

Cobram 2025 Cobram Strategy Plan

November 2007

Prepared by Coomes Consulting Group

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	The Cobram Strategy Plan	1
1.2	The Study Area	2
1.3	Objectives of the Strategy Plan	2
1.4	Public and Stakeholder Consultation	3
2	Background and Context	4
2.1	Overview of Cobram	4
2.2	Planning Policy Framework	5
2.3	Moira Shire Council Plan	7
2.4	Previous Studies and Reviews	10
3	Strategy Plan Philosophy	11
3.1	Settlement Vision	11
3.2	Land Use Mix	11
3.3	Environmental Considerations – Flora and Fauna	12
3.4	Environmental Considerations – Flooding	12
3.5	Cultural Heritage	13
3.6	Servicing and Infrastructure	13
3.7	Town Entrances/Rural Surrounds	14
4	Residential Land Use and Development	15
4.1	Existing Context	15
4.2	Previous Studies	15
4.3	Population Growth	18
4.4	Age Structure	20
4.5	Number of Households and Household Size	22
4.6	Affordability and Tenure	23
4.7	Dwelling Numbers and Dwelling Approvals	24
4.8	Residential Land Demand and Supply	26
4.9	Physical Infrastructure and Servicing	31
4.10	Residential Land Strategy	34
4.11	Summary and Recommendations	41

5	Affordable Housing and Oasis Village	43
5.1	A New Village	43
5.2	The Concept	44
5.3	Locational considerations	44
6	Commercial and Retail	46
6.1	Existing Context	46
6.2	Previous Studies	47
6.3	Commercial Land Demand and Supply	48
6.4	Physical Infrastructure and Servicing	49
6.5	Options for Future Commercial Land	51
6.6	Commercial Land Strategy	55
6.7	Summary and Recommendations	60
7	Industrial Land Use and Development	61
8	Open Space and Recreation	62
8.1	Existing Context	62
8.2	Options for Future Open Spaces	63
8.3	Open Space Land Strategy	64
9	Traffic and Transport	66
9.1	Existing Context	66
9.2	Previous Studies	67
9.3	Public Transport	69
9.4	Anticipated Trends	70
9.5	Strategy Plan	71
10	Community Facilities	73
10.1	Existing Conditions	73
10.2	Previous Studies	73
10.3	Anticipated Trends	74
10.4	Community Facilities Strategy	75
11	Rural and Agriculture	78
11.1	Existing Conditions	78
11.2	Anticipated Trends	78
11.3	Strategy Plan	79

12	Recommendations and Implementation	80
12.1	Recommendations for Residential Land Strategy	80
12.2	Recommendations for Commercial Land Strategy	81
12.3	Recommendations for Industrial Land Strategy	81
12.4	Recommendations for Open Space and Recreation	82
12.5	Recommendations for Traffic and Transport	82
12.6	Recommendations for Community Facilities	83
12.7	Recommendations for Rural and Agricultural Lands	83
12.8	Other Matters	84
13	Cobram Settlement Strategy and Strategy Plan	85
13.1	Settlement Strategy	85
13.2	Strategy Plan	86

1 Introduction

1.1 The Cobram Strategy Plan

The Cobram Strategy Plan has been prepared for the Moira Shire Council, and it will assist in ensuring a continued sustainable future for Cobram.

A Strategy Plan is a document that guides major change to land use, infrastructure and built form by setting out preferred directions for growth and how the changes should be managed. It is a long-term policy document that sets out ideas and actions that can be undertaken over many years, by Council and other stakeholders.

The Strategy Plan sets out the scale and direction of development in Cobram to meet the future needs of the community and gives clear direction to owners, investors, government bodies, business operators and the Council about preferred locations for investment and change, and areas that need to be retained and enhanced.

The broad directions for land use and development in Cobram have been derived through the investigation and identification of the following:

- Existing conditions within the study area
- Strategic planning context of the study area
- Supply and demand of land for various uses/activities
- Relevant opportunities and constraints
- Future growth and development strategies
- Appropriate implementation techniques

The Strategy Plan has been prepared by Coomes Consulting Group with specialist input from SGS Economics. The project commenced in November 2006 and has involved continued consultation with the community, landowners, officers and Councillors of the Moira Shire Council, government agencies and authorities and other key stakeholders.

The Strategy Plan was commissioned by the Moira Sire Council in response to a direction in the 2006/2007 Council Plan (refer Section 2.3 below) and also in response to a development proposal to extend Oasis Village to the west of its current location. The current Settlement Strategy, including the Cobram Structure Plan, in Clause 21.04 of the Moira Planning Scheme discourages Oasis Village from extending to the west as this area may be required for future industrial development. One of the purposes of this review is to ascertain whether the directions of the current Structure Plan are still appropriate. Section 5 of this report specifically comments on the merits and management of this Oasis proposal.

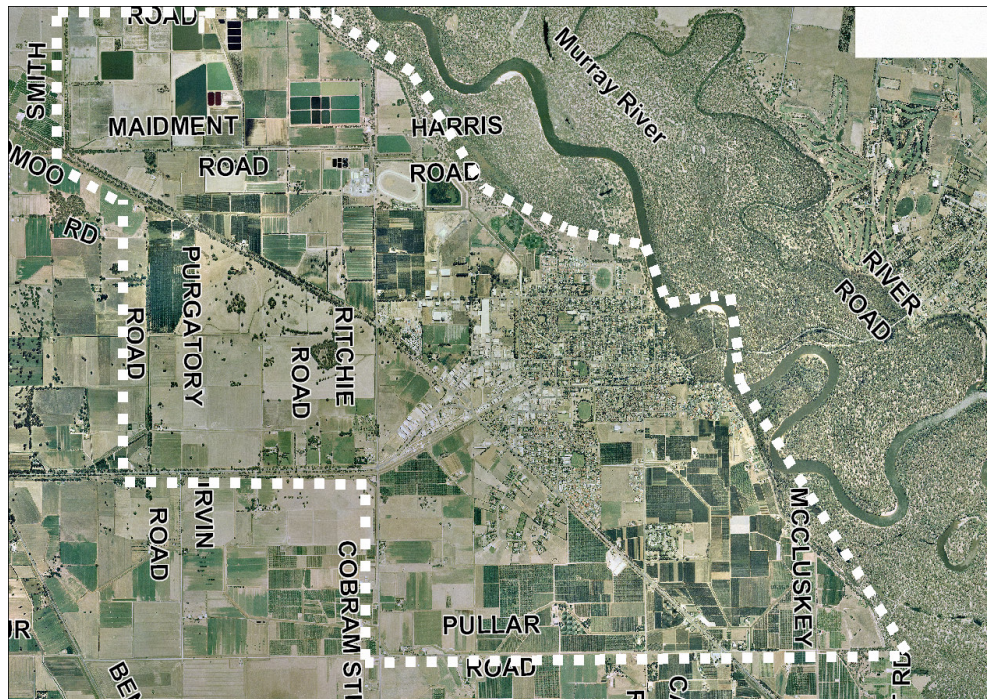
The Strategy Plan is a stand alone policy document. It is envisaged that the Strategy Plan will be referenced within the Moira Planning Scheme.

1.2 The Study Area

The Cobram Strategy Plan Study Area, as shown below in Figure 1, incorporates the urban area of Cobram and land on the fringe of the urban area.

Cobram is located approximately 70 kilometres north of Shepparton, on the banks of the Murray River. With a population of approximately 5,000, it is a primary town within the Moira Shire and acts as the manufacturing and retail centre. Cobram has a wide catchment for community and business services, extending beyond the municipal boundaries and into southern New South Wales.

Figure 1 – Cobram Study Area



Source: Project Brief, Moira Shire Council, 2006

1.3 Objectives of the Strategy Plan

The State Planning Policy Framework provides a range of policies relevant to the study area with Clause 14 Settlement being the most relevant. The general objectives of the Strategy Plan are consistent with the objectives of Clause 14 of the Moira Planning Scheme – Settlement.

Consequently, the objectives of this Strategy Plan are to:

- Facilitate the orderly development of urban areas, including for residential, commercial/business, industrial, open space and recreational land use activities.
- Make effective use of existing infrastructure, particularly through urban consolidation.

- To contain urban growth to identified areas in order to protect higher quality and intact agricultural areas and sensitive environmental areas, and to achieve a more compact built up area.
- Provide for the development of sustainable and liveable urban areas in an integrated manner.
- To release land efficiently in terms of location, supply of services and infrastructure.
- To facilitate the logical and efficient provision of infrastructure.
- Seek to minimise potential land use conflicts through recommending appropriate zoning patterns and/or other statutory planning tools such as overlays, design guidelines, local policies and the like.

1.4 Public and Stakeholder Consultation

One of the vital components of a Strategy Plan is the incorporation of stakeholder consultation. Consultation sessions were held in Cobram in December 2006 and January 2007 for the following key industry stakeholders:

- Business and community individuals and groups
- Council officers and Councillors
- Local residents
- Landowners
- Servicing authorities
- Relevant government agencies

The consultation sessions focussed on the identification of the perceived issues facing Cobram at present and the identification of important projects to be undertaken and appropriate strategic direction to be achieved over the next 15-20 years.

The feedback received from the consultation sessions has played an important role in the formulation of this draft Strategy Plan.

Attachment 1 includes details of the consultation program.

Council will be seeking further community feedback on this draft Strategy Plan when it is placed on public exhibition. This feedback too, will play an important role in finalising the Strategy Plan for Cobram.

2 Background and Context

2.1 Overview of Cobram

Located on the Murray River in northern Victoria, Cobram is often referred to as the 'peaches and cream' town due to the influence of the surrounding agricultural activities of irrigated dairying and orcharding.

The development of the town has largely depended on the growth of farm irrigation. At the end of the Second World War the government decided to use the area for a major soldier settlement scheme. In addition, Italian immigrants began to migrate in greater numbers than they had previously and they remain a significant presence in the town today. Consequently irrigation infrastructure progressed rapidly and many dairy farms and orchards were established.

In 1949 the Murray Goulburn Co-operative was formed for the manufacture and marketing of the region's dairy produce. The Co-op became one of the largest organisations of its type, and is still today one of the State's largest milk producers and a major player in the local economy. A cheese factory established in 1951 by the Co-op at Cobram has diversified over the years and is a significant employer.

As Cobram's development and history has been influenced by the agricultural activities of the environs, it is now also recognised by its built and natural environment. Historic buildings and sites such as the Cobram Hotel and silos constructed in 1925 influence the main street and the skyline aspects of Cobram respectfully. Located not far from the town centre, along the banks of the Murray River are many sandy beaches set amidst the giant river red gums.

After adopting a town plan in 1949 and seeing a tripling in population after the war years, Cobram has developed today into a town of its own right. With a population base of approximately 5,000 it provides a range of retail and business services, including supermarkets, pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, various sporting and recreational organisation, a hospital, accommodation and showgrounds.

In recent times, the Moira Shire Council has commissioned a number of studies and reviews for Cobram and the wider municipality, however many of these studies only addressed specific issues. To update and build upon the existing Cobram Structure Plan as prepared in 2003, these reviews and studies need to be brought together to form the framework for a Strategy Plan that will guide major changes to land use, built form and infrastructure

Not commonly seen in similar sized and aged towns, Cobram is fortunate to have a pattern of development whereby major roads and/or built forms separate and provide buffers between potentially conflicting land use activities. To ensure that this can continue, and to achieve economic, social and environmental improvements to the town, it is fundamental that a strategic approach to the development of Cobram for a 15-20 year horizon is adopted.

2.2 Planning Policy Framework

All land within the study area is governed by the Moira Planning Scheme. The components of the planning scheme applicable to strategic development of the study area are:

- State Planning Policies;
- The Moira Municipal Strategic Statement;
- Land Use Zonings; and
- Overlay Controls

In addition to the relevant components of the Moira Planning Scheme, a number of policies and research reports have been prepared in recent years that may influence the future development of the study area. A review of the relevance of these policies and research reports to the Cobram Study Area has been undertaken and referenced throughout this Plan.

2.2.1 State Planning Policy

Clause 11 (Introduction, goals and principles) and Clause 14 (Settlement) of the Moira Planning Scheme are of particular note in planning for the strategic growth and development of Cobram.

The principles of land use and development planning are addressed in Clause 11 of the Moira Planning Scheme. In particular the Clause states *'Society has various needs and expectations such as land for settlement, protection of the environment, economic well-being, various social needs, proper management of resources and infrastructure. Planning aims to meet these by addressing aspects of economic, environmental and social well-being affected by land use and development'*. This Strategy Plan has been prepared to address the various needs of the Cobram community.

State policy in relation to urban settlement (Clause 14.01 of the Moira Planning Scheme) states that planning authorities should plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a ten year period. This Strategy Plan provides the planning framework for the next 15 – 20 years and aims to facilitate the orderly development of Cobram.

2.2.2 Municipal Strategic Statement

The Moira Shire Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) provides the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and the strategies and actions for achieving those objectives. The Moira MSS promotes the objectives of planning in Victoria to the extent that State policies are applicable to the Moira Shire.

The Moira MSS contains a number of references to Cobram. The MSS identifies Cobram as one of four of the Shire's principle townships. Cobram is one of the fastest growing centres within the municipality with 134 house permits issued in a 5 year period.

The MSS also recognises the aging population of the shire and the need to provide affordable housing within easy access to physical and social services, in particular within the four large urban centres, including Cobram.

“Council’s Settlement Goal is to ensure that the majority of future residential growth and development occurs within the Shire’s existing townships and that such growth is accommodated for in a planned, rather than ad hoc manner. Rural lifestyle opportunities are to be provided in identified and appropriately zoned areas rather than being dispersed throughout the rural areas of the Shire in order to protect agricultural land for agricultural uses, avoid urban-rural conflicts and to facilitate efficient servicing.”

Council’s current Settlement Strategies for Cobram are:

- *Future development of the township of Cobram will be generally in accordance with the Cobram Town Structure Plan (Refer 21.04-5);*
- *Short and medium term residential development will be directed towards areas currently zoned for residential purposes;*
- *Long term residential development will be directed to the south east of the town in accordance with the outcomes of the Cobram Outline Development Plan 2002;*
- *Medium density housing will be encouraged around the commercial fringe areas to promote a greater diversity of housing within walking distance to the town centre;*
- *Low Density Residential development will be limited to those areas with existing and appropriate zoning;*
- *Long term Low Density Residential development will be directed to the south west of the town;*
- *Industrial development will be focused to the north west of the township. A mix of large and small lots will be retained for long term manufacturing and service industrial expansion;*
- *An integrated open space plan inclusive of connections to the town and access along the river frontage will be developed;*
- *An urban design framework will be developed to address business amenity, and pedestrian, traffic and streetscape improvements; and*
- *Discourage the expansion of existing Caravan Park to the west of town.*

The MSS further notes the importance of having appropriately serviced and zoned land to allow for new industrial development in suitable towns such as Cobram and also recommended the preparation of an Industrial Land Strategy which was recently completed.

It is noted that the current MSS is being reviewed as part of the three year review process required by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).

2.2.3 Land Use Zoning and Overlays

Various land use zones are applied to Cobram and provide relevant objectives and development controls (refer Figure 2 Cobram Zoning Plan).

Further planning provisions apply to sites and areas through the provision of various overlays. Similar to land use zones, overlays provide objectives and development controls, however they apply to forms of development rather than simply land uses. Overlays, as they apply to the study area offer planning controls in relation to built form, heritage and environmental considerations.

2.3 Moira Shire Council Plan

Title	Council Plan 2006/2007 to 2009/2010
Date	2006
Author	Moira Shire Council
Status	Adopted

Summary of Findings:

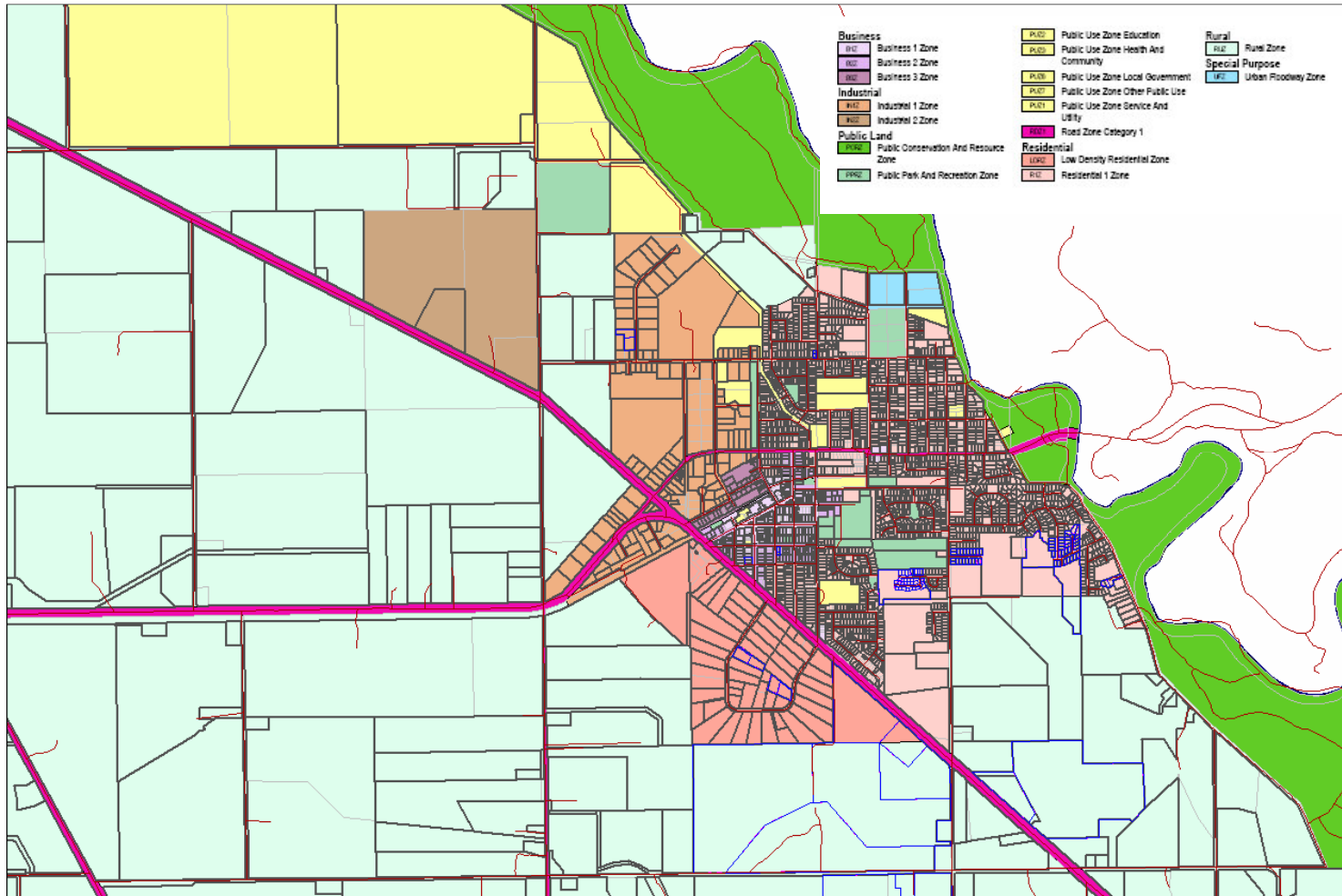
In 2006 the Moira Shire Council developed a Council Plan that focused on the five pillars of wellbeing:

- *Built and physical environment*
- *Social*
- *Economic*
- *Natural environment*
- *Government*

In order to achieve the outcome for liveable communities “*Planning and building control for a vitalised community*” the Council Plan nominates the following strategies:

- *To continue to develop guidelines and policies to ensure that planning decisions reflect best practice.*
- *To encourage environmentally sound building design and practices which minimise resource and energy use.*
- *To continue to develop guidelines and policies to ensure the design of subdivisions reflect best practice.*
- *To continue to undertake strategic planning to ensure sustainable urban and rural land use and development for the benefit of the community.*

Figure 2: Zone Plan for Cobram



Source: Moira Shire Council, 2007

Figure 3: Development Plan Overlay Plan for Cobram



Source: Moira Planning Scheme, extract from Plan 7DPO

Note: Land Subject to Inundation and Floodway Overlay shown in Section 3.4 (Figure 4)

2.4 Previous Studies and Reviews

The following studies and reviews provide background context to this Strategy Plan and/or are referred to in this draft report:

- *Cobram Urban Design Framework*, David Locke and Associates, June 2006
- *Moira Shire Industrial Zones Review*, Maunsell's Australia Pty Ltd, Nov 2004
- *Moira Rural Living Strategy*, O'Neil Pollock & Assoc Pty Ltd, 2004
- *Cobram Development Plan Report*, EarthTech & TTM Consulting, Sept 2006
- *Moira Shire Council Integrated Strategy Plan*, Tract Consultants, April 1997
- *Cross Border Development Project*, Sinclair Knight Merz, November 2003
- *Moira Shire Heritage Study*, Lorraine Huddle & Associates, 2006
- *Moira Shire Open For Business*, Neil L. Noelker, March 2001
- *Background documents to Amendment C13 to the Moira Planning Scheme.*
- *2006-2007 Moira Shire Council Plan*, Moira Shire Council
- *Moira Planning Scheme*
- *Draft Land Use Strategy Plan*, Moira Shire Council, October 1996.
- *Cobram Community Action Plan*, Moira Shire Council

3 Strategy Plan Philosophy

3.1 Settlement Vision

The vision for the Cobram Strategy Plan has been formed by a synthesis of good urban design principles and a consideration of the relevant features that can be utilised to create sustainable townships.

