

This is a DRAFT document which has been prepared for public discussion purposes and does not necessarily indicate the position of Council. Council will adopt this plan after consideration of all public submissions received and amendments have been made to address concerns where appropriate.



Commercial Land Strategy 2040



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Acknowledgment

The Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the Shire, the people of the Yuin nations, and show our respect to elders past, present and emerging.

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Executive Summary

In August 2019 Council initiated a review of its commercial areas to address the future need for commercial land in Bega Valley Shire and provide a vision and framework for the development of the Shire's commercial centres over the next 20 years. A draft Commercial Land Strategy was prepared on behalf of Council with collaboration from commercial land and business owners as well as community members.

The draft strategy works towards the community's vision outlined in the Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040 and the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036. Once adopted it will inform Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement.

The draft strategy examines existing and future population and industry characteristics, opportunities for industry growth and trends such as physical changes in commercial centres, changing technologies and national and global economic factors and identifies actions that can be taken by Council to address these trends.

The draft strategy establishes a commercial centres hierarchy for Bega Valley Shire centres to differentiate the role of each centre to ensure each remains viable and able to support the level of goods and services required by residents and visitors.

The draft strategy sets the direction for future development within commercial centres based on their existing natural advantages and includes recommendations for changes to land use zones, building heights, land use tables and other planning controls to help revitalise commercial space and promote economic growth opportunities.



A photograph of an outdoor market stall. In the foreground, a chalkboard sign on a wooden stand lists 'KARMA FARM - KAMERUKA', 'POTTED HERBS and VEGETABLE SEEDLINGS', 'SQUARE PLANTS \$3', and 'ROUND POTS \$5'. The stall is set up on a grassy area with a paved path in front. In the background, there are other market stalls with blue canopies, trees, and a clear blue sky.

Introduction

In August 2019, Bega Valley Shire Council initiated a review of its commercial areas to address the future need for commercial land in Bega Valley Shire and provide a framework and vision for commercial development for the coming 20 years.

The Draft Commercial Land Strategy has been prepared to provide a framework for how our commercial centres are planned and developed over the next 20 years to encourage service provision and employment generating opportunities within vibrant and activated commercial environments.

When finalised and adopted, this draft strategy will replace The Bega Valley Shire Commercial Centres Strategy from 2006 that was amended in 2018.

Aims

- Work towards the community's vision outlined in the Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040 and South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036
- Build resilience by improving the ability of our communities and businesses to recover and grow in the face of stresses and shocks
- Inform Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)
- Establish the hierarchy of centres of Bega Valley Shire based on the provision of daily, weekly and occasional goods and services for the community and visitors
- Set the direction for future development within commercial centres based on their existing natural advantages and to explore ways to revitalise commercial space to promote growth opportunities
- Manage risks to developments present in commercial centres
- Recommend changes to land use zones and development standards or controls to stimulate development of the industry sectors that have been identified to provide economic development and employment

Foundation principles

- Adopt a resilience approach to planning by identifying long term benefits to the community of a more diverse and thriving economy and working toward those outcomes
- Adopt a place-making approach and planning principles to guide recommendations for each of the commercial centres
- Adopt a partnership approach to economic growth which provides reliable incomes for the labour force, business opportunities for employers and revenue to maintain services and infrastructure that supports the needs of the community
- Recognise the need to protect the elements and settlement character that attract people to live in the Bega Valley Shire and support the tourism industry
- Recognise the underlying importance of residential development to commercial development to meet changing demand for goods and services, attract new residents and provide opportunities such as shop top housing that add vitality and security



Achieving resilience outcomes

This strategy addresses the resilience outcomes of a more diverse and thriving economy:

- Economic sustainability
- Sustainable development and growth
- Sustainable employment opportunities
- Efficient land use
- Enhanced natural advantages and character
- Improved amenity of town centres
- Reduced reliance on major employers
- Major industry sectors diversification
- Housing diversity
- Tourism opportunities

Achieving community goals

This strategy addresses the following goals from the Bega Valley Community Strategic Plan 2040:

- Our economy is prosperous, diverse and supported by innovative and creative businesses.
- We have meaningful employment and learning opportunities for people in all stages in life.
- Our places retain their character and scale, development is well planned, and a range of goods and services are available within our Shire that meet local needs.

Achieving State Government goals

The strategy addresses the goal of the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036 to create a connected and prosperous economy and the direction to promote business activities in urban centres. It aims to achieve the following actions from the plan:

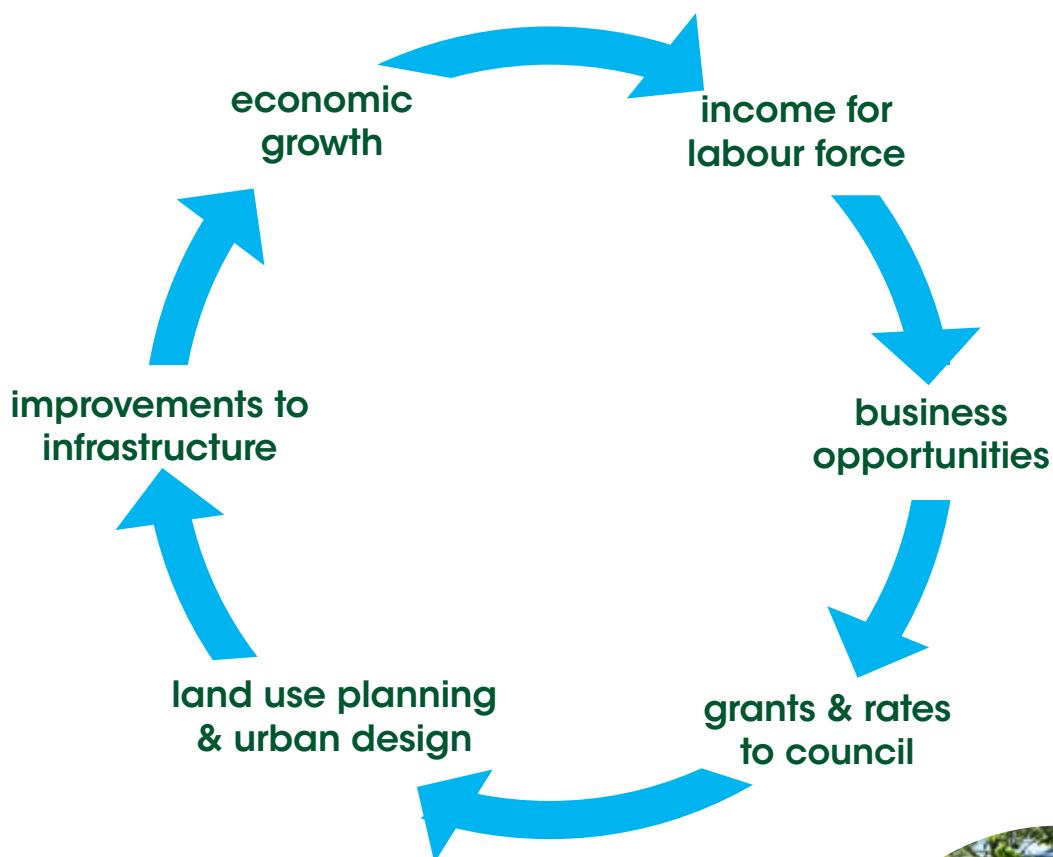
- Reinforce the role and function of centres as the primary places for commerce, retail, social activity and regional services
- Focus future commercial and retail activity in existing commercial centres

Information sources

The recommendations of this strategy are based on the findings of the engagement process as well as information relating to development activity and land supply from the following sources:

- .id Profile population and demographic information
- Council data of development activity and supply of commercial land
- On-ground inspections to gain an understanding of the diversity of each centre and vacancy rates
- NSW and Commonwealth government, academic institution and industry body publications to research local, regional, national and global trends in retail and hospitality.

The partnership approach





Developing the Strategy

Vibrant commercial centres are defined by land uses, the design and function of the public realm, the scale and design of buildings, and the character of the built environment. This draft strategy starts with the community's vision for their future and works backwards so that recommendations reflect this vision by reinforcing the character and qualities of each town centre.

Bega Valley Shire Council has adopted a partnership approach where the business community and Council collaborate to develop vibrant and activated commercial centres in ways that build on the strengths and advantages of each centre.

Collaboration

A key principle of developing the strategy was to collaborate with stakeholders.

The goal of the community engagement process was to develop the strategy in partnership with key stakeholders to create ownership in the process and encourage creative thinking and solutions.

The draft strategy built on visioning work carried out by Council in the development of Bega Valley Community Strategic Plan 2040 and involved collaboration with staff from across Council and the consultants engaged to prepare the Residential Land Strategy.

Workshop discussion topics:

- natural advantages and strengths
- challenges to development
- how to encourage growth
- development principles or approaches to underpin growth
- incentives to stimulate development

Engagement process

The project began by listening to land owners, business owners, the development industry, representatives of community groups, interested community members and Councillors.

The project began by listening

Community and business stakeholder workshops were held between August and November 2019 where ideas, views, visions, key concerns and possible solutions were discussed.

Meetings were held with the Bega, Cobargo, Merimbula, Bermagui, Pambula and Eden business chambers in September and October 2019.

Community workshops were held throughout August in Bega, Merimbula, Bermagui, Tathra, Pambula and Eden and a meeting with representatives of Cobargo to discuss each commercial centre. A second community workshop followed in November to discuss the preliminary draft strategy.

Workshops with councillors were held in October and November 2019.

Issues raised by stakeholders during the workshops and meetings, along with comments from the consultant who prepared the draft strategy, forms Appendix 2 to the draft strategy and was also used to inform character statements for the town.

[Further detail to be inserted following public exhibition].





The Local Economy

Population characteristics

The 2019 population is estimated to be 34,538 and is expected to grow by around 3,600 people by 2036, giving a growth rate of 10.42% over the twenty year period or an average of 0.6% per annum.

If productivity improvements do not match growth, more goods and services and more jobs will be required to meet the needs of new residents.

The Shire is predominantly rural, with numerous towns and villages and approximately 30% of the population living outside urban areas.

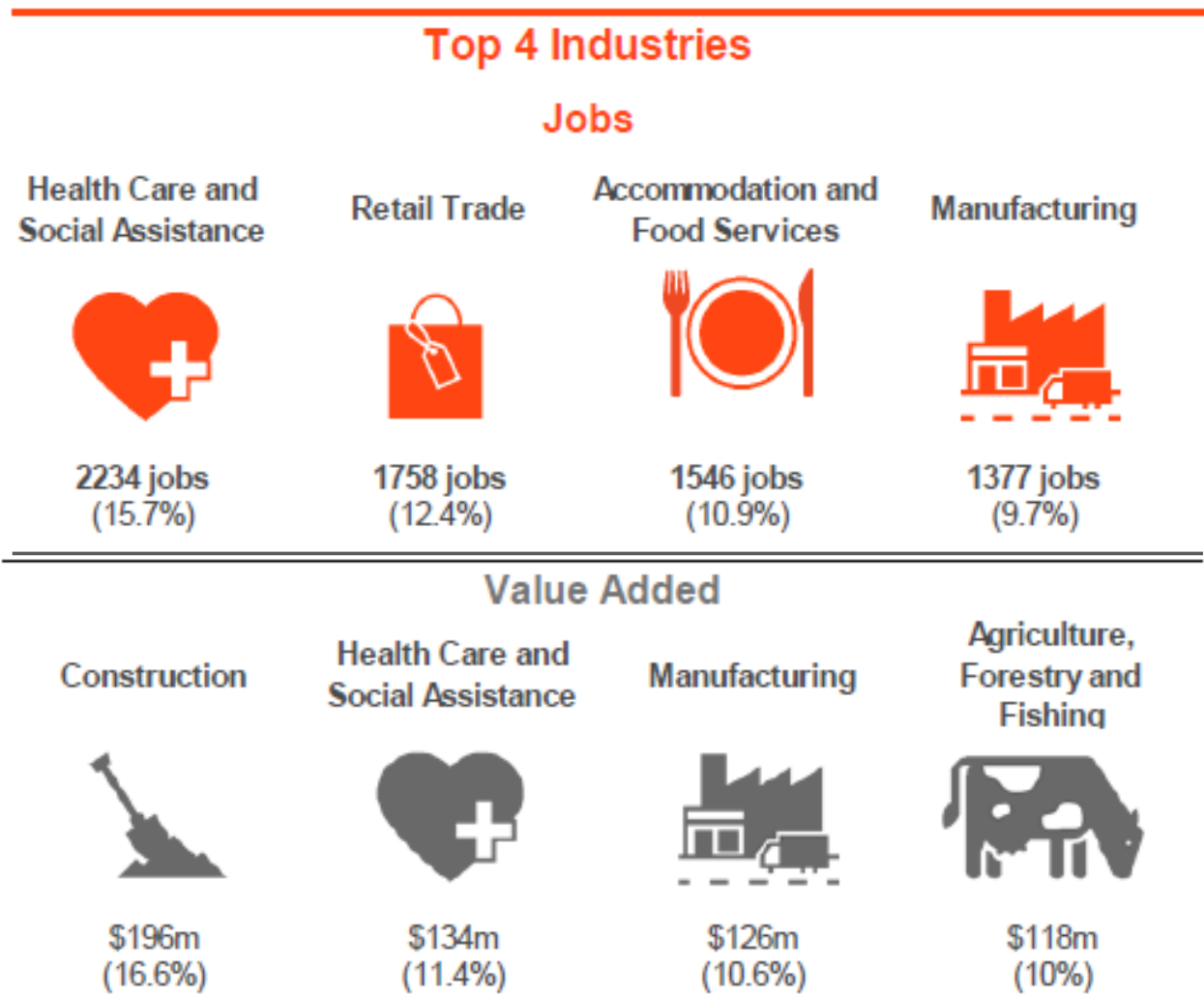
The population is ageing, with the median age up 5.1% between 2011 and 2016.

