

Meander Valley Council

Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study

Preliminary Overview



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1. Summary

This document will provide the Meander Valley Council with a preliminary overview for a character study for the township of Westbury in the Meander Valley. The study will be known as the *Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study*.

This document is the precursor to the study and is suitable for public consultation. It is aimed at facilitating community feedback and informing the preparation of a more detailed *Draft Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study*.

This overview will include descriptions and mapping to define the town centre area based on Council's brief and previous studies and plans prepared by the Council.

These previous studies include the:

- *Westbury Outline Development Plan Final Report*, 12 December 2013, prepared by Aurecon; and
- *Meander Valley Road – Streetscape Renewal Master Plan Concept*, prepared by Playstreet and the Meander Valley Council, April 2024.

The overview is intended for a workshop with the elected Council and then to be finalised and released for stakeholder and community consultation. The consultation is intended to inform the content and direction of the *Draft Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study* and identify places and features that contribute to the character of the town centre area.

1.1. Council Brief

The Council brief, for the project, is provided as follows for context:

The character study will be a key document guiding the development of an amendment to the Meander Valley Local Provisions Schedule to create a Specific Area Plan that can protect and enhance the unique amenity of the Town Centre, including the Village Green.

The consultant's objective will be to undertake a character study that identifies the parts of Westbury's town centre that contain unique or distinctive local characteristics that contribute (or have the potential to contribute) to the community's identity and sense of place and to identify opportunities for how these elements may be protected and enhanced.

The study will, at minimum:

- *Identify the extent of Westbury's 'Town Centre'*
- *Identify and describe the elements of the public and private spaces that make Westbury's town centre unique and/or distinct from other towns and villages in the region and be underpinned by an analysis of the built form (including lot design and arrangement), vegetation, streetscapes, historical features, and topographical elements that combine to define the overall look and feel of a place*
- *Identify any specific areas that contribute to (or have the potential to contribute to) the community's identity and sense of place*
- *Prepare design guidelines for these specific areas that protect and enhance the characteristics most valued by the community*
- *The study will assist Council in developing suitable planning controls and guidelines to ensure that new development is sited and designed to respond to the existing or preferred future character of Westbury town centre. These may include, but not limited to:*
 - o *Identification of 'local area objectives'*
 - o *Additional development standards (e.g. Specific Area Plan relating to character)*

- *Application of specific codes (e.g. significant tree register or local historic heritage code)*

The deliverables to be provided are anticipated to include the following.

- *Project return brief.*
- *A preliminary overview that identifies the parts of the Westbury town centre that contain unique or distinctive local characteristics that contribute (or have the potential to contribute) to the community's identity and sense of place and identify opportunities for how these elements may be protected and enhanced. This document will inform preliminary and targeted consultation with direct landowners and key stakeholders.*
- *Provision of a draft character study that provides recommendations, design guidelines, options for consideration, and associated supporting commentary to Council for review and to be made available to the broader public for consultation.*
- *Concept sketches for any notable preferred/non-preferred development arrangements, where required.*
- *Provision of final character study detailing recommendations and options for consideration.*

2. Methodology

In preparing this preliminary overview, Form Planning + Projects have undertaken the following:

- Reviewed the *Request for Fee Proposal – Westbury Town Centre Character Study – Consultant Commissioning Brief, March 2025*, prepared by Meander Valley Council
- Site visit and town walkover with Council Officers on the 9th May 2025
- Regard for the *Meander Valley Heritage Study, February 2006*, prepared by Paul Davies Pty Ltd
- Desktop assessment and review of current zoning and overlays under the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Meander* (the Planning Scheme)
- Desktop assessment of services and infrastructure, places of interest, community facilities, elevations etc
- Review of the *Subdivision Guidelines, October 2013*, a joint project of the Tasmanian Local Government Authorities
- Regard for *PPN43: Understanding neighbourhood character*, January 2018, prepared by the Victorian State Government
- *Westbury Outline Development Plan Final Report, 12 December 2013*, prepared by Aurecon for the Meander Valley Council
- *Meander Valley Road – Streetscape Renewal Master Plan Concept*, prepared by Playstreet and the Meander Valley Council, April 2024
- Review of places listed under the *Tasmanian Cultural Heritage Act 1995*
- Ongoing discussions with Council Officers



