

PSP2.0

Ballarat North

PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN

Vision & Purpose Survey Summary

DECEMBER 2023

VICTORIA
State
Government

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Victorian Planning Authority

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

The land, skies and waters that make up the Ballarat North precinct and its surrounds are Wadawurrung Country.

The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich cultures and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's First People and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation and ensuring that Aboriginal voices are heard.

Victorian Planning Authority's commitment

The Victorian Planning Authority commits to improving our practices, to better protect and acknowledge Aboriginal values and heritage in our plans, precinct structure plans and strategic documents.

The protection of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is an important part of continuing cultural practice, understanding history and recognition of the Traditional Owners of Victoria. Commonwealth and State Acts and Regulations provide protection of places and areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

The ultimate custodians of Aboriginal cultural heritage are Traditional Owners, including groups formally recognised as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) which are appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. In 2023, there are 11 registered RAPs with decision-making responsibilities for approximately 75 per cent of Victoria. Traditional Owner Groups without formal recognition also have a vital role to play as key partners and stakeholders. Strategic planning for Aboriginal cultural heritage also involves a range of different stakeholders including State Government agencies, local government, developers, landowners, and community groups. The Traditional Owners of the Ballarat region are the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation.



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Introduction

What is Vision and Purpose engagement?

The Vision and Purpose stage aims to establish an overarching vision for the precinct, and:

- Provide an overview of key issues and opportunities for the PSP, which emerged from the Pitching Sessions.
- Build upon and validate the key themes for the precinct developed from Pitching Sessions.
- Encourage and capture any innovative and contextual ideas and information to shape a future urban structure for the Ballarat North PSP.
- Provide a consultation opportunity for key stakeholders and landowners to raise or clarify any issues of concerns which may not have been effectively captured through Pitching Sessions.

The Ballarat Vision and Purpose stage was undertaken via an online survey.

The online survey was open from 8 September 2023 to 29 September 2023.

Survey questions and responses are included in the Appendix.

Who participated in the Vision and Purpose stage?

The VPA received **41** complete responses.

Respondents included the City of Ballarat, agencies such as Department of Transport and Planning, the Department of Education, precinct landowners, and developers.

70 per cent of respondents were precinct landowners which covered the majority of the land in the precinct.

Purpose of this document

- Present the emerging vision for the precinct.
- Analyse the results of the Vision and Purpose survey.
- Highlight the primary issues and opportunities for the PSP identified during the Pitching Sessions and the Vision and Purpose survey
- Provide information on how the Ballarat North PSP will integrate various key aspirations.

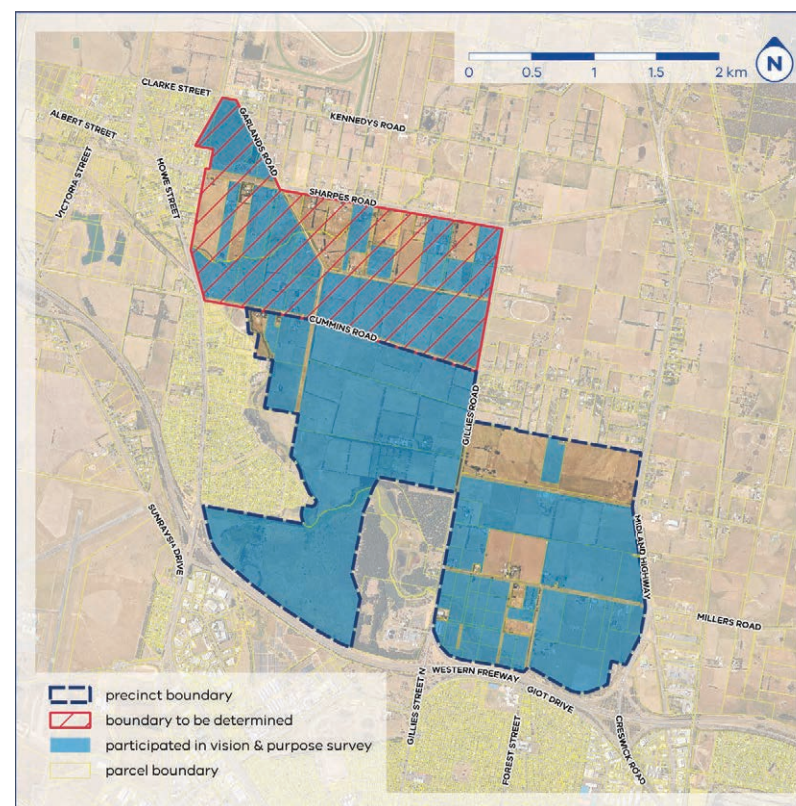


Figure 1 Parcels represented in vision and purpose responses

Background

In August 2022 the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) was requested by the Minister for Planning to prepare a precinct structure plan (PSP) for Ballarat North.

The Ballarat North PSP area is split into a core area and an expanded area. The VPA is tasked to assess whether the expanded area should be incorporated into the final PSP.

At the time of writing, no decision has been made on whether the expanded area will be included in the final PSP.

