



WARBURTON TOWNSHIP URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



Summary Report

September 2023

INTRODUCTION

What is an Urban Design Framework (UDF)?

Urban Design Frameworks (UDFs) are strategic planning and placemaking tools that set out an integrated design vision for desired future public and private development of urban places. UDFs provide direction for interventions that shape open space, buildings, landscape, and the public realm.

Unlike a master plan, which only gives a final detailed vision for how an area will develop, an UDF provides flexibility by identifying key principles and concepts rather than finite solutions. It includes a design vision for how a place might develop and provides sufficient detail at key locations so that the vision can be tested for economic and functional viability.

Also a UDF allows room for continuous review of detailed actions within the strategic framework, and assists council to assess development proposals with industry best guidance on design outcomes.

Why has Council Prepared a UDF?

Council has prepared the Warburton UDF to help think creatively and strategically about towns and how people use them socially and physically. Frameworks provide guidelines, standards and plans to help with our decision-making as Council. This is vital in ensuring that new buildings, parks, bike paths, public areas, and businesses are developed in accordance with set standards for safety, sustainability, accessibility, environmentally-friendly infrastructure, and overall quality of life. Ultimately, Council will use the urban design framework to ensure that new developments fit into the existing environment without hindering liveability for those living in the area.

What consultation has taken place?

The Warburton community outlined their vision and values through an extensive community engagement process during late 2018 and early 2019. The findings resulted in the development of the Warburton Place Plan which undertook additional consultation between July and August 2021, ultimately resulting in Council adopting the Warburton Place Plan in November 2021.

One of the priorities of the Place Plan was to develop an Urban Design Framework for the Warburton Town Centre. The Draft Urban Design Framework for Warburton is an important next step to provide detailed guidance and site-specific solutions to address many of the actions in the Warburton Place Plan. The Draft Warburton UDF undertook:



12 weeks engagement period for the Warburton Urban Design Framework were undertaken (16th December 2022 - 12th March 2023)



A project alert was sent to 1593 people who registered to receive updates with tags of Warburton and/or Urban design on the Shaping Yarra Ranges webpage



In excess of 200 people in total attended the four Drop-in sessions at Warburton Arts Centre, Warburton Mechanics Hall on the 6th, 14th, and 22nd of February, and an after hours session on the 6th of March



7,134 page views of the Shaping Yarra Ranges Warburton Urban Design Framework page from 3,185 unique visitors



2,149 total downloads of documents and information associated with the Warburton Urban Design Framework



207 contributions through the Shaping Yarra Ranges Warburton Urban Design Framework page; 26 hard copy surveys were submitted through the drop-in sessions and post; 54 contributions by emails; and 48 post-it notes were provided at drop in sessions

WARBURTON UDF

Purpose

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) builds upon the work undertaken as part of the Warburton Place Plan in 2021. Its purpose is to provide clear design guidance regarding the development and structuring of land within the Warburton Township along the Warburton Highway.

The preferred character, guidelines and illustrations contained in this document provide directions to landowners, designers, Yarra Ranges Council and the wider Warburton community with regards to the expected place based outcomes that are to be achieved by the development of land within Warburton Township.

The UDF provides a clear course of action for future development of key strategic, and public realm sites within Warburton. By utilising the most appropriate mechanisms for implementing key recommendations from this framework, this UDF can inform draft planning scheme policies and controls, as well as future capital works programs.

No capital funding (Council funding) is committed to projects proposed within the UDF at this time. Any future funding streams required to establish new buildings, public realm projects, streetscape projects, or undertake upgrades of an existing building/place/infrastructure, and other associated costs will rely on future funding streams including, but not limited to, capital works, and available grants.

Warburton Urban Design Framework

The Urban Design Framework provides the local community, and Yarra Ranges Council with the tools to guide future development focused on the commercial town centres and main precincts within Warburton in a positive way. The UDF establishes a design vision to achieve land use and community expectations, articulating how people will experience Warburton as the area transitions to meet the needs of the local community and the demands of increasing tourism in the future. The UDF provides built form guidance, identifying key sites for future development outcomes through the preparation of design concepts that demonstrate how projects can achieve the vision for Warburton. Additionally, the UDF provides design guidance on key public realm areas, streetscapes, and transport (including car parking) outcomes for Warburton.

