

November 2018

# PLAN HARCOURT

DISCUSSION PAPER



MOUNT ALEXANDER  
SHIRE COUNCIL

### Acknowledgement of Country

Mount Alexander Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the traditional owners of the lands and waters of Harcourt and recognises all other indigenous people of the Shire and the vital role that the traditional owners, the local Jaara people, play as custodians of the region.



# INTRODUCTION

## What is Plan Harcourt?

Plan Harcourt provides the overarching long term strategic plans for the town to set the scene for its future development. It builds on previous plans prepared for Harcourt in consultation with the community.

It focuses on the area within the township boundary and includes a sub-area which takes in the land adjacent to the old Calder Highway/Harmony Way as far south as Elphinstone, as this is considered to be an important southern gateway to the town.

The Plan Harcourt project brings together Council's town planning and economic development units to work closely with the community to establish the vision and objectives for the town. It also works in harmony with the other service delivery units of Council for a strong long-term partnership.

## Why is Plan Harcourt needed?

Harcourt has been identified as a small town that can accommodate planned growth in the region. This is recognised in the Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan 2014 and in the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme.

Strategic planning is required to ensure that there is adequate land supply and infrastructure to accommodate growth, while also protecting surrounding agribusiness and horticultural land uses, the irrigation network, and other natural and cultural features of the area.

## How will Plan Harcourt be prepared?

The project will be completed in three stages. The first stage involves consolidating the current strategic plans for Harcourt and presenting them to the community, stakeholders and government agencies to test whether they are still relevant and continue to represent their goals and aspirations for the growing town.

Officers will collate all of the responses and present them to the community through a 'What we heard' paper.

The second stage involves the preparation of Plan Harcourt which includes a new framework plan, economic stimulus plan and developer contributions plan, all which will be released for community discussion and feedback prior to finalisation. Once finalised, Plan Harcourt will be recommended to Council for adoption.

The final stage will be the preparation of a planning scheme amendment, which will bring the plans into the planning scheme.

## What is the purpose of this paper?

This paper consolidates the current strategic plans for Harcourt through a series of plans that will form the basis for discussion during the stage one consultation. These plans identify uncertainties, issues or gaps arising from the current plans, and also consider changes that have taken place since the plans were prepared.

Community feedback from submissions addressing the questions raised in the discussion paper, responses to the survey and comments on the online interactive map will inform the preparation of the draft Plan Harcourt.

## How can the community get involved?

Attend an information session during launch week, and come and see us at a pop-up project office over the eight week program.

Answer the questions in this discussion paper.

Complete the survey (online or hard copy).

Tell us what you love about Harcourt via the online interactive map.

Visit

[www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/PlanHarcourt](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/PlanHarcourt)

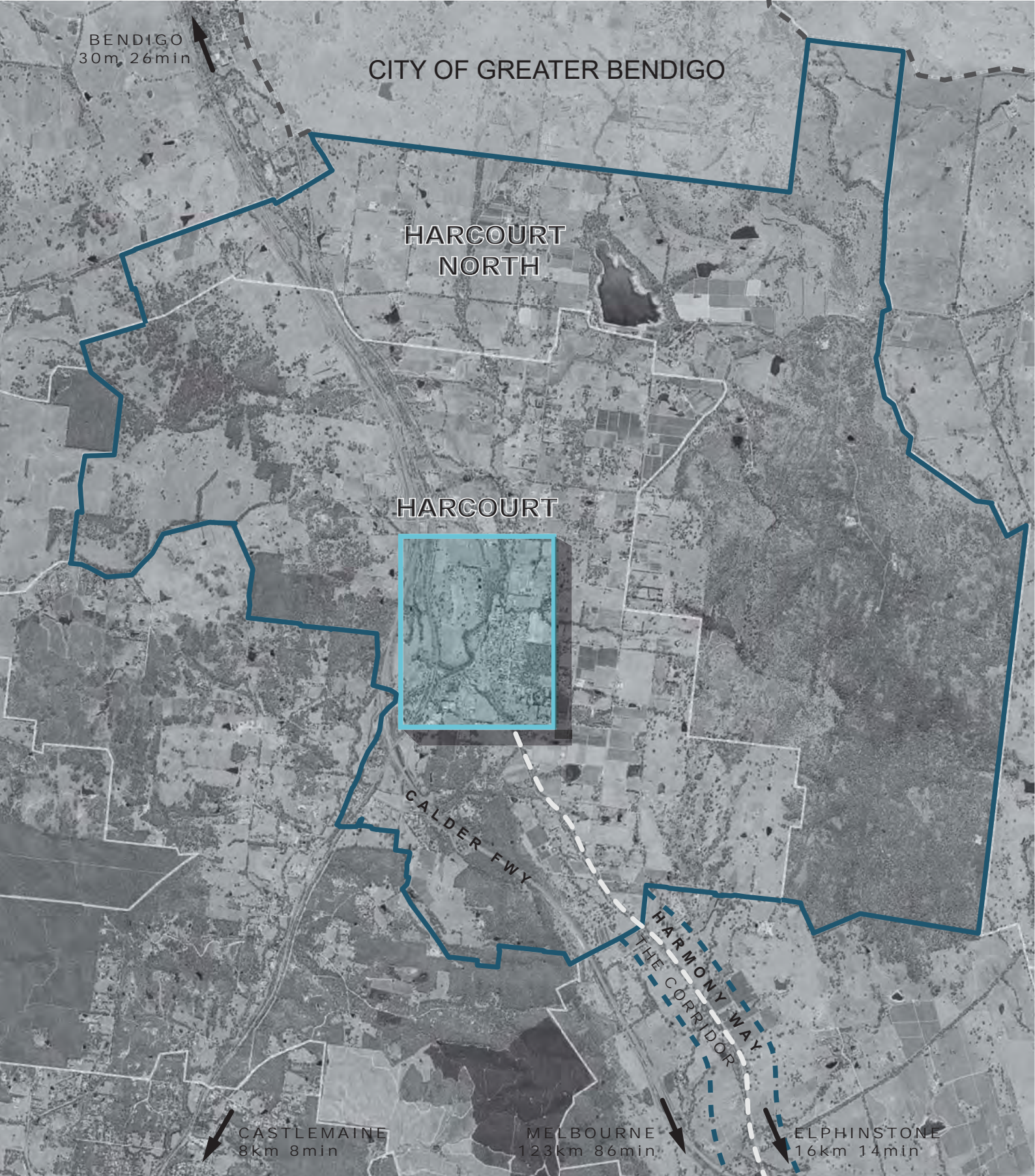
Email: [info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au)