Figure 1: Westbury Township (greater area) (Source: theLIST Mapping)

2.1. Study Area

This preliminary overview examines two (2) areas:

- 1) It will include an assessment of the overall urban area of Westbury excluding the surrounding Low Density Residential Zoned land as shown in Figure 1; and
- 2) The town centre area which is based on the diagrams provided in the Council Brief and shown in Figure 2 and Figure 6.

A recommended historic town centre area is shown in Figure 9. This is the recommended town centre area for the purposes of developing urban design guidelines and progressing the character study. This area has a consistent and identifiable character that warrants further urban design guidelines and potential town planning controls.

Descriptions of the land and features within the Figure 1 greater area is provided as important context for the town centre and to describe the character of the Westbury township and the historical development of the township.

As described further in this study, defining a town centre in Westbury is complicated. This is due to the land use patterns and historical development of Westbury since colonial settlement. These changes include the construction of the railway line and railway stations, flooding in the King Street/Quamby Brook area, the Westbury Bypass and more recently the opening of the new IGA supermarket at the eastern end of the town (which has consequently redirected business activity away from the old town centre).

The historic town centre area is defined through the preliminary observations, descriptions and assessment provided in this document. This area is shown in Figure 9.

A final historic town centre area will require input from the Council and the community through consultation in order to finalise a spatial area for the town centre.

