

ECHUCA

Commercial Strategy

Strategy and
Implementation Plan

FINAL REPORT

PREPARED BY
Campaspe Shire Council
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INTRODUCTION

Overview and objectives

The *Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017* ('the Strategy') provides a detailed assessment of the demand and supply for retail and commercial development in Echuca and presents recommendations to guide the future development of Echuca's commercial areas. The Strategy has been prepared by Campaspe Shire Council.

Echuca is the regional centre serving the Shire of Campaspe and beyond and, as such, offers a wide range of retailing, entertainment, business, community and civic facilities and services.

The Shire of Campaspe had a resident population of 37,040 in 2015. The Shire's population is expected to increase by more than 5,400 residents over the next 20 years. The majority of this growth is expected to occur in Echuca with growth concentrated on the western fringes of the town. This population growth, along with the many visitors to Echuca and the region, will generate demand for a variety of retail, commercial and community services that are provided in Echuca's commercial areas.

In the future, residents and visitors will continue to expect that Echuca will provide a high level of facilities and services, commensurate with its role as a regional centre. At present, however, only limited opportunities exist to accommodate larger forms of commercial development in the Echuca CBD. Therefore, a key challenge for Echuca is how to support the existing retail and commercial sectors in the town while continuing to attract new investment and support job growth.

Council will apply the Strategy as the strategic planning basis for promoting the long-term sustainability of current and future commercial development in Echuca. The Strategy is required to support the primacy of the Echuca CBD and encourage its growth and evolution into the future. The Strategy will consolidate and revitalise existing commercial areas, as well as provide a future vision for the development of well-located and high quality activity centres and commercial areas. Importantly, the Strategy will assist Council with their decision-making process when considering proposals for new commercial developments in Echuca.

The *Echuca Commercial Strategy Background Report (August 2016)* provides the research, analysis and discussion upon which the Echuca Commercial Strategy is based. The Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Background Report.

Report purpose

In summary, the purpose of the *Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017* is to:

- Provide a clear understanding of the role and function of each current and proposed activity centre.
- Identify future retail and commercial floorspace and land requirements.
- Provide direction to areas that need to be improved.
- Provide general observations about the adequacy of existing car parking requirements and policy.
- Identify opportunities for commercial areas to accommodate new business, investment and employment opportunities;
- Prepare a strong basis for Council land use and development policies.

Report content

This Strategy and Implementation Plan includes the following content:

- A summary of the main research findings from the analysis undertaken through the course of the study (and with detail provided in the Background Report).
- A vision statement which provides overall guidance for the future development of commercial centres in Echuca.
- A description of the Echuca Commercial Centre Hierarchy, including the preferred roles and opportunities for each centre.
- A set of objectives designed to support the vision.
- A set of strategies to give effect to each of the objectives.
- Detailed actions to achieve the strategies, with these actions supported by associated implementation plans which identify roles, responsibilities and timing.
- Six 'framework plans' that provide a summary of the key strategic directions (objectives and strategies) for the centres in visual and written form.
- Urban design recommendations for a number of precincts.
- A monitoring and review process.

ECHUCA'S EXISTING COMMERCIAL CENTRES

The commercial centres of the twin towns of Echuca-Moama provide residents and visitors with a wide range of retail, business, community, entertainment, civic and recreational facilities and services. The centres are shown in Figure 1 on the following page.

The Echuca CBD is the main centre providing both regional and local amenities to residents and visitors to Echuca and the surrounding region. The Echuca CBD contains approximately 68,200m² of retail and commercial floorspace and successfully performs its role as a regional centre. The success of the Echuca CBD is illustrated by a relatively low vacancy rate and the presence of many national brand retailers.

The CBD can be divided into three distinct areas:

- **Port of Echuca** is located along the Murray River and is the key tourist area in Echuca. Heritage buildings with locally-owned retail, tourist attractions and cafes attract large volumes of tourists each year, especially during school holidays.
- **Hare Street** is Echuca's 'Main Street' with a large number of national retail chains, community amenity, offices and takeaway food / cafes located along the strip.
- **High Street** is a major transport route with larger blocks and less pedestrian traffic than the Port of Echuca or Hare Street. A number of motels have located along the street which is reflective of its role as a major transport route.

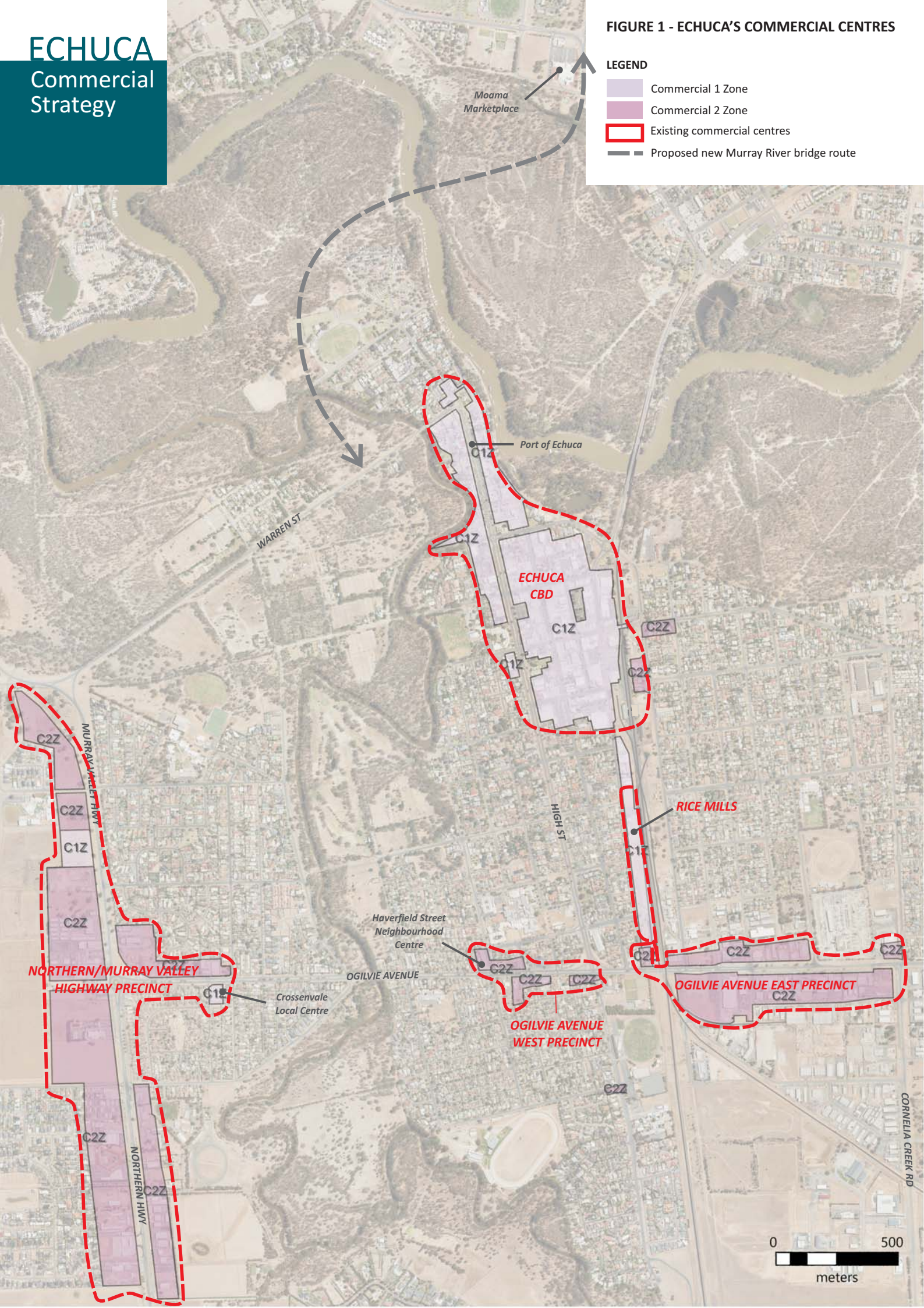
In addition to the Echuca CBD, the following commercial centres also perform important roles in the commercial centre hierarchy of the area:

- Moama town centre combines a significant neighbourhood shopping function with extensive visitor services in the form of dining and accommodation options
- Ogilvie Avenue West: includes the shops at Haverfield Street and nearby uses on Ogilvie Avenue, which comprise a small neighbourhood centre, anchored by an IGA supermarket and several fast food outlets. The centre is close to the recently expanded hospital and contains expanding health services.
- Ogilvie Avenue East, which provides large format homemaker retailing and restricted retailing. The planned development of a Homemaker Centre will reinforce the importance of this centre as a regional-level homemaker destination.
- Northern / Murray Valley Highway, providing opportunities for restricted retailing and other businesses requiring large expanses of floorspace and exposure to passing traffic. Approximately 15ha of vacant Commercial 2 Zone land is located in the Northern / Murray Valley Highway precinct. The precinct includes the Crossenvale Local Shopping Centre in Ogilvie Avenue.

FIGURE 1 - ECHUCA'S COMMERCIAL CENTRES

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Existing commercial centres
- Proposed new Murray River bridge route



0 500
meters

KEY FINDINGS OF BACKGROUND REPORT

The key findings of the background report are summarised below, for reference purposes and to provide the context for the Strategy.

Retail trends in regional centres

Regional centres are continually faced with a variety of broad issues and opportunities relating to industry-wide trends in retailing and development. A number of these trends that are particularly relevant to Echuca are discussed below.

