

HOUSING DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong
in conjunction with alphaPlan and David Lock Associates



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Background Report 2:

Review of Housing Policy Options and Implementation Tools under the Planning and Environment Act

Background Report 3:

Preliminary Housing Demand Analysis for the City of Greater Geelong

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

In June 2006 the City of Greater Geelong commenced the preparation of a Housing Diversity Strategy for its municipality. The strategy has been prepared in conjunction with David Lock Associates alphaPlan.

The Housing Diversity Strategy aims to:

- Provide for the development of a range of housing types and densities in the City of Greater Geelong, to meet the City's existing and future housing needs;
- Provide certainty to the existing and future community with regards to where different housing types and densities will be generally supported or discouraged by Council; and
- Provide for the development of a sustainable overall urban structure in the City of Greater Geelong.

Under these broad aims, a principal role of the strategy is to reconcile three of the most prominent influences on the ongoing development of the Geelong's urban areas, being:

- The environmental, social and economic need to manage urban sprawl and improve accessibility to urban services, principally by consolidating urban development around places of activity and public transport infrastructure;
- The need to accommodate contemporary changes in housing needs, particularly the growing demand for medium and higher density housing that is proximate to urban services and lifestyle destinations; and
- The need to manage the impact of urban consolidation and changing housing needs on the City's existing neighbourhood character, particularly the character of established suburban areas.

The strategy represents a key response to the City of Greater Geelong Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report (2005), which clearly established the need for Council to designate areas where increased housing diversity would be supported, as well as areas where existing neighbourhood character would be preserved.

Drawing on the Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report (2005) and a range of supplementary studies, an analysis of the City's housing needs is provided, including an assessment of the likely demand for medium and higher density housing in Geelong to 2031. The capacity of the framework proposed by the Housing Diversity Strategy to accommodate expected housing demand is also discussed.

The strategy has had regard to current policy directions of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), current and recent reviews of planning practice notes, current metropolitan strategy and discussions with officers of the DSE regarding the suitability of various statutory planning tools for implementing Council's housing diversity objectives.





1.1 Scope of the Housing Diversity Strategy

In broad terms, housing policy and strategy at a Local Government level can be divided into three key, closely related elements:

1. Strategy to guide the general location and mix of housing development;
2. Strategy to guide the development of social and affordable housing; and
3. Strategy to guide the detailed design of housing.

The Housing Diversity Strategy will have implications for all three of the abovementioned elements, however it is primarily concerned with the first – policy to guide the general location and mix of housing development. The strategy does not seek to guide the development of social and affordable housing in detail, or to establish detailed design directions beyond those concerned with density, neighbourhood character and residential amenity.

Whilst the Housing Diversity Strategy will influence the latter two elements noted above, they will be more specifically addressed as part of separate strategic initiatives being undertaken by the City of Greater Geelong and other State and Local Government authorities. In particular:

- The development of an Affordable Housing Strategy for the G21 Region. This project commenced in June 2007 and is a joint initiative of the municipalities which comprise the G21 Region. Amongst other things, it will set out a detailed action plan for generating increased stocks of affordable and social housing in the region; and
- An investigation into opportunities for improving design outcomes in the City of Greater Geelong. This project is scheduled to commence in the second half of 2008. It will involve a detailed examination of the ways in which design outcomes can be improved in the municipality, focussing particularly on new housing development. This may involve the introduction initiatives such as design awards, design evaluation panels, best practice demonstration projects and the use of particular planning controls such as Design and Development Overlays in specific areas, for example.

The investigation into opportunities for improving design outcomes in the City of Greater Geelong is a key part of Council's overall approach to managing the impact of new forms of housing development on the character of Geelong's established suburban areas. It will supplement the broader structural intent of the Housing Diversity Strategy.

1.2 Study Process

Development of the Housing Diversity Strategy and associated background reports has involved a substantial program of consultation, research and policy option analysis.

In particular, a broad program of community consultation and engagement has been undertaken to ensure that the strategy presents a balanced approach to housing development in the City which reflects the diverse needs of different stakeholders.

The consultation program has involved:

- The establishment of community information and feedback booths in fourteen shopping centres across the municipality, over a period of six weeks. The information booths were staffed by senior Council officers and provided all interested persons with an opportunity to discuss their key issues and ideas, and to provide feedback on Council’s proposed approach to managing the need for increased housing diversity in the City;
- A series of eight focus group workshops with key stakeholder groups, including resident groups and community groups. The focus group workshops provided key stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss relevant issues and opportunities in more detail; and
- Various industry briefings with developers and planning consultants in the Geelong Region, as well as a number of industry associations.

The overall approach to the study is summarised in the diagram overleaf.



1.3 Study Area

The Housing Diversity Strategy considers all existing residential and commercial zoned land in the City of Greater Geelong, with the exception of:

- Land zoned Rural Living (RLZ);
- Land zoned Township (TZ); and
- Land zoned Low Density Residential (LDRZ).

See Figure 2 – Housing Diversity Strategy Study Area.

1.3.1 The City of Greater Geelong

The City of Greater Geelong (See Figure 1 – Greater Geelong Urban Areas) comprises the entire urban area of Geelong as well as an expansive rural hinterland and the Bellarine Peninsula. The municipality has an area of 1,240 km², with a resident population of approximately 234,000 people.

The City is located adjacent to Corio Bay, which provides a sheltered, north facing harbour. The Barwon River runs through the urban areas of Geelong, with the Barrabool Hills providing the backdrop to the western edge of the town.

The municipality extends from Little River in the north, including the You Yangs and Lara township, to the Brisbane Ranges National Park in the north west.

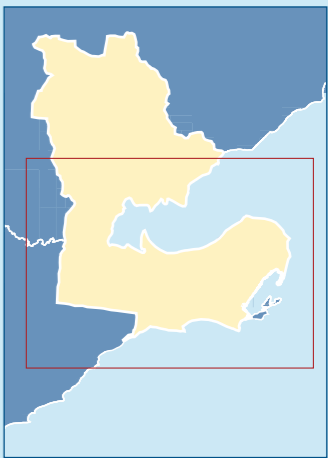
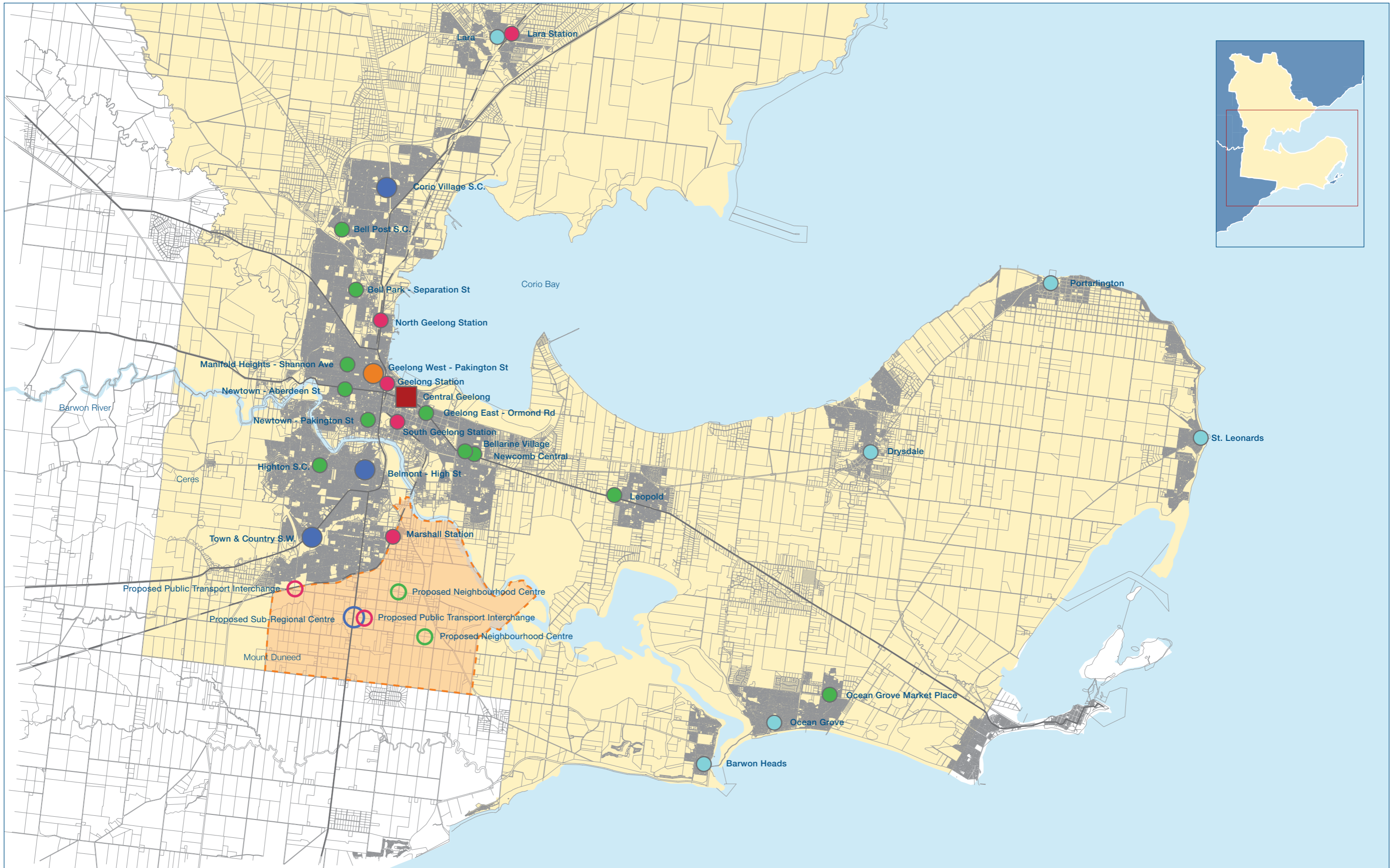
South and east of the main urban settlement of Geelong are a series of coastal townships surrounding the Bellarine Peninsula, and extending toward Mount Duneed at the southern boundary of the municipality.

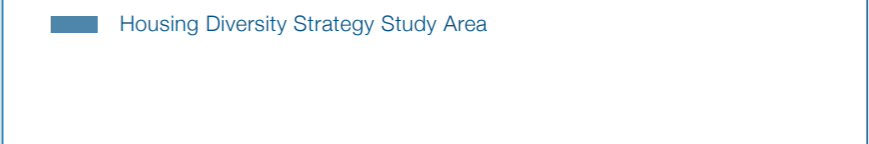
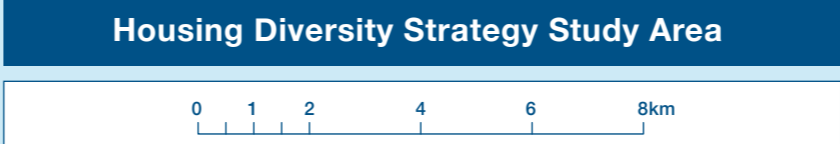
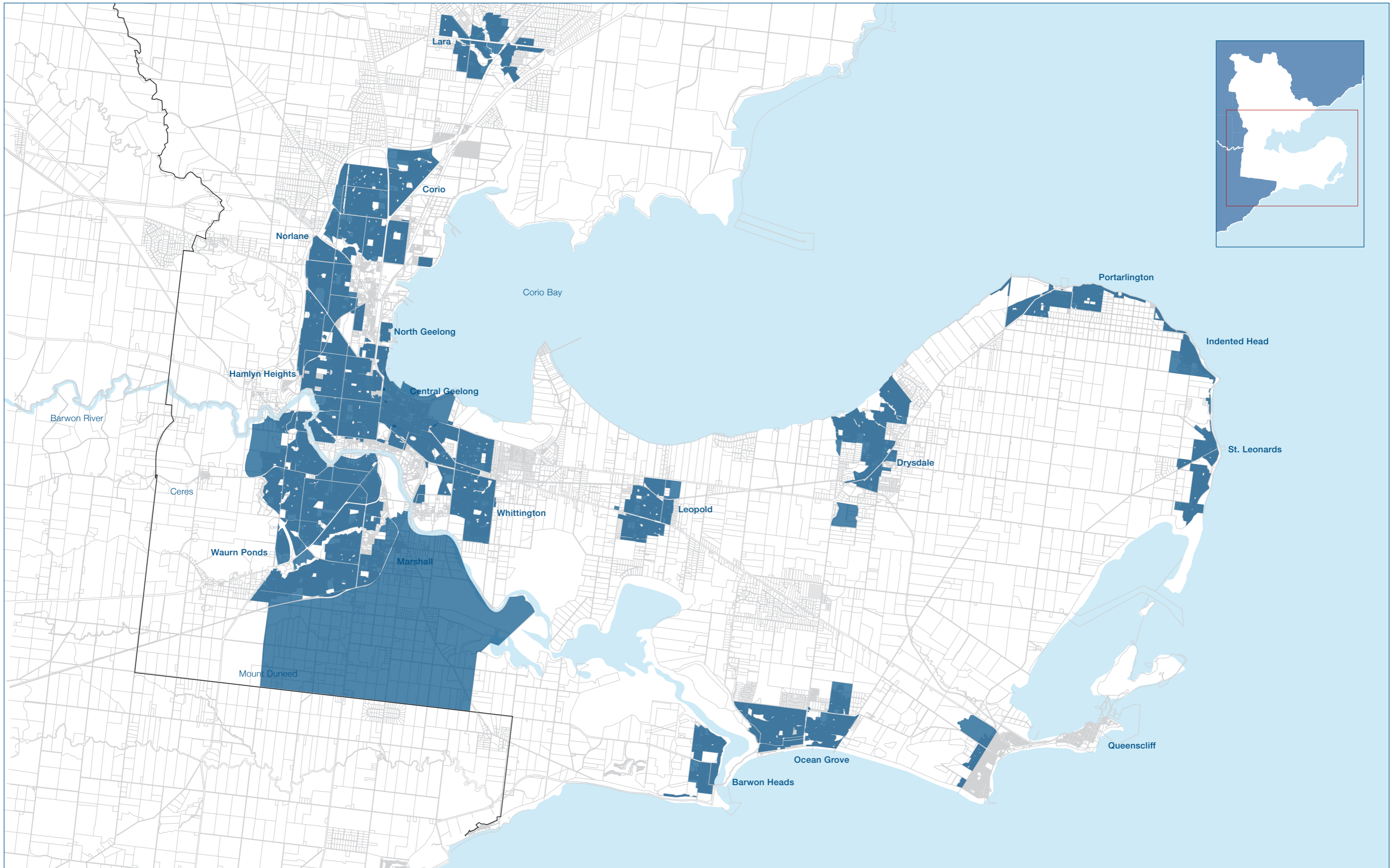
The City's principal urban growth directions are set out in the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS). They include:

- Ongoing consolidation within existing urban areas;
- Designation of Armstrong Creek as the principal urban growth area for the Geelong Region;
- Urban growth on the Bellarine Peninsula to be focused at Ocean Grove and Drysdale / Clifton Springs;
- Designation of Leopold for limited future expansion; and
- Designation of Lara for limited future expansion.

The City of Greater Geelong is expected to remain the hub of population growth and service provision for the G21 Region. The G21 Region comprises the municipalities of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Golden Plains and the Borough of Queenscliffe.









1.4 Defining Different Housing Types and Densities

In broad terms, urban housing types and densities can be categorised into three groups; conventional, medium and higher density housing. This categorisation does not account for housing densities in rural residential or rural living areas.

The general definitions of urban housing, as adopted by this strategy, are provided below. Figure 3 provides some examples of the types of houses that generally fall into each category.

- **Conventional housing** Single detached dwellings on lots generally ranging between 500 and 1,000 square metres (sqm). The development of an area for conventional housing generally results in a gross residential density¹ of 10 – 15 dwellings per hectare².
- **Medium density housing** The provision of two or more detached or attached dwellings, townhouses or apartments on a site below four stories. The development of an area for medium density housing generally results in a gross residential density of 20 – 40 dwellings per hectare.
- **Higher Density housing** Attached townhouses or apartments, usually more than 3 storeys in height. The development of an area for high density housing generally results in a gross residential density of more than 40 dwellings per hectare.

The definitions above are not ‘target’ densities under the Housing Diversity Strategy. Different areas will achieve different development densities, depending on the capacity of the area, the nature of the housing market and the specific policy context.

¹ Gross residential densities¹ include local roads and parks, but exclude main roads, activity centres, employment areas, schools and regional parks.

² Gross residential densities of 10 dwellings per ha generally achieve an average lot size of approximately 800 sqm. 15 dwellings per ha generally achieves an average lot size of 533 sqm.

Figure 3 URBAN HOUSING TYPES

Conventional Housing

Single detached dwellings on lots of 500 - 1,000 sqm. This results in a gross residential density of 10 - 15 dwellings per hectare.



Medium Density Housing

Detached or attached dwellings, townhouses or apartments on lots generally ranging between 200 and 500 sqm, but may be as low as 100 - 150 sqm for apartments. This results in a gross residential density of 15 - 40 dwellings per hectare.



Higher Density Housing

Attached townhouses or apartments, usually more than 3 storeys in height, resulting in a gross residential density of more than 40 dwellings per hectare.



2.0 Policy and Statutory Context

2.1 Principle Supporting Studies

The Housing Diversity Strategy has regard for a number of key studies previously undertaken by Council which relate to housing and activity centre development. In particular, these include:

Greater Geelong Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report, 2005

The City of Greater Geelong Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report (2005) includes recommendations aimed at encouraging more diverse housing stock, noting that the City's existing housing stock is dominated by detached housing, with relatively few higher density living options. The strategy recognises that changing demographic demand will see a need to provide an increasing variety of housing to accommodate the increasing number of smaller household types that have established over the past 10 years and are predicted to grow in number over the coming 10 years.



Residential Character Study - 2001

The Residential Character Study (RCS) (2001) identifies a set of design guidelines for assessing medium density housing development, based on the identification of precincts of similar urban character in the City. The study also highlights the particular environmental and physical attributes that contribute to the character of each defined precinct.

The study resulted in the production of Neighbourhood Character Brochures for each precinct, which are incorporated into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The Brochures establish the elements of neighbourhood character which are to be preserved and enhanced by future development.

It is acknowledged that the precincts defined in the RCS are quite broad and that with each precinct there are some areas of differing residential character. In assessing the impact of residential development on neighbourhood character, Council officers therefore also utilise the findings of more detailed character assessments undertaken as part of the planning permit application process for a development. Officers also apply the Planning Practice Note: Understanding Neighbourhood Character (2001), prepared by the Department of Infrastructure.

Geelong Retail Strategy - 2006

The Geelong Retail strategy establishes a number of objectives for the future development of Geelong's retail network, including:

- To encourage the development of interesting, viable and vibrant retail activity centres;
- To improve the range and quality of shopping and business services provided at activity centres and at other locations;
- To improve the amenity of the built environment in activity centres;
- To create safe and liveable activity centres;
- To encourage accessibility and sustainability as key features of activity centre policy; and
- To introduce activities such as housing and mixed use development at appropriate locations which support the role of activity centres.

The strategy encourages a variety of uses to establish at identified activity centres, including higher density residential development, where this is supported by other Council policies and by other recommendations presented in the strategy. The level and type of retail development anticipated for each activity centre is guided by its position in the Greater Geelong Retail Hierarchy.

Further information on these studies is provided as Appendix 4 – Housing Policy and Statutory Context.



2.2 Other Relevant Policies and Controls

Planning for residential development in Geelong is directed by the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme contains a State Planning Policy Framework and a Local Planning Policy Framework.

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) is prepared by the Minister for Planning in Victoria and is consistent across the entire state. The Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) is prepared by the City of Greater Geelong to provide specific policy direction for land use and development in the municipality, and to implement the SPPF at a local level.

Below is a summary of the provisions of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme that affect residential development in the City. A more detailed description of the policy and statutory tools that affect land use and development in Geelong is contained in Appendix 4 – Housing Policy and Statutory Context.



Table 1

Provision	Key Points	Comment
State Planning Policy Framework		
CI 14.01 – Urban Settlement	Provides objectives to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure a sufficient supply of land is available for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, institutional and other public uses. - facilitate the orderly development of urban areas 	Makes specific reference that planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character. Also directs that Planning authorities should encourage higher density and mixed use development near public transport routes.
Clause 16.02-1 Medium density housing	Provides objectives to encourage development of well designed medium density housing which respects neighbourhood character, improves housing choice, makes better use of existing infrastructure and improves energy efficiency.	Implementation of this strategy is through the use of Clause 54 and 55 of the Scheme which translates the provisions of ResCode into the planning scheme.
Clause 19.03 Design and built form	Objectives of this strategy are to achieve a high quality urban design and architecture that reflects the identity of the community and promotes attractive towns and cities within broader strategic context of the planning scheme.	Implementation of this strategy is through the use of Clause 54 and 55 of the Scheme which translates the provisions of ResCode into the planning scheme.
Local Planning Policy Framework*		
*Note: The existing Local Planning Policy Framework is currently being reviewed as detailed in Appendix 4. This table outlines the relevance of current provisions only.		
Clause 21.08 – Urban Growth	Includes specific a specific objective to promote higher residential densities within established urban areas.	Seeks to achieve a target of 15 dwellings per hectare in new residential development and consolidate development activity into urban Geelong and existing townships. This includes provision of medium density housing located in areas close to town centres and within urban Geelong.
Clause 21.18 – Housing	Includes objectives to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the quality of the City’s urban area and townships by protecting and improving their character. provide a diversity of residential opportunities across the municipality to cater for the range of housing needs of the community 	Introduces the Geelong Residential Character Study – Precinct Brochures 2001 as a means of addressing local character in development proposals. Includes strategic direction to support increased density of development around inner city areas and township areas in walking distance of employment, services and entertainment.

Provision	Key Points	Comment
Zone Provisions		
CI 32.01 Residential 1 zone	Enables single dwellings on lots greater than 300 sqm to be developed without a planning permit	Applies to the majority of residential land in Geelong and surrounding townships. Is the standard residential zone used across Victoria. Directs that development on lots less than 300 sqm or of more than one dwelling on a lot requires a planning permit and that the provisions of ResCode (CI 54 and 55) apply. Has provision for local variation to be made to specific provisions of CI 54 and 55. Currently no local variation applies.
CI 32.02 Residential 2 zone	Similar to Residential 1 zone, but with a specific objective to encourage residential development at medium or higher densities to make optimum use of the facilities and services available	Still requires a permit for development, but exempts the proposal from notice and objections from other parties. The zone is applied in small locations around the Geelong Central Activities Area. Most sites where the zone applies are also affected by heritage or design and development overlays that may still trigger notice of the application.
Clause 32.06 Residential 3 zone	Similar to Residential 1 but with a mandatory height limit of 9 metres.	Zone was recently introduced by the state government to ensure areas of generally lower building form, as experienced in suburban settings were protected from inappropriate or excessive building form. Zone is not currently applied in Geelong.
Overlay Provisions*		
*Note the key overlays that affect land in urban areas are addressed below. Other overlay provisions may also apply to specific sites and areas.		
Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 14	Requires a planning permit for all development over 7.5 metres in height to enable issues of scale, character and potential issues of view sharing to be addressed.	Overlay is particular to Geelong and Surf Coast as a translation of previous provision of the Geelong Regional Planning Scheme. Provision is currently interim until such time as more strategic investigation is completed as to its need to be applied across the majority of residential areas in Geelong.
Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 1	Requires specific criteria for heritage conservation to be met.	Applies as a quasi heritage overlay provision in areas of Geelong West. Impacts on character and development density in this area.
Heritage Overlay	Is applied to sites where heritage study has identified the site as having local, regional or state heritage significance. Generally requires a planning permit for external Buildings and Works.	Development of land within overlay areas needs to address the heritage impact of the development on the identified values of the site.
Significant Landscape Overlay	Applies to rural and residential sites. Notably used in Ocean Grove to address specific issues of character and view sharing.	
Environmental Significance Overlay	Applies to some areas of residential development and generally requires a planning permit for all buildings and works.	

