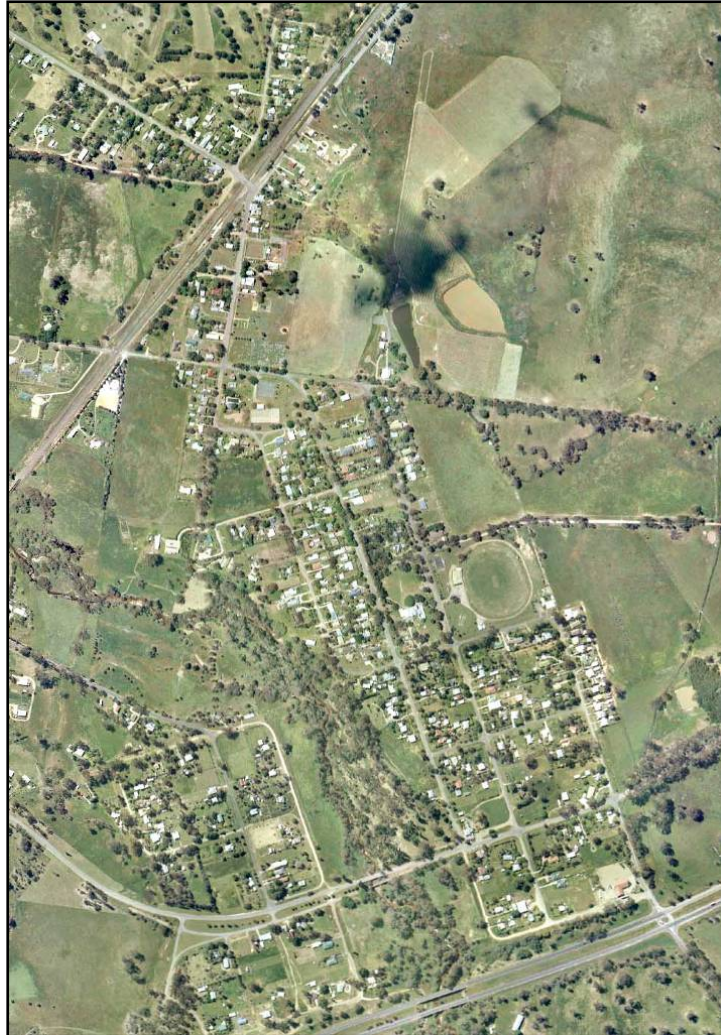


Strathbogie Shire

AVENEL 2030

STRATEGY



Final Report
March 2008

Strathbogie Shire



AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY

Final report

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AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY

Contents

Summary and Recommendations	i-v
1. Background to Study	1
2. Avenel Township – Role and Character	3
3. Regional Context and Influences	6
4. State Planning Policy	8
5. Community Profile – population, housing, employment	10
6. Council Plan 2007-2011	12
7. Local Planning Policy	15
8. Relevant Strategic Studies	20
9. Infrastructure and Services	22
10. Strategic Issues and Opportunities	24
11. Residential Demand and Supply	33
12. Avenel 2030 Strategy	36
<i>Key strategic directions</i>	36
<i>Township form and boundary</i>	38
<i>Sustainable development principles</i>	38
<i>Infrastructure</i>	39
<i>Transport and access</i>	39
<i>Residential growth and housing</i>	40
<i>Low density housing and rural living</i>	42
<i>Housing choice and diversity</i>	44
<i>Industrial development</i>	45
<i>Town centre</i>	45
<i>Town open space network</i>	48
<i>Township and neighbourhood character</i>	48
<i>Town entrances</i>	49
<i>Tourism</i>	51
13. Implementation	52
<i>Reference document</i>	52
<i>Municipal Strategic Statement</i>	52
<i>Zoning</i>	52
<i>Overlays</i>	53
<i>Further strategic investigation</i>	53
Appendices	
A <i>Avenel Lot Sizes and Lot Development</i>	55
B <i>Land Supply Assessments for Residential, Low Density Residential and Rural Living</i>	58

AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY

List of Plans

1.	Avenel: Study Area	2
2.	Regional Context	5
3.	Melbourne 2030: Hume Corridor	7
4.	Avenel 2030 Strategy- Strategic Issues and Opportunities	27
5.	Avenel 2030: Strategy: Residential Infill and Expansion	35
6.	Avenel 2030: Strategy: Strategic Framework Plan	37
6A.	Avenel 2030 Strategy: Rural Living Investigation Areas	44
7.	Avenel 2030 Strategy: Town Centre Framework Plan	48
8.	Land Supply Assessments for Residential, Low Density Residential and Rural Living Appendix A	59

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of the Strategy

The Avenel 2030 Strategy provides a long term strategic framework and directions for future land use and development of the town. The Strategy considers all types of land use including different forms of residential development options such as township, lower density and rural living. The Strategy will be implemented by an amendment to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

Population and housing profile

Avenel's population increased marginally in the ten years to 2001 following a decade of higher population growth. The population increased from 552 to 732 from 2001 to 2006. This was a significant increase indicating that the town is growing as a result of "tree change" trends in the Hume Corridor.

Household size is declining with the number of 1 and 2 person households increasing. Age profile characteristics include increases in the proportion of residents in the 50-59 age group and declining proportions of young families.

Employment trends include the continued importance of agriculture and increasing proportions of the working population employed in property and business, health and community services and personal services.

Township form and character

Elements that define Avenel's character are its size, low density form, grid street layout, freeway and rail boundaries, the town's physical and visual relationship to the rural landscapes and Hughes Creek and its floodplain. The town's openness and spaciousness with many vacant lots presents planning and design challenges as demand for residential land and housing increases.

Growth influences

Melbourne 2030 Strategy

Policy Direction 3 (Networks of regional cities) of the Melbourne 2030 Strategy "promotes growth of key towns on regional transport corridors and seeks to control development in rural areas to protect agriculture." Avenel is situated at the northern tip of the Hume corridor. Future strategic planning for the township must fully consider implications of this policy direction.

Intensive agricultural opportunities – proposed Special Use Zone.

A potential intensive agricultural area extending between Nagambie, Euroa and the Mangalore/Avenel area. The Strathbogie Municipal Strategic Statement recognises this area as having significant economic potential. The area is under further investigation for enhanced agricultural industry and potential use of the Special Use Zone.

Avenel's future role

Avenel's future role will be determined by a range of factors including:

- ability to attract new residents including part-time residents seeking a 'tree change'
- commuting potential to Melbourne and larger regional centres for work.
- intensive agricultural opportunities in hinterland
- progressive improvements to community infrastructure with increasing levels of development.
- potential of town centre to provide an enhanced community, shopping and tourism role.

Key issues and opportunities

Strategic issues and opportunities are discussed in detail in Chapter 10 of this Report. Key issues relating to the future planning of Avenel include:

- traffic safety and town entrance character of Hume Freeway town entry,
- Lambing Gully Road would make an attractive town entry
- traffic safety at the railway level crossing at Queen Street,
- ample supply of serviceable residential land within the Township Zone to meet future demand for housing in the town,
- development planning processes are required to co-ordinate development of large sites that are notionally available for residential development,
- sites for medium density residential development close to the town centre need to be identified,
- locations for low density residential and rural living need to be identified to meet future demand for this form of residential development,
- all land within the existing urban area and undeveloped land with a Township zoning can be serviced with reticulated sewerage and water supply at developer's cost,
- managing the impact new residential development has on neighbourhood and township character,
- vacant land within and adjacent to the town centre presents some development and urban design opportunities,
- Avenel's entrances generally each have their own distinctive character which need to be protected from visually inappropriate development,
- views and vistas to adjacent hills and Strathbogie Ranges are a strong landscape features that need to be protected and opportunities for views need to be created, and
- Hughes Creek and its riverine environment have potential to form a major open space corridor.

Avenel 2030 Strategy

Avenel Structure Plan (Plan 6 p36)

An Avenel Structure Plan has been prepared to replace the existing structure plan. The new structure plan provides a town structure for planned growth of the township. Some of the plans more important components include a future urban growth boundary, residential infill and expansion opportunities, locations for future low density residential and rural living, a town open space network, town centre precinct for longer term expansion and identification of sites requiring planning processes to determine land use and design outcomes.

Township form and boundary

An urban growth boundary has been defined on the new Avenel Structure Plan. The boundary allows for growth over the next 25 years. As well as allowing for town consolidation and expansion it separates urban from rural and environmental land. The boundary also provides for greater land use certainty. Longer-term residential opportunities within the boundary should not be prejudiced.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure performance measures for new development through planning permits, development plans and works. Measures include water sensitive urban design for development, roads and drainage; site responsive road design; provision of drainage and service corridors; and provision of recreation corridors and trails with connections throughout the town.

Highway Town Entry

The timing of the proposed Freeway interchange has not been established. In the meantime traffic safety at the town entry into Jones Street needs to be addressed. An option currently being considered by VicRoads is to close off the right hand turn and provide for a U-turn 70 metres north along the Freeway. A more distinctive town entrance character at the Freeway entry needs to be established. The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends the preparation of a concept design and landscape plan for this entrance.

Some consideration needs to be given to the potential for Lambing Gully Road as an alternative town entry. As an entrance it has attractive features including landscape views and no immediate residential development and Henry Street streetscape. Discussions are required with VicRoads.

Avenel Transport Impact Assessment

Transport and access in Avenel township has been identified as a significant issue during consultation. It was also raised as a key issue during consultation on the draft Strategy. Transport and traffic issues relating to the future planning and development of Avenel include:

- traffic safety issues at the Queen Street level crossing,
- potential to improve safety at the level crossing by relocation of the Avenel-Nagambie arterial road route,
- level crossings on local roads within the township eg. Ewings Road and Aerodrome Road.
- potential of Lambing Gully Road as an additional or alternate entry to the township, and
- definition of a preferred traffic route from the Hume Freeway exit to the town centre.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that an Avenel Transport Impact Assessment Study be undertaken to address these and other issues.

Residential growth and housing

There is ample serviceable residential land with Avenel township. A residential demand and supply analysis estimates a current supply of over 100 hectares of land with a Township zoning and capable of being serviced with sewer, town water supply, roads and drainage. This supply of residential land could provide for approximately 1,000 dwellings. The location of this land supply is shown on the Avenel Structure Plan.

An assessment of future demand for residential land is attached in Appendix A. This assessment is based on available data from Strathbogie Shire Council records.

Larger lot sizes prevail in the town, most common sizes being 1-2,000 and 2-3,000 m². There is substantial potential for development on larger lots (in the 2-4,000 m² range). Resubdivision of larger lots > 1,000 m²) raises issues about increased density, loss/change of character. Council has commenced a neighbourhood character study for Avenel to manage changes to the town's character.

Low density housing and rural living

There are a range of lot sizes throughout the environs of the Avenel township with substantial undeveloped lots (46 houses on 170 lots) with most land holdings having housing (46 houses on 67 holdings).

Dwelling approvals rates in the town environs are not an indicator of demand for rural living due to the lack of zoning for this purpose and also many dwellings in the environs are linked to farming purposes and zoning.

All new low density residential zone and rural living zone proposals must be strategically assessed and justified in accordance with *Minister's Direction No 6, Rural Residential Development*.

The Strategy identifies locations at the growth boundary for future low density residential development. These areas needing zoning amount to a supply of 32 hectares.

The Avenel Structure Plan does not show any areas for future rural living rezoning. The Structure Plan does identify three rural living investigation areas. These investigation areas were included in the Rural Living Study and are being further reviewed under implementation options for the Study. Assessment of potential rural living zoning and development will need to be in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6.

Development Plan Overlays

Development Plan Overlays have been recommended for some of the proposed future residential areas including low density residential and potential rural living areas. Development plans will guide future layout and servicing, integrate new with existing residential areas and facilitate site responsive development.

Housing Choice and Diversity

The Avenel 2030 Strategy supports the existing housing choice policies in the Strathbogie Municipal Strategic Statement. Including the need for retirement and aged care accommodation. More diverse housing options will be required in the future due to a range of factors including ageing of the population, declining household sizes and housing preferences of residents moving to Avenel for retirement or lifestyle reasons. The mix of housing options include township living including medium density housing, retirement housing, low density township and rural living. Priority and high priority areas for residential development have been identified on the Avenel Structure Plan. Priority areas close to the town centre are considered to be suitable locations for medium density housing.

Town centre

As Avenel township grows so will the demand for new business and town centre services. The Avenel Strategy identifies a town centre precinct to allow for future commercial infill and town centre expansion. The precinct includes the northern side of Ewings Road and the recreation reserve. Town centre proposals include:

- Queen Street (west side) south to Ewings Road has the potential to be main commercial strip in the longer term.
- Street plantings in Queen and Livingstone Streets and Ewings Road to physically define the town centre as well as provide shade and a sense of place.
- Development and urban design opportunities of vacant land in Queen Street and Bissett Street
- Mixed use potential of large site on north side of Ewings Road
- A tourism focus for the heritage precinct in Bank Street north of the railway line
- Use of B1 Zone and potential use of the Mixed Use for the town centre precinct identified on Plan 8 to encourage complementary mix of retail/business uses and residential.

Key Sites

The large parcel of land adjoining the cemetery to the east is strategically important at the entry to the town. This land parcel particularly to the north could be considered for a use that would benefit from a location adjacent to the town centre. Development of the site at its Ewing Street frontage raises urban design issues about treatment of town entries and civic presentation and image. The Strategy recommends that a master plan be prepared for this site.

Town Open Space Network

The Avenel Structure Plan identifies Hughes Creek and environs from the Freeway to Vearings Road as an open space corridor, the main corridor of a future open space network for the township. Walking and cycle trails within the open space network can provide accessible links to the town centre, residential areas, recreation and community facilities and to places of natural and cultural heritage interest.

The Strategy recommends that a Hughes Creek and Environs Riverine Trail and Management Plan be prepared. The Plan would identify a riverine trail and linked path system and make recommendations about protection of vegetation and wildlife habitat, weed management, public facilities (seating, interpretative facilities, picnic areas etc).

Township and neighbourhood character

Managing the impact of new residential development on township and neighbourhood character is a challenge for a town with an open and spacious character. Strathbogie Shire Council has commissioned a neighbourhood character study for Avenel. Community consultation will be major part of the study process. The Study will undertake a survey and analysis of Avenel to define neighbourhood precincts, identify development trends, issues and describe neighbourhood features.

Development Plan overlays recommended for future residential areas can help achieve a preferred character and plan requirements relating to residential layout and design, siting of buildings, retention of significant vegetation and location of public open space areas.

Town entrances

Town entrances have the function of conveying messages and impressions about the town. Avenel's entrances generally each have their own distinctive character. The entrance character and image for each of the town's main entrances are discussed in the report.

The Strategy recommends a concept design and landscape plan for the Hume Freeway town entrance at Jones Street to create a more distinctive character based on thematic planting and landscaping and new directional and welcoming signage.

Other entrances considered in the Strategy are Avenel–Nagambie Road and Henry Street (former Hume Highway) west of Lambing Gully Road. Siting and design of development of land facing to Avenel-Nagambie Road is an important issue while protection of views of the Strathbogie Ranges is important for the Henry Street entrance.

Implementation of Avenel 2030 Strategy

Implementation of the Avenel 2030 Strategy will require amendments to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The amendment will include changes to the Municipal Strategic Statement and new zones and overlays. It is recommended that the Avenel 2030 Strategy be included as a Reference Document in the Planning Scheme.

The proposed planning scheme amendment would include:

- insertion of the new Avenel Structure Plan (Plan 6) at Clause 21 to replace the existing plan.
- insertion of a new objective and strategies to provide strategic justification for the components of revised Structure Plan and 2030 Strategy: town centre precinct, township character, identifying development priorities, town open space network, housing choice, and sustainable design and development.

- insertion of new items of further strategic work including Avenel Transport Impact Assessment study, Hume Freeway town entrance concept plan, Hughes Creek riverine trail and management plan and Ewings Road (east end) Site Masterplan
- rezoning all existing and future residential areas identified on the Avenel Structure Plan with an existing Township zoning to Residential 1 Zone.
- Rezoning the town centre precinct shown on Plan 7 from Township Zone to Business 1 Zone and, where appropriate, Mixed Use Zone.
- Application of Development Plan Overlays to currently undeveloped and larger future residential areas with an existing Township zoning shown on Plan 6 Avenel Structure Plan.

1. BACKGROUND TO STUDY

1.1 Why is a 2030 Strategy Required?

A planning strategy for Avenel township and its immediate environs will provide a long term strategic framework for the future land use and development of the town. A detailed future plan of Avenel has not been prepared. The town has been growing modestly and steadily over the past 15 years.

Council recognises the need to plan for the future of the town. This Study relates to other strategic studies including Strathbogie Shire Rural Living Strategy, strategic investigations for the proposed Special Use Precinct near Mangalore Airport and an Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study.

