure 3: Existing Site Features*.

3.5 Infrastructure

The majority of the Development Plan area is situated within Melbourne Water's Mernda Central Drainage Scheme, with a small area at the south-eastern corner draining to Melbourne Water's South Drainage Scheme.

There are existing open drains that traverse the Development Plan area which have been identified by Melbourne Water as an integral part of the Mernda Central Drainage Scheme. Currently the site is drained by the existing open drainage channels that convey all flows from upstream developed and undeveloped catchment areas. As a result, the Development Plan area is currently susceptible to uncontrolled sheet run-off when stormwater flows fill and overtop the open channels.

The existing open drains which traverse the site are relatively narrow and shallow, generally not much more than 1 metre deep. They have been completely stripped of vegetation and highly disturbed by cattle grazing over a long period of time.

Yarra Valley Water is responsible for the provision of water supply to the development in the Mernda area. The subject land is situated within the Yarrambat Reservoir Supply Zone.

The supply zone consists of a low level system serving land up to an elevation of RL 180 AHD and a high level pumped system for land above this elevation. The subject land is situated below the RL 180 contour.

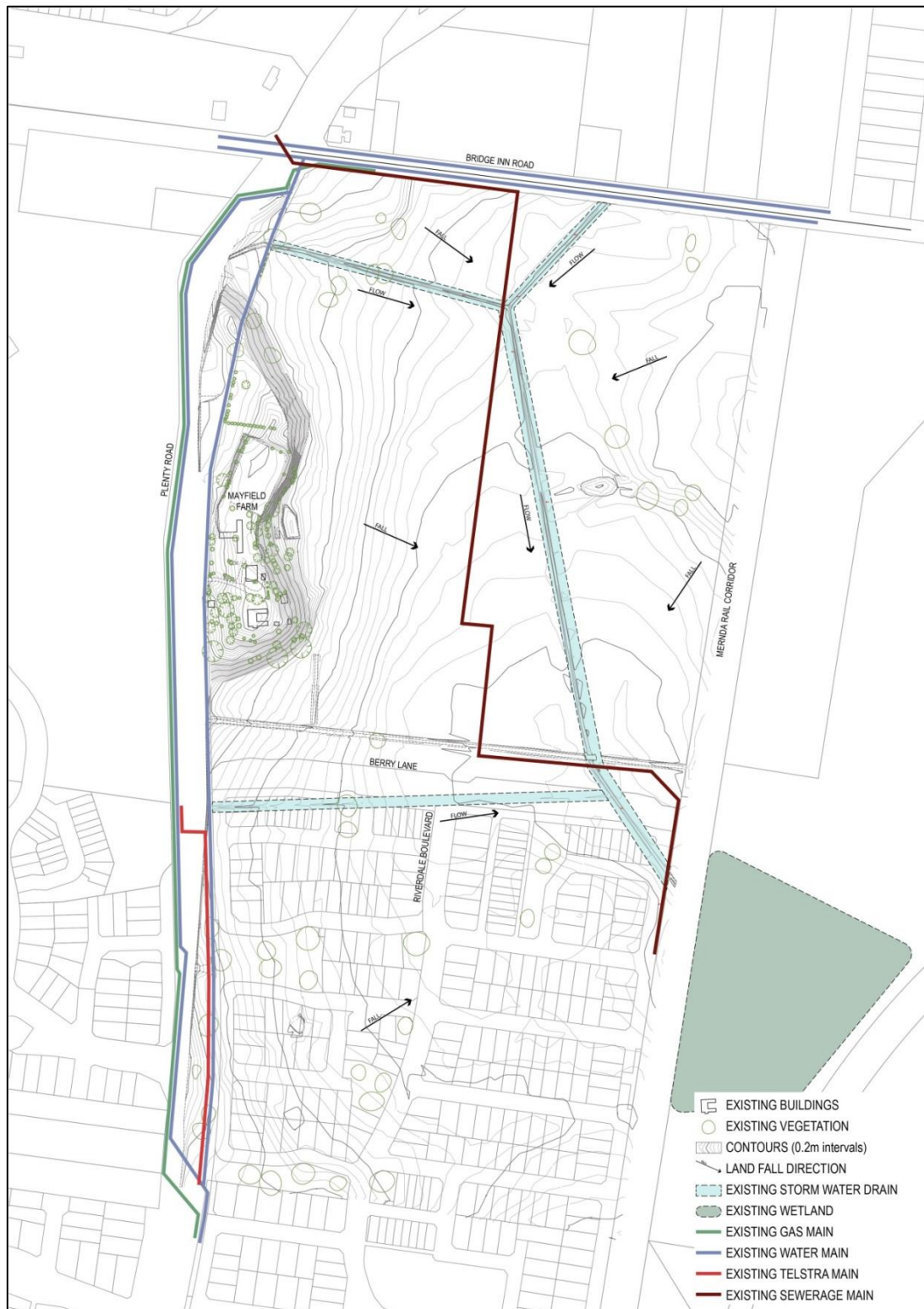
Existing services are shown in *Figure 4: Infrastructure – Existing Services*.

Table 1 provides a summary of the services currently provided to the Development Plan area and the relevant provider.

Table 1: Service Providers

SERVICE	PROVIDER
Water supply	Yarra Valley Water
Main drainage, flood protection, water quality	Melbourne Water
Sewerage	Yarra Valley Water
Electricity	SP Ausnet / SPI Electricity
Telecommunications	Telstra
Gas	APA Group Envestra Ltd

Figure 4: Infrastructure- Existing Services



3.6 Soil Assessment

An environmental Development Plan area assessment for the subject site was undertaken in June 2011 to inform the Development Plan.

Site geology and soils conditions

The local geological setting is described within the Geological survey of Victoria (1997) as Holocene Quaternary alluvial sediments consisting of river alluvium, sand, silt, clay and minor gravel.

Underlying the alluvial sediment and outcropping to the west of the property are epoch igneous rocks consisting of tholeiitic to alkaline basalts, minor scoria and ash, known as the Newer Volcanics. Outcrops of basalt are not uncommon in this area. Other features include:

- Poor drainage and waterlogging in wet weather.
- Very hard when dry and very sticky when wet.
- Slightly alkaline to slightly acidic;
- Drying very quickly in hot weather and developing deep cracks; and large shrink-swell capacity, which can lead to cracks in walls and pavements.

These features should all be considered during future development and construction on the Development Plan area.

Potential for Soil Contamination

The soil assessment considered that the main sources for chemicals of potential concern are associated with the sheep dip, heating oil tank, fill area beneath the riding arena and potentially in-filled dam at 1410A Plenty Road.

The assessment recommended that targeted soil sampling be undertaken within the specific areas identified. This will determine what impact, if any, these areas have on the underlying soil and / or groundwater.

Regional hydrogeological conditions

Groundwater beneath the Development Plan area and across the region occurs as an unconfined aquifer in the fractured basalt of the New Volcanics. There may also be sub-aquifers within the Newer Volcanics associated with the various lava flows. Additionally, yields in the groundwater bores situated within the Newer Volcanic basalts as typically less than 1L/sec, although yields up to 40L/sec have been obtained.

The closest down gradient sensitive ecosystem receptor to the Development Plan area is considered to be the Plenty River, which is approximately 250 metres east of the eastern boundary. Based on topography, the regional groundwater is considered to flow in an easterly direction, ultimately discharging into the Plenty River.

Groundwater in the area is expected to contain a total dissolved salts (TDS) concentration between 3,000 and 7,000 mg/L according to DME Groundwater Resources Victoria. As such, the groundwater would be classified as Segment C according to the SEPP Groundwaters of Victoria with the beneficial uses to be protected including:

- Maintenance of ecosystems.
- Stock watering.
- Industrial Water Use.
- Primary contact, recreation.
- Buildings and Structures.

4.Strategic Planning Context

4.1 Mernda Strategy Plan

The Mernda Strategy Plan (MSP) is the primary policy document to guide and inform the preparation of development plans for the Mernda Growth Area.

The City of Whittlesea prepared the MSP to give effect to the policy framework for the development of Mernda. The MSP was prepared to set a strategic direction and provide broad level planning control over the development of land in the Mernda component of the Plenty Valley growth corridor.

The MSP was incorporated into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme as part of Amendment C30 and contains key objectives and strategic responses to guide the development of land within the Mernda growth area. The key component of the MSP is to ensure that new development is sustainable and delivers environmental improvement, social progress and local economic growth.

The MSP was approved by Council in November 2004 and builds on the foundations of the Plenty Valley Strategic Plan. The MSP area is divided into 6 precincts covering 1,738 developable hectares around the Mernda township region.

The MSP identifies that a new Town Centre (Major Activity Centre) be developed and located at the corner of Bridge Inn Road and Plenty Road, in proximity to the Mernda railway station.

The individual Precinct Plans provide a more detailed and site-specific guidance on land-use and design requirements within each area. The statutory planning framework supports the implementation of the strategy by requiring a development plan be prepared and approved before development occurs. Development plans prepared must be generally in accordance with the relevant Precinct Plan.

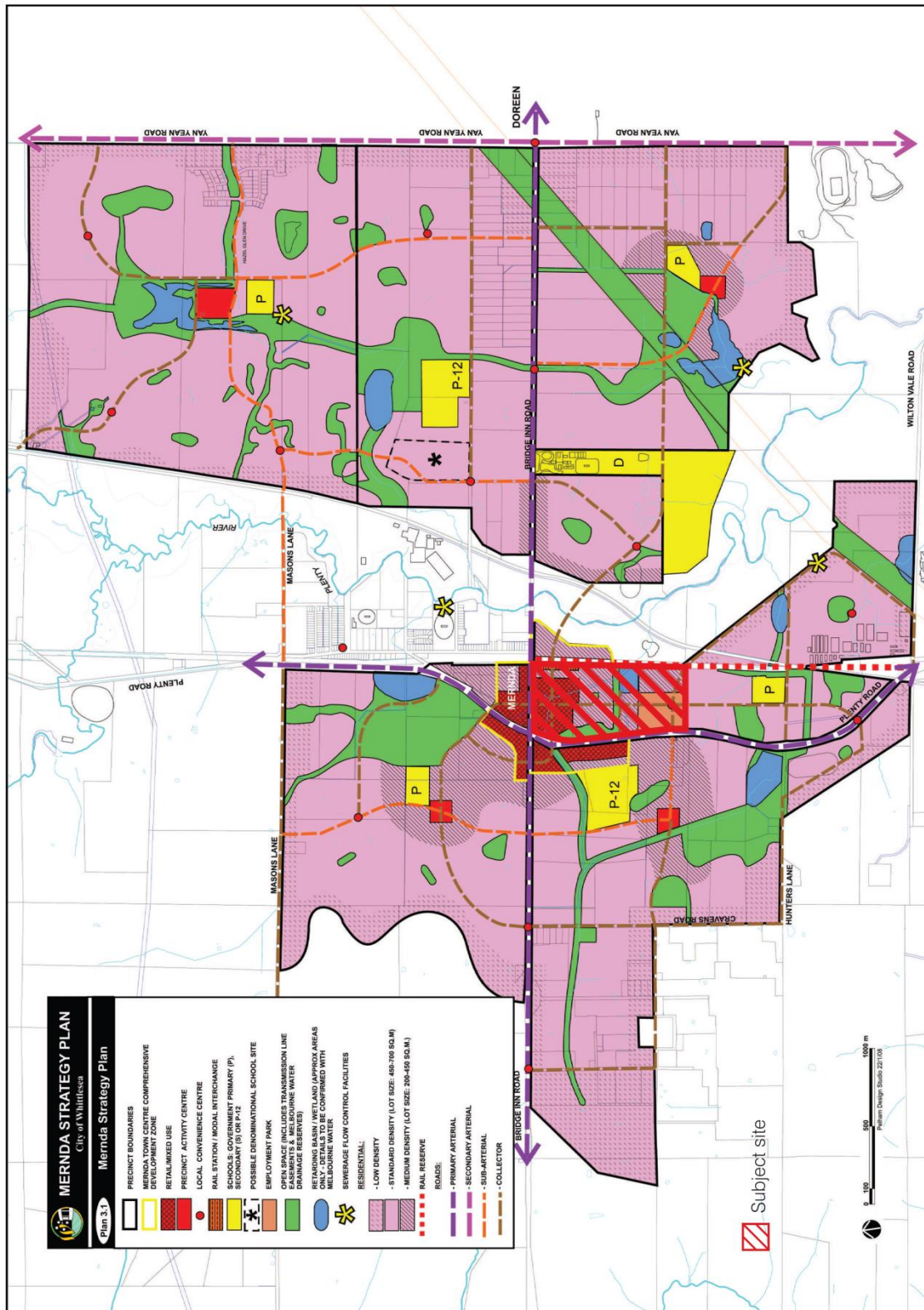
The MSP provides for an estimated 35,000 new residents in the City of Whittlesea and addresses both the residential, open space and employment needs of the growth area and the infrastructure and other development needs required to service the area. Future development plans prepared by developers must accord closely with the MSP and the relevant Precinct Plan.

The Key Objectives and Strategic Actions of the MSP identified are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Mernda Strategy Plan- Key Objectives and Strategic Actions

Planning and Design	Outlines the basic design guides that subdivisions should follow. The Key Objective is to create interconnected neighbourhoods with distinct characters.
Transportation	Summarises the expected road hierarchy and promotes non-vehicular transport use as part of Precinct planning. This is to put in place an efficient, equitable and environmentally sustainable transportation system including the rail extension to Mernda.
Environmental Considerations	Identifies areas requiring environmental protection to protect and enhance environmental values.
Activity Centres	Summarises the retail hierarchy throughout the study area to establish a series of diverse and pedestrian friendly precinct activity centres. The land within Precinct 5 identifies the location of the main town centre for the growth area.
Social Infrastructure and Community Development	Seeks to facilitate the timely provision of a range of community and recreation facilities to meet the needs of local residents. A Neighbourhood Centre and Youth Facility are proposed within the Precinct, close to the proposed school site.
Housing	The objective seeks to provide a mix of lot sizes and housing forms to cater for a broad range of household types.
Open Space	The MSP outlines an established open space network that establishes an integrated open space network. Of main interest to the study area is the proposed linear park to be established along the Yan Yean Pipetrack.
Heritage and Culture	Identifies important Aboriginal and European heritage and cultural sites and requires their protection in individual development plans.
Servicing and Drainage	The objective seeks to implement the servicing and drainage strategies that have been prepared by Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water. Plans must comply with the relevant drainage and water schemes.

Figure 5: Mernda Strategy Plan



Mernda Strategy Plan – Precinct 5

The Precinct 5 Plan provides more specific guidance for the Development Plan area as part of the overall Structure Plan area.

The Strategy Plan envisaged that Precinct 5 would contain approximately 1,354 residential households, in addition to approximately 27,500 square metres of retail floor area and 70,450 square metres of commercial floor area.

