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Nagambie Growth Management Strategy

# Main Street Plan

*FINAL*

FOR THE STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL

December 2008



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# 1 Introduction

Nagambie's population is growing dramatically, albeit from a relatively small base. In recent times, the Strathbogie Shire has experienced increasing interest from the Melbourne and Shepparton property markets, particularly in the Strathbogie Ranges, Avenel and Nagambie. Building approvals leapt from \$2.25M to \$7.25M in value in the year to 2006. The permanent population is expected to grow to around 4,000 people, and there will be a need to service some 7,000 altogether, including visitors and tourists. Proposed / approved developments include:

- Hotel resort accommodation including 13 units and conference facility
- Retirement village/caravan park, 208 units, 323 cabins and 72 van sites
- Proposed commercial and residential development
- New medical centre and 90 place child care facility
- The completed redevelopment of the Chinaman's Bridge caravan park, renamed the Nagambie Lakes Leisure Park, into a 5-star leisure resort, including licensed restaurant incorporating numerous annual cabin sites, powered caravan sites, camping sites and bunk houses. It has the ability to accommodate 2,000-2,500 people when full.

It is within this context that the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy will be developed. In order to deliver this comprehensive Strategy, it will consist of five separate projects that all look at individual aspects of the town, but which will be interconnected and operate as one final Strategy. They six components of the Strategy are:

- Nagambie Growth Management Strategy
- Main Street Plan
- Lakeside Connectivity and Recreation Plan
- Lake Activities and Access Framework
- Nagambie Style Guidelines
- Background Report & Appendices



1.1 Vision

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**Vision for Nagambie**

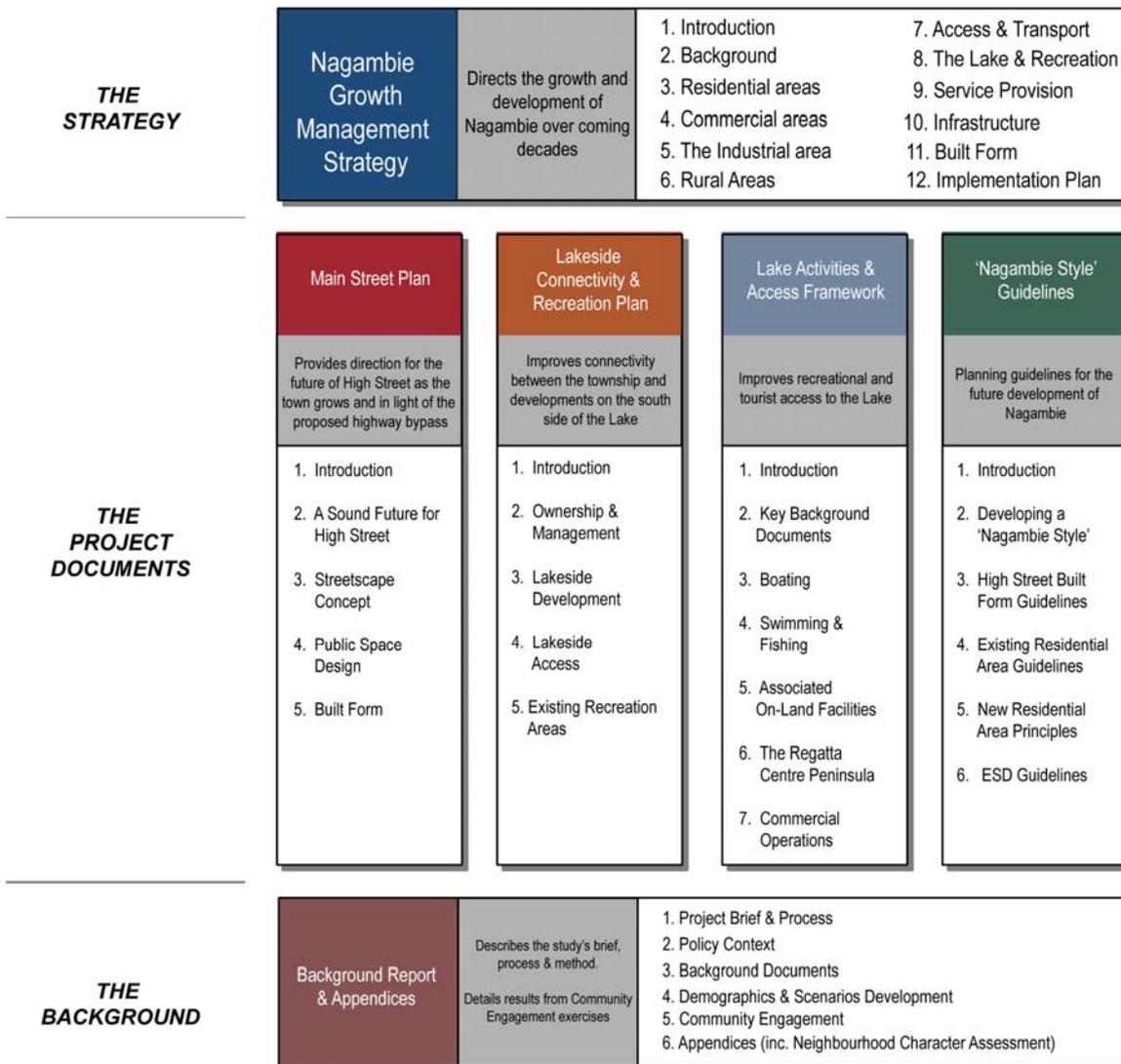
Nagambie will grow as both an agricultural service centre, and as a visitor / lifestyle / retirement centre. This is to be done in a way that:

- Maximises the economic benefits of a lakeside location to the town and the Shire.
- Strengthens character of the town in its lakeside and rural setting.
- Protects and enhances the environmental values of the lake and other natural features.
- Improves the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the town.