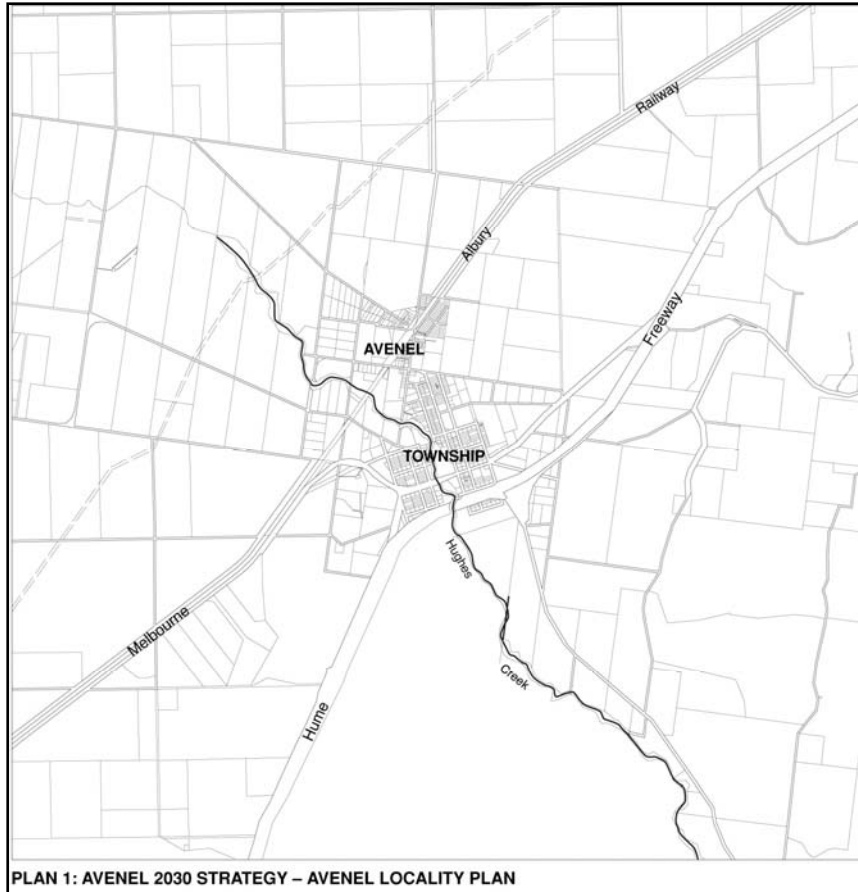
Development potential in Avenel is linked to the town's role as a commuter town in the Hume corridor and agribusiness opportunities in the surrounding rural areas. In summary, the factors that are most likely to influence town growth and development within the town are:

- Melbourne 2030 Strategy (Networks of regional cities: Direction 3) which promotes growth of key towns on regional transport corridors and seeks to control development in rural areas to protect agriculture.
- Proximity to Melbourne and Hume growth corridor with improved road and rail connections.
- Proximity to larger regional centres such as Shepparton, Seymour and Benalla.
- Land and housing demand for rural town lifestyle.
- Business and employment opportunities in hinterland including the proposed Special Use Precinct.

Avenel will benefit from a strategic forward looking plan that sets a vision and objectives for the future. A more defined town structure will provide for greater land use certainty and provide the physical basis for its planned growth. A revised town structure will help new development to be absorbed into the existing town fabric.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy will provide overall land use and development directions. The Strategy considers all types of land use including different forms of residential development options such as township, lower density and rural living. The Strategy will not assess and make recommendations for rural land. The Strategy examines other major elements of the town's form, function and character including access and traffic, open space and community facilities, landscape and townscape protection and the town centre.

The Study Area for the Avenel 2030 Strategy is shown on Plan 1.



1.2 Study Objectives

Overall project objectives of the Avenel 2030 Strategy, as set out in the project brief are to:

- Establish a strategic framework for the future land use, development and urban design of the Avenel township and environs.
- Allow for the future expansion and diversification of the Avenel township, including the provision of a range of residential and rural living lifestyle options and developments.
- Consider land capability and the availability of services in the development of future strategies for land use and development in the Avenel township and environs.
- Assess, maintain and protect the role, characteristics and heritage of the Avenel township.
- Foster a liveable and environmentally sustainable community and township environment.
- Provide a framework to guide future community, Strathbogie Shire Council and government decision making, works programs, budgeting and funding bids.
- Consider the need and make recommendations as appropriate for land to be rezoned to Low Density Residential and Rural Living in accordance with Minister's Direction No 6, *Rural Residential Development*.
- Provide the strategic justification for any changes to policy directions and planning controls in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme in accordance with Minister's Direction No 11, *Strategic Assessment of Amendments*.

2. AVENEL TOWNSHIP

Avenel is one of the four major towns in the Shire. Avenel township is located on the Hume Freeway and Melbourne – Sydney railway line. Avenel is approximately 35 kilometres southwest of Euroa and approximately 15 kilometres northeast of Seymour (in Mitchell Shire).

Post contact settlement in Avenel and district commenced in the 1830's with grazing. A ford was constructed over the creek where the old bridge now stands and the place became popular as a rest stop and camping place for teamsters, drovers, and Cobb & Co. Coaches en route to and from the north of the State. The stop was established in 1839 and 10 years later the town was established following land sales by the Government. (*Strathbogie Urban Design Framework, 2004*).

The stone bridge was constructed in 1859 with the increase in goldfields traffic. The railway was built in 1872 and has been an important grain freight line to Melbourne. New and more regular passenger rail services are now operating on the Melbourne-Albury rail line.

At the 2001 Census, Avenel's population was 552, with 258 dwellings. The town's population in 1981 was 420. Data released from the recent census indicate that the town's population has grown to 732 by 2006. Population and housing characteristics are included in Chapter 5.

The township has experienced modest and steady population growth and residential building activity over the past twenty years. Dwelling approval rates and residential subdivision levels are included in Chapter 11.

Rural economic base

Strathbogie Shire has a rural economic base of wool, grain and cattle production, extensive vineyards at Nagambie and throughout the Strathbogie Ranges and a wide range of intensive cool climate horticultural enterprises. Key industrial enterprises in the town and district include Vinery horse stud, Chateau Tahbilk Wines, Eat More Poultry, Campbell's Mushrooms, Mangalore Airport and Plunkett's Wines.

Development opportunities for Avenel and the district are viticulture, equine and tourism industries.

Landscape setting

Attractive landscapes surround the town with flatter agricultural landscapes to the north and west and more elevated landscapes to the east and south with views of the Strathbogie Ranges. The Hughes Creek runs through the southwestern section of the town.

Hume Corridor

The Hume Freeway provides ready access to the northeast of Victoria and south to metropolitan Melbourne (approximately 1.5 hours driving time). The Melbourne – Sydney railway line also provides easy train access to metropolitan Melbourne with the nearest stopping station at Seymour.

Infrastructure

Urban sewerage and water supply services are available in Avenel. Goulburn Valley Water supplies reticulated water and sewerage to the town.

Town Services and Facilities

Avenel has a level of community and business services typical of a town its size. Business services include a mixed business store, antique store, hotel, tourist accommodation and service station and roadhouse. Avenel has an impressive range of community facilities including primary school, sports grounds, recreation reserve, CFA fire station, churches, bowling club and community hall.

Town residents are reliant on larger centres such as Seymour and Shepparton for shopping, community and business services and employment. The town performs a local service role and community focus for residents.

Avenel can build on this role if the town is able to sustain new and expanded services as the town's population increases.

Town Character

The town is shaped by the Hume Freeway and the regional rail corridor to the south and north and hills to the southwest and north east.

Elements that define Avenel's character are its size, low density form, grid street layout, freeway and rail boundaries and its physical and visual relationship to the rural hinterland and landscapes.

Hughes Creek and its floodplain is a major landscape feature running through the town flowing under Queen Street. Vistas from the town to nearby hills and the Strathbogie Ranges provide an attractive setting. Bushland areas at the town's edge, roadside vegetation and vegetation generally including exotic formal plantings are important elements of Avenel's character.

Maintaining and enhancing Avenel's character will be a significant challenge with any rise in development pressures. Council has commissioned a Neighbourhood Character Study to examine in detail Avenel's character and identify the town's preferred character and make recommendations about how that character can be protected and enhanced.

Planning for future growth and decision making about future development in and around the town needs to protect and enhance the town's townscape features and character. Decisions to choose Avenel as place of residence will have some basis in the qualities the town offers including character and lifestyle. Some of the more important features and character elements include:

- Riparian environment of Hughes Creek
- Views and vistas to adjacent hills, Strathbogie Ranges and rural landscapes
- Low density and low rise nature of the town
- Rural lifestyle and atmosphere
- Town centre with potential to provide a greater community focus.

Future Role of Avenel

It is likely Avenel will continue to attract new residents principally due to its location and accessibility to metropolitan and Central Melbourne, the regional centres of Seymour, Shepparton and Euroa, and also its proximity to Nagambie. Reduced travel times and more convenient travel journeys on both road and rail provide opportunities for commuting to the northern suburbs of Melbourne and central Melbourne.

Avenel could be a "tree change" town close to metropolitan Melbourne and larger regional centres. The rural landscape setting and low density character are appealing features. Infill potential within the town raises issues concerned with protection of the town's character.

Avenel's future role will be determined by a range of factors including:

- ability to attract new residents seeking a lifestyle change from the highly urbanized environment of metropolitan Melbourne
- strategic location of Avenel and its advantages for commuting to Melbourne and larger centres for work.

- attraction of part-time residents combining metropolitan and rural town lifestyles.
- progressive improvements to community infrastructure with increasing levels of development.

Existing Planning controls

The town has generalised planning controls with a Township Zone covering most of the township area. Detailed flooding controls are in place in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The Avenel 2030 Strategy and town strategic framework plan will provide the strategic basis for the introduction of more comprehensive planning provisions in the Planning Scheme.



PLAN 2: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY – AVENEL REGIONAL CONTEXT

3. REGIONAL CONTEXT & INFLUENCES

The Hume Freeway provides ready access to the northeast of Victoria and south to metropolitan Melbourne (approximately 1.5 hours driving time). The Melbourne – Sydney railway line also provides easy train access to metropolitan Melbourne with the nearest stopping station at Seymour.

The Goulburn Valley Highway (providing access between Seymour and Shepparton/the New South Wales border to the north) lies to the west of the Avenel township, linked between the township and the highway by the Avenel – Nagambie Road.

Avenel is located at the northern boundary of the Melbourne commuter zone. Travel times to Melbourne Central are approximately one and a half hours traveling time by car and by rail. Travel times to existing and proposed activity centres in the Hume Growth Corridor are less than one hour. Reductions in travel times in the future, particularly by rail will, increase the appeal of Avenel as a commuting town that offers a mix of rural and urban lifestyles.

A significant number of residents commute to Seymour, Euroa and Shepparton (approximately 70 kilometres to the north) for work in retail, health, education and community services.

Avenel is the resident town for people working in conjunction with horse studs in the area, the wine industry and the agricultural sector generally.

In summary the important regional influences that need to be taken into account in the development of a strategy for Avenel township are:

- Commuting potential to Melbourne
- Rural retreaters from Melbourne as permanent or part time residents
- Development potential of proposed Special Use Precinct
- Agribusiness opportunities in the surrounding district

Melbourne 2030 Strategy

The State Government’s Melbourne 2030 Strategy is relevant to Avenel and the Strathbogie Shire Policy Direction 3 (Networks of regional cities) of the Melbourne 2030 Strategy “promotes growth of key towns on regional transport corridors and seeks to control development in rural areas to protect agriculture.” Avenel is situated within the Hume regional transport corridor extending between Melbourne and Seymour/Nagambie (Refer to Plan 3). Future strategic planning for the township must fully consider implications of this policy direction.

Intensive agricultural opportunities – proposed Special Use Zone.

The Avenel township lies at the southwestern extent of an identified potential intensive agricultural area extending between Nagambie, Euroa and the Mangalore / Avenel area. This area is already recognised as a significant area of economic potential in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme and is subject to further investigations for enhanced agricultural industry and potential use of the Special Use Zone.

Goulburn Broken Catchment

Hughes Creek flows north in to the Goulburn River (Lake Nagambie). This river system lies in the southwestern section of the Goulburn Broken catchment, administered by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.



PLAN 3: MELBOURNE 2030 – AVENEL'S LOCATION WITHIN HUME CORRIDOR

4. STATE PLANNING POLICY

The State Planning Policy Framework, which forms part of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme, outlines state policy for land use and development. All planning and responsible authorities must take into account and implement state planning policy and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development.

State planning policies of particular relevance to the future planning of the Avenel township are summarised in Table 1 below. Some of the general implementation measures of key policies relevant to the Avenel 2030 Strategy and the preparation of a structure plan for the town are:

Clause 14, Settlement: 14.01, Planning for urban settlement:

General implementation measures include:

- Accommodate projected population growth over at least a 10 year period, taking in to account opportunities for redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas, land capability and natural hazards, environmental quality and the costs of providing infrastructure.
- Encourage consolidation of existing urban centres while respecting neighbourhood character.
- Facilitate the orderly development of developing urban areas through the preparation of structure plans that take into account location, provide sustainable and liveable urban areas, facilitate the development of walkable neighbourhoods and facilitate the logical and efficient provision of infrastructure.

Clause 15, Environment: 15.10, Open space:

General implementation measures include ensuring that open space networks are linked through walking and cycle trails, integrates with open space contributions from abutting subdivisions and incorporate, where possible, linkages and maintain public accessibility.

Clause 16, Housing: 16.03, Rural living and rural residential development:

General implementation measures include:

- Land should only be zoned for rural living or rural residential development where it is located close to existing towns and urban centres but not in areas that will be required for fully serviced urban development and can be supplied with electricity, water and road access.
- Land should not be zoned for rural living or rural residential development if it will encroach on high quality productive agricultural land or adversely impact on waterways or other natural resources.

Table 1. State Planning Policy		
Clause	Sub-clause	Policy
Clause 14, Settlement	14.01, Planning for urban settlement	To ensure a sufficient supply of land is available for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, institutional and other public uses. To facilitate the orderly development of urban areas.
Clause 15, Environment:	15.01, Protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater	
	15.02, Floodplain management:	To assist the protection of: Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways, flood storage function of floodplains and waterways and floodplain areas of environmental significance.
	15.05, Noise abatement:	To assist the control of noise effects on sensitive land uses.
	15.09, Conservation of native flora and fauna:	To assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention and provision of habitats for native plants and animals and control of pest plants and animals.
	15.10, Open space:	To assist creation of a diverse and integrated network of public open space commensurate with the needs of urban communities and rural areas.
	15.11, Heritage:	To assist the conservation of places that have natural, environmental, aesthetic, historic, cultural, scientific or social significance or other special value important for scientific & research purposes
Clause 16, Housing:	16.01, Residential development for single dwellings:	Encourage subdivisions in locations with access to physical and community infrastructure and providing a range of lot sizes, a convenient and safe road network, appropriate pedestrian and cycle paths, sufficient useable public open space and low vulnerability to fire. Encourage residential development that is cost-effective in infrastructure provision and use, energy efficient, incorporates water-sensitive design principles & encourages public transport use. Encourage opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.
	16.02, Medium density housing:	To encourage the development of well-designed medium-density housing which respects the neighbourhood character, improves housing choice, makes better use of existing infrastructure and improves energy efficiency of housing.
	16.03, Rural living and rural residential development:	To identify land suitable for rural living and rural residential development.
Clause 17, Economic development:	17.02, Business:	To encourage developments which meet community's needs for retail, entertainment, office and other commercial services and provide net community benefit in relation to accessibility, efficient infrastructure use and the aggregation and sustainability of commercial facilities.
	17.04, Tourism:	Encourage tourism development to maximise the employment & long-term economic, social & cultural benefits of developing State as a competitive domestic & international tourist destination.
Clause 18, Infrastructure:	18.09, Water supply, sewerage and drainage:	To plan for the provision of water supply, sewerage and drainage services that efficiently and effectively meet State and community needs and protect the environment.
Clause 19, Particular uses & development:	19.01, Subdivision:	To ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, livable and sustainable neighbourhoods.
	19.03, Design and built form:	To achieve high quality urban design and architecture that: Reflects the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community. Enhances livability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm. Promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within broader strategic contexts.

5. COMMUNITY PROFILE – Population, Housing, Employment

Avenel's population increased marginally in the ten years to 2001 following a decade of relatively high population growth. Household size is declining with the number of 1 and 2 person households increasing. Age profile characteristics include increases in the proportion of residents in the 50-59 age group and declining proportions of young families. Employment trends include the continued importance of agriculture and increasing proportions employed in property and business, health and community services and personal services.

Population Change in Shire

Strathbogie Shire's population has increased by 318 persons during the period 1991-2004 and has increased by 3.6 % between 1996 and 2004. Population change for the Shire is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Strathbogie Shire: Estimated Resident Population: 1991-2006

	1991	1996	2001	2006
Total Population	9,298	9,285	9,648	9,295

Source: ABS, Catalogue No 3218.0

Department of Sustainability and Environment population projections for the Shire indicate a population increase of 1,229 persons between 2001 and 2031 and an increase of 1,079 persons between 2006 and 2031. Population projections for the Shire are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Strathbogie Shire: Population Projections, 2001-2031

	2001	2006	2011	2021	2031
Estimated Resident Population	9,648	9,798	10,018	10,420	10,877

Victoria in Future 2004

Population Change in Avenel

Avenel township has experienced modest and consistent population increase over the past two decades. The population increased from 420 in 1981 to 528 in 1991 and to 546 by 2001. The highest population increases were experienced in the decade 1981-1991. Marginal increases were experienced from 1991-2001. Population change from 1981 to 2001 is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Avenel: Population Change Avenel 1981-2006

1981	1991	1996	2001	2006	81-91	91-01	01-06
420	528	546	552	732	5.14 *	0.90 *	6.5 *

* Average annual change

Household Size

Household size has declined with the number of number of 1 and 2 person households increasing with a corresponding decline in households with 3 or more persons. In 2001 62.0 % of households were one or two person households. Declining household size in Avenel is consistent with national and regional trends. Changes in household size in Avenel are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Avenel: Household Size: 1981, 1991, 2001, 2006

Households	1981		1991		2006	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1 person	27	19.9	32	18.0	73	26.4
2 person	36	26.5	57	32.0	85	30.8
3 person	23	16.9	31	17.4	46	16.6
4 person	24	17.6	32	18.0	47	17.0
5 person	26	19.1	26	14.6	16	5.8
6 person					9	3.2

Population Characteristics

The following characteristics and trends are evident from Avenel's age/sex structure:

- declining proportions young families with of children in the 0-4 age group,
- stable proportions of persons in the adolescent age group of 5-17 years,
- low and declining proportions of young adults in the 18-24 age group which is consistent with the regional trend of young adults to seek work and education opportunities in larger centres and Melbourne, and
- substantial increases in the number and proportion of residents in the 50-59 age group and 60+ group due to an ageing of the resident population and new residents moving to Avenel for retirement or lifestyle reasons.

