

Torquay Town Centre Revitalisation Project

Final Report



Jump Starting the Heart



Fisher Stewart





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1. Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgements

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1.2 Context

Torquay Village

Gilbert Street has long been the commercial and cultural heart of Torquay. Its location, at the centre of the ‘Old Torquay’ street grid, meant that it was always highly accessible and convenient to the residents and holiday makers who enjoyed the atmosphere of this once compact town. No matter where one lived or stayed in ‘Old Torquay’ it was never too far to walk to Gilbert Street.

Gilbert Street is also central to many of the natural features that attract tourists to the town. It is adjacent to the spectacular Yellow Bluff and about half way between the family beach at Cosy Corner and the popular Fisherman’s Beach. Taylor Park, to the north of the precinct, provides a peaceful interface between the busy foreshore and the residential areas of Old Torquay.

Such close proximity to the foreshore is central to what is often described as the ‘coastal village’ character of the precinct. Ocean views, coastal breezes and sea birds provide a sensual link to the coast. Holiday makers and day-trippers circulating between the foreshore and the precinct add vitality, colour and a relaxed atmosphere. The Shire is seeking to further enhance these coastal linkages through the present study and by working closely with the foreshore committee and the Western Coastal Board in the development of the Coastal Action Plan.

The people-friendly ‘village’ character of the precinct is also attributable to the low key, human scale of the buildings and the traffic calming effect of the road layout. The orientation of Gilbert Street means that pedestrians are separated from through traffic and protected from the strongest winds. In winter, the southern side of the street is sunny, warm and inviting. In summer, the shade cast by the low rise buildings on the northern side of the street provides welcome respite on the hottest of days.

Gilbert Street has always had its competitors. Rival shopping strips have at various times sprung up in Bell Street, Geelong Road, The Esplanade, Anderson Street, Jan Juc, and more recently at Wombah Park. Price Street, with its community services, was also a potential competitor. Yet the Gilbert Street precinct prevailed, retaining a cluster of core functions that the others did not boast such as a post office, banks, supermarkets, real estate agents, a newsagency, and the nearby primary school.

Changing times

In the last decade or so the features that were once advantageous to Gilbert Street precinct have begun to disadvantage it. The size of the town has swelled and access from the growth areas of Wombah Park, Torquay West, and Jan Juc is perceived to be a problem. The road layout has contributed to congestion during peak periods. Greater reliance on the motor car and the duplication of Geelong Road (now known as the Surf Coast Highway) means that tourists may speed past the precinct and residents have greater access to a wider range of shopping in Geelong.

The size and mobility of the local population means that Gilbert Street’s main rivals are no longer the local strip shopping centres, but large, multifunctional, purpose-built shopping malls in Waurin Ponds, Belmont and central Geelong. Studies undertaken by the Surf Coast Shire indicate high levels of ‘escape expenditure’ to these centres.

Concern has also been raised about the capacity for Gilbert Street to grow sufficiently to accommodate Torquay/Jan Juc’s rapidly expanding population. There is scope for infill



development within the existing centre, but its outward growth is said to be constrained by surrounding residential development. The difficulty and expense of purchasing sufficient land to accommodate a new supermarket in the precinct is contrasted with the relatively ‘easy’ option of developing a large greenfield site elsewhere in town.

All of this created pressure to start afresh, to create Torquay’s own new, purpose-built shopping complex on the western side of Surf Coast Highway. In this way the location and structural challenges faced by the Gilbert Street precinct would be avoided altogether. Under such a scenario, Gilbert Street would lose its status as the commercial heart of Torquay and be reinvented as a cultural, café precinct.

The push to develop on the highway was not only to do with location, it also had much to do with history. Until 1994 Geelong Road was the boundary between the City of South Barwon, which controlled the eastern side (old Torquay and Wombah Park), and the Shire of Barrabool, which controlled the largely undeveloped area of Torquay West, and Jan Juc.

During the 1980s the most significant and ongoing challenges to the pre-eminence of Gilbert Street started to emerge on the western side of the highway. The Shire of Barrabool constructed its offices on its own land in Grossmans Road. The Geelong Regional Commission established the Surf World shopping centre, surfing museum, and recreational facilities. The Baines Court service business precinct was developed and has since expanded considerably.

In recent years Surf World has been sold to a private company and revamped as ‘Surf City’. A number of other businesses have also relocated to or expanded on the highway, the most notable being Rip Curl which has developed a substantial factory, warehouse, office and retail complex. In 2001 the Torquay Primary School will move from its current location near Gilbert Street to a site close to the Shire offices.

The future

Almost from its inception in 1994 the Surf Coast Shire has had to grapple with the question of whether to start afresh with a new development on the Surf Coast Highway, or to retain and enhance the role and status of Gilbert Street as the heart of Torquay.

As will be evident from the discussion below, the decision has probably been one of the most difficult and complex to confront the Council. Commercial interests have lobbied from both sides of the argument. Community opinion appears to have been equivocal. A number of studies have been undertaken by the Shire in an effort to provide a clearer direction, but these appear to have simply made the situation more confused, more complex.

The Council has finally resolved to retain and enhance the status of the Torquay Town Centre as the cultural and commercial heart of Torquay, the capital of the Surf Coast. This position is unambiguously reflected in the recently adopted *Municipal Strategic Statement*. The recent approval of a new supermarket in Bristol Road has demonstrated that with clear strategic support from the Shire the perceived constraints upon the growth of the precinct can be overcome.

The purpose of this study is to realise this objective; to provide effective and achievable solutions to the structural and perceptual challenges now confronting the precinct. This purpose is neatly encapsulated by the slogan used during the consultation phase – ‘*Jump Starting the Heart*’.



1.3 Project scope

The objectives of this project are to:

- Establish and reinforce a unique character, image and icons for the Torquay Town Centre that will ensure it becomes a vibrant, attractive and dynamic shopping centre attracting future investment and increased patronage by residents and visitors.
- Review and assess the land use, layout and development pattern of the centre and make recommendations as to the most appropriate configuration to encourage future investment of new facilities and services.
- Identify and make recommendations on traffic management and signage which will achieve optimal ease of vehicular access into the centre and encourage visitors to seek out the centre from the Surf Coast Highway.
- Ensure the centre makes optimum advantage of its proximity to the foreshore and provide incentives for attracting increased patronage by beach goers.
- Make recommendations on the best way to provide future car parking including a 'formula' and guidelines for assessing future car parking requirements when applications for planning permits are made.
- Raise awareness amongst all stakeholder groups of the opportunities for the Centre and ensure their involvement in, ownership of, and commitment to the revitalisation project and outcomes.
- Identify opportunities to market and promote the centre to customers and potential new businesses, developers and investors, so as to increase patronage and to encourage investment and business development in the centre.

The project boundaries are illustrated in [Figure 1A](#) below.

The study methodology involved extensive research and consultation with stakeholders and included:

- A detailed review of previous reports, with particular reference to the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* (1999) and the *Torquay Urban Design Framework* (1999)
- An intensive consultation phase involving street surveys, interviews and public workshops
- Attendance and reporting to meetings of the Shire's Gilbert Street Streetscape Committee throughout 1999 and 2000
- Consultation with Council Officers
- Data and information collection and analysis from various sources.

In addition, members of the study team assisted in the redrafting of the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* leading to its adoption by Council and eventual gazettal in October 2000. As a consequence, some of the strategic outcomes recommended by this study have already been adopted as Council strategies in the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme*.



Figure 1A: Study area



2. Background

2.1 Previous studies

The future of Torquay Town Centre has been a challenging issue for the Surf Coast Shire since its inception. The rapid growth of the township, new development on the highway, and the planning reform process have all emphasised the need for a consistent and comprehensive strategic plan for the future of the township and, in particular, the Gilbert Street precinct.

The decision to reject proposals to develop a new supermarket and retail node on the Surf Coast Highway and to consolidate and enhance such activity in the traditional Torquay Town Centre has not been made without extensive research. Following is a brief overview of a number of previous studies and their key recommendations. The previous studies are important because they either provide a foundational background, or make recommendations that complement or conflict with the objectives of this study. An understanding of the existing body of work is therefore critical to the success of this project.

Surf Coast 2020 Vision - A Preferred Future (1996)

The vision was developed through extensive consultation with the Shire's community, including both permanent and non-permanent residents. For the purposes of the present study it emphasises the need to pay careful attention to the environment; the importance of sustainable tourism activities to the local economy; the sense of individuality and identity expressed in each township; and the value of community. The vision also moots the development of a 'well-being' industry focussing on personal wellbeing and harmonious relationships; and a distinctive built form to be known as 'Surf Coast Design' which will be characterised by natural materials, natural colours, energy efficiency, and indigenous flora.

The vision sees Torquay as the administrative and commercial centre of the Shire, with Gilbert Street described as follows:

Gilbert Street, in 'Old Torquay', is now a traffic-free plaza, surrounded by cafes, restaurants, speciality food shops, galleries and craft shops, gift shops, with office space above the shops. A glass-roofed area of the plaza allows outdoor eating all year round - and is quite spectacular at night with charcoal braziers providing both heat and atmosphere.¹

Elsewhere, 'Old Torquay' is referred to as having the atmosphere of a 'heritage seaside resort' with 'Gilbert Plaza' as a focus of artworks, attractions and festivals.²

Comprehensive Strategy Plan for Torquay/Jan Juc (1996)

The *Comprehensive Strategy Plan* was the first strategy plan commissioned by the Surf Coast Shire dealing with the Torquay/Jan Juc urban area. Part of the brief was to review previous studies prepared by the former Geelong Regional Commission (GRC), including the *Geelong Regional Development Strategy* and the *Torquay Jan/Juc Structure Plan, 1992*. Importantly, the 1992 plan supported the retention of the Gilbert Street shopping centre as the primary shopping centre for the region.³

¹ Surf Coast 2020 Vision - A Preferred Future, 1996, p. 17.

² *Id.*, p. 19.

³ Comprehensive Strategy Plan for Torquay/Jan Juc, 1996, pp. 8-12.



The 1996 plan adopts the reference to Torquay as the ‘*capital of the Surf Coast*’ and also supports the retention and expansion of the Gilbert Street shopping precinct as the main shopping centre for Torquay/Jan Juc.⁴

The following recommendation was made concerning the future of Gilbert Street:

Gilbert Street Commercial and Retail Centre

Retain, enhance and strengthen Gilbert Street as the principal retail area, as this is exciting in terms of the urban evolution of Torquay. A number of problems need to be addressed to make Gilbert Street function more effectively for Torquay’s growing community. Greater visual prominence for the Centre - particularly with regard to visitors - needs to be created by establishing a better presence in the road network and by signage. Gilbert Street needs:

- to have a face to the Esplanade and to Taylor Park (Zeally Bay Road);
- to have principal streets, such as Zeally Bay Road, Bristol/Gilbert Street and Beach Road linking it to the Geelong Torquay Road;
- to provide easy and clearly discernible access and car parking;
- to link to the open space system via connections with the foreshore reserve, Taylor Park and beyond;
- to provide a highly attractive and high amenity local environment, with professionally executed urban design solutions that celebrate Torquay’s unique culture and not just surfing; and
- to have a clear link back to the burgeoning Surf Coast Plaza and adjoining municipal precinct.⁵

The study also considered the feasibility of relocating municipal facilities and community services close to the Gilbert Street shopping centre. This proposition was considered to support the viability of the shopping centre and to represent sound planning by concentrating community and commercial activities. Ultimately, however, the study favoured locating such activities in Torquay West. Factors leading to this conclusion included perceived constraints on further commercial expansion of Gilbert Street and the considerable amount of vacant Council land available in Torquay West.⁶

The study has since been developed and superseded by the *Municipal Strategic Statement* and the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999*.

Retail futures for Torquay Jan Juc (1997)

This study was commissioned to follow on from the *Comprehensive Strategy Plan* by providing more specific directions and recommendations aimed at reducing the escape expenditure of local residents and increasing Torquay’s share of the tourist dollar. The main shopping centres competing for residential expenditure were identified as Waurn Ponds, Belmont, and Geelong Central Activities District.⁷

The study considered two scenarios:

- retaining and expanding the Gilbert Street Shopping centre; or
- developing a new retail and tourist ‘activity’ centre on the Surf Coast Highway between Grossmans Road and Baines Court.

The study recommended in favour of the latter scenario, based largely on ‘*structural problems*’ attributed to the Gilbert Street shopping centre. These problems were described

⁴ *Id.*, p. i.

⁵ *Id.*, pp. 52-53.

⁶ *Id.*, pp. 145-148.

⁷ Retail Futures for Torquay Jan Juc: An Assessment of Retail Opportunities, 1997, p. 5.

as 'low visibility, poor access, restricted parking, and limited opportunity for expansion. It is an older style shopping centre which cannot structurally cater for the easily accessible, easy parking, one stop shopping aspirations of today's customers who expect high levels of convenience.'⁸

The recommendation proposed that Gilbert Street would lose its status as the major shopping centre for Torquay Jan Juc and instead take on a role as 'Torquay Village', a 'pedestrianised historical, cultural and social heart of Torquay.' This model, similar in many respects to that proposed by the 2020 vision, promoted the transition of the Gilbert Street shopping centre into a cafe/restaurant precinct with a range of tourist, market and cultural activities, to be surrounded and sustained by medium density development and accommodation.⁹

The recommended scenario was not adopted by Council and is not supported by the *Municipal Strategic Statement* (see below). Some of the detailed suggestions made regarding the enhancement of Gilbert Street were, however, reflected in later strategies and in the *MSS*.

Torquay Jan Juc Draft Retail Strategy (1997)

This strategy was commissioned following a resolution of Council in February 1997 confirming its commitment to retaining Gilbert Street as the major retail shopping centre for Torquay/Jan Juc. Importantly, it sought to reconcile the markedly different assumptions and projections contained in the *Comprehensive Strategy Plan* and the *Retail Futures* reports.

In order to overcome the perceived structural problems associated with Gilbert Street, the strategy proposed a comprehensive development plan that extended the shopping centre west along Bristol Road so that it gained frontage to the Surf Coast Highway. The plan was divided into four precincts, one of which would contain a large supermarket development adjacent to the highway and accessed from Bristol Road. Short, medium and long term strategies were proposed for each precinct in order to avoid an oversupply of floor space.

Relevant policies included:

Retail Hierarchy Policies

- 1.1 Promote the Gilbert Street shopping centre as the town centre for Torquay Jan Juc, integrating commercial, tourist and community development in a manner that buildings on the 'beach, village, surfing' character of the centre. In order to fulfil this role the activity centre will expand to take in Bristol Road through to the Surf Coast Highway.¹⁰

Torquay Town Centre Policies

- 2.1 Promote the expansion of the Gilbert Street Shopping Centre, with a short to medium term goal of establishing a large supermarket at the western end of Bristol Road, recognising the market preference for highway exposures. The long term growth of the centre will infill along Bristol Road between the Highway and Gilbert Street.
- 2.2 The town centre will primarily function as the commercial and civic hub of Torquay Jan Juc, and over time will establish a number of distinct nodes serving particular markets. Each node will complement the overriding 'beach, village, surfing' character of the centre.¹¹

⁸ *Id*, p. 8.

⁹ *Id*, pp. 33-35.

¹⁰ Torquay Jan Juc Draft Retail Strategy, 1997, p. 12.

¹¹ *Id*, pp. 12-13.



Bristol Road Precinct Policies

- 4.1 To promote the long term redevelopment of Bristol Road as a commercial strip catering for a range of retail, commercial, office and service uses in a relaxed but vibrant environment.¹²

Gilbert Street Precinct Policies

- 5.1 To expand and enhance the role of Gilbert Street as the ‘Paris end’ of the town centre, encouraging a wide range of complementary retail, tourist related and accommodation development, reinforcing a coastal village character.¹³

A number of initiatives were mooted to enhance the identity and function of the Gilbert Street precinct, these included:

- improving visual linkages to Taylor Park;
- encouraging tourist development at the foreshore end, including eating establishments on The Esplanade;
- improving facilities on the foreshore and replacing vegetation that currently impedes views from Gilbert Street;
- developing building and landscaping design guidelines;
- encouraging an enhanced mixture of land uses;
- encouraging ‘shop top’ accommodation and apartments;
- retaining low rise development on the Esplanade, while allowing for higher development within the centre;
- development of a tourist convention centre;
- conversion of part of Gilbert Street to a mall, possibly including a covered area.¹⁴

Once again, this strategy has been superseded by subsequent policy decisions.

Torquay Urban Design Framework Plan (1998)

The *Urban Design Framework* focuses on the area commonly known as ‘Old Torquay’ (ie. the eastern side of the highway between Darian Road and Bell Street) as well as the Surf City precinct. It addresses and makes recommendations concerning such issues such as streetscape design, the road hierarchy, linkages, vistas, and the open space network.

The recommendations include the establishment of a new road hierarchy to improve linkages between key social, cultural and commercial activity nodes within the town. Key elements of the hierarchy are as follows:

- **Surf Coast Highway** - focus of gateway, signage and boulevard treatments; the section between Beach Road and Zeally Bay Road to be modified to emphasise its role as the heart of surf-related activities and industries (‘the Surf Core’).¹⁵
- **Grossmans/Darian Road** - links municipal offices and proposed school with residential areas and Fisherman’s Beach; recommends roundabout on highway, signage and landscaping theme.
- **Beach Road** - links Surf Core with Taylor Park, The Esplanade and Fisherman’s Beach; recommends roundabout on highway, signage and landscaping theme.

¹² *Id*, p.16.

¹³ *Id*, p.18.

¹⁴ *Id*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁵ Torquay Urban Design Framework, 1998, pp 25-28.

- **Puebla Street** and **Spring Street** - pedestrian link from Surf Core and proposed Tourist Information Centre to Taylor Park and Gilbert Street; recommends signage and landscaping theme.
- **Bristol Road** - links Surf Coast Highway to shopping centre; recommends signage and landscaping theme.
- **Anderson Street** - links Surf Coast Highway to shopping centre and The Esplanade; recommends signage and landscaping theme.
- **The Esplanade** - scenic alternative to Surf Coast Highway and a key local link; recommends vegetation theme between Bell Street and Taylor Park.¹⁶
- **Fischer Street** - recognised as the main connection between Old and New Torquay; no recommended modifications.¹⁷

Key actions and strategies recommended for Gilbert Street are:

- Create a stronger visual connection between the Shopping Centre and the Foreshore. This may involve some modification of vegetation on the Zeally Bay side of The Esplanade at the end of Gilbert Street. This would have to include improvements to pedestrian access across the Esplanade.
- Create a clearer visual connection with Taylor Park by opening views from the Gilbert Street precinct. This would be achieved by making use of the Cliff and Walker Street vistas.
- Provide additional shelter and shade within existing car parking areas.
- Provide additional pedestrian space, particularly within footpath areas.
- Improve vehicle access to the Gilbert Street area, particularly in regard to circulation in and out of the main car parking area.
- Develop an overall streetscape plan, particularly developing consistent planting, paving and furniture themes. This plan would focus on planting with an appropriate image ...¹⁸

Council is presently implementing key recommendations of this plan, including the undertaking of the present study, innovative highway signing initiatives and traffic control measures on the Surf Coast Highway.

Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan (1998)

The plan was commissioned by the Torquay Foreshore Management Committee and involved extensive public consultation. It will form the basis of a Coastal Action Plan being developed under the *Coastal Management Act*.

Design recommendations for this area include (amongst others):

Foreshore adjacent to Gilbert Street

Design Recommendations

- Remove information shelter to open up views from Gilbert Street to the foreshore.
- Create a raised, pedestrian crossing over the Esplanade at Gilbert Street.
- Sensitively designed interpretive signage using large weathered hardwood poles, with signage inserted in these. The poles would lead visitors down to the beach - with the poles disappearing down the path, as the poles do on a beach.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 33.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 14.

¹⁸ Torquay Urban Design Framework, 1998, p. 32.

- Yellow coloured stone seating walls, with interpretive signage panels giving orientation information. These are aligned at 90 degree angle to Gilbert Street so they are visible to people travelling along the Esplanade, but do not block views of the foreshore from Gilbert Street.
- Timber viewing platform, designed overlooking the coast, directly accessible from Gilbert Street. Selective removal of shrubs in this location to open up views of the coast. Platform to have large diameter round hardwood posts, and Australian hardwood decking to be reflective of coastal environment and provide long term durability.
- Grassed seating area in shade of existing Cypress trees and some single scattered proposed Moonahs or Banksias. These plantings are single trees only and are not to inhibit views into the area. In the long term when the trees are established they will replace the Cypress when they cinesse.

Elephant Walk

Design Recommendations

- Close the existing unsealed road around the Bluff to re-establish the large open sense of space of the Bluff, for use as picnic area, for markets, informal open space for ball games, flying kites and festivals.
- Provide unsealed car parking in a clearly defined area near Zeally Bay Road, which is used to access the picnic/open space area and the playground. Additional angled parking is provided along the Esplanade to increase parking for Gilbert Street and the Elephant Walk areas.
- Pedestrian access over the Esplanade and Zeally Bay Road to improve links to Taylor Park and Gilbert Street. Car parking defined to maximise parking capacity and allow for pedestrian access.
- Retain established Cypress trees. ... Selectively plant some scattered Moonah and Banksia overstorey trees ensuring adequate areas of open space are retained. ...¹⁹

Torquay Town Centre Strategy (1999)

This strategy contains the most up-to-date retail analysis of the town centre and provides a solid foundation for the present study. It includes:

- a description of the town centre;
- a vision for Torquay and related policies;
- planning policies for the several precincts identified for the town centre; and
- an implementation program.

The retail catchment, or '*main trade area*', of Torquay Town Centre is identified as an area extending approximately 10 kilometres to the north and north-west of the centre, and approximately 30 kilometres to the south-west. The population of this area is approximately 13,000 at present and is expected to rise to 16,300 by 2011. In addition, the strategy states that an estimated 4.4 million visitor days/nights are spent in the catchment annually and this number is expected to continue to increase.²⁰

A floor space survey undertaken as part of the study in March 1999 found that the Torquay Town Centre had an estimated 6,545m² total retail floor space (including vacant shops), as summarised in the [Figure 2A](#).

¹⁹ Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan, 1998, pp. 37-39.

²⁰ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, p. 4.

Figure 2A: Retail floorspace in Torquay Town Centre, March 1999²¹

Component	No. of businesses	Estimated floorspace
Food	5	2,530 m ²
Non-food	27	2,210 m ²
Personal services	7	450 m ²
Restaurants/Cafes/Take Away	12	1,100 m ²
Total Retail	51	6,290 m²
Vacant Shops	4	255
Offices and other non-retail tenancies	17	n/a
Total tenancies	72	

The total retail floor space provided in the main trade area was estimated to be 16,330m². The strategy states that escape expenditure is currently very high and likely to rise if no new retail floor space is created. Escape expenditure was estimated to be 52%, divided between: food (34%); non-food (62%); and personal services (48%).²²

The strategy recommends a development scenario aimed at achieving a modest reduction in escape expenditure. The scenario focuses on reducing escape expenditure for food to 10% by 2011, with non-food and retail services achieving only modest reductions (to 60% and 45% respectively). The total escape expenditure would therefore be reduced to 45%. The scenario would require the development of an additional 7,950m² retail floor space within the entire main trade area, which includes the towns of Anglesea and Aireys Inlet.²³

The preferred scenario allocates anticipated additional floor space to the Torquay Town Centre as follows:

- 3,000m² - new supermarket;
- 2,000m² - tourist related shops, restaurants, cafes and general retailing;
- 1,000m² - retailing associated with neighbourhood role of Torquay Town Centre.²⁴

Thus, even based on a 'modest' reduction in escape expenditure, the preferred scenario would virtually require a doubling of the current retail floor space of the Torquay Town Centre within twelve years. The strategy estimates that in order to accommodate such growth an additional 3 hectares of land area would need to be found. The components of this additional area are summarised in [Figure 2B](#).

²¹ *Id*, p. 7.

²² *Id*, p. 8.

²³ *Id*, pp. 9-10.

²⁴ *Id*, pp. 11-12.

Figure 2B: Recommended growth scenario land area requirements by 2011 ²⁵

Component	Land area required
Retail development and car parking Supermarket (3,000m ²) Supermarket car parking (6 spaces/100m ² floor area) Other retail (3,000m ²) Other retail car parking (4 spaces/100m ² floor area)	1.5 - 2.0 hectares
Offices and community uses (typically, 40% of retail)	0.5 - 1.0 hectares
Total additional land area required by 2011	2.0 - 3.0 hectares

The vision recommended for the Torquay Town Centre addresses:

- Expansion and promotion of the centre as the ‘retail, commercial and community focus of Torquay and the Surf Coast Shire’
- Urban design elements reinforcing the ‘coastal village’ image and ambience of the centre
- Securing the long-term economic future of the centre
- Discouraging the development of new shopping centres which would further fragment retailing in Torquay
- Realising opportunities to expand retail, commercial, business and community facilities and services.²⁶

Eleven town centre policies are proposed, summarised broadly according to their headings as follows:

- **Town centre role** - to be strengthened and consolidated
- **New retail floor space** - to be developed as a priority
- **Future town centre expansion** - to be encouraged and planned for
- **Links between town centre and foreshore** - to be encouraged
- **Links between town centre and highway** - to be improved, particularly with respect to vehicles
- **Tourist-related development** - to be accommodated without detracting from amenity of surrounding residential areas and foreshore
- **Town centre ‘village’ image** - to be enhanced
- **Pedestrian scale** - to be enhanced so that people are encouraged to visit more regularly.
- **Urban design elements** - recommendations of recent studies (including the present study) to be implemented
- **Parking and traffic** - improvements to off-street car parking and internal access required
- **Town centre promotion** - to include signage and improvements to trader skills.²⁷

Finally, the strategy recommends planning policies for each of the precincts identified in the Comprehensive Development Plan. These have been adopted or superseded in the *Torquay/Jan Juc Strategy* (see below).

²⁵ *Id.*, p. 12.

²⁶ *Id.*, p. 15.

²⁷ *Id.*, pp. 15-17.

Surf Coast New Format Planning Scheme: Report of the Advisory Committee and Panel (1999)

The Panel Report on the new format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* dealt concurrently with the exhibited planning scheme as well as a request to rezone land at the corner of Surf Coast Highway and Grossmans Road for a variety of uses including a supermarket.²⁸ Council opposed the amendment on the grounds that it was inconsistent with the policy of supporting the pre-eminence of the Torquay Town Centre (Gilbert Street) shopping centre.

The Panel concluded that the Torquay Town Centre met the criteria of an ‘*activity centre*’ discussed in the *State Planning Policy Framework* (refer to the following section). It also concluded that the Surf Coast Highway locality did not operate as an integrated activity centre and that the proposed supermarket development did not meet State policy criteria for the establishment of a new activity centre.²⁹

The panel heard a considerable amount of evidence regarding two competing proposals for supermarkets in Bristol Road/Walker Street and Surf Coast Highway. It concluded:

The Panel is satisfied that the Council’s policy to reinforce the primacy of the existing town centre by supporting the establishment of a further supermarket in the Walker Street precinct is soundly based and would result in a net community benefit. The Panel emphasises the need to maintain a viable supermarket as an anchor for the town centre.

The Panel accepts expert evidence that a supermarket of the order of 3000m² can be supported in the short term although the existing supermarket would be affected. There was consensus that two new supermarkets in Torquay could not be supported within the planning timeframe. Therefore the two supermarket proposals presented to the Panel were treated as competing alternatives and their relative merits were evaluated.

