

Prospect Vale-Blackstone Heights Structure Plan

Prepared for
Meander Valley Council

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1	Context <i>Population growth, demographic change, the planning context, community priorities, issues and constraints, assets and opportunities</i>	Page 4
2	Vision and Strategies <i>The vision for Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights, the vision for Westbury Road Activity Centre, planning strategies</i>	Page 11
3	A Framework for Urban Growth <i>Framework plan, land use and housing, roads and public transport, open space, walking and cycling</i>	Page 16
4	Westbury Road Activity Centre <i>A sub-regional activity centre, community facilities and services, built form and design, movement</i>	Page 24
5	Implementation <i>Development fronts, infrastructure, further investigations</i>	Page 29



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What is the Structure Plan?

The suburbs of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights have accommodated a significant proportion of residential growth in Northern Tasmania during the last fifteen years. Between 1996 and 2011 the combined population of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights grew by around 97 persons per year, or 1.8% per annum. By comparison, Tasmania as a whole has grown by an average of 0.7% per annum over the last decade.

The local population is expected to grow at a rate of 1.4% per annum over the coming decades. To accommodate this population growth, there is a need to plan for development and investment in the area.

The Structure Plan provides a blueprint for this development in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights for the next twenty years. It identifies where new housing should be located, the future character of the area, and the facilities needed to service our growing community.

How was the Structure Plan developed?

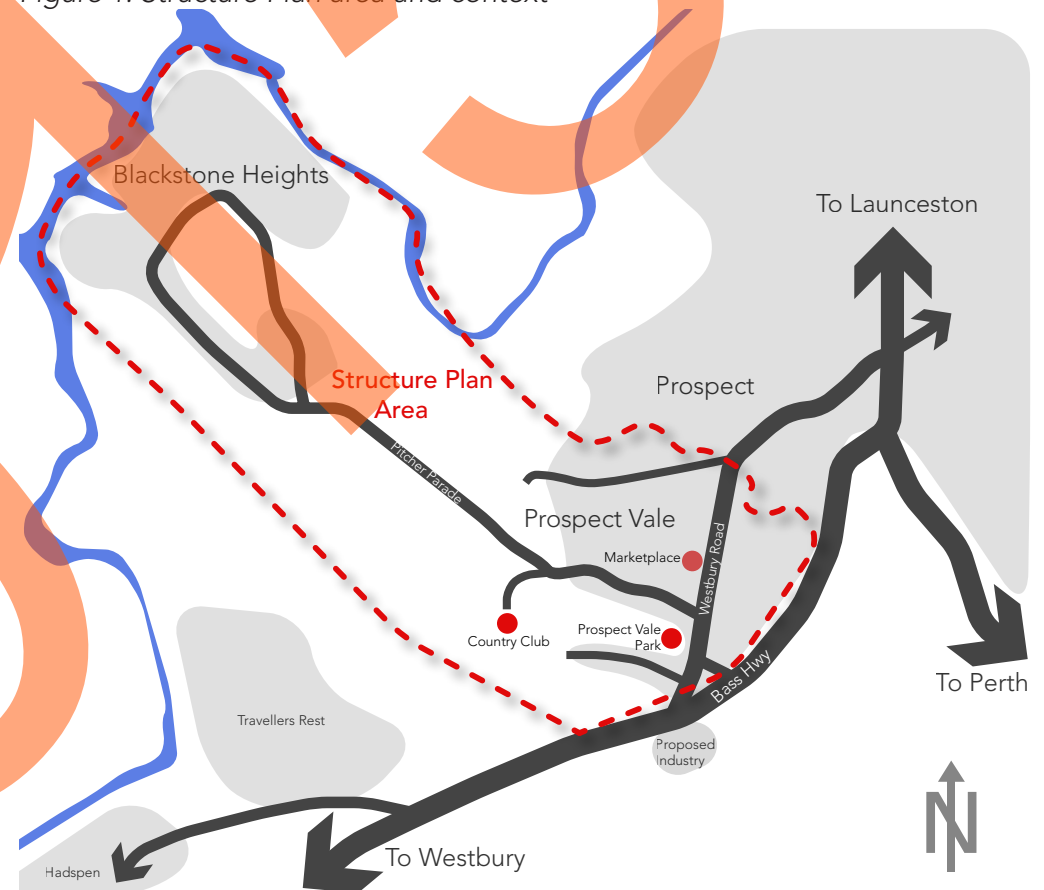
Three rounds of consultation with the local community, landholders, and government stakeholders have informed the preparation of this Structure Plan. Initial consultation was undertaken in March 2014, with follow up consultation in June 2014 to seek feedback on preliminary development concepts. Public comment was received on a Draft Structure Plan in August 2014. In total, over 300 stakeholders participated in the consultation process and have informed the development of this Structure Plan.

This consultation was complemented by urban planning, design and transport analysis to understand the constraints, opportunities and future needs of the local community. This analysis has included site assessments, demographic projections, transport demand modeling, and facilities and services analysis.

Structure Plan Area

The Structure Plan encompasses the suburbs of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights, extending from the Bass Highway in the south-west to Lake Trevallyn in the north-east.

Figure 1: Structure Plan area and context



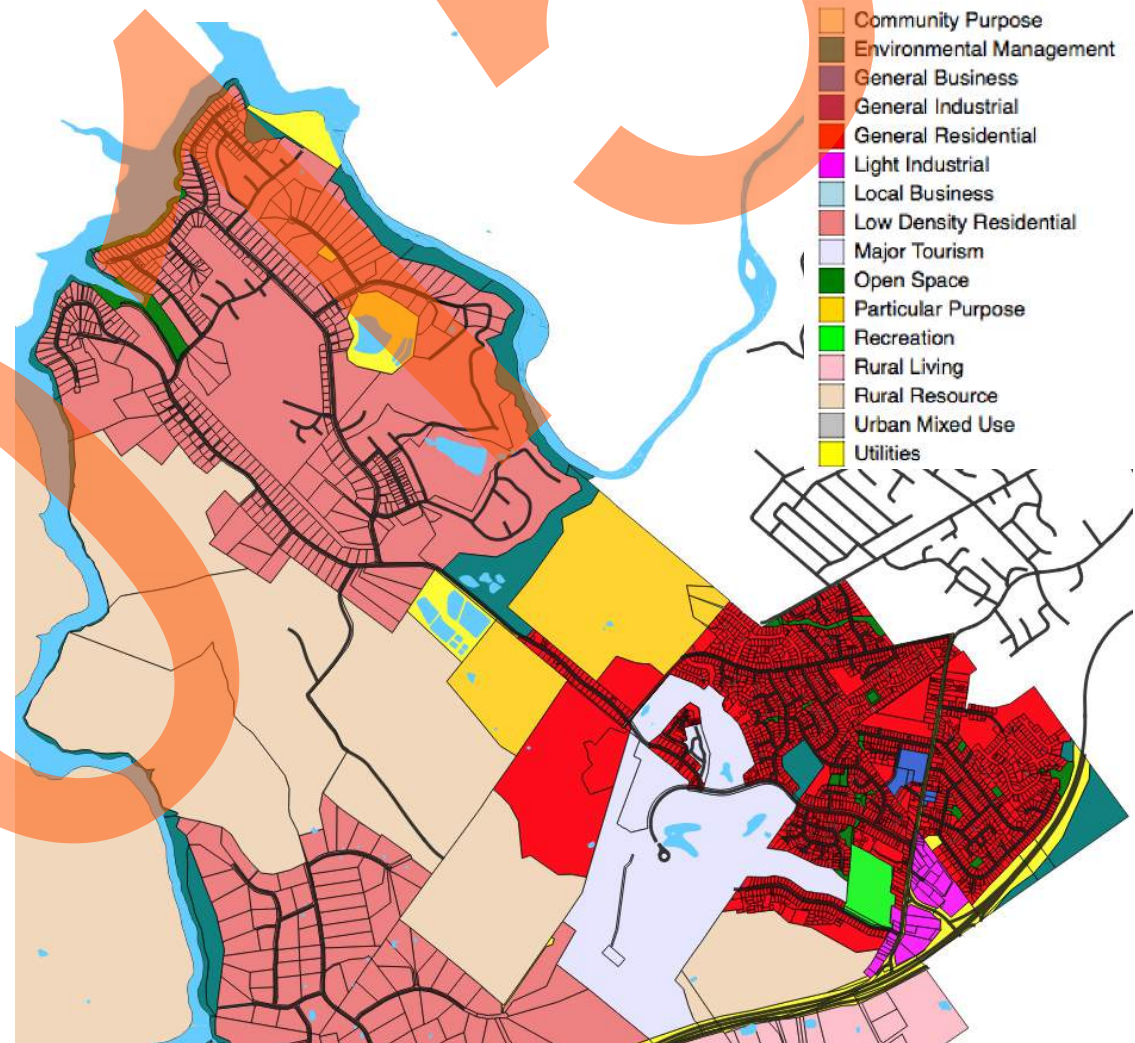
1. Context

The Planning Context

There are a number of existing local and regional strategic planning documents that provide direction for land use and development in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. The key strategic land use objectives in these documents include:

- Recognition that Prospect vale and Blackstone Heights will continue to be one of greater Launceston's primary growth areas
- Recognition that Prospect Vale is well placed to grow into an Activity Centre that services the growing population to the south and south west of Launceston
- Recognition that there is potential for further housing within Prospect Vale, especially within the current Particular Purpose Zone (see Figure 2)
- Improved and alternative access to Blackstone Heights for emergency management
- Maintenance of the scenic vistas that define the area
- Maintain the low-density character and environment in Blackstone Heights
- Transition the industrial uses in Donald's Avenue to commercial and community uses
- Create an employment activity node south of Prospect Vale (see Figure 1)
- Build greater diversity and choice into the housing market

Figure 2: Current land use zoning (Meander Valley Planning Scheme)



Population Growth and Demographic Change

Between 1996 and 2011 the combined population of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights grew by around 97 persons per year, or 1.8% per annum. This compared to 0.7% across Tasmania.

Population projections undertaken for the study area by Geografia, adapted from State Government forecasts, suggest that the population will grow at a rate of 1.4% per annum. By 2031, the population of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights will reach 8,600 residents, or an additional 1,900 residents when compared to 2011.

This population growth, coupled with decreasing household sizes in the area, will create demand for an additional 1,700 homes in the area by 2031. Current available and appropriately zoned land supply can accommodate around 50% of this growth. Additional land will need to be released to accommodate projected demand.

Like much of Tasmania, Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights both have an ageing population. The median age in the area increased from 34 in 2001 to 41 in 2011. As the population continues to age and households become smaller, new forms of housing, services and infrastructure will need to respond the community's changing needs.

At the same time, parts of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights remain popular with families and younger households. In Blackstone Heights, for example, 32% of the residents were under 20 years of age in 2011. This compared to 26% across Tasmania. The service needs of younger families and youth need to be considered in planning for the future of the area.