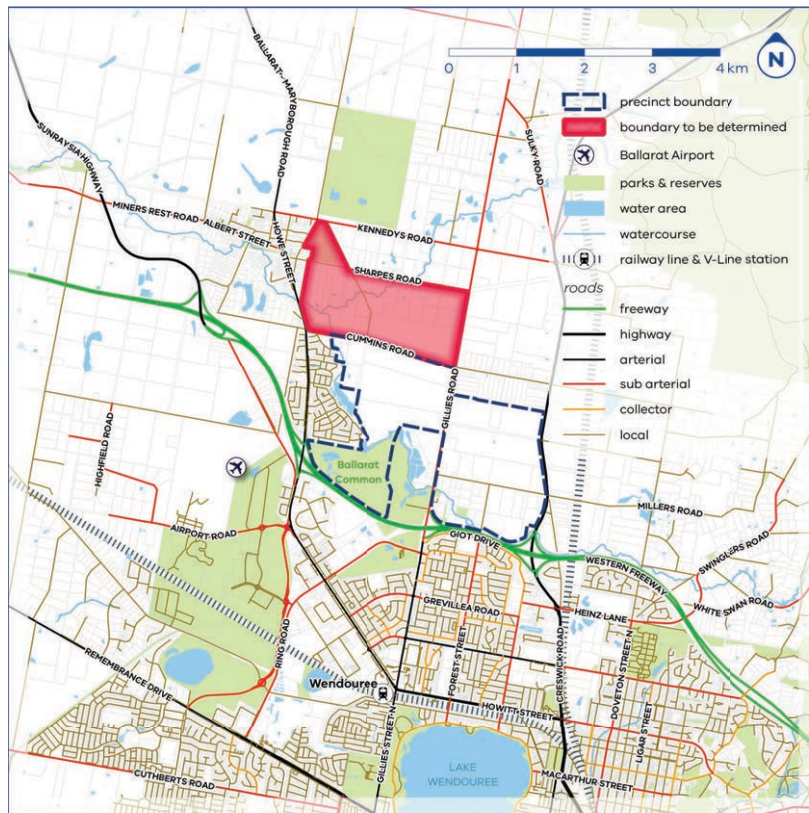


Figure 2 Ballarat North precinct - regional context

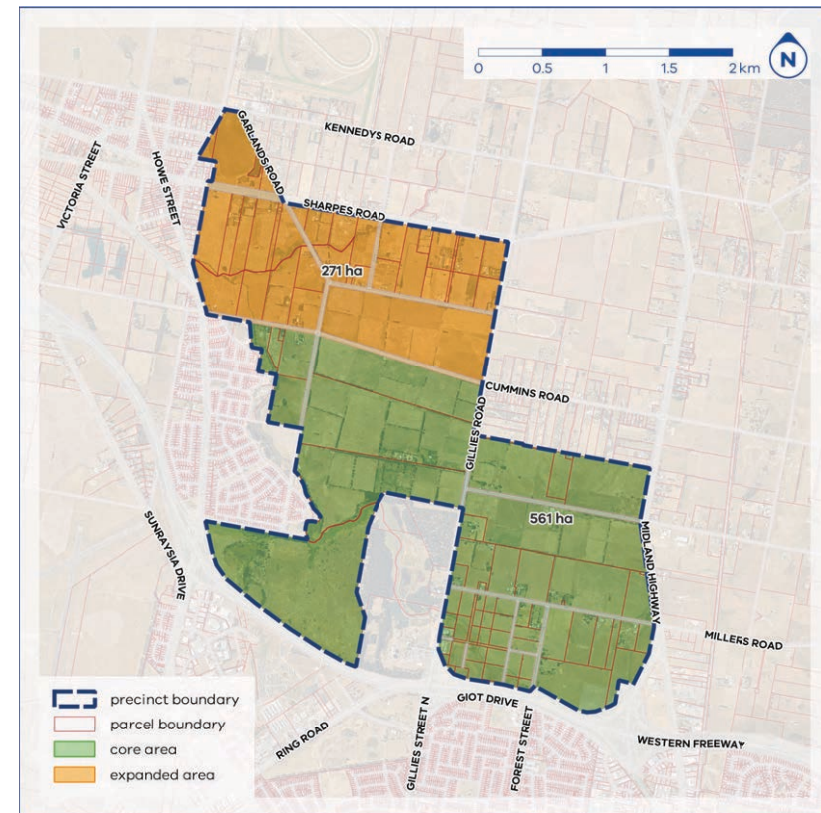


Figure 3 Precinct boundary (core and expanded areas)

Innovation Pathway Pilot Project

As part of the PSP 2.0 Process, a new Innovation Pathway is being piloted through this PSP process. The PSP 2.0 Process introduces a step-by-step framework for preparing structure plans, that embraces innovation and delivers on current strategic government policy. The purpose of the Innovation Pathway is to encourage leading practice and support the resolution of key challenges often faced by precinct planning for new communities.

The City of Ballarat lodged an Expression of Interest to the VPA, who considered a total of four shortlisted submissions to participate in the pilot program. Ballarat North PSP was chosen as the winning submission. It is the goal of this pilot project to develop a replicable process for future projects on the VPA work program.

As a pilot, the Ballarat North PSP will look to establish processes and procedures that will seek to explore five key areas of innovation:

- 1 Sustainable embedded energy networks.
- 2 Sustainable Subdivisions.
- 3 Biodiversity Corridors.
- 4 A new approach to waste management.
- 5 Social and affordable housing including diverse range of housing options.

The VPA is currently working alongside City of Ballarat in determining the exact scope of the innovations. Understanding if it can be achieved through the PSP planning process and identifying if additional technical work is required to be commissioned and who is responsible for resourcing this work.



Emerging vision

This Vision has been drafted to reflect the feedback received in both the Pitching Sessions and Vision and Purpose Survey. As the PSP process progresses, the emerging vision will undergo further refinement.

The Ballarat North PSP envisions a thriving residential community shaped by a combination of unique landscapes, rich local heritage, and aspirations for a more connected and sustainable community planned around a cohesive network of green spaces. In essence, a destination precinct.

The Ballarat Town Commons will remain protected, along with Mount Rowan, which stands as a significant landmark and represents the cultural history of the Wadawurrung people. Both will be preserved for their natural beauty for future generations.

Education and community hubs will emerge within the residential areas, emphasising the importance of community and learning. Housing will cater to a variety of needs and preferences, with a focus on delivering diverse housing types for a broad sector of the community.