The Walker Street supermarket is clearly consistent with planning policies to reinforce the role of the existing town centre. Land has been assembled in the Walker Street precinct which could accommodate a supermarket of sufficient size to offer consumer choice and increase the depth of goods available to consumers. ... Integration of the Walker Street supermarket development with the existing town centre, a more functional precinct and more efficient use of land with better outcomes for the community would be achieved if the precinct is planned as a whole rather than treating the supermarket site and public land as discrete parcels. Priority should also be given in work which is underway to establish effective traffic management measures to minimise adverse impacts of proposed development at boundaries with residential properties.³⁰

The integration of the proposed supermarket and associated car parking into the precinct is a key objective and feature of the framework and traffic management plans outlined below.

The Panel also provided a detailed commentary on the proposed Comprehensive Development Zone for the Torquay Town Centre. The issues raised were addressed in the adopted new-format planning scheme, relevant extracts of which are reproduced below.

Taylor Park Landscape Master Plan (2000)

Prepared for the Torquay Public Reserves Committee of Management, key features of this plan include:

²⁸ Amendment RL51.

²⁹ New Format Surf Coast Planning Scheme: Report of the Panel and Advisory Committee, Report 21, p. 4 of 30.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 23 of 30.

- Informal, unsealed parking along the road reservations of Zeally Bay Road and Fischer Street. The former will provide overflow spaces for the Torquay Town Centre and thereby reduce the need to construct hard surface car parks for peak periods.
- Planted end path entries at Walker and Cliff Streets to encourage access to and use of Taylor Park by shoppers.
- Picnic barbecue areas adjacent to Cliff and Walker Streets to provide a convenient resting point for shoppers walking through Taylor Park to the Town Centre and to encourage use of the park by shoppers and workers.

2.2 Surf Coast Planning Scheme

State Planning Policy Framework

The *State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)* forms part of all new-format planning schemes. It provides State-wide policy direction and is to be taken into account when making amendments to, or decisions under, the scheme. The *Municipal Strategic Statement*, the *Local Planning Policy Framework* and all zone and overlay provisions applied by a responsible authority must be consistent with the *SPPF*.

The framework encourages the concentration of retail, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural development into ‘*activity centres*’ which should be planned to:

- provide accessible shopping facilities
- incorporate and integrate a variety of land uses
- be accessible by all available modes of transport and be safe for pedestrians and cyclists
- facilitate ease of pedestrian movement
- include opportunities for co-location and sharing of facilities
- provide child care facilities
- minimise amenity impacts on adjoining residential areas
- provide attractive environments for community activities.³¹

Local Planning Policy Framework

The *Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)* comprises the *Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)* and a number of local policies. Relevant parts of the *MSS* and some of the local policies represent a synthesis of many of the previous studies referred to above.

Municipal Strategic Statement

Surf Coast 2020 Vision

The planning scheme clause titled *Surf Coast 2020 Vision*³² represents a summary of general elements of the original document (see above). No specific reference is made to individual township visions as these are expressed elsewhere in the scheme.

Strategic Framework

The *Strategic Framework* provides an overview of the Shire’s key strategic issues and objectives. With respect to Torquay-Jan Juc it states:

³¹ Surf Coast Planning Scheme, clause 17.01.

³² *Ibid*, clause 21.03.

Torquay-Jan Juc is the surfing capital of Australia but also plays a traditional role as a seaside holiday resort. The Shire is committed to maintaining and enhancing these attractions whilst managing inevitable growth and development.

Torquay is the administrative hub and fastest growing area in the Shire. It has the capacity to meet the increasing demand for population and economic growth over the next 30 plus years, however it faces the threat of losing its coastal township character and becoming a dormitory suburb of Geelong. The two-lane highway between Torquay and Geelong provides very convenient access to Geelong and beyond, and living by the sea is becoming an increasingly attractive place of residence for commuters. The township relies heavily on the tourist industry for its economic wellbeing. This is based on its reputation as a surfing destination and attractive coastal township with safe beaches suitable for family recreation. Torquay is valued for its distinctive coastal township character and traditional role as a seaside holiday resort that the community considers should be maintained and enhanced.

Key objectives

To concentrate the majority of coastal population growth in designated growth corridors to the north and west of Torquay/Jan Juc and provide opportunities for medium housing particularly in the 'Old Torquay' area.

To develop and promote the role of the Torquay Town Centre as the commercial and administrative centre of the Shire.³³

Torquay-Jan Juc Strategy

The *Torquay Jan Juc Strategy*³⁴ includes an extensive discussion about the role and future development of the town centre. The section titled *Torquay Town Centre* was developed as part of the present study, however the adoption of the new-format planning scheme preceded the publication of this report. A detailed discussion and extracts from the strategy are included below in Chapter 3.

Tourism Strategy

Tourism is the largest and fastest growing industry sector in the Shire. The *Tourism Strategy* seeks to balance tourism growth with environmental and social objectives. A key priority is to ensure that tourist retailing does not detract from the core retail function of the Torquay Town Centre. The strategy provides for a geographical hierarchy of tourism activity areas. At the top of the hierarchy four 'coastal activity nodes' are identified in Torquay:

- Surf Coast Gateway Precinct, Surf Coast Highway
- Surf Core Precinct, Surf Coast Highway
- Town Centre Foreshore Precinct, The Esplanade
- Entertainment Precinct, Bell Street.

The two Surf Coast Highway precincts have been included within a Special Use (Tourist Development) Zone specifically aimed at focussing land use and development on the tourist market and to avoid compromising the retail primacy of the town centre. No such restrictions have been placed on the Bell Street precinct as there is considered to be a degree of economic synergy with the town centre.

The Town Centre Foreshore Precinct forms part of the study area and will be discussed at greater length below. The strategy states:

Town Centre Foreshore Precinct, The Esplanade

The development of this precinct will open up and enhance visual and physical linkages between the Torquay Town Centre and the foreshore. The foreshore is the

³³ *Ibid*, clause 21.04-3.

³⁴ *Ibid*, clause 21.10.

Torquay Town Centre's greatest asset, yet development to date has focussed in on Gilbert Street.

Along The Esplanade a variety of food and drink establishments will be encouraged along with tourist related retailing and first floor accommodation.

The precinct is intended to complement and enhance the general retail function at the western end of the Town Centre.³⁵

The Special Use (Tourist Development) Zone has also been applied to this precinct in order to support the above objectives and to ensure that retail activity within the traditional core is not fragmented.

Local Planning Policies

Surf Coast Design and Colours Policy

This policy promotes the development of Surf Coast Design, a distinctive style of architecture that will reflect the valued characteristics and identity of the Shire's townships and enhance the appearance of development along important tourist and access roads.

The policy describes the essential elements of Surf Coast Design as follows:

- The use of timber or natural materials in preference to brick veneer.
- Imaginative textures, colour combinations and sculptural forms.
- Shapes which convey an images natural features such as rolling waves, sand dunes, jutting or rugged cliff faces; rather than expanses of smooth walls and straight lines.
- Disaggregated or discrete structures with interesting spaces and projections rather than solid bulky structures and blank walls.
- Facades which reflect light, shade and texture rather than uninterrupted, smooth single coloured surfaces.
- Roof lines, proportions and architectural forms which convey a combination of simplicity and distinction without fussy detail and decoration, and which establish 'patterns' reflecting recognisable characteristics in an area.
- Buildings which are set into the landscape rather than sitting up on visible footings.
- Images which tend to be modern rather than conservative or conventional.
- In the commercial areas and tourist precincts in coastal townships, colours should be used which assist in creating a vibrant and colourful streetscape. Generally it is envisaged these would be quite bright and vibrant conveying a feeling of beaches, sand, water and 'activity'.³⁶

Surf Coast Design principles are integral to the urban design and landscape strategies discussed in Chapter4 of this report.

2.3 Consultation

Open consultation with stakeholders has been an important source of information, ideas, criticism, inspiration and general feedback. The study process was undertaken with a clear understanding of the objectives of the study and the history of Gilbert Street, but without any preconceived ideas about outcomes. As ideas arose they were tested with the stakeholder group, some of them being expanded upon and developed, others being strongly rejected.

The consultation approaches adopted were:

³⁵ *Ibid*, clause 21.08-2.

³⁶ *Ibid*, clause 22.05-2.

- Close and ongoing consultation with the streetscape committee, members of which include property owners, traders and residents
- Public notices and articles in *The Echo* and the *Geelong Advertiser* newspapers announcing the study, advertising the workshops and inviting interested persons to contact the project manager
- Posters and fliers advertising the workshops and including a response form displayed by members of the streetscape committee
- Fliers distributed to residential letterboxes within the study precinct advertising the workshops and including a response form
- A news item broadcast on KROCK FM radio station on 17 June 1999
- Workshops with residents and traders, held in Gilbert Street on 17 June 1999
- Urban design questionnaires distributed to all occupied retail tenancies and to passers-by
- Unstructured interviews both in person and by telephone with key stakeholders and persons who could not otherwise attend the workshops
- Letters, facsimiles and emails received in response to public notices.

As a very broad summary, some key issues and priorities are listed in the Figures 2C and 2D below:

Figure 2C: Top priorities of traders and residents/shoppers

Traders' top priorities	Residents'/Shoppers' top priorities
Entrances	Improve visual image
Signs	Retain 'people-friendly' environment
Removal of power poles	Traffic and pedestrian links
Street lights	Safety and security
Views to ocean	Existing attractions
Centre management	Maintenance
	Choice and prices
	Affordable recommendations

Figure 2D: Levels of consensus apparent on various issues

General consensus	No consensus
<p>Retailing lacks value, variety & quality</p> <p>More community facilities needed, especially library</p> <p>Need to address seasonal trade/service fluctuations</p> <p>Public toilets inadequate and unclean</p> <p>Street maintenance and cleanliness is generally poor</p> <p>Street too cluttered, impedes pedestrian access</p> <p>Climatic conditions need to be considered - wind, sun, light, shade</p> <p>Views and links need to be improved</p> <p>Indigenous tree species should be used</p> <p>Costs need to be kept down, payment resolved</p> <p>Human scale should be retained</p> <p>Glass roof too expensive</p> <p>Electricity lines should be underground</p> <p>Street lighting needs to be improved</p> <p>Highway signs inadequate</p> <p>Car parking needs to be expanded</p> <p>Better marketing needed</p> <p>Centre management should be established</p> <p>Village atmosphere to be retained</p> <p>More activities needed</p> <p>Improve waste disposal facilities</p>	<p>Mall v Widened footpaths</p> <p>More trees v Fewer trees</p> <p>Beach/nature theme v Surf theme</p> <p>Appropriate colour themes</p> <p>Parking meters v Free parking</p> <p>Preferred route from highway – Bristol Road v Zeally Bay Road v Darian Road</p> <p>Retention of foreshore cypresses</p> <p>Location of tourist information centre</p> <p>Relocation of Sunday market to Gilbert Street</p> <p>Two-way v One-way traffic</p>

3. Framework plan

3.1 Land use and development precincts

The *Torquay - Jan Juc Strategy* contained in the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* includes a framework plan for the Torquay town centre which was developed in conjunction with the present study.¹ Due to the timing of the introduction of the new scheme the adoption of the framework plan by the Surf Coast Shire Council has preceded the completion of this study.

The framework plan identifies three town centre precincts and provides development and land use guidelines for each. The guidelines for Precinct 3 'Foreshore' also supplement the *Tourism Strategy*² contained elsewhere in the scheme (see discussion above). Different land use zones have been applied to each precinct (see discussion below). [Appendix A](#) provides a summary of the land uses controls.

Key objectives of the plan are as follows:

- Consolidating retail activities around an identifiable core centred on Gilbert Street (west of Cliff Street)
- Providing for short to medium term retail expansion in Bristol Road (east of Fischer Street) and long term expansion in the area bounded by Payne Street, Bristol Road, Boston Road and Pearl Street
- Utilising the existing Gilbert Street and the proposed Bristol Road supermarkets as retail anchors around which other land uses and circulation patterns are planned
- Enhancing visual and pedestrian linkages with the foreshore and Taylor Park
- Creating opportunities for accommodation and eating establishments in close proximity to the foreshore on The Esplanade and at the eastern end of Gilbert Street
- Protecting and enhancing the boulevard character of The Esplanade and Zeally Bay Road
- Locating civic and community functions within the Torquay Town Centre to enhance its retail viability and its status as a cultural centre
- Providing opportunities for free-standing office development adjacent to Taylor Park
- Maximising efficient use of existing infrastructure
- Improving traffic and circulation patterns to address perceptions of congestion
- Consolidating and expanding car parking opportunities to accommodate demand associated with new floor space
- Protecting the low-rise 'human' scale of the Torquay Town Centre which is an important component of its 'village' atmosphere
- Maintaining sunlight penetration into Gilbert Street.

The text presented under the remaining sub headings in section 3.1 is reproduced from the adopted *Torquay – Jan Juc Strategy*.³

¹ *Ibid*, clause 21.10-5.

² *Ibid*, clause 21.08.

³ *Ibid*, clause 21.10-5.

Torquay Town Centre

The Torquay Town Centre will be strengthened, expanded and promoted as the commercial focus and civic hub of Torquay-Jan Juc. A wide range of retail and tourist related activities as well as complementary apartments and tourist accommodation will be encouraged to give life and vitality to the Centre during and outside business hours.

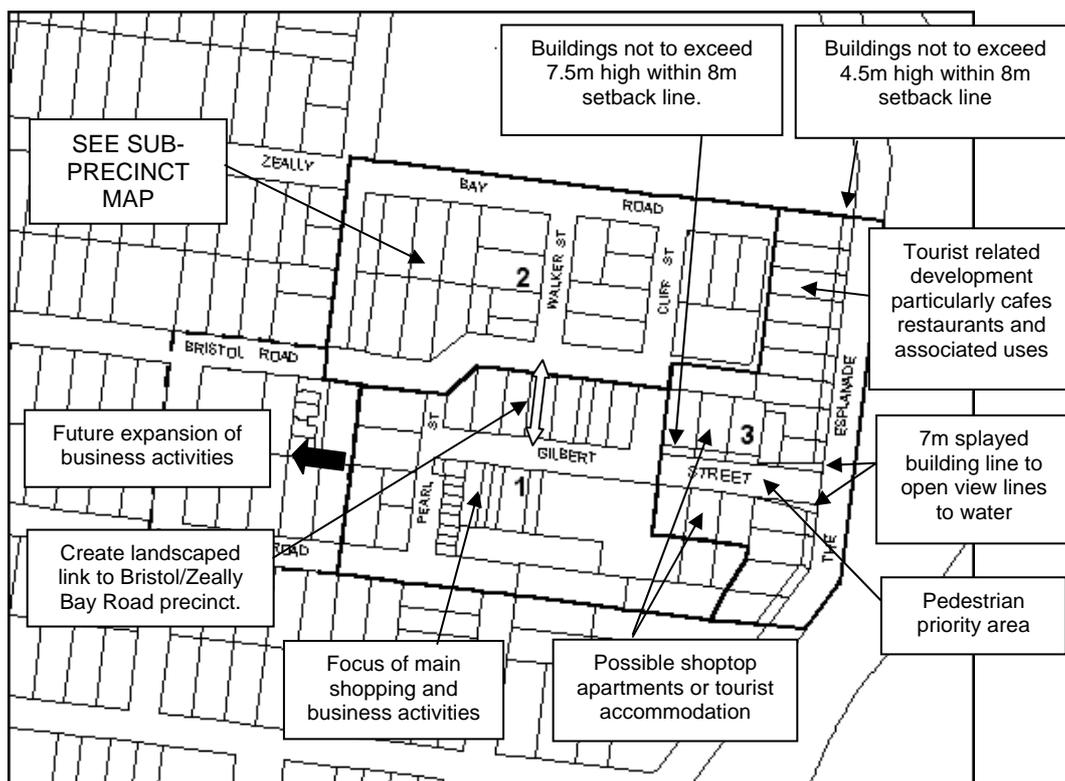
Over time, a number of distinct nodes will evolve throughout the Centre, each serving a particular market. This will include a change in emphasis that will focus core retail and business activities at the western end, and encourage a progressive build up of tourist activities at the eastern end, creating viewsheds and greater functional links to the foreshore.

The Town Centre will develop in a manner which enhances the ‘beach, surfing and coastal’ character of the town. People visiting the Centre should feel a sense of place which is recognisably Torquay and reflects its image as one of Australia’s greatest surf beach environs. ‘Surf Coast design’ will be part of realising this image and is an evolving theme that will be integral to the consideration of development proposals.

Development in the Town Centre will cater for local and tourist, retailing, commercial and community development in three activity precincts shown on the attached Precinct Plan. These include:

- Precinct 1 - convenience retailing, office and business related uses at the western end of the Centre.
- Precinct 2 - a large supermarket, office development, and major car park in the area bounded by Zeally Bay Road, Fischer Street, Bristol Road and Cliff Street, possibly some medium rise apartments or tourist accommodation on land east of Cliff Street. Details of this precinct are shown on the attached Subprecinct Plan.
- Precinct 3 - tourist related uses (and possibly some apartments and resort type accommodation) at the eastern end of Gilbert Street and along the Esplanade, particularly cafes, eating establishments and uses which support recreational activities.

Figure 3A: Torquay Town Centre precinct plan



(i) Gilbert Street Precinct - (Precinct 1)

The Gilbert Street Precinct is the main shopping and commercial area in the Town Centre and will remain as a focus for retail and business related activities.

Retail uses typically found in a town centre location such as weekly or fortnightly shopping trips will continue to be encouraged in the precinct. Examples include supermarkets, convenience shops (chemist, newsagent, bakery, etc), comparison shopping (clothing, footwear, household wares, jewelry, etc), and personal services (video hire, hairdresser, florist, dry cleaner, etc).

Shops are the preferred use for Gilbert Street frontages, however offices and other professional uses will also locate in the precinct, preferably in upper floor locations.

It would be desirable to create a pedestrian thoroughfare linking the main shopping precinct with the supermarket and car parking sub-precincts in Bristol Road. Any walkway would need to be landscaped and possibly contain some shops or cafés to its frontage to create greater activity and security and enhance this important part of the Centre.

Building should not exceed 8.0m in height in the precinct.

(ii) Bristol Road / Zeally Bay Road Precinct - (Precinct 2)

This precinct will be promoted for a mixture of retail, office and community development including a large supermarket and a major car park. It includes a number of sites with an opportunity for consolidation and redevelopment for commercial use. It will be important that any development occurs in an integrated manner. Accordingly the precinct has been divided into a number of sub-precincts. Any future development will be generally in accordance with the sub-precincts shown on the attached Precinct Plan. Until land can be assembled for redevelopment, uses will be encouraged which make best use of existing buildings without significant capital investment in their upgrading.

With the exception of Sub-precinct D, building heights in the precinct should not exceed two storeys or 8m. A high priority will also be placed on the future design, appearance and architectural merits of any new development which will need to comply with the Shire's Surf Coast Design policy.

Sub-precinct A

Subject to developer interest, a supermarket will be encouraged and facilitated in the sub-precinct on the corner of Fischer Street and Bristol Road, provided it has a minimum floor area of 2500m². It is envisaged that the northern part of this sub-precinct (including the rear of lots fronting Zeally Bay Road) would be suitable for long term expansion of the supermarket including an access lane and possible rear car parking serving future commercial uses in sub-precinct B. No other retailing uses would be supported in the northern part of the sub-precinct, however consideration would be given to some small boutique retailing establishments along the Bristol Road frontage to disguise the building bulk effect of a large supermarket. In this regard, particular attention will be given to the articulation and massing of the supermarket to ensure that it complements the coastal character of the Centre and surrounding areas.

It is proposed that car parking attached to the supermarket would be provided on land in Sub-precinct C between the supermarket and Walker Street. In particular, it would be desirable that this car parking be constructed as part of a joint venture with the Shire which intends to construct a public car park in Sub-precinct C. (See Sub-precinct C below)

The establishment of a pedestrian priority area will also be needed on Bristol Road to connect the supermarket and car parking area with Gilbert Street, and to provide a clear and safe pedestrian link across Bristol Road. Any future traffic management works should facilitate this proposal.

Sub-precinct B

Sub-precinct B, fronting Zeally Bay Road, is considered suitable for professional offices and related business services. Retail development will not be encouraged in this part of the precinct in order to consolidate shopping facilities in the Gilbert Street and Bristol Road. It would be desirable that any future redevelopment of commercial buildings along the Zeally Bay frontage occur in an integrated manner. At the very least, staff car parking should be provided at the rear of allotments and consideration will be given to the need to provide a rear access lane to allow zero lot line set backs on side boundaries.

Future commercial development of this precinct will need to be in accordance with a development plan showing proposed floor space layouts, car parking, building heights, setbacks and landscaping. Off-street car parking will be required in accordance with the Precinct Plan and any buildings and works will need to build on the emerging Surf Coast design theme.

Sub-precinct C

The key feature of this sub-precinct will be to establish a major public/private car park. This will include land for any car parking required as part of the supermarket development as well as land owned or to be purchased by the Shire. The car park will include Walker Street itself which will be closed to through traffic and incorporated into the total design concept. An overall plan of development will need to be prepared and approved before any new development proceeds in the sub-precinct.

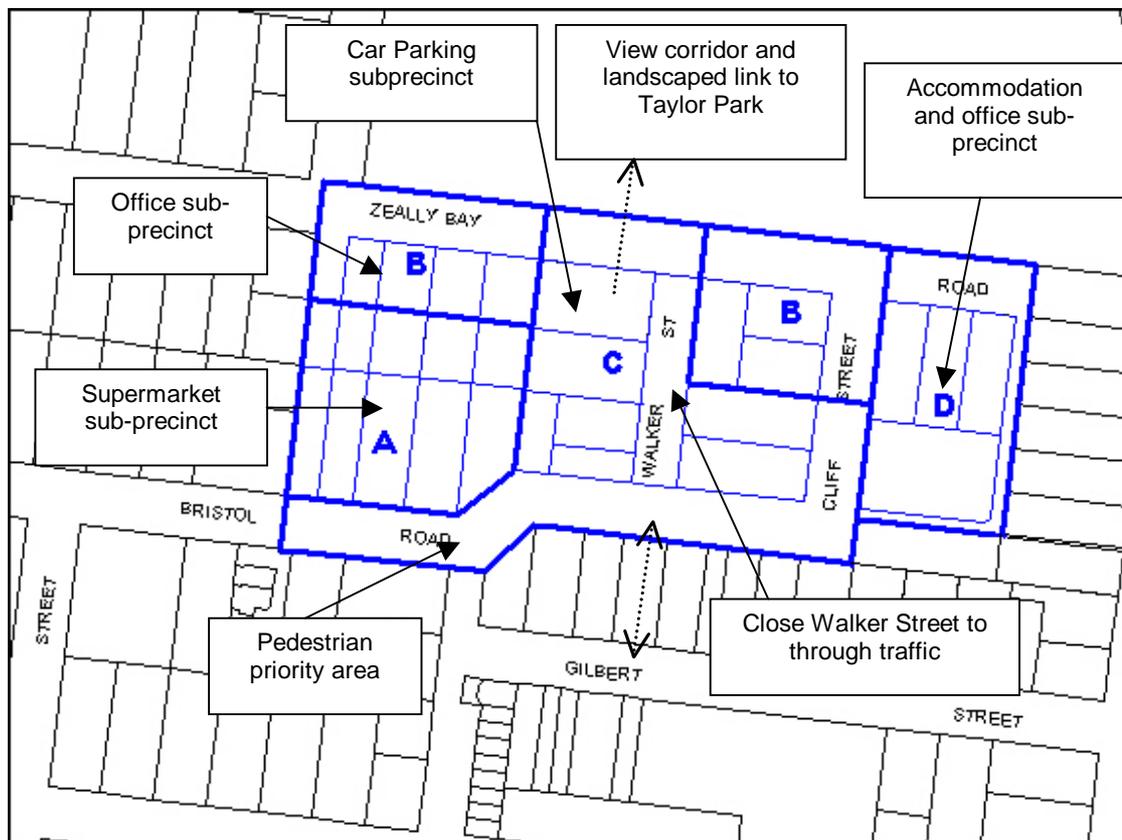
Again, subject to developer interest, it is proposed that the car park be developed as a public private joint venture with the Shire to provide an efficiently laid out car park which will serve the long term needs of the Centre. The car park will be attractively landscaped, and safety permitting, will include a landscaped pedestrian link between the Bristol Road and Zeally Bay Road to provide a visual corridor Taylor Park.

Sub-precinct D

The area east of Cliff Street is earmarked for possible office development, as well as medium rise residential apartments or tourist accommodation, to create a people environment and give greater life to the Town Centre outside business hours. Consideration will be given to residential or tourist accommodation up to four storeys (or 13.5m) in height to allow upper level apartments to take advantage of sea views. Any views above second floor level will be protected by limiting the height of buildings on The Esplanade to two storeys (7.5m).



Figure 3B: Precinct 2 sub-precinct plan



(iii) The Foreshore Precinct (Precinct 3)

This precinct will progressively be developed with tourist oriented uses including eating establishments, art and craft shops and, if the market responds, some shop top apartments or tourist accommodation designed to take advantage of views to the coast.

Foreshore end of Gilbert Street

In view of its proximity to the foreshore and beach, the eastern end of Gilbert Street will be progressively redeveloped as a focus for tourist-related retailing and services including cafes, restaurants and alfresco dining facilities. People will be encouraged to spend leisure time in and around this location. Major streetscape works will provide public spaces and sheltered areas for people to rest, eat and recreate.

One-way vehicular access will be provided from The Esplanade into the Centre. This part of the street will assume a pedestrian dominance with a combination of landscaping, earthworks and structures to provide shade and protection from weather. Ideally, it would be desirable to create a roofed area or glassed enclosure across part of the street to allow year round outdoor eating. Consideration may even be given to creating and leasing a limited number of 'rotunda' sites to be privately developed as 'island bars' for on-site eating. Before any serious consideration could be given to such a proposal, a feasibility study would need to be undertaken to assess costs and potential developer interest. In the short term however, any streetscape master plans will provide the flexibility to implement innovative initiatives which reinforce the relationship of the shopping centre to the foreshore and beach. Any future development will need to be in accordance with an approved streetscape master plan, and detailed guidelines would need to be prepared to coordinate development.

It is envisaged that part of Gilbert Street (between the alignment of Cliff Street and rear of allotments fronting The Esplanade) could be developed for shop apartments or tourist accommodation in the form of one to two storey apartments above ground level shops (to a maximum of 10.5m). Any new buildings fronting the north side of the street should be set back at least 8m above ground level to allow sunlight penetration at street level and to achieve a two storey visible height from the southern side of the street.

The Esplanade

This part of the precinct is currently residential in character, yet offers strong potential to increase the profile of the Town Centre and its connectivity to the foreshore. Development along the Esplanade will create foreshore frontage to the Centre. It will increase the visibility of the Centre from the foreshore and provide an opportunity to create a vibrant tourist atmosphere that takes advantage of the foreshore outlook.

The type of uses established will be critical to achieving this objective. It will be important to strongly discourage uses which do not usually attract tourists, visitors or residents seeking to enjoy some recreational time. Accordingly, allotments fronting the Esplanade will be encouraged for cafes, restaurants and uses which are clearly directed at the tourist and visitor market. Daily and weekly convenience retailing, offices and personal services will not be supported. The zone provisions have restricted the range of goods permitted to be offered for sale or hire and require conditions to be placed on a permit to enforce this restriction. Goods and services offered for sale or hire will be restricted to recognised tourist industries in the locality.

New or expanded development along The Esplanade will reflect the "ocean, surf and beach" image of the town with minimal advertising signage to complement the coastal character of this part of the precinct and adjoining foreshore. This precinct will become a sought out and attractive area for holiday-makers, visitors and residents alike, providing opportunities for leisure, recreation and views of the foreshore and coast.