- The tendency for smaller operators to lose market share to the retail ‘giants’ which include supermarket chains, department stores, category killers and big-box retailers which prefer an enclosed shopping centre or free-standing site with on-site car parking and good exposure to passing trade.
- The shopping public are continually redefining their demand for goods and services in terms of types of retail and their allocation of expenditures on particular retail items, and adapting to new ways in which retailing is conducted in the marketplace.
- The increasing use of the Internet as a purchasing medium, which is particularly affecting sectors including music, books and wine.
- Regional centres are increasingly becoming a focus for investment and are attracting the interest of larger national brand retailers, and this coincides with the expectation of many regional Victorian (and Australian) residents for an expanded level of retail choice.
- As regional centres expand, varying forms of retail development are becoming evident and include the following:
 - Development of sub-regional shopping centres beyond the CBD and which accommodate a range of retailers, including Discount Department Stores (DDS).
 - Development of neighbourhood shopping centres to serve the convenience needs of expanding populations on the fringes of regional cities.
 - Development of homemaker centres or precincts in locations beyond the CBD where the retailer has the benefit of good exposure to traffic travelling on major highways.

Although strong proposals for stand-alone sub-regional shopping centres have yet to eventuate in Echuca, a neighbourhood centre has been approved on a site in Echuca West and a homemaker centre has been approved on Ogilvie Avenue.

While no proposal currently exists for a sub-regional centre, such as the Marketplace in Shepparton or the Mildura Central in Mildura, the Strategy will need to consider the implications of such development in Echuca should pressure emerge for such development over the next 20 or so years. It will be important that Council is provided with a development framework that will assist Council in responding to any future proposals.

Emerging local issues

Key issues affecting land use planning of Echuca's commercial centres include the following:

- Implications of the planned second bridge between Echuca and Moama.
- Recent approval for a neighbourhood centre to serve the Echuca West growth area, which is as yet unconstructed.
- Limited vacant and appropriately zoned land to accommodate large developments in the Echuca CBD, but existence of several under-utilised sites.
- Large amount of vacant land with potential for commercial development in Moama and uncertainty about the policy direction for this land.
- Perceptions of a lack of car parking in the Echuca CBD and the implications for business performance.
- The need to improve the appearance and function of key highway entrances that provide access and exposure to commercial land, including the Northern Highway, Ogilvie Avenue and Murray Valley Highway and uncertainties about how the improvements will be funded.
- The need to improve drainage infrastructure on the key highway entrances and in the Echuca CBD to unlock the full development potential of commercial land;
- Lack of reticulated water pressure to comply with the fire fighting requirements of the Building Regulations for new commercial buildings, which means that developers must provide tanks and pumps on site; the additional costs can affect project viability.

Retail development opportunities

In a regional context, Echuca-Moama competes to a high degree with the regional centres of Shepparton, Bendigo, Swan Hill and Deniliquin for investment and the retail spending of trade area residents. While Echuca's commercial centres (as a collective) are considered to be performing well, continued improvement in the level of retail service and offer is required in order to maintain and improve the performance of Echuca commercial centres.

The retail sector in Echuca-Moama contains a total of 69,000 square metres of floorspace and achieves an estimated turnover in 2016 of \$388 million at an average of \$5,600 per square metre. This average turnover level reflects a well-performing retail sector in a regional Victorian context.

In 2016, Echuca's commercial centres achieve an estimated market share of 56% of the \$571m in retail spending by the estimated 44,320 residents in the Main Trade Area (MTA). In 2036, the MTA population is forecast to be approximately 50,040 residents and their retail spending will continue to increase in real terms.

Allowing for population and income growth over the next 20 years, potential demand is expected to support an additional 24,000m² of retail floorspace, comprising the following:

- Non-food floorspace: 12,600 square metres
- Food, groceries and liquor (FGL) floorspace: 6,500 square metres

- Food catering floorspace: 3,000 square metres
- Retail services: 1,500 square metres

Retail development proposals such as the Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre and the Ogilvie Avenue Homemaker Centre, and currently existing vacant space will provide around 8,000 to 10,000 square metres of this additional retail space. The remaining unmet demand for floorspace will include an additional full-line supermarket, potentially another discount department store and a wide variety of specialty stores. This space will need to be found in the existing and planned activity centres of Echuca-Moama.

Office and non-retail development

In addition to retail development, opportunities for non-retail development are also likely to arise, taking into consideration the following factors:

- Echuca's office market is likely to focus on the provision of office accommodation for small to mid-sized businesses that provide important services to residents in the surrounding region.
- It would be prudent to plan for an additional 6,000m² of office floorspace over the next 15 years, the majority of which is likely to be located in the Echuca CBD.
- Other forms of development should also be encouraged in the Echuca CBD that contribute to the role of the CBD as a regional centre that provides a wide range of facilities and services, including visitor accommodation and community, entertainment and cultural facilities.
- Ogilvie Avenue and the Northern / Murray Valley Highway should continue to be the main locations for 'restricted retail', including businesses involved in the sale of motor vehicles, caravans, agricultural machinery and trade supplies.

Future options for the form of the Echuca CBD

Limited vacant land currently exists in the Echuca CBD to accommodate the development of additional retail and commercial floorspace, particularly the development of uses that may require large floor areas, such as a discount department store or regional office development. However, there are at least 10 redevelopment sites with existing buildings or infrastructure that could have capacity for some form of development, including three sites that are considered to have 'high' potential for different forms of commercial development in the short-term.

While demand may not currently exist for additional large-scale retail or office development in the Echuca CBD, planning policy should recognise that demand for such uses is likely to eventuate in the future. The Echuca CBD will therefore need to be well-positioned to accommodate these uses in order to:

- Encourage the attraction of new businesses, investment and employment.
- Consolidate Echuca's role as a regional centre.
- Improve Echuca's competitive position with respect to other regional centres and Moama.

- Reduce development pressure for such uses in less desirable locations beyond the CBD.

There are four broad options for accommodating new commercial uses in the Echuca CBD:

- Option 1: Consolidation of the existing commercial area to encourage the redevelopment of existing sites.
- Option 2: CBD expansion to the eastern side of the railway line, with a focus on sites owned by VicTrack and Graincorp.
- Option 3: CBD expansion to the south which would involve the re-development of approximately 3.4 hectares of land that is currently zoned for residential purposes.
- Option 4: CBD Expansion – Rice Mills, which would involve formally identifying this site as part of the Echuca CBD and encouraging a range of uses.

Future supermarket needs

Demand for new food, groceries and liquor (FGL) floorspace over the period to 2036 is estimated to be 6,500 square metres across Echuca-Moama. Of this, 1,800 square metres of supermarket floorspace and 500 square metres of specialty retail floorspace has been approved at the proposed new Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre on the Murray Valley Highway.

It is likely that approximately 200 square metres of the additional 500 square metres of retail space approved at Echuca West will also be specialty FGL stores. Therefore, a further 4,500 square metres of FGL floorspace will need to be accommodated to 2036. This is sufficient for a full-line supermarket (3,200+ square metres) and specialty stores.

The main principal in siting FGL facilities is to provide them in activity centres in a location that is central to their catchment. In this case there appear to be three main options:

- A new supermarket in Echuca CBD and specialty stores spread amongst the CBD and the other activity centres.
- A new supermarket in Moama town centre, with specialty stores in all the centres.
- An additional or larger new supermarket at Echuca West (1,800m² supermarket approved to date) with specialty stores in all the centres.

Neighbourhood centre in Echuca West

More than 5,650 residents currently live in Echuca West, with forecast growth of approximately 2,000 additional residents (+34%) expected in the Echuca West over the next 20 years.

Council has approved the development of a neighbourhood centre at 31 Murray Valley Highway, Echuca West. This will provide 2,300 square metres of retail floorspace including a supermarket of 1,800 square metres. This centre will provide for the grocery and daily shopping needs of the growing population in this part of Echuca, reducing their need to travel. Council may need to consider rezoning the site on the Murray Valley Highway that is currently earmarked in the Planning Scheme as the future site of the Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre to prevent the development of a larger centre in this area.

Planning and policy context

Key findings of an analysis of the current planning and policies in the Campaspe Planning Scheme for the project are:

- The current land use planning framework has assisted in creating and maintaining a healthy CBD.
- Appropriate planning provisions will need to be applied to protect and reinforce the commercial hierarchy as the CBD evolves and responds to population growth, market demand and commercial trends.
- Recent changes to the commercial zones have resulted in more flexible arrangements for most retail, office and other uses and a reduced ability for Council to manage these uses through the planning system.
- The Campaspe Planning Scheme contains a high degree of guidance for the design and layout of new development along most of its highway entrances, however, no guidance exists for some areas fronting High Street and Ogilvie Avenue.
- Car parking provisions have been incorporated into the Campaspe Planning Scheme to allow for cash-in-lieu contributions for car spaces that cannot be provided on site in new developments, however these provisions need to be reviewed.

Design principles

Successful centres that are valued by their local communities, no matter the role or size of the centre, are usually characterised by a design that provides the following:

- Interesting built form and style.
- Safe and secure public spaces.
- Public spaces where people can meet and congregate that provide for “green” space and landscaping.
- High levels of accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Good way-finding and directional signage.
- Positive interface with adjoining neighbourhoods.