The Cobram Urban Design Framework was prepared in June 2006 and is identified as a long term strategy which sets a vision and action strategies for the enhancement of the Cobram town centre. This Framework has assisted in informing this Strategy Plan.

The vision for Cobram in regard to its settlement strategy is:

“A sustainable and innovative environment that meets the needs of the Cobram community through providing interactive neighbourhoods, safe open space, connecting pathways, a vibrant business sector; encouraging innovative building design; and recognising and valuing the natural environment and heritage”.

3.2 Land Use Mix

A sustainable mix of land uses is proposed for the Cobram. It is the holistic consideration of all existing conditions and issues as they relate to the study area that has informed the vision and primary strategies for this Strategy Plan.

Cobram is fortunate to be structured with a clear division of its economic role of industry and manufacturing, its business role as a service centre, its community role as a housing provider and its recreation role around the river environs. There are clear areas with distinct boundaries.

In this regard the historical distribution of land uses does not require restructuring. The town centre areas should be pedestrian friendly and neighbourhood based. Land identified in the longer term for industrial and associated uses should not be located in close proximity to sensitive land uses such as residential or recreational areas.

Those areas within Cobram that have been identified for future development respond firstly to demand forecasts for both residential and industrial land uses, and secondly to identified areas of environmental significance and identified engineering constraints. For these reasons not all areas within the study area are recommended to support land use change or development. The resultant Strategy Plan recommends a sustainable area and mix of land uses, to service a town that is experiencing a steady rate of economic and residential growth.

The concept of neighbourhood planning is endorsed within the Strategy Plan, especially as Cobram continues to grow and the town centre increasingly focuses upon a wider catchment rather than the town itself. Neighbourhood nodes (incorporating local commercial, community and recreational facilities) are

encouraged for existing and emerging neighbourhood precincts in order to be distributed in a more equitable fashion.

Diversity is encouraged through the Strategy Plan, particularly in relation to the form, density and location of residential areas. A sustainable mix of infill and greenfield development opportunities is encouraged within the Plan.

It is acknowledged that Cobram cannot continue to expand through residential growth alone and a sufficient and sustainable mix of land is required for commercial, industrial and necessary facilities such as medical facilities. The following sections of this Plan address these particular land uses in greater detail.

3.3 Environmental Considerations – Flora and Fauna

Clause 15.09-1 of the Moira Planning Scheme refers to the conservation of native flora and fauna. Specifically, the objective of this clause is *“To assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals and control of pest plants and animals”*.

Parks Victoria manages the riparian environs of the Murray River, located to the east of Cobram. These areas generally correspond to land affected by the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) and in some cases, the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).

Parks Victoria has advised that all reserves under their administration are managed as flora and fauna reserves. Furthermore, the Cobram community utilise many of these areas for recreational pursuits.

3.4 Environmental Considerations – Flooding

Clause 15.02 of the Moira Planning Scheme refers to the management of floodplains. Specifically, the objective of this clause is *“To assist the protection of: life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard; the natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways; the flood storage function of floodplains and waterways; and floodplain areas of environmental significance”*.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) manages the floodplain in and around Cobram. The GBCMA advised that Regional Murray River Study is still being undertaken, and that this study will investigate and determine the flow paths of flood waters and the applicable flood levels along the Murray River, including Cobram.

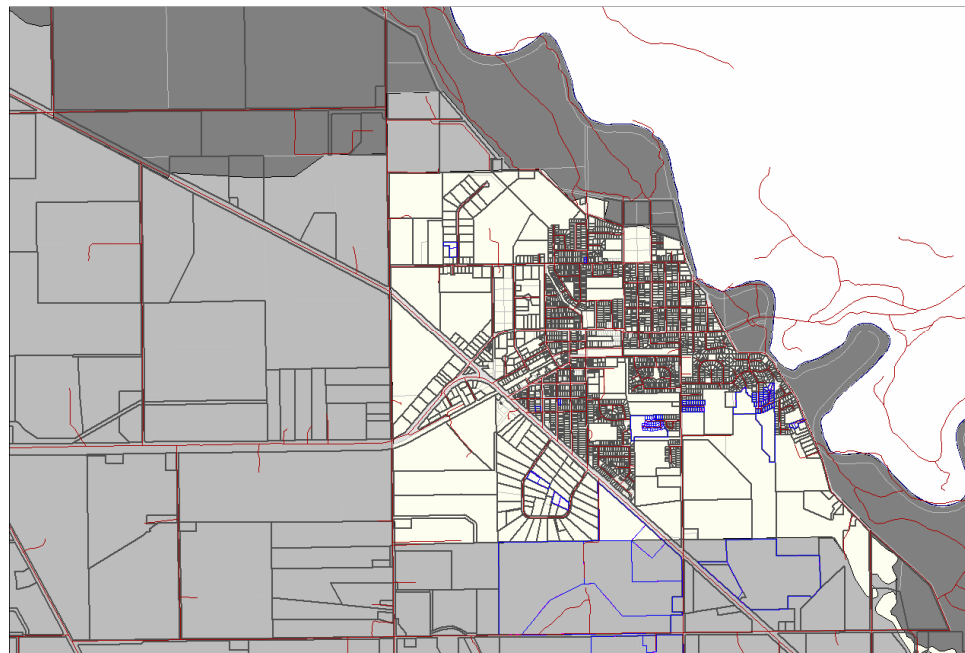
The GBCMA further advised that the levee system around Cobram was very important, especially in protecting the town from backwater flooding. The authority suggested it may investigate the possibility of locating a new levee to the south east of the town, in the vicinity of the Murray Valley Highway.

It also suggested that the boundaries of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay should follow the alignment of the existing channels located to the south and west

of Cobram. The Figure 4 below shows the current location of the Land Subject to Inundation (lighter grey shade) and the Floodway Overlay (darker grey shade).

It is recommended that Council work closely with GB, CMA to prepare a strategy to flood proof the immediate surrounds of Cobram.

Figure 4: Existing Flood Constraints for Cobram



Knowledge Creativity Performance
Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management

3.5 Cultural Heritage

Clause 15.11-1 of the Moira Planning Scheme refers to heritage significance. Specifically, the objective of this clause is *“To assist the conservation of places that have natural, environmental, aesthetic, historic, cultural, scientific or social significance or other special value important for scientific and research purposes, as a means of understanding our past, as well as maintaining and enhancing Victoria’s image and making a contribution to the economic and cultural growth of the State”*.

Heritage Studies are currently underway for both the Cobram Town Centre Precinct and the Cobram Church Precinct (draft reports prepared in June 2006). These reports have assisted in informing this Strategy Plan.

3.6 Servicing and Infrastructure

Servicing and infrastructure of existing and proposed new development areas is an essential consideration of any Strategy Plan. Infrastructure should be used and provided in an efficient and effective manner. Cobram is serviced by Goulburn Valley Water for the provision of reticulated water and sewer, Telstra for telecommunications, Powercor for electricity and the Council is the responsible drainage authority. Servicing and infrastructure comments in regard to specific types of land use activities are considered and addressed in this Strategy Plan.

3.7 Town Entrances/Rural Surrounds

Town entrances are important to many rural and regional towns, including Cobram. Sprawling development along highways often results in unappealing entrances to towns. Cobram occupies a high profile location on the Murray Valley Highway, yet to date has failed to capture and maximise the opportunities offered by this location. Highway and the entrances to the townships are visitors' first impressions of the townships.

The entrances to Cobram require careful planning, in conjunction with future development and should incorporate the major findings of the Cobram Urban Design Framework.

The rural areas are a vital component of the economic and employment base of Cobram. This Strategy Plan promotes the sustainable use of these lands for agriculture and seeks to ensure that potential conflict of the rural/urban interface is minimised, thereby allowing agricultural operations to continue. Not only will this boost the economic base of Cobram, but will also enhance the town entrances with maintained orcharding and/or grazing operations lining the approaches into Cobram.

4 Residential Land Use and Development

4.1 Existing Context

Cobram's residential areas have historically developed to the north east, east and south east of the town centre, extending towards and alongside the attractive environs of the Murray River.

The majority of residential land is of a standard residential subdivision size and is incorporated within the Residential 1 Zone. The older, more established residential neighbourhoods contain allotments which are generally 800m² to 1,200m², with more recent subdivisions generally providing lots of less than this.

The current Cobram Structure Plan provides for current and future residential areas to the south east of the town centre. The Moira Shire Council has been proactive in commissioning the preparation of a development plan for some properties located in this growth area so as to effectively guide and co-ordinate future residential development (refer Section 4.2 below). Of the 106 hectares of developable land in the development plan area, approximately 24 hectares is developed, leaving 82 hectares of undeveloped land.

Some medium density housing is occurring in Cobram, mostly through the redevelopment of existing allotments in and near the town centre. These allotments are in the order of 400m² to 500m².

There is an area of lower density residential allotments (within the Low Density Residential Zone) south of the town centre and south of the Murray Valley Highway, known as Catona Crescent. The majority of this area has been subdivided into allotments of 2 hectares (5 acres). Some of these allotments are being re-subdivided into 2, 3 or more lots, depending on the capacity of the land to dispose of effluent (as this area is not serviced with reticulated sewerage), the location of the dwelling and other physical improvements on the site. There are few vacant allotments within this Catona Crescent area. There are smaller undeveloped areas of Low Density Residential Zone land to the east and west of the Catona Crescent subdivision, occupied respectively by an orchard with coolstores (12.3 hectares) and a poultry farm (3.5 hectares).

4.2 Previous Studies

Two studies have been undertaken in recent years in regard to residential land supply and development. These are described below.

Cobram Development Plan, September 2006

In March 2007 the Moira Shire Council is likely to adopt the Development Plan Report for Numurkah, Nathalia, Cobram and Yarrawonga prepared by EarthTech and TTM Consulting. The Development Plan Report was prepared in consultation with the landowners, Council and service authorities, including workshops in December 2005 and public exhibition in April 2006.

The study area for Cobram was approximately 160 hectares to the south east of Cobram town centre, with approximately half the area within the Residential 1 Zone and the other half within the Rural Zone. Part of the land is also covered by the Development Plan Overlay Schedule 1.

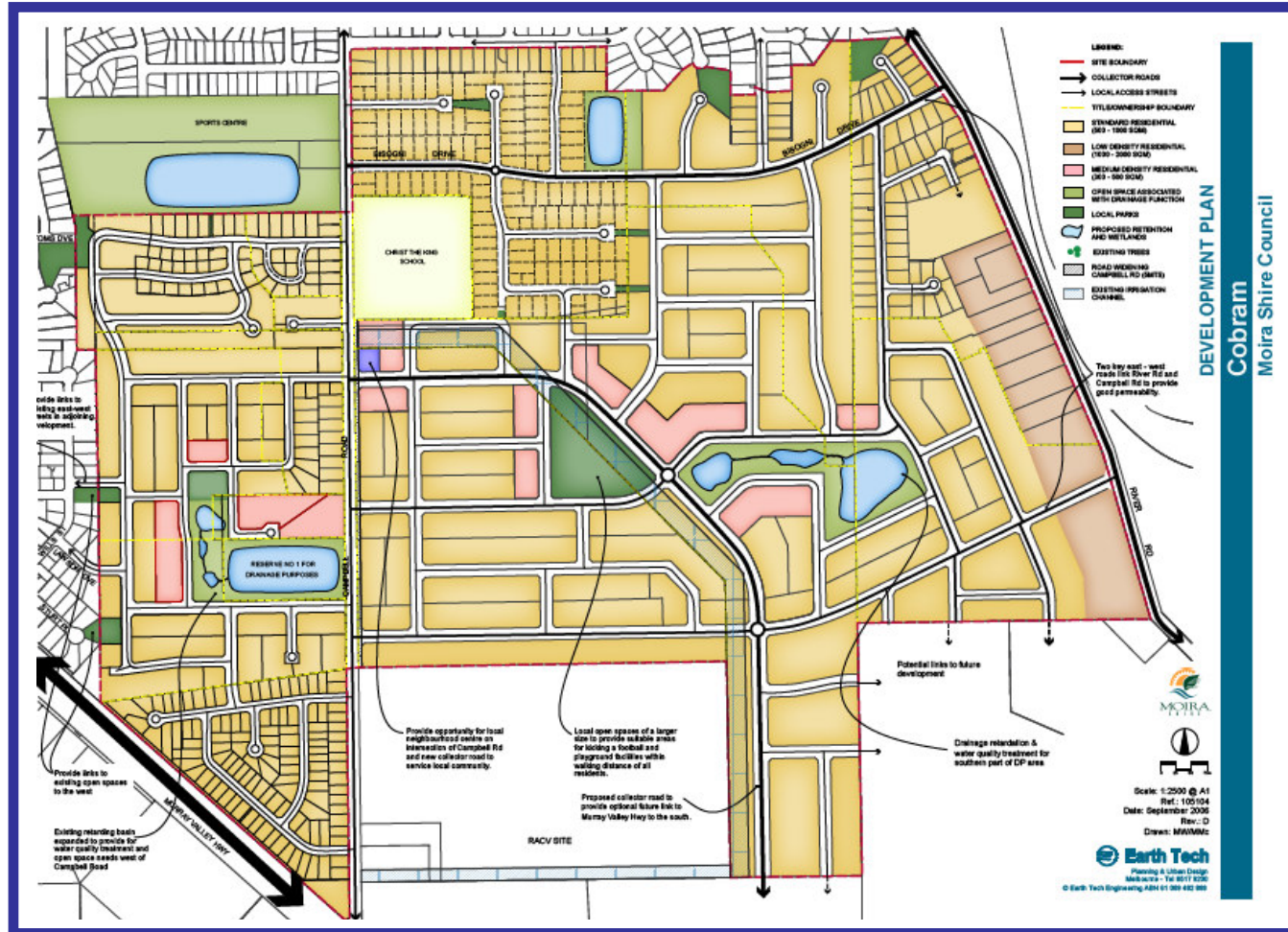
The Development Plan Report estimates that there is currently approximately a 10 year residential supply of land for Cobram with most of it within the study area. This 10 year supply is in accordance with the State Planning Policy. The report also found that future residential growth beyond the existing 10 year supply is generally constrained and will need to be to the south-east of Cobram; including the land within the study area currently zoned Rural.

The most significant issue that arose during the preparation of the Cobram Development Plan was the lack of north-west connection to the Cobram town centre from the study area. This was also expressed during the consultation conducted for this Strategy Plan. Due to existing developments and current development permits, the Development Plan is unable to provide significant upgrading of existing road linkages or to provide new east-west connections to the town centre from the study area.

The final development plan (refer to Figure 5) is a grid street design that will provide drivers with alternate routes and only requires minor changes to the already approved, but not yet completed, residential developments.

Given that this study is very recent, and its findings have been supported and accepted by the Moira Shire Council and the community, this Strategy Plan will rely upon its findings and recommendations.

Figure 5: Cobram Development Plan



Source: Cobram Development Plan, Earth Tech, 2006

Knowledge Creativity Performance
Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management

Rural Living Strategy for Moira Shire, June 2004

O'Neil Pollock & Associates Pty Ltd was appointed by the Moira Shire Council to undertake a Rural Living Strategy for the Moira Shire. Stage 1 of the report was finalised in June 2004 and included a review of Cobram, Numurkah, Nathalia, Yarrawonga, Bundalong, Barmah and their surrounds. The recommendations of the Stage 1 report included:

- *It is recommended that no additional land be rezoned in or around Cobram to accommodate additional LDR development as existing supply is forecast to be in excess of projections of 10 year demand.*
- *It is recommended that Council work co-operatively with Goulburn Valley Water and land owners within the Cobram South area to determine the feasibility of introducing a co-operative waste water treatment option to minimise impact of onside treatment and effectively project the opportunity to increase the LDR lot yield within the Cobram South Area.*

Whilst these findings were supported by the Moira Shire Council, they did not seem to have the same level of support from the general community. The need for a greater supply of allotments on the order of 0.4 hectare (1 acre) was clearly expressed a number of times during the consultative program.

4.3 Population Growth

4.3.1 1986 to 2006

According to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing the population of Cobram in 2006 was 5,531 persons, representing over 20% of the municipality's total population.

The Census results indicate an steady population growth rate for Cobram since 1986. Population growth between 1996 and 2006 was notably high both for Cobram and for the Moira Shire.

Table 1: Population Change, 1986 to 2006

	Population	% Change	% of Moira	% Chg in Moira
1986	3,651		16.4	
1991	3,797	4.0	15.6	-3.4
1996	3,865	1.8	15.6	-6.5
2001	4,554	17.8	17.9	12.0
2006	5,531	21.9	20.4	6.6

Source: DSE Know Your Area, adapted from Towns in Time 2001

In 2006, Cobram was the second largest town within the Moira Shire after Yarrawonga. The table below shows the comparison between the other major towns within the municipality.

Table 2: Population Change in Main Towns, 1981 to 2006

	Cobram	Yarrawonga	Numurkah	Nathalia
1981	3,817	3,442	2,713	1,222
1986	3,651	3,388	2,840	1,346
1991	3,797	3,603	3,128	1,470
1996	3,865	3,435	3,128	1,455
2001	4,554	4,012	3,382	1,416
2006	5,531	6,112	4,643	1,430

Source: DSE Know Your Area, adapted from *Towns in Time 2001*

Whilst in 2001 Cobram had the highest proportion of the Shire's population, between 2001 and 2006 Yarrawonga experienced unprecedented growth (increasing by over 50% in this time) to overtake Cobram as the largest town within the Shire.

Cobram is a cross border town with Barooga, which is located on the northern side of the Murray River in New South Wales. Whilst Barooga has a significantly smaller population base, it too has experienced some higher than expected population growth over the more recent years. Planning for the future growth and development of Cobram must consider the experiences occurring in and those predicted to occur for Barooga.