3.0 Managing the Key Influences on Housing Development

This section of the strategy discusses a range of key influences on housing development in Geelong's existing and future urban areas.

A number of the influences have the potential to conflict with each other and thus need to be carefully managed to generate sustainable development which maximises the quality of life enjoyed by all of the City's existing and future residents.

The key influences are:

We are growing.

- Recent population and housing trends.
- Existing and future housing needs.

Our environment is important to us.

- Reducing urban sprawl.
- Developing healthy, walkable communities.
- Protecting and enhancing neighbourhood character.
- Providing urban infrastructure.



3.1 We are growing

3.1.1 Recent Population and Housing Trends

In most places around Australia, the average size of a household is getting smaller. In Geelong, the average number of people per household is projected to drop from 2.44 in 2006, to 2.14 by 2031 (DSE 2004).

In particular the Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report notes that the fastest growing household types in Greater Geelong were single persons (14.6%), sole parents (17.6%) and childless couples (13.4%).

The report further notes that over the last decade the number of people living in traditional families with children in the City has declined by almost 10%.

The Housing Study Issues and Background report states:

“the changes in the household structure, in particular those arising from the number of people over 50 years, and increases in single, sole parent and childless couple households, will have a bearing on the suitability of current stock and the type of housing that will be required in the future.

A second implication of the demographic trends arises from the fact that much of the in-migration is likely to come from people aged over 45. These will pose a challenge for the municipality as they age in place, thereby adding to the challenge arising from the ageing of the existing population. The projections suggest that over 70% of the population increase in Greater Geelong will be of people aged over 50.”

As stated above, declining household sizes in Geelong are being driven largely by the rapid aging of the population, as well as quite drastic changes in the composition of our households. The aging of the population is particularly prominent on the Bellarine Peninsula, as the ‘sea change’ phenomenon has made the City’s coastal townships very popular retirement destinations.

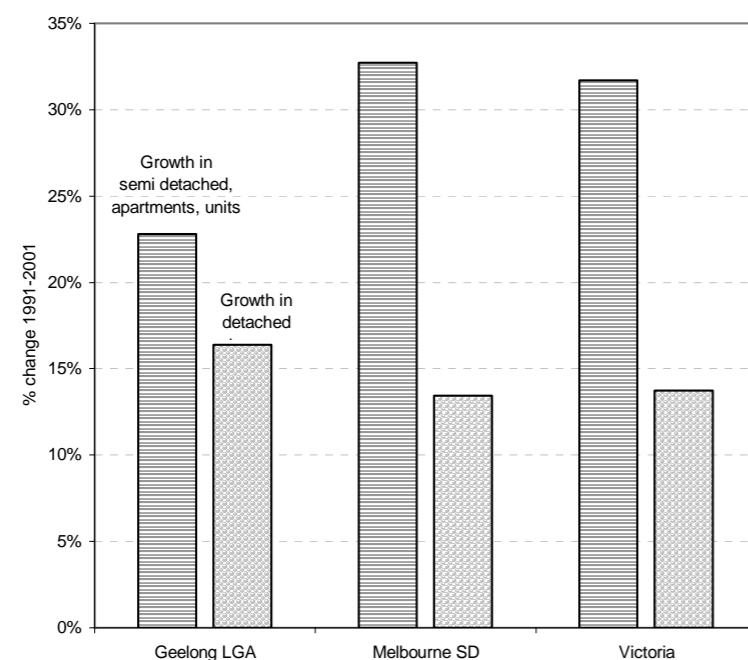
Table 2

	Separate house	%	Semi-detached	%	Flat, unit or apartment	Total*
Geelong LGA	69,171	85%	3,864	5%	6,622	80,951
Melbourne SD	986,846	73%	139,583	10%	197,205	1,344,624
Victoria sfdasfsd	1,488,155	78%	158,446	8%	231,475	1,914,211

*Note: ‘Other’ and ‘Not stated’ results included in Total but not shown separately.

Source: ABS (2001) Census of Population and Housing, in Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report, 2005

Figure 4
Percentage change in detached dwellings compared to semi-detached dwellings, apartments, units and townhouses



Source: ABS (2001) Census of Population and Housing, Time Series Profile

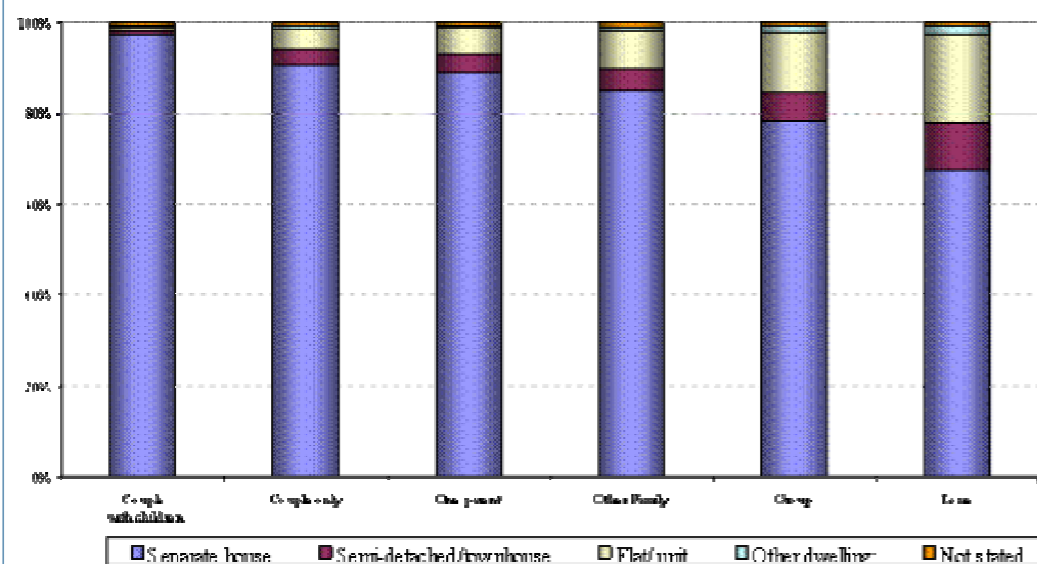
Although household sizes are becoming smaller, larger detached dwellings still make up the dominant form of housing in the municipality, accounting for 85% of total dwelling stock. This proportion is higher than in Metropolitan Melbourne (73%) and Victoria (79%).

Conversely, flats, units and apartments account for 8% of the City's total dwelling stock, compared with 15% for metropolitan Melbourne and 12% for Victoria (see Table 2).

As Figure 4 shows, the share of detached dwellings as an overall proportion of the City's housing stock has remained relatively constant between 1991 and 2001, whereas in Victoria and Melbourne, the proportion of detached dwellings has declined.

Because of the growth in smaller household types it is likely that this trend will change. Indeed, as Figure 4 shows, the household types that are growing fastest in Geelong are those that are least likely to live in larger, detached forms of housing. Whilst over 95% of families with children in Greater Geelong live in detached housing, the proportion who live in this type of accommodation falls to 90% for couples, 80% for group households and 70% for sole parents.

Figure 5
Distribution of household type by dwelling type, Greater Geelong, 2001



3.1.2 Existing and Future Housing Needs

Recent Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) population and Housing projections indicate that between 2006 and 2031, the City will grow by approximately 62,700 persons and 41,400 (DSE, 2004). Interestingly, this means that, on average, there will be only 1.5 persons in each new household in the City to 3031 (see Table 3).

The bulk of the population growth is expected to occur in new and establishing residential areas in Armstrong Creek, Grovedale / Marshall and Lara. Coastal areas on the Bellarine are also expected to grow rapidly.

To better quantify the effect of changing household structures on the future demand for different housing types in Geelong, a more detailed analysis of the expected demand for conventional and medium and higher density housing in the municipality has been undertaken³.

The analysis looks at the age distribution of Geelong's future population, then ascribes a propensity for different age groups to live in different types of households. The propensity of these different households to live in different types of dwellings is then determined.

The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4 below. Two growth scenarios are presented (see Background Report 3 for details).

As shown above, the analysis indicates that between 2001 and 2031, approximately 6300 to 9500 medium or higher density dwellings will need to be accommodated in the City of Greater Geelong, compared to approximately 29,000 conventional dwellings.

This means that single detached dwellings will continue to be the dominant form of housing stock in the City, accounting for around 75% of total new dwellings, compared to 25% of total new dwellings for medium and higher density housing.

The projections indicate a small increase in the total share of medium and higher density housing in Geelong by 2031. However, it can be reasonably assumed that as new and more appealing forms of medium and higher density housing are become available in the housing market – particularly in Central Geelong – consumer preferences will continue to change and that a degree of latent (i.e. presently unmet) demand for that type of housing will be met.

Table 3

	2006	2031	Net Change
Total Population	208,012	270,749	62,737
Total Households	85,183	126,617	41,433
Average Persons per Household	2.44	2.14	1.5

Source: Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria in Future, 2004

³ SGS Economics and Planning 2007, Preliminary Housing Needs Analysis for the City of Greater Geelong.

3.1.3 Key Points:

- Between 2006 and 2031 it is anticipated that the City of Geelong will grow to accommodate approximately 63,000 additional people and around 41,000 additional dwellings.
- Much of this population growth will come from people over the age of 50. The City's population is aging rapidly, both through the in-migration of elderly persons and the aging-in-place of existing residents. Coastal areas are popular retirement destinations, particularly townships on the Bellarine Peninsula.
- The rate of growth in smaller household types, such as singles, childless couples and sole parents, outstrips the rate of growth larger household types in the municipality.
- The majority of new housing development in the municipality will continue to be in the form of separate houses on conventionally sized blocks. However, because of the significant growth in smaller and more diverse household types, the demand for smaller and less conventional housing types is expected to increase.
- It is anticipated that the City will need to accommodate between 6300 and 9500 medium or higher density dwellings to 2031, and around 29,000 conventional detached dwellings.
- The aging of the population in particular will contribute substantially to an increase in demand for low maintenance housing and retirement accommodation that is close to a range of urban services, particularly on the Bellarine Peninsula.

4 The total number of private dwellings indicated differs marginally from previous analysis contained in the Housing Diversity Strategy as it is based on 2006 Census Data, rather than 2001 Census Data or 2004 Department of Sustainability and Environment Population and Housing Project

Table 4

Dwelling type	Projected Demand, 2006 – 2031 (Number of Dwellings)	
	Scenario 1 (Lower growth)	Scenario 2 (Higher growth)
Separate house	29,789 (82%)	28,486 (74%)
Semi-detached / row / terrace / townhouse	2,198 (6%)	2,722 (7%)
Flat / unit / apartment	4,107 (11%)	6,819 (18%)
Other	297 (1%)	313 (1%)
Total Private Dwellings⁴	36,392	38,340

3.2 Our Environment Is Important to Us

Increasing evidence now exists at the international and national level that the way in which we live and travel is having a significant detrimental impact on the environment, our resource base and the health of our communities.

3.2.1 Reducing Urban Sprawl

In particular there is now a growing need to proactively limit the outward sprawl of our cities and townships through initiatives like settlement boundaries and the development of additional houses within existing urban areas. These sorts of initiatives aim to create a more compact urban form. This is often referred to as 'urban consolidation'.

By building additional houses within existing urban areas, particularly areas that are well serviced by infrastructure and facilities, development pressure on the urban fringe is reduced and more people are able to walk to their daily needs, use other transport modes or just travel shorter distances in their cars. This means less pollution, less environmental degradation, better accessibility to services and healthier communities.

A useful way of conceptualising the need for urban consolidation is to recognise that for every house not built within an established urban area, approximately 1000 square meters of natural environment is lost on the urban fringe, forever.

Of course, competing environmental, heritage, character, amenity and servicing issues mean that it would not be practical or desirable to significantly increase development activity across all of Geelong's existing urban areas. Rather, the City must look to consolidate the urban environment in a managed and balanced way which recognises the different needs of different people, as well as the environment.



3.2.2 Developing Healthy, Walkable Communities

In 2004, the National Heart Foundation of Australia (Victorian Division) released “Health by Design: A planners’ guide to environments for active living”.

The strategy emphasises fostering healthy lifestyles through the development of ‘walkable neighbourhoods’, wherein it is easy and attractive for people to walk or cycle to facilities and services. The guide states:

“The need for healthy urban planning is becoming increasingly important. In Australia, the annual, direct health care costs attributable to physical inactivity are about \$400 million. More than 8,000 deaths are associated with physical inactivity each year, representing an estimated 77,000 premature potential years of life lost because of inactivity. Engaging in regular physical activity reduces the risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, osteoporosis, colon cancer, obesity and injury. In addition, physical activity has been shown to alleviate depression and anxiety and increase social interaction and integration”. (National Heart Foundation 2004: Pg 8)

The guide goes on to suggest that destination points such as food stores, schools, chemists, neighbourhood centres, senior citizen centres and cafes provide focal points for people to walk and cycle to within their neighbourhood.

In addition, the guide notes that the development of walkable neighbourhoods reduces car dependency and, therefore, the social exclusion of those not able to drive or without access to a car, particularly elderly people and those on low incomes.

Walkable neighbourhoods can also improve personal security in the public realm, as there is more activity and ‘eyes on the street’.

3.2.3 Providing Urban Infrastructure

The outward expansion of cities like Geelong requires Council and other service providers to link new infrastructure with existing infrastructure, and then to extend it. This includes extensions to roads, parklands, drainage, sewerage, gas, electricity, telecommunications and public transport infrastructure, for example. New residential areas also require the provision of a range of education, community and health facilities.

By consolidating urban development in established urban areas where there is existing infrastructure, the need to extend infrastructure networks outwardly is reduced and more efficient use of existing services and infrastructure can be achieved. Of course, there is always a need to monitor the capacity of infrastructure and services to ensure that, as demands grow and change, the needs of the community continue to be met.

The direct cost of servicing one new dwelling on the urban fringe can be as much as \$20,000 more than the direct cost of servicing one new dwelling in an established area⁵. This cost difference does not account for the indirect costs associated with travel times and environmental degradation, for example.

When considered in the context of the total amount of housing development in Geelong, the potential cost savings of urban consolidation are therefore significant. The savings can be directed to the provision of important community facilities and services.

⁵ SGS Economics and Planning, 2003



3.2.4 Protecting and Enhancing Neighbourhood Character

How and where we live in dwellings contributes to how we define ourselves as individuals and as a community. Residential or neighbourhood character is the tangible and sometimes intangible collection of elements that make up this identity, both at a site specific and community wide level.

Most of Geelong's residential areas were developed during the 20th Century, according to the traditional Australian model of a single detached dwelling on a reasonably sized lot with a front and rear garden. The opportunity to own and live in this style of dwelling has often been referred to as the Great Australian Dream!

More specifically, Geelong's suburbs are generally comprised of lots of 650sqm – 800 sqm, with front setbacks of 7 – 8 metres and generous side and rear setbacks. A green, low density setting is the dominant feature of the City's established suburban areas.

Within this dominant suburban character, more specific character types can be defined. These are derived through particular building forms, landscaping and vegetation characteristics for example. Just some of the individual elements which can comprise the character of an area include:

- The provision of specific street trees and vegetation, particularly vegetation that is 'coastal' or 'rural' in nature;
- Prevailing building heights and views;
- The separation between dwellings;
- The size of side and rear setbacks;
- The provision of larger or smaller backyards;
- The provision of garages;
- The provision of particular styles of front fences; and
- The style of public infrastructure, such as sealed or unsealed roads and footpaths for example.

The 2001 Residential Character Study provides a detailed description of the character of different parts of Geelong.

There is no particular character that can be described as good or bad. However, some areas clearly provide a more consistent residential character than others. In the same way that humans naturally like order, we often crave consistency and continuity in the environments in which we live.

The importance that many members of the community place on the traditional character of Geelong's suburbs cannot be overstated. This importance is often underpinned by the fact that a person's home is usually their largest financial investment and the place in which they spend some of their most valued time. As such, there are vitally important economic, social and emotional reasons as to why an individual or household would seek to retain their home and its setting in a manner in which they are used to and enjoy.

However, as the makeup of households and their housing needs change, it is inevitable that neighbourhood character will also change. Many Local and State Government's in Australia have sought to manage the impact of this change, particularly in terms of its effect on the traditional garden character of established suburban areas. Within the various approaches a number of consistent themes emerge:

- There is an acknowledgement by all parties that there is a need to provide increased housing diversity, particularly increased housing densities, to address changing social and demographic trends, lessen the impact of urban development on the environment, and improve the efficiency of urban areas;
- There is continued debate about the level of density that should be achieved and where increased densities are best directed;
- There is ongoing community concern regarding the quality of higher density housing development and the ability of new development to complement existing, 'conventional density' neighbourhood character;
- There is ongoing community concern about the impact of increased development densities on existing infrastructure capacity;
- There is a level of subjectiveness as to what makes good design and how new development can and should reflect existing or preferred urban character; and
- The community continues to be concerned about the rate of change, particularly in established suburban areas, and about the uncertainties of not knowing when or where change may occur.

Whilst Council's approach to managing the impact of changing housing needs on existing neighbourhood character aims to address all of these themes, the need to provide certainty to the community with regards to the likely rate of change in different locations has been identified through consultation as being of critical importance. This is a key aim of the Housing Diversity Strategy.

3.2.5 Key Points:

- Creating a more compact, accessible City is a fundamental part of Council's drive for more sustainable development.
- By allowing for the development of a more diverse range of housing types within existing urban areas, particularly areas around public transport infrastructure and activity, we can:
 - » Reduce the City's outward expansion into the surrounding rural and coastal environments;
 - » Reduce trip distances in cars and, consequently, oil consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, road accidents and congestion;
 - » Give more people, particularly elderly people and those on low incomes, better access to existing employment, activity and transport nodes;
 - » Protect productive agricultural land;
 - » Maintain the non-urban break between Geelong and Melbourne, and between individual settlements within the municipality;
 - » Protect the amenity and tourism functions of rural and coastal areas;
 - » Improve social diversity and reduce social exclusion; and
 - » Enhance the vitality and viability of the city's activity centres.
- The need for more sustainable development and increased housing diversity is bringing about a marked change in the City's traditional character, particularly in established suburban areas.
- Many individuals value the character of Geelong's established neighbourhoods immensely. There is a critical need to provide an increased level of certainty with regards to the level and type of change that can be expected in different parts of the municipality.

4.0 Taking a Balanced Approach

The Housing Diversity Strategy builds on the recommendations of recent State Government reviews and other Local Government Strategies which have sought to manage the impact of changing housing needs on traditional neighbourhood character (see Background Report 2).

The strategy recognises the diverse housing needs of different people, the ease with which different areas can accommodate different development densities, the benefits delivered by increasing densities in different areas and the broader needs of the environment.

The approach supports the greatest increase in housing diversity and densities in the most strategically beneficial locations, so that more conventional housing types and densities in other areas can be preserved for longer.

Importantly, all individuals are provided with greater certainty regarding the type of housing and rate of urban change that can be expected in different parts of the municipality.



The Housing Diversity Strategy achieves a balanced approach by defining three different area types with reference to the general density and type of development which each area is expected to accommodate:

- **Key Development Areas;** being large existing and future development areas that have the potential to accommodate significant amounts of new medium and higher housing, including mixed use development;
- **Increased Housing Diversity Areas;** being areas where a mix of high, medium and conventional density housing will be encouraged, with the density of development being highest within the commercial core of the area and lower at the edge of the area; and
- **Incremental Change Areas;** being residential areas where the majority of new development will be in keeping with Geelong's traditional suburban character.

This approach provides for:

- The most substantial increase in housing densities in key development areas across the city, such as Central Geelong and other large development sites;
- A mix of high, medium and conventional housing densities within established urban areas, particularly areas that are within walking distance of activity centres and/or transport hubs; and
- The maintenance of more conventional housing densities in other areas.

The approach also acknowledges that many physical and environmental influences will impact upon the capacity of an area to accommodate housing development, and that these influences can change over time.

Council will continue to identify and manage these influences through the application of specific planning controls, rather than through the designation of specific areas of minimal or no change in the Housing Diversity Strategy.

4.1 Key Development Areas

Key Development Areas are large existing and future development areas that have the potential to accommodate significant amounts of new medium and higher density housing, including mixed use development.

Because of their large size, location and generally agreed upon function, Key Development Areas can be purposefully planned and designed to accommodate substantially higher housing densities without detrimental amenity impacts on established suburban areas.

Place specific plans, such as Structure Plans or Development Plans, should be prepared for all Key Development Areas. This will inform in greater detail the preferred scale, intensity and mix of development in each area and address matters such as infrastructure and services provision, interfaces with the surrounding environment, accessibility and urban design.

Key Development Areas will accommodate the bulk of higher density housing development in Geelong to 2031.

The Key Development Areas identified in the Housing Diversity Strategy are:

- Central Geelong;
- West Fyans Key Development Area;
- Waurin Ponds Key Development Area;
- Proposed Armstrong Creek Medium and Higher Density Housing Areas; and
- Other designed precincts in new residential areas.

Each Key Development Area is outlined below. The relevant supporting studies should be referred to for more detail.

