

PANEL SUBMISSION PART B



GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C457ggee

Highton Urban Design Framework Implementation

Part B Submission to the Independent Panel

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Prepared by: City of Greater Geelong

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1 INTRODUCTION

1. This submission has been prepared by the Planning Authority, the City of Greater Geelong, for the Panel Hearing for Planning Scheme Amendment C457ggee (“the Amendment”). This submission responds to the 2 April 2025 Panel Direction 13, which requires a Part B submission that addresses:
 - a) List key items to be addressed.
 - b) Its response to the submissions and evidence.
 - c) Its final position on the Amendment.

1.1 Overview

2. The Amendment implements the key land use planning elements of the Highton Village Urban Design Framework January 2024 (UDF) into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, and complementary changes. The Amendment does this by introducing new planning policy for social and affordable housing, rezoning Council owned land (car parks) and road reserves to the Commercial 1 Zone and applying the Design and Development Overlay Schedule 52 to the Centre.
3. The UDF has the following intent (UDF p 8) which includes public realm elements not implemented through the planning scheme:
 - a) A community vision for the future Highton Village
 - b) An overall plan to guide future investment and development
 - c) Concepts for streetscape upgrade works
 - d) An access and movement plan for vehicles, walkers and cyclists
 - e) A staged and costed implementation plan
 - f) Planning guidelines for new developments within and around the centre to enhance the village character
4. The Amendment applies to land within the UDF study area which is shown in figure 1 of the Part A submission.
5. The preparation of the UDF was driven by the need to undertake a refresh of Highton Village public infrastructure and to outline where additional floorspace could be delivered, and the City's Settlement Strategy 2020 and related planning policy which seek to facilitate infill development to increase its housing supply contribution.
6. The UDF and Amendment were prepared in-house by Council officers.

2 ISSUES RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS

7. In total, Council received twenty-seven submissions regarding the Amendment.
8. The key issues raised in objecting submissions to the Amendment are grouped into the following themes.

Amendment Specific Issues:

- 1) Height of Development
- 2) Change to Character of Highton Village
- 3) Rezoning of Council Car Parks to C1Z
- 4) Traffic Impacts
- 5) Affordable Housing Local Policy
- 6) Timing of Exhibition

UDF Specific Issues:

- 7) Car Parking, Roads and Intersections
 - 8) Potential Development sites
 - 9) Impact on Public Facilities
9. There was one submission (no.13) supporting the amendment.
 10. The following summary of the issues raised is generally taken from the Council report of 25 February 2025.

2.1 Theme 1 – Height of Development

11. Common amongst most opposing submissions is the desire to retain a lower height limit across the Village Centre (Submissions 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25). These submissions oppose a maximum 4-storey height limit, preferring the retention of a nine metre/two storey height for new development. The primary reason for objecting to the maximum height for development is the impact this will have on the character and appearance of the Village Centre.
12. Submission No.11 supports three storey height for development across the Village and is concerned that four storeys may have a detrimental impact for surrounding properties and visual amenity for the immediate area, and potential shadowing effect in winter for the low-rise properties on the south side of Roslyn Road.

2.2 Theme 2 – Change to Character of Highton Village

13. Many of the objecting submissions comment that the UDF and amendment are against the wishes of local community as expressed in petitions, previous consultations on the UDF, and against Council decision.
14. Submission No's. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 15, and 24 all submit that the character of the Village Centre will be lost with new, higher development and expansion onto the potential development sites. Submission No. 15 summarises the sentiment to preserve the community character of Highton Village which is well known for its community-oriented atmosphere, characterized by low-rise buildings, green spaces, and easy accessibility. Increasing building heights and traffic congestion would undermine this ambiance, deterring residents from utilizing local amenities.
15. Submissions opposing the change to the character of the Village consider that eyesore buildings, overlooking and over towering from new development and high density living in the Centre will result from the UDF and amendment.

2.3 Theme 3 - Rezoning of Council Car Parks to C1Z

16. Submissions have been made against the rezoning of the two Council car parks and the road reserves from General Residential Zone 4 to Commercial 1 Zone. Submission No. 11 has acknowledged that change proposed for 1A Taylor Court whilst submission No's. 17, 18, 21 and 22 object to their rezoning for reasons including that rezoning will lead to multi-storey car parking which would become a paid parking and be less safe for users and gives Council the power to sell/lease parts of them to developers for new commercial spaces.
17. Submission No. 12 acknowledges the intent of the rezoning of the car parks to the C1Z as clearing up historical anomalies but is concerned about who pays for higher commercial rates as this goes against the agreement with eastern side Belle Vue traders that rates would reflect the closeness of the public car park and toilets.

2.4 Theme 4 - Traffic Impacts

18. Several submissions raise concerns about the impact of traffic generated from new development in the area. Submission No. 11 comments that traffic management has a major influence over the functionality of the centre and that a traffic management study should be undertaken and implemented in any design development strategy adopted. This would include any

recommendations for rerouting traffic in and around the Village and consideration as to whether land needs to be acquired and redeveloped to facilitate the proper and adequate traffic, loading, and unloading of provision vehicles and pedestrian movement in and around the Village.

19. Submission No. 9 from DTP comments that future development in the Village Centre will need to be consistent with the Clause 18 – Transport of the Planning Scheme and use an integrated approach.
20. DTP advises that a detailed Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) study may be required to support all future works within and modification of intersections with Barrabool Road, including any intersections not specifically identified by the UDF.
21. Submission No.11 opposes for safety and congestion reasons the proposal on map three in the DDO52 for an exit south from the Woolworths site onto Roslyn Road. This is within fifty metres of the roundabout and pedestrian crossing at the Roslyn Road/Belle Vue Ave intersection.

2.5 Theme 5 - Affordable Housing Local Policy

22. Submission No. 12 raises concerns that the five percent use for residential buildings is only window dressing and fails to address where such residents will park. Submission No. 1 seeks no 4-storey car park with affordable housing.
23. Submission No.10 raises concern about how possible affordable housing will change the feel and structure of the Village. Submission No's. 17, 18, 21, and 22 comment that social and affordable housing does not fit the Village and should be proposed in residential area not in commercial areas.
24. Submission No. 9 by Department of Transport and Planning notes that there is more detail to be provided about affordable housing on the potential development sites and wishes to be involved in the detailed planning, design and construction phases and the impacts on Barrabool Road.

2.6 Theme 6 - Timing of Exhibition

25. Some submissions such as Submitter No's. 2, 4, 5, 6, 17, 18, 21, 22, and 25 raised issue that the amendment was exhibited during caretaken period and in December, being the busiest time of year for retailers. Further, commenting that this was at a time when local representation was not available.

