



Rye Urban Design Guidelines Review

Prepared for Mornington Peninsula Shire

April 2020



Aerial Image of Rye

This review has been prepared by REALMstudios in response to Council's request for comment on the Draft Rye Urban Design Guidelines prepared by SJB, and with particular reference to the potential for a fourth storey on both the Hotel and Woolworths sites.





Township Plan Consultation

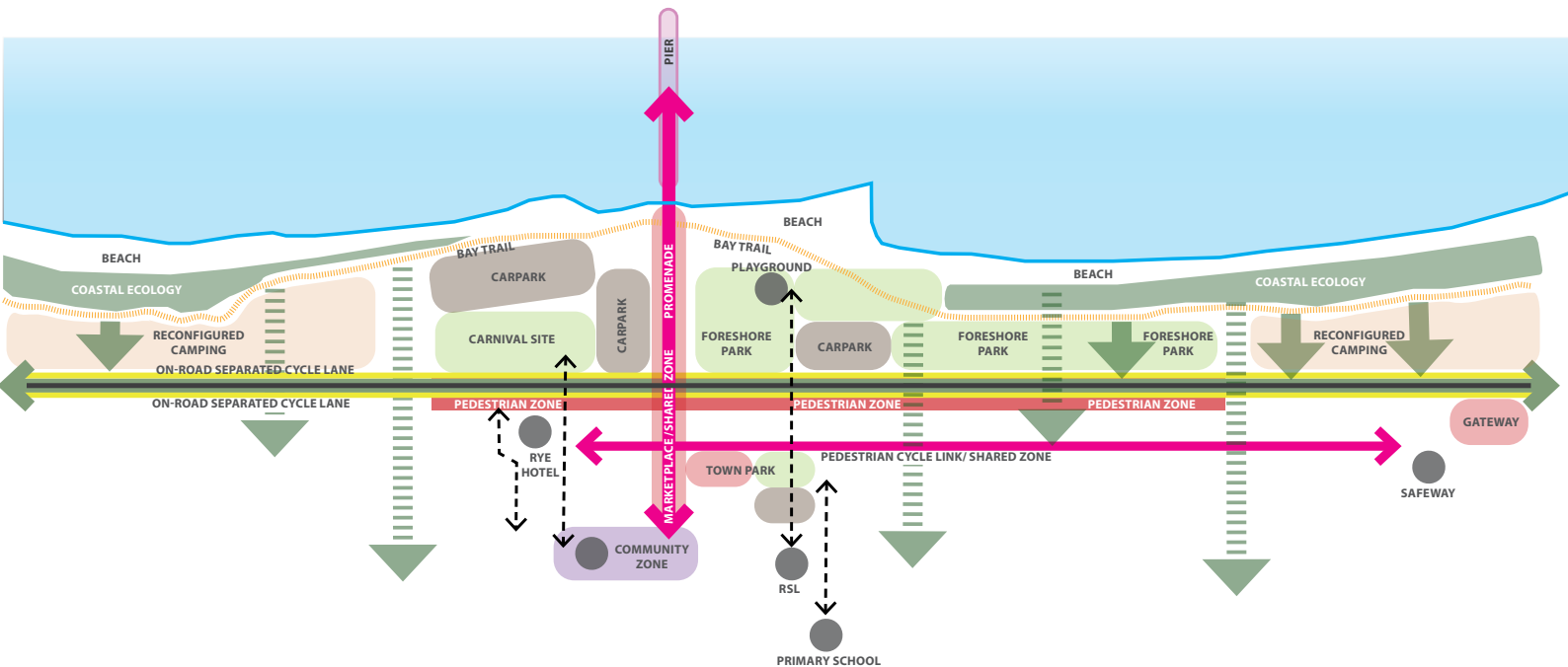
By way of background, REALMstudios authored and completed the now endorsed (and awarded) Rye Township Plan which, at the time of development, went through a considered and considerable public consultation process. It was clear throughout this engagement process that the general sentiment expressed by the community supported maintaining a 2 storey form of development across Rye, even though there was considerable pressure from State Government at the time to make provision for increased densities and population growth. As part of the plan a number of options were tested, some with community involvement, including 4 storey proposals in the central commercial zone. At the time these were loudly rejected and the Plan ultimately settled on a 2 storey streetedge built form with a set back third storey (meaning that the township could be perceived as a 2 storey village). It did however recommend that an urban design study be undertaken to further test appropriate built form and subsequent development opportunity. This is the current Draft Urban Design Guidelines.



The Township Plan was conceived as a document to frame 'the Place called Rye', a place with an economically thriving towncentre heralded on arrival along Pt Nepean Road by sculptural gateways. The principles outlined in the Township Plan around People and Economy included:

- Encourage appropriate population growth to support a wider range of infrastructure, facilities and services.
- Provide a clever integration of commercial and residential development to allow for an expanded commercial, retail and entertainment, art and culture offering within the Town Centre and to stimulate the local economy.
- Support moderate increases in building height and density in identified locations.
- Support establishment of live/ work capability and innovative local start-ups.
- Encourage active street frontages i.e. avoid blank walls.

It envisaged a township with a heart, an active and vital heart. It did not conceive a township bookended by 4 storey built form or extruded 4 storey built form along Pt Nepean Rd. A 4 storey built form as bookends to the village reinforces a linearity and leaves its central core heart open with the likes of the Bowls Club, RSL being large site's with a low scale and form of development. From the point of view of the township character and identity the most appropriate place to have increased density is at its core and in this context it would be inappropriate to have larger scaled and lumpy development to 4 storeys on the Woolworths site as a bookend to the town. It sets the wrong precedent and undermines the community's aspirations.



Aspirational Township Plan, REALMstudios

In the spirit of the Township Plan, the scale and vitality of the village is important, and perhaps the most suited locations for redevelopment are on those sites in the centre of town and back from the foreshore where as a consequence of the Township Plan there are now a number of township improvement projects that have received funding and are underway:

1. Napier St Plaza
2. Promenade and Foreshore upgrade
3. Camping reconfiguration
4. Car parking reallocation.

This new amenity, being the spine of the pier, the promenade and Napier St Plaza, constitutes a spine around which increased height and density could be located. What will be revealed as

Aerial Image of Rye





these projects are implemented is a significantly improved foreshore and central area (Napier St Plaza) and this represents the most suitable precinct for development activity seeking to capitalise on these changes. The extension of this spine being the sites of the RSL, Bowls Club and Council car parking are the logical sites perhaps for future development consideration, stimulating the economy and character of the township by having people and not cars at its core.

In this context, if 4 storey development is to be considered, it is our recommendation that 4 storey development be restricted to sites that are central to the heart of the township, back from the foreshore and maintaining a 2 storey presentation to the street. Such an approach would enhance the performance and character of the village and support the community's aspiration for 'a place called Rye'.

