

**21.02**21/12/2017  
C76**SETTLEMENT**

This Clause provides local content to support Clause 11 Settlement of the State Planning Policy Framework.

**21.02-1**06/03/2020  
C85gpla**Settlement Patterns****Context and issues**

The Shire consists of numerous small townships and settlements classified as 57 localities, 35 communities and 14 townships.

The largest town is Bannockburn with approximately 19% of the population, followed by Teesdale with approximately 8% of the population. All other townships have a population of less than 1000 people. This highlights the dispersed nature of the population in Golden Plains Shire.

Other urban centres, small towns and communities which have grown include Haddon, Inverleigh, Lethbridge, Linton, Meredith, Ross Creek, Scarsdale and Smythesdale. These settlements perform important living, retail, service and community roles to residents and the rural community.

There is a significant difference in the settlement patterns between the north and south. The settlement pattern is based on historic rural service centres and nineteenth century mining towns, however, over time the role of many towns has been changing to one of commuting areas to the regional centres of Ballarat, Colac and Geelong.

The majority of growth has occurred in the small towns and communities at the south-east and north-west as more people come from Melbourne and the regional cities looking for affordable housing and a country lifestyle, but still close enough to services and facilities in Ballarat and Geelong. In the south-east of the municipality the population has increased rapidly, by about 40% between 2005 and 2015. In the north-west area, the population increased by nearly 6% during the same period.

In the north-west:

- Past decisions have seen a proliferation of subdivisions and subsequent rural residential developments.
- It is recognised as an area that reflects a rural residential character, centred on communities of interest.
- There is a large proportion of existing small lots, which include old crown titles.
- Many existing small lots have been developed for rural residential purposes and distinct communities have developed in these areas.
- To the north-west, all of the towns in the Central Highlands Water district are supplied with an interconnected, potable water supply. There is sufficient capacity to cater for all anticipated growth likely over the next 20 years.
- Historic subdivisions have left a legacy of fragmented landholdings in the north-west of the Shire and there is a proliferation of low density residential development in isolated areas devoid of appropriate infrastructure.
- There is capacity to consider growth and development in accordance with the Northern Settlement Strategy.

In the south-east:

- Urban type development is focused around townships.
- All water is treated and the existing systems, with minor augmentations, are adequate to cater for the existing populations and anticipated growth in the immediate future.

The Shire contains a relatively large number of small townships. Residential development is supported within the boundaries of these townships.

There is pressure for subdivision and development outside these townships particularly for subdivision and hobby farm development close to Geelong and Ballarat. Residential development is not supported in these areas, except where supported and directed by the *Northern Settlement Strategy* (Golden Plains Shire Council, October 2019).

Better management of urban development in township areas affected by flooding, salinity or wildfire is required.

Future use and development of urban centres and small towns will largely centre on the traditional character and form of these towns. The maintenance of a clear distinction between urban and rural areas is essential to continued agriculture and efficient township development and maximise the use of infrastructure. This is supported by the Northern Settlement Strategy which directs the investigation of development located within close proximity to the City of Ballarat boundary.

Rezoning will be required in Bannockburn to accommodate expected future growth before current supply is taken up. In recent years, Bannockburn has experienced steady population growth. Such growth will require the prudent management of land use and development in order to maintain and enhance the town's features, assets and the community's vision.

Smythesdale, Haddon and Cambrian Hill have been identified as locations appropriate for growth (or appropriate to investigate for growth) in the north of the Shire. These settlements are within close proximity to Ballarat and provide a range of services which support the north west district. Inverleigh is also experiencing pressure for increased residential development. However, there is limited opportunity for new residential development within the established historic township area due to potential flooding and limited land sizes for effluent disposal.

### Objectives and strategies

#### **Objective 1 To make efficient use of land.**

- Strategy 1.1 Locate population growth to urban areas provided with water, sewerage and social infrastructure.
- Strategy 1.2 Reduce environmental impacts caused by existing unserviced urban development.
- Strategy 1.3 Improve service delivery to urban centres townships, including sewerage infrastructure and treated water supply where it is lacking.
- Strategy 1.4 Avoid extension of infrastructure services and urban use and development outside identified urban growth boundaries.
- Strategy 1.5 Support co-location of complementary community facilities.
- Strategy 1.6 Require development infrastructure to be provided in conjunction with intensification of residential development.
- Strategy 1.7 Avoid battle axe blocks in greenfield development.

#### **Objective 2 To encourage the consolidation of existing township areas.**

- Strategy 2.1 Direct residential development to township areas that have reticulated water, sewerage and stormwater drainage and community services and facilities.
- Strategy 2.2 Require infill development in towns lacking sewerage treatment to provide onsite effluent treatment.
- Strategy 2.3 Avoid unserviced urban development.