In 2016 the median age was 51 years with 35% of people over 60 years old. By comparison, the median age in regional NSW in 2016 was 43 with 27% of the population over 60 years.

Median weekly household income in Bega Valley Shire in 2016 was \$987, significantly less than for regional NSW at \$1,166 and NSW at \$1,431.

Industry characteristics

The Bega Valley Shire’s economy is dominated by household service industries. Agriculture and tourism also make an important contribution. The industries that are in the top 5 for both jobs and productivity include health care and social assistance, retail trade, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and fishing. Employment in the retail trade industry fell by 113 people between 2011 and 2016. The high proportion engaged in the health care and social assistance is reflective of the ageing of the population.



Source: NIEIR

Shire of Bega Valley - Economic Health Check



The health of the Bega Valley Shire economy can be measured by Gross Regional Product (GRP), the number of businesses operating and vacancy rates for business premises. GRP at 30 June 2018 was \$1.53 billion, down 3.3% from the previous year.

There were 2,983 businesses operating in business, industrial and rural zones as well as home businesses and home industries in residential zones in Bega Valley Shire in 2018, up by over 3% from 2017. Business entries were up by 9.6% over the year 2017-2018 and totalled 321 new businesses. A survey of the Shire's commercial centres in October 2019 counted 318 business premises in commercial cores with a vacancy rate of 19.2%. Exits on the other hand were down by 3.3% from 300 in 2017 to 290 in 2018.

Significant local employment generators include the new regional hospital in Bega, the Port of Eden, the expansion of Merimbula airport, food production (in particular Bega Cheese), and nature-based tourism enterprises, which are scattered across the Shire.

The tourism industry is a major contributor to the Bega Valley Shire economy. There were 522 businesses directly associated with tourism in the year 2018 and the industry attracted \$380 million in that year. The occupancy rate for tourist accommodation establishments with 15 rooms or more at 30 June 2016 was 45.5%, up 0.2% from the previous 12 months.

84% of approvals for commercial development in the last 10 years were for buildings located in the main commercial centre, indicating that out-of-centre commercial development is relatively minimal.

Population and Commercial Development

Centre	Population (2016)	Median age (2016)	Median household income (2016)	Labour force participation rate (2016)	Vacancy rate (Oct 2019)	Commercial development approvals 2009-2019*
Bega	5,203	44	\$989	53.8%	12.5%	49
Bermagui	2,374	58	\$864	40.5%	14.6%	15
Tathra	3,247	49	\$1,135	53.1%	5.0%	10
Tura Beach	3,680	56	\$1,100	43.8%	5.9%	12
Merimbula	4,916	56	\$902	45.5%	22.0%	20
Pambula	2,941	46	\$1,121	52.4%	2.6%	17
Eden	3,798	50	\$865	46.2%	21.8%	14
Bega Valley LGA	33,253	51	\$987	49.7%	12.1% average	163

* Measured by the issue of construction certificates and complying development certificates for commercial development over the ten year period 2009 to 2019. Approvals data includes changes of use, industrial development and alterations and additions as well as new development.

Opportunities for industry growth

The Draft Enterprise Land Review prepared for Bega Valley Shire Council in 2016 found that there are several opportunities for industrial development in Bega Valley that concentrate on and build upon existing strengths and drivers. The development and expansion of these industries would necessitate the establishment of new business in commercial centres to provide goods and services as inputs to industry as well as to satisfy the day to day, weekly and occasional needs of the additional workers and their families.

It is important that the commercial centres of Bega Valley Shire are positioned to be able to cater to growth.

Local opportunities for growth

- support industries linked to the medical industry and health services such as catering, cleaning, manufacturing
- support industries linked to the ageing population and their accommodation needs such as catering, cleaning, laundry and packaged food products
- industries that require good access to technology such as the fast broadband speeds provided by the NBN network and that support that technology, including education
- agribusiness, value-added food processing and packaging businesses to support the growing local, national and international demand for high quality organic food products such as dairy, seafood (oysters and mussels) and organic vegetables





Commercial Trends

Current trends in commercial centres can be grouped into three categories:

- Physical changes experienced on the ground in commercial centres
- Changes due to alternative and emerging technologies
- Changes due to national and global economic factors

Some of the trends described are beyond the control or influence of local government.

This draft strategy focusses on those trends which can be addressed by Council, such as the effects of out-of-centre development, the use of development principles to encourage a particular style of development, land use zoning and development standards or controls.

Physical changes in commercial centres

Use of vacant premises used for temporary purposes

This includes pop-ups for art displays, marketing displays of goods for sale elsewhere and food and drink sales. The temporary use of vacant premises can be indicative of the success of a flexible and adaptable planning approach.

Competition for main street activity from new out-of-centre development

Regional centres are particularly sensitive to the development of big box supermarkets, hardware stores, shopping centres and discount department stores, especially those that contain specialty shops.

Highway improvements that bypass town centres

The impact of highway bypasses on commercial centres is dependent upon the alignment of the bypass, distance from the town centre, the capacity of the town to carry out effective marketing to restore business after the opening of the bypass, the improvements in amenity after the bypass and whether trade is predominantly local or passing.

Rising vacancy rates of existing commercial premises

This is due to a multitude of factors including the consolidation of store networks to within major regional centres, competition from out-of-centre development, competition from on-line transactions, complex approvals processes and land banking by commercial property owners for investment purposes or to offset taxation.

Decline of large format shopping centres and the rejuvenation of old town centres

In some parts of the world town centres have transitioned into destinations or multi-purpose areas which offer accommodation and office space along with a range of experiences through hospitality offerings, personal services, recreation and entertainment across the whole centre. This decline is not evidenced in Australia as large format shopping centres have either specialised, for example, offering a range of bulky goods, or have diversified to resemble the range of goods and services available in typical main streets.



Digital economy

Changing trends in retail and service provision including online shopping is having a major impact on the health and vitality of commercial centres, causing rising vacancy rates of existing premises.

The traditional approach to retailing is to buy a product and collect in store at the time of purchase. Purchases of comparison goods and increasingly convenience goods are now being made more frequently on-line using websites, social media and catalogue sales. Products purchased in this way are delivered to the home or post office box.

The digital economy has also seen the advent of businesses that offer different purchase arrangements through both physical and on-line retail known as omni-channelling. Purchase can be one of the following methods or a combination of two or three of these methods:

- Buy and receive – buy in store receive at home
- Click and collect – buy on line and pick up in store
- Click and receive – buy on line and receive at home

One example of such a business that was noted at several stakeholder's forums is a combined "warehouse or distribution centre" and retail "shop" based in Cooma. Participants expressed that this format should be encouraged in local commercial centres, however currently there are no commercial or industrial zones where this combination of land uses is permitted.



Economic influences

A range of national and global economic factors influence the health of our commercial centres. A few of these are:

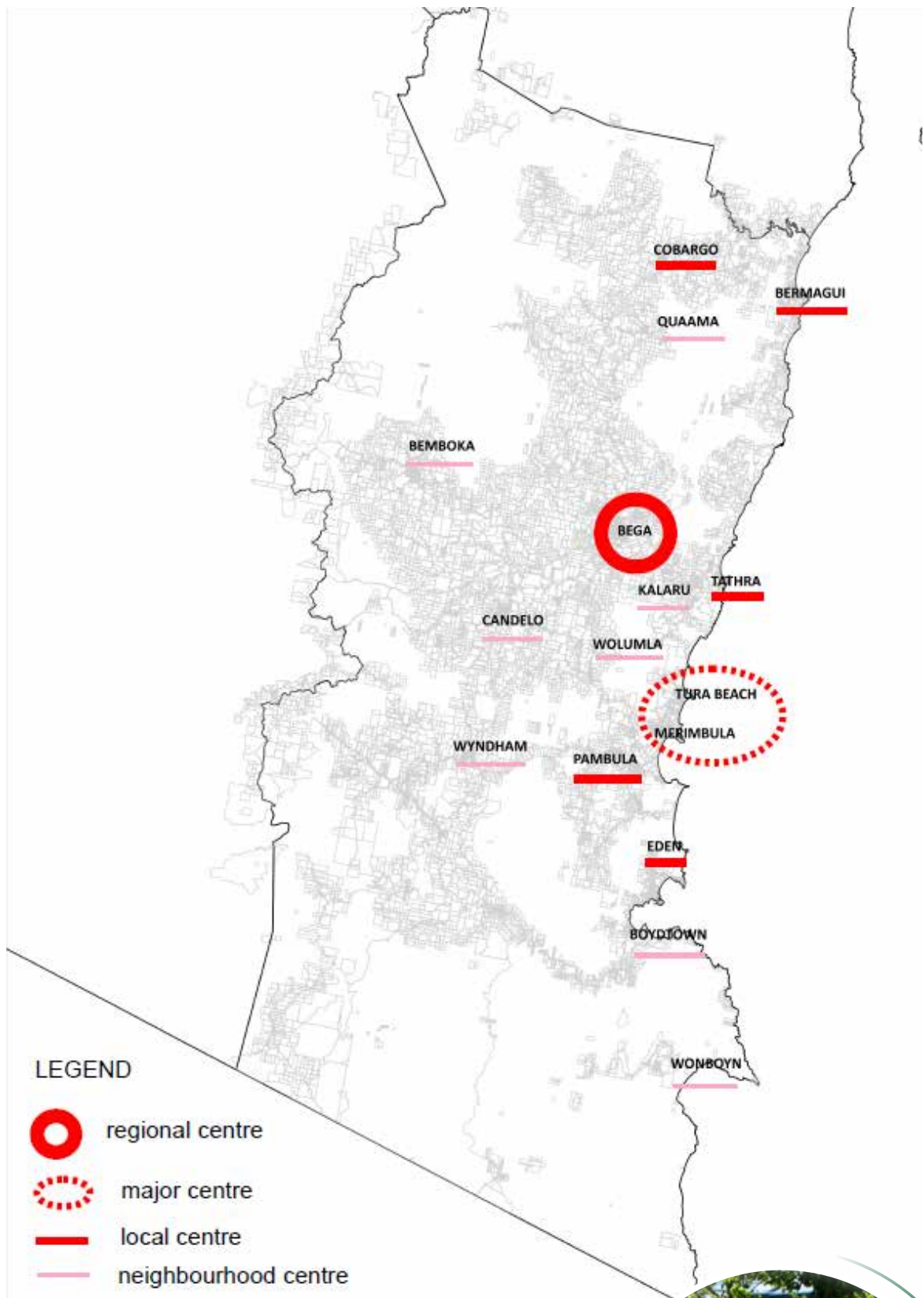
- With a stable and aging population, there are limited prospects for attracting major new retail establishments even in the most desirable locations given the current trends described above
- Retail growth in Australia remains weak despite taxation cuts, the results of the recent election and interest rate cuts to almost zero percent
- Weak Australian currency. The falling value of the dollar relative to international currencies may lead to improvements to domestic and international tourism visitation as more Australians opt to holiday at home and the country becomes relatively more affordable to international tourists.





