



**Yarriambiack**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

# WARRACKNABEAL STRUCTURE PLAN

APRIL 2026  
DRAFT

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarriambiack Shire Council acknowledges that the activities of this Council are being held under the traditional skies and in the waterways and lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjall, Wergala and Jupagulk people.

We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Warracknabeal takes its name from the local Indigenous word *Werracknabeal*, which describes gum trees shading the watercourse.

The Yarriambiack Shire Council declares its commitment to Aboriginal reconciliation. We acknowledge the traditional people and the cultural significance and history of the land. Yarriambiack Shire Council is aware of the impact of alienation and other forms of injustice against indigenous people and through acknowledgement and understanding of these injustices, Council is committed to redressing them and moving forward together.

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The Warracknabeal Structure Plan was prepared for **Yarriambiack Shire Council** with assistance from the **Department of Transport and Planning** and in collaboration with:



# 1. CONTEXT

## WARRACKNABEAL

Warracknabeal is Yarriambiack Shire's largest town and is located central in the Shire, approximately 60 kilometres north-east of the Wimmera's regional centre of Horsham.

Warracknabeal is on the lands of the people of the Wotjobaluk nations, who are the traditional custodians of the land.

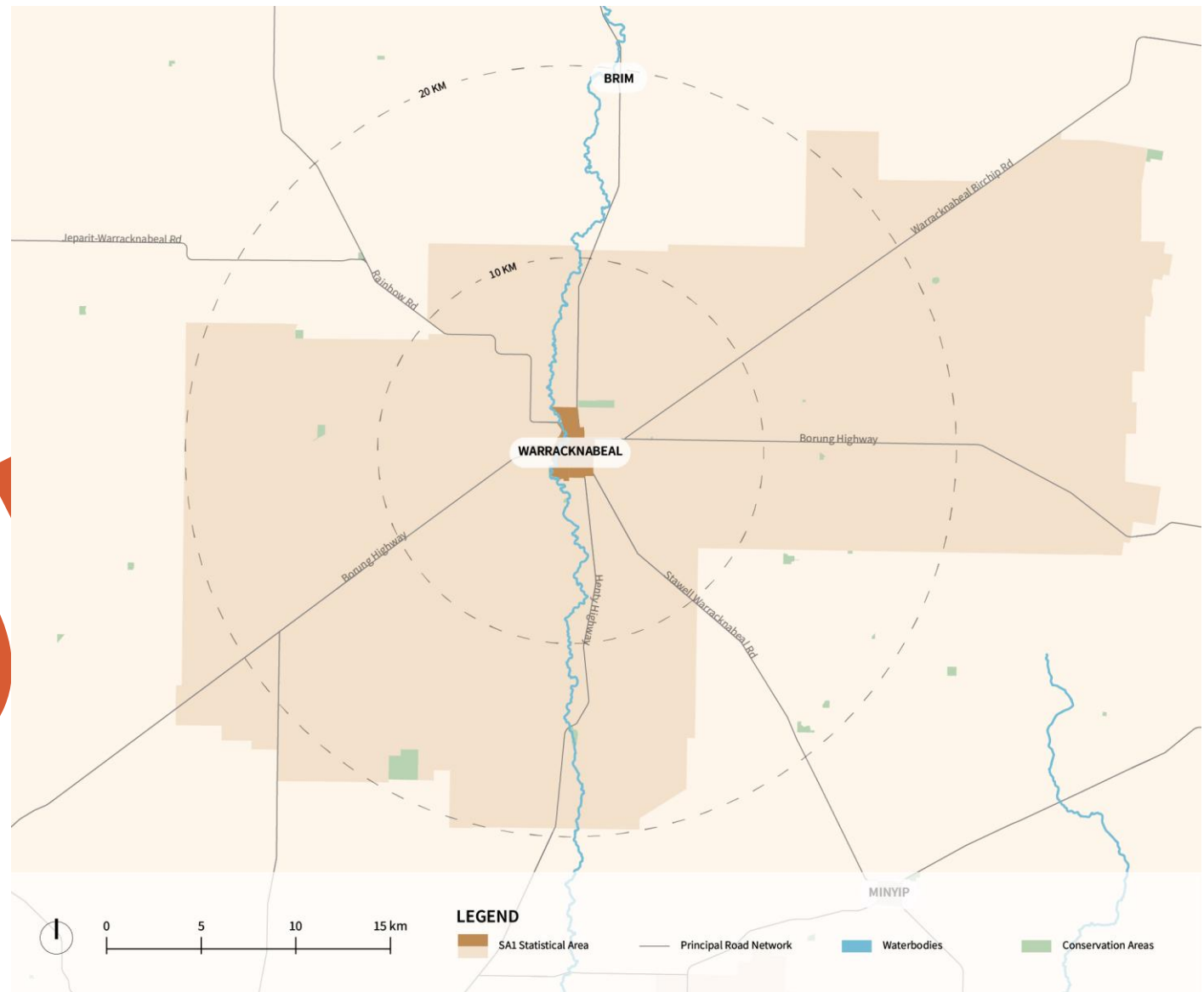
The town is home to a resident population of 2,177 people.

The town is identified as a district centre, which is critical to providing services, employment and economic opportunities to the broader municipality and towns beyond the Shire.

Key local industries include agriculture, health care, education and public administration.

These industries are expected to remain key employers within the town. However, economic and population change is occurring. New opportunities in renewable energy and mineral sands extraction provide future opportunities and also require careful management.

Towards 2044, the town will experience population and economic change that must be planned for. There is a need for more diverse housing to support ageing in place and key workers. Key services and businesses will need to be maintained and expanded to ensure that Warracknabeal remains a vibrant economic centre for the Shire and the region more broadly.



# 1.1 POLICY & STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## 1.1.1 ROLE & FUNCTION

The Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 of the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme) identifies Warracknabeal as a district centre. Its role is described in Clause 02.03-1 (Settlement) as:

*Warracknabeal has a district centre role. It is the largest centre of the Shire with the smallest rate of population decline. It is a retail, administrative and industrial centre, well serviced with educational, medical and community services. It is located on important transport routes and has potential for critical mass to support and sustain large industries. Warracknabeal is the second largest grain receival terminal after Murtoa. Graincorp's maintenance workshop is located in Warracknabeal.*

There is no town framework plan, settlement boundary or local level policy direction beyond policy at Clause 02.03-1 which directs development and growth to take place within Warracknabeal.

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Framework Plan at Clause 11.01-1R 'Settlement – Wimmera Southern Mallee' identifies Warracknabeal as a district town. Strategies at this clause support Warracknabeal's role as a key service hub, which supports the community and key local industries.

State, regional and local policy directions within the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme encourage the provision of more diverse and affordable housing within the Shire's higher order towns, including Warracknabeal.

Built environment and heritage policies encourage the preservation and conservation of the town's sites of heritage significance.

Warracknabeal is vulnerable to riverine and stormwater flooding throughout the town and possible bushfire at its urban edges and along Yarriambiack Creek.

Beyond the planning scheme, the strategic directions and the role and function of Warracknabeal is also influenced by Council policies, including:

- Yarriambiack Shire Council Plan 2025-2029.
- Yarriambiack Shire Economic Development Strategy 2026-2029.
- Yarriambiack Shire Housing Strategy 2023.
- Yarriambiack Shire Master Environmental Strategy 2024-2034.
- Yarriambiack Shire Tourism Strategy 2023-2027.
- Hopetoun Recreation Reserve Masterplan 2023.

