



Casterton

'Embraced by the Glenelg River'

Urban Design Framework

## **Contents**

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Urban Design Framework</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Town Analysis</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 1</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 2</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 3</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 4</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 5</b>	<b>Page 21</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 6</b>	<b>Page 24</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 7</b>	<b>Page 27</b>
<b>Key Project Design Initiatives 8</b>	<b>Page 30</b>
<b>Overall Key Initiatives</b>	<b>Page 32</b>

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**Casterton Community**

**All the students from La Trobe University and the University of Moratuwa who participated in the workshop.**

**The final report was developed by second year planning students Tracy De Cotta, Robert Kretschmer, Robert Lean and Jack Pickering.**

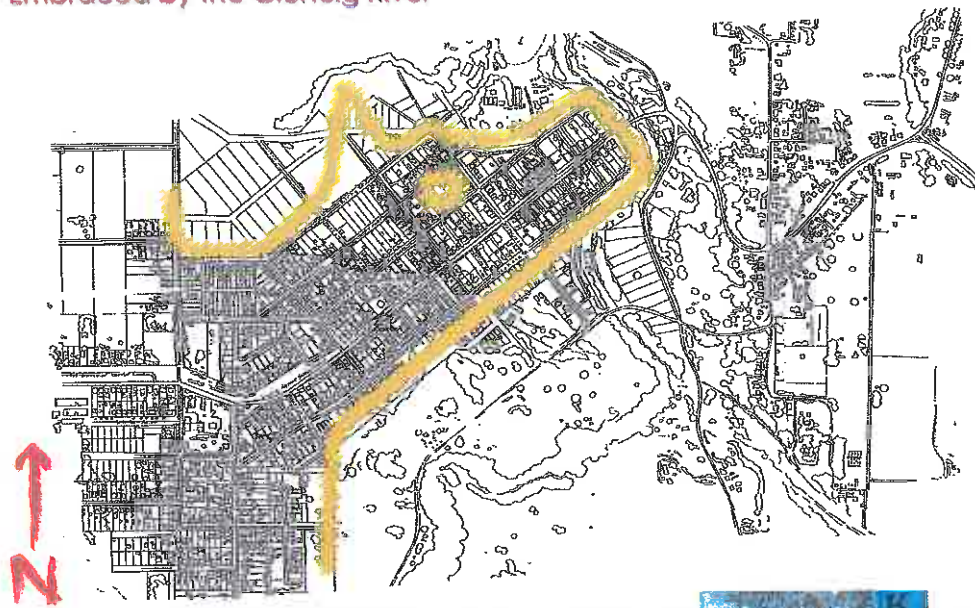
## Casterton – Birthplace Of The Kelpie



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Kelpie Trail



## **Introduction**

Casterton is a significant town of over 1,600 people located in south-western Victoria. Founded in 1840 it is one of the state's oldest settlements. Casterton is located in a strong agricultural area characterized by sheep farming, timber plantations and cropping. The town is located about 100 kilometres north of Portland and close to the South Australian border. It has had a stable (although ageing) population over recent years and has a well developed retail and service sector. Its wide historic main street and the Glenelg River setting are dominant physical features of the town. Significantly the town is recognised and celebrated as the birthplace of the Australian kelpie dog.

From 7 to 9 May 2010 students from the Community Planning and Development Program at La Trobe University Bendigo conducted an Integrated Planning Workshop at Casterton with the support of the Glenelg Shire Council. This involved about 80 students from a number of subject areas within the undergraduate and postgraduate programs together with 17 exchange planning students from the University of Moratuwa in Sri Lanka. Staff from the University accompanied the students.

The overall purpose of the Workshop was to enable students to work with the community and undertake organized sessions and activities. The specific aims were to assist students to research local issues and formulate planned responses in the areas of community and economic development, urban design, strategic planning, and social and demographic change. The focus was on students interacting with the community and developing plans and policy responses for the issues identified in consultation with the community and through a series of symposiums that the students were engaged in.

A major element of the program was to work with Council and the community to prepare an Urban Design Framework (UDF). Glenelg Shire Council financially assisted this process. The Casterton community were encouraged to participate in the exercise and students were required to engage with residents in the whole program and specifically with the preparation of the UDF. The students were assisted in the preparation of the UDF by the presence of three qualified urban designers.

## **An Urban Design Framework**

The following material has been extracted from information supplied by the Department of Planning and Community Development. Urban design is the practice of shaping the physical features of urban areas and towns to create better places for people and to make high-quality connections between places and buildings for safe movement of people.

While creating places for people, urban design must respect and enhance the natural environment and use resources efficiently. Improving the way public spaces work not only makes them more enjoyable; it has economic benefit. Better-designed public spaces make more efficient use of resources and attract more businesses.

Successful urban places are:

- **Walkable:** Walking is the social glue that holds public environments together.
- **Safe:** Safe environments encourage community interaction and reduce the incidence of crime.
- **Active and varied:** Human activity is the reason cities and towns exist and activities in and overlooking public spaces contribute to safety.
- **Inclusive:** Our society embraces all people. Design of public spaces must integrate and balance the needs of all us.
- **Delightful:** People seek out places that interest and engage them.
- **Ecologically Sustainable:** The natural environment is the basis of all human activity. Sustainable urban design safeguards natural places.
- **Adaptable:** Cities are constantly evolving. Successful public places accommodate and encourage a variety of uses.
- **Distinctive:** Urban design uses the climate, topography and natural and built assets to create distinctive places.