Development on the Esplanade will be limited to two storeys (7.5m) to create an opportunity for properties at the eastern end of Gilbert Street and Cliff Street to retain ocean views from any upper level development. Commercial buildings will be required to have a zero lot line setback from the frontage to ensure a consistent streetscape appearance and to allow possible future alfresco dining on the footpath. Zero lot line setbacks will also be supported along side boundaries where it is otherwise possible to obtain access from a rear lane.

At first floor level, buildings should be set back at least 8m to maximise direct sunlight to development at footpath level and to facilitate a progressive increase in building heights to development at the rear. First floor balconies will be supported and encouraged within this setback particularly for the development of outdoor eating areas.

Support will not be given for any car parking within the frontage of allotments along the Esplanade, and in the case of allotments east of Cliff Street, access must be obtained via the rear lane off Zeally Bay Road which may need to be widened to improve practical access and avoid future congestion. In the case of other allotments, it would be desirable if lots were developed in an integrated manner in order to minimise the number of driveways requiring access from the Esplanade. If this is not possible, consideration may be given to requiring shared access with an adjoining lot as and when applications are made for individual developments.

(iv) Linking the Centre with the Foreshore

Perhaps the greatest asset of the Torquay Town Centre is its proximity to the foreshore and beach. Opening up views of the water will create greater physical integration and sense of connection with the coast as well as increasing the intrinsic attraction and value of the Centre.

It is therefore proposed to develop an attractive visual corridor down Gilbert Street and "widen the viewshed" of the foreshore and water by creating a splayed building line

across allotments at the foreshore end of Gilbert Street. (See Precinct Plan). The loss of potential building area on allotments affected by the splay will be less than the building setback which would otherwise have been required if the land were developed for residential purposes under the Good Design Guide. No structures or vegetation will be supported on land included in the splayed area with the exception of low shrubs and landscaping.

The creation of a visual corridor to the ocean may also require modification of existing vegetation and tree cover on the foreshore that tends to obstruct attractive views of the water. A favored approach would be to remove the large Cyprus trees which are the single greatest obstruction of views. These could be replaced with more appropriate vegetation, for example strategically placed Norfolk Island Pines, which are more open and would link this area with the main beach to the south.

(v) Traffic Management and Streetscape

Visitor traffic will be encouraged to access the Centre through Pearl Street (via Anderson Street) and through Zeally Bay Road. It is envisaged that one-way access will be permitted into Gilbert Street via the Esplanade. However, as the eastern end of Gilbert Street is to be a pedestrian priority area, the access will down-played by the use of traffic calming devices on the Esplanade designed to facilitate easy pedestrian movement between the foreshore and the Centre.

In particular, traffic will be encouraged to access the Centre via Zeally Bay Road where the largest and most accessible car park will be provided in the future. Vic Roads has already identified Beach Road/Surf Coast Highway as a major intersection requiring future traffic management works. These works should include a design that incorporates identification of the Town Centre access. Effective signage should also be provided at the intersections of Surf Coast Highway with Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street; and at the intersection of Beach Road and Fischer Street to reinforce and give clear direction to the Centre.

Appropriate traffic calming devices, landscaping and signage will also be needed at the intersection of Gilbert Street and the Esplanade. These will discourage entry to the Centre from this intersection to increase pedestrian safety and to facilitate movement of people between the Centre and foreshore.

Major car parking areas for the Centre will have primary access to roads bounding the precinct. This, together with traffic management works in Bristol, Pearl and Boston Streets to reduce traffic speeds, will encourage pedestrian use of the Gilbert Street area while not totally preventing vehicle access.

Streetscape works will need to be designed in conjunction with traffic management installations to enhance the appearance of the Centre as well as reinforcing areas of pedestrian preference.

(vi) Future Expansion of the Centre

Any future expansion of the centre will occur in a westerly direction. The Precinct Plan identifies a possible extension of the Gilbert Street precinct to accommodate commercial and business activities when the need arises. This area is contiguous with the existing core business area in Gilbert Street and provides a physical link between Gilbert Street and the school site, which also offers future development opportunities. The precinct will be considered for future retail, commercial, office use and, if the need arises, as an off street parking area to serve Gilbert Street and environs.

Land zoned for various commercial uses in the Town Centre is generally intended to accommodate demand over a five year period to 2005 depending on the rate of development. In view of continuing growth in the residential population and visitor numbers, there are two areas where longer term commercial development could occur:

Along and either side of Bristol Road, where emergent commercial pressures are likely due to its linking the Town Centre with the Highway and where a number of non-



residential activities already exist enjoying locational attributes and affordable property values.

The existing Torquay primary school site located to the west of the Town Centre, approximately 250m west from the Torquay Post Office. This site is 2ha in area and is to be sold by the State Government.

Bristol Road supermarket

The proposal to construct a second supermarket on the north side of Bristol Road opposite Pearl Street will provide a major catalyst for short to medium term expansion of the Torquay Town Centre. As a second major retail anchor tenant the new supermarket will enhance competition with the existing supermarket, potentially resulting in lower prices and a greater range of products on offer to consumers. These were key priorities raised by shoppers during the consultation phase of the project.

The site is strategically located from a retail perspective, being on the opposite side of the centre from the existing supermarket. This is a configuration common to most indoor shopping centres, as it tends to stimulate pedestrian movements between the two 'poles', enhancing the exposure of smaller tenancies in the locality. Other advantages of the location are the reinforcement of the western end of Gilbert Street as the retail core, the potential to stimulate development on both sides of Bristol Road, and the creation of a link with any future expansion to the west of the existing centre along Bristol Road.

The location of the new supermarket will also provide a major impetus for car parking and traffic improvements discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The Independent Panel reviewing the new *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* encouraged Council to liaise with the supermarket developer to develop an integrated car parking plan incorporating the supermarket car park, Walker Street and the existing Council car park. Consultation with the supermarket developer has occurred as part of this study, culminating in the proposed car parking layout provided in Chapter 5. Further consultation will be necessary to co-ordinate detailed design work, timing of construction and funding.

Civic, office and tourism development

Consultation with both shoppers and traders highlighted the highly seasonal nature of retail and tourism trade in the Torquay Town Centre. The enormous influx of holidaymakers during the summer period stretches staffing, resources and infrastructure, resulting in high stress levels, congestion and, in some cases, diminished service and presentation standards. On the other hand, the lower levels of trade experienced in the quieter months means that without careful financial planning it can be difficult to meet costs and support year-round full time staff. Once again, presentation and service standards potentially suffer.

A key objective of this study is to improve the image and accessibility of the Torquay Town Centre in an effort to reduce escape expenditure. If the town centre is perceived as a convenient and desirable place to shop then local residents will be encouraged to spend their money in Torquay rather than Geelong. The impact of such a change in culture will be most clearly manifest in the lean 'off season' months of the year.

In addition to encouraging a change in the habits of existing residents, strategies that will create new markets for town centre businesses are also warranted. The new-format planning scheme therefore makes provision in the town centre for new tourist-related retail tenancies, holiday accommodation, permanent accommodation and offices.

The establishment of offices along Zeally Bay Road and above retail tenancies in Gilbert Street is a particularly important strategy for encouraging 'off season' trade in the Torquay Town Centre. The close proximity of the retail area will encourage office workers to

purchase their lunch and groceries in town, and the businesses themselves will seek venues for conferences, dining, accommodation, training and entertainment.

Torquay is already beginning to establish itself as a desirable option for office accommodation. Unfortunately from the perspective of the Torquay Town Centre, most office accommodation is being developed on the Surf Coast Highway. However, the relocation of Surf Link to Gilbert Street has demonstrated that the town centre can be an attractive and accessible place to conduct a major business, particularly where a customer interface is a priority.

Potential exists to attract new office businesses to the Torquay Town Centre. Although the information technology revolution has to some degree created greater freedom to work from home, many businesses still require a central office base and many workers find it desirable to maintain the social contacts associated with working in a team environment. There is potential for Torquay to market itself to ‘electronic’ businesses based on its attractive setting and lifestyle advantages over Geelong and Melbourne. The location of the proposed office precinct overlooking Taylor Park and in close proximity to two safe swimming beaches is a significant feature.

Previous studies have flagged the idea of relocating the Surf Coast municipal offices to the Torquay Town Centre. While it is beyond the scope of this study to determine the feasibility of such a proposal, it is an initiative that should be given considerable thought. Council has already identified Torquay as the capital of the Surf Coast and confirmed that the town centre is to remain the predominant commercial and cultural centre of Torquay. It follows logically that, should the need arise to develop new municipal offices, the Torquay town centre be considered as a priority option.

The relocation of the municipal offices to the Torquay Town Centre would benefit traders by bringing with it a large employee base, but also provide an opportunity for the Shire to enhance its service levels by co-locating a variety of municipal customer service functions. The relocation of the Torquay Primary School has already necessitated the relocation of the local library to the town centre. A multi-functional municipal office could accommodate the library as well as a range of other services such as tourist information, conference facilities, and public toilets.

A large area of land would be required to accommodate municipal offices. A potential site is the area on the south side of Zeally Bay Road between Cliff and Walker Streets (immediately to the north of the existing Council car park). Use of this site would be likely to necessitate the construction of underground car parking, however overflow parking for major events could readily be accommodated in the road reserve adjacent to Taylor Park.

Clearly the relocation of the municipal offices would be a major undertaking for the Surf Coast Shire. It is only likely to be considered if conditions in the existing premises become untenable and expansion is not an option. If relocation is to be considered a variety of innovative options should be explored to enhance the feasibility of the proposal. Options may include co-location with a Government department, or a public-private joint venture.

Future expansion

The commercially zoned area of the Torquay Town Centre was significantly expanded with the adoption of the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* in October 2000. This represented the first expansion since the formation of the Surf Coast Shire in 1994. Prior to October 2000 the commercially zoned area was limited to properties fronting Gilbert Street (with the exception of the lots at the corner of The Esplanade) and those fronting both sides of Pearl Street between Bristol and Boston Roads.



It is too early to gauge the impact of the rezoning on the economy or building development within the centre. Prior to the rezoning there were only a limited number of development opportunities and only one vacant site within the commercially zoned area. There have only been three major redevelopments undertaken in the past five years, although a number of minor refurbishments have been completed.

The *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* (1999) estimates that the centre has sufficient land to accommodate projected growth for the next decade.⁴ This assumes that the recommendations of the strategy are adopted and growth meets floor space targets aimed at reducing escape expenditure. If development does not meet these expectations the centre may not outgrow its existing limits for more than a decade.

As stated above, long term growth (10 years plus) for the Torquay Town Centre will occur in a westerly direction into the precinct bounded by Bristol Road, Payne Street and Boston Road. The timing of this growth will need to be determined by development trends over the next five years in order to avoid a glut of commercially zoned land and blight caused by vacant tenancies. It is therefore considered premature to develop plans for the expansion area, particularly as the form and rate of development in newly rezoned areas such as The Esplanade has yet to be determined.

In general terms it is recommended that long term expansion be directed along Bristol Road in order to maintain continuity of retail frontage. This would create a link with existing commercial enterprises on the north side of Bristol Road west of Fischer Street (which should eventually be rezoned themselves) and the proposed retail frontage of the new Bristol Road supermarket. Properties fronting Boston Road within the precinct could be developed for car parking or, depending on demand demonstrated in Precinct 2B, offices.

3.2 Retailing in Torquay

The current retail environment within Torquay reflects a polarisation of the major retailing offers to locations in Geelong such as Bay City Plaza, Market Square, Waurn Ponds and Belmont. This trend is expected to continue as these centres offer the benefit of plentiful car parking, a climate controlled shopping environment and an attractive range of complementary stores across customer-demanded major brands. This is consistent with a more general trend in Australian retail development which has seen the consolidation of market share to major retail brands, mainly driven by consumers responding to superior merchandise offers and customer service.

Another recent trend is the emergence of new retailing concepts such as ‘big box’ retailers. Box retailers are free standing stores that require high visibility and passing street traffic with immediate on-street and adjacent car parking. These stores have open plan ground floor areas generally ranging from 1,000 sq metres to 13,000 sq metres, as in the case of the large hardware operations. Box retailers generally concentrate their merchandise offers within key merchandise categories and within selected product areas have a width and depth of range combined with attractive and competitive pricing. They work on the concept of ‘productivity loop of pricing’; low prices and depth of stock attract more customers, which in turn enables them to offer lower prices.

It is extremely unlikely that box retailers other than dedicated and ancillary surf and tourist-related offerings will be attracted to a Torquay site as the lack of a large open floor spaces, high street visibility, passing traffic and adjacent parking at an attractive rental cannot usually be provided by areas such as Torquay. For this reason box retailers are attracted to

⁴ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, p. 12.

strip sites along major roadways located alongside complementary and similar retail concepts. Retailers that fit into this classification are: Ikea, Freedom Furniture, Harvey Norman, Hardwarehouse, Banner Hardware and Babyco.

The last few years have also seen the development of factory outlets and seconds stores. A true factory outlet is operated by manufacturers or wholesalers and is established to facilitate clearance of their own discontinued merchandise or seconds rather than selling through their established network of retail customers. Retailers themselves, and in particular clothing retailers, have also moved to establish clearance and second outlets to assist in the seasonal clearance of their merchandise to ensure their frontline stores present a clean and consistently fresh image of current in-demand merchandise. This trend has led to the establishment of specialist trading areas such as Bridge Road Richmond which has developed and carefully marketed its reputation and presence as a factory and fashion clearance centre.

If retailing within Gilbert Street is to remain viable, relevant and attractive to Torquay residents, whilst attracting increased tourist retailing, it must aim to satisfy consumers on a number of key factors detailed below.

Key retail factors to maximise consumer numbers and retailers within the Gilbert Street:

- An attractive range of merchandise with an improved supermarket and cafe food offering
- Convenient and accessible retail areas
- Attractive external and internal signage
- Adequate and easily accessible off street parking
- Security of retail areas and adjacent parking
- Security lighting in street and car parks
- Attractive visual merchandise presentation of windows and interior display
- Attractive and illuminated windows for night time display
- High retail service and selling skills
- Retail trading hours as demanded by customers & catering for tourists
- Consistent, relevant marketing & promotion within Gilbert Street to target markets
- A community role and focus for Torquay
- Good communications between traders, stakeholders and council
- Optimising advantages associated with proximity to the foreshore.

If actions are not taken to revitalise retailing within the Torquay Town Centre there will be a further reduction in retail consumer numbers which inevitably will lead to further reductions in retailers, both in numbers and quality.

Town Centre Management

The major competitors to the Torquay Town Centre are purpose built shopping complexes such as Town and Country Shopping World at Waurm Ponds and Bay City Plaza and Market Square in central Geelong. These centres gain enormous advantage over traditional shopping strips such as Gilbert Street due to their central management and attractive shopping environment.

Central management provides a variety of services to retailers and shoppers, including: co-ordinated and cost-effective marketing and promotion; targeting of needed or desired tenants; management of cleaning and security services; and facilitating a more pleasant



shopping environment. All of these services make a tangible difference to the presentation of the shopping centre and the prosperity of individual tenants.

At present there is no central management of the Torquay Town Centre, nor is there a single body responsible for marketing and promotion. The Surf Coast Shire does publish a comprehensive calendar of community events, however only a small proportion of these events involve the Torquay Town Centre and (understandably) none are commercial or promotional in character.

A critical strategy for improving the fortunes of traditional shopping centres is the establishment of a central body charged with responsibility for managing the centre in a professional and competitive manner modelled on the successful stand-alone shopping centres. In order to be most effective such a body should be independent of Council so that it may serve as an effective advocate for the centre. Council would be an important stakeholder and a member of the body, however operational and political independence is imperative.

It is recommended that a Town Centre Management Body be established to co-ordinate the revitalisation program for the Torquay Town Centre, enhance the image of the centre, and vigorously pursue measures to enhance the range and quality of retail outlets on offer.

Key functions of the Torquay Town Centre Management Body would comprise:

- Marketing and promotion
- Co-ordination of delivery of town centre services
- Security and crime prevention
- Liaison and public relations
- Introduction of environmental improvements
- Involvement in projects
- Training for retail staff
- Parking and traffic management
- Determination of desired retail mix and preparation of strategies to attract required 'missing' retailers
- Liaison with retail trading groups within the Surf Coast Shire area
- Establishment of a fully funded business plan
- Establishment of key performance measures.

Structure, operation and funding

The Torquay Town Centre Management Body should be independent of Council, representative of and accountable to stakeholders, and structured in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Although independent from Council, the body will be reliant upon Council for a proportion of its funding and as such the Council should have a position on the board. In order to emphasise its independence the body should be structured as a separate legal entity rather than as a committee of Council.

The Board should be structured to appropriately reflect the views of stakeholders. It should include representatives of Council, small retailers, professionals, service businesses, property owners, tourism businesses and any relevant local groups. It is also important that the body establish positive working relationships with other organizations, such as Geelong Otway Tourism, Surf Coast Tourism Board and the Chamber of Commerce, in order co-ordinate and maximise the effectiveness of operations and promotional activities.



The size of the Torquay Town Centre is unlikely to justify a full time management body in the short to medium term. A part-time executive officer, answerable to the board, would be sufficient to establish the body and gain a great deal of momentum. Assuming that office space is provided costs are estimated to be as follows:

- Engagement of part-time Executive Officer (per annum) \$15,000
- Administrative support (per annum) \$5,000
- Development of marketing and promotional plan incorporating logo (year 1) \$5,000
- Marketing of 6 promotional events (per annum) \$15,000
- Production of point of sale signs and promotional materials (per annum) \$10,000

The above estimates are based on similar structures established in Melbourne. The actual size and prioritisation of the budget would be a decision for the funding body and the board itself. While a variety of funding options are available, such as grants and allocations from Council consolidated revenue, the stability of ongoing financial support is essential. One option is a membership subscription model. Such a model would ensure complete independence from Council, but would occupy a great deal of the Executive Officers time in ‘selling’ and administering memberships. Furthermore, both members and non-members would benefit from the activities of the management body.

The preferred source of funding is a special rate dedicated to the management body. Initially the funding of the entire budget from the proceeds of the special rate may be too onerous and would need to be supplemented by other sources of funding. However as additional floor space is constructed and new tenants establish themselves the rate base will broaden significantly. The rate should apply to all properties in the Torquay Town Centre Precinct⁵ that are developed and used for commercial purposes. Any temptation to spread the rate base further to other commercial areas in Torquay should be avoided as this will dilute the effectiveness of the Management Body in promoting the Torquay Town Centre as a distinct and vital shopping centre.

The establishment of a management body will play an integral role in the revitalisation of the Torquay Town Centre. This success will depend largely on the commitment of stakeholders who will gain a sense of responsibility for the future prosperity of the town centre. This said, it is emphasised that the suggestions made above with respect to the structure, budget and funding of the management body are based on successful examples undertaken elsewhere; the precise model established for Torquay must be developed with and to meet the needs of the local stakeholders.

Performance Measurement - ‘Measuring Vitality & Viability’

In measuring the success of the Town Centre Management Body, a number of key performance indicators need to be established. The rationale is that if performance can be measured then it can be monitored. What can be measured and monitored can therefore be maintained and improved. The suggested key performance indicators, as detailed below, will provide baseline and time series information on the health of the centre, allow comparison between retail areas and enable the assessment of the likely impact of out-of-town centre developments. The Town Centre Management Body should regularly collect a range of these indicators.

Suggested key performance indicators are as follows:

⁵ Properties included in the Business 1 Zone, Comprehensive Development Zone and Special Use (Tourism Development) Zone.

- **Diversity of uses:** How much space is in use for different functions such as offices, shopping, other commercial, leisure, cultural and entertainment activities, cafes and restaurants, hotels, educational uses, housing - and how has that balance been changing?
- **Retailer representation and intentions to change representation:** It may be helpful to look at the existence and changes in representation, including events and street activities over the past few years; and at the demand from retailers wanting to come into the town, or to change their representation in the town, or to reduce or close their representation.
- **Shopping rents:** The pattern of rent movements within the primary & secondary retail shopping areas should be monitored.
- **Proportion of vacant street level property:** Vacancies can arise even in the strongest retail centres and this indicator must be used with care. Vacancies in secondary retail areas and changes to other uses will also be useful indicators.
- **Commercial yields on non domestic property:** (ie. the capital value in relation to the expected market rental). This demonstrates the confidence of investors in the long term profitability of the Town Centre for the retail, office and other commercial developments.
- **Pedestrian flows:** The numbers and movements of people on the streets, in different parts of Torquay at different times of the day and evening, who are available for businesses to attract into shops, restaurants or other facilities.
- **Accessibility:** The ease and convenience of access by a choice of means of travel, including the quality, quantity and type of car parking, the frequency and quality of public transport services, the range of customer origins served and the quality of provision for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Customer views and behaviour:** Regular surveys of customer views will assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of Town Centre improvements and in setting further priorities. Interviews in the Town Centre and at home should be used to establish views of both users and non-users of the Town Centre. This could establish the degree of linked trips within the Surf Coast Shire.
- **Perception of safety and occurrence of crime:** This should include views and information on safety and security.
- **State of the Town Centre environmental quality:** This should include information on problems (such as air pollution, noise, clutter, litter, toilets in quality and quantity and graffiti) and positive factors (such as trees, landscaping, open spaces).

3.3 Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
3A	Liaise with the developer of the proposed Bristol Road supermarket to ascertain anticipated application and development timelines and ensure that the supermarket design, layout and function are consistent with the recommendations of this study.
3B	Undertake a study to determine the feasibility of relocating the municipal offices to the Torquay Town Centre. A variety of options should be investigated, including multi-functional building layouts; potential co-tenancies; and joint ventures with Government agencies or private enterprise.
3C	Upgrade existing public toilets on the foreshore pending the provision of new facilities as an integrated component of either the Bristol Road supermarket or municipal offices development.
3D	Establish a development plan for the long term expansion of the Torquay Town Centre in the area bounded by Bristol Road, Payne Street and Boston Road.
3E	Liaise with stakeholders to determine the structure, responsibilities and funding



No.	Recommendation
	sources for a town centre management body.
3F	Establish a representative town centre management body partly or fully funded by a special rate scheme.
3G	<p>The Torquay Town Centre Management Body should (in conjunction with Council where necessary and appropriate):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a part-time executive officer responsible for the management of the body • Establish a business plan for the management body • Develop a marketing and promotion plan for the Torquay Town Centre incorporating a distinctive Town Centre logo and a retail events calendar • Determine the Torquay Town Centre key performance indicators and establish an ongoing measurement and monitoring system to ensure the Town Centre performance is within the standards laid down within the business plan • Prepare a database of all current retailers by market segment and type to enable a listing to be compiled of required additional retailers • Develop a strategic plan to target and secure required new retailers • Review and determine what assistance packages could be offered to attract new retail and service businesses to Gilbert Street • Explore opportunities for promoting Torquay Town Centre as a centre for electronic businesses, highlighting lifestyle advantages and proximity to Geelong and Melbourne • Develop training opportunities to enhance trader and employee skills, particularly with respect to promotion and tourism • Prepare a ‘State of the Environment’ report for the Torquay Town Centre.



4. Streetscape and urban design

4.1 Introduction

A primary component of the Torquay Town Centre Revitalisation Project is the implementation of a streetscape design concept. This concept is intended to reinforce the coastal village character of Torquay and strengthen the role of the town centre as the hub of commercial and retail activity on the Surf Coast and as a popular tourist destination.

The goal is to create a vibrant, distinctive and active precinct. The focus will be on pedestrian activity and developing an interactive and exciting commercial zone which offers a quality shopping experience, features attractive and striking artworks and street furniture, and encourages people to spend time in the area.

Gilbert Street will become a one way street with cars entering from The Esplanade and car parking integrated as part of the design concept. Extensive paving works will be undertaken and the distinction between the footpath and roadway will be made using feature bollards rather than kerb and channel to encourage pedestrian use of Gilbert Street, slow vehicles and create a seamless paved surface.

Integration of the precinct with the foreshore and Taylor Park will be achieved through the use of design features and the opening up of view corridors to these areas. Views to the ocean will be emphasised by requiring buildings on the corner of Gilbert Street and The Esplanade to incorporate a seven metre splayed building line. Selective shrub removal and the trimming of lower tree branches on the foreshore will open up clear views to the ocean. Links with the foreshore will be further strengthened by the use of street paving that will create the effect of a wave rolling in from the foreshore along Gilbert Street.

A pedestrian walkway will be provided linking Gilbert Street with Taylor Park incorporating attractive landscaping and community artwork and sculptures. Garden beds alongside the walkway will feature native shrubs, grasses and trees with local boulders adding textural and visual interest to the planting.

The ocean, surf and beach character of the area will be reinforced through the use of a whimsical, contemporary sea creatures theme. Paving, street furniture and artworks will be based around this theme, drawing on the form and movement of the creatures of the sea rather than presenting literal reproductions.

A gateway feature and potentially significant meeting point will be the development of a café/rotunda at the entrance to Gilbert Street. The café will comprise a light weight structure to retain an open feel, maintain vistas and to create a sense of integration between diners and passers by.

A more detailed assessment of this and other design features and landscaping concepts is contained under the relevant headings below

4.2 Streetscape works program

Gilbert Street will form the nucleus of the streetscape works program, with adjoining areas receiving secondary and tertiary improvement works. This hierarchy allows for flexibility as the town centre develops in line with the Master plan and Guidelines. The development of a consistent range of street furniture and artworks will enhance the character of Torquay Town



Centre and allow secondary and tertiary areas to be upgraded in a coherent manner as the centre develops. Refer to [Figure 4A Master Plan](#).

Primary streetscape works will initially focus on the Gilbert Street precinct, while The Esplanade will be upgraded over time as it takes on a commercial / tourist character. Primary works will introduce distinct landscape elements, feature paving, custom made furniture, artwork and lighting which will be comprehensively discussed below. Initial works will also include the underground placement of powerlines.

Secondary streetscape works will provide a simple, robust furniture palette, whilst clearly drawing on the themes developed for the entire precinct. By using simpler versions of the sculptural forms developed for primary streetscape works, a consistent and coherent theme can be developed for Torquay Town Centre. These works will focus on nodes and meeting points within the precincts. Secondary works will ensure continuity between primary and tertiary areas, particularly through the use of distinctive street planting which will also provide shade and foster the unique character of the area.

Tertiary streetscape works will ensure that all streets in the town centre precinct receive some improved amenity, whilst maintaining a consistent and coherent theme throughout. These streetscape works will be carried out in areas with low traffic and pedestrian circulation. As these streets develop more intensely, other secondary streetscape elements will be introduced to provide seating and other furniture at nodal points.

4.3 Streetscape master plan design elements

The Streetscape Master Plan has been prepared following extensive research and site analysis along with valuable input from interested stakeholders. The ideas and concepts presented relate to ocean, surf and beach themes, emulating the culture existing at Torquay.

These ideas are schematically presented on the Streetscape Master Plan to provide the basis for unique, creative and site-specific detailed design. The landscape elements are based on a common theme to provide continuity and unite the town centre.

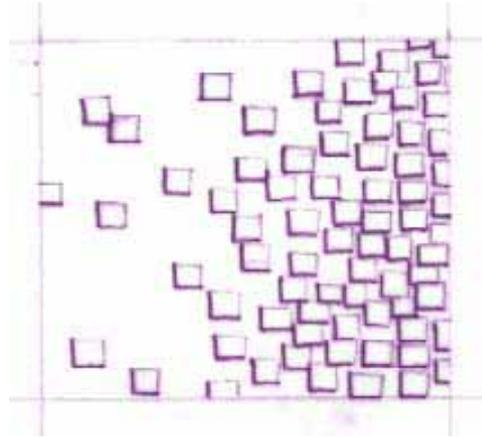
The Streetscape Master Plan is a broad concept plan providing the basis for additional detailed design work which will be necessary for implementation of the proposed streetscape works program. The opportunity exists to involve one or more local artists in the development of individual design features. Such involvement will strengthen the local character of the precinct and stimulate the feeling of ownership and pride within the townscape.