The key land use and design concepts within the Mernda Town Centre component of the Precinct 5 Plan which inform the development of the Development Plan area include:

- Land, of approximately 50 hectares, in the north-west of the precinct to be used for retail / mixed use land uses. This land is bound by Bridge Inn Road to the north and Plenty Road to the west.
- Employment generating land located at the south-west of the Town Centre precinct with a frontage to Plenty Road.
- A retarding basin located along the eastern edge of the Town Centre precinct.
- Residential development to be provided at medium density (lot sizes 200-450 sqm) around the previously defined land uses.
- A designated site for railway station and modal interchange. The layout and

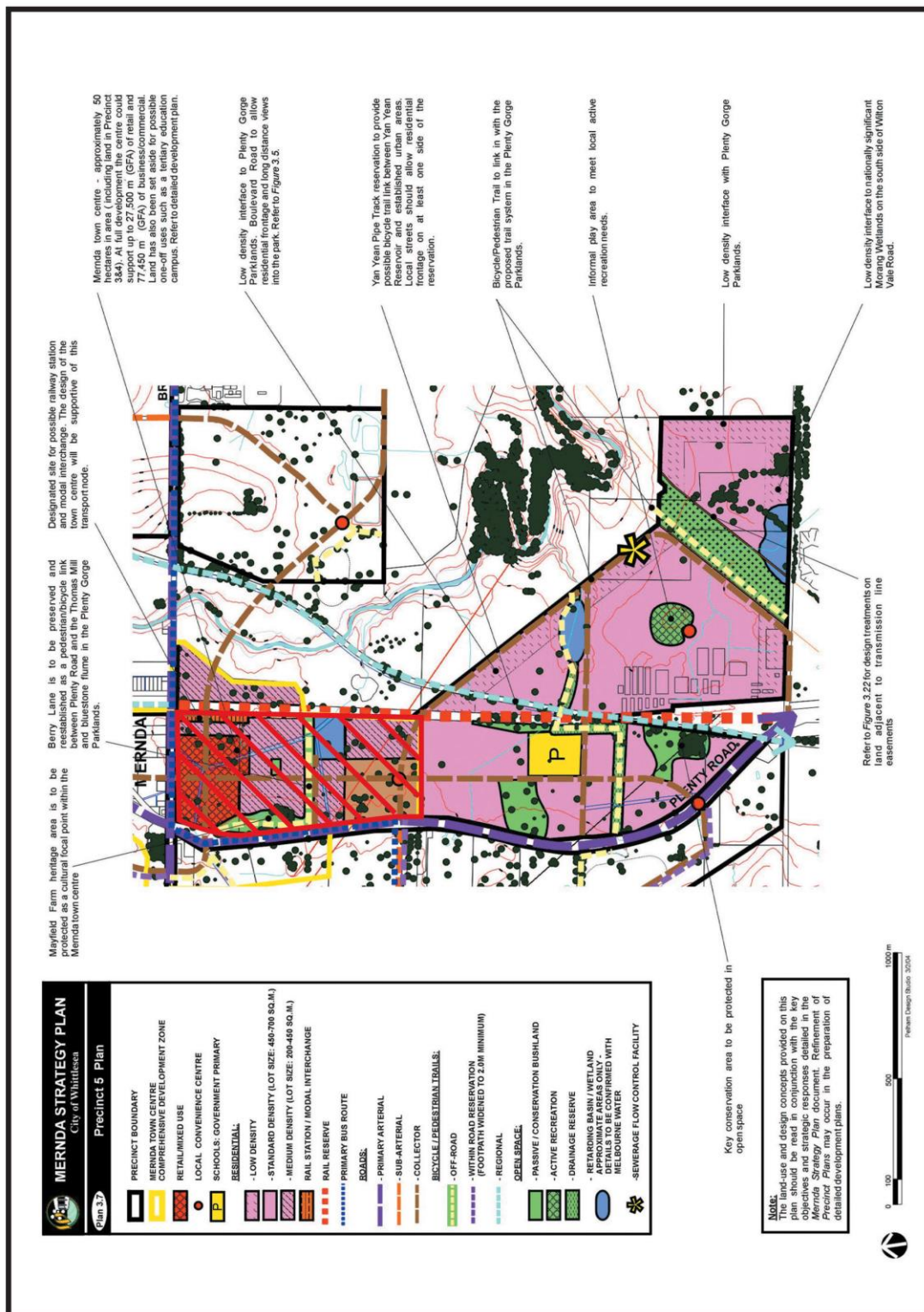
design of the town centre will be supportive of this transport node.

- Provision of three east-west collector roads, connecting Plenty Road to areas within the Town Centre precinct.
- Provision of a north-south collector road, connecting Bridge Inn Road with the areas to the south of the Town Centre precinct.
- Mayfield Farm heritage area is to be protected as a cultural focal point within the Mernda Town Centre.
- Berry Lane is to be preserved and re-established as a pedestrian/cycle link between Plenty Road and the Thomas Mill and bluestone flume in the Plenty Gorge Parklands.

These key features of the Precinct 5 Plan have informed the preparation of this Development Plan in providing for the efficient, integrated and sustainable design of the residential neighbourhoods.

The land-use and design concepts provided on this plan should be read in conjunction with the key objectives and strategic responses detailed in the Mernda Strategy Plan document. It should be noted that refinement of Precinct Plans may occur in the preparation of detailed Development Plans.

Figure 6: Mernda Strategy Plan - Precinct 5



Subject site

4.2 Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan

The Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) applies to an area of approximately 74.5 hectares. This includes some areas of medium density housing that surround and support the core mixed-use area and employment park. The emergence of a functional and attractive town centre in Mernda will further the social, economic and environmental objectives outlined in the Mernda Strategy Plan.

The Mernda Town Centre (MTC) will be a sub-regional centre that will service a primary catchment of around 50,000 people when the Mernda urban growth area is fully developed. It is expected that the MTC will have the following characteristics and attributes:

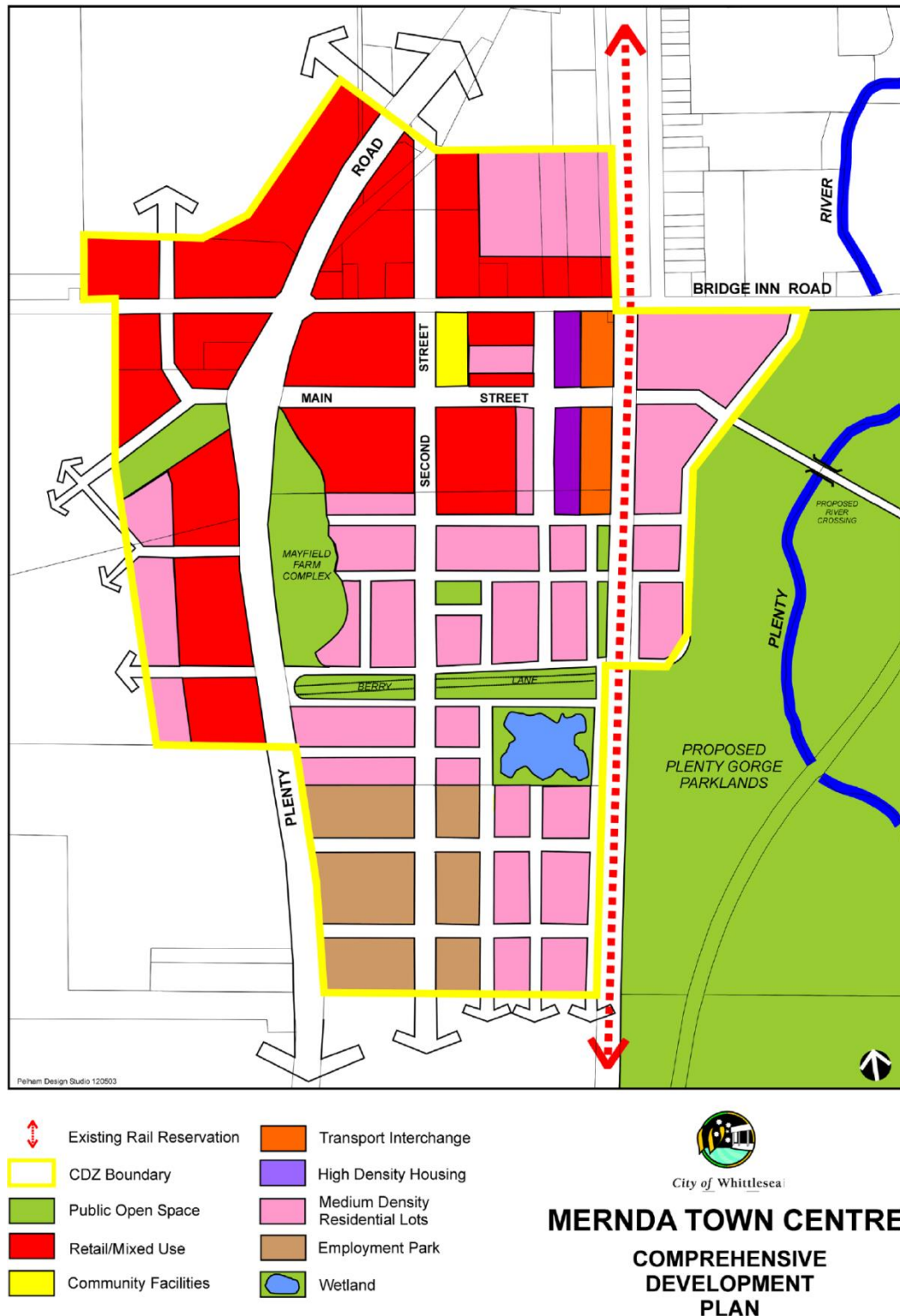
- Form the social and economic heart of a community.
- Remove the need to use a car for many local trips.
- Support public transport services.
- Generate local economic activity and employment.
- Promote civic pride and community participation.

To realise the type of Town Centre that is envisaged by the Mernda Strategy plan, five sets of Urban Design Principles have been adopted. More detailed principles will be identified under the same five subject headings in subsequent Development Plans for the Mernda Town Centre.

The principles relate to:

1. Land Use Integration and Density
2. Access and Connectivity
3. Diversity and Adaptability
4. Local Identity and Legibility
5. Ecological Responsiveness

Figure 7: Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan



5. Planning Framework

5.1 State Planning Policy Framework

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) seeks to foster the objectives of planning in Victoria (as set out in the Planning and Environment Act 1987) through appropriate planning policies and practices that encompass relevant environmental, social and economic factors to help guide land use decisions.

The sections of the SPPF most relevance to the consideration of this Development Plan includes:

- Clause 11 – Settlement
- Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values
- Clause 13 – Environmental Risks
- Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage
- Clause 16 – Housing
- Clause 17 – Economic Development
- Clause 18 – Transport
- Clause 19 – Infrastructure.

The relevant strategies from these clauses include:

- Locate a substantial proportion of new housing in or close to activity centres and other strategic redevelopment sites.
- Ensure that sufficient land is available for development to accommodate the needs of a growing and diversifying population, including for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, institutional and other public land uses.

- Deliver development which achieves high quality outcomes which reflect the community character and maintains liveability, ease of access and safety for the community.
- Ensure that significant environmental qualities of development sites are protected and where possible integrated within the overall development.
- Encourage residential development and subdivisions in locations where access to physical and community infrastructure is available and a range of lot sizes and densities can be achieved.
- Develop residential communities to deliver a convenient and safe road network, quality pedestrian and cycle paths and sufficient useable public open space.
- Encourage communities that contribute to an attractive built environment created because neighbourhood development emphasises existing cultural heritage values, attractive built form and landscape character.
- Ensure that new residential areas contribute to an urban structure where networks of neighbourhoods are clustered to support larger activity centres on the regional public transport network.

5.2 Local Planning Policy Framework

The Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) contains the City of Whittlesea's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and local policies.

The MSS policy framework offers specific directions with respect to the following considerations, relevant to the Development Plan area:

- Clause 21.04 – Settlement
- Clause 21.08 – Built Environment and Heritage
- Clause 21.09 – Housing
- Clause 21.10 Economic Development
- Clause 21.11 Transport
- Clause 21.12 Infrastructure

The key directions from the MSS include:

- Provide for activated street based environments which are pedestrian friendly, incorporating a mix of retail, commercial and community facilities with opportunities for residential or business uses on upper levels.
- Support the urban design outcomes identified in the approved plans for Plenty Valley Town Centre, Mernda Town Centre, University Hill, the Aurora Town Centres and other activity centres.
- Guide housing growth into areas in proximity to the PPTN and Metropolitan Activity and Neighbourhood Centres.
- Support a greater diversity of employment uses within the Epping Central Metropolitan Activity Centre and other designated activity centres, including office-based employment.
- Ensure the future Mernda Railway Line stations are well-located and integrated with town centres.

- Support transit orientated development which provides opportunities for higher density development, intermodal transport connections, public buildings and spaces.
- Ensure the railway corridor is designed such that it enhances movement, linkages across and along the rail corridor.
- Co-locate facilities close to other community assets such as retail precincts, arts facilities, and libraries to maximise accessibility and convenience to users.

The following local policies have important application for the Development Plan:

- Clause 22.10 – River Redgum Protection Policy – seeks to ensure that the development of urban and rural areas takes into account the presence, retention, enhancement and long term viability of River Red Gums in urban areas.
- Clause 22.11 – Development Contributions Policy – seeks to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided in a timely fashion to meet the needs generated by new development.

5.3 Zoning

The subject land is within a Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ) as shown in *Figure 8*. The purpose of this zone is:

- To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies.
- To provide for a range of uses and the development of land in accordance with a comprehensive development plan incorporated in this scheme.

More specifically, the Development Plan area is covered by CDZ Schedule 1, which is the primary mechanism for controlling the use and development of land in the Mernda Town Centre.

Schedule 1 to the CDZ requires that all use and development be generally in accordance with the incorporated Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan (MTC CDP).

Figure 8: Zoning Map



5.4 Overlays

The subject land is covered by 5 overlays. They are as follows:

- Vegetation Protection Overlay;
- Heritage Overlay (partially);
- Incorporated Plan Overlay;
- Development Plan Overlay; and
- Development Contributions Plan Overlay.

Each of these are summarised below:

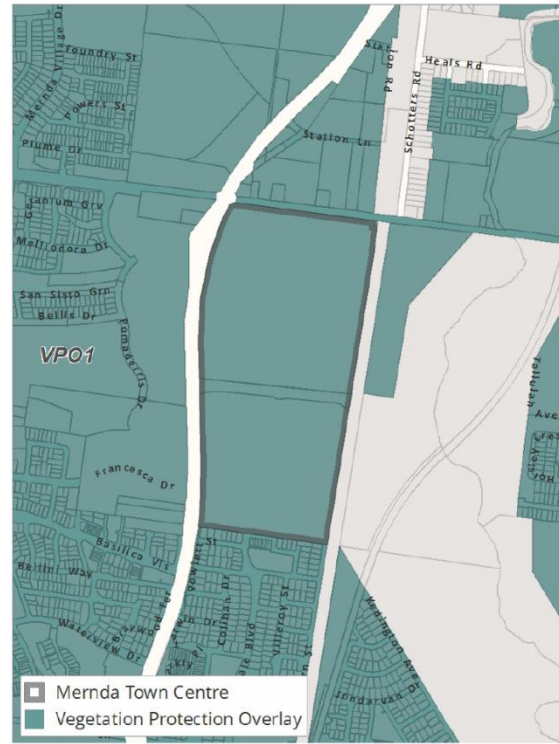
Vegetation Protection Overlay – Clause 42.02

The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas of significant vegetation, and ensure that development minimises loss of vegetation. It also recognises areas as locations of spatial significance, natural beauty, interest and importance.

