

Transport Discussion Paper

Integrated Transport Strategy
For Hepburn Shire

September 2023



Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL



Acknowledgement of Country



Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.



Community Vision:

Hepburn Shire – an inclusive rural community located in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are value, partnerships are fostered, environment is protected, diversity supported, and innovation embraced.

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BACKGROUND

Hepburn Shire Council is preparing an Integrated Transport Strategy, with help from Movement & Place Consulting.

The Integrated Transport Strategy will guide the continued improvement of transport across the Shire. It will shape Council's priorities and actions through its own annual works programs, as well as its advocacy to others, especially Victorian and Commonwealth Government agencies and industry bodies.

The Integrated Transport Strategy will plan for a local transport system that can efficiently and safely connect people to their everyday needs, catering for residents, workers and visitors alike. It will recognise the need for better transport connections within and between townships in Hepburn Shire and to places beyond.

As well as covering motorised private and public transport, the Integrated Transport Strategy will encompass active transport needs for the Shire and set in place key directions for improved connections

for the community. It will also cover recreational infrastructure such as walking and cycling trails and will address how good transport can promote economic prosperity and environmental sustainability.

The Integrated Transport Strategy is part of Council's Future Hepburn project, which includes:

- Township Structure Plans for Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford and Hepburn Springs, Glenlyon and Trentham
- Rural Hepburn: Agricultural Land and Rural Settlement Strategy

The Hepburn Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy is also part of the Integrated Transport Strategy.

Bike Riding in Creswick



This paper

This discussion paper provides information on Hepburn Shire's transport network and highlights key areas of significance and implications.

A comprehensive draft Background Report is being prepared, which will be the evidence base for the strategy. It will be made available on the project website: <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au/future-hepburn>

We need your input

We want to hear what matters to you; please follow the link/QR code to a survey that will help Council to better understand the transport needs of our community.

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WHY DO WE NEED AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY?

Transport is a key issue throughout Hepburn Shire. This was clear from the local transport forum held in Trentham (2018), which prompted Council’s Local Transport Benchmarking Study in 2019. Further feedback in 2023 has come from Future Hepburn township surveys.

Integrated planning puts the most vulnerable - and sustainable - methods of travel first.

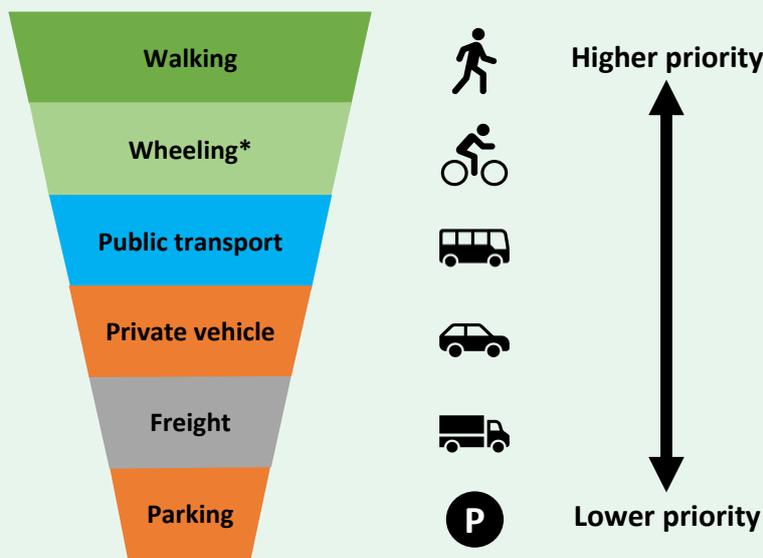
Why does Integrated Transport matter?

Good transport systems are critical to liveability, a high-quality environment and vibrant community life. They make it easier for people and goods to move and connect, improve health and well-being, and cater for the needs of people of all abilities and attributes.

An integrated approach understands the places that people need to go and the transport options required to reach them. It also considers all transport users, putting the most vulnerable first. A key element of this is to reduce car dependency

wherever possible and provide better and more affordable choices, especially for short local journeys. Another key element is to cater for new more sustainable transport technologies, such as electric vehicles and emerging transport trends such as ride sharing and micro-transport solutions like e-scooters.

Transport issues are best understood and tackled as a whole, which is why an integrated approach is so important. Victoria’s Transport Integration Act 2010 requires Council to use a comprehensive, integrated approach to transport.

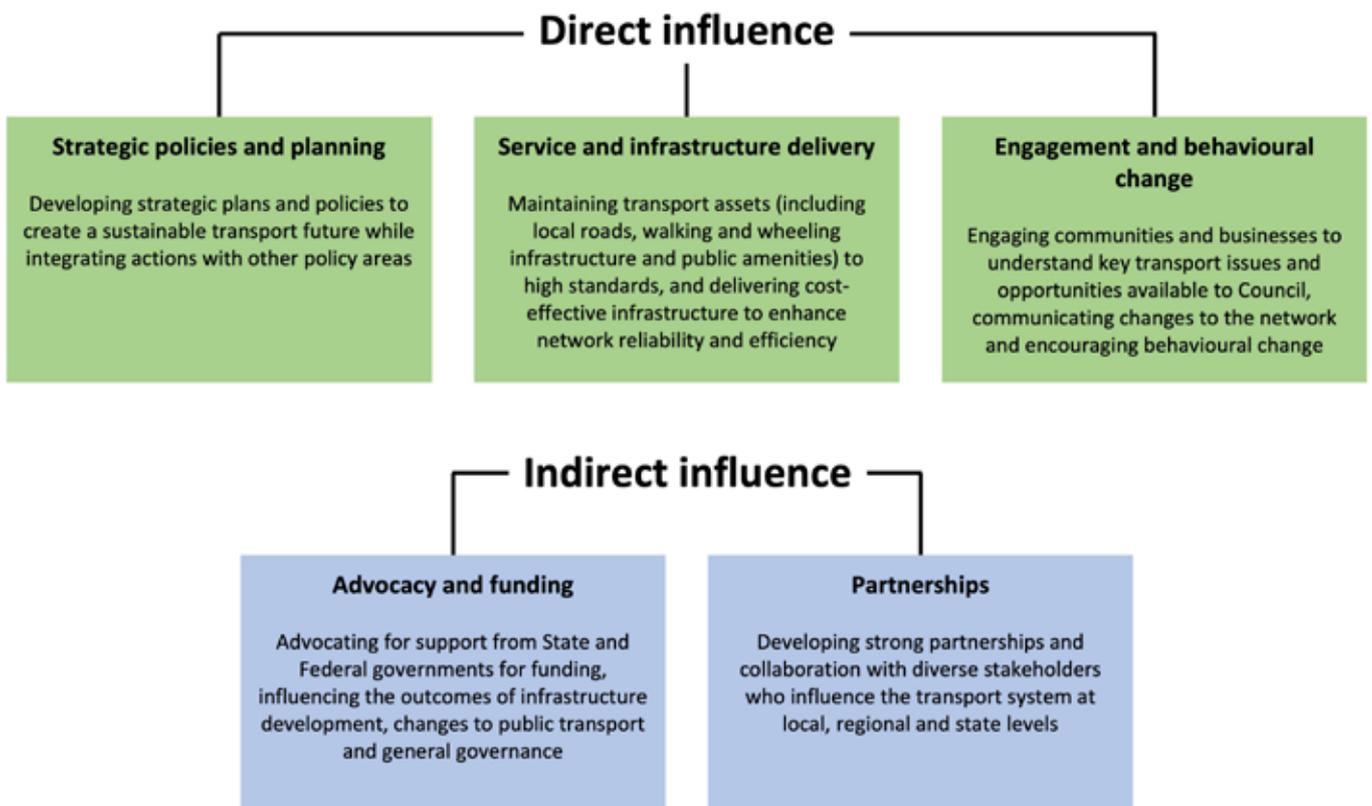


*'Wheeling' includes bicycles, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and e-mobility devices

Council's role in Transport Planning

An integrated approach ensures that transport system changes account for and benefit all areas that Council is responsible for. It will recognise and build on other plans and strategies, including those below.

Council's role covers areas that it can influence directly, through its planning and service delivery activities and indirectly through advocacy and partnerships with other responsible agencies.