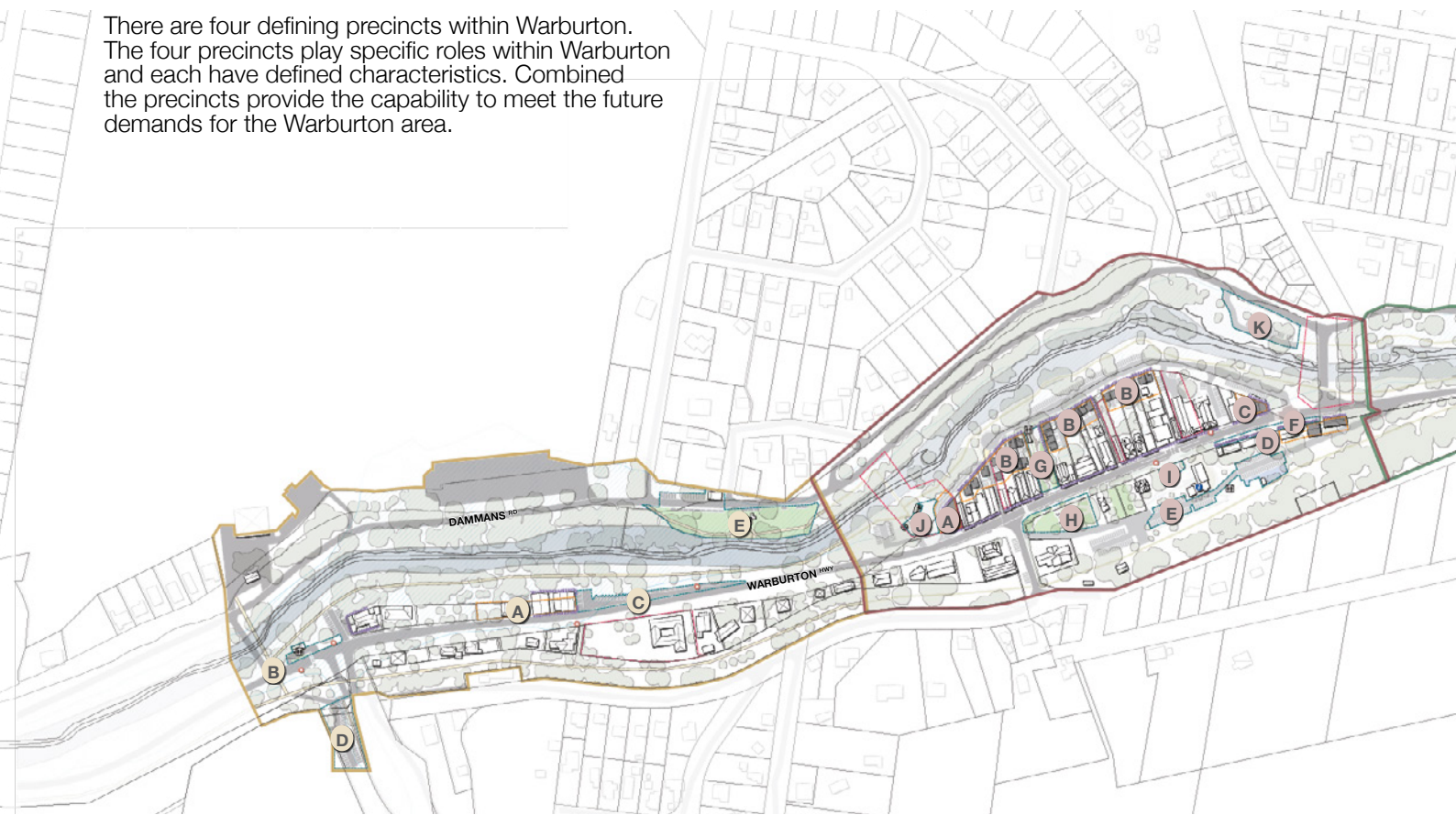
Study Area

The study area is approximately 55Ha in size and is focused on the Warburton Highway and the Yarra River which provide access to both town centres within Warburton. The study area is accessed from the west by Mayers Bridge and from the east by Signs Bridge with both bridges forming gateways into Warburton. The study area is bounded to the north by Dammans Road and the Yarra River and to the south by the Warburton Rail Trail and the Warburton Highway.