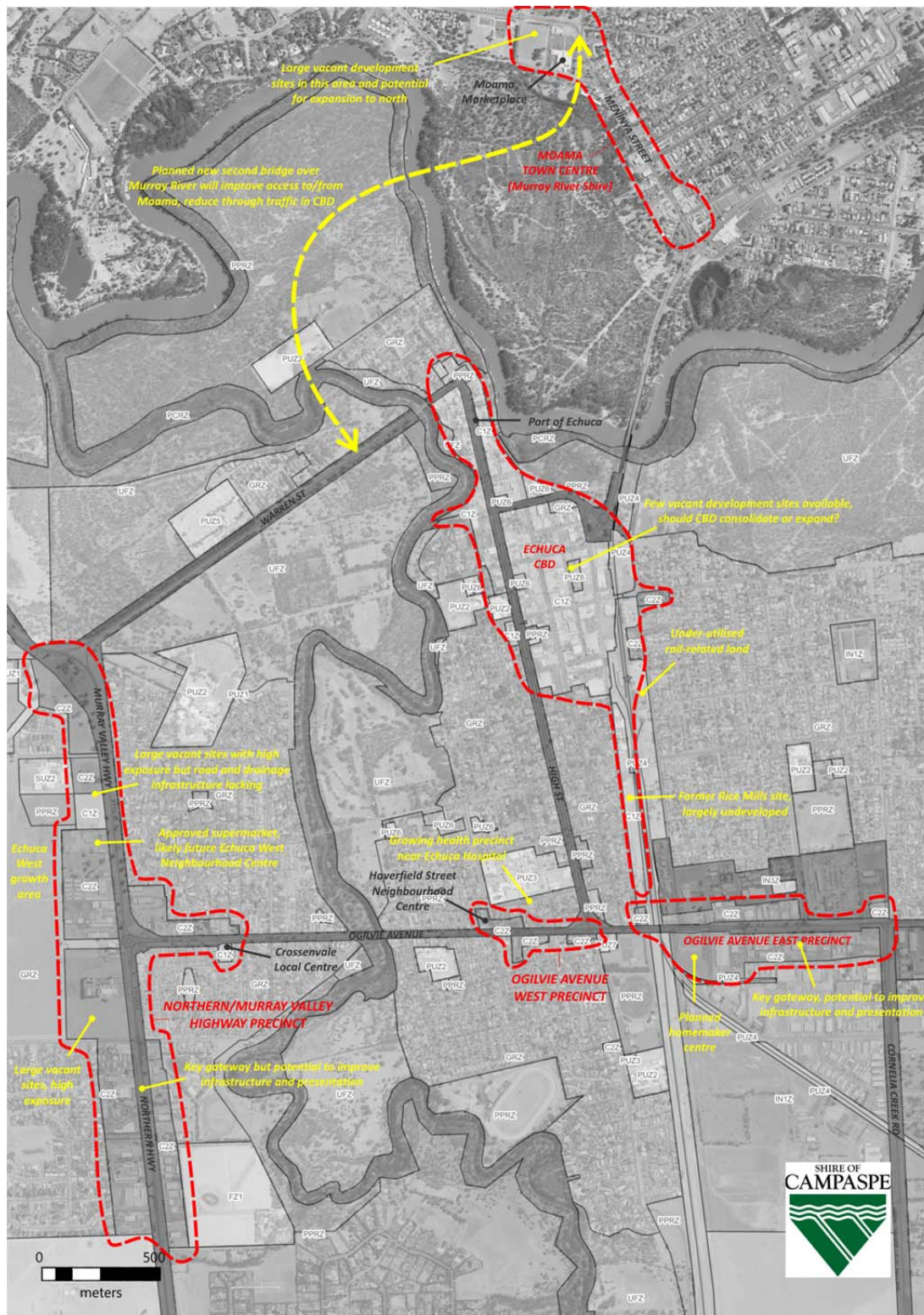
The above features encourage people to spend more time in their centres, which in turn, has positive implications for local businesses and the ability to continue to attract investment. The Echuca Commercial Land Strategy needs to consider how these design features can be incorporated into new development.

Development principles

Having regard to the research and analysis presented in the Background Report, the following broad principles to guide the future development of Echuca’s commercial centres are suggested, for consideration:

- 1 To ensure residents and visitors to Echuca are provided with a range of retail and commercial facilities and services appropriate to that of a regional centre.
- 2 To ensure Echuca’s commercial centres are the focal point for the community and are places people enjoy visiting.
- 3 To ensure local residents have a high degree of accessibility to local convenience retailing and services.
- 4 To continually improve Echuca’s competitive position with respect to other regional centres, including the reduction in spending that escapes to other centres.
- 5 To maintain the primacy of the Echuca CBD as the regional centre serving the Shire of Campaspe.
- 6 To provide opportunities for the attraction of new businesses to Echuca’s commercial centres.

Figure 2: Summary of issues and opportunities for Echuca's commercial centres



Prepared by Centrum Town Planning and aerial photographs provided by Campaspe Shire

ECHUCA'S COMMERCIAL CENTRES HIERARCHY

This Strategy establishes a commercial centre hierarchy for Echuca, as shown in Table 1, below:

Table 1 Echuca's Commercial Centres Hierarchy

Centre	Centre Type	Centre Role	Preferred Uses
Echuca CBD	Regional Centre	Regional centre providing a wide range of retail, business, community, health, civic and entertainment uses to residents and visitors to Echuca and the surrounding region.	Discount Department Store(s), supermarkets, specialty retailing, regional and local offices, visitor accommodation, entertainment (restaurant, café, pubs, cinemas), community facilities, tourism facilities.
Northern and Murray Valley Highways	Restricted Retailing Precinct	Provision of restricted retailing and limited bulky goods retailing.	Trade supplies, agricultural machinery, car yards, caravan and boat sales, camping/outdoor retailing.
Ogilvie Avenue (East)	Homemaker and Restricted Retailing Precinct	Provision of large format homemaker and restricted retailing.	Echuca Homemaker Centre (hardware, furniture, white-goods, camping/outdoors, retailing), trade supplies, agricultural machinery.
Future Echuca West	Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood centre providing convenience retailing to Echuca West residents.	One supermarket (up to full-line size) and speciality retail, with a total retail floorspace that could eventually reach 5,000 square metres (noting the current approval for 2,300 square metres)
Ogilvie Avenue (West) & Haverfield Neighbourhood Centre	Small Neighbourhood Centre	Small neighbourhood centre providing day-to-day convenience retailing and services. Highway based food outlets	Limited range supermarket, speciality retail and services tenancies. Encourage hospitality, medical and other uses that complement the expanding health precinct nearby.
Rice Mills	Peripheral commercial centre near CBD	Strategic development site linking CBD with Ogilvie Avenue (East), with potential for a range of uses most likely with a small-scale commercial emphasis.	Peripheral retail, commercial and higher density residential development that complements the Echuca CBD
Crossenvale	Local Centre	Local centre providing day-to-day convenience retailing, services and employment opportunities.	Speciality retailing and service tenancies.

VISION & OBJECTIVES

Vision

A Vision Statement has been prepared in order to guide the ongoing development of commercial centres in Echuca and to provide the basis for the subsequent detailed objectives which are presented in the Action and Implementation Plans. The Vision for future development in commercial centres in Echuca is as follows:

Echuca CBD will be a leading example of a regional centre, renowned for its 'experience' offered to residents and visitors, its high level of amenity and sense of place, product offering and customer service. The CBD will continue to evolve and will make a lasting impression in the minds of people who visit the centre.

The Echuca CBD will be supported by a complementary hierarchy of commercial centres that provide a range of local convenience retailing and services, and that accommodate retail and commercial uses requiring large expanses of land.

Echuca's commercial centres will assist in stimulating local business development and entrepreneurship, will generate local employment, and will contribute to the sustainability of the local community.

Objectives

The vision for commercial centres in Echuca is supported by the following objectives which form the basis for more detailed strategies and actions as set out in the 'Strategic Directions and Implementation Plan' in the following section of this Strategy:

- To reinforce Echuca's commercial centres hierarchy and maintain the primacy of the Echuca CBD as the regional centre serving the Shire of Campaspe and beyond.
- To ensure local residents have a high degree of accessibility to local convenience retailing and services.
- To ensure residents and visitors to Echuca are provided with a range of retail and commercial facilities and services that are appropriate to a regional centre.
- To ensure that commercial centres in Echuca are well-designed places where people enjoy shopping, doing business, and participating in community activities.
- To encourage the attraction of new businesses to Echuca's commercial centres that will provide investment and employment opportunities.
- To assist local businesses with existing and future challenges faced by their respective industries.
- To ensure that new development in all key commercial centres in the Shire is high quality and is appropriate to the needs of each centre.
- To implement the Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017 by incorporating the Strategy into the Campaspe Planning Scheme and including the Strategy as a Reference Document.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This Chapter identifies a set of objectives, strategies and actions designed to implement the Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017. For each underlying objective, a set of detailed actions and an implementation plan identifying key roles and responsibilities are provided.

The following conventions have been adopted in identifying the suggested timing for implementation:

- Short-term: Within 12 months
- Medium-term: From 1 year to 3 years
- Longer-term: From 3 years to 5 years or beyond
- Ongoing: An existing action that continues into the future.

Objective 1: *To reinforce Echuca's commercial centres hierarchy and maintain the primacy of the Echuca CBD as the regional centre serving the Shire of Campaspe and beyond*

Rationale: Echuca's CBD is a strongly-performing regional centre that provides a wide variety of facilities and services to residents and visitors in the region. In addition, the Echuca CBD performs important roles in attracting investment and as a place for the community to congregate, as well as providing a 'centre piece' or focal point for residents and visitors to the Shire of Campaspe.

However, the Echuca CBD is situated in a competitive environment with Bendigo, Shepparton, Swan Hill and other centres competing for investment and the spending of residents and visitors in the region. Therefore, it is vital that the Echuca CBD continues to successfully perform its role as the regional centre for the surrounding area.

