

Commercial Land Strategy 2040



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Acknowledgment

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

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction.....	4
Developing the Strategy	8
The Local Economy	10
Commercial Trends.....	14
The Centres Hierarchy	18
Vision for Commercial Land	22
Planning for Commercial Centres.....	24
General Recommendations.....	26
Changes to Planning Controls	28
Future Directions for Towns and Villages.....	32





Executive Summary

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

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

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

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

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



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

Introduction

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

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

This strategy replaced the Bega Valley Shire Commercial Centres Strategy from 2006 that was amended in 2018.

Aims

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

Foundation principles

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



Achieving resilience outcomes

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

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

Achieving community goals

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

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

Achieving State Government goals

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

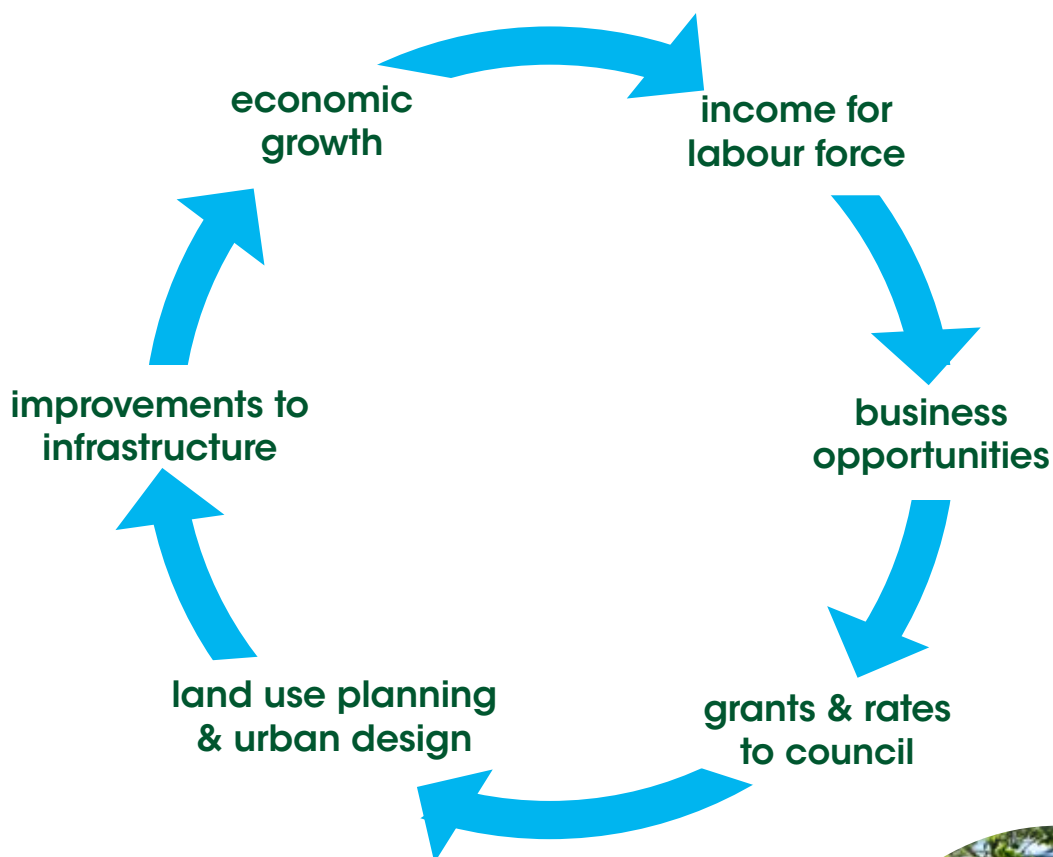
- Reinforce the role and function of centres as the primary places for commerce, retail, social activity and regional services
- Focus future commercial and retail activity in existing commercial centres

Information sources

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

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

The partnership approach



Developing the Strategy

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

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

Collaboration

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

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

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

Workshop discussion topics:

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

Engagement process

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

The project began by listening

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

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

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

Workshops with councillors were held in October and November 2019.

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

Council publicly exhibited the draft strategy for 13 weeks from 16 December 2019 to 15 March 2020 with 18 submissions received. Following the review of submissions, several changes to the exhibited draft strategy were made before the strategy was adopted by Council on 29 April 2020.