The key elements of the plan are:

Feature paving



The proposed paving is a sand coloured concrete base inlaid with vivid pavers to replicate the colours and intensity of a wave rising from the ocean and flowing along Gilbert Street. The wave concept will focus on Gilbert Street, however the theme will be carried through the town centre with pavers used at entry and meeting points.

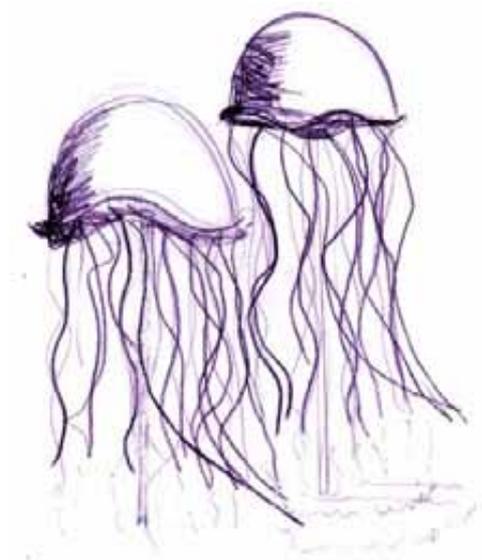


Extending the paving to the building line on either side of the road will reinforce the pedestrian dominance in Gilbert Street, enliven the entire area and enhance the unique sense of place of Torquay.

Sea Creatures Theme

As the nucleus of the Torquay Town Centre, the design of the Gilbert Street streetscape is intended to reinforce the ‘ocean, surf and beach’ character of the area. Street furniture, sculptural elements and paving in the Gilbert Street precinct draw on a whimsical, contemporary sea creatures theme.

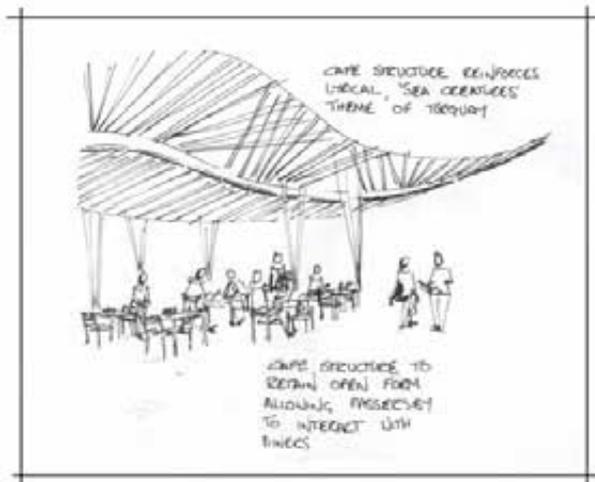
The success of the revitalisation project is dependent on the use of high quality, crafted pieces developed in collaboration with local artists. All works should draw on the form and movement of the creatures of the sea, rather than presenting literal reproductions.



Care and consideration should be given to the use of materials; such as timber, steel and glass, with only those selected which age beautifully.

Preference should be given to a staged works program, as funding becomes available, rather than the use of lesser quality materials or finishes, which will date quickly and require replacement sooner.

Rotunda / Café



Reflecting the sea creatures theme, the rotunda form draws on the feel and movement of a stingray. The built form should be a feeling evoked in the design of the structure, rather than a literal reproduction of a stingray. Contemporary architectural form and detailing should allow visual and physical permeability, whilst providing a shelter and café facilities.

Materials should combine timber, glass and steel, in a bold, organic structure with a variety of seating options and visual surprises in the play of light and formation of shadows. Cantilevered glass awning retains views to foreshore.

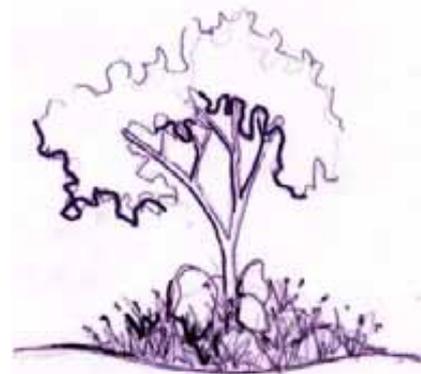
Guidelines for planting, paving and street furniture have been prepared. These are intended to supplement the Streetscape Master Plan and provide guidance for the detailed design phases.

Refer to [Figure 4B](#) Streetscape Plan.

Planting

Mounded garden beds add sculptural form and visual interest to streetscape, with the organic forms contrasting with the right angled geometry of the built environment. Local boulders combined with indigenous grasses and shrubs are used to reflect the rugged coastal environment of Torquay.

Street tree planting combines the strong sculptural coastal form of the *Araucaria heterophylla* (Norfolk Island Pine) with native planting of *Banksia integrifolia* (Banksia). Positioning of the major street trees will be to highlight entrance points, meeting areas and to create landscaped links to Taylor Park and the foreshore area.



Planting in the town centre, beyond the Gilbert Street precinct incorporates a variety of native trees, shrubs and grasses to provide thematic links to areas adjoining the Torquay Town Centre and the natural, coastal environment beyond. This is particularly emphasised through the reoccurrence of distinctive vegetation including feathery She-oaks and the robust Coastal Banksias.

Objectives

- To provide protection from the sun and wind and to soften the dominance of hard surfaces and car parks.
- To reinforce a sense of human scale and enclosure to the village.
- To use native Australian plants with preference for species indigenous to the area.

- To enhance existing views within and along Gilbert Street and provide visual links to the foreshore and Taylor Park.
- To minimise water consumption and maintenance costs through the use of native and indigenous vegetation.

Design guidelines

- Street planting within the shopping centre area will provide a thematic link to the natural surrounds with the selection of species that evoke the nature of the coastal environmental context. The use of the prominent *Araucaria heterophylla* will help to guide pedestrians along Gilbert Street to the beach and Taylor Park and add a distinctive coastal flavour to the streetscape.
- 
- As shown in the Master Plan, the south side of Gilbert Street will accommodate a larger number of street trees conveying a shaded area for outdoor cafes and meeting points. Suggested species for shade planting include the She-oaks or Banksia species as listed in the schedule below. The lower branches of these trees are amenable to regular trimming which will allow vistas to be maintained along the street.
 - Extensive use of trees is promoted throughout car parks to provide shelter and break up the visual impact of hard surfaces. A combination of the trees, shrubs and groundcovers contained in the following table are incorporated to provide visual relief and shelter without obstructing vision.
 - Understorey planting of shrubs and grasses in the garden beds introduces a lower level of vegetation focusing on form, colour and texture. The recommended grasses and flowering groundcovers will consolidate planting and strengthen the coastal theme.
 - Species selection for the streetscape and surrounding area should include a variety of trees, ground covers and grasses as listed in the [Figure 4C](#) below.

Figure 4C: Vegetation species selection for Torquay Town Centre

Trees	Shrubs	Ground covers / Tussocks
<u>Gilbert Street</u>	Silver Banksia	Cut Leaf Daisy
Norfolk Island Pine	<i>Banksia marginata</i>	<i>Brachyscome multifida</i>
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	Common Everlasting	Tasman Flax lily
Coastal Banksia	<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	<i>Dianella tasmanica</i>
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Silky Guinea-flower	Knobby Club-sedge
<u>Other streets</u>	<i>Hibbertia sericea</i>	<i>Isolepis nodosa</i>
Blackwood	Silky Teatree	Running Postman
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	<i>Leptospermum myrsinoides</i>	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>
Black Sheoak	Dusty Miller	Tussock Grass
<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>	<i>Spyridium parvifolium</i>	<i>Poa labillardieri</i>
Drooping Sheoak		Coast Tussock Grass
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>		<i>Poa poiformis</i>
Moonah		Seaberry Saltbush
<i>Melaleuca lanceolata</i>		<i>Rhagodia baccata</i>

Paving

Attracting pedestrian activity along the full length of Gilbert Street is an essential part of ensuring a vibrant and active precinct core. The paving theme has been designed to capture the ocean theme and represent the dynamic forces of the breaking waves.



As discussed above, paving the street across the entire width and up to the building line will create a seamless surface, promoting pedestrian activity and imitating the flow of water. In secondary areas, paving should be used to highlight nodal points.

Objectives

- To provide imaginative shapes and patterns that create a physical and thematic link between the town centre and the foreshore, beach and ocean.
- To create an entrance to Gilbert Street that identifies the street as the retail and activity centre of the township.
- To facilitate clear orientation, a sense of direction and greater variety for pedestrians.
- To create greater pedestrian priority and nodes of activity.
- To provide for street closure for special events.
- To improve pedestrian access across The Esplanade.
- To enhance pedestrian linkages to Taylor Park.

Design guidelines

Feature Paving

- The pedestrian zone of Gilbert Street is defined by the thematic ‘wave effect’ paving.
- Boardwalk detail will define the pedestrian priority zone and create a physical and thematic link with Taylor Park and the foreshore.
- Define the passive pedestrian space (cafes) from the active space (walking space) through paving details and the use of bollards.
- Continue feature paving at The Esplanade, slowing traffic and creating safer pedestrian crossings.

Street furniture

The street furniture should reflect the ocean, surf and beach culture of Torquay, add to the sea creatures theme and complement the function of the street and its spaces. The consistent theme for the street furniture will relate to the scale of the space and accommodate and encourage a range of social experiences. Artwork needs to provide visual interest and be functional: can be climbed on, sat on and touched.

Objectives

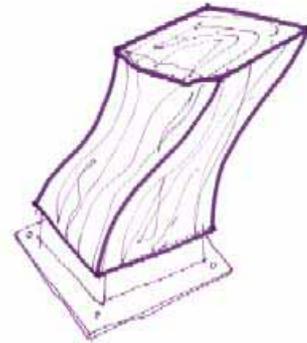
- To incorporate references to natural elements such as rolling waves and sand dunes and abstract design references derived from elements of the surf culture.
- To utilise imaginative textures, colour combinations and sculptural forms that reflect the *Surf Coast Design and Colours Policy*.
- To provide attractive, functional and durable furniture that complements the overall streetscape theme.



Design guidelines

Feature Bollards

- Feature bollards developed in conjunction with a local artist combine the maritime history of the area by using recycled timber, with contemporary highlights of stainless steel and ultra violet / blue lighting.
- The bollards add visual interest, define spaces such as delineating between the roadway and pedestrian zones and can be used for temporary seating.



Simple Bollards

- Used to complement the sculptural form of the primary bollard and also to define spaces.
- Bollards are also used to protect street trees not in garden beds and to create a sense of continuity.



Sails and flags

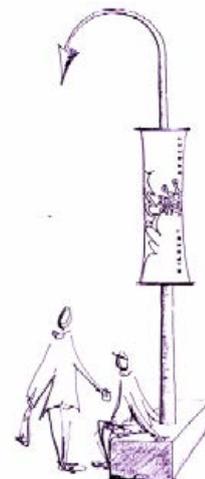
- Integrate sails along the sunny side of Gilbert Street to provide shade while incorporating a sculptural element to the street. The sails are located at meeting points where the footpath is suitably wide.



LoneStar Park Horse Racing Track in Dallas TX

Lighting

- To provide security in the evening for the shops as well as pedestrians.
- To provide thematic impact and highlight events through the use of banners (eg Festoon lighting during festive periods, Christmas, Easter, or local festivals).
- Avoid clutter by combining street furniture wherever possible, such as the informing seating idea provided here.
- Position street lights to provide definition at the intersection of Gilbert Street and The Esplanade.



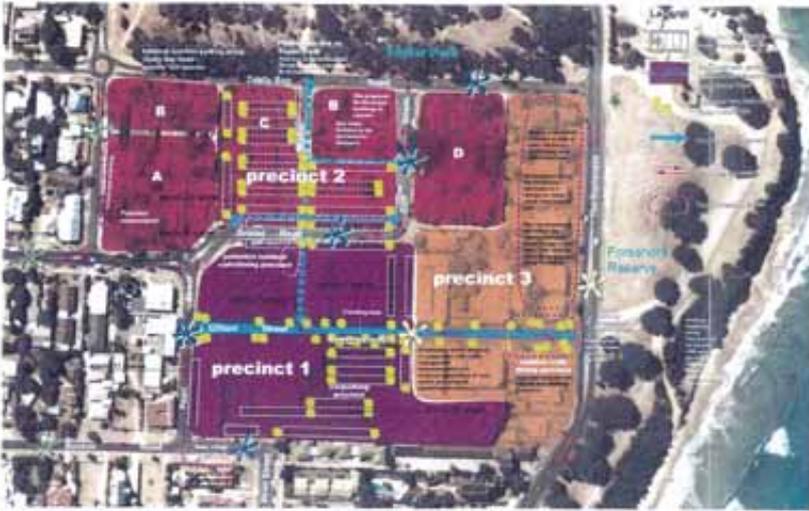
Seating

- Feature seating should draw on the contemporary ocean, surf and beach character of Torquay or add to the sea creatures theme.
- A palette of high quality, robust street furniture will reinforce the ocean theme and sculptural forms established in Gilbert Street, using recycled timbers to represent the maritime traditions of the coast and the contemporary highlights of stainless steel.



Infrastructure Services

- Overhead services to be placed underground, initially in Gilbert Street and eventually throughout the town centre.



Torquay Town Centre will be developed, expanded and governed as the commercial focus and main hub of Torquay, set out in Torquay Strategic Plan 2014. A wide range of retail and leisure related activities, as well as non-primary activities and further opportunities will give life and vitality to the Centre, during and outside business hours. People visiting the Centre will find a variety of places which are recognizable Torquay and reflect its image as one of Australia's greatest surf beach towns. Characteristics of the Town Centre will cater for local, tourist, retail, recreational and community development in these activity precincts.

precinct 1

Precinct 1 is the focus for retail and business related activities. An extensive variety of shopping including retail, leisure and the outdoor cafe or "Street Town" concept, with office and other professional uses, meeting greater use of space than traditional. A landscape design that integrates with the landscape and surrounding infrastructure in a way that caters for local, tourist and other activity along the foreshore.

precinct 2

Precinct 2 will be used for office and business development, including a large commercial and retail. This development will cater for the "Street Town" concept. The precinct has been divided into a number of sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct A

Traditional commercial offices. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct B

Professional offices and retail business services. Retail parking is provided at the rear of buildings and the use of this space may be developed to allow for alternative use such as office buildings.

sub precinct C

High quality public spaces. This precinct will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct D

Future office development will include an extensive public space and will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

precinct 3

Precinct 3 is the focus for retail and business related activities. An extensive variety of shopping including retail, leisure and the outdoor cafe or "Street Town" concept, with office and other professional uses, meeting greater use of space than traditional. A landscape design that integrates with the landscape and surrounding infrastructure in a way that caters for local, tourist and other activity along the foreshore.

foreshore reserve & taylor park

Precinct 3 will be used for office and business development, including a large commercial and retail. This development will cater for the "Street Town" concept. The precinct has been divided into a number of sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct A

Traditional commercial offices. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct B

Professional offices and retail business services. Retail parking is provided at the rear of buildings and the use of this space may be developed to allow for alternative use such as office buildings.

sub precinct C

High quality public spaces. This precinct will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

sub precinct D

Future office development will include an extensive public space and will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts to ensure that development occurs in an integrated fashion. Future development will be primarily in connection with the sub-precincts.

References

- 1. Torquay Strategic Plan, Surf Coast Shire, 2014
- 2. Torquay Town Centre Master Plan, Fisher Stewart, 2014
- 3. Torquay Town Centre Landscape Architecture, Fisher Stewart, 2014
- 4. Torquay Town Centre Master Plan, Fisher Stewart, 2014

Streetscape Works Program

A range of streetscape works will improve Torquay Town Centre by enhancing the streetscape, including street lighting, signage, landscaping, and other improvements. These works will be implemented in a staged manner, with the most significant works completed first. The program will be managed in a way that minimizes disruption to the town centre and its users.

Primary

Primary streetscape works will include: street lighting, signage, landscaping, and other improvements. These works will be implemented in a staged manner, with the most significant works completed first. The program will be managed in a way that minimizes disruption to the town centre and its users.

Secondary

Secondary streetscape works will include: street lighting, signage, landscaping, and other improvements. These works will be implemented in a staged manner, with the most significant works completed first. The program will be managed in a way that minimizes disruption to the town centre and its users.

Tertiary

Tertiary streetscape works will include: street lighting, signage, landscaping, and other improvements. These works will be implemented in a staged manner, with the most significant works completed first. The program will be managed in a way that minimizes disruption to the town centre and its users.

Figure 4A: Master Plan



TORQUAY TOWN CENTRE



Fisher Stewart
Landscape Architecture
Suffolk Street, Torquay
Phone: 03 5222 1022
www.fisherstewart.com.au

Master Plan
Gilbert Street, Torquay
Suffolk Street
Drawing No: 010001.001 Rev. 4
Scale: 1:1
© Fisher Stewart 2014

4.4 Urban design guidelines

Introduction

The Torquay Town Centre is characterised by its casual, relaxed atmosphere and strong associations with the coast and beach culture. There are a variety of building styles along Gilbert Street with no consistent or prevailing theme. However, the ‘village’ atmosphere often referred to derives from a low-rise built form and a consistent rhythm of relatively narrow shopfronts that provide an interesting, active and well-articulated streetscape.

The built form of Gilbert Street is well and truly grounded in the latter half of the 20th century, with no legacy of older buildings upon which to build a stereotypical heritage streetscape theme. The future built form should therefore avoid the adoption of a kitsch ‘*olde worlde*’ idiom and instead concentrate on celebrating the youthful, brash vibrancy that is associated with Torquay.

The following design guidelines are provided to encourage an innovative, adventurous approach to building design in the Torquay Town Centre. They are intended to stimulate ideas rather constrain or restrict. True to the culture of Torquay, individuality is to be encouraged and as such the use of diagrams has been minimised in order to avoid thoughtless replication.

The guidelines provide a canvas on which individual flair can be expressed, whilst preserving the fundamental and valued character of Torquay – human scale, interesting frontages, vibrancy - and complementing the streetscape plan outlined in the preceding section.

Building height and setback

The low rise built form of Torquay is an important element of the ‘coastal village’ character of the town. The comfortable, human scale of the existing buildings allows the sun to penetrate into pedestrian areas and provides expansive views of the sky – a contrast to the urban environments from which many visitors to Torquay are seeking respite.

In order to maintain the existing scale and avoid overshadowing of Gilbert Street, the height limits outlined in [Figure 4D](#) are recommended (refer to [Figures 3A and 3B](#) for precinct boundaries). Minor projections, such as flag poles and architectural features may exceed the recommended heights provided they do not cause overshadowing, create a sense of visual bulk, or compromise the proportions of the streetscape.

Building set backs are also an important element of the character of Torquay. Along Gilbert Street shopfronts directly abut the road reserve and there are few remaining vehicle crossings. This promotes a consistent image and enhances safety by avoiding pedestrian-vehicle conflict and secluded loitering places.

A zero lot line is therefore recommended for all boundaries, with two exceptions. A 7 metre wide splay is recommended at the corners of Gilbert Street and the Esplanade in order to open up views to the ocean and to provide an expansive pedestrian area and focal point right at the ‘front’ entrance to the Torquay Town Centre. In other precincts side setbacks may be necessary in order to accommodate vehicle access to rear car parks. Setback recommendations are also outlined in [Figure 4D](#).

All plant, equipment, and plumbing must be located within the building envelopes outlined in [Figure 4D](#) and be located or screened so as not to be visible from the street.



Figure 4D: Town Centre precinct building heights and setbacks¹

Location	Setbacks	Height Limit
Precinct 1: Gilbert St (west of Cliff St) Pearl St (b/w Bristol & Boston Rds)	All boundaries: 0m	2 storeys to a maximum height of 8.0 metres
Precinct 2A: Bristol Rd (b/w Fischer and Walker Sts)	Front: 0m Other boundaries: 0m*	2 storeys to a maximum height of 8.0 metres
Precinct 2B: Zeally Bay Rd (b/w Fischer and Cliff Sts)	Front 0m Other boundaries: 0m	2 storeys to a maximum height of 8.0 metres
Precinct 2C: Proposed Walker Street Car Park	Not applicable	Not applicable
Precinct 2D: Cliff Street (b/w Zeally Bay Rd and lane)	All boundaries: 0m*	2 storeys to a maximum height of 8.0 metres for individual properties; or 4 storeys to a maximum height of 13.5 metres for an integrated development of the entire precinct
Precinct 3: The Esplanade	All boundaries: 0m*	1 storey to a maximum height of 4.5 metres within 8.0 metres of frontage Elsewhere: 2 storeys to a maximum height of 7.5 metres
Precinct 3: Gilbert Street (b/w Cliff St & The Esplanade)	Front: 0m at ground floor level, except cnr The Esplanade where 7m splayed setback applies Other boundaries: 0m*	North side: 2 storeys to a maximum height of 8.0 metres within 8.0 metres of frontage Elsewhere: 3 storeys to a maximum height of 10.5 metres

* Except where a building setback is required to accommodate on-site car parking or vehicle access lanes.

Building design

Building design in the Torquay Town Centre should be innovative and adventurous, drawing on the coastal and surf theme, whilst contributing interest, vitality and interaction. The *Surf Coast Design and Colours Policy* provides an invaluable starting point, however references may also be made to the simple, unpretentious building forms of the 1940s and 50s – a seminal period in the development of Torquay.

¹ Refer to previous section for precinct boundaries.

Interaction with the environment is fundamental to the Torquay ethos and as such building design and the choice of materials should be based on principals of ecological sustainability. The use of durable and recycled materials is particularly encouraged.

The identity of shops should be enhanced through innovative design rather than size and bulk. Forms may reflect natural elements with free flowing wave like structures or more rigid forms conveying juttred or rugged cliff faces.

Where larger buildings are proposed, façade detail, materials and colour should be designed to provide interest and articulation. The traditional ‘strip shopping centre’ image of multiple shopfronts should be maintained.



Docklands, Vancouver

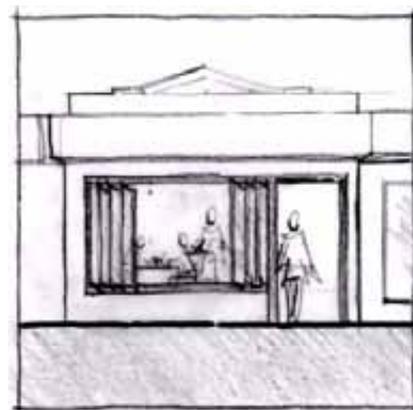
Roof forms and materials, where visible, should be designed to complement the building design and contribute to the interest and variety of the streetscape.

Facade detail should be in keeping with the ‘surf/beach’ theme, incorporating colours and materials that complement the existing natural and built environment. Materials might include weathered timber, corrugated iron or mosaic tiling.



Blank walls should be avoided, particularly on commercial street frontages. Where it is impractical to provide windows, consideration should be given to the use of glass blocks or other design features, which break up the surface and provide interest.

The general proportions of building facades can be improved with the addition of parapets. The individuality of small shop fronts will be reinforced by a diversity of parapet shapes.



At ground floor level shop fronts should be inviting an encourage interaction. The use of a combination of solid and glass is preferred to fully glazed shopfronts.

Al fresco dining can be encouraged by designing shopfronts with fully or partially opening windows and doors, allowing the smell of food and a festive atmosphere to spill into the street.

Weather protection should be provided on all retail frontages.

Simple, cantilevered awnings reflect the modernist styling of some of the older buildings in Gilbert Street and avoid cluttering the pedestrian space with veranda posts.

First floor setback areas on the north side of Gilbert Street may be used for outdoor dining, providing an entirely new dimension to streetlife and offering attractive views along the street to the foreshore.

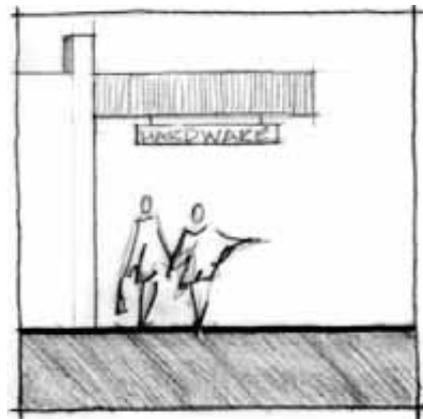
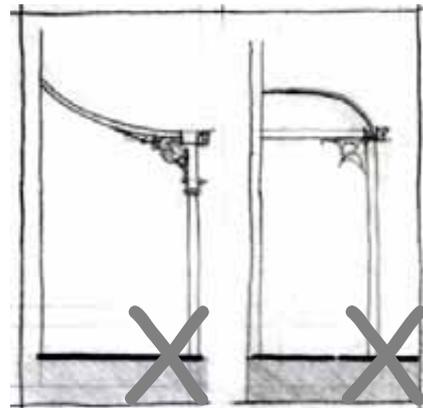
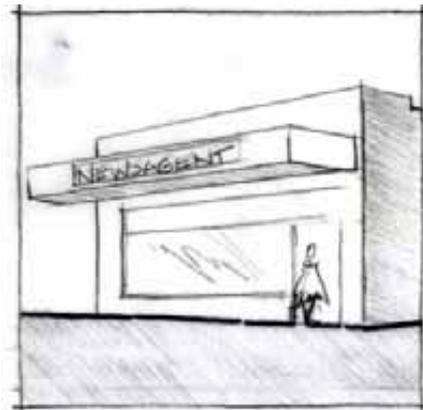
Reproduction heritage verandas and post-supported awnings are strongly discouraged as they are inconsistent with the character of Torquay, add to visual clutter, and impede pedestrian movements.

Veranda posts would conflict with the streetscape plan for Gilbert Street, which integrates pedestrian and vehicle spaces and utilises contemporary feature bollards and street furniture.

Awnings should be located at a height and width to provide enclosure and weather protection without creating a sense of claustrophobia.

The underside of the awning should be approximately 3 metres above footpath level to allow room for business identification signs.

Awning widths should match existing awnings, provided that a sufficient setback from the vehicle carriageway is provided to avoid damage by trucks. The appropriate width may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis, particularly on corners and where there is a road camber adjacent to the awning.