4.3.2 Forecasts 2006 to 2031

The population of Cobram is experiencing high population growth rates and there is an identified need to plan for anticipated future growth. In this regard the DSE's *Towns in Time 2001* and *Victoria in Future 2004* and building approvals data have been used for this purpose although these projections are based on the 2001 Census data.

The population of Cobram has been growing steadily in recent times. The average annual population change for Cobram from 1986-2006 equates to approximately 2.6%, and 4.3% per annum between 2001 and 2006.

An estimate for Yarrawonga is that it may continue to experience growth rates of between 7 and 10% per annum. Whilst this scenario is less likely to be experienced in Cobram, population forecasts based on this growth rate have been calculated to ascertain the population growth should this actually occur.

Some different scenarios for population growth are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Scenarios for Population Growth, 2001 to 2031

	1% chg pa	2% chg pa	3% chg pa	5% chg pa	7% chg pa
2006	5,531	5,531	5,531	5,531	5,531
2011	5,813	6,107	6,412	7,059	7,758
2016	6,110	6,742	7,433	9,009	10,880
2021	6,421	7,444	8,617	11,499	15,260
2026	6,749	8,219	9,990	14,675	21,403
2031	7,093	9,074	11,581	18,730	30,019

Source: Estimates by Coomes Consulting Group, 2007

4.4
4.4.1

Age Structure
1986 to 2006

As shown in the table below, in 2006 the age group with the highest proportion of Cobram's population was the 35 to 49 years cohort with 18.4%, closely followed by the 5 to 17 years cohort with 17.9% of the total population. Whilst this indicates that a high proportion of young families reside in Cobram, these cohorts were still under-represented when compared with the municipality and averages for Regional Victoria.

Cobram has over a quarter of its population aged over 60 years (26.6%), notably higher than the average for regional Victoria (21.4%). This cohort has increased steadily over the last ten years.

The attractiveness of Cobram's physical environment and lifestyle opportunities to retirees and an ageing population have seen the 50 years and over age cohorts increase from 26.2% of the Cobram population in 1986 to 39.1% in 2006.

Table 4: Age Structure, 1986 to 2006

Age Cohort	Cobram					Moira	Reg Vic
	1986 %	1991 %	1996 %	2001 %	2006 %	2006 %	2006 %
0-4	7.9	7.1	6.9	8.0	6.5	6.0	6.1
5-17	25.5	21.1	19.2	17.5	17.9	18.8	18.9
18-24	9.7	9.5	8.8	7.8	6.8	6.4	7.9
25-34	13.7	13.8	12.9	12.9	11.3	9.4	10.6
35-49	17.0	18.1	19.5	18.3	18.4	20.2	21.3
50-59	9.5	10.5	10.4	11.0	12.5	13.6	13.8
60 +*	16.7	20.0	22.4	24.6	26.6	25.6	21.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: DSE Know Your Area and ABS Census data 2006, adapted from Towns in Time 2001

* Due to ABS changing groupings, it is not possible for further breakdown of the population aged 60 and over and at the same time allow comparisons to be made at the Shire and regional level.

Many rural and regional towns experience a significant decline in the number of persons within the 18 to 24 years cohort. Since 1986 the proportion of the people living in Cobram within this cohort and the 5 to 17 years cohort has continued to decline. Whilst this is consistent with the changes to the overall age structure for Victoria, and indeed being experienced throughout Australia as the “baby-boomers” age, efforts should be made to reverse this decline through new employment opportunities and further economic development. The lack of tertiary education facilities and opportunities is a genuine concern amongst the Cobram population.

4.4.2 Forecasts 2006 to 2031

Whilst age structure projections are not available specifically for Cobram, the projections for Moira Shire based on 2001 data (as per the table below) indicate that it is expected that this trend towards an ageing population will continue. Like Moira, when compared to 2001, by 2031 Cobram’s population is expected to have a higher proportion of those aged over 55 years, with much of the population growth coming from increases in this age cohort, through ageing and migration.

Table 5: Forecast for Age Structure, 2001 to 2031

Age Cohort	Moira						Reg Vic
	2001 %	2006 %	2011 %	2016 %	2021 %	2031 %	2031 %
0-4	6.7	6.1	5.4	5.0	4.9	5.0	4.5
5-14	15.1	14.4	13.7	12.5	11.5	11.0	10.4
15-24	10.7	10.3	10.5	10.3	9.9	8.3	9.4
25-34	11.3	10.2	9.0	8.8	8.9	8.7	9.6
35-49	20.5	20.1	19.2	18.0	16.7	15.8	17.9
50-59	12.2	13.5	13.6	13.7	13.3	12.1	12.3
60-69	10.7	11.4	13.2	14.7	15.0	14.9	13.9
70-84	10.8	11.5	12.3	13.3	15.5	18.8	17.4
85+	1.9	2.4	3.1	3.8	4.3	5.5	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: DSE, Victoria in Future 2004

A major issue for planning for the housing of this group is the desire for many people to stay at home for as long as possible, with the benefit of Home and Community Care programs. This is particularly applicable to those people from remote areas and retired farmers, who wish to remain in familiar areas.

There will be a range of people in this age group, from early retirees that are fully independent and may combine part time work with leisure activities, to elderly people who are fully supported. Subsequently the housing and community facility demands of these sub groups will differ and may include:

- independent living units
- retirement villages, which may be co-located with supported living dwellings
- serviced apartments
- supported residential units
- residential aged care

There is likely to be demand for medium density of 1-2 bedroom stock, smaller lots with manageable gardens, in both the private and public housing markets. Such housing should be provided in proximity to services and other residents, to encourage social interaction and easy access in the event of emergencies. Physically these dwellings should be flexible in terms of occupant use, contain ramps and have minimum changes in levels.

4.5 Number of Households and Household Size

4.5.1 1986 to 2006

Since 1986 to 2006 the number of households in Cobram increased by 932, representing an average of 47 per year (households are not the same as dwellings as one dwelling may have a number of households). Significant is the increase in number of households between 1996 and 2006, which recorded an increase of 677 households over this period, a trend which is consistent with the trends in population growth as shown in Section 4.3.

Consistent with national trends, household size continues to decline within Cobram, and the Moira Shire, as the number of dwellings and population continues to increase. The number of one and two person households increased considerably to represent 67% of all households in Cobram in 2006, with the converse trend experienced by the four and five or more person households which declined from 34% of households in 1986 to 21% in 2006.

Table 6: Household Occupancy Rates, 1986 to 2006

Persons per h/h	Cobram					Moira	Reg Vic
	1986 %	1991 %	1996 %	2001 %	2006 %	2006 %	2006 %
1	20.4	23.0	25.9	28.3	28.7	25.8	26.3
2	30.4	32.7	37.5	36.6	38.3	38.9	35.9
3	14.7	15.2	14.5	14.4	11.4	12.2	14.1
4	15.4	14.3	11.8	12.2	11.7	12.3	14.1
5 or more	19.0	14.8	10.4	8.5	9.9	10.7	9.5
Total No. h/holds	1,225	1,345	1,480	1,811	2,157	10,133	498,361

Source: DSE Know Your Area and ABS 2006, adapted from Towns in Time 2001

4.5.2 Forecasts 2006 to 2031

In 2006 there was an average of 2.4 persons per household in Cobram. For the Moira Shire, *Victoria in Future 2004* (DSE) estimates indicate a decrease in this number as per the table below.

Table 7: Forecast Household Occupancy Rates, 2001 to 2006

Persons per h/hold	Moira						Reg Vic
	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2031	2031
	2.49	2.40	2.31	2.22	2.15	2.01	2.15

Source: DSE, *Victoria in Future 2004*

There has been an ongoing gradual reduction in household occupancy rates which is forecast to decrease to 2.01 persons per household by 2031 for the Moira Shire. This will create a high demand for a different form of housing from the typical detached family home that predominates in Cobram. More of the households will be one or two person households, as a consequence of an ageing population, break-up of families, and young people moving to larger towns and cities to work or study. Home ownership for a sole person is often more difficult in terms of affordability.

Housing strategies for residential areas should identify areas suitable for the development of medium density housing and the potential for subdivision or conversions of older housing and industrial buildings, especially those within close proximity to the town centre.

4.6 Affordability and Tenure

House prices within the Moira Shire have increased since 2002 as indicated in the table below:

Table 8: Median House Price, 2002 to 2006

Median Price	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
House	\$130,000	\$155,000	\$174,500	\$185,000	\$195,000
Unit/apartment	\$105,000	\$135,000	\$151,000	\$182,500	\$175,000
Vacant block	\$40,000	\$52,260	\$57,000	\$63,000	\$69,600
No. house sales	563	526	464	467	220

Source: DSE, *Know Your Area, 2004* (based on *Valuer General Victoria, A Guide to Property Values, 2005*.)

Please note, 2006 data is not yet available and the above statistics are preliminary only. Of the 2,464 private dwellings in Cobram in 2006, approximately 25% were being purchased and 41% fully owned.

In 2006, Cobram also had relatively high proportions of publicly rented housing (6.6% of all dwellings in Cobram) and privately rented housing (22.1%) compared to the regional Victorian averages of 3% and 19.4% respectively (*ABS Census 2006*).

Sales figures provided by the Moira Shire Council show that in 2006 the mean price for a house and a vacant allotment in Cobram was comparable to those for the Moira Shire, being slightly higher than the municipal average, as shown in Table 9 over the page. Unit/apartment prices were slightly lower in Cobram.

Table 9: Median House Price, 2005 to 2006 for Cobram

Median Price	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
House	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$197,000	\$215,000
Unit/apartment	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$150,000	\$172,500
Vacant block	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$85,000	\$72,000
No. house sales	N/A	N/A	N/A	160	133

Source: Moira Shire Council, *Sales Figures*. Note: No. house sales includes the sale of vacant blocks

4.7 Dwelling Numbers and Dwelling Approvals

4.7.1 Dwelling Numbers 1986 to 2006

The number of private dwellings within Cobram increased from 1,305 in 1986 to 2,464 dwellings in 2006 (*DSE, Know Your Area, 2004, ABS Census 2006*). This represents an overall increase of 1,159 dwellings, an average of 58 dwellings per year. These figures do not include dwellings purchased for location within Oasis Village as the Australia Bureau of Statistics does not include moveable dwellings in its figures.

4.7.2 Dwelling Approvals 2000 to 2006

An insight into population growth is also obtained through analysis of the information on building approvals for new dwellings. Since 2000 the number of

new dwellings approvals for Cobram, and in comparison to the other major towns in the municipality, is shown in Table 10.

The average number of dwelling approvals in Cobram over the seven year period was 35 new dwellings per year. This is not consistent with the average growth in the number of households between 1986 and 2006 as indicated in Section 4.7.1 above (average of 58 dwelling per year), indicating that growth has been irregular.

Table 10: New Dwelling Approvals in Main Towns, 2000 to 2006

	Cobram	Yarrowonga	Numurkah	Nathalia
2000	29	58	23	8
2001	24	55	43	4
2002	28	115	34	4
2003	29	133	42	4
2004	45	149	39	13
2005	48	139	60	10
2006	38	129	33	3

Source: Moira Shire Council Building Approvals Database, 2000-2006

The unprecedented growth rates for Yarrowonga are reflected in the significant rise in the number of new dwelling approvals between 2001 and 2002, a trend which continues through to today, albeit a little slower.

The above figures do not include new dwellings purchased for location within Oasis Village. Oasis Village has provided an average of 25 - 30 dwellings per year, contributing to the overall housing stock in Cobram.

4.7.3 Forecasts 2006 to 2031

Between 1986 and 2006, the number of private dwellings increased by approximately 58 dwellings per year. As per the Council's database, the number of new dwellings approvals averaged 35 dwellings per year between 2000 and 2006. (Note – these figures do not include the dwellings provided at Oasis Village).

Different scenarios have been explored in Table 11 below at various levels of dwellings per annum.

Table 11: Scenarios for New Dwelling Numbers, 2001 to 2031

	35 dwlgs pa	60 dwlgs pa
2006	2,464	2,464
2011	2,639	2,764
2016	2,814	3,064
2021	2,989	3,364
2026	3,164	3,664
2031	3,339	3,964

Source: Estimates by Coomes Consulting Group, 2007

4.8 Residential Land Demand and Supply

4.8.1 Demand Calculations

The following housing demand calculations are intended to provide an overall picture of land requirements to house future population. This Strategy Plan is not a detailed housing supply and demand analysis; a comprehensive Housing Strategy would provide further definition to the demand side of housing.

Based on the population forecasts as per Table 3 and the dwellings forecasts on Table 11, the following land requirements scenarios have been calculated (Note: assumptions for these calculations are explained following the tables).

It is acknowledged that the findings of Tables 12 and 13 have limitations, due to the imperfect nature of housing and land area statistics used and the variables of the housing market over time. However, these tables provide an indication of the upper and lower levels of demand for residential land that are likely to occur within Cobram, and as such provide a reasonable basis to estimate potential residential land requirements and take up rates.

**Table 12: Cobram Residential Land Area Requirements
(based on 2% pa pop growth & 35 new dwelling approvals pa)**

Year	Population	Occupancy Rate	Equivalent Dwellings	No. of New Dwellings Based on Population Projection	No. of New Dwellings Based on Building Approval Trends	Land Area (ha) required for Residential Demand (Average of population projection & approval trends)
2006	5,531					
2011	6,107	2.31	2,643			
2016	6,742	2.22	3,037	394	175	38
2021	7,444	2.15	3,462	425	175	40
2026	8,219	2.08	3,951	489	175	45
2031	9,074	2.01	4,514	563	175	50
			TOTALS	1,871 dwlg	875 dwlg	173 hectares
				(Equivalent to 250ha)	(Equivalent to 120ha)	

**Table 13: Cobram Residential Land Area Requirements
(based on 3% pa pop growth & 60 new dwelling approvals pa)**

Year	Population	Occupancy Rate	Equivalent Dwellings	New Dwelling Demand – Population Projection	New Dwelling Demand – Building Approval Trends	Land Area (ha) required for Residential Demand (Average of population projection & approval trends)
2006	5,531					
2011	6,412	2.31	2,777			
2016	7,433	2.22	3,348	571	300	58
2021	8,617	2.15	4,008	660	300	64
2026	9,990	2.08	4,803	795	300	73
2031	11,581	2.01	5,762	959	300	84
			TOTALS	2,985 dwlg (Equivalent to 400ha)	1,500 dwlg (Equivalent to 200ha)	280 hectares

Table 12 and 13 assumptions

Population estimates 2% pa increase based on Census of Population & Housing results 1986 to 2006. The 3% pa based on faster rate of growth than previously experienced.

Occupancy rate estimates based on occupancy rate forecasts for Moira Shire as sourced from *Victoria in Future*, DSE 2004

Equivalent dwellings is calculated by dividing the population by the relevant occupancy rate

New dwelling demand (population projection) calculates the additional number of dwellings required over a 5 year period to cater for residential growth.

New dwelling demand (building approval trends) calculates the additional number of dwellings required over a 5 year period to cater for residential growth. The 35 new dwellings per year scenario is based on number of new dwelling approvals 2000 to 2006 sourced from Moira Shire Council. The 60 dwellings per year scenario is based on average increase in number of private dwellings 1961 to 2006 sourced from the Census of Population & Housing

Land area required to accommodate potential residential demand is derived from the average of population derived dwelling demand and building approval trend dwelling demand. The land areas shown demonstrate the number of residential hectares necessary (assumed a density of 7.5 dwellings/ha to allow for average lot size of 1,000m² and 25% allowance for roads/infrastructure) to accommodate projected residential demand over each five year period. The proposed density allows scope for medium and low density development.

4.8.2 Options for Residential Land Supply

The range of residential land demand for Cobram to 2031 equates to between 120 hectares and 400 hectares depending on the growth rate scenarios (refer Section 4.8.1 above).

The range of residential land demand for Cobram for the next ten years (to accord with State Planning Policy of maintaining a minimum 10 years of residential land supply) equates to between 50 hectares and 90 hectares, again depending on the different growth rate scenarios.

In terms of supply of residential land, as found in the Cobram Development Plan Report, future residential development is generally limited to the south east and to a certain extent to the south of the town centre, with smaller pockets available to the north, for the following reasons:

- The riparian environs of the Murray River preclude any further development east of the town.
- With the exception of some undeveloped parcels of land north of the town centre, continued development in this direction is also constrained by the riparian environs of the Murray River.
- To a certain extent the existing low density residential and some potential flooding issues limit residential development to the south of Cobram.
- There is no residentially zoned land and virtually no conventional residential development west or north west of the town centre as the predominant land use activities in these directions are industry and agriculture. It is considered that existing and future industrial development to the west will become an impediment to further residential development in this direction.

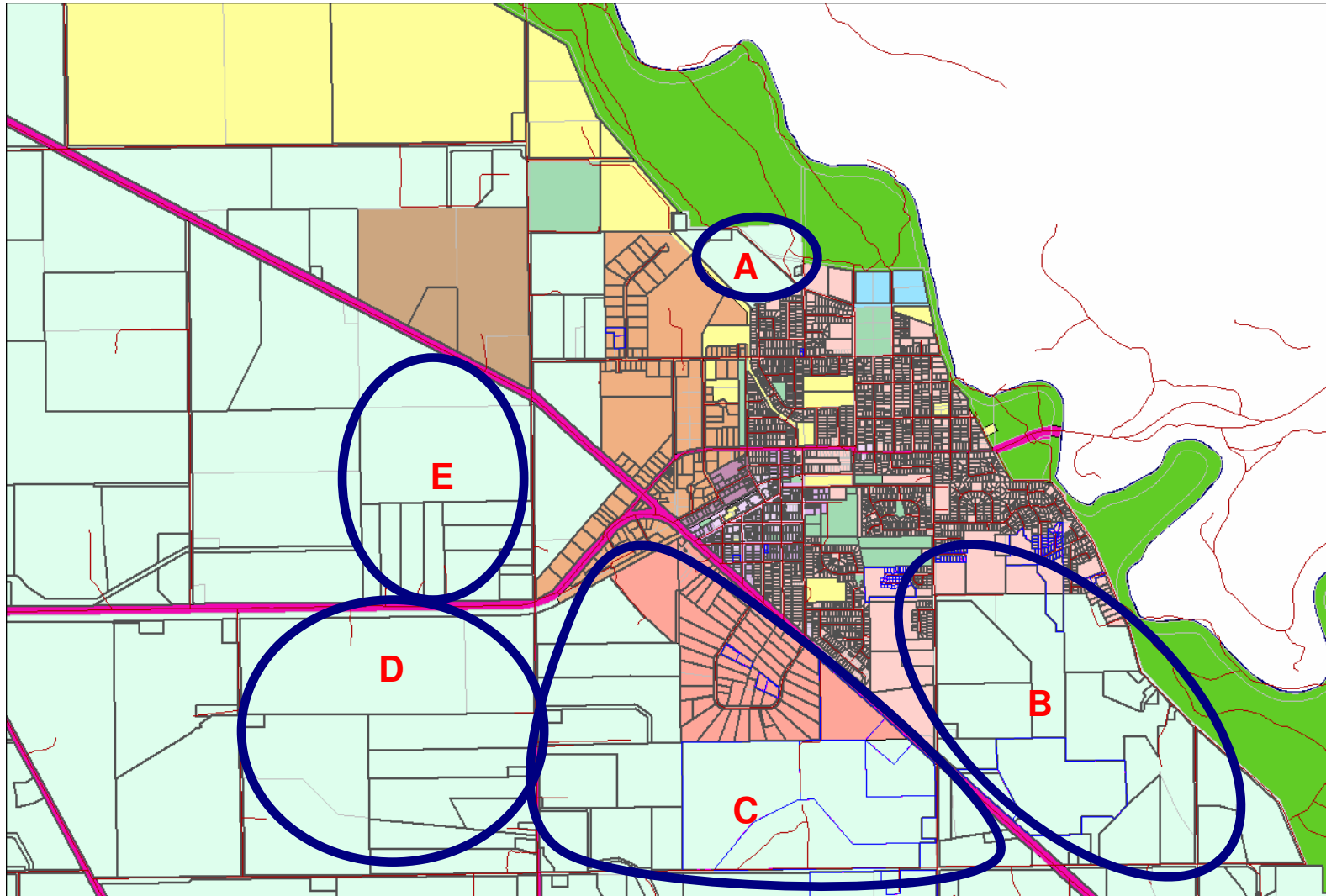
In light of the above, the following areas are options for future residential development (refer Figure 6 over the page):

Area A the area known as Grasso's land (17 hectares). This site is within the Rural Zone, however a proposal to rezone the land to Residential 1 Zone has been adopted by the Council. This proposal is with DSE and has been placed "on-hold". If developed, it is likely that this land will yield 160 conventional residential allotments (based on lot size of 800m² and 25% roads).