Submissions close 30 January 2019.

2018	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	March 2019	Early-mid 2019	Mid 2019	End 2019	2020
Review of current plans	Public consultation on Discussion Paper	Release 'What we heard' paper	Preparation of Plan Harcourt	Public consultation on draft Plan Harcourt	Adoption of Plan Harcourt	Planning scheme amendment

WE ARE HERE





-  Town Centre
-  Study Area
-  Municipality Boundary
-  Harmony Way Corridor
-  Distances from Harcourt Post Office

**MAP 1:**  
**HARCOURT STUDY AREA**





## BACKGROUND

### The role of strategic planning

Management of growth is the focus of strategic planning, which endeavours to provide clear directions on location where growth should occur, and consider:

- Opportunities for the consolidation, redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas
- Neighbourhood character and landscapes
- The limits of land capability and natural hazards and environmental quality
- Service limitations and costs of providing infrastructure

### Regional planning

Mount Alexander Shire forms part of the Loddon Campaspe region (formerly Loddon Mallee South). Regional planning ensures proper coordination of future plans can occur, enabling local and state government agencies to work together and achieve common goals. The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan provides the big picture plan for the region and it forms part of the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme. As Bendigo is the key regional centre in the Loddon Campaspe region, strategies support its growth as the major population and economic hub. Castlemaine is Mount Alexander Shire's major town and administration centre, which supports the region and Bendigo, and Harcourt has been targeted as a place where sustainable growth and expansion is encouraged to capitalise on its proximity to Bendigo.