4.1.1 Central Geelong

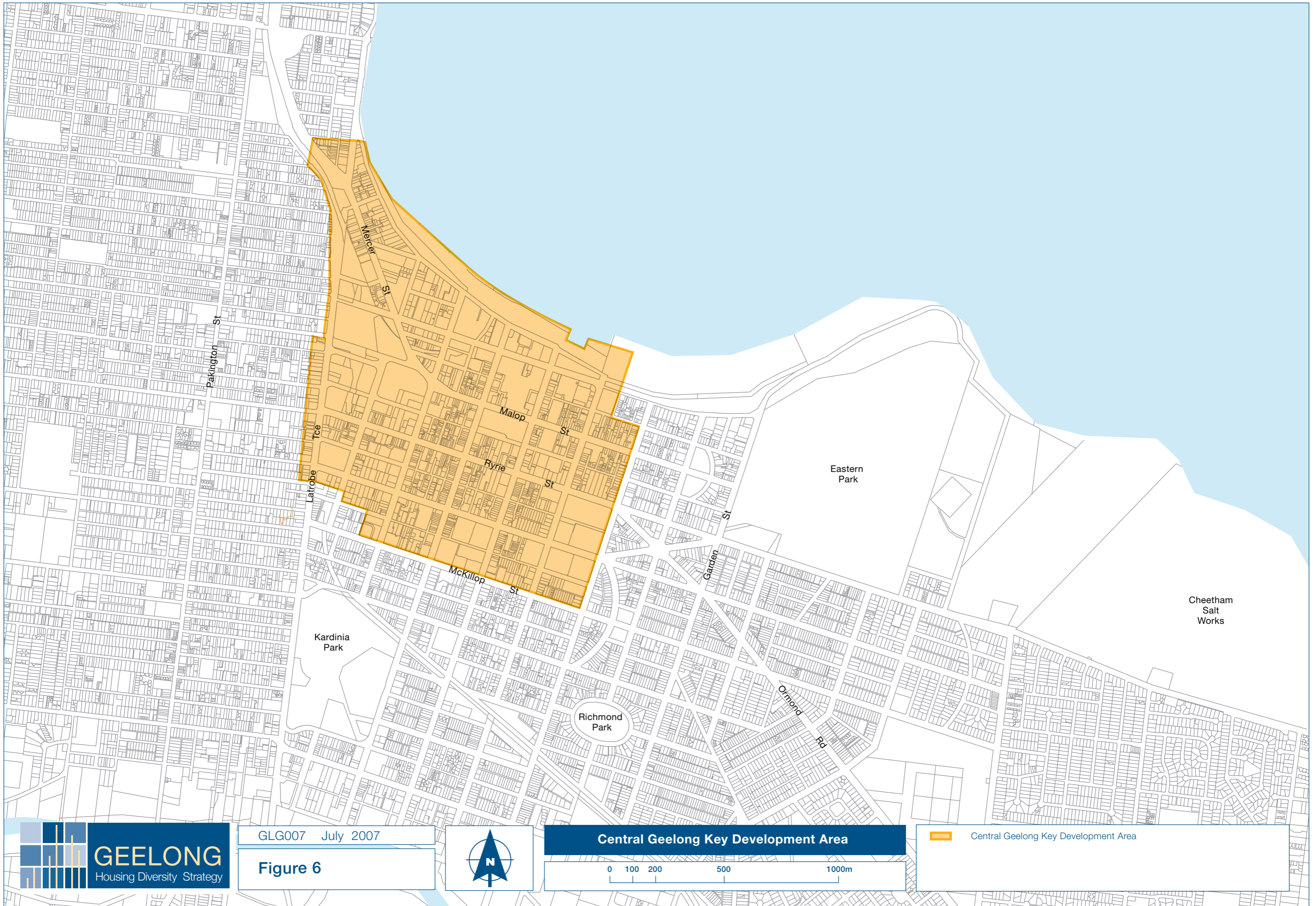
The area known as Central Geelong includes Eastern Park, the Western Wedge, the waterfront and the retail and commercial core. Central Geelong is the focus of commercial, cultural, educational and leisure activities in the municipality.

A Structure Plan for Central Geelong has been prepared⁶ to provide a planning and design framework for the area over a 20 year time horizon. The Structure Plan reaffirms the role of Central Geelong as the principle area of urban consolidation within the municipality, where opportunities for new medium and high density housing development and mixed uses will be maximised, whilst protecting residential amenity.

Council, VicUrban and the State Government have established a set of development projections for Central Geelong, based on aspirational growth levels and the capacity of the area under the proposed policy framework.

The projections show that if Central Geelong were to develop at a relatively high growth rate, the area could accommodate around 4000 additional permanent residents and 2800 additional dwellings by 2025.

⁶ Central Geelong: Looking Forward, Part A – Structure Plan, July 2007



4.1.2 West Fyans Key Development Area

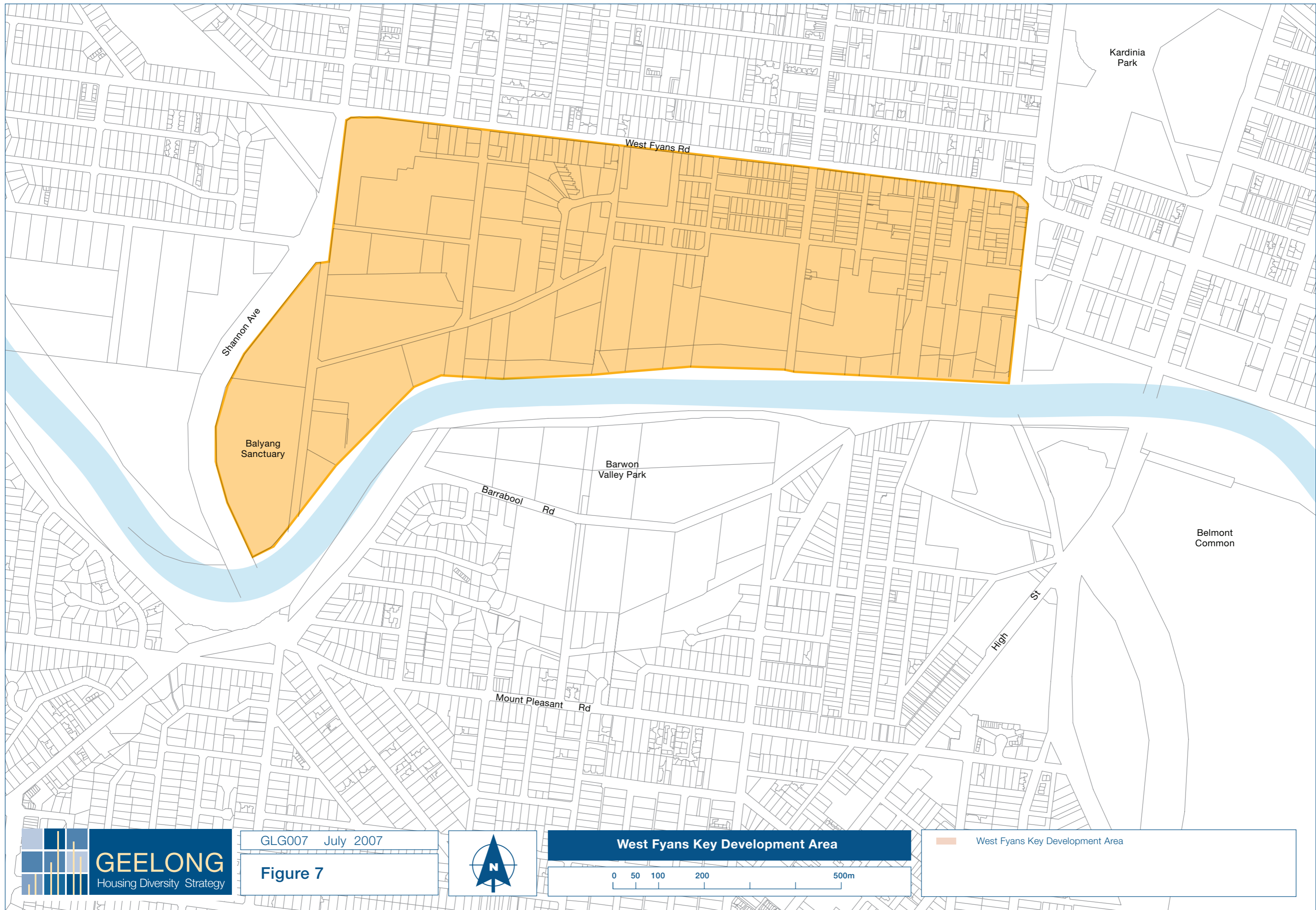
The West Fyans Key Development Area is located in the suburb of Newtown, approximately 1.5 km from Central Geelong. The area is bound by the Barwon River, Latrobe Terrace, West Fyans Street and Shannon Avenue (see Figure 7).

The area currently hosts a mix of land uses including large and small scale industries, residential, light industrial and peripheral sales, public open space, public infrastructure and recreation and leisure uses.

For some time Council and the community have shared a vision for the West Fyans Key Development Area to accommodate a diverse range of quality living and working environments, in a way that reconnects the precinct with the Barwon river and celebrates its industrial heritage. The provision of high quality medium and higher density housing in a mixed use environment is vital to achieving this vision.

Because of the mixed use nature of the vision for the West Fyans Redevelopment Area, it is not possible at this time to accurately estimate the amount of new residential development which the area might accommodate.

A Structure Plan for the West Fyans Key Development Area is scheduled to commence in 2008. This will provide more detail on the areas ultimate development capacity.



Kardinia Park

West Fyans Rd

Shannon Ave

Balyang Sanctuary

Barwon Valley Park

Barrabool Rd

Belmont Common

High St

Mount Pleasant Rd



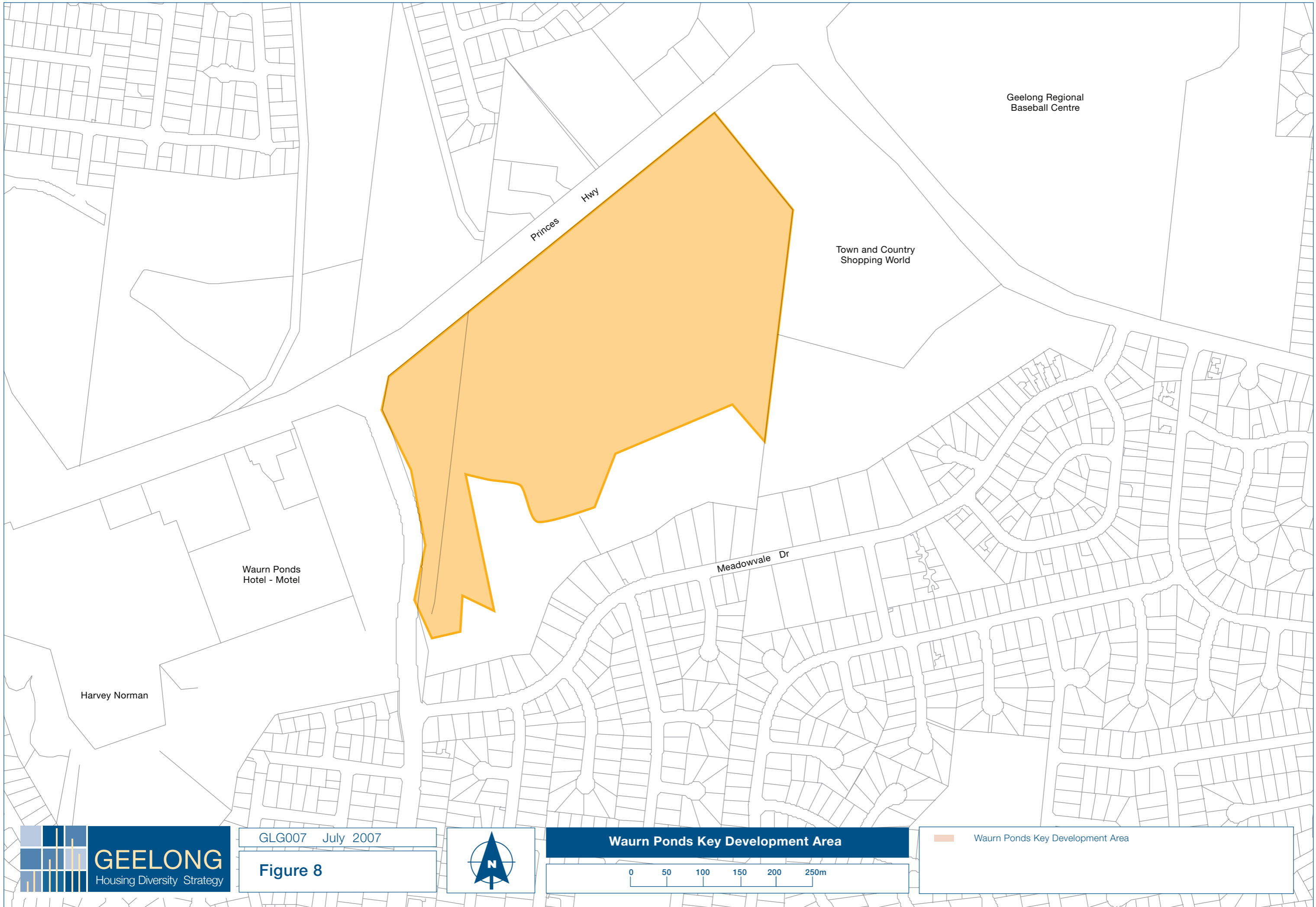
4.1.3 Waurm Ponds Key Development Area

The Waurm Ponds Key Development Area is located adjacent to the existing Waurm Ponds retail activity centre. The area is a 19ha parcel of undeveloped land, bound by Colac Rd (Princes Hwy), Rossack Drive and Waurm Ponds Valley Parkland (see Figure 8 below).

The Waurm Ponds Key Development Area has the potential to accommodate a vibrant mix of land uses which capitalise on the site's proximity to the Waurm Ponds Shopping Centre, surrounding high quality parkland and the nearby Surf Coast.

It is estimated that, once developed, the Waurm Ponds Key Development Area could accommodate around 400 new medium and higher density residential dwellings, as well as a range of other complementary land uses.

A Development Plan for the area will be prepared to ensure that it is developed in a coordinated, best practice manner.



Geelong Regional
Baseball Centre

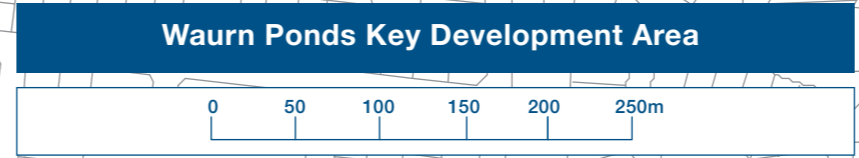
Princes
Hwy

Town and Country
Shopping World

Waurm Ponds
Hotel - Motel

Meadowvale Dr

Harvey Norman



4.1.4 Proposed Armstrong Creek Medium and Higher Density Housing Areas

The City of Greater Geelong has recently released an Urban Growth Plan (UGP) for the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area UGA.

The UGP is based on best practice, sustainable urban development principles. It provides for a diverse range of housing types and densities within an urban structure based on walkable neighbourhoods, public transport and mixed use activity centres.

The plan states that medium and higher density housing in the Armstrong Creek UGA is to be clustered in areas close to public transport nodes and mixed use activity centres, maintaining the more traditional character of other residential areas. To this end, specific areas for the development of medium and higher housing are designated. These include:

- **Higher density housing:**
Within 400 metres of Marshall Station and the proposed public transport interchanges at Rossack Drive and the proposed new Sub-Regional Centre.
- **Medium density housing:**
Up to 800 metres from Marshall Station and the proposed public transport interchange at Rossack Drive; and Within 400 metres of the edge of the proposed new Sub-Regional and Neighbourhood Centres.

It is estimated that under this framework, the Armstrong Creek UGA has the capacity to accommodate:

- 5820 new medium and higher density dwellings (20 – 40 dwellings per ha);
- 15,450 conventional density dwellings (14 dwellings per ha); and
- 54,000 people.

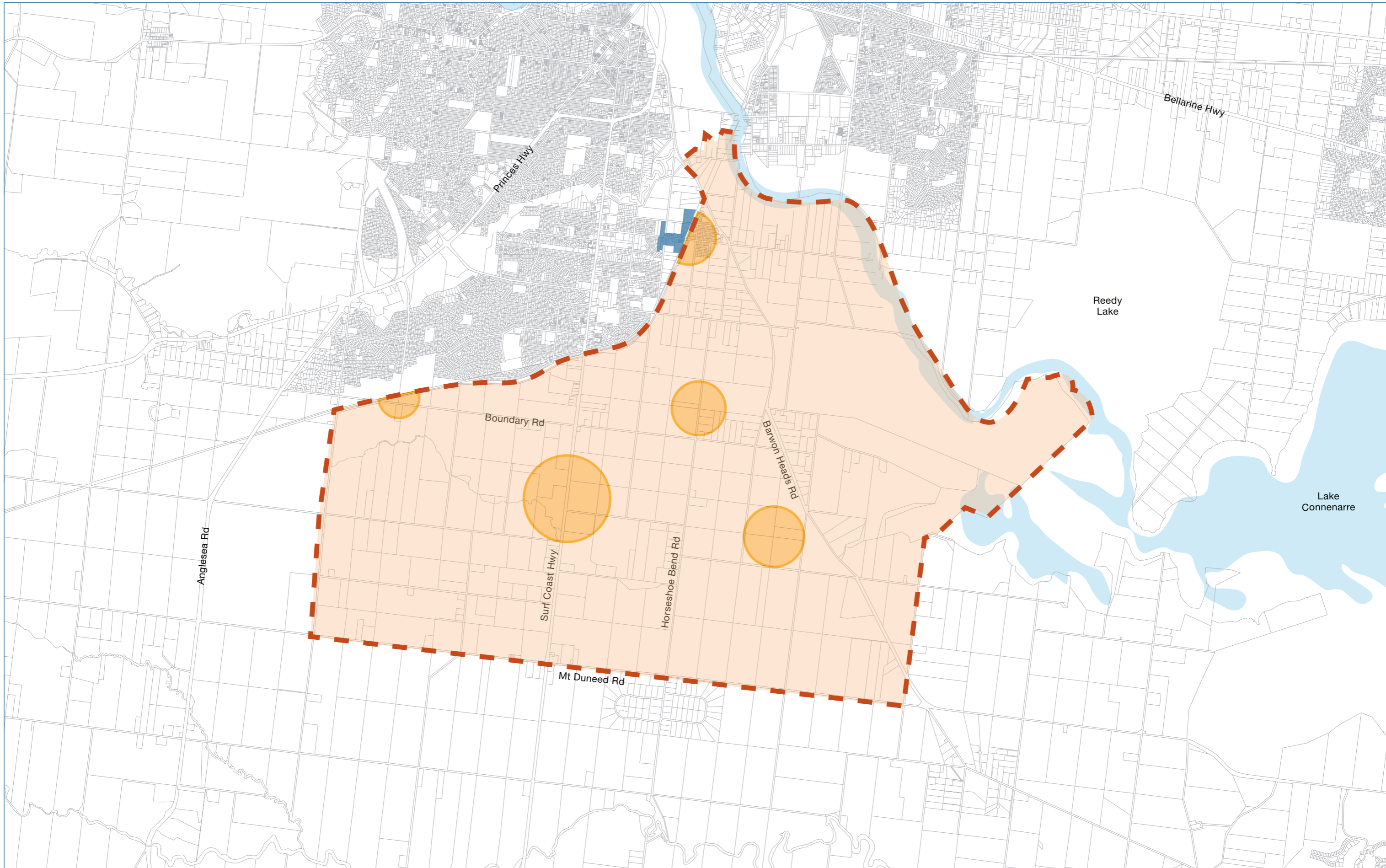
4.1.5 Other Precincts in New Residential Areas

In addition to the Key Development Areas identified above, there may be the potential to accommodate relatively high levels of new medium and higher density housing within purpose designed precincts in other new residential areas across the City.

This may include, but is not necessarily limited to specific precincts in the following designated growth areas:

- Ocean Grove Urban Growth Area;
- Drysdale Clifton Springs (Jetty Road) Urban Growth Area;
- Leopold Urban Growth Area;
- Lara Urban Growth Area; and
- Proposed new residential areas around Fyansford, on the western side of urban Geelong.

The preparation of Development Plans and/or Structure Plans for these areas will determine the local suitability of developing such precincts, as well as their precise location, scale and function.

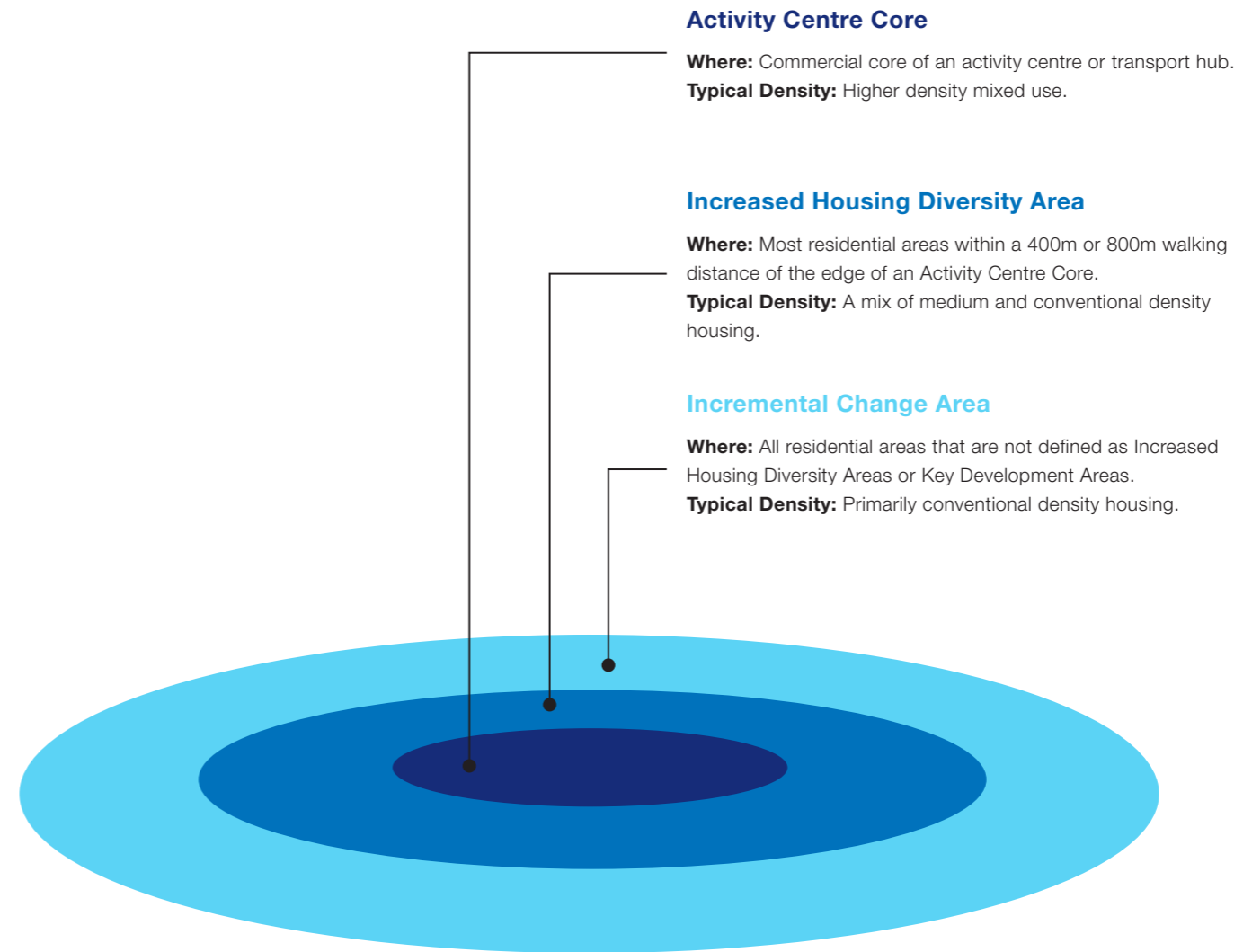


4.2 Increased Housing Diversity Areas

Increased Housing Diversity Areas are areas where a mix of high, medium and conventional density housing will be encouraged, with the density of development being highest within the commercial core of the area and lower at the edge of the area.