Table 5. Avenel Age/Sex: 1981, 86, 91, 96, 06

Years	1981		1986		1991		1996		2006	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
0-4	28	6.7	54	11.1	45	8.4	37	6.8	36	4.9
5-17	103	24.6	95	19.6	109	20.7	109	20.0	133	18.2
18-24	42	10.0	43	8.9	27	5.2	27	5.0	49	6.7
25-34	48	11.5	83	17.1	79	15.0	63	11.5	64	8.7
35-49	76	18.1	82	16.9	121	22.8	134	24.5	170	23.2
50-59	41	9.8	52	10.7	52	9.8	66	12.1	108	14.7
60-74	66	15.8	53	10.9	68	12.9	77	14.0	109	14.9
75+	15	3.6	23	4.7	27	5.2	33	6.1	54	7.4
Total	420	100.0	487	100.0	528	100.0	546	100.0	732	100.0

Source: Towns in Time and ABS 2006 Census data

Employment

Employment by industry group for census years from 1981 to 2001 is shown in Table 7 below. Employment characteristics and trends for this period are shown are summarized as follows:

- rising proportions of persons employed in agriculture with 17% in 2001 due to the increased agribusiness activities in the Shire and near to Avenel,
- manufacturing has maintained its proportion over the 20 year period with declines in the number of persons employed in this industry group in 1991 and 1996,
- marked decline in construction employment following 1996 due mainly to completion of Hume Freeway upgrading,
- a stable proportion of persons employed in retail trade since 1981 (12.1% in 2001) due to limited opportunities in Avenel and nearby towns,
- significant increase in the number of persons employed in property and business from 1996 due most likely to new business opportunities created in nearby larger centres,
- a dramatic fall in the proportion of employed persons in government administration and defence since 1991, and
- a consistent increase in health and community services and personal services which is consistent with regional trends with this employment found in nearby larger centres and possibly metropolitan Melbourne.

Table 7. Avenel: Employment by Industry: 1981-2001

Employment by Industry	1981		1986		1991		1996		2001	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agriculture	19	12.1	29	13.4	15	7.2	24	11.2	38	17.0
Mining	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.5	3	1.3
Manufacturing	17	10.7	21	10.0	12	5.6	17	7.8	25	11.2
Elec., gas & water supply	0	0.0	7	3.5	8	3.6	9	4.4	3	1.3
Construction	25	16.4	31	14.4	20	9.2	11	5.3	11	4.9
Wholesale trade	4	2.9	5	2.5	5	2.6	15	6.8	3	1.3
Retail Trade	24	15.7	22	10.4	29	13.3	24	11.2	27	12.1
Accom. cafes & rest	6	3.6	9	4.0	4	2.1	13	5.8	18	8.1
Transport & storage	10	6.4	19	9.0	20	9.2	20	9.2	15	6.7
Communication	7	4.3	12	5.5	12	5.6	7	3.4	6	2.7
Finance & insurance	4	2.9	4	2.0	5	2.6	6	2.9	3	1.3
Property & bus services	3	2.1	0	0.0	3	1.5	2	1.5	12	5.4
Gov't admin & defence	14	9.3	27	12.4	41	19.0	15	6.8	11	4.9
Education	12	7.9	14	6.5	21	9.7	17	7.8	16	7.2
Health & comm. services	6	3.6	14	6.5	14	6.7	19	8.7	20.0	9.0
Cultural & rec. services	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.1	6	2.9	3	1.3
Personal & other services	3	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	2.9	9	4.0
TOTAL	155	100.0	214	100.0	214	100.0	215	100.0	222	100.0

Source: *Towns in Time*

6. STRATHBOGRIE SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2007-2011

Council Plan identifies seven key strategic issues with supporting objectives, strategies and key performance indicators. These key strategic issues are:

- Planning for our future
- Enhancing our lifestyle and strengthening our community
- Engaging our community to develop a shared vision for the future
- Driving our economic development
- Planning and delivering our infrastructure services
- Planning for long term sustainability, and;
- Striving for excellence in our organisation

Key issues and supporting objectives that are particularly relevant to a future plan for Avenel are summarized in the following table.

Table 8. Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2007-2011

Key Issue	Objectives	Strategies	Benefits to Community
Land Use Planning	Ensure land resources are used & developed in manner that reflects social, environmental & economic benefits. Manage land to capitalise on competitive advantage in land type, location, clean green environment, infrastructure, landscape values and lifestyle. Encourage provision of amenity lifestyle living within rural areas through strategic and planned approach.	Implement Rural Living Strategy-first stage - Euroa & Avenel. Progress investigations with the Special Use Zone. Undertake Neighbourhood Character Studies in Avenel. Undertake shire-wide Heritage Study.	Improved: - preservation & revitalisation of natural environment character. - environmental values. - appearance of Shire. - economic sustainability.
Driving our economic development	Diversify the economic base to enhance long-term viability & in a manner that promotes clean green image. Facilitate new investment, diversification of industry, international competitiveness and improvement in skills to increase the employment base. Develop & promote tourism opportunitieswith appropriate infrastructure and support facilities.	Investigate the Strathbogie Special Use Zone to provide a planned approach to the possibility of a precinct. Implement the Economic Development Strategy. Continue to support the North East Thoroughbred Industry Alliance.	Improved: - economic functioning of region - viability of local businesses - new business initiatives Increased presence of NETIA as Thoroughbred Homeland of Vict.
Infrastructure maintenance and renewal	Further develop & maintain infrastructure to meet changing needs of community, support sustainable development & growth which is sensitive to environment.	Implement Council's long-term infrastructure Borrowing Business case.	Improved: - efficiency in storm-water drainage in Avenel. - longevity of Council's Assets.
Urban Design Frameworks	To revitalise and enhance the character & infrastructure to help improve their viability in the future.	To revitalise and enhance the character and infrastructure of small towns.	Enhanced character and scenic value of towns.
Traffic Management and Parking	To develop traffic management, car parking systems and infrastructure that support development, enhance amenity and improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic movements.	To monitor and respond to local traffic management issues.	Enhanced character and scenic value of towns.
Environmental sustainability	To seek to improve the water quality in the lakes, rivers and streams throughout the shire. To maintain the diversity of plant and animal life To endeavour to ensure that all indigenous species of flora and fauna can survive.	Consider new initiatives & educational opportunities for improved outcomes in environmental & climatic sustainability. Implement a plan to improve quality of urban stormwater entering river systems. Implement Roadside Management Plan Develop environmental manag't system Participate in implementation of the State Govt's Local Sustainability Accord	Better water quality in lakes, rivers and streams. Increased plant and animal life.

7. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Zoning and Overlays

The following zones and overlays in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme apply to land in Avenel township.

Township Zone (TZ) covers the township area including all township residential areas and undeveloped land at northern and western fringes of the township. Within the township zone houses are “as of right”. Other uses such as industry and retail require a planning permit.

Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ) applies to the immediate environs of Hughes Creek north of the Hume Freeway to Queen Street. The UFZ is a restrictive zone that applies to main floodways in urban areas. Under the zone dwellings are prohibited.

Public Use Zone (PUZ) applies to sites occupied by Avenel Primary School, a Sports oval and recreation reserve, golf course and cemetery. A PUZ also applies to the railway station precinct.

Road Zone 1 (RZ1) applies to the Hume Freeway.

Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) applies over the western portion of the Avenel township. While the overlay only restricts the height of new buildings, it does appear to be excessively applied and should be reviewed.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) covers an extensive area of the Hughes Creek environs. The LSIO applies building heights for new buildings to ensure that they are located above the 1 in 100 year flood levels.

Floodway Overlay (FO) covers land in the floodway of Hughes Creek generally north from Wedge Street.

Heritage Overlay (HO) applies to the former Royal Mail Hotel (HO1) and the bridge over Pranjip Creek.

Municipal Strategic Statement

Clause 21.03 covering Settlement, Environment and Economic Development contains objectives and strategies that must be considered in planning for future development of Avenel township.

Settlement

Orderly development of towns

The following issues are listed in the clause as issues relevant to all towns in the Shire.

- Identification and recognition of neighbourhood character
- Acknowledgement of built and cultural heritage
- Identification of appropriate land use mix
- Drainage and flooding issues
- Provision and maintenance of additional infrastructure
- Retirement and aged care accommodation
- Appearance of town entrances

In particular, the MSS identifies the following issues for Avenel:

- need for additional land to the north and south of the existing township in context of growth constraints to the east and west,
- lack of commercial and retail services, and
- no identified industrial precinct.

Housing and lot diversity

Avenel has a high proportion of persons in the age group over 60 years which is a similar proportion for the Strathbogie Shire. Providing greater housing choice is a planning issue for Avenel. Alternative forms of housing such as retirement and aged care accommodation need to be investigated.

Rural living and low density housing

The Shire's towns are experiencing demand for this form of residential development. This is particularly the case with Avenel due to its proximity to the northern fringe of Melbourne and the towns improved transport links to Melbourne. Rural living and low density residential opportunities need to be investigated and strategically justified on the basis of local planning policies relating to protection of agricultural land, planned growth of townships and availability of services.

Protecting and enhancing the character and environment

Important issues for the Shire's towns including Avenel is the protection of character and amenity, Town entrances and the town centres are two town precincts identified for visual enhancement.

Management of infrastructure

Management of infrastructure is an important issue for a Shire with dispersed settlement. Some areas are experiencing development pressures and infrastructure deficiencies. Efficient infrastructure improvement is an issue for Avenel with capacity and potential for township infill and expansion.

Environment

Clause 21.03-5 lists the key environment issues and challenges for the Shire. Those issues that are particularly important in terms of the future development of Avenel are:

Protection of natural regions and bioregions

- sustainable use and development of the Shire's natural resource base
- important flora and fauna including depleted vegetation types such as grassy woodland and box-ironbark forests and endangered and threatened fauna
- minimising impact of pests
- protection of watercourses and streams including Hughes Creek
- management of water resources

Protection of landscape

The natural landscape is an important natural asset of the Shire. Protection areas of the environmental and visual significance from inappropriate development and discouraging development on prominent ridges and hilltops are important issues for Avenel.

Floodplain management

Floodplain management is to be provided by two floodplain development plans" which have been prepared to provide a performance-based approach to reflect local issues and best practice in floodplain management. An Urban Floodway Zone and flooding overlays apply to the environs of Hughes Creek in Avenel.

Management of effluent disposal

The Shire has an important role in encouraging waste minimisation and reuse including the use of new and viable technologies. Avenel township is connected to a township sewerage system.

Protection of built and cultural heritage

Important heritage buildings, structures and places are listed in the Heritage Overlay of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. Further assessment and evaluation of the Shire's heritage is required.

Economic Development*Agriculture and intensive agribusiness*

Council's commitment to the protection of high quality agricultural land is particularly relevant to Avenel.

The proposed Strathbogie Special Use Precinct is currently under investigation by Council to determine suitability for intensive forms of agriculture and horticulture. The proposed precinct is situated approximately north-east of Avenel township. Rezoning of the land from Farming to Special Use Zone with selective application of the Environmental Significance Overlay is proposed. The proposed precinct would be strategically located with access to rail, road and air services (Mangalore Airport).

Business and industry development

The road and rail network within the Hume Corridor provides business and industry development opportunities for the Shire, including road freight distribution businesses and agribusinesses requiring convenient access to national and international markets. Mangalore Airport has the potential to provide multi-modal opportunities for transport, food processing and logistics industries.

Currently there is no provision for industrial land in Avenel.

Tourism

Avenel's location within one hour's drive of the northern metropolitan fringe of Melbourne provides a strategic advantage in terms of attracting visitors. Tourism in the Shire is founded on a diverse range of activities including:

- scenic landscape appeal of Strathbogie Ranges
- heritage and cultural attractions
- wine production and intensive agriculture
- sports events
- aerial and aquatic activities and
- award winning wineries

Local Policies*Natural landscape Protection: Local Policy 22.03*

This policy applies to all applications for new buildings and extensions to existing buildings within the Shire and any buildings and works on significant hilltops and ridgelines.

The Local policy recognises the natural landscape of the Shire as an important asset that requires protection from inappropriate use and development. The policy also provides a basis and guideline for the sympathetic external treatment of buildings in their context.

Key objectives are to protect areas of environmental and visual significance from inappropriate development, limit development on prominent ridges and hilltops, encourage protection and

revegetation and ensure all structures blend in with the surrounding environment. The local policy includes policy requirements to satisfy the objectives.

Development in Rural Areas Requiring Buffer Distance: Local Policy 22.06

This Policy applies to applications requiring planning permits for the use or development of land in the Farming Zone where buffer distance separations are required to protect the amenity of adjoining or nearby properties and land uses. It excludes public infrastructure facilities.

A large area of the northern sector of the Shire as identified in the proposed Strathbogie Special Use Precinct is under investigation because it appears to be particularly suited to enterprises requiring buffer distances. It is Council's policy to further investigate the development of such uses in this area.

This local policy is particularly relevant for the Mushroom Composting enterprise to the north of Avenel township. The local policy includes policy requirements to satisfy the objectives.

Hume Freeway Goulburn Valley Highway Environs: Local Policy 22.07

This policy applies to the use and development of land within 100 metres of the Hume Freeway and aims to assist in the efficient performance of freeways and protect the appearance of areas through which they pass.

The Goulburn Valley Highway and Hume Freeway are principal roads linking State capital cities and are designated as part of the Auslink National Land Transport network under the Auslink (National Land Transport) Act 2005. Land use and development planning should take full account of these roads when development occurs in their vicinity.

Key objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure that the use and development of land does not prejudice the levels of service, safety and amenity of the Hume Freeway and Goulburn Valley Highway.
- To minimise any adverse effects of noise from traffic using the Hume Freeway and Goulburn Valley Highway.

The local policy includes policy requirements to satisfy the objectives.

Avenel Structure Plan

The Avenel Structure Plan is part of Clause 21.03 of the Planning Scheme. Key elements of the Avenel Structure Plan are:

Town access and entrances

Improved urban design with strengthening of the town's identity

Residential growth and infill

Investigate future growth opportunities at 2 locations at the Avenel's northern edges.
Investigate residential infill opportunities at the western edge of the town

Rural living

Investigate rural living opportunities beyond the township boundary south-west and north-east of the town.

Business and community use

A precinct is identified in Queen Street adjacent to the railway line

Heritage Walking trail

A proposed trail is identified at the western town boundary.

Planning Scheme Amendment C25

A major planning scheme amendment (Amendment C25) was approved by the Minister for Planning in July 2007. This amendment followed a major general review of the Planning Scheme. The amendment implements the recommendations of the review.

8. RELEVANT STRATEGIC STUDIES

Two recent studies are relevant to land use and development outcomes for Avenel. They are the Strathbogie Urban Design Framework (Connell Wagner, 2003) and Strathbogie Rural Residential Strategy, Beca, 2004).

8.1 Strathbogie Urban Design Framework

The Urban Design Framework Report was prepared in 2003. The Report includes a chapter on Avenel with town framework plan and town centre plan. Some of the key recommendations and suggestions for Avenel are:

Town Boundaries

- Reinforcement of existing town boundaries with increased plantings.
- North west limit of the township defined at railway line with a vegetation buffer along the railway reserve.
- Vegetation buffer along western boundary of the golf course to bring the Nagambie Road residential area into the core of the town.

Traffic Safety

- Investigation of traffic control measures, intersection treatments and improved signage prior to the proposed grade separated intersection at the Hume Freeway proposed by VicRoads.
- Detailed engineering design for railway crossing and intersection to alleviate traffic hazards.

Town centre

- Urban design and landscaping proposals to improve the functionality, amenity and clarity of the town centre precinct and to establish a sense of place for the town centre.
- Town centre defined by area extending along Queen Street, Longwood Road and Bank Street.
- Urban design improvements including coloured concrete footpaths, street furniture, recommended palette of colours for painting of buildings and a unifying theme for signage.
- Avenue planting along Queen Street is proposed to mark the precinct and to form a link the recreation area.

Community infrastructure

- Any additional community infrastructure and services should, if possible, be located within the Queen Street area to consolidate the town centre. Any future recreational development should be concentrated in the active recreation precinct. A landscape masterplan should be undertaken for the area.

8.2 Strathbogie Rural Residential Strategy

Potential areas for future rezoning to low density residential and rural living were considered under the *Rural Residential Strategy, Strathbogie Shire*, (Strathbogie Shire And Beca Pty Ltd, July 2004). This study recommended that areas to the northeast and southwest of the Avenel township be further assessed to identify areas for rezoning to rural living and low density residential. In addition to recommending the strategic rezoning of land to identify new areas for inclusion in the rural living zone, the Study commented that areas close to the Avenel township allow for the infill development of remaining blocks.

In response to the *Rural Residential Strategy, Strathbogie Shire*, Strathbogie Shire and Beca Pty Ltd, July 2004, Strathbogie Shire Council commissioned the report *Land Capability Analysis And Evaluation Of*

Natural Resources of Land Within the Strathbogie Shire Final Report: Report 1: Avenel, (RMCG and Primary Industries Research Victoria, November 2005) to further assess areas identified in the rural residential strategy. This land capability report further addressed the land capability aspects of Ministers Direction no 6, based on geology, landform and soils information and mapping. The report found that the areas identified in the Study were suitable for rural living development from a land capability perspective.

9. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Water

Goulburn Valley Water provides reticulated water to most of the Avenel township. Current water supply comes from the Seymour township, the main feeding a high level water tank in the south-western section of the Avenel township, and then being gravity fed throughout the town. Goulburn Valley Water requires that all lots below 4 hectares in area be supplied with reticulated water.

There is ample existing water supply to cater for infill residential development within the town. The current water supply system is suitable for residential, community and commercial purposes. This system is not suitable for larger scale 'wet' industries that require a large water supply.

The existing reticulated water system has ample capacity for township expansion and increased water requirements. While most potential expansion could be met by gravity supply from existing water provision, there is also potential to further extend water supply by the further provision of higher level pumping stations.