A note on 'wheeling'

We use the term 'wheeling' instead of 'cycling' or 'bicycle riding' throughout this paper. This is to acknowledge that there are many other forms of wheeled personal transport than just bicycles – they include scooters, skateboards, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other emerging forms, including electric-powered versions and also e-mobility share schemes such as those being trialled in Melbourne and Ballarat.

'Bicycle riding' is only used when talking about previous data (most surveys do not distinguish other forms of 'wheeling').

A note on 'active transport'

Active transport relates to people embracing physical activity as a healthy way to get around for all purposes, including recreation. It covers walking and 'wheeling' as defined above.

TRAVEL IN AND AROUND HEPBURN SHIRE

Planning for transport is about understanding the needs of people and the economy. It's important to recognise the unique character of Hepburn Shire when planning any changes. As well as local people's needs, the large number of visitors

to the Shire must also be considered. Limited transport choices within the Shire means that car travel dominates, resulting in high transport costs for households in an area with an older population with relatively low income.

Location and population

Hepburn Shire has a resident population of about 16,600 people (2021 Census). The main towns (Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford/Hepburn Springs, Glenlyon and Trentham) house two-thirds of the Shire's total population.

The Shire's tourism industry attracted 1.2 million domestic visitor nights and a further 884,000 domestic day trips in the year ending March 2023. All trips are heavily skewed towards weekends, with 66% of overnight trips and 62% of day trips including a Saturday or Sunday over the past five years (Tourism Research Australia, 2023).

During most Saturdays and Sundays, the "daytime population" of the Shire is double that of the resident population, producing a lot of extra traffic and demand for parking. This particularly affects key tourism centres, like Daylesford.

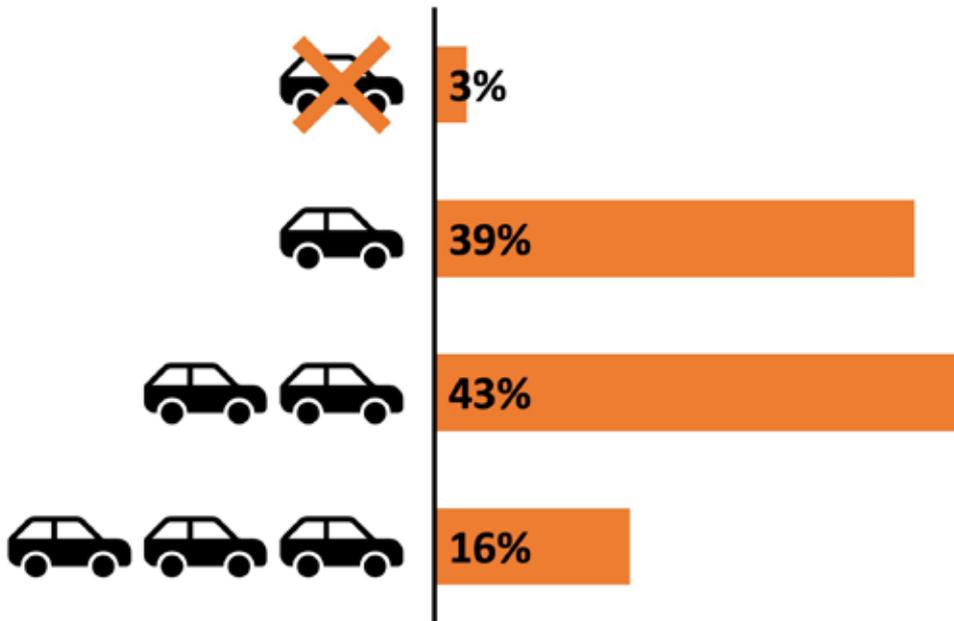
Additionally, one in nine houses in Hepburn Shire are listed on short-term rental platforms such as Stayz and Airbnb (AirDNA, 2023). This further highlights the transient nature of a significant part of the population.



Midland Highway entering Hepburn Shire from Ballarat

Travelling in and around the Shire

Over 80% of Hepburn Shire households have 1 or 2 cars

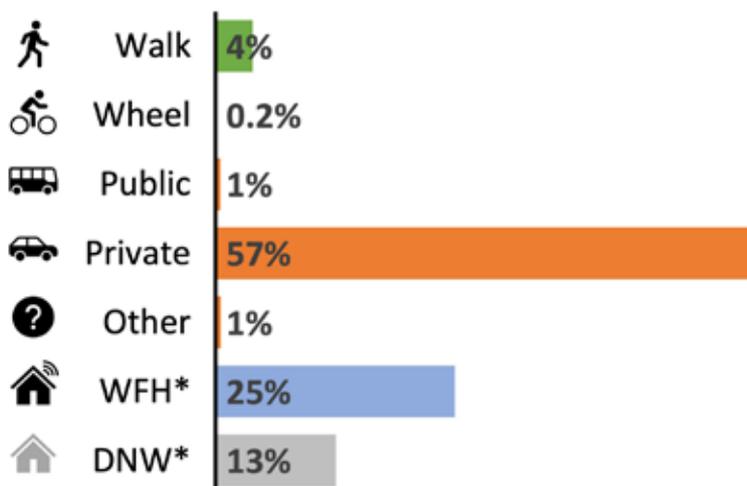


Source: 2021 Census

Most travel in Hepburn Shire uses private cars. For many, this is the only practical choice. Long distances between key destinations, low public transport service frequencies, poor connections and limited coverage mean that local people and visitors are highly car dependent.

Only 3% of households in Hepburn Shire are without a car, and nearly 60% have two cars or more.

The majority of Hepburn Shire residents drive to work



Source: 2021 Census. * WFH = worked from home, DNW = did not work

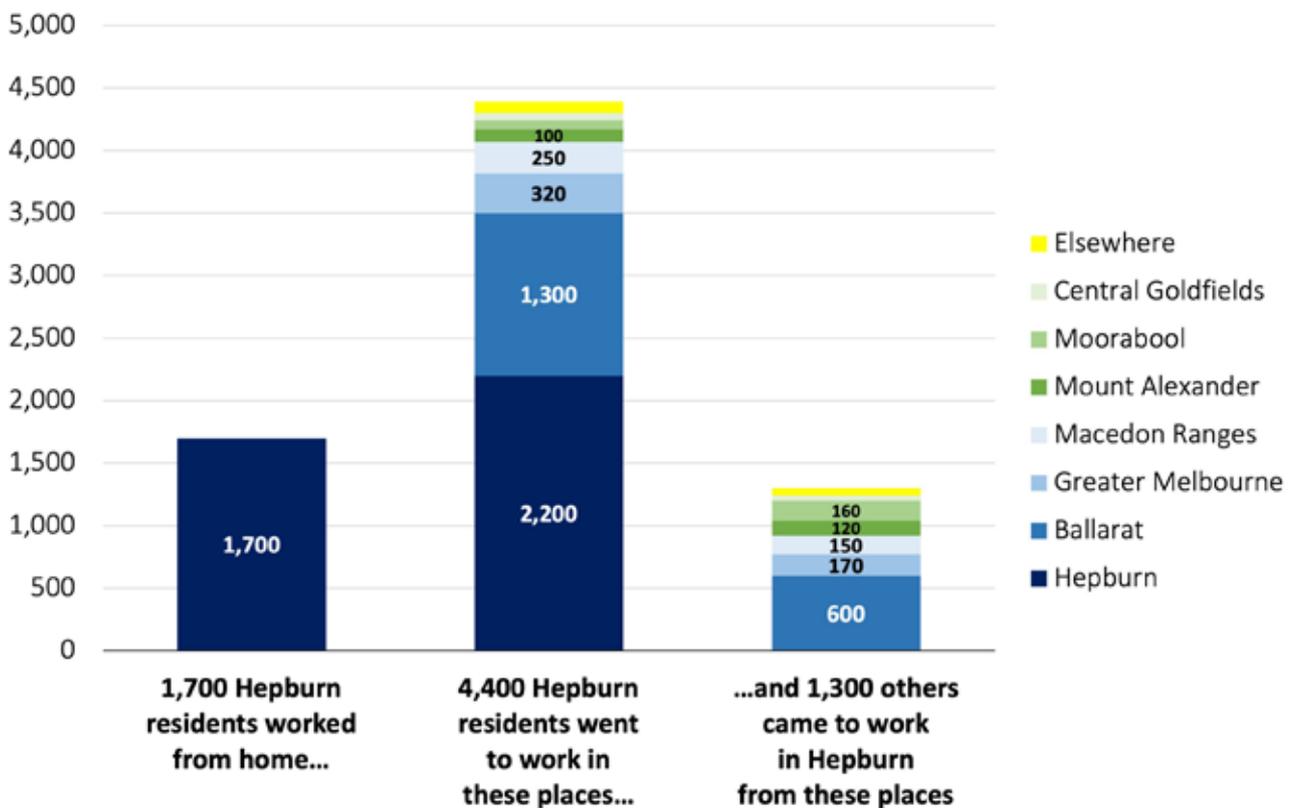
As a rural area, data on travel in Hepburn Shire is limited, but the evidence confirms the large amounts of car use. For example, in the 2021 Census, 25% of Shire workers worked from home and 57% drove to work, while only 4% walked and very small numbers wheeled or used public transport.