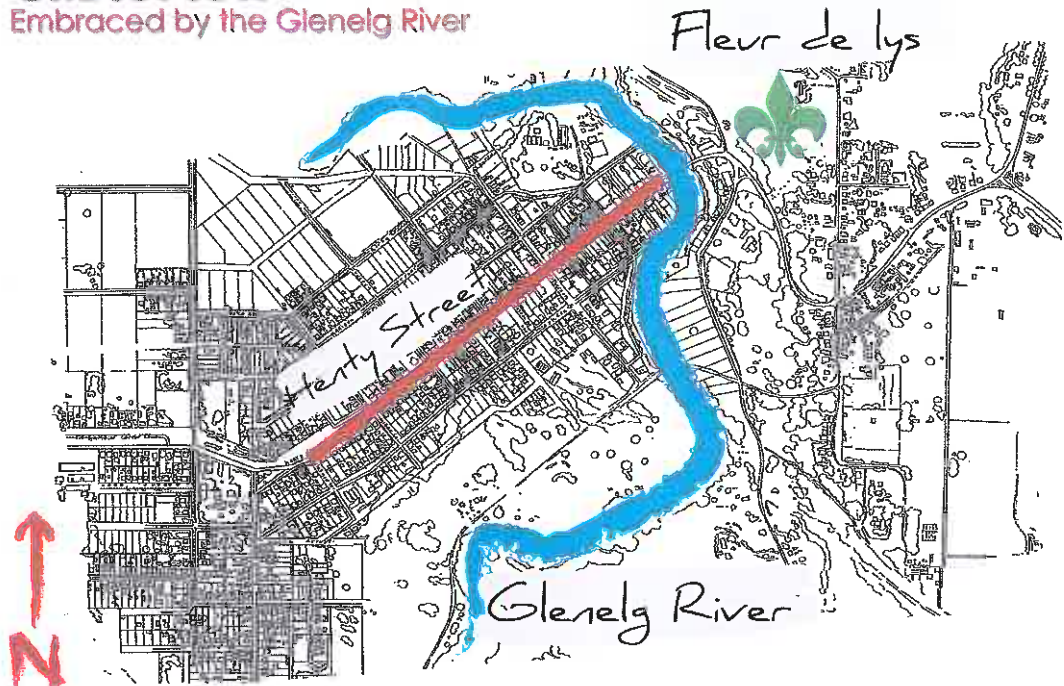
An Urban Design Framework is a means to assist a community to set an overall direction for a particular place or locality. Recommendations are fed into capital budgets, guidelines and works for implementation. An Urban Design Framework should provide flexibility by identifying key principles rather than finite solutions. It is not a fixed view of the future. It includes a design vision for how a place might develop and should include sufficient detail at key locations so that the vision can be tested for economic and functional viability. An Urban Design Framework should include sufficient information to allow continuous review of detailed actions within the strategic frame, and to enable councils to assess development proposals.



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## Casterton Urban Design Framework

What is an urban design framework?

- An urban design framework co-ordinates physical development issues with other actions such as social, economic & management strategies.
- Sets out the strategic vision for an area which can be adopted and used to develop the statutory planning legislation that controls development and allows the urban design vision to be achieved
- Provides flexibility by identifying key principles & a design vision of how a place might develop – but is not a fixed view of the future
- It is important that the Urban Design Framework reflects the desires of the Casterton community



## **Town Analysis**

Preparing an urban design framework requires an analysis of the built form and the natural and environment character of a place and how the community uses and interacts with the urban setting. The focus of the analysis for Casterton was on several important places. The most significant features of Casterton are its settings on a sweeping bend of the Glenelg River and the long wide main street (Henty Street). Henty Street with its substantial and impressive historic buildings forms the backbone of the whole town; it links the town with the river, and provides the setting for most of town's significant buildings. The original siting of Casterton was at a crossing point of the Glenelg River that gave rise to the need for a bridge. This feature now forms a gateway and together with the dramatic form of the adjoining hill slope provides a distinctive element of the town's presentation.

Much of the core of the town is based on a grid form of streets with many of the local residential streets leading to the Glenelg River, which with its walking tracks frame much of the town. A distinctive feature of the town is the Fleur de Lys emblem that was carved into the hill overlooking the town by boy scouts in 1941.

The community places a high value on Casterton's location with its high quality open space areas, outstanding trees along the Glenelg River, the presentation of the town's civic spaces and buildings. The residents of Casterton all express great pride in the heritage and environmental values of the town and the river.



## Opportunities

The process of analysis of the town's key elements identified significant opportunities that utilise the town's environmental, built and community assets and attributes. The dramatic setting of the river and Henty Street as the main address for the town, have potential to be substantially enhanced as the most identifiable features of Casterton. Strengthening the link between these two features so as to celebrate the significance of this location, and to re-unite the town centre with the river is an extremely important civic design opportunity for Casterton.

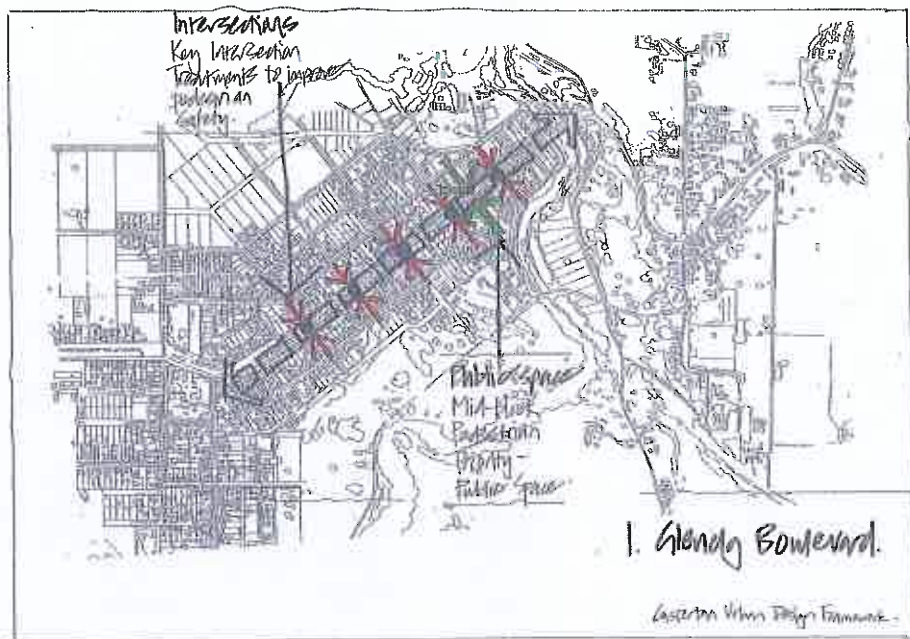
Connecting the river through the network local residential streets should be strengthened so that this feature becomes a point of difference in the design of the individual streets and creates a stronger riverside setting for these areas. The Kelpie Trail can be further celebrated in a number of locations, with extensions provided to enable greater access to the river edge, with further interpretation and cultural history information added to punctuate the experience.

There is a great opportunity to refresh the Fleur de Lys emblem. One idea is to provide a significant plantation of trees in the form of radiating avenues that focus attention on the emblem and provide a context for the outline during the day and night. There is capacity for innovative infill of sites and for creative forms of the site development that introduce small-scale open spaces, and for new projects to be orientated towards the river corridor. A major opportunity is to more effectively harvest the urban stormwater runoff from the town and to direct this flow through a system of detention ponds and landscaped feature areas prior to discharge into the Glenelg River. The installation of a commercial solar system would allow local businesses to contribute to Casterton's energy independence while creating employment.

The scale and width of Henty Street provides a magnificent opportunity to celebrate the significance and grandeur of this dominating element. The UDF recommends the establishment of tree planting replicating an 'avenue of honour' so as to provide a grand boulevard in the style of the great avenues of the late nineteenth century. This would sweep along the length of Henty Street.