Sewerage and effluent disposal

Goulburn Valley Water provides reticulated sewerage to most of the Avenel township, this service supplied to Avenel in 2002 as part of State Government sewerage backlog scheme. The current sewerage system has ample capacity for infill residential development within the town. The current sewerage system is suitable for residential, community and commercial purposes. This system is not suitable for larger scale 'wet' industries that require a large water supply.

The existing reticulated sewerage system also has ample capacity for township expansion and increased sewerage requirements. While most potential expansion could be met by gravity supply from existing trunk line sewers, there is also potential to further extend sewerage by the further provision of higher level pumping stations.

The existing wastewater treatment plant to service the Avenel township is located approximately two kilometres north of the town. Required buffer distances for the plant allow an opportunity to expand residential development for the township to the north without affecting residential amenity and the operation of the plant.

Effluent disposal systems are required outside the area supplied by reticulated sewerage. Although very few effluent disposal systems have been approved in this fringe area, the Strathbogie Shire Council Environmental Health Officer reports that soils are of average quality and capability for effluent disposal, there is no documented history of septic failure in the area and that an absolute minimum of 0.4 hectare area is required to sustain a dwelling and associated effluent disposal system/field.

Drainage

The current drainage system for the Avenel township drains to the Hughes Creek on the western side of the town. Hughes Creek drains to the northwest into the Goulburn River, south of Nagambie. Some upgrading of existing drainage systems are required to meet the future residential potential of the Avenel township.

Water sensitive urban design principles need to be employed in the design of onsite and offsite drainage systems. Natural drainage lines should be fully utilised for drainage and recreation functions as part of the subdivision and development of residential and rural residential areas.

The draft *Stormwater Drainage Master Plan for Township of Avenel, Final, 2007* has been prepared by EarthTech for Strathbogie Shire Council (2007) to assess the performance of existing drainage and prioritise future drainage improvement works. The report concluded that the Avenel drainage system generally performs adequately, including under extreme rainfall and flooding conditions. The report did outline and prioritise drainage works for the current township and the future expansion of the township.

10. STRATEGIC ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following discussion about strategic issues and opportunities for Avenel have emerged from discussions with Council officers, relevant State agencies, review of the planning scheme and relevant studies and from consultant investigations. The issues need to be considered in the formulation of the Avenel 2030 Strategy and the town structure plan.

Hume Freeway Town Entry

Existing and new dwellings on the northern side of the Hume Freeway, that is in the Ash and Lime Street areas, have experienced noise impacts from the freeway. The proximity of the freeway has created the need to install noise attenuation measures in the design and construction of dwellings. The rezoning of land and construction of new dwellings should be avoided in close proximity to the Hume Freeway.

VicRoads proposes to create a grade separated intersection at the Hume Freeway, Jones Street and Tarcombe Road extension. A typical diamond interchange is proposed. The exit point of the interchange is at Spencers Road, east of Jones Road. The timing of these proposed works have not been established. A freeway flyover at Lambing Gully Road is under a consideration by VicRoads as a longer term option.

Traffic safety at the Freeway is an important issue. Interim options to the interchange being considered by VicRoads include closing off the right hand turn lane and providing for a U-turn 70 metres north.

The proposed Hume Freeway interchange will have important implications for the image and presentation of a new entrance to Avenel. A new entrance character can be created at the new intersection with Spencers Road and along Spencer Road and Mitchell Street.

Some consideration needs to be given to the potential for Lambing Gully Road to become an alternative town entry as an entry only or as the longer term town entry and exit replacing Jones Street. Discussions of options are required with VicRoads. Attractive features include:

- avenue of roadside box trees in Lambing Gully Road
- rural character on west side of Lambing Gully Road
- old Hume Highway and bridge crossing
- potential for avenue planting along Henry Street

Road network

The existing secondary road network, shown on Plan 4, comprises the alignment of Jones Street, Mitchell Street, Livingstone Street, Ewing Street, Queen Street and the Avenel-Nagambie Road. Maintenance of this road network is the responsibility of VicRoads.

Other roads within the secondary road network include Henry Street and Mitchell Street east and west of Livingstone Street (former Hume Highway) and Avenel-Longwood Road the alignment of which follows the railway line. This section of the road network and all other local roads are the responsibility of Strathbogie Shire Council.

The existing alignment with right and left turns at the Royal Mail Hotel and recreation precinct add interest to the journey experience to and from the town centre.

A town bypass option linking the Hume Freeway with Avenel – Nagambie Road has previously been considered. No proposals followed this consideration

Traffic safety at the railway level crossing at Queen Street and the Nagambie Road is an important issue. Larger trucks using the crossing intersection as an alternative route to Nagambie are causing some town centre amenity issues. Larger trucks also are having maneuvering problems at the crossing intersection. Eventual development of land within the Township zone on the west side of the railway line will intensify the traffic issues at the intersection. One option could be to divert truck movements from the south north along Goulburn Valley Highway with further diversion through rural areas north of Avenel.

Increases in traffic volumes resulting from progressive infill and expansion of the township are likely to impact on the conditions of the local road network.

Key strategic issues relating to the road network and traffic safety include:

- Improving safety of the intersection with the Hume Freeway with traffic safety measures until construction of the proposed interchange.
- Improved town entry signage to provide clear message to car travelers.
- Detailed investigation, design and engineering plans for town centre level crossing intersection.
- Traffic safety investigation of all level rail crossings within context of all land zoned Township zone situated on the west side of the railway line.
- Thematic street planting along roads leading to the town centre particularly from south of the recreation reserve in Livingstone Street.
- Need to maintain and in some instances upgrade roads in the township, particularly those with greater traffic volumes.

Residential growth and infill

Some residential areas of the Avenel township have undeveloped lots within them. The availability of reticulated sewerage and water has led to the gradual development of some of these lots.

Larger lot sizes prevail in the town, most common sizes being 1-2,000 and 2-3,000 m². Approximately 60 % of township lots are in these lot ranges. Approximately 30 % of land parcels with lots in this range are vacant. Township lots less than 1,000 m² represent 19% of total township lots. There are few lots in this range that are undeveloped. A table showing the range of lots sizes and the number of lots occupied by dwellings in the township is included in Appendix A.

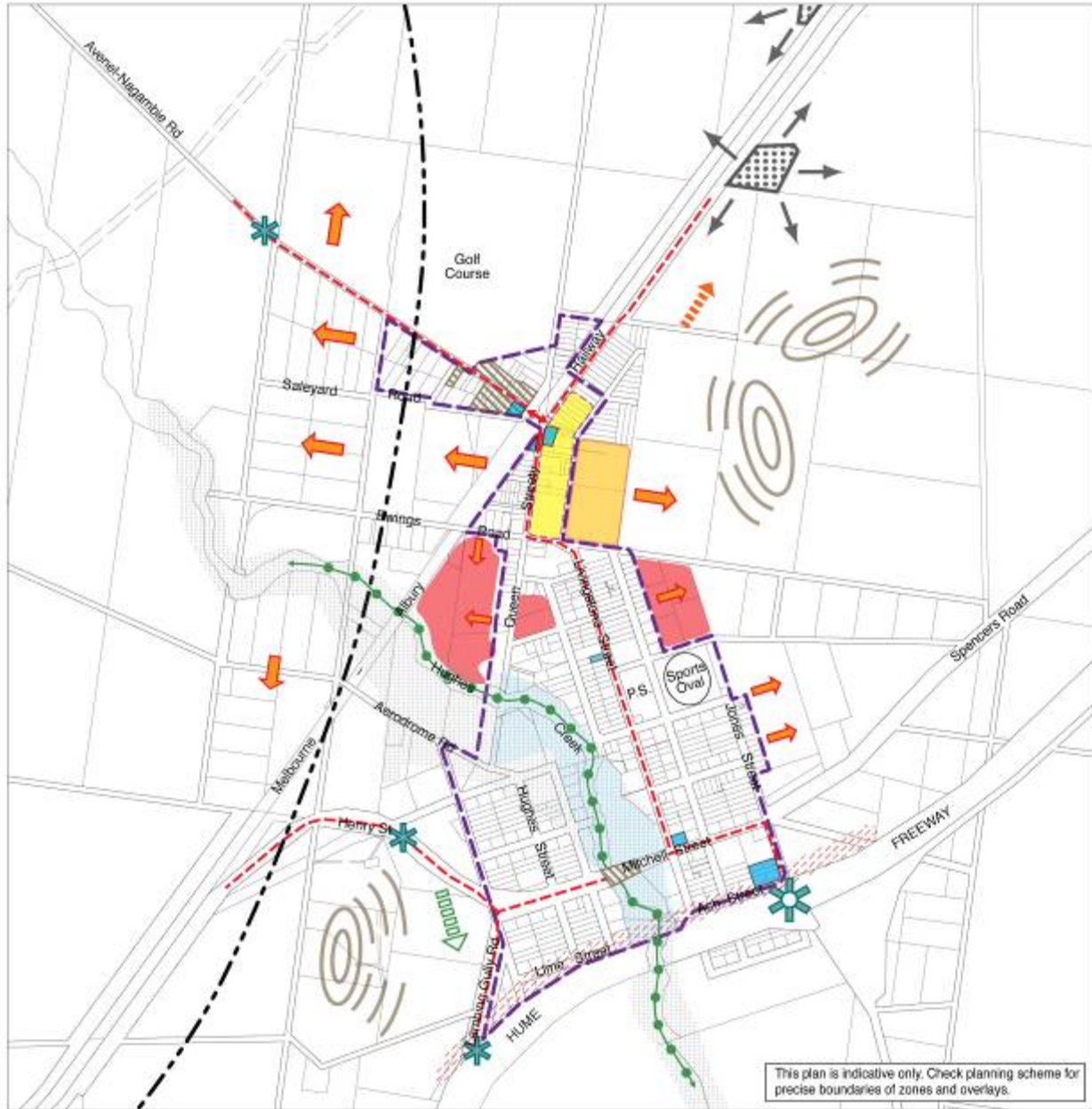
There is substantial potential for development on larger lots (in the 2-4,000 m² range). Resubdivision of larger lots > 1,000 m²) raises issues about increased density, loss/change of character. Council has commenced a neighbourhood character study for Avenel to manage changes to the town's character. Some peripheral township areas are effectively used for rural purposes, particularly to the west of the township. It is important for these areas which can be supplied with reticulated services to be protected from other forms of residential development that will compromise the ability to achieve the full residential development potential in the future. Prior to the full residential development of these areas, semi rural uses provide an ideal interim use of the land.

Major residential and expansion areas with a current Township zoning are located north of Ewings Road and Saleyards Road west and east of the railway line, south of Ewings Road adjacent to Queen Street and land west of Jones Street. These locations and other smaller infill areas are shown on Plan no. 5.

An assessment of residential land supply and demand has been carried out as part of the Avenel 2030 Strategy. The findings of this assessment are included in Chapter 12 and in Appendix A.

A summary of strategic issues related to residential growth and infill include:

- Application of Development Plan Overlays and/or Design and Development Overlays need to be considered for large undeveloped tracts of land within the existing Township Zone on both sides of the railway line. Application of these overlays will ensure better integration of new residential areas with existing urban areas.
- Sites suitable for medium density housing close to the town centre should be identified.
- Housing choice and diversity should be encouraged by the provision of housing areas at varying residential densities including conventional, medium and low density. Proposed rural living areas outside of a defined urban boundary should also be identified.



PLAN 4: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY – STRATEGIC ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Existing township edge
- Residential expansion potential - residential expansion and infill potential within existing Township Zone
- Residential expansion potential - subject to protection of elevated slopes and adequate buffers from mushroom growing facility
- Residential Infill, Priority Sites/Areas - sites and areas close to town centre and services offering maximum development opportunities
- Key town development site - investigate future land use options and design opportunities at key site adjoining town centre and major access road
- Town Centre - consolidation of town centre is required. Sites for future business and community use need to be investigated.
- Heritage buildings and precinct - identify and protect town's important buildings, structures and streetscapes
- Potential traffic hazard - road safety and traffic design solution required at railway level crossing
- Reinforce existing major road network - greater definition of main road system possible with urban design and landscaping
- Existing industry requiring buffer distances
- Significant viewlines to Strathbogie Ranges
- Existing township commercial
- Primary town access point - proposed interchange and new town entry at Hume Highway. Provide for visual exposure of town entry and good visual amenity
- Town entrances - opportunities to reinforce town image and enhance entrance character
- Potential town open space link along Hughes Creek and environs - opportunities to create open space corridor along Hughes Creek with links to town services and features and residential areas
- Existing floodway - existing Urban Floodway Zone and Floodway Overlay. Check planning scheme maps for precise boundaries
- Existing Airport Exposure Overlay (eastern boundary) - refer to planning scheme overlay map
- Hilltops and ridgelines - landscape features of Avenel's character and townscape that require protection
- Freeway visual corridor - presentation and image of Avenel needs to be considered within the visual corridor of the Hume Freeway

Low density and rural living

Low density and rural living subdivision and development refer to lots in the range of 0.4 ha to approximately 8.0 ha. There are no existing low density residential or rural living zones in or adjacent to the township. Existing demand for this type of housing is currently met by lots in the Township and Farming zones.

There are a range of lot sizes throughout the environs and a substantial number of undeveloped lots (46 houses on 170 lots). Approximately 32 % of lots in the town environs are in the 1-4 hectare range. A table showing the range of lots sizes and the number of lots occupied by dwellings in the environs of the town is included in Appendix A.

Dwelling approvals rates in the town environs are not an indicator of demand for rural living due to the lack of zoning for this purpose and also many dwellings in the environs are linked to farming purposes and zoning.

Low density residential subdivision and housing should be discouraged on land within the township that is suited to smaller township lots. The Avenel Structure Plan should provide direction for future low density residential zoning and development. The Structure Plan also needs to identify potential rural living areas for further detailed investigation

All new low density residential zone and rural living zone proposals must be strategically assessed and justified in accordance with *Minister's Direction No 6, Rural Residential Development*. The direction requires a planning authority to demonstrate how the proposed rural residential development meets performance measures for this type of development, as outlined in the guidelines that accompany the direction.

Infrastructure provision

A detailed description of available infrastructure is discussed in Chapter 9 of this Report. A summary of the key infrastructure issues and opportunities includes:

- All land within the existing urban area and undeveloped land with a Township zoning can be serviced with reticulated sewerage and water supply at developer's cost.
- Use of Development Plan Overlays in larger currently undeveloped residential areas can provide the mechanism to plan and co-ordinate services such as sewerage, road access, drainage and open space and potentially minimise development costs.
- Road infrastructure and drainage is generally of a standard typical of rural towns. Gravel road verges and open swale drains are one element of the town's character. Engineering solutions that retain the township character and amenity need to be investigated in the context of increased subdivision and house construction.
- Community expectations need to be considered and decisions need to be made about the future standards of road infrastructure.

Neighbourhood character

Council has commissioned a Shire of Strathbogie Neighbourhood Character Study. The Study will examine and make recommendations about neighbourhood character for Avenel and the three other major towns in the Shire. Council wishes to “develop policies and design objectives that will promote the values of the community, add to the preferred neighbourhood character and ensure that the built form articulates the community's values and responds to the preferred neighbourhood character.” (*Project Brief: Neighbourhood Character Study of Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town*).

The key strategic issue relating to neighbourhood character is the need to manage the impact new residential development has on neighbourhood character and absorb this development into the existing urban fabric. Council's commitment to protection of neighbourhood character, as demonstrated in the commissioning of a neighbourhood character study, is an important step forward. A community workshop is planned to identify community values and views about the town's character.

The overall neighbourhood character of Avenel is one of a small rural town or village characterized by the following elements and characteristics:

Landscape setting

- riparian environment and flooding functions of Hughes Creek,
- native vegetation along Creek environs & within road/rail reserves,
- relatively open pattern of development in the township
- landform that is flat incorporating the floodplain of Hughes Creek, and
- views and vistas to adjacent hills, Strathbogie Ranges and rural landscapes.

Urban form and character

- ill defined edge to the township,
- low density and low rise nature of development,
- relatively large residential lots,
- grid street layout typical of rural towns,
- wide residential streets with generous road verges, and
- drainage swales with road reserves.

Built environment

- diversity of housing styles,
- heritage buildings scattered throughout town with a cluster of heritage buildings in and near to the town centre,
- potential for a stronger built form focus for the own centre

Town centre

The town centre along Queen and Bank Streets is the main focus for business activity. The small heritage precinct on the northern side of the railway line including Harvest Home forms part of the town centre. Other commercial sites include the hotel at the corner of Mitchell Street and Livingstone Street, the service station and roadhouse at the southern Hume Freeway entry and the mixed business store in Jones Street.

Traffic safety at the railway crossing intersection is an important issue, particularly with large trucks using this route as an alternative route to Nagambie. Traffic control measures need to be investigated by VicRoads and Council.

Strategic issues relating to the town centre include:

- Population growth will in time, create the demand for a small supermarket. A site needs to be identified.
- Vacant land within and adjacent to the town centre presents some development and urban design opportunities.
- Livingstone Street (west side) has the potential to be main commercial strip in the longer term.

- Street plantings along Livingstone Street and Queen Street would provide a stronger town centre image.
- Significance and contribution of heritage buildings in the town centre and its environs needs to be assessed. Protection of buildings of heritage significance and character should be investigated.
- Traffic safety at the railway crossing intersection needs to be investigated.

Industry

There are no industries or industrial zoning within the township. A mushroom composting plant and Council's transfer station are located to the north of the township. Plunketts Winery is situated in Lambing Gully Road near to the intersection with the Hume Freeway.

Mushroom growing facility:

A mushroom growing facility is located on the southern side of Avenel – Longwood Road, to the northwest of the Avenel township. The presence of the plant restricts the potential for residential expansion in this direction due to the nature of its operation.

Plunketts Winery

Plunketts Winery is located at the alternative entry to Avenel. It is a business and tourist site. Encroachment of other land uses such as residential on viticulture must be prevented to eliminate potential land use and amenity conflict and to provide for business certainty.