### Settlement planning

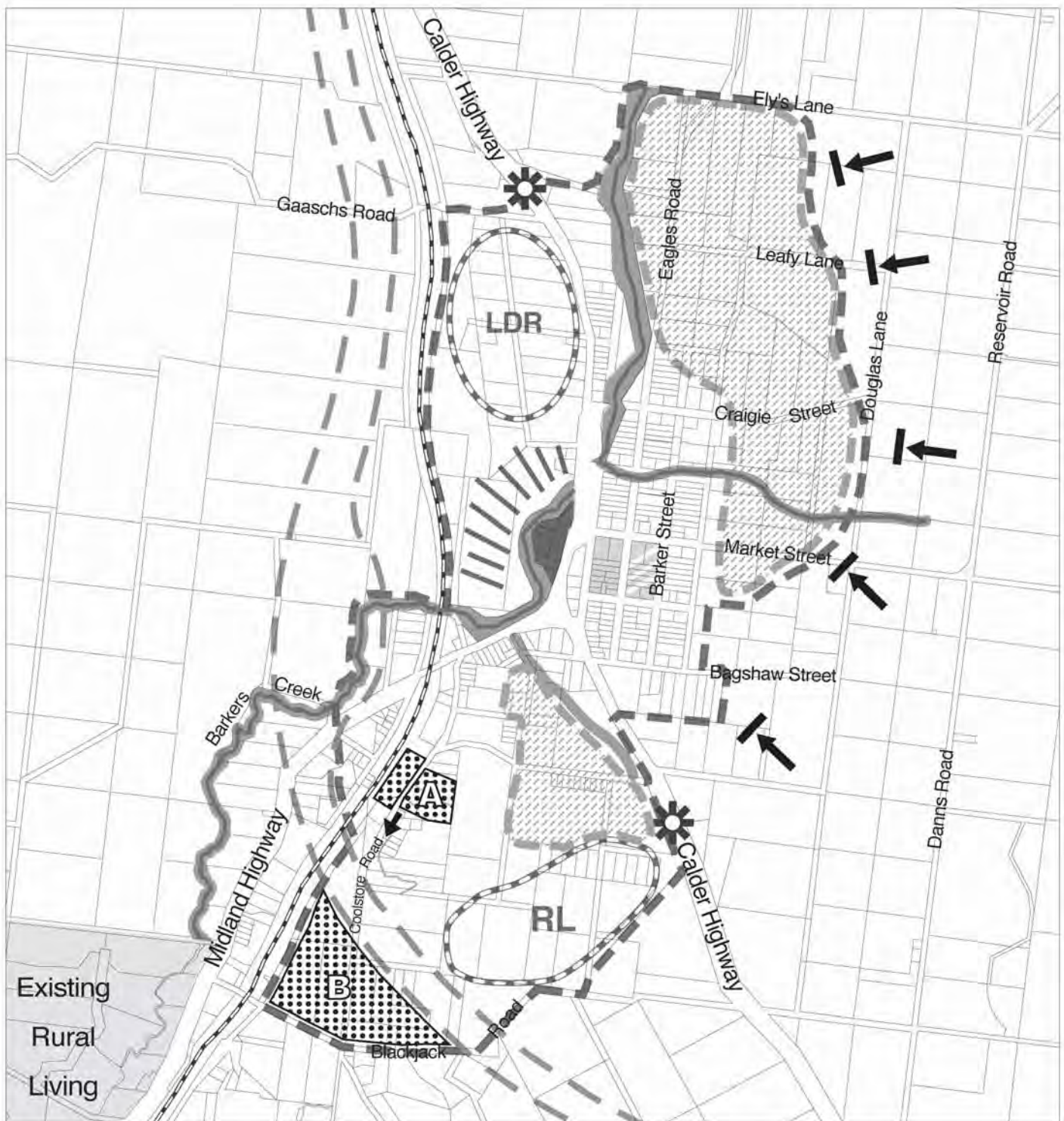
Strategic settlement planning must give clear direction on the use and development of land in town centres and preferred locations for investment, encourage economic activity and improve access to centres.

For Harcourt, strategic planning must maintain access to productive natural resources such as Harcourt's well established horticultural land and rural-based industries including its wineries and cideries. It must also restrict rural residential development that would compromise future development at higher densities.

### Mount Alexander Planning Scheme

The Mount Alexander Planning Scheme establishes the future directions for Harcourt through the Harcourt Framework Plan. This was developed by the Mount Alexander Urban Living Study (2004). The plan, shown in Map 2 (Plan 6 at Clause 21.12-6 of the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme), identifies the existing township boundary, areas for future residential expansion and infill (including areas for low density residential and rural living), the horticultural land use buffer, the existing town centre and areas for future expansion of the town centre. As almost 15 years has passed since this was prepared, a review of this plan is required to ensure that it is consistent with regional planning policy and meets the vision and aspirations of the community.

The Mount Alexander Planning Scheme also defines the current planning zones for Harcourt, shown in Map 3.



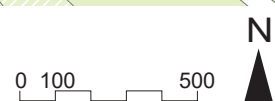
## PLAN 6: HARCOURT FRAMEWORK PLAN

-  State Parks, Reserves
-  Township Boundary (allowing for future expansions)  
- review existing Township Zone in proposed urban design framework
-  Residential expansion and infill  
- rezoning to Residential 1 Zone recommended  
- Development Plan overlays will need to be applied to co-ordinate town growth & design and protect environmental values
-  Open Space Network  
- develop network based on creek system  
- use network in design of new residential areas
-  Town Centre  
- future rezoning to Business Zone recommended
-  Future Expansion of Town Centre
-  Retain hillslope and landscape background to town centre.  
Discourage any new development
-  Site for comprehensive redevelopment.  
Suitable for mixed use - residential, business, tourism

-  Industrial Areas  
Area A - with allowance for expansion to south (rezone to Industrial 3 Zone).  
Area B - proposed new industrial area
-  Potential Rural Living  
- retain native vegetation, vegetation protection overlay will need to be applied
-  Potential Low Density Residential
-  Prevent conflict between residential and horticultural land use. Buffers to be provided within township boundary.
-  Town Entrance -  
- establish entrance character
-  Proposed Calder Freeway alignment corridor
-  Public/Private Forest Interface Areas  
Rezoning and subdivision proposals to assess potential impact

Proposed Studies:  
Harcourt Urban Design Framework  
Planning Scheme Reference Documents:  
Metcalfe Heritage Study 1997





## Strategic planning for Harcourt

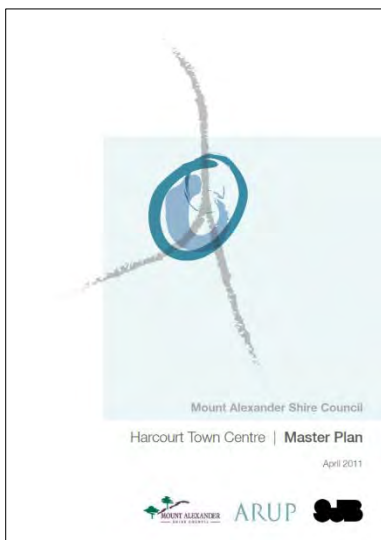
A number of plans have been prepared for Harcourt in consultation with the community since 2009. A brief summary of these is provided below. In addition to the current framework plan for Harcourt, these plans have been reviewed and relevant aspects incorporated into the Plan Harcourt analysis and proposed framework plan.