Travelling in and around the Shire

On Census Day in 2021, about 1,700 Hepburn residents worked from home, and 2,200 travelled to work in the Shire. Another 2,200 travelled to work outside the Shire, primarily to Ballarat, Greater

Melbourne and Macedon Ranges Shire. 1,300 people came to work in Hepburn from outside, again primarily from Ballarat, Greater Melbourne and Macedon Ranges Shire.

Shire residents travel elsewhere to work, while others come into the Shire



Source: 2021 Census

This illustrates that Shire residents rely on good access to surrounding places, not only for work but for health care, shopping, personal business and recreation. Ballarat, Bendigo and Greater Melbourne are important, as are places like Maryborough, Castlemaine, Kyneton, Woodend and Gisborne.

Car ownership cost burdens

Transport costs can take a large slice of income

Median household income in Shire of Hepburn is \$847 per week*

This is 21% below the Victorian median figure

\$847

\$230

Typical weekly spending on transport**

\$230

\$318

\$299



Transport**



Mortgage/rent**

Remainder

29% of Shire of Hepburn households earn less than \$500 a week*

\$500

* 2021 Census, 'Median equivalised total household income (weekly)'

** Estimated for a family of 2 adults and a student, paying median mortgage/rent and running a medium sized car/SUV (running costs sourced from RACV)

Car dependency comes at a high cost to households. For example, a two-adult, one-student household with median income in Hepburn Shire may only have about \$300 a week left after covering their housing and transport costs.

Low-income households in the Shire may find it difficult to get around easily and cost-effectively, given the high reliance on car ownership and use. They may have to rely on older, cheaper cars (vehicles are generally older in regional areas than in capital cities), which lack modern safety features and are less fuel-efficient.

Vulnerable transport users

Understanding the key needs of different groups of people is essential to health and wellbeing, especially in relation to travel, access and mobility. The Integrated Transport Strategy will use a person-centred approach to ensure that the most vulnerable users of transport are prioritised: this includes people living with a disability, the young and old, and different genders.

24% of
Hepburn Shire's
population live
with disability

18% of
the population
is over 70
years old

51% of the
population
are women

People living with a physical disability have particular challenges with travel. They often rely on others, or on special services such as the Multi Purpose (Maxi) Taxi Program. Access to public transport – and also getting around local areas – can be difficult, especially where the facilities are not well-designed. The Disability Discrimination Act sets standards for design of public places, including footpaths and public transport systems (like bus stops and vehicles), but many facilities fall well short of these standards, and can be poorly maintained.

Hepburn Shire's population has a median age of 52, which is significantly older than the Victorian average of 38.

Older people, especially when fully or partially retired, may have less mobility and tend to drive less than people of working age. From 75 years, people have to self-test for driving ability and can only keep a driving licence for three years at a time. Many would like to walk or cycle more but are often deterred by poor facilities and safety concerns.

Older residents may continue to drive even as their ability declines because there are not paths where they could ride a mobility device to local shops and services.

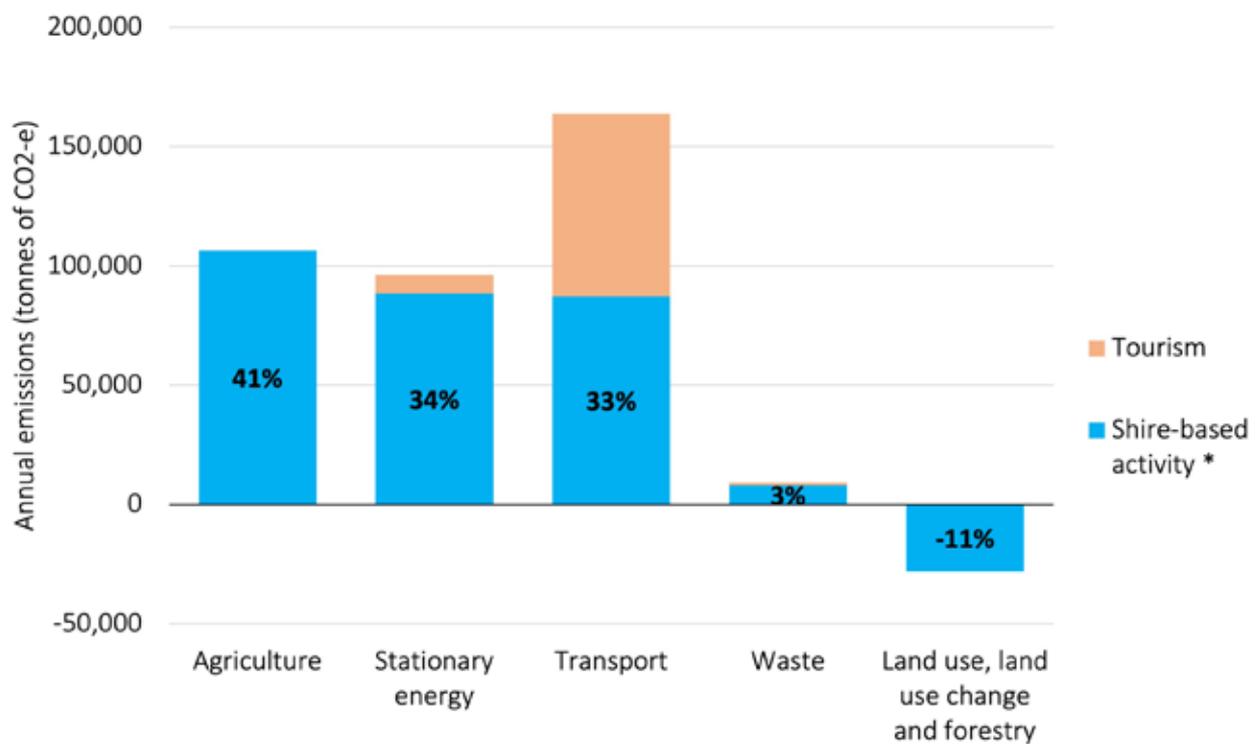
Women ride bicycles and use public transport less than men do. They also have different needs and transport use patterns to men. For example, in Hepburn Shire, 44% of people travelling to work in the 2021 Census are women, but they are only 30% of people cycling to work, and 40% of those using public transport. This is a common pattern in many places. Women are deterred by concern for their safety and security, especially if travelling alone. Transport services can also be unsuitable to their transport usage patterns (e.g. smaller more frequent local trips throughout the day).

Environmental impacts of transport

The global climate crisis has become an increasingly important issue for local governments to tackle. It is well understood that actions to reduce emissions should also generate economic, social and environmental benefits. Council has been proactive in their approach to climate action by supporting Z-NET Hepburn Shire, a community partnership working toward zero-net emissions, as well as through Council plans and strategies.

Emissions from transport in Hepburn Shire make up 33% of total baseline emissions, attributed mostly to high levels of private motor vehicle travel. On top of this, visitors to the Shire produce a similar proportion of emissions.

Transport produces 33% of Hepburn Shire-based emissions, and tourism activity nearly doubles this



* Hepburn Shire residential, commercial, industrial, farming, and municipal sectors

Source: ZNET Hepburn Shire Community Transition Plan (2018)

Costs to Council

Council is responsible for maintaining many transport infrastructure assets throughout the Shire. This includes approximately 612km of sealed roads, 844km of unsealed roads, 45km of footpaths, 82km of kerb and channelling, 165 bridges and 34km of drains. Council's maintenance budget for these assets is about \$2.9 million per year.

