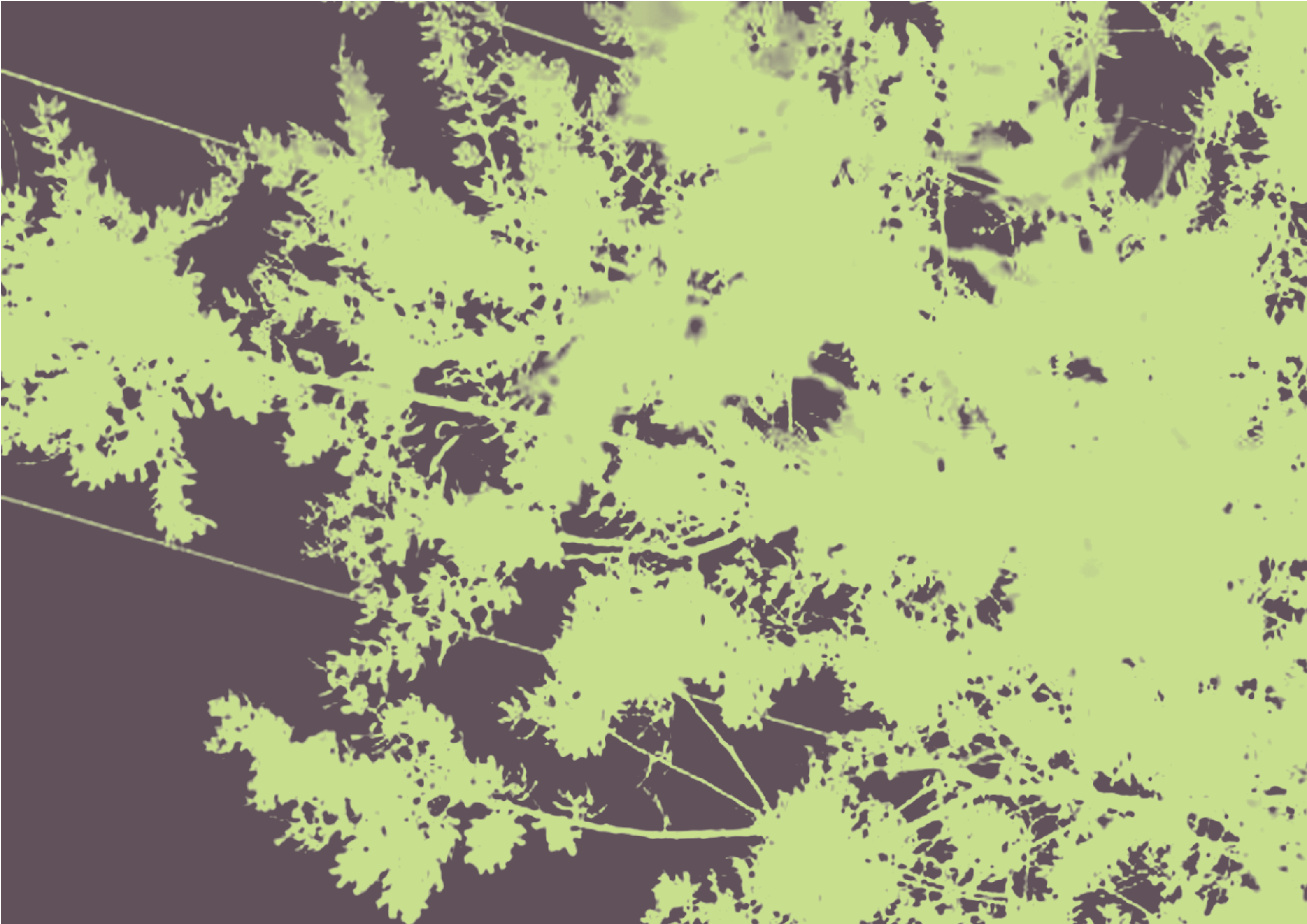




THE GREENBOOK

GREENSBOROUGH PRINCIPLE ACTIVITY CENTRE PLAN
EXHIBITION VERSION

GREENSBOROUGH AND PARTNERS
OCTOBER 2006





greensborough

principal activity centre plan

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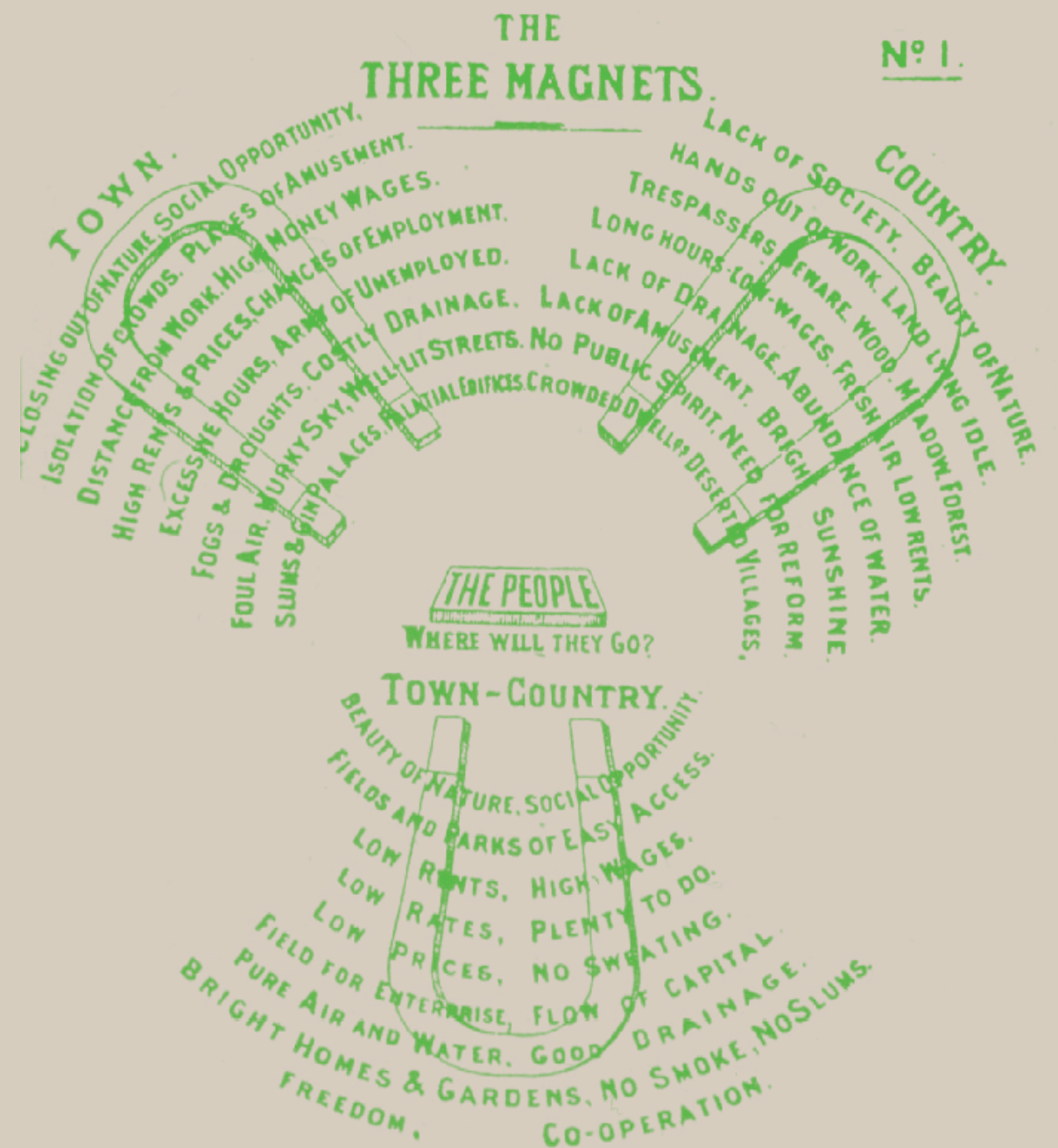
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“ If one can make a blanketing statement about the character of these (future) cities, it is that they will be literally green. This proposition might seem both too obvious and too simple. But an abundance of greenery in cities will be the mark of their efficiency and progress in the future. For virtually every issue that cities confront, nature has an answer. Our new urban gardens - ubiquitous on every horizontal - will supply us with oxygen, sequester carbon dioxide, control our temperatures, provide habitat for our fellow creatures, offer us food, grow construction materials, calm our gaze, and instrumentalise our autonomy. This condition must become the default. Our lives depend on it, on the incorporation of a universal we have always had.” **Michael Sorkin**



The Three Magnets, 1898
Ebenezer Howard, original proponent of the Garden City urban living strategy

Introduction

The Greensborough Principal Activity Centre Plan (The Plan) is the culmination of an extended period of consultation undertaken by the City of Banyule. This began in 2002 and 2003 with the development of a structure plan for the centre. This programme of consultation, which is ongoing, has been put in place to ensure that the concerns, issues and desires of the community of Greensborough are incorporated in the plan.

The GPAC Plan incorporates three main elements: a structure plan, an urban design framework (UDF) and a transport plan incorporating parking precinct plans. Together these components describe the conditions and requirements for the future development and growth of Greensborough.

Grow, Renew, Sustain

Greensborough is well placed to develop as one of Melbourne's most desirable urban centres, able to provide its community with a range of residential, recreational, retail and commercial opportunities. The Greensborough Plan is also geared towards expanding the town's appeal to visitors and patrons from well beyond the boundaries of both Greensborough and the City of Banyule.

The plan is predicated on the simple platform of growth, renewal and sustainability.