Schedule 1 to the VPO, which covers the Development Plan area, relates to significant vegetation (River Redgum Grassy Woodland) in the Plenty Valley and surrounding areas, including Mernda, Doreen and South Morang.

The clause states that no permit is required to remove, destroy or lop vegetation, which is not native vegetation.

Figure 9: Vegetation Protection Overlay

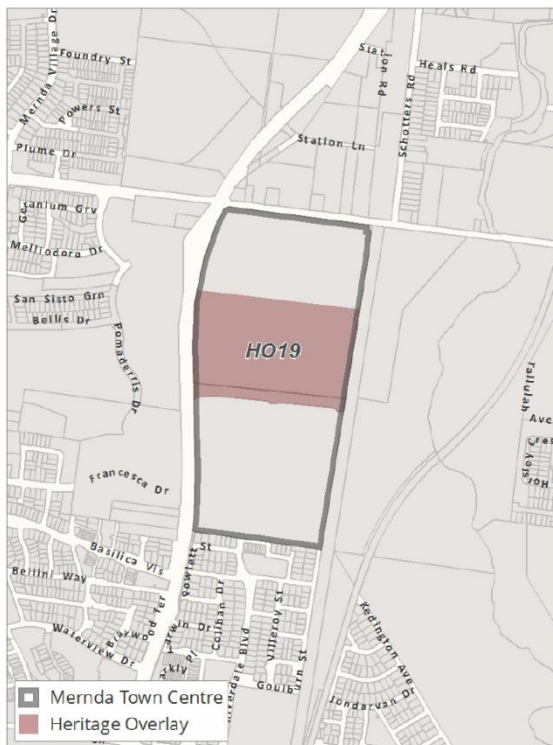


Heritage Overlay – Clause 43.01

The purpose of this overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance and to conserve those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage plans.

Part of the site is covered by the Heritage Overlay, being 1390 Plenty Road, which relates to Mayfield Farm and Berry Lane.

Figure 10: Heritage Overlay Map

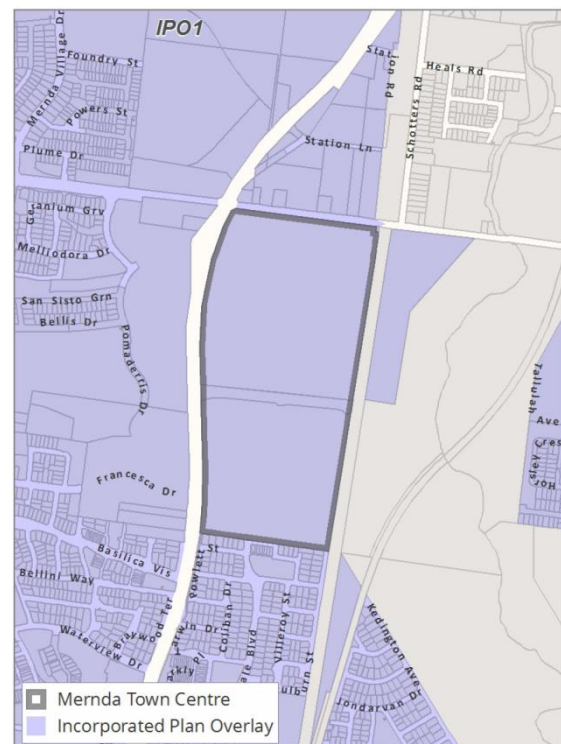


Incorporated Plan Overlay – Clause 43.03

The purpose of this overlay is to identify areas which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be shown on an incorporated plan before a permit can be granted to use or develop the land.

Pursuant to Schedule 1 of the IPO, the Mernda Strategy Plan is incorporated into the Planning Scheme under Clause 43.03. Applications made in accordance with the Mernda Strategy Plan are exempt from the notice and review rights provided in the Act.

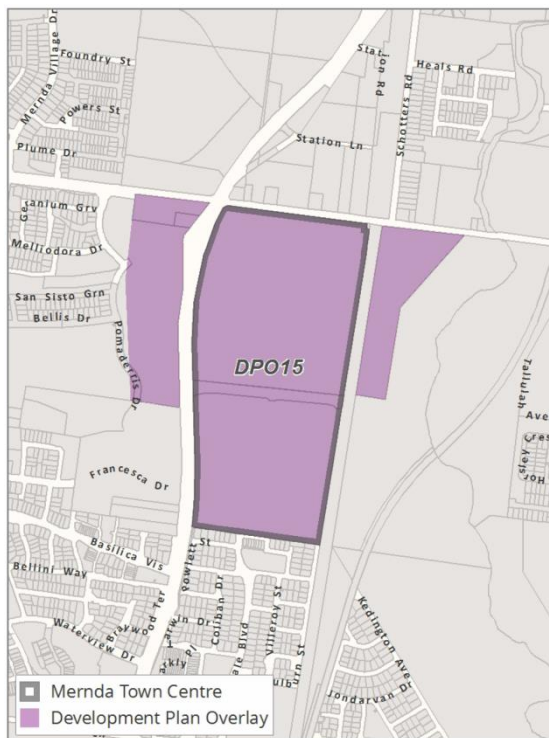
Figure 11: Incorporated Plan Overlay



Development Plan Overlay – Clause 43.04

The purpose of this overlay is to identify areas which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be shown on a development plan before a permit can be granted to use or develop the land, and to exempt an application from notice and review if it is generally in accordance with a development plan.

Figure 12: Development Plan Overlay Map



Schedule 15 applies to the Development Plan area, and applies to the Mernda Town Centre Development Plan.

A development plan must be informed by a detailed Development Plan area analysis of the natural, cultural and strategic context of the site and show, or include, the following matters to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:

- General consistency with the relevant incorporated plans (Mernda Strategy Plan and Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan).
- Protection and enhancement of identified conservation areas, including retention of mature indigenous trees where possible, and a net gain assessment of any native vegetation to be removed.
- The located of various land uses which are to comprise the Development Plan area, and provision of appropriate transition and interface design treatments between designated land uses.
- Conservation and protection of Aboriginal and European cultural heritage places.
- Provision of a safe pedestrian-orientated road network providing a high degree of connectivity and external and internal permeability.
- A traffic management plan, including parking plans and concept plans for the modal transport interchange and train station.
- Building envelopes showing building heights, massing and indicative scale.
- The stages, if any, by which the development of land is proposed to proceed.

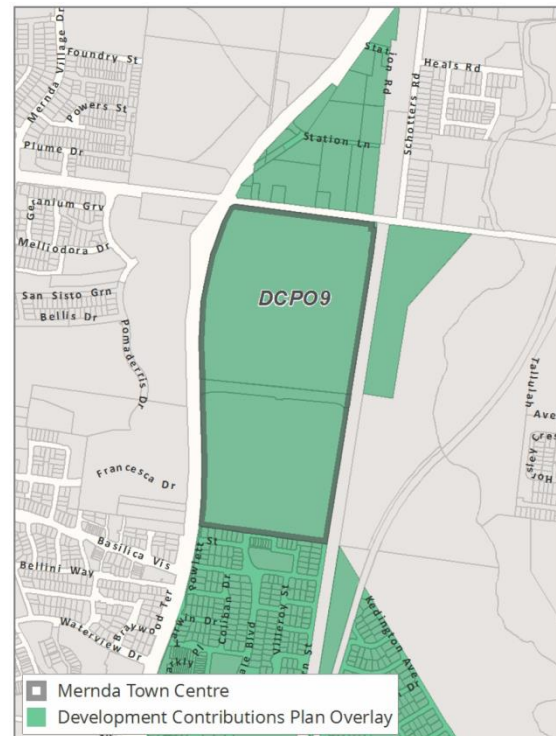
Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Clause 43.06

The purpose of this overlay is to identify areas which require the preparation of a development contributions plan for the purpose of levying contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities before development can commence.

Schedule 9 applies to Precinct 5 of the Mernda Strategy Plan, and provides a summary of the costs and contributions required.

The Mernda Strategy Plan Development Contributions Plan should be referred to for full details of contributions required.

Figure 13: Development Contributions Overlay



6. The Development Plan

This chapter is to be read together with the whole of this approved Development Plan.

The approved Development Plan for the Mernda Town Centre embraces the principles of the MSP and the CDP for the Town Centre and proposes a design framework that will deliver:

- an truly integrated pedestrian-scaled, mixed use centre focused on a traditional Main Street;
- a range of residential densities and housing options to respond to the changing household make up of Melbourne's population;
- a range of community services;
- protection and integration of heritage sites including Mayfield Farm and Berry Lane;
- employment opportunities within a well- designed commercial centre;
- a transport hub centre around the Mernda Train Station.

The major strength of the approved Development Plan is that it provides a balanced design solution that seeks to achieve the key land use and design objectives originally identified in the MSP and CDP for this focal point of Mernda.

6.1 Design Principles

In preparing this Development Plan, the focus has been to create a sustainable, vibrant and urban Mernda Town Centre that will provide for a unique range of land uses to service the broader Mernda Growth Area. *Figure 14* outlines the proposed land uses.

The integration of these uses, the flexibility in the plan to adapt to market conditions over time and the opportunity for setting new standards in town centre design have been the driving factors in developing the master plan.

Subsequently, and in keeping with the relevant planning policy direction for Precinct 5, the following key overarching design principles have been established and therefore, have influenced the ultimate design of the Development Plan:

1. The town centre core precinct is to be strategically positioned in a central location and in proximity to the train station in order to maximise the broadest access to local residents, workers and visitors from the region and to appropriately integrate the centre with the new railway station. Main Street will run perpendicular to the railway line, extending through the Development Plan area to a north-south connector road which will provide the primary connection to adjacent residential land and to Bridge Inn Road.
2. Establish a permeable and efficient road network based upon a clear grid pattern, with key activity hubs adjacent to key intersections, and ensure permeable sightlines for all modes of transport (especially pedestrians and cyclists) are available at all intersections. Articulate the grid pattern so as to encourage multi-modal (vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian) use to gain access to all precincts of the development.
3. Establish and reinforce the linkages between the town centre and Mayfield Farm to the west and the transport hub to the east. Provide clear sightlines and a multi modal movement corridor to the residential precinct (south and east) and employment precinct (north).
4. Integrate the town centre core with the surrounding land uses through a highly permeable, network of streets and lanes that provide a variety of pedestrian experiences consistent with an urban environment. Provide for pedestrian priority to assist permeability across Main Street and between the town centre core precinct and transport hub.
5. Introduce built form diversity to assist the legibility of the various parts of the Main Street Precinct. Examples of how this can be achieved within the framework of the plan include vertical elements adjoining the town square, large scale anchor tenants adjoining laneway environments, freestanding pavilion scaled buildings onto Main Street, and upper level activity. High quality architectural design and finishes shall communicate a civic quality to the street.
6. Maximise opportunities for the activation of streets and passive surveillance of key public spaces from within adjoining land uses during day and night time. For example, activation of small retail premises

- facing onto streets using passing trade with carefully located car parks (including vertical circulation design), car park design and high pedestrian/bicycle connectivity into adjoining precincts. At grade car parking areas are to be screened from streets by the built form.
7. Celebrate community gathering and sense of place with a clearly defined and useable public square located centrally within Main Street, supported by a network of smaller public spaces.
 8. Provide for a diversity of density and housing types, which is complemented by an open space network that is to be utilised for informal passive recreation.
 9. Introduce new dwelling formats within the high density residential areas to encourage a diverse residential population, with active ground level land uses to create a vibrant and mixed use environment.
 10. Position the employment zone adjacent to Bridge Inn Road in order to provide it with easy access to the transport hub and high exposure to assist in attracting commercial tenants. The location will allow for expansion around a marker entry at an intersection with the north-south connector road and adjacent to the retail precinct to reinforce interaction.
 11. Provide building formats that are flexible and adaptable to support a variety of business types to facilitate a sustainable commercial precinct.
 12. Reinforce the local historical and cultural significance of Mayfield Farm not only through the preservation of its existing built form and surrounds but by establishing it as an important focus of the local community, by locating key community activities within it and ensure it is well connected to the town centre core
13. The upgrade of the historic Berry Lane will provide a transition between the town centre to the north and the residential precinct to the south. This linear open space will have the primary function of providing access for all forms of transport and will create the opportunity for linking with land to the east and west of the Development Plan area. The connection should sympathetically interpret and strengthen the historical link between Mayfield Park and the Plenty River.
 14. The large areas of remnant native vegetation scattered throughout have been retained where reasonably possible within pocket parks to enhance the landscape quality that is Mernda. At the planning permit stage of the town centre's development, reasonable endeavours should be made to maximise the retention of remnant trees including trees that have been nominated for removal.
 15. Further design detail for each precinct and land use will focus on environmentally sustainable design initiatives that will be energy efficient and achieve best practice water conservation principles. This level of detail will be explored at the planning permit stages.
 16. Provide landscaping opportunities across the town centre including the retention of River Red Gums and planting of trees within the car parking areas and a green space within the town squares.

6.2 Building Heights

The Mernda Town Centre provides opportunity for a higher scale of buildings than in the surrounding areas. This will assist in providing for a diversity of uses and a density which makes best use of the services and facilities of the Mernda Town Centre. The preferred building heights are illustrated in *Figure 14* Land Use plan.

The key design principles which future applications are to demonstrate compliance with are identified as follows:

- Buildings should be consistent with the preferred building heights outlined in *Figure 14*.
- Higher scale development should be concentrated in proximity to the Mernda Train Station and the town centre core and at key intersections.
- Buildings with frontage to public streets in the Town Centre (in particular Main Street) and at the corner of intersections, should to be a minimum of 2 storeys.
- Where buildings are less than the preferred building height the design and construction methods of the building structure should ensure that additional stories can be accommodated at a later date.
- Building heights are to be sympathetic with and transition to the Mayfield Farm Heritage precinct.
- Upper levels greater than 4 storeys should be setback to minimise amenity impacts on adjoining use and development and also ensure the building does not dominate the street.

Figure 14: Land Use Plan



Note: The size and location of community facilities is to meet the requirements of the Mernda Strategy Plan (MSP) and Mernda Development Contributions Plan (DCP). The plan above identifies the preferred location of the community facility buildings. Additional or alternative sites may be required to satisfy the MSP and DCP requirements.