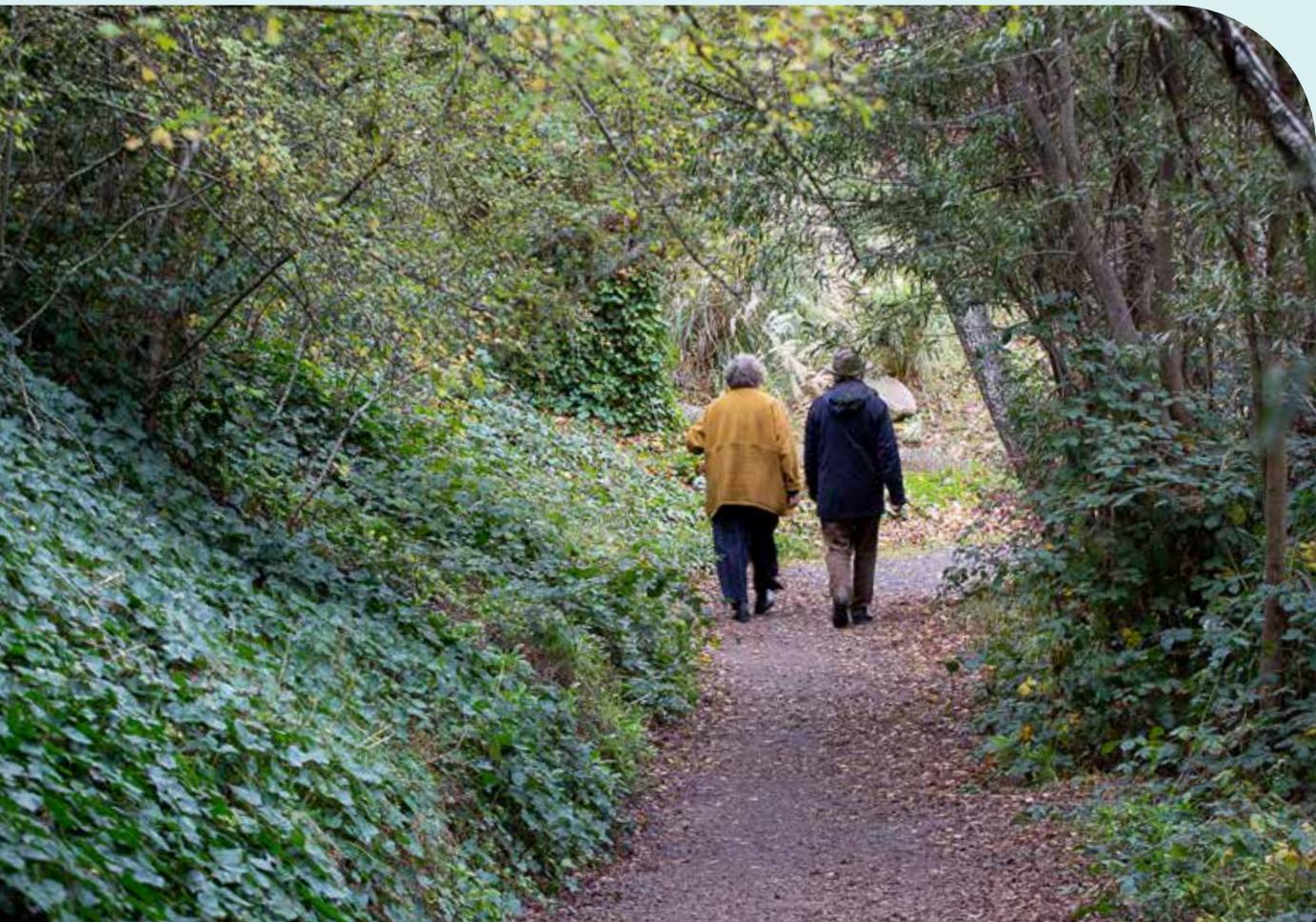
The impacts of steadily increasing traffic (especially heavy vehicles) and weather extremes from climate change (such as storms, stormwater flows and flash flooding) are significantly affecting

the condition of roads, which in turn affects user safety, fuel consumption and wear and tear on vehicles. Preventative maintenance, and frequent monitoring of road and path condition, will be needed to ensure that maintenance funding is used as efficiently as possible.

WHAT IS TRANSPORT LIKE IN HEPBURN SHIRE TODAY?

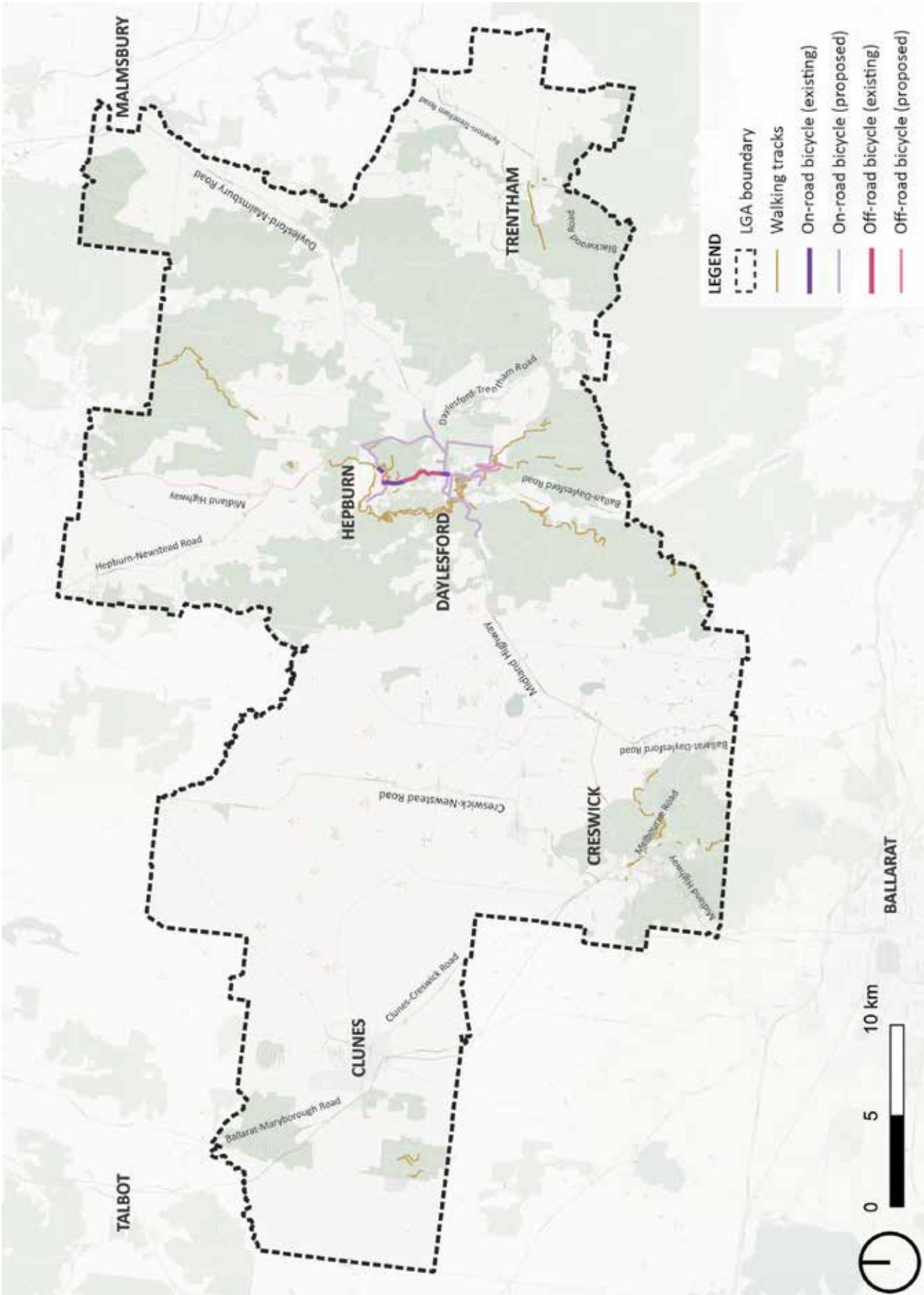
Hepburn Shire's transport system is almost exclusively road-based, apart from a single rail line with a very limited passenger service. Bus and coach services are also limited, apart from Creswick, which is served by relatively frequent buses to and from Ballarat.