Green linkages, featuring trees and pedestrian-friendly routes, will be central to the community's design. This will promote internal and external connections to new schools, community facilities, playgrounds, and other amenities to deliver the essential infrastructure the community needs.

Infrastructure development will prioritise safe roads, public transport, cycling routes, and pedestrian routes. This will ensure effective connectivity within and outside of the precinct.

Environmental initiatives will include the conservation of native vegetation, improvement and protection of Burrumbeet Creek, and advanced stormwater management to protect and manage flood risks and improve drainage in the precinct.

Sustainability will be a guiding principle, with environmentally conscious subdivisions, solar energy adoption, and eco-friendly designs at the forefront.

Evaluation of survey responses

The 41 survey responses were categorised into the following themes:

- **Theme 1:** Housing and character
- **Theme 2:** Transport
- **Theme 3:** Community infrastructure
- **Theme 4:** Green spaces, water, and the environment

These themes mirrored the themes identified at Pitching Sessions and articulate the high-level ideas, opportunities and matters for further investigation.

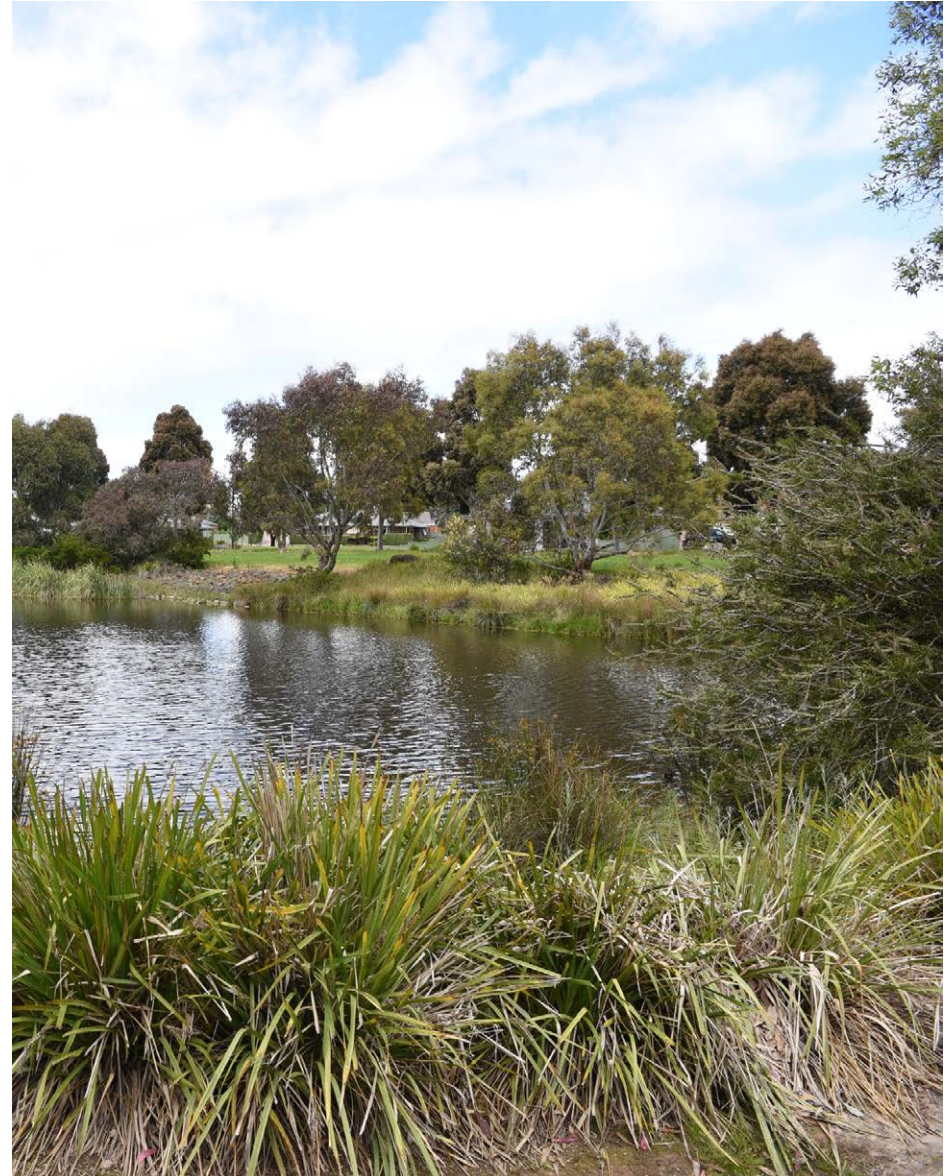
The survey questions were designed based on feedback from Pitching Sessions.

This approach allowed us to determine the main priorities of participants. It also helped us strike a balance between landowner/agency wishes, technical requirements, and the need to create a lasting and sustainable community.

How to read the sections below

The next sections outline the themes in more detail. The tables include:

- The **key aspirations** of each theme, which are derived from the most frequent responses across all survey questions.
- **How the PSP can support these aspirations** shows key areas where the PSP can exert influence to achieve stakeholder aspirations. However, this is not a comprehensive list of areas where the PSP can encourage change.
- **Actions for the VPA** are tasks to evaluate the viability or implement the intent of each aspiration.



Theme 1 Housing and character

Key aspirations

To create a residential precinct that celebrates the unique character of Ballarat including proximity to equine activities.

To deliver diverse and affordable housing.

To create a thriving residential community.

To promote housing development that can enhance overall community safety.

To ensure housing respects the surrounding rural landscapes.

To facilitate a more sustainable form of subdivision.

To encourage housing that incorporates Environmentally Sustainable Design principles.

