



THARWA VILLAGE

Draft Village Plan

JUNE 2017

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DEFINITIONS

Active travel is travel that involves physical activity such as walking and cycling.

Blocks and sections are how areas of land are identified in the ACT. Land is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks. Territory Plan zoning determines what activities/uses can occur on the blocks. Blocks are usually leased to one entity.

Built form relates to the buildings, associated structures and surrounding public spaces.

Catchment areas are the areas of land surrounding a river. Rain falling in a catchment area that isn't absorbed into the ground runs into the river.

Ecological communities are groups of plants, animals and other organisms that naturally occur together. Their structure and composition are determined by environmental factors such as climate, landscape position, soil, aspect and altitude.

Human scale reflects a sympathetic proportional relationship between the built form and human dimensions where people are not overwhelmed by the built form. Human scale contributes to a person's perception of buildings or other features in the public domain. It is typically referred to when discussing the bulk and scale of development.

Land use zones are allocated by the Territory Plan to all land within the ACT. They define what land uses can or cannot occur on a piece of land. See the Territory Plan and more about the zoning system at www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27

Placemaking enables people to create attractive streets and places that are prosperous, liveable, healthy and green. It includes urban design and place management and results in the creation of quality public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness and wellbeing.

Public domain refers to spaces that belong to or are available to the public, including parks, streets and other public spaces such as plazas, courtyards and open spaces.

Riparian zone is the land alongside creeks, streams, gullies, rivers and wetlands. These areas are unique and ecologically diverse, and are often the most fertile parts of the landscape.

The Lanyon Bowl, also known as the Lanyon Landscape Conservation Reserve, extends from Point Hut to Tharwa. It contains the historic Lanyon and Lambrigg homesteads, which are located within a shared historic rural landscape setting. The reserve is a visual catchment area and is significant for its preserved and accessible landscape, which bears the imprint of successive phases of nineteenth and twentieth century rural development.

Shared path is a path for non-motorised transport, with the exception of motorised wheelchairs and power-assisted pedal cycles. Both pedestrians and cyclists share these paths.

Surveillance or **passive surveillance** is the 'eyes on the street' from residents and people going about their daily activities to create a sense of safety on streets and public spaces.

Water sensitive urban design (WSUD) is the planning, design and/or construction of the built environment to minimise water runoff and ensure any runoff causes the least amount of damage. It is also about wise use of that water to improve the environment.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE ACT GOVERNMENT HAS PREPARED A DRAFT VILLAGE PLAN FOR THARWA THAT DEFINES WHAT IS IMPORTANT ABOUT THE VILLAGE AND PROVIDES A PLANNING FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE ITS VIABLE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH INTO THE FUTURE.

Tharwa Village is set in picturesque pastoral landscape beside the Murrumbidgee River and at the foot of Mount Tennent. It is the gateway to the Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. Local residents of Tharwa are very proud that this community is Canberra's oldest officially recognised European settlement. The village retains important elements from its early rural settlement, making it a valued retreat from the suburban edge of Canberra.

This Tharwa Draft Village Plan aims to foster the protection and enhancement of Tharwa's unique character and build upon the value the village contributes to the local community, tourism and recreational opportunities for Canberra.

Tharwa faces a number of infrastructure, investment and economic challenges given its location and size.

Preparation of this draft village plan involved extensive background research and analysis, including:

- consideration of strategic planning directions and policies,
- responding to outcomes from community and stakeholder engagement activities that were undertaken as part of the village plan process, and
- consideration of background research, reports and analysis.

The key findings of this research and analysis include:

- Tharwa's historic and peaceful rural village character is valued.
- Opportunities could be created for appropriate outdoor recreational and environmental activities that take advantage of Tharwa's location on the Murrumbidgee River and close proximity to Namadgi National Park.
- The significance of Tharwa's Aboriginal cultural heritage and early European settlement is recognised.
- Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct is recognised as one of Tharwa's most valued historic assets.

- Tharwa's population has remained virtually unchanged since 1933.
- The village has a number of vacant and underutilised facilities, including the school, which could potentially be reinvigorated to enhance social and community connections and new opportunities.
- The lack of coordinated / independent attractions reduces the incentive for visitors to stop and spend time in Tharwa.
- The existing independent art and craft businesses and the presence of Outward Bound contribute to Tharwa being a destination for visitors.

The proposed vision for the village of Tharwa is:

.....

**THARWA VILLAGE IS A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE
MEETING PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY WHERE
PEOPLE CAN GET CLOSER TO NATURE AND
EXPERIENCE THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF A RURAL
VILLAGE LIFESTYLE.**

.....

The vision is supported by five planning principles, which inform the planning strategies and actions. The principles and strategies provide direction and guidance for the future development of the village over the long term, and consider the broad range of issues identified during community engagement and in the background research and analysis.

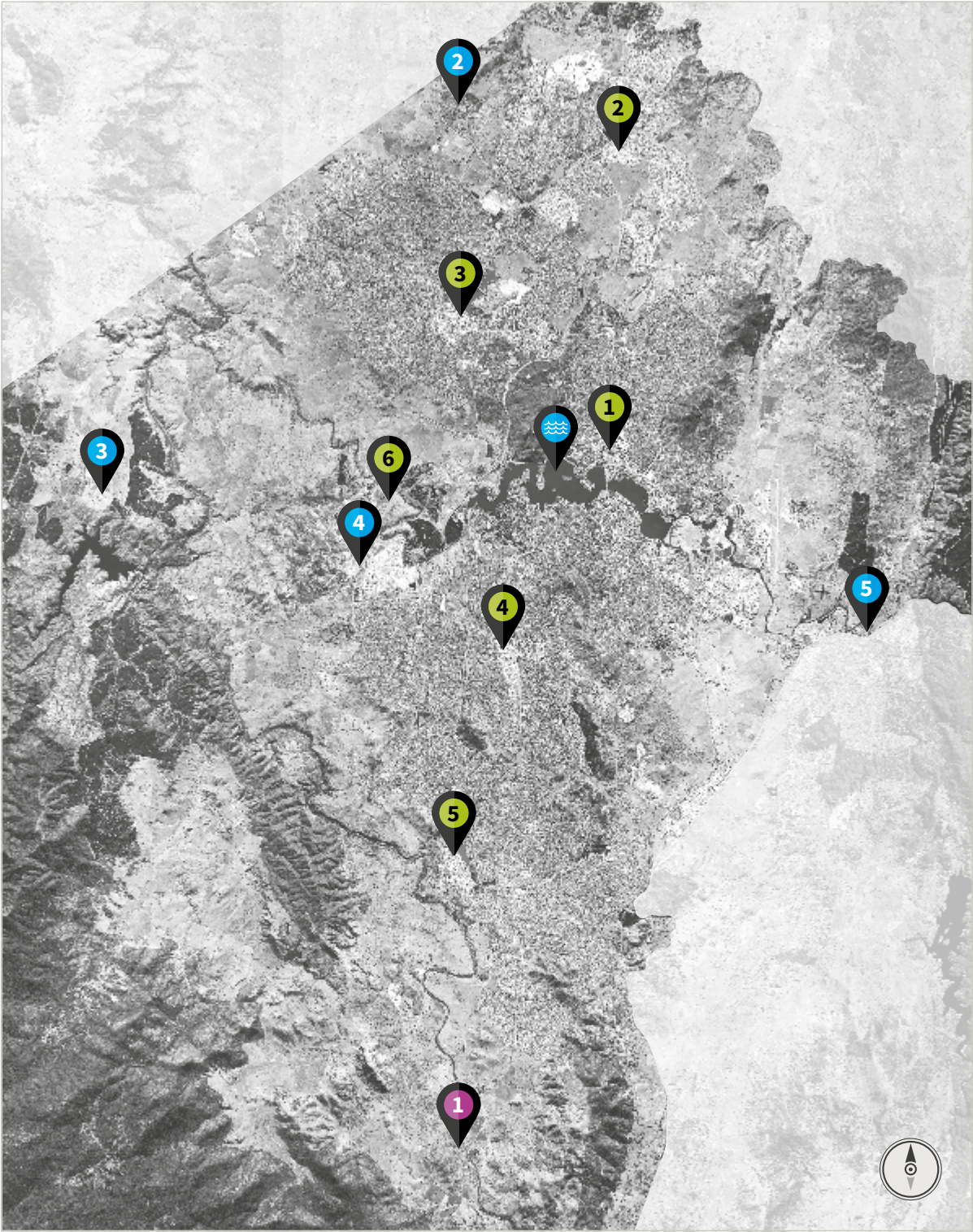
Some of the key recommendations proposed by this Tharwa Draft Village Plan include:

- Make the village core an appealing, social, recreational and creative hub for the local community while also attracting visitors to experience the qualities of a rural village lifestyle.
- Ensure Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct expresses and enhances the story of Tharwa.
- Protect and enhance Tharwa's history (both Aboriginal and European) and unique natural environment.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment, particularly improving the riparian zone of the Murrumbidgee River to benefit recreation opportunities.


1. INTRODUCTION

Tharwa Draft Village Plan

Map 1: Spatial context



LEGEND

1	THARWA VILLAGE	5	OAKS ESTATE	4	WODEN TOWN CENTRE
2	HALL VILLAGE	1	CITY CENTRE	5	TUGGERANONG TOWN CENTRE
3	URIARRA RURAL VILLAGE	2	GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE	6	MOLONGLO CENTRE
4	STROMLO VILLAGE	3	BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE		LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN

1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The ACT Government recognises the value of the ACT's rural villages and is preparing a village plan for Tharwa that will provide a long-term vision and planning framework to guide its enhancement and viability into the future. This Tharwa Draft Village Plan responds to engagement that was undertaken during 2016. It aims to define what is important about Tharwa and how its rural character and qualities can be kept while providing sustainable lifestyle opportunities to live and work in a unique rural village setting.

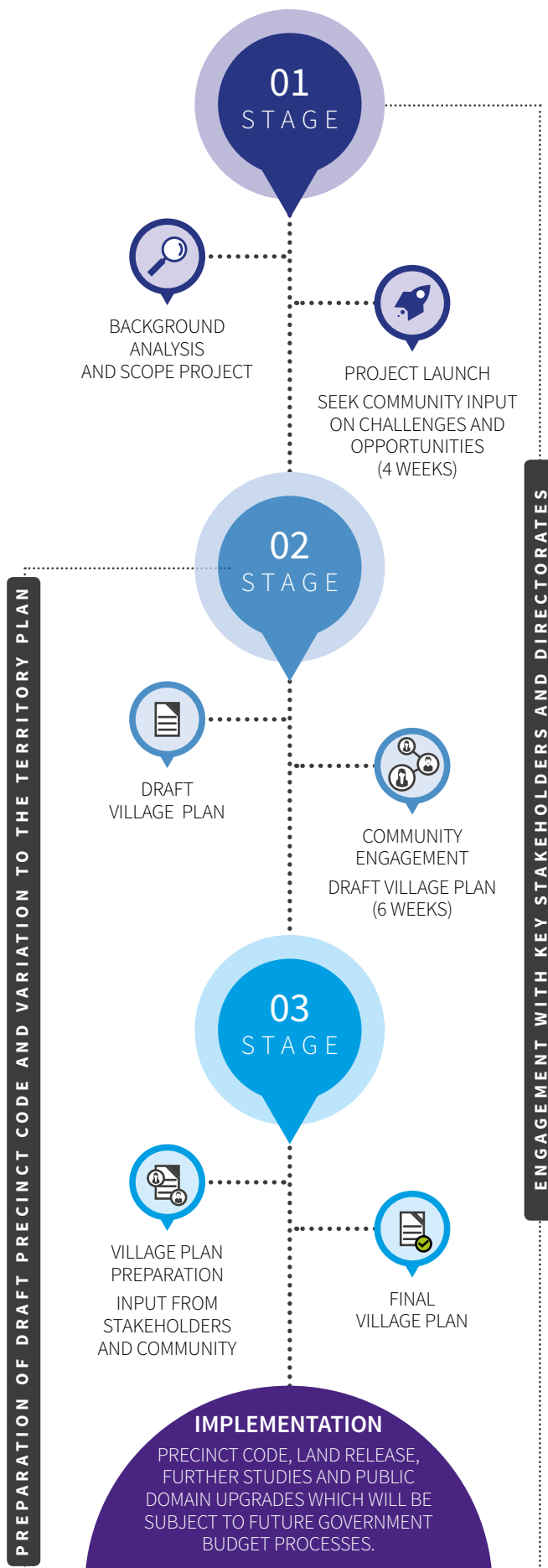
Over the past few years, key strategic documents for the ACT have been introduced including the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra, the Active Travel Framework, AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT, the ACT Adaptation Strategy and the Minister for Planning and Land Management's Statement of Planning Intent.

The ACT Planning Strategy encourages more detailed planning for the urban areas of the ACT and its rural villages, including Tharwa, to set guidelines to retain the character of these villages while allowing for limited growth. The Tharwa Draft Village Plan aims to keep the function and identity of Tharwa, as well as look at locally-based economic, tourism, recreation and community opportunities for its long-term viability.

The Tharwa Draft Village Plan provides an overview and background analysis of the area and feedback from key stakeholders and the community. Through the process of gathering and the analysis of information and feedback, existing and potential opportunities and challenges have been identified.

The Tharwa Draft Village Plan recommends a vision and overarching spatial framework with planning principles and strategies that identify the outcomes and actions to be implemented. The Tharwa Draft Village Plan recommends changes to planning policies, opportunities for some land release, public domain upgrades and further studies.

Implementation of these recommendations will be subject to funding consideration through future government budget bid processes as well as market demand for land and development opportunities. It may take a number of years to achieve the final vision. The village plan process is shown in **Figure 1**.



VILLAGE PLAN STUDY AREA

Tharwa is one of five rural villages located in the ACT, as shown in **Map 1**. The village is situated on the west bank of the Murrumbidgee River, 34 kilometres south of Canberra's city centre and approximately 5 kilometres south-west of the suburban edge of Tuggeranong.

Tharwa is a small rural village that pre-dates the establishment of Canberra as a city and the nation's capital. The area around Tharwa was a crossing point for Aboriginal groups for at least 25,000 years prior to the village being proclaimed as a township in 1862.

The main access route to the village from Canberra is via Tharwa Drive, passing Lanyon Homestead and over the historic Tharwa Bridge. Tidbinbilla Road and Naas Road provide access from the north-west and from the south. The Namadgi National Park Visitors Centre is 3.5 kilometres south of the village centre.

Tharwa Village is bounded by the Murrumbidgee River to the east, Sawyers Gully to the south and rural holdings with Box-Gum Woodland to the west and north. The village comprises a small number of residential cottages and community facilities located within a formal grid pattern at the northern end of the village. The historic Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct, a group of artisan properties and Outward Bound Australia's national base and campsite are at the southern end. Two historic cemeteries are located at either end of the village.

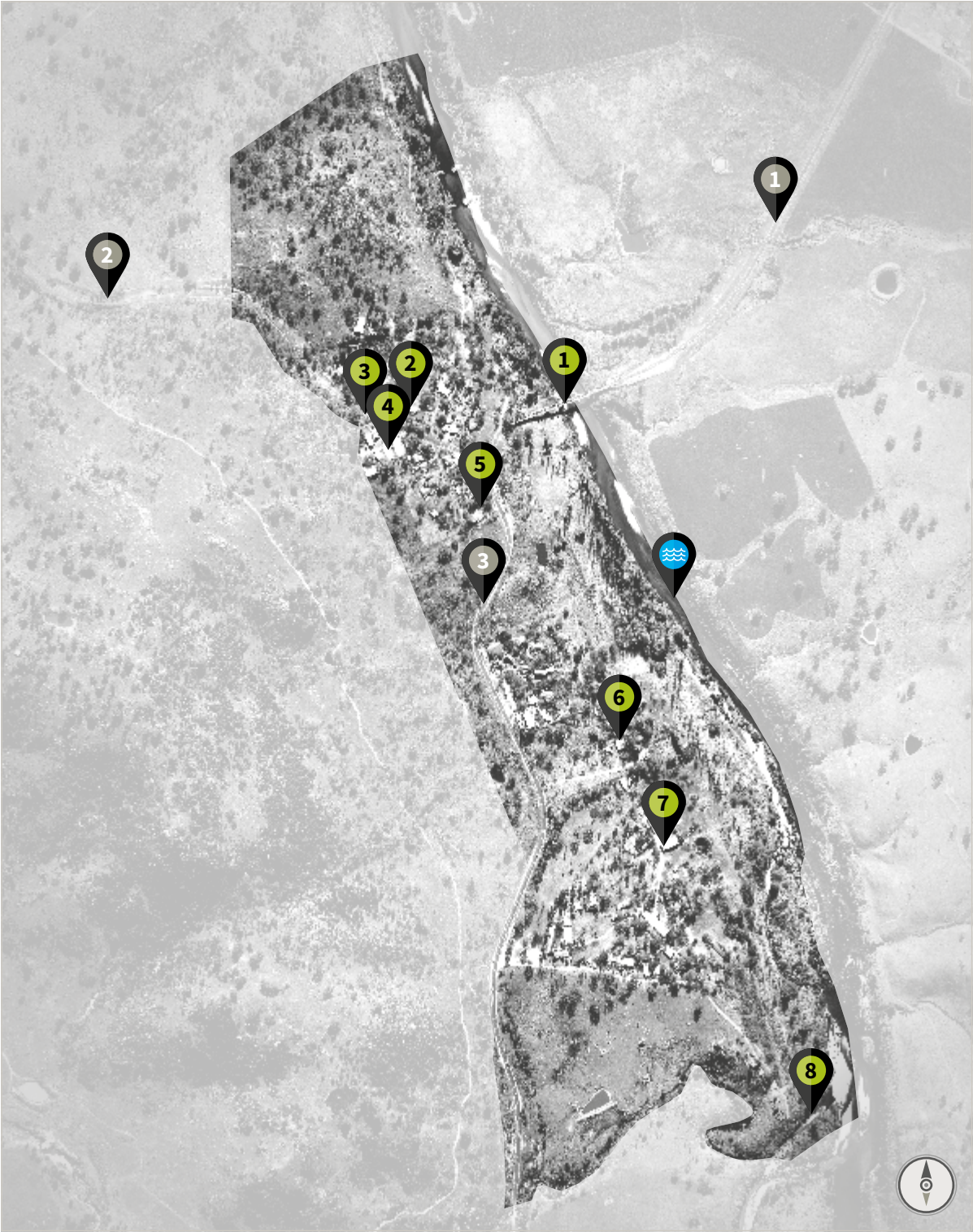
The study area for the Tharwa Draft Village Plan is shown in **Map 2**.