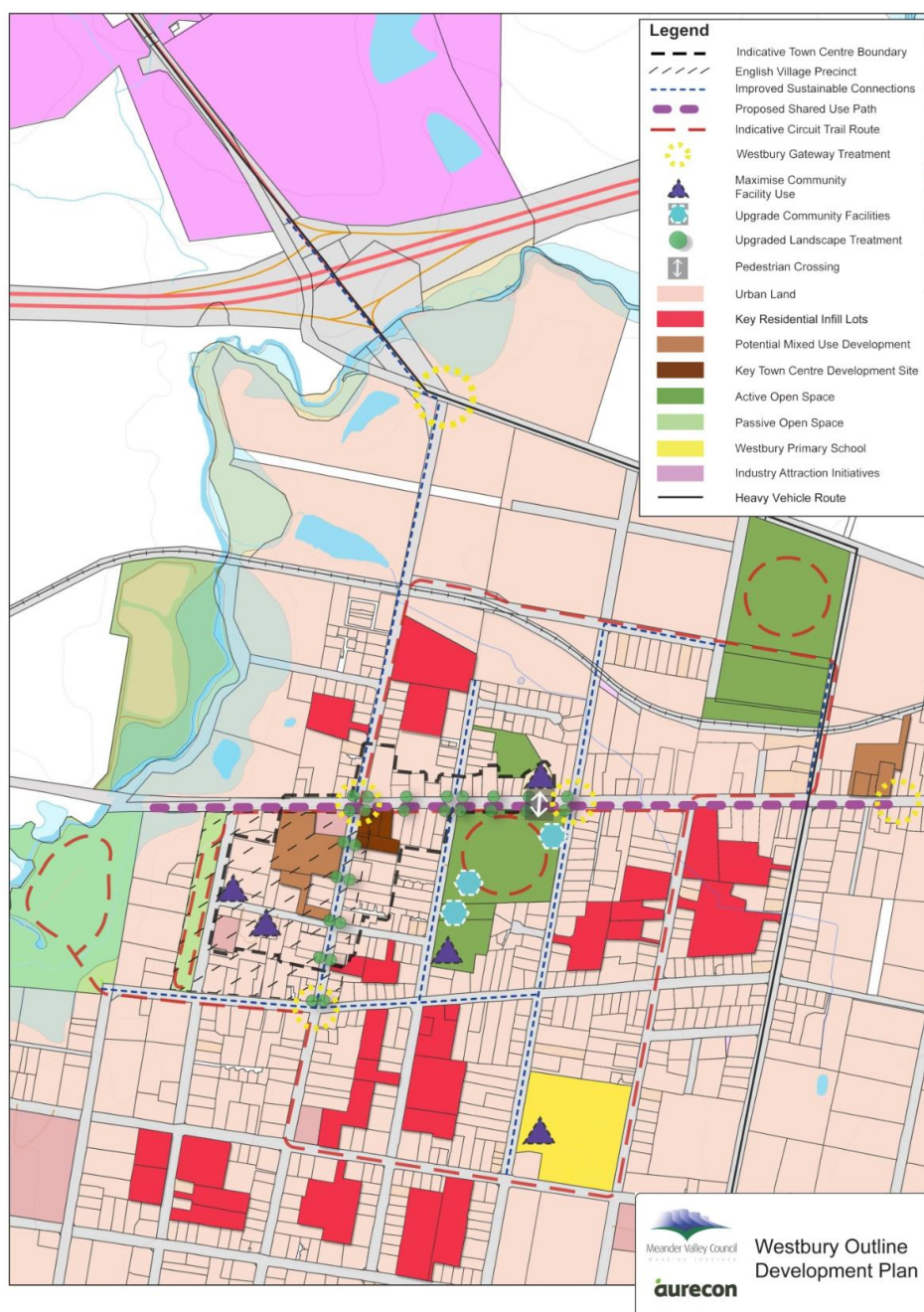


Figure 2: Westbury Town Centre area as shown in the Westbury Outline Development Plan (Source: Westbury Outline Development Plan, 2013)

3. Understanding Character

3.1. What is Local Character?

Defining the character of an area is a central feature of strategic planning, especially for existing townships such as Westbury.

Local character is what makes a neighbourhood, village or township distinctive. Per the *PPN43: Understanding neighbourhood character*, (Victoria State Government, January 2018):

Character is essentially the combination of the public and private realms. Every property, public place or piece of infrastructure makes a contribution, whether great or small. It is the cumulative impact of all these contributions that establishes neighbourhood character.

The key to understanding character is being able to describe how the features of an area come together to give that area its own particular character. Breaking up character into discrete features and characteristics misses out on the relationships between these features and characteristics.

Understanding how these relationships physically appear on the ground is usually the most important aspect in establishing the character of the area.

A character study may describe or have regard to a particular cultural group, historical event or place of cultural significance. However, they are intended to be a value-neutral concept. The character of a place, from a town planning perspective, is primarily shaped by the presentation of dwellings to the street, streetscaping, subdivision patterns, vegetation, public places/features and places of interest.

In identifying the character of a place a community (including businesses, residents, Government agencies etc) are able to identify those public and private realms that are important to the community and give a particular settlement or an area its local distinctiveness and unique identity.

In articulating and agreeing on the character for a township (through consultation), a Council and Community is able to encourage better planning and design appropriate for that area through design guidelines or standards in a Planning Scheme. A character study can be used by developers, planners, businesses and designers to better understand the local character and progress sensitively designed buildings, infrastructure and other works (Planning Aid England, Royal Town Planning Institute, 2015).

Furthermore, defining and then protecting or enhancing the character of a place can be beneficial for a number of other reasons. These include:

- Preservation of culture and identity of a place
- Enhance public engagement in the town planning process and encourage a cohesive/community minded approach to planning and design
- Strengthen a sense of community
- Economic and tourism benefits through preservation of character. This is particularly important to Westbury as the heritage character of the place is the greatest attraction to the township for visitors and as put forward in this document provides significant amenity to residents. Businesses can then leverage off the attraction of the township.
- Guidance for public works such as play equipment, street trees, footpath construction, signage etc
- Policy development

3.2. Heritage or Character?

Per above, a character study is intended to be a value-neutral concept concerned with defining the character of a place and developing guidelines for future development of the place.