The Local Economy

Population characteristics

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

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

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

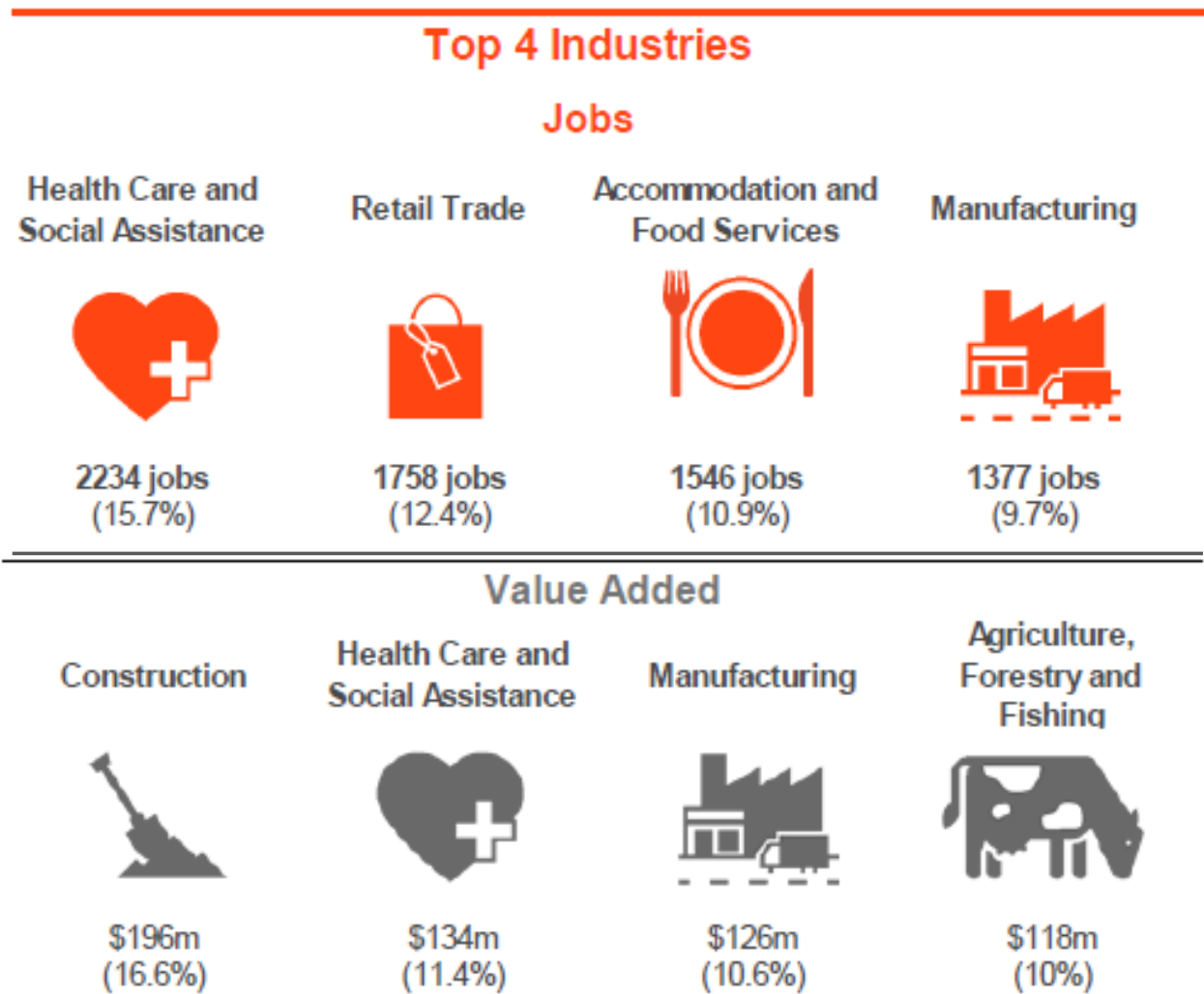
The population is ageing, with the median age up 5.1% between 2011 and 2016.

