

21.05-4 OBJECTIVES – STRATEGIES – IMPLEMENTATION**Environment*****Natural Environment***

Mt Buller Alpine Resort is a sensitive alpine environment that has significant conservation, scenic, tourism and recreational values. The sub-alpine environment as a whole is a valuable resource forming an important part of the Australian landscape. Protection of the environment aids the maintenance of biodiversity and provides important habitat for flora and fauna within the Resort. The Mountain Pygmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*) is listed as a threatened species on Schedule 2 of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. Potential habitats for the Mountain Pygmy-possum is dispersed throughout the Resort, generally located outside of the Village areas. The existing and potential habitat requires protection from inappropriate development.

The physical characteristics of the natural environment provide the Mt Buller Village and skifields with a unique alpine character and an attractive landscape setting which, combined with its accessibility, make it a popular visitor destination.

Future development within the Resort should seek to capitalise on the natural assets of Mt Buller which are a primary attraction for visitors. Sustainable use and management of both the natural and man-made components of the environment is crucial to the future viability of the Resort.

The potential for adverse environmental impact on the Resort exists in the ongoing traffic and use of the skifields and woodland areas and by the disturbance of natural ecosystems during construction of buildings, infrastructure and services. There is a need to minimise, and where possible prevent, such environmental impacts through appropriate management practices. It is also important to ensure that off-site effects of development and activities at the Resort are minimised.

Objectives

- To preserve and maintain the natural environmental features of the Resort.
- To preserve and maintain the ecology of environmentally significant areas of the Resort.
- To protect biodiversity values within the Resort and within the adjoining Alpine National Park.
- To retain native vegetation, including trees, shrubs and ground cover, and to encourage revegetation of disturbed areas with indigenous species with a principle of no net vegetation loss.
- To ensure development minimises environmental impact and that environmentally sound construction and management techniques are employed.
- To encourage development that complements natural environment values.
- To protect the quality and quantity of natural water systems and aquatic ecosystems.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- Identify areas of conservation value within the Resort and define significant flora and fauna habitat areas and/or particular sites.
- Develop management requirements for the protection, maintenance and enhancement of nominated areas or sites of conservation significance within the Resort.
- Encourage the protection of existing native vegetation through use of planning tools such as building envelopes.
- Monitor the extent of indigenous vegetation removal within the Resort.
- Identify suitable locations within the Resort to provide for appropriate commercial, residential, tourism and support infrastructure.
- Ensure that all development and use of land is undertaken in a manner which minimises adverse impacts on the environment through education of those involved in construction and adequate environmental supervision.
- Ensure that all development and use of land does not result in any off-site adverse effects on the environment.
- Ensure that design, construction and maintenance of development takes proper account of geotechnical stability considerations.
- Encourage applicants to consult with the Mt Buller Resort Management Board regarding existing geotechnical information prior to lodging an application for planning permit or site development plan.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- Areas considered appropriate for resort development are generally included within the Comprehensive Development Zone.
- Public land surrounding the Village and skifields is included in the Public Park and Recreation Zone. Development in this zone will be encouraged if it is consistent with policies and objectives and does not result in any adverse environmental impacts.
- Assessment of likely environmental impacts is required to be undertaken for all proposed development within the Comprehensive Development Zone as part of the preparation of an application for permit. The Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) shall additionally detail proposed construction techniques, vegetation retention, revegetation and rehabilitation and environmental education and supervision on site.
- Potential off-site effects of development and land use including noise will be considered in the assessment of applications.
- The Mt Buller Resort Management Board will prepare an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the Mt Buller Alpine Resort. The EMP will detail the environmental policies and management practices to be implemented in the Resort for construction and operation of all infrastructure and services. The EMP will also include guiding environmental principles for all development within the Resort.
- Flora and fauna investigations will be undertaken in the Resort with the aim of defining existing resources and identifying species or habitats of significance. The

need for implementation of appropriate overlay controls will be assessed as part of these investigations.

