



BAXTER

**Township Structure Plan
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council**

25 March 2019

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Structure Plan	4
2.1 Function	4
2.2 Objectives and Boundary	4
2.3 Background Research	5
3. Community and Stakeholder Engagement	6
3.1 Approach	6
3.2 Engagement outcomes	6
3.3 Engagement Summary	6
4. Baxter Township's Regional Context	7
5. Baxter Township Overview and Key Issues	8
5.1 Overview and Key Issues Analysis	8
5.1.1 Community Profile	8
5.1.2 Land Availability	8
5.1.3 Heritage	8
5.1.4 Topography, Natural and Landscape Features	8
5.1.5 Activities and Land Use	9
5.1.6 Enterprise, Retail and Business Activity	9
5.1.7 Community and Education Facilities	10
5.1.8 Utility Services	10
5.1.9 Housing	10
5.1.10 Open Space	10
5.1.11 Movement and Transport	11
5.1.12 Urban and Built Form	13
6. The Vision	14
7. Planning for Baxter Township's Future	15
7.1 Housing	15
7.2 Town Centre (around the railway station)	16
7.3 Retail and Commercial Opportunities	17
7.4 Community Infrastructure	19
7.5 Built Form	19
7.6 Open Space	21
7.7 Movement	22
8. The Baxter Township Development Framework	24
9. Precinct Plans	25
9.1 Precinct 1 - Town Centre	26
9.2 Precinct 2 - Residential Areas	26
10. Implementation	31
10.1 Statutory Implementation	31
10.2 Non Statutory Implementation	31
11. Monitoring and Review	34

List of Figures

Figure 1: Baxter Township Boundary and Location	3
Figure 2: Baxter Township Boundary and Location – Aerial Imagery	4
Figure 3: Baxter Township Regional Context	7
Figure 4: Baxter Township Opportunities Framework	18
Figure 5: Baxter Township Built Form and Open Space Framework	20
Figure 6: Possible Pedestrian Facilities	22
Figure 7: Baxter Township Movement Framework	23
Figure 8: Baxter Township Development Framework	24
Figure 9: Baxter Township Precincts Plan	25
Figure 10: Thomas Street-Railway Cross Section	26
Figure 11: Precinct 1 – Town Centre	27
Figure 12: Precinct 2 – Residential Areas: West	29
Figure 13: Precinct 2 – Residential Areas: East	30



1. Introduction

The Baxter township is a small inland township located on the Mornington Peninsula and within the broader postcode area of Baxter which comprises 987 hectares of urban and rural land. The township's urban land comprises 245.17 hectares and had a population of approximately 2,162 permanent residents (2016 Census). It provides a variety of commercial, recreational, employment and community services to its residential population and is highly prized for its lifestyle factors by the local community.

The township is uniquely placed in a rural setting on the northern edge of the Peninsula nestled in between green wedge land, but relatively close to the outskirts of the Melbourne suburban area. The township is distinctly part of the Mornington Peninsula.

The Stony Point railway bisects the township and provides a shuttle service to Frankston railway station, connecting with metropolitan train and bus services.

A business case is currently underway examining the benefits of duplicating and electrifying the railway line. This provides an opportunity to improve connections and accessibility for residents from the Baxter township to the metropolitan train and bus network and potential for a transport modal interchange that would service the wider area.

Baxter is one of 40 townships within the Mornington Peninsula Shire and has experienced low levels of growth over many years. The township has excellent road links to the surrounding region through Peninsula Link and many arterial roads giving it good car access to education, employment, services and amenities.

The Baxter township is shown in **Figures 1 and 2**.

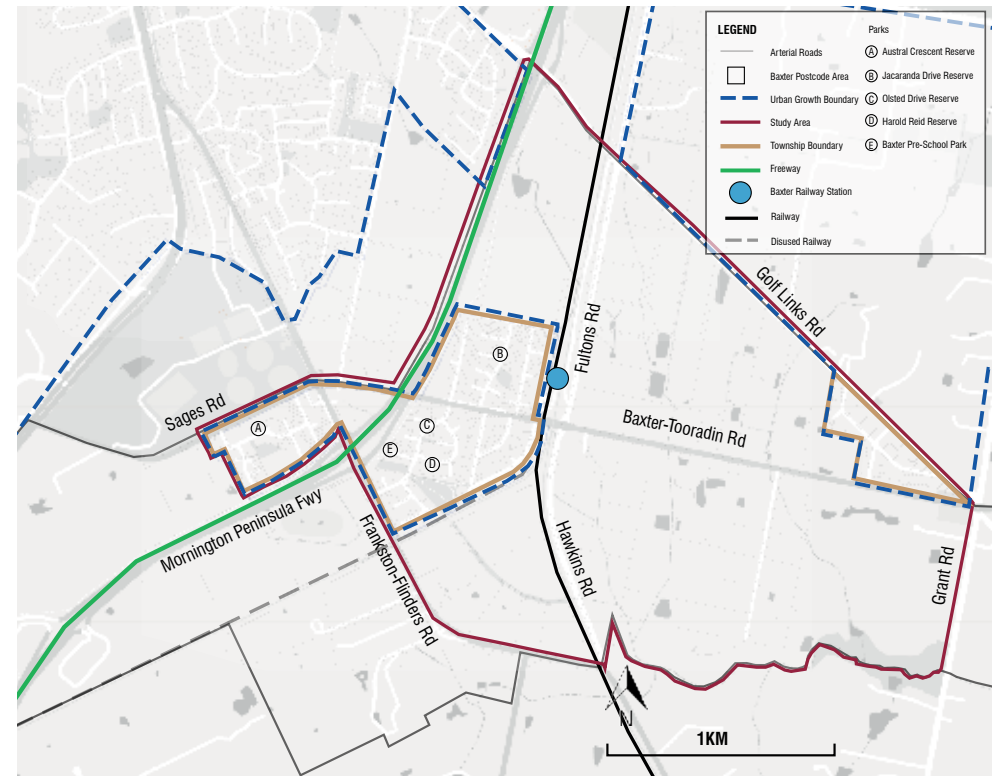


Figure 1: Baxter Township Boundary and Location

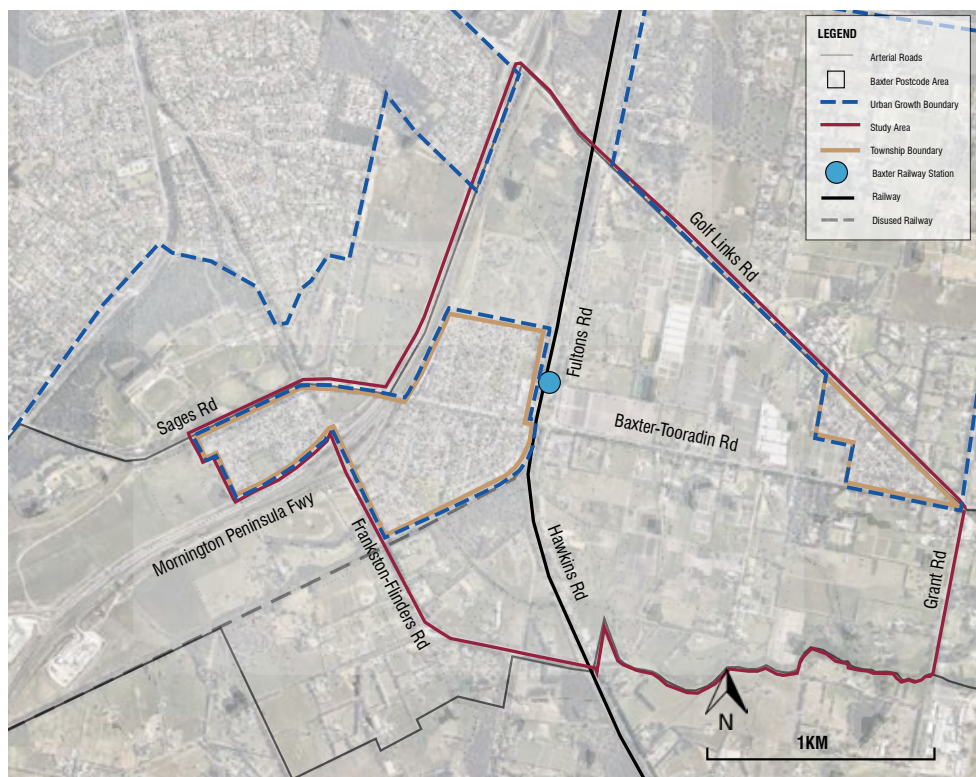


Figure 2: Baxter Township Boundary and Location - Aerial Imagery

2. The Structure Plan

2.1 Function

The purpose and function of the *Baxter Township Structure Plan* is to plan for the future of the Baxter Township by protecting the distinctive positive elements of the township and building upon its opportunities. This will guide the physical environment, amenity and activities within the township.

Council has engaged Plan2Place Consulting (in conjunction with other subconsultants) to prepare the structure plan with input and assistance from community members, business groups, government, public authorities and agencies.

The structure plan embodies *Plan Melbourne 2017-2051* strategic objectives to ensure that land use and transport planning and investment contribute to economic, social and environmental goals. It has been prepared in accordance with State planning policy and guidelines for townships and structure planning. The structure plan supports the objectives of both the *Mornington Peninsula Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)*, the *Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement* and Council's adopted *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2017*.

The structure plan addresses both the development and management of public infrastructure, in streets, parks and walkways, and sets private property development parameters for preferred land uses, building form, heights and siting. It provides guidance to the community, government, business and the development industry about appropriate directions and opportunities for change. The structure plan reflects community values and aspirations for the future growth of the Baxter township, as a place where people will work, learn, socialise, rest and play.

2.2 Objectives and Boundary

The structure plan defines a vision to guide the future of the Baxter township over the coming decade and outlines the objectives and strategies that will realise the vision. A township boundary has been defined for the structure plan which emanates from the project study area and the identification of issues and analysis from the *Baxter Township Structure Plan - Background Report*.

2.3 Background Research

The structure plan is informed by a comprehensive background report drawn from the following documents:

- *Our Peninsula - Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Plan 2017-2021*
- *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*
- *Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement, July 2014*
- *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2014*
- *Mornington Peninsula Housing and Settlement Strategy, December 2017*
- *Mornington Peninsula Activity Centres Strategy, April 2018*
- *Mornington Peninsula Industrial Areas Strategy, April 2018*
- *Mornington Peninsula Liveability Index, October 2017*

- *Mornington Peninsula Township Profiles, December 2017*
- *Mornington Peninsula Access and Mobility Study, November 2007*
- *Mornington Peninsula Pedestrian Access Strategy (draft) August 2018*
- *Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme.*

Copies of these documents are available from Council's website:

<https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Strategies-Plans-Policies/Strategy-Plan-Listing>

<https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Building-Planning/Strategic-Planning/Strategic-Planning-Projects>



3. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Approach

The structure plan methodology is founded on a community engagement approach based on community information, participation and involvement from start to finish in the development of the plan.