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

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

Industry characteristics

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



Source: NIEIR

Shire of Bega Valley - Economic Health Check



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

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

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

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

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

Population and Commercial Development

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

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

Opportunities for industry growth

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

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

Local opportunities for growth

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





Commercial Trends

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

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

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

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

Physical changes in commercial centres

Use of vacant premises used for temporary purposes

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

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

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

Highway improvements that bypass town centres

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

Rising vacancy rates of existing commercial premises

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

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

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



Digital economy

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

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

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

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

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



Economic influences

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

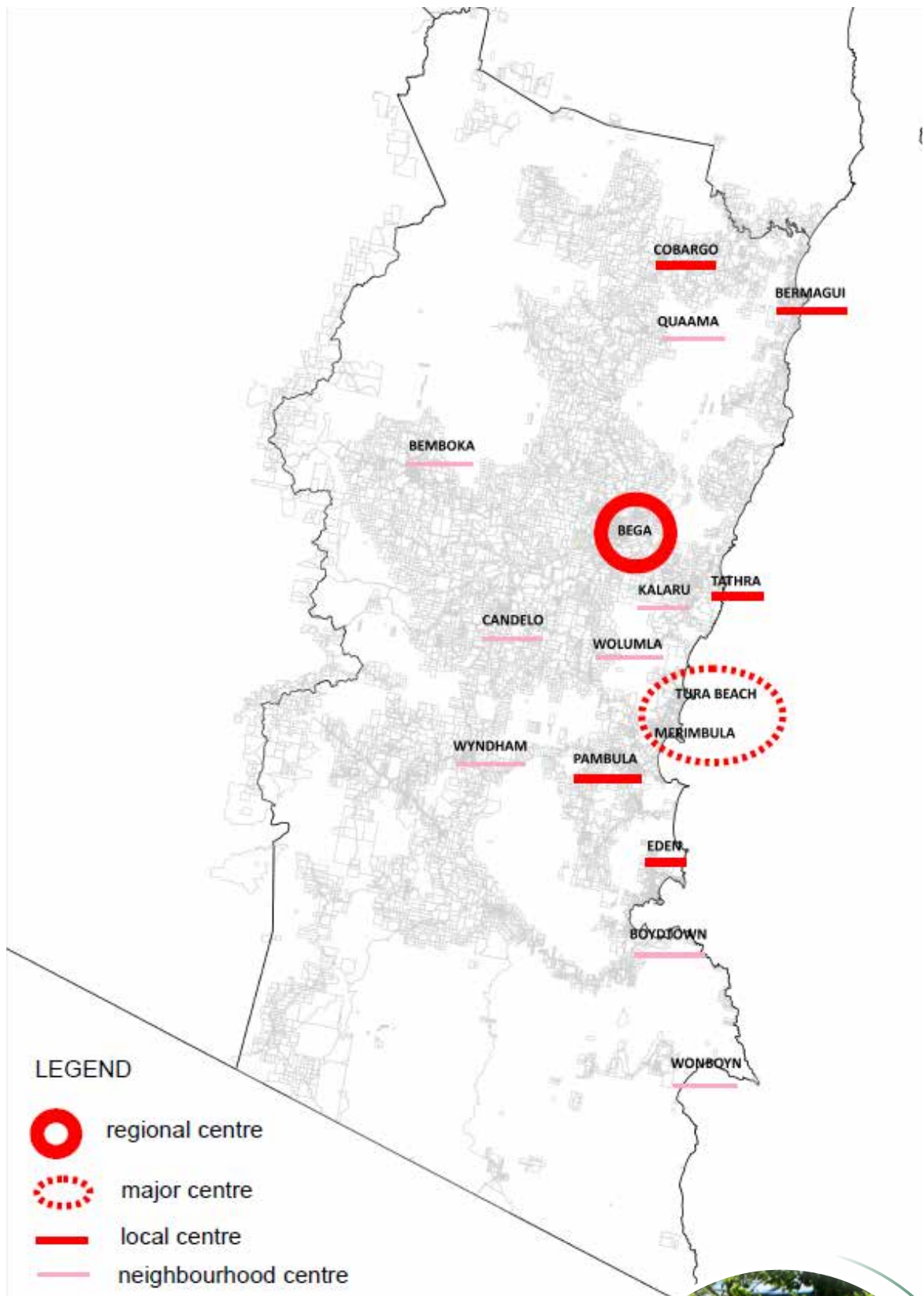
- With a stable and aging population, there are limited prospects for attracting major new retail establishments even in the most desirable locations given the current trends described above
- Retail growth in Australia remains weak despite taxation cuts, the results of the recent election and interest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





The Centres Hierarchy

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



Regional centre

Bega

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

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

Major centre

Merimbula/Tura Beach

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

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

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

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

Local centres

Bermagui, Cobargo, Tathra, Pambula, Eden

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

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

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

Neighbourhood centres

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

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

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

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

Categories of retail goods and services

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

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

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





Vision for Commercial Land

Working towards our future

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

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

Bega Valley Community Strategic Plan 2040.