1.2 Structure of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy

As part of the development of the Strategy, a number of different pieces of work were commissioned by Shire. The Nagambie Growth Management Strategy is the major document, with other studies informing a number of the individual components.

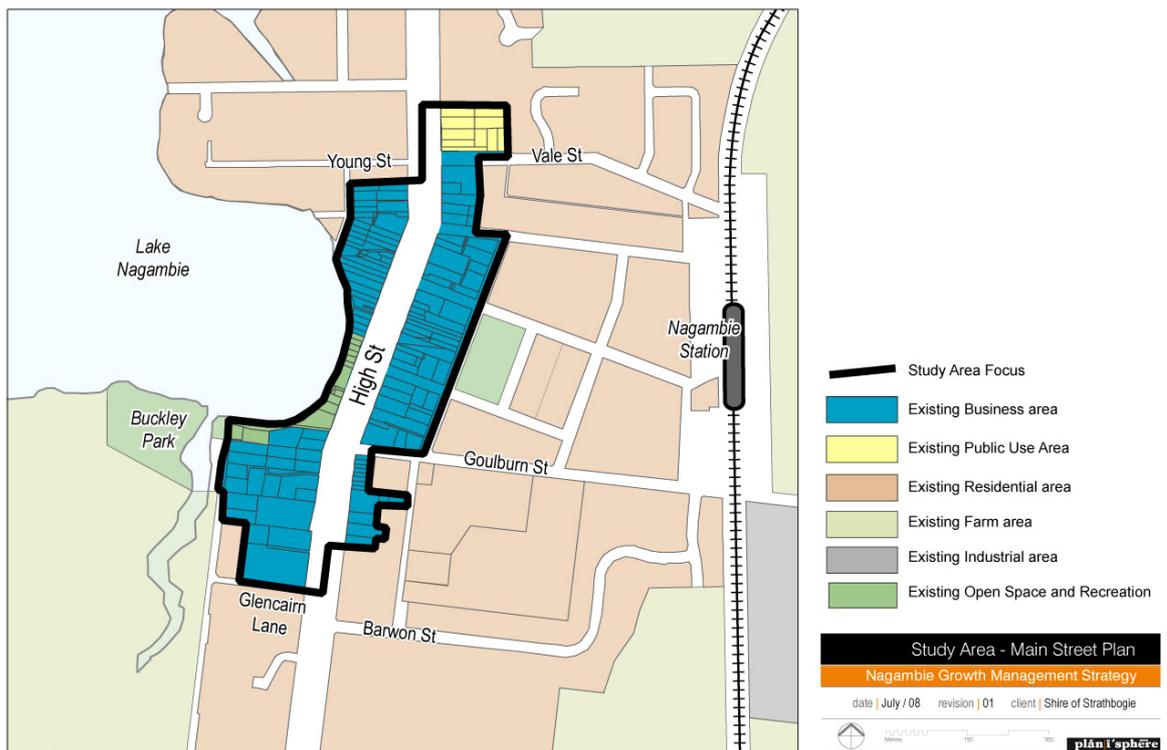
The structure of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy is detailed below.





### 1.3 The Study Area

The study area comprises Jacobson's Outlook and the Business and Public Use zoned land along High Street, which extends westward to Blayney Lane, and eastward to Filson Street.



## 2 A Sound Future for High Street

### 2.1 Introduction



High Street retail viewed from road median

The High Street commercial centre is generally bounded by Young and Vale Streets in the north, Filson Street in the east, Glencairn Lane in the south and Blayney Lane in the west. Within this area there are a number of commercial and retail uses as well as civic buildings and public land.

Higher density retail buildings, which date back to the Victorian era, are generally located between Vine and Goulburn Streets, and include shops, take-away outlets, cafes, hotels, and accommodation. At the northern and southern edges of the area are lower-density commercial land uses including service stations, a motel, supermarket and hardware stores.

The Lake Foreshore open space, Jacobson's Outlook, is a particularly significant area within the High Street commercial centre. This open space offers spectacular views across the lake from High Street and provides access to the lakeside, as well as the walking track which leads to Blayney Reserve and Buckley Park. For those passing through the township, views from the Jacobson's Outlook are particularly important as they offer the only immediate views across the Lake.

The highway forms a north-south spine which runs through the township and acts as the main street. It currently carries a high amount of traffic, including large numbers of trucks, as it is part of the main highway network that links Melbourne to Brisbane. The proposed highway bypass is anticipated to remove the vast majority of this through traffic from the town centre. This provides the opportunity to 're-imagine' High Street as a country town 'main street', instead of part of an interstate highway network.

### 2.2 Place-Making and Marketing



Community workshops and placemaking activities

The construction of the highway bypass will provide a challenge for the retailers and land owners along High Street who have benefited from a large amount of passing trade. To begin preparing for this change, a number of workshops have been held as part of the development of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy.

#### Workshop One

The first Trader's workshop was held at the Lakeside Resort Motel on 31 March 2008, attended by approximately 20 traders and others with an interest in the future of the town's 'main street'. The workshop was facilitated by Gilbert Rochecouste of Village Well, who took the participants through a place making exercise. Among other products, the workshop arrived at a set of goals, strategies and actions for:

- Streetscape/ beauty
- The Lake – visual, activities, access
- Retail mix/ marketing/ tourism/ promotion
- Shopfronts/ buildings
- Parking traffic

The key outcomes from the workshop were:

- Reinforce High Street as the main retail and community hub of Nagambie.