2.7 Theme 7 – Car Parking, Roads and Intersections

26. Most of the objecting submissions expressed opposition to the loss of car parking available with the Village Centre. Submission No. 12 outlined the numerical loss of car parking spaces if the potential development sites are developed.
27. Submissions opposing the loss of car parking have stated that the alternative raised in the UDF of multi-storey car parking is unsuitable for Highton, and that at-grade parking is the preferred method for traders and shoppers/visitors. Submission No. 17 states that development of multi-storey parking will likely result in a pay-to-park model which is not supported by the community.
28. Submitters say that a loss of car parking will detract from the ease of accessibility for the Village Centre and lead to people preferencing Waurn Ponds instead.
29. No additional pedestrian crossings in Belle Vue Avenue than currently exist have been a clear message across submission No's. 3, 4, 6, 11, 12 and 24. Submission No.3 sums the issue up by commenting that there is opposition to more pedestrian crossings as these will impede traffic flow and increase congestion, frustrate drivers, and result in posing a safety risk to pedestrians.
30. Submission 12 opposes any changes to the Barrabool Road – Belle Vue Avenue intersection preferring it to remain in its current state as it works effectively for drivers leaving Belle Vue Ave to Barrabool Road and within the Village Centre. This submission comments that their local lawyer experience shows no evidence of personal injury claims from this intersection operation.
31. Submission No.12 also submits that the clock tower is an essential feature of the Village and moving it will disturb the time capsule and disrespect the community and trader's asset.
32. Submission No.9 from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) comments on the UDF works to Barrabool Road, noting that they are the road manager and must be engaged in any changes or development on this road and intersection. DTP further advises that a detailed Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment may be required to support all works within and modification of intersections with Barrabool Road, including any not specifically identified in the UDF.

2.8 Theme 8 - Potential Development Sites

33. Submission No's. 12 and 14 specifically reference the potential development sites on either side of the southern end of Belle Vue Avenue and their impact on the character of the Village Centre with

potential bulky, multi-storey development, whilst Submission No. 5 considers these sites will allow for overdevelopment by short term development interests.

34. Submission No's. 6 and 7 question the need to provide for more retail floorspace in the Village Centre, as there are current vacancies. These submissions consider that new shops will impact on the survival of small businesses and that Council needs to focus on supporting current stakeholders rather than creating future challenges.
35. Submission No.14 states that there are already commercial vacancies with no tenants to fill them, considering the amendment will be detrimental to current businesses with a flow on effect to landlords, and an oversupply of commercial properties.
36. Other submissions are opposed to these as they will remove needed car parking spaces and amenities.
37. Submission No's. 17-23 comment on the impact of the potential development site on the eastern side of Belle Vue Avenue. This would remove the current laneway to the south of or adjacent to Nardi's Cellarbrations shop impacting the driveway access into the car park affecting both car park flow and truck access for deliveries to the rear of the shops.

2.9 Theme 9 – Impact on Public Facilities

38. Submission No's. 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, and 25 are opposed to the loss of the public toilets affected by the potential development site on the southeastern end of Belle Vue Avenue. There is concern that as these are an essential service their loss will diminish accessibility and inclusivity, and there is no justification for moving their location or removal.
39. Submission No's. 2, 4, 6, 8, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 25 do not want to see any changes to the current location of the library and that it should remain where it is, and that no ratepayer's money is to be wasted in moving it to another location. Submission No.19 comments that any move of the library will create a dead zone.
40. Submitters such as No's. 1 and 14 seek Council to focus on doing the basics for repairs and maintenance of the existing Centre features such as footpaths, remove graffiti etc instead of making significant changes proposed in the UDF and amendment. S14 noted that there \$606,000 in the 2022/2023 budget to upgrade pavements.

41. Submission 12 is thankful for the February commitment to rectify footpaths and surfaces after accidents in the Village Centre.

3 RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

Council's response to issues raised in submissions

42. This section of Council's Part B Submission responds to Panel Direction 13 and provides Council's response to submissions.

AMENDMENT SPECIFIC SUBMISSION ISSUES

3.1 Theme 1 – Height of Development

Development Height

43. The UDF identified design guidelines to protect the village character from inappropriate development through the introduction of building heights where none exist now. The UDF considered that a mixture of development, including 3-4 storey development, would maintain a village feel, locating jobs, shops, cafes, and community services near each other, providing access to everyday needs, and creating active, social places that people choose to spend time in.
44. The UDF analysis considered relevant factors in establishing the mix of preferred maximum building height provisions, with an emphasis on retaining the current scale along Belle Vue Ave, with highest development planned for the western side adjacent to the Highton Reserve. The UDF building heights also addressed the interfaces with the surrounding residential areas. This was conceived to provide a balance between the role of an activity centre to deliver commercial and residential growth within the municipality, whilst responding to the local context.
45. The building heights in the exhibited DDO52 were derived from the UDF and the exhibited DDO52 proposed height provisions were seen to manage the future growth of the Village Centre.
46. In response to exhibition, the submissions clearly and almost unanimously, outlined that these heights were too great for the Village Centre and would overwhelm the character and feel of their experience of going to or working there.
47. Council has considered these submissions and in response resolved to support further changes to the height provisions to restrict the maximum preferred building height limit to across the Centre in the Day 1 DDO52 to 9 metres/2 storeys.

48. This is a preferred maximum height as the drafting of a DDO should where possible, used performance-based requirements rather than prescriptive ones. Council has listened to the community and their submissions and adjusted the DDO to meet these expectations.
49. Council considers that applying a consistent preferred maximum building height of nine metres/2 storeys across the Village will maintain the existing character that submitters reference. Council considers that these changes balance character and will enable modest future growth of the Village Centre.
50. The first two objectives of the Day 1 DDO52 are:
- a) To support a low-rise built form character for Highton Village.
 - b) To maintain and enhance the established high-street character of Belle Vue Avenue and the intimate character of the laneways.
51. The preferred maximum building height changes will still speak to these Day 1 DDO52 objectives. New and redevelopment within the Centre is still encouraged and achievable within these new height parameters.
52. To consolidate the change to the height of development across the Centre and in response to the submissions, Council has resolved to delete map 1 (UDF Framework Plan) from the Day 1 DDO52 (with consequential changes to text references and map numbering) and to delete the UDF as a Background Document.
53. Removing the framework plan from the Day 1 DDO52 removes extraneous detail from the DDO that is not specifically planning related. The framework plan references matters beyond the scope of a DDO such as the future of the library, public realm upgrades, vehicle movements, pedestrian routes, and on-street car parking changes. Where appropriate, matters such active frontages and landmarks are included in other maps within the Day 1 DDO52.
54. A background document is not part of the planning scheme and is not to be relied upon directly for decision making. It may however be referenced in the scheme, although not compulsorily. The key elements of the Highton UDF for decision making on development applications are included in the DDO (heights, setbacks, street wall heights etc). These substantive elements of the UDF have been included in the scheme and require no further explanation from a background document.