How the PSP can support these aspirations

- Include requirements to ensure development considers and respects topography, view lines, landscape values, the rural interface, and notable landmarks such as Mount Rowan and the Ballarat Town Commons.
- Protect the Ballarat Town Commons and Mount Rowan from development.
- Include guidelines to facilitate most appropriate sequencing of development to enable early activation of open spaces and community facilities to promote a thriving community.
- Require that housing adjacent to parks, open spaces, and the Burrumbeet Creek have front-facing orientations to ensure passive surveillance of the streets bordering these assets.
- Designate areas for varied housing densities to encourage diverse housing types. Areas closer to amenities will have a higher density requirement, which will gradually decrease as it approaches rural zones, ensuring a seamless blend with the surrounding environment.

- Include guidelines to incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design principles and a more sustainable subdivision layout.
- Include requirements for subdivision that draw on the unique characteristics of Ballarat.
- Include appropriate affordable housing demand targets in the precinct structure plan (PSP).

Actions for the VPA

- Prepare a cultural values assessment to identify any areas of Aboriginal cultural or heritage significance that can be leveraged to foster place identity.
- Prepare a landscape and visual impact assessment to identify key view lines to be protected and enhanced.
- Prepare a post-contact heritage assessment to identify significant European heritage and how they should be incorporated into the urban fabric.
- Prepare a Housing Demand Assessment to identify the likely demand for affordable housing in the precinct.

Theme 2 Transport

Key aspirations

- To establish walking and cycling trails that connect to amenities.
- To ensure streets reflect the unique character of Ballarat.
- To create safe and enjoyable walking/cycling paths in the precinct.
- To manage traffic congestion.
- To reduce reliance on private vehicles.
- To ensure road infrastructure is safe and fit for purpose.

How the PSP can support these aspirations

- Require streets to be constructed to ensure 95% of all households are located within 400 meters of bus-capable roads, and all households are able to directly and conveniently walk to public transport services.
- Require that bus stops to be designed as an integral part of the town and convenience centres, and other activity generating land uses such as schools, community facilities, sports reserves, and employment areas.
- Require that the street network must give priority to the requirements of pedestrians and cyclists by providing footpaths, shared paths, or bicycle paths of appropriate widths, safe and accessible crossing points, and wayfinding signage.
- Identify the most appropriate and convenient location of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Vary the standard road cross sections (where appropriate) to better reflect the character of Ballarat and to enhance positive experience for cyclists and pedestrians.
- For safety reasons, the PSP can require that vehicle access to lots fronting arterial roads must be provided from a local internal loop road, rear lane, or service road to the satisfaction of the coordinating road authority.

Actions for the VPA

- Prepare a Transport Modelling Assessment and an Integrated Transport Assessment. This assessment will:
 - » Model and assess the impact of additional traffic generated to and from the precinct and identify what upgrades to roads, freeway interchanges, crossings etc. are required to provide safe movement and access within the precinct and to key destinations adjoining the precinct.
 - » Determine the suitable alignments for new key roads with considerations to deliverability, costing, and protection of sensitive features.
 - » Identify public transport options that connect the precinct to the surrounding neighbourhoods and leverage from a potential future use of the Public Acquisition Overlay that connects to the train line.
 - » Identify the primary pedestrian and cycling network.

Theme 3 Community infrastructure

Key aspirations

To facilitate the development of sporting ovals, playgrounds and other leisure facilities.

To ensure the community has convenient access to retail areas for their daily activities.

To facilitate the development of new schools.

How the PSP can support these aspirations

- Identify the appropriate locations for local parks and open space networks with consideration to drainage reserves.
- Identify locations of future school/s that will best support both the existing and emerging community.
- Position retail areas throughout the precinct to ensure even facility distribution and enable residents to access daily necessities within walking distance.
- Ensure each requirement or guideline in the PSP prioritises multifunctional community use where relevant. For instance, when addressing drainage, integrate walking trails around the reserve to transform it into a community asset.
- Consider staging for the PSP to expedite the activation of community assets.

Actions for the VPA

- Prepare a Community Infrastructure Assessment to identify the required community facilities to support a thriving neighbourhood.
- Continue open engagement with the Department of Education and Training Victoria to identify the most appropriate siting for schools within the precinct.



Theme 4 Green spaces, water and the environment

Key aspirations

To apply a holistic approach to water and drainage management in the precinct and the surrounding area.

To appropriately manage flooding and inundation risks in the precinct.

To identify and plan for the optimal location and sizes of waterway assets to manage flooding and drainage in the precinct.

To protect the Ballarat Town Commons from development.

To establish streetscapes characterised by an abundant presence of canopy trees.

To make sure people have access to and can enjoy the Burrumbeet Creek.

To maintain and improve the biodiversity of the precinct, particularly around the Burrumbeet Creek and Ballarat Town Commons.

To ensure public access and enjoyment of Burrumbeet Creek.

How the PSP can support these aspirations

- Require developments to include integrated water management initiatives to diversify water supply, reduce reliance on potable water, and increase the utilisation of storm and wastewater, contributing to a sustainable and green urban environment where practicable.
- Identify and locate stormwater quality treatment and drainage assets to be constructed in the precinct to minimise impact of flooding.
- Identify the most appropriate staging of development to facilitate efficient delivery of the ultimate waterway drainage infrastructure.
- Require that waterway corridors and drainage assets are designed to minimise impact on biodiversity values.

- Require the design and layout of roads, road reserves, and public open space optimise water use efficiency and long-term viability of vegetation and public uses through the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design initiatives.
- Ensure that the applied zoning for the Ballarat Town Commons and Mount Rowan can facilitate protection of these important assets.

