



# Merimbula Transport Study 2021-23

Consultants Brief



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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council is commissioning an holistic vision-led transport study for the township of Merimbula. Council recognises it will need the leadership of consultants with subject matter expertise in multi-modal transport, traffic engineering, urban planning, community consultation and strategy development to prepare a transport study that will guide planning and investment in Merimbula's growing transport networks.



## Vision 2040: Merimbula

The coastal atmosphere of Merimbula as a vibrant seaside destination has been enhanced by orienting commercial development towards the lake, prioritising pedestrians and improving public open space.

Further information is available in annex B, and the full statement is available in the Local Strategic Planning Statement.

## Background

Merimbula is a seaside town of approximately 5,000 people on the far south coast of New South Wales known as the Sapphire Coast, within the Bega Valley Shire local government area. The township services a diverse stakeholder group with distinct and critical commercial, residential, recreational and transport needs. Development investment is a key driver in achieving strategic outcomes for the Shire including tourism, retail, industry, aquaculture, agriculture, residential needs and community amenities.

Recent major changes in Merimbula include: construction of the Merimbula by-pass allowing peak season traffic to move through Merimbula without impacting on the commercial centre; construction of the Lake Street shared path; and land rezoning to consolidate the town centre and provide opportunities for urban renewal and housing diversity.

Merimbula township is already struggling to meet the transport needs of its diverse stakeholders due to a combination of factors. This includes challenging geographic (terrain) and environmental characteristics, ageing population, seasonal tourism and expanding economic needs. Increasing development interest has necessitated a re-think of township transport planning in line with Council's broader strategies. The township's interdependencies and connectivity with transport links within and without the local government area also need careful consideration. These include cross-border linkages with Victoria and the ACT, heavy vehicle needs and the implications of marine transport and aviation on the land based networks. It is anticipated that the existing transport networks will reach saturation during peak tourism periods in the near term.

## Purpose and Intended Use

The Final Study Report (Final Report) from the project will be presented to Council for adoption as a key planning document that will shape the Council's strategic transport agenda for the town and how it will pursue improvements to the transport network in Merimbula township. It will support the future development of the Council's shire wide transport strategy. The Final Report will be a key input into the future development of a Place-based Area Plan for Merimbula and may inform changes to other Council strategies and plans.

## Strategic Objectives

The Merimbula Transport Study seeks to achieve the following strategic objectives:

1. Establish the transport context (current and possible futures) for Merimbula taking into account the natural, social, cultural and commercial environment, and recognising the importance of all modes of transport, their interdependencies and the needs of users, and
2. Provide a future transport planning framework that will enable the development of an integrated transport network that supports the vision for Merimbula.

# Project Brief

## Location Description

The principal location of the study is Merimbula Central Business District (CBD) extending to and around the boat ramp carpark, Market Street, Beach Street, Main Street and Lake Street, around Sapphire Coast Drive and Berrambool oval driveway, up Merimbula Drive to Monaro Street and Back down to the include the Bega Valley Learning Centre carpark. These boundaries are supplied on the map at annex A.

The study recommendations are intended to focus on the principal study area; however, consideration of the surrounding area is required to ensure that interdependencies and connectivity issues are appropriately considered. The study is to consider the surrounding environment such as main, secondary and alternate routes for all modes of transport, and the needs of adjacent townships reliant upon Merimbula's social, cultural and economic amenity. It may also need to consider the environmental and heritage impacts proposed changes may impose.

## Detailed Objectives of the Project

Noting the location description and boundaries, the following detailed objectives are to be considered in the project resulting in a Study and recommendations.

- Provide a strategic framework that supports the vision for Merimbula and links holistic transport issues to other Council adopted land use strategies (listed in the Existing Data and Documentation section below)
- Improve the safety and capacity of main, secondary and alternate routes for all modes of transport within the location boundary, including key interdependencies and connectivity issues
- Improve transport facilities that cater to the needs of visitors passing through, or staying in, Merimbula
- Strengthen public transport operations and improve connections for within township and neighbouring township residents
- Achieve improvements in a way that does not detract from the amenities provided as a destination
- Work with stakeholders to inform the study and harness community interest and human capital in the strategy through consultation and other innovative means to be proposed by the consultant
- Provide recommendations for amending the CBD Landscape Master Plan and Bike Plan and other Council strategies as required
- Provide recommendations that consider peak and non-peak tourism periods
- Support the 2040 Vision for Merimbula in the Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Give effect to the Desired Future Character Statement in the Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Implement the Future Directions as they may apply to Merimbula detailed in Planning Priority 8: 'Transport' in Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Implement the NSW Movement and Place Framework
- Contribute to Council's commitments to reduce greenhouse emissions and increase resilience to climate change



- Improve public access and open space in key foreshore areas.