20 year vision for commercial land

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

Good practice outcomes of a successful commercial strategy are:

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





Planning for Commercial Centres

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

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

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

Commercial centre development principles

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

1. Manage hierarchy and encourage blended use

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

2. Consolidate commercial activities

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

3. Maintain fine grain and encourage business diversity

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

4. Enhance the public realm

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

5. Address connectivity within centres and improve accessibility

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

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

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

7. Focus on unique assets

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

8. Introduce design guidance and sustainability

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

9. Streamline approvals processes

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

10. Embrace technology

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





General Recommendations

Improve the public realm

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

Improving the public spaces including appropriate planting and green space in commercial areas to make them more attractive, accessible, healthier and safer and can stimulate additional visitation and business investment.

Consider applying site specific character controls

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

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

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

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

Assist business-related development applications

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

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

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

Investigate incentives for shop top housing

To help facilitate greater housing diversity and supply in commercial centres, it is recommended that Council investigate a range of options to incentivise development of shop-top housing in Merimbula and Bega. This may include increases in height limits or reductions in headworks or developer contributions.

Continue deferred headworks charges

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

Continue heritage conservation incentives

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





Changes to Planning Controls

Land use planning and development controls

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

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

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

Commercial zones

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

B1 Neighbourhood Centre

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

B2 Local Centre

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

B4 Mixed Use

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

B5 Business Development

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

RU5 Village

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

Building Heights

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



Amendments to land use planning and development controls

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013: Commercial Development

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

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

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



Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013: Land Use Tables

B1 Neighbourhood Centre

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

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

B2 Local Centre and B4 Mixed Use

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

RU5 Village

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

Remove land uses from the zone RU5 Village that are inconsistent with a rural village, including self-storage units, vehicle repair stations, vehicle body repair workshop, vehicle sales or hire premises, hardware and building supplies, landscaping material supplies, timber yards, depots, warehouse or distribution centre and public administration buildings.

RU2 Rural Landscape and E3 Environmental Management

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

Combined digital outlets

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





Future Directions for Towns and Villages

Cultural heritage

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

Built heritage

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

Bega

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

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

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

Height of buildings limits play an important role in stimulating redevelopment and urban renewal while maintaining desired character and limiting unwanted impacts. Larger sites can more easily integrate higher levels without impacting upon neighbouring sites.