Strategy 1.1 **Recognise and reinforce Echuca's commercial centres hierarchy**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning & Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to include the Vision Statement for Echuca's Commercial Centres the Guiding Principles of this Strategy.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) and Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to include a description of and intentions for the preferred hierarchy of Echuca's commercial centres (as per Table 1 of this Strategy).
- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to include anticipated demand for additional retail and non-retail floorspace over the next 15 years.

Strategy 1.2 Facilitate the redevelopment of key sites in the Echuca CBD to cater for large scale retail/commercial developments

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning and Economic Development, Infrastructure)

Partnerships: Property owners, Coliban Water

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Continue to liaise with property owners to understand their intentions and opportunities for their sites.
- Maintain the register of key development and redevelopment sites in the Echuca CBD prepared as part of the Background Report.
- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to identify key redevelopment sites in the Echuca Town Structure Plans.
- Actively explore opportunities to re-develop Council car parks in the CBD to stimulate the redevelopment of adjoining private land.
- Actively investigate methods to centralise stormwater detention in the Echuca CBD to facilitate the development of individual sites, including appropriate funding mechanisms.
- Engage further with Coliban Water and the State Government to assess issues and develop solutions relating to water pressure and fire fighting for new commercial development.

Strategy 1.3 Expand CBD to the east of railway, but only to accommodate large new use or developments that cannot locate on existing key development sites

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: VicTrack, Graincorp

Timeframe: Long term or subject to demand from large user

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to identify future expansion areas in the Echuca Town Structure Plans.
- Engage with Graincorp to commence a planning scheme amendment to rezone the Graincorp site at 137-141 Sturt Street, Echuca, to the Commercial 1 Zone.
- Consider the purchase of the Graincorp site by Council to facilitate an appropriate long-term development outcome for the site, with potential car parking as a short-term or interim use.
- Apply a Design and Development Overlay to manage built form outcomes in future expansion areas and CZ1 land in Sturt Street during an appropriate planning scheme amendment.

Strategy 1.4 **Locate large-scale retail attractors including supermarkets and discount department stores in the Echuca CBD (with the exception of a new supermarket in Echuca West – refer Action 2.1)**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: NA Murray River Council

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.04 Commercial to include a description of and intentions for the preferred hierarchy of Echuca's commercial centres (as per Table 1 of this Strategy).
- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Area Plans) to identify the Echuca CBD area as per Figure 3.
- Discourage the development of new sub-regional activity centres in Echuca.
- Discourage proposals to rezone land on the fringes of the Echuca CBD to Commercial 1 or Commercial 2.
- As part of the rezoning described in Strategy 2.1, introduce an Incorporated Document in the Schedule to Clause 81.01 of the Planning Scheme to ensure that a planning scheme amendment is required to construct more than 5,000 square metres of retail floorspace on all land zoned Commercial 1 and Commercial 2 on the Northern Highway and Murray Valley Highway in Echuca.
- Include policy guidelines in the MSS or a local planning policy to give effect to the strategies and actions above.
- Engage with Murray River Shire to discourage unplanned major commercial developments in Moama that would affect the Echuca commercial hierarchy and the primacy of the Echuca CBD.

Strategy 1.5 **Continue to support the Port of Echuca as a key tourism asset, as it is a key strength and competitive advantage of Echuca's CBD**

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners, developers, businesses, Echuca Moama Tourism Association, Murray Region Tourism Board

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) and Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to reflect this position.

Strategy 1.6 Facilitate the further development and range of uses in the Echuca CBD, including community, social, education, tourism and entertainment facilities and upper floor dwellings

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning and Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners, developers, community service providers

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to reflect this position.

Strategy 1.7 Consider redevelopment or re-configuration of Council car parks to facilitate commercial development subject to no net loss of parking

Responsible Authority: Council

Partnerships: Property owners, developers, businesses

Timeframe: Ongoing (as opportunities emerge)

Actions:

- Lease or facilitate the re-development of car parks, as appropriate.
- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) and Clause 21.08 (Transport) to reflect this position.

Strategy 1.8 Discourage developments whose form and layout would encourage shop uses to establish in the Commercial 2 Zone

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: N/A

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) to reflect this position.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) with policy guidelines or develop local policy statements to discourage the development of new commercial tenancies that would encourage the unplanned development of shop uses in the Commercial 2 Zone.

Objective 2: *To ensure local residents have a high degree of accessibility to local convenience retailing and services*

Rationale: Providing easily accessible day-to-day and weekly convenience and grocery retailing is an important role of the commercial centre hierarchy. Providing accessible daily requirements reduces travel costs for residents and the broader community improving the sustainability of the urban area. Furthermore, providing a network of centres reduces the reliance on one centre for day-to-day shopping, minimising over-crowding and improving the resilience of the community as a whole.

Strategy 2.1 **Manage the future development of the Echuca West neighbourhood centre and surrounds**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Short/medium-term

Actions:

- Reinforce the role of Echuca West by updating Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to include a description of and intentions for the preferred hierarchy of Echuca's commercial centres (as per Table 1 of this Strategy).
- Subject to commencement of construction on the approved Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre at 35-41 Murray Valley Highway, rezone this site to the Commercial 1 Zone and cap the total 'shop' floorspace to 5,000 square metres for the site in the Schedule to the Commercial 1 Zone.
- Continue to liaise with Coliban Water regarding the upcoming sale of the land, and with the future owners of the site.
- Liaise with land owners of Commercial 2 zoned land in Echuca West and encourage a form of development that reflects the recommendations in this Strategy.
- Ensure that the Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre is well-connected with adjoining education, open space and residential development through the provision of walking and cycling paths, footpaths, constructed roads and access points.

Strategy 2.2 **Rezone the Haverfield Neighbourhood Centre to the Commercial 1 Zone to better reflect the role of the centre**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Short/medium-term

Actions:

- Rezone land on the west side of Haverfield Street currently zoned Commercial 2 Zone to Commercial 1 Zone.

Strategy 2.3 Support the viability of Haverfield Neighbourhood Centre by appropriate street furniture, signage, plantings and other physical works

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Medium-term

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.06 (Built Environment and Heritage) to encourage and reinforce the intention for good design outcomes for the public and private land in the commercial centres, with consideration to be given to built form and style, safety and security of public spaces, “green” space and landscaping, pedestrian, cycling and vehicular accessibility and connectivity, good way-finding and directional signage, interface with adjoining neighbourhoods, and maintenance of important short and longer views and vistas.

Strategy 2.4 Encourage and assist property owners at the Haverfield Neighbourhood Centre and Crossenvale Local Centre to invest in the appearance and amenity of their buildings

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.06 (Built Environment and Heritage) to encourage and reinforce the intention for good design outcomes for the public and private land in the commercial centres (as referenced in Action 2.3).

Objective 3: *To ensure residents and visitors to Echuca are provided with a range of retail and commercial facilities and services that are appropriate to a regional centre*

Rationale: A fundamental role of Echuca’s commercial centres is to ensure that residents and visitors are provided with convenient access to a wide range of retail and commercial facilities. This reduces the need for residents and visitors to travel to centres further afield, and encourages the retention of spending and investment within the Shire of Campaspe.

Ensuring an adequate supply of commercial land for large-scale retail and commercial development is fundamental to achieving this Objective. Strategies 1.2 and 1.4, outlined previously under Objective 1, are aimed at ensuring a future commercial land supply exists in the Echuca CBD.

Strategy 3.1 **Encourage the development of the ‘key development sites’ shown in Figures 3-8, for uses that are highly compatible with the role of each precinct**

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.

Strategy 3.2 **Encourage the development of the ‘Rice Mills’ site for a mix of peripheral retail, commercial and higher density residential development that complements the Echuca CBD**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property owner

Timeframe: Medium-term

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.

Strategy 3.3 Consider the development of new activity centres to serve local communities where there has been higher than expected population growth or where the network needs to be adjusted in order to better meet resident needs

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property owner

Timeframe: Short-term

Actions:

- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.
- Include the 'assessment guidelines for non-conforming proposals' as provided in this report as policy guidelines in Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) of the MSS.

Strategy 3.4 Assist, where possible, with the attraction of businesses to the Echuca Homemaker Centre on Ogilvie Avenue and other commercial development opportunities where planning permits have been issued

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners, businesses and real estate agents

Timeframe: Short to medium term

Actions:

- Provide business attraction package (refer Action 5.1) to any potential businesses that may be attracted to Echuca Homemaker Centre.
- Liaise with real estate agents to gain an understanding of how Council may be able to assist; this may involve providing information contained in the Background Report for marketing material.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) to reinforce the need for the CBD to be connected and permeable, especially recognising the findings of the Echuca Station Precinct Masterplan and potential for using the railway land and Rice Mills site as a key connection between the CBD and the Homemaker Centre.

Strategy 3.5: Amend zoning anomalies through an appropriate planning process

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Property owners and businesses

Timeframe: Long term

Actions:

- Rezone land at 163-167 Pakenham Street, Echuca, and 129 Hume Street, Echuca, from the Commercial 1 Zone to the General Residential Zone to reflect the existing use and development of the land and Heritage Overlay.

Objective 4: *To ensure that commercial centres in Echuca are vibrant, well-designed places where people enjoy shopping, doing business, and participating in community activities*

Rationale: Successful and sustainable regional centres are most often characterised by high levels of amenity, an attractive public realm, and investment in property by individual property owners. These characteristics should also be accompanied by high-quality planning which emphasises pedestrian amenity, accessibility, and integration of uses and activities. These key features encourage return visits from shoppers and other visitors to the centres, and contribute to the level of in-centre activity, thus supporting the viability of local businesses and the services they provide.