Area B the area bound by existing residentially zoned land to the north and west, the Murray Valley Highway and Pullar Road to the south, and River Road to the east. A development plan has been prepared for 160 hectares of this area, of which 106 hectares is developable, 24 hectares which is developed. Approximately 80 hectares of the total area is currently within the Residential 1 Zone, therefore leaving 56 hectares of zoned and undeveloped land.

- Area C the area bound by existing the Low Density Residential and Industrial 1 zoned land to the north, the Murray Valley Highway to the east, Pullar Road to the south and Cobram South Road to the west (270 hectares)
- Area D an area west of Cobram, generally bound by the Murray Valley Highway to the north and Cobram South Road to the east and Irvin Road to the west (note – this area is outside the study area for this Cobram Strategy Plan).
- Area E an area west of Cobram, generally bound by the Murray Valley Highway to the south, Ritchie’s Road to the east and the Cobram Koonoomoo Road to the north.

Figure 6: Land Supply Options for Future Residential Development



4.9 Physical Infrastructure and Servicing

Water Supply

Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) is the responsible water supply authority.

GVW has advised it generally has good capacity for servicing the proposed residential growth areas as identified in the existing Cobram Structure Plan (generally contained in Area B on Figure 6). For the most part land to the south east of Cobram can be fully serviced with reticulated water. The servicing can be achieved by the construction of water reticulation main extensions throughout the study area and connecting to the existing nearby assets. GVW acknowledges that their trunk network may have to be upgraded to ensure adequate supply conditions are met during peak demand periods, particularly to customers located on the higher “sand hill” ground.

GVW has advised that it prefers residential development to occur near existing and upgraded infrastructure. It would not view residential development near the Cobram Waste Management Facility favourably.

The cost of new works is to be funded at the cost of the developer and/or Goulburn Valley Water in accordance with the statutory guidelines of the Essential Services Commission (ESC). Generally, non-shared reticulation water mains within a developer’s landholding that are 150mm or less in diameter are to be fully funded by the developer. Larger trunk mains or shared distribution assets are to be fully funded by GVW or otherwise by agreement between GV Water and the developer(s) with ESC consent.

There are formulae that apply to the funding of shared distribution assets whereby in the event that the said asset is not reasonably expected to be funded within GVW’s financial forward planning, then the developer is required to contribute to the cost of the works.

Sewerage Services

Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) is the responsible sewerage authority.

GVW has advised it generally has good capacity for servicing the proposed residential growth areas as identified in the existing Cobram Structure Plan (generally contained in Area B on Figure 6). For the most part land to the south east of Cobram can be fully serviced. The servicing can be achieved in part by extensions to their existing gravity sewerage reticulation mains and in part via the construction of new sewage pumping stations, rising mains and gravity reticulation mains.

GVW would prefer the larger allotments along River Road to be connected to reticulated services, particularly from a water quality management perspective.

GVW has advised that it prefers residential development to occur near existing and upgraded infrastructure. It would not view residential development near the Cobram Waste Management Facility favourably.

In regard to land south of the Murray Valley Highway, this area (Area C on Figure 5) is not provided with reticulated sewer services. The continual re-subdivision of existing allotments in the Catona Crescent area is increasingly becoming a concern to GVW, particularly from a water quality management perspective. The authority has no plans for reticulated sewerage to Catona Crescent. For low density lots greater than 0.4ha reticulated sewerage is not required if Council is satisfied that all domestic waste can be adequately treated and retained within the boundaries of each lot.

GVW also advised that further investigations would need to be undertaken in regard to servicing this area with reticulated sewer and the infrastructure requirements that would be required.

The cost of new works is to be funded at the cost of the developer and/or Goulburn Valley Water in accordance with the statutory guidelines of the Essential Services Commission (ESC). Generally, non-shared reticulation assets within a developer's landholding that are 225mm or less in diameter are to be fully funded by the developer. Larger trunk mains or shared distribution assets are to be fully funded by GVW or otherwise by agreement between GVW and the developer(s) with ESC consent.

There are formulae that apply to the funding of shared distribution assets whereby in the event that the said asset is not reasonably expected to be funded within GVW's financial forward planning, then the developer is required to contribute to the cost of the works.

A "buffer" around the Cobram Waster Management Facility in accordance with Recommended Buffer Distances for Industrial Air Emissions 1990 will be applied to all use and development proposals. Council may wish to give effect to this via a policy or overlay in the planning scheme.

Drainage

The Moira Shire Council is the responsible drainage authority for Cobram, and the receiving water for stormwater runoff is the Murray River. Stormwater generally discharges into the river via a series of existing and proposed retarding basins, wetlands, pump stations, rising mains, underground piped and open stormwater outfall drains.

Moira Shire seeks stormwater drainage works to be designed to accord with the current best practice principles contained in "Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Guidelines, CSRIO 1999". As such, the post construction performance objective of the drainage system is to achieve 80% retention of the typical urban load of suspended solids, 45% retention of the typical urban load of

total phosphorus, 45% retention of the typical urban load of total nitrogen and 70% retention of the typical urban load of litter. Furthermore, flows need to be retarded such that they do not exceed the predevelopment discharge that would result from a storm having an average recurrence interval of once every 1.5 years. Moira Shire will also require retardation to cater for the 1 in 100 year event.

Development also has to accord with the construction phase performance objectives of limiting and preventing sediment, litter and other pollutants from entering the receiving waters. Consequently, development in Cobram will have to accord with the “Best Practice Guidelines” and developers will have to consider the adoption of “Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)” principles.

Costs for drainage works including water quality improvement and retardation will be borne by the developers.

In 1988 the then Shire of Cobram initiated the Cobram South Drainage Scheme to enable properties fronting Campbell Road and properties south of the Murray Valley Highway to be drained so they could be developed for residential purposes. Contributions towards this scheme were made by the landowners, some on a reduced rate depending on the zoning of their properties.

Electricity

Powercor Australia Ltd is the network service provider for Cobram. At this stage Powercor has elected to comment on the draft Strategy Plan, so comments received from Powercor during the preparation of the Cobram Development Plan have been referred to in this section.

In the event that the existing high voltage lines need reconductoring or extending as a consequence of a detailed assessment of the loading demands within the study area, Powercor’s current policies dictate this work generally be completed at Powercor’s cost, but developers should confirm specific requirements and conditions by formal application to Powercor.

The usual strategy of high voltage underground cable extensions to substations sited as appropriate throughout the development with low voltage domestic underground cable reticulation to the lots would apply.

In relation to development costs, current policy conforms to the statutory requirement for Powercor to allow construction to be carried out comprising a mix of non-competitive works (ie works to be done by the Network service provider) and competitive works (ie works to be done by accredited contractors). Powercor will provide a fee offer and procedural conditions upon formal application.

Telecommunications

Telstra is the network service provider for Cobram, and it too has advised it will comment on the specific of the draft Strategy Plan during exhibition period.

During the preparation of the Cobram Development Plan, Telstra advised that it has a statutory responsibility to provide a network service for telecommunications, including broadband) to the respective property boundaries of the sites within Cobram. The usual developer shared trenching conditions would apply within the proposed development (ie. developer to fund shared trenching).

The need or otherwise to upgrade their network assets would be investigated in detail at the time of application for a planning permit.

4.10 Residential Land Strategy

Significant levels of State and local policy exist in relation to residential development and housing. In particular, contemporary planning policy encourages urban consolidation in order to utilise infrastructure more efficiently and locate residences in close proximity to a range of community, commercial and recreational facilities.

A diversity of housing choice is also strongly encouraged at both State and local level. This Strategy Plan provides for choice, diversity and opportunities for growth in all housing/residential sectors, including:

- Infill urban consolidation
- Conventional residential
- Lifestyle/low density residential
- Affordable housing
- Rural residential

For the past ten years or so, Governments have adopted urban consolidation as their predominant planning and economic philosophy, including the encouragement of higher density infill residential development in close proximity to transport (particularly public transport) and activity centres.

For Cobram to grow in a sustainable fashion, future residential development should incorporate a mix of infill development and residential expansion. Urban consolidation is strongly encouraged within this Strategy Plan.

Housing within the Moira Shire is generally characterised by single dwellings on residential lots. The majority of residential allotments in Cobram are within the 1,000m² range. In order to encourage the principles of urban consolidation, it may be appropriate for the majority of residential allotments to have an average lot size of 800m² in the future.

As determined in Section 4.8.1 the range of residential land demand for Cobram to 2031 equates to between 120 hectares and 400 hectares depending on the growth rate scenarios. The range of residential land demand for Cobram for the next ten years (to accord with State Planning Policy of maintaining a minimum 10

years of residential land supply) equates to between 50 hectares and 90 hectares, again depending on the different growth rate scenarios.

In identifying areas for residential development or redevelopment to accommodate forecast demand, the residential development strategy has utilised the upper level forecast for residential land demand. Whilst it is acknowledged that actual demand (and uptake) may not match this upper level demand forecast for the life of the Strategy Plan, it is appropriate that sufficient and appropriate areas are identified to ensure that upper level forecast demand can be accommodated.

Similar to the current planning provisions, it is recommended that areas proposed for residential development (or redevelopment) within this Strategy Plan be subject to the preparation of a Development Plan which will require any future residential development to be strategically justified (in terms of both supply and demand) to ensure that residential development within Cobram is facilitated in an orderly manner in accordance with the objectives of this Strategy Plan.

Figure 7 demonstrates the residential growth options for Cobram for the next 15-20 years. The recommendations made for residential growth within Cobram are informed by the following:

- Existing State and local planning policy;
- Development opportunities and constraints as they apply to the urban areas and surrounding environs;
- Existing and forecast population growth rates; and
- Existing and forecast residential building approval trends

In the short term, residential expansion within Cobram is focussed upon the south east of the township, with the exception of Area A to the north, which has potential to yield 160 conventional residential allotments. It is also noted that opportunities are likely to exist to redevelop under-utilised sites within central areas of the town for medium density residential development.

The strategic justification for the majority of residential expansion to the south east of the township includes:

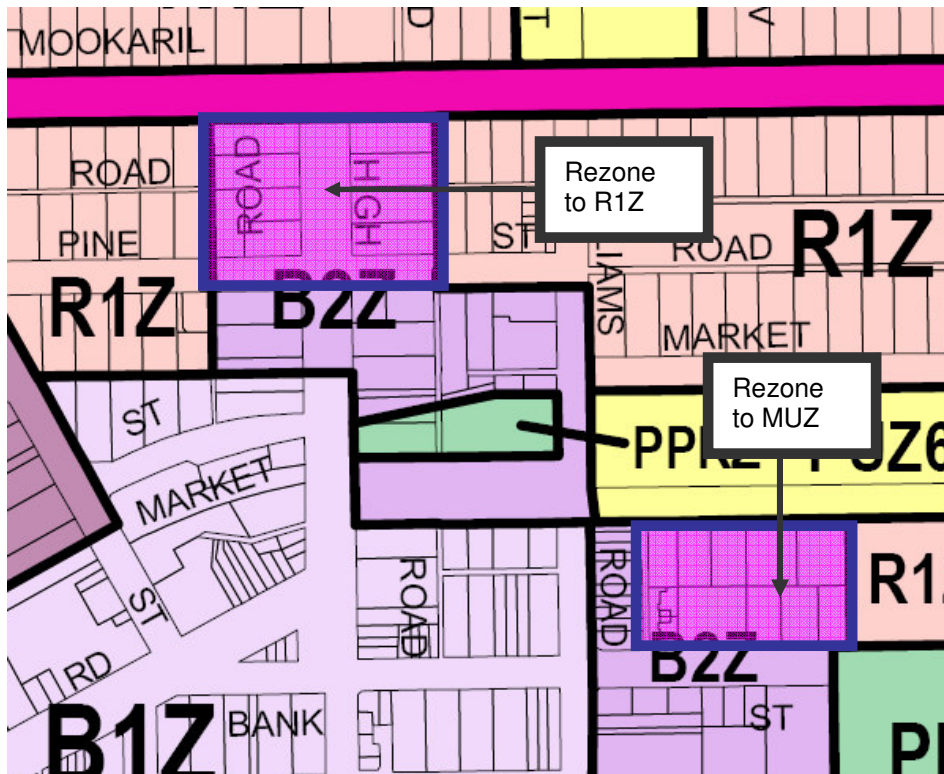
- The physical constraints associated with the Murray River eliminating expansion opportunities to the east and north;
- The need to protect existing and future industrial precincts to the north west and west of the town centre;
- Existing and proposed infrastructure and services have been planned for in the south east growth corridor.
- Flooding constraints on land south of the town centre and more particularly south of Pullar Road, and on land to the north and north west of the town.

Existing coolstores stand in the area noted for a residential expansion. For the most part these are uses that have no material off site effects. Subdivision and development can occur around them but it would be prudent to insure that subdivision plans provide for future potential residential subdivision.

4.10.1 Medium Density Residential

Future residential development should encompass a sustainable mix of housing density, including medium density development. Such densities should be provided for through a mix of infill development and within suitable locations in expanding residential neighbourhoods. In this regard it is proposed to rezone properties adjacent to the town centre from Business 2 Zone to Residential 1 and Mixed Use Zones to facilitate medium density housing and mixed use developments. These properties are mostly occupied by residential dwellings, with some being redeveloped for medium density housing. There are two main small precincts – in High Street (east and west sides) between Pine Street and Broadway, and the area bound by Bank Street, Punt Road and Williams Street, as shown in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8: Areas to be rezoned to Residential 1 Zone



Source: Extract from Moira Planning Scheme Zone Plan No. 7

Whilst new subdivision design should be flexible to cater for all housing needs and housing types, medium density development should be located around public open spaces and within good access to existing and potential public transport routes.

As stated in the Cobram Development Plan, being located adjacent to open spaces provides these lots with added amenity and space that the lot may otherwise not be able to provide. Ideally these lots should 'front' towards the open space to provide the added benefit of passive surveillance.

4.10.2 Conventional Residential Development

Conventional or standard residential development is generally focussed on the south east of Cobram in the short to medium term, and includes areas south of the Murray Valley Highway for the medium to long term. These areas are readily serviced by reticulated serves, a drainage strategy has been in place for a number of years and the opportunity exists for the linking of future neighbourhoods through a well planned movement network comprising clear hierarchy of roads and open space and linear links.

4.10.3 Low Density/Lifestyle Residential Development

Given its location on the Murray River, Cobram is attracting an increasing number of people choosing to both stay and move to/near the town due to its “lifestyle” opportunities. Low density housing, or residential allotments of approximately 0.4 hectares and larger, is a recognised housing type within Cobram. Whilst there is an area of such development in Catona Crescent, anecdotal evidence suggests there is a greater demand for such allotments than currently supplied by the market. Anecdotal evidence further suggests that this market is readily supplied in Barooga and to a certain extent in Tocumwal, both New South Wales border towns.

Recognising this demand, the Strategy Plan has nominated the following areas for low density residential development:

- As per the recommendations of the Cobram Development Plan, a lower density residential interface should be provided adjacent to the existing low density development on River Road. This would provide a suitable transition to the adjacent Murray River environs.
- An area around McCluskey Road, particularly towards the intersection with River Road
- Along the eastern side of Cobram South Road, south to Pullar Road, and east along Pullar Road for approximately 1.2 kilometres. This area adjoins the Catona Crescent subdivision, and although there does not appear to be viable/feasible options for providing vehicular connectivity with the Catona Crescent subdivision, there is potential to provide a walking/bicycle track alongside the retardation basin located to the south west of the subdivision. This area would provide for short, medium and long term supply of low density residential allotments.

The provision of low density residential allotments provides for the lifestyle market, however so do developments such as Oasis Village. Oasis Village provides higher density housing in a village like environment whereby people generally feel more secure and appreciative of the sense of community resulting from the style of development and its management.

These lifestyle opportunities are a legitimate form of residential development and opportunities for such are provided through this Strategy Plan.

4.10.4 Affordable Housing

All development and redevelopment of land for residential purposes should consider the provision of affordable housing.

As stated previously Oasis Village provides 25 to 30 dwellings per year, demonstrating a demand for such housing options in Cobram. However, as described above Oasis Village also provides a lifestyle choice, contributing to its popularity as a place to live. To qualify and quantify the level of demand and the need for affordable housing in Cobram, it is recommended that the Council undertake a municipal wide housing strategy which would address this issue, as well as investigate and make recommendations on the specific housing needs for the wider community.

It is noted that the take up rates of dwellings in Oasis Village may distort the perceived demand/need for affordable/lifestyle accommodation in Cobram as currently Cobram is the only location in the municipality offering this type of housing arrangement at such a scale.

4.10.5 Rural Living

Rural living on larger allotments (generally greater than 2 hectares in area) is a recognised and legitimate land use. Existing rural residential allotments are located throughout the municipality. The Strategy Plan nominates an area outside the boundaries of the study area, being south of the Murray Valley Highway and west of Cobram South Road, whereby there may be opportunity to provide additional rural living/residential allotments. Whilst providing consistency with the low density residential area south of the highway and east of Cobram South Road, the identification and subsequent rezoning of land for such purposes should be reviewed in light of the pending land capability assessment to be undertaken by the Moira Shire Council in conjunction with the Greater Shepparton City and Campaspe Shire Councils.

4.10.6 Release of Land

In relation to nominated residential growth areas, it is acknowledged that the market has a role to play in the release and development of land, and as such an unqualified and rigid implementation of the Strategy Plan may unreasonably restrict land supply and impact upon both housing choice and affordability.

Accordingly, it is recommended that Council consider supporting proposals for the release and development of land within nominated residential growth areas that diverge from the specified implementation timeframes where:

- The site is contained wholly within a nominated growth area on the Cobram Strategy Plan;
- The Cobram Strategy Plan has been adopted and referenced in the Moira Planning Scheme;

- A Development Plan applying to the whole of the site has been prepared to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority; and
- The proponent can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority that the proposal will enhance the choice of available allotment sizes, housing opportunities and dwelling types within Cobram.

4.11 Summary and Recommendations

Overall, the strategies of the current Cobram Structure Plan and the policies in Clause 21.04-4 have provided Cobram with a sound planning base. This Strategy Plan endorses many of these policies and strategies, and includes some minor changes to reflect aspects such as recent population growth and demographic change, greater provision of choice in housing diversity and type, and the outcomes and recommendations of recent studies undertaken for the Moira Shire Council.

