

South Gippsland  
Shire Council  
*Come for the views. Stay for the lifestyle.*



# LOCH. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Final Report\_May 2005

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**planning by design**

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**Disclaimer**

This is a strategic document, which aims to identify and scope broad opportunities and directions for the future development of Loch. It is not intended to be relied on for any specific physical, business, and management or marketing activities. Any body, business, organisation or individual that intends to rely on it do so at their own risk and should seek further detailed professional advice. Whilst Planning by Design Pty Ltd and associated consultant team base the views and ideas expressed on the professional skills, no responsibility what so ever is taken in regard to issues that may arise through the pursuit of the actions it identifies or the reliance on the information it contains.

# 1. Introduction

The South Gippsland Shire Council is developing an Urban Design Framework for the township of Loch. Funding support for the project has been received from the State Government Department of Sustainability and Environment's Pride of Place program.

## 1.1 What is an Urban Design Framework?

*"In a diverse, but increasingly urbanised world, there are some truths. People everywhere want to lift themselves and their children to better lives. People are better able to lift themselves when they live in economically and socially diverse communities where there are jobs and businesses, where there is a linkage between development and the environment. In those places, environmental concerns are addressed, and those communities are healthier places to live where we recognise a stewardship of the land and the open spaces, of the air and the water, and we undertake explicit strategies to reduce waste and to recycle and to be attentive to the environmental and design implications of life. Regional guidance is vital, but local initiative is essential..."*

Cisneros quoted by Michael Gory in *"Altona. Toward Sustainable Suburbia"*, 1995

The aim of an Urban Design Framework is to identify and scope a preferred physical, social, economic and environmental future for a specific location in an integrated fashion. This is achieved by taking into account a broad range of aspects including:

- Local character
- Relationship with its environs and open space
- Regional context
- Business development
- Infrastructure
- Movement and access
- Community aspirations and values
- Land use activities
- Design and form of public and private spaces
- Image and identity
- Heritage
- Safety and security
- Planning and development provisions
- Landscape design and materials

A framework typically takes a long-term view of the area and identifies actions and initiatives that can be pursued within a 10-15 year period. It also prioritises the actions and establishes an implementation strategy that identifies which individuals or groups need to do what and when, in order to achieve the overall preferred future. Whilst recognising that many of the initiatives will require a long time horizon, the framework must also recognise the importance of pursuing actions in the short term to address the present issues facing the town. These short-term actions will also serve to generate community and investor confidence in the project and its processes.

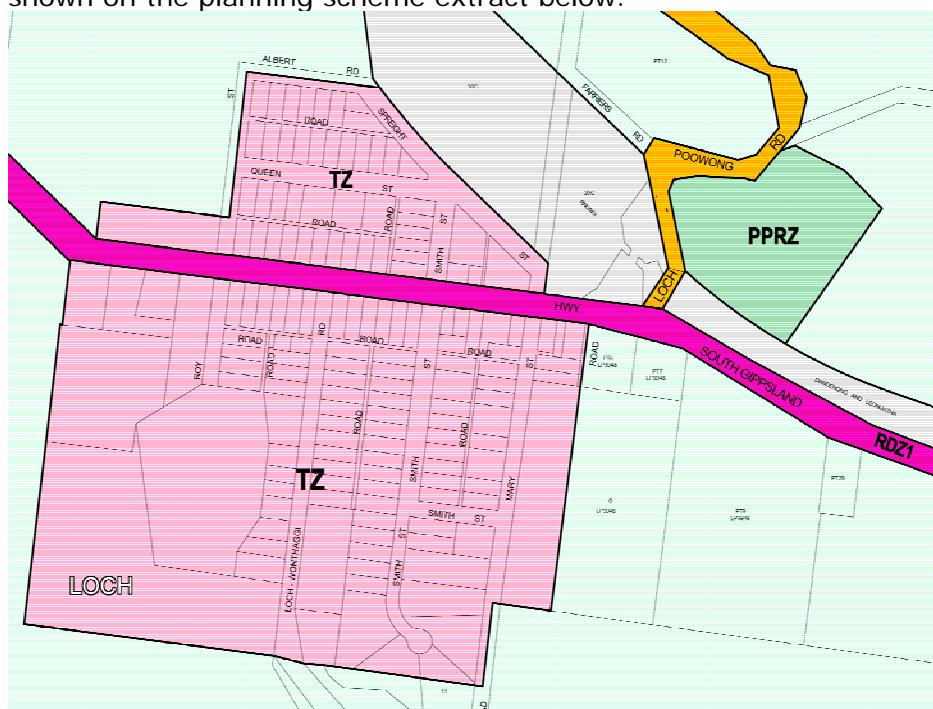
## 1.2 Objective

The key tasks for the project are:

- 1 To identify, with the community, a **future vision** for Loch.
- 2 To establish **viable roles and functions for the town** and establish scope for:  
Residential development                      Business development  
Tourism activities and facilities.              Community services and facilities.
- 3 To identify opportunities to tell the **community's "story", history and culture**. The plan will seek to reflect the character and heritage of Loch through its future urban design and development.
- 4 To consider the opportunities and challenges posed by the by-pass and establish a clear strategy to **attract visitors** off the highway and into the town.
- 5 To create an overall framework plan that provides a **road map and structure plan** for the Council and the community to pursue and to focus resources in a common direction towards the achievement of the vision.
- 6 To develop a practical **implementation program** that identifies short-term and long-term initiatives and identifies resource requirements.

## 1.3 Study area

The study area for this project was the Loch Township and its immediate environs, as shown on the planning scheme extract below.





## 1.4 Process

The project commenced in October 2004 with an initial meeting of the Steering group and the review of existing information. An initial round of public consultation, aimed at identifying issues, ideas and aspirations was conducted in November 2004. This involved:

- The distribution of a project information brochure to 500 properties in and around the Loch Township, delivered by Australia Post.
- The display of posters to raise awareness of the project in the Loch township and at the Leongatha offices of the Shire of South Gippsland.
- Media releases in local papers.
- Presentation of the project to the Loch Community Development Association.
- Government and infrastructure stakeholder workshop.
- A community workshop in the Loch Public Hall.
- Discussion with students from Loch Primary School.
- Individual discussions with business operators in Loch.

Following the assembly of this primary information, initial ideas and future directions were established, discussed and agreed with the Steering Committee in December 2004. A preliminary draft framework was developed over December 2004 and January 2005 and presented to the Steering Committee in February 2005. Following receipt of comments from the Steering Committee and the further testing of initiatives and ideas, a further draft of the framework was prepared for public display and consideration.

The Loch Urban Design Framework was placed on public exhibition for a period of 3 weeks from Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March until Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Displays were mounted in the Loch Township, at the Post Office and at the Leongatha offices of the Shire of South Gippsland. A summary brochure was distributed to households in and around Loch and posters advising of the display were erected throughout Loch.

The draft plan was discussed with members of the LCDA at their meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March. A manned display of the draft, attended by members of the Consultant team, was held at the Loch Community Market on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March, between 8.30am and 12.30pm.

As a result of the display and the various discussions, a total of 16 written submissions were received and comments were provided from around 60 people attending the Market.

Submissions have also been received from VicRoads, DSE, CFA, EPA, Melbourne Water, South Gippsland Shire Council Departments and Loch Community Development Association.

In general, the submissions are supportive of the general thrust of the UDF, Structure Plan and movement plan and the future directions and development opportunities for the Township.

Many specific issues and comments were provided in terms of the detail and many ideas were provided that will assist in the implementation and further detailing of the concepts and opportunities identified in the UDF. These ideas and initiatives have, where appropriate, been incorporated into the framework. The submissions also allocated priorities to the various actions and initiatives. The implementation plan for the framework reflects these priorities.

The major concerns raised through submissions relate to the numerous references to quilts and quilting themes as part of the UDF, concern over the definition of the “town centre” and a variety of responses to the ideas of identifying Loch with “cottage gardens”. These submissions have been accepted and the framework has been amended accordingly.

Submissions raised a variety of issues relating to the “branding” of the town. The issues raised in these submissions suggest that further work should be undertaken prior to the final determination of the most appropriate brand for the town. It is considered essential that the Loch community have the final say on this issue. To enable this to occur, the Urban Design Framework will simply make a recommendation for a brand and image, for further consideration by the community.

## 1.5 Acknowledgements

The Consultant team wish to acknowledge the support and assistance provided throughout the project to date from the Loch Community as a whole and specifically:

Ms Lorraine Knox	President Loch Community Development Association
Mr Geoff Lee	Village Antiques
Ms Barbara Lee	Loch Express
Mr Frank Deane	Loch Post Office
Ms Julie Wallace	Quilters Barn
Mr Greg Bull	Acting Principal Loch Primary School
Mr Mark Hunter	Teacher Loch Primary School

The project has been managed by Mr Joshua Clydesdale, Strategic Planner Shire of South Gippsland. The Department of Sustainability and Environment is represented by Mr Barry Hearsey.

The consultant project team is comprised of:

Mr Stephen Sully,	Director Planning by Design, Lead Project Consultant
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Mr Rob McGauran	Director MGS Architects
Mr Terry Hardingham	Associate Andrew O'Brien, Traffic and Transport consultants
Mr Tim Bracher	Principal Bramark, Tourism and Marketing Consultants

## 1.6 References

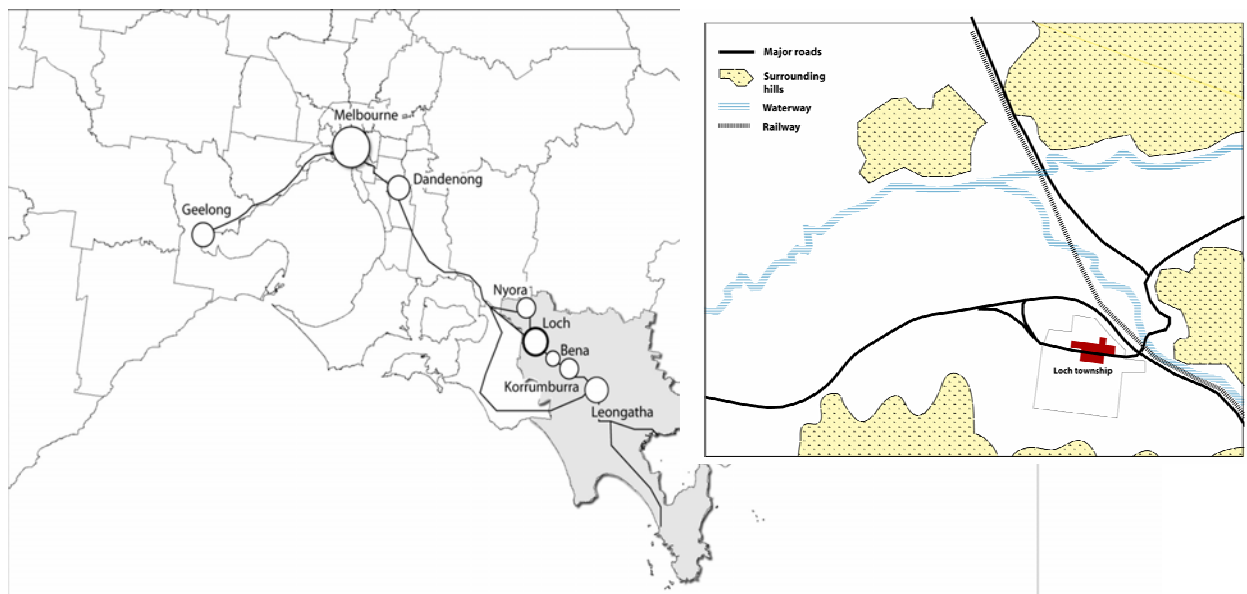
A number of previous planning studies have been carried out in Loch over the past six years. These documents have been reviewed. Their recommendations and assessments of various aspects of Loch have been used as a foundation for the development of the Urban Design Framework.

Noted documents:

- South Gippsland Community Charrettes Handbook Ball State University USA 1997.
- UnLocking the potential business seminar August 2004.
- Loch Community Guide 2004
- Vic Roads "Landscape plans for the Loch" By-pass 2003.
- Loch Community Park plan 2004, LCDA.

## 2. Snap shot of the township and community

### 2.1 Location and setting



**REGIONAL CONTEXT**

The township of Loch enjoys an idyllic rural location nestled in the rolling green hills and rich agricultural area of South Gippsland. Loch is now the first "real country town" along the South Gippsland Highway, and is located 105 km south east of Melbourne,

5 km from Nyora	55 km from Cranbourne (35 mins)
35 Km from Wonthaggi	13 km from Korumburra
30 km from Leongatha.	

The South Gippsland Highway is the main traffic route from Melbourne to South Gippsland, Wilsons Promontory, Inverloch and Venus Bay. The highway was realigned to the north of the Loch township in 2003 effectively by-passing the township. The township covers an area of 1.3 sq km and has a residential density of 153.8 persons per sq km.

## 2.2 Demographics

At the time of the 2001 Census, the township had a residential population, of 200. This represented a slight decline from the population of 213 recorded in the 1996 census.

### Loch

	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001
Total Population	171	201	209	213	200
% of LGA's population	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8
Rank by population size	304	298	304	307	340
Age group (% of pop'n) 0 - 17	27.5	23.9	23.6	28.2	22.1
Age group (% of pop'n) 18 - 34	16	20.4	26.8	20.2	15.5
Age group (% of pop'n) 35 - 59	32.6	24.4	17.3	25.2	31.5
Age group (% of pop'n) 60+	24	31.4	32.5	26.7	31
Private dwellings	74	79	84	92	88
Households	62	74	66	72	75
Total labour force	64	84	78	77	91
Unemployment rate (%)	3.2	7.4	15.4	10.4	7.4
Participation rate (%)	46.4	50	50	50	54.4

Source: Towns in Time, 2001

The above figures indicate a fairly static situation in Loch with minimal growth in housing stock and a slight decline in overall population over the last 5 years. Slight growth in the older population groupings and a decline in those aged below 17 years old are also indicated.

## 2.3 Traffic

VicRoads data indicates that an average of 4,200 vehicles per day use the South Gippsland Highway near Loch. An increase to 5,000 vehicles per day is anticipated by 2014. (an increase of 1-2% per annum). The development of the by-pass has significantly reduced the through traffic in the town centre especially heavy vehicle traffic.

The by-pass has created the opportunity to reconfigure the main street of Loch (Victoria Street) through the township acknowledging that it is no longer classified as a State Highway. Preliminary engineering evaluations suggest that a reconfiguration could provide angle parking on one side of the carriageway and parallel parking on the other side, hence providing opportunity to increase car parking capacity, reducing the overall road width and improving pedestrian accessibility. Opportunity would also exist to provide a bicycle lane and to realign nature strips at key points to facilitate additional pedestrian spaces or landscaping areas.

The by-pass has created key intersections at either end of the town centre where Victoria Street rejoins the Highway. The design of the Poowong Road intersection (eastern entry point to Loch) has been raised as a potential traffic hazard. The intersection is perceived by the local community as a poor design that is potentially dangerous, due to the topography and curving nature of the Highway to both the west and east, the configuration of splitter islands and line marking. VicRoads has advised that the design of the intersection meets current design standards. In response to community concerns VicRoads has recently removed all vegetation on the inside of the curve to improve visibility. The community still however have concerns over the safety of the intersection.

## 2.4 Heritage and Built form.

The character and design of the built form provides a critical component of the overall image and identity of the township and underpins both its tourism role and village atmosphere. Loch has an attractive, and from a heritage point of view, significant built form. Eleven specific buildings in the township and three precincts (Smith Street, Victoria Street and Roy Street) are identified as sites of heritage importance in the 2000 South Gippsland Shire Heritage Study. Of these, 6 sites were recommended for inclusion in an Heritage Overlay in the Planning Scheme.

The township also contains a number of significant cultural heritage locations including the Memorial Reserve, railway station precinct, site of the Loch Butter Factory (Allsop Creek) and a significant Oak tree (rear of the Catholic Church).

Of interest is that Allsop Creek itself and the ex-swimming area do not appear to be recognised in the heritage study.

The Loch community has in its possession, many photographs that date from early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the immediate pre WWII. These resources will be a rich source of information for any one wishing to reinstate some of the historical physical attributes of the buildings within the village. Examples are: Smith Street/ Victoria Road intersection, swimming pool and the railway station area.

Heritage elements of Loch recommended in the South Gippsland Heritage Study for inclusion in the Planning Scheme are:

HO78	<i>St Paul's Church of England &amp; Parish Hall</i> 2 Clarence Street, Loch
HO79	<i>Loch Memorial Reserve</i> Loch-Poowong Road, Loch The heritage place includes the World War 1 Memorial Gates constructed in 1922, the World War 2 Memorial Oaks planted around the perimeter of the reserve, and other mature trees.
HO80	<i>St Andrew's Uniting Church &amp; Hall</i> 5 Roy Street, Loch
HO81	<i>Loch Post Office</i> 7 Smith Street, Loch
HO82	<i>Loch Mechanics' Institute Hall</i> 16 Smith Street, Loch
HO83	<i>Loch Primary School No 2912</i> Victoria Road, Loch
HO84	<i>St Vincent's Catholic Church</i> 1 Victoria Road, Loch

## 2.5 Infrastructure

In general terms Loch appears to have the “bare minimum” range of basic infrastructure for current population levels and presents significant challenges for the future development and population growth of the township.

The most serious infrastructure deficiency for the township is the lack of any integrated sewerage system. The township relies on individual septic tanks for each property, many of which are aging and have limited capacity to treat the sewage and grey waste water produced. According to Council officers, this situation is causing significant environmental issues in the township and surrounding watercourses. Anecdotal evidence from business operators suggests that the lack of sewerage is also having a detrimental impact on business opportunities in the township with potential businesses unable to satisfy Environmental Health requirements or unable to afford the sophisticated treatment equipment required to meet EPA regulations.

A variety of schemes to address the sewerage issues in Loch, along with two other townships in the area (Nyora and Poowong) are being pursued by Council. These three townships have been accorded high priority in terms of the Council’s overall sewerage program for the municipality.

Electricity and water supplies are adequate for the current population and potential exists to upgrade the supply to service a limited increase in population. The township has recently experienced a significant number of electricity outages and the supply has been shown to be susceptible to disruption during storms. Recent works have reduced the frequency of outages.

The town has limited access to telecommunications facilities and the nature of the topography makes wireless receptions difficult. The township does not currently have access to Broadband or ADSL connections to the Internet.

The town has no access to the reticulated gas network.

## 2.5 Tourism Role and Potential

Loch has traditionally acted as a service town to the travelling public. When the highway passed through the centre of the town, it was readily apparent to motorists which services were available and which of them were open. The proximity of the motorist to retail premises meant that spontaneous purchases and exploration of the main street was probable.

The diversion of the highway to the fringe of the town means that Loch has lost its spontaneous appeal to the travelling public. The traveller now needs to be pre-informed that Loch can meet his or her needs through past experience, word of mouth or advertising.