This general concept is depicted in Figure 10.

Figure 10
Housing Densities Around Activity Centres



4.2.1 Identification of Increased Housing Diversity Areas

In general, Increased Housing Diversity Areas have been defined around regional, sub-regional, community, neighbourhood and town level activity centres in the municipality, as defined by the City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy (2006).

Increased Housing Diversity Areas have also been defined around the North Geelong, South Geelong and Marshall railway stations. These stations are not attached to existing activity centres, however they are significant commuter stations which have the potential to become more intensive hubs of activity.

The nomination of respective activity centres and transport hubs as the core of an Increased Housing Diversity Area has had regard to the following criteria:

- The need to provide a spatially balanced distribution of Increased Housing Diversity Areas;
- The need to ensure that the demand for medium and high density housing in the municipality can be met;
- The need to provide appropriate choice and diversity in the location of Increased Housing Diversity Areas;
- The need to strike an appropriate balance between Increased Housing Diversity Areas and Incremental Change Areas, particularly in Geelong's older suburbs where the preservation of neighbourhood character is particularly important to the community; and
- The need to respond to local area conditions and circumstances.

Figure 11 and Table 5 detail the designated Increased Housing Diversity Areas. An evaluation of each activity centre in the City's retail hierarchy against the criteria for defining an IHDA is provided as Appendix 3 – Identification of Increased Housing Diversity Areas.



Table 5

Centre/ Transport Hub		Baseline Walkable Catchment Adopted
No.	Sub-regional Centres	
1	Belmont – High Street	400 metres
2	Corio Village Shopping Centre	800 metres
3	Town and Country Shopping World	800 metres
	Community Centres	
4	Geelong West – Pakington Street	400 metres
	Neighbourhood Centres	
5	Bell Park – Separation Street	400 metres
6	Bell Post Shopping Centre	“
7	Bellarine Village Shopping Centre ⁷	“
8	Geelong East – Ormond Road	“
9	Highton Shopping Centre	“
10	Leopold	“
11	Newcomb Central ⁷	“
12	Ocean Grove Market Place	“
	Town Centres	
13	Barwon Heads	“
14	Drysdale	“
15	Lara ⁸	“
16	Ocean Grove	“
17	Portarlington	“
18	St. Leonards	“
	Railway Stations	
19	Geelong Station ⁶	“
20	Lara Station ⁸	“
21	Marshall Station	“
22	North Geelong Station	“
23	South Geelong Station	“

4.2.2 Defining the Boundaries of Increased Housing Diversity Areas

The base methodology for defining the boundary of each IHDA was to determine the walkable catchment of the activity centre or train station that forms the core of the respective area.

The extent of the walkable catchment for each centre (known as a ‘ped-shed’) is based on the premise that the majority of people will walk 400m (or 5 minutes) to a community level or lower order activity centre or train station, and 800m (10 minutes) to a sub-regional level activity centre.

The boundary of each IHDA was then adjusted to:

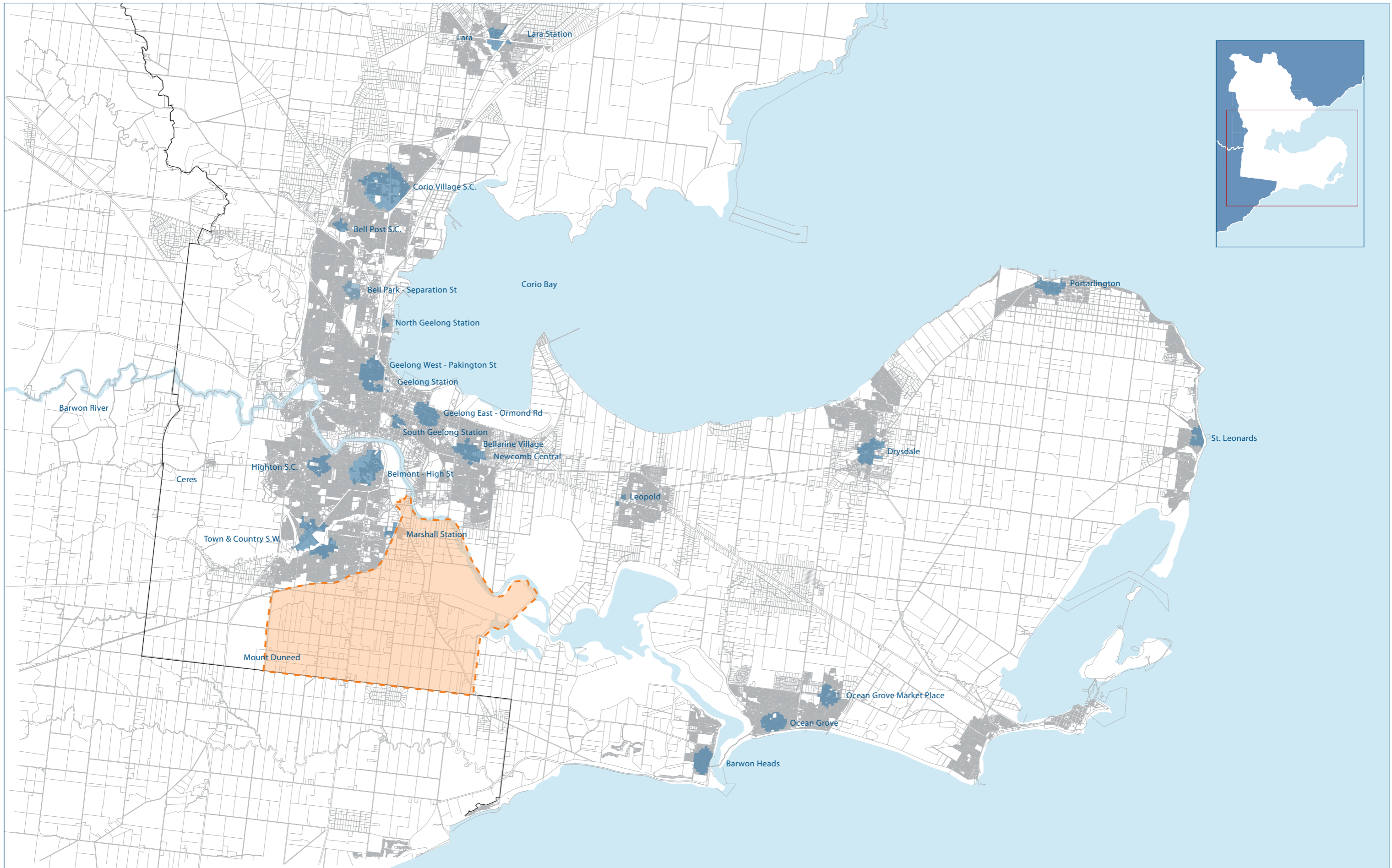
- Meet the criteria for defining Increased Housing Diversity Areas (noted above);
- Minimise interfaces with low amenity areas, such as industrial areas or major roads;
- Take advantage of access opportunities provided by existing or proposed pedestrian links;
- Acknowledge major barriers to movement, such as topographical constraints or poor accessibility;
- Acknowledge changes in land use zone (i.e. exclude non-residential areas); and
- Acknowledge major development constraints, such as inundation and flooding.

In some instances, the coverage of an Increased Housing Diversity Area has also been extended to connect with nearby railway stations that form the core of a designated Increased Housing Diversity Area (i.e. Geelong and Lara).

Full details of where the boundaries of the Increased Housing Diversity Areas have been amended to reflect site conditions are provided in Appendix 7 – Increased Housing Diversity Areas Establishment.

⁷ Bellarine Village S.C. and Newcomb Central have been consolidated into one Increased Housing Diversity Area due to their ‘ped sheds’ merging.

⁸ Lara and Lara Station have been consolidated into one Increased Housing Diversity Area due to their ‘ped sheds’ merging.



4.2.3 Increased Housing Diversity Area Development Guidelines

Within all increased Housing Diversity Areas, Council will:

- Encourage a mix of high, medium and conventional density housing;
- Direct high density development to sites immediately within and adjoining the commercial core of the area;
- Encourage the development of a mix of uses at the commercial core of the area, including residential accommodation above ground floor retailing and commercial uses;
- Ensure that development at the edges of Increased Housing Diversity Areas is sensitive to the neighbourhood character of any adjoining Incremental Change Areas;
- Acknowledge that the residential character of the area will adapt and evolve over time as housing needs and demands change; and
- Utilise the guidelines detailed in this strategy as a basis for decision making for new development, along with the objectives of ResCode and the Greater Geelong Neighbourhood Character Precinct Brochures – 2001, as well as the directions of any other relevant policy or planning provision which might apply to an area or individual site.



4.2.4 Increased Housing Diversity Area Design Guidelines

In all circumstances development in Increased Housing Diversity Areas should incorporate high quality architecture and innovative design solutions.

In all circumstances, the objectives to be applied are:

- To promote built form that does not compromise the amenity of adjacent residential land uses and minimises the negative impacts of:
 - » Overlooking;
 - » Overshadowing;
 - » Noise; and
 - » Visual bulk.
- To promote landscape that does not compromise the amenity of residential land uses and minimises the negative impacts of:
 - » Overlooking; and
 - » Poor visual amenity.
- To protect and enhance the amenity of the public realm.

In order to meet these objectives, the following guidelines are to be adopted:

- Built form must not compromise the amenity of adjacent residential land uses and must minimise the impacts of overlooking, overshadowing, noise and visual bulk, having particular regard to the standards contained within Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme and the Activity Centre Design Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development (DSE 2004);
- Building design must be well articulated and mitigate overlooking, overshadowing, and noise impacts, and must respond appropriately to the public realm. Building Design is to have particular regard to the Activity Centre Design Guidelines and Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development (DSE 2004) and Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme; and
- Where medium or higher density housing is proposed, provide increased landscaping and vegetation planting, particularly along front setbacks and in car parking and common areas, should be provided to offset the loss of private open space and planting opportunities in private gardens.

4.2.5 Increased Housing Diversity in Urban Renewal Areas

New housing development and increased housing diversity can play an important role in the renewal of urban areas, particularly areas where there are concentrations of older public housing stock and/or socio economic disadvantage.

In particular, the re-development of older public housing stock can bring a renewed mix of public and private dwellings to an area, increase social diversity, improve the quality of the living environment for individual households and significantly improve the amenity of an area and its integration with surrounding suburbs.

The Housing Diversity Strategy does not nominate specific urban renewal areas and designate these as Increased Housing Diversity Areas. This is because it is considered important to retain a consistent approach, whereby a balanced distribution of Increased Housing Diversity Areas and Incremental Change areas is achieved in all parts of the City. Furthermore, most areas in the City where there are concentrations of public housing stock are already within the defined Increased Housing Diversity Area network.

Council explicitly supports the redevelopment of existing public housing dwellings, in all parts of the municipality, where this fulfils an urban renewal objective. The appropriateness of the density and type of housing achieved as part of such redevelopment will be assessed on a case by case basis, according to Council's standard development assessment processes.



4.2.6 The Role of Other Planning Provisions in Increased Housing Diversity Areas

The assessment of development within all Increased Housing Diversity Areas will continue to have regard for all of the relevant planning scheme provisions that may apply to a particular area or site.

Some planning provisions that affect land in an Increased Housing Diversity Area may have the effect of constraining the design and capacity of housing development and thus the rate of urban change in that area.

For example, where a Heritage Overlay is prevalent in an Increased Housing Diversity Area, a planning signal is being sent to all members of the community that, a) this area is strategically suited to the development of greater housing diversity and, b) this area also contains dwellings of heritage significance. These elements will need to be appropriately balanced in all land use and development decisions.

There are many ways in which good design can achieve an increase in housing diversity whilst also respecting other built form elements. These will be explored fully as part of an investigation into housing design outcomes in the city of Greater Geelong (see section 1.2).

By retaining the Increased Housing Diversity Area designation in areas that may be constrained, maximum opportunity for creative development solutions are provided.

4.3 Incremental Change Areas

Incremental Change Areas are residential areas where the majority of new development will be in keeping with Geelong's traditional suburban character.

4.3.1 Identification of Incremental Change Areas

Incremental Change Areas are all residential areas outside the designated Increased Housing Diversity Areas and Key Development Areas.

They are general areas of suburban housing where a modest, incremental change in housing form is expected. The preferred type of housing development in Incremental Change Areas is:

- Extensions to existing houses;
- New single dwellings;
- Dual occupancy developments; and
- Low scale medium density developments that are responsive to the existing or preferred character of the area.

4.3.2 Incremental Change Area Development Guidelines

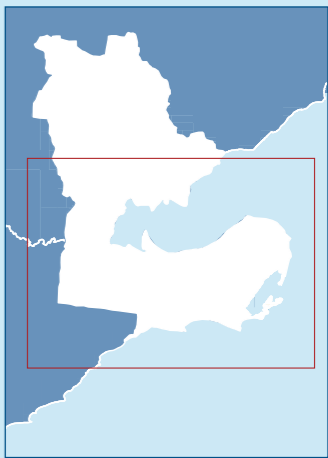
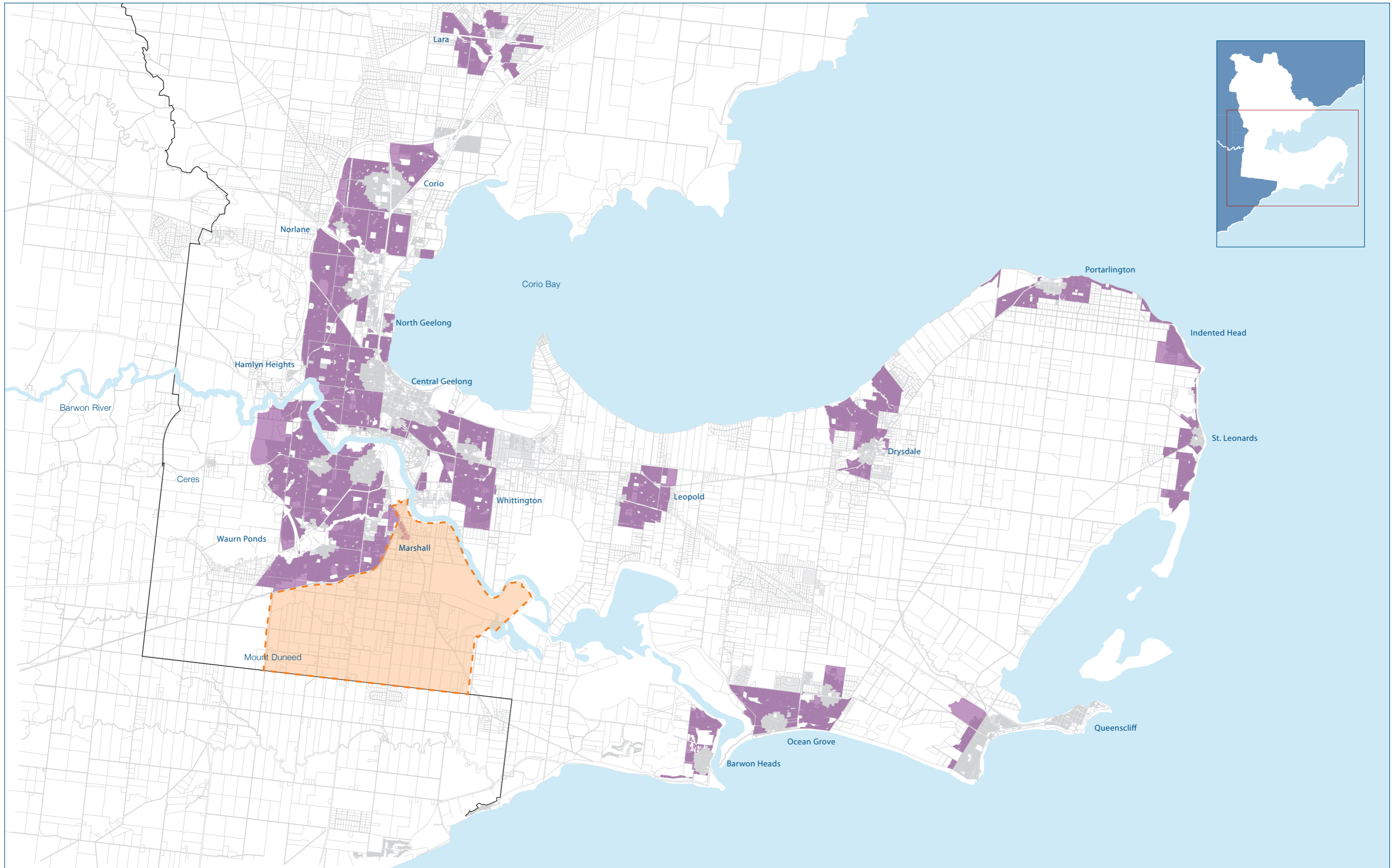
Within all Incremental Change Areas, Council will:

- Encourage the retention and renovation of existing dwellings that front the street and contribute positively to surrounding neighbourhood character;
- Encourage extensions to existing houses, new single dwellings and the development of additional dwellings to the rear of existing buildings;
- Encourage low scale medium density housing development that is responsive to surrounding neighbourhood character to locate:
 - » Within a 400 metre walking distance of the following activity centres:
 - Shannon Avenue in Manifold Heights,
 - Aberdeen Street and Pakington Street in Newtown,
 - Dorothy Street and Ash Road in Leopold;
 - Vines Road in Hamlyn Heights;
 - » On sites that are within 200 metres of active parkland and/or places of tertiary education; and/or
 - » On sites that accommodate existing public or social housing that requires urban renewal.

Ensure that all new residential development respects the preferred neighbourhood character of the area, having regard to:

- » The neighbourhood character descriptions of the Greater Geelong Residential Character Guidelines, 2001;
- » Specific site descriptions and design responses prepared as part of the application for a planning permit; and
- » The directions of the General Planning Practice Note: Understanding Neighbourhood Character, Department of Infrastructure, 2001.





4.3.3 Incremental Change Areas Design Guidelines

As discussed previously, much of Geelong provides what is often described as a garden suburb setting. Suburban areas in the municipality generally comprise single detached dwellings on lots of between 650 and 800 sqm, with generous side and rear setbacks and large backyards. A green, low density setting is the dominant feature of the City's established residential areas.

The 2001 Residential Character Study provides a detailed explanation of the elements of residential character in Geelong. Based on consultation undertaken as part of the Residential Character Study, Table 6 below outlines the most commonly 'preferred' and 'non-preferred' aspects of residential character in Geelong.

In terms of the things people most 'like' and 'dislike' about residential character in Geelong, the Residential Character Study concludes:

"When reviewing those most commonly listed negative aspects of Greater Geelong, poor quality, high-density developments and removal of vegetation were the main concerns. These issues were seen to be insensitive to local character and the local environments, intrusive upon streetscapes and the properties surrounding them, and an eyesore spoiling views from near and far. Poorly designed development and clearing of vegetation were seen to threaten the very fabric that gives the Geelong and Bellarine regions their special characteristics and atmosphere. There is also a strong community desire to maintain and strengthen the older architectural styles in suburban Geelong, the rural, spacious feelings of many townships and the valued coastal character of the remaining townships".

- City of Greater Geelong Residential Character Study (2001), Background Report, p27.

Three key local variations to the standard Victorian residential development provisions (i.e. ResCode) are considered necessary to ensure that new residential development in Incremental Change Areas is respectful of and responsive to the City's established residential character – particularly those aspects which are most valued and representative of what makes Geelong unique.

The ResCode standards to be varied are:

- The coverage of buildings on a lot;
- The provision of private open space within developments; and
- The permissible height of buildings without a planning permit.

The coverage of buildings on a lot

When considering the development of more than one dwelling on a lot, the amount of the lot that is covered by buildings is a reasonable indicator of the development intensity on the lot, including the number of dwellings and/or their size.

The Housing Diversity Strategy seeks marginally less intensive development in Incremental Change Areas when compared to development in Increased Housing Diversity Areas or Key Development Areas (densities will be significantly higher in Key Development Areas).

On this basis, it is appropriate to adopt different site coverage standards for the Incremental Change Areas, relative to the standards adopted for Key Development Areas and Incremental Change Areas.

A maximum permissible site coverage of 50% (reduced from the ResCode Standard of 60%) is therefore proposed for all Incremental Change Areas.

Site coverage of less than 50% is common throughout most of the Geelong's established residential areas and this revision will therefore assist in procuring development that is responsive to neighbourhood character, particularly in terms of retaining a well vegetated, garden suburban feel⁹.

⁹ Local variations to the site coverage provisions of ResCode have also been supported by the Minister for Planning, based on recognition of the need to preserve the prevailing neighbourhood character of areas identified for incremental housing change within a municipality. Support for this approach is further reflected in the findings of the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) review of the Good Design Guide and VicCode 1, in relation to the impact of medium density housing on neighbourhood character.

The provision of private open space

The ResCode private open space standard essentially requires the provision of 40sqm of private open space, including a single area of 25sqm with a minimum dimension of 3m.

Through consultation it was generally considered that in areas designated for Incremental Change, development should provide an area of private open space that is more in keeping with the established garden setting Geelong's suburban areas and townships. In particular, it is considered that:

- Increased private open space provision will recognise the desire of the community to conserve the family oriented, backyard garden character of much of the municipality, particularly the suburban areas developed in the 20th century and today;
- The provision of only 40m2 of private open space for larger, family size dwellings has often created a sense of over development;
- Increased private open space provision enables the space to function better as an outdoor living area, whilst also providing opportunities for vegetation planting, particularly where it is necessary to screen the visual impact of buildings on adjoining properties;
- Differentiation between open space requirements in Incremental Change Areas and Increased Housing Diversity Areas / Key Development Areas is required to generate actual differences in development outcomes in the two areas, apart from the differences sought through policy statements alone; and
- A sliding scale for open space provision would recognise the different open space requirements of different households, particularly the notion that a larger dwelling is likely to accommodate a family with greater open space needs.

Table 6
Most commonly preferred and non-preferred aspects of residential character in Geelong

	Most commonly preferred aspects	Most commonly non-preferred aspects
Urban Geelong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The older styles of architecture; • Spacious setbacks and well maintained gardens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, inappropriately designed dwellings built at high densities; • Interface issues such as overlooking, overshadowing and overhearing; • Poor landscaping and removal of vegetation; • Pedestrian unfriendly streets.
Bellarine Peninsula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The country or coastal environment; • Indigenous vegetation; • Informal street treatments; • Low scaled buildings with spacious setbacks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, inappropriately designed dwellings built at high densities; • Removal of indigenous vegetation; • Dwellings blocking views along the coastline.