The community engagement approach for the Baxter Township Structure Plan sought to gather opinions from a range of community members. It asked what they valued about their township and any elements they may wish to change. Specifically:

1. What do you love / like about Baxter?
2. What would make Baxter great / better?
3. If you could change one thing in Baxter what would it be?
4. Is there anything in Baxter that should not change?

The following community engagement methods were used:

- A. An online 'have your say' web page.
- B. Two community drop in sessions at the Baxter Community Hall.
- C. Focus groups with children from the Baxter Primary School and community groups.
- D. Email engagement with local clubs.
- E. Intercept surveys with local businesses in Baxter.

3.2 Engagement outcomes

Across all engagements there was broad agreement in most areas and on most issues.

People valued the quiet, rural feel, the community and easy access to a range of services in Baxter and beyond.

People felt that pedestrian and cycling facilities could be improved to increase links through Baxter and to the broader cycling and pedestrian networks.

Some roads could be improved and made safer, particularly at intersections.

Some playgrounds and open space areas could be improved to provide more activities for children and amenity for residents.

The area around the railway station requires better infrastructure such as waiting areas for passengers and additional parking.

People wanted the rural, small town feel to remain and did not want any major development. Some increase in housing was supported if it was in keeping with the existing township and provided greater diversity and housing types for households not currently catered for.

Areas of contention

The green wedge was strongly supported by some while others would like to see it relaxed but only for limited development.

End of line

There was broad support for electrification of the railway line but no support for end of line stabling and other significant end of trip facilities at Baxter.

3.3 Engagement Summary

Residents consulted during this process appreciate Baxter largely how it currently is. They support limited development if it is in keeping with the current township and support retaining the existing community and profile. An improvement in transport and recreational links, better facilities at the railway station and an upgrade of playgrounds and open space areas were supported.

Community engagement has informed the development of the vision and objectives, strategies and actions for the township structure plan.

4. Baxter Township's Regional Context

Baxter township has been designated as a Local Activity Centre by Council as defined under *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and the *Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement*. The *Mornington Peninsula Activity Centre Policy* outlines that Local Activity Centres serve a small locality catchment typically less than 5,000 people, and have a retail mix that is focused on convenience and grocery shopping (although often with a limited range of non-food traders). In some cases they also provide a range of community services to the surrounding communities.

Baxter Township is one of 40 townships within the Shire. Most residents live along the coast within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Land outside the UGB occupies around 70 percent of the Shire and supports a wide range of activities that include recreation, tourism, agriculture and viticulture. There are a number of State and national parks within the Mornington Peninsula containing significant environmental and conservation values.

The Baxter township is located in the northern region of the Mornington Peninsula adjacent to the municipal boundary with the City of Frankston, around 46 kms from the Melbourne CBD (by direct measurement) or around 52 kms by car. The township has good access to the surrounding areas with the opening of the Mornington Peninsula Freeway in 2013. Research is also underway to investigate duplicating and electrifying the Frankston railway line to Baxter. Current shuttle services between Stony Point and Frankston are supported by a limited bus network that provides some broader access to the region.

There are three Major Activity Centres within the Shire – Mornington (11kms south-west), Rosebud (30kms south-west) and Hastings (14kms south). These provide a sub-regional retail and service function within the Shire and have State and regional significance. Just 6 kms north of Baxter is a Metropolitan Activity Centre (Frankston) and Major Activity Centre (Karingal), both of which are in the City of Frankston.

Growth within townships such as Baxter is expected to accommodate, at most, moderate and generally low levels of housing growth in line with the *Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement*.

Baxter's regional context is shown in **Figure 3**.

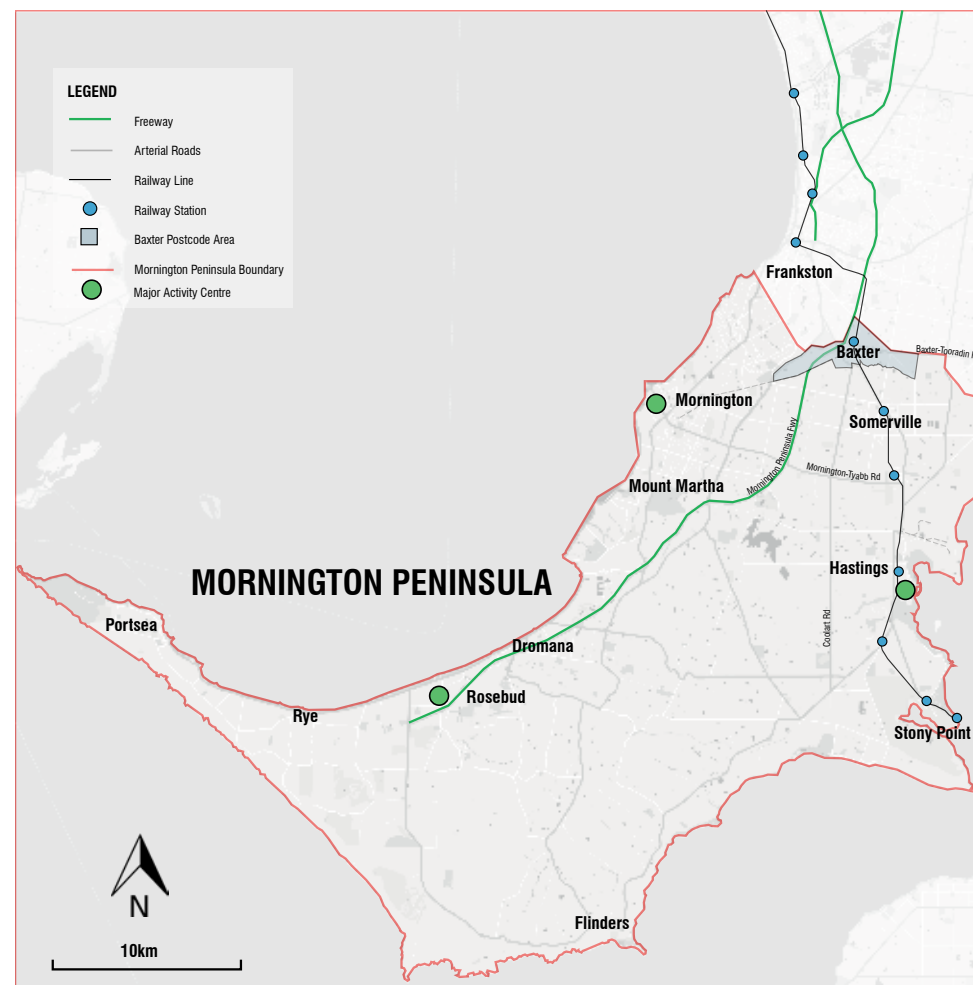


Figure 3: Baxter Township Regional Context

5. Baxter Township Overview and Key Issues

5.1 Overview and Key Issues Analysis

This section of the Baxter Township Structure Plan gives an overview of the township and identifies existing conditions, key issues and opportunities that will be explored further in the document.

5.1.1 Community Profile

Approximately 2,230 persons lived in the Baxter study area in 2016, and the vast majority of these people lived in the Baxter township (2,162 permanent residents). The population has remained relatively stable with only minor growth predicted in the study area and township (forecast to be 2,360 people in the Baxter study area by 2033) due to the limited number of development sites and existing township boundary. The age profile is significantly younger than the Mornington Peninsula Shire with the median age being 39 years compared to 46 years for the remainder of the Shire.

Households consist of predominantly “couple family with children” (28.9%) and “couple family with no children” (27%). Lone person households are higher than the Greater Melbourne average (26.8% vs 23.3%) and “group households” are significantly lower than the Greater Melbourne average with only 1.5% compared to 4.9%.

Most housing is owned with a mortgage (48.7%) while 30% of residents own their dwelling outright. Approximately 43.4% of residents within Baxter have completed education to Year 12 or equivalent. Employment of residents is characterised by a large number of “blue collar” occupations such as technicians and trades workers, machinery operators, and drivers and labourers accounting for 39.4% of employment. This is significantly higher than the 30.8% “blue collar” resident occupation figure across the Mornington Peninsula.

5.1.2 Land Availability

Lot sizes are predominantly 500-749 m² in the residential areas (59%) while a further 25% of lots are greater than 750m². Future residential development is likely to consist of small-scale infill development of existing vacant and occupied lots for medium density housing but forecasts are low (of five dwelling approvals per year). Land ownership is highly fragmented, and existing lot configurations and subdivision patterns present difficulties in site amalgamation for larger scale residential development.

In the commercial areas, lot sizes vary from groups of small shops through to a large site which accommodates a supermarket and specialty shops and services.

There are limited sites available for redevelopment in the township due to the UGB which surrounds the township. The two largest sites include Council owned land which is zoned residential and subject to potential disposal, north of the supermarket site and approximately 2 hectares of vacant commercially zoned land at the intersection of Baxter-Tooradin and Frankston-Flinders Roads. A permit has recently been issued on this site for a 150 bed, three storey residential aged care facility, medical centre and child care centre.

5.1.3 Heritage

There are no heritage places or aboriginal heritage sites currently identified within the Baxter township boundary but several are on the outskirts of the township.

5.1.4 Topography, Natural and Landscape Features

The township is located on the Moorooduc Plain with a relatively flat topography. View sheds are attained mainly from those properties located along the edge of residential areas to the green wedge surrounding the township, and through the township, again to the green wedge. The topography rises slightly towards Frankston and more significantly towards Mt Eliza, west of the freeway. There are few environmental features or assets of significance within the township.



The township is defined by major transport corridors. The Mornington Peninsula Freeway bisects the town with the Baxter-Tooradin Road running through the town's centre. The Frankston-Stony Point rail corridor borders the town's commercial area to the east. This breaks the township into three largely separate precincts being west and east of the Mornington Peninsula Freeway, the town centre between the freeway and the railway line and the residential area further to the east anchored around Baxter Primary School.