Figure 3: Historical and projected population and dwellings

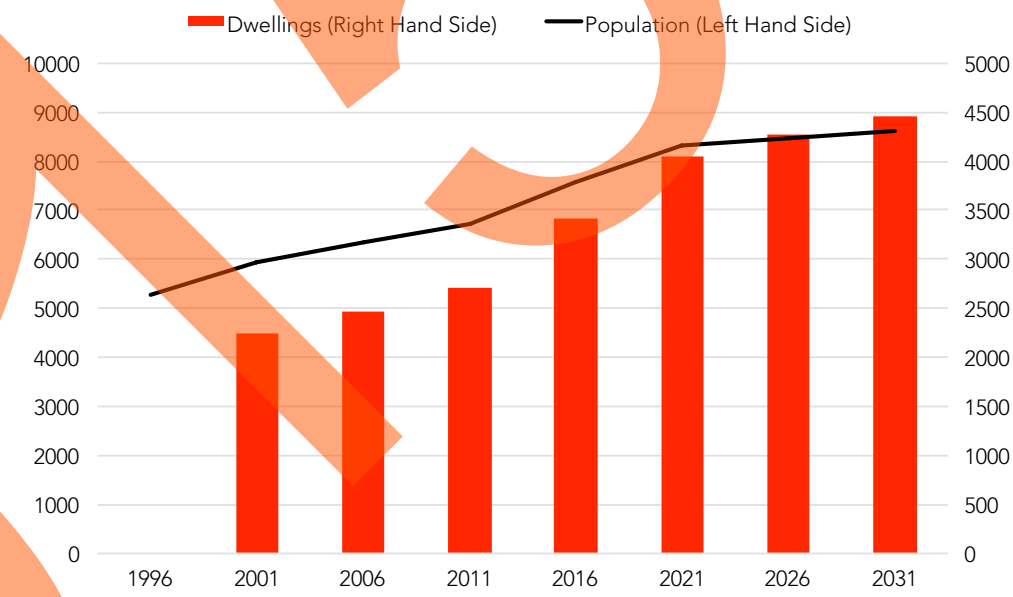


Table 1: Historical and projected population, dwellings and household size

Year	Population	Dwellings	Household Size
1996	5275		
2001	5941	2244	2.65
2006	6362	2460	2.59
2011	6727	2713	2.48
2016	7584	3415	2.22
2021	8310	4047	2.05
2026	8469	4276	1.98
2031	8625	4467	1.93

Community Priorities

Consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders and the wider community over two stages in March and June 2014. Over 300 people actively participated in workshops, surveys, drop-in sessions and one-to-one interviews, highlighting community priorities:

Community disconnection – physical and social

In Blackstone Heights, the lack of pedestrian pathways were an important issue. In Prospect Vale, issues of community cohesion, social connection and limited community activities were prominent.

Lack of a physical 'community heart'

A related theme was the lack of a community 'heart' or focal point. The lack of community facilities, local level retail and community meeting points in the study area were highlighted.

Access risks in Blackstone Heights

There was high awareness of the safety issues associated with having a single road access into Blackstone Heights, especially during emergencies such as bush fires.

Welcoming further growth

There was strong support for further population growth, recognising the service, facility and employment benefits it would bring.

Access to Lake Trevallyn and the river

Poor public access to Lake Trevallyn limits recreational opportunities along the Lake for walkers, watercraft and swimming. Creating better pedestrian links and infrastructure around the Lake was a key theme throughout consultation.

Public transport

Infrequent bus services, lack of shelters and poor walking access to bus stops were prominent issues.

Internet access

Poor Internet speeds throughout the study area were commonly cited as an impediment to both home businesses and entertainment.

Traffic issues

Many community members noted traffic issues at particular 'pinch points' including Mount Leslie Road near where it meets Westbury Road.

Value of the natural environment

There is a strong value of the local natural amenity and environment, including open space, Lake Trevallyn, views and hills in the area.

Regionally significant tourism assets

There is an opportunity to build upon tourism assets such as Country Club Casino and Golf Course, and Richardson's Harley Davidson.

Figure 4: Community input into the Structure Plan

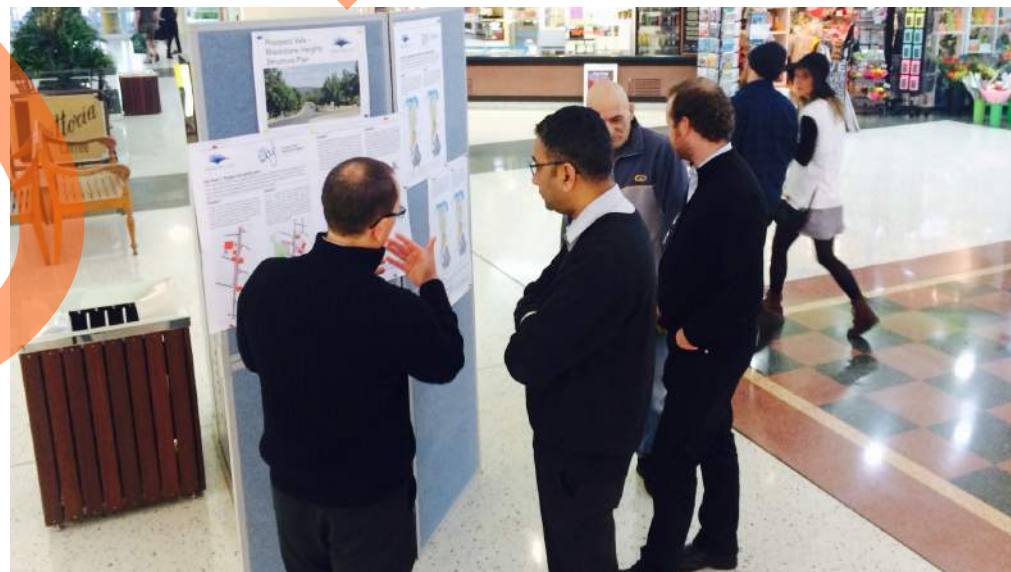


Figure 5: Community values about the local area

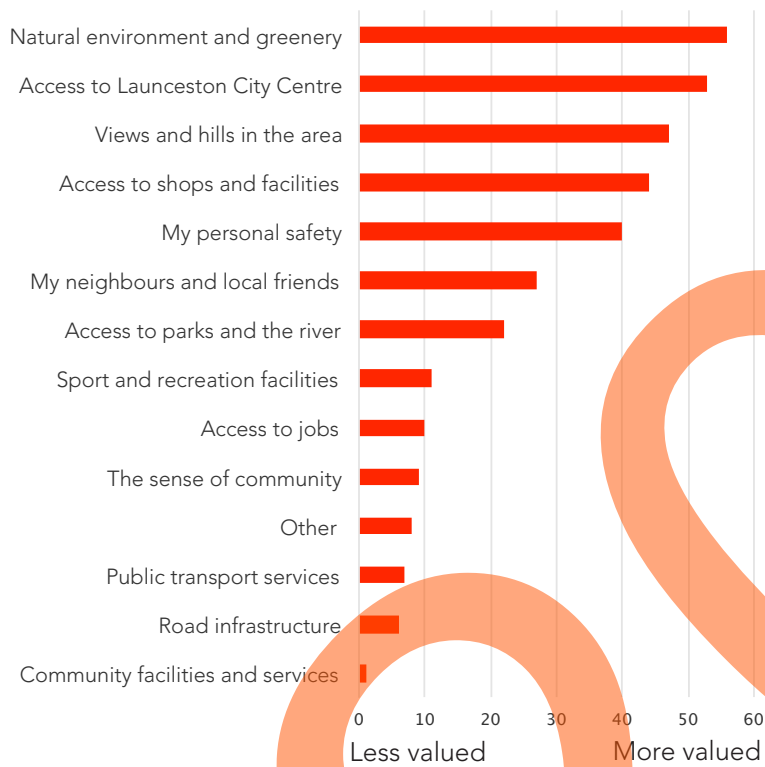
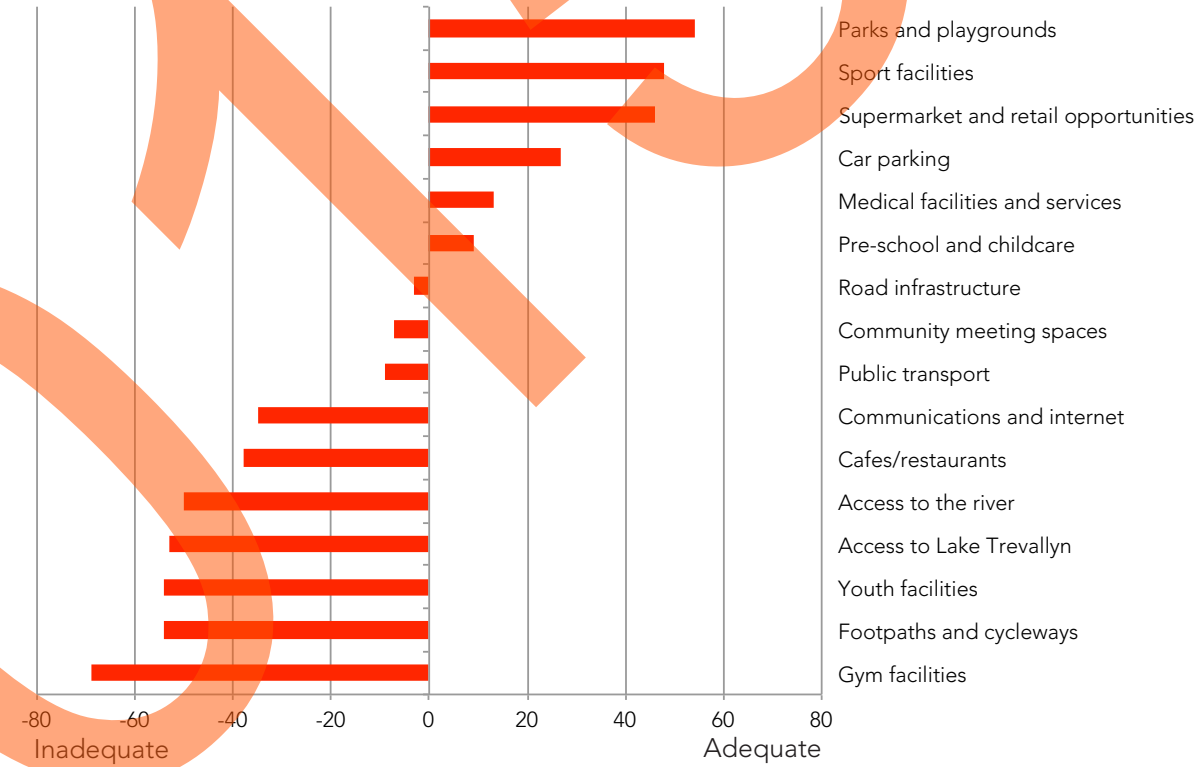


Figure 6: Community perceptions about facility and service provision



Issues and Constraints

Pressures on active open space in the area

Sports ovals at Prospect Vale Park are at capacity, due to the regional role they provide within greater Launceston. There is the opportunity to develop new active open space in growth areas of the suburb. However, such space would not be optimally located for regional use.

Uncertainty about the sewerage treatment facility

There is uncertainty about the relocation of the treatment plant in the long-term, and limitations for what can be developed within the buffer around the facility.

Activity centre fragmentation

The distance between existing and proposed commercial activities on Westbury Road poses challenges for planning the activity centre.

Conflict between residential and industrial uses

There is a need to resolve land use conflict in the **Donalds Avenue area**. There is potential for the new supermarket approval to be a catalyst for further transition. However, fragmented ownership of small lots around Donalds Avenue poses challenges for changes in the area in the medium term.

Future of the Department of Education site

The site on Las Vegas Drive is not ideal for use as a school, and development is inhibited by native vegetation. There may be an opportunity to transfer the site to alternative uses.