## **Key Project Design Initiative 1**

### **Re-creating a World Class Boulevard – The Glenelg Boulevard**



The grand main street that links the town to the Glenelg River is of generous width, and flanked by the most important buildings within Casterton. This is the address route for the town and has the potential to be substantially enhanced as the most identifiable feature of Casterton. It is proposed to establish a new avenue of honour that is offset from the veranda edge and the extension of the pedestrian promenade so as to provide a grand boulevard in the style of the great avenues of the late nineteenth century.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*

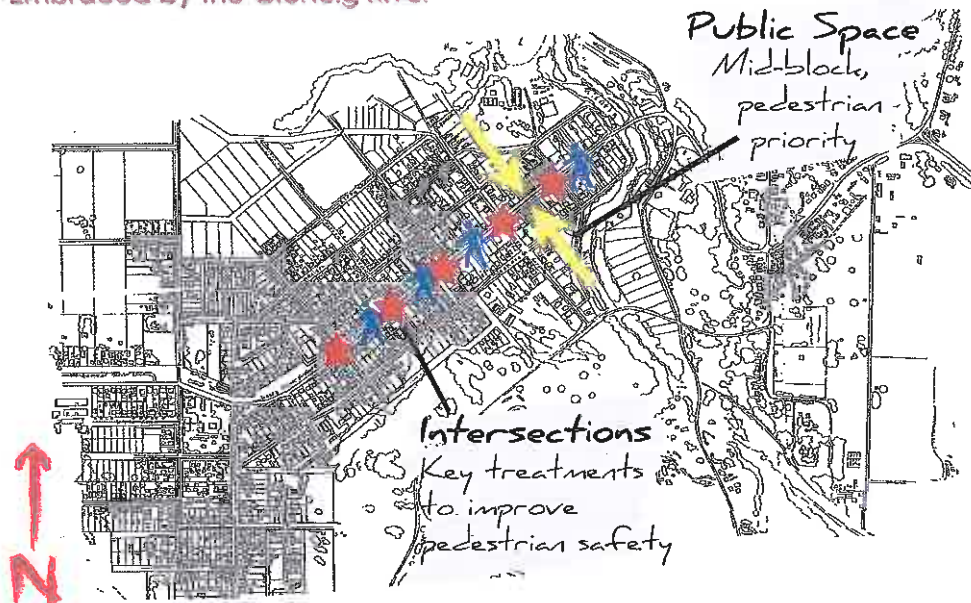


Key intersection treatments to improve pedestrian safety are important and pedestrian mid-block is the number one priority for this potentially world-class boulevard.



**Casterton**

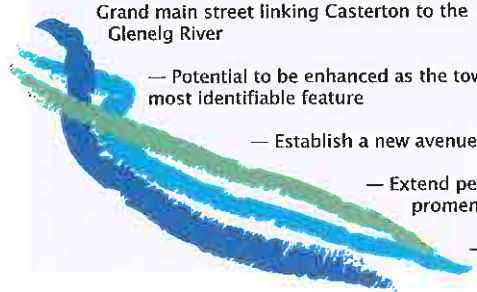
Embraced by the Glenelg River



# 1. Glenelg Boulevard

The grand main street that links the town to the Glenelg River is of generous width, and flanked by the most important buildings within Casterton. This is the address route for the town and has the potential to be substantially enhanced as the most identifiable feature of Casterton. This will require the establishment of a new avenue of honour that is offset from the verandah edge and the extension of the pedestrian promenade to provide a grand boulevard in the style of the great avenues of the late nineteenth century.

Grand main street linking Casterton to the Glenelg River

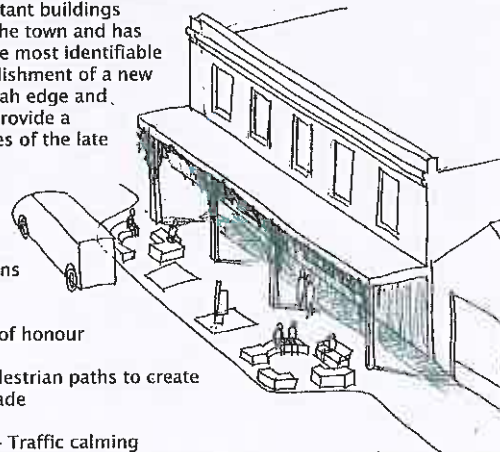


— Potential to be enhanced as the towns most identifiable feature

— Establish a new avenue of honour

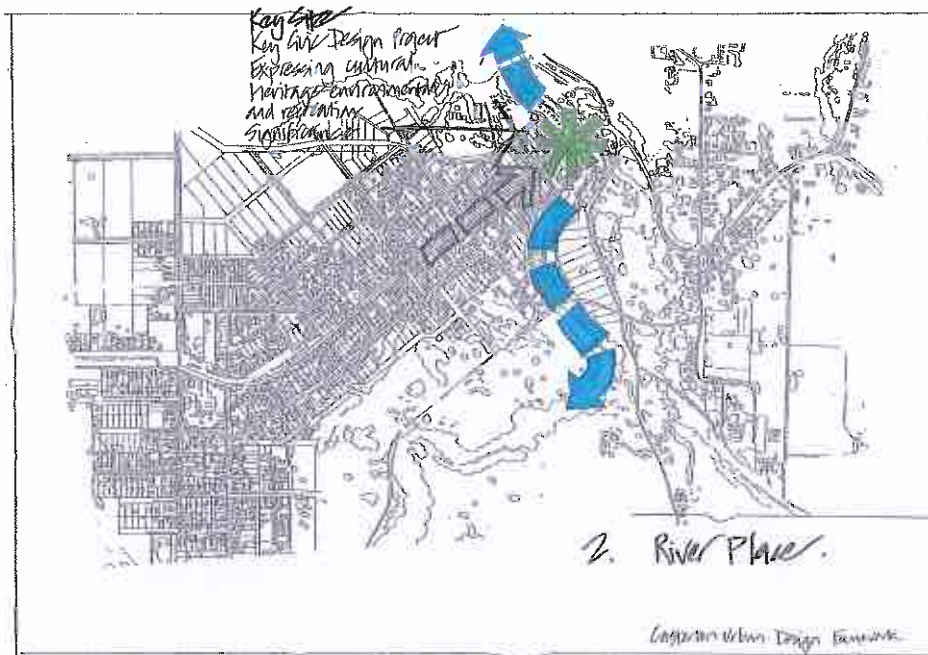
— Extend pedestrian paths to create promenade

— Traffic calming



## **Key Project Design Initiative 2**

### **River Place – Where the Boulevard meets the Glenelg**



The establishment of towns such as Casterton was at a crossing point of a river, which gave rise to the need for a bridge, and formed the catalyst for the inception of the town. The first Europeans in the area were the party of the surveyor Thomas Mitchell that passed through the Casterton area during the Australia Felix expedition of 1836. The actual crossing place was surveyed in 1840. To celebrate the significance of this location and to re-unite the town centre with the river, "River Place" is an extremely important civic design opportunity for Casterton. This will also be the gateway point for the further design initiative of "River Walk" which has already been commenced within Island Park. Currently this site is used as a car park, and the edge to the Glenelg River is not particularly well resolved. As a location for high quality passive open space the treatment of this civic space is to reflect the heritage and environmental values of the town and the river.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*



This site is potentially the key civic design project where expressing cultural, heritage, environmental and recreation significance.