Strategy 4.1 **Promote high quality and best practice urban design outcomes for the public realm and private developments**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property and business owners, community

Timeframe: Medium-term

Actions:

- Develop an urban design framework for the Echuca CBD which meets best practice principles in urban design, and which has regard for the recommendations and discussion provided in this Strategy, the identified 'CBD expansion areas', the future of poorly-performing arcades in the CBD, the planned second bridge across the Murray River, open space requirements and pedestrian/cycle links.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) and Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.

Strategy 4.2 **Encourage the development of a broad mix of uses in the Echuca CBD that are closely integrated with commercial uses including residential, accommodation tourism**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Property and business owners, community

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Develop an urban design framework for the Echuca CBD, as per the action in Strategy 4.1.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) and Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.

- Strategy 4.3** **Recognise High Street as the key boulevard entry to the Echuca CBD and actively encourage a mix of medium and high density building forms in this area**
- Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)
- Partnerships: NA
- Timeframe: Medium-term
- Actions:
- Apply a Design and Development Overlay to land zoned Commercial 1 fronting High Street, Echuca, generally between Heygarth Street and Tyler Street (excluding land affected by the Heritage Overlay), with design requirements that relate to building heights, frontages, setbacks and other relevant matters.
 - Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.
- Strategy 4.4** **Improve the appearance of key highway entrances to Echuca (Northern Highway and Murray Valley Highway) to improve access and maximise the further development potential of the area**
- Responsible Authority: VicRoads and Council (Planning and Infrastructure)
- Partnerships: VicRoads, business owners
- Timeframe: Medium-term
- Actions:
- Apply a Design and Development Overlay to Commercial 2 zoned land in Ogilvie Avenue (West).
 - Support plans to duplicate Northern Highway and Murray Valley Highway and upgrade service roads.
 - Update Clause 21.09 (Local Areas) to encourage and reinforce this strategy.
- Strategy 4.5** **Encourage a high-quality public realm through appropriate investment in street furniture, signage, plantings and other physical works and initiatives which add to the appeal of centres**
- Responsible Authority: Council (Planning, Economic Development and Infrastructure)
- Partnerships: Businesses and business networks
- Timeframe: Medium-term
- Actions:
- Update Clause 21.06 (Built Environment and Heritage) to encourage and reinforce the intention for good design outcomes for the public and private land in the commercial centres (as referenced in Action 2.3).

Strategy 4.6 **Improve signage and way-finding throughout the Echuca CBD, with a special emphasis on connecting the Port of Echuca with the balance of the CBD**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: Businesses and business networks

Timeframe: Short-term

Actions:

- Continue to implement the *Shire of Campaspe Wayfinding Strategy and Style Guide* and consider including as a Reference Document in the MSS.
- Update Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) to encourage and reinforce the intention for good design outcomes for the public and private land in the commercial centres.

Strategy 4.7 **Prepare an update of the *Parking Strategy for Echuca CBD and Historic Port Precincts (2008)* that considers the provision of car parking, parking time limits and cash-in-lieu contributions**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning and Infrastructure)

Partnerships: NA

Timeframe: Short-term

Actions:

- In the short-term consider increasing the cash-in-lieu contributions for car parking shortfalls to align similarly with nearby and comparable municipalities, as per Table 3 in the Background Report.
- Further investigate opportunities of leasing or purchasing VicTrack land alongside the railway line for the provision of municipal car parks, if required, as an interim use prior to potential development for commercial uses.

Objective 5: *To encourage the attraction of new businesses to Echuca's commercial centres that will provide investment and employment opportunities*

Rationale: Echuca's commercial centres are a significant contributor to employment and investment in Campaspe. Continuing to attract new businesses and investment to Echuca's commercial centres will have significant positive benefits for the local and regional economy.

Strategy 5.1 **Prepare a business attraction package that highlights the availability of existing and potential future commercial sites, and provides information in regard to the catchment served by businesses in Echuca**

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Business networks

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Develop a database of existing and potential future sites available for new businesses.
- Identify gaps in Echuca's retail provision and take steps to attract those types of businesses that are currently not represented in Echuca.
- Develop the "Attraction Package", which could include information about retail markets and growth, residential opportunities, available community facilities, such as schools) that can be used in attracting retail and other businesses to locate in Echuca.

Objective 6: *To assist local businesses with existing and future challenges faced by their respective industries*

Rationale: Echuca's commercial centres contain a large number of successful local businesses that contribute significantly to the provision of services and the local economy. These local businesses will be faced with many challenges over the coming years and it will be important that they are equipped with appropriate tools to assist them in improving their business performance. Perceptions of poor customer service and competition from internet retailers are two challenges identified in this Strategy that will need to be addressed and managed.

Strategy 6.1 **Continue to support local business through professional development and other programs**

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Business, business networks, education providers

Timeframe: Ongoing

Actions:

- Provide courses/seminars on relevant business topics such as customer service, use of information technology, trends in the retail industry, social media and other topics, as appropriate.

Strategy 6.2 **Continue Council funding for local business networks where 'value for money' in terms of business education or marketing can be demonstrated**

Responsible Authority: Council (Economic Development)

Partnerships: Local business networks

Timeframe: Ongoing-term

Objective 7: *To ensure that new development in all key commercial centres in the Shire is high quality and is appropriate to the needs of each centre*

Rationale: The focus of the **Echuca Commercial Centres Strategy 2017** is Echuca and its commercial centres, however, other key towns in the Shire such as Kyabram and Rochester also contain important commercial centres that provide a range of services to their local communities and surrounding rural areas. Most of the high level objectives and principles that have been developed for Echuca also apply to new development in these towns.

Strategy 7.1 **Apply the objectives and principles of the Echuca Commercial Centres Strategy 2017 to the commercial centres in Kyabram and Rochester**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: NA

Timeframe: Short-term

Actions:

- Include the design and development principles outlined on Page 12 of this Strategy in Clause 21.06 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Clause 21.07 (Economic Development) and apply them to the commercial centres of Echuca, Kyabram and Rochester.

Objective 8: *To implement the Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017 in the Campaspe Planning Scheme*

Rationale: The Campaspe Planning Scheme will need to be amended to ensure that the **Echuca Commercial Centres Strategy 2017** has proper statutory effect and provides appropriate guidance for all users of the planning system.

Strategy 8.1 **Adopt the *Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017* and amend the Campaspe Planning Scheme by listing the Strategy in Clause 21.05 as a Reference Document.**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: NA

Timeframe: Short-term

Strategy 8.2 **Prepare planning scheme amendments, as appropriate, to give effect to the zone and overlay recommendations set out in this Strategy.**

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning)

Partnerships: NA

Timeframe: Short-term

Strategy 8.3 Update relevant clauses of the MSS to reflect the Actions identified in this Strategy.

Responsible Authority: Council (Planning) Partnerships: NA

Timeframe: Short-term

Assessment guidelines for non-conforming proposals

This Strategy provides a framework for the development of activity centres throughout the area. There is a strong expectation that retail and other appropriate commercial and community activities will be located within one of the nominated centres.

Exceptions to this rule could include:

- Minor retail provision associated with rural or tourism enterprises, where such provision amounts to no more than that of a local centre.
- Introduction of a new activity centre (other than a local centre) or bulky goods precinct into the network in areas where there has been higher than expected population growth or where the network needs to be adjusted in order to better meet resident needs. Land for any such new centre would need to be rezoned and the proposal justified in detail as part of a structure plan or similar strategic plan. In addition to the detailed design of the proposed new centre and its key occupants, the proposal should contain an assessment of net community benefit comprising:
 - identification of the catchment to be served and how this affects the catchment of surrounding centres;
 - retail supply and demand analysis;
 - assessment of economic impact on other centres in the network and how this will affect their expected role;
 - assessment of net social and employment benefits of the proposal.

FRAMEWORK PLANS

FIGURE 3 - ECHUCA FRAMEWORK PLAN

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Existing commercial centres
- Proposed new Murray River bridge route

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Reinforce Echuca's commercial centres hierarchy and maintain the primacy of the Echuca CBD as the regional centre serving the Campaspe Shire and beyond.

Recognise and re-inforce Echuca's commercial centres hierarchy as per Table 1 of the Echuca Commercial Strategy.

Locate large-scale retail attractors including supermarkets and discount department stores in the Echuca CBD (with the exception of a new supermarket in Echuca West)

Facilitate the development of a new neighbourhood centre in Echuca West.

Engage with Murray River Shire to discourage unplanned major commercial developments in Moama that would affect the Echuca commercial hierarchy.