55. According to the *Practitioner's guide to Victoria's planning schemes April 2022*, a document that includes a lot of information that is not directly relevant to the specific provision of the scheme will not be suitable for mention as a background document. In this case, the UDF contains a lot of material about public realm upgrades and projects that is not relevant to the DDO. With the changes to the Day 1 DDO52 in response to submissions, the scheme provision will be quite different from the adopted UDF which if it was to be retained, will be confusing.
56. Council is not intending to re-adopt the UDF with changes.

Overshadowing

57. No overshadowing analysis has been undertaken for the south side of Roslyn Road to the west of Belle Vue Avenue. This was not necessary because Roslyn Road is a 20-metre-wide road reserve, and the exhibited DDO52 requirements along Roslyn Road are for eight metres (2 storey) maximum street wall height with a 4-metre setback above street wall and a maximum preferred building height of twelve metres (3 storeys). This combination acting to avoid overshadowing on the south side of Roslyn Road.
58. With Council resolving to reduce the height of future development across the Centre to nine metres/ 2 storeys as shown in the Day 1 DDO52, this further diminishes any possibility of overshadowing to properties on the south side of Roslyn Drive.
59. Any new development in a Commercial 1 Zone must be considered against the decision guidelines (Clause 34.01-8 of the Planning Scheme), which for buildings and works includes consideration of the overlooking and overshadowing affecting adjoining land in a General Residential Zone, which is the land use zoning on the south side of Roslyn Road.
60. This combination means that overshadowing is a matter that will be addressed in any future detailed development design process.

3.2 Theme 2 – Change to Character of Highton Village

61. In developing the design guidelines in the UDF, key considerations included:
- Maintaining the low scale character of the Village
 - Maintaining the intimate character of the laneways

- Minimising overshadowing of new and existing public open spaces.
62. The development of the UDF was cognisant of the Village character in its recommendations for building height, new development areas, overall development design parameters and these have been translated into the exhibited DDO52.
63. The current planning scheme for Highton Village has the zoning as Commercial 1 Zone (all except for the two Council car parks and roads) with no overlays except the Special Building Overlay (which relates to flooding from the stormwater system). This means that there are currently no building heights or other specific design and development controls for the Centre.
64. Council considers that the combination of the revised height provisions in the DDO52 and the design objectives of the DDO52 will provide protection for the existing character of the Village that otherwise does not currently exist under the C1Z:
- *To support a low-rise built form character for Highton Village.*
 - *To maintain and enhance the established high-street character of Belle Vue Avenue and the intimate character of the laneways.*
 - *To enhance Highton Village's character as a desirable destination for local shopping and recreation by promoting contemporary design and built form that demonstrates design excellence.*
 - *To prioritise the pedestrian environment by encouraging active frontages at ground floor level adjacent to existing roads and laneways.*
 - *To consolidate lots within the retail core to improve overall design and development outcomes while retaining the fine grain pattern of the streetscape.*
65. Places evolve over time and without built form and built environment direction, this can occur in a vacuum with unintended consequences. Amendment C457ggee through the Day 1 DDO52 gives the built form guidance to future development in Highton Village. Specifically, the amendment introduces design guidelines to protect the village character from inappropriate development through building height guidelines where none exist now. A nine metres/2 storey height across the Centre, will maintain the low-rise village feel.

66. It is standard process to prepare and update UDFs to respond to the need for public realm upgrades, changing conditions, including population growth and the demand for employment and retail space, as well as other broader policy initiatives. The current zone control that applies to Highton Village has no limits and effectively allows for more development than what is proposed in the UDF and in the DDO52. The new proposed controls are therefore intended to support changing conditions while protecting the character of the Village.
67. The quality of new development will be assessed against the design objectives and decision guidelines of both the DDO52, the decision guidelines on the C1Z and the general planning decision guidelines in clause 65 of the Planning Scheme. There is an emphasis in clause 6.0 of the DDO52 for development to employ a massing strategy that reduces visual bulk, achieves design excellence by providing high quality and innovative architecture, landscape architecture and urban design, and make a public contribution to the streetscape appearance of the area.
68. In response to submissions concerned about accommodating housing and the impact this will have on Highton Village, Council acknowledges that as Greater Geelong grows, it is critical to ensure the community has access to everyday services within a 20-minute drive from home. It is our planning policy that retail centres, of which Highton Village is one, should be encouraged to grow and transition over time into activity centres with an extended offer including uses other than retail.
69. The inclusion of housing within activity centres is supported by existing local planning policy, specifically at clause 11.03-1L Activity Centres. This clause supports the role and function and the continued diversification over time of centres in Geelong through including encouraging a mix of uses, supporting accommodation uses above ground floor level, encouraging redevelopment of car parking areas for commercial and residential uses, supporting increased intensity and vertical growth of centres, and encouraging development that supports a diversity of retail forms.
70. The changes to the amendment to reduce the height of development will have an effect of reducing the opportunities for even more housing provision, but DDO52 still allows for built form that can accommodate above-ground floor level accommodation and development to support active uses along ground floor frontages whilst maintaining the neighbourhood centre level role within the retail hierarchy.
71. It is both appropriate, and supported by planning policy, that Highton Village accommodate housing within new development opportunities.

3.3 Theme 3 - Rezoning of Council Car Parks to C1Z

72. The proposed planning scheme amendment seeks to extend the Commercial 1 Zone to two Council car parks which are currently zoned General Residential Zone 4 (GRZ4). The residential zoning is at odds with their role as car parks for the activity centre and location within the extent of the activity centre.