- An Environmental Significance Overlay applies to known areas of habitat of the *Burramys parvus* within the skifield areas of the Resort.
- An Environmental Significance Overlay applies to areas identified as being at risk from landslip or instability.
- An Environmental Management Overlay applies to all land in the Mt Buller Resort Alpine Resort.
- A Local Planning Policy applies to provide guidance in determining an application for planning permit or site development plan made under the Erosion Management Overlay.

Heritage

Mt Buller's heritage elements contribute to the character and evolving development of the Resort. These include the natural features of the Resort which are recognised on the Register of the National Estate and pre-settlement archaeological sites.

The heritage elements provide a reference point for residents and visitors to appreciate the natural attributes and social and cultural history of the Resort in its regional setting.

Objectives

- To protect and enhance identified places, sites and objects of natural conservation and landscape significance.
- To protect and enhance identified places, sites and objects of European cultural, historical and architectural significance.
- To protect and enhance identified significant Aboriginal places, sites and objects.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- Identify, document and protect the Resort's heritage elements both natural and pre and post-settlement.
- Require the appraisal of impacts on heritage interest when determining planning permits for use or development in places of cultural or historical significance.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following action:

- A Local Policy will apply to areas identified in the Village as being of potential archaeological significance. In such instances the policy will apply to any redevelopment of a site.

Settlement

Village Development

Mt Buller Alpine Resort is a tourist resort destination with a seasonal population that increases significantly during the winter months. Careful planning is necessary to achieve growth within the Village that is both economically and environmentally sustainable.

Mt Buller Village will be planned to develop to 8,500 beds over the next ten years in conjunction with a planned capacity to accommodate up to 10,000 snow users per day on the slopes and a total of 15,000 visitors per day to the Resort. Opportunities for additional resort development within the Village beyond this planning target will be considered if it can be demonstrated that the potential growth will be environmentally and economically sustainable and achieve the Resort goal and strategic objectives.

There is a need to provide opportunities for a wide range of tourist and recreation facilities, residential accommodation, commercial activities, community facilities and services to cater for visitors as well as the smaller but growing permanent population.

The alpine environment provides a unique natural landscape setting for the Mt Buller Alpine Resort. Enhancement of the character and appeal of the Village is critical to the success of the Resort in realising the goal of becoming a year round visitor destination.

The built form and physical appearance of development within the Resort plays a vital role in the creation of an identifiable image for Mt Buller and attention needs to be paid to high quality, innovative design. Development should seek to enhance the alpine character of the Village through the use of natural alpine colours and stonework and to emphasise energy efficient design.

Associated with the physical elements of the Resort is the need to ensure that priority is given to free and safe movement of pedestrians and skiers throughout the Village and that potential conflict with vehicles is minimised.