## 1.1.2 WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan identifies the role of Warracknabeal as a District Town (sub-regional hub), which is expected to be the hub for services and employment in the northern and central Wimmera. It is expected to be a key focus for investment and consolidation of services.

Diversification of housing is encouraged, to support a changing population. While infill housing will provide for some growth, it is expected that additional land will be required to meet the town's housing needs.

## 1.1.3 PLAN FOR VICTORIA

Plan for Victoria is a statewide land use planning strategy which sets the overarching vision for the development of Victoria's cities, towns and regions towards 2050.

The Plan's strategic directions are centered around five key pillars:

- **Pillar 1: Housing for all Victorians.**
- **Pillar 2: Accessible Jobs and Services.**
- **Pillar 3: Great Places, Suburbs and Towns.**
- **Pillar 4: Sustainable Environments.**
- **Pillar 5: Self-determination and Caring for Country.**

Plan for Victoria identifies that an additional 2.24 million homes will be needed across Victoria to house the expected population of the state over the next 30 years.

In order to deliver sufficient housing, the Plan sets housing targets for each local government area.

Yarriambiack Shire has a housing target of 300 new homes by 2050. This is approximately 12 new homes per year, every year between now and 2050.

This is a municipal-wide target and Plan for Victoria does not specify where new homes should be located. However, it is anticipated that Warracknabeal will accommodate a high proportion of future housing supply for the region, in line with its district centre role.

# 1.1 POLICY & STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## ZONING & OVERLAY MAP

### ZONING & OVERLAYS

#### ZONING

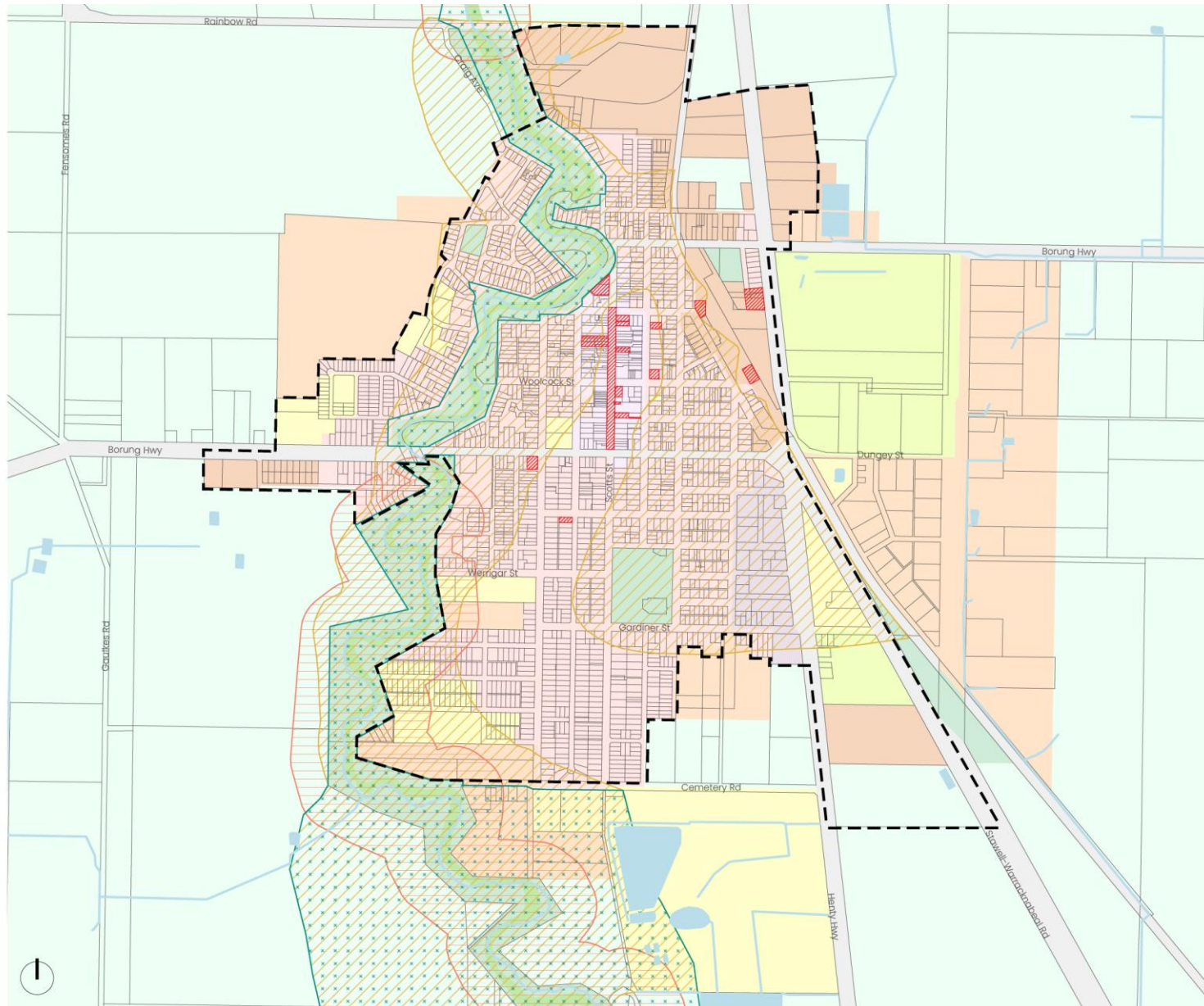
- General Residential
- Public Use
- Farming
- Public Park and Recreation
- Public Conservation and Resource
- Rural Living
- Commercial 1
- Commercial 2
- Industrial 1

#### OVERLAYS

- Heritage
- Environmental Significance
- Bushfire Management
- Land Subject to Inundation

#### BOUNDARIES

- Strategic Settlement Boundary



# 1.2 POPULATION & ECONOMIC PROFILE

## POPULATION

The resident population of Warracknabeal in 2024 was 2,177 people. The population has declined slightly since the 2021 census, when 2,208 residents were recorded (2025. .id Consulting).

The Population and Housing Forecasts (.id Consulting, 2025) expect that Warracknabeal's resident population will decline to a resident population of 1,903 people in 2044. This represents a decline of 12.6 per cent of the town's population, which is lower than the municipal average. Despite the forecast decline, the town has had a relative stable population over recent years.

The median age of residents is 51.3 years old. Working age people (between 15-64) comprise approximately 54.1 per cent of the population.

The proportion of working age population is expected to decrease to 45.3 per cent by 2044, alongside an increase in people aged 65+ to 41.4 per cent of the population. Notwithstanding this forecast, opportunities for workers within and surrounding the town is expected to increase in coming years, as development of renewable energy and mineral sands opportunities arise.

Growth within these industries may reduce the decline of the town's population and has the potential to result in population increases in the medium to long term.

These forecast and emerging shifts in population have implications for service delivery and employment within the town and the broader region.



Yarriambiack Creek

## RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

The Population and Housing Forecasts (.id Consultants, 2025) identify that Warracknabeal has capacity for an additional 153 dwellings, through infill development and expansion of the town's urban area.

Despite the forecast decline in population, demand for additional dwellings is expected to increase, given the need for smaller and diverse housing, the housing targets outlined in Clause 16.01-1S and the town's higher order role as a district centre.

