



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL CONVERSATION REPORT

**Shepparton North Structure Plan
Pre-draft consultation**

APRIL 2022



GREATER
SHEPPARTON

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About the Shepparton North Structure Plan

Shepparton is located approximately 180 kilometres north of Melbourne, and combined with the population of Mooroopna, forms Victoria's fourth largest regional city with an estimated population of approximately 66,000 in 2019. Shepparton-Mooroopna also services a wider catchment of more than 100,000 extending as far north as Deniliquin in New South Wales.

Shepparton North is experiencing strong population growth and significant investment in infrastructure, particularly planning for arterial road projects and the construction of stormwater drainage in recent years. The future expansion of Shepparton North is supported by several strategic planning documents including, but not limited to:

- *Commercial Activity Centres Strategy, November 2015;*
- *Draft Wanganui Road and Ford Road, Shepparton: Feasibility Study Design Report 2018;*
- *Greater Shepparton Freight and Land Use Study 2013;*
- *Land Supply Review - Shepparton and Mooroopna 2050: Regional City Growth Plan;*
- *Residential Land Supply and Demand Assessment City of Greater Shepparton 2022;*
- *Shepparton and Mooroopna 2050: Regional City Growth Plan;*
- *Shepparton Mooroopna Flood Mapping and Flood Intelligence Study 2021;*
- *Shepparton North Growth Corridor: Outline Development Plan Report;*
- *Shepparton North East Precinct Structure Plan;* and
- *Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas July 2006;* and the *Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas (Addendum) 2017.*

In May 2021, the Minister for Planning recommended that Greater Shepparton City Council (Council) prepare a structure plan for Shepparton North, including the Shepparton North Activity Centre (SNAC) (commercial land on the western side of Numurkah Road (Goulburn Valley Highway) between Ford Road and Hawkins Street), existing commercial uses along Pine Road and Hawkins Street, the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre and the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence.

Council engaged Mesh Liveable and Urban Communities Pty Ltd (Mesh) in November 2021 to prepare the Shepparton North Structure Plan (the Structure Plan).

An indicative boundary of the Structure Plan area was prepared and is included in Figure 1 below, which comprises:

- approximately 2km² of land;
- residential interface areas, including the recently constructed The Vines residential estate;
- commercial and industrial land on the western and eastern sides of Numurkah Road (Goulburn Valley Highway) between Pine Road and Ford / Wanganui Roads; and
- the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence, Shepparton Sports City, and the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre.