This situation is the opposite in Loch’s two nearest centres, Korumburra and Leongatha, where travellers are still directed through the centre of town and where the retail and hospitality offerings are obvious, even when travelling at 60-80 km/hr. In particular, the prominence, accessibility and long trading hours of McDonalds in Leongatha is probably the major competition to the refreshment potential provided by Loch.



While Loch could still be classified as a 'services town' to the travelling public, its broader appeal as a short term tourism 'experience' now needs to be conveyed to the traveller. This is the challenge for the residents, and particularly the businesses of Loch

Loch's new entrances from the Highway are bland and formulaic, which probably discourages visitation. A central recommendation of the Loch UDF must be to create a motivating 'sense of arrival' for the motorists, which strengthens the chosen brand for the town, but which doesn't jar with the visual appeal and atmosphere of the surrounding countryside. For this reason, 'giant' tourism icons should be avoided.

The new highway signing for Loch is designed and installed according to Australian Standards. It is designed to be functional and not motivational.

While promotional signing of any nature is actively discouraged by VicRoads, Loch's special circumstances as a newly by-passed town, could place it in a strong lobbying position for the easing of State guidelines. In response to this issue, VicRoads have advised that the current tourist and service signs for the Loch By-pass were agreed between the business and community reps, South Gippsland Shire and VicRoads during the pre construction phase of the project. During construction of the Loch By-pass, the Loch Consultative Group proposed a promotional sign on the highway (similar to sign at Yarragon). VicRoads have advised that they suggested that a similar style sign should be submitted for VicRoads consideration and that opportunity still existed for this to occur.



Existing sign on approaches to Loch  
Does not provide any indication of the  
Character or environment of the township.



Sign indicating access to Loch from  
the highway gives no indication of  
how far the township.

Loch does not sit within the natural touring routes of South Gippsland, which are largely coastal focussed. While the area surrounding the town is of significant rural beauty, there is little within the immediate vicinity to create a meaningful tourist drive or touring route. It is however, located on the popular route to Wilsons Promontory, which has important international appeal as well as a legion of Melbourne devotees, particularly those living in the eastern suburbs. Currently, it is suspected that the Koonwarra General Store and McDonalds in Leongatha receive the major stop-over benefit for people travelling to and from the Prom, particularly when combined with the easy provision of discounted petrol in Leongatha. It is important therefore, that Loch firmly establishes a reputation for the reliable provision of quality light meals and refreshment. The installation of suitable playground equipment on the proposed site will be an important tool in attracting repeat visitation from the family market. The provision of public toilets is not currently planned for the Community Park that may reduce its appeal.

As it is located on the edge of both the 'Melbourne Surrounds' and the 'Gippsland' tourism regions, Loch tends not to be embraced within any regional marketing

programs. Tourism structures have traditionally been weak in the Gippsland region, particularly South Gippsland. For these reasons, it is unlikely that much assistance could be extended to Loch by outside agencies. Active involvement in larger marketing campaigns would need extensive lobbying by local people and would require significant 'buy-ins' to cooperatively funded publications and other forms of marketing.

### **Ability to service traveller needs**

#### Toilets in Centennial Park

- Signed from Highway.
- Signed in Main Street.
- Adequate toilets; clean, naturally ventilated.
- Externally well presented.
- Heavily obscured by vegetation.
- Picnic facilities

#### Petrol & Mechanical service in Victoria Street.

- Prominent location.
- Basic presentation.
- Mechanical service available.
- Business hours only.

#### Food and Drink

- Cafes providing light meals and refreshments with mix of indoor and outdoor seating.
- Newsagents/ milk bar provides light snacks & refreshment, and is looking at expansion.
- Evening meal available in Royal Hotel on Friday and Saturday nights.

#### Tourist information

- Brochure stand in Smith Street Tearooms.
- Information board in Victoria Street (Centennial Park) – information limited to regional touring; rear of display not used.

#### Accommodation

- Limited within the township.
- Predominantly B&B style, rooms available at Royal Hotel
- Informal camping opportunity at Memorial Reserve.

#### Business Attractions

- Predominantly craft and antique related.
- Renowned quiltery.
- Quality antique and collectables.
- Quality wood gallery.

All located within 100 metres of each other

#### Main Tourism features

The main tourism feature is town itself, the town centre, heritage architecture and businesses, the overall nature and character of the town and its community. This feature is supported by the presence of:

- Cottage gardens
- Views and vistas
- Memorial Reserve
- Suspension bridge
- Centennial park
- Heritage buildings
- Childrens playground (under construction)
- Allsop Creek and environs
- Tourist railway and station
- Regular markets
- Community park (under construction)
- ANZAC memorial and soldier sculpture.

## 2.7 Scope for further residential development

Compared with other townships in South Gippsland (eg Nyora), no detailed investigations have been undertaken to identify the opportunities and constraints for the potential residential development of Loch. Whilst this Urban Design Framework can scope the potential and identify areas that may be appropriate, it must be noted that further, more detailed analysis will be required before further residential development could be actively entertained.

The natural topography, combined with the location of the railway line, the by-pass and the Allsop Creek valley create significant constraints to the future development of the town. Preliminary investigations suggest that potential exists for some minor expansion of the township through the extension of the existing subdivision grid to the south, west and east. Such development could proceed however only when sewerage was available and if it proved economically viable to extend other basic infrastructure.

### Future Residential Development Investigation Areas.

The community has indicated an interest in seeing the population of Loch increase to some extent, provided that the essential 'village' character and easy accessibility for all residents to the town centre can be maintained. A potential target of a population of 600 was mentioned at the public workshop.

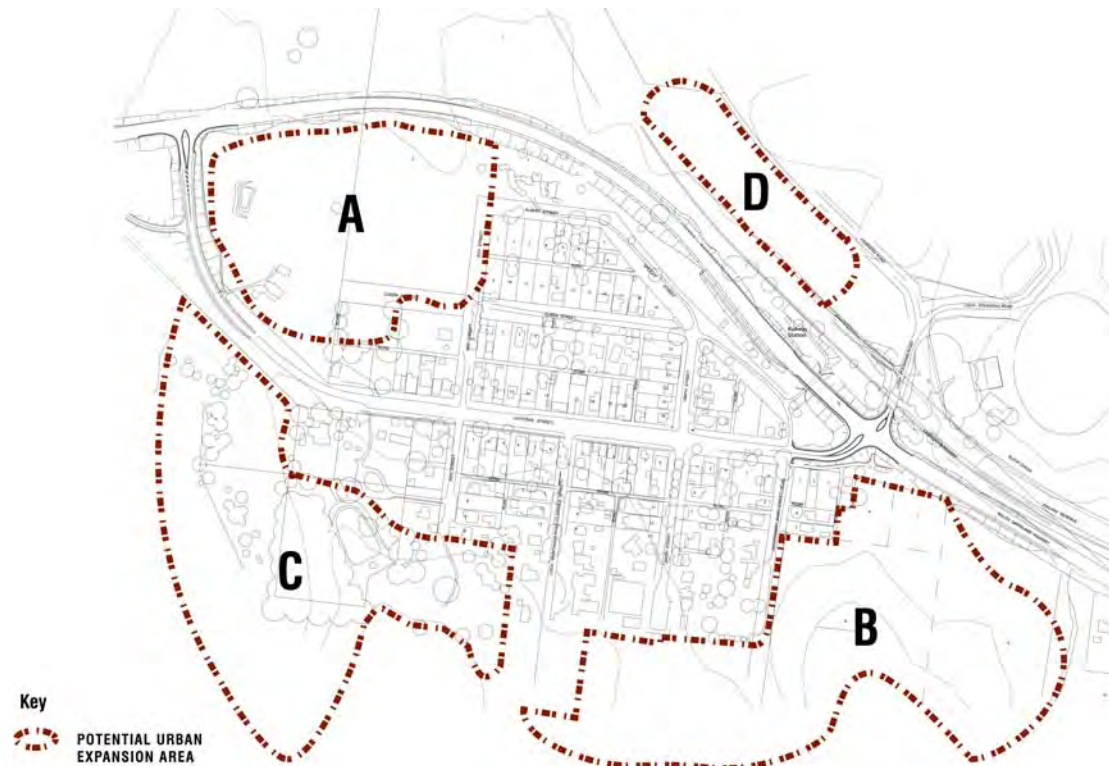
A population of 600 represents an increase of 400 over the current population. The current population is accommodated in 75 dwellings in an area of approximately 1.3 sqm km. This equates to a population density of 15 people per ha, and 5.7 dwellings per ha. It should be appreciated that such a population density is very low by current urban standards, especially if easy walking access to features and facilities can be provided. Future residential development in Loch could be anticipated to occur at a higher density of dwellings per hectare.

To illustrate the impact of a future population of 600 for Loch. If such an expansion occurred at the same rate as current densities, an additional 28 hectares of land would be required. If however such development occurs at a higher density, obviously less land would be required.

Analysis of Loch undertaken as part of this project suggests that there are 4 areas adjoining the current urban area that has potential to accommodate future residential development. These areas are identified on the plan below.

The areas have been identified on the basis of their potential to satisfy the overall objectives and principles for the future development of the township, namely:

- the capacity for all residents to have easy walking access to the town centre (a maximum distance of 600m has been used to determine this)
- the capacity for all properties to be directly linked to the existing residential development areas.
- the potential for the areas to be serviced by electricity, water and sewerage.
- the relative flatness of the topography and absence of steep hills.



Potential Residential development expansion area	Approx size*	Potential capacity (option 1)	Potential capacity (option 2)	Potential capacity (option 3)
Area A to north of Victoria Street between Victoria Street and the by-pass.	4ha	140	100	68
Area C to the south of Victoria Street to the west of Clarence Street.	8ha	280	200	136
Area B to the south of Victoria Street to the east of Clarence Street.	10ha	350	250	170
Area D railway reservation land, west of the railway station.	2ha	70	50	34
Potential overall totals if all areas totally developed to full capacity.	24ha	700	600	408

\*Gross areas that potentially include environmental features that may reduce overall capacity.

- (Option 1) 14 lots per hectare & 2.5 persons per lot = 35 people per ha
- (Option 2) 10 lots per hectare & 2.5 persons per lot = 25 people per ha
- (Option 3) 7 lots per hectare & 2.5 persons per lot = 17 people per ha

As is illustrated by the options outlined above, capacity does exist to expand Loch's population, certainly up to the community target of 600 people (an increase of 400) and beyond. At a high growth rate of 10% per year, it would take 11 years for the population target of 600 to be passed.

It should be recognised that each of the areas contains natural environmental features and aspects that will need to be protected and retained. This will potentially reduce the overall development capacity and require that detailed assessment occurs prior to any development.

To achieve the desired objectives, it will be essential for any further development to occur through a carefully staged process. Development should radiate outwards from existing development, as an expansion of the current residential subdivision and road network. It is not considered appropriate for new development to occur in an isolated, separated or "gated" estate fashion. Such development could make the provision of infrastructure difficult and lead to the fragmentation of the overall township of Loch.

In addition to the potential to expand residential development into current non urban areas, there appears considerable potential to accommodate further development within the existing urban areas through infill of vacant sites, further subdivision of existing urban allotments and redevelopment at a higher density of sites within the town centre.

The increase in residential population would result in an increased demand for local business goods services and facilities. It is considered that sufficient room exists within the "commercial" areas of the town centre to accommodate the bulk of such activity. Only minor expansion of the existing commercial area may be required.

## **2.8 Planning Scheme**

The Victorian Planning Provisions establish a comprehensive framework within the future planning and development of land in Victoria can be considered. At a state wide level there are broad principles that this Urban Design Framework needs to consider, these are:

### **Settlement**

Planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation and open space, commercial and community facilities and infrastructure.

### **Environment**

Planning is to contribute to the protection of air, land and water quality and the conservation of natural ecosystems, resources, energy and cultural heritage.

### **Management of resources**

Planning is to assist in the conservation and wise use of natural resources including energy, water, land, flora, fauna and minerals to support both environmental quality and sustainable development over the long term through judicious decisions on the location, pattern and timing of development. Integrated catchment planning for land use and resource management provides the basis for planning to protect waterways and water quality, and to minimise flood hazards, drainage infrastructure costs and downstream impacts, including estuarine, coastal and marine environments.

### **Infrastructure**

Planning for development of urban physical and community infrastructure should enable it to be provided in a way that is efficient, equitable, accessible and timely. Growth and redevelopment of settlements should be planned in a manner that allows for the logical and efficient provision and maintenance of infrastructure, including the setting aside of land for the construction of future transport routes. Strategic planning should facilitate efficient use of existing urban infrastructure and human services.

### **Economic well-being**

Planning is to contribute to the economic well-being of communities and the State as a whole by supporting and fostering economic growth and development by providing land,

facilitating decisions, and resolving land use conflicts, so that each district may build on its strengths and achieve its economic potential.

### **Social needs**

Planning is to recognise social needs by providing land for a range of accessible community resources, such as affordable housing, places of employment, open space, and education, cultural, health and community support (mental, aged, disabled, youth and family services) facilities. Land use and development planning must support the development and maintenance of communities with adequate and safe physical and social environments for their residents, through the appropriate location of uses and developments and quality of urban design.

### **Regional co-operation**

Some issues dealt with by planning and responsible authorities have impacts that extend beyond municipal boundaries. These impacts may be economic, social or environmental and particularly arise around such issues as coordinated planning for transport and water infrastructure, catchment management, including floodplain management and water quality protection, and waste management.

### **Local Planning Provisions.**

At the local municipal level, there are ranges of local planning provisions and policies that the framework needs to consider. These are included in the Shire of South Gippsland Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies, as discussed below.

The Municipal Strategic Statement for South Gippsland Shire supports the vision identified in council's community and corporate plan which is to:

*"promote a vibrant prosperous community that respects the unique character, lifestyle and future of South Gippsland"*

Relevant aspects of the vision identified in the planning scheme (CI 21.03) are:

- Ensure that the environment and cultural heritage of the Shire is retained and is protected, managed and promoted in a way that adds to, rather than diminishes, its significance.
- Encourage investment and development to facilitate population growth and employment.
- Encourage ingenuity and innovation in both private and public sector development.
- Promote tourism by building on the Shire's heritage assets, coastline, environmental qualities, rural landscape and agricultural produce.
- Promote high quality and diverse lifestyle opportunities.
- Promote and improve the urban environment of towns.
- Maintain and improve the road network to support economic development and the future needs of the community.
- Maintain and improve physical infrastructure in order to support the future needs of the community.
- Provide and facilitate a range of community services in an efficient and equitable manner.

The planning scheme also identifies (at c121.02) the key land use issues that are expected to challenge South Gippsland future growth. The issues relevant to this project are considered to be:

- *Protection of the natural resource base of soil, waterways and wetland, remnant vegetation and threatened flora and fauna.*
- *Cultural heritage places in the shire have great potential to enhance its image and attractiveness to tourists, in a way that clearly distinguishes us from*



*surrounding areas in the same way that the highly successful "Prom Country" promotion has done.*

- *The changing roles and functions of some small towns and villages and the need to encourage each to develop its own identity to facilitate economic development.*
- *The need to promote the area as a major tourism destination through its natural beauty and the lifestyle opportunities it offers.*
- *The strong contribution of the tourism industry to the local and state economies.*
- *The steady increase in tourist numbers each year.*
- *The significance of natural and cultural environment and the natural based activities for tourism.*

The township of Loch is covered by a Township Zone (TZ) in the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. The purpose of the Township Zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns. The surroundings of the township are all zoned Rural.

The township is also covered, in part, by a number of planning scheme overlays:

- ESO5: Areas susceptible to erosion.  
Significant areas abutting the township to the north east and the south are identified within this overlay. This overlay provides an additional layer of provisions and necessary approvals to protect areas prone to erosion by minimising land disturbance and vegetation loss.
- PAO4: Public acquisition overlay.  
This overlay, relating to the provision of the Loch By-pass and associated alterations and widenings of the South Gippsland Highway still exist in the planning scheme. It is understood that processes are underway to amend the scheme to recognise the completion of such road works.
- HO2: Heritage Overlay.  
This overlay identifies a *Chestnut-Leaved Oak tree (Quercus Castaneifolia)*. This is the only heritage element specifically identified on the planning scheme maps for Loch.

## 2.9 Current Projects and Initiatives.

Loch has a very active and committed community that are constantly pursuing projects and seeking out opportunities to attract funding to enable project implementation. At the present time the community are pursuing the following projects relevant to the development of the Urban Design Framework.

### Community Park & Childrens Playground

The community has attracted funding and local and state government support to establish a community park on an area near the eastern entrance to the town, on the northern side of Victoria Street between Speight Street and the rear of Smith Street properties. Work on the construction of the park fencing and childrens playground is progressing.

### Skate Park.

The community and the Shire are currently seeking funding to enable the construction of a skate park facility in Loch. A site at the eastern entry to Loch is currently proposed for the facility but final arrangements and design have yet to be determined.

### Biolink from Nyora to Hilda Falls (passing through Loch)

The Loch/Nyora Landcare group have made application for a biolink between Nyora and Hilda Falls, following the railway reserve. This biolink, if established, would pass through Loch and hence could improve pedestrian access from Loch to both Nyora and Hilda Falls.

### Gazebo construction at Memorial Reserve.

The community have commenced construction of a timber gazebo facility at the Memorial Reserve.

### Art works for pedestrian underpass

The community is pursuing an initiative to make the pedestrian underpass more attractive and inviting. Murals will be painted, by a renowned local artist, depicting aspects of Loch's history and culture.

### State Government rail service reinstatement project.

The scheduled Vic Rail train service to Leongatha passed through Loch until it was replaced by a bus service in the 1990's. As part of the State Government's regional rail project it is proposed to re-establish a train service to Leongatha.

## 2.10 Key features and attributes

The Loch township has a broad and diverse range of features and attributes, all of which contribute to creating the character and the quality of life in the township.