## ECONOMY & INDUSTRY

Warracknabeal is the main hub for services and employment within Yarriambiack Shire and the northern Wimmera region. It also supports the Rainbow, Jeparit, Beulah and Minyip communities. It is expected that Warracknabeal will continue to serve as an important and significant regional hub for the Yarriambiack Shire and the northern Wimmera.

Health care, education, social assistance, public administration and retail trade are the dominant local employers within Warracknabeal. Demand for health care services and workers is expected to increase as the population ages. It is expected that the town's employment will grow by 136 workers in the decade to 2034, with much of this growth expected to occur in health care.

Warracknabeal is located within the Western Renewable Energy Zone. Future energy and mineral sands projects have the potential to lead to significant economic transformation and development for the town and the region.

# 1.2 POPULATION & ECONOMIC PROFILE

## POPULATION PROFILE (2024)

**2,177** Resident population

**1,903** Forecast resident population in 2044

**51.2** Median age

**54.1%** Working age population

**30.5%** Population aged over 65

**2.4%** Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Population

**6.3%** Born overseas

**2.5%** Speak a language other than English

**41.4%** Have a long term health condition

**\$184** Median weekly rent

**\$763** Median monthly mortgage payment

## ECONOMIC PROFILE (2024)

**1,080** Workers

**34.4%** Residents work in healthcare and social assistance

**13.1%** Residents work in retail trade

**9.1%** Residents work in education and training

**8.2%** Residents work in public administration

**5.0%** Residents work in construction

**4.9%** Residents work in accommodation and food services



# 1.3 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

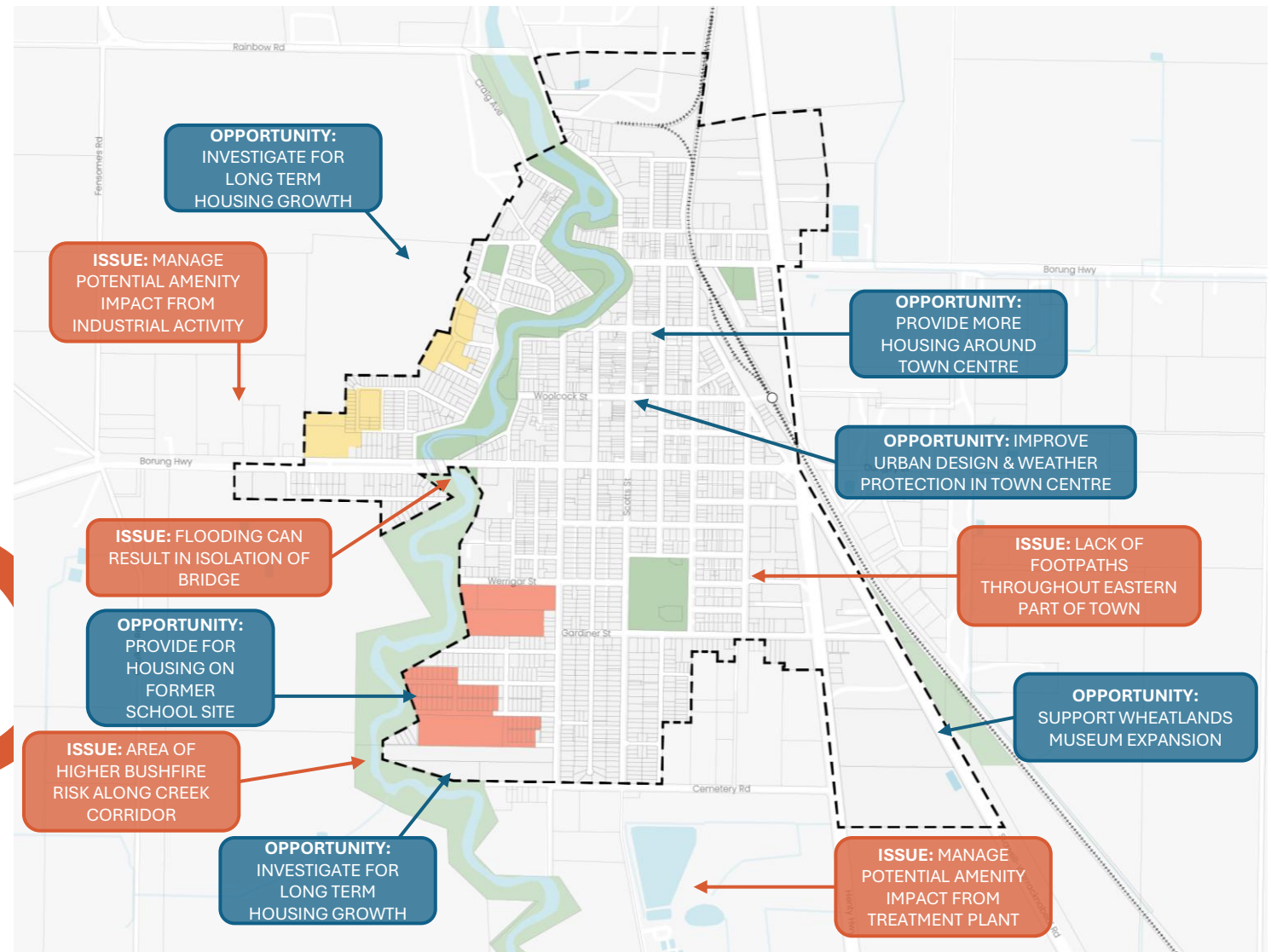
## BACKGROUND & TECHNICAL STUDIES

As part of the development of the Warracknabeal Structure Plan, a series of investigations have been undertaken to identify issues and opportunities. The following technical assessments were prepared to inform the Warracknabeal Structure Plan Background Report:

- Yarriambiack Shire – Township population and housing profiles (.id Consulting).
- Yarriambiack Shire – Township economic profiles (.id Consulting).
- Yarriambiack Structure Plans – Strategic Bushfire Assessment (Terralogic).
- Yarriambiack Structure Plans – Movement & Transport Assessment (Quantum Traffic).

The findings of these technical assessments and Council stakeholder engagement in March 2025 informed the preparation of the Warracknabeal Structure Plan Background Report, which identified key issues and opportunities for the development of the Structure Plan.

The spatial elements of those issues and opportunities are reflected on the issues and opportunities map.



## 2. VISION

*Warracknabeal will maintain and enhance its role as the key service and economic centre within the Shire and the northern Wimmera region.*

*Warracknabeal will embrace emerging economic opportunities and be a focus for investment and economic growth.*

*Warracknabeal will provide increased housing diversity to support population stability, including provision for key workers and to support ageing in place.*



Scott Street

# 2. VISION

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN

### WARRACKNABEAL STRUCTURE PLAN

#### EXISTING FEATURES

- Education
- Healthcare
- Open Space
- Water bodies
- Railway

#### LAND USE & ZONING

- Heritage Overlay

#### STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT

- Strategic Settlement Boundary
- Town Growth Investigation Area
- ✱ Strategic Redevelopment Sites