The revisions to site coverage and open space requirements are not intended to prevent Incremental Change Areas from accommodating multi-unit development. that is responsive to the directions of the Housing Diversity Strategy.

Rather, the revisions aim to ensure that any such development is less intensive than in Increased Housing diversity Areas, and significantly less intensive than in Key Development Areas.

As the majority of the allotments in Incremental Change Areas are large, it will be possible to develop low scale medium density housing that provides open space and vegetation generally in keeping with surrounding residential character.

Conversely, if the generally large lots in Incremental Change Areas were developed according to the intensity envisaged for Increased Housing diversity Areas, the resulting impact on neighbourhood character would be much more significant and not in keeping with the intent of the Housing Diversity Strategy.

This concept is perhaps best thought of as a sliding scale, whereby one lot which contains one existing dwelling and a large amount of open space might be reasonably developed to contain two or three dwellings in a manner that is still responsive to the surrounding 'garden setting' neighbourhood character, particularly through the provision of similar sized front setbacks, private garden areas and vegetation.

However, if the same lot were developed to contain four or five dwellings, the overall intensity of the built form would render the development much less likely to be in keeping with the preferred character of the area.

Figure 13 demonstrates the general result of the proposed revisions to site coverage and private open space on a smaller allotment that, under the current ResCode standards, has the potential to be developed more intensively than is preferred for Incremental Change Areas.

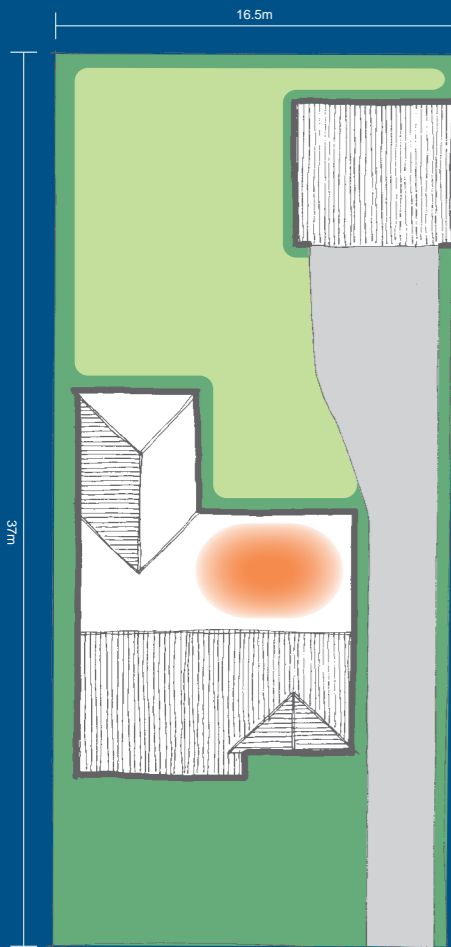
Figure 13

COMPARISON OF BUILT FORM OUTCOMES

Incremental Change Areas

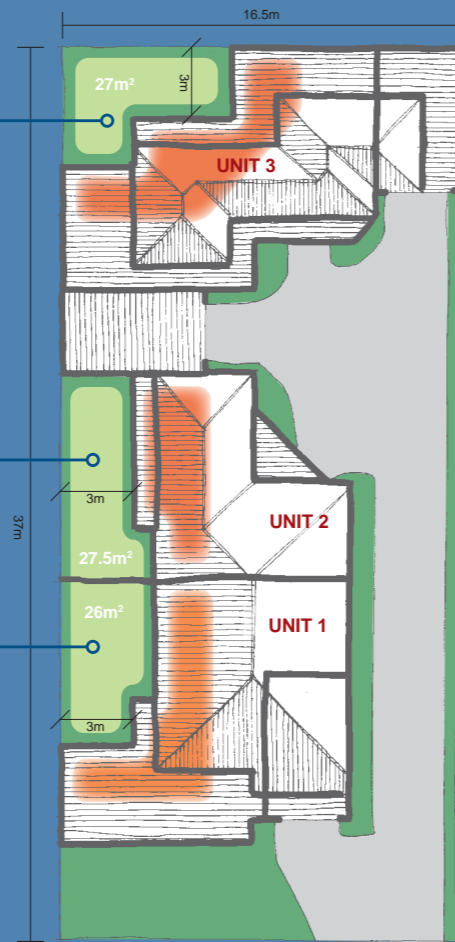
Case study lot is 610.5m² in size

Single Detached Dwelling



- Access Way
- Open Space
- Secluded Open Space
- Living Room

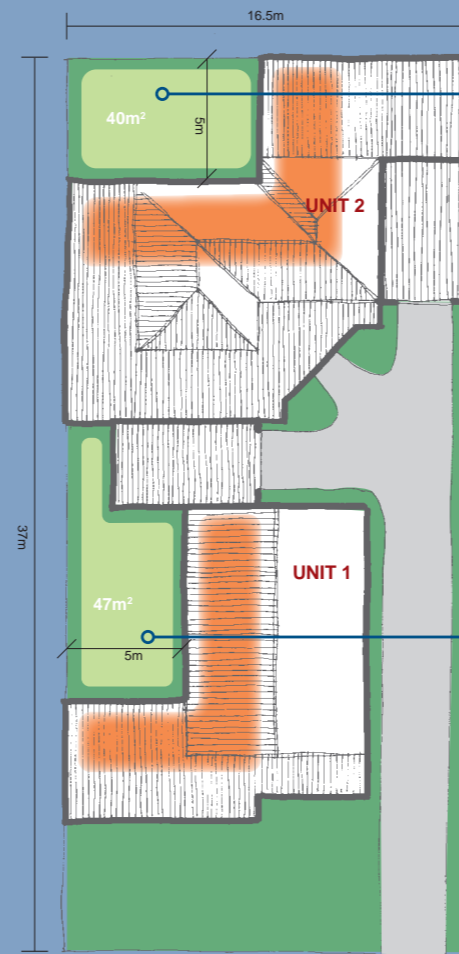
Typical Medium Density Housing Proposal Under Current Policies



Private open space consisting of an area of 40m² of the lot.

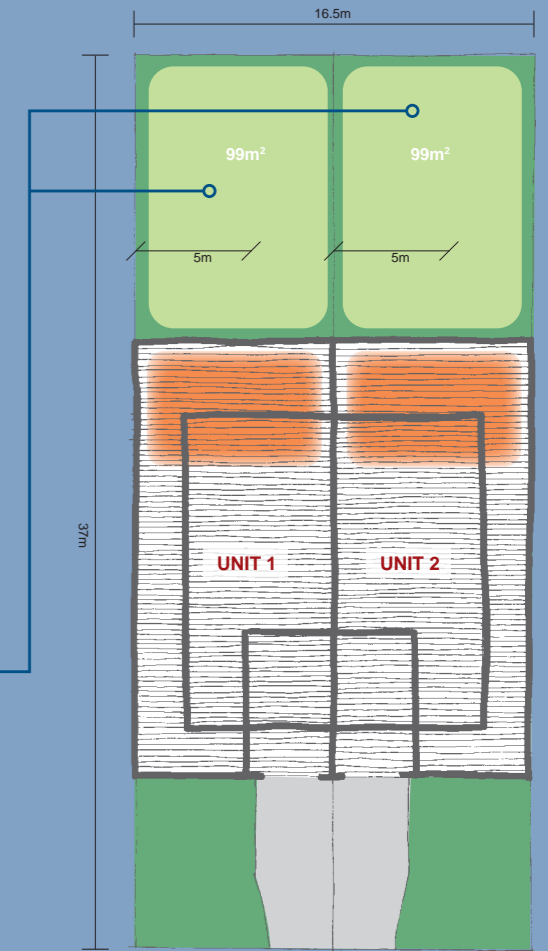
At least one part of private open space to consist of secluded private open space with a minimum area of 25m² and a minimum dimension of 3 metres at the side or rear of the dwelling with convenient access from the living room.

Medium Density Housing Outcomes Under Proposed New Policies



Private open space consisting of an area of 80m² or 20% of the area of the lot, whichever is lesser, but no less than 60m².

At least one part of private open space should consist of secluded private open space with a minimum area of 40m² and a minimum dimension of 5 metres at the side or rear of the dwelling with convenient access from a living room.



New policies mean more open space and reduced densities in incremental change areas.

Building Height

The current provisions of Design and Development Overlay (Schedule 14) (DDO14) require a planning permit to be sought for the construction of a dwelling in excess of 7.5 metres in height in all residential areas in the City of Greater Geelong. Details on the history and purpose of DDO14 are provided as Appendix 5 to the Housing Diversity Strategy.

The retention of the Design and Development Overlay (Schedule 14) in Incremental Change Areas is considered important to retaining the community's preference for a lower scale building form in these areas, and to retain the opportunity for third party appeal rights in the event that a single dwelling in excess of 7.5 metres is proposed.

This is particularly important in coastal areas and areas with steep topography, where the height of many dwellings has been driven by the historical presence of the Overlay and the community's involvement in the development assessment process for single dwellings has assisted Council in ensuring that new development provides for the reasonable sharing of views.

Building Design

In all circumstances development should incorporate high quality architecture and innovative design solutions.

In all circumstances, the development objectives to be applied are:

- To promote built form that does not compromise the amenity of adjacent residential land uses and minimises the negative impacts of:
 - » Overlooking;
 - » Overshadowing;
 - » Noise; and
 - » Visual bulk.
- To promote landscape that does not compromise the amenity of residential land uses and minimises the negative impacts of:
 - » Overlooking; and
 - » Poor visual amenity.
- To protect and enhance public realm amenity.

In order to meet these objectives, the following guidelines are to be adopted:

- Built form must not compromise the amenity of adjacent residential land uses and minimise the impacts of overlooking, overshadowing, noise and visual bulk – refer to standards contained within Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme;
- Building design must be well articulated and mitigate overlooking, overshadowing and noise impacts, and must respond appropriately to the public realm. Refer to Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme; and
- Where medium or higher density housing is proposed, provide increased landscaping and vegetation planting, particularly along front setbacks and in car parking and common areas, to offset the loss of private open space and planting opportunities in private gardens.



5.0 Housing Capacity

As noted in section 3.1 of the Housing Diversity Strategy, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) population and housing projections indicate that between 2001 and 2031, approximately 41,000 additional dwellings will need to be accommodated within the City of Greater Geelong.

More detailed projections of housing demand suggest that, out of the total number of new dwellings in the City to 2031, there is likely to be a need for between 6300 and 9500 medium to higher density dwellings.

Figure 14 combines the identified Key Development Areas, Increased Housing Diversity Areas and Incremental Change Areas in the Housing Diversity Strategy to define the City of Greater Geelong Housing Capacity Map.

The Housing Capacity Map establishes the City's capacity to accommodate existing and future housing needs in a balanced, sustainable way which recognises the housing needs of different people, as well as the broader needs of the environment.

Importantly the Housing Capacity Map ensures that the three aims of the Housing Diversity Strategy are met:

- Provide certainty to the community as to where different housing types and densities will be supported or discouraged by Council;
- Provide for the development of a range of housing types and densities in the municipality and;
- Provide for the development of a sustainable overall urban structure in the City of Greater Geelong. To better quantify the ability of the Housing Capacity Map to meet the City's future housing needs, Council has undertaken a broad analysis of the capacity of the defined Key Development Areas and Increased Housing Diversity Areas to accommodate the expected demand for medium and higher density housing in the City. Of course, a proportion of the demand for lower scale medium density housing, particularly dual occupancy development, will also be accommodated in Incremental Change Areas.



For the sake of conservatism however, the following have been omitted from the capacity analysis:

- All Incremental Change Areas;
- All sites that are covered by a Heritage Overlay, regardless of where they are located;
- The west Fyans Key Development Area, due to difficulties predicting the level of residential development achievable without first completing a Structure Plan for the area; and
- The potential for residential development in the commercial core of activity centres, as this type of development is largely untested in Geelong and difficult to predict with any certainty.

There are a small number of allotments within the Belmont and Waurm Ponds Increased Housing Diversity Areas which are known to be subject to single dwelling covenants. It is assumed that the omissions outlined above more than offset this capacity constraint.

Based on the development yield assumptions, Table 7 provides the results of the capacity analysis.

It is important to note that whilst development outcomes in Key Development Areas are relatively straight forward to project, the task is much more complex in Increased Housing Diversity Areas.

In particular, it is not possible to predict with any accuracy the number of lots in an Increased Housing Diversity Area which might become the subject of multi-unit development, or the extent to which higher density housing might be developed in the commercial core of activity centres, for example.

Hypothetically, if all Key Development Areas and only one third of the residential lots in Increased Housing Diversity Areas were developed to 2031 (according to the development assumptions contained in the capacity analysis), collectively the areas would have the capacity to accommodate around 13,000 medium or higher density housing units. Should this occur, Key Development Areas and Increased Housing Diversity Areas would have accommodated around 32% of all new dwelling starts in the City of Greater Geelong to 2031. This level of urban consolidation is significantly above State Government targets and is a reasonable aspirational goal for the City of Greater Geelong.

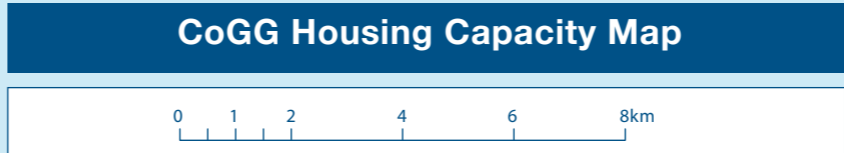
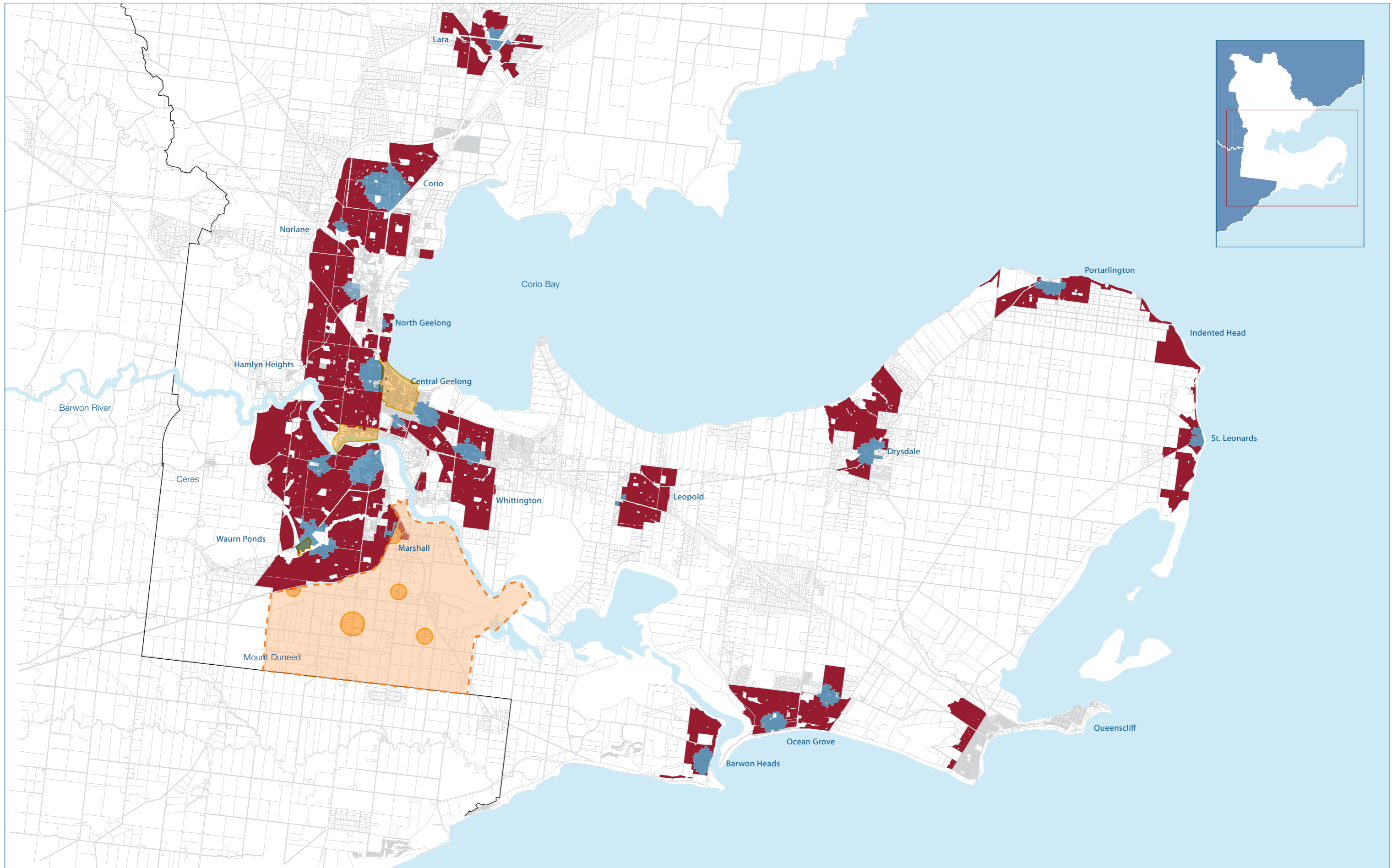
In summary:

The capacity analysis clearly indicates that the capacity of the designated Increased Housing Diversity Areas and Key Development Areas significantly outstrips the expected long term demand for medium and high density housing in the City, without accounting for the capacity of Incremental Change Areas to absorb lower scale multi-unit development, the potential for development within the commercial core of established activity centres, or the potential for innovative approaches to increased housing diversity in heritage areas.

Whilst the capacity analysis is limited to conservative ‘best estimates’ of likely future development activity, it demonstrates that medium and higher density housing development can be directed to strategically beneficial areas to meet the needs of different people and the environment, without constraining the supply of or demand for such development.

Table 7 – Results of Conservative Housing Capacity Analysis

Area	Estimated Capacity (Medium and higher density housing units)
Key Development Areas	9000
Increased Housing Diversity Areas	12000
Total Capacity	21,000
Areas omitted from capacity analysis	All Incremental Change Areas; All sites subject to a Heritage Overlay; The West Fyans Key Development Area; The commercial core of all activity centres.
Estimated demand for medium and higher density housing, 2006 - 2031	6300 – 9500 units



- Increased Housing Diversity Areas
- Incremental Change Areas
- Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area
- Key Development Areas

6.0 Supporting the Housing Diversity Strategy

This section of the strategy discusses the range of supplementary initiatives that are required to support future housing development in Geelong, as guided by the Housing Diversity Strategy.

6.1 Providing Urban Infrastructure

The development of additional housing within established urban areas will place additional demands on existing infrastructure and services.

Council is committed to ensuring that this demand is met via appropriate infrastructure augmentation, including upgrades to roads, drainage, pedestrian and cycling networks, car parking and open space, as well as the provision of appropriate community facilities and services, for example.

It is not possible for the Housing Diversity Strategy to establish the infrastructure needs of different places in detail. Rather, this role is fulfilled by Council's capital works planning processes, which are informed by detailed local area needs analyses. The development of local Structure Plans is also a key part of the process of identifying the specific, longer term infrastructure requirements of particular places with reference to forecast development activity and growth patterns.

In preparing Structure Plans and capital works plans for particular places, Council will have specific regard to the directions of the Housing Diversity Strategy, in particular the influence of the strategy on future levels of housing development and activity in different areas.



6.1.1 Gathering Equitable Development Contributions

The requirement for equitable development contributions to new infrastructure is another key part of Council's drive to ensure that the infrastructure needs of the existing and future community can be appropriately met.

Development Contributions Plans (DCPs) are being prepared for all new urban growth areas (UGAs) in the municipality, beginning with the Armstrong Creek and Jetty Road (Drysdale Clifton Springs) UGAs respectively.

Over the longer term it is Council policy to investigate the potential for applying DCPs to the established parts of Geelong – particularly areas where significantly increased levels of development are anticipated.

As part of the implementation of the 2001 Study of Open Space Networks, the minimum required contribution to open space for all new residential development in the City is proposed to be increased from 5% of site area to 10%, or the payment of equivalent cash-in-lieu.

This lift in development contributions for open space will assist Council in providing new open space areas and/or improving the quality of and accessibility to existing open space areas throughout the City.



6.1.2 Car Parking

For as long as populations grow and the number of cars on our streets increases, the provision of adequate car parking will remain a perennial issue, particularly in areas that are not well serviced by public transport infrastructure.

By focussing a proportion of new development around places of activity, the Housing Diversity Strategy provides more people the opportunity to comfortably walk or cycle to their daily needs, resulting in less travel in cars, reduced pollution, healthier communities and ultimately reduced car parking demand.

Whilst it cannot be assumed that individuals who live in close proximity to their daily needs will suddenly start leaving their cars at home, the development of an urban structure which reduces the average length of private vehicle trips and promotes other transport modes to the fullest extent possible is critical to changing habits and reducing the City's overall impact on the environment. Reduced private vehicle trips – even reduced trip distances – also generate significant car operating and travel time savings to individuals.

All new residential development in the City, regardless of where it is located, will still have to meet the car parking requirements set out in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. If new development cannot meet the Planning Scheme requirements but can demonstrate that the required level of car parking is unnecessary, Council will consider restricting the issuance of resident parking permits for the occupants of the development in question. This would preserve existing on street parking entitlements for visitors and existing residents in the respective local area.

6.2 Further Strategic Work

The following work should be undertaken to support the Housing Diversity Strategy:

Improving Housing Design

- Commence an investigation into opportunities for improving design outcomes in the City of Greater Geelong, focussing particularly on medium and higher density housing. This may involve the introduction of initiatives like design awards, design evaluation panels, best practice demonstration projects and the use of particular planning controls like Design and Development Overlays in specific areas, for example.

Protecting Significant Environments and Landscapes

- Investigate the application of a Significant Landscape or Environmental Significance Overlay on areas along the Barwon River corridor and Barrabool Hills escarpment, to appropriately recognise the local landscape or environmental significance of these areas. Specific consideration of building height, form, site coverage and the potential need to consider view sharing should be addressed through the planning control that is applied;
- Investigate the application of a Significant Landscape or Design and Development Overlay on foreshore areas along the Corio Bay and Bass Strait. Specific consideration of building height, form, site coverage and the potential need to consider view sharing should be addressed through the planning control that is applied;

Updating the Residential Character Study

- Review the Residential Character Study to identify specific areas of distinct and continuous character where more specific provisions or policy should be applied to direct future residential development (e.g. significant landscape overlay or design and development overlay to conserve and enhance specific local features);
- Subject to the review of the Residential Character Study or other specific studies undertaken by Council, consider of the use of Significant Landscape, Design and Development or similar Overlays to protect areas of specific urban design continuity as identified in the Residential Character Study, notably specific areas of Breamlea, Barwon Heads (RCS Precinct 2, 4, 5 and 6), Ocean Grove (RCS Precinct 2, 3 and 8) and Drysdale (RCS Precinct 3).