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*Key site*  
*Key civic design project*  
*expressing cultural,*  
*heritage, environmental*  
*and recreation significance*

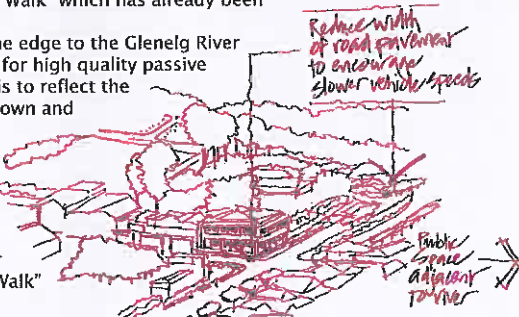
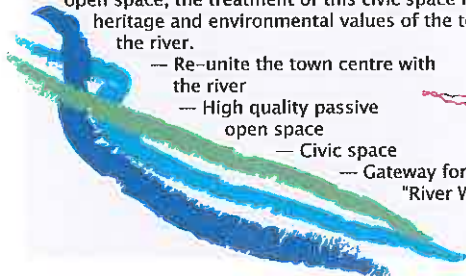
## 2. River place

The inception of towns such as Casterton was at a crossing point of a river, which gave rise to the need for a bridge, and formed the catalyst for the inception of the town. First Europeans in the area were the party of the surveyor Thomas Mitchell which passed through the Casterton area during the Australia Felix expedition of 1836. The actual crossing place was surveyed in 1840.

To celebrate the significance of this location, and to re-unite the town centre with the river, "River Place" is to be an extremely important civic design opportunity for Casterton. This will also be the gateway point for the further design initiative of "River Walk" which has already been commenced within Island Park.

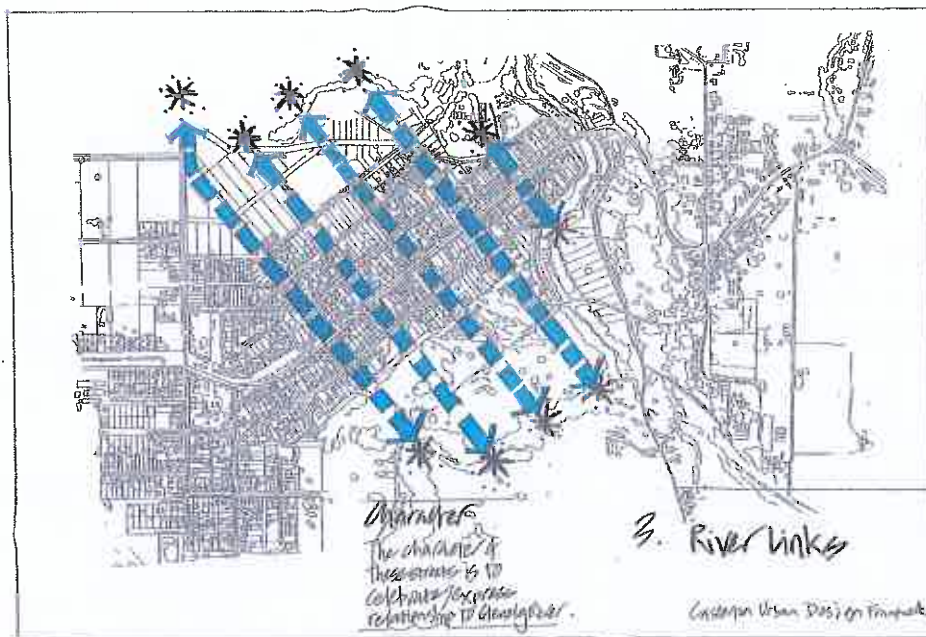
Currently this site is used as a carpark, and the edge to the Glenelg River is not particularly well resolved. As a location for high quality passive open space, the treatment of this civic space is to reflect the heritage and environmental values of the town and the river.

- Re-unite the town centre with the river
- High quality passive open space
- Civic space
- Gateway for "River Walk"



### **Key Project Design Initiative 3**

#### **River Links – Creating a Distinctive Residential Character**



The residential streets, which encircle the main commercial area of Casterton, provide a distinctive feature in the way in which many of these routes connect again with the Glenelg River. This feature is to become a point of difference in the design of the individual streets and create a stronger riverside setting for these areas. As part of the future infill development of these areas, improvements in pedestrian/cycle systems, establishment of avenue planting, and construction of focal activity points at selected street-river meeting places is proposed.



*Casterton Urban Design Framework*

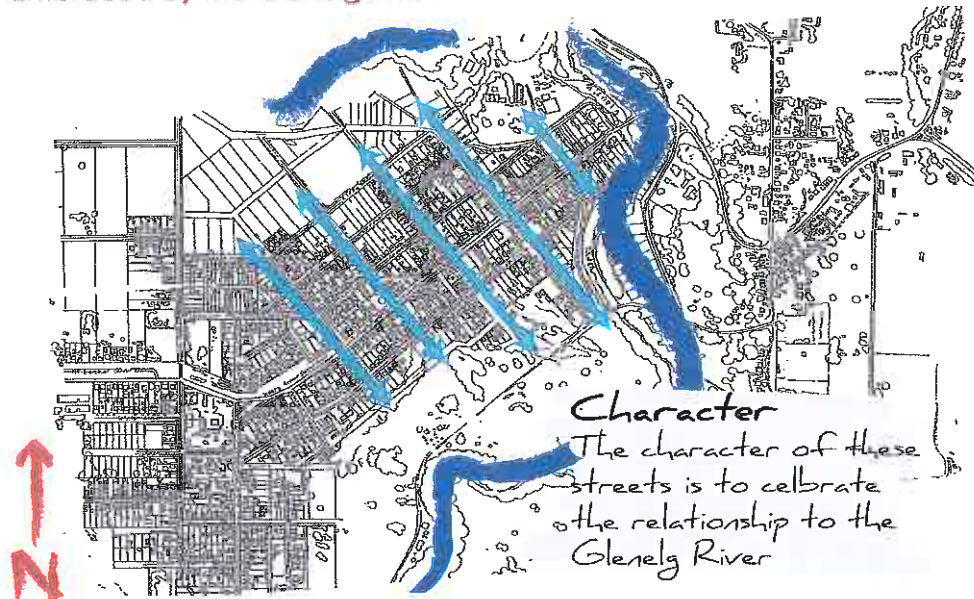


The character of these streets is to celebrate and express the relationship to the Glenelg River.