Objectives

- To retain the integrity of the existing Village and consolidate future development within the Village.
- To develop Mt Buller Village as an attractive living place for the permanent and visitor population.
- To develop an identifiable image for Mt Buller and enhance it through high quality design standards in public and private development throughout the Resort.
- To ensure that development in the Mt Buller Village recognises the landscape, amenity and environmental values of the Resort.
- To ensure that new development and redevelopment of existing sites within the Village achieves high quality, innovative design.
- To encourage energy efficient building design throughout the Village.
- To identify commercial and residential areas within the Village which recognise the special requirements of a mixed destination and day visitor Resort.
- To provide a Village Centre for Mt Buller that functions as a community heart for the Resort.
- To ensure protection of significant vegetation on development sites.
- To protect the amenity of existing development within the Mt Buller Village.
- To ensure that new development respects and enhances access to skifield entry points.
- To maintain existing views and vistas to and from the skifields.
- To preserve the interface with the Bourke Street skifield.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- Further outward expansion of the Village will not be supported in the next 10 years except for One Tree Hill as identified in the Comprehensive Development Plan. New development will be encouraged within the Village area as identified in the Strategic Land Use Framework Plans to consolidate the Village settlement.
- Redevelopment of existing underutilised sites will be encouraged to optimise the development potential within the Village.
- The release of new sites for development over the next 10 years will take into consideration the following factors:
 - future patterns of visitation, usage and demand for commercial, lodge and private accommodation;
 - the existing development potential throughout the Village and rate of development being planned and achieved on sites;
 - the strategic planning directions for the future development of the Village, particularly in proximity to the Village Centre;
 - environmental parameters identified for particular sites;
 - potential environmental impacts associated with future development.
- The Cow Camp Plaza to be further developed through urban design treatment to make it more attractive as a gathering and focal point.
- Development requirements to apply which will establish the basis for achievement of a special alpine character for the Resort. The development requirements will ensure that:
 - development will not adversely impact on the amenity of adjacent buildings and public areas.
 - development is designed and sited to ensure that snow shed from the development will be retained within the site boundaries.
 - development is designed and sited to ensure the maximum retention of significant existing vegetation on the site, particularly stands of Snow Gum.
 - development is designed and sited in a manner that will complement the alpine landscape setting and will not result in any visual intrusion into the streetscape or landscape.
 - development is of a scale and density that complements and enhances the Village image.
 - development demonstrates energy efficient design principles and techniques.
 - development makes provision for free movement of skiers and pedestrians into and around the site and enhances connections to public spaces and skifields.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- The Strategic Land Use Framework Plans identifies the extent of the Village settlement and highlights the commercial and residential areas of the Village.
- Comprehensive Development Plans will be prepared for key development sites shown on the Village Precinct Plan and the Village Centre Plan which will set out the land use and development parameters for future development proposals.
- A land development program will be prepared which will stage the release of key development sites for private sector investment. Existing vacant development sites and areas nominated for future development on the Strategic Land Use Framework

Plans will be released over the next 10 years to meet market demand for new development opportunities and subject to monitored development rates on existing sites.

- A Design and Development Overlay applies across the Village to establish urban design guidelines for development in the Resort.
- Requirement to submit an Urban Design Impact Statement with permit applications detailing how a development responds to the site, its context and the Mt Buller Strategic Statement.

Residential Development

Mt Buller Alpine Resort provides a unique living environment for a small permanent population and a seasonal visitor population. The accommodation requirements of the different groups at Mt Buller need to be catered for through a variety of types and standards of residential accommodation.

Residential accommodation for visitors is provided throughout both the commercial and residential areas of the Village. Club based accommodation in lodge style developments is the predominant form of accommodation throughout the residential areas, with new developments providing commercial and private apartments. There is an identified need for provision of residential accommodation for permanent residents within the Village. One Tree Hill has been identified as an area having opportunities for development of dwellings and residential buildings which could provide accommodation for permanent residents.

Objectives

- To encourage a variety of accommodation types and styles throughout the Village to meet the needs of the permanent and visitor population.
- To facilitate the establishment of educational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve the needs of the community.
- To ensure that development protects the amenity of existing residential development on adjacent sites.
- To ensure future development achieves a high level of finish and permanence to enhance the amenity of the area.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- A range of residential accommodation types, at varying densities, will be encouraged in the residential areas of the Village to cater for the needs of the permanent and visitor population.
- In the commercial areas of the Village, emphasis will be on the provision of commercial accommodation for short-term visitors.
- Development of accommodation outside the Village will not be supported.
- Higher intensity residential accommodation will be encouraged in nominated locations throughout the residential areas of the Village as shown on the Strategic Land Use Framework Plans.
- In the residential areas, the provision of commercial and other non-residential activities will be supported if it can be demonstrated that the use will not result in any adverse impacts on residents.