#### TRANSPORT & MOVEMENT

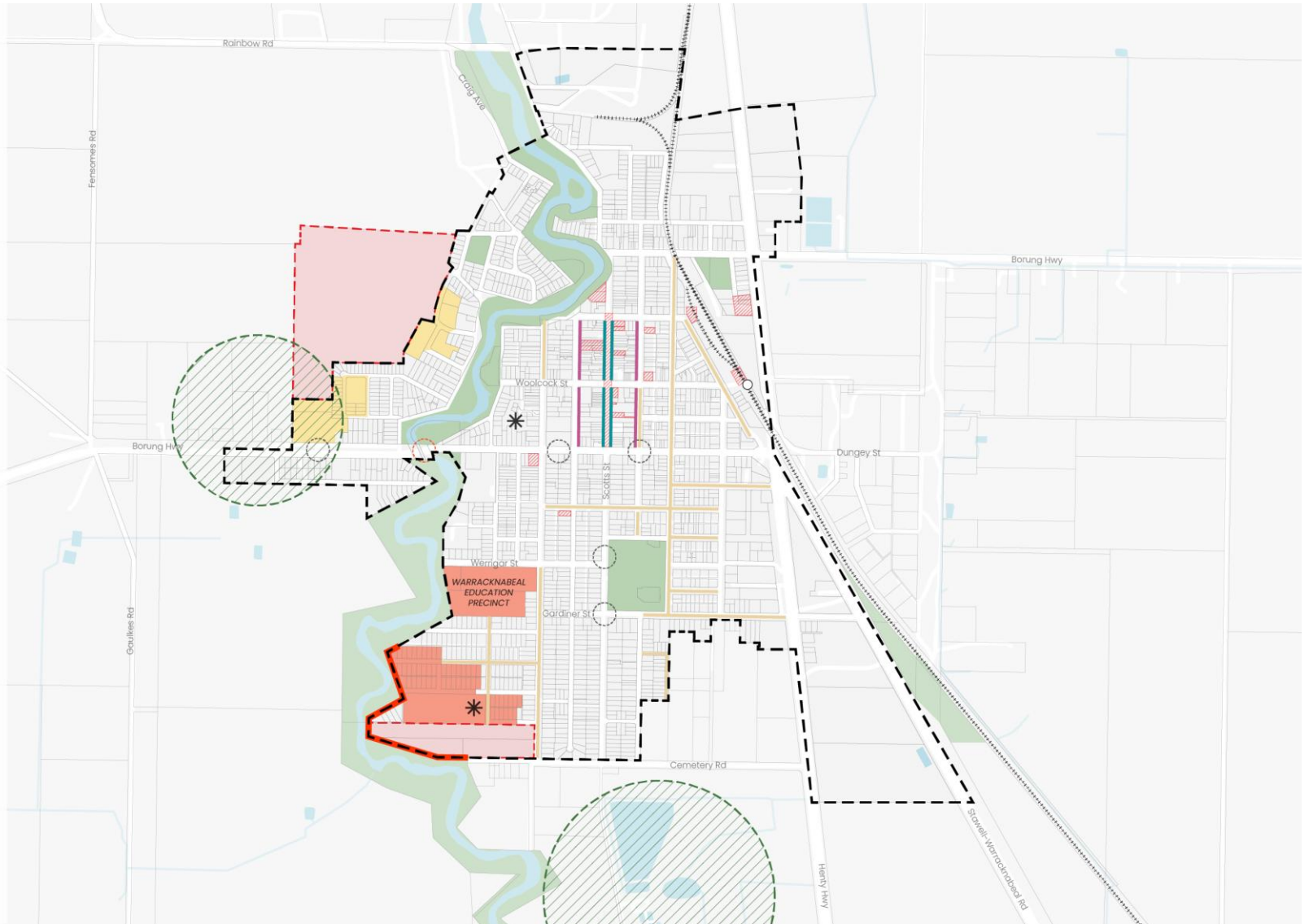
- Facilitate improvements to pedestrian safety, through pedestrian crossings, safety islands and other measures
- Investigate opportunities to provide flood-free, all-weather road access across Yarriambiack Creek
- Advocate for funding to complete gaps in the footpath network

#### URBAN DESIGN & STREETSCAPE

- Provide consistent all-weather shading and awnings along Scott Street and work with Warracknabeal Action Group to improve streetscape
- Improve built form interface and streetscape presentation

#### INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

- Investigate and implement amenity buffer to manage land use conflict
- Incorporate bushfire protection measures (roads and building setbacks)



# 3. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 3.1 HOUSING

The majority of housing in Warracknabeal is made up of single, detached dwellings (93.7 per cent), with only 4.6 percent of residents living in medium density housing.

The largest household type in the town is lone person households (38.9 per cent) followed by couples without children (27.8 per cent) and then couples with children (15 per cent).

Home ownership is the dominant tenure type, with 70.8 per cent of homes either owned outright or with a mortgage. The proportion of rental households (17.2 per cent) is higher than the Shire average, but lower than the rural average.

The ownership and household structures suggest that many residents have aged in place within their existing homes. More than 50 per cent of dwellings contain two or more spare bedrooms. This results in a mismatch between housing supply and demand, with little smaller format and diverse housing options available.

As the largest town within the municipality, Warracknabeal is expected to provide for the most significant housing growth in the Shire, in line with the Shire's housing target at Clause 16.01-1S, which anticipate an additional 300 dwellings across the Shire to 2051 and the town's role as a key focus for employment and service delivery.

Warracknabeal's population is expected to be relatively stable in the medium term. Growth in employment in the health care, agriculture, renewable energy and mining sectors is likely to require increased and more diverse housing to support the town's future population.

There is a need for smaller and more diverse housing options to support the community and emerging workforce, including specialised aged care and retirement accommodation to facilitate downsizing and ageing in place, which in turn allows existing housing stock to better match future housing needs.

To support improved housing diversity, consolidation of housing in proximity to the town centre will be encouraged, with smaller, easily maintained housing and smaller lots.

The former Warracknabeal School site and 40 Anderson Street present strategic development opportunities to provide for new housing.

In the medium to long term, the town's urban area will need to expand to provide increased housing opportunity. Areas to the south and west of the existing urban area may provide opportunities, but bushfire risk and the potential for land use conflict will need to be analysed and resolved before any further consideration.

**OBJECTIVE 1: To facilitate increased housing choice and diversity within Warracknabeal that responds to community needs.**

**Strategy 1.1: Facilitate a range of more affordable and diverse housing types to support ageing in place and key workers.**

- Action 1.1.1: Encourage compact lots and smaller format housing within a 400-metre walkable catchment of the Scott Street commercial centre.
- Action 1.1.2: Support the provision of housing to the rear of Commercial 1 Zone properties along Jamouneau Street and Devereux Street.

- Action 1.1.3: Support the redevelopment of the former Warracknabeal School site and 40 Anderson Street for housing.
- Action 1.1.4: Advocate for and support the provision of specialised aged care accommodation, including retirement villages and residential aged care facilities.
- Action 1.1.5: Advocate for the provision of affordable rental accommodation to support key workers, particularly in the health care and agricultural processing sectors.

**Strategy 1.2: Ensure sufficient land is available to support the growth of Warracknabeal.**

- Action 1.2.1: Investigate the potential rezoning of land between the former Warracknabeal School site and north of Cemetery Road (west of Anderson Street) to the Low Density Residential Zone to support increased housing opportunities.
- Action 1.2.2: Investigate the potential rezoning of the Rural Living Zone to the west of the town to Low Density Residential Zone to support increased housing in the medium to long term.

**Strategy 1.3: Ensure that new housing is well designed and responsive to the valued character of Warracknabeal.**

- Action 1.3.1: Implement built form objectives and strategies into the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to guide housing design.
- Action 1.3.2: Establish the settlement boundary in the planning scheme to reinforce the town's structure.