However, the focus of the *Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study* is the land around the old town centre and the Village Green which has the strong characteristics of a colonial village and a heritage precinct. This is due to the number of heritage listed places clustered in this particular area and the colonial history of the area. These buildings, places and features exist as this area was the original town centre in the 1820s at the beginning of colonial settlement and the survey of the Westbury township (<https://www.utas.edu.au/tasmanian-companion/biogs/E001071b.htm>, accessed 4th July 2025).

Meaning that the character of this particular part of town is colonial heritage character.

A description of the historic town centre cannot be given without reference to the colonial settlement and history of this area as this is the reason the character of this area exists. Arguably this character exists due to the heritage protections afforded under the National Trust, *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995*, local planning scheme and through the actions of community groups and landowners. Other reasons the heritage values and character of this area exist is that Council has deliberately enhanced the streetscapes through development that is sympathetic to the character of the area and that the area has not been subject to development pressures or demolition as new development has occurred elsewhere in Westbury such as along the Meander Valley Road.

Heritage places and precincts can be registered under the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* or under the C6.0 Heritage Code of the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Meander* (the Planning Scheme). If a precinct has the qualities of a heritage precinct and has local historic heritage significance then a spatial area can be mapped as a local heritage precinct through a planning scheme amendment process.

Local heritage significance is defined in Table C6.3 of the C6.0 Heritage Code under the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme* as:

... significance in relation to a local heritage place or a local heritage precinct or local historic landscape precinct, and its historic heritage values as identified in the relevant list, in the relevant Local Provisions Schedule, because of:

- a) its role in, representation of, or potential for contributing to the understanding of:*
 - (i) local history;*
 - (ii) creative or technical achievements;*
 - (iii) a class of building or place; or*
 - (iv) aesthetic characteristics; or*
- (a) its association with:*
 - (i) a particular community or cultural group for social or spiritual reasons; or*
 - (ii) the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance to the locality or region,*

as identified in the relevant list in the relevant Local Provisions Schedule, or in a report prepared by a suitably qualified person, if not identified in the relevant list.

A local heritage precinct is further defined in Table C6.3 of the C6.0 Heritage Code as:

... an area that has been identified as having particular local historic heritage significance because of the collective heritage value of individual places as a group for their streetscape or townscape values, and is:

- a) shown on an overlay map in the relevant Local Provisions Schedule; and*
- b) listed and identified in the local heritage precincts list in the relevant Local Provisions Schedule.*

As discussed in this document, the town centre area could be listed as a Local Heritage Precinct under the C6.0 Local Historic Heritage Code. This would require detailed statements of heritage significance and potentially input from a heritage consultant or architect.

Alternatively, the town centre and surrounds could also be included in the Local Provisions Schedule of the Planning Scheme as a Specific Area Plan which describes the heritage character and other values in the area with a set of standards that would apply to the area to maintain and enhance the character.

4. Westbury Character

Westbury, has identifiable, unique and recognisable features scattered across the entire township. Some examples of these features, places, built elements are listed below (in no particular order):

- Holy Trinity Catholic Church on the corner of William Street and Meander Valley Road.
- “The Big Wickets” and the Westbury Recreation Ground.
- The Village Green.
- Pearn’s Steam World.
- Heritage listed places (and other 19th and early 20th century places) around King Street, William Street, Lyall Street and Lonsdale Promenade.
- Numerous significant trees (due to size, age, prominence in the streetscape).
- Westbury Uniting Church .
- Westbury Gingerbread Cottages.
- The White House on the corner of King Street and Lonsdale Promenade.
- St Andrews Anglican Church
- Westbury Hotel on the Meander Valley Road
- Fitzpatrick’s Inn on the Meander Valley Road