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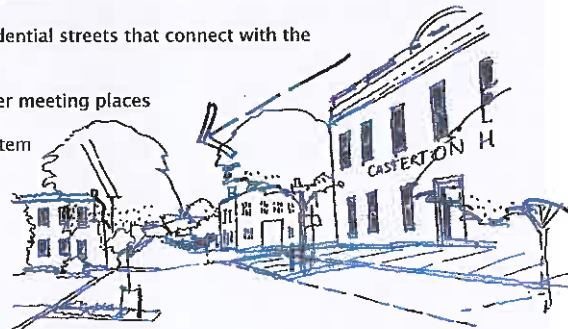


### 3. River links

#### Creating a distinctive residential character

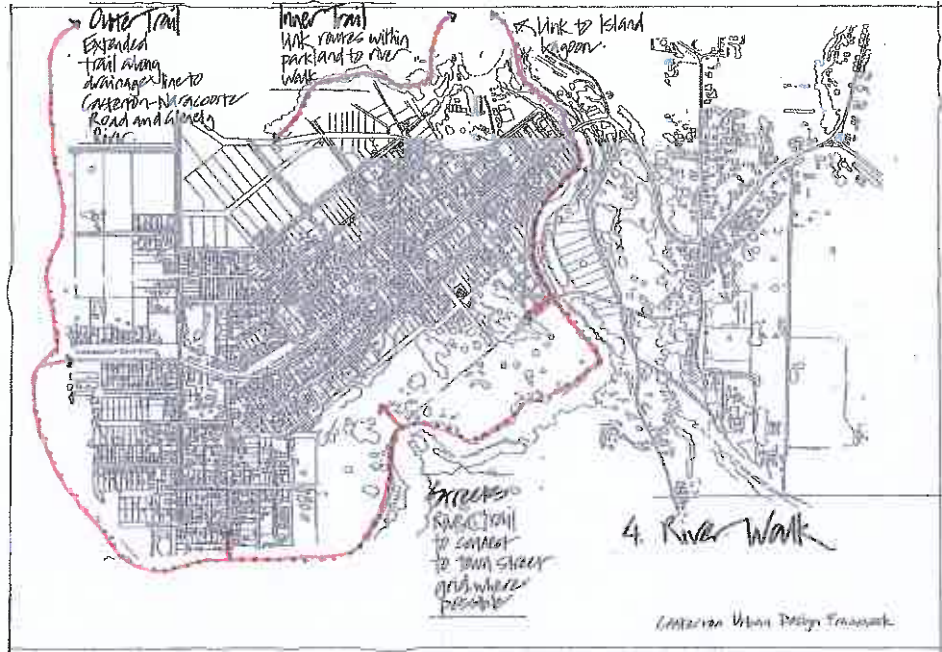
Within the residential streets with encircle the main commercial area of Casterton a distinctive feature is the way in which many of these routes connect again with the Glenelg River. This feature is to become a point of difference in design of the individual streets and create a stronger river-side setting for these areas. As part of the future infill development of these areas, improvements in pedestrian/cycle systems, establishment of avenue planting, and construction of focal activity points at selected street-river meeting places is proposed.

- Create stronger riverside setting for residential streets that connect with the Glenelg River
- Activity points at selected street-river meeting places
- Improve pedestrian & cycle system
- Avenue planting



## Key Project Design Initiative 1

### River Walk – Community Health Project



Already commenced with sections constructed within Island Park. There is a need to provide a continuous pedestrian/cycle trail along the Glenelg River that loops back around Casterton. In some locations branch extensions should be provided to allow closer access to the river edge, and interpretation and cultural history information can be added to punctuate the experience. A night walk experience could also be considered.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*

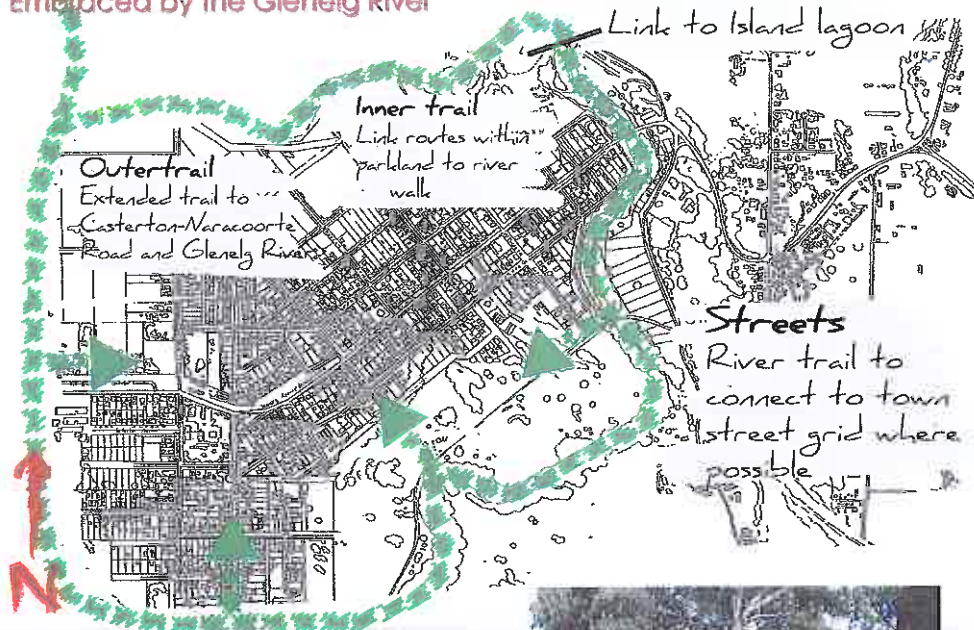


There is a possibility of the river trail to connect to the town's street grid where possible. The outer trail would be the extended trail along the drainage line to the Casterton-Naracoorte Road and the Glenelg River. The inner trail link routes within the parkland to the river walk.



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## 4. river Walks

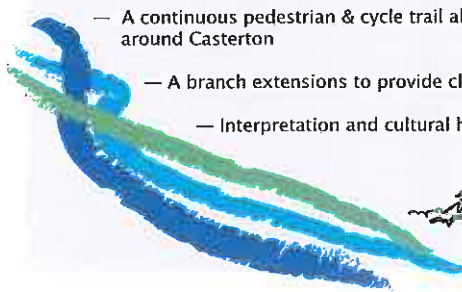
### Community Health project

Already commenced with sections constructed within Ess Lagoon and Island Park, there is a need to provide a continuous pedestrian/cycle trail along the Glenelg River that loops back around Casterton. In some locations branch extensions should be provided to allow closer access to the river edge, and interpretation and cultural history information can be added to punctuate the experience. A night walk experience could also be considered.