The Centres Hierarchy

The hierarchy of commercial centres differentiates the role for each centre within the Bega Valley Shire and ensures that each centre remains viable and able to support the level of goods and services being provided.



Regional centre

Bega

The primary administrative and service centre for the catchment comprising Bega Valley Shire and surrounding communities.

A regional centre provides higher order comparison goods as well as convenience goods and destination goods and services. This includes health care services, educational facilities, professional services, bulky goods premises, transport logistics and government offices.

The primacy of the regional centre should be continually guarded and reinforced by consideration of the impacts of commercial development in other centres. Offerings of higher order goods and services, institutions, government offices and the like should be located in the regional centre.

Major centre

Merimbula/Tura Beach

A secondary centre that supports the primacy of the regional centre for a catchment that extends to include nearby towns and villages.

A major centre provides some higher order comparison goods and services day to day needs including specialty shops, bulky goods premises, health and professional services.

Development in the major centre is secondary and supportive of the regional centre. Development in the major centre should not detract from the role of the regional centre and accommodate large floorplate development only where there is no suitable space in the regional centre.

NOTE: The commercial areas of Merimbula and Tura Beach both compete with each other and are complimentary in terms of the goods and services they offer. The commercial areas of Merimbula and Tura Beach are considered to operate as a single entity and are treated as one centre in this strategy.

Local centres

Bermagui, Cobargo, Tathra, Pambula, Eden

Small centres that rely on tourism and service a residential catchment comprising the immediate surrounding area plus rural localities.

Local centres provide day to day needs and limited retail, health & hospitality services. Reliant on higher order centres for shopping and employment.

Development in local centres should be limited to current low order functions and be oriented to servicing the immediate surrounding area and providing a destination experience for visitors. New out-of-centre development, particularly large floorplate supermarkets, homemakers stores, shopping centres containing specialty shops, and bulky goods premises should be avoided as the impacts on existing centres is adverse without exception.

Neighbourhood centres

Bemboka, Candelo, Wyndham, Kalaru, Wolumla, Quaama, Wonboyn, Boydtown

Small centres that rely on tourism and service a catchment comprising the immediate surrounding area and passing trade.

Neighbourhood centres provide limited day to day needs with limited or no retail and hospitality services.

Development in neighbourhood centres should be limited to current low order functions and be oriented to servicing the immediate surrounding area and providing a destination experience for visitors. New out-of-centre development, particularly large floorplate supermarkets, homemakers stores, shopping centres containing specialty shops, and bulky goods premises should be avoided as the impacts on existing centres is adverse without exception.

Categories of retail goods and services

Convenience: Retail goods and services for which shoppers tend to patronize the closest business, like newsagents, service stations, hardware stores, and grocery stores to obtain daily or weekly essentials. “Impulse” retail such as card shops and florists also fall into this category.

Comparison: Retail goods and services for which shoppers like to compare styles, brands and prices before making a purchase, like apparel, shoes, furniture and restaurants. Purchases of comparison goods and services are made on an occasional basis. For this reason, comparison retail businesses tend to cluster together (e.g., clothing stores in traditional shopping malls), and a comparison business is likely to be more successful if located in a cluster than if it is freestanding, without related businesses nearby.

Destination: Retail goods and services for which shoppers will travel significant distances. These might include specialty businesses (like musical instruments), large clusters of related businesses (like antiques or restaurants), or businesses that offer exceptional service and that have developed a very loyal clientele. Purchases of destination goods and services are also made on an occasional basis.





Vision for commercial land

Working towards our future

This strategy implements the Bega Valley Shire community's vision of working towards our future:

By working together, the Bega Valley Shire community integrates quality of life, enterprising business, sustainable development and conservation of the environment.

Bega Valley Community Strategic Plan 2040.

20 year vision for commercial land

Our town centres support a diverse blend of commercial, social, recreational and cultural activities. Each has a unique atmosphere and character, but incorporates common elements such as open space, trees and shade. They are vibrant and pleasant spaces where we choose to shop, socialise and relax. Each centre is easy to walk around and navigate.

Good practice outcomes of a successful commercial strategy are:

- Commercial centres have a dense, compact form with no new ribbon development along major thoroughfares
- New development integrates with existing commercial development
- Entertainment and recreational facilities are close to centres to maximise accessibility by walking or cycling
- Bulky goods are within existing commercial zones on the edges of regional and major town centres
- Mixed uses are encouraged including opportunities for residential accommodation
- Opportunities for visitor accommodation are provided
- Vibrant and viable commercial centres generate business and employment with improvements to the design quality of the urban environment





Planning for commercial centres

A place-based approach to planning and managing development builds on the natural advantages and strengths of the community and town centre.

It is about keeping authenticity—the unique feeling of a place that makes it a special place to live and experience.

In turn this point of difference improves the wellbeing of residents and keeps visitors coming back.

Commercial centre development principles

The following principles will guide land use management and decision making in relation to commercial development. The principles have driven the recommendations in this draft strategy and are considered best practice in ensuring that development supports local economies and communities.

1. Manage hierarchy and encourage blended use

Manage new development to retain and support the commercial hierarchy and encourage blended uses where consistent with the range of goods and services that are suited to the category of the centre. Blended uses comprise accommodation, office space, retail and hospitality offerings, personal services, recreation and entertainment which together contribute to a centre as a destination for residents and visitors

2. Consolidate commercial activities

Consolidate commercial activities within defined limits and prevent interference by out-of-centre development and the sprawl of commercial activities beyond business zone boundaries

3. Maintain fine grain and encourage business diversity

Maintain what architects refer to as 'fine grain'. This refers to the traditional pattern of small premises occupying small allotments which encourages business diversity

4. Enhance the public realm

Enhance the public realm through streetscape improvements. Provide adequate amenities for shoppers and visitors with interesting and comfortable gathering spaces. Attention should be given to seating, shade structures and public toilets especially as the population ages, street trees to add amenity and shade and to creating attractive places and spaces for community events and gatherings

5. Address connectivity within centres and improve accessibility

Address connectivity within centres and improve accessibility between disparate sections of commercial centres by providing pathways and wayfinding

6. Maintain zoning, bulk and scale controls generally but introduce flexibility

Maintain land use zoning and development standards to control the bulk and scale of new development generally but introduce flexibility in terms of land uses

7. Focus on unique assets

Focus on unique or locally distinctive assets. Preserve heritage values, settlement character and environmental and biodiversity values where these attributes are seen as significant in a centre by stakeholders and contribute to the ongoing viability of the centre

8. Introduce design guidance and sustainability

Introduce design guidance in terms of architectural style to suit the centre, e.g. contemporary materials and fabric for coastal centres, and encourage sustainability measures in building design

9. Streamline approvals processes

Streamline approval of new business development where possible, particularly for temporary uses and outdoor eating places which add to the vitality of a centre

10. Embrace technology

Embrace technology and redefine platforms for the provision and delivery of goods and services to encourage a combination of methods that facilitate a physical location for a business in conjunction with on-line arrangements





General recommendations

Improve the public realm

Improvements to the public realm are integral to activating town centres. Council should consider planning improvements that are tailored to each specific centre in line with the natural advantages and strengths outlined in this draft strategy. Improving public spaces in commercial areas will make them more attractive, accessible, healthier and safer and can stimulate additional visitation and business investment.

Consider applying site specific character controls

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has released a preliminary framework and discussion paper for the introduction of character overlays through an optional standard clause and map layer to the Local Environmental Plan. It is proposed that these character overlays could be used to enhance a locality as much as to protect existing character. After amendments to the Standard Instrument are made Council should consider applying character overlays in order achieve desired future character in key areas.

Review the Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021 and prepare a prospectus

It is timely to review Council's Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021 to identify the types of business and industry that should be targeted. The findings of that review and the information and data contained in the Commercial Land Strategy may be used to prepare a prospectus to promote Bega Valley Shire and to distribute to businesses looking to establish locally or move to Bega Valley.

The aim of the prospectus would be to attract targeted business types to the Shire and assist new businesses by clarifying suitable locations. Council may wish to go so far as to match specific businesses to particular locations based on competitive advantages, such as lifestyle, infrastructure capacities, access to markets, the benefits of clustering of businesses and the available labour force.

Assist business-related development applications

The development approval process, costs associated with preparing drawings and reports to submit with development applications and the timeframes to assess development applications was an issue cited as a challenge to development during consultation forums. Council has recently established a Development Hub to guide applicants in the preparation and lodgement of their development applications. While Council is the consent authority, it is noted that many of the development controls and development application requirements are set by the State Government, which Council is obligated to uphold. However, wherever possible, Council should continue to make concerted efforts to prioritise the processing of business-related development applications.

Introduce flexible on-site car parking requirements for certain commercial uses

It is recommended that Council consider introducing flexible on-site car parking for land uses that are identified desirable for each town centre. This would provide an opportunity to streamline the approvals process for change of use applications within commercial centres by matching requirements for certain uses and could also reduce the on-site parking requirements for some new developments. The purpose of this recommendation is to remove barriers to business development and to facilitate uses that will activate and contribute to the local economy.

Continue deferred headworks charges

Council has adopted a policy to waive the payment of water and sewer headworks charges for non-residential development to reduce the upfront costs of development for businesses. Instead of paying a lump sum payment at business establishment, eligible non-residential properties have the option of paying a high consumption charge based on actual water and sewer use. Council should continue to support business establishment in the Bega Valley Shire through this successful policy.

Continue heritage conservation incentives

Council currently has the ability consider variations to development standards as an incentive for development within heritage conservation areas. Council should continue to offer this incentive to provide additional opportunities for development encouraging conservation of the built heritage in our commercial areas.





Changes to planning controls

Land use planning and development controls

Two documents form the land use planning and development controls for the Bega Valley Shire: Bega Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP 2013) and Bega Valley Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP 2013).

LEP 2013 provides the standards that apply to development within the Shire. It sets out Council's vision and seeks to implement this by way of objectives, policies, land use tables and zoning and heritage conservation maps. Land use tables set out the uses that are permitted (with or without consent) and prohibited within each land use zone. LEP 2013 also sets the maximum building heights for new buildings.

DCP 2013 supplements LEP 2013 by providing detailed reasoning, guidelines, requirements and general information to guide future development so it is consistent with the desired future character and community vision for the Bega Valley Shire.

Commercial zones

LEP 2013 applies a range of zones that enable various types of commercial development and there are also a range of commercial uses permitted in villages.

B1 Neighbourhood Centre

Enables a range of small-scale retail, business and community uses that serve the needs of people who live or work in the surrounding neighbourhood.

B2 Local Centre

Enables a range of retail, business, entertainment and community uses that serve the needs of people who live in, work in and visit the local area and aims to strengthen the viability of existing business centres as places for investment, employment and cultural activity.

B4 Mixed Use

Enables the integration of suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development

B5 Business Development

Enables a mix of business and warehouse uses, and specialised retail premises that require a large floor area, in locations that are close to, and that support the viability of, centres.

RU5 Village

Enables a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village.

Appendix 1 outlines the permitted uses in business and village zones that are classified as retail, office, hospitality, recreation and accommodation and are of relevance to revitalising commercial centres. The appendix also contains definitions of the land uses described in the recommendations of this draft strategy.

Building Heights

Height limits in commercial areas vary between 10m, 13m and 16m. Depending on the design of the building, this would accommodate development of 2-3 storeys, 4 storeys and 5 storeys respectively. For the purposes of this strategy 2-3 storey development is considered to be 'low-rise' and 4-5 storey development is considered to be 'medium-rise'.



Amendments to land use planning and development controls

A review of LEP 2013 and DCP 2013 with regard to alignment with the principles and vision outlined in this strategy found that they are generally sound and thorough documents that already contain principles, objectives and development standards that should serve to stimulate development and assist to preserve the aesthetic qualities that make each centre unique.

This strategy makes a number of recommendations to change land use planning and development controls to add vitality to commercial centres, encourage business diversity, and meet future needs.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013: Commercial Development

The principles of Bega Valley DCP 2013 should be reviewed to ensure the ten principles contained in this draft strategy are included to guide land use management and decision-making in relation to commercial development.