### Harcourt: After the Bypass (2009)



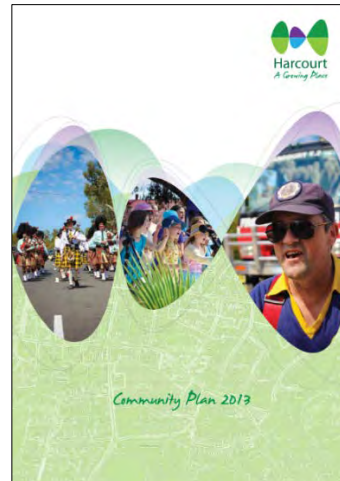
After the Bypass is a strategic action plan developed for Harcourt, identifying opportunities for economic and community development, urban design, land use and planning policy.

### Harcourt Town Centre Master Plan (2011)



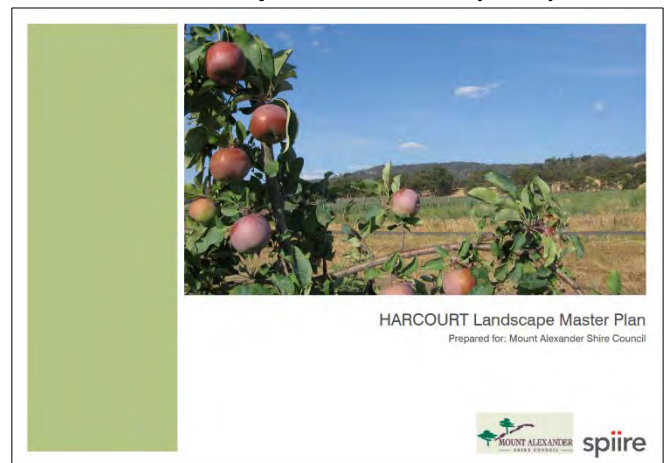
The Town Centre Master Plan establishes a spatial masterplan for the Harcourt town centre. Short term, medium term and long term strategies are identified with relevant implementation actions.

### Harcourt Community Plan (2013)



The Community Plan sets a vision for Harcourt based on five key themes (A Hub and Heart, Harvesting Opportunities, Happening Harcourt, Connecting Community, Our Natural Environment). It identifies a range of actions for these key areas by linking objectives to strategies.

### Harcourt Landscape Master Plan (2015)



The Landscape Master Plan outlines a landscape vision for the town centre. It identifies issues and potential opportunities to be addressed through the plan and includes an implementation plan.



## HARCOURT FRAMEWORK PLAN

A new framework plan needs to be developed that addresses the issues/uncertainties with the current Harcourt Framework Plan, incorporates aspects of the other four plans prepared for Harcourt since 2009 and considers the changes that have occurred since these plans were prepared. These are identified in the following series of maps, maps 4a to 4d.

Map 4a identifies the current township boundary for Harcourt. No changes are proposed to this boundary.

Map 4b identifies the agricultural and horticultural land located in and around Harcourt, the 300 metre agricultural buffer and the open space network. The 300 metre buffer is shown located outside of the township boundary, which addresses the uncertainty relating to this in the current framework plan.

Map 4c identifies the current overlays affecting land in and around Harcourt, including the Bushfire Management Overlay, Design and Development Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay, Erosion Management Overlay and Heritage Overlay.

Map 4d identifies the proposed planning zones for Harcourt by rezoning land from the Township Zone to General Residential, Commercial Zone/Mixed Use Zone, Industrial Zone, Public Use Zone and Public Park and Recreation Zone (Stanley Park North). The map proposes that the area of land north of the miniature railway could be zoned General Residential instead of Low Density Residential to encourage conventional density housing close to town. It also proposes that the land identified for Rural Living towards the southern end of the township should remain in the Farming Zone given the revised Bushfire Management Overlay mapping.

Map 5 combines the features of maps 4a to 4d to produce a proposed framework plan.

The legend on the following page is to be used for maps 4a to 4d and map 5.