BLOCK AND SECTION MAP

Under the Territory Plan, Canberra is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks, with blocks usually leased to one entity. Blocks and sections are referred to in this document. **Map 3** provides a reference to help the reader identify blocks and sections within the village plan study area.

Figure 1: Village Plan process

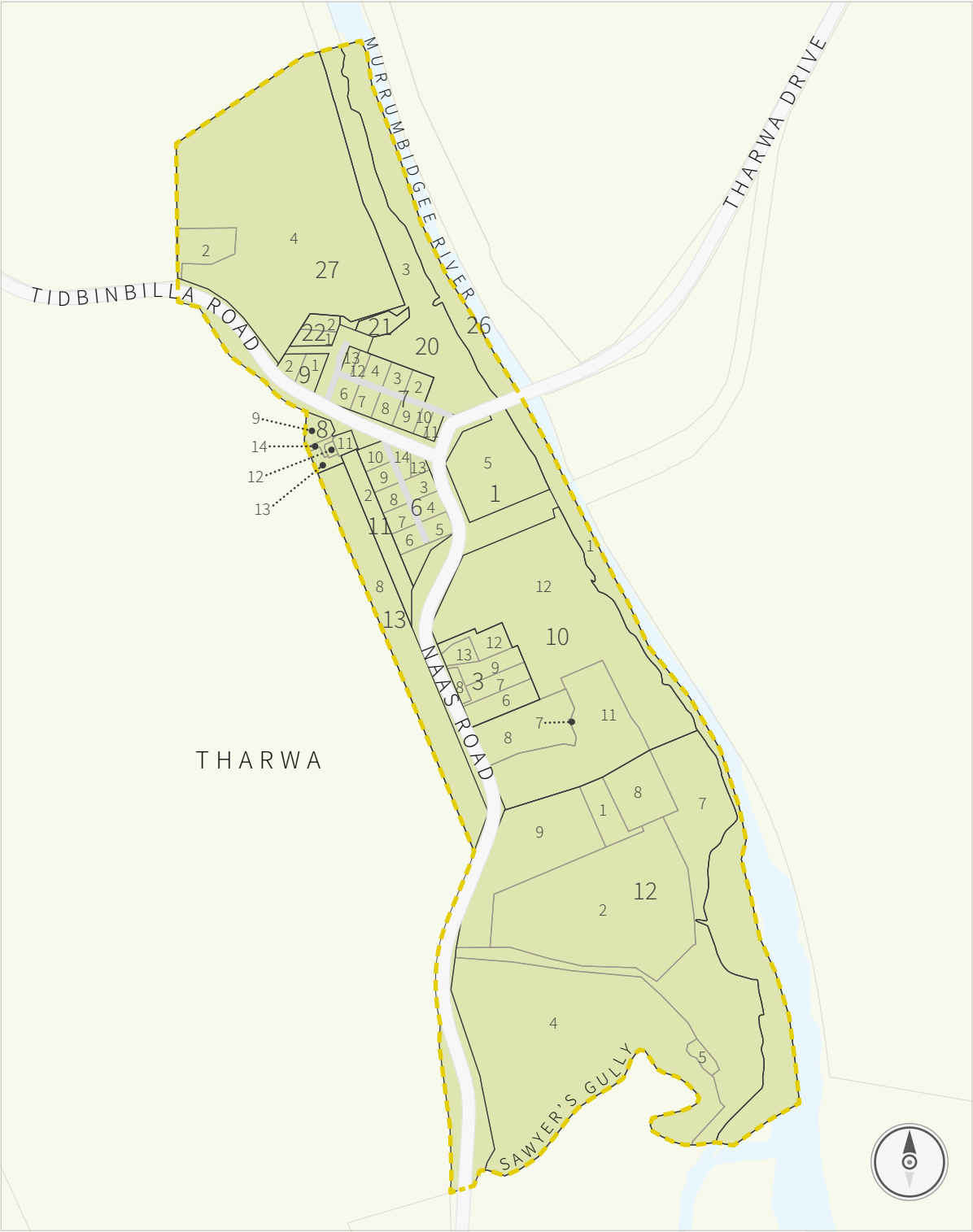
Map 2: Tharwa Draft Village Plan study area



LEGEND

- | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | THARWA BRIDGE | 5 | ST EDMUNDS ANGLICAN CHURCH | 1 | THARWA DRIVE |
| 2 | THARWA PRESCHOOL/PRIMARY SCHOOL | 6 | CUPPACUMBALONG HOMESTEAD | 2 | TIDBINBILLA ROAD |
| 3 | GENERAL STORE | 7 | OUTWARD BOUND | 3 | NAAS ROAD |
| 4 | THARWA PUBLIC HALL | 8 | ONYONG GRAVE SITE | | MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER |

Map 3: Block and section



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|----------|----------------|
|  | STUDY AREA | 1 | SECTION NUMBER |
|  | SECTION BOUNDARY | 1 | BLOCK NUMBER |
|  | BLOCK BOUNDARY | | |

2. PLANNING CONTEXT

Tharwa Draft Village Plan



2. PLANNING CONTEXT

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Tharwa Draft Village Plan is a strategic policy document that seeks to translate the ACT Government's broader metropolitan policies at a local level. The following section outlines the policy context that applies to Tharwa.

THE STATEMENT OF PLANNING INTENT

The Minister for Planning and Land Management released his Statement of Planning Intent in 2015. The statement sets out the key planning priorities for the ACT Government for the next three to five years. The statement establishes four key planning priorities and associated actions:

- Create sustainable, compact and liveable neighbourhoods with better transport choices.
- Deliver high quality public spaces and streets through placemaking.
- Deliver an outcome-focused planning system to reward design excellence and innovation.
- Engage with the community, business and research sectors to optimise planning outcomes.

While these key planning priorities have a focus on urban renewal, they can be used to provide high level guidance for the planning of Tharwa. This includes improving the quality of the streets and public spaces, such as the reserves, and engaging with the community to optimise planning outcomes.

ACT PLANNING STRATEGY

The ACT Planning Strategy was prepared in response to changes in the ACT's economic, demographic and environmental circumstances. The strategy outlines a number of principles relevant to Tharwa Village, including ensuring lifestyle opportunities afforded by the region will be recognised and supported with the opportunity to live in an urban or suburban environment, rural village, in the 'bush' or on a farm.

The ACT Planning Strategy encourages more detailed planning for locations such as the ACT's rural villages, including Tharwa, noting that 'the distinctive character of these villages can easily be lost with inappropriate development. Planning should set guidelines to retain the character of these villages while allowing for limited growth'.¹

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT is the ACT Government's strategic policy on climate change. AP2 guides the Territory's strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% of 1990 levels by 2020 and to transition the ACT to zero net emissions by 2060. In May 2016, the ACT Government brought forward its target for net zero carbon emissions to 2050.

In response to projections for the ACT and region for an increasingly hotter and drier climate with more extreme weather events, the ACT Government has been taking mitigation action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by minimising use of fossil fuels for heating, cooling and transport, and increase the efficiency of energy use.

AP2 provides a pathway to achieve emission reductions through energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy. It also identifies opportunities for improved environmental performance of buildings and infrastructure.

The ACT Government has developed a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy to help the community, city and natural environment adapt to climate change and become more resilient to its impacts.

ACT WATER STRATEGY AND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

The ACT Water Strategy 2014–44: Striking the Balance was endorsed by the ACT Government in July 2014. The strategy incorporates three themes and a detailed implementation plan. It will guide the management of the Territory's water supply, water resources and catchment practices over the next 30 years. It builds on the original ACT Water Strategy, Think Water, Act Water.

While the emphasis of the original strategy was on water security following the 2003 bushfires and the Millennium Drought, the strategy also focuses on improving water quality and ecosystem health of the region's rivers and streams.

The ACT and Region Catchment Strategy 2016-2046 details factors that affect the wider catchment and includes actions to promote a healthy catchment region. The strategy aims to coordinate governments, community and industry to produce a healthy, productive, resilient and livable catchment region.

STATUTORY PLANNING

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

The National Capital Plan is the strategic plan for the ACT managed by the National Capital Authority on behalf of the Australian Government. The National Capital Plan ensures Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

The National Capital Plan recognises the importance of the natural landscape setting of the National Capital, with the Murrumbidgee River Corridor one of the key components of a nationally significant open-space framework, the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS). The Murrumbidgee River Corridor zone is a strip of land and water up to 4 kilometres wide along the full length of the ACT section of the river and is defined by the National Capital Plan's 'General Policy Plan' for land use in the Territory. The general planning policies for river corridor zones set out to reinforce and preserve the landscape, heritage values and ecological continuity while providing for a balanced range of recreational and tourist-related uses. Specifically, the Murrumbidgee River Corridor is to be conserved as an important national resource

and a key open space element that provides a definable edge to developed urban areas.

The Murrumbidgee River Corridor overlaps the boundaries of the Tharwa Draft Village Plan study area, as shown in **Map 4**. Development along the corridor is managed in accordance with the general policies of the National Capital Plan, including the Special Requirements for Murrumbidgee River Corridor and Lanyon Bowl Area and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Policy Plan, the requirements of the Territory Plan and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Plan of Management 1998. The ACT Government is responsible for implementing the intent of the National Capital Plan, including all formal planning and approvals for these areas. The National Capital Authority has a referral role to ensure that proposals are consistent with the provisions of the National Capital Plan.

TERRITORY PLAN

The Territory Plan is the key statutory planning document in the ACT, providing the policy framework for the administration of land use and planning in the ACT. The purpose of the Territory Plan is to manage land use change in a manner consistent with strategic directions set by the ACT Government, Legislative Assembly and community. The provisions and administration of the Territory Plan must be "in a manner not inconsistent with the National Capital Plan".²

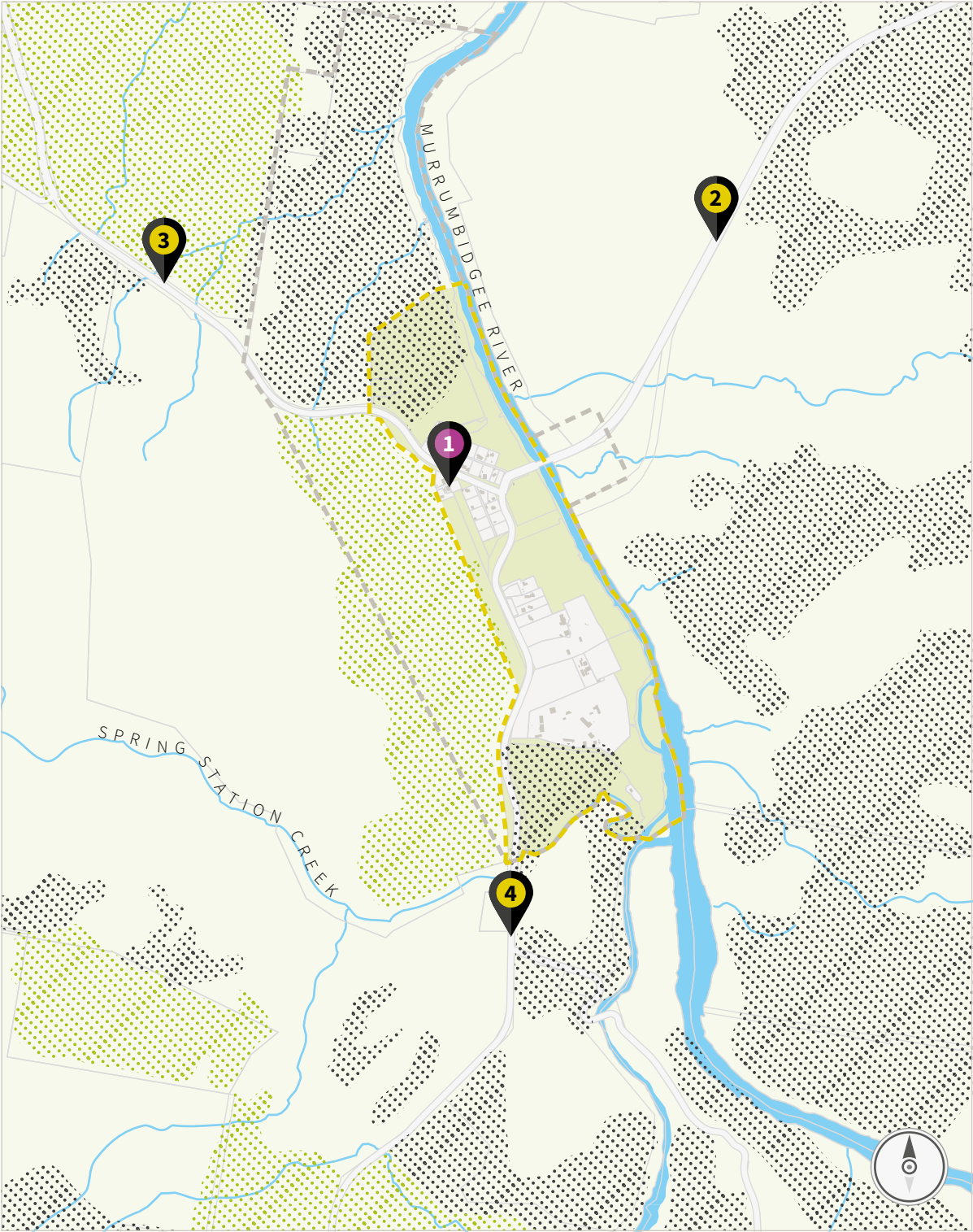
Development in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor and the Lanyon Bowl areas are subject to special requirements and are administered by the ACT Government through the Territory Plan to ensure compliance with the special requirements of the National Capital Plan.

As indicated on **Map 5**, blocks in the northern area of the village are predominantly zoned as low density residential (RZ1 Suburban Zone), however the sites of the tennis courts, school, preschool, community hall and fire brigade are zoned as community facilities (CFZ). The shop is zoned as commercial (CZ4 local centre).









Blocks towards the south of the village are zoned as 'river corridor' (NUZ4: Non urban zone River Corridor).

The village plan may recommend changes to the Territory Plan, including the introduction of a new precinct code for Tharwa.

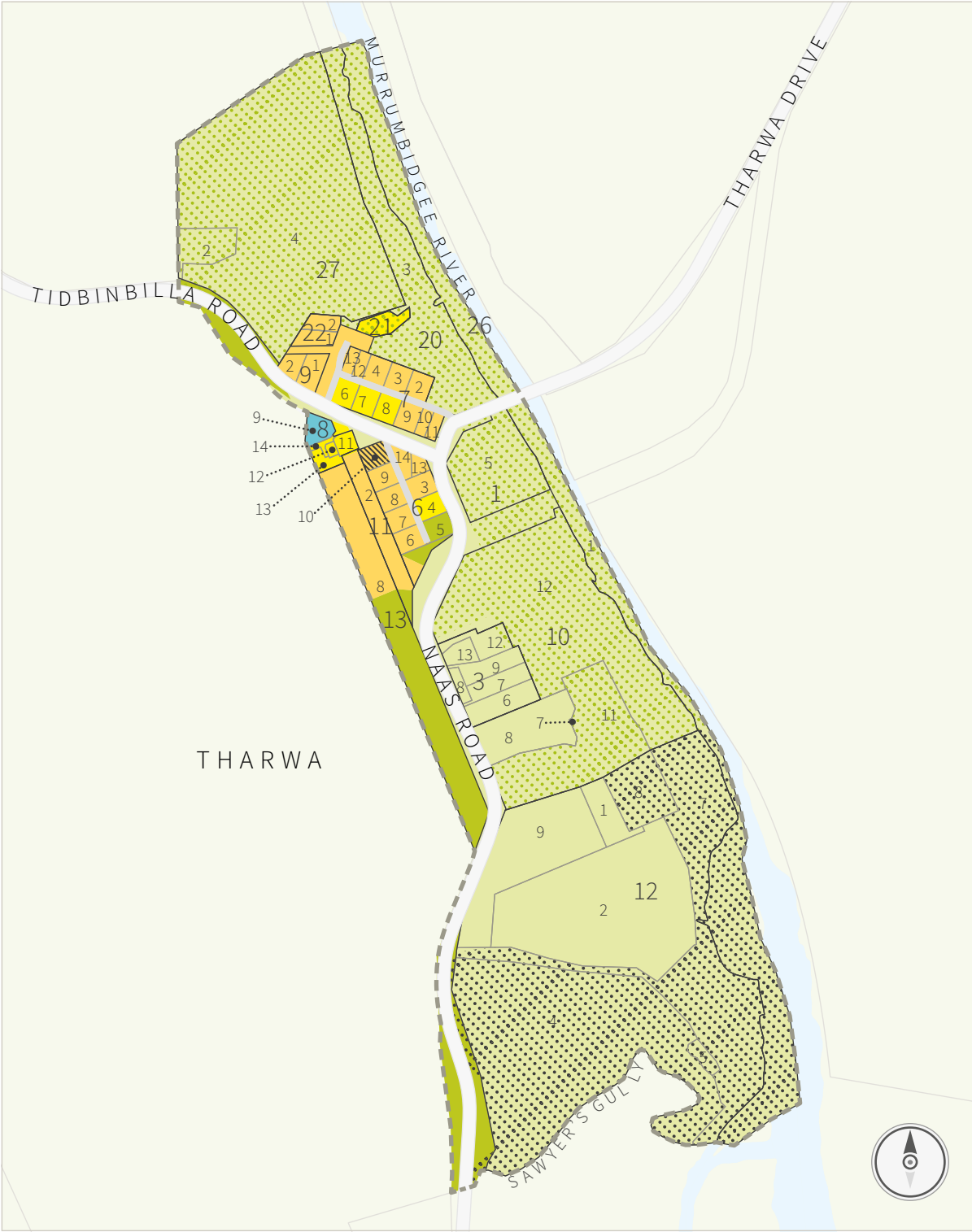
Map 4: Murrumbidgee river corridor












LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|------------------|
|  | STUDY AREA |  | THARWA VILLAGE |
|  | AREA OF INFLUENCE |  | THARWA DRIVE |
|  | EPBC LISTED BOXGUM WOODLAND |  | TIDBINBILLA ROAD |
|  | ACT LISTED BOXGUM WOODLAND |  | NAAS ROAD |

Map 5: Territory Plan land use zones



LEGEND

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  RZ1: SUBURBAN |  NUZ3: HILLS, RIDGES, AND BUFFERS |  PC - NATURE RESERVE |
|  CFZ: COMMUNITY FACILITIES |  NUZ4: RIVER CORRIDOR |  PD - SPECIAL PURPOSE RESERVE |
|  CZ4: LOCAL CENTRE |  TSZ1: TRANSPORT |  PI - SPORT AND RECREATION RESERVE |

MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR PLAN OF MANAGEMENT 1998

The plan of management, prepared by the ACT Government, describes how the Murrumbidgee River Corridor is to be managed to enhance its conservation, educational and recreational values. The corridor serves important hydrological, ecological and recreational functions. Its proximity to urban development requires co-ordinated management to preserve the area's generally natural and undeveloped character and to protect it against damage and inappropriate use. The plan of management is consistent with the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan.