Include an objective to encourage the development of open-air unroofed arcades with small boutique retail and hospitality outlets to provide a sense of being outdoors and the ability to appreciate the surrounding natural environment.

Amend car and bicycle parking requirements to provide corresponding land uses to the Standard Instrument LEP definitions and amend the requirements to permit a broader range of land uses that may be available through a change of use, in particular where the use has been identified as desirable and is likely to activate the commercial centre.



Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013: Land Use Tables

B1 Neighbourhood Centre

Include shops as a use that is permitted with consent in zone B1 Neighbourhood Centre. There are existing businesses that meet this definition within B1 zones. The inclusion of shops as a permitted use would regularise those existing uses and encourage business diversity by the development of further shops in zone B1.

Remove vehicle sales or hire premises from the zone B1 Neighbourhood Centre, which is inconsistent with the zone objectives.

B2 Local Centre and B4 Mixed Use

Include artisan food and drink industry as a use that is permitted with consent in zone B2 Local Centre and B4 Mixed Use but retain light industries as a prohibited use. This use would add vitality to commercial centres and contribute to the foundation of centres as a destination. The continued prohibition of light industries will, over time, lead to the relocation of these uses to an industrial area as the highest and best use of each commercial property and land values change.

RU5 Village

Include health consulting rooms as a use that is permitted with consent in zone RU5 Village, in order to better meet the immediate needs of an ageing population based within a rural village.

Remove land uses from the zone RU5 Village that are inconsistent with a rural village, including self-storage units, vehicle repair stations, vehicle body repair workshop and vehicle sales or hire premises.

RU2 Rural Landscape and E3 Environmental Management

Include hotel or motel accommodation as a use that is permitted with consent in zones RU2 Rural Landscape and E3 Environmental Management to permit high quality tourist development.

Combined digital outlets

Investigate opportunities for new uses in land use tables. This could introduce more flexibility into the range of permitted uses in commercial areas of the Shire and enable consideration of new forms or mixed use such as combined warehouse or distribution centre and retail shop.





Future directions for towns and villages

Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage includes buildings, sites, vegetation, landscapes and objects that contribute to the uniqueness of a place and provide a connection back through time. This strategy recognises the important role that cultural heritage, both indigenous and non-indigenous, plays in the community and seeks the continued protection of significant cultural heritage items, places and landscapes.

Built heritage

Heritage buildings contribute to the character of a place and set the tone for future development in terms of design, scale, materials, fabric and colours. Bega Valley Shire contains many buildings and places of cultural heritage significance. There are controls in place to preserve the values of these buildings and places and it is important that new development in the vicinity of heritage-listed items respects those values. The protection of heritage contributes to the wellbeing of residents and brings social and economic benefits by maintaining the attractiveness of places to visitors.

Bega

Bega is to maintain its primacy as the regional centre offering civic and community facilities, and the full range of commercial and industrial goods and services.

The presence of local government, health and education facilities, financial and higher order retail facilities will protect the functioning of Bega as a strategic centre in accordance with the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan.

The primacy of Bega as a regional town should be preserved by ensuring that administrative, health and education services continue to be concentrated in the township. Bega should also be safeguarded as the centre offering high level comparison business and retail goods and services.

Existing streetscape elements and the relative importance of commercial thoroughfares including the contribution made by heritage buildings should be protected and enhanced through improvements to the public realm.

Business land and vacancy rates, Bega October 2019*

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	0.5 hectares
	B2 Local Centre	14.2 hectares
	B4 Mixed Use	30.4 hectares
Maximum building height	Zone B1	10 metres
	Zone B2	13 metres/16 metres
	Zone B4	13 metres/16 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	Zone B1	0.1 hectares (0.14%)
	Zone B2	0 hectares (0%)
	Zone B4	10.2 hectares (33.6%)
Vacancy rate	(rateable commercial premises in zone B2 only)	12.5%

* Estimated areas of vacant business zoned land include allotments that are currently occupied by a non-commercial use such as a dwelling or visitor accommodation or have not been built upon. Vacancy rates are the number of unoccupied constructed commercial premises as a proportion of total premises.



Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Bega in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Protect existing streetscape elements that are unique to Bega town centre including the existing granite curb, existing tree lined streets and historic buildings.

Promote Bega as a regional centre with a distinct agricultural base and unique history that is adaptable to change that continues to provide a broad range of cultural, artistic, administrative, retail, business, health and educational opportunities for the community.

Create a clearly defined town centre that contains a diverse range of employment opportunities where Carp Street provides a traditional main street experience with activated shop fronts, pedestrians are prioritised and the history of the town is celebrated.

Continue to support the growth of Littleton Gardens as the centrepiece of Bega town centre by encouraging a range of day and night time activities, the orientation of buildings that enhance the activation of this space and better pedestrian linkages including Ayres Walkway.

Build upon the history of Bega by protecting the setting and landmark features of European and Aboriginal heritage that is intrinsic to the character of the town including the Bega River, network of wetlands and iconic views towards Biamanga (Mumbulla Mountain).

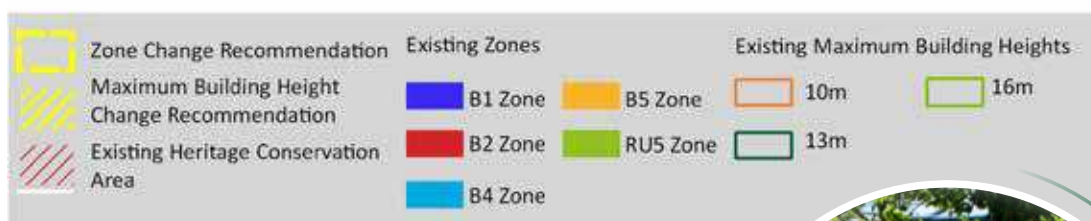
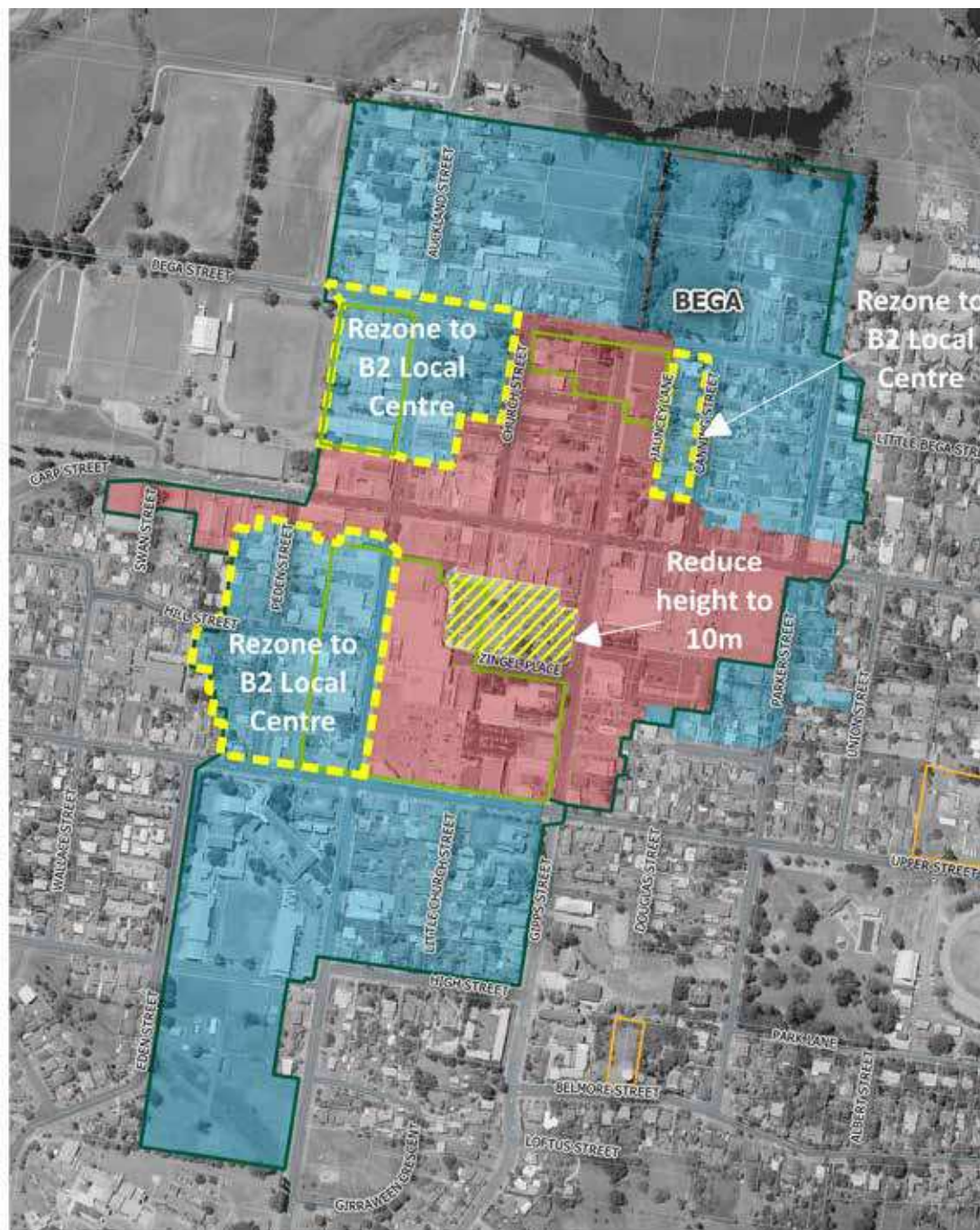
Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B4 Mixed Use land to B2 Local Centre as shown on the map to reduce the potential for further sprawl of commercial uses and to consolidate the business zone and existing uses
- Reduce maximum building height of land zoned RE1 Public Recreation Littleton Gardens to 10 metres on the map to be consistent with surrounding non-commercial zone land

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

- Mapped precincts and relevant precinct specific objectives and requirements should be adjusted to conform with the recommended land zoning changes for Bega town centre

It is a principle of this strategy to consolidate the commercial centre to prevent the sprawl of commercial activities beyond business zone boundaries. Taking into account vacant B4 zoned land, vacancy rates in zone B2 and the potential for the gradual relocation of light industries to outside the centre, there is ample business zoned land to cater to growth in the future and it is not considered necessary to rezone land adjoining the town centre (such as open space or recreational land) for commercial use. Future reviews of the local environmental plan, including the allocation of land use zones, may cause adjustments to the supply of commercial land in response to monitoring of development activity.



Bega: Recommended changes to land use zoning and maximum building heights



Merimbula/Tura Beach

The combined commercial precinct of Merimbula/Tura Beach is a major centre that reinforces the primacy of Bega through offering high level retail and trade facilities that serve the immediate catchment and beyond.

Land capacity for additional commercial development exists at Merimbula and Tura Beach that can be used to develop commercial activities that provide goods and services to cater to local day-to-day shopping as well as limited weekly comparison goods.

Two areas adjoining the existing Tura Beach commercial area are suitable for bulky goods retail development due to proximity to existing commercial development, the availability of infrastructure and visual exposure. The development of bulky goods retail should be subject to design considerations.

Merimbula town centre benefits from good connectivity between retail, hospitality and larger box store developments. A range of building heights enables diverse forms whilst ensuring new development respects the landform and position relative to the waterfront.

Commercial goods and services are provided in a mix of hospitality, retail, office, leisure and entertainment spaces catering to both residents and visitors.

High quality upper floor accommodation is encouraged to take advantage of views and lifestyle opportunities.

Connectivity by pathways, laneways and arcades between commercial precincts should be retained with active street frontages to streets and private thoroughfares.

Business land and vacancy rates, Merimbula/Tura Beach October 2019*

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B1 Neighbourhood Centre (Tura Beach)	7.5 hectares
	B2 Local Centre (Merimbula)	11.8 hectares
	B4 Mixed Use (Merimbula)	14.4 hectares
Maximum building height	Zone B1 (Tura Beach)	10 metres
	Zone B2/Zone B4 (Merimbula)	10 metres/13 metres/16 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	Zone B1 (Tura Beach)	2.4 hectares (32.0%)
	Zone B2 (Merimbula)	1.5 hectares (0%)
	Zone B4 (Merimbula)	5.1 hectares (35.4%)
Vacancy rate	Zone B1 (Tura Beach)	5.9%
	Zone B2 (Merimbula)	22%

* Estimated areas of vacant business zoned land include allotments that are currently occupied by a non-commercial use such as a dwelling or visitor accommodation or have not been built upon. Vacancy rates are the number of unoccupied constructed commercial premises as a proportion of total premises.

Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Merimbula in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Support the continued growth and development of Merimbula as a major centre.

Pedestrian access is prioritised within Market Street and Beach Street and further opportunities to maximise connectivity with the open space network around Merimbula Lake are created.

Protect key elements within the streetscape including view corridors and access to Merimbula Lake where larger development is well articulated and proportioned and the overall height, bulk and scale is in keeping with a medium-rise coastal setting.

Enhance the existing coastal atmosphere of Merimbula as a vibrant seaside destination with a mixture of commercial and residential land uses where streetscape elements such as awnings and signage are well articulated and proportioned and the redevelopment of older building stock is encouraged.

Promote the continued enhancement of existing laneways and arcades providing opportunities for boutique shopping, alfresco dining, seating and landscaping within a compact and clearly defined town centre that is easy to navigate where night time activation and temporary uses are encouraged.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- In recognition of the oversupply of land zoned B4 Mixed Use and to consolidate commercial activity it is recommended that certain land zoned B4 Mixed Use be rezoned to a residential or tourist zone as shown on the map. This would reflect the predominance of residential and tourist accommodation uses in these areas. It would also remove approximately 5 hectares from the business zone that is currently considered vacant or underutilised, however, vacant land zoned B1 Neighbourhood Centre at Tura Beach and the future occupation of vacant commercial premises is adequate to cater for the foreseeable future. Condensing the town centre may cause property values to rise and stimulate redevelopment and growth.
- There are no changes recommended to maximum building heights as these have been allocated based on topography and existing uses and will serve to create diversity in building bulk and scale across the town centre.
- The development of bulky goods premises is limited to Tura Beach and the existing business zoning is retained without future expansion.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

- Mapped precincts and relevant precinct specific objectives and requirements should be adjusted to conform with the recommended land zoning changes for Merimbula town centre
- Encourage contemporary coastal architecture to create a consistent design theme and include design guidance
- Develop an Area Plan for the town centre to guide built form, traffic and climate change adaptation



Zone Change Recommendation

Maximum Building Height Change Recommendation

Existing Heritage Conservation Area

Existing Zones

Existing Maximum Building Heights

10m

13m

16m

B1 Zone

B2 Zone

B4 Zone

B5 Zone

RU5 Zone

Eden

The historic atmosphere of Eden town centre should be preserved by ensuring that future commercial development is compatible with and contributes to existing heritage character.

Development in the vicinity of buildings with historical importance should be compatible with the form and scale of those buildings and distinctive street character.

All future development should be of a scale that complements the existing building stock and promotes sustainability by encouraging the use of renewable energy and green building design principles.

Character may be reinforced through the use of a mix of building materials and textures, detailed in the Port of Eden Planning Report: urban design blueprint and design principles.

The town's setting and natural vistas should be managed to retain historic and aesthetic values whilst creating a connected and activated centre.

Eden offers a diverse range of retail goods and services including those of the creative industries, technology-related businesses, local food produce and temporary uses which ensures diversity in employment and business opportunities.

Business land and vacancy rates, Eden, October 2019*

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B2 Local Centre	9.2 hectares
	B4 Mixed Use	13.3 hectares
	B4 Mixed Use North Eden	8.6 hectares
Maximum building height	B2 Local Centre	13 metres
	B4 Mixed Use	13 metres/16 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	Zone B2	1.3 hectares (14.5%)
	Zone B4	4.6 hectares (34.3%)
Vacancy rate	zone B2 only	21.8%

** Estimated areas of vacant business zoned land include allotments that are currently occupied by a non-commercial use such as a dwelling or visitor accommodation or have not been built upon. Vacancy rates are the number of unoccupied constructed commercial premises as a proportion of total premises.*



Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Eden in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Support the continued growth of Eden as a clearly defined local centre with a diverse range of social and retail options where art, music and the selling of local produce is celebrated.

Protect key elements within the streetscape including street trees, view corridors and items of heritage significance through development that is well articulated and proportioned where the overall height, bulk and scale is in keeping with the coastal setting.

Encourage connectivity through the development of existing laneways where opportunities for night time activation and temporary uses is supported and pedestrian linkages from Snug Cove to Imlay Street are enhanced.

Continue to support the redevelopment of Snug Cove as a revitalised wharf precinct that showcases the working Port of Eden as a gateway to the Sapphire Coast and beyond.

Build upon the maritime history of Eden and the surrounding landscape by protecting views to the ocean and geographical landmarks of European and Aboriginal heritage that are intrinsic to the character and history of Eden, such as Boyd's Tower, Davidsons Whaling Station, Bundian Way, Twofold Bay and Balawan (Mount Imlay).

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B4 Mixed Use land to B2 Local Centre to reflect existing commercial uses as shown on the map.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

- Mapped precincts and relevant precinct specific objectives and requirements should be adjusted to conform with the recommended land zoning changes for Eden town centre.





Eden: Recommended changes to land use zoning and maximum building height



Bermagui

Future commercial development should be designed to enhance Bermagui's existing coastal character with building scale and heights that maintain amenity while allowing for design flexibility.

Development in the vicinity of buildings with historical importance should be compatible with the form and scale of those buildings.

All future development should be of a scale that compliments the existing building stock and promotes sustainability by encouraging the use of renewable energy and green building design principles.

Character may be reinforced through the use of a mix of building materials and textures, including timber to reflect early wharf construction. The town's streetscapes and adjacent foreshore areas should be managed to retain the unique relationship between the built and natural environment.

Business land and vacancy rates, Bermagui October 2019*

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B2 Local Centre	5.4 hectares
Maximum building height	B2 Local Centre	10 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	B2 Local Centre	1.1 hectares (20.2%)
Vacancy rate	B2 Local Centre	14.6%

** Estimated areas of vacant business zoned land include allotments that are currently occupied by a non-commercial use such as a dwelling or visitor accommodation or have not been built upon. Vacancy rates are the number of unoccupied constructed commercial premises as a proportion of total premises.*



Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Bermagui in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Protect the existing character of Bermagui that is defined by a low-rise, eclectic mix of unique commercial buildings and items of heritage significance that contribute towards the sustainable growth and development of Bermagui as a vibrant local centre.

Identify opportunities to improve accessibility and active transport links to commercial and recreation areas around the Bermagui foreshore.

Encourage development that is sympathetic to the coastal setting through the use of colours and materials that reflect the history of this fishing village through the use of natural materials and timber elements that enhance the coastal atmosphere of Bermagui.

Seek opportunities to enhance the sense of place, connectivity and identity with welcoming street frontages that create activated public spaces where visitors and residents can relax and enjoy. The upgrading of Lamont Street is encouraged to provide an opportunity to integrate public art and sculpture, landscaping, seating and shade.

Build upon the history of Bermagui by protecting the setting and landmark features of European and Aboriginal heritage that is intrinsic to the character of Bermagui including the Bermagui Waterhole, Bermagui Wharf and open space with iconic views across Horseshoe Bay towards Gulaga (Mount Dromedary).

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

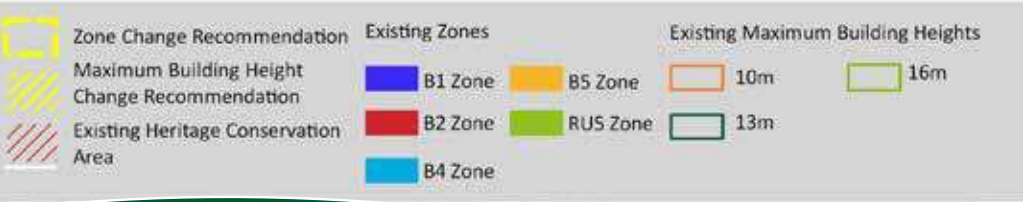
There are no changes recommended to the allocation of business zones or to maximum building heights. There is sufficient land zoned B2 Local Centre for the foreseeable future. The rezoning of land adjacent to the commercial centre to B4 Mixed Use would lead to a diffusion of commercial activity and detract from the existing compact town centre.

The zoning of additional commercial land along Lamont Street to link with the Fishermans Wharf development and potentially the north Bermagui commercial area would detract from the current setting, provide excessive business zoned land and conflict with the need to retain the existing natural advantages and strengths of Bermagui identified during consultation forums.

Amending building controls by either increasing or reducing maximum heights would impact on the existing character of Bermagui, in particular the inconsistency of building design that contributes to the sense of place.



Bermagui: Land use zoning and heights



Pambula

The historic atmosphere of Pambula town centre is to be preserved by ensuring that future commercial development is compatible with and contributes to existing heritage character.

Development in the vicinity of buildings with historical importance and particularly in the commercial area of Quondolo and parts of Toallo Streets, should be compatible with the form and scale of those buildings and distinctive street character.

All future development should be of a scale that complements the existing building stock and promotes sustainability through the use of renewable energy and green building design principles.

The town's streetscapes, its rural setting and legible layout should be managed to retain its historic and aesthetic values whilst creating a pedestrian friendly and active centre.

Care should be taken to ensure that commercial development on land zoned B5 on Arthur Kaine Drive does not detract from the historic centre in terms of uses, scale and design.

Business land and vacancy rates, Pambula October 2019

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B2 Local Centre	9.7 hectares
	B4 Mixed Use	6.8 hectares
	B5 Business Development	12.0 hectares
Maximum building height	Zone B2	10 metres
	Zone B4	10 metres
	Zone B5	10 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	Zone B2	1.9 hectares (19.1%)
	Zone B4	3.3 hectares (47.8%)
	Zone B5	6.0 hectares (49.9%)
Vacancy rate	(rateable commercial premises in zone B2 only)	2.6%



Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Pambula in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Encourage the development of Pambula as a vibrant and active local centre.

Build upon the historic atmosphere of the town ensuring development is sympathetic with the existing streetscapes of Quondolo Street and Toalla Street.

Protect key elements within the town including street trees, items of heritage significance and connectivity to the Panboola Wetlands

Promote signage and awnings that are well articulated and proportioned.

New development will make a positive contribution towards the built form of Pambula through appropriate scale, design and colours and materials.

Encourage developments that make a positive contribution to the sense of place by enhancing pedestrian linkages to and within the town centre and by creating active street frontages.

Promote boutique shopping, alfresco dining and seating within a compact and clearly defined town centre that is easy to navigate where opportunities for festivals and events are encouraged.