Community services/ facilities	St Vincent's Catholic Church Masonic Hall St Paul's Anglican Church St Andrew's Uniting Church Loch Primary School Loch Police station Loch CFA Loch Public Hall Loch Pre school centre Loch Lawn bowls club Greenhills Community Health Centre Loch Memorial Reserve, oval, tennis and picnic area. Loch Railway Station Centennial Park & Public toilets Community Park (under construction) Market area adjacent to railway station
Features	The number, quality and variety of heritage buildings throughout the town Cottage Garden streetscape of the town centre Mature trees "Green" and rural character of the township Suspension bridge over Allsop Creek Allsop Creek and environs Cape Horn Lookout (south of the township) Hilda Falls on Allsop Creek (east of township) Views and vistas over green rolling hills Rural character Remains of the ex-swimming area on Allsop Creek ANZAC memorial planting in the Memorial Reserve Collection of historic photography of the township
Local Retail/ Service Businesses	Loch Village Craft and Tea Rooms Offset Café Loch Newsagent / General Store Post Office Bena Tree woodcraft Opportunity Shop Victoria Manor Antiques Loch Village Bears Quilters Barn Rustic Rose Antiques Carriages of Loch Antiques Royal Hotel Elton Motors 2 <sup>nd</sup> Hand Machinery sales Rural Produce supplies
Tourist Accommodation	Royal Hotel Quilters Barn B & B Glen Loch B & B Camping at Memorial Reserve

### 3. Community Desires and Perceptions.

#### 3.1 Community desires for future development

##### 3.1.1 Aspects of the township that are valued and need to be retained

The community, in responses to the survey or at the community meeting identified a desire to retain and enhance the following activities, features and facilities that add to the quality of life and reinforce the culture and character of Loch:

- Small town friendliness
- The accessibility and “walkability” around the town,
- Village Atmosphere
- Heritage buildings
- Cleanliness
- Small scale community
- Cottage gardens in main street
- Natural environment
- Safe environment
- Sporting clubs
- Friendly businesses
- The un constructed and “non urban” feel of the place.
- Historic buildings
- The antique shops
- The churches
- The reserves and parks
- The markets
- The by pass
- Greenhills Aged Care
- Country town atmosphere, picturesque setting

##### 3.1.2 Aspects of the township that are poor and need the be changed

The community, in responses to the survey or at the community meeting identified a desire to improve or remove the following initiatives, activities, features and facilities that currently create problems in Loch:

- Lack of sewerage / drainage
- Lack of youth facilities
- Overhead powerlines
- Lack of footpaths
- Improve access to the memorial reserve, creek and ex-swimming hole
- The Poowong road bridge over Allsop Creek
- The appearance of Centennial park and improve access to toilets
- Remove weeds and rubbish
- Maintenance responsibility of Open Space
- Streetscape in the main street
- Poorly presented entrances to town
- Poowong Intersection
- Parking - provide flexible options
- Council Approvals processes
- Improve the design and appearance of rear lanes
- Reduce the number of vacant blocks and empty shops
- Decrease the speed limit through the town centre
- Poor Access to technology
- Lack of EFTPOS facility in the town centre
- Parking / Bicycle restriction signs

### 3.1.3 New aspects and initiatives that need to be created.

The community, in responses to the survey or at the community meeting identified a desire to pursue the following initiatives and create activities, features and facilities that do not currently exist in Loch:

- Improved links to reserve from the Town Centre
  - Quality noticeboards to advertise events on approaches to the town
  - A place where visitors will want to stop and stay a few hours.
  - Themed signage on the highway at the approaches
  - Attractive entrances to the town that depict the character and image
  - Opportunity to develop any added residential within walking distance of town centre
  - Use the historic photos as part of the streetscape and interpretive signage
  - Public Art in public spaces integrated into the streetscapes
  - Indoor sports facility
  - Access to technology and communications
  - Historic elements in Streetscape
  - Bicycle and pedestrian tracks / network / 'loops'
  - Angled Car Parking
  - Pedestrian and Bicycle tracks to the Creek and Hilda Falls
  - Childrens playground,
  - Skate park
  - Increased opening hours for the businesses
  - Rough adventure, jogging or mountain bike fitness trail
  - Environmental walk around the town, wetlands,
  - Awareness of Loch as a great place to visit and live
  - Places for people to sit outside businesses and enjoy the views
  - Entrance "avenue" planting to celebrate local community members
  - Links to other towns in the area and to features and facilities in surroundings
  - Effective "town management" structures and processes incorporating businesses.
  - "Multi-Functional" integrated art piece at Melbourne Gateway Entry
  - Recreate the swimming hole, as a recreation feature for the town
  - More opportunities for businesses
  - A business friendly council approvals process
  - Central square or meeting place
  - Iconic feature eg: windmill, cows, earthworm, quilts,
  - Parking for trucks, buses and caravans
  - A strong physical and visual link to the Railway station.
  - Access to ATM in the town centre.
  - Build on quilting attractions
  - Safe place for teenagers to go, talk, and relax.
  - Opportunities for more and a greater variety of housing in the township
- 
- Access to greater range of food and groceries eg bakery, deli, local wine, pizza, fish and chips, fruit, vegetables, butcher, More places to eat and drink, hardware store, nursery, book shop, rural supplies printing photocopy facilities

### 3.2 Key issues

The key issues emerging from the analysis of the town, that will need to be addressed in the Urban Design Framework, are:

<p><b>Sewerage / drainage / infrastructure</b> The lack of an effective sewerage system is having a detrimental impact on the town now and will severely constrain future development and growth of the town and the pursuit of many of the desires and initiatives identified.</p>
<p><b>Attracting and accommodating further residential development</b> For Loch to grow in a fashion desired by the community, it will be necessary to attract and accommodate additional residential development. Initial analysis has suggested a number of options for the expansion of the existing residential grid on to relatively flat land that can easily be accessed from and linked to the existing township.</p>
<p><b>Review of Planning Scheme Provisions.</b> The planning scheme will require amendment to provide statutory recognition and support for the initiatives of the Urban Design Framework.</p>
<p><b>Town Entrances.</b> The town entrances are critical components of the town from a visitor and community pride perspective. They currently give no indication of the character of Loch.</p>
<p><b>Traffic management at Poowong Road intersection with Highway.</b> This intersection has been raised by numerous parties as requiring attention.</p>
<p><b>Business development</b> Business development is an important component of the project as it will drive the tourist "offer" and provide a base for the further residential development of the town. The longer-term business development initiatives are reliant on the provision of a sewerage system. There is however a need to address the constraints on existing businesses posed by the lack of sewerage.</p>
<p><b>Community Development</b> Planning for the retention and enhancement of community services and facilities in Loch providing for all age groups of the community will be need to be addressed. This could include the identification of gaps for the current and future population and identification of appropriate locations for the community facilities.</p>
<p><b>Cultural References</b> The urban design framework will identify opportunities to respect, reflect and celebrate all aspects of Loch's heritage, characters, events and achievements. This will include public art, signage, imagery, iconography and interpretive signage.</p>
<p><b>Pedestrian and Bicycle linkages</b> A driving desire from the community is for all aspects of the town to be safely and easily linked by a network of pedestrian and bicycle tracks.</p>
<p><b>Allsop Creek</b> The creek appears to be an under-recognised asset of the town as the present time. The consultant team consider that the existence of the Creek has major opportunities for the community and as a tourism attraction for the town.</p>
<p><b>Integration of initiatives</b> The community of Loch is clearly very highly motivated, involved and passionately committed to the future development and enhancement of the town. This passion needs to be carefully channelled to ensure that the projects are pursued in a coordinated way.</p>
<p><b>Funding and management of the implementation processes</b> The most important component of this project are the processes that can be put in place to manage the various projects and to attract funding resources.</p>



## 4. Future Directions

### 4.1 Future Vision

Loch, in the future, will be known as:

#### **Historic Loch: *The garden village of South Gippsland.***

- A small thriving rural township where all people have easy access by foot or bicycle to all its features and facilities.
- A township with a rich array of heritage architecture in the rolling hills of South Gippsland that is renown for crafts, antiques and quality food.
- A township with a distinctive garden village character where well tended gardens spill out from the heritage buildings onto the road reserves providing year round colour and interest.
- A township where the urban form is simple, where hard "urban" edges are kept to a minimum, where people have time to relax and enjoy the scenery.

#### **Roles and Functions**

- A residential centre for a population of up to 600 people.
- An urban centre and focus for community services and facilities, primary education, police station, fire brigade, churches, sporting, social and business, automotive and a small range of retail facilities for the local community and rural surroundings.
- A centre renowned for crafts and gardens.
- A stopping point for visitors providing public facilities, tourist information, accommodation and food and drink.
- A centre with aged care and health facilities for the local community and rural surroundings.

#### **Values and Principles**

##### Community leadership and involvement

The Loch community accept the need to grow, but are determined to lead and influence how such growth occurs in order to maintain the valued characteristics of the township.

##### Cultural heritage

The future development of Loch will occur in a fashion that protects and enhances its culture as a small close knit rural township, its strong sense of community, its built form heritage, its gardens, streetscapes and rural character.

##### Future residential development.

Further residential development of the township, creating a total population approaching 600 over the next ten years, will be facilitated and encouraged where sewerage, drainage, pedestrian and vehicular access can be provided in a staged and integrated fashion as a direct extension to the existing road network. All current and future residents will have easy pedestrian and bicycle access to all features and facilities.

#### Future commercial and community development.

Emphasis will be given to consolidating business and community activities around the intersection of Victoria and Smith Streets, establishing this intersection as the core of the town centre.

#### Access and Circulation

The Loch township will be designed to be accessible by all people including disabled and aged. All features and community facilities will be designed and located to facilitate easy access by foot and bicycle. The town centre will be designed to be easily accessible for prams and wheelchairs.

#### Relationships with other nearby townships.

Loch will continue to develop as part of a network of mutually supporting settlements in the north-western region of South Gippsland (eg Poowong and Nyora). Each of the townships in this sector have specific roles to play in the overall development of the region, and each of which relies on the other towns for specific services and facilities.

#### Architectural form

Future development and redevelopment in Loch should be contemporary and complimentary to the many and variety architectural eras that make up the current built form. The gardens and natural environment should remain the dominant feature of Loch. Buildings should be designed to blend with rather than dominant the natural environment. Future built form should not seek unnecessarily mimic any one of the many architectural eras that are currently represented in the township.

#### Development Principles.

- All dwellings should be within easy walking and cycling distance from the town centre.
- All new development should be located so as to enable connection to sewerage system (when one becomes available)
- All dwellings should have easy access to safe pedestrian and bicycle paths that link all features and facilities in the township.
- All commercial and community facilities should be clustered in the town centre defined as Victoria Street between Clarence Street and Smith Street and Smith Street between Victoria Street and Queen Street, including all properties adjoining the Victoria Street, Smith Street intersection.
- Residential development at ground level, fronting onto the street, in the Town Centre should be discouraged.
- Car parking for visitors and customers should be clustered on, adjacent to or clearly visible from Victoria Street or Smith Street.
- Appropriate business activities and additional commercial development in the township should be fostered and facilitated by minimising the establishment costs for infrastructure (eg car parking,)
- Car parking facilities should be located designed and configured to recognise the needs of trucks, motorbikes, bicycles, caravans and buses as well as cars.

## 5. Structure Plan for Loch

The first stage of preparing a plan to guide the future development of Loch is to establish the desired basic physical form of the township and identify the type of activity and development that should be encouraged in each area. Once such a plan has been established more detailed evaluation of specific initiatives and opportunities can be pursued.

A structure plan is principally an urban planning tool that identifies the basic future physical form for the township, key features and facilities and how particular land use activities can be accommodated.

### 5.1 Key features of the structure plan for Loch

#### 5.1.1 Traffic and Transport Links

The Structure plan recognises the primary transport role of the South Gippsland Highway, (Loch by-pass) and the major traffic role of Victoria Street and Clarence Streets, as through vehicular routes. Other aspects of access, traffic and transport identified in the plan are:

- The railway line and railway station.
- Bus pick up and drop off point in Victoria Street.
- Key access points to future residential development areas, as an extension of the existing road network.
- A network of Pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout the township, linking all the major features and facilities.

#### 5.1.2 Public land

The structure plan identifies significant areas of land in one form or other of "public ownership" (eg VicTrack, Vic Roads, DSE, Crown Land, Council). Where such land is identified it is considered important for retention as public land.

#### 5.1.3 Public open space

Public open space in and around the town that provides access, linkages, recreational opportunities, it identified for retention.

#### 5.1.4 Natural environmental features

The plan identifies areas of natural environmental significance, for example, wetland areas, water courses, gullies, drainage lines, stands of trees etc. These elements are shown on the plan to indicate their importance and ensure that they are considered during any future planning or development of the township. The boundaries depicted on the structure plan are indicative only and designed to highlight the need for further investigation rather than automatically implying a precise area.

#### 5.1.5 Potential Urban Growth areas

The plan identifies four areas for further investigation as potential residential development locations to house the desired population growth of 400 over the next ten year period.

Area A: North west of the town centre between the town centre and the by-pass

Area B: South east of the town centre

Area C: South west of the town centre

Area D: A small area of land to the north of the by-pass currently part of the railway reservation.

#### **5.1.6 Existing commercial area**

The plan identifies the area of Victoria Street between Clarence Street and Smith Street and Smith Street between Victoria Street and Queen Street, including all properties adjoining the Victoria Street, Smith Street intersection, as the existing commercial area of the township, and as the preferred focus for future commercial activity. It is acknowledged that commercial activities operate in other locations of Victoria Street. It is not the intention of the structure plan to change this situation.

#### **5.1.7 Potential commercial growth areas**

An aim of the structure plan is to maintain a contiguous and compact town centre for Loch, as described above. As further residential and tourism development of the township occurs, demand may be established for additional commercial development. It is considered that extensive opportunity exists for such development to occur within the existing commercial area through consolidation and intensification of development.

# structure plan

# LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

















South Gippsland  
Shire Council  
Council for the Shire, Plan for the Shire

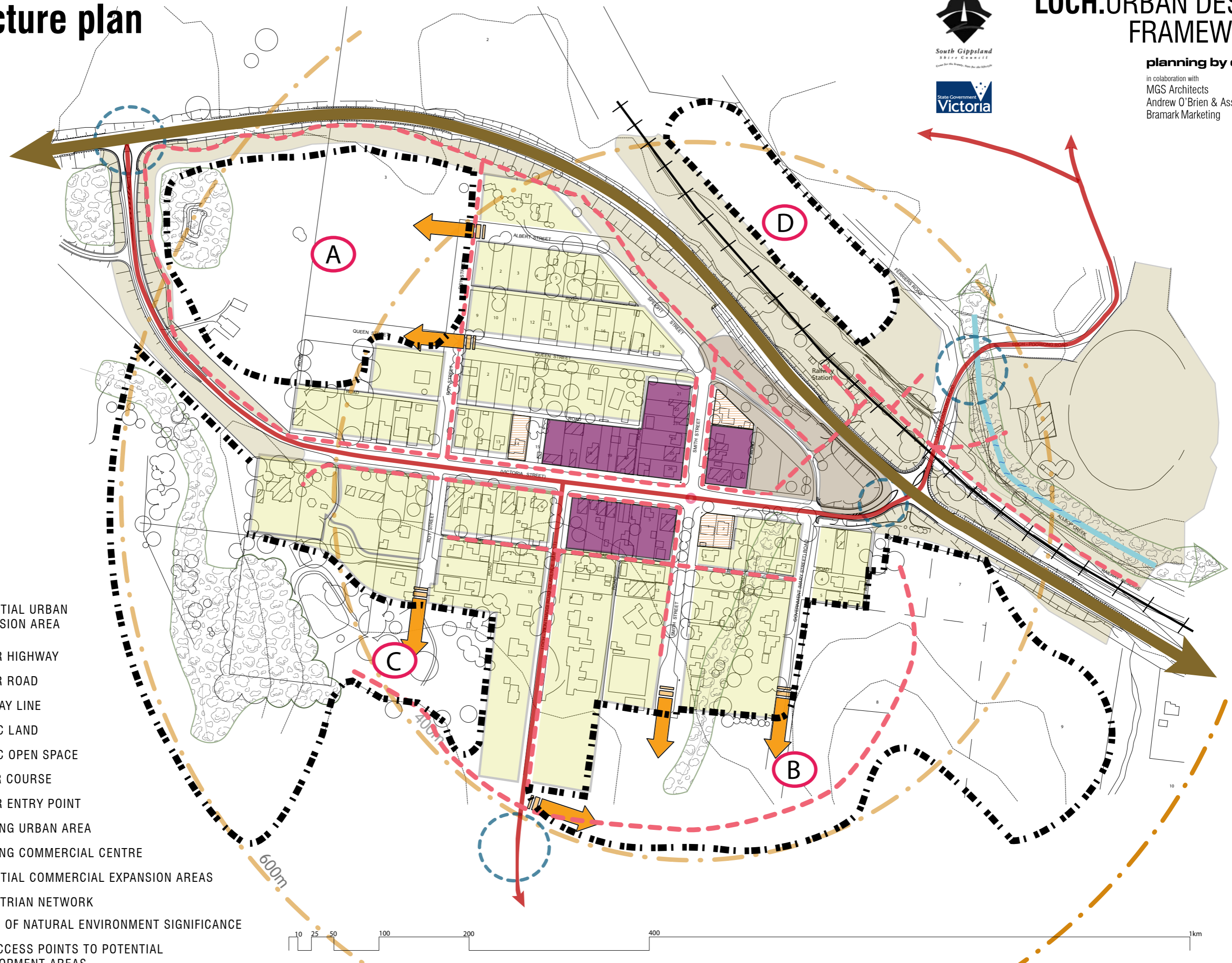


planning by design

in collaboration with  
MGS Architects  
Andrew O'Brien & Associates  
Bramark Marketing

## KEY

-  POTENTIAL URBAN EXPANSION AREA
-  MAJOR HIGHWAY
-  MAJOR ROAD
-  RAILWAY LINE
-  PUBLIC LAND
-  PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
-  WATER COURSE
-  MAJOR ENTRY POINT
-  EXISTING URBAN AREA
-  EXISTING COMMERCIAL CENTRE
-  POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL EXPANSION AREAS
-  PEDESTRIAN NETWORK
-  AREAS OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE
-  KEY ACCESS POINTS TO POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS



## 6. Urban Design Framework (UDF) for Loch

The Urban Design Framework Plan for Loch seeks to establish a preferred design, development and movement framework for the future development of the township over the next 15 years.

The plan does not provide specific design detail and should not be regarded as a “blue print” depicting exactly how the town will appear in the future. Rather the framework seeks to illustrate how the township could develop in order to achieve the community's vision and objectives.

### 6.1 Highlights of the Framework

- The framework provides a suggested identity for Loch (for further consideration and final determination by the Loch community) as the “Garden Village of South Gippsland.”  
Achieved through:
  - Establishing a brand and its incorporation into signage on the highway prior to the approaches and entrances to the town, throughout the town and on all marketing and tourism materials produced.
  - Indicating on information signs how close Loch is to the highway.
  - The use of banners and flags, depicting features and aspects of the town, at the entrances and through the centre of the town.
- Establishing Loch as a great stopping place on the South Gippsland Highway for families in general and specifically groups and individuals interested in gardens, antiques and crafts.  
Achieved through:
  - Improved design, visibility and access to Centennial Park
  - Development of the Community Park
- Identification of opportunity for additional tourism services and facilities.  
Achieved through:
  - Raised awareness of Loch's businesses, services and facilities.
  - Improved pedestrian access between the features and facilities.
- Improved design of key entry points to the township, to reflect its character.  
Achieved through:
  - Western entrance being designed to draw visitors into the town through an attractive garden setting and a tree lined “Community Avenue of Honour”
  - Eastern entrance highlighting the Childrens playground and allowing glimpses of the heritage architecture of the town centre.
- Retention and enhancement of the gardens throughout the township.  
Achieved through:
  - The maintenance and expansion of the garden theme that currently creates attractive informal identity for the town and a clear “point of difference” from other communities.
- Recognition that the provision of a sewerage system for the town is of fundamental importance and critical to the pursuit of the town's vision. The majority of future development initiatives for Loch identified in the framework rely on the establishment of an appropriate sewerage system.