Tharwa is located within the Murrumbidgee River Corridor and is subject to the provisions of the plan of management, except for the village core, which is zoned urban land and is excluded from these provisions.

The Gigerline Nature Reserve is one of five declared nature reserves in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor. Gigerline Nature Reserve comprises undisturbed areas of ecologically significant habitat. The Murrumbidgee River Corridor Plan of Management aims to protect these nature reserves from further disturbance and to enhance their nature conservation values. The objectives for the Tharwa section of the reserve are to provide low key recreation opportunities and to interpret and protect significant cultural sites and settings surrounding the existing De Salis Cemetery.

Tharwa Bridge Reserve and the reserve fronting Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct have no significant nature conservation value; however, they provide a range of recreational opportunities.

The corridor plan of management prescribes management objectives that recognise the importance of 'retaining a viable rural operation, and prohibiting inappropriate or incongruous elements from the landscape' and not detracting or destroying the historic integrity or context of the pastoral surroundings.

ACT STRATEGIC BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2014–2019

The ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan 2014–2019 is the overarching strategic framework that directs all levels of bushfire planning and management throughout the ACT. The government agencies with a responsibility for bushfire response and management include the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA), the ACT Rural Fire Service and land managers. Rural landholders and the general community also have a duty to take reasonable care to reduce bushfire risk, including preventing the spread of a fire from their property.

Tharwa Village is exposed to the risk from bushfires that could start within and spread from the Namadgi National Park and adjoining farmlands. The village is in a designated Bushfire Prone Area (BPA)—a risk-based map that depicts the area of the ACT that has been assessed as being at high risk for life and property due to bushfires. Assets on urban or rural property in Tharwa identified in the BPA to be at risk from the impact of bushfires include critical and social infrastructure, businesses (including agricultural production operated by rural landholders), water catchments, cultural heritage and environmental assets (including threatened species and ecological communities).

THARWA PRECINCT CODE

A precinct code provides place-specific planning, design and environmental controls to guide the design of development proposals and preparation of development applications. Precinct codes generally take precedence over other codes.

A review of the existing Tharwa Precinct Map and Code (December 2012), informed by the final version of the village plan, is expected to improve outcomes and increase certainty for the community and government.

PLANNING HISTORY

Tharwa Village was proclaimed a township in 1862, with a traditional grid layout similar to other small rural communities across New South Wales. The village did not grow to the extent of the original layout. This was due to a lack of demand, with the exception of the early 20th century when there was some ‘haphazard and opportunistic planning’³ undertaken. This included several irregular shaped and sized blocks clustered around the village core and the formalisation of main roads through the village.

The National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) produced a report, Tuggeranong Planning Studies, by A. Bickford in 1975 to look at the historical significance of the Cuppacumbalong–Tharwa–Lambrigg–Lanyon area to assess their potential for museums and aid development planning in the southern part of Tuggeranong. The primary recommendation for Tharwa was to ‘preserve (the village) as it is’⁴ and that its future was best seen as a place for artists and craftsmen who liked and could work within the quiet village atmosphere.

In 1983 the NCDC completed the Village of Tharwa Policy Plan, which described planning policies for the village. This consisted of providing for changing needs and future development while seeking to preserve and protect the essential visual and historic character of the village. The policy plan specifically intended to provide for limited ‘residential development and some provision for tourist-oriented recreational or craft activities, where these are of a type compatible with the rural nature of the village’.⁵

This plan was the last major planning document prepared for Tharwa.

3. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Tharwa Draft Village Plan



3. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community and key stakeholder engagement for the Tharwa Village Plan formed a critical part of the analysis in the early stages of the planning process and later in refining recommendations for this Tharwa Draft Village Plan.

Community engagement for the Tharwa Village Plan comprises two main stages, each informing the village plan as it evolves.

STAGE 1 – ISSUES STAGE

The first stage of community engagement began on 27 January 2016 and concluded on 26 February 2016. The purpose was to understand key issues and concerns, develop a shared community vision and explore strategies for Tharwa's future.

A range of community engagement activities were undertaken, including:

- two focussed community workshops with the local village community and surrounding rural lease holders,
- survey and guestbook, via EPSDD's then online engagement tool 'Haveyoursay ACT Planning', since replaced with 'Your Say',
- meetings with individual stakeholders, and
- information displays at Tharwa General Store and Tuggeranong Library.

Approximately 75 people attended the community workshops, which were held in the Tharwa Public Hall.

Written submissions via the online 'Haveyoursay ACT Planning' website and submissions by letter and email included:

- 34 online surveys
- 4 people contributed to the online discussion forum (Guestbook)
- 15 letters and emails, and
- 1 resident's petition titled 'Please don't release any house blocks in the village of Tharwa'.

Although the Tharwa community has a small population of less than a hundred people, some diverse views and opinions on matters were expressed. The key messages heard from the first stage of community engagement for the Tharwa Village Plan included:

- a desire for the village to retain its country charm, unspoilt by over-development
- support for limited development that respects Tharwa's rural village character and heritage values and promotes adaptive re-use options that respect the heritage values of individual sites and places, such as cultural and low-scale commercial activities
- the Murrumbidgee River is valued for its contribution to the character of the village and for the opportunities it provides for recreational and environmental activities
- improvements are needed to water, sewage, telecommunications and road infrastructure (while retaining the current soft edges and kerbing profiles during road maintenance and roadworks, subject to safety requirements) in order to preserve the rural landscape, and
- concerns regarding the closure of the primary school and public access to Cuppacumbalong.

The community engagement snapshot, which includes a summary of key messages heard from Stage 1 community engagement can be seen at: www.yoursay.act.gov.au

All feedback was considered and, where appropriate, key messages and relevant background information used to develop the Tharwa Draft Village Plan.

STAGE 2 – DRAFT VILLAGE PLAN

Stage 2 of community engagement is seeking feedback from the community on this Tharwa Draft Village Plan. This feedback will be used to further refine the village plan before it is finalised.

Further community engagement will be undertaken on any changes to the Territory Plan through a separate consultation process.

HERITAGE AND CHARACTER

The ACT has a number of rural villages that reflect pioneer life before the formation of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). They are important in understanding the history and story of our place and are evocative of a way of life no longer available within the urbanised areas of the ACT.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the heritage issues in Tharwa, a study was undertaken to inform the development of the Tharwa Draft Village Plan. The Tharwa Heritage Significance Study was completed in 2015.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The ACT region has a long and rich Aboriginal history, extending back at least 25,000 years. The area around Tharwa has been a significant Aboriginal place for many generations, with an important cultural pathway from the plains to the high country following the Murrumbidgee River, crossing the river at a shallow bed at Tharwa.

The land now known as Cuppacumbalong was one of the main Aboriginal camping places in the ACT. With the establishment of Cuppacumbalong Homestead in the 1840s, Aboriginal people continued to live on the property, and their economic contribution—working as stockmen through to the 1880s—helped the estate thrive, particularly in the 1850s when the station lost many European workers to the gold rushes in New South Wales and Victoria.

‘Tharwa’ is understood to be the traditional name for Mount Tennent, an important part of a Dreaming story of the sons of Bundjil, the first great ancestors who moved across the land. ‘Cuppacumbalong’ is understood to be the traditional name for the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Gudgenby Rivers.

Tharwa Village and the surrounding area contain many Aboriginal places that reflect its rich history, and are of heritage and cultural significance. Importantly, Onyong's Hill within Tharwa is named after Aboriginal man Onyong, who was traditionally buried on its slopes with his spear and nulla nulla (hunting stick). Onyong is still honoured among local Aboriginal families as a warrior and leader of the mid-1800s.

Tharwa is still a significant place for Traditional Custodians, who now use the area for cultural education and as a base for maintaining cultural connections to the lands and waters of the Namadgi National Park.

EUROPEAN CONTEXT

During the early to mid-1800s European explorers and settlers used the river crossing at Tharwa to access land west of the Murrumbidgee River, particularly for pastoral stations. Camps were often made at Tharwa while transporting stock across the river. During the Kiandra goldrush of 1859–61 the track crossing the Murrumbidgee River at Tharwa became the major route from Queanbeyan to the gold fields.

The small settlement at the river crossing was proclaimed as the township of Tharwa in 1862—the first township established within the present boundaries of the ACT.

The village prospered until an economic depression in the 1890s was brought on by a fall in the price of exported wool and major drought. While the Cuppacumbalong Homestead remained a fine example of a working property, producing super-fine merino wool and beef, the village itself has remained relatively undeveloped and has not grown into the village it was designed to be.

This situation was exacerbated when the Commonwealth Government resumed all rural properties in the southern part of the ACT in the late 1960s and many of the rural families left the district.

Since 1975 the Cuppacumbalong Homestead has performed a role as a tourist and visitor destination, alongside four new blocks that were created in the 1980s with the intent of fostering an environment for craftspeople to create and sell their works. Several of the original craftspeople were joined by other independent artists and the group remains an active presence in the village.

The closure of the Tharwa Primary School and then the closure of the Tharwa Bridge for restoration works and Canberra's 2003 bushfires have further impacted on the vitality of the village.

With its small resident population who enjoy a rural village lifestyle, Tharwa today remains valued by the local and ACT community for its heritage values, local crafts, proximity to parks and reserves, outdoor adventure opportunities and expansive views of pastoral and natural landscapes.

IDENTIFIED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Tharwa Village has key elements that are registered on the ACT Heritage Register. The register identifies places and objects of heritage significance at the Territory level that enrich our understanding of history and identity.

As identified on **Map 6**, Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct, Tharwa Bridge, and Cuppacumbalong (De Salis) Cemetery (which includes the Avenue of Elms) are the most important heritage features of the local area, along with St Edmund's Anglican Church, Tharwa General Cemetery and Onyong's Grave Site. These features are all included on the ACT Heritage Register.

The current Cuppacumbalong homestead, built in 1923, is a relatively rare and intact example of an Inter-War Californian Bungalow set in an enclosed garden landscape. Tharwa Bridge was opened in 1895 and St Edmund's Anglican Church was dedicated in May, 1919.

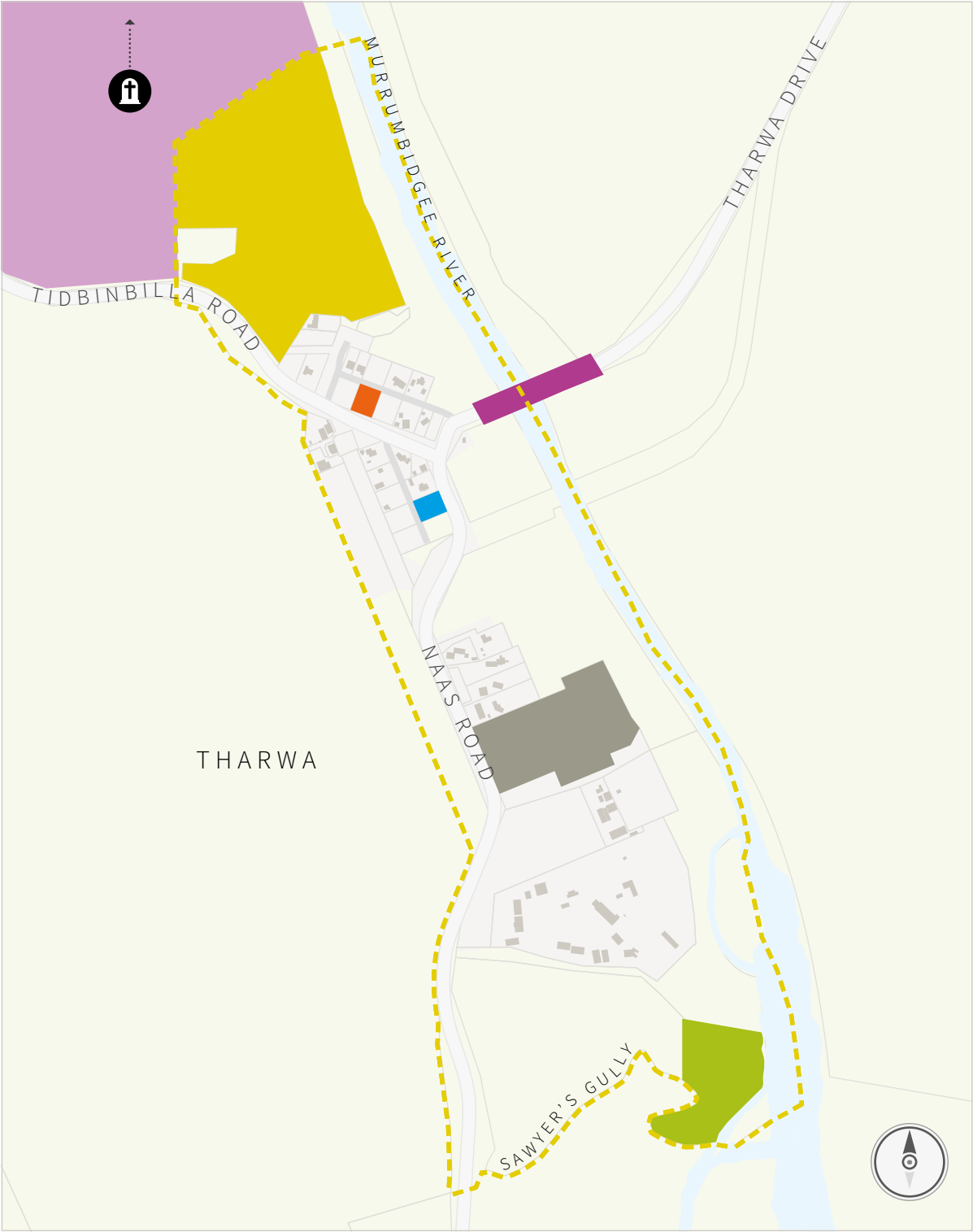
Both the Tharwa Primary School, including the original 1912 school house, and a Travelling Stock Route north of North Road have been nominated for consideration by the ACT Heritage Council for inclusion on the register. The Tharwa Heritage Significance Study recommends:

- progressing the nomination to include the Tharwa Primary School on the ACT Heritage Register
- further heritage assessment of the Tharwa Bridge Reserve, Tharwa General Store, Public Hall, tennis courts and a number of residences due to their local significance
- undeveloped areas within Tharwa Village undergo detailed survey in consultation with the Representative Aboriginal Organisations
- a potential Tharwa Village Precinct is likely to be of local rather than Territory level significance, but further investigation would be required to assess its heritage value.








The Rabbiter's Cottage, a former workers' cottage, faces directly onto the public access road to Cuppacumbalong (De Salis) Cemetery. Its proximity to the road creates a false impression of entering a private property, which deters potential visitors to the cemetery.

Two kilometres south of Tharwa Village on Smiths Road is the heritage-listed Cuppacumbalong Woolshed and Shearer's Quarters. The shed retains its original integrity and serves as a reminder of times when Cuppacumbalong was the centre of a pastoral community, with the original owners being producers of large quantities of fine merino wool. The woolshed is still operational and retains a significant relationship with the homestead.

Map 6: Heritage significance



LEGEND

	ONYONG'S GRAVE SITE REGISTERED		TRAVELLING STOCK ROUTE NOMINATED
	THARWA PRIMARY SCHOOL NOMINATED		CUPPACUMBALONG (DE SALIS) CEMETERY (WHICH INCLUDES THE AVENUE OF ELMS) REGISTERED
	SAINT EDMUND'S ANGLICAN CHURCH REGISTERED		THARWA GENERAL CEMETERY
	CUPPACUMBALONG HOMESTEAD REGISTERED		

VILLAGE SETTING AND IDENTITY

Tharwa Village is set against the backdrop of Mount Tennent and smaller hills to the west and north. The village also overlooks the Murrumbidgee River to the east with expansive rural views of the Lanyon Landscape Conservation Reserve (Lanyon Bowl area). A mature stand of Lombardy Poplars, originally planted by the De Salis family in the 1870s as a windbreak, form an avenue along the western bank of the Murrumbidgee River providing a striking and memorable edge to the village. Tharwa's picturesque rural character is distinct from the suburban edge of Tuggeranong and the village provides a transition into the rugged natural environment of Namadgi National Park.