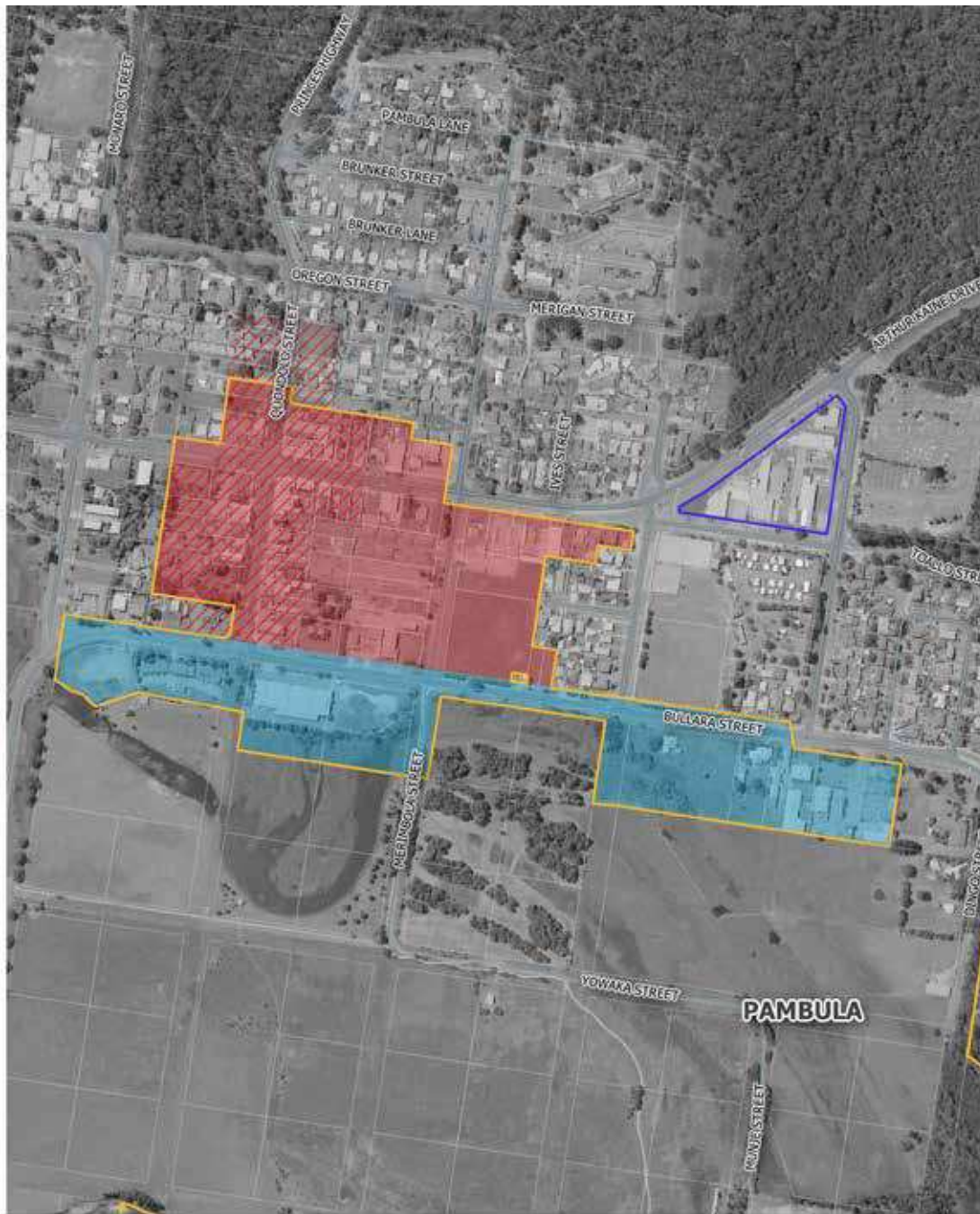
Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

There are no changes recommended to the allocation of business zones or to maximum building heights in Pambula. There is sufficient land zoned B2 Local Centre, B4 Mixed Use and B5 Business Development for the foreseeable future at recent rates of development activity.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

Consider the introduction of design guidelines to improve the visual amenity of industrial estates and business park development. These guidelines could include landscaping buffers, provision of shade trees and setbacks and apply to these types of development throughout the Bega Valley Shire.





Zone Change Recommendation	Existing Zones	Existing Maximum Building Heights
Maximum Building Height Change Recommendation	B1 Zone	10m
Existing Heritage Conservation Area	B2 Zone	13m
	B4 Zone	16m
	B5 Zone	
	RUS Zone	

Pambula: Land use zoning and heights



Tathra

The tourism industry underpins the local economy of Tathra. Commercial development should be in sympathy with existing character and aim for a consistent look using timber and natural colours to match the historic wharf. Connectivity and sustainability need to underpin business development and land uses in the commercial centre.

It is not considered necessary to rezone additional land along Andy Poole Drive for commercial use at this point in time as further commercial development would detract from the current setting, provide excessive business zoned land taking into account the unoccupied land at Tathra headland, and would conflict with the need to retain the existing natural advantages and strengths of Tathra identified during consultation forums.

Business land and vacancy rates, Tathra October 2019*

	Zone	Area/proportion of total
Business zones	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	0.42 hectares
	B2 Local Centre	3.65 hectares
Maximum building height	All zones	10 metres
Non-commercial properties (vacant or residential use)	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	0 hectares (0%)
	B2 Local Centre	1.2 hectares (32.1%)
Vacancy rate	(rateable commercial premises in zone B2 only)	5%

** Estimated areas of vacant business zoned land include allotments that are currently occupied by a non-commercial use such as a dwelling or visitor accommodation or have not been built upon. Vacancy rates are the number of unoccupied constructed commercial premises as a proportion of total premises.*



Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Tathra in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Establish a clear identity and image for the two distinct commercial areas as spaces for leisure, retail and tourism with a mix of commercial and residential land uses that contribute towards the sustainable growth and development of Tathra as a local centre.

Protect key elements within the streetscape including street trees, view corridors and items of heritage significance that contribute to the uniqueness of Tathra.

Encourage development that is sympathetic with the coastal setting through the use of colours and materials that reflect the history of the town through the use of natural materials and elements within the landscape such as the Tathra Wharf.

Promote development that makes a positive contribution to the sense of place by enhancing pedestrian linkages to open space, foreshore areas and encourages active street frontages.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B1 Neighbourhood Centre land to B2 Local Centre to permit a wider range of commercial uses including retail premises on Andy Poole Drive as shown on the map.
- Rezone R3 Medium Density Residential land to B2 Local Centre to reflect existing commercial uses on Andy Poole Drive and Panorama Drive as shown on the map.
- Rezone B2 Local Centre to B4 Mixed Use on the Tathra headland as shown on the map to increase diversity in the commercial area and provide opportunities to bring residential development into the commercial centre, adding vibrancy and security.

It is not considered necessary to rezone additional land along Andy Poole Drive for commercial use at this point in time as further commercial development would detract from the current setting, provide excessive business zoned land taking into account the unoccupied land at Tathra headland, and would conflict with the need to retain the existing natural advantages and strengths of Tathra identified during consultation forums.



Tathra: Proposed changes to land use zoning and heights



Villages

The villages of Cobargo, Bemboka, Candelo, Kalaru, Quaama, Towamba, Wolumla, Wonboyn and Wyndham are currently zoned RU5 Village under Bega Valley LEP 2013. This is a relatively unrestricted zone in which many commercial uses are permitted. It is an appropriate zone where there is very limited development occurring and where commercial offerings comprise only convenience goods and services. Building heights are limited to 10 metres across all villages.

Bemboka, Candelo, Kalaru, Quaama, Towamba, Wolumla and Wonboyn

The villages of Bega Valley Shire possess significant heritage and environmental values. The RU5 Village zoning should be retained for all villages except Cobargo which has a defined 'main street'. Retaining the village zone would ensure continuing flexibility for proposed future development due to the large range of uses permitted in zone RU5. New commercial development in the villages is likely to locate close to existing development to benefit from clustering and to gradually form a main street and centre as each village expands in population over time. Council should maintain a watching brief to determine when it is appropriate to apply a business zone over commercial development.

Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Bemboka, Candelo, Kalaru, Quaama, Towamba, Wolumla and Wonboyn in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Protect the character of each rural village as unique neighbourhood centres.

Identify sustainable growth opportunities within each village that encourage more affordable business and housing development with the Bega Valley.

Provide for a range of business, retail and boutique uses to make our villages thrive with innovative ways of using empty buildings and the use of public spaces.

Ensure appropriate speed environments along the main street of each village, improving safety and identify more opportunities for the active use of the street.

Light industrial developments do not detract from the rural setting and outlook, particularly along main road frontages within proximity of residential uses.

Promote the history of each village by protecting the setting and landmark features of European and Aboriginal heritage that is intrinsic to the character of each village.



Cobargo

Cobargo has a defined 'main street' being a concentration of retail and hospitality outlets along the Princes Highway. During October 2019 there were four vacant premises. There is no immediate need for additional commercial property, however, the continued viability of the existing commercial area should be reinforced by application of a business zone to that area to prevent competing commercial development being developed outside of the existing centre.

Character statement

The following character statement is to guide the location, style and design of development and reinforce the role of Cobargo in the commercial centres hierarchy.

Encourage the continued growth and development of Cobargo as a vibrant and active local centre through development that makes a positive contribution towards the sustainable growth and development of the town.

Build upon the unique highway frontage of Cobargo with development that continues to provide a range of local facilities and services for tourists, residents and the broader rural community with improved pedestrian connectivity and convenient parking for larger vehicles.

New development needs to make a positive contribution towards the built form and existing aesthetic values of Cobargo in terms of use, scale and design and through the choice of colours and materials that reflect the history of the town and the surrounding rural landscape.

Protect the existing streetscape and view corridors from public places including the Princes Highway and Cobargo-Bermagui Road.

Enhance the unique heritage qualities of Cobargo through the sensitive adaptation of existing structures and infill development on vacant land.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Apply a business zone to commercial development along the Princes Highway and Cobargo-Bermagui Road as shown on the map and consider application of a residential zone to the remainder of the village zone in Cobargo to prevent competing commercial development being developed outside of the existing centre.



	Zone Change Recommendation	Existing Zones		Existing Maximum Building Heights	
	Maximum Building Height Change Recommendation	B1 Zone	B5 Zone	10m	16m
	Existing Heritage Conservation Area	B2 Zone	RU5 Zone	13m	
		B4 Zone			

Cobargo: Proposed changes to land use zoning and heights



Appendix

An aerial photograph of a valley. In the foreground, there's a small town with houses, trees, and a road. The middle ground shows rolling green hills. In the background, there are more hills under a clear sky.

Appendix 1:
Details from Bega Valley
Local Environmental Plan
2013

Appendix 2:
Outcomes of community
engagement

Appendix 1

Details from Bega Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013

Permissible (with or without consent) and prohibited uses in business and village zones

Land use	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	B2 Local Centre	B4 Mixed Use	B5 Business Development	RU5 Village
Amusement centre	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Artisan food and drink industry	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Business premises	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Centre-based child care facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Educational establishments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Entertainment facilities	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Food and drink premises	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Function centres	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Information and education facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Industries	No	No	No	No	No
Hardware and building supplies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Health consulting rooms	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Light industries	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Markets	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Medical centres	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Neighbourhood shops	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Neighbourhood supermarkets	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Recreation facilities (indoor)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Registered clubs	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes



Land use	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	B2 Local Centre	B4 Mixed Use	B5 Business Development	RU5 Village
Residential accommodation (excluding Shop top housing)	No	No	Yes	No	Some land uses
Restaurants or cafes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Retail premises	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Self-storage units	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Service stations	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shops	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Shop top housing	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Small bar	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Specialised retail premises	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tourist and visitor accommodation	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Vehicle body repair workshops	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle repair stations	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle sales or hire premises	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Veterinary hospitals	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Warehouse or distribution centres	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Selected land use definitions

artisan food and drink industry means a building or place the principal purpose of which is the making or manufacture of boutique, artisan or craft food or drink products only. It must also include at least one of the following:

- (a) a retail area for the sale of the products,
- (b) a restaurant or cafe,
- (c) facilities for holding tastings, tours or workshops.

health consulting rooms means premises comprising one or more rooms within (or within the curtilage of) a dwelling house used by not more than 3 health care professionals at any one time.

hotel or motel accommodation means a building or place (whether or not licensed premises under the Liquor Act 2007) that provides temporary or short-term accommodation on a commercial basis and that

- (a) comprises rooms or self-contained suites, and
- (b) may provide meals to guests or the general public and facilities for the parking of guests' vehicles,

but does not include backpackers' accommodation, a boarding house, bed and breakfast accommodation or farm stay accommodation.

shop means a premises that sell merchandise such as groceries, personal care products, clothing, music, homewares, stationery, electrical goods or the like or that hire any such merchandise, and includes a neighbourhood shop and neighbourhood supermarket, but does not include food and drink premises or restricted premises.

self-storage units means premises that consist of individual enclosed compartments for storing goods or materials (other than hazardous or offensive goods or materials).

vehicle body repair workshop means a building or place used for the repair of vehicles or agricultural machinery, involving body building, panel building, panel beating, spray painting or chassis restoration.

vehicle repair station means a building or place used for the purpose of carrying out repairs to, or the selling and fitting of accessories to, vehicles or agricultural machinery, but does not include a vehicle body repair workshop or vehicle sales or hire premises.

vehicle sales or hire premises means a building or place used for the display, sale or hire of motor vehicles, caravans, boats, trailers, agricultural machinery and the like, whether or not accessories are sold or displayed there.



APPENDIX 2:

Outcomes of community engagement

Details of natural advantages and strengths, challenges and means to encourage growth for each centre that were identified during consultation carried out during preparation of this strategy are given below. The recommendations provided in chapter 6 Implementation of the Commercial Land Strategy respond to these findings. 'Out of scope' challenges and suggestions that were raised but cannot be addressed by the planning system are not included in this strategy.