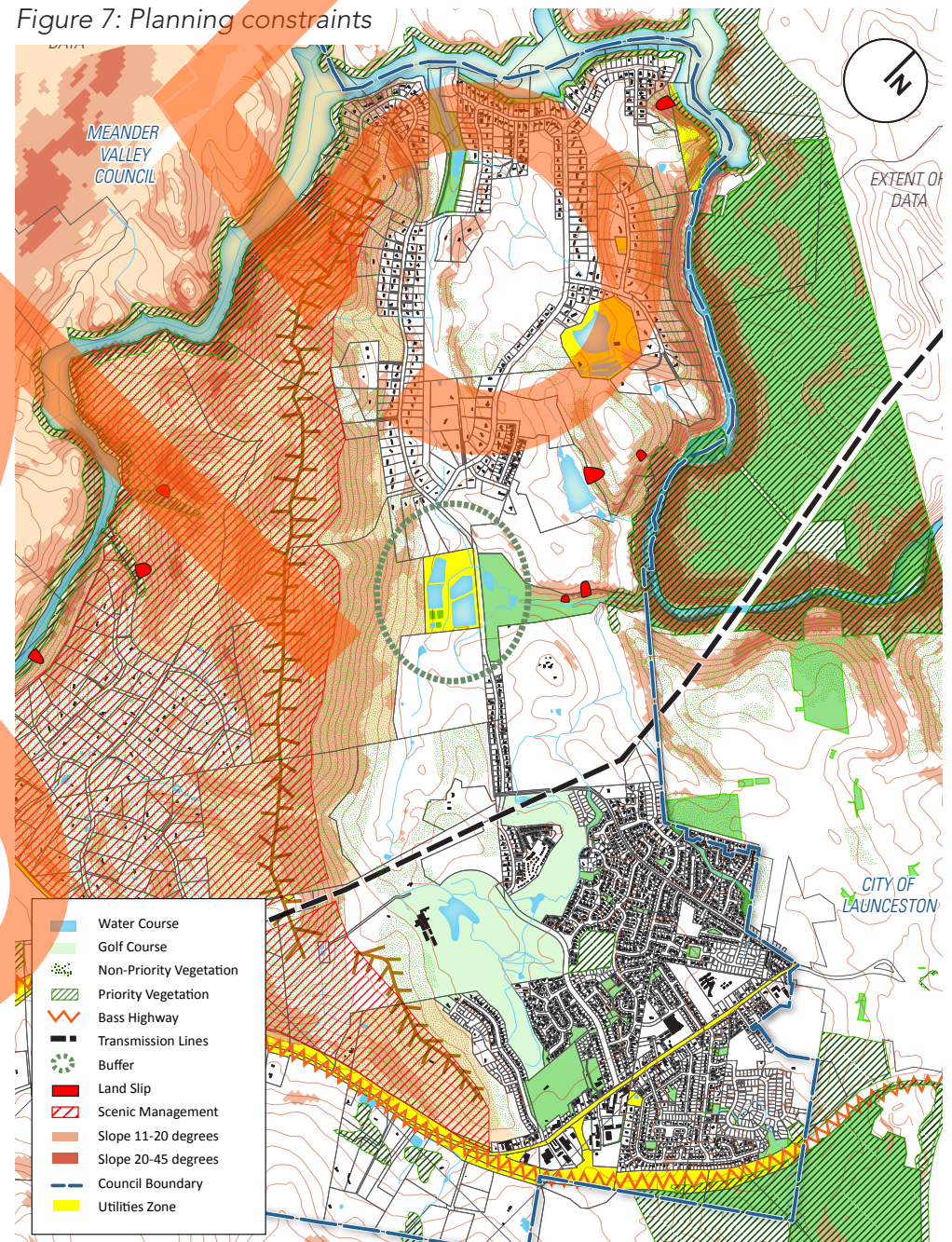
Topography and storm-water

The steep topography in parts of Blackstone Heights sometimes makes construction difficult, and means that storm-water run off needs to be carefully managed.

Fire risk

Vegetation along the Blackstone Hills, as well as one road access into Blackstone Heights, create fire risks in this area.

Figure 7: Planning constraints



Opportunities and Assets

Spare capacity in the existing road network

There is sufficient capacity in existing roads such as Country Club Avenue and Mt Leslie Road to cater for projected population growth in the area. Specific 'pinch points' in the network can be resolved through reconfiguration.

The potential for a new neighbourhood centre

There is potential for a small activity centre to develop in Blackstone Heights. A small centre would provide local level retail (such as a convenience store, and potentially takeaway). It could also provide the focal point for any new community facilities. These would be supported by a growing population.

Opportunities for a network of linear open space

Creeks and encumbered land throughout the growth areas of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights provide an opportunity to create a connected network of open space. This network would enhance community connectivity.

Increasing demand for well located, smaller housing

The large proportion of strata housing in Prospect Vale is representative of high demand for smaller dwellings from an ageing population. Smaller housing will optimally be located around public transport and activity centres.

Opportunities to expand housing demand

The quality of the natural environment in the area is unique amongst northern Tasmania's growth areas, providing an opportunity for high quality development that is differentiated from other growth areas. This could build upon environmental assets, and focus on sustainable design.

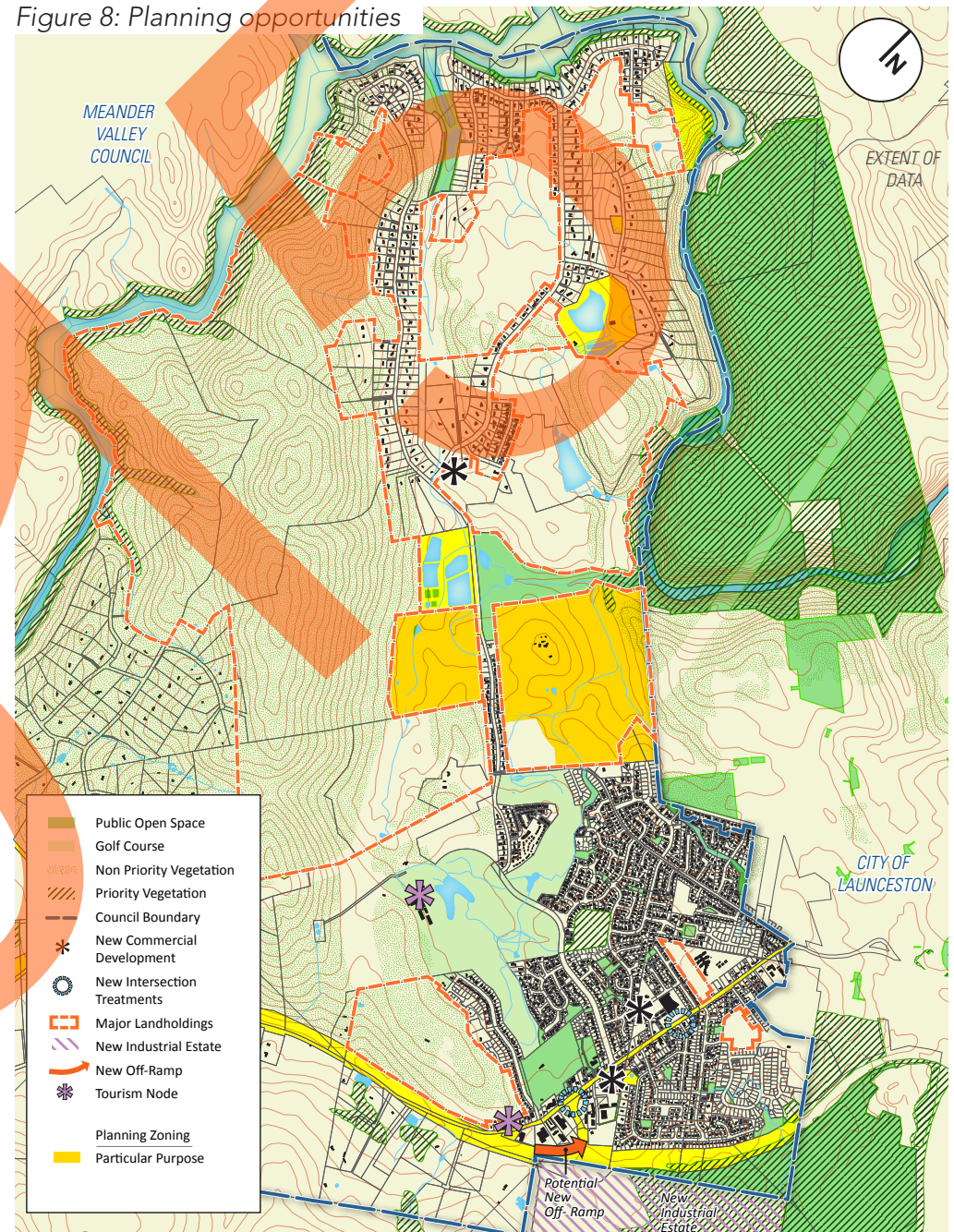
Good secondary active transport network

There is potential to reinforce and extend the existing secondary transport network for cyclists and pedestrians in Prospect Vale.

Large, strategic development sites on Westbury Road

There are several large potential development sites within proximity to Westbury Road that could accommodate higher uses in the future (e.g. medium density housing, aged care or commercial activity).

Figure 8: Planning opportunities





2. Vision and Strategies

The vision below describes the desired future for Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. It has been informed by consultation with the community, as well as the analysis of planning issues and opportunities detailed in the preceding chapter.

The Vision for Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights

In 2035, Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights will be a growing community, known for the quality of the natural environment, a distinctive lifestyle, and easy access to services.

A larger population will support the development of new shops, services and community facilities, clustered together to form a 'community heart' along Westbury Road.

A diverse mix of housing will cater to the needs of an ageing population – from medium density housing choices through to lower density housing.

Investments in new road infrastructure will make it safer and easier to move around the area. New active transport pathways will encourage residents to walk and cycle to shops, open space, Lake Trevallyn and the South Esk River, and support a healthier community.

Prospect Vale's role as a tourism destination will be supported by these enhanced connections, as well as the development of new attractions and entertainment facilities, creating new jobs in the local area.

The Vision for Westbury Road Activity Centre

Westbury Road will be a sub-regional commercial and community centre, servicing the growing population south-west of Launceston. The Centre will accommodate a wider mix of retail, entertainment and community facilities. Easy car access and frequent bus services will make the Activity Centre accessible for residents across Greater Launceston.

Westbury Road will form the spine of this Activity Centre, extending from Mace Street in the north to the Bass Highway on-ramp in the south. New shops and facilities will face Westbury Road, activating the street and creating a community focal point. Changes to the street, including beautification, will draw residents and shoppers to Westbury Road.

The Activity Centre will be a key driver of the community's quality of life in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. Better walking and cycling links to the Centre will help local residents enjoy the benefits of this improved Centre.

Planning Strategies

Create a network of linear open space, pedestrian and cycling pathways

A network of open space and off-road pathways will connect residents to services, parkland, and environmental assets. Connected open space and pathways will encourage recreation, walking, cycling and a healthy community. There is an opportunity to use natural assets and encumbered land to form this network in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights.

Strategies

- Maximise connections between individual pieces of open space to create a network.
- Extend open space to major community and commercial activities and services.
- Plan for open space and pathways that follow natural linear networks such as creeks, low points and ridge lines.

Distribute road traffic to enhance safety and minimise congestion

Country Club Avenue provides a single route in and out of Country Club Tasmania, Blackstone Heights, and parts of Prospect Vale. This creates a safety risk during emergencies, and capacity issues during major events. New road investments provide alternative access points, and distribute traffic across the wider network.