- Three storey buildings along High Street should be of a high architectural quality and fit into the Nagambie streetscape.
- No need for current amount of roadscape now that Bypass is going ahead. Options to reduce this include closing one lane or reducing lanes to one in each direction and introducing angled parking.
- Newer buildings are acceptable up to 3 storeys as long as they are of a good architectural quality and respond to the streetscape.
- Expansion and upgrading of Jacobson's Outlook, with moorings.
- General streetscape upgrade, footpaths, lighting, signage, trees, facilities, verandas etc.
- Revamp of Buckley Park with swimming reinstated. Development of boardwalk in sections as part of link into High Street.
- Jacobson's Outlook as a 'water activity' node close to the town.

### Workshop Two

The second Trader's workshop was held at the Mechanics Hall on 28 July 2008, with approximately 10-15 Traders in attendance. This workshop was again facilitated by Gilbert Rochecoste of Village Well who took the participants on a 'Walk the Beat' exercise to a number of locations throughout the town that included Jacobson's Outlook, the waters edge and the 'Antiques corner'.

The participants were asked the following questions at each location and were asked to write down their responses.

- What do you like best about this place?
- List ideas that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away.
- What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?
- What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements?
- Any other comments/suggestions?

The participants then returned to the Mechanics Hall to further discuss what had been spoken about during the 'Walk the Beat' and to formulate a Place Action Plan.

The key outcomes of this workshop form the Place Action Plan that has been prepared by Village Well. It is based around the developed vision for Nagambie in 2013 which is:

*"Nagambie is a welcoming and friendly food, wine and lakeside destination brimming with potential. The local traders and community embody a sense of pride and optimism for the future".*

The identified opportunities include:

- Traders tailoring opening hours to meet the needs of the community.
- Standardise opening hours to ensure consistency and allow for visitors to have adequate places to eat and shop.
- Economic Development Officer and Tourism Commerce Group to source successful target retailers from other regional centres.
- Town entry statement showcasing some of Nagambie's points of difference including the lake, wetlands and wineries.
- New branding to be released into the public forum with marketing campaign stewarded by the local traders and Action Group.
- Practical business workshops including visual merchandising and customer service.
- Beautification of streetscape through painting and planting.



Two key actions identified by the participants were the introduction of grapevines along the verandahs like Ararat and Mildura and painting of shops. It was suggested that individual vines could be sponsored by local wineries and planted/maintained by local Scouts and Girl Guides or school groups. It was also suggested that local business could donate paint or other materials.

#### Actions

- Work with Traders to make the town more attractive as a tourism destination in its own right, and in particular:
  - develop consistent trading hours for businesses along High Street that meet local community and tourism needs
  - Source successful target retailers from other regional centres
  - Design a town entry statement showcasing Nagambie's points of difference
  - Introduce a new branding of the centre
  - Run workshops on visual merchandising and customer service

### 2.3 SWOT Analysis

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Undertaking a 'SWOT' analysis provides key information about the existing conditions that exist along High Street, whilst also detailing potential futures. This allows for a number of individual elements of High Street to be examined in greater detail, whilst still taking into account the Key Objectives of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy.

#### Strengths

- Significant amount of commercially zoned land exists along High Street.
- Consistent commercial frontages in the retail area with a fine grain of buildings.
- Proximity to the Lake and Jacobson's Outlook.
- Large amount of car parking.

#### Weaknesses

- The existing supermarket to the south of Jacobson's Outlook has poor integration with the other retail areas to the north.
- There is no defined edge to the commercial area at the southern end of town.
- There are a limited number of retail outlets in the town and the retail mix does not encourage browsing.
- Lack of information and directional signage.

#### Opportunities

- The removal of truck traffic due to the proposed construction of the highway bypass.
- Further amenity improvements to the High Street streetscape to encourage further activity and visitations.
- Improved access from residential areas to the east.
- Improved access to the recreational areas of Jacobson's Outlook and the High Street median.



### Threats

- Escape expenditure to other towns such as Seymour and Shepparton due to goods and/or services not being available in town.
- New developments which are not in character with the existing streetscape.
- New developments reducing the role of High Street as the retail and community focus of Nagambie.
- Loss of passing trade after the completion of the bypass.
- Competition from future Lakeside developments.

## 3 Streetscape Concept



*The construction of the freeway bypass creates an opportunity to reconsider how High Street will work as a traditional 'Main Street' through a country town*

The proposed construction of the Highway bypass to the east of Nagambie is anticipated to greatly change the way in which High Street operates. It will remove the vast majority of through traffic from the town centre, including almost all heavy vehicles and trucks. This will however provide a challenge for the retailers and land owners along High Street who have benefited from a large amount of passing trade.

As previously detailed, the High Street traders are looking at how their business will operate in this new environment, and are exploring marketing and place-making techniques to manage, and benefit from, the change of High Street from a major highway, to a more traditional country town Main Street.

The other issues and options being explored are the spatial arrangement of the actual roadway and its surrounds is being examined to look at the opportunities that arise from the potential to 're-engineer' how traffic operates along High Street and the public realm and community benefits that could stem from that.

Options for the reconfiguration of High Street have been developed with a focus upon the potential for improvements to the public realm in and around High Street. This includes looking at ways to increase public open space and improve pedestrian and cycling access.

Issues around traffic management and parking have been discussed with VicRoads. It needs to be recognised however that High Street will still be an arterial road, and will be needed to accommodate through-traffic movements of large vehicles, even when the proposed bypass is constructed.