The main changes to the existing Cobram Structure Plan in regard to residential growth include an expansion to the growth boundary, reallocation of some areas for conventional residential rather than low density residential, the incorporation of medium density housing opportunities in new residential neighbourhoods rather than just at the town centre fringe and the inclusion of a low density buffer for residential development adjacent to the river environs (along River Road).

The following strategies are recommended for residential land use and development:

- Medium density development is encouraged around the commercial fringe of the Cobram town centre, near public open spaces and local neighbourhood centre and within good access to existing and potential public transport routes so as to promote greater diversity in housing within walking distances to the town centre and other community facilities.
- Rezone land on the east and west of High Street, between Pine and Broadway Streets and land bound by Punt Road, Williams Road and Bank Street from Business 2 Zone to Residential 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone respectively. These properties are generally existing residential allotments which are experiencing conversion to medium density residential developments. The allotments are within close proximity to the town centre, and the opportunity for redevelopment for medium density housing will be encouraged and facilitated through this rezoning.
- Short term residential development will be directed to land already zoned and proposed to be rezoned (as above-mentioned and illustrated in Figure 7).
- Rezone land identified for short term residential development to Residential 1 Zone with a Development Plan Overlay.
- Medium and long term residential development should be directed to the south east and south of the town, as illustrated in Figure 7.
- Encourage new development and the redevelopment of land to consider the provision of affordable housing.

- All zoned yet undeveloped residential land and areas identified for short, medium and long term residential (conventional and low density) should be included in a Development Plan Overlay to ensure their orderly development and co-ordinated provision of infrastructure, community services and facilities.
- The aesthetics and character of the river environs will be protected through the inclusion of residential land at the interface with the river in a Low Density Residential Zone.
- Low density residential land will be directed to the south west of the town centre as illustrated in Figure 7. This area should be serviced with reticulated infrastructure.
- Rezone land identified for short term low density residential development to Low Density Residential Zone with a Development Plan Overlay.
- Pending the outcome of the Rural Land Review, the opportunity may exist for rural living development between Irvin Road and Cobram South Road, located on the south side of the Murray Valley Highway.
- Discourage the expansion of the existing caravan park to the west of the town.
- The area to the north of Murray Valley Highway and west of Ritchies Road should be the subject of advice and direction as part of the Rural Strategy.

Further details on implementation are included in Section 12 of this Report.

5 Affordable Housing and Oasis Village

One of the factors instrumental in initiating this strategy plan review has been a proposal to establish a “village” of affordable housing on land at the south-west corner of Cobram – Koonoomoo Road and Richie Road (part of the area shown as option ‘E’ in Figure 6). The nature and merits of the proposal warrant fulsome and separate discussion.

Following consideration of the proposal, the Moira Shire Council issued a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit in support of the proposed development. The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) has appealed this decision to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Oasis Village is an established “caravan park” on the north side of the Koonoomoo Road east of Richie Road, Cobram. Over a 12 year period Oasis Homes Australia Pty Limited, has built and sited on the land a range of lower cost prefabricated homes in a park setting. The site has a finished capacity for 166 moveable homes. The housing product has been highly sought as a retirement and lifestyle option due to its low capital and reoccurring costs. The demand is evident in the 25 – 30 dwellings established per annum and the labour force that has been engaged in the prefabrication and construction of the homes. The village has been established and operated under the provisions of the Caravan Parks and Moveable Dwellings Act.

The dwellings are moveable, occupying serviced sites (not private allotments) and residents pay a site rental and not municipal rates.

The role and demand for this manner of affordable lifestyle housing has been demonstrated with the current site approaching capacity and the continuing latent demand.

5.1 A New Village

In 2005 the Moira Shire Council received a planning permit application to use and develop land at the south-west corner of Cobram – Koonoomoo Road and Richie Road, for a new and additional residential village to be known as Oasis Village Common.

In summary, the housing concept was intended to be similar to that described above, with the concept conceived as 750 sites in 5 smaller villages or precincts. The development would have a woodland setting, various recreational facilities and a community centre and a factory to build the homes, replacing the factory at Karook Street.

While a final decision making process will be the subject of a VCAT consideration, the brief for this strategy plan review has sought comment on the strategic planning merit of the proposal and its proposed location.

This report does not attempt to document and evaluate the detail of application.

5.2 The Concept

The concept of affordable lifestyle housing has to be acknowledged as a legitimate and positive contribution to housing choices and diversity in the Shire. While this study has not undertaken any independent evaluation of the market for this housing product it is evident that it is a different, distinctive and sought after option that has the capacity to suit not only persons living in Cobram and Moira, but appeals to persons well beyond the municipality who seeks,

- new and well maintained cabin style homes
- lower cost housing
- low maintenance obligations
- a location near the Murray in a country town.

5.3 Locational considerations

Upon review of the concept and the proposed site, there are some fundamental reasons why the development cannot be strategically justified in the proposed location. These include:

- Cobram is fortunate to be structured with a clear division of its economic role in discrete and separate industrial and manufacturing areas; its business role as a service centre embodied in the town centre; its residential role and areas as a housing provider and its recreation role around the river environs. These are clear areas with distinct boundaries. The Oasis development in its proposed location fundamentally compromises this strategic framework of land use introducing a residential component in a long term industrial precinct.
- The industrial policies as set out in Clause 17.03 and also Clause 52.10 of the Moira Planning Scheme are couched around the long term protection and operation of industrial land. As a matter of planning principle, strategic decisions should reinforce, not undermine, the policy position. The proposal in this location, regardless of design detail, compromises this policy imperative.
- Since 2001 Clause 21.04 of the Moira Planning Scheme has included a settlement policy which clearly discourages the expansion of Oasis Village to the west of the town. The planning scheme has been through a major three year review since this time and this policy direction has been upheld. The policy basis for discouraging the expansion of the Village to the west is therefore long established.
- A fundamental tenant of residential and community planning is proximity and access to services, particularly on a daily basis, and the integration of communities into coherent and sustainable neighbourhoods. The proposal is unable to meet these policy objectives in a meaningful way. The project would represent a high concentration of a group of people (approximately 1,300 people based on 1.75 persons/dwelling) whose socio-economic profile suggests that with time, they will become more dependent in a location relatively isolated from services with a poor integration with the rest of the community, as the proposed site is surrounded by industrial or rural land.

- As part of the consultation for this strategy, Goulburn Valley Water has expressed a clear preference for residential development to be located to the south east of the Cobram town centre as this area can be readily serviced with reticulated water and sewerage.

Whilst there may be some ways in which the Council could facilitate the development of Oasis Common on the proposed site, such as rezoning the land to Rural Living Zone, removing the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and reducing the proposed scale/size of the development, for the reasons listed above it is unlikely that these or other similar techniques would gain the strategic support of the Department of Sustainability and Environment or the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority. It also should be recognised that the undertaking of such measures would not overcome any of the above-mentioned limitations of the proposal.

Nevertheless, the Council believes there will be significant community benefits arising not only from the additional choice that residents will have in housing, but economically through the jobs created from the manufacturing and installation business, the expenditure on materials and services and the flow on effects through the economy of the increased spending.

The Council wishes to foster these types of opportunities and it encourages the proponents of Oasis Common to continue to explore opportunities to secure a positive outcome. The Council has also indicated a willingness to work closely with the proponents outside of this strategy plan.

Given the importance of the Cobram Strategy Plan to the broader Cobram community, the decision was made to move ahead with the strategy even though the strategy itself makes no recommendations about the Oasis Common proposal.

6 Commercial and Retail

6.1 Existing Context

The commercial and retail opportunities are within the Cobram town centre, which is generally defined by the Murray Valley Highway to the south, Broadway Street to the north and west and Williams Road to the east.

The town centre contains a mix of retail outlets and other services such as commercial, professional, entertainment and health. It is relatively consolidated and whilst it is acknowledged that the town centre should be able to accommodate growth, it is arguably its relative compactness that has been the major contributor to its success as a commercial centre. Comments received during the consultative sessions noted the need to maintain the consolidation of the town centre, with also the need to provide a central focal/gathering place.

A smaller neighbourhood centre exists at the intersection of Broadway/Mookarii Streets and Warkil Street, north east of the town centre. This provides for local convenience services for the surrounding residential neighbourhoods, and includes a milk bar, restaurant, hotel, DVD/video hire and the like. It is also located opposite St Joseph's Primary School.

The 2001 Census of Population and Housing recorded the following industry sectors as employing the majority of Cobram's workforce:

Table 14: Employment by Industry, 2001

Sector	% Cobram	% Moira	% Reg Vic
Manufacturing	22.8	16.72	13.36
Retail Trade	17.2	12.37	15.27
Agriculture	9.1	24.87	11.22
Health & comm services	8.9	8.18	10.82
Accom, cafes & rests	6.6	5.74	4.9
Education	6.0	5.28	7.54
Sub-total	70.6	73.16	63.11

The high proportion of persons employed in the manufacturing sector shows Cobram's strengths in this area, most likely due to the processing of agricultural produce, particularly from surrounding dairy and orcharding operations. This strong manufacturing base is also a factor in the retention of younger people who may otherwise leave Cobram seeking employment opportunities in larger towns and cities.

Commercial land, including the abovementioned local convenience centre, is currently included within the Business 1, 2 and 3 Zones (commercial and retail).

- *There is a perception that more room within the town centre is needed for retail growth, i.e. from two main streets to three.*
- *The growth of the town centre was hampered by the railway only leasing the land fronting the northern side of Punt Road. This has led to the development of the southern side of Punt Road and Main Street.*
- *The new bridge over to Barooga will increase Cobram's potential to capture the trade from Finley and Deniliquin.*
- *There is a lack of visibility of the Cobram retail area from Broadway Street and the Murray Valley Highway. It is too easy to by-pass Cobram and poor signage does nothing to entice visitors into the town centre.*
- *There is a lack of connection between the town centre and the Murray River, including Thompsons Beach.*
- *There are limited opportunities to shop, recreate and socialise in a traffic free environment.*
- *The future of the current saleyard site (Business 3 zoned land) must be protected from being rezoned to a higher order commercial zone (Business 1 or 2 Zone). Such a rezoning could potentially further disperse and fragment Cobram's commercial centre from south of the railway line.*
- *There is a perception of a shortage of larger sites, those in excess of 6,000m², to provide opportunities for major operators to locate within the town centre.*
- *The retention of ownership of the railway land by VicTrack has resulted in the unusual combination of the Safeway supermarket ('the anchor') being separated from much of the town centre by the Ford dealership ('fringe commercial'), resulting in a somewhat disjointed centre.*
- *There are many empty retail shops (10 – however at the time of the UDF 3 were being used for storage) and vacant allotments (7) in the town centre.*
- *There is a perception that Yarrowonga may in the future (with increased population) adversely impact on the Cobram town centre.¹*

The above comments were reinforced during the consultative sessions conducted to inform this Strategy Plan.

The UDF suggested and described a number of strategies to guide physical changes in Cobram and/or to change the way people think about the town in order to strengthen its distinctiveness, character and identity, as well as its economic competitiveness and efficiency.

6.3 Commercial Land Demand and Supply

Cobram has an established role as a main service centre for retailing and other activities, but there is increasing competition from nearby towns such as Yarrowonga which is experiencing a rapid population growth, and regional centres such as Albury and Shepparton.

¹ Cobram Urban Design Framework - Final Draft Report – July 2005, David Lock & Assoc., pp.15-16

If Cobram is to maintain its role, there is a need to emphasise its opportunities as a location for entertainment, tourism and specialty retailing, and as the location for higher-order professional and community services, and the like. The provision of an appropriate range of retail and entertainment facilities, as well as other higher-order services (such as health, legal, accounting, etc) has the potential to generate increased spending by residents and visitors.

As the population increases, there is a need to plan for new retail/commercial provision, especially in locations where such retailing will serve expanding residential areas.

A retail floor space analysis for Cobram is required to determine how much floor space is likely to be required over the next 15 to 20 years, and also to identify the preferred future mix and roles of different commercial locations such as:

- **Cobram town centre** should continue to be the primary business/commercial centre and provide a range of higher order shops, speciality retail, tourist shops and higher-order professional services. A vibrant centre would also include a range of entertainment venues such as cinemas, cafes and restaurants.
- **Highway commercial area(s)** for bulky goods retailing.
- **Local neighbourhood centres** for daily and weekly goods in the expanding residential areas.

It should be recognised that bulky goods is a growing retail market, and there is a need to plan for the provision and location of bulky goods retail in Cobram. This form of retailing typically serves a larger catchment.

Bulky goods tenants typically seek high profile sites with highway frontages; these sites are often located outside the established centres as large areas for display purposes and extensive on-site parking are required. The issue for the strategy plan is to identify suitable locations for this expanding form of retailing.

As per the Cobram Urban Design Framework, and as emphasised during the consultation program for the strategy plan, an enhanced visitor information centre is needed for Cobram. The proposed redevelopment of Federation Park could create opportunities for visitor services to be located in a high profile site.

6.4 Physical Infrastructure and Servicing

Water Supply

Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) is the responsible water supply authority.

GVW has advised it generally has good capacity for servicing the town centre. This area is currently fully serviced additional servicing can be achieved by the construction of water reticulation main extensions throughout the town centre and connecting to the existing nearby assets.

As per residential development, the cost of new works would have to be borne by either the developer(s) or GVW in accordance with the statutory guidelines of the Essential Services Commission, Victoria (ESC).

Sewerage Services

Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) is the responsible sewerage authority.

GVW has advised it generally has good capacity for servicing the town centre. The servicing can be achieved in part by extensions to their existing gravity sewerage reticulation mains and if necessary, in part via the construction of new sewage pumping stations, rising mains and gravity reticulation mains.

In regard to existing commercial development to the west of the town centre, on both sides of the Murray Valley Highway, GVW has advised that further investigations would need to be undertaken in regard to servicing this area with reticulated sewer and the infrastructure requirements that would be required.

The cost of new works would have to be borne by either the developer(s) or GVW in accordance with the statutory guidelines of the Essential Services Commission, Victoria (ESC).

Drainage

The Moira Shire Council is the responsible drainage authority for Cobram, and the receiving water for stormwater runoff is the Murray River. Stormwater generally discharges into the river via a series of existing and proposed retarding basins, wetlands, pump stations, rising mains, underground piped and open stormwater outfall drains.

Moira Shire seeks stormwater drainage works to be designed to accord with the current best practice principles contained in "Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Guidelines, CSRIO 1999". As such, the post construction performance objective of the drainage system is to achieve 80% retention of the typical urban load of suspended solids, 45% retention of the typical urban load of total phosphorus, 45% retention of the typical urban load of total nitrogen and 70% retention of the typical urban load of litter. Furthermore, flows need to be retarded such that they do not exceed the predevelopment discharge that would result from a storm having an average recurrence interval of once every 1.5 years. Moira Shire will also require retardation to cater for the 1 in 100 year event.

Development also has to accord with the construction phase performance objectives of limiting and preventing sediment, litter and other pollutants from entering the receiving waters. Consequently, development in Cobram will have to accord with the "Best Practice Guidelines" and developers will have to consider the adoption of "Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)" principles.

Costs for drainage works including water quality improvement and retardation will be borne by the developers.

Electricity

Powercor Australia Ltd is the network service provider for Cobram. At this stage Powercor has elected to comment on the draft Strategy Plan, so comments received from Powercor during the preparation of the Cobram Development Plan have been referred to in this section.

In the event that the existing high voltage lines need reconductoring or extending as a consequence of a detailed assessment of the loading demands within the study area, Powercor's current policies dictate this work generally be completed at Powercor's cost, but developers should confirm specific requirements and conditions by formal application to Powercor.

The usual strategy of high voltage underground cable extensions to substations sited as appropriate throughout the development with low voltage domestic underground cable reticulation to the lots would apply.

In relation to development costs, current policy conforms to the statutory requirement for Powercor to allow construction to be carried out comprising a mix of non-competitive works (ie works to be done by the Network service provider) and competitive works (ie works to be done by accredited contractors). Powercor will provide a fee offer and procedural conditions upon formal application.

Telecommunications

Telstra is the network service provider for Cobram, and it too has advised it will comment on the specific of the draft Strategy Plan during exhibition period.

During the preparation of the Cobram Development Plan, Telstra advised that it has a statutory responsibility to provide a network service to the respective property boundaries of the sites within Cobram. The usual developer shared trenching conditions would apply within the proposed development (ie. developer to fund shared trenching).

The need or otherwise to upgrade their network assets would be investigated in detail at the time of application for a planning permit.

6.5 Options for Future Commercial Land

Cobram needs to provide a variety of commercial/business land to cater for the different types of such land use activities, including commercial, retail, local conveniences, weekly shopping, businesses and the like. Whilst the majority of such land should be provided in a consolidated town centre, commercial/business land is also needed on the periphery of Cobram to provide for bulky goods/highway retailers, and also within the emerging residential neighbourhoods to provide for daily convenience shopping.

As per the recommendation of the Cobram Urban Design Framework, *"in the pursuit of creating a 'vibrant and effective core', it is important that the B1Z area maintains its consolidated scale and that full business occupancy rates in shops*

be encouraged. Additionally, in order to continue to provide for Cobram's identity as a 'great place to make things', the B3Z and adjacent Industrial 1 Zone must be protected to some extent to provide for manufacturing and industrial land in the future". Rezoning the Industrial 1 Zoned land as referred to in Section 6.2 maintains these areas for commercial/business development.