Growth will be organised around a strategic approach to expanded commercial, retail and residential development that recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the existing town centre. It will include additions to the existing retail base, provision of high quality, integrated civic and commercial facilities, and identified sites for medium and higher density residential development within the town centre.

Growth will also be controlled and coordinated to ensure that capital investment in the town centre delivers urban and civic outcomes commensurate with both the Council's and the community's aspirations for an improved and enlivened Greensborough town centre.

The concept of **renewal** in Greensborough acknowledges that the existing Greensborough town centre requires significant intervention and recognition of forces which have degraded the quality of the town's urban environment. Renewal will include a rejuvenated Main Street, a new civic community heart for the town centre, the provision of new recreational, aquatic and entertainment facilities, new impetus for commercial investment and expanded and integrated retail development east and west of Main Street.

A **sustainable** Greensborough means:

- a town which begins to invest strategically in its physical infrastructure, including buildings, transport, energy supply and water collection, according to environmentally sustainable applied design principles
- a town designed and planned to achieve civic and community outcomes including community engagement, civic events and cultural activity
- a town designed and planned to create and sustain new commercial opportunities and position itself as an important metropolitan commercial hub

The Plan also provides a framework for public sector investment in Greensborough. It facilitates a detailed planning process where community aspirations and minimum performance criteria for new development can inform all future investment in the town centre.





Glossary of Terms

COLAB

Greensborough Walk

DDO

GPAC

PDP

PDZ

RALC

The Plan

The Plaza

Indicative Development

UDF

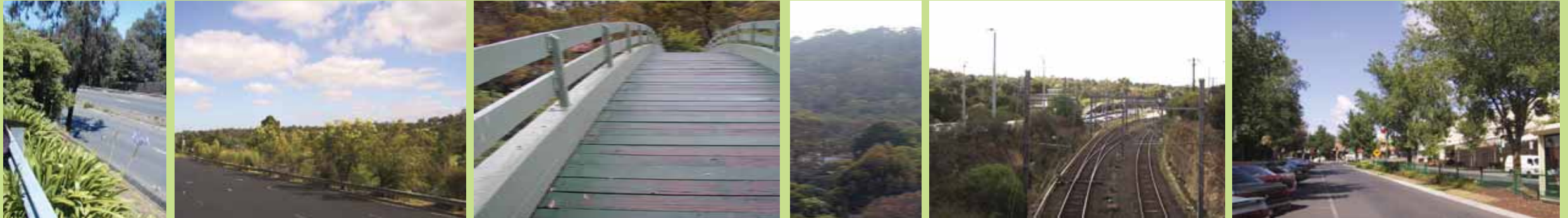
- Collaborative Workplace occupied by Banyule City Council
- New public realm linking Main Street with Flintoff Street, providing connections to Greensborough Plaza, RALC and COLAB and incorporating the Town Square
- Design and development overlay
- Greensborough Principal Activity Centre
- Priority Development Panel
- Priority Development Zone
- Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre
- The Greensborough Plan (This document: also known as the GPAC Plan or ‘The Green Book’)
- Greensborough Plaza Shopping Centre
- The plan drawing showing indicative development outcomes for the GPAC
- Urban design framework

About Greensborough



Main Street, Greensborough, 1889.

This painting hung in the Redcliffs home of the late Walter West for nearly 60 years, and is currently in the possession of his daughter, Mrs J. Cramp of Geelong.



A brief history

The Wurundjeri occupied the Greensborough region for many thousands of years before European settlement, and continued to live in campsites for some time after the Europeans arrived.

In 1836, Joseph Tice Gellibrand and a party of men from the Port Phillip Association explored the area which ultimately became known as the municipality of Banyule. In 1838 government surveyor Robert Hoddle surveyed the area and created three Parishes extending from Fitzroy northwards to beyond Diamond Creek: Greensborough is contained within this area. The section comprising most of present day Greensborough was purchased by Henry Smythe who, in 1841, sold it to Edward Green. Green was a squatter, soldier and mail contractor, and the person whom Greensborough was ultimately named after.

Squatters followed Green into the area in order to take advantage of verdant pastureland in the valleys around Greensborough, and life was difficult for these early settlers. Winter floods and summer bushfires frequently destroyed property, crops and stock, and bushrangers and horse stealers were common. Feelings of isolation were exacerbated by the dreadful condition of the roads, and home was often a tent or shanty, hastily constructed and far from comfortable.

Miners, labourers, trades people and small farmers settled in the villages around Greensborough. The discovery of gold in the early 1850s brought a large number of hopeful miners to the area. However, compared to the rich fields at Ballarat and Bendigo gold finds in the region were limited and the rush soon lost momentum.

In 1859 the Greensborough Road District was formed and by 1868 Greensborough had an Anglican church with a primary school (1855), a hotel, a post office and a store. The local population at this time was approximately 200 people, while the immediate area's population was approximately 670.