## 3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Warracknabeal is identified as a district centre in the Wimmera Mallee South Regional Growth Plan. As the Shire's largest town and commercial centre, it has a significant role in providing essential services and business opportunities to the Shire and the broader Wimmera and Southern Mallee regions.

The Yarriambiack Planning Scheme recognises that the town has the critical mass and economy of scale to support business and industry for the broader region. It is expected that the town will continue to be the key employment centre for the Shire.

Approximately one in three (34 per cent) local workers are employed in the health care sector. Education, social assistance, public administration and retail trade are other key employers, which reflects the district centre role of the town.

### RETAIL & BUSINESS

Scott Street forms the main commercial spine of the town. It provides for a range of retail and commercial uses, including two supermarkets, banking, post office, restaurants, food and drink premises, hardware and services.

While the range of retail and services provided within Scott Street reflects its function as a district centre, retail activity has been declining. There are many vacant retail and commercial premises along the main street. Economic forecasts by .id Consulting estimate that there is approximately 30 per cent of commercial zoned land with vacant capacity.

The commercial centre is well integrated with nearby council offices, community facilities and emergency services.

Maintaining and improving the extent of retail and business activity within the commercial centre is important to ensuring that Warracknabeal can fulfil its role as a district centre and support the local and regional population.

There has been extensive efforts from the local community to activate blank retail facades. There is an opportunity to expand public realm improvements to act as a catalyst for increased investment and activity.

### INDUSTRY

Warracknabeal's main industrial precinct is located in the north of the town and takes advantage of its connections to the Henty Highway and Borung Highway. A smaller industrial pocket is located south of the Wheatlands Museum, also along the Henty Highway.

There is a strong connection between the industrial activity within the town and nearby grain production and other agricultural activities.

GrainCorp's grain receipt terminal and grain processing facility is the second largest in the Shire and occupies a large proportion of the industrial land.

QA Hay is developing a large hay press facility along the Henty Highway, south of the Wheatlands Museum. Upon completion, it will be the largest facility of its type globally. The facility is expected to employ 60-70 full time workers.



Warracknabeal Community Garden



Warracknabeal Post Office

There is strong demand for industrial activities to support the local agricultural industry.

The Regional Growth Plan identifies that industrial land supply should be monitored in the medium to long term.

The town has an adequate supply of industrial land to meet current and immediate future needs. .id Consulting estimates that there is approximately 27.4 hectares of vacant industrial land capacity, from a mixture of vacant and underutilised industrial land. It is expected that this land will meet the future needs of industrial land for the town.

There is also a need to monitor industrial land supply in the medium term to ensure sufficient land availability to continue to support industry.

#### **RENEWABLE ENERGY & MINERAL SANDS**

Warracknabeal and other parts of the Yarriambiack Shire are located within the draft Western Renewable Energy Zone.

There are a range of proposed renewable energy and mining projects within proximity to Warracknabeal, including the Warracknabeal Energy Park, Wilkur Energy Park and the Donald Mineral Sands.

These are emerging industries within the Shire. If these projects are approved, they are likely to have transformative economic impacts on Warracknabeal, through increased consumption and employment. It is forecast that these projects could result an additional 133 jobs to the year 2044.

However, the provision of renewable energy and mineral sands within the Shire must be carefully managed to ensure that agricultural land is maintained and that adequate housing and services are provided.

#### **AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture is a cornerstone industry throughout much of Yarriambiack Shire. Warracknabeal is located at the centre of one of the State's most significant broadacre grain production areas. Future development and expansion of the town must carefully manage the interface with agricultural land.

#### **TOURISM**

Tourism is an important contributor to the broader Yarriambiack Shire economy. Local attractions include the Wheatlands Museum and the former home of musician Nick Cave. More broadly, the town's location on the Silo Art Trail and proximate to Little Desert National Park and Lake Hindmarsh make it an attractive stopover in the region.

Like other towns within the Shire, there is limited capture of tourist spend. Current tourism accommodation includes the Caravan Park and two motels. There is an opportunity to expand accommodation and dining options to support regional tourism and facilitate longer tourist stays within the town and the Shire.

**OBJECTIVE 2: To reinforce Warracknabeal's district centre role, by providing a broad range of retail, commercial and industrial activities that support the community and increase employment opportunities.**

**Strategy 2.1: Revitalise Scott Street as the commercial and civic heart of Warracknabeal.**

- Action 2.1.1: Amend local policy to encourage a diverse range of commercial, retail and service uses within Scott Street.
- Action 2.1.2: Provide consistent all-weather shading and awnings along Scott Street.
- Action 2.1.3: Work with the Warracknabeal Action Group to improve the Scott Street streetscape.

**Strategy 2.2: Facilitate sustainable growth in industrial activity to support the agriculture industry**

- Action 2.2.1: Support more intensive utilisation of industrial land.
- Action 2.2.2: Facilitate industrial land uses that support the region's agricultural production.
- Action 2.2.3: Monitor industrial land supply in the medium term.

**Strategy 2.3: Support tourist facilities and accommodation within Warracknabeal.**

- Action 2.3.1: Facilitate the provision of diverse tourism accommodation to support overnight stays.
- Action 2.3.2: Facilitate the expansion of the Wheatlands Museum.



**Scott Street**

### 3.3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE

#### TOWN STRUCTURE

Warracknabeal has developed in a predominantly regular grid pattern, which is centred around the commercial centre along Scott Street. Streets are generally oriented north-south or east-west, with regular rhythm and spacing of streets.

Yarriambiack Creek bisects the town and development west of the Creek maintains a grid pattern, but is slightly off-axis to follow the contour of the creek bank.

Henty Highway generally forms the eastern edge of the urban parts of the town.

Lots within the Scott Street commercial core are fine grain and lot sizes are variable.

Residential lots are more uniform and in the order of approximately

Lot sizes within the town are fairly uniform and in the order of approximately 800 to 1,000 square metres. Some smaller residential lots are found in proximity to the commercial centre. In these areas, there is a higher presence of battle-axe style subdivisions and smaller format housing. These are the main locations and examples of medium density housing within the town.

#### TOWN CHARACTER

Warracknabeal's character is defined by the high presence of single storey dwellings, with some limited two storey development present. Where two storey development does exist, it is typically older and it is evident that it has been used previously for commercial purposes.

Dwellings comprise a mixture of architectural styles and materials, which reflect the organic development and growth of the town over time. Materials are typically brick or weatherboard and roofs are generally pitched. Site coverage is typically low, and setbacks are relatively uniform. Front fencing is uncommon and where it is provided, it is typically low and open in style.

Street tree planting is common, but is generally sporadic.

Buildings along the more commercially-focused Scott Street are typically constructed to the front boundary and contain large extents of glazing. Some commercial buildings along these streets include verandahs and canopies over the footpath, although this is not a consistent feature and there are opportunities to provide for all weather protection along the Scott Street streetscape.

Properties on Jamouneau Street and Devereux Street within the Commercial 1 Zone contain a mixture of housing (which fronts these streets) and rear interfaces to commercial properties (which front Scott Street). This results in an eclectic streetscape, with housing interspersed with utilitarian loading bays or vacant properties. This results in a poor urban design outcome and there are opportunities to improve presentation to this streetscape.