-The framework will assist the community and the Council to raise awareness of the problems and to identify the social and economic benefits that can be achieved through the establishment of a sewerage system.

- Identification of opportunities to accommodate additional incremental residential development, within easy walking distance of the town centre.  
Achieved through:
  - The identification of future residential development investigation areas adjacent to the town with the capacity to increase the population to 600 (as suggested by the community at the workshop) over the next 10 years.
- Protection of the built form character and image of Loch.  
Achieved through:
  - Identification of design and development principles and objectives to ensure that future development of the township will maintain and enhance the desired character and image.
- Improved car parking and traffic management in the township.  
Achieved through:
  - Reduced speed limits through the town, creation of additional on street parking improved pedestrian safety, allocation of more space for pedestrians and outdoor activity.
  - Pursuing opportunities to improve the Loch-Poowong Road intersection.
- Establishment of a sculptural Skate Park and social gathering place for the youth of Loch adjacent to the by-pass.  
Achieved through:
  - Pursuing the establishment of a skateboard facility that will provide a safe and secure focus for the young people of Loch, designed and configured in a fashion that will make it an attractive sculptural feature of the town.
- The use of urban art, streetscape initiatives and sculpture to acknowledge and celebrate current and past communities.  
Achieved through:
  - The incorporation of historic photos, memorabilia, information plaques, old tools, pioneers, materials, into murals, public art, footpaths, fences and pathways.
  - Running a sculpture competition and actively seeking the support of the local arts community.
  - Utilising the wealth of historic photography to illustrate how the town and its features and facilities used to appear.
- Improved awareness and access to Memorial Reserve and Allsop Creek.  
Achieved through:
  - Improved pedestrian / bicycle access from the town centre.
  - Improved viewing opportunities of the ruins of the ex-swimming hole.
  - Providing pedestrian access under the Poowong Road, via the existing railway underpass.
- Improved walking and cycle tracks around the town to link all attributes and features.  
Achieved through:
  - Creation of a integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle paths linking all features and facilities in and around the town, each designed to celebrate a specific aspect of the town, its community, its heritage and its future aspirations.
  - Provision of long distance walking and cycling tracks linking Loch to Nyora, Hilda Falls and other regional features.



- Identification of opportunities to support and nurture existing businesses and to attract and accommodate additional complimentary businesses to serve both local community and visitors.  
Achieved through:
  - Locating tourism features, facilities and car parks to encourage patronage of the town centre.
  - Identify opportunities to ease the infrastructure requirements on businesses.
  - Provide support and encouragement to businesses willing to take risk and try new ideas.
  - Provide opportunities for outdoor display and activities.
  - Maximise parking at the front of businesses.

## 6.2 Key issues and principles.

### 6.2.1 Character

The character of Loch is defined by the following attributes:

- The slow and unhurried pace of life.
- The friendliness of the community.
- The style and nature of the existing businesses.
- The unstructured, informal and “non urban” nature of the streetscapes in the town.
- The formal and yet haphazard nature of the gardens on nature strips throughout the town.
- The ease of access for all, to all features and facilities in the town.
- The connection of the town to its rural surroundings and communities.
- The history and heritage of the town.

These attributes are valued by the community and must be maintained in the future.

### 6.2.2 Image and Identity.

It is considered essential that Loch seeks to consolidate its reputation for servicing travellers, rather than attempting to undertake any “destination” marketing in its own right.



The existence of antique shops and events such as the Quilters Festival extend the town's reputation throughout Victoria and interstate.

The childrens' playground will help to establish the town's reputation as a family-friendly stop-over as well as for some older travellers, particular caravanners and mobile home users.

Loch's major positioning in the tourism marketplace should be built on its already well established reputation for European trees, street gardens and living heritage. Larger communities like Bright, Katoomba, Buderim and Toowoomba have solid tourism brands based on gardens and horticulture.

Flowers and vegetation have an almost universal appeal among all market sectors, especially when set against the verdant backdrop of South Gippsland. As opposed to a



purely heritage theme, which is commonly adopted by many small communities throughout Australia. Loch's ability to sustain a horticulture theme should help to provide it with a major point of difference.

The horticulture theme also provides a complementary image for the town's rapidly emerging profile as the quilting capital of Victoria. It also sits very comfortably with the town's arts and craft offerings.

The very fact that the gardens are planted and tended by proud townspeople provides a major talking point for visitors and strong story material for the travel media.

Further planting of garden beds should be encouraged among retailers and residents. Attention should be paid to staggered plantings that will ensure that there is something colourful and/ or lush available for viewing at most times of the year. Peer pressure to maintain the standard of presentation will be important to ensure sustainability of the Loch brand.

The gardening theme is not an artificial marketing construct because it reflects the town's European vegetation and it complements the lushness of the immediate countryside. This theme also has great potential to attract charter groups of older travellers, who have a particular penchant for gardens, especially when complemented by heritage, crafts and tearooms.

Loch needs to avoid the temptation to become 'folky' and 'cutesy', which in its worst form can border on kitsch. The town needs to be naturally presented as an idyllic Aussie country town, where the friendly locals love to tend their gardens. This approach will resonate with the marketplace - especially an urban marketplace - much more significantly than an historic theme. Millions of urban-based Australians dream of living in a pretty country town, filled with gardens and friendly people!

The Urban Design Framework suggests that the addition of the word 'garden' be added to the town's slogan. This could provide it with another strong marketing dimension:

### ***Historic Loch –The Garden Village***

The incorporation of the agreed town title, with suitable graphics, into advance promotional signing on the highway (subject to VicRoads approval), complemented by a tasteful, complementary entry statement at the highway entrances, will appeal to a wide range of travellers.

Banners could be introduced at the entrances to and through the town, displaying a variety of current and historic images on a common background.

It is essential that the image and identity of the town be pursued in a consistent and professional fashion. The "brand" for Loch should be respected and protected in the same way that a corporation jealously protects its brand and how it is used. Once the image has been identified, the colours, fonts, sizes, composition should be established, recorded and adhered to. Guidelines should be prepared to ensure that it is used appropriately.

#### **6.2.3 Information and directional signage.**

The overall signage system in and on the approaches to Loch requires review. Currently there are a plethora of signs providing inconsistent messages, and a variety of themes. Some are redundant since the introduction of the by-pass and others are worn or damaged. All these aspects can contribute to confusing visitors and making it difficult to

navigate to the various features and facilities in the town. One common style of sign, professionally developed, is desirable with a consistent message that makes it very easy for visitors to find the features and which will lead them through the town and past the businesses. Once a brand and theme have been developed a new set of signs should be installed and all old signs removed.

Attention should also be given to the “advance warning” of Loch on the South Gippsland Highway and other regional road networks.

Specific opportunities to improve signage are:

Advanced warning on the South Gippsland Highway.

Improved indication of where the turnoffs to Loch actually are on the South Gippsland Highway.

Indication of how close the Loch Town Centre is to the by-pass.

Opportunity to improve awareness of Loch exists:

- on the Nyora / Poowong Road
- at the Loch / Wonthaggi Road (Wonthaggi end)
- on the Bass Highway, -from Drouin and Poowong.

Opportunity to indicate how far Loch is from the by-pass could also be achieved by including distances on the existing sign, as shown opposite.



#### 6.2.4 Traffic

The by-pass provides the opportunity for the reconfiguration of Victoria Street in the Town Centre. It is proposed that Victoria Street be redesigned to provide:

- Narrower traffic lanes. (whilst still providing adequate access for buses and trucks)
- Additional kerbside parking.
- Designated bicycle lanes
- Safer pedestrian crossing points.
- Reduction of speed limit through the town to 50 kph.

The framework also identifies the opportunity to improve the design and sight lines surrounding the Poowong Road / South Gippsland Highway.

#### 6.2.5 Parking in the township for visitors and businesses

The principle for the provision of car parking in Loch to meet the needs of customers and travellers, is that wherever possible such parking should be provided on the existing roadways adjacent to the businesses, rather than being provided at the rear of business

premises or accessed via rear lanes. Parking at the rear of premises may meet the needs of staff and owners but is not considered effective or appropriate for customers or visitors.

It is considered that the Council should explore all opportunities to exercise its discretion to reduce the car parking requirements as currently allowed for in the Planning Scheme in Loch, as an incentive for business development.

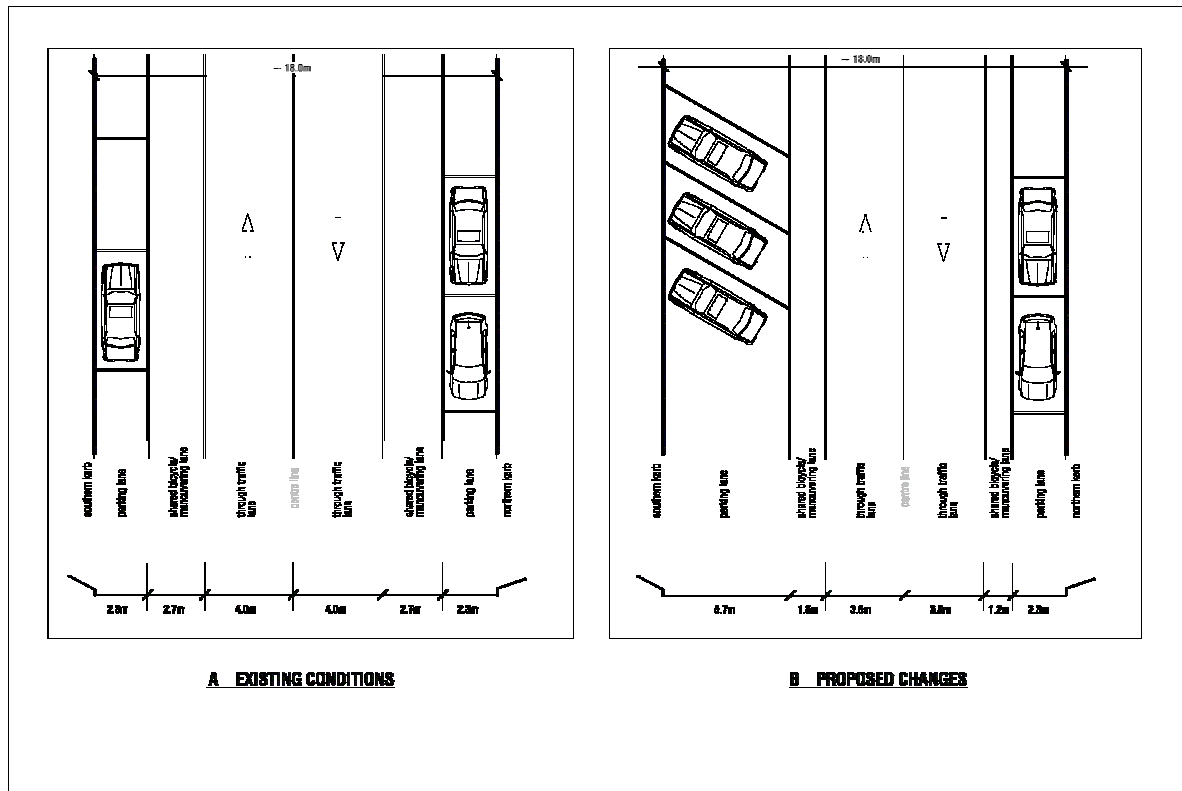
The construction of the by-pass enables the composition of Victoria Street and the balance between through traffic facilities, parking and pedestrian spaces to be reevaluated. The Urban Design Framework identifies the opportunity to reduce the amount of roadway required for through traffic in each direction, whilst still enabling easy access for trucks and buses. This reconfiguration will allow for the introduction of angle parking on one side of the road and parallel parking on the other side in the Town Centre. This will increase the overall capacity for on street parking for cars, cars with trailers, buses and trucks. It will also allow for the introduction of bicycle lanes along Victoria Street.

The framework proposes that the angle parking be provided on the south side of Victoria Street between Clarence Street and Smith Street, adjacent to the largest concentration of retail premises in the town centre. The provision of angle parking also provides for additional landscape areas at the intersections. These landscape areas can also include pedestrian refuges and hence decrease the width of roadway that need to be crossed, hence improving pedestrian access and safety. Angle parking could also be provided on the north side of Victoria Street to the east of Smith Street, adjacent to the Community Park.

Parking for buses, trucks and cars with trailers is provided for on the north side of Victoria Street, west of Smith Street and on the south side of Victoria Street west of Clarence Street.

It is noted that the existing landscape plan prepared by VicRoads for this area includes accommodation of significant parking capacity in this area. The Urban Design Framework also identifies opportunity for "peak period" parking along Speight Street adjacent to the by-pass to cater for major events, markets etc. It is envisaged that these areas would be constructed as "park area that can be used for overflow parking" rather than being designed and constructed as permanent car parking areas.

Provision for pickup/drop off facilities for timetable and school bus services as well as tourist coaches, is maintained in Victoria Street, at a suitable location, having regard to access requirements of Churches, to the west of Clarence Street. This will free up space adjacent to businesses for customer parking. Adequate passenger waiting shelters will need to be provided. Opportunities for tourist buses to stop in the Town Centre are provided for adjacent to the Centennial Park, this is considered appropriate given the location of tourist information and public toilets in this vicinity.



### 6.2.6 Footpaths

The framework recognises the community desire to keep infrastructure and hard surfaces to a minimum in Loch. For this reason it is intended that formal footpaths only be provided in areas where high volumes of pedestrian traffic can be anticipated and at the frontages of commercial premises. The materials used for the construction of footpaths should be simple and basic, either bitumen or (uncoloured) concrete pavers, or slabs should be considered. Plaques or elements of memorabilia should be incorporated into the footpaths to provide direction, information and create visitor interest. (refer examples from Kuranda Streetscape)

### 6.2.7 Streetscape

The specific design of the streetscape will need to be detailed in subsequent detailed design exercises. The Urban Design Framework identifies a number of principles that should be followed and identifies some specific locations where opportunity exists to create pedestrian focal or activity points in the town centre.

#### Streetscape design principles:

It is not considered appropriate to pursue one specific heritage style for Loch or to attempt to standardise streetscape design to reflect one specific era of the town's development.

- retain and enhance the unconstructed and informal nature of the Town Centre, retain as much unsealed and unconstructed area as practical.
- maintain and extend the informal gardens in the town centre. Gardens should be encouraged on nature strips throughout the town centre provided that they do not restrict pedestrian access, reduce visibility for pedestrians or drivers, create rubbish traps or create hidden or isolated locations. The plant material used for the cottage gardens should be drought tolerant and be designed to flower at a variety of times to create visual interest throughout the year.
- maintain the variety of seat styles in the town centre to reflect the variety of architectural styles and eras represented in the town.

- introduce appropriate historic lights, seats and street furniture adjacent to heritage buildings.
- create opportunities for outdoor eating at a variety of locations, especially at points which have a northerly aspect or where views to the surrounding countryside are provided.
- where retaining walls or fences are required local materials should be used and informality created rather than strong straight lines. Elements of cultural or heritage significance should be incorporated into these elements wherever possible, eg photographs, memorabilia, references to the giant earthworm, (refer to illustrated examples from Kuranda Streetscape below)
- streetscapes should have regard to the high rainfall in Loch and provide shelter for visitors wherever possible.



**Photos of streetscape works in Kuranda (QLD) where elements of local character and history has been effectively integrated into the streetscape**

### **6.2.8 High profile properties and frontages**

The Urban Design Framework identifies the frontages of properties along Victoria Street as playing a significant role in forming the image and character of the township. To ensure that this character is maintained a series of Design Guidelines have been identified for the area to guide future development and alteration of buildings:

- Scale and development in the town centre should not exceed 2 storeys.
- Existing residential premises should be encouraged to be retained and adapted for commercial purposes where possible rather than being redeveloped, front gardens should be maintained and designed to incorporate outdoor eating or merchandise display.
- Where new commercial buildings are required in the areas identified for current or future commercial development, they should be built to the front boundary to create an active frontage and sympathetically designed to respect the design and configuration of adjoining premises.
- Buildings in areas of Victoria Street beyond the "town centre" should be set back to conform with existing development to maintain the garden image at the approaches to the town centre.
- New development should reflect contemporary design rather than seeking to mimic or copy any one of the many architectural eras represented in Loch.

### **6.2.9 Natural Environmental Areas.**

The Urban Design Framework identifies a number of areas near the Town Centre, which contain natural environmental elements, primarily watercourses or natural vegetation. It is important that these areas be maintained and enhanced through appropriate management and development controls. This will be especially important when further residential subdivision is planned. Further detailed assessment of the areas identified in the Urban Design Framework will be required to identify specific locations and boundaries.

### **6.2.10 Infrastructure.**

The achievement of the vision and objectives identified in this framework is clearly reliant on the establishment of an adequate sewerage system for Loch and the extension of other basic physical infrastructure, water, drainage, electricity, gas and communications. It is difficult to envisage that any further development or the pursuit of many of the community's objectives in terms of business or tourism development can occur without the provision of a sewerage system.

## **6.3 Pedestrian and Cycling connections**

In order to pursue the objective to link all features and facilities in Loch for pedestrians and cyclists, a comprehensive series of pedestrian / bicycle tracks have been identified and are illustrated on the attached "**Movement Plan**".

### **6.3.1 Loch Pedestrian / Riding Lap (reference 1 on Movement plan)**

A pedestrian and riding link along the northern edge of the town, following the route of the by-pass. The track could include features along the way to provide points of interest and cater for a variety of users, for example:

- mountain bike track
- exercise points
- environmental points
- wetlands observation
- viewing points

Link should be punctuated by art, sculpture and information, memorabilia telling the stories of past events and characters that can be viewed from the track. Precise location of the track will require further investigation, having regard to the need to protect the by-pass escarpment and future urban development opportunities. The Loch Lap also has the potential to establish a buffer between future residential development and the by-pass.

### **6.3.2 School pedestrian / riding track. (reference 2 on Movement plan)**

This trail would link the school to the town centre and could tell the history of the school and its current and past pupils, staff and its vision for the future. The trail is designed to run from the town centre along the southern edge of the Victoria Street road reserve. It would be designed to cater for both pedestrians and school children on bicycles.

### **6.3.3 Memorial Reserve pedestrian / riding link. (reference 3 on Movement plan)**

This pedestrian and riding trail would link the town centre to the Memorial Reserve, Allsop Creek, ex swimming hole and potentially, on to Hilda Falls. Track would utilise the existing suspension bridge and would require a pedestrian path under the Loch Poowong Road utilising part of the existing rail underpass with appropriate separation and safety fencing (preliminary discussions with DOI indicate that this should be achievable and satisfy regulations for distances between pedestrian access and railway lines). Track should cater for pedestrian and cyclists. Track should highlight the ANZAC history of Loch and provide reference to the ANZAC memorial, sculpture of the soldier at the suspension bridge and the commemorative trees with plaques around the reserve.

### **6.3.4 Allsop Creek / Railway reserve, pedestrian and riding trail. (reference 4 on Movement plan)**

This pedestrian and mountain bike trail would follow the alignment of the creek, or the railway at appropriate points, linking Loch to the Hilda Falls to the east and potentially Nyora to the west.