But it is only the town centre area around William Street, King Street, Lonsdale Promenade and the Village Green where these features, and defined sense of character, is prominent and clearly identifiable as a precinct type area. The features, streetscapes, building designs, tree plantings, etc. that ordinarily create a character and sense of place are not consistent across the greater study area as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2 (the greater study area). There are scattered elements but they are not clustered together or necessarily consistent with one another. Such places, buildings, trees, particular streetscapes and other built elements contribute to a sense of place in Westbury and ought to be documented and recognised and potentially preserved. But not as a single precinct area.

The entire township (greater study area) does not have the characteristics or values of a heritage precinct and does not have a single and definable “value-neutral characteristics” that can be readily described or linked together across the greater study area/entire township. For example the southern residential areas shown in Figure 3 have little relationship or similarities in building style, streetscaping to the buildings and streetscapes of Lyall Street, William and King Street. The two (2) areas could be in separate townships. It would be improper to apply a Specific Area Plan over the southern residential area requiring new development to be consistent with the largely Georgian and Victorian characteristics of Lyall Street and William Street. Some areas adjoining the historic town centre area, such as those shown in Figure 9A contribute to the historic town centre character and overall sense of place.



Figure 3: Southern residential areas (Source: theLIST Mapping)

The town centre area around William Street, King Street, Lonsdale Promenade and the Village Green where has consistent character with unique qualities that could be preserved through a Specific Area Plan or Heritage Precinct under the Local Provisions Schedule of the Planning Scheme.

4.1. Historical Development of Westbury

One reason there is a lack of consistency in character across Westbury is simply that the township is comprised of various precincts which have emerged and evolved over the past 200 years. King Street in early colonial settlement was the main road through Westbury with government buildings and dwellings built around the village green and King Street in the 1820s and 1830s (Companion to Tasmanian History, Allison Alexander, 2005). This was also the centre of activity in the town for business and gatherings.

In the 1870s the Launceston and Western Line was constructed with a train station in the vicinity of Pearn's steamworld and the Fitzpatrick Inn creating a new entry point and new centre of activity. The construction of the railway line and the train station had an impact on the original settlement as trade, business and activity migrated towards the railway station and its connection to other towns including Launceston. At some point, the bridge over the Quamby Brook and the main access to the town from the west along King Street was permanently destroyed during a flood in the late 19th Century. This of course coincided with the railway station which had already begun to divide the township.

The upgrades and construction of the Meander Valley Road over the late 19th century and early 20th century also further divided the town through moving people along a new main road. This meant more businesses began to open on the main road to conveniently service people moving through the township. Arguably this created the busy intersection around William Street and Meander Valley Road around the pub, service station, bakery and other shops.

In the late 20th century many towns in the Northern Midlands were bypassed through the construction of the Bass Highway. This included Westbury which was bypassed in 2001 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bass_Highway,_Tasmania, accessed 4th July 2025). The bypass of the township has had a major impact on the movement of people and the locations of business and trade in the township. It also further encouraged business and trade along the Meander Valley Road, particularly at the western entrance to the township around William Street and the eastern entrance near the new IGA and

Pearn's Steam World. These have become the main access points to the township as they are also the access points from the Bass Highway.

4.2. Different Precincts of Westbury

The existence of different precincts is supported by the *Westbury Outline Development Plan Final Report*, (December 2013), the *Meander Valley Road – Streetscape Renewal Master Plan Concept*, (April 2024) and the *Meander Valley Heritage Study*, (February 2006). These three (3) documents have all described the overall township as comprised of various nodes and areas that are spread out across the township.

These nodes are described in the above documents (in no particular order) as the William Street Node, Town Node, Recreation Ground Node, Mixed Use Node, IGA Node, Town Centre, Andy's Commercial Land, Residential Land, the Township, the Rural Lots to the South, and the Rural Lots to the East.