Actions for the VPA

- Prepare a Biodiversity Assessment that will identify and map areas of biodiversity, including key habitat for rare or threatened species and communities, and strategically valuable biodiversity sites.
- Prepare a Bushfire Risk Assessment to inform the bushfire management strategy for the precinct and new developments including road layout and built form requirements.
- Prepare a Land Capability Assessment to identify risk areas subject to sodic/dispersive soil, acid sulphate soil, erosion and salinity.
- Prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to identify key view lines to be protected and enhanced.
- Prepare an Integrated Water Management Assessment and Flood Modelling. The assessment will:
 - » Identify land affected by flooding, including land inundated by a 1-in-100-year flood event, including natural flow paths and existing waterways.
 - » Identify land at risk of sea level rise.
 - » Plan for acceptable cumulative impacts of uses and development on flood behaviour.
 - » Undertake drainage infrastructure assessment to coordinate with the activities of catchment management authorities.
 - » Investigate water-sensitive design strategies that utilise innovative and sustainable options for landscape irrigation, reusing water and using water-wise and native tree species.
 - » Recommend appropriate measures to restrict sediment and stormwater discharges from new developments.

Next steps

Co-design workshop

The next engagement milestone for agencies and precinct landowners is the Ballarat North Co-Design Workshop.

The workshop will be in-person and will run for approximately half a day. All stakeholders who participated in the Pitching Sessions and/or Vision and Purpose Workshop, and precinct landowners, are invited to attend.

Further information on these sessions will be provided via email.



Technical reports update

Several technical studies have been commissioned to support early planning for Ballarat North. The precinct structure planning process aims to balance individuals, technical feasibility with creating a sustainable new community.

The following reports have been commissioned and are in progress:

- *Land Capability Assessment*
- *Landscape and Visual Assessment*
- *Adverse Amenity Impact Assessment*
- *Biodiversity Assessment (including targeted surveys of Growling Grass Frogs, Striped Legless Lizards as well as Golden Sun Moths)*
- *Post-Contact Heritage Assessment*
- *Geoscience Analysis*
- *Bushfire Assessment – Part 1 of 2*
- *Utilities and Servicing Assessment – Part 1 of 2*
- *Flooding and Drainage Assessments (including flood modelling and integrated water management – Part 1 of 3)*
- *Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment*
- *Cultural Values Assessment*
- *Affordable Housing Needs Assessment*
- *Economic and Retail Assessment*

These technical reports will be required at a later stage:

- *Arboricultural Assessment*
- *Native Vegetation Precinct Plan*
- *Integrated Transport Assessment (including transport modelling)*
- *Infrastructure Costings*

The VPA may obtain further technical work if required.

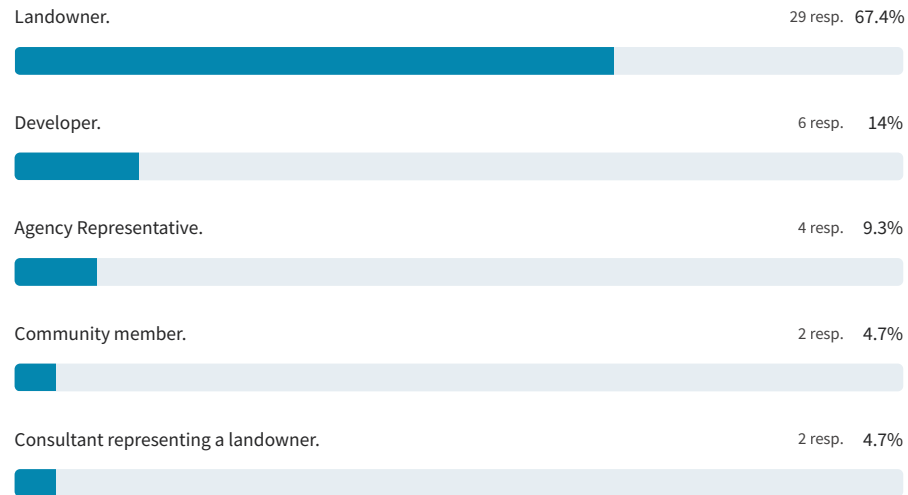
Appendices

Vision and purpose survey data

The VPA created the survey in Typeform, which is an online survey platform. The questions and responses are below.

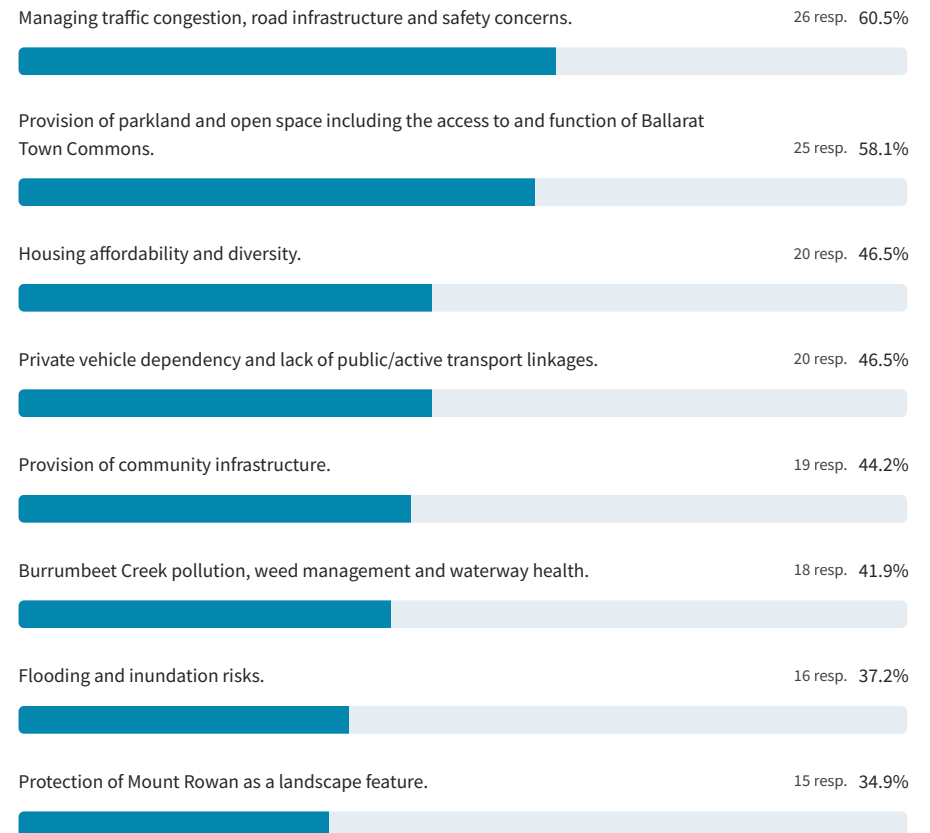
What's your connection to the precinct?