- The impact of residential development on the environment and adjacent development will be limited through the use of appropriate design standards.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- Higher density residential development will be encouraged on the northern portion of Sites 141-150 and 151-152 in Breathtaker Road and on the undesignated land in Standard Lane.
- Comprehensive Development Plans will be prepared to facilitate development of the key sites with potential for future residential development. These include One Tree Hill Standard Lane and the Gateway site and other key sites in the Village as shown on the Strategic Land Use Framework Plans.
- The development of accommodation for permanent residents will be encouraged at One Tree Hill.
- A Design and Development Overlay will apply throughout the Village that establishes development requirements for setback, bulk and height and appearance of development in the residential areas.

Commercial and Service Activities

Mt Buller Alpine Resort has a range of commercial, retail, entertainment, community and service facilities and infrastructure that cater for the needs of visitors and permanent residents. Providing the right mix of facilities and services is crucial to the ongoing viability of the Resort as a year round destination.

The Village has an identifiable centre that has a community and commercial focus for visitors and residents at the Resort. This centre is generally surrounded by a commercial precinct which has potential for future development. There is a need to consolidate and strengthen the Village Centre, and encourage development within the commercial node to enhance year round opportunities for the Village.

Objectives

- To provide a range of retail, commercial, tourist, entertainment and service activities that cater for the needs of the visitors and permanent residents.
- To enhance the function, visual appearance and pedestrian amenity within the Village Centre.
- To promote development in the Village Centre that creates a sense of arrival and enhances its role as the primary focus of visitor activity in the resort.
- To ensure that the scale, intensity, bulk and appearance of any development enhances the character of the Village and is compatible with existing development.
- To ensure that commercial development, if located in residential areas, does not unreasonably detract from the amenity of the neighbouring accommodation.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- The commercial area shown on the Strategic Land Use Framework Plans will be the primary focus for commercial, tourism and community activities within the Village.

- Mixed use development will be encouraged in the commercial area to provide a range of major tourist facilities, commercial and retail uses, visitor services, entertainment and high density residential accommodation.
- Cow Camp Plaza and Old Summit Road are the preferred location for an identifiable hub or centre of activity for the Village. Development in this vicinity should provide linkages with the commercial area and to the skifields as well as accommodating a primary area for pedestrian and skier congregation.
- The primary day visitor arrival and congregation area will be provided within the Village Centre area. Outside the Village the arrival point for day visitors accessing the ski slopes will be at Horse Hill and the Skating Rink.
- Commercial facilities or retail premises will only be supported in locations outside of the Village if it can be demonstrated that the use will provide a desirable service for snow users or it is an integral component of a development proposal for passive alpine recreation and the use will not detract from the amenity or operation of the skifields.
- Service activities or infrastructure will be accommodated throughout the Resort on appropriate land as the need for the use or development arises.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- Comprehensive Development Plans will be prepared to facilitate development of the key sites with potential for future mixed use or commercial development. These include undesignated land along the northern and southern side of New Summit Road alignment and Sites 117 and 118 and undesignated land along Mt Buller Tourist Road.
- The creation of a pedestrian spine along the existing alignment of Bourke Street (old Summit Road) will be undertaken as New Summit Road is completed.
- Opportunities for provision of a parking station within the commercial area will be investigated by the Mt Buller Resort Management Board.
- In the residential area, the following commercial or retail activities will be supported provided that the use does not result in any adverse impact on the amenity of residential areas:
 - Commercial Shop with a leasable floor space of up to 80 square metres.
 - Nightclub, Cabaret, Restricted Place of Assembly, Retail Premises with a leasable floor area of up to 120 square metres and provided in association with a Residential Building with not less than 30 beds.
 - Hours of operation for a Nightclub or Cabaret shall be limited to closure at 12.00 midnight Sunday to Thursday and 1.00 am Friday and Saturday.
- A Design and Development Overlay will apply throughout the Village that establishes development requirements for setback, bulk and height and appearance of development in the commercial area. The overlay includes an overshadowing control throughout the commercial area to protect the amenity of key pedestrian areas in New Summit Road and Summit Road.