### **6.3.5 Southern pedestrian/ riding connection. (reference 5 on Movement plan)**

This is a longer-term link that would eventually create a cycling and pedestrian route circumnavigating the township of Loch. It would be established as residential development occurs in the adjoining areas. East west access through Loch is difficult apart from Victoria Street and to a lesser degree the laneway to the north of Victoria Street. As future residential development occurs to the south of the township a system of east west pedestrian cycle access tracks should be established as part of any future subdivision. Road network should also allow for east west movement and access to the existing north south roads.

### **6.3.6 Northern pedestrian/riding link. (reference 6 on Movement plan)**

A pedestrian link has been shown along Roy Street, connecting Victoria Street to the Loch Lap.

### **6.3.7 Upgrading of rear laneways. (reference 7 on Movement plan)**

A network of laneways runs parallel to both the north and south of Victoria Street. These laneways are well used by pedestrians and motor vehicles. They should be retained and upgraded in future to maintain east/west access.

### **6.3.8 Community Park –Centennial Park link. (reference 8 on Movement plan)**

Whilst the establishment of the Community Park at the eastern entry point to the town is a major positive development it is important, if the park is to play a role in the overall development of the town as a tourist location, that visitors do not simply visit the Community Park and nowhere else in the town.

An opportunity to encourage visitors to move beyond the community park exists through the location of public toilets at Centennial Park and the businesses of the town centre literally adjacent to the Community Park. If this link is attractive and punctuated by points of interest it would encourage visitors to walk through the town centre, patronise local businesses and enjoy other features of the town. The link should be paved and landscaped in an attractive fashion, reflecting aspects of local culture, history or environment.

### **6.3.9 Victoria Street pedestrian path and bridge (reference 9 on Movement plan)**

A pedestrian access path and bridge over a watercourse exists on the southern side of Victoria Street at the eastern end of the township. The pathway is overgrown, unconstructed and the bridge is in disrepair. Opportunity exists to repair the bridge and make the pedestrian path more accessible, hence providing an additional pedestrian route into the town centre from the eastern residential areas.

### **6.3.10 Lookout to the North. (reference 10 on Movement plan)**

A lookout point has been identified along the Loch Lap to provide a view to the rural surroundings and rolling hills to the north of the town. At this point a view exists over the by-pass to the northern hills. The lookout would not have to be very high to achieve an interesting view. The lookout should however be visible from the by-pass to create a point of interest for passing traffic, a glimpse of something in the distance that may attract a stop on the next trip.

### **6.3.11 Pedestrian underpass (reference 11 on Movement plan)**

The pedestrian underpass can be decorated and lit to create an interesting feature rather than a barrier to movement. The walls of the underpass should be painted with murals depicting the history of the railway station and the swimming hole, two features that can be accessed through the underpass. The underpass should be decorated and additional lights provided to improve safety and security.

### **6.3.12 Pedestrian / Riding underpass of Loch Poowong Road (reference 12 on Movement plan)**

Pedestrian access across the Loch Poowong Road is currently difficult and an easy link from the by-pass underpass is not available. It is proposed to create a pedestrian path under the Loch Poowong Road utilising part of the existing rail underpass with appropriate separation and safety fencing (preliminary discussions with DOI indicate that this should be achievable and satisfy regulations for distances between pedestrian access and railway lines). Track should cater for pedestrian and cyclists.



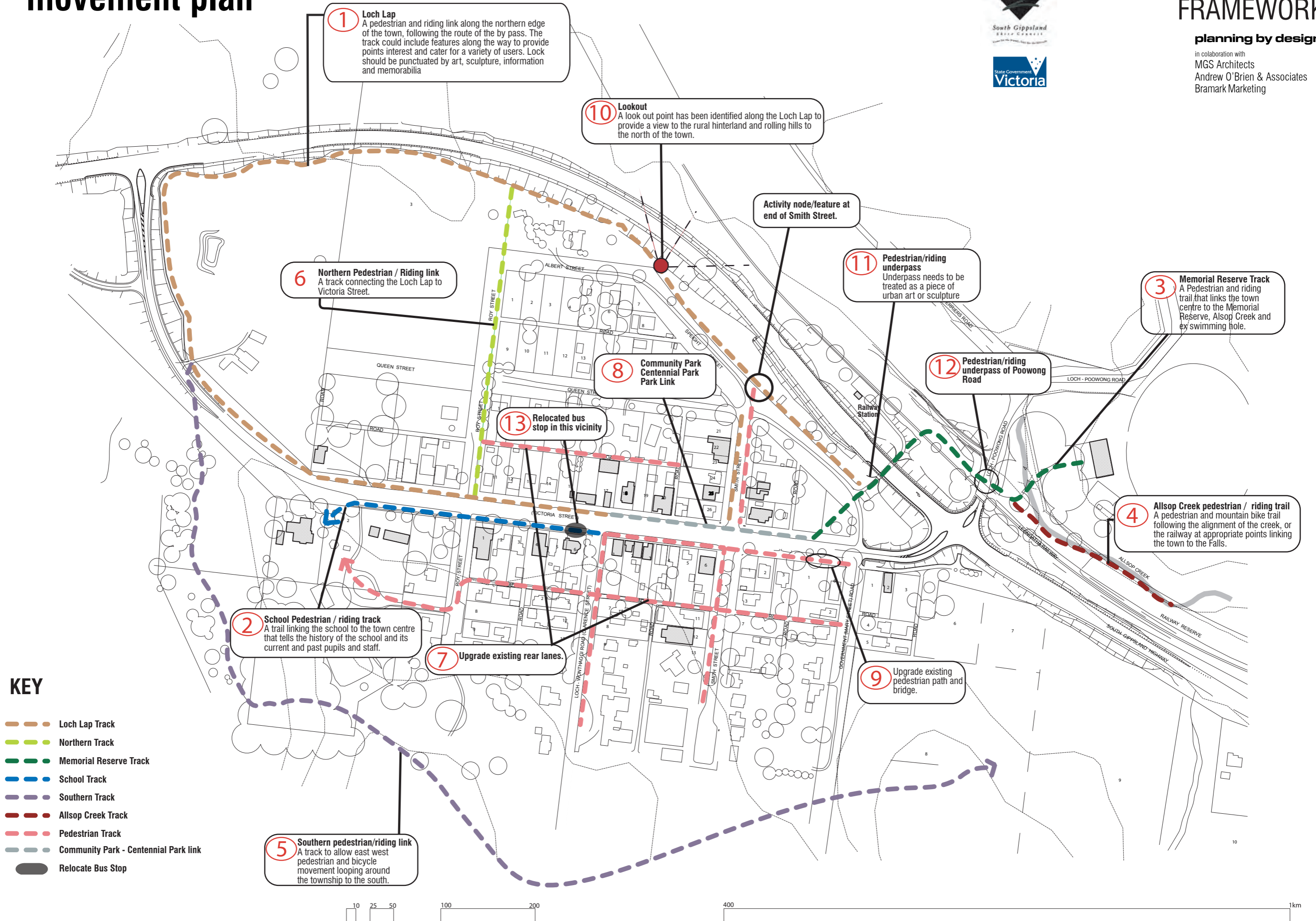
# movement plan



# LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

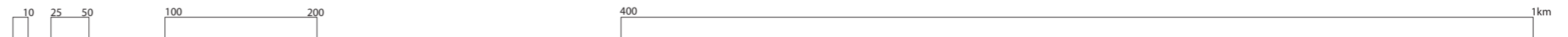
planning by design

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## KEY

- Loch Lap Track
- Northern Track
- Memorial Reserve Track
- School Track
- Southern Track
- Allsop Creek Track
- Pedestrian Track
- Community Park - Centennial Park link
- Relocate Bus Stop



## 6.4 Concepts and ideas for specific areas and sites

The framework identifies and in some cases illustrates opportunities to improve the design, use or development of a range of individual sites and precincts in the township. These are notated on the framework plan and described here. Additionally, five of the sites, areas or initiatives are the subject of more detailed consideration as “precinct plans” (refer section 6.5)

### 6.4.1 Town Centre (see also precinct plan E)

Based on responses from the community and having regard to the themes being promoted for the township the following additional business activities and facilities could be accommodated within the town centre (assuming the sewerage system is available) have been identified. In identifying additional businesses, the capacity for Loch to support additional businesses is acknowledged. It is possible that many of the additional activities identified below may be able to be provided by growing and expanding the existing businesses, rather than establishing new businesses. In a small community such as Loch is it not un usual to see the doubling up of activities.

- Nursery/ Garden supplies: To build on the garden theme and possibly specialise in growing and selling the plants that can be found in the cottage gardens around the town.
- Automatic teller facility, most probably in conjunction with an existing business operation in the town centre.
- Local Produce outlet: Business that specialises in selling locally produced or grown produce, wine, fruit, vegetables, cheese, delicatessen goods, bread etc. Additional antique, craft, shops to complement the existing range. Additional premises would add to the recognition of Loch as a “centre or destination for antiques and craft.”
- Hobby Shop: Business that can build on the overall “arts and craft” theme for Loch and establish a destination for hobbyists. It is noted in this regard that a Model Railway shop operated in Loch for some time in the past and anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a lack of hobby shops throughout the South Gippsland region.
- Take away food outlet: providing basic range of takeaway food for the local community and travellers.
- Additional antique, bric a brac, second-hand books and memorabilia businesses should be accommodated to add to the existing collection and build on the image of Loch as a “focus” for antiques and old wares.
- Additional café, restaurant facilities, serving quality light meals possibly in a garden setting and in conjunction with local crafts should be attracted to the township. Cafes and restaurants, in a similar fashion to Antique shops benefit when more than one exists in any location as they provide variety and choice and establish Loch as a destination for good food.
- Additional tourist accommodation in the form of bed and breakfast or cabin style accommodation for families and the formalising of camping facilities near Memorial Reserve.

- Confectionery Shop specialising in old-fashioned lollies, made on the premises.
- Improved tourist information signage system in the town centre, on approaches to the town and at the key features.

#### **6.4.2 Glimpses of town centre from the by-pass (ref 14 on plan)**

Opportunity exists to provide a glimpse of the Loch town centre from the by-pass and hence raise awareness of exactly how close the town centre is to the by-pass. This could be achieved by replacing specific segments of the solid noise wall with transparent material. This technique has been used on other freeways throughout Victoria.

#### **6.4.3 Community Avenue of Honour. (reference 15 on plan)**

The Urban Design Framework proposes that Victoria Street, leading from the western entry point should be developed over time as a "community avenue of honour" with trees planted each year to recognise members of the community that have assisted the Loch community. Over time this avenue would provide a very attractive entrance into the town. Formal, exotic, deciduous European trees should be used to reinforce the heritage of the town and compliment the existing street trees in Victoria Street.

#### **6.4.4 Western entry point.(reference 16 on plan and precinct plan A)**



This is a major arrival and gateway point to the town. From this point of the South Gippsland Highway no features or attributes of the town are visible. It is critical therefore that the design and appearance of the gateway reflect the image and character of the town and draw visitors into the town via Victoria Street. If the town is to be promoted as a garden village, then a garden image should be created at this point.

Opportunity to improve lighting at the entrance should also be pursued, through floodlighting of the trees, and lighting the signs. This would create a warm and attractive entrance to Loch in the evening.

#### **6.4.5 Post Office (reference 17 on plan and precinct plan B)**



The existing Post Office is a major physical and cultural attribute of the town and it commands a prominent location at the core of the town centre. The rear of the property is currently occupied by a small telephone exchange that is understood to have a limited operational lifespan. The property also adjoins the new Community Park. Opportunity exists to utilise the existing Post Office building (and potentially extending in a sympathetic manner), to enable additional facilities and activities to be incorporated into the building. This

has very successfully been achieved at the Koonwarra Store, further along the South Gippsland Highway. The location, visibility and accessibility of the Post Office building to the main street, town centre and the community park would make it an excellent location for example, a family orientated café, overlooking the Community Park, in addition to its current Post Office roles.



#### **6.4.6 Skate Park (reference 18 on plan)**

The demand for a skate park was a high priority from the young community of Loch. Funding for a skate park is currently being sought but final details on design have yet to be determined. Current proposal sees the skate park located at the eastern entrance to the town adjacent to the Community Park. Subject to the impact on current funding arrangements and directions. It is suggested that alternative sites for the skate park further to the west along the Loch Lap should be considered to create interest and focal points along the Loch Lap rather than consolidating a range of activities at the eastern entry to the township.

The specific design and configuration of the skate park will be critical to ensure that it is attractive to potential users and will integrate physically and visually with the other facilities and features in the area. A sculptural design should be pursued so that the facility is visually attractive as well as functional. The skate park should also incorporate an undercover viewing area for spectators and as a safe and secure gathering point for the youth of Loch.

#### **6.4.7 Childrens Adventure Playground (reference 19 on plan)**

The Urban Design Framework supports the current community initiative to establish a Childrens playground in the Community Park and recommends that it be expanded to be a major "adventure playground". This location is highly visible from by-pass and South Gippsland Highway. In this way, it can act as an attraction to the town. The playground should incorporate architectural features that are highly visible and act as a "marker" to passing traffic. The overall design could build on a local theme or character, possibly incorporating references to giant earthworms or other local natural features.

#### **6.4.8 Railway Station (reference 20 on plan)**



The railway station is an important historic and cultural component of the town and a key entry point for visitors. If the town is to adopt a garden village the railway station should also reflect this image with cottage gardens on the platform. The station building could be renovated and extended to create a multi purpose community facility, able to be used in conjunction with the market or other activities, in addition to fulfilling its railway station roles.

#### **6.4.9 Ex Swimming hole (reference 21 on plan)**



Opportunity exists to raise the awareness and improve the views of the old swimming hole. This should be highlighted as part of a visitor trail through the Memorial Reserve, through photography, plaques and viewing areas adjacent to the creek and from the suspension bridge. The opportunity to view the swimming hole will provide an additional reason for visitors to cross the suspension bridge.

#### **6.4.10 Memorial Reserve (reference 22 on plan)**

The Memorial Reserve is a very important cultural, recreational and heritage component of the township. The creation of the by-pass has severely isolated it from the rest of the town. This can be addressed by the provision of a dedicated pedestrian and cycle path and through the maintenance and enhancement of the features and facilities provided in the reserve.

#### **6.4.11 Public Hall (reference 23 on plan)**

The public hall is a significant public asset and the quality of the interior is of great cultural value. The external frontage to the hall does not do justice to the design and cultural relevance of the interior and the photographic display. Pedestrian connections from the hall to the town centre need to be improved to attract visitors from the town centre to the hall and draw visitors to the hall (eg for the winter market) to the town centre. This could be achieved by, for example, creating a point of interest to attract attention in Smith Street at the front of the public hall or extending the nature strip gardens up to the public hall to integrate the hall with the streetscape design of the town centre. The area outside the public hall could also be sympathetically redesigned to incorporate historic elements, lights and seats.

#### **6.4.12 Loch Poowong Road intersection. (reference 24 on plan)**



of the intersection should be pursued immediately with Vic Roads.

The intersection of the South Gippsland Highway with the Loch Poowong Road is considered by the community to be unsafe. It is also unattractive for pedestrians and cyclists wanting to access the Memorial Reserve. Sight lines along the South Gippsland Highway at this point, due to the crash barrier fencing, topography and curved nature of the roadway appear to be limited. The original design of the intersection appears to show a much more "staggered" type "T" intersection rather than the cross road that now exists. Opportunity to improve the layout

#### **6.4.13 Wetlands. (reference 25 on plan)**

Natural wetland areas have been designed as part of the by-pass project. These areas could be further developed to create environmental interest points on the Loch Lap route. It is noted that the wetland areas are close to the western gateway. Design will need to deal with the natural and indigenous style of the wetlands which will contrast, with the contemporary and formal style of the Western Gateway.

#### **6.4.14 Centennial Park. (reference 26 on plan and precinct plan D)**



Centennial Park is an important central public space in the town centre that provides public toilet and tourist information. Currently the park is isolated and hidden from the road and provides poor surveillance of the park and toilets. Opportunity exists to redesign the park and open it up to Victoria Street by removing the picket fence and thinning out the existing vegetation. As the Community Park is established as a major attraction it is essential that an attractive and easy route is established leading people from the Community Park to Centennial Park, through the town centre and hence encouraging patronage of the businesses.

#### **6.4.14 Royal Hotel (reference 27 on plan and precinct plan C)**

The Royal Hotel is a significant architectural and cultural feature of the town, it is however visually hidden and somewhat remote from Victoria Street. This could be addressed by providing outdoor eating facilities outside of the Hotel to create activity on Smith Street and improving linkages from the Hotel to the Community Park and Loch Lap. Historic images of the Hotel and environs could be incorporated into the streetscape.

Opportunity appears to exist to expand the business role of the Hotel, extend business hours and the range of services provided to the local community and visitors. Additionally, a glimpse of the facade of the Royal Hotel can be seen from the by-pass. This indicates how close the Loch township is to the by-pass. This view to the Royal Hotel could be enhanced if a section of the solid noise wall was replaced by Perspex panels, as occurs on many other locations throughout Victoria.

#### **6.4.15 Community Park (reference 28 on plan)**

The Community Park is a current and ongoing priority project for the local community. The park is excellently located and visible from the south Gippsland Highway at the eastern entrance. Opportunity exists to create a park that will attract attention from passing traffic and encourage people to visit the town, especially if it incorporates a distinctive and special childrens play area and public facilities. The park will be further attractive if café facilities are visible directly from the park (refer to previous comments on Post Office or Nissen Hut).



It is essential that the park is planned and developed in an orderly way and that a master plan is followed. The master plan should ensure that the park is integrated in a physical and design sense with its surroundings and that it becomes part of the network of paths and trails. It should not be seen as a location that can be all things to all people or where a variety of facilities are located in an adhoc fashion as they become available. Opportunity to establish public toilet facilities in the park should be pursued in future, once sewerage is available.