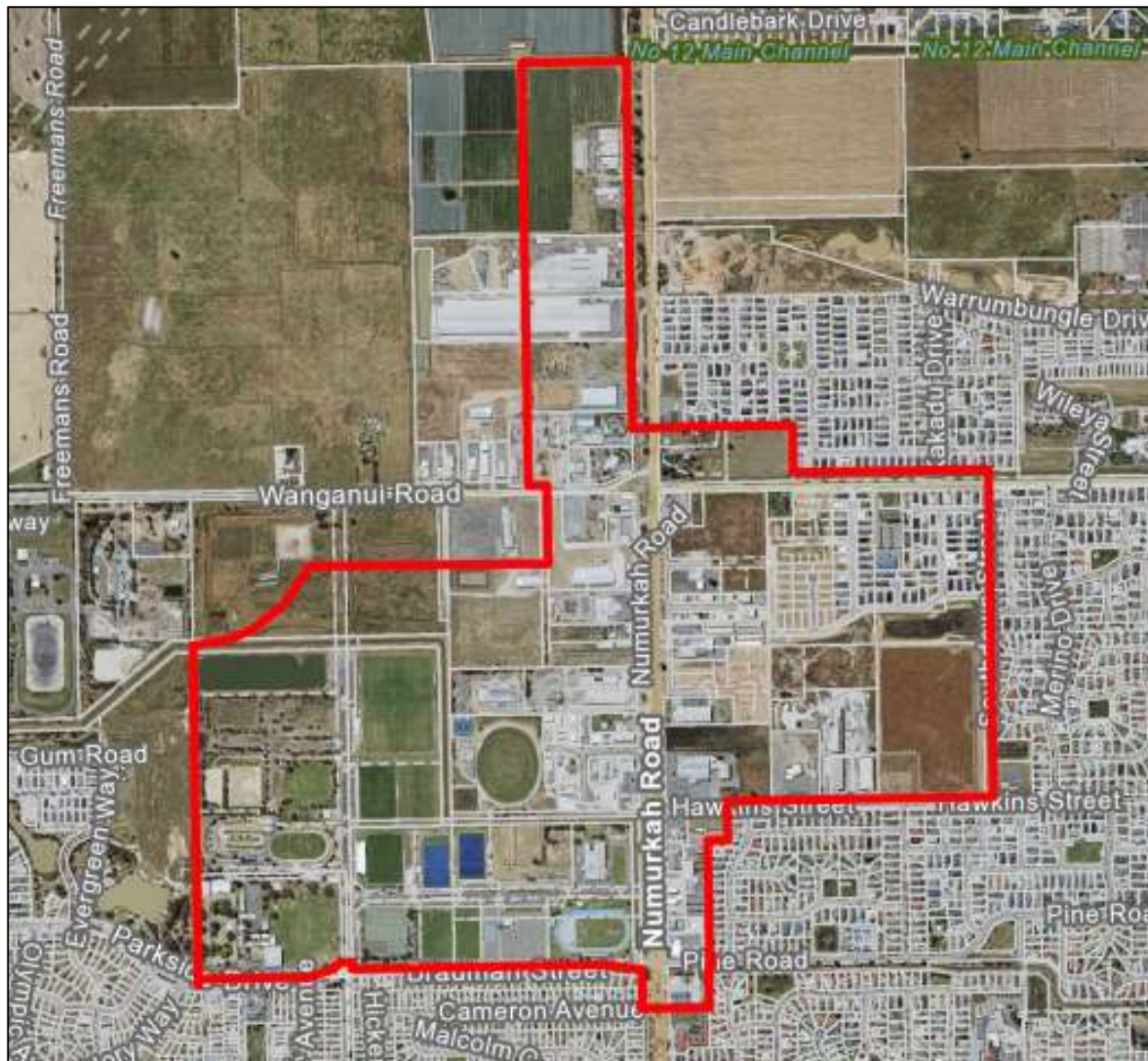


Figure 1: Indicative Shepparton North Structure Plan area outlined in red.

The Structure Plan will guide the future development of the SNAC for predominantly retail and commercial purposes whilst also investigating the wider Shepparton North area. This will better ensure that the Structure Plan provides appropriate connections to surrounding commercial, recreational and residential areas in the wider Shepparton North area.

Pre-draft Consultation

Mesh is currently preparing an Emerging Options Paper to inform the preparation of the Structure Plan. The Emerging Options Paper will gather and synthesise background research and information into one consolidated document. It will include key considerations, such as:

- Council's aspirations for Shepparton North;
- key influences informing the growth of Shepparton North (e.g. growth constraints);
- the role of key land uses;
- how development can positively contribute to the growth of the area;
- what form commercial and residential development should take; and
- what the issues and opportunities for the transport network are.

Council undertook pre-draft consultation with landowners, key stakeholders, referral authorities and government agencies, and members the community from 21 February to 21 March 2022 to inform the preparation of the Emerging Options Paper.

Methods of engagement included:

- a letter to landowners and occupiers of land within the indicative Structure Plan area in Figure 1 above;
- a letter to key stakeholders (namely large commercial businesses) within the Structure Plan area;
- advertisements on Council's various social media platforms, the Shepparton News and the Shepparton Adviser;
- a media release, which attracted media attention from the Shepparton News;
- a consultation webpage on Council's website with an online submission form; and
- online meetings with key stakeholders.

A total of eleven (11) submissions were received by Council during the pre-draft consultation process. This included:

- four (4) submissions from (or on behalf of) landowners within the Structure Plan area;
- seven (7) submissions from government referral agencies, including the:
 - Country Fire Authority;
 - Department of Education and Training;
 - Department of Transport;
 - Environment Protection Authority;
 - Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority;
 - Goulburn-Murray Water; and
 - Goulburn Valley Water.

What we heard

Transport and Movement Considerations

Submissions indicated a strong desire to make Shepparton North safe and connected for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport whilst also ensuring ease of accessibility for vehicular traffic by providing an interconnected layout. It was noted that arterial roads within Shepparton North accommodate significant freight movements.

Feedback received also noted the surrounding arterial road network and sought to ensure that the future growth of Shepparton North builds upon it.

A submission from the Department of Transport also noted that an assessment of conflicts with the arterial road network must occur with consultation with heavy vehicle operators to reduce conflicts between freight movements and cars.