Walking and wheeling facilities are concentrated in the townships, where there are also connections into a growing network of recreational trails in surrounding forest areas.



Daylesford Lake Walking Path

Walking and wheeling



Walking and wheeling

Dedicated walking and wheeling facilities are concentrated in and around the main townships. Footpaths are generally located along local streets and, in some cases, next to arterial roads, often displaying outdated and low-quality designs that create unsafe environments for users. The Shire contains less of a traditional 'active transport' network configuration and is more of a recreational network, including walking tracks and on and off-road bicycle tracks.

Most of the street space in townships is allocated to car traffic and parking. While important for local businesses, this can make things more difficult for people walking and wheeling. The busiest area is Vincent Street in the middle of Daylesford, where conflicts between cars and walkers or wheelers are common, and footpaths get very crowded. Creswick has an increasingly busy centre along Midland Highway, where wide traffic lanes, angle parking and high truck volumes also compete with walkers and wheelers.

Elsewhere, especially in Hepburn Springs, Clunes or Trentham, there is much less through-traffic in the main streets, but they still get very busy at weekends.

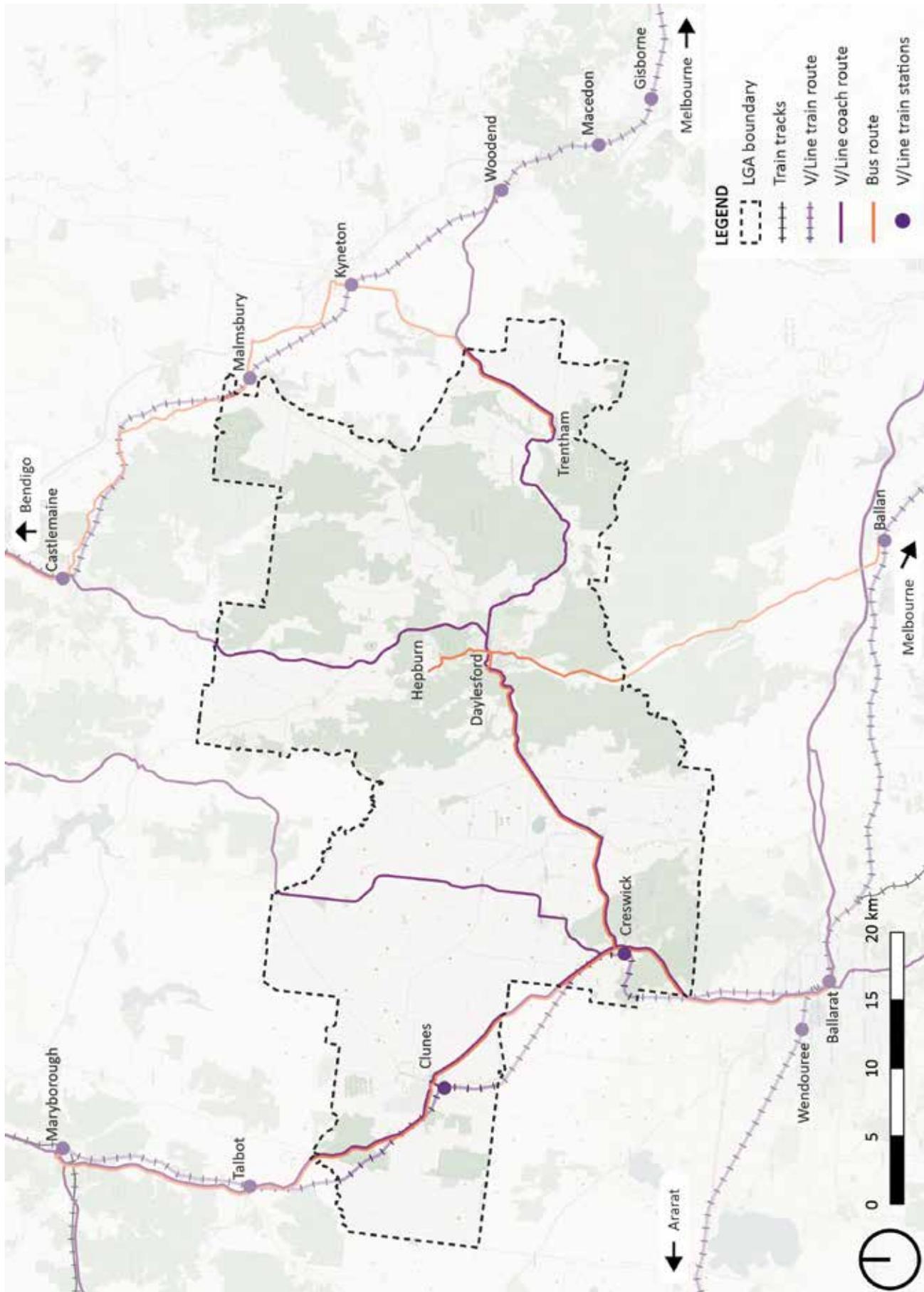
Away from the main streets in towns there is much less car traffic, but in many places, walkers have to use the road carriageway where there are no footpaths. Solutions could provide safer streets while also protecting the heritage and rural feel that residents treasure.

The tourist economy brings substantial weekend and holiday congestion for Daylesford and Hepburn Springs in particular, and to a lesser extent Trentham and Clunes. Residents and visitors enjoy recreational walking and bicycle tracks in and around the main townships.

There are some good off-road paths and trails which provide recreational walking and wheeling opportunities.



Public transport



Public transport in Hepburn Shire includes:

- Melbourne – Maryborough V/Line train service, with stations at Clunes and Creswick
- V/Line coach routes
- Regional bus routes

Service frequencies are relatively low.

The Melbourne-Maryborough V/Line service in the west of the Shire has only two services a day in each direction, while most of the regional and coach bus services that provide connections between the townships and beyond the Shire operate infrequently.

The weekday bus route between Ballan and Hepburn Springs via Daylesford operates only one service a day in each direction.

The most frequent services in the Shire are between Creswick and Ballarat; this enables Creswick people to access trains at Ballarat station. This route operates fifteen services in each direction on weekdays, and about half that amount on weekends.

Regional Coach services provide connections to the north, including Bendigo and Castlemaine. They also make connections between Daylesford and Woodend, providing the only public transport for Trentham residents. Despite being infrequent, these services connect to important facilities (such as health services in Kyneton), as well as train services on the Bendigo line.