## Scope of Works

### General

The scope shall include all tasks to manage, supervise, liaise, communicate and plan with Council and stakeholders in executing each scope item. All modes of transport and their related user needs, infrastructure requirements, interdependencies, connectivity and impacts are to be considered including:

- Mobility impaired access and facilities needs
- Pedestrian and cycling
- Public transport
- Light Vehicle (resident, short, long term visitor)
- Heavy Vehicle (public transport, freight, waste and commercial)
- Recreational Vehicle
- Road space allocation to accommodate the above need in the principal study area
- Aviation transport (general, commuter and commercial) impacts on onward chain transport types
- Marine transport (commercial, general, recreational) impacts on onward chain transport types

Additionally, Consultants may also propose other innovative conceptual “overlays” to consider the problem.

The following destinations are highlighted as key places in Merimbula servicing a community need and are to be factored into the destination-based issues and framework:

- Airport
- Parks
- Boat Ramp
- Jetties
- Beaches
- Lakes
- Berrambool
- Retirement villages
- Merimbula Public School
- “High Street Retail” Destinations
- Tourist Infrastructure on Lake St and Short Point

## **Deliverables**

Specified deliverable scope items include:

### **3. Data Collection and Analysis**

Data collection of characteristics that impact transport, social, commercial, geographic factors

Transport profiling against the modes listed above that accounts for normal and holiday conditions separately

Transport and network modelling (to be proposed by the consultants)

- This may require calibration to account for recent COVID-19 related impacts
- It may also need to account for long-term trends resulting from COVID-19

Types of data collection Council recognises is currently a gap in our data include:

- Pedestrian and Cyclist Counts
- Intersection Movement Counts
- Establishing the level of service of the Merimbula Bypass arrangements and adjoining intersections

### **4. Consultation**

Industry and community consultation to identify destination and transport user needs, requirements and (where possible) specifications. A list of proposed stakeholders is provided further below.

Consultants are to identify and propose methods for consultation in their tender submission.

### **5. Documentation**

The expected deliverable documentation is expected to include:

- Project Management Plan
- Engagement Management Plan compliant with Council's Community Engagement Strategy
- Community consultation materials, agendas and minutes of meetings
- Raw and analysed data collected to inform the study
- Monthly progress reports to the project steering group
- Early Draft Study report including assessment of existing context and future opportunities
- Exhibition Draft Study Report for presentation to Council and public exhibition
- Final Draft Study Report (Final Report) that adopts (as appropriate) public feedback following exhibition, for adoption by Council

Consultants are to confirm the milestones, deliverables and their proposed approach to meet the objectives of the project in their tender submission. Tenderers are to use this as the basis for the lump sum price breakdown (Schedule B.1.) of the tender.

## Existing Data and Documentation

Considerable data already exists which will inform the study. All relevant data will be provided to the successful consultant at the commencement of the project and is expected to shape the requirements of the data collection tasks outlined in the scope of works.

The following data types and references will be made available as part of project initiation.

Data Types and Reference Documentation	
Permanent Traffic Counts (3 x locations)	Merimbula Airport Masterplan
Seasonal Traffic Counts (multiple locations)	<a href="#">Merimbula CBD Landscape Masterplan</a>
Temporary Pedestrian Counts	Merimbula Flood Study
Airport Movement Counts	<a href="#">Merimbula CBD parking report 2018</a>
Smart Parking data (raw)	Merimbula Flood Plain Risk Management Plan
<a href="#">Local Strategic Planning Statement</a>	<a href="#">Commercial Land Strategy</a>
Economic Development Planning Strategy	Community Strategic Plan
<a href="#">Climate Resilience Strategy</a>	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
Local Transport Committee meeting minutes	Bega Valley Shire Regional Transport Strategy (Draft)
Delivery Program	Operational Plan
Profile ID Service (based upon census data) <a href="https://profile.id.com.au/bega-valley/home">https://profile.id.com.au/bega-valley/home</a>	Community feedback to existing plans and strategies
Community Engagement Strategy	Existing design documentation for proposed future works

## Community and Council Consultation

The Consultant's engagement management plan is to follow the Council's adopted Community Engagement Strategy with is based upon the IAP2 Framework. Council has assessed this project as having HIGH community impact and MODERATE community scale. However not all stakeholders will be affected equally, and the Consultant is to consider individual stakeholder impacts to determine the level of engagement required.

Considerable community consultation and feedback has occurred prior to the commissioning of this study. All relevant data will be provided to the successful consultant at the commencement of the project, including community feedback received in the consultation of the above strategies and masterplans. This is expected to refine the nature of the data collection and community consultation tasks outlined in the scope of works in order to prevent (as much as possible) consultation fatigue. In addition, Council will make available all relevant complaints, issues and communications from Customer Request Management tickets – Civica Authority.



Council provides an indicative list of stakeholders the consultants may need to engage with.

Suggested Stakeholder Groups (not exhaustive)	
Traffic Committee	NSW Police
Public Transport Operators	Taxi Service Operators
Merimbula Chamber of Commerce	Merimbula Airport Community Advisory Group
Cruise Operators utilising Merimbula Lake	Department of Education
Licensed Clubs within the principal study area	RSL Lifecare (Bimbimbie Park)
Transport for NSW	Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
Local Emergency Management Committee	Merimbula residents

The Exhibition Draft Report will undergo public exhibition prior to adoption by Council. The Consultant is to remain available during this period to provide advice on feedback received and make amendments as necessary to the Final Report.