6.3 Land Use Precincts

The Development Plan provides for a range of land uses consistent with the purpose of the Comprehensive Development Zone. These land uses create the activity and focus for the Mernda Town Centre. Critical for the success of the development is that land uses are integrated, connected and complementary to ensure the future population has convenient access to a broad range of facilities, services, activities and opportunities ranging from work through to recreation.

The precincts have been laid out across the Development Plan area to maximise the walkability for all users, ensure there is necessary transitional treatments between the precincts and that opportunities for pedestrian activity at ground level is maximised.

The layout of the Mernda Town Centre has been designed with these driving principles in mind together with the objectives of the MSP and CDP. The following provides an outline of the key precincts that have been defined within the Development Plan and the driving design objectives integral to delivering the project.

The land uses shown in *Figure 14* identify the predominant land use and function of the different precincts in the town centre. However, it is envisaged that the precincts will develop as mixed use precincts with residential developed at upper levels within the core retail area and compatible commercial and retail uses integrated into the residential area.

Town Centre Core

The town centre paradigm is one of the oldest and most enduring forms of creating a community focus. Its origins date back thousands of years to village squares, which served as the community market place and became a central location for services and social interaction.

The town square concept has evolved but its essence as a commercial and social hub remains as relevant as it ever was. For planned town centres in growth areas on the urban fringe of metropolitan Melbourne, retail development and to a lesser extent civic uses provided by a level of government are invariably the initial drivers of activity, ahead of other commercial, community and residential uses that might be introduced later as the local economy develops and the market matures.

The Development Plan for Mernda Town Centre seeks to create a framework and structure that will allow retail opportunities to grow and diversify in response to the development of its supporting residential communities and retail trade area.

It is important that the Mernda Town Centre has the capacity and flexibility to accommodate an increasingly diverse mix of uses as it matures and supports more facilities and infrastructure.

It is intended that this town centre also integrates with the commercial / business land uses to be contained within the employment precinct to the immediate north and with residential uses to the south. The integration of these commercial and residential land uses will contribute to 'blurring the line' between

the adjacent but complementary precincts.

As development progresses, a review of the mixture of land uses may need to be undertaken to inform the most appropriate land use for later stages on the periphery of the Town Centre core.

The Development Plan also enables the integration of the Mernda Town Centre with the public transport system including Mernda Train Station and bus connections to the surrounding neighbourhood centres.

Figure 15 provides a design response to the development of the Town Centre Core Precinct to which future applications are to generally accord. Any variation to this plan must demonstrate strict compliance with the key design principles for the Town Centre Core Precinct.

The driving principles behind the design of the town centre can be summarised as follows:

Scale – It is essential that the market and the competitive environment can accommodate a range of retail offerings and is relative to the needs of the catchment area it serves, to ensure the centre is of a sustainable scale. The scale of buildings should enclose the street and facilitate a range of complimentary uses.

Flexibility – The retail environment is extremely dynamic, constantly changing to remain competitive and meet the needs of consumers. This change occurs incrementally and activity centres must be capable of physically adapting to accommodate new store types and customer demands.

Connectivity – The degree of connectivity with surrounding uses is an important issue relating to convenience, exposure, identification and the benefits of synergy. Linkages (physical and visual) are critical to the optimal functioning of the centre. This includes factors such as the safety and convenience of pedestrian routes, adjoining land uses on site edges, and integration with public transport. The centre must be designed to maximise pedestrian flows around high-intensity nodes such as the Mernda Train Station and the Main Street where core uses are concentrated.

Integration – A vibrant town centre core needs to integrate with the wider precinct and a variety of land uses. In particular integrating with the Mernda Train Station and transport interchange is important for the vitality of the centre.

Anchor uses – Destinations such as large anchor stores, community facilities and the Mernda Train Station are important for generating pedestrian traffic. Such uses should be located in key positions to ensure that they are convenient to access and while maximising the amount of speciality retail located en-route.

Broad role – Create the broadest possible role for the centre to satisfy a range of consumer needs in one location, maximise reasons to visit, length of stay, frequency of visit and amount spent. As the centre matures, its role should expand as the population base expands to support additional commercial, community and civic functions.

Environment and ambience – Create an environment and atmosphere which suits the role and scale of the centre, making it a place to visit regularly and establishing it as a community focal point. This can be achieved by creating attractive and safe public spaces with interesting buildings with quality architecture and maintaining the pedestrian scale. High quality landscaping, street furniture, shade and shelter are to be incorporated into the town centre to deliver a pleasant amenity.

Car parking – Adequate car parking is required to support the town centre. The siting of car parking areas must strike a balance between being convenient for all users of the township and ensuring active streetscapes are maintained. Open parking areas are to be screened from streets by the built form.

24 hour activity - Single-purpose shopping centres or business districts are typically active for only part of the day. Successful town centres on the other hand are often active for extended periods every day. This is achieved by providing residential development within and adjacent to the centre as well as retail and entertainment uses that operate beyond normal business hours.

Community focus – Community services and uses which are compatible with the activity within the town centre should be designed in partnership with Council. Such uses may include the library or maternal child health services which are often significant generators of activity and sit comfortably with key retail facilities. Activation of space beneath the elevated rail will also be encouraged.

Figure 15: Design Response Plan



The key design principles for the Town Centre Core Precinct which permit applications must give effect to are identified as follows:

- Must deliver a two sided 'Main Street' with active frontages and 'fine grain' retail established along the length of the northern side and opportunities for on-street dining on the southern side. 'Fine grain' retail should be provided in favour of larger format stores and uses on the Main Street.
- Must ensure that priority is given to pedestrian movement throughout the Town Centre core and reflected in permeable pedestrian routes, high amenity, the design of road cross section and intersection treatments. Pedestrian priority must be provided across Main Street and at the intersection of Main Street and Station Street, between the transport hub and the Town Centre core.
- Pedestrian activity from the Train Station must be directed and promoted along the Main Street to the Town Centre via a shared pedestrian zone and direct pedestrian links. Pedestrian activity must not be encouraged to bypass the Main Street though the provision of direct access to internal or private pedestrian streets from Station Street.
- The Train Station and transport hub must be integrated into the Town Centre core. Activation of land adjacent and beneath the elevated rail is strongly encouraged.
- Buildings and streets are to be designed to provide a consistent covered walkway or verandah for weather protection, dense canopy trees, and space for on-street dining.
- High density residential / office uses should be provided in upper storeys along streets to provide an enclosed built form and diversity of uses.
- Streets and intersections must be enclosed by built form. The fronts of buildings are encouraged to be built to the front property boundary. Built form at intersections is to be prominent, actively address both streets and provide high quality architectural forms and features.
- Car parking areas must be satisfactorily screened by the built form. In early stages where screening by built form is not viable, pad sites are to be provided in favour of temporary uses such as car parking.
- Community facilities must be centrally located to provide easy access for residents to services and generate community activity with the Town Centre core. A community facility should be located on the Main Street with direct frontage and pedestrian access to deliver this objective.
- A Town Square must be delivered to function as the identifiable 'centre' or 'heart' with a distinctive local character for both the town centre and the broader residential catchment. The Town Square must be connected directly to the Main Street and include a shared pedestrian zone across Main Street to facilitate pedestrian movement.

- Internalised retail and retail fronting private car parking must be minimised in favour of locating retail to activate and engage with public streets, squares and pedestrian paths. Internalised retail must be restricted as much as possible to small areas at the entrance of anchor stores and uses.
- Development is to complement the character of the surrounding area by responding appropriately to key visual cues associated with the topography of the town centre location and its surrounds.
- River Red Gums identified in this Development Plan must be retained unless consented for removal by the City of Whittlesea. Retained River Red Gums must be incorporated sensitively into the town centre core in accordance with relevant protection guidelines and contribute to establishing a character for the centre reflective of its surrounding area and past appearance.

Employment / Commercial

The land contained within Precinct 5 of the MSP has the unique opportunity to provide for development of a commercial nature focused on generating a significant level of employment for the Mernda Growth Area. The MSP identifies this opportunity as being focused towards the promotion of high end business and offices which are encouraged to be of a non-retail based nature.

Key design objectives relating to the employment / commercial hub include:

- Provides for commercial and offices uses supported by complementary retail and residential uses.
- Provide for the retention and protection of River Red Gums trees into tree reserves as part of the design.
- Ensure built form is prominent along arterial roads and public streets and provides a screen to car parking.
- Encourage built form of high architectural quality and interest.
- Avoid uses such as child care centres and medical centres being located on main roads.

Transport hub

The Development Plan has been designed to integrate with Mernda Train Station and the associated transport hub contained on both sides of the rail corridor.

Key design objectives relating to the transport hub include:

- The ground level of built form facing the transport hub is to be of an “active” nature to create a vibrant precinct that will service commuters, residents and visitors heading into the town centre core.
- Encourage activation of land beneath railway.
- Provide for road, pedestrian and cycle connections across the rail corridor.
- Ensure bus interchange and taxi rank to be sited and designed with convenient pedestrian connections to the town centre.
- Ensure the transport hub provides for convenient and safe cycle facilities and pedestrian connections to ensure the precincts are accessible for all users.

Encourage the high density housing to be accommodated within close proximity of the transport hub and to have active frontages at ground level that complement the town centre core function.

Mayfield Farm precinct

The Mayfield Farm precinct is a unique feature of the Mernda Town Centre land and of the broader Mernda Growth Area. Its topography, remnant vegetation and historic built form are distinctive features within the region and lends itself to a land use or collection of uses that encourage the broader community to gather and enjoy the precinct.

Development in and in the vicinity of Mayfield Park will need to be sympathetically designed to respond to the heritage values of the site.

Key design objectives relating to the precinct include:

- Restore the historic buildings within the precinct to provide for multifunctional facilities that are adaptable to range of commercial and community uses.
- Reinforce the accessibility of the Mayfield Farm facility through well designed network that connect with all precincts within the Mernda Town Centre.
- Provide for complementary and sympathetically designed commercial and mixed use land uses around the perimeter of the Mayfield Farm Precinct to integrate with the surrounding precincts.
- Provide for a sensitive interface between the Mayfield Farm precinct and adjoining land uses and development.

Residential precinct

The Mernda Town Centre precinct provides an environment for a diversity of housing options that take full advantage of the proximity to an activity centre with employment, services and facilities and the Mernda Train Station.

The Development Plan therefore seeks to accommodate medium to high densities in the residential precincts which will meet the objectives of the MSP and state policy. The layout and design of the residential precincts has sought to provide a permeable and walkable residential environment that has direct access to the transport hub, the Town Centre core and Mayfield Farm. Berry Lane and its linear open space provides the appropriate interface and transition between the residential environment in the southern portion of the site and the town centre core.

The development plan provides for a number of residential options and typologies which respond to the housing objectives of the MSP. The scale and density of these housing options increases the closer to the town centre and the transport hub. These options include:

- Medium to standard residential lots as part of the existing residential estate south of Berry Lane. These lots are complemented by open space to protect River Red Gums, provide recreational opportunities and a natural landscape setting that is associated with Mernda.
- Medium density residential lots and townhouses sited within close proximity to the town centre and the Berry Lane cycle / pedestrian link. Terrace style and attached dwellings will be well suited to these lots and cater to the small household units.
- High density housing is to be facilitated in the Town Centre core land and above retail developments.

Residential buildings are to accord with the preferred building heights outlined in Figure 14 and provide for uses such as retail and commercial to activate the street at ground level.

Building heights and the built form in the residential estate south of Berry Lane should be consistent with the provisions of the General Residential Zone (GRZ) and Res Code (Clauses 54 and 55 of the Victorian Planning Provisions).

The town centre may also provide the opportunities for social and affordable housing to be integrated into residential developments, given the proximity to services and public transport.

6.4 Creation of the Street Network

The creation of the town centre begins with the development of a street network which will provide the structure from which everything will branch off and will be the primary focus of pedestrian activity. This street network provides a framework that will allow complementary uses, a variety of pedestrian experiences and a range of services to be introduced over time.

The development of the town centre is to include a permeable and connected network of public streets. Public streets are to provide unrestricted public access and are to be designed to prioritise pedestrian movement and safety. The creation and activation of public streets will be the priority for development in the town centre.

The Main Street will be the primary focus of the town centre. It will offer sufficient pavement widths to permit ease of pedestrian movement coupled with tree planting, the provision of well-located public furniture (i.e. seats, rubbish bins, drinking fountains, etc.) and space for outdoor trading/ dining particularly on the south side. Where appropriate, the town centre's related streets and laneways will also make some allowance for a similar range of public amenity provisions.

The Main Street will seek to prioritise pedestrian movement and activation and is to include a central shared pedestrian zone to facilitate pedestrian movement between the two sides of the street. The zone is to link the proposed town square with a widened pedestrian space on the north side of the Main Street. Vehicle and loading access and crossovers are not

encouraged along the town centre Main Street so as to avoid additional conflict of between pedestrians and turning vehicles and to provide for pleasant pedestrian amenity in the heart of the town centre. Activating public streets and particularly the 'Main Street' is to be the priority for the built form and retail layout of development.

The Main Street will be directly connected to the transport hub providing for integration and connection between transport and retail activity. A shared pedestrian zone is to be provided at the intersection of Main Street and Station Street to facilitate pedestrian movements between the Mernda Train Station / bus interchange, community facility and Main Street retail.

It is proposed that the Main Street will extend further east, beneath the proposed elevated rail to provide access to the transport interchange and parking located on the east side of the railway and future development areas.

A secondary access beneath the rail corridor to the land east of the railway line should also be provided further south. It is important that a minimum of two crossings of the rail corridor are provided to provide for the connectivity and permeability of the broader Mernda Town Centre.

Private or internal pedestrian streets and access to retail establishments is to only be considered when it does not detract and draw activity from the surrounding public streets and should be minimised to a small number of retail establishments centred around the entrance to anchor stores.

As part of the staging arrangements for the gradual development of the town centre the delivery of these street amenity qualities will be a carefully considered component of each stage of the Mernda Town Centre's development.

It is critical that the staging of development supports the development of built form along the public streets as a priority. Where development is not viable as part of early stages it is important that the ultimate vision for the town centre is safeguarded and not prejudiced through temporary uses such as parking or other developments that will be difficult to shift.

The key principles for the street network which future applications are to demonstrate compliance with are identified as follows:

Street Network

Objective: to provide a permeable and connected street network that prioritises pedestrians within a Town Centre environment.

- Must provide multiple pedestrian connections through to Main Street, supporting pedestrian intensity and directing pedestrian movement to the primary Main Street route.
- Must incorporate pedestrian shared zones in Main Street adjoining Town Square and at intersection with Station Street, to facilitate safe and efficient pedestrian movement across.
- Must design intersections with high pedestrian activity such Main Street and Station Street and Main Street and Riverdale Boulevard to be tight, compact and pedestrian friendly. Roundabouts are not considered an appropriate treatment for these intersections.
- Must provide for active frontages including 'fine grain' retail and cafes and community uses, to the Main Street.
- Must provide for legible and direct pedestrian/ street connections between the town centre's street system and adjoining residential and employment precincts.
- Town centre core to be built around a well-used, lively Main Street, and supported by a public street and laneway system with the potential for similar social qualities.