In January 1875 the Road Board District amalgamated with the Heidelberg Shire. This move was motivated by the Roads Board's difficulties in maintaining the roads around Greensborough. A state primary school replaced the Anglican school in 1878, while Greensborough continued to be primarily an agricultural area. In 1902 the railway line was extended from Heidelberg to Eltham and a station was built at Greensborough. The township's estimated population at this time was about 270.

After the railway extension there was a steady population growth, but despite this the area remained predominantly rural. From the 1920's to the late 1930's undeveloped sites in Greensborough were used for much-needed housing, with the proximity to Melbourne considered a benefit. In 1933 when Greensborough's population was around 1,000 it was a picturesque township at the centre of a vibrant horticultural district. The township had a bank branch, a hall, a park and a golf course.

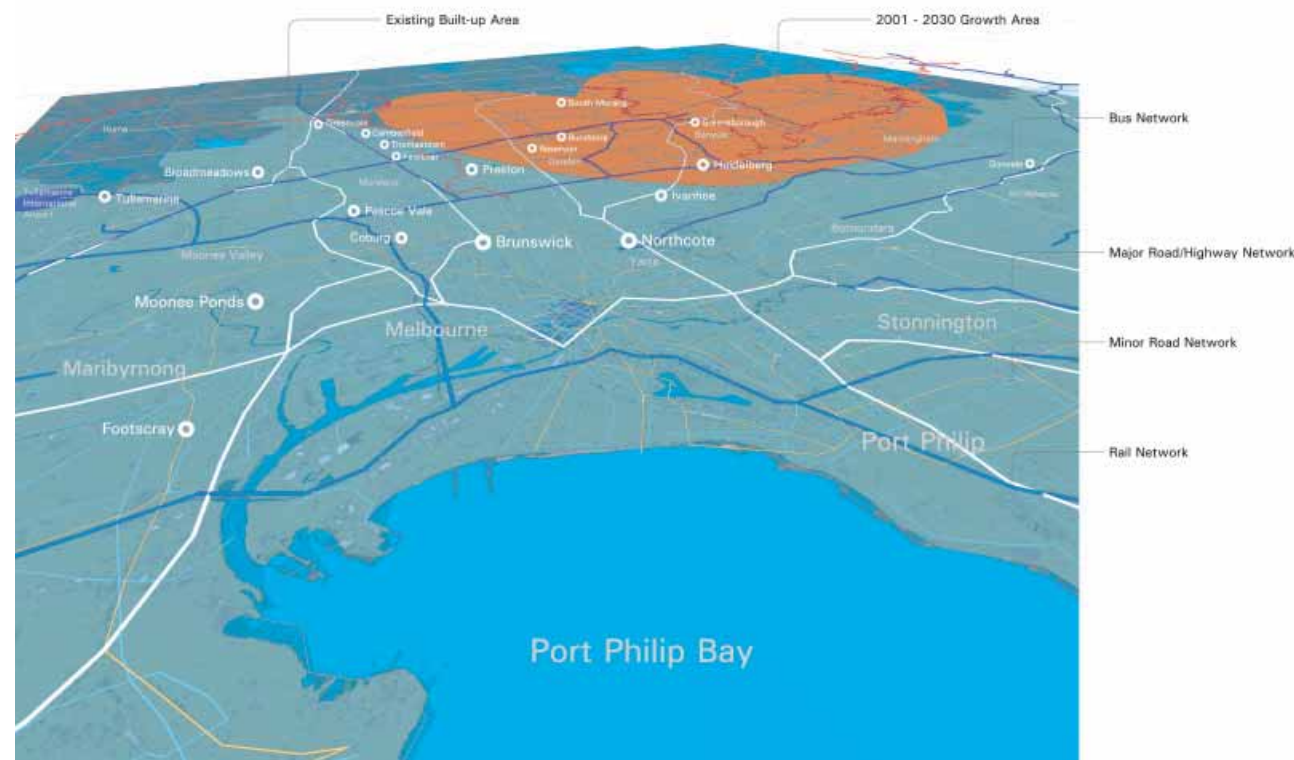
In 1942 the Diamond Valley Community Hospital was opened in Greensborough, and in 1961 a referendum favoured severance of the Greensborough and Diamond Valley region from the City of Heidelberg. This resulted in the Diamond Valley Shire being created in 1965, and it located its offices on the outskirts of Greensborough.