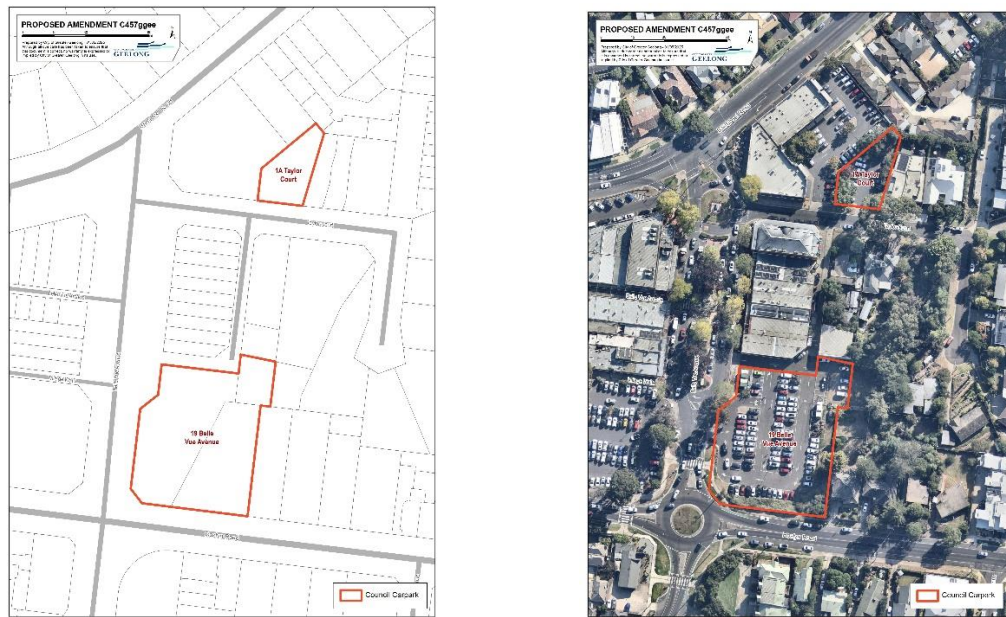


Figure 1 – council car parks being rezoned

73. Whilst not a recommendation of the UDF, in preparation of the amendment Council considered that the zoning of these two parcels which are contained within the shopping centre and which are used for car parking use, was an anomaly and should be rectified as part of this amendment. Alike other retail centres across the municipality such as High Street Belmont and Pakington Street in Geelong West and Newtown, it is appropriate to include car parks within the retail centres within the same C1Z as the balance of the centre. The use and future of these properties better aligns with the purpose of the C1Z than the current GRZ4.
74. The northern portion of the 19 Belle Vue Avenue site car park is identified in the Highton Village UDF as a key development site, although there is no current sale or redevelopment plan for the land.
75. A condition of the ministerial authorisation for the amendment was to also rezone the road reservations of Belle Vue Avenue, part of Taylor Court, and the laneway to the east of Belle Vue

Avenue to C1Z. This is an administrative and mapping exercise which does not at all imply that the road reserves will be developed for commercial purposes and no longer be available as roads.

76. The car park at 1A Taylor Court is not identified in the UDF for any development and is subject to a section 173 Agreement under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* requiring Council to hold this land as a car park for users of the shopping centre. For the car park at the 19 Belle Vue Avenue, the UDF identifies a northern portion of this site as a potential development site.
77. It is an appropriate planning outcome to include the car parks within the C1Z regardless of whether a part of one of these sites is identified in the UDF as potential development site.
78. The land use of 'car park' is a permit required use in both the GRZ4 and the C1Z; buildings and works for a car park require a permit in both zones; and notice and review rights apply regardless of a GRZ4 or C1Z zoning.
79. This combination should provide comfort for the local community to be informed and engaged about the future of the area as in either the GRZ4 or C1Z a permit will be required, and notice/review rights will apply.
80. The concern in submissions against rezoning of the carparks to C1Z as would allow for future multi-level commercial/residential development, would also apply to the land remaining as is because this would be possible under the current GRZ4 too. It would be subject to a planning permit for buildings and works and notice/review rights apply. Under the Day 1 DDO52 the height of any development in the Centre would be limited to nine metres/two storeys.
81. In response to the concerns for the portion of the car park site at 19 Belle Vue Ave, Council would first have to undertake a feasibility study on making the land available for a mixed-use development. This would then need to be followed by a Council decision to sell the land and go through a full public process. This will be required regardless of whether the land is in the GRZ4 or the C1Z.
82. The impact on the commercial rates of adjoining properties is not a consideration for the planning scheme amendment.

3.4 Theme 4 - Traffic Impacts

83. The UDF is a long-term vision for the area, and it is anticipated that any new and redevelopment of parcels within the Village Centre will happen over time. The need for any traffic mitigation and

parking changes will continue be assessed as development applications are considered and any changes being made on an as needed basis.

84. A traffic assessment was undertaken as part of the UDF process with emphasis on the then proposed changes to the Barrabool Road/Belle Vue Avenue intersection. However, as these changes are no longer being pursued, this assessment has no ongoing relevance.
85. Car parking would be considered with a permit application proposing additional commercial and residential development in the Highton Village and would be appropriately managed through Clause 52.06 (Car parking) of the Planning Scheme. Should car parking become an issue in the future, the City may consider a Parking Overlay or other measures such as parking restrictions and resident parking permits.
86. This said, the changes to the development height across the Centre, will curtail the development potential and therefore likely any traffic/parking impacts.
87. A DDO as proposed by this amendment does not usually trigger the need for a broader traffic study of the area. A DDO is principally intended to implement requirements to control built form and the built environment rather than land use requirements which are dealt with under the land use zoning.
88. The amendment is unlikely to have a significant impact on the transport system of the Village Centre as it is providing controls over the scale and form of future development. There is scope in the UDF for two potential development sites and any proposals for these would need to be subject to a full planning permit assessment including the localised traffic impacts of any such development and subsequent use.
89. The issue for Map 3 raised by Submission No. 11 is as shown on exhibited map 3 in the DDO52. Refer to figure 2 for the location of this issue. This is a future service laneway that could be implemented if the Woolworths site is redeveloped. It would be necessary to have access onto Roslyn Road at this point as there will be no vehicular cross overs on Belle Vue Ave. Final design of any development proposals at this site would need to address access suitability and safety. Map 3 is intended to show key access and movement locations and intentions rather than final detailed design outcomes.