FRAMEWORK

There are four defining precincts within Warburton. The four precincts play specific roles within Warburton and each have defined characteristics. Combined the precincts provide the capability to meet the future demands for the Warburton area.



Warburton Gateway (Precinct 1)

Precinct 1 will enhance the distinctive natural features associated with the historic development of the town, including the Yarra River, established trees, and views to features such as Mount Donna Buang, and Mount Little Joe. Opportunities for high quality buildings with an active ground floor interface should be focused on land between the Warburton Highway and the Yarra River. The scale of built form of new development will build towards the eastern edge of the precinct to link with the character of Precinct 2.

Key Development Opportunities

- A** Warburton Highway Riverfront

Key Movement Routes and Access

- B** Mayers Bridge Gateway
- C** Warburton Highway Road Reserve (north) Access

Key Places

- D** Dolly Grey Activation
- E** Upper Yarra River Reserve (west) Rejuvenation

Yarra Town Centre (Precinct 2)

The scale of built form of new development will complement this character and the heritage within the precinct. It will also retain and enhance the distinctive natural features associated with the historic development of the town, including the Yarra River, established trees, and views to Mount Victoria. The Thomas Avenue interface fronting the Yarra River provides opportunities for high quality buildings with an active ground floor interface incorporating potential residential accommodation above.

Key Development Opportunities

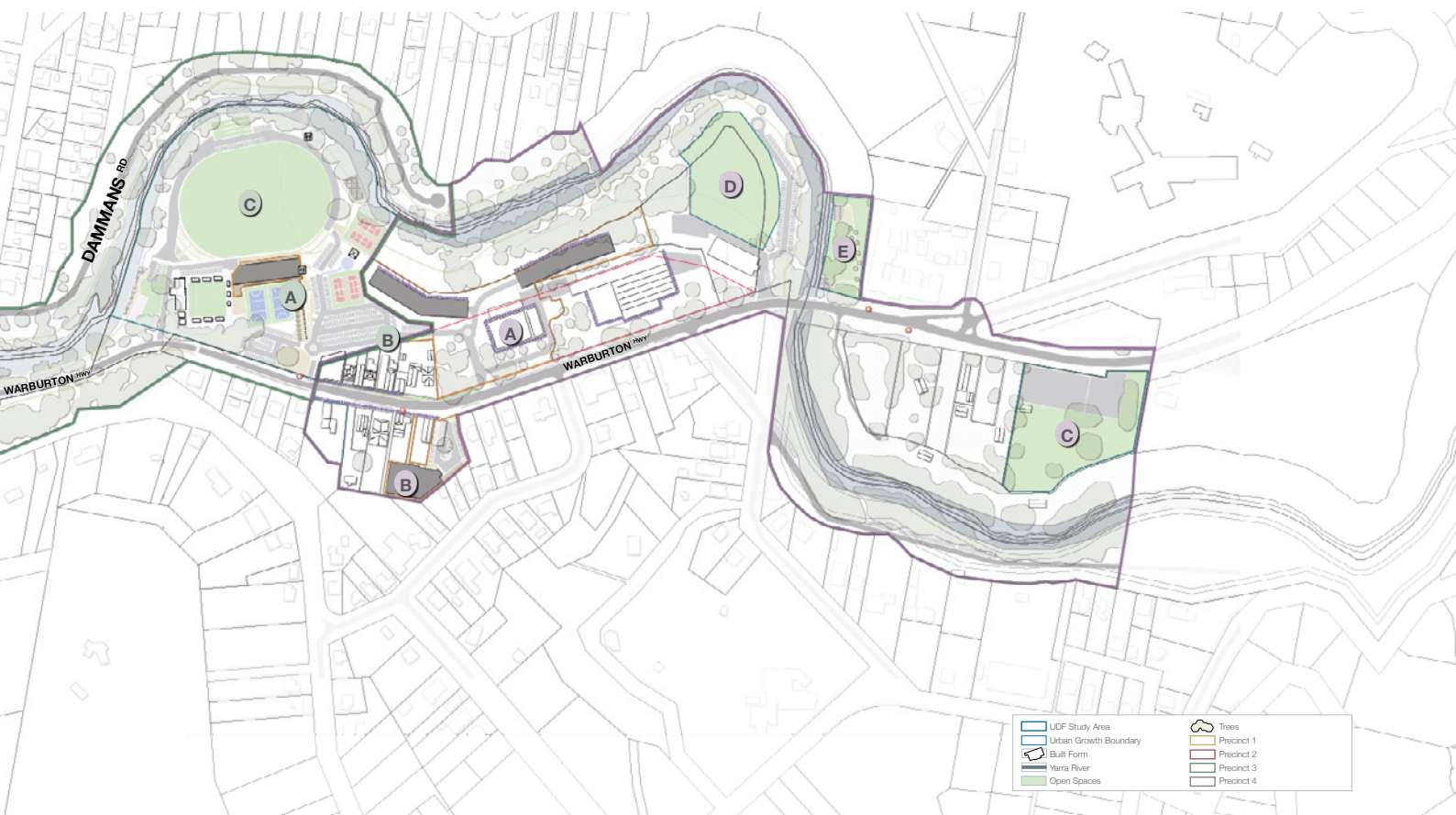
- A** Warburton Highway/Thomas Avenue (west) Gateway
- B** Thomas Avenue Interface Activation
- C** Warburton Highway/Thomas Avenue (east) Gateway
- D** Warburton Highway Southern Interface Development