VILLAGE STRUCTURE

Tharwa was laid out in 1861 in a traditional formal street grid, typical of rural villages in NSW. It provided a compact, walkable village structure with well defined boundaries. Dwellings are located fairly close to one another and not scattered over the landscape.

The original plan, indicated on **Figure 2** comprised six sections, each with ten half-acre blocks divided by a small lane, and a larger section for public buildings set in a reserve along the Murrumbidgee River, just south of the future bridge.

Cuppacumbalong Homestead, originally part of a larger working property, occupied part of one of the planned sections. The introduction of residences with a distinct 1980's brick form and character, along with the breakup of the Cuppacumbalong property holdings for Outward Bound, have impacted on the historical form of the village.

While parts of the original town plan remain intact and reflect a distinct village character, much of the plan has not been realised. This is due to a small and static population resulting in a lack of development demand over time. The village's integrity and intactness was further diminished through the introduction of some irregular blocks and haphazard changes during the twentieth century.

The appearance of the main arterial roads in the early twentieth century exacerbated the fragmented nature of the village and created a disconnect between the northern and southern parts of Tharwa.

BUILT FORM

Within the village there are 18 existing residential houses, excluding the Cuppacumbalong Homestead and a worker's cottage (The Rabbit's Cottage) near De Salis Cemetery in the southern part of the village. Six of these houses are painted weatherboard or fibro with pitched corrugated iron roofs. Generally situated on large blocks with deep setbacks and separate garages, they are typical of their time.

Community buildings such as the school, St Edmund's Anglican Church and Tharwa General Store are built of the same materials, while the public hall is a large galvanised iron clad structure set on wooden stumps. All these buildings were built before 1930 and are representative of Tharwa's early rural village character.

While houses built later in the twentieth century tend to be brickwork and of a style of their time, the village as a whole has resisted modernisation of its streetscapes and built form. The village has retained most of the original infrastructure and built features of a small rural settlement.

Figure 2: Original Tharwa plan



DEMOGRAPHICS

Growth and change in Canberra's population will generate demand for housing, business services, and community facilities and associated infrastructure. As at December 2014 the ACT population was estimated to be 387,600, with the population projected to reach 430,400 by 2021 and 493,500 by 2031.⁶

Historically the population of Tharwa initially fluctuated, with a boom during the 1860's Kiandra gold rush, but slowed substantially over the last century. According to the 1933 census the population was 73 people and 14 dwellings, while in 1954 the population was boosted to 81 people and 20 dwellings. The local Tharwa area, including the village proper, has a population of approximately 75 people living in approximately 35 dwellings.⁷

The broader Tharwa area, including Namadgi National Park and the south-west region of the ACT, has approximately 425 residents, with slightly more male residents than female. The median age of the broader Tharwa community is 30 years, slightly less than the ACT median age of 34 years.⁸

The population structure shows there are proportionally more people in the 10–14 and 40–44 year age groups than any other group. This can be attributed to the formation of household families during these years and possibly the population which lives on base at Outward Bound. There are atypically low numbers in the 15–19 and 30–34 year age brackets which may reflect people moving away from home for study, employment, or to another place to start a family. There is a significant, but typical, dip in the population from 60 years that may be due to the elderly moving to more centrally located aged care services.

The rate of unemployment in the broader Tharwa area is 2.2%, compared with the rate of 3.6% for the whole of the ACT. Car ownership is high with every household having at least one car, compared with the ACT where 6% of households do not own a car. All dwellings in Tharwa are separate detached houses.

LAND USE

LAND USE ZONES

The Territory Plan, as indicated at **Map 5** identifies land use zones for Tharwa.

Tharwa Village is located beside the Murrumbidgee River and is part of the broader Murrumbidgee River Corridor that runs through the full length of the ACT. To ensure the ecological and cultural values of the river are conserved, the strip of land fronting onto the river is zoned Non-Urban River Corridor (NUZ4). Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct, the adjoining arts and crafts properties and Outward Bound are all located in this land use zone.

A Public Land Reserve overlay applies to parts of this land use zone. The reserve north of Outward Bound is a Special Purpose Reserve (Pd) providing an area for recreation and education purposes. South of Cuppacumbalong is Gigerline Nature Reserve, a Nature Reserve (Pc) that seeks to conserve the natural environment as well as provide for recreation, education and research uses.

The river corridor is also subject to the provisions of the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Plan of Management 1998, as described in Section 2.2.3.

The surrounding hills are also zoned for non-urban land use, in sub-category Hills, Ridges and Buffer (NUZ3). The purpose of this zoning is to conserve the environmental integrity of the hill system as a visual backdrop, as well as protect the significant cultural and natural heritage resources and the diversity of natural habitats and wildlife corridors in these areas.

Secondary uses, such as farm tourism, are allowable in this land use zone, provided they are ancillary to the primary use of the land as defined by the lease. Farm tourism includes overnight camping and guest house accommodation.

The village core area is categorised for urban use with the majority of blocks zoned as Suburban (RZ1) with the objective to protect the character of established single dwelling housing areas. There are also eight blocks zoned as Community Facilities land use (CFZ), including the school, St Edmund's Anglican Church, Tharwa Public Hall and tennis courts.

The general store and post office are located on the only commercially zoned block in the village, specifically for use as a Local Centre (CZ4) to provide convenient shopping and community and business services to meet the daily needs of local residents.

LAND CUSTODIANSHIP

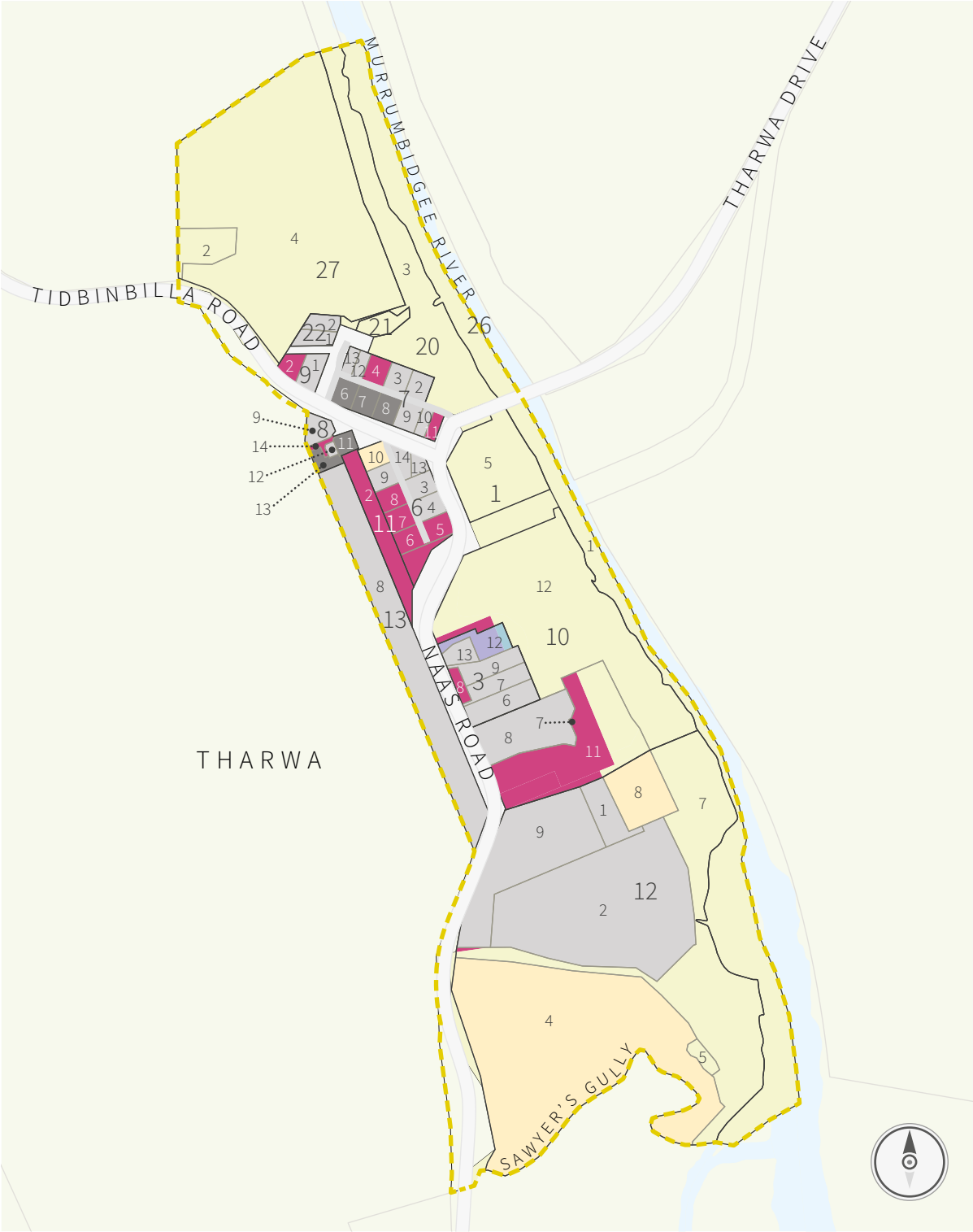
All land in the ACT is owned by the Territory with a leasehold system of land tenure for all blocks of land. **Map 7** shows the mix of land custodianship in Tharwa. The majority of blocks with existing development on them are held under private lease and are not public land. Residential development, including Cuppacumbalong Homestead, Tharwa Public Hall and Outward Bound headquarters fall into this category.

The school, tennis courts and the Southern Rural Fire Service station are on Territory land leased to various government agencies.

Vacant blocks, predominantly in the northern part of the village, are unleased Territory land currently managed by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS). They are mostly zoned for Residential Suburban (RZ1) use. Some of the unleased blocks have had licences to occupy them for the care of stock.

The reserve area fronting the Murrumbidgee River, including Tharwa Bridge Reserve, is public unleased Territory land managed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service. The surrounding hills and agriculture areas are generally held by the land holders as private rural leases.

Map 7: Land custodianship



LEGEND

	LEASED TERRITORY LAND - PRIVATE LEASE - NOT PUBLIC LAND		LEASED TERRITORY LAND - PRIVATE LEASE - PUBLIC LAND		OTHER ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCY - NOT PUBLIC LAND - UNLEASED		TCCS - PUBLIC LAND
	LEASED TERRITORY LAND - GOVERNMENT LEASE - NOT PUBLIC LAND		OTHER ACT GOVERNMENT AGENCY - PUBLIC LAND - UNLEASED				TCCS - VACANT (OTHER)
							TCCS - ROADS

PUBLIC DOMAIN AND CONNECTIVITY

The public areas of Tharwa are maintained by the Parks and Conservation Service. This includes maintenance of the open spaces of the reserve, public toilets, streets and roadsides.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND TREES

Tharwa has significant public open space that fronts on to the Murrumbidgee River and includes the Tharwa Bridge Reserve. On the northern side of the bridge is a stand of deciduous trees, which provides a shaded and protected recreation spot for locals and visitors.

Tharwa Bridge Reserve is equipped with public toilets, barbeques, picnic tables, parking and a large open grassed area to the south of the bridge. The reserve is used for swimming and picnics during the warmer months as well as the occasional game of cricket, while the ‘marker and mow’ heritage trails and tracks along the river reserve are well used by local walkers. Dog walking along the reserve is currently not allowed. Opportunities for safe access to the river along the river corridor are limited.

While Tharwa displays many of the characteristics typical of a rural village, it has areas for improvement. These include an identifiable entrance and main street. Visitors who are unfamiliar with Tharwa can pass through the village without realising.

The forecourt to Tharwa General Store, which is dominated by a large asphalt surface parking area, serves as the primary public gathering place for the village. The function of the forecourt is further strengthened by the Tharwa Public Hall, tennis courts and several outbuildings to the general store, which all open onto the car park in an ad-hoc manner.

The asphalt forecourt lacks definition as a key civic space. Poor amenity, lack of clarity between pedestrian and vehicular movement, no places to stop and sit and little soft landscaping contribute to a lost opportunity for the community.

There are large and well-established trees along the main roads. Scattered throughout the village are remnant native Kurrajong trees, noted for their lush, green foliage and drought tolerance.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

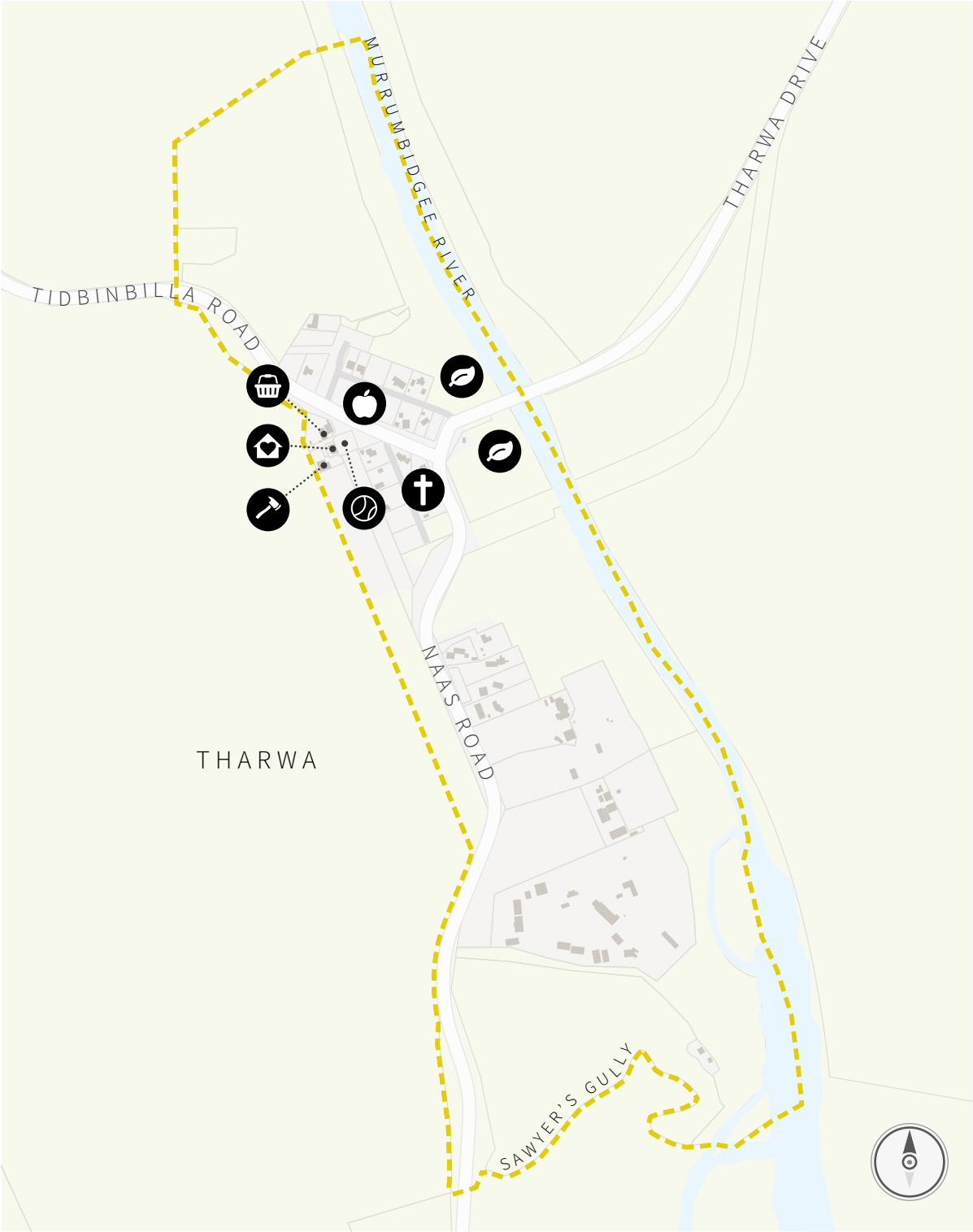
For a village of its size Tharwa is reasonably well provided for, with community facilities and meeting spaces shown in **Table 1**. The suburban areas of Banks, Conder and Gordon offer additional shopping, health, schooling and recreational facilities within a 10 minute drive of Tharwa.

Table 1: Community and recreation facilities located in Tharwa








FACILITY	LOCATION
Tharwa Pre-School	Blocks 6-8 Section 7
Tharwa Public Hall	Block 12 Section 8
St Edmund’s Anglican Church	Block 4 Section 6
Tharwa Bridge Reserve	Block 5 Section 1
Tharwa tennis courts	Block 11 Section 8
Southern Rural Fire Service	Block 13 Section 8

The location of these community facilities is identified on **Map 8**.

Map 8: Community facilities



LEGEND

	THARWA PUBLIC HALL		TENNIS COURT
	THARWA PRESCHOOL/PRIMARY SCHOOL		THARWA BRIDGE RESERVE
	SOUTHERN ACT VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE BRIGADE		ST EDMUNDS ANGLICAN CHURCH
	GENERAL STORE		

Tharwa Public Hall is privately owned, but used as a community activity centre that provides a large meeting space for the community, with public toilets located behind it. Adjacent to the hall are tennis courts, consisting of two clay courts that were previously sub-leased by the local tennis club.

The Southern ACT Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade is based in the village and provides protection for the southern area of the ACT, from Lanyon to the NSW border.

St Edmund's Anglican Church is well maintained and holds services on one Sunday per month and the occasional ceremonial services. It is available for small community cultural events.