5.1.5 Activities and Land Use

The township is mainly residential in character with three local retail centres located along Baxter-Tooradin Road serving the local community and adjacent rural areas. The main retail centre, located near the Baxter train station and level crossing includes a supermarket, associated speciality shops and other retail and commercial uses fronting the main street. A smaller centre located at the intersection of Frankston-Flinders and Baxter-Tooradin Roads includes a service station and approximately five small shops/services. At the far eastern end of the township there is a much smaller retail centre comprising a service station with general store type goods.

The township comprises land within the UGB and consists of residential, commercial, open space, roads and public land.

5.1.6 Enterprise, Retail and Business Activity

The Baxter township provides a limited retail and commercial offer serving a catchment beyond the township. There is 4,850m² of retail floorspace around the railway station and a further 1,040 m² around the service station at the intersection of Frankston-Flinders and Baxter-Tooradin Roads.

Key retail uses are located in the Baxter Central Shopping Centre next to the railway station with a Woolworths supermarket as the key anchor. Retail and commercial uses are focused around this centre with further specialty shops fronting onto Baxter-Tooradin Road, a childcare centre and dentist opposite the centre, and the Baxter Tavern across the railway line.

Although the existing commercial premises in the township trade relatively well, there is limited demand for retail and commercial expansion in Baxter.

5.1.7 Community and Education Facilities

Baxter has a limited number of community facilities within the township with residents accessing services in adjacent townships and in the City of Frankston. There are a number of services for children and young people with both community and commercial day care and kindergarten services located within the township. The community day care is located in a residential area while the commercial day care centre is located on the roundabout adjacent to the railway line.



Baxter Primary School is located approximately 1.9km from the town centre to the east along Baxter-Tooradin Road and currently has just over 140 students. High school students travel outside of the township to access educational facilities in Mount Eliza, Somerville, Frankston and elsewhere on the Peninsula.

There is a community hall located along Baxter-Tooradin Road, that is available for community use and a mobile library visits the township weekly.

5.1.8 Utility Services

Baxter has a range of utility services provided in the township including:

- Gas.
- Electricity.
- Water.
- Sewerage.
- Drainage.
- Telecommunications (National Broadband Network (NBN) – connected to the township and rural areas east of Frankston-Flinders Road).

5.1.9 Housing

Housing in the Township is quite homogenous, consisting largely of separate detached housing. These comprise 90% of occupied private dwellings compared to the metropolitan Melbourne average of 68%. The remaining dwellings are medium density housing comprising semi-detached houses and townhouses.

Housing in the township is relatively affordable for the Mornington Peninsula, with the median house price of \$550,000 compared to the median house price of \$780,000 for the Mornington Peninsula. Lower prices are partially due to the inland location of the township and the age of the existing building stock.

There has been limited development in the township with an average of five new dwellings approved per annum since 2011/12. There has been some infill development in recent years with approximately 3 new dwellings being developed per annum between 2010 and 2018 (noting the difference in dwelling approval and development).

The recently completed Peninsula Lifestyle Retirement Village is located in the township and consists of 46 independent retirement living units.

With limited development sites and constraints on the growth of the town, new housing opportunities are limited and will largely consist of single dwelling rebuilds along with infill and some medium density development opportunities.

There may also be some opportunities for shop-top and mixed-use residential opportunities in commercial areas and on the Council owned site near the railway station. Housing associations or other agencies could have a role in helping to provide more diverse and affordable housing stock, particularly for an ageing population.

5.1.10 Open Space

Baxter Township has five parks and reserves. These are the:

- Austral Crescent Reserve.
- Harold Reid Reserve.
- Jacaranda Drive Reserve.
- Olstead Drive Reserve.
- Baxter Pre-School Park (currently formally un-named)



While most people in the township have good access to public open space (92% of dwellings are within 400 metres of open space), the quality of some of the open space is poor. Although the open space is available, it is not well integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods and in some of the reserves, facilities such as playgrounds, picnic shelters and furniture are not available. Generally in all public open space areas, there are very limited numbers of mature trees and therefore opportunities for shade and micro-climates.

The township does not have any dedicated sporting facilities, however Baxter Park managed by Frankston City Council borders the township on the northern side of Sages Road. This is a significant local and regional facility and includes sport facilities for soccer, football (AFL), cricket, tennis, archery and equestrian facilities as well as a small children’s playground and dog off-lead area.

5.1.11 Movement and Transport

Cars and parking

The township is relatively car-dependent due to the distance to major employment areas, and allocation of space (and priority) to motor vehicles. The location of key destinations in the township and beyond (including the Baxter Primary School) further entrench car use. The reliance on jobs outside the area and infrequent public transport services also contributes to car dependency.

Car ownership rates are high in Baxter with 76 cars per 100 people. This results from a very high proportion of households (almost a quarter) owning three or more cars. This creates a significant drag on the local economy because the residential car fleet costs Baxter households (collectively) almost \$30 million per year to own, operate and maintain.

The township has been designed with car travel as the transport focus to the extent that residents’ freedom to choose another mode is curtailed by a lack of facilities or services. This lack of choice increases the cost of living for all residents in Baxter. A key issue is the need to increase modal choice and a key driver is to provide choice for local residents in how they travel on a daily basis.

There is abundant public car parking at various locations around the township. Car parking is often not well integrated with other movement networks or the fabric of the town. Car parking areas in Baxter typically serve to dislocate services, businesses and activities from one another.

A key issue to resolve is how to provide adequate access by car without impinging on the right of residents to choose other modes and use them safely. This is particularly important for active modes such as walking and cycling – as these provide the greatest benefits to individuals and the community.

Some minor congestion issues were noted in and around key destinations at peak times which is a symptom of car dependency. The issues cannot be resolved by demolishing buildings and making roads wider, they can only be resolved by providing real choice so that some people (who want to) can leave their car at home for some trips.

Public transport

The Baxter township is serviced by the Stony Point Railway Line which connects from Stony Point through Baxter to Frankston where passengers can transfer to and from metropolitan rail and bus services. There are ten services northbound and eight services southbound on the Stony Point Railway Line each weekday. There are eight services in each direction on Saturdays and seven on Sundays. The limited destinations and lack of frequency on the train line limits the usefulness of the service.

There are three bus routes servicing the township:

- Route 776 – Frankston to Pearcedale.
- Route 782 – Frankston to Hastings and Flinders.
- Route 783 – Frankston to Hastings.

Public transport service levels in Baxter are shown in the table below.

Route	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday	Weekly Total
Bus 782	19	14	14	123
Stony Point Train	18	16	14	120
Bus 783	8	0	0	40
Bus 776	7	3	0	38

Connections between the bus and train services are non-existent – the only bus service on a weekday that would offer a connection with the train at Baxter Station leaves Frankston at the same time as the train.

The bus services in the area were reviewed in 2006 and again in 2009. Basic improvements recommended are yet to be implemented. For example, the review suggested that the timetables for the bus routes on Frankston-Flinders Road be published on a combined timetable with the Stony Point train services.

The Victorian Government has announced an investigation into the duplication and electrification of the Frankston railway line to Baxter. A key attraction for government is the ability to provide large stabling and maintenance facilities to service the line and meet future needs. This requires approximately 100 hectares of land in addition to 8 hectares likely to be required for the station, car parking, park and ride, and bus facilities.

Such facilities at a Baxter terminus would need to be located in the green wedge. The facilities are more industrial in nature and inconsistent with the purpose of the green wedge. This illustrates the need for an integrated solution along the whole railway corridor and a more strategic approach to the deployment of new transport infrastructure, particularly at Hastings.

Walking and Cycling

The walking and cycling environment is severely compromised by major roads that cut through the township and create real and perceived barriers to active transport movement. The design and speed of these roads makes it feel unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. Roundabouts in particular are designed for car movements, and do not provide priority for pedestrians or cyclists. This restricts residents in their choice of transport modes and leads to further car dependence.

There is a high-quality shared path along the Mornington Peninsula Freeway that provides regional linkages to Frankston (Karingal), Mount Martha and Rosebud.

Basic cycling infrastructure is provided on some major roads and basic bicycle parking can be found at key locations. Facilities are poor at locations where they are most required to minimise the risk to cyclists such as at major intersections and roundabouts and at key destinations such as the town centre and Baxter Primary School.

The Structure Plan focuses on better connecting key activity areas with the community and regional links such as the Peninsula Link Trail. An important initiative is the Baxter to Somerville “missing link” shared user path that forms part of the Western Port Bay Trail Network. The Western Port trail network is

a regionally significant trail connecting townships and communities across the Shire. The Baxter to Somerville Trail is a 4.8km shared user path that connects the townships of Somerville and Baxter to the Frankston to Baxter Trail and the Peninsula Link Trail.

An ageing population and improved technology in the future is likely to lead to greater use of mobility scooters and other vehicles for transport purposes. Providing suitable infrastructure for these modes will be a key challenge in coming years. Progress on improving pedestrian infrastructure crossing minor streets and main roads needs to be made urgently – to provide real choice for local residents.



5.1.12 Urban Design and Built Form

The Baxter township is mainly residential in type and character. The local street network reflects the different stages of subdivision. A predominance of cul-de-sac style subdivision and development creates poor connections impacting on the walkability of the township and induces car based trips for short and long trips. The relationship of housing to public parks is also impacted by the subdivision pattern with back fences providing little surveillance and overlooking from adjoining housing.

The majority of dwellings in the township are single storey, detached dwellings constructed between 1970 and 2000. Due to their age and condition, it is possible that some stock will be due for renewal or replacement within the foreseeable future. Housing is generally simple and unadorned with a wide variety of fencing heights and usually of timber or brick construction. Houses are setback from the front boundaries with lawn or simple garden treatments. There are few large or established trees within properties.

The streetscape quality is not high with little street tree planting throughout the township to unify the streetscape or provide shade and shelter to pedestrians.

The public realm around the shopping centre is simple and utilitarian, with spaces prioritising movement and parking of vehicles at the expense of pedestrian movements. While there are some pedestrian areas, their size and design does not invite gathering or lingering by the public. The environment around the railway station requires improvements such as access for all modes, amenity and personal safety.



6. The Vision

Baxter will continue to be a small township nestled in the green wedge, offering the best of metropolitan and rural lifestyles. It is an affordable and attractive place providing a range of housing types, recreation opportunities, facilities and services to support the community today and into the future. An enhanced town centre and improved public spaces and connectivity has created a more cohesive community, while transport infrastructure ensures that residents can continue to enjoy the benefits of the township's location.