Strategies

- Provide alternative to Country Club Avenue for those accessing Blackstone Heights, Prospect Vale and Country Club Tasmania.
- Create a more permeable network of roads in the growth areas of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights
- Encourage new development in Prospect Vale to connect to both Mount Leslie Road and Country Club Avenue wherever possible.

Protect and leverage the area's environmental qualities

New residents to Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights are attracted by environmental values in the area – including gorges, hills, open space, and water access. Protecting, enhancing and creating better linkages to environmental assets will benefit the community and differentiate housing development in the context of Greater Launceston.

Strategies

- Maximise connections between urban areas and environmental assets such as Lake Trevallyn, the South Esk River and Cataract Gorge.
- Maximise vistas to natural assets such as waterways and hills.
- Consider the prominence, profile, and vegetation values when exploring potential development on hills in the area.
- Maintain predominately low-density housing in Blackstone Heights.
- Promote environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in new housing.

Develop new community focal points

There are currently limited community services available within the Prospect Vale-Blackstone Heights area. The limited services, and lack of a 'community heart' has been a key concern for the local community. Clustering new commercial development with new community services and activities provides the opportunity for developing a strong community 'focal point'.

Strategies:

- Cluster community activities and facilities together in 'activity centres'
- Plan for the medium to long term provision of a community centre in Prospect Vale
- Encourage the provision of key services (e.g. doctors, local retail and childcare) in the identified activity centres

Naturally manage the impacts of storm water

Environmental features such as topography, creeks and waterways in Blackstone Heights and Prospect Vale create challenges when managing storm water. Local creeks and topography also create an opportunity to support natural systems that capture, filter and manage storm water.

Strategies

- Respond to the natural environment, and reserve low-lying land and creek corridors for the capture and management of storm-water.
- Vegetate swales, creek corridors and develop wetlands where applicable to naturally capture, hold and filter storm water.
- Encourage public access and interaction with natural assets in the urban area, such as creek corridors, vegetated swales, and wetlands.

Optimise the use of constrained land

Environmental features and infrastructure, such as creeks or attenuation areas, constrain development in some areas of Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. These land constraints provide opportunities for open space or other compatible uses. Using encumbered land for open space or other uses will maximise the affordability of housing construction in the area, and minimise hazards.

Strategies:

- Encourage the use of land within the Prospect Vale waste water treatment plant attenuation zone for public open space.
- Use easements and encumbered land for open space, and off-road pedestrian and cycling connections wherever practical.
- Allow developers to use constrained land for public open space contributions required when developing housing.



Provide a diversity of housing choices

This population in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights increasingly require different housing options – including smaller homes, townhouses and aged care facilities. Older residents should be encouraged to stay in the area by responding to their housing needs. There is also growing demand for smaller housing from younger groups who desire homes with less maintenance requirements.

Strategies

- Provide for a mix of housing styles, including smaller dwellings that are suitable to both older and younger persons.
- Maximise housing affordability by maintaining land supply and minimising barriers to smaller lot subdivision.
- Plan for the provision of aged care facilities and other alternative housing choices for the older population.
- Provide the opportunity for innovative development models that respond to the unique natural attributes of the area. Specifically, there is potential to develop housing models such as cluster residences, that would be unique in the Tasmanian housing market.

Encourage facilities that respond to the needs of an ageing population

The ageing population will require new facilities and services that are not currently provided, or are not adequately provided, in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. These include medical facilities, community services and transport infrastructure.

Strategies

- Plan for the provision of a community centre in Prospect Vale to service the future needs of the community.
- Advocate for and attract private investment in a local medical centre in Prospect Vale, recognising the lifestyle and health benefits of local services for older residents.
- Recognise the benefits of walking and public transport access for older residents when accessing services and recreating.

Support the expansion of the Westbury Road Activity Centre

There is an opportunity for Westbury Road to develop into a more significant commercial centre that services a wider population catchment. Industrial land uses at Donalds Avenue conflict with the surrounding area, and provide an opportunity to transition to new uses in the medium to long term.

Strategies:

- Provide an adaptable framework for the transition of land at Donalds Avenue away from industrial uses.
- Promote the establishment of sub-regional level commercial and community uses within proximity of Donalds Avenue and Westbury Road
- Promote links between the regional sporting facilities at Prospect Vale Park and new sub-regional commercial and community uses.
- Support the establishment of the Strathroy Employment Precinct.

Provide for a mix of transport choices

Promoting alternative transport means, such as public transport, walking and cycling, are important to creating a sustainable and healthy community. These alternative transport modes are especially important for children, youth, an ageing population and those with fewer financial resources.

Strategies:

- Design a street layout that facilitates efficient bus services.
- Plan for all households being located within 400m of bus routes.
- Encourage higher density housing to cluster around activity centres and bus corridors.
- Connect new destinations with Prospect Vale's off-road pedestrian and cycling network.
- Resolve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure shortfalls in Blackstone Heights.
- Improve pedestrian amenity along Westbury Road.
- Maximise public transport access to key activities along Westbury Road.

Build upon Prospect Vale's regional tourism function

Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights benefit from regionally significant tourism assets such as Country Club Tasmania, Lake Trevallyn and Richardson's Harley Davidson. There are opportunities to build upon, and create better links between these assets.

Strategies

- Connect tourism assets through pathways wherever practical.
- Promote the development of entertainment facilities that complement tourism at Westbury Road Activity Centre, Richardson's Harley Davidson and Country Club Tasmania.

Promote safe access to the water at Lake Trevallyn

There is demand for better access to the Lake, for both watercraft and swimmers. New access points for motorised watercraft will be investigated with safety in mind. The potential for conflict between motorised watercraft with swimmers will be reduced. Potential amenity impacts on residences in Blackstone Heights will be reduced.

Strategies

- Encourage passive water sports (e.g. swimming, kayaking) on Lake Trevallyn at Blackstone Park. Discourage motorised watercraft from impacting on the safety and amenity of passive users in this area.
- Investigate the provision of new infrastructure to launch motorised watercraft into Lake Trevallyn further to the south, with a connection from Blackstone Road.



3. Urban Growth Framework



Urban Growth in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights

This section provides a framework to guide urban growth across Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights until the year 2035 and beyond. This section provides a blueprint for residential growth and infrastructure investment in the area. The recommendations are based on planning and transport analysis, community consultation and the vision and strategies detailed in Section 2. The overall growth framework is detailed in Figure 9, on the following page.

The major elements of the framework plan are:

- Long-term provision for a **variety of housing types across Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights**. These include medium density lots and housing, conventional suburban densities and innovative models of low density housing in Blackstone Heights.
- An **extended Mount Leslie Road**, providing a crucial second connection into Prospect Vale's growth areas. The road will be complemented by improved links to Pitcher Parade.
- The **reconfiguration of Mount Leslie Road near St Patrick's College**, to improve safety and traffic conditions.
- The development of Westbury Road as a **sub-regional commercial and community centre**. More detailed planning for the Westbury Road Activity Centre is provided in Section 4.
- A new **network of open space and off-road pathways** connecting Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights.
- Provision of major **new passive and active open space along Pitcher Parade**, within proximity to Dalrymple Creek.
- The long-term development of a **safe, motorised boating node on Lake Trevallyn**, with boat ramp and related facilities.
- Long-term planning for a **private road connecting Country Club Tasmania with Harley Parade**.

Further details regarding these elements and the framework plan are provided in the following pages.

Housing

The Structure Plan supports and encourages the development of three different types of housing: conventional suburban densities, low-density housing, and medium density/small lot housing. The variety of housing types reflects the different lifestyles and different needs within the future community. The distribution of housing densities and options is detailed in Figure 10.

Medium density/small lots are areas where smaller dwellings should be encouraged. The supply will primarily respond to an ageing population, and declining household size in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. Areas with good public transport access, and access to facilities and services are most suitable for this form of housing.

These areas could include townhouses, flats, and small lot subdivisions (up to 500 sqm lots). Encouraging the efficient release of smaller dwellings will promote housing affordability, and encourage older residents to remain in the local area. Large parcels of land that are allocated as medium density would be suitable to develop as aged care facilities or independent living.

Conventional urban density areas are suitable for lots between 600 and 800 sqm. These lots will accommodate conventional family homes, at either one or two storeys. These lots will provide affordable options for families with children, as well as other demographic groups.

Low-density areas are suitable for lots up to 2 hectares in size, depending on the location. These lots will accommodate larger family homes, at either one or two storeys. They will offer more premium housing, allowing owners to live within a natural landscape and environment. These areas are generally less accessible by public transport and further from services and facilities.

Cluster residential development areas will accommodate clusters of residences placed within a high amenity environment. The overall density of cluster residential areas will be low and respond to the character of the surrounding areas.

Figure 10: New housing

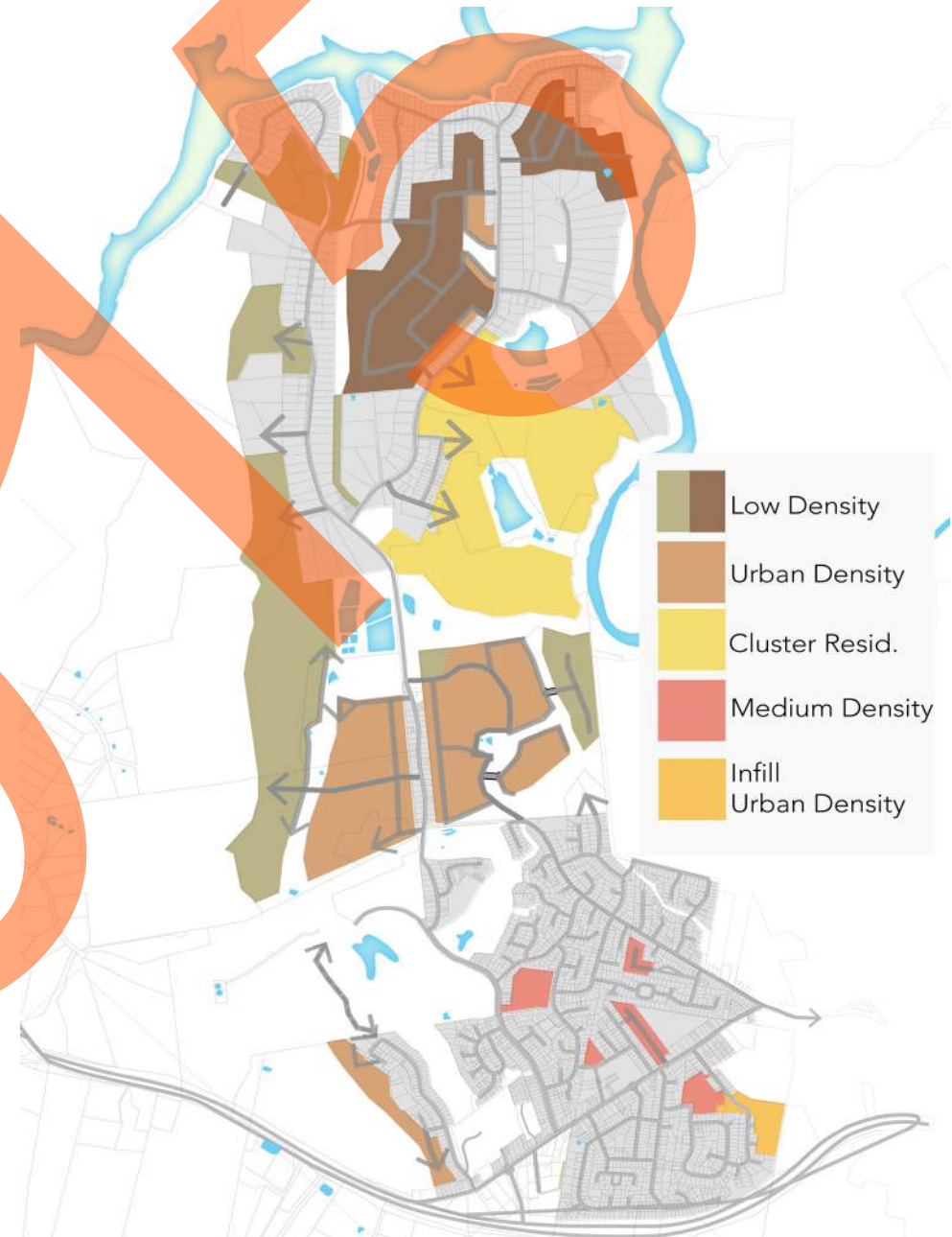


Figure 11: Tourism and entertainment precincts

Activity Centres

Activity centres are areas allocated for community and commercial uses, such as retail, education and employment. Two activity centres are proposed for Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights:

- **Westbury Road Sub-Regional Activity Centre**, a sub-regional centre servicing Prospect Vale, Blackstone Heights and a much wider area (see Section 4 of this Plan for further details).
- **Blackstone Heights Local Activity Centre**, a small, local activity centre that will provide convenience retail and hospitality for a catchment of up to 2,000 local residents.