Based on the above descriptions, reports, desktop studies and the site visit undertaken on the 9th May 2025 the following areas were observed as definable precincts with their own character. These are:

- A. Historic town centre and Village Green Area Precinct (focus of this study)
- B. Intersection with Main Road and William Street Precinct - including the pub, fire station, library, veterinarian clinic, and takeaway food businesses etc
- C. Tourist Precinct - including Pearn's, the distillery, Fitzpatrick Inn, Hardware/Cafe/gifts store
- D. Recreation Precinct – Recreation Ground, Skatepark/BMX track, bowls club, health centre, sports centre area
- E. The residential areas beyond the above described precincts – though they do not have a consistent style of building or pattern of development the streets remain on a grid layout which is based on the original 1820s survey of the township. The streets are also consistently 20m wide road reserves with a narrow carriageway (with line marking only at intersections) and grassed verges and grassed swales for stormwater drainage and management. Streets are not consistently tree lined or have footpaths. But for the streets that have a footpath it is located either alongside the boundary of the dwellings or offset slightly to maintain a grassed verge between the road carriageway and the footpath. This creates a distinctive country town style. A similar example is found at nearby Carrick. This is shown below in Figure 4 and Figure 5.



Figure 4: Grassed swales, narrow carriageway, street trees and footpath. A typical streetscape in Westbury (Source: Google Street View, September 2023)



Figure 5: Another example of grassed swales, narrow carriageway, street trees but without a footpath. A typical streetscape in Westbury (Source: Google Street View, September 2023)

4.3. Defining the historic town centre

One of the catalysts for this study was the petition submitted to Council in May 2023 that requested the following:

‘that Meander Valley Council properly protect the unique amenity and history of the Village Green by declaring the Village Green and all properties directly surrounding it as a Heritage Precinct with appropriate heritage controls within the Meander Valley Planning Scheme. We further request that in the interim an immediate moratorium be placed over the proposed precinct on any development which may affect the heritage values of this precinct.’

This is useful as it demonstrates the social and cultural attachment that the community has to the Village Green and the land around the Village Green. The Village Green is shown below in Figure 5A:



Figure 5A: Westbury Village Green located on Lonsdale Promenade (Source: theLIST Mapping)

However, as shown below in Figure 6, which was included in the brief (and is the basis for this study) the town centre area did not include the Village Green or the adjoining land and Lonsdale Promenade. This

area needs to be included to meet the commitment of Council to investigate the character of this area and to determine if further urban design guidelines and possible town planning controls are required. Accordingly, the area shown in Figure 6 below is not the recommended historic town centre area.



Figure 6: Town centre as recommended in the Westbury Outline Development Plan, 2013 (Source: Westbury Outline Development Plan, 2013)

The town centre area for the purposes of this study and in alignment with Council's brief and the petition to Council in May 2023 is more the "historic centre" of Westbury and the original colonial settlement area. This is a more useful description and does not then complicate Council's vision for the town centre area shown in Figure 6 and in the recent *Streetscape Renewal Master Plan Concept* (April 2024) which is currently underway for land around Meander Valley Road and William Street.

As described in **Part 4 Westbury Character** of this document it is only the town centre area around William Street, King Street, Lonsdale Promenade and the Village Green which has a consistent and definable character unique to a single area. This is an historic character (which can also be described as an historic or heritage precinct area). Figure 8 shows the heritage listed places around the Village Green and town centre area. It is very clear these places are clustered together when compared to the other parts of the town. This helps to identify the extent of the town centre precinct area.

The gateway treatments constructed by the Meander Valley Council into the town centre also help to delineate the spatial extent of the town centre for the purposes of the character study. These are shown below in Figure 7.