Since the 1960's, Greensborough has experienced sustained growth. Schools were opened in nearby Watsonia (1959 and 1962), as well as the Greenhills primary school in 1962. In 1994 Greensborough town became part of the City of Banyule, with half of suburban Greensborough in Banyule and the other half in the Shire of Nillumbik to the north. Growth has continued to this day, and the population has steadily increased.*

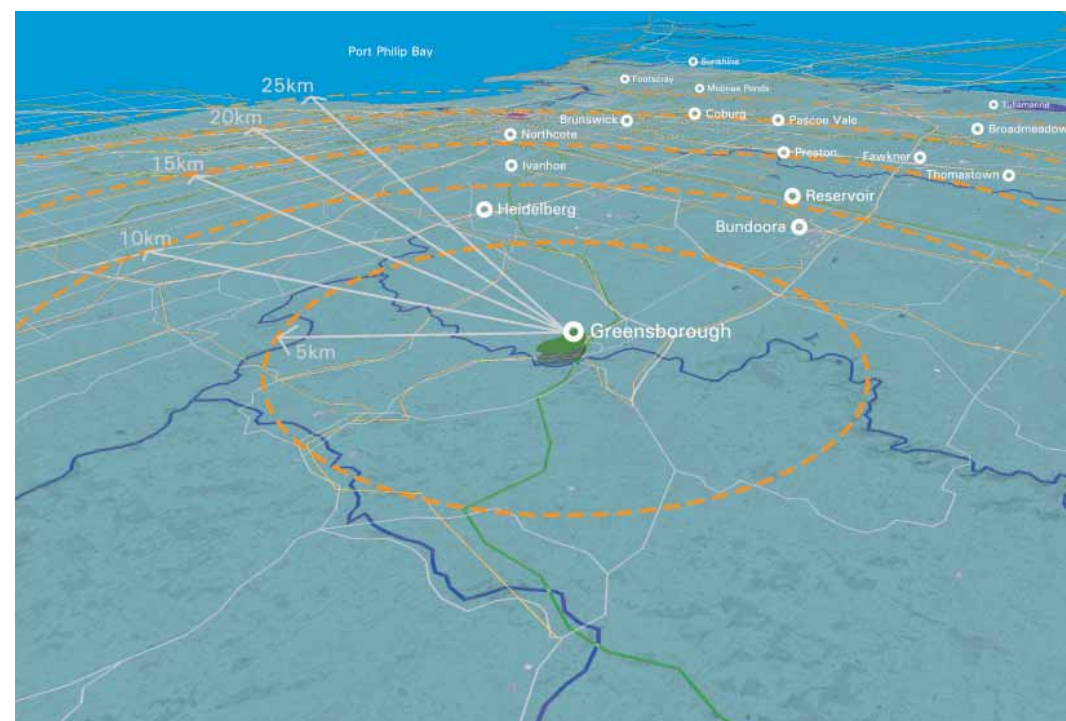
**Facts and figures in this section were drawn from the following sources:*

<http://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?TopicID=677>

<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ncas/multimedia/gazetteer/list/greensborough.html>



Aerial View from the Port Philip Bay showing Greensborough's relationship to greater Melbourne



Aerial View from the North of Greensborough showing relationship to greater Melbourne

The Greensborough Principal Activity Centre

Identified in the State Government Strategy Melbourne 2030 as a Principal Activity Centre, the Greensborough Principal Activity Centre (GPAC) is the central activities district and heart of the suburb of Greensborough. It is characterised by retail and commercial space, combined with some residential properties, across various locations to the north of Grimshaw Street. Low density residential properties predominate south of Grimshaw Street.

Melbourne 2030 defines Principal Activity Centres as having or aspiring to:

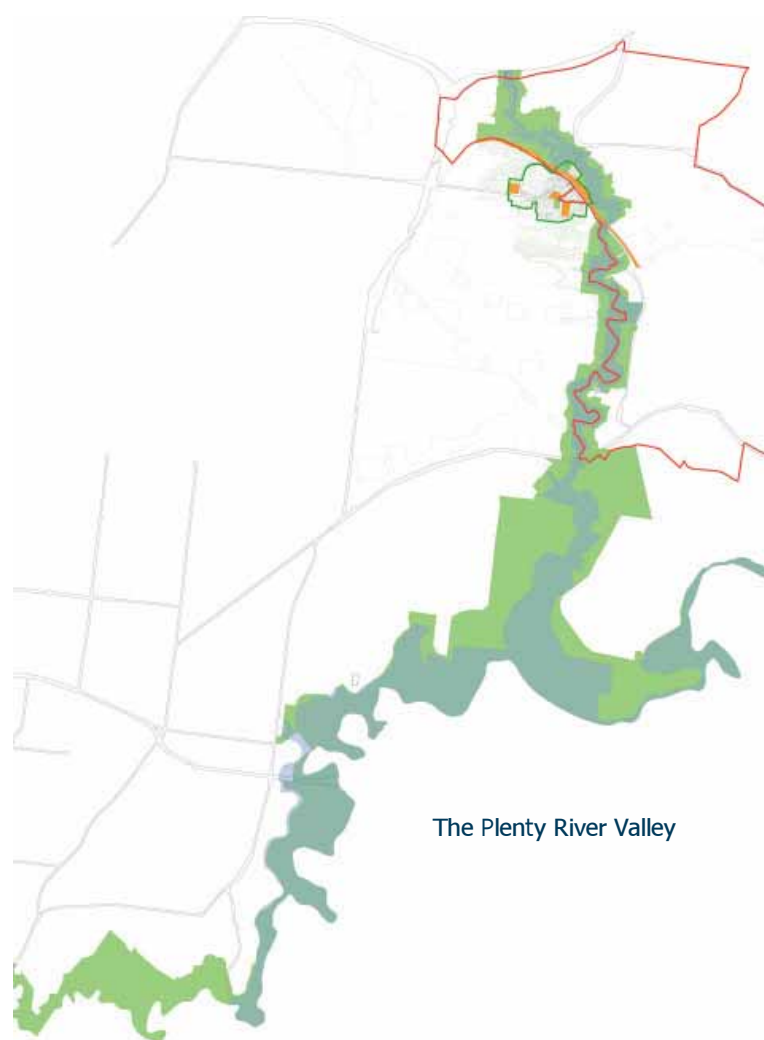
- a mix of activities that generate high numbers of trips, including business, retail, services and entertainment
- being generally well served by multiple public transport routes (being mainly on the rail network), and on the Principal Public Transport Network or capable of being linked to that network
- a very large catchment covering several suburbs, and attracting activities that meet metropolitan needs
- the potential to grow and support intensive housing developments without conflicting with surrounding land uses