All commercial and community facility investment will be directed toward these centres, creating community focal points and maximising the community's accessibility to services and facilities.

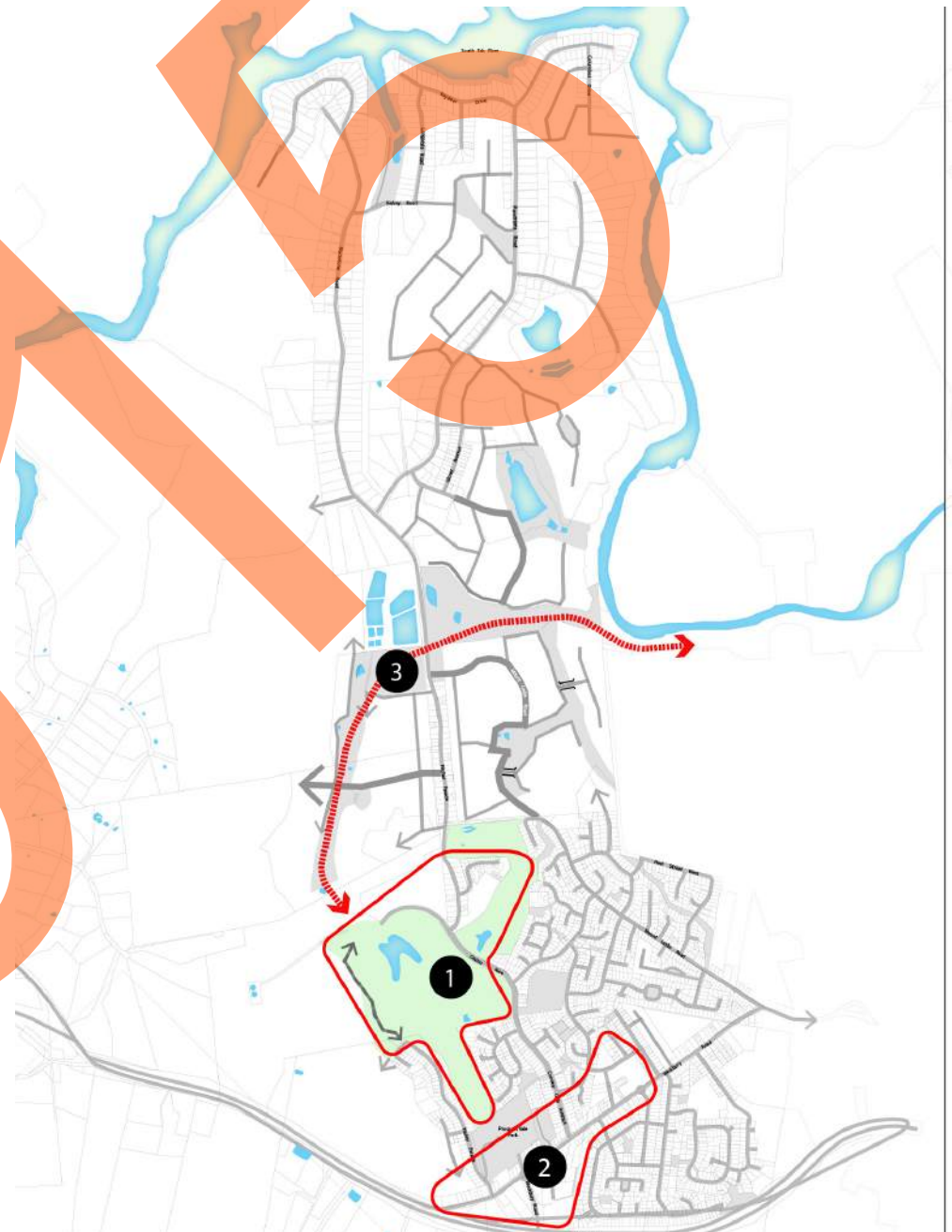
Tourism and Entertainment Precincts

With the presence of Country Club Tasmania and Richardson's Harley Davidson, Prospect Vale plays a substantial tourism and entertainment role in the northern region of Tasmania.

Two key precincts have been identified where further tourism and entertainment functions should be encouraged:

- Country Club Tasmania (No. 1, Figure 11)
- The Westbury Road Activity Centre (No. 2, Figure 11)

There is scope to direct tourism and entertainment development (cinemas, accommodation, function and exhibition spaces, gaming, restaurants and hospitality businesses) to these areas. Tourism at Country Club Tasmania can be supported by an off-road cycle and pedestrian link to the river (No. 3, Figure 11).



Roads and Public Transport

A number of key road infrastructure changes are required to facilitate population growth. These changes will create a more efficient road network, accommodate population growth in Blackstone Heights and Prospect Vale, and increase the safety of residents. The changes include:

1. **Extending Mount Leslie Road** to Dalrymple Creek before turning to meet Pitcher Parade. Mount Leslie Road has sufficient capacity to accommodate population growth in Prospect Vale. The extension will provide crucial extra capacity in the local road system in case of emergencies, such as fire.
2. The **reconfiguration of parking and traffic movement along Mount Leslie Road** adjacent to St Patrick's College. This will enhance the flow of traffic by allowing two vehicles (including buses) to safely pass at all times, reduce the number of conflict points along the road, and narrow the road space at key points to allow children to cross safely (see Figure 15).
3. The potential for a **private road to be developed between Harley Parade and Country Club Tasmania**. This will improve access to the Country Club, and provide significant extra capacity during major events.
4. **Changes to Westbury Road**, within the Westbury Road Activity Centre, to **promote the development of a more pedestrian friendly and commercially viable centre** (see Section 4 for detail).

These changes are detailed in Figure 12, as well as in the cross-section diagrams on the following page. Existing and potential **bus routes** in the area are shown in Figure 13. There is an opportunity to provide more direct, and more frequent bus services to the area, supported by a larger population. Enhanced services should be supported by the construction of bus shelters and pathways to access bus stops.