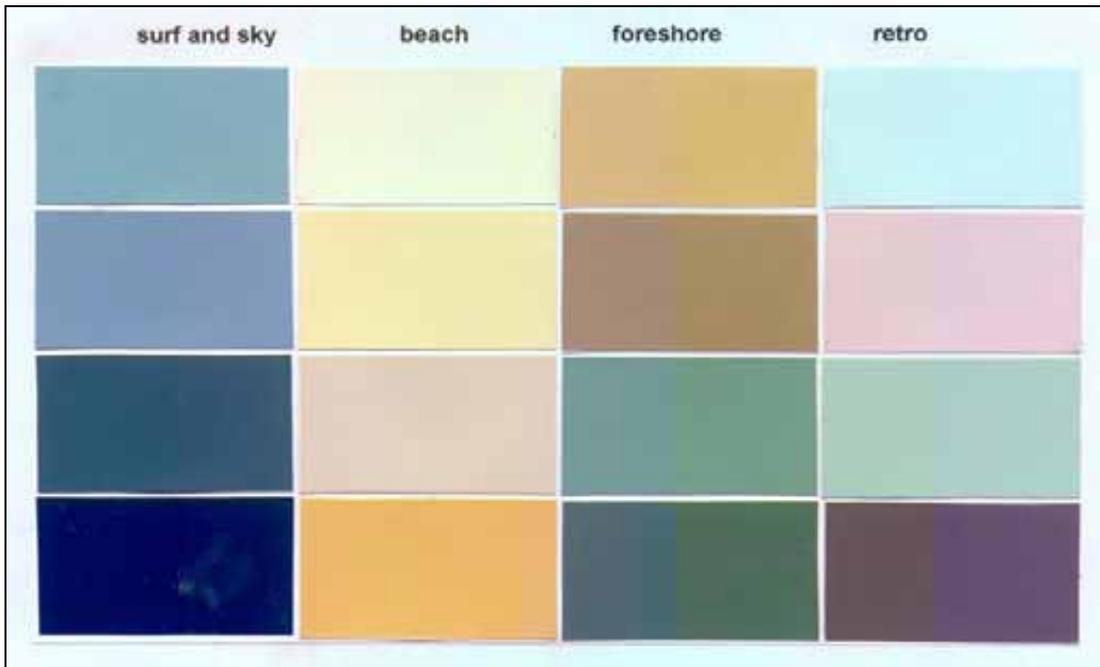
Colour Schedule

The *Surf Coast Design and Colours Policy* states that ‘in the commercial areas and tourist precincts in coastal townships, colours should be used which assist in creating a vibrant and colourful streetscape. Generally it is envisaged these would be quite bright and vibrant conveying a feeling of beaches, sand, water and “activity”.’

An indicative palette of colours has been selected based on these themes and including a selection of ‘retro’ colours which recollect the pastels of the 1940s and 50s. The palette is not intended to be prescriptive; its purpose is illustrative.

Figure 4E provides a variety of suggested colours.

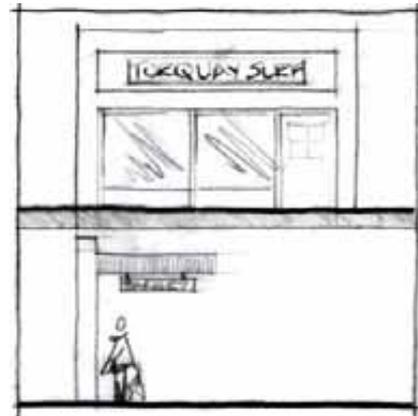
Figure 4E: Colours encouraged within the precinct



Signage

Signs are an essential promotional tool for businesses and assist shoppers in identifying destinations and making choices. Well-designed signage can also add vitality to commercial streetscapes, promoting a perception of excitement and a sense of place.

On the other hand, in a competitive environment the desire for an individual business to be noticed creates the temptation to use large or garish signage. Such an approach promotes an obtrusive, cluttered appearance that detracts from the architectural qualities of buildings and undermines the positive impact of streetscape works.



Well-proportioned signs serve to promote and identify businesses without detracting from the streetscape environment.

The *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* provides a statutory framework for the control of advertising signs within which the recommendations of this study must fit. The level of control applied to signs depends on the relevant land use zone and a comprehensive list of definitions exists to cover all types of signs. At present, two levels of control apply:

- precincts 1 and 2 are subject to minimal control, meaning that many signs can be displayed without a planning permit
- precinct 3 is subject to more stringent controls and most signs require a permit.

No decision guidelines currently exist with respect to business signs in precincts one and two. In precinct 3 the zone schedule provides decision guidelines. Free-standing signs located on the footpath are exempt from planning scheme controls due to the operation of a local law.

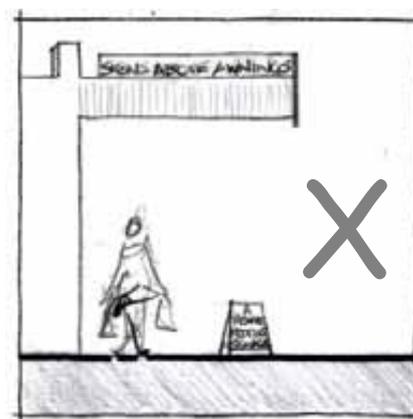
Figure 4F is a table which summarises the advertising sign controls in the planning scheme and provides specific decision making guidelines to be applied where a planning permit is required. The guidelines are derived from the objectives listed immediately below.

Signage Design Objectives

- To encourage effective advertising signage that enhances streetscapes and individual buildings.
- To ensure that advertising signs complement urban design initiatives outlined in the precinct master plan and streetscape concept plan.
- To discourage advertising signs and structures that disrupt the streetscape and create a perception of clutter.
- To ensure that signage is scale in proportion to buildings and verandahs and does not obscure building features.
- To encourage consistency in signage with respect to location and the information conveyed.
- To promote pedestrian safety and convenience by discouraging the placement of signs in pedestrian thoroughfares.



Large, disproportionate signs detract from the design of the building and reduce human scale and streetscape amenity.



Above veranda signs are ineffective and detract from the appearance of the building. Free-standing signs disrupt pedestrian flows.

The sign descriptions used in Figure 4F are taken from the *Surf Coast Planning Scheme*. The definitions cover different attributes of the sign, such as information content, illumination, location and structure. As such a single sign may fall into more than one category. The decision guidelines should therefore be read carefully to ensure that all facets of a particular sign are properly considered.

Signage design guidelines

The following design guidelines apply to all signs where a permit is required.

- Advertising signs should be designed to integrate with the architectural style and character of a building and where possible should be included as an integral part of the design theme of a development.
- Advertising signs attached to buildings should not obscure architectural features and supporting structures should not be obtrusive when viewed from public areas.

- The advertising area should be proportionate to the existing building or structure on which the sign is located and should not unreasonably obscure views to surrounding signs.
- Advertising schemes should be consistent with the concept of Surf Coast Design by incorporating graphics, symbols and colours that reflect themes of beach, ocean and natural environment.
- Above veranda height advertising should be limited to shop and business identification and/or name painted on, or fixed flush to, the building facade (eg. Real Estate, Jetset Travel, Thrifty Link Hardware).
- At verandah level advertising signs should provide information about the nature of the shop, name and phone number (eg newspapers, vegetables, fresh meat).
- Below veranda level detailed and specific information about the goods and/or services offered may be provided.
- Promotional and product signs are strongly discouraged.
- Portable/temporary signage is strongly discouraged.
- Signage on shop fronts should allow for individuality whilst avoiding reflective surfaces and treatments that create visual clutter.

Figure 4F: Advertising sign controls and guidelines

Precincts 1 and 2	Planning scheme controls	Guidelines
Above-verandah sign Animated sign High wall sign Major promotion sign Panel sign Pole sign Reflective sign Sky sign	<u>Permit required</u>	Avoid.
Bed and breakfast sign Home occupation sign Promotion sign	<u>No permit required</u> if the total advertising area of all signs to each premises does not exceed 8sqm (excluding a sign with an advertising area not exceeding 1.5sqm that is below a verandah, or if no verandah, that is less than 3.7m above pavement level).	If condition not met, avoid.
Business identification sign	<u>No permit required</u> if the total advertising area of all signs to each premises does not exceed 8sqm (excluding a sign with an advertising area not exceeding 1.5sqm that is below a verandah, or if no verandah, that is less than 3.7m above pavement level).	Refer to general decision guidelines above.
Bunting sign	<u>Permit required</u>	Temporary banners and flags may be permitted for promotional purposes. Bunting and streamer signs should be avoided.

Precincts 1 and 2	Planning scheme controls	Guidelines
Direction sign	<u>No permit required.</u>	Not applicable.
Floodlit sign	<u>Permit required</u>	Illumination levels should not cause detriment to the amenity of nearby dwellings. Refer to general decision guidelines above
Internally-illuminated sign	<u>No permit required</u> if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total advertising area to each premises does not exceed 1.5sqm • No part of the sign is above a veranda or, if no veranda, more than 3.7m above pavement level • The sign is more than 30m from a residential zone or traffic lights. 	Illumination levels should not cause detriment to the amenity of nearby dwellings. Refer to general decision guidelines above

Precinct 3	Planning scheme controls	Decision guidelines
Above-verandah sign Pole sign Reflective sign	<u>Permit required.</u>	Avoid.
Animated sign Bunting sign High wall sign Major promotion sign Panel sign Reflective sign Sky sign	<u>Prohibited</u>	Not applicable.
Bed and breakfast sign Home occupation sign	<u>No permit required</u> if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one sign to each premises • The advertisement area does not exceed 0.2sqm. 	If condition not met, avoid.
Business identification sign	<u>Permit required.</u>	Refer to general decision guidelines above.
Direction sign	<u>No permit required.</u>	Not applicable.
Floodlit sign	<u>Permit required</u>	Illumination levels should not cause detriment to the amenity of nearby dwellings. Refer to general decision guidelines above.
Internally-illuminated sign	<u>Permit required</u>	Illumination levels should not cause detriment to the amenity of nearby dwellings. Refer to general decision guidelines above.
Promotion sign.	<u>Permit required</u> <u>Prohibited</u> if advertising area exceeds 2 sqm.	Avoid.



4.4 Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
4A	<p>Undertake a detailed streetscape design development phase culminating in the preparation of construction plans for the Gilbert Street streetscape works. The plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be consistent with the Streetscape Masterplan • Provide a catalogue of street furniture to be progressively installed throughout the Town Centre • Include recommendations on the timing and funding of progressive streetscape works for the balance of the Town Centre. <p>Approximate budget = \$20,000.</p>
4B	<p>Negotiate with the owner of the vacant block immediately to the south of Walker Street for the purchase, land swap or transfer of a 4.0 metre wide portion along the eastern boundary to Council for development as a pedestrian accessway.</p>
4C	<p>Amend the <i>Surf Coast Planning Scheme</i> to include this report as an incorporated document which may be used to guide decision making with respect to built form and advertising signs.</p>
4D	<p>Undertake streetscape improvements in Gilbert Street, Pearl Street, Bristol Road and Cliff Street.</p>
4E	<p>Support the recommendations of the <i>Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan</i> (1998), giving particular priority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a raised pedestrian crossing over The Esplanade at Gilbert Street • Interpretive signage on the foreshore adjacent to Gilbert Street • Construction of a timber viewing platform directly accessible from Gilbert Street • Selective removal of shrubs and pruning of trees to open up views to the coast from the Torquay Town Centre.
4F	<p>Preparing a new (or amending any existing) local law to clearly define areas where street furniture may be placed within Town Centre road reserves and to prohibit the display of 'A' frame signs..</p>
4G	<p>Progressively undertake streetscape works in The Esplanade (west side) and Zeally Bay Road.</p>

5. Traffic management

5.1 Introduction

In order to maintain and enhance the status of the Torquay Town Centre as the commercial heart of Torquay it will be necessary to address perceived problems associated with the lack of direct frontage to the Surf Coast Highway.

A number of clear priorities can be identified in this regard:

- Improving exposure and identity on the Surf Coast Highway
- Clarifying and enhancing gateways and access routes to the centre
- Improving traffic and vehicle circulation within the centre
- Providing sufficient numbers of car parking spaces in appropriate locations.

The Torquay Town Centre is located approximately 500 metres to the east of the Surf Coast Highway. The highway, also known as Geelong Road, is a dual lane divided highway linking Torquay with Victoria's second largest city, Geelong. More importantly, beyond Spring Creek in Torquay the highway is known as the Great Ocean Road, one of Victoria's premier tourist icons.

Apart from Torquay's beaches and natural beauty, the Surf Coast Highway is one of the town's greatest assets. Large numbers of commuters (to and from Geelong), visitors, holiday makers, tourists, and commercial vehicles travel along the highway daily. To ensure its prosperity the Town Centre needs to enhance its exposure and accessibility in an effort to attract a greater proportion of passing traffic away.

Accessibility to local residents is also of critical importance. The *Torquay Town Centre Strategy 1999* estimates escape expenditure to be 52% of all available spending¹ and makes recommendations aimed at reducing this 45%.² Even such a modest reduction will result in an increase in the number of trips made to the Town Centre. It is unlikely that the number of trips will increase proportionately to the reduction of escape expenditure as locals may spend more per trip than they do at present.

Another important source of Town Centre patrons will be new residents settling within the primary and secondary trade areas.³ The *Torquay-Jan Juc Strategy Plan* estimates that the population of the two towns (the primary trade area) will grow from almost 6,000 in 1996 to between 10,000 and 11,000 in 2011.⁴

The main foci of population growth in the primary trade area will be to the north of Wombah Park, Golden Beach, and Torquay West. Some additional growth will also be achieved through urban consolidation within Old Torquay; peripheral development in Jan Juc; and potential hobby farm and low density residential development west of Torquay. The location of the new growth areas will have implications for access to the Town Centre as many of these areas do not rely on the Surf Coast Highway for access.

The Town Centre's secondary trade area includes coastal townships along the Great Ocean Road and the rural hinterland to the west of Torquay.⁵ A large majority of trips to the Town

¹ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, p. 8.

² *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

⁴ Surf Coast Planning Scheme, clause 21.10-2.

⁵ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, pp. 5-6.



Centre from this area will therefore utilise the Great Ocean Road/Surf Coast Highway. This emphasises the need to consider highway access from the south-west as well as the north. The other main access points for the secondary trade area are Grossmans Road and Coombes Road.

5.2 Road hierarchy

Existing road hierarchy

The grid layout of ‘Old Torquay’ and the generous pavement widths of most streets have allowed the existing road hierarchy to evolve largely along traffic desire lines. While attempts have been made to delineate a more formal hierarchy through the use of signage these efforts have been either ineffective from the outset or have lost effectiveness over time. Clearly, if a successful road hierarchy is to be established a suite of measures needs to be implemented, including signage, traffic control devices, and vegetation themes.

There is no formally adopted road hierarchy for Torquay. The hierarchy shown in the *Melway* street directory provides a reasonably accurate overview of the existing function of the road and street network, however at present Bristol Road clearly carries more traffic than Zeally Bay Road. Refer to [Figure 5A](#).

Figure 5A: Road hierarchy shown in *Melway* Greater Melbourne street directory



The **Surf Coast Highway** is the major highway providing access to Torquay from Geelong and this route connects to the Great Ocean Road. The Surf Coast Highway is considered to be a primary arterial in the Torquay road network.

The Esplanade/Bell Street route provides access to a large area of Torquay and is several kilometres in length. The route is more important than a collector road due to its length and higher volumes of traffic (see discussion below) and is considered to be functioning as a second arterial road.

Darian Road and **Grossmans Road** form an important east west link in the Torquay road network. This link provides access from the coast and The Esplanade in the east to Fischer Street, Surf Coast Highway and Duffields Road in the west. Due to its length and connectivity this route is clearly a secondary arterial road. The importance of the route will be further reinforced with the imminent relocation of the Torquay Primary School to Grossmans Road.

Fischer Street, Pearl Street and **Pride Street** serve as a north-south collector route.

Zeally Bay Road is designated as an east-west collector street as it provides a direct link between Surf Coast Highway and The Esplanade, however at present it carries less traffic than Bristol Road.

Anderson Street, Boston Road and **Bristol Road** currently perform a collector type function providing access between the Surf Coast Highway and the town centre. Bristol Road carries the largest volumes of traffic to and from the west.

Beach Road does not perform a significant collector street function at present, however its importance will be enhanced by the construction of a roundabout as part of the ‘Pride of Place’ project and as residential development in Torquay West increases.

Traffic volumes

The most recent traffic surveys of the Torquay Town Centre were undertaken by Arup Transportation Planning on behalf of the Surf Coast Shire in 1996.⁶ Although the data is now becoming dated for the purposes of a detailed analysis of traffic volumes, it is still considered to be useful for the purpose of analysing overall trends. Since 1996 there have been no changes to the road layout, traffic management devices, or layout of the Torquay Town Centre of such significance as to disturb the relevance of the overall trends discussed below. The following discussion therefore focuses on overall trends and the relative proportions of traffic utilising various routes, rather than the specific numbers of vehicles recorded.

The 1996 surveys were conducted around the Torquay Town Centre to identify the volume and direction of incoming and outgoing traffic. Two surveys were taken, one in January (6/1/96) representing peak holiday season; the other in March (16/3/96), representing the ‘off season’. Statistics were provided for both peak hour and daily traffic flows.

Figure 5B ranks the key access roads into the Torquay Town Centre according to the percentage share of total incoming traffic during 9 hour periods on 6 October and 16 March 1996. Figure 5C provides the same analysis with respect to traffic leaving the precinct. Refer also to Appendix B which is an extract from the Arup report which identifies total traffic volumes and the intersections at which traffic counts were made.

⁶ Torquay Town Centre Traffic Survey Results, 1996.

Figure 5B: Traffic volumes entering Torquay Town Centre

Vehicles entering precinct (9 hour period)					
Origin		6/01/96		16/03/96	
Street	Direction	No.	%	No.	%
The Esplanade	South	1380	20.9%	550	14.2%
Bristol Rd	West	1130	17.1%	895	23.2%
The Esplanade	North	945	14.3%	560	14.5%
Fischer St	North	900	13.6%	550	14.2%
Anderson St	West	825	12.5%	475	12.3%
Pride St	South	515	7.8%	270	7.0%
Zeally Bay Rd	West	385	5.8%	225	5.8%
Payne St	West	215	3.3%	150	3.9%
Anderson St	East*	185	2.8%	80	2.1%
Boston Rd	West	135	2.0%	110	2.8%
Sub-totals	West	2690	40.7%	1855	48.0%
	South	2080	31.4%	900	23.3%
	North	1845	27.9%	1110	28.7%
Total		6615		3865	

Figure 5C: Traffic volumes leaving Torquay Town Centre

Vehicles leaving precinct (9 hour period)					
Destination		6/01/96		16/03/96	
Street	Direction	No.	%	No.	%
The Esplanade	North	1295	19.6%	770	19.5%
The Esplanade	South	1205	18.3%	640	16.2%
Bristol Rd	West	775	11.7%	520	13.2%
Boston Rd	West	755	11.4%	460	11.7%
Fischer St	North	690	10.5%	440	11.2%
Pride St	South	550	8.3%	335	8.5%
Zeally Bay Rd	West	390	5.9%	240	6.1%
Anderson St	East*	385	5.8%	205	5.2%
Payne St	West	285	4.3%	135	3.4%
Anderson St	West	265	4.0%	160	4.1%
Sub-totals	West	2470	37.4%	1515	38.5%
	South	2375	36.0%	1450	36.8%
	North	1755	26.6%	975	24.7%
Total		6600		3940	

* Vehicles travelling from the east on Anderson Street have been included in the 'south' sub-total.

An analysis of the statistics as they apply to key routes follows.

The Esplanade

The above tables exclude through traffic travelling along The Esplanade, ie. vehicles not turning into either Gilbert Street or Zeally Bay Road. These figures were excluded as The Esplanade does not currently function as part of the Torquay Town Centre Precinct and because the high volumes involved would have significantly distorted the results.

During the peak survey period (6/1/96) the volume of 'through' traffic on The Esplanade was equivalent to approximately 70% of the total traffic entering the precinct. During the off-peak survey period (16/3/96) this proportion dropped to approximately 55%. This suggests that The Esplanade is well used by tourists and clearly demonstrates the value in developing a direct frontage to the town centre on The Esplanade.



During the peak survey period (6/1/96) 35% of all vehicles entering the centre arrived via The Esplanade and 38% left the centre via The Esplanade. More vehicles arrived from the south than the north, however upon departure the figures were relatively even.

While it is not possible to determine the origin of vehicles entering the centre from The Esplanade it is noteworthy that the proportion of vehicles travelling from the south dropped significantly from 20.9% in the peak survey period to 14.2% in the off-peak period. Similarly, vehicles exiting the centre and travelling south along The Esplanade dropped from 18.3% to 16.4%.

Meanwhile, vehicles entering from and exiting to the north along The Esplanade remained relatively static (14.3% to 14.5% entering; and 19.6% to 19.7% exiting respectively). This suggests that traffic entering and leaving the town centre via The Esplanade from the south is more likely to comprise a higher proportion of visitors than traffic from the north. This would appear logical given that Cosy Corner, the surf beach, and the Torquay Camping and Caravan Park are all located to the south of the Town Centre.

Bristol Road

Bristol Road is the second most important access route to the Town Centre, and the only other route significantly affected by seasonal variation. However, four important points should be made about Bristol Road. First, the surveys were conducted on a Saturday and therefore excluded large volumes of school traffic. Secondly, during both survey periods Bristol Road was a more popular access route than egress route. Thirdly, the importance of Bristol Road rose in the off-peak period compared to the peak period, suggesting that it is less important as a tourist route than The Esplanade. Finally, the relocation of the Torquay Primary School will significantly reduce traffic volumes during weekdays.

During the peak survey period (6/1/96) 17.1% of vehicles entering the precinct arrived via Bristol Road, while 11.8% departed in the same direction. The off-peak (16/3/96) percentages were 23.2% and 13.3% respectively.

Fischer Street

Fischer Street, despite the bottle neck between Zeally Bay Road and Bristol Road, was the third most important access route, carrying 13.6% of vehicles during the peak period and 14.2% during the off-peak. Like Bristol Road, it was also less likely to carry vehicles leaving the precinct - serving 10.5% and 11.3% for the two survey periods.

Boston Road

Access to Boston Road is restricted to vehicles turning left from the Surf Coast Highway and this probably accounts for the small proportion of vehicles accessing the precinct via this route (2.0 and 2.8%). On the other hand it is also the most direct route to the Surf Coast Highway from the supermarket car park and this probably contributes to its ranking as the fourth most important exit route (11.4% and 11.8%). Given the turning restrictions on the Surf Coast Highway it is likely that many of the vehicles exiting the precinct via Boston Road originate from Jan Juc or settlements within the secondary trade area.

Anderson Street

According to the feedback received during the consultation phase Anderson Street is an important access route to the town centre for Jan Juc residents. This is reflected in its ranking as the fifth most important access route (12.5% and 12.3%). However, the more direct egress route offered by Boston Road appears to contribute to the reduced importance of Anderson Street for vehicles leaving the town centre (5.8% and 5.2%).

Zeally Bay Road

Despite its width and status as a collector street, Zeally Bay Road carries a relatively small 5.8% of incoming traffic from the west and 5.9-6.1% of outgoing traffic to the west. It is however used in greater proportions by persons accessing and egressing via The Esplanade. It should also be noted that since the time of the survey new direction signs have been erected at the intersection of Zeally Bay Road and Surf Coast Highway and vehicle volumes may have increased as a result.⁷ Zeally Bay Road serves as a route for delivery vehicles.

Directional trends

The largest volumes of traffic enter the precinct from the west: 40.7% during the peak and 48.0% during the off-peak survey periods. Slightly smaller proportions left the precinct in the same direction: 37.5% and 38.5%. Due to the road layout access from the west was dispersed between four different roads, with Payne Street providing a connection between three of them.

Traffic volumes north and south of the Town Centre were split in a relatively even manner. On the peak survey date 31.4% of vehicles accessed the centre from the south while 27.9% came from the north. The figures were reversed in the off-season with 28.7% accessing the centre to the north and 23.3% from south. This supports the suggestion made above that traffic on The Esplanade south of the Town Centre is more significantly influenced by tourists than traffic to the north of the Town Centre.

Traffic volumes leaving the town centre clearly favoured the south ahead of the north. In the peak survey period 36.0% travelled south upon leaving the precinct, while 26.6% travelled north. The figures were similar during the off-peak period - 36.8% and 24.7% respectively.

It is reiterated that the above discussion is intended to explain existing patterns and trends. These patterns are likely to be substantially altered after the new supermarket is constructed and strategic recommendations are implemented affecting the flows and volumes of traffic.

Road hierarchy conclusions

In identifying future routes to provide access to the town centre from the Surf Coast Highway it is necessary to consider a number of issues.

Firstly, the width of the existing carriageways and the level of access provided onto the Surf Coast Highway must be considered. Boston Road is only 8 metres wide and only permits left turn in and left turn out movements at the highway. This is obviously not a suitable route to be nominated as a future collector road. Bristol Road on the other hand, being 9.5 metres wide, is nearly as wide as Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street and all movements are permitted at the highway. The intersection of Bristol Road and the Highway is however located near a crest on the Surf Coast Highway which limits sight distances for vehicles leaving Bristol Road.

Secondly, it is also necessary to consider how the road links in with the overall function of the town centre. Bristol Road and Boston Road, while leading traffic directly into the town centre, do not distribute traffic towards the periphery of the centre, which is where traffic should desirably be directed. Car parks should be developed on the fringe of the centre not in the middle where some of the existing car parks are located. Consequently, it is considered that both Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street are better located to perform the function of collector roads to the town centre.

⁷ See section 5.4 for a discussion regarding directional signs.

Although Beach Road does not provide direct access to the Torquay Town Centre its importance as a collector street will grow as residential development in Torquay West expands. The *Torquay Urban Design Framework* ‘Pride of Place’ project recommends the construction of a roundabout and the installation of directional signage at the intersection of Beach Road and Surf Coast Highway. These measures are likely to increase traffic volumes on Beach Road, particularly tourist vehicles which are likely to enter the Town Centre via either Fischer Street or The Esplanade. The provision of this ‘scenic’ route to the Town Centre is supported on the basis that it will reduce traffic impact on Zeally Bay Road.

An analysis of the key streets capable of providing access to the Torquay Town Centre is provided in [Appendix C](#). Each route is assessed against the following considerations:

- Existing function and traffic volumes (see above discussion)
- Road pavement dimensions
- Connectivity to the Torquay Town Centre
- Surf Coast Highway treatment, including proposed traffic control devices
- Links to identified growth areas
- The predominant land use in the street
- Bus routes.

The recommended road hierarchy is shown in [Figure 5D](#).

Figure 5D: Recommended road hierarchy



Town centre circuit

The proposed hierarchy includes a road circuit around the town centre. The circuit would comprise: Zeally Bay Road, The Esplanade, Anderson Street, Payne Street, Bristol Road and Fischer Street (south of Zeally Bay Road).

The town centre circuit is required to direct traffic around the centre to appropriate parking areas without travelling through the middle of the town centre and conflicting with pedestrian movements. It is not the intention of the internal circuit to totally remove traffic from the town centre but rather to enable the traffic to be managed more appropriately.

Figure 5E: Recommended Town Centre road circuit



Commercial traffic

At present there are no defined heavy vehicle routes in or around the Torquay Town Centre. The 1996 Arup surveys were conducted on Saturdays and as such did not count a sufficient number of delivery vehicles to make any conclusions about preferred routes. It may reasonably be assumed that such vehicles follow the same general routes as passenger car traffic as many of the shops on Gilbert Street are serviced from the front door. It is understood that semi-trailers servicing the existing supermarket utilise Zeally Bay Road and Cliff Street as this is the most convenient means of accessing the existing supermarket loading bay.

Based on the recommended road hierarchy Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street are preferred routes to provide access from The Esplanade or the Surf Coast Highway to the town centre. Commercial traffic should then utilise the Town Centre circuit as required to access their final destination. The use of any local streets within the inner circuit to gain access to the actual premises they are delivering to should be limited to the essential streets only.

The use of Fischer Street north of Zeally Bay Road by commercial vehicles should be discouraged because of the residential development along this route. Commercial vehicles should not need to use this route as other suitable routes are available. The use of Fischer

Street by passenger cars is supported as Fischer Street is an important collector road providing access to the town centre.

It is acknowledged that Anderson Street and Zeally Bay Road also have residential development however, the extent of residential development is less along these streets which are shorter than Fischer Street and there are no reasonable alternatives available. The reduction of commercial traffic in Bristol Road and Boston Road will improve the residential amenity of both these streets.

The redirection of commercial traffic to the defined road hierarchy can be achieved through a combination of directional signage and load limits placed on designated local streets.