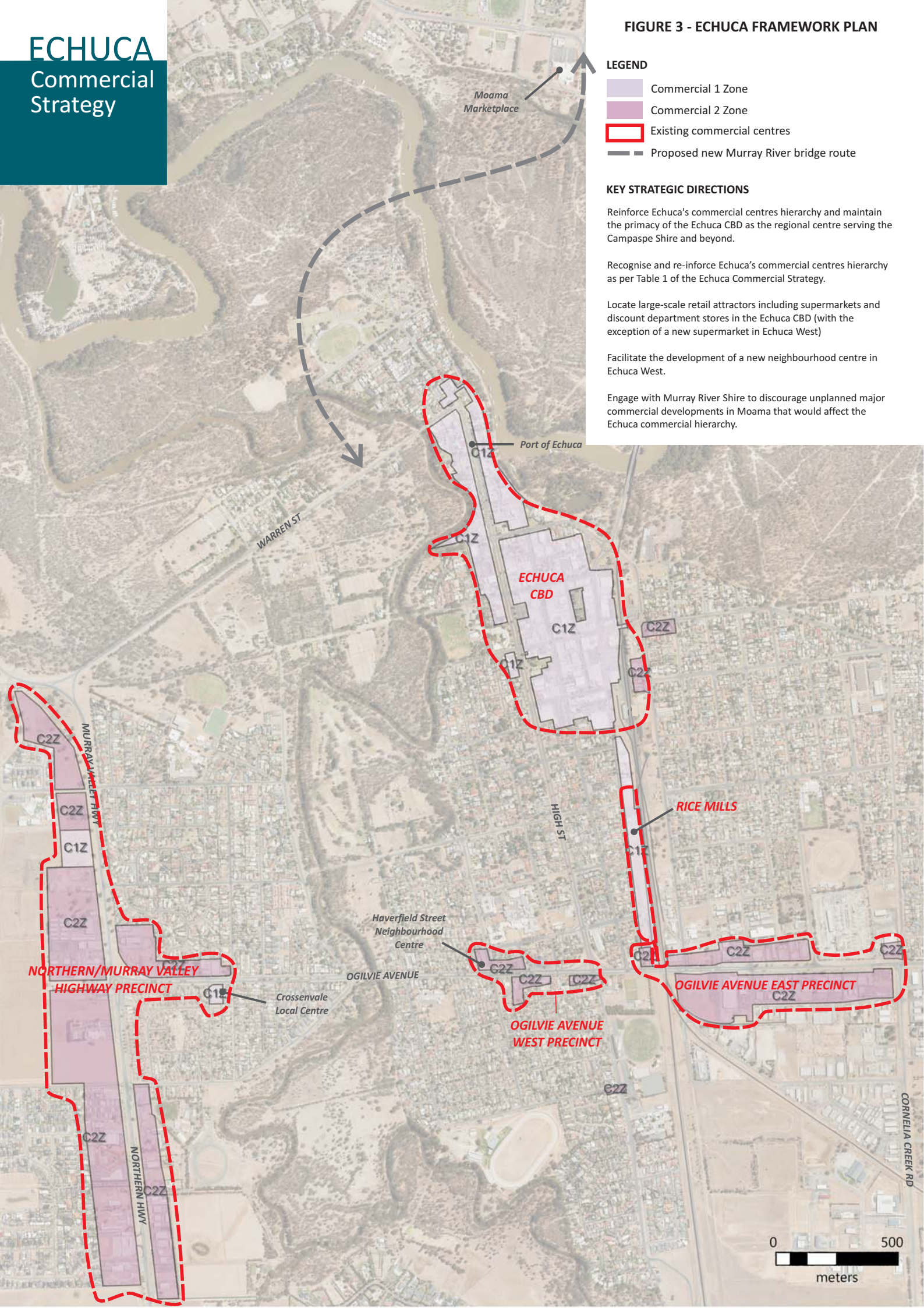


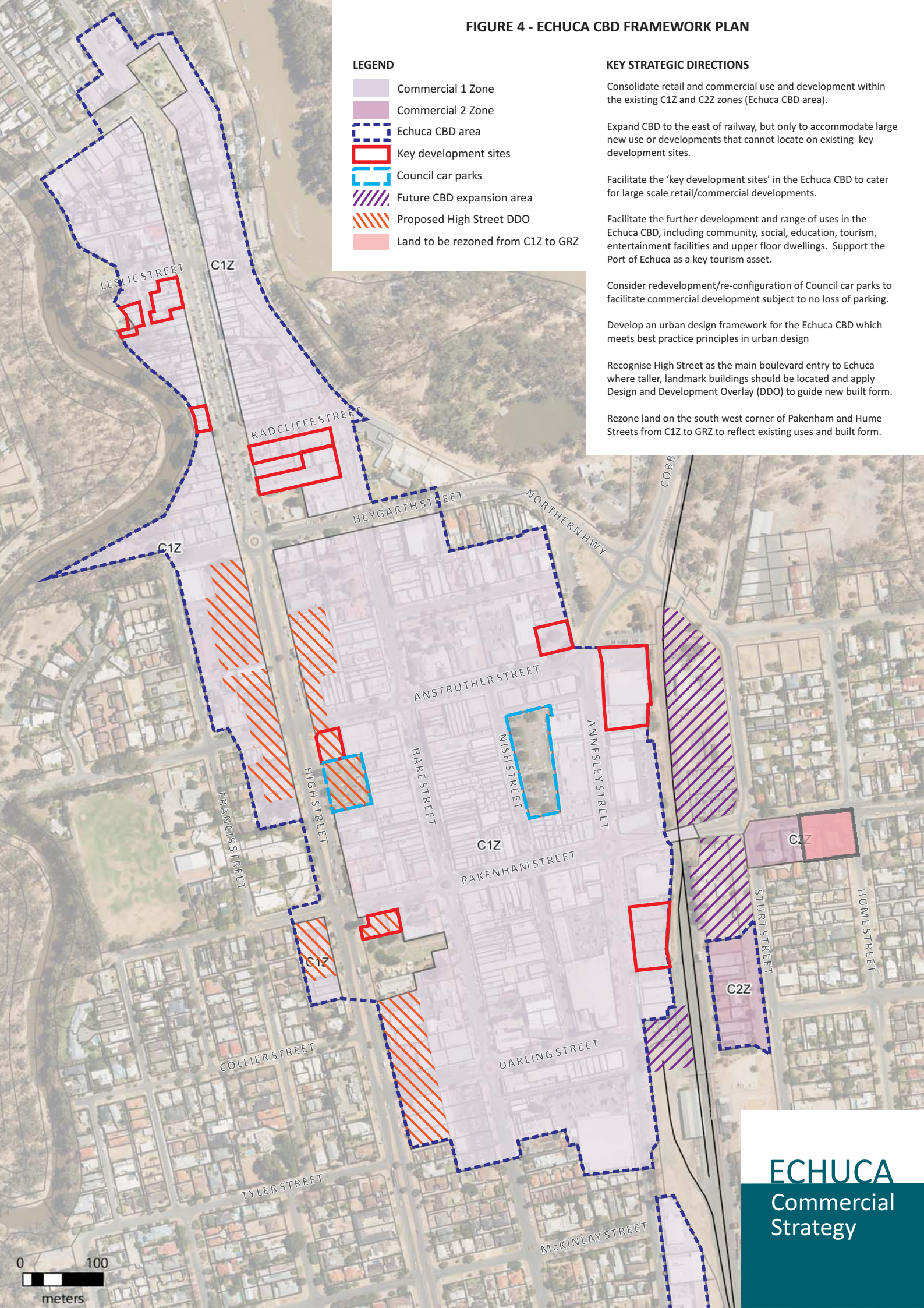
FIGURE 4 - ECHUCA CBD FRAMEWORK PLAN

LEGEND

-  Commercial 1 Zone
-  Commercial 2 Zone
-  Echuca CBD area
-  Key development sites
-  Council car parks
-  Future CBD expansion area
-  Proposed High Street DDO
-  Land to be rezoned from C1Z to GRZ

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Consolidate retail and commercial use and development within the existing C1Z and C2Z zones (Echuca CBD area).
- Expand CBD to the east of railway, but only to accommodate large new use or developments that cannot locate on existing key development sites.
- Facilitate the 'key development sites' in the Echuca CBD to cater for large scale retail/commercial developments.
- Facilitate the further development and range of uses in the Echuca CBD, including community, social, education, tourism, entertainment facilities and upper floor dwellings. Support the Port of Echuca as a key tourism asset.
- Consider redevelopment/re-configuration of Council car parks to facilitate commercial development subject to no loss of parking.
- Develop an urban design framework for the Echuca CBD which meets best practice principles in urban design
- Recognise High Street as the main boulevard entry to Echuca where taller, landmark buildings should be located and apply Design and Development Overlay (DDO) to guide new built form.
- Rezone land on the south west corner of Pakenham and Hume Streets from C1Z to GRZ to reflect existing uses and built form.