- Melbourne 2030, pp.47

In addition to meeting these benchmark requirements, Greensborough has other unique and positive aspects. It is positioned in direct relation to the green setting of the Plenty River Valley and has a unique topography that allows beautiful views across the valley. The majority of the area encompassed by the GPAC line falls within a 400 metre, 5 minute walkability radius and its connection to greater Melbourne is already strong, with a rail link located at the northern border of the GPAC area.

Greensborough is also home to an established mix of retail premises including a major shopping centre, Greensborough Plaza, in the West Main Street Precinct that draws residents from a wide catchment area. With the area of the Plenty Valley, encompassing South Morang and Mernda, identified as a Melbourne 2030 growth area, Greensborough has the potential to draw on these future population reservoirs, given the right mix of services and diversity of attractions.

The Plan is concerned with enhancing these positive attributes and delivering a structure within which these aspirations can be attained.



The Plenty River Valley

*GreenEdge - A hill town's link to ecology and landscape
Greensborough's physical qualities, public space network (existing and projected), activity mix, transport infrastructure and distinctive identity form the basis of the town centre's unique development potential - the model, green urban village.*



— The GPAC boundary

Context and Environmental Analysis



The context and environment of the Greensborough Principal Activity Centre have been analysed to define the strengths and weaknesses of the existing town and to establish starting points of the development of a new urban framework.

Town centre boundaries

The boundary of the GPAC follows a circuit around the Centre, traversing residential streets to the south and west, skirting the Greensborough Plaza to the north (the Circuit), and then cutting a sweeping line along the Plenty River Valley to the east. It reflects the strong natural boundary of the Plenty River Valley to the north, reinforced by the railway cutting and the ring road, and a desire to incorporate existing residential areas to the south into a future, consolidated mixed use town centre.

Statement of character

The character of the GPAC is informed by a balance of urban, suburban and riparian environments. The town centre is poised upon a hill with extensive views of the green landscape of the Plenty River Valley. The views of the surrounding hills also give an appealing, distinctive quality to the place. This outlook and setting makes Greensborough unique in the context of metropolitan Melbourne, presenting a topography and landscape setting not readily associated with the city.

Greensborough Plaza is the major activity hub of the town centre, which dominates the north-eastern quadrant of the GPAC. The Plaza forms a major attractor to the Centre, and it has historically drawn people away from Main Street and into the interior of the mall. Finding a strategy for the coexistence of Main Street and the Plaza is a high priority in the planning process, and will have a direct impact on the character of a visit to the Centre.

Physical description

The hilly topography of the GPAC makes walking appear challenging, but the GPAC is still highly compact and walkable, even though precincts are largely disconnected. Better design of traffic infrastructure and the pedestrian network will enhance the pedestrian experience of the GPAC.

The special topographical character of the place needs to continue to be evident in the resulting environment. Main Street traverses both the high and low points of this topography, from the retail strip at the higher level down into the Plenty River Valley, beyond which it joins up with Diamond Creek Road.

Existing residential densities around the GPAC are typically low, with houses and units nestled in the abundant greenery of well-established gardens. Residential properties are generally concentrated in the southern and western areas within the GPAC boundary, and in the surrounding urban fabric around the whole perimeter.

The Plenty River Valley cuts a swathe through the surrounding residential expanse, wrapping around the north-eastern and northern parts of the GPAC boundary. The Plenty River Valley is well utilised by people for sporting, active and passive recreational purposes, but it could be better integrated with the Town Centre.