Proposed Special Use Zone (SUZ)

The potential for a SUZ is being investigated further by Council and includes the possible expansion of the existing intensive agricultural industry precinct to the north, extending east of Nagambie. Important considerations in relation to Avenel are:

- expanded role of area, with Avenel playing a role as a residential area and in providing some services, and
- potential expanded role of Mangalore airport for industrial uses and airport functions associated with large scale agricultural industries.

Mangalore airport has a current proposed light industrial area associated with it as part of a current economic development strategy.

Town entrances

Town entrances have the function of conveying messages and impressions about the town. Avenel's entrances generally each have their own distinctive character.

The main town entrances are:

Hume Freeway entry at Jones Street

Henry Street (former Hume Highway) west of Lambing Gully Road

Avenel–Nagambie Road west of golf course

The entrance character of each of the town's main entrances are discussed in Chapter 12.

Planning and design issues relevant to Avenel's town entrances are:

- safety and town image at the main Freeway entrance,
- the potential role of Lambing Gully Road as an alternative entry and/or longer term major highway entrance

- protection of views of adjacent hills and ranges from visually inappropriate developments particularly at Henry Street entrance,
- poorly sited or designed buildings along entrances could potentially degrade entrance character,
- heritage is an important element of entrance character particularly along the Avenel-Nagambie Road entrance, and
- Avenel-Nagambie Road entrance will take on a more urban character in the future which gives rise to siting and design issues from future development with main road frontage.

Heritage

The Strathbogie Planning Scheme recognises the heritage significance of two buildings/structures; the former Royal Mail Hotel at the corner of Mitchell Street (old Hume Highway) and Livingstone Street and the bridge over Pranjip Creek on Mitchell Street.

There are other historic buildings that make an important contribution to the heritage character of Avenel. They include hotels, churches, halls, commercial and residential buildings mostly concentrated along Livingstone Street and Nagambie Road. These and other buildings need to be included for consideration in the proposed Strathbogie Heritage Study.

Remaining historic buildings are an important legacy of Avenel's history. They are an essential part of the town's character and its appeal as a town for living and visiting.

Heritage issues include:

- need to identify and assess all buildings that are of heritage significance or make an important contribution to the character of Avenel, and
- protection Avenel's heritage buildings can be provided with MSS policy in the period interim to completion of the Strathbogie Heritage Study.

Protection of landscape and native vegetation

Avenel township is set amongst rolling hills and rural landscape. The town's landscape setting is a dominant feature of Avenel's townscape. Adjacent hills and views of the Strathbogie Ranges are very much part of Avenel's attractiveness as a place to live and visit.

The surrounding landscape is in the Farming Zone. This zoning together with Local Policy Natural landscape Protection (Local Policy 22.03) provides a good level of protection for ridgelines and hilltops and discourages development on steeper land.

Significant roadside vegetation exists along roads at the edge of the town including Vearings Road, Lambing Gully Road, Spencers Road and Mitchell Street. This remnant native vegetation should be retained as important flora and fauna habitat and at some locations will establish an edge to the town.

Vegetation in the township within street reserves contribute to the town's character. Retention of the many mature native and exotic species will help to preserve Avenel's landscape character and visual qualities.

The main issues in summary are:

- protection of views and vistas of adjacent hills and Strathbogie ranges,
- maximising opportunities from views to hills and ranges, and
- protection of native vegetation along roadsides and in Hughes Creek corridor.

Hughes Creek environs

Hughes creek corridor is a valuable natural feature and important native vegetation corridor. It has the potential to form the spine of a town open space network with links to the town centre, residential areas and places of interest.

Much the creek and its environs within the town are zoned Urban Floodway Zone in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. This is a restrictive zone and dwellings are prohibited. A Flooding Overlay applies to other areas of the creek environs.

Large and smaller areas of undeveloped land with a Township zoning abut Hughes Creek. Other future residential areas are situated close to the creek environs. Design of new residential areas need to consider linking opportunities for pedestrian and cycle trails.

Hughes Creek environs provides an important flora and fauna habitat and its flooding is important to the maintenance of a healthy river system.

The main issues in summary are:

- lack of defined walking trail,
- making provision for access links to creek environs from existing and future residential areas,
- vegetation within the creek environs has protection in clause 52.17 of the planning scheme and permits are required for lopping, destruction and removal of vegetation,
- ongoing control of weeds is necessary to protect remnant indigenous vegetation and habitat values,
- an environmental interpretative program with information such as the area's cultural history and flora and fauna habitats would be of interest, and
- potential for weed invasion at interface with private land.

11. RESIDENTIAL DEMAND AND SUPPLY

State policy at Clause 14 (Settlement) of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme require planning authorities to make provision for a supply of residential zoned land to meet at least a 10 year demand.

Land supply estimates

The following residential supply analysis identifies the amount of residential zoned and serviceable land and the potential number of residential lots that can be created from this land supply.

An analysis of residential land supply in Avenel indicates that there is approximately 115 hectares of land currently zoned Township zone within Avenel that remains undeveloped and is therefore notionally available for residential development.

Table 11 Avenel: Undeveloped and Notionally Available Land with Township Zoning

Site/Area	
Site 1. North of Ewings Road, east of Railway line	26.0
Sites 2-8. Various sites with areas ranging from 5.0 – 17.0 ha	82.0
Site 9 Land between Ewings Road and Hughes Creek	7.3
Total	115.3 ha

n.b. Refer to Plan 8 (Appendix A) for location of sites

Notional Lot Yield – Residential 1 Zoned Land

The notional lot yield from land zoned Township zone is shown in Table 12 below. The yield is derived from the land supply analysis. Calculations of lot yield assume an average lot size of 1,000m² for Residential 1 zoned land with no major development constraints or a net residential density of 8 dwellings per hectare

Table 12. Notional Lot yield for Avenel

	Land Area - hectares	Potential Lot Yield
Land within Township zone and without major development constraints	115	920 lots
Total Supply of Residential lots	115	920 lots

It is unrealistic to assume that all of this potential supply will be taken up as sold residential lots. The supply analysis assumes an 80% take-up of these potential lots giving a supply of 740 lots.

There are substantial opportunities for subdivision and resubdivision of existing larger lots in the township. It is estimated that approximately 60% of all township lots are in the lot size ranges of 1,000-2,000 m² and 2,000-3,000 m². Approximately 30% of these lots are vacant. In many instances several lots are held in the same tenement parcel with a single dwelling occupying the parcel. There are also substantial opportunities for subdivision and resubdivision of lots above 3,000 m² including lots 4 ha and above.

There are estimated to be 567 lots in the township area. Many of these lots have subdivision potential. The number and range of lot sizes and the proportion of lots and tenement parcels with and without dwellings is summarised in Table 1 in Appendix A.

Demand by Dwelling Approvals

The number of residential dwelling approvals issued by Council on an annual basis indicates past demand for housing in Avenel. The average annual number of dwelling approvals issued between 2000-2006 was 11.

Table 9. Dwelling Building Approvals – Avenel 2000-2006

	2000-2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Avenel township	41	11	16	13	79

Demand by Residential Subdivision

An examination of residential subdivision or the number of residential lots created also provides an indication of demand for housing in Avenel. For the purpose of this residential demand analysis, residential lots are lots created by subdivision within the Township Zone.

The table below shows that a total of 24 new residential lots were created via certified plans of subdivision for the period 2003–2006, at an average of 6 lots per year.

Table 10. Residential Lots Created : Avenel (2003-2006)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Avenel township	2*	4	8	10	24

* Current proposed certifications (not resolved)

The level of subdivision activity (ie. number of lots) is considered to be a reliable measurement of long term demand. The supply and demand analysis has been calculated on the basis of historical trends and levels of residential subdivision

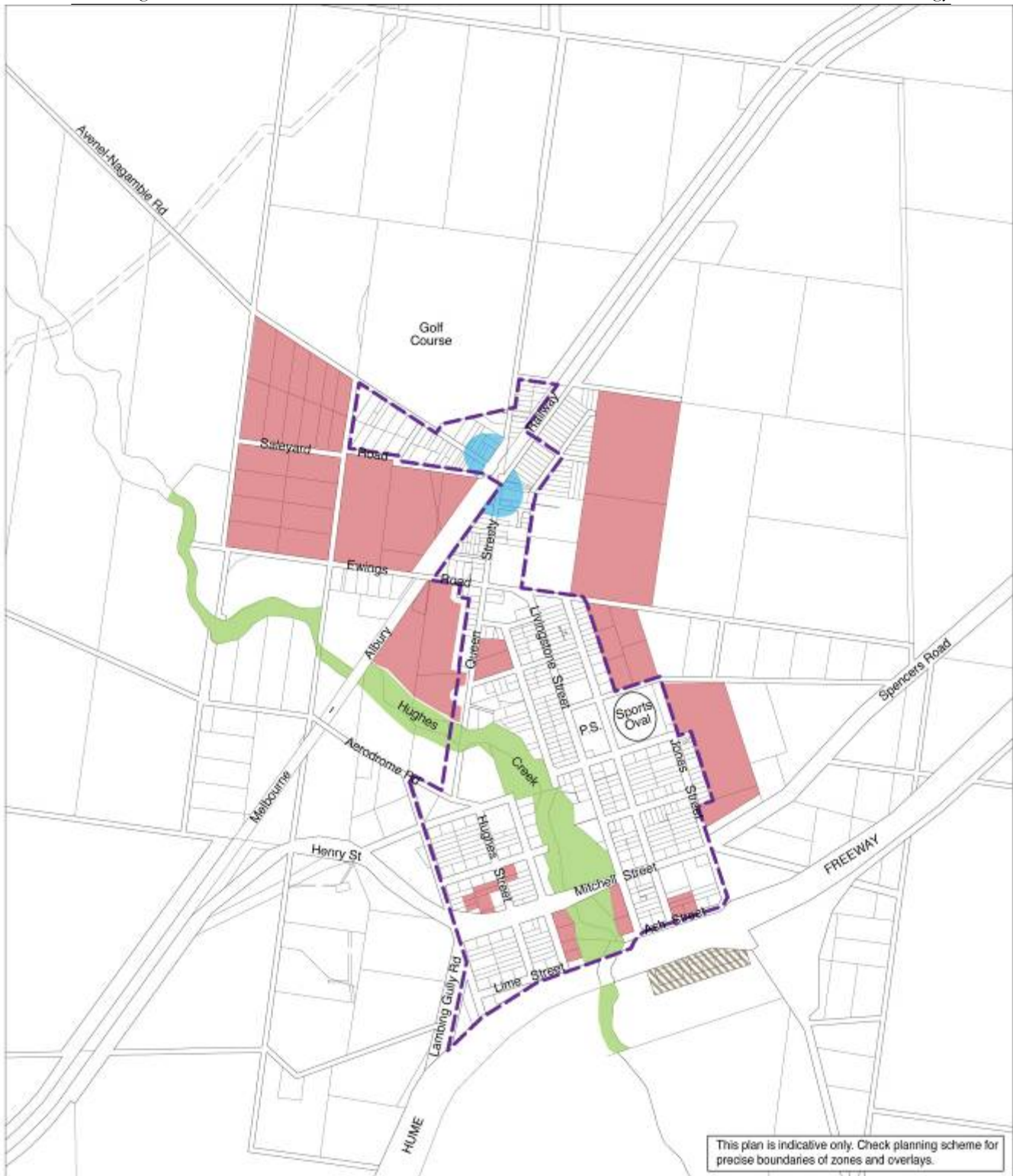
Future Demand

Future demand for residential lots in the township based on historical subdivision and dwelling approvals would provide for a low growth scenario at 11 dwellings per annum (dwelling approvals).

A higher growth scenario for Avenel is likely due to:

- higher population growth between 2001 and 2006,
- continuing “tree change” trends with road and rail improvements in the Hume Corridor, and
- enhanced agricultural industry and use of the proposed Special Use Zone in the potential intensive agricultural area extending between Nagambie, Euroa and the Mangalore/Avenel area.

It is clear from an assessment of the supply of residential land (115 hectares and in excess of 700 lots) that there is an abundant supply of residential land to satisfy demand from higher growth scenarios. Residential supply and demand issues in Avenel are related to the potential subdivision and resubdivision of larger undeveloped lots and tenement parcels.



This plan is indicative only. Check planning scheme for precise boundaries of zones and overlays.

PLAN 5: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY – RESIDENTIAL INFILL & EXPANSION

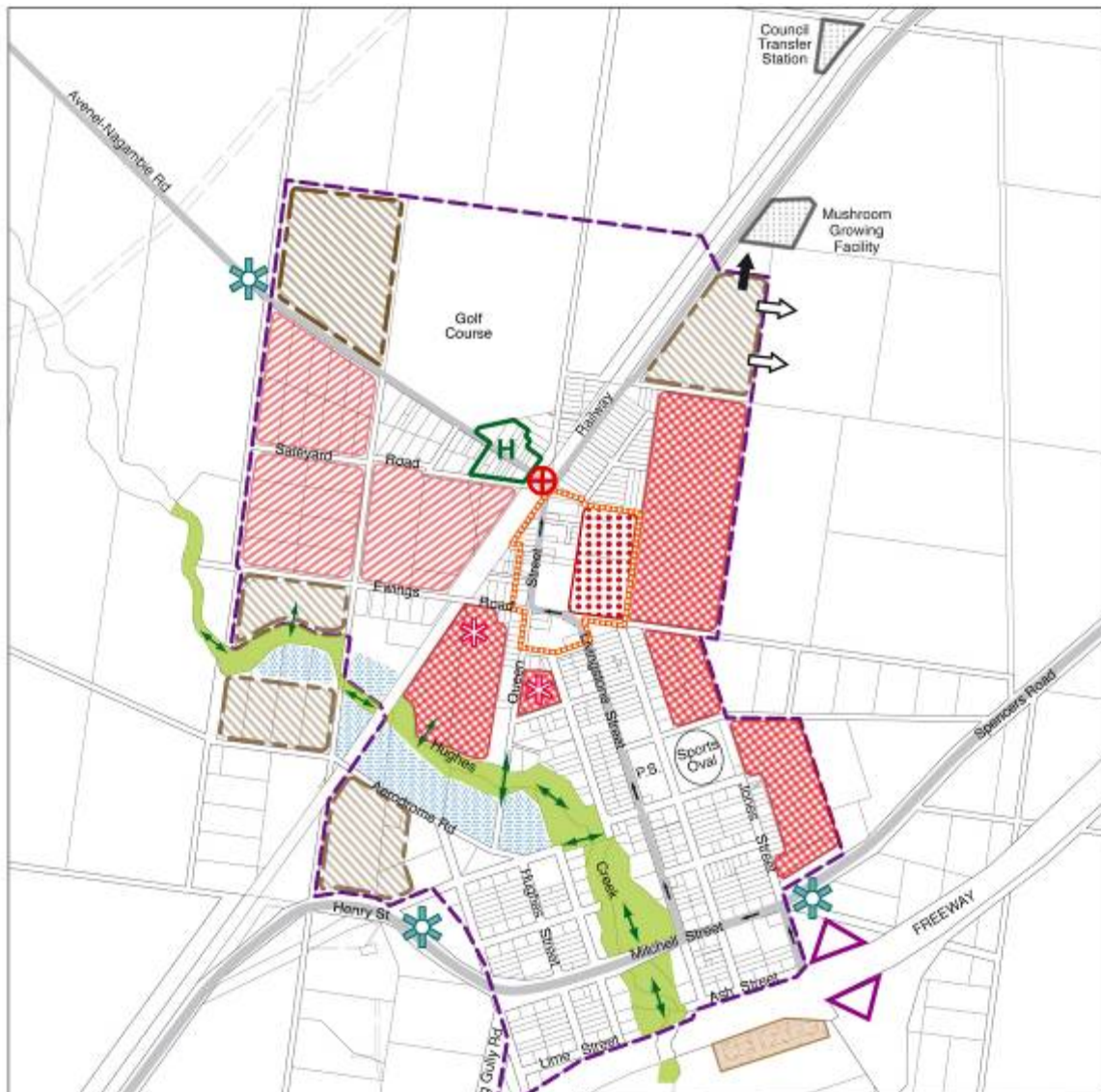
- Existing Township Edge
- Residential 1 Zone Recommended (existing Township Zone)
 - opportunities for residential infill and expansion within existing Township Zone
 - encourage sequencing of development from more central to outer areas
 - town water and sewerage either available or system capacity to extend services to new areas
- Hughes Creek & Environs - provide open space & walking trail links from creek environs to residential areas & town centre (refer to Plan 5)
- Retain Farming Zone - retain Farming Zone and investigate application of Restructure Overlay
- Existing Town Centre - encourage new housing opportunities close to town centre (Refer to Plans 5 & 6)

12. AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY

Each of the three population growth scenarios discussed in Chapter 12 can be accommodated within the existing Township zoned land.

















The key strategic directions of the Avenel 2030 Strategy are as follows:

1. Clearly define an **urban growth boundary** that allows for longer term township expansion as shown on the Avenel Structure Plan.
2. **Plan and co-ordinate** residential development of existing undeveloped land with a current Township zoning through the use of planning scheme tools such as development plan overlays.
3. Provide for **low density residential** development as township development within and adjoining the defined urban growth boundary that satisfies the requirements of Ministerial Direction No. 6.
4. Provide for **rural living development** as an urban related form of residential development at locations beyond and adjacent to the defined urban growth boundary that satisfies the requirements of Ministerial Direction No. 6.
5. Replace the existing Township Zone with residential zones and other land use zones (ie. Business Zone) to **provide a town structure** for orderly and co-ordinated development.
6. Provide for greater **housing choice** and diversity to meet the housing preferences of different population segments of the existing and future population.
7. Encourage development that meets **sustainable development** principles and respond to local site and environmental conditions.
8. Plan for a **town centre** that allows for expansion and encourages a strong sense of place
9. Encourage new development to respect residential **neighbourhood and heritage character**.
10. Develop a town **open space network** based on Hughes Creek and environs with connections to existing and new residential areas and community facilities
11. Ensure that development respects **townscape features** of Avenel including major viewlines, landscape settings, hilltops and ridgelines, and significant vegetation.
12. Ensure that built form and landscape themes at **town entrances** reflect and enhance Avenel's identity and character.