## Governance

The consultant is to propose their project management controls and governance in their Tender response. The consultant's project team will report their findings periodically (per milestones) to the steering group established specifically for the project.

The Steering committee is comprised of representatives from the Council's executive, Works & Assets, Planning Services, Leisure & Recreation and Project Services departments. The committee is responsible directly to the Council's Chief Executive Officer. Council's primary representative for the day to day management of the project is the Civil Assets Superintendent.

## Communication and Reporting

Formal progress reporting is to occur in accordance with the tender documentation Appendix A Progress Claims and Invoicing. Consultants, as part of their tendered project methodology, are to propose how they will conduct informal reporting and communication with the Council's representative to ensure the project specification and outcomes are achieved.

## Phasing and Milestones

The project is expected to commence with an initiation meeting no earlier than mid to late November 2021. The project is to be completed, with Final Report submitted to the Council Meeting Secretariat no later than January 2023 for an anticipated February 2023 Council Meeting. Public exhibition of the Final Report is expected to last 42 days, followed by a consideration period prior to adoption at a further Council Meeting.

Consultants are at liberty to propose how they will structure the project by phases, with appropriate key milestones in their tendered project methodology. A high-level indicative program is to be provided, preferably in MS Project. Within four weeks of commencement, the consultant is to provide a detailed project management plan including project program to the steering group for approval.

## Project Risks

The consultant is to include in their project methodology a high-level project risk assessment. In addition to the consultant's own assessment of project risks it is to include how the consultant will manage COVID impacts resulting from current and potentially escalated restrictions to ensure that the project is delivered on time and to scope, including clearly identifying mitigations or resources required by Council. The assessment is to be conducted and documented in accordance with ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management.

## Standards and Guidance Documents

The following standards and guidelines are to be understood in reference to this project. This is not intended as an exhaustive or exclusive list. Consultants are encouraged to provide assurance of their familiarity with these in referencing previous work.

Standards and Guidance Documents	
<a href="#">NSW Movement and Place Framework</a>	<a href="#">Practitioners Guide to Movement and Place – Transport for NSW &amp; Government Architect NSW</a>
Austroads Guide to Traffic Management	Austroads Guide to Road Design
Austroads Research Report - Implementing Safe System with Movement and Place for Vulnerable Road Users	Austroads Research Report - Classifying, Measuring and Valuing the Benefits of Place on the Transport System
Austroads Guide to Road Safety	AS/NZS 2890 Parking Facilities
<a href="#">NSW Road User Space Allocation Policy</a>	<a href="#">NSW Future Transport Strategy 2056</a>



## Annex A – Merimbula Principal Study Area Map







## Annex B – Desired Future Character Statement for Merimbula

# Precinct: Merimbula

### DESIRED FUTURE CHARACTER

#### PROTECT

Key elements within the streetscape including sculpture and mature trees, view corridors to the lake and ocean and access to Merimbula Lake are retained.

Public views of Merimbula Lake, Back Lake and the ocean from Merimbula Drive on the approach into town are protected. The natural forested backdrop has been protected to retain the coastal bushland setting.

The history of Merimbula has been promoted by protecting the setting and landmark features such as Courunga (Munn's Tower House), Mitchie's Jetty, Merimbula Wharf and Merimbula Lake.

#### ENHANCE

Attractive buildings distinguish new development.

Buildings are higher in some places than those that currently exist in the town. Taller buildings are appropriately located and set within attractive streetscapes so that their visual appearance fits in with the coastal town character and lake front setting.

Larger development is well articulated and proportioned with the overall height, bulk and scale in keeping with a medium-rise coastal setting.

The town centre is a prominent mixed-use area containing offices, shop-top housing, tourist accommodation and leisure/ entertainment uses.

Development on all approaches to the town contributes to the sense of arrival.

Laneways and arcades provide connectivity and opportunities for boutique shopping, alfresco dining, seating and landscaping within a compact and clearly defined town centre that is easy to navigate where night time activation and temporary uses are encouraged.

Streetscape elements such as awnings and signage are well-articulated and proportioned.

New connections within the open space network around Merimbula Lake have been created and pedestrian connectivity to Mirador and Tura Beach has been improved.

Merimbula's town centre has transformed through the consolidation of the town centre, redevelopment of old buildings, traffic rerouting, prioritising of pedestrian movements, incorporation of drop-off zones, streetscape upgrades and landscaping, retention of the high-street retail shopping experience and integration of a broader range of complimentary land uses into the town centre.

#### CHANGE

Market Street and the lake foreshore is the physical and perceptual heart of the commercial centre.

Market Street (between Merimbula Drive and Beach Street) is a highly pedestrian area, with a focus on boutique shopping, al fresco dining and children's play areas.

Beach Street has been redeveloped with new cafes and restaurants overlooking Merimbula Lake. The Beach Street car parking area has become a lakefront park featuring public sculpture, grassed areas, landscaping and seating.

The density and diversity of housing close to the town centre has increased and contributes to the vitality of the town.