#### **Objective 3 To lessen conflict in rural areas between agriculture and non-agricultural land uses.**

- Strategy 3.1 Avoid use and development that may undermine the viability and sustainability of adjacent land in agricultural production.
- Strategy 3.2 Protect land in agricultural production from adjoining uses and development inconsistent with normal farming practices.

### Implementation

The strategies for settlement will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

#### **Policy guidelines**

- Requiring applications to rezone land for urban purposes to demonstrate that alternative suitable locations are not available.

- Support a progressive series of land rezoning within Bannockburn, in line with the staged development of the town taking into account sustainable land supply, growth capacity and infrastructure provision.
- Support growth in the north of the Shire in accordance with the Northern Settlement Strategy.
- Coordinating land release, subdivision and infrastructure servicing through the preparation of structure plans for all urban areas, with defined urban boundaries.
- Applying Local Planning Policy Clause 22.11 – Floodplain Management.

**Application of zones and overlays**

- Applying a Salinity Management Overlay over areas affected by salinity.

**Further strategic work**

- Establish an urban edge to all settlements. Zoning will be used to provide a clear urban growth boundary.
- Prepare a local policy to protect farming land from inappropriate land uses.

**21.02-2**

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**Townships**

**Context and issues**

Over time the Golden Plains Shire’s towns will become more urbanised. There is substantial supply of residential land in all urban centres and towns in the Shire which means new demands for residential development can be accommodated within the existing areas of towns.

In addition, significant scope exists for the consolidation of sites and intensification of development in existing towns without altering the character or quality of these areas.

At current rates of demand there is in excess of a 20 year supply of Rural Living Zoned land in the north of the Shire.

Limited amounts of medium density housing are currently provided in the Golden Plains Shire. With changing housing needs there is a necessity to promote a wider range of housing types and set clear direction for the form and design of this development. The Shire’s township hierarchy framework and commercial and retail hierarchy is:

**Table 1: Township Hierarchy Framework**

Status	Township	Description
Sub-regional commercial and retail centre	Bannockburn	Higher order and speciality commercial and retail development to service the south east portion of the Shire.
District commercial and retail centres	Inverleigh	Commercial and retail needs to service the surrounding area
	Linton	
	Meredith	
	Rokewood	
Town commercial and retail centres	Smythesdale	Commercial and retail needs to service immediate residents.
	Corindhap	
	Dereel	
	Haddon	
	Lethbridge	

Status	Township	Description
	Napoleons	
	Ross Creek	
	Scarsdale	
	Teesdale	
	Other towns	

## Objectives and strategies

### Objective 1 To direct commercial and retail development to appropriate locations.

- Strategy 1.1 Locate higher order and specialty retail services in Bannockburn.
- Strategy 1.2 Locate commercial and retail services in Bannockburn and district commercial and retail centres.
- Strategy 1.3 Locate commercial and retail services that service immediate residents in town commercial and retail centres.
- Strategy 1.4 Avoid linear commercial and retail development along highways and beyond identified commercial precincts.
- Strategy 1.5 Provide a sufficient supply of commercially zoned land.

### Objective 2 To ensure the efficient use of commercially zoned land.

- Strategy 2.1 Support a compact form of commercial use and development to reinforce the viability and vitality of commercial and retail centres.

### Objective 3 To provide for a variety of lot sizes to meet the requirements of all age groups, household types, different lifestyles and to provide housing choice.

- Strategy 3.1 Provide a density, number and variety of lots within residential areas relevant to the needs of the community.
- Strategy 3.2 Support lot sizes within established urban township areas typical of existing development.
- Strategy 3.3 Require housing lots to be connected to reticulated water and sewerage systems (when available) and underground stormwater drainage.
- Strategy 3.4 Avoid the creation of lot sizes under 400 square metres that are not within walking distance of commercial and retail centres and community facilities.

### Objective 4 To accommodate medium density development adjacent to community services and facilities and within proximity to commercial and retail centres.

- Strategy 4.1 Discourage medium density housing that is not within walking distance of commercial and retail centres and community facilities.
- Strategy 4.2 Support medium density housing located in urban areas that have reticulated water and sewerage systems.

## Implementation

The strategies for townships will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

### Policy guidelines

- Consider pedestrian and transport facilities within the urban area and the standard of access to shopping and community service areas.

### Application of Zones and Overlays

- Applying the Commercial 1 Zone to commercial precincts.
- Applying the Township zone for smaller townships where the separation of land uses is not critical to the function of the town.
- Applying a Development Plan Overlay – for large undeveloped areas zoned for urban development.

**Further work**

- Investigate expansion of retail floor space at Bannockburn.
- Prepare structure plans for the planned development of the commercial and retail areas in Meredith and Smythesdale Inverleigh, Linton, Meredith and Smythesdale for highway commercial services.
- Investigate the Cambrian Hill locality for future growth.
- Prepare a new structure plan for Haddon.
- Review the Smythesdale Urban Design Framework.