The Tharwa Preschool, located on the Tharwa Public School site, is associated with Charles Conder Primary School and operates two and a half days a week. The preschool currently caters for 22 students from the village and other areas of Canberra.

The former Tharwa Primary School was closed in 2006 and has been nominated for the ACT Heritage Register. The building is significant for the Tharwa community and is available for use for community and business activities, including private yoga classes. There are clear opportunities to encourage new uses of the building.

WALKING AND CYCLING

There are no designated cyclist/pedestrian paths or on-road cycle lanes within the existing road corridors of the village. The community has expressed concern about the tension experienced between drivers and cyclists. The village is a popular staging point for cyclists riding through the village as part of a range of courses, including the annual 'Fitz's Challenge' event.

Formalised pedestrian facilities are generally not provided in the village or along the approach roads. Footpaths are provided near the public toilets next to the Tharwa Public Hall and near the Tharwa Bridge recreational facilities. A children's crossing is provided near the Tharwa Preschool.

The two existing lanes are valued features of the village, although Clarrie Lane has no pedestrian or vehicular through-access to the Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct or the adjoining arts and crafts properties and Outward Bound in the southern part of the village.

A lack of connected pedestrian routes in and around the village contributes to a sense of fragmentation and encourages a reliance on vehicular travel between the two parts of the village.

ROADS AND PARKING

Tharwa is located at the intersection of three arterial roads—Tidbinbilla Road from the north-west, Tharwa Drive from the north-east and Naas Road from the south. The approaches of these roads have differing speeds; however traffic is slowed to 50 km/h within the village.

The historic Tharwa Bridge, built in 1895, is single lane and a rare Alan Truss construction. It was closed in 2006 for restoration works that cost over \$26 million, reopening in June 2011. The bridge provides the most direct route to Canberra and its closure was a significant inconvenience for the community.

Roads are generally bitumen and are in a satisfactory condition, although the lane width of the arterial roads does not conform to current design guidelines. Unsealed gravel roads in the village vary in condition, with some possibly requiring repair, although they are still accessible.

Parking within the village is unrestricted, with the exception of a 'no stopping' zone along North Street on the approaches to the school crossing. Parking for approximately 12 vehicles is provided on the North Street verge for the Tharwa Preschool.

There is no signage or line marking on the asphalt forecourt to the Tharwa General Store. It has been observed that parking is generally to the north side of this area under trees. There is parking for approximately 20 vehicles at the carpark near the Tharwa Bridge, overlooking the reserve. There is minimal kerbing within Tharwa Village.

There have been no major collisions within the village in recent times. However, there have been a number of fatal accidents involving cyclists just outside the study area on the approach routes into the village.

There is no public transport service provided to Tharwa due to insufficient demand. A private bus service is, however, provided by ACT Government for students travelling to south Canberra schools.

HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL NETWORKS

Tharwa has long been—and remains—the gateway between the plains of the urbanised city and the mountain ranges of the Namadgi National Park to the south-west. The village is a destination or stopping point en-route for many heritage and recreational walking, cycling, horse and driving networks.

The Murrumbidgee River Corridor provides many interesting walks along sign-posted and well-formed tracks. These include the Tharwa Explorer Track, an easy 2.8 km return walk from the bridge upstream to the De Salis Cemetery, with interpretive signs that tell stories of people who lived at Cuppacumbalong. The Tharwa Sandwash Track is a short walk accessed off Smiths Road near Tharwa. There is a picnic spot in the Gigerline Nature Reserve where canoes can be launched onto the river (**Map 9**).

Tharwa is also part of an ancient Dreaming Track telling the story of ancestors travelling the land.

The village is also a destination on Canberra Tracks, a network of heritage signage that incorporates self-drive routes leading to many of Canberra's historic sites. The 650 km Australian Alps Walking Track winds through the alpine high country of Victoria, NSW and the ACT, starting and finishing at Namadgi National Park Visitors Centre, 2.5 km south of Tharwa Bridge.

The National Bicentennial Trail, Australia's premier long distance, multi-use recreational trekking route that extends 5330 km from far north Queensland to Victoria, also passes through Tharwa Village.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety issues in Tharwa village include vehicular speed, road design and a lack of surveillance. Vehicle speeds are reduced within the village limits via speed reduction zoning. However the proximity of arterial roads can lead to occasional speeding through the village. The geometry of the main road provides some traffic calming measures, but there are further opportunities for traffic to be slowed to facilitate safe pedestrian movement around the village.

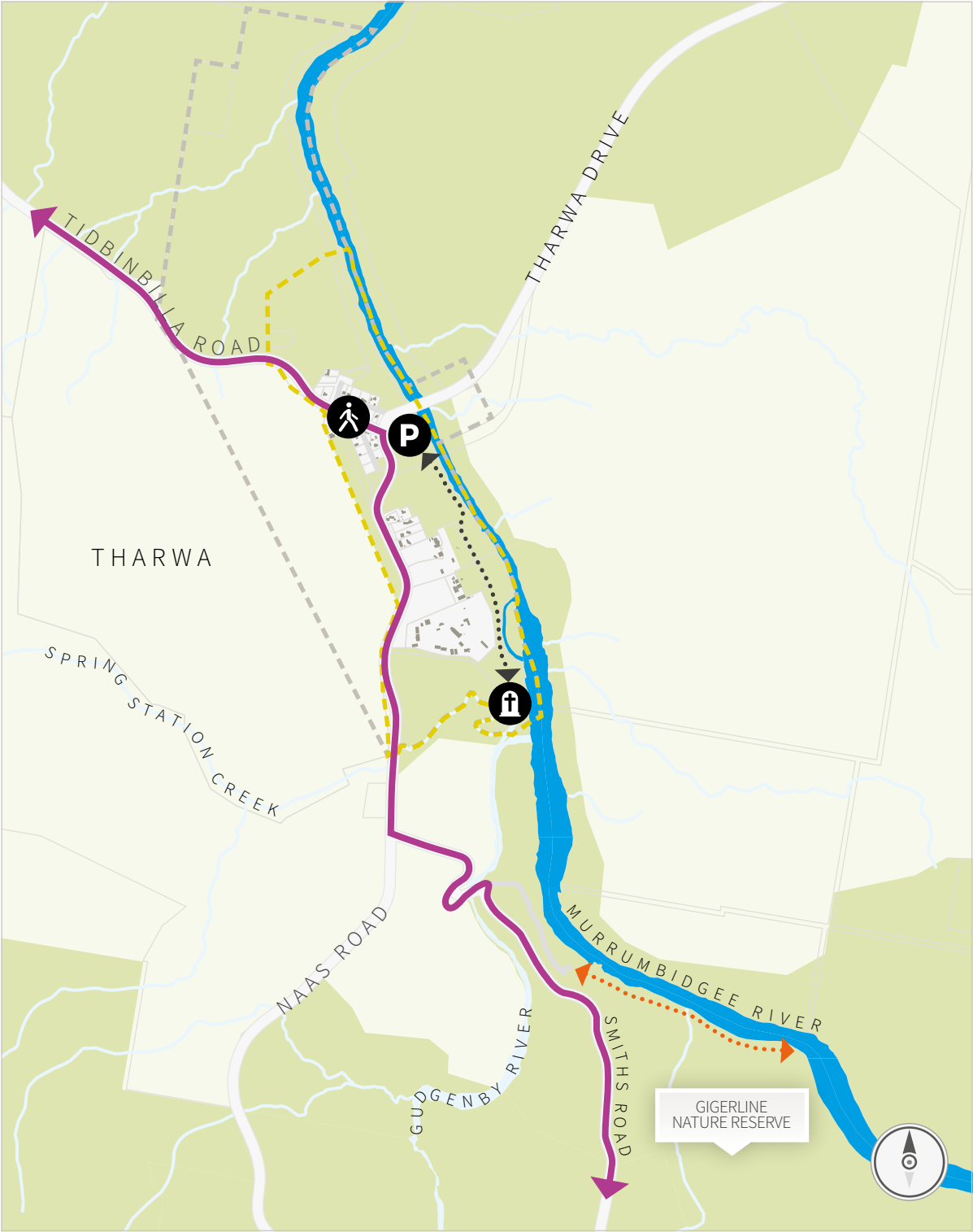
Other issues include the minor deficiencies in the road layout on Tharwa Road at the southern approach to Tharwa Bridge near the intersection with Bridge Street and poor sight lines to property access on Naas road south of the 50 km/h village speed zone.

A lack of street activity and the presence of dead-end lanes contribute to reduced surveillance in the village. Limited sightlines between the village core and residential properties overlooking the Tharwa Bridge Reserve contribute to the community's perception of a reduced level of public safety at the recreation area.



A lack of surveillance over the bridge reserve may also be an additional contributing factor to antisocial behaviour that has been reported by the community.

Limited street lighting is provided in the village precinct along North Street, Bridge Street and Clarrie Lane. Lighting is also provided adjacent to intersections and near Tharwa General Store and the tennis courts.

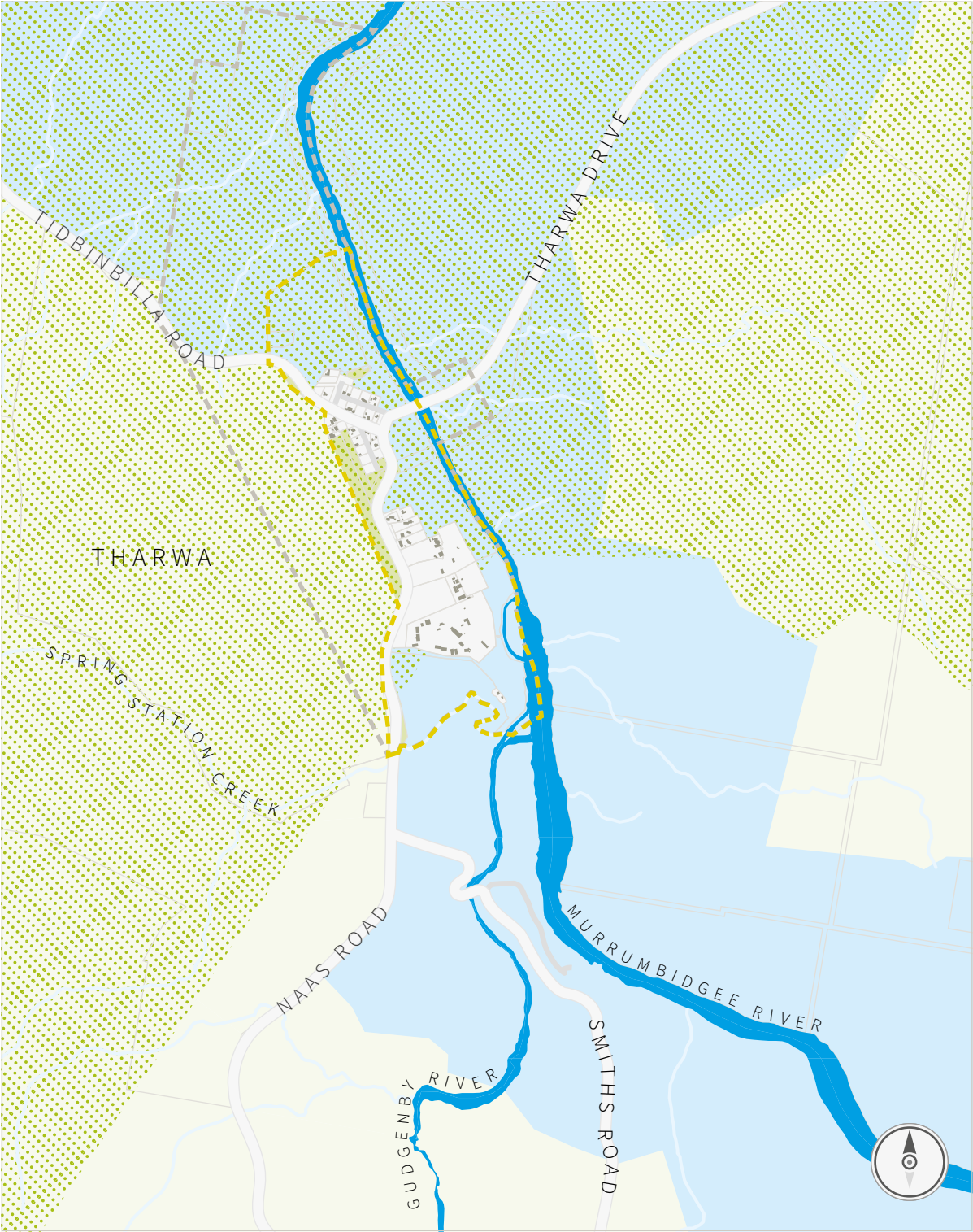
Map 9: Heritage and recreation networks






LEGEND

	MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER		SPECIAL PURPOSE RESERVE
	NATIONAL BICENTENNIAL TRAIL		DE SALIS CEMETERY
	THARWA EXPLORER TRACK		SCHOOL CROSSING
	THARWA SANDWASH TRACK		TERRITORY-OWNED SURFACE PARKING

Map 10: Murrumbidgee river corridor



LEGEND

-  MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER
-  MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR
-  LANYON LANDSCAPE BOWL AREA

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HAZARDS

LANDSCAPE SETTING

Tharwa village is set in a rich natural landscape on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River and amongst a significant box-gum woodland ecological community.

The Murrumbidgee River Corridor is an important element in the region providing diverse ecological, scenic, cultural and recreational resources. Retaining the river's undeveloped character and conserving its natural systems is a priority, not just for the amenity and recreational opportunities the river provides, but also because it is an integral part of one of Australia's major river systems, the Murray–Darling Basin (**Map 10**).

Protecting the health of the river is central to the ongoing sustainability and future prosperity of Tharwa. The ACT and Region Catchment Strategy (August 2016) sets out governance and management principles to produce a healthy, productive, resilient and liveable catchment region.

Sections of the river near Tharwa have been severely affected by large amounts of sand, called 'sand slugs', that have built up over time. These were caused by land clearing for grazing since European settlement and several large floods in the 1800s that washed large amounts of sediment into the river. More recently sand build-up has been exacerbated by water extraction. The recent introduction of engineered log jams north of Tharwa Bridge is contributing to the rehabilitation of the Murrumbidgee River systems. The log jams increase the depth of the river channel and provide suitable fish habitat to help protected native fish survive. Future tree planting will further improve and stabilise the river corridor.

The Tharwa section of the river corridor riparian zone has a long history of land clearing for pastoral use, with weed cover and erosion prevalent in the Tharwa Bridge Reserve and the reserve fronting Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct. As degraded areas they have little nature conservation value; however the Gigerline Nature Reserve is relatively undisturbed, retaining

significant nature conservation value. These areas are subject to the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Plan of Management 1998.

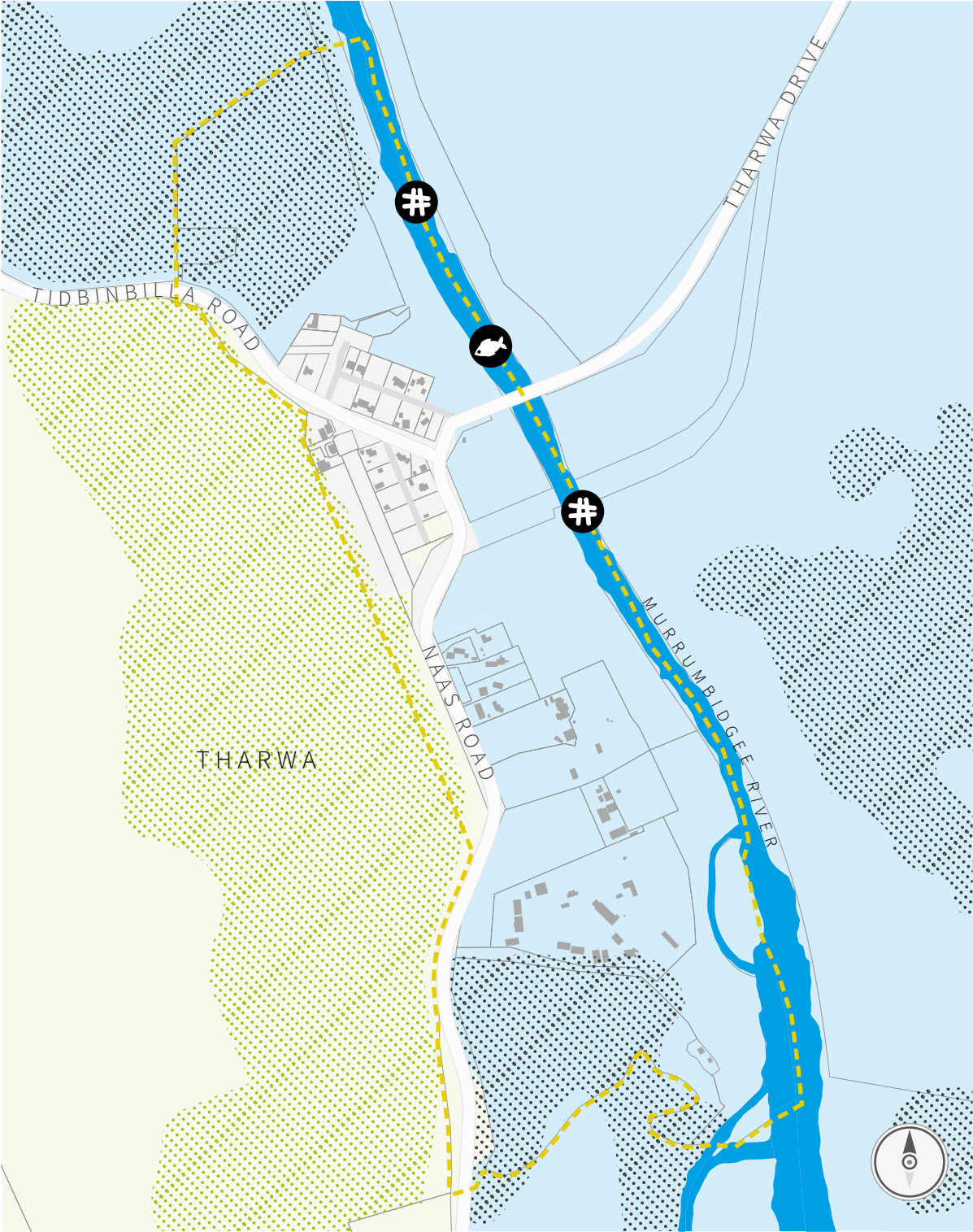
Tharwa is surrounded by relatively intact Box–Gum Grassy Woodlands. This is a threatened ecological community that is characterised by a dominant eucalyptus overstorey and a grassy understorey that provides habitat for rare and declining species of woodland birds. Large areas of this ecological community have been cleared or modified in the Tharwa district since European settlement and remaining fragments are listed as critically endangered.