Key Movement Routes and Access

- E** Warburton Rail Trail Space Animation
- F** Warburton Highway Southern Interface Activation

Key Places

- G** Yarra Square Renewal
- H** Memorial Park Activation
- I** Warburton Water Wheel Forecourt Revitalisation
- J** Warburton Swing Bridge Forecourt Redevelopment
- K** Chisholm Park (west) Reactivation



Warburton Recreation (Precinct 3)

Development within the precinct has the potential to provide multi-use and multi-function spaces that encourage enhanced activity, social experiences and events in public spaces that include all people in the community. Active community spaces, that embrace diversity in people, environment and culture, and built form that protects the significant and unique natural environments and landscapes are essential to Precinct 3.

Key Development Opportunities

- A** Warburton Recreation Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment

Key Movement Routes and Access

- B** Warburton Recreation Reserve/Warburton Sanitarium link

Key Places

- C** Warburton Recreation Reserve Revitalisation

La La Town Centre (Precinct 4)

Precinct 4 offers opportunities for improved residential accommodation to meet both local and tourist demand, with the local commercial and retail development expanding to support this residential growth. Development, incorporating potential residential accommodation, is scaled and sited appropriately to maintain the natural feel of the Warburton Township and create a residential neighbourhood to activate La La Town Centre.

Key Development Opportunities

- A** Warburton Sanitarium Redevelopment
- B** IGA Supermarket Development

Key Movement Routes and Access

- C** Warburton Water World links

Key Places

- D** Redwood Community Centre Access
- E** Upper Yarra River Reserve (east) Activation

WARBURTON GATEWAY



Description

The primary development edge is elevated above the southern interface to the Warburton Highway and includes the Alpine Retreat Hotel as the defining heritage building within the precinct. A secondary frontage on the northern interface of the Warburton Highway also has a prominent interface with the Yarra River. Any development must be scaled and sited appropriately to maintain the natural feel of the Warburton Township.

Access to, and within the precinct will utilise the Warburton Rail Trail and the Yarra River Trail as key public spaces, with the UDF ensuring that car parking and sustainable transport modes are convenient and accessible for a wide range of users. Improved linear open spaces, with a focus on the Yarra River, and the Warburton Rail Trail will define the precinct and provide consistent movement corridors that link to the commercial centre of Warburton in Precinct 2.