Tourism and Recreation

The natural environmental qualities together with existing tourist and recreation infrastructure and accessibility of the Resort provide an ideal basis for expansion of the year round use of Mt Buller Alpine Resort.

The primary attraction of Mt Buller as a tourist destination during winter months is the extensive ski fields and associated accommodation and entertainment facilities.

The Mt Buller skifields are a finite resource which require extensive management and maintenance all year round. The capacity of the existing skifields can be improved and expanded to provide for a variety of experiences for skiers, snow boarders and snow players visiting the Resort. Development of the skifield terrain has significant environmental implications which must be balanced against the goal of achieving intensive year round recreation in the Resort.

The use of the Resort throughout the balance of the year should capitalise upon the natural assets of the Resort and the infrastructure in the Village and skifields. These natural and built features provide opportunities for a broad range of passive recreational pursuits, tourist, educational and entertainment activities within an alpine setting.

Objectives

- To encourage the use and development of Mt Buller as a year round destination capitalising on the natural beauty, environmental qualities and infrastructure of the Resort.
- To achieve the optimum use and development of the skifields.
- To manage the skifields year round to optimise usage and minimise environmental impacts.
- To provide for the development of a range of tourism and recreation opportunities and facilities that are compatible with the alpine environment of Mt Buller Alpine Resort.

Strategies

The strategies to achieve the objective are:

- The development and management of skifield terrain and facilities will be encouraged within the Skifield Precinct as shown on the Strategic Land Use Framework Plans. The skifields will be planned to achieve a capacity of 10,000 skiers per day over the next ten years.
- The Skifield Precinct will be used and developed primarily for the purpose of alpine skifield terrain providing facilities for alpine skiing, snow boarding and snowplay.
- The use of the mountain's snow resources will be enhanced through the extended development of snowmaking facilities.
- Commercial facilities or retail premises will only be supported in the Skifield Precinct if it is small scale development and it can be demonstrated that the use will provide a desirable service for snow users or it is an integral component of a development proposal for passive alpine recreation and the use will not detract from the amenity or operation of the skifields.
- The establishment of facilities for passive alpine recreation or conduct of activities and special events in the non-ski season will be encouraged within the skifield terrain provided that the use and development is compatible with the primary use of the area for alpine skiing and result in minimal adverse environmental impact.
- The use of Corn Hill for dispersed alpine skiing, snow boarding or snow play will continue to be a long term option for Mt Buller. Any development proposals for Corn Hill must be assessed taking into account environmental, ecological, economic, aesthetic and safety considerations.
- Management of the skifields must be undertaken in a manner which minimises disturbance to flora and fauna communities and landscape values.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- A Skifield Master and Management Plan will be prepared by the skifield lessee for the Skifield Precinct which sets out the manner in which the area is planned to be developed and managed over the next 10 years. The Plan will detail current and future requirements for snowmaking and make provision for passive recreation within the skifields outside of the snow season. A Local Policy will be prepared to implement the Skifield Master and Management Plan.
- An All Season Resort Master Plan will be prepared by the Mt Buller Resort Management Board which sets out the planned alpine recreational and tourism use of the Resort areas outside of the skifields that are included in the Comprehensive Development Zone and Public Park and Recreation Zone. A Local Policy will be prepared to implement the All Seasons Resort Master Plan.
- The future development potential of the Mirrimbah area will be investigated to assess opportunities for recreation and nature-based commercial uses.

Transport and Access

Access is a critical issue for the operation of the Resort during the snow season. Mt Buller is presently subject to high levels of visitor entry and departure at weekend periods. In addition to these peak periods, high visitation often occurs following good snowfalls. At these times of high demand, weather conditions often necessitate that the access system operates at below its maximum capacity. To accommodate existing and planned visitor levels to Mt Buller during peak conditions, it will be necessary to augment the transport and access system through infrastructure works and management arrangements.

