



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL
CONVERSATION
REPORT

Tatura Structure Plan
Pre-draft Consultation

MARCH 2021



**GREATER
SHEPPARTON**





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About the Tatura Structure Plan

Tatura is situated approximately 18km west of Shepparton to the south of the Midland Highway. At the 2016 census, Tatura had a population of 4,669 making it the largest township in Greater Shepparton outside of the Shepparton – Mooroopna urban area.

Greater Shepparton is continuing to grow and there has been substantial interest in larger scale development in Tatura in recent years. Tatura has proven popular with home buyers due to its attractive country-town vibe that is in close proximity with services and infrastructure in the Shepparton urban area.

Since the completion of the popular Northlinks estate, the *Shepparton Residential Land Supply & Demand Assessment September 2019* has identified a shortage of residential zoned land in Tatura and concluded that additional residential land supply must be realised in the short-term.

The future expansion of Tatura is supported by the following strategic planning documents, which were implemented into the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme). This includes the:

- *Greater Shepparton Housing Strategy 2011* (GSHS), which was prepared to guide the long term identification and provision of residential land within Greater Shepparton. The GSHS included framework plans for all urban areas and townships in the municipality (including Tatura) that identified land that may accommodate future development following detailed investigations. The framework plan identified the north, north-east, and east of Tatura for possible future development. The GSHS was implemented into the Planning Scheme by Amendment C93 in 2012.
- *Greater Shepparton Townships Framework Plan Review 2019* (the Review), which was prepared to evaluate and update the framework plans for nine of the ten townships contained in the GSHS. The Review updated the framework plan for Tatura, and was implemented into the Planning Scheme by Amendment C212 in 2020.

In response to land supply shortages and the need for additional residential development in Tatura, Council has begun the preparation of a high-level Tatura Structure Plan (Structure Plan) for land to the north, north-east and east of Tatura. The Structure Plan will incorporate the recommendations of the updated framework plan for Tatura, provide information on appropriate densities for future residential development, identify all appropriate regional infrastructure required to support residential development and outline the cost of this infrastructure.

The future implementation of the Structure Plan into the Planning Scheme will provide the strategic justification to rezone additional land in Tatura for residential development realising much-needed residential land supply.



Acknowledgements

Greater Shepparton City Council gratefully acknowledges the assistance of local government and service agencies, and the Tatura community in the preparation of the Tatura Structure Plan.

Pre-draft Consultation

In order to inform the preparation of the Structure Plan, Council engaged consultants to prepare a Traffic Impact Assessment and an Integrated Water Management Plan to identify and cost all appropriate regional stormwater drainage and transport infrastructure to support future residential development.

Council undertook pre-draft consultation with the Tatura community between 7 July 2020 and 10 August 2020 to help inform the preparation of these two reports to understand the aspirations of the community and identify any key issues that can be considered in the preparation of the Structure Plan.

Methods of engagement included:

- A letter to all landowners and occupiers of land within the Tatura Structure Plan study area.
- A letter to relevant stakeholder and referral agencies.
- A media release, which attracted media attention from the Shepparton News and Shepparton Adviser.
- A consultation webpage on Council's website with an online submission form.
- One-on-one meetings between Council officers and individual stakeholders.
- A meeting with the Tatura Community Plan Steering Committee.

Submissions were invited via an online submission form, by email and by post.

Who did we hear from?

A total of 30 submissions were received by Council during the public consultation process. This included:

- 24 submissions from landowners, residents and community groups within Tatura; and
- 6 submissions from government referral agencies, including;
 - The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning;
 - The Department of Transport;
 - Country Fire Authority;
 - Environmental Protection Authority;
 - Goulburn Valley Water; and
 - Goulburn-Murray Water.



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What we heard

Traffic Considerations

A number of submissions from the community asked for improved pedestrian and cycling linkages within the Structure Plan area, the broader Tatura township and to neighbouring townships. This includes improved access to the Hogan Street commercial area, completion of the Tatura 10km Loop, additional off-road shared paths, the provision of wombat crossings in high-pedestrian areas and a review of speed limits.

The draft Traffic Impact Assessment and the Structure Plan layout has established a hierarchy of roads that ensures safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The Structure Plan layout has incorporated the use of green corridors, which is a series of landscaped shared paths and trails that will connect open space, neighbourhoods and existing areas of Tatura.

Several submissions also called for improved public transport within Tatura, including additional services and relocating the town's main bus stop. While the provision of public transport is a Department of Transport responsibility, Council is acutely aware of the lack of public transport services in Tatura and has advocated to the State Government to establish a bus service between Tatura and Shepparton–Mooroopna. The Structure Plan layout has incorporated higher-order roads that will be capable of supporting buses, including school buses.