**FIGURE 5 - NORTHERN HIGHWAY
FRAMEWORK PLAN**

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Key development sites

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

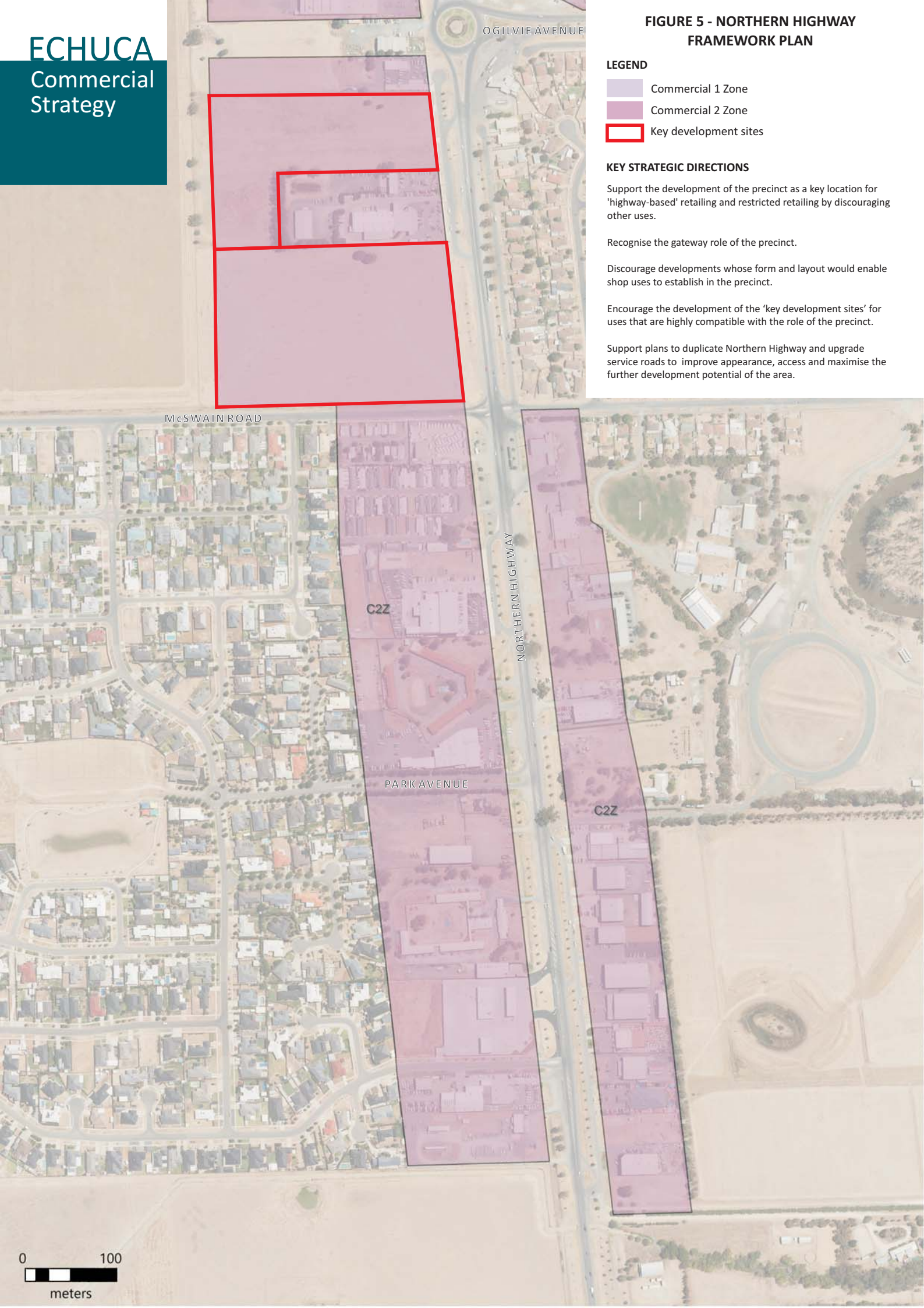
Support the development of the precinct as a key location for 'highway-based' retailing and restricted retailing by discouraging other uses.

Recognise the gateway role of the precinct.

Discourage developments whose form and layout would enable shop uses to establish in the precinct.

Encourage the development of the 'key development sites' for uses that are highly compatible with the role of the precinct.

Support plans to duplicate Northern Highway and upgrade service roads to improve appearance, access and maximise the further development potential of the area.



**FIGURE 6 - MURRAY VALLEY HIGHWAY
& ECHUCA WEST FRAMEWORK PLAN**

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Key development sites
- Approved Echuca West Neighbourhood Centre
- Zone change required

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Support the precinct as a key location for 'highway-based' retailing and restricted retailing by discouraging other uses.
- Recognise the gateway role of the precinct.
- Manage the future development of the Echuca West neighbourhood centre and surrounds through limits on the development of shop floorspace and appropriate rezonings.
- Discourage developments whose form and layout would enable shop uses to establish in the precinct.
- Encourage the development of the 'key development sites' for uses that are highly compatible with the role of the precinct.
- Support plans to duplicate the Murray Valley Highway and upgrade service roads to improve appearance, access and maximise the further development potential of the area.
- Support the development of a drainage scheme to fund new drainage infrastructure to facilitate precinct development.

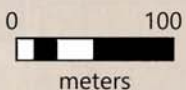
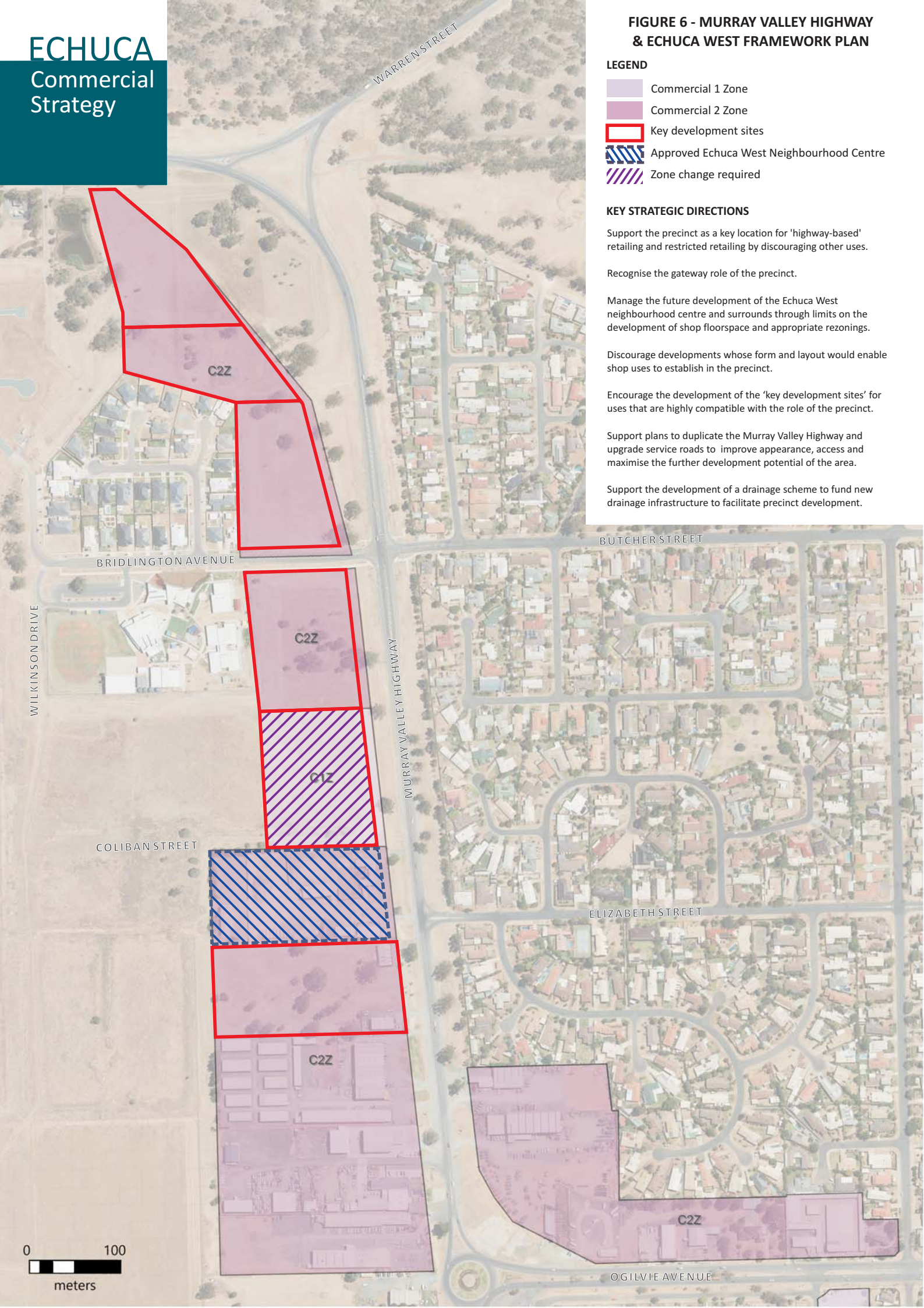


FIGURE 7 - OGILVIE AVENUE (EAST) & RICE MILLS FRAMEWORK PLAN

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Homemaker Precinct
- Key development sites

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Support the development of the precinct as a key location for 'highway-based' retailing and restricted retailing by discouraging other uses.

Encourage the development of the 'Rice Mills' site for a mix of peripheral retail, commercial and higher density residential development that complements the Echuca CBD.

Support the Echuca Homemaker Centre as the main location for homemaker retailing in the region.

Encourage the development of the 'key development sites' for uses that are highly compatible with the role of the precinct.

Discourage developments whose form and layout would enable shop uses to establish on C2Z land in the precinct.

Support plans to duplicate Ogilvie Avenue and upgrade service roads to improve appearance, access and maximise the further development potential of the area.