Protecting Heritage Areas

- Conduct a Heritage Study to identify buildings of Heritage Significance in the Ashby, Newtown and Chilwell areas.
- New Structure Plans
- Investigate the need to prepare Structure Plans for activity centres in Geelong's established urban areas, particularly Packington Street, Corio Village, Waurin Ponds (Town and Country) and Belmont (High Street).
- Investigate the longer term need to prepare Structure Plans for railway stations that have been designated as the core of Increased Housing Diversity Areas but that are not currently attached to an activity centre (notably Marshall and South Geelong).

Examining Residential 2 Areas

- Review existing Residential 2 areas around Central Geelong to determine whether they may be more suited to a different zoning regime, such as Mixed Use or Business 5, to better recognise the quasi commercial use of sites along Geelong's major arterial roads (e.g. Latrobe Terrace, between Aberdeen Street and Autumn Street).
- Consider the application of the Residential 2 Zone to Key Development Areas, where appropriate.

Single Dwelling Covenants

- The provision of covenants on title is a common law matter, which may be instigated by developers without Council knowledge or consent. Should developers seek to establish single dwelling covenants on new subdivisions it is beyond the scope of the Planning Scheme to prohibit the use of such covenants. A planning permit may, however, with the consent of the other parties of that covenant, seek to remove such a covenant.
- Council will not be actively participating in the application of single dwelling covenants to lots in new subdivisions.

Greenfield Development Areas

- The Housing Diversity Strategy has not examined the specific location of residential zoning boundaries in new residential areas. This will be determined when these areas are zoned for urban purposes.

Township Zones

- The Housing Diversity Strategy does not direct the provision of housing diversity in township zone areas (e.g. Ceres and Batesford). Development assessment in these areas should be made on the individual merits of the proposal and the need to assess both servicing and character issues.

Building Envelopes on Small Lots

- Where small lots are proposed as part of residential subdivisions (300sqm – 500sqm), Council will continue to require that the plan of subdivision create building envelopes which minimise overshadowing and maintain a reasonable spacing between dwellings in adjoining lots.



6.3 Monitoring and Review

- Monitor housing capacity, supply and demand in the municipality and update the Housing Diversity Strategy every five years to ensure that existing and future housing needs are being met.
- Update the Housing Capacity Map as more detailed planning work for different areas is undertaken, particularly Structure Plans for individual places.
- Ensure that any changes to the structure of activity centres, such as the expansion of business zones, includes an assessment of the need to make complementary changes to the boundaries of associated Increased Housing Diversity Areas.



6.4 Statutory Implementation

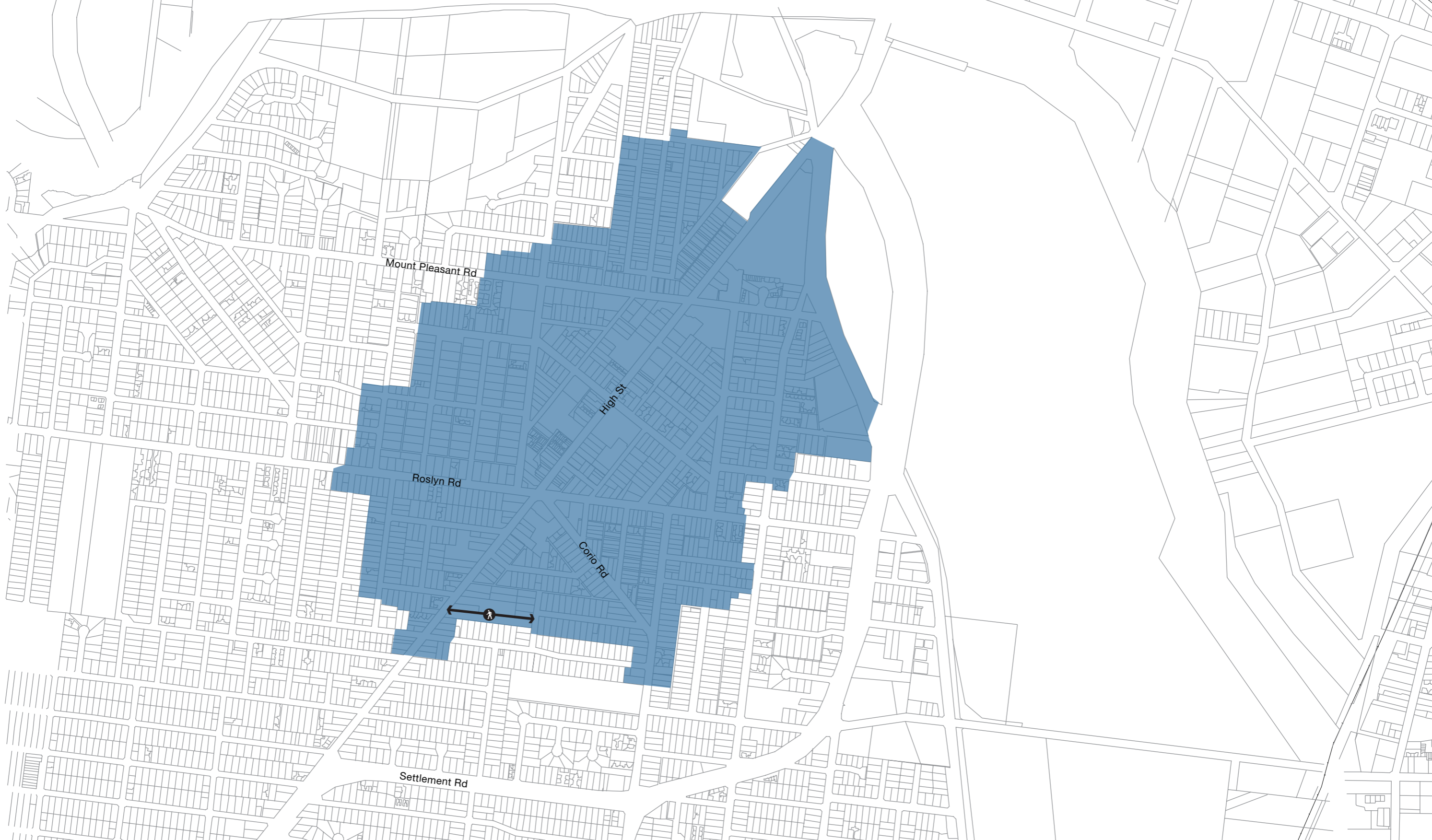
The following changes to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme are proposed to implement the Housing Diversity Strategy:

- Include the relevant strategic directions of the Housing Diversity Strategy in the City of Greater Geelong Municipal Strategic Statement;
- Remove the existing Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 14 (DDO14) from all Increased Housing Diversity Areas;
- Apply the Residential 3 Zone to all areas currently zoned Residential 1 in Incremental Change Areas;
- Amend the Schedule to the Residential 3 Zone to include:
 - » Local variation to Standard A5 and Standard B8 of ResCode to provide a maximum 50% site coverage for new development;
 - » Local variation to Standard A17 of ResCode to provide private open space consisting of an area of 80 square metres or 20 per cent of the area of the lot, whichever is the lesser, but not less than 60 square metres. At least one part of the private open space should consist of secluded private open space with a minimum area of 40 square metres and a minimum dimension of 5 metres at the side or rear of the dwelling, with convenient access from a living room.
 - » Local variation to Standard B28 of ResCode to provide private open space with a minimum area of 60 square metres, with one part of the private open space to consist of secluded private open space at the side or rear of the dwelling or residential building. The secluded private open space provided at the rear or side of a building must be a minimum area of 40 square metres, a minimum dimension of 5 metres and offer convenient access from a living room.

Appendix 1

Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas





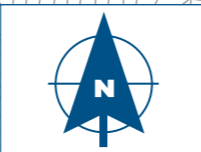
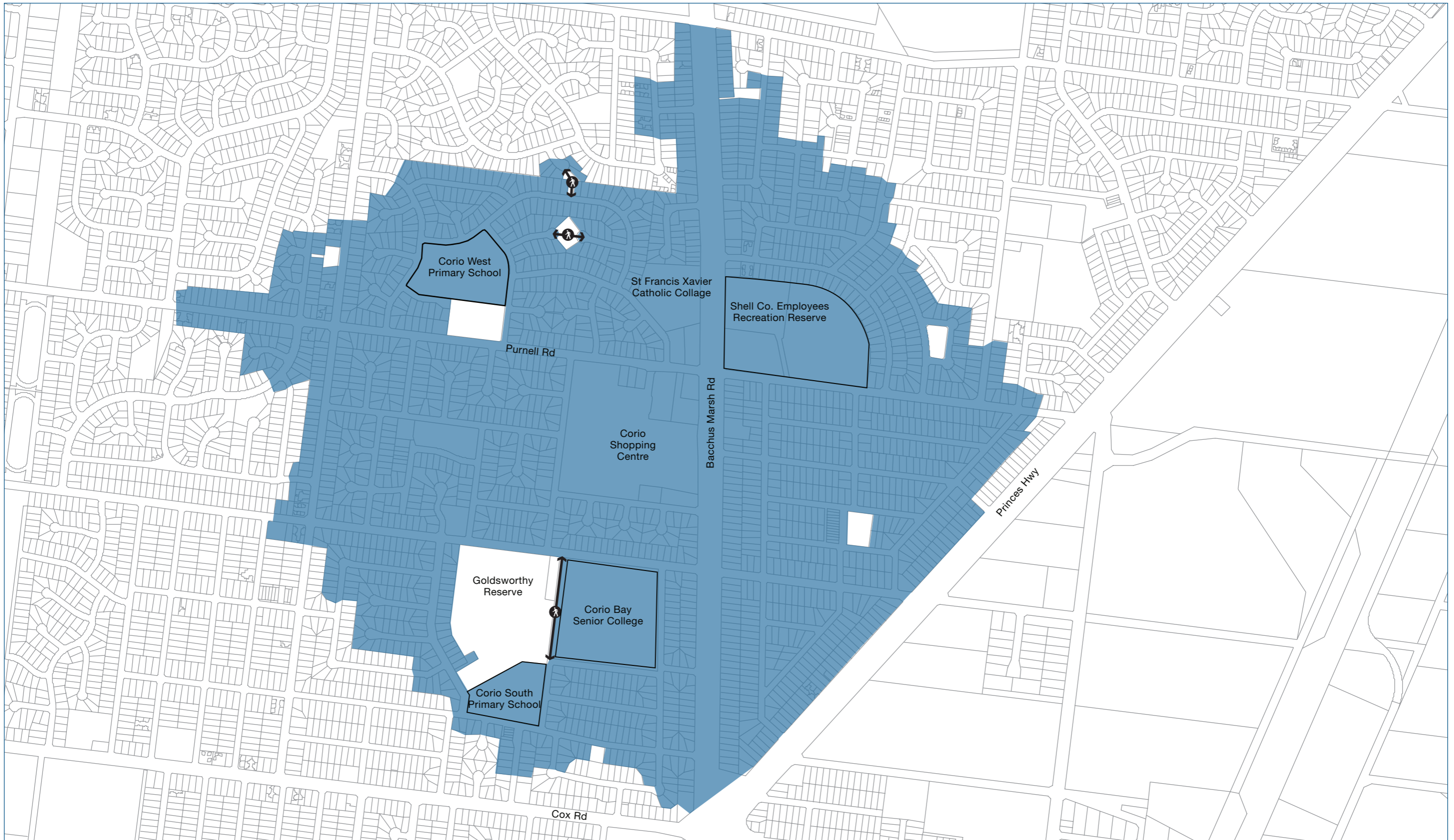
GLG007 January 2009
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area
Existing pedestrian access

Belmont - High Street

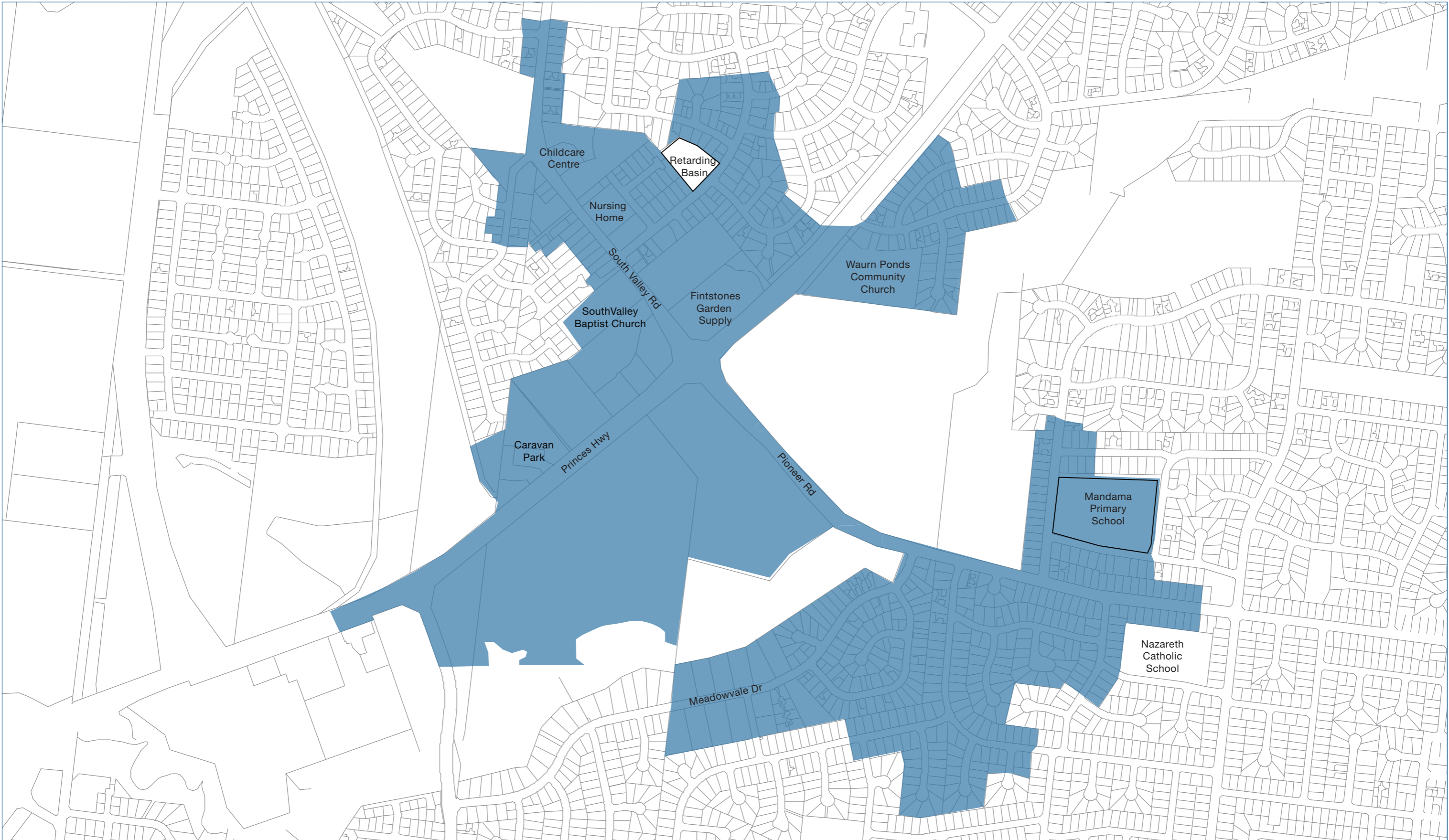




- Final area
- Existing pedestrian access

Corio Shopping Centre





GEELONG
Housing Diversity Strategy

GLG007 August 2007

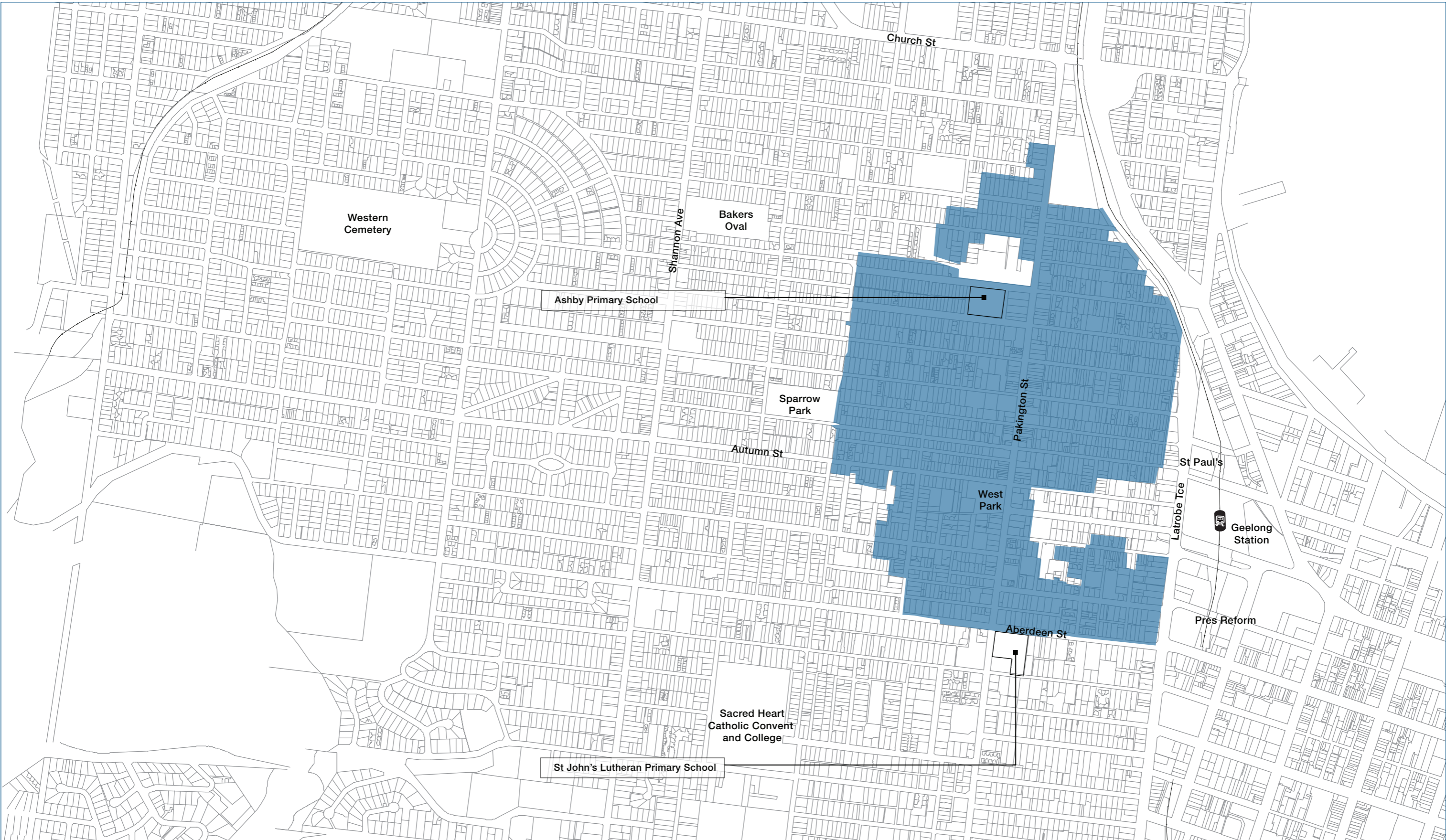
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area

Town and Country Shopping World





GLG007 August 2007

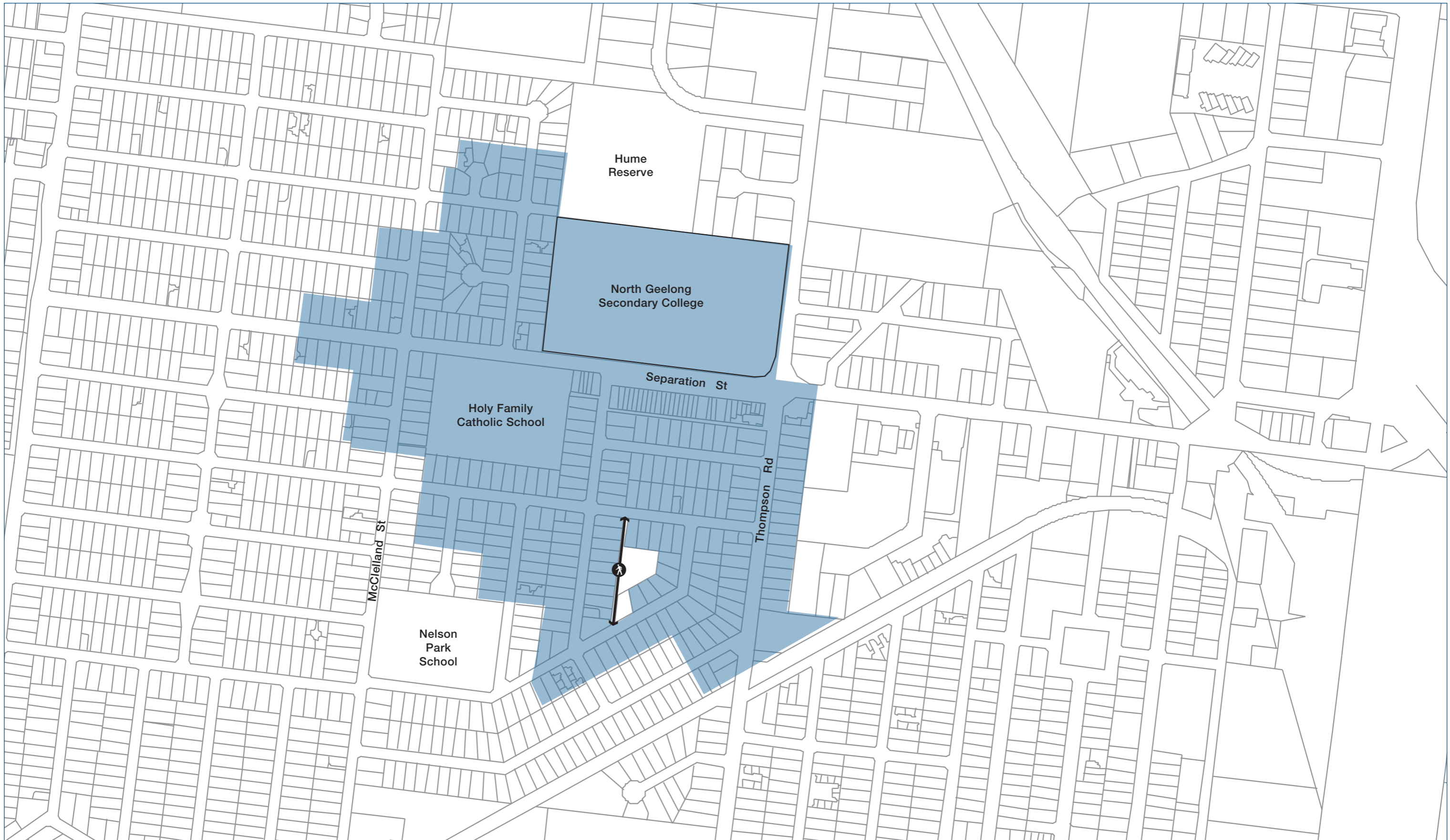
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area
Train Station