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**Rural areas**

**Context and issues**

Over the past two decades the Shire has continued to experience demand for rural residential development.

The north-west area of the Shire contains Rural Activity and Farming zoning that is interspersed with large areas of Rural Living zoning.

There is a considerable amount of potential infill rural residential development within the Rural Living zoning of the north-west area. No additional land will be rezoned for Rural Living without alignment with the planning scheme.

House lot excisions can be detrimental to the efficient operation of farming activities and can result in isolated residential development without adequate access to social and physical services.

House lot excisions can lessen the capacity of an area to undertake agricultural production as conflicts can arise between residential and farming land uses.

It is therefore important that any house lot excision takes into account the infrastructure and environmental constraints that generally exist in this area and the existing supply of available rural residential land.

Other areas of the Shire have a number of townships and community areas containing Low Density Residential zoning.

These areas are often located on the periphery of urban type residential areas, and reflect larger residential development with lot sizes usually ranging from 1 hectare to 4 hectare. Subdivision provisions under the zone would allow for these areas to be subdivided into lot sizes down to 0.4 hectare in line with the *Domestic Waste Water Management Plan* (RMCG, July 2015). This would substantially increase the overall lot yield and infrastructure servicing requirements within these areas.

Many proposals are isolated or separated from existing residential areas where services and facilities are provided.

**Objectives and strategies**

**Objective 1 To control the density and overall lot sizes of land in the north west area and Low Density Residential Zone according to environmental conditions and established character.**

Strategy 1.1 Require new subdivision to recognise and maintain the surrounding lot configurations and lot size.

Strategy 1.2 Avoid subdivision within water supply catchment areas in order to protect water quantity and quality

**Objective 2 To avoid indiscriminate subdivision of land in the north west area and Low Density Residential Zones**

Strategy 2.1 Limit the subdivision of land that will be incompatible with the utilisation of the land for sustainable resource use.

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- Strategy 2.2 Require any new subdivision of land to provide appropriate infrastructure, including drainage and roads and integrated transport plans.
- Strategy 2.3 Require lots to provide for on site effluent disposal including on-going maintenance of septic systems.

### **Objective 3 To discourage dwellings and house lot excisions on rural properties.**

- Strategy 3.1 Require any application for house lot excision to demonstrate it will not compromise the future capacity of agricultural production on the property and surrounds and on adjacent land.

### **Objective 4 To ensure dwellings and house lot excisions on rural properties, where permitted, are appropriate.**

- Strategy 4.1 Ensure lots for an existing dwelling excised under the provisions of the Farming Zone have a maximum size of 2 hectares.
- Strategy 4.2 Design and locate lots to minimise impact on significant environmental features such as remnant vegetation, public park reserves and waterways.
- Strategy 4.3 Require dwellings excised under the provisions of the Farming Zone to be in a habitable condition and comply with the Building Code of Australia to this extent.
- Strategy 4.4 Maintain adequate distance within the existing lot around the dwelling to reasonably limit impacts of adjacent agricultural activity.
- Strategy 4.5 Support planting of vegetation within the excised lot to reduce any potential impacts of adjacent agricultural activity.

### **Objective 5 To maintain the general use and character of rural areas in the Shire.**

- Strategy 5.1 Avoid subdivision that is likely to lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character of the rural area.
- Strategy 5.2 Require applications for subdivision to demonstrate that the clustering of lots will not limit the productive use and development of the larger lots in the subdivision or surrounding properties.

## **Implementation**

The strategies for rural areas will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

### **Policy guidelines**

- Where house lot excision is permitted:
  - Require subdivision of land which excises a dwelling be designed in a manner which supports continued agricultural use of the land and does not prejudice surrounding rural production activities or cause negative impact on environmental or landscape qualities of the area.
  - Require excision of a lot and dwelling in the north west area of the Shire to take into account infrastructure and environmental constraints, existing rural residential development and the existing supply of available rural residential land.
- Give consideration to the following environmental, economic and social impacts of low-density residential development:
  - effluent disposal
  - infrastructure services
  - transport
  - access to commercial and community services
  - protection of existing environmental quality
  - the interface with rural/farming areas

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- land development hazards such as land subject to inundation, areas affected by salinity and areas prone to wildfire
- land capability taking into consideration lot sizes and neighbouring areas capable of containing on-site effluent disposal.
- Have regard to existing lot sizes of the immediate area. Consider maintenance and provision of important rural and community amenity and characteristics and development assessments against identified land capability assessment.

### **Application of zones and overlays**

- Applying the Low Density Residential Zone to residential areas in and around the major towns.

### **Further strategic work**

- Prepare a policy to guide dwellings and subdivision in the Farming Zone.

### **Reference document**

- Northern Settlement Strategy (Golden Plains Shire, October 2019).