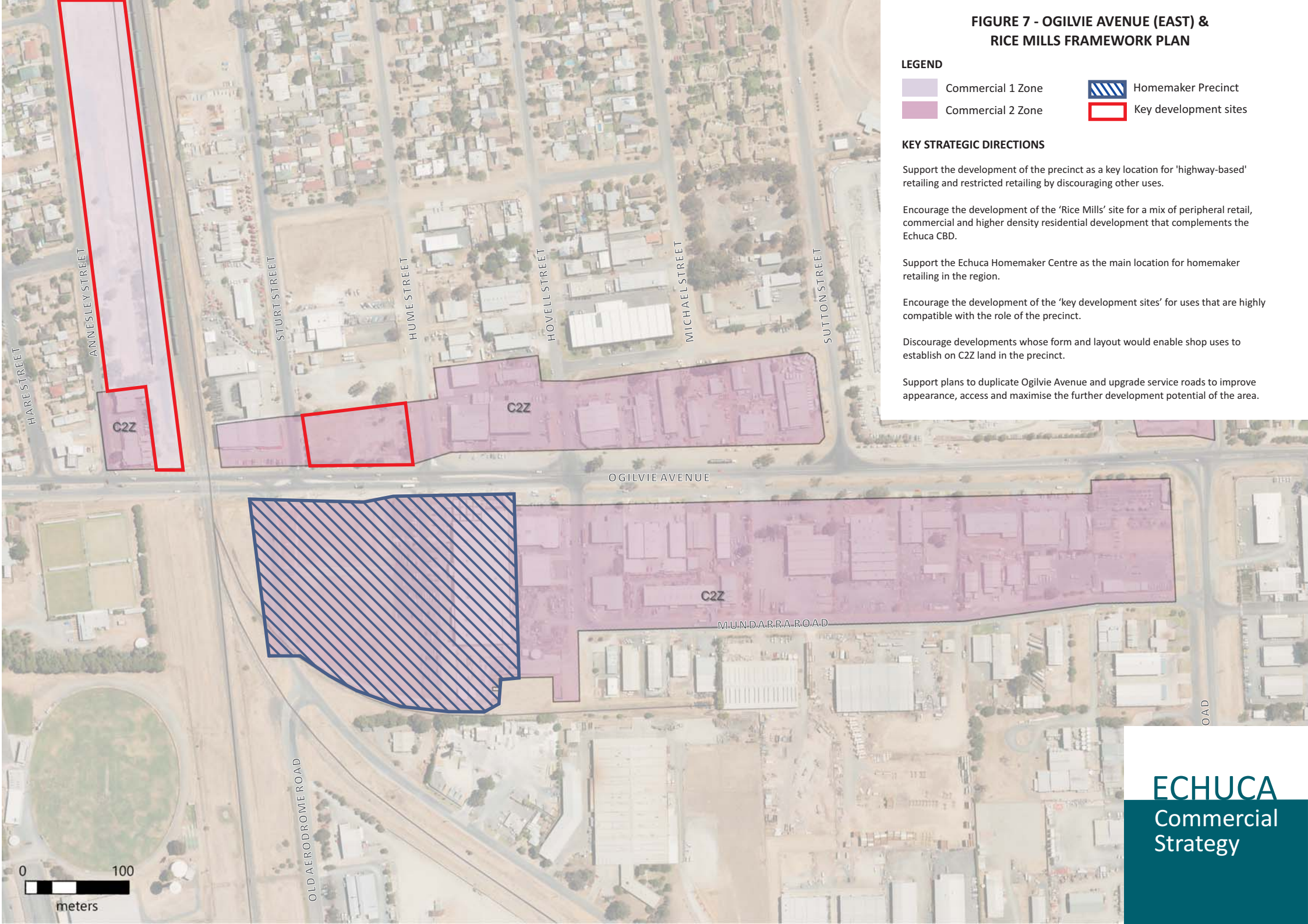


FIGURE 8 - OGILVIE AVENUE (WEST) & HAVERFIELD FRAMEWORK PLAN

LEGEND

- Commercial 1 Zone
- Commercial 2 Zone
- Health/Hospital Precinct
- Key re-development sites
- Zone change required
- Proposed DDO

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Support the role of the centre as a small neighbourhood centre with potential to attract uses that can complement the expanding health/hospital precinct.

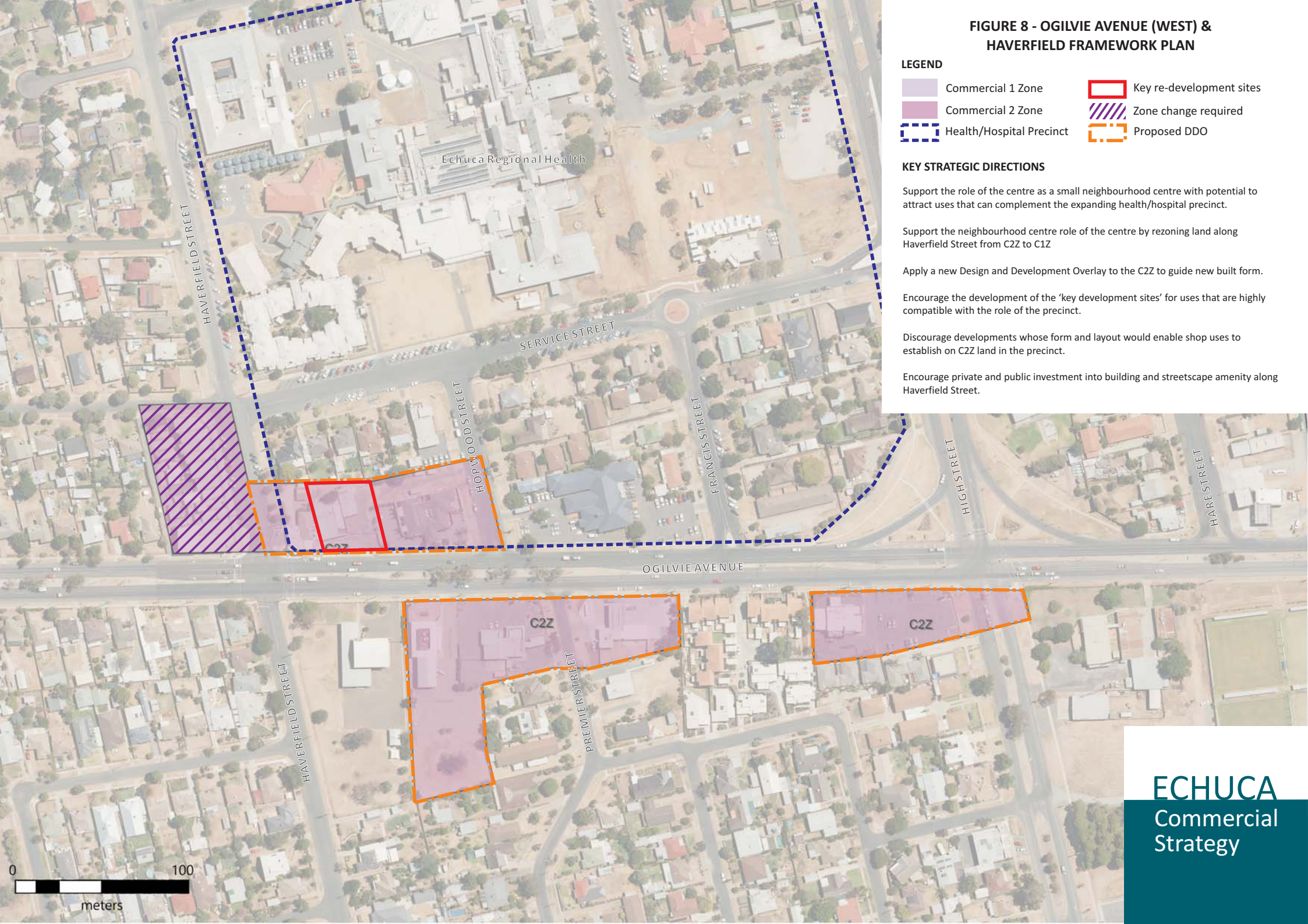
Support the neighbourhood centre role of the centre by rezoning land along Haverfield Street from C2Z to C1Z

Apply a new Design and Development Overlay to the C2Z to guide new built form.

Encourage the development of the 'key development sites' for uses that are highly compatible with the role of the precinct.

Discourage developments whose form and layout would enable shop uses to establish on C2Z land in the precinct.

Encourage private and public investment into building and streetscape amenity along Haverfield Street.



MONITORING AND REVIEW

An important part of the implementation process for the Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017 is to ensure that the Strategy remains relevant as circumstances change and as new issues and opportunities arise.

Monitoring the implementation process will enable proper assessment of the Strategy's performance and whether or not changes are warranted as a result of new and emerging trends.

Monitoring also enables the Council and the community to judge how well and how efficiently the Strategy is being implemented. It is important, however, that speed of implementation should not be the sole criterion for success. Most communities seek good quality outcomes and, with a little patience, will be pleased to see on-the-ground results which ensure viable activities and attractive, competitive commercial centres.

Council must therefore ensure that the Strategy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Some indicators of progress can be readily assessed on an annual basis, while other indicators can be assessed over a longer period, or sooner if important changes are identified in the marketplace and other conditions.

Indicators for monitoring and review purposes are listed in Table 2 on the following page. These indicators are based on readily-available and relatively inexpensive data, including official data, Council planning approvals and commencements data, land use/floorspace surveys, and reference to consultant reports.

Table 2 Indicators for monitoring process

Indicator	Source	Comment
1. Commercial Centre Floorspace	Echuca Commercial Centres Strategy, floorspace surveys, Council data for planning and building approvals.	Implement retail/commercial floorspace survey in order to allow an up-to-date estimate of total floorspace and the mix of retail/office activities. The floorspace survey presented in the Echuca Commercial Centres Strategy will serve as the base-year survey. Alternatively, Council planning and approvals data could be added to the floorspace data presented in this Strategy.
2. User perceptions	In-centre surveys	Undertake a series of short in-centre surveys of businesses and customers on a regular basis (e.g. every one or two years). The survey could cover issues such as the local community's views on the centre(s), changes in people's perception of the centre as a place to visit, views on competing centres, issues they identify and actions that need doing, trends in employment levels, etc. The surveys would be a helpful reference point in assessing potential impacts of the initiatives contained in the Strategy.
3. Property development proposals and projects	Council records	Track development applications, proposals, and completions.
4. Retail trading performance	Consultant reports; Property Council	Track official sources of data. Note numbers of new businesses and estimate of new jobs on an annual basis.
5. Vacancy rates for retail and commercial floorspace (vacant m2 expressed as a share of total m2)	Land use and floorspace surveys	Can be undertaken at any time. As a guideline, the average retail floorspace vacancy rate of around 4-6% of total retail floorspace is acceptable for a healthy strip shopping centre.
6. Changes in property values and rates	Council rate records; data from Victorian Valuer- General	Useful indicator, especially as a relative indicator (e.g. different rate valuations for between centres).
7. Viewpoints on health of centres as expressed in property industry, real estate and those in retail industry	Regular contact with real estate agents, property owners, developers, retail industry, other businesses, business associations, and the wider community.	Annual forum organised by Council at a venue for information exchange between property and retail industry, local traders, other businesses and stakeholders, Council and other community representatives.

Source: Essential Economics, 2015