**LEGEND**

CZ Potential Commercial Zone

FZ Farming Zone

GRZ General Residential Expansion

GRZ General Residential Zone

GRZ Potential Reneral Residential Zone

INDZ Potential Industrial Zone

INDZ Industrial Zone

MUZ Potential Mixed Use Zone

PPRZ Potential Public Park and Recreation Zone

PPRZ Public Park and Recreation Zone

PUZ Potential Public Use Zone

PUZ Public Use Zone

BMO Bushfire Management Overlay

DDO Design Development Overlay

EMO Erosion Management Overlay

ESO Environmental Significance Overlay

HO Heritage Overlay

ACHS Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Area  
Other sites have been or may be identified but are not shown on this map

--- Township Boundary

--- Agricultural Buffer dimensions approximate

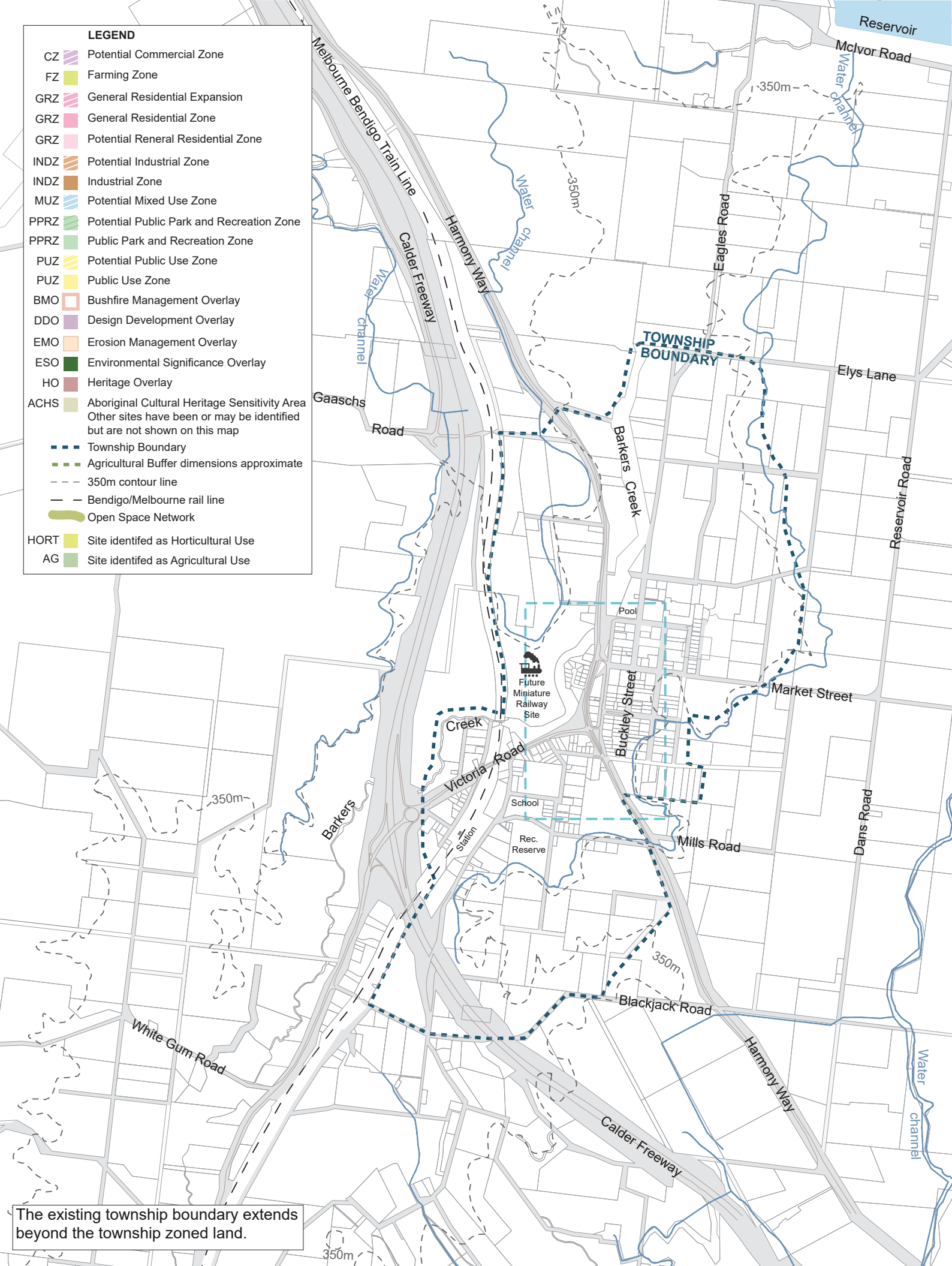
--- 350m contour line

--- Bendigo/Melbourne rail line

Open Space Network

HORT Site identified as Horticultural Use

AG Site identified as Agricultural Use



The existing township boundary extends beyond the township zoned land.