There is a general lack of policy guidance within the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to support assessment of built form issues and response to neighbourhood character.

#### BUILT FORM HERITAGE

Warracknabeal contains 16 places that are identified as individually significant heritage places.

Many of the places of heritage significance are located along Scott Street, where the streetscape is also within a Heritage Overlay that applies only to the public realm.

Council is aware that some of the individual and precinct heritage controls are incorrectly mapped within the planning scheme and require correction. Council has completed a Heritage Study Review, which when implemented will correct these anomalies.

There is a general lack of policy guidance within the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to support the assessment of heritage issues and ensuring new development appropriately protects sites of heritage significance.

#### GATEWAYS & APPROACHES

The major approaches to Warracknabeal are from the Henty Highway, which connects with Hopetoun, Brim and Beulah (to the north) and Horsham (to the south). Borung Highway provides a secondary gateway from the east and west.

The entries to the town are generally well maintained. However, the high presence of industrial activity on the northern and eastern approaches limits visual appeal.

**OBJECTIVE 3: To ensure that developments contribute to the character and heritage of Warracknabeal.**

**Strategy 3.1: Ensure that development protects and enhances the valued heritage of the town.**

- Action 3.1.1: Introduce local policy guidance to support appropriate decision-making for sites of heritage significance.
- Action 3.1.2: Implement the Heritage Study Review into the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.

**Strategy 3.2: Ensure that development respects the valued character of the town.**

- Action 3.2.1: Introduce local policy guidance to support appropriate decision-making in relation to neighbourhood character.
- Action 3.2.2: Introduce local policy guidance to support improved urban design outcomes to the rear of the commercial core on Jamouneau Street and Devereux Street.



**Warracknabeal Anglican Church**



Scott Street

## 3.4 LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENT

### BUSHFIRE

The Bushfire Management Overlay applies to land along the Yarriambiack Creek south of Dimboola Road. This area includes the town's Education Precinct, the former Warracknabeal School site and residential areas.

Warracknabeal's rural living and industrial areas, as well as residential areas along Yarriambiack Creek are also identified as a designated bushfire prone area.

There have been previous small bushfire events recorded in areas surrounding the town.

The Yarriambiack Creek corridor is densely vegetated and classified as a woodland landscape. Land along this corridor is at an increased risk of bushfire compared with the grassland interface in other areas.

Consistent with settlement planning directions at Clause 13.02-1S 'Bushfire planning', the Structure Plan and Bushfire Assessment support directing growth and new development in infill locations, which have been identified as low risk, before any potential expansion of the town.

There is a need to carefully manage vegetation and urban activity at the urban edges of the town and along the Yarriambiack Creek corridor to protect life and property from bushfire.

Development at the urban edge and in proximity to the creek should incorporate built form setbacks, vegetation management and hazard reduction measures.

The former Warracknabeal School site and the proposed low density residential area to the south are strategic redevelopment opportunities and are exposed to bushfire risk given the interface with vegetation along Yarriambiack Creek. The bushfire risk will need to be carefully considered in the redevelopment and rezoning of the land.

### FLOODING

Yarriambiack Creek runs through Warracknabeal. Large parts of the town are low-lying and are affected by riverine flooding. Significant flood events in 2011 and 2022 resulted in widespread impacts to the local community.

Dimboola Road and Rainbow Road are the only road crossings over the creek, connecting the town centre with residential areas and the hospital west of the creek. In a flood event, these roads can be subject to inundation and isolate the hospital from the rest of the town.

The isolation of parts of the town and key health care infrastructure is a significant issue. While there are long lead times before flooding events (3-5 days), there is a need to explore opportunities to maintain all weather access to this critical infrastructure.

Warracknabeal is also impacted by flooding from the urban stormwater network during high rainfall events.

Council and the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority have undertaken updated modelling of riverine and stormwater flooding, including accounting for climate change impacts to 2100.

### BIODIVERSITY & TREE CANOPY

Warracknabeal is at the centre of the Yarrilinks Landcare enhanced vegetation link, which extends from Murtoa to Hopetoun. The link represents a significant biodiversity spine through the municipality.

The NatureKit tool identifies Yarriambiack Creek as having a high habitat value and are likely to support a number of species. The creek is classified as Riverine Chenopod Woodland.

Most of the urban area of Warracknabeal has limited to no habitat value. The creek corridor is extensively vegetated and includes significant remnant canopy trees. There is fairly limited canopy tree coverage in the public and private realms elsewhere in the town and there are opportunities to increase tree cover, predominantly through street tree planting.

### LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

There is a concrete batching plant close to the urban edge of the town and in proximity to the Rural Living Zone and the hospital.

The concrete batching plant has the potential to create off-site amenity impacts, primarily through dust, noise and potential odour.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant on the southern edge of the town involves treatment through aerated lagoons and has the potential to cause adverse amenity through odour.

An investigation should be undertaken as to whether a buffer area needs to be established around the concrete batching plant and the wastewater treatment facility in order to manage land use conflict and protect the community.

**OBJECTIVE 4: To protect community health and safety from natural hazards and land use conflict.**

**Strategy 4.1: Ensure that development occurs in areas that are at lower risk of bushfire and flood hazard.**

- Action 4.1.1: Ensure that development occurs in areas where bushfire risk can be managed, by prioritising infill development.
- Action 4.1.2: Incorporate bushfire protection measures in the development of land along Yarriambiack Creek and the western edge of the town, including perimeter roads and development setbacks.
- Action 4.1.3: Ensure the redevelopment of the former Warracknabeal School site adequately addresses bushfire risk.
- Action 4.1.4: Implement updated flood modelling for Warracknabeal into the planning scheme.
- Action 4.1.5: Investigate opportunities to provide flood-free, all-weather road access across Yarriambiack Creek to the hospital.

**Strategy 4.2: Manage the potential for adverse safety and amenity impacts from land use conflicts.**

- Action 4.2.1: Investigate and implement measures to manage the buffer areas to the concrete batching plant and wastewater treatment facility to protect the community from adverse amenity impacts.

**Strategy 4.3: Increase canopy tree cover within Warracknabeal.**

- Action 4.3.1: Undertake a street tree planting program within the town.



Yarriambiack Creek

## 3.5 MOVEMENT & TRANSPORT

### ROAD NETWORK

Warracknabeal has a road network which provides good connections to nearby communities and important economic centres in the region. The town is strategically located at the intersection of the Henty Highway, which forms a key north-south transport corridor from Lascelles and Hopetoun in the north to Portland in the state's south and the Borung Highway, which provides connections to Dimboola, Donald and other towns in the Wimmera region.

These highway corridors facilitate agriculture, grain handling and freight truck movements.

The local road network predominantly forms a grid alignment and traffic volumes can be comfortably accommodated within the existing road network.

Urban road reserves within the town are typically in the order of 30 metres in width and are generally sealed and in relatively good condition.

Car parking demands are low and can typically be met by existing on-street parking.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport connections are limited to a V-Line Coach that operates between Ouyen and Ballarat once daily.

There are no passenger rail services and commuter bus services to nearby towns are limited to a Mildura-Horsham service which runs three days per week.

The lack of public transport results in a high level of car dependency, fewer economic opportunities and a lack of connection to nearby towns.

Improving access to public transport is critical to supporting the local community, particularly to ensure that residents are able to age in place and access a full range of services.