Business land and vacancy rates, Bega October 2019*

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

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



Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

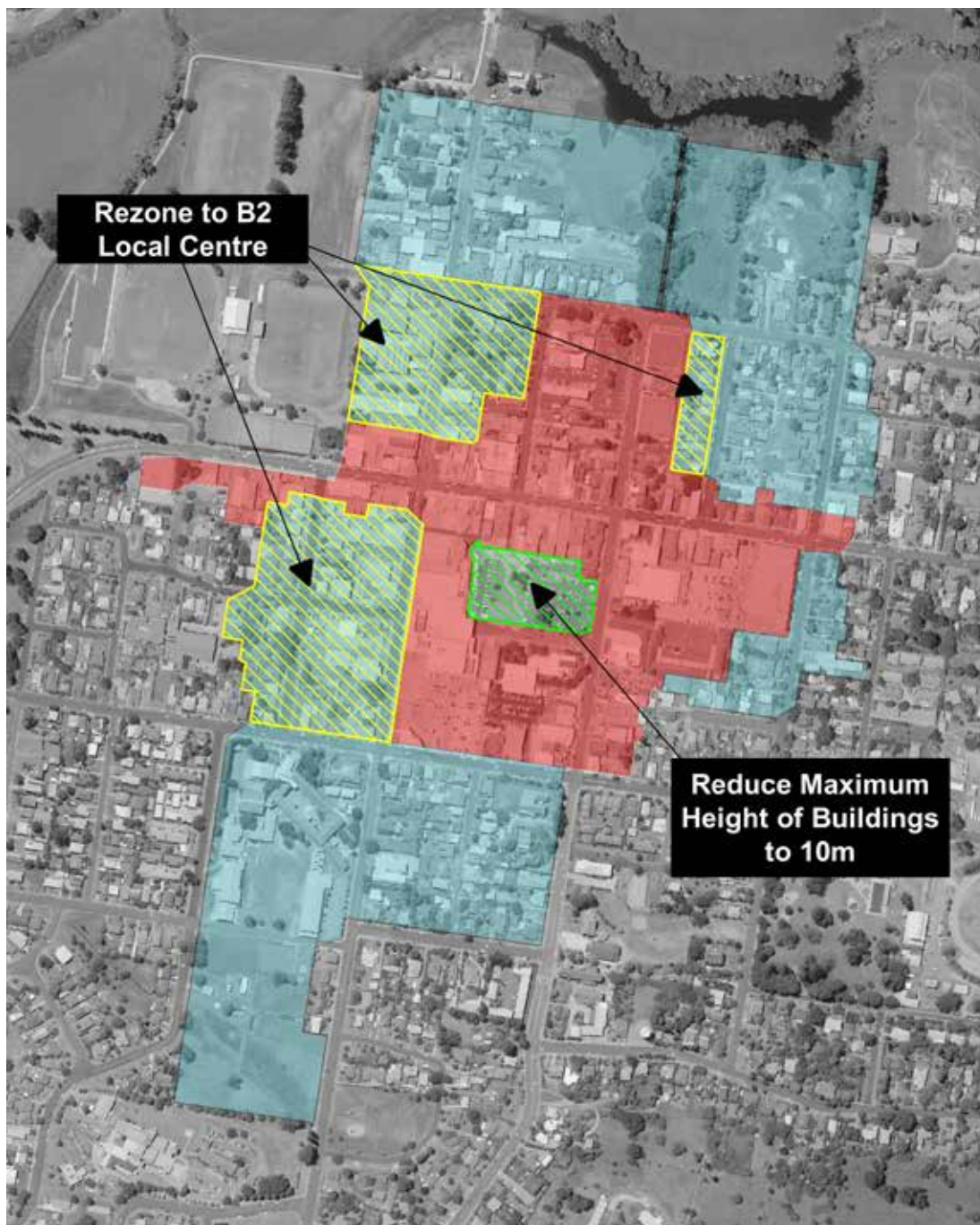
Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B4 Mixed Use land to B2 Local Centre as shown on the map to reduce the potential for further sprawl of commercial uses and to consolidate the business zone and existing uses
- Reduce maximum building height of land zoned RE1 Public Recreation Littleton Gardens to 10 metres on the map to be consistent with surrounding non-commercial zone land
- To encourage new development in Bega and Merimbula town centres, Council will consider site-specific proposals, with a land area greater than 2000m², to increase the maximum height of buildings in Bega by way of a combined Planning Proposal and Development Application that allows the community to evaluate the details of each proposal.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

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

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



- Existing Land Zoning
- B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
 - B2 - Local Centre
 - B4 - Mixed Use
 - B5 - Business Development
 - RU5 - Village
- Zone Change Recommendations
- Zone Change Recommendation
 - Maximum Height of Buildings Change Recommendation

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



Merimbula/Tura Beach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Height of buildings limits play an important role in stimulating redevelopment and urban renewal while maintaining desired character and limiting unwanted impacts. Larger sites can more easily integrate higher levels without impacting upon neighbouring sites.