- Should provide a comfortable, physically well-defined and carefully-scaled built form to the edges of the Main Street and to the town centre's other streets.
- Vehicular access to car parking areas should not be from Main Street and other 'fine grain' retail strips. Where permitted the vehicle access must be designed to prioritise pedestrian safety and amenity.

Berry Lane

Objective: to sensitively integrate a pedestrian/ cycle link along Berry Lane having regard to its heritage significance.

- Must include the provision of a useable shared path.
- Should ensure built form engages and activates the lane.
- New landscape elements should promote entry experience and important view lines to ranges.
- Sections of the heritage elements of Berry Lane should be incorporated into the design to capture the historic value of the lane.
- Provide for retention of the existing bridge consistent with heritage recommendations.

Internal pedestrian streets

Objective: to restrict internal pedestrian streets in favour of promoting activity in public streets.

- Must be restricted to small areas at the entrance of anchor stores and uses.
- Must have main entrances directed to public streets.
- Must not provide routes which detract pedestrian activity away from 'Main Street' and other key pedestrian links.
- Where permitted, must be afforded good daylight access and natural ventilation system sufficient to break down the barrier between the nature of external weather conditions and the inherently enclosed nature of the internal street.
- Where permitted, must integrate (including visual and physical links) between the internal and external areas and with the broader the Town Centre including key nodes and connections.

Town Square

Objective: To create an appropriately sized and flexible public space that provides a focus for the community and a place for lively human interaction.

- The new town square must reflect the character of Mernda and respond to its emergence from its rural and natural context.
- Must provide a venue for community gathering and public events.
- Protection and integration of River Red Gum and its tree protection zone.
- Must provide protection from the elements.
- Must ensure surveillance from the surrounding single and double storey buildings.
- Should provide activation through ground floor café tenancies with outdoor seating.
- Must be connected directly to the Main Street and include a shared pedestrian zone across Main Street to facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Must provide appropriate levels of public infrastructure - seats, platforms, trees and urban art.
- Should clearly delineation between public and private zones.
- Should be integrated with and provide easy access to community facilities.

6.5 Response to Key Design Elements

Community facilities

The Development Plan makes provision for a range of community facilities in accordance with the MSP. The MSP requires the following community facilities to be co-located in a single building:

- Community and Performing Arts Centre;
- Outreach Centre; and
- Maternal & Child Health Centre.

In addition, parcels of land are required to be set-aside for the purposes of a branch library and a commercial child care centre.

The location and form of community facilities will ultimately be resolved as part of Development Contribution discussions to Council's satisfaction.

The provision of flexible and active community facility spaces on the Main Street is an important element of this Development Plan.

Figures 14 and 15 of this Development Plan identify the most suitable location for a community facility site on the Main Street in proximity to the transport hub. It is expected that to accommodate the range of required services in the one facility the building on the Main Street will need to be multi-level. A secondary facility could be accommodated on the same site at the corner of Station Street and an east-west local street.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the MSP additional or alternative sites maybe required. These could potentially be provided either within the retail core of the Mernda Town Centre or around the historic Mayfield Farm precinct.

A formal agreement will need to be made between the applicant and Council regarding the development contributions and the future delivery of the community facilities for the site. This may be in the form of a section 173 agreement.

Environment, Open Space and the Public Realm

The significance of the River Red Gums across the Development Plan area is recognised by both State and Local Policies which set out guidelines as to how vegetation should be protected. The Development Plan area is also subject to the Vegetation Protection Overlay which relates to native vegetation protection.

Several site layout options were explored to enable the retention of remnant River Red Gums to be maximised. The removal of any native vegetation should be avoided where possible. Tree removal also needs to be consistent with the requirements of the CDP, and moreover, the critical role that the Mernda Town Centre will play in the future success and sustainability of the Mernda Growth Area.

A report has been prepared which deals specifically with the retention and removal of trees and the manner in which this can be addressed under the requirements of the Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework, including an offset assessment.

A major challenge in the design of the Mernda Town Centre is to balance the need to conserve remnant trees while remaining consistent with the design parameters of the incorporated CDP and other social and economic objectives of the SPPF, LPPF and the MSP. It is considered that the Development Plan strikes an appropriate balance between these potentially conflicting objectives.

The Development Plan provides a variety of open space to suit the needs of the community and is generally in accordance with the Mernda Strategy Plan. Open

space is to be provided in the form a contiguous park that encompasses Mayfield Farm and Berry Lane to provide a direct link to the Plenty Gorge Parklands. Moreover, a variety of small and large pocket parks based around stands of remnant vegetation are to be created within the Residential precinct, which represents a departure from the MSP but is an appropriate supplement and response in light of the Melbourne Water retarding basin being relocated to the Plenty Gorge Parklands.

Key principles of the Development Plan relating to the open space network include:

- Creation of a local open space network for the residential component which will provide the framework within which residential development will sit. This network should have direct connections to all residential neighbourhoods, as well as connections with the broader context of the Development Plan area, including the Town Centre, the Plenty Gorge Parklands and the residential development to the south.
- Creation of a network of "hard" open spaces within the Town Centre component which will provide for visual and spatial amenity for users. This network should be closely integrated, both functionally and materially with the pedestrian movement system of the Town Centre.
- Development of a movement system which has a strong landscape character in its own right, and is clearly integrated with the character of the "hard" and "soft" open space framework. Moreover, the open space areas are to be integrated with movement systems (roads and paths)

so that a public realm of consistent character can be easily accessed by all.

- The design of proposed open spaces (in both Town Centre and residential contexts) is to be integrated with and respond to the design of the surround built form, in order to:
 - Create a consistent visual character for the entire the development;
 - Create a unifying public realm setting for the Development Plan area;
 - Provide for links to the Plenty Gorge parklands.
- Retention of trees nominated on the Development Plan for retention.
- Retention of remnant trees in public open space (both “hard” and “soft”) wherever possible, recognising the role such trees have in defining local landscape character.

Town Centre Open Space

The town centre area will feature a network of “urban” open spaces providing opportunity for pedestrian movement, as well as meeting and gathering. The Town Centre open space network will provide for a high amenity urban open space experience through the incorporation of seating, lighting, focal planting and pavement detailing to encourage community interaction and the external focus of cafés and other Town Centre businesses.

These local open space areas will be focused on the retention of remnant River Red Gums and will also feature low level indigenous planting and the integration of pedestrian access between streets and commercial and nearby higher density residential buildings.

The cultural heritage report recommends that all reasonable attempts are made to preserve and protect the two recorded scar trees in areas of open space.

In relation to the area of potential Aboriginal archaeological sensitivity it is recommended that disturbance of soil on the stony rise in the south-west corner of the Development Plan area be monitored by a Wurundjeri representative during the excavation works.

All earthworks in the south-west corner of the Development Plan area will be monitored by a Wurundjeri representative in accordance with the heritage assessment recommendations.

Mayfield Farm

In accordance with the Heritage Overlay that applies to this element of the Development Plan area, the intent is to retain the farm area and the elements that help define its valued character (remnant farm buildings and the Hawthorn hedge and bluestone pavement of Berry Lane) within a large open space context and facilitate a truly civic environment for the future cultural and community precinct.

This open space will be informal in nature, focused on the scattered exotic trees and providing open space infrastructure including a connecting path system, seating and shelters and picnic / barbecue facilities as appropriate. This informal character will continue down the eastern escarpment to the edge of the road which defines the western edge of the town centre precinct and will contrast with the more formal avenue planting to be established on the eastern verge of this road.

There will be the opportunity to explore the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for a range of appropriate community, commercial and retail uses.

It is important that the Mayfield Farm precinct is well integrated into the Town Centre and that development responds sympathetically to the heritage values of the Development Plan area.

Figure 16 identifies the heritage precinct and its integration with the broader Town Centre.

Figure 16: Mayfield Farm and Open Space Linkages



Road Access and Layout

The Strategy Plan provides for access to the precinct through a collector road network as shown in and with the roads described as follows:

- a) A new collector road running north from Plenty Road, approximately 500 metre north of Wilton Vale Road and extending into the Town Centre;
- b) A new collector road running east from Plenty Road then deviating around the retarding basin and then connecting to Wilton Vale Road which will be upgraded to collector Road status for approximately 350 metres; and
- c) A new collector road running east from Plenty Road directly opposite the proposed sub-arterial access to Precinct 4, deviating south-east and then south-west to connect to another connector road.

Moreover, the Comprehensive Development Plan prepared for the Town Centre provides for access to the future commercial precinct.

Background traffic reports have informed the development of a street network (refer to *Figure 17*) which responds to the Strategy Plan and the CDP while being functional and safe.

The final configuration of the road network will be determined in discussions with relevant service providers and Council to ensure that all infrastructure and service requirements can be accommodated at the permit application stage and to ensure that the road layout contributes to achieving the other objectives of this plan.

Access and Connectivity

The access strategy for the proposed development has been designed having regard to the Mernda Strategy Plan, the Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan and subsequent design and analysis which has been undertaken in consultation with Council and VicRoads.

The proposal incorporates two access points to Plenty Road and two access points to Bridge Inn Road.

The access strategy generally accords with the Mernda Strategy Plan, with the exception of the relocation of the Ring Road further south along Plenty Road to the Berry Road intersection. The implementation of the access strategy will be staged based on traffic engineering advice and discussions with Council and VicRoads.

The Ring Road is now proposed to cross Plenty Road via the signalised cross intersection at Berry Lane, approximately 200 metres south of Bridge Inn Road. This location is approximately 90 metres further south than the original proposal, but is considered appropriate.

The Ring Road will effectively form a perimeter road around the Town Centre and provide excellent access to the Mernda Rail Station and is considered to provide for improved access to the precinct.

The intersection treatment of Plenty Road with Main Street will be subject to further consideration at the planning permit stage.

The Development Plan allows for a connection to the land immediately east

of the Development Plan area, with potential accesses in the vicinity of the train station, south of Main Street and north of the intersection of Berry Lane and Station Street.

A minimum of two connections across the rail corridor must be provided.

Additionally, two connections to the land immediately south of the Development Plan area have been allowed for to facilitate access to the Town Centre. The roads connecting to the south have been designed to integrate into the already built cross sections of Riverdale Boulevard and Goulburn Street.

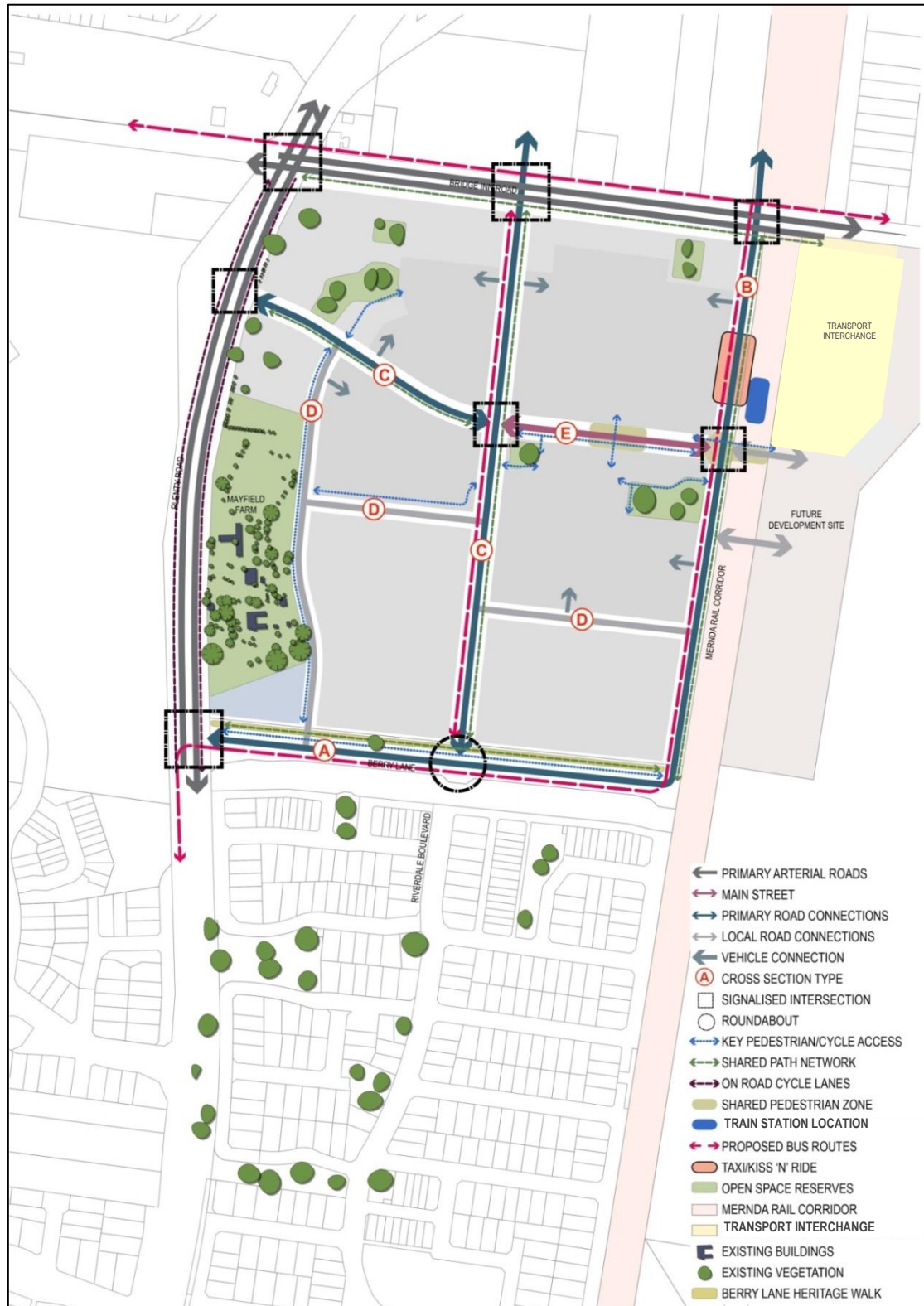
Parking

The Mernda Town Centre Development Plan area has adequate space to accommodate future parking needs of the retail, commercial and residential components of the development. It is proposed that parking for each land use will generally be provided at the rates nominated within the planning scheme. The main areas of car parking will be accessed from Main Street and located on both the north and south end of the Town Centre. Additional on-street car parking will also be provided subject to the function of the road and suitability of access.

At grade car parking areas will be landscaped and contain WSUD treatments as appropriate.

All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that bulk car parking is 'sleeved' with built form in the final build out of the Town Centre. Where, built form is not feasible as part of early stages pad sites will be provided adjacent to parking areas to provide for future built form.