In light of the above, the following areas are options for future commercial/business development (refer Figure 10):

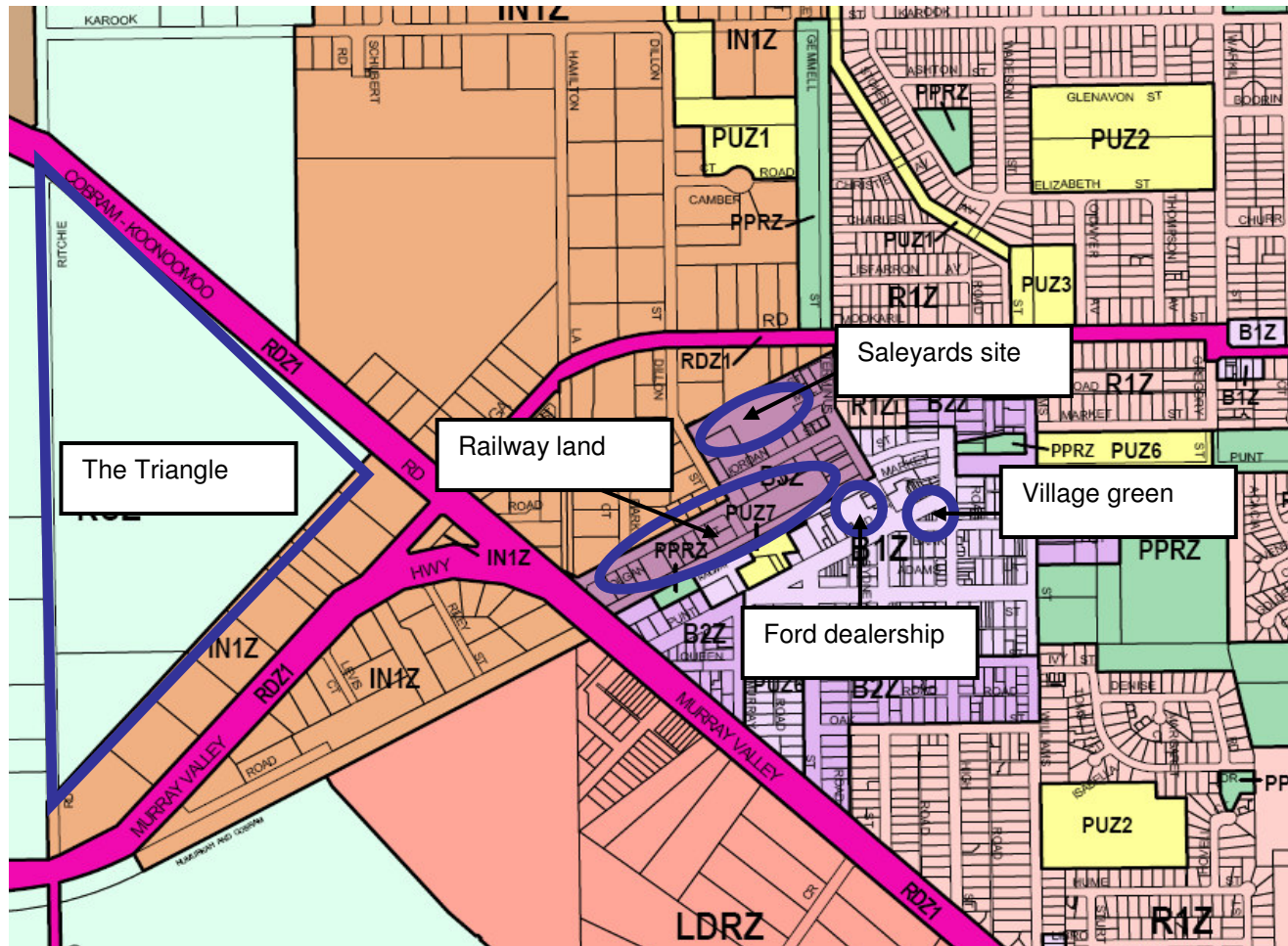
- Vacant premises - there are a number of vacant commercial premises and allotments in Cobram for which full occupancy and development should be encouraged. Recommendations for improvements to the town centre as per the Urban Design Framework should assist in this regard.
- Saleyards site - the possible re-location of the saleyards would provide an opportunity to redevelop the site for commercial purposes, particularly as the site is located at the edge of the main commercial heart of Cobram. This Strategy Plan supports the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework in that a rezoning of the site to Business 1 Zone could potentially further disperse and fragment Cobram's commercial centre from south of the railway line. It is recommended that the site remain in a Business 3 Zone until a retail floorspace analysis has been undertaken.
- Railway land - similar to the above, a proposal to relocate the railway station/bus terminal and associated infrastructure from its present location creates the potential to better utilise the former railway land (currently vacant or underutilised and not aesthetically attractive) and to provide better connectivity to and within the commercial centre of Cobram. This Strategy Plan supports the recommendation of the Cobram UDF to extend Dillon Street through to Punt Road, and encourages continued consultation with VicTrack in this regard.
- Punt/Terminus Sts- this site is currently occupied by the Ford car dealership. Should it become available for redevelopment it would provide the opportunity for smaller tenancies to provide an 'active shop front' linking the existing premises east of the Safeway supermarket with those east of Terminus Street, similar to the character on the southern side of Punt Road (refer further discussion in Section 6.6).
- The Triangle - the area bound by the Murray Valley Highway to the south east, Cobram Koonoomoo Road to the north east and Ritchie Road to the west. These three roads are main arterial roads and afford high exposure, particularly the former two. Subject

to traffic and transport assessment, it is expected that Ritchie Road will carry increased traffic volumes, especially to provide access to the existing and proposed industrial areas to the north and west of the town centre.

Village green - whilst not strictly commercial/business in its land use activity, a village green can support and enhance the attractiveness and vibrancy of a commercial centre. In this regard, this Strategy Plan supports the recommendations in the Cobram Urban Design Framework for the development of a town centre/village green along Bank Street between Punt Road and High Street.

Residential areas- Subject to development planning and detailed design, provision should be made for local neighbourhood centres to serve expanding residential communities. These centres may include a milk bar, DVD/video hires, café and the like, but not any higher order shopping facilities such as a supermarket. The co-location with community facilities such as child care, kindergartens, schools and the like should be encouraged.

Figure 10: Land Supply Options for Future Business/Commercial Development



Knowledge Creativity Performance
Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management

6.6 Commercial Land Strategy

6.6.1 Cobram Town Centre

The existing town centre will continue to be the commercial heart of Cobram. This area should consolidate its focus on intensifying its retail activities for daily and weekly shopping and higher order shopping. Ideally, traffic management improvements (refer Cobram Urban Design Framework recommendations and Section 9 of this Report) will be made to give rise to a more pedestrian friendly environment within this main retail precinct. Restaurants and cafés should be encouraged to service locals and visitors, as well as the important office and business sector.

Whilst there are some vacant retail/business premises and allotments in the town centre, including Main Street. The recommendations for streetscape improvements, pedestrian linkages, and traffic circulation as per the Cobram Urban Design Framework should facilitate the enhancement of the town centre and in doing so create new opportunities for these premises to become occupied.

It is generally considered that business/commercial premises that occupy large areas of floor space without “active” shop frontages, such as car dealerships, major hardware outlets) are not generally suited to a town centre location. These uses are often better located on the main approach into the town centre, such as the Murray Valley Highway.

In this regard bulky goods outlets and car dealerships should be encouraged to locate along the Murray Valley Highway or Broadway Street, preferably in the areas proposed to be rezoned to Business 4 Zone from Industrial 1 (north and west of the town centre). The highway/main road exposure would suit these businesses and these locations offer larger and often less constrained parcels of land. In addition, land within the town centre is available for more appropriate uses such as higher order shopping premises. (It is noted that the availability of land in these areas proposed to be rezoned to Business 4 Zone is limited - this is further discussed in Section 6.6.3 below).

The Cobram Urban Design Framework made a series of recommendations in regard to streetscape works (including landscaping, street furniture and signage/flags), traffic management, open space linkages, establishment of a village green/town square, walking trails, links to the river and gateway/entrance statements. With community support and as funding becomes available these suggestions, which have been prioritised, should be implemented and completed.

The Strategy Plan recommends the following for the Cobram town centre:

- Maintain the compact nature of the Cobram town centre and to intensify retail and commercial uses within the existing town centre, including the existing Business 1 zoned land;

- Encourage the urban design initiatives for the town centre as set out in the Cobram Urban Design Framework David Lock & Associates, July 2005);
- Encourage the relocation of businesses such as car dealerships to less centralised areas in Cobram, such as adjacent to existing car dealerships on the Murray Valley Highway. It is further noted that the sites with frontage to Punt Road are more appropriate for higher order retail and commercial uses. Such uses would facilitate continuity of the “active shop front retail experience” along the northern side of Punt Road, east of the Safeway supermarket;
- Continue discussions with VicTrack in regard to undertaking a land swap to relocate the railway station and associated land from the town centre. This would free up the railway reservation for commercial development and enhance connectivity between commercial areas north and south of the railway line;
- Encourage higher density residential development on the periphery of the town centre to provide support and contribute to its vibrancy.

6.6.2 Local Convenience Centres

As per the comments in Section 4.5 above, local neighbourhood centres should be provided in expanding residential communities. To service the proposed short/medium term residential growth to the south east of Cobram, the Cobram Development Plan has identified the site for a local neighbourhood centre at the intersection of Campbell Road and the new connector road for the eastern precinct. It will have an area of approximately 0.16 hectares and capitalise on its proximity to Christ the King School, activities associated with the role of Campbell Road, surrounding proposed medium density housing and the linear open space link. These activities are essential to the viability and success of the centre.

As further residential neighbourhoods develop, appropriately located local centres should be provided.

Should the train station/bus terminal be relocated to an area south of the Murray Valley Highway (on land currently occupied in part by a poultry farm), and the area within vicinity of the new facility is developed for conventional residential development, a local neighbourhood centre should be included to service not only this neighbourhood but the day to day needs of the nearby commercial premises to the north along the Murray Valley Highway, and neighbourhoods of the proposed low density residential development further south along South Cobram Road. This centre should be accessible by walking/cycle paths, and in this regard could also service the Catona Crescent area if a shared path was included alongside the existing retardation basin.

6.6.3 Bulky Goods/Peripheral Sales

Currently Cobram does not have any land within the Business 4 Zone. The Business 4 Zone provides for a mix of retailing for bulky goods, manufacturing industry and associated business services, sometimes referred to as peripheral sales.

Many of the uses along the Murray Valley Highway to the west of the town centre and along Broadway Street east of the highway are more akin to a Business 4 Zone rather than the existing Industrial 1 Zone. The Industrial Land Review undertaken by Maunsell Australia appropriately recommended that these areas be rezoned to Business 4.

Whilst this recommendation is supported, it is recognised that there are limited opportunities for new business to establish within these areas as the majority of properties are occupied.

Outlets within the Business 4 Zone generally prefer/require properties with highway frontage to obtain high exposure. Further, peripheral sales uses do not directly compete with traditional retail uses within Business 1 Zones. Peripheral sales outlets are dominated by customers arriving in vehicles, and generally have particular goods in mind when visiting peripheral sales precincts.

Therefore, the co-location of bulky goods/peripheral sales outlets is encouraged. However peripheral sales precincts need not necessarily be co-located with traditional retail precincts. This being the case, it is appropriate to create a Business 4 Zone precinct, adjacent to the Cobram town centre, and establish a consolidated precinct that has a significant highway and/or main road frontage. This can be achieved through the rezonings as recommended in the Industrial Land Review Report.

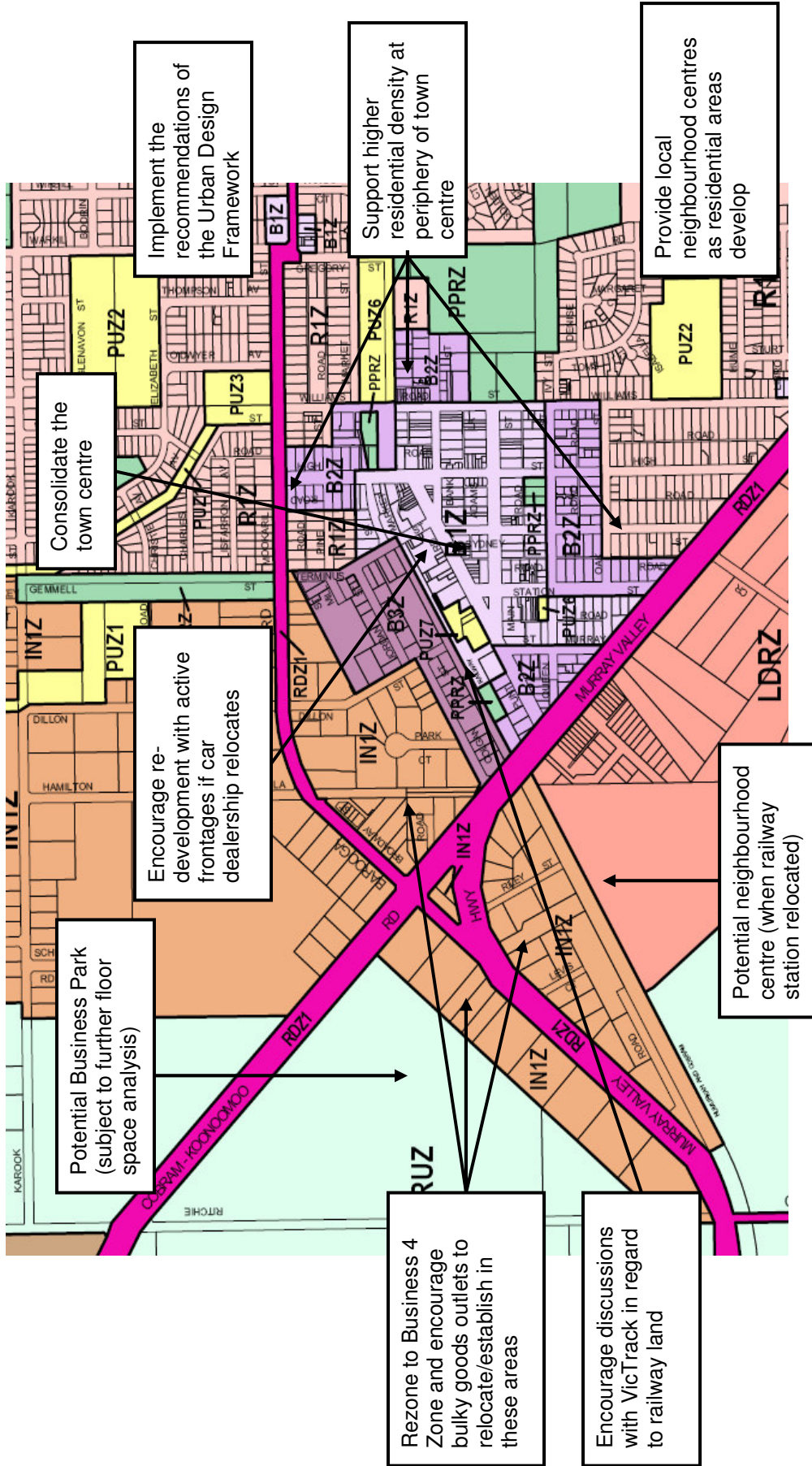
However in recognising the limited opportunities within these areas it is further recommended that a 'business park' be established in the triangle defined by The Murray Valley Highway to the south east, Cobram Koonoomoo Road to the north east and Ritchie Road to the west. These three roads are main arterial roads and afford high exposure, particularly the former two. Subject to traffic and transport assessment, it is expected that Ritchie Road will carry increased traffic volumes, especially to provide access to the existing and proposed industrial areas to the north and west of the town centre.

This recommendation builds upon the rezonings as suggested in the Industrial Land Review and facilitates the provision of a consolidated business park activity within a site defined by main roads. Premises which will front to Cobram Koonoomoo Road and Ritchie Road should be accessed via a service road. An internal road from either of these roads could provide access to the central part of the site. It is suggested that this area be included in a Development Plan Overlay or similar control to ensure the co-ordinated planning of lot layout, access, design of built form, advertising signage, logical release of land and the like. This proposal provides the opportunity for an attractive business park to be established in Cobram, to complement the industrial precincts to the north and to provide ample space for business which prefer main road exposure and are more akin to a Business 4 zoning rather than being located within an industrial precinct.

The Strategy Plan recommends the following for bulky goods/peripheral sales:

- Initiate a new Business 4 Zone (peripheral sales) precinct as per the recommendations of the Industrial Land Review (Maunsell Australia, 2004)
- Establish a 'Business Park' to be zoned Business 4 in the triangle defined by The Murray Valley Highway, Cobram Koonoomoo Road and Ritchie Road (subject to further floorspace needs analysis). The development of such should be subject to design guidelines for built form, access, landscaping, signage, front fencing and the like.
- Encourage the relocation of businesses such as car dealerships to less centralised areas in Cobram, such as to the abovementioned Business 4 Zone precincts. It is further noted that the sites with frontage to Punt Road are more appropriate for higher order retail and commercial uses. Such uses would facilitate continuity of the "active shop front retail experience" along the northern side of Punt Road, east of the Safeway supermarket

Figure 11: Areas for Business/Commercial Development



6.7 Summary and Recommendations

The following settlement strategies are recommended for commercial/business land use and development in Cobram:

- Maintain the compact nature of the Cobram town centre to intensify retail and commercial uses;
- Encourage the implementation of the urban design initiatives for the town centre as set out in the Cobram Urban Design Framework David Lock & Associates, July 2005);
- Encourage the relocation of bulky goods outlets and similar businesses to less centralised areas in Cobram.
- Encourage sites with frontage to Punt Road for higher order retail and commercial uses which would facilitate continuity of the “active shop front retail experience” along the northern side of Punt Road, east of the Safeway supermarket;
- Continue discussions with VicTrack in regard to undertaking a land swap to relocate the railway station and associated land from the town centre. ;
- Encourage higher density residential development on the periphery of the town centre to provide support and contribute to its vibrancy;
- Rezone land to Business 4 Zone as per the recommendations of the Industrial Land Review (Maunsell Australia, 2004)
- Undertake a retail floorspace analysis to review the supply of and anticipated demand for commercial and retail floorspace in and around the town centre;
- Subject to the outcomes of the floorspace analysis, establish a ‘Business Park’ to be zoned Business 4 in the triangle defined by The Murray Valley Highway, Cobram Koonoomoo Road and Ritchie Road. Apply an appropriate overlay to the site to control aspects such as built form, design, landscaping and the like;
- Provide appropriately located local neighbourhood centres in residential neighbourhoods as they develop;
- Subject to the train station/bus terminal be relocated to an area south of the Murray Valley Highway, investigate the possibility of providing a local neighbourhood centre to service a new residential neighbourhood and existing nearby businesses.

Further details on implementation are included in Section 12 of this Report.

7 Industrial Land Use and Development

This section of the Strategy Plan report was prepared by SGS Economics and Planning. Please refer to their report as attached.

Knowledge Creativity Performance
Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management

8 Open Space and Recreation

8.1 Existing Context

Land dedicated for open space and/or recreation can generally be classified as passive and/or active recreational land. These lands are either incorporated within the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) or the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ).

Much of the open space land to the north, east and south east of Cobram contains the riparian environs of the Murray River. These areas are within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone and are managed by Parks Victoria.

By way of summary, Cobram has the following recreational facilities:

- Civic Centre (major events)
- Scott Reserve (football and netball)
- Apex Park (soccer, netball, tennis)
- Showgrounds/Cricket ground (cricket, soccer, annual agricultural show)
- Tennis and croquet club
- Bowls
- Canoe club
- Walking club
- Running club
- Swimming club
- Dancing (youth, old time)
- Arts group
- Golf clubs (in NSW)

Thomsons Beach, a popular sandy beach, is included in this area. During the consultative program for this strategy, and as referred to in the Cobram Urban Design Framework, it was identified that the facilities at Thomsons Beach are in desperate need for upgrading and enhancing. It is considered that the beach could become a well known tourist destination, as well as a more attractive place for local residents if its facilities and access were improved.

Cobram has a number of local parks of varying sizes and with varying facilities such as playgrounds and toilets. These are generally within the Public Park and Recreation Zone. As noted in the Cobram Development Plan Report, “the provision of open space in Cobram is ad hoc, inefficient and generally does not meet the needs of the community. Many of the smaller local parks are ‘left over’ pockets that developers have provided only to meet their obligations under the Subdivision Act 1988. This is not desirable and has left the town with spaces that are infrequently used and often unsafe.

North of Broadway Street/Mookarii is the football ground in Warkil Street, a local park in Stokes Avenue and a linear open space that extends north from Broadway Street alongside Gemmell Street to Karook Street. This linear space acts as a buffer between the residential areas to the east and industrial precinct to the west.

South of Broadway Street/Mookarii Street are the showgrounds and cricket ground off Bank Street, the tennis courts in Williams Street and smaller local parks in Queen Street and Toms Drive. The Cobram Sports Centre is adjacent to the showgrounds, accessed from Campbell Road. Mivo Park is accessible from the town centre, and includes a playground and public toilets.

The area know as Federation Park, located in Punt Road west of the Safeway supermarket, was purchased by the community with community grants made available through the Federation Fund. Until recently this land contained approximately five dwellings which were associated with the railway operations. These dwellings have been removed from the site and the Cobram Urban Design Framework includes plans to redevelop this park to include a visitor centre, display areas and public amenities and general passive recreation spaces. It will also provide a drawcard at one of Cobram's key gateways on the Murray Valley Highway. This land is currently within the Business 1 Zone and the Strategy Plan recommends rezoning the area to Public Parks and Recreation Zone.

Recently, the main channel though Cobram has been closed. In some locations this provides an ideal opportunity for the provision of open space linear links, especially between existing/future residential neighbourhoods and key community facilities. Currently Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) manages the reservation of the channel, which has been piped under the built up areas of Cobram, and plans are still in progress for its future.