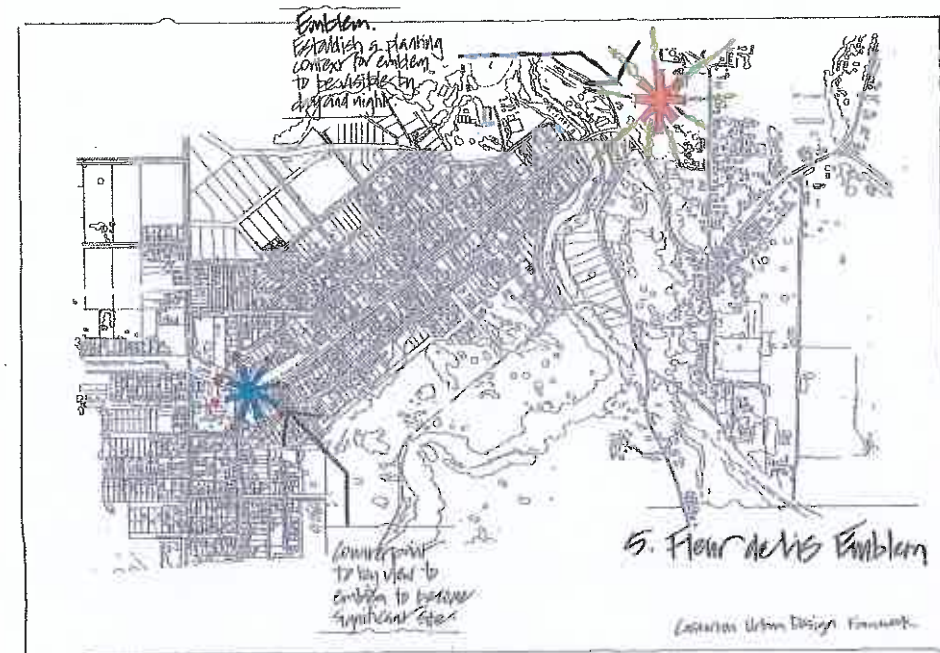
- A continuous pedestrian & cycle trail along the Glenelg River that loops back around Casterton
- A branch extensions to provide closer access to the river
- Interpretation and cultural history information

Casterton  
Station to  
be linked to  
River trail



## **Key Project Design Initiative 5**

### **The Fleur de Lys Emblem**



A well-known feature of the town is the Fleur de Lys emblem that was carved into the hill overlooking the town by boy scouts in 1941. Old rags soaked in kerosene and set alight originally illuminated it. Electric lighting has since been installed to maintain the tradition. There is an opportunity to refresh this local feature. One concept would be to provide a significant plantation of trees in the form of radiating avenues that focus attention on the emblem and provide a context for the outline during the day and at night. The illumination system could also be re-examined with the possible addition of solar power and led lights that improve the night display. A further option is to incorporate a light display that occurs at a set time each night, which will again add to the appeal of the emblem. The word Casterton that is also written on the side of the hill could be included in the radial design.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*

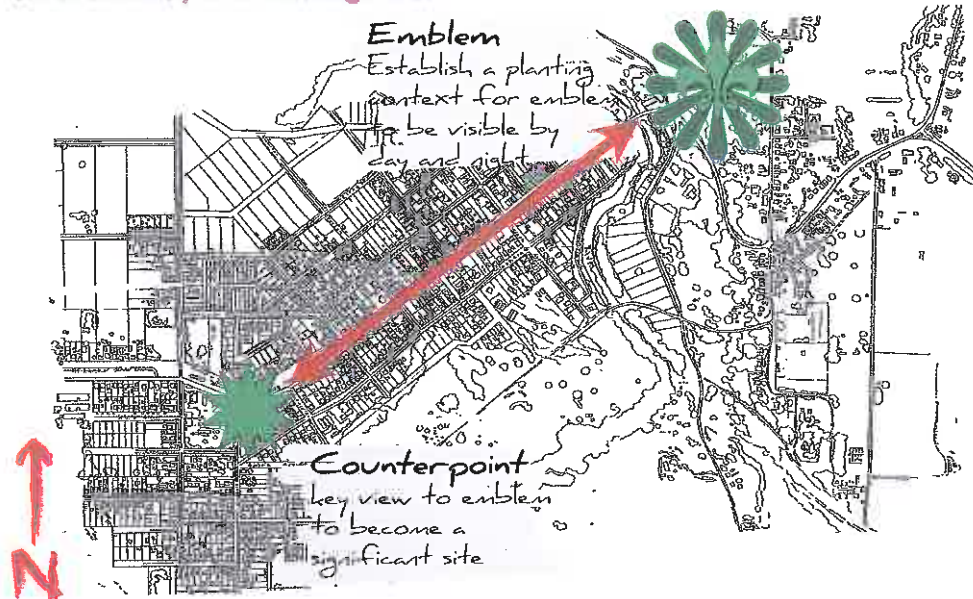


Possibility to establish a planting context for the emblem to be visible during both day and night with the war memorial to be a counterpoint and a key view to the emblem to become a significant site.



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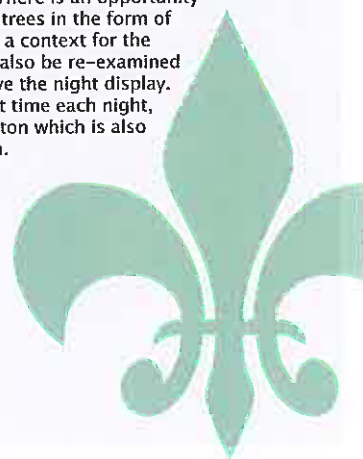
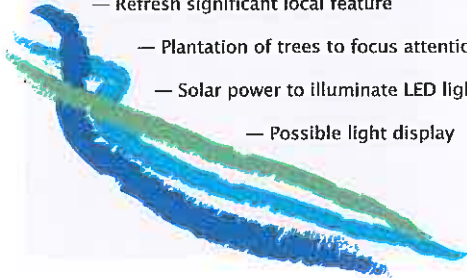
Embraced by the Glenelg River



## 5. Fleur De Lys

A well known feature of the town is the Fleur de Lis emblem that was carved into the hill overlooking the town by scouts in 1941. It was originally illuminated by old rags soaked in kerosene and set alight. Electric lighting has since been installed to maintain the tradition. There is an opportunity to refresh this local feature by providing a significant plantation of trees in the form of radiating avenues that focus attention on the emblem, and provide a context for the outline during the day and at night. The illumination system could also be re-examined with the possible addition of solar power and led lights that improve the night display. A further option is to incorporate a light display that occurs at a set time each night, which will again add to the appeal of the emblem. The word Casterton which is also written on the side of the hill could be included in the radial design.