7. Planning for Baxter Township's Future

The future of the Baxter Township will be guided by the following seven objectives:

1. To provide a range of housing choices to meet current and future community needs.
2. To create a town centre around the railway station that is a focus for the community and a great place to meet.
3. To ensure the continuing viability of the township's retail and commercial areas.
4. To ensure that community infrastructure meets the needs of residents of the township.
5. To ensure new built form is of a scale and form appropriate to the township character.
6. To improve amenities and facilities within parks and open spaces for a range of ages and life stages.
7. To ensure residents are provided with a variety of movement options that are safe, accessible, integrated and prioritise all mode types and movements within the township.

These seven objectives are detailed in the following themes of:

- Housing.
- Town centre (around the railway station).
- Retail and commercial opportunities.
- Community infrastructure.
- Built form.
- Open space.
- Movement.

7.1 Housing

Objective

To provide a range of housing choices to meet current and future community needs.

Strategies

Facilitate an increased diversity of housing stock particularly in and around the town centre.

Encourage housing that meets the needs of an ageing population and increase the diversity of household types.

Actions

- A1. Council will encourage some limited forms of housing and mixed use development adjacent to, and within, the town centre as shown for Precinct 1 to support the town centre through improved street activation, surveillance and integration.
- A2. Council will prepare design controls to facilitate medium-density housing around parks providing more diverse housing types (refer to Section 9).
- A3. Council will encourage the delivery of more diverse housing stock within the township, providing for the needs of an ageing population.
- A4. Council will investigate options to work with housing associations to deliver more diverse housing stock on its land holdings (some of which are subject to potential disposal) within the township.



7.2 Town Centre (around the railway station)

Objective

To create a town centre around the railway station that is a focus for the community and a great place to meet.

Strategies

Facilitate the development of a cohesive town centre that better connects the railway station and town centre.

Support opportunities for new development around the railway station that are well designed and integrated with the train station, including on Council owned land which is subject to potential disposal.

Improve the public realm within the town centre to facilitate safe, convenient pedestrian access, public gathering and business performance.

Support new development that contributes to a greater range of retail and commercial spaces and offerings in the town centre.

Actions

- A5. Council will develop a streetscape masterplan for the town centre precinct identifying projects to be undertaken over the coming years to enhance amenity and improve the quality of the public realm.
- A6. The Plan will provide for new, well designed and integrated mixed-use residential, community and small scale commercial development in the town centre as shown in Precinct 1.
- A7. Council owned land north of the railway station which is subject to potential disposal will be rezoned in part as shown in Precinct 1.
- A8. Council will undertake an audit of street lighting in the town centre to identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian movements.

Examples of active, cohesive, vibrant, vegetated and well designed centres



7.3 Retail and Commercial Opportunities

Objective

To ensure the continuing viability of the township's retail and commercial areas.

Strategies

Reinforce the town centre as the focus for retail and commercial activities in the township and commercial land west of the Mornington Peninsula Freeway for service retailing.

Maintain a range of retail and commercial spaces and offerings in the town centre.

Facilitate uses such as primary produce sales or other uses that support agriculture in the green wedge on commercially zoned land in the township.

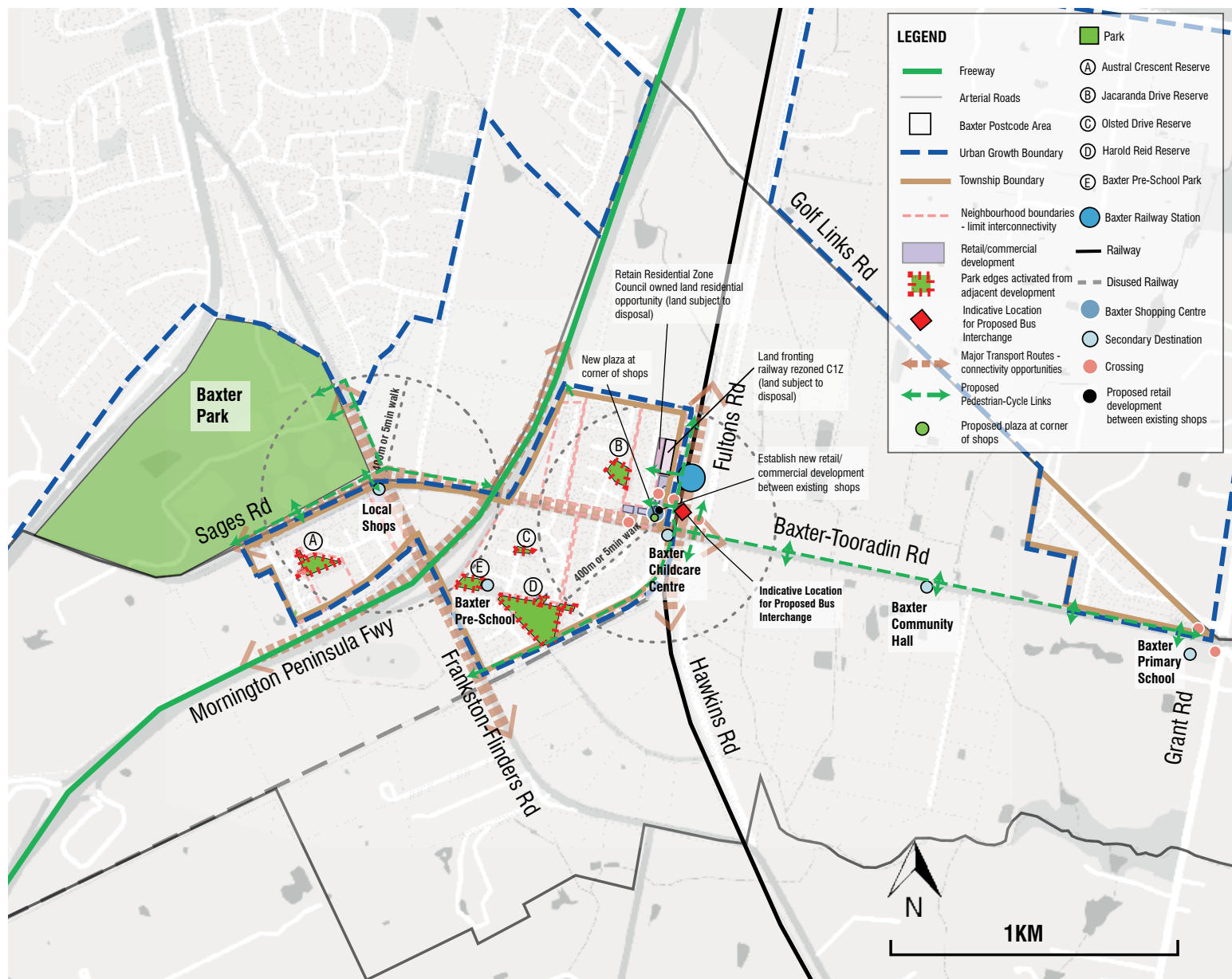
Actions

A9. Council will work with local businesses to promote their economic activities through clustering, promotion and a business support program.

Opportunities for the township are shown in **Figure 4** (page 18).



Indicative images showing possible new shops, improved pedestrian environment, new trees and landscaping, cycling priority lanes and possible plaza location subject to more detailed design at a later stage



7.4 Community Infrastructure

Objective

To ensure that community infrastructure meets the needs of residents of the township.

Strategies

Support the provision of additional community facilities, including youth facilities, to meet identified community needs either within the township or in adjacent areas.

Ensure that residents have adequate transport to access community infrastructure provided in surrounding townships and Major Activity Centres.

Actions

- A10. Council will investigate the need for additional community facilities, including youth facilities, to meet community needs within the township or in adjacent areas.
- A11. Council will advocate to the Victorian Government for additional public transport options connecting Baxter with surrounding areas to improve access to community and support services for people in and around Baxter.
- A12. Council will identify an appropriate location for a community bus stop or stops in Baxter.

7.5 Built Form

Objective

To ensure new built form is of a scale and form appropriate to the township character.

Strategies

Support development in residential areas consistent with Council's adopted Housing and Settlement Strategy 2017 (of up to a maximum of 2 storeys).

Support development up to 3 storeys in commercial areas in the town centre and up to 2 storeys for the local shops commercial area.

Actions

- A13. Council will adopt the *Neighbourhood Character Study & Guidelines* (currently under preparation) to provide further guidance on the built form character requirements for the residential areas of the township.
- A14. Council will prepare precinct design guidelines, requirements and planning controls to set parameters for appropriate scale, height and intensity of development (refer Section 9).

The township's built form and open space framework are shown in **Figure 5** (page 20).