Figure 17: Transport Plan



Intersection Treatments

Intersections around and within the Development Plan area are proposed to be controlled by a range of treatments. Preliminary assessments of the proposed road layout and traffic volumes around the Development Plan area have been utilised to determine appropriate treatment types.

Proposed treatments are outlined in *Figure 17*.

Intersections in the town centre core are to prioritise pedestrian movement. Roundabouts which prioritise vehicular movement are not considered appropriate.

In accordance with the Mernda Strategy Plan, it is proposed to signalise the intersection of Plenty Road and the east-west sub-arterial, in addition to intersection of Bridge Inn Road with Station Street. It is also proposed to signalise the intersection of the north-south road and Bridge Inn Road approximately mid-way across the Development Plan area's northern boundary. VicRoads will be involved in the development and final design of these intersections.

The intersection and roadwork final design and contributions for the Town Centre are

to be identified during the preparation of Planning Permit applications for each component of the Development Plan area. A traffic impact assessment report is to be prepared in conjunction with each application, identifying interim access requirements, as well as identifying the proposed design and treatments of roads and intersections to be constructed. This will enable the development of the Town Centre road network to be staged, with adequate access arrangements for each stage, designed to be incorporated into the ultimate layout as development progresses.

Indicative Road Cross Section Design

Streets within the Development Plan area are to be designed generally in accordance with the cross sections contained in the Table below and *Figures 18 to 22*.

The final cross section treatment will be subject to detailed design and will be determined in consultation with relevant service providers including bus operators and to the satisfaction of Council as part of planning permit process.

Any variations to the indicative cross sections must be consistent with the design objectives in section 6.4.

Table 3: Road Cross Sections

Reference	Road Reserve	Carriage-way Width	Parking
Section A (<i>Figure 18</i>)	21.6 metres	7.0 metres	Parallel kerbside
Section B (<i>Figure 19</i>)	22 metres	7.0 metres	Parallel kerbside
Section C (<i>Figure 20</i>)	20.6 metres	7.0 metres	Parallel kerbside
Section D (<i>Figure 21</i>)	19.3 metres	7.0 metres	Parallel kerbside (one side only)
Section F (<i>Figure 22</i>)	23.3 metres	6.0 metres	Parallel kerbside on south side; angle on north side

Figure 18: Indicative Road Cross Section A- Berry Lane

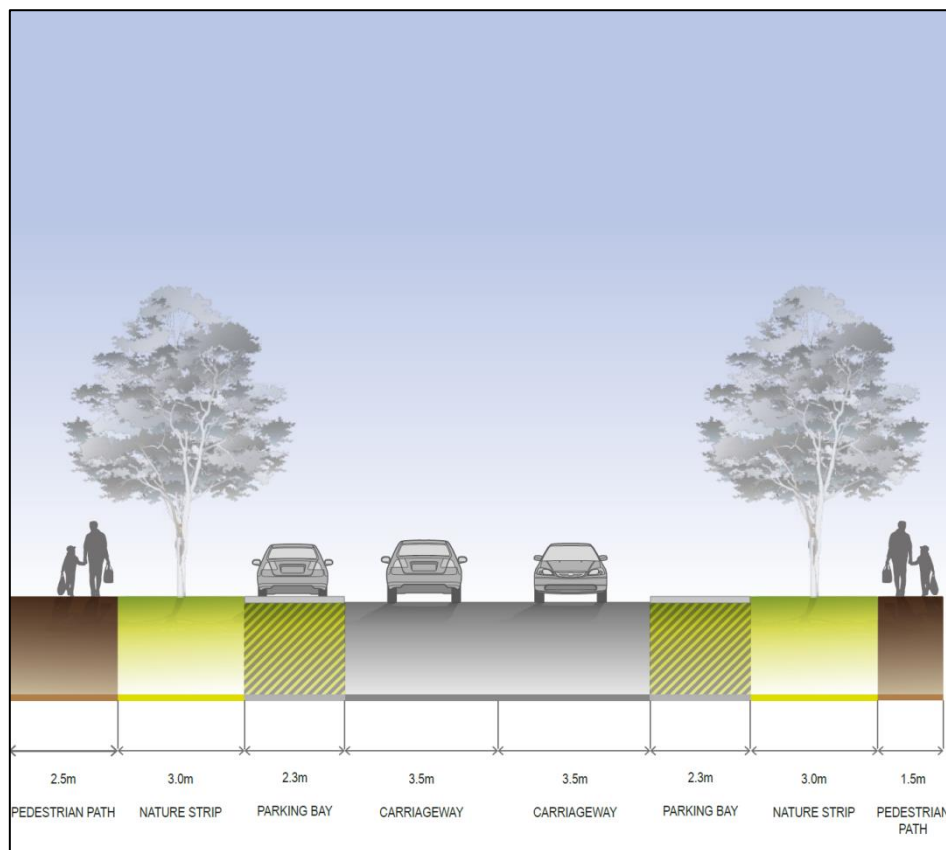


Figure 19: Indicative Road Cross Section B- Station Street

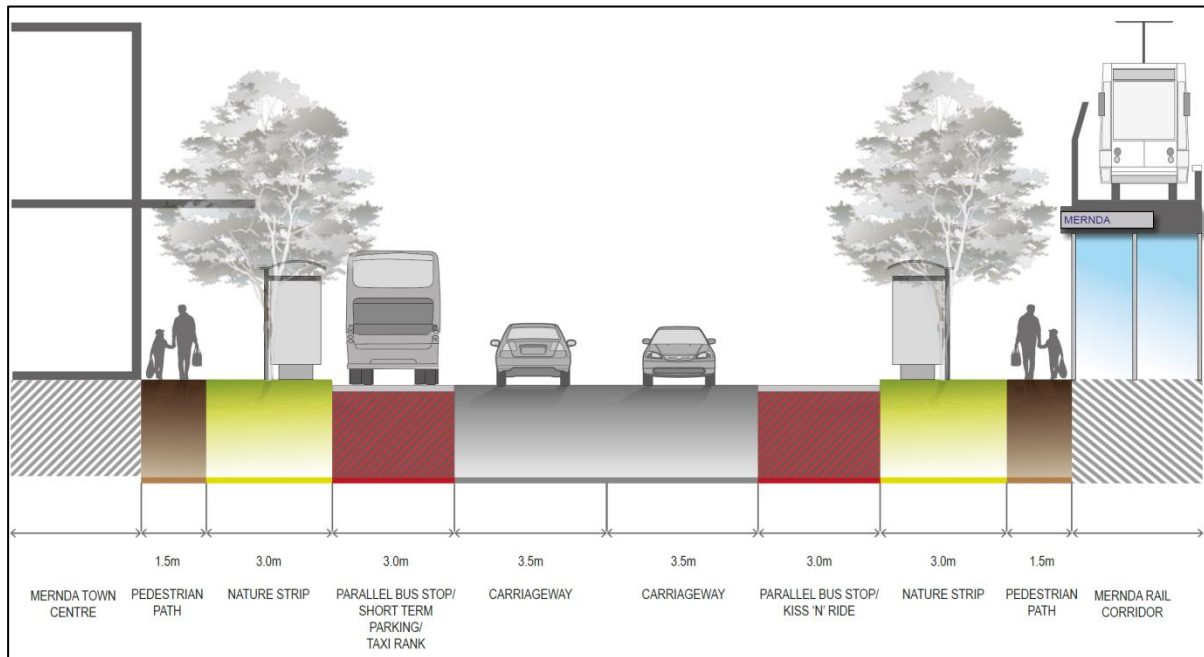


Figure 20: Indicative Road Cross Section C- Riverdale Blvd and Main Street (part)

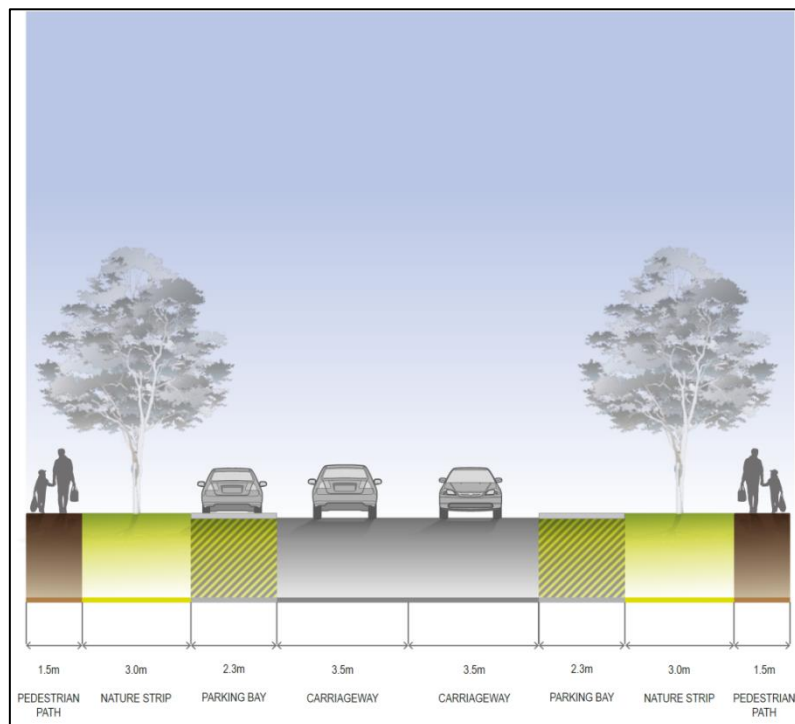


Figure 21: Indicative Road Cross Section D- Local Streets

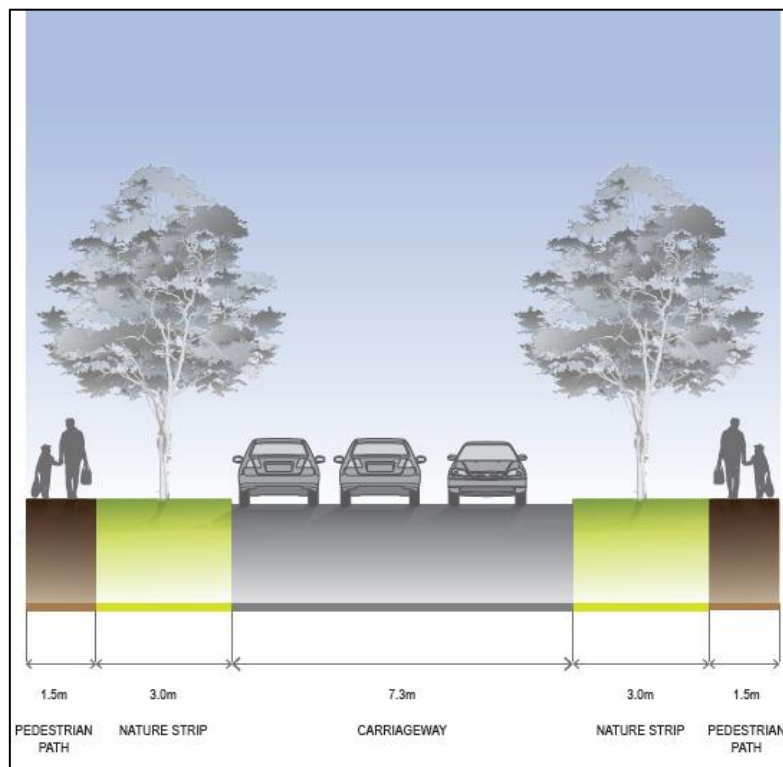
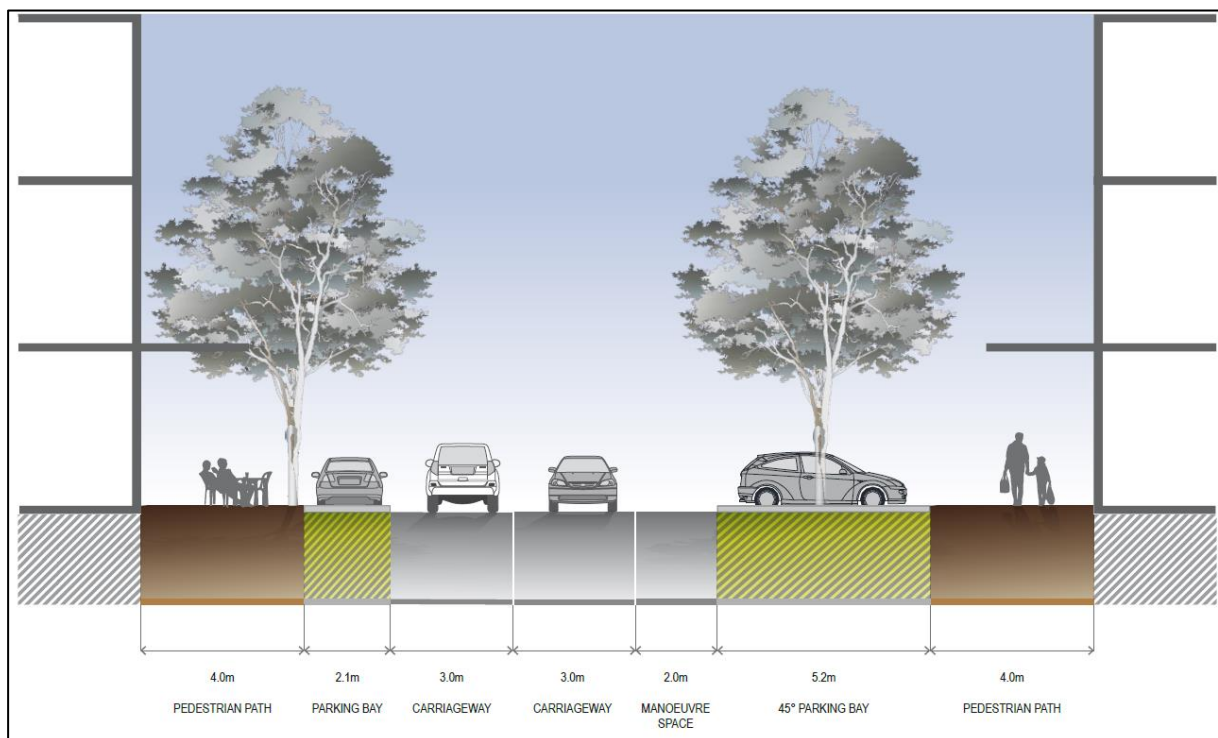


Figure 22: Indicative Road Cross Section F- Main Street (part)



Public Transport

The extension of the South Morang rail line to Mernda Train Station immediately east of the Development Plan area provides Mernda Town Centre with advantageous public transport connectivity, of a level rarely seen in growth corridors. Mernda Station incorporates public commuter parking, bus interchange and taxi ranks, all within proximity of the Town Centre. In response to population growth, additional services will be provided on existing routes when warranted and corridors identified for new services which can be implemented when demand is sufficient.