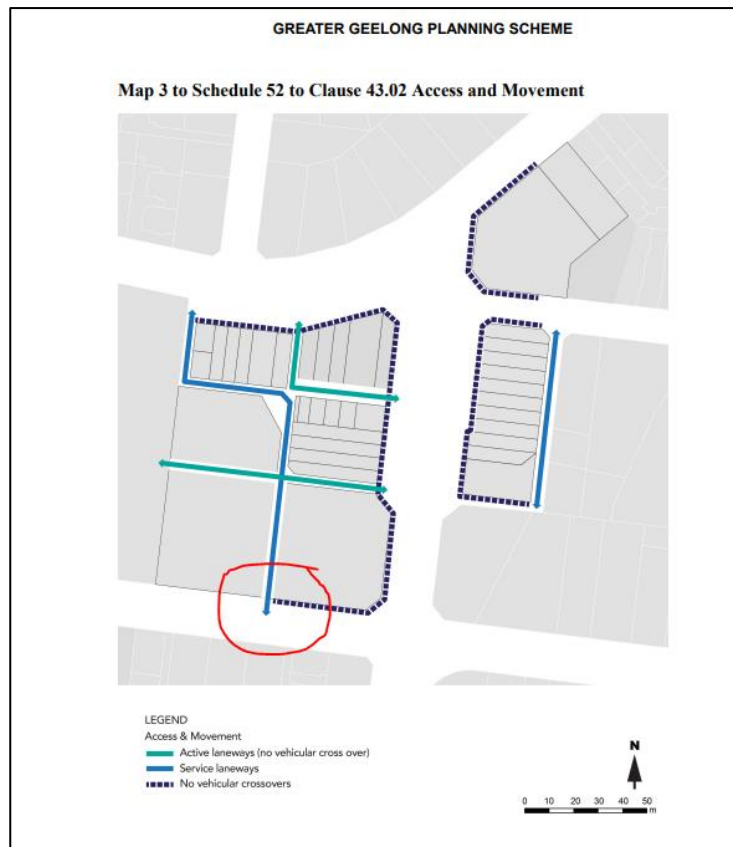


Figure 2 – Map 3 extract from exhibited DDO52

3.5 Theme 5 – Social and Affordable Housing Local Policy

90. The inclusion of the social and affordable housing (S & AH) policy builds on Council's commitment to increase the housing supply and is appropriate to include in the activity centre just like we are doing in the activity centres of South Geelong, Pakington Street, and Central Geelong.
91. The Council resolution adopting the Highton UDF and preparation of a planning scheme amendment did not refer to the specific inclusion of a S&AH policy in the planning scheme amendment but did generically refer to an amendment introducing policy and development controls into the Planning Scheme.
92. Unlike the South Geelong UDF, the Highton UDF document does not make a specific reference to a S&AH contribution in the Highton Village Shopping Centre. It does support the growth of the Highton Village Shopping Centre to provide additional commercial and residential use/space, in line with its designation in the Highton Increased Housing Diversity Area. The UDF supports Council's goal of providing for 50 per cent of future housing needs through urban infill, as well as delivering housing diversity and affordability. For new residential use in Highton Village, this will be achieved through vertical development in any above ground level development.

93. Council considered Amendment C457ggee as an opportune time to include a policy element to encourage a S&AH contribution as part of any residential development within the Highton Village Shopping Centre. The PPF already includes support for S&AF and is actively encouraged by the State Government's Housing Statement. Council discussed with the DTP Regional office the possibility of including in this amendment a local policy for affordable/social housing, like what has been proposed and refined for the South Geelong Amendment C432ggee. The regional DTP team was supportive of its inclusion in this amendment request.
94. Council is seeking to include such contributions with developer and Council led amendments and rezonings that lead to residential and wherever residential and mixed-use potential arises.
95. The proposed local policy will allow for a negotiation as part of a planning permit that allows for residential use.
96. One of the primary recommendations of the UDF is to promote high-quality mixed-use development up to four storeys that respects the low scale-built form of the Village. With Council changes to the height provisions in the Day 1 DDO52, it is acknowledged that there is less scope for providing new housing in the Centre but there is still opportunity to consider and provide above ground floor accommodation uses.
97. Any redevelopments of sites within the Village Centre may include space above ground level for residential use. This is becoming more common with residential use supplied in activity centres and provides for needed housing to be delivered close to services.
98. Current local planning policy supports social and affordable housing in areas with good access to services and facilities. In Highton Village, daily needs can be accommodated, as well as access gained to public transport, recreation, and leisure services/facilities.
99. The Village Centre is within the middle of the Highton IHDA which includes the objective to evolve the character of Increased Housing Diversity Areas (IHDA) through more intensive development, to be achieved through:
- Maximise opportunities for housing in IHDA by accommodating:
 - High density housing in the activity centres consistent with their primary commercial and retail role.

- Medium density housing in residential areas with more intensive development being located closest to the core of activity centres.
 - Encourage a diversity of housing types to cater to a variety of lifestyle needs.
 - Encourage development to provide a high level of on-site amenity for future residents.
100. Any future housing within Highton Village would need to be provided above ground floor level. Any development approval will need to address and include plans for parking provision or exemption as required.
101. According to the proposed local planning policy, as part of any future planning permit application that includes residential development, Council will negotiate with applicants for an affordable housing provision.
102. A five percent contribution is a start and is a modest contribution. Greater contributions will be realised elsewhere across Greater Geelong such as in Central Geelong, the former Saleyards and in South Geelong, but all areas in urban Geelong can contribute to the increase in affordable and social housing to meet a great community need. The scaling back of development height will reduce the opportunities for realising S&AH in Highton but any gain, no matter how modest, is worth continuing to pursue.
103. Major development applications will be referred to Transport for Victoria where required by Clause 66.02-11. Referral of smaller development applications would only be considered on a case-by-case basis.
104. Council has made a change to the exhibited amendment to delete the UDF as a background document from the proposed new local planning policy, Clause 16.01-2L. This is because the UDF does not directly address a social and affordable housing contribution being made in Highton Village and it would be inappropriate to continue this reference in the proposed local policy.