Ecological connectivity is generally good in the woodlands to the north and south of Tharwa. They are listed by the ACT Government for protection because of their high conservation value. Rural landholders are required to manage these woodlands according to best practice, with any development to take into account its potential impact on the local ecological community. This includes maintaining ecological connectivity across the rural landscape and preventing further land fragmentation.


As indicated on **Map 11**, the woodlands adjoining the western boundary of Tharwa Village are listed as a threatened ecological community and are protected under the Commonwealth Government's Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). Activities which affect the condition or extent of these woodlands may require consent or approval by the Commonwealth Government. A preliminary visual assessment of the vacant blocks on Clarrie Lane suggest that some may have vegetation that meets the EPBC and ACT endangered woodland inclusion criteria.

Another issue is the high occurrence of African Lovegrass, a major weed of grazing lands. This requires management to control its spread to minimise fire fuel loads and the further fragmentation of endangered woodland areas.

Map 11: Ecological values



LEGEND

	MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER		ENDANGERED NATIVE FISH
	MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR		LOG JAM
	EPBC LISTED BOXGUM WOODLAND		
	ACT LISTED BOXGUM WOODLAND		

BUSHFIRE

The village and adjoining farmlands have been assessed as being at high risk to life and property from bushfires that start within and spread from the Namadgi National Park. Consequently, there are designated Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA), subject to the requirements of the ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan 2014–2019 that directs all levels of bushfire planning and management.

Fire Management Zones are identified as a subset of BPAs where measurable fuel management treatments are applied. The zones established in the Tharwa area indicated on **Map 12** and include Asset Protection Zones and Agricultural Management Zones.

The ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan also takes into account the role of fire management practices in the continued survival of important ecological communities, such as the Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands at Tharwa. It provides the framework to implement strategies to maintain these critically endangered ecological communities and meet bushfire management needs.

As the village is located in a BPA, all new development must be designed and constructed to meet the provisions of the Building Code of Australia and Australian Standard AS3959 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas, which require a higher construction standard to achieve adequate levels of bushfire protection.

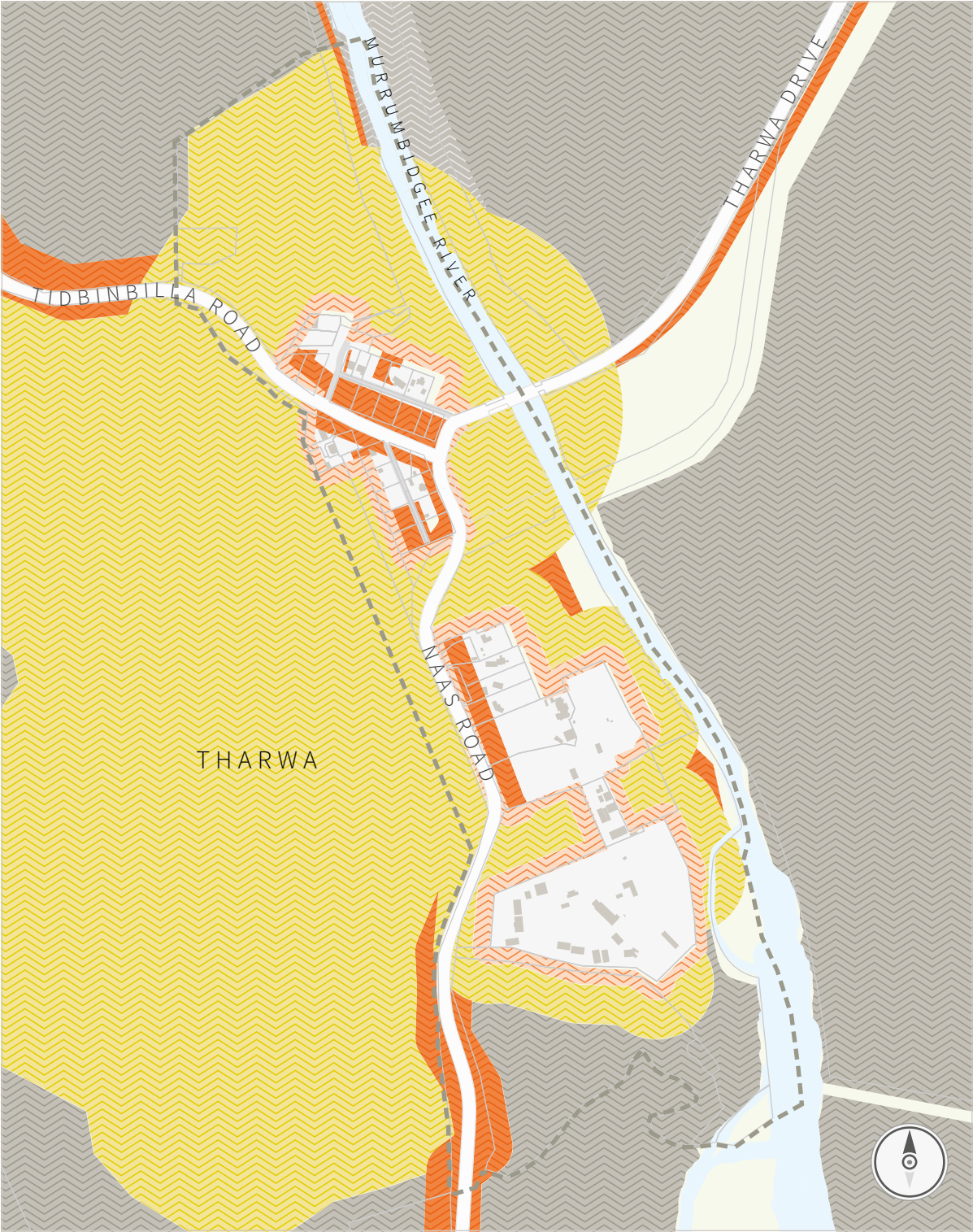
Unmanaged grassy woodland vegetation in these locations expose Tharwa Village to an extreme level of risk from a major bushfire.⁹ Grasses, particularly the prevalence of the weed African Lovegrass, also need to be controlled and managed effectively. Most of the developed parts of the village have maintained landscaped gardens.

FLOOD






Due to the proximity of the Murrumbidgee River, flooding to parts of the village in major storm events is probable, although large floods are uncommon. In large 100 year average recurrence interval (ARI) storm events, floodwaters will overtop the deck of Tharwa Bridge and the Tidbinbilla road by small margins, and inundate Naas Road Bridge. The 1 in 100 year flood level is shown on **Map 13**. Emergency access (or egress) may be reduced during times of major flooding.

Overland flow paths convey major storm water flows away from existing residential properties with some minor localised sheet flow to some blocks in the northern part of the village. The public reserve and some blocks under private lease fronting the river corridor are vulnerable to flooding in large storm events, with some property damage possible.

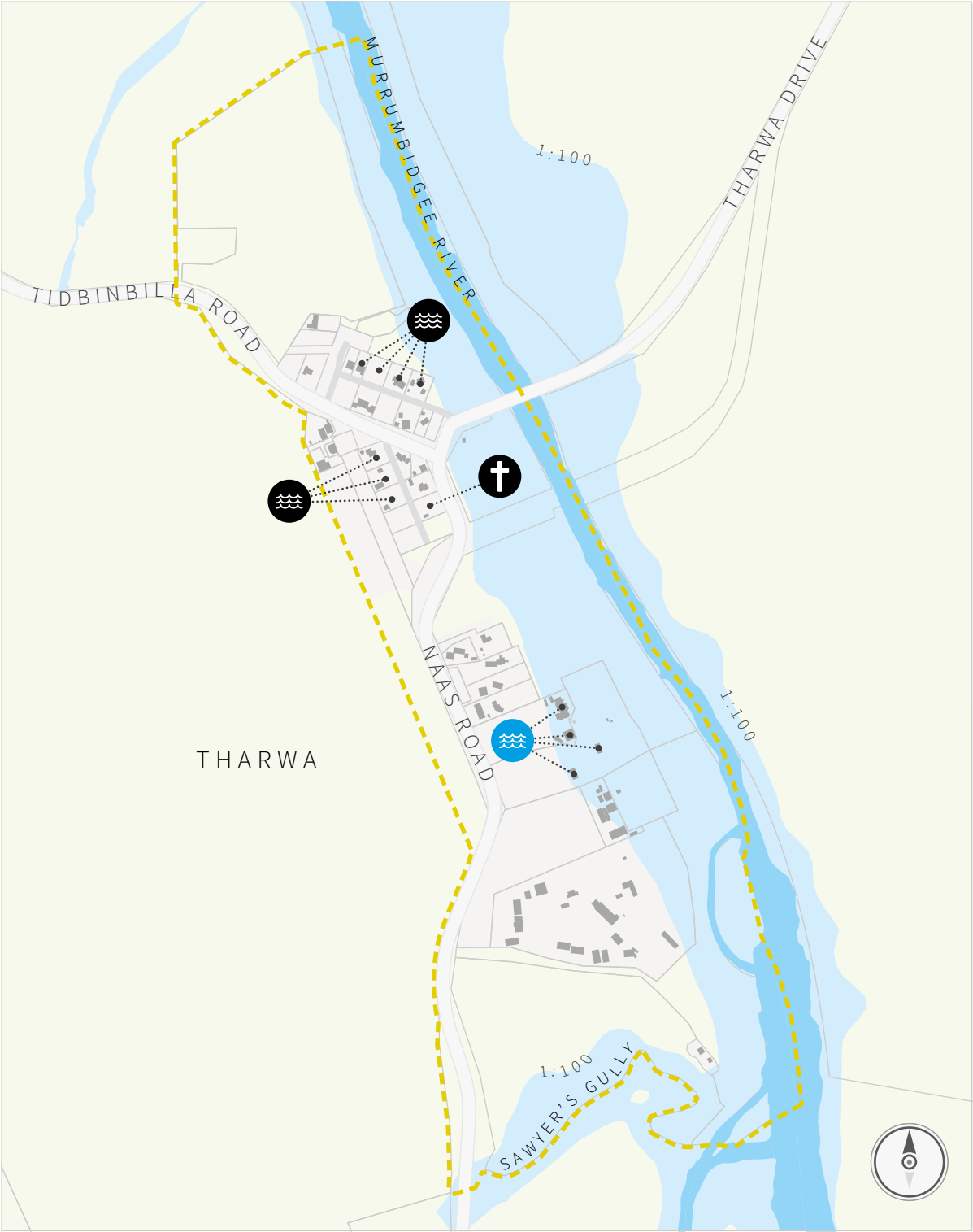
Map 12: Bushfire management zones



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
|  | INNER ASSET PROTECTION ZONE |  | LANDSCAPE FIRE MANGAEMENT ZONE |
|  | OUTER ASSET PROTECTION ZONE | | |
|  | STRATEGIC FIREFIGHTING ADVANTAGE ZONES ACT GOVERNMENT | | |
|  | STRATEGIC FIREFIGHTING ADVANTAGE ZONES AGRICULTURAL | | |

Map 13: Flood events



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
|  | ONE-IN-ONE HUNDRED YEAR FLOOD LINE |  | BUILDINGS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION |
|  | WATER FLOWS THROUGH BLOCK |  | OVERLAND FLOWS THROUGH CHURCH |

INFRASTRUCTURE

An Infrastructure Capacity Study¹⁰ was undertaken in 2013 to document the existing infrastructure and to consider the capacity for additional limited growth in Tharwa Village. The study included liaison and consultation with service authorities and local residents, a Dial Before You Dig enquiry, and a visual site inspection. The study investigated village infrastructure, including potable and non-potable water, electricity, sewerage, stormwater, gas and telecommunications. The study was considered in the development of this Tharwa Draft Village Plan.

WATER

The Murrumbidgee River, which is part of the Murray–Darling Catchment, is one of Australia's major rivers; many communities use it as their source of water. For decades, major towns upstream and downstream of Canberra have been drawing water from the Murrumbidgee River, treating it and safely using it for drinking water supply. The river is a third tier water supply for the ACT, supplementing the Territory's water storages when they are depleted.

A number of factors on the land surrounding the river can affect the quality of its water. It is therefore important that catchment areas are cared for and managed well.

The community collects its drinking water in rainwater tanks fitted to most residences and some community facilities in the village. Non-potable water is extracted from the Murrumbidgee River via two pump and pipe networks for some domestic use and for fire-fighting purposes.

The non-potable water system is owned and managed by two separate entities—privately by a local resident and by the Parks and Territory Services, Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS).

The privately owned system services the northern part of the village and was constructed during the 1950s. This system supplies the general store, the community hall and some residences. This infrastructure is unreliable, difficult to maintain and does not allow for monitoring water usage or water quality.

The second system, owned and managed by TCCS, services the Tharwa School and the public toilets and acts as a back up to the privately owned system. The existing extraction points for both systems are poorly located on the western side of the Murrumbidgee River and provide an unreliable water supply during years with low rates of precipitation.

The infrastructure capacity study identified numerous deficiencies in both pumping systems. These include: the storage tanks are located on privately leased land; pump systems and tanks have reached the end of their useful life; the monitoring system of water usage is inadequate; the systems do not provide adequate fire-fighting water supplies (and are unreliable when the river is too high, too low or too silty to pump); and the unknown underground network and connection to low voltage power supply has no backup.

Given the village is within a bushfire prone area and the existing non-potable water supply is aged and unreliable, a non-potable water supply options report was undertaken. The outcomes of this report are currently being considered by government.

SEWERAGE

All residences in Tharwa Village use localised or individual sewage treatment systems with absorption trenches. Most of the older cottages in the northern part of the village and several others on Naas Road and near the De Salis Cemetery use conventional concrete septic tanks with rubble drains. The risk of contamination of the Murrumbidgee River via leaching of pathogens from the older tanks during extreme drought conditions has been highlighted by the Environment Protection Agency.

Regular, periodic maintenance is required to ensure optimum performance for all other systems in use.

STORMWATER

Existing stormwater infrastructure in the village consists of roadside swales and small culverts for water runoff under minor roads and driveways, with larger culverts under the main roads. The infrastructure capacity study¹¹ notes that some of the stormwater infrastructure may require upgrading or augmentation to adequately cope with major storm events. All stormwater drains towards the east and discharges into the Murrumbidgee River.

Rainwater tanks, which collect stormwater from rooftops, are a traditional source of domestic water supply for small communities and are fitted to most residences in Tharwa. Aside from rainwater tanks and an informal grassed buffer between village development and the river, there are no other Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) measures in place in Tharwa. WSUD aims to protect and improve the Murrumbidgee River's health by actively managing the volume and quality of water run-off from storms. Implementing WSUD measures have multiple amenity and safety benefits, including reducing the demand on the existing stormwater infrastructure.

ELECTRICITY

The electricity network has spare capacity sufficient for limited future additional development in the village, but may not be sufficient to support a large new development.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications provider Telstra has confirmed the current network is sufficient to meet the current needs in the area. However a network upgrade may be necessary if development is sufficiently increased in the future.

During the initial community engagement process, some members of the community said the telephone, internet and mobile services are poor. Tharwa is identified as having access to the National Broadband Network's satellite network, which commenced during 2016. There is currently no indication an NBN cable service will be provided to Tharwa.

GAS

There is no gas infrastructure within the study area. The nearest gas network is located at the intersection of Tharwa Drive and Knoke Avenue, approximately 6 kilometres away. Some local residents purchase bottled gas for cooking purposes.

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4. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Tharwa Draft Village Plan



4. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE MAIN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THARWA ARE OUTLINED BELOW. WHILE THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE, IT PROVIDES THE OUTCOMES OF THE PRELIMINARY PLANNING INVESTIGATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THAT INFORMED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS THARWA DRAFT VILLAGE PLAN.

CHALLENGES

- **Protection of environmental assets** - The village is bounded by significant ecological communities in the form of protected Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands and the Murrumbidgee River. These communities are vulnerable to a range of threats including loss of endangered flora and fauna, weed infestations, potential water contamination from old septs and stormwater run-off, erosion, and natural hazards such as bushfire and flooding.

Protection of these environmental assets is paramount to the ongoing sustainability and future prosperity of Tharwa.

- **Lack of village form and identity** - The structural form of Tharwa is incomplete, with a poorly defined main street and village square and underutilised land within the village limits. Arterial roads bisect the village, resulting in a

lack of cohesion between the southern and northern parts of the village. This threatens its identity as a rural village.

- **Limited walking and cycling connections**
 - With only arterial roads connecting the activity nodes in the northern and southern parts of the village, opportunities for walking or cycling around the village by locals or tourists are limited. This arrangement also reduces safety, health, economic activity and liveability outcomes for Tharwa.

Visitors to Cuppacumbalong (De Salis) Cemetery are discouraged by an incorrect perception of entering private property when passing the Rabbiter's Cottage. This has resulted in some tourists not visiting the cemetery.