Figure 7: Entry to William Street and “Westbury Historic Village” (Source: Google Streetview, September 2023)



Figure 8: Heritage Listed Places in the Village Green and town centre area (Source: theLIST Mapping)



Figure 9: Westbury Historic Town Centre Area and focus of the Character Study (Source: theLIST Mapping)

Council and the community, through consultation may refine the boundary of the town centre area or provide additional sub-precinct areas that have a relationship to this town centre area and contribute to the overall setting. Some examples of these additional areas which border the recommended town centre area in Figure 9 are shown below in Figure 9A.



Figure 9A: Adjoining areas that contribute to the historic town centre setting (Source: Meander Valley Council)

5. Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Description

The Westbury Historic Town Centre area can be spatially defined as the land between the western boundary of the Town Common extending to the southern side of the Meander Valley Road to the corner of William Street and Meander Valley Road (excluding the service station) and all properties fronting William Street to King Street and all properties fronting King Street between William Street and Mary Street (and the boundary of the Town Common). This is shown in Figure 9.

The area is unique as a particularly good example of early colonial settlement in Tasmania characterised by significant trees in the streetscape and gardens and within the Village Green. The area has 25 heritage listed places on the Tasmanian Heritage Register. Most of which are identified as either Georgian or Victorian era buildings (and places) which display intact examples of the architectural style of the era. These places have potential to yield important information concerning life in a developing regional town in the 19th Century. The area provides a number of commercial and public buildings which were all integral to life in the township in the 19th and 20th centuries. Most remain in use and are examples of continuous use. This includes the many dwellings in the area but also some of the businesses such as the post office on the corner of Lyall Street and William Street. Buildings and places that were former businesses such as those along Lyall Street and William Street still have the potential to be re-opened and repurposed for business use in a small business precinct. The Village Green is also a place that displays continuous public use for events and recreation since the 19th Century with traditions such as the St Patrick's festival held each year which demonstrates continuous tradition and cultural association with the land.

The Meander Valley Council have deliberately used a type of dolerite stone in the street plantings and entry treatments at intersections in the area. An example is shown in Figure 7 and in Figure 13. This stone material corresponds well with the paving used at the intersections of Lyall Street and William Street and at the entrance to this part of the town on William Street (visible in Figure 7).

The Lyall Street and William Street business and community area is strongly linked to the Lonsdale Promenade and Village Green area. The streetscaping, connectivity through footpaths and the consistent style and type of buildings create a true sense of place and create a destination for visitors to the township. This is exemplified through the walking tours (maps) provided by the Westbury and Districts Historical Society and their plans to further show case places and buildings of interest through publications and signage.

Within the recommended historic township area shown in Figure 9, there are very few buildings and structures that are intrusive or otherwise detract from the character of the area. This assessment and observation is supported by the *Meander Valley Heritage Study*, (February 2006). The pattern of housing and lot arrangements are similar to that which existed in the mid to late 19th century. Most buildings are single storey buildings on small lots or larger lots with well established gardens. Two (2) storey and larger buildings are mostly commercial or former commercial buildings located on William Street. Other prominent buildings in the area is the former commercial bank on Lyall Street, the St Andrews Anglican Church on Lonsdale Promenade, the Holy Trinity Catholic Church on the Corner of William Street and Meander Valley Road, the old Inn on the corner of William Street and King Street, the former barrack and now Westbury RSL on Lonsdale Promenade and the Town Hall on Lyall Street. These prominent buildings strongly contribute to the sense of place and character of the area.

The land on the western side of the Village Green (also on Lonsdale Promenade) and adjoining the Town Common has been deliberately included in the recommended historic township area shown in Figure 9. The reason is that the trees lining Lonsdale Promenade on this side together with the dwellings and their established gardens contribute strongly to the character of this area. If the vegetation, including the hedges, was to be removed by the Council or landowners this would have a significant impact on the character of the Village Green area. An example of the relationship between the street and boundary plantings on Lonsdale Promenade is shown in Figure 10.



