

## 7 ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

### 7.1 PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT

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**Attachments:** *Nil*

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#### SUMMARY

This report discusses a second phase place-based community planning approach to follow on from the phase one pilot program that commenced in 2019 in Beveridge, Tooborac and Pyalong.

Council's place-based planning approach is founded in the principles of Asset Based Community Development which mobilises the community to come together, to draw on its strengths and to lead initiatives which have the potential to transform community life.

The report revisits the rationale for the selection of the three pilot place-based planning approach sites; it proposes five communities for the second-phase rollout – Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Reedy Creek, Tyaak and Clonbinane; and proposes the application of a place-based planning framework to capture and consolidate current and pipeline projects in Wallan ahead of a future immersive community planning process.

As with the pilot, the second phase presents an opportunity to deliver place-based outcomes both in small, rural communities and in a growth community setting.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** Council endorse the second phase place-based approach rollout in the communities of Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Reedy Creek, Tyaak, Clonbinane and Wallan.

#### BACKGROUND

In February 2019, Council endorsed the rollout of a place-based community planning approach in three pilot communities – Beveridge, Tooborac and Pyalong. Since that time, community plans have been developed for each of these communities capturing a range of social connection, township improvement and advocacy priorities.

The draft plans have been presented to Council with community priorities and implementation now under way. This includes projects captured in Council's draft capital works planning process.

In addition to the three designated pilot communities, Council has also been partnering on a number of other place-based approaches including the Seymour Revitalisation project and the integrated Kilmore project (a communications, engagement and internal project management framework that aligns a number of concurrent projects)

PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

**ISSUES AND DISCUSSION**

A key consideration in identifying the initial three pilot communities of Beveridge, Tooborac and Pyalong was ensuring there were some characteristics which would enable replication to other communities within the shire.

Recognised attributes included:

- Small, rural communities undergoing transition
- Growing communities undergoing transition
- An opportunity to activate community development

The proposed second-phase rollout communities are well suited to benefit from the learnings and replication opportunities identified during the pilot phase, while also building on the place-based approach emerging in Kilmore and Seymour.

In summary, it is recommended that the second phase rollout comprises an immersive engagement approach in Reedy Creek, Tyaak, Wandong, Heathcote Junction and Clonbinane with the anticipated outputs being:

- A place-based community plan for Reedy Creek and Tyaak
- Facilitation activity for the Clonbinane community and the Clonbinane Community Group, building on their successful bushfire recovery and emergency readiness initiatives and supporting their transition to a broader community development focus
- A community engagement process with the Wandong and Heathcote Junction communities to consolidate key priorities, building on the engagement and project delivery/implementation to date of the Wandong-Heathcote Junction Structure Plan.

It is proposed to include Wallan as the final stage-two rollout site, with an anticipated output modelled on the Kilmore approach referenced above, rather than an immersive community planning engagement and development process. This would achieve the mapping and capturing of key projects and a consolidated pipeline of planned activities ahead of considering a future place-based community planning initiative for Wallan.

The following table provides headline data for each of the proposed localities, drawn from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census data. Note, there is some minor variation in the information provided for smaller locality as in some instances a comparable dataset is not available.

**1) Wandong and Heathcote Junction**

Community Profile	<p><u>Wandong</u></p> <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,343 people in 2016</li> <li>• We have an Indigenous population of 11 people, or 0.8% of our population</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 488 dwellings</li> </ul>
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PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93.1% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 9.6% are rented, less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82.1% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> <li>• Only 5.5% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul> <p>Economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real Estate Services is the biggest industry by output</li> <li>• 36.2% of jobs are in Education and Training</li> <li>• Education and Training pays 44.9% of local wages</li> <li>• 25.5% of residents earn \$2,500 or more per week,, greater than the Victorian average of 20.2%</li> </ul> <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 478 FTE primary students</li> </ul> <p><u>Heathcote Junction</u></p> <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 838 people in 2016</li> <li>• An Indigenous population of 25 people, or 3% of our population</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 287 dwellings</li> <li>• 100% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 6.6% are rented, less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> <li>• Only 5% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul>
<p>Initial mapping</p>	<p>Although separate localities, the combined footprint of Wandong-Heathcote Junction supports a growing and physically connected community.</p>

PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<p>It is home to a significant commuter population, with social connections principally delivered through the kindergarten, primary school, sporting Clubs and special interest networks such as the Wandong History Group.</p> <p>A range of community visioning, infrastructure and amenity issues were canvassed during The Wandong-Heathcote Junction 3758 structure planning project and a Place Based community planning approach could aid ongoing implementation.</p> <p>The community enjoys strong but not always cohesive and connected community leadership, with a number of active, key groups reporting significant volunteer fatigue.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to enhance and broaden community participation, and ‘spread the load’ of volunteerism, via community planning.</p> <p>The project approach would need to be one of building on and supporting initiatives already underway; working to strengthen and refresh existing community groups and foster enhanced collaboration between the groups.</p> <p>Key life stages that have been identified for a particular focus given limited local service provision include youth and older community members.</p> <p>Finally, the community has been proactive in emergency management planning and recovery since the 2009 bushfires. The recent success of the R U Ready 10 years on commemoration event has generated some partnership momentum that can be built on through community planning. A further complementary and leveraging opportunity in this regard is a pending Council funding application under the state government’s <i>Strengthening Partnerships for Bushfire Management with Local Government</i> stream – preliminary project scope is a collaboration project which would enhance community emergency readiness across the ridgeline communities of Wandong-Heathcote Junction. Clonbinane, Upper Plenty and Reedy Creek.</p>
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**2) Clonbinane and Waterford Park**

Community Profile	<p><u>Clonbinane</u></p> <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 333 people in 2016</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p>
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PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 152 dwellings</li> <li>• 96.7% standalone – greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 3% are rented – less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84.4% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> <li>• Only 2.7% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul> <p><u>Waterford Park</u></p> <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 192 people in 2016</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 83 dwellings</li> <li>• 100% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 12.5% are rented, less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87.5% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> <li>• 0% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul>
<p>Initial mapping</p>	<p>Clonbinane and Waterford Park are among the small township localities featured in Council’s Rural Land Activities Review (RLAR). The RLAR has explored the function and character of these townships and their capacity or limitations to accommodate future residential growth. A suite of recommendations from this project will be considered by Council in early 2020 and community planning would scaffold well from this work.</p> <p>Clonbinane Community Action Group is an active and successful community organisation which has been transitioning from a 2009 bushfires recovery focus to a more broad-based community support / progress organisation in recent years. Their community emergency readiness work could be built on as part of the collaborative <i>Strengthening Partnerships for Bushfire Management with Local</i></p>

PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<p><i>Government</i> project noted above; and their emerging community development activity could be fostered and facilitated through community planning.</p> <p>As with Wandong-Heathcote Junction, a project approach of supporting succession; broadening engagement; developing partnerships and bolstering capacity would be well received by the community.</p>
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**3) Reedy Creek and Tyaak**

<p>Community Profile</p>	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 164 people in 2016</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82 dwellings</li> <li>• 100% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 10.6% are rented, less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82.9% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> <li>• Only 5.5% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul> <p><u>Tyaak</u></p> <p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 people in 2016</li> </ul> <p>Homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42 dwellings</li> <li>• 100% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 28.6% are rented, higher than the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94.3% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> </ul>
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PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 5.7% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul>
Initial mapping	<p>Like Clonbinane and Waterford Park, Reedy Creek is among the small township localities featured in Council’s Rural Land Activities Review (RLAR).</p> <p>The township of Reedy Creek and adjacent Tyaak are isolated, have limited infrastructure (unserved by water and sewerage) and considered to be at high risk of bushfire. Many in the community remain traumatised by the impact of the 2009 bushfires.</p> <p>There is strong connection amongst a core group of community members centered around management of the Community Hall; however, there is also a cohort of isolated and vulnerable community members and anecdotally a growing number of ‘weekender’ landowners.</p> <p>Although Tyaak and Reedy Creek are small communities, there are some complexities and divisions.</p> <p>Again, community planning would support the proposed <i>Strengthening Partnerships for Bushfire Management with Local Government</i>; and with a carefully focused approach could result in some positive health and well-being and community building outcomes.</p>