This plan is indicative only. Check planning scheme for precise boundaries of zones and overlays.

PLAN 6: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY STRUCTURE PLAN

-  **Urban growth boundary**
Ensure consolidation within boundary to achieve sustainable township form
Establish urban-rural edge at town boundary
Encourage serviced residential subdivision and development within boundary
-  **Town Centre**
Implement Town Centre proposals of Avenel 2030 Strategy
-  **Key Strategic Site: Potential Mixed Use**
Prepare master plan for sites to investigate land use options and development and urban design framework
-  **Heritage Precinct**
Protect heritage buildings and encourage tourism retailing
-  **Rail Crossing Intersection (Queen Street-Nagambie Road)**
Undertake traffic management and safety study
-  **Hughes Creek Open Space Corridor**
Establish walking trails and open space links from residential areas to Hughes Creek & environs
-  **Protection of riparian areas & floodways**
-  **Protect and Enhance Town Entrances**
Implement town entrance proposals of Avenel 2030 Strategy
-  **Major Town Road Network**
Streetplanting and landscaping recommended to define major traffic route and to direct visitors to town centre
-  **Proposed Freeway Interchange**
-  **Industrial Uses Requiring Buffer Distances**
Mushroom composting farm and Council's transfer station require adequate buffer distances to existing/proposed residential areas
-  **Residential Infill and Expansion (existing Township Zone)**
Rezoning from Township to Residential 1 Zone recommended
Apply Development Plan Overlays to co-ordinate layout and provision of services and integrate with existing urban area
-  **Priority Residential Development Areas**
Priority residential areas on south side of railway line to reduce potential for traffic conflict at Queen Street rail crossing intersection & maximise accessibility to town services
Higher priority residential areas near town centre
-  **Potential Future Low Density Residential (LDR)**
Rezoning to LDR Zone subject to Ministerial Direction 6 requirements including demand and supply assessment for LD lots and land capability assessment.
Development plan overlay recommended
Buffer distance from mushroom growing facility to be determined by EPA
Eastern boundary to be determined by visual impact assessment
-  **Rural Living Zone**
Areas may be considered for full investigation and rezoning to Rural Living in accordance with Minister's direction No. 6, Rural Residential Development
-  **Retain Farming Zone**
Retain Farming Zone to avoid future development on south side of Hume Fwy
Restructure Overlay recommended

Township form and boundary

Urban form of Avenel has been influenced by the Hume Freeway (and the former Hume Highway) and Melbourne-Sydney railway line. Landform has imposed some physical constraints on the development of the town with prominent hills to the east and south-west of the town. Natural features such as Hughes Creek and its floodplain have influenced the form and pattern of development.

Defining urban growth boundaries on township strategic plans is a means by which physical form and shape of the town can be controlled. The planning principle behind defining the urban growth boundary is to achieve containment of the urban area rather than allowing for uncontrolled urban expansion of the town. The urban boundary provides certainty, separates urban from rural and environmental land, allows for expansion, and encourages urban consolidation. Importantly land use and development in these areas should not prejudice longer-term residential opportunities.

The urban growth boundary is shown on the Avenel Structure Plan (Plan 6). The boundary is formed by the Hume Freeway to the south, the existing township zone to the east and west and the northern boundary of the Avenel Golf Course.

The urban growth boundary allows for growth over the next 25 years. Included within the boundary is well in excess of a 15-year supply of residential land zoned Township and land also currently zoned Township zoning that will be required for residential development beyond 2020. This land should be protected for this purpose. The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that this land with a Township zoning be rezoned to Residential 1 Zone.

Land required for low density residential development is also provided for within the defined urban growth boundary. Land for this form of residential development is located at the edges of the town, ensuring that the town will develop to its full residential capacity.

There are expansive areas of undeveloped land at the edge of the existing urban area. These areas have a Township zoning and are therefore regarded as areas for future residential zoning and development. Planning for the town's outward expansion must achieve sustainable urban form, better access to town facilities and efficient use of existing infrastructure such as water, sewerage and roads.

Sustainable development principles

There are now higher expectations for the design of residential areas according to sustainable development principles. To some extent these principles are covered in Clause 56 of the Planning Scheme, however it is the responsibility of the land developer and Council in the approval process to ensure that the design of new residential areas and neighbourhoods satisfy State and local policies and respond to the local site conditions and the site's wider urban context.

The Avenel Structure Plan and the subsequent development of the Avenel township provide an ideal opportunity for sustainable design and development of the township. Sustainable design and development principles may be implemented through individual applications for planning permit, the use of development plans to guide the overall layout of larger, undeveloped areas. Sustainable development can also be achieved through public works undertaken by Strathbogie Shire Council and other public authorities.

Sustainable development initiatives for Avenel could include:

- increasing on-site filtration of stormwater and devising ways to use water within the site,
- maximising solar access by orientation of streets and residential lots,
- creating pedestrian permeability in residential neighbourhoods to reduce the need for car travel over short distances and to enhance community well being,
- provision of a walking/pedestrian trail along Hughes Creek between the Hume Freeway and Vearings road,
- protection of native vegetation and where possible incorporating the vegetation as a natural feature within proposed public open space,
- increasing residential densities, where appropriate, in order to protect undisturbed or environmentally significant areas, and
- creating habitat links to and from bushland and vegetated areas.

Infrastructure

Performance measures for future development and provision of infrastructure that should be implemented through planning permits, development plans and works include:

- water sensitive urban design for development, roads and drainage,
- site responsive road design, including layout of roads to provide accessibility and connectivity, retention of road reserve, trees and surfaces and design that reduce future maintenance cost,
- provision of drainage and service corridors,
- provision of roads and drainage in accordance with any approved infrastructure manual and drainage strategy/plan,
- provision of recreation corridors and trails that provide connectivity throughout the town, offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors and utilise natural features as far as possible, such as waterways and natural drainage lines, and
- provision of a walking/pedestrian trail along Hughes Creek between the Hume Freeway and Vearings Road; the trail may be provided through either the provision of land as a recreation contribution for residential subdivision or as works on public land.

Transport and access

The key transport issues from the discussion in Chapter 9 (Strategic Issues and Opportunities) that require a response in the Avenel Structure Plan and the 2030 Strategy relate to traffic safety at the Freeway entry, and Queen Street rail crossing, amenity issues adjacent to the Freeway Corridor and the implications for construction standards and condition from increasing traffic volumes in the future.

Queen Street railway level crossing

This Strategy supports the need to undertake a traffic management study to consider traffic options to alleviate current traffic conflict and amenity issues particularly associated with the heavy truck movements from Queen Street into Nagambie Road. The need for such a study is also recommended in the Avenel Urban Design Framework (Strathbogie Urban Design Frameworks, Connell Wagner 2003).

A land use option that needs to be considered is to encourage future expansion of the town centre away from the intersection south along Queen Street. Refer to Town Centre recommendations below and Plan No. 7).

A traffic option that should be considered is the diversion of truck movements from the south and north along Goulburn Valley Highway with further diversion through rural areas north of Avenel.

Traffic safety at the Hume Freeway entry

Improved traffic safety at the Hume Freeway entry to the town needs to be considered in the short and medium term until such time as the proposed interchange is constructed. A proposal currently being considered by VicRoads to close off the right hand turn lane and provide for a U-turn 70 metres north along the Freeway needs to be fully investigated in consultation with Strathbogie Council.

Lambing Gully Road is now being used as an alternative town entry and exit. This option also requires full investigation as an alternative prior to the construction of the proposed interchange. From a planning point of view this option has the advantage of offering a more interesting journey experience with the transition from rural landscape to the former Hume Highway passing heritage buildings including the Hughes Creek bridge.

Development adjacent to Hume Freeway Corridor

Visual amenity and noise levels associated with housing development situated within the corridor of the Hume Freeway are planning concerns. The rezoning of land and construction of new dwellings should be avoided in close proximity to the Hume Freeway. Land on the north side of the Freeway east of Jones Street and south of Spencer Street should be retained in the Farming Zone.

Secondary road network

The Avenel 2030 Strategy supports the recommendation of the Avenel Urban Design Framework (Shire of Strathbogie Urban Design Frameworks, Connell Wagner 2003) to create stronger definition of the secondary road network by street plantings. Stronger definition of the route from the Freeway to the town centre along Livingstone Street and Queen Street can be achieved through street tree plantings. This would help to direct visitor traffic along the desired route to and from the town centre. It would also improve civic presentation and enhance town character.

Condition construction standards of local roads

There is a lack of existing road infrastructure to meet the residential potential of the Avenel township. While fully constructed, sealed roads exist within the residentially developed section of the township, most roads outside the developed township area are of semi constructed gravel standard that would need to be upgraded in conjunction with new residential development. Improvements to the rail crossings on Ewings Road and Aerodrome Road will be required as residential development, and rural living development in the case of Aerodrome Road, takes place. Road design and construction costs in new residential areas should be met fully by developers.

New roads will be required in conjunction with the residential development of outlying township areas. New road location and design should reflect the current north–south, east–west road pattern, be located to maximise the future residential and servicing potential of land, and provide accessibility and connectivity.

Avenel Transport Impact Assessment Study

Transport and access in Avenel township has been identified as a significant issue by the project consultants. It was also raised as a key issue during consultation on the draft Strategy. A number of submissions to the draft Strategy, including one from VicRoads, discussed the significance of transport and traffic in the context of future planning for Avenel township.

The issues that have been identified during the course of the Avenel 2030 project include:

- traffic safety issues at the Queen Street level crossing,
- potential to improve safety at the level crossing by relocation of the Avenel-Nagambie arterial road route,
- level crossings on local roads within the township eg. Ewings Road and Aerodrome Road.
- potential of Lambing Gully Road as an additional or alternate entry to the township, and
- definition of a preferred traffic route from the Hume Freeway exit to the town centre.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that an Avenel Transport Impact Assessment Study be undertaken to address these and other issues. VicRoads in their submission to the draft Strategy supports the need for such a study and indicated their interest in contributing data and professional input into the Study

Residential growth and housing

There is ample serviceable residential land within Avenel township. A residential demand and supply analysis (refer to Chapter 11) estimates that the current supply of Township zoned land will meet future demand, based on historical trends, well beyond 15 years.

There is a current supply of over 100 hectares of land with a Township zoning and capable of being serviced with sewer, town water supply, roads and drainage. This supply of residential land, which could provide for approximately 1,000 dwellings, is at the following locations. These locations are shown on Plan 8 at Appendix A.

Site	1	North of Ewings Road, east of Railway line	26.0 ha
	2	South of Ewings Road,	5.5 ha
	3	East of Jones Street, north of Spencers Road	9.6 ha
	4	North of Saleyards Road, east of Vearings Road	15.5 ha
	5	South of Saleyards Road, east of Vearings Road	16.0 ha
	6	North of Ewings Road, west of rail line	16.9 ha
	7	South of Ewings Road west of railway line	12.5 ha
	8	East of Queen Street, south of Ewings Road	1.8 ha
	9	Land between Ewings Road and Hughes Creek	7.3 ha
		Total	111.1 ha

Clearly there are considerable opportunities for residential infill, consolidation and expansion in Avenel. While currently zoned Township, a Residential 1 zoning is more appropriate for these areas where reticulated water and sewerage is available.

Larger areas of undeveloped Township (Residential 1) zoned land may be subdivided and developed through individual applications for planning permit and the use of development plans to guide the overall layout and development of township subdivision. Performance measures for township subdivision and development that should be implemented through planning permits and development plans include:

- Performance measures for infrastructure outlined in Section 9 of this report
- Retention of the basic north – south, east – west road pattern with road provision with new subdivision
- Land being fully provided with reticulated water and sewerage to maximise the use of these available services

Residential infill at locations east of the railway line should be encouraged in advance of the Township zoned land on the western side of the railway line. This sequencing is justified on the basis of traffic safety at the rail level crossing intersection.

Infill and consolidation within the existing urban area needs to be encouraged having particular regard to the protection of rural town character. The planning tools to achieve protection of neighbourhood character will be a major outcome of the Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study.

In addition to rezoning Township zoned land to Residential 1 Zone, this Strategy also recommends the application of development plan overlays. Schedules to these overlays will need to include various requirements including:

- staging and co-ordinated provision of services (sewerage and water)
- identification of internal road layout
- optimizing views and protecting other views
- protection of existing native vegetation
- use of natural drainage opportunities
- incorporation of Hughes Creek and natural drainage corridors into a town open space network
- integration of new development into the existing urban area
- provision of buffers from Hughes Creek and the railway line

Low density housing and rural living

One of the objectives of the Council Plan 2007-2011 is to “encourage provision of amenity lifestyle living within rural areas through strategic and planned approach.”

The Strathbogie Municipal Strategic Statement states that “.....the Shire’s towns are experiencing demand for this form of residential development. This is particularly the case with Avenel due to its proximity to the northern fringe of Melbourne and the towns improved transport links to Melbourne. Rural living and low density residential opportunities need to be investigated and strategically justified on the basis of local planning policies relating to protection of agricultural land, planned growth of townships and availability of services.”

All new low density residential zone and rural living zone proposals must be strategically assessed and justified in accordance with *Minister’s Direction No 6, Rural Residential Development* and accompanying guidelines. The direction requires a planning authority to demonstrate how the proposed rural residential development meets the following requirements:

- consistency with the housing needs and settlement strategy of the area;
- supported by and supports sustainable and viable settlements and communities;
- does not compromise the sustainable future use of existing natural resources, including productive agricultural land, water, mineral and energy resources;
- protects existing visual and environmental qualities of the area, such as landscape, water quality, native vegetation, habitat and biodiversity;
- avoids predictable adverse environmental processes and effects, such as flooding, erosion, landslip, salinity or wildfire; and
- can efficiently be serviced by social and physical infrastructure, at an acceptable and sustainable cost.

Low Density Residential Development

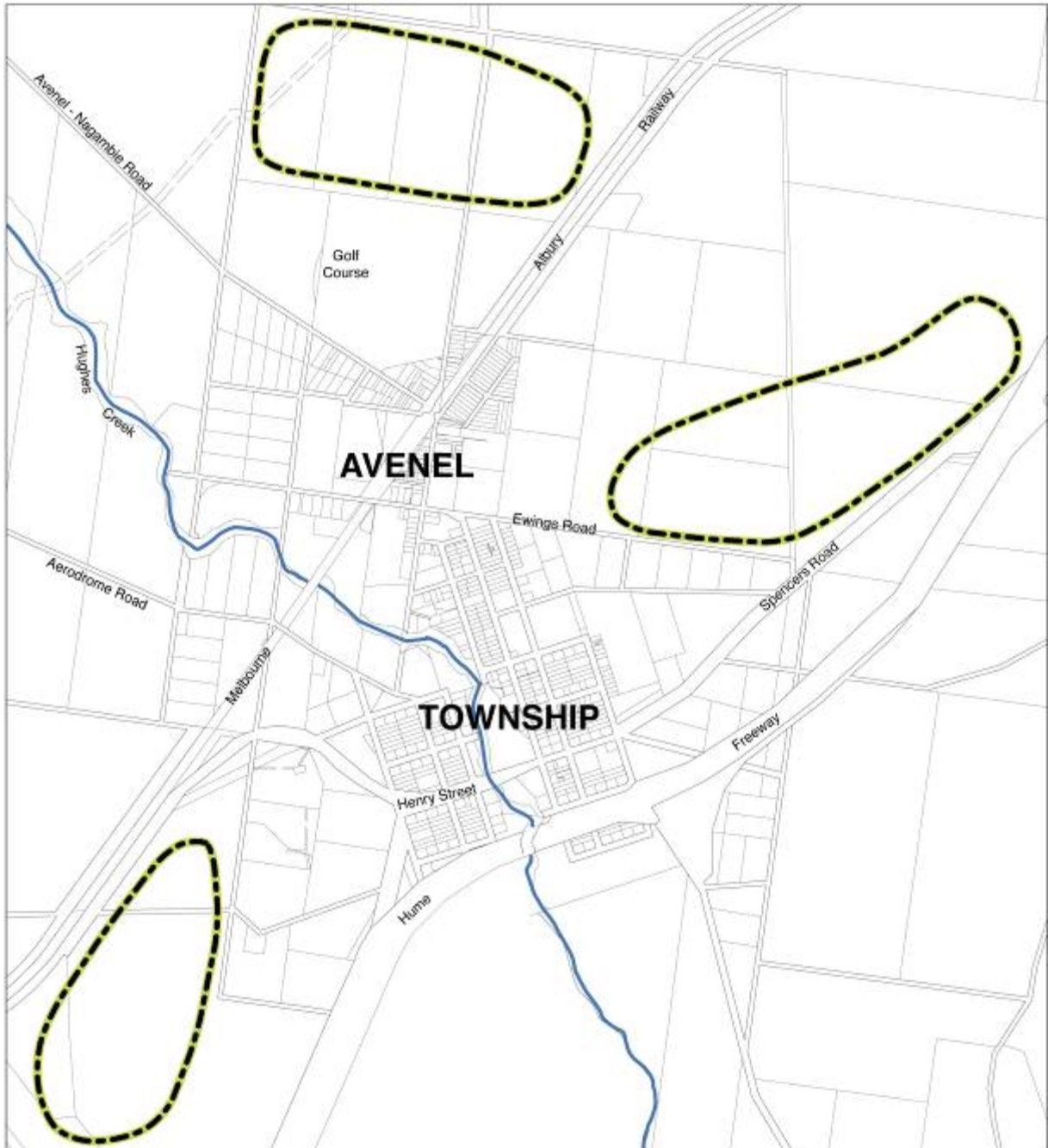
This Strategy identifies the following areas as being suited to the Low Density Residential Zone. The Strategy recommends that these areas be rezoned to Low Density Residential Zone subject to

meeting the requirements of Ministerial Direction No. 6. A description of these areas and their suitability is provided in Appendix A.