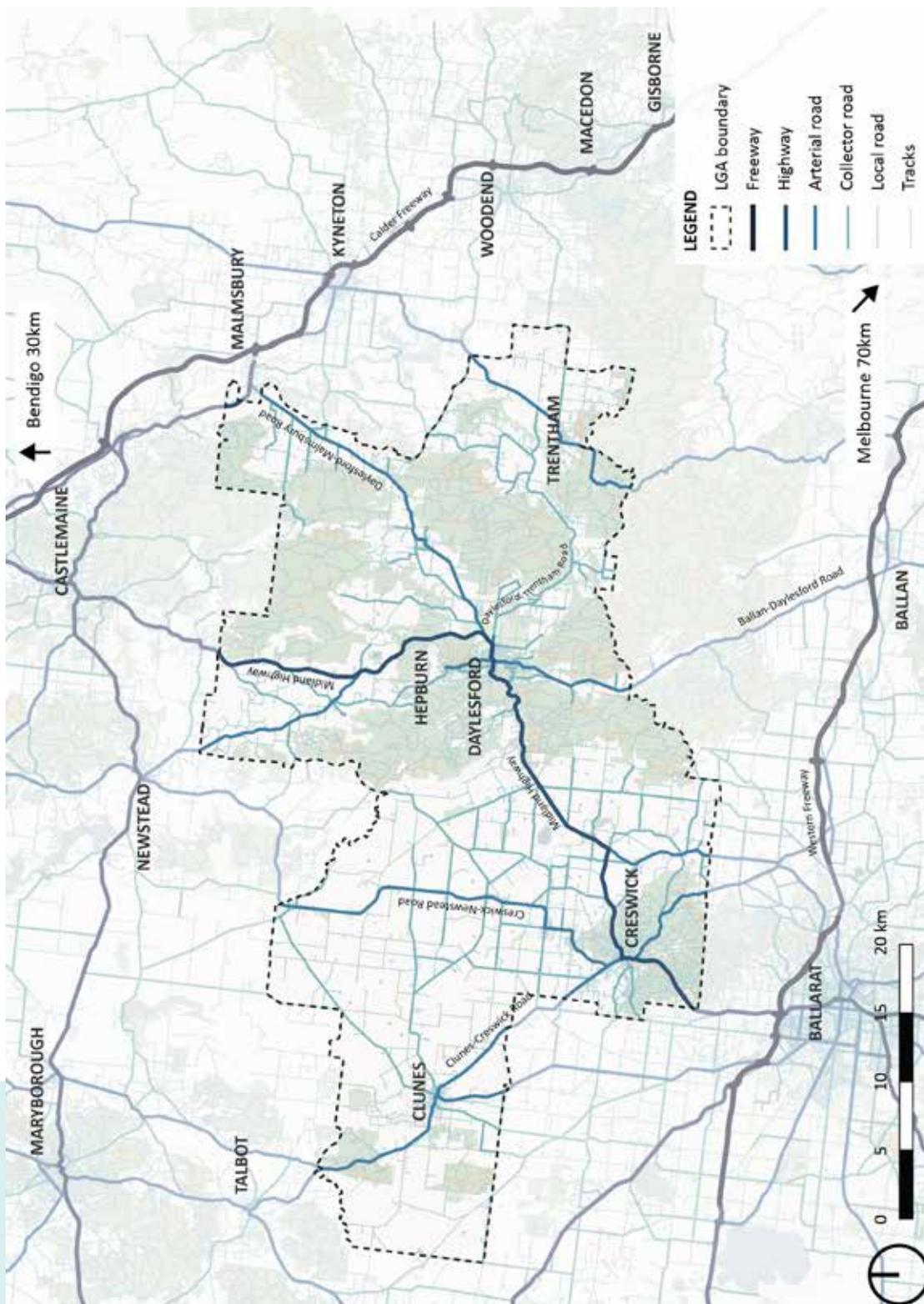
Fares on regional public transport in Victoria have recently been capped to a maximum of \$10 per day (\$5 concession). Demand has increased substantially on regional train services, but regional bus and coach services have not seen the same growth, probably because of their infrequency.

Where better frequency is provided, usage can increase substantially. For example, when train services to Ararat were increased in recent years, the improved timetable enabled Ararat students to travel by train to and from school in Ballarat much more conveniently than before.

At present, most bus and train services in the Shire use paper tickets rather than the myki system. The State Government recently awarded a 15-year contract to a new ticketing operator, who will run and upgrade myki to include use by mobile phones and credit cards. It is understood that the upgraded system will be rolled out throughout Victoria.



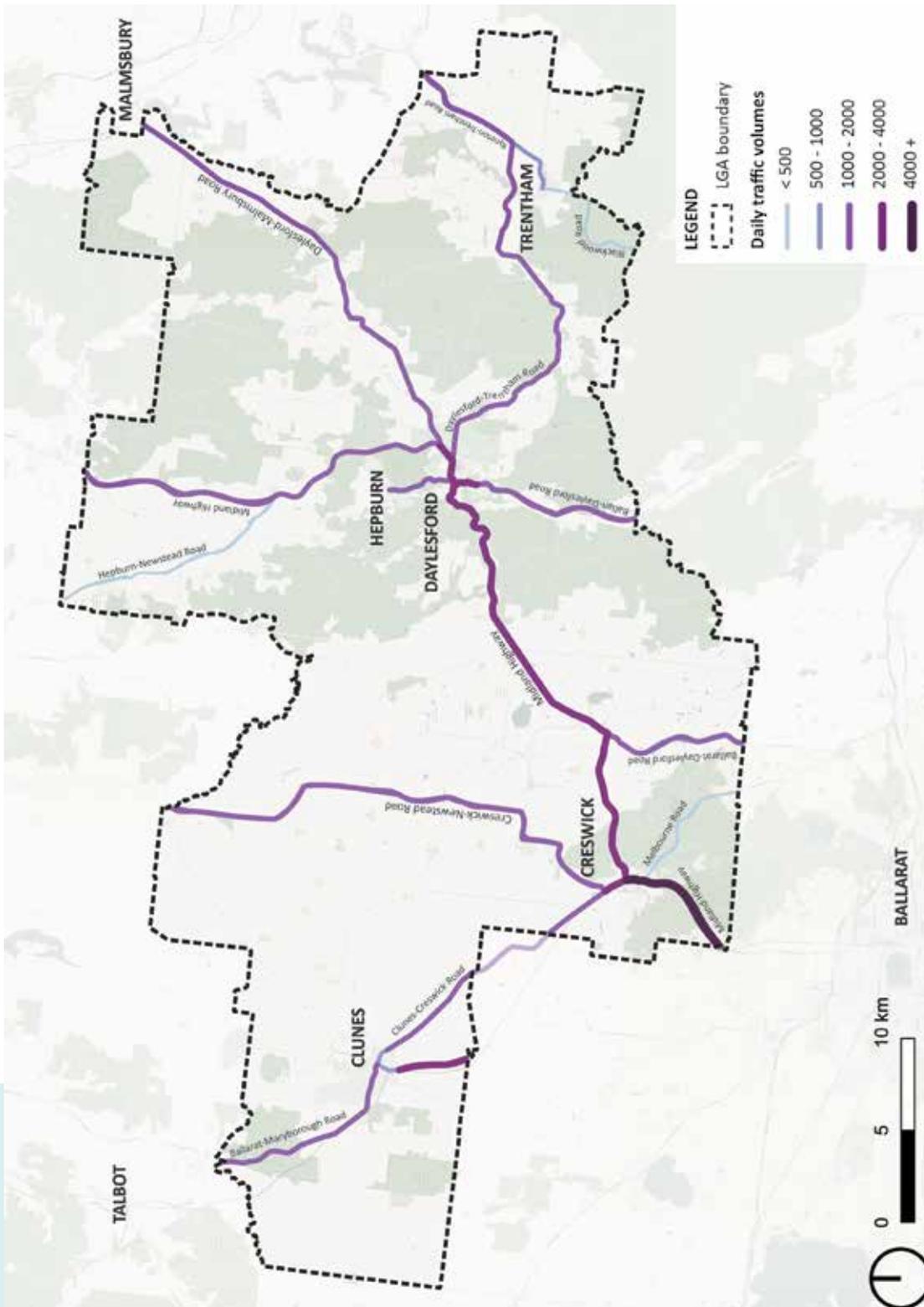
Road network and freight



Hepburn Shire Roads

Hepburn Shire is serviced by an extensive road network. The Calder and Western Freeways connect the Shire to Metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat and Bendigo, while the Midland Highway serves as an important north east south west route through the Shire.

Arterial and local roads provide links between the larger towns of Daylesford and Creswick, and smaller towns like Clunes, Hepburn Springs and Trentham. There are also many smaller settlements between these places. Distances between townships are anywhere from 15km to 65km, meaning that return journey times can range from 30 minutes to well over an hour and a half.



Hepburn Shire Traffic Volumes

The busiest roads are the Midland Highway and Ballan-Daylesford Road, which both serve Daylesford-Hepburn Springs.

Freight traffic is concentrated along Ballan-Daylesford Road and the Midland Highway, travelling directly through Daylesford. Truck routes are signposted in Clunes and Daylesford to divert heavy vehicles away from their main streets,

but in Creswick the Midland Highway carries trucks through the town centre.

The Maryborough rail line carries significant rail freight, especially grain, to the Port of Geelong via Ballarat.

WHAT ARE THE TRANSPORT CHALLENGES?

Hepburn Shire's transport network has a range of challenges that the Integrated Transport Strategy will need to address. This section summarises these challenges and provides some case studies to show how they are tackled elsewhere.