Geelong West - Pakington Street and Geelong Station





GLG007 August 2007

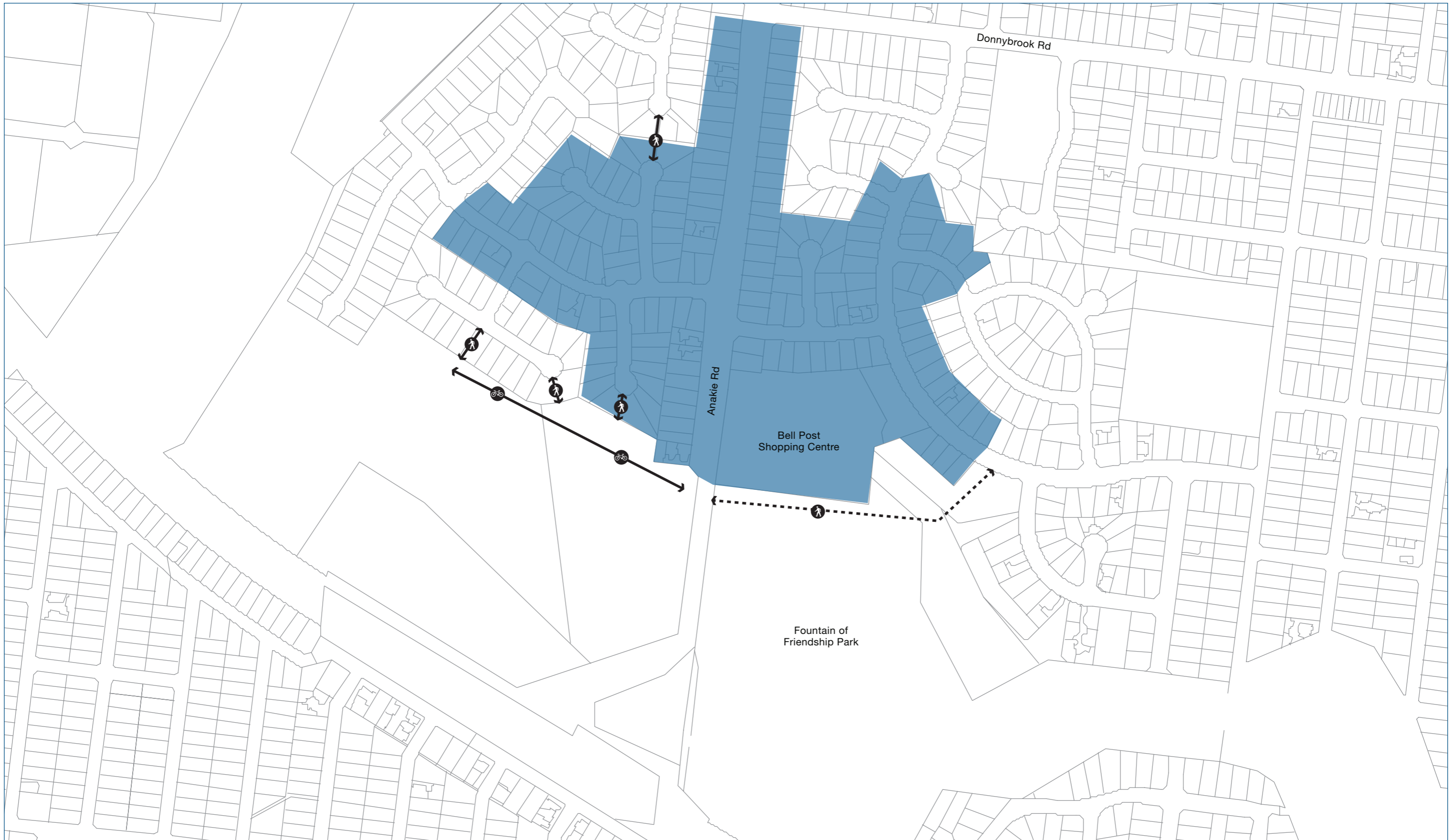
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



- Final area
- Existing pedestrian access

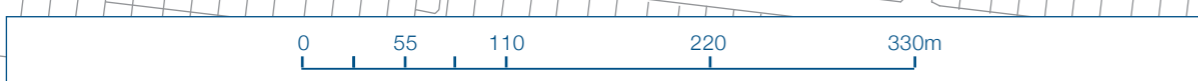
Bell Park - Separation Street

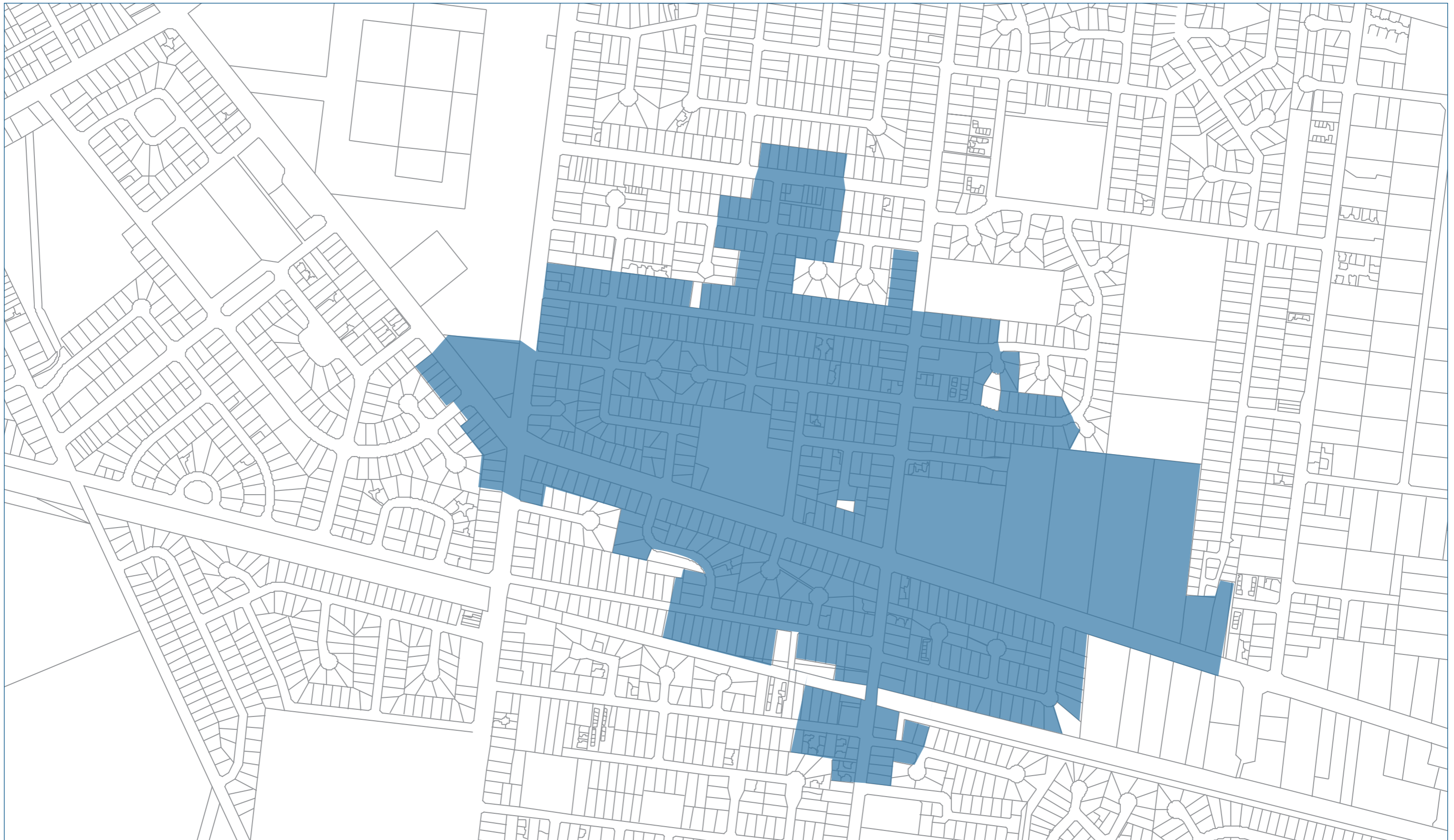




- Final area
- Existing bicycle path
- Existing pedestrian access
- Pedestrian goat trail

Bell Post Shopping Centre





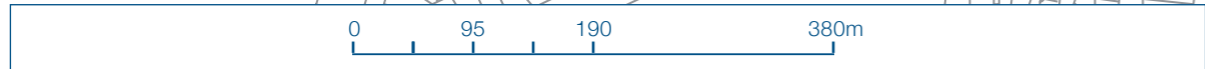
GLG007 August 2007

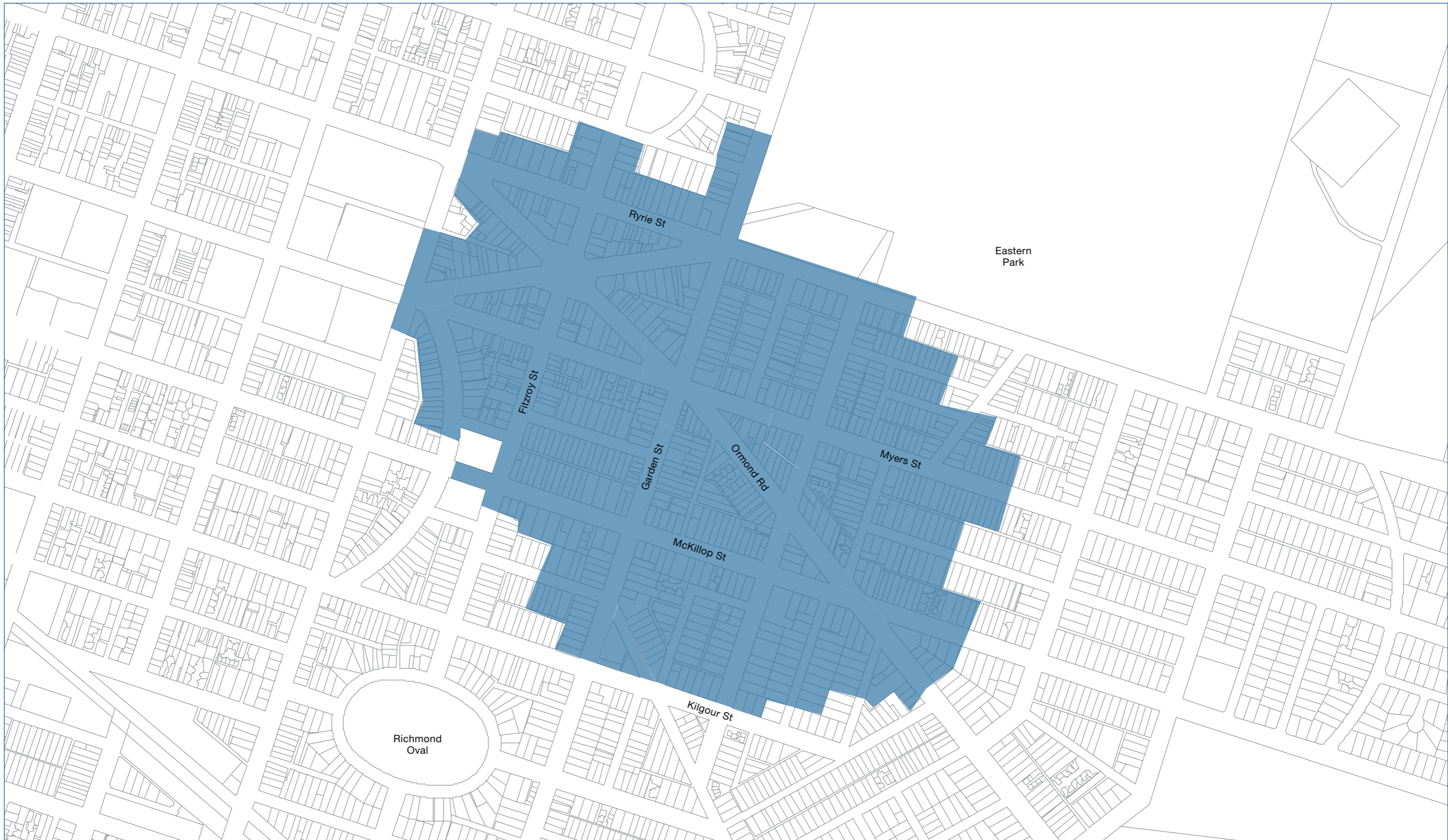
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area
Existing pedestrian access

Bellarine Village & Newcomb Central





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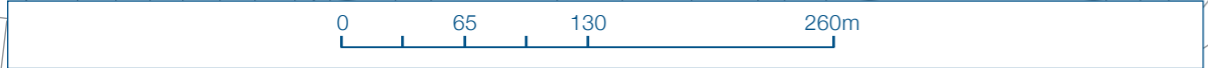
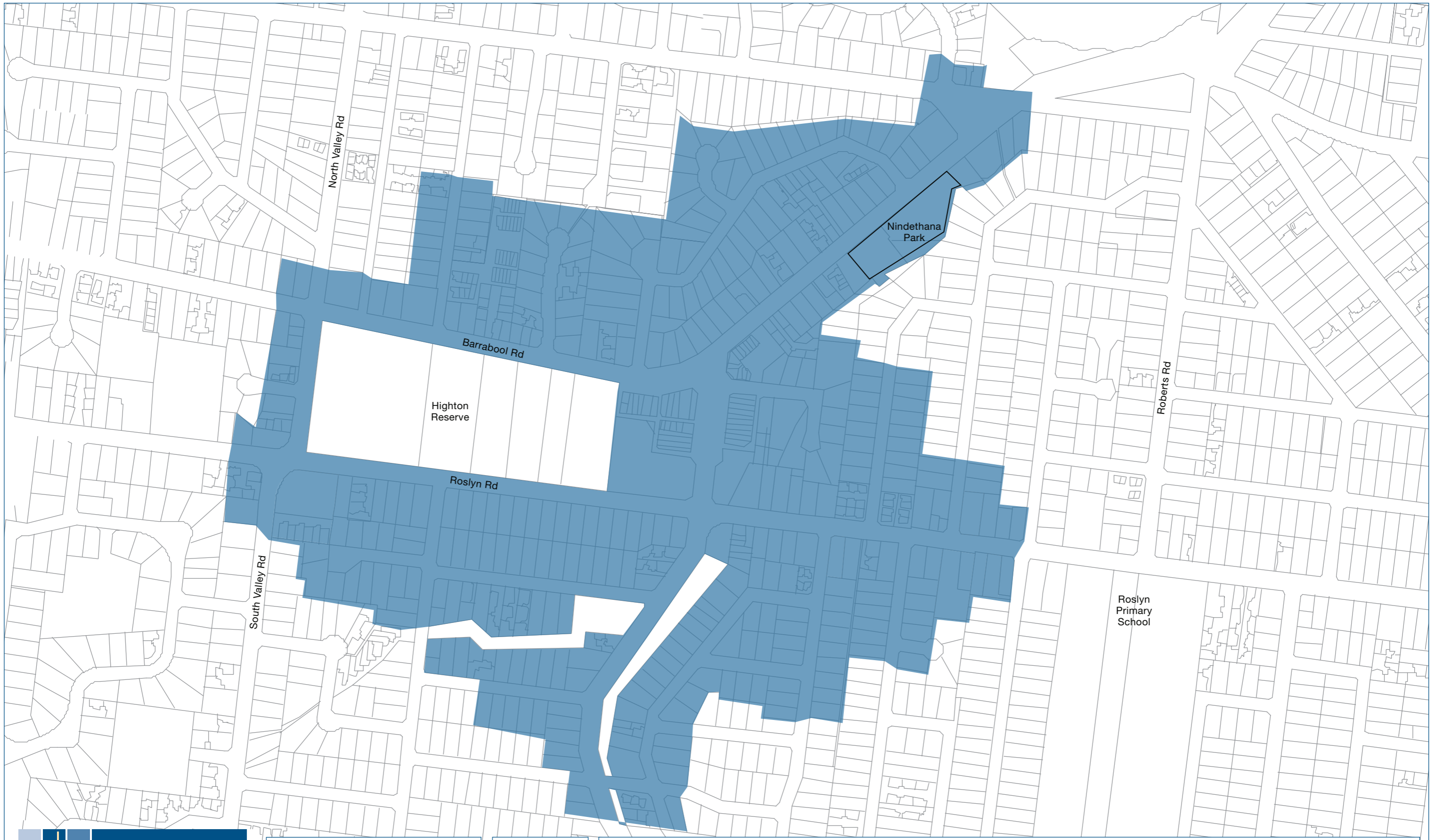
Proposed Increased Housing
Diversity Areas



Final area

Geelong East - Ormond Road

0 90 180 360m





- Final area
- Existing pedestrian access
- Pedestrian link required

Leopold

0 75 150 300m



GLG007 August 2007

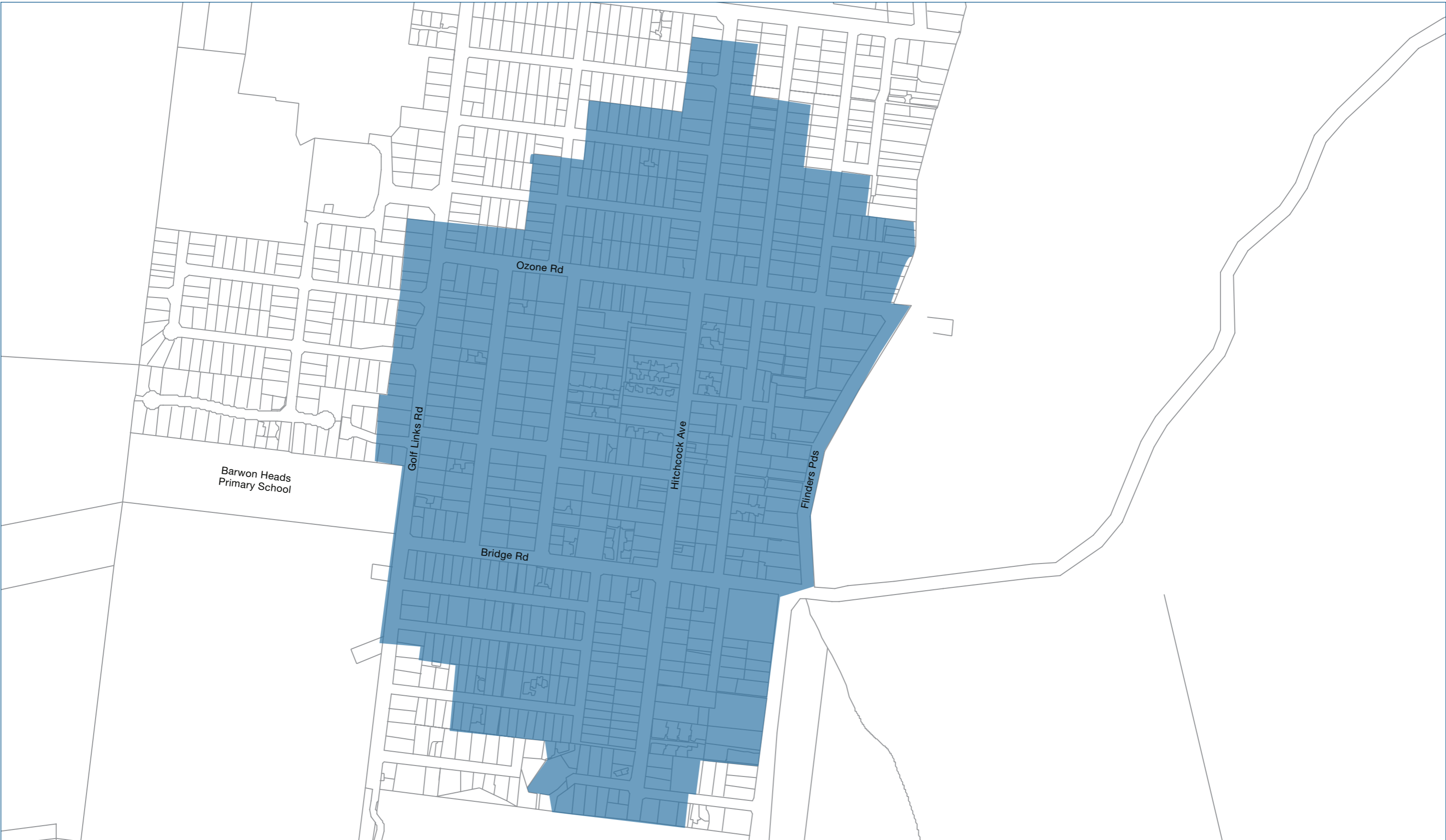
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area