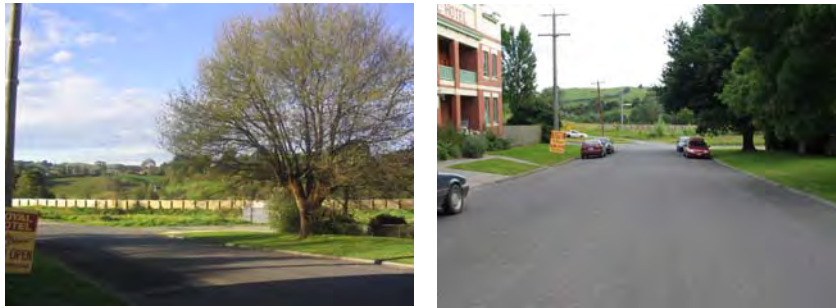
#### **6.4.17 Nissen Hut (reference 29 on plan)**



The Nissen Hut currently occupied by a second hand machinery business, occupies a high profile location at the eastern entry to the town and is visible from the South Gippsland Highway and located opposite the community park. The architectural features of the Nissen Hut create interest and similar buildings have been successfully used elsewhere as antique, “bric a brac” stores or casual cafes. The pursuit of such activities for this site would be advantageous and it could act as a major “signpost to the town”



#### 6.4.18 Visual Feature or activity point at the northern end of Smith Street (ref 30 on plan)



The view to the north along Smith Street, prior to the construction of the by-pass, was of the open rolling green hills of South Gippsland. With the establishment of the by-pass the noise wall abruptly terminates the view. Whilst it is

acknowledged that the newly planted landscape treatments associated with the by-pass will obstruct the view of the noise wall, it is considered that the northern end of Smith Street deserves more recognition through the construction of a visual feature or facility that will attract interest and create an attractive feature at this point. Possibilities identified to date include:

- A community garden or orchard.
- Redesign of the Smith Street / Speight Street intersection to improve access and rationalise amount of area provided for vehicular traffic.
- Development of landscape that “frames” the views to the rolling hills to the north.
- A climbable lookout tower, a physical feature in this location would be visible from the by-pass and hence could be used as a visual marker to reinforce how close the town centre of Loch actually is to the by-pass, providing an opportunity for people to climb the tower and gain a view of the surrounding area,
- The establishment of the skate park and youth meeting facility at this location, (rather than at the eastern entry point to the town as currently proposed).
- A major sculpture or piece of urban art reflecting a component of Loch’s culture or history.
- A Community Christmas tree could be established as a focus for Christmas celebrations in the town.
- An expansion area for the Market to bring is visually and physically closer to the Town Centre.
- A focal point for town festivals and community events.
- The establishment of an activity point along the Loch Lap, for example an exercise point, a mountain bike “circuit” or an additional element of childrens play equipment (eg a maze)

#### 6.4.19 Advance promotional signage (reference 31 on plan)

As a by passed town, Loch requires appropriate signage on the highway up to 2km either side of the town. This signage should be developed in a fashion that conveys the identity and character of Loch, rather than simply a standard Vicroads information sign. The signs need to be professionally designed to ensure that they convey the right message in the simplest fashion, are not cluttered, confused and are professionally presented.

In addition to the “advance promotional signage” the existing Vicroads signage should be reviewed to:

-indicated exactly how close Loch is to the by-pass (ie 200m not 10km as could be interpreted from the existing signage).

-simplified in terms of the number of features identified. These signs have to be interpreted at 100kmh, there is only so much information that can be taken in by drivers at that speed. Too many words or messages create confusion.



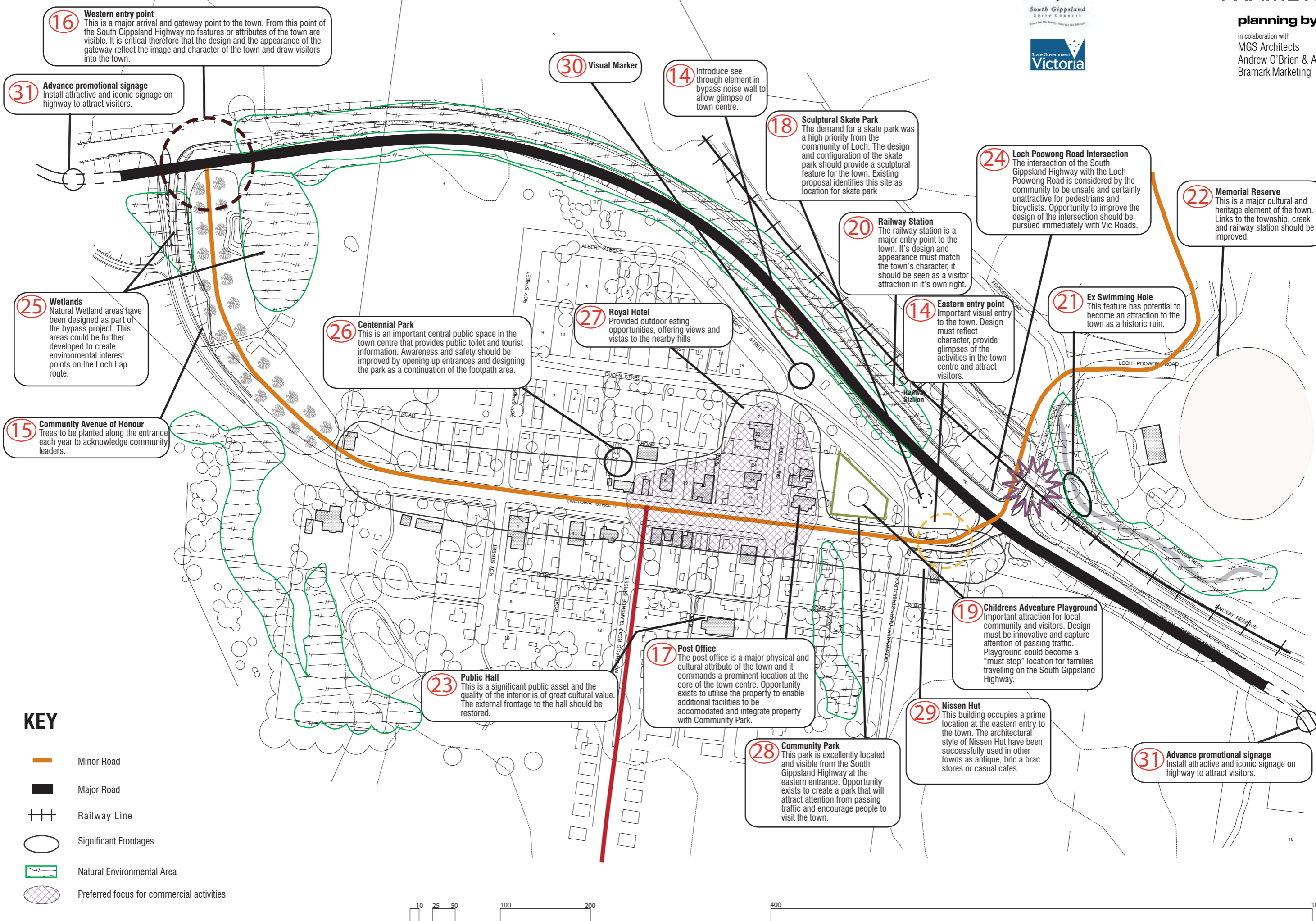
# urban design framework



# LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

planning by design

in collaboration with  
MGS Architects  
Andrew O'Brien & Associates  
Bramark Marketing



**16 Western entry point**  
This is a major arrival and gateway point to the town. From this point of the South Gippsland Highway no features or attributes of the town are visible. It is critical therefore that the design and the appearance of the gateway reflect the image and character of the town and draw visitors into the town.

**31 Advance promotional signage**  
Install attractive and iconic signage on highway to attract visitors.

**30 Visual Marker**

**14** Introduce see through element in bypass noise wall to allow glimpse of town centre.

**18 Sculptural Skate Park**  
The demand for a skate park was a high priority from the community of Loch. The design and configuration of the skate park should provide a sculptural feature for the town. Existing proposal identifies this site as location for skate park

**20 Railway Station**  
The railway station is a major entry point to the town. It's design and appearance must match the town's character, it should be seen as a visitor attraction in it's own right.

**24 Loch Poowong Road Intersection**  
The intersection of the South Gippsland Highway with the Loch Poowong Road is considered by the community to be unsafe and certainly unattractive for pedestrians and bicyclists. Opportunity to improve the design of the intersection should be pursued immediately with Vic Roads.

**22 Memorial Reserve**  
This is a major cultural and heritage element of the town. Links to the township, creek and railway station should be improved.

**25 Wetlands**  
Natural Wetland areas have been designed as part of the bypass project. This areas could be further developed to create environmental interest points on the Loch Lap route.

**26 Centennial Park**  
This is an important central public space in the town centre that provides public toilet and tourist information. Awareness and safety should be improved by opening up entrances and designing the park as a continuation of the footpath area.

**27 Royal Hotel**  
Provided outdoor eating opportunities, offering views and vistas to the nearby hills

**14 Eastern entry point**  
Important visual entry to the town. Design must reflect character, provide glimpses of the activities in the town centre and attract visitors.

**21 Ex Swimming Hole**  
This feature has potential to become an attraction to the town as a historic ruin.

**15 Community Avenue of Honour**  
Trees to be planted along the entrance each year to acknowledge community leaders.

**23 Public Hall**  
This is a significant public asset and the quality of the interior is of great cultural value. The external frontage to the hall should be restored.

**17 Post Office**  
The post office is a major physical and cultural attribute of the town and it commands a prominent location at the core of the town centre. Opportunity exists to utilise the property to enable additional facilities to be accommodated and integrate property with Community Park.

**19 Childrens Adventure Playground**  
Important attraction for local community and visitors. Design must be innovative and capture attention of passing traffic. Playground could become a "must stop" location for families travelling on the South Gippsland Highway.

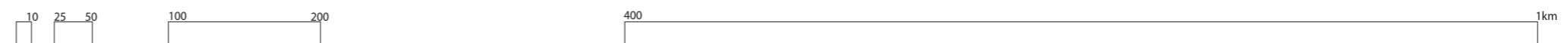
**29 Nissen Hut**  
This building occupies a prime location at the eastern entry to the town. The architectural style of Nissen Hut have been successfully used in other towns as antique, bric a brac stores or casual cafes.

**31 Advance promotional signage**  
Install attractive and iconic signage on highway to attract visitors.

**28 Community Park**  
This park is excellently located and visible from the South Gippsland Highway at the eastern entrance. Opportunity exists to create a park that will attract attention from passing traffic and encourage people to visit the town.

**KEY**

- Minor Road
- Major Road
- Railway Line
- Significant Frontages
- Natural Environmental Area
- Preferred focus for commercial activities



## 6.5 Precinct plans

In order to illustrate how a range of initiatives from the Urban Design Framework may appear a series of five precinct plans have been prepared.

- 6.5.1 Precinct Plan A: Western Entry to the township**
- 6.5.2 Precinct Plan B: Loch Post Office and environs**
- 6.5.3 Precinct Plan C: Smith Street and environs**
- 6.5.4 Precinct Plan D: Centennial Park**
- 6.5.5 Precinct Plan E: Victoria Street and Town Centre**

These plans are shown on the next pages.

It is important to note when considering these illustrations that:

- The concepts have been prepared to illustrate how a variety of the initiatives identified in the Urban Design Framework could be pursued. Many of the initiatives illustrated could occur with similar success at a variety of locations in the town.
- They are conceptual in form and are not designed to illustrate the only way that the areas could be developed or configured.
- They are designed to indicate the suggested broad approach to the design and development of specific areas and not to illustrate specific material, colours, designs, layouts or the locations of specific elements.
- Where illustrations include reference to private properties, this should not be implied to indicate the support of the property owners or the Council towards the style of development identified.
- Further detailed design and documentation will be required prior to any of the initiatives, either on public or private land could be pursued.
- The designs are illustrative only and should not be relied on for the production of detailed plans.



## precinct plan "A" western entry



The Urban Design Framework proposes that Victoria Street, leading from the western entry point (and possibly the eastern entrance) should be developed over time as a "community avenue of honour" with trees planted each year to recognise people that have assisted the Loch community



Western entry viewed from South Gippsland Hwy looking south.

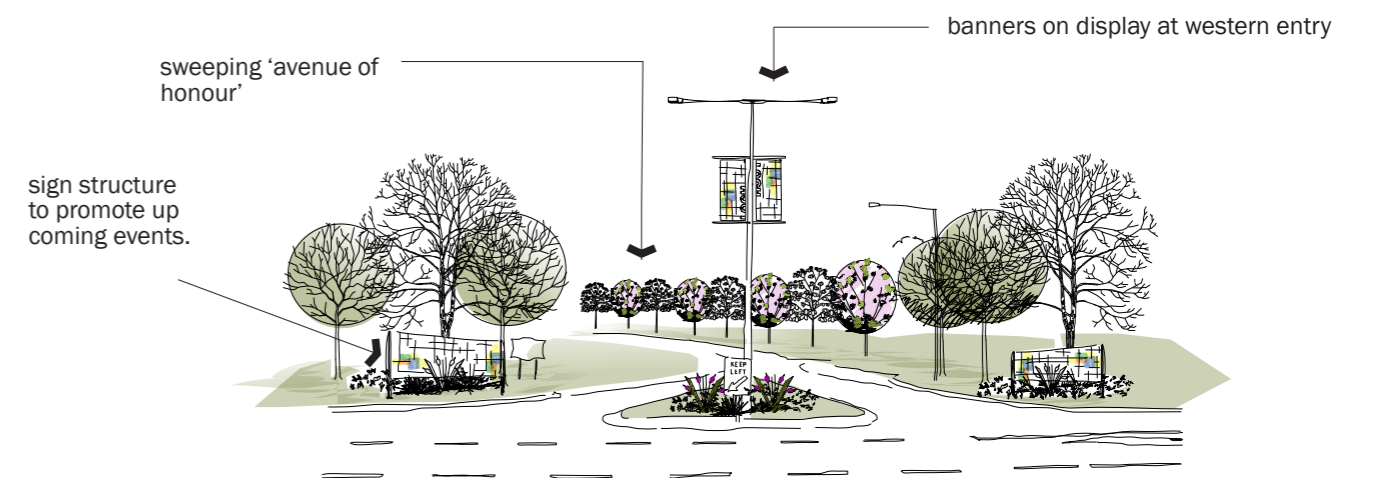


Western entry looking from the south.

Over time this avenue would provide a very attractive entrance into the town. Formal, exotic, deciduous trees should be used to reinforce the heritage of the town and compliment the existing street trees in Victoria Street.

### Western entry point

This is a major arrival and gateway point to the town. From this point of the South Gippsland Highway no features or attributes of the town are visible. It is critical therefore that the design and appearance of the gateway reflect the image and character of the town and draw visitors into the town via Victoria Street through an avenue. If the town is to be promoted as a garden village, then a garden image should be created at this point.

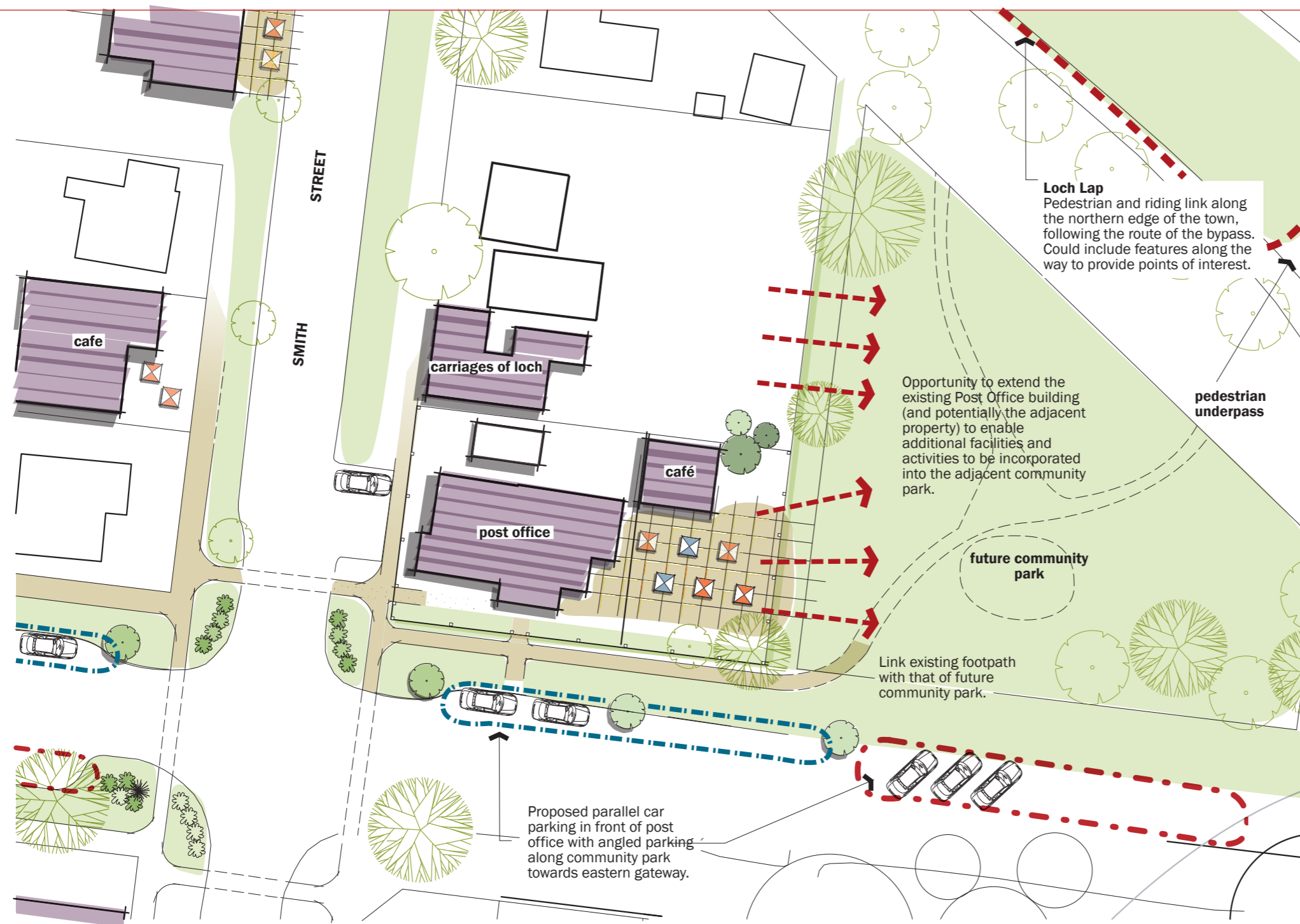


## LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

planning by design

in collaboration with  
MGS Architects  
Andrew O'Brien & Associates  
Bramark Marketing

# precinct plan "B" loch post office



**Loch Lap**  
Pedestrian and riding link along the northern edge of the town, following the route of the bypass. Could include features along the way to provide points of interest.

Opportunity to extend the existing Post Office building (and potentially the adjacent property) to enable additional facilities and activities to be incorporated into the adjacent community park.

Link existing footpath with that of future community park.

Proposed parallel car parking in front of post office with angled parking along community park towards eastern gateway.

pedestrian underpass

future community park

The existing Post Office is a major physical and cultural attribute of the town and it commands a prominent location in the town centre. The rear of the property is currently occupied by a small telephone exchange that is understood to have a limited operational lifespan. The property also adjoins the new Community Park. Opportunity exists to utilise the existing Post Office building (and potentially extending in a sympathetic manner,) to enable additional facilities and activities to be incorporated into the building. This has very successfully been achieved at the Koonwarra Store, further along the South Gippsland Highway. The location, visibility and accessibility of the Post Office building to the main street, town centre and the community park would make it an excellent location for example a family-style café, restaurant, in addition to its current role, overlooking the Community Park.



- potential family cafe or other outdoor activity
- future community park with children's playground
- outdoor eating/seating facing the community park
- extension of kerb to accommodate proposed parking provisions along Victoria Street

» conceptual sketch of post office precinct showing possible outdoor activity.