The northern part of the GPAC is dominated by the Greensborough Plaza shopping centre. A major entrance to the Plaza is located on Main Street, and extensive areas of parking are located to the north, incidentally commanding excellent views.

The eastern edge of the GPAC sees the ground fall away, with a large drop on the alignment of the railway lines. Access to the station presents a substantial challenge in any consideration of the GPAC.



Entries and Gateways

Entry to the Centre cuts across the GPAC boundary at key points. The most dramatic of these is the eastern arrival, the sweeping descent into the Plenty River Valley and again up the hill, travelling from Diamond Creek Road onto Main Street.

The entry along Grimshaw Street from the west is less dramatic, and is marked by continuous powerlines on the Street forming a visually unappealing entry to the Town Centre. This route feeds indirectly into Main Street at the western end, which veers to the north east.

Natural systems

The Plenty River and the river valley corridor form the major natural systems associated with the GPAC.



The river valley is a site of regional environmental significance and is part of the important wildlife corridor between the Plenty Gorge and the Yarra River. The vulnerable swift parrot has been recorded in yellow box trees in the area, and the river is critical to the movement of platypus and native fish. The existing native vegetation requires protection and enhancement which will contribute to the recreational appeal of the river valley.

This riparian landscape is a tremendous asset of the GPAC, and is well utilised by the community. It also provides visual relief, forming a green backdrop to the views from the Town Centre. The views to the north and north east are particularly expansive. The River itself forms an excellent recreation corridor.

Traffic and road network

Traffic effectively divides the GPAC along the Grimshaw/Main Street axes, each of which carry fast-moving traffic. Traffic conditions around the Circuit also form a 'hard' boundary to the northern edge of the GPAC, whereas to the south the GPAC line moves through quieter residential secondary streets.

To improve the pedestrian experience of the GPAC it is logical to consider limiting faster and heavier traffic to the perimeter roads, particularly around the Circuit to the north, connecting Grimshaw on the west with Main Street on the east.

Public transport infrastructure

Greensborough is serviced by both bus and train infrastructure. Bus movement is currently directed along Main Street, resulting in high traffic levels on this Street and the creation of an environment hostile to pedestrians. The level and direction of bus traffic has demanded the erection of a barrier down the median strip of the Street to control pedestrian movement.

Access outside of peak hours to the Station is a major issue for residents of Greensborough, and services are infrequent and poorly connected, with low reliability and poor connection to bus services. With its colossal stair and non-compliant ramps the station is unsuitable for aged, infirm or disabled users. Any consideration or reconfiguration of the Station must confront the issue of levels and equitable access directly.

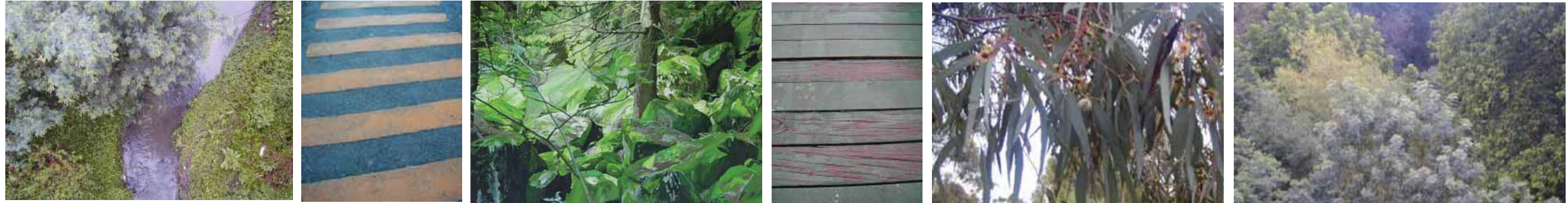
Summary

The weaknesses of the urban environment of the GPAC will be directly addressed in the Plan. These include the challenge of achieving access across the picturesque but hilly terrain, the lack of pedestrian paths and links, disconnection at key points such as the railway station, the over-prioritisation of vehicle movement across the GPAC and the lack of a distinct and coherent urban and architectural character.

The strengths of the GPAC are the abundant natural systems and green spaces, the views afforded by the hilly topography and the general economic and social vitality of the centre. These strengths will be reinforced in the Plan, which takes advantage of the critical mass of activities in the GPAC to create a series of vibrant new public spaces. These spaces, tied together by a new network of pedestrian paths, will see Greensborough transformed.

The Vision

A Diverse, Civic, Greener Greensborough



The Greensborough Principal Activity Centre will be famous for its extraordinary natural attributes, an urban area connected to the natural beauty of the Lower Plenty River Valley. New development will provide visual linkages as well as an extension of the green landscape between the Valley and the activity centre.

A “Green Edge” will define the centre’s entrances and reflect the landscape setting, while greenery and landscaping treatments throughout will provide both cohesiveness and define the role of parts of the centre. The activity centre will be recognised for its sense of community, sustainability and connectivity to and within the centre. A coherent public realm will be created with new public spaces including the centrally located town square, where people of all ages can meet, relax or enjoy public events.