As part of the preparation of the draft Traffic Impact Assessment, an additional request for information was undertaken with members of the Tatura Community Plan Steering Committee to understand the roads residents use to travel in and out of Tatura. As part of this engagement 11 comments were received. It was understood that many residents prefer to use Ferguson Road to access Shepparton and Mooroopna due to safety concerns on the Midland Highway, particularly at the intersection with Dhurringile Road. The draft Traffic Impact Assessment has accounted for an increase in usage on Ferguson Road, and has recommended that further investigations be conducted into safety at the Midland Highway and Dhurringile Road intersection.

Integrated Water Management Considerations

Council received multiple submissions relating to the use of stormwater runoff to enhance existing wetlands; particularly Cussen Park. Other submissions mentioned the need to incorporate natural features and open space within existing drainage lines and future retarding basins. The draft Integrated Water Management Plan has designed a number of catchments to the south of Pyke Road to retain stormwater in retarding basins which then discharge into Cussen Park to enhance the park with more water. The Structure Plan layout has listed the indicative locations of the retarding basins, subject to further consultation with the community and consultants.

One submission was concerned about the levels of stormwater runoff the Structure Plan would have on agricultural properties to the north side of the Midland Highway outside of the Structure Plan Area. To address this concern the draft Integrated Water Management Plan has included a retarding basin on the north-west corner of the study site, with the intent of capturing runoff and discharge it at a steady rate so that the increased runoff from development will not increase flood levels on downstream properties.

Ecological Considerations

Council received a submission from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning that outlined several ecological considerations when preparing the Structure Plan. This included the need to retain native flora and fauna within the Structure Plan area, the creation of biodiversity links, and the widespread planting of native trees and shrubs. The submission also contained information on the possible locations of native flora and fauna. Based on this submission Council commissioned an additional background report to undertake a high-level Ecological Assessment of the study area to assess the extent of native flora and fauna for all land within the Structure Plan area.

The draft Ecological Assessment identified 60.05 hectares of native vegetation within the study area, including a large patch of significant remnant Plains Grassland in the north-east corner of the study area south of the Midland Highway and 151 scattered trees. The Structure Plan layout has designated the remnant Plains Grassland as a conservation reserve to allow it to be protected from residential development and appreciated by the community.



A number of submissions received from government agencies and community members requested the retention of native vegetation and tree planting within the study area, including in public open space, road reserves, bike paths and for the creation of habitat linkages.

The Structure Plan layout aims to preserve and integrate scattered native vegetation within new and existing road reserves, green corridors and dedicated conservation open spaces. It will also seek to retain existing roadside vegetation, and introduce new plantings within open spaces, green corridors and local streets. The green corridors will also provide habitat linkages between Cussen Park and the retarding basins.

Other Matters

Council received 11 submissions relating to the provision of a High School within Tatura. The aspiration for a high school in Tatura was originally identified through consultation with the Tatura Community Plan (TCP). The original TCP, developed in 2010, noted an action to explore opportunities to attract a component of secondary school education to Tatura e.g. Year 8 - Year 10 with the Catholic and independent school systems.

A review of the TCP in 2015 saw this raised again. The TCP sought advice from the Department of Education and Training to clarify what criteria would need to be met for a secondary school to be considered in Tatura. The response received from the Department of Education and Training indicated that Tatura would not meet the required criteria any time in the foreseeable future. The action was removed from the TCP.

Because the establishment and funding of schools is a State Government responsibility, it is unable to be considered in the preparation of the Structure Plan. All submitters who enquired about the secondary school were sent a letter of response from Council early in the consultation process, and all submitters were sent an email outlining the status of the secondary school.

Other matters raised in submissions including development requirements for subdivisions and housing, including lot orientation, energy requirements, use of recycled water, provision of open space, and environmental and bushfire requirements from government agencies. Development requirements will undergo further assessment as part of the statutory planning process for subdivisions once the Structure Plan is incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

The remaining submissions received were from landowners within the study area outlining their aspirations for the development of their land.

What's next?

All of the responses received during the pre-draft consultation were considered as part of the development of a draft Tatura Structure Plan, including the preparation of the three background reports and the draft Structure Plan layout itself.

Referral agencies, landowners, residents, and community members will have further opportunity to provide input when the draft Structure Plan is exhibited for public comment and feedback, following consideration at a future ordinary council meeting.

Following this draft consultation process, further revisions to the Structure Plan in response to public comments is expected. The final *Tatura Structure Plan* will then be considered for adoption at an ordinary council meeting later in 2021, before being incorporated into the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme via a planning scheme amendment. Additional consultation will occur as part of this process.



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