8.2 Options for Future Open Spaces

The provision of open spaces in future residential areas should be carefully planned for, preferably at a development plan stage so its location can be equitably distributed across a residential neighbourhood(s). The Cobram Development Plan provides for good size spaces which can incorporate water treatment facilities as required.

Areas set aside for open space should be of an adequate size to provide for informal active recreation and a focal point for the local community, as well as catering for drainage needs.

As outlined in the Cobram Development Plan Report *"the Subdivision Act 1988 requires developments to provide a maximum of 5% of the developable land for open space. This may be provided in land or the cash equivalent. It is understood that it has been the historic practice of the Moira Shire Council to accept a cash contribution. Whilst this may be well intended, with the contribution to go towards the provision of more meaningful open spaces, this appears to have not occurred"*.

Many metropolitan Councils, particularly those in growth areas, require a higher minimum percentage of open space for new developments. Clause 52.01 of the Moira Planning Scheme can provide for this, though requires a planning scheme amendment to be implemented. This in turn requires an open space strategy to be produced and justification for a higher contribution provided.

As also stated in the Cobram Development Plan Report *“many of these Councils do not accept encumbered open space as part of the 5% contribution. Encumbered open space is that space used for another purpose (e.g. required for drainage purposes) and thus may not be useable at all times. Clauses 12 and 56 of the Moira Planning Scheme provide specific objectives for open space and the provision of encumbered land does not meet these, except in specific circumstances”*.

Consistent with the Cobram Development Plan, this Strategy Plan recommends that the Moira Shire Council does not include encumbered open space as part of the 5% contribution.

The ageing of Cobram’s population and their preferred leisure activities also needs to be considered when providing for new open space areas and/or redeveloping existing areas. In particular the network of passive open spaces will be more heavily used as the numbers in this age group increase.

8.3 Open Space Land Strategy

The State policy applicable to open space provision (Clause 15.10 of the Moira Planning Scheme) provides the objectives and open space implementation methods. The primary considerations for open space and recreational land in Cobram include the following:

- Regional open spaces should be used for recreation and conservation of natural and cultural environments;
- Newly developing residential areas should be provided with adequate levels and variety of open spaces. Where possible and practical these spaces should be appropriately linked so as to provide a network of open spaces;
- Open spaces can incorporate features such as drainage lines and waterways;
- Encumbered land should not be included as part of the 5% public open space contribution.
- Areas of public open space should be zoned within the Public Park and Recreation Zone, including Federation Park in Punt Road;
- Appropriate land uses should be sited adjoining regional open space networks.

The sustainable provision of open space is of integral importance to all communities.

It is appropriate for new open space facilities to be incorporated into emerging residential growth areas, ideally as part of a local neighbourhood centre or community focal point. The provision and location of open space has been identified for the proposed residential neighbourhoods as per the Cobram Development Plans. This will ensure that future residents within these neighbourhoods will have adequate accessibility to appropriate facilities.

The creation of an integrated park network, with linear paths along floodways and river frontage is essential to provide additional opportunities for walking, cycling and children's play. This issue is interlinked with the protection and enhancement of the river environs and native vegetation.

It is further noted that the need for locally based open space is diminished in close proximity to residential areas comprising lower densities.

9 Traffic and Transport

9.1 Existing Context

The Moira Planning Scheme encourages efficient transportation networks through Cobram. At present, the transportation network through and around the town is experiencing some difficulties and inefficiencies due to the layout of the existing network and the pressures of additional vehicles on the roads.

A number of objectives and strategies exist within the planning scheme, primarily aimed at improving road links to and within the towns of the municipality, including Cobram.

The primary road networks servicing Cobram are:

- The Murray Valley Highway, which is the major link between Wodonga in the east and Robinvale (past Swan Hill) in the west. It passes alongside the southern boundary of the Cobram town centre.
- Broadway/Mookarii Streets, which extend east from the Murray Valley Highway and provides access to southern New South Wales through industrial and residential precincts of Cobram. The bridge over the Murray River has recently been upgraded to a two lane bridge.
- Cobram Koonoomoo Road, which provides access from the Goulburn Valley Highway in Koonoomoo to Cobram. It passes through industrial areas before connecting to the Murray Valley Highway west of the town centre.

At present, all heavy traffic travelling to, from or originating in Cobram utilise the arterial road network. Whilst the Murray Valley Highway and the Cobram Koonoomoo Road do not traverse the centre of town, the potential for conflict between cars and trucks and indeed through traffic and internal traffic is high on Broadway/Mookarii Streets. Recent traffic counts by Moira Shire Council show that Broadway/Mookarii Streets carries 8,000 vehicles per day.

Campbell Road provides an alternative route linking Broadway/Mookarii Streets in the north to the Murray Valley Highway to the south without the need to travel through the residential and industrial precincts along Broadway/Mookarii Streets. However this is a local road servicing existing and new developing residential neighbourhoods, and in its existing form is not adequately designed to cater for additional commercial and heavy vehicle traffic. Recent traffic counts by the Moira Shire Council indicate that near its intersection with Murray Valley Highway, Campbell Road carries 1,100 vehicles per day and near Cornish Street it carries 2,500 vehicles per day.

Some previous studies have identified a number of short term and medium term road works to improve traffic conditions for Cobram. These are outlined below, however it is further recommended that a full traffic analysis and assessment be undertaken for the town.

9.2 Previous Studies

Two studies have been undertaken in recent years which have addressed traffic management in and around Cobram. These are described below.

Cobram Development Plan, September 2006

As outlined in Section 4, in February 2007 the Moira Shire Council adopted the Development Plan Report for Numurkah, Nathalia, Cobram and Yarrawonga prepared by EarthTech and TTM Consulting. The study area for Cobram was approximately 160 hectares to the south east of Cobram town centre, with approximately half the area within the Residential 1 Zone and the other half within the Rural Zone.

In regard to traffic issues for the Development Plan area, the Report found:

- The Development Plan area is such that there is around 103 hectares of new development, potentially yielding around 1,000 dwellings generating around 8,000 daily vehicle movements. This will take the volume of traffic on Campbell road, north of Bisogni Drive to around 10,000 vehicle movements per day.
- Most of this traffic will be moving between the town centre and the Development Plan area, with concentrations along Campbell Road, Punt Road and Broadway/Mookarii Street.
- That part of the Development Plan area west of Campbell Road has an area of 40 hectares and development potential for around 350 dwellings. This is likely to result in daily traffic generation of around 2,800 vehicle movements, mostly with trip origin or destination to the north-west of the Development Plan area. Some connections to streets to the west of the Development Plan area would be beneficial in respect of keeping total vehicle kilometres travelled to practically low levels.
- Existing streets to the west of the DP area have been subdivided and developed such that imposition of substantial additional traffic loadings may create either real or perceived traffic related amenity problems. There are westerly connection opportunities available to Toms Drive, Lawson Drive and Wills Drive, each of which has been developed in a way that indicates the future eastward extension has been envisaged.
- The Development Plan provides several connections to Campbell Road to encourage use by people living in the western part of the Development Plan area, and also linkages to the available streets on the western side. These have been provided as a mix of vehicular and pedestrian connections.
- The linkages with the existing development to the west are not intended to carry high volumes of vehicular traffic, but should carry some vehicles to assist with enhancing of pedestrian safety and security, and reducing total vehicle kilometres for the conduct of daily tasks for those living close to the western edge of the DP area.

- The report found that the two lane roads can accommodate the anticipated 10,000 vehicle movements per day, but traffic related amenity will be degraded unless appropriate traffic management strategies are imposed by Council.

The Development Plan Report makes a number of recommendations in regard to traffic strategies and management. This Strategy Plan supports these recommendations, including:

- The movement network being built around Campbell Road and new east west connections, as per Section 2.4.2 of the Development Plan Report.
- The use of courts is minimised to where a through connection is not possible.
- Campbell Road be managed to keep truck traffic to a minimum
- Campbell Road reservation is widened along the eastern side by 5 metres between the RACV Tourist Club and the local neighbourhood centre. This allows for a 2.5 metre shared path separated from lot frontages by 2.5 metres.
- The proposed street form as per Section 2.4.2 of the Development Plan Report.

Cobram Urban Design Framework 2005

As stated in Section 6.2 of this Report, in July 2005 David Lock & Associates prepared an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for Cobram. The findings and recommendations of this UDF have been accepted and adopted by the Council and generally by the community.

The UDF commented on a number of traffic management issues relevant to the town centre and its immediate surrounds (refer to Section 8.3 of the UDF Report), including pedestrian movement and safety, accessibility, traffic conflict, movement, public transport, parking and road quality. Some of the main issues identified include:

- There is only one pedestrian crossing on Punt Road, outside Safeway
- Need for better pedestrian crossings over Broadway Street to the hospital and school
- Perceived conflict between delivery trucks manoeuvring to unload and pedestrian shoppers walking from their cars to Safeway and ancillary shops
- Improved access to the town centre from the highway is needed to encourage passing traffic to visit Cobram
- There are difficult and dangerous intersections that need addressing – Punt Road/Bank Street, Punt Road/High Street and Bank Street/High Street
- The new bridge will increase traffic in Broadway/Mookarii Streets and the town centre due to increased levels of accessibility
- The disused railway line is a major barrier for movement in the town centre and there is a lack of connection across Dillon Street between the northern side of the railway line and the town centre to the south

- Lack of connectivity between the town centre and residential areas to the east of William Street. Punt Road is the main access street which leads to extra pressure on the Punt Road/William Street intersection
- Disused railway land could be used for extra parking, extension to Federation Park or regional cycle trail to attract touring visitors to Cobram.

In regard to recommendations for improved traffic management, the UDF made the following:

- Improve the intersection of Punt Road and High Street by realigning the centre line at the eastern end of Punt Road and upgrade pedestrian crossings
- Improve pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Punt Road and Sydney Road
- Improve the accessibility and amenity of existing car parking areas
- Investigate a pedestrian and cycle link across the railway line at Dillon Street
- Investigate a vehicular link across the railway line at Dillon Street
- Provide a parking area for caravans and long vehicles near the proposed information centre near the existing railway station
- Improve pedestrian movements in Punt Road through the installation of a second zebra crossing

The UDF report also provided some more detailed comments in regard to the proposed extension of Dillon Street across the railway line and on the railway land itself. In terms of a long term recommendation in regard to transport the Report found as follows:

“From a transport perspective extending Dillon Street through the Safeway carpark will provide increased permeability options for cars and trucks moving north. This will reduce vehicle conflict and dominance at the eastern end of Punt Road, which is currently compromising a safe and aesthetic pedestrian environment, both along and across Punt Road”.

9.3 Public Transport

Public rail services to Cobram have been replaced by bus services. The two main bus services include:

- The V-Line bus which provides three links per weekday and two links per weekend day between Cobram and Shepparton. This provides access to the rail services commencing/terminating in Shepparton.
- The Murray Line which links Albury to Mildura. It operates from Albury on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday and from Mildura on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

There is also a twice weekly town bus service that undertakes a twice daily loop of the town. This is of particular value to elderly residents.

There are a number of school bus services servicing the rural areas around Cobram, including southern New South Wales.

Increasing fuel prices, the ageing population and the number of people living outside existing urban areas will increase the demand for both public and community transport services. Limited public transport options can lead to dependency on the car and social isolation for non car owners, such as the elderly, the young or low income earners.

As Cobram continues to grow, accessibility throughout the town should be improved. Appropriate links between popular destinations such as the town centre, recreational facilities and the various residential precincts are important and should be investigated.

9.4 **Anticipated Trends**

Whilst this Strategy Plan has not involved a comprehensive review of the traffic management issues within the study area, the following trends are anticipated:

- Increase in traffic demands within and around Cobram as the population and employment base continues to grow
- Increase in heavy vehicular movements within the arterial road network including the Murray Valley Highway, Broadway/Mookarii Streets Road, Cobram-Koonoomoo Road and the Cobram South Road.
- An increase in industrial traffic is also anticipated along Ritchie Road, Racecourse Road and Karook Street as the existing and proposed industrial and commercial areas develop
- An increase in pressure for both vehicle and pedestrian/cycle connections between the main residential growth areas to the south east and the town centre
- Increase in demand on public transport for access to the town centre and other regional areas due to ageing of the population, increasing distance from town centre as Cobram's residential areas grow and increase in fuel prices

In particular there is likely to be increased pressure along Campbell Road as an alternative link between Broadway/Mookarii Streets and the Murray Valley Highway. Whilst the recommendations of the Cobram Development Plan report are supported, further analysis of this issue is recommended.

As traffic increases along the Murray Valley Highway and as Cobram develops along this highway alignment, a by-pass of Cobram may be needed in the long term, most likely beyond the timelines of this Strategy Plan. However consideration should be given to the location of such a route as forward planning can lead to better outcomes and results in the longer term. Such a by-pass could

turn off the Murray Valley Highway south east of the town and connect to the Cobram South Road.

9.5 Strategy Plan

Efficient and effective transportation networks through and around Cobram are encouraged and should be provided. As identified in the above descriptions, at present the transportation network is experiencing some difficulties and inefficiencies due to the layout of the existing network and the pressures of additional vehicles on the roads.

This Strategy Plan endorses the recommendations of the Cobram Development Plan Report and the Cobram Urban Design Framework.

9.5.1 Residential Areas Traffic and Transport

In regard to traffic and transport networks to and through residential areas, the principles as outlined in the Cobram Development Plan Report should be implemented in future residential areas. Particular regard should be given to providing:

- A clear hierarchy of roads which channels and disperses traffic effectively and promotes a connected and permeable neighbourhood
- A network which can reduce the vehicle kilometres travelled for the conduct of daily tasks
- Local roads which carry a level of traffic to enhance pedestrian safety and security
- Connections between existing and proposed residential neighbourhoods
- A modified grid design which encourage public transport and eases traffic by providing drivers with alternative routes
- A local road network which focuses on through connection between key roads to promote walkability and alternative means of movements
- A road network which allows lots with regular shape and appropriate solar orientation
- Courts only in locations where a through connection is not possible

9.5.2 Town Centre Traffic and Transport

In regard to traffic and transport networks to and through the town centre, the recommendations for traffic improvement as outlined in the Cobram Urban Design Framework should be implemented. An effective and efficient movement network though the town centre is vital to its on-going vitality and success.

9.5.3 Public Transport

As Cobram continues to grow, accessibility throughout the town should be improved. Appropriate links between popular destinations such as the town centre, recreational facilities and the various residential precincts are important.

The continuation of the public bus service in and around Cobram should be encouraged, particularly as it provides a much needed social and transport service to elderly, young people and low income earners.

As stated above, provision should be made in road network of the residential neighbourhoods for buses, and the option of re-routing the Murray Line and V-Line bus services through the collector street network rather than along the Murray Valley Highway should be explored, particularly as these residential areas develop.

9.5.4 Further Investigations

There are a number of trends anticipated which cannot be qualified or quantified as part of this Strategy Plan. In this regard it is recommended that a comprehensive traffic and transport analysis and assessment be undertaken for Cobram. Such an assessment should review and make recommendations on the overall network, and also address specific matters including, but not limited to the:

- Movement networks for industrial traffic
- Perceived need for and possible locations of a by-pass route
- Traffic speeds along the Murray Valley Highway
- Alternative links between the Murray Valley Highway and Broadway/Mookarri Streets
- Intersection upgrades at the Murray Valley Highway/ Broadway/Mookarri Streets /Cobram Koonoomoo Road, the Murray Valley Highway/Cobram South Road and Ritchie Road and Murray Valley Highway/Campbells Road

Such an assessment should give consideration to the findings and recommendations of "*The Cobram Traffic Study, Cobram Hospital Precinct Traffic Management Plan*", prepared by John Piper Traffic P/L, July 2006.

10 Community Facilities

10.1 Existing Conditions

A good range of community facilities exist in Cobram and generally include educational facilities and community activity centres/gathering places.

Community facilities are an integral component of the fabric of urban centres. An equitable distribution of community facilities is essential to the efficient functioning of a town.

Various community facilities currently exist within Cobram including:

- Schools (State primary, Catholic primary, State secondary, Christ the King Anglican College, special school)
- Cobram Hospital (17 acute beds and 5 day stay beds)
- Nursing homes (high and low care facilities)
- Community health services (including aged care, mental health services, dietician, district nursing, ear nose and throat surgeon, occupational health, paediatrician, pathology, physio therapy, podiatry, psychiatrist, rural housing network, social worker, speech pathologist, ultrasound and the like)
- Doctors (two clinics with nine doctors)
- Ambulance
- Supported accommodation
- Library
- Toy library
- Family day care
- Long day care
- Senior citizens
- Neighbourhood/community house
- Service clubs
- Civic centre (700 person capacity)
- Local Paper (Cobram Courier)

10.2 Previous Studies

The Moira Shire Council is currently preparing a new Social Plan for the municipality. As part of the information gathering for this project the Council prepared a background report as described below.

Moira Shire Social Plan, What We Already Know, August 2006

This background report includes an inventory of the social and community facilities located in each of the 24 towns and localities within the municipality. In addition to this list, community consultation was undertaken in February 2006 to identify some of the social needs for these places. In regard to Cobram some of

the main services and facilities are listed above. The report also identifies the following social needs for the town:

- Encourage more use of Council recreation reserves
- Improved lighting in parks and car parks
- Ongoing building of links between different cultures
- Improved employment for different cultures
- Drug and sex education to be encouraged in schools and in community setting
- Welcome evenings for new residents of the town
- Swimming pool needs to stay affordable
- Improved collaboration and cooperation between services
- Leadership program for youth
- Skate park for Cobram
- Improved men's health programs
- Maintain community health services
- Increased mental health services
- Engage with older people more
- Continue to ensure Cobram has adequate aged care / bed numbers
- Walking tracks
- New residents kits
- Public transport
- Accessible facilities
- Café / restaurant on the foreshore at Thompson's beach
- Increased job opportunities

In addition to the above, some further needs were identified as part of the Cobram Urban Design Framework 2005, including:

- Accentuate Cobram as a tourist/visitor destination, particularly as a riverside town
- Enhance the quality of experience of moving into and around Cobram
- Improve the linkages between different parts of town
- Provide a place that feels like a "centre" of town
- Create a town and beach walk
- Establish Federation Park and Settlement Square
- Improve town signage
- Enhance the quality of streetscapes and intersections

10.3 Anticipated Trends

It is anticipated that as the population increases and more areas of Cobram are developed for various land use activities, the demand for a range of community

and social facilities, including educational and health will increase. However as a Social Plan for the municipality is currently being prepared, it is considered more appropriate that this project quantify and qualify the projected demand and supply for such services.

10.4 Community Facilities Strategy

10.4.1 General Provision of Services and Facilities

The Strategy Plan recommends provision of appropriate community services and facilities as a sustainable level and mix of such facilities is important in achieving a functional town. The Plan should be flexible to accommodate the location of additional services and facilities once a demand and site has been identified.

Issues associated with the provision of community services in part relate to the residential growth that is occurring within Cobram and its surrounds. Population forecasts and the ageing of the population indicate that there is likely to be a significant increase in demand for health and community services over the coming twenty years. There is a need to ensure that the infrastructure and systems are in place to support the additional demand.

10.4.2 Medical Services

The Cobram Hospital occupies land to the north east of the town centre, on Broadway Street. The hospital serves the local catchment and provides 17 acute beds and 5 day stay beds. It also has an emergency department. The hospital is located nearby to medical consulting rooms and the co-location of adequate levels of support facilities such as medical consulting rooms and aged care facilities in the form of a medical precinct is supported.