Poor quality walking and wheeling infrastructure



Narrow, uneven and incomplete bike lane (Hepburn Springs)

Car-centric streets reduce the quality of walking and wheeling environments. This makes it more difficult for walkers, wheelers and people who are mobility impaired. In many places there's a need to retain the heritage character of streetscapes, but it is also important to provide better and safer infrastructure for vulnerable road and street users, safely separated from general vehicle traffic wherever possible.

In many of the towns, there are posted 60km/h speed limits except in the very centre, where 50 or 40km/h limits are provided. Reducing these limits, as is being done elsewhere, would make things much safer for everyone.



Mobility chair user in traffic laneway (Clunes)

Infrequent and limited public transport network

Public transport services are infrequent and do not connect well with each another. For example, regional bus and coach services only run a few times a day, and do not always link up with other services like V/Line trains. This results in long waits, lengthy journey times, and limits choice making car use the only practical option in most places.

With a significant population that comes into Hepburn Shire to work, particularly in hospitality roles, affordable and effective public transport is an issue in attracting additional workforce to this (and other) sectors.



Geelong-Bendigo via Daylesford V/Line coach at Creswick Station – runs twice a day



Clunes station – well preserved and cared for, with good facilities, but only two trains a day each way.

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Environmental issues

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is vital to limiting climate change. Transport produces about 20% of Australia’s annual emissions, and most of this is from cars and light commercial vehicles. Electric vehicles are slowly appearing, but Australia is behind the rest of the world in its take-up. Charging infrastructure is important, and Council has made a good start with charging stations in Creswick, Hepburn Springs, Clunes and Daylesford.



EV charging station in Vincent Street, Daylesford

Local air quality is heavily influenced by large trucks, especially diesel ones. Whilst this may not be a serious problem in Hepburn Shire, the other impacts of heavy trucks – noise, visual bulk and safety concerns – are significant, especially where they pass through residential areas and town centres.

It is also important that the Strategy recognises the importance of freight and promote alternative modes where possible and potentially reviewing designated heavy vehicle routes away from retail centres and residential areas.



Heavy trucks pass through town centres (Bridport Street, Daylesford)

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Public safety

People should feel safe when travelling. Feeling otherwise reduces mobility, engagement in civic life and access to services. Traditional approaches to transport planning have often overlooked the ‘place making’ aspect of transport provision. For example, streets should be designed for people not just cars so that they facilitate walking, wheeling, social interaction, and access to public transport. Transport environs should embody ‘safer by design’ principles to improve public safety and perceptions of vulnerability. By doing this, places become more attractive, vibrant and inviting.

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Road trauma

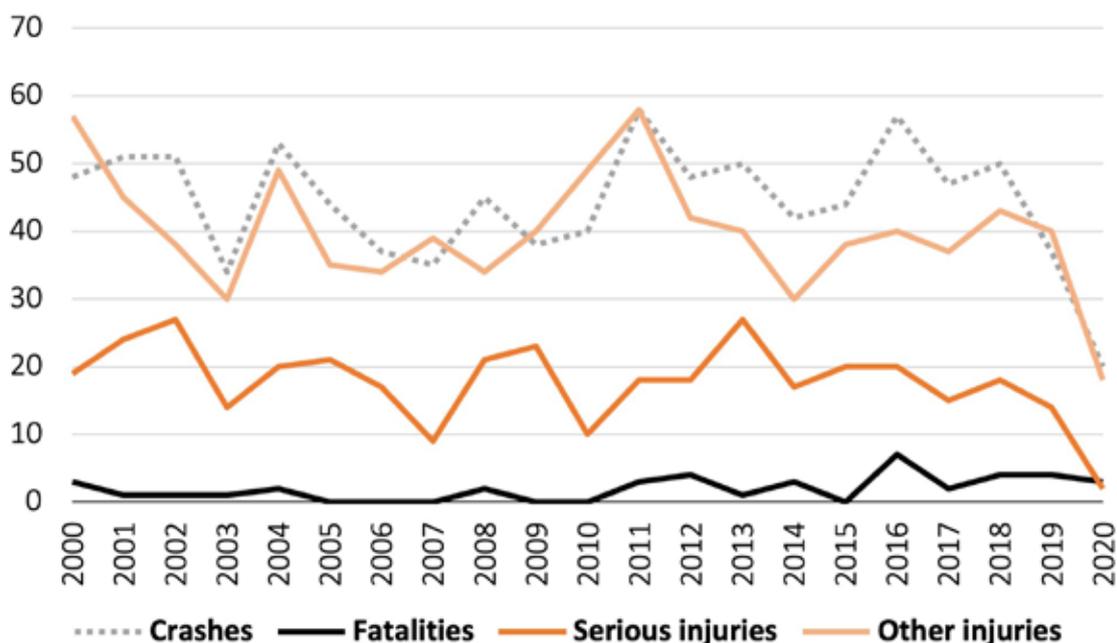
Between 2000 and 2020, there were about 40 deaths, 370 serious injuries and over 800 other injuries reported in crashes on roads in Hepburn Shire. Half of these were in single motor vehicle crashes, and 40% were in crashes involving multiple motor vehicles. Pedestrians were affected by about 30 crashes, most of which involved motor vehicles. Bicycle riders were involved in 26 crashes, most of which were with cars or trucks.

Causes of deaths and injuries in road crashes (Shire of Hepburn, 2000-2020)

Fatalities and injuries	In a crash with...							Total
	Bicycle	Motorcycle	Car	Truck	Bus	Other	No other vehicle	
Pedestrians	-	-	25	3	-	2	1	31
Bicyclists	-	-	18	3	-	-	5	26
Motorcyclists	-	29	12	3	-	1	125	170
Vehicle occupants	-	4	424	54	1	5	532	1,020
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
Total	-	33	479	63	1	8	667	1,251

Source: Movement & Place Consulting analysis of CrashStats data 2000-2020

Annual road crash trends (Shire of Hepburn, 2000-2020)



Source: Movement & Place Consulting analysis of CrashStats data 2000-2020

Annual trends in crashes are variable, although there was a significant drop in 2020 because of COVID lockdowns which reduced road traffic everywhere in Victoria. More recent data is not yet available, but we know that there have been significant increases in road trauma in 2022 and 2023 throughout Victoria.

Beyond the reported road crash data, it is also vital to address perceptions of safety and personal security that people experience in public areas.

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Traffic and demand for parking



Street parking is often full in Daylesford, especially at weekends

The Shire has a strong tourist economy, meaning that the townships experience peak demands for parking. This can result in congested streetscapes which reduce the attractiveness and safety for walking and wheeling. The high demand for parking could be managed by incentivising active travel, which can be achieved through traffic calming, well connected walking and wheeling links and more end-of-trip facilities such as secure bicycle parking.



Long traffic queues can build up at busy visitor times



Multiple signs in Trentham look quaint, but create confusion and visual clutter

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Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage in many Shire towns appears to have grown organically over many years. Different colours, typefaces, sizes and types of signs are confusing and distracting and can contradict each other.

Case study examples – opportunities

Movement and Place Framework - Victoria

Victoria's [Movement and Place Framework](#) is highly relevant. It is an approach that analyses roads and streets to determine their 'movement' functions (throughput* of vehicles, use by public transport, etc.) and recognise their 'place' functions (gathering places for people, shopping, etc.). The process then determines the changes needed to provide better roads and streets. Applying the framework to places in Hepburn Shire is a good way to provide more balance between 'place' and 'movement'; protecting and supporting vulnerable users, increasing health and well-being, as well as improving townscapes.

Link: <https://dtp.vic.gov.au/about/planning/transport-strategies-and-plans/movement-and-place-in-victoria>

50km/h speed limits in New South Wales (NSW) rural towns and lower speed limits in general

Many rural towns in NSW have 50km/h speed limits throughout, including on their main through roads. In Victoria there has been a reluctance to do this; despite the 'default' speed in built-up metropolitan areas being 50km/h, many towns retain 60km/h speeds on built-up roads. [Victoria Walks](#), [RACV](#) and other organisations support further speed reductions to protect the safety of walkers and wheelers, especially in residential areas and town centres.