### WALKING & CYCLING

There is an extensive footpath network in Warracknabeal, with most streets providing footpaths on at least one side of the street. However, there are some gaps in the provision of footpaths on the periphery of the town and along secondary north-south routes in the town's east.

There are good walking connections along the Yarriambiack Creek, with several pedestrian crossings provided throughout town.

The wide road reservations present a challenge to safe crossing in some parts of town, particularly for residents who rely on mobility aids to travel into the commercial and service core. There is an opportunity to improve pedestrian safety by providing more crossings and 'safe zones' in the middle of streets.

There is no dedicated cycling network within town.

**OBJECTIVE 5: To provide a safe, accessible and integrated movement network within Warracknabeal.**

**Strategy 5.1: Facilitate safe, accessible and direct movement networks within Warracknabeal that support active and public transport.**

- Action 5.1.1: Advocate for funding to complete the footpath network within town.
- Action 5.1.2: Facilitate improvements to pedestrian safety, including through the provision of pedestrian crossings, pedestrian safety islands and other measures.
- Action 5.1.3: Advocate to the State Government for bus connections between Warracknabeal and nearby towns.
- Action 5.1.4: Provide wayfinding signage to support safe and efficient movement within town.

## 3.6 OPEN SPACE & INFRASTRUCTURE

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

As the Shire's largest town, Warracknabeal is the main health care, education and essential services hub for the Yarriambiack Shire.

It is a key service point for VicRoads, emergency services such as police, fire and ambulance, and is the main service location for Yarriambiack Shire Council.

Health care, public administration, social assistance and education are among the key economic drivers and employers within Warracknabeal, accounting for approximately 50 per cent of the local workforce. This recognises the importance of these key services to the local community and the economy.

The Civic Precinct, which includes Council's service centre, library, senior citizen's hall and leisure centre is an important community facility.

The ongoing provision of these services within Warracknabeal is critical to the broader Yarriambiack community.

The Rural Northwest Health – Warracknabeal Campus provides a range of urgent and acute medical services, alongside community health services and some aged care facilities. The hospital is town's largest employer and modest growth is expected in health care roles towards 2044.

Expanded health and aged care infrastructure and services will be critical to support the local community.

There is an identified need for aged care and home services, as well as increased demand for general practitioners, specialists and allied health services.

The lack of affordable and suitable housing contributes to the challenges of attracting workers within these key industries.

The Warracknabeal Education Precinct includes a kindergarten, Prep-12 government school and a special development school. The precinct has been recently developed and consolidates previous facilities into one location.

There is a critical and urgent need for expanded child care facilities within Warracknabeal. The provision of child care services assists in maintaining a sustainable workforce and community.

### SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

Warracknabeal is provided with reticulated water, sewerage, electricity and telecommunications services.

All of the urban areas of the town are connected to reticulated water and sewerage. The rural residential areas on the town's fringe are connected to reticulated water, but not sewerage.

Warracknabeal is within the mobile coverage areas of major telecommunications providers and is connected to the National Broadband Network by a mixture of fibre to the premises and wireless technology.

The Council Plan 2025-2029 advocates for equitable access to internet and mobile connectivity. While Warracknabeal is well served in terms of mobile coverage, there is a disparity in home internet technology. There is an opportunity to advocate for broader provision of the fibre to the premises technology across the urban area.

### OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Warracknabeal has a range of active and passive open space and recreation facilities provided within the town.

ANZAC Memorial Park is the town's largest sport and recreational space. It includes an oval for football and hockey, an outdoor 50 metre swimming pool and tennis and netball courts, as well as areas for passive recreation and a playground. It is a highly valued facility and is a social hub.

Council has developed a master plan for ANZAC Memorial Park for a \$12 million staged redevelopment, including upgrades to netball and tennis courts, changerooms for the swimming pool and redevelopment of the sports pavilion. These improvements are important to maintaining the viability of these facilities for the local and regional community. Significant funding from all levels of government will be required to deliver the recommendations of the master plan.

**OBJECTIVE 6: To provide and maintain viable and sustainable health care, education and other services to support the Hopetoun and southern Mallee community.**

**Strategy 6.1: Deliver viable health care, education and community services to support the local community**

- Action 6.1.1: Advocate for increased child care facilities and services within Warracknabeal.
- Action 6.1.2: Investigate future service needs for aged care and health services.
- Action 6.1.3: Facilitate the provision of an increased range of community services within Warracknabeal.
- Action 6.1.3: Amend local policy within the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to facilitate improved health care, education and community services.

**Strategy 6.2: Deliver equitable connectivity**

- Action 6.2.1: Advocate for improved and equitable provision of fibre to the premises internet technology.

**Strategy 6.3: Deliver improved recreational facilities that meet community needs**

- Action 6.3.1: Continue advocating for funding to deliver the ANZAC Memorial Park Master Plan.
- Action 6.3.2: Facilitate the staged redevelopment of ANZAC Memorial Park in accordance with the master plan.



**ANZAC Memorial Park**

# 4. IMPLEMENTATION

The Warracknabeal Structure Plan will be implemented through a range of statutory and non-statutory measures to ensure that the vision, objectives, strategies and actions are achieved.

The full range of implementation measures are set out in the implementation plan overleaf.

## STATUTORY IMPLEMENTATION

Statutory implementation of the Structure Plan will involve the preparation of planning scheme amendments to implement the relevant land use planning directions.

Most of the recommended changes for inclusion in a planning scheme amendment will be in the form of changes to local policy in the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. These measures can be implemented in the immediate term.

Other measures, such as implementing planning controls to rezone the land in the south-west to the Low Density Residential Zone and to investigate and apply buffers to industrial activity with adverse amenity will require further investigation before implementation.

## NON-STATUTORY IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to the statutory implementation, the Structure Plan also identifies a range of actions that will be implemented outside of the planning scheme.

These measures require further investigation, funding and partnership with other stakeholders, including the Victorian State Government, infrastructure and utility service providers and other non-government bodies.

## MONITORING & REVIEW

This Structure Plan is intended to guide the development of Warracknabeal towards 2044.

Council should review the Structure Plan every five (5) years to audit the progress of implementation of each action and to determine if any changes in the physical, economic or policy context affecting the community require a change in policy direction.

This review cycle will also ensure that the Structure Plan remains relevant and consistent with the Council Plan and Council's strategic priorities.