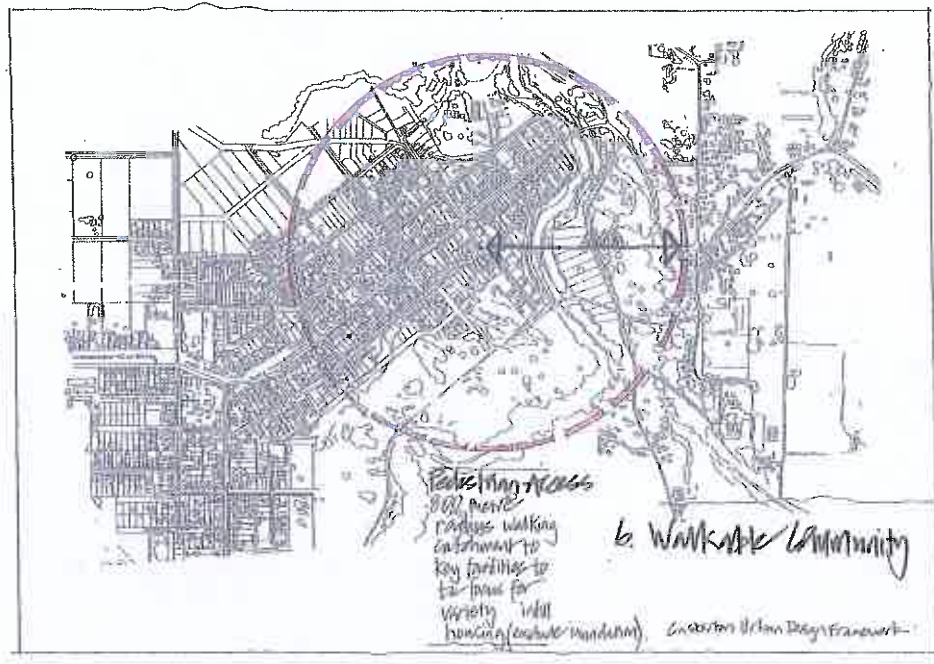
- Refresh significant local feature
- Plantation of trees to focus attention on emblem
- Solar power to illuminate LED lights
- Possible light display





## Key Project Design Initiative 6

### The Sustainable Community Initiative 1: Walkable Community



The grid form of the street system within the residential areas which flank the commercial and community spine are highly capable of delivering a pedestrian orientated and sustainable structure that is capable of increased densities for a wider range of accommodation. Casterton is already supplied with accommodation for aged persons, and the demand for both independent living and assisted care facilities are forecast to increase. There is also an emerging need for more affordable accommodation to assist with the process of people retiring into town. There is capacity for infill and creative forms of site development that introduce small-scale open space, and for new projects to be orientated towards the river corridor.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*



The 800-metre radius walking catchment to key facilities is to be the focus for variety of infill housing, this excludes areas subject to inundation.

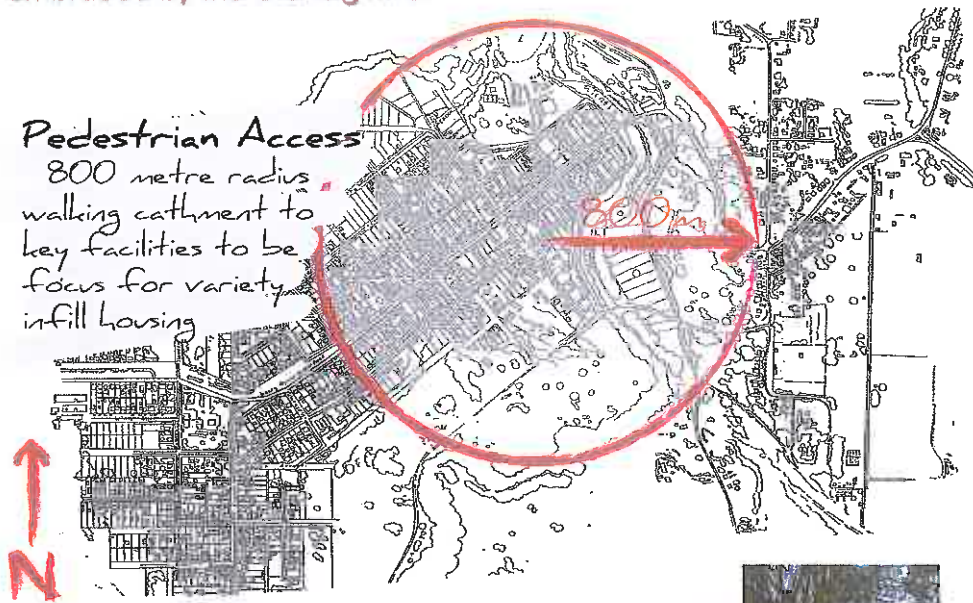


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### Pedestrian Access

800 metre radius walking catchment to key facilities to be focus for variety infill housing



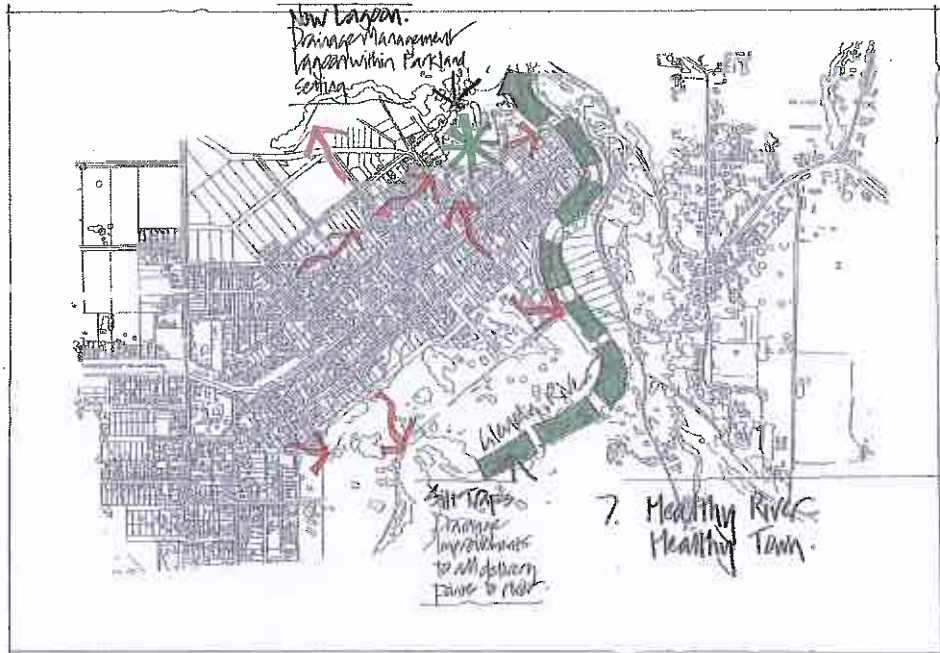
## 6. Walkable community

- The grid form of the street system within the residential areas which flank the commercial and community spine are highly capable of delivering a pedestrian orientated and sustainable structure that is capable of increased densities for a wider range of accommodation.
- Casterton is already supplied with accommodation foraged persons, and the demand for both independent living and assisted care facilities is forecast to increase.
- There is also an emerging need for more affordable accommodation to assist with the process of people on rural allotments retiring into town.
- There is capability for infill and creative forms of site development that introduce small scale open space, and for new projects to be orientated towards the river corridor.