Within the Town Centre, it is envisaged that some buses will utilise Station Street and Berry Lane when accessing the Development Plan area. This route provides convenient access to the future Mernda Station, as well as the mixed use and commercial precincts of the Town Centre. Station Street and Berry Lane have been designed to accommodate bus movements, and all intersections will similarly be designed for bus access. Other roads may also be considered to be designed to be bus capable as part of the more detailed planning. Main Street is not supported as a bus route due to the need to create a compact road cross section that promotes pedestrian and retail activity.

Key public transport routes and infrastructure are shown in *Figure 17*.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The Development Plan promotes walking and cycling by providing a road network that is well connected to adjoining precincts and parkland. Built form will be of a pedestrian scale, with safe and convenient routes to be provided throughout the Mernda Town Centre. In particular, the design of Main Street will cater for pedestrians with wide footpaths proposed. On street furniture will provide for increased pedestrian amenity.

Cycling will be encouraged through the provision of safe and direct access for cyclists. On-road bicycle lanes will be provided on the two main north-south roads through the Town Centre. An off-road shared path will operate along the north side of Berry Lane. Bicycle storage facilities will be provided at appropriate locations throughout the Mernda Town Centre.

It is proposed to provide a shared user path from the residential development to the south of the Development Plan area through to the Town Centre.

6.6 Utilities, Infrastructure and Servicing

The proposed Mernda Town Centre and residential development area are suitably placed for development based on the availability of existing infrastructure and capacity to augment and expand the existing services given the staged development program.

The Mernda Strategy Plan requires that the servicing and drainage of the development area effectively and efficiently implement the servicing and drainage strategies that have been proposed by Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water.

In relation to underground services, adequate provisions will be made to reflect the relevant council standards to their satisfaction.

The infrastructure background report provides a review and general assessment of the principal infrastructure services including drainage, their availability and implementation strategies for the proposed development. Further refinement of this strategy may be required when the general understanding of the principles for the regional stormwater treatment strategy has been resolved. This will need to be done in consultation with Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and Council.

The following is a summary of infrastructure assessment for each key service.

Drainage

The development plan engages the principles and general requirements of the Mernda Strategy Plan for drainage and water quality of the development area and will integrate these features based on the design and construction requirements of both Melbourne Water and Council.

Melbourne Water is responsible for the provision and management of the main drainage, flood protection and water quality requirements in the Mernda area.

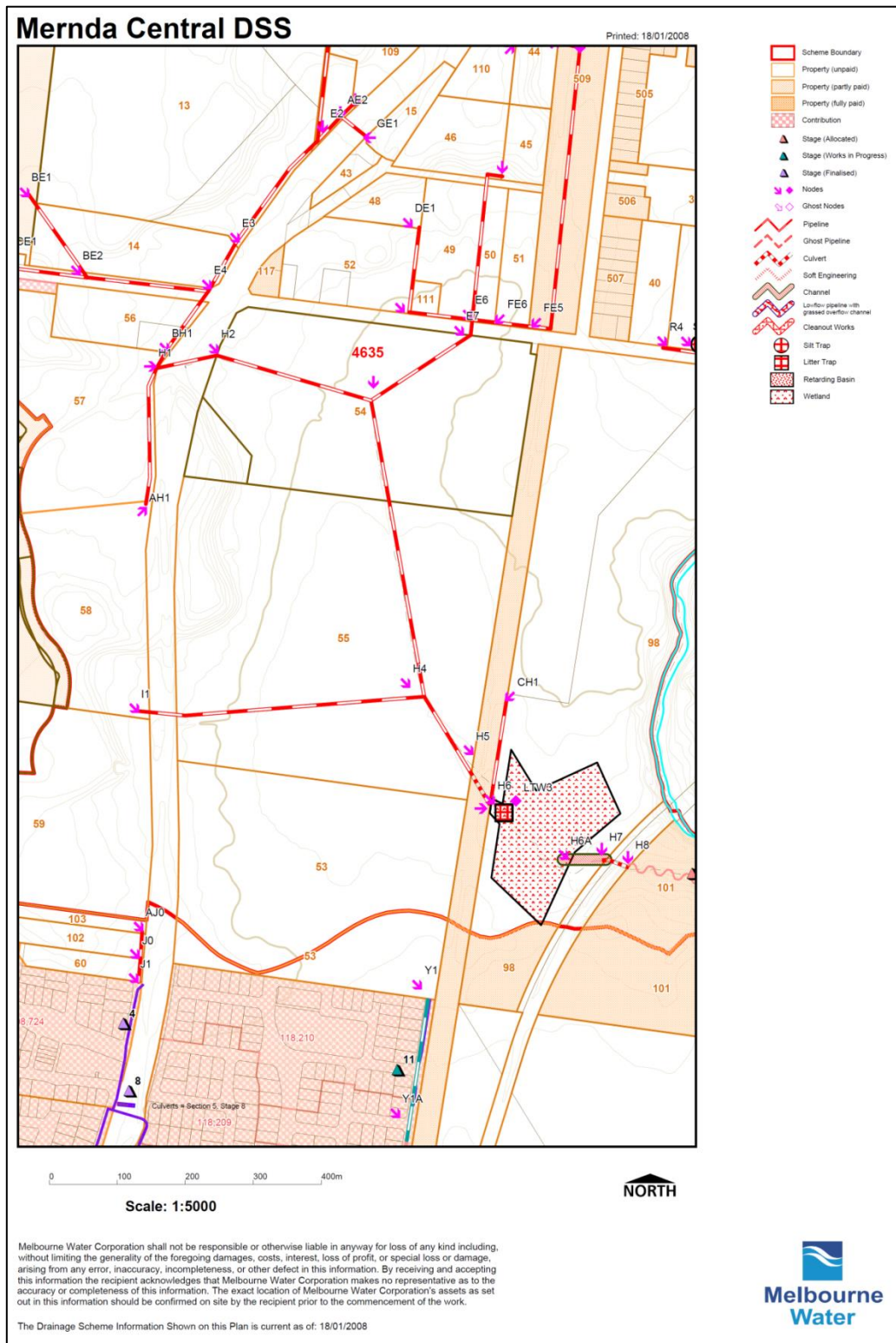
The proposed Melbourne Water Drainage Scheme identifies the drainage infrastructure required to service each land holding within the catchment, including pipelines, major open channel works, wetlands, retarding basins and other water quality facilities.

As part of the development, the Developer will be required to install underground stormwater drains within the Development Plan area generally in accordance with the Drainage Scheme and MWC's Land Development Manual. These works are to be coordinated with the underground stormwater drainage reinforced concrete pipe along the northern boundary which was constructed by Melbourne Water and to replace existing open drains that traverse the Development Plan area.

The underground stormwater drains will extend to the southeast corner of the proposed development and connect into underground stormwater drains which have been constructed as part of the residential development to the south. Drainage will discharge into a Melbourne Water wetland located south east of the Development Plan area.

Internal drainage systems for the commercial and residential precincts will be designed on the basis of City of Whittlesea subdivision and development guidelines and requirements.

Figure 23: Mernda Central Drainage Scheme Strategy



Storm Water Management Plan

The infrastructure assessment recommended the following Storm Water Management Plan to be implemented for the Development Plan area:

A number of Council documents exist which sets out the Council's expectations on the management of stormwater to improve its quality using an integrated approach with the preparation of a Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) for the development. These documents include:

- Melbourne Water's (MWC) Manual on WSUD Engineering Procedures: Stormwater
- Council's Guideline on the Design, Construction and Maintenance of WSUD
- Council's Addendum to the Guideline on the Design, Construction and Maintenance of WSUD

The SMP addresses and integrates the planning, design, construction and maintenance aspects for dealing with stormwater generated from the development. These Council documents are intended to provide guidance on the approvals process together with the documentation requirements, design considerations, suitability of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) elements in different conditions, construction considerations and maintenance requirements of proposed WSUD elements to be incorporated into the development.

A detailed Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) should be prepared and submitted with the detailed

design of the WSUD elements to be implemented with the proposed development.

The SEMP should identify the potential risks associated with the construction and provides solutions and methodologies to address the risks, such as erosion and sediment control, stockpiling of cut and fill, etc.

The above provides the basis for managing the stormwater in a more sustainable way and to provide environmental benefits associated with the proposed WSUD elements. The preparation of the relevant documentation will be prepared by the Developer, in consultation with MWC and the Council as part of the detailed planning and design.

A stormwater management strategy will be prepared during the planning permit stage of the application in discussion with the relevant authorities.

Water Sensitive Urban Design

The Mernda Strategy Plan promotes the implementation of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) into development in various ways to complement the drainage function. It also promotes that the drainage system comprise natural style watercourses and wetlands that contribute to efficient stormwater management and urban amenity based on the principles and requirements of Melbourne Water current drainage scheme practice.

The development will comply with the Best Practice for Environmental Management for Urban Stormwater by adopting the planned water sensitive urban design strategies of the Melbourne Water Drainage Scheme that are designed to meet the Victorian Urban Stormwater Quality Management Objectives for pollutant reduction.

The Melbourne Water wetland which forms part of the Mernda Drainage Strategy implements a number of water quality objectives, as well as providing a natural waterway feature incorporating aquatic and terrestrial landscaping, selected edge treatments and also silt and litter capture facilities.

At a local level, opportunities for WSUD elements have also been considered as an integral part and function of the proposed landscape and drainage designs; such initiatives are to be complementary to the Melbourne Water treatment proposal.

As a consequence of the location and development specific factors outlined within Reeds report, the broad-scale use of WSUD within the development, as

acknowledged by the Melbourne Water drainage scheme, will not be implemented, however opportunities for specific area treatments exist within the development proposal. The WSUD treatment initiatives proposed within the development include the following:

- a) The creation and integration of a vegetated swale and/ or bioretention system along the proposed Berry Lane reservation that will be incorporated into the overall road cross section and complemented by other landscape treatments.
- b) The treatment of runoff from the Mayfield Farm precinct within its own confines by elements such as swales, bioretention treatment, rain gardens, filtration trenches, rainwater tanks or any combination of these or other techniques
- c) The possibility of implementing porous paving and associated collection and treatment measures in open car park areas and in limited cases for on-street car parking area.
- d) The integration of swales, bioretention beds, rain gardens, filtration zones wherever possible in public open space reserves including elements specifically designed to maintain moisture to significant and other trees to be retained or planted under landscaping proposals.
- e) Provision of a limited number of local gross pollutant and sediment control facilities at point discharge drainage outlets.
These measures will be need to properly considered in the detailed design in consultation with Council and Melbourne Water where applicable.
- f) It is expected also that appropriate water management measures will be

applied in the design of both commercial and residential building in accordance with current planning and building requirements.

All WSUD proposals will need to be further explored and resolved with Melbourne Water and Council as part of the planning permit application process to be undertaken post endorsement of the Development Plan.

Sewerage

Yarra Valley Water is responsible for the provision of sewerage to the Mernda area.

The proposed development is to be sewered by connection and the Riverdale Boulevard Branch Sewer, which has been constructed along the alignment of Second Street in 2014.

There will be a network of sewer reticulation mains required to be constructed within the Development Plan area to provide a sewerage connection point for each allotment and commercial unit.

Water Supply

Yarra Valley Water is responsible for the provision of water supply to the Mernda area. The subject land is situated within the Yarrambat Reservoir Supply Zone.

The Preliminary Servicing Advice received from YVW indicates the proposed development should connect to the existing distribution main to the west of the Development Plan area along Plenty Road and the existing reticulation main to the north of the Development Plan area along Bridge Inn Road. The internal water reticulation mains should be designed to the Water Supply Code WSA03-2002-2.3 – Melbourne Retail Water Agencies Edition – Version 1 to suit the proposed development layout and the likely future subdivision of the Development Plan area.

Ongoing liaison with YVW will be required during the design development of the water reticulation works. The general plan of subdivision provided by the Developer may require each lot to have a separate connection off the proposed internal water reticulation main. Internal connection to the water reticulation mains is subject to further investigation and will be finalised as part of future planning permit application to Council.

The Development Plan area is currently not in YVW's recycled water area and therefore recycled water is not applicable.

Electricity

SP Ausnet /SPI Electricity Pty Ltd is the electricity supply company responsible for the provision of power facilities.

Electricity supply for the development will be provided by connection to the existing high voltage overhead electricity infrastructure located on the east and changing to the west side of Plenty Road and the north side of Bridge Inn Road.

Electricity supply for the Mernda Town Centre precinct will be provided by extension of the high voltage network to the Development Plan area by installation of underground high voltage cables under Plenty or Bridge Inn Roads. A network of underground cables within the road reservations will be required to reticulate the electricity to the commercial units.

The residential precinct will be serviced under standard underground URD provisions and require kiosk substations as necessary.

Telecommunications

Telstra has existing telephone cables, both local and optical fibre in Plenty Road and Bridge Inn Road. These assets will need to be extended and upgraded within the Development Plan area as the development progresses.

Gas Supply

APT AM Group / Envestra Limited is responsible for the provision of reticulated gas facilities to the proposed development and surrounding Mernda area.

There is an existing high pressure gas main located on the west side of Plenty Road.

This gas main will be the basis for gas supply to the proposed development and it is envisaged that high pressure gas demand will be required by some of the proposed commercial uses in the town centre.

Upon application, Envestra Limited will extend this main to the subject land, along with internal reticulation mains and services during the civil construction phase.

7. Development Contributions

The Development Plan area is affected by the Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 9 (DCPO9) which requires that development contributions be paid in accordance with the requirements of the Mernda Development Contributions Plan (DCP), which is an incorporated document in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

The DCP requires a contribution from all development in Precinct 5 to assist with the funding of necessary development and community infrastructure projects in the Mernda Strategy Plan area.

Precinct 5, which includes the whole of the Development Plan area, is required to make contributions towards a total of 32 infrastructure projects. Some of these proposed infrastructure projects are located in the Development Plan and others are proposed on land outside the Development Plan area.

The details of how a developer of land in the Development Plan area will meet their obligations under the DCP will be resolved through negotiations with Council in its capacity as Collecting Agency and the Development Agency prior to the issue of planning permits for any stage of the proposed development. There may be opportunities for land requirements to be rationalised with the co-location of community facilities.

It is envisaged that the contributions, either in the form of cash payment or works-in-kind, will be secured through a legal agreement(s) under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

DCP principles

It is understood that there are several important principles implicit in the Mernda Development Contributions Plan that must be observed when determining the liability of a given land parcel(s). Those most relevant to the Mernda Town Centre land in Precinct 5 are summarised below:

- Contributions are payable per hectare of developable land. Developable land is defined in the MSP as being all land net of Melbourne Water drainage reserve and retarding basins, transmission line easements and railway reservations. Contributions are therefore payable on all unencumbered open space and school sites.
- The extent of developable land is permanently linked to the land budget in the DCP. If further land is required to deal with detailed design matters, there will not be a requisite reduction in the gross developable area that is subject the DCP levy. Further, the quantum of area that designated as either 'commercial' or 'residential' by the DCP will not be amended to reflect the development outcomes reflected in the DP or in subsequent planning permits.
- The DCP allows developers to carry out works in lieu of cash payments for certain infrastructure projects subject to agreement with Council or the relevant delivery agency, these are known as works in kind. Where Council or the delivery agency agrees to a developer directly providing a DCP listed infrastructure item, a credit will be issued against the developer's total liability under the DCP.
- The credits given for open space under the DCP are based on the open space areas shown on the MSP. The

maximum credit issued by Council for the provision of open space is therefore capped at the value of land designated as open space in the MSP.