43 out of 43 answered



The following statements summarise the key issues our team heard during pitching sessions. Please select the five (5) issues which you think are most important for planning the Ballarat North precinct.

43 out of 43 answered

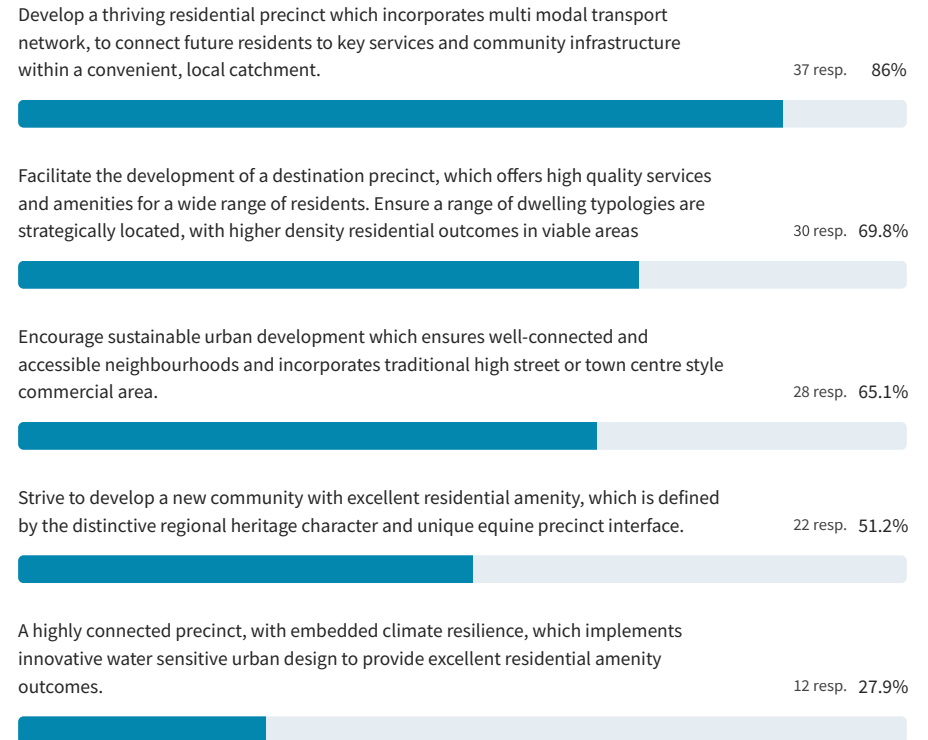


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Please select the three (3) vision statements you think best describe the future of the precinct.

43 out of 43 answered



Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised delivering a community that respects the local character of Ballarat.

Some aspects of character described by precinct landowners include the matters below. Please choose the top four (4) aspects of Ballarat's character that you feel is special and should be incorporated in the precinct.

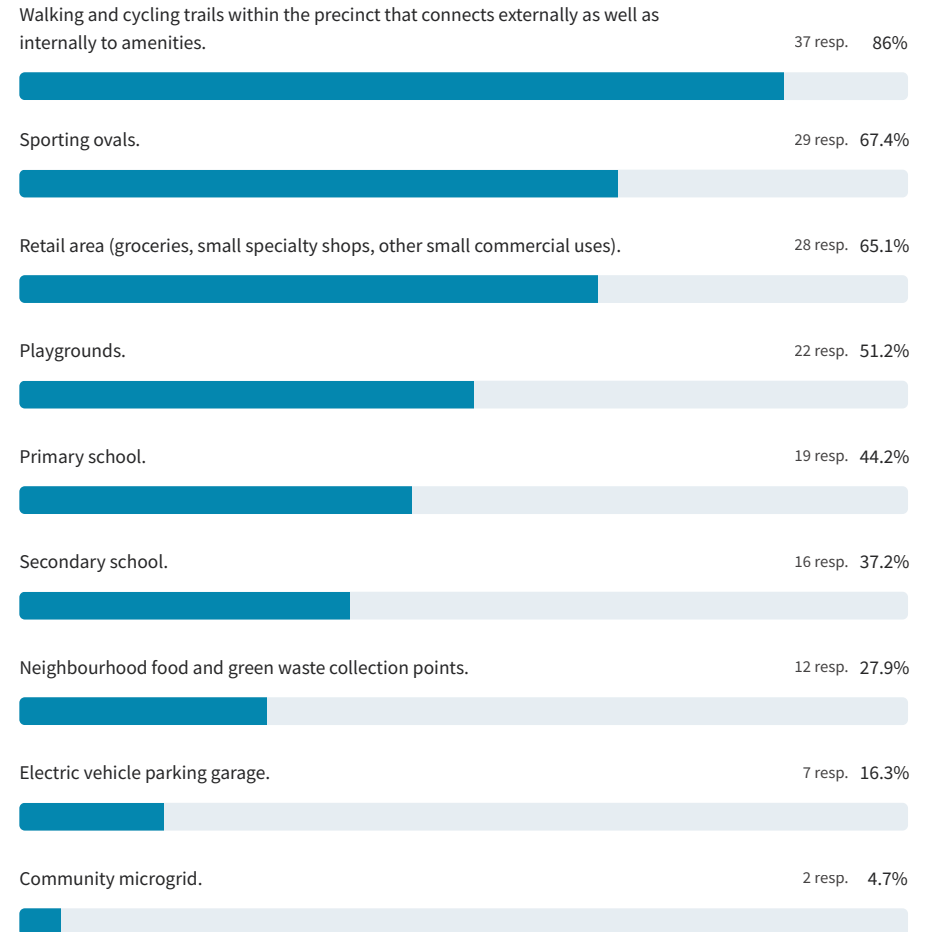
43 out of 43 answered



Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised the need for good community infrastructure.