- **Underutilised community facilities** - Vacant or underutilised facilities reduce the places the local community can gather, as well as conveying to visitors and tourists a sense of 'downturn' in the village.
- **Limited opportunity for economic activity** - Only one block is zoned for commercial use. This limits opportunities for expansion and diversification of business activity and employment opportunities within the village core. A perceived lack of business activity in the village reduces the incentive for visitors to stop and spend time in Tharwa.
- **Population** - A stationary population with gaps in some age groups threatens the future viability of the village, including the provision of service upgrades and infrastructure investment.
- **Aged infrastructure** - The existing non-potable water supply is considered aged and unreliable. Other infrastructure, including sewerage treatment and the water supply for fire fighting also require improvement. Development and growth of the village may be constrained by the capacity of existing utility networks.
- **Community sentiment** - The community has a wide range of views on the future of Tharwa, with opinions varying significantly on the type and extent of activity and any additional development in the village.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Natural heritage** - Set in the picturesque landscape beside the Murrumbidgee River at the foot of Mount Tennent, the village is endowed with abundant natural assets. From the park-like reserves on the banks of the river to Namadgi National Park beyond, Tharwa provides diverse cultural and recreational/adventure and possibly environmental education opportunities. The river and surrounding woodlands are also important conservation habitats for protected ecological communities.
- **Aboriginal cultural heritage** - Tharwa is significant for Traditional Custodians, providing a base for maintaining cultural connections to the lands and waters of the Namadgi National Park. The area is also used for cultural education, building on traditional knowledge and skills. There is a significant opportunity to expand the provision of cultural education to the broader community.
- **European cultural heritage** - Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct is one of Tharwa's most important landmarks and a historic asset valued by the local community and the broader Canberra region. Cuppacumbalong Woolshed and Shearers Quarters (located to the south of the village) and the heritage-listed bridge, church and old cemeteries further enhance Tharwa's unique regional status as a pioneering rural village.
- **Reinforcing Tharwa's identity and public domain** - Tharwa has a unique opportunity to build upon its heritage providing "a rural retreat away from the heavily urbanised Canberra, where people can get closer to nature".¹² Preserving Tharwa's rural village character is also consistent with the objective of the ACT Planning Strategy to provide a diversity of lifestyle opportunities. Public domain upgrades will further enhance the amenity and liveability of Tharwa and reinforce its identity as a rural village.



- **Improving pedestrian connections** - Located on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, the Tharwa Explorer Track is located between two significant local landmarks, the Tharwa Bridge Reserve and the Cuppacumbalong (De Salis) Cemetery. This track has potential for improvements and greater promotion. The laneways in the village core provide attractive slow speed pedestrian environments that could be further improved.
- **Community facilities** - Assessment of vacant and underutilised facilities may provide new opportunities to enhance Tharwa's cultural and social life, as well as new opportunities to create activity in the village.
- **Encourage economic development** - Small rural communities often look for ways to strengthen their economies, provide a better quality of life and build on local assets. It is important that smart goals for growth and development in Tharwa maintain the distinctive rural character of this unique rural village. The existing independent art and craft businesses, the distinctive general store, and vacant community facilities provide scope for new enterprises that leverage the resources and capabilities of the community. Existing agricultural enterprises, the natural environment, and Aboriginal and cultural heritage have potential for small-scale development and investment, such as farm tourism.

Tharwa's location next to the Murrumbidgee River and at the doorstep of Namadgi National Park and several other nature reserves provides the potential for new tourism opportunities for recreation and outdoor/adventure/environmental education/conservation based activities.

The existing general store is a well known and treasured landmark. There is also an opportunity for additional convenient shopping and business services to meet the daily needs of local residents and visitors to the village.

- **Land release** - Five vacant blocks of Territory land located in the existing village limits and zoned for residential use have been identified as suitable for land release. Development on these blocks would be limited to single dwellings and would be encouraged to reflect the existing rural character of Tharwa.
- **Alternative services infrastructure** - A response to the deficit of urban infrastructure presents an opportunity for the village to showcase 'off the grid' renewable energy technologies and sustainability measures.

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5. THARWA INTO THE FUTURE

Tharwa Draft Village Plan



5. THARWA INTO THE FUTURE

VILLAGE PLAN STRUCTURE

The draft village plan structure indicates how the planning strategies and policies support achievement of the vision and principles outlined on **Map 14** and **Map 15**.

THE VISION

The vision for Tharwa has been developed from feedback from the community and broader government policies. It captures what is valued about the village and sets out what the village could be in the future.

THARWA VILLAGE IS A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE MEETING PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE CAN GET CLOSER TO NATURE AND EXPERIENCE THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF A RURAL VILLAGE LIFESTYLE.

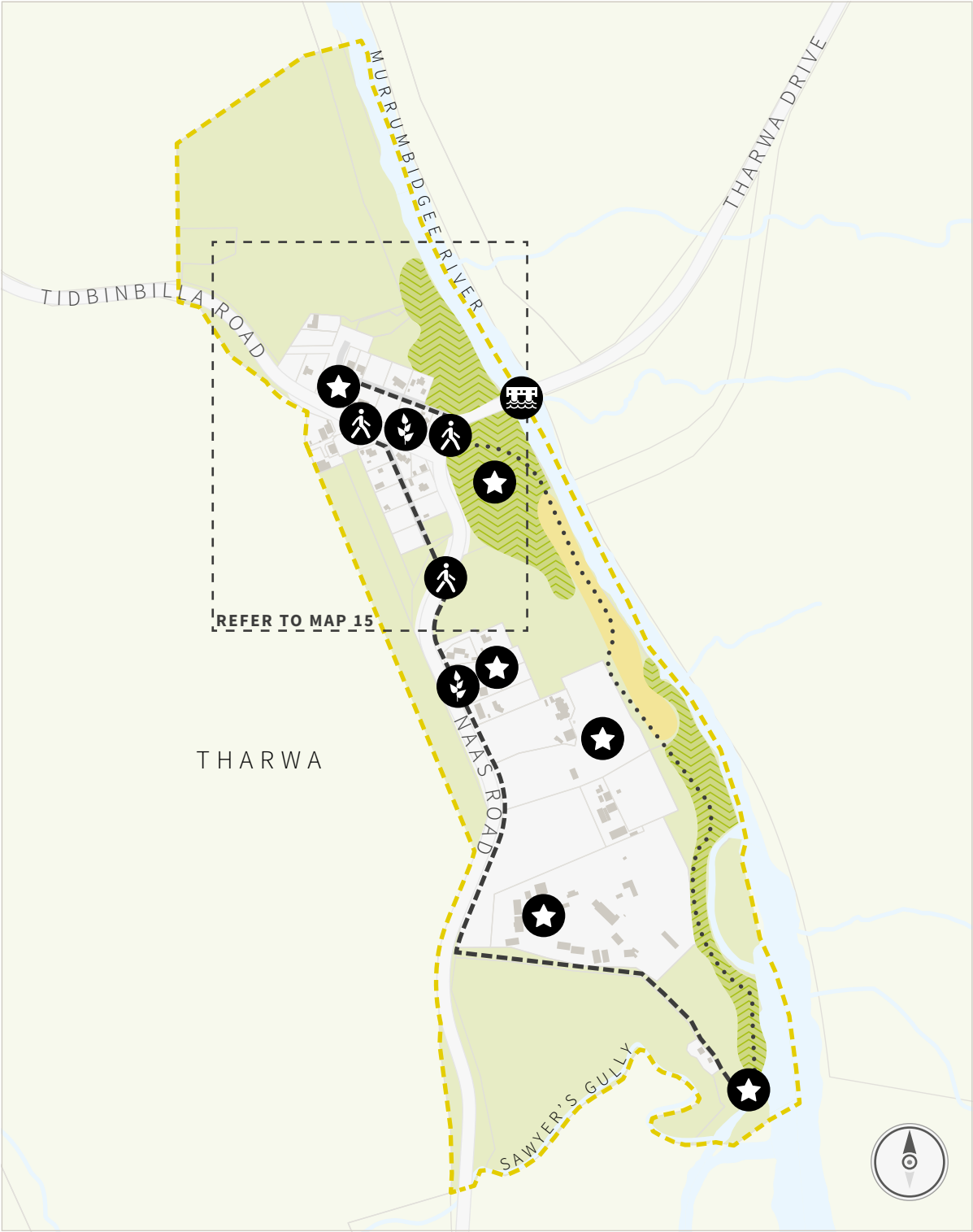
CHARACTER STATEMENT

Set at the foot of Mount Tennent, overlooking the Murrumbidgee River, Tharwa Village is a small but picturesque landmark in an expansive rural landscape setting of regional significance.






Tharwa is a human scale village with modest buildings made of practical and functional materials and intimate laneways that show off productive gardens and livestock—all underpinning a tranquil and rural lifestyle.

The Tharwa character speaks of a deep vein of resilience with multi-generational families staying in the district and an attitude of ‘making do’ to conserve precious resources and the heritage of the village.

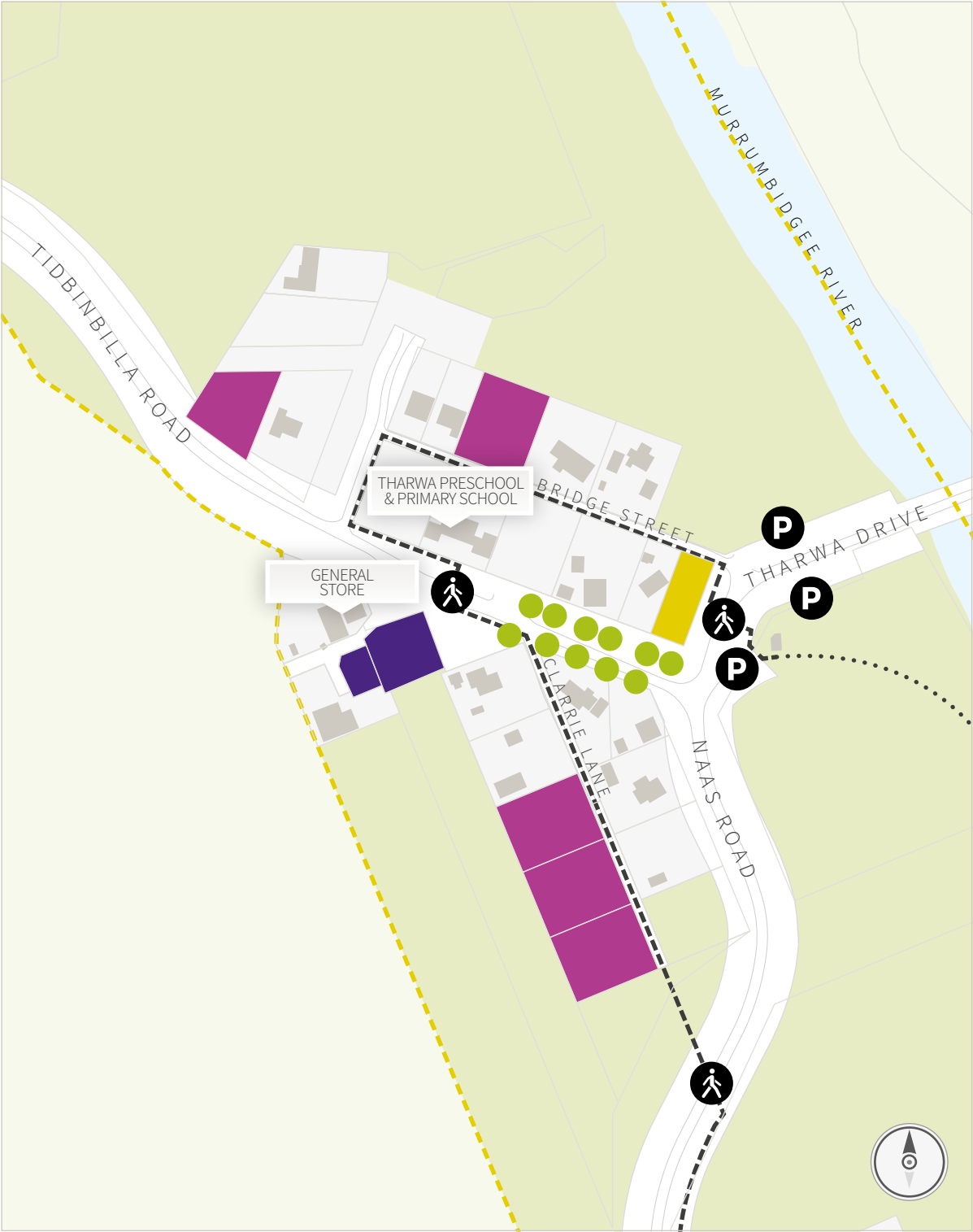
Map 14: Spatial framework











LEGEND

	DESTINATIONS/ ACTIVITY NODES		LANDSCAPE ALONG THE RIVER CORRIDOR
	LANDSCAPE UPGRADE		RETAIN AND PROTECT EXISTING VEGETATION AND TREES
	CROSSING		NEW SHARED PATHWAY
	THARWA BRIDGE		EXPLORER TRACK

Map 15: Spatial framework inset



LEGEND

	CHANGE LANDUSE FROM CFZ TO CZ4		CROSSING
	LAND RELEASE RZ1		EXISTING PARKING
	LAND FOR ACTIVATION		NEW SHARED PATHWAY
	PROPOSED STREET TREES		EXPLORER TRACK

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The following principles are applied to guide the implementation of this village plan, its vision and planning strategies. The principles reflect the future desired outcomes for the village.

PRINCIPLE 1: RETAIN AND ENHANCE THE EXISTING RURAL VILLAGE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

The original layout of Tharwa displays many of the characteristics typical of a rural village, being surrounded by farming land and located next to a river with strong visual connections to the natural environment. These qualities should be reinforced. In particular, the existing village boundaries must be respected to avoid further fragmentation and address shortcomings in the public domain. Reinstating existing civic spaces in the village will provide the setting for public life where a strong sense of community can continue to be forged.

Tharwa has significant natural and cultural heritage features intrinsic to its identity. These features will be enhanced and future development will consider these features:

- The historic street grid with its well defined, compact form, walkability and informal edges.
- Buildings, places and elements (e.g. the Lombardy Poplars) that contribute to the original rural village character.
- Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct.
- The use of the Tharwa Bridge Reserve and river corridor for recreational purposes in a way that respects the quality of the water, ecological habitat and riparian zone.
- The Lanyon Bowl visual catchment area.

PRINCIPLE 2: PROVIDE LOCALLY-BASED ECONOMIC, TOURISM, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG-TERM VIABILITY

Farming is the economic foundation of the village, with the emergence of arts and crafts businesses and outdoor recreation making Tharwa a destination for visitors.

Supporting existing business and enterprises and exploring and creating new opportunities for complementary entrepreneurial activities will bring greater diversity and resilience to the local village economy.

Activating vacant or underutilised community facilities can also enhance cultural and social life in the village.

PRINCIPLE 3: ENSURE THARWA IS ACCESSIBLE AND WELL CONNECTED

Approaches to the village should be safe for pedestrian, cycling, equestrian and vehicular traffic.

Traffic on the approaches to the village should be slowed with some kind of landmark to signify arrival at the village.

Good walking and cycling connectivity with easy access to all parts of the village, including a clear network linking business activity and natural and cultural heritage attractions, will facilitate social, economic and health benefits for Tharwa.

This can be achieved by prioritising the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and recreational walkers to encourage active travel as an alternative to car travel within the village. It requires investing in walking and cycling networks that are direct, safe and accessible for multiple users.

Another initiative involves reducing the exposure to high speed traffic by introducing traffic calming measures and safe road crossings.

Attractive open public spaces with good natural surveillance, safe pedestrian access and shade trees with 'sit and rest' opportunities should also be created.

PRINCIPLE 4: PROTECT AND CONSERVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE OF THARWA'S NATURAL HERITAGE

The river corridor and surrounding woodlands provide the backdrop to Tharwa's identity as a rural village.

This can be enhanced through the conservation and management of natural heritage, including riparian zones and landscape connectivity for threatened ecological communities.

Other initiatives could include improving recreational facilities to enhance people's enjoyment and experience of the natural environment with activities that are appropriate to the rural and natural river setting. Educational and interpretative opportunities associated with local cultural heritage and water issues relevant to the corridor should also be provided.

PRINCIPLE 5: PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

There are opportunities to promote the village as environmentally sustainable and, potentially, a showcase sustainable rural village. This includes adopting energy and water efficiency measures for private dwellings and community buildings such as the Tharwa Public Hall.

Improving the energy and water efficiency of public community facilities and adopting water sensitive urban design (WSUD) measures in the public domain should also be considered, where appropriate.

Another initiative could be to encourage local food production on a community-wide and domestic scale. 'Village farming/community gardens' could be an opportunity for the local community to reconnect with the food supply system and be involved in issues of provenance and security. Community gardens can significantly contribute to strengthening social networks and offer many benefits, particularly for local residents including young children and youth.