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

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

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

Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

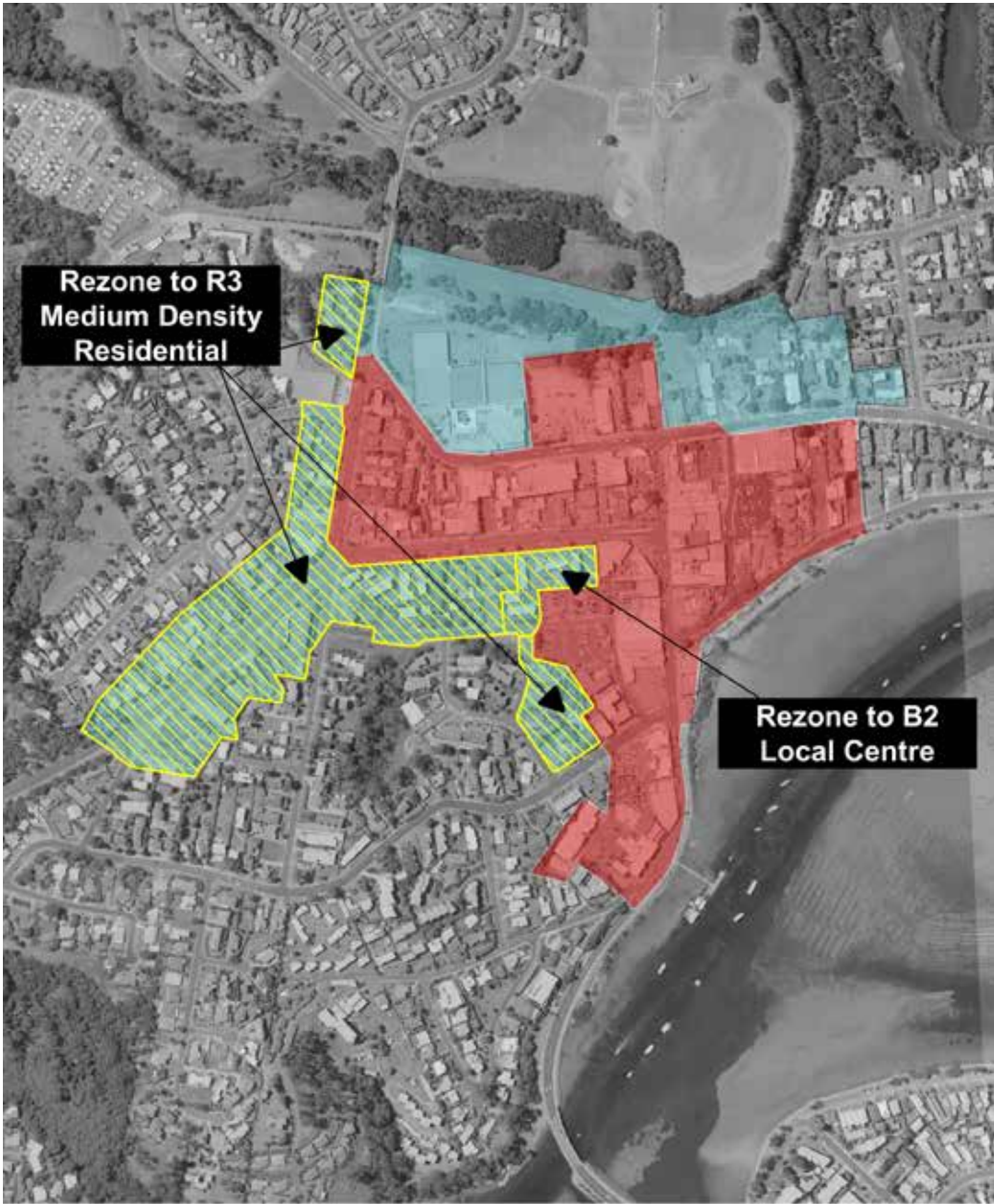
- In recognition of the oversupply of land zoned B4 Mixed Use and to consolidate commercial activity it is recommended that certain land zoned B4 Mixed Use be investigate rezoning to medium density residential as shown on the map. This reflects the predominance of residential and tourist accommodation uses in these areas and will provide opportunities for urban renewal and housing diversity to enable more people to live close to the town centre. It would also remove approximately 5 hectares from the business zone that is currently considered vacant or underutilised, however, vacant land zoned B1 Neighbourhood Centre at Tura Beach and the future occupation of vacant commercial premises is adequate to cater for the foreseeable future. Condensing the town centre may cause property values to rise and stimulate redevelopment and growth.
- To encourage new development in Bega and Merimbula town centres, Council will consider site-specific proposals, with a land area greater than 2000m², to increase the maximum height of buildings in Merimbula by way of a combined Planning Proposal and Development Application that allows the community to evaluate the details of each proposal.
- The development of bulky goods premises is limited to Tura Beach and the existing business zoning is retained without future expansion.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

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



Merimbula: Recommended changes to land use zoning



- Existing Land Zoning Zone Change Recommendations
- B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
 - B2 - Local Centre
 - B4 - Mixed Use
 - B5 - Business Development
 - RU5 - Village

