

BEGA VALLEY COMMERCIAL LAND STRATEGY

INTERIM REPORT - FINDINGS OF STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

PAMBULA, 27 AUGUST 2019

1. *What are the natural advantages and strengths of the commercial centre?*

- Local history and well-preserved heritage buildings gives a solid brand and identity
- The natural environment. Pamboola wetlands conservation area, which provides insights into indigenous culture, birdlife and ecology, is a core tourist spot within walking distance of the town centre
- Business is characterised by independent and local ownership with no chain stores. The heritage, aesthetic of the town and independent businesses offer different goods to franchises and chain stores. Low vacancy rates indicate a healthy commercial centre.
- It is a community-focussed village. There are people living in the commercial zone in shop-top housing which provides security
- Businesses are supportive and co-operate with each other to create a destination town. Pambula consistently captures a lot of passing trade

2. *What, if anything, is challenging development of the commercial centre?*

- Recent growth is not in line with the established identity – demolition of heritage buildings, new development that obscures heritage buildings, large scale development.
- Out-of-town tourist development is an attraction but drains business away from main street. The business on rural land does not pay commercial rates
- Lack of parking and street crossings are problems with the wide main street. There are no connecting pathways and the town is not pedestrian or bicycle-friendly. Towns that focus on pedestrians are succeeding in attracting tourists
- Competition with large floorplate retail outlets such as at Tura Beach
- Tourists are focussed on Pambula Beach in preference to Pambula town centre

3. *Given the natural advantages and strengths, how could growth of the commercial centre be encouraged?*

- Expand the range of festivals and events to attract businesses and tourists
- Support local business, e.g. promote the range of building supplies and products that are available to counter the escape expenditure to large floorplate retail in other centres

- Make the town pedestrian and bicycle friendly with connecting pathways and improve car parking facilities
- The focus of tourism is changing to being environmental through conservation of the Pamboola wetlands and marsh lands. Expand development of Pamboola wetlands and engage the Aboriginal community to participate in managing the wetlands

4. *What development principles or approaches are necessary to underpin growth of the commercial centre?*

- Build on existing elements and retain the heritage brand and environmental elements. Utilise the composition of character – heritage, small village, business, environmental, local produce, etc - to promote the town.
- Acknowledge Pambula as a destination by supporting unique local shops and promoting small business. Capitalise on tourism to Merimbula and Pambula Beach
- Manage new building design to complement existing heritage and the heritage conservation area. Develop strong policies to support principles and approaches using development control plans

5. *What are some incentives to stimulate development of the commercial centre?*

- Provide RV parking friendly areas to cater for large vehicles and caravans. Promote the town as a destination with a dump point
- Obtain grant funding for community capacity building to conserve natural areas and heritage buildings

Comments about Bemboka

- Retain the heritage brand – ‘*the village in the valley*’. We need to protect landmark buildings and have developed a heritage walk
- The community is trying to capture RV traffic at Colombo Park just outside town. A dump point and other facilities catering to visitors are required