Pick your top four (4) community infrastructure items which you would want to see in the precinct.

43 out of 43 answered



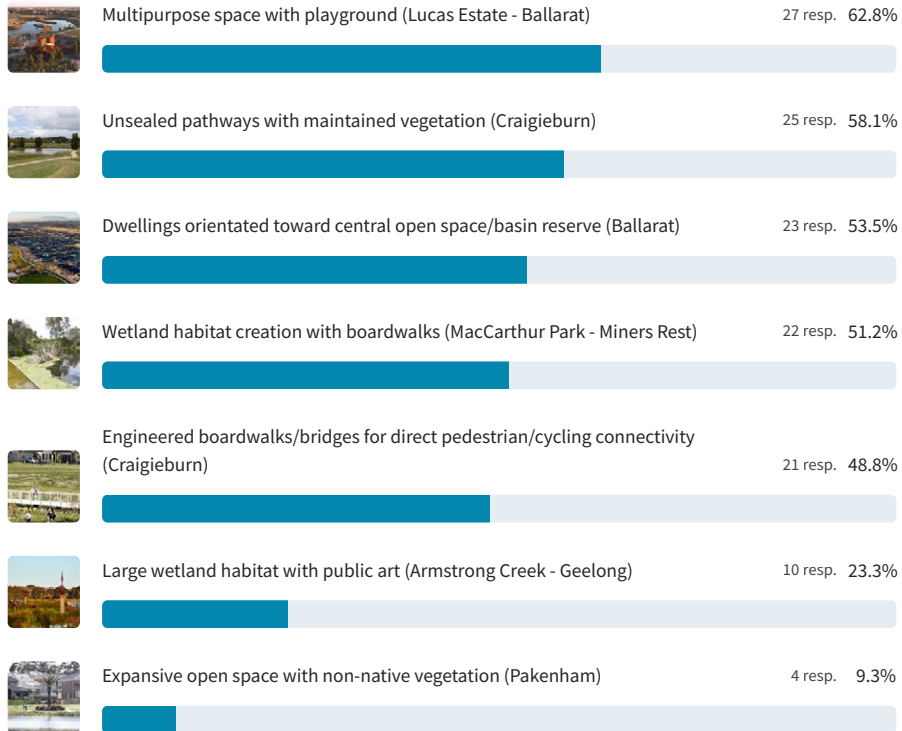
Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised the need to appropriately manage flooding and drainage. There was also a strong preference for enhancing biodiversity values and creating safe, enjoyable walking / cycling paths.

The VPA recognises the interconnectedness of these goals. Our planning process involves carefully identifying optimal locations and sizes for waterway assets, while strategically incorporating vegetation to enhance biodiversity and inclusion of shared paths along creeks in all precinct plans.

These images are a collection of examples from Ballarat as well as new communities in select areas of Victoria, some of which were planned by the VPA.

Please select three (3) images that resonate with you the most.

43 out of 43 answered



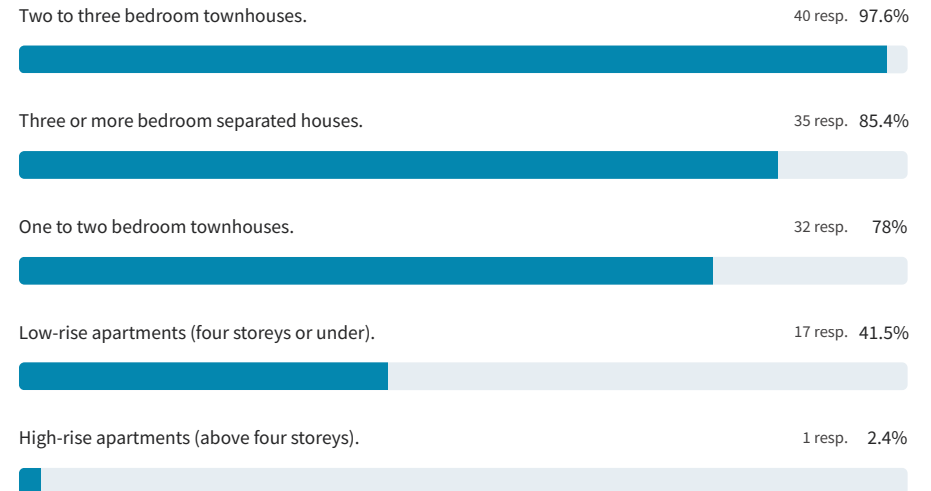
Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised the need for more diverse housing.

Our research shows that three-bedroom dwellings are currently the most prevalent in the Ballarat municipality (accounting for approximately 48% of homes), followed by four-bedroom dwellings (29% of homes) and two-bedroom dwellings (16% of homes). The remaining percentages represent all other forms of housing.

In your opinion what type of housing is most needed in Ballarat?

Please pick (3) three.