Eden

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

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

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

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

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

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

Business land and vacancy rates, Eden, October 2019*

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

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



Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

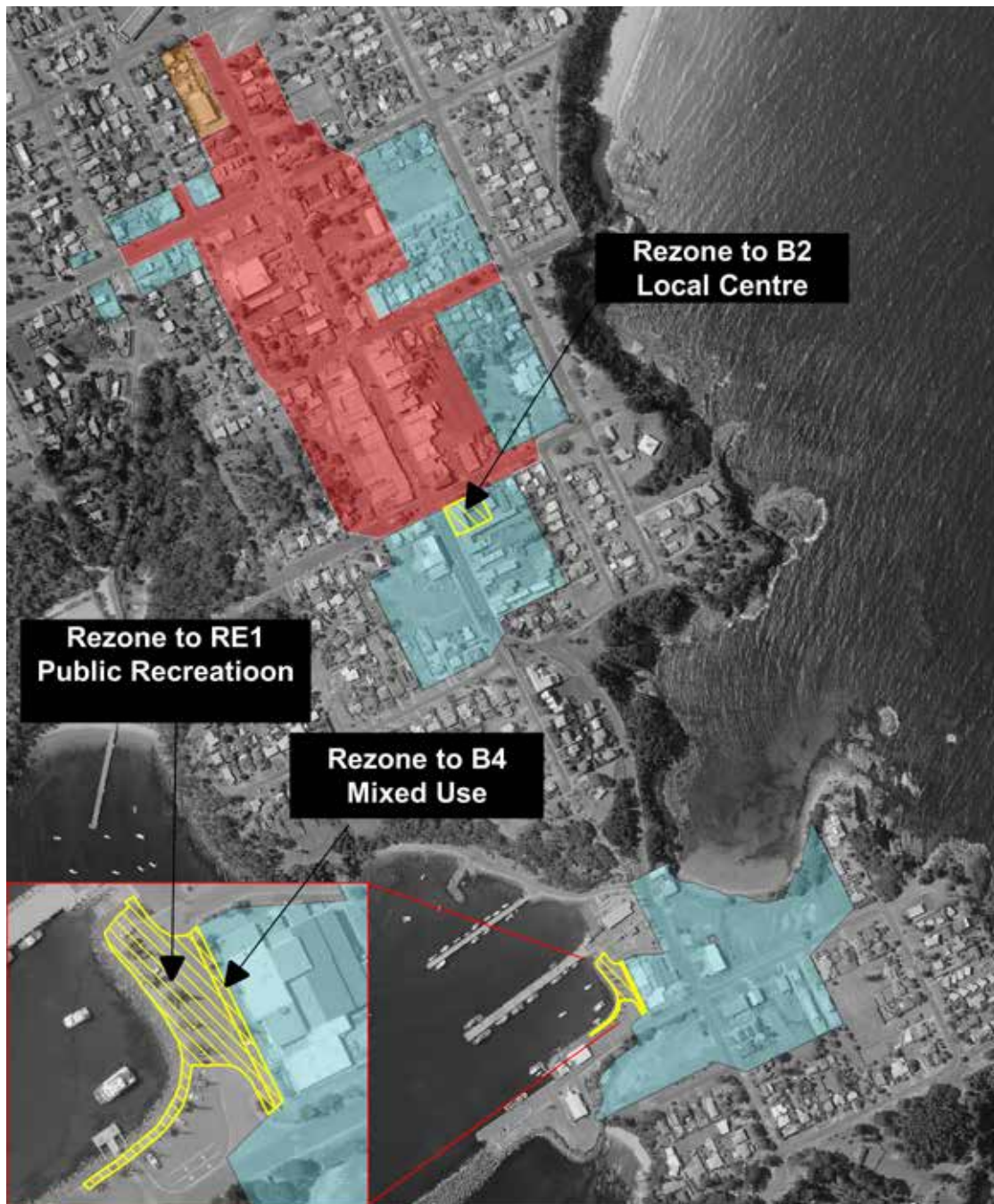
Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B4 Mixed Use land to B2 Local Centre to reflect existing commercial uses as shown on the map.
- Rezone IN4 Working Waterfront to B4 Mixed Use and RE1 Public Recreation to achieve activation and harbourside renewal as shown on the map.

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

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





- Existing Land Zoning Zone Change Recommendations
- B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
 - B2 - Local Centre
 - B4 - Mixed Use
 - B5 - Business Development
 - RU5 - Village

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



Bermagui

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

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

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

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

Business land and vacancy rates, Bermagui October 2019*

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

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



Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- There are no changes recommended to the allocation of business zones or to maximum building heights. There is sufficient land zoned B2 Local Centre for the foreseeable future. The rezoning of land adjacent to the commercial centre to B4 Mixed Use would lead to a diffusion of commercial activity and detract from the existing compact town centre.
- A watching brief will be kept to monitor the demand for and supply of vacant and occupied commercial land in Bermagui to determine the appropriate time for further zoning of B4 or B2 land.