A survey of commercial premises was undertaken in September 2000 to determine delivery requirements. Twenty survey forms were returned. The survey identified the following general trends:

- Approximately 51% of deliveries are made by small vehicles, spread across a nine hour period
- Approximately 37% of deliveries are made by medium-sized vehicles (eg. freezer vans), over five hours
- Approximately 12% of deliveries are made by large vehicles, over two hours
- Most delivery vehicles take between 10 and 30 minutes to unload
- Very few deliveries are made on weekends
- Most deliveries are made in the morning
- There is little variation in the number or frequency of deliveries between peak and off-peak seasons.

While it would be preferable to avoid providing on-street loading facilities in a pedestrianised environment such as is proposed for Gilbert Street, existing development makes such provision a necessity as very few premises have been constructed with rear delivery bays. It is therefore proposed to include a loading bay on the southern side of Gilbert Street adjacent to the supermarket car park to accommodate larger vehicles and to set aside two angled spaces at either end of the street to accommodate smaller vehicles throughout the day.

The proposed centre management body and Council should monitor delivery needs to determine whether in the future it may be desirable or necessary to place parking restrictions in Gilbert Street in the early morning to allow for more intensive loading. The success of such a measure would depend on the ability or willingness of suppliers and transport operators to make deliveries during specified hours.

New developments should be designed to ensure that adequate provision is made for loading and storage of goods and waste materials.

Bus and coach services

Several bus and coach services visit Torquay, these are:

- **V/Line** – scheduled bus services with stops on the Surf Coast Highway
- **McHarry's Bus Lines** – scheduled services between Geelong Railway Station, Grovedale, Wombah Park, Torquay Town Centre, and Jan Juc
- **School buses** – regular services during school terms with stops on the Surf Coast Highway and some in the Torquay Town Centre
- **Tourist Coaches** – irregular services, some of which stop in the Torquay Town Centre.



The bus stops at the southern end of the Pearl Street Council Car Park serve as a *de facto* bus interchange. Most of the bus services which visit the town centre utilise this facility. The advantage of this location is that it is separated from core traffic circulation areas; does not block off commercial frontages; and is in close proximity to car parking, shops and public toilet facilities. The convenience of the bus interchange will not be diminished by the proposed changes to the Torquay Town Centre which will serve to redirect the focus of the retail trading to the western end of Gilbert Street, directly to the north of the bus stop.

It is recommended that this location be retained as the town centre bus interchange and that the effectiveness of line marking and signing be reviewed commensurate with this role. Bus stops, seating and landscaping should be upgraded to enhance the amenity, safety and comfort of public transport users.

The scheduled McHarry's service currently travels along a route which includes Fischer Street, Bristol Road, Pearl Street, Anderson Street and The Esplanade. During some peak periods buses are forced to deviate from the scheduled route due to congestion at Bristol Road and Pearl Streets. Furthermore, traffic volumes on the Surf Coast Highway sometimes result in delays due to difficulties in turning right from Bristol Road onto the highway. The narrow width and restricted view lines do not allow for safe turns from Fischer Street into Zeally Bay Road. This situation may be remedied in future by the widening of this section of Fischer Street, however due to the current residential development of adjoining properties this should only be considered in the event that these properties are redeveloped for commercial purposes at some time in the future.

While buses should be encouraged to utilise the collector routes identified in the road hierarchy it is recognised that there may be practical or logistical constraints that prevent this objective being achieved in the short term. Council should consult with bus operators during the detailed design phase of the implementation program to ensure that any upgrades incorporate the needs of buses and facilitate the relocation of scheduled bus routes onto designated collector routes. Proposed traffic control devices at the Surf Coast Highway intersections with Darian, Beach and Zeally Bay Roads will resolve concerns about congestion and traffic safety when entering and exiting the highway.

Tourist coaches and school buses often do not follow set routes or, if they do, may be more susceptible to change than transit services. These services may be encouraged to utilise collector routes through appropriate signing and, if necessary, load limitations on local streets.

Pedestrian and bicycle access

Torquay is a highly car-dependent town. Dwelling densities are generally low and there has been a significant investment in road infrastructure. The relatively small permanent population means that a self-sufficient public transport service is unlikely to be provided in the foreseeable future.

While high levels of escape expenditure lost to Geelong suggest that car dependency is not an issue for many, Torquay also has significant populations of older and younger people who do not have ready access to private transport. For these people convenient access to the Torquay Town Centre is crucial for social as well as economic reasons.

The *Torquay Urban Design Framework* identifies the need for improved pedestrian and bicycle access from the residential areas to the town centre and makes specific recommendations regarding a proposed link between the town centre and the 'Surf Core' on the highway. This is further complemented by the *Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan* and the *Taylor Park Master Plan* which both include measures designed to improve linkages to the town centre. In particular, the foreshore plan proposes a raised

pedestrian crossing between the foreshore and Gilbert Street. These initiatives are supported as they will enhance pedestrian access to the Torquay Town Centre and improve safety.

The Torquay Town Centre Master Plan has been designed to complement the recommendations of the three plans referred to above. Gilbert Street as a whole will be primarily a pedestrian precinct, with the eastern end providing a activity node adjacent to the foreshore and The Esplanade. Linkages to Taylor Park and the residential areas beyond will be enhanced by the provision of a landscaped north-south walkway extending from Zeally Bay Road to Gilbert Street along the alignment of Walker Street.

Opportunities for improved bicycle access should also be investigated. Consideration should be given to the marking of bicycle lanes along non-collector streets that connect the Town Centre to key nodes such as the ‘Surf Core’, Wombah Park, the proposed school site, and Bell Street. Within the Town Centre itself provision should be made for bicycle storage both within the public realm and associated with any major new development.

5.3 Town centre traffic management

Existing conditions

The dominance of Gilbert Street as a destination reflects the traditional retail structure of the town centre precinct. At present most retail activity is focussed on Gilbert Street, with a smaller proportion on Pearl Street and some peripheral activity occurring on Bristol Road. The two existing supermarkets are both located on Gilbert Street as is the main sealed car park.

Opportunities for infill development within Gilbert Street are almost exhausted. Under the proposed framework outlined above new floorspace will develop to the north and west of the traditional town centre. The proposal to develop a major supermarket on the north side of Bristol Road is likely to be a major catalyst for development in this direction. This will have the immediate effect of altering the current pattern of vehicle circulation, particularly as any new development will require the construction of a substantial car park in the Walker Street precinct.

The current circulation pattern is problematic due to the circuitous route required to gain access to Gilbert Street, particularly from the west. Consultation with stakeholders reveals that traffic congestion and vehicle-pedestrian conflict occur in the following locations:

- Fischer Street/Zeally Bay Road intersection
- Fischer Street/Bristol Road intersection
- Bristol Road/Pearl Street intersection
- Pearl Street/Gilbert Street intersection
- Cliff Street/Gilbert Street intersection
- Southern supermarket car park.

It is apparent that all of these locations are associated with the convergence of vehicles into the core precinct area which is also the main focus of pedestrian activity. The northern entrance to Pearl Street is cited as a particularly congested location due to the volumes of pedestrians crossing the street to visit the post office.

Within the town centre the most problematic area extends from the intersection of Bristol Road and Fischer Street through to the intersection of Pearl and Gilbert Streets. Problems arise in this location due to:

- the popularity of Bristol Road for traffic accessing and egressing the town centre from the west
- traffic volumes associated with the Torquay Primary School on Bristol Road
- the convergence of traffic from Fischer Street and Bristol Road and the narrow pavement width of the former
- the configuration of Bristol Road, which appears to terminate at Pearl Street but in fact contains a ‘dog-leg’ extending north-east of the intersection
- the ‘desire line’ of shoppers travelling along Bristol Road who seek to turn right into Pearl Street to park either within Gilbert Street or to access the southern car park via Gilbert Street
- the location of the post office at the south-west corner of Bristol Road and Pearl Streets and its lack of off-street parking, causing traffic congestion and drawing pedestrians across Pearl Street from Gilbert Street
- the confusing road layout at the intersection of Bristol Road and Pearl Street.

The consultation with shoppers and residents revealed that traffic congestion in the town centre precinct, particularly in the peak tourist months, detracts from shopper amenity and contributes to perceptions of inconvenience and insufficient numbers of car parking spaces. Addressing these perceptions is an important means of reducing escape expenditure.

Pedestrians - Gilbert Street Mall?

Previous studies have mooted the establishment of a mall along all or part of Gilbert Street. Streetscape works completed approximately a decade ago by the former City of South Barwon created a semi-pedestrianised environment along the western half of the street. The *Torquay Jan Juc Draft Retail Strategy 1997* recommended the closure of the eastern end of the street, between Cliff Street and The Esplanade, in order to enhance linkages with the foreshore.

The late 1970s through to the early 1990s saw the creation of numerous malls throughout Australia. Malls were generally regarded as a means of bringing life back into strip shopping areas by removing traffic and thereby attempting to emulate conditions in the free-standing shopping centres. The creation of malls was also seen as victory against the domination of our urban areas by the motor car.

In recent times the effectiveness of malls has been questioned and a number - most notably Swanston Street, Melbourne - have been reopened to traffic. The reasons are various but the general perception has been that malls have had resulted in adverse economic and social impacts. At the same time there has been a resurgence in the economic fortunes of strip shopping centres. Properly managed shopping strips are now succeeding because of on-street traffic rather than despite it.

As the above discussion demonstrates, Gilbert Street provides an important access route into the core precinct from both the west and east. It also provides a key egress route for traffic travelling in all directions. While it is important to reduce traffic in Gilbert Street and improve pedestrian comfort and safety the closure of the street to form a permanent pedestrian mall is not supported.

The framework and landscape plans outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report envisage the creation of a highly amenity shopping precinct in Gilbert Street. The precinct will be characterised by enhanced views and physical linkages to the foreshore and Taylor Park; wide, landscaped pedestrian areas suitable for outdoor dining and activities; and an intimate, human scale built form.



Although the complete closure of Gilbert Street to through traffic is not supported, the creation of a high amenity shopping precinct will necessitate a substantial calming of traffic movements. Vehicles should still be able to enter and park in Gilbert Street, however the street must present itself as a pedestrian domain. Traffic management measures need to be designed to make it less desirable to park in Gilbert Street, thus subtly encouraging patrons to enter the peripheral car parks.

To some degree the objective of reducing escape expenditure is as much about changing perceptions about Torquay Town Centre as it is about providing new floor space and making physical changes. Current perceptions (in the peak season) are that the town centre is crowded with people, congested with traffic and has insufficient parking spaces. The traffic circulation plan outlined below aims to alter these perceptions by modifying long held habits. Traffic will be directed around the periphery of the town centre rather than directly to its centre. This will lead patrons to convenient, available car parking away from the existing traffic and pedestrian conflict points. On foot, they will find a safe, pleasant and vibrant town centre that is not dominated by cars circulating in search of car parking spaces.

Traffic Access Circulation Plan

In order to improve access and circulation around the Torquay town centre a Traffic Access Circulation Plan has been prepared which is shown at [Figure 5H](#). The plan is based upon the recommended internal circuit of collector roads and the need to overcome other difficulties within the centre, particularly in the Bristol Road and Pearl Street area at the western end of Gilbert Street. The access and circulation plan also considers the need to discourage traffic from using Bristol Road and Boston Road to access the centre and, more importantly, the need to direct traffic to existing and future parking areas which should be located on the outskirts of the centre in close proximity to the internal circuit.

It is recommended that Gilbert Street be made one-way from The Esplanade through to Pearl Street. It is further recommended that Pearl Street be one-way to the north and two-way to the south from the western end of Gilbert Street. This will prevent traffic from driving the full length south along Pearl Street between Bristol Road and Boston Road. It will also prevent traffic from the west accessing Gilbert Street on either Bristol Road or Boston Road and encourage this traffic to move to either Zeally Bay Road or Anderson Street in order to access the centre. This arrangement will also facilitate smooth traffic flow along Gilbert Street in an east to west direction and then allow traffic to either circulate to the north or to the south along Pearl Street. Access to Gilbert Street will also be available through the two car parks which abut Gilbert Street. Traffic entering and leaving these car parks will be able to circulate through the car parks using Gilbert Street to travel in the permitted direction.

Giving priority to Payne Street traffic at the Boston Road and Bristol Road intersections facilitates traffic flow along Payne Street. This should be timed to coincide with the redevelopment of the Torquay Primary School site. At the Bristol Road intersection a changed priority intersection treatment will be required. The plan also facilitates traffic movement along Bristol Road east of Payne Street via Cliff Street to Zeally Bay Road. The plan envisages Walker Street being incorporated into the design of the adjacent car parking areas and as such Walker Street would not be retained. In order to minimise any disruption that right turning into Cliff Street from Zeally Bay Road may cause, it is recommended that a painted right turn lane be provided at the intersection.



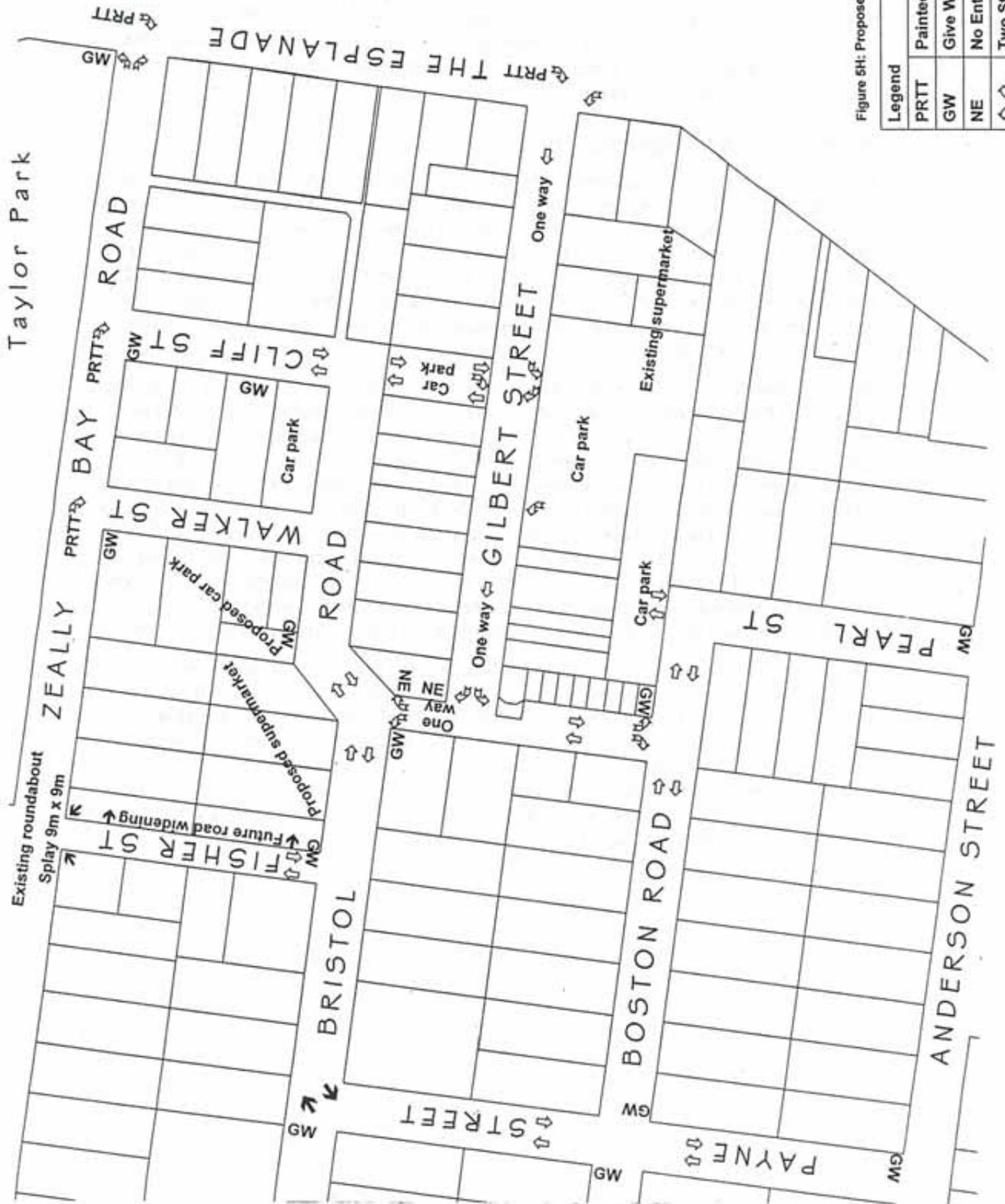


Figure 5H: Proposed traffic access circulation plan

Legend	
PRTT	Painted Right Turn Treatment
GW	Give Way Sign
NE	No Entry Sign
	Two Stand-up Lanes at Intersection

The traffic access and circulation plan shown on [Figure 5H](#) identifies desirable traffic circulation patterns within the centre and the traffic management measures recommended to facilitate these circulation patterns. In developing the recommended traffic access and circulation plan the location of the existing and proposed supermarkets and major car parks have been taken into consideration along with the desirability of converting Gilbert Street to one-way along its entire length in order to increase pedestrian space and improve traffic flow. The effect of implementing these recommended traffic management measures will be to:

- Discourage the use of Bristol Road and Boston Road and move any traffic currently using these two streets into Zeally Bay Road or Anderson Street
- Restrict traffic flow on Gilbert Street to one-way (east to west only) with traffic then able to travel either to the north or south along Pearl Street
- Prevent traffic from travelling along the full length of Pearl Street between Boston Road and Bristol Road. Traffic accessing the southern half of the centre would be able to circulate along Pearl Street and Boston Road while traffic accessing the northern half of the centre would be able to circulate along Bristol Road east of Payne Street and Cliff Street.
- Support the recommended road hierarchy, including the town centre circuit.

5.4 Tourist and direction signage

Signage identifying access routes to the Torquay Town Centre is currently inadequate and poorly presented. Along the Surf Coast Highway there is a considerable degree of sign clutter and the effectiveness of standard signage (white letters with blue backgrounds on yellow frames) has been diminished by the gradual accretion of finger boards and non-standard signs. Recently installed signs identifying the town centre and containing a graphic symbol are visually appealing but are difficult to read when travelling at the speed limit. There are no standard Vic Roads direction signs that identify the location of the Torquay Town Centre.

The *Torquay Urban Design Framework* proposes an integrated two level system of signage as part of a package of measures aimed at enhancing the image and identity of Torquay. The primary identification system will involve the construction of unique sculptural elements at key intersections along the Surf Coast Highway. Each of these elements will provide directions to key destination points. Signage identifying the Torquay Town Centre is proposed at the intersections of Beach Road, Zeally Bay Road and Anderson Street. In the case of the former two intersections the effectiveness of these signs will be enhanced by the proposed construction of roundabouts. It is recommended that any primary identification signage to be located at the intersection of Surf Coast Highway and Bell Street include a reference to the Torquay Town Centre.

The secondary system will provide smaller scale signage in a theme consistent with the primary system. The role of the secondary signage is to mark decision points and provide directions. Locations have yet to be identified for the installation of the secondary signage system. In support of the road hierarchy proposed above and the general objectives of this study it is recommended that the secondary signing system include signs identifying the Torquay Town Centre in locations outlined in [Figure 5I](#).

Figure 5I: Recommended secondary directional signing system

Street	Location	Sign facing	Purpose
Beach Rd	Fischer St	West	Direct traffic to Town Centre
Zeally Bay Rd	Walker St	West & East	Town Centre Gateway Direct traffic to new car park
Anderson St	Pearl St	West & East	Town Centre Gateway Direct traffic to existing car park
Bell St	The Esplanade	West	Direct traffic to Town Centre
Fischer St	Zeally Bay Rd	North	Town Centre Gateway Direct traffic to new car park
The Esplanade	Taylor Park	North	Advance sign for Zeally Bay Rd
The Esplanade	Zeally Bay Rd	North	Town Centre Gateway Direct traffic to new car park
The Esplanade	Gilbert St	North & South	Town Centre Gateway Direct traffic to Gilbert St
The Esplanade	Anderson St	South	Direct traffic to existing car park

Vic Roads in conjunction with Department of Infrastructure and Tourism Victoria recently released *Tourist Signing Guidelines* (1999) aimed at rationalising tourist and direction signing across the State. It is unclear at this time what level of generic Vic Roads signage will remain after the *Urban Design Framework* signing scheme is implemented. Nonetheless, it is recommended that the Shire liaise with Vic Roads to ensure that any generic direction signs (eg. located at the town entrances and at the corner of Surf Coast Highway and Bell Street) identify the Torquay Town Centre as a key destination.

It is also recommended that the Shire undertake a program of sign rationalisation along the Surf Coast Highway to remove excessive, redundant and illegal signs. In the case of legally installed, privately owned signs this will require negotiation with stakeholders. Discussion on sign rationalisation is provided in the *Tourist Signing Guidelines* (1999).⁸

⁸ Tourist Signing Guidelines: Guidelines for Tourist and Services Signing on Roads in Victoria, 1999, p 28.

5.5 Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
5A	<p>Implement the recommended road hierarchy shown at Figure 5D by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a roundabout at the intersection of Surf Coast Highway and Zeally Bay Road. • Widening Zeally Bay Road for a distance of 20 metres at its western end to provide two exiting lanes into Surf Coast Highway, one marked as a right turn lane and the other as a left turn lane.⁹ • Line marking a right turn lane into Zeally Bay Road on The Esplanade • Widening Zeally Bay Road for a distance of 20 metres at its eastern end to provide two exiting lanes into The Esplanade, one marked as a right turn lane and the other as a left turn lane • Widening The Esplanade to provide a painted right turn lane into Anderson Street • Trimming vegetation on private properties on the south east and south west corners of the intersection of Zeally Bay Road and Fischer Street • Removing Town Centre signs at the corner of Surf Coast Highway and Bristol Road • Line marking a left turn lane into Anderson Street on Surf Coast Highway • Widening Anderson Street for a distance of 20 metres at its western end to provide two exiting lanes into Surf Coast Highway, one marked as a right turn lane and the other as a left turn lane • Placing load limits on designated 'local streets' and Fischer Street north of Zeally Bay Road • Close the median opening on the Surf Coast Highway at the intersection of Bristol Road • In the long term as land is redeveloped, widen Fischer Street between Zeally Bay and Bristol Roads.
5B	<p>Prepare detailed design drawings to facilitate the integrated implementation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traffic access circulation plan (Figure 5H) • The town centre master plan (Figure 4A) • The car park concept plan (Figure 6G).
5C	<p>Undertake a review of existing signage along the Surf Coast Highway to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove signage that is inconsistent with the adopted road hierarchy (Figure 5D) • Remove illegal and redundant signage • Provide incentives to the owners of legal signs to encourage removal, rationalisation or improved presentation.
5D	<p>Implement the traffic management and signing recommendations of the <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> with additional secondary signs as outlined in Figure 5I.</p>
5E	<p>Liaise with Vic Roads to ensure that generic highway signs specifically identify the Torquay Town Centre as a destination.</p>
5F	<p>Investigate the need for and feasibility of providing marked bicycle lanes between the town centre and key destinations.</p>

⁹ The necessity of this treatment will depend upon the timing of proposed roundabout construction at this intersection.

No.	Recommendation
5G	Make provision for bicycle storage as part of the streetscape redevelopment and any major private developments within the town centre.
5H	In conjunction with the proposed Torquay Town Centre Management Body, monitor the delivery patterns of retail premises to determine the appropriateness of early morning parking restrictions in Gilbert Street to encourage deliveries to be made during non-peak periods.



6. Car parking

6.1 Introduction

The project brief and stakeholder consultations have emphasised the importance of ensuring that the future growth of the Torquay Town Centre is supported by an adequate supply of accessible car parking spaces. A balanced approach needs to be adopted to ensure that provision of car parking spaces does not compromise the aesthetic and environmental qualities of the town centre, or the pedestrian emphasis referred to above. Furthermore, as the highly seasonal nature of trading in Torquay means that peak demand for spaces only occurs over a limited number of days per year, catering for absolute peak demand would be economically unjustifiable.

The *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* incorporates State-standard car parking provisions which determine supply requirements based on land uses. These are based on the former regional section of the Melbourne metropolitan planning schemes and as such do not necessarily cater for the particular requirements of a non-metropolitan coastal township.

A number of factors influence the consideration of car parking requirements in Torquay, these include:

- Existing development has occurred subject to regional car parking standards which required 3 car parking spaces for every 100 sqm of shop floor area. The new-format scheme now requires 8 spaces per 100 sqm.
- The new car parking requirements require a significant additional amount of land to be set aside for car parking associated with a shop. Under the former scheme for every 100 sqm of shop floor space, 38.22sqm of land was required for car parking spaces and up to 49.9 sqm for access lanes. Under the new scheme parking rate 101.9 sqm of land is required for car spaces and up to 133.1 sqm for access lanes.
- Torquay is a holiday resort with a highly seasonal economy. Peak demand for car parking spaces occurs over a small number of days during summer. The 1996 Arup car parking accumulation surveys revealed a 35% reduction in peak car parking demand between the surveys taken in January and March of that year.¹
- Changes to work practices and legislation have encouraged longer opening hours for many retail businesses, allowing for a greater spread of car parking demand and reduced peaks. This is particularly relevant in resort localities where visitors have greater flexibility in terms of their shopping needs.
- New development and refurbishments have contributed to a number of businesses relocating within the Torquay Town Centre over the past few years. Projected population growth is expected to perpetuate this trend due to increased demands for services. Changes to tenancies sometimes also involve a change in land use, eg. from a shop to a restaurant; thus different car parking requirements apply under the planning scheme. This raises significant equity and enforcement issues.
- The underlying subdivision pattern in the Torquay Town Centre is based on traditional residential lot sizes. As such there are no large development sites available unless a number of adjacent properties can be purchased. The accumulation of land for public car parking is therefore difficult and expensive. On the other hand, the provision of on-site parking on individual lots is often undesirable and inefficient due to the restrictions this would place on site development and the safety implications of creating multiple vehicle-

¹ Proposed Torquay Supermarket: Traffic Report, 1999, p. 2.

pedestrian conflict points. Car parking policy therefore needs to focus on provision of public spaces in an efficient and equitable way.

The *Victoria Planning Provisions* which guide the form and content of the *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* provide for the incorporation of parking precinct plans designed to cater for local car parking requirements. Once incorporated into the scheme such plans override or supplement the State-standard car parking provisions. A parking precinct plan must include:

- The purpose of the plan.
- The area to which the plan applies.
- An assessment of car parking demand in the precinct.
- An assessment of car parking supply in the precinct.
- The parking policy to be applied in the precinct.
- Any locational, financial, landscape or other plans or requirements necessary to implement the policy.²

The following discussion provides the strategic basis for a draft car parking precinct plan which forms [Appendix F](#). The plan is presented in draft form as it may need to be reviewed upon the release of a Department of Infrastructure practice note on parking precinct plans which is expected to be released in 2001.

6.2 Existing supply and demand

Supply

[Figure 6A](#) provides an overview of the existing car parking supply in the Torquay Town Centre precinct. In order to assist in the analysis of supply and demand spaces have been grouped into several categories: on-street; off-street; core precinct; outer precinct; public; and private. [Figure 6B](#) is a map illustrating the location of the public car parking spaces.

The following points should be noted when analysing the data provided in the table:

- Spaces that do not directly service the *existing* town centre have been excluded from the calculations, eg. on-street spaces in The Esplanade, Anderson Street, Payne Street, Boston Road, and Fischer Street; and off-street spaces on the foreshore.
- The ‘Gilbert Street’ supermarket car park, which is on private land, has the function and appearance of a ‘public’ car park and has therefore been categorised as such.
- The vacant lot on the corner of Gilbert Street and The Esplanade serves as a *de facto* public car park, however it is privately owned, a key development site and has never been formally approved as a car park. It has therefore been excluded from both the demand and the supply analysis.
- ‘Private’ spaces are located on private land and are mostly used solely by the owners or operators of the premises. In some cases the number of car spaces had to be estimated as the spaces were not line marked.
- Residential properties within the study precinct have been excluded.
- Private spaces belonging to shops fronting Gilbert Street are included in the ‘Gilbert Street’ column despite being accessed from Bristol Road.