Table 2: Summary of Principles

#	PRINCIPLE
1	Retain and enhance the existing rural village character and identity
2	Provide locally-based economic, tourism, recreation and community opportunities for long-term viability
3	Ensure Tharwa is accessible and well connected
4	Protect and conserve the environmental value of Tharwa's natural heritage
5	Promote sustainability

THE VILLAGE PLAN

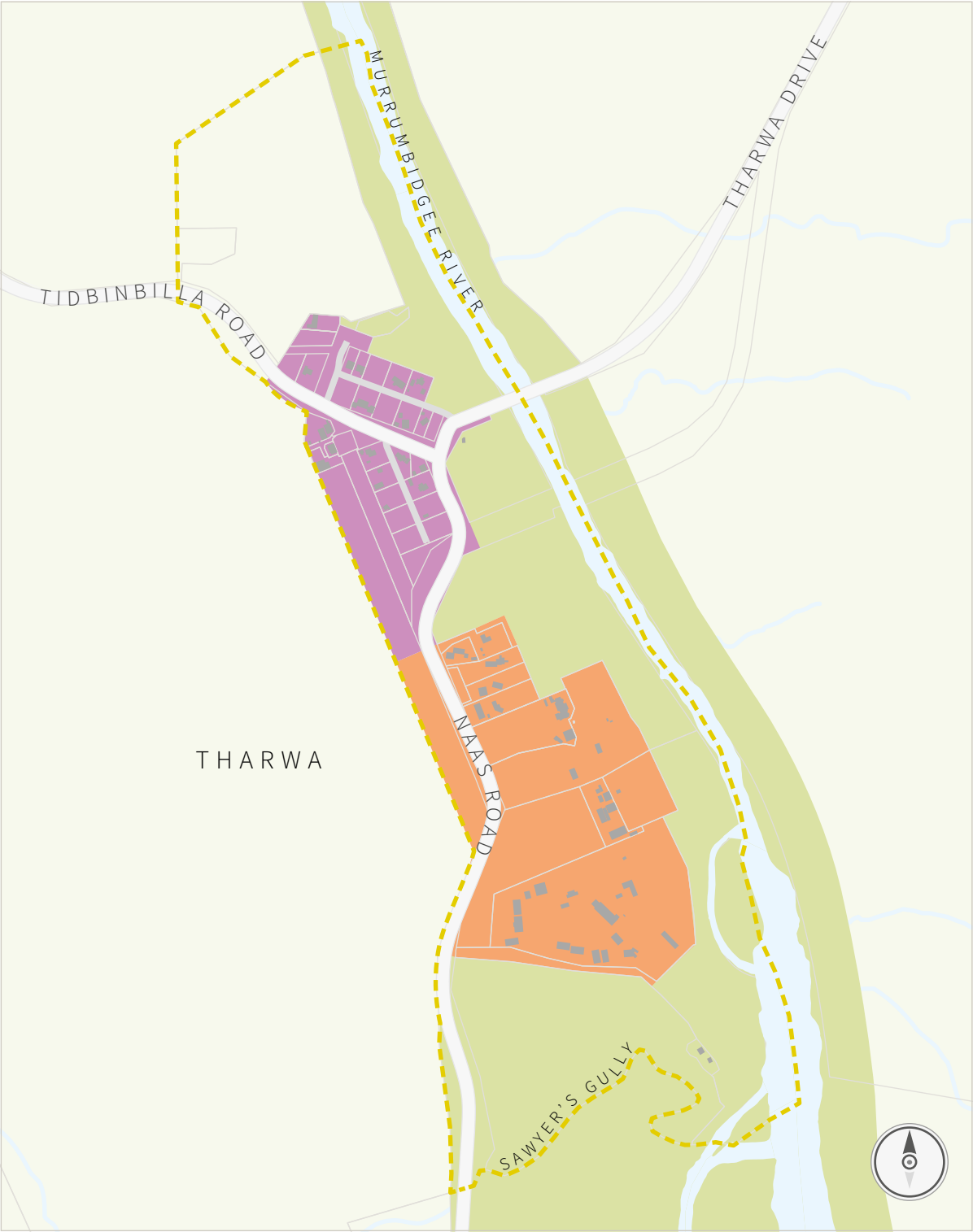
The draft village plan incorporates the vision and principles, and responds to the identified challenges and opportunities. The village plan shows how land use, public domain and connections could be arranged and delivered, illustrating how Tharwa could physically adapt over the next 30 years.

In this plan, Tharwa has three distinct precincts—the Village Core, Historic Cuppacumbalong and the River Corridor. Refer to Spatial Framework (**Map 16**)




The highly significant broader cultural landscape for Lanyon and its setting, which includes Tharwa within its boundaries, is recognised through the definition of the Lanyon Bowl and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor areas under the National Capital Plan (**Map 17**). The Tharwa Draft Village Plan was informed by the policies for these areas.

The strategies and actions below provide a path to implementing the village plan in accordance with the planning principles. The strategies also include planning policy recommendations, which will be translated into a precinct code.

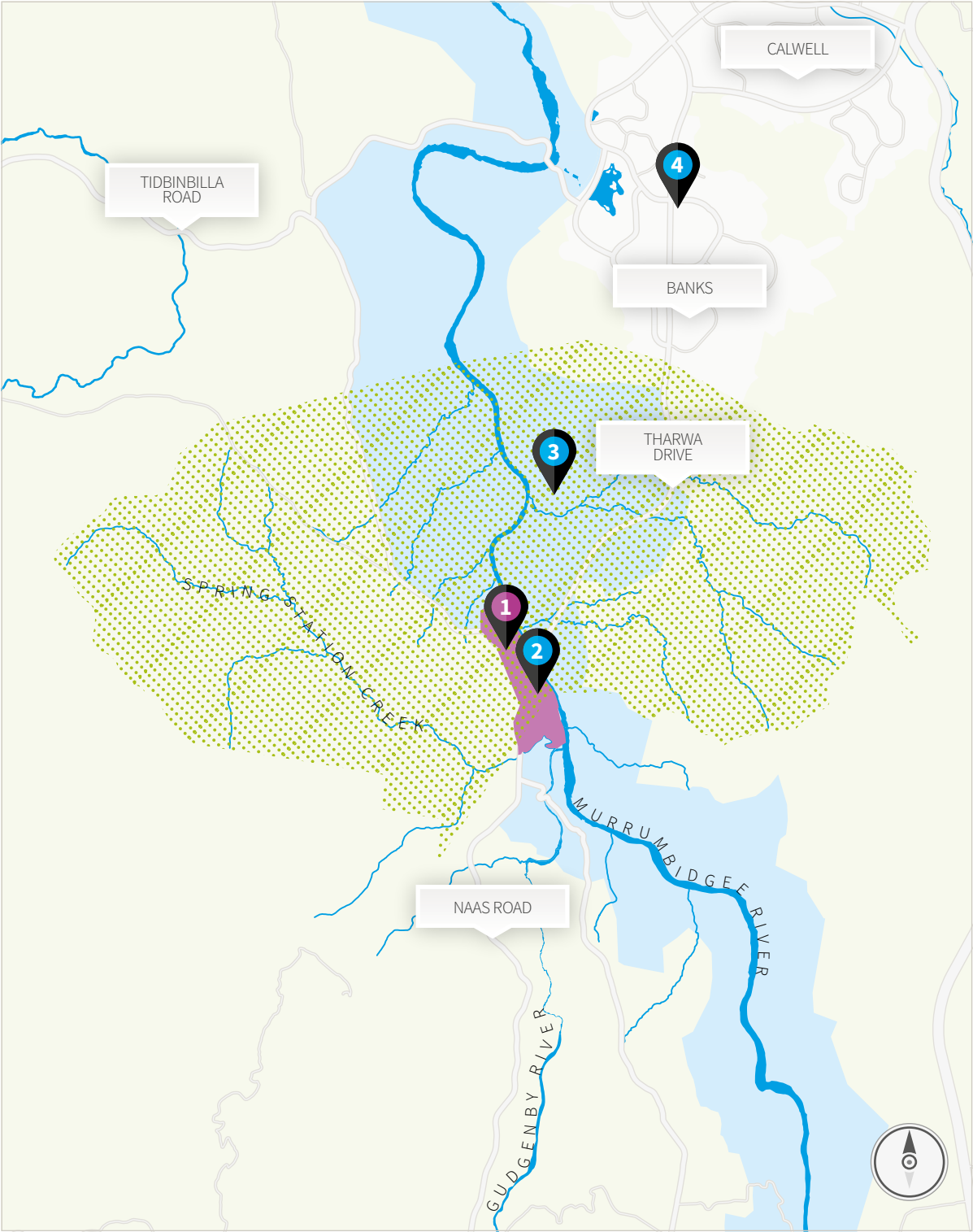
Map 16: Tharwa precincts



LEGEND

-  VILLAGE CORE
-  HISTORIC CUPPACUMBALONG
-  RIVER CORRIDOR

Map 17: Lanyon Bowl area



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 | THARWA RURAL VILLAGE | | THARWA STUDY AREA |
| 2 | CUPPACUMBALONG HOMESTEAD | | MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER |
| 3 | LANYON HOMESTEAD | | MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER CORRIDOR |
| 4 | LANYON GROUP CENTRE | | LANYON LANDSCAPE BOWL AREA |

PRECINCT 1: VILLAGE CORE

OUTCOME 1: THE VILLAGE CORE IS AN ACTIVE RECREATIONAL AND CREATIVE HUB FOR THE COMMUNITY

A vibrant village has an obvious centre with an attractive civic space where the community can come together. Upgrading the forecourt to Tharwa General Store to a 'village square' will enrich the lives of the community and enhance the viability of surrounding business and community facilities.

Providing good walking and cycling connectivity between the village square and the rest of the village will encourage the sharing of the economic and social benefits.

Maintaining the existing fine-grain character of the residential parts of the village core will ensure the rural village character is retained.

Relevant principles: 1, 2, 3, 5.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

1. In conjunction with the local residents, investigate opportunities to upgrade the forecourt to Tharwa General Store and Public Hall to create an attractive village square with street furniture and landscaping. Provide new designated surface parking.
2. Upgrade North Street (the main street) and Clarrie Lane to provide a new shared pathway that connects the village square with shared pathways in adjoining precincts.
3. Release vacant blocks of land that are suitable for residential development.
4. Encourage built form and siting of new dwellings to complement the historic features of Tharwa's older houses.
5. Promote and encourage home owners to retrofit or build houses to the highest possible standards for energy and water efficiency. Advice on improving the efficiency of dwellings is available at these two web sites: <http://www.actsmart.act.gov.au/what-is-the-government-doing/energy/energy-efficiency-improvement-scheme> and <http://www.yourhome.gov.au>

6. Identify opportunities for future commercial development, which will expand convenient shopping and business services in the village core and provide more employment opportunities for the local community.
7. Repurpose or redevelop vacant or underutilised community facilities for community focused recreational and commercial initiatives that are compatible with the village identity.
8. Build on the existing identity of Tharwa Pre-School as a 'rural school' and investigate the potential for an environmental/local heritage education centre.
9. Investigate retrofitting existing public community facilities to the highest possible standards for energy and water efficiency.
10. Use vacant Territory-owned land not suitable for land release for 'light and quick' community initiated projects that could build momentum for short-term revitalisation of the village, such as Block 11 Section 7.
11. Investigate opportunities for community gardens as a means for educating and sharing knowledge about food production, healthy eating, recycling and environmental practices at a local level.

PLANNING POLICIES

1. Retain the existing land use zoning for Residential Suburban (RZ1) blocks in the precinct.
2. Promote adaptive re-use options that respect the heritage values of individual sites and places, such as cultural and low-scale commercial activities; respect the views to, from and within the village to the immediate rural surrounds. Retain larger block sizes. Allow an appropriate landscape setting for individual properties by providing them with separate garages and deep setbacks consistent with those of the houses constructed from the 1920s to the 1950s as this will contribute to retaining the rural character of the area.
3. Change the existing Community Facilities (CFZ) land use zoning for the tennis courts and Tharwa Public Hall to Local Centre (CZ4) for commercial use.

4. Prepare a precinct code to define site planning requirements, characteristics of new buildings including form, scale and materials, sustainability measures and required construction standards. This may include a plan that identifies all heritage listed sites to ensure a consistent approach to future development.

PRECINCT 2: HISTORIC CUPPACUMBALONG

OUTCOME 2: CUPPACUMBALONG HOMESTEAD PRECINCT WILL EXPRESS AND ENHANCE THE STORY OF THARWA

Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct is the anchor of the precinct and retaining its character and viability is important.

Good connectivity with the rest of the village will encourage walking and cycling opportunities for the community and tourists and ensure this precinct forms an integral part of the village.

Relevant principles: 1, 2, 3, 5

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

1. Assist and support tourism and development opportunities for Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct consistent with the lease purpose clause.
2. Assist and support the artists and craftspeople in the properties adjoining Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct to continue to explore new ways to promote and sell their work.
3. Upgrade the landscaping and signage on the designated parking site (Block 8 Section 3) to provide better amenity for tourists visiting the arts and crafts businesses.
4. Provide a new shared pathway that connects Outward Bound, Cuppacumbalong Homestead Precinct and the arts and crafts properties with shared pathways consistent with the character of the village in adjoining precincts.
5. Increase visitor numbers to Cuppacumbalong (De Salis) Cemetery by addressing the perceived separation between the public road and The Rabbit's Cottage.

6. Facilitate tourism links with the historic Cuppacumbalong Woolshed and Shearer's Quarters.

PLANNING POLICIES

1. Retain the current soft edges and kerbing profiles (subject to safety requirements).
2. Enhance access to both cemetery sites through directional signage.
3. Increase consistency in signage across the village, enhancing the interpretation when sign replacement is required. Consult with the local community on the extent of signage.

PRECINCT 3: RIVER CORRIDOR

OUTCOME 3: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Addressing the diminished conservation value of the riparian zone of the Murrumbidgee River will benefit both local recreation opportunities for the village and the regional hydrological and ecological functions of the river as an integral part of the Murray–Darling Basin.

Tharwa Bridge Reserve is an important 'green' civic space with a long history of recreational use. It increases appreciation for the natural environment for locals and visitors.

Tharwa Explorer Track is an established recreation walking trail along the river corridor. Connecting it to new pathways in adjacent precincts will create a more continuous walkable network.

Relevant principles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

1. Continue to plant, manage and maintain the river corridor. Incorporate water sensitive urban design measures that contribute to riparian zone restoration and ensure they are integrated with landscape features.
2. Work with the community to investigate ways to improve the amenity and recreational possibilities of the reserve to make it a comfortable and welcoming 'village green' for locals and visitors.
3. Upgrade and enhance Tharwa Explorer Track to make it accessible for multiple users. Provide new connections from the track to the boundary lines of Cuppacumbalong and Outward Bound to optimise interaction between the river corridor and these key activity hubs.
4. Investigate increasing the involvement of Aboriginal people in natural resource management (NRM) and cultural heritage education and interpretation along the river corridor.

PLANNING POLICIES

1. Retain the park-like character of Tharwa Bridge Reserve by developing a planting strategy that respects the aesthetic contribution of the Lombardy poplars, which will eventually require a suitable replacement species.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

Tharwa Draft Village Plan



6. IMPLEMENTATION

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

This Tharwa Draft Village Plan is being released for public comment. Following community engagement and feedback, a final village plan will be produced for consideration by the ACT Government.

Implementation will be undertaken through:

- a variation to the Territory Plan to introduce a new Tharwa Precinct Code and changes to land use zoning
- land release
- capital works for public domain upgrades
- uptake of opportunities by the community and private developers.

Implementation of the village plan will be progressive over the longer term as it is dependent on capital works funding from the ACT Government and investment decisions by private business.

TERRITORY PLAN VARIATION

A variation to the Territory Plan recommending some minor land use changes and to revise the existing Tharwa Precinct Code will implement some of the planning policy recommendations. The precinct code will provide the opportunity for the building character, setbacks and land uses outlined in the village plan to be realised as development occurs.

There will be an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the precinct code through a separate community engagement process.

LAND RELEASE

There are five ACT Government-owned vacant blocks within the current village layout that are suitable to be made available for sale. These blocks are located at Block 2 Section 9, Block 4 Section 7 and Blocks 6, 7 and 8, Section 6.

The blocks are all zoned RZ1 Suburban and are located in the village core. Minor civil works will be needed to improve road access to several blocks in Clarrie Lane.

PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

Infrastructure and public space improvements are required to realise the vision and some of the strategies of this village plan. This will involve further investigations by various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budget bids.

This includes reinstating key civic spaces such as the village square and green, upgrades to the main street and the creation of a destination walking and cycling network which circumnavigates the village. Improving the provision of street trees and minor municipal upgrades to improve signage will be considered.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Subject to approvals by the ACT Government, the Tharwa community is encouraged to explore ways to use the vacant or underutilised facilities in the village core for low cost, rapidly implemented, community initiated projects that would build momentum for short-term revitalisation of the village.

Short-term initiatives could include a community garden and orchard, a farm shop, produce market, a co-working space, a pop-up seasonal cafe or a sustainable living hub.

COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Business and the wider community have the responsibility to take advantage of opportunities identified within the village plan to invest in the area. Some changes indicated in the village plan are on existing developed sites and may require substantial investment. Implementation of the village plan will be progressive over time.

FURTHER STUDIES

Further studies may be required to progress some strategies that are either outside of what a village plan can achieve or may take more time to investigate. Potential further studies could include:

- heritage assessments for the significant objects and places identified in Section 3
- Infrastructure studies
- EPBC Woodland assessment of vacant blocks.

END NOTES

1. ACT Planning Strategy – page 59, ESDD, 2012
2. Planning and Development Act 2007- section 48
3. GML Heritage, Tharwa Heritage Significance Study, September 2015, p95
4. A. Bickford, Tuggeranong Planning Studies, December 1975, p11
5. NCDC, Village of Tharwa Policy Plan, June 1983, p1
6. Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate estimates, derived from ABS 2011 census data.
7. ABS 2011 census data, 2016 ERP.
8. ABS 2011 census data, 2016 ERP.
9. Australian Bushfire Protection Planners Pty Ltd, Bushfire Risk Assessment for the Village of Tharwa ACT, p43
10. Tharwa Infrastructure Capacity Study Phase 1 Report Brown Consulting December 2013
11. Tharwa Infrastructure Capacity Study Phase 1 Report Brown Consulting December 2013
12. Submission by an ACT resident on the 'Haveyoursay ACT Planning' website

The background of the page is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this are several thin, white, straight lines that intersect at various points, creating a complex geometric pattern. The lines radiate from different points, some intersecting each other, forming a series of triangles and other polygons across the upper and middle portions of the page.

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