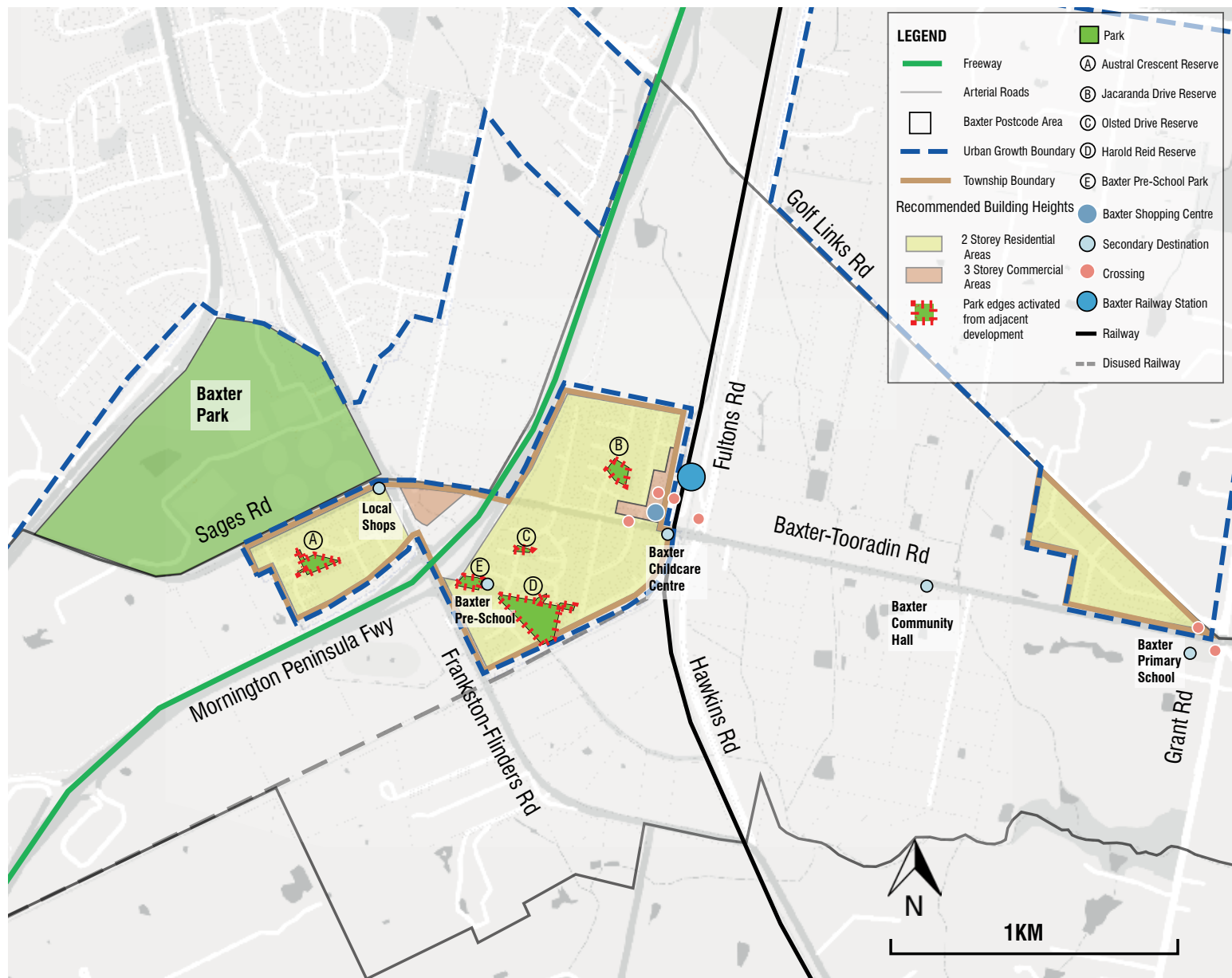


Figure 5: Baxter Township Built Form and Open Space Framework

7.6 Open Space

Objective

To improve amenities and facilities within parks and open spaces for a range of ages and life stages.

Strategies

Facilitate a series of high quality open spaces integrated with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Promote the semi-rural character of the township by maintaining, improving and complementing open spaces, trees and local views.

Continue to build upon the existing recreation facilities in, and adjoining, the township.

Enhance the town centre and residential areas through additional tree planting and improvements to existing open spaces.

Encourage the development of land adjacent to parks to be designed to improve passive surveillance and connectivity.

Actions

- A15. Council will undertake an audit of local parks to determine future priorities for improvements and recreational needs.
- A16. Council will plant additional trees within parks and open spaces to improve amenity and micro-climate.
- A17. Council will investigate opportunities to integrate parks within their surrounding neighbourhood to enhance public safety and comfort for users.
- A18. Council will provide improved walking and cycling connections to Baxter Park.
- A19. Council will work with Frankston City Council to improve walking and cycling connections into Baxter Park.



7.7 Movement

Objective

To ensure residents are provided with a variety of movement options that are safe, accessible, integrated and prioritise all mode types and movements within the township.

Strategies

Improve the township's existing road, off-road and public transport infrastructure to ensure residents have real choice about how they access local facilities and the surrounding region.

Improve amenity, priority and safety for pedestrians and bicycle riders to, and within, the township with improved pathways and pedestrian facilities as shown in **Figure 6** below.

Possible pedestrian facilities and treatment along Baxter-Tooradin Road adjacent to Baxter Tavern, Baxter Community Hall and Baxter Primary School as detailed by pedestrian - cycle links on Figure 7



Figure 6: Possible Pedestrian Facilities

Actions

A20. Council will advocate to the Victorian Government to deliver improvements to the bus network throughout the region to provide for greater access to more destinations with higher frequency services.

A21. Council will advocate to the Victorian Government to deliver improvements to the railway station for train and bus passengers.

A22. Council will advocate to VicRoads and the Victorian Government to prioritise improvements to pedestrian and cycling priority, safety and greater opportunities to move within the township particularly at main roads and intersections as identified in **Figure 7** (page 23).

A23. Council will enhance pedestrian and cycling links between precincts of the township and permeability within residential and commercial areas as identified in **Figure 7**.

A24. Council will work with VicTrack to plan and construct a regional shared path along the Stony Point Railway Line from Baxter to Merricks and Stony Point.

New or enhanced links are shown with green dashed lines and arrows on the township's movement framework in **Figure 7**.

Possible pedestrian, cycling and public transport improvements that could be considered for the Baxter town centre



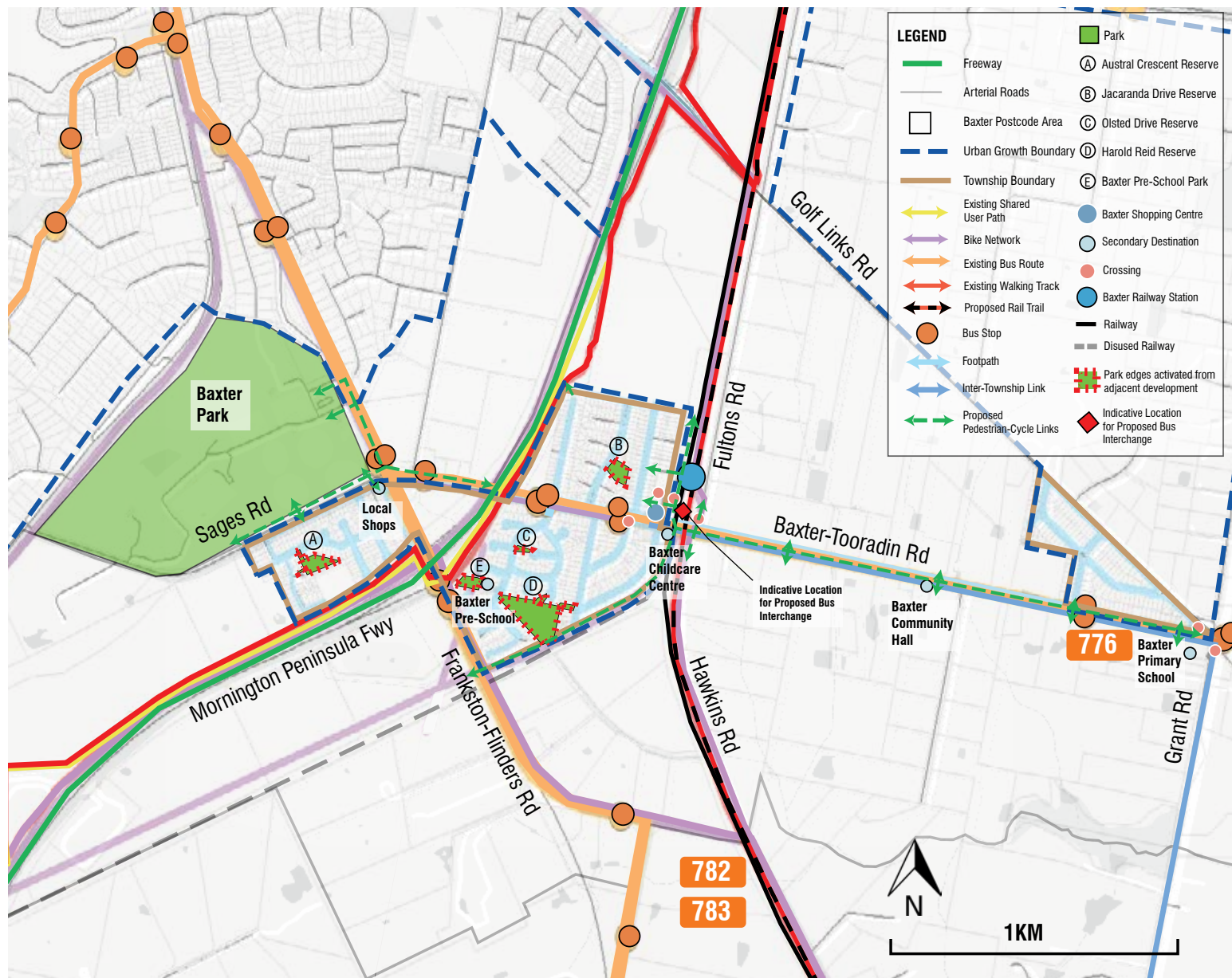


Figure 7: Baxter Township Movement Framework

8. The Baxter Township Development Framework

The Baxter Township Development Framework details a planning framework for the Baxter Township as shown in **Figure 8**.

The Development Framework should be read in conjunction with the specific township precinct plans identified in Figure 9 which shows two township precincts:

- **Precinct 1 – Town Centre.**
- **Precinct 2 – Residential Areas.**

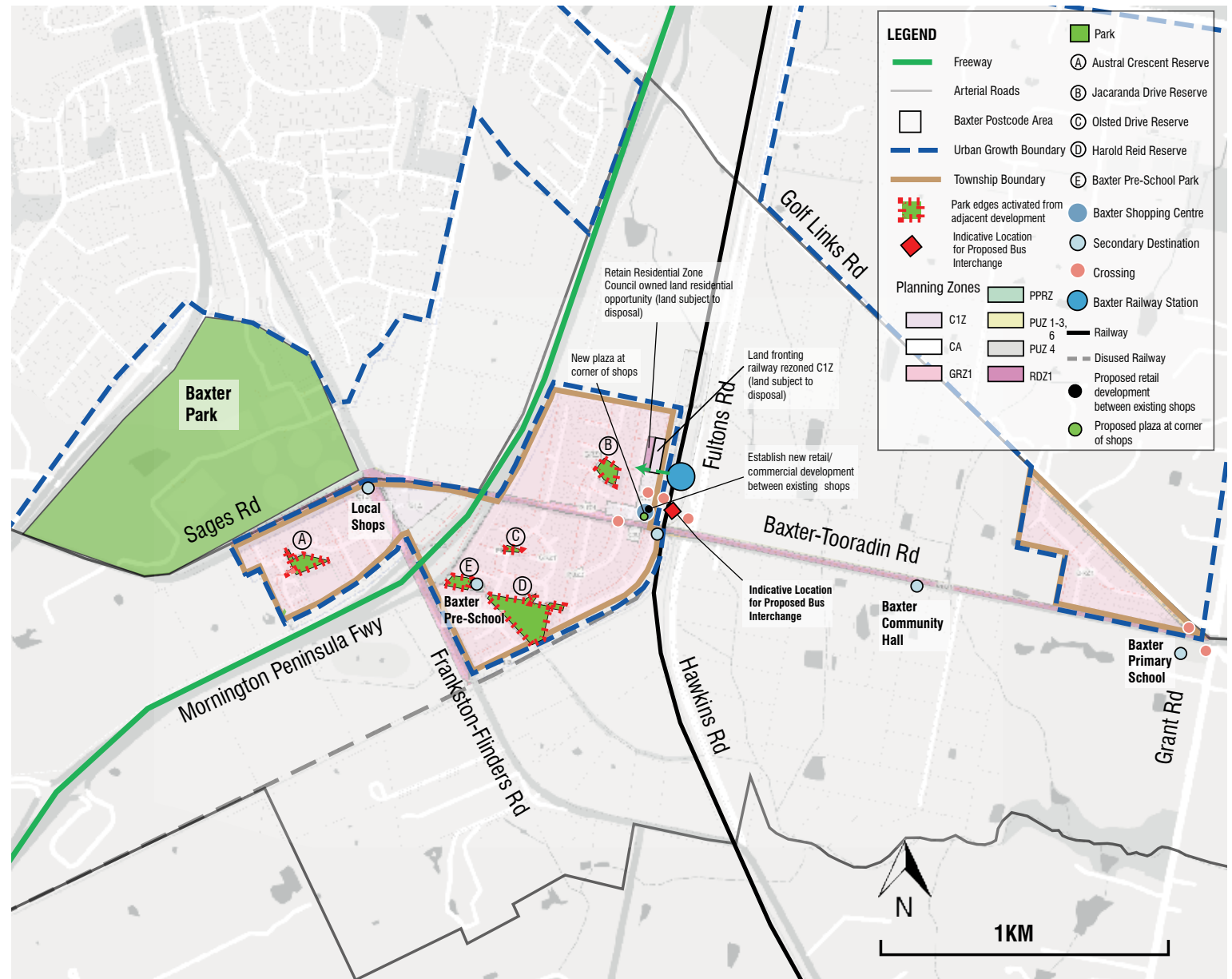


Figure 8: Baxter Township Development Framework

9. Precinct Plans

Precinct 1 – Town Centre.

Includes a residential and mixed use area with building heights of up to 2 storeys and commercial zoning (C1Z) for the town centre adjacent to the Baxter station with building heights of up to 3 storeys.

Precinct 2 – Residential Areas.

Includes a small area of local shops located at the corner of Baxter-Tooradin Road and Frankston-Flinders Road. Existing residential provisions, as per the adopted *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2017* for land use and development will be maintained (shown as GRZ1 land) with building heights of up to 2 storeys. Residential development will also provide improved interfaces and passive surveillance of adjacent parks. The area of local shops will include building heights of up to a maximum of 2 storeys to provide a transition to residential areas and up to 3 storeys on the service commercial site.

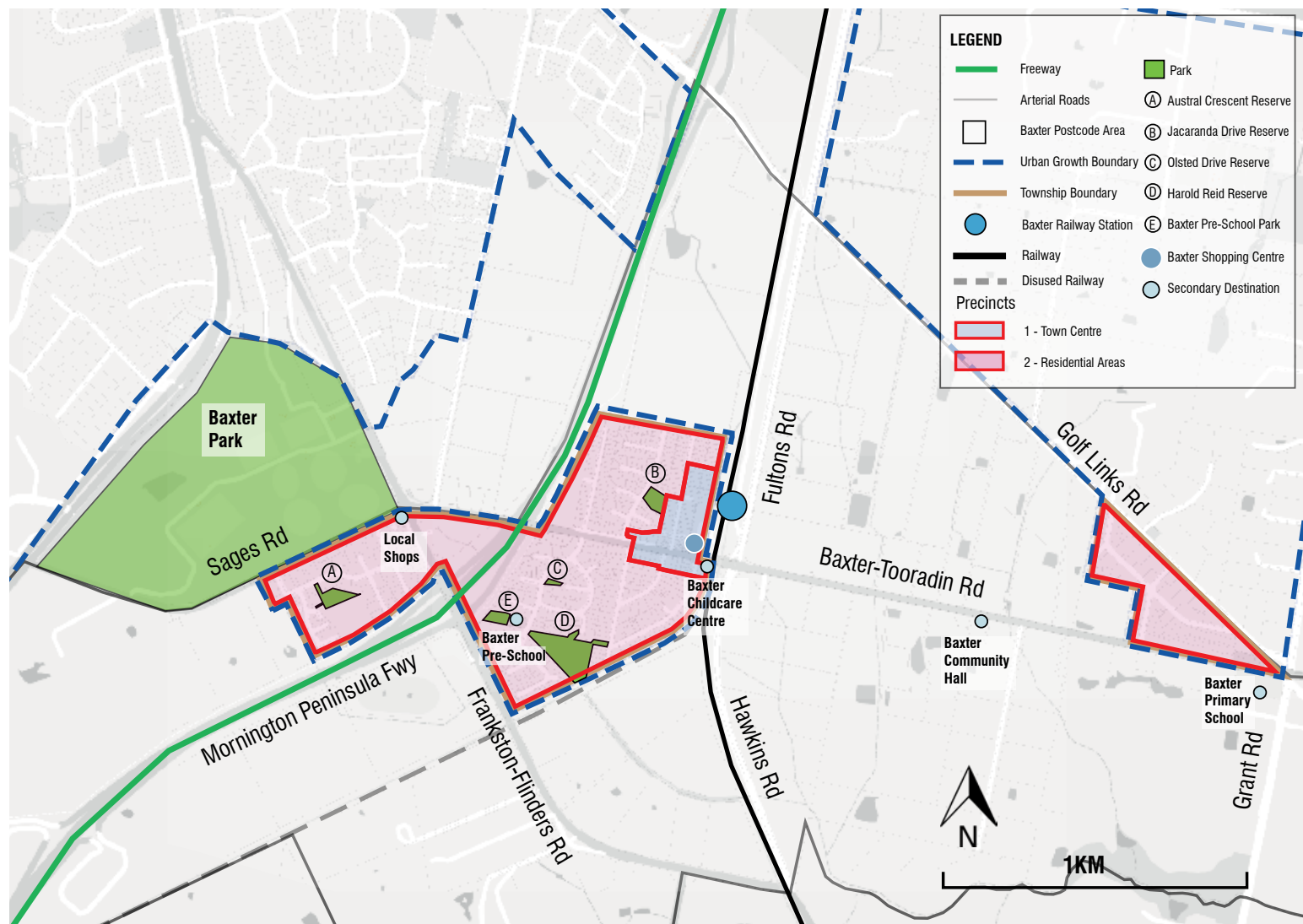


Figure 9: Baxter Township Precincts Plan

9.1 Precinct 1 - Town Centre

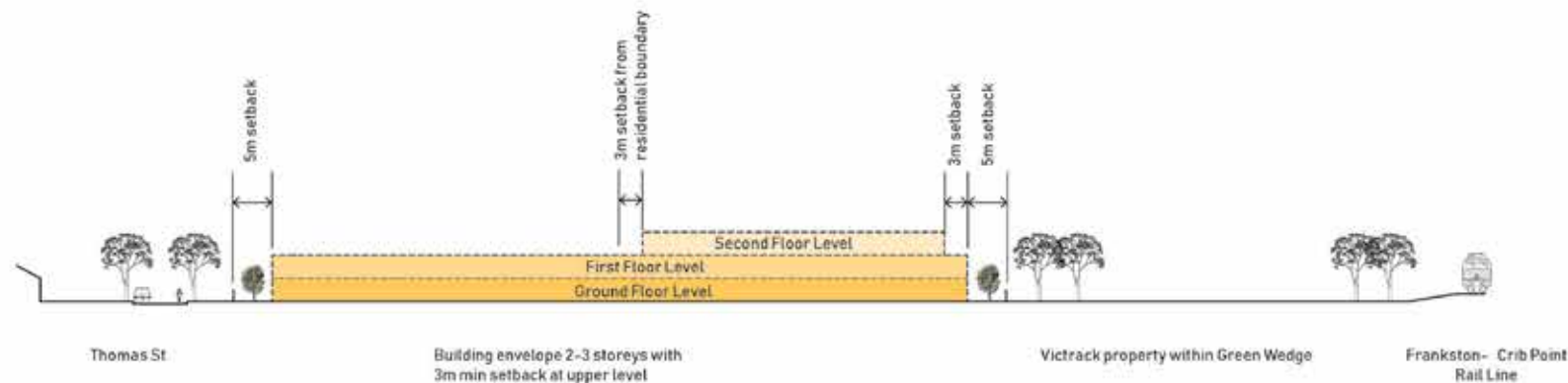
The Baxter Township Precinct 1 - Town Centre is shown in **Figure 11**.

9.1.1 Precinct Objectives

- To improve the connection between the town centre and the railway station.
- To utilise Council land that may be subject to future disposal to facilitate new residential use and development such as affordable housing around the railway station.
- To utilise Council land that may be subject to future disposal to facilitate new, small scale retail and commercial use and development integrated with housing around the railway station.
- To ensure that development makes a positive contribution to the character of the town centre and improves the public environment.
- To provide a more integrated and coherent town centre with improved pedestrian, cycling, vehicle and public transport access and connectivity.

9.1.2 Precinct Requirements

- Maximum 3 storey building height for development in commercial areas within the town centre.
- Minimum 3 metre setbacks for all buildings at second floor level in the Commercial 1 Zone which are directly adjacent to residential areas.
- Minimum 5 metre setbacks with canopy vegetation for all buildings at ground, first and second floor levels in the Commercial 1 Zone which are directly adjacent to green wedge areas and the street frontage.
- Maximum front fence height of 1.5 metres with 25% transparency or 1.8 metres with 50% transparency along a street or public pathway.