It should also be noted that final approval for any re-configuration of the High Street carriageways ultimately rests with organisations outside of the Shire of Strathbogie, in this case, VicRoads.

The proposed concepts for the changes to the alignment of High Street are detailed on the following pages. The concepts have been presented to the public and have been generally well received. There was general agreement from the community that the opportunity to extend Jacobson's Outlook in the southern section of High Street should be pursued, whilst the finer detail of the proposals for the central and northern sections of High Street will be re-visited once the detailed design phase is undertaken.

The plans are at the concept stage only and there will be future opportunities for further community consultation once the detailed designs are developed.

### Actions

- Obtain preliminary cost estimates to implement the 'Streetscape Concept Plan' based on the option that extends Jacobson's Outlook, as outlined in the 'Main Street Plan', and seek opportunities to secure grant monies to implement the scheme, including preparation of detailed design and construction drawings



Nagambie Growth Management Strategy | Main Street Plan

Preferred southern High Street area concept



Options for central High Street area



Concept One



Concept Two



Options for northern High Street area



Concept One



Concept Two

## 4 Public Space Design

### 4.1 Introduction

The public realm of any area is a vitally important 'civic' space which not only provides access to all the buildings and services in a particular area, but can either encourage or discourage public life and a sense of community. A poor public realm has a detrimental effect on the activities that take place in the area and makes it difficult for people to linger and enjoy being 'in public'.

It should also be noted that the design and siting of buildings also has a very strong influence on the public realm. Issues surrounding buildings are detailed at Section 5 in the Built Form Assessment.

A good public realm can benefit business, can encourage social interaction, and create a sense of civic pride in a town. There are a number of different and interrelated elements that all contribute to the quality of the public realm. For the purpose of analysis and recommendations, each of these elements of the public realm will be broken down into separate categories. These are detailed below.

### 4.2 Footpaths

#### Existing Conditions

Footpaths along High Street are generally wide and in good condition. They are predominantly concrete, however there are some different paving types such as bricks and stamped concrete used on the central median. Some side streets running from High Street do not have footpaths, but there are footpaths through Jacobson's Outlook, providing access alongside the motel and towards the Lake.

#### Strategies

- Provide high quality, safe and easily accessible footpaths for people of all abilities.
- Provide opportunities for footpath dining areas to be established.

#### Actions

- As part of the development and implementation of a priority program to gradually roll out wide and continuous footpaths throughout Nagambie:
  - Provide footpaths along High Street that cover the entire depth from shopfront to street edge
  - Prioritise the construction of footpaths along side streets that provide access to key areas of High Street (e.g. Vale, Vine, Prentice, Marie and Goulburn Streets).
  - Provide a consistent design treatment along High Street retail area that assists in visually identifying and binding the area together



*A lack of footpaths provides a barrier to safe pedestrian access throughout Nagambie. This is particularly important for an aging population.*

### 4.3 Lighting

#### Existing Conditions

Lighting is important along High Street for a number of reasons including personal safety and providing visibility for pedestrians and motorists. Lighting is an important factor in encouraging High Street to be used at night.

Due to High Street currently being a declared highway, the street lighting along its length through the commercial area is relatively good. Lighting can also come from a number of different sources such as shop windows, under awnings and from illuminated signs.

The opportunity also exists to install feature lighting to highlight some of the key features of High Street. This could include the water tower, significant trees and potentially around the edge of the Lake (under the boardwalk)

#### Strategies

- Provide adequate lighting along the length of High Street and in Jacobson's Outlook to provide visibility and personal safety.

#### Actions

- Undertake an assessment of street lighting in High Street to identify any areas of deficiency in terms of perceived pedestrian safety, and provide upgrades/improvements where required.
- Investigate funding options for the replacement of existing street lighting lamps with 'low voltage fluorescent' lamps to reduce power usage and carbon emissions.
- Investigate options for integrating feature lighting of major features along High Street such as the water tower and significant trees.

### 4.4 Weather Protection



*Existing verandas providing weather protection. Posts are a distinct feature of the verandas that still exist.*

#### Existing Conditions

Providing weather protection in retail areas is an important feature for the amenity for shoppers and other uses of the area. The existing verandas throughout High Street provide a strong visual element to the streetscape and provide a strong sense of local character.

#### Strategies

- Provide weather protection along retail streets by providing verandas or canopies that are consistent in form with those that already exist.

#### Actions

- Encourage the re-fitting of verandas (and posts) for buildings from which original verandas have been removed.
- Encourage shop owners to install sympathetically designed verandas over footpaths where there are gaps in weather protection.
- Encourage new developments to incorporate effective weather protection of the footpath from sun and rain

## 4.5 Signage



Numerous signs scattered around the streetscape contribute to a 'cluttered' look

### Existing Conditions

There is a lack of coordinated directional and gateway signage throughout Nagambie. There is however a small tourist information sign located at Jacobson's Outlook. A coordinated suite of directional signage would greatly benefit High Street, promote a greater sense of unity for Nagambie as a whole and has the potential to enhance and facilitate tourism.

The size, location and amount of signage used by businesses along High Street is mixed and varied. While signage is an important part of advertising businesses, too much signage can create visual clutter and detract from the architectural and scenic quality of the streetscape.

### Strategies

- Provide well located, high quality directional and welcoming signage for residents and tourists.
- Ensure that business signage does not overwhelm the visual landscape of High Street.