Figure 10: Lonsdale Promenade Streetscaping and relationship to the Village Green (Source: Google Streetview, May 2023)

As shown in Figure 9A, land adjoining the town centre area, such as the Westbury Town Common, the streetscape and properties to the north of Meander Valley Road, and the properties along William Street to the south also contribute to the town centre setting and sense of place.

These adjoining areas, or part thereof, may be considered by the community as places that may become sub-precinct areas under a Planning Scheme or a sub-precinct of an overall Specific Area Plan for the town centre area.

6. Key Risks to Character (Preliminary)

Within this area there are many vacant lots and single dwellings on larger lots. These are located in either the Village Zone or the General Residential Zone. Both zones encourage residential development as either permitted or no permit required development. This is significant for places that are not on the Tasmanian Heritage Register as such places are not subject to any particular design standards other than non-specific (not unique to Westbury) performance criteria.



Figure 11: This area of land has the potential to be developed for multiple dwellings or subdivision subject to design and Council approvals (Source: theLIST Mapping)

An example of a large open space, that may developed, is shown in Figure 12. This land has the potential to allow for up-to four (4) additional dwellings in the General Residential Zone. Meaning, the zone deliberately encourages a higher density of dwellings without regard for the character of the area. Similarly for places that are not on the heritage register, a person is able to demolish or remove vegetation to allow for new development to occur without due regard to the heritage value or character of the area. Council and the community ought to contemplate the character of the land between Lonsdale Promenade and the Town

Common as shown in Figure 11. This area of land, subject to design and Council approval, may provide for largescale residential development such as multiple dwellings or subdivision. This would require vegetation removal and potentially major drainage and/or earthworks including retaining walls due to the flood potential from the Quamby Brook.

Smaller infill development such as new outbuildings, a second dwelling or minor subdivision are possible on many other properties within the township area. Many of which could be achieved with minimal impact on the character of the area. For example, a new dwelling or shed located at the rear of an existing dwelling is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the overall character of the area. However, demolition of existing buildings or construction of buildings that are prominent in the streetscape would contribute to the gradual erosion of the character of this area.

Subdivision potential within the town centre area is confined to mostly small 1-2 lot subdivisions or 1 lot plus balance battle-axe style subdivision. Given the lot sizes and lot arrangements are not consistent in the town centre area, subdivision is not necessarily a high risk to eroding the character of the area. The larger area identified in Figure 11 and also the Holy Trinity Catholic Church on the corner of William Street and Meander Valley Road may allow for a more substantial subdivision with road access which has the potential to alter the character of the area through inconsistent housing design but also inconsistent street layout and design. These two (2) parcels of land require further consideration in the *Draft Westbury Town Centre Character Study*. This may include recommended design solutions to either prohibit the construction of new roads or provide detailed design solutions to ensure any such roads are in keeping with the town centre character.



Figure 12: King Street Property, an example of potential unit development (Source: David Cundall, May 2025)



Figure 13: Example of stonework in Lyall Street (Source: David Cundall, May 2025)

7. Conclusion

The retention and enhancement of the Westbury historic town centre is important. The features, places, layout, buildings, and landscaping have been created by the people that live and have lived in the area.

Understanding and further defining the local character of a place is critical to developing any further objectives for this important part of Westbury as it underpins elements of design and provides clear direction for the Council, landowners and developers. This can be particularly useful in expediting the scoping, planning and design process for new developments.

This overview will assist consultation and inform future preparation of the *Draft Westbury Historic Town Centre Character Study*. The final *Character Study* will be prepared subject to community and stakeholder consultation to better understand the places, precincts, buildings, vegetation and other streetscape elements that are unique and important to the Westbury community. The consultation will test some of the statements made in this document and allow such statements to be further refined and developed.

Council and the community can then decide how best to proceed with regard to options for preserving and enhancing the character of the area.