# 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Action #	Action	Statutory / Non-Statutory	Council Role	Priority	Partners
<b>Housing</b>					
1.1.1	Encourage compact lots and smaller format housing within a 400-metre walkable catchment of the Scott Street commercial centre.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
1.1.2	Support the provision of housing to the rear of Commercial 1 Zone properties along Jamouneau Street and Devereux Street.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
1.1.3	Support the redevelopment of the former Warracknabeal School site and 40 Anderson Street for housing.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
1.1.4	Advocate for and support the provision of specialised aged care accommodation, including retirement villages and residential aged care facilities.	Statutory / Advocacy	Advocate Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning, Department of Health, Developers
1.1.5	Advocate for the provision of affordable rental accommodation to support key workers, particularly in the health care and agricultural processing sectors.	Non-statutory	Advocate	High	Department of Health, Developers
1.2.1	Investigate the potential rezoning of land between the former Warracknabeal School site and north of Cemetery Road (west of Anderson Street) to the Low Density Residential Zone to support increased housing opportunities.	Statutory	Investigate & Implement	Medium	Department of Transport and Planning, Country Fire Authority
1.2.2	Investigate the potential rezoning of the Rural Living Zone to the west of the town to Low Density Residential Zone to support increased housing in the medium to long term.	Statutory	Investigate & Implement	Low	Department of Transport and Planning, Country Fire Authority
1.3.1	Implement built form objectives and strategies into the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to guide housing design.	Statutory	Implement	High	Department of Transport and Planning

Action #	Action	Statutory / Non-Statutory	Council Role	Priority	Partners
<b>Housing (continued)</b>					
1.3.2	Establish the settlement boundary in the planning scheme to reinforce the town's structure.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
<b>Economic Development</b>					
2.1.1	Amend local policy to encourage a diverse range of commercial, retail and service uses within Scott Street.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
2.1.2	Provide consistent all-weather shading and awnings along Scott Street.	Non-statutory	Partner	Medium	Warracknabeal Action Group, Traders, Community
2.1.3	Work with the Warracknabeal Action Group to improve the Scott Street streetscape.	Non-statutory	Partner	Medium	Warracknabeal Action Group
2.2.1	Support more intensive utilisation of industrial land.	Statutory, Non-statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment), Partner	Medium	Industry, Utility Providers
2.2.2	Facilitate industrial land uses that support the region's agricultural production	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning.
2.2.3	Monitor industrial land supply in the medium term.	Non-statutory	Monitor	Medium	Industry
2.3.1	Facilitate the provision of diverse tourism accommodation to support overnight stays.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
2.3.2	Facilitate the expansion of the Wheatlands Museum.	Non-statutory	Partner	Medium	Wheatlands Museum

Action #	Action	Statutory / Non-Statutory	Council Role	Priority	Partners
<b>Built Environment &amp; Heritage</b>					
3.1.1	Introduce local policy guidance to support appropriate decision-making for sites of heritage significance.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
3.1.2	Implement the Heritage Study Review into the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
3.2.1	Introduce local policy guidance to support appropriate decision-making in relation to neighbourhood character.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
3.2.2	Introduce local policy guidance to support improved urban design outcomes to the rear of the commercial core on Jamouneau Street and Devereux Street.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
<b>Landscape &amp; Environment</b>					
4.1.1	Ensure that development occurs in areas where bushfire risk can be managed, by prioritising infill development.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning, Country Fire Authority
4.1.2	Incorporate bushfire protection measures in the development of land along Yarriambiack Creek and the western edge of the town, including perimeter roads and development setbacks.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Country Fire Authority
4.1.3	Ensure the redevelopment of the former Warracknabeal School site adequately addresses bushfire risk.	Statutory	Implement	High	Country Fire Authority

Action #	Action	Statutory / Non-Statutory	Council Role	Priority	Partners
<b>Landscape &amp; Environment (continued)</b>					
4.1.4	Implement updated flood modelling for Warracknabeal into the planning scheme.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
4.1.5	Investigate opportunities to provide flood-free, all-weather road access across Yarriambiack Creek	Non-statutory	Investigate, Partner	High	Department of Transport and Planning, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
4.2.1	Investigate and implement measures to manage the buffer areas to the concrete batching plant and wastewater treatment facility to protect the community from adverse amenity impacts.	Statutory	Investigate & Implement	Medium	Department of Transport and Planning, Environment Protection Authority, GWM Water
4.3.1	Undertake a street tree planting program within the town.	Non-statutory	Deliver	Medium	
<b>Movement &amp; Transport</b>					
5.1.1	Advocate for funding to complete the footpath network within town.	Non-statutory	Advocate	Low	
5.1.2	Facilitate improvements to pedestrian safety, including through the provision of pedestrian crossings, pedestrian safety islands and other measures.	Non-statutory	Deliver	Low	
5.1.3	Advocate to the State Government for bus connections between Warracknabeal and nearby towns.	Non-statutory	Advocate	High	Department of Transport and Planning
5.1.4	Provide wayfinding signage to support safe and efficient movement within town.	Non-statutory	Deliver	Low	

Action #	Action	Statutory / Non-Statutory	Council Role	Priority	Partners
<b>Open Space &amp; Infrastructure</b>					
6.1.1	Advocate for increased child care facilities and services within Warracknabeal.	Non-statutory	Advocate	High	Department of Education, Department of Health
6.1.2	Investigate future service needs for aged care and health services.	Non-statutory	Investigate	High	Department of Health
6.1.3	Facilitate the provision of an increased range of community services within Warracknabeal.	Non-statutory	Support	High	Community, Industry
6.1.4	Amend local policy within the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme to facilitate improved health care, education and community services.	Statutory	Implement (via a planning scheme amendment)	High	Department of Transport and Planning
6.2.1	Advocate for improved and equitable provision of fibre to the premises internet technology.	Non-statutory	Advocate	High	NBNCo
6.3.1	Continue advocating for funding to deliver the ANZAC Memorial Park Master Plan.	Non-statutory	Advocate	High	
6.3.2	Facilitate the staged redevelopment of ANZAC Memorial Park in accordance with the master plan.	Non-statutory	Deliver	Medium	



# 5. DRAFT PLANNING SCHEME CHANGES

## MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY & THE PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The vision, objectives and strategies of the Structure Plan will be embedded into local policies within the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.

This will include the following:

- **Clause 02.03-1 Settlement** to update the role of Warracknabeal to reflect the vision outlined within the Structure Plan.
- **Clause 11.01-1L-01 Warracknabeal** to introduce the key land use and development planning objectives and strategies outlined within the Structure Plan, as well as the Strategic Framework Plan outlined in the Structure Plan.
- **Clause 15.03-1L Heritage conservation in Yarriambiack** to introduce local policy guidance to support decision making on sites of heritage significance.
- **Clause 16.01-1L Medium density housing – Yarriambiack** to update policy direction for preferred locations for medium density housing within Warracknabeal.
- **Clause 17.04-1L Tourism in Yarriambiack** to introduce directions to support the provision of tourism accommodation within Warracknabeal.

## ZONES & OVERLAYS

The Structure Plan recommends that the Warracknabeal Former School site be rezoned to facilitate its redevelopment for residential purposes in the future.

The Structure Plan also makes recommendations for further strategic work to be undertaken to inform any further potential changes to zoning or the application of overlays to manage land use conflict. In the case of the potential for land in the investigation areas to be rezoned, a full strategic assessment of the land will be required. In particular, an assessment of environmental risks in relation to bushfire and flooding must be undertaken. If these risks cannot be managed to an acceptable level, the land must not be rezoned.

The potential for land use conflict from the concrete batching plant and wastewater treatment plant should be further investigated. If necessary, the Buffer Area Overlay should be considered to protect the community and manage adverse amenity, health and safety impacts.

- **Rezone the Warracknabeal Former School site** to facilitate its transition to residential development.
- **Investigate** the potential to expand the town to the investigation areas to the south and west and apply the Low Density Residential Zone if appropriate.
- **Investigate** whether the **Buffer Area Overlay** should apply to manage land use conflict.

## OPERATIONAL PROVISIONS

The implementation of the Structure Plan can also be achieved through the following changes to the operational provisions of the planning scheme:

This will include the following:

- Introducing the Warracknabeal Structure Plan as a background document in the schedule to **Clause 72.08 Background Documents**.
- Identifying further strategic work in the schedule to **Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work**.



**Yarriambiack**  
SHIRE COUNCIL