### Actions

- Develop a signage strategy for Nagambie, in partnership with Nagambie Lakes Tourism and VicRoads, to provide interpretive and directional signage to key tourist destinations, amenities, pedestrian links, car parks and transport stop locations. Utilise a consistent approach in terms of design and theming of all signage.

## 4.6 Trees & Vegetation



The High Street median provides ample room for large trees.

### Existing Conditions

There are a wide variety of street trees in High Street, predominately along the median. The number and maturity of street trees is less in the northern section of High Street, however plantings in recent years are starting to have an effect, particularly around the car parking area. A treed aspect and continuous canopy of trees throughout the entire town has been highlighted in the community engagement process as an important part of the character of Nagambie. The median itself provides a green visual base throughout High Street, which contrasts with the asphalt, stone and masonry of the roadway and buildings.

Street trees provide shade, enclosure and a pleasant visual aspect, usually in contrast to a hard urban form of asphalt, concrete and brick. Established healthy street trees are an extremely valuable asset for the community and should continue to be managed and maintained to a high standard.

Opportunities exist to increase the number of street trees along High Street, particularly along the footpath areas near the buildings. This could include widening footpaths in specific locations, or creating 'outstands' with room for trees to be planted in between car parking bays. Creating a regular pattern of street trees at a certain level of intensity can also assist to delineate the town centre, whilst providing social and environmental benefits.

A further opportunity exists to develop a consistent planting of a flowering species of tree along High Street that would create a spectacular visual 'show'. This could then act as a basis for a festival based upon the particular species used. (i.e. Flowering gum or Jacaranda festival). Selection of the tree species would need to take into account a number of factors such as suitability to a main street, safety, time of flowering and ways to prevent falling leaves and flowers entering the Lake. This is a long term option that could be explored as part of a review of the Strathbogie Shire Council Urban Tree Management Plan.

A third opportunity that was identified during workshops with the Traders, was to introduce grapevines along the verandahs like some other towns have done (Ararat and Mildura). It was suggested that individual vines could be sponsored by local wineries and planted/maintained by

the Traders and other local service groups. This would provide a softening of the built form throughout High Street, whilst also linking back into the surrounding food and wine offer.

Jacobson's Outlook is currently an open space with a small number of trees located within it. Any street tree planting programme should ensure that views across Jacobson's Outlook to the water from High Street are not impeded by a large number of trees.

### Strategies

- Retain, protect and enhance the existing street trees along High Street.
- Increase the number of street trees along High Street.
- Preserve the long distance views across the lake from Jacobson's Outlook.

### Actions

- Develop and implement a priority street tree planting program for the High Street area
- Continue to implement the 'Strathbogje Shire Council Urban Tree Management Plan'.
- Provide new locations for street trees through the widening of footpaths, or the creation of 'outstands' as outlined in the '*Streetscape Concept Plan*'
- Work with Traders and other service groups to investigate options for the planting of grape vines along verandahs

## 4.7 Public Facilities

### Existing Conditions

There are numerous public facilities provided along High Street, however most of them are concentrated along the median. They include the toilet block, picnic table style seating (also at Jacobson's Outlook) and rubbish/recycling bins. These facilities appear to be mainly directed at providing places for travellers to stop and rest.

There appears to be a lack of seating and bins along the footpaths near the buildings. Changing the focus of providing facilities to travellers to local residents is an opportunity that is dependant upon a number of factors. This includes the capacity of the footpaths in front of the buildings to accommodate additional structures, and the most optimum position for those structures to be located.

The development of a coordinated suite of public furniture can assist in 'knitting' an area together, display the identity of Nagambie, and also reduce maintenance and repair costs.

### Strategies

- Provide public facilities such as toilets, seating and rubbish bins for both travellers and local residents.
- Provide a coordinated suite of public street furniture.

### Actions

- Undertake an audit of existing public facilities and develop a maintenance and replacement schedule as required.
- Develop a coordinated suite of public street furniture that reflects the local character of Nagambie.



*The public toilets and pedestrian crossing creates a focal point of activity*

4.8

Links / Access



*Opportunities exist to improve access throughout Jacobson's Outlook, and to and from the High Street retail area.*

**Existing Conditions**

High Street is the current 'heart' of Nagambie, with its retail and community role well established. As such, it does not operate in a vacuum, and the links to other parts of the town are very important. Currently vehicles are well catered for through the provision of roads, however there are opportunities to improve access for cyclists and pedestrians.

A key part of this is establishing key accessways to other activity areas, and then improving the conditions and amenity of those access ways. Key areas that have the opportunity to provide improved connections to High Street include:

- The Regatta centre.
- Social services such as the hospital, library and schools.
- The train station.
- Public open spaces such as Buckley Park and the River Street Reserve.
- Surrounding residential areas.

Ways to improve the links to these areas from High Street include upgrading (or constructing) footpaths, providing road crossing points, introducing directional signage and improving the permeability of the street network.

Opportunities to provide public access along the rear of the commercial premises to the north of Jacobson's Outlook should be also be explored. The creation of public access in this area will also facilitate the development of a 'waterside' accessway for pedestrians (and potentially cyclists) all the way from the Regatta Centre to the River Street Reserve. This accessway could take the form of a boardwalk over the water, or requiring part of the land to the rear of the commercial premises to be used when they are developed.

**Strategies**

- Improve connectivity between High Street and Regatta Centre.
- Improve connectivity between High Street and the River Street Reserve.
- Provide high quality and safe access ways for cyclists and pedestrians from High Street to a number of key areas throughout Nagambie.
- Encourage students to cycle and walk to schools.