**MAP 4a**  
**HARCOURT : Township Boundary**



Refer to map 4a for legend

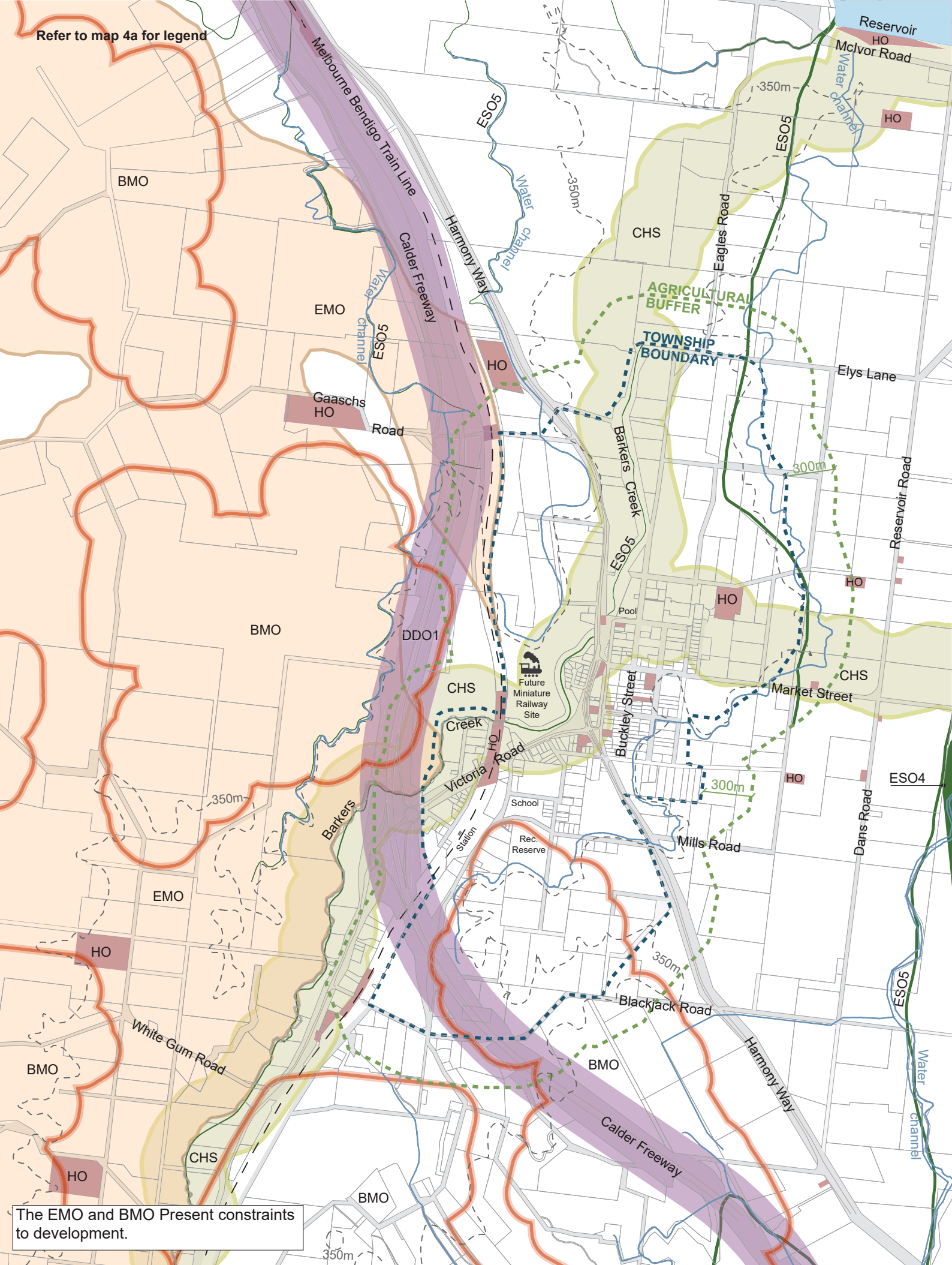


**MAP 4b**  
**HARCOURT : Agricultural & Horticultural Land & Open Space Network**

0 100 500

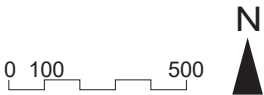


Refer to map 4a for legend



The EMO and BMO Present constraints to development.