Figure 12: Proposed new roads

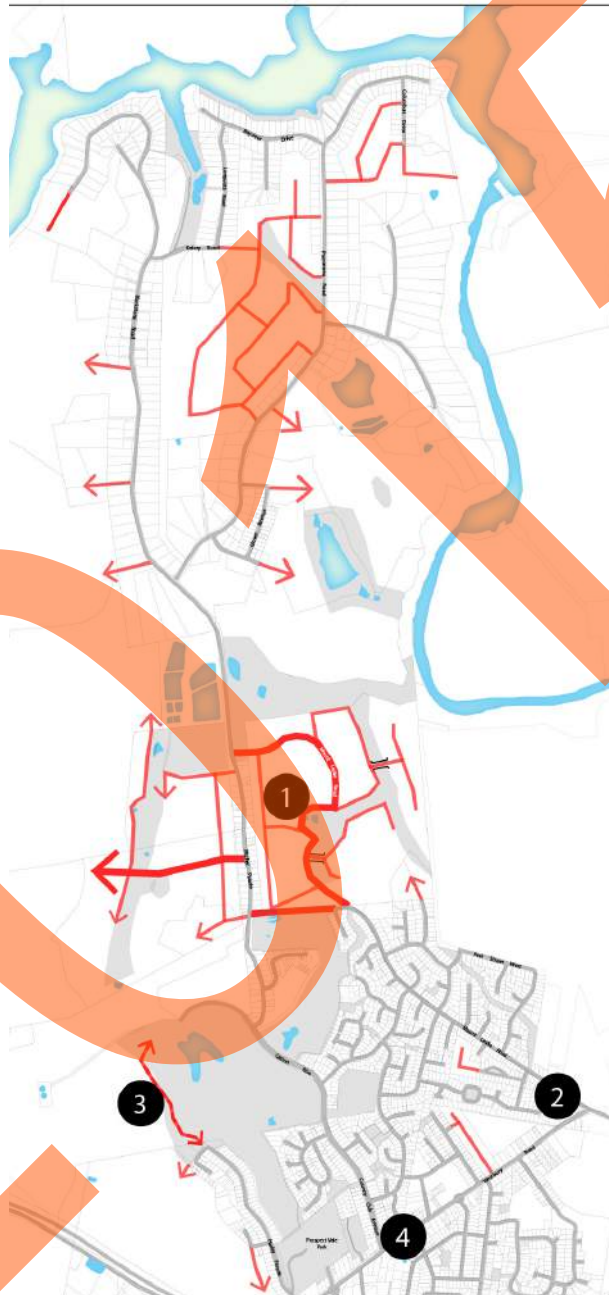


Figure 13: Potential public transport network

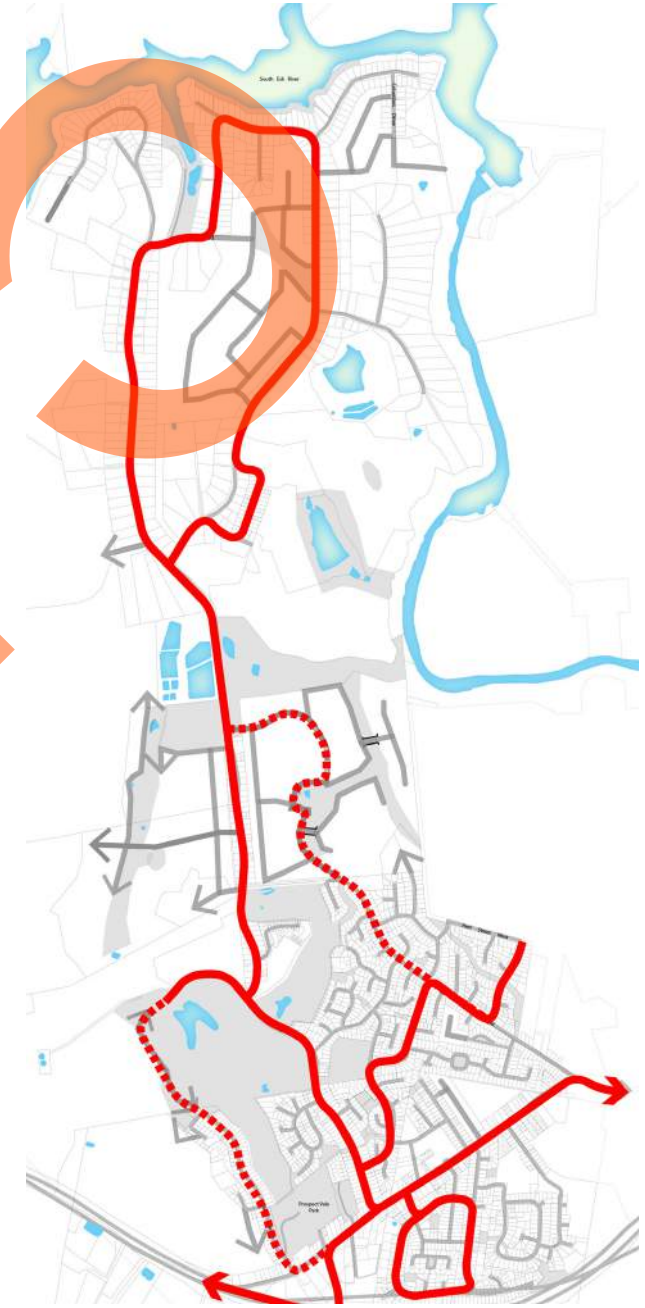


Figure 14: Existing configuration at Mt Leslie Road / St Patrick's College

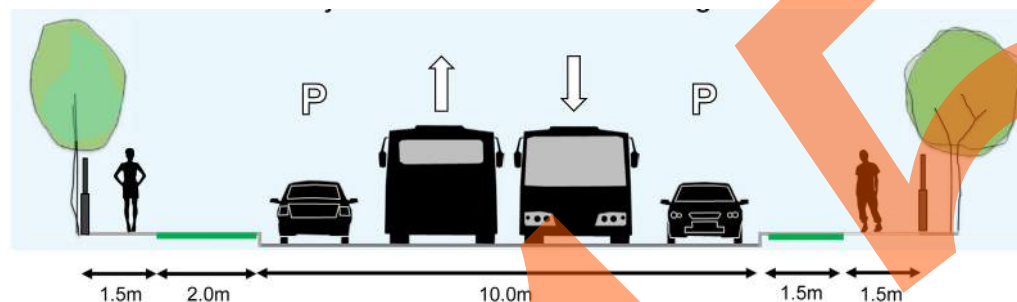
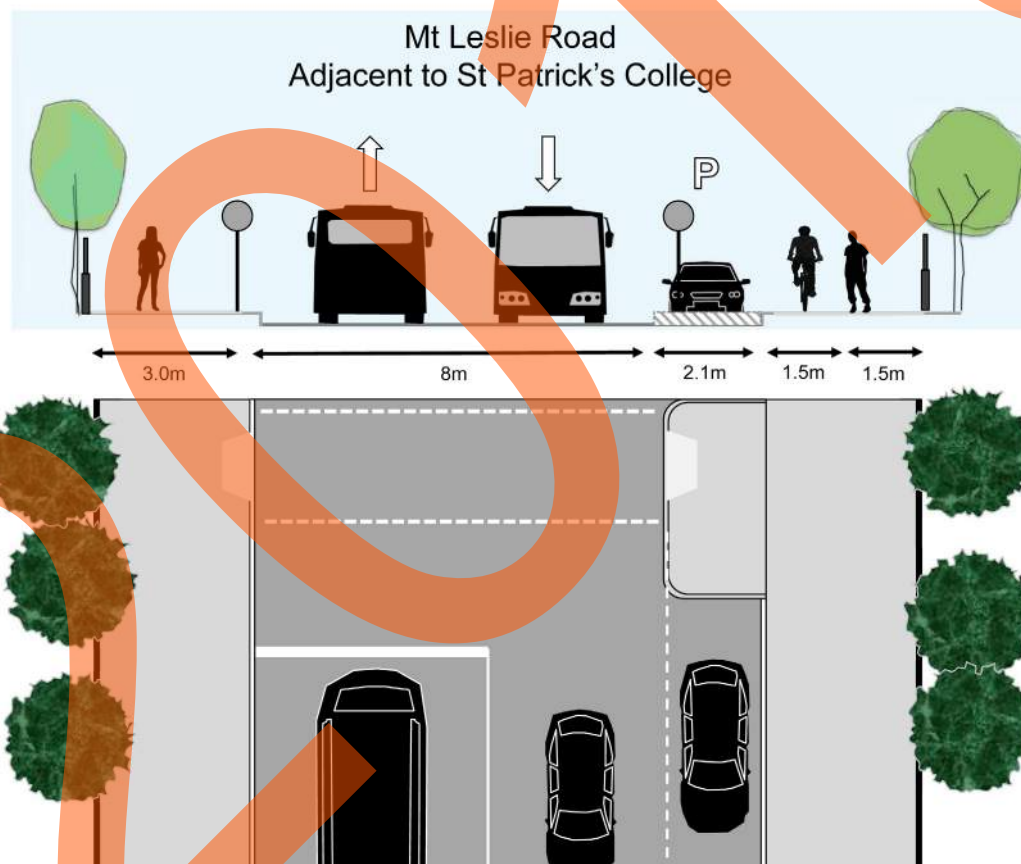


Figure 15: Proposed configuration at Mt Leslie Road / St Patrick's College



Open Space, Walking and Cycling

The community will benefit from a network of linear open space that incorporates shared, off-road pathways. Street footpaths will connect gaps in the off-road and open space network. The open space and pathway network will help promote walking, cycling, jogging, and the health of the community. The network will connect residents to environmental assets both locally (Lake Trevallyn, Dalrymple Creek) and the wider area (Duck Reach and Cataract Gorge).

Key elements of this linear open space and pathway network include:

1. Provision for major **new passive and active open space near Pitcher Parade**, within the Wastewater Treatment Plant attenuation zone.
2. **Linear open space**, wildlife corridors and pathways following naturally occurring creeks. This will include the **extension of Blackstone Park toward Panorama Drive**, encouraging access to Lake Trevallyn for residents in growth areas of Blackstone Heights.
3. Providing a **pathway along Blackstone Road**, creating safer access to bus stops for local residents. Figures 17 and 18 provide detail of potential changes along Blackstone Road.
4. Public open space alongside the South Esk River.
5. An investigation into the feasibility of **building a new pathway following the river**, connecting Blackstone Heights with Cataract Gorge and Duck Reach in Launceston City Council. This pathway would also connect to the internal open space and pathway network, linking Prospect Vale and Country Club Tasmania to other tourism assets in Greater Launceston.
6. Providing for **access changes to Prospect Vale Park** to help resolve car parking issues and conflict with residences around the Park. See Section 4 for further details.