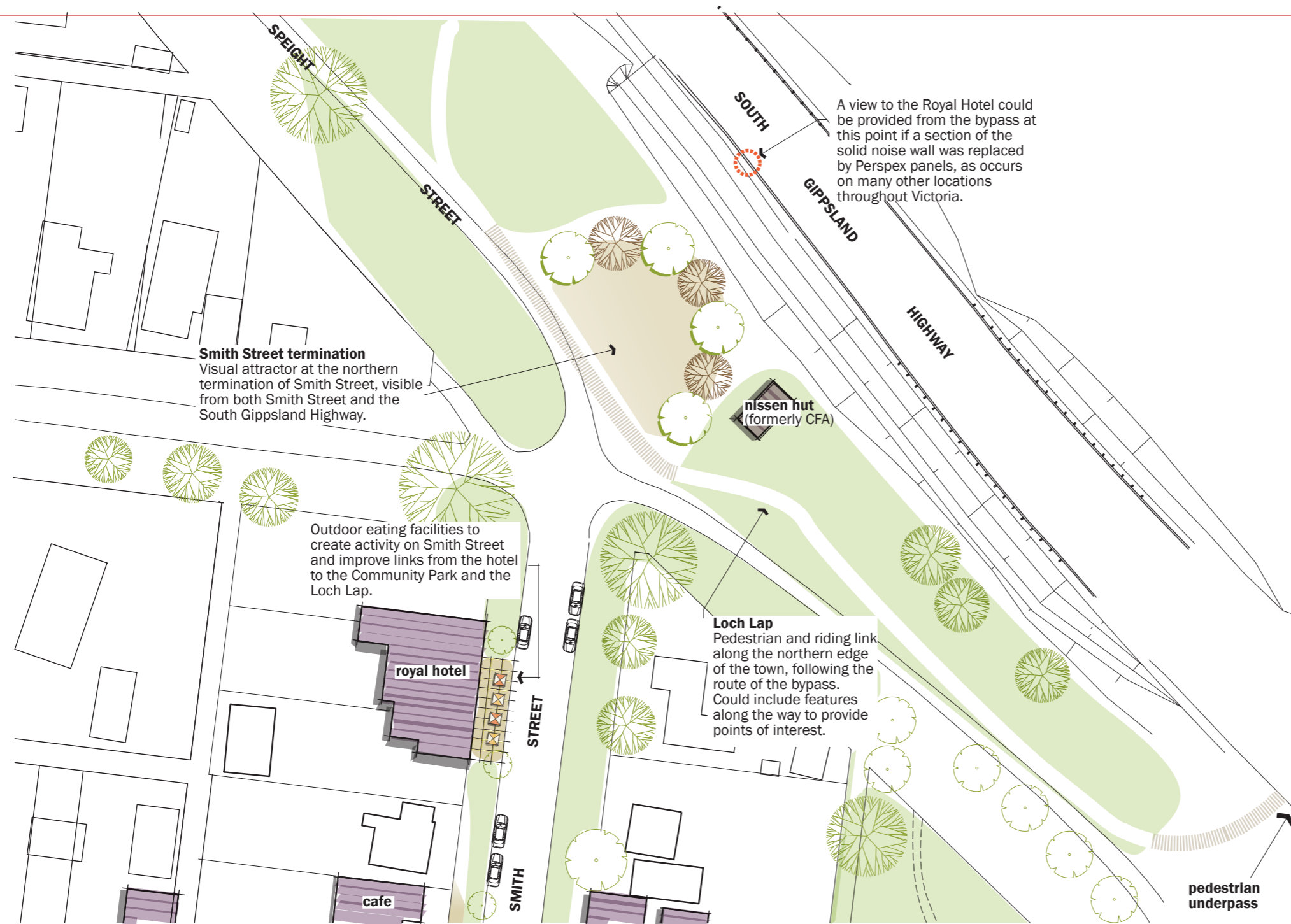


## LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

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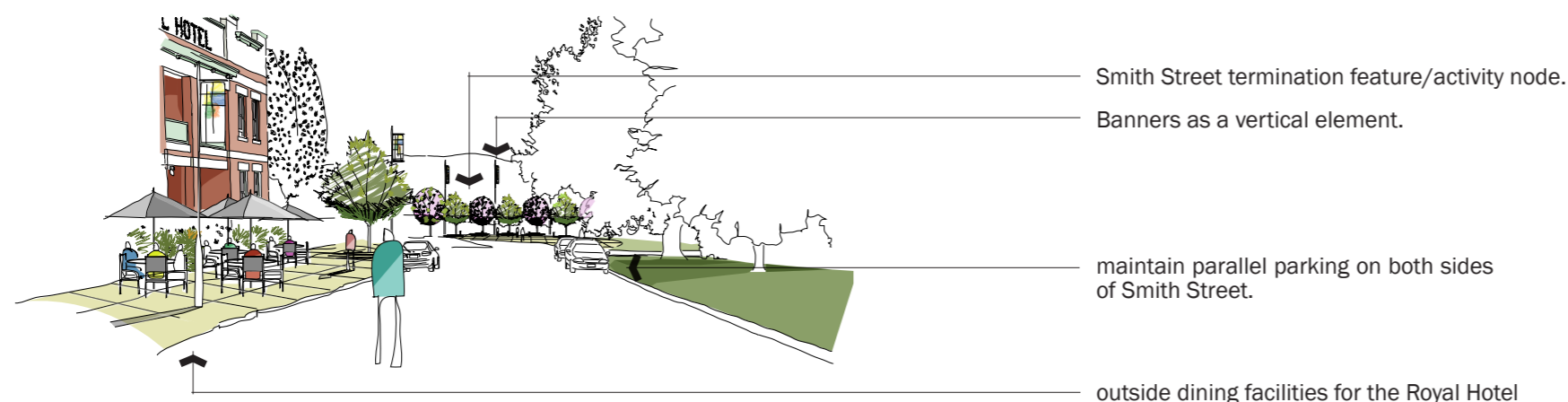
## precinct plan "C" smith street



The Royal Hotel is a significant architectural and cultural feature of the town, it is however, visually somewhat remote from the town centre. This could be addressed by providing outdoor eating facilities outside of the Hotel to create activity on Smith Street and improving linkages from the hotel to the Community Park and Loch Lap. Historic images of the hotel and environs could be incorporated into the streetscape.

Opportunity appears to exist to expand the business role of the Hotel, extend business hours and the range of services provided to the local community and visitors.

A glimpse of the façade of the Royal Hotel can be seen from the bypass. This indicates how close the Loch township is to the bypass. This view to the Royal Hotel could be enhanced if a section of the solid noise wall was replaced by Perspex panels, as occurs on many other locations throughout Victoria.



» conceptual sketch of view down Smith Street towards bypass.

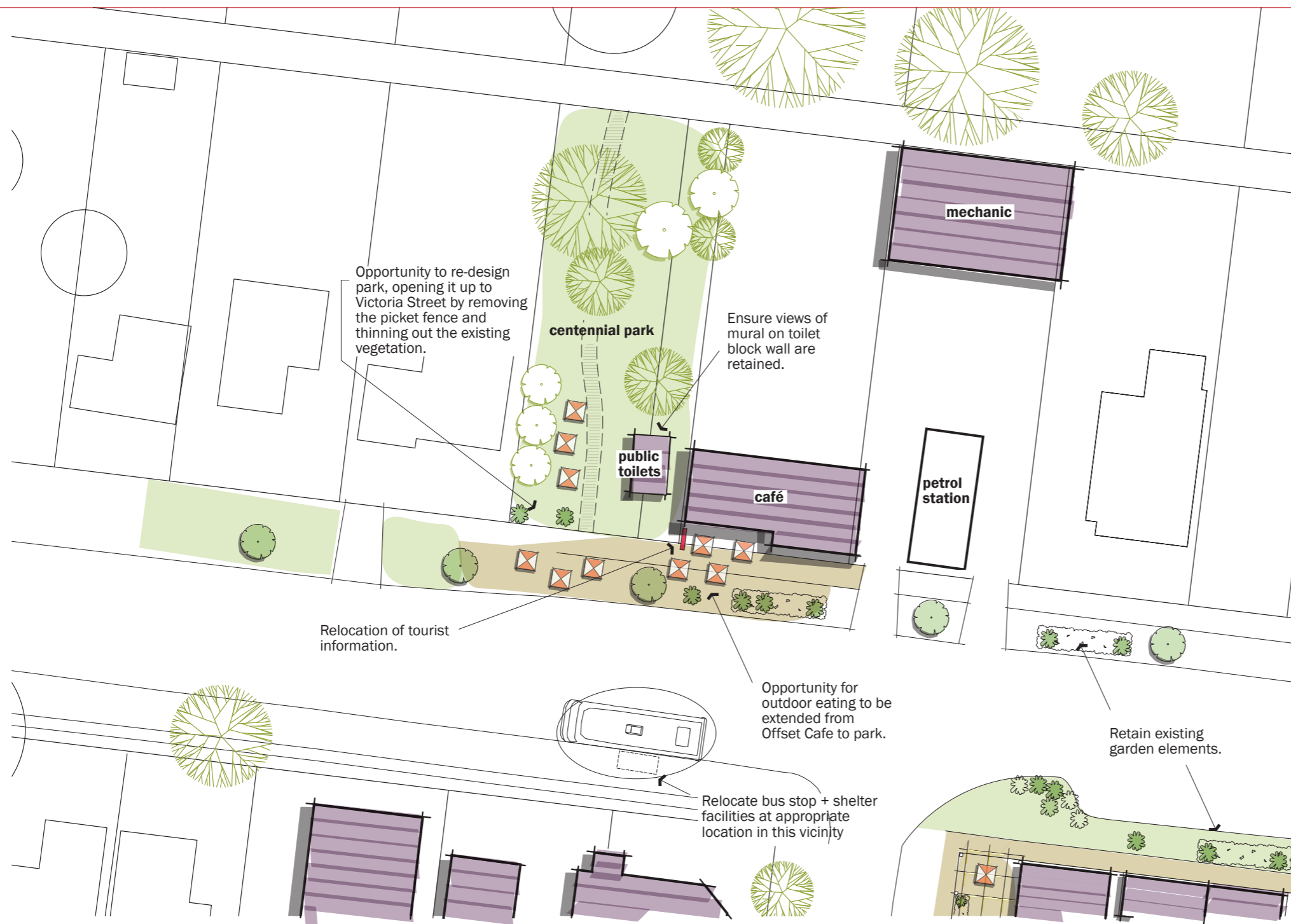


## LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

**planning by design**

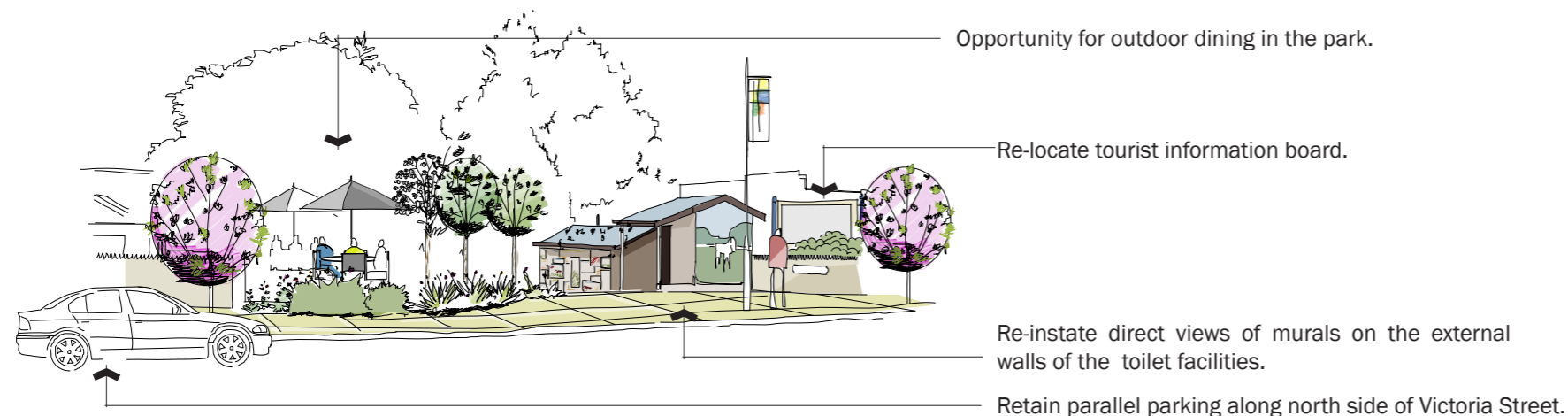
in collaboration with  
MGS Architects  
Andrew O'Brien & Associates  
Bramark Marketing

# precinct plan "D" centennial park



Centennial Park is an important central public space in the town centre that provides public toilet and tourist information. At the present time it is isolated and hidden from the road and provides poor surveillance of the park and toilets. Opportunity exists to redesign the park and open it up to Victoria Street by removing the picket fence and thinning out the existing vegetation.

As the Community Park is established as a major attraction it is essential that an attractive and easy route is established leading people from the Community Park to Centennial Park, through the town centre and hence encouraging patronage of the businesses.



» conceptual sketch of Centennial Park.



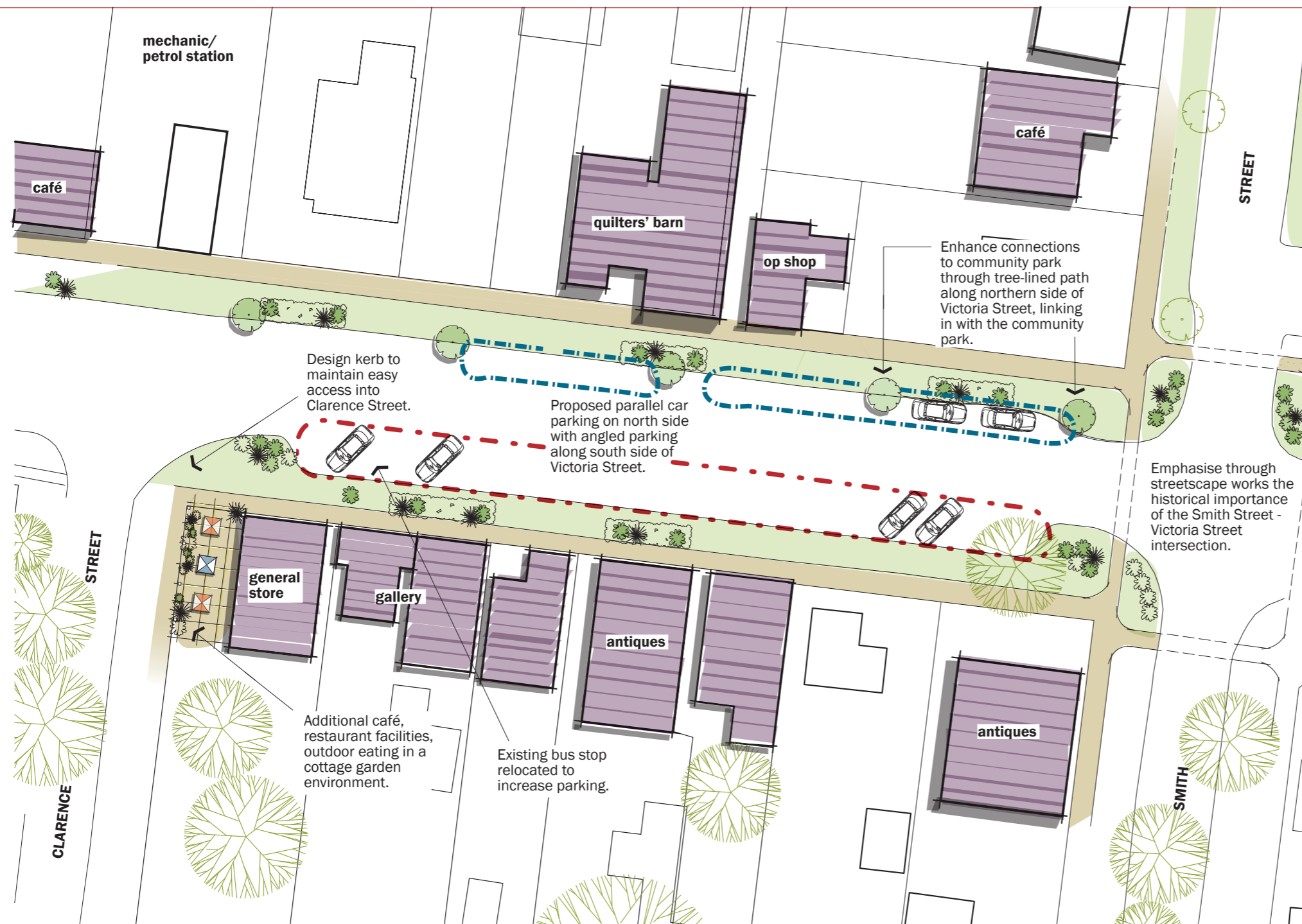
## LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

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# precinct plan "E" town centre



The town centre of Loch has been defined as Victoria Street between Smith and Clarence Street and Smith Street north of Victoria Street. All business and community activities should be encouraged to consolidate in this area. Residential activities, at ground floor level frontages, should be discouraged. It is this area where priority for streetscape and physical improvements should be focused.



» view down Victoria Street illustrating possible streetscape changes.



## LOCH.URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

planning by design

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Bramark Marketing

## 7. Management and Implementation of the Framework.

### 7.1 Loch Urban Design Framework Implementation Plan.

#### 7.1.1 Aspects of implementation.

The most important component of the UDF is its implementation. Irrespective of how sound the overall strategy, if its implementation process is not well lead and managed and adequately funded it will not be regarded as an effective project.

Implementation of the UDF will take many forms, cover many issues and involve long term commitment by a broad range of private, community and government agencies.

Specific aspects of the implementation process will involve:

- **Physical works.**  
The UDF identifies many opportunities for the physical development of the town. All physical works need to be pursued in a logical and coordinated fashion. Some remedial type works could be commenced immediately while others may require further detailed assessment and could take 10-15 years to achieve.
- **Advocacy and Leadership.**  
The UDF will only succeed if it is passionately lead and effectively managed. The implementation of the plan will require significant funding and resource allocation, all of which needs to be lobbied and advocated for. The complex and diverse issues will need to be effectively managed in a coordinated fashion that makes the most effective use of limited human and financial resources. The expectations on the UDF need to be managed and realistic, there is not point in rasing false hope or expectations.
- **Partnerships.**  
Very few of the initiatives identified in the UDF will be able to be implemented by one party operating in isolation from other stakeholders. Partnerships will need to be forged and maintained and the specific objectives of each party understood in order to create mutual benefit or "win-win" situations.
- **Community development.**  
The development and nurturing of the community of Loch and the maintenance of the essential character and culture of the town throughout the implementation process is of paramount importance. Community development initiatives should receive equal billing to the physical and economic development aspects of the project.
- **Establishing the appropriate Planning Scheme directions and provisions.**  
The UDF contains a variety of policies, objectives and actions that will need to be reflected in and supported by the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. As part of the UDF implementation plan, drafts of specific planning scheme provisions and an overall discussion of how the planning scheme can best be used to facilitate and encourage appropriate development and activity in the township.