41 out of 43 answered

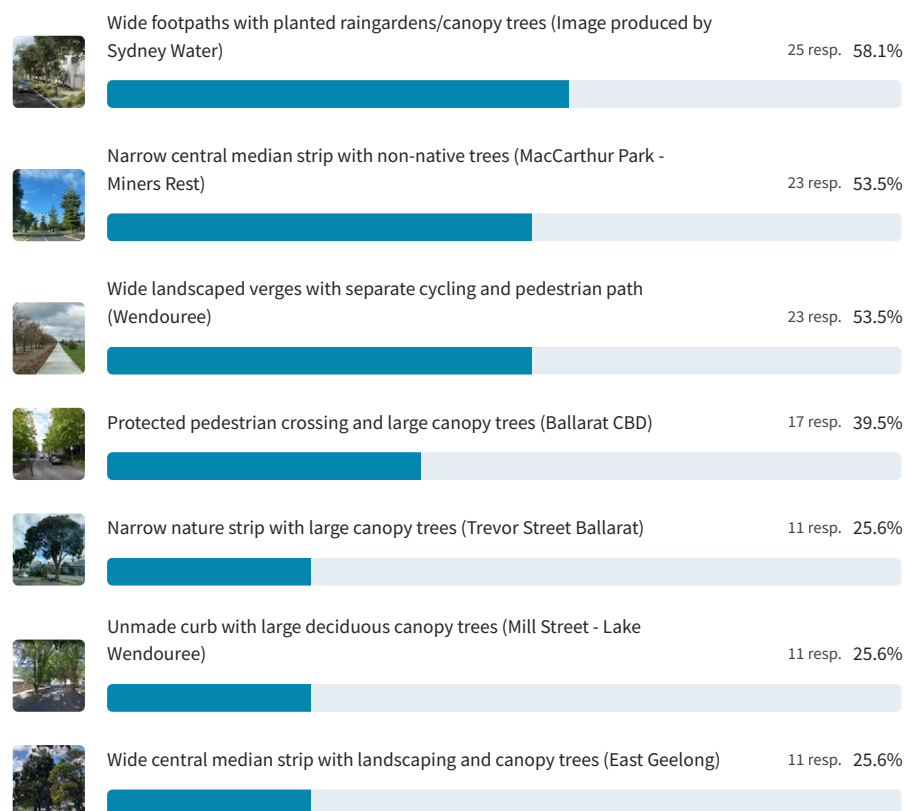


Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised delivering attractive streetscapes that can accommodate large trees and walking / cycling paths.

These images are a collection of examples from Ballarat as well as new communities in other areas, some of which were planned by the VPA.

Please pick three (3) images that resonate with you the most.

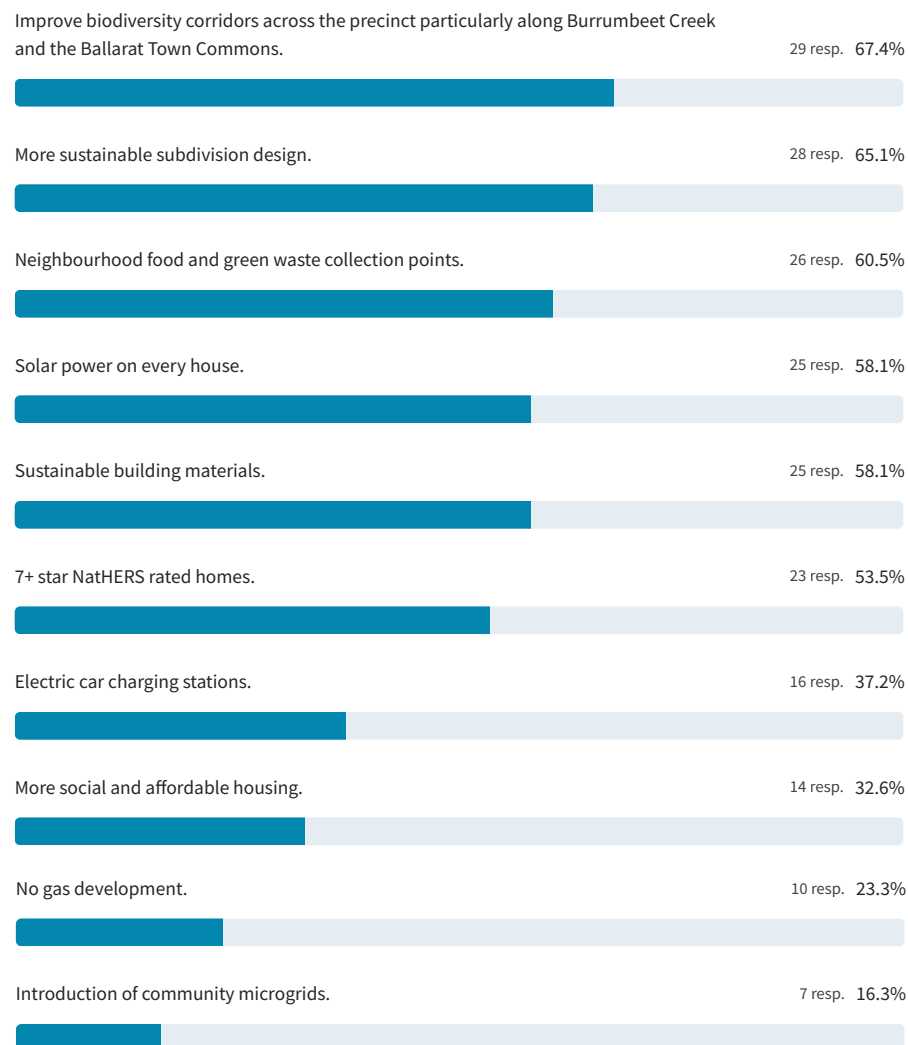
43 out of 43 answered



Feedback received from precinct landowners and agencies emphasised the need for more sustainable outcomes.

Please pick the top five (5) initiatives that you think the VPA should focus on, in creating a more sustainable community.

43 out of 43 answered



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