Health and wellbeing will be the focus of the transformed centre with the Aquatic Centre, spa facilities and a host of health and wellbeing services being accommodated in the centre. The diversity of higher density mixed use development will cater for the varied needs of the Greensborough population, including providing new opportunities for people to live in the centre. The centre will provide expanded retail, commercial, entertainment, leisure and civic uses to serve the needs of the local and regional area.

Visitors and residents will be encouraged to walk the centre or use public transport rather than use their cars.



Walkability Radius from Main Street





Destination Drivers

Destination Points

Greensborough's Attractions

The Plan incorporates important destination drivers, such as:

- Leisure shopping areas – where it's fun, even just to look
- Highly interactive sports experience
- Places for public events
- Spaces in which to relax

In a world that's increasingly commoditised and homogenised the renewed Greensborough will provide a point of difference. It already possesses retailers that provide unique shopping experiences not to be found elsewhere in Melbourne. The renewed Greensborough will have experiential and interactive leisure facilities integrated into the Centre.

The renewed Greensborough will meet the diverse needs of its population. Greensborough's people, drawn together by the range of experience it offers, will be the essential vitality of Greensborough. At the same time, the feeling of safety and 'homeliness' so prized by the community will still be there. Young and old, family or individual, resident or visitor, worker, shopper, fun-seeker, or people wanting just to hang out, they'll all discover things not found in any other

Regional Centre.

For business owners the benefit will be Greensborough's strong draw as a destination. A village that can't sustain itself commercially doesn't feel as positive as people would like and certainly won't guarantee its long term viability. The Plan seeks to create a mixed-use environment where economic viability is driven by high levels of patronage across a range of activities, from shopping and swimming to actually living in the town centre.

The Structure Planning Process

Objectives of the structure planning process

The Greensborough Plan will meet a broad spectrum of objectives that can be loosely categorized as social, economic and environmental. A summary of each is provided below.

Social Objectives Include

- Improved liveability including safety, convenience, comfort and aesthetics within the GPAC. This objective has been met at every level of the plan, from broad strategies down to the visualizations of potential development across the GPAC.
- Increased opportunities for social interaction and focal points for the community. The Plan provides for a range of new social gathering points and promenades throughout the GPAC.
- Protection of and contribution to the area's natural, historical and cultural heritage. The Plan identifies key heritage aspects of Greensborough's historic urban and regional role.
- Improved accessibility of a wide range of services and facilities. The Greensborough Plan creates a stronger and more natural network of services and facilities, encouraging better access by vehicle, public transport, freight transport and on foot.
- Good relationships to surrounding development, land uses and landscapes. The 'edges' of the GPAC have been respected in the plan and defined by broad tree plantings. This marks the boundary of the GPAC, which supports intensification of uses suitable to adjoining land uses and landscapes.
- Improved transport choice for all users, through the strengthening of transport networks and the shaping of the urban environment to support sustainable transport choices.
- Improved public health through good planning, through the creation of inherently healthy urban environments with good access to daylight, fresh air and views of greenery and distant vistas.

Economic Objectives Include

- Contributing to the economic effectiveness of the network of centres, providing wide community benefit. The Greensborough described in the Plan will be a vital economic centre, able to attract commercial and residential investment in competition and partnership with the network of other centres.
- The promotion of urban form that minimizes overall land and transport requirements. The Greensborough Plan promotes a consolidation of use and density that will allow growth without placing undue additional stress on land and transport requirements. More efficient land use and infrastructure provision characterize the plan.
- Improved freight movement and business logistics. The consolidation of transport and freight movement and delivery in the GPAC will lead to a more efficient logistical infrastructure. The creation of a revitalized civic centre will help improve business vitality, which in turn will positively influence employment opportunities within the GPAC.

Environmental Objectives Include

- Encouragement of urban transport systems and user movement patterns that limit pollution from fossil fuels. A significant portion of Greensborough's PAC has been engineered to encourage a culture of vehicle use. By prioritizing pedestrian movement and the more effective use of public transport infrastructure the Greensborough Plan will encourage systems and patterns of movement that rely less on the use of fossil fuels.
- Improve energy efficiency in building design, siting and layout. The siting and massing of proposed development patterns within the Framework Plan take into account efficient energy use and the creation of climatically sound urban spaces.

Consultation methodology

The Plan is predicated on a methodology of broad consultation through a variety of channels and means, including:

- Continual input from the Greensborough Community Consultative Committee, a cross section of residents, traders and community representatives
- Community presentations and workshops throughout the period of the planning process
- Presentations to councillors and senior council officers and other levels of government
- a whole-of-government approach across local, state and federal tiers and departments

This has ensured that the concerns of the broadest possible cross section of the community are accommodated in the Plan.