Figure 16: Proposed public open space and pathway network

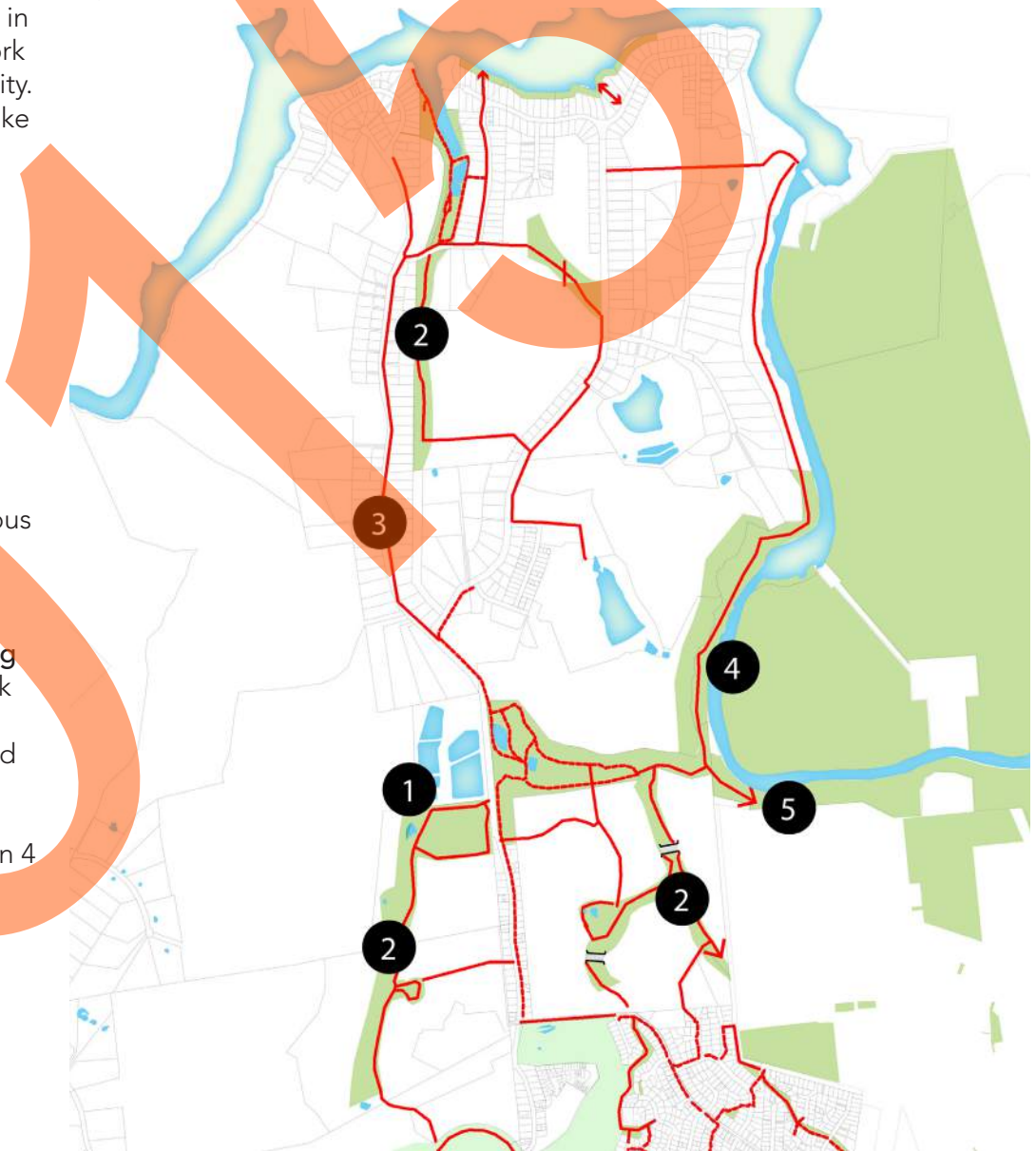


Figure 17: Existing configuration at Blackstone Road

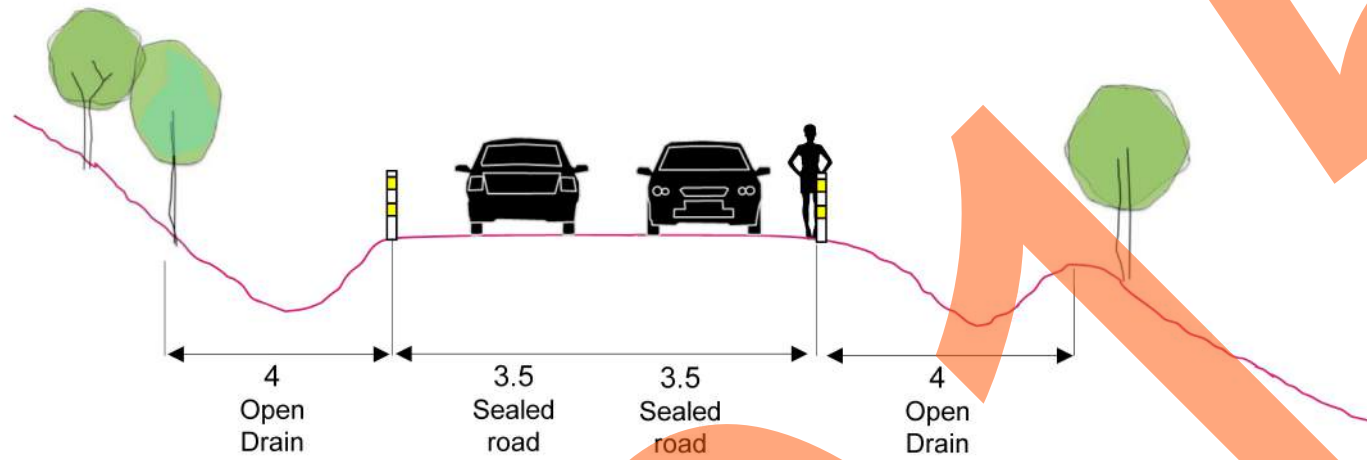
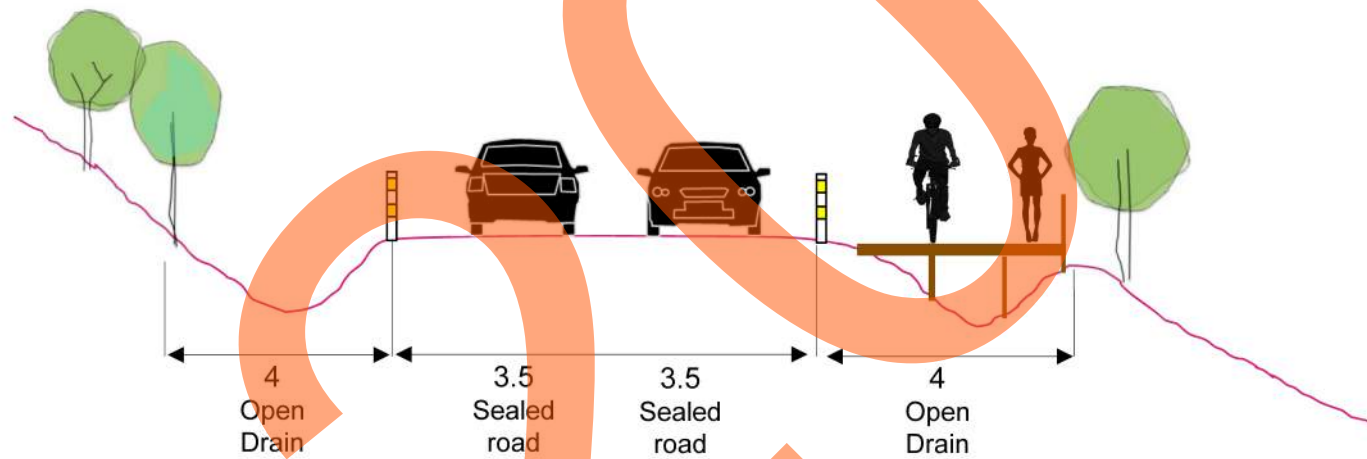


Figure 18: Potential configuration at Blackstone Road



4. Westbury Road Activity Centre

This section provides a more detailed plan to guide future development within the Westbury Road Activity Centre, extending from Mace Street in the north to Harley Parade in the south. With the population of Prospect Vale, Blackstone Heights and Hadsphen continuing to grow, there is a need to plan for further development within the Centre. This planning has considered consultation with land-holders and developers, demand for commercial and community facilities, and urban planning, transport and urban design analysis. Detailed planning for the Westbury Road Activity Centre is shown in Figure 19.



A Sub-Regional Activity Centre

Council and local landholders have expressed a vision for Westbury Road Activity Centre moving to a sub-regional retailing role. Existing retail analysis has identified unmet demand for some sub-regional retail uses, such as a discount department store, in the southern areas of Launceston. Retailing in the Centre would be accessible from the Bass and Midland Highways, as well as proximate to regional entertainment facilities at Country Club Tasmania.

Existing retail analysis undertaken for Meander Valley Council suggests that sub-regional commercial space at Westbury Road could require up to 20,000 sqm of additional floor space. There is potential for sub-regional retail facilities to be supported by additional tourism and entertainment uses in the area.

Figure 19 provides a framework for accommodating new commercial development within the Activity Centre. Major new commercial development could occur at both Prospect Vale Marketplace and the Donalds Avenue area. Seven hectares of commercial land could be made available at Donalds Avenue if it were transitioned away from its current industrial use.

The areas allocated for commercial use in Figure 19 could potentially include:

- Supermarkets, a discount department store, and associated specialty stores. These would ideally be located on commercial land to the north of Donalds Avenue.
- Bulky-goods retailing including a homemaker centre or large format hardware store, ideally located on commercial land to the south of Donalds Avenue.
- High exposure retailing with good access that could be used for fast food, petrol stations and other convenience uses.
- Complementary uses such as self-storage or an indoor recreation centre. These could potentially be located in less prominent areas of the Centre.
- Tourism and entertainment uses, such as taverns, cinemas or hotels.

Figure 19: Westbury Road Activity Centre Plan



Community Services and Facilities

There will be growing demand for community services and facilities, such as medical services, community meeting spaces and seniors activities, in the local area. Ideally, these services will be located within the Westbury Road Activity Centre, promoting accessibility for both local residents and the Activity Centre's wider catchment area.

Medical services

There is potential for a local level medical facility supported by around five general practitioners in the Westbury Road Activity Centre. This facility would need to compete with and capture customers from existing medical centres in the adjoining suburbs of Prospect and Summerhill.¹ If the Westbury Road Activity Centre were to develop into a sub-regional retail destination, there is potential for more substantial medical facilities with up to fifteen general practitioners supported by a mix of specialised medical professionals.

Community meeting and activity spaces

There are currently limited publicly owned community meeting or activity spaces in the area. The population size in Prospect Vale, Blackstone Heights and Hadspen warrants the consideration of a community centre in the local area.² A community centre would require a site around 0.6 hectares in size. This centre would ideally interface with Prospect Vale Park to create a community focal point and promote the shared use of sports and community facilities (see Figure 19, community precinct).

If Westbury Road Activity Centre were to grow into a sub-regional retailing role, there will be longer term demand for a more substantial community centre servicing a much larger catchment. A sub-regional facility could accommodate additional uses such as a library, indoor sports courts, and a neighbourhood house. This would require a site up to 1.5 hectares in size.

¹ - The number of GPs per resident in the suburbs of Prospect and Summerhill is well above the average for comparable areas. Coupled with the absence of medical services in Prospect Vale, this suggests that medical centres in Prospect and Summerhill are capturing demand for medical services from the Structure Plan area. New medical facilities in Prospect Vale would need to compete with these existing centres. Estimates of GP numbers are based on standard ratios of GP provision per capita in suburban areas of Tasmania.

² - Demand for a local level community centre is based on a benchmark of one centre per 9,000 residents.

Schools and education

In 2011, there were 594 children of primary school age living in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. By 2031, this is expected to increase to 650 children. The nearest primary school is Summerdale Primary School, approximately 2km from the Activity Centre. Consideration needs to be given to the increasing demand for primary schooling from growing populations in Prospect Vale, Blackstone Heights, and Hadspen. If a new primary school is to be developed locally, it should be located within proximity to the Activity Centre to maximise accessibility.

Movement

New roads are proposed to improve access and circulation around the Westbury Road Activity Centre, and help accommodate future commercial activity in the area. These are in addition to Council's previous commitments to develop new roundabouts at points along Westbury Road. Changes include:

- A new link from Westbury Road, near the Bass Highway into Donalds Avenue. This will provide more direct access into future commercial uses in Donalds Avenue and improve traffic circulation by eliminating the current cul-de-sac. This road may have a left-in, left-out configuration onto Westbury Road.
- Creating a more direct road link from Westbury Road into Prospect Vale Park. This will help to realise the redevelopment of the Park, as proposed in the Prospect Vale Park Development Plan.
- Providing lane-way access along the northern edge of the Donalds Avenue precinct. This lane-way can be used as an alternative loading access in the precinct and extends an existing lane-way in the area.

The corner of Donalds Avenue and Westbury Road will be a focal point for pedestrians crossing Westbury Road. It will provide access between Prospect Vale Park and its adjoining community precinct, and proposed commercial activity along Donalds Avenue.

Road configuration at this point should prioritise pedestrian access, and avoid the use of roundabouts.

Built Form, Character and Urban Design

The Plan for the Westbury Activity Centre promotes a single, linear activity centre extending from Mace Street in the north to near Harley Parade in the south. Westbury Road will form the spine of this activity centre with a 'main street' character. Key urban design and built form changes to support this character will include:

- New commercial buildings interfacing with Westbury Road and Donalds Avenue to promote street life and activate public areas. Figure 19 shows where active street frontages should be prioritised.
- The reconfiguration of Westbury Road to promote a 'main street' character, and a more pedestrian friendly environment. The potential reconfiguration of Westbury Road is shown in Figure 21. This reconfiguration would allow for the widening of footpaths and street-scape enhancements (e.g. street trees and street furniture), while maintaining turning lanes at key intersections. Slowing of traffic along Westbury Road could be considered to encourage a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- More medium density housing along Westbury Road, and adjoining Prospect Vale Park. This housing should face the street and park, helping to activate public spaces and provide passive surveillance.
- The development of gateways at key points along Westbury Road (see Figure 19) to signal to visitors that they are entering the Centre. Gateway treatments could include street-scape, signage or public art installations.
- Loading areas for retail should be provided at the rear or to the sides of buildings. This will enhance safety, character and pedestrian access within the Activity Centre. The use of lane-ways for rear loading access should be encouraged.