**Actions**

- Include in the Strathbogie MSS, a policy requiring developers of the commercial lots to the north of Jacobson's Outlook with an interface with Lake Nagambie, to provide public access along the waters edge, either on land or via other means such as boardwalks.
- Establish bicycle lanes along key roads that provide access to and from High Street and the residential areas.
- Investigate the potential for additional pedestrian and cyclist crossing points along High and Goulburn Streets.

4.9

Interface with the Lake



**Existing Conditions**

There are two very different ways in which High Street currently interfaces with Lake Nagambie. The first is at Jacobson's Outlook where a public open space fronts onto the Lake, providing visual



*There is currently a mix of interface treatments to the edge of the Lake*

and physical access for all. The steep topography of the area could restrict access to the water's edge for those with mobility issues.

A key objective of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy is to maximise public access to Lake Nagambie and its edge. This exists to a degree at Jacobson's Outlook; however opportunities to improve access include options to construct a boardwalk along the water's edge that can also double as a boat dock for private and commercial craft. It would be a short term informal docking area, providing access to High Street from other areas around the Lake. Opportunities for the establishment of a tourist boat/water taxi departure point in this area should also be pursued to improve the tourist provision along High Street.

The second way in which High Street interfaces with the Lake is at the rear of the commercial businesses on the western side of High Street. There is no uncontrolled public access to these areas, although some businesses such as 'The Jetty' and the hotel have created spaces near the Lake frontage that are part of their businesses. Other premises though have 'privatised' back yards facing onto the water.

A key opportunity is the development/continuation of the waterside accessway from Jacobson's Outlook, along the rear of the businesses, along Bryde Street and extending to the River Street Reserve. The development of this link would open up this area for public access, provide a key off-road link to St. Joseph's Primary School, the hospital and the River Street Reserve.

Stormwater from the gutters of High Street flows into Lake Nagambie. Measures should be undertaken to limit the amount of gross pollutant matter entering into the Lake system.

#### Strategies

- Development of a short term boat mooring area along the edge of Jacobson's Outlook.
- Utilise Jacobson's Outlook as a tourist boat departure point for cruises to other areas on the Lakes and along the Goulburn River, such as the Tabilk Winery.
- Improve connectivity between High Street and the River Street Reserve.
- Reduce the amount of gross pollutant matter entering the Lake.

#### Actions

- Install gross pollutant traps on all stormwater outlets into Lake Nagambie.

## 5 Built Form

The built form assessment looks at the three dimensional form of the High Street commercial centre. The buildings of a town centre play a key role in strengthening the identity of a place and influencing the function of an area, which is particularly important in Nagambie. This assessment covers issues relating to the scale and form of the buildings, how to encourage design quality and buildings that support the achievement of the key objectives of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy.

### 5.1 Image and Heritage



*Historic buildings such as the Mechanics Institute contribute to the sense of place in Nagambie*

The historic buildings and streetscape of High Street is the key feature of the township. It contributes to its sense of place and identity, whilst also providing economic activity through tourism. There are instances however where the visual importance of these buildings and the streetscape is often detracted from, through a clutter of advertising signs and power lines.

The aim for High Street is to retain these highly valued historic buildings and streetscape, whilst complimenting them with new buildings that are of a very high quality of contemporary architecture and urban design.

RBA Architects have been commissioned to undertake a Heritage Study for the Shire. As of August 2008 they have undertaken a preliminary analysis and have identified several key buildings in the commercial area with potential heritage values.

### 5.2 The 'Grain' of Buildings



*Narrow shopfronts along High Street*

The 'grain' or density of buildings refers to the number of buildings that exists across a certain length of frontage. It is varied along High Street, with a concentration of buildings between Jacobson's Outlook and Vine Street. The buildings in this area predominately have no front and side setbacks, narrow frontages and present as a traditional shopping strip. To the north and south of this area, buildings have a mixture of front side setbacks, with spaces in between and in front of buildings, which creates a coarser grain. This is reflective of larger lot sizes in this area, and the types of services that operate on the periphery of a commercial area, such as garages, larger format retail and residential houses.

It is proposed that the 'fine grain' of the streetscape be retained as part of any larger development proposals. This can be achieved through the use of different materials, vertical articulation with recesses or door/window combinations that are reflective of the existing pattern.

### 5.3 The Future Character of High Street – Developing a 'Nagambie Style'

Nagambie is an attractive country town with a strong individual identity because of its location on the banks of a lake – in fact from some viewpoints the lake dominates the town. Topographically, the town is relatively flat, but stands of indigenous vegetation (eg River Red Gums) and the distant backdrop of the Strathbogie Ranges link the town strongly to its landscape context.

In terms of built form, there are interesting historic buildings on High Street, and some fine houses – but take away the lake, and the town might be hard to distinguish from other similar settlements across country Victoria.

As the town is expected to grow very substantially in coming decades, a significant opportunity arises. The sheer quantity of new development anticipated is likely to change the town's character,



for better or for worse. The opportunity is to use the new development to help create a new and stronger urban character for the town – one that is founded in the sense of place that the town already has. The obvious starting point for this is the lake.

There is a tradition of waterside design in the western world based on use of weatherboard and other 'lighter' materials. Simple, lightly constructed boat sheds, fisherman's sheds, bathing boxes and pleasure structures such as pier pavilions exemplify this style.

In seaside environments this approach has often been overlaid with nautical detailing and sun-sea-and-sand colours. This would seem alien for an inland town like Nagambie.