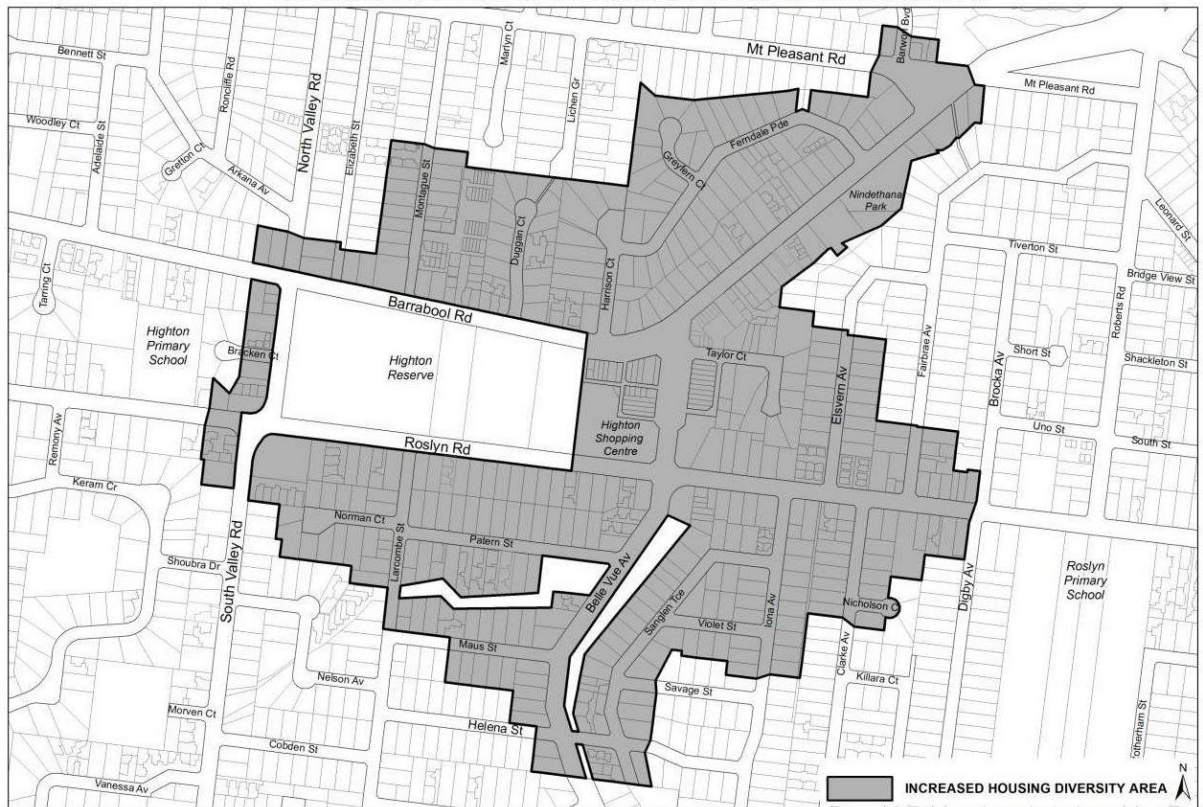


Figure 3 – Highton Increased Housing Diversity Area

3.6 Theme 6 - Timing of Exhibition

105. Following receipt of authorisation, the preparation for exhibition came too close to the caretaker period and Council election. Council officers deferred the exhibition until after the close of the election to avoid any conflict with this process. As the amendment timelines would be affected, Council sought an exemption from DTP for the giving of notice of the amendment within forty business days after authorisation. On 31 July 2024, DTP granted an exemption for the deferment of exhibition on the condition that the amendment be exhibited as soon as possible following the result of the election held on 26 October 2024.
106. Notices for the amendment were sent out on 31st October with exhibition concluding on Monday 9th December 2024. Exhibition was timed to avoid being close to the Christmas period and ending just into December.

UDF SPECIFIC SUBMISSION ISSUES

3.7 Theme 7 - Car Parking, Roads and Intersections

107. The submissions about car parking changes, pedestrian crossings, intersection changes, and the clocktower are only relevant to the UDF. These are not matters that are being proposed by the amendment. In response to submissions, Council has resolved to delete map 1 from the DDO52 (UDF Framework Plan) and the removal of the UDF as a background document in the Planning Scheme. This is shown in the Day 1 DDO52. Nonetheless, a response is provided to these submissions.

Car Parking

108. Whilst not proposed by the amendment, Figure 4 shows the existing and proposed car parking locations outlined in the UDF:

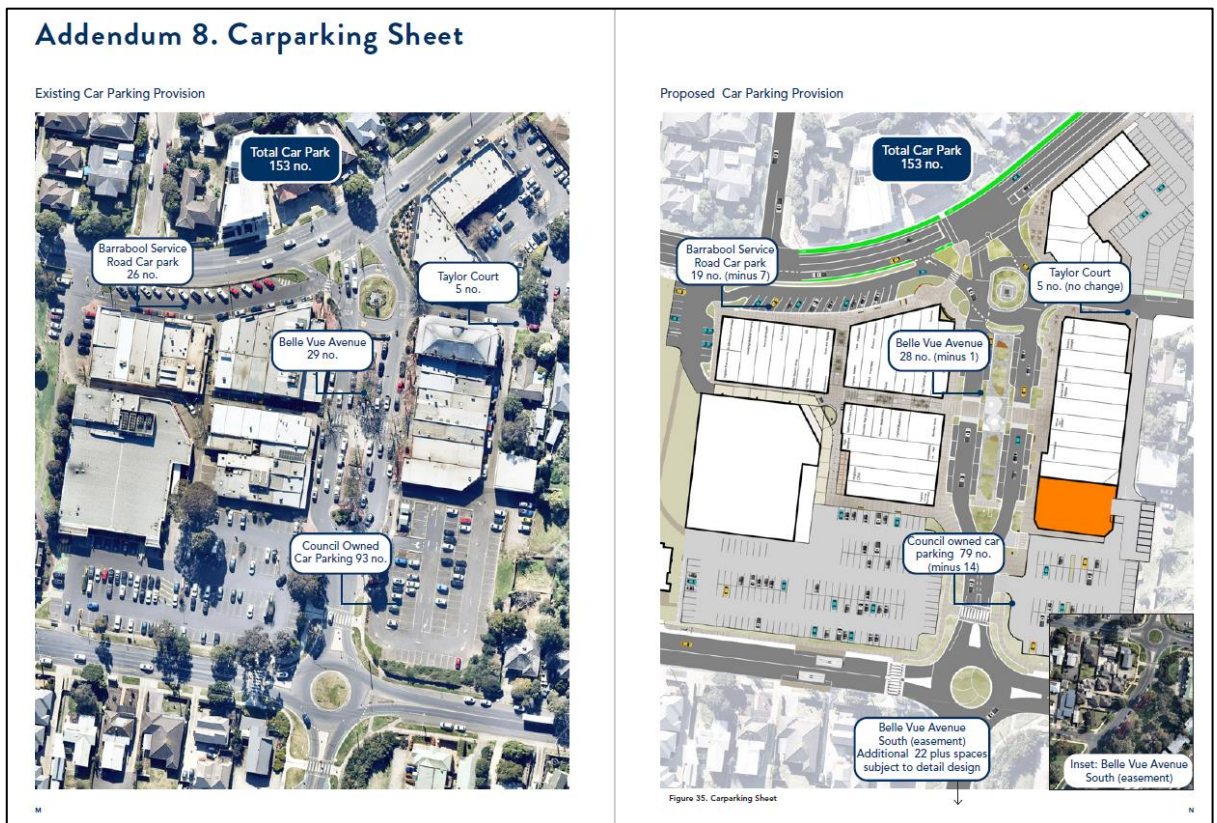


Figure 4 – UDF Car parking changes

109. The UDF proposes a net loss of eight spaces as part of significant upgrades for the public realm, primarily from along Barrabool Road and Belle Vue Avenue.