² Surf Coast Planning Scheme, clause 52.06-2.

Figure 6A: Torquay Town Centre car parking space supply, January 2000

Location	Number of car spaces		
	On-street	Off-street	
		Public	Private
Core Precinct			
Cliff Street Car Park		27	
Gilbert Street	45		35
Gilbert Street Car Park		71	
Pearl Street (b/w Bristol & Boston)	11		22
Pearl Street (Council) Car Park		55	
Core precinct sub-total	56	153	57
Outer Precinct			
Boston Rd (b/w Payne & Pearl)	27		
Bristol Rd (b/w Payne & Cliff)	64		
Cliff Street	18		
The Esplanade			22
Pearl Street (b/w Boston & Anderson)	18		
Walker Street	18		2
Walker Street Car Park		64	
Zeally Bay Rd (b/w Fischer & Esplanade)	134		
Outer precinct sub-total	279	64	24
Category sub-total	335	217	81
TOTAL AVAILABLE SPACES			633

Of the total 633 car parking spaces identified in the above table 552 (87.2%) are free public car parking spaces located on roads, public or private land. The remaining 81 (12.8%) are private spaces, often located to the rear of commercial properties and mainly used by tenants and/or employees.

Just under half of the spaces (266 or 42.0%) are located in the core precinct. The majority of these spaces are located in Gilbert Street itself and in the Gilbert Street, Pearl Street (Council) and Cliff Street car parks. As noted above it is these car parking spaces which are subject to greatest demand due to their proximity to the supermarket and the existing retail core.

There is a relatively even split between on-street and off-street public car parking. Of the 552 public spaces available, 335 (52.9%) are located within the road reserve, whilst the balance of 217 (47.1%) are located in car parks. The on-street figure is inflated by the 134 spaces located in Zeally Bay Road. Surveys indicate that these spaces are under-utilised, probably due to their distance from the core retail area. The development of a new supermarket in Bristol Road will increase the convenience of these spaces and highlight their importance as a seasonal peak overflow parking area.

Figure 6B: Location of public car parking spaces

Demand

A car parking accumulation survey undertaken by the Surf Coast Shire on Thursday 13 January 2000 provides the most recent data with which to assess car parking demand in the Torquay Town Centre Precinct. The date was chosen as it was considered to provide a reasonable representation of parking conditions in the peak trading period.

The survey identified the number of cars parked in public spaces at half-hourly intervals between 9:00am and 6:00pm. It included the 552 on-street and off-street public spaces, but excluded small private car parks. [Figure 6B](#) (above) identifies the location and number of car spaces surveyed throughout the centre.³

[Figure 6C](#) shows the number of cars parked in the 'core' and 'outer' precincts and in the entire Town Centre at half hourly intervals on 13 January 2000. At the peak survey interval (midday) 372 (63.2%) of 552 available public car parking spaces were occupied. Of these 206 (55.4%) were in the core precinct, compared to 166 (44.6%) in the outer precinct.

³ The vacant lot at the corner of Gilbert Street and The Esplanade is currently used as an informal car park and was included in the survey, however the data collected has not been included in the above analysis due to the potential for the site to be redeveloped in the short to medium term.

Figure 6C: Car parking accumulation, public spaces 13 January 2000

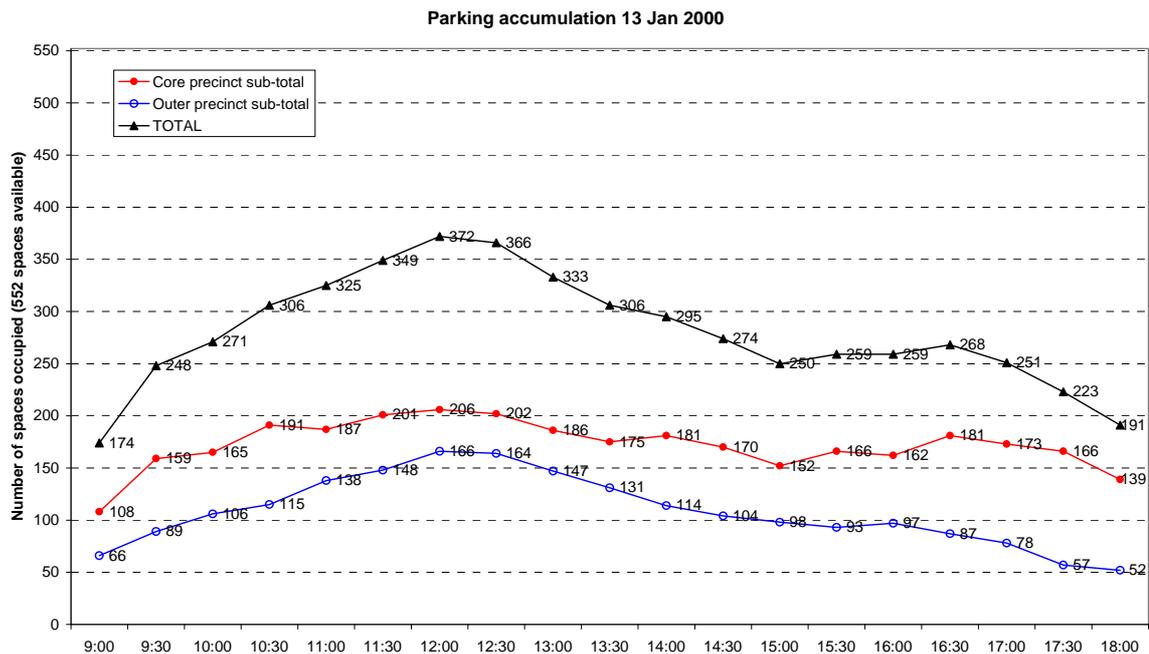
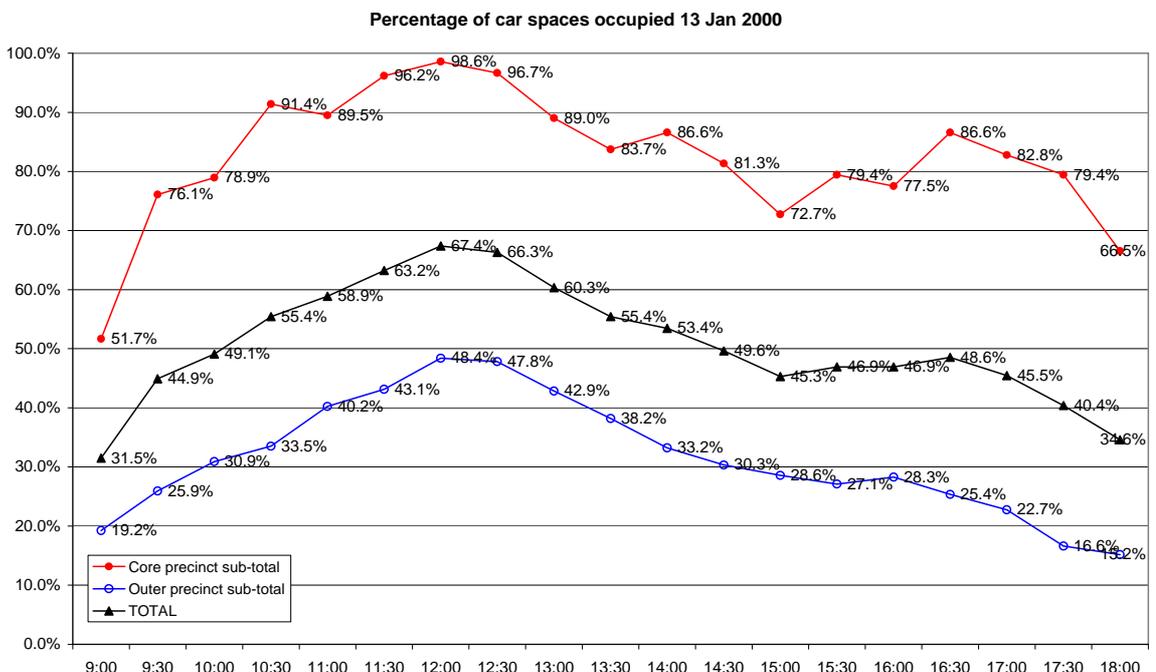


Figure 6D shows the level of demand for spaces in the ‘core’ and ‘outer’ precincts by presenting the figures as a percentage of available spaces. At midday in the core precinct 98.6% of available spaces were occupied, compared with only 48.4% in the outer precinct. Occupancy rates in the core precinct were close to or above 90% between 10:30m and 1:00pm. They remained above 75% throughout the main trading period of 9:30am and 5:30pm.

Figure 6D: Percentage of public car spaces occupied 13 January 2000



The community consultation identified concerns about insufficient car parking spaces and traffic congestion in the Torquay Town Centre. The above analysis demonstrates that for the



precinct as a whole the number of car parking spaces exceeds demand even in peak times. However, consumer preference leads to high demand for spaces that are convenient to retail outlets and under-utilisation of distant or less convenient spaces.

The traffic management recommendations in the previous section are intended to enhance the convenience of existing peripheral spaces and thereby reduce congestion in the precinct core which is to be given a greater pedestrian emphasis. The initial objective is therefore the better utilisation of existing car spaces rather than the provision of new ones.

Future car parking supply will need to accommodate the additional demand associated with increased floor area, particularly in the retail, entertainment and accommodation sectors. A substantial increase in retail floor space will be necessary to achieve the policy objective of reducing escape expenditure as outlined in the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy*. In order to achieve a 'modest reduction in escape expenditure', the strategy envisages development of 6,000sqm of additional floor space by 2011 in the following forms:⁴

- Supermarket - 3,000 sqm
- Tourist-related shops, restaurants, cafes & general retailing - 2,000 sqm
- Retail (serving local neighbourhood requirements) - 1,000 sqm.

The following section addresses the question of the appropriate car parking rate to be applied to the anticipated additional floor space.

6.3 Car parking rates

Car parking rates under the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* are different to those that have traditionally applied under the former *Geelong Regional Planning Scheme* and the old-format Surf Coast scheme. The following table (Figure 6E) summarises car parking requirements before and after 5 October 2000 for a range of relevant land uses.

Figure 6E: Planning Scheme Car Parking Rates

Land Use	Spaces required under old format planning scheme ⁵	Spaces required under new-format planning scheme ⁶
Bank	1 space to each 50sqm of (gross) floor area	<u>Office:</u> 3.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of net floor area
Consulting room/Medical Centre	3 spaces to one surgery, plus 2 spaces to each additional surgery, or 1 space to each 15sqm of (gross) floor area whichever is greater	<u>Medical centre:</u> 5 car spaces to each practitioner
Convenience shop	1 space to each 25sqm of (gross) floor area Minimum 4 spaces	If the leasable floor area exceeds 80sqm: 10 car spaces to each premises
Dwelling	0 spaces	2 car spaces to each dwelling
Flat	1.33 spaces to each dwelling less than 60sqm; 1.5 spaces to each dwelling between 60 and 80 sqm; 1.75 spaces to each dwelling between 80 and 100sqm;	<u>Caretaker's house:</u> 1 car space to each dwelling <u>Dwelling:</u> 2 car spaces to each dwelling

⁴ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, p. 11

⁵ Clause 76-11

⁶ Clause 52.06-6

Land Use	Spaces required under old format planning scheme ⁵	Spaces required under new-format planning scheme ⁶
	2 spaces to each dwelling exceeding 100sqm.	
Hotel	1 space to each 2 sqm of bar floor space available to the public; plus 1 space to each 5.5 sqm of lounge and beer garden or other floor space available to the public	If the public floor area exceeds 150sqm: 60 car spaces to each 100sqm of bar floor area available to the public, plus 30 car spaces to each 100sqm of lounge floor area available to the public If the public floor area does not exceed 150sqm: 2 car spaces to each premises
Motel	1 space to each unit plus 1 space to each 10sqm of floor area of a restaurant	1 car space to each unit, plus 1 car space to each resident employee, plus 2 car spaces to each 100sqm of motel service floor area not available for use by guests
Office	1 space to each 50sqm of (gross) floor area	3.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of net floor area
Restaurant	1 space to each 5 square metres of floor area available to the public	0.6 car spaces to each seat available to the public
Shop	3 spaces to each 100sqm of (gross) floor area	8 car spaces to each 100sqm of leasable floor area
Take-away food shop	16 spaces minimum	Not specified

A survey undertaken as part of the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* (1999) in March 1999 estimated total retail floor space to be in the order of 6,545sqm. This figure includes shops, personal services, food establishments and shop tenancies that were vacant at the time of the survey, but excludes offices and non-retail tenancies. There has been one development completed since the time of the survey, however this involved a redevelopment of existing floor space and as such does not significantly impact upon the 1999 survey results.⁷

The demand and supply figures discussed above yield a range of car parking ‘rates’ as outlined in the following table (Figure 6F). For reasons of consistency small private car parking spaces that were not included in the accumulation survey have been excluded.

Figure 6F: Summary of car parking rates for Torquay Town Centre

Description	Car spaces	Floor area (sqm)	Floor area per car space (sqm)	Car spaces per 100sqm floor area
Retail floor space <i>cf</i> core precinct supply	209	6,545	31.3	3.2
Retail floor space <i>cf</i> total Town Centre supply	552	6,545	11.9	8.4
Retail floor space <i>cf</i> total Town Centre peak demand ⁸	372	6,545	17.6	5.7

⁷ Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999, p. 7.

⁸ An analysis of floor space against peak demand in the core precinct was not included in the table as demand represented almost 100% of supply, thus diminishing the relevance of the calculation.

The study brief calls for the development of a generic car parking rate to be applied to the Torquay Town Centre. This need arises from a historical problem associated with the land use based car parking ratios applied under both the former and current planning schemes. In order to calculate car parking requirements development applications usually include a nominated land use. A problem arises when the nominated land use later changes from a use with a low car parking requirement (eg. an office) to one with a much higher requirement (eg. a take away food shop). In most cases a planning permit is not required for the change of use and as such the need for a permit to account for the additional requirement is overlooked (or deliberately ignored). The situation is particularly problematic when enforcement action is instigated against a tenant who has no financial interest in the property yet who may be required to make payment for additional car parking to the benefit of the land owner and future tenants. Theoretically the converse situation could also arise, with the Council being expected to refund the balance of any payment in lieu previously made.

The consequences of the existing system are ongoing enforcement problems; an inequitable situation for those developers who do provide adequate car parking in the first instance; and a potential undersupply of car parking spaces.

The development of a completely flat car parking rate is difficult to achieve because the requirements must be met by all developers or tenants regardless of the amount of demand generated by their particular development or business. Cross subsidisation of car parking may occur because businesses which generate a low level of car parking demand are required to contribute the same amount per square metre of floor space as businesses which generate a high level of demand.

The cross-subsidisation issue may be minimised by adopting car parking ratios which reflect the minimum parking requirements for all uses to which the ratio is applied. This is a feasible approach provided the overall result does not lead to a large shortfall in car parking provision. In the case of the Torquay Town Centre a shortfall is unlikely to arise due to the relatively abrupt nature of the peak summer demand period, the existing oversupply of car spaces, and the availability of informal 'overflow' spaces adjacent to Taylor Park and on the foreshore reserve.

It is possible to adopt a generic ratio for car parking provided a number of divisions or conditions are applied based on the varying requirements of different land uses. The zone provisions applying in the Town Centre (refer to [Appendix A](#)) reveal four categories of land use around which the car parking policy may be structured.

Prime commercial uses

These occupy the majority of tenancies in the town centre and are the main focus of the generic car parking ratio scheme. They include shops, cafes, restaurants, take-away food premises, personal services and offices.

The **ground floor** requirement for car parking should be 5.5 spaces per 100 square metres of gross leasable floor area. This rate is recommended on the basis that it reflects an appropriate car parking requirement associated with shops which would be the main use located at ground floor level. The adoption of this rate for ground floor uses would encourage offices to be located on the first floor where they can operate without the need for high volume access by the public.

The **first floor** car parking rate should be 3.5 spaces per 100 square metres of gross leasable floor area on the basis that the first floor will mainly be used for offices.

The parking requirements for **restaurants** during the daytime closely matches that of shops. In the evening restaurants generate a significantly greater demand for car parking, however

at these times car parking provided within the centre for other uses should be available for restaurant patrons. On this basis, the car parking rates recommended above should ensure that satisfactory car parking is provided on the proviso that a significant amount of car parking is provided close to the restaurant/entertainment precinct which can be easily accessed by both patrons of the restaurants and shops.

If a **medical centre** is located within the centre, the lower car parking requirement can be justified on the basis that medical centre patrons are likely to be making multi purpose trips within the centre. It is also unlikely that a large number of medical centres would be set up in the centre and hence the impact of any medical centres would be small across the whole centre. It is also noted that the *Municipal Strategic Statement* encourages the location of medical centres along the Surf Coast Highway where access is more convenient and most properties are of sufficient size to provide for adequate off-street car parking.

Supermarkets

These are the anchor tenancies in the Torquay Town Centre and are distinguished from the ‘primary commercial uses’ due to their large floor areas. As key generators of car parking demand a rate of 6 spaces per 100sqm of floor area is recommended.

Accommodation

Tourist accommodation and medium density housing will be encouraged in Precincts 2D and 3. Such uses generally require on-site parking for reasons of security and convenience.

It is recommended that residential and tourist accommodation developments provide the full car parking requirement on-site according to existing car parking requirements set out in the *Surf Coast Planning Scheme* or the *Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing*, whichever is relevant. The only dispensation for residential parking would be associated with visitor parking, which may be provided on-site or by payment in lieu of provision.

Other uses

The zone provisions allow a range of uses that cannot reasonably be included in any ‘generic’ car parking system because the use (eg. an hotel) is likely to generate a much higher demand than the primary commercial uses. However, due to the relatively small number of such uses likely to become established in the town centre and the potential for them to be accommodated in ‘purpose-built’ developments, the complications arising from changed car parking requirements associated with relocation are not as significant as for the primary commercial uses.

There may be cases where the proposed use is small in scale or occupies a building that could readily be converted for a primary commercial use. In these circumstances it is recommended that the responsible authority may use its discretion to apply the generic car parking rate referred to above.

The above recommendations have been incorporated into the draft Car Parking Precinct Plan provided at [Appendix D](#). A table comparing the State standard car parking requirements and the recommended Car Parking Precinct Plan is provided at [Appendix E](#).

6.4 Future car parking supply

The level of development anticipated in the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* will require a substantial increase in the number of car parking spaces in the study area. If the recommended rate of 5.5 spaces per 100sqm is applied to the retail component (3,000 sqm) and 6 for the supermarket component (3,000 sqm), the additional requirement would be in the order of 345 spaces. This figure does not take into account other land uses that are

promoted in the *Municipal Strategic Statement*, such as accommodation and offices. It also assumes that all retail and service uses will be provided at ground floor level.

The exact number of spaces required to accommodate future development cannot readily be predicted for a number of reasons. Factors likely to vary the ultimate car parking requirement include: the need to provide on-site parking associated with accommodation uses; the general lack of ‘greenfield’ sites; the need to take into account any existing car parking credits as sites are redeveloped; previous payments made in lieu of car parking; and the existing car parking surplus.

As a consequence of these complicating factors this report recommends a policy approach which seeks to integrate and maximise car parking opportunities as they arise rather than attempt to predict and supply all future requirements.

The centrepiece of the recommended policy is the opportunity to develop a single, integrated car park in the north of the study area (Precinct 2C). The opportunity arises due to the proximity of the Council-owned Walker Street car park to the proposed Bristol Road supermarket and car park. By co-ordinating the development of the two car parks and integrating the Walker Street and Bristol Road reserves a substantial public car park can be established without the need to acquire additional land. This approach was supported by the Independent Panel which reviewed the new-format *Surf Coast Planning Scheme*.

A concept plan for the proposed parking precinct 2C is provided at [Figure 6G](#). The concept design attempts to maximise car parking spaces whilst making sufficient provision for landscaping and pedestrian movements. Pedestrian linkages have been included through the car park between Gilbert Street and Taylor Park; and on both sides of Bristol Road to provide safe access to the supermarket entrance.

The car parking layout has been designed to provide convenient vehicular egress and ingress from Bristol Road, Zeally Bay Road and Cliff Street. These three entrances would provide convenient and safe access to the car park and facilitate internal circulation while discouraging traffic from short-cutting through it. These entrances would also be adequate to handle the volume of traffic movements into and out of the car park.

The car parking layout has also been designed to allow for future access by delivery vehicles to the north of the proposed supermarket. This access point should be provided adjacent to a parking aisle both parallel to and at right angles to the proposed access laneway. This would ensure that delivery vehicles are able to access the laneway and manoeuvre to reverse into the laneway if required.

The Precinct 2 plan will result in a significant net increase in car parking spaces in the Town Centre. Recommendations made elsewhere in this report and in the *Taylor Park Landscape Masterplan* also affect car parking numbers. The following table ([Figure 6H](#)) provides an overview of existing and potential number of public car parking spaces within the Torquay Town Centre. The numbers outlined in the table are only intended to be indicative as future detailed design work may result in variations, particularly with respect to the provision of disabled parking, trolley bays, loading areas, and landscaping.

The recommendations outlined in [Figure 6H](#) would yield a maximum of 794 car parking spaces, a net increase of 228 spaces compared to the existing supply. This increase would accommodate the first stage of the Bristol Road supermarket development (2,500sqm) and a further 1,400sqm of ground floor retail floor space (assuming a rate of 5.5 car spaces per 100sqm of floor area). The remaining 1,600sqm of retail floor space projected in the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* (1999) would require an additional 88 spaces, a figure that could be absorbed into the car parking surplus identified in the Shire’s January 2000 car parking accumulation survey unless additional land is identified elsewhere.

The above analysis does not take into account on-site spaces or non-retail uses. The *Torquay Jan Juc Strategy* also promotes the establishment of accommodation and office uses in the Torquay Town Centre. There are no projected floor space figures for such uses, however by necessity accommodation uses will need to provide spaces on-site. Office uses in Precinct 2 would also be expected to make provision for on-site spaces at the rear of the properties. The size of permissible office floor space may need to be determined by the capability of the site to accommodate sufficient provision for car parking. A similar approach will need to be taken with respect to on-site car parking for properties fronting The Esplanade, the objective being to ensure that no car parking is provided in front of buildings on either of these streets.

It is concluded that there is sufficient space within the existing Torquay Town Centre to accommodate new retail development to 2011 in accordance with the recommendations and projections of the *Torquay Town Centre Strategy* (1999). The recommendations contained in this report and the policy outlined in the Car Parking Precinct Plan are intended to facilitate the provision of car parking requirements in a co-ordinated and timely manner.



Figure 6H: Potential public car parking provision in the Torquay Town Centre

Location	Existing public spaces	Potential public spaces	Comments & recommendations
Bristol Road Proposed Supermarket land	0	116	Part of the Precinct 2C car park. It is understood that Stage 1 of the proposed supermarket development would involve 2,500sqm of floor space. Future stages would see the floor area increased to 3,000sqm. Stage 1 would require the provision of 150 spaces, while Stage 2 would require a further 30 spaces (based on a rate of 6 spaces per 100 square metres floor area). The car parking concept plan will accommodate 116 spaces on the supermarket land, whilst the balance could be provided as a contribution to the development of Walker Street. Future stages would require the acquisition of additional land to the west and north of the site which would create the opportunity to provide additional parking.
Bristol Road (b/w Pearl & Cliff Streets)	41	68	Part of the Precinct 2C car park. Additional spaces are achieved by converting parallel spaces to ninety degree spaces. The diagonal link between Pearl Street and the new car park entrance would be a no standing zone in order to enhance pedestrian safety. Development of spaces on the southern side of the road (between Pearl Street and the proposed pedestrian link) would need to be co-ordinated with the redevelopment of adjacent commercial properties and the total number of spaces may be reduced as loading and access requirements are negotiated.
Cliff Street Car Park	27	27	The construction and landscaping of this car park should be reviewed during the detailed design phase. The recommended traffic management measures will increase the importance of this car park as a connection between Cliff and Gilbert Streets. Landscaping and pedestrian amenity are currently poor and the connection is currently used by commercial vehicles accessing the Food Works supermarket.
Gilbert Street	45	29	The proposed one-way configuration and widening of pedestrian spaces will result in a net decrease in the total number of car parking spaces in this location. The objective is to alter travel patterns and achieve a highly pedestrianised environment, whilst still allowing access by vehicles to shop frontages. Pedestrians will gain priority and additional space will be provided for landscaping and outdoor eating, creating a high amenity shopping and eating precinct. Provision for delivery vehicles and taxis is maintained.
Gilbert Street (Supermarket) Car Park	71	71	The configuration of the Gilbert Street car park has been the subject of considerable debate over a number of years. No changes are recommended with respect to car park numbers, however landscaping beds between spaces could be removed in order to enhance ease of parking. This would also allow spaces adjacent to Gilbert Street to be relocated slightly further to the south in order to enhance pedestrian amenity and landscaping.
Pearl Street (b/w Bristol & Boston Roads)	11	11	In order to improve access to shops fronting Pearl Street it is recommended that angled parking be converted to ninety degrees. This can be achieved providing slightly wider than average spaces to accommodate turning movements. No net loss of car parking spaces is expected.
Pearl Street (Council) Car Park	55	55	Landscaping of this car park should be enhanced, particularly around its edges and adjacent to Pearl Street. Expansion of the car park onto the adjoining land to the south which forms part of the Torquay Town Centre precinct may be a long term option, however this would require the purchase of existing dwelling units.

Location	Existing public spaces	Potential public spaces	Comments & recommendations
Walker Street	18	29	Walker Street will form the core of the proposed Precinct 2 car park. Although the street will be closed to through traffic the existing intersection at Zeally Bay Road will be retained and it is suggested that the precinct be named the 'Walker Street Car Park' in order to retain historical associations. The pedestrian link between Gilbert Street and Taylor Park will extend along the eastern alignment of Walker Street.
Walker Street Car Park	64	74	Part of the proposed Precinct 2C Car Park. Additional spaces are achieved through the sealing and linemarking of the existing gravel car park.
Zeally Bay Road (b/w Fischer Street & The Esplanade)	134	124	The gravel shoulder adjacent to Taylor Park provides an important supply of informal overflow parking during the summer peak demand period. Although currently under-utilised the importance of these spaces will increase once the Bristol Road supermarket is developed. The <i>Taylor Park Landscape Masterplan</i> supports the retention of these informal spaces but shows a significant reduction in numbers. Whilst it is acknowledged that some reduction is warranted in order to enhance landscaping and pedestrian access, it is recommended that not more than 10 spaces be removed to achieve this end.
Other on-street spaces	86	86	No changes are proposed that would impact upon on-street parking in other locations. The Car Parking Precinct Plan includes a policy which seeks to minimise the loss of existing on-street car parking spaces.
Sub total	552	690	Net increase = 138 spaces
The Esplanade (west side)	14	14	Development of properties on The Esplanade will eventually necessitate the line marking of spaces and the imposition of time limits. Existing spaces have not been included in previous analysis as The Esplanade currently does not function as part of the Town Centre Precinct and has only recently been rezoned.
The Esplanade (east side)	≈15	≈50	The eastern (foreshore) side of The Esplanade between Gilbert Street and Zeally Bay Road currently provides a number of unmarked parallel public parking spaces. The <i>Torquay Foreshore Master Plan</i> recommends the closure of the unsealed car park around Elephant Walk and its replacement with angled parking on The Esplanade. This recommendation is strongly supported as it will provide an additional supply of public car parking spaces likely to be utilised by future eating and tourism establishments fronting The Esplanade. The existing parking spaces around Elephant Walk would be far less convenient for such purposes. The layout of the car parking spaces would be subject to the approval of the Department of Natural Resources and as such the number of spaces potentially developed in this area has not been predicted.