Ocean Grove Market Place

0 85 170 340m



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Housing Diversity Strategy

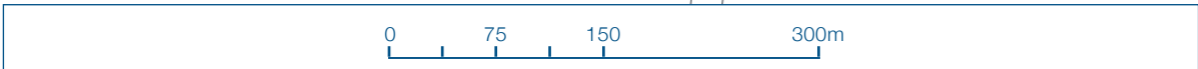
GLG007 August 2007

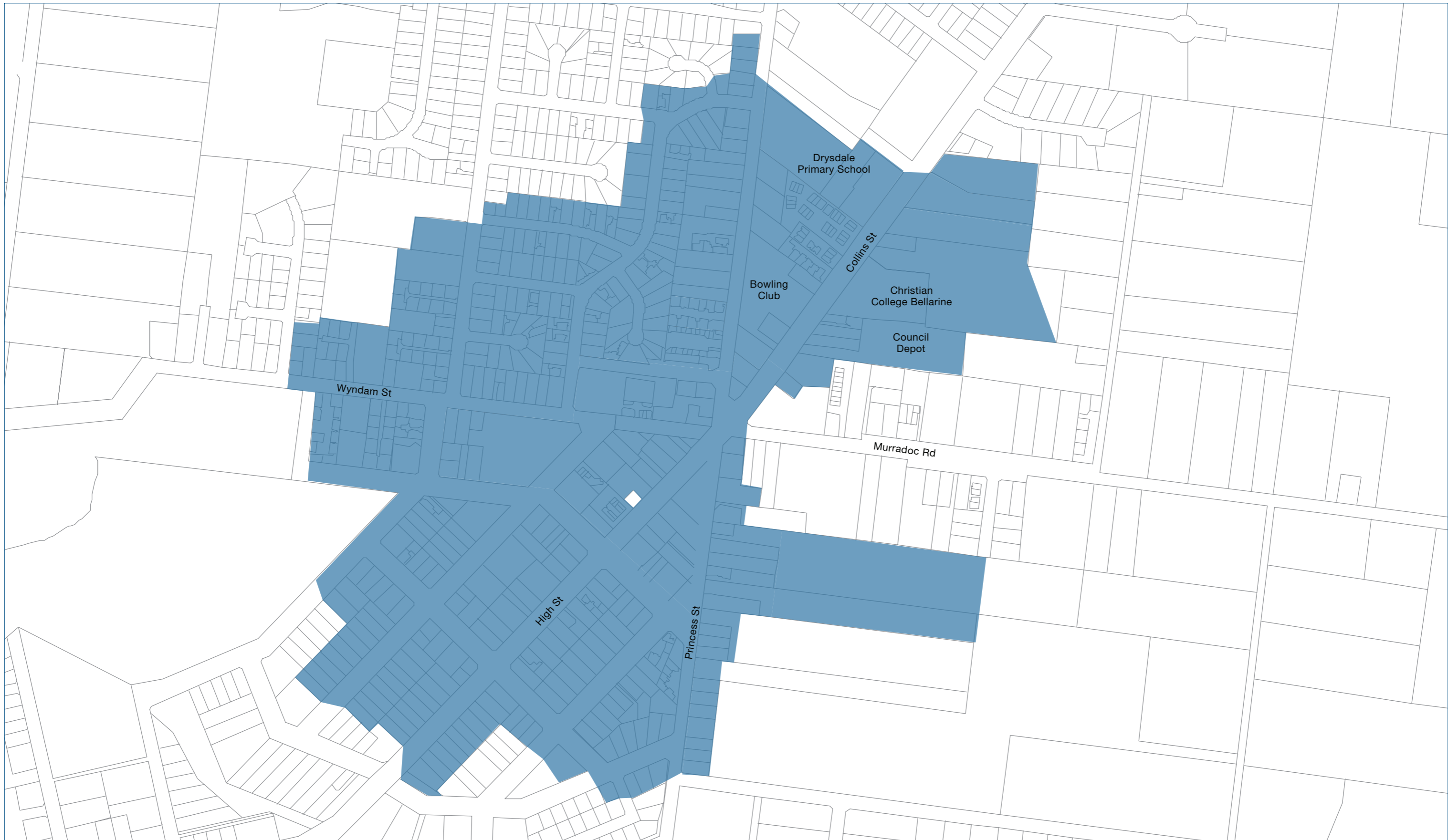
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area

Barwon Heads





GEELONG
Housing Diversity Strategy

GLG007 August 2007

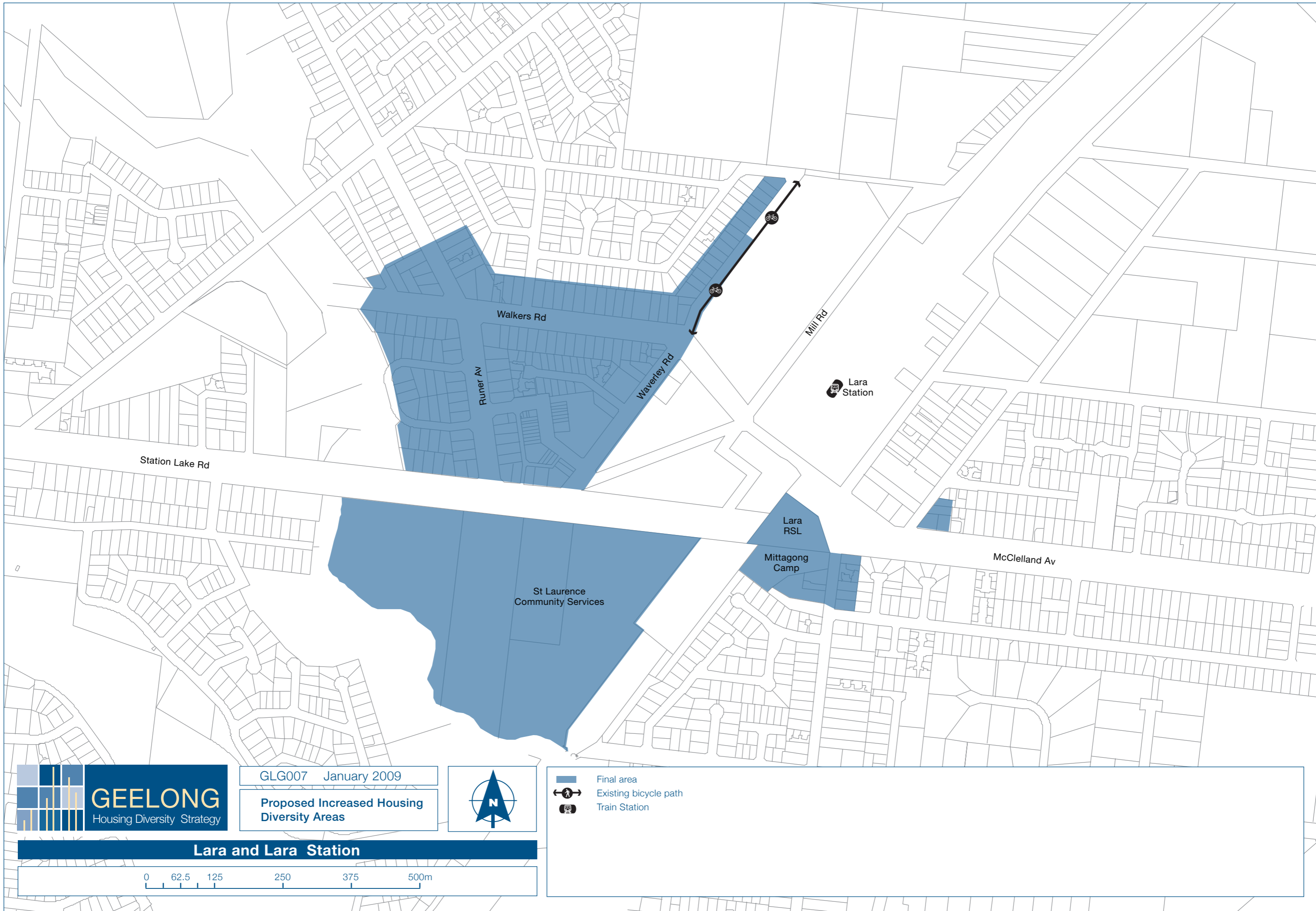
**Proposed Increased Housing
Diversity Areas**






Final area

Drysdale Village





-  Final area
-  Existing bicycle path
-  Train Station

Lara and Lara Station





GEELONG
Housing Diversity Strategy

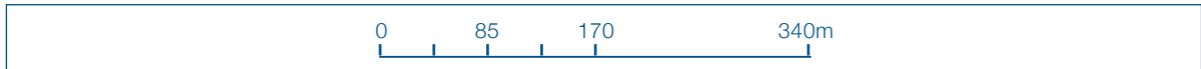
GLG007 August 2007

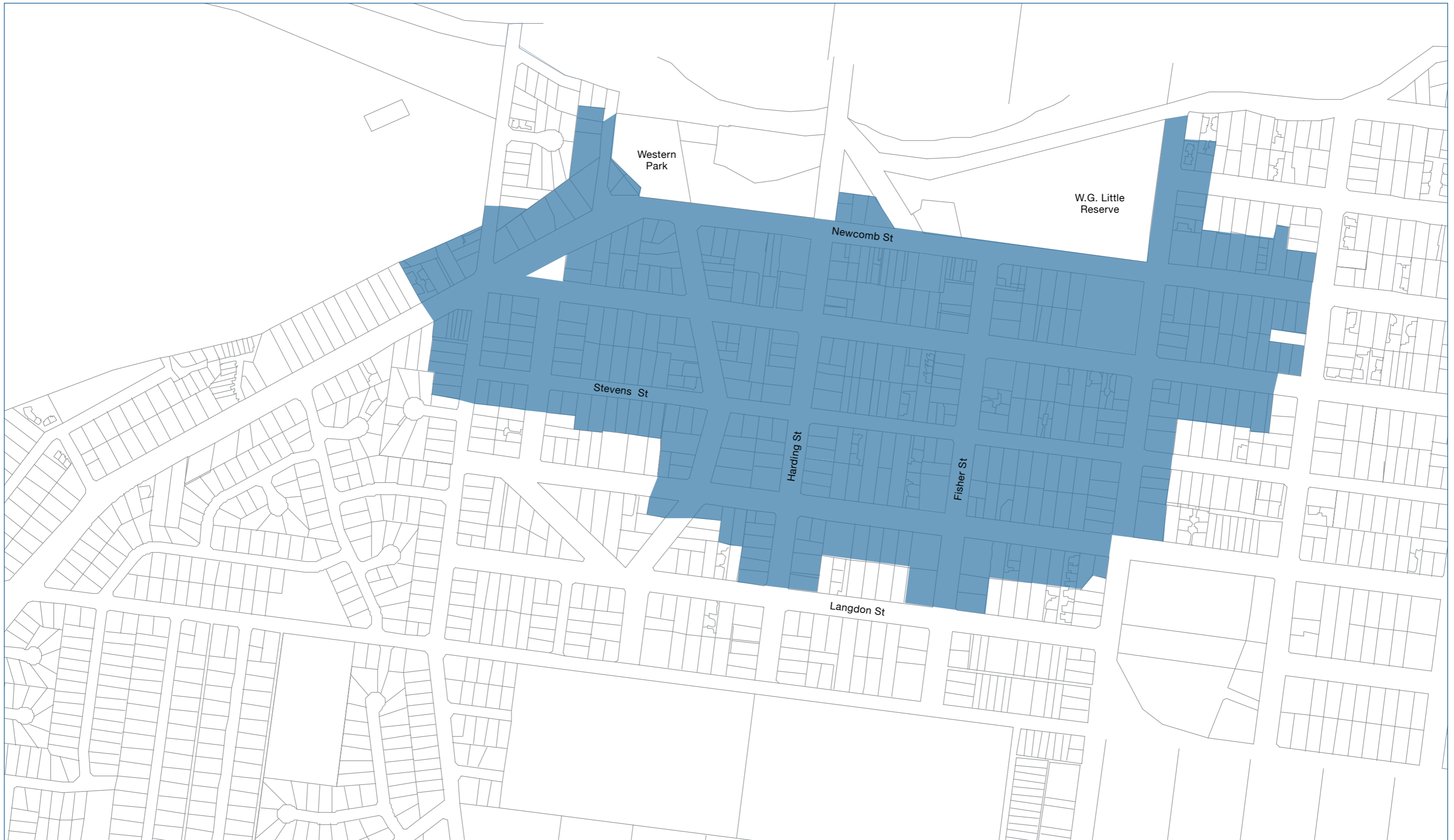
**Proposed Increased Housing
Diversity Areas**



Final area

Ocean Grove





GEELONG
Housing Diversity Strategy

GLG007 November 2007

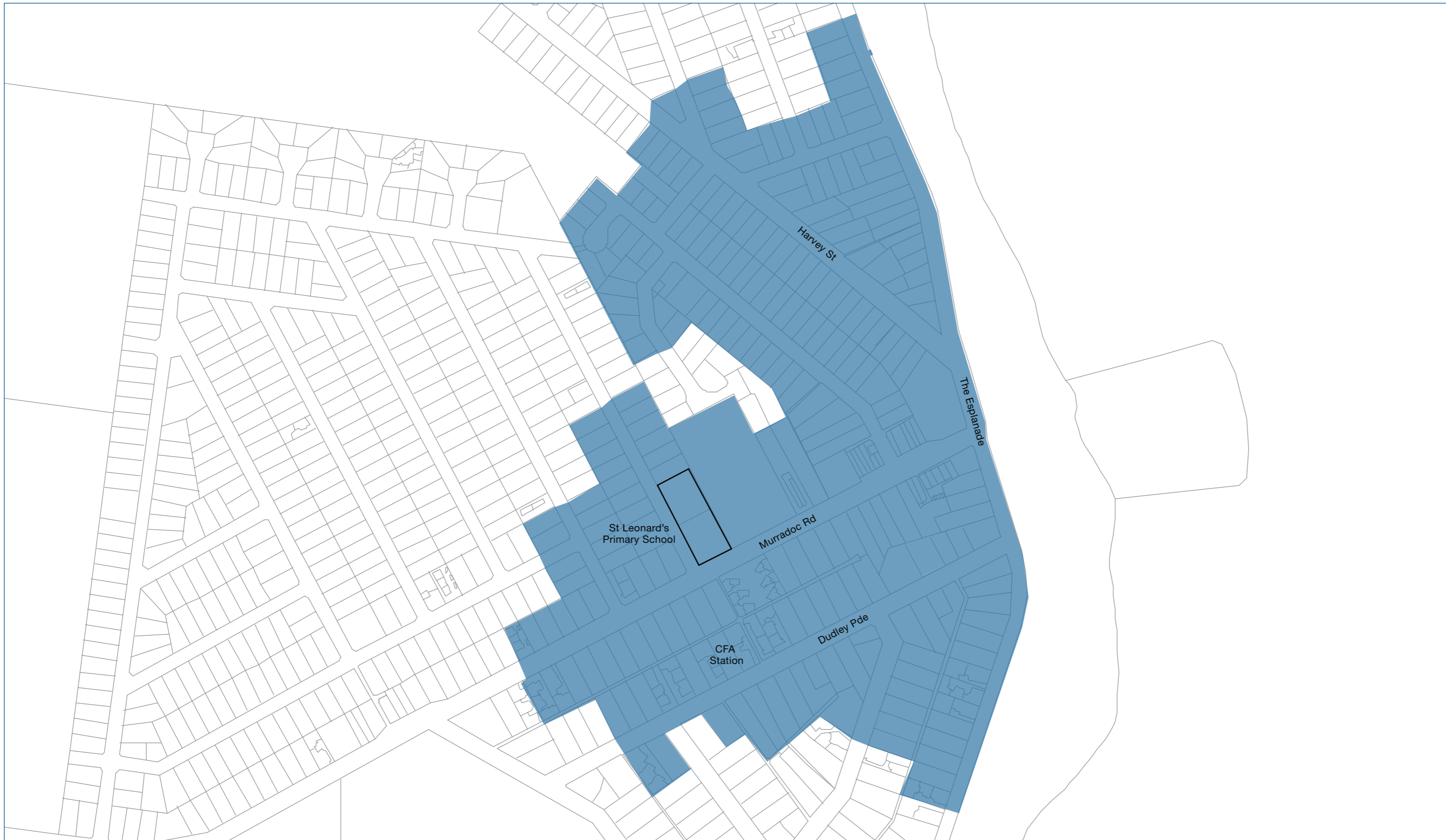
Proposed Increased Housing
Diversity Areas



Final area

Portarlinton

0 75 150 300m



GEELONG
Housing Diversity Strategy

GLG007 August 2007

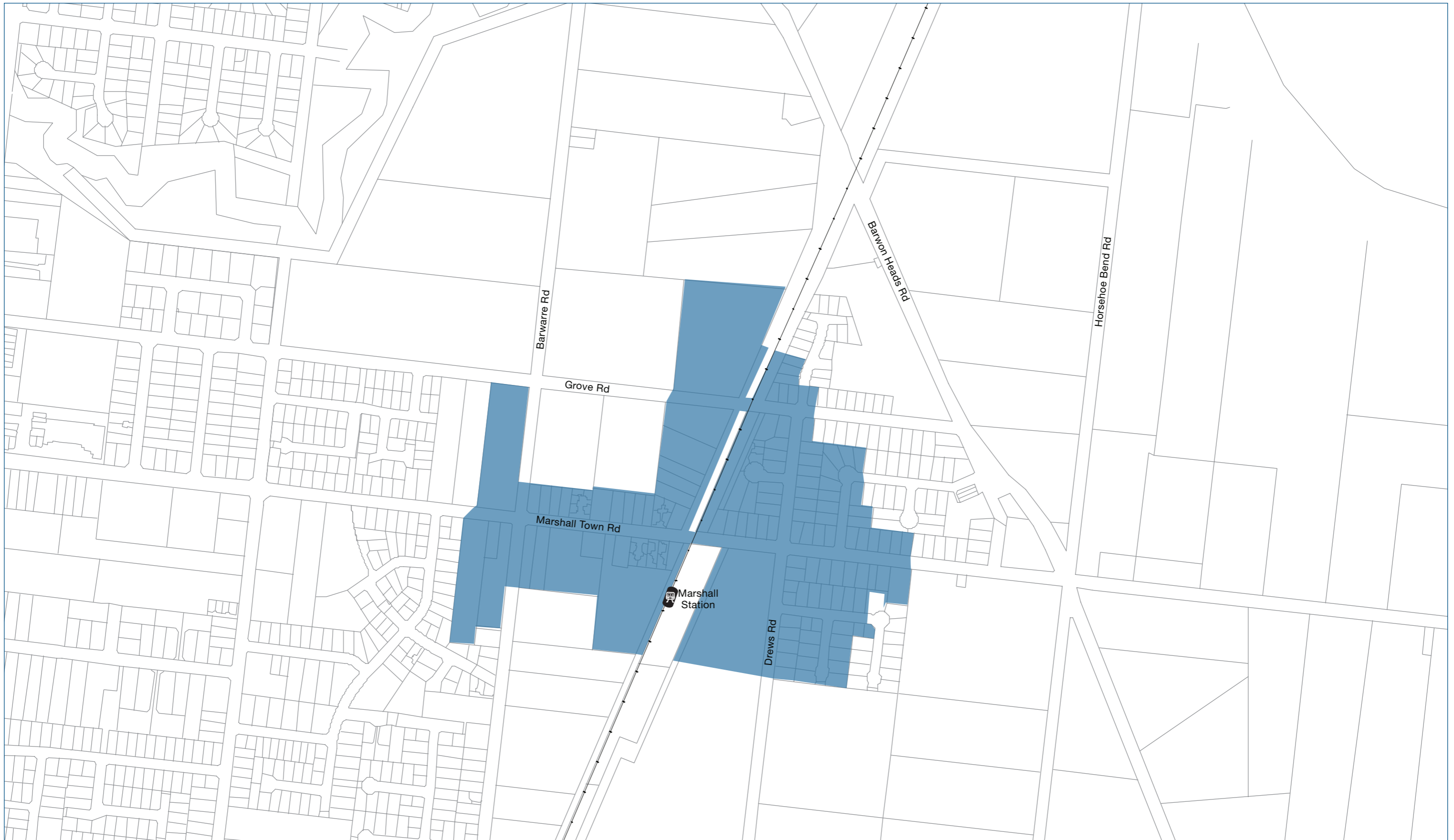
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area

St. Leonards

0 75 150 300m



GLG007 August 2007

Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



- Final area
- Train Station

Marshall Station




0 50 100 200 300m



GLG007 August 2007

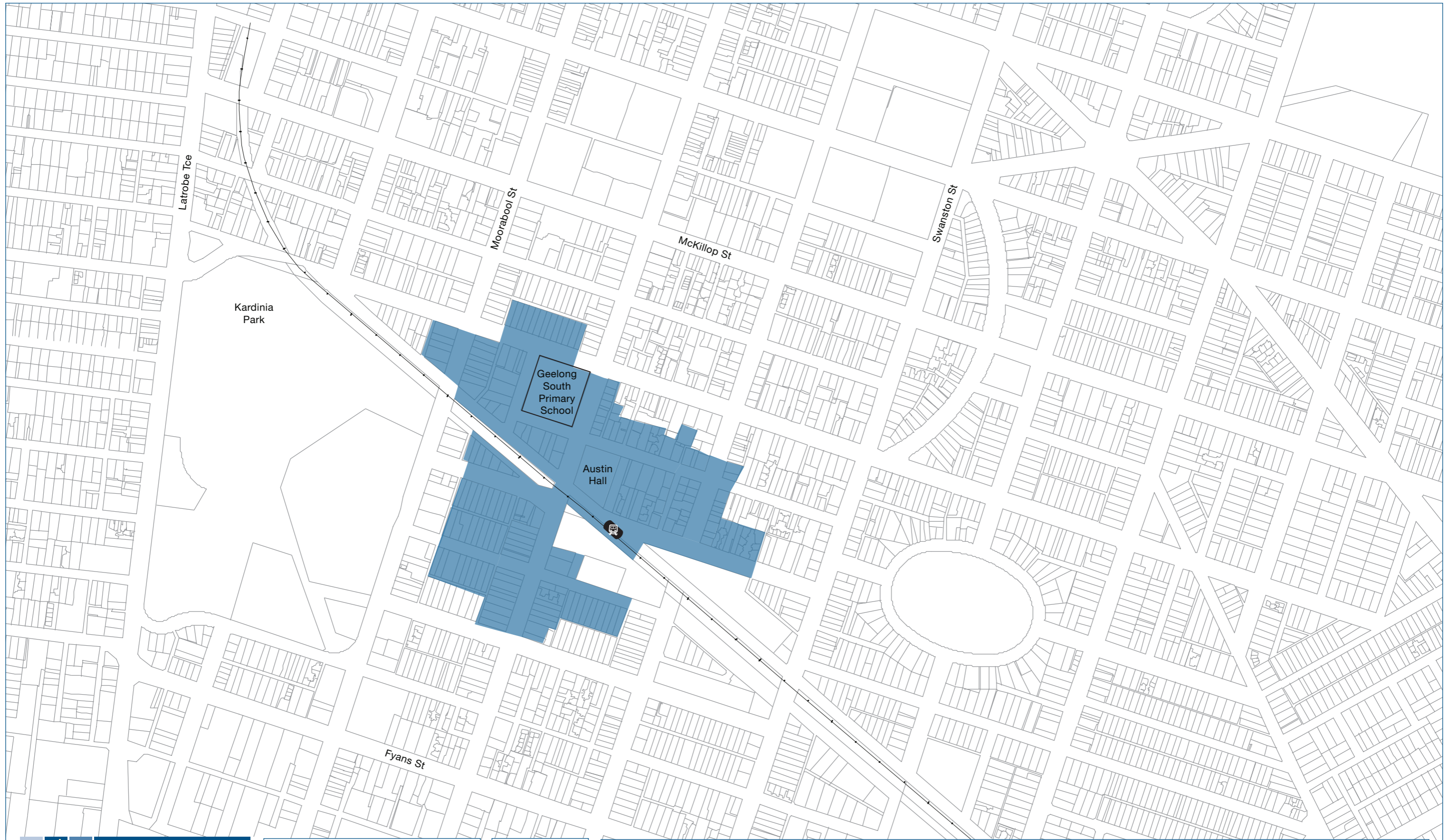
Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



-  Final area
-  Existing pedestrian access
-  Train Station

North Geelong Station





GLG007 August 2007

Proposed Increased Housing Diversity Areas



Final area
Train Station

South Geelong Station

