

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.

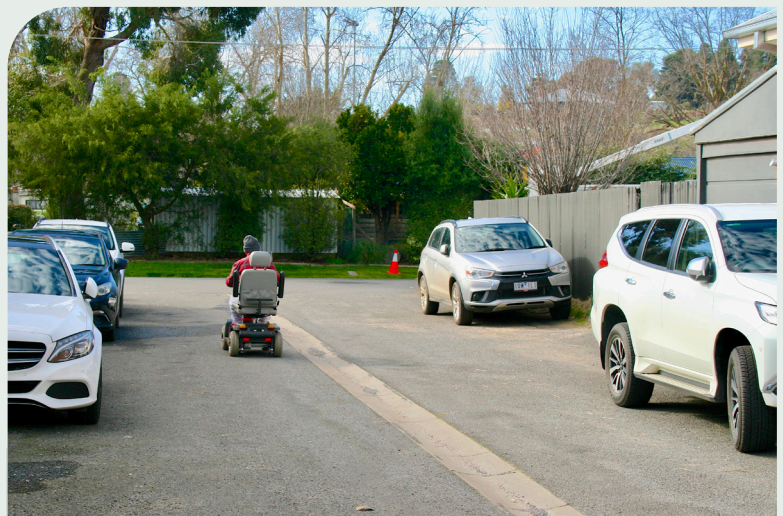
Poor quality walking and wheeling infrastructure



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.

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)













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.

Road trauma

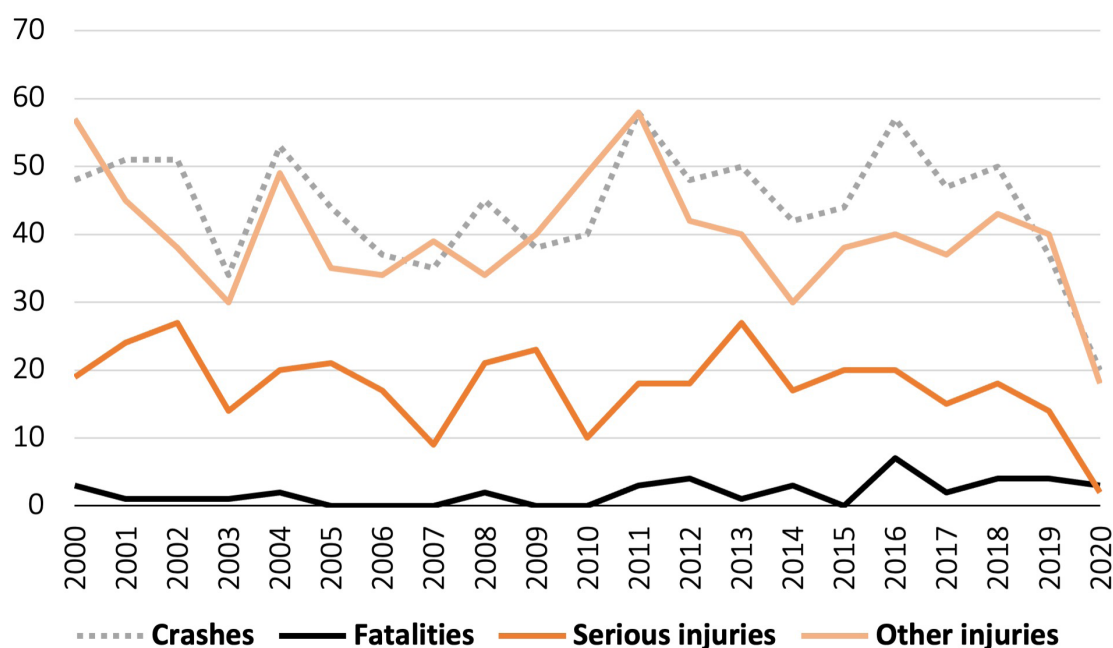
Between 2000 and 2020, there were about 40 deaths, 370 serious injuries and over 800 other injuries reported in crashes on roads in Hepburn Shire. Half of these were in single motor vehicle crashes, and 40% were in crashes involving multiple motor vehicles. Pedestrians were affected by about 30 crashes, 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)

| In a crash with... | | Bicycle | Motorcycle | Car | Truck | Bus | Other | No other vehicle | Total |
|---|-------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|-------|
| Fatalities and injuries | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | 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.

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

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.

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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