Location	Existing public spaces	Potential public spaces	Comments & recommendations
Other potential off-street car parks	0	90	<p>Opportunities for additional car parking at the southern end of the Torquay Town Centre are limited by fragmented ownership and existing development. Provision of additional spaces would assist in addressing existing high demand in the core precinct and provide greater convenience for shoppers accessing premises in the south of the town centre.</p> <p>There are two properties zoned Business 1 that offer the opportunity to provide additional parking in the short to medium term. The first is no. 8 Boston Road, a vacant lot one block to the west of the corner of Pearl Street. It is estimated that this lot could accommodate up to 38 spaces and could provide the basis for long term expansion to the west.</p> <p>The second property is no. 6 Pearl Street, a large allotment abutting the existing Council Car Park and Food Works supermarket. The purchase and development of this property would be expensive as it currently contains five single storey units, however this may become feasible should the supermarket seek to expand at some time in the future. The site could either be used to provide additional parking (potentially 52 spaces) or accommodate loading facilities for the supermarket and thereby create new opportunities for car parking within the existing loading area.</p>
Total	581	844	Net increase = 263 spaces

6.5 Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
6A	Prepare detailed engineering and traffic management plans to implement the proposed Walker Street Car Park generally in accordance with the recommended configuration shown in Figure 6G .
6B	Enter into a legal agreement with the developer of the proposed Bristol Road supermarket to facilitated the co-ordinated development of the proposed Walker Street Car Park, ensuring that the car park design satisfies all car parking requirements for the supermarket in accordance with the draft Parking Precinct Plan.
6C	Amend the <i>Surf Coast Planning Scheme</i> to include the draft Parking Precinct Plan shown at Appendix F .
6D	Support the recommendation of the <i>Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan</i> (1998) to create angled parking on the eastern side of The Esplanade opposite the Torquay Town Centre Precinct 3.
6E	Convert angled car parking spaces in Pearl Street to 90° spaces.
6F	Negotiate the purchase of no. 8 Bristol Road for the purpose of developing a car park.

7. References

Comprehensive Strategy Plan for Torquay/Jan Juc, 1996

New Format Surf Coast Planning Scheme: Report of the Panel and Advisory Committee, 1999

Proposed Torquay Supermarket: Traffic Report, 1999

Retail Futures for Torquay Jan Juc: An Assessment of Retail Opportunities, 1997

Surf Coast 2020 Vision – A Preferred Future, 1996

Surf Coast Planning Scheme, 1994

Surf Coast Planning Scheme, October 2000

Torquay Foreshore Masterplan and Management Plan, 1998

Torquay Jan Juc Draft Retail Strategy, 1997

Torquay Town Centre Strategy, 1999

Torquay Town Centre Traffic Survey, 1996

Torquay Urban Design Framework, 1998

Tourist Signing Guidelines: Guidelines for Tourist and Services Signing on Roads in Victoria, 1999



Appendices



Appendix A: Summary of Precinct Zone Provisions

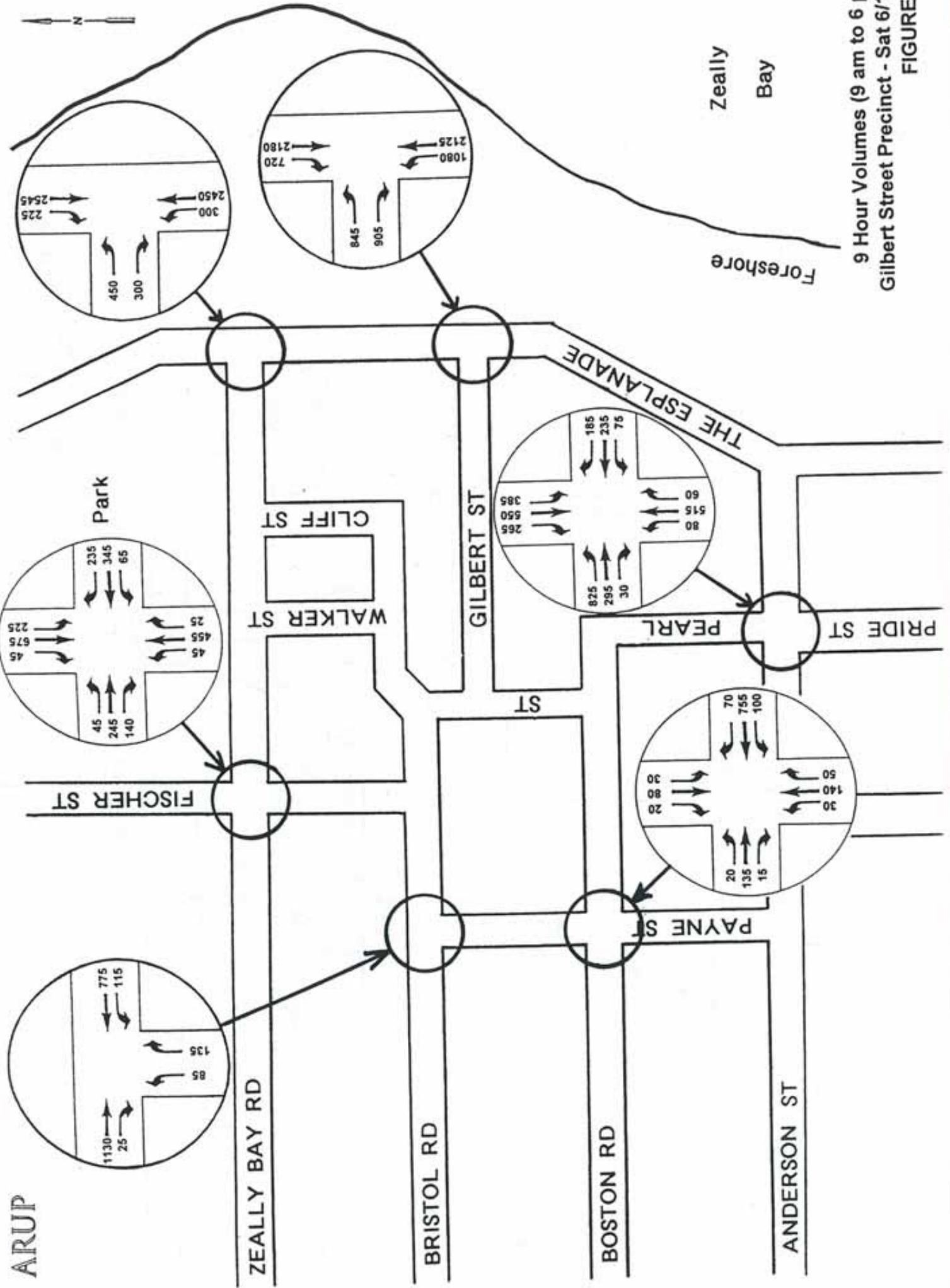
Land use (excludes nested definitions separately listed)	Precinct 1 B1Z	Precinct 2 CDZ1	Precinct 3 SUZ5
Accommodation*	☑	☑	☑
Art and craft centre	☑	☑	✓
Bed and breakfast	☑	☑	☑ ©
Caretaker's house	✓	✓ ©	☑ ©
Dwelling*	✓ ©	✓ ©	☑ ©
Car park	☑	✓ ©	☑ ©
Child care centre	✓ ©	✓ ©	☑
Cinema based entertainment facility	✓	☑	☑
Education centre	✓ ©	✓ ©	☑
Home occupation	✓	✓	✓
Leisure and recreation*	☑	☑	☑
Office*	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Bank	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Electoral office	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Medical centre	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Real estate agency	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Travel agency	✓ ©	✓ ©	☑
Place of assembly*	☑	☑	☑
Cinema	✓	✓ ©	☑
Exhibition centre	☑	☑	✓
Retail premises*	☑	☑	x
Beauty salon	✓ ©	☑ ©	x
Betting agency	✓	✓ ©	☑
Community market	☑	☑	x
Convenience shop	✓ ©	☑ ©	☑ ©
Department store	✓ ©	☑ ©	x
Food and drink premises*	✓	☑	☑
Hairdresser	✓ ©	☑ ©	x
Hotel	☑	☑	☑
Market*	☑	☑	x
Postal agency	✓	✓	x
Restaurant	✓	☑	☑
Restricted retail premises	✓ ©	☑ ©	x
Shop*	✓ ©	☑ ©	☑ ©
Supermarket	✓ ©	✓ ©	x
Tavern	☑	☑	☑
Road	✓	✓	✓
Utility installation*	☑	x	☑
Minor utility installation	✓	✓	✓

Note: The information in the above table represents a selection of land uses most relevant to the Torquay Town Centre. A number of land uses and nested land uses have been excluded for reasons of brevity. No responsibility is taken for any errors or omissions contained in the table.

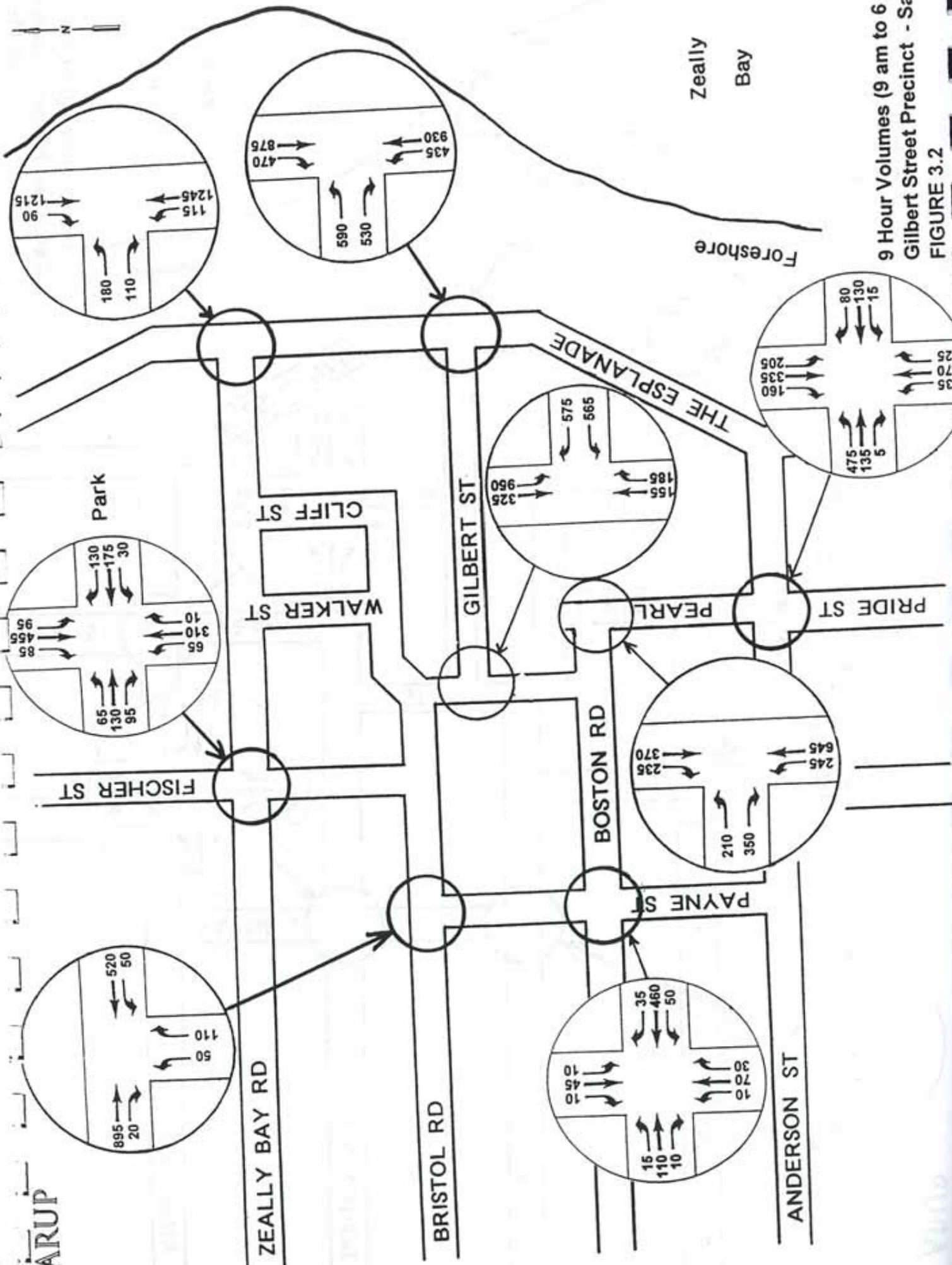
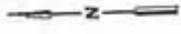
Key

✓	Permit not required	B1Z	Business 1 Zone
☑	Permit required	CDZ1	Comprehensive Development Zone, Schedule 1
x	Prohibited	SUZ5	Special Use Zone, Schedule 5
©	Condition(s) apply	*	Excludes nested definitions listed separately

Appendix B: Arup 1996 Traffic Survey



9 Hour Volumes (9 am to 6 pm)
Gilbert Street Precinct - Sat 6/1/96
FIGURE 3.2



9 Hour Volumes (9 am to 6 pm)
Gilbert Street Precinct - Sat 16/3/96
FIGURE 3.2

Appendix C: Road hierarchy analysis

Road/Street Name	Pavement width ¹ , Indicative classification ² & capacity ³	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments and recommendations
Surf Coast Highway <i>Darian Rd - Bell St</i>	4 lane divided Primary Arterial Road 25,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large capacity divided arterial • Link to Geelong and Great Ocean Rd • Mixed used character • Pride of place upgrade proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No direct frontage to Torquay Town Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary arterial road • Support <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> recommendations
The Esplanade <i>Darian Rd - Bell St</i>	11.6m -15.2m Secondary Arterial Road 10,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient width for arterial road • Direct link to town centre precinct (physical and visual) • Edge of precinct • Link to Wombah Park/Torquay North growth area and Bell Street • Tourist/mixed use character • Ocean views • Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrances to precinct not clearly defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary arterial road (north-south) • Eastern section of town centre circuit. • Identify and enhance town centre access points • Introduce advance signs identifying precinct • Support development of commercial frontage along edge of town centre precinct
Darian Road <i>Surf Coast Hwy - The Esplanade</i>	11.35m Secondary Arterial Road 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient width for collector street • Highway median break (proposed roundabout) • Link to The Esplanade • Link to Torquay West growth area and proposed school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential character • No direct Link to precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary collector street (east-west to Fischer St and The Esplanade) • Support <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> recommendations • No highway signage identifying town centre

¹ Measured from kerb invert to kerb invert.

² Indicative classification as reflected by the existing function.

³ Victorian Code for Residential Development: Subdivision and Single Dwellings, April 1992.

Road/Street Name	Pavement width ¹ , Indicative classification ² & capacity ³	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments and recommendations
Beach Road <i>Surf Coast Hwy - The Esplanade</i>	10.8m Access Street 1,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Highway median break (proposed roundabout) Link to The Esplanade Link to Surf City and Torquay West growth area Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential character No direct link to precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future collector street (east-west to Fischer Street) Support <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> recommendations
Zeally Bay Road <i>Surf Coast Hwy - Fischer St</i> <i>Fischer St - The Esplanade</i>	8.7m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day 9.1m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Direct Link to precinct Southern Link to Surf City Highway median break (roundabout proposed) Roundabout at Fischer Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Edge of town centre precinct Residential/Park character Overflow parking proposed at edge of Taylor Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing commercial development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collector street (east-west) Northern section of town centre circuit Support <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop visual cue/signage at Fischer St roundabout Develop office frontages to precinct
Bristol Road <i>Surf Coast Hwy - Fischer St</i>	9.7m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Direct link to precinct Highway median break School to be relocated Business zone on highway corner Direct views to town centre Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential/School character Congestion associated with school Traffic conflict at Fischer St Traffic conflict at Pearl St 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downgrade to residential access street Remove highway median break Remove highway signage Discourage use by town centre traffic
Boston Road <i>Surf Coast Hwy - Pearl St</i>	6.4m Access Street 1,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct link to precinct Existing egress point to Jan Juc and Ocean View estate growth areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient width for collector street Residential character No highway median break 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downgrade to residential access street Discourage use except by local residents Town centre traffic should use Anderson Street

Road/Street Name	Pavement width ¹ , Indicative classification ² & capacity ³	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments and recommendations
Anderson Street <i>Surf Coast Hwy - Pearl St</i> <i>Pearl St - The Esplanade</i>	8.7m Access Street 2,000 vehicles per day 11.1m Access Street 2,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Highway median break Important link to Jan Juc and Ocean View estate growth areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Semi-residential character Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential character No direct link to precinct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct link to precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collector street (east-west) Southern section of town centre circuit Support <i>Torquay Urban Design Framework</i> recommendations Improve highway signage identifying town centre Introduce signage on The Esplanade
Bell Street <i>Surf Coast Hwy - The Esplanade</i>	Width varies Secondary Arterial Road 10,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for arterial road Mainly commercial character Roundabouts at highway and The Esplanade Link to Jan Juc and Ocean View estate growth areas Link to The Esplanade Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct link to precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary arterial road (east-west) Streetscape works recently completed Improve linkages and signage to Town Centre via The Esplanade
Fischer Street <i>Darian Road - Zeally Bay Road</i> <i>Zeally Bay Road - Bristol Road</i>	8.0 - 9.6m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day 6.4m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient width for collector street Direct Link to precinct Link to Wombah Park/Torquay North growth area Bus route Roundabout at Fischer Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-residential character Direct Link to precinct Link to Wombah Park Bus route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential/park character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow width for collector street Traffic conflict at Bristol Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collector road (north-south) Improve safety at Zeally Bay Road intersection by improving sight lines Provide visual cue at Zeally Bay Road roundabout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widen eastern side as adjoining properties are redeveloped.
Payne Street <i>Bristol Rd - Anderson St</i>	6.4m Access Street 1,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to be relocated Edge of town centre precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow width for collector street Cross Link only Residential/school character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collector street (north-south) Potential western portion of town centre circuit

Road/Street Name	Pavement width ¹ , Indicative classification ² & capacity ³	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments and recommendations
Pearl Street <i>Boston Rd - Anderson St</i>	10.0m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient width for collector street • Direct Link to main southern car park • Bus route/bus stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access street to car parking areas • Downgrade function but not traffic levels
Pride Street <i>Anderson St - Bell St</i>	Divided 5.4m Collector Street 3,000 vehicles per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divided, sufficient width for collector street • Direct Link to precinct • Link to Bell Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential access street • Discourage use as access route to town centre

Appendix D: Draft parking precinct plan

TORQUAY TOWN CENTRE PARKING PRECINCT PLAN

1.0 Purpose

To implement the recommendations of the *Torquay Jan Juc Strategy* in respect of the Torquay Town Centre.

To support the role of the Torquay Town Centre as the commercial and cultural heart of Torquay.

To co-ordinate the provision of new car parking facilities with the development of additional retail and commercial floor space.

To ensure that new car parking facilities are provided in an efficient, timely and cost-effective manner.

To ensure that the supply of permanent car parking facilities is sufficient to meet the majority of peak demand recognising the highly seasonal nature of the local economy.

To reduce traffic congestion and enhance the safety and amenity of the pedestrian environment.

2.0 Area of application

This Car Parking Precinct Plan applies to land shown on Map 1 as follows:

- Precinct 1 – Business 1 Zone
- Precinct 2 - Comprehensive Development Zone, Schedule 1
- Precinct 3 – Special Use Zone, Schedule 5.

Map 1 to the Torquay Town Centre Car Parking Precinct Plan



Name of Incorporated Parking Precinct Plan	Requirement
Torquay Town Centre Car Parking Precinct Plan	<p>1.0 Car Parking Rates</p> <p>Dwelling 1.5 car spaces per dwelling, or 1 car space where the dwelling has only one bedroom or not more than 60 sqm gross floor area. 1 visitor or service vehicle space per 5 dwellings.</p> <p>Office If in Precinct 2, 3.5 spaces to each 100sqm of leasable floor area, or If in Precinct 1 or 3, as for 'Any other use'.</p> <p>Supermarket 6 car spaces to each 100 sqm of leasable floor area.</p> <p>Residential building, Hotel, Tavern, Motel or Place of assembly Refer to Car parking table at Clause 52.06-6.</p> <p>Any other use If at ground level, 5.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of leasable floor area, or If above or below ground level, 3.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of leasable floor area.</p>
	<p>2.0 Off-Site Parking Provision</p> <p>Precinct 1</p> <p>The provision of on-site car parking spaces is discouraged, except where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed use is an addition to the existing supermarket on the southern side of Gilbert Street and includes an extension of the existing car park to the satisfaction of the responsible authority; or ▪ The proposed use is a form of Accommodation. <p>All other car parking requirements must be met by a payment-in-lieu of on-site provision.</p> <p>Precinct 2</p> <p>Car parking requirements should be met on-site, except where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed use is a supermarket and a contribution is made to the development of a car park in the Walker Street road reserve in accordance with an approved development plan. <p>A payment-in-lieu of on site provision may be made for all or part of the car parking requirement except where the proposed use is Accommodation or an Office.</p>

Name of Incorporated Parking Precinct Plan	Requirement
	<p>Precinct 3</p> <p>Car parking requirements should be met on-site. A payment-in-lieu of on site provision may be made for all or part of the car parking requirement except where the proposed use is Accommodation.</p> <p>Car parking associated with an Accommodation use</p> <p>Car parking spaces associated with Accommodation must be secure, well lit and readily accessible from the dwelling or lodging room to which they are allocated. Such spaces must be provided on-site where practicable.</p> <p>Car parking spaces may be provided off-site only where there is a title arrangement or an agreement under Section 173 of the Act which prevents the spaces being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ developed or used for purpose other than a car park associated with the allocated dwelling or lodging room; and ▪ sold separately from the allocated dwelling or lodging room.
	<p>3.0 Other Requirements</p> <p>Payment in lieu of provision</p> <p>The amount to be paid in lieu of provision of car parking shall be set by the responsible authority and calculated according to the number of spaces required for the proposed use.</p> <p>All payments are to be made into a separate account kept by the responsible authority for the sole purpose of implementing the plan shown at Map A and associated landscaping and pedestrian works.</p> <p>Reduction or waiver of car parking requirements</p> <p>The reduction or waiver of car parking requirements is strongly discouraged.</p> <p>In addition to the decision guidelines at Clause 52.06-1, the responsible authority may reduce or waive the car parking requirement where is it is satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a credit should be allowed for spaces provided, or payments made, under a previous car parking scheme or planning permit; and ▪ any credit is adjusted to take into account any reduction in existing spaces resulting from the current proposal.

Name of Incorporated Parking Precinct Plan	Requirement
	<p>Tandem spaces</p> <p>Car parking spaces may be provided in tandem where the two spaces serve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ one dwelling or lodging room; ▪ staff or service vehicle needs for one commercial tenancy.

Map A to Parking Precinct Plan

[Insert Walker Street car park plan]

Appendix E: Comparison between State-standard car parking rates and precinct plan

Use	Standard car space measure and rate	Precinct plan measure and rate	Comment
Residential building, other than specified in this table	Car spaces to each lodging room: 1	Standard provision applies	No change
Caretaker's house	Car spaces to each dwelling: 1	Falls within definition of dwelling	In most cases will result in no change.
Dwelling, other than Caretaker's house if at least 2 on a lot	Car spaces to each dwelling: 2	1.5 car spaces per dwelling, or 1 car space where the dwelling has only one bedroom or not more than 60 sqm gross floor area. 1 visitor or service vehicle space per 5 dwellings.	Good Design Guide standard applies to all dwellings even if only 1 on lot.
Shop other than specified in this table	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of leasable floor area: 8	If at ground level, 5.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of leasable floor area, or If above or below ground level, 3.5 car spaces to each 100 sqm of leasable floor area.	Lower rate applied in order to facilitate generic car parking standard.
Betting agency Market	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of net floor area: 8	As for Shop	Lower rate applied in order to facilitate generic car parking standard.
Restaurant	Car spaces to each seat available to the public: 0.6	As for Shop	Will result in lower rate. Justified on the basis that demand is highest in evenings when shops are closed.
Office other than specified in this table Postal agency	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of net floor area: 3.5	As for Shop	No change if in Precinct 2. If in Precinct 1 or 3 - higher rate if at ground floor level, no change at first floor level.
Hotel or Tavern if the floor area available to the public exceeds 150 sq m	60 car spaces to each 100 sq m of bar floor area available to the public, plus 30 car spaces to each 100 sq m of lounge floor area available to the public	Standard provisions apply	No change
Hotel or Tavern if the floor area available to the public does not exceed 150 sq m	Car spaces to each premises 2	Standard provisions apply	No change

Use	Standard car space measure and rate	Precinct plan measure and rate	Comment
Motel	1 car space to each unit, plus 1 car spaces to each resident employee, plus 2 car spaces to each 100 sq m of motel service floor area not available for use by guests	Standard provisions apply	No change
Industry other than specified in this table Mail centre	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of net floor area: 2.9	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Uses either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones.
Materials recycling Fuel depot Milk depot Motor repairs	Percentage of site area to be set aside for car spaces and access lanes, but not driveways 10	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Uses either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones
Plant nursery Saleyard Store other than specified in this table Timber yard Utility installation	Percentage of site area to be set aside for car spaces and access lanes, but not driveways: 10	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Uses either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones
Freezing and cool storage Warehouse other than specified in this table	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of net floor area: 1.5	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Uses either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones
Display home	5 car spaces to each dwelling for five or fewer contiguous dwellings, plus 2 car spaces to each additional contiguous dwelling	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones.
Medical center Veterinary centre	Car spaces to each practitioner: 5	As for Shop	Lower rate likely to apply. Justified on the basis that patients may use other services when visiting centre.
Hospital	Car spaces to each bed available for use by patients: 1.3	As for Shop	Use either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zone.
Place of assembly Funeral parlour	Car spaces to each seat or to each sq m of net floor area, whichever is greater: 0.3	Place of assembly – standard provisions apply; Funeral parlour – as for Shop.	Place of assembly – no change; Funeral parlour – likely to be either prohibited or inconsistent with the purposes of the zones.
Golf course	Car spaces to each hole 4	As for Shop	Cannot be accommodated in town centre.
Bowling green	Car spaces to each rink 6	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use either prohibited or likely to be inconsistent with purposes of zones.

Use	Standard car space measure and rate	Precinct plan measure and rate	Comment
Squash court other than in conjunction with a dwelling	Car spaces to each court 3	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use unlikely to be accommodated in town centre
Swimming pool other than in conjunction with a dwelling	Car spaces to each 100 sq m of site 5.6	As for Shop	Lower rates apply. Use unlikely to be accommodated other than ancillary to another use.
Tennis court other than in conjunction with a dwelling	Car spaces to each court 4	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use unlikely to be accommodated in town centre
Primary school	Car spaces to each employee 1	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use cannot be accommodated in town centre
Secondary school	Car spaces to each employee 1.2	As for Shop	Higher rates apply. Use cannot be accommodated in town centre
Tertiary institution	Car spaces to each full-time student and three part-time students: 0.6	As for Shop	Higher or lower rate may apply depending on nature of proposal and whether located on ground or first floor level.
Convenience shop if the leasable floor area exceeds 80 sq m	Car spaces to each premises 10	As for Shop	Lower rate will apply.