## **Key Project Design Initiative 7**

### **Healthy River – Healthy Town**



There have been a number of projects completed along the Glenelg River to improve the water quality and to more effectively manage runoff from the town centre. A major opportunity is to more effectively harvest the urban stormwater runoff from sites and to direct this flow through a system of detention ponds and landscaped feature areas prior to discharge into the Glenelg River. This will be accompanied by community education and awareness and signing of entry pits and water treatment areas. This can also provide for supplementary sources of grey water for irrigation of the recreation and open space areas. It can provide improved visual quality of the existing parkland and add to the environmental values of this area. Most importantly it will be an expression of a town that cares for its environment.

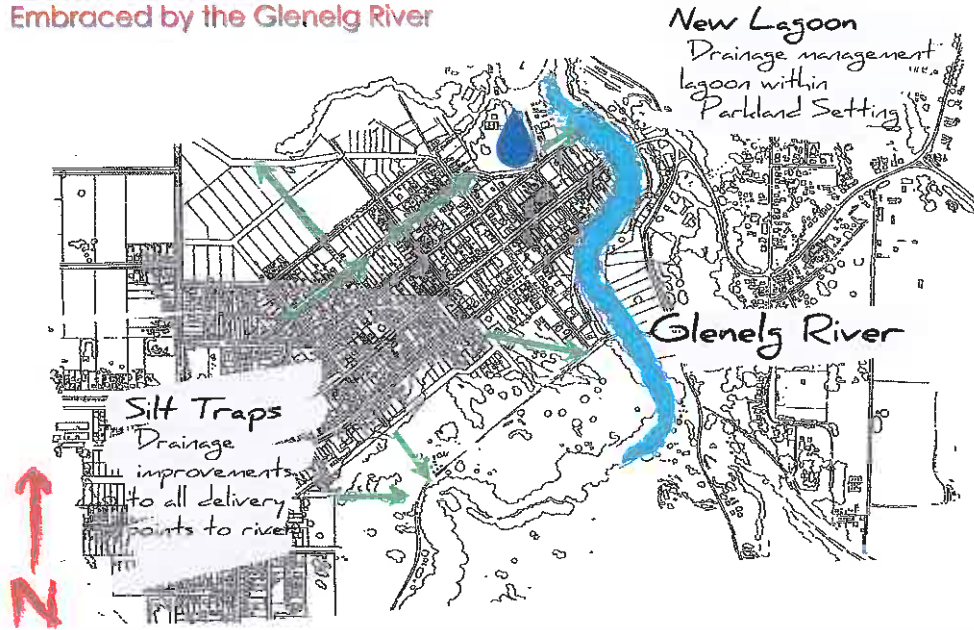
*Casterton Urban Design Framework*



Drainage management is vital for the lagoon within the parkland setting and drainage improvements to all delivery points to the river.



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## 7. Healthy river, healthy town

There have been a number of projects completed along the Glenelg River to improve the water quality and to more effectively manage runoff from the town centre.

A major opportunity is to more effectively harvest the urban stormwater runoff from the site, and to direct this flow through a system of detention ponds and landscaped feature areas prior to discharge into the Glenelg River. This will be accompanied by community education and awareness, and signing of entry pits and water treatment areas.

This can also provide for supplementary sources of grey water for irrigation of the recreation and open space areas. It can provide improved visual quality of the existing parkland, and add to the environmental values of this area.

Most importantly it will be an expression of a town that cares for its environment.

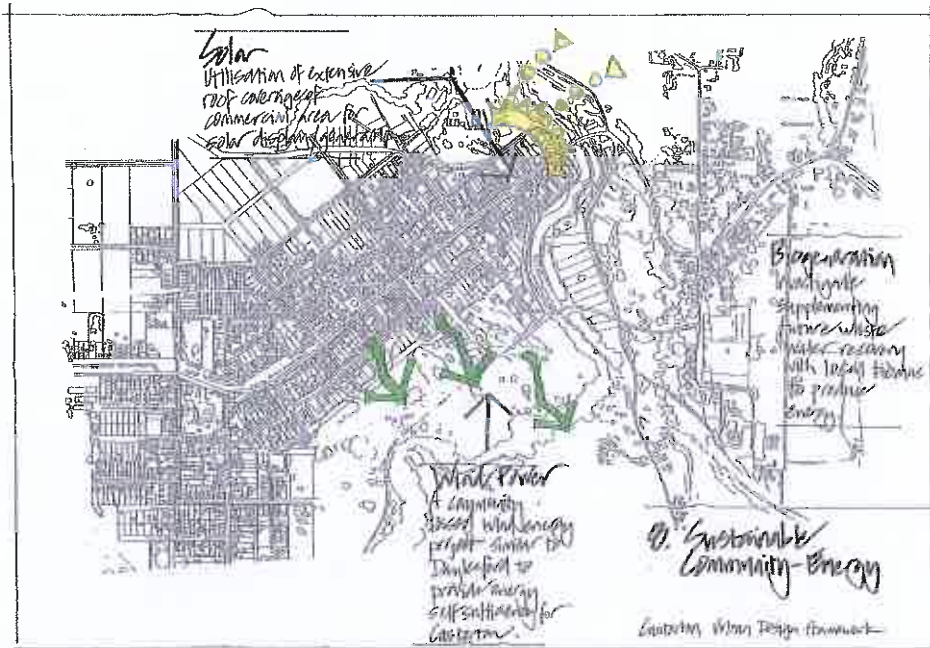
— Opportunity to further harvest the urban stormwater runoff

— Supplementary sources of grey water for irrigation, recreation & open space areas



## Key Project Design Initiatives 8

### The Sustainable Community Initiative 2: Energy Generation



The utilisation of extensive roof coverage of the commercial area for solar display and generation is a way to create a healthier, more sustainable and independent-resilient town. The installation of a commercial solar system would allow local businesses to be more independent from the power grid and contribute in a major way toward the reduction of greenhouse gases. A community based wind energy project similar to Daylesford would provide energy and allow Casterton to become more self-sufficient. There are opportunities to investigate supplementing future wastewater recovery with local biomass to produce energy.

*Casterton Urban Design Framework*



Utilisation of extensive roof coverage of the commercial area for solar display/generation is a sustainable option for the town.



## Overall Key Initiatives

The following plan shows the eight initiatives consolidated onto one overall plan