110. The UDF proposes a re-direction of car parking spaces to the south of the Village Centre in Belle Vue Avenue with twenty-two spaces lost from within the Centre if the potential development site on Council's land proceeds, which itself would involve the loss of 14 spaces. Should this not proceed, these 14 spaces will remain in situ.
111. These plans do not show the loss of car parking if the potential development site to the south of Amcal and on the Woolworths site is developed. Any future development of these sites may require alternate forms of parking to be provided on site, albeit in a different configuration such as basement or multistorey. Any form of development will need to meet the design guidelines of the DDO52 and be assessed against these and other provisions of the Planning Scheme.
112. An independent study of parking prepared as part of the UDF preparation showed that demand peaked at 90% in off-street car parks during the week and at the weekend for less than one hour. Parking demand on-street peaked at 70% during the week and lower on the weekends. These findings show that parking is available in the Village.
113. The UDF proposes the development of a parking precinct plan to manage car parking in the Village Centre to ensure parking time limits more closely reflect the needs of businesses and services in the village. This form of parking management may increase the utilisation of the existing parking supply.
114. The loss of parking is always an issue for the community. The UDF outlines how alternatives can be implemented to provide new areas for parking. Parking provision and amounts are not addressed in the Day 1 DDO52.
115. As part of any new development within the Village, car parking will be addressed and considered as part of any planning permit applications.

Pedestrian Crossings

116. There are four existing pedestrian links shown across Belle Vue Avenue. However, two of them (circled in red in Figure 5) are not 'Key Pedestrian Routes' and not physically in place on the ground, and these two lines should have been removed from the adopted UDF Framework Plan. This is in line with the Council resolution adopting the UDF but was an error to not correct the Framework Plan in the adopted version.