The Structure Plan must be cognisant of a number of vehicular traffic matters, including various intersection upgrades within the study area and the Bypassing Shepparton Business Case. The Structure Plan must also account for the proposed upgrade of the Shepparton Sports Precinct and the Shepparton Sports Stadium, and allow for appropriate pedestrian and cyclists connections within the area. The Structure Plan layout will also incorporate the higher-order arterial roads capable of supporting buses, and identify opportunities for vehicular and pedestrian connections.

Mesh has subcontracted One Mile Grid Pty Ltd to prepare a traffic and movement analysis to identify existing issues, constraints and opportunities for the local and arterial traffic network in Shepparton, including:

- barriers to movement;
- pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure necessary to support active transport and mode share;
- linkages for public transport services;
- key intersection performance;
- road capacity and function; and
- implications of external road projects (such as the Bypassing Shepparton Business Case).

This information will form part of a background report that will inform the Emerging Options Paper and the Structure Plan itself.

Council will also seek input from heavy vehicle operators as part of the preparation of a Structure Plan.

Opportunities for Landscaping and Gateway Treatments

Submissions also noted that the northern gateway (Goulburn Valley Highway / Numurkah Road) would benefit from gateway treatment(s) and active road frontages, to project a sense of arrival into Shepparton proper. This could include the identification of landscaping and consistent road treatments.

The Shepparton North commercial area is defined by 'big box' agricultural suppliers and large scale commercial buildings with hard stand areas and warehouse built forms. *The Urban Design Framework - Shepparton North and South Business Areas (Addendum) 2017* (the UDF Addendum) identified a number of built form objectives and design requirements for future businesses. The Structure Plan will be informed by the objectives and design requirements outlined in the UDF Addendum and identify any additional opportunities for gateway treatments.

Issues and Opportunities for Future Commercial Use

There was consensus within submissions that a second full-line supermarket is required in the SNAC. However the preferred location of any future full-line supermarket(s) differed between submissions.

Submissions also noted that there was capacity to identify additional commercial uses outside of the SNAC and that these could be co-located with residential uses. Council and Mesh will explore the feasibility of expanding the SNAC outside of land between Ford Road and Hawkins Street on the eastern side of Numurkah Road as part of the Emerging Options Paper.

Concern was also raised that any well-functioning activity centre would concentrate retail activities and that allowing multiple activity nodes within Shepparton North would lead to poor planning outcomes.

The location(s) of any additional full-line supermarket(s) will be resolved as part of the preparation of a structure plan for Shepparton North. To inform the Structure Plan, Mesh engaged Geografia Pty Ltd to undertake an economic analysis, and provide technical advice on retail, commercial economics, including an audit and analysis on retail floor space area and office demand. The Emerging Options Paper will also provide a range of recommendations to inform land use and development opportunities, and strategic direction.

Interface Issues

Submissions noted that the Structure Plan should identify appropriate interfacing opportunities between existing commercial areas on the eastern side of Numurkah Road (Goulburn Valley Highway) and existing residential areas (e.g. The Vines residential estate).

The Structure Plan, once prepared, will provide recommendations on the appropriate preferred land uses, urban design objectives and requirements for the land located within the Industrial 1 Zone on the north side of Hawkins Street.

The Shepparton Sports Precinct

Submissions noted that the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre, and its interactions with surrounding uses, namely the former Wanganui High School and the SNAC. As part of the preparation of the Structure Plan, Council and Mesh will work closely with the Department of Education and Training, user groups of the Sports Precinct and adjacent businesses to ensure the Sports Precinct and any future upgrades seamlessly integrate within the Structure Plan area.

Sustainable Transport Opportunities

Council received a submission from the Department of Transport, which noted that Council should allow for the provision of electric vehicle charging within the Structure Plan area. The *Draft Greater Shepparton Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022* identifies a number of actions to advocate and provide for electric vehicle charging infrastructure within Greater Shepparton. The Structure Plan will investigate the feasibility of establishing these facilities within the Structure Plan area.

Next Steps

All responses received during the pre-draft consultation will be considered by Mesh and Council, and used to inform the preparation of the Emerging Options Paper.

Referral authorities and government agencies, landowners, key stakeholders and community members will have further opportunities to provide input through the Emerging Options Paper and the draft Structure Plan. These documents will be exhibited for public comment and feedback, following consideration at a future ordinary council meeting.