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

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



Bermagui: Land use zoning and heights



- Existing Land Zoning
- B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
 - B2 - Local Centre
 - B4 - Mixed Use
 - B5 - Business Development
 - RU5 - Village

Pambula

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

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

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

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

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

Business land and vacancy rates, Pambula October 2019

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



Character statement

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

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

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

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

Promote signage and awnings that are well articulated and proportioned.

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley DCP 2013

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





Existing Land Zoning

- B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
- B2 - Local Centre
- B4 - Mixed Use
- B5 - Business Development
- RU5 - Village

Pambula: Land use zoning and heights



Tathra

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

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

Business land and vacancy rates, Tathra October 2019*

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

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



Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- Rezone B1 Neighbourhood Centre land to B2 Local Centre to permit a wider range of commercial uses including retail premises on Andy Poole Drive as shown on the map.
- Rezone R3 Medium Density Residential land to B2 Local Centre to reflect existing commercial uses on Andy Poole Drive and Panorama Drive as shown on the map.
- Rezone B2 Local Centre to B4 Mixed Use on the Tathra headland as shown on the map to increase diversity in the commercial area and provide opportunities to bring residential development into the commercial centre, adding vibrancy and security.
- A watching brief will be kept to monitor the demand for and supply of vacant and occupied commercial land in Tathra to determine the appropriate time for further zoning of B4 or B2 land.

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



Tathra: Proposed changes to land use zoning and heights



- Existing Land Zoning  Zone Change Recommendations
-  B1 - Neighbourhood Centre
 -  B2 - Local Centre
 -  B4 - Mixed Use
 -  B5 - Business Development
 -  RU5 - Village

Villages

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

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

The villages of Bega Valley Shire possess significant heritage and environmental values. The village zone provides flexibility for proposed future development due to the large range of uses permitted in zone RU5. New commercial development in the villages is likely to locate close to existing development to benefit from clustering and to gradually form a main street and centre as each village expands in population over time.

The village zone does, however, have drawbacks which include land use conflict caused by incompatible land uses operating within what are essentially residential areas. The flexible village zone can also make it harder to control the future character of villages and may impact on achieving the consolidation of new commercial development within existing commercial areas and ensuring support for the hierarchy of centres.

For these reasons Council has commenced investigation of the application of B2 and R2 zones for the villages of Wolumla and Kalaru. Wolumla to preserve a possible future commercial centre that is at risk of being lost to residential development; and Kalaru to prevent ad-hoc commercial development.

Council should maintain a watching brief to determine when it is appropriate to apply a business zone over commercial development in other villages.

Further to the above, it is recommended that amendments are made to DCP 2013 to provide specific requirements for commercial development in the RU5 Village zone that consider the centres hierarchy and desired village character through bulk and scale controls.



Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- It is recommended that Council undertake further consideration and community consultation regarding rezoning Wolumla and Kalaru from RU5 Village to B2 Local Centre and R2 Low Density Residential to ensure the orderly development of these centres



Cobargo

Cobargo has a defined 'main street' being a concentration of retail and hospitality outlets along the Princes Highway. During October 2019 there were four vacant premises. The bushfire in January 2020 destroyed seven premises requiring redevelopment of a significant portion of the main street. Retention of the village zone on these large parcels of land will ensure that each rebuild can be flexible in terms of the mix of commercial and residential while remaining sympathetic to the existing heritage character of the area.

The village zone provides flexibility for proposed future development due to the large range of uses permitted in the zone. However, it has drawbacks, with the flexible village zone across the whole village making it harder to ensure that new commercial development contributes to the existing commercial main street.

For these reasons Council has commenced investigation of the application of B2 and R2 zones for the village of Cobargo. Once rebuilt, the continued viability of the existing commercial area should be reinforced by application of a business zone to that area to prevent competing commercial development being developed outside of the existing centre.

Further to the above, it is recommended that amendments are made to DCP 2013 to provide specific requirements for commercial development in the RU5 Village zone that consider the centres hierarchy and desired village character through bulk and scale controls.

Character statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended changes to Bega Valley LEP 2013

- It is recommended that Council undertake further consideration and community consultation regarding rezoning Cobargo from RU5 Village to B2 Local Centre and R2 Low Density Residential to prevent competing commercial development being developed outside of the existing centre.