Links: <https://www.victoriawalks.org.au/Assets/Files/Speed-Limits-Position-1.3.pdf>

<https://www.racv.com.au/on-the-road/driving-maintenance/road-safety.html>

Age friendly cities – Ottawa

The [age-friendly programme in the City of Ottawa](#) uses the World Health Organisation's [Age-Friendly Cities framework](#) to improve conditions for senior residents. The City Council partnered with the community and charities to create action plans that have delivered age-friendly urban environments. Initiatives include general improvements to public amenity, safety alterations to intersections, accessible bus stops and safe pedestrian crossings. As well as senior residents, the benefits extend to the entire community.

Links: <https://coaottawa.ca/afo/>
<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/>

Hepburn Shire signed the Age-Friendly Victoria Declaration in July 2023

*Throughput is a measure of how many units of information a system can process in a given amount of time.

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Future trends

Hepburn Shire's population is expected to grow steadily, but slowly. However, higher growth in Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo will increase tourism, so visitor traffic will continue to grow. This will increase the need for better and safer roads, more recreational facilities and better conditions for walkers and wheelers in Hepburn Shire's town centres.

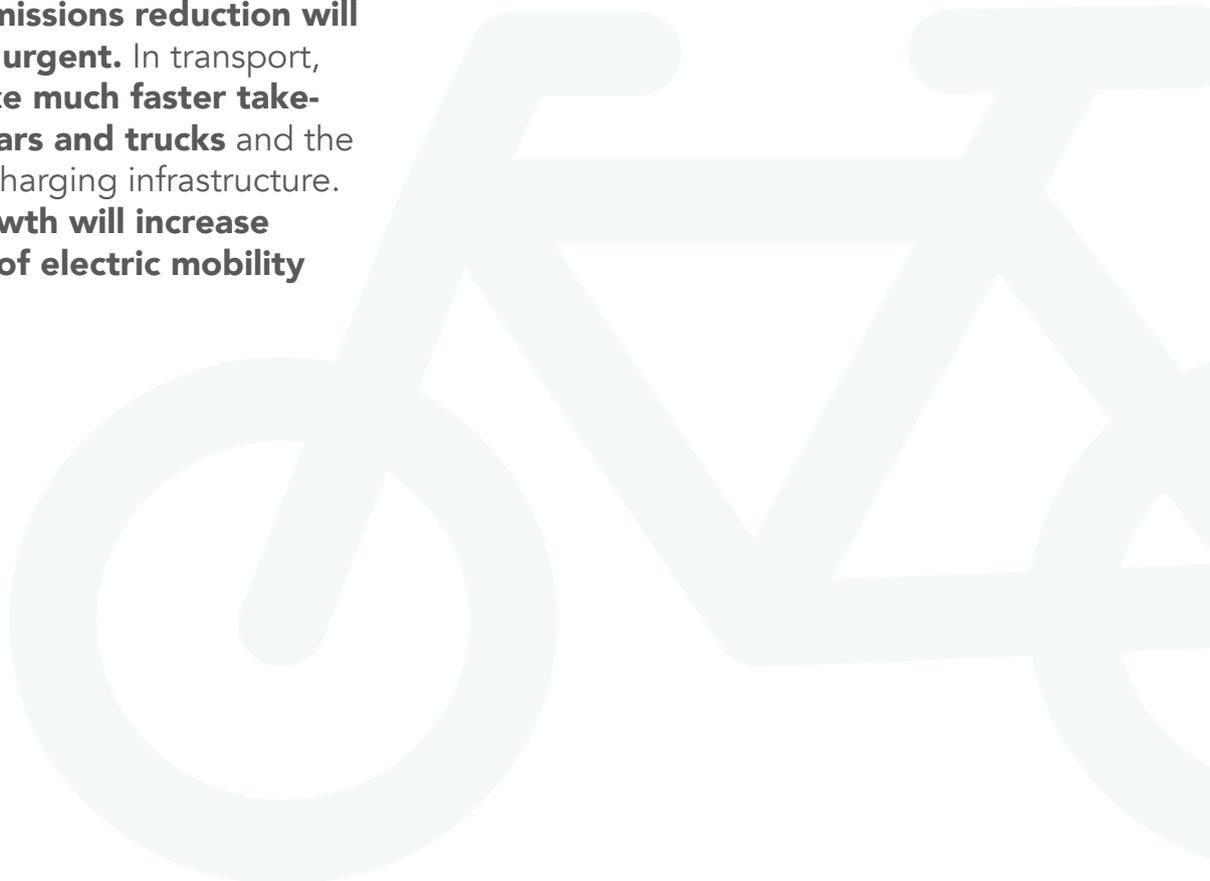
The steadily ageing resident population will need more alternatives to car use. Public transport services, if they were more frequent, well connected and convenient, could play a much more important role for access to surrounding places and train services., Locally Creswick and Clunes would significantly benefit from more train services on the Maryborough line.

While population growth continues, **the need for emissions reduction will get even more urgent.** In transport, **this will produce much faster take-up of electric cars and trucks** and the need for more charging infrastructure. Meanwhile, **growth will increase in other forms of electric mobility**

including e-bikes and e-scooters, both privately-owned and in shared mobility offerings. Electric vehicles (EVs) will not solve traffic problems; although increased automation and safety systems will have some effect on road safety.

Fully-automated self-driving vehicles are expected to take a long time to become widespread. Eventually they could make a difference to efficient and safe traffic movement.

Long-awaited **improvements to north west Victoria's freight rail network could produce significant growth in freight train traffic and its use of the Maryborough line.** If so, the impacts on the Clunes and Creswick area will need to be understood and allowed for.



PRINCIPLES FOR THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Based on the existing and expected challenges for Hepburn Shire's transport network, the following Principles are suggested for the Integrated Transport Strategy.

People-centred transport

Looking at transport in a people-centred, integrated sense is important because people move around in many different ways. We share different parts of the transport network with each other, on foot and in vehicles, at different times and parts of our journeys. Developing the transport system in ways that integrate and harmonise these uses, instead of creating conflicts between them, will make it easier and safer for everyone to travel.

Fairer transport

Car-based transport systems create barriers to mobility that reinforce long term social inequalities. Transport investment must be mindful of and remove these barriers, while also prioritising the needs of vulnerable and marginalised people, different genders, people with low incomes and people with disabilities. Access to transport should not depend on someone's ability to pay, their age, physical abilities or attributes. Transport investment should establish programs that provide affordable options for everyone who needs it.

Greener and healthier transport choices

Greenhouse emissions from transport are causing long term damage to the natural environment. Greener transport options reduce emissions, preserve air quality, improve health outcomes and help to combat car dependency. Transport is also important for developing the Shire's Circular Economy, to design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use and regenerate natural systems.

These principles will guide preparation of the strategy and actions to address the transport issues outlined here. Community input will further inform the strategy.

Safer movement and places

Making movement and places safer includes measures to reduce road trauma and improve safety in transport environments.

People should feel safe when travelling. Streets should be designed for people (not just cars) so that they facilitate walking, wheeling, social interaction and access to public transport. By doing this, township and public places will become more attractive, vibrant and inviting.

Better road maintenance supports a safer road network, for all users including those who are walking and wheeling.

Another important aspect is protection of wildlife, including research and reducing roadkill.

A connected Shire

The Integrated Transport Strategy will seek to promote and create a transport network that maximises access and mobility for people to places within and beyond the Shire. Improving public transport service levels, connections and access will help increase greener transport trips and reduce car-dependency. By improving connectivity, people will have access to more employment opportunities, community services, the local economy and social interactions. This may include the 15 minute town concept*.

Vibrant economy

Future transport networks should facilitate efficient movement of goods and people, which is vital for Hepburn Shire's local and regional economy. Improving transport affordability for households and visitors alike will increase local economic activity and create new development opportunities. There will also be economic benefits from transport initiatives that support the Shire's Circular Economy.

*In a 15 minute town most daily necessities and services, such as work, shopping, education, healthcare, and leisure can be easily reached by a 15-minute walk or bike ride from any point in a town. This aims to reduce car dependency, promote healthy and sustainable living, and improve wellbeing and quality of life.

MOVING FORWARD

This discussion paper has given a background to the Shire’s transport system to help prompt community discussion and feedback during September 2023.

The next stage of the project will be to produce the Integrated Transport Strategy.

Timeline



If you would like further information please contact:
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Hepburn

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