Site	10	south of Aerodrome Road, east of rail line	10.7 ha
	11	west Golf Course, north of Nagambie Road	21.5 ha
	13	eastern side Avenel-Longwood Road **	13.0 ha
	Total		32.2 ha

** This land is suitable for low density zoning and development subject to finalization and provision of an adequate buffer area between low density residential development zoning and the mushroom growing facility and defining the eastern extent of future low density residential development based on the outcomes of a visual impact assessment.

A potential land supply of 32.2 ha for low density residential development at a net residential density of 2 dwellings per hectare will yield approximately 64 low density lots.



PLAN 7: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY
Rural Living Investigation Areas



Rural Living Investigation Area

Investigate potential for rural living zoning and development in accordance with Ministerial Direction No. 6, Rural Residential Development

This Strategy recommends the application of development plan overlays for sites 11 and 14 to provide enhanced recreation trails and to guide future layout and servicing of low density residential subdivision.

A Development Plan Overlay is also recommended for Site 13. The overlay schedule needs to include development plan requirements relating to:

- staging of future development, and
- need for a visual impact assessment to determine the area, shape and dimensions of easterly lots and the location and orientation of proposed building envelopes.

Rural Living Investigation Areas

This Strategy identifies three rural living investigation areas. These investigation areas are shown on Plan B in the Attachments to this Report. The existing zoning of these areas is Farming Zone. A description of these areas and other areas in the hinterland of the township is provided in Appendix A. A full strategic assessment of the areas in accordance with *Minister's Direction No 6, Rural Residential Development* will be required as part of the formal rezoning process. The rural living investigation areas are:

Site	16	north of Golf Course, east of Vearings Road
	18	north-east of township west of Spencers Road and north of Ewings Road (unmade road)
	21	south-west of township, south of railway line (plus 7 existing rural living lots)

Development Plan Overlays are recommended for Sites 16 and 18. Development plans for these sites should be prepared as part of any future rezoning proposal.

Strathbogie Shire Council has undertaken a Rural Living Study for the Shire. Council is currently reviewing the technical findings and land use recommendation of the Study. The Study will make recommendations for Rural Living rezonings.

Housing Choice and Diversity

Avenel has a high proportion of persons in the age group over 60 years. The town has experienced substantial increases in the number and proportion of residents in the 50-59 age group and 60+ group due to an ageing of the resident population and new residents moving to Avenel for retirement or lifestyle reasons.

The need for retirement and aged care accommodation is identified in the Strathbogie Municipal Strategic Statement as an issue relevant to Avenel and all towns in the Shire. Providing greater housing choice and residential lot diversity is also identified as a planning issue for Avenel.

In 2001 62.0 % of households were one or two person households. Declining household sizes and more diverse household types requires a mix of housing densities and styles including medium density housing.

Medium density housing should be encouraged at locations near to the town centre. . Suitable sites include:

- A 1.8 hectare site between Queen Street and Shelton Street on the north side of Pinniger Street.
- Two vacant sites behind the town centre at the end of Belmont Road east to an existing drainage line. The site adjacent to the town centre has potential for a mixed use site i.e. business and residential
- The northern end of a vacant 6.0 hectare site on the north side of Ewings Road, east of the cemetery.

Diversity of housing lot sizes can be encouraged at the planning approval stage of residential subdivisions. It can also be encouraged in the development planning process once the overlay is included in the planning scheme by amendment. This Strategy recommends the application of Development Plan Overlays for all large vacant sites with an existing Township zoning.

Industrial development

Existing industries in the environs of Avenel township include the mushroom growing facility north of the town adjacent the Avenel-Longwood Road, the transfer station further north on the north side of the railway line and Plunketts Winery to the south west of the township. Plunketts Winery is within the Farming Zone under the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

The Avenel Structure Plan does not identify any sites or general locations for future industrial development.

Mushroom growing facility

The mushroom growing facility is within the Farming Zone. While the Strathbogie Planning Scheme and EPA guidelines do not actually specify a setback for residential uses from this type of industry, the plant requires a buffer between its operations and residential uses to avoid the potential for nuisance under the Health Act. In the event of potential relocation or closure of the plant in the future, residential growth options for this section could be reconsidered.

The Environment Protection Authority's publication "Recommended Buffer Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions states that the buffer distance for the category under which a facility of this type falls will be determined by EPA, on a site specific basis.

Town centre

Demand for new stores will increase with the town's increase in population. A town centre needs to be defined to provide opportunities for some expansion and reuse of buildings. The southern end of the town centre needs to be placed at a point that includes vacant sites and meets the recreation precinct. Street plantings in Livingstone and Queen Streets can be used to physically define the town centre as well as provide shade and a sense of place.

Land at the rear of shops in Queen Street and north of Belmont Street could be considered for town centre uses or a mix with residential. The drainage line running north to the railway line has potential as a walking trail that could be linked to the town centre.

The large parcel of land adjoining the cemetery to the east is strategically important at the entry to the town. This land parcel, particularly at its northern end, could be considered for a use that would benefit from a location adjacent to the town centre. Development of the site at its Ewing Street frontage raises urban design issues about treatment of town entries and civic presentation and image.

Concentration of business development within the town centre is particularly important in terms of the longer term viability of the town centre. Retail and commercial development should be discouraged outside of the town centre at locations such as Ash Street.

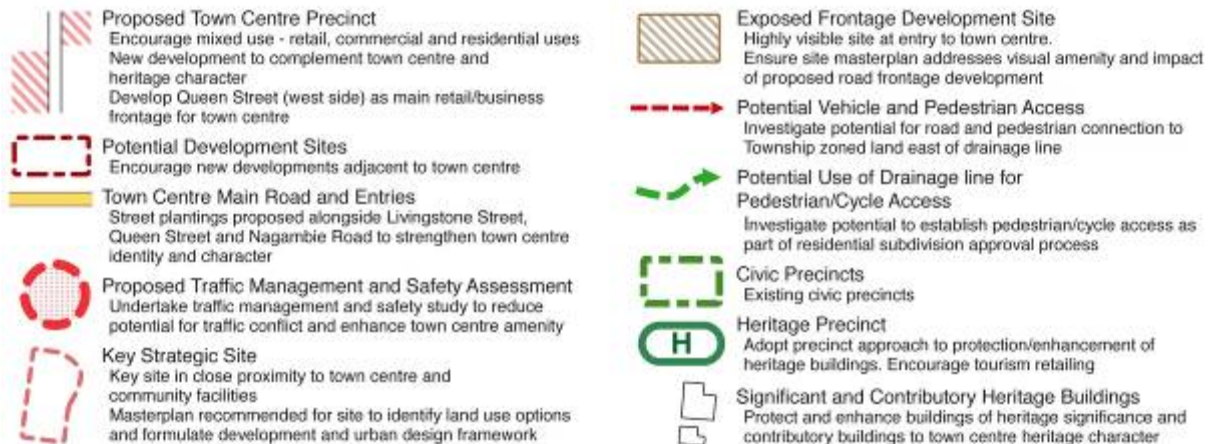
Town centre proposals include:

- Consolidation of the town centre on the south side of the railway line for traffic safety reasons and to enhance the viability of the town centre.
- Business development on the north side of the railway should be limited to existing non-residential buildings.
- A tourism focus for the north side of the railway line would be appropriate to provide a separate role from the town centre and to compliment the heritage character of buildings and the precinct.
- Population growth will in time, create the demand for a small supermarket. A site needs to be identified.
- Vacant land within and adjacent to the town centre presents some development and urban design opportunities.
- Queen Street (west side) has the potential to be main commercial strip in the longer term.
- Street plantings along Livingstone Street and Queen Street would provide a stronger town centre image.
- Significance and contribution of heritage buildings in the town centre and its environs needs to be assessed. Protection of buildings of heritage significance and character should be investigated.
- Traffic safety at the railway crossing intersection needs to be investigated.
- Retail and commercial development should be discouraged in the Ash Street precinct

The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that a combination of Business 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone be considered for the Town Centre precinct identified on Plan 8 (Town Centre Framework Plan). The use of the Mixed Use Zone in certain areas within the precinct will allow for greater flexibility particularly in relation to complementary mix of residential and business uses.



PLAN 8: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY: TOWN CENTRE FRAMEWORK PLAN



Town Open Space Network

The Avenel Structure Plan identifies Hughes Creek and environs from the Freeway to Vearings Road as an open space corridor, the main corridor of a future open space network for the township. It is possible to link minor creeks and natural drainage corridors to the open space network. Opportunities to progressively extend and develop the network are available at the planning application stage to subdivide land. Development of the network can be facilitated through the development planning process. This Strategy recommends the application of Development Plan Overlays for large undeveloped sites with a current Township zoning.

Provision of walking and cycle trails along the environs of Hughes Creek and within the open space network can provide accessible links to the town centre, residential areas, recreation and community facilities and to places of natural and cultural heritage interest.

Hughes Creek and environs is a significant natural and civic asset for Avenel township and its residents. The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that a Hughes Creek and Environs Riverine Trail and Management Plan be prepared. Issues that can be addressed in such a plan include:

- establishment of a defined riverine trail and linked path system,
- protection of large native trees along the river and planting of additional native species to attract fauna,
- protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat,
- enhancement of public use and enjoyment with seating, interpretive facilities and better access,
- benefits of an environmental and historical interpretative program throughout the riverine environment to raise community awareness about the natural and heritage significance of the riverine environment,
- recognition of the need for balance between vegetation protection and flood mitigation, and
- management of weeds.

Township and neighbourhood character

A summary of the elements and features that define Avenel's township and neighbourhood character is described in Chapter 10 of this Report.

The key strategic issue relating to neighbourhood character is the need to manage the impact of new residential development on neighbourhood character and to absorb this development into the existing urban fabric.

A neighbourhood character study has commenced for Avenel. Community consultation will be a major part of the study process. The Study will undertake a survey and analysis of Avenel to define neighbourhood precincts, identify development trends, issues and describe neighbourhood features.

Neighbourhood precinct communities will be consulted to identify community values and aspirations attached to precincts. Preferred neighbourhood character statements will be prepared for each precinct.

The Study will also review the existing Strathbogie Planning Scheme and make recommendations about how the planning scheme can be improved to provide direction and guidance for protection of neighbourhood character.

The considerable development opportunities that are available in Avenel due to the large residential land supply pose a challenge in terms of neighbourhood character. The provisions of Clause 56 of

the Planning Scheme (Residential Subdivision) include visual character and amenity objectives and standards that must be addressed in planning applications for residential subdivision.

Furthermore the recommended use of Development Plan overlays for future residential areas in this Strategy can assist in achieving desired and preferred character. A schedule to a Development Plan can, for instance, require a development plan to:

- site buildings to prevent visually intrusive development and maximize views out of the site,
- indicate the location of building envelopes on a development plan or plan of subdivision so as to create streetscape and neighbourhood character,
- retain native vegetation in residential layout and design, and
- set aside an identified area as public open space

Other planning scheme tools can be used to achieve built form design outcomes. One such tool is a Design and Development Overlay. The Avenel Neighbourhood Character Study will examine and assess the range of planning scheme tools that can be used to protect neighbourhood character.

Town entrances

Town entrances have the function of conveying messages and impressions about the town. Avenel's entrances generally each have their own distinctive character. The entrance character and image for each of the town's main entrances are summarized below.

Hume Freeway entry at Jones Street

The township is partially screened by vegetation within the highway reserve with the view opening at the service station/roadhouse. The impression of arriving at the edge of the town is gained at the entry off the Freeway at Jones Street.

This entrance is the main entrance to Avenel. An interchange is proposed by VicRoads in the longer term. A new entry point will be established at the intersection with Spencer Street.

The entrance character is now defined largely by the service station and roadhouse, a transition to residential on the west side of Jones Street and open rural landscape views on the east side of Jones Street. The existing roadside native vegetation on the east side of Jones Street is a strong visual element of this entrance.

The main issues for this entrance are:

- visibility of residential properties from the Freeway,
- lack of clear signage to welcome and direct visitors,
- visual amenity of service station/roadhouse as an entrance feature, and
- stronger entrance image required at Jones Street.

This entrance being the main entrance to Avenel should receive the highest priority in terms of entrance treatment.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends that an entrance and landscape plan be prepared for the entrance addressing the following:

- Landscaping and tree planting within the freeway reserve, in consultation with VicRoads, with design aims to establish a distinctive entrance character and retain visibility of the township at Ash Street and Lime Street.

- Location and style of appropriate directional and welcoming signage within the Freeway reservation in consultation with VicRoads and in Jones Street.
- Thematic street planting along the section of Jones Street between the Freeway entry and Mitchell Street.
- Traffic management measure such as a roundabout at the intersection of Jones Street and Mitchell Street to mark a point of arrival and enhance traffic safety. This would most likely be required when the proposed Freeway interchange is constructed.

Some consideration needs to be given to the potential for Lambing Gully Road to become an alternative town entry as an entry only or as the longer term town entry and exit replacing Jones Street. Discussions of options are required with VicRoads. Attractive features include:

- avenue of roadside box trees in Lambing Gully Road
- rural character on west side of Lambing Gully Road
- old Hume Highway and bridge crossing
- potential for avenue planting along Henry Street

Avenel–Nagambie Road west of golf course

This town entrance commences at Vearings Road. The character of this entrance is defined by a more immediate transition from open rural landscape to residential development and the Avenel Golf Course. The arrival point will have a more urban atmosphere with eventual development of the Township zoned land on the south side of the Avenel-Nagambie Road.

Heritage is the main character component of the approach to the railway crossing and town centre. This part of the entrance has historic charm with historic cottages and commercial buildings. The entrance terminates at the Harvest Home.

The main issues for this entrance are:

- identification, assessment and protection of buildings of heritage significance and contributory buildings to the heritage precinct,
- siting and design of new housing with frontage to Avenel-Nagambie Road (south side) should have regard to the town entrance role of Avenel-Nagambie Road.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy recommends the application of a Development Plan Overlay (Residential 1 Zone) for land south of the Avenel-Nagambie Road and east of Vearings Road. The schedule to the overlay should include a development plan requirement about siting and design of development facing to Avenel-Nagambie Road to maintain and enhance the entrance character.

The Avenel 2030 Strategy proposes that the potential of land west of the golf course be investigated for rezoning from Farming Zone to Low Density Residential Zone. Similarly the siting and design of any future residential development with frontage to the Avenel-Nagambie Road should have regard to maintaining and enhancing entrance character.

The proposed Strathbogie Shire Heritage Study should assess the significance of heritage buildings along this entrance to the railway line and, as appropriate, include significant buildings and buildings important to local heritage character in the heritage overlay to the Planning Scheme.

Henry Street (former Hume Highway) west of Lambing Gully Road

The descent to Hughes Creek with views of the floodplain, the hill to the right and distant views of the Strathbogie Ranges makes for an attractive entrance. The traveler is given the impression of entering a rural township.

There are limited opportunities for development at this entrance due to flooding risk on the north side and land ownership of the hill on the south side by VicRoads.

Planning and design issues relevant to this town entrance are:

- open rural and landscape character should be maintained as a strong element of entrance character, and
- distant views of the Strathbogie Ranges should be protected.

Recommendations in relation to this entrance need to maintain the existing character by retention of the existing Farming Zone on both sides of Henry Street. Any proposals for roadside planting should be low level so as to preserve views of the Strathbogie Ranges

Tourism

Tourism attractions and interest in Avenel has a focus on the wine industry and Ned Kelly heritage. Signs have been erected in Avenel indicating directions to Ned Kelly sites. A feasibility study is being undertaken into the establishment of a Ned Kelly interpretative and visitor centre at a site adjacent to the Imperial Hotel.

Avenel derives some tourism benefits from Nagambie. Avenel could provide additional tourist accommodation such as bed and breakfast accommodation to cater for regional tourists, spillover effects from Nagambie and regional events.

14. IMPLEMENTATION

Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

Implementation of the Avenel 2030 Strategy will require amendments to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The amendment will include changes to the Municipal Strategic Statement, zones and overlays.

a. Reference document

It is recommended that the Avenel 2030 Strategy be included as a Reference Document in the Planning Scheme. A reference document status means that its contents must be considered by Council in its consideration of planning applications for future use and development of land and for rezoning proposals.

b. Municipal Strategic Statement

It is recommended that the planning scheme amendment to implement the Avenel 2030 Strategy includes the insertion of the new Avenel Structure Plan (Plan 6), new objectives and strategies and further strategic work as follows:

Avenel Structure Plan

It is recommended that Plan No. 6 Avenel Structure Plan replace the existing Avenel Structure Plan at Clause 21.03 of the Planning Scheme.

Objectives and Strategies

It is recommended that new strategies be inserted into Clause 21.03 of the Municipal Strategic Statement relating to:

- expansion of the town centre precinct and creating a stronger sense of place,
- protection and enhancement of township, neighbourhood and town entrances character,
- sequencing of future residential development areas with priority to new residential areas south of railway line and close to services,
- development of a town open space network based on Hughes Creek and environs,
- encouraging housing and lifestyle choice
- sustainable land use, design and infrastructure

Further Strategic Work

It is recommended that the following studies and projects be listed as “Further Strategic Work”:

- Avenel Transport Impact Assessment Study (study to include traffic safety improvement at Queen Street level crossing)
- Hume Freeway town entrance concept plan
- Hughes Creek riverine trail and management plan
- Ewings Road (east of cemetery) Site Masterplan

c. Zoning

It is recommended that:

- all existing and future residential areas identified on the Avenel Structure Plan with an existing Township zoning be rezoned to Residential 1 Zone.