Cross section showing building heights and setbacks for new development in the town centre between Thomas Street and the railway

Figure 10: Thomas Street-Railway Cross Section Plan

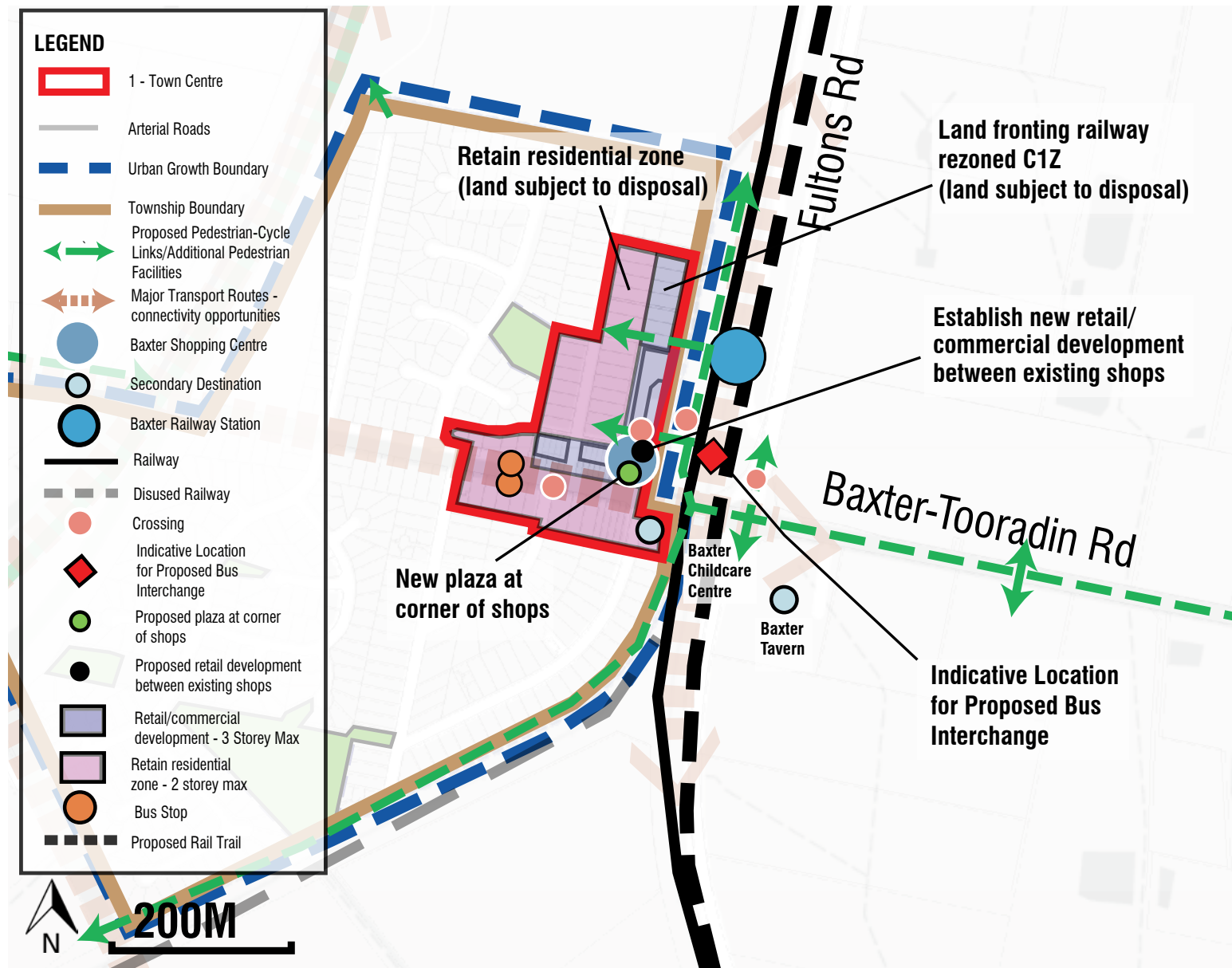


Figure 11: Precinct 1 - Town Centre

9.2 Precinct 2 - Residential Areas

The Baxter Township Precinct 2 – Residential Areas: West is shown in **Figure 12** and Residential Areas: East is shown in **Figure 13**.

9.2.1 Precinct Objectives

- To retain the existing low scale residential character of residential areas.
- To encourage affordable and diverse housing types.
- To encourage a wider range of housing options around public parks that improve the surveillance and safety of the public park.
- To ensure an appropriate transition of built form for residential areas and from residential areas to surrounding green wedge land with appropriate setbacks.
- To improve walking and cycling connectivity through the precinct.
- To improve the connection between residential areas, the town centre and railway station.

9.2.2 Precinct Requirements

- Maximum 2 storey building height for development within residential areas.
- Development along a park interface should provide:
 - A minimum lot size of 300 m².
 - Windows and balconies overlooking parkland.
 - Maximum fence height along the park interface of 1.5 metres with 25% transparency or 1.8 metres with 50% transparency.

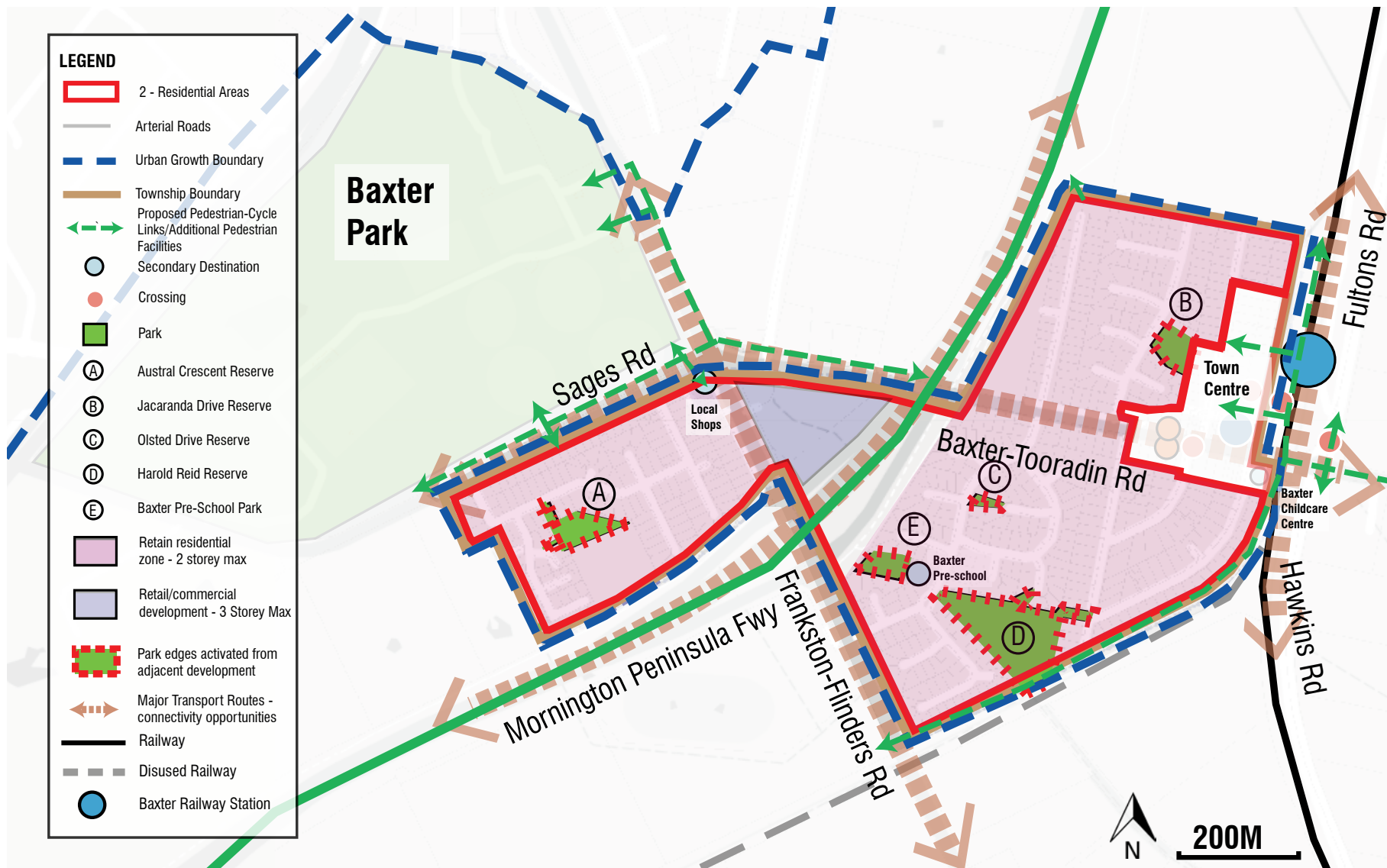


Figure 12: Precinct 2 - Residential Areas: West

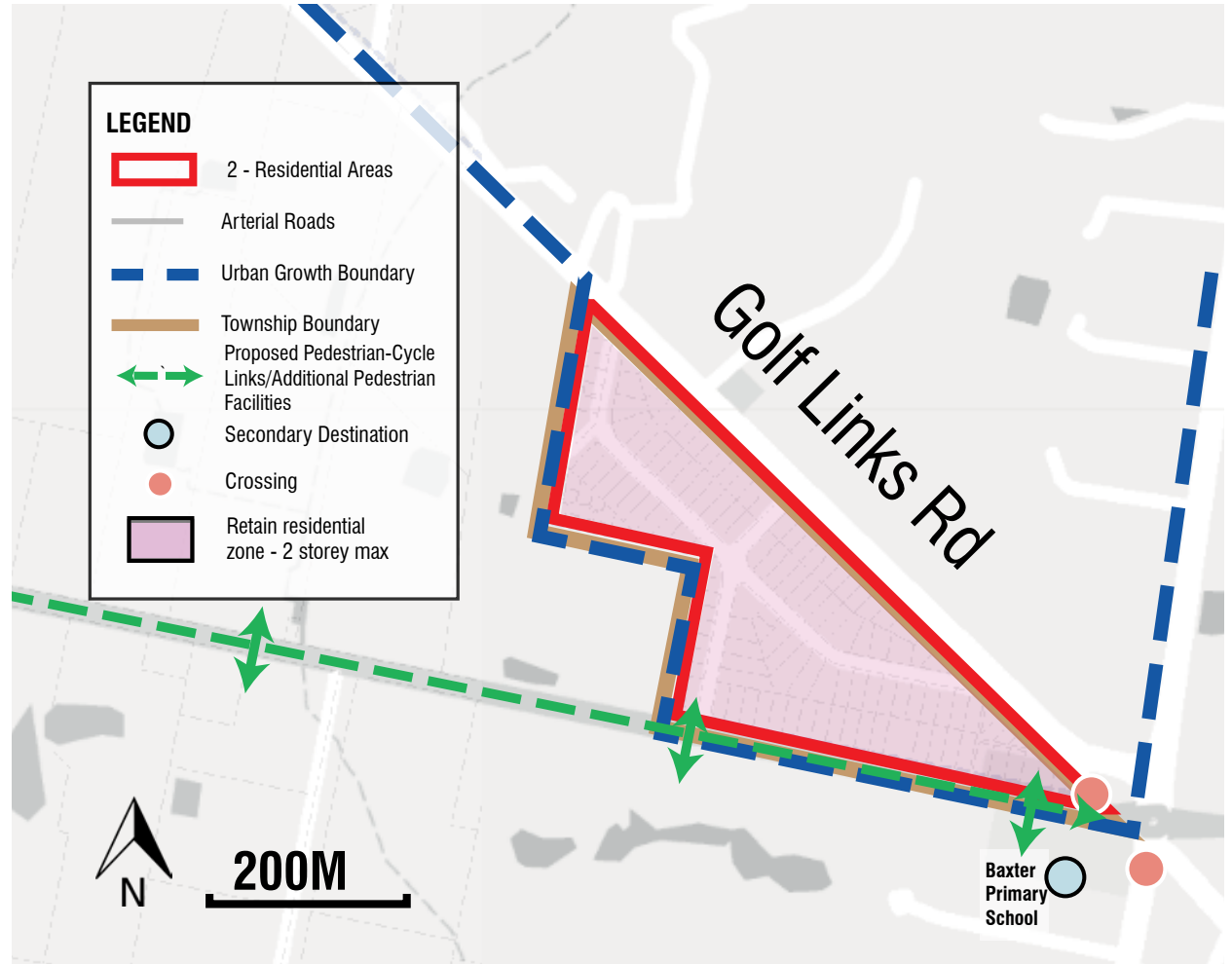


Figure 13: Precinct 2 - Residential Areas: East

10. Implementation

Implementing the Baxter Township Structure Plan will require a range of statutory and non-statutory implementation measures to ensure the vision is realised.