Figure 20: Existing configuration of Westbury Road

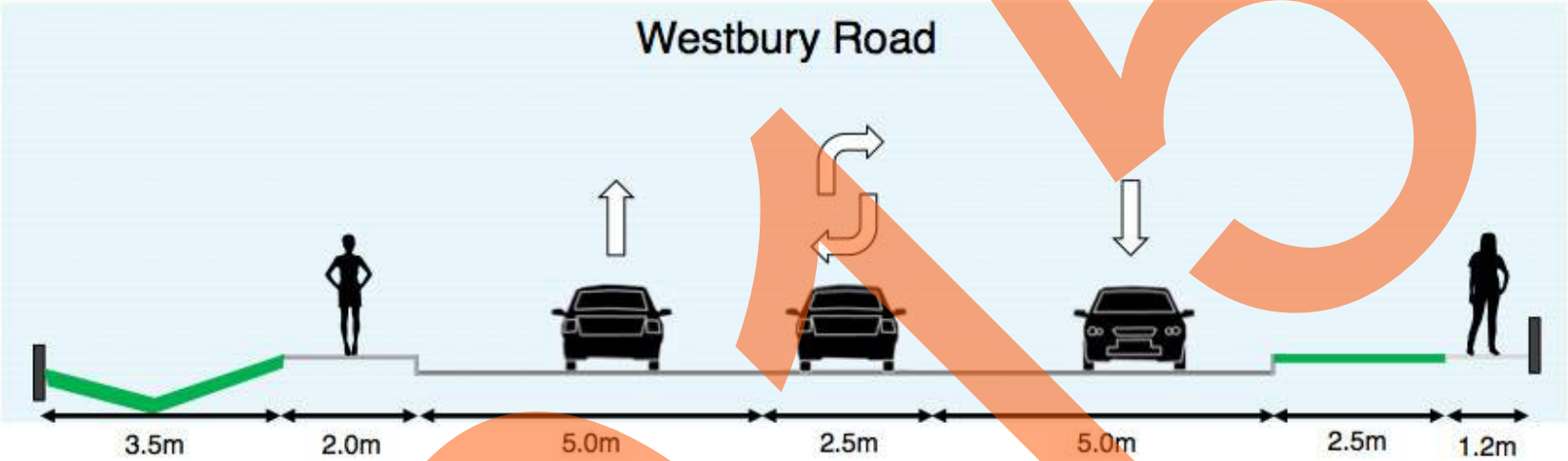
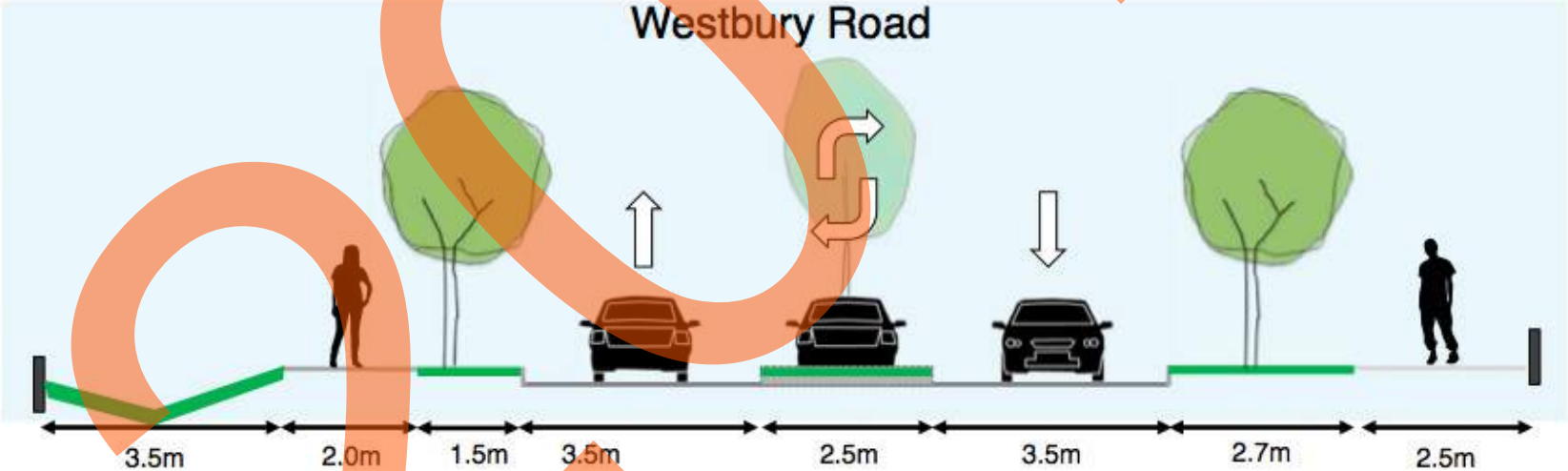


Figure 21: Potential reconfiguration of Westbury Road



5. Implementation

Urban Development Fronts

Unlike many growth areas, Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights benefit from substantial existing infrastructure connections. The existing provision of water, sewerage and road infrastructure will allow development to occur from multiple directions. Managed staging of development will be less important in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. Figure 22 provides an indication of the preferred development fronts in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. The development fronts consider land ownership, the availability of infrastructure and site access.

Figure 22: Preferred major development fronts for urban growth



Land Use Changes

Amendments to the Meander Valley Planning Scheme will be required to implement the blue print defined in this Structure Plan. Amendments should be undertaken in partnership with land owners and any rezoning can potentially be undertaken in stages, depending on the readiness of land-owners for development or land-use changes.

In the case of the Westbury Road Activity Centre, it would be prudent to undertake further investigations, as detailed in Table 2, into the potential for commercial development within the precinct.

Enabling Infrastructure

TasWater and TasNetworks have indicated that infrastructure will be able to respond to the increased population in the area. In the case of TasWater, there may be a need for investment in new or improved sewerage and water infrastructure to cater to new development.

This Structure Plan will provide these utilities with greater certainty about the level of growth, and the pattern of development in the area. The Structure Plan will be critical to planning for infrastructure investment in the area. TasWater has indicated a desire to work in partnership with Council to respond to these infrastructure needs, through a Memorandum of Understanding or similar mechanism.

New road infrastructure will be essential to delivering adequate capacity and guaranteeing safety for residents in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights. Council and major land owners in the area will be jointly responsible for the timing and delivery of these new roads. Ongoing discussions with Metro should be held with regard to route planning and road needs.

Westbury Road/Donalds Avenue Transition

It is unlikely that the Donalds Avenue area will transition away from industrial uses to commercial uses in a single stage. The fragmented land ownership in the precinct creates complexities for land acquisition and assembly. Figure 23 provides an potential staging patterns for the long-term redevelopment of the Donalds Avenue area. The actual transition pattern will depend on a number of factors such as the future plans of land owners, market demand for commercial space, and developer interest.

Further Investigations and Advocacy

Following the endorsement of the Structure Plan, a number of key investigations need to be undertaken to implement the Plan. See Table 2, on the following page for details of these actions.

Figure 23: Potential transition patterns for industrial land at Donalds Ave

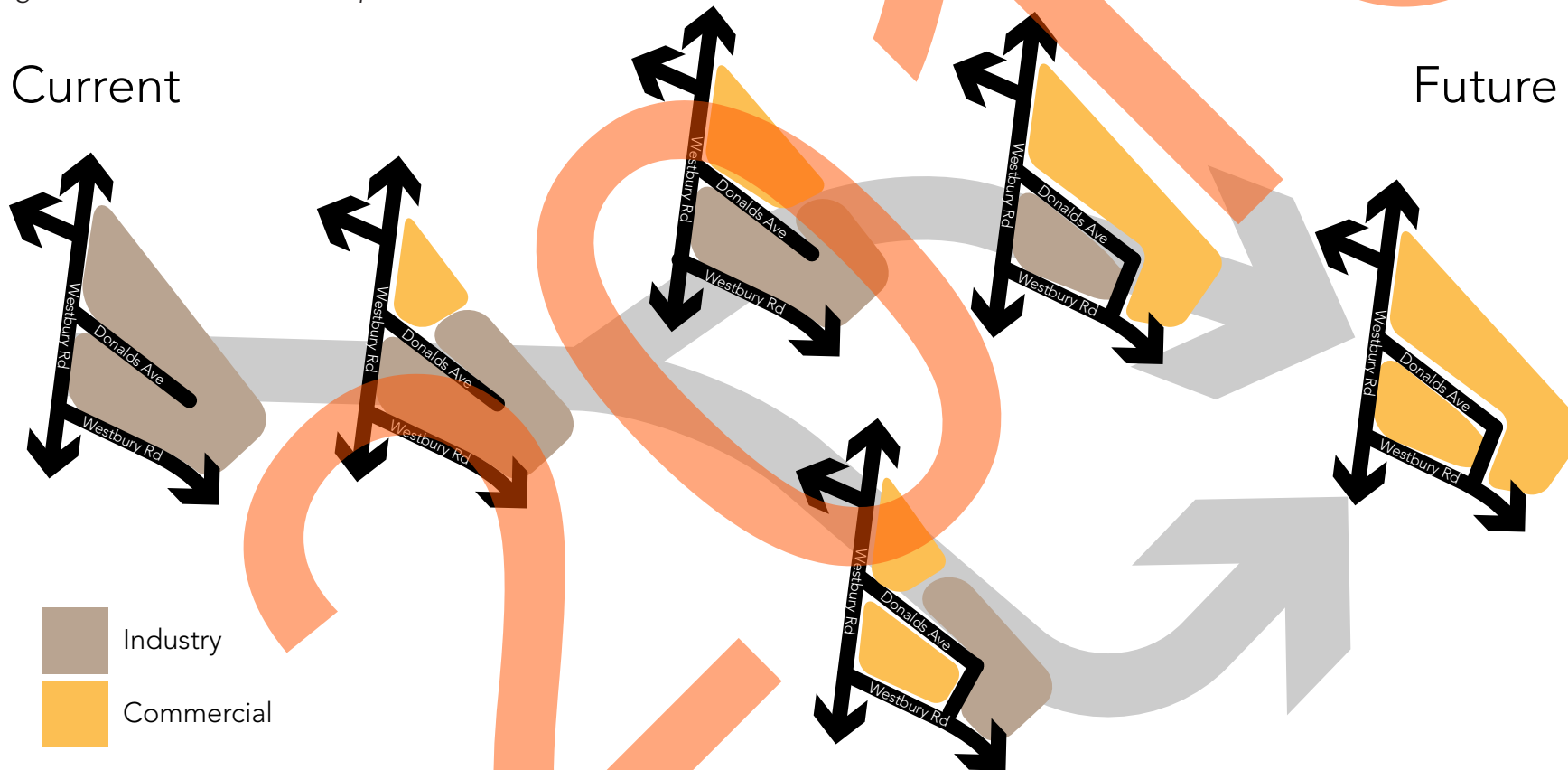


Table 2: Further investigations and advocacy

Task	Responsibility	Priority
<p>Develop a more detailed Urban Design Framework (UDF) for the Westbury Road Activity Centre, in partnership with land owners and developers active in the area. This UDF should provide further detail about built form and movement outcomes in the Centre. The UDF can also develop further detail about street-scape enhancement and investment in the area.</p> <p>Consider undertaking a thorough feasibility assessment for the development of commercial, tourism and entertainment uses around the Activity Centre to inform the UDF.</p> <p>Undertake preliminary investigations of potential contamination and other environmental constraints surrounding the Donalds Avenue industrial area to inform the UDF.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Developers, Land Holders	High
<p>Develop a Specific Area Plan for the area identified for future cluster residential development in Blackstone Heights, in partnership with land holders. The Specific Area Plan should reflect the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing densities should respond to the character of the local area, giving consideration to the interface with existing residential areas of Blackstone Heights. Medium density housing should only be promoted within proximity to services such as public transport and the proposed activity centre. Lower density housing should be promoted further away from services. Development should respond to the natural environment in the area, including topography and landscape values. Development will promote public access to the South Esk River and Gorge, including connections with the wider open space and pathway network in Blackstone Heights and Prospect Vale. 	Meander Valley Council, Developers, Land Holders	High
<p>Undertake further investigation to determine an appropriate management plan to protect the existing botanical and ecological values at the Education Department site. Prepare a development plan for the site in consultation with Department of Education, relevant agencies and local residents.</p>	Meander Valley Council, State Government, Local Community	High
<p>Investigate long-term boat and water craft access to river</p>	Meander Valley Council, Marine and Safety Tasmania	Medium
<p>Undertake detailed twenty-year school planning for the south-west corridor extending from Prospect to Westbury. Consider the need for any land reservation in Prospect Vale.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Department of Education	Medium
<p>Undertake a feasibility study into the development of a community centre within the Westbury Road Activity Centre.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Landholders	Medium
<p>Advocate for the development of bus shelters along bus routes in Prospect Vale and Blackstone Heights.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Metro	Medium
<p>Undertake a feasibility study into the construction of pathway from Duck Reach to Prospect Vale, Blackstone Heights and Country Club Tasmania.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Launceston City Council	Medium
<p>Participate in service planning reviews for bus services, advocating for more direct routes and more frequent services in the area.</p>	Meander Valley Council, Metro	Low