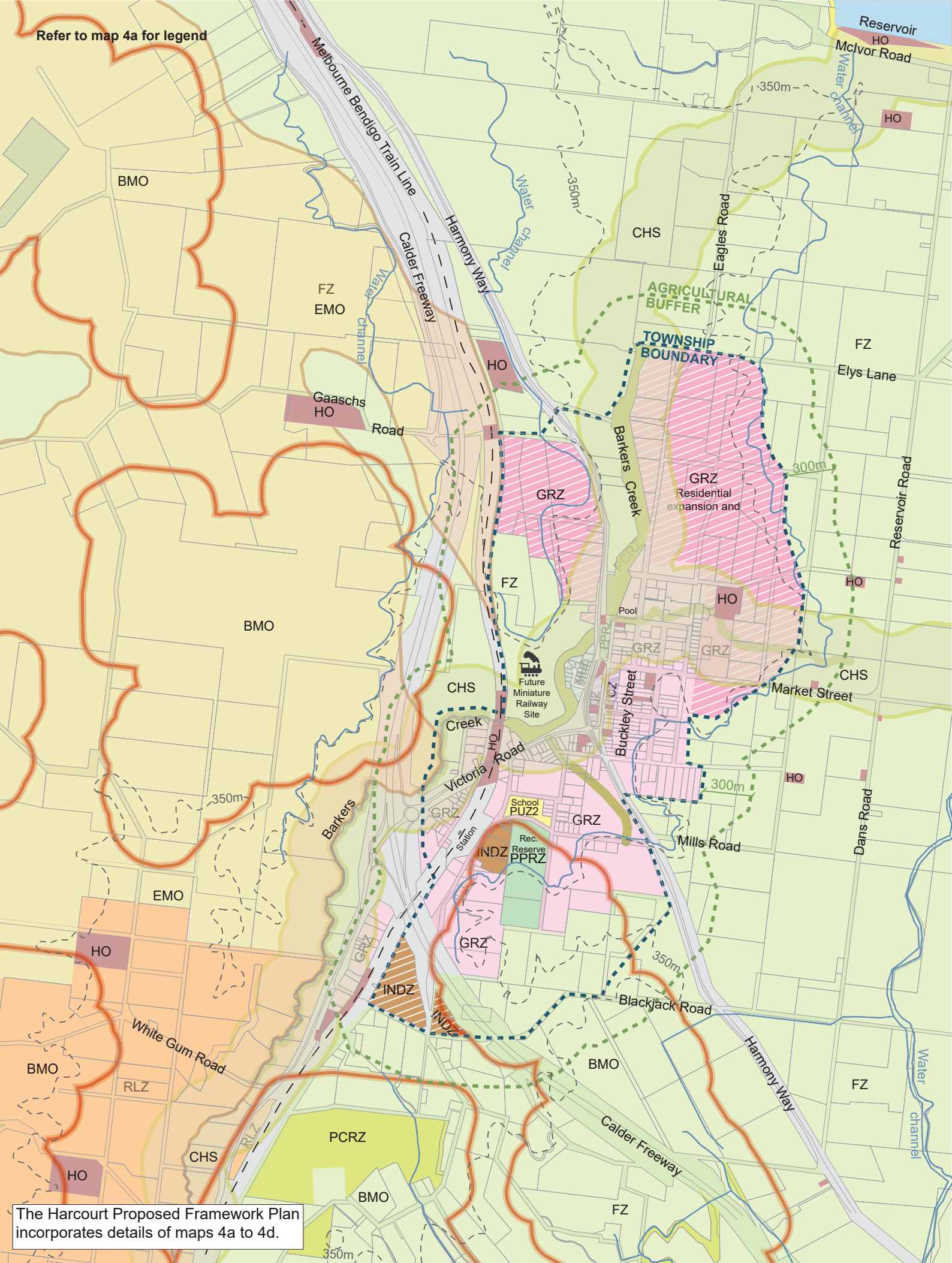
**MAP 4c**  
**HARCOURT : Current Overlays**







Refer to map 4a for legend



**MAP 5:**  
**HARCOURT PROPOSED FRAMEWORK PLAN**

0 100 500





## HARCOURT TOWN CENTRE PLAN

The current plans for Harcourt presented various options for the future of the Harcourt town centre. Map 6 provides an analysis of the wider development framework plan and the longer term strategy plan for 2021 and beyond prepared as part of the Harcourt Town Centre Master Plan in 2011. This map identifies changes that have occurred since this plan was prepared and raises questions relating to proposed land use and development in the town centre.

Map 7 is a proposed Town Centre and Landscape Plan that was informed by the Harcourt Town Centre Master Plan, the current Harcourt Framework Plan and the Harcourt Landscape Master Plan, looking specifically at the town centre of Harcourt. This includes the proposed rezoning of land and proposed paths and planting (excluding the path between Stanley Park North and the pool).

The plan incorporates the location of the future play space at Stanley Park North, a possible location for a civic space and the subdivision layout approved on the western side of Harmony Way within the town centre.