10.1 Statutory Implementation

To give greater certainty to the implementation of the vision for the centre, it is necessary to ensure key elements are included in the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme. The vision and objectives should be embedded in local policy. This could be through Council's existing Activity Centres Local Policy (Clause 22.02) or a new Local Policy. The Structure Plan should be included as a reference document in the local policy or similar mechanism and then integrated into the Planning Policy Framework as required at a later stage.

Part of the Council owned land within the Town Centre Precinct which is subject to potential disposal should be rezoned to facilitate a range of commercial uses and new housing types. Council will prepare and implement a Design Development Overlay (DDO) around the parks within the township to facilitate improved interfaces and surveillance with the parks by encouraging one dwelling per lot size of 300 m², passive surveillance and more transparent fencing treatments along park interfaces. A DDO should also be applied to the town centre to improve the design response and interactions between the built form of the private and public realms and to green wedge interfaces. The DDO will be based on the requirements specified for the township precincts.

In the Residential Precinct key directions for the *Mornington Peninsula Housing and Settlement Strategy 2017* will be implemented relating to the protection of neighbourhood character and liveability with the township, and the containment of future residential development within the established Baxter Township as shown by the existing UGB. This will not only maintain a clear township boundary but also separation between townships where green wedge areas and significant rural landscapes can flourish.

The Neighbourhood Residential Zone will be applied within the Residential Precinct to all current residential areas that are zoned General Residential (GRZ). Neighbourhood Residential Zone areas will have a maximum height of 2 storeys and a minimum lot size of either 300 m² or 450 m² to support the objectives of the *Mornington Peninsula Housing and Settlement Strategy*.

With the Mornington Peninsula Freeway now constructed, Council may wish to consider rezoning the Public Use Zone 4 and Green Wedge Zone – Schedule 2 where the Public Acquisition Overlay – Schedule 1 applies to the more appropriate zone of Road Zone – Category 1.

10.2 Non Statutory Implementation

The Structure Plan identifies a wide range of non-statutory implementation actions in Section 7, necessary to deliver the vision for the township. There are a range of community advocacy roles that Council needs to lead, particularly in relation to improving the township's transport opportunities. The most significant is the potential railway line extension and duplication to Baxter (and beyond).

There is a risk that the design and delivery of the infrastructure could be detrimental to the township. It is critical to ensure that the extension contributes to the township vision, that a range of social, economic and environmental benefits are considered, and that the infrastructure expenditure is maximised and in the public interest. Extension of the railway to Hastings is the optimum outcome.

There are also a number of public realm initiatives that are required to improve the amenity of the township and address a number of access, connectivity and safety issues including streetscape master planning, tree planting and improved crossings. These are subject to investment by Council.

In the Town Centre Precinct, there are a range of capital works improvements that Council and State Government Agencies can make to the pedestrian and cycling environment to strengthen links throughout the precinct and to the Residential Precinct. Council should also facilitate and build a new public plaza in the Town Centre Precinct and work with VicTrack on the proposed rail trail.

Audits should be undertaken and possibly masterplans prepared by Council for some or all parks in the Residential Precinct to improve their integration, amenity, safety, environment and utility.

Statutory and non-statutory initiatives are outlined in more detail in the Implementation Plan in **Table 1** along with recommendations on timing, partners and priority.

Table 1: Implementation Table

	Action	Timing / Commenced	Duration	Lead Agency / Responsibility	Involved	Stakeholder & Community Engagement	Estim. New Cost (\$)	Priority
A1	Council will encourage some limited forms of housing and mixed use development adjacent to, and within, the town centre as shown for Precinct 1 to support the town centre through improved street activation, surveillance and integration.	June 2019	Ongoing	Council	DELWP	Yes	-	Medium
A2	Council will prepare design controls to facilitate medium density housing around parks providing more diverse housing types (refer Section 9).	June 2019	18-24 months	Council	DELWP	Yes	100K – 200K	Medium
A3	Council will encourage the delivery of more diverse housing stock within the township, providing for the needs of an ageing population.	June 2019	Ongoing	Council	DELWP	Yes	-	Medium
A4	Council will investigate options to work with housing associations to deliver more diverse housing stock on its land holdings (some of which are subject to potential disposal) within the township.	2019	Ongoing	Council	Housing Associations	Yes	-	Medium
A5	Council will develop a streetscape masterplan for the town centre precinct identifying projects to be undertaken over the coming years to enhance amenity and improve the quality of the public realm.	2019	12-24 months	Council	Traders	Yes	80K – 150K	Medium
A6	The Plan will provide for new, well designed and integrated mixed-use residential, community and small scale commercial development in the town centre as shown in Precinct 1.	2020-2022	24 -48 months	Council	DELWP	-	-	Medium
A7	Council owned land north of the railway station which is subject to potential disposal will be rezoned in part as shown in Precinct 1.	2020-2022	24 -48 months	Council	DELWP	Yes	100K – 200K	High
A8	Council will undertake an audit of street lighting in the town centre to identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian movements.	2020	18 months	Council	Traders	Yes	30K	Low
A9	Council will work with local businesses to promote their economic activities through clustering, promotion and a business support program.	2020	Ongoing	Council	Traders	Yes	-	Low
A10	Council will investigate the need for additional community facilities, including youth facilities, to meet community needs within the township or in adjacent areas.	2020-2022	24 -48 months	Council	Community Groups	Yes	40K	Low
A11	Council will advocate to the Victorian Government for additional public transport options connecting Baxter with surrounding areas to improve access to community and support services for people in and around Baxter.	2019	12 months	Council	DoT/PTV	-	-	High
A12	Council will identify an appropriate location for a community bus stop or stops in Baxter.	2019-2021	36 months	Council	DoT/PTV	Yes	-	Low

Table 1: Implementation Table - continued

	Action	Timing / Commenced	Duration	Lead Agency / Responsibility	Involved	Stakeholder & Community Engagement	Estim. New Cost (\$)	Priority
A13	Council will adopt the <i>Neighbourhood Character Study & Guidelines</i> (currently under preparation) to provide further guidance on the built form character requirements for residential areas of the township.	2019	12 months	Council	DELWP	Yes	-	High
A14	Council will prepare precinct design guidelines, requirements and planning controls to set parameters for appropriate scale, height and intensity of development (refer Section 9).	2020-2021	24 -36 months	Council	DELWP	Yes	150K - 250K	Medium
A15	Council will undertake an audit of local parks to determine future priorities for improvements and recreational needs.	June 2019	24 months	Council	-	Yes	50K	Medium
A16	Council will plant additional trees within parks and open spaces to improve amenity and micro-climate.	2019-2021	12 -36 months	Council	-	Yes	40K-50K	Medium
A17	Council will investigate opportunities to integrate parks within their surrounding neighbourhood to enhance public safety and comfort for users.	2019-2021	12 -36 months	Council	-	Yes	-	Low
A18	Council will provide improved walking and cycling connections to Baxter Park.	2019-2021	12 -36 months	Council	DoT/PTV	Yes	50K - 100K	High
A19	Council will work with Frankston City Council to improve walking and cycling connections into Baxter Park.	2019-2021	12 -36 months	Council	Frankston City Council	Yes	-	Medium
A20	Council will advocate to the Victorian Government to deliver improvements to the bus network throughout the region to provide for greater access to more destinations with higher frequency services.	2019-2022	12 -48 months	Council	DoT/PTV	Yes	-	High
A21	Council will advocate to the Victorian Government to deliver improvements to the railway station for train and bus passengers.	2019-2022	12 -48 months	Council	DoT/PTV	Yes	-	High
A22	Council will advocate to VicRoads and the Victorian Government to prioritise improvements to pedestrian and cycling priority, safety and greater opportunities to move within the township particularly at main roads and intersections as identified in Figure 7.	2019-2022	12 -48 months	VicRoads	DoT/PTV	Yes	-	Medium
A23	Council will enhance pedestrian and cycling links between precincts of the township and permeability within residential and commercial areas as identified in Figure 7.	2019-2022	12 -48 months	Council	DoT/PTV	Yes	1-2 M	Medium
A24	Council will work with VicTrack to plan and construct a regional shared path along the Stony Point Railway Line from Baxter to Merricks and Stony Point.	2020-2023	12 -48 months	Council	Vic Track, DoT/PTV	Yes	5.44 M	High

11. Monitoring and Review

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council will provide a progress report on the implementation of the Baxter Township Structure Plan every two years, commencing from when the Structure Plan is approved. This process will enable Council to measure progress, to ensure an appropriate application of resources, and to ensure the delivery of key priority projects. The Council will use the two yearly progress report to adjust the implementation program to ensure that the Structure Plan is achieving the vision.

The Structure Plan review cycle is every four years, to ensure that it remains relevant and consistent with Council's strategic policies, MSS (or Municipal Planning Strategy) and the Council Plan, and to identify any changes required to respond to new trends, policies or changing circumstances. A review of the Structure Plan should commence four years prior to the expiry of the Plan and will enable Council to prepare for the subsequent Structure Plan period.





BAXTER

Township Structure Plan