- Developers will liable to pay contributions towards a number of infrastructure projects which have a nexus and need relationship with proposed development associated with the Mernda Town Centre. Where the cost of a works-in-kind project exceeds the value set in the current indexed DCP, funding for the required infrastructure will need to be provided by the developer unless an alternative funding strategy is agreed to by Council and/or the relevant delivery agency.

8. Staging of Development

The development of the Mernda Town Centre needs to be carefully phased. It is very important to strike a balance between providing facilities and services for the local community as early as possible while ensuring that the offer is able to create an economic, vibrant and sustainable long term proposition.

A staging plan is provided below setting out the progression of development anticipated across the Development Plan area based on an understanding of the natural evolution of Town Centres and the future growth prospects of Mernda.

The types of uses which could be supported at the Mernda Town Centre from the outset are retail and the personal services that the economic activity and community interaction demands as a result and traditional residential lots. Also, Whittlesea City Council may provide for the early delivery of community services within the town centre.

Central Equity has commenced development of the residential precinct as part of previous stages in the southern parts of the Town Centre.

The intention of the developer for Stage 1 of the town centre core is to focus on the delivery of an anchor retail tenant and

supporting specialty shop development in close proximity to Mernda Train Station.

The delivery of Stage 1 will see the delivery of north-south connecting road and part of Berry Lane, Station Street and the 'Main Street'. Stage 1 is to comprise the Development Plan area for a future community facility to be located on the corner of Main Street and Station Street.

The early stages of development will act as a catalyst for future development by creating and stimulating demand for a broader range of uses in the Development Plan area. Future development will extend out from the core and include development of the residential and employment land uses.

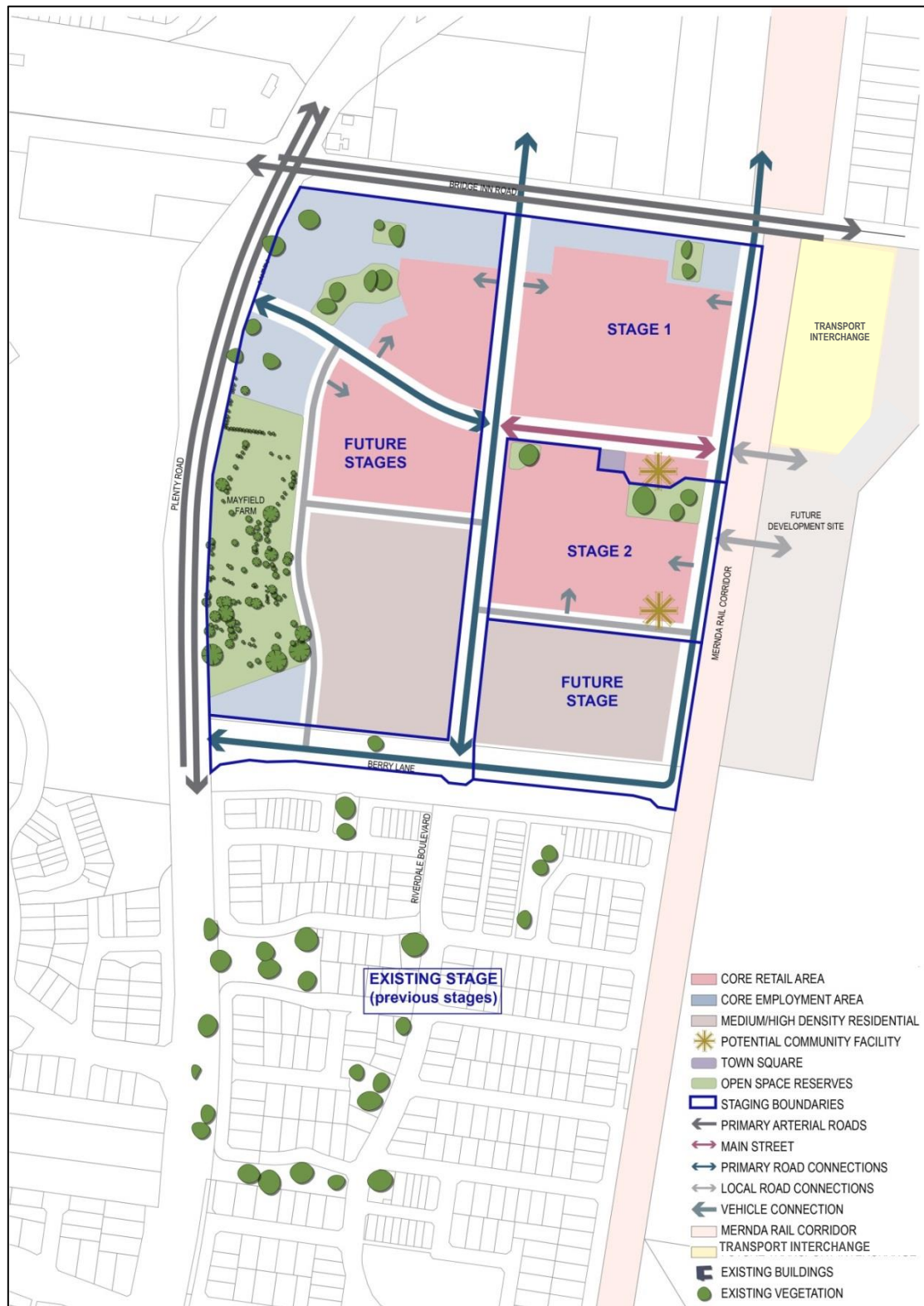
The central location of early stages in the context of the overall Development Plan area will ensure there is an immediate retail and residential presence in the Development Plan area from which surrounding development will grow. The timing and actual boundaries of future stages of development will be dependent on the rate of growth and demand in the supporting catchment.

The table below outlines the anticipated staging of the development.

Table 4: Staging of Development

STAGE	PRECINCT
Previous	Residential (Central Equity land)
1	Core retail (anchor store, community facility site, some commercial and 'Main Street' including some specialty retail and food and drink)
2	Additional retail (built form on southern side of 'Main Street', food and drink and potentially additional anchor store)
Future	Additional retail and commercial (could include additional anchor stores, specialty retail, food and drink, etc) Mayfield Farm site Employment uses Medium and high density residential and mixed use

Figure 24: Indicative Staging Plan



8.1 Transitional Arrangements

With development across the Development Plan area to be undertaken in several stages over an extended timeframe, it is recognised that there is a need to initiate a range of measures to ensure each stage is finished and designed so as to:

1. maintain a level of flexibility by designing and building each stage in a manner that delivers the services and facilities that are in need, whilst not prejudicing the ongoing mix of land uses and evolution of built form into the future; and
2. ensure that the progression of development across the Development Plan area is undertaken in a logical manner consistent with the objectives set out in the Development Plan. Infrastructure and services required to allow each stage to be “self-sufficient” and operate and function efficiently.

Thus, the primary objective will be to complete each stage to an appropriate standard and address any potential sensitive interfaces to adjacent stages so as to ensure there is no detrimental impact upon the existing built and natural features of the site.

Given the final composition of the longer term stages may ultimately be influenced by the prevailing market forces of the day, it is difficult to determine with any certainty what specific transitional arrangements may be required at the present time. To ensure transitional measures are carefully considered and dealt with at each stage of development, it is proposed that planning permit applications submitted to Council will include a detailed staging plan identifying the specific measures that will be

employed to achieve the key objectives as outlined below:

- Development works at each stage to be constructed wherever possible to final built form. Any buildings or works that are to be temporary will be clearly identified as such in the permit application;
- All sensitive interfaces which will need to be specifically addressed include: Mayfield Farm, Berry Lane, the River Red Gums to be retained and the future Public Open Space areas. These historic or natural features of the plan have been carefully assessed and planned for in other sections of this development plan and as such it will be important to demonstrate to what extent they will be resolved and treated prior to the final development;
- Landscaping works to be undertaken around the perimeter of all stages to be consistent with the ultimate design or in the event that temporary landscape works are required they must ensure the public domain is reflective of the final landscape concept design;
- All temporary car parks to support the necessary parking provisions at the early stages will be clearly marked as such and be finished in the interim with an all weather treatment to ensure they do not detract from the overall development. Temporary car parks are not to be located where future built form is proposed to ‘sleeve’ permanent car parks;
- Maintain the amenity of all undeveloped stages throughout the whole Development Plan area up to the final build out and ensure the future

development of such areas is not prejudiced or left to deteriorate;

- The approach to construction management to ensure there is no unreasonable impact on any stage that is in full operation;
- All relevant supporting services and physical infrastructure to be completed to support each stage and to take into consideration the need for future capacity;
- Each planning permit applications should include a detailed staging plan identifying the specific measures that will be employed to achieve the key objectives as outlined in the transitional arrangements section of the Development Plan;
- Final agreement with DELWP regarding tree retention and the approach to the net gain assessment is to be resolved prior to the issue of any relevant planning permit; and
- The recommendations of the biodiversity report are to be further explored prior to any permit issued for removal of native vegetation.

Matters to be dealt with at Planning Permit Stage

The following items are to be dealt with at the relevant planning permit stage:

- At the relevant planning permit stage, the intersection and road work design in accordance with this Development Plan for the Town Centre are to be identified.
- A traffic impact assessment report identifying all roads and intersections to be constructed as well as any relevant interim access requirements is to be prepared in conjunction with each planning permit application.
- All Water Sensitive Urban Design measure to be implemented are to be further explored and resolved with Melbourne Water and Council as part of any relevant planning permit application.
- Prior to the issue of a planning permit, the details of how the developer is to meet its obligations under the Mernda Strategy Development Contributions Plan must be resolved if it has not already been the subject of an agreement with Council. It is envisaged that the contributions, either in the form of cash payment or works-in-kind, will be secured through a legal agreement(s) under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Land requirements of infrastructure projects including land projects will need to be accommodated in the planning permit application.
- Each planning permit application should include a detailed staging plan identifying the specific measures that will be employed to achieve the key objectives as outlined in the

transitional arrangements section of the Development Plan.

- Conservation Management Plan which set out plans for the long term preservation of the heritage features of the site. This will include immediate works to ensure the heritage values are not damaged or left to deteriorate, medium term actions to prepare the elements for incorporation into the town centre environment and longer term actions to ensure the preservation of values into the longer term. The CMP will need to be given effect via an agreement pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987.
- In addition, the construction and the subsequent maintenance of the WSUD elements will need to consider the requirements also outlined in the Council's guideline, Design, Construction and Maintenance of WSUD and the associated Addendum document. The maintenance requirements include identifying the various WSUD elements, the frequency and those responsible for maintenance.
- Final agreement with DELWP regarding tree retention and the approach to the net gain assessment is to be resolved prior to the issue of any relevant planning permit.
- The recommendations of the biodiversity report are to be further explored prior to any permit issued for removal of native vegetation.
- For applications where native vegetation is to be retained, Construction Environmental Management Plan and Ecological Management Plan should be a condition of any permit.
- The Construction Environmental Management Plan is to provide specific

detail to prevent impacts to retained native vegetation and aquatic and terrestrial habitat. This will include issues relating to contractors such as environmental inductions, installation of temporary fencing/signage, drainage and sediment control.

- The Ecological Management Plan should be prepared by an ecological consultant to provide detailed advice on ongoing protection and long term management of retained/ habitat, creation of linkages and other habitat features such as wetlands, if proposed.
- An application for use or development for accommodation in proximity to the Mernda Rail Line must be accompanied by a noise, vibration and light spill report prepared by a suitably qualified person, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. The report shall consider potential amenity impacts from the rail operations and include any recommended mitigation measures.

8.2 Future Proofing

A further factor influencing the staging of the development is the need to incorporate future proofing into the development strategy. Given, the Mernda Town Centre will be constructed over an extended period of time it will be necessary for it to be designed and staged in a manner that enables it to remain flexible enough to accommodate and adapt to changes in the market so it may realise its full potential. Conversely, so its development potential may be maximised it will also be critical to ensure the staging plan does not prejudice or preclude future built form or land use options that would benefit or become viable from a 'mature' market.

To give Mernda Town Centre the best possible opportunity to realise its potential and in particular to facilitate multi-level built form, the staging plan has been strategically sequenced to leave specific areas to the later stages of development. It is within these later stages when a mature market is more likely to be in place and thus, the ultimate composition of the town centre has the greatest opportunity to be influenced by genuine market demand and the roll out of the train line to Mernda. The two key areas with the most potential upside are the residential precincts adjacent to Berry Lane and Mernda Railway Station; both of which will benefit from the growth of the township over time.

The purpose of the Development Plan is to set out the principles for locating possible future multi-level built form. *Figure 14* Land Use Plan of identifies preferred building height and hence locations suitable for multi-level development across the town centre. Development in

the short to medium term is unlikely to achieve the maximum building heights until the market demand exists.

To this end, planning permits for development which is below the maximum building height are to:

- Outline a construction strategy to facilitate the development of "upper floor" development over existing "single storey" construction, as opportunities for this gradually occur across the Town Centre;
- Ensure that all entry/exit points to and from upper floor occupation are planned for within, and along, the edges of the Town Centre's external streets, laneways, or dedicated public spaces.

9. Conclusion

The plans and information contained within the Development Plan demonstrate that the proposed Mernda Town Centre development will deliver an integrated urban environment that will become the social, economic and cultural focus for the existing and future population of Mernda.

In summary, the preceding Development Plan:

- Demonstrates a high level of consistency with the Mernda Strategy Plan, Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan and other relevant planning controls contained within the Whittlesea Planning Scheme;
- The design and location of the each of the land use precincts suitably responds to the opportunities and constraints of the Development Plan area and its surrounds;
- The key heritage (Aboriginal and European) and natural characteristics within the Development Plan area have been identified and preserved, where appropriate and possible;
- Delivers a truly integrated pedestrian-scaled mixed use centre, which is focused on a traditional Main Street;
- The Town Centre will provide employment opportunities for Mernda within a well-designed and appropriately sited commercial precinct;
- Offers a range of housing options and densities to the future residents of the Town Centre and thereby, allow Mernda to further respond to the Melbourne's on-going demand for housing;
- The development incorporates a safe and functional road layout that has been designed with sufficient capacity to accommodate the vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle movements it will generate in the future; and
- Demonstrates that the Town Centre can be adequately serviced by the infrastructure required to support it.
- This Development Plan together with the supporting documentation addresses all the requirements of DPO15.