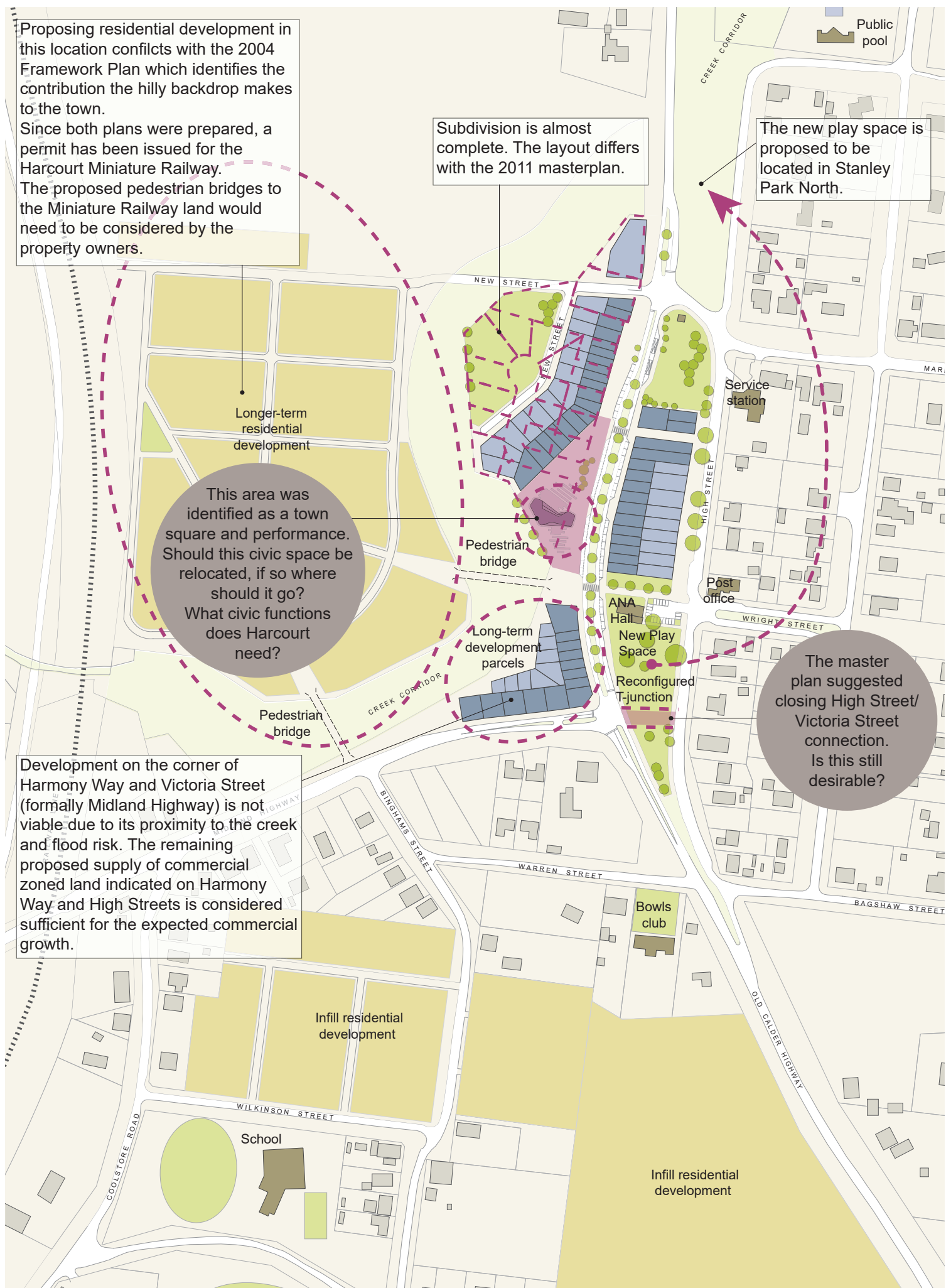
### Questions

What's your vision for the future of Harcourt's town centre and Harmony Way?

Where would you like to see a civic space within the town centre of Harcourt?

Where would you like to see a pedestrian crossing within the town centre of Harcourt?

Would High Street, next to Stanley Park be a good location for the north bound bus stop?



**MAP 6 :  
HARCOURT 2011 TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN ANALYSIS**





# KEY

- Public parks and recreation spaces
- Proposed Feature Planting
- Buildings
- Future Stanley Park North Play Space
- Trees proposed to be removed
- Existing and proposed trees
- Proposed future Commercial 1 Zone
- Proposed future Public Use Zone
- Proposed future General Residential Zone
- Proposed future Mixed Use Zone
- Current Industrial 3 Zone
- Proposed Bus Stop
- Proposed Bus Route
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Existing Footpath
- Proposed Footpath
- Existing Crossing
- Proposed Crossing
- Bendigo/Melbourne rail line
- P Parking

Proposed paths and planting is in accordance with the Harcourt Landscape Master Plan by Spiire excluding the path between Stanley Park North and the Pool. Proposed zones are informed by the 2004 Harcourt Framework Plan, Clause 21.12 of the Planning Scheme and the Harcourt Town Centre Master Plan prepared by SJB.

The recent subdivision and introduction of a new road results in minor changes to the parking indicated in the Town Centre Master Plan.

Bridge connection would require approval from the land owners.

Could James park be considered for the Town Square and Civic Space?

Landscape Masterplan indicates a formal avenue of trees along Harmony Way, resulting in removal of some existing trees

Stanley Park North Master Plan to include pathways to connect key locations and existing and proposed paths

The current plans don't show a north bound bus stop on Harmony Way. A bus stop would remove some parking spaces. Is High Street next to Stanley Park a good location?



**MAP 7 :  
HARCOURT TOWN CENTRE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN**





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Photo: Katie and Hugh from Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op. Photo by Richard Baxter Photography