117. This was however updated on the UDF's 'Streetscape Concept Plan' as shown in Figure 6.

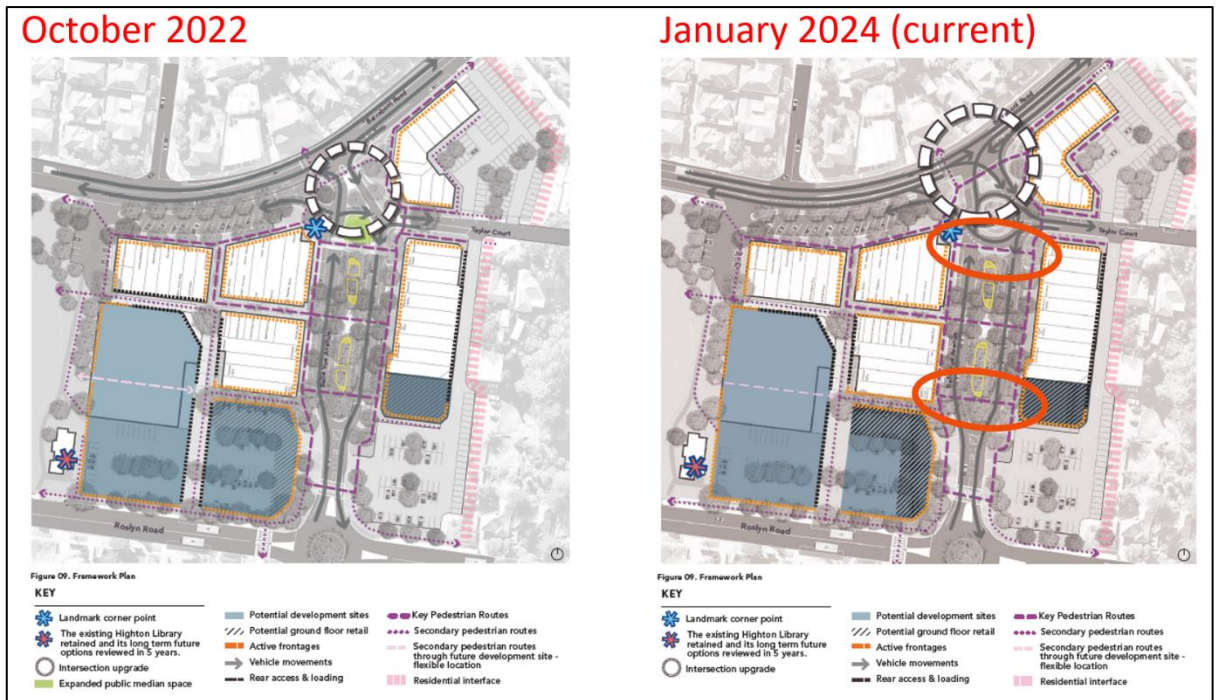


Figure 5 – UDF Framework Plan - pedestrian crossing map changes

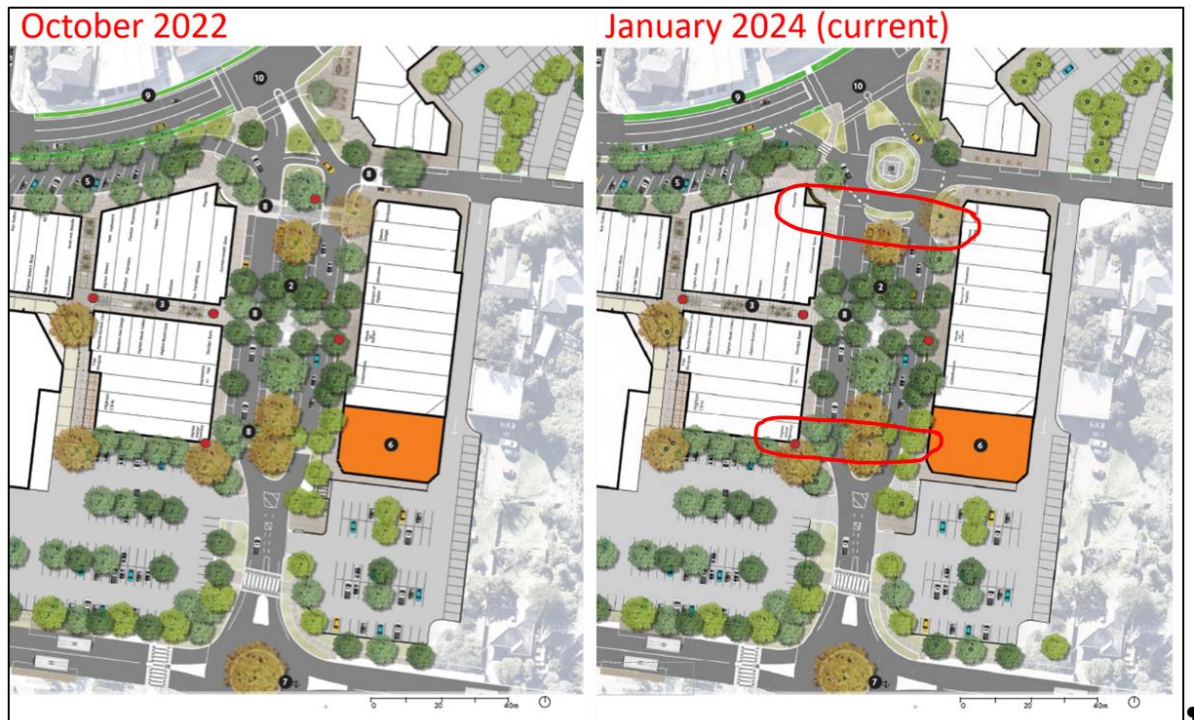


Figure 6 – Streetscape Concept Plan changes

Intersection and Clock Tower

118. There are no changes proposed to the intersection of Barrabool Road and Belle Vue Avenue in accordance with the Council resolution of 22 October 2022. Whilst the intersection upgrade

designation symbol on the Framework Plan in the updated UDF was not removed, the underlying road configuration was changed back to the current layout.

119. There are no changes to the clocktower.

3.8 Theme 8 - Potential Development Sites

120. Highton Village is a thriving centre that plays a local day-to-day retail and hospitality role within Highton. As the much larger centres of Waurin Ponds and Belmont cover the wider catchment, Highton will continue to serve a local, neighbourhood centre role. The Village Centre currently comprises 7,000sqm retail floor space with a mix of unique and independent stores offering the opportunity to continue to capitalise on the trend in retailing and consumer behaviour to seek 'experiences' rather than just a marketplace for goods and services. The Geelong Retail Strategy identifies the need for an additional 1,000sqm of floorspace in the Highton Village by 2031 to meet the shopping needs of the community.

121. The Highton UDF identifies where this additional floorspace could be provided with potential development sites.

122. These sites were identified as they are logical locations for further expansion within the extent of the Centre. The sites are contiguous to the Belle Vue Ave strip, are in large parcels, and have single owners. These factors would allow for easier development planning and investment.

123. The potential development site around Woolworths is already zoned C1Z and could be considered for a commercial/mixed use redevelopment at any time under this zoning.

124. The other potential site on the eastern side of Belle Vue Ave is under Council ownership and would be subject of a public process if it is to be considered for any redevelopment.

125. Economic impacts of amendments are considered in a wider sense and for achieving a net community benefit rather than at a micro business level. Private economic impacts are not considered a relevant planning consideration. Whilst the UDF nominates potential development sites, the amendment does not approve these or make them happen and there is no short-term time identified in the UDF for these to occur.

126. The laneway south of Nardi's Cellarbrations would need to move further southward under any future building on the potential development site. This is shown in map 2 of the Day 1 DDO52. The

laneway would not be removed altogether but rather relocated further south. Access to the rear of the shops would be accommodated in this scenario.

3.9 Theme 9 – Impact on Public Facilities

Library

127. The UDF identifies that the library is retained and that its long-term options be reviewed in five years. The UDF does not make any plans for this site if a future decision relocates or closes the library. The Geelong Regional Library Corporation will make any future library operation decisions.

Toilets

128. Public toilets – an essential infrastructure in an activity centre – would need to be relocated in event of potential development occurring on the eastern side of Belle Vue Ave south of Nardi's. This means they could be relocated elsewhere in the Council car park or incorporated into any development rather than removed altogether.

129. There are no plans for this now as the site is only marked as a potential development site. We acknowledged that the UDF Framework Plan does not show an alternate location for these facilities.

130. As this potential development site is Council owned, any potential development of this site is within Council's control and would need to go through a public process for any sale and planning permission for any redevelopment. Council will be able to direct how the provision of public toilets is managed as part of that process.

Centre Maintenance/Public Realm Improvements

131. Council services continue to be provided in the Centre and are unaffected by the amendment or UDF. However, the following responds to this point of submission.

132. Whilst the Village Centre is a success for the local community there are challenges and opportunities for improvement. It has been many years since the streetscapes in Highton Village have been updated and some infrastructure is old and tired and presents hazards for walkers that need attention. Without an overall plan for investment, Council considered that upgrades and maintenance of infrastructure could be replaced in an ad hoc way. The UDF will guide this future investment and Council budget allocations and work programs.

133. The UDF includes streetscape upgrade works in Barrabool Road, Village Walk, Belle Vue Arcade, the rear laneway, and Belle Vue Avenue to emphasise pedestrian routes and create a unified material palette throughout the Village Centre. These street and landscape works, including any changes to the car parking along Barrabool Road are not being implemented by Amendment C457ggee but would undertaken by Council as separate future capital works projects.
134. There is no budget allocation in this financial year's budget for the capital works and projects identified in the UDF but there have been funds for footpath upkeep/repairs that have been allocated to the Centre as outlined in Submission No. 12.

4 RESPONSE TO EVIDENCE

135. There has been no calling of expert witnesses by other parties and consequently no circulation of evidence. Council therefore has no response to this requirement of the Panel Direction 13 for our Part B submission.

5 COUNCIL'S FINAL POSITION

136. The Day 1 amendment documents Council's changes to the amendment in response to the submissions and we continue to support these changes.
137. Council submits the Day 1 amendment appropriately implements planning direction for new development whilst responding to the expressed community views from submissions.
138. In Council's view, the Day 1 amendment is justified, implements the Planning Policy Framework and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and has been prepared in accordance with Ministerial Directions, planning practice notes and relevant urban design principles.
139. The Amendment will support Council's settlement strategies through allowing for a modest increased housing opportunities in an activity centre that is serviced with transport, employment and commercial activities while balanced with preserving the local village character expressed by the community.
140. Council submits that the Amendment addresses and implements the design and development aspects of the UDF's vision for Highton Village (UDF p.26):
- Highton Village is and will be the heart of the community with a unique, vibrant, leafy feel. High quality public spaces will encourage visitors to linger longer and promote community interaction. The movement network and design of buildings will provide for a range of activities and prioritise the pedestrian experience.*
141. Accordingly, we seek the Panel's support for what we consider is an amendment that will provide development parameters for Highton Village whilst respecting and maintaining its unique feel as described above.
142. That concludes Council's submission.