Key Items

Car Parking

It was noted that an increased amount of car parking has been proposed within Warburton through the UDF. The amount of car parking proposed is consistent with feedback received as part of the Warburton Place Plan, and this is in direct response to Priority 5 – Parking, Traffic and Transport solutions within the Warburton Place Plan, specifically Action 5.1 – Parking Solutions,

and Action 5.3 – Traffic Movement and Innovation. The Warburton UDF identifies parking solutions for peak periods that does not erode the character of the township, and presents a program of possible short, medium, and long term projects for delivery. Additionally, local transport solutions have also been proposed to work cohesively with parking areas, to alleviate traffic pressure during events, emergencies, and peak tourism periods.

Some feedback was focused on roads which are the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) who are responsible for the Warburton Highway. Council has the ability to advocate for projects within the Urban Design Framework, to advocate for improved outcomes with DTP.

YARRA TOWN CENTRE



Description

Precinct 2 is the major focus for commercial and retail uses within Warburton. Access to, and within the precinct will utilise footpaths as key public spaces, with the UDF ensuring that car parking and sustainable transport modes are convenient, and accessible for a wide range of users. Improved paths, and laneways link the commercial town centre to the Yarra River, offering opportunities for improved community spaces, with a focus on Yarra Square, Memorial Park, and Warburton Water Wheel.

The Thomas Avenue interface fronting the Yarra River provides opportunities for high quality buildings with active ground floor interfaces incorporating potential accommodation above. The scale of built form of new development will complement this character and the heritage within the precinct. Significant improvement to traffic circulation within the precinct could be achieved by extending Thomas Avenue to join Main Street where the two tennis courts are located. This intervention would also allow a new public realm space in the form of a forecourt to the Swing Bridge to be created on one side of the new intersection and a new building fronting both Main Street and Thomas Avenue on the other side of the intersection.

Key Items

Tennis Courts

The relocation and expansion of the Warburton

Tennis Courts and access to the courts for all of the community was prioritised in the UDF. Feedback regarding the tennis courts was primarily concentrated to current users who were concerned regarding the loss of existing facilities. The UDF proposal anticipated, and responded to this feedback, with four courts (doubling the number of existing courts) proposed within the Warburton Recreation Reserve, as well as new facilities including a shared pavilion, larger car parking areas, and a shelter to provide a shaded, and weather protected viewing area. Additionally, the multi-layered approach to this area proposed within the UDF provides increased community access to the heritage listed tennis pavilion, improved through movement for vehicles along Thomas Avenue, and an additional high quality public open space area adjacent to the Swing Bridge, which has the potential to include seating, tree planting, walking and cycling paths, and outdoor dining facilities.

Built Form

The existing Planning Controls (DDO12) state:

“Building heights should not exceed two storeys (7.5 metres). A third level may be permitted where the overall height of the building will match that of an adjacent building or where it is set back so as not to be easily discernible from the opposite side of the street.”

The UDF guidelines will inform more detailed and specific future planning scheme controls (to be implemented through a future planning scheme amendment) to ensure improved built form outcomes in the future which retain and protect the much loved character of Warburton.

WARBURTON RECREATION



Description

Access to, and within the precinct is primarily from the Warburton Highway. The precinct provides car parking for the La La Town Centre (Precinct 4) in Ottrey's Car Park and the large, predominantly flat land has capacity to provide additional car parking areas to support recreation uses as well as meet any additional demand.

Development within the precinct has the potential to provide multi-use and multi-function spaces that encourage enhanced activity, social experiences and events in public spaces that include all people in the community. Active community spaces, that embrace diversity in people, environment and culture, and built form that protects the significant and unique natural environments and landscapes are essential to Precinct 3.

Key Items

Tree in Ottrey's Car Park

Council has managed a large tree in the Ottrey's car park, Warburton for many years. The tree is a large *Eucalyptus cypellocarpa* (Mountain Grey Gum) and has been cabled due to faults at the base. A tomography test in 2023 confirmed there was extensive decay at the base and that a crack from the stem union to the ground. The tree has now been cut to 10m. In its current state the tree is considered a moderate risk, which is incompatible with a public carpark without additional risk mitigation being undertaken. An exclusion

zone around the tree preventing public access would be required for its risk profile to be reduced to low.