Bega

Strengths of Bega

The natural advantages and strengths of Bega identified during consultation are listed below.

- Bega is the administrative and service hub of the valley and has built its commercial character around this. There is clear identification that Bega is the local and regional centre and is a focus and attractor for new business activities. Bega is the administrative and service hub of the Shire and has built its commercial character around this
- The central geographic location in Bega Valley and its location relative to Sydney and Canberra offers affordable lifestyle benefits without lengthy commuting times. There is a diverse range of retailers and creative enterprises that are not entirely dependent on tourism and are therefore more economically stable. This includes some galleries, cafes, bookshop, giftshops combined with practical offerings such as food and hardware
- The availability of land and services, e.g. education and medical facilities, regional hospital, council, successful speciality businesses such as Bega Cheese, the rural catchment and farming community, the regional gallery, green spaces and infrastructure such as water, sewerage, electricity, car parking
- The stable population and united community comprising skilled, friendly people. The centre benefits from a strong network of businesses and open communication lines. There is also a strong volunteer sector and a safe community
- The grid pattern of the township and the consequent ease of manoeuvring and good parking with an attractive streetscape. The central core of the town is small and intimate and centred around open space. There has been recent strong residential growth and adequate land available for future residential expansion. The rural landscape setting, natural amenity and heritage values provide an attractive backdrop to the township

Challenges for Bega

The challenges to commercial development in Bega that were identified during consultation are given below.

- The high expense of developing commercial land and the need to relocate bulky goods and the like to outside the centre. There is a lack of available commercial and industrial land that restricts some businesses, such as farm supplies and car sales, from relocating to outside the town centre. No land is available for new businesses, and the fragmentation of land holdings and small size of lots makes it difficult for new market entrants. Similarly, there is an oversupply of developed office space taking up retail space in the centre
- Commercial premises vacancy rates due to on-line sales, declining retail sales, technological change, the slowdown in the world economy and competition between similar business types. There are high costs and expertise required for businesses to adapt to new technology and systems
- There is concern about the loss of administrative functions and regional centre status due to the potential threat of large floorplate development and bulky goods premises in other centres. Development of other centres has impacted on retailing in Bega and undermined the centres primacy
- The sprawl of commercial uses beyond the core across the surrounding B4 Mixed Use zone. The undeveloped B4 and industrial land in town and south of Bega adds to sprawl although much of the B4 Mixed Use zone is flood affected and is occupied by heritage buildings
- Distance from major markets and capital cities. There is a lack of transport infrastructure and connectivity to centres outside the Shire. Similarly, the local economy is dependent on limited industries which makes Bega vulnerable to structural economic change

The future of Bega

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 1.

Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Bega

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Retain and reinforce the administrative role of Bega and the heritage character of Bega and ensure that the town maintains its appeal to residents and visitors by controlling building design to be complementary. Promote the centre's heritage values, its rural setting and the pleasant climate and focus on the major strengths being proximity to the coast, housing availability and the diversity of business, including art galleries, creative industries and technology-based industries	The primacy of Bega as the regional centre for Bega Valley Shire and surrounding country is reinforced in character statements which will be included in the LSPS and adopted as policy by Council. Any future proposals for development that may compete with commercial activities in Bega, other than where proposed as complementary in the major centre of Merimbula/Tura Beach, should be rejected by Council unless it can be demonstrated that the economic impact on Bega would be negligible or nil



Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
<p>Encourage light industrial uses to relocate to outside the town centre but do not permit retail development in industrial zones to prevent competition with the centre. Confine commercial development to within the existing town centre</p>	<p>Light industries are currently prohibited in all business zones except B5 Business Development. This means that any approved business that can be defined as a light industry in the centre of Bega is operating with existing use rights. Over time these uses will relocate to an industrial zone as the highest and best use and land values of sites in the commercial centre change. Most retail uses are prohibited in industrial zones other than industrial retail outlets which offer goods for sale as ancillary to an industry</p>
<p>Promote Bega as part of the regional tourism experience. Maintain the flow-on effects of tourists to the coast visiting Bega during bad weather and continue to attract visitors to the Shire's central shopping centre to assist to overcome the seasonality of tourism</p>	<p>Sapphire Coast Tourism is carrying out promotional activities to attract tourism including responding to recent trends in visitation and length of stay with a view to reducing the seasonality of the industry</p>
<p>Encourage steady growth of the population and employment by providing land for housing and land for the development of medium sized businesses. Encourage light industrial uses and some large floorplate retailers to relocate to land outside of the commercial core to ensure land is available for office and retail uses. Consolidate the commercial centre, provide opportunities for all business types by ensuring a range of lot sizes are available in business zones. There are opportunities to generate business within the health and education sectors</p>	<p>Land available for residential growth is being considered in the Residential Land Strategy being prepared in parallel with this commercial strategy. Taking into account vacant B4 zoned land, vacancy rates in zone B2 and the potential for the gradual relocation of light industries to outside the centre, there is ample business zoned land to cater to growth in the future. Much of the vacant premises are located on small lots and available for small to medium size businesses. Health and education businesses and support services are permitted in business zones and Council is actively encouraging development in these two sectors aligned with the new regional hospital and university campuses</p>
<p>Relocate sporting fields from land adjacent the commercial area to enable that land to be rezoned to a business zone to facilitate the expansion of commercial uses</p>	<p>It is a principle of this strategy (see section 5.3) to consolidate the commercial centre to prevent the sprawl of commercial activities beyond business zone boundaries. Taking into account vacant B4 zoned land, vacancy rates in zone B2 and the potential for the gradual relocation of light industries to outside the centre, there is ample business zoned land to cater to growth in the future. Council is required to review its local environmental plan every 5 years which includes the allocation of land use zones. These reviews may cause adjustments to the supply of commercial land in response to monitoring of development activity</p>

Merimbula/Tura Beach

Strengths of Merimbula/Tura Beach

The natural advantages and strengths of Merimbula/Tura Beach identified during consultation are listed below.

- Feelings of spaciousness, proximity to the lake with views to the lake and ocean and the unspoilt coastline which supports aquaculture. The existence of interesting spaces, such as small laneways and arcades, and unique architecture such as Twyford Theatre
- The availability of infrastructure, such as the regional airport which provides links to major cities, and the boardwalk around the lake foreshore
- The cohesive focus of the commercial community which includes young professionals who generate business and employment opportunities using new technology
- Connections between the boutique retail and hospitality area of the main street and big box development of supermarkets, which are close but not too close
- Tourism visitation, with a traditional focus on families, sustains the local economy of Merimbula

Challenges to Merimbula/Tura Beach

The challenges to commercial development in Merimbula/Tura Beach that were identified during consultation are given below.

- The dispersed character of commercial activities which has been caused by zoning large areas of land as B4 Mixed Use and the increased number of home businesses
- There is a lack of identity and lack of vision for the town. The streetscape looks tired, there is a lack of lighting at night, a lack of parking, a reduction in traditional retail outlets, high rents for commercial property, many vacant premises, a lack of pride in the presentation of premises and the town centre is not pedestrian friendly. The layout and design of the town and ageing infrastructure is limiting growth
- The composition of businesses, competition between businesses and with on-line trading, and the restricted opening hours of shops and businesses
- There are competing visions for tourism – one is focussed on adventure and nature which attracts younger people who are not using retail or entertainment facilities; the other is focussed on families. There are also changes in tourism behaviour with shorter length of stay, less camping and caravanning, and the rise of unregulated accommodation, e.g. AirBnB
- There is a poor selection of housing for modern living, reflected by the lack of residential opportunities within the centre such as shop top housing

The future of Merimbula/Tura Beach

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 2.



Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Merimbula/Tura Beach

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Encourage and facilitate a diverse range of commercial activity including educational facilities, research and development, professional services, on-line collective and delivery services, a business hub and serviced shared office space, conference facilities and creative industries	A large range of commercial uses are currently permitted in zones B1, B2 and B4. Council can encourage further diversity of commercial offerings in Merimbula/Tura Beach through the character statement and through improvements to the public realm by implementation of the landscape master plan. Artisan food and drink industries are recommended to be a permitted use to add vitality to the centre
re-use vacant office space by encouraging pop-ups in vacant shops to activate the centre	The temporary use of vacant premises is permitted and depends on the willingness of property owners to undertake improvements that are necessary to accommodate pop-ups. Council can encourage temporary uses through the character statement prepared for the LSPS
Create a vibrant town centre by revitalising and beautifying the centre to improve amenity and appearance by taking advantage of the estuary, lake and surrounding natural beauty, encouraging boutique tourist style development, carrying out building upgrades, improving parking and planning for traffic flows. There is the potential to create a compact commercial centre	Council can encourage further diversity of commercial offerings in Merimbula/Tura Beach through the character statement, through improvements to the public realm by implementation of the landscape master plan and by including development principles in the development control plan
Address the lack of identity through rebranding that is focussed on innovation and energy. Create a slightly up-market cosmopolitan feel with cafes, arts and crafts outlets, artisan and modern to appeal to urban holiday-makers and build interesting laneways and boutique shops with outdoor festivals and events taking advantage of the close waterways and outdoor spaces	Improvements to the presentation of the centre and infrastructure services can be achieved by streetscaping, landscaping, signage and the like. Further implementation of the CBD landscape masterplan will address these matters. The character statement should encourage a range of uses and set the direction for the types of development suited to Merimbula/Tura Beach
Address the lack of residential space within the town centre possibly by converting visitor accommodation to permanent medium density residential and acknowledge	The reciprocal link between residential and commercial development is acknowledged in that more residents create demand for goods and services, and the greater the range of goods and services the more attractive is the centre as a place to live. Residential development within a centre definitely adds vibrancy and has the added benefits of providing security to commercial premises outside trading hours. Shop top housing is currently the only type of residential accommodation permitted in zone B2. This is appropriate as the development of medium density dwellings in the town centre would prevent commercial use on those sites. The conversion of visitor accommodation to residential use may be considered in the Residential Land Strategy

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Limit building height to 3 or 4 storeys, and the bulk, scale and extent of new commercial development and consolidate into the existing town centre. Ensure that the centre is clearly defined with identity, improvements to the public realm and links to the foreshore	The existing maximum building heights would enable building to up to 4 or possibly 5 storeys where the height limit is 16 metres. The areas of the centre where this height is permitted are limited to two sections where topography is suitable and where there would be negligible impacts on vistas and scenic qualities. A principle is already included in the development control plan to encourage building design to promote coastal character and objectives to guide development to address the foreshore

Bermagui

Strengths of Bermagui

The natural advantages and strengths of Bermagui identified during consultation are listed below.

- The unique character which is due to its location by the sea and the juxtaposition of open space and main street shops, the beauty of the surrounding natural environment, its small geographic scale with iconic views over the ocean and mountains, and its low key feel in a climate similar to California
- The town has an environmental focus with low level development and low land costs, caring people and young people building businesses
- The location affords easy access to national parks and day trips for tourists. The fishing industry contributes to character and crucial to viability of centre. Fishing tourism relies on proximity to the continental shelf which in turn supports retailers and hospitality. The town is a destination for holiday makers
- The separate commercial areas of the main centre and north Bermagui are complementary and the Fishermans wharf development in between draws visitors
- All the values of a small city in a nice town with amazing people and social responsibility. The centralised commercial area and relatively flat terrain is easily navigable, accessible for pedestrians and bicycles and uncongested. The mix of commercial and recreational activity in close proximity is unique
- Bermagui's character is that it is not uniform. There are differences between shops and buildings, and there is a need to retain the relaxed atmosphere, everything within walking distance, no high rise and no particular style.
- There are a variety of businesses offering different experiences with a high number of good cafes and restaurants. Small businesses are surviving alongside major chain stores such as Woolworths and capitalising on their drawing power

Challenges to Bermagui

The challenges to commercial development in Bermagui that were identified during consultation are given below.

- Retaining Bermagui's unique village character and beauty while at the same time allowing growth. There are contrasting views regarding building heights and the existing low rise character. There is no consistent architectural design and there are some unattractive



buildings

- Traffic and car parking during peak tourist season and lack of physical connectedness. There are few transport options, poor parking and footpaths, a lack of shade and trucks in the main street. There are limited options for walking and cycling, lots of stairs, and no street crossings
- There is limited commercial space and a lack of space for pop-ups, markets, festivals and community events. The separate commercial centres and the wharf commercial development are seen as a challenge due to dispersal of shoppers and the lack of connectivity between all three areas
- The seasonality of tourism challenges the off-season viability of businesses and job opportunities. There is a shortage of good quality accommodation for visitors

The future of Bermagui

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 3.

Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Bermagui

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Enable more residential development in commercial areas and consider mixed use zones adjacent the commercial core with commercial at ground floor level and residential on upper floors. This will soften the edges of commercial development. Stronger support is sought for shop top housing in the commercial core to add vibrancy	Shop top housing is a permitted use in zone B2 Local centre. Council can encourage development of shop top housing and vibrancy of the centre through the character statement. At present 20% of business zoned land is either vacant or occupied by dwellings. Expanding the business zone through rezoning additional land to B4 Mixed Use would conflict with the principle to maintain a consolidated centre and undermine or delay the potential redevelopment of vacant business zoned land for commercial use
Bermagui should have the same height opportunities as other centres with the ability to develop buildings to three storeys within the 10 metre height limit without comprising coastal character	Three storey buildings can be designed within the 10 metre height limit and contribute to local character. Greater height limits apply in the larger centres of Bega and Merimbula and the 10 metre height limit applies to all other local centres with the exception of Eden
Timber cladding materials are an aspect of local character but should not be made compulsory in building design due to maintenance costs and the desire to maintain the inconsistency of design	The use of timber for cladding and other architectural elements should be encouraged through the character statement prepared for the LSPS. It is important to maintain the diversity of design in Bermagui as this is recognised as an important local feature
Need to promote the town's accommodation, natural assets and events throughout winter as alternatives to peak season as tourism underpins the local economy	Sapphire Coast Tourism is carrying out promotional activities to attract tourism including responding to recent trends in visitation and length of stay with a view to reducing the seasonality of the industry
Improve the public realm in terms of connectivity between open space and commercial areas, provision of places for people to socialise and traffic management/provision of car parking	It is recommended that Council attempt to facilitate community agreement regarding the landscape masterplan so that improvements can be made to the public realm

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Provide additional commercial land and link the commercial centre to Fishermans Wharf and North Bermagui be rezoning land along Lamont Street	The zoning of additional commercial land along Lamont Street to link with the Fishermans Wharf development and north Bermagui would detract from the current setting, provide excessive business zoned land and conflict with the need to retain the existing natural advantages and strengths of Bermagui identified during consultation forums

Tathra

Strengths of Tathra

The natural advantages and strengths of Tathra identified during consultation are listed below.

- Tathra has a strong community and sense of place within a natural environment with limited potential for residential growth. Being surrounded by national park and the ocean supports adventure tourism. The historic buildings such as the wharf and hotel as well as the Indigenous history contribute to local character
- Hospitality and retail business operators collaborate to manage and provide services to visitors whilst balancing commercial requirements
- Tathra benefits from amenities such as playgrounds, camping facilities and pathways to the river and around the headland

Challenges to Tathra

The challenges to commercial development in Tathra that were identified during consultation are given below.

- Business trading hours are restrictive especially during winter and are less than required by visitors. There is a need to engage and co-operate about opening hours
- The lack of connectivity between the two commercial areas near the beach and on the headland. There is no continuous safe access from top commercial area to the bottom commercial area and to the wharf
- Lack of signage, information and directions for visitors to accommodation and shops
- There is a lack of commercial land near the beach to respond to demand but there are vacant premises at the upper commercial area

The future of Tathra

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 4.



Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Tathra

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Provide clear signage and directions for visitors to commercial services	Council has commenced a project to address wayfinding including directional signage for all settlements in the Shire
The visitor market is trending towards short stays to address the current seasonality of tourism. Events and markets could be promoted to attract day and overnight visitors	Sapphire Coast Tourism is carrying out promotional activities to attract tourism including responding to recent trends in visitation and length of stay. Events and markets are currently permitted in zones B2 and B4 but are prohibited in zone B1. It is recommended that land zoned B1 in Tathra be rezoned to B2 to permit a wider range of commercial activities including markets
Provide more diversity in retail shops, such as clothing and footwear, handmade and local artworks	Council can only encourage retail diversity as the development of an individual business is subject to market demand and business feasibility. These types of speciality offerings can be promoted through the character statement prepared for the LSPS
Provide additional commercial land along Andy Poole Drive to connect the three areas of commercial development and to provide more business opportunities	It is not considered necessary to rezone additional land along Andy Poole Drive for commercial use at this point in time as further commercial development would detract from the current setting, provide excessive business zoned land taking into account the unoccupied land at Tathra headland, and would conflict with the need to retain the existing natural advantages and strengths of Tathra identified during consultation forums

Pambula

Strengths of Pambula

The natural advantages and strengths of Pambula identified during consultation are listed below.

- The natural environment, local history and well-preserved heritage buildings give Pambula a solid brand and identity. Close proximity to Pamboola wetlands conservation area, which provides insights into indigenous culture, birdlife and ecology, ensures that a prime tourist attraction is within walking distance of the town centre
- Business is characterised by independent and local ownership with no chain stores. The heritage, aesthetic of the town and independent businesses offer different goods to franchises and chain stores. Low vacancy rates indicate a healthy commercial centre
- Pambula is a community-focussed village and businesses are supportive and co-operate with each other. The presence of residents in the commercial area living in shop-top housing provides security

Challenges to Pambula

The challenges to commercial development in Pambula that were identified during consultation are given below.

- Recent growth has involved the demolition of heritage buildings, new development that obscures heritage buildings and large scale development that is not consistent with the established heritage identity
- Lack of parking and street crossings are problems with the wide main street. There are no connecting pathways and the town is not pedestrian or bicycle-friendly. Towns that focus on pedestrians are succeeding in attracting tourists
- Tourists are focussed on Pambula Beach in preference to Pambula town centre and the town competes with other centres that have large floorplate retail outlets

The future of Pambula

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 5.

Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Pambula

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Encourage new business and promote existing businesses to counter escape expenditure to large floorplate retail in other centres	There is ample vacant business zoned land available for future commercial development. Pambula is a 'destination' centre for tourists and Council promotes tourism to Bega Valley through Sapphire Coast Tourism
Carry out improvements to the public realm to make the town pedestrian and bicycle friendly with connecting pathways and improved car parking facilities	Attention needs to be given to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Council can consider improvements to these matters and can lobby the state government and RMS to provide crossings along Quondolo Street

Eden

Strengths of Eden

The natural advantages and strengths of Eden identified during consultation are listed below.

- The natural beauty of Twofold Bay and surrounding forests provide an important backdrop to the township and provide opportunities for adventure tourism and eco-tourism. The location of Eden relative to the capital cities of Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne means that it the town accessible and attractive to visitors
- Eden has a strong local character due to heritage buildings and historic maritime connections that need to be preserved
- The Port of Eden and additional cruise ship visits bring opportunities for new businesses to establish particularly in the hospitality sector

Challenges to Eden

The challenges to commercial development in Eden that were identified during consultation are given below.

- slow residential growth impacts on businesses as commerce follows residential development. The environmental zone over Crown land to the west of



the town restricts expansion and opportunities for growth. There are large areas of residential land suitable for the expansion of Boydtown which have not been approved

- The town is a product of the 1960s with low quality accommodation and infrastructure is not capable of sustaining modern tourism. Tourism underpins business but occupancy rates are low. More hospitality businesses such as cafes and restaurants, facilities to attract tourists and high quality accommodation options are required
- The existing streetscape requires attention. There are vacant shops, poorly maintained roads, and no consistent colour schemes. The design of the public realm including the variable building height limit of 13 metres, 14 metres and 16 metres across the town centre should be addressed
- The leakage of expenditure to other centres that have large floorplate development such as supermarkets and hardware stores

The future of Eden

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 6.

Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Eden

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Impose a consistent building height for all commercial sites and prevent high rise and higher density development. Buildings with large bulk and scale that encroach onto the streetscape do not complement local character and affect vistas	There are currently two maximum building heights that apply to business zoned land in Eden. There is the potential that development to 16 metres on a single site may saturate the market with commercial development and delay or restrict development of other commercial sites. It is recommended that the maximum building height be consistent at 13 metres across business zoned land at Eden centre
Activate the main street to attract motorists off the Princes Highway to visit the town with a focus on domestic tourism	This can be achieved by improvements to the public realm such as streetscaping, landscaping and signage. Further implementation of the CBD landscape masterplan will address these matters
Prevent out-of-centre development and keep the town centre compact	Large floor plate developments are not permitted in the residential, environmental or open space zones. Any new commercial development should be confined to the existing business zones. Council should not proceed with any proposed spot rezonings to facilitate out-of-centre commercial development. It is recommended the extent of zone B2 be expanded to apply to existing commercial development on the north-eastern corner of Imlay Street and Chandos Street

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Improve the presentation of the main street, maintain the maritime and heritage theme, and improve infrastructure such as upgrading the size and capacity of the airport to service tourists, providing parking for caravans, new signage, improved amenities including at the wharf precinct	Improvements to the presentation of the main street and infrastructure services can be achieved by streetscaping, landscaping, signage and the like. Further implementation of the CBD landscape masterplan will address these matters. Upgrades are underway to Merimbula airport
Consider the future use of the former cannery site and its role relative to the commercial centre	The former cannery site comprises private and Crown land. A tourism development including a marina has been approved but consent has lapsed. The site is some distance from the main street and existing business zoned land and should continue to be treated separately

The Villages

Strengths of the villages

The natural advantages and strengths of the villages identified during consultation are listed below.

- The natural advantages of the villages of Bega Valley relate to their individual history and heritage, Victorian cottage architecture and strong cohesive communities. Each is also set within scenic countryside characterised by a steep mountain hinterland, cleared farmland and thick forested ranges. These rural landscapes add value to each settlement. Cobargo and Bemboka benefit from their highway location due to the trade generated by passing motorists.

Challenges to the villages

The challenges to commercial development in the villages that were identified during consultation are given below.

- Parking, especially for buses, larger vehicles and the elderly is a problem in Cobargo. Business owners tend to park in front of business premises and occupy space that could be used by visitors. More parking would assist trade that is opportunistic as most businesses depend on the highway for trade. At the same time, increased traffic has made the town less attractive
- Topography and the slope of the main street of Cobargo prevent people stopping whilst passing through
- The opening of Woolworths in Bermagui has changed shopping habits and caused convenience shops for residents to close. Locals do not shop in Cobargo

The future of Cobargo and Bemboka

Having regard to the strengths and challenges, ways to stimulate growth were identified during consultation. These matters and how Council can implement these are noted in Table 7.



Incentives, principles and approaches to stimulate growth in Cobargo and Bemboka

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Participants in consultation from Cobargo suggested that heritage character be respected and preserved but not as a barrier to new development	Preserving heritage character can be achieved by listing a place of heritage value or a heritage conservation area in the LEP, or through controls in a DCP. Both of these methods are already in use and, in addition, it is recommended that a character statement be included in the LSPS that recognises the importance of heritage conservation to the viability and character of small villages
Similarly, participants in consultation from Bemboka advised that the heritage values of that village be retained and landmark buildings be protected	

General

Matters raised	How Council can address the matter
Revise car parking requirements for commercial land uses and prepare a car parking strategy	It is recommended that flexible car parking requirements be introduced to facilitate changes of use and new developments that are identified as suited to commercial centres. This equates to the outcomes of a car parking strategy by providing revised development controls for commercial uses
Insert sub-zones into the development control plan to identify the types of land uses suitable for each centre and permit only targeted business uses	Bega Valley DCP 2013 contains precincts for the centres of Bega, Merimbula and Pambula. It is not possible to introduce new land use zones into the LEP to restrict the types of permissible land uses for specific commercial centres
Increase agility in the planning system at all levels of government	Council's economic development section and the Development Hub have been working closely to streamline the development assessment and approvals process. Council is also working with Service NSW through the 'easy to do business' program to assist businesses to establish and operate
Council needs to ensure that all strategies and policies align with the Climate Resilience Strategy	Council is revising several land use strategies and policies in light of the Climate Resilience Strategy and the requirement to prepare a Local Strategic Planning Statement. Mapping provided overlays land zones with coastal inundation mapping to identify commercial areas at risk. Future development will need to comply with the directions of the Climate Resiliency Strategy





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