- Detailed planning and analysis.  
In terms of facilitating the future design and development of Loch, the development of the UDF is merely the starting point. Further detailed assessment and detailed design exercises will be required prior to many of the initiatives being pursued. The UDF does however provide a strong and focused foundation upon which to pursue the detail and will prevent the need for each project to go “back to basics” in regard to the overall aspirations, directions and principles.
- Communications.  
Effective and inclusive communications relating to the implementation of the UDF is a critical component. Regular information should be provided to the community, council and state government agencies on the status of the project to ensure that it is kept in the forefront and to ensure that all parties are aware of the status of the various initiatives.
- Business development and investment community.  
The involvement and engagement with the existing business operators and property owners in the “town centre” is essential. It is this group that will ultimately determine the success of a raft of UDF initiatives that look at the future economic development and tourism development of the town. Existing businesses need to be nurtured and appropriate new business activities embraced and facilitated.

### 7.1.2 Key Stakeholders.

Who are the stakeholders in the implementation of the UDF and the future desirable development of Loch?

All these groups and individuals will need a role in the implementation of this framework.

<p>Loch community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loch residential community</li> <li>▪ Loch business community</li> <li>▪ Memorial Reserve Committee</li> <li>▪ Landcare group</li> <li>▪ Historical committee</li> <li>▪ Loch Primary School</li> <li>▪ Loch Police, CFA, SES etc.</li> <li>▪ Youth groups</li> </ul>	<p>South Gippsland Shire Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic planning</li> <li>▪ Statutory planning</li> <li>▪ Environment</li> <li>▪ Social and community planning</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure and Engineering</li> <li>▪ Economic Development and Tourism</li> <li>▪ Corporate planning</li> <li>▪ The Councillors.</li> </ul>
<p>Private Infrastructure Businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Telstra</li> <li>▪ Power company</li> </ul>	<p>Local and Regional Associations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tourism</li> <li>▪ Business</li> <li>▪ Rotary / Lions / Apex</li> </ul>
<p>State Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ VicRoads</li> <li>▪ Department of Sustainability and Environment</li> <li>▪ Drainage Authority</li> <li>▪ Department of Regional Development</li> <li>▪ Department of Infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Tourism Victoria</li> <li>▪ Victorian Communities</li> </ul>	<p>Property Owners, Investors, developers and financiers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Banks</li> <li>▪ Real Estate</li> <li>▪ Property managers</li> <li>▪ Accountants</li> </ul>

### **7.1.3 Leading and managing the implementation program.**

The implementation of the UDF needs to be lead and managed by a high profile committee comprising representation from all key stakeholder groups:

It is recommended that an Implementation group be formed immediately with the following composition:

- Loch Community Development Committee representatives (2)
- Loch Business representatives (1)
- Youth representative from the Loch community. (1)
- Shire of South Gippsland Councillor (1)
- Shire of South Gippsland Strategic Planner (1)
- Shire Economic Development / tourism (1)
- Shire Infrastructure/ Engineering (1)
- State Government (1)

The group should meet on a two monthly cycle with a senior council officer identified as the "executive officer", and "implementation project manager."

The key aims of this group should be to:

- Ensure that the UDF project remains in the forefront with all the stakeholders.
- Provide regular information updates on the progress of the project.
- Ensure that something happens, related to the project at least every six months
- Ensure that the specific components of the project are promoted for inclusion in council and State government budgets.
- Ensure that any opportunity to attract outside funds and resource commitment is pursued.
- Ensure that local parliamentary members are aware of the project and specific initiatives that require support.
- To receive regular updates on the progress of specific initiatives related to the project.
- Act as the steering committee, or contribute members to steering committees of the various projects that will be undertaken because of the UDF.

## 7.2 Implementation Plan.

### Legend:

**Priority:** 1 = highest priority, action to commence as soon as possible.

“Shaded project boxes” indicate high priority projects where immediate action should be pursued.

2 = medium priority, action to commence in year 2 or 3 of the project.

3 = low priority, action to commence in year 3 or beyond.

**Lead Agency:** Indicates the specific agency or group that will need to take responsibility for the action.

**Funding opportunities** indicates where opportunities may exist for funding other than Council.

### Access and movement

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
A1	Poowong / Loch intersection	Lobby Vicroads, to review the configuration of the intersection to improve sight lines and to make intersection more legible and responsive to its rural location.	1	VicRoads	State Government Regional Road funding.
A2	Speed limits in Town Centre	Reduce the speed limit through the town to 50kph.	1	Shire	
A3	Pedestrian underpass	Improve the appearance and attractiveness of the pedestrian underpass by introducing urban art and improving the lighting.	1	Loch Com	Arts Victoria Community Development fund. Council community grants.
A4	School Track	Create a shared pedestrian / bicycle track along the northern edge of the Victoria Street road reserve between Clarence Street and the school. Include elements of school history, memorabilia and achievement and characters in the paving material and on signage and commemorative plaques.	2	Shire	Council capital works. State Government Community Development fund. Bicycle Victoria.
A5	Community Park Centennial Park Track	Create an attractive and inviting pedestrian link along the northern side of Victoria Street. Utilise historic photos, memorabilia, and information	2	Shire	Council capital works. State Government Community

		plaques to raise awareness of the character and history of Loch.			Development fund.
A6	Loch Lap Stage 1	Stage 1: Community Park to Roy Street. Prepare a detailed plan to establish optimal route and configuration of a shared pedestrian and bicycle track adjacent to the By-pass.	2	Shire	Council DSE Urban Design program.
A6	Allsop Creek Track	Prepare a plan to identify the optimal route and configuration for a shared pedestrian / bicycle track along the Allsop Creek linking the Loch to Hilda Falls.	2	Shire	Council. DSE Natural resources. BioLink.
A7	Memorial Rec Track	Create a shared pedestrian /bicycle track linking the community park to Allsop Creek via the by-pass pedestrian underpass, the railway underpass of Loch /Poowong Road, and the suspension bridge.	2	Shire	Council capital works. State Government Community Development fund.
A8	Northern Track	Create a pedestrian track along Roy Street reservation linking Victoria Street to the Loch Lap.	3	Shire / Private developers	Council DCP
A9	Loch Lap Stage 2.	Stage 2: Roy Street to eastern entrance. Prepare a detailed plan to establish optimal route and configuration of a shared pedestrian and bicycle track adjacent to the by-pass.	3	Shire	Council capital works. State Government Community Development fund. Bicycle Victoria.
A10	Southern Track	Ensure that future planning and development of the areas to the south of the township can incorporate a shared pedestrian /bicycle path.	3	Shire / Private developers	Council DCP
A11	Railway station	Improve the design and appearance of the railway station. Pursue the initiative of establishing a multifunctional community building to act as the railway station and a community facility.	3	VicTrack / Shire	Council capital works. State Government Community Development fund. VicRail. VicTrack.

## Business development

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
B1	Business development	Provide invitation to all existing business operators to meet with Shire representatives individually to discuss their ideas for the future development of their business. Identify specific opportunities for the Shire to assist in the development of the business, facilitate the idea, clear the way, identify funding support, form investment partnerships,	1	Shire / Loch Community / State Gov	Council Economic Development. State DIIRD. Gippsland ACC.
B2	Business Association.	Re establish a business association for the town. This could occur as a sub committee of the LCDA or as a separate body, Under either arrangement, the Business Association should pursue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Combined marketing of business activities.</li> <li>▪ Mutual support of businesses.</li> <li>▪ Consistent business hours.</li> <li>▪ Business support of community activities, school, sporting events etc.</li> <li>▪ Attracting additional complimentary businesses.</li> <li>▪ The specific lobbying of Council and State government on business issues.</li> </ul>	1	Shire / Loch com	Council.
B3	Development facilitation	Review Council planning and development requirements for business activity in the Town Centre to ensure that they provide encouragement for appropriate development and activity. Specifically, for business activities that are sought for the township, consider	1	Shire	Council Economic Development. State DIIRD. Gippsland ACC.

		<p>exercising discretion where appropriate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce the requirement for car parking.</li> <li>▪ Reduce fees and charges for development applications.</li> <li>▪ Reduce charges for outdoor displays or eating.</li> <li>▪ Subsidise costs of compliance with environmental regulations.</li> </ul>			
B4	Business networking and support	Facilitate regular business training and professional development sessions for business operators, for example: the art of running tourism related businesses, making \$ from tourists, customer service, business presentation, opportunities for business diversification.	2	Shire / Loch Com	Council Economic Development. State DIIRD. Gippsland ACC.

## Community development

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
C1	Skate park	Pursue the development of the skate park in the location adjacent to Community park. Ensure that the design does not interrupt or detract from the views towards the community park and the township from the Highway.	1	Loch Com	State Community Development Fund.
C2	Community Avenue of Honour	Engage professional assistance to identify appropriate tree species, identify specific locations for trees. Establish a process through which to determine appropriate community members to be recognised. Establish an annual Community award program which would culminate in the annual planting.	1	Shire / Loch Com	Council DSE Urban Design program.
C3	Youth facility	Pursue, in collaboration with the youth community, the construction of a shelter, meeting facility for the youth of Loch in the vicinity of the community park and skate park.	3	Shire / Loch Com	Council capital works. Community Development program.

## Landscape / Streetscapes

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
L1	Car parking	Change line marking on Victoria Street to enable the introduction of the angle parking between Smith and Clarence Streets.	1	Shire	Council
L2	Streetscape Design Principles	Prepare guidelines to identify appropriate materials, planting, structures, styles and designs for streetscape and street furniture throughout the township.	1	Shire	Council. DSE Urban design programs
L3	Detailed streetscape design preparation. for:	Western Entrance priority 1 Centennial Park priority 2 Town Centre priority 3 Smith Street priority 4	2	Shire	Council DSE Urban Design programs
L4	By Pass noise wall	Pursue with Vicroads opportunities to have transparent sections placed in noise wall to improve visibility of the Town Centre from the by pass.	2	VicRoads	Vic Roads

## Infrastructure Environment

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
I1	Sewerage	Lobby Council and the State Government to have an appropriate sewerage system provided for the township.	1	Shire	State Government Infrastructure program.
I2	Railway station / services	Advocate for the return of passenger rail services to Loch.	1	Shire	N/A
I3	Pedestrian underpass	Pursue with VicTrack and DOI the potential to allocate space within the existing railway underpass of Loch Poowong Road, to provide for pedestrian access.	1	Shire	N/A
I4	Telstra exchange	Assess with Telstra the future for the facility and the potential for redevelopment of the site in conjunction with adjacent properties.	1	Shire	N/A
I5	Future development capacity	Undertake detailed analysis of the areas identified in the UDF as having potential for future urban development to establish potential, capacity and identify development constraints and infrastructure issues.	2	Shire	DSE Urban planning programs.
I6	Swimming hole	Clean out the creek and remove debris in the vicinity of the ex swimming hole to improve its attractiveness and visibility from the suspension bridge. Improve pedestrian access along the creek in the vicinity of the swimming hole.	2	Shire	Council DSE Natural resources Tourism Victoria.
I7	Memorial Reserve	Maintain and enhance the facilities provided on the reserve for camping.	2	Loch Com	Council Tourism Victoria
I8	Pedestrian bridge	Replace the dilapidated pedestrian footbridge on	3	Shire	Council capital works.



		the south side of Victoria Street, east of Smith Street.			
	Public Hall	Restore the frontage of the building and associated works	3	Loch Com	Council Heritage Victoria.

### Signage image and identity

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
S1	Establish Loch Brand	Engage graphic design expertise to assist the Community develop an image that reflects the UDF vision for the town to a stage where signs can be prepared and logo used on all marketing and communication materials.	1	Loch Com / Shire	Council Tourism Victoria
S2	Signs on highway	Work with VicRoads to enhance or replace the Loch signage on the highway, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Include a reference to distance from the by-pass to the town centre in the route sign.</li> <li>▪ Amend the list of key features on information town.</li> <li>▪ Amend the name of the town on the information sign.</li> <li>▪ Provide additional early warning sign on the approaches to the town.</li> </ul>	1	Shire	Council Vicroads Tourism Victoria.
S3	Awareness of Loch on regional road network	Work with Vicroads to ensure that Loch is appropriately recognised on distance indicator signs on all major roads in the region.	1	Shire	Council
S4	Review existing signage in the town.	Undertake an audit of existing informational and directional signage in the township, remove damaged or redundant signs, reduce clutter and identify where wayfinding signage should be installed.	1	Loch Com	Council

S5	Internal wayfinding	Develop and install an internal way finding signage system throughout the township using the Loch brand, iconography and historic images.	2	Shire	Council
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### Planning and development

Ref	Project	Aspect/ Detail	Priority	Lead Agency	Funding opportunities
P1	Initial Planning Scheme Amendment	Prepare a planning scheme amendment based on the draft provisions provided in the UDF, to: 1. Amend MSS to reflect the Loch UDF. 2. Introduce additional clause in the MSS for Loch including the structure plan diagram and movement plan. (see proposed outline later in the document) 3. Recognise the Loch UDF reference document to the Planning Scheme.	1	Shire	Council
P2	Subsequent amendment	Following the completion of the detailed analysis of the potential growth areas the planning scheme should be amended to introduce the township zone over some or all of the areas, in line with the recommendations of such analysis. DDO's could also be considered at that stage.	2	Shire	Council

### **7.3 Priority Projects.**

To engender long term commitment towards the implementation of the UDF it is essential that action is seen to occur in the immediate and short term. The UDF process for Loch generated significant interest and involvement from the local community. If this interest is to be maintained and the community engaged throughout the implementation process, the community need to see action being pursued and some of the issues they identified being tackled within 3 months of the completion of the project.

For this reason a number of initiatives have been identified for immediate pursuit. To ensure that no one agency is overwhelmed, short term priority initiatives have been identified to be lead by each stakeholder group:

#### **Council / State Government**

- Establish the implementation group.
- Pursuit of the sewerage program
- Prepare an "implementation opportunity" brochure on Loch and its future opportunities for business, investment and development for broad distribution.

#### **VicRoads / Council.**

- Improve information and directional signage on the approaches to Loch.
- Address the safety of the Loch / Poowong Road intersection.

#### **Loch Community / Council**

- Determine and refine the image and identity.
- Re establish business group
- Encourage youth involvement in the project.

#### **State Government**

- Fund the detail design and construction of the Western Entry treatment.

#### **Private Sector / Council.**

- Support and revitalisation of existing business activities in Loch.

## APPENDIX 1: Planning Scheme Provisions to support the Loch UDF.

The following recommendations are made to form part of an amendment to the South Gippsland Planning Scheme to provide statutory recognition and support for the Loch Urban Design Framework. Preliminary discussions have been held between the Shire of South Gippsland and DSE regarding these proposals. Additionally they have been referred to Statutory Planning Consultant Keaney Planning and Research for review.

### **Recommended amendments to current South Gippsland MSS,**

21.01-2. Add specific reference to the "small towns" of South Gippsland noting that they are small thriving rural townships that provide a quality urban lifestyle in a rural environment.

21.02-4. add a dot point relating to small towns:

- The need to recognise that the network of small towns throughout South Gippsland provide a valid alternative to the larger settlements.

21.03-2. add an additional dot point under Settlement:

- Recognise the importance of the network of small rural towns throughout South Gippsland and the important contribution they make to the overall character of, and lifestyle opportunities, in the Shire.

21.03-Framework plan. Add reference to Loch and all other small towns mention in the MSS on the plan.

21.04-3. Add reference to small towns in Settlement Overview.

The Shire also contains a network of vibrant small rural townships which provide a quality "village" lifestyle for their communities and create an additional tourism attraction for the Shire.

21.04-3. Add additional elements:

*(suggest slight restructure of the planning scheme documents at this point)*

Element 3- major towns (insert current pages 15-22)

Element 4- small towns (insert current pages 23-28)

Insert Loch provisions (plus amended A4 b/w UDF plan) following 21.04-9 Venus Bay, as outlined below. Suggest this format be used for other small towns as structure plans or design frameworks are established.

### **21.04-X Loch**

#### **Overview**

The township of Loch enjoys an idyllic rural location nestled in the rolling green hills and rich agricultural area of South Gippsland. Loch is now the first "real country town" along the South Gippsland Highway, and is located 105 km south east of Melbourne. Its character and design of the built form provides a critical component of the overall image and identity of the township and underpins both its tourism role and village atmosphere.

At the time of the 2001 Census, the township had a residential population of 200. Opportunity has been identified in the Loch Urban Design Framework for the population of Loch to grow towards 600 people in the future. The community has indicated support

for this growth, provided that the essential ‘village’ character and easy accessibility for all residents to the town centre can be maintained.

### **Objectives**

- To establish Loch as a small thriving rural township.
- To retain Loch as a township that has a rich array of heritage architecture
- To promote a distinctive garden village character in Loch.
- To improve traffic management and car parking in the town centre.

### **Key Issues**

- The need for an effective sewerage system.
- The need to improve the design and appearance of township entrances
- The need to effectively link all features and facilities in the town by foot and bicycle.
- The need to ensure that all future development occurs in a fashion that will provide easy walking access by all people to all features and facilities.
- The need to recognise that Loch is part of a network of “small rural townships” with Nyora and Poowong and Bena in the western region of the Shire of South Gippsland, each of which has strengths and each of which is interdependent on the others

### **Strategies**

- Develop an overall vision for the future development of the township and identification of specific roles and functions.
- Improve the tourist services and facilities in the township.
- Improve community services and facilities in the township.
- Identify future residential development investigation areas, with capacity to enable the population to approach 600.
- Create an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways linking all features and facilities in and around the township.
- Provide long distance walking and cycling tracks linking Loch to Nyora, Hilda falls and other regional features.
- Identify design and development principles to ensure that future development will maintain the desired character and image.
- Identify the town centre as the preferred focus for all business community and tourist services and facilities.
- Retain the existing character, design and built form of the buildings and gardens along Victoria Street, recognising their contribution to the overall image of Loch.
- Strengthen the network and social, physical and economic linkages between Loch, Nyora, Bena and Poowong.

### **Implementation**

Use of the UDF in the exercising of discretion.

As an interim measure and pending the investigation of new zones and / or overlays, assess all planning applications in Loch in accordance with the vision, principles and objectives of the Loch Urban Design Framework 2005.

### **Further Strategic Work**

- Investigation of the areas identified for potential future urban development.
- Upon completion of the strategic investigation work implement a new zoning and overlay regime to implement the vision principles and objectives of the Loch Urban Design framework 2005.

### Other Actions

- Establishment of a brand for the township.
- Improved design of township entrances and informational and directional signage on approaches.
- Provision of an effective sewerage system for the township.
- Reduced speed limits through the town.
- Improved traffic safety at the Loch – Poowong Road intersection.
- Incorporation of urban art and sculpture into the streetscapes of the town centre.
- Identification of opportunities to support and nurture existing business in the town centre.

The planning scheme should identify the Loch Urban Design Framework 2005 as a reference document.

### Proposed framework plan for inclusion in planning scheme.