This work could also be supported and enhanced by additional planting and other landscape improvements as part of a designed outcome to support environmental, historical and cultural values attached to the tree. The draft Warburton UDF proposes this concept with an 'enhanced connection between Warburton Highway and the new pavilion through a defined entry forecourt' (section 5.4 Draft Warburton UDF). Locating the forecourt area next to a landscaped exclusion zone for the tree could achieve a combined high amenity landscape space in the Warburton town centre. This approach would be in keeping with the Council's recent decision regarding the ongoing management of this tree.

Facilities

The existing skate park will be retained in Precinct 2 with further investigation to be undertaken when the Warburton Recreation Reserve Master Plan is undertaken in the future.

LA LA TOWN CENTRE



Description

Precinct 4 offers opportunities for improved residential accommodation to meet both local and tourist demand, with the local commercial and retail development expanding to support this residential growth. The scale of built form of new development will complement this character and the heritage within the precinct. It will also retain and enhance the distinctive natural features associated with the historic development of the town, including the Yarra River, established trees, and views to features such as Mount Victoria, and Mount Little Joe.

Access to, and within the precinct will utilise footpaths as key public spaces, with the UDF ensuring that car parking and sustainable transport modes are convenient and accessible for a wide range of users. Improved paths link the commercial town centre to the Sanitarium Health Food Company and Signs Publishing Company sites, the Yarra River, and more broadly to the adjacent Recreation in Precinct 3.

Key Items

Emergency Management

Under the Emergency Management Act 2013 (the Act); Municipalities must establish a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) which is responsible for the preparation and review of a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP). The MEMP details general preparedness, response (including relief), and recovery arrangements across all

hazards within the borders of the municipality. Sub-plans are generally prepared by the relevant control agency (eg: Victoria State Emergency Service for our Municipal Storm and Flood Emergency Plan), in conjunction with the Yarra Ranges emergency management team. The Yarra Ranges MEMP was reviewed and endorsed in March 2023.

The Warburton UDF considered and addressed Emergency Management through referral of the Warburton UDF to the CFA. Other mechanisms including future individual planning permit assessments involving the CFA, will be undertaken as part of approvals required for specific individual projects, such as the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination project.

Environment

The environment was a key consideration in the design of the UDF. The UDF focuses closely on the Yarra River, and environmental considerations are considered to be well embedded in each of the design approaches. The Warburton UDF is also consistent with objectives of the Yarra Strategic Plan (Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo) 2022–32.

Sanitarium Building

Privately owned land with proposed development opportunities, such as the Warburton Sanitarium site is subject to meeting the requirements of the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme, and as such Council can advocate for outcomes, and is also the Responsible Authority to assess and inform any future permit applications.

NEXT STEPS

Costings

The Warburton UDF provides Council with a thorough evidence-based document to help prioritise and justify the delivery of remaining key capital works projects. The Warburton UDF will also provide Council with the opportunity to present shovel ready projects as candidates for any external funding grants that might be on offer, including those with short application timeframes.

No capital funding (Council funding) is committed to any projects proposed within the Warburton UDF. Any future funding streams required to establish new buildings, public realm projects, streetscape projects, or undertake upgrades of an existing building/place/infrastructure including design, architectural, surveyor and permit costs; site preparation costs; project management costs; construction costs; and other associated costs will rely on future funding streams including, but not limited to, capital works and available grants.

The timing of some projects may require significant pre-planning, authority approvals and complex documentation, such as any arterial corridor works and the creation of the Warburton Recreation Reserve Master Plan. These major development projects would anticipate delivery timeframes potentially beyond 10 years. The remainder of projects, by comparison, are simpler and would be able to be scheduled once funds and resourcing become available.

Process

The Warburton Urban Design Framework provides the necessary evidence-based context to decision making by identifying key capital works projects for upgrade or construction. The Warburton UDF's holistic approach will assist in informing a wide range of Council service delivery areas of the specific opportunities and challenges to consider in the Warburton area and maximise Council's response to the Community's expectations.

The UDF will inform Council decision making in Warburton to improve development outcomes and to develop a pipeline of agreed projects, within the context of the community's voice.

This Summary Report provides a high level overview of the Warburton Urban Design Framework. The final Warburton Urban Design Framework, and all supporting consultation and engagement documentation can be reviewed in full, in the following documents:

- Warburton Urban Design Framework
- Warburton UDF Community Engagement Report
- Warburton UDF Engagement Feedback Report