Car parking is an important factor in the operation of the Mt Buller Resort and its ability to cater for day and overnight visitors. There is a need to ensure that adequate provision is made for visitor car parking facilities within the Mt Buller Alpine Resort to facilitate easy access to the skifields and the Village. Car parking within the Mt Buller village has been provided on a limited basis, and it is acknowledged that there are significant community benefits in preserving the priority for pedestrians in the Village.

Objectives

- To develop a transport access system for Mt Buller that has the capacity to service existing and future resort demands.
- To ensure unrestricted and safe movement of pedestrians and skiers within the Mt Buller Village.
- To improve circulation and movement within the Village Centre.
- To provide public car parking to meet the needs of existing and planned visitation levels to the Mt Buller Resort.
- To protect and enhance the priority for pedestrian movement by limiting the provision of private and public car parking within the Mt Buller Village.

Strategies

- The transport and access system for Mt Buller will be progressively augmented to accommodate a planned visitor level of 15,000 people per day accessing the mountain.
- Access to the Mt Buller Resort and movement of vehicles within the Village will continue to be limited and managed by the Mt Buller Resort Management Board.

- Facilities for public car parking will be provided at appropriate locations within the Village and along the Mt Buller Tourist Road to cater for the needs of visitors during summer and winter seasons.

Implementation

- A Transport Policy will be prepared by the Mt Buller Resort Management Board which clearly sets out the infrastructure and management arrangements necessary for the operation of the existing and planned transport and access system to and within the Mt Buller Alpine Resort.
- Policies for the administration and provision of private and public car parking within the Village will be prepared as part of the Transport Policy.
- A local policy will be developed as appropriate and incorporated into the planning scheme to implement the Transport Policy.
- A network of pedestrian walkways and footpaths will be constructed throughout the Village along Village roads and as isolated walkways to enhance pedestrian and skier movement.
- A feasibility study of the potential for the development of a multi level undercover car parking facility within the commercial area of the Village will be undertaken by the Mt Buller Resort Management Board.
- A Local Policy for car parking applies in the Village as an interim management measure until the car parking management arrangements and level of provision is resolved.

Infrastructure

The Mt Buller Resort is well provided for in terms of physical infrastructure and services. Provision of major infrastructure is expensive and usually has a limited life space, it must be managed to ensure longevity and provision made for its replacement. There is a need to augment the sewerage treatment facilities to meet current and future peak load capacity and achieve EPA licence limits.

Infrastructure such as power lines, sub-stations and other facilities can impact on the alpine environment and the landscape setting of an area. All new infrastructure needs to be sympathetic to the environmental values of the resort and to minimise impact upon the alpine natural systems.

Objectives

- To ensure physical infrastructure is provided efficiently to meet the needs of the Resort with planned growth.
- To ensure that service and infrastructure developments preserve or enhance existing natural, built, cultural and environmental values of the Resort.
- To minimise the impact of stormwater and other discharges on the water quality of the Howqua and Delatite Rivers.

Strategies

The strategies for achieving the objectives are:

- Provision of physical infrastructure and services will be implemented to meet the planned growth of the Resort.
- Physical infrastructure and services will be appropriately designed and located to minimise their environmental and visual impact.
- The provision of additional water supply and storage facilities for snow making purposes will be encouraged within the Resort.
- Encourage development to meet minimum setback and buffer distances from the Delatite River.

Implementation

The strategies will be implemented by the following actions:

- The sewerage treatment facilities will be augmented to meet existing and future requirements of the Resort.
- New development in the Resort Village will be required to be connected to reticulated services.
- The construction of the underground reticulated electricity supply system will continue to be progressively implemented throughout the Village.
- Development in proximity to the Delatite River will be supported if buildings have a minimum setback of 30 m and septic tanks have a minimum of 100 m setback from the top of the river bank or high water mark and a minimum 30 m width of undisturbed vegetation is provided along the waterway.