- Zone selection of the Town Centre Precinct shown on Plan 8 include both Business 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone.
- Areas of the Structure Plan identified as suitable for future rezoning to Low Density Residential Zone in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6

d. Overlays

It is recommended that Development Plan Overlays be applied to the currently undeveloped and larger future residential areas with an existing Township zoning shown on Plan 6 Avenel Structure Plan.

e. Further Strategic Investigation

It is recommended that the three (3) rural living investigation areas identified on Plan 7 be referred to the proposed Strathbogie Rural Living Study as preferred rural living areas linked to Avenel township.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Avenel Lot Sizes and Lot Development

Table 1 Avenel: Township lots and dwellings:

<i>Lot size</i>	<i>Number of lots (% total)</i>	<i>Total parcels (ownerships / tenements)</i>	<i>Dwelling numbers (% occupied by parcel by lot size range)</i>	<i>Vacant (No dwelling / % vacant by parcel)</i>	<i>Unknown (dwelling or vacant / % by parcel)</i>
< 600 m2	32 (5.6)	13	12 (92.3)	1 (7.7)	0
600 – 1,000 m2	76 (13.4)	19	16 (84.2)	3 (15.8)	0
1– 2,000 m2	188 (33.2)	115	108 (93.9)	5 (4.3)	2 (1.7)
2,– 3,000 m2	155 (27.3)	107	80 (74.8)	27 (25.2)	0
3,– 4,000 m2	13 (2.3)	7	5 (71.4)	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)
4 – 5,000 m2	28 (4.9)	26	19 (67.9)	6 (23.1)	1 (3.8)
5,000 m2 – 1 ha	18 (3.2)	16	13 (81.3)	3 (18.8)	0
1 ha – 4 ha	12 (2.1)	23	18 (78.3)	3 (13)	2 (8.7)
4 ha+	46 (8.1)	22	18 (81.8)	4 (18.2)	0
Unrecorded lot size		65	41 (63.1)	20 (30.8)	4 (6.2)
Total lots	567 (100)	413 (100)	330 (79.9)	73 (17.7)	10 (2.4)

Source: Council records

Table 2 Avenel - Town environs lots and dwellings

<i>Lot size</i>	<i>Number of lots (% total)</i>	<i>Total parcels (ownerships / tenements)</i>	<i>Dwelling numbers (% occupied by parcel by lot size range)</i>	<i>Vacant (No dwelling / % vacant by parcel)</i>	<i>Unknown (dwelling or vacant / % by parcel)</i>
< 600 m2	4 (2.4)	1	0	1 (100)	0
600 –1,000 m2	0 (0)	0	0	0	0
1 – 2,000 m2	7 (4.1)	1	1 (100)	0	0
2 – 3,000 m2	9 (5.3)	9	7 (77.8)	1 (11.1)	1
3– 4,000 m2	1 (0.6)	1	1 (100)	0	0
4– 5,000 m2	4 (2.4)	5	4 (80)	1 (20)	0
0.5 ha – 1 ha	14 (8.2)	3	3 (100)	0	0
1 - 2 ha	16 (9.4)	3	2 (66.7)	0	1 (33.3)
2 -4 ha	38 (22.4)	4	4 (100)	0	0
4-6 ha	8 (4.7)	3	3 (100)	0	0
6-8 ha	9 (5.3)	2	1 (50)	1 (50)	0
8-10 ha	4 (2.4)	5	2 (40)	3 (60)	0
10-20 ha	12 (7.1)	8	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	0
20-40 ha	27 (15.9)	7	5 (71.4)	2 (28.6)	0
40+ ha	17 (10)	15	8 (53.3)	7 (46.7)	0
Total lots	170 (100)	67	46 (68.7)	19 (28.4)	2 (3)

Source: Council records

Township lots and dwellings:

Lot size	Number of lots (% total)	Total parcels (ownerships / tenements)	Dwelling numbers (% occupied by parcel by lot size range)	Vacant (No dwelling / % vacant by parcel)	Unknown (dwelling or vacant / % by parcel)
< 600 m ²	32 (5.6)	13	12 (92.3)	1 (7.7)	0
600-1,000 m ²	76 (13.4)	19	16 (84.2)	3 (15.8)	0
1-2,000 m ²	188 (33.2)	115	108 (93.9)	5 (4.3)	2 (1.7)
2- 3,000 m ²	155 (27.3)	107	80 (74.8)	27 (25.2)	0
3-4,000 m ²	13 (2.3)	7	5 (71.4)	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)
4-5,000 m ²	28 (4.9)	26	19 (67.9)	6 (23.1)	1 (3.8)
0.5 ha – 1 ha	18 (3.2)	16	13 (81.3)	3 (18.8)	0
1 ha – 4 ha	12 (2.1)	23	18 (78.3)	3 (13)	2 (8.7)
4 ha+	46 (8.1)	22	18 (81.8)	4 (18.2)	0
Unrecorded lot size		65	41 (63.1)	20 (30.8)	4 (6.2)
Total lots	567 (100)	413 (100)	330 (79.9)	73 (17.7)	10 (2.4)

Notes:

1. Lot numbers include all land uses, eg commercial lots.
2. Lots with capital improved value (CIV) of more than \$50,000 above site value are assumed to have a dwelling located on them; lots with less than this value difference are assumed to not have a dwelling located on them. Therefore, a small number of occupied lots (listed as 'tenements with dwellings' above) are actually commercial buildings.

Town environs lots and dwellings:

Lot size	Number of lots (% total)	Total parcels (ownerships / tenements)	Dwelling numbers (% occupied by parcel by lot size range)	Vacant (No dwelling / % vacant by parcel)	Unknown (dwelling or vacant / % by parcel)
< 600 m2	4 (2.4)	1	0	1 (100)	0
600-1,000 m2	0 (0)	0	0	0	0
1-2,000 m2	7 (4.1)	1	1 (100)	0	0
2-3,000 m2	9 (5.3)	9	7 (77.8)	1 (11.1)	1
3-4,000 m2	1 (0.6)	1	1 (100)	0	0
4-5,000 m2	4 (2.4)	5	4 (80)	1 (20)	0
0.5 ha – 1 ha	14 (8.2)	3	3 (100)	0	0
1 - 2 ha	16 (9.4)	3	2 (66.7)	0	1 (33.3)
2 -4 ha	38 (22.4)	4	4 (100)	0	0
4-6 ha	8 (4.7)	3	3 (100)	0	0
6-8 ha	9 (5.3)	2	1 (50)	1 (50)	0
8-10 ha	4 (2.4)	5	2 (40)	3 (60)	0
10-20 ha	12 (7.1)	8	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	0
20-40 ha	27 (15.9)	7	5	2	0
40+	17 (10)	15	8	7	0
Total lots	170 (100)	67	46	19	2

Note:

1. Lots with capital improved value (CIV) of more than \$50,000 above site value are assumed to have a dwelling located on them; lots with less than this value difference are assumed to not have a dwelling located on them.

Appendix B

Land Supply Assessments for Residential. Low Density Residential and Rural Living

Potential Residential 1 Zone

- Site 1, 'Shelton land':

This land is 25.9 hectares in area.

The land is currently zoned Township and is being considered for residential development with fully reticulated services at a range of densities. Reticulated sewerage and water is available to most of the land, other than the elevated section of land to the east. The land should be developed for residential purposes to provide for the range of services and envisaged lot sizes.

Recommendation: Rezone from Township to Residential 1 and apply the DPO 1.

- Sites 2 – 8 (inclusive):

These sites have a combined area of approximately 82 hectares (Site 2 -5.5 ha; Site 3 - 9.6 ha; Site 4 - 15.5 ha; Site 5 – 16 ha; Site 6 – 16.9 ha; Site 7 – approximately 6 ha; Site 8 – 12.5 ha).

These areas are cleared, mostly undeveloped and may be serviced with reticulated water and sewerage. The areas have no particular environmental or drainage issues that would prevent the being readily developed for residential purposes. Although some of these parcels of land have experienced some infill development, they are largely undeveloped. Given the residential growth projections for the Avenel township, the future residential potential for these areas need to be maintained and the land should be rezoned for residential purposes with the use of a development plan to guide the future layout and servicing of residential subdivision.

Recommendation: Rezone from Township to Residential 1 and apply the DPO 1.

- Site 9, land between Ewings Road and Hughes Creek:

This land is 7.3 hectares in area.

The land is cleared and may be serviced with reticulated water and sewerage. With adjoining Township Zone (future Residential 1 Zone) land to the north and east, an expansion of services for these areas offers an opportunity to service this land for residential purposes. The land is attractive, flood free land on the northern side of Hughes Creek. Residential development of the land would allow the extension of the Hughes Creek reserve through a recreation contribution to provide for a pedestrian / bicycle trail along Hughes Creek. Given the residential growth projections for the Avenel township, the land should be rezoned for residential purposes with the use of a development plan to guide the future layout and servicing of residential subdivision.

Recommendation: Rezone from Township to Residential 1 and apply the DPO 1.



**PLAN 8: AVENEL 2030 STRATEGY
RESIDENTIAL & RURAL LIVING ASSESSMENT OF LAND WITHIN TOWN & ENVIRONS**

Potential Low Density Residential Zone:

Site 10, south of Aerodrome Road:

This land is 10.7 hectares in area.

The land is effectively a low density residential area that is being formalised and recognised through rezoning. The land is not affected by flooding, with no flooding overlays applying to the land. This area is cleared and may be readily serviced with reticulated water. The land is not required for the extension of the fully serviced residential area of the town. Given the developed nature of the land, no development plan process is required to guide the future layout and servicing of residential subdivision.

Recommendation: Rezone from Farming to Low Density Residential.

- Site 11, 'Green land', west of the Avenel Golf Course:

This land is 21.5 hectares in area.

The land is cleared and may be serviced with reticulated water. The land is attractive, flood free land on the northern side of the Avenel township that provides potential for some lower density residential development. There are opportunities on the land to provide for enhanced recreation trails through a recreation contribution for subdivision that links to the Avenel Golf Course and Avenel township generally. Although this land is affected by the Airport Environs Overlay, the overlay only restricts the height of new buildings and will not impact on the rezoning of the land. The land should be rezoned to Low Density Residential with the DPO 2 applied to guide the future layout and servicing of low density residential subdivision.

Recommendation: Rezone from Farming to Low Density Residential and apply the DPO 2.

- Site 12, land between the Avenel Golf Course and Melbourne – Sydney railway:

This land is 13.2 hectares in area.

The land is attractive, cleared, flood free, grazing land. The land is not visible from most of the Avenel township but is visible from the Melbourne – Sydney railway line. Road access to the land from the Avenel township is available on both the eastern and western sides of the land. Although this land is conveniently located near the Avenel township, borders the Avenel Golf Course and could provide part of recreational linkage through the town, the land is within a recommended buffer distance for the mushroom composting operation to the east on the southern side of the Melbourne – Sydney railway line. The land should be retained for rural purposes.

Recommendation: Retain the current Farming Zone.

- Site 13, land in Avenel – Longwood road north of the Avenel township:

This land is 13.3 hectares in area.

The land is attractive, cleared, flood free, grazing land. The land is visible from the northern section of the Avenel township and the Melbourne – Sydney railway line. Road access to the land from the Avenel township is available along Avenel - Longwood Road. The adjoining

government road to the south will be developed as access for the proposed residential subdivision of land immediately to the south. This land is conveniently located near the Avenel township and is suitable for low density residential zoning and development. A suitable buffer distance is required to be retained between the mushroom growing facility to the northeast and low density residential development. Subject to this buffer being provided, the southern section of the land is suitable for low density residential development. The easterly extent of any future Low Density Residential Zone needs to be determined by a visual impact assessment.

Recommendation: Rezone from Farming Zone to Low Density Residential Zone subject to finalisation and provision of an adequate buffer area between low density residential development/zoning and the mushroom growing facility. A visual impact assessment is required to determine the eastern boundary of a future Low Density Residential Zone

- Site 14, land on northern side of Spencers Road, east of the Avenel township:

This land is 36 hectares in area.

The land is cleared and may be serviced with reticulated water. A considerable part of the land is low lying and subject to periodic flooding. Future rural uses of this land that complement the functions of the town should be investigated.

Recommendation: Retain as Farming Zone

- Site 15, western side of Lambing Gully Road (15.5 ha between Plunkets to the south and VicRoads land to the north):

This land is 15.5 hectares in area.

The area adjoins Plunkets Winery (to the south) and may be affected by spray drift associated with viticultural use from prevailing winds. The land is elevated to the west, with associated visual impact from elevated development. The area should be restricted to protect the visual amenity of this area and the continued operation of the winery to the south.

Recommendation: Retain the current Farming Zone.

Potential Rural Living Zone:

Potential areas for rural living zoning and development are being sought through this Strategy. Comments on potential land adjoining the township follow

- Site 16, land north of the Avenel Golf Course, between Vearings Road and the Avenel – Murchison Road:

This land is 82.1 hectares in area.

The land is attractive, cleared, flood free, grazing land. The land is not visible from the Avenel township or Avenel – Murchison Road. The land has unrestricted views to the east and south / southeast to the Strathbogie Ranges. Good road access to the land is available along Vearings Road. The land is conveniently located near the Avenel township and borders the Avenel Golf Course. The land is potentially suitable for rural living use and development. In the event of future zoning and development, the DPO 3 should be applied

to guide the future layout and servicing of rural living subdivision. Although this land is affected by the Airport Environs Overlay, the overlay only restricts the height of new buildings and will not impact on the rezoning of the land. This land is located sufficiently south of the Avenel waste water treatment plant to protect the required buffer for waste water plants from residential use.

Recommendation: Rural Living Investigation Area. Investigate potential for rural living zoning and development in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6.

- Site 17, land northeast of the Avenel Golf Course, between Avenel – Murchison Road and Melbourne – Sydney railway:

This land is 36.4 hectares in area.

The land is attractive, cleared, flood free, grazing land. The land is not visible from the Avenel township but is visible from the Melbourne – Sydney railway line. The land has attractive views to the south / southeast to the Strathbogie Ranges. Road access to the land from the Avenel township is available on both the eastern and western sides of the land. Although this land is conveniently located near the Avenel township and borders the Avenel Golf Course, the land located nearby the Strathbogie Shire Council transfer station to the northeast and is potentially within the buffer distance for the mushroom growing facility to the east on the southern side of the Melbourne – Sydney railway line. The required buffer distance for mushroom growing facilities from residential land requires clarification.

Recommendation: Rural Living Investigation Area subject to defining and providing setbacks from Council Transfer Station, the railway line and the mushroom farm on the southern side of the railway line.

- Site 18, land east of the Avenel township, north of Spencers Road and south of Avenel – Longwood Road:

This site is a large area of land extending east and northeast of the Avenel township. The land was previously considered for rural living under the 2004 rural residential strategy. A hill range runs east – west throughout the whole extent of the land. The area has road access from the north along Avenel – Longwood Road, with only partial access to the western section of the land from the south off Spencers Road. Major road upgrading and extension of Spencers Road would be required if this land were developed for rural living purposes.

Any potential rural living development in this area would be in the form of lineal development extending away from the Avenel township that would be visible from the Hume Freeway and the Melbourne – Sydney rail line. The central elevated section of the land is not suitable for the siting of rural living development as dwellings or buildings in this area would adversely affect the general landscape of the area. The southern area of this investigation area closer to the township should be included as a rural investigation area.

The north-western section of this land is potentially within the buffer distance for the mushroom growing facility on Avenel – Lockwood Road. The required buffer distance for the mushroom growing facility from residential land requires clarification.

Recommendation: Rural Living Investigation Area. Investigate potential for southern area of this investigation area (west of Spencers Road and north of unmade Ewing Road) for rural living zoning and development in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6.

- Site 19, land east of the Avenel township, south of Spencers Road and north of the Hume Freeway:

This site is a large area of land extending lineally east and northeast of the Avenel township between Spencers Road and the Hume Freeway. The land was previously considered for rural living under the 2004 rural residential strategy. The area has only partial road access off Spencers Road. Major road upgrading and extension of Spencers Road to the east would be required if this land were developed for rural living purposes.

Any potential rural living development in this area would be highly visible from the Hume Freeway. Dwellings or buildings in this area would adversely affect the general landscape of the area and highway. The land would be difficult and expensive to provide a range of rural living services to.

Recommendation: Retain current Farming Zone

- Site 20, land west of the Melbourne – Sydney railway, north and south of Aerodrome Road:

This land is 27.5 hectares in area (approximately 6 hectares to the north is affected by the Floodway Overlay).

The land is attractive, cleared, flood free, grazing land, with the Hughes Creek extending along the northern boundary. The land is located at the south-western extent of the Avenel township with convenient access along Aerodrome Road. The land is already developed for rural living type lot sizes and development. Although this land is affected by the Airport Environs Overlay, the overlay only restricts the height of new buildings and will not impact on the rezoning of the land.

Recommendation: Rural Investigation Area. Investigate potential for rural living zoning and development in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6.

- Site 21, land southwest of the Avenel township, south of the Melbourne – Sydney railway:

This land is approximately 70 hectares in area, plus seven existing rural living lots.

The land is mostly cleared, north facing land that is not visible from either the Avenel township or Hume Freeway due to elevated slopes to the south and east. The land comprises approximately 50 hectares of CA9A, 22.2 hectares in Pt CA 1B and seven existing rural living lots under LP 209029. Although the northern section of the land is affected by the Airport Environs Overlay, potential lots would have potential dwelling sites outside the overlay. The land is elevated to the south, this section of the land not being suitable for the siting of rural living development. Proposed subdivision and development may be designed and sited to suit land form and the environment. The area is narrow enough to allow subdivision design through a planning permit process, rather than the use of a development plan.

Recommendation: Rural Investigation Area. Investigate potential for rural living zoning and development in accordance with Minister's Direction No. 6.

- Site 22, land southwest of the Avenel township, north of the Hume Freeway and west of Lambing Gully Road:

This land is approximately 90 hectares in area.

The land lies to the southwest of the Avenel township and was previously considered for rural living under the 2004 rural residential strategy. The land is elevated to the north, and does not have major road access and cannot be accessed directly from the Hume Freeway. Water to the land could not be directly accessed from the main extending from Seymour. Any potential rural living development in this area would be in the form of lineal development extending away from the Avenel township that would be highly visible from the Hume Freeway.

Recommendation: Retain current Farming Zone