**4) Wallan**

Community Profile	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11,076 people in 2016</li> <li>• We have an Indigenous population of 162 people, or 1.5% of our population</li> </ul> <p>Homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3,998 dwellings</li> <li>• 94.3% standalone, greater than the Victorian average at 72.1%</li> <li>• 18.2% are rented, less than Victoria at 27.5%</li> </ul> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 76.6% of residents were born in Australia, compared to the Victorian average at 64.9%</li> </ul>
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PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 10.9% of people speak a language other than English at home compared to the Victorian average which is 25.9%</li> </ul> <p>Economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction is the biggest industry by output</li> <li>• 28.2% of jobs are in Construction</li> <li>• Construction pays 35.8% of local wages</li> <li>• 18.6% of residents earn \$2,500 per week or more, less than the Victorian average of 20.2%</li> </ul> <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 784 FTE primary students</li> </ul>
<p>Initial mapping</p>	<p>Wallan is experiencing strong residential growth to the south, east and north of the current township and is currently the largest community in Mitchell Shire.</p> <p>Like Beveridge, Wallan is spatially divided with significant development fronts along both sides of the Northern Highway as well as existing and growing residential communities on both sides of the Hume Freeway.</p> <p>It is diversifying both in terms of its built form and its socio-economic composition and cultural diversity.</p> <p>A need has been identified to ‘orient’ both the new and established community to the scale and pace of growth and foster a cohesive, overarching connection to place across the footprint of Wallan, as well as supporting localised neighbourhood connection.</p>

**CONSULTATION**

In identifying communities best positioned and ‘ready’ to respond to community planning, internal consultation has taken place to map the above snapshot of issues and opportunities. Limited external consultation has been undertaken to ‘test’ the appetite of the Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Tyaak, Reedy Creek and Clonbinane community members for community planning.

Wallan has been identified for inclusion through internal consultation and a recognition that a range of projects are both proposed and underway and it is timely to apply a place-based lens to capture and consolidate.



PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

## FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report outside of that which has already been budgeted for. The Community Plans that will be developed as an output of the second phase Place Based planning approach rollout will identify a range of projects and initiatives that will be the subject of future budget allocation bidding and grant procurement.

## POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Place-Based Community Planning rollout responds to the Mitchell Shire Council Plan 2017 – 2021 Strategic Objectives of:

- Community Participation – to actively explore all opportunities for community involvement and participation in Council decisions
- Strong Communities – To build and nurture strong and vibrant communities where people are proud to live

## RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk Ranking is determined using [ROHS201-G1- Corporate Risk Matrix](#). Risk is identified as Low, Medium, High or Very High.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
Reputational risk – community planning expectation management with second phase rollout communities	Medium	Comprehensive communication and engagement plan developed at inception to assist with setting and moderating expectations	Yes
Expectation management – the communities that have not been selected for either the pilot or stage two may perceive inequity if further stages are unable to be resourced and funded	Medium	The pilot and phase two rollout have seeded a participatory budgeting approach and built internal capacity to apply a 'place-based' lens to project and development planning. The organisation will continue to work toward applying the principles of participatory budgeting and place-based collaboration as a core focus.	Yes

PLACEBASED PLANNING PROJECT - SECOND PHASE ROLLOUT (CONT.)

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL)**

Embedded in the Place-Based Planning approach is the building of community capacity to take ownership of community plan development and implementation delivering a core sustainability outcome. In terms of environmental sustainability, it is anticipated that as part of the celebration and connection to 'place' canvassed in the community planning process a range of environmental initiatives may be identified.

### **CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

The rights protected in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* were considered in preparing this report and it's determined that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS**

Children and young people are an important life stages cohort to be considered in both the community planning process and in the projects delivered under the Rural Towns Activation grant program.

### **OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in this matter.

### **CONCLUSION**

A second phase rollout will solidify a framework for a place-based planning approach and will help facilitate participatory budgeting processes to become embedded in Council's annual planning cycle and community engagement activity.

The identified stage two communities of Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Clonbinane, Tyaak, Reedy Creek and Wallan offer valuable replication opportunities to build on the learnings from the pilot phase; and also present some unique characteristics and challenges that applying a place-based approach to can support optimum community engagement and development outcomes.