In Nagambie's case, the 'palette' of colours and textures might more appropriately be taken from the town's landscape setting. The key colours that can be found in the local landscape are associated with native trees and grasses, and include olive green and varying shades of beige and brown. Locally appropriate 'natural' materials might include timber and sheeting products, perhaps with metal or stone details. Corrugated metal roofs, perhaps in the same colour palette, would complement the lightness of design. Shiny or reflective materials, other than glazing, would be avoided.

Building forms would be simple in basic plan but with strong articulation, particularly of elevations. Plans of larger buildings would fit more easily into the finer grain of a country town by being divided into distinguishable component parts and avoiding strong symmetry. Verandas, balconies, roofs, balustrades and other devices can be used to articulate elevations and add to the feeling of lightness. Balconies, verandas and similar features would use light timber or metal supports, rather than heavy masonry.

#### 5.4 Setbacks



*Buildings constructed right up to the front property line create a consistent street wall and are an identifying feature of retail areas*

The way that buildings are setback from the property line influences the interaction of those buildings with the street and can also inform the types of land uses within those buildings. Setbacks in High Street are fairly consistent in the area between Jacobson's Outlook and Vine Street; however to the north and south of these areas consistent setbacks are less prevalent.

In commercial areas it is important that setbacks are consistent and that buildings retain a connection to the street space by being constructed to the front and side property boundaries whilst also incorporating weather protection. This is of particular importance for Nagambie as it ensures that land in the commercial centre along High Street is not underdeveloped. Having fully developed lots in the commercial centre ensures that valuable commercial land is not 'wasted', and that pressure does not emerge for additional commercial land to be zoned in existing residential areas, or on the edge of town.

It is proposed that all buildings in business zoned areas between Vale and Goulburn Streets should have no front or side setbacks. Landscaped setbacks, reflective of adjacent setbacks to delineate the commercial area should be provided along Filson Street, along High Street north of Vale Street and along Glencairn Lane. This setback reflects the interface of these parts of the commercial areas with the surrounding residential areas.

For sites that currently have a direct interface with Lake Nagambie (primarily north of Jacobson's Outlook) these building should have a landscaped setback of at least 6 metres to provide a 'softening' of the edge of the Lake. Buildings constructed right up to the Lake edge are to be discouraged.

The Lakeside Resort Motel should have active frontages to Jacobson's Outlook and High Street with a landscaped setback to Blayney Reserve. Large blank walls to Jacobson's Outlook and Blayney Reserve should be avoided, with passive surveillance of these areas from the Resort provided by upper level balconies and windows.

This approach to building 'style' is deliberately different to the heavier, urban style found in many resort developments and former docklands.

5.5 Scale of Buildings



Relatively low-scale buildings and a wide streetscape reduce the visual impacts of buildings along High Street and provide a sense of 'openness'



The old two storey Bank Building in High Street is approximately 10.5 metres tall. This is roughly the equivalent of a modern-day three storey building

High Street is a relatively low-scale commercial area with most buildings being either one or two storeys. This sense of low scale is augmented by the width of High Street which provides a sense of 'openness' in the middle of the commercial area. The width of and the existence of the median provides an opportunity for higher, well designed buildings to be accommodated without overly dominating the streetscape.

The majority of buildings along High Street are one storey, with the occasional older two storey structure. The old Flour Mill and the old bank are the tallest structures in High Street and are at least the equivalent of a modern day 3 storey building. The recent 'Jetty' development incorporates two storey townhouses; however these are setback from the street frontage and are barely visible from High Street.

One of the key roles of the built form assessment is to articulate a desired form for buildings along High Street, including the scale, setback and grain of buildings. In terms of articulating building heights, a number of factors are taken into consideration, including existing building heights, lot size, views to surrounding landscapes as well as market forces and the economic viability of increased building scale.

Other factors specific to Nagambie in determining a preferred building height for buildings along High Street are the visual and amenity impacts that could potentially occur in relation to the Lake, High Street, and the surrounding residential areas.

**The Lake**

Lake Nagambie is a major community and landscape asset of Nagambie. When determining the visual and amenity impacts of building height upon the Lake, a number of factors need to be taken into account. This includes views to the Lake from the buildings, views to the buildings from the Lake, and ensuring that the Lake retains its 'visual primacy' in the town and that buildings do not visually dominate the Lake and reduce the overall 'county town' aspect of buildings in a landscape setting.

**High Street carriageway**

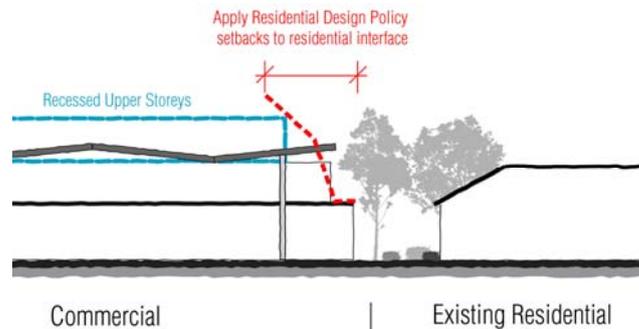
As previously indicated, High Street has a very wide carriageway with a highly landscaped central median that has the potential to accommodate a higher building form without overly dominating the streetscape. It is important however, particularly in commercial areas that buildings are constructed to the front and side property boundaries to create a consistent street wall and to facilitate the development of active frontages to the street.

This in turn leads to a situation where the upper levels of buildings should be setback from the front and site boundaries to reduce overshadowing on adjacent properties and to reduce the visual impact of building 'massing'.

**Surrounding residential areas**

At the interface between the commercial element of the town centre and the surrounding residential areas, buildings need to be carefully and thoughtfully designed to retain residential amenity and ensure that overlooking and overshadowing are avoided.

This not only includes direct interfaces such as the ones depicted in the image below, but in areas where the interface exists across a roadway.



### Existing building heights

As previously detailed, the current High Street streetscape is currently a mix of one and two storey buildings. The majority of the two storey buildings however are at least the equivalent of a modern 3 storey building. In determining a maximum building height for new buildings within High Street, establishing the current heights of the tallest buildings is a good starting point.

Spot heights have been taken of a number of buildings along High Street. They include:

- The old flour mill at the intersection with Prentice Street which is approximately 11 metres high (at the apex of the roof)
- The Tabilk Tavern which is approximately 10 metres high (including parapet)
- The buildings currently housing the Bakery and Chicken Shop (opposite the pedestrian crossing) which are approximately 10 metres high
- The old bank building at the intersection with Marie Street which is approximately 10.5 metres high (including parapet)

To determine the proposed maximum heights for new buildings it is important to detail that height in metres, not just storeys. It is proposed that 4 metres for the ground floor be allocated to reflect the preferred use as a retail space, with every additional upper level being 3.5 metres, reflecting either an office or residential use. Each of these heights include space for floor plates, services such as electrical and plumbing, and ceilings etc.

In this circumstance a 2 storey building would be 7.5 high at the street frontage, and a 3 storey building 11 metres. This is roughly equivalent to the existing buildings detailed above.

It is also important to note that an additional level, set back from the street frontage, may be able to be accommodated on a number of lots due to their depth and orientation. It is therefore proposed that two different maximum building height areas be established in the High Street area.

The first is the 'A' areas where buildings are to have a maximum height of 11 metres (3 storeys) at the street frontage, with an overall building height of 14.5 metres (setback 4<sup>th</sup> storey). These areas reflect the area in Nagambie where there are reduced interface issues due to this area being surrounded by streets. There are no direct residential or lake interface issues. This maximum height can also assist in delineating the heart of the High Street retail area.

The second are the 'B' areas where buildings are to have a maximum height of 7.5 metres (2 storeys) at the street frontage, with an overall building height of 11 metres (setback 3<sup>rd</sup> storey). These areas include the remainder of the commercial area along High Street and reflect the direct interface between the lake and other residential areas that occur.

### Conclusion

Taking into account all of the factors outlined above, it is proposed that two areas be delineated to specify preferred heights with consideration being given to the Lakeside Resort Motel due to its multiple frontages.



The 'A' areas (located on the three blocks bordered by High , Goulburn, Filson and Vine Streets) would have a maximum of three storeys at the street frontage, with opportunities for upper levels provided they are setback from the street frontage, and are not visually dominant when viewed from the Lake, High Street or the surrounding residential areas. Buildings should 'step down' to either one or two storeys at the Filson Street frontage to manage the interface with the adjacent residential area.

The 'B' areas (remainder of the Commercial zoned area) would have a maximum of 2 storeys at the High Street frontage, with the potential for a third storey provided they are setback from the street frontage, and are not visually dominant when viewed from the Lake, High Street or the surrounding residential areas. Buildings with an interface with Lake Nagambie should 'step down' to one storey to reduce the visibility of these buildings when viewed from the Lake.

The Lakeside Resort Motel that is directly south of Jacobson's Outlook needs to be examined individually due to its location adjacent to the Lake, and having frontages to Jacobson's Outlook, Blayney Reserve and High Street. This is a key site within Nagambie and is understood to currently being totally redesigned as part of a full redevelopment of the site. As part of that redevelopment a 4 storey building is currently proposed for the site, to the south of the existing building which abuts Jacobson's Outlook. This building will not have any direct frontages to the edge of the lot and will site within the site.

The site is currently part of the 'B' area due to its proximity to the lake. A key principle of establishing this height in this area is to avoid buildings which physically and visually dominate the lake.

## 5.7 Strategies & Actions

### Strategies

- Locate future commercial development in existing business zoned areas.
- Ensure that development in existing business zoned areas makes full use of the available land and is not an 'underdevelopment' of the site.
- Retain and protect heritage buildings in and around the town centre.
- Encourage restoration of heritage buildings.
- Protect, enhance and achieve a sustainable neighbourhood character that reflects the aspirations of the local community.
- Ensure that buildings within the business zoned areas make a positive contribution to the pedestrian environment, the streetscape character and the activity of High Street.
- Encourage buildings that present Nagambie as a leader in ecological sustainable design.
- Facilitate the development of an outstanding mix of building styles that are of a high architectural standard and are responsive to surrounding built form and landscapes.
- Encourage new buildings to be of high quality contemporary architecture that complements the existing fabric and scale of the town.
- Create a more consistent streetscape by encouraging buildings to be constructed right up to the side and street frontage boundaries.

### Actions

- Prepare and exhibit a proposed schedule to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO) to implement the provisions in the 'High Street Built Form Guidelines' as contained in the 'Nagambie Style Guidelines' document and the Heights and Setbacks Map as detailed in the 'Main Street Plan' which shows the proposed heights and setbacks of new buildings



## Nagambie Growth Management Strategy | Main Street Plan

- Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Character Assessment as outlined in the '*Existing Residential Area Guidelines*'
- Include in the Strathbogie LPPF a policy to implement the '*ESD Guidelines*' as contained in the '*Nagambie Style Guidelines*' document
- Include in the Strathbogie LPPF a policy to implement the '*Retail Development Guidelines*' as contained in the '*Nagambie Style Guidelines*' document
- Include in the Strathbogie LPPF a policy to implement the '*Buildings Adjoining Open Space Guidelines*' as contained in the '*Nagambie Style Guidelines*' document