Adding to the need or demand for medical and health facilities is the ageing population of Cobram and its surrounds. Whilst the demand for medical facilities is market driven; not land use planning driven, it is recommended that the identification of an appropriate location for a medical precinct be incorporated into a land use plan (this Strategy Plan). As such, this Plan shows a medical precinct around the existing hospital.

An overview of medical and health care services in Cobram and the Moira Shire will be undertaken as part of the Social Plan. It is suggested that any relevant recommendation from the Social Plan be incorporated into an amended Strategy Plan.

The report noted that the greatest need for additional services that are accessed by older people are specialist medical services, doctors/general practitioners and public hospital facilities. Overall, the report identified the need for a general increase in health care for the elderly.

While the encouragement of medical specialists to relocate to Cobram is outside the scope of this Strategy Plan, the Plan should be flexible so as to facilitate the

development of appropriate sites for such services as required. The co-location of specialist facilities is particularly encouraged.

The land area required for a medical precinct to be established is unknown at this point in time, however the siting of the precinct in close proximity to the Cobram Hospital is strongly encouraged. It may also be possible to co-locate a number of the facilities on the hospital site itself.

Land surrounding the Cobram Hospital is generally incorporated within the Residential 1 Zone. Residential development is located immediately to the east, west and north of the hospital, while to the south, across Broadway Street the former convent and presbytery of the Catholic church are being redeveloped for medical consulting rooms.

There are no planning constraints to utilising residential zoned land for medical facilities; however all proposed facilities would be subject to the issuance of a planning permit. It is noted that the fourth objective of the Residential 1 Zone is:

'In appropriate locations, to allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs'.

It is therefore appropriate to incorporate land within the Residential 1 Zone and located around the hospital within a preferred medical precinct. It is acknowledged that the majority of land within this precinct contains residential development; however the relocation of some existing residents within this precinct (or indeed co-location of residents within the medical precinct) is encouraged.

It is acknowledged that the implementation of a medical precinct in this location and on both sides of Broadway Street will potentially intensify traffic flow and car parking demand. It is therefore appropriate for investigations into the potential traffic and transport issues associated with a new medical precinct (and potential expansion of the Cobram Hospital) to be included as part of the recommended transport investigations discussed at Section 9.5.4 of this report

10.4.3 Education Services

Cobram currently has five primary and secondary educational campuses, all located within the study area. It is understood that the pending Moira Social Plan will identify any expansion proposals for these campuses and it is recommended that Council and the schools work co-operatively to find suitable accommodation should the need arise for expanded and/or new educational facilities.

If the need for a new education campus was identified, it is recommended that these be co-located with other community facilities such as public open space/sporting facilities, local neighbourhood centres and the like.

The Cobram Community House is a registered training organisation and offers a range of educational courses for both professional and personal development. This valuable facility should continue to be supported by the Moria Shire Council.

A concern raised by the Cobram community during the consultative stage for the Strategy is the lack of local tertiary educational facilities available to the population. As such, it would be appropriate for the Council to actively pursue discussions with nearby tertiary and further education providers, such as GOTAFE, TAFE in regard to the provision of such courses. It is acknowledged that the decision to provide tertiary and further education within Cobram is market driven, however Council should take a facilitation role in this issue. The potential flow on effects include the retention of youth in the region, skills development, increased business and a stimulus to social interactions and community life

10.4.4 Neighbourhood Hubs

It is appropriate for new neighbourhood hubs to be incorporated into emerging residential growth areas. The neighbourhood hubs would incorporate community facilities suitable to a wide range of age cohorts, including facilities for the aged and for the youth. Where these facilities are needed, they too should be co-located with other community facilities such as schools, public open spaces and local neighbourhood centres.

11 Rural and Agriculture

11.1 Existing Conditions

Rural land effectively surrounds the urban areas of Cobram to the west, south west, south and south east. These areas are generally included within the Rural Zone (RUZ) which generally encourages the sustainable use of rural land for agriculture.

The majority of the rural land immediately surrounding Cobram is used for orcharding, however other uses including grazing and dairying. The majority of rural land within the study area is still actively used.

Under the current provisions of the Moira Planning Scheme, some rural land around Cobram can be subdivided into 12 hectare allotments. This provision was carried over from the former Shire of Cobram and reflects the horticultural values of these rural lands.

Some concern exists in relation to the productivity of rural land in proximity to Cobram, particularly some of the orcharding land to the south east of the town. There is also concern about continuing operations of agriculture, particularly in regard to orcharding, within close proximity to emerging residential areas. Issues related to noise, spray drift, dust and the like often lead to conflict at the rural/urban interface.

11.2 Anticipated Trends

It is anticipated that agricultural properties at the rural/urban interface will continue to experience some degree of conflict and/or pressure from emerging urban development, especially residential and other sensitive land uses activities such as education. However, it is recognised that this situation is not unique to Cobram and is experienced by most rural and regional towns throughout Victoria and indeed Australia. Good strategic planning can provide a higher degree of certainty to farmers located at or near the fringe, especially in terms of timing for the potential conversion of their land for urban development.

However planning for urban development is not an exact science and it is recommended that Council investigate and implement some appropriate techniques for addressing the potential conflicts that arise at the urban/rural interface. This should be done in consultation with the Departments of Sustainability and Environment and Primary Industries.

It is understood that the Moira Shire Council is about to undertake a review of their rural areas. This review is in conjunction with the Greater Shepparton City and the Campaspe Shire Councils, and will build upon the knowledge and information held by various government agencies and department including Departments of Sustainability and Environment and Primary Industries, Goulburn Murray Water and the Goulburn Broken Catchment management Authority.

The review will investigate various influences on rural land including land capability, pressures for lifestyle subdivision, farming techniques, water supply and the like so as to make recommendations on the implementation of the new rural zones, rezoning of land to other non-rural zones and on appropriate subdivision sizes within the rural areas.

11.3 Strategy Plan

This Strategy Plan recognises the importance and value of the agricultural industry to the economic, and employment, base of Cobram. As stated in Section 5.1, the agricultural industry employed 9.1% of Cobram workforce in 2001 and a further 23% were employed in manufacturing, with the manufacturing of agricultural products being a major industry within the town.

In this regard, the Strategy Plan seeks to provide a high degree of certainty for agricultural operations located at or near the urban/rural fringe. This should assist in the planning and decision making for investment in stock, infrastructure, plants and the like, contributing to the continued strength of the agricultural base.

The Strategy Plan also supports the effective management of potential conflict at the rural urban interface and recommends that the Council implement appropriate techniques to address this issue. Such techniques could include restricting residential development within a certain distance from a continuing agricultural operation which could cause nuisance, planting of appropriate species in a buffer between orchards and residential or other sensitive land uses to reduce the adverse impacts of spray drift and so on. Consultation with the Departments of Sustainability and Environment and Primary Industries will provide further assistance in this regard.

It is further recommended that this Strategy Plan be flexible to accommodate any recommendations from the pending review of rural land, and that it be amended if necessary so as to incorporate any recommendations or proposed actions.

12 Recommendations and Implementation

The Strategy Plan provides specific recommendations on how future development within Cobram should proceed. These recommendations reflect the desired future roles of Cobram and will ensure growth opportunities and constraints are accommodated over the next 15 to 20 year period.

This section provides a summary of the primary issues incorporated within the Strategy Plan and the means by which these can be implemented. Various actions are required to implement the Strategy Plan, and the resolution of the various issues is generally achieved through the following means:

- Amendments to the Moira Planning Scheme in its local policy and zone and overlay controls, and
- Other actions, such as strategic studies, facilitation of consultation and the like

The various implementation measures are outlined below.

12.1 Recommendations for Residential Land Strategy

12.1.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13
- Rezone land identified for short term residential development in Figure 7 to Residential 1 Zone
- Rezone land identified for short term low density residential development in Figure 7 to Low Density Residential Zone and cover by Development Plan Overlay requiring among other matters that lots be sewerred
- Rezone the parcels of land identified in Figure 8 to Residential 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone.
- Amend the planning scheme to include all land identified for short, medium and long term residential and low density residential development within the Development Plan Overlay. The requirements of the Development Plan Overlay should at least be consistent with the existing Development Plan Overlay No. 1.

12.1.2 Other Actions

- Undertake a Housing Strategy for the municipality to quantify and qualify the needs for different types of housing, including affordable housing and lifestyle opportunities.
- Following the completion of the Rural Lands Review, amend the Moira Planning Scheme to include land in the Rural Living Zone, if recommended.

- Council should take a lead role in the preparation of the Development Plans in consultation with relevant land owners and service authorities.

12.2 Recommendations for Commercial Land Strategy

12.2.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13
- Rezone land as per the recommendations of the Industrial Land review by Maunsell Australia, and as identified in Figure 9 to Business 4 Zone

12.2.2 Other Actions

- Undertake a Retail/Business Floorspace Analysis for Cobram.
- Continue discussions with VicTrack in regard to the railway land
- Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework, prepared by David Lock & Associates
- Undertake an assessment into the feasibility of relocating the Cobram Saleyards to the identified site in Cobram-Koonoomoo Road.
- Encourage the relocation of bulky goods and other such retail outlets from the town centre.
- Ensure the requirements of the Development Plan Overlay (as recommended in Section 12.1.1 above) include provision for appropriately located local neighbourhood convenience centres.
- Investigate the establishment of a 'Cobram Business Park' in the triangle defined by Ritchie Road, Cobram-Koonoomoo Road and the Murray Valley Highway. The demand for such will be identified through a floorspace analysis (As per the above recommendation). If this area is to be developed for a business park, a Business 4 Zone is recommended, as is a Design and Development Overlay.

12.3 Recommendations for Industrial Land Strategy

12.3.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13
- Rezone all current rural land north and south of Karook Street to Industrial 1 Zone, except Oasis Village, which we recommend to be rezoned Mixed Use Zone
- Extend the industrial zoning west of Richie Road to encompass the abattoirs

12.3.2 Other Actions

- Council should continue to facilitate high quality industrial development as occurring in Schubert Crescent on vacant industrial sites.
- Undertake an assessment into the feasibility of relocating the Cobram Saleyards to the identified site in Cobram-Koonoomoo Road. If the relocation does not prove to be feasible, or saleyards are not required in Cobram, consider the rezoning of the site to Industrial 1 Zone.

12.4 Recommendations for Open Space and Recreation

12.4.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13
- Rezone Council owned land used or reserved for public open space, including parts of Federation Park to Public Park and Recreation Zone.

12.4.2 Other Actions

- Continue discussions with VicTrack in regard to the railway land
- Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework, prepared by David Lock & Associates
- Prepare a policy position on the inclusion or otherwise of encumbered land as part of the required public open space contribution
- Ensure the requirements of the Development Plan Overlay (as recommended in Section 12.1.1 above) include provision for appropriately located public open space.

12.5 Recommendations for Traffic and Transport

12.5.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13

12.5.2 Other Actions

- Undertake a traffic and transport assessment for Cobram
- Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework, prepared by David Lock & Associates

- Encourage the adoption of the traffic and transport networks and management as identified in the Cobram Development Plan prepared by Earth Tech throughout other areas proposed to be included in the Development Plan Overlay.
- Continue to encourage the provision of public transport to service Cobram.

12.6 Recommendations for Community Facilities

12.6.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13

12.6.2 Other Actions

- Undertake a Social Plan for the municipality (*note – it is understood that this is currently underway*)
- Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework, prepared by David Lock & Associates
- Ensure the requirements of the Development Plan Overlay (as recommended in Section 12.1.1 above) include provision for appropriately located community facilities.
- Undertake discussions with tertiary and further education providers to facilitate the provision of such courses/subject in Cobram.

12.7 Recommendations for Rural and Agricultural Lands

12.7.1 Amendment to the Moira Planning Scheme

- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the existing Settlement Strategies with the revised Settlement Strategies as per Section 13
- Amend Clause 21.04 to replace the Cobram Structure Plan with the Cobram Strategy Plan as per Figure 12 in Section 13

12.7.2 Other Actions

- Undertake a Social Plan for the municipality (*note – it is understood that this is currently underway*)
- In consultation with the Departments of Sustainability and Environment and Primary Industries, prepare a policy on the treatment of the rural/urban interface.
- As appropriate amend the Strategy Plan to reflect the recommendations of the Rural Lands Review (*note – it is understood this project is soon to commence*).

12.8 Other Matters

- Council work closely with 6B CMA to prepare a strategy to flood proof the immediate surrounds of Cobram

13 Cobram Settlement Strategy and Strategy Plan

Following the preceding analysis and assessment of various land use activities, the following Settlement Strategy and Strategy Plan has been prepared for Cobram. As per the recommendation of Section 12, it is proposed that the Moria Planning Scheme be amended to include these as follows:

13.1 Settlement Strategy

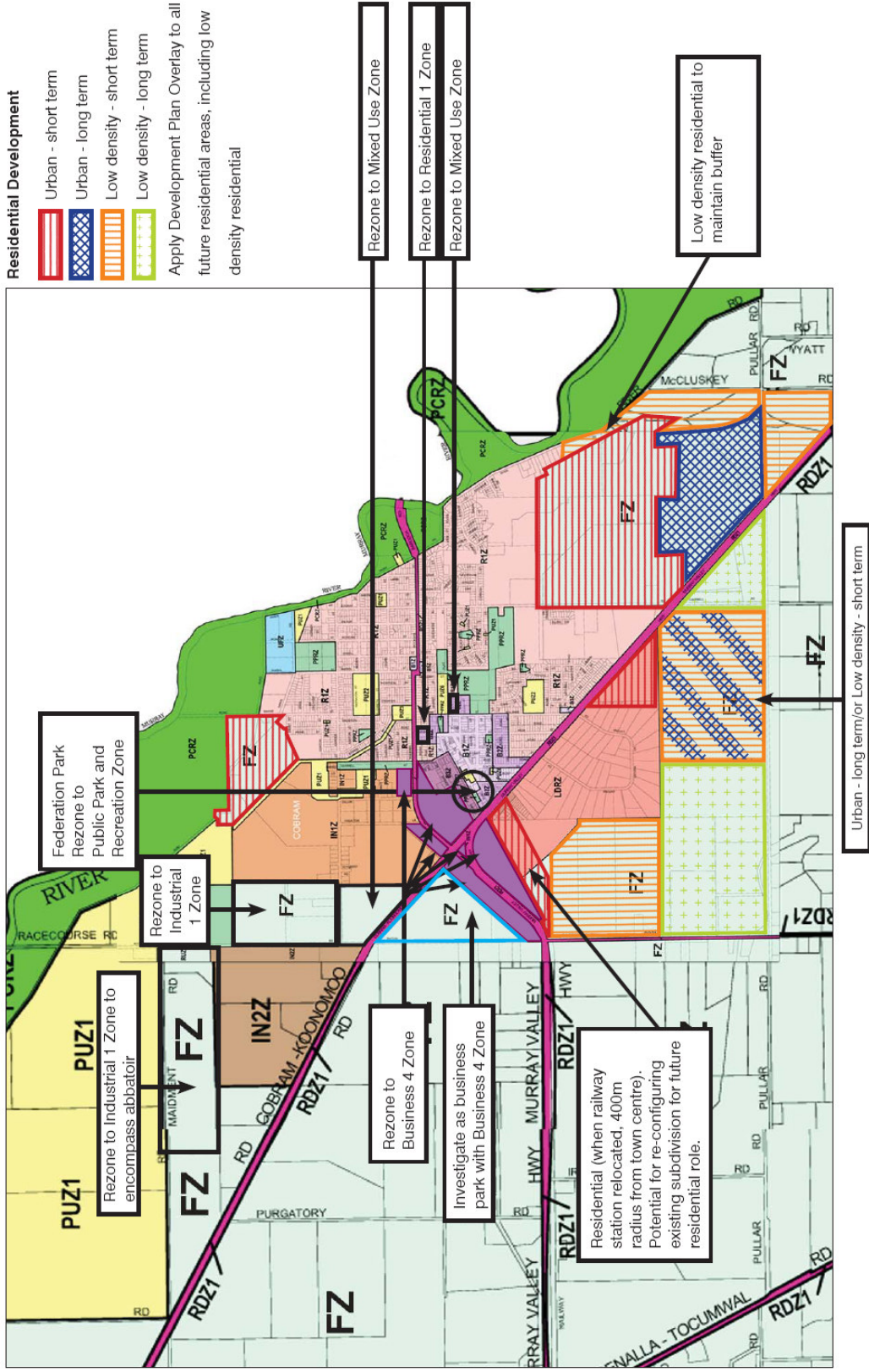
- Future development of the town of Cobram will generally be in accordance with the Cobram Strategy Plan (refer Clause 21.04-5);
- The existing structure of Cobram, with its clear division between land use activities, should not be compromised;
- Medium density housing is encouraged around the commercial fringe of the town centre, near public open space and local neighbourhood centres and within good access to existing and potential public transport routes;
- Short term residential development will be directed to land already zoned;
- Medium and long term residential should be directed to the south east and south of the town centre as per the Cobram Strategy Plan;
- Encourage new development and the redevelopment of land to consider the provision of affordable housing;
- Include all areas identified for short, medium and long term residential (conventional and low density) in a Development Plan Overlay to ensure their orderly development and co-ordinated provision of infrastructure, community services and facilities;
- The aesthetics and character of the river environs will be protected through the inclusion of residential land at the interface with the river in a Low Density Residential Zone;
- Low density residential land will be directed to the south west of the town centre as per the Cobram Strategy Plan. This area should be serviced with reticulated infrastructure;
- Pending the outcome of the Rural Land Review, the opportunity may exist for rural living development between Irvin Road and Cobram South Road, located on the south side of the Murray Valley Highway;
- Industrial development will be focused to the north west of the township. A mix of large and small lots will be retained for long term manufacturing and service industrial expansion;
- Encourage the establishment of a Cobram Business Park in the area defined by the Murray Valley Highway, Cobram Koonoomoo Road and Ritchie Road;
- Discourage the expansion of the existing caravan park to the west of the town;
- An integrated open space plan inclusive of connections to the town centre, through the expanding residential neighbourhoods and access along the river frontage will be developed;
- Ensure that open space is provided in appropriate locations in new residential developments;

- Implement the recommendations of the Cobram Urban Design Framework (2006);
- Encourage the development of Federation Park as a community and tourist facility;
- Continue discussions with VicTrack in regard to the relocation of the railway station/bus terminal from its current location in the town centre;
- Facilitate the redevelopment of surplus railway land (if deemed surplus by VicTrack) for either open space or commercial type uses, as appropriate;
- Seek the relocation of inappropriate uses in the town centre to more suitable and appropriately zoned sites;
- Undertake a retail/business floorspace analysis for Cobram;
- Encourage the redevelopment of vacant and underutilised sites in the commercial precincts, including the town centre;
- Facilitate the development of a village green/community gathering place in the town centre;
- Protect the town centre by favouring new developments that provide active frontages on the ground floor with offices above the ground floor or in the streets surrounding the town centre
- Undertake a traffic and transport analysis and assessment for Cobram;
- Facilitate the expansion of the private and public primary, secondary and tertiary educational facilities to provide a full range of education services in Cobram;
- Facilitate the establishment of a medical precinct around the Cobram Hospital in Broadway Street;
- Ensure that new and expanding residential communities are sensitive to the continued use of adjoining land for agricultural purposes, and that appropriate buffers are included in plans for residential development.

13.2 Strategy Plan

The Strategy Plan for Cobram is shown in Figure 12 over the page.

Figure 12: Cobram Strategy



Coomes Consulting Group Pty Ltd
A subsidiary of Downer EDI coomes.com.au
Offices Melbourne Shepparton Bendigo Albury Geelong

Knowledge Creativity Performance
Engineering Surveying Planning Urban Design Landscape Architecture
Sustainability